Cops and robbers game

By David Clarke

You can use this game to teach young players the basics of attacking and defending in a fun game. Awareness of where players are and the ability to control, pass and stop the ball can all be coached.

How to set it up
Use the centre circle and put three cones to form a triangle in the centre. If your pitch doesn't have a centre circle use a circle of cones in a similar size. With all players in the playing area, have some players with a ball - the cops, and half as many without a ball - the robbers.

How to play it
The robbers have to try and win a ball from one of the cops. If the robber wins the ball, they attempt to score by stopping it in the centre "bank". If the robber manages to do that the cop who lost the ball also becomes a robber. Play continues until the last player with a ball wins.

Key coaching tips:
Cops should keep the ball close, with head up so the players are aware of the robbers. If the ball is lost, recover quickly and fight to win it back before the robber puts it in the bank.
Robbers should move quickly from defence to attack to avoid other players and control the ball into the bank.