

Boyne Area 4H
Youth Soccer

Grades 5 & 6

Practice Lesson Plan Manual

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Under 12 Lesson Plans

Welcome coaches to Boyne Area 4H Soccer. If you are new to soccer, you are probably asking yourself... "What did I get myself into now?" Well, you can relax. Within the context of this manual are daily lesson plans that you can use to develop your players in key areas of soccer.

These plans are by no means finite. As you become comfortable with coaching your team, feel free to be creative. At the end of this manual are suggested websites where you can enhance your creative juices. You should be able to create your own sessions once you understand the essential ingredients.

Each practice session has four main areas:

1. **Warm-up:** Emphasis on preparing the player both physically and mentally for the training session. General motor ability (i.e.) balance, coordination and flexibility) should also be enhanced. All of the above should be followed by stretching of the various parts of the body. Young players don't need stretching, but it's a good habit for them to begin early.
2. **Individual Activities:** This portion will cover fun-filled methods that can improve a young player's technique in a playing non-drill manner.
3. **Small Group Activities:** These games will challenge the player (without the pressure of high numbers) to improve a variety of the needed skills. It also gives the players the opportunity to touch the ball more often.
4. **Large Group Activities:** This time will be used to familiarize the player with the different aspects of playing in a match situation. Each section should last between 10 to 15 minutes (take rests when needed). All activities should start with a brief demonstration, followed by the players moving quickly into activities.

The successful coach is one who can imagine these activities through a player's eyes. By creating a fun-filled environment, the players will be excited to return.

Have a great coaching season,

Boyne Area 4H Soccer Association.

U12 --- Lesson One: Penetration Session (Dribbling, Passing, Shooting)

Objectives: To help players recognize when to penetrate by dribbling, passing and/or shooting.

1) Gates (15 to 20 minutes):

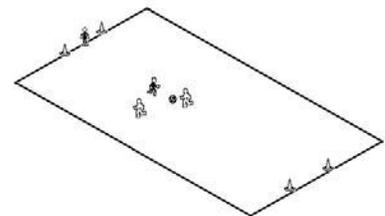
Randomly place many pairs of cones making small goals (1yd) in a large space (30 x 20 yds) and have players dribble their balls through the goals for a point. Players try to accumulate as many points as possible. Have players count up their total points in the time you provide them. After doing once, ask them to improve their score by 2 and play the game again. Challenge each player individually (can ask for right foot only, left foot only). Version 2: Can now ask players to partner up and pass through as many gates as they can. Version 3: Add defenders.

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce dribbling technique – all parts of foot / keep ball close / on toes / push vs. kick
- Reinforce passing technique – inside of the foot - ankle locked / toe up-heel down / hit the middle part of inside of foot / follow through-land on kicking foot / plant foot next to ball and facing where you want the ball to go // outside of the foot – ankle locked / front part on the outside part of foot (not toe and not middle of outside)
- Reinforce shooting technique – ankle of shooting foot locked with toe pointed down (instep)/ plant foot next to the ball / land on kicking foot / head down / lean over ball as you kick / strike through the middle of the ball (encourage players to always keep ball low when using the laces for this activity)

2) 2v1+1 to goal (15-20 minutes):

In a 12x17 yard grid add two 3 yard goals on each 12-yard side. The attacking team looks to combine (over-lap, take-over or wall pass) or attack on the dribble or shoot (knee height or below). The defending team must have one player in the goal and one on the field. The goalkeeper must stay in the goal until the attacking team loses the ball, then the player that was in the goal can come out to attack (while the team that just lost possession must send one player back to play in goal).



Coaching Points:

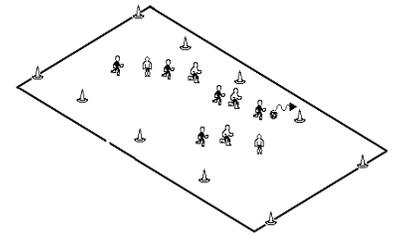
- Reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1 and #2
- Visual cues should determine how the attacking players penetrate into the space behind the opponent...dribble, pass

or shoot

- To combine, make defender commit to person with the ball; selection of appropriate combination (wall-pass, take-over, run-around or double pass) is based on the visual cues
- Explode into space on the dribble if defender doesn't commit
- Encourage finding the goal as quickly as possible (whether attacking on the dribble, combining with teammate, or getting a quick shot off)

3) 4v4 to 6v6 to end zones (15 minutes):

Set up a 30 yd x 40 yd field with endzones behind the 40 yd lines. Teams comprised of 4-6 players depending on numbers and space. The attacking team may dribble into the endzone or combine with a wall pass, take-over or over-lap to get into the end zone (marked with discs). Add a "plus" player who always plays for the attacking team if they can't keep possession long enough to create a combination or opportunity to score on the dribble. Also, coach can give more points to encourage more dribbling if necessary or more points for passing if necessary. Variation 2: Coach can limit touches-3 touch, 2 touch, 1 touch.



Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1 and #2

4) 6v6 to 8v8 Scrimmage (25-30 minutes):

Depending upon numbers, space will change. Ideally, finish with the number you normally play with in games. Play a regular game with goalkeepers.

Coaching Points:

- Stress that the first look is always to penetrate
- Should the player with the ball penetrate on the dribble, with a pass or a shot?
- Positively reinforce decisions to penetrate...especially to shoot!

5) Cool-down (10 minutes):

Groups of 5 Relay Heading Challenge. One player stands on the line with the ball in their hands (server); the other 4 players positioned directly across from them (about 3-5 yards away), one behind the other. The server tosses the ball to the first person in line. The first person in line heads the ball back to the server, then goes down on one knee. The server then tries to head it back to the second person in line, who heads it back, goes down on one knee, etc. Give the server multiple chances to get the ball all the way down the line. Switch up players to ensure everyone gets a chance to be the server. Finish cool-down with static stretching of major muscle groups.

U12 --- Lesson Two: Possession– Large Groups/Open Spaces

OBJECTIVE: Possession with a purpose. Soccer is a multi-directional game and players must know how and where to possess the ball and recognize when opportunities open up for attacking. The session can be used for players from U12 and older. The older and/or better ability of players the more demands we place on them.

1) Warm-up (15-20 minutes including stretching):

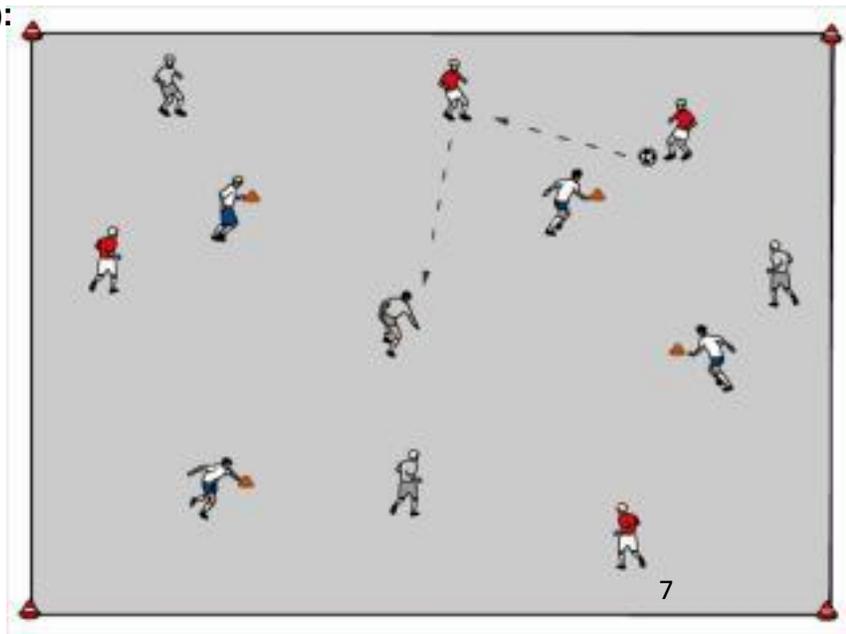
Split players evenly into three colors. Open space. Start with half the players with a ball and the other half without a ball. The ball and player do not stop moving. If you have a ball, find someone without a ball to pass to (colors do not matter, passes can go to any color). Make it challenging by placing conditions on the players: 1. Perform a move after receiving a pass. 2. Take a long first touch into space and away from traffic. 3. Sprint 2-3 steps in any direction with the ball after receiving a pass. 4. Turn with the ball in the opposite direction from where the ball came from.

Coaching Points:

- Don't be in a hurry to pass it, make sure the pass is on
- Communication: Verbal, visual, always thinking
- Direction of the pass - non-kicking foot: knee slightly bent with foot next to the ball and toe pointing at target
- Passing foot: ankle locked (stiff) with heel to the ground and toe to the sky, strike the upper middle part of the ball with the inside of foot for short to medium long passes. For longer passes use laces with toe pointing to the ground
- Which foot and what surface of your foot are you receiving the ball with and which way are you turning? And why?
- Receiving foot: cushion the impact of the ball and re-direct it; do not stop it

2) GAME #1 - 4 v 4 v 4 (15-20 minutes):

40 x 40 yard grid. Split team in 3 colors. Two colors keep the ball away from the other color. Defending team must (all players) pick-up and hold a disk before they CAN start defending. When defending team wins the ball they drop discs and the new defending team (the team that lost possession) pick up the discs and start defending. This causes defending team to communicate and players in possession time to organize. Each player on the two teams in possession has a maximum of three touches on the



For additional coaching resources visit <http://www.soccer-for-parents.com>

ball. (Variations: 3v3v3, 5v5v5, 6v6v6)

Coaching Points:

- Stress on the quality of the first touch (which surface of which foot, which direction and why) and the quality of the pass.
- Stress communication and organization.

3) GAME #2: 4 v 4 v 4 (15-20 minutes):

Same as the previous game but now the field is divided into four quarters. Defending team does not have to hold discs. Players have unlimited touches on the ball BUT have 3 PASS limit in each quarter or the ball goes the defending team. (Variations: (3v3v3, 5v5v5, 6v6v6)

Coaching Points:

- All of the above points, plus speed of play, stretching the field north-south and east-west.
- Are the supporting players offering options close and far from the ball?



