

TRAINING RESOURCES



Football Drills Part 1

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Football Drills – Part 1

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No Picture

No 1. Can You Do This?

This is a football drill designed for under 6 players. It is designed to work on simple body movement, coordination and balance.

Setup

In an unmarked area gather your players without their football (you can introduce this later in this drill). The coach should come up with short list of activities such as: skipping, one-legged hops, star jumps, log rolls, summer salts, push-ups, etc...

Instructions

The coach should start by asking the players "I can do [activity] can you?" The coach should then demonstrate to the players the activity and have the children do the same.

Variations

Introduce the soccer ball and change activities to include the soccer ball such as:

- dribbling
- throw ins
- punting

Coaching Points

- Allow Children the ability to explore their body movements.
- Make it fun for the children!

Focus

- FUN



No 2. Traffic Jam Dribbling Game

This game is just out right fun! The kids will have a blast playing this game. This drill is ideal for kids who know how to dribble but just need to learn to get their heads up and dribble under the pressures of mere congestion.

Setup

Step off a grid approximately 30X30 metres. Randomly place tall cones and training sticks (flags will work as well) in the middle of the grid. Split the group into 4 even teams who start on the corners of the grid with 1 ball per group.

Instructions

On the coach's command, the first player from each line will race through the "Traffic Jam" (training sticks and cones) in attempt to not hit a stick, cone, or another player. Once the player makes it through the traffic jam instruct them to dribble with speed to the line they are facing and pass the ball to the first player in line. That player should immediately head towards the traffic jam with speed in attempt to get through the traffic jam first.

At first don't keep score, simply let the players enjoy the close calls before playing the game. After 8-10 minutes, combine the two teams that are facing each other into one team. Next, have the players race through the traffic jam to the cone on the opposite side of the grid, around that cone and back through the traffic jam. As each player finishes the race they must sit down to signify to the group that they have completed the race. The team that has all players sitting down first wins the game.

Variations

For younger players it might be best to start with one or two players entering the traffic jam at a time.

Coaching Points

Since all 4 players should be entering the centre area at the same time make sure players are looking ahead of them with their head up. Remind players to keep the ball close when entering the traffic area.

Focus

- Dribbling
- Warm-up
- FUN



No 3. Instep Shooting Drill

This drill focuses on the instep drive. This is a very important method of striking a ball as it is used in shooting. The ball is struck with the shoelace part of the foot with the toe pointed down and the ankle locked.

Setup

Setup a grid that is 25x25 metres and place 3-4 tall cones in the middle of the grid. Divide the team into groups of 2. Partners stand on opposite sides of the grid facing each other. Each group of 2 needs a ball.

Instructions

Players get points by knocking over a cone by driving the ball to their partner's side of the grid. Any of the players on the side can return the ball by driving it with the instep of the foot while attempting to knock over a cone.

Variations

- Drill can be used for younger players to work on inside of the foot passing

Coaching Points

- Striking the ball with the shoelaces, toe pointed down, ankle locked, non-kicking foot should be next to the ball and slightly behind it and pointed towards the target. Players should try to land on their kicking foot to use the full transfer of body weight.

Focus

- Shooting
- Goalkeeping



No 4. Guard the Castle

This drill is a great small sided game that focuses on passing in numbers up situations. This is a fun drill and the kids will love it!

Setup

Set up a grid that is 12 X 12 metres. Organise the team into groups of four. One of the four players should wear an alternate jersey and be the designated defender (guarder of the castle). Take a ball and place it on the top of a disc cone in the middle of the grid, this will become the "castle". If you do not have disc cones, a tall cone will work just as good.

Instructions

It will be up to the 3 attackers to pass the ball around the defender in the grid in attempt to knock down the castle with a pass. The castle is considered knocked down when the ball is knocked off the cone or the tall cone is knocked down with a pass.

Variations

- Depending on the age level and skill of the players, you can remove the 12 x 12 grid limitations, or make the grid smaller for very skilled players.
- If players are standing next to the cone, you can build a 3x3 grid and not allow players to step into that small grid.
- Require players to complete a certain number of passes before they are allowed to knock down the castle.
- Play 1v1 and focus on dribbling skills.

Coaching Points

- Instruct players to get their heads up to find the pass.
- Make sure the players are passing the ball with proper weight on the ball.
- Make sure players are moving about the grid in order to find open space. Make sure players know it is ok to dribble the ball to space or beat the defender before making the pass.
- Make sure players are making the easiest decisions when passing.

