

Program Curriculum

Learning to Train
U9 to U12

U9 to U12 Curriculum

Welcome to the Learning To Train (U9 to U12) Stage Training Curriculum.

This LIVE document will provide you with activities and ideas appropriate for the players you are working with.

Comments have been turned ON. Feel free to ask questions or contribute some more ideas for everyone who may access this document. I will attempt to answer any questions I can and would encourage all other coaches to add any thoughts or ideas they may have to help enhance each activity so we can

You may download this document in MS PowerPoint format or print it directly as is.

U9-U12 (L2T) Program Curriculum

Program Introduction

[Slides 4 through 6 \(click for a shortcut\)](#)

Cutting and Turning

[Slides 7 through 16 \(click for a shortcut\)](#)

Short Passing

[Slides 17 through 28 \(click for a shortcut\)](#)

Receiving & Striking

[Slides 29 through 39 \(click for a shortcut\)](#)

U9 to U12 Program Introduction

Player Characteristics and Coaching Methodology

Overall objective of the U9 to U12 program

A positive, rewarding and appropriately competitive soccer experience that contributes to the individual's self confidence.

Basic skill development (i.e. first touch and short passing vs kicking and running)

Basic tactical understanding (i.e. attacking and defending in 1v1, 2v1, 2v2, 3v2 and 3v3 situations)

Characteristics of the U9 to U12 Player

- Improved coordination skills, endurance and self confidence
- Increased attention span and desire to learn
- Performance oriented and able to problem solve difficult tasks

Coaching Methodology for the U9 to U12 Player

- Players should be encouraged to experiment through failure. Guide the players in the right direction, avoid telling them how to get there.
- You are looking to develop an independent spirit in each player...too much direction makes young players dependant on the coach for learning and discourages them from problem solving on their own.
- Sessions can begin to focus on basic tactical behaviour (1v1, 2v2, att/def, combination play, creating space...)
- High intensity and competition levels can be expected with most activities.

Suggested Session Structure

Game/Activity/Game

The drills and activities presented here provide you with general ideas for content for the 60 minutes you have with your team. The activities are structured around the game - activity - game format which is most appropriate for learning, retention and transfer of knowledge. You will need to consider and plan your activities in advance.

Warm-up / Intro Game (15 to 20min)

Get them playing quickly. Intro games should be structured to provide lots of opportunity for players to bring out the desired skill. Minimize stops and start...allow a lot of flow in these games.

Technical Activity (10 to 15min)

Demonstrate the skill you want to see. Manage your numbers appropriately. Try to achieve a work:rest ratio of 1:3 or less. Encourage players to focus on their performance behaviour before / during / after the execution of each technical repetition (sequencing). Include the GK's where you can or have an assistant work with the GKs separately.

Scrimmage Game (20 to 25min)

Get them playing quickly. Reduce the frequency of your coaching as the game goes on. Challenge the players to bring out the principles of play (discussed later) while still focussing on specific technical outcomes. Encourage good playing habits (i.e. controlling and passing the ball vs kicking the ball).

Cool Down & Wrap-Up (5min)

Have a routine for the end of practice. This is a good time to begin introducing the habit of stretching and allows you to debrief with the team and

Session Preparation

With only 60 minutes on field your transition time between activities is crucial. Plan out your organization and player communication in advance.

How will you transition players from one activity to the next?

How much time will you invest to introduce an activity?

How many times will you need to intervene for constructive or supporting coaching points?

Players should be working with intensity. Demand game effort and a desire to win every battle. When managed correctly the 60 minute session can push the player's fitness.

Cutting & Turning

**Practice Plans for Cutting
and Turning with the ball**

Cutting & Turning

Suggested Activities

Mix and match activities suggested below as you see fit and based on the ability of your players. All sessions should include a Warm-Up, Intro Game, Technical Drill, Scrimmage Game and Cool Down (with Strength Work). Repeating sessions is OK and encouraged (there is a balance between repeating a session and maintaining player motivation). Consistency can help players better process the information they receive and transfer it more effectively into competition.

Intro Games

1v1 to side goals

'Wonderful Ones' to 'Make up your Mind'

Technical Drills

Dribbling Star (can add passing around the back)

Dribble out from line cut/turn and dribble back (in pairs or 3's, can incorporate a pass back instead)

Scrimmage Games (with GK's)

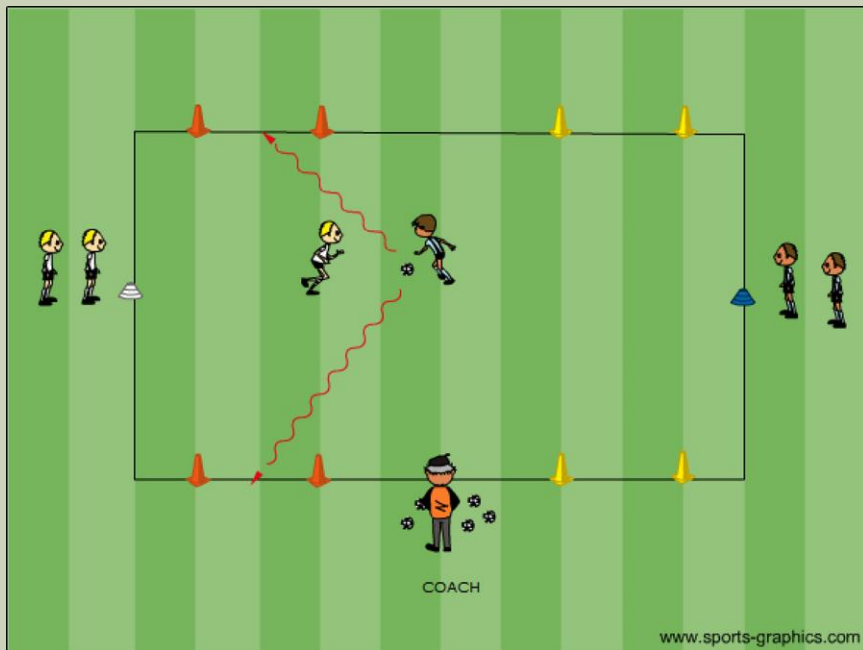
Two teams with subs

Two teams with jokers

Wave game (3v3, 4v4's)

Cutting & Turning

Intro Games

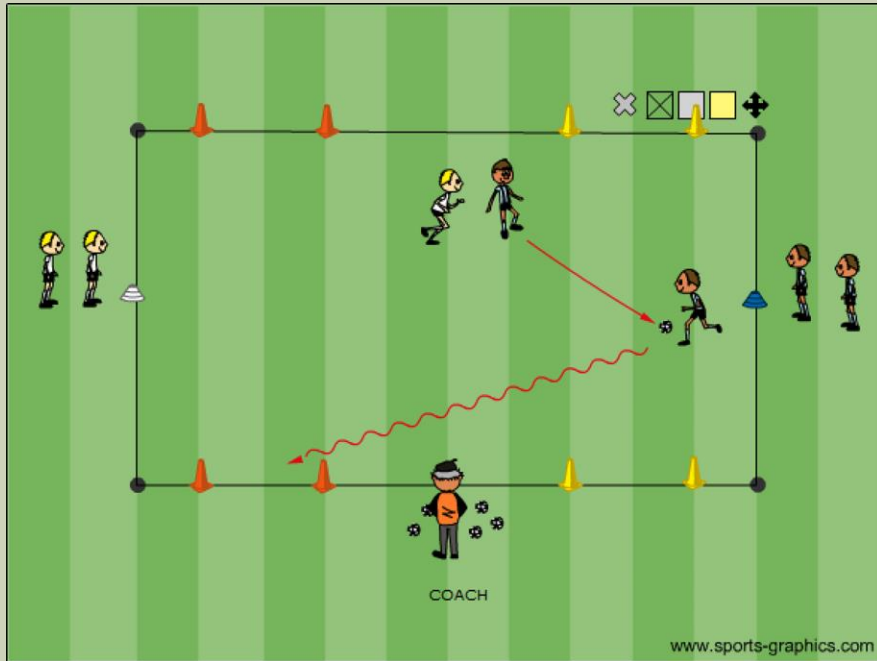


Sideline Goals (1v1, 2v1 & 2v2)