4) GAME # 3: 4 v 4 v 4 (15-20 minutes):

Same as the previous game but now we play with no restrictions. (Variations: 3v3v3, 5v5v5, 6v6v6)

5) THE GAME: Game to two goals with GKs (25-30 minutes):

Play - 6 v 6 or 8 v 8 or 11 v 11 with GKPR"s. A 3-3-1 formation is shown below.

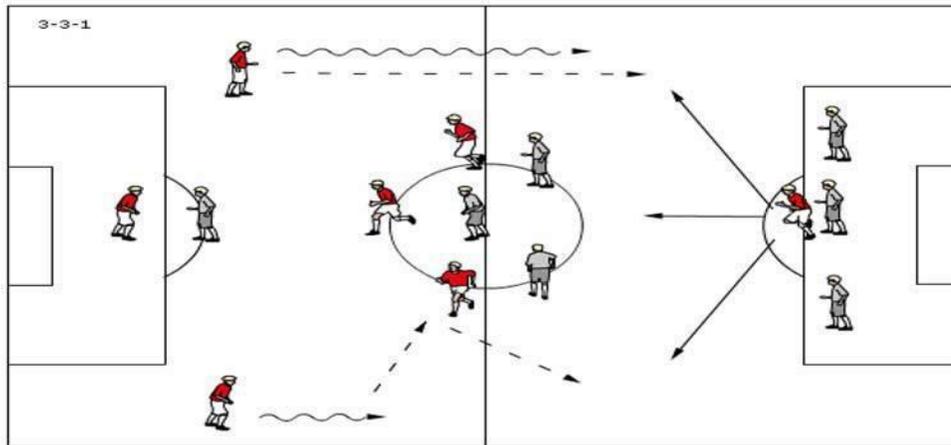
Coaching Points:

- Are players recognizing when to keep the ball and when to attack?

- Are they switching the point of attack to unbalance defending team and create scoring opportunities?

6) COOL-DOWN (10 minutes):

In 3"s, one and two touch point passing. A passes to B, B back to A, then A passes C, C back to A. A is the point person. After 2 minutes, change the point person. Include static stretching of the large muscle groups.



U 12 --- Lesson Three: Penetration Cont'd (Dribbling, Passing, Shooting)

Objectives: To help players recognize when to penetrate by dribbling, passing and/or shooting.

1) Colors Warm-Up (15 to 20 minutes):

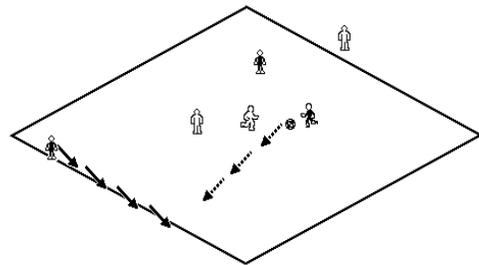
Half of the players in red pennies, half in blue. Teams playing together in a 40 x 30 yard grid passing in the sequence: blue-blue-red-red-blue-blue-red-red etc. etc. The ball can never stop moving, the players can never stop moving, and the ball cannot leave the grid. Coach can limit touch, mandate which foot to pass with or which part of foot to pass with. When players can do first sequence adequately and without frequent errors, change the sequence to blue-blue-blue-red-red-red-blue-blue-blue etc. etc. Stress communication and technical passing points throughout.

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce dribbling technique – all parts of foot / keep ball close / on toes / push vs. kick
- Reinforce passing technique – inside of the foot - ankle locked / toe up-heel down / hit middle part of inside of foot / follow through-land on kicking foot / plant foot next to ball and facing where you want the ball to go // outside of the foot – ankle locked / front part on the outside part of foot
- Reinforce shooting technique – ankle of shooting foot locked with toe pointed down / plant foot next to the ball / land on kicking foot / head down / lean over ball as you kick / strike through the middle of the ball (encourage players to always keep ball low when using the laces for this activity)

2) 2v2+2 (15 to 20 minutes):

In a 20x20 yard grid, two teams look to play to a target player on opposite sides of the grid. If they play to the target and receive the ball back, they look to switch directions and play to the other target player. If they just play to one target it counts as 1 point. If they play to two consecutive targets without losing possession it counts as 3 points. Target players must constantly move along their line to show for the ball. Every three minutes matches and then rotate the players.



Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1
- Get player with the ball to penetrate on the dribble or the pass to the target player on the outside as quickly as possible by checking to ball, checking over shoulder,

opening hips up to the field, making sure both players do not check into the same space

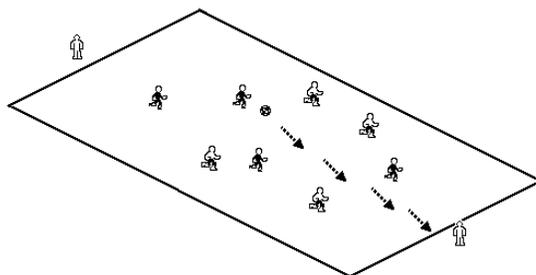
- To combine, make defender commit to person with the ball
- Explode into space on the dribble if defender doesn't commit

3) 4v4 + 2 Targets (15-20 minutes):

In a 50x40 yard grid, 4 red versus 4 yellow with Targets on opposite end lines. In order to get a point, team must find the Target, look to get the ball back (either the same player who played the ball to the Target or another player moving off the ball) and then dribble across end line.

Version 2: Team must look to find a Target, get the ball back and attack the opposite end and try to get the ball to the other target. Two points if a player finds the Target in one long penetrating pass and one point if a player finds the Target through shorter combinations.

Version 3: If a player finds the Target, someone other than the original passer must get the ball back and maintain possession of it. Important: Want players to capitalize on finding target and maintaining possession.



Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1 and #2 and #3
- Encourage finding the end line/target as quickly as possible (whether attacking on the dribble or combining with teammate)

4) 6v6 to 8v8 Scrimmage (25-30 minutes):

Depending upon numbers, space will change. Ideally, finish with the number you normally play with in games. Play a regular game with goalkeepers.

Coaching Points:

- Stress first look is always to penetrate
- The decision becomes...can the player with the ball penetrate on the dribble, with a pass or a shot?
- Reinforce positive decision making opportunities (seeing space to dribble for self, finding the best penetrating pass forward, or taking a shot for self, etc.).

5) Cool-down (10 minutes):

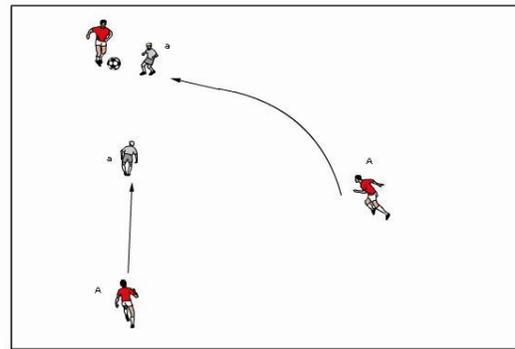
Groups of 5 heading challenge. One player in the middle, four players circle around them. Player in the middle tosses ball to player on the outside who heads in back to player in the middle. Player in the middle then heads to next player on the outside, who then heads it back to player in the middle and so on. Give player in the middle multiple chances to get the ball all the way around the circle, and then switch up players to ensure everyone gets a chance to be the middle player. Finish cool-down with static stretching of major muscle groups.

U12 --- Lesson Four – Zonal Defending

Objectives: To provide a training environment that will foster a flatter, zone-like defense, especially in the back 1/3. Zonal defending requires focus, discipline, athleticism and quality defensive technique and decision making. This requires functional training for the individual as well as specific units of players. In these activities, if possible, form teams that include the players that work together as a defensive unit, a midfield unit, etc. As coaches, we must give the defensive side of the game much more of our attention.

1) Inter-passing in 3's With Defensive Approach (15 minutes):

Player #1 and Player #2 pass the ball back and forth over a 5-10 yard distance while Player #3 drifts 15-20 yards away from the other two players. After 4-5 passes, Player #1 passes the ball to Player #3. As the ball is traveling to Player #3, Player #2 provides immediate pressure to Player #3 and Player #1 immediately moves into a cover position behind Player #2. Player #3 can either try to dribble past Player #2 or player #3 can try to split the two players with a pass. The warm-up activity then continues with Player #2 and Player #3 passing while Player #1 drifts away, etc.

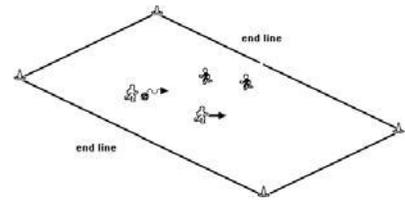


Coaching Points:

- The 1st defender needs to “approach fast, arrive slow”, bend run, have correct stance: be on their toes, with knees bent, one foot forward, one back. The 1st defender “affects” the ball...gets the head of the 1st attacker down by getting close to the 1st attacker, approximately arm’s length
- The 2nd defender needs to be at approximately a 30 degree backward angle to the 1st defender on the side that the first defender is showing the 1st attacker; cannot be too far back or too close to 1st defender. If the first defender is tighter to the ball, the 2nd defender provides closer cover. If the 1st defender is closer to the ball, the 2nd defender is more detached from the 1st defender.
- The 2nd defender communicates where to steer the ball; tells 1st defender which way to push the attacker.

2) 2 v 2 To End Lines (20 Minutes):

15yd x 20yd grid. (Grid is wider than it is long) This is a 2v2 game. A point is awarded when a team dribbles over the opposite 20 yard end line.



