

# **U6-U10 Football Soccer Academy Coaching Sessions**

These Academy coaching sessions have been delivered by UEFA A and B Licence coaches from **Liverpool**, Manchester United, **Blackburn Rovers**, **Bolton** and **Preston**.

All sessions were observed at each of the Academy Venues

**Brockhall - Blackburn  
Springfields - Preston  
Euxton Villa - Bolton  
The Academy - Liverpool  
Carrington – Manchester United**

**This makes these sessions a must have for any serious football coach!**

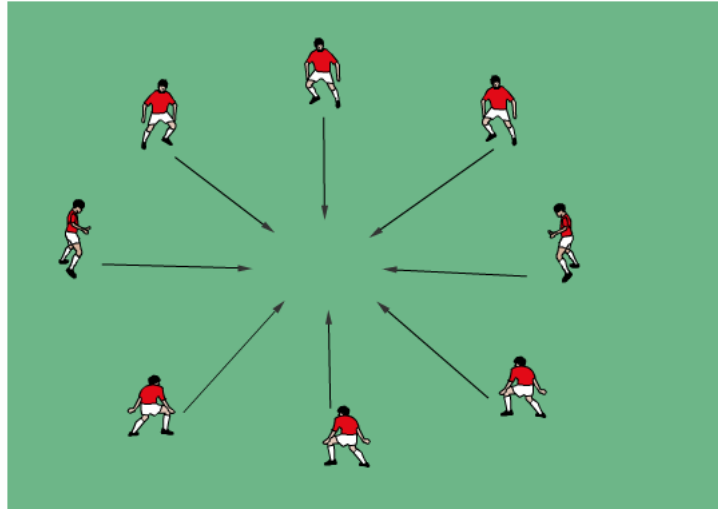
**Topics include:**

**Warm ups  
Team building  
Passing  
Shooting  
Dribbling**

**Each coaching session has detailed explanation and is accompanied with easy-to-read diagrams to make this the perfect reference for any level of coach.**

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## **WARM-UP OPENING EXERCISES**

### **1. Untie the knot**

#### **Setup**

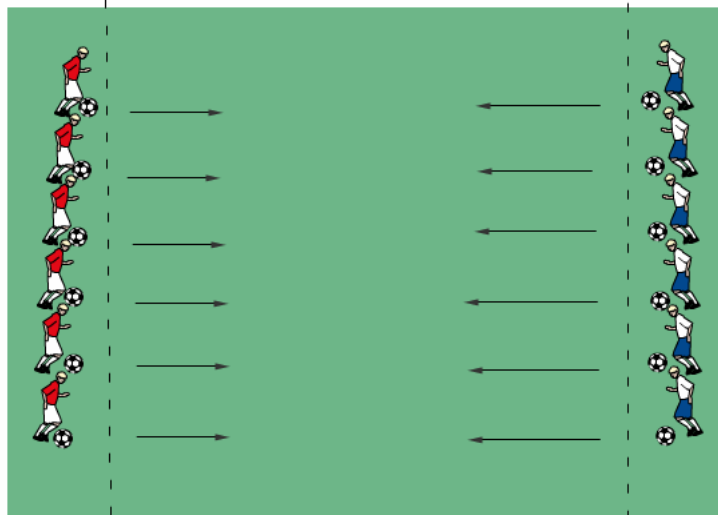
- Arrange six – 12 players in a circle, facing inward

#### **Sequence**

- Players extend their arms forward and cross them. They close their eyes, walk slowly forward and grasp another child's hand in each of their hands
  - The challenge: Untie the "Knot" without anyone letting go

#### **Tips**

- Do a round, then hold a competition with multiple teams. Which team can untie the knot first?
- This exercise can give you a lot of insight into players' personalities (e.g. quiet, thinkers, leaders)



## 2. Soccer Power

### Setup

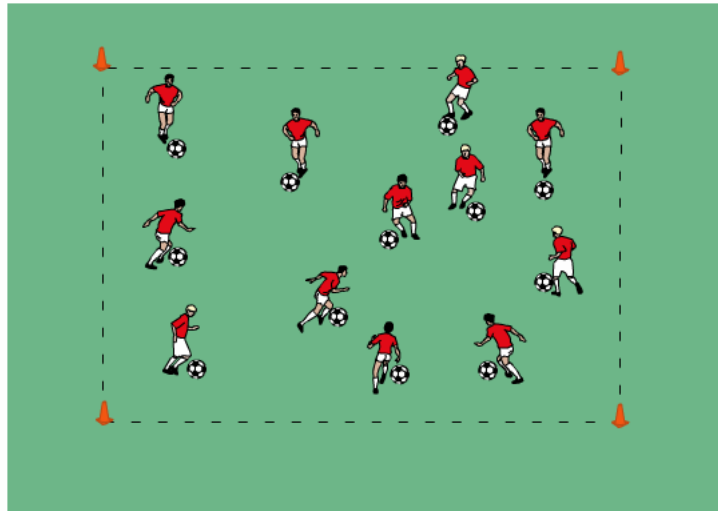
- Divide players into two teams. Each team stands shoulder to shoulder, forming a line
  - Each player holds a ball at chest level
  - The “enemy lines” face each other (8 – 10 yards apart)

### Sequence

- Team A takes a step forward and yells out loudly as they can “football”
  - Team B immediately steps forward and yells (even louder!) “power”
- Teams take turns yelling and stepping forward, ending with a friendly “shoving match” in the middle

### Variations

- Let the teams invent their own battle cries
  - Teams move backwards or sideways