- Shown = 1v1
- The sideline goals encourage tricks and changes of direction from the attacker.
- Vary size of field based on ability of players or desired objective
- Goals are about 2yds in width
- Players score by dribbling the ball through either goal in the opponent's half of the field
- Coach starts the play by serving the ball onto the field. Vary how you play the ball and where. This will challenge the players differently each time (driven pass, chipped pass, in the corner or in the middle etc...)

Cutting & Turning

Intro Games

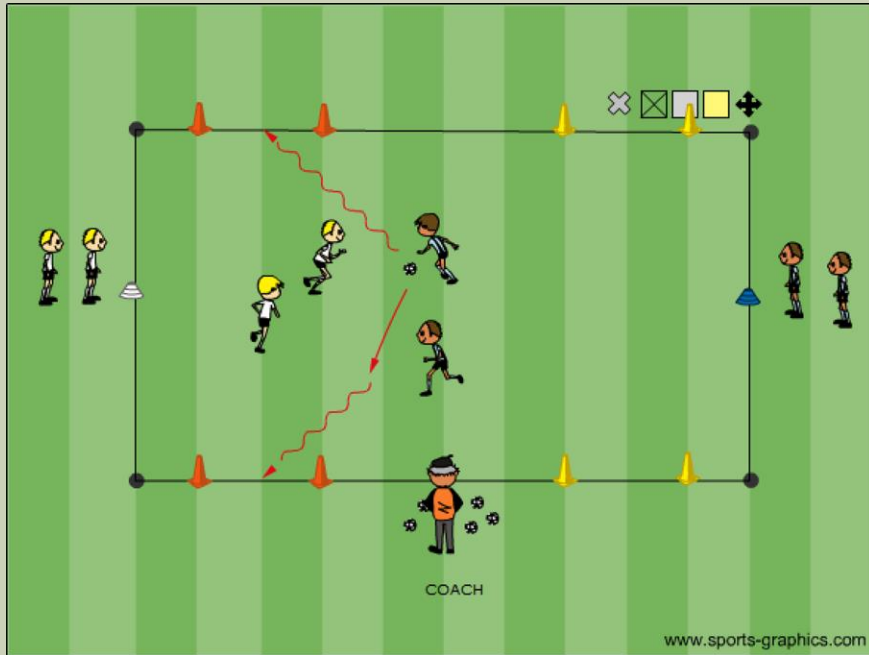


Sideline Goals (1v1, 2v1 & 2v2)

- Shown = 2v1
- Vary size of field based on ability of players or desired objective
- Goals are about 2yds in width
- Players score by dribbling the ball through either goal in the opponent's half of the field
- Start with 1v1. The player on the ball can choose to attack 1v1 or turn and pass to a teammate to create a 2v1 situation.
- If defender wins the ball they can choose to attack or turn and pass to a teammate. Can play up to 2v2

Cutting & Turning

Intro Games

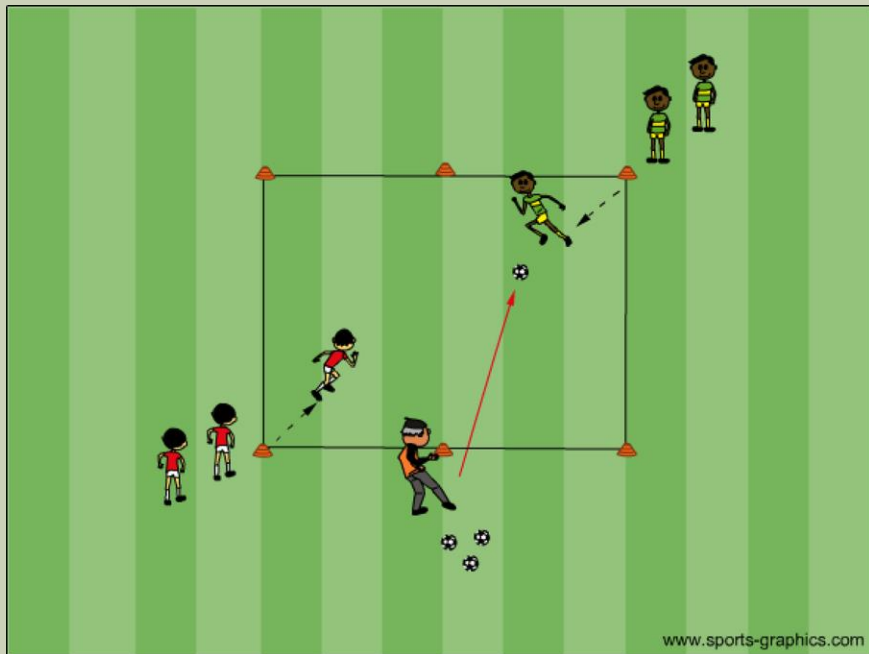


Sideline Goals (1v1, 2v1 & 2v2)

- Shown = 2v2
- The sideline goals encourage tricks and changes of direction from the attacker.
- Vary size of field based on ability of players or desired objective
- Goals are about 2yds in width
- Players score by dribbling the ball through either goal in the opponent's half of the field
- Coach starts the play by serving the ball onto the field. Vary how you play the ball and where. This will challenge the players differently each time (driven pass, chipped pass, in the corner or in the middle etc...)

