



# **AYSO REGION 55**

## **U10 COACH CLINIC HANDOUT**

We thank you for volunteering to coach. We hope you will have a great season and a wonderful experience teaching these players to love the game of soccer.

### **A LITTLE BIT ABOUT THE PLAYERS**

- Boys and girls begin to develop separately.
- Ability to stay on task is lengthened. They have the ability to sequence thought and actions.
- Greater diversity in playing ability and physical maturity.
- Skills are emerging. Becoming more predictable and recognizable.
- Some children begin moving from concrete thinking to abstract thinking.
- Able to pace themselves, to plan ahead.
- Increased self-responsibility. They remember to bring their own equipment.
- Starting to recognize basic tactical concepts, but not exactly sure why certain decisions are better.
- Repetition of technique is very important, but it must be dynamic, not static.
- Continued positive reinforcement needed.
- Explanations must be brief, concise, and mention "why".
- Becoming more serious. Openly, intensively competitive, without intention of fouling.
- Still mostly intrinsically motivated. Peer pressure starting to be a factor.
- Adult outside of family may take on added significance.
- Prefer identification with a team. Like to have good uniforms, equipment, balls.
- More inclined towards wanting to play instead of being told to play. Will initiate play more.

### THINGS YOU CAN EXPECT NO MATTER HOW GOOD A COACH YOU ARE

- Games are still frantically paced and unpredictable for the most part.
- They start to understand offside, but still forget themselves when the goal is in front of them.
- They will really beat up on each other during practice...especially boy's teams.
- During a game, the parents will scream out "hand ball" or "come on ref, call it both ways" at least 15 times.
- They might cry after the game if they lose, but will forget it if you ask them if they want to go for ice cream.
- You might actually catch them practicing on their own without you telling them to do so.
- Their parents are telling them to do one thing during the game, you are telling them another thing, but what they end up doing might be what their friend is telling them to do.
- You will see a pass that is deliberate. You might even see a pass back.
- You will see your first \$100 pair of cleats on a player.
- They may call the other team names...really bad names.

### SO, REMEMBER THIS

- Use small sided games as the main teaching vehicle. Not only will they get more touches on the ball, but the full 11-a-side game is still too complicated for them to understand.
- How we group players during training takes on an even added significance because of the wide margins of ability levels. We need to mix players up often.
- Stretching is more important, along with a good warm-up.
- Training twice a week is plenty. Sessions need not go longer than one hour, fifteen minutes. If you can't get a good practice in that time then you are doing something wrong. Possibly not being efficient. Ask for help.
- Put them into competitive environments as much as possible. This will not only keep them focused, but, it will allow the game itself to teach them.
- Now it is possible to teach them positional play with the expectation that they will get it some of the time. However, it is absolutely necessary that you do not allow players to specialize in any one position. They need to learn basic principles of the game and having them play all of the positions is best for their individual development. Remember our first responsibility is to develop players and let them have fun.
- Whenever possible, allow them to solve their own puzzles. Don't immediately give them the solutions on how they can play better.

## **WHAT TO DO FIRST?**

Read your Regional Handbook and this Coach Clinic Handout thoroughly.

## **WHAT TO DO SECOND? CALL YOUR PLAYERS**

Before your team meeting you need to call all your players and make some decisions. Have these items set before your team meeting if possible. You don't really want them to be open for debate at the meeting. Be flexible, but remember, you are the one who stepped up to coach. They had their chance, trust me. Make sure it works for you first.

Some parents of U10 players will stay for practices and some will not. Remind them of this when you are trying to get parents to step-up and volunteer. Parents need not know anything about soccer at U10. Older siblings, particularly those who already play soccer, are also very valuable. They can help assist at practice or even be one of your referees.

### **PRACTICE DAY / TIME**

Practices can begin as of August 1<sup>st</sup>. That said, a lot of U10 teams do not begin practicing until mid August due to players still being out of town on vacations. Whatever works for you and your players is fine as long as you do not practice before August 1<sup>st</sup>.

As coach, you will determine the practice days and times that work best for you. Most coaches do ask their players parents if there are any days that they absolutely cannot practice in order to ensure that the players can attend. Do this when you initially call them so that you can have practice days set before your team meeting. It is best NOT to leave practice days up for debate.

U10 should practice late afternoon if possible. You cannot practice too early since school is still in session, and our permit does not apply that early anyway, and you cannot practice too late since U10 players are still just 8 & 9 year olds who need to be home with their family in the evening – doing homework and getting to bed early. Most U10 teams have two, 1 hour long, practices a week. Some go for an hour fifteen minutes. Please don't go longer than that. At U12 you'll extend practices to 1½ hours. One of my teams is a U13G Plus team and I run a very effective practice that is 1 hour 15 minutes long.

You can practice at any of the schools listed in your Regional Handbook (you read it, right?). Good places for U10 to practice are Spring View or College View since those are the fields at which U10 games will be played. At College View, you can practice anywhere you like until daylight savings time ends at which time the area under the lights will be reserved slots only. The info for this is in your handbook.

If you have a player who absolutely cannot make your practice day/time their options are – rearrange their schedule so they can make practices, move to the waitlist and hope that a spot on another team opens up and that they can make those practices, or, get a refund. We do not swap players from one team to another once teams are formed. And, if you have this packet, teams are formed. Essentially, they need to decide if they want to play soccer or do their other activity for the 10-12 week season.

### TEAM PARENT

Find one when you make your initial calls. If you have a “career” team parent, most likely they will tell you on the phone. Be sure to look at the player registration forms when you make your calls to see who volunteered to team mom, ref, etc so you know who you are calling. If you do not have a “career” team parent you need to find some people willing to do the job. Once you find these people make sure they know the date of the team parent meeting to pick up their folder. This will give them all the info they need to do the job. Don’t do their job. If they have questions there is a resource listed that they can contact.

### ASSISTANT COACH

Again, try to find this person when you are making your initial phone calls.

### REFEREES

You want to find three referees. Essentially a Referee and two Assistant Referees. Referees just take a short class, get a uniform and whistle and then sign up to ref games. It’s easy. And, youth referees are perfect so hit up those big sisters and brothers to do this work. But, you must get 3 refs because at U10 you have to acquire ref points in order for your team to be eligible for playoffs. This is explained in your coach handbook.

## TEAM MEETING

If you don't already have them assigned, you will need to finalize your AC, one-two Team Parents, three Referees and two Field Set-up/Takedown People at your team meeting. Remember, your team must set-up the goals and line the field if you have the first game of the day and you must take down the goals if you have the last game. Field set-up needs to be finished 30 minutes prior to game time.

You'll need to cover the following during the team meeting:

- Pick a team name so the Team Parent can get your banner order going.
- Email your coordinator the names of your volunteers for each position and make sure your AC, Team Parents and Referees have turned in their volunteer paperwork. Field Set-up People do not have to do paperwork. If they have not already, they will need to give it to you. Volunteer paperwork must be done every year so even if they did it last year they need to do it again for this season. In order to get your uniforms you must have emailed your volunteer names and any outstanding volunteer paperwork. And, yes, we will know who has not turned in paperwork. If you are not sure about a volunteer, your Coordinator can tell you if their paperwork is in or not.
- Let the parents know what you expect the players to bring to practice. That you expect them to be on time. And, that if they do not stay they must pick their kids up on time.
- Explain the AYSO philosophy specifically 'Everyone Plays'. Remind them that the most important thing is that the players have fun. It is not about winning or losing.
- Explain your parent behavior expectations for practices and games. If you are clear about this now you will have no problems with unruly parents or bad behavior. Tell them that they may only cheer positively. That they are not to instruct or coach. That they are to say nothing negative to the referee before, during or after the game. This is where you really need to convey that you are in charge.
- Make sure to tell the Team Parent the date of the Team Parent Meeting!
- Be sure to hand out a Team Contact List with all the player and parent contact info.

# **RUNNING PRACTICES**

Here is a list of the things you should have with you at each practice/game:

- Extra bottles of water - for you or kids who don't have any
- Small First-Aid kit – you can pick-up an inexpensive one at a drug store
- Ball air pump if you have one
- Registration forms - you must have these with you at all practices/games
- Practice Discs – provided in your coach bag
- Scrimmage Vests (aka Pinnies) – provided in your coach bag
- Goalkeeper gloves

Your players should have the following at every practice/game:

- Size 4 ball
- Shin guards covered by socks
- Cleats (baseball cleats ARE NOT allowed – no toe cleats)
- Water

## **CONTROLLING SIX 8 & 9 YEAR OLDS**

### *Player Circle*

When you want to talk to the players all together, instruct them to put their balls in the center of a circle and sit surrounding the balls. This gets the balls out of the hands of the players and reduces mayhem. If you don't separate balls from players, you will be amazed at the mischief they can invent. They are truly creative! The circle also ensures that no player sits behind another, another opportunity for fun. Sitting players do not have the same freedom to move into trouble that standing players do.

### *Water Break Time*

A key component to getting and keeping attention is to attend to players' needs for rest, water, and down time. Use breaks in the action to give your players rest, water, and down time. Use the time to organize your assistants for the next activity.

### *Unruly Players*

Sooner or later, you are going to have one or more players get unruly. Let them on occasion. But, if you do have a difficult child. One who disrupts practice repeatedly in a negative way. I recommend first that you have your AC continue the practice and you talk to the child away from the team. Explain how the behavior is not acceptable and that you will not allow it to continue. Tell them that if it continues you will be forced to speak with their parents. This usually does the trick. If not, speak with the parents and they should take care of it. But, give the child a chance to change their behavior on their own first. You'll be surprised how effective this can be.

If you have a child that this does not work with and you are at your wits end, contact me – [coach@ayso55.org](mailto:coach@ayso55.org). Seriously. You should have fun too and dealing with difficult situations is not fun and not in your volunteer job description.

### *Unruly Parents*

OK. There it is. We have parents who get out of hand. Parents get out of control at practice, sometimes hounding their child to run faster, to do better, or to pay attention. Although it doesn't happen very often, parents also get out of control at games, "correcting" volunteer referees who may be running the first game they have ever seen. There are two ways you can deal with these parents: confrontation and deceit.

Deceit. If a parent "helps" you during practice by constantly (and negatively) instructing their child, you should thank the parent and give them an assignment directing part of the team that does not include their child. Chances are, the parent will be so busy that your problem will be over. In addition, the parent may learn that other children also share the same problems as their own. If the unacceptable parent behavior persists, take the parent aside, thank them for the help, and remind them that it is better to praise than to condemn.

Confrontation. During the game, try confrontation, particularly if the parent objects to referee decisions. The coach is responsible for the parents' behavior and can be removed from the game if they cannot control parents. This is no time to fool around with subtleties. Remind the parent that this is just a game, that we are all volunteers (many for the first time, so are learning), and do so loudly enough that they will be embarrassed. Of course, make sure your tone is not angry. You are simply reminding them of the facts and not getting aggressive while doing it. It doesn't hurt after the game to apologize to the parent, thank them for their enthusiasm (give them an out). Remember, you already told them all this at the team meeting. They know your expectations during games, right?

EACH 1¼ HOUR PRACTICE WILL HAVE THIS SAME STRUCTURE

5-10 MIN PRIOR	YOU AND YOUR AC ARRIVE AND SET-UP
5 MIN	FREE PLAY / LATE PLAYER ARRIVALS - Select a "Free Play" that follows in this handout.
10 MIN	WARM-UPS / STRETCHES
15 MIN	ACTIVITY 1 - Select an Activity that follows in this handout. Select an activity based on what your players need to work on most.
3 MIN	WATER BREAK
15 MIN	ACTIVITY 2 - Select an Activity that follows in this handout. Select the next progression of Activity 1 or another activity that is related to Activity 1. Be sure to select 4v1, 4v2, 3v2, 5v3, 4v4 at least once a week.
2 MIN	WATER BREAK
25 MIN	6v6 SCRIMMAGE
5-10 MIN AFTER	YOU AND YOUR AC STAY TO ANSWER QUESTIONS AND MAKE SURE ALL KIDS GET PICKED UP

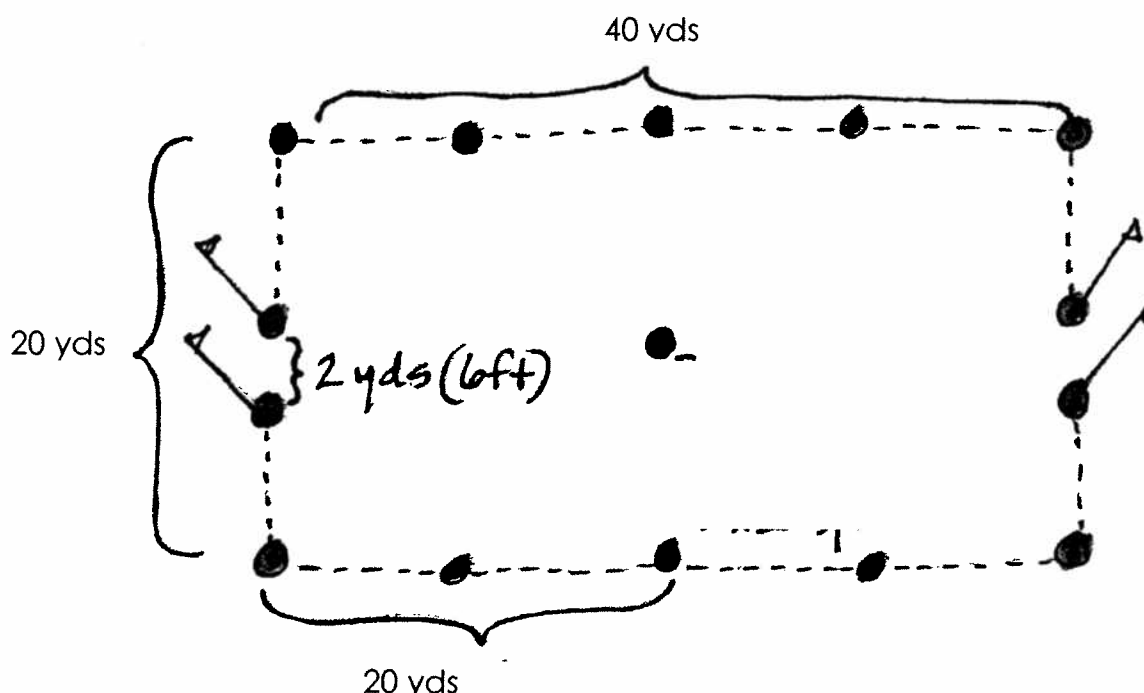


## SET-UP

Be sure to arrive 5-10 minutes prior to each practice to set-up and plan to stay 5-10 minutes after to answer parent questions or wait for all the kids to be picked up. NEVER LEAVE A KID AT THE FIELD EVEN IF THERE IS MORE THAN ONE WAITING TO BE PICKED UP.

