

Sterling Soccer Association



U6 – U12 RECREATIONAL COACHING MANUAL

*This manual is also available online at
www.sterlingsoccerassociation.com*



**STERLING SOCCER
ASSOCIATION**

STERLING SOCCER ASSOCIATION GENERAL INFORMATION

Our Mission:

The Sterling Soccer Association is a community organization dedicated to providing recreational and competitive activities for area youth through the sport of soccer.

Phone: 970-520-4858 (soccer phone) 970-520-0366 (Jared cell) 970-580-1825 (Jaime cell)

Website: www.sterlingsoccerassociation.com

Email: sterling_soccer@hotmail.com

Board Meetings: 7:00 p.m. on the 1st Wednesday of the month at Sonnenberg Agency, LLC (302 N. 3rd St.).

Game Cancellations: Will be posted on the website by 7:00 a.m. on the game day. Due to the difficulties of rescheduling games, the Club will not typically reschedule games. However, in the event of multiple game cancellations, we will do our best to facilitate make-up games. This is not however a guarantee that cancelled games will be rescheduled.

Sterling Soccer Association Code of Conduct: 1. No foul or offensive language will be tolerated at practices or matches. 2. Foul play with the intent to harm will be dealt with decisively. 3. Coaches and Spectators will be supportive of all players, referees, and each other. 4. Referees will treat Players, Coaches and Spectators with respect. Every Player, Coach, Referee and Spectator is expected to comply with the Sterling Soccer Association Code of Conduct. Failure to do so may result in a suspension or termination of participation or viewing privileges.

Game Day: Have your team at the field at least 30 minutes prior to the scheduled start time. Cleats and shinguards will be for sale at the field on the first two Saturdays of games.

Photo Day: Photos will be taken on Saturday, April 16th. Check your schedule!

Paperwork and Equipment Distribution: Saturday, March 18th from 9:00am – 11:15 am at First Christian Church in Sterling. Each coach will be given a Roster, Game Schedule, Picture Order Forms, Coaching Manual, Soccer Balls, cones, disc-cones, goalkeeper pennie, and equipment bag. Game Schedules will also be posted on the website. Team shirts and socks will be available for pick up at Pro-Sports – time TBA.

Coaching Priorities: Have Fun! Equal playing time. Sportsmanship – Do not assume the kids know what this is, Teach it, Show it, Enforce it! Commitment – explain to the players their responsibility to be at practices. Help them learn the rules and learn to believe in themselves!

COACHES: CONTACT YOUR PLAYERS BY MONDAY, MARCH 21st (AT THE LATEST) TO SET-UP YOUR PRACTICE SCHEDULE.

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INTRODUCTION

What is “Recreational Soccer?” You have probably heard the term before, but do you really know what “recreational soccer” is? There is no legal or US Youth Soccer definition, so for the purposes of this manual, let’s use the following basic definition: *“Recreational soccer is a soccer program primarily devoted to the enjoyment and development of soccer players without the emphasis on score or playing high-level competition. The purpose of recreational soccer is to provide an opportunity for the participants to have fun, learn the sport, and develop the necessary skills while developing a lifelong love of the game.”*

Therefore:

- Access is open to all who desire to participate (*The Game for ALL Kids*).
- Emphasis is on active participation (minimum of half game playing time).
- Objective is for the players to enjoy the experience.
- Success and excellence are measured in players attracted and players retained.
- Recreational soccer is all about fun, recreation, developing a love of the game, and winning is not a measure of success.

Some of the main characteristics of recreational *play* and recreational *players* are as follows:

- Almost every player and parent will start out in recreational soccer.
- There is a wide gap between the most skilled player and the least skilled player.
- Wider age gaps create greater differences in physical, mental and social development.
- Players new to the sport are constantly being introduced into the mix.
- Enthusiasm and dedication varies widely from the highly motivated to the socially involved.
- For the child who wants to play, soccer is an outlet for energy and enthusiasm. For others it is an imposed activity, something selected for the child by the parent.
- Fit and unfit players play together.
- Many parents sign up their child for next season without the child being involved in the process.
- The game is played for enjoyment and not necessarily for future playing opportunities on college or elite teams; however, the younger age groups are where elite players first begin to develop.
- Many young children start out in soccer. It has been said that, *“Soccer is the first sport that American children play”*.

- Soccer is a game, especially at the very young level, where all skill-levels of children can participate and have fun.
- Many young children try out many sports at a young age and may jump from one activity to another during the year or even during the same season.

Some of the main characteristics of recreational *coaches* are as follows:

- Every recreational coach is an unpaid volunteer.
- Many recreational coaches are coaching their own children, and many times these children are “would-be stars” in the eyes of their parents. Equal treatment may not happen as a result.
- About 25% of youth sport coaches will quit coaching after one season.
- Most of the youngest age-group coaches are first-time coaches with little or no soccer experience and no coaching experience.

THE COACH'S ROLE

Often the question is asked, "What is the coach's role in the game of soccer?" To develop your answer, it is important to understand the differences between coaching soccer and other sports:

1. Soccer is a player's game. While the coach is important, the player is pre-eminent in soccer.
 - a. Soccer is a game with limited coaching interference.
 - b. There are no timeouts and coaches do not send in plays.
 - c. The players make the decisions on the field, making soccer the ultimate "players' game."
 - d. Studies have shown that advanced soccer players make as many as 10 decisions per minute during a match.
2. Soccer is a game involving very difficult skills; therefore, the bulk of practice should be spent with a ball, practicing the skills of the game.
3. Players learn in a number of ways, including listening, watching coaching demonstrations and observing advanced players. The number 1 teaching tool, however, is playing the game itself.
4. Humans are hand-eye dominated, and this creates difficulty in soccer because the necessary skills require eye-foot coordination that must be developed at a fairly young age.

The difficulty for many coaches is addressed by Manfred Schellscheidt, Boys U-14 National Team Head Coach. He describes the scene that many beginner level soccer players face in the following quote: *"Let us take a look at what typically happens to our youngsters as they are introduced to the sport of soccer. Day one for most of our players is probably the day mom or dad registers them with the local or the town recreation league. Based on the number of applicants, teams are formed, coaches are assigned (many of whom have never played soccer), and the playing fields coordinated. And so the games begin. Children that may have never previously kicked a ball are faced with the ultimate challenge – playing a game that is foreign to them. Are we really surprised that they struggle at first to do this?"*

The question then becomes, "What is needed from the youth coach?" International conferences about this topic often conclude that well-intended coaches and parents should try to withdraw from influencing young players too much. It is suggested that if you want to train young players, the emphasis should be on "play and have fun" and various smaller versions of the 11 against 11 game. We need to keep in mind that most of the great soccer players played their early soccer in recreational games. Just as basketball players learn to play basketball by constantly playing in school yards and playgrounds, soccer players need constant repetition to acquire the skills of soccer.

All players need to master the ball at an early age. The first skill, dribbling, involves using all parts of the foot, combined with body swerves to maneuver the ball to beat an opponent. Dribbling is the only skill for developing confidence on the ball. Encourage dribbling at the younger ages. Dribbling, at the younger ages, is the child's attempt to gain control over the ball. Controlling the ball is the foundational element that every other skill in soccer is built upon. Although controlling the ball may seem to be a simple task, it actually takes an enormous amount of the child's energy. Do not expect him or her to look to pass or to pass with any level of competence or awareness, until he or she has first mastered this skill. Given this, one of the difficulties for coaches of young players is to conduct training sessions that involve fun and repetition but are not boring or tedious.

Consider these two points:

- 1) Children from about age 6 to 12 have an almost limitless capacity to learn body movement and coordination.
- 2) At the same time, their intellectual capacity to understand spatial concepts like positions and group play is limited. Work to their strengths. Many kids who have been involved in organized soccer will often look to kick the ball down field as their first option. They have been taught that the best way to keep from making a "mistake" is to kick it away as fast as possible. For this reason, it is crucial for the coach to continually encourage the players to make dribbling their first option. It may also help to make the players take at least two touches on the ball before they can look to pass. Remember, making mistakes at these early ages is a very important part of the player's learning and development. Encourage risk-taking and applaud the effort.

CONSIDER THIS: At the younger ages (6 to about 10), soccer is not a team sport. On the contrary, it is a time for children to develop their individual relationship with the ball. The fact that younger children are placed into team environments is not their fault. Do not demand that the more confident players share the ball, encourage them to be creative and go to goal. Do the same with the rest of your players. Work to bring all your players up to that level of confidence and comfort with the ball. Coaches should avoid the impulse to "coach" their players from "play to play" in order to help them win the match. Coaches should not be telling the young players (U-6 – U-10) to "pass rather than dribble," or to "hold their positions".

CONSIDER THIS: At young ages, the primary goal is to make the player's experience with soccer so enjoyable that when he or she has a choice of activities, they will choose to play soccer on their own.

"I don't believe skill was, or ever will be, the result of coaches.

It is a result of a love affair between the child and the ball"

Manfred Schellscheidt

What I hear I forget,

What I hear and see I remember a little;

What I hear, see and ask questions about or discuss with someone else,

I begin to understand;

What I hear, see, discuss and do, I acquire knowledge and skill;

What I teach to another, I master.

Chinese Philosopher Confucius

COACHING GUIDELINES

Pre-Kindergarten (U5) & Kindergarten (U6)

General Developmental Characteristics

1. The children have short attention spans.
2. Children are “me” oriented – the concept of team play does not yet compute.
3. Not capable of playing organized soccer.
4. Psyches are bruised very easily.
5. Physical development of boys and girls is very similar.
6. Even at this age, most girls prefer cooperative play, most boys prefer competition.
7. Physical coordination is immature.
8. For most, eye/hand and eye/foot coordination is primitive at best.
9. Love to run, jump, roll and climb.
10. For most, catching skills are not developed.
11. No sense of pace — GO FLAT OUT!

Practice Guidelines

1. Practices should be no longer than 45 minutes in length, once a week, and they should be FUN!
2. Stretching is fun for the children, but not necessary.
3. Pick 3 or 4 drills for each practice.
 - No more than 10 minutes on any drill or concept.
4. Drills can be repeated for several weeks, introduce 1 new drill each week – repetition is good.
5. Practices should blend cooperative and competitive activities
 - Some soccer, some relays/races, etc...
6. Basic skills should be introduced, but should not be forced.
7. Encourage dribbling.
8. Take a lot of breaks.
9. Avoid having the children waiting in lines; they need to move with a ball.
10. Encourage each child to bring their own ball to practice, if they have one.
11. Be active and play with the children, demonstrate activities, act silly – be involved.
 - Dress like a coach.

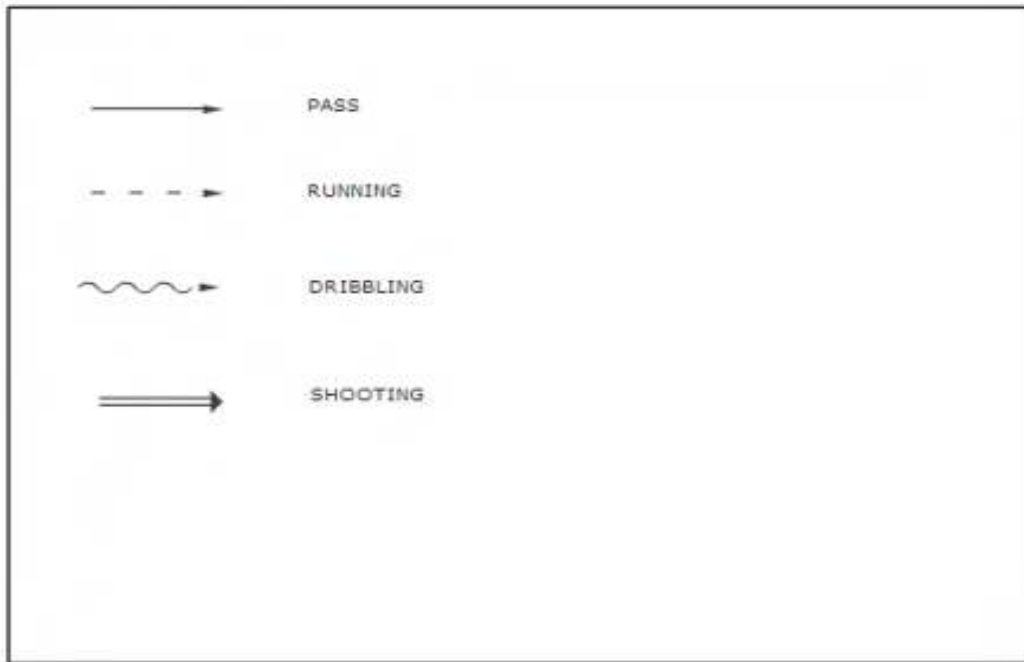
DRILLS & ACTIVITIES

Pre-Kindergarten (U5) & Kindergarten (U6)

The following 4 pages include games and activities for Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten (U-6) players. Although the drills and activities shown are age specific, many of the U-6 activities can be used for U-8 players, and vice versa. Therefore, coaches are encouraged to review both sections to find drills and activities for their players.

