



STEP AHEAD SOCCER

U6 Curriculum

for more than 20 coaches



Who Are U6 Players?

You will be coaching players who are 4 and 5 years old. They will be turning 5 and 6 during the year.

There are a few things to understand about their development that will help you to understand and work with the kids more effectively.

At this age, it should not be all about soccer. You should also be focused on movement. These young bodies are just learning how to do many things. They need to be participating in activities which involve running, jumping, falling, and twisting. You can include activities with and without the ball that involve these types of movements. This helps them develop coordination and agility from an early age.

Help them increase the use and development of all their body parts.

Tip: This is a great age to explore the qualities of rolling and bouncing balls. You can use both their hands and feet to help them pass (or throw) a ball and receive (or catch) a ball and learn to judge varying speeds.

U6 Physical Characteristics

Their body segments grow at different rates. The top of their body grows first, making them top heavy. Growth starts with the head and moves down toward the feet. Their heads and bodies are disproportionate to their lower body compared to the adult body. Look around at your players and you will see this. This is one of the major reasons that coordination is difficult for them, especially with their feet. Be patient with them.

Physical differences between boys and girls are minimal.

U6 players are easily fatigued, but have rapid recovery. They will tire quickly of a game or running, but give them a breather and they are back at full speed. They have one pace – all out! Watch your own children, they go, and go, and go, and then they go to sleep. They wake up in the morning and the go, go, go starts as soon as their eyes open. Like Anna says in Frozen to her sister Elsa, “The sun is up and so am I.”

Cognitive development

They can focus well on one task at a time. Don't give too many rules or tasks at the same time. Try to break everything down into one task at a time.

Everything is very concrete. Don't use sarcasm. They don't get it and can lead to them perceiving things from you that you are not intending.

Psycho-Social development

They are ego-centric. This is demonstrated by watching a group of children all in the same area playing or doing different things. The need for group is very low.

A U6 player will recognize themselves, and you the coach. They may not even know their teammate's names until well into the season. When they bring a ball to practice, it is their ball and they will defend it. As a coach, you will get the most out of your players if most of your activities revolve around individuals rather than team. It is all about the ball and getting as many touches in as many different ways that you can. Keep activities as individually oriented as possible.

They have a short attention span. You will want to change activities up every 5-7 minutes. Within an activity, you will often need to change that activity (the rules) at least once.

Keep U6 players in constant motion. Don't spend very much time talking to them. 30-60 seconds is long enough to get them to the next activity and keep them moving.

U6's love fantasy. If you can add dragons, monsters, castles, jails, princes and princesses their attention will immediately increase. An activity that would have been boring is now fun and exciting, all by tapping into their imaginations. Use your imagination and enjoy playing pretend with them as you teach them soccer skills. Passing a ball becomes much more interesting if you have to avoid lava flows or asteroids.

On every U6 team, you will have a player or players who lack motivation. They would rather walk, or even lay down, than participate. Here are a couple of ideas to try. None of this is an exact science and there will be those players who don't respond to anything, except the passage of time as they get older. Developmentally some players may not be ready to be out

there, but they have been placed on your team none the less. Don't stress out too much, they are on every team.

First, if practices move too slowly, if there are a lot of breaks or standing in line, players will get bored and underperform. Keep the practices moving, keep encouraging and challenging players.

Don't be afraid to enlist the parent. U6 parents are generally right on the side line. After practice or before the next practice, let the parent know if the player does not respond you will ask them to go sit by the parent. Don't approach the parent as an adversary, treat them as if you're on the same side and tell them why and how you think it might help. Explain that most players have no desire to be sent to their parent during practice. They have a correct sense that the parent will be displeased.

The other option you have, if nothing else is working, is to not give the child the attention. You have other players who are working for you, reward them, spend your time on them. Don't beg and plead the child to join in after you have tried the encouragement route. Don't waste 80% of your time on the child who does not care or want to be there. Invest 80% of your time on the other players who are engaged.

These practices are designed to be fun for the players, teach skills and coordination, get each player to touch the ball as much as possible, and be easy for the coach to use. Coaches should feel confident to change or adapt plans as necessary, but stick to the basic plan.

Practice Themes

Each practice will have a theme or focus listed at the top. Emphasize this theme with your players throughout the activities. Each practice will be formatted as follows:

- Warm-up activity: Fun and energetic start to practice. 5-7 minutes.
- Skill activity: Working on technical skills such as dribbling, receiving, or finishing. 5-7 minutes.
- Fun activity: These activities vary, but are fun with lots of movement. 7-10 minutes.
- 1v1 games: Games where two players compete against each other. 7-10 minutes.
- Lead into game activity: This activity will set up the game at the end of practice. 5-10 minutes.
- Soccer game: These will be 2v2 and 3v3 games to two goals. There will be specific variations to emphasize different parts of soccer. 10-12 minutes.
 - If the coach wants to play, always be on offense for both teams to keep play moving.
 - Teach rules during this time, but keep the play moving especially as the season progresses and they learn the rules. Your job is to keep the ball in play and let them get lots of touches on the ball. No standing around every time a ball goes out, get the next ball in.

