



AYSO

U-12 Coach

Manual



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Soccer the beautiful game!

Soccer, by any measure, is the most popular game in the world. It's easy to play, can be played almost anywhere and requires very little equipment—perhaps markers of some sort for the two goals and the four corners of the field, and, of course, a ball.

Soccer is non-stop action, played in two halves with far fewer interruptions than other team sports. For sheer exercise, it is hard to beat. In fact, it provides one of the best cardiovascular workouts in all of sport.

Now that you're excited about soccer, continue on to learn what it means to be a coach in AYSO!



Welcome!

The American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO) welcomes you to the world of coaching youth soccer. The Programs Department of the National Support & Training Center and the AYSO National Coaching Advisory Commission are pleased to present this manual to help you get started.

AYSO is a place where every child plays in an atmosphere of good sportsmanship and positive coaching. The emphasis in AYSO is on youth. AYSO is unique because we recognize the social and psychological needs of children and do our best to work toward the fulfillment of those needs in all our programs. This emphasis makes AYSO a model for other youth sports groups and is a key to our astounding growth and popularity.

Developing soccer skills, physical attributes, tactical awareness and knowledge of the game are critical to promoting self-efficacy and increasing self-esteem in players. Thus, they perform at a higher level, avoid injury, see the results of their hard work and achievement and most importantly, have fun. As a volunteer coach, your participation in the program should be fun, as well.

The content of this manual is drawn from the knowledge and experience of AYSO's National Coach and National Coaching Advisory Commission—people with vast soccer knowledge, yet volunteers of AYSO—just like you. The soccer skills and coaching techniques included in this manual have been carefully selected as appropriate for the level of your players. We encourage you to use the techniques in this manual to train young players in the skills most needed at their level of development and play. With these guidelines and recommendations, your coaching experience will be satisfying for both you and your players.

We encourage you to attend the Annual Coach Orientation Course, held in your local region, as well as other AYSO coaching courses available in your area. Your Regional Commissioner or Coach Administrator can provide you with information about what's available and how to register.

We are glad that you have joined the AYSO. On behalf of the players, we thank you!

John Ouellette

AYSO National Coach



AYSO Philosophy

This section provides a brief introduction to AYSO's vision, mission and the philosophies on which the program is based.

Vision Statement

To provide world class youth soccer programs that enrich children's lives

Mission Statement

To develop and deliver quality youth soccer programs, which promote a fun, family environment based on the AYSO Philosophies:

- **Everyone Plays:** Our program's goal is for kids to play soccer—so we mandate that every player on every team must play at least half of every game.
- **Balanced Teams:** Each year we form new teams as evenly balanced as possible—because it is fair and more fun when teams of equal ability play.
- **Open Registration:** Our program is open to all children between 4 1/2 and 19 years of age who want to register and play soccer. Interest and enthusiasm are the only criteria for playing.
- **Positive Coaching:** Encouragement of player effort provides for greater enjoyment by the players and ultimately leads to better-skilled and better-motivated players.
- **Good Sportsmanship:** We strive to create a positive environment based on mutual respect rather than a win at all costs attitude, and our program is designed to instill good sportsmanship in every facet of AYSO.



Team Management

There are off-the-field responsibilities that affect the team and the players before they ever step on the field. These activities are referred to as team management.

Organizing the Team

1. Develop a Team Goal.

“Players having FUN while learning about soccer” is a good base for a team goal. You, the parents and players can build on that foundation.

2. Develop a Coaching Philosophy.

You can base your personal coaching philosophy on the AYSO Coach Pledge (see Appendix C).

3. Conduct a Parents’ Meeting.

- Discuss AYSO’s five Philosophies.
- Discuss the team’s goal(s).
- Explain your coaching philosophy.
 - You can begin by explaining short-sided soccer and why we play it.
 - Do not hesitate to share your experience or lack thereof as a coach.
- Educate parents briefly on the Laws of the Game specific to this age group. Distributing the ABC’s of AYSO (contact your Regional Commissioner for more info) is a great way to introduce new parents to soccer and AYSO.
- GET HELP – You will need:
 - Assistant Coaches
 - Team Manager: administrative duties such as phone calls, coordinating carpools, etc...
 - Team Parent: develop snack schedule, plan social activities, etc...
- Set team policies regarding:
 - Equipment brought to practice by each player: water, ball (properly inflated), shin guards, appropriate clothing.
 - Attendance at practices and games.
 - Player and parent behavior. You can discuss expectations of players and parents based on the Player and Parent Pledges

Practice

Preparation

You should always come to practice with a plan. Consider what technique you wish to work on and what activities you can use to achieve your goal. A written plan ensures smooth transitions, little down time and that you won't leave anything out.

Sample Practice Outline



- **Warm Up - 20 Minutes** (as was taught to you in the field portion of your training)



- **Skill-Based Activity - 20 Minutes**
Remember to utilize the methods of instruction discussed later in the manual.



- **Short-Sided Play - 20 Minutes**

Equipment

Below is a basic list of the minimum equipment you should have with you at practices and games:

- player medical release forms
- a basic first-aid kit
- water container (filled with water) and cups
- soccer balls
- an extra pair of shin guards
- a marking pen for labeling
- whistle

Players should bring a soccer ball to every activity and must be wearing shinguards.

Warm Up

At this young age, player's muscles are not developed to a point where injuries will occur often, especially due to a lack of warming up and stretching. It is critical, however, that players be introduced to the concepts in order to prepare them for future competition in the years to come.

Warming-up before playing sport prepares the mind, heart, muscles and joints for the upcoming event. It improves performance, helps players get mentally prepared and is a great step towards injury prevention.

Warming up prepares the body for physical activity – it prevents a rapid increase in blood pressure, improves blood flow to the heart, increases muscle temperature and makes muscles more pliable. By warming up, players will improve their performance and reduce the risk of injury.

There are two methods of stretching: “dynamic” and “static” methods.

- **Dynamic stretching** involves stretching movements performed at gradually increased speed as will be demonstrated in the field portion of this clinic.
- **Static stretching** involves placing a muscle in its most lengthened position and holding for at least 30 seconds. An example of static stretching will be demonstrated in the field portion of this clinic.



In sports, like soccer, that involve sprinting and changes of direction, the general warm-up that builds to dynamic stretching should include jogging as well as short sprints and multi-directional running (such as sideways and backwards as will be demonstrated on the field).

Dynamic stretching is good for 'waking muscles up' to get them ready to work hard. This involves moving limbs through the full range of motion that they will be used in during the game or training. Gradually increase the range of the movement over a series of repetitions.

Cooling down is equally important. It helps the body to recover and gradually return to its normal temperature. This is also a good time to work on flexibility.

Game Day Basics

This section will provide information on the steps to follow on the days leading up to the big game. Ensuring that your players are prepared and ready to play will ease your mind and keep everything running smoothly.

In advance of game day

- Remind parents where and what time your team will meet.
- Ask parents to have players arrive 30 minutes in advance in order to account for late arrivals and preparation time.

Game Day

Check Your Equipment Before You Leave Home: make sure you have all the equipment you need prior to getting to the field.

Before the Game

- Arrive early: at least 10 minutes before the time you expect your players.
- Gather team: begin "free play activity" as players arrive.
- Conduct a warm-up.
- Talk: Excite them about getting ready to play.
- Remind them to have fun and to do their best!
- Review training that was practiced and how it should be integrated into the game.
- A quick reminder of the rules can be most beneficial.

After the Game

- Conduct a short game review.
- Ask if anyone is hurt.
- Congratulate players who worked hard.
- Remind players of next practice or game.
- Make sure parents know as well.



Training Overview for U-12 Players

Objectives of the Game for the U-12 player

Attacking Objectives	Defending Objectives
Score	Prevent Scoring
Maintain Possession	Regain Possession
Advance the Ball	Delay the Opponents

Principles of Play for the U-12 player

Attacking Principles	Defending Principles
Penetration	Delay
Depth	Depth
Mobility	Balance
Width	Concentration
Creativity	Composure

Techniques

- Dribbling
- Inside of the foot – ball control
- Sole of the foot – ball control
- Top of the thigh – ball control
- Instep kick
- Inside of the foot – push pass
- Heading
- Tackling – front block
- Goalkeeping

Knowledge

- What is in and out of play
- Corner kick
- Goal kick
- Penalty kick
- Don't kick or trip others
- Don't hold or push others
- No handling of the ball

The Coaching Cycle

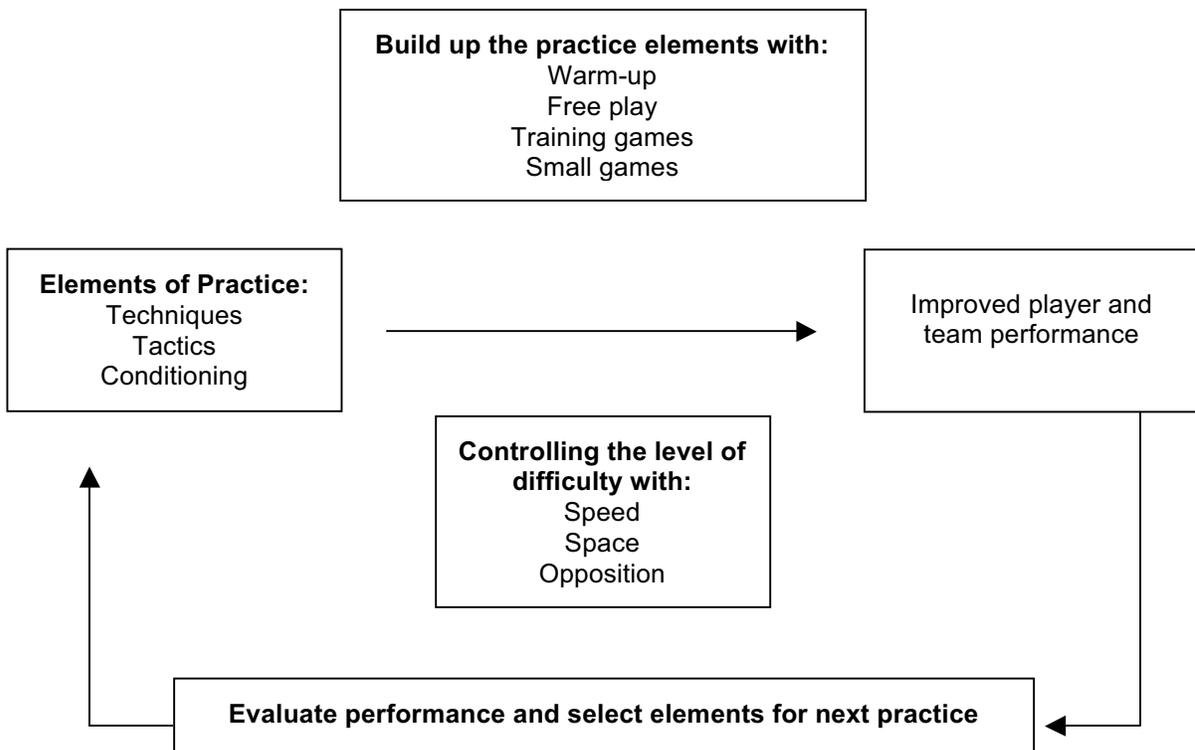
Coaching involves evaluating player and team performance in order to determine what needs to be worked on during training (practice). The necessary techniques and tactics are then incorporated into training along with the appropriate physical conditioning.

As a coach, your ability to utilize the coaching cycle will make your job easier and more fun as well as improving overall player and team play.

- Observe your team in game situations. Evaluate and select the elements to be taught during training sessions (practice).
- Decide what to teach and build up during the training session (practice) through warm-up, free play, training games/activities and small games.
- Control the difficulty level during the training session (practice) by varying the speed of the activity, the space allowed to do it in, and the amount of opposition allowed.

Figure 1: The Coaching Cycle

The elements of practice are taught at each practice using buildup comprised of warm-up, free play, activity games, and small games. The level of difficulty is controlled by varying speed, space, and opposition. The result of this coaching cycle is improved player and team performance. The coach evaluates performance and selects the elements for the next practice.





Positions

Soccer has four basic positions: goalkeepers, defenders, midfielders, and strikers. There are many specialized names you'll hear as you continue to coach: sweeper, center-half, forward, wing, outside back, center-back, stopper, libero, etc. We will concentrate only on the four basic positions in this course.

The major characteristics of players for each of the four basic positions are listed in the table below.

Goalkeepers

- Agility
- Quick reflexes
- Sure hands
- Courage to get the ball
- Ability to distribute the ball
- Ability to read the game

Defenders

- Sufficient speed to cover opposing players
- Basic tackling technique
- Determination to win the ball
- Strong and accurate kick

Midfielders

- Stamina for continuous running
- Desire to win the ball
- Aggressiveness and hustle
- Soccer sense

Strikers

- Desire to score
- Persistence
- Speed
- Good ball control skills
- Accurate/strong shot

The basic responsibilities of each position are listed in the table below. The responsibilities change depending upon whether your team has the ball or the other team has the ball. Teach your players the responsibilities of each position.

Position	Own Team with Ball	Other Team with Ball
Goalkeepers	Begin the attack	Stop scoring attempt
Defenders	Maintain possession Advance the ball	Stop scoring attempt Regain Possession
Midfielders	Advance the ball Maintain possession	Delay Attack Regain Possession
Strikers	Score Advance the ball Maintain possession	Regain possession Delay attack

Throughout the season, try to let all players to experience all field positions, but not in same game. Allow players to play one, or at most, two positions in a single game. This gives them some time to familiarize themselves and get comfortable with the position.

This also applies to the goalkeeper position so that all children get a chance to develop their field skills.

Every child must play 1/2 of every game; however, we recommend strongly that each player play 3/4 of every game before any player plays all four quarters.

Children of all abilities improve when they play and the more they play, the better they get.

Objectives & Principles

Objectives of the Game

Objective is defined in the dictionary as “a goal or a purpose.” The Objectives of the Game at this age are simple:

If your team has possession of the ball, your team is **attacking**, and your objectives are to:

- ***maintain possession, advance the ball, and SCORE!***

If the opposing team has possession of the ball, your team is **defending**, and your objectives are to:

- ***delay the opponents, STOP them from SCORING, and regain possession!***

Your first step is to give your players an understanding of what objective must be achieved at any given point during a match. This priority is based on a player’s relative position to: **Ball, Teammates, Opponents, Location on Field and Time in Game.**

Principles of Play

Principle is defined in the dictionary as “a fundamental origin or cause of something.” The Principles of Play are used to achieve the Objectives of the Game.

There are ten **Principles of Play** utilized in soccer — five **attacking** principles and five **defending** principles. Remember that while these concepts can be introduced, do not expect U-12 players to grasp the concepts right away or be able to utilize all ten all the time.

Attacking Principles

- **Penetration:** Advancing the ball past opposing players by dribbling, passing and shooting.
- **Depth:** Supporting teammates by creating safe options for the player with the ball.
- **Mobility:** Players changing positions (filling in for one another when necessary) and moving off the ball creates numerical advantages and thereby attacking/scoring opportunities.
- **Width:** Attacking on a broad front (players spread out) stretches the defense and creates space for players to advance.
- **Creativity:** Creating opportunities for advancement, possession and scoring by utilizing individual skills such as feints and fakes while dribbling.

The attacking principles of penetration, depth, mobility, width and creativity ultimately lead us to achieving our attacking objectives – ***to maintain possession, advance the ball and score!***

Defending Principles

- **Delay:** To slow down the attack by closing gaps and denying space for the other team to work in. Once the attack is slowed, your team can attempt to take the ball back.
- **Depth:** Supporting the player(s) challenging the ball in case they are beaten.



- **Balance:** Reading the attack and providing an equal or greater number of defenders than attackers at the point of attack, while simultaneously covering the vital area near the goal.
- **Concentration:** Compressing or restricting the space the attacking team has by “shepherding” them into a confined area makes it easier to defend and regain possession of the ball.
- **Composure:** Staying calm and collected in the face of an attack by maintaining proper defensive techniques and positioning.

The defending principles of delay, depth, balance, concentration and composure ultimately lead us to achieving our defending objectives – **to delay the opponents, stop scoring and regain possession!**

For each attacking principle, there is a defending principle to counter it.		
Attacking	countered by	Defending
Penetration		Delay
Depth		Depth
Width		Concentration
Mobility		Balance
Creativity		Composure

Understand that in soccer there are no absolutely correct decisions. You cannot always judge how well your team is playing by the results of a game. You need to have a standard method of assessing your team from moment to moment. The **Principles of Play** are your measuring sticks.

It is not enough to just explain the principles of play. They must be illustrated and worked on within match-related conditions.

Once players understand the principles of play, they must be taught to use or exploit them in order to achieve the objectives.

Coach, you must UNDERSTAND the objectives and principles of play if you want to be successful. They are the foundation of your coaching strategy and should be taught at every practice.



Systems of Play

Systems of Play is simply a soccer term that refers to the formation of positions that a team employs during a game. Players at this age must begin to understand the shape and organization of play within a soccer game.

Teaching players about systems of play, along with the principles and objectives of the game will begin to open them up to the concepts of shape and organization.

- Systems of play are referred to using numbers that reference how many players are at a given position.
- Systems assume the presence of a goalkeeper, so there is no number for that position.
- Systems are numbered from the back to the front, with the first number indicating the number of defenders, then midfielders, then forwards.
- Example: 3-3-2 means: 1 goalkeeper, 3 defenders, 3 midfielders and 2 strikers.
- Players during a game are not positioned in straight lines across the field. They fill general areas, not specific spots. Emphasize this to your players.

Players must move relative to the ball, their teammates, their opponents and the goal as discussed in the previous section. Thus, when strikers move up to try to score, the midfielders and defenders must also adjust to the new position. Similarly, when the opposing team gets the ball, the strikers must drop back as the midfielders and defenders move to new positions in order to fulfill their duties.

Systems of play must be appropriate for the players on your team. In other words, find a system of play that fits the ability of your players instead of trying to fit your players into a particular system.