No training area sizes are listed on the drill and activity diagrams; however as a general guide use a 30 yard x 20 yard training area for your practices. To make your practices work; adjust the size of the training area accordingly.

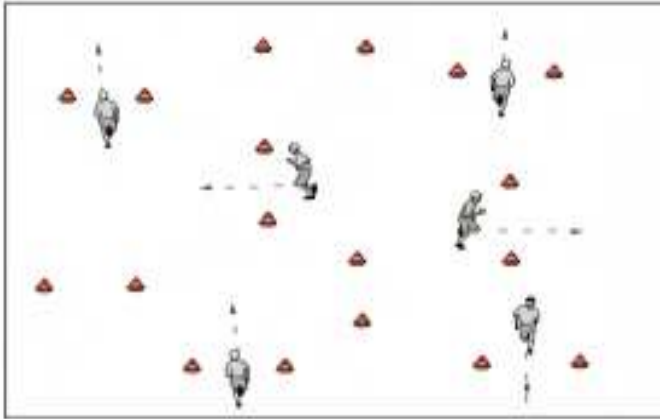
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DRILLS & ACTIVITIES

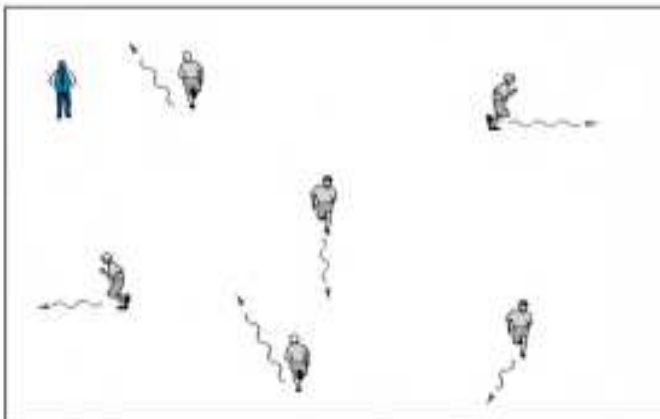
Pre-Kindergarten (U5) & Kindergarten (U6)

“The Gates” Game



Organization: The coach places cones throughout the training area in pairs 3-4 yards apart. Make sure that there are at least 3-4 more goals than the number of players participating. The coach then challenges the players (for a set period of time 15-30 seconds) to get as many goals as possible by moving through the cones in various ways e.g. *running forward, running backwards, ball stuffed up shirt, ball above the head, bouncing the ball, hopping, skipping, dribbling.*

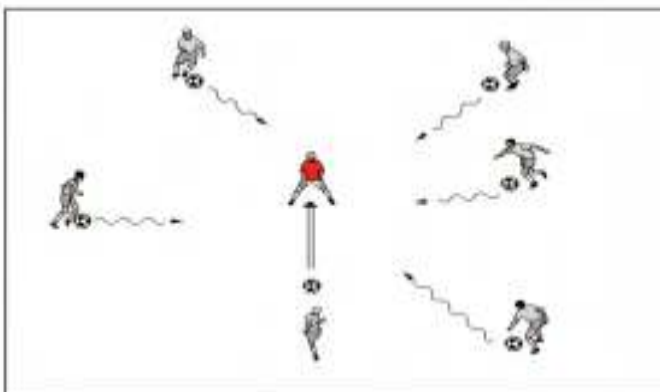
Identifiers



Organization: Players move around the training area in various ways — jogging forwards, backwards, hopping, skipping, running fast, slow etc. At random the coach calls out an identifier of a group of players or player, who then try to tag as many of the other players in a set period of time.

Identifiers examples: T-shirt color, blond hair, sock color, names etc. You can play this game with or without a ball.

Tunnel Soccer

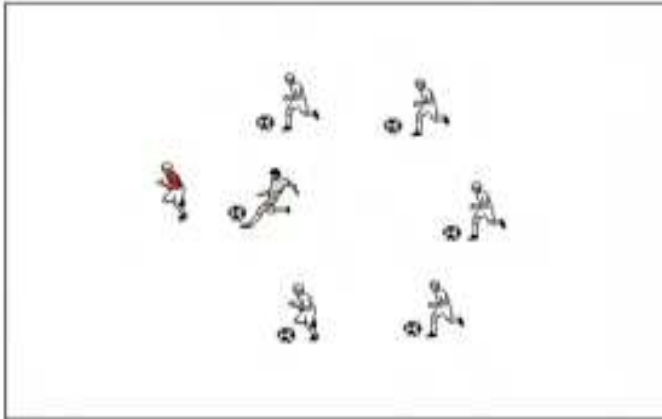


Organization: Each player has a ball. The coach moves around the field with the players and from time to time stops and spreads his legs to form a tunnel. The players dribble after him and try to shoot the ball through the tunnel whenever he stops. After a set period of time the coach moves again. The player who scores the most goals wins the game.

DRILLS & ACTIVITIES

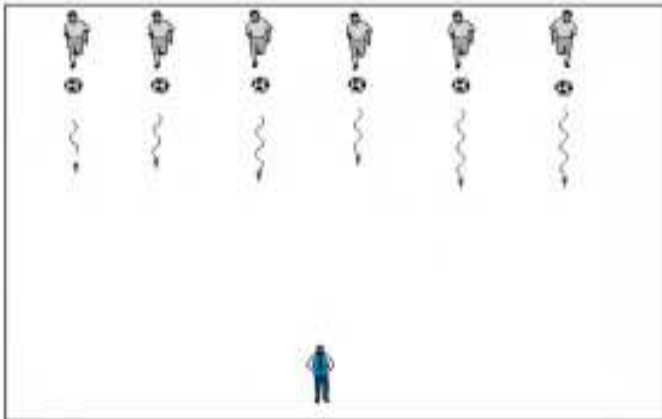
Pre-Kindergarten (U5) & Kindergarten (U6)

“Gotcha”



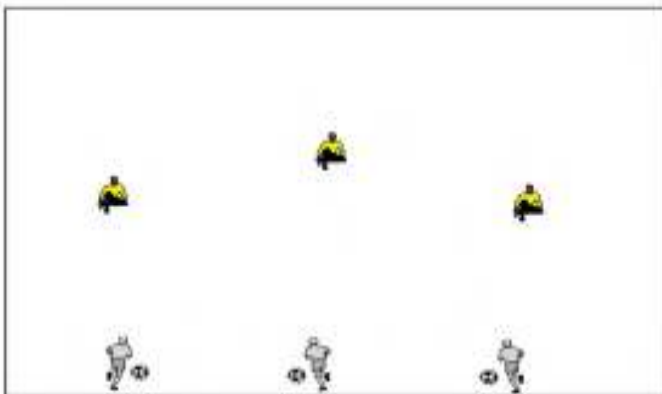
Organization: Each player has a ball. The coach moves about the field with the players. Each player dribbles with their ball and tries to hit the coach with the ball. Whenever the coach gets hit he/she yells “ouch”. The player that causes the most ouches wins the game.

What Time Is It Mr. Wolf?



Organization: Each player has a ball and stands on one side of the grid opposite the coach/wolf. The coach/wolf has their back to the players. The players ask Mr. Wolf “What time is it, Mr. Wolf?” If Mr. Wolf says “8 o’clock,” the players dribble 8 steps forward, 6 o’clock, 6 steps forward, etc. If Mr. Wolf says “Its dinner time,” the Wolf attempts to tag the players before they can get back to the starting line. If a player gets tagged they become a wolf.

Shark & Minnows

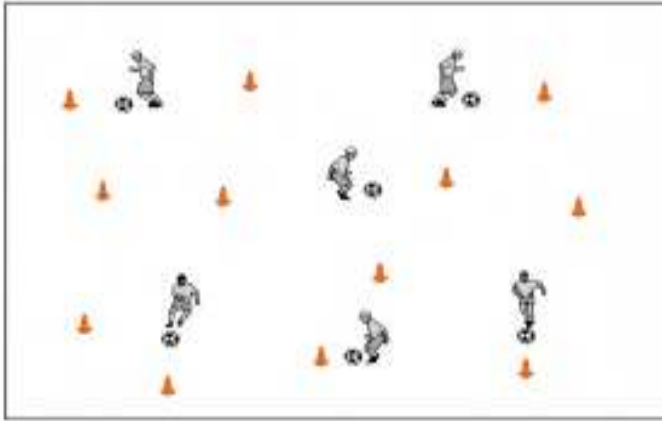


Organization: Half of the players (sharks) sit on the ground without balls. Each of the other players has a ball and they stand on one side of the training area. The players with a ball dribble from one end of the grid to the other. Each crossing scores one point. If a player loses a ball to a shark, the two players immediately switch roles. Sharks must stay sitting but can stretch and bend to try and steal a ball. See who can score the most points in a set time period.

DRILLS & ACTIVITIES

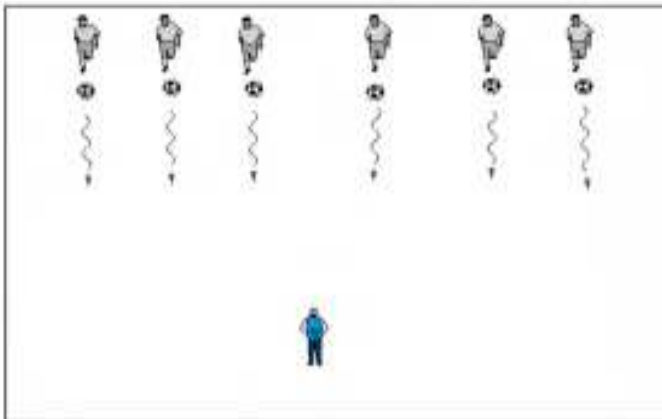
Pre-Kindergarten (U5) & Kindergarten (U6)

Bingo



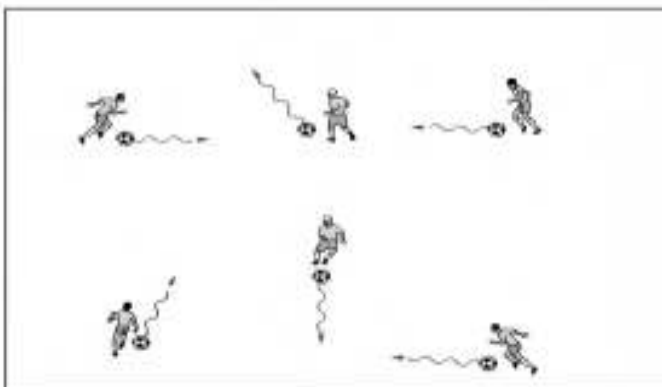
Organization: A number of cones are distributed throughout the training area. One player and the coach are the “replacers.” Each player has a ball. The players with the balls try to knock down as many cones as possible with their balls. The “replacers” (all players take turns in this role) set up the cones as fast as they are knocked down. When a player knocks down a cone they yell bingo. The player who scores the most bingos wins the game.

Red Light / Green Light



Organization: All players gather on a line. The object is to dribble their ball from one line to the other line. The coach calls out either green light or red light. Players dribble their ball and go when green light is called and stop when red light is called. If a ball is not stopped and controlled immediately, the player is sent back even with the last player, but not all of the way back.

