

For more tips and drills, or for more information on the rules specific to your age group, please visit our website:

www.WAXAHACHIESOCCER.org



COACHING MANUAL

4u – 8u



Table of Contents

About WSA	2
Basics	3
Coaching 101	3
Drills	9
Extras	31
Notes	35



About WSA



Notes

The Waxahachie Soccer Association (WSA) welcomes you to the world of coaching youth soccer.

WSA is a place where every child plays in an atmosphere of good sportsmanship and positive coaching. The emphasis in WSA is on having fun while learning the game.

Developing soccer skills, physical attributes, tactical awareness and knowledge of the game are critical to promoting self-efficacy and increasing self-esteem in players. Thus, they perform at a higher level, avoid injury, see the results of their hard work and achievement and most importantly, have fun.

As a volunteer coach, your participation in the program should be fun, as well. For this reason, we have created this manual to help build your confidence level as a coach and therefore allow you to be comfortable enough to have fun.

The content of this manual is drawn from the knowledge and experience of WSA's Director of Coach and Player Development and our Board Members; people with vast soccer knowledge, yet volunteers of WSA—just like you. The soccer skills and coaching techniques included in this manual have been carefully selected as appropriate for the level of your players. We encourage you to use the techniques in this manual to train young players in the skills most needed at their level of development and play. With these guidelines and recommendations, your coaching experience will be satisfying for both you and your players.

We encourage you to also visit our website for videos on how to perform a few common soccer skills and to also utilize our Director of Coach and Player Development as well as your Commissioner for any questions or help.

Thank you for volunteering to coach this season!

-WSA Board



RED CARD: Presented to a player by the referee for dangerous behavior or severe unsportsmanlike behavior. Also, two yellow cards equal a red card. A player receiving a red card must immediately leave the playing area and the team must play short a player for the remainder of the game. The player receiving the red card must also sit out an additional game.

SIDE LINE/TOUCH LINE: The line which runs the full length of the sides of the field.

SLIDE TACKLE: When a player slides in to kick the ball away from a player. The player must slide in with the studs of their cleats pointed down, away from the player or the sliding player will receive a foul. This play is reserved for teams U10 and older due to the dangerous nature of the play.

SUBSTITUTION: Trading one on-field player for one off-field player. May only be done at the restart of a play when your team has possession of the ball, or when the other team has possession of the ball while they are also using a substitution. You may substitute as many players at a time as you wish. The on-field player must completely leave the field before the off-field player may enter.

THROW IN: A type of restart where a player throws the ball from behind his head with two hands while standing with both feet on the ground behind a sideline; taken by a player opposite the team that last touched the ball before it went out of bounds across a sideline.

Soccer is played by two teams on a rectangular field. The game is played in either two halves of equal time (for 9U and older) or four quarters of equal time (for 8U and younger). The length of each half/quarter is determined by the age of the children playing.

Physical size is not an important factor in becoming a skilled and successful soccer player. Because of the game's pace, every child participates in the action while on the field.

The Team

- 4U teams have 3 players on the field and must have at least 3 players in order to start the game.
- 5U-8U teams have 4 players on the field and must have at least 3 players in order to start the game.

Each team offers the following positions:

- **Defender:** primary duty is to prevent the opponent from having a good shot at the goal. This player also works to gain possession of the ball and pass it to a teammate for an attack.
- **Midfielder:** plays a "transitional" game from defense to offense and vice versa. Usually the midfielder is the most active player on the field and key to maintaining team continuity.
- **Forward:** primary responsibility is to score, and assist the midfield in shifting play from defense to offense.

It's important to keep in mind that any player on a team may score a goal, regardless of position.

For U4 - U6, you will not need to worry too much about what position each player is playing in. The key for these age groups is to teach the fundamental basics of soccer.

Equipment: What Players Need

Soccer is played with a minimal amount of required equipment. All players will be required to wear shinguards at every practice and game; this is for insurance purposes. If a player is injured during practice or a game- they will not be covered if they were not wearing shinguards.

Each team will also have a uniform (jersey and shorts) and socks which will need to be worn at all games. Additionally, player will need to have soccer socks which come up to at least their knee and cover their shinguards. These socks can

either match their uniform or be a different color or pattern. Every player should also have a ball of appropriate size for their age. U8 and under will use a size 3 ball. Players should bring their ball to every practice and game.

Equipment: What Coaches Need

A coach must always come to the field prepared. Below is a basic list of recommended equipment you should have with you on activity day:

- a basic first-aid kit
- water container (filled with water)
- soccer balls
- an extra pair of shinguards
- whistle
- cones

WSA may have some equipment that you may *borrow*. Please contact the Director of Coach and Player Development to obtain this equipment.

The Officials

The Referee is the ultimate authority during the game – no matter their age. The referee’s chief responsibilities are to make the game as fun, fair and safe for the players as possible.

The referee enforces the rules — which, in soccer, are called “Laws” — by calling fouls (offenses) and determining if goals have been scored.

Assistant referees provide vital assistance to the referee by signaling when the ball has gone out of play and which team gets possession. Assistant referees also assist with substitutions and the general control of the game.

Your team’s age will determine how many referees you will have for each game. U8 and under will have one center referee.

WSA has a zero tolerance policy for referee abuse. Even if you feel that a referee has made a bad call, it is never appropriate to scream at or berate a referee. Not only is this behavior forbidden and can cause you to be thrown from the game (along with other serious consequences), you must also remember that as the coach, you are setting an example for the players watching you. All of our referees are hired by North Texas and professionally trained, but they are human and they do make mistakes.

The Field

The field is divided in two halves. The center circle in the middle of the field is used to start the game, to start the second half and to restart after a goal has been scored.

There is a large rectangular area and a smaller rectangular area found at each end of the field. These are vital areas for both teams, and are where penalty kicks are

GOAL LINE/ END LINE: The line which touches either goal at the ends of the field.

HALF FIELD LINE: The line which runs directly across the center of the field and thru the middle of the center circle.

HANDBALL: When the ball strikes a player between the armpit and the fingers on their arm- even if the player did not mean to hit the ball. If a handball is called, the opposing team will receive a free kick from the point of occurrence.

HEADER: To play the ball using your head. Coaches should be careful while teaching this method of play as concussions are prevalent. Not allowed for players in U12 and younger.

INDIRECT KICK: Any kick where the ball must touch at least one other player before entering the goal for a score.

KICK-OFF: How the game is started or restarted after a goal is scored. The starting of the game at the beginning or after halftime/quarters will be determined by the referee. The restart of the game after a goal will be by the team who did not score the goal. For the game to be considered as “started” the ball must pass across the half field line, if it is not, the other team may be awarded the start.

MARK: In man-to-man coverage the defender is said to mark (rather than guard) the attacker.

MIDFIELDER: A player who links the offense with the defense and helps to play both roles. This player is generally involved in all goal scoring plays because they retrieve the ball from the defense and dribble it thru the middle to pass up to the offense where a goal can be scored.

OFFENDER: The attacking players on a team. These are the players who generally score the goals.

PASSING: Passing is playing the ball to a teammate or to a space where a teammate can run to the ball. A player may lightly tap the ball to a teammate several feet away or kick it strongly to move it down the field. The ball may scoot along the ground or may be kicked into the air.

Most players use two types of kicks to pass to a teammate. One is the instep drive which is a powerful kick. The other kick is called a push pass. Performed using the inside of the foot, the push pass is much more accurate than the instep drive, but is less powerful.

PENALTY: If a foul is called on an opposing player within the penalty box of the opposing team, a penalty kick will be awarded to the attacking team.