When you arrive at the field you should set-up in a way that allows you to do the activities and finish with your scrimmage without having to place more discs. You should only have to pick-up discs as you go. So, start with your 20 x 40 yard scrimmage grid. Don't use too many discs to set it up. And, place your flag for goals as shown below. You don't need very much space to run a U10 practice.

All of the activities in this handout can be done using either the 20 x 20 or 20 x 40 grid (as shown below).



## FREE PLAY

Free play describes the condition where individuals play without restrictions. Players are given general directions on time or space, on what they should attempt to accomplish and then left on their own. Free play allows players to develop natural abilities. You should not instruct during free play except for the initial direction. You will also have to make sure the parents understand that they are not to instruct. After a few practices players may understand that free play is the first thing they will do. Let players know as they arrive what free play is that day and have them start. No need to wait for the whole group to arrive.

Free Play 1 – Tell your players to take their ball and dribble around in a set space (use your 20 x 20 or 20 x 40 grid). Tell them that they need to make sure they stay inside the space marked by the discs and that they should not run into other players. Don't tell them anything else. Let them do whatever they do.

Free Play 2 – Tell your players to take their ball and juggle. For U10, you may still need to show them what juggling is. Then just let them juggle however they want.

Free Play 3 – Tell your players to partner up and pass with their partner. Tell them they can decide how.

Free Play 4 – Make something up. ☺ Or, repeat a previous Free Play. Dribbling is always good.

## STRETCHES

For U10, you need to have a warm-up/stretch routine. Before they stretch they should take a short jog. To a fence, tree, or something a medium distance away and back. The jog is not a race. And, they need to take their ball with them. Always with a ball. No running just to run unless it is sprints. Make sure that your stretches cover all muscle groups including arm muscles.

## ACTIVITIES

No matter which activities you choose from this handout you will deliver them to the players using the same process – SAY IT, SHOW IT, HAVE THEM DO IT, ASSESS IT, INSTRUCT.

1. SAY IT. Tell the players what activity they are going to do. And, explain it simply.
2. SHOW IT. Then, using your AC and a couple of your players, demonstrate the activity (don't pick the same players for every demonstration). Have the demonstration players actually do it while the other players watch. For more difficult things pick the strong players. You can also use stronger

players to demonstrate proper technique – controlling, shooting, passing, etc.

3. **HAVE THEM DO IT.** Now get all the players involved. Be patient, they will get it. It will take time though. Don't stop them to explain again if you can help it. Just help each kid one at a time if necessary until the activity is running well.
4. **ASSESS IT.** Assess the activity and how your players are able to do it. Can they? If not, simplify it. If it is too easy, make it harder. If the activity breaks out groups, are the groups balanced? If not, correct the groups so they are balanced.
5. **INSTRUCT.** During the activity you will instruct individual players on proper technique. Please do not embarrass players. When you give them "hints" do it quietly with just that player. Anything you shout should be positive – "good job", "great work", "excellent", etc. The better your players think they are, the better they will be, seriously. Encourage the use of both feet. **AND, NEVER, NEVER CRITICIZE A SHOT.** Once a player is criticized on how they shoot they become less likely to shoot. The more they hear it the less they shoot. By the time I get them at U14, 16, 19 it is difficult to find "finishers" (players who score goals because they shoot often enough). And, praise attempts not just goals. Please? ☺

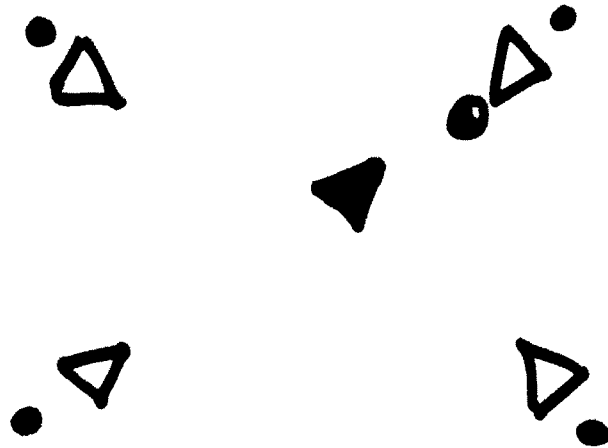
#### 4v1, 4v2, 3v2, 5v3, 4v4

Diagrams for 4v1, 4v2...are with the activities in the back of this handout. At U10, you have 12 players on your roster. If all players are at practice run three teams of four for 4v4. The team that is out can do another activity. Something simple set up on the sideline like "Containment" that your AC can run. Have two teams play for 3 minutes, then swap the winning team out and replace with the sideline team, go another 3 minutes and then switch again. Make sure each team gets 4v4 time.

Set each team up in a diamond shape (one player up, one back, one right and one left). Don't worry if they don't keep their shape. We are just trying to get the concept of shape into their little head early on. So, explain that it is a diamond and show them. They will get it. During a real game they will not maintain much shape. Don't be disappointed.

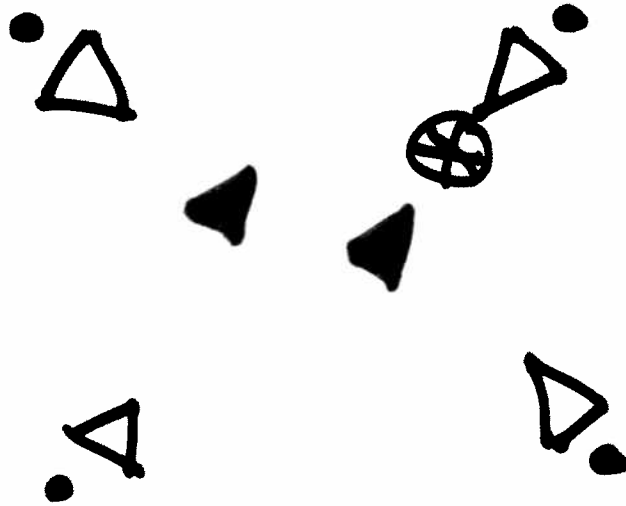
A good way to get them to think about shape and spacing is to tell them to pretend that they (their team) are attached with rubber bands. If they get too close to each other then the bands will fall on the ground and they will trip over them. If they get too far away from each other then the bands will break. Players get this and it makes it easy for you to remind them about shape without saying "shape" which U10 players won't easily relate to anyway. Instead, you tell them, "be careful your rubber bands are going to break".

4 v 1



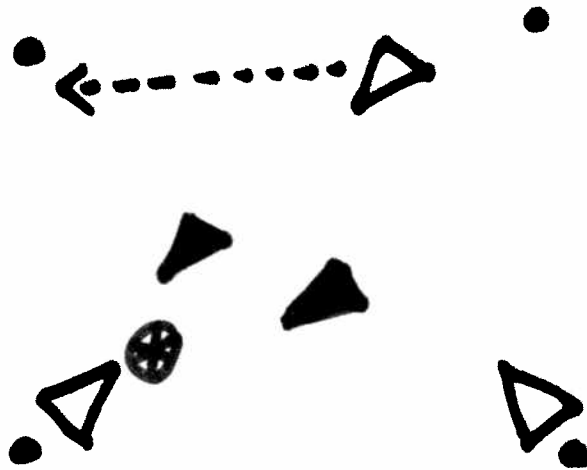
- FIRST PASS IS "FREE"
- IF DEFENDER TOUCHES BALL THEY SWAP WITH PLAYER THAT LOST IT
- SHOULD BE QUICK BALL MOVEMENT. TRAP → PASS

4 v 2



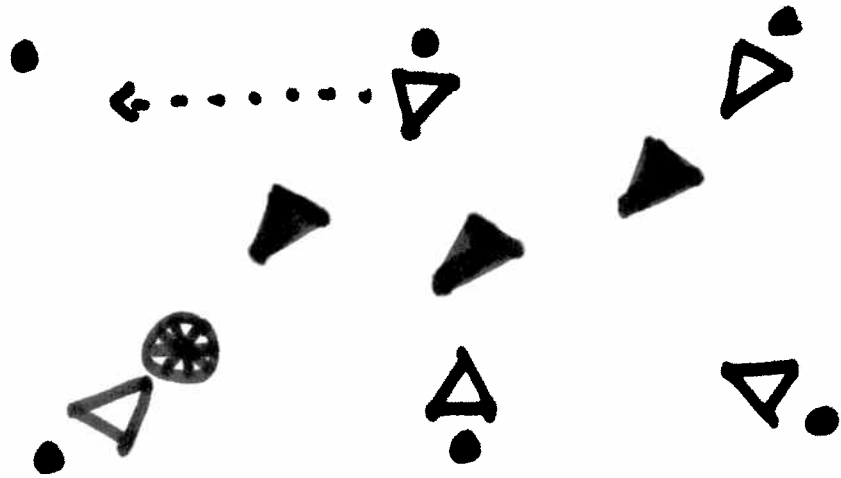
- SAME AS 4v1 BUT WITH ADDITIONAL DEFENDER
- PUTS MORE PRESSURE ON OFFENSE
- FIRST PASS STILL "FREE"

3v2



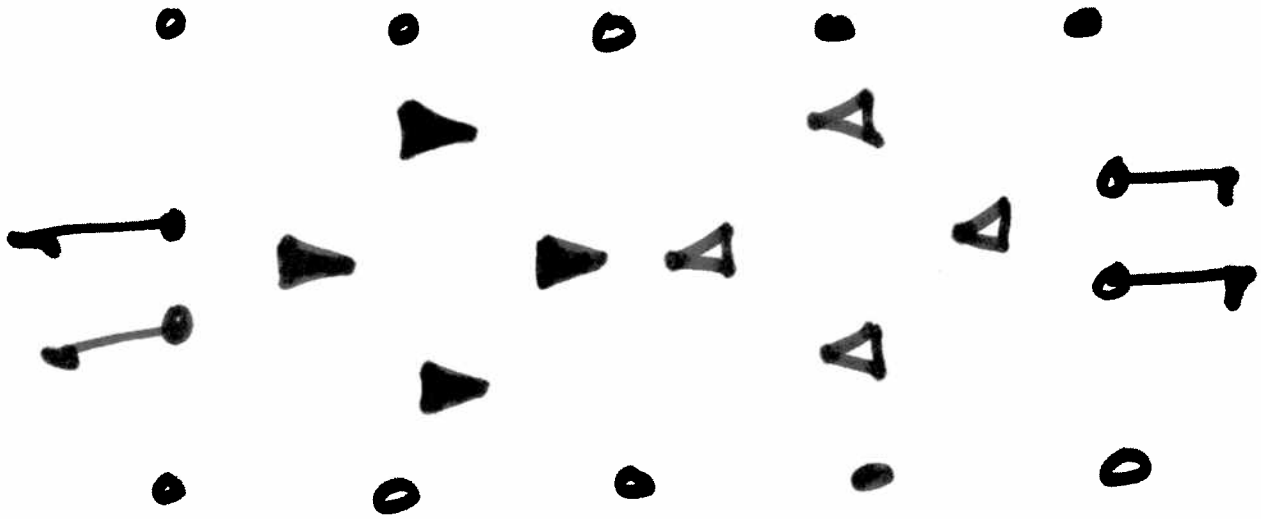
- 3 OFFENSE, 2 DEFENSE
- OFFENSIVE PLAYERS MUST MOVE TO PROVIDE SQUARE PASS TO PLAYER WITH THE BALL

5 v 3



- LARGER SPACE THAN 4v1/4v2
- IF OFFENSE IS NOT SUCCESSFUL ENOUGH REMOVE DEFENDER AND GO TO 5v2

4 v 4



- DIAMOND SHAPE
- FIND MARKS
- CAN ADD CONSTRAINTS  
LIKE SHOOT WITHIN  
2 MINS, ETC



## 6v6 SCRIMMAGE

Use your 20 x 40 grid, with flags in place for goals, to run a 6v6 scrimmage. There are two ways to do 6v6 – 2 goal or 4 goal. There are diagrams for each with the activities in the back of this handout. Make sure your teams are balanced. Don't put your strongest players on one team and weakest on the other.

Now, this is the hard part...let them play. Don't stop them every 5 minutes to correct them. Just let them play. As they play, you can pull players aside to give them "hints" on what to try. This is not the time to teach a player to pass or kick or throw-in though. You do that in your other activity time. Watch them. The things you see in the scrimmage that need fixing are your activities for your next practice.

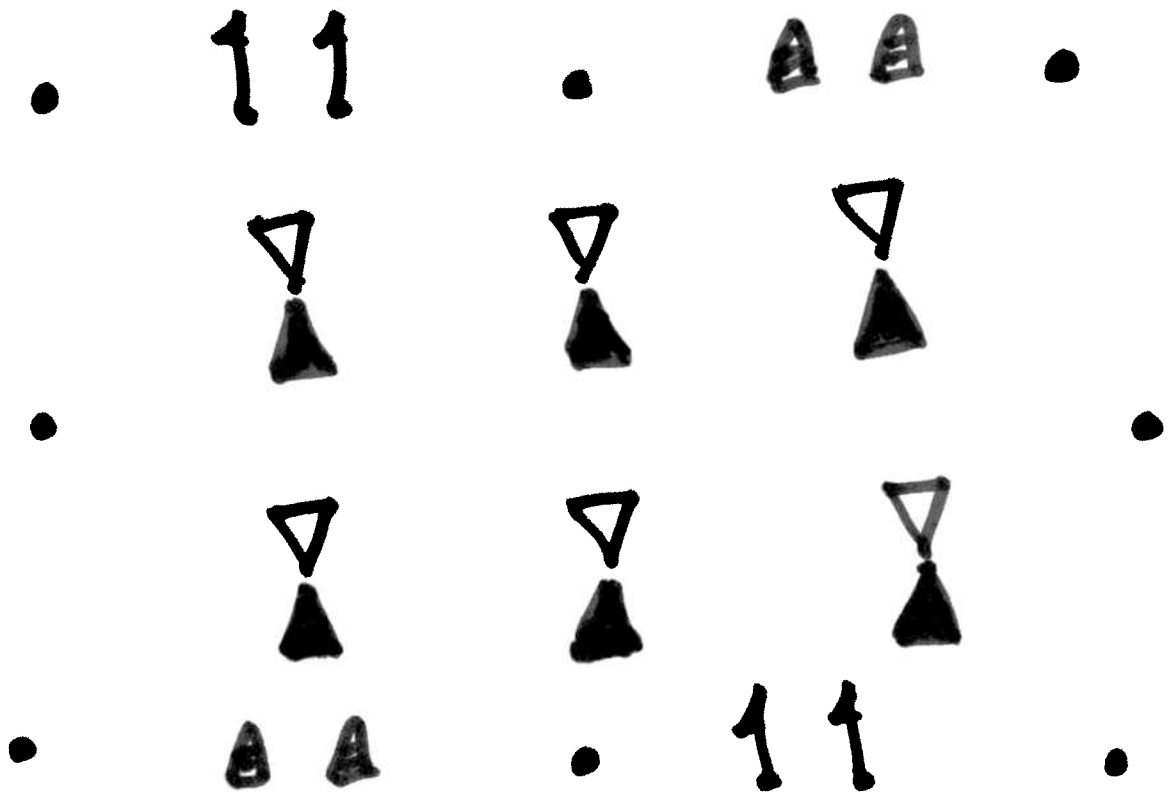
Remember not to give them too much to think about with your comments. Don't flood them with dribbling technique, passing technique, shooting technique...all in one 6v6 scrimmage.