Body Parts

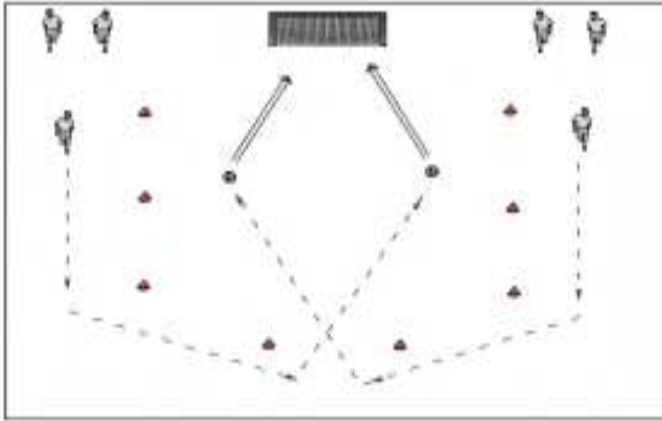


Organization: All players have a ball dribbling inside the training area. When the coach calls out a body part the players must control the ball with their feet and then put that body part on the ball. The last player to put that body part on the ball does three toe taps.

DRILLS & ACTIVITIES

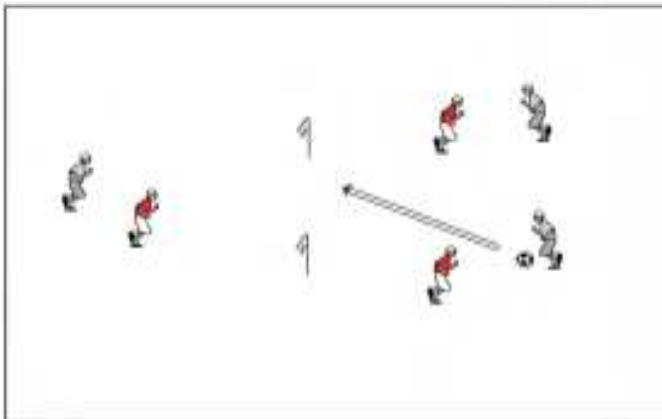
Pre-Kindergarten (U5) & Kindergarten (U6)

Disney Game



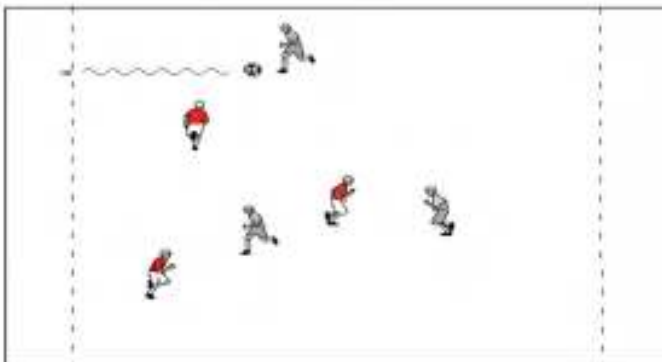
Organization: Two teams of equal numbers stand at either side of a goal. Give each player a Disney character name and make sure there is a matching character on the other side. The coach places two balls in the playing area and then calls out a Disney character. The two players run around the cones into the playing area and the first one to score wins one point. Progression: Place one ball in the training area and create a 1v1 situation.

One Goal Game



Organization: Divide players into two equal teams. Place a goal in the middle of a playing area. Teams can score from any direction. A variation would be to have teams score on opposite sides of the goal.

The "End Zone" Game



Organization: Divide players into two equal teams. A player scores a goal dribbling the ball over the other team's end line. Players do not get a point if they just kick it over the line. There are no throw-ins or kick-ins and if the ball goes out of bounds the coach feeds in a new ball. Progression: Give the players an extra point if they can stop the ball on the other player's end line.

COACHING GUIDELINES

First Grade (U7) & Second Grade (U8)

General Developmental Characteristics

1. Attention spans are a little longer than U-6's.
2. Most children are still "me" oriented, but the idea of team play MAY start to make sense.
3. Still not capable of playing organized soccer.
4. Dislike personal failures in front of peers.
5. Ridicule from the coach in front of the group is very destructive.
6. Psyches are still bruised very easily.
7. Physical development of boys and girls is still similar.
8. Most girls will start to prefer cooperative play, whereas most boys will prefer competition.
9. Beginning to develop self-confidence.
10. Want to imitate the "Big Guys".
11. Still love to run, jump, roll and climb.
12. Still no sense of pace, will chase the ball until they drop — GO FLAT OUT!

Practice Guidelines

1. Practices should be 45 minutes to 1 hour in length, once a week, and they should be FUN!
2. Stretching is fun, but still not necessary.
3. Pick 3 or 4 drills for each practice.
 - No more than 10 minutes on any drill or concept.
4. Drills can be repeated for several weeks, introduce 1 new drill each week – repetition is good.
5. Basic skills should be practiced (dribbling, shooting, passing, etc...).
6. Practices should blend cooperative and competitive activities
7. Encourage the child not to fear the ball, give each player plenty of opportunities to experience the ball at their own pace.
8. Soccer-related information should be limited to basic ideas and concepts.
9. Take a lot of breaks.
10. Avoid having the children waiting in lines; they need to move with a ball.
11. Encourage each child bring their own ball to practice, if they have one.
12. Be active and play with the children, demonstrate activities, and act silly – be involved.
 - Dress like a coach.

DRILLS & ACTIVITIES

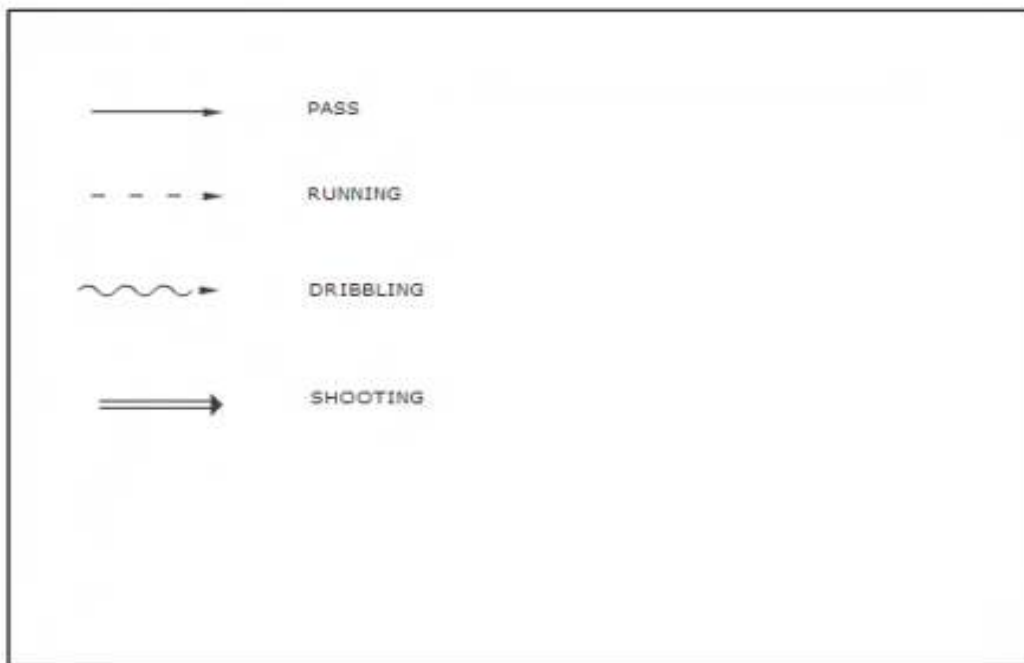
First Grade (U7) & Second Grade (U8)

The following 4 pages include games and activities for First Grade & Second Grade players (U-8).

Although the drills and activities shown are age specific, many of the U-8 activities can be used for U-6 players, and vice versa. Therefore, coaches are encouraged to review both sections to find drills and activities for their players.

No training area sizes are listed on the drill and activity diagrams; however as a general guide use a 40 yard x 30 yard training area for your practices. To make your practices work; adjust the size of the training area accordingly.

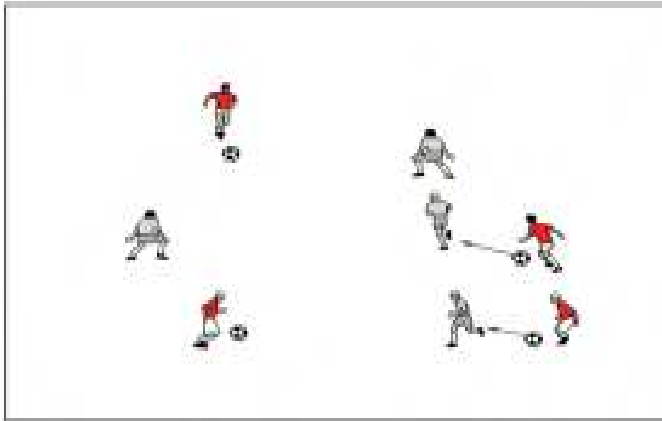
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DRILLS & ACTIVITIES

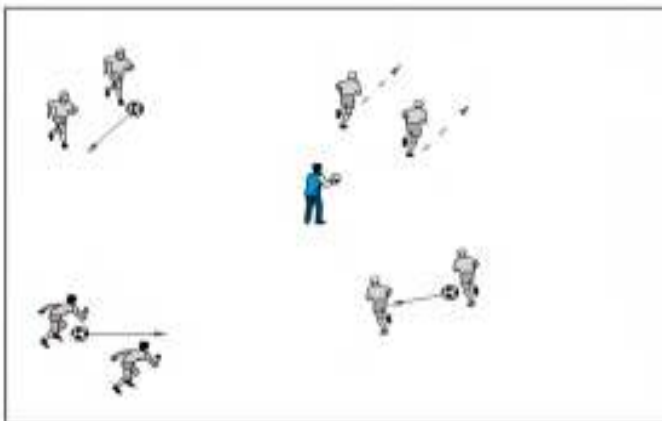
First Grade & Second Grade (U-8)

Freeze Tag



Organization: Divide players into two equal teams, each player with a ball. On the coach command, all players dribble around in the area and try to avoid being tagged by the coach (or designated player call the “tagger”). Once a player is tagged, they become frozen and must stand with their legs apart. The objective is freeze the entire team as quickly as possible. A frozen player can only get defrosted when a teammate passes a ball gently between their legs. *See which team can unfreeze the fastest.*

Ball Retrieve in Pairs



Organization: Each pair has a ball which in turn they give to the coach. The coach tosses the ball away and each pair must retrieve the ball as quickly as possible and bring it back to the coach. The players must bring the ball back a different way each time (I.E. balanced between two backs, balanced between two heads, throwing the ball to each other, passing the ball to each other). Variation: The coach may move and change position which encourages players to look up.

Pacman

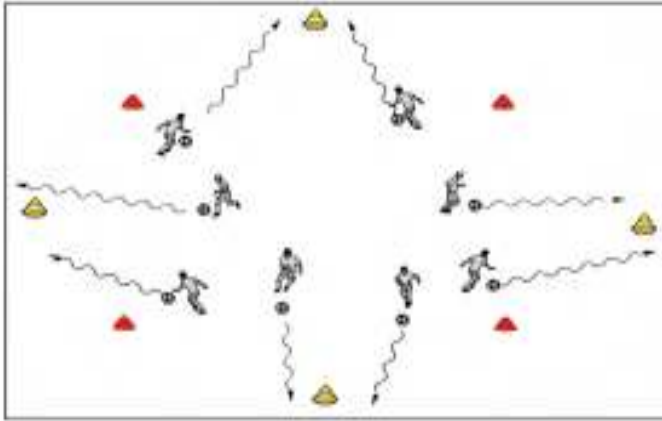


Organization: One player with a ball (Pacman) outside the area and the rest within a 20 x 20 yard area. All the other players run freely within the area. On the coach’s command the player with the ball dribbles into the area and tries to hit the other players below the knees by passing the ball at them. Once a player is hit, they go outside the area to get a ball and become the second Pacman. Game continues until all but one player is left who is the Pacman for the next game.