Coaching Points:

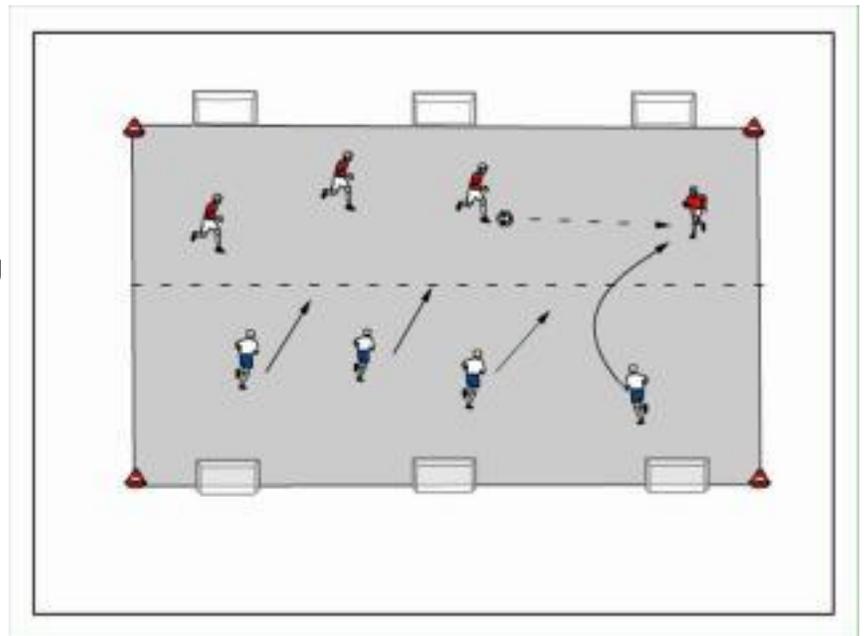
- Reinforce 1st and 2nd defender responsibilities as the 2v2 game proceeds. It is crucial that Pressure and Cover, the relationship and connection between the 1st and 2nd defenders, is given plenty of time and repetition.
- Defensive decisions to pressure or cover must be anticipated and made as the ball is traveling (as the attacking players are playing the ball).
- Knowing when to pressure or cover is crucial to winning the ball back. Verbal and visual communication between the 1st and 2nd defenders is imperative!

3) 4v4 SIX GOAL GAME (20 minutes):

30yd x 45yd grid. (Field is wider than it is long) The midfield line is the restraining line (offsides line). Simply a 4v4 game. Each team of 4 attempts to score in one of the 3 goals opposite them. Work with one of the teams to help them maintain the flat shape of the defending action.

Coaching Points:

- There must always be pressure on the ball. There may be one or two 2nd defenders depending on where the ball and supporting attack players are located.
- 3rd defender play/positioning is now crucial to the defensive success. The 3rd defender must provide balance to the defensive action by being in a position that



is not too deep (somewhat flat in relation to the 2nd defender(s)) and not too detached. The 3rd defender works on squeezing space centrally.

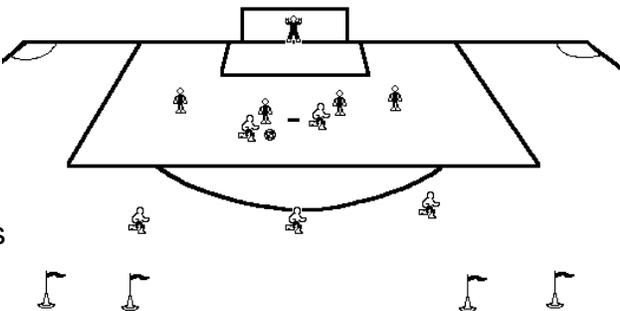
- Changing roles quickly as the ball moves is vital to the success of the flat defense. It takes discipline, fitness and tactical speed.

4) 5v 4 + GKPR (20 minutes):

1/2 field to one goal and 2 counter goals or targets. Defend the goal with the purpose to counter attack. Keeper takes on sweeper role behind the flat back four (4).

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce coaching points made throughout the training session.
- The coaching points made in these more realistic game-like environments will be more beneficial to the players and will transfer to the game.



5) Match/v7, 8v8 or 9v9 (30 minutes):

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce coaching points made throughout the training session.
- The coaching points made in these more realistic game-like environments will be more beneficial to the players and will transfer to the game.

6) Cool-down (5-10 minutes):

Individual juggling; challenge players to see who can juggle the most in a 2 minute period.

U12 --- Lesson Five: Combination Play – Two Players Combining

Objectives: To help players to recognize when to combine with teammates and what combination is appropriate (wall-pass, overlap and take-over) considering the changing conditions of the game.

Coaching Points:

Wall pass:

- First attacker runs right at the defender with the ball
- The second attacker sets up level with or slightly ahead of the defender, turned sideways, shoulders pointed to the goals
- When the first attacker is close to-but still out of tackling range of-the defender, he/she must read cues from the defender
- If the defender is jockeying between the two attackers and obviously playing the pass, the first attacker must simply dribble past the defender with speed
- If the defender is attending more to the first attacker, then the first attacker should pass the ball to the wall player's (2nd attacker) front foot
- The 2nd attacker plays the ball with one touch into the space behind the defender and into the running path of the first attacker
- The 1st attacker sprints to receive the ball preferably in the natural flow of her run.

Overlap:

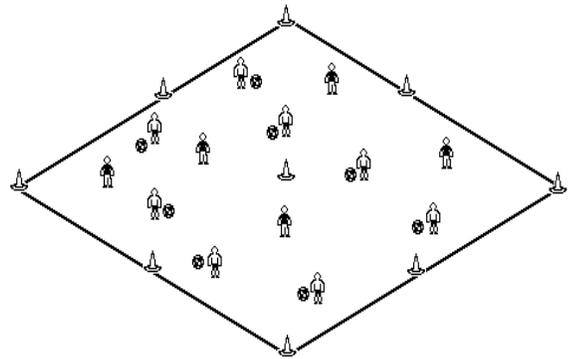
- The 1st attacker runs right at the defender (option 1) or the first attacker plays the ball to the second attacker who dribbles in a direction away from the overlapping space (option 2)
- If the defender shifts over to pick up the 2nd attacker in option 1, the 1st attacker can dribble by the defender. If not, the second attacker's run must be around either shoulder of the first attacker at full speed. After drawing the defender toward the ball (and away from the space intended for the overlapping run), the first attacker may play the ball into the running path of the second attacker
- In option 2, the second attacker dribbles to create overlapping space and the first attacker then becomes the player who overlaps. The ball is played into the running path of the first attacker

Takeover:

- The 2nd attacker runs directly at the 1 attacker from the opposite direction
- The 1st attacker protects the ball from the defender by keeping it on the foot furthest from the defender so that his body is in between the defender and the ball
- If the takeover is on (if the defender does not step into path of second attacker), the first attacker leaves the ball for the second attacker and the second attacker takes the ball using the same foot as the first attacker (right foot to right foot, left to left!)
- Depending on your preference as a coach you may have the first or the second attacker dictate this exchange with simple communication
- If the defender slows down to “pick-up” the 2nd attacker, 1st attacker can call his or her name and continue to dribble.

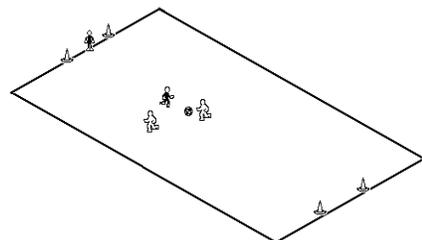
1) Combination Square (15 to 20 minutes):

Make a grid about 30yds x 30yds and break it into quarters. Place 4 or 5 players in vests and have them roam around the entire grid in order to give support to the other players. Players in vests do not have soccer balls, while all other players do. Players with soccer balls look to dribble around the grid and try to connect with the vested players to perform wall-passes. However, in order for this to happen the player on the ball must pass to a vested player in a different quarter than him and the pass back from the vested player must go into a quarter that neither he nor the player who passed the ball is in. The player initiating the wall pass needs to play a firm pass, sprint to an open space in a different quarter, receive the return pass, and look for another player to combine with. The vested player must show themselves to others constantly in order to give support and look to play balls to the front foot of the runner.



2) 2v1+1 to goal (15-20 minutes):

In a 12x17 yard grid add two 3 yard goals on each 12-yard side. If the attacking team combines before they score, they are awarded 2 points. If they don't combine and score, it is worth 1 point. The defending team must have one player in the goal and one on the field. The goalkeeper



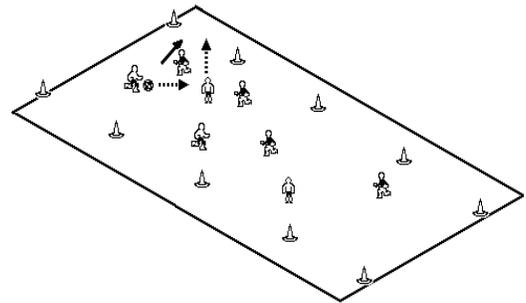
must stay in the goal until the attacking team loses the ball.

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1
- Help players recognize when to combine and when to fake the combination to beat the defender
- Assist players in seeing that, when they combine, their ultimate goal is to get their pass in and behind the defender (vs. in front of them).

3) 4v4 to end zones (15 minutes to 20 minutes):

In a field space approximately 30 to 35 yards long by 40 to 50 yards wide, teams comprised of 4 players depending on numbers and space (can increase or decrease from 3v3 to 6v6). Teams receive 5 points if they combine with a teammate before successfully entering the opponent's end zone; they receive only one point if they get in without a combination. Add a "plus" player who always plays for the attacking team, **IF** they can't keep possession long enough to create a combination or opportunity to score.

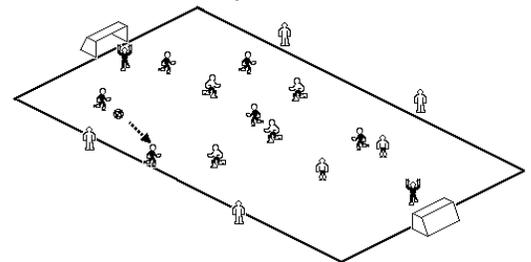


Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1 and #2

4) 6v6 plus 4 to Goals (15-20 minutes):

In a field approximately 55 yards long by 40 yards wide, play 6v6 to goals, with goalkeepers, and position 2 neutral players on each sideline (neutral players can move up and down the sidelines). Play a regular game...the 4 neutral players always play with the attacking team (team in possession of the ball). This activity will stimulate combination play.



Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1 and #2

5) 8v8 Scrimmage (25-30 minutes):

In a field approximately 75 yards long by 50 yards wide, play a regular game with goalkeepers. Depending upon number of players that you have at training, field size may change. Ideally, finish with the number you normally play with in games.

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce positive decision making opportunities (decision to

combine or not, what type of combination, how effective at the time and place on the field, etc.).

6) Cool-down (5-10 minutes):

Individual juggling; challenge the players to see who can juggle the most in a 2 minute period.

