

CYSA MINI SOCCER COACH'S GUIDE AGE 7-8's

Soccer coaches wear many different hats, particularly when they're training young players, many of whom are lacing up their cleats for the first time. You might find yourself leading a fun activity one minute and reining in a distracted player the next. You must be flexible, because a session or drill that was meant to last 10 minutes might need to be switched up after half that time to keep the players engaged. Above all, make sure everyone is enjoying the session—including you. HAVE FUN !!!

Your personality and enthusiasm will have the biggest impact on your players. HAVE FUN !!!

Remember, a method that works well with one player may not be effective with another. So it's important to be flexible, to set realistic goals, and to give positive feedback as often as possible. If a drill is not working change it up, keep it simple or move on to the next one.

Canada Soccer recommends a “station” approach to training. Players move from one skill-building activity to the next at regular intervals.

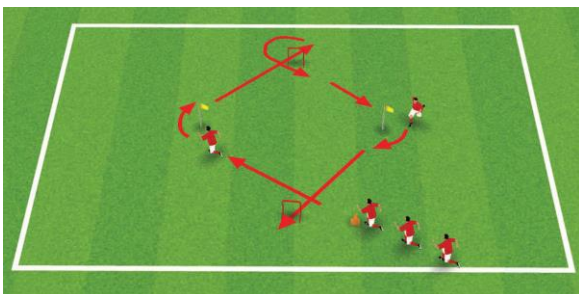
Soccer times are split into 40 min practice followed by 20 min game. The practice time is built around four activity stations, one focusing on general movement skills, one on coordination, one on soccer technique and another on small-sided games. Addressing all four of these training “pillars” at each practice session will help develop well-rounded young players with a foundation in physical literacy, solid soccer skills and, ideally, an enduring love of the game.

Each field will be split into four stations and teams will combine for the practice before their game. The kids will move through each station. The station will be assigned by a weekly schedule, during the eight week season. Each soccer technique will be covered twice in the season. Coaches will also have the opportunity to bring their own drills into the mix.

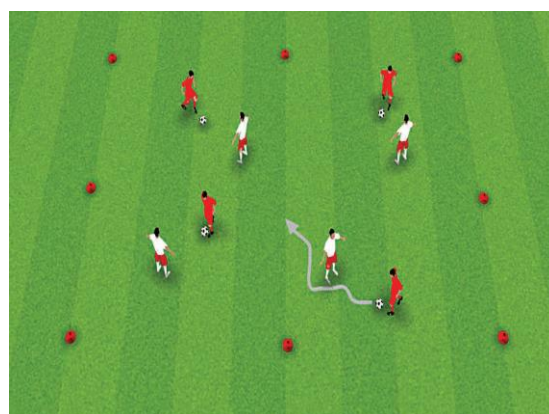
The four soccer techniques are dribbling, control, passing and shooting.

Week One

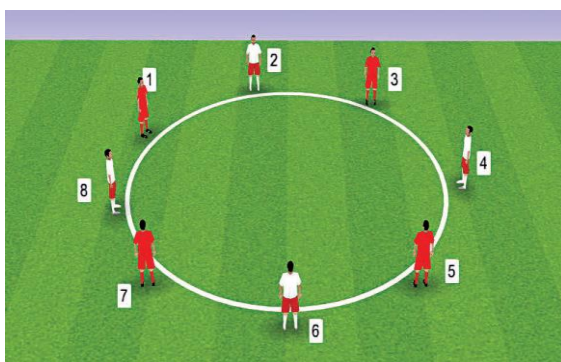
Station #1: Cones and Hurdles, *general movement*, Use cones and hurdles alternately to mark out a circuit, as shown. Modify the circuit depending on the available equipment (i.e. have players jump over cones or balls and crawl through teammates' legs if hurdles aren't available) "Go!" – finish the circuit as fast as you can (depending on available equipment): **1.** Run around the first cone. **2.** Turn and sprint to the first hurdle, then crawl under it. **3.** Sprint around the second cone. **4.** Jump over the second hurdle. **5.** Sprint to the last hurdle, jump over it and finish! As soon as your feet hit the ground, the next player starts. **OPTIONS:** Turn it into a race by timing the players as they go through the circuit one at a time.