## WRAP UP

At the end of practice have the players get their water and come back to you in the circle. This is when you can remind them of things they learned. Praise them. Let them ask questions. ☺

Always remind the parents what time your game is that weekend and what time you want the players there.

# 6v6-4 GOAL



- MAKES PLAYERS SWITCH BALL TO "WEAK" SIDE FOR THE "EASY" GOAL
- USE FLAGS AND TALL CONES FOR GOALS

# GAME DAY

## THE FIELD, PLAYERS & GAME DURATION

- 50 yards wide by 85 yards long
- Goals are 7 feet high by 21 feet wide
- Twelve players on a team
- Games are played 9v9 including the goalkeeper
- Four 12½ minute quarters
- Half-time break is five to ten minutes

The two things you need to do before each game are:

- A Game Line-up Card - see the example of how to fill this out in your Regional Handbook)
- Your player Line-up Plan. Examples are on the following pages. If you do them this way you can easily see who is playing each position in each quarter and reference the bottom for who the subs are for each quarter. No matter what format you choose, make sure you have a plan. Don't count on remembering who sat out and who hasn't during a game. All players must get 3 quarters of play each game.

Have your team arrive 30 minutes before the game is scheduled to begin. Your field set-up people should have already handled that part if necessary. If not, get the other parents to set the field up. Don't do it yourself. You need to prepare your team. Preparation simply consists of warm-up and making sure your players know what position they are playing the first quarter or if they are a sub.

An elaborate warm-up is not necessary for U10. Have your AC handle the warm-up part while you handle the informational part. A quick jog to a fence, then some stretches, then some passing or shooting on goal will suffice. At this point it is too late to teach technique.

During the game remember to be positive. The most important thing is for the players to have fun. No matter what you say or yell during the game will change the outcome. Likewise, keep the parents under control. You are responsible to make sure ALL the players have fun – on both sides of the field. Don't let your parents get too vocal when your team scores, especially if your team scores more than the other team.

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Joe  
alex  
Sean  
Zack

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Sam  
Roger  
Scot  
Jesse

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Jesse  
Russ  
Roger  
Cameron

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Paul  
Paul  
alex  
Paul

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Russ  
Sean  
Sam  
Joe

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Scot  
Scot  
Russ  
alex

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Patrick  
Zack  
Patrick  
Patrick

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Cameron  
Cameron  
Zack  
Roger

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Sean  
Joe  
Jesse  
Sam

1

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alex  
Roger  
Zack

2

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Sam  
Patrick  
Jesse

3

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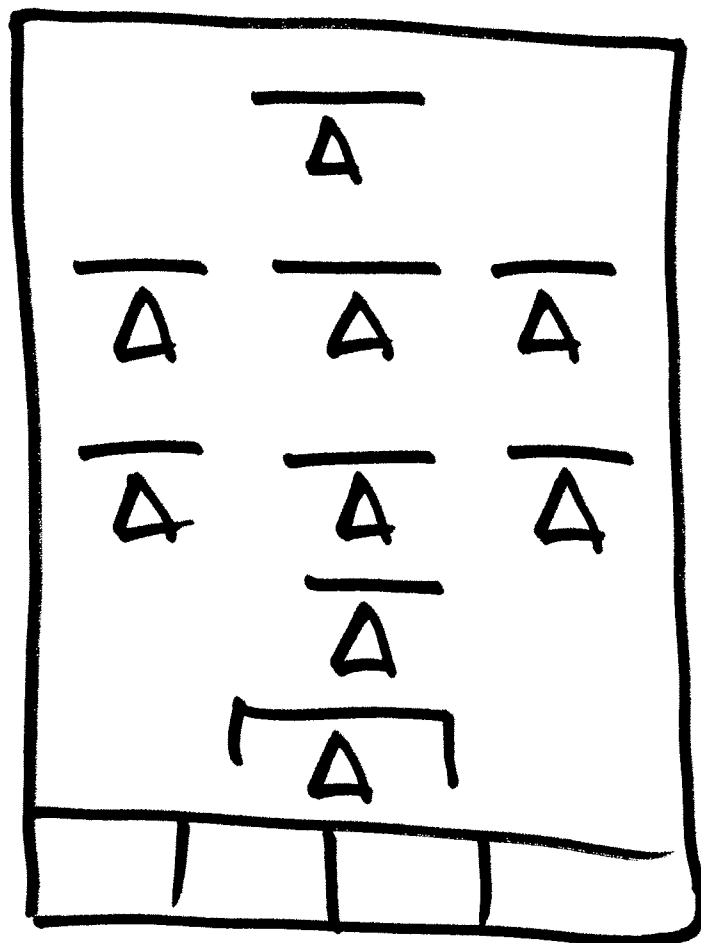
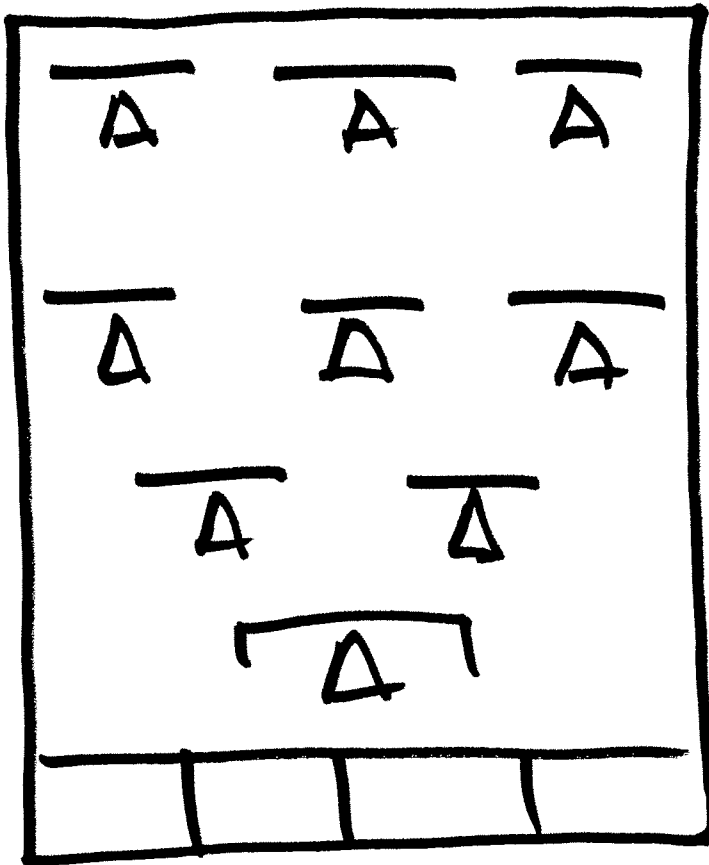
Joe  
Paul  
Cameron

4

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Sean  
Russ  
Scot

# OTHER FORMATIONS



Don't run up the score - no matter what. So, you need to have a plan going into your first game in case your team is strong. A run up score is anything over a 5 goal differential. So, if your team scores 3 goals in the first quarter you are going to need to reign them in. Here are some options to even things out if needed:

- First off, make sure your team understands that if your team scores 3 goals then you won't score anymore unless the other team does first. Yes, they will get it. Yes, they will make mistakes, forget the score, etc. But remember, you'll only be at 3 when that happens.
- If you are ahead by 3 at the first quarter break tell your team that they can now only score a goal if they kick it with their left foot. If they are a lefty, then their right foot. Make sure they understand this. You won't have anything else to cover at the break if you are ahead. At the same time, move your scoring players back and tell them they need to defend and are not to cross the halfline. Do this now, don't wait because they will forget and you'll need to remind them at halftime.
- If you are still ahead at halftime you will need to make sure your scoring players know that they should not score anymore goals. Pull them aside and explain that it is a secret...just for them. Their secret mission is to defend and not score any goals. Don't tell your entire team not to score anymore. What will happen is that they will go out on the field and talk about it. They will remind each other that they are not allowed to score any more and that is just rude. Not good sportsmanship. U10 players just can't keep from talking about it even if you tell them not to.
- Now, pick your player who is the least likely to score that day and tell all your players that everyone is to pass to that player. That it is their turn that day to score a goal. Best case scenario is that your game ends with a score of say 3-1 or 5-3 or 6-4 and your weakest player got a goal. That's a good day. 😊

## GOOD LUCK WITH YOUR TEAM!

# ACTIVITIES

## THE GAME BASICS

Be sure to cover the game basics during your activity time in practices. But, don't just do the basics, make sure you do the other activities that are on the pages that follow along with 4v4. They are fun and teach skills. And, it is about the fun.

**KICKOFFS** - Show the players what should happen during a game for kickoff. Have two players stand near where the halfline would be. One player will kick the ball as over the halfline to the other player. Then have that player kick it forward say to the right forward. Make sure your team knows that they should move forward on kickoff.

**THROW-INS** - Show the players what should happen during a game for a throw-in. If you have not done the throw-in activities in practice don't do this one yet. Do one of those for your first activity then translate that to a game situation. At U10 throw-ins should always be up the line toward the goal you are shooting on. Never toward the goal that you are defending. Practice using your 20 x 40 space.

**GOAL KICK** - Show the players what should happen during a game for a goal kick. You want your players to know to kick the ball to the side and not up the middle. If they kick it up the middle in a game the other teams forwards will get it and score quickly. Practice technique too. Have them try to lift the ball on their kicks.

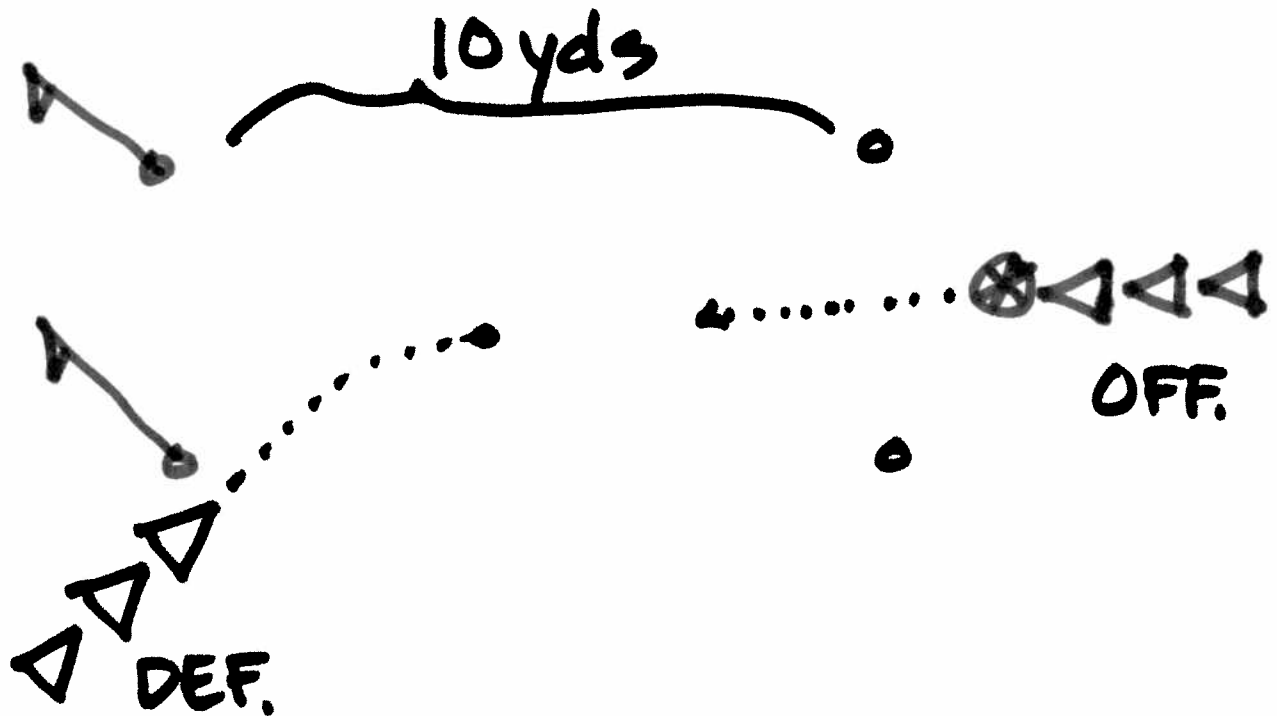
**CORNER KICK** - Show the players what should happen during a game for a corner kick. You want your players to kick the ball from the corner toward the goal box in front of the goal. Work more on the defensive side of corner kicks too. How to mark-up. Right defender covers right post and left covers left.

**OFFSIDE** - Explain and demonstrate offside to your players.

***Make sure you are having all your players take the kicks and throw-ins during a game and not just having your strongest players do them.***



# "CONTAINMENT"



- OFFENSIVE PLAYER TRIES TO GET PASS DEFENDER
- DEFENDER "CONTAINS" PLAYER INSTEAD OF TACKLING.
- FOCUS ON NO "DIVE IN"
- DON'T INSTRUCT OFFENSE JUST DEFENSE.



