

TRSA

U4 & U5

FESTIVAL GUIDE



www.trsa.ca

Welcome

Thank you for volunteering your time to be a TRSA U4/5 mini soccer coach. What a rewarding and exciting job you have taken on. We know you are up to the challenge! Mini Soccer involves smaller fields, smaller goals, smaller balls and most importantly smaller players! This guide has been written with you in mind. Regardless of your experience with soccer it will make your job EASY and FUN!

What's Inside

Introduction	P.1
General information	P.2
Team Official Roles and Volunteers	P.3-4
Overview of session breakdown	P.5
Ball manipulation activity ideas	P.6
Agility, balance, and coordination activity ideas	P.7
Fun game and game time overview	P.8
Fun Games	P.9-24

Need Information



Still can't find what you're looking for, contact Tara McEachren Mini-Program Coordinator: programassistant@trsa.ca

So, you're a coach! Here's what we need from you:

- ⚽ Teach these kids to love the game!
- ⚽ Engage, encourage, and enjoy!
- ⚽ Be prepared, positive, professional and passionate!
- ⚽ If you are having fun, they will too!
- ⚽ Yes, it is that simple

Tips to make your coaching career a success:

- ⚽ Never be on time! Always be early.
- ⚽ Be organized and share responsibilities with assistants. Delegate duties, working as a team is key.
- ⚽ Plan your sessions ahead of time. Use the session format guide to ensure consistent, purposeful practices each time.
- ⚽ Quickly get the players active.
- ⚽ Look the part! Be a great role model.

Objectives as a U4/5 Coach

- ⚽ Provide a positive and fun introduction to soccer.
- ⚽ Getting comfortable with the ball and moving around with it.
- ⚽ Development of ABC's and fundamental movement skills.
- ⚽ Introduction to game intelligence and basic game play.
- ⚽ Create a positive team environment where everyone can feel success.



Understanding your U4/U5 players

- | | |
|--|---|
| ⚽ Short attention span | ⚽ Aim to please and be praised |
| ⚽ Not yet understanding "team" mentality- Self-focused | ⚽ Sensitive to criticism |
| ⚽ Enjoy repeating familiar activities | ⚽ Impatient when waiting for their turn |

GENERAL INFORMATION

Season

- ⚽ Starts first week of May.
- ⚽ Ends last week of June.
- ⚽ Every Saturday @ 9:30am or 10:30am Coach discretion May long weekend.
- ⚽ Field location will be sent by the last week in April.

First Steps

- ⚽ Download TeamSnap when you receive the email invite.
- ⚽ Contact your assistant coaches and manager immediately and plan a date for your meet and greet.
- ⚽ Invite all players via TeamSnap
- ⚽ Monitor to ensure all players have accepted their invitation, if players are pending contact them via email to ensure they get messaging.

Initial Team Meeting

- ⚽ Prior to the start of the season
- ⚽ Distribute player kits- line them up smallest to tallest to avoid running out of big/small sizing.
- ⚽ Discuss expectations and request support for ongoing volunteer roles as outlined on the volunteer page.

Player Equipment

- ⚽ TRSA provides each player with a kit including jersey, shorts, and socks for players to keep.
- ⚽ Families should provide
 - Shoes- Cleats preferred, running shoes are acceptable.
 - Shin pads- mandatory
 - Soccer ball (size 3)
 - Water bottle

Cancellations

- ⚽ Sessions are on unless the fields are closed or there is an air quality advisory in effect.
- ⚽ Please sign up for field notifications- Instructions available on our website under resources.
- ⚽ Please use your judgement if you arrive and there is lightning, or fields are unsafe in any way.
- ⚽ There are no reschedules for U4-U5 if you would like to host a make up session you can do so on any green space you wish at your convenience, TRSA will not assign fields.

TEAM OFFICIALS

Head Coach (1)

- ⚽ Will be named in the EMSA portal roster and must provide Police Information Check.
- ⚽ Make the initial contact with Assistant Coaches and Team Manager.
- ⚽ Discuss station activities with assistants prior to session and keep the sessions organized.
- ⚽ Move through all the stations playing with all groups and modeling, encouraging and supporting where needed.
- ⚽ Keep track of time and alert station rotation supporting groups from moving one station to the next.
- ⚽ Collaborate with other officials on activities and modifications needed.

Assistant Coaches (4)

- ⚽ Listed on the EMSA roster and must provide Police Information Check.
- ⚽ Cover for Head Coach if they are absent.
- ⚽ Set up and run a station at each session- It can be discussed if coach will determine each activity, or if assistants would like to come up with their own activity for the station they run.
- ⚽ Stay at your station and work with each group that moves through.
- ⚽ Collaborate with other Team Officials.