U12 --- Lesson Six: Attacking Shape

Objectives: To help our players understand the importance of individual, group and team shape when their team is in possession of the ball. A player's shape and how it is coordinated with teammates in the area around the ball, as well as teammates away from the ball, is crucial to the attacking success of the team.

1) Interpassing in 4's or 5's (10-15 minutes):

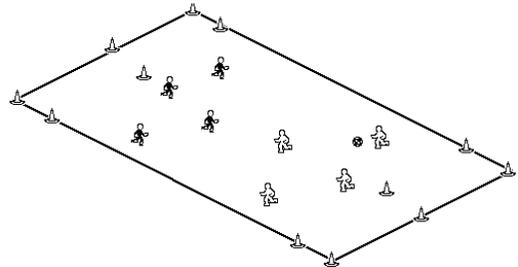
Players are in color-code groups of 4 (4 blue, 4 red, etc.). Each group has one ball. Each group passes and moves in free space, playing through the other groups. The purpose of this warm-up activity is to clean up the mechanics of passing and receiving, increase the players' technical speed and develop basic individual and small group shape.

Coaching Points:

- Survey the playing area at all times so that you can anticipate what to do next with and without the ball. Keep body open to as much of the field as possible based on where you are on the field. Take first touch toward a passing option. Strike ball with proper weight and proper surface.

2) 4 v 0 or 5 v 0 Pattern Play (15 minutes):

In a 30yd x 40yd grid, one of the 4 or 5 player groups moves the ball from one end of the grid to the other. In this activity, the point is to move the ball effectively and quickly, while the players maintain their positions and a "kite-type" shape. The idea is to have 2 wide players supporting the player with the ball and one high player for a long pass option. The players in the area around the ball make 4-5 passes before looking long to the high option. Once the ball is played to the high option, the 2 wide players move to support the ball at the other end of the grid.



Coaching Points:

- Develop & keep individual and group shape
- Develop rhythm of play
- Increase speed of play
- Recognize visual cues such as body shape of teammates, supporting positions, high option "ON"

3) (4 v 0) + (4 v 0) (15 minutes):

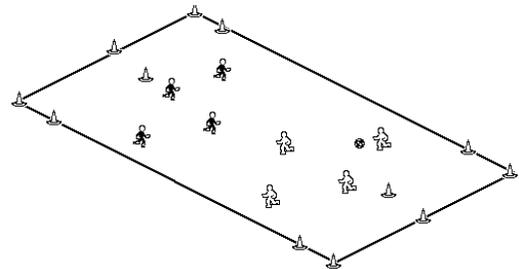
Two groups of 4, with 1 ball per group, play through each other in the same 30yd x 40yd grid. Each group simply focuses on their ball, their individual & small group shape and their speed of play. Neither group attempts to disrupt the other.

Coaching Points:

- Develop & keep individual and group shape
- Develop rhythm of play in traffic
- Increase speed of play in traffic
- Recognize visual cues such as body shape of teammates, supporting positions and high option with the added pressure of more players on the field

4) 4v4 or 5v5 to Zones (15 minutes):

In the same 30yd x 40yd grid, add 30yd x 5yd end zones at each end. Play a 4v4 or 5v5 game to end zones. Each team defends one end zone and attacks the other end zone. If a team successfully plays a ball into the end zone opposite them to a teammate, they receive one point (the player must arrive in the end zone as the ball arrives...NO attacking player is allowed to “hang out” in the end zone). The defending team can only defend in front of their end zone...they cannot enter the end zone that they are defending.



Coaching Points:

- Constantly survey the playing area
- Develop & keep individual and group shape under the pressures of a game
- Develop rhythm of play based on what the game presents...increase speed of play at the right time

5) 6v6 to 8v8 Game (25 minutes):

Play the larger game. If playing 6v6, the field size should be approximately 45 x 60 yards. If playing 8v8, the field size should be approximately 55 x 80 yards. Encourage your goalkeeper to communicate to the team regarding team shape. Emphasize the coaching considerations made throughout the training session. Stay on topic.

6) Cool Down (10 minutes):

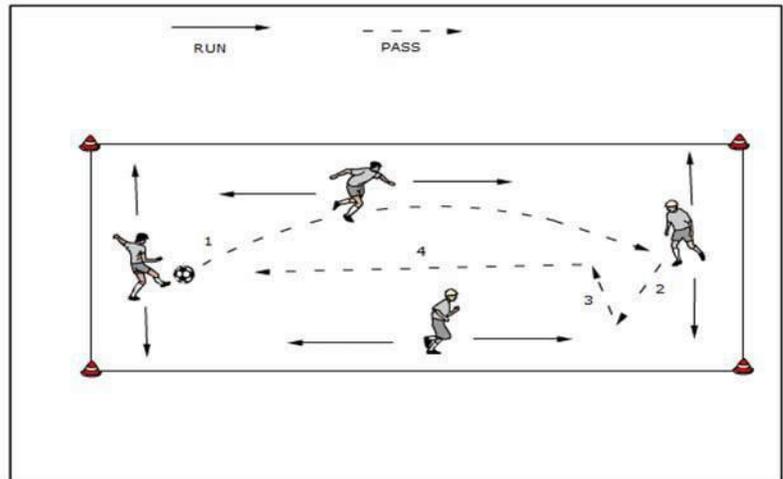
Controlled juggling (thigh-thigh-foot-foot). Statically stretch the large muscle groups.

U12 --- Lesson Seven: Speed of Play

Objectives: This session will help players to recognize their own shape and the shape of the team as it relates to speed of play (playing the game faster). This takes into account field awareness and vision, as well as physical speed, technical speed and tactical speed.

1) Inter-passing in 4's (15-20 minutes):

Players pass the ball within their group. Three of the players position themselves about 10-15 yards apart, forming a triangle shape (one central player and two outside players). They pass the ball back and forth to each other (short passes), while the fourth player (long player) positions himself/herself centrally about 25-30 yards away. After 4-5 short passes, the long player calls for the ball. The ball is played into the long player. The two outside players move quickly to support the long player, forming the triangle shape at the other end of the grid. The deepest central player stays home. The same passing sequence continues at the opposite end of the grid. The activity continues in this manner for 3-4 minutes to develop a smooth rhythm in the passing sequence. Players consistently keep themselves and the ball moving. Version 2: Only 2-3 passes prior to the long pass.



Coaching Points:

- Clean up technique of passing and receiving. Intelligent movement, head up, preparing to receive the ball, surveying the area, looking for their target early, anticipation, passing accuracy and pace, keeping appropriate individual and group

shape, playing in the direction that you are facing.

2) 4v0 and 4v0(15-20 minutes):

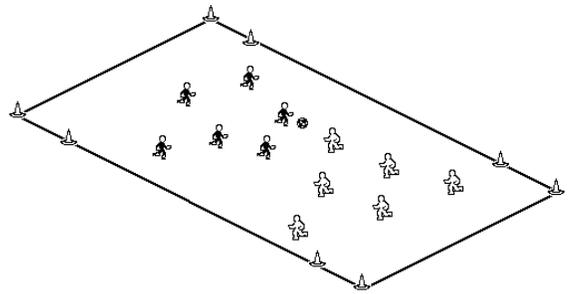
Same activity as in #1 above, but with two groups of 4 playing on the same field and playing through each other (red and yellow groups). Each group has its own ball and only concentrates on moving up and down the grid possessing their ball only. No defending. Variation: Add 1 or 2 bandits (in blue) to try to steal the balls.

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce coaching points above as they play in traffic. When bandits are added, players must make better and faster decisions to eliminate pressure and successfully possess the ball. Proper individual and group shape is crucial to this success.

3) 6v6 Zone Game (20-25 minutes):

Play a 6v6 game on a field 40 yards wide x 60 yards long. Create zones with cones at each end approximately 10 yards deep and the full width of the field. Each team defends the zone behind them and attacks the zone opposite them. A team cannot enter the zone it is defending. A team can enter the zone it is attacking. A point is awarded to a team that successfully dribbles the ball into the zone or makes a well-timed pass into the zone as a teammate arrives to receive it. Version 2: Describe a scenario and put time limits on the game to speed up play...i.e. It is a tie game with 2 minutes remaining. The red team must win the game to advance into the play-offs.



Coaching Points:

- Maintain the integrity of individual/group/team attacking shape while playing under the pressure of even numbers. Talk about the tactical speed of the attacking players...speed of the 1st attacker to find forward options, if they are on; speed of the 2nd attackers to provide supporting options to the 1st attacker; overall speed of play of the group. Reinforce coaching points made throughout the session.

4) 6v6, 7v7 or 8v8 Match (25-30 minutes):

Field size appropriate to age and numbers. Play the game with goalkeepers. As in Version 2 of Activity 3 above, describe a scenario that will put the pressure of time on one of the teams...i.e. With 5 minutes remaining in the game, the red team is winning by a goal; the yellow team needs a draw to advance into the championship round of the

tournament.

Coaching Points:

- Maintain the integrity of individual/group/team attacking shape while playing under the pressure of the Game. Coach their attacking shape as it relates to the thirds or halves of the field. Teach the goalkeeper to coach the team shape from his/her vantage point.

5) Cool-Down:

Player Juggling (10 minutes) A can only juggle with his feet, B can only juggle with her thighs and C can only juggle with his head. Each player in the group has a max of 5 consecutive juggles. A, B and C must try to juggle as many times as possible as a group. If they drop the ball, they can start again. After a few minutes, change the juggling surfaces within each group.

U12 --- Lesson Eight: Attacking Shape - (Small Groups/Team)

Objectives: This session will help players to recognize how small group shape and team shape positively impacts the quality of the team's play.