Cutting & Turning

Intro Games

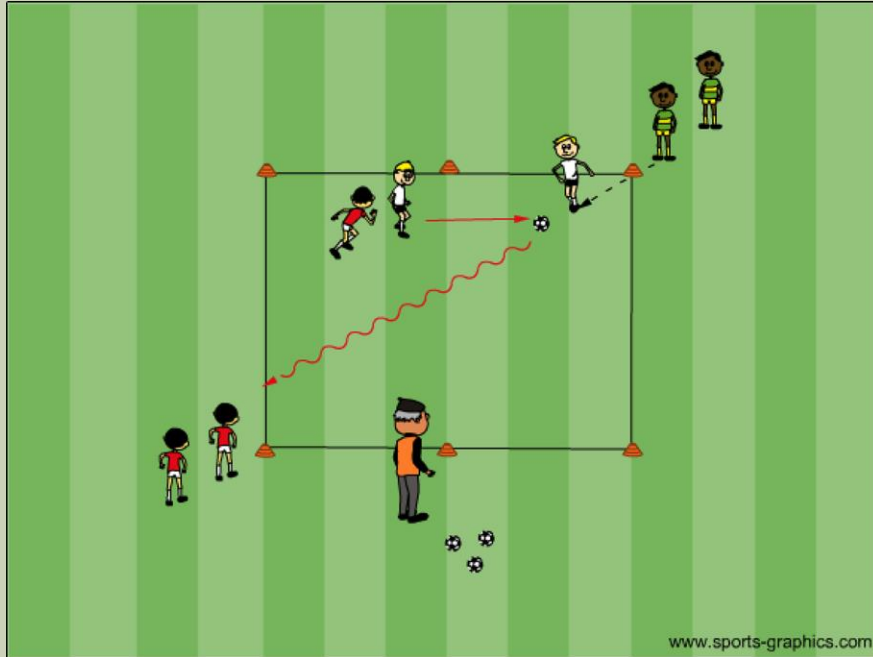


Wonderful 1's (1v1)

- Use a small field to encourage tight control and skill (8x12yds or 10x15yds)
- Players score by dribbling the ball over the opponents end line OR by stopping the ball on the opponents end line.
- Coach starts the play by serving the ball onto the field. Vary how you play the ball and where. This will challenge the players differently each time (driven pass, chipped pass, in the corner or in the middle etc...)

Cutting & Turning

Intro Games

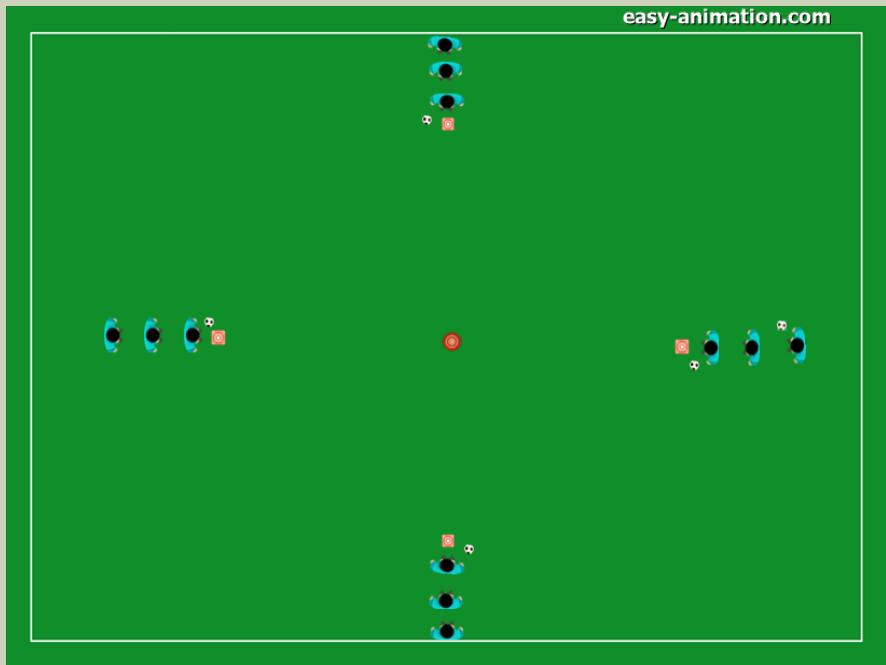


Make Up Your Mind (1v1 to 2v1)

- Use a small field to encourage tight control and skill (8x12yds or 10x15yds)
- Players score by dribbling the ball over the opponents end line OR by stopping the ball on the opponents end line.
- Coach starts the play by serving the ball onto the field.
- Player on the ball can attack or turn and pass to a teammate to create a 2v1 situation.
- Coaching Points
 - ◆ “when to dribble” vs “when to pass”
 - ◆ supporting angles in a 2v1
 - ◆ defending against two opponents

Cutting & Turning

Technical Activities

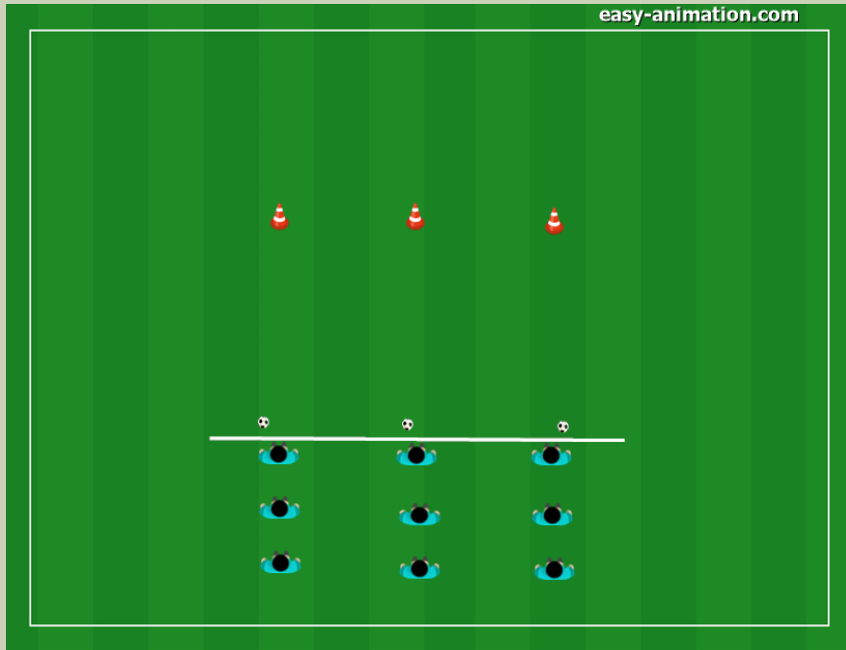


Dribbling Star

- Click on the image for a video
- Players dribble towards centre cone, turn and dribble back to start, give the ball to the next player and then head to the back of the line
- For added complexity the last player in each line passes another ball around the outside of the area continually.
- Variation - Players dribble towards centre, cut and dribble to the cone on their left (or right), give the ball to the next player in line and head to the back of the line.

Cutting & Turning

Technical Activities



Dribble Out & Pass Back

- Click on Image for a video.
- Set cones 5yds away from line.
- First players dribble out to cone, cut and turn back towards starting line then pass the ball back to the next player.
- Second player receives and dribbles out to cone to repeat.
- Focus on improving speed of play, sharp turns and crisp pass back.
- Receiver should be on toes to receive and attack the cone with their first touch.
- Vary the type of turns the players execute. Use R & L foot. Repeat turns 5 - 8 times.

Cutting & Turning

Scrimmage Games

Get them playing quickly. Reduce the frequency of your coaching as the game goes on. Challenge the players to bring out the principles of play (reviewed on the next slide) while still focussing on specific technical outcomes.

Two teams with subs

Monitor sub frequency to maintain appropriate work : rest ratio. Play 2 equal halves.

Two teams with jokers

Add one or two jokers to the game. Jokers help the team in possession. You can choose to reduce the number of jokers as the game progresses

Three team rotation (4v4 or 5v5)

Play 4-5 minute games then rotate teams. Two teams on the field one team off. Team that is off can act as target players on the end line or bumpers on the sideline (they try to keep the ball from going out or play). Rotate teams evenly or winning team stays on.