PENALTY KICK: One player from the team awarded the penalty will stand with the ball on the penalty spot (a mark on the forward most line of the penalty box). The goalie of the opposing team will stand on their goal line within the goal box anywhere they wish. All other players will stand behind the half field line. On the referee’s whistle, the attacking player will be allowed to take one kick on the ball.

NO ONE other than the attacking player may move off of their line until the ball has been struck. Once the ball has been struck, all players may attempt to retrieve the ball.

CENTER CIRCLE: A circular marking in the center of the field where kick-offs are taken to start or restart a game.

COACHES BOX: The area where a coach is to remain during the game.

CONTROLLING: Controlling (or trapping) is receiving the ball in flight or on the ground, and then controlling it by either dribbling or passing the ball to teammates. There are many ways to trap a ball:

- allowing it to hit the chest at an angle that deflects the ball to the ground where it can be controlled;
- allowing it to hit the thigh or bent knee to deflect the ball to the ground where it can be controlled; or
- using the foot to receive/control the ball.

CORNER ARCS: The mark in each corner of the field where corner kicks are taken.

CORNER KICK: If the ball crosses the goal line due to a touch by the defending team (even if it was bounced off of the player), the attacking team is awarded a corner kick. One player from the attacking team will kick the ball from the nearest corner arc where the offense occurred. All players may participate in a corner kick from anywhere on the field.

DRIBBLING: Dribbling is transporting the ball under control from one area to another. Soccer players cannot use their hands. Players dribble the ball with their feet, using light taps on the ball to move it along the ground.

DEFENDER: The player/s who job is solely to protect the goal. They are to defend the goal from the opposing team.

DIRECT KICK: Any kick where the ball may pass directly into the goal for a score.

EJECTION: A player or coach may be ejected from the game due to unsportsmanlike behavior or receiving a red card. The player or coach must leave the playing area immediately. If a coach is ejected, only a registered assistant coach may continue to coach the game- if there is no registered assistant coach, the team must forfeit. If a player is ejected from the game, the team must play short a player for the remainder of the game.

FORWARD: The forward most players on the team. Usually there are two forwards, a left and a right. The forward is considered to be a part of the offense for a team.

FOUL: A violation of the playing rules which a referee will award a free kick for. A foul may be accompanied by a card if the offense was serious or has happened multiple times by the same player.

FREE KICK: A free kick will be awarded to the opposing team when a foul has been committed by any player. The free kick will take place from the spot where the offense occurred. All players may participate in a free kick from anywhere on the field. These can be direct or indirect kicks.

GOALKEEPER: The only player on the team who is allowed to use their hands, in order to do so- the “keeper” must stay within the penalty box, if they travel outside of the penalty box, they are then held to the same rules as the rest of the team. The “goalie” is the most protected player on the field, a player can be red-carded and ejected from the game if they commit a foul upon the goalkeeper.

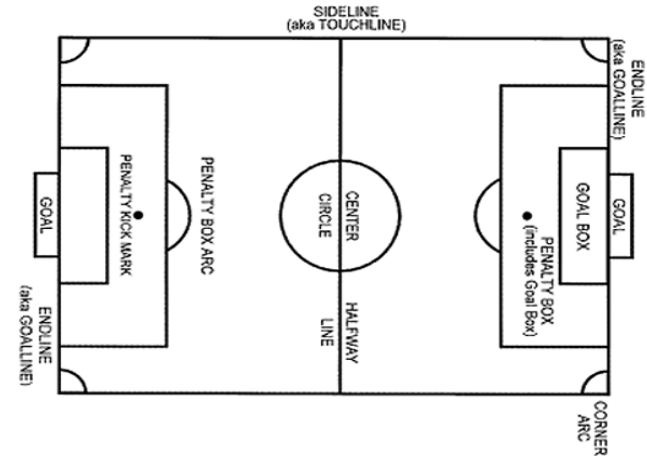
taken.

The four corners of the field are inscribed with three-foot arcs where corner kicks are taken.

The U8 and under fields will only have the goal box, no penalty box.

In U5-U8, the coach must remain on the touchline and can only enter the field if the referee requests for them to.

In U4, one coach may be on the field- but must remain near their touchline and stay out of all plays. No one may be behind the goal line at any time, for any reason.



Start and Restart of the Ball

Generally, the Laws require that referees stop the game only when something has happened which they decide is unfair or unsafe. Important elements of the Laws to be familiar with include Ball In and Out of Play, Fouls and Misconduct.

• Kick-Off

To start the game or the second half, and after each goal, a kick-off is taken from the center circle. The player who kicked the ball cannot touch it again until it has been touched by any other player.

• Throw-In

After the ball has completely crossed the side boundary lines — called touch lines — a throw-in is awarded against the team that last touched the ball. The throw-in is taken from where the ball left the field and must be thrown with two hands on the ball from behind and over the head, while both feet are on the ground on or behind the touch line.

• Goal Kick

The goal kick is taken by the defending team each time the ball crosses the goal line without a goal being scored and was last touched by an attacking player. The ball may be placed anywhere in the goal area and is not considered back in

play until it has been kicked out of the penalty area. The player who kicked the ball cannot touch it again until it has been touched by any other player.

● **Corner Kick**

This kick is taken by the attacking team each time the ball is kicked by the defense over its own goal line without a goal being scored. The ball is placed within the three-foot arc in the corner of the field (nearest to where the ball went out of play) and kicked into play by the attacking team. The player who kicked the ball cannot touch it again until it has been touched by any other player.



PLAYING RULES

	4U	5/6U	7/8U
# of Players on Field	3v3 (3 with NO goalie)	4v4 (4 with NO goalie)	4v4 (4 with NO goalie)
Min # of Players to Start	3	3	3
Game Time	6 min Quarters 2 min Between Quarters 5 min Halftime	8 min Quarters 2 min Between Quarters 5 min Halftime	10 min Quarters 2 min Between Quarters 5 min Halftime
Player Substitution	Quarters Halftime Injury	Quarters Halftime Injury	Quarters Halftime Injury
Field Size (approx. yds)	20x30	20x30	20x30
Goal Size	6ft X 4ft	6ft X 4ft	6ft X 4ft
Out of Bounds Restart	Throw-In	Throw-In	Throw-In
Penalty Kicks	No	No	No
Offside Rule	No	No	No

Definitions

ATTACKING PLAYER/TEAM: The player/team who has possession of the ball.

ASSIST: When a goal is scored directly from a pass from one player to another, the player who passed the ball to the goal scorer made an “assist”.

BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY: For the ball to pass out of play, all of it must be outside all of the sideline or goal line (the lines can be up to five inches wide). Thus, a ball on the line is in play. Even a ball resting on the ground just outside the line is in play if any part of it is projecting over the line. Similarly, a goal is not scored until all the ball has passed over all the goal line. The position of the player controlling or dribbling the ball does not matter -- he can be standing or running with both feet outside the touchline, but as long as the ball is in play the game goes on.



COACHING 101

Now that you have familiarized yourself with the game of soccer - you are probably thinking “well that’s all great information to have, but how do I use it? How do I coach?” Let us give you some direction.

Register to be a Coach

First things first- you need to register through GotSport to be a coach. This process will include a background check and a SafeSport Course - once completed, we will assign you to your team. Visit the Coach page of our website for instructions on registration.

Please email your commissioner once you have registered so that they know to look for your approval.

This process must be completed for every coach and assistant coach on your team. Reports and Courses are good for one soccer year (July thru June), so even if you submitted them for the Spring season- they must be completed every Fall.