Team Manager (1)

- ⚽ Listed on the EMSA roster and must provide Police Information Check.
- ⚽ Add all sessions to Team Snap and send reminders to parents to update their availability.
- ⚽ Determine ideal number of groups based on attendance and have organized prior to session.
- ⚽ As players arrive check them in, give them their colour pennie and send them to the warmup.
- ⚽ Remain available throughout the session to support players who come off for any reason, sad, hurt, need water and connect them with parents, allowing the coaches to stay at their stations.
- ⚽ Update TeamSnap for sessions canceled due to weather or field conditions.
- ⚽ Organize a snack schedule so all families are contributing equally.

VOLUNTEERS

Overview

- As a community-based program, TRSA relies on all families to participate in the organization to keep program fees low and provide a quality program for the children in our communities.
- Volunteer role can be **an on-going** role with a team OR **a half day commitment** to the operation of the program.
- Coaches can assign on-going roles to their families and have discretion in how those roles look to best support their specific needs.
- Any families not assigned on-going roles with the team will be contacted by the volunteer coordinator with program operation needs to fill their commitment.
- Any inquiries from families on volunteer opportunities not associated with the team should be directed to programassistant@trsa.ca. **Coaches are NOT** responsible for assigning or monitoring volunteer commitments not associated with their team needs.
- Bringing snacks is NOT a volunteer role, helping at one session is NOT a volunteer role.

U4/U5 TEAM OPPORTUNITIES

Station Support (4-6)- Needed

- Not listed on the roster and no Police Information Check needed.
- Will be assigned a station and given instructions on the activities.
- Play with the kids as they move through the stations.
- This is an on-going roll with the team and volunteers should be available most sessions.

Equipment Manager (1)- Nice to have* High responsibility

- Bring the equipment to and from each session.
- Cleans up the equipment at the end of each session.
- Monitors equipment and relays and broken, missing.

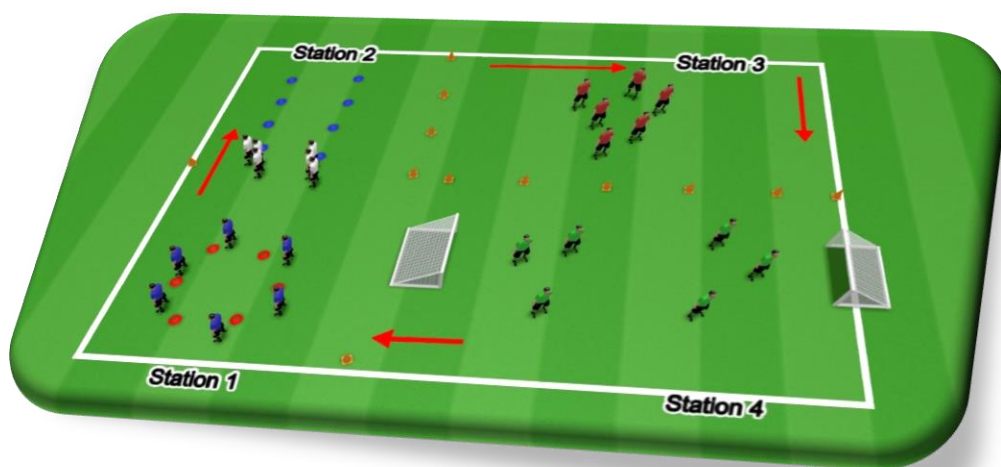
Photographer (1)- Nice to have

- Takes action shots weekly, upload to TeamSnap.
- Takes one individual picture of each player and provides a digital copy to family.
- Organizes day/time for group photo and provides a digital copy to each family.

All families, including those who have declined to volunteer or who have supported the operation of the program, should support the team where possible, pick-up garbage you see on our community fields, help take down a net, carry a bag, bring a snack if the team chooses to do weekly snack for players.

Festival Fun~ A Recipe for Success

- Each session is 60 minutes - U4's you may decide to cut each station a little shorter for a 45-minute session depending on the capability of your players.
- You will divide the playing area into 4 separate stations. Playing areas will vary depending on location. Below is a guide of how you can set up. The size of each station will depend on the activities you pick for that session.
- Players will be divided into 4 groups and move through the stations in their small group. If you have lots of absent players, make 3 groups and leave one station empty as you rotate them through.
- Have your activities planned for each station so the assistants or parent helpers can set up the stations as you warm up the players.
- As your players arrive, have the team manager or a parent helper divide them equally into groups and send them to the warm up.
- Once most of the players have arrived or a few minutes have passed, send each group to their starting station.
- An assistant or parent helper should already be at the station they set up and should STAY at that station, working with all players throughout the duration of the session.
- Set a timer for 12-15 minutes, depending on your group's ability to transition, the players will rotate from their starting station to their next station.
- Keeping a consistent set up and rotation will ensure the player improve transition time!



Station 1: Ball Manipulation



Station 2: Agility, Balance, Co-ordination ABC'S



Station 3: Fun Game



Station 4: Small game: Introduction to game play



Station 1~ Ball Manipulation

This station focuses on players gaining confidence and control with a ball.