Wave game (3v3, 4v4)

Create two balanced teams. Each team takes position on their goal line and forms three or four lines (no more that 3 players per line). On the coach's command the first player in each line enters the field of play and competes for the ball with their team. Play continues until the coach calls switch. At that time the players on the field return to their lines and the next players come out to compete. Monitor 'switching' frequency to maintain appropriate work : rest ratio.

Short Passing

Practice Plans for Passing the Ball

Short Passing

Suggested Activities

Mix and match activities suggested below as you see fit and based on the ability of your players. All sessions should include a Warm-Up, Intro Game, Technical Drill, Scrimmage Game and Cool Down (with Strength Work). Repeating sessions is OK and encouraged (there is a balance between repeating a session and maintaining player motivation). Consistency can help players better process the information they receive and transfer it more effectively into competition.

Intro Games

2v2 End Zone Game

2v2 End Zone Game with Support

2 or 3 Team Soccer Tennis

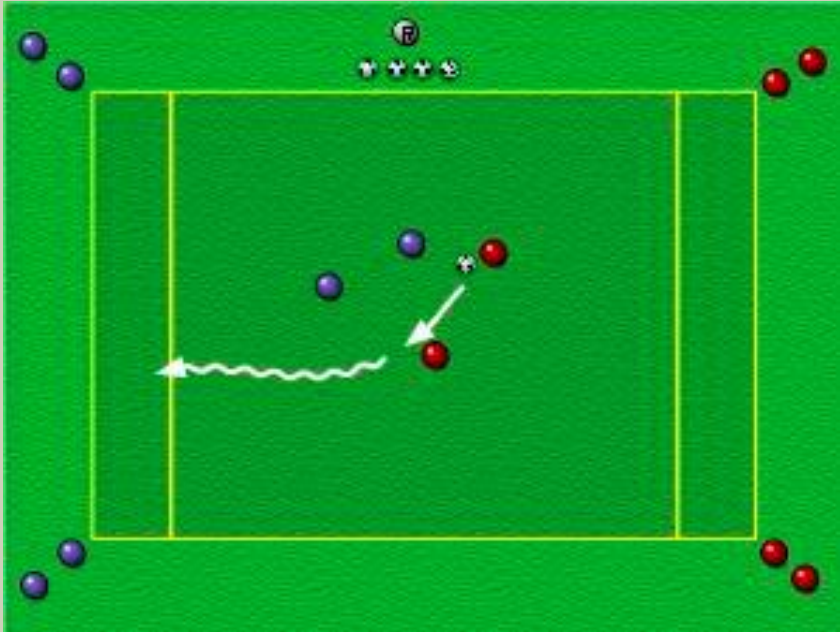
Technical Drill

Patterned Passing Activities

Scrimmage Games (with GK's)

Short Passing

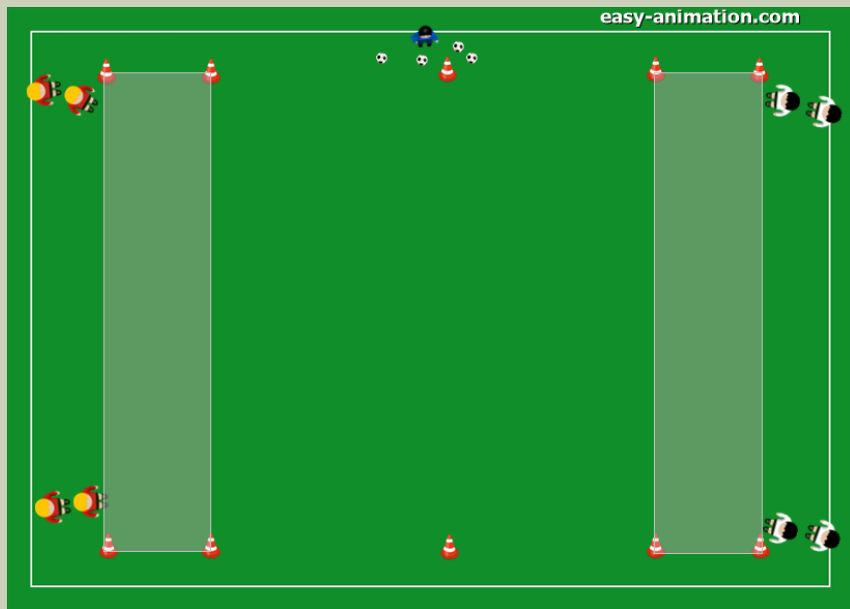
Intro Games



2v2 End Zone Game

- Coach serves a ball onto the field.
- First player in each corner comes out to create a 2v2 situation.
- Players score by dribbling into OR receiving a pass in the opponents' end zone.
- Give bonus points if the attackers can connect a pass between the defenders (split).
- Coach the supporting attacker on good receiving angles.
- Vary your service to challenge the team receiving the ball differently each time.
- Keep score to motivate both sides.

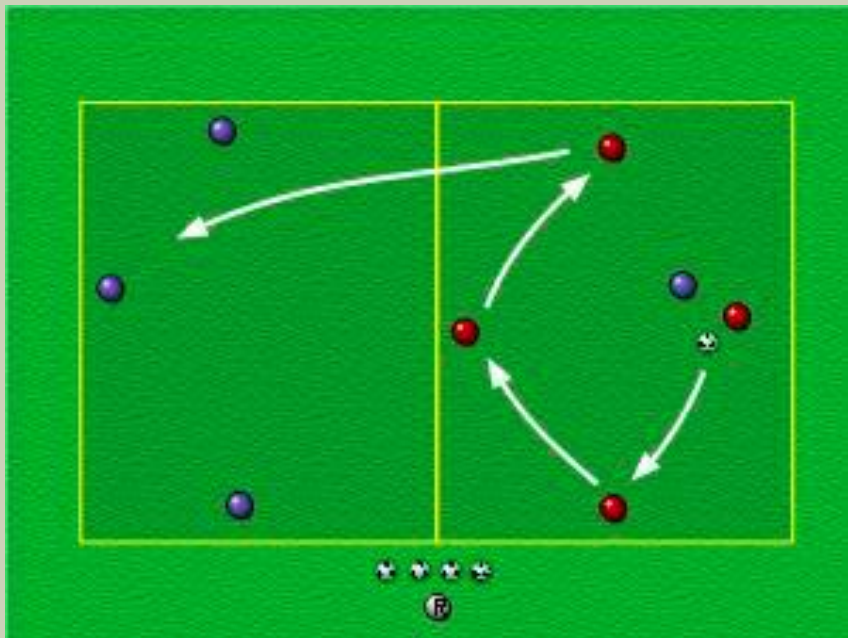
Short Passing Intro Games



2v2 End Zone Game with Support

- Click on the image for a video.
- Coach serves a ball onto the field.
- First player in each corner comes out to create a 2v2 situation.
- Players score by dribbling into OR receiving a pass in the opponents' end zone.
- Team in possession can turn and play back to supporting teammates. Supporting teammates **MUST** remain in the end zone and are only involved in the attack...they cannot defend.
- Coach coordinated movement by the two attacking players to unbalance defenders