Determine Teams’ Identity

There are two things used to determine a teams’ identity- team color and team name. It is up to you to decide the team name and team color, some coaches think it’s best to ask the team for their opinion- that will only cause stress in the long run because you can’t please everyone. Most parents/players are content with being told their team name and color.

Determine Teams’ Schedule

Deciding when and where you would like to hold practices is entirely up to you.

- When Your Team Will Practice
 - Keep in mind that most parents work so anything before 5pm is not a good idea. Most teams hold practice two times a week. You should also keep in mind your team’s age:
 - U4: 45 minutes is about all of the attention span that you will get out of this age. Schedule your practice to last an hour that way with everyone arriving late and water breaks you’ll be right about on time.
 - U5-U8: 1 hour should be plenty for this age group
- Where Your Team Will Practice
 - Any public park or school
 - Keep in mind that places like Lions Park will be very busy on peak practice days (Monday, Tuesday and Thursday).

SMALL SIDED SCRIMMAGE

Concept:

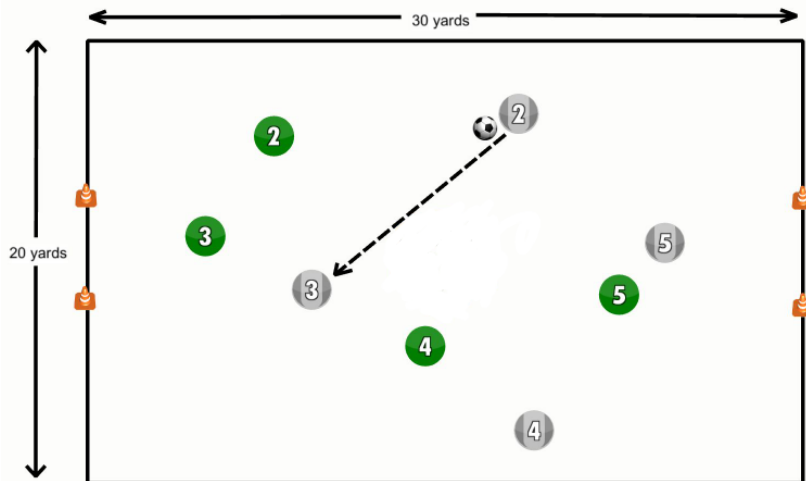
Divide the players into two teams using pinnies. Both teams should have matching numbers. If you do not have enough players for two full teams, have more players on one team. The team with less players should focus on defense. Set up 3 yard goals on either end of a 20yd x 30yd field.

Direction:

Play as game-like as possible using throw-ins and even a whistle if possible. If possible, set players up using the best format for your age group. 4U should play in a triangle (1 defender and two forwards) while 5U-8U should play in a diamond (1 defender, 2 midfielders and 1 forward).

Coach Notes:

Give minimal direction letting the players make mistakes and discover on their own.



- If there are defined field areas (either lined or with goals), only use the field size appropriate for your teams age.
- NO ONE can practice at the Sports Complex.

Team Meeting

Decide where and when you'd like to hold your team meeting. Some coaches choose a neutral location (like Chick-fil-A or a park) where the kids can go play while the parents talk – others like to hold it 30 minutes before their first practice. There are several things that you'll want to accomplish at this meeting:

1. Introduce yourself. Tell them why you chose to coach.
2. Define expectations. Tell them how WSA expects them to behave (have them sign the Parent Code of Conduct). This is also the time to tell them what you expect from them.
3. Get Volunteers. Have someone volunteer to be the team parent to plan parties, make snack schedules and do reminder calls. Also, get an assistant coach. If you can't make a game, the team will have to forfeit if you do not have a registered assistant coach who has completed their requirements and been assigned to your team.
4. Tell them your team information. This includes name, color and practice information.
5. Tell them what equipment they will need to purchase- shinguards, cleats and a ball. Also, tell them about their team uniform and collect any fees (7U-18U).

Contact Your Team

Call each player on your team to let them know when/where your team meeting will be.

Hold Practices

The next thing that you will do is start holding practices. There are a few drills included in this book to help get you started.

If you would like additional assistance with practices or drills, please contact our Director of Coach and Player Development.

Keep Your Team Updated

It is your responsibility to ensure that your team is up to date with the latest WSA news and information. Some of the information you will need to distribute to your team is the schedule, picture day information, game reschedules and WSA updates. You are not responsible for calling each parent to let them know that a game has been cancelled due to the weather. You should distribute the rainout numbers for each city that you will be playing in so that the parents can call before they leave for the game. Even if it's not severe weather here, they should still call just to check.

KING OF THE JUNGLE

Concept:

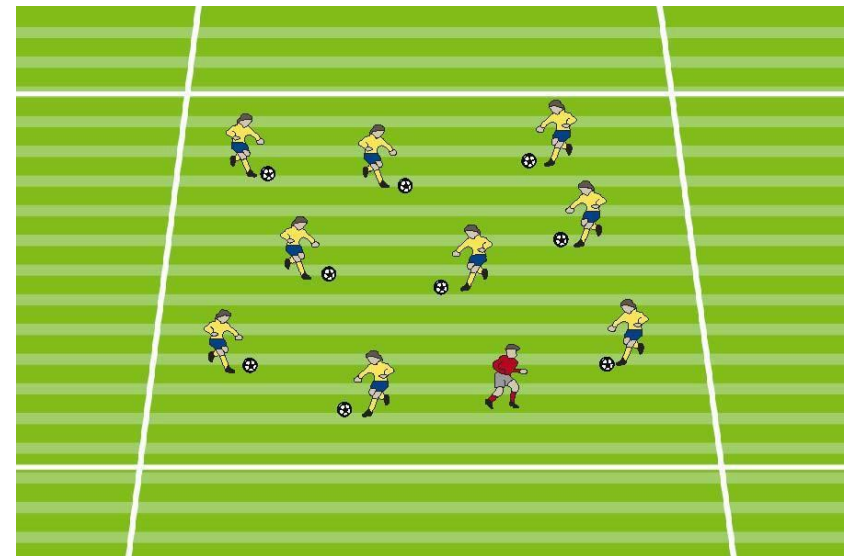
The players dribble their ball around the inside of a 25yd x 25yd grid, practicing looking up between every 2nd or 3rd touch.

Direction:

When the coach shouts "Go" one player wearing a contrasting color pinnie attempts to kick the player balls out of the grid. Players should be allowed to re-enter the game for the first one minute, and then when the coach announces that it is "Knock Out" time, they are eliminated if their ball is kicked out.

Coach Notes:

Encourage the players to keep the ball close by using soft touches and keep looking up so that they are aware of where the "tiger" is at all times.



CLEAN YOUR ROOM

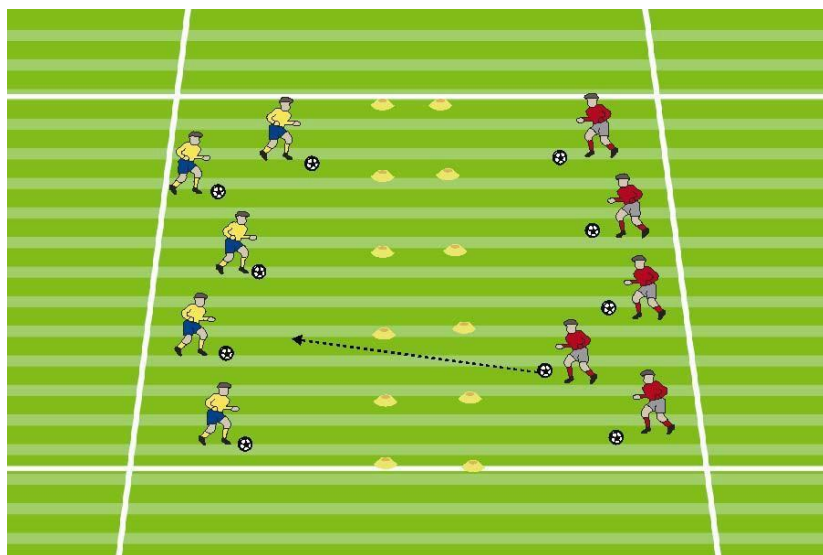
Concept:

The players are divided into two groups and each player has a ball. The two groups stand at either end of a 20yd x 25yd grid, there is a 3 yard “no go” zone marked down the middle of the grid with cones.