## ***Training Game U-10 Players***

### **1 v 1 Shooting**

**Skill:** Multiple

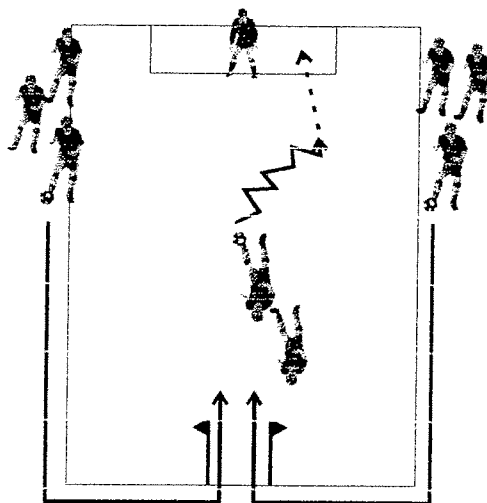
**Number Of Players Required:** Full U-10 Team

**Equipment:** 12 or more cones to mark a grid, five or six soccer balls, one soccer (full size goal would be great but not necessary), a set of pennies and a pair of co flags.

**Grid Requirement:** A 45 X 30 yard grid.

**Organization:** Using cones layout a 45 X 30 yards. Divide the team into two equal teams. Place a Keeper in the goal and the two teams about mid-point of the grid c team on each touchline. On the opposite end of the grid from the goal place a 5-y gate at the mid-point of the grid.

**How The Game Is Played:** This is a simple game of 1 v 1. Coach will call two player names (John and Bill). The two players dribble as fast as they can through the gate. The first player to go through the gate is on the attack, the second player leaves him and becomes a defender and tries to gain possession of the ball. The first team to score five goals wins.



**Variations:** Call 4 names so that 2 v 2 is played. The ball can be passed into the player to go through the gate.



## ***Training Game U-10 Players***

### **Junk Yard Dog**

***Skill:*** Attacking and Defending

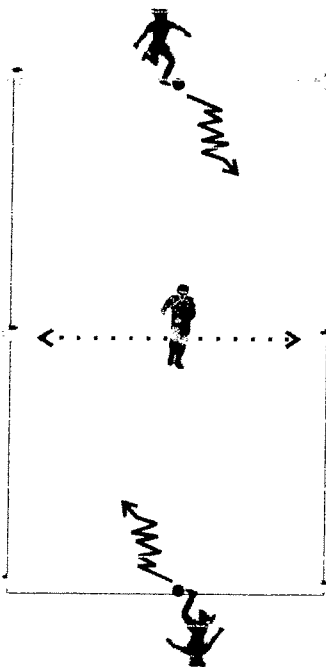
***Number Of Players Required:*** Full U-10 Team

***Equipment:*** 24 or more cones to mark 3 or 4 grids and 30 or so soccer balls.

***Grid Requirement:*** A 30 X 15 yard grid

***Organization:*** Using cones layout three or four 30 X 15 yard grids with an imaginary line centered in the grid (use cones to mark the line). Position one player on the top of the grid and one player at the bottom of the grid each with a soccer ball (attackers). Position one player at the center point of the grid (defender).

***How The Game Is Played:*** One at a time the attackers try to dribble over the mid line without losing the ball to the defender. If the defender wins the ball the player lost the ball becomes the defender. One point is awarded for crossing the centerline. Game must always start from the top or the bottom of the grid. First player with four points wins.



***Variations:*** Increase or decrease the size of the grid. Establish a time limit for the challenge.



## ***Training Game U-10 Players***

### **Playing With Four Goals**

***Skill:*** Multiple

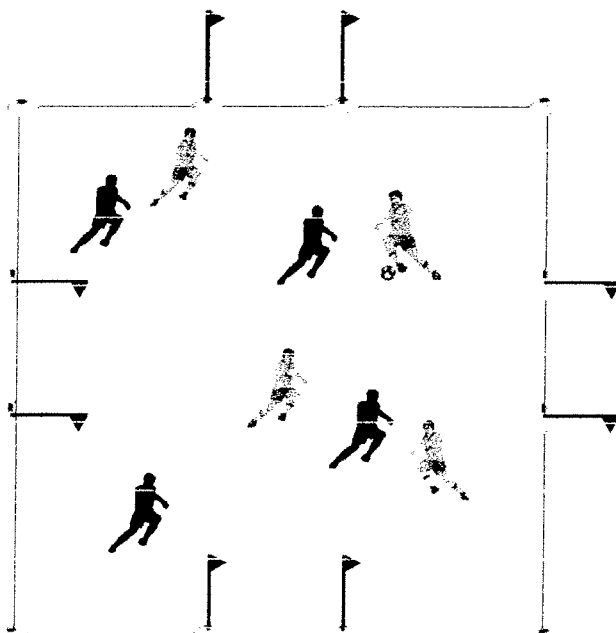
***Number Of Players Required:*** Full U-10 Team

***Equipment:*** 12 or more cones to mark a grid and the four (4) goals. Pug Nets, cones or corner flags can be used for goals and a set of pennies.

***Grid Requirement:*** A 45 X 45 yard grid

***Organization:*** Using cones layout a 45 X 45 yards with a goal located at the center point of each line. The goal should be no more than 3 yards wide. Divide the team that a 4 v 4 is what will be played. Place one team in pennies and give the other team a soccer ball. All players must be located within the grid.

***How The Game Is Played:*** The game is over when one team has scored in all four goals. Ball must be passed into the goal not dribbled through the goal. If defense gains possession of the ball, they become attackers.



***Variations:*** Play one touch. Allow ball to be dribbled through the goals. Same as



## Training Game U-10 Players

### The Twilight Zone

**Skill:** Dribbling

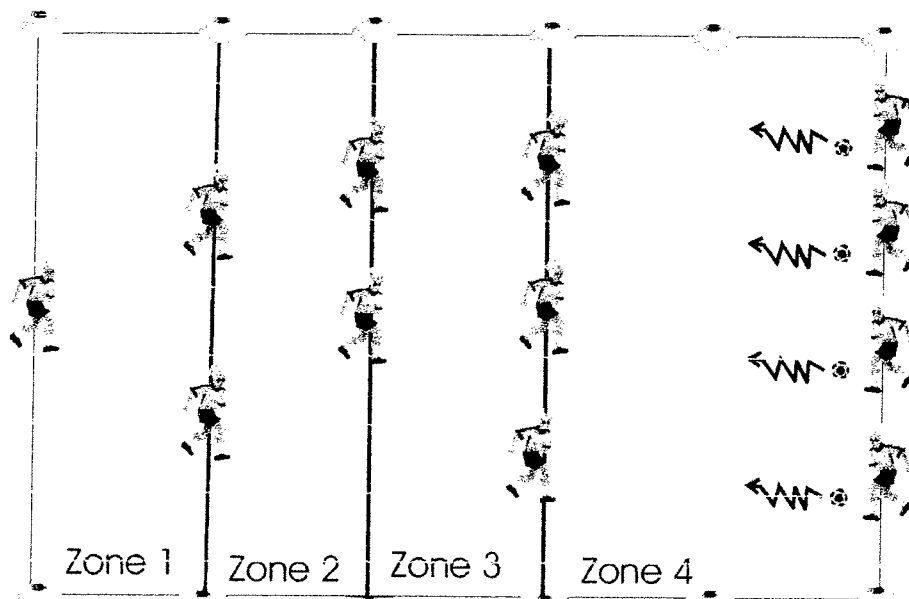
**Number Of Players Required:** Full U-10 Team

**Equipment:** 1 soccer ball per player and 12 cones to mark the grid.

**Grid Requirement:** A 30 X 40 yard grid

**Organization:** Using cones layout a 30 X 40 yard grid. Divide the grid into four zones. On the top of the grid in zone 4 place 4 players with a ball at their feet. On the line zone 4 place 3 player (no ball) zone 3, 2 players (no ball) zone 2, 2 players no ball place 1 player (no ball) in zone 1.

**How The Game Is Played:** Players on the top of zone 5 try to dribble the length of the grid without losing possession of their ball, all other players are defenders. Defenders attempt to steal balls from the dribblers while staying in their zone. Each player who dribbles the length of the grid without losing possession scores 1 point; player with most points after 5 rounds wins. Ensure that defenders only defend in their zone.



**Variations:** None



## ***Training Game U-10 Players***

### **Teammates 2v2 One Center Goal**

**Skill:** Dribbling, Passing, Attacking and Defending

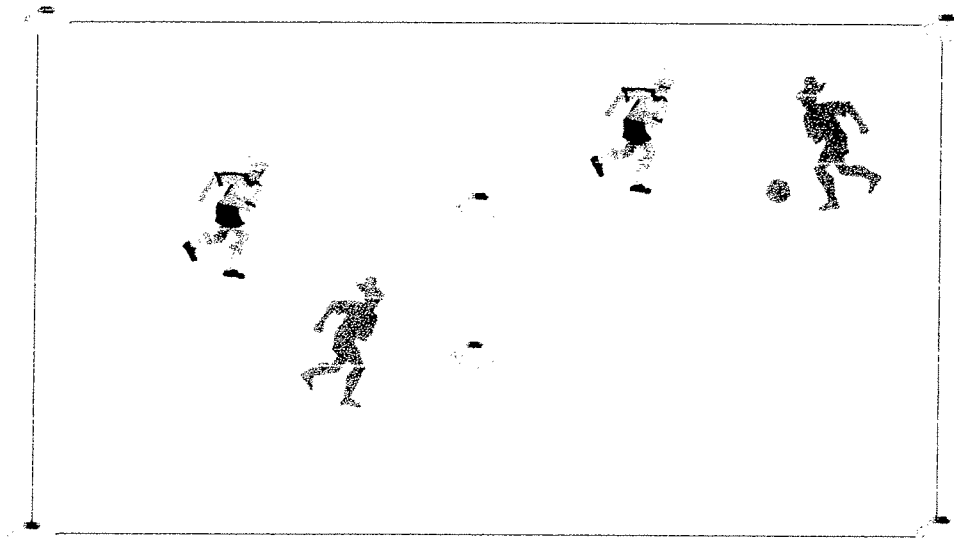
**Number Of Players Required:** Full U-10 team

**Equipment:** 8 or more cones to mark the grid, 2 or 3 soccer balls.

**Grid Requirement:** 15 X 20 yard grid

**Organization:** Create a 15 X 20 yard grid marked with cones and create a goal with cones on the center point in the grid. Group players into pairs; place one pair of players on each end line, players can start from any point on the end line.

**How The Game Is Played:** Coach will direct which team has the ball first. The coach will yell, "go". Team with the ball is on the attack and the second pair defends. Attackers try to beat the defenders by dribbling or passing the ball through the goal in the center of the grid. If the defenders gain possession they go on the attack. Goals can be scored from either direction. Play is stopped when a goal is scored or the ball goes out of play. A point is scored every time a ball that is played through the goal. First team with 3 points wins.



**Variations:** Coach can play the ball to the center of the grid. Play one touch, or two touch only. Allow goals to only be scored if dribbled through the goal or passed to the teammate on the other side of the goal.



## ***Training Game U-10 Players***

### **Dribbling Center Turn Left/Right**

***Skill:*** Dribbling Warm-Up

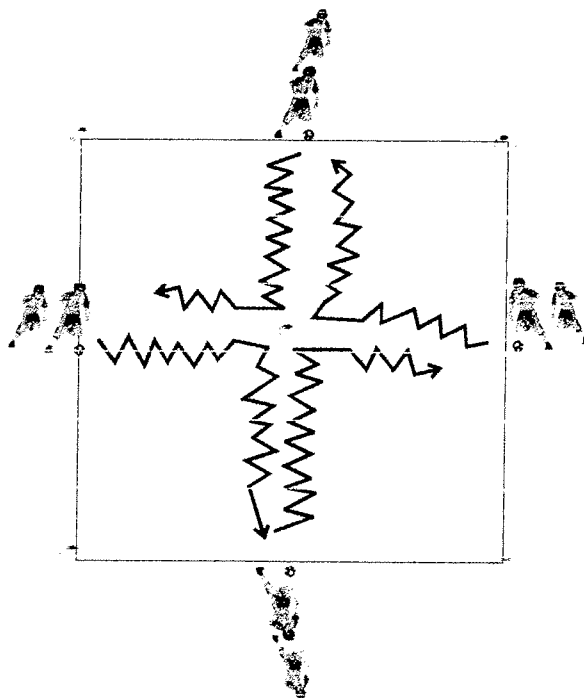
***Number Of Players Required:*** Full U-10 team

***Equipment:*** 5 cones to mark the grid, 1 soccer ball per group

***Grid Requirement:*** 15 X 15 yard grid

***Organization:*** Create a 15 X 15 yard grid marked with cones. Place a cone in the center of the grid. Divide the team into pairs and place a pair of players centered on each end line with one soccer ball per group at their feet.

***How The Game is Played:*** The coach will yell, "go". Each player from the head of the line will dribble as fast as they can toward the center cone, staying under control the player executes a tight right turn as close to the center cone as possible and dribbles to the grid line and leaves the ball for the next player in line. Game is over when the players have returned to their starting point.



***Variations:*** Players can only use outside of left or right foot. Have the players cut left.



## ***Training Game U-10 Players***

### **Dribbling Center Straight Across**

***Skill:*** Dribbling Warm-Up

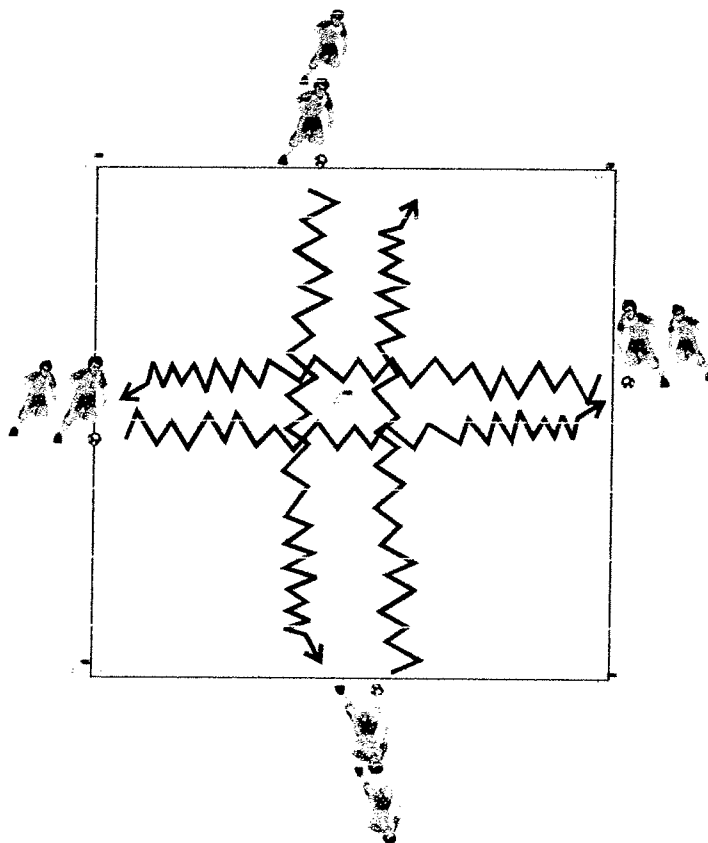
***Number Of Players Required:*** Full U-10 team

***Equipment:*** 5 cones to mark the grid, 1 soccer ball per group

***Grid Requirement:*** 15 X 15 yard grid

***Organization:*** Create a 15 X 15 yard grid marked with cones. Place a cone in the center of the grid. Divide the team into pairs and place a pair of players centered on each end line with one soccer ball per group at their feet.