DRILLS & ACTIVITIES

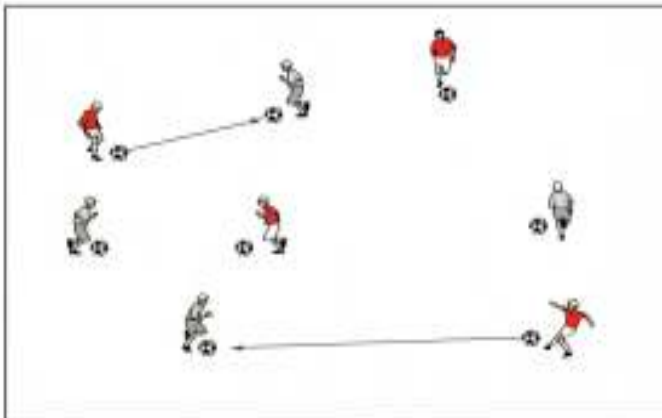
First Grade (U7) & Second Grade (U8)

Musical Cones



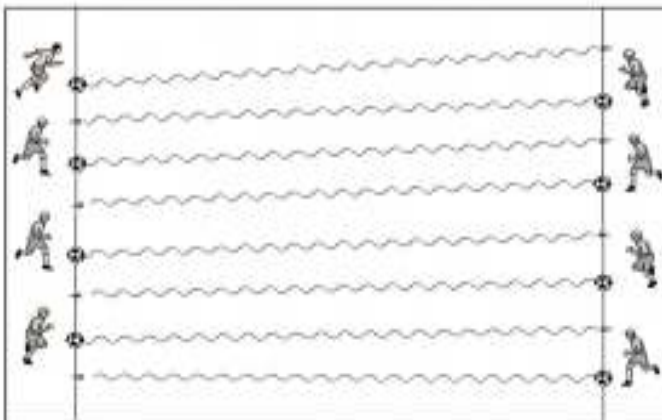
Organization: Place 4 cones outside the playing area. Players dribble in the playing area and on the coach's command, players stop their ball and then run around any of the four outside cones. The last player to get back to a ball scores a point or loses a life. Make sure all players are moving in the playing area not staying by the sides.

Moving Marbles



Organization: All players have a ball and are inside the playing area. Each player tries to pass and hit another player's ball while they are moving. If they pass and hit someone else's ball, they get a point. **Variation:** Divide into two teams. One team is trying to hit the other team's ball. One team is designated as the passing team; the other is the dribbling team. After time, they switch roles. Play 3 rounds and see which team has the most total amount of hits.

Braveheart

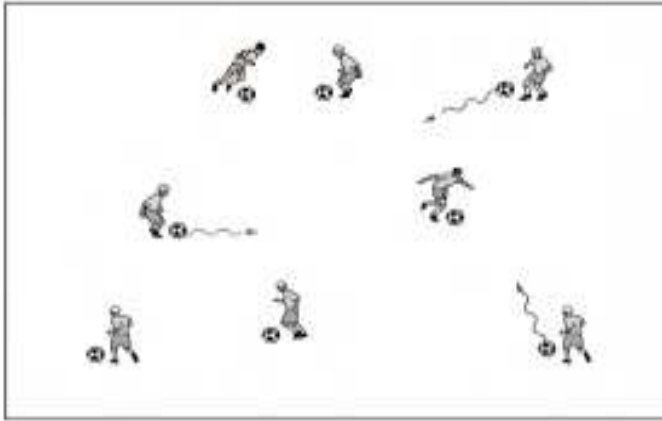


Organization: Divide players into two equal teams. All players have a ball and start on opposite end lines. When the coach shouts "charge," they each dribble towards each other and try to get to the opposite end line and stop the ball on the line. The team that has 3 players on the line first gets a point. Start by walking with the ball, then progress to running with the ball.

DRILLS & ACTIVITIES

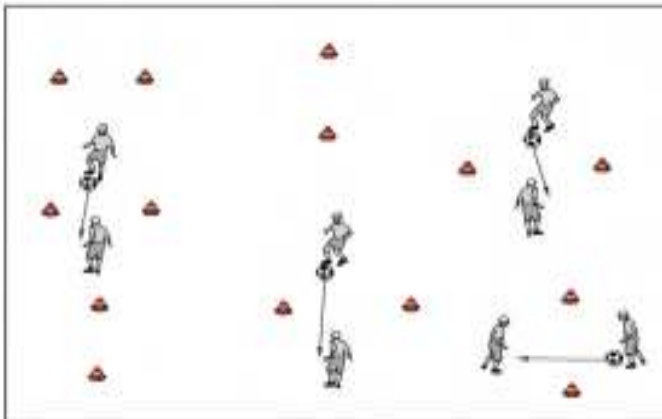
First Grade (U7) & Second Grade (U8)

Everybody's It



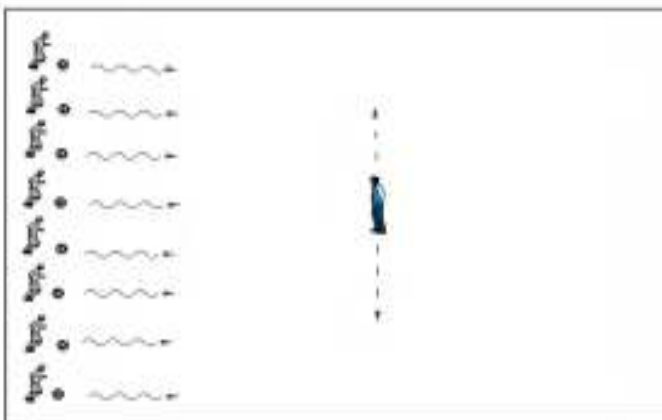
Organization: Each player has a ball. The players dribble around trying to tag as many people as possible while maintaining control of their own ball. Players get a point for each time they tag another player. Play each game for 30 seconds.

Multi-Goal Dribbling and Passing



Organization: Set up random goals (2 cones 3 yards apart). Divide players into pairs with one ball between each pair. On the coach's command the players try and score as many goals as possible by passing the ball through the goals to their partner and then moving to another goal. Play for 30-60 seconds each round. Players lose a point if they knock over a cone. Add conditions to the game such as pass with right foot only, outside of foot only, etc.

The "Bulldog"

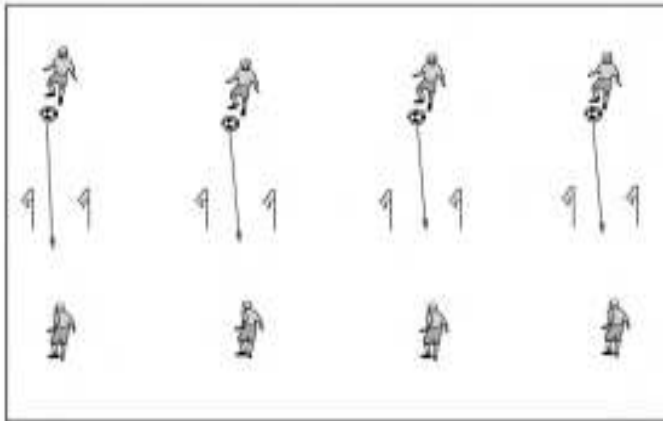


Organization: The coach starts as the "bulldog" in the middle of the playing area. All the players are at one end of the playing area with a ball. On the coach's command of "go bulldogs" the players must get to the opposite side of the playing area without their ball being kicked out by the coach. If a player's ball is kicked out they become a "bulldog". The last player with a ball wins the game and becomes the "bulldog" for the next game.

DRILLS & ACTIVITIES

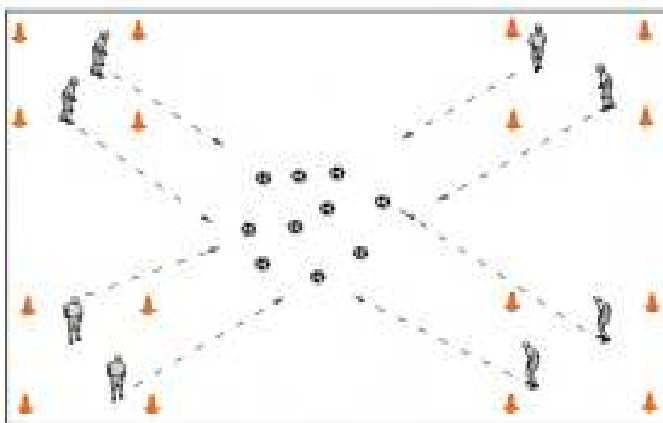
First Grade (U7) & Second Grade (U8)

Pong



Organization: Although passing should not be focus at U-8, Pong is a fun way to introduce passing to your team. Two players play against each other and share a ball. They place two cones anywhere from 2-8 yards apart. Players pass back and forth to each other. The rules are the ball must never stop, it must always stay on the ground, and it must go through the two cones without touching them. Whenever this is violated the other person receives a point. Because of the rule that the ball must never stop, players have to play 2-touch. The closer the two cones are, the closer the pairs are probably going to be.

Four Corners



Organization: Divide the team into 4 groups of 2. Each group of two starts in their own corner. Eight balls are placed in the center of the training area. On the coach's command players run to the middle and dribble one ball back to their own corner. Players cannot defend their corner or tackle other players. After all the balls are gone from the middle, players can then raid the corners of the other teams. After a set time period the team with the most balls in their corner wins the game.

Corner Gates



Organization: Divide players into two equal teams. Make diagonal goals with flags or cones in each corner of the field. When a goal is scored or the ball goes out of bounds, the coach plays in a new ball to keep the game flowing. The object of the game is to score through any of the 4 corner goals by passing or shooting.
Progression: Assign each team two goals to attack and two goals to defend.

COACHING GUIDELINES

Third Grade (U9) & Fourth Grade (U10)

General Developmental Characteristics

1. Some players will demonstrate a capacity to stay focused for longer periods of time.
 - Still people of action rather than thought.
2. Competition and score are important, however, all games should not be result oriented.
3. Most will buy into the “team” concept.
 - It will still be very difficult, if not impossible, to play organized soccer.
4. Psyches are still bruised very easily because self-confidence is still very shaky.
5. What seemed to make sense last practice may have to be almost relearned at the next practice.
6. Physical development of boys and girls may start to differ.
7. Some children are becoming more physically mature.
8. Most girls will prefer cooperative play, whereas most boys will prefer competition.
9. Some players will have eye-hand and eye-foot coordination that is more advanced than others.
10. The faster, stronger players should not be encouraged to use their athleticism to solve all problems.

Practice Guidelines

1. Practices should be 1 hour in length, up to twice a week, FUN is still the central idea.
2. Practices should be simple and player-centered.
 - Create simple problem-solving opportunities and plenty of opportunities to score goals.
3. Stretching is becoming more important given the physical development of some of the players.
4. Warm-up and cool-down exercises (drills not run at full speed) are very important.
5. Pick 2 or 3 drills for each practice.
 - 15 minutes maximum on any drill or concept.
6. Drills can be repeated over the course of the season, introduce a couple new drills each week.
7. Small-sided games (such as 3 v 3 and 5 v 5) are preferable.
8. Take a lot of breaks.
9. Performance is more important than the outcome.
10. Practices should blend cooperative and competitive activities.
11. Players should be encouraged to try playing every position.
12. Avoid having the players waiting in lines; they need to be moving with a ball.

DRILLS & ACTIVITIES

Third Grade (U9) & Fourth Grade (U10)

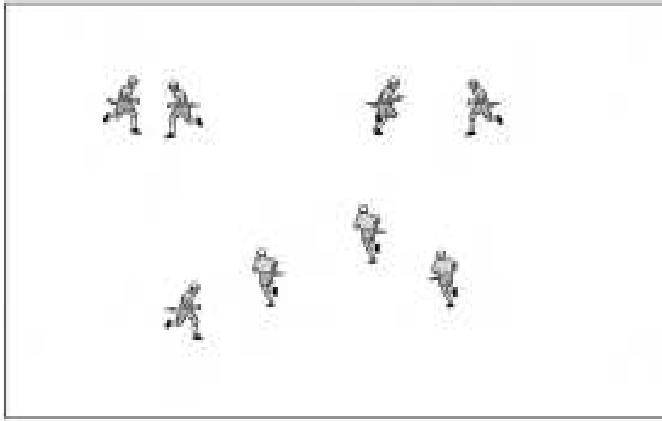
The following 4 pages include games and activities for Third Grade & Fourth Grade players (U-10). Although the drills and activities shown are age specific, some of the U-8 and U-12 activities can be used for U-10 players. Therefore, coaches are encouraged to review all three sections to find drills and activities for their players.