### 3. Hunters and rescuers

#### Setup

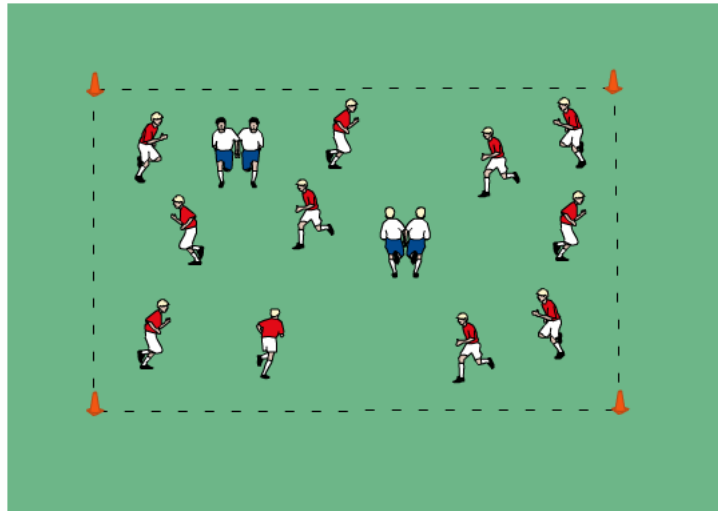
- Using cones, mark out a field
- All players take the field, each one has a ball

#### Sequence

- Players dribble about the field as “hunters” trying to tag each other. Tagged players must freeze with legs spread
- At the same time, players may also act as “rescuers” and unfreeze tagged players by crawling between their legs

#### Tips

- Players decide whether they want to be hunters or rescuers. They can switch roles at any time



#### 4. Twin Tag

##### Setup

- Using cones, mark out a field
- Designate two sets of “twins” who hold names and try to tag the others
  - All the other players take the field

##### Sequence

- The twins try to tag the other players
- Tagged players form chains and join the twins
  - Who will be the last man left

##### Variation

- Instead of splitting the chain just keeps getting longer



5. **Triangle Tag**

**Setup**

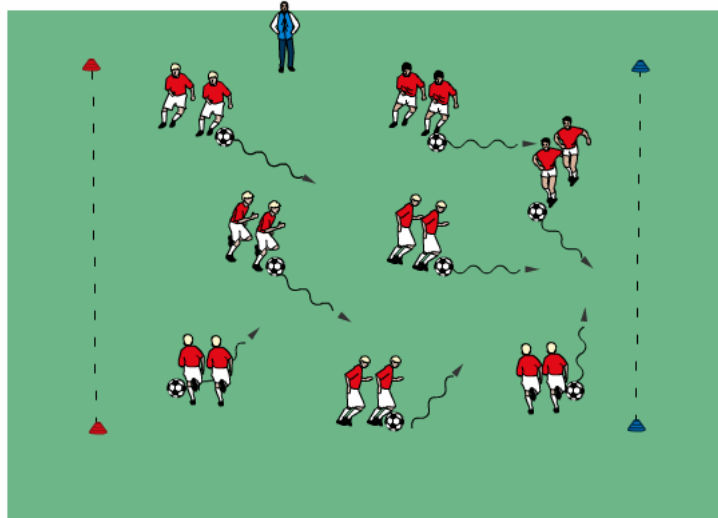
- Three players hold hands, forming a triangle
- Designate one of these as the “rabbit”
  - A fourth player is the “hunter”

**Sequence**

- The hunter tries to tag the rabbit
- The players in the triangle try to prevent this by turning and avoiding the hunter

**Tip**

- Fakes and physical contact are great, but remember to play fair



## 6. Line Dribbling

### Setup

- Using coloured cones, mark out two lines (10 yards long, 12 yards apart)
- Divide players into pairs (partners hold hands); each pair has a ball

### Sequence

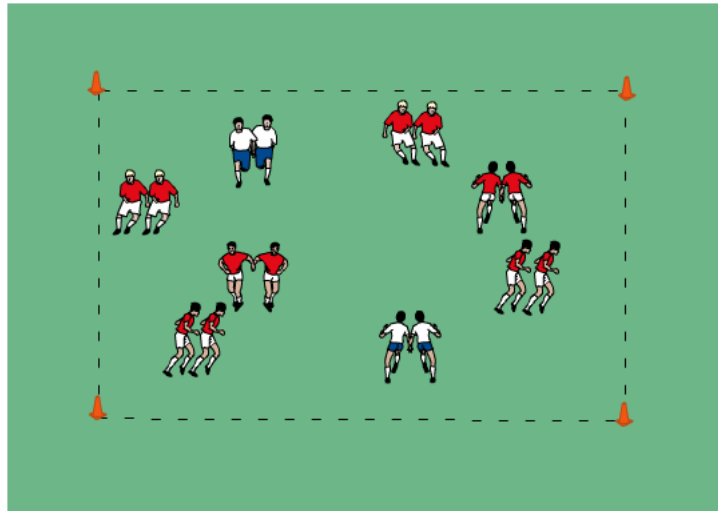
- Players dribble between the lines
- When the coach calls out “red” or “blue”, players dribble across the corresponding line as fast as they can. Fastest pair??

### Variations

- Mark out four lines. Each player has a ball
- Divide players into two teams. Which team is first across the line?

### Coaching Points

- Holding hands forces players to coordinate their direction and speed. They also have to agree on who will dribble.