The main objective is to ENSURE ALL PLAYERS ARE TOUCHING the ball as much as possible.

Use games like Simon Says (Coach Says), Red Light Green Light, Freeze Stop etc. The variations are almost endless; adjust them to suit your players. Start simple and progress as the season continues.

This is a great opportunity to discuss the different surfaces of the feet: inside, outside, laces, heels and soles.

This is when we learn the difference between dribbling and kicking, passing and shooting, soft touches and hard kicks etc.

Demonstrate a move and have the players repeat. You can add in all different movement patterns, sequences. Encourage the players to come up with their favorite move and demonstrate.



SOME IDEAS:

- ⚽ Tapping the ball with the soles of the feet
- ⚽ Jumping over the ball
- ⚽ Running with the ball
- ⚽ Dribble with the laces: slow down and push the ball lightly-left, right and alternate
- ⚽ Kick, bounce, kick
- ⚽ Sole drag backs: hopping between feet, move backwards, dragging the ball back, alternating between the sole of the shoes
- ⚽ Bouncing the ball
- ⚽ Throwing the ball and catching it
- ⚽ Dropping the ball to your feet
- ⚽ Dropping the ball to your thighs
- ⚽ Push the ball from side to side, right to left and back again
- ⚽ Toe taps: hopping from one foot to the other, tapping the ball with the opposite foot each time
- ⚽ Sole push: pushing the ball forward with the sole of the shoes

Station 2~ABC's Agility, Balance, Coordination

Leave the soccer balls on the sidelines for this one.

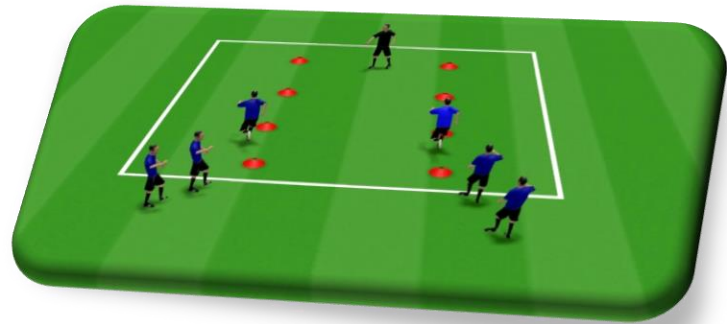
This station focuses on physical literacy and fundamental movement skills such as running, jumping, skipping, crawling, hopping, galloping etc.

Young players are just learning how their bodies work, dedicating intentional time to developing their coordination is vital for long term player development.

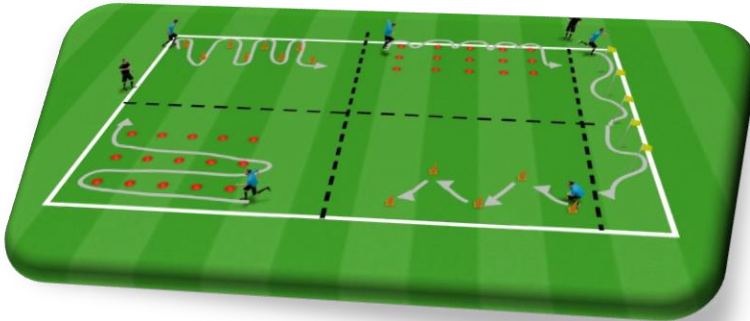
The goal here is to make it fun.

Some Ideas:

Relay Races have players make 2 lines and move through using different movement skills. Let the kids pick their favorite animals and move through the cones like them. Slither like a snake, gallop like a horse etc.



Obstacle Course create a different movement challenge for each section.



- ⚽ Running forward in a figure 8
- ⚽ Hop through on both feet
- ⚽ Side step in figure 8
- ⚽ Crab crawl
- ⚽ Monkey walk
- ⚽ Running backward in a figure 8
- ⚽ Hop through on right foot only/left foot only
- ⚽ Jump side to side
- ⚽ Jump directly over

Leap Frog skip the cones and use the players, have them jumping over each other to get from one side of the playing area to the next.

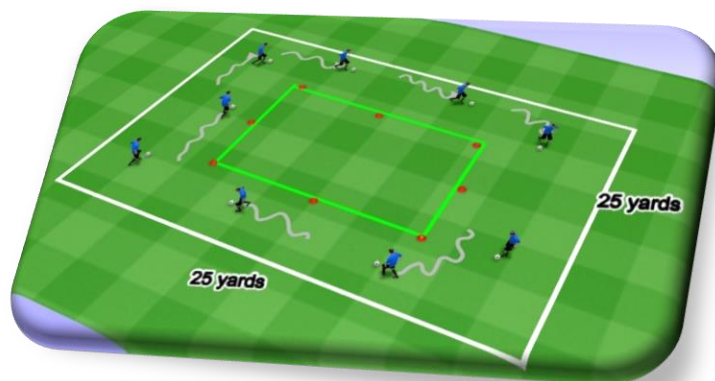
Follow the Leader You can incorporate any movement skill you wish here, quick small fairy feet to huge, angry giant feet! Have the kids take a turn and make up their own movement for the group to follow.