No training area sizes are listed on the drill and activity diagrams; however as a general guide use a 50 yard x 40 yard training area for your practices. To make your practices work; adjust the size of the training area accordingly.

DRILLS & ACTIVITIES

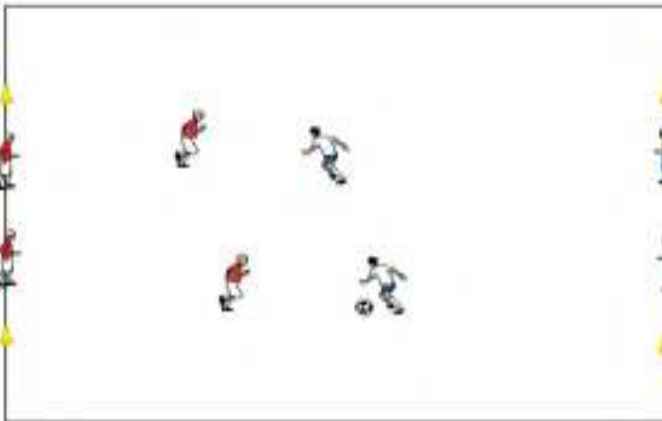
Third Grade (U9) & Fourth Grade (U10)

Tail Tag



Organization: Each player has a tail (pinnie tucked into the back of their shorts). On the coach's command, each player tries to steal the other players' tails and if they win a tail they throw it on the ground. When a player loses their tail they continue to play as the winner is last player left with a pinnie. **Variation:** Is for player to keep the pinnies they steal and see who can collect the most pinnies. Players cannot steal a pinnie from another player's hands. **Progression:** Play the same game while dribbling a ball.

Change Game



Organization: Divide players into two equal teams. Create two goals on each end line. Two players from each team play out on the field, the other 2 players go into a goal. Play like a normal game. When the coach yells "Change" the players who are on the field switch with the players who are in goal. The players simply leave the ball where it is when the coach yells "Change". Goals must be scored below shoulder height. The goalkeepers cannot use their hands to stop the ball, cannot step off of the goal-line and cannot score.

The Game

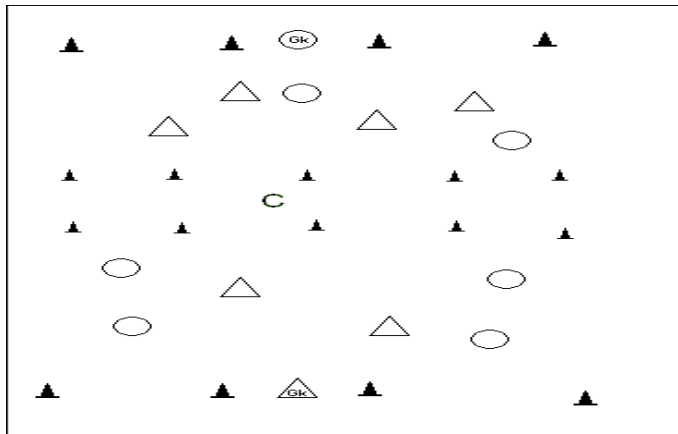


Organization: Divide players into two equal teams. Play a regular 4 v 4 game with no rules. No goalkeepers.

DRILLS & ACTIVITIES

Third Grade (U9) & Fourth Grade (U10)

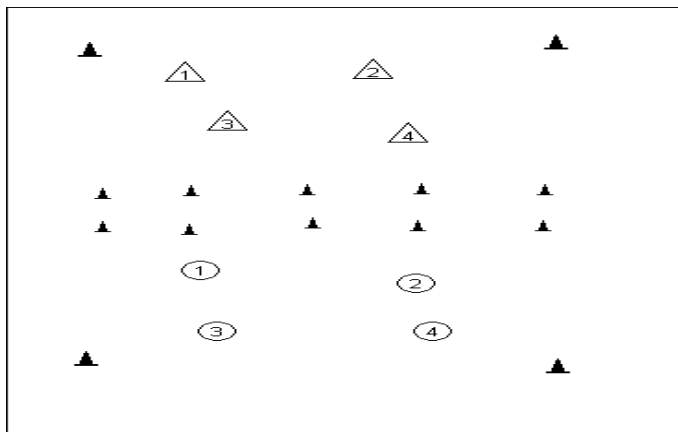
No Mans Zone



Organization: One a big field- use cones and make a 15 yard channel through the middle of the field – this is "no mans zone". No players are allowed in this area. The game – a regular game with an area which players cannot enter. To give advantage to strikers, split players so there is a 4v2 advantage for attackers.

Progress: To 3v3 on each side of the field. Have lots of soccer balls available.

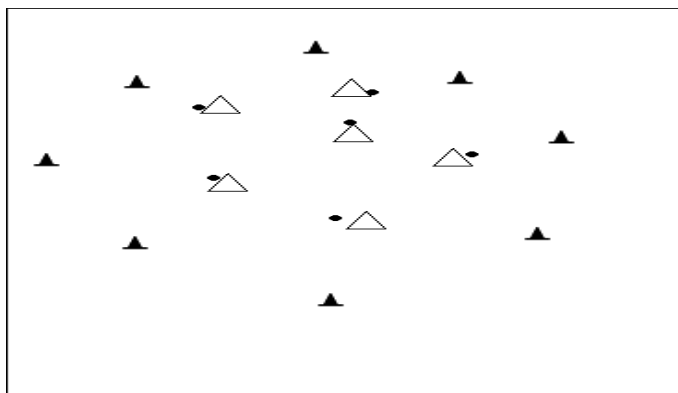
Soccer Volleyball



Organization: Soccer Volleyball for 2-8 players. Set up- 30 X 50 yard grid. Use cones and make a 1 yard channel through the middle to act as a net. The Game – players use their juggling/half volley skills play volleyball. No Hands. If the ball bounces in the middle of the "net" it's a point for the other team. Start off by allowing the ball to be able to bounce once.

Progress: To full volley for advanced players.

Knock Out

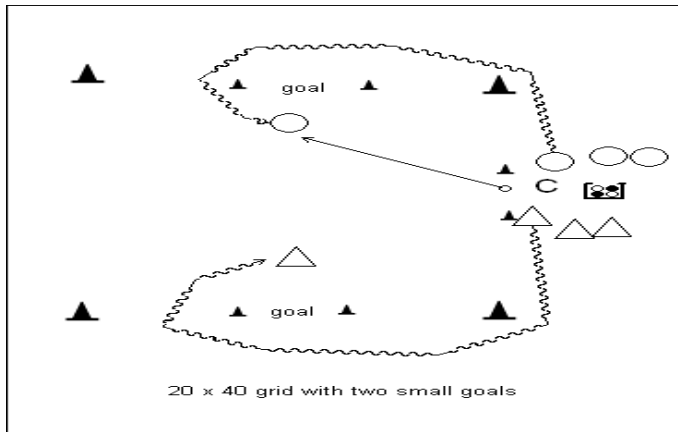


Organization: Create a large circle with cones. 4-18 players each with a soccer ball inside the circle. The object of the game is for players to try to kick the other players' balls out of bounds while protecting his/her own soccer ball. Player who kicks out most wins.

DRILLS & ACTIVITIES

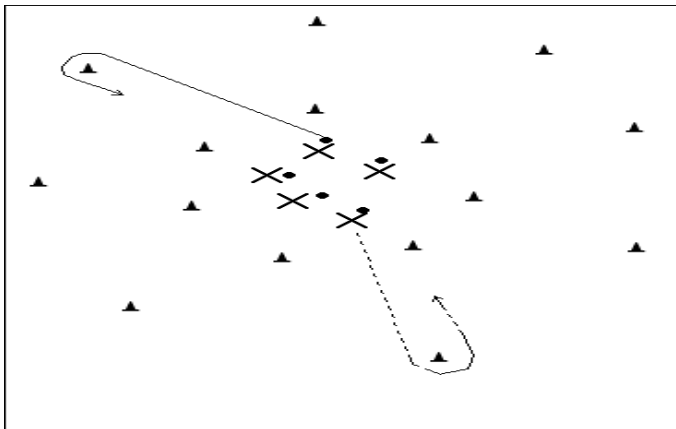
Third Grade (U9) & Fourth Grade (U10)

Get Out of Here



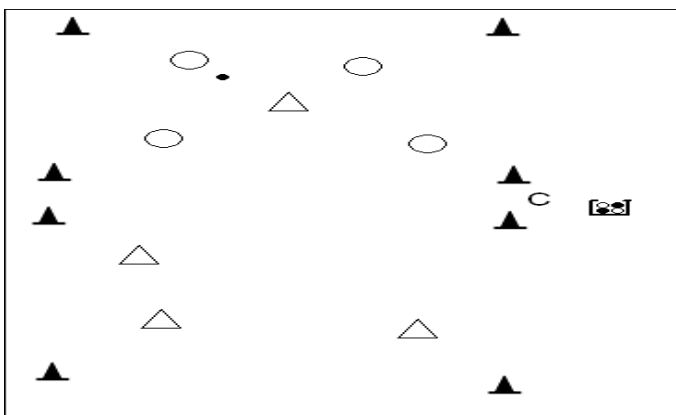
Organization: Can be played 1v1, 2v2, or 3v3. Is used to focus on offense, defense, techniques, and tactics. Make two lines of 3-5 players behind two cones. Coach in the middle with lots of soccer balls. When the coach yells "go", the first players in each line sprints around the corner cones and around the goals and tries to be the first player into the playing area. The coach serves the ball to the first player into the playing area. From there, they play a small sided game. If a goal is scored or the ball goes out of bounds, the coach yells "get out of here". The two players then sprint off the field. The coach yells "go" and the next players go.

Explode



Organization: Make two large circles with cones. The outside circle should be 15-20 yards from the inner circle. Players dribble inside the small circle of cones. On the coach's whistle, players explode to the outside and dribble their ball around an outside cone. First player back to inner circle wins. When players come back, keep dribbling. Coach blows whistle again or make last player back do 10 "ball taps" with the bottom of his cleat. Coaching Points: When exploding, body low, use the shoe lace part of cleat to take off.

Keep Away



Organization: Two teams of 4 or 5 players. Each in a 40 X 40 grid (adjustable). The coach sends a soccer ball into one team's grid. The opposing team sends 1 player to play as a defender. Try to connect 5 passes in a row without the defender stealing the ball. Each time a team accomplishes this, they have 2 choices. Go for 5 more passes or send the soccer ball into the opposing team's grid and THEY send a defender to try to steal the ball. Progression: Send in more than 1 defender, make grids smaller. To make the game easier, make the grids larger and add an offensive player

DRILLS & ACTIVITIES

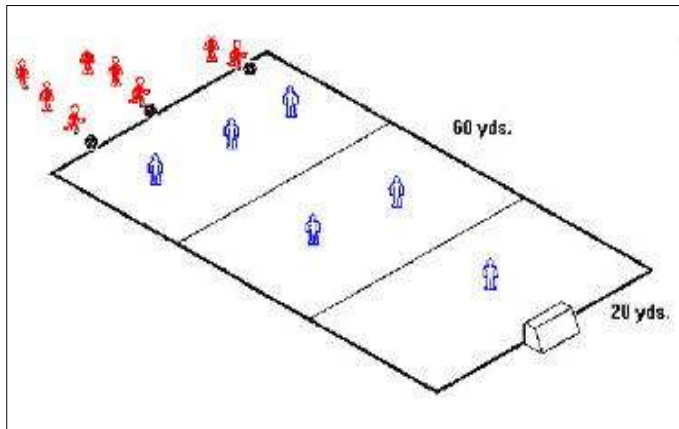
Third Grade (U9) & Fourth Grade (U10)

Targets Passing



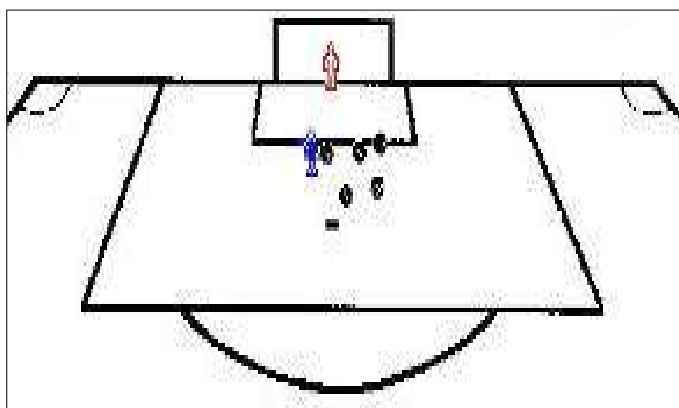
Organization: Start with 3 teams with an equal number of players. The space should be rectangular in shape. Team A starts as free players on the outside of the playing area. Teams B and C play a game of keep away. Passes can be made to players of team A, but the ball must be returned to the team who passed it. 10 consecutive passes = goal. After a goal, rotate the teams. Let the winning team decide to stay or become the “target” team (team on the outside). **Coaching Points:** Encourage good paced, accurate passes. Players need to make good decisions on when to use the “target” players. Time and space is on the outside.