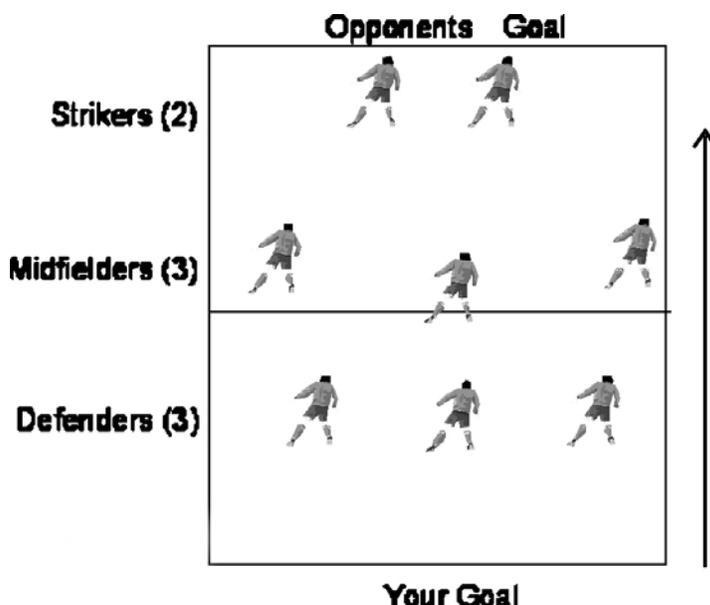
Remember that no system of play will overcome a lack of basic technique. Do not be discouraged if your team plays as a herd at times with little or no organization. Player maturity, skill and an understanding of the objectives, principles and systems will slowly but surely alleviate this problem.

U-12 Systems of Play

The AYSO National Coaching Advisory Commission strongly recommends that U-12 play 9 vs. 9. Following are a couple of possible systems of play for this age group:

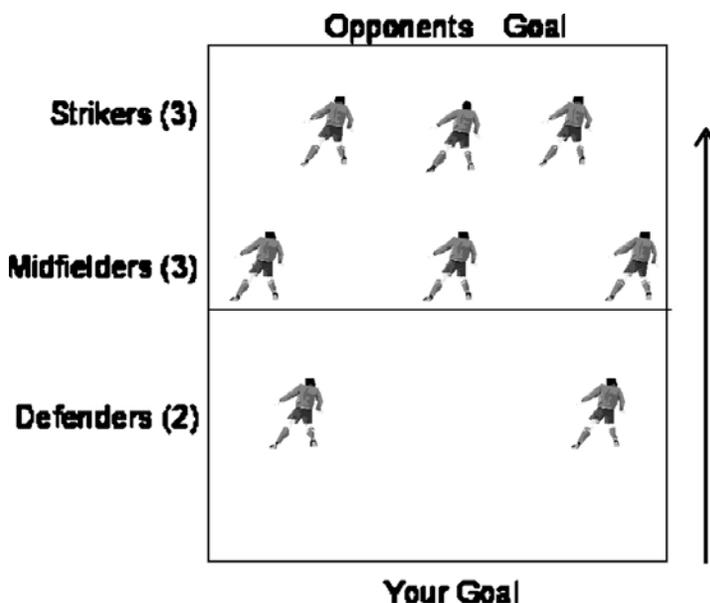
3-3-2: 3 defenders, 3 midfielders, 2 strikers

- Allows for good player movement
- Provides a strong defensive structure, defenders must prevent scoring and initiate the attack
- Midfielders assume defensive responsibility then support strikers on the attack



2-3-3: 2 defenders, 3 midfielders, 3 strikers

- Gives good attacking power and adequate midfield control, often used to attack a strong defense
- Defenders must be very solid and fast
- Midfielders must help a lot on defense



Teaching Methods

This section covers the most comprehensive and difficult aspect of coaching to master —how to develop player skills. Covered first are methods for instructing your players, followed by an explanation and discussion of the techniques necessary to perform the skills.

The AYSO National Coach and the AYSO National Coaching Advisory Commission have found a teaching method that is very effective in teaching players of all ages and skill levels the basics of soccer. This method is based upon the teaching principles listed below. We will use this method throughout the clinic to teach techniques. Base what to teach on your evaluation of the previous training session (practice) or game. Prepare a training (practice) plan.

- Assemble your players, get their attention. Position them so that they are looking at you and not into the sun or other distractions.
- State the objective (what will you teach).
- Demonstrate (show them the technique).
- Involve a player (have a player show the technique).
- Circulate and correct (watch everyone and correct mistakes).
- Positive feedback (be positive all the time).
- Move quickly and interestingly into the next technique, activity or small game.
- Minimize lectures. Make verbal instructions short.
- Warm-ups.
- Free play.
- Demonstrate the technique.
- Static drill (check for correct technique).
- Dynamic drill (check for correct technique in a game related situation).
- Dynamic with pressure drill.
- Increase pressure of drill as needed.
- Repeat with more complex drill or scrimmage situation using skill (scrimmages should not be more than 3 vs. 3).

Points to Remember

- Be organized, plan ahead
- Use the teaching method
- Build up the technique.

P. I. E. Positive instruction & encouragement

This concept is so important to AYSO's coaching philosophy, it was written into the National Rules and Regulations. **Positive Instruction and Encouragement** should always be used to instruct and motivate your players. They will respond better to you and it will help keep AYSO a happy, positive place for all.

Say, Show, Do and Review

This method is effective for teaching any age group. Simply follow these four steps for the technique you are working on with you team:

- **SAY:** Explain the skill or technique.



- **SHOW:** Demonstrate the skill or technique.
- **DO:** Have players perform the skill or technique.
- **REVIEW:** Review, correct and confirm proper technique.

Remember to keep explanations and demonstrations brief and that young children will only want to work on the same thing for a short period of time.

See, Show, Say Method

This process can be used in conjunction with the Say, Show, Do and Review method described above. Once you have taught the technique, you can observe and correct your players as described below.

See

Coaches must learn to be observers of their players' performances, looking to see if the skills, tactics and strategies they have learned are being properly utilized and executed on the field.

Observation is a silent activity. Instead of trying to coach or correct immediately, let them play uninterrupted for a time while taking notes:

- Make notes (preferably written) on what your players do.
- Make notes on the positive outcomes.
- Make a note (ONE note) on how they can improve.

Through the act of seeing (without speaking or directing), you can focus on analyzing the players and their performance. This **analysis** is the basis for the next step.

Show

Showing consists of two complementary parts: description and demonstration.

Description involves briefly telling the players what you saw in terms of their execution, and then provide them with attainable modifications to correct one or two deficits. This is called analysis and application. Don't try to describe every error or apply every remedy.

Demonstration comes after the description of what you saw, and involves showing the players what modifications they can employ to improve their technique most effectively. If you are unable to demonstrate the technique yourself, utilize a player who can.

Say

Once all of these steps have been followed, if the players perform the skill, tactic, or strategy effectively, it's time to let them know! Say it out loud, so everyone can hear.

That's the whole thing: **See, Show, Say** using **Positive Instruction and Encouragement**.



Techniques for U-12 Players

This section covers the various techniques you can teach to your players. The better grasp you have of the techniques, the better you will be able to teach them to your players. Note: all techniques should be practiced with both feet to ensure players do not develop a “strong foot” and a “weak foot.”

Remember to utilize the coaching cycle and the various methods of instruction when teaching the techniques.

Evaluate your players first. (See Appendix F for Player Evaluation Form.) Look at the ability of all your players to perform the techniques. Grade them as Good (G), OK, or Needs Improvement (NI). This is to help you plan the level of your training sessions (practice).

Grade them on three different levels of performance for each technique:

- Technique demonstrated with no pressure
- Technique with pressure
- Technique in a game or game situation

Remember, you must do the first level of a technique (the motor movement) before moving to the next level. Expectations are just that, expectations. Allow the players to develop at their own pace. Be realistic with your expectations.



Dribbling

Dribbling is the art of using the feet to maintain possession of the ball, on the ground, under control, while moving. The two primary reasons to use dribbling skill are:

- to move the ball into a better position on the field.
- to retain possession of the ball.

Dribbling is one of the ways to achieve **penetration**, one of the Attacking Principles of Play for this age group.

The most important element of dribbling is developing a “feel” or “touch” for the ball with the feet... BOTH OF THEM. The key is then to **keep the ball close** by touching it softly.

Dribbling Basics

- Use all major surfaces of the foot.
- Knees should be slightly bent and body leaning slightly over the ball for balance.
- Arms should be relaxed and used for balance and protection.
- Players should play with their head up as much as possible, enabling them to see the field as well as the ball by utilizing peripheral vision as their ability progresses.
- Ball should be kept close. Encourage players to:
 - Touch the ball softly.
 - Keep the ball close.
 - Keep the ball under control.
 - Touch the ball every step or so.
 - Ball should never be more than one step away.

Common Errors & Corrections

Error	Correction
Player loses control of the ball	Have players move slower and remind to touch ball softer
Player dribbles the ball into trouble or out of play	Have players move slower and remind to touch the ball softer
Player re-positions entire body behind ball before touching	Encourage player to use motion of foot to direct the ball instead of re-positioning their body

Fakes and Feints

Fakes and feints, or “moves” are utilized by the creative dribbler to unbalance his opponent thereby creating an opportunity to penetrate or maintain possession of the ball.

Players at this age should begin to develop a repertoire of feints. A player often has 2 or 3 that are his “favorite moves” along with others to be called upon depending on the situation.

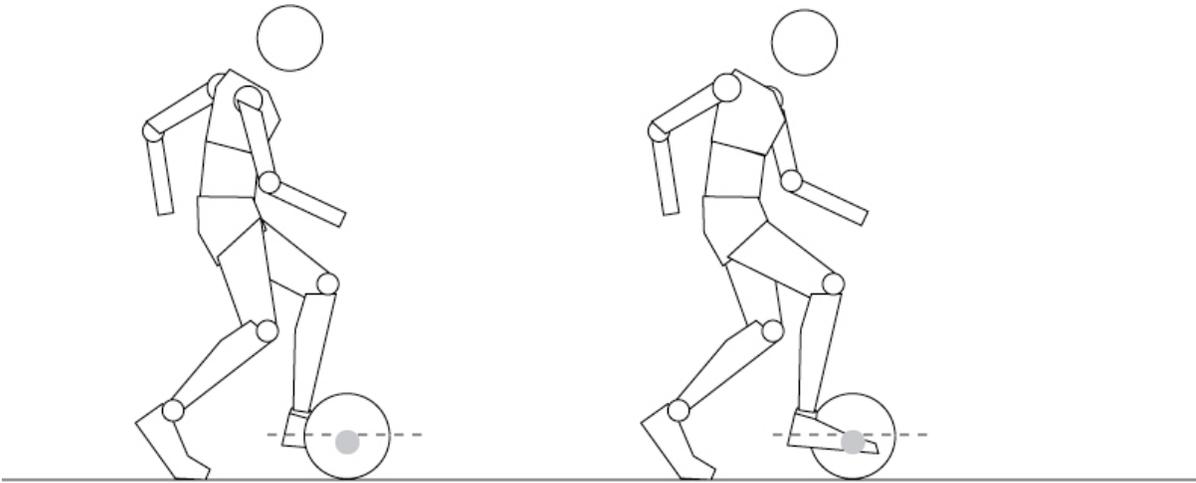
Described below is a simple yet extremely effective feint to get you and your players started:

Fake Left, Go Right (this direction can be reversed)

As dribbler approaches opponent:

- Step hard slightly in front of and to the left of the ball w/ left foot (speed of ball must be accounted for).
 - Left knee should bend as all weight is placed on left foot.
 - Upper body should move as well to “sell” the fake.

- Right foot is quickly brought up in between the left foot and the ball
- Push off with left foot back to the right.
- Outside of the right foot pushes ball forward and to the right at approximately 45 degrees.
- Accelerate (explode) past the opponent and continue dribbling.



Inside of the Foot – Ball Control

This technique is used to control the ball using the inside of the foot in order to maintain possession and prepare for the next move.

Basics

Move into path of the ball

Prepare Plant Leg

- Place support foot next to path of the ball.
- Bend knee slightly.
- Put weight on plant leg.

Prepare Control Leg

- Move leg toward the ball.
- Bend knee slightly.
- Rotate leg outward at hip, 90 degrees.
- Lock ankle with toe pointed up to ensure solid contact point.
- Raise foot off the ground and perpendicular to ball (form an “L” with feet).



Controlling Movement

- Keep eyes on the ball.
- Extend the arms to the sides for balance and protection.
- Contact center of the ball with center of inside of the foot (in curve/arch).
- Withdraw action leg straight back as contact is made in order to cushion the ball.
- Prepare ball for your next move—pass, dribble, or shoot.

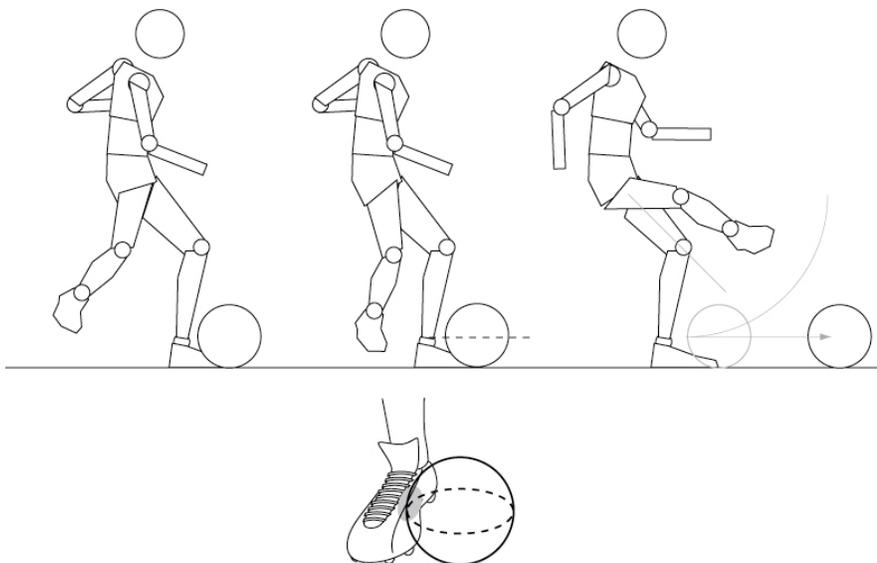
Coaching Points

Before having players contact the ball:

- Have them practice planting their foot in the proper place.
- Have them practice moving their leg and foot straight back and forth in a controlled motion ensuring proper body and leg movement.

Common Errors & Corrections

Error	Correction
Player misses the ball	Keep eyes on the ball and move into its path
Ball rolls over the controlling foot	Lock the ankle, point tow slightly up
Ball bounces off the controlling foot	Draw the controlling leg back as the ball arrives



Sole of the Foot – Ball Control

(Rolling Ground Ball) This technique is used to control the ball on the ground using the sole of the foot or to bring a bouncing ball to the ground in order to maintain possession and prepare for the next move.

Basics

Move into path of the ball

Prepare Plant Leg

- Place support foot next to path of the ball.
- Bend knee slightly.
- Put weight on plant leg.

Prepare Controlling Leg

- Raise leg from hip with knee bent.
- Place foot in path of ball.
- Toe up, heel down (makes a wedge).

Controlling Movement

- Keep eyes on the ball.
- Use arms for balance and protection.
- Keep weight on the support foot.
- As ball arrives, contact the back of the ball with the foot in a wedge position controlling the ball lightly between the foot and the ground.
- Prepare ball for your next move — pass, dribble or shoot.

Common Errors & Corrections

Error	Correction
Player takes eye off the ball and steps on top of the ball. The foot rolls forward, causing the player to fall	Maintain eye contact off the ball and steps on top of the ball. The foot rolls forward causing the player to fall.



Top of Thigh – Ball Control

This technique is used to control the ball in the air using the top of the thigh in order to maintain possession and prepare for the next move.

Basics

Move into path of the ball

Prepare Plant Leg

- Place support foot next to path of the ball.
- Bend knee slightly.
- Put weight on plant leg.

Prepare Controlling Leg

- Raise leg from hip with knee bent.
- Raise leg until top of thigh is no higher than parallel to the ground.
- Use arms for balance.
- Target contact of ball with top of thigh between hip and knee.

Controlling Movement

- As the thigh contacts the ball, cushion by withdrawing the controlling leg towards the ground.
- Move leg from hip to drop the ball at feet.
- Prepare ball for your next move — pass, dribble, or shoot.

Common Errors & Corrections

Error	Correction
Player falls when controlling	Have player practice balancing. Bend knees and use arms for balance.
Ball bounces off thigh.	Withdraw thigh towards ground when ball hits. Ensure that the ball doesn't hit the knee.



Instep Kick

The instep kick is used to kick the ball and, as players get older, for long passes and shots on goal.

Basics

Prepare Plant Leg (supporting, non-kicking foot)

- Place support foot next to the ball pointed in general direction of target (distance from ball will depend on height of the player).
- Bend knee slightly.
- All weight should be on plant foot.
- Use arms out to sides for balance.

Prepare Striking (kicking) Leg

- Bend knee (cock lower leg).
- Withdraw leg straight back at hip.
- Lock ankle back and down, toes pointed down.

Striking Movement

- Body should be over the ball, moving forward.
- Keep eyes on ball.
- Set plant knee over ball (eye-knee-ball in line).
- Move thigh of striking leg forward (whip action).
- Strike the center of the ball on the instep (“laces” of the shoes).
- Follow through—move leg straight through toward target:
- Pull leg straight through while maintaining balance.
- Lower body as leg rises.
- Keep ankle locked, follow through and lift knee.
- Step out of the kick.