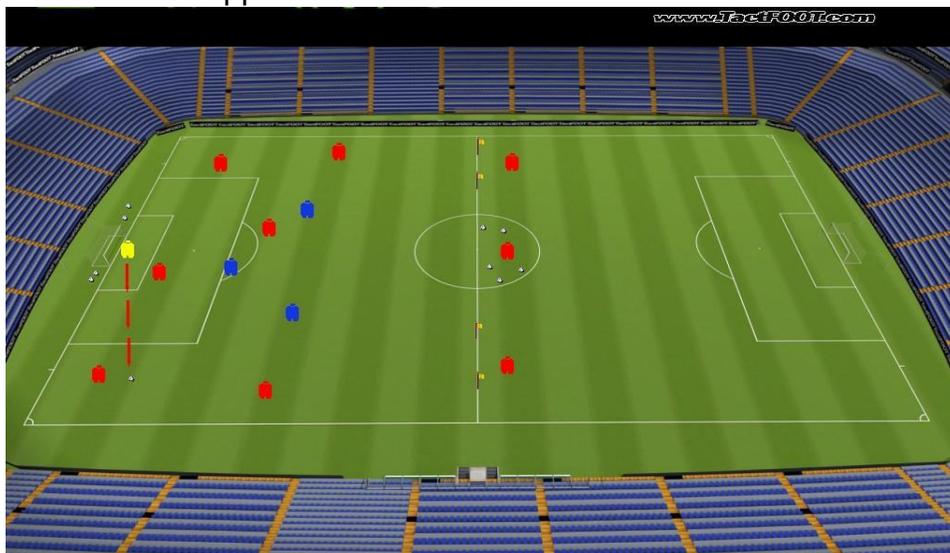
1) Inter-passing in 6+1 goalkeeper_(30-40 minutes):

On one half of the regulation soccer field, organize one group of players into a formation (3-3 or 4-2) in front of their goal and ask them to pass and move from the goal to the midfield. Make sure the goalkeeper is in the goal so that he/she can be involved in the play. Position extra players as targets past the half line. Begin to develop patterns of play and rhythm of play. Sample Pattern...Keeper plays ball wide to the outside back; the outside back combines with the central midfielder for a wall pass and by-passing the outside midfielder (overlap); the outside back changes the point of attack to the opposite outside midfielder; outside midfielder plays the ball to one of the targets. When the ball reaches the target player, the goalkeeper, who is focused on play throughout the activity yells, "RECOVER!" alerting all field players to recover defensively with appropriate recovery runs. At this point, one of the target players at midfield serves a long ball into the goalkeeper or penalty area and the pattern play begins again. Complete many repetitions of the same pattern. (Present other patterns of play to the team.)

Version 2: When the coach yells, "PRESSURE!" during the patterned play, the field players must play the ball back one layer (i.e. midfield to backs) and change the point of attack before they can move the ball forward again.

Version 3: Add 3 opponents to the mix to add live pressure. Once the opponents are added, eliminate verbal commands by the coach. The group playing out of the back must now play to 2 counter-attack goals placed in wide positions at midfield. If they score, have an extra player serve a ball deep into the defensive area of the field to begin play again. If the opponents win the ball, they must attempt to dribble it over the touch line for 1 point or score a goal for 3 points. The attacking team gets 1 point for scoring on one of the 2 counter-attack goals. (See diagram below)

Version 4: Add more opponents to the mix.



Coaching Points:

- Clean up technique of passing and receiving. Intelligent movement; head up; preparing to receive the ball, 1st touch to be positive (move forward), if possible, surveying the area, looking for target early; anticipation; passing accuracy and pace; correct positioning relative to their assigned position on the field (right midfielder, central back, etc.); timing, angle and distance of support; keeping appropriate individual and group shape; playing in the direction that you are facing; communication by supporting players (“dribble”, “wide”, “square”, “play it back”, etc.).

2) 7v7 or 8v8 Match_(25-30 minutes):

Field size appropriate to age and numbers. (80 yards x 55 yards for an 8v8). Play the game with goalkeepers.

Coaching Points:

- Maintain the integrity of group and team attacking shape while playing under the pressure of the Game.
- Coach their attacking shape as it relates to the thirds or halves of the field. Teach the goalkeeper to coach the team shape from his/her vantage point.

3) Cool-Down (10 minutes):

Player „A“ can only juggle with his feet, Player „B“ can only juggle with her thighs and player „C“ can only juggle with his head. Each player in the group has a max of 5 consecutive juggles. A, B and C must try to juggle as many times as possible as a group. If they drop the ball, they can start again. After a few minutes, change the juggling surfaces within each group.

U12 --- Lesson Nine: Defending – Pressure/Cover

OBJECTIVE: This session is designed to teach the defenders closest to the ball when, where and how to win the ball back for their team. In particular, we will discuss the roles and responsibilities of the pressuring defender (1st defender) and the covering defender (2nd defender).

1) Pressure-Cover Warm-up (5-7 minutes): 3 Players per ball in open space. Player A and Player B, about 8-10 yards apart, pass the ball back and forth. Player C is located about 10-15 yards away from Players A & B. After 3-4 passes between Players A & B, Player A passes the ball to Player C. While the ball is traveling, Player B approaches Player C to apply pressure to the ball; at the same time, Player A provides appropriate cover to Player B (positions herself behind and at an angle to Player B. Player C attempts to split Players A & B with a 1 touch pass. Repeat many times, changing the roles of the 3 players.

Coaching Points (1st Defender):

- Angle of approach – We want to direct the player one way on the field, take away option of advancing forward.
- Speed of approach – Approach fast...arrive slow
- Body Shape- knees bent, on the balls of their feet, one foot slightly angled in front of the other foot
- Decision to delay opponent or to tackle the opponent to win possession of the ball; if 1st defender does not have good cover, delaying the opponent is a good decision; if the 1st defender has good cover, then the decision to tackle with the toe-poke or block tackle is appropriate just as the ball comes off the foot of the dribbler

Coaching Points (2nd Defender):

- Angle and distance of cover; speed to cover – Stay connected to first defender
- Cover dangerous space between 1st defender and you; cannot allow a penetrating pass to split you and the defender!
- Be positioned so that, if the 1 defender gets beat with the dribble, you can become the 1 defender immediately.
- Be ready...see the ball, keep feet moving

~~Mistakes to watch for (1st Defender):~~ (these are common mistakes that we want to watch for and correct.)

- Planting their feet once they get to the defender
- Sprinting straight at the attacker (diving in)
- Standing straight up

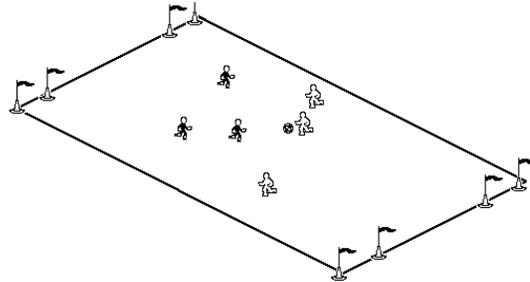
Mistakes to watch for (2nd Defender):

- Running right behind the 1st defender
- Running next to the 1st defender and creating a flat shape

2) 2v2 to lines (20 minutes):

Create multiple fields that are 20yds x 15yds with 4 cones outlining the field (enough so all players are playing); organize all of the players into teams of 2. Each team will attack the end line opposite them and defend the end line behind them.

Players must dribble over the opposite end line to score. Play a tournament format where teams play 2 minute games and then rotate to another field. Scoring goes as follows: 3 pts for the win, 1 pt for the tie, 0 for a loss and, if they have a shut-out, they get 2 bonus pts.



Coaching Points:

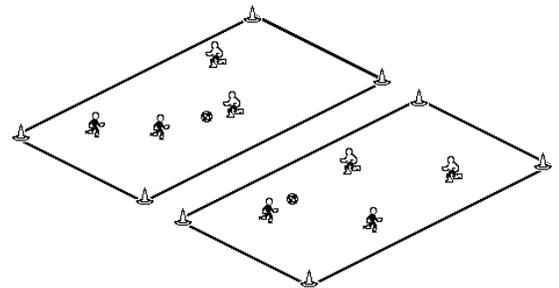
- Same as above

Mistakes to watch for:

- Players hanging back and not pressuring the ball as a team when they become defenders

3) 3v3 Four Goal game (20 minutes):

In a grid 20x30 yards with four goals measuring 3 feet across in each corner, play 3v3. Each team attacks the 2 goals opposite them and defends the 2 goals behind them. Some questions to ask the players: “can you channel the ball into certain areas of the field to gain possession?” “Can you apply enough pressure on the ball to limit the first attacker's options and make the play predictable?” Version 2: If the players are scoring very quickly, change the game so that the attacking team has to score by dribbling through one of the goals; this will allow the defending team more time to get organized.



Coaching Points:

- 2nd defender must recognize their responsibility to cover the 1st defender as the ball is traveling to the opponent (1st attacker).

4) 6v6 Game (15 minutes):

Unrestricted play. While the game is going on, praise successful defending and connection by the 1st and 2nd defenders.

5) COOL-DOWN (10 minutes):

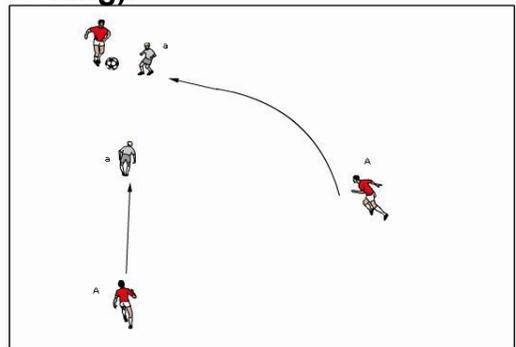
Juggling in 2"s and 3"s only using their feet or head. Static stretching of the major muscle groups.

U12 - Lesson Ten: Defending - Zonal

OBJECTIVE: Defending individually and as a group. Players must know the technical, tactical, physical and mental components of defending as individuals, in small units and as a team. This session can be used for players from U12 and older. The older and/or better ability of players the more demands we place on them.

1) Warm-up (15-20 minutes including dynamic stretching):

In three's, pass the ball back and forth one or two touches from about 7-10 yards apart. When any of the three players stops the ball with the bottom of their foot (or at the coach's command), the partners respond by the 1st player making a bending run and closing down the player on the ball as the 1st defender would and the other player reacts as the 2nd defender and covers the space behind the 1st defender. After arriving, the defender backs off, and the exercise continues.