Station 3 ~ Fun Games

This end of this guide provides a multitude of fun games, all that engage the players and create a fun atmosphere while teaching soccer skills!

This is a great opportunity for you to play alongside and encourage the development of your players.

Keep it simple, easy and fun. Enlist parents to help organize and keep the players focused! Results do not matter. If your players are having fun, rest assured they are learning!



- ⚽ Remember! The games outlined in this guide are suggestions. You know your players. If they need a little more time developing a particular skill, don't be afraid to come back and try a fun game again at a different session!

Station 4 ~ Game Time

The playing field should span about 20-25 yards by 15-20 yards outline the area with cones and place a net at each end.

It is helpful to have a parent or 2 on either side of the field keeping the ball in play. Have an extra ball in hand so if the ball is kicked out you can toss a new one in and not be chasing the runaway ball!

Divide your group into 2 and have one group remove their pennies.

Teams will play 3v3.

Rules ~There are no formal rules in U4, here are some things to keep in mind!

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| ⚽ Do not keep track of score | ⚽ No goal keepers |
| ⚽ Encourage fair play and sportsmanship | ⚽ Shake hands at the end of the game |

Your role during game ~ on the field, letting them play

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| ⚽ Encourage active participation | ⚽ Praise positive effort |
| ⚽ Let the game be the teacher | ⚽ Be the coxer |

Respect the rules of the game
⚡ Pushing
⚡ Kicking
⚡ Body checking
⚡ Holding
NO HANDS IN SOCCER- not on the ball or other players!

Ice Cream Scoop Challenge

Purpose This game allows the players to work on their defensive approach and stance, in a 1v1 format. Additionally, the attacking players are given opportunity to improve moves used against the defenders.

Organization Divide grid into two 10x15 yard areas. Place a cone with a ball 'ice cream' on top, two yards off each end line. Stand between the 2 grids in the 'coaching channel'. Divide the players into four groups, arranged on opposite end lines.

Directions One side of the area will start the attacking. You will play the ball to them first. These players will attempt to beat the defender and try to pass the ball to the cone knocking the 'ice cream' off the cone. Should the defender win the ball, they will attempt to knock the 'ice cream' off the other cone, for a point.

Objectives & Tips

Are the defending players able to recognize when to slow down and keep their body under control, in order to keep the attacking player in front of them?

To avoid the same players facing off each round, make your lines uneven.

Build on this by making it 2v1 or 2v2.



- ⚽ Defender sprints to the attacking player and applies pressure, slowing down and taking smaller steps upon approach.



- ⚽ Keep those feet moving!
- ⚽ Remember to angle your body and keep the attacker in front!



- ⚽ If the defender wins the ball quickly transition to attack.

Popcorn

Purpose teaches players to transition from dribbling to shooting, using their instep.

Organization 30*20-yard grid with 2 goals. Arrange a zone, the width of the space and 8-10 yards long, in the middle. Divide players into two teams, each wearing different coloured pinnies. Start each player with a ball and assign them a number between 1-6. A goal keeper is in each net.

Directions Explain to the players they are each an individual piece of popcorn and the middle area is the popcorn-pot. Teams are each told which goal they are to shoot on. Players dribble around in the pot, avoiding each other while heating up! Call out a number and the player assigned to that number, on both teams will “pop” and dribble out of the pot, taking a shot on goal. See who can score the most goals in 2 minutes.

Objectives & Tips

Pay attention to shooting technique: toe down, ankle locked, knee over the ball and striking with the laces.

Have parents on the side, collecting the balls! Switch it up! Call out a colour and a number. The player whose color is called is attacking their goal and the player with the same number on the other team must try to defend.



- ⚽ Players dribble around in the middle avoiding others until their number is called.



- ⚽ When their number is called, the player should make a clean move and turn towards the goal for a shot.
- ⚽ Encourage players to have the ball under their knee or a little in front, when shooting.



- ⚽ Are players striking the ball with their laces and keeping their heads down?

How to Feed Your Dragon

Purpose This easy game incorporates agility with goal scoring; encouraging players to shoot with the inside of their foot.

Organization In a 25*25-yard area, arrange three goals in the middle of 3 of the 4 sidelines. In the middle of the 4th, pile enough balls for each player to have one. Create a semi-circle with cones off the 4th sideline. Build a minimum of 10 gates with cones, various sizes and distances apart, throughout the grid.

Directions Divide the players into three teams. Each will line up next to a goal, their 'pet dragon'. The balls are food for their dragon and it needs to be fed! When you yell "GO", the first person from each line will move through 3 gates to "power up" before getting food (a ball), from the pile. Only one piece of food at a time and the player must dribble it back near their goal, before passing into their dragon's mouth. Once the first player has gone, the next in line will repeat. Which team has fed their dragon the most?

