



Division One - 5 and 6 Years Old Curriculum

AIM: The curriculum is based upon introducing younger players to the key fundamentals of the game through a series of FUN based practices and small sided games.

At the ages of five and six, the following techniques will be introduced and reinforced:

- Dribbling
- Individual Moves I.e. Pull Back turn, or L Turn.
- Juggling
- Short passing

These techniques have been selected because research shows that these are the areas that young players can learn and more importantly, enjoy learning.

The emphasis of the work with younger players is focused firmly upon introducing them to the game in a manner which leaves them excited about playing. The following guidelines should be followed:

Age – 5 and 6

Max Sessions per week – 2

Duration of Sessions – 1 hour

Type of Game – Small sided, 4vs4, no goalkeepers

Length of Game – 32 minutes' total

Coaching Guidelines for 5 and 6 Years Old

The guidelines below can be used as “golden rules” which will help you run your games and practices in a developmentally appropriate manor.

1. Players learn best when touching a ball. Try to give the players as much active time with the ball as possible.
2. Juggling and Dribbling type moves should be part of every session you do.
3. Do not use practices that involve the players standing in a line.
4. Play scrimmages that are as close to the recommended guidelines as possible. Ideally 3vs3 or 4vs4 with a goalkeeper.
5. Try to finish the practice on a positive point and when the children are having tremendous fun
6. Be an entertainer. A child’s world is one with color and imagination. Avoid treating them as a mini adult.
7. Use your body language to express enthusiasm. Young players relate better to enthusiastic characters.
8. Try to use language that encourages participation from all players (The hardest working player wins), rather than encouraging participation from a select, gifted few (The first player to Wins).

Division One – Key Moves

The Drag Back Turn

Coaching points:

1. Place the non - kicking foot at the side of the ball.
2. Place the kicking foot on the top of the ball.
3. The player's body should be leaning over the ball.
4. Drag the ball back, in the opposite direction.
- 5 Push the ball away using opposite foot.

The Step Over

Coaching Points:

1. Place both feet at the side of the ball, with the strongest foot nearest the ball.
2. The strongest foot is taken over the ball and placed down.
3. The upper body has moved down wards, attempting to throw the defender off balance.
4. The weaker foot then takes the ball away in the opposite direction.

The Cruyff Turn

Coaching points:

1. Place the non-kicking foot at the side of the soccer ball.
2. The kicking foot is placed in front of the ball at 90 degrees to the non-kicking foot (making a part of a birthday box).
3. Using the inside of the kicking foot, push the ball back in the opposite direction. (wrapping the present)
4. The player should then turn and pivot around the non-kicking foot. Children will often pivot on the wrong foot. Note - for a young child this is a complex bio- mechanical movement. To successfully coach the Cruyff turn, the coach should adopt a hands-on approach.

The L Turn

Coaching Points:

1. Place the non-kicking foot at the side of the soccer ball
2. Place the kicking foot on top of the ball
3. Roll the ball backward and let go when it is behind the standing foot
4. Use the inside of the kicking foot to push the ball behind the non-kicking foot
5. The balls movement will be either the shape of an L or a reverse L

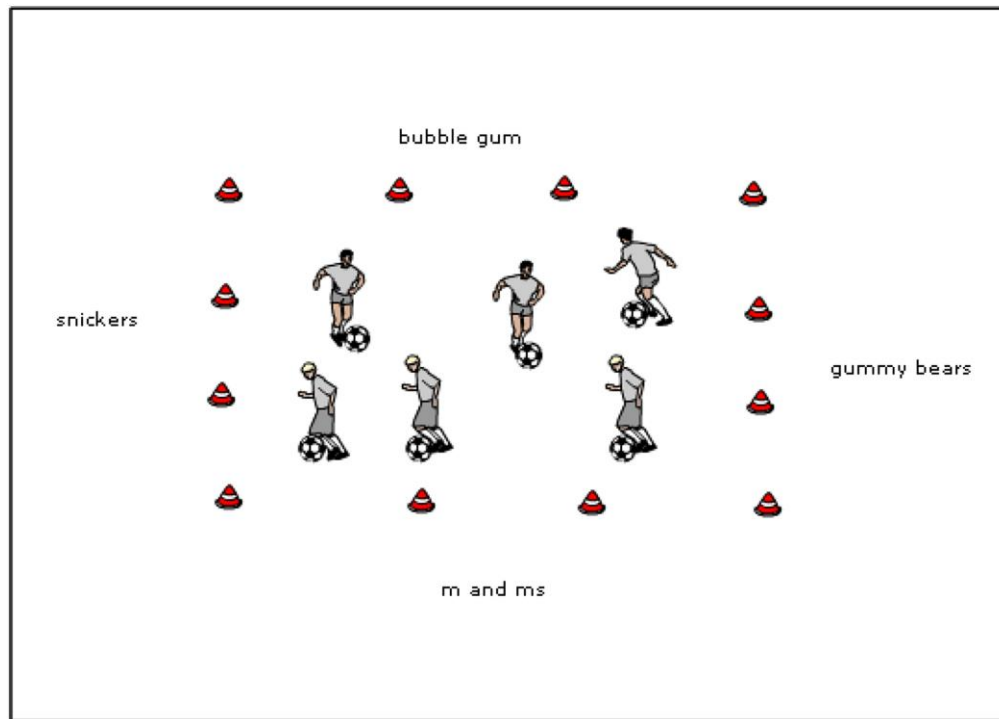
Division 1 – Activities

Candy Store

While the players move around with a soccer ball in square approximately 30 x 20 steps, the coach names each side of the area after a piece of candy. When the coach shouts out the name of a candy bar, the children dribble their soccer ball to the appropriate side.