## 7. Partner Tag

### Setup

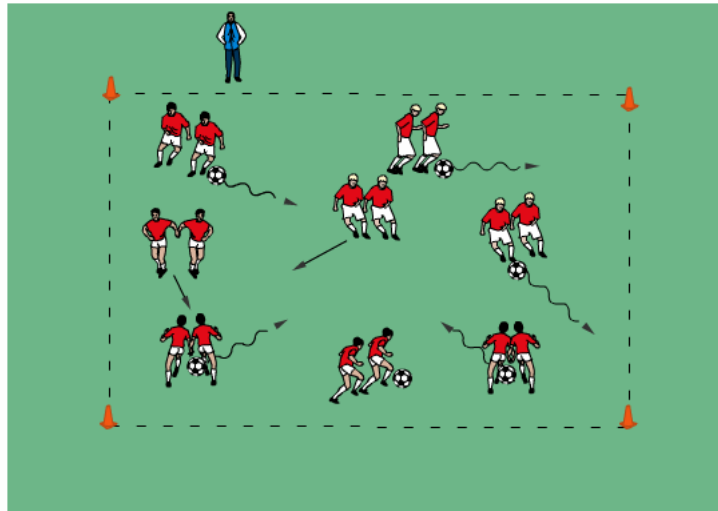
- Using cones, mark out a field (size depends on numbers)
  - divide players into pairs (partners hold hands)
- two pairs are “hunters”; the rest scatter across the field

### Sequence

- The hunters try to tag the others as many times as possible within a given time limit, scoring one point for each tag
  - Afterwards, two other pairs become the hunters

### Variations

- Each pair dribbles a ball
- How fast can each pair tag five others



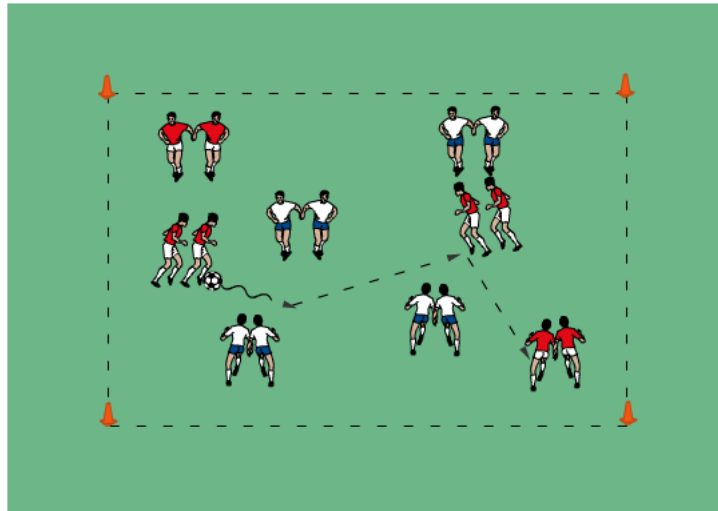
## 8. Find a ball

### Setup

- Using cones mark out a field (size depends on numbers)
  - divide players into pairs (partners hold hands)
    - two pairs do not have a ball
- the remaining pairs take the field; each one has a ball

### Sequence

- All pairs run or dribble about the field
- At the coach's signal, they all stop their balls and immediately look for another one to dribble
  - Which pairs are left without a ball this time



## 9. Partner Soccer

### Setup

- Using cones mark out a field (size depends on numbers)
- Divide players into two teams and each team into pairs (partners hold hands)

### Sequence

- The teams play team keep away with one ball
- Which team can complete the most passes in a row

### Variations

- One or two neutral pairs act as a “moving goal”. Both teams try to score on these goals by shooting between the partners
  - Teams try to dribble across each other’s goal lines
    - Teams play on goals



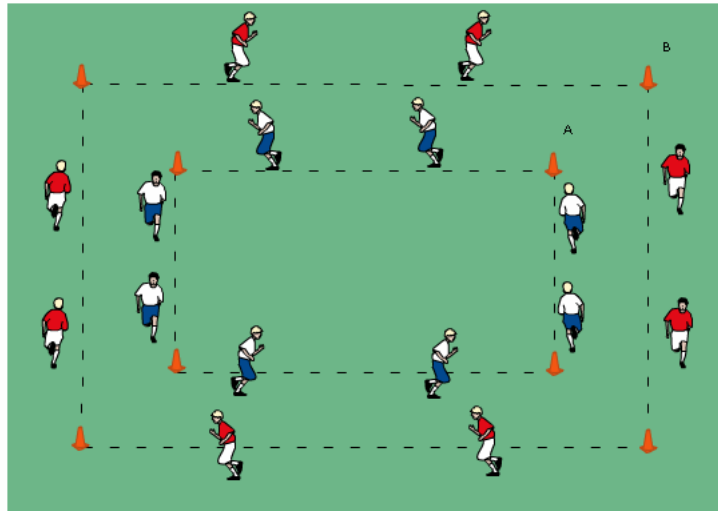
10. **Shoot yourself free**

**Setup**

- Using cones mark out a field (size depends on numbers)
  - All players take the field; two of them are the “hunters”
  - Set up a goal outside the field and mark two goal zones
- Mark out a shooting line in front of the goal and place a number of balls behind it

**Sequence**

- The hunters try to tag other players
- Tagged players shoot at the goal zones
- If they score, they can go back to the field. If they miss, they get another try after the next tagged player
- After 3 minutes, choose 2 new hunters



## 11. Breakout

### Setup

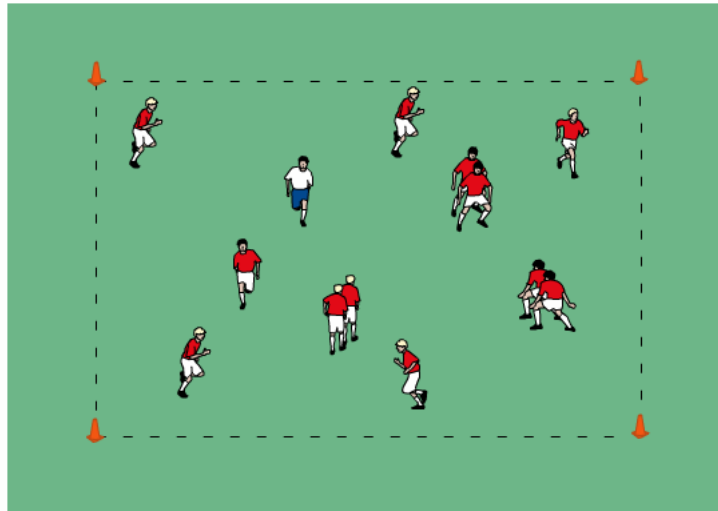
- Using cones, mark out two squares
- Divide players into two teams of equal size