Dribble to Score



Organization: Dribblers (in Red) try to dribble through the three zones occupied by the blue defenders. The defenders must stay in their zones and try to kick any ball they intercept out of bounds. Dribblers go three at a time. Once a ball is kicked out, the next player may start right away. As soon as the dribbler moves to the next zone, the next player in line may go. After beating the last defender, the dribbler must shoot the ball into the goal to get a point for their team. **Coaching Points:** Good dribbling technique. Look for openings, when the defense opens – go!

Shot Stopper



Organization: Coach stands 5 -7 yards away with ball in hand. Coach simulates shots by rolling ball to side, lobbing ball over head, throwing ball downwards – but always give the keeper a chance to make the save. If keeper misses the ball or pushes it away, the coach immediately picks up another ball while the keeper is recovering. When a save is made, keeper must first throw the ball back to the coach. **Coaching Points:** Look for improper diving positions, such as: both knees in front, diving backward, belly flop and rolling on to back.

COACHING GUIDELINES

Fifth Grade (U11) & Sixth Grade (U12)

General Developmental Characteristics

1. Ability to stay focused for long periods of time; however, hormones may make focusing difficult.
2. Competition and score are important, however, all competition should not be results oriented.
3. Players want individual and team challenges.
4. There will be a big gap between the “best” players and the “worst” players.
5. What seemed to make sense last practice may have to be almost relearned at the next practice.
6. Physically, bodies are beginning to change. This may cause awkward growth spurts.
 - Rapid bone growth may result in painful joint conditions in the legs.
 - Eye-hand and eye-foot coordination may disappear for some during growth spurts.
6. Physical growth may temporarily affect balance, agility and coordination.
 - If the technical foundation is not strong, soccer will not be fluid during the growth spurts. It is at this point that these players may move toward sports where it is easier for them to achieve some level of success.
7. Players need a lot of rest.
8. Most girls will prefer cooperative play, whereas boys will prefer competition.

Practice Guidelines

1. Practices should be 1½ - 2 hours in length, twice a week; FUN is still a central idea.
2. Practices should be player-centered with an emphasis on team play.
 - Create problem-solving opportunities and plenty of opportunities to score goals.
3. Stretching is important.
4. Warm-up and cool-down exercises (drills not run at full speed) are very important.
5. Pick 3 – 4 drills for each practice.
 - 15 – 20 minutes on any drill or concept is plenty, some activities may require less time.
6. Drills need to address individual ball-skills as well as individual and small-group decisions.
7. Drills need to be repeated over the course of the season, introduce new drills each week.
8. Players should learn the game based on principles of the game rather than positions on the field.
9. Small-sided games (such as 3 v 3 5 v 5) are preferable.
10. Performance is more important than the outcome.

DRILLS & ACTIVITIES

Fifth Grade (U11) & Sixth Grade (U12)

The following 4 pages include games and activities for Fifth Grade & Sixth Grade players (U-12).

Although the drills and activities shown are age specific, some of the U-10 activities can be used for U-12 players. Therefore, coaches are encouraged to review both sections to find drills and activities for their players.

No training area sizes are listed on the drill and activity diagrams; however as a general guide use a 60 yard x 40 yard training area for your practices. To make your practices work; adjust the size of the training area accordingly.

DRILLS & ACTIVITIES

Fifth Grade (U11) & Sixth Grade (U12)

Circuit Drill



Organization: Distance between the cones is based on the age and ability of the players. Each player has a soccer ball. Players dribble around the obstacles as shown, first using right foot and then switching to left foot. **Coach Observation:** Movement of the player, coordination, speed, agility, use both feet. **Note:** Add a net so players can shoot after going thru obstacles.

8 vs. 8 Quick Transition



Organization: This is a drill to focus on transition. Adjust the area of play based on ability of the players. Two teams with equal number of players + 1 goalkeeper (GK is not on either team). The objective is to keep the ball from the other team and score by passing the ball to the goalkeeper. **Coach Observation:** Give restrictions on how many touches and passes before the ball can be passed to the goalkeeper. **Note:** Movement of the ball, movement into space with and without the ball. Accurate passing and receiving, and quick transition.

4 vs. 4 – Play it Wide



Organization: This is a 4 vs. 4. Grid size based on the ability of the players. Two teams of four players each play a normal game. To go into the opposite field and score the ball must be played wide between one of the “small opening” made out of cones. **Coach Observation:** Notice how the players receive and pass the ball. Body movements are important in this drill. Notice how the players will support teammates. **Variation:** Players can not go thru the “small openings”. Two touches restrictions. Add an extra ball. Add goalkeepers.

DRILLS & ACTIVITIES

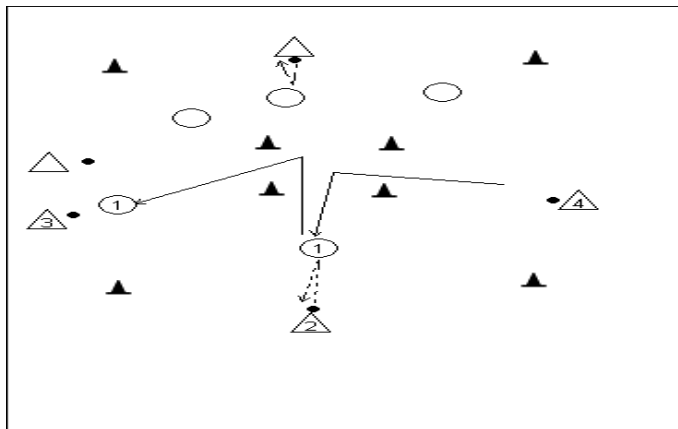
Fifth Grade (U11) & Sixth Grade (U12)

3 Vs. 2 + 1



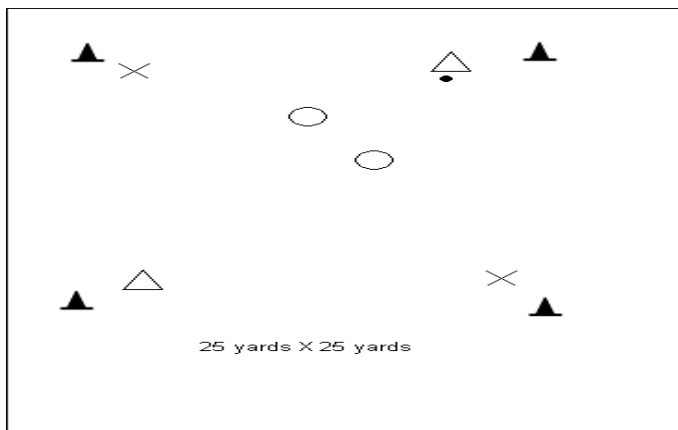
Organization: This is a 3 Vs. 2 plus 1 player. Grid size based on the ability of the players. Yellow players pass the ball to each other. Red players will move as yellow players pass the ball to each other. There is a yellow player moving to receive the ball at the other end of the grid. The only way the ball can be passed is thru one of the side openings. (made by four cones). **Coach Observation:** Notice how the players move and receive and pass the ball. Body movements are important in this drill. **Note:** Add an extra defender, limit number of touches.

Heading Activity



Organization: One 30 yard x 30 yard grid with a smaller 3 yard X 3 yard grid inside. Two groups of players. One group of players on the outside grid with a soccer ball in their hands. The players on the inside of the grid (player#1) run or show to a player on the outside of the grid (player#2). Player #2 underhand tosses the ball to player #1 who showed for them. Player #1 heads the ball back to the outside player. Player #1 next runs into the smaller grid and looks to show for different player on the outside. **Coaching points:** Eyes open, mouth shut. **Be the Hammer, not the nail.**

Split the Defenders



Organization: Form 3 teams of two players. 25x25 yard grid. The object of the game is for the four outside players to keep possession and keep the ball away from the "O" team. Teams score a point when they see an opportunity to pass the ball in between the two defenders and the pass reaches their team-mate who is diagonally across the grid. If a team makes a mistake, those two go in the middle and the two defenders go to the outside cones.

DRILLS & ACTIVITIES

Fifth Grade (U11) & Sixth Grade (U12)

Ball Control and Finishing



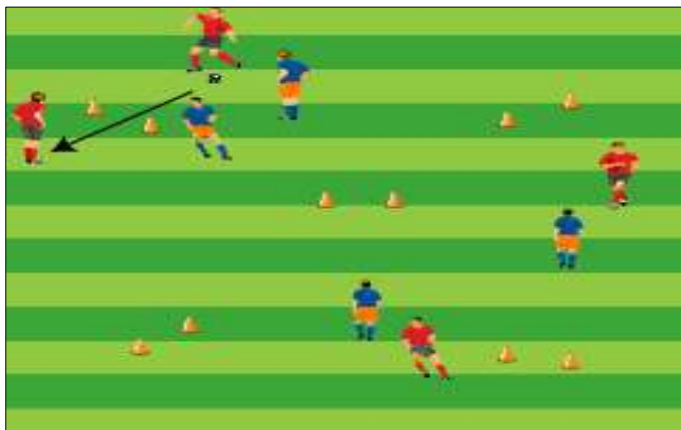
Organization: The players are positioned in a triangle in front of a goal with a goalkeeper. "A" passes to "B", who receives the ball, dribbles in "C's" direction and passes the ball to "C". "C" receives the ball and dribbles to the edge of the penalty area and shoots on goal. Every player rotates one position. Variation: Vary distance between the players.

5 vs. 5 with Substitutes



Organization: Focus: Fast runs due to the field format and rules. Small Sided Game. Theme: Combination play. Number of Players: 17. 5 vs. 5 with two goalkeepers. Field is about 40 yds long and the width of the penalty area (16 yds). After a minute and a half the other team substitutes one of the playing teams. Progression: Small sided game with 2 touch rule. Small sided game with 2 touch rule on own half and scoring team retain possession. Small sided game with free play, the ball has to remain in motion.

The Parma Game



Organization: 2 Teams, sizes = 4-6 players. Goals are two small cones. You need one more goal than there are players for one team. (So for 4v4 you have 5 goals, etc...). The goals should be about 2-3 feet apart and should be distributed around the pitch. To score goal, a player from one team has to pass the ball through the goal, where a player from his team controls the ball on the other side without any of the opposition touching it first. (You can score in either side of the goal.) You cannot soccer on the same goal times in a row, unless the opposition get the ball.