Direction: The object of the games is to kick as many balls as possible into the opposite half of the grid. As soon as the opponents kick a ball into one half the other team can kick it straight back. No one can touch balls that end up in the “no go” zone.

Coach Notes:

You should initially allow the children to kick the ball however they wish so that they get the hang of the game. You should then gradually introduce them to striking the ball with the upper part of the foot, keeping the toes pointed.



Getting Started

Plan Your Practice

All practices should be planned in advance and should focus on a specific technique or tactic, which in turn guide the activity for that session. The practices you select in your coaching plan should: teach; practice; improve; and refine the particular skill. Write your drills down and take them with you to the field.

Coaching Grids

Most coaches use coaching grids to organize their practice sessions. Grids are marked areas that define the space being used for a practice or game. Grids help provide boundaries, supply pressure and organize layers. The size of your grid will depend on the age, ability and number of players that you have. As a coach, you should select a grid size that allows for successful repetitions of the technique or tactic being practiced.

Individual grids are traditionally set up 10 yds wide by 10-15 yds long. Multiple small grids can quickly be adapted to create larger playing areas for small sided games.

Get Them Going

Players should be encouraged to be there early to allow you to always start your practice on time. Having explained the theme of the practice to your players, get the drills started as quickly as possible. Do not stand there talking for long periods of time, your practice time is short as is the attention span of your players.

Stop

When you want to stop the practice to make a coaching point or change the activity, it is helpful to use short sharp commands such as “Freeze” or a catch command like “Stop, Stand Still”. Try to avoid stopping the activity every time you see a mistake. Players will become frustrated and will no longer be motivated to learn if they are repeatedly stopped.

Start

When you are ready to resume activity, you can prepare them with a cue such as, “Ready to play, Play!” or 3-2-1 Live”. This additional cue draws their attention and

prepares them to be ready to start the activity together.

Do not stand in one spot, you should move continually throughout the practice area and be seen and so you can watch all players equally. When you make a coaching point, ensure that you are facing into the sun so that the players can clearly see what you are saying and doing.

Questioning

Try to avoid talking *at* the players in your practice, involve them in the process of guided discovery. Ask those questions like “Can you do it this way” and “how many ways can you do this”. The player discovers the solution through experimentation and reinforcement occurs with successful repetitions.

Coaching Young Players

Warm-up

You can use a combination of fun playground games to get the players warmed up. These warm-up activities will involve running, chasing, jumping and will help you get the group settled down and ready to listen to instructions.

Ball Familiarity

The players should be provided with an opportunity to become familiar with the ball and should be allowed high levels of repetition without having to worry about specific rules or opponents.

Fun Games

As the players become more comfortable with the ball, you can create games that allow the players to practice fundamental techniques within a fun and often competitive setting.

Small Sided Games

You should conclude each practice by playing a small sided game using the appropriate number of players, field size and rules that will be used throughout the season.

BALL BALLISTICS

Concept:

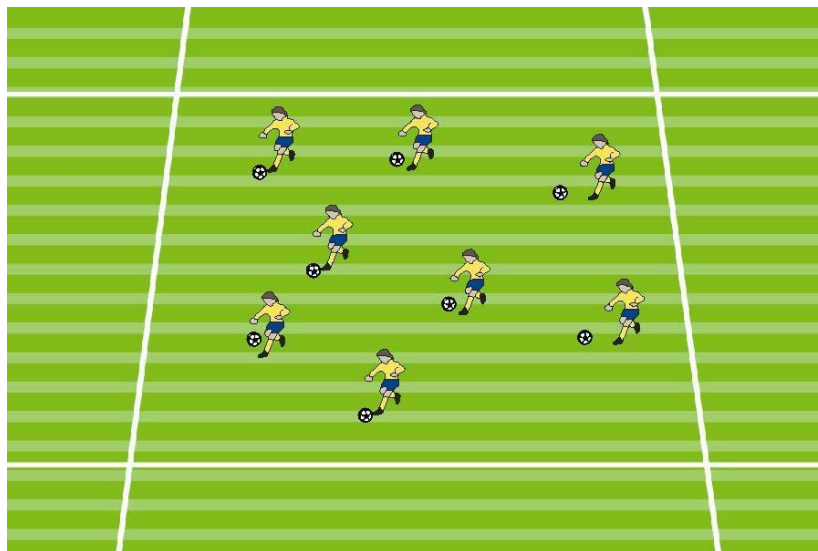
Each player stands with a ball at their feet. The coach stands in front and demonstrates each movement that he wants the players to copy.

Direction:

- Put one foot on the ball and roll it backwards and forwards with the sole of the foot. Also try with the weaker foot.
- Place the ball between the inside of both feet and try to pass the ball back and forth between each foot.
- Place one foot alongside the ball and the other on top of the ball. Quickly change the standing foot and the foot on the ball. Try repeating several times back and forth.

Coach Notes:

You can create a number of basic ball ballistic activities that allow the players to become comfortable using various surfaces of the feet.



SESSION FOUR

THE PLAN

- Pairs Tag (10 Minutes)
- Ball Ballistics (10 Minutes)
- Clean Your Room (10 Minutes)
- King of the Jungle (10 Minutes)
- Small Sided Scrimmage (15 Minutes)

PAIRS TAG

Concept:

Two sets of two players are connected by each holding on to the end of pinnie. They cannot let go of the pinnie until the game is over. The other players run all around the inside of a 20yd x 20yd grid.

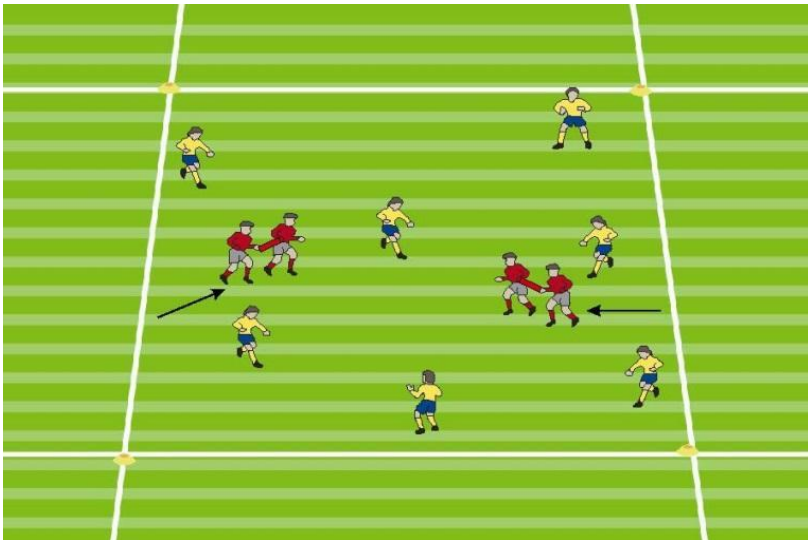
Direction:

The two sets of pairs have to chase after the other players and tag them. Once tagged the players run over and stand by the coach until all of the remaining players have been tagged.