Focus

- Dribbling
- Passing
- Receiving/Turning
- Possession
- Defending
- Attacking
- Warm-up
- FUN



No Picture

No 5. Simon Says

For U6 and U8 players. This drill focuses on dribbling and keeping close control for quick instructions. Also works on listening skills for the younger player.

Setup

Outline a 20X30 grid with cones. Each of the players needs a ball.

Instructions

Play Simon Says with the team as the players dribble in the grid. If a player does something they are not supposed to, issue them a GOTCHA. See who gets the least number of GOTCHA's. Examples of commands could be: Change direction, stop the ball, stop the ball and put your belly on the ball... etc. Also, try to throw in a trick or two like: kick the ball as far away as you can.

Variations

- Without ball
- With ball in hand
- With ball

Coaching Points

- Have players do actions like clapping in between their legs and skipping to increase body awareness.
- Focus on dribbling skills and keeping the ball close and under control.
- Focus on players listening skills.

Focus

- Dribbling
- Warm-up
- FUN



No 6. 2v2 or 1v1 - Get Outta Here

This drill is a very fast paced 2v2 game that focuses on aspects of the small sided game such as dribbling, passing, and scoring.

Setup

Setup a 25 x 15 metre grid with a small goal at each end, play 2v2. You can adjust the size of the field based on the skill level of the players.

Instructions

The coach stands on the touchline with a supply of ball and a small line of players on each side. The coach plays a ball in and the first person from each line plays 2v2. If a player scores they stay on and the other person leaves. A ball is immediately played back into the game. If the ball goes out of bounds both players are “outta there.”

This should be a very fast paced game.

Variations

- You can start with a 1v1 before progressing to the 2v2.
- Progress to a 3v3
- Limit touches to encourage passing.
- Enforce limitations such as beating a player before passing to encourage players taking on defenders.

Coaching Points

- Promote good small group passing, early support, good skills to beat defenders and taking shots.

Focus

- Dribbling
- Receiving/Turning
- Fitness
- Possession
- Defending
- Attacking
- FUN



No 7. 5v2 Rotating Defenders

This drill will focus on keeping possession by making good passes as well as good passing decisions, moving to open space, and good communication.

Setup

Start by setting up a 12X12 grid. 5 attackers wear Alternate jerseys, and the remaining players should pair up as defenders behind one cone with the supply of balls.

Instructions

The first pair of defenders passes a ball into the 5 attackers, and step into the grid and become defenders. The attackers should continue passing until the defenders win the ball, or the ball is knocked out of play. Once the play is dead, the next pair of defenders plays into the same 5 attackers, and play resumes.

Variations

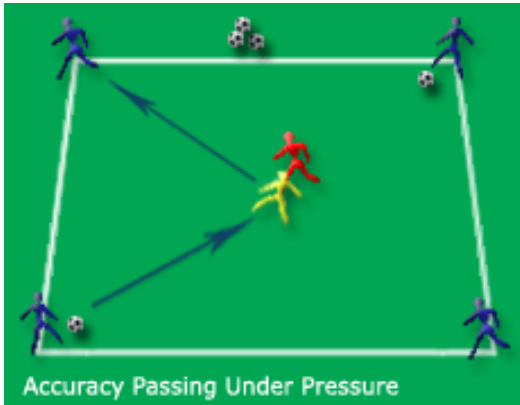
- Adjust grid (larger = easier; smaller = harder)
- Introduce splits (split defenders, defenders do 10 push ups every split)
- Adjust the number of attackers (4 attackers vs. 2 defenders)

Coaching Points

- Vision
- Changes in the direction and speed of play
- Appropriate use of 1st touch
- Appropriate use of short or long passing
- Good passes to feet
- Good first touch
- Good decision making (make play easy)
- Speed of play/decisions

Focus

- Dribbling
- Passing
- Receiving/Turning
- Possession
- Defending
- Attacking
- Warm-up



No 8. Accuracy Passing Under Pressure

This drill focuses on passing, agility and fitness.

Setup

Set up a field that is 20X20 metres. Four players should be in each of the corners with the remaining two players in the middle of the grid. One of the two players is working while the other person rests with their hands on their knees. Two balls are used and the ball starts in opposite corners.

Instructions

Player 1 passes the ball towards the player resting, the working player jumps over the player resting and receives the ball and knocks it to the player to his right. As soon as the working player plays the ball back, the player on the other side of the grid plays a ball towards the resting player and the working player jumps him again, receives the ball and passes to the player on his right. The play continues in this manner. Each player should work for 60 seconds. Rotate all players.