***How The Game Is Played:*** The coach will yell, "go". Each player from the head of each line will dribble as fast as they can toward the opposite end line staying to the right of the center cone. Play is stopped when they return to their original starting location.



***Variations:*** Players can only use outside of left or right foot.





## ***Training Game U-10 Players***

### **Teammates 2v2**

**Skill:** Dribbling, Passing, Attacking and Defending

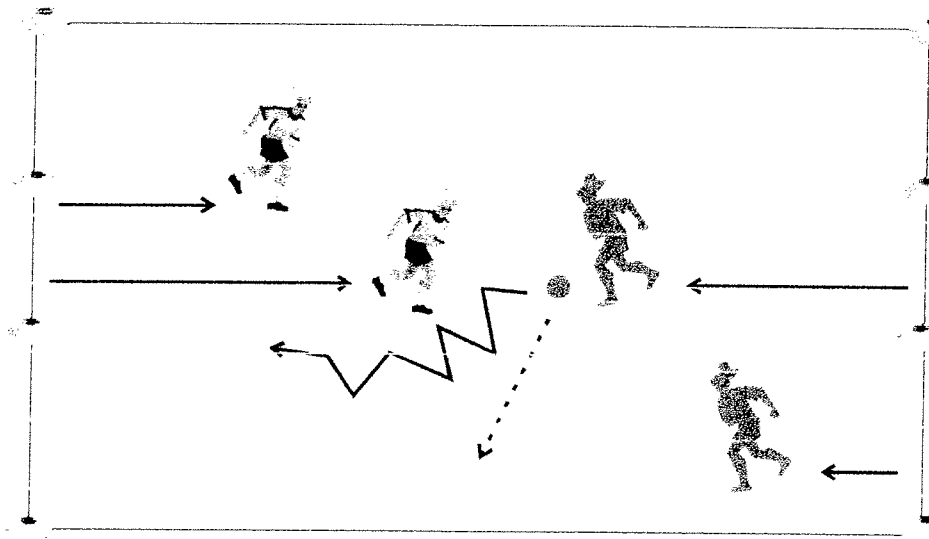
**Number Of Players Required:** Full U-10 team

**Equipment:** 8 or more cones to mark the grid, 2 or 3 soccer balls.

**Grid Requirement:** 15 X 20 yard grid

**Organization:** Create a 15 X 20 yard grid marked with cones. Create a goal v cones on the center point of each end line. Group players into pairs; place one pair of players on each goal line. Players can start from any point on the end line. Place a soccer ball at the mid point of the grid.

**How The Game Is Played:** The coach will yell, "go". Players from each end attempt to be the first pair to the ball. First pair to the ball is on the attack and second pair defends. Attackers try to beat the defender by dribbling or passing (playing 2v2) the ball through their goal. If the defenders gain possession they on the attack. Play is stopped when a goal is scored or the ball goes out of play. A point is scored every time a ball that is played through the goal. First team w 3 points wins.



**Variations:** Coach can play the ball to the center of the grid. Play one touch, or two touches only. Allow goals to only be scored if dribbled through the goal.



## ***Training Game U-10 Players***

### **The Square**

**Skill:** Dribbling Warm-Up

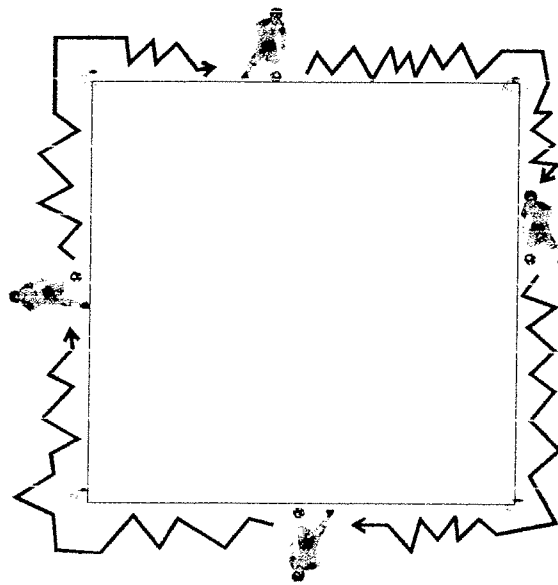
**Number Of Players Required:** Full U-10 team

**Equipment:** 4 cones to mark the grid, 1 soccer per player

**Grid Requirement:** 15 X 15 yard grid

**Organization:** Create a 15 X 15 yard grid marked with cones. Place a player at the center point just outside the grid boundaries with a soccer ball at his feet.

**How The Game is Played:** The coach will yell, "go". Each player will dribble as fast as they can around the square grid stopping at their starting point. Play is stopped when the first player returns to their original starting location.



**Variations:** Players can only use outside of left or right foot. On a signal given by the coach, players reverse the direction.



## ***Training Game U-10 Players***

### **Dribbling With A Center Turn**

***Skill:*** Dribbling Warm-Up

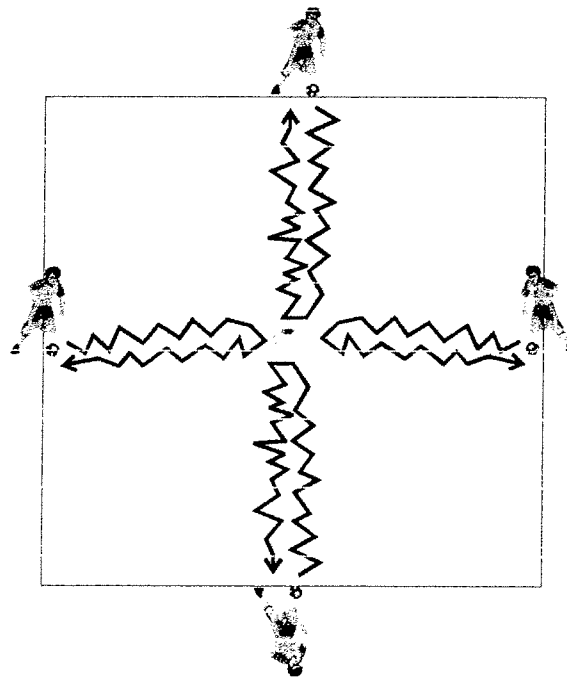
***Number Of Players Required:*** Full U-10 team

***Equipment:*** 5 cones to mark the grid, 1 soccer ball per player

***Grid Requirement:*** 15 X 15 yard grid

***Organization:*** Create a 15 X 15 yard grid marked with cones. Place a cone in the center of the grid. Place a player centered on each end line with a soccer ball at their feet.

***How The Game Is Played:*** The coach will yell, "go". Each player from the head of the line will dribble as fast as they can toward the center cone, staying under control the player executes a turn as close to the center cone as possible and dribbles back to the starting point, turns and returns to the center cone again. All players must go to the center cone three times. First player to complete three runs wins.



***Variations:*** Players can only use outside of left or right foot. Players can pass the ball back to the next player in line when they turn at the center cone. Players can execute a take-over with the next player in line after the turn is completed.



## ***Training Game U-10 Players***

### **Free For All**

**Skill:** Shooting, Dribbling, Attacking and Defending

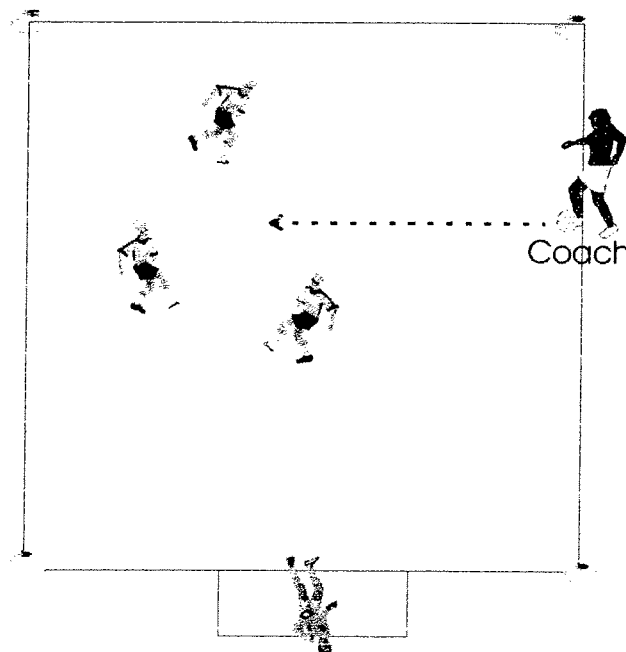
**Number Of Players Required:** Full U-10 Team

**Equipment:** 12 or more cones to mark a grid, a goal (a full size goal is great but a smaller goal can also be used) and 5 or 6 soccer balls.

**Grid Requirement:** A 30 X 30 yard grid

**Organization:** Using cones, layout a 30 X 30 yard grid with a goal centered on the line. Place three players in the grid and a goalkeeper in the goal. The coach should be located just outside of the grid with several soccer balls at her feet.

**How The Game Is Played:** The coach will play a ball into the grid to no particular player. The three players will compete for the ball. The player who gains possession on the attack and the remaining players defend while trying to gain possession so they may go to goal. When a goal is scored the player who scored will determine which player plays in goal. The coach restarts game after all goals or if the ball goes out of play.



**Variations:** Increase or decrease the size of the grid. Change the number of players in the grid.



## ***Training Game U-10 Players***

### **2 Keepers Shooting**

***Skill:*** Multiple

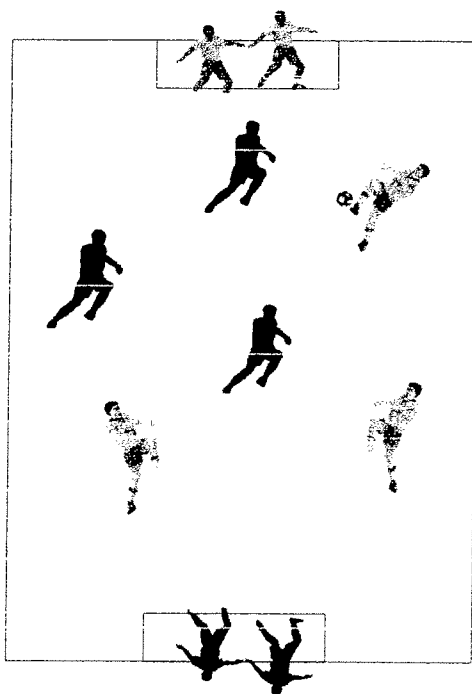
***Number Of Players Required:*** Full U-10 Team

***Equipment:*** 12 or more cones to mark a grid and two goals (two full size goals w be great but not necessary), a set of pennies and three or four soccer balls.

***Grid Requirement:*** A 45 X 35 yard grid

***Organization:*** Using cones layout a 45 X 35 yards. Divide the teams so that team 3 v 3 or 4 v 4. Place two Keepers in each goal.

***How The Game Is Played:*** This is a simple game of 3 v 3 or 4 v 4 depending on number of players at practice. The twist to the game is in the Goalkeeping. The two Keepers in each goal must link hands. The team in possession must attempt to pass the ball past the two linked Keepers. Award 1 point for a goal and one point for a save. First team to gain 5 points wins.



***Variations:*** Play one touch. Allow no more than three touches when a player is dribbling.



## ***Training Game U-10 Players***

### **Beat The Twins**

**Skill:** Multiple

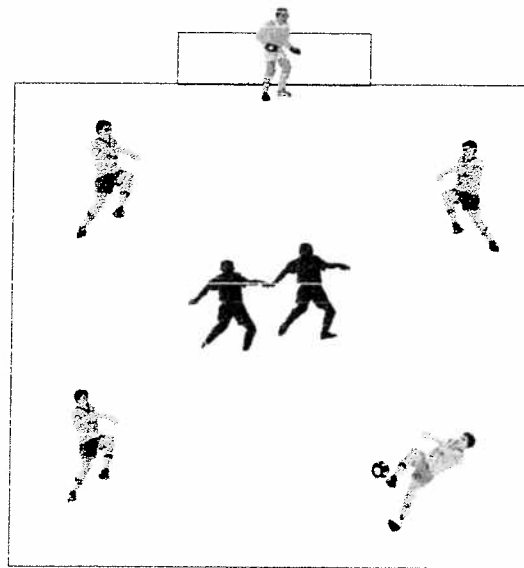
**Number Of Players Required:** Full U-10 Team

**Equipment:** 12 or more cones to mark a grid and one goal (a full size goal would great but not necessary), a set of pennies and three or four soccer balls.

**Grid Requirement:** A 35 X 35 yard grid centered on a goal.

**Organization:** Using cones layout a 35 X 35 yard grid centered on a goal. Divide team into groups of 4. Place a Keeper in the goal (rotate the keeper with field play

**How The Game Is Played:** This is a simple game of 4 v 2. The twist to the game the 2 players that defend. The coach will decide which team will first have the ball players from another group will defend. The defenders must hold hands while they defending. The team in possession must attempt to score past the two linked defenders. If the defenders win the ball they break apart and will be joined by the two remaining team mates and the team that lost possession defends (two players link hands and players leave the grid). Award 1 point for a goal first team to gain 5 points wins.