Coaching Points:

1. This game can be played with or without a soccer ball as a method to get the players attention
2. When the children reach the candy line, they can be encouraged to perform a soccer move rather than stand still and wait for other players on the team.
3. The practice should be upbeat and requires a dynamic and enthusiastic coaching performance.
4. As a coach of youth players, it is important that you know their favorite candy bars.



Body Breaks

While the players move around with a soccer ball in square approximately 30 x 20 steps, the coach calls out a body part, for example, elbow. The players must try to stop their soccer ball with the sole of their foot and then touch that body part on the ball.

Coaching Points:

1. If a child's ball is running away from them and they are unable to stop it, they are not in control and should take smaller touches.
2. When the children are stopped, the coach should encourage the players to move in open space.
3. The coach can use 'hands' as a trigger word to encourage players not to use their hands in play. When the coach says hands, rather than put their hands on the ball, the players put their foot on the ball and scream 'no hands in soccer'.

Cone man

While the players move around with a soccer ball in a square approximately 30 x 20 steps, the coach is the "Cone man/woman" who runs around the area attempting to "Cone" the players. This is done by placing a cone on top of the player's ball, and shouting "Cone man/woman has got you". Once a player has been coned they must perform three juggles to get back in the game.

Coaching Points:

1. The coach should encourage the players to dribble with heads up, looking for space and to avoid the Cone man/women.
2. The coach should encourage the players to take as many touches of the ball as possible.
3. The coach should encourage the players to use both feet.
4. Players can be rewarded for working the hardest by becoming the next Cone man/women.

Story Book Soccer – The Magic Car

While the players move around with a soccer ball in a square approximately 30 x 20 steps, the coach tells a story of when he/she was young and on his/her birthday they were given a magic car. The coach then asks the children if they want to play “magic cars.”

The children dribble around the area and the coach introduces three gears. In first gear the children must dribble their soccer ball slowly. In second gear the children should be encouraged to dribble the ball at a medium speed. Third gear is “racing car” speed, the children should be encouraged to dribble the soccer ball as fast as they can.

Coaching Points:

1. The coach can introduce additional instructions/coaching points:
 - a. Red Light – STOP! Remember, if a car travels fast, they usually screech as they come to a halt.
 - b. Uphill Driving – Perform Toe Taps on the ball
 - c. U Turn – Perform a Pull Back Turn and change direction
 - d. Chicane – Drive around the grid cradling the ball (inside to inside of feet alternating feet)
 - e. If the children fail to stop when the coach shouts red light, they get a speeding ticket
 - f. The coach has the freedom to additionally create his/her own coaching points specific to the game.

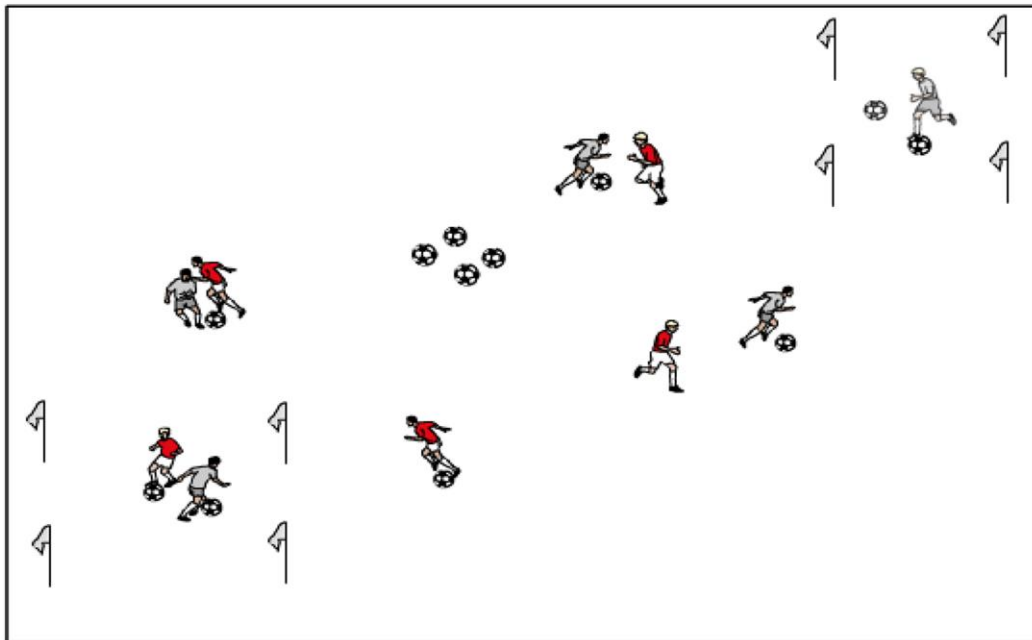
The Golden Egg

The coach makes two small squares approximately 30 steps apart. Each square acts as a nest for a group of birds (players). The coach places all the soccer balls into the middle of the “nests” (the area between the two nests) where the soccer balls have turned into “Golden Eggs” that the birds must save.

On the coaches’ command of “take flight”, the birds fly into the middle to save the eggs. Once all eggs have been collected, players can now take an egg from another team’s nest.