Coach Notes:

The players holding the pinnie need to communicate with each other and determine which direction they are going to run in.

The two sets of pairs can communicate between each other and work as a team to corner the players they are chasing.



SESSION ONE

THE PLAN

- Number Runaround (10 Minutes)
- Ball Ballistics (10 Minutes)
- Through The Gates (10 Minutes)
- The Numbers Game (10 Minutes)
- Small Sided Scrimmage (15 Minutes)

NUMBER RUNAROUND

Concept:

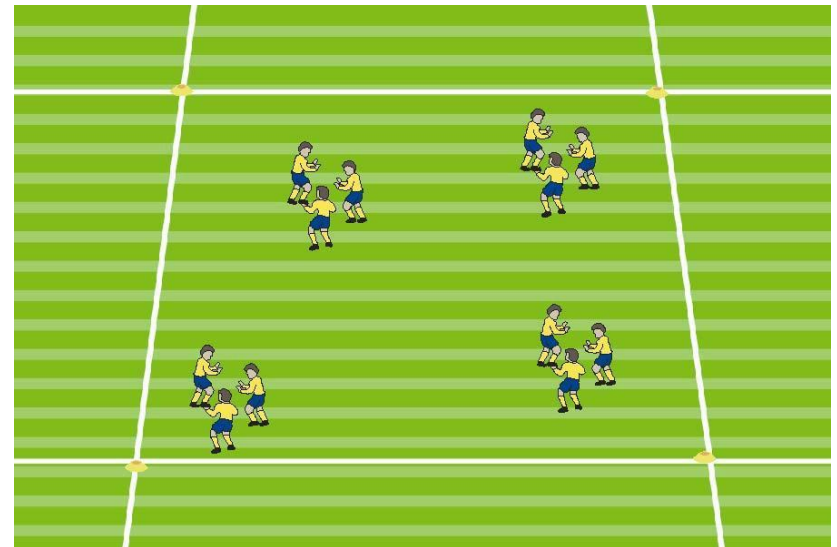
All of the players run around the inside of a 20yd x 20yd grid, weaving in and out of each other. The players can be encouraged to make sharp turns, skip, spin, and change pace as they run.

Direction:

The coach will call out a number and the players must immediately get into groups of that number. Any player left outside of the correct numbered groups loses a life.

Coach Notes:

Players need to react quickly and communicate with each other. Players can try to get players from another group to join theirs. The coach can add math problems such as "6 plus two".



BALL BALLISTICS

Concept:

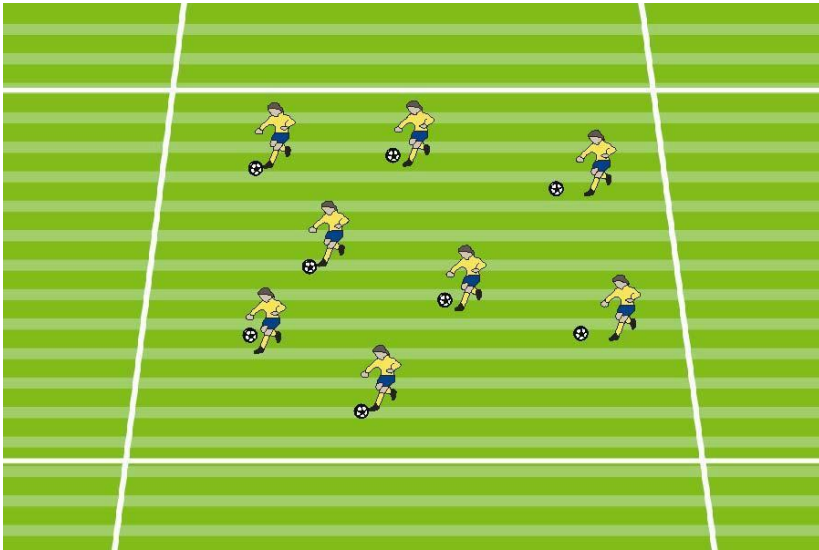
Each player stands with a ball at their feet. The coach stands in front and demonstrates each movement that he wants the players to copy.

Direction:

- Put one foot on the ball and roll it backwards and forwards with the sole of the foot. Also try with the weaker foot.
- Place the ball between the inside of both feet and try to pass the ball back and forth between each foot.
- Place one foot alongside the ball and the other on top of the ball. Quickly change the standing foot and the foot on the ball. Try repeating several times back and forth.

Coach Notes:

You can create a number of basic ball ballistic activities that allow the players to become comfortable using various surfaces of the feet.



SMALL SIDED SCRIMMAGE

Concept:

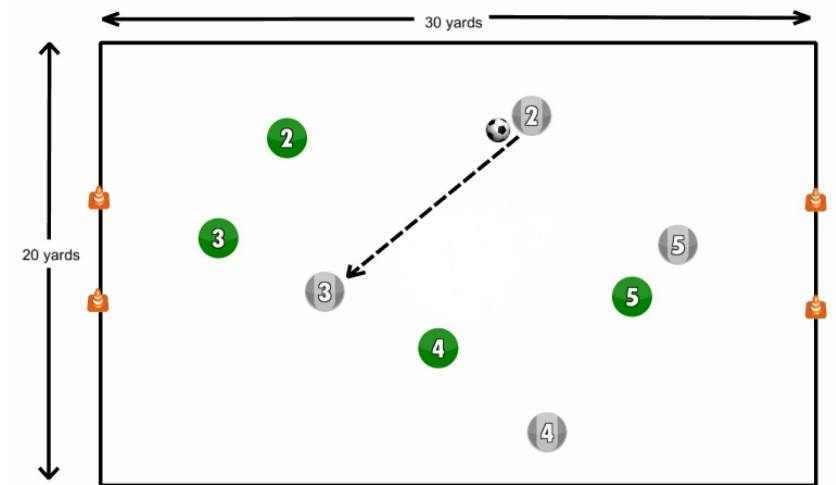
Divide the players into two teams using pinnies. Both teams should have matching numbers. If you do not have enough players for two full teams, have more players on one team. The team with less players should focus on defense. Set up 3 yard goals on either end of a 20yd x 30yd field.

Direction:

Play as game-like as possible using throw-ins and even a whistle if possible. If possible, set players up using the best format for your age group. 4U should play in a triangle (1 defender and two forwards) while 5U-8U should play in a diamond (1 defender, 2 midfielders and 1 forward).

Coach Notes:

Give minimal direction letting the players make mistakes and discover on their own.