Objectives & Tips

Warm up the players with various movements. Ensure accuracy by encouraging the players to use the inside of their foot when finishing. To have the players shooting from further back, set up a shooting zone in front of the goal. Switch it up! Have players dribble back through 3 gates, before shooting.



- ⚽ What movements can the players try for each round (jogging, skipping or hopping)?



- ⚽ Once players have the "food" dribble back to the goal and shoot!
- ⚽ Plant that foot and point towards the goal when finishing!



- ⚽ Assign 2 players as "bandits" who act as passive defenders.
- ⚽ Players keep their heads down and strike the middle of the ball!



- ⚽ Call out a number signaling the bee with that number to run to collect the “pollen”.
- ⚽ The bee will dribble it back to their hive.



- ⚽ Introduce different turns to retrieve the balls.
- ⚽ Keep returning to the “field to collect pollen, when their number is called.



- ⚽ To progress the activity, reduce the number of balls in play.
- ⚽ Players can steal pollen from other hives!

Beehive

Purpose This small sided game emphasizes close control and dribbling with the laces. You can introduce the speed of dribble, change of direction and simple attacking and defending strategies.

Organization 15*15-yard grid, with four ‘beehives’ made out of cones, in each corner. All players organized into four teams, each team in a different coloured pinnie. At least one ball for each player, arranged in the center of the grid.

Directions Explain to the players that there are four beehives, close to a field of flowers, with the bees’ favorite pollen. Each bee has to supply the hive with three pollen balls to win the game. Arranging four teams of 3 bees, give each bee a number or character name. Position each team behind a ‘hive’. All the pollen (balls) are in the center. The objective is to see which team can supply their hive with 3 pollen balls the fastest. The game starts when you call out a number. That player from each hive must run, collect the pollen (ball) and dribble it back to the hive.

Objectives & Tips

Are the players dribbling with the laces and performing different turns, when collecting the ball?

Use assistant coaches and parents for crowd control; helping to keep players behind their hives and reminding them when it’s their turn.

Switch it up! Adding more balls will make this activity easier. Less balls will increase difficulty and create 1v1 duels.

Line Dribble

Purpose Provides players with repetition, using different moves to beat a defender.

Organization 20*25-yard grid, marked with cones in each corner. Arrange cones to create end zones, five yards off each end line. Place flags 10 yards from the center of the sideline, where you will stand with all the balls. Divide the players into two teams of 6, each team wearing a different coloured pinnie.

Directions When you yell “GO”, the first player in line must run around their flag before entering the field. Play the ball towards the first player to create an attacking advantage. The player must dribble the ball to the opposite end zone and stop the ball for a point. If the defending player can win the ball, they can score at the opposite end line.

Objectives & Tips

Encourage players to make a good first touch and attack the defender at speed.

Are the groups taking too long? Try playing additional balls and have the next group play simultaneously.

Switch it up! Add numbers to the activity to create 2v1, 2v2 and 2v3 games.



- ⚽ Yell “go” and the first player in each line runs around their flag.
- ⚽ The last player to touch the ball brings it back to you!



- ⚽ Call out more than one player from a team!



- ⚽ Try adding a small goal at either end.
- ⚽ Engage the players waiting, what would they do if it was them on the field?



- ⚽ Players gather around you in a circle, each with a ball
- ⚽ Use this time to demonstrate some different moves!



- ⚽ Roll the balls randomly throughout the grid.
- ⚽ Players chase the ball attempting to reach before it stops moving.



- ⚽ Additional coaches/ parents join in.
- ⚽ Have the players alternate between the servers.
- ⚽ Servers to add additional challenges.

Fetch

Purpose This activity is a great introduction to dribbling and ball mastery. Your players are constantly moving and touching a ball. A great way to activate the players in the beginning of a session.

Organization 25*25-yard area with extra room to roam, outside the square. Enough balls for each player to have one. You will need 2 or 3 extra helpers, encourage the parents to join in!

Directions Have the players arrange themselves in a circle around you, each with a ball. Kneel, so you are at their level. Explain that you will roll each of their balls into the playing area and it's their job to catch it and dribble it back to you. Roll to varying distances. Involve the other coaches/parents to ensure all players are moving! Add in different challenges. I.e.: Have them dribble the ball to another coach/parent helper, reach the ball before it stops moving and preform toe taps, (right foot, left foot, outside, heel) before dribbling back etc.

Objectives & Tips

Add in many skills and objectives. Talk about the surfaces of their feet: inside, outside, laces, heels and soles.

Change the activity to suit your players. If some require more of a challenge, increase the difficulty or create simpler tasks for others. Switch it up! Alternate the serve height and direction to transition into another activity such as a body-part dribble or a tag game.