Coaching Points:

1. The birds are obviously only allowed to save the eggs using their feet.
2. Make sure that the balls are spread out when they are in the middle, avoiding collisions.
3. The eggs are fragile and can only be stolen using small, controlled touches
4. With more advanced groups, the players are encouraged to perform a pullback turn when stealing an egg.



British Bulldog

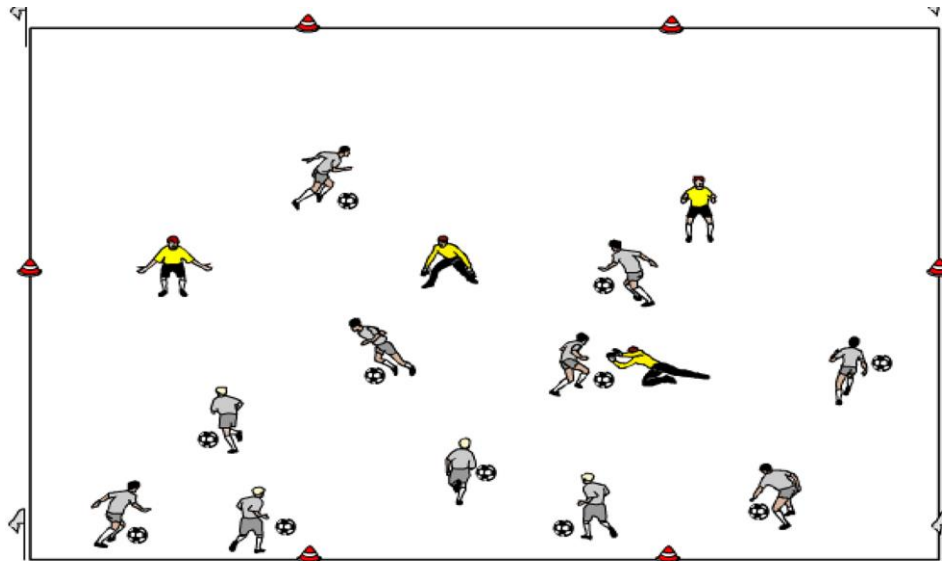
The children play in a square approximately 30 x 20 steps and start at one side of the area. The coach has told the story of a “Bulldog” who will not let the children out to play, letting them know that they must dribble their soccer ball past the “Bulldog” to get to the opposite side of the street. The coach plays the part of the “Bulldog.”

Each time the children make it past the “Bulldog” they get a one point and the players can only travel when the coach says “Bulldogs”

Once the players have been caught, they become a bulldog and assist the coach to catch the others.

Coaching Points:

1. Allow the players to have success, this isn't an opportunity for a coach to show that they 'still have it'
2. Encourage the players to dribble with their heads up, looking for space to avoid other Bulldogs.
3. Players should be able to use both feet when avoiding the Bulldogs.
4. The hardest working player should be allowed to become the Bulldog as the game progresses.



Hospital Tag

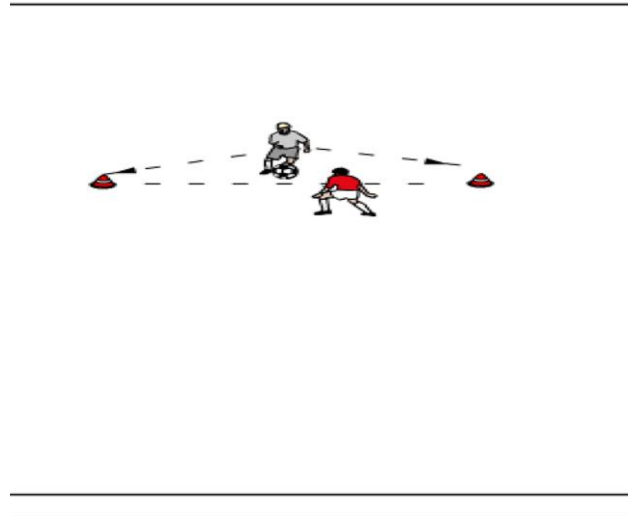
The children play in a square approximately 30 x 20 steps. Each player has a soccer ball and is dribbling in the area. When the coach shouts "Hospital," the children can try to tag one another. When they have been tagged, they hold that part of the body while still dribbling. When the children have been tagged twice and both hands have been used, the next tag means that they must go to "Hospital" for treatment, this can only be administered after four juggles.

Coaching Points:

1. The coach should be aware that younger children may become aggressive when tagging. This should be addressed immediately.
2. Encourage players to dribble with heads up, looking for space and avoiding defenders.

Mickey Mouse's Doorbell

The coach sets up gates that are approximately four yards apart. The players stand facing one another, with the cones either side of them as shown below:



The coach explains that Goofy and Donald Duck have fallen out because as they went to call for Mickey they couldn't decide who would ring the doorbell.

One player starts with the ball and is trying to ring the doorbell by rolling the ball over a cone. The other player is trying to stop him. This is done by the defending player putting his foot over the cone/doorbell.

The coach tells the children that there is an imaginary line between the two doorbells, which the children cannot cross.

Coaching Points:

1. The player with happy feet (on their toes and moving) will be the most successful.
2. Encourage players to use any moves that they have previously learnt.
3. Encourage the players to keep score, keeping the intensity high.
4. Always keep the ball moving, make it harder for the defender to keep up with changes of direction.