Coaching Points

Before having players strike the ball:

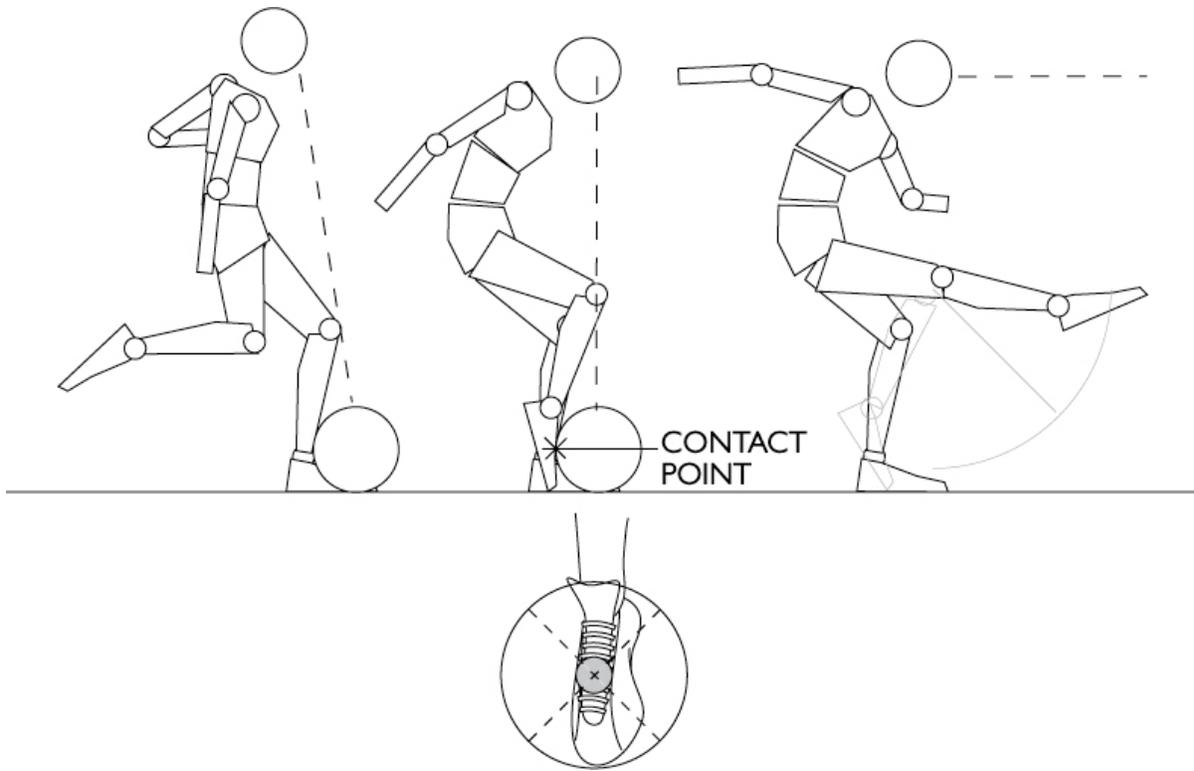
- Have them practice planting their foot in the proper place.
- Have them practice swinging their leg and foot straight back and forth, ensuring proper body and leg movement.

Next, have a parent sit down with legs out in front and secure ball with feet. Have each player stand with plant foot in proper position and strike lightly until they begin to hit the ball solidly (properly).



Common Errors & Corrections

Error	Correction
Plant foot is too far in front, behind or away from ball and/or not pointed in general direction of target.	Review proper technique with player(s).
Knee(s) are locked, not bent	Review proper technique with player(s).
Ankle is not locked and toes are not pointed.	Lock ankle, point toes
Ball is stabbed or jabbed	Encourage player to follow through
Leg is swung across the body instead of toward the target.	Encourage player to withdraw leg straight back and follow through straight toward target.





Inside of the Foot – Push Pass

This technique is used to advance the ball or to maintain possession by passing to a teammate.

Basics

Prepare Plant Leg

- Place support foot next to the ball (*toe should not be past ball*) pointed *in general direction of target* (distance from ball will depend on height of the player).
- Bend knee slightly.
- All weight should be on plant foot.
- Use arms for balance.

Prepare Action Leg

- Draw leg back from hip.
- Bend knee slightly.
- Rotate leg at hip 90 degrees outward.
- Lock ankle with toe pointed slightly up.
- Inside of foot should face the general direction of target.

Striking Movement

- Body should be over the ball, moving forward.
- Use arms for balance.
- Keep eyes on ball.
- Move leg straight forward toward target, ankle locked and toe up.
- Strike at the center of the ball with the inside of the foot.
- Sole of foot should be off the ground with toe pointed slightly up, and perpendicular to ball (form “T” or “L” with feet).
- Follow through:
 - Pull leg straight through in general direction of target while maintaining balance.
 - Lower body as leg rises.
 - Keep ankle locked and follow through and lift knee.
 - Step out of the kick.

Coaching Points

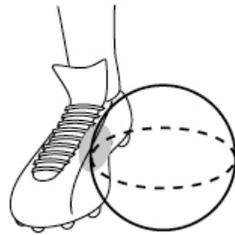
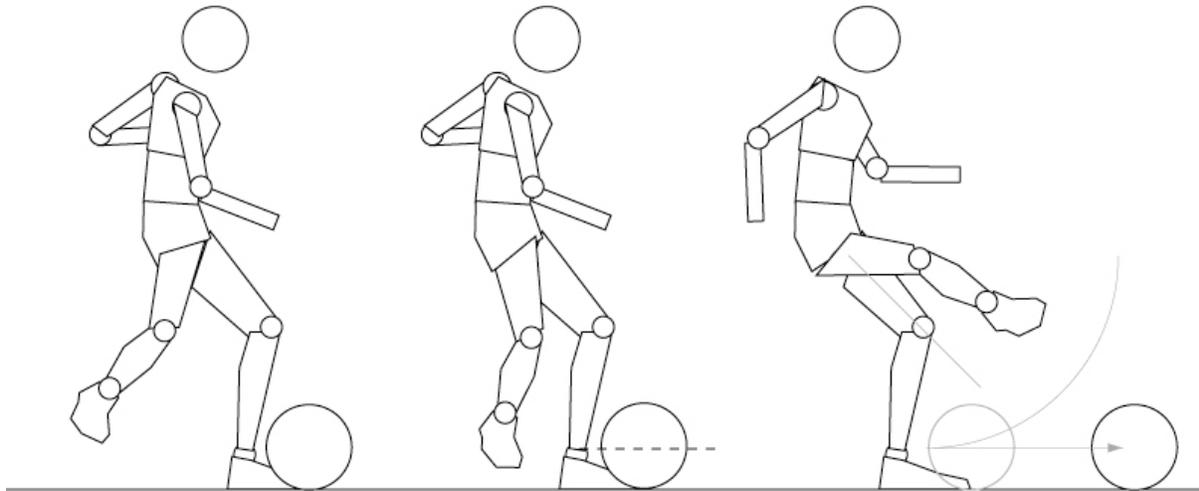
Before having players strike the ball:

- Have them practice planting their foot in the proper place.
- Have them practice swinging their leg and foot straight back and forth, ensuring proper body and leg movement.

Common Errors & corrections

Error	Correction
Plant foot is too far in front, behind or away from ball and/or not pointed in general direction of target.	Move plant foot closer to the ball and point in direction of target.
Knee(s) are locked, not bent	Bend knees slightly.
Ankle is not locked and sole of foot is not parallel to ground and/or facing general direction of target.	Lock ankle and square body to the desired target.

To see correct technique, refer to picture and description, review proper technique with player(s).



Heading

This technique represents the earliest opportunity for a field player to play a ball in the air.

Note: Use a rag ball or under inflated ball to start heading for the comfort and security of young players.

Basics

Prepare Body

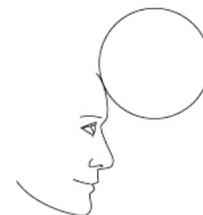
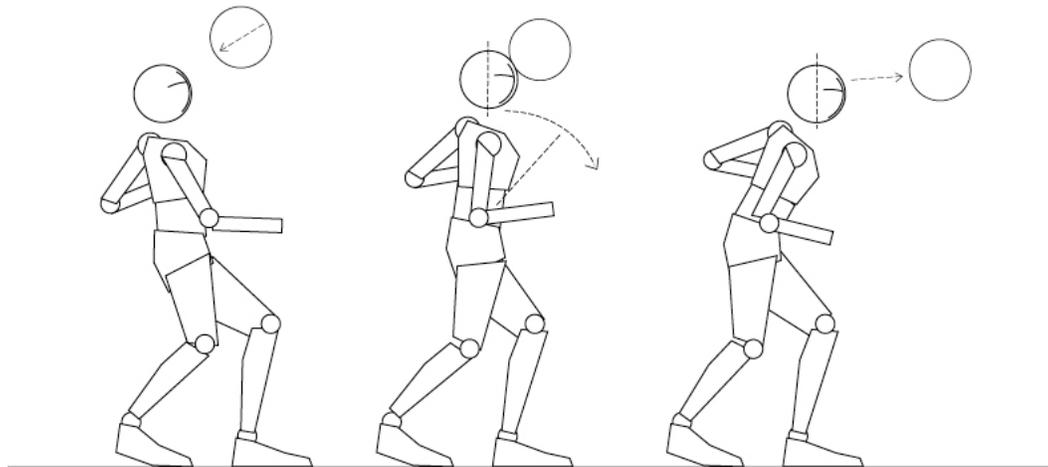
- Keep eyes on the ball. Players must be able to see the ball at all times.
- Place your body in line with the ball so that the forehead will meet the ball.
- Take a comfortable stance with knees bent.
- Use arms for balance.
- Keep:
 - Eyes open
 - Mouth closed
 - Chin tucked in
 - Rigid neck



Contacting Movement

- Use legs and abdominal muscles to propel trunk forward to meet ball.
- Move forehead to ball.
- Follow through toward target.

NOTE: Very little heading is displayed in games prior to U-10 or U-12. Proper coaching of the correct technique will allow exposure at younger ages without fear.



Throw-In

A throw-in is used to restart the game after the entire ball has crossed the touch line, whether on the ground or in the air.

Basics

To execute a proper throw-in, the player must:

- Face the field of play.
- Have part of each foot on the ground, either on or behind the touchline when the ball is released.
- Use both hands and deliver the ball from behind and over the head in one continuous motion.
- Teach the “W”/Butterfly method of holding the ball: touch thumbs together and grasp ball in hands.
- Feet must be kept on the ground until ball is released.

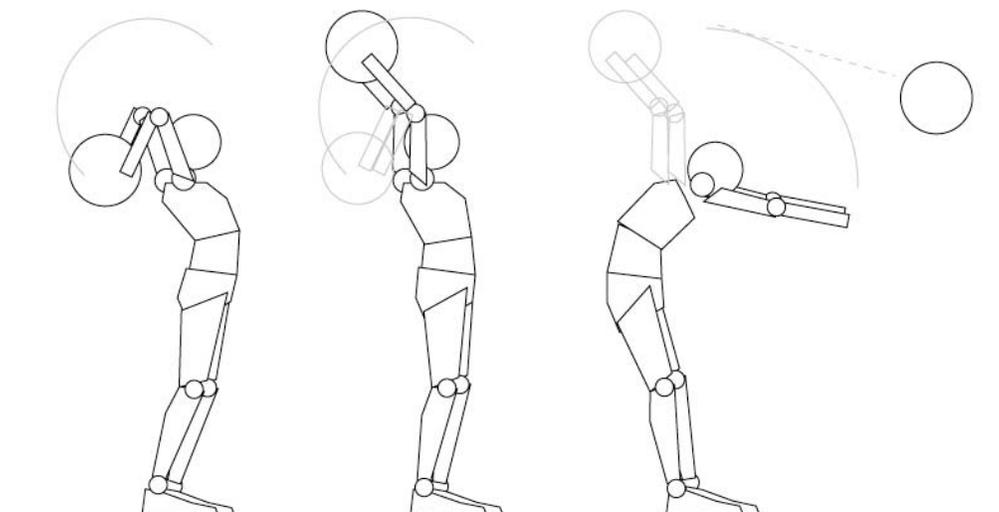


Coaching Points

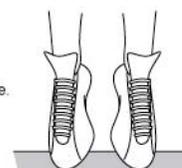
- The thrower may not play the ball a second time until it is touched by another player.
- Your team should try to maintain possession when executing a throw-in.
- Get the parents involved! Have each one of your players execute a throw-in by making a throw-in to a parent.
- Have each player continue to make throw-ins while you circulate and correct.

Common Errors & Corrections

Error	Correction
Foot/feet come off the ground during throw.	Have players keep their feet together with knees bent and hold their feet down until they develop the feeling of throwing without lifting their feet.
Ball slips out of grasp.	Reinforce use of “W/Butterfly method for holding ball. If players hands are small, instruct them to spread hand out until they have a solid grasp.



Make sure your feet stay on the ground ON OR BEHIND the touchline.



Tackling – Front Block

Tackling is used to take the ball away from an opponent or to maintain possession.

Basics

Prepare (front) Plant Leg (supporting, non-tackling foot)

- Place support foot even with and next to the ball.
- Bend knee slightly.
- All weight should be on plant foot.
- Use arms for balance.

Prepare Tackling Leg

- Draw leg back from hip.
- Bend knee slightly.
- Rotate leg at hip 45 degrees outward.
- Lock ankle with toe pointed slightly up.

Tackle

- Keep eyes on the ball.
- Move tackling leg straight forward.
- Lower body and lean slightly forward.
- Strike at the center of the ball with the inside of the foot. Block through the ball with your body weight.

Follow through

- Keep foot behind the ball with body lowered.
- Keep the ankle locked through the tackle
- Win the ball from opponent.
- Dribble away or pass the ball to a teammate.

Common Errors & Corrections

Error	Correction
Incorrect placement of the plant foot puts the plant foot too far away causing the tackler to reach for the ball and lose it.	Review technique and encourage player to place plant foot closer to ball.
Ankle is not locked up and ball “dribbles” off the foot.	Lock toe up on the tackling foot.
Tackling movement and follow through are tentative, causing player to miss and/or lose the ball.	Build this technique up slowly, beginning with “soft” tackles and progressing to “harder” tackles as player becomes more comfortable with the technique.



Goalkeeping

Goalkeeper is a unique and exciting position. Goalkeepers are the only players on the field that are allowed to use their hands to play the ball, so long as they are within their own penalty area. They are the last line of defense when the other team is attacking and the first line of attack once they possess the ball.

At this age, one player should not be designated as your team's only goalkeeper. Allow everyone who wants to try playing keeper a chance, but do not force any player to play keeper if they are reluctant to do so.

Basics: Receiving the Ball

Body Position

- Stand on the balls of feet with knees slightly bent. Bending the head forward will help push the body weight to the correct position.
- Move body in line with ball when shot is taken.
- Always receive ball with body behind ball (between ball and goal).

Hand Position

- Hands should be up at the side at approximately waist level, facing the field of play before the shot is taken.
- When receiving the ball, hands should be close together behind the ball:

The High Contour is formed by spreading the hands as wide as possible in a contour to fit around the ball, with the fingers up and the thumbs almost touching. It is utilized for receiving high balls – chest level and above

The Low Contour is formed like above but with the fingers down and the pinkies almost touching. It is utilized for receiving low balls – waist level and below

Two Methods of Saving Ground Balls

- Feet slightly apart (not too far), bend at the waist

OR

- Go down on the knee nearest the far post, body square to the ball

THEN

- Scoop up ball with hands in the Low Contour position
- Let ball run over hands and up arms
- Gather ball to chest and “hug” it
- Stand up straight
- Put the ball away

Saving Waist-High Balls

- Use arms to make a pocket for the ball
- Bend slightly at waist and catch ball in pocket as it comes into the body
- Allow body to move backwards slightly to cushion the impact of the shot
- Put the ball away

Saving High Balls

- Form a High Contour with hands slightly in front of the head
- Extend arms to meet flight of ball
- As ball arrives, bend elbows and use hands to cushion the impact of the shot



High Contour



Low Contour



Handling Ground Balls



Handling High-Waist Balls



Handling High Balls

- Put the ball away

Putting the Ball Away

Regardless of the type of shot, keepers should always finish the save by “putting the ball away.” Once the save is made:

- Keep eyes on ball while “hugging” into chest.
- Breathe and look around for teammates.
- Distribute The Ball

Basics: Distributing the Ball

The goalkeeper starts the attack by putting the ball back into play. Once the keeper has possession of the ball, they are allowed 6 seconds to restart play. **Maintaining possession** is the prime objective when distributing the ball, requiring an accurate delivery to a teammate. Distance is secondary.

There are two primary methods of distribution: throws and kicks.

Throws

- Underhand roll - “bowling” - quick, short and accurate, should not bounce.
- Overhand - “baseball” - longer distance, arrives quickly after one or two bounces.
- Overhand - “arc/sling” - most distance but least accuracy; may take too much time, allowing for interception.



Kicks

- Volley (“punt”) - greatest distance, but not very accurate; can relieve pressure or create a numerical advantage.
- Volley is performed by holding the ball in the hands and kicking it with the instep before it hits the ground.



Punt





Training Your Goalkeepers

- Start by rolling, tossing or throwing the ball gently to your goalkeeper. Make sure you toss the ball so they must work on all different (types) heights of receiving the ball.
- Progress to rolling, tossing or throwing the ball slightly to one side or the other causing them to move to get the body behind the ball in a ball side/goal side position.
- Increase the distance you roll, toss or throw the ball so the keeper has to move and react faster and faster.
- Once they have mastered the correct technique, continue to increase the speed and change directions and heights of the balls.

Positioning

As your goalkeepers begin to master the fundamental techniques, they must begin to understand fundamental positioning. Teaching basic positional play is essential at this age group. Goalkeepers should always position themselves on the “shooting line.” This is an imaginary line from the ball to the center of the goal. The location of the ball in the field dictates how far from the goal line the goalkeeper should be.

If the ball is in the opposing half, the goalkeeper should be on the shooting line about 12 – 18 yards from the goal line.

If the ball is just over the half way line, the goalkeeper should be on the shooting line between 6 and 12 yards from the goal line.

If the ball is close to the defensive 18-yard line, the goalkeeper should be on the shooting line between 2 and 6 yards from the goal line.

On one-to-one breakaways, the goalkeeper should cautiously advance along the shooting line to cut down on the shooting angle and to put pressure on the shooter. At the time of the shot, the goalkeeper should be stationary and balanced on the balls of the feet, with the body leaning slightly forward.

As logic dictates, the keeper should move across the goal relative to the position of the ball on the field.

Keepers should not remain on the goal line, but can come out from the goal in order to “cut off the angle” of a shot, thereby covering more of the goal.

Once the shot is taken, the keeper should run perpendicular (90 degree angle) to where the ball will be. This is the shortest distance to the ball.

Demonstrate this by having them stand on the goal line. Roll the ball to the far post and ask them to count the number of steps to touch the ball.

Have them step out toward the ball two steps. Roll the ball to the far post and ask them again to count the number of steps to touch the ball

Repeat one or two more times. It will become clear that it takes fewer steps to reach the ball the more they have come out to “cut off the angle.”