DRILLS & ACTIVITIES

Fifth Grade (U11) & Sixth Grade (U12)

1 v 1 Duel with Four Neutral Players



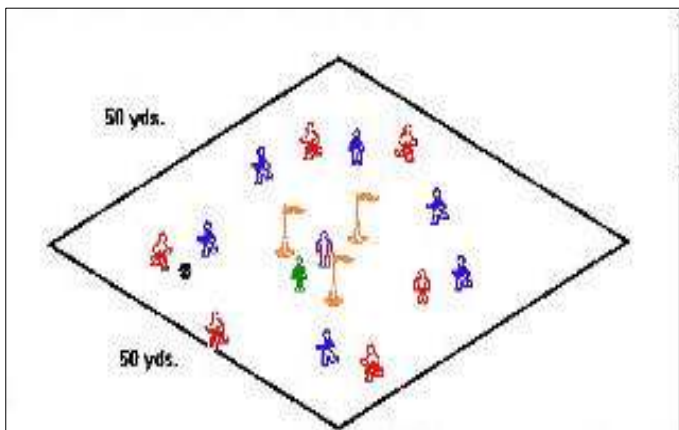
Organization: Improve passing and receiving with an opponent from behind. 6 players needed. "1" players has the ball and tries to retain ball possession with help from a neutral player. (Substitute regularly). **Progression:** Neutral player has a maximum of 3 touches. Cannot play to same Neutral player 2 times in a row. **Playing format:** How many times the neutral players are being passed to? How many times is the deepest player being passed to? Instead of passing deep to a neutral player, pass deep into a goal. **Coaching Points:** Taking the ball and turning away. Explosive and moves with the ball.

Penalty Box Shootout



Organization: Play takes place inside the penalty box. Play continues until keeper makes a save and maintains possession or until the ball goes out of bounds. Coach immediately serves a new ball when this happens. The team in possession attacks, the other team defends. When possession is won, that team immediately tries to score. **Coaching Points:** Teams are encouraged to shoot rather than play "good soccer". Look for half chances and rebounds. If play becomes too bunched around goal, prohibit players from entering keeper's (6 yard) box unless in pursuit of a rebound.

Triangle Goal Game



Organization: Set up a triangular goal in the middle of a 50 x 50 grid. Play an even sided game with both teams having their own keeper. Both teams try to score through any one of the three sides of the triangular goal. It is best to place the goal in the center of a 20 yard in diameter circle, with only the keepers allowed inside the circle. When a keeper catches the ball, his or her team must take the ball outside of the grid before they may attack again. **Coaching Points:** Attacking and defending, principles of play, shooting, finishing, possession, goalkeeper positioning, shot saving and distribution.

TEAM MANAGEMENT

Effective communication and coordination with the parents of your players will make coaching a lot more enjoyable. The first step is to speak with the parents prior to the first practice. Have the following information ready to discuss or hand out (if applicable):

1. Identify your Philosophy of Coaching and Goals for the Season.
 - a. At the U6 and U8 age group, your philosophy should be something similar to, “Success and excellence for this team will be measured in the number of players who continue playing next season, and how much fun they have during the season.”
 - b. Winning is not a measure of success.
2. Make sure you have all the players’ information from SSA.
3. Make sure you have all the parents’ contact information.
4. Identify Player Responsibilities.
 - a. I.E. Players must bring an inflated soccer ball, water and appropriate clothing to every practice.
 - b. Discuss expectations of the players concerning attitude and sportsmanship.
5. Identify Parent Responsibilities.
 - a. Discuss expectations of the parents concerning communication with the coach.
 - b. Emphasize that you will always remain behind with a player if the parent is late, but the expectation is that parents pick up their children immediately at the end of practice.
6. Provide each child with the following.
 - a. A game schedule.
 - b. Uniform.
7. Have a sign-up sheet for post-game snacks.
8. Provide the parents with your contact information.
 - a. If parents have concerns, encourage them to call or e-mail you.
 - b. Conversations with a displeased parent should not occur before practice or immediately following a game.

PLANNING & EXECUTING YOUR PRACTICE

Taking several minutes to outline your practice session prior to arriving at the field will help ensure that the time you have with the players is well spent. Parents trust you to spend quality time with their children, and this trust should not be betrayed. SSA strongly suggests that you do the following:

1. REMEMBER – The game is the best teacher, but you cannot have the players just scrimmage for all practice – they need to practice specific skills and concepts in order to have something to use in a scrimmage.
2. Look at the age appropriate drills in this manual, or from other resources, and create your practice outline.
 - a. Each training session should have a focus, which is referred to as the "theme" of the session. *As the players get older, the "theme" of the practice should be based on the needs of the players, which is determined by watching them play a match. This is called "match analysis".*
 - b. Pick out several drills and make simple notes about setting them up, and what items need to be explained to the players – REPETITION IS NECESSARY.
 - c. Pre-determine roughly how much time you will spend on each drill.
 - d. Conditioning (running) is a critical component of soccer, but getting the players to enjoy conditioning is difficult – utilize some activities that have "conditioning" components.
3. Bring a cell phone for use in case of an emergency.
4. Arrive at the field before you have told your players to arrive.
5. Consider doing some simple stretches or other activities to get the players' minds into practice.
6. Use your notes as a guide to lead practice.
 - a. Deviate from the notes if necessary, but do not "wing it" too much.
 - b. Adjust the times of drills, activities, etc... as directed by the pace, ability and attention of the players.
7. Avoid over-talking a subject or concept – the game is the best teacher.
8. Look for coaching moments.
 - a. Addressing the player(s) at these times will make the most impact.
 - b. Don't over-correct, children know when they mess up – correct the actions that are continually done incorrectly.
9. End practice at the predetermined time.
10. Do not, under any circumstances, leave the field until all children have been picked up.

PROPER PRACTICE STRUCTURE

Complete practices need to have the following components:

1. Warm-up
 - a. Includes stretching, if necessary.
 - b. Should include non-explosive activity which has some relationship to the session.
 - c. Should last for the first quarter of the session and steadily increase in intensity.
2. Core Exercises (Drills or Activities)
 - a. These exercises are designed to emphasize the coaching themes for the practice.
 - b. They should not be too complicated and should have a common theme.
3. Practice Game (Scrimmage or Small-sided game [5 v 5])
 - a. Takes place toward the end of the session.
 - b. The coach may stop the activity early in the practice game to make points, but at some point the play should be allowed to continue uninterrupted for an extended period.
 - c. Small-sided games (less than the “normal” number of players on each team) are great ideas.
4. Cool-down
 - a. Players can stretch and listen to the coach. This is the time to give feedback on the practice and to give directions for the next game (weather information, who is bringing snacks, etc...).

GAME DAY RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Arrive at the field at least 15 minutes prior to the time you told the players to arrive.
2. Check the playing surface and equipment for safety (I.E. objects on the field, goals are secured).
3. Make sure you have a game ball that is properly inflated.
 - Under-inflated balls can cause ankle injuries.
4. Confirm the number of players available.
 - If you are short players, notify the referee and the other coach.
5. Organize a warm up for your players – lots of movement – not just kicking on goal.
6. If you have a referee, organize your players for referee check- in.
 - If no referee, find the SSA Field Supervisor.
7. Coordinate your player rotation to make sure all players receive equal playing time.
8. Make sure all your comments are very positive.
9. Make sure each player drinks water or some kind of sports drink to stay hydrated.
 - This is also necessary in cold weather; players still sweat even when they don't think they do.
10. Players should be aware of the direction they are attacking.
11. During the game players must be allowed to run around freely – bunch ball is a natural occurrence in the younger age groups.
12. In the younger age groups, positions are not necessary, and although it is tempting to leave a player back to defend the goal, this is developmentally inappropriate.
13. Under no circumstances should children be made to stand in a position, stand on a line or in a certain area.
14. Upon completion of the game, line up your players and shake hands with the opposing team and coach.
15. Lastly, before you leave, make sure the sideline is clear of trash.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- **United States Soccer Federation “Player Development Guide”**
 - Best Practices for Coaching Soccer in the United States
 - www.USSoccer.com

- **Colorado Youth Soccer Association**
 - <http://www.csysa.org/index.html>

- **Coaching Soccer 101**
 - www.soccercoaching101.com/drills

- **Jeff Pill’s Online Drills**
 - www.jaymoore.com/jpill

- **Decatur Sports Page**
 - Soccer Drills
 - www.dprsports.com/drills

- **Soccer Xpert**
 - www.soccerxpert.com

- **Kudda: Soccer**
 - Free Youth Sports Coaching Videos
 - www.kudda.com/sports/soccer

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PRE-K (U5) & K (U6) LAWS OF THE GAME (U.S. YOUTH SOCCER W/SSA MODIFICATIONS)

LAW 1 – THE FIELD

A. Dimensions:

The field of play shall be rectangular, its length being not more than 30 yards nor less than 20 yards and its width not more than 20 yards and not less than 15 yards. The length in all cases shall exceed the width.

B. Markings:

1. Distinctive lines not more than five (5) inches wide.
2. A halfway line shall be marked out across the field.
3. A center circle with a three (3) yard radius.
4. Four corner arcs with a two (2) foot radius.
5. Goal area: none.

LAW II – THE BALL

Size three (3)

LAW III – NUMBER OF PLAYERS

- A. Maximum number of players on the field at any one time is three (3). Game played without goalkeepers.
- B. Maximum number of players on the roster should be: six (6).
- C. Substitutions:
1. Injuries.
 2. Any dead ball (kick-in).
- D. **Playing Time: Each player shall play a minimum of 50% of the total playing time.**

LAW IV – PLAYERS EQUIPMENT

The basic equipment of a player consists of the following:

- A. A jersey or shirt (same color for all players on a team).
- B. Shorts
- C. Stockings – must completely cover the shinguards, should be the same color for all of team.
- D. Shinguards – MANDATORY for protective reasons.
- E. Footwear – tennis shoes or soft-cleated soccer shoes.

LAW V – REFEREE

- A. Coaches act as the referees. Coaches remain on the field for U-6 games.
- B. All rule infractions shall be briefly explained to the offending player.
- C. Before play can begin, the coaches will make sure all players are properly equipped.

LAW VI – DURATION OF THE GAME

- A. The game shall be divided into four (4) equal eight (8) minute quarters.
- B. There shall be a two (2) minute break between quarter one (1) and quarter two (2), and another two minute break between quarters three (3) and four (4).
- C. There shall be a half-time break of five (5) minutes between quarters two (2) and three (3).

LAW VII – START OF PLAY

- A. At the start of the game, choice of field ends and kick-off is determined by the coaches.
- B. Opponent must be three (3) yards from the center mark while kick-off is in progress.
- C. Ball must be passed (touched) to another player (no dribbling on kick-off).

LAW VIII – BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY

The ball is out of play during the following circumstances:

- A. When it has gone completely over the boundary line (on ground or air-born).
- B. When the game has been halted by an official.

LAW IX – METHOD OF SCORING

- A. A goal is scored when the whole of the ball passes over the goal line.
- B. The ball must cross the goal line between the goal posts and under the crossbar.

LAW X – OFF-SIDE

Off-side will NOT be called.

LAW XI – FOULS AND MISCONDUCT

- A. All fouls shall result in an indirect free kick.
- B. Opponents must be three (3) yards away before kick is allowed.
- C. Any player who commits one of the following offences shall be penalized by the opposing team being awarded an indirect free kick.
 - 1. Kicks or attempts to kick an opponent.
 - 2. Trips an opponent.
 - 3. Jumps at an opponent.
 - 4. Charges an opponent
 - 5. Strikes or attempts to strike an opponent
 - 6. Pushes an opponent.
 - 7. Holds an opponent.
 - 8. Spits at an opponent.
 - 9. Handles the ball deliberately.
 - 10. Plays in a dangerous manner.
 - 11. Impedes the progress of an opponent.
- D. The coaches need to explain ALL infractions to the offending players before restarting play.

LAW XII – FREE KICKS

- A. All free kicks are INDIRECT.
- B. A goal cannot be scored unless ball has been played or touched by a player other than the kicker before passing through the goal.

LAW XIII – PENALTY KICK

- A. No penalty kicks are to be taken during these games.
- B. Play is restarted with an indirect free kick.

LAW XIV – KICK-IN/THROW IN

- A. A kick-in is considered an indirect free kick with the opponent five (5) yards away from the ball.
- B. If throw in is used a second throw must be allowed if the player commits a foul on the initial attempt. The coaches shall explain the proper method before allowing player to throw in again.

LAW XV – GOAL KICK

- A. A goal kick is taken by a member of the defending team when the ball crosses the goal line outside of the goal when last touched by a member of the attacking team.
- B. The kick is taken from the edge of the goal area or from the goal line.

LAW XVI – CORNER KICK

- A. The attacking team is awarded a kick-in when the ball passes completely over the goal line outside the goal area after last being played by a member of the defending team.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Any situation not covered by what is listed above will be governed by FIFA Laws of the Game.