Keep It Moving

Practices are designed for 45-50 minutes, but can easily be lengthened to an hour by adding 1-2 minutes to each activity. 45 minutes is optimal for U6. Definitely do not practice more than one hour. One practice a week is enough.

- Teach yourself and players to keep practices moving briskly.
 - Transition from one activity to the next quickly.
 - Keep the ball in play and players moving.

- Take time for water breaks.
 - Plan on two water breaks after the 2nd and 4th activities. If it is hot, you may have to take water breaks more frequently. Teach kids to jog to water, get a drink, and jog back. Don't let them sit and hang out with their parents until you call them back. Total time involved should be approximately 60 seconds.

Do

- Every player must have a ball! Size 3. Pumped up. Coach should bring a pump to practice. Don't use flat balls.
- Every player must have water.
- Dribbling Activities: Every time you do dribbling activities make players use different parts of their feet (inside, outside, toe, laces, heel, and sole). ALWAYS MAKE PLAYERS USE BOTH FEET!
- Goals: A Goal is anywhere you drop two cones. It does not have to be a real goal with posts and a net.

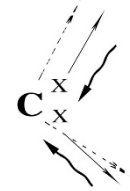
Don't

- Don't waste time on stretching. The purpose of stretching is to prevent muscle pulls; six year olds don't sustain these types of injuries on the soccer field.
- Don't have players run laps! Players will be running in other activities that imitate the game of soccer better. A well run practice will include a lot of movement with the ball in confined areas.

Enjoy! Don't be scared of getting in there and learning with the kids. The important thing is that the kids have fun, move a lot, and touch the ball. They don't know if you are new to this. They will love you for being there and having fun with them.

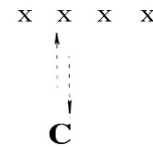
Boss of the balls (7 Min)

- Every player has a ball.
- Coach throws balls out and gives directions how players are to bring the ball back and hand it to the coach. Example: if coach has players “bring the ball back with their knees,” when they get back to the coach, they will pick the ball up and hand it to the coach.
- Vary how they bring the balls back.
 - Feet, head, knees
 - Throwing ball up to yourself three times
 - While skipping, hopping
 - Funny ways – elbows, head (with ball on ground), noses, shoulder, between knees
 - These are only ideas, make up your own as well. Be creative as you want. It does not all have to look like soccer, you are also working on coordination.



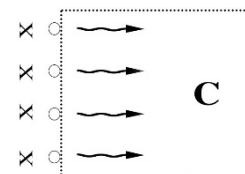
Soft Toss (7 Min)

- Every player has a ball. Players stand shoulder to shoulder. Coach slides down line from player to player.
- The player tosses the ball to the coach and the coach tosses it back (gently, two hands, underhand) to each player.
- Beforehand coach tells players how to return the ball.
 - Hands – player has to catch ball.
 - Thighs – player uses thigh to hit ball up and catch it.
 - Feet – player uses laces to kick ball up and catch it. (Difficult.)
 - Heads – player heads ball up and catches it.
- All players are a team. Coach sets a number (between 3-15 depending on difficulty) of successful attempts (i.e. Player hits ball up with thigh and catches it). Players count out loud together with coach for each success until they reach the set number. Then move on to the next skill.



Sharks and Minnows (7 Min)

- Every player has a ball. 15 x 20 yard grid.
- Coach is the shark (players may be the sharks after the first game).
- Players must dribble from one side of the grid to the other.
- If a player’s ball is kicked out of bounds, that player becomes a shark.
- It is the coach’s job to make sure the same people are not always first to lose their ball.
- Play until all player’s balls have been kicked out, then restart game.

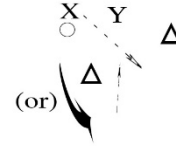


U6 Practices: Practice #1 Dribbling

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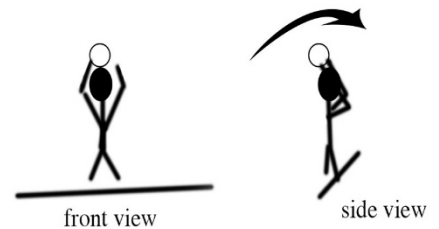
1v1 to two sided goal (7 Min)

- 2 players per ball. Set up one “goal” for each set of partners.
- Set up “goals” by placing two cones 3 yards apart.
- 3 games x 45 seconds. Switch partners for every game.
- Players can score from either side by passing through goal.
- Both players must be where the ball is, no standing in the goal.
- If one player scores, the other gets the ball.