Four Cone Soccer

The coach sets the cones up as shown below:



Play a maximum of three- a -side (Micro soccer) with both teams trying to knock down each other's cones.

Coaching Points:

1. Try to play with more than one ball, maximizing the number of players that are actively involved
2. There is no out of bounds
3. The coach should encourage the players to knock the cones over using the correct push pass technique
 - a. Non-kicking foot by the side of the ball
 - b. Lock ankle and follow through in the direction that you want the ball to go
 - c. Watch the foot make contact with the middle of the ball

Knockout

The children play in a square approximately 30 x 20 steps. With the coach acting as a catcher for the first round.

All the players dribble around the area with a ball, while the catcher gets players out of the game by touching their soccer ball with his/her foot. The catcher can win the game by getting all the players out of the square at the same time. The players must perform 3 juggles to get back into the square.

Coaching Points:

1. The child that is working the hardest should be the catcher in the second round
2. Encourage the players to use moves throughout the game to get away from the catcher

The Numbers Game

The children all dribble around in a 20x30 square with a ball. When the coach calls out a number the players get into groups of that number. Any players who cannot get into a group join the coach as part of his group.

Coaching Points:

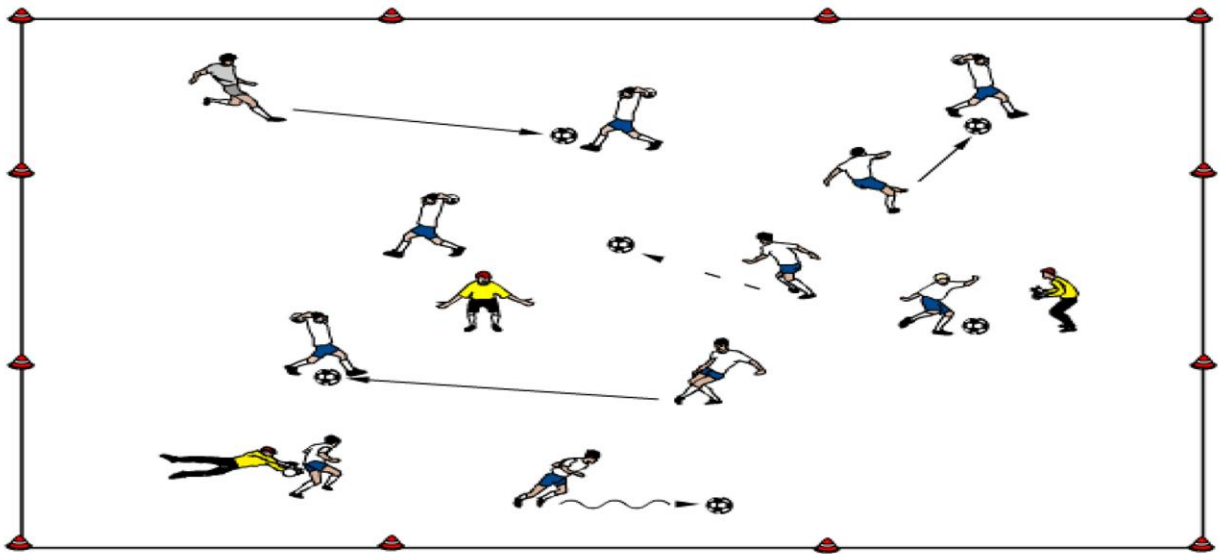
1. Encourage the players to communicate amongst themselves and organize each other
2. Make sure every player has a friend/group at every time. The groups must always be different with the same players not always going together.

Stuck in the Mud

The children dribble around the marsh land approximately 30 x 30 yds. Two mud monsters attempt to freeze out the players. To do this, they simply must touch the player's ball with their foot. Once the player is frozen he/she picks up the ball and stands with their legs open, ball held on head. Players can set each other free by passing the ball through a frozen player's legs.

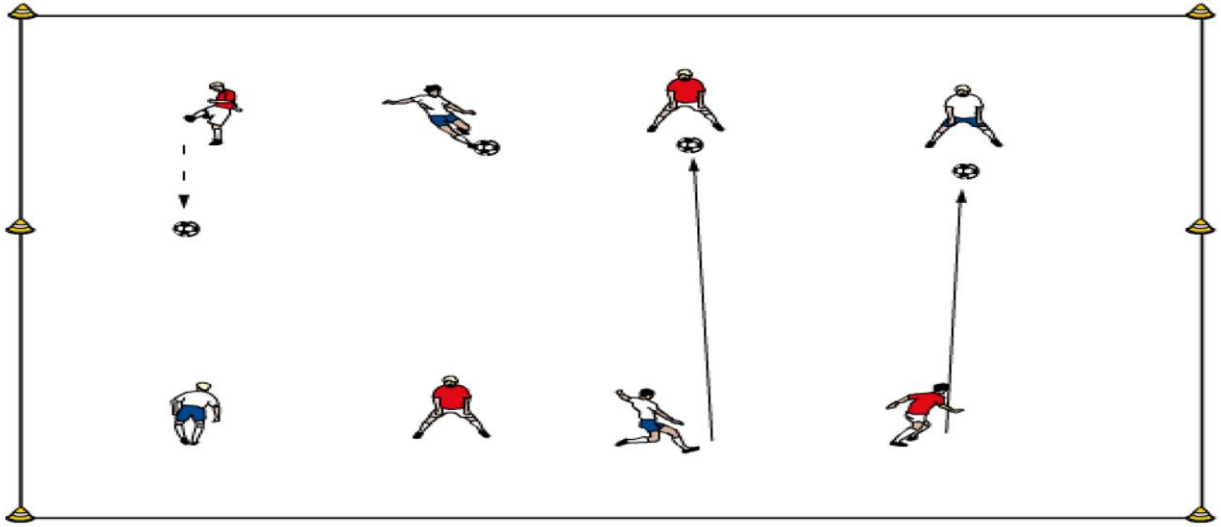
Coaching Points:

1. The hardest working player is always the first catcher
2. Encourage players to use the correct Push Pass technique when setting players free
 - a. Non-kicking foot by the side of the ball
 - b. Lock ankle and follow through in desired direction of ball
 - c. Watch the foot make contact with the middle of the ball
 - d. Encourage the correct weight of the pass by asking player to run and collect the ball on the other side of their teammate.



Ghostbusters

The children stand approximately six yards apart, as shown below. The coach introduces the game as “Ghostbusters”, every time the children can pass the ball through their partner’s legs as their partner stands completely still, they score a “slimer”. First pair to five “slimers” are the winners.



Coaching Points:

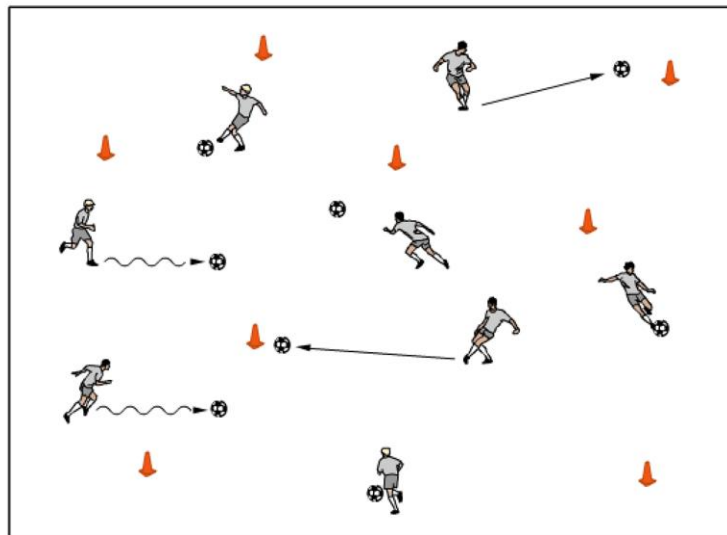
1. Encourage players to use the correct Push Pass technique when setting players free
 - a. Non-kicking foot by the side of the ball
 - b. Lock ankle and follow through in desired direction of ball
 - c. Watch the foot make contact with the middle of the ball
 - d. Encourage the correct weight of the pass by asking player to run and collect the ball on the other side of their teammate.

Demolition Soccer

The children play in a square 40 x 30 steps. The coach sets out a series of cones, explaining to the children that they are castles that need to be knocked down. The children can do this by knocking the cones with a strong and accurate push pass.

Coaching Points:

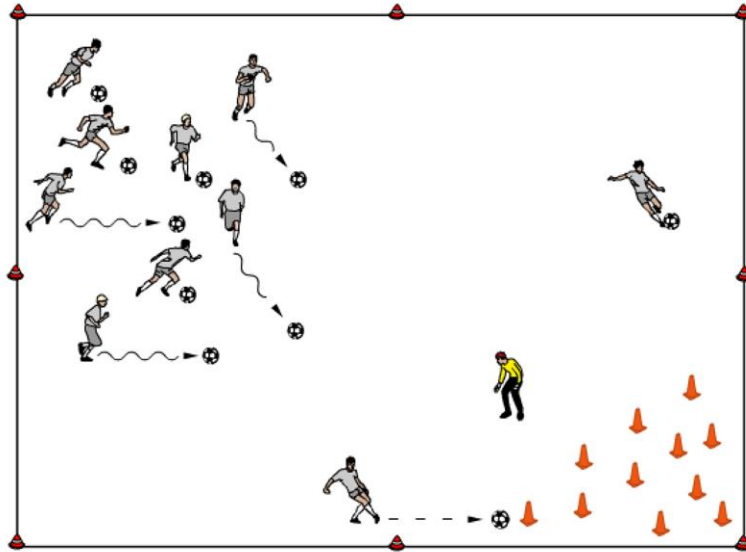
1. The coach should use this opportunity to teach the push pass correctly
 - a. Non-kicking foot by the side of the ball
 - b. Lock ankle and follow through in desired direction of ball
 - c. Watch the foot make contact with the middle of the ball
 - d. Encourage the correct weight of the pass by asking player to run and collect the ball on the other side of their teammate.
2. The coach can keep picking up cones and rebuilding the castles If he/she feels that they players are not working hard enough.



The Sleeping Giant

In the darkest reaches of the deepest Forest in Bellport, there lived a Giant. The Giant had planted rows and rows of beanstalks (his father once told him a story about beanstalks, he had been fascinated ever since!). The only problem was, that when the young children were out playing soccer, they kept knocking the beanstalks down. This made the giant angry, so angry that he would often chase after them.

The giant (coach) starts the game fast asleep: as he wakes up, he catches the children knocking down the beanstalks, and chases after them. The practice is set up as shown below.



