

Bellingham Coaching Manual
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Table of Contents

1	Coaching Overview	4
1.1	Coaching code of conduct.....	4
1.2	Play the game.....	4
1.3	No Lines, Laps or Lectures.....	4
1.4	Courtesy to the Refs.....	5
1.5	Muscle Memory	5
1.6	Side Games	5
1.7	Coaching tips	5
1.8	Understand the Age you are Coaching	6
1.8.1	U6-U7	6
1.8.2	U7-U9	6
1.8.3	U10-U12	7
2	Coaching Session Format	7
3	Coaching Drills	8
3.1	Warmup : goalie-defense-offense	8
3.2	Warm up Defense (Key: DR, DE. Age: U8-U10).....	9
3.3	Warm up Passing with dynamic stretching (Key: P, R. Age: U8 and up).....	10
3.3.1	Game layout.....	10
3.3.2	Progression with dynamic stretching	10
3.4	Passing Drill – Quadrant passing (Key: P, R, DR. Age: U8 and up).....	11
3.4.1	Game layout.....	11
3.5	Attacking 1v1 (Key: DR, DE. Age: U8 and up).....	12
3.5.1	Game Layout.....	12
3.5.2	Game Organization	13
3.5.3	Progression (Key: DR, DE, S. Age: U8 and up).....	13
3.6	Defense 1v2/ Attacking 2v1 (Key: DR, DE, R, P. Age: U8 and up).....	13
3.6.1	Progression (Key: DR, DE, S, R, P)	13
3.7	Shooting with laces warm up (Key: S Age: U8 and up).....	13
3.8	Striking Competition (Key: S. Age U8 and up).....	14
3.9	End-zone Striking (Key: S. Age U9 and up)	15
3.9.1	Game Layout.....	15
3.9.2	Game setup.....	15
3.10	Strike to goal (Key: S, R. Age: U7-U10).....	16
3.10.1	Game Layout.....	16
3.10.2	Game Setup.....	16
3.11	Attacking 2v1 Wall pass (Key: P, R, S. Age: U8 and up)	17
3.11.1	Game layout.....	17
3.12	Attacking 2v1 Overlap (Key: P, R, S. Age: U10 and up).....	18
3.12.1	Game layout	18
3.13	Attacking 2v1 Takeover (Key: P, R, S. Age U9 and up).....	19
3.13.1	Game layout	19
3.14	Color passing (Key: P, DR. Age: U10 and up).....	20
3.15	Goalie basics	20
3.16	Goalie wars	21

3.17	Goal Keeper Tennis	21
3.18	Get-out-of-there with numbers (Key: S, DR, DE, P, R. Age U7-U10)	22
3.19	Get-out-of-there (DR, S, P, DE. Age U6-U10).....	22
3.20	Back-to-back goals (Key: P, R, DE, DR, S. Age: U9 and up).....	23
3.21	Rage-in-the-cage (Key: P, R, DE, DR, S. Age: U9 and up)	23
3.22	Large Fixed Triangle passing (Key: P. Age U8-and up)	24
3.23	Possession to score- no pressure	25
3.24	Possession to score – with pressure	26
3.25	Possession turnover – loose a player	27
4	Coaching Session Examples	28
4.1	Shooting Session (Key: S, P. Age: U9-and up)	28
4.1.1	Warm-Up	28
4.1.2	First Side Game.....	28
4.1.3	Second Side Game	28
4.1.4	Free Scrimmage	28
4.1.5	Cool down.....	28
5	More drills specific for (U6-U8).....	29
5.1	Dribble inside island	29
5.2	Green Goblin (or simply Kangaroo) – U6	29
5.3	Kick the coach –U6-U8	29
5.4	Tag – without the ball- U6.....	29
5.5	Tag – with the ball (hospital tag) –U6-U8	29
5.6	Gates Dribble –U6	30
5.7	Gates Dribble – U8	30
5.8	Gates passing –U7-U8	30
5.9	Capture the ball – U6-U8.....	30
5.10	Musical balls –U6	31
5.11	Musical Balls (version 2) (Key: U7-U8)	31
5.12	Shadow Dribble –U6.....	31
5.13	Shadow Dribble (version 2) U6-U8.....	31
5.14	Switch balls-U6-U8	31
5.15	The Snake game – U6-U8.....	31
5.16	Body Part Dribble – U6-U7	32
5.17	Math Dribble – U6-U8.....	32
5.18	Soccer Marbles – U6-U8	32
5.19	Man in the middle-U6-U8.....	32
5.20	One Away Passing –U7-U10.....	33
5.21	Cone Soccer – U6- U10.....	34
6	Rules of the game.....	35

1 Coaching Overview

The following information is being distributed to all coaches to add consistency in the way we administer the Bellingham Soccer Program. The Bellingham Soccer Association Board of Directors thanks all of you for volunteering to coach and asks that you do your very best to follow these guidelines as a coach. Thank you!

This manual is broken down into four main topics:

- Coaching Guidelines
- Coaching Drills
- How to create coaching sessions
- Rules of the game

1.1 Coaching code of conduct

A coach should instill the following requirements:

- Setting a good example. Be a positive role model for the kids.
- Keeping players safe.
- ensuring that all players have a positive experience
- Treat referees in an exemplary manner and encouraging players to do the same.

1.2 Play the game.

It's important to understand one main point for coaching...The game is the best teacher. This theme emphasizes players learn by doing, so let them play the game. During practice sessions allow players to play the game for 10 minutes in instructional U6 and 20 minutes for U7 and up. The game is the best teacher because it provides players to:

- Solve their own problems.
- Experience a variety of problems to solve at game speed.
- Provides competition.

Soccer is one of the few sports where players are in charge on the field, not coaches.

1.3 No Lines, Laps or Lectures.

The main rule of thumb is no Lines, Laps or Lectures. During a session, players will form small lines but should immediately engage in the activity as soon as possible. A drill should not require more than 30 seconds of explanation. Lectures lasting over 30 seconds will lose most of your player's attention. Remember the age you are coaching. Laps should not be part of any soccer drills. At the older U ages, if they warm up by running around the field for example, give them a ball.

1.4 Courtesy to the Refs.

Adhere to the Zero Tolerance Rules regarding comments to referees. Coaches are not to approach the refs for any reason. If there are problems, these should be reported to the Division Director who will then take them up with the Refs Coordinator.

1.5 Muscle Memory

What is Muscle Memory? Muscle Memory is the ability for muscles to become familiar to activities requiring a great deal of trial and error. Gradually player's muscles will react to situations like automatically locking their ankle for a firm pass.

When we teach drills to players it's important that they experience some level of repetition in game like activities to allow muscle memory to take place.

1.6 Side Games

The best description of side games are activities players experience as close to game like as possible. This promotes muscle memory, isolation of a specific skill, problem solving and logical progression to a game.

There are typically two side games per session to isolate a skill. The first sided game has limited pressure, restriction of play and touch lines to dribble over versus scoring goals. The second side game removes most restrictions and allows scoring goals. Following the last side game logically progresses to a game with no restrictions.

The main reason for side games allows each player enough touches on the ball and practice an isolated skill. A 6v6 game with one ball for 12 players will be difficult to allow enough touches per player to isolate a skill.

1.7 Coaching tips

Coaches need to understand their role on how to convey information to players.

It's also important to be aware of player's age and abilities to influence the development of players.