Station #2: Fake and Turn, *soccer technique (dribbling)* divide kids half with a ball half with no ball, 4 with no ball (free players) "Dribble!" – use your dribbling skills (i.e., fakes and turns) to move the ball around the field and get it past the "free" players, who get in your way but don't try to take the ball. "Switch!" – rotate players into the "free" role. **OPTIONS:** How many free players can you dribble past in one minute? "Challenge!" – free players try to take the ball; if successful, they get to dribble.

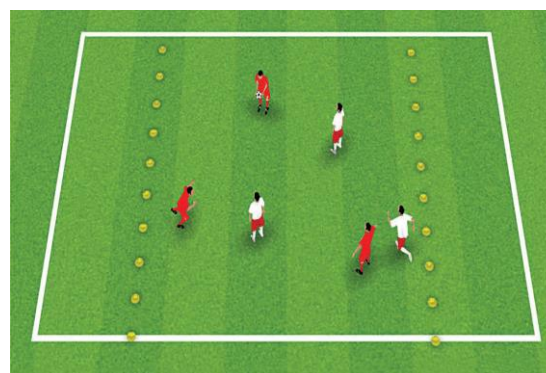


Station #3: Around the World, *coordination*, players, sit or stand in a large circle. "Go!" – when the coach calls your number, travel around the outside of the circle and return to your spot as fast as you can. "Listen!" – move as your coach tells you to. **1.** Run forwards. **2.** Run backwards. **3.** Shuffle to the side. **4.** Hop with your feet together. **5.** Skip, etc. **OPTIONS:** Each player has a ball: "Forwards" – players dribble the ball forward around the circle. "Turn!" – players turn and dribble in the other direction. "Weave!" – players must weave in and out of their seated teammates as they dribble around the circle. Players use only their left or right foot, or a certain part of the foot (i.e., inside, outside, laces) to move the ball. "Race!" – call out 2 numbers at once. The first player back wins.



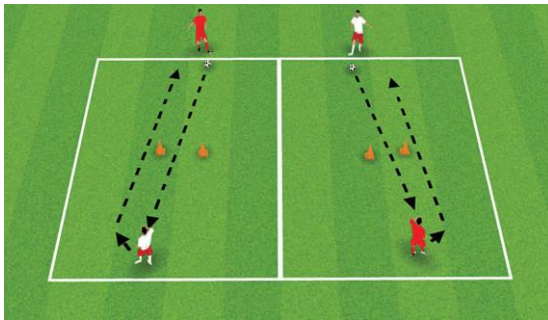
Station #4: Flag football, *small sided games*, create two end zones using cones, divide players into two teams, carry the ball with your hands and try to score by running into the end zone. If a player on the other team touches you when you have the ball, it's their turn to try and score in the other end zone. You can avoid being touched by throwing the ball to one of your teammates. **Options:**

Use your feet to dribble the ball into the end zone.
Instead of tagging use your feet to take ball away



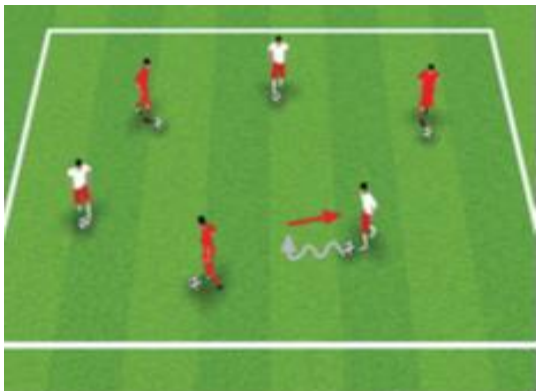
WEEK TWO

Station #1: Through the Gate, *soccer technique (control)*, Players start on opposite sides of the field with a gate in the middle. Start by passing the ball back and forth through the gate. When you receive a pass, use one foot to control it, and then pass it back quickly with the other foot. "On the outside!" – Player 1 passes through the gate and Player 2 controls it on the first touch, and passes back outside the gate. Alternate using the inside and outside of each foot to control the ball. OPTIONS: "Throw in!" – Player 1 throws the ball to Player 2, who controls it with the foot, thigh, or chest before passing it back to their partner's feet through the gate. Control the ball so that it moves across your body (e.g., left thigh to right foot). Add a goalkeeper to defend the gate



Station #2: coach's choice, use one of your own drills.