FIRST GRADE (U7) & SECOND GRADE (U8) LAWS OF THE GAME (U.S. YOUTH SOCCER W/SSA MODIFICATIONS)

LAW I – THE FIELD

A. Dimensions:

The field of play shall be rectangular, its length being not more than 50 yards and not less than 40 yards and its width not more than 30 yards and no less than 20 yards. The length in all cases shall exceed the width.

B. Markings:

1. Distinctive lines not more than five (5) inches wide.
2. A halfway line shall be marked out across the field.
3. A center circle with a three (5) yard radius.
4. Four corner arcs each with a two (2) foot radius.
5. Goal area: Three (3) yards from each goal post and three (3) yards into the field of play joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line.

LAW II – THE BALL

First Grade – Size three (3) -- Second Grade – Size four (4)

LAW III – NUMBER OF PLAYERS

- A. Maximum number of players on the field at any one time is four (4). Game played with goalkeepers.
1. Maximum number of players on a roster: seven (7) – 1st Grade, eight (8) – 2nd Grade.
- B. Maximum number of players on the roster should not exceed ten (10).
- C. Substitutions:
1. Injuries.
 2. Any dead ball (kick-in) with referee's permission.
- D. **Playing Time: Each player shall play a minimum of 50% of the total playing time.**

LAW IV – PLAYERS EQUIPMENT

The basic equipment of a player consists of the following:

- A. A jersey or shirt (same color for all players on a team, goalkeepers must be different from either team).
- B. Shorts
- C. Stockings – must completely cover the shinguards, should be same color for all of team.
- D. Shinguards – MANDATORY for protective reasons.
- E. Footwear – tennis shoes or soft-cleated soccer shoes.

LAW V – THE REFEREE

- A. Registered Referees.
- B. All rule infractions shall be briefly explained to the offending player in a helpful and instructive manner.
- C. Before play can begin, the referees will inspect all players for shinguards and proper footwear.

LAW VI – DURATION OF THE GAME

- A. The game shall be divided into four (4) equal, twelve (12) minute quarters.
- B. There shall be a two (2) minute break between quarters one and two, and another two (2) minute break between quarters three and four.
- C. There shall be a half-time break of five (5) minutes.

LAW VII – THE START OF PLAY

- A. At the start of the game, choice of field ends and kick-off determined by the referee.
- B. Opponent must be five (5) yards from the center mark until the ball has been kicked.
- C. The ball may not be touched again by the same player until it has been touched by another player of either team.
- D. The ball may not travel backward on the first touch.

LAW VIII – BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY

The ball is out of play during the following circumstances:

- A. When it has completely crossed a boundary line (on the ground or in the air).
- B. When the game has been halted by a referee.

LAW IX – METHOD OF SCORING

- A. A goal is scored when the whole of the ball passes over the goal line.
- B. The ball must cross the goal line between the goal posts and under the crossbar.

LAW X – OFF-SIDE

Off-side will NOT be called.

LAW XI – FOULS AND MISCONDUCT

- A. All fouls shall result in an indirect free kick.
- B. Opponents must be five (5) yards away before kick is allowed.
- C. Any player who commits one of the following offences shall be penalized by the opposing team being awarded an indirect free kick.
 - 1. Kicks or attempts to kick an opponent.
 - 2. Trips an opponent.
 - 3. Jumps at an opponent.
 - 4. Charges an opponent.
 - 5. Strikes or attempts to strike an opponent.
 - 6. Pushes an opponent.
 - 7. Holds an opponent.
 - 8. Spits at an opponent.
 - 9. Handles the ball deliberately.
 - 10. Plays in a dangerous manner.
 - 11. Impedes the progress of an opponent.
- D. The referee must explain ALL infractions to the offending player before restarting play.

LAW XII – FREE KICKS

- A. All free kick are INDIRECT.
- B. No kicks shall be taken by the attacking team within the defending team's penalty area.
- C. Opponents must be five (5) yards away before kick is allowed.

LAW XIII – PENALTY KICKS

No penalty kicks taken during these games.

LAW XIV – THROW-IN

- A. If a player commits a foul on the initial attempt, the referee shall explain the proper method before allowing player to throw in again.

LAW XV – GOAL KICK

- A. A goal kick is taken by a member of the defending team when the ball crosses the goal line outside of the goal when it has last been touched by a member of the attacking team.
- B. Goal kick may be taken from anywhere on the goal area line.
- C. Opponents must be outside the penalty area.

LAW XVI – CORNER KICK

- A. The attacking team is awarded a kick-in when the ball passes completely over the goal line outside of the goal area after last being played by a member of the defending team.
- B. Opponents must be five (5) yards away from the ball, or whatever is marked on the field.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Any situation not covered by what is listed above will be governed by FIFA Laws of the Game.

THIRD GRADE (U9) – FIFTH GRADE (U-11) LAWS OF THE GAME (U.S. YOUTH SOCCER W/SSA MODIFICATIONS)

LAW I – THE FIELD

A. Dimensions:

The field of play shall be rectangular, its length being not more than 80 yards and not less than 70 yards and its width not more than 50 yards and not less than 40 yards. The length in all cases shall exceed the width.

B. Markings:

1. Distinctive lines not more than five (5) inches wide.
2. A halfway line shall be marked out across the field.
3. A center circle with a ten (10) yard radius.
4. Four corner arcs with a two (2) foot radius.
5. Goal area: Six (6) yards from each goal post and six (6) yards into the field of play, joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line.
6. Penalty area: Fourteen (14) yards from the goal post and fourteen (14) yards perpendicular to the goal line.
7. Penalty mark: Ten (10) yards parallel to the goal line centered between the goal posts.

LAW II – THE BALL

Size four (4)

LAW III – NUMBER OF PLAYERS

- A. Maximum number of players on the field per team at one time can be seven (7), nine (9) or eleven (11), one of which is the goalkeeper.
- B. Maximum number of players on the roster should not exceed eleven (18).
- C. Substitutions:
1. Prior to throw-in.
 2. Prior to a goal, kick, by either team.
 3. After a goal, by either team.
 4. After an injury, by either team, when the referee stops the play.
 5. At half-time.
 6. If a player receives a caution (yellow card).
 7. Whenever the Center Referee allows.
- D. **Playing Time: Each player shall play a minimum of 50% of the total playing time.**

LAW IV – PLAYERS EQUIPMENT

The basic equipment of a player consists of the following:

- A. A jersey or shirt (same color for all players on a team except goalkeeper).
- B. Shorts
- C. Stockings – must completely cover the shinguards, should be same color for all of team.
- D. Shinguards – MANDATORY for protective reasons.
- E. Footwear – tennis shoes or soft-cleated soccer shoes.

LAW V – REFEREE

- A. A Center Referee shall be assigned to officiate each game.
- B. The Center Referee is in charge of all game activity.
- C. The referees will not be shown any visible or verbal dissent during or after the game.
- D. The Center Referee is empowered to cause the removal of any coach, player, spectator who is disruptive or who has displayed behavior contrary to the spirit of the game and/or the rules of play.
- E. All rule infractions shall be briefly explained to the offending player.
- F. Before play can begin, the referees will inspect all players for shinguards and proper footwear.

LAW VI – ASSISTANT REFEREES

- A. In addition to the Center Referee, the league will assign two (2) Assistant Referees for each scheduled game.

- B. The Assistant Referees will help the Center Referee decide among other things, ball in and out of play, offside, and goal scoring.
- C. The Assistant Referee must remember that his/her opinion may or may not be accepted by the Center Referee.

LAW VII – DURATION OF THE GAME

- A. The game shall be divided into two (2) equal halves of twenty-five (25) minutes each.
- B. Half-time break of five (5) minutes.

LAW VIII – START OF PLAY

- A. At the start of the game, choice of field ends and kick-off determined by the Center Referee.
- B. Opponent must be ten (10) yards from the center mark while ball is kicked.
- C. The ball may not be touched again by the same player until it has been touched by another player of either team.

LAW IX – BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY

The ball is out of play during the following circumstances:

- A. When it has completely crossed a boundary line (on the ground or in the air).
- B. When the game has been halted by an official.

LAW X – METHOD OF SCORING

- A. A goal is scored when the whole of the ball passes over the goal line.
- B. The ball must cross the goal line between the goal posts and under the crossbar.

LAW XI – OFFSIDE

- A. A player is considered offside if he is nearer to the opponent's goal line than the ball at the time the ball is kicked except in the following cases:
 - 1. The player is in his own half of the field.
 - 2. The player is not nearer to his opponent's goal line than at least two of his opponents.
- B. A player is only penalized for being offside if the ball is played or touched by one of his team and he is involved in active play in one of the following ways:
 - 1. Interfering with play.
 - 2. Interfering with an opponent.
 - 3. Gaining an advantage by being in an offside position.

LAW XII – FOULS AND MISCONDUCT

- A. Opponents must be ten (10) yards away before kick is allowed.
- B. The referee should explain infraction to the offending player before restarting play.
- C. Any player who commits one of the following offences shall be penalized by the opposing team being awarded a direct free-kick.
 - 1. Kicks or attempts to kick an opponent.
 - 2. Trips or attempts to trip an opponent.
 - 3. Jumps at an opponent.
 - 4. Charges an opponent (except when the charge is shoulder to shoulder and when the player is playing the ball or attempting to play the ball).
 - 5. Strikes or attempts to strike an opponent.
 - 6. Pushes an opponent.
 - 7. Holds an opponent.
 - 8. Spits at an opponent.
 - 9. Handles the ball deliberately. (It is not considered a "hand ball" when the ball hits the players hand and no advantage is gained. A player must deliberately try to handle the ball for a foul to occur.)
- D. Indirect free kicks are awarded if the following should occur:
 - 1. Dangerous play
 - 2. Charging shoulder to shoulder while away from the ball.
 - 3. Charging the goalkeeper when not in possession of the ball.

- 4. The goalkeeper takes more than six (6) seconds or delays the game.
- E. No cautions or ejections shall be issued to players except by the Center Referee.
- F. The goalkeeper may handle the ball while inside the penalty area unless the ball is passed back to the goalkeeper by a teammate (pass must be intentional and played with the feet). The goalkeeper may not handle the ball a second time after gaining control until the ball has been touched by another player.

LAW XIII – FREE KICKS

Free kicks are one of two types

- A. Direct kick – A goal can be scored directly against the offending team.
- B. Indirect free kick – A kick awarded after a foul where the ball must be touched by another player from either team before going into the goal.
- C. For both types of kicks, opponents must be ten (10) yards away before kick is allowed.

LAW XIV – PENALTY KICKS

- A. A penalty kick is taken from the penalty mark.
- B. It is awarded when any of the fouls that result in a direct kick occur inside the penalty area.
- C. Only the goalkeeper and the kicker are allowed inside the penalty area.
- D. Opponents must be ten (10) yards away before kick is allowed.
- E. The goalkeeper must stay on the goal line until the ball is kicked.
- F. The kicker cannot touch the ball twice until it has been touched by another player.

LAW XV – THROW-IN

- A. A throw-in is awarded to the defending team when the attacking team causes the ball to leave the field of play by crossing completely over the sideline.
- B. The player making the throw-in must have both hands on the ball and has both feet on the ground at the time of the throw. The ball must be thrown from a starting point directly behind the head.
- C. When a ball passes over a touchline, it will be thrown in from the point where it crossed the line.

LAW XVI – GOAL KICK

- A. A goal kick is taken by a member of the defending team when the ball crosses the goal line outside of the goal when the ball is last touched by a member of the attacking team.
- B. The kick is taken from any point within the goal area (6 yard box).
- C. The ball must leave the penalty area before it can be touched by a player of either team.

LAW XVII – CORNER KICK

- A. The attacking team is awarded a corner kick when the ball passes completely over the goal line outside of the goal area after last being played by a member of the defending team.
- B. The kick is taken from within the corner arc on the side of the field that the ball left the field of play.
- C. No defending player may be within the eight (8) or 10 (ten) yards of the ball, whatever is marked on the field.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Any situation not covered by what is listed above will be governed by FIFA Laws of the Game.