Some tips to follow:

- Bring energy to the team.
- Present information to players clearly. Don't face the sun or speak into the wind. Make sure they can see and hear your instructions.
- Demonstrate what you are going to teach them as they follow by example.
- Don't stop a play just to coach. Make sure you are presenting a coaching point on what is happening on the field.
- Use guided discovery to increase players problem solving. At the U7 and up, ask questions that lead them to the answer. For example how to receive a pass so the ball doesn't hop up in the air. How to move the ball down the field quickly?
- Understand the age you are coaching.
- Practice Sessions should be fun.
- Always have an activity setup prior to players arriving.
- Talk to the players at eye level especially at the younger U6-U9 level. This provides players focus by not looking up.

- Players need to hydrate so allow appropriate water breaks per session. U6 players should go no longer than 6-8 minutes as U8 8-12 minutes.

1.8 Understand the Age you are Coaching

1.8.1 U6-U7

At this level 5- 6 yr olds at the instructional level need to limit their tactics/skills to simple guidelines:

- Emphasized basic dribbling, passing, shooting skills using both feet.
- Just play the ball.
- Guiding a basic pass with proper technique.
- Continue to remind players don't kick to kick. Kick to pass or kick to shoot.
- Explore different hitting surfaces including inside, outside, laces, sole of foot, etc.
- Win the ball.
- Stop looking at your socks when dribbling in open space. Begin to look around during play and not just at the ball.
- Learning locked ankle to correct kicking with the toe.

At this level you as the coach have a hidden agenda. Teach players the basic skills without them knowing that's what they are learning. Keep it fun and every player has a ball. This is the first level to teach memory muscle. This is the time to teach players the proper techniques.

Many coaches at this level will yell instructions to players on the field to "spread out" and "kick the ball". At the early stages it's simply bees on the ball. When there are many players close to the ball, it begins to teach players how to dribble in tight space. Yelling at players to spread out takes away this learning experience. Kicking the ball just to kick is not what we want players to do. As I listed above don't kick to kick. Instead kick to pass or kick to shoot.

1.8.2 U7-U9

At this level 7-9 yr olds (Junior Town level) tactics increased awareness guidelines:

- Continue to emphasize different hitting surfaces for passing, shooting **with both feet**.
- Field awareness increases at this level.
- Not capable of abstract thinking yet, so tactics must still be kept sequential and simple.
- Ball control increases and should be introduced to feints.
- Players become aware when to pass and when to dribble under pressure.
- This is the first time to play 6v6 format with offense/defense. Use simple drills to emphasize the differences.

- Stop looking at your socks when dribbling into open space. Look around during play to decide on whether to move past pressure by a pass, feint, or speed dribble.
- A basic wall pass strategy can be introduced.
- Introduction to short and long pass.
- Learn basic Goalie (Keeper) drills.
- Encourage back passing strategies as well.
- They do not require static stretching and it's discourages. Use dynamic stretching at this age level only.
- Introduction on shooting basic surface areas of the ball to keep the ball low versus high.

Players at this level should understand how to kick a ball with different speeds and different locations. At this level all players will play all positions. They should also be given equal playing time regardless of skill or aggression.

As one selects coaching drills from the following section, keep in mind how to build a session emphasizing on one specific topic. Although one session should have all elements of soccer, try to focus on only one topic encouraging muscle memory and limit confusion on what they are learning.

1.8.3 U10-U12

At age 10-12yrs old (senior town level / travel), players begin to understand the beginning of tactics:

- Players begin to think in abstract terms. If I get the ball, then I will do X.
- Technical skills for ball control, passing, and shooting are well defined.
- Introduce Wall, and takeover passing strategies. For U12 also introduce Overlap passing strategies as this requires abstract thinking.
- Introduction to Midfield positions for U12.
- Players need to warm up at this level and stretch to prevent injury. Encourage dynamic stretching and some basic static stretches to isolate main muscle groups.
- Continue on learning shooting surface areas of the ball to keep the ball low versus high including spins.

It's at this level the beginning of tactics are born. Players can now experience how to setup plays from wall, takeover, and overlap passing strategies.

2 Coaching Session Format

How to create a coaching session for your players

A coaching session for players should be broken down into 4 main parts:

1) Warm-Up

- Players at age U12 and under do not require significant static stretching. If you incorporate stretching into your warm-up, consider dynamic stretching over static stretching.

- The warm-up can have some elements of technical or tactical but go light and begin leading them into the theme of the days session.
- 2) Small Side games
- The 1st small side game should isolate the theme of your session.
 - The 2nd small side game should more closely resemble the game with limited restrictions.
- 3) Free Scrimmage
- Play the game with no restrictions. It's the best teacher.
 - Allow 20 minutes to play the game.
- 4) Cool Down
- Ask players what they learned. Very briefly have players demonstrate and remember to pick different players each session.

Coaching session should begin from a simple/general skill and build progressions from there.

Many sided games take place in a 15x20 grid sometimes called a combination technical box (grid). In this grid one can setup many scenarios on offense, defense, and passing. A typical first side game resembles a grid with players on opposite sides attempting to dribble over the opposing touch lines.

The opposing player(s) will start as defense, but if they win the ball to dribble it over the opposite touch line. **See section 3.5.1** for more info on game layout.

3 Coaching Drills

Each coaching drill will be labeled with the following key emphasis:

- P** – Passing
- R** - Receiving
- S** – Shooting
- DE** - Defense
- DR** – Dribbling

Although your session may concentrate on a specific technical skill, we still need to incorporate other aspects as well. For example if your session will focus on passing, it's still a good idea to add pressure with defense.

3.1 Warmup : goalie-defense-offense

(this exercise has technical aspects on passing and receiving as well)

Setup 1A: Inside a 15x20 grid. Players will be paired up in groups of **three** with a ball for each. When the coach says begin, allow players to move around the grid and find their partner to pass. Now have them stop and instruct them to start passing and when the coach says “Now”, the one with the ball passes to someone in their pair. The receiver of the pass performs a running scoop. Once the ball is secure, the player throws with proper technique to the 3rd player. Once the 3rd player has the ball, keep passing and wait for the coach queue “Now” to begin again.

Coaching points:

- Are players communicating with each other during passes?
- Did the “goalie” correctly perform a running scoop? If so did they yell “keeper”?
- When the goalie threw the ball to their teammate, did they bowl it or throw it? Considering just like a goalie passing the ball to a defensive player, bowling the ball allows receiver a simple first touch.
- The pass from the goalie should lead the passer.
- Did the receiver open up their stance to receive the pass from the goalie properly?
- When passing, were they communicating with each other to pass and where? Did they lock eyes before passing?

3.2 Warm up Defense (Key: DR, DE. Age: U8-U10).

Setup 1A: Inside a 15x20 grid. Players will be paired up in groups of two with a ball for each. When the coach says begin, allow players to move around the grid and find their partner to pass. Now have them stop and instruct them to start passing and when the coach says “Now”, the one with the ball puts their foot on it and the other player runs up to the ball in the correct defensive position. Don’t have them kick the ball away as the coach is interested in the following coaching points:

- Approach fast and as they close to within a few feet, to slow within a few steps of the ball. This allows the defense to not over commit which is a very common mistake to new defenders.
- As they approached, knees should be bent and weight shifted to their back foot and one foot forward toward the ball.
- Where are their eyes focused? On the ball, player, or both?
- When passing, were they communicating with each other to pass and where? Did they lock eyes before passing?

(Provide the players a quick demonstration)

Repeat a few times so both pairs have had a few opportunities to demonstrate the correct defensive move.

Setup 1B: When the coach says “Now” allow players with the ball to keep dribbling and players without the ball attempt to take the ball away.