Getting Scored On

No keeper enjoys being scored on and some at this age may take it very personally. Remind them, yourself and the entire team that if a goal is scored, it is scored on the entire team. The opponents had to get the ball by 10 other players before it got by the keeper.

Never allow anyone to place blame on the keeper for a goal scored!



Juggling

Juggling in soccer refers to keeping the ball in the air without it touching the ground utilizing all parts of the body except, of course, the hands. While juggling in and of itself is not a technique to be used in games, it is a tremendous way to develop your players' "touch" or feel for the ball, thereby improving his or her ability to perform techniques.

Below is a brief description of how to get your players started juggling.

- Drop ball, bounce kick and catch ball five times for each foot. One bounce – one kick.
- Drop ball, bounce kick twice and catch ball – five times for each foot. One bounce – two kicks, three kicks, etc.

Progress to:

- maximum number of kicks – how long can you...
- keep the ball in the air?
- kick ball without initial bounce.
- utilize other body parts such as thigh and head.
- drop/throw ball onto thigh/head first.
- use of chest to drop ball onto thigh.
- nomination of foot or surface area to be used.

Coaching Points:

- Kick with laces.
- Let ball drop to foot – don't touch too early.
- Arms out to steady and stay balanced.
- Don't kick ball too high.
- Have busy (quick) feet to stay close to ball. Make constant minor adjustments. Emphasize constant movement.



Build up the techniques

Build-up is defined in the dictionary as a “gradual increase.” It is essential to the development of technical and tactical ability and should be utilized at every training session (practice). When working on skills and tactics, it is the job of the coach to gradually increase the level of difficulty by adding different factors into the training sessions.

Progression of Build-Up

Build-up should follow the specific progression below for all techniques:

- Technique demonstrated with no pressure
- Technique demonstrated while under pressure
- Technique demonstrated in a game or game situation

Match Pressure

Practices should simulate as much as possible the pressures players experience during match conditions. This is done by varying the: **space, speed and opposition**.

- Change the physical **space** available to players
- Vary the **speed** of the play
- Introduce and vary the amount of **opposition**

Small-sided games are the best method of practicing under Match Conditions. These games can be left as unstructured and are referred to as **free play**. Restrictions such as one-touch or off foot use only can be used for build up.

Any game (drill or activity) that is used should follow the guidelines set forth above.

Sample Build Up for Practice

The AYSO National Coaching Advisory Commission has prepared a sample buildup for each of the techniques covered in the Techniques section.

Remember to utilize the Teaching Methods taught in conjunction with the progression discussed above.

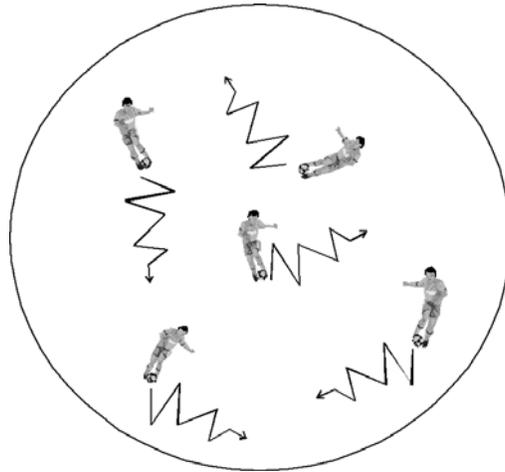
Coaches should always attempt to relate what happens in training back to game conditions.

Note: During buildup, be careful as you introduce opposition as a factor to control the intensity of a drill. Your players must be successful with a technique in order to build confidence. Opposition should be introduced carefully and slowly. If your players are not successful with a drill, decreasing the opposition or altering the SPEED, SPACE and OPPOSITION will be helpful and enable your players to succeed.

Technique Build Up

Dribbling

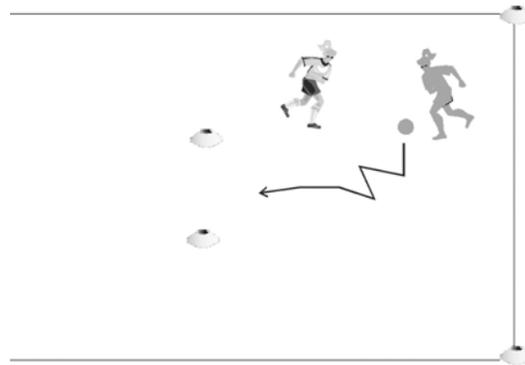
Technique demonstrated with no pressure: Have players tap ball back and forth between their feet and after five touches with each foot have players explode away and dribble around an established grid.



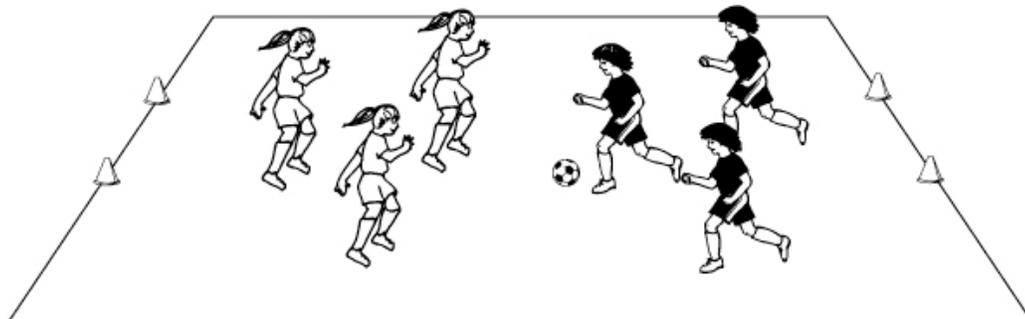
Technique demonstrated while under pressure:

1 vs. 1 Dribbling Drill: Dynamic Drill with Pressure

Coach serves the ball (puts the ball in the right spot). Two players run toward ball. First player to the ball is the attacker and shields the ball. The second player is the defender. Dribble the ball toward the goal for a shot.



Technique demonstrated in a game or game situation: Place all players in a small sided 3 v 3 game. While players are playing evaluate the development of each players dribbling ability.



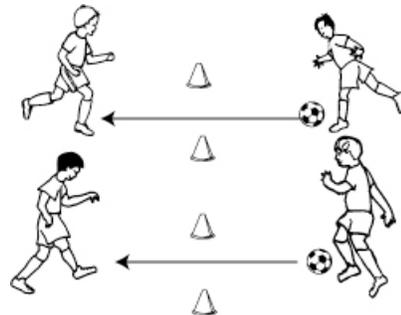
Instep Kick Passing and Shooting

Technique demonstrated with no pressure (passing): Set up goals and place one player on each side of the goal. Players take turns shooting the ball into the goal. The player on the other side collects the ball and shoots again. Reduce the width of the goals as skill increases.

NOTE: The whole team can be doing this simultaneously, building up to using a keeper.

Technique demonstrated with no pressure (shooting):

Position two players on a team; each team on the opposite sides of a goal. Players pass the ball to their teammate who runs to the ball and shoots at goal with the instep kick. The other team repeats the pass and shot with the instep kick in the other direction. Control the difficulty by varying the width of the goal and the distance. Vary the angle of the pass.



Technique demonstrated while under pressure (refer to diagram on previous page):

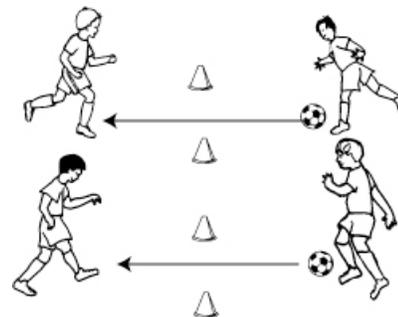
Lay out a small grid with goals at each end. The center line cannot be crossed by either team. Players must pass the ball on their own side of the line until they get a shot at goal. The other team tries to stop the ball, gain control, and set up a shot with the instep kick at the other goal. Start with wide goals to make scoring easy. NO KEEPERS!

Technique demonstrated in a game or game situation (refer to diagram on previous page): Place all players in a small sided 3 v 3 game with keepers. While players are playing evaluate the development of each players passing and shooting ability using the instep kick.

Inside of Foot – Push Pass

Technique demonstrated with no pressure:

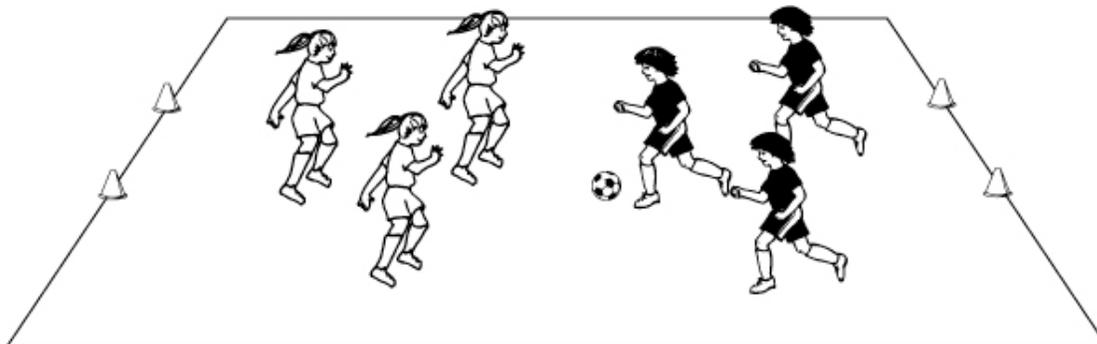
Each player gets a partner. Set up cones 2 yards apart centered 5 yards from each player. Players pass the ball through the cones. Player must control and then pass the ball back to partner. Reduce the width of the cones and increase the distance of the pass as skill level increases.



Technique demonstrated while under pressure:

Play 4 v 1 keep away in a 15 X 15 yard grid.

Technique demonstrated in a game or game situation: Place all players in a small sided 3 v 3 game with keepers. While players are playing evaluate the development of each players passing ability to use a push- pass.



**Ball Control – Sole of the Foot**

Use the drills for Inside of the Foot shown above using the sole of the foot instead.

Ball Control – Top of Thigh

Static Drill: Players partner up and stand 2 yards apart. One throws the ball (underhand with both hands) to player for easy control with the top of the thigh. Player controls ball to the feet and passes back to server who controls ball and repeats. Players switch serving every 5 tosses.

Dynamic Drill: Players partner up and stand 3 to 5 yards apart. Receiver moves toward the server who throws the ball for control with the top of the thigh. Receiver controls the ball and passes back to the server. Repeat.

Dynamic with Pressure Drill: Three players: a server, a defender in the middle slightly to one side, and a receiver. The receiver moves toward the server. The defender is stationary.

The receiver controls the ball with the inside of the thigh away from the defender and passes to the server. Allow defender to move slowly forward to increase pressure as skill level progresses.

Small Game Situation: While playing, award an extra point each time a player properly controls a ball with his or her thigh.

Heading

Static Drill: Players hold the ball in their hands. They bring it up to the hairline and head it out of their own hands. Players strike the ball with increasing intensity as they feel more comfortable.

Dynamic Drill: Coach or player serves the ball to player. Player heads ball back to the thrower, aiming for the chest.

Dynamic Drill with Pressure: Use a heading player and a defender. Defender is first to stand, then walk. Coach or player serves ball near the defender. The heading player runs to the ball and heads it.

Small Game Situation: Use a small grid with a goal. The players play golf. Coach serves ball, player heads toward goal. Where ball bounces first, coach serves second ball. Player heads toward goal. Golf continues until player heads ball into goal.

Front Block Tackle

Static Drill: Players partner up and face one another, each standing one yard from the ball on opposite sides. Both players step in simultaneously to a front block tackle. Pin the ball between the player's feet. Gradually increase the intensity of the block.

Dynamic Drill: Lay out a small grid with the ball placed in the center. Players simultaneously walk in toward the ball, meeting and tackling the ball at the same time. Increase speed and intensity of the block as technique improves.

Dynamic with Pressure Drill: Lay out a grid. Attacker tries to dribble across the end line for a point. Defender must use block tackle to win the ball and must dribble across the starting line for a point. If the ball goes across the sideline, no points are scored.

Small Game Situation: Lay out two grids right next to one another. Play 2 vs. 2 with one player per team in each grid. Player with ball tries to dribble in the grid and pass to his teammate in the other grid. The defensive player attempts to front block tackle him. The winner must control the ball and pass to his teammate inside the grid to win. Repeat.

Throw - In

Static Drill: Players stand 10 yards apart and throw the ball back and forth. Practice throw-in to player straight across the field, at a diagonal and then up the line. Emphasize accuracy, correct technique and flexibility.



Dynamic Drill: Place players in two lines 5 to 10 yards apart facing each other. Player with ball throws in to the player at the front of the other line and runs to the back of that line. The player in the other line controls the ball with technique required by flight of the ball and then passes the ball with the inside-of-the-foot pass to the player in the front of the other line and runs to the back of that line. Repeat.

Dynamic with Pressure Drill: Player throws the ball into open space. Receiver runs to control the ball. Player receiving the ball runs to space, calls for ball, controls throw-in, and passes back to the thrower. Add a defender. The defender walks at first, then increases speed as the players get better at throw-ins.

Small Game Situation: Use a grid with two attacking players and one defensive player. Players try to dribble across grid. When ball goes out, the offensive team must throw-in and control the ball. Offense scores if they get the ball across the grid. Defense scores if they get the ball out of the grid along the sides. Rotate players. Adjust defensive pressure to assure success for attacking players at first.

Offensive and Defensive Build Up

When working with young players, the best way to teach offensive methods is through the use of small games: 1 vs. 1, 2 vs. 1, 2 vs. 2, and 3 vs. 3.

The reduced numbers give each player more quality time with the ball. Soccer players today need good attacking and defending skills which are best developed in these small-sided games.



Training Games for U-12 Players

This section will provide you with training games recommended by the AYSO National Coaching Advisory Commission to help the players practice their skills. The games are grouped according to the skill that they will most effectively help to teach.

“The game itself is the teacher!”

Despite all of the coaching techniques that can be utilized, nothing will ever teach young players more effectively than just letting them play.

You can be creative with the names of the games and modify them. Change the speed, space, and opposition as you and your players begin to feel comfortable with them.

Passing Warm-up

Skill: Passing/Controlling

Number Of Players Required: Full U-12 team

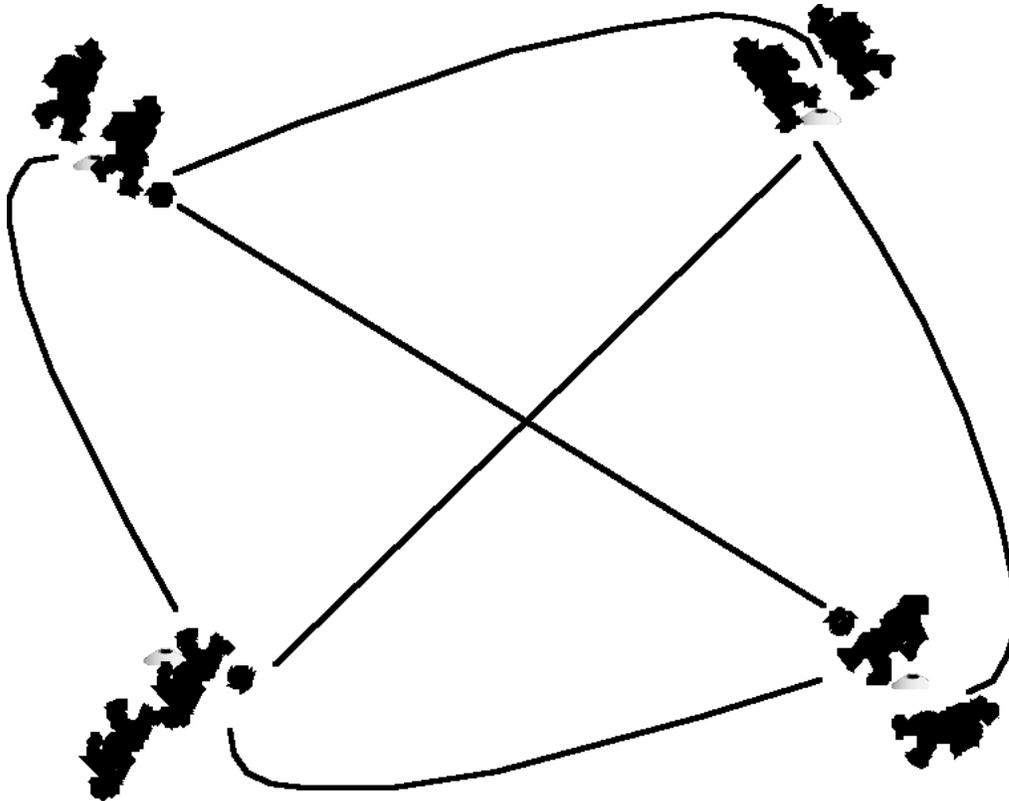
Equipment: 12 or more soccer balls and 8 cones

Grid Requirement: 30 yard grid

Organization: Create teams of four players per group, one soccer ball per group, two cones per group placed at a distance of 30 yards from one another.

How the Game Is Played: Using the inside of the foot, player 1 plays the ball to player 3 who plays a 1-touch to pass player 2 who plays a 1-touch pass to player 4. Player 4 has two touches; one to control the ball and the other to restart the activity.

Deviations: Allow players 2 and 3 to use two touch until the activity is mastered. Rotate players after 30 seconds.