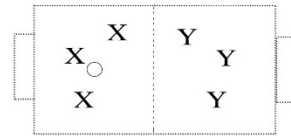
Throw-Ins (5 Min)

- Every player has a ball and stands shoulder to shoulder on the side line.
- Coach slides down line (quickly), having each player throw-in their ball to the coach.
- Work on correct technique. Player must stand behind line. Two feet must stay on the ground. Two hands come back over the head and throw together. 3-5 minutes maximum. Players need to learn, but this can get boring.



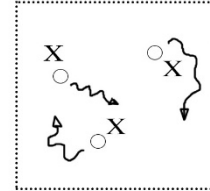
Soccer Game (12 Min)

- 3v3 games. 20 x 25 yard area. Set up small goals on each end using cones.
- Have all extra balls set next to the field so nobody has to chase a ball.
- When ball goes out of bounds, restart with throw-ins. Focus on THROW-IN technique.
- Make sure to rotate through the players taking the throw-ins.



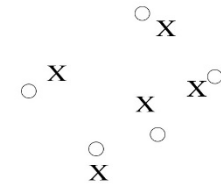
Car Dribbling (7 Min)

- Every player has a ball. 10 x 10 yard grid.
- Say beep-beep as you avoid other cars
- Coach will call out commands for players to follow while dribbling. Coach will introduce the commands one at a time. Players will need to stop only during the teaching part. After the first introduction, when a command is called out players should learn to do it without stopping.
 - Stop sign – step on ball
 - Red light – stop ball without stepping on it
 - Yellow light – slow motion dribbling
 - Green light – dribble fast and crazy
 - Right and Left turns – help players learn right and left.



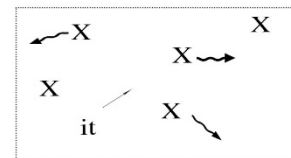
Standing ball moves (7 Min)

- Every players has a ball. 10 x 10 yard grid.
- Coach will take players through a series of ball moves. 30-45 seconds per move.
- Toe taps – Looks like running in place touching the bottom of feet to the top of the ball.
- Jump over ball – Jumping backward and forward, then side to side over ball.
- Step over turn – Run over the ball with one foot on each side of the ball when going over it. Turn and face the ball as quickly as possible.
- Inside taps – Touching the ball with the insides of the feet, tapping the ball back and forth between the feet side to side.
- Use your imagination. What else can a player do with a ball? You don't need to be a soccer expert.



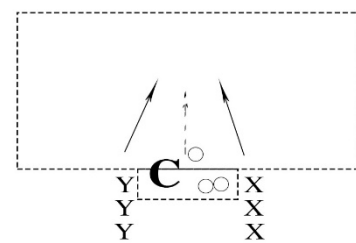
Tag (10 Min)

- Regular tag for 2-3 minutes. Keep the grid small enough that there is lots of action and it's hard to get away.
- Freeze tag
 - 3 games x 2 minutes with different players being "it."
 - All players who are not "it" have a ball. To unfreeze teammate, pass a ball through their legs.



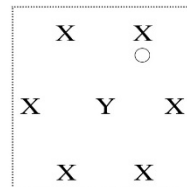
1v1 off Goal Post (7 Min)

- Coach is the goal keeper and starts all balls.
- Players line up on both posts.
- Coach rolls out ball and both players try to score on the big goal.



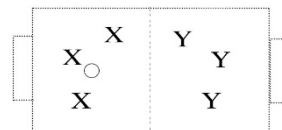
Monkey in the middle (5 Min)

- 1 ball. 10 x 15 yard grid
- This is keep away. The players on the outside keep the ball away from the player (or coach) in the middle.
- Start off with 6 players around the outside with the coach in the middle. Coach goes at a speed that the players will have success most of the time.
 - Encourage players to spread out when they have the ball.
- If players are successful with keep away, add one player as a defender with the coach.
- If the defenders win the ball, the players on the outside come in and steal it back and go back on the outside and quickly start passing again.



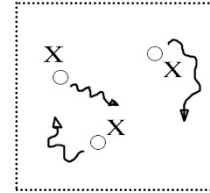
Play Soccer Game (10 Min)

- 3v3 games. 20 x 25 yard field. Set up small goals on each end using cones.
- Have extra balls set next to the field so nobody has to chase a ball.
- There must be ONE PASS each time a team wins the ball before shooting.



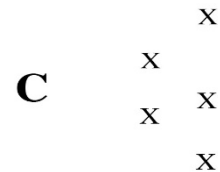
Body Part Stop (5 Min)

- Every player has a ball. 10 x 10 yard grid.
- Players dribble around area randomly, in and out of other players. Don't let players just dribble in a circle around the edges.
- Coach says body part to stop ball with. Player stops ball and immediately starts dribbling again. Example: "Stop the ball with your elbow." Repeat with lots of different body parts.
- Same as above except coach says two body parts to stop ball with.