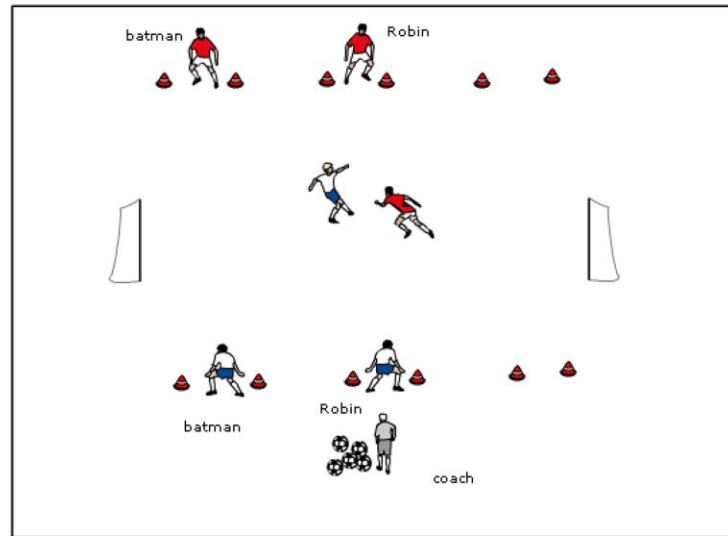
Coaching Points:

1. The push pass should be used to knock down the cones
 - a. Non-kicking foot by the side of the ball
 - b. Lock ankle and follow through in desired direction of ball
 - c. Watch the foot make contact with the middle of the ball
 - d. Encourage the correct weight of the pass by asking player to run and collect the ball on the other side of their teammate.

2. If the giant catches a player, they can escape by performing 4 juggles.

Batman

Mark out an area as shown



The coach stands in the position shown with a supply of soccer balls. The children have been give different names of Batman and Robin characters i.e. Joker, Penguin, this can be done in pairs or single.

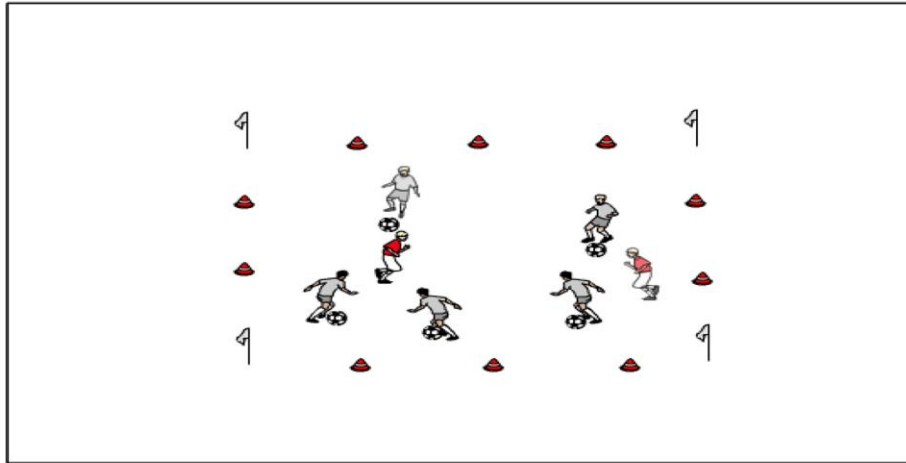
When the coach shouts out the name of the child's character, he/she runs into the "Bat dome" and tries to score. When the coach shouts out "Gotham City" all the children run into the "Bat dome" and try to score.

Coaching Points:

1. When the coach calls a character name, all players with that name must compete against each other with one ball to see who is the first that can score.
2. If the coach calls two characters' names, the players must work together to score.
3. The coach can call two characters and put in two balls, but must not call one character and only put in one ball.
4. Whenever the coach calls Gotham City, the players must work together with their team using only one ball. This creates a game-like scenario.
5. Keep the game fun – Winning and losing is not important.
6. As the players become more advanced, rules can be created to increase the difficulty. For example, you must pass to your teammate before you can score.

Captain Freeze

The children play in a square approximately 30 x 20 steps. They attempt to freeze the coach by passing their ball against the coach's ankle. If they can freeze the coach, they have won!



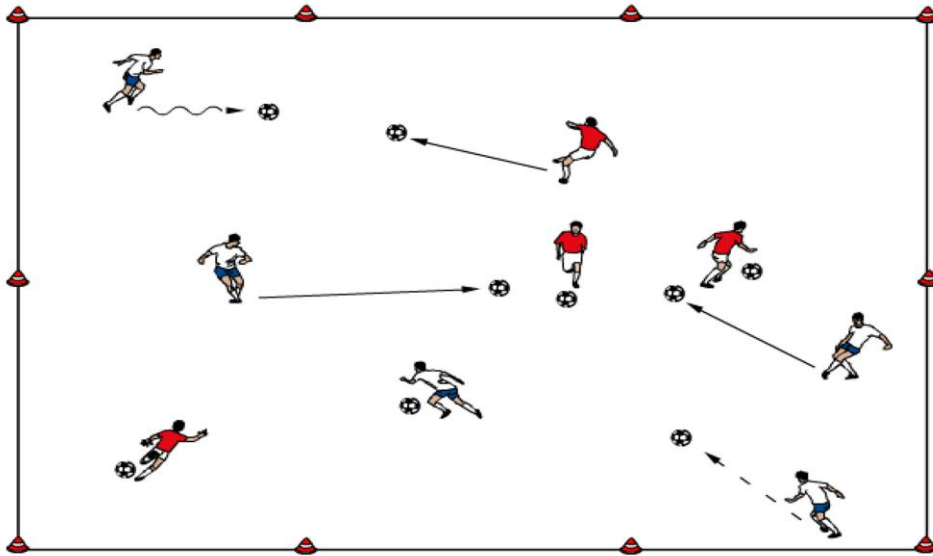
Coaching Points:

1. Encourage the players to frequently attempt the push pass against the coach
 - a. Non-kicking foot by the side of the ball
 - b. Lock ankle and follow through in desired direction of ball
 - c. Watch the foot make contact with the middle of the ball
 - d. Encourage the correct weight of the pass by asking player to run and collect the ball on the other side of their teammate.
2. As you play, attempt to correct technique where possible.