Coaching Points:

- The 1st defender needs to “approach fast, arrive slow”, bend run, have correct stance: be on their toes, with knees bent, one foot forward, one back. The 1st defender “affects” the ball...gets the head of the 1st attacker down by getting close to the 1st attacker, approximately arm's length
- The 2nd defender needs to be at approximately a 30 degree backward angle to the 1st defender on the side that the first defender is showing the ball towards; cannot be too far back or too close to the 1st defender
- The 2nd defender tells 1st defender which way to push attacker
- Communication/decision; who's the 1st or 2nd defender and why

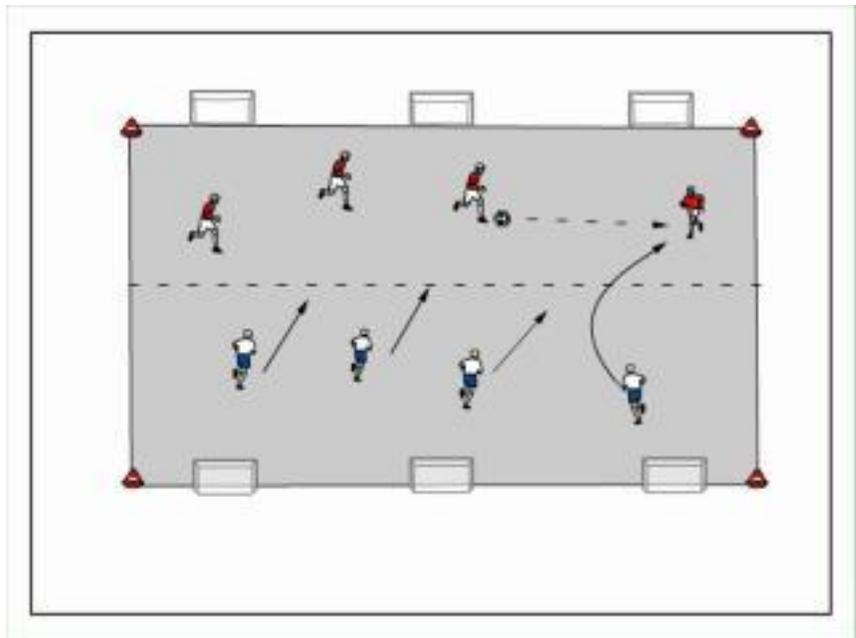
2) 4v 4 to Lines (15-20 minutes):

Field is divided in half by discs; size of the field depends on players' age,

ability and training objectives. Offsides begin at midfield. One team defends and attacks the long side of an end line. Teams score by dribbling ball under control over the end line.

Coaching Points:

- Deny penetration with a dribble
- Immediate chase/pressure – The moment possession is lost the nearest player(s) try to regain possession or apply pressure on the ball
- Delay – The pressuring defender(s) forcing the attacking team to take time organizing its attack so defenders have time to form a collective defending action behind the ball
- Cover – While the ball is being pressured all other players should be recovering into defensive positions. The positions taken should support the pressuring defender in the event he is beaten
- Balance – As the team concentrates their defense in the area of the ball, defenders away from the ball (opposite side of field) must position themselves to cover vital spaces (central areas) in order to prevent attackers from making penetrating runs into these spaces in which to receive the ball



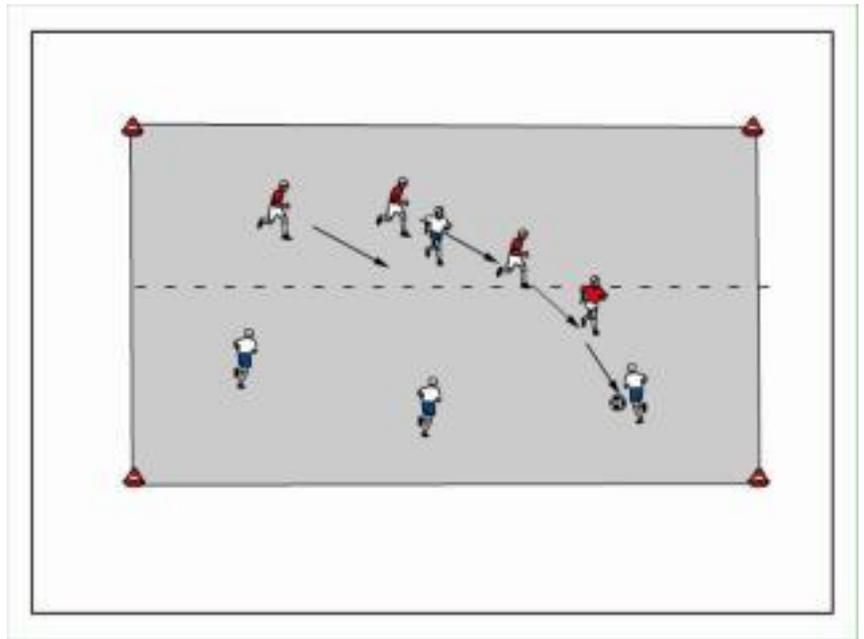
3) 4 v 4 to Six Goals (15-20 minutes):

Same as game #1 but now each team defends and attacks three goals.

Coaching Points:

Same as above and also; sliding together or moving as a block. When and how much space to squeeze; any pass by attacking team side ways (square) we squeeze or close down a little space; any pass or dribble backwards by the attacking team, the defending team pushes up and closes a lot more space.

Caution: How much space to squeeze will depend on how much pressure is applied to the 1st attacker (player with the ball). If not enough pressure is applied, defending team can be beaten with a long ball over the heads or a through ball.

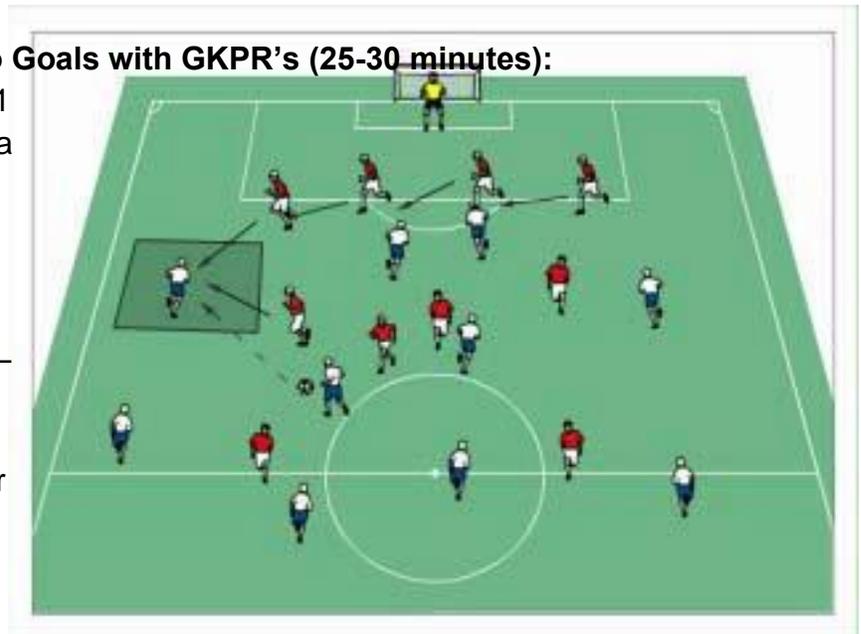


4) THE GAME - Game to two Goals with GKPR's (25-30 minutes):

Play – 7 v 7 or 8 v 8 or 11 v 11 including Goalkeepers. Use a system of play that has 3 or 4 backs. Shown here is a 4-4-2 system.

Coaching Points:

- Communication – Visual and verbal. Players must communicate their attentions and responsibilities clearly and precisely through verbal and visual cues
- Defending relative



to match situation -
Time, score, etc.
How much time is
left in the game and
what is the score?
Do we defend more
cautiously to
preserve the win or
just keep playing
the same way?

Reminder: Goalkeeper plays a very important role in zonal defending. He or she must come off their line and act as a sweeper as soon as the defenders push up and squeeze space. Be ready to clean up any balls played over or through the defenders.

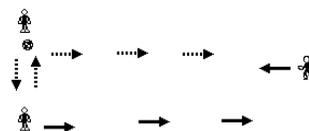
COOL- DOWN (10 minutes): Juggling in 2"s and 3"s. Static stretching of the major muscle groups..

U12 --- Lesson Eleven: Combination Play (Three or More Players Combining)

Objectives: To help players to recognize combination play with two to three players, as well as movement off the ball from the 3rd and 4th players.

1) Short-short-long (15 to 20 minutes):

Players pass the ball within their group. Two of the players position themselves about 5-10 yards apart and pass the ball back and forth to each other (short passes), while the third player (long player) drifts about 20-25 yards away. After about 4-5 short passes, the long player calls for the ball. The ball is played into the long player. The player that played the ball into the long player stays home, while the other player joins the long player. They begin to (short) pass to each other until the new "long" player calls for the ball. The activity continues in this manner for 2-3 minutes to develop a smooth rhythm in the passing sequence. Players consistently keep themselves and the ball moving. (Develop a triangle shape)



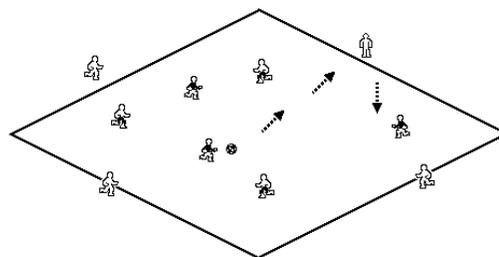
Groups of 4: Same setup as above, but three players make short passes to each other, while one player drifts away. When the ball is played long, the passer stays home and the other two players join the "long" player. (Develop a „kite" type shape)

Coaching Points:

- Intelligent movement off the ball
- Head up, preparing body to receive the ball (ball across body to see all options)
- Surveying the area, looking for target early, anticipation
- Passing accuracy and pace
- Keeping appropriate individual and group shape
- Playing in the direction you are facing

2) 3v3 plus 4 Neutrals (15-20 minutes):

In a grid 35yds x 25yds, three players are in Red and three players are in Yellow on the inside of the grid, with the four neutral players positioned



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For additional coaching resources visit <http://www.soccer-for-parents.com>

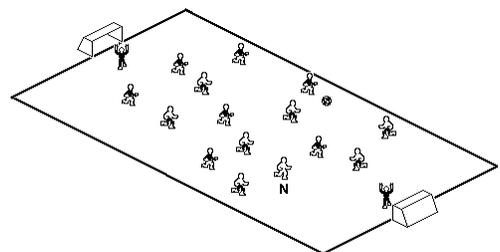
on the four sides (free movement up and down the sidelines). Red team tries to keep possession and can use neutral players on the outside. To get points, the team in possession must find neutral players on outside and neutral player must find that player back or another one on their team to get a point. First team to 10 points wins. Yellow does the same when they have possession of the ball. Version 2: Neutral player tries to play it back to another player on the team (besides the one who passed it to them) to get a point. Neutral player on outside should not force the ball into a third player, important to keep possession, so can play it back to the person who passed it to them (they just do not get a point, but do maintain possession). Note: Must find one Target player to get a point, then to get the next point, must find another target player.