Setup 1C: Place a tall cone for each pair along the 20 yard grid. Each pair begins passing and when the coach says “Now”, the one with the ball attempts to hit the cone with the ball. If they miss, it’s the defense’s goal. So this forces the players with the ball to shoot close. If Defense takes the ball, then they can score for a point.

Progression: A 15x20 grid using the Combination technical box for 1v2 to touch lines, goals, and then play a game without restrictions.

3.3 Warm up Passing with dynamic stretching (Key: P, R. Age: U8 and up)

Setup: Inside a 15x15 grid one side has pointy tall cones on each corner and two circle cones at the other. Players line up at each of the four cones. Start at a tall cone passing diagonally to a circular cone and straight passing from a circular cone to tall cones.

Player movement:

- At a tall cone: Players receive the pass from a circular cone player, and pass diagonally by a one-touch or two-touch pass to the other circular cone. Once the player passes the ball, run to where you passed the ball to then end in line of the tall cone players.
- At a circular cone: Players receive a diagonal pass from the tall cone and one-touch or two-touch pass to the other tall cone. After the player passes the ball, run straight to the back of the tall cone line.

3.3.1 Game layout

TC – tall cone

CC – circular cone

P – Players line up behind cones.

P	P
P	P
P	P
TC1	TC2

CC2	CC2
P	P
P	P
P	P

The ball and player path will start at TC1->CC2->TC2->CC2-> and then back to TC1. A simple explanation to players is if at a circular cone, pass straight and run straight. If at a tall cone, pass diagonal and run diagonal...always moving in the direction of the ball.

So far this looks like a passing drill. Well this would be a good warm up for such a progression. Let's next add dynamic stretching.

3.3.2 Progression with dynamic stretching

Progression A:

Players that follow the ball to a circular cone must skip with high knees in the air.

Players that follow the ball to a tall cone must hop left-right-left-right.

Progression B:

Replace high knees with high heels to back stretching out quads.

Replace hop with right leg straight and kick outstretched left hand palm down. Then

Alternate leg and arms to stretch ham strings.

Progression C:

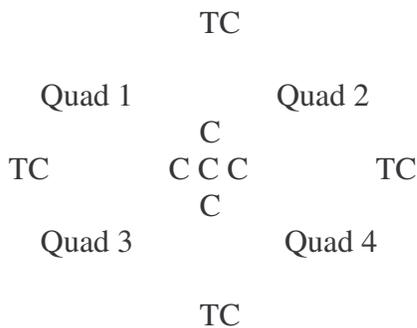
Add a second ball starting TC1 and TC2 with a ball. Now players quickly have to think quickly and react to passing, running, and receiving.

3.4 Passing Drill – Quadrant passing (Key: P, R, DR. Age: U8 and up)

As players arrive have them get a ball, pair up and have them dribble and pass the ball.

3.4.1 Game layout

You may have some flat cones setup inside a 20x15 area and setup a simple quadrant as seen below



TC – Tall cone demonstrating Quadrant boundaries

C – Flat cones (Above flat cones in a “cross” shape)

QuadX(1-4) – Lists the four quadrants players are expected to pass.

Note: Make sure to demonstrate this.

Setup (1A): Half the players start with a ball. Players with the ball must pass to players in a different quadrant. Players must lock eyes with another player to confirm a pass. If the player with the ball is in quadrant 1, they are looking to pass the ball to players in quadrants 2-4.

Warning: Players will have a tendency to stop, look for players and then pass. Once you begin to see this, stop the game and instruct them to continue dribbling while they pass.

Setup (1B): Add to the rules when a pass is complete both the passer and receiver must sprint to a new quadrant before continuing.

For the younger U8 players coaches may want to simply assign numbers to players and begin with coach passing to player and have them play it back to the coach. Use multiple coaches to keep players active.

Wall Pass: Must be in a different quadrant. Pass-return, then accelerate to a new quadrant.

Overlap Pass: Must be in a different quadrant. Pass-passer runs around another player into another quadrant and receives a leading pass.

Takeover Pass: Must be in a different quadrant. As you approach at half speed into the same quadrant, slow down to one quarter speed for the takeover and then both passer-receiver accelerate full speed into new quadrants.

Coaching points:

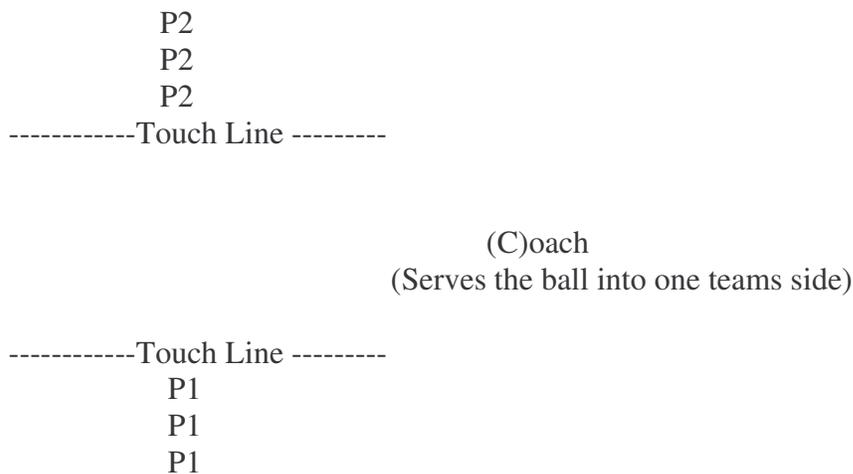
- Keep your head up while dribbling so you can lock eyes with a receiver.
- Ones without the ball must move to open space.
- If the drill begins to fail, demonstrate with a ball and restart. If this continues, then it's time to stop this drill and go over more fundamental isolated drills specific to body mechanics, locking the ankle, etc.

3.5 Attacking 1v1 (Key: DR, DE. Age: U8 and up).

Penetrate defense with dribble using feints.

This game would be considered the first side game.

3.5.1 Game Layout



P1 - Attacking players if coach serves the ball to them but transitions to defense if the ball is lost.

P2 – (Same as P1).

C – Coach

Place small circular cones on a 15X20 grid to outline where players need to cross touch lines.

3.5.2 Game Organization

Each team P1 and P2 players start at opposing ends. The coach plays in a firm pass to either P1 or P2. The player receiving the pass will attempt to dribble the ball to the opposing touch line. Play for 10-15 minutes.

Coaching points:

- As the coach serves in the ball, say “Now” and have the receiving side aggressively run up to the ball and not wait. After a few minutes eliminate saying anything upon serving in the ball, as the ball is the only queue they need...just like the real game.
- Attacking side should aggressively get to the ball and immediately put pressure on the defensive side. Force the defense to make their decision early. This will allow decisions to be made on either penetrating defense with dribble or setting up a wall, takeover, or overlap.
- Defense side will need to put pressure on the Attacker with the ball typically called Defense Disrupt/Destroy. If a 2nd player is on defense, the back player can play Delay and wait for the 2nd Defensive player for support.
- For young U8 players coaches may want to start with P1 as offense and P2 as defense. Once they understand the play, introduce whoever receives the ball is offense just like the real game.

3.5.3 Progression (Key: DR, DE, S. Age: U8 and up).

Progress this game to goals (using tall cones) allowing players to shoot. This progression would be considered the 2nd side game.