### Sequence

- Team A runs counter clockwise around the inner square
  - Team B runs clockwise around the outer square
- At the coach's signal, Team A tries to run out of the outer square
- Team B stays on its line and tries to tag the players from a as they run past
  - Teams switch roles and positions after 5 rounds

### Variation

- Players dribble around the squares



12. **Help Me!**

**Setup**

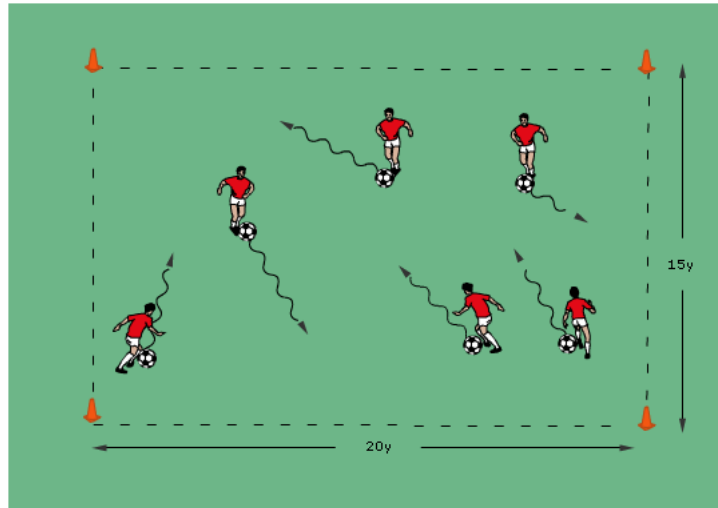
- Using cones, mark out two squares
- All players take the field; one is the “hunter”

**Sequence**

- Players move freely about the field. Hunter tries to tag them
- Players who are being chased can protect themselves by yelling “help me” and taking another player's hand
- These two players then line up with legs spread and stay there until another player crawls through the tunnel

**Variations**

- Each player dribbles a ball



13. **Red light, green light**

**Setup and sequence**

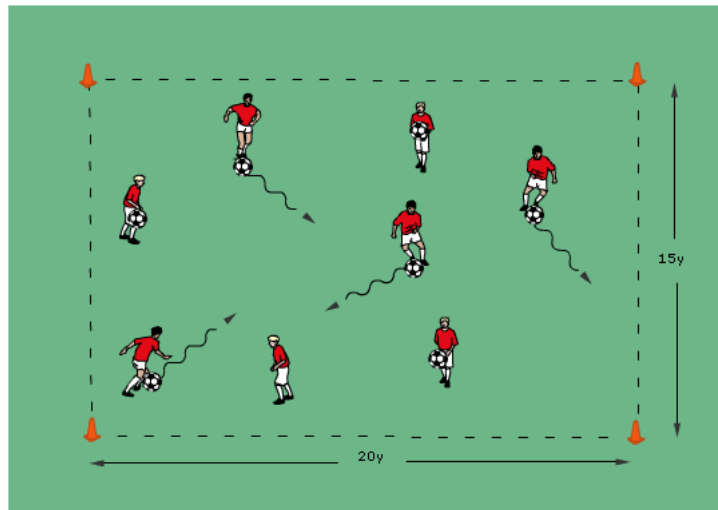
- Mark out a 15 x 20 yard grid
- Players move around the grid with one ball each
- When the coach says “green light,” players dribble. When the coach says “red light,” players stop their balls and stand still

**Variations**

- Players dribble with different parts of the foot, or only with right/left
- Players stop the ball with the instep, sole or outside of the foot

**Coaching Points**

- Allow some players to carry the ball with their hands while others dribble
  - Praise players for creative movement



14. **Body Part Dribbling**

**Setup and sequence**

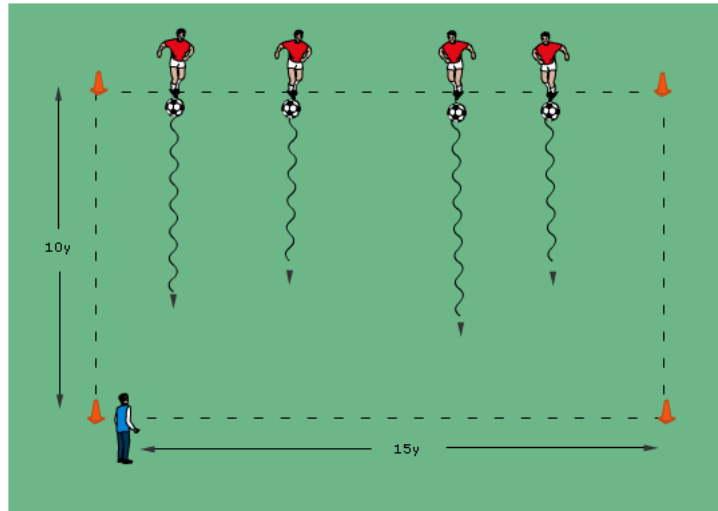
- Set up is as previous session
- Players dribble freely inside the grid
- When the coach says “now”, players stop the ball with any body part

**Variations**

- Coach calls out a specific body part. Each player must stop the ball with that body part

**Coaching Points**

- This game improves agility and flexibility
- Praise players for creative movement and ask players what part they used to stop the ball