- ⚽ Each team has a doctor waiting safely in the hospital.
- ⚽ Game begins with all the 'school kids' dribbling in the playing area.



- ⚽ Each team attempts to pass their ball into the opposing team's ball and injure the players.
- ⚽ The doctor must leave the hospital to provide treatment!



- ⚽ If the doctor is hit or all players are injured, the game is over.
- ⚽ Play again!!

Doctor! Doctor!

Purpose Requires all players to be moving constantly and working together!

Organization 20*30 yard playing area. Divide players into two teams, each with a different coloured pinnie. In each end zone, create a 5*5 yard 'hospital'. One player from each team is a 'doctor'.

Directions Explain to the children they are playing in the school yard. If they get hurt, the school doctor is on hand to patch them up and get them playing again. If, however, there was no doctor on hand, there would be no one to provide medical assistance. Doctors wait in the 'hospitals' while all the other players dribble around the playing area. When you say "GO", all the 'school kids' must pass their ball in an attempt to hit the other teams ball. If a ball is hit the 'school kid' must sit on their ball and yell "DOCTOR! DOCTOR!" The doctor runs out to help the injured player (give a high-5) and they can resume playing. The doctor is now out of the hospital and is at risk if hit by the opposing teams ball! Teams must protect their doctor to win the game. The game ends when a doctor is hit or all players on one team are injured.

Objectives & Tips

Players must keep their balls moving to make it harder to be hit by the opposing team. Join in with your players and set the tone and intensity by being the doctor.



- ⚽ Start with introducing the rules of the game.
- ⚽ Players dribble in the safe zone, awaiting your commands!



- ⚽ Introduce the swamp and the crocodiles.
- ⚽ Players earn a point each time they cross the swamp.
- ⚽ The crocodile is trying to tap their ball!



- ⚽ Divide players into 4 teams and have one team as the crocodiles!
- ⚽ Other teams attempt to cross using special moves.

Crocodile Swamp

Purpose This activity incorporates dribbling skills, ball mastery and changing direction. A great game for activating the players!

Organization 25*25-yard grid and a smaller 10*10-yard area in the center. The center zone is the 'swamp'. BEWARE, players only enter on your command!

Directions Explain to the players they are lost in a Floridian swamp, infested with hungry crocodiles! They are safe as long as they are outside the swamp area. However, to score a point they must risk safety and cross through the swamp, which they only do on your instruction! Have them start by dribbling around in the safe zone. Introduce the direction of the dribble, left or right. When it is time call out "Cross the swamp" all the players must cross over the swamp, remaining in control of their ball. Add different ways to change direction, moves to beat an opponent etc. Enter the swamp as the 'crocodile coach' and attempt to tap the players' ball, when they enter. If they make it through, without being tapped, they earn a point.

Objectives & Tips

Repetition and reinforcement of dribbling and ball mastery skills are key! Introduce inside and outside of the foot cut moves.

At an early age, teach players to preform cut moves with the correct surface of the foot, so that the ball is furthest away from pressure.

Switch it up! Create a team game by dividing into four teams, with one in the center as the crocodiles.



- ⚽ Egyptians start in the end opposite of the pyramid stones.
- ⚽ Serpent coach stands in the middle.
- ⚽ Egyptians cross the valley to gather stones for their pyramid.



- ⚽ Egyptians must avoid the serpent's tag.
- ⚽ After collecting the stone, they must dribble it back to the building zone; and make a 3 tiered pyramid.



- ⚽ Add cones for width.
- ⚽ Captured Egyptians attempt to hit players with "boulders" passed from the sidelines.

Pyramid Challenge

Purpose This is a fun and fast paced activity, where the 'Egyptians' (players) must avoid the 'serpent snake', in an attempt to build their pyramid. The dribbling activity also emphasizes take on moves to beat a defender and is an opportunity to teach about dribbling to space.

Organization 15*20-yard grid with an additional 5-yard zone, at one end. 14 balls are all randomly placed in the end zone, each representing a 'pyramid stone'. All players start in the opposite end, facing the balls. While you the 'serpent snake' stand in the middle of the playing area.

Directions Tell the players they are attempting to build a magnificent pyramid with the stones in the opposite end of the valley. They must avoid the serpent, collect a stone and dribble it back to the building site. Have a parent in the building zone to assist the 'Egyptians' in building a three-tiered pyramid (9 on the bottom, 4 in the middle and 1 on top). If tagged by the 'Serpent' the 'Egyptians' becomes a 'serpent helper', tagging other players. The 'Egyptians' win if they build the pyramid, before all are captured!

Objectives & Tips

Players dribbling with the laces, performing different take on moves, to beat the serpent. Discuss big space and little space. Switch it up! Captured players go to the sides and fire boulders (pass balls), to hit the 'Egyptians' below the knee.



- ⚽ First player dribbles out towards the center.
- ⚽ The dribbler must dribble through the gate before scoring.



- ⚽ Players are encouraged to use cut moves to change direction.
- ⚽ Work with players to use a move to keep ball away from pressure.