**Deviations:** Play one touch. Allow no more than three touches when players are dribbling. Allow the team in possession to go to goal after 5 consecutive passes have been completed.



## ***Training Game U-10 Players***

### **Keep-away**

**Skill:** Multiple

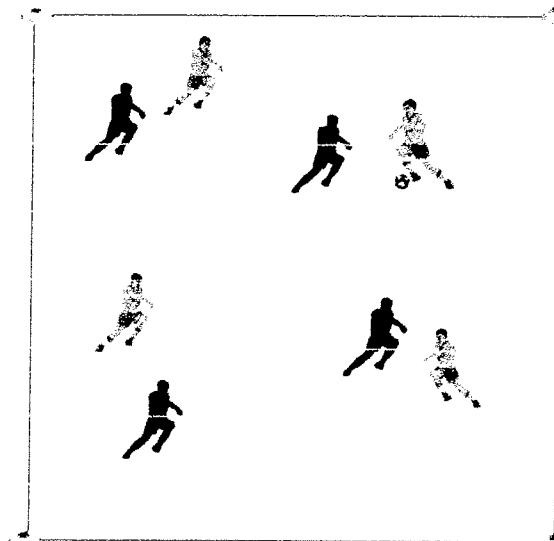
**Number Of Players Required:** Full U-10 Team

**Equipment:** 12 or more cones to mark a grid, a set of pennies and three or four soccer balls.

**Grid Requirement:** A 45 X 45 yard grid

**Organization:** Using cones layout a 45 X 45 yards grid. Divide the teams so that they play 3 v 3 or 4 v 4. Place one team in pennies and give the other team a soccer ball; all players must be located within the grid.

**How The Game Is Played:** This is a simple game of Keep-away. The team with possession must complete 5 passes to win. Defending team attempts to gain possession. If defenders win the ball they become attackers and must connect 5 passes. First team to connect 5 passes three times is declared the winner.



**Variations:** Add two goals and after 5 passes have been connected allow that team to go to goal. Play one touch. Allow no more than three touches when a player is dribbling. Players cannot return a pass to the player who passed them the ball.



## ***Training Game U-10 Players***

### **Free For All Shooting**

***Skill:*** Shooting, Attacking, Defending and Goalkeeping

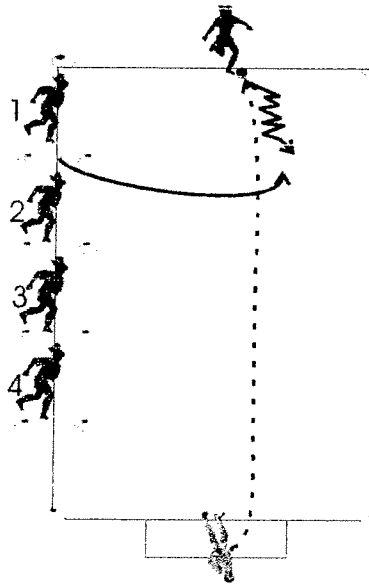
***Number Of Players Required:*** Full U-10 Team

***Equipment:*** 12 or more cones to mark a grid, a goal (a full size goal is great but corner flags can also be used) and 5 or 6 soccer balls.

***Grid Requirement:*** A 30 X 15 yard grid

***Organization:*** Using cones, layout a 30 X 15 yard grid with a goal centered on the line. Place four gates on one of the sidelines. Position one player on the top of the grid (attacker) and place one player in each of the four gates (defenders). Put a goalkeeper in the goal.

***How The Game Is Played:*** The goalkeeper serves the ball to the player at the top of the grid. The player at the top of the grid must attempt to get a shot on goal before a defender steals the ball or plays the ball out of play. As soon as the top player touches the ball the coach will call a number from 1-4, the number called will become the defender. The defender becomes the next attacker and the first attacker goes to the vacated gate. One point for each goal scored. First player to have three points wins.



***Variations:*** Increase or decrease the size of the grid. Start the ball at the top of





## Training Game U-10 Players

### 1v1 Four Gate Soccer

**Skill:** Attacking and Defending

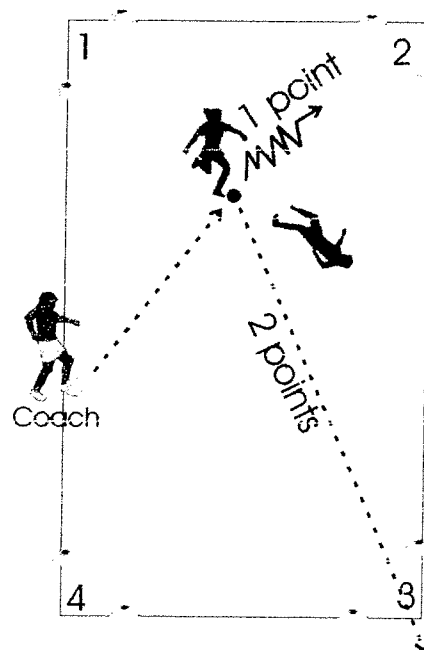
**Number Of Players Required:** Full U-10 Team

**Equipment:** 8 or more cones to mark a grid (make additional grids as needed, as lines) and 5 or 6 soccer balls.

**Grid Requirement:** A 30 X 15 yard grid

**Organization:** Using cones layout a 30 X 15 yard grid with a 2-yard gate marked cones in each corner. Place two players randomly within the grid. The coach will position herself anywhere outside of the grid with 4 or 5 soccer balls at her feet.

**How The Game Is Played:** The coach will play an unbiased ball into the grid. Both players in the grid will compete for possession of the ball. Player who gains possession is on the attack the other player will defend and try to gain possession of the ball. Attackers score one point by dribbling the ball through a gate and are awarded two points for a ball that is passed through a gate. After each score the coach must pass the ball to the player who is behind in points. First player to 8 points wins.



**Variations:** Increase or decrease the size of the grid. Increase or decrease the size of the gates in the corners of the grid.



## ***Training Game U-10 Players***

### **3 v 3 With 2 Point Zones**

***Skill:*** Dribbling/Passing

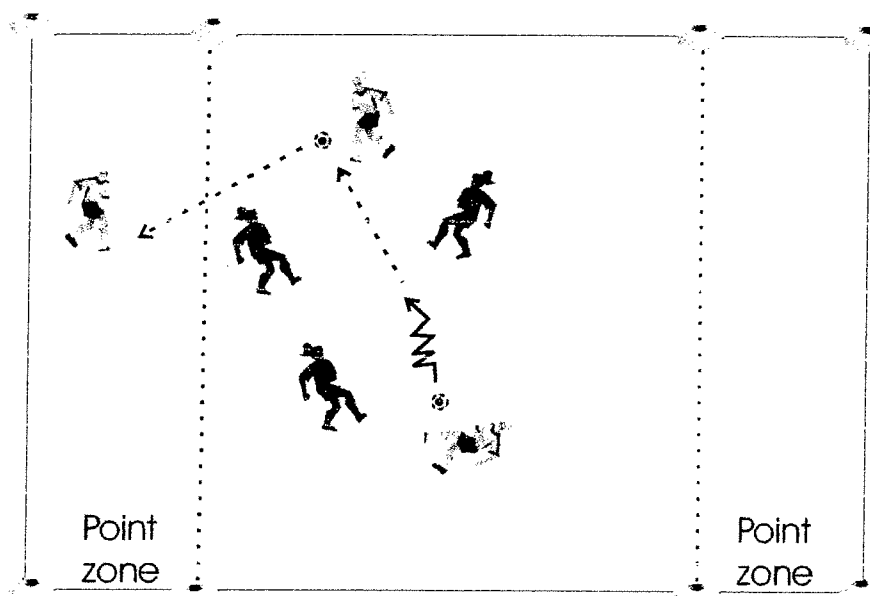
***Number Of Players Required:*** Full U-10 Team

***Equipment:*** 8 or more cones to mark the grid.

***Grid Requirement:*** A 20 X 40 yard grid

***Organization:*** Using cones layout a 20 X 40 yard grid with a 5-yard "Point Zone" at each end. Place three (3) attackers with 1 soccer ball in one of the point zones and place three defenders in the other point zone.

***How The Game Is Played:*** Players in the "Point Zone" try to dribble and pass the length of the grid to the other "Point Zone". The defenders try to gain possession of the ball. Points can only be scored when a teammate passes a ball to a teammate in the point zone. First team to 5 points wins.



***Variations:*** Play one touch. Allow ball to be dribbled into the point zone. Increase or decrease the size of the point zones. Start the game in the center of the grid and either team to score in either point zone. Play 4 v 4.



## ***Training Game U-10 Players***

### **Cone Run 10 Yards (very good warm-up activity)**

***Skill:*** Passing/Dribbling

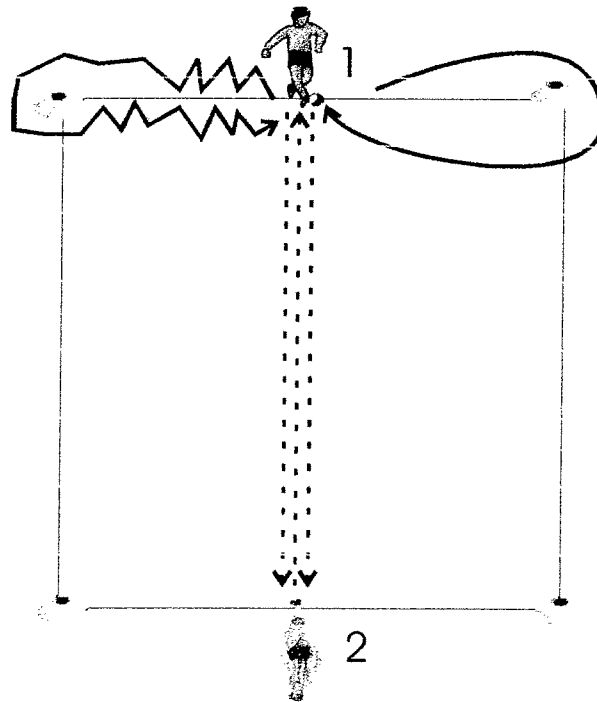
***Number Of Players Required:*** Full U-10 Team

***Equipment:*** 12 cones to mark three grids and 8 or so soccer balls.

***Grid Requirement:*** Set up (three) 10 X 10 yard grids.

***Organization:*** Using cones layout a 10 X 10 yard. Divide the team into pairs. Place player from the pair on the top of the grid with a soccer ball and the other player on the opposite end of the grid.

***How The Game Is Played:*** Player 1 passes to player 2. Player 1 runs around on the cones. Player 2 passes the ball back to player 1. Player 1 dribbles around the opposite cone and returns to the center of the grid. Player 1 passes to player 2 and the activity now starts from the opposite end.





## ***Training Game U-10 Players***

### **Fast Shooting**

***Skill:*** Shooting

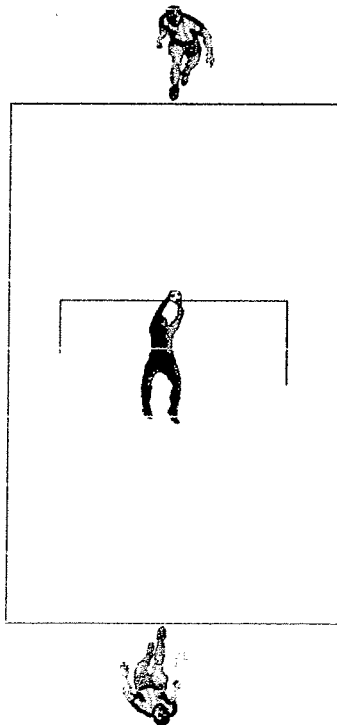
***Number Of Players Required:*** Full U-10 Team

***Equipment:*** 12 or more cones to mark a grid, one goal (full size goal is great) no Four or five soccer balls.

***Grid Requirement:*** A 15 X 20 yard grid

***Organization:*** Using cones layout a 15 X 20 yard grid with a goal of some type centered in the grid. Divide the group into teams of three.

***How The Game Is Played:*** Place 1 shooter with a soccer ball at each end of the grid and a keeper in the goal. Shooters alternately try to score on the keeper one at a time. If the keeper makes a save he becomes a shooter and the player that didn't score becomes the keeper. The first player to score 5 goals wins.





## ***Training Game U-10 Players***

### **4 Cone 4 Person Passing**

**Skill:** Passing

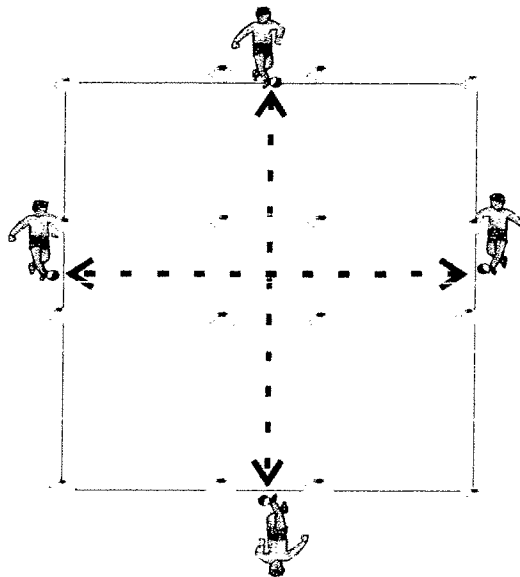
**Number Of Players Required:** Full U-10 Team

**Equipment:** 12 cones to mark the grid 4 soccer balls.

**Grid Requirement:** Set up a 15 X 15 yard grid.

**Organization:** Using cones layout a 15 X 15 yard. Divide the team into pairs. Place one player from one of the pairs on the top of the grid between two of the cones (about 5 yards wide) with a soccer ball. The other player is on the opposite end of the grid standing between two cones. Place one player from the other pair on the side of the grid between two cones with a soccer ball and his or her partner on the opposite side of the grid between two cones (as shown in the diagram). Construct a 4 cone square in the center of the grid (no more than five yards square).

**How The Game is Played:** The two teams attempt to pass their ball between the cones in the middle of the grid for each direction. The first team to complete 5 passes through all 8 cones is declared the winner.