Passing Warm-up

Skill: Passing/controlling

Number Of Players Required: Full U-12 team

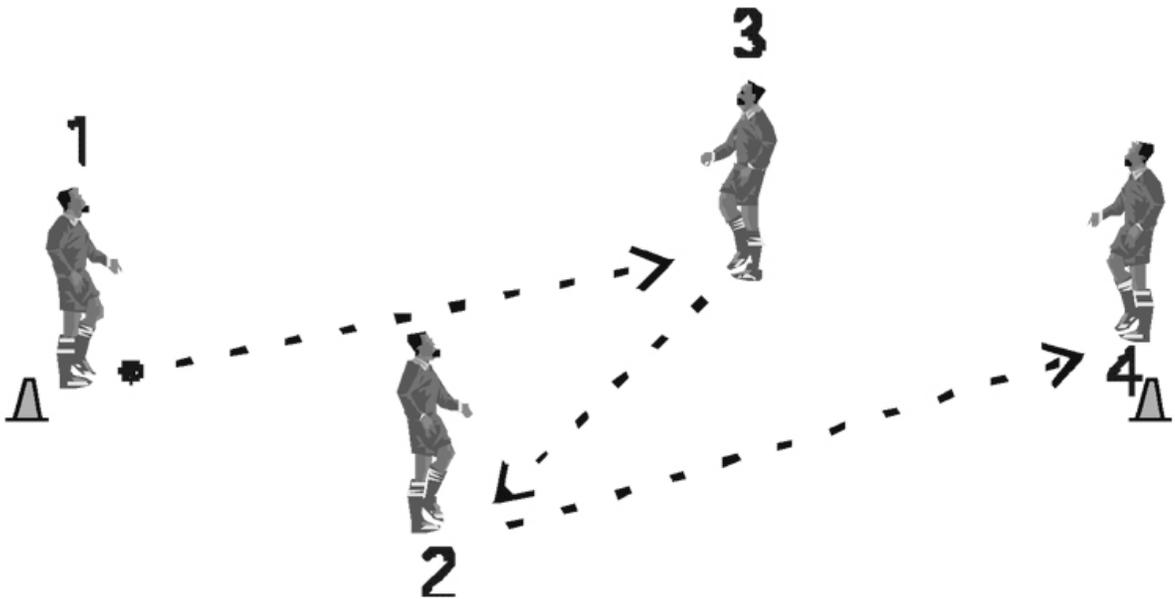
Equipment: 12 or more soccer balls and 8 cones

Grid Requirement: 30 yard grid

Organization: Create teams of four players per group, one soccer ball per group, two cones per group placed at a distance of 30 yards from one another.

How the Game Is Played: Using the inside of the foot, player 1 plays the ball to player 3 who plays a 1-touch to pass player 2 who plays a 1-touch pass to player 4. Player 4 has two touches; one to control the ball and the other to restart the activity.

Deviations: Allow players 2 and 3 to use two touch until the activity is mastered. Rotate players after 30 seconds.



Dribbling Warm-up

Skill: Dribbling

Number Of Players Required: Full U-12 team

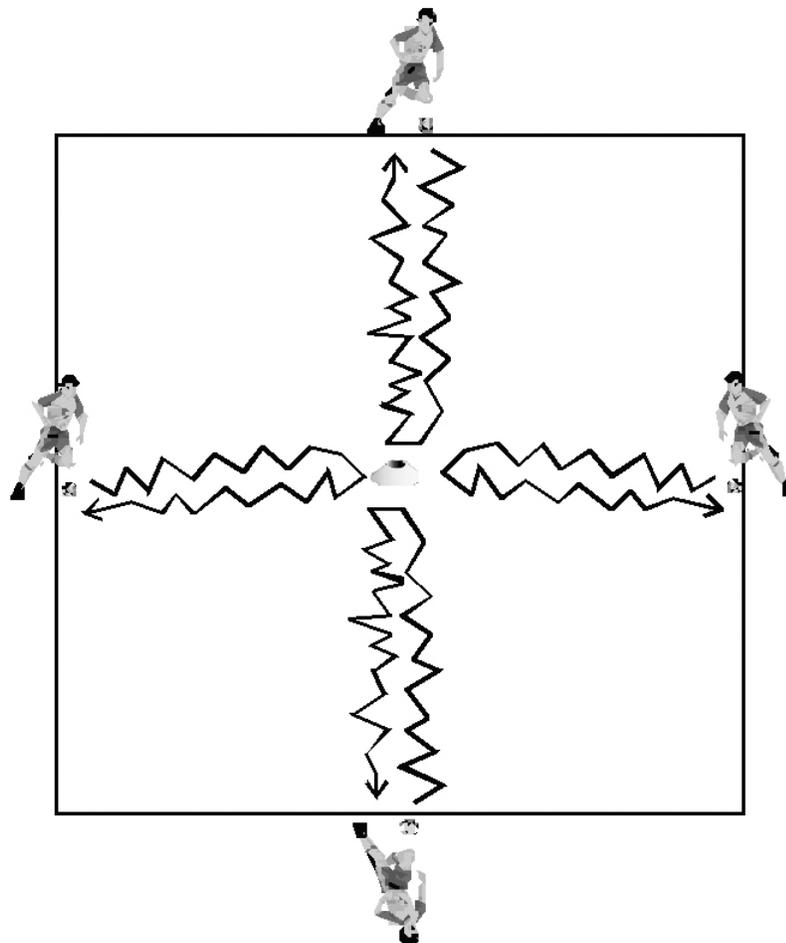
Equipment: 12 or more soccer balls and 5 cones

Grid Requirement: 15 X 15 yard grid.

Organization: Create teams of four players per group, one soccer ball per group. Place one cone centered in the grid.

How the Game Is Played: On a given signal the first player in each line dribbles at the cone in the center of the grid, turns and returns the top of the line, leaves the ball for the next player who will also complete the circuit.

Deviations: Allow players to only use the outside of the feet, have players cut to the right or the left when they go to the center. Rotate players after 30 seconds.



4 v 4 With Rotating Keepers

Skill: All skills required to play soccer

Number of Players Required: Full U-12 team

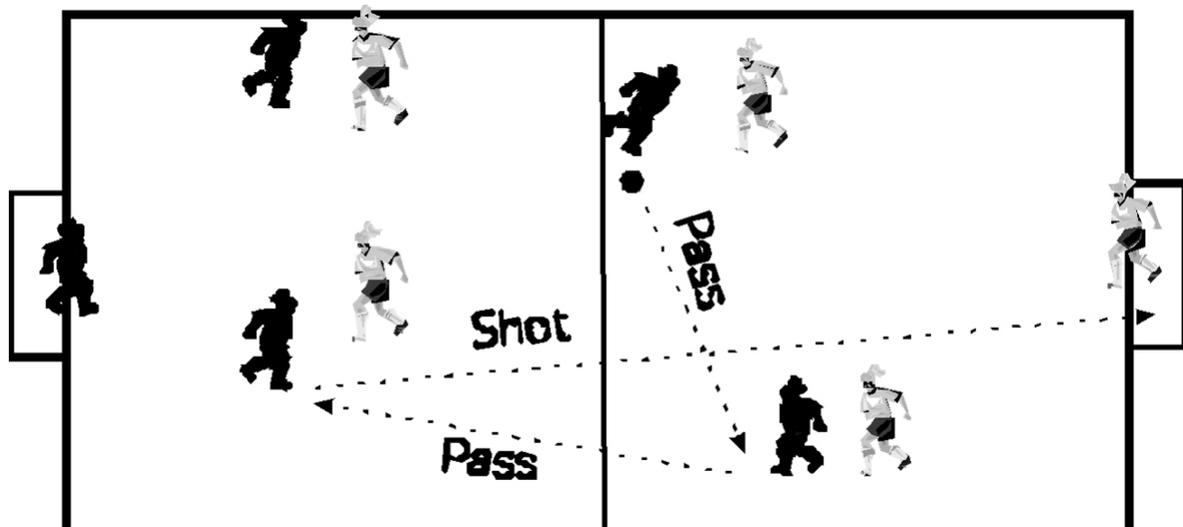
Equipment: 12 or more cones to mark grid and 2 goals, 5 or 6 soccer balls and a set of pinnies.

Grid Requirement: 20 X 30 yard grid with two 8-yard goals marked with cones if goals are not available.

Organization: Create a 20 X 30 yard grid marked with cones with a goal centered on each end line.

How the Game Is Played: Two teams of 4 v 4. Play normal short sided game however the only condition is that the players can only score from a shot when it is taken from their own half of the field.

Deviations: Allow players to only use left foot, right foot, for the shot. Must one touch final ball.



4 v 4 With Rotating Keepers

Skill: All skills required to play soccer

Number of Players Required: Full U-12 team

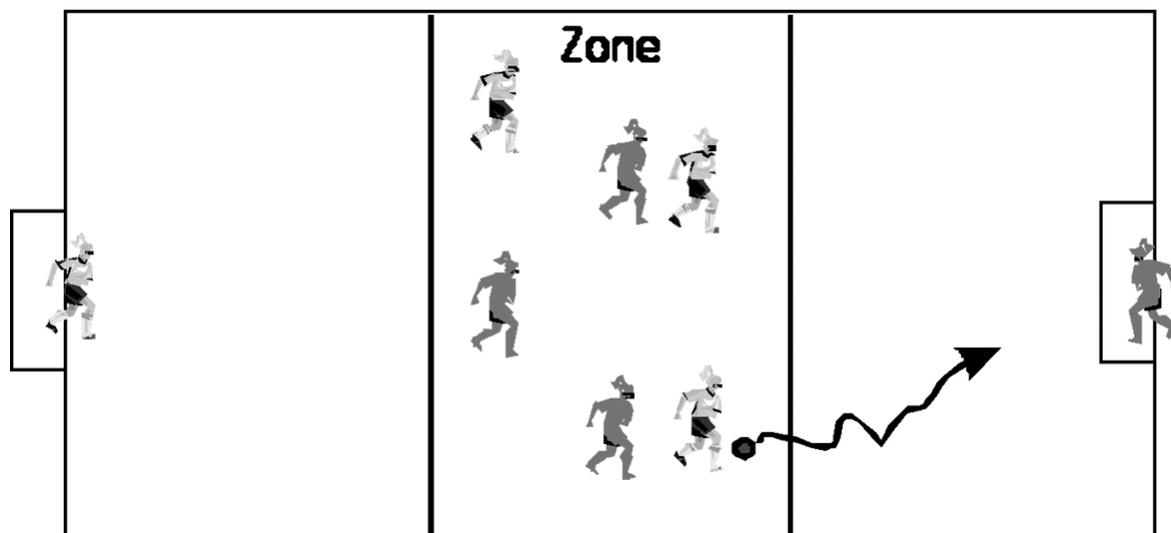
Equipment: 12 or more cones to mark grid, 2 goals, 5 or 6 soccer balls and a set of pinnies.

Grid Requirement: 50 X 30 yard grid with two 8-yard goals marked with cones if goals are not available.

Organization: Create a 50 X 30 yard grid marked with cones with a goal centered on each end line. Mark out a central zone.

How the Game Is Played: Play two teams of 3 v 3 with keepers. All players with the exception of the two designated keepers will play in the central zone. The coach will play a ball into the zone. The team that gains possession must connect 3 or 4 passes (dictated by the coach). The player receiving the final pass can leave the zone and dribble towards goal and attempts to score. First team with three goals wins.

Deviations: Allow a defender to leave the zone and chase the attacking player. Allow two attackers and one defender to leave the zone.



2 v 2 In A Grid

Skill: all skills required to play soccer.

Number of Players Required: Full U-12 team

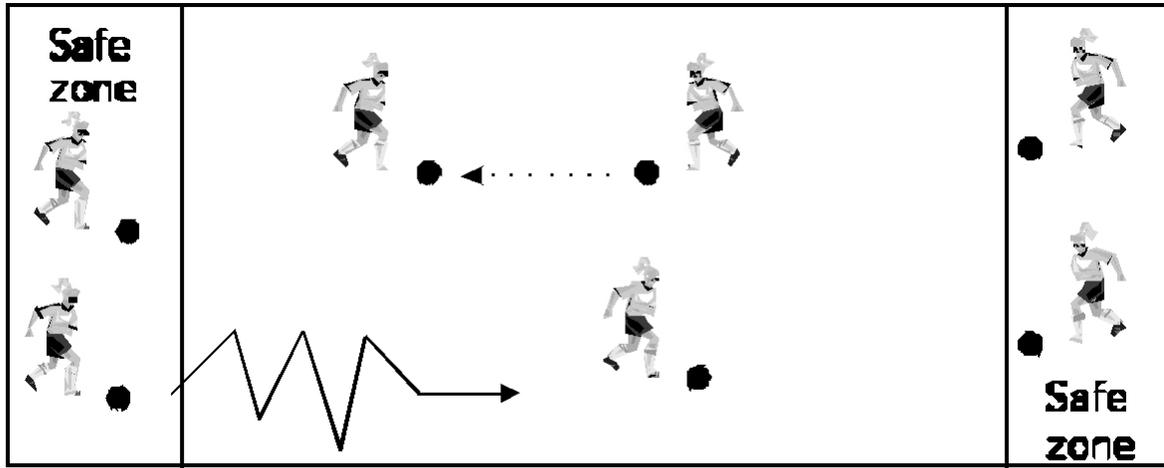
Equipment: 12 or more cones to mark grid, one ball for each player, and a set of pinnies.

Grid Requirement: 20 X 40 yard grid

Organization: Using cones layout a 20 X 40 yard grid with a 5-yard "Safe Zone" at each end of the grid. Place three players in the center of the grid with a ball at their feet. All remaining players, each with a ball, are located in one of the "Safe Zones".

How the Game Is Played: Players in the Safe Zone try to dribble the length of the grid to the other Safe Zone. The players in the center try to prevent dribblers from reaching the other Safe Zone by knocking their ball out of the grid with a passed ball. After a player's ball is knocked out of the grid they now play in the center. Players dribble between Safe Zones until one player remains. The last player remaining wins.

Deviations: None



Point Zone

Skill: All skills required to play soccer with an emphasis on Passing/Dribbling

Number of Players Required: Full U-12 team

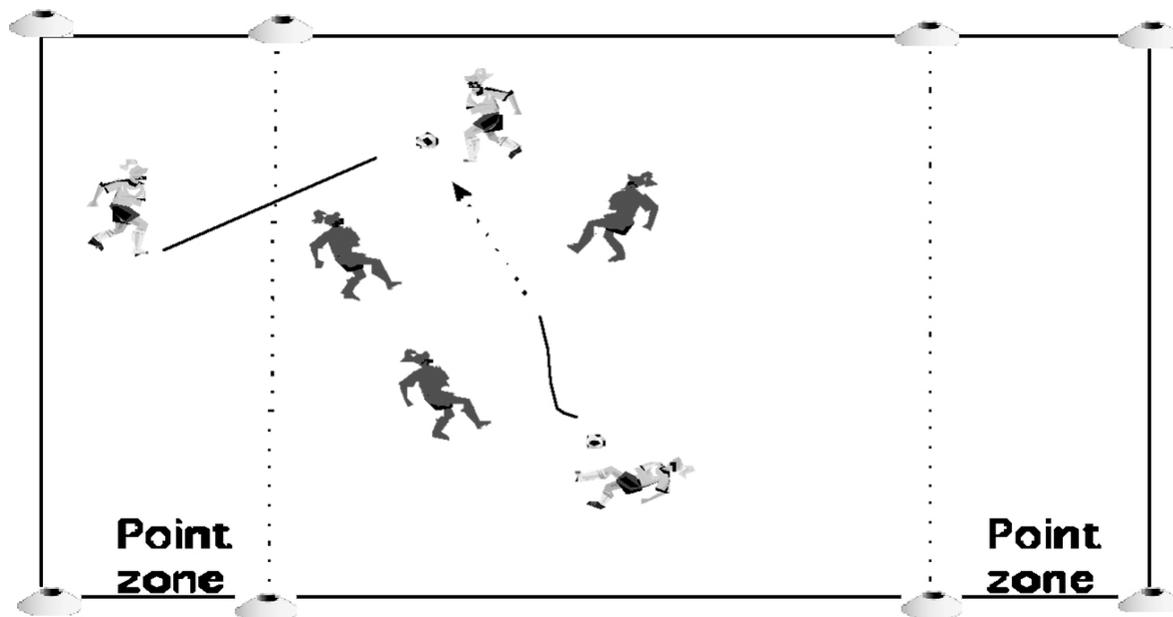
Equipment: 10 or more cones to mark a grid, 2 or 3 balls and a set of pinnies.

Grid Requirement: 30 X 20 yard grid

Organization: Create a 30 X 20 yard grid marked with cones. At both ends of the grid mark a 5-yard Point Zone.

How The Game Is Played: The coach plays a ball in from the side of the grid, both teams fight for possession. Points can only be scored if the ball is passed to a teammate who is located in either the Point Zone. First team to get 5 points wins.

Deviations: Allow players to only use left foot, right foot, outside of R or L only for the final pass. Last pass to the Point Zone must be a 1 touch. Don't allow teammates to stand in the Point Zone.



Point Zone

Skill: All skills required to play soccer with an emphasis on Passing/Dribbling

Number of Players Required: Full U-12 team

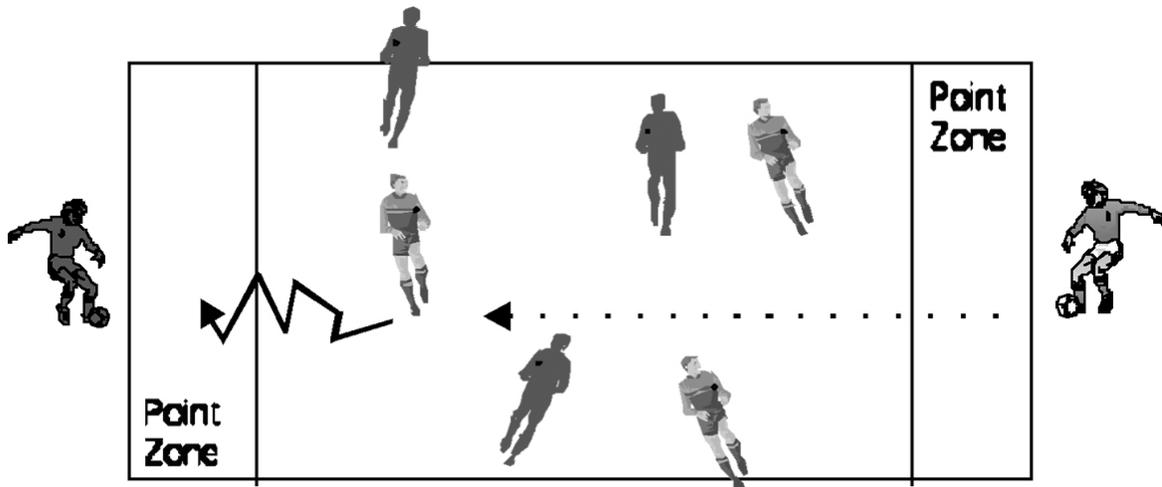
Equipment: 10 or more cones to mark a grid, 2 or 3 balls and a set of pinnies.