## 15. Hit the Line

### Setup

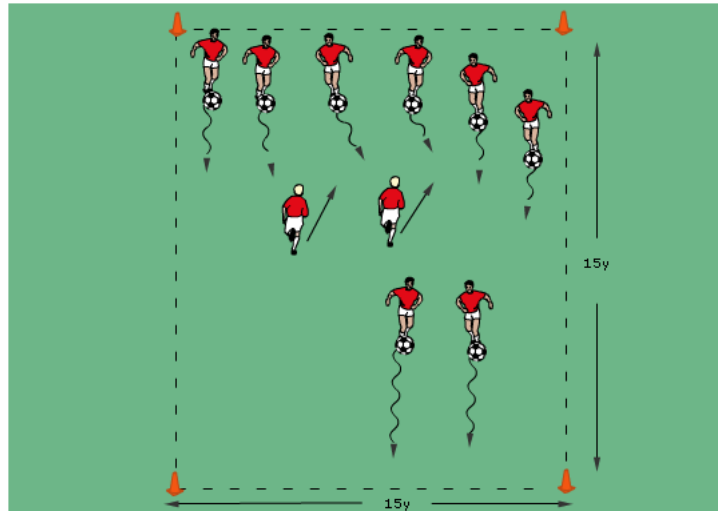
- Mark out a 10 x 15 yard grid
- Players line up side by side along one sideline, facing the opposite sideline. Each player has a ball
- When the coach calls out a player's name, that player kicks the ball trying to land it on the opposite sideline

### Variation

- Put cones or flags on the opposite line, about 5 steps apart. Players try to pass balls between the markers

### Coaching Points

- This activity provides a relaxing challenge after the more strenuous exercises before it.



16. **Sharks and minnows**

**Setup**

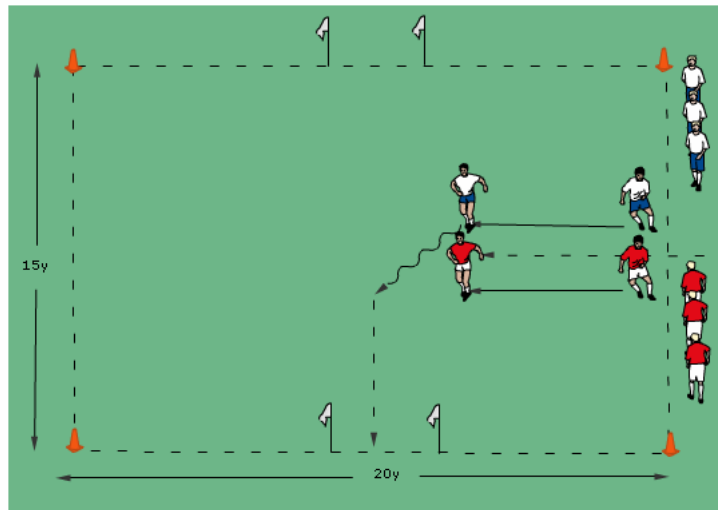
- Mark out a 10 x 15 yard grid
- 2 players “sharks” stand inside the grid without a ball. The others (minnows) line up along one endline with a ball each
- When the coach calls out “swim”, the minnows try to dribble safely past the sharks to the other side
  - Any minnows whose ball is lost or stolen are now sharks

**Variation**

- If a shark steals a ball from a minnow and dribbles it out of the grid, the shark and minnow switch roles

**Coaching Points**

- Keep ball close
- Recognise open space and dribble into this



### 17. Get out of there!

#### Setup and sequence

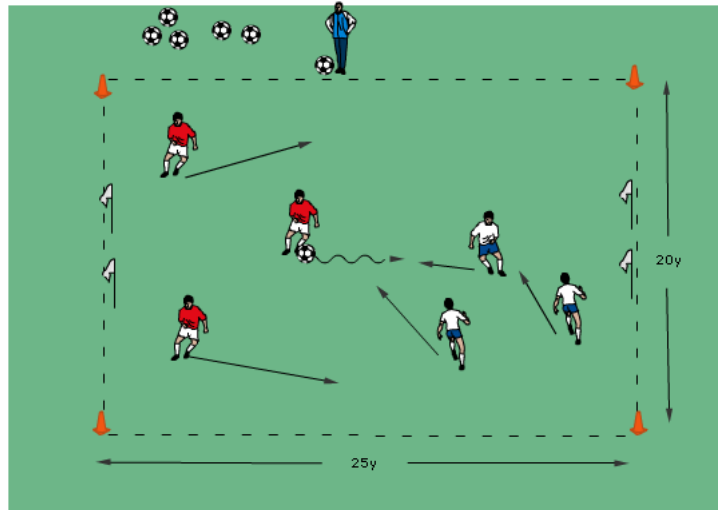
- Two teams line up outside a 15 x 20 yard field with a small goal at each end. The coach stands between them
- The coach serves a ball; the first two players chase it and play 1 v. 1. the attacker shoots at whichever goal is farther away
- As soon as the ball leaves the field, both players must immediately return to their lines. Then the coach serves the next ball, and the next 1 v. 1 begins

#### Variations

- Before serving, the coach calls out the team size, any number between one and four]
- After the shooter scores or the ball goes out of bounds, the coach serves a second ball for the same player

#### Coaching points

- Players practice dribbling, shooting, 1 v. 1 defending and tackling
  - Praise players' effort and show



## 18. Boss of the balls

### Setup and sequence

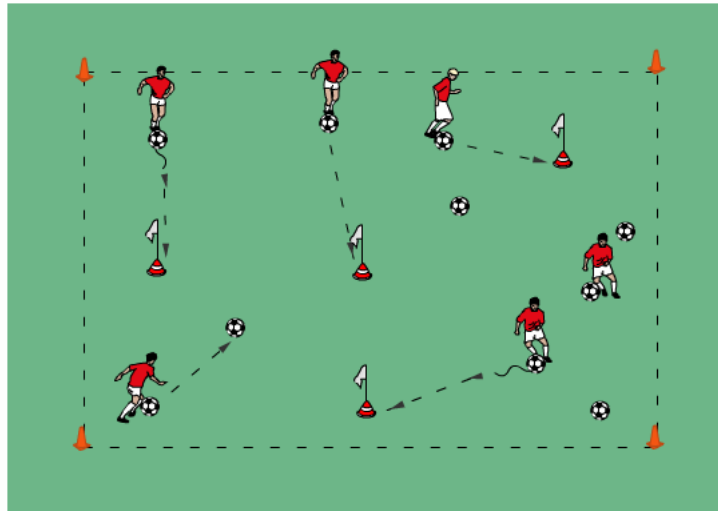
- Mark out a 20 x 25 yard field with a 6 x 12 foot goal at each end
  - Divide players into teams of three or four (no keepers)
- The coach is “boss of the balls”. Each time a ball goes out of play or a goal is scored, the coach serves a new ball
  - Play continues until all the balls have been used