3.6 Defense 1v2/ Attacking 2v1 (Key: DR, DE, R, P. Age: U8 and up).

This drill is similar to Attacking 1v1 above except have one side with 2 lines and the other with one. If the coach passes the ball to the two lined player, it's a 2v1 attacking, otherwise it's a 1v2 defending depending on the emphasis of your session.

3.6.1 Progression (Key: DR, DE, S, R, P)

Progress this game to goals (using tall cones) allowing players to shoot. This progression would be considered the 2nd side game.

3.7 Shooting with laces warm up (Key: S Age: U8 and up)

The setup is very simple to isolate proper kicking technique with laces. Every player has a ball and holds the ball with fingertips only. Begin by dropping the ball and kick with laces. The ball should pop straight up without any rotation. Catch the ball and repeat exercise. The time duration on this should be 2~3 minutes.

Variation 1: Players pair up and now when dropping the ball, try to strike to partner about 8 yards apart.

Variation 2: Same as Variation 1 except partner is always the passer and the receiver one time kicks the ball with laces. Switch up every 30 seconds or so.

Coaching point:

- To land on the striking foot. Continue using right foot and then alternate to left foot.
- As technique breaks down, shorten distance.
- As technique is good, increase distance.
- Keep the knee low and snap the foot down in a punching motion to strike the ball.
- Make sure the ankle is locked. Specifically the player should land forward on the front of their striking foot indicating their ankle was locked.

3.8 Striking Competition (Key: S. Age U8 and up)

This shooting drill demonstrates striking with laces technical activity.

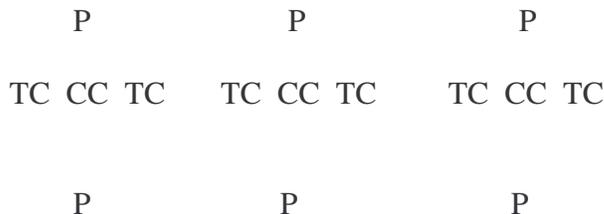
Setup: Partners are 10-20 yards apart depending on age. Between the players is a pair of tall cones (or circular) 3 feet apart and a circular cone in the middle. Place a ball on the circular cone. Players will attempt to knock the ball off the circular cone for 3 points and 1 point for striking the ball between the outer cones. Continue first competition to 5 points for example with Right foot and switch to the Left foot for the second game. Each game should last about 3 minutes. Also for each kick, players must run up and touch one of the cones.

Game Layout:

P – Player

TC – Tall cone

CC – Circular cone with ball on it.



Variation 1:

Same as above except when the partner receives the ball from the other player, receive the ball and roll it forward. Then strike slow rolling ball away from you by over stepping the plant foot before striking.

Variation 2:

Strike the ball served to you by partner. Then alternate.

The plant foot must now be made early before the ball is received.

Coaching point:

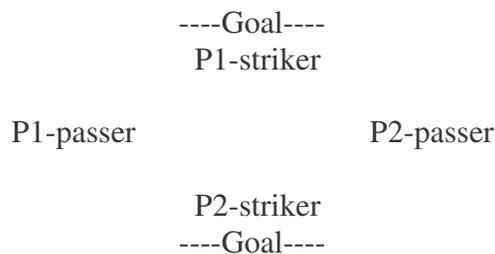
- Make sure the ball does not start going into the air. This should be a low powerful kick.
- Land forward on your kicking foot.
- Having players touch the cone after striking the ball demonstrates good habits in moving forward.
- Players should be looking at the top of the ball when shooting?
- Players who try each variation now understand to plant the foot early on a ball moving toward them and ahead of a forward rolling ball.

3.9 End-zone Striking (Key: S. Age U9 and up)

This drill can be played in groups of 2, 4, 5 or 6.

3.9.1 Game Layout

Key: P1 & P2– One striker and one passer.



3.9.2 Game setup

Goals are placed 10-20 yards apart where 2 players are at one end of the field and 2 at the opposite end. One player (the passer) remains forward about mid field (where the cones were in the Striking competition above) while the striker remains near their own goals end. See game layout above.

The game begins with a passer passing back to their striker. The striker one-time kicks the ball with laces to the opposing goal. The striker collects the ball and passes to their teams player who one time passes back to the striker for a shot on the opposing net. After a few minutes alternate players off so everyone has a chance to become a striker and passer.

Variation 1:

Add a group of 5 players. The setup now has two players at each corner and one player in the center for both teams. One corner player always passes to the center player followed by center passing to the other corner for a one time kick to the opposing goal.

Key: P1 & P2– One striker and one passer.



Setup 1: As seen above C1 (Coach 1) places the ball for P1 to run up and kick the ball into the net. Coach can closely observe technique and provide guidance. The 2nd coach C2 at the same time places a ball for P2. A parent or 3rd coach helps recycle balls from the net back to the coaches. All balls remain between the coaches keeping lines small and repetition of kicks high.

Setup 2: At the same time Coach C1 and C2 roll the ball towards players at an angle causing players to kick on goal from the left or right side. P1 players must use the left foot and P2 use the right foot. Once players complete one side, they run back in the middle and into the back of P2's line. P2's player after kicking now lines up into P1's line.

Setup 3: Similar to Setup 1 except the ball is now rolled away from the player to kick on goal.

3.11 Attacking 2v1 Wall pass (Key: P, R, S. Age: U8 and up)

The Wall pass is sometimes called the give-and-go. You may have heard players on the field yell one-two as they pass to a player telling them to pass it back.

3.11.1 Game layout

Create a grid 15x20

D – Defensive players

A1 – First Attacker

A2 – Second Attacker

D
D
D
-----Touch Line -----

20 feet
long

(C)oach
(Serves the ball to A1)

A2 A2 A2

-----Touch Line (15 feet) -----
A1
A1
A1

Timeline Attacking:

1. Coach serves in the ball to the first attacker A1.

2. Second attacker A2 can now move from their line to setup a Wall pass.
3. A1 receives the ball and quickly closes distance to the goal.
4. A1 decides on whether to dribble as first attacker or pass to A2.
5. A2 receives the pass from A1 and one touch passes back.
6. Dribble over touch line (or shoot on goal) for one point.
7. (See coaching points for more info)

Timeline Defense:

1. Defense can't move until the first attacker touches the ball.
2. Defense closes down distance quickly on the first attacker.
3. Win the ball and dribble over the opposing touch line for one point.

Progression: Same as above except instead of touch lines, players can shoot on a 3 foot goal using tall cones.

Coaching points:

- Attacker's first touch was proper. The ball should not pop in the air or stop the ball. The first touch should be positive towards open space.
- The first attacker must decide on whether to link up with the second attacker via pass or penetrate defense with dribble.
- First Attacker must quickly run to meet the coach's pass and then close down distance on Defense.
- Second Attacker plays the ball with a one-touch pass.
- Second Attacker upon receiving a pass from the first attacker, to decide on whether to continue to dribble over the touch line or to link up a pass back.
- Delaying Attackers favor the defense.
- Typically I have seen this drill start by the defense serving the ball to offense. If defense has the ball, then make sure you don't just give it away.

3.12 Attacking 2v1 Overlap (Key: P, R, S. Age: U10 and up)

The overlap pass should be executed in the opposing team's half of the field.