Station #3: Think Fast, *general movement*, players move ball around with feet, react as fast as you can:
Stop – stop ball with bottom of your feet
Turn – stop ball, roll it backwards, and then continue in other direction
Options:
Step over – step over ball and change direction
Fake – pretend to shoot then continue dribbling
Explode – change speed quickly and go to open area



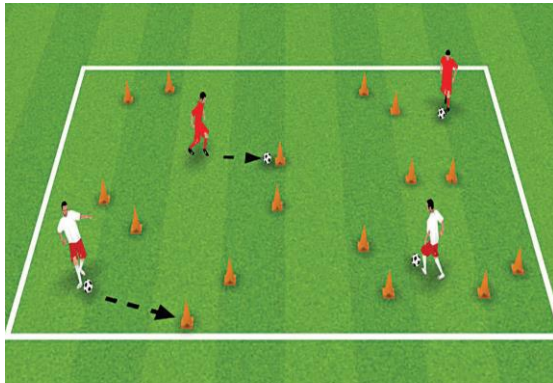
Station #4: coach's choice, use one of your own drills

WEEK THREE

Station #1: Shark island, *soccer technique (passing)*, players are on an island surrounded by shark infested waters. Go! – use your feet to move the ball around the island, trying not to touch a cone or fall off into the water. “Pass!” – Use your foot to pass the ball and try to knock over the cones. Try to knock them all down (in 30 seconds). Options:

“Pass!” – use your foot to pass the ball to your partner on another part of the island, without knocking over any cones.

Pass back and forth with your partner as many times as you can (in 30 seconds) without knocking over any cones or falling off the island.

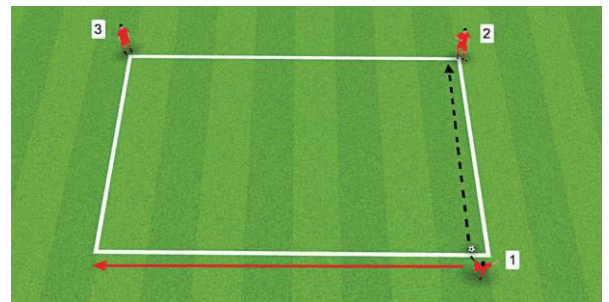


Station #2: Three Corners, *Soccer technique (passing)* Player 1 passes along the sideline to Player 2, then runs to the empty corner. Player 2 receives the ball and passes along the sideline to Player 3 before running to the empty corner. Player 3 receives the ball and passes to Player 1, etc. Remember to use the side of your foot when passing. When you receive a pass, try to use just 2 touches: control the ball with one foot then pass back quickly with the other foot. “Switch feet!” – use your other foot to control and/or pass.

OPTIONS:

Allow a player to pass to either teammate before running to the open corner.

Player 1 passes to the open corner and Player 2 runs to receive it. Player 2 passes to the open corner and Player 3 runs to

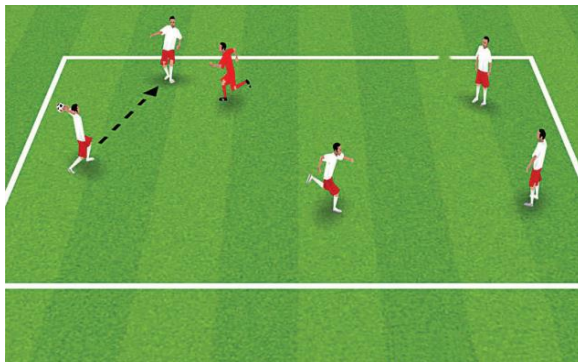


Station #3: Freeze tag, *coordination passing*, One player is “it”; another player starts with the ball. Try to tag the other players by touching them with your hand. If you have the ball, you cannot be tagged. Save a teammate by throwing the ball to them before they get tagged. If you get tagged, you’re frozen. You’re back in the game when a teammate crawls through your legs. “Switch!” – The player holding the ball becomes “it.” Options:

More than one player has a ball and can “save” their teammates.

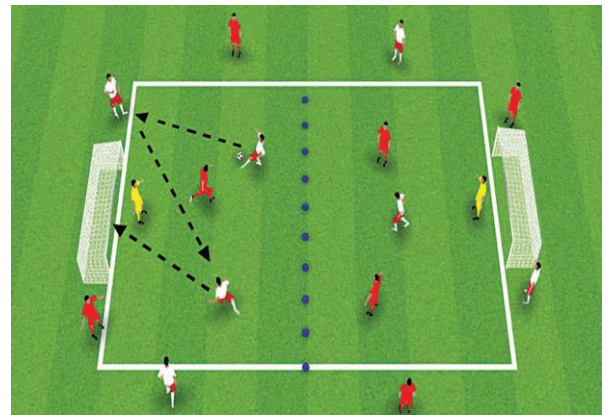
Instead of passing with your hands, use your feet.