Variations

- Play 1 or 2 touch
- Use inside and outside of foot
- Move close and serve with their hands for volleys

Coaching Points

- Good first touch
- Good work rate along with accurate passes

Focus

- Passing
- Receiving/Turning
- Fitness



No 9. Angle of Support Possession Drill

This football passing drill is a great drill for teaching young players angle of support and spacing.

Setup

Set up a grid that is 10 X 10 metres. Organise the team into groups of three players per grid. Each of the three players should position themselves near 3 different corners of the grid with one ball.

Instructions

The instructions are simply to never leave an empty cone adjacent to the player with the ball. For example, say the drill begins with a player at position 1 in possession of the ball while players at 2 and 4 start at the cones adjacent to the player at 1. The player at position 1 can pass to either of the players at positions 2 and 4. If the player at position 1 passes to the player at position 2, the player at position 4 must quickly move to position 3 in order to support the player in “un-defended space”. The play continues with no defensive pressure and players are allowed to pass to either supporting player. This soccer drill is simple, however, players will have to pay attention to the ball movement and often anticipate the next move in order to move to space quicker.

Variations

- Play in 1 or 2 touches.
- Add a defender

Coaching Points

- Make sure players are thinking and moving quickly to the next supporting position.
- Explain Defended Space (see diagram)
- Help players with good angle of support

Focus

- Dribbling
- Passing
- Receiving/Turning
- Possession
- Defending
- Attacking
- Warm-up



No 10. Attacking from the Midfield

Focuses on building an attack from the midfield and focuses on the midfield players getting forward into the attacking third.

Setup

Divide the field into 3rds using cones. In the defensive third have a keeper in the goal and 2 defensive players who play against 2 attacking players. In the middle third have 4 attacking midfield players and 3 defensive midfield players. Have the defensive players wear an alternate jersey. The play begins with the coach on the side line.

Instructions

The coach starts the play by serving a ball into the attacking midfielders. When the attacking mid players gain possession, the attackers should penetrate and attack immediately. The mid field player that passes to an attacker in the attacking third should step in and play 3v2 (in the attacking third). If the defensive players win the ball, they should play keep-away from the attacking team.

Variations

- Instead of making the person passing into the attacking 3rd step into the attack, make the furthest player from the ball step in and attack.
- Increase or decrease the number of players.
- Change the numbers to focus on offensive attack or defensive shape.

Coaching Points

- Proper spacing and angles to receive passes (support).
- Good movement from attackers checking into the midfield players.
- Make sure the midfield players are getting into the attack and playing off the attackers and getting forward (attack).
- Quickly swing the ball through the midfield to take advantage of number up situations.

Focus

- Passing
- Possession
- Attacking



No 11. Attacking the End Line Crossing Game

This drill focuses on attacking from the end line from the flanks and serving a ball in. This is a great crossing game to isolate the flank players and getting them to serve the ball in front of the goal.

Setup

Using half of a field, move the goal to the midfield line facing a goal on the end line. Using 4-5 cones on each side, create a 10-metre wide channel along each touchline. Two teams of 4 will play in the middle. Each team has one player in the channel, and the goals should have a goalkeeper in both nets. One team will start with the ball, and the remaining balls should be placed behind the goal.

Instructions

Instruct the players to play 4v4 in the middle area and 1v1 on the flanks in either channel.

The ball must be served from a channel to score a goal.

When the ball is in the channel, the channel players should play 1v1 until one of the player's breaks into the offensive end of the channel. At this point, the defender should allow the cross. The four middle players become near post, far post, trail and supporting runs. Play is continued.

Variations

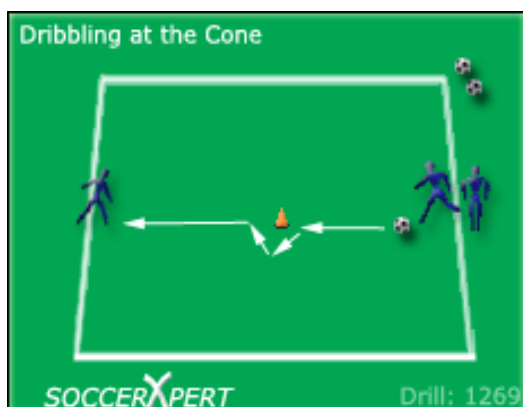
- Increase or decrease the number of players in the middle
- Use wall passes, takeovers or overlaps.
- Rotate channel players.