Grid Requirement: 30 X 20 yard grid

Organization: Create a 30 X 20 yard grid marked with cones. At both ends of the grid mark a 5 yard Point Zone.

How The Game Is Played: Play 3 v 3 or 4 v 4 in the middle third of the grid. Each team will play with 3 middle players and a server (rotate the server with middle players). The coach will decide who is to serve the first ball. The team designated by the coach will serve a ball to one of their teammates. The team that receives the ball from it's server will play keep-away until one of their players is able to dribble the ball into the Point Zone on the opposite site of the grid. Alternate the service after the first serve or after a goal.

Deviations: Allow players to only use left foot, right foot, outside of R or L only for the final pass. Last pass to the Point Zone must be a 1-touch. Don't allow teammates to stand in the Point Zone.



Shooting

Skill: Passing/Shooting

Number of Players Required: Full U-12 team

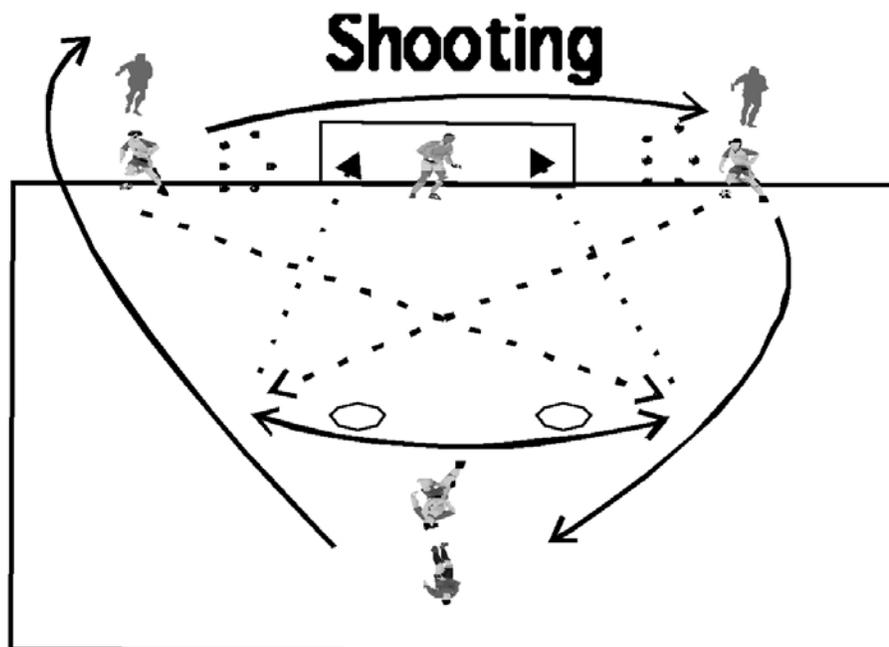
Equipment: 2 cones, 12 or more soccer balls and one full size goal.

Grid Requirement: Penalty area of a soccer field.

Organization: Place 3 servers on the end line six yards from each goal post with a ball at their feet. Center two cones 6 yards apart 15 yards from the goal. Add 3 shooters centered between the two cones standing on the 18-yard line. Add a Keeper.

How the Game Is Played: The shooter will make a run to the left or the right cone. The server from the opposite side will serve the ball to the shooter who will take a one touch shot on goal. The Shooter will turn and make a run to the other cone to receive a pass from the other server again for a one time shot. The shooter goes to the back of the serving line and everyone rotates to the left.

Deviations: Move the cones every so often. Let the shooter become the keeper and the keeper moves to the server's line.



1 v 1

Skill: Dribbling/Shooting and defending

Number of Players Required: Full U-12 team

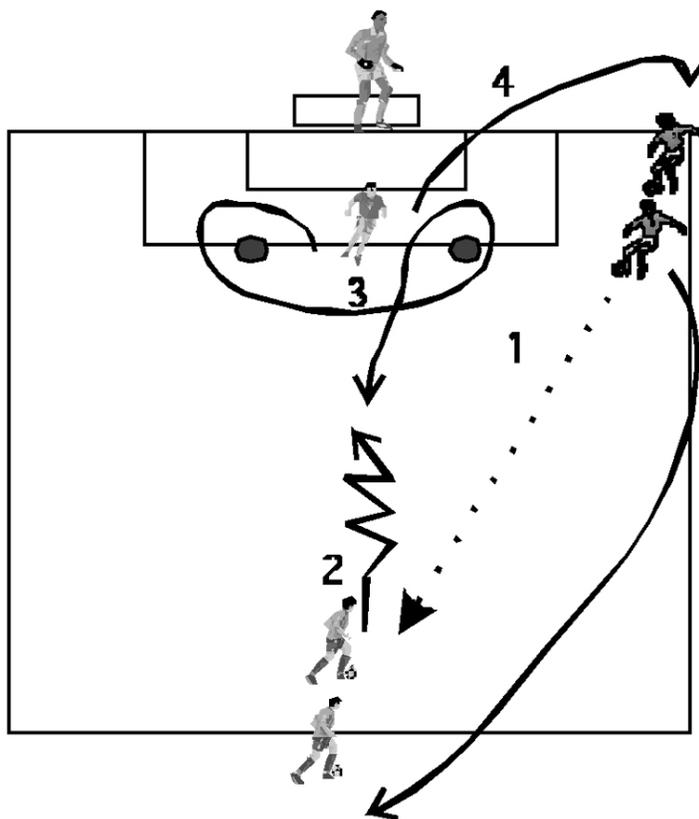
Equipment: 12 or more cones to mark a grid & 12 soccer balls

Grid Requirement: 50 x 50 yard grid or half a soccer field

Organization: Place 2 cones on the top of the penalty area. Locate the Attackers about 40 yards from the goal, Servers will serve from about 10 yards from the end line. Center a Defender between the two cones. Play with a Keeper.

How the Game Is Played: First Server passes to the attacker (1). As soon as the ball is passed, the defender must circle the two cones and will begin to defend the attacker. The attacker will attempt to dribble past the defender and get a shot on goal. After being dispossessed from the ball or a shot is taken, the attacker becomes the defender and the defender becomes a server.

Deviations: Move the cones every so often. Let the shooter become the defender, the defender becomes the keeper, the keeper becomes the server and the server becomes the attacker. Start the activity with a throw-in. Advance to 2 v 1 (passer/attacker).



Shooting

Skill: Passing/Shooting

Number of Players Required: Full U-12 team

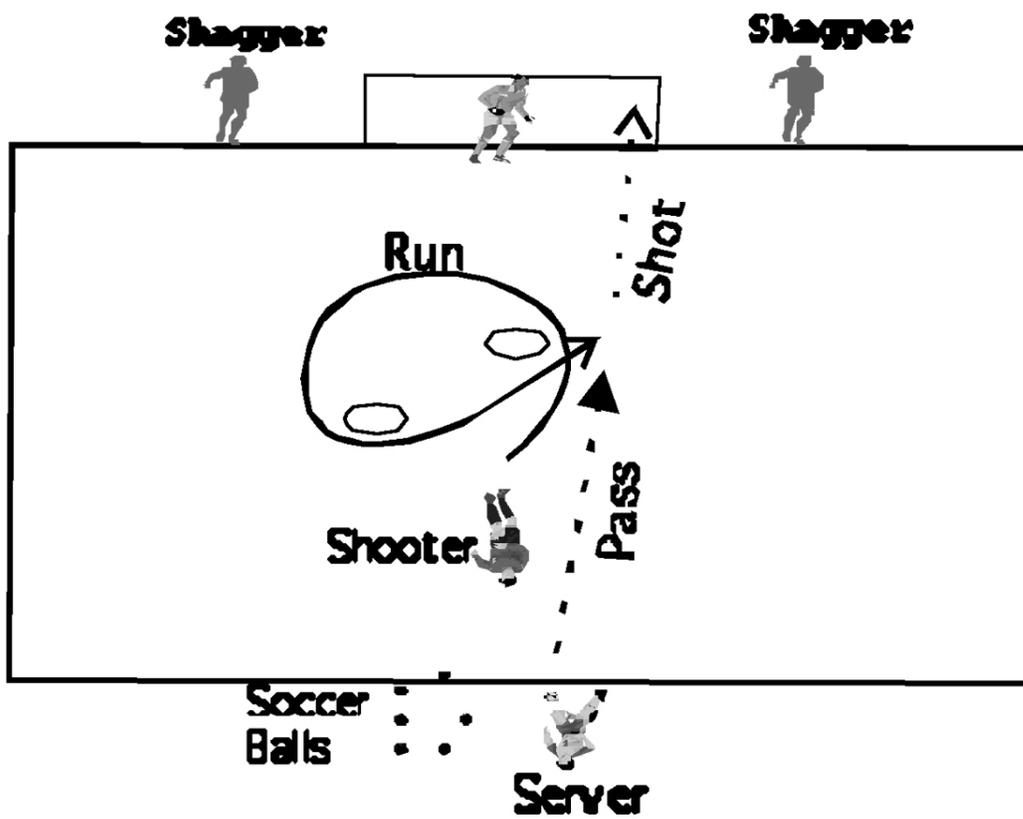
Equipment: 2 cones, 12 or more soccer balls and one full size goal.

Grid Requirement: Penalty area of a soccer field.

Organization: Place three Servers 35 yards from the goal line centered on the goal. Place one Shooter 30 yards from the goal centered on the goal. Place one cone 25 yards from goal just inside of the goal post and another cone 15 yards from goal centered on the goal. Place four Shaggers behind the goal.

How the Game Is Played: The Shooter will make a run around the two cones. The Server will deliver a well timed ball that will allow the Shooter to take a take a one touch shot on goal. The Shooter becomes a Shagger and a Shagger with ball in-hand becomes a Server. The Server Becomes the Shooter.

Deviations: Move the cones so that the shot will be taken with the other foot. Let the shooter become the Keeper and the Keeper becomes a Shagger.



Shooting

Skill: Passing/Shooting

Number of Players Required: Full U-12 team

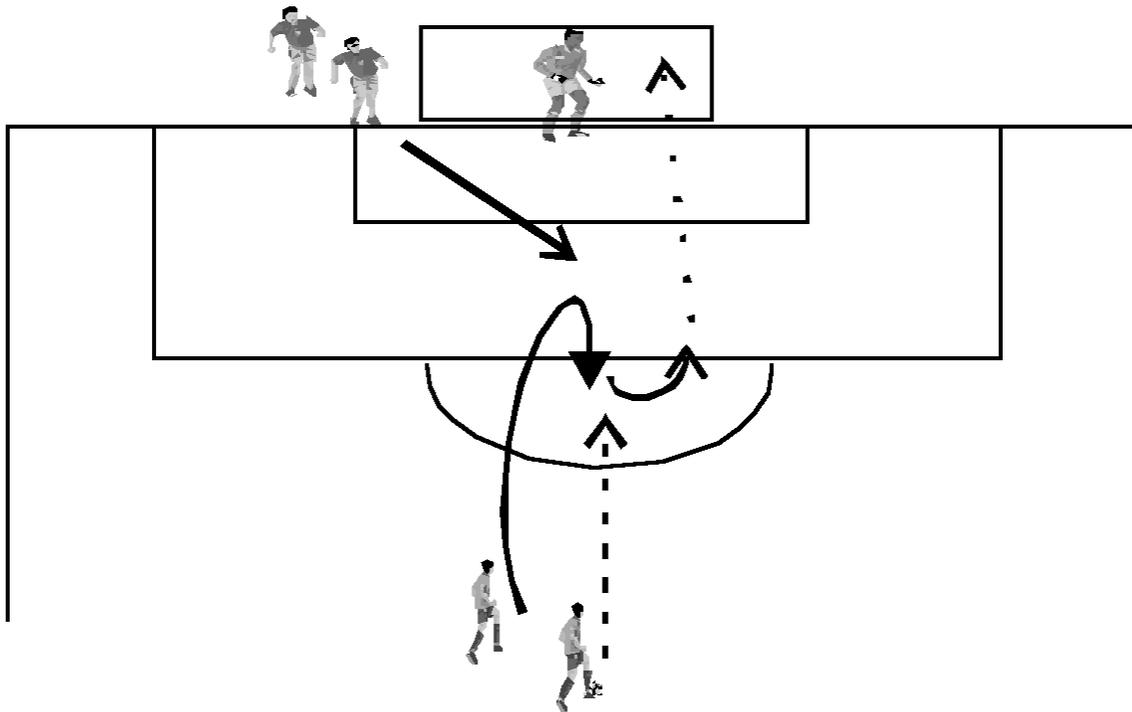
Equipment: 12 or more soccer balls and one full size goal

Grid Requirement: One half of a soccer field or a 50 x 50 yard grid

Organization: 1 keeper in goal. Form 2 lines. 1 line of players each with a ball 40 yards from goal, 1 line of defenders on the goal line six yards from the goal post..

How the Game Is Played: The first player in line runs to the penalty spot and checks back toward the passer. He receives a pass from the next person in line, turns, and shoots on goal. A defender races toward the player as soon as the ball is played to the shooter.

Deviations: Let the shooter become the keeper and the keeper moves to the server's line.



50 – 50 Balls

Skill: Tackling/Dribbling

Number of Players Required: Full U-12 team

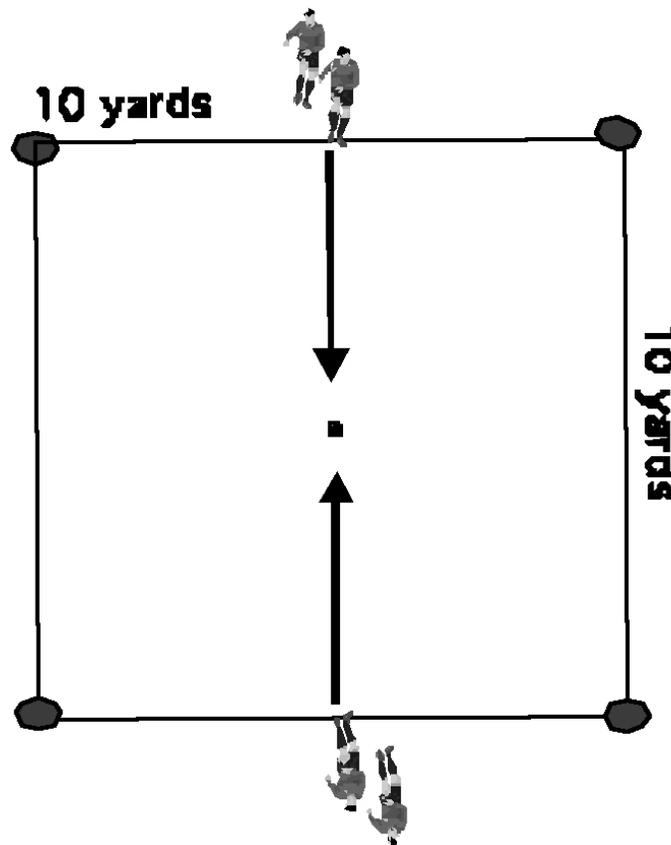
Equipment: 12 or more soccer balls

Grid Requirement: three 10-yard x 10-yard grids.

Organization: Players form 2 lines, facing one another at opposite sides of the grid. Place a ball in the center of the grid.

How the Game Is Played: On the signal from the coach the 2 players on the top of the line will race to the ball and try to win possession. A point is scored if a player dribbles across the opposite end of the grid. If the ball goes out of the grid, neither player receives a point. First player to accumulate 3 points wins.

Deviations: After possession is gained play 2 v 2 however the ball must still be dribbled across the end of the grid.



Defending From Behind

Skill: Controlling, Dribbling, Shooting, Defending, and Goalkeeping

Number of Players Required: Full U-12 team

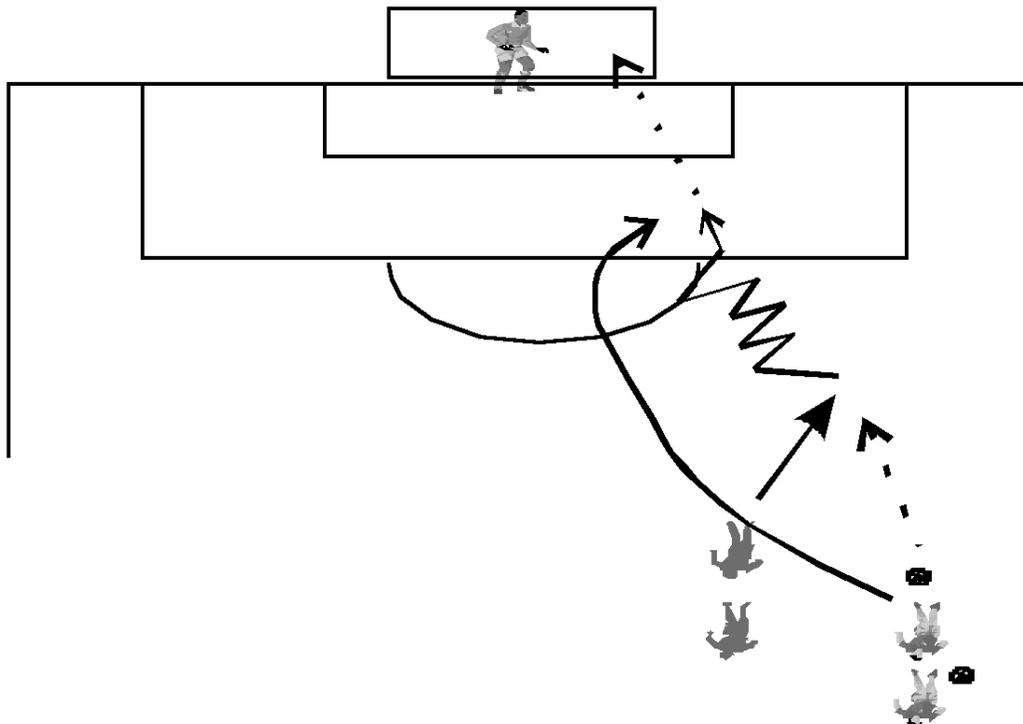
Equipment: 12 or more soccer balls

Grid Requirement: Half of a full size soccer field.

Organization: Form two lines with 6 to 8 players: one line on mid-field line, the other 8 yards behind and more central. Each player on the outside line has a ball at his or her feet.