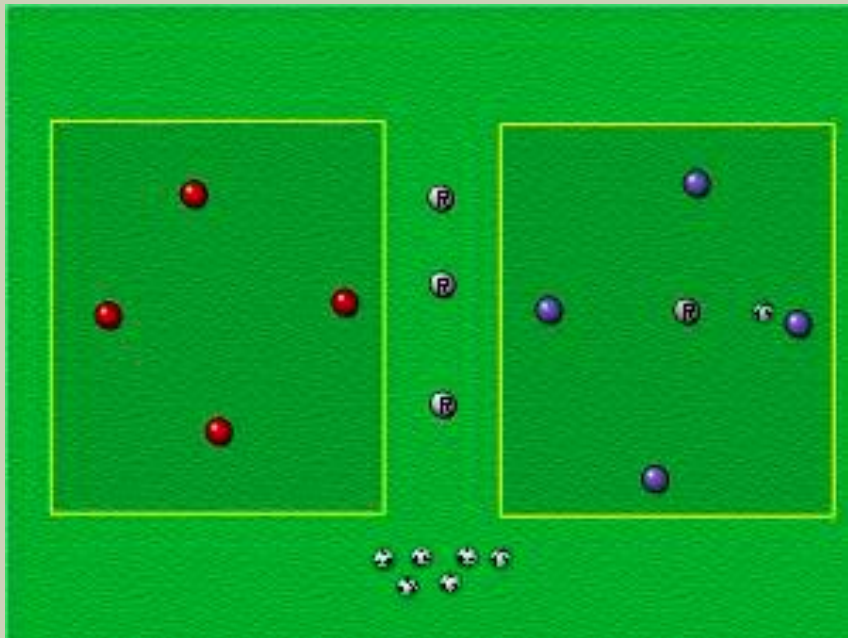
Short Passing Intro Games



Two Team Tennis (3v3 or 4v4)

- Show is 4v4 scenario
- Two teams, each restricted to their own half of the field.
- Team A must complete a set # of passes (2, 3, 4...) and then pass over the line and into the opposing area to score. This counts as one point.
- After the ball enters opposing area, Team A can send a defender into the area to try and win the ball back (4 v 1).
- The defender can get rid of the ball if they win it OR they can turn and pass it back to their teammates for a bonus point.
- Play is similar when team B has possession.
- Can restrict the team in possession to passes on the ground, chipped or left foot only in order to play the ball into opposing area.

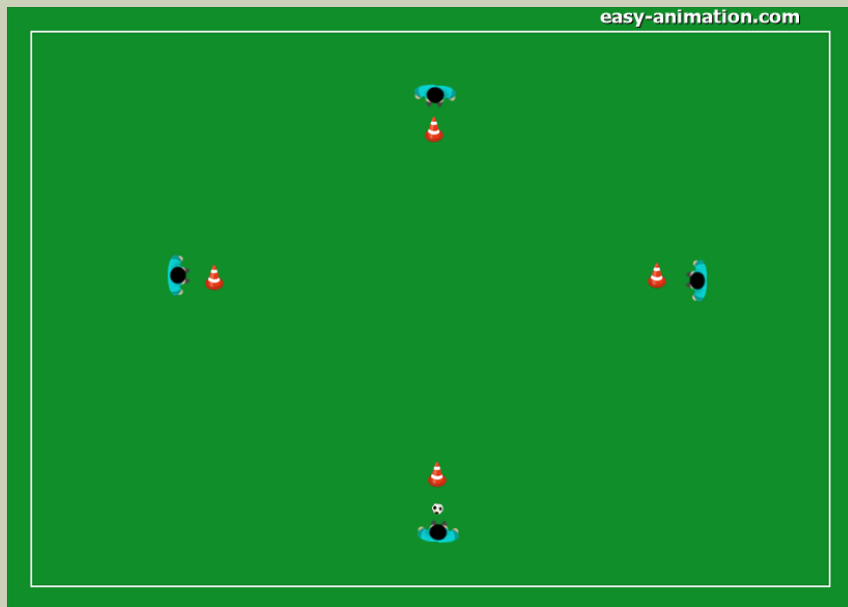
Short Passing Intro Games



Three Team Tennis (3v3v3 or 4v4v4)

- Shown is 4v4 scenario
- Three teams, each restricted to their section.
- Blue team must complete a set # of passes (2, 3, 4...) and then pass through / over the central section and into the opposite area to score. This counts as one point.
- After the ball enters opposite area, Grey team can send a defender into the area to try and force a loss of possession (4 v 1).
- The team who loses possession becomes the team in the middle.
- Can restrict the team in possession to passes on the ground, chipped or left foot only in order to play the ball into opposing area.

Short Passing Technical Drill



Passing Diamond (and variations)

- Click on the image for a video.
- Suggested if you have access to half of the Dome. If less space try the passing triangle (shown in later slides)

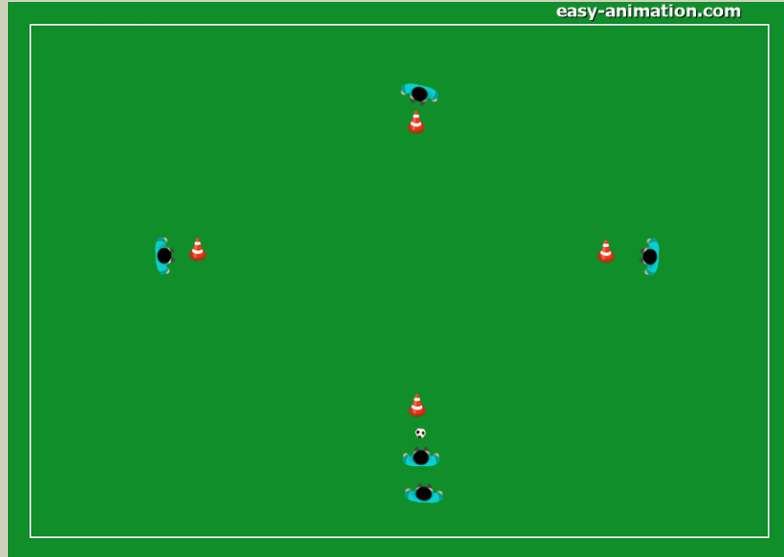
Encourage the following key points:

- **PRESENT FOR THE BALL** - Players must SHOW & CALL for the ball by checking away from cone and presenting a target area for the pass.
- **HALF TURNED** - Players must receive the ball in a half turned posture (i.e. facing the triangle - or centre of the area - with one shoulder towards the passer and one shoulder toward the direction they will play the ball next)
- **INSIDE OF THE FOOT** - Receive and then Pass with the inside of the same foot (use R foot only if moving ball in counter clockwise direction & L foot only if clockwise direction).
- You can increase the intensity by challenging the group to make 10 full cycles around the area in a set amount of time
- OR you can have one group compete against another