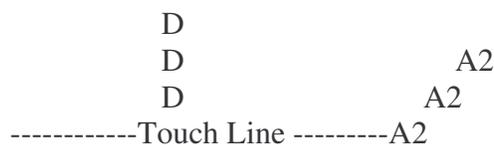
3.12.1 Game layout

Create a grid 15x20

D – Defensive players

A1 – First Attacker

A2 – Second Attacker



20 feet
long

(C)oach
(Serves the ball to A1)

-----Touch Line (15 feet)-----
A1
A1
A1

When the coach serves in the ball to the first attacker (A1), the second attacker (A2) can now run into position. Defense can't move until A1 touches the ball. This allows the attacking team a slight advantage. A2 immediately runs into position to sell the overlap pass. A1 dribbles the ball in inward arc moving into the direction of the defender toward A2. When the second attacker A2 sees this run from A1, the overlap is on. A2 the second attacker runs around behind the first attacker and receives a connected pass from A1 where the player created space from their inward arcing run. Follow with a dribble to touch lines.

(See above wall passes for coaching points)

Progression: Same as above except instead of touch lines, players can shoot on a 3 foot goal using tall cones.

3.13 Attacking 2v1 Takeover (Key: P, R, S. Age U9 and up)

The take over pass should be executed in the last third of the opposing team's field. A predecessor to this drill would include Quadrant passing emphasizing on takeovers.

3.13.1 Game layout

Create a grid **20x15** (Provides more space for attacking team).

D – Defensive players
A1 – First Attacker
A2 – Second Attacker
CC – circular cone

D
D
D
-----Touch Line -----

15 feet
long



Four circular cones (CC) create a small square A1 must dribble through towards A2. A1 starts up by dribbling towards A2. Once A1 exits the circular cone box, A2 can begin their run towards A1 selling the take over. Defense can't run until A1 exits the cone box. Depending on defense, attackers decide on who should take/keep the ball. After attackers commit to who will take over the ball, both players accelerate to opposing touch line.

Progression: Same as above except instead of touch lines, players can shoot on a 3 foot goal using tall cones.

3.14 Color passing (Key: P, DR. Age: U10 and up)

Create a 20x20 area for passing.

This drill will require pennies of two colors, say red and blue.

Half of the players will wear red and the other half blue. The coach sets up the passing sequence of red-red-blue-blue and repeat. Players dribble around and pass to the appropriate color sequence. After players successfully complete a number of sequences, then add a new sequence.

Coaching points:

- Communication between players is a must
- Coach to select number of touches before pass.
- Players must now think ahead if receiving a pass on what to do next.

3.15 Goalie basics

Catching techniques:

- The high “W” hand position. The “W” is created by the thumbs at the center of the “W” and index fingers.
- Teach them to form the “W” by placing the tip of their thumbs together, with their palms toward the ball and fingers pointing upward.
- Elbows should be bent.

Stance:

- Standing in a “Gorilla” shape-shoulder rounded, and the knees bent. Palms should be facing outward and fingers pointing toward the ground.
- Always on your toes to be ready for the ball. I tell beginners as the opposing team approaches, begin to take a few quick steps on your toes reminding them to shift their weight forward.
- Make sure hands always lead, not the knees.

3.16 Goalie wars

Setup:

- A 1v1 competition between keepers.
- Keepers attempt to score on each other by a kick or throw.
- Once a keeper makes a save they can shoot on the opposing goal.
- Provide a few extra balls in each net so keepers don't have to stop and run down balls beyond their goal.

Coaching points:

- Saving techniques
 - Low: Wall versus scoop
 - Middle: Basket with elbows together and palms down
 - High: Receive the ball as high as possible, "Keeper!" call
 - Hands using the "W" or contour shape.
- Stance: Gorilla, on balls of pivoting feet, palms slightly forward
- Throwing the ball using proper technique curling arm over ball stepping into the throw and in a whipping motion to deliver the ball.

3.17 Goal Keeper Tennis

Setup:

Create a 15x10 grid and place either tall cones or goalie nets between players of a 1v1 Keeper versus keeper. In the middle of the grid goalies can't cross the half way point and must bounce the ball once over the opposite side of the circular cones by throwing the ball.

Key:

K – Keeper

CC – circular cones.

---- Goal----

K

CC CC CC CC (must bounce once over cone line for a goal)

K

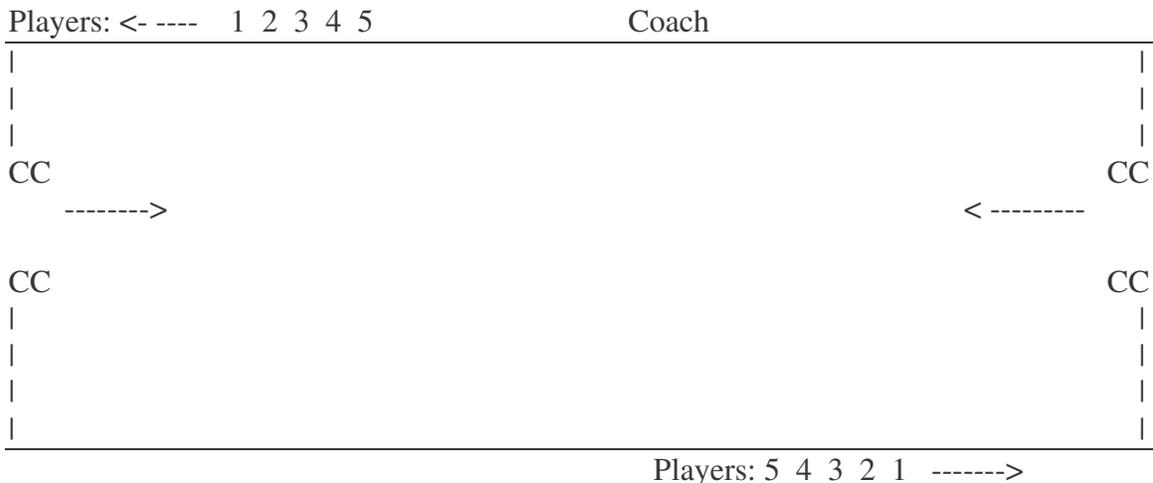
---Goal---

Coaching points:

- Proper throwing technique.
- Same coaching points as Goalie Wars above.

3.18 Get-out-of-there with numbers (Key: S, DR, DE, P, R. Age U7-U10)

The coach sets up a 15x15 grid and selects players 1-5 on each end. One side wears colored pennies.



The coach set the ball into the field of play and calls out a player's number 1,2,3,4, or 5. When player's numbers are called, they run through their defending goal (between the circular cones first and run to win the ball. Once they win the ball to dribble through the cones.

Progression 1:

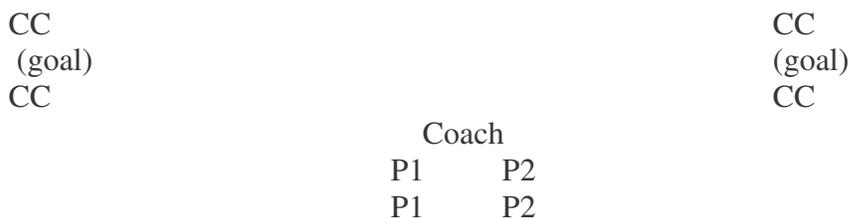
Shoot to goals instead of dribbling between cones.

Coaching points:

- Call out numbers unordered to keep players surprised.
- Call out multiple numbers for 2v2 or 3v3 for example.
- Coach may send the ball into play closer to less aggressive players.
- If players go out of bounds, just yell get out of here and they run back into their position. For younger players place a small circular cone to mark their position.

3.19 Get-out-of-there (DR, S, P, DE. Age U6-U10)

Setup: Line P1 for example has colored pennies.