How the Game Is Played: The first player in the line farthest from the goal is the defender and server. Play begins when this player passes the ball into space in front of the attacker. The attacker controls the ball and dribbles toward the goal and attempts to get a shot on goal. The defender tries to tackle the ball or get goal-side of the ball to prevent the attacker from taking the shot. Attackers and defenders change roles after each attempt. Award one point for a goal and 3 points to the defender if the attacker is unable to get a shot on goal. First player with 8 points wins. Do not allow one touch shots on goal.

Deviations: Duplicate the setup on the other side of the grid. Change the starting distance of the defender.



Defender Has A Problem

Skill: Passing, Controlling, Dribbling, Defending and turning the ball away from goal.

Number of Players Required: Full U-12 team

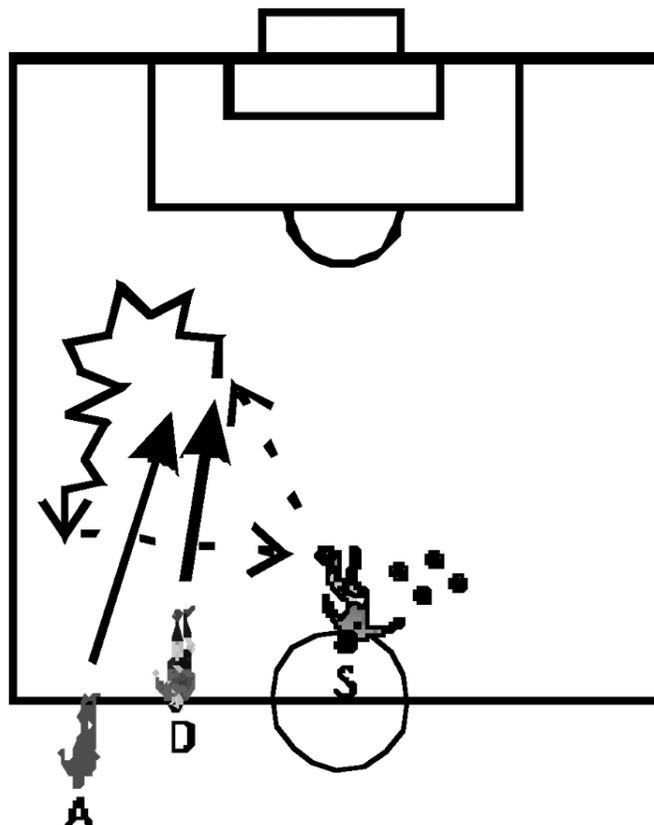
Equipment: 12 or more soccer balls

Grid Requirement: 50 x 50 grid or half or a full size soccer field.

Organization: Create 2 lines near midfield. One line of attackers (A), 10 yards behind and outside the line of defenders (D). Place a server (S) to the right of the lines.

How the Game Is Played: An attacker and a defender race to a ball that is played forward by the server. The defender must turn away from goal and dribble it back us the field.

Deviations: Defender must pass back to server. Add a keeper and if attack wins, allow attacker to go to goal. Use both sides of the field.



Defend The Gates

Skill: Attacking a defender, Dribbling and Defending

Number of Players Required: Full U-12 team

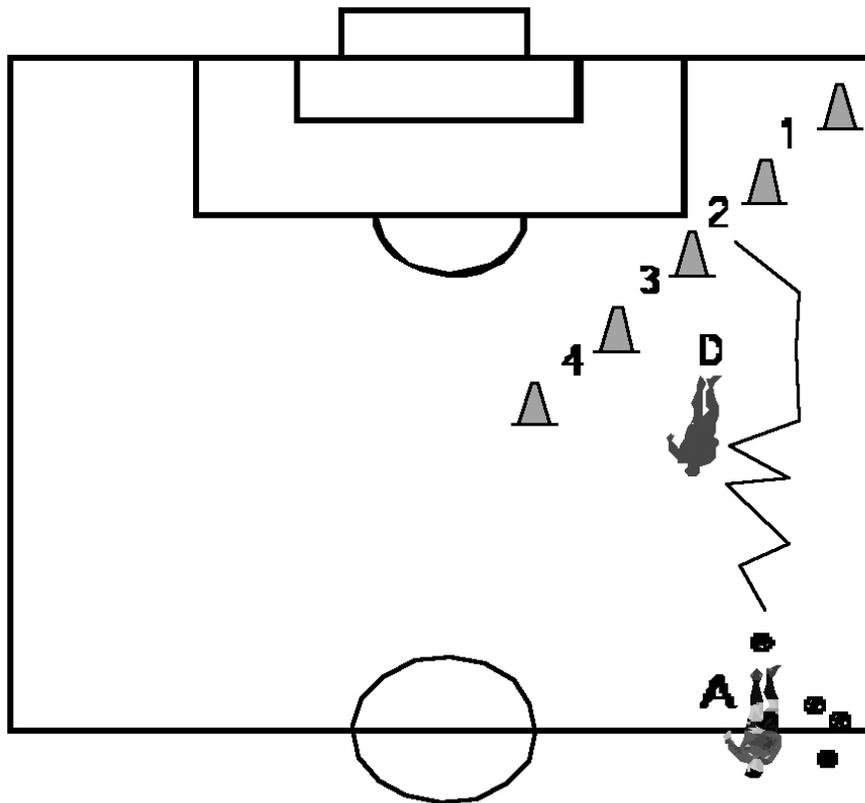
Equipment: 12 or more soccer balls and 4 or 5 cones

Grid Requirement: 50 x 50 grid or half or a full size soccer field.

Organization: Position a line of attackers near the midfield line a few yards from the touchline. Place a line of 4 or 5 cones diagonally across the field about 5 yards apart. The opening between cones is a gate. Place 1 defender central to the last gate.

How the Game Is Played: The first attacker in line tries to dribble past the defender and through a gate. Award points according to which gate the attacker dribbles through. Gate 4 is worth 4 points. Gate three is worth 3 and so on. Gate 4 should be the target gate because it is closest to the center of the field. First player to 10 points wins. Attackers and defenders switch roles.

Deviations: Add a keeper and allow the attacker to go to goal after dribbling through a gate, award 5 points for a goal. Use both sides of the field.



Shooting

Skill: Passing/Shooting

Number of Players Required: Full U-12 team

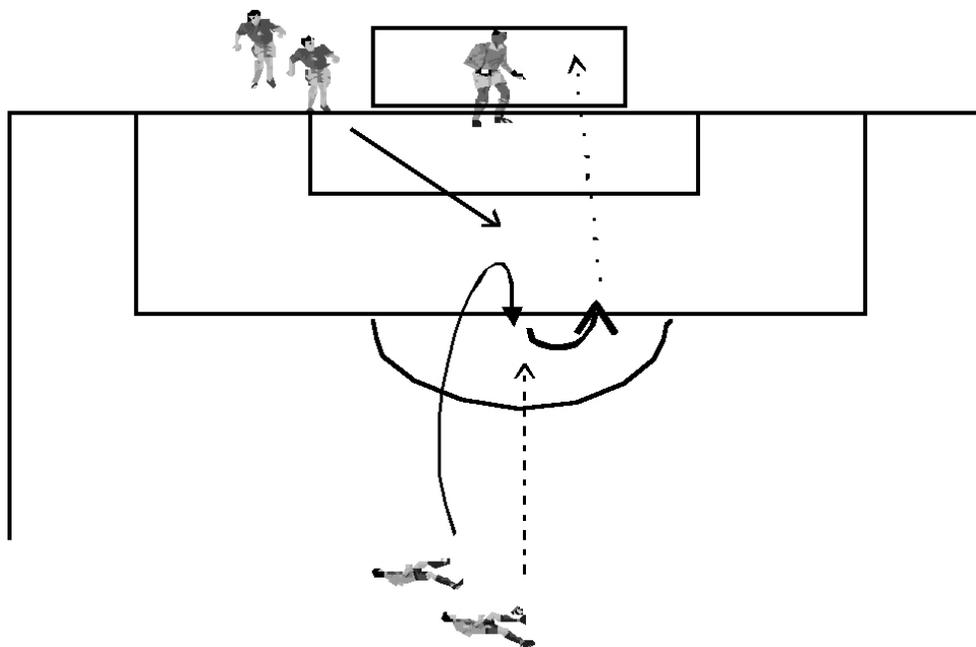
Equipment: 12 or more soccer balls and one full size goal.

Grid Requirement: One half of a soccer field or a 50 X 50 yard grid.

Organization: Form 2 lines, 1 keeper, 1 line of players each with a ball 40 yards from goal, 1 line of defenders on the goal line six yards from the goal post.

How the Game Is Played: The first player in line runs to the penalty spot, checks back toward the passer, and receives a pass from the next person in line, turns, and shoots on goal. A defender races toward the player as soon as the ball is played into the shooter.

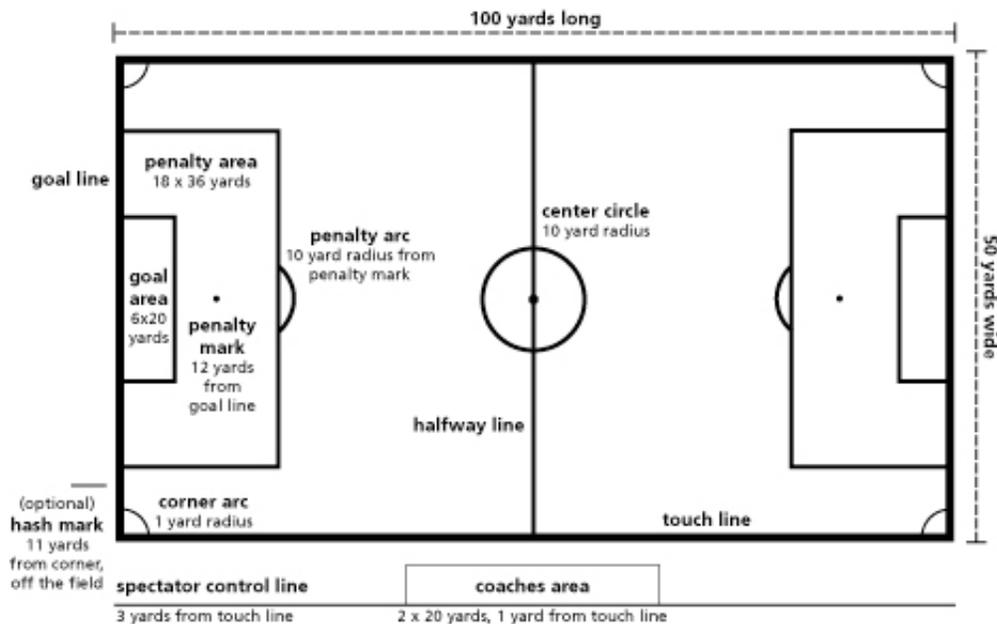
Deviations: Let the shooter become the keeper and the keeper moves to the server's line.



Appendix A: Under-12 Program Guidelines

Field

- Dimensions: 100 yards long and 50 yards wide (maximum).
- Markings: No change from Laws of the Game.
- Goals: No change from Laws of the Game.



Ball

- Size 4

Players

- Number: Nine per team on field; one of which is a goalkeeper. 12 maximum on roster.
- Substitutions: Between periods, at halftime and for injuries.
- Playing time: Minimum of two periods per game and no player should play four periods until everyone has played three.
- Teams: Separate girls and boys teams should be promoted at all levels of play.

Players' Equipment

- Footwear: Soft-cleated soccer shoes or tennis shoes.
- Shinguards: MANDATORY for both practices and games, and must be covered entirely by socks.

Referee

- The referee must be a certified regional referee or above.

Duration of Game

- Four 15-minute periods.
- Halftime break of 5–10 minutes.



Appendix B: Laws of the Game

Essential Facts for AYSO Coaches

Introduction

Welcome to the family of AYSO coaches. Your volunteer participation is greatly appreciated. The AYSO National Coaching Commission in cooperation with the National Referee Commission has prepared this information to assist coaches in learning and understanding the Laws of the Game. As your coaching experience increases, so will your need for additional instruction. Our courses are designed to support those needs as they arise. You should obtain a copy of “Guidance for Referees and Coaches” to supplement your training and understanding of AYSO policies and interpretations of the Laws.

AYSO is an affiliate member of the United States Soccer Federation (USSF) the national governing body of soccer in the United States recognized by FIFA (Federation Internationale de Football Association), the international governing body of soccer. All AYSO matches are played in accordance with the FIFA Laws of the Game and the AYSO National Rules and Regulations. Since FIFA meets annually to consider changes to the Laws and AYSO considers proposed changes to its National Rules and Regulations each year at the AYSO Annual General Meeting, it is strongly recommended that each year you obtain the current AYSO edition of the FIFA Laws of the Game and the AYSO National Rules and Regulations to familiarize yourself with the most recent changes.

As you gain knowledge and experience as an AYSO coach you will find that your understanding of the Laws of the Game and of the job of the officials will increase. To truly understand officiating, we recommend strongly that you “walk a mile in his shoes”. That is, try your hand at actually refereeing some matches. Experience as a referee can only improve your skills as a coach and is well worth the effort. Thank you again for volunteering your time and talents.

LAW 1: THE FIELD OF PLAY

Essential Facts About the Field of Play:

- Regular season play: Goal dimensions and field size at discretion of the region.
- Post-season play-off games: The field must conform to all requirements of Law 1.
- A coaches’ area shall be marked, where possible, ten (10) yards on either side of the halfway line, and at least one yard from the touch line.
- Touch lines: Define sides of the field.
- Goal lines: Define ends of the field.
- Goals: 8 feet high and 8 yards wide.
- Halfway line: Divides field in half and belongs to both halves.
- Center mark: Location for kick-off.
- Center circle: 10-yard radius from center mark.
- Penalty area: Area in which goalkeeper may use his hands and where certain fouls result in a penalty kick.
- Penalty mark: 9-inch spot 12 yards from goal line indicates location for penalty kick.
- Penalty arc: 10-yard radius from penalty mark.
- Goal area: Defines location for goal kicks.
- Corner area: 1-yard arc defines location for corner kicks.
- Corner flag: Locates corner of field. May not be moved or removed during corner kicks.
- Optional equipment: Goal nets, halfway flags (1 yard outside touch line).



LAW 2: THE BALL

Essential Facts Regarding the Ball:

- The referee approves the game ball.
- Ball cannot be replaced without the referee's permission.
- The size used in AYSO matches is regulated according to age division.

LAW 3: THE NUMBER OF PLAYERS

Essential Facts Regarding Number of Players:

- 11 a side is the norm. 3 a side, 5 a side, 7 a side, and 9 a side are the AYSO recommendations for U-6, U-8, U-10, and U-12 respectively.
- A player who has been sent off may not be replaced.
- Substitutes come under the jurisdiction of the referee.
- One player on each team must be designated as the goalkeeper.
- Field players may change places with their goalkeeper at any normal stoppage in play. The referee must be notified that the change is taking place.
- In AYSO, each team member must play a minimum of one half of the match.
- Play may be stopped at any time by the referee to attend to an injured player. An injured player may be replaced or the team may play short while the injured player recovers. Only the injured player receives credit for playing that quarter. A dropped ball is used to restart play if the ball was in play at the time of the stoppage.

LAW 4: THE PLAYERS' EQUIPMENT

Essential Facts Regarding Players' Equipment:

- Jersey, shorts, footwear, and shinguards covered by stockings are required. Sleeveless jerseys are permitted as are rolled or tied up sleeves provided, in the opinion of the referee, it is done in a safe manner.
- Shinguards are required in all practices and games.
- The goalkeepers must be distinguishable from all other players on the field.
- Players may not wear anything that could endanger either themselves or another player.
- Casts or splints, jewelry, watches and articles of adornment are not allowed.

LAW 5: THE REFEREE

Essential Facts Regarding the Referee:

- Should interfere with the game as little as possible, penalize only deliberate breaches of the Law, and not whistle for trifling or doubtful offenses.
- Authority includes all pre-match, half-time and post-match activities.
- May refrain from penalizing if it is to the advantage of the team against which the offense was committed.
- Is the official record and time keeper, and may add any time lost through accident or other cause.
- May stop the match and suspend or terminate play for any reason deemed necessary such as: the elements, interference by spectators, or other cause.
- Shall submit a detailed report of any misconduct.
- Allows no person other than the players and assistant referees to enter the field of play without permission.
- May stop the match to have an injured player attended.



LAW 6: THE ASSISTANT REFEREES

Essential Facts Regarding the Assistant Referees:

- Indicate when the ball is out of play.
- Indicate which side is entitled to a goal kick, corner kick or throw-in.
- Indicate when a player may be penalized for being in an offside position.
- Indicate when a substitution is requested.
- Assist the referee in the control of the match in accordance with the Laws.
- May signal any misconduct, incident, or breach of the Laws which occurred out of view of the referee
- Assistant referees' decisions may be overruled by the referee.
- Referee decisions may not be overruled by an assistant referee.
- Referees may consult with and accept the decision of neutral assistant referees to determine whether or not a legal goal was scored.

LAW 7: THE DURATION OF THE MATCH

Essential Facts Regarding the Duration of the Game:

- The match is divided into two equal periods (halves) which varies with age group.
- The teams will defend each goal for one period (half).
- Players have a right to an interval at half-time, which, in AYSO, shall be a minimum of five and maximum of ten minutes.
- Allowance shall be made, at the discretion of the referee, for time lost due to injury, substitution, time wasting or other cause.
- Time shall be extended to permit a penalty kick to be taken at or after the expiration of the normal time period.
- The referee is the sole time keeper for the match.
- FIFA Law requires a match terminated by the referee for any reason to be replayed in its entirety. In AYSO, the referee submits a game report to the governing body (Region) who will determines whether or not the game will be replayed, if the score will stand, or if a team shall be declared in forfeit.

LAW 8: THE START AND RESTART OF PLAY

Essential Facts Regarding the Start of Play:

- Play is started with a kick-off from the center mark:
 - at the beginning of the match.
 - at the beginning of the second half.
 - following a goal.
 - at the beginning of overtime periods.
- Play is restarted with a dropped ball where the ball was when the play was stopped while the ball was in play:
 - following an injury where no foul occurred.
 - for outside interference.
 - for needed repairs to the ball or field equipment.
 - for any cause not mentioned in the Laws.
- The team winning the coin toss chooses which goal it will attack in the first half. The other team must kick off.
- The ball is in play from a kick-off once it has been kicked and moves forward.
- Every player must remain in his own half of the field, and players of the team not taking the kick-off must remain at least ten yards from the ball until the ball is in play.
- The player taking the kick-off shall not touch the ball a second time until it is has been touched by another player. The penalty for this "double touch" is an indirect free kick.
- A goal may be scored directly from a kick-off.
- The kick-off shall be retaken for any infringement occurring before the ball is in play.
- The dropped ball is in play once it has touched the ground.