- ⚽ If the defender wins the ball, they can attempt to score on either goal.

1 V 1 To Goal

Purpose 1v1 to goal gives the player an opportunity to score a goal after they have performed an introductory move. The activity includes dribbling, take on moves and goal scoring.

Organization a 15*15-yard square with two goals, on opposite sides, located centrally along the line. On the other two sides of the area, set up 2 cones opposite each other. Ideally, set up two areas in order to maximise the amount of playing time for each player. Divide the players into four teams, with each team in a different coloured pinnie. Two teams in each area.

Directions This activity is most appropriate for players who have progressed from introductory dribbling activities. Each team is arranged behind a cone, facing each other. One team starts with the balls. The first player in line dribbles the ball toward the center of the square and the first player from the other line, comes forward to defend. Once the dribbler goes through a cone gate he can dribble towards either of the goals, to the left or the right. The defender attempts to win the ball and score in either goal.

Objectives & Tips

The goals are strategically placed to enable you to work with the players on dribbling laterally and using different cut moves before scoring. Use assistant coaches and parents, so the players receive more playing time and touches. Switch it up! To increase the difficulty, allow players to play in teams of two, passing between them.



- ⚽ All players dribbling anywhere on the race track.
- ⚽ Introduce different commands “red flag” =STOP!



- ⚽ Have parents close off the gates in ‘pit lane’.
- ⚽ Race cars must find and open gate.



- ⚽ Parents/Coaches move in and out of different gates.
- ⚽ Add two police to chase after the speeding cars!

Pit Stop

Purpose An excellent activity to activate the interest and focus of young players quickly. Consistent with individual focus at the first stage of development, you can differentiate the difficulty of the activity.

Organization 20*20 yard playing area. Randomly place six gates, made out of cones, throughout the grid (pit lane). Gates should be two yards apart. All players have their own ball and can dribble anywhere within the grid. Add conditions to emphasize different skills, such as the space of the dribble, changing direction and dribbling to space.

Directions Explain to the players they are on a race track with many twists and turns. To begin the race, you will introduce different signals: ‘Green flag’ means the players can dribble at any speed they want. ‘Red flag’ means there has been an accident and all cars must stop (place foot on ball). ‘Final lap’ means players must dribble at full speed. Add many other conditions to include turns and other ball mastery skills. During the race, the cars need refueling and new tires. Players must go through gates when you call “Pit stop”! Assistant coaches/parents can help to close off different stops and create more of a challenge!

Objectives & Tips

Players are dribbling with their laces and heads up, to see if lanes are open or closed! Add a point system to add extra excitement. One point per pit stop! Switch it up! Vary the conditions to increase or decrease the difficulty. Add a police officer (player without a ball), to chase after speeding players.



- ⚽ Players dribble throughout the space, waiting for your instruction.
- ⚽ Start with simple body parts!



- ⚽ A good opportunity to teach rules, such as hand balls!
- ⚽ When you shout "Hands" players all yell back "NO HANDS IN SOCCER COACH"!



- ⚽ Increase the challenge by calling a series of body parts.
- ⚽ Have the players place more than one body part at a time.

Body Ball

Purpose Gives young players the opportunity to experiment with the ball in a fun activity. Incorporates both laughter and skill development. Players learn to use the surfaces of their feet and keep their hands off the ball!

Organization 25*25-yard grid. All players each have a ball dribbling throughout the space.

Directions Players are to dribble around the area, listening for your instruction. When you call out a body part, the players have to stop and place that body part on the ball. Start off simple, keeping the instruction to a single body part, I.e.: head, tummy and bottom. Increase the complexity by calling out "Left foot", "Right knee", "Left elbow" etc. This game creates a great opportunity to discuss the 'no hands' rule. Tell the players when you instruct them, to use their hands, they are to all shout "NO HANDS IN SOCCER, COACH"!

Objectives & Tips

Get the players laughing, moving and touching the ball!

Introduce players to left and right and the 'hand ball rule'.

Kneel down, so you are eye level with your players and establish eye contact!

Switch it up! As players become proficient, increase the difficulty by calling a series of body parts they need to repeat, such as "Tummy, nose, and ear". Or, call out two body parts at once, such as "Right hand and left foot".



- ⚽ Three players link and start the 'web'.
- ⚽ Remaining players dribble around the 'jungle'!



- ⚽ The spider's web grows whenever it touches a ball.
- ⚽ Players must dribble in space.
- ⚽ Players in the web must remain linked.



- ⚽ Add two safety zones to make the game more directional.
- ⚽ Play becomes more predictable.

Spiders Web

Purpose Spiders web introduces young players to the concept of dribbling to space, within a confined area. As more players join the web less open space is available. This is an excellent teaching moment for the coach to discuss heads up, looking for space and changing direction.