“Dodge ball:” the player who is “it” has the ball. To freeze other players, throw the ball to hit them below the knees.



Station #4: 2 Vs. 1 Pass, *Small sided games (passing)*, The 2 attackers and 1 defender in each half cannot leave their respective zones. Position additional support players around the edge of the field, on the sidelines or beside the goals (no 2 players from the same team can stand next to each other).

• “Go!” – proceed with a 2 v 1 game. Attacking players can also pass to their teammates around the edge of the field. Remember: try to control and pass in just 2 touches



WEEK FOUR

Station #1: coach's choice

Station #2: Shoot the Distance, *Small sided games (shooting)*, Set up both nets and divide players into two teams. Players try to score at every opportunity but can only shoot from their half of the field.

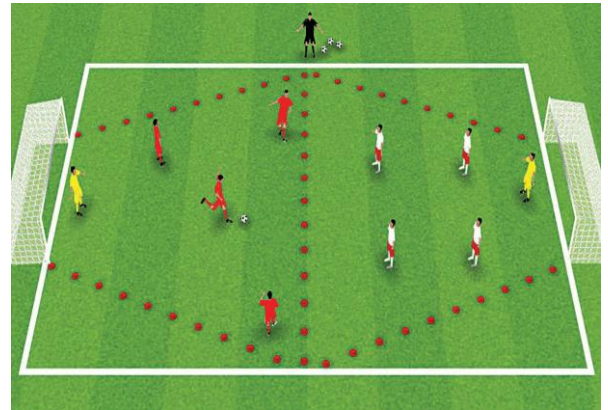
OPTIONS:

Teams get an extra point if they score a one-touch goal (i.e. pass to a teammate who shoots with his first touch).

Add a defender in each half who can challenge for the ball.

Add a striker in each half who tries to score on rebounds.

(Image shows cones throughout field but just divide field in half)

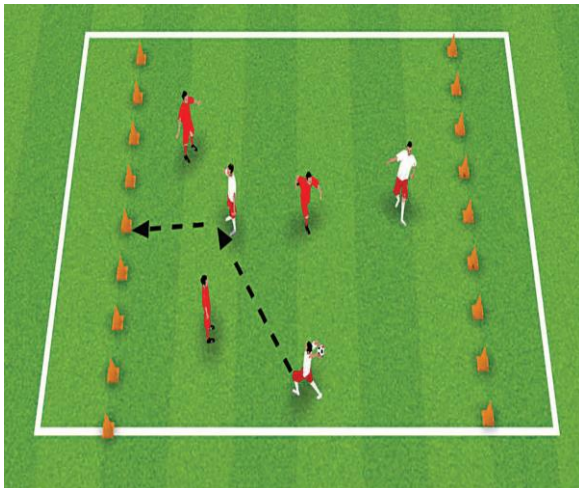


Station #3: Knockdown, *small sided games (shooting)*, Divide into two teams, one ball. "Go!" – use your hands to start with, and pass by throwing the ball to your teammates. If a player on the other team tags you while you have the ball, then the other team gets the ball. Score by throwing the ball and knocking over a cone.

OPTIONS:

"No hands!" – use your feet to pass and shoot. Instead of tagging, use your feet to take the ball away from the other team.

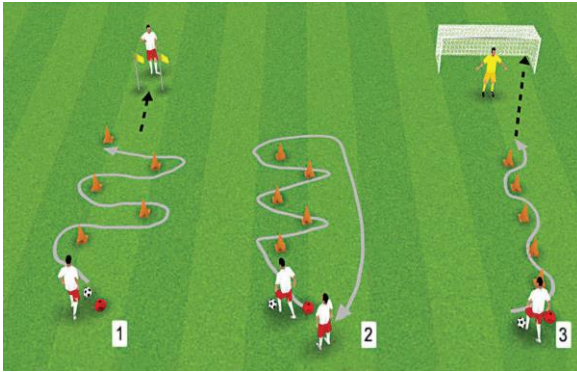
Remember to use the top of your foot (laces) when shooting!