Short Passing Technical Drill

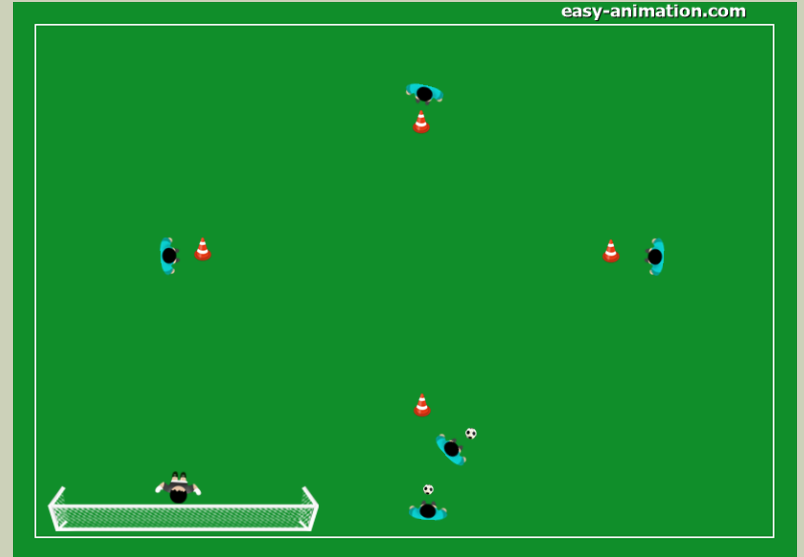
Passing Diamond Variation (movement)

Click on image for video



Passing Diamond Variation (GK)

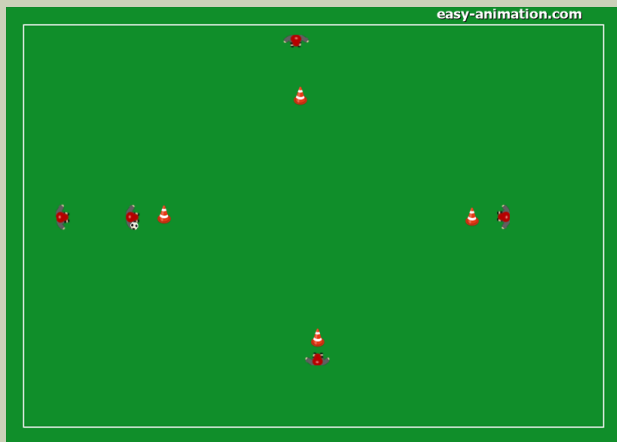
Click on image for video



Short Passing Technical Drill

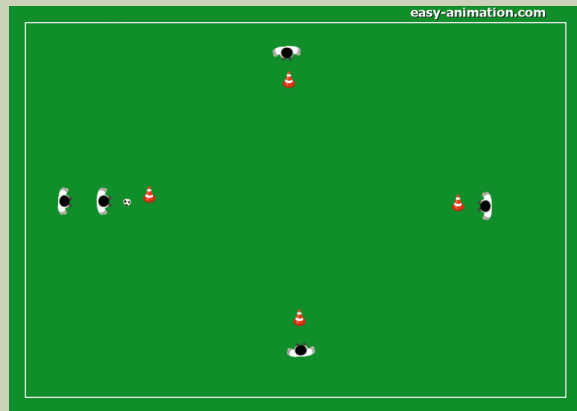
Passing Diamond Variation (Double Pass)

- Click Image for Video
- Second player receives the ball and gives a one touch pass back to the first player who plays a one touch pass back directly to the second player.
- Second player now progresses to the third player.



Passing Diamond Variation (Give & Go)

- Click Image for Video
- Second player receives the ball and gives a one touch pass back to the first player. The first player now plays a through ball into space for the second player to run on to.
- Second player now progresses to the third player.



Short Passing Technical Drill



Passing Triangle (with Dribble / with GK)

- Click on each image for a video.
- These are variations of the Passing Diamond activities and can help you accomplish the same objectives in smaller space

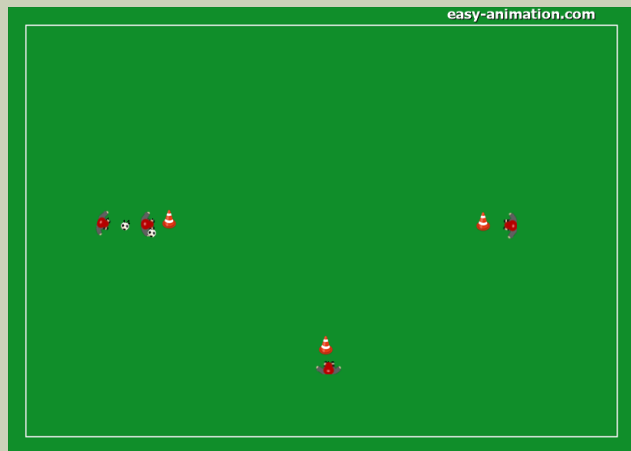
Encourage the following key points:

- **PRESENT FOR THE BALL** - Players must SHOW & CALL for the ball by checking away from cone and presenting a target area for the pass.
- **HALF TURNED** - Players must receive the ball in a half turned posture (i.e. facing the triangle - or centre of the area - with one shoulder towards the passer and one shoulder toward the direction they will play the ball next)
- **INSIDE OF THE FOOT** - Receive and then Pass with the inside of the same foot (use R foot only if moving ball in counter clockwise direction & L foot only if clockwise direction).
- You can increase the intensity by challenging the group to make 10 full cycles around the area in a set amount of time
- OR you can have one group compete against another

Short Passing Technical Drill

Passing Triangle Progression (Double Pass)

- Click Image for Video
- Second player receives the ball and gives a one touch pass back to the first player who plays a one touch pass back directly to the second player.
- Second player now progresses to the third player.



Passing Triangle Progression (Give & Go)

- Click Image for Video
- Second player receives the ball and gives a one touch pass back to the first player. The first player now plays a through ball into space for the second player to run on to.
- Second player now progresses to the third player.



Short Passing

Scrimmage Games

Get them playing quickly. Reduce the frequency of your coaching as the game goes on. Challenge the players to bring out the principles of play (reviewed on the next slide) while still focussing on specific technical outcomes.

Two teams with subs

Monitor sub frequency to maintain appropriate work : rest ratio. Play 2 equal halves.

Two teams with jokers

Add one or two jokers to the game. Jokers help the team in possession. You can choose to reduce the number of jokers as the game progresses

Three team rotation (4v4 or 5v5)

Play 4-5 minute games then rotate teams. Two teams on the field one team off. Team that is off can act as target players on the end line or bumpers on the sideline (they try to keep the ball from going out or play). Rotate teams evenly or winning team stays on.

Wave game (3v3, 4v4)

Create two balanced teams. Each team takes position on their goal line and forms three or four lines (no more that 3 players per line). On the coaches command the first player in each line enters the field of play and competes for the ball with their team. Play continues until the coach call switch. At that time the players on the field return to their lines and the next players come out to compete. Monitor 'switching' frequency to maintain appropriate work : rest ratio.

Receiving & Striking

Practice Plans for Receiving & Striking the ball

Receiving & Striking

Suggested Activities

Mix and match activities suggested below as you see fit. All sessions should include a Warm-Up, Intro Game, Technical Drill, Scrimmage Game and Cool Down (with Strength Work). Repeating sessions is OK and encouraged (there is a balance between repeating a session and maintaining player motivation). Consistency can help players better process the information they receive and transfer it more effectively into competition.