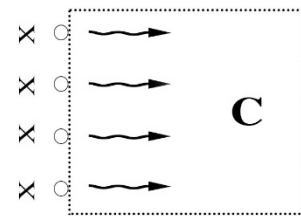
Simon Says (5 Min)

- Every players has a ball. 10 x 10 yard grid.
- Work on specific skills, coordination and fun things. Examples: throw up the ball and catch it. Dribble the ball with your left foot, step on the ball, kick the ball with your heel, bounce the ball off your head three times, etc.
- Coach can also include actions without a ball.
- Nobody is ever 'out.' If you mess up, go to back of group. This does not need to be a line, it can be done with players in a group in front of you. Going to the back on a mistake will stimulate focus.



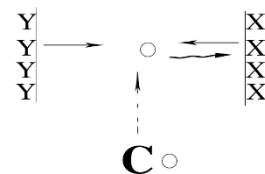
Red Light, Green Light (7min)

- Every player has a ball. 10 x 20 yard grid.
- Players move from one side of the area to the other toward you.
- Start without a ball. After a couple times, add a ball for every player.
- Player must step on ball when coach says red light. If they get caught still moving make them go back to the beginning.



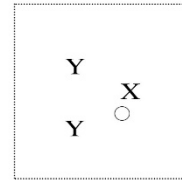
Steal the Bacon (7 Min)

- 1 ball in the center of a 10 x 20 yard grid. Coach should have all the other balls ready to replace the ball in the center.
- Two teams face each other standing one team on each end line.
- Coach calls two players, one from each team, who run to the center and try to get the ball and dribble back to their team.
- It does not matter who gets the ball first, both players continue to play 1v1 until one of them gets the ball back to their line or the ball goes out of bounds.



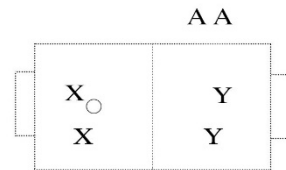
1v2 Keep Away (5 Min)

- Get in groups of 3 players with one ball per group. 10 x 10 yard grid for each group of three.
- 3 games x 1 minute games. It is keep away, there are no goals.
- The player with the ball tries to keep it away from the other two.
- The other two try to take it (not kick it away). If one of them wins it, that player tries to keep it from the other two.



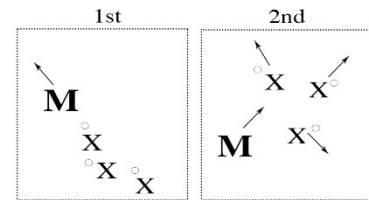
Play Soccer Game (10 Min)

- 2v2. 20 x 15 yard grid.
- Have three teams. One team rests, while two teams play. 2 minute games.
- Encourage players to beat the other team by DRIBBLING.



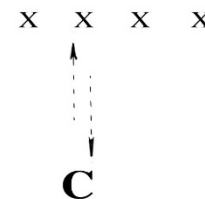
Dribbling: The Monster (7 Min)

- Every player has a ball. 10 x 10 yard grid.
- 1st Activity: Follow the monster.
 - Coach dribbles around doing goofy things like hopping, sitting, spinning, having fun. (If the coach cannot do these things, have the players lead each other.) Players follow.
- 2nd Activity: Away from the monster!
 - Players dribble around in the box trying to keep their ball and keep it in bounds.
 - Coach acts like a monster and kicks the balls of the player outside the grid. Player chases the ball and gets back in as fast as possible.



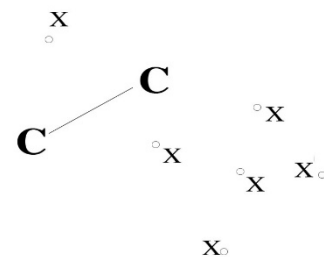
Soft Toss (5 Min)

- Every player has a ball. Players stand shoulder to shoulder. Coach slides down line from player to player.
- The player tosses the ball to the coach and the coach tosses it back (gently, two hands, underhand) to each player. Beforehand, coach tells players how to return the ball.
 - Hands – player has to catch ball.
 - Thighs – player uses thigh to hit ball up and catch it.
 - Feet – player uses laces to kick ball up and catch it. (Difficult)
 - Heads – player heads ball up and catches it.
- All players are a team. Coach sets a number (between 3-15 depending on difficulty) of successful attempts (i.e. Player hits ball up with thigh and catches it). Players count out loud together with coach for each success until they reach the set number. Then move on to the next skill.