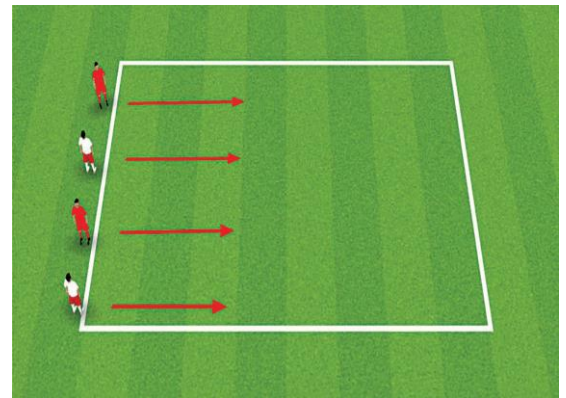
Station #4: coach's choice

WEEK FIVE

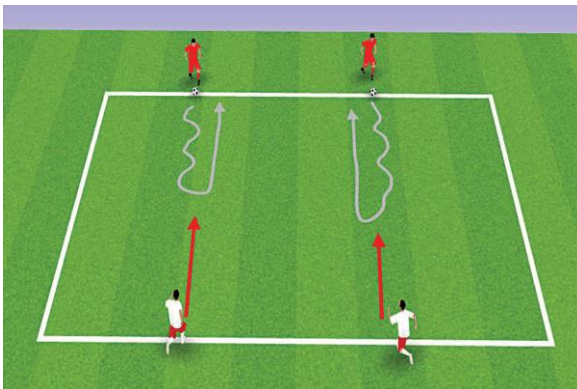
Station #1: Relay race, *soccer technique (dribbling)*, divide players into two or three groups. Line up in order with Player 1 in front at the start line. "Go!" – one at a time, use your feet to move the ball around the cones to the end, and then come back to the start line. Take your ball to the back of the line. **OPTIONS:** Split each group so that 2 players are at opposite ends of the cones. One ball per group. Player 1 dribbles around the cones to the opposite end, and passes to Player 2, who dribbles back through the cones and passes to Player 3, etc. Player 1 dribbles through the cones then shoots the ball into the net. Player 1 goes to the back of the line and Player 2 has a turn, etc.



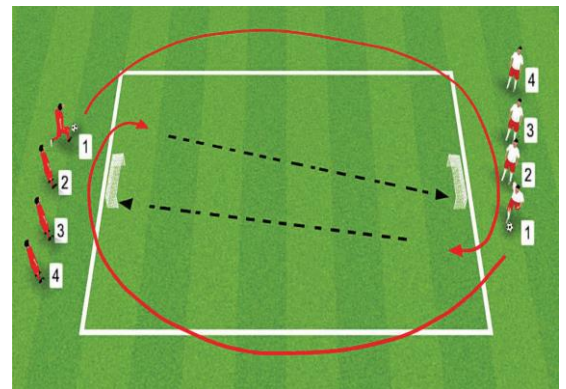
Station #2: Freeze, *coordination (dribbling)*, Go!" – start to run forwards towards the finish line. "Change!" – **1.** Run sideways. **2.** Hop on one foot, then the other. **3.** Bunny hop with both feet together. **4.** Skip. **5.** Roll. **6.** Crawl and roar like a bear. **7.** Crab walk. "Freeze!" – stop where you are and don't move until your coach says "go." **OPTIONS:** Each player has a ball; i.e., **1.** Hop with the ball between your feet or knees. **2.** Bounce and catch the ball as you skip or run. **3.** Dribble the ball



Station #3: Across the Channel, *soccer technique (dribbling)*, Player 1 dribbles the ball across the channel towards Player 2. Player 2 tries to take the ball away before Player 1 can turn and dribble back. If Player 2 doesn't win the ball, Player 1 gets a point. On the next turn, Player 2 starts with the ball and Player 1 challenges rotate partners. **OPTIONS:** Decrease the distance between players. Instead of turning and dribbling back, players with the ball get 2 points if they can dribble the ball over their partner's start line. (Set up cone to indicate "channel")