Intro Games

King Louie

Tennis with GK's

Scrimmage w/ Very Large Goals

Technical Drill

Dribble, feint & shoot

Receive, dribble, feint & shoot (facing goal & back to goal)

Receive, dribble, feint & shoot under pressure (facing goal & back to goal)

Scrimmage Games (with GK's)

Two teams with subs

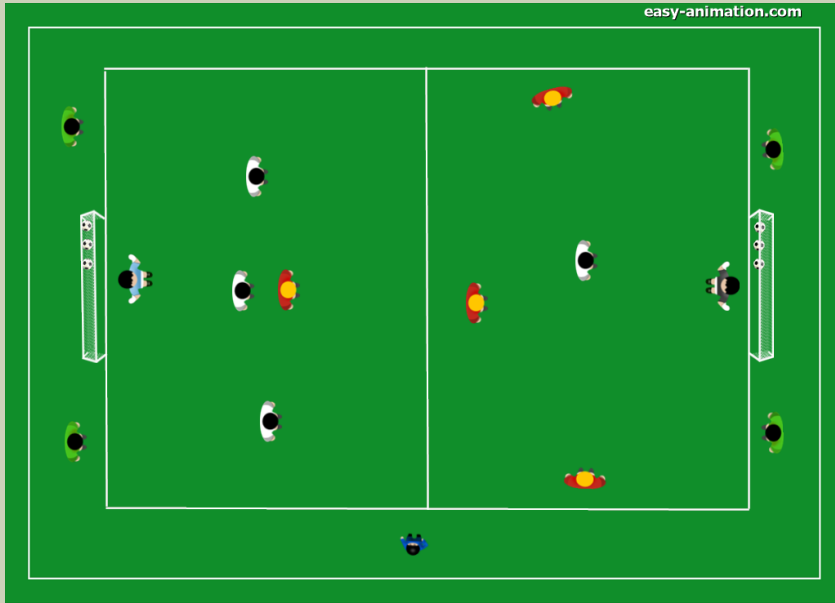
Two teams with jokers

Wave game (3v3, 4v4's)

Three team Rotation (4v4's 5v5's)

Receiving & Striking

Intro Games

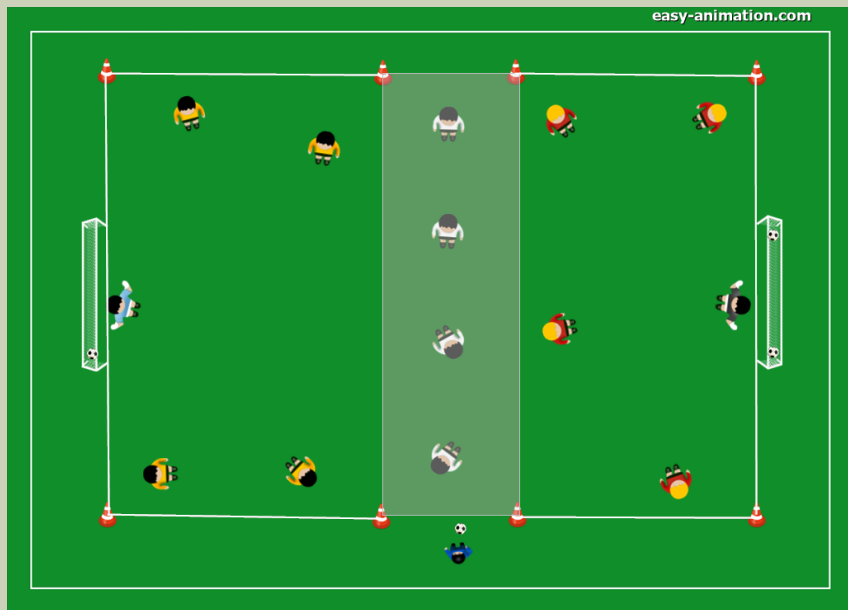


King Louis (with GK's)

- Click on the image for a video.
- 4v4 version shown
- Each team is restricted to their half of the field.
- Each team has a single striker in the opponents half.
- A third team acts as bumpers for the team attacking the end line that they occupy.
- Play starts from the GK
- The attacking team must maintain possession and try to score a goal.
- Goals can only be scored by initiating a pass to the striker.
- The striker may only lay the ball back for a shot on goal
- If the defending striker can steal the ball from the opponent they may turn to shoot on net or maintain possession with their teammates.

Receiving & Striking

Intro Games

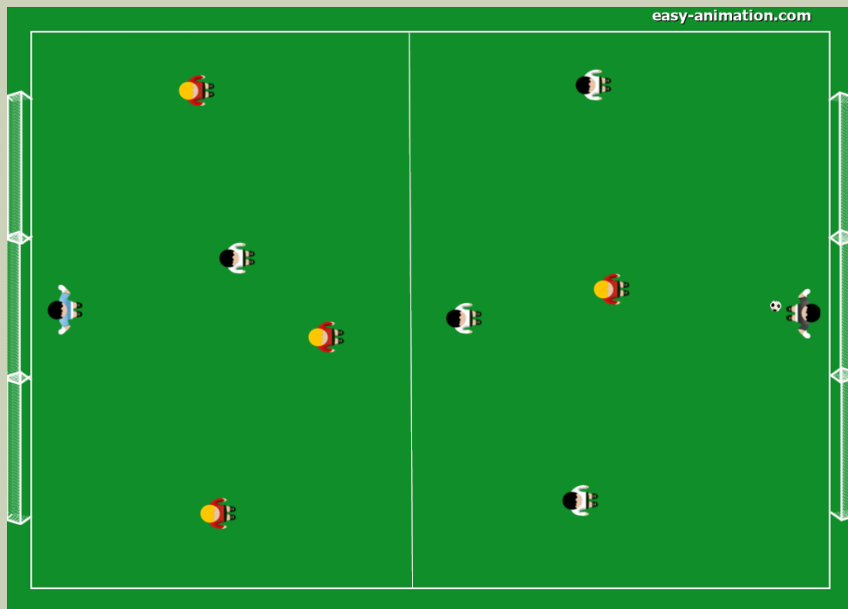


Three Team Tennis (3v3v3 or 4v4v4)

- Shown is 4v4v4 scenario
- Three teams, each restricted to their section.
- Blue team must complete a set # of passes (2, 3, 4...) and then pass through / over the central section and into the opposite area to score. This counts as one point.
- After the ball enters opposite area, Grey team can send a defender into the area to try and force a loss of possession (4 v 1).
- If the defending team wins possession they can have an attempt against the net they are facing. If they. The defending team can get out of the middle when they score a goal or have three attempts at goal.
- Can restrict the team in possession to passes on the ground, chipped or left foot only in order to play the ball into opposing area.