Organization 20*20-yard grid. Nine players, each with a ball, can dribble anywhere within the space. Three players start the 'web' by linking arms and the 'web' moves around the space together.

Directions Tell the players they are on a safari in the dangerous jungle. Huge spiders have made a massive web and are trying to capture them all in it! On the command of "GO", the 'web' will start to move throughout the 'jungle'. If the 'web' touches the player's ball, the player must join the 'web' and kick their ball out of the area. The game continues until all the players are caught in the web!

Objectives & Tips

Encourage players to dribble with their laces, keeping their heads up to see the available space.

Switch it up! Make the game a direction activity by adding a safety zone in each end of the jungle.

Categories

Purpose Teaching players how to angle their run and receive the ball.

Organization Create an 8*8 square out of cones, in the center of a large circle. Divide the players into two teams, half the players are in the center while the other half are around the circle, with the balls.

Directions Call out a category at the start of each round. Players who start in the center must check to an outside player and call out a name from the category you have chosen. Example you call out “Vegetables” the inside player will approach an outside player and say “Carrot”, in order to receive the ball. The center players will receive the ball and play it back to the outside player, run back to the square and move on to receive a pass from another outside player.

Objectives & Tips

Players are checking at an angle that leaves their body open to seeing the field.

Players need to cushion the ball upon receiving.

Switch it up! Have players split into thirds with two thirds on the outside and one third on the inside.



- ⚽ Outsiders pass the balls with their hands to the checking players.
- ⚽ Receivers should look over their shoulder before receiving the ball.



- ⚽ Center players are checking at an angle to receive the ball.
- ⚽ Change the surface the receivers use to pass.



- ⚽ Players dribble through the center of the square.

2v2 Transition to Goal Keeper

Purpose This is a fun transition game that encourages players to communicate with their partner, while working on their individual defending.

Organization Creating several small 10*20 grids with goals on either end, will allow several groups to play simultaneously. Divide players into groups of two.

Directions The pair starting without the ball, will have one player on the field as a defender while the other acts as a goal keeper, who must remain at the goal. Should the defending player win possession of the ball, they must pass back to the keeper to switch roles and start the attack. The pair that lost possession will then transition to defence, with one player in goal and the other defending.

Objectives & Tips

Players should be encouraged to think about their body position when defending and how to approach the ball.

Switch groups every few minutes to encourage groups to face off with different players.

Switch it up! To allow for a faster transition, players do not have to play the ball back to the keeper before switching from defence to attack.



- Defender makes an angled run attempting to cut off the pass to the other attacker.



- Encourage the defender to stay low and keep their feet moving to force the attacker to the sideline.



- Defender should look for opportunity to gain possession of the ball and pass to the keeper to switch roles!

Gate Passing

Purpose This game teaches the players to work together in teams, passing and moving with the ball.

Organization 25*20-yard grid with a cone in each corner. Make 12 'gates' by placing cones of varying sizes throughout the grid. Split the team into pairs, each pair with their own ball.

Directions First have the pairs pass through a single gate to work on their passing technique. Then instruct them to pass through as many gates as they can in one minute. Ensure you play several rounds to allow the pairs to develop different strategies to improve their score.

Objectives & Tips

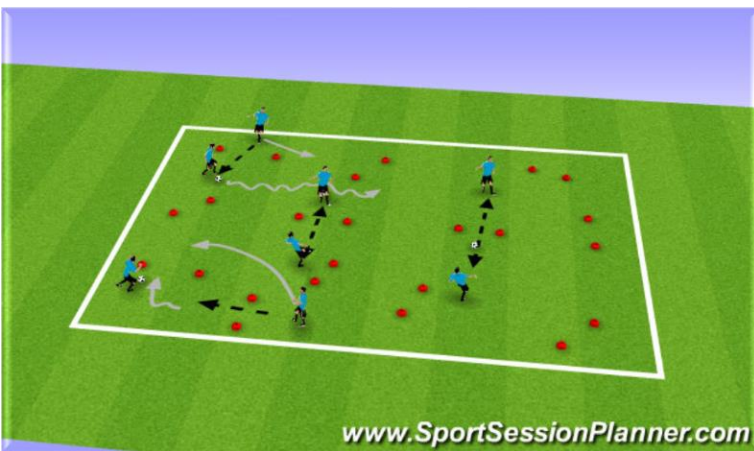
Players should improve passing with accuracy, vision and be thinking of their next move, when receiving the ball.

You want to see players striking through the middle of the ball. Try having them vision the ball as an Oreo cookie aiming for the cream in the middle!

Switch it up! Have one pair act as bandits who attempt to steal the ball from the other pair.



- ⚽ How many passes can a pair get in one minute?
- ⚽ Try asking the players to receive the ball with different parts of their foot.



- ⚽ Teams pass through one gate and move to the next.
- ⚽ Plan the next move, thinking about the pace of the ball & Partner.



- ⚽ Try making passes longer, make it through more than one gate with a single pass.

NOTES