SHADOW DRIBBLE

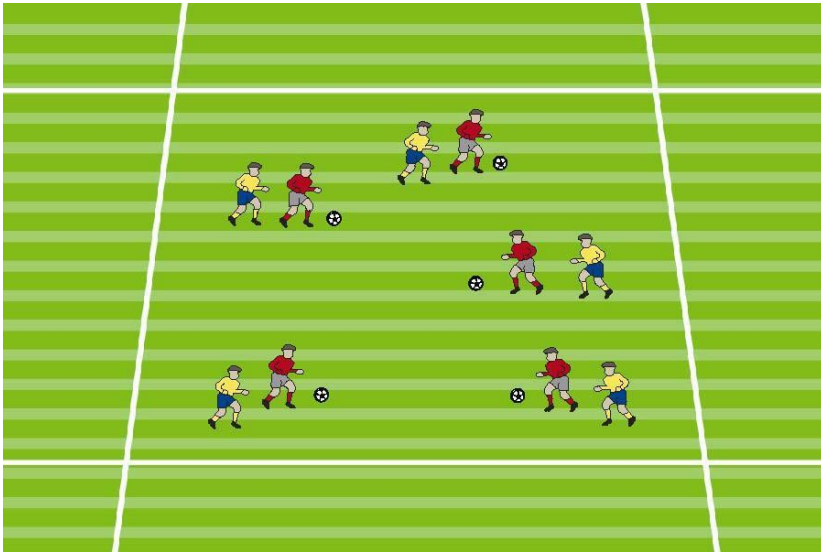
Concept:

The players are divided up into pairs and are numbered one and two. The number one players will start as the leaders and dribble their ball anywhere throughout the grid. The number two player must follow them, dribbling their own ball and must copy the moves of number one.

Direction: After 30 seconds the players change roles. After a couple of runs, change the pairings.

Coach Notes:

The players should be encouraged to experiment by dribbling with different parts of the feet and by twisting and turning to try and lose their shadow.



THROUGH THE GATES

Concept:

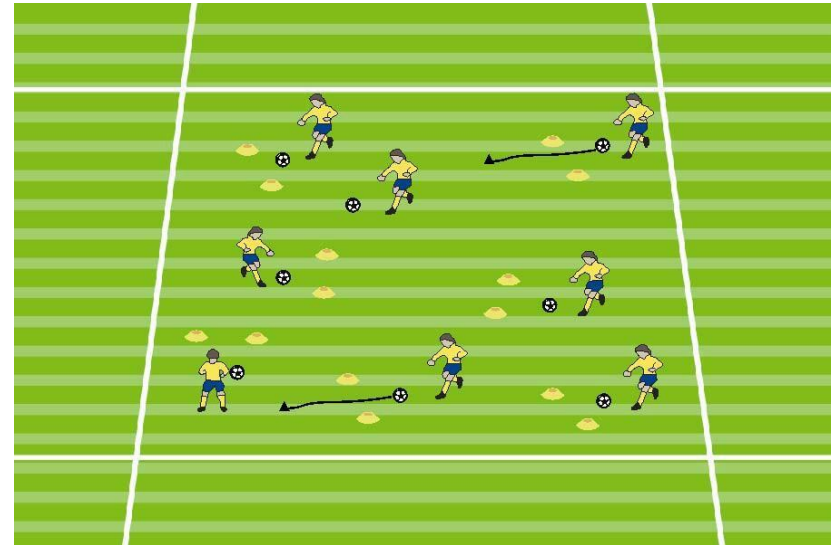
Each player has a ball in a 20yd x 20yd grid. Cones are placed around the grid in pairs making gates approximately 2 yards wide.

Direction:

The players attempt to dribble through as many gates as possible in one minute. As the older age groups get used to playing this game, the coach can specify that they must use a specific foot or must pass the ball through the gate with the inside of their foot.

Coach Notes:

The players should be encouraged to take lots of soft touches so that the ball remains close to them and must look up frequently between touches as they dribble.



THE NUMBERS GAMES

Concept:

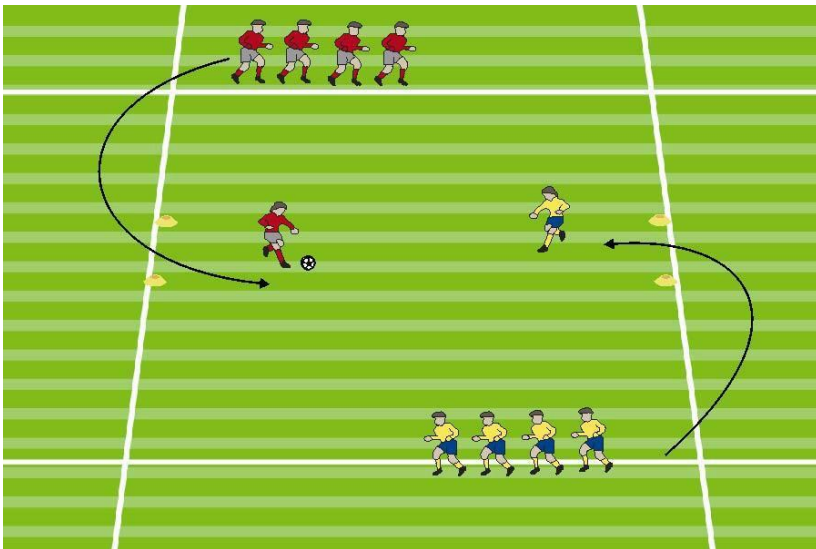
Divide the players into two teams and give each player a number. Both teams should have matching numbers. If you have an odd number of players, designate one player to have two numbers. Set up 3 yard goals on either end of a 20yd x 25yd field.

Direction:

The coach will throw a ball into the middle of the field and call out a number. Those corresponding players run from half way, through the back of their own goal and will attempt to score in the opposite goal.

Coach Notes:

Change the players' numbers every few minutes so that the same players do not compete against each other every time. Progress to calling out more than one number and explain how passing to an open teammate can help their team win the game.



MONSTER TURNAROUND

Concept:

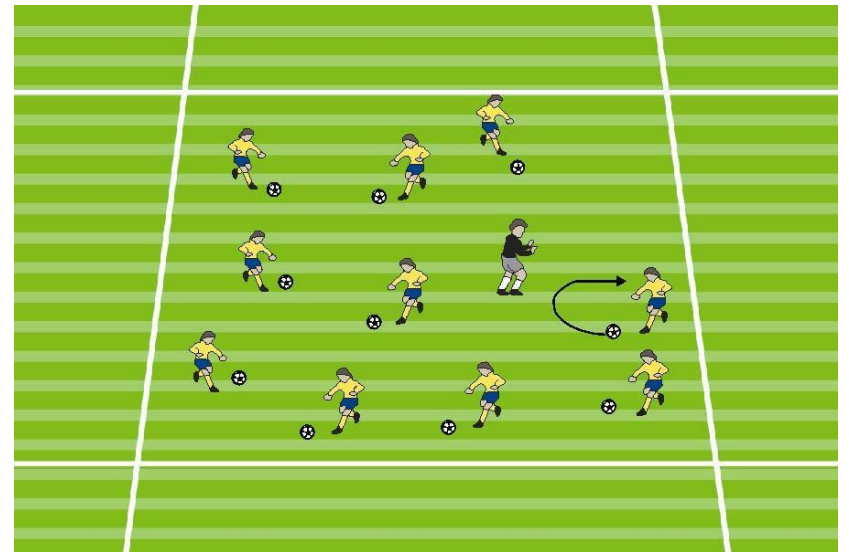
Each player dribbles a ball throughout a 20yd x 20yd grid. Players experiment by dribbling with the inside and outside of their foot and when the coach calls "Turn" they practice quickly turning around.

Direction:

After a few practice runs, the coach enters the grid and starts to chase after the players, roaring like a monster as he approaches each one. If the coach runs towards the player, they must turn quickly and dribble away in the opposite direction.

Coach Notes:

The players should be encouraged to use the inside of their lead foot to cut the ball back away from the coach as they turn.



FUNNY BONES

Concept:

Each player moves around the grid with a ball at their feet.

The coach gives instructions regarding how he wants the players to dribble, “slow”, “fast”, “twisty”, “straight” etc.