- The dropped ball is retaken if it is touched by any player before it has touched the ground or if it goes out of play without being touched by a player.

LAW 9: THE BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY

Essential Facts Regarding Ball In and Out of Play:

- The ball remains in play until the entire ball has crossed the outside edge of either the goal line or touch line either on the ground or in the air.
- It is the position of the ball and not the player playing the ball which determines whether or not the ball is out of play.
- The ball is out of play when the referee has stopped play.
- The ball remains in play unless signaled out of play by the referee.

LAW 10: THE METHOD OF SCORING

Essential Facts Regarding Method of Scoring:

- The ball must completely cross the goal line between the goalposts and under the crossbar for a goal to be scored.
- Only the referee may award or disallow a goal.
- The referee may accept the opinion of a neutral assistant referee regarding a possible goal that the referee did not see.
- The position of the ball is relevant when determining whether a goal has been scored, not the position of the goalkeeper.
- A goal should not be awarded if an outside agent (spectator, dog, etc.) has interfered with play prior to the ball entering the goal.
- A goal should not be awarded if the Laws of the Game were violated by the attacking team immediately prior to the ball entering the goal.
- The referee may reverse his decision regarding the scoring of a goal as long as play has not yet been restarted.

LAW 11: OFFSIDE

Essential Facts Regarding Offside:

- A player is in an offside position if he is nearer to the opponents' goal line than both the ball and the second to last defender. Being in an offside position in itself is not an offence. A player is not in an offside position if:
 - he is in his own half of the field of play or
 - he is level with the second last opponent or
 - he is level with the last two opponents
- The player in an offside position is only penalized if, at the moment the ball is touched or played by a teammate, the referee considers him to be actively involved in the play by:
 - interfering with play or
 - interfering with an opponent or
 - gaining an advantage from being in that position
- There is no offside offence if a player receives the ball directly from:
 - a goal kick or
 - a throw-in or
 - a corner kick
- The punishment for being offside is an indirect free kick for the opposing team.
- The indirect free kick is taken from the location of the offside player.
- The referee may or may not declare a violation of the Offside Law depending upon his judgment of the circumstances.



LAW 12: FOULS AND MISCONDUCT

Essential Facts Regarding Fouls:

There are two categories of fouls; direct free kick fouls from which a goal may be scored directly and indirect free kick fouls from which a second player on either team must touch or play the ball before a goal may be scored. If a direct free kick foul is committed by a player in his or her own penalty area, the opponents are awarded a penalty kick (see Law 14).

Essential Facts Regarding Direct Free Kick Fouls:

There are ten direct free kick fouls of which the following seven must be considered by the referee to be careless, reckless or done with excessive force:

1. Kicks or attempts to kick an opponent
2. Trips or attempts to trip an opponent
3. Jumps at an opponent
4. Charges an opponent
5. Strikes or attempts to strike an opponent
6. Pushes an opponent
7. Tackles an opponent

The other three direct free kick fouls require only that they be committed.

1. Holds an opponent
2. Spits at an opponent
3. Handles the ball deliberately (except for the goalkeeper inside his own penalty area)

Essential Facts Regarding the Indirect Free Kick Fouls:

The following are the eight indirect free kick fouls:

1. Plays in a dangerous manner
2. Impedes the progress of an opponent
3. Prevents the goalkeeper from releasing the ball from his hands
4. Commits any other offence, not previously mentioned in Law 12, for which play is stopped to caution or dismiss a player
5. Goalkeeper controls the ball with his hands for more than six seconds before releasing it from his possession
6. Goalkeeper, having released the ball into play, touching it again with his hands before it has been touched by another player
7. Goalkeeper touching the ball with his hands after it has been deliberately kicked to him by a teammate
8. Goalkeeper touching the ball with his hands after he has received it directly from a throw-in by a teammate.

Essential Facts Regarding Cautionable Offenses:

There are seven reasons a player may be cautioned and shown a yellow card.

1. Unsporting behavior
2. Dissent, by word or action,
3. Persistent infringement of the Laws of the Game
4. Delays the restart of play
5. Failure to respect the required distance during corner kicks, free kicks or throw-ins
6. Enters or re-enters the field of play without permission of the referee
7. Deliberately leaving the field of play without the permission of the referee

Essential Facts Regarding Sending-Off Offenses:

There are seven reasons a player may be sent off the field and shown a red card.

1. Serious foul play.
2. Violent conduct.
3. Spits at an opponent or any other person.
4. Denies the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball.
5. Denies an obvious goal-scoring opportunity to an opponent moving toward the player's goal by an offence punishable by a free kick or a penalty kick.
6. Using offensive, insulting, or abusive language and/or gestures.
7. Receiving a second caution in the same game.

LAW 13: FREE KICKS

Essential Facts Regarding Free Kicks:

- Direct free kicks are awarded for direct free kick fouls and a goal may be scored directly against the opponents.
- Indirect free kicks are awarded for indirect free kick fouls and certain technical infractions. After the ball is in play, it must touch or be played by a second player from either team before a goal can be scored.
- The opposing team must remain at least ten yards from the ball until the ball is kicked into play.
- The ball is in play from a free kick once it has been kicked and has moved or, in the case of the defending team taking the kick from within their own penalty area, when the ball completely leaves the penalty area.
- The player taking the free kick may not play the ball a second time until it has been touched by another player. The penalty for violation is an indirect free kick for the opponents from the point of the infraction.

LAW 14: THE PENALTY KICK

Essential Facts Regarding Penalty Kick:

- A goal may be scored directly from a penalty kick.
- The kick is taken from the penalty mark located twelve yards from the goal line.
- The ball is in play once it has been kicked and moves forward.
- All players must be on the field of play, outside the penalty area, ten yards from the ball, and must stand behind the penalty mark, except for the kicker and the opposing goalkeeper.
- The defending goalkeeper remains on the goal line between the goalposts facing the kicker until the ball has been kicked.
- The kicker must wait for the referee's signal before taking the kick.
- The player taking the penalty kick may not play the ball twice in succession without it first touching another player (penalty is an indirect free kick for the opposing team).
- For infringements of the Law by the defending team, the kick shall be retaken if a goal has not been scored.
- For infringements of the Law by the attacking team, except for the kicker playing the ball twice in succession, the kick shall be retaken if a goal was scored.
- For infringements of the Law by both teams, the kick shall be retaken regardless of the outcome.

LAW 15: THE THROW-IN

Essential Facts Regarding Throw-In:

- The throw-in shall be taken from the point at which the ball left the field.
- The thrower must face the field and part of both feet must remain on or behind the touch line.
- The ball must be thrown with both hands from behind and over the head.
- Opposing players must stand no less than 2 meters (yards) from the point at which the throw-in is taken.
- The ball is in play as soon as it is both released and has entered the field of play.
- The thrower may not play the ball a second time in succession (penalty is an indirect free kick for the opposing team from the point of the infraction).
- If the ball is improperly thrown in, it shall be retaken by a player of the opposing team.
- A goal may not be scored directly from a throw-in.
- Exception to the Offside Law is permitted for the first person to receive the ball from a throw-in.



LAW 16: THE GOAL KICK

Essential Facts Regarding Goal Kick:

- The ball may be placed anywhere within the goal area.
- The ball is in play once it has been kicked beyond the penalty area.
- Opposing players must remain outside the penalty area until the ball is kicked into play beyond the penalty area.
- A goal may be scored directly from a goal kick, but only against the opposing team.
- The player taking the goal kick may not play the ball twice in succession (penalty is an indirect free kick for the opposing team).
- Exception to the Offside Law is permitted for the first person to receive the ball from a goal kick.

LAW 17: THE CORNER KICK

Essential Facts Regarding Corner Kick:

- The ball is placed within the corner arc at the nearest corner flag post.
- A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick.
- The ball is in play after it has been kicked and moves.
- Opposing players must remain ten yards from the corner arc until the ball is in play.
- The corner flag must not be moved or removed during the taking of the corner kick.
- The kicker may not play the ball twice in succession (penalty is an indirect free kick for the opposing team).
- Exception to the Offside Law is permitted for the first person to receive the ball from a corner kick.



Appendix C: Pledges

AYSO Coach Pledge:

In my words and action, I pledge to:

1. Enthusiastically support and practice the AYSO Philosophies of: Everyone Plays, Open Registration, Balanced Teams, Positive Coaching and Good Sportsmanship.
2. Stay informed about sound principles of coaching and child development.
3. Respect the game and know the Laws.
4. Emphasize to my players that they must abide by the Laws of the Game at all times.
5. Develop a true respect for the judgment of all referees.
6. Develop a team respect for the ability of our opponents.
7. Ensure a safe environment for my players.
8. Never yell at or ridicule a player.
9. Always set a good example.
10. Remember that soccer is a game and all games should be fun.

AYSO Player Pledge:

In my words and action, I pledge to:

1. Play for the sake of playing a game, not just to please a parent or coach.
2. Always give my best effort and work as hard for my teammates as I do for myself.
3. Treat all players as I would like to be treated.
4. Be a team player and not show off or hog the ball.
5. Be a good sport and acknowledge good plays whether they are made by my team or my opponents.
6. Abide by the Laws of the Game.
7. Cooperate with my coaches, teammates, opponents and the referee.
8. Never argue with or complain about referee calls or decisions.
9. Control my temper when I feel I have been wronged.
10. Remember that the object of the game is to win, but the goal is to enjoy myself.

AYSO Parent Pledge:

In my words and action, I pledge to:

1. Attend and participate in team parent meetings.
2. Be on time or early when dropping off or picking up my child for a practice or game.
3. Ensure my child is supported and encouraged by family or loved ones at games.
4. Encourage my child to have fun and keep sport in its proper perspective.
5. Define winning for my child as doing his/her very best.
6. Endeavor to learn the Laws (rules) of soccer and support the efforts of referees.
7. Honor the game and show respect for all involved including coaches, players, opponents, spectators and referees.
8. Applaud and encourage players from both teams and not yell out instructions.
9. Not make negative comments about the game, coaches, referees or players in my child's presence.
10. Encourage others to refrain from negative or abusive sideline behavior.



Appendix D: VIP

Integrating the “VIP” Player into Your Region

A VIP (Very Important Player) is a player whose physical and/or mental challenges make it difficult to successfully participate on a mainstream soccer team.

What is successful participation? It should be defined by the player’s enjoyment and the safety of all team members.

The player who has only a physical disability is likely to have many of the expectations and capabilities of a non-disabled player and should be coached accordingly. Every effort should be made to integrate these players into mainstream teams, as much as safety allows.

VIP is an AYSO program designed to provide a quality soccer experience for VIP players. VIP teams offer many players with disabilities the least-restrictive and safest environment in which to learn and enjoy the game of soccer. Contact your Regional Commissioner, Regional Coach Administrator, Regional VIP Administrator or the National Support & Training Center to obtain AYSO’s special VIP training materials and information on how to begin a VIP program.



Appendix E: Practice Planner

Technique to be Taught:	
Objective:	
Equipment Required:	
Free Play	
Demonstrate the skill:	
Involve a player	
Involve all players	
Observe and correct	
Increase difficulty by varying speed, space, or opposition	
Use Build UP	
Small – sided games, 3 vs 3	
Teach the Law	
Description	Coaching Points
Drill 1	
Drill 2	
Drill 3	
Small Game	



Appendix F: Evaluations

Player Evaluation

Player:

Technique	Motor Movement	Static Skill	Dynamic Skill	Game Use
Inside Foot Pass	G OK NI	G OK NI	G OK NI	G OK NI
Instep Kick	G OK NI	G OK NI	G OK NI	G OK NI
Ball Control				
Sole of Foot	G OK NI	G OK NI	G OK NI	G OK NI
Inside of Foot	G OK NI	G OK NI	G OK NI	G OK NI
Thigh	G OK NI	G OK NI	G OK NI	G OK NI
Other	G OK NI	G OK NI	G OK NI	G OK NI
Throw-In	G OK NI	G OK NI	G OK NI	G OK NI
Dribbling				
Balance	G OK NI	G OK NI	G OK NI	G OK NI
Head-Up	G OK NI	G OK NI	G OK NI	G OK NI
Change Directions	G OK NI	G OK NI	G OK NI	G OK NI
Goalkeeping				
Hand Position	G OK NI	G OK NI	G OK NI	G OK NI
Body Position	G OK NI	G OK NI	G OK NI	G OK NI
Punting/Throwing	G OK NI	G OK NI	G OK NI	G OK NI
Playing Position	G OK NI	G OK NI	G OK NI	G OK NI

G = good

OK = average

NI = needs improvement



Coach Evaluation

Practice: Did I accomplish my training plan? 100% 75% 50% 25% 0%

Technique taught:

Did I:	Yes	No
State the objective		
Use Free Play		
Demonstrate the skill		
Involve a player		
Involve all players		
Observe and correct		
Increase difficulty using speed, space or opposition		
Scrimmage using the skill		
Move quickly		
Minimize verbal instructions		
Teach the law		
Did players get bored?		
Did players stand in line?		

One thing to do to improve the next practice:



Glossary of Terms

Balance: Reading the attack and providing an equal or greater number of defenders than attackers at the point of attack, while simultaneously covering the vital area near the goal.

Ballistic: Stretching with movement.

Center: To pass the ball from a wide position on the field into the penalty area.

Charge: Legally upsetting an opponent's balance by shoulder-to-shoulder contact.

Clear: A throw or kick by the goalkeeper or a kick by the defender in an attempt to get the ball away (clear) from the goal area.

Combination Play: Passing combinations executed by two or more players. The most common example is the wall pass.

Concentration: Compressing or restricting the space the attacking team has by "shepherding" them into a confined area makes it easier to defend and regain possession of the ball.

Corner kick: A corner kick is awarded the opposing team when the defending team is last to touch the ball before it crosses the goal line but not scoring a goal. The opposing team must be at least ten yards from the ball when the corner kick is taken in U-12 games. Refer to the Laws of the Game for further details.

Defender: Primarily a defensive player who assists the goalkeeper in protecting the goal area.

Delay: Slowing down the attack by closing the gap and denying space to allow the defense to get organized.

Depth (defending): Supporting the player(s) challenging the ball in case they are beaten.

Depth (attacking): Supporting teammates by creating safe options for the player with the ball.

Dribble: A way of advancing the ball by a series of short taps with one or both feet.

Dynamic: Moving.

Everyone Plays: Our program's goal is for kids to play soccer—so we mandate that every player on every team must play at least half of every game.

Far Post: Side of the goal or goal post farthest from the ball.

Forward: Primarily an attacking.

Goalkeeper: The last line of defense. The goalkeeper is the only player who can use his hands within the field of play. Use of hands is limited to within the penalty area.

Good Sportsmanship: We strive to create a positive environment based on mutual respect, rather than a win-at-all-costs attitude. All our programs must be designed to instill good sportsmanship in every facet of AYSO.

Grid: A marked, restricted playing area.



Half-Volley: Kicking the ball just as it is rebounding off the ground.

Halfback: Another name for midfielder.

Hands: Illegal act of intentionally touching the ball with the hands or arms.

Heading: A method of scoring, passing, and controlling the ball by making contact with the head.

Inside of the Foot – Push Pass: This technique is used to advance the ball or to maintain possession by passing to a teammate.

Inside of the Foot – Ball Control: This technique is used to control the ball using the inside of the foot in order to maintain possession and prepare for the next move.

Instep Kick: This skill is used for long passes and strong shots on goal using the instep of the foot.

Linkman: Another name for midfielder.

Lob: A high, soft kick which lifts the ball over the heads of the opponents.

Marking: Guarding an opponent.

Midfielder: A player who is primarily responsible for moving the ball from the defenders to the forwards.

Mobility: Players changing positions (filling in for one another when necessary) and moving off the ball creates numerical advantages and thereby attacking/scoring opportunities.

Near Post: Side of the goal or goal post closest to the ball.

Obstructing: Preventing the opponent from going around a player by standing in the path of movement.

One-Touch Pass: A pass made without controlling (trapping) it first.

Overlap: The attacking play of a defender or midfielder going down the touch-line past his or her own winger.

Penetration: Advancement, moving the ball and/or players past an opponent in order to get into position to shoot and/or score, and is achieved by shooting, dribbling, and passing.

Pitch: Another name for the field of play.

Positive Coaching: Encouragement of player effort provides for greater enjoyment by the players and ultimately leads to better-skilled and better-motivated players.

Pressure: Action of a defender to restrict time and space available to the offensive player.

Save: Goalkeeper stops an attempted goal by catching or deflecting the ball away from the goal.

Screen: Retaining possession and protecting the ball by keeping your body between the ball and opponent.

Set play: A planned offensive movement to be executed at a free kick.

Shielding: see Screen.



Sliding Tackle: Attempting to take the ball away from the opponent by sliding on the ground and using the feet or legs to block and hold the ball.

Static: Stretching against muscle and holding as opposed to bouncing.

Striker: A central forward position with a major responsibility for scoring goals.

Sweeper: A defender who roams either in front of or behind the defensive line to pick up stray passes.

Tackling: Attempting to or taking the ball away from an opponent when both players are playing the ball with their feet.

Takeover: A 2 vs. 1 combination play in which the two offensive players move toward each other and the ball is transferred from one player to the other.

Through Pass: A pass that goes between two players and behind the defense.

Throw-In: The throw-in is used to restart the game after the entire ball has crossed the sideline, whether on the ground or in the air.

Trap: Controlling a ball by means of the feet, thighs, or chest.

Two-Touch Pass: A passing technique in which one touch is used to control the ball and the second touch is used to pass the ball.

Volley: Kicking the ball while it is in flight.

Wall Pass: A pass to a teammate, followed by a return pass on the other side of the opponent. Also called "give-and-go."

Warm-Up: Keep it short, but do it. Young players must get used to warming up and stretching their muscles.

Width: Attacking on a broad front (players spread out) stretches the defense and creates space for players to advance.

Wing: An area of the field near the touch-line.

Winger: Name given to the right and left outside forwards.