Moving Goal (7 Min)

- Coaches (or coach and parent) each hold one end of a t-shirt (or towel) making a taught line. It should be higher than the heads of the players, then slowly walk around the field. Vary the difficulty by walking faster or making frequent turns.
 - Activity 1 – Every player has a ball. Players try to dribble ball through the moving goal. Player runs through goal as well.
 - Activity 2 – 2 players per one ball. Players try to kick ball thru the moving goal to a partner.

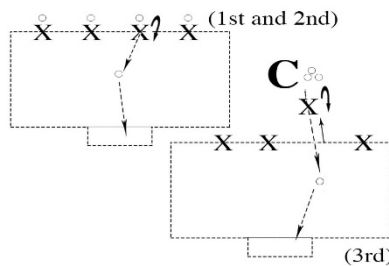


U6 Practices: Practice #4 Shooting

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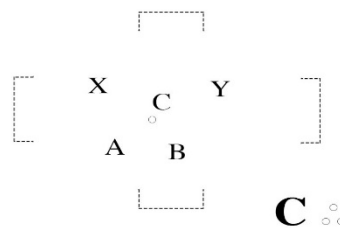
Back to Goal Shooting (10 Min)

- Every player has a ball.
- Players stand with back to goal, shoulder to shoulder on the top of the penalty box (the big rectangle that is painted around the goal).
- Activity 1 – Coach will call out a player’s name. That player rolls the ball through their legs, turns, chases the ball, and shoots it into the goal.
- Activity 2 – Coach will call out a player’s name. That player throws the ball over their head backwards and tries to shoot the ball before it stops.
- Activity 3 – Coach starts with the balls. Player runs to coach and away from the goal. Coach rolls the ball through the legs of the player, who turns and shoots. Don’t let players stop the ball.



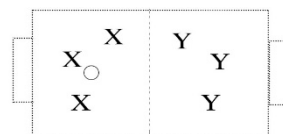
4 Goal Game (10 Min)

- All players on the field. 10 x 30 yard grid with small goals on each side. Use cones to set up 2 yard wide goals. Coach should have all balls together on the side of the field.
- Coach starts play by rolling the ball onto the field. Mix up which player the ball is rolled to.
- Every player is on their own team. Play goes until one of the players scores or the ball goes out of bounds. Coach immediately starts next ball.
- Players can score in any of the four goals.



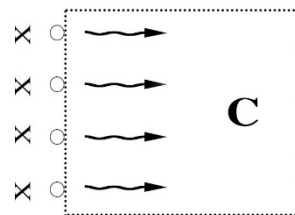
Play Soccer Game (10 Min)

- 3v3. 10 yards long x 30 yards wide. Big goals about 10 yards apart. Use real goal or cones to make 4-6 yard wide goals.
 - The goals are close together to cut down on the dribbling and running and encourage more shooting.
- Coach starts play by rolling the ball onto the field. Mix up which player the ball is rolled to and where on the field it is rolled.
- Emphasize shooting fast and get next ball in immediately.



Sharks and Minnows (7 Min)

- Every player has a ball. 15 x 20 yard grid.
- Coach is the shark (players may be the sharks after the first game).
- Players must dribble from one side of the grid to the other.
- If a player's ball is kicked out of bounds, that player becomes a shark, until only one minnow is left.
- It is the coach's job to make sure the same people are not always first to lose their ball.



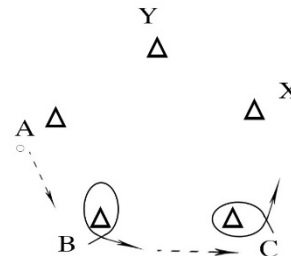
I can do this, can you? (5 Min)

- Every player has a ball.
- Players imitate what coach does. If the coach cannot perform a skill, demonstrate and describe without actually doing it.
- Let players have turns to make up tricks.
- Be creative and have fun with this. Do one thing at a time and let the players have about 30 seconds to practice it. Do both soccer and non-soccer looking things.



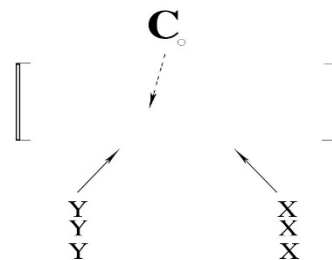
Circle of Cones Passing (5 Min)

- 1 ball for the entire group.
- Circle of cones. 1 player per cone. Each cone should be about 5-7 yards apart or closer if the players cannot pass the ball that far.
- A passes to B who receives the ball and dribbles around cone as fast as possible. B then passes to C who dribbles around cone as fast as possible. Repeat around the circle.
- If there is too much standing, add a second ball.