### Variations

- With eight players: Play 4 v. 4; or 3 . 3 plus two helpers, who retrieve balls until their turn
- With 9 or 10 players divide players into three teams, one helps while other two play

### Coaching points

- Let them play and have fun
- Give generous praise for their effort and hard work



19. **Hit the ball/cone**

**Setup**

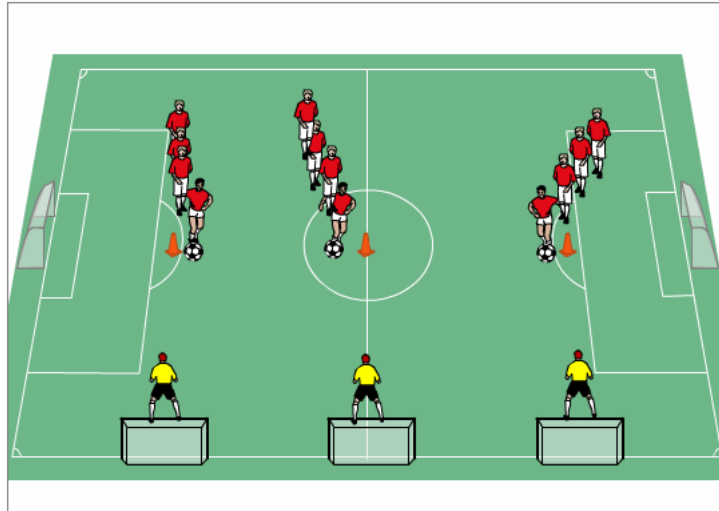
- Scatter extra balls or cones around the playing area
  - Each player has their own ball

**Sequence**

- Players kick their balls, trying to hit stationary balls/cones
  - Players can start from various distances
  - After they hit one target, they try to hit another

**Coaching Points**

- Coordinate players so they're not all aiming at same ball/cone
  - Let them play and have fun
  - Give generous praise for their effort



20. **Shooting Alley**

**Setup**

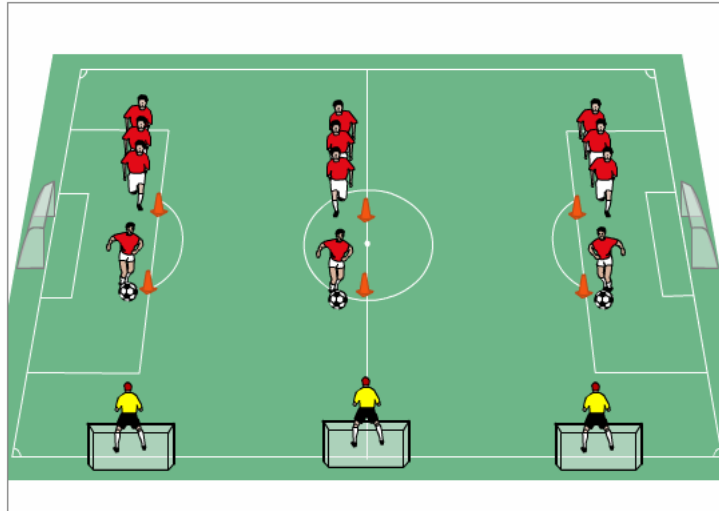
- Set 3 goals up as shown in diagram

**Sequence**

- Each GK throws ball out to first player in line. After receiving ball the player then attacks their goal

**Coaching Points**

- Make sure your first touch puts the ball in front of you
  - First 10 yards acceleration
  - Different attacking options (inventive)
- Use fakes, dummy's, different body positions

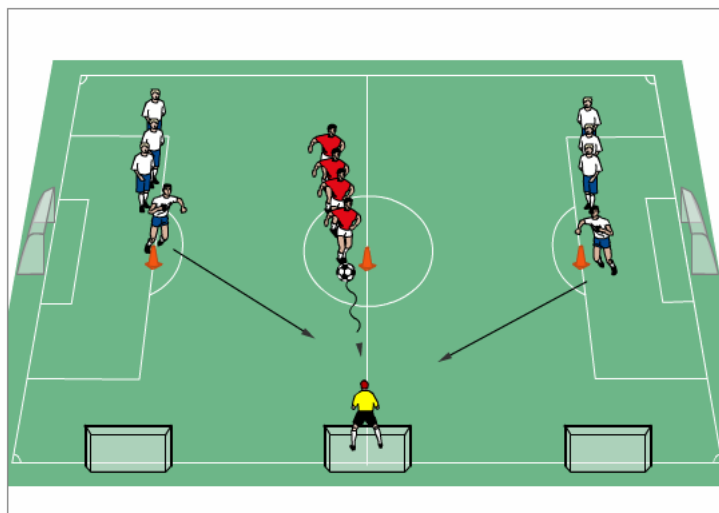


21. **Shooting Alley Progression 1**

- Player now line up at a cone placed five yards behind the original cone. The first player in the line steps up to the front cone and receives the pass from the keeper. On his first touch the next player in line, who is at the second cone, chases and attempts to disrupt the players run at the keeper

**Coaching Points**

- First touch is crucial
- Use the first ten yards to accelerate away
- Run across the path of the chasing player