Coaching Points

- Proper service of crosses from flanks. When to serve on the ground, when to knock back, and when to drive hard.
- Make sure attackers are making proper runs.

Focus

- Dribbling
- Passing
- Receiving/Turning
- Crossing/Finishing
- Possession
- Defending
- Attacking
- Shooting
- Goalkeeping



No 12. Dribbling at the Cone

This is a good football dribbling drill for young football players to learn to dribble without opposition. It is a great drill to introduce different fakes and fakes to gain an edge on the defender.

Setup

Build a grid that is 20X10 metres with a cone in the middle of the grid. This grid will be for 3 players, so build additional grids as needed depending on the amount of players.

Instructions

Position the players where 2 players are on one end line and 1 player is on the other end line. The first person in the group of 2 will start with the ball. This player will dribble at the cone; change the direction of the ball as he makes a move (fake) around the cone. After moving past the cone, the player should increase his speed to finish at the other side of the grid. He then lays the ball off to the other player who performs the same fake on the cone. Play continues until the coach introduces a new fake at the cone.

Variations

Here are some moves to perform are:

- the scissors
- the swerve
- hard step, drop shoulder and change direction
- replace the cone with a defender.

Coaching Points

Make sure the players move towards the cone with the ball under total control. Make sure there is a good change of direction at the cone. Make sure they sell the move to the cone. After passing the cone, make sure the player has a burst of speed.

Focus

- Dribbling
- Attacking
- Warm-up



No 13. Head/Catch Game

This football game is more of a fun activity. When players need a break from the normal drills, need a reward from hard work, or if you just want to let the players goof around. It focuses on listening and reaction skills.

Setup

Have the team form a circle around the coach, facing the coach. Only the coach needs a ball.

Instructions

The coach will always throw the ball towards the player's head as if the player is going to head the ball. The coach yells "HEAD" or "CATCH" to the player he is tossing the ball to. The player must quickly react to the coach's command and perform the event the coach yells.

If the coach yells "HEAD" the player must head the ball back to the coach. If the coach yells "CATCH" the player must catch the ball and return it to the coach. If the player performs the wrong action, that player sits and only standing players are active. The last player standing wins the round.

Variations

- To really get interesting, have the players do the opposite as this adds an interesting twist to this football game
- Use other body parts (keep it simple)

Coaching Points

- Just Have Fun!

Focus

- Heading
- Fun



No 14. Knock Out

This drill is a great training warm-up drill for dribbling sessions. It strives to emphasise on dribbling and ball control (keeping head up, change of direction and change of pace).

Setup

Create a grid depending on the number of players and have each player with a ball inside the grid.

Instructions

Instruct the players to protect their own ball while trying to "knock out" the other player's balls out of the grid. Players must stay with their ball and cannot leave the ball for long periods of time. Players can only be "knocked out" 2 times where they do 5-10 push ups and get back in the game. On the 3rd time, they are out.

Variations

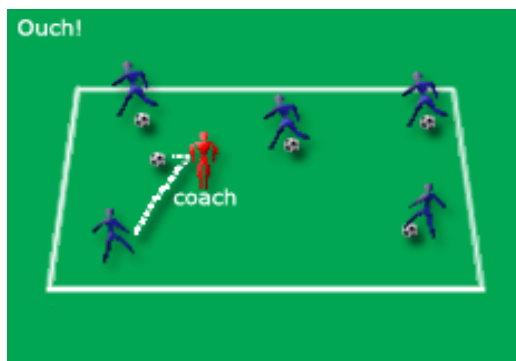
- Make players dribble with certain parts of their foot.
- If player dribbles out of bounds their self they are considered "knocked out".
-

Coaching Points

- Instruct players to keep the ball close and touch the ball often * Players heads should be up looking for other players and be aware of their surroundings.

Focus

- Dribbling
- Possession
- Warm-up
- FUN



No 15. Ouch!

This drill should be used with younger players (U6 and U8) to introduce dribbling, looking up and properly striking the ball at a target. AND It's FUN!

Setup

Build a grid 20X30 (may adjust if too large or small). Every player must be in the grid with a ball.

Instructions

The coach jogs around in the grid and players try to kick their balls and hit the coach. The players get a point each time they hit the coach. The coach should yell OUCH each time they are hit to make the game FUN. Make sure the players are striking the ball with the proper part of the foot.

Variations

- If the players are struggling to hit the coach, the coach should stop for a couple seconds to give the players a chance.
- Use different parts of the foot: Inside, Instep, Right and Left foot.