P1 P2
P1 P2

The coach sets a ball into play and calls out for both P1 and P2 line players 1-4 for example. If the coach says 1, then one player from each line comes out to win the ball and shoot on net. Mix up where the ball is set into the field including bouncing ball, etc. Also mix up number of players to 1v1 to 4v4.

3.20 Back-to-back goals (Key: P, R, DE, DR, S. Age: U9 and up)

Both main goals are brought to the center of the field and placed back to back. The goals now face in opposite directions from each other. Each team should have a goalie and if the goalie wins the ball they can't throw the ball over their back in an attempt to score. Place pennies on one team in a 5v5 or 6v6 format. Play to 5 goals.

Coaching points:

- Players must spread out and form passing lanes to the opposing goal.
- Many shots on goal opportunities exist.
- Communicate between players.
- Transitions from defense to offense will be exercised.

3.21 Rage-in-the-cage (Key: P, R, DE, DR, S. Age: U9 and up)

Setup:

Create a 20x15 area for passing so it's longer than it is wide.

This drill can be played with many players 12-and up. Split the team up into 2 with one side wearing pennies. Line up circular cones to mark out the length of the playing field. The main theme is for each team to score on the opposing goal encouraging lots of goal scoring opportunities.

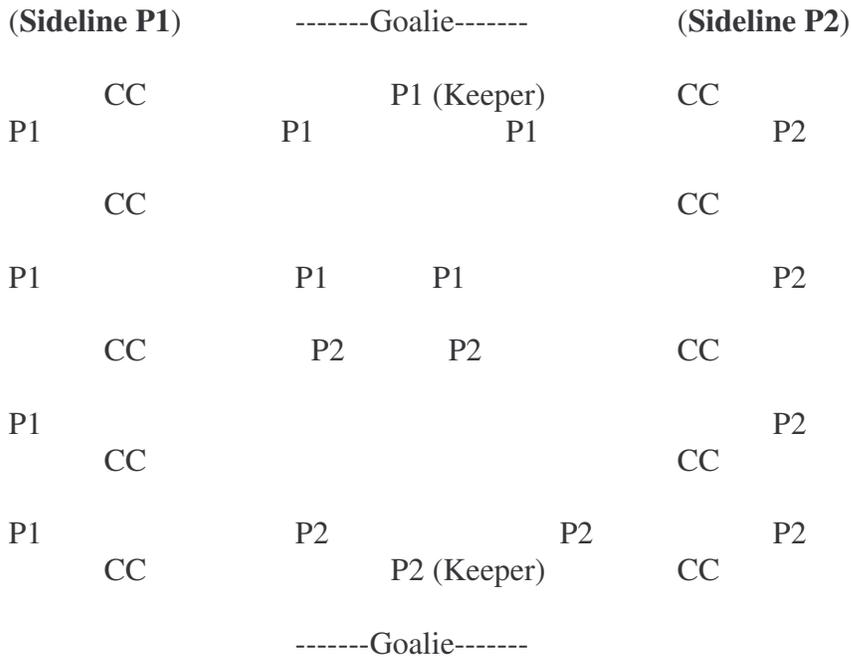
Guidelines:

- Play 4v4 with keepers. If you have less players then 3v3 with or without keepers.
- Players on the field can play to players on the sideline.
- Players on the sideline can one-touch or two-touch the ball back into play.
- When a goal is scored or play becomes boring, the coach calls "CLEAR" and players cycle in/out of the game.

Scoring:

- Player on the field passes to sideline player who misses the ball. One point to the opposing team. So players on the sidelines must remain engaged in the game.
- 1-points – Score a goal.
- 2-points – Ball hits either left or right goal post.
- 3-points – Ball hits either left or right goal post and goes in.
- 1-point – Ball hits the goal's cross bar.

- You can also replace hitting the goal post by placing cones on the inside of net.



Coaching points:

- Attacking in the last 3rd encourages shooting on goal often even if it's not the perfect setup.
- Encourage shooting with different striking surfaces.
- Depending on age did they attempt wall, take-over, or overlaps?
- Keep head down when striking the ball.
- Continue to emphasize locked ankles for all striking surfaces.
- How was their first touch on the ball? Away from pressure?

3.22 Large Fixed Triangle passing (Key: P. Age U8-and up)

Setup:

Place three circular cones in a triangle about 15 feet apart to form an equilateral triangle. You will have players evenly divided into 3 lines behind each of the 3 cones. Start with only one ball.

Guidelines:

- Pass clockwise and receive on the left foot passing with right.
- Follow the ball to player who is clockwise and get in back of line at new cone location.

Progression:

- Add a second ball to start from a different location.

- Change to counterclockwise
- One-touch only.
- Left foot only.
- Laces, tow-down pass, or inside foot.

Coaching points:

- Locked Ankle.
- First touch positive towards target.
- Players don't wait for ball to be received as they should be running toward the receiving ball.
- Players after completing a pass should follow through continuing run to next cone.

CC – Circular cone

P - Player

P
P
P
CC

CC
P
P
P

CC
P
P
P

3.23 Possession to score- no pressure

The basic setup will be in 3 groups. Left, center, and right parts of field have a passer, receiver/striker. The passer starts with the ball and passes to the receiver who one-touch shoots on goal.

Setup:

- Each group Left, Center, and Right side has a passer line and a receiver/striker.
- The left side receives on their left foot and one touch strikes with their right.
- The center receives a pass to one side or the other and one touch strikes to goal.
- The right side receives the pass on the right foot and one touch strikes with their left foot.

- May need two coaches as one near the net and the other cycling balls back to the players who just shot on goal.
- When players complete their shot on goal, they run to the passer line on the same side. The passer will now become the receiver/striker.
- After a number of iterations, switch groups so Left becomes center, center to right and right becomes the left group.

TC – Tall cone

CC – Circular cone

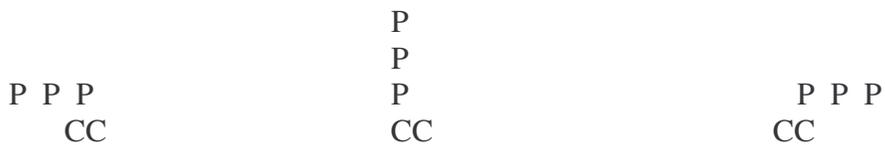
P - Player

Left Side

Center

Right Side

-----Goalie-----



Coaching points:

- Crisp passes with locked ankle
- Keep head down while shooting.
- Encourages shooting with no pressure from defenders to emphasize technique.
- No strikes should be in the air. All strikes should aim low towards corners of goal.

Progressions:

- Passers must use left foot
- Pass using inside, toe-down side of foot, or laces.
- See Possession to score – with pressure.

3.24 Possession to score – with pressure

Create two 10x10 boxes using circular cones (CC) and have two pair of players, one with pennies and one without. Two players are on each team trying to maintain possession of

the ball within the 10x10 grid box. This will be the same setup for the 2nd grid and players. Next further down the field are only two players, one with a pennie and one without. The coach numbers each 10x10 grid box as #1 or #2.

Setup:

- Players in both box #1 and box #2 begin to shield, pass, and dribble to maintain possession of the ball for their team.
- When the coach yells out, “box number 1” for example, the player who currently possesses the ball passes to the same colored teammate down the field out of the box and continues to support the play to help score a goal.
- The play resumes and is repeated.
- Switch off players to the two players who support down the field.
- Play with or without keepers.

Key:

CC – Circular cone

P1 – Player one wearing Pennie.

P2 – no color.