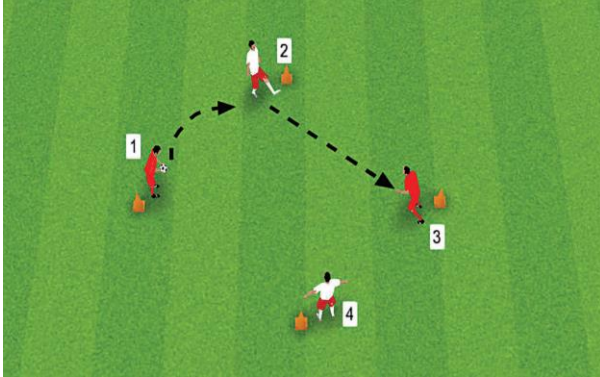


Station #4: race to goal, *small sided games (dribbling)*, Set up both nets at this station and divide players into two teams. Teams start behind their own net each with a ball. Dribble your ball as fast as you can around the field, until you get to the other team's goal. Dribble around the back of the goal, then dribble onto the field and try to score into your net. The first player to score gets a point. **OPTIONS:** Add a player as goalie. Allow a player to play defence. Two players go at same time



WEEK SIX

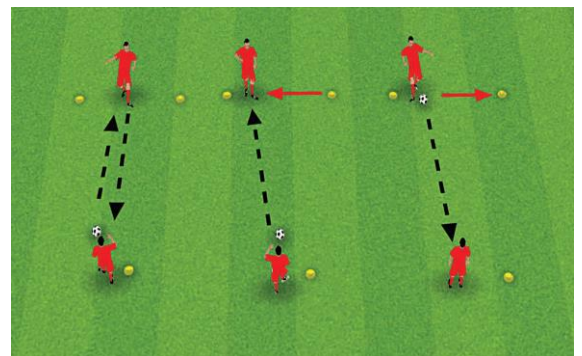
Station #1: Diamonds, *Soccer technique (control)*, set up cones in diamond shape, player at each cone. Players move the ball in a clockwise direction. Player 1 throws the ball to Player 2, who controls it in 2 touches (i.e. thigh to foot) and passes to Player 3. Player 3 picks up the ball and throws it to Player 4, who controls it in 2 touches and passes to Player 1. Repeat 3 times, then switch so Player 2 starts with the ball. **OPTIONS:** Have each player follow his/her throw or pass (i.e., Player 1 passes/throws to Player 2, then moves into Player 2's position). Continue until all 4 players are back at their starting positions. Player 2 starts with the ball on the next turn, going in the other direction around the diamond. Instead of ground passes, have players try to keep the ball in the air and use their foot to volley it around the diamond, catching the ball



Station #2: Coach's choice

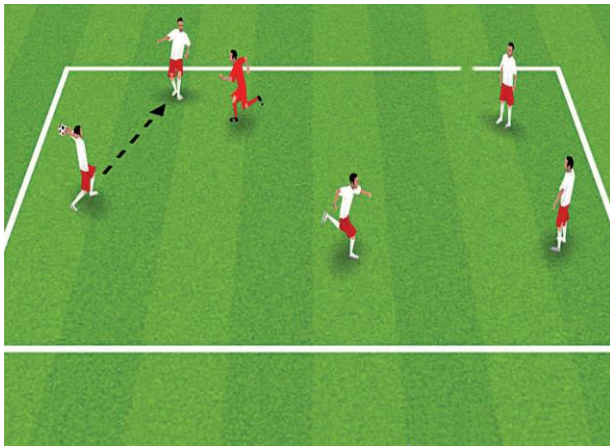
Station #3: coach's choice

Station #4: Lateral Control, *coordination (control)*, Use 2 cones to mark out a gate at one end, with a single marker centered opposite. Player 1 starts at the single marker, Player 2 stands in the middle of the gate. Player 1 passes to Player 2 who controls the ball with the foot and quickly passes it back. Player 2 moves laterally to touch the cone on his/her right. Player 1 passes the ball quickly toward the centre of the gate, so Player 2 has to either control or pass while moving. Player 2 passes back to Player 1 again, and moves laterally to touch the other cone. Continue with Player 2 moving laterally after each pass. After 5 passes back and forth, players swap roles. **OPTIONS:** Instead of passing to the centre, Player 1 passes to one of the side cones. Player 2 runs to it and passes back, in one touch if possible. Then Player 1 passes to the cone on the opposite side.