Freeze Teams

The children play in a square approximately 30 x 20 steps. Divide the group into two teams. One half keep a ball, and the other half runs free in the square. Players with a ball can freeze the others by playing the ball against their ankles. When the players are caught, they stand with their feet open. The team without the balls can set each other free by crawling through each other's legs.

You cannot freeze a player on the ground (setting a teammate free and you are not allowed to jump over the ball - SAFETY)



Coaching Points:

1. Encourage the players to use the correct push pass technique
 - a. Non-kicking foot by the side of the ball
 - b. Lock ankle and follow through in desired direction of ball
 - c. Watch the foot make contact with the middle of the ball
 - d. Encourage the correct weight of the pass by asking player to run and collect the ball on the other side of their teammate.
2. Do not let the players jump over the ball. They must evade it by simply changing direction and speed.

Passing Races

The children play in a square approximately 30 x 20 steps. And work in pairs. They stand approximately 8 feet apart and simply have to pass the ball back and forth to each other.

Each team must race to 20 passes, once with the left foot, and then with the right.

Each team must then repeat the races while also on the move, not allowing the ball to stop and no players standing still.

Coaching Points:

1. Constantly correct the push pass technique
 - a. Non-kicking foot by the side of the ball
 - b. Lock ankle and follow through in desired direction of ball
 - c. Watch the foot make contact with the middle of the ball
 - d. Encourage the correct weight of the pass by asking player to run and collect the ball on the other side of their teammate.

2. Remind the children to have happy feet (Always moving).

Pace to Yourself Races

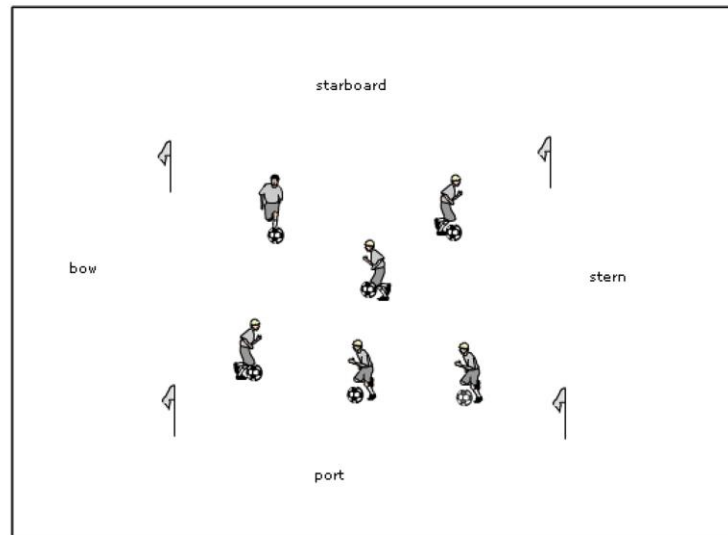
The children play in a square approximately 30 x 20 steps. Players work in pairs and must play a small pass to themselves before they can pass it back to their partner.

Coaching Points:

1. As the ball arrives, encourage the children to gently cushion the ball to the side of their body, playing the next pass before it has stopped.

The Captain of the Ship

The children play in a square approximately 30 x 20 steps. The coach plays the part of the “CAPTAIN”. Whatever command the “captain” gives the players must follow. This should begin with simple commands such as, port, starboard, bow and stern, referring to different sides of the ship. The coach, or should I say captain, can then begin to use other commands.

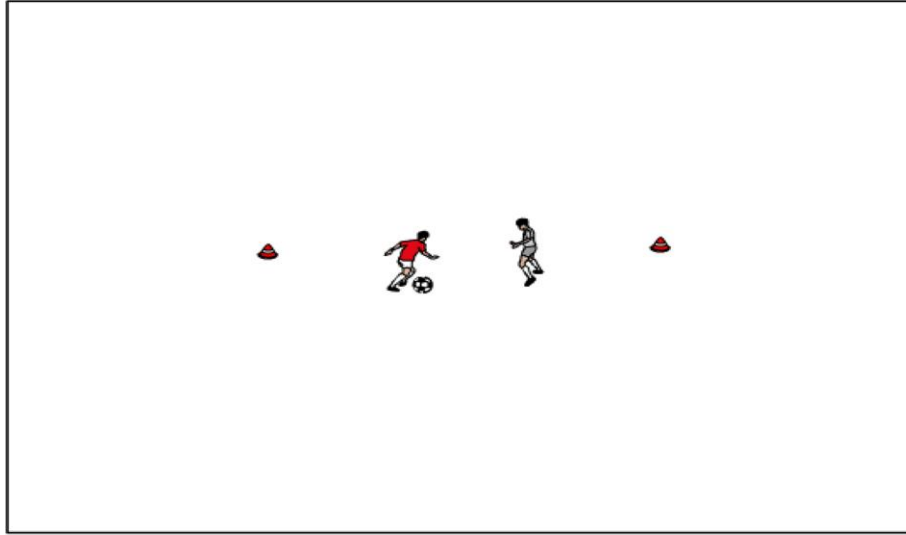


Coaching Points:

1. The coach should encourage that everything be done at game speed – no walking!
2. Swab the Decks – Move around the ship cradling the ball (inside to insides of feet, alternating feet).
3. Man the Rigs – Perform Toe Taps on the ball.
4. Load the Cannons – Perform a Pull Back Turn and change direction. Make a big touch out of the feet when complete to change speed.
5. The coach has the freedom to additionally create his/her own coaching points specific to the game.