Receiving & Striking

Intro Games



Scrimmage to Large Goals

- 5v5 game shown
- Play a standard game of 3v3 / 4v4 / 5v5 or a numbers game to manage your players.
- Goals are scored as normal EXCEPT the goals are larger than usual. Shown below are three goals side by side but you can vary this as you see fit. The entire end line can be a goal or the entire back wall.
- The objective is to encourage the idea of shooting often. When the objective is easy to achieve each player will take advantage of tiny opportunities.
- Feel free to add restrictions as the game progresses (i.e. can only shoot from attacking half, can only shoot from the defending half, can only shoot on first touch, can only score from volley's etc)
- As the play adapts you can reduce the size of the goals to make the objective more challenging

Receiving & Striking Technical Drill



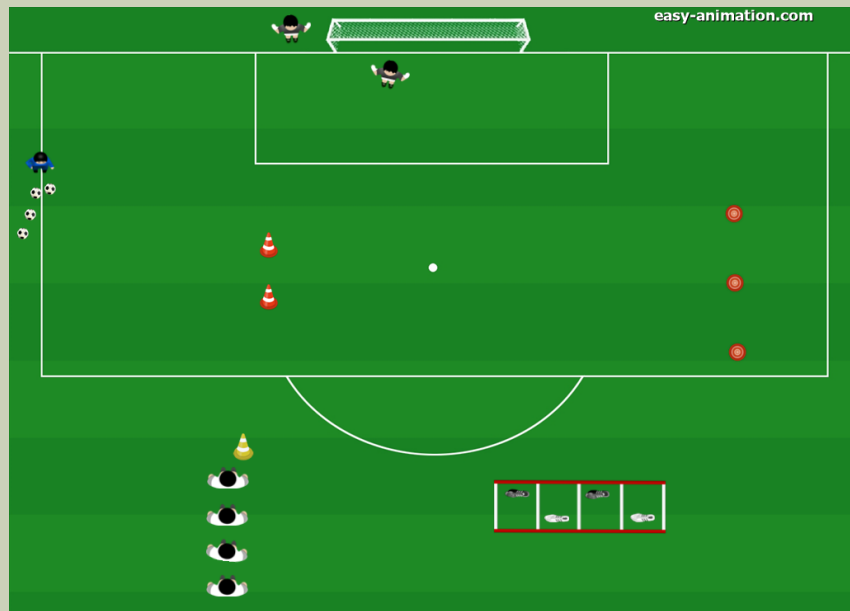
Dribble, Feint & Finish

- Click on image for a video
- First player attacks the space in front of them, feints an imaginary opponent and cuts through the gate to set up a shot on goal.
- After the shot the player collect the ball and makes their way back to the line via a set of obstacles (cones, ladders etc.)
- Regulate frequency of shots for the benefit of the GKs.
- Switch sides to work left and right foot
- Add a second goal for more players

Encourage the Following Key Points

- After you beat the 'opponent' touch and finish as quickly as you can with as few touches of the ball as possible.
- Strike the ball with the top of the toes and push the ball (follow through) towards the target.
- Don't stretch and reach for the ball, be comfortably close to the ball when you strike it

Receiving & Striking Technical Drill



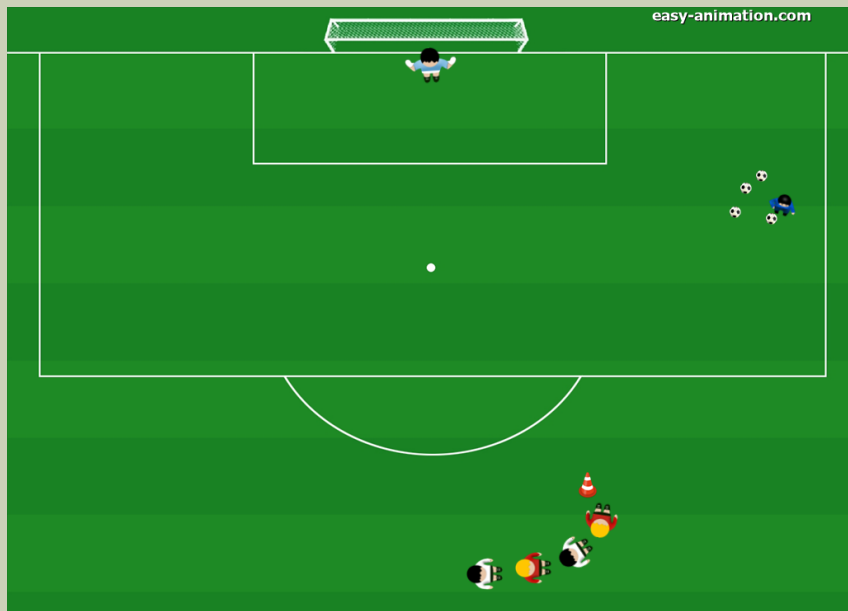
Dribble, Feint & Finish - Receive when facing goal

- Click on image for a video
- First player attacks the space in front of them to receive the ball from the coach.
- They control the ball, feint an imaginary opponent and cut through the gate to set up a shot on goal.
- After the shot the player collect the ball and makes their way back to the line via a set of obstacles (cones, ladders etc.)
- Regulate frequency of shots for the benefit of the GKs.
- Switch sides to work left and right foot
- Add a second goal for more players

Encourage the Following Key Points

- First Touch should keep the ball close and support the decision to attack the goal
- After you beat the 'opponent' touch and finish as quickly as you can with as few touches of the ball as possible.
- Strike the ball with the top of the toes and push the ball (follow through) towards the target.
- Don't stretch and reach for the ball, be comfortably close to the ball when you strike it

Receiving & Striking Technical Drill



Dribble, Feint & Finish - Receive w / pressure when facing goal

- Click on image for a video
- First player attacks the space in front of them to receive the ball from the coach.
- They control the ball and attack the net for a shot on goal
- After they shoot they turn to become the next defender
- Second player receives a ball from the coach, attacks the defender and attempts a shot on net then turns to become the next defender
- Once they have defended they get a ball from the back of the net, return it to the coach and rejoin the line.
- Switch sides to work left and right foot
- Add a second goal for more players

Encourage the Following Key Points

- First Touch should keep the ball close and support the decision to attack the goal
- After you beat the 'opponent' touch and finish as quickly as you can with as few touches of the ball as possible.

Receiving & Striking Technical Drill



Dribble, Feint & Finish - Receive w / pressure when back to goal

- Click on image for a video
- First player attacks the space in front of them to receive the ball, half turned, from the coach.
- They control the ball and attack the net for a shot on goal
- After they shoot they turn to become the next defender
- Second player receives a ball from the coach, attacks the defender and attempts a shot on net then turns to become the next defender
- Once they have defended they get a ball from the back of the net and return to the line via the obstacles that are laid out.
- Switch sides to work left and right foot
- Add a second goal for more players

Encourage the Following Key Points

- Encourage players to receive on the half turn (as they did during the short passing phase).
- Their First Touch should keep the ball close and support the decision to attack the goal

Receiving & Striking

Scrimmage Games

Get them playing quickly. Reduce the frequency of your coaching as the game goes on. Challenge the players to bring out the principles of play (reviewed on the next slide) while still focussing on specific technical outcomes.

Two teams with subs

Monitor sub frequency to maintain appropriate work : rest ratio. Play 2 equal halves.

Two teams with jokers

Add one or two jokers to the game. Jokers help the team in possession. You can choose to reduce the number of jokers as the game progresses

Three team rotation (4v4 or 5v5)

Play 4-5 minute games then rotate teams. Two teams on the field one team off. Team that is off can act as target players on the end line or bumpers on the sideline (they try to keep the ball from going out or play). Rotate teams evenly or winning team stays on.

Wave game (3v3, 4v4)

Create two balanced teams. Each team takes position on their goal line and forms three or four lines (no more that 3 players per line). On the coaches command the first player in each line enters the field of play and competes for the ball with their team. Play continues until the coach call switch. At that time the players on the field return to their lines and the next players come out to compete. Monitor 'switching' frequency to maintain appropriate work : rest ratio.