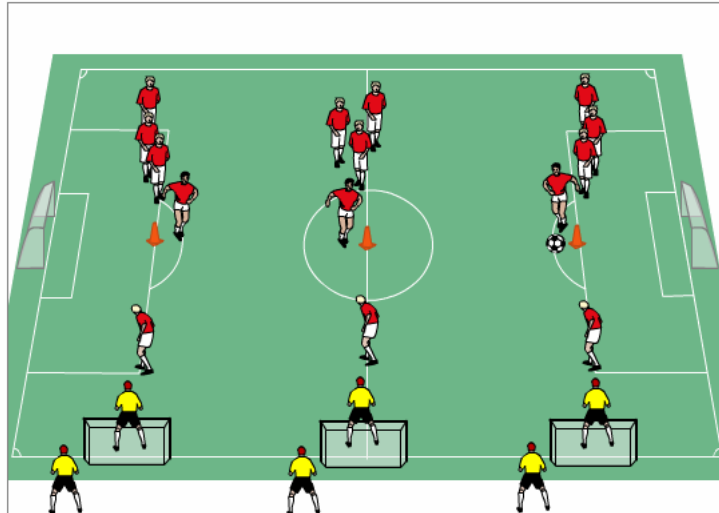


22. **Shooting Alley Progression 2**

- Two outside lines of players are moved 5 yards closer to the centre cone. Use just one GK in the middle goal. The GK throws the ball to the front player in the middle line. On that players first touch, the front players in the outside lines chase the player with the ball. After each attempt, the players join back of different lines

**Coaching Points**

- Again, the first touch is important
  - Composure



23. **Shooting Alley Progression 3**

- Organise players as shown in diagram with a defender in front of each goal and defenders behind each goal ready to rotate in. the GK take turns throwing the ball to the front player in their line. Once the player has received the ball, the front players from the other two lines join in and play 3 v 3. Can score in any goal.

**Coaching Points**

- Look to get into a 2 v. 1 situation
  - Switch the play
  - Overlaps



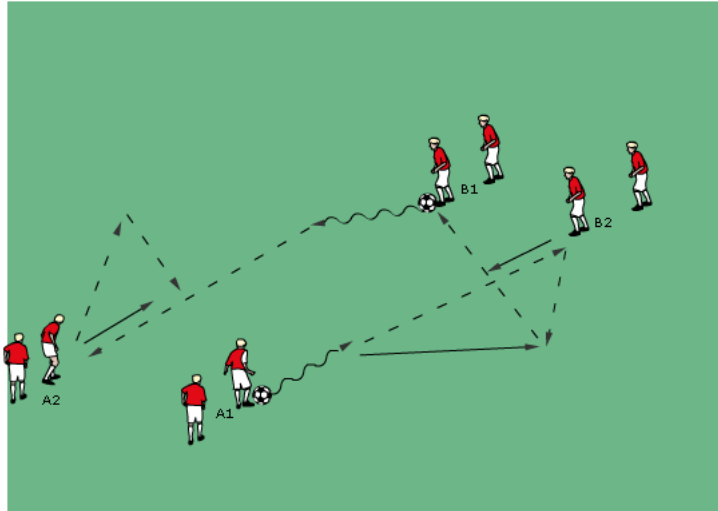
24. **Passing / Movement 1**

**Setup**

- Split players into groups of 4 as shown in diagram.
- Front players A1, and B1 are 10 – 12 yards apart and dribble toward each other, half-way across a step over is performed and then pass to player opposite
  - A1 passes to B2

**Coaching Points**

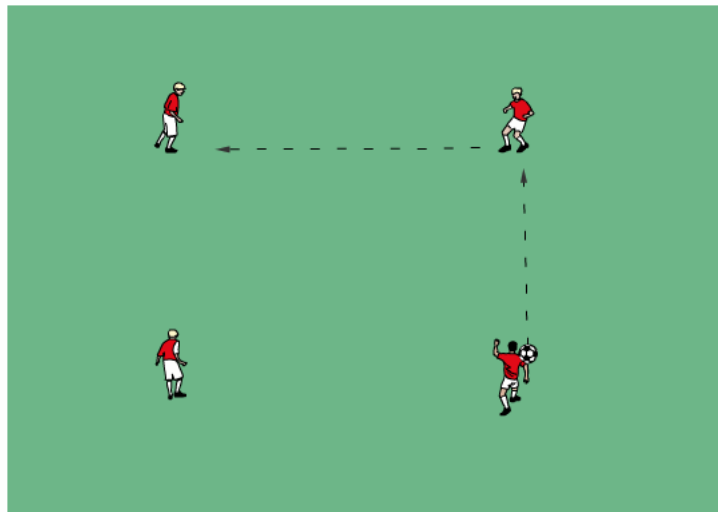
- Encourage the children to practice different skills in the middle of the drill
  - Quality of first touch and accuracy of passing



25. **Passing / Movement Progression 1**

**Setup**

- As in previous diagram
- After passing ball, A1 and B1 move wide
- The receiving payers, A2 and B2 then play give and go's to start their turn



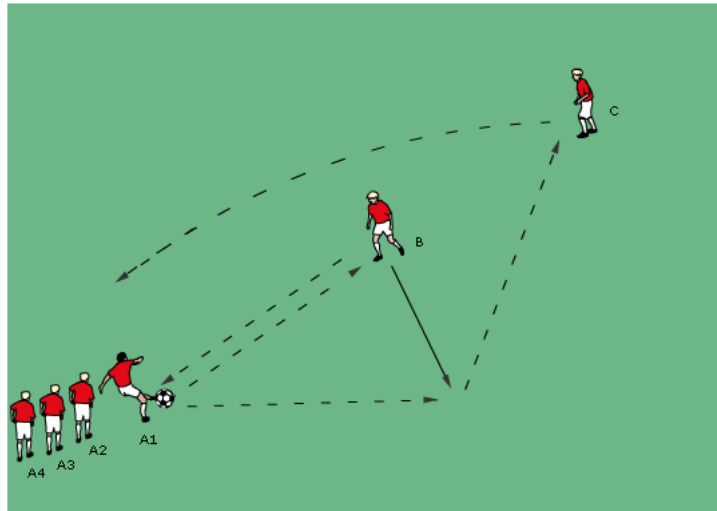
26. **Passing / Movement 2**

**Setup**

- Same groups of 4, form a square about 10 – 12 yards apart
- Ball is passed around the square using two touches whenever possible. Then move the ball in opposite direction