Coaching Points

None

Focus

- Dribbling
- Passing
- Warm-up
- FUN



No 16. Red Light, Green Light

For U6 and U8 Players. This drill will focus on dribbling with the ball close in order to stop quickly.

Setup

Create a starting line for each of the players, and the coach should move 15-20 metres away.

Instructions

With the coaches back to the players, he yells GREEN LIGHT and the players try to dribble to the coach. When the coach yells RED LIGHT, he waits a moment and then turns to face the players. Anyone who is not stopped has to go back to the farthest person from the coach.

Variations

- Have the players dribble with only the right or left foot.

Coaching Points

- Make sure the players keep the ball close so they can stop quickly.

Focus

- Dribbling
- Warm-up
- FUN



No 17. The Greeting Game

This drill is specifically designed for younger players (U-6 and U-8). This drill will get the players moving, greeting each other, and a building block to introduce dribbling. Good for Camp activities for the younger players.

Setup

Build a grid that is 15X20 metres using cones. Each of the players gets inside the grid.

Instructions

All the players run around randomly inside the grid. The coach calls out various types of greetings, which each players then has to carry out with others: shake hands, high fives (one hand), high fives (other hand), shoulder to shoulder, back to back, etc.

Progressions: Add dribbling.

Variations

- Add Dribbling

Coaching Points

- When dribbling, keep the ball close and don't run into other players.

Focus

- Warm-up
- FUN



No 18. The Pirate Game – Curse of the Pugg

This drill is a good drill that can be used to focus on many aspects of the game. For younger players ages 8-11, the primary focus should be on good dribbling technique in traffic which requires vision and awareness. The coach can also focus on transition from offense to defence if the ball is lost, or recovering from a tackle and finding safety. Defensively, this allows defenders to steal the ball from attackers and play to a particular goal or target.

Setup

Build a circle approximately the size of the centre circle with a Pugg net in the middle of the circle. The actual size of the circle will vary depending on the age and skill level of the players. With all players in the playing area, dedicate 9 players with the ball and 3 players without a ball will be the "Pirates".

Instructions

Instruct the "Pirates" without the ball to defend the players with the balls. Once the Pirate wins the ball, they attempt to score on the Pugg net in the middle of the circle. If the Pirate scores the goal, that player too becomes a Pirate. Play continues until the last player with the ball wins. If the pirates have a hard time getting started, the coach can help the pirates at first.

Variations

NONE

Coaching Points

Attacking: keep the ball close with head up so the players are aware of defenders and safety areas (space). If the ball is lost, recover quickly and fight to win it back.

Defending: Transition quickly from defence to offensive and stay focused once the ball is won, and find the target.

Focus

- Dribbling
- Passing
- Defending
- Attacking
- FUN



No 19. End Zone Game

The soccer end zone game is a great soccer drill that will help coaches focus on all aspects of attacking and defending in soccer. With incorporating end zones into the game it gives players a chance to learn to attack space behind the defence and allows defenders to learn how to deny space behind them.

Setup

Create a 50X30 metre grid with 5 metre end zones on each end of the field. Split the team into 2 evenly matched teams

Instructions

A team scores a goal by getting the ball from one end zone (by passing or dribbling into the zone) and immediately attacking the end zone and gaining possession in the end zone on the opposite end. If the other team wins the ball before they are able to successfully gain possession in both end zones no point should be awarded.

Variations

- Limit the number of touches.

Coaching Points

- Focus on basic passing, moving, and support.
- Focus on basic defending and attacking skills.
- Focus on quick counter attacks.

Focus

- Dribbling
- Passing
- Receiving/Turning
- Possession
- Defending
- Attacking



No
Picture

No 20. Snake in the Grass Football Game

This is a great football game for under 6 and under 8 football players. This football game is designed to work on young player's coordination and body movements.

Setup

Create a small grid approximately 15X15 metres. All of the players should be inside the grid. The coach should designate two players to be the "snakes" by lying on their stomachs. Each of the players begins with one of their hands on the snakes in the grass.

Instructions

When the coach yells "SNAKE IN THE GRASS" the non-snake players attempt to avoid the snakes as the snakes attempt to slither around on their stomach and touch a non-snake player. As a player is touched, that player too becomes a snake. The activity continues until everyone is a snake.

Variations

None

Coaching Points

This soccer game is designed to work on young soccer player's balance, coordination and body movement. As the children attempt to avoid the snakes, they will move in all directions and should be encouraged to run, jump, cut, turn, etc to avoid the snake.

Focus

- Warm-up
- FUN