-----Goalie-----

P1 P2

(P1 & P2 wait for a pass from box 1 or 2 below)



3.25 Possession turnover – loose a player

The game is played as a 4v4 with keepers in a 20x20 grid.

Setup:

All the soccer rules apply for a 6v6 except if the player turns over the ball to the opposing team or scores a goal they must kneel until possession changes again. The reason for this

is to give number to the attacking team during each run. This is a very fast passed game encouraging fast breaks and shooting.

Provide pennies for the two teams and cycle out players so they don't remain on the sidelines for long.

If you don't want players to get run over on the field, you can always have them come off and next in line to come on waits for possession change.

4 Coaching Session Examples

4.1 Shooting Session (Key: S, P. Age: U9-and up)

4.1.1 Warm-Up

Warm-up 1: Begin with **Dynamic Stretch Passing** using only laces.

Warm-up 2: Start with **Passing Drill – Quadrant passing** except use laces for all passes. Pass to partner with laces using only your Left foot and then Right foot.

4.1.2 First Side Game

Before the first side game begins isolate the proper kick with laces.

- Shooting with laces warm up section 3.7.

4.1.3 Second Side Game

The second side game adds more technical skills and has multiple parts.

- Striking Competition section 3.8
- End-Zone Striking section 3.9

Technical game: 4v4 no keepers for ~8-10 minutes.

- Shots hitting the frame from own half of the field for one point.
- Shots scoring from own half for 3 points.
- Passing back to own half for a strike for double points. Must score with laces.

4.1.4 Free Scrimmage

Play the game without restrictions.

4.1.5 Cool down.

This is the time for coach to wrap up what players learned today. Point out the topic of the day and briefly state the coaching points.

5 More drills specific for (U6-U8)

5.1 Dribble inside island

Heel, laces, outside, inside, soul of foot. Use left inside, right...etc. Now try all of them. This should be considered a warm up for the kids to experiment with different touches on the ball. Typically we remind kids to dribble with little toe for outside foot and big toe for the inside part of foot.

Variation 1: Red-light-green-light. When the coach says red light, players must put their foot on the ball and remain still. When the coach says green light they begin to dribble again.

Variation 2: Players dribble fast if the coach yells “run like a cheetah” and slow if coach yells “walk like an elephant.” When walking slow each step players should be touching the ball.

5.2 Green Goblin (or simply Kangaroo) – U6

Players dribble inside an island. If the goblin tags a player who is dribbling the ball, they must hold the ball up in the air with both hands. Then any player can free them if they kick the ball through their legs. To slow the green goblin down, I first try having them dribble their own ball. If that doesn't do it I have them hop like a Kangaroo.

5.3 Kick the coach –U6-U8

This drill is a shooting/passing drill to help player aim the ball. Kids really love this as they get to kick the coach with the ball. Coaches move around a grid while players try and strike the ball touching one of the coach's legs. For each successful hit, they score one point. After a minute ask them how many points they received. Now restart the drill asking them to beat their own score.

5.4 Tag – without the ball- U6

I only run this drill once at the beginning of the season. All players are in a grid 15x15 and when the coach says go, players must tag other players on the knee. While they are running around say remember to bend your knees and try to not get tagged. Then after a minute ask how many tags they were able to get. Redo the drill asking them to do better than they did last time. This teaches balance and includes everyone in the game.

5.5 Tag – with the ball (hospital tag) –U6-U8

In a grid 15x15 players dribble around and try and tag players on the shoulder. If they do the player who was tagged must now place their hand on that body part. If tagged a 2nd time, they place the other hand on that body part. If tagged a 3rd time come see the coach for a special drill. The coach may give 10 toe-taps or some such foot drill to help improve their abilities. Then place kids back into the drill.

Redo the drill again asking for them to improve on the number of tags.

Variation 1: Freeze-Tag – Coach tags players and any other player can un-freeze by tagging them.

5.6 Gates Dribble –U6

Dribble through gates 3 feet apart in a 15x15 grid. Ask players to see how many gates they can dribble through. Let the drill go for a few minutes and ask them to pick their heads up so they don't bump into each other. Redo the drill and see if they can improve their score.

5.7 Gates Dribble – U8

Same as U6 gates dribble except now you can explore different dribbling. For example how many times can you dribble around a gate with the left foot only? Can you make figure 8 around gates? How about circles? Use inside, outside foot to make turns.

5.8 Gates passing –U7-U8

Similar to Gates Dribble above except players are paired up to pass the ball through the gates. This should not be the first introduction to passing and it's not typically covered until dribbling and shooting have been addressed. See how many points they can get in 2 minutes. Now replay the game asking them to better their score.

5.9 Capture the ball – U6-U8

Place balls in the center of the 15x15 grid. Then create two small square grids about 5 feet apart on either end. Players are split into two groups one wearing pennies starting in their own goal grid. When the coach yells "go", players run to the center trying to dribble and pass balls back into their goal. The winner is the team with the most balls in their goal in 2 minutes.

Key:

CC – circular cones

B – Balls

P - Players

CC CC

BBBBB

CC CC

BBBBB

ppppp

pppppp
CC CC

CC CC

5.10 Musical balls –U6

This drill provides awareness and speed.

One player does not have a ball and must move around to find a ball once the coach says “switch”. Try not to be the last one to get a ball. After a few times take out a few more balls and then up to 4. Remind players to move sideways, backwards, and look up to see where the players are on the field.

5.11 Musical Balls (version 2) (Key: U7-U8)

This drill improves turns, fakes and fades.

Everyone has a ball. When the coach says “change” dribble in a different direction. Remind them to accelerate away in a different direction after “change”. Also use top foot, hook turn, etc to change direction. When the coach says “stop”, make sure players can hold out their arms and don’t touch anyone. Use open space and stay away from others.

5.12 Shadow Dribble –U6

This drill helps players keep their ball under control, and quickly change direction.

Use turns to keep the ball as close and then accelerate after turning. Pair up players and one person carries the ball under their arm while their shadow player tries to follow while dribbling their ball. Remind them to make it tricky and keep your heads up. Look up to see where the leader is running and use the bottom of your eyes for looking at the ball. It’s important to look up.

5.13 Shadow Dribble (version 2) U6-U8

Similar to Shadow Dribble except now the leader and the shadow dribble the ball. Ask the players if they can move away from their shadow.

5.14 Switch balls-U6-U8

This drill has players dribbling in a 15x15 grid.

When the coach says “switch”, players run to another player’s ball. Try not to be the last one there...it’s a race. Now dribble again until the coach says “switch”.

5.15 The Snake game – U6-U8

This drill has players dribbling in a 15x15 grid.

Mark the grid with tall cones and tell players if they fall off of the island (go outside the boundary of cones), they give up their ball and add onto the snake.

The game begins by having two players hold hands (called the snake) while the rest of the players dribble balls around the grid. If the snake tags a player dribbling the ball, they join hands to become the snake until all players have been tagged. The snake must remain fully attached for any tagged player to count.

This game promotes balance, group communication on which way to run while ones dribbling become aware of players around them.

5.16 Body Part Dribble – U6-U7

Players dribble the ball in a 15x15 grid.

When the coach yells out a body part, players must stop and touch the body part on the soccer ball. Encourage players not to be last to complete the move. The coach will yell out a different body part (elbow, belly, right foot, left foot, knee, bottom) at different intervals to keep them guessing.

This specific drill helps break the ice for many newcomers. It's important to have the team fully included in an activity all can do. Also the players are listening to the coach's instructions. So coaches as the activity leader trick the players into learning how to listen and enjoy playing with their teammates. 😊

5.17 Math Dribble – U6-U8

Players dribble the ball in a 15x15 grid.