**Variations:** Play one touch. Place a time restriction on the length of the game. Have two teams compete.



## ***Training Game U-10 Players***

### **Hate To Be A Defender**

***Skill:*** Passing

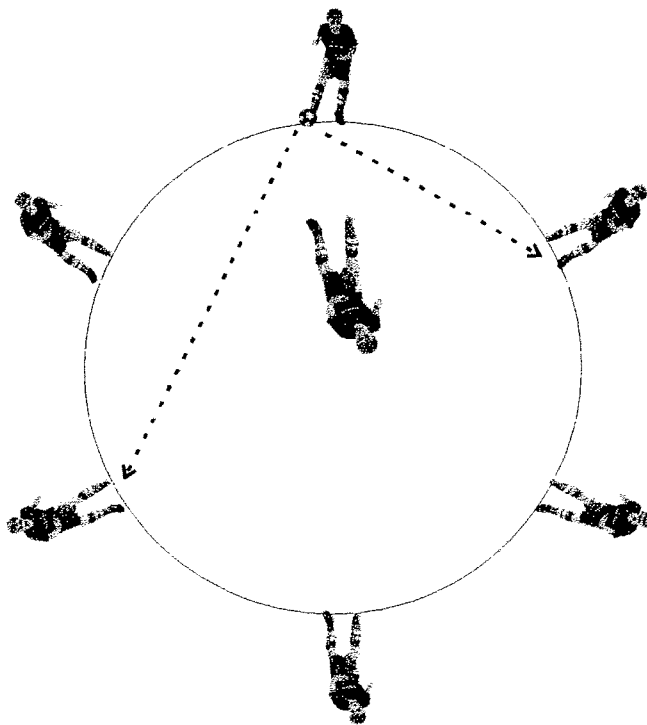
***Number Of Players Required:*** Full U-10 Team

***Equipment:*** 12 or more cones to mark the grid (circle) and at least one soccer ball

***Grid Requirement:*** A circle 10 to 15 yards in diameter (center circle of a full field well).

***Organization:*** Using cones layout a circle 10 to 15 yards in diameter. Position a defender within the circle and all other players on the perimeter of the circle.

***How The Game Is Played:*** Perimeter players try to keep possession of the ball from the defender by passing to any other perimeter player. If the ball goes out of play intercepted the player who made the last pass becomes the defender.



***Variations:*** Change the size of the circle as needed. Do not allow perimeter players to move along the perimeter. Perimeter players can only one touch. Add an additional defender.



## ***Training Game U-10 Players***

### **3 v 3 Shooting**

**Skill:** Shooting, Dribbling and Passing

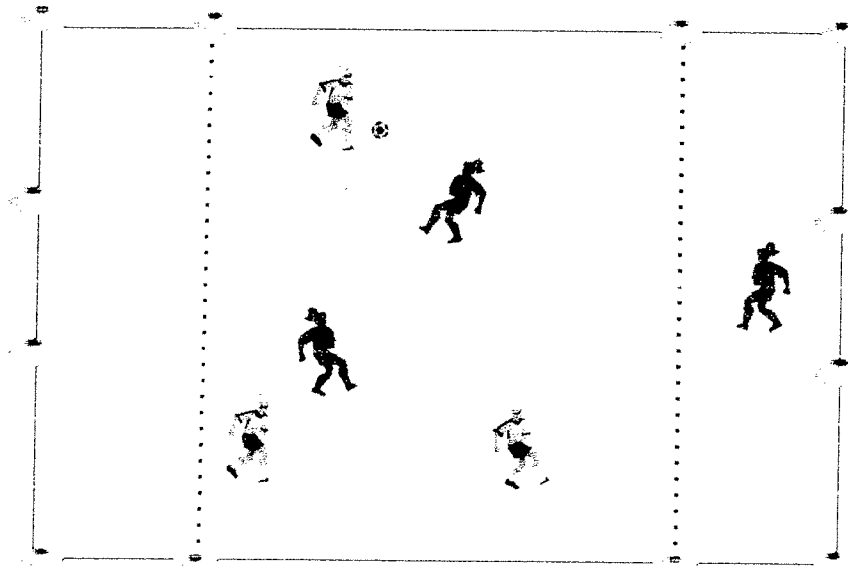
**Number Of Players Required:** Full U-10 Team

**Equipment:** 12 or more cones to mark a grid, two goals (full size goals are great cones can also be used), a set or two of pennies and 5 or 6 soccer balls.

**Grid Requirement:** A 20 X 40 yard grid

**Organization:** Using cones layout a 20 X 40 yard grid with a 5-yard zone at each end. Center a goal on each end line. Divide the team into teams of three. Place three attackers with 1 soccer ball in one of the zones and place three defenders in the center zone.

**How The Game Is Played:** Play 3 v3. Each team elects a goalkeeper. The goalkeepers can use their hands in their zone. However the goalkeepers must go forward when their team is attacking. The 3 defenders try to gain possession of the ball so that they can attack. One point is awarded for a shot on goal and two points for a goal. First team to 10 points wins.



**Variations:** Play one touch. Increase or decrease the size of the zones. Play 2 v 4.



# Training Game U-10 Players

## Cone Run Shooting

**Skill:** Shooting

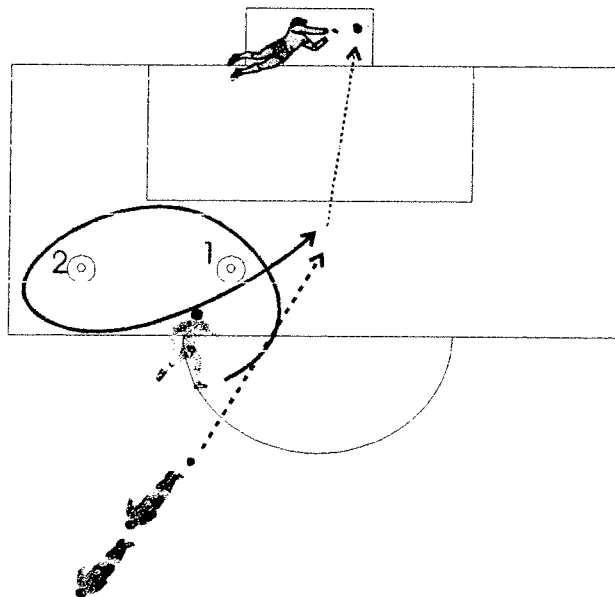
**Number Of Players Required:** Full U-10 Team

**Equipment:** 8 or more cones to mark a grid, 10 or so soccer balls and some type goal (full size is fine).

**Grid Requirement:** A 20 X 20 yard grid or use a Penalty Area

**Organization:** Using cones layout a 20 X 20 yard grid or play within the penalty area. Place two cones about 5 yards apart five yards from the top of the grid. Place one player on the first cone and the remaining players five yards outside the grid each ball at their feet. Put a goalkeeper in the goal.

**How The Game Is Played:** The player standing by the first cone runs around the cones, as the player approaches the first cone the first player in line passes the ball to the player who must hit a first time shot on goal. The keeper tries to make a save. Simple rotation, shooter becomes the keeper; passer becomes the shooter and keeper retrieves a ball goes to the end of the passing line. First player with three goals wins.



**Variations:** Allow no more than 2 or three touches before player must shoot. Have players use both feet to shoot. Change location of players delivering the pass.



MORE

GOOD

INFORMATION

*This section covers the various techniques you can teach to your players. The better grasp you have of the techniques, the better you will be able to teach them to your players. Note: all techniques should be practiced with both feet to ensure players do not develop a "strong foot" and a "weak foot."*

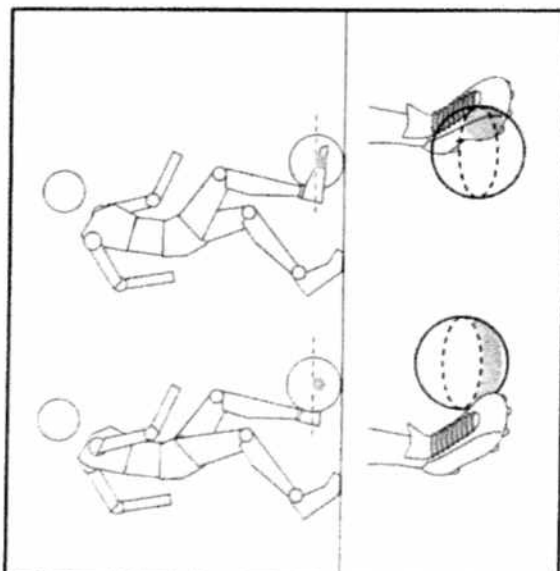
## **Dribbling**

Dribbling is the art of using the feet to advance the ball, on the ground, under control, while moving. The two primary reasons to use dribbling skill are:

- to move the ball into a better position on the field.
- to retain possession of the ball.

**Dribbling** is one of the ways to achieve **penetration**, the **Attacking Principle of Play** for this age group.

The most important element of dribbling is developing a "feel" or "touch" for the ball with the feet... BOTH OF THEM. The key is then to **keep the**



**ball close** by touching it softly.

## **Dribbling Basics**

- Use all major surfaces of the foot.
- Knees should be slightly bent and body leaning slightly over the ball for balance.
- Players should play with their head up, enabling them to see the field as well as the ball by utilizing peripheral vision as their ability progresses.
- Ball should be kept close.
  - Encourage players to touch the ball softly.
  - Close control of the ball should be emphasized.
  - Players should attempt to touch the ball every other step (or so).
  - Ball should never be more than a step or two away.

## **COMMON ERRORS AND CORRECTIONS**

- E** Ball is played too far ahead.
- C** Have players move slower and remind them to the touch ball softer.
- E** Player does not look up from ball.
- C** Remind players to look up, then run activity requiring players to look up while dribbling.
- E** Player re-positions entire body behind ball before touching.
- C** Encourage player to use motion of foot to direct ball, instead of re-positioning their body.

## **Dribbling Build Up**

- Stop the Ball** Players at this age should be able to stop the ball by putting their foot on top of it.
  - Balance on plant foot (foot on the ground), while keeping play foot (foot on the ball) firmly on top of the ball.
  - Step past the ball with plant foot before stepping on it, keeping in mind the speed at which the ball is rolling.
- Turn the Ball** Learning to change direction while dribbling is critical in soccer and should be introduced at this age level.
  - Use motion of foot to direct the ball.
  - Accelerate after changing direction.

## ■ **Throw-In**

A throw-in is used to restart the game after the entire ball has crossed the touchline, whether on the ground or in the air.

### **THROW-IN – BASICS**

*To execute a proper throw-in, the player must:*

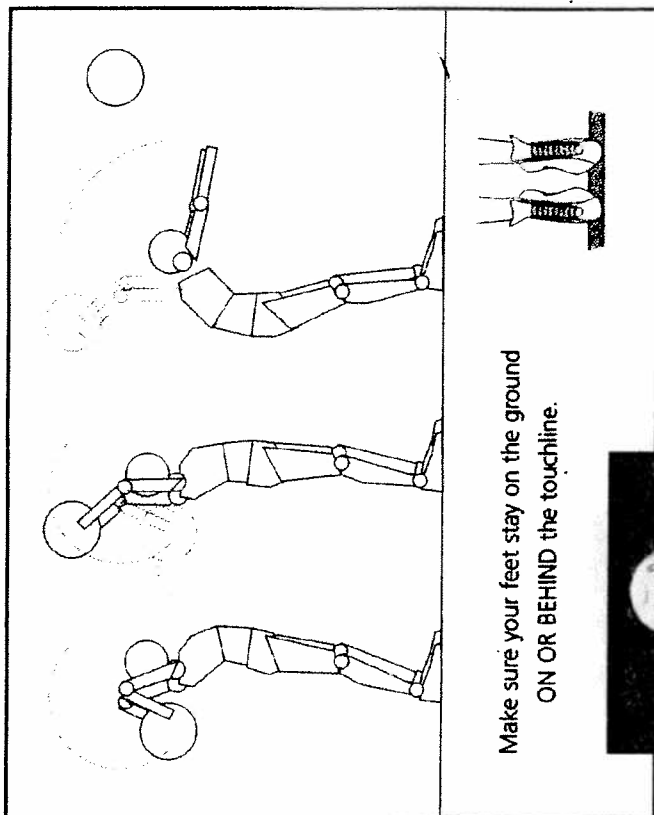
- Face the field of play.
- Have part of each foot on the ground, either on or behind the touchline when the ball is released.
- Use both hands and deliver the ball from behind and over the head in one continuous motion.
- Hold the ball evenly in both hands (hands should be slightly apart).
- Feet must be kept on the ground until ball is released.

### **THROW-IN – COACHING POINTS**

- The thrower may not play the ball a second time until it is touched by another player.
- Your team should try to maintain possession when executing a throw-in.
- Get the parents involved! Have each one of your players execute a throw-in by making a throw-in to a parent.
- Have each player continue to make throw-ins while you circulate and correct.

### **THROW-IN – COMMON ERRORS AND CORRECTIONS**

- E** Feet/feet come off ground during throw.
- C** Have players keep their feet together with knees bent and hold their feet down until they develop the feeling of throwing without lifting their feet.
- E** Ball slips out of grasp.
- C** If players hands are too small, instruct them to spread hands out until they have a solid grasp.



## ***Instep Kick***

The instep kick is used to kick the ball and, as players get older, for long passes and shots on goal.

### ***INSTEP KICK – BASICS***

#### ***Prepare Plant Leg (supporting, non-kicking foot)***

- Place support foot next to the ball pointed in general direction of target (distance from ball will depend on height of the player).
- Bend knee slightly.
- All weight should be on plant foot.
- Use arms out to sides for balance.

#### ***Prepare Striking (kicking) Leg***

- Bend knee (cock lower leg).
- Withdraw leg straight back at hip.
- Lock ankle back and down with toes pointed down.

#### ***Striking Movement***

- Body should be over the ball, moving forward.
- Keep eyes on ball.
- Set plant knee over ball (eye-knee-ball in line).
- Move thigh of striking leg forward (whip action).
- Strike the center of the ball on the instep ("laces" of the shoes).
- Follow through—move leg straight through toward target:
  - Pull leg straight through while maintaining balance.
  - Lower body as leg rises.
  - Follow through and lift knee.
  - Step out of the kick.