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1
- Looking for timing of runs into receive ball from neutral players
- Communication (asking for ball)
- Inside player receiving ball across body to see all options if possible
- Players reading each other to see who is making the run in to get ball
- Movement of the other two players off the ball

3) 7v7 plus Neutral to Goals with Goalkeepers (15-20 minutes):

In a field approximately 60 yards long by 50 yards wide play 7v7 to big goals, with goalkeepers, and position one neutral player on the field. Play a regular game...the one neutral player always plays with the attacking team (team in possession of the ball). This activity will stimulate combination play and movement off the ball.



Sample Combinations to look for:

1– (Wall Pass with 3 players) Center midfield player passes to a forward; center midfielder then holds their run. Forward then plays it to an outside midfielder making the overlapping run down the flank.

2– (Up-Back-Through) A central forward, with back to goal, checks on a slight angle toward the center midfielder. The center midfielder passes to the forward; the forward one touches the ball back to the center midfielder; the center midfielder plays a one touch through ball into the space created by the central forward to a third player.

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1 and #2

4) 8v8 Scrimmage (25-30 minutes):

Depending upon numbers, space will change and numbers may change. Ideally, finish with the number you normally play with in games. Play a regular game with goalkeepers.

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce positive decision making opportunities (decision to combine or not, look for opportunities to play up-back-through & wall pass with 3 players, and when to keep possession vs. long penetrating pass, etc.).

5) Cool-down (5-10 minutes):

Groups of 3: One player is the server and has the ball in their hands and the other two are ready to juggle. Server says 2 and 2 which means the server tosses the ball to the first player who has to juggle the ball two times before getting it to the next player who has to juggle the ball twice and get it back to the server (ball should not touch the ground). Server can change numbers of juggles to 1 and 1, 1 and 5, 3 and 4, 4 and 2, etc.

U12 --- Lesson Twelve: Speed of Play

OBJECTIVE: To improve and increase speed of execution and speed of thought. Players must think ahead (anticipate) to decide what to do with ball and therefore play quicker. Players without the ball must always stay connected to the game. The session can be used for players from U12 and older. The older and/or better ability players the more demands we place on them. This is a 90 minute session.

1) Warm-Up.(15-20 minutes including stretching):

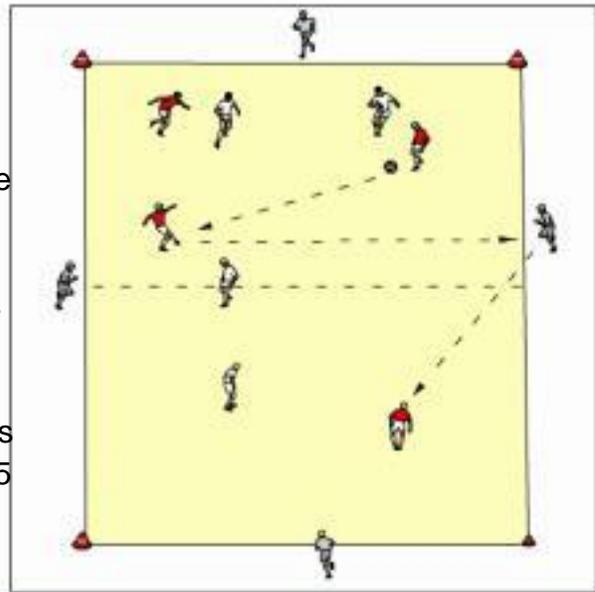
Groups of three players. B passes short to A, who passes long to C and follows pass and executes a 1-2 pass with C who passes long to B and follows pass and repeats process. After a few minutes of successful combinations have them execute an overlap instead of 1-2 pass. After a few more minutes, have them execute a take-over.

Coaching Points:

- Quality of pass; proper weight, proper direction
- The quality of the support runs, angle, distance
- Speed of play. Gradually increase speed as performance improves
- Communication; verbal, visual, always thinking

2) GAME #1 - 4 v 4 + 4 (15-20 minutes):

In a 30 x 40 yard grid, two teams play 4 vs. 4 inside the grid with the support of the 4 players (bumpers) outside the grid. Field size depends on players' age, ability and training objectives. Outside players have one or two touches on the ball or two seconds. Five pass = transition: When the team in possession completes five consecutive passes, they remain in the middle while the other two teams switch roles (play is continuous). Variations: (5 v 5 + 5, 6 v 6 + 6)



Coaching Points:

- Stress speed of play and organization.
- Don't take the same space as your teammate
- Quality of the 1st touch
- Communication; verbal, visual, always thinking

- Keep ball moving, always

3) GAME # 2 - 4 v 4 + 4 (15-20 minutes):

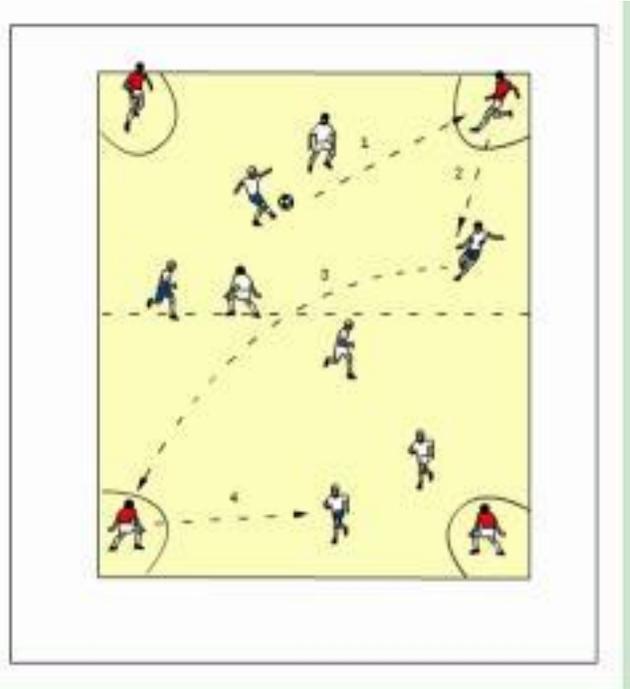
Same as game #1 but now outside players must play a long ball if they take two touches. With one touch they can play short or long. The team in possession must complete at least three consecutive passes before playing to a neutral player.

Coaching Points:

- Outside players must move along the line and offer supporting angles
- Outside players must see the whole field and not just in front of them
- Team in possession must execute quickly using 1-2 pass, overlap and take-over

3) GAME #3 - 4 v 4 + 4 (15-20 minutes):

The neutral team occupies the four corners (which are 5x5 yard grids made of cones). Ball must be played into a grid to a neutral player and back to the team that passed it in. Every time a team regains possession they must play a short corner first (that is determined by the ball being in that half of the field). After completing a short corner, the attacking team must complete a long corner by passing from the far half of the field to either of the other two corners on the other side of the mid-line. This completes the sequence.



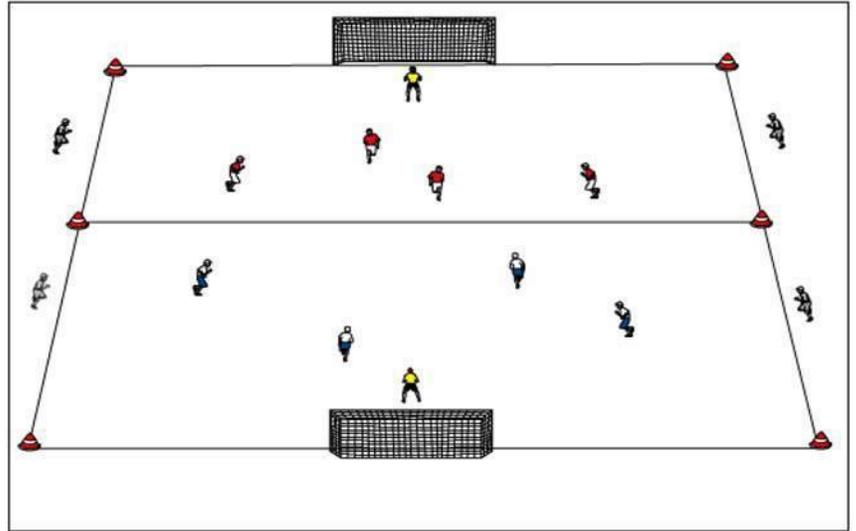
Two goal option: Award a goal for a complete sequence. After two goals the winning team stays in the middle while the other two team switch roles (play is continuous).

Coaching Points:

- Organization, communication
- Quick transition from defense to attack
- Must transition from one half of the field to the other
- Must offer several passing options to corner players
- Corner players must recognize better option

4) THE GAME - Game to two Goals with GKs (25-30 minutes):

4v4+4+GKs: Two teams play 4v4 in the field while the third team plays as neutrals or bumpers outside of the field. A win is 3 points a tie 1 point and loss 0 points. Each team keeps score. Play 5 minute games or to 2 goals. Winning team stays and losing team switches with bumpers. One team plays maximum 2 games in a row. Regular rules. Bumpers have 2 touches or 2 seconds and always play for the team that gave them the ball. At the end of the designated time, the winning team goes automatically to the final and the other 2 teams play for the other spot. Semi-final and final are 5 minutes. In case of a tie in the semi-final, the team with most shots on goal is the winner. Use penalty kicks to break a tie in the championship game.



5) COOL- DOWN (10 minutes):

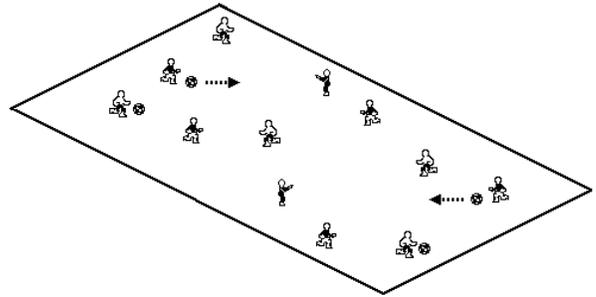
A low intensity activity to help players unwind mentally and physically, including static stretching of the large muscle groups.