**Coaching Points**

- Quality of Passes
- First touch should be an open body position to allow for next pass



## 27. Passing / Movement 2 (Progression)

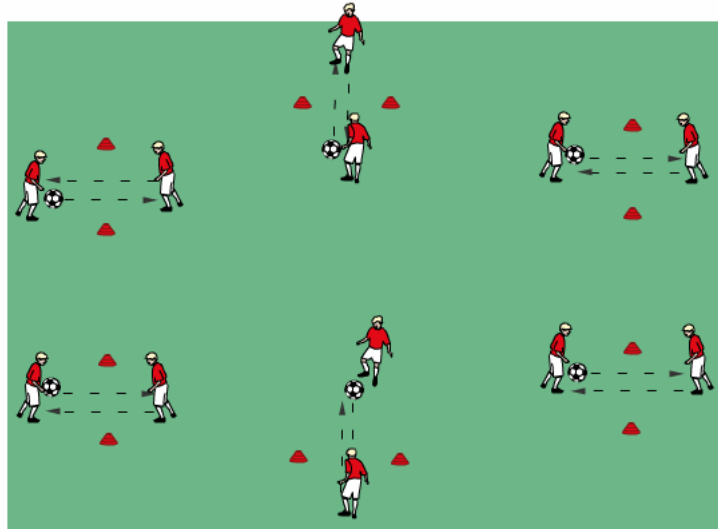
Diagram shows the coach now working with the group.

### Sequence

- A2 is 10 yards from A1
- A1 passes firmly to A2
- A2 passes back with one touch and moves into a wide position
- A1 passes wide to A2
- A2 controls the balls with an open body position and passes to the coach
- The coach then passes to the next player in line A3, and the drill continues

### Coaching Points

- Firm passes on the ground
  - Good first touch
- A2 back pedals to wide position so that he is in a sideways position to receive the next pass
  - Use both feet

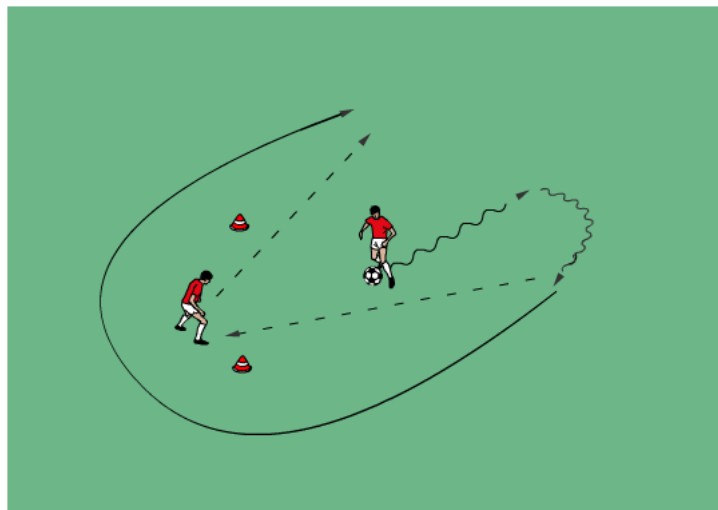


28. **Passing and Movement 3**  
**Setup**

- Set up cones as in diagram (40 yard square), 2 players per cones

**Sequence**

- Players pass the ball back and forth through the cones using one touch if possible, whilst bouncing on their feet.
- Coach shouts “turn”, inside player turns, dribbles to opposite side of grid with head up and moves to a different set of cones.
- As players are dribbling, outside players move to the inside position so the players are always alternating positions.
  - If coach shouts “face”, outside players dribble with the ball

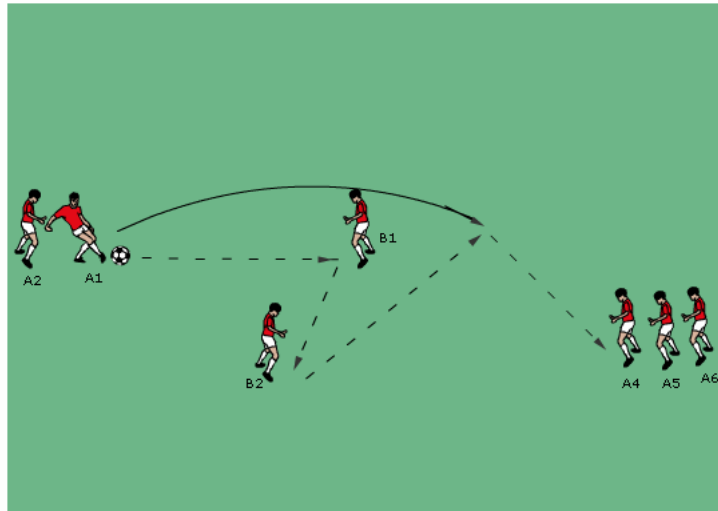


29. **Passing and Movement 3 (progression)**

- The diagram shows a close up of two players from the previous diagram. This time after dribbling, the player passes the ball back to his partner, shouts “hold” and runs round the back of his partner who passes into his path. 3 repetitions then change

**Coaching Point**

- Communication is essential – hold it and then wait till he asks to play the ball back



### 30. Passing and movement 3 (variation)

#### Setup

- Players again split into 2 groups

#### Sequence

- A1 passes firmly to B1 then makes an overlap run round B1.
  - B1 'stuns' the pass with one touch to B2
- B2 passes with his first touch into the path of running A1
  - A1 passes with one touch if possible to A4
- A4 takes a controlling touch and continues the drill by passing to B2
  - Everyone takes turns at B1 and B2's position

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