



AYSO

U-5 Master Coach

Handbook



Developed by the Programs Department

AYSO U-5 Master Coach Handbook

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Introduction

During the 2004 AYSO NAGM in Phoenix, AZ, AYSO Executive Membership voted on and passed an amendment to the National Rules and Regulations to lower the minimum age requirement for participation in AYSO to four years of age.

The objective of this program is to provide young players and their parents with a “pressure free” introduction to the beautiful and simple game of soccer. At this age players should be exposed to soccer by playing simple, fun activities and games that require little to no practice, and a minimal time commitment.

This program allows players to discover the game for themselves, while parents are given a soccer foundation on which to build and grow into future AYSO coaches, referees and administrators.

The AYSO U-5 Program is not to be considered a coaching program. It is a program that is designed to be facilitated by a qualified AYSO Master Coach.

The Master Coach must be registered as an AYSO Advanced Coach and Advanced Coach Instructor. The Regional Coach Administrator shall work with the Regional Commissioner to determine the most qualified instructor.

The Master Coach is the key to a successful U-5 program. The Master Coach must have a complete understanding of the AYSO National Coaching Program and full understanding that:

- Young soccer players need special consideration
- Are children playing a child's game
- These young children must be regarded as young children, not mini adults
- Fun and activity factors must be a central part of a child-centered program
- Educators agree that early learning experiences are the most important and produce life long learning experiences
- Under 5 players are essentially self-oriented and relate naturally to one or two others, not to large groups
- Most children cannot sustain prolonged activity
- They function best in suitable starts and stops (rest periods)
- Concentration span is limited, so frequent changes of pace and activity is essential



- The young players should learn to discover the wonderful game of soccer, not be taught the game of soccer by adults.

The “Master Coach” will take the lead in program implementation within the region.

The AYSO National Coaching Advisory Commission supports this program predicated on the basis that the guidelines provided within this document are followed and that all decisions regarding the program are made in the best interest of the players.



U-5 Program Guidelines

- The U-5 program should be separate from U-6, as there are significant social, emotional and physiological differences between U-5 and U-6 players.
- The effective date of age determination shall be the player's age as of July 31 of the year that the season commences. Players who have reached the age of four as of this date are eligible to participate—NO EXCEPTIONS!
- Every effort should be made to have separate girls and boys training groups.
- The Jamboree One with One format is the AYSO U-5 program and should be followed when offering a U-5 program.
- The U-5 program consists of one day per week of the Jamboree One with One program for 6 weeks.

Organization

Jamboree One with One is the combination of two different formats that, put together, provides the best possible introduction to soccer for our youngest players. In AYSO soccer, a jamboree means that groups are formed on a weekly basis depending on how many players attend a given session. **One with One** refers to the concept that each player will have a parent (or other adult) working with them on the field.

A "Master Coach" will lead each session. The Master Coach will introduce a game/activity that will apply to a certain skill or part of the game. They will explain and demonstrate to help parents and players understand the activity. Each pair (player/parent) will then attempt the activity while the Master Coach circulates between pairs providing specific help or suggestions so that the activities are performed as intended. After a suitable amount of time, the Master Coach will bring the players and parents back together as a group and recap what they have done, introducing the next game/activity.

If the activity is a group activity, each parent will be given the opportunity to play the activity (game) with the group (team).

Each **Jamboree** session will end with a 20 minute short-sided game (3v3). Details regarding the game are explained later in this document. Most importantly, allow the players to play **without coaching or teaching** as this experience is designed to expose them to soccer, not to begin developing them. The two objectives of the program are to allow the players to enjoy the activities, and let the game be the teacher.



3 v 3 Game Set-Up and Guidelines

Each player in the U-5 division can receive a uniform, since it is part of the fun to get dressed up for “the big game