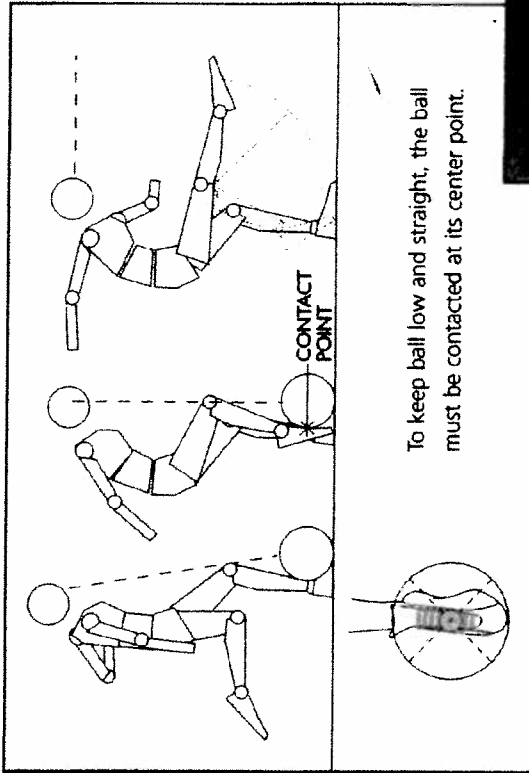


### ***INSTEP KICK – COACHING POINTS***

Before having players strike the ball:

- Have them practice planting their foot in the proper place.
- Have them practice swinging their leg and foot straight back and forth, ensuring proper body and leg movement.

Next, have a parent sit down with legs out in front and secure ball with feet. Have each player stand with plant foot in proper position and strike lightly until they begin to hit the ball solidly (properly).



### ***INSTEP KICK –***

#### ***COMMON ERRORS AND CORRECTIONS***

- E** Plant foot is too far in front, behind or away from ball and/or not pointed in general direction of target.
  - C** Review proper technique with player(s).
- E** Knee(s) are locked, not bent.
  - C** Review proper technique with player(s).
- E** Ankle is not locked and toes are not pointed.
  - C** Lock ankle, point toes.
- E** Ball is stabbed or jabbed.
  - C** Encourage player to follow through.
- E** Leg is swung across the body instead of toward the target.
  - C** Encourage player to withdraw leg straight back and follow through straight toward target.



# COACHING GUIDELINES

1. **COMMUNICATION:** Ensure the terminology you use is clear and precise. Let players know you are in charge.
  2. **POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT:** Whenever possible give individuals and/or groups positive reinforcement. Refrain from using negative comments. Use praise as an incentive.
  3. **BE CREATIVE AND USE INITIATIVE:** If the drill or game is too advanced, modify to increase the chances of success.
  4. **MAKE A DIFFERENCE:** Be motivational and inspirational. Enthusiasm and being energetic are contagious.
  5. **KEEP PLAYERS ACTIVE:** If the drill is static, create need of helpers or assistants to keep everyone involved.
  6. **EACH PLAYER IS AN INDIVIDUAL:** Be aware of player differences. Aggressive or quiet, recognition of player personalities will allow you to respond to all players, and they will respond to you positively.
  7. **STRIVE FOR QUALITY:** In all demonstrations make the desired objectives clear. If a player shows mastery of a skill, use him/her to demonstrate.
  8. **REINFORCE CORRECT TECHNIQUE:** In all drills and games continually emphasis the use of correct techniques.
  9. **ENCOURAGE PLAYER MOVEMENT:** At all times make players aware of importance of readiness. Emphasize weight forward on toes and bouncing instead of flat footed-ness.
  10. **ROTATE POSITIONS:** All players should be active as servers, assistants. In game situations change positions each quarter.
  11. **DEVELOP PLAYER RESPECT:** Continually get players to support one another. To show good sportsmanship towards all players including opponents, and respect for others attempts and effort.
  12. **EQUALITY AMONGST PLAYERS:** Give equal attention to all players in group or games. Do not leave the less competent players behind nor slow the advanced players.
  13. **FUN AND ENJOYMENT:** Players will respond and want to continue if things are fun. Create their enjoyment.
- **REMEMBER AS A COACH YOU SHOULD BE DEDICATED TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF ALL PLAYERS WHETHER TECHNICALLY ABLED OR NEW TO THE GAME. YOUR POSITION IS VERY IMPORTANT. YOU ARE A ROLE MODEL TO THESE CHILDREN. SET EXEMPLARY STANDARDS. DEVELOPING GOOD TOUCH AND TECHNIQUE, GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP AND A GOOD ATMOSPHERE IS THE GOAL. KEEP AWAY FROM CREATING A PRESSURE TO WIN. MAINTAIN EQUALITY THROUGHOUT YOUR SESSIONS AND EMPHASIZE FUN AND DEVELOPMENT.**

# COACHING POINTS

## **DTT. ( Developing Touch and Technique.).**

- Maintain close control with both feet.
- Be agile, stay on toes.
- Use all parts of feet, inside, outside, laces, sole.
- Move to get behind balls path.
- Keep a soft contact.
- Concentrate on center of ball.
- Keep head up.
- Control ball first, don't just kick it away.
- Change direction and speed when turning.
- Be a friend with the ball.

## **PASSING.**

- Use inside of feet.
- Change body position so it's comfortable.
- Stay relaxed. Don't be like a robot.
- Look at ball when passing.
- Pass to other players, not just kick and hope.
- Move afterwards.
- Move away from players to receive ball.
- Turn body to face ball when receiving.
- Stay spread out.

## **SHOOTING.**

- Keep toe pointing down.
- Lock ankle.
- Strike with shoelaces.
- Strike through center of ball.
- Swing leg and follow through.
- Keep relaxed except keep foot locked.
- Accuracy before power.
- Keep knee and head over ball.
- Place standing foot alongside ball, not in front or behind.
- Aim for bottom corners of goal.
- Accuracy before power.
- Follow after shooting.
- Use foot closest to the ball. I.E. left or right foot.

## **GAMES.**

- All of the above.
- Keep moving.
- Encourage movement towards ball.
- Encourage use of width.
- Keep positions only loosely restricted.
- Take Time-out to rotate subs and positions.
- Coach, educate, and support during games.
- Explain all fouls and calls made.
- Create an understanding of the Laws of the Game.

# PRACTICE TIPS

This page is designed to help coaches overcome some common practice time occurrences. There are 30 solutions listed here to some common problems. Some of these solutions contain a direct link to a sample in the practice plan manual.

**NOT ENOUGH SOCCER BALLS AT PRACTICE** or half the team left them at home!

1. Use “ghost” players who play without ball. They can tag a player on shoulder and replace that player. Good in individual activities and when only 1 or 2 balls missing.
2. Revise practice session to be less Individual and more small group. Good for passing and shooting type activities that work 1 ball between 2,3 or more players. Useful if half balls or more are missing.
3. If only 2 balls present: play a 3 Vs 3 style tournament, IE 2 games of small-sided being played at once. Only 1 ball, rather than play 6 Vs 6 play 3 teams of 4 NON-STOP SOCCER, where teams rotate after each goal or set time.

**HAVE AN ODD NUMBER OF PLAYERS AT PRACTICE** or I planned for 12 but got 9!

4. If you have an Assistant or spare parent have them work with a goalkeeper.
5. When doing pair activity make a triangle.
6. If small group activity, ie In groups of 3 players pass to a central player who turns and passes, add spare player to one group and the passes are alternated.
7. In small group activities use spare as a shadow defender with no tackling allowed (vary)
8. Scrimmage time at the end of practice and only 9 players:
  - Play 5 vs 4 and make the team with less players loaded with stronger players
  - Play 5 vs 4 and have team of 5 attacking small goal
  - Play 5 vs 4 and team 4 with GK, team 5 without
  - Use Asst./ parent/ brother - sister to even teams
  - Play yourself
  - Play 4 vs 4 with a floating player who plays for the team in attack (good for more advanced players. )
  - Play 4 vs 4 and use a sub. Good for more active activities, longer period of play

**HOW YOU CAN INCLUDE GK SPECIFIC TRAINING** or my keeper needs work but so do my field players?

9. If odd number of players, remove GK and have them work with Asst or Parent.
10. In individual and group activities allow GK's to use hand. IE Your topic is passing and receiving and your activity is give 'n' go's. Allow Gk to use hands to receive and distribute, or if a defending activity allow them to dive to try and intercept passes.
11. In activities make topic goal orientated. If playing 1 vs 1 game trying to knock over opponents cone, have 1 player attack a cone and other attack a GK and goal.
12. Small and large group activities can be goal orientated also. Playing 5 vs 2 keep away, after 6 passes can attack goal

# PRACTICE TIPS

## HOW TO PICK TEAMS FOR SCRIMMAGES or I don't want to use captains?

13. Use your knowledge and judgement to evenly match up individuals
14. Play offense versus defense, or as the Dutch do, play left side versus right side
15. For Random teams:
  - Choose 1 player to give everyone a number. You turn away then pick random numbers
  - Choose players by criteria like 1<sup>st</sup> letter of 1<sup>st</sup> name (or any 1<sup>st</sup> - last combo with 1<sup>st</sup> name, last name, mom - dad's name etc)
  - Choose players by criteria of date of month born, month of year born etc

## HOW TO RESTRICT DEFENDERS/OPPOSITION or my defenders always win the ball without the others gaining experience!

16. Have opposition play only as a shadow (good for introducing new topics as its only light pressure)
17. Have defender play as a ghost, IE no tackling only pressure to force an error or interception
18. Restrict movement of defender by playing as a crab on all 4's (good for less experienced)
19. Ensure adequate grouping. IE less experienced might need 6 vs 1 to achieve success, more experienced maybe 3 vs 1
20. Increase the playing area especially in examples like above

## HOW TO INCREASE COMPETITION FOR THE MORE ADVANCED PLAYERS ON TEAM or my good players are creaming the weaker ones and not learning !

21. In pair or group activities match players up by talent/ experience
22. If 1 exceptional player then match against an Asst/ parent/ older brother - sister for greater physical challenge
23. Reduce the space the stronger player must work in
24. Make their target smaller or further away
25. Limit their number of touches
26. Limit them to use their weaker foot only
27. Allow a less experienced player to play more intense opposition, IE rather than shadow defend can play 100%
28. In scrimmage you as coach play Against that 1 stronger player
29. 9 players for scrimmage, maybe play 3 stronger players vs 6

## IN SOME ELIMINATING GAMES PLAYERS SIT OUT FOR 5 MINUTES or its my weaker players who lose first - and they need the practice!

30. In games like Knockout, players should do a skill activity that allows them back into the game. Rather than score game by eliminating players, score by number of successes in a set period of time, thus allowing players back in after they :
  - dribble to a distant cone: juggle the ball x times: do x toe taps



# Technique Tips

## INSIDE OF THE FOOT PASS

EXECUTION	OBJECT	POSSIBLE ERRORS	OBSERVE
-The planted foot is next to the ball pointing toward target	-Shooting over short distances combined group play restarts	-Kicking foot is straight	-Leave kicking foot and leg bent. (Toe 'up', ankle locked)
-Kicking foot is raised, toe up strikes middle of ball	-Accurate combined group play over short distances	-The standing foot is too far from the ball	-Place standing foot next to the ball
-Ankle is locked		-The ball is not struck through the center	
-Contact area is between ball of foot and the heel on the inside of the foot			

## OUTSIDE OF FOOT PASS

EXECUTION	OBJECT	POSSIBLE ERRORS	OBSERVE
-Angle approach to direction of the pass	-Playing the ball with deception	-The ankle is not locked	-Knee is brought over the ball
-Toe down, ankle locked, foot angled slightly in	-Shooting around defenders	-Planted foot is too far from the ball	-Contact ball with the outside of the foot
-Contact	-Passing	-The ball is	



EXECUTION	OBJECT	POSSIBLE ERRORS	OBSERVE
-Guide the ball with both feet, use all surfaces of the foot	-Gain ground	-Ball is played too far from foot	-Push the ball, do not kick it
-Upper body is bent slightly over the ball	-Go past an opponent -Set up a short or combination play	-Player looks only at ball	-Keep head up and and observe situation around you.  -Raise toe when changing directions.
-Keep ball in close when in a crowd, using light touches	-Relieve pressure		
-Push it further out in front when given more space			

## HEADING

EXECUTION	OBJECT	POSSIBLE ERRORS	OBSERVE
-Strike ball with top of forehead; you strike it, do not let it strike you	-Shooting  -Passing -Clearing from danger area	-Ball is struck with top of head	-Upper body is drawn back
-Keep eyes open		-Eyes closed	-Watch ball strike and leave the forehead
-Before making contact, draw upper body back, tuck chin, "whip"		-Players "spear" the ball instead of "whipping" their body	

body through the ball		at it	
-Set the ball up with your chest, come through with your head			

## RECEIVING

EXECUTION	OBJECT	POSSIBLE ERRORS	OBSERVE
-Lightly receive the ball with inside or outside of foot and move off with it; keep toe pointed up	-Bringing all arriving balls under control	-Ball bounces too far away	-Move in an elastic way as if catching an egg on your body; the controlling part of the body withdraws in a smooth, controlled fashion
-Receive ball with thigh or chest, take the pace off of the ball by withdrawing the body part receiving the ball		-Pace of the ball is underestimated	

## DEFENSIVE BEHAVIOR

EXECUTION	OBJECT	POSSIBLE ERRORS	OBSERVE
-Keep goal side of your opponent	-Regain possession	-Falling for feints	-Keep ball in view
-Be first to the ball	-Deny penetration	-Poor position relative to opponent	-Beat your opponent to the ball

-Do not dive in on an opponent	-Slow down or with the ball interrupt an attack	-Trying to tackle from too far away	-Tackle as opponent receives the ball
-Defend the ball, not the player	-Stop shots	-Tackle as the opponent is halfway turned	-Make opponent play the ball square or back -Make opponent look at the ball

### GOALKEEPERS - CATCHING

EXECUTION	OBJECT	POSSIBLE ERRORS	OBSERVE
-Low balls - scoop into body with both hands outstretched, fingers spread	-Safely catching the ball - Defending the goal	-Fingers were not spread	-Always observe the game situation
-Palms up		-Hands were not far enough behind the ball	-The position in the goal is determined by the player in possession
-Hands extended toward the ball guide the ball into the stomach		-Hands are not "soft"	
-High balls - catch with hands behind the ball, slightly to the side, and slightly above			

### GOALKEEPERS - DIVING

EXECUTION	OBJECT	POSSIBLE ERRORS	OBSERVE
-Land on outside of thigh, hip and side of upper body	-Catching balls away from the body that cannot be reached by standing	-The ball is lost from view during the dive	-First practice diving without the ball from sitting, kneeling, and standing positions
-Do not bring arms under the body		-Landing on the front or back	-Catch the ball securely
		-Letting the ground knock the ball free	

Back to Pill's Drills

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