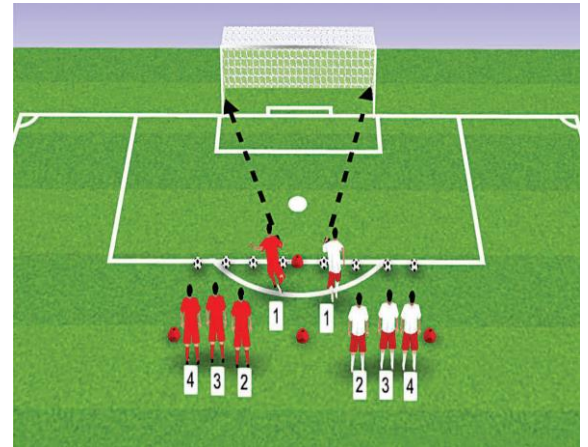


WEEK SEVEN

Station #1: Freeze tag, *coordination (passing)*, one player is it, another one holds the ball, – if you're "it", try to tag the other players by touching them with your hand. If you have the ball, you cannot be tagged. Save a teammate by throwing the ball to them before they get tagged. If you get tagged, you're frozen. You're back in the game when a teammate crawls through your legs. "Switch!" – the player holding the ball becomes "it." **OPTIONS:** More than one player has a ball and can "save" their teammates. Instead of passing with your hands, use your feet.

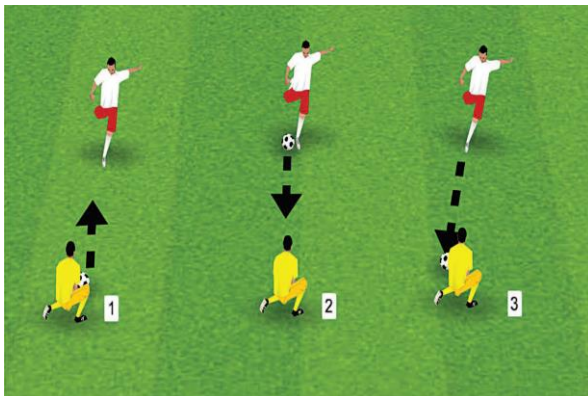


Station #2: Wild West shoot out, *Soccer technique (shooting)*, Set up both nets, split into two teams. Use one ball for each team. Players shoot on goal then retrieve ball and return to next player in line. If they score they sit down, first team to have all players score wins. **OPTIONS:** Have a goaltender. Start from a sitting down or push up position.

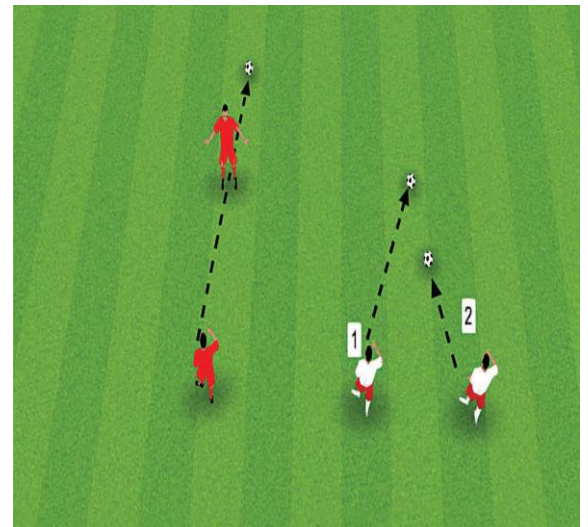


(Image only has one net but you can use two)

Station #3: Ground Ball, *soccer technique (shooting)*, players are paired up with a parent or another teammate, one ball per pair. One partner kneels, while the other remains standing. The person kneeling will roll the ball towards their partner's feet. "Shoot!" – use your foot to shoot the ball gently along the ground into your partner's hands. Try to use the top of your foot (laces) to contact the ball. **OPTIONS:** Shoot with your other foot. "Stay on your toes!" – take a few quick steps towards the ball and then shoot. "Spin!" – spin around after each shot.



Station #4: Score, *soccer technique (passing)*, Players work in pairs with one ball. Set up approx. ten feet apart (change depending on skill level). Use your foot to pass the ball through your partner's legs to score a point, then switch. **OPTIONS:** "Marbles:" Both players have a ball. Player 1 passes his/her ball. Player 2 passes his/her ball and tries to hit the other ball to score a point, like in a game of marbles.



WEEK EIGHT

Final week of season set up your favourite drills that you have learned this season!! Have fun!!