While players dribble the ball and hear the coach yell out a number, they must run into groups of that number. If the coach yells 2, players must look up and pair up into a group of two. Encourage players to get into groups as fast as possible. Run this drill for a few minutes and tell players to dribble into space and look up.

5.18 Soccer Marbles – U6-U8

Players dribble the ball in a 15x15 grid.

Pair up players and have them start 5-6 feet away. Players score a point if their ball makes contact with the player's ball. If they miss, the other player shoots to make contact with their ball. Continue playing for 2-3 minutes. Ask how many points did they get? Now restart the activity and at the end ask if they improved their last score.

5.19 Man in the middle-U6-U8

Split the players into three groups. One group in the middle wearing pennies while the non-pennie players on opposite sides.

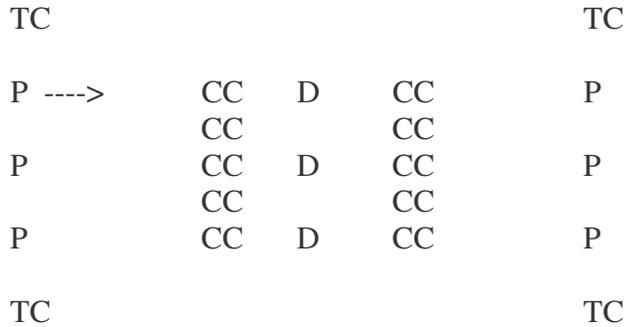
Key:

P – Player working together to pass the ball past the middle team to connect a pass to the other players.

D – Players in the middle wearing pennies trying to stop the pass from occurring.

CC – Circular cones the Defense can't cross

TC – Tall cones marking the boundary players can't cross.



Players (P) attempt to pass through the defense (D) and connect a pass to players on the opposite side. The team receives a point for each successful connected pass. Switch teams every few minutes. The team which failed to connect the pass is now the middle team. If one team has not been the middle team after a few iterations, place them into the middle so everyone has had a turn at defense.

Players will quickly find out that if they attempt to just kick the ball through, it will likely fail. Coaches should encourage connected passes on the same side and then one-touch pass to the opposite team. Also players can even pass backwards to players waiting to kick the pass to the opposing teammates.

5.20 One Away Passing –U7-U10

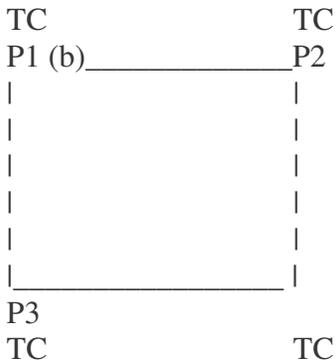
Players pass at the corners of a 10x10 grid.

Key:

TC – Tall cones

P – Player one away from the ball.

b – The ball



Start the ball with player P1.

Players can only pass one cone away and can't pass diagonally.

Players can't pass back to the one who passed the ball.

P1 passes to player P2.

Now P3 must run to the open cone (lower right) so P2 can pass the ball.

Follow the three Frames 1-3 below for further examples.

P1 (b) --->passes the ball P2

P3 runs to opposite cone ----->
(Frame 1)

P1	P2
(runs to open cone)	(b)
	Pass to P3
V	V
	P3

(Frame 2)

< ----- P2

P1 <----- (b) P3

(Frame 3)

Frame 1: Player P1 passes to P2. Player P3 runs to the open cone to be one away from the ball.

Frame 2: Player P2 passes one away to player P3 while player P1 runs to open cone.

Frame 3: Player P3 passes one away to player P1 while player P2 runs to open cone.

Once player understand the movement they will begin to run toward the open cone after their pass.

This drill helps players understand how to spread out and help support their teammate who has the ball...just like the real game.

Variation: Add a defender in the middle who must stay inside the box. The defender will catch on to guard the “one-away” player so change the rule that players can pass to any receiver. If the player turns the ball over to the defender, they are now in the middle.

5.21 Cone Soccer – U6- U10

Create a 15x15 grid for players.

Split into 2 teams and one wears pennies.

Place TC (Tall Cones) in four locations in the grid.

Players need to kick the ball into any cone for their team to gain one point.

Any player can then shoot the ball to any other cone for a new point.

Continue this play for a few minutes.

Present coaching points encouraging players to move towards open “unguarded” cones. Then a quick pass from their teammate can score a quick point.

6 Rules of the game

Mercy Rule Guidelines:

When a team is up by 5 goals, the opposing team is allowed to add another player on the field. This has been decided by the board and the referees have been updated to this specific change.

Please understand that if your team has been dominating the game and the score is only 3-0 for example, and then begin backing down your most skilled players applying additional restrictions. Restrictions are as follows:

- Move aggressive players to defense/keeper.
- Stop defense from progressing past half field.
- Don't allow more than 2 offense players to cross into the opposing defensive field.
- Must pass the ball x times before scoring a goal.
- Passes and shots on goal with your left (or less dominant) foot.

The above is a suggested guideline to help address restrictions.

Goalkeepers: Players are not permitted to play more than one quarter in the net during a game. Players can play in the net for a full quarter or coaches may break up the time over the length of the game. Although refs will probably not enforce this, goalies should not hold onto the ball for more than 6 seconds. A team will lose possession of the ball if the goalie mishandles the ball twice. In the junior's, refs may simply warn them to drop the ball and use their feet.

Substitutions: Have your players ready to substitute into the game ahead of time to keep the game moving. Substitutions may be made on a goal kick, after a goal is scored, between quarters, your team's throw-ins, or when the other team substitutes on their throw-in. Substitutions **may not** be made during a corner kick. When your team is ready for a substitution, ask the ref for permission to substitute the players.

Official FIFA laws of the game:

http://www.fifa.com/mm/document/affederation/federation/81/42/36/lotg_en.pdf

Please take the above site as a guideline to the rules. Some rules simply don't apply to this league and others are modified for age, etc.

Penalty Kicks: There will be no penalty kicks in this division. In the event there is a hand ball in the zone, the opposing team will be given a free kick from ten yards outside the goal zone.

Drop Balls: There will be no drop balls in this division. If after an injury it is not clear which team had possession, the Ref will alternate giving teams a free kick at the point where play stopped.

Hand Balls: To reduce the number of hand balls called, refs will only call a hand ball if a player intentionally touches the ball. Players who are hit by the ball and use their hands in self defense will not be called for a hand ball.

Throw – Ins: A call of an improper throw-in by the ref will result in possession going to the opposing team. Refs have been asked to signal with the arm the direction of the throw-ins, especially on the opposite side of the field, enabling coaches to give their players direction. A couple of rules to be aware of:

- All opponents must not distract the thrower.
- All players from the other team must be at least 2 feet away until the ball is in play.
- The thrower must keep both feet on the ground and remain behind or on the touch line until the ball is in play.
- A proper throw in for Junior's will be given up to three attempts before possession is given to the opposing team.

Goalie-kicks: A goalie kick is taken when the ball leaves the field of play across the goal line. All opposing players must remain outside the penalty area until the ball leaves the area. No one from either team can touch the ball until it's in play. If an opposing player touches the ball prior to leaving the penalty area, the kick is retaken.

Corner-kick: A corner kick is taken when the ball leaves the field of play across the goal line, last touched by a defender. The ball is in play once it is kicked. The player taking the corner kick must not touch the ball until another player has touched the ball. All opposing players must remain 10 yards away from the ball until it's in play.