Tiny Toons

Two players play between the cones as shown:



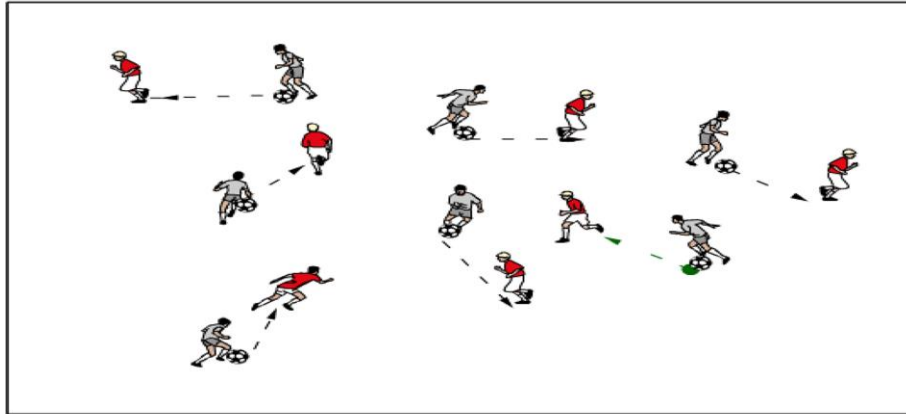
When player X has the ball, he tries to touch player Y's cone. When player Y has the ball, he tries to hit player X's cone. First player to hit the cone three times with the ball is the winner.

Coaching Points:

1. The coach should encourage the children to defend the ball and not their cone.
2. The players cannot score, and therefore cannot win without the ball at their feet.

Marbles

The children play in a square approximately 30 x 20 steps. All the children have a ball each. The children are numbered one and two, number one plays the ball into space. When the ball has stopped rolling, their partner tries to hit the stationary ball with his/her ball. If a hit is recorded, a point is scored. The first to five points wins the game.

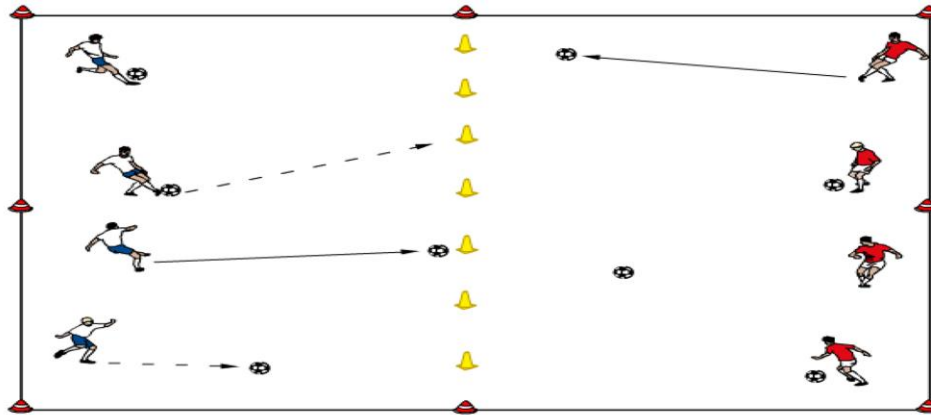


Coaching Points:

1. The coach should encourage the correct technique for the push pass
 - a. Non-kicking foot by the side of the ball
 - b. Lock ankle and follow through in desired direction of ball
 - c. Watch the foot make contact with the middle of the ball
 - d. Encourage the correct weight of the pass by asking player to run and collect the ball on the other side of their teammate.
2. Encourage stronger players to play the same game but with their weaker foot.

Crocodile Alley

The practice is set out as shown below:



The children are lined up each side. With the aim of the game being to knock the cone over in the middle by striking the ball against it. First player to hit the cone three times is the winner.

Coaching Points:

1. The coach should encourage the correct technique for the push pass
 - a. Non-kicking foot by the side of the ball
 - b. Lock ankle and follow through in desired direction of ball
 - c. Watch the foot make contact with the middle of the ball
 - d. Encourage the correct weight of the pass by asking player to run and collect the ball on the other side of their teammate.
2. Encourage stronger players to play the same game but with their weaker foot.

Games and Scrimmages – Micro Soccer

Play 3v3 with no goalkeepers or 4v4 with goalkeepers on a field approximately 30 x 20 steps

Coaching Points:

1. Throughout the game, discourage players from kicking the ball away. Players should always try to pass or dribble
2. Do not stop the game every time the ball goes out of play. Simply roll a new ball in.
3. Encourage the players to perform moves while in the game and offer positive praise to those that attempt this, irrelevant of the outcome of the move.