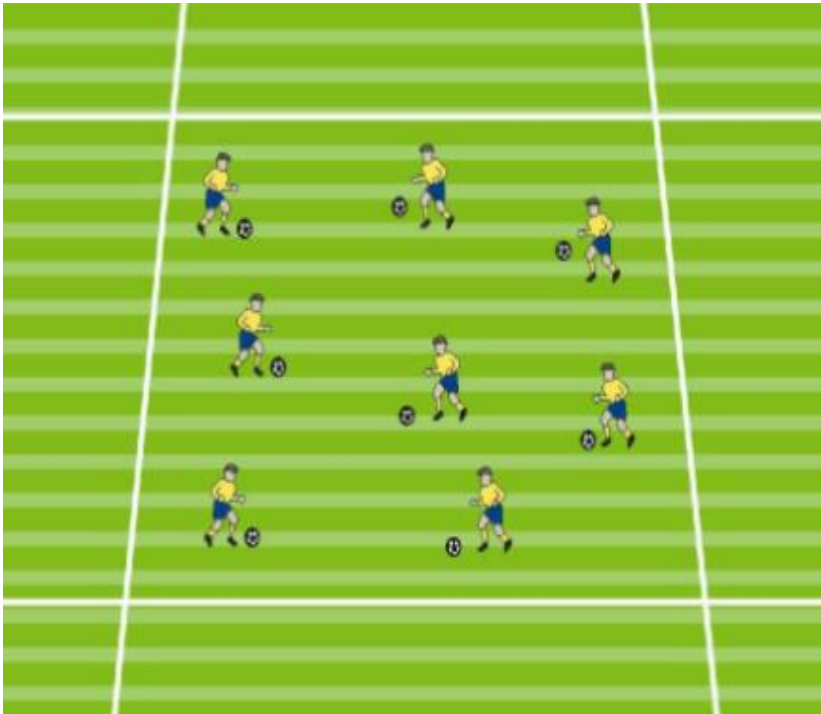
Direction:

The coach then calls out a specific part of the body such as “Elbow” or “Knee” and the players must come to a complete stop and put that part of their body on the ball.

Young players can be encouraged to dribble like certain animals and can make the relevant noises as they move around the grid.

Coach Notes:

These types of games are a great help in developing balance and coordination in addition to dribbling skills.



SMALL SIDED SCRIMMAGE

Concept:

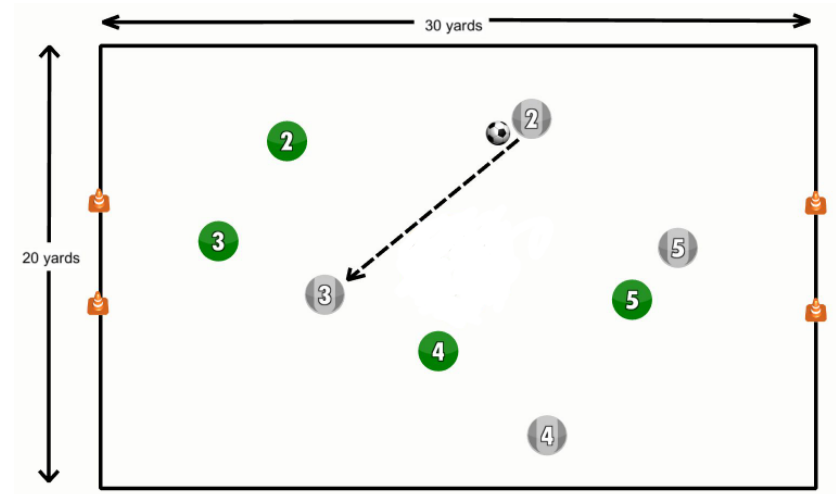
Divide the players into two teams using pinnies. Both teams should have matching numbers. If you do not have enough players for two full teams, have more players on one team. The team with less players should focus on defense. Set up 3 yard goals on either end of a 20yd x 30yd field.

Direction:

Play as game-like as possible using throw-ins and even a whistle if possible. If possible, set players up using the best format for your age group. 4U should play in a triangle (1 defender and two forwards) while 5U-8U should play in a diamond (1 defender, 2 midfielders and 1 forward).

Coach Notes:

Give minimal direction letting the players make mistakes and discover on their own.



SESSION TWO

THE PLAN

- Pairs Tag (10 Minutes)
- Freeze Dribble (10 Minutes)
- King of the Jungle (10 Minutes)
- Stuck in the Mud (10 Minutes)
- Small Sided Scrimmage (15 Minutes)

PAIRS TAG

Concept:

Two sets of two players are connected by each holding on to the end of pinnie. They cannot let go of the pinnie until the game is over. The other players run all-around the inside of a 20yd x 20yd grid.

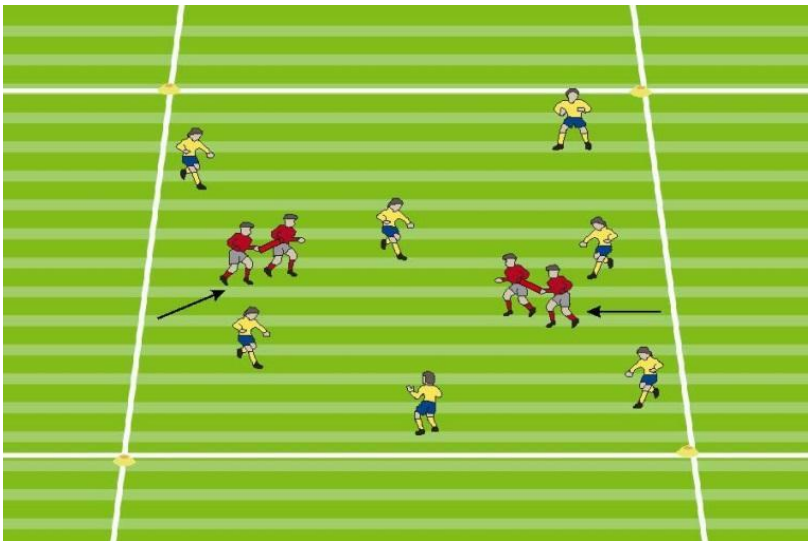
Direction:

The two sets of pairs have to chase after the other players and tag them. Once tagged the players run over and stand by the coach until all of the remaining players have been tagged.

Coach Notes:

The players holding the pinnie need to communicate with each other and determine which direction they are going to run in.

The two sets of pairs can communicate between each other and work as a team to corner the players they are chasing.



SESSION THREE

THE PLAN

- Number Runaround (10 Minutes)
- Funny Bones (10 Minutes)
- Monster Turnaround (10 Minutes)
- Shadow Dribble (10 Minutes)
- Small Sided Scrimmage (15 Minutes)

NUMBER RUNAROUND

Concept:

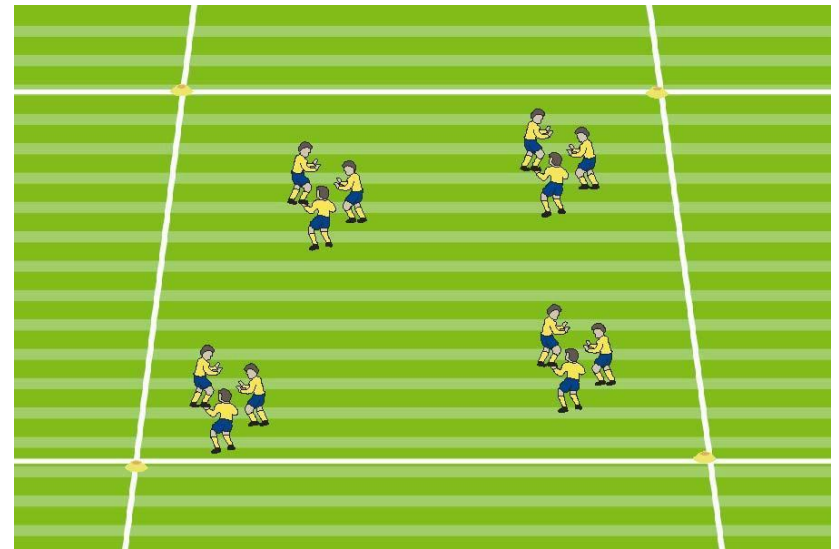
All of the players run around the inside of a 20yd x 20yd grid, weaving in and out of each other. The players can be encouraged to make sharp turns, skip, spin, and change pace as they run.