U12 --- Lesson Thirteen: Goalkeeping – Handling Long-Range Shots

Objectives: To improve the goalkeeper's ability to handle long range shots...recognizing when, where and how the shot is being taken (anticipation), getting into appropriate position and making the save.

1) Goalkeeper Technical Box (15-20 minutes):

Divide the field players into two groups (a red group and a yellow group). Each group has 1-2 soccer balls. Position the two groups with the goalkeepers on half of the field passing and moving freely throughout the space. Field players must pass to any goalkeeper when the opportunity arises. The goalkeepers must use their feet during this phase.



Version 2: All balls played to keepers must be on the ground; keepers field the ball with their hands; then they distribute to any field player by rolling the ball to them.

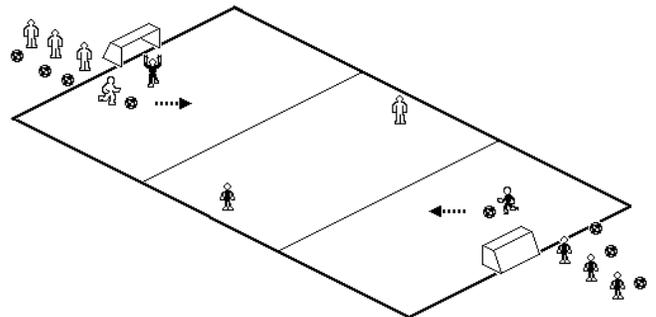
Version 3: Balls must be played over distance in the air to the keeper; keepers catch the ball with their hands; then they distribute to any field player by rolling the ball to them.

Coaching Points:

- Make sure foot skills (receiving and passing), catching technique and distribution by the keeper are clean.
- Keeper must begin communication to the field players in this activity by calling for the ball and talking to field players when distributing it.

2) Pass-Deflect-Shoot (15-20 minutes):

Position goals at each end of a half field opposite each other. Goalkeepers in each goal. Field players are split into two groups, each with a soccer ball and positioned in a line on the right side of each goal. Two target players are positioned diagonally opposite each line. Both groups perform the following sequence at the same time: the first player in line passes a ball to the target player facing them. The target player lays the ball off centrally for the



passer to shoot. After the shot, the shooter becomes the next target player, while the original target player goes to the end of the shooting line. Play is continuous for a designated time.

Version 2: the target player lays ball off toward the flank.

Version 3: move the lines to the left side of each goal.

Coaching Points:

- Coach should be in a good coaching position behind the goalkeeper
- Proper starting positions, footwork and angles
- Cut down angle of the shooter and get set as the shooter prepares to shoot
- Focus on clean handling (saving) of the ball versus shot stopping (deflection, parrying)

3) 6v6 on a Half Field (15-20 minutes):

Play 6v6 on a half field. Award 3 points for any shots taken from outside the penalty area that are on goal. Award 5 points for any shots taken from outside the penalty area that score. Award 1 point for goals scored from inside the penalty.

Coaching points:

- Coach should be positioned behind the goalkeeper emphasizing the coaching points made throughout the session to this point.

4) 11v11 Game on the Full Field (30 minutes):

Play a game! Throughout the run of play, the coach will award each team 5-8 corner kicks and 5-8 free kicks from 20-30 yards out.

Coaching points:

- Coach should be positioned behind the goalkeeper emphasizing the coaching points made throughout the session to this point.

5) Cool-down (5-10 minutes):

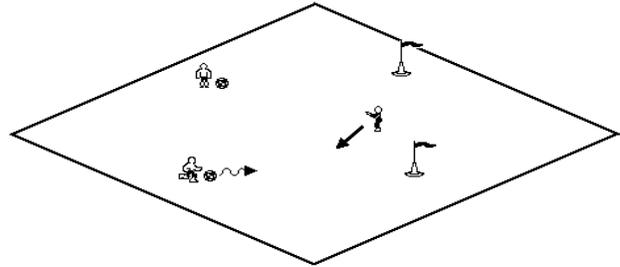
Individual juggling with restrictions: feet only, feet and thigh only, 3 small juggles then 1 big touch above head, unrestricted. Static stretching of the major muscle groups.

U12 --- Lesson Fourteen: Goalkeeping - Breakaways

Objectives: To teach the goalkeeper proper technique and decision making when confronting attacking players in 1v1 situations where the attacker is in control of the ball.

1) Crouch Warm Up 1 (10-12 minutes):

Create groups of three with at least 2 balls per group. One player is the working goalkeeper and the other two are servers. The servers stand 5 yards away facing the goalkeeper, one on the goalkeeper's left side, the other on the right side. The first server dribbles toward the goalkeeper simulating a breakaway. The goalkeeper starts in a crouch position and goes to the ground to make the save. The goalkeeper returns to the crouch position and the second server repeats the breakaway from the other side. Repeat the exercise – you can either go for time or number of repetitions. Rotate players through as the working goalkeeper.



Coaching Points:

- Crouch position – arms down with hands almost touching the ground, palms facing forward, bend knees and shoulders, head and upper body forward
- The goalkeeper should explode down to the ball with their hands and upper body so that they go in strong.
- Common mistake: Goalkeeper will reach with their hands to the ball only and will not go in strong for the challenge.
- The hands should be in a W shape, extended away from the body with the elbows slightly bent, and the nose behind the thumbs to protect the head and face. The nose and face should be 6-10 inches away from the hands. Common mistake: The goalkeeper will raise their head above their hands exposing it to the feet of the attacker.
- The goalkeeper should go down to the ground sideways to create a barrier behind the ball. Common mistake: The goalkeeper goes down on their stomach.

2) Partner Warm Up (10-12 minutes):

Two goalkeepers stand facing each other at a distance of 20 yards. The goalkeeper with the ball is the attacker and dribbles on a breakaway toward the other goalkeeper who starts their approach from the ready position and approaches the attacker at a

controlled speed. As the space closes down between the attacker and goalkeeper, the goalkeeper crouches down towards the ground before going down to make the save. Goalkeepers return to their starting positions and repeat. Switch roles after 10 breakaways.

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce coaching points from Activity #1.
- Stay low – don't stand up! The goalkeeper should get lower to the ground the closer they get to the attacker. Common mistake: The goalkeeper stands up as they get closer to the attacker allowing space to play directly under the goalkeeper.
- Approach the attacker at a controlled speed. Common mistake: The goalkeeper runs at the attacker at top speed when the attacker is in control of the ball.

3) 1v1 Grid Challenge (12-15 minutes):

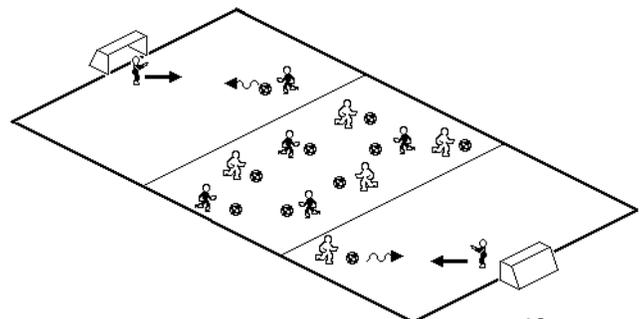
Attacking line sets up at one end of the grid (10x12 yds) and the goalkeeping line at the opposite end. The attacker starts with the ball and must dribble over the opposite endline with possession to score a point. Players can switch between goalkeeping and attacking line. You can make this exercise a challenge – either individual or team – by keeping track of goals scored. The individual or team with the lowest number of goals scored against wins.

Coaching points:

- Coach should position themselves behind the goalkeeper.
- Reinforce coaching points from Activities 1 & 2.
- The goalkeeper should try to force the attacker to go around the goalkeeper. The goalkeeper can then try to win the ball on the push around. Common mistake: The goalkeeper dives forward on their stomach to try to win the ball at the attacker's feet.
- The goalkeeper should get off the goal line to engage the attacker as far away from goal as possible.
- Common mistakes: The goalkeeper waits for the attacker on the goal line or the goalkeeper approaches the attacker too quickly and the attacker pushes the ball around the goalkeeper.

4) Game Situation Breakaways (20-25 minutes):

Version 1: Divide a regulation size field into three equal size areas horizontally (thirds of the field). Position goals at each end of the vertical field with goalkeepers. Create two teams of 5-6 field players (a blue team and a red team). Number the players 1 through 5. Every player has a ball dribbling freely in the middle third. The blue team will shoot at one of the goals and the red team will shoot at the



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other. Number 1 dribbles out of the middle third going to goal on a break-away. Then number 2 goes, etc. Players dribble out of the middle in consecutive order and repeat many times. Version 2: Designate a couple of players (in yellow) as recovering defenders (bandits) to chase down the attacking players from behind when they enter the shooting zone.

Coaching Points:

- Make sure that the goalkeeper is fully recovered before the next player goes to goal
- Give the goalkeeper breaks by alternating other players in the goal
- Coach should position themselves behind the goalkeeper.
- Reinforce coaching points from the previous activities.

5) 8v8 scrimmage (25-30 minutes):

Depending on numbers, space may change and numbers will change. Ideally, finish with the number you normally play with in games. Play a regular game with goalkeepers.

6) Cool-down (5-10 minutes)

Juggling in groups of 2 or 3. Static stretching of the major muscle groups.

Further Information

The practice plans provided in this manual are just intended for suggestions. There is a myriad of information available to you on the internet for you to incorporate into your lesson plans.

There's always more than one way to skin the cat (apologies to you cat lovers). In fact, the sky's the limit in terms of your creativity with the kids. Here are some suggestions:

Free online videos demonstrating soccer skills:

<http://bigfootsoccer.com/>

http://www.soccertricks.org/soccer_skills.html

<http://www.joesoccer.com>

<http://www.soccerpracticevideoclips.blogspot.com/>

Great websites for lesson plans and skill development:

<http://www.footy4kids.co.uk/> (our favorite)

http://www.mayouthsoccer.org/pages/6_practice_plans.cfm

<http://usyouthsoccer.org>

http://www.ussoccer.com/articles/viewArticle.jsp_280734.html

If you have any questions, please feel to contact Jeff Burke at jrburke9631@sbcglobal.net or call him at 582-3259