1v1 (10 Min)

- 10 x 20 yard field with two small goals. Make the goals 2 yards wide.
- All balls are set by the coach at the midline on the side of the field. Coach serves from midline. Ball is rolled or bounced toward one of the players to start 1v1. Players are working on receiving the ball. Don't roll it in the middle of them.
- Players line up in two teams, on opposite side of the field from the coach.
- Play stops when a goal is scored or ball goes out of bounds.
- After playing 1v1, players should get back to line and have just a few seconds to catch their breath before going again. You can have more than one 1v1 game going at a time. Mix up who plays who.



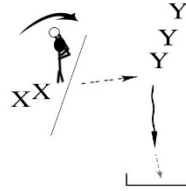
U6 Practices: Practice #5 Receiving

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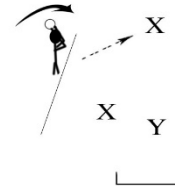
Throw-Ins (7 Min)

- Activity 1 – Player throws ball in to partner who receives ball, turns and dribbles toward goal and scores.
- Activity 2 – 3v1 to goal. 3 attackers and 1 defender.
- Play begins with throw-in. Other two attacking players spread out. Ball is thrown to the open player (where the defender is not).
- Player must stand behind line. Two feet must stay on the ground. Two hands come back over the head and throw together.

Activity 1

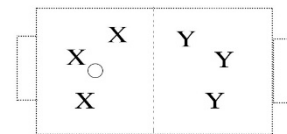


Activity 2



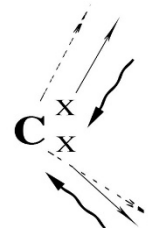
Play Soccer Game (12 Min)

- 3v3 20 x 30 yard field with two small goals.
- Every ball that goes out of bounds is started by a throw-in from the side line. Today, this is even for balls that go off the end line.
- Coach should have every other team take the throw-in no matter who kicked the ball out. Make sure to rotate which player is throwing the ball in.



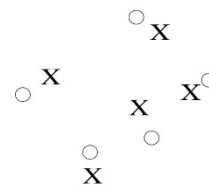
Boss of the balls (7 Min)

- Every player has a ball.
- Coach throws balls out and gives directions how players are to bring the ball back and hand it to the coach. Example: if coach has players “bring the ball back with their knees,” when they get back to the coach, they will pick the ball up and hand it to the coach.
- Vary how they bring the balls back.
 - Feet, head, knees
 - Throwing ball up to yourself three times
 - While skipping, hopping
 - Funny ways – elbows, head (with ball on ground), noses, shoulder, between knees
 - These are only ideas, make up your own as well. Be creative as you want. It does not all have to look like soccer, you are also working on coordination.



Standing ball moves (7 Min)

- Every players has a ball. 10 x 10 yard grid.
- Toe taps – Looks like running in place touching the bottom of feet to the top of the ball.
- Jump over ball – Jumping backward and forward, then side to side over ball.
- Step over turn – Run over the ball with one foot on each side of the ball when going over it. Turn and face the ball as quickly as possible.
- Inside taps – Touching the ball with the insides of the feet, tapping the ball back and forth between the feet side to side.
- Be creative. What can a player do with a ball? You don’t need to be a soccer expert. Just use your imagination.



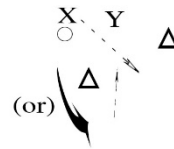
Passing Through Goal (7 Min)

- 2 players, one ball. Set up a 2 yard wide goal with cones. Set up one goal for each set of partners.
- Partners stand facing each other on opposite sides of the goal.
- Pass the ball back and forth with every other foot.
- Turn it into a competition. Who can score the most points in 45 seconds?
- Repeat six times. Use three different parts of the feet, two times each.
 - Inside of the foot (turn foot sideways).
 - Laces (point toes straight down).
 - Heels (stand backward), this is just for fun.



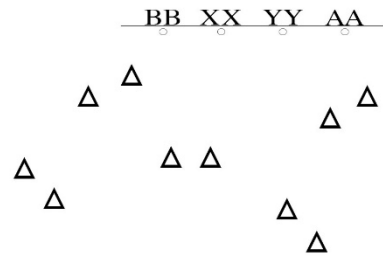
1v1 to Two Sided Goal (5 Min)

- Score either direction by passing through goal.
- Both players must be where the ball is, no standing in the goal.
- If one player scores, the other gets the ball.
- 3 games x 45 seconds



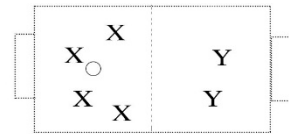
Multiple Goals (10 Min)

- Everybody has a ball.
- Set up six goals (2 cones that are two yards wide). Scatter the goals around randomly in a 25-25 yard area.
- Players start on line facing the area with the six goals.
 - Activity 1 – On the coach’s signal, players race through the goals. Coach can vary the number and order the goals need to be dribbled through or let the players choose their order.
 - Activity 2 – 2 players, 1 ball. All players go at the same time. Partners must pass the ball through each goal to score before moving on to the next gate.



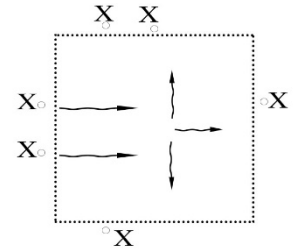
Play Soccer Game (12 Min)

- 1 ball on the field. 4v2 on two small goals (2 yards wide). 20 x 25 yard field.
- 3 games x 3 minutes so everybody can be on the team of 2.
 - The team of 4 must pass before scoring.
 - The team of 2 can score without passing.
- Each time the team of 4 wins the ball, they must pass before scoring.
- Coach may play and be on offense for both teams to help keep the game moving and passes more successful.



Dribbling From the Sides (7 Min)

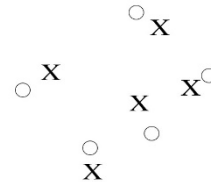
- Everybody has a ball. 15 x 15 yard grid.
- Players choose a side of the grid to begin. Players can be on different sides to begin and throughout.
- Coach points to a side, the players on that side of the grid dribble in the middle, do what coach tells them and dribble to a new side. Example of what the coach will tell players: "Dribble to the middle using the sole of your foot and then find a new side to go to".



- Sole of foot: The bottom part of the foot where the cleats are.
 - Cut moves: Cut moves are when a player turns the direction of the ball sharply to go another direction.
 - Heels: Players can dribble forward or backward but must use only the sides and back of their heel to move the ball.
 - With elbows: Just for fun and coordination, you can use different body parts.
 - Left foot: Have the players use just the right foot or just the left.
 - Be Creative: Any other ideas you have.
- Keep it moving, call one side after another and mix it up. Keep players attention by how fast you point toward the next side and uncertainty of which side will be called next.

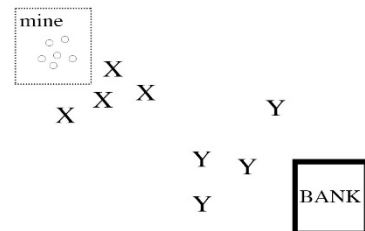
Throw It Up (5 Min)

- Players throw ball up to themselves.
- Catch it with hands.
- Let ball hit thigh (leg should be at a 90 degree angle with the knee up) and then catch it.
- Let ball hit the laces of the foot and try to kick it up to catch it.
- Run over it when it bounces and try not to let it hit them. They can vary how high they throw by how confident or good they are.
- Be Creative! Anything else you think could be done with a ball that is thrown up in the air.



Get the Gold to the Bank (10 Min)

- Divide the players into two teams. Gather all balls together in the mines (5 x 5 yard area, adjust size if necessary). Set up a bank (5 x 5 yard area, adjust size if necessary.) The mine and the bank should be 15 yards apart.
- X's must dribble as many balls (gold) into the bank as possible in one minute.
- Y's guard the bank and try to kick the balls away. Y's may not go in the bank. Once the gold is in, it stays in.

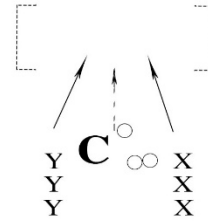


U6 Practices: Practice #7 Body Coordination

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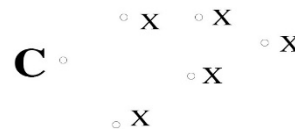
1v1 to Small Goals (10 Min)

- 10 x 20 yard field with two small goals. Make the goals 2 yards wide.
- All balls are set by the coach at the midline on the side of the field. Coach serves from midline. Ball is rolled or bounced toward the center of the field. Players line up in two teams, one on each side of the coach (right next to the coach) on the side of the field.
- Starting body position of players change to work on coordination. Players don't move until the coach rolls ball out and says, "go".
 - Laying down on stomachs.
 - Laying down on backs (head toward the field)
 - Players head to head, back to back, elbow to elbow, etc...
 - Push up position
- Play stops when a goal is scored or ball goes out of bounds.
- After playing 1v1, players should get back to line and have just a few seconds to catch their breath before going again. Mix up who plays who.



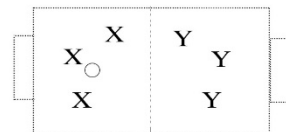
Simon Says (5 Min)

- Every player has a ball. 10 x 10 yard grid.
- Work on specific skills, coordination and fun things. Examples: throw up the ball and catch it. Dribble the ball with your left foot, step on the ball, kick the ball with your heel, bounce the ball off your head three times, etc.
- Coach can also include actions without a ball.
- Nobody is ever 'out'. If you mess up, go to back of group. This does not need to be a line, it can be done with players in a group in front of you. Going to the back on a mistake will stimulate focus.



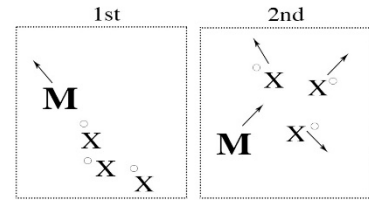
Play Soccer Game (12 Min)

- Activity 1: Crab Soccer for (5 Min). Players are in crab position, feet and hands on the ground with their front side up toward the sky.
- Activity 2: 3v3 games (7 Min). 20 x 25 yards. Set up small goals on each end using cones.
- Have all extra balls set next to the field so nobody has to chase a ball.
- When ball goes out of bounds, restart with throw-ins. Focus on throw-in technique.
- Every time a player loses the ball or kicks it out of bounds, the player must perform an action to get back in the game. Vary actions to focus on coordination.
 - Examples of actions coach could have the players perform: touch bottom to the ground and get back up, 1 push up, 1 sit up, touch both elbows to the ground, etc.



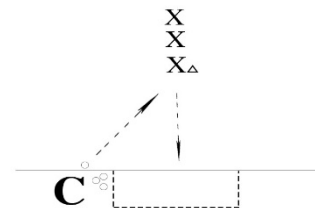
Dribbling: The Monster (7 Min)

- Every player has a ball. 10 x 10 yard grid.
- 1st Activity: Follow the monster.
 - Coach dribbles around doing goofy things like hopping, sitting, spinning, having fun. (If the coach cannot do these things, have the players lead each other). Players follow.
- 2nd Activity: Away from the monster!
 - Players dribble around in the box trying to keep their ball and keep it in bounds.
 - Coach acts like a monster and kicks the balls of the player outside the grid. Player chases the ball and gets back in as fast as possible.



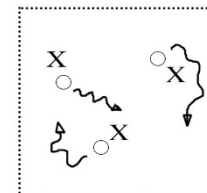
Shooting Frenzy (7 Min)

- Players stand by a cone 12 yards from goal post. Coach stands next to the post with all of the balls.
- Players are to shoot as many balls as possible in the 7 minutes available. There will be no goal keeper or defenders.
- Coach serves balls to on coming players in three different levels of difficulty.
 - On ground. (3 Min)
 - Bouncing balls. (2 Min)
 - In the air (soft). Move starting position into 4 yards in front of coach. (2 Min)
- The players come one after another as fast as the coach can send balls out. The line should move fast. There really will be no line, just a starting spot.
- Players grab ball out of goal after shooting and bring it to the coach's feet.



Skill Bag (5 Min)

- Every player has a ball. 15 x 15 yard grid.
- Coach has players do a variety of skills on command. Rotate randomly through the following six skills. No more than 20 seconds before moving to the next skill.
- The first time through will be slow as the coach introduces each skill, but then the idea is to make the players think quickly as a new skill is called out. The coach will have to continue to guide players to remember what to do.
 - Dribble Quickly.
 - Strike (kick) ball, chase it, and bring it back to the grid quickly.
 - Throw ball up and catch it as many times as possible.
 - Player heads the ball out of their own hands (or toss the ball up in the air to head it), chase it, sit on it and spin in a circle. Repeat.
 - Dribble at varying speeds: Slow motion, walk, jog, sprint as coach commands changes of speed.
 - Crawl on hands and knees and heading ball across the grid.

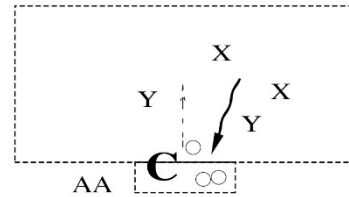


U6 Practices: Practice #8 Lots of Skills

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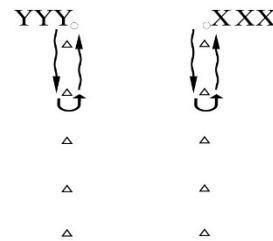
2v2 (10 Min)

- 2v2 to one big goal. Both teams are trying to score in the same goal. Place extra ball inside the goal.
- Players are inside the penalty box (big painted box around the goal). Extra players stand next to the goal post. Rotate players each time a goal is scored.
- Play begins by the coach throwing or kicking a ball out to the players.



Relay Races (7 Min)

- Two teams, one ball per team
- Set up five cones in a straight line for each team five yards between each cone.
- Do 3-5 races total.
- Each player has to go around the first cone and back. Then each player goes out to the second cone and back. Then to the third cone, then the fourth cone, until all players have finished.
- Teams can be changed inbetween races to even them out if necessary.
 - Race one time without the ball.
 - The remaining races should be with the ball.



Play Soccer Game (12 Min)

- 3v3 games. 20 x 25 yards. Set up small goals on each end using cones.
- Have all extra balls set next to the field so nobody has to chase a ball.