Direction:

The coach will call out a number and the players must immediately get into groups of that number. Any player left outside of the correct numbered groups loses a life.

Coach Notes:

Players need to react quickly and communicate with each other. Players can try to get players from another group to join theirs. The coach can add math problems such as "6 plus two".



SMALL SIDED SCRIMMAGE

Concept:

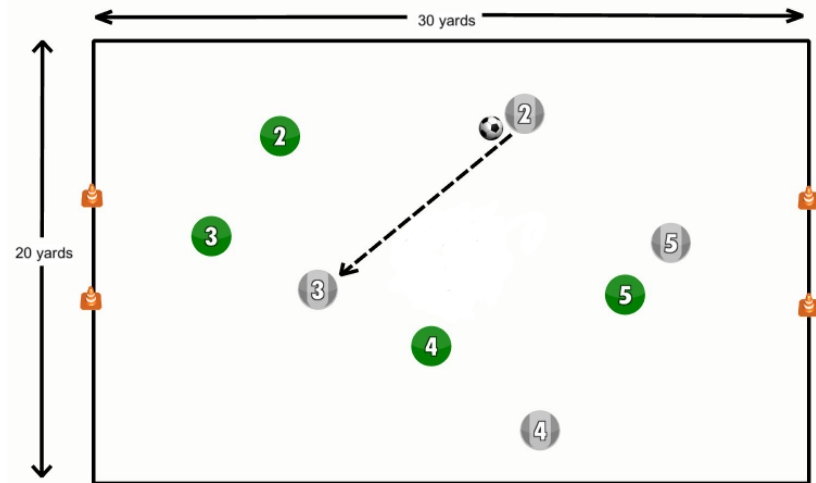
Divide the players into two teams using pinnies. Both teams should have matching numbers. If you do not have enough players for two full teams, have more players on one team. The team with less players should focus on defense. Set up 3 yard goals on either end of a 20yd x 30yd field.

Direction:

Play as game-like as possible using throw-ins and even a whistle if possible. If possible, set players up using the best format for your age group. 4U should play in a triangle (1 defender and two forwards) while 5U-8U should play in a diamond (1 defender, 2 midfielders and 1 forward).

Coach Notes:

Give minimal direction letting the players make mistakes and discover on their own.



FREEZE DRIBBLE

Concept:

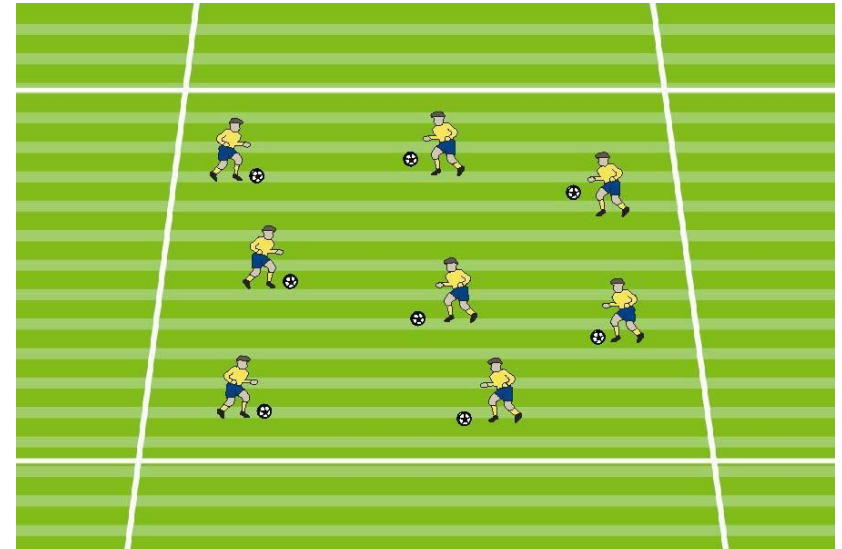
Each player moves around the grid with a ball at their feet. They should experiment using the insides, outsides, bottom and top of the feet while dribbling.

Direction:

The coach will call out "Freeze" and the players must come to a complete stop putting one foot on top of the ball. Anyone who moves loses a life. The coach can add other commands such as fast, slow, towards me, away from me, etc

Coach Notes:

Children can imitate cars, trucks, boats and can make the sounds of their vehicle as they drive around the grid. They can also stop to refuel by doing toe taps on the ball.



KING OF THE JUNGLE

Concept:

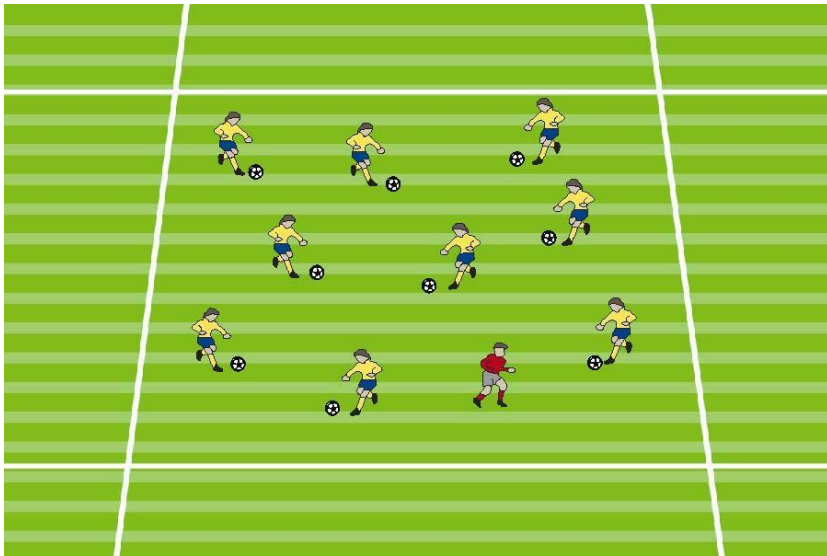
The players dribble their ball around the inside of a 25yd x 25yd grid, practicing looking up between every 2nd or 3rd touch.

Direction:

When the coach shouts “Go” one player wearing a contrasting color pinnie attempts to kick the player balls out of the grid. Players should be allowed to re-enter the game for the first one minute, and then when the coach announces that it is “Knock Out” time, they are eliminated if their ball is kicked out.

Coach Notes:

Encourage the players to keep the ball close by using soft touches and keep looking up so that they are aware of where the “tiger” is at all times.



STUCK IN THE MUD

Concept:

The players dribble their ball around the inside of a 20yd x 20yd grid, weaving in and out of each other.

Direction:

Two players wearing contrasting color pinnies will chase after them and try to tag them. Once they are tagged they are “frozen” and must pick up their ball and stand with their feet apart until a teammate can unfreeze them by passing their own ball through their legs.

Coach Notes:

Players who are tagged should try to call teammates who are in space and not in risk of being tagged themselves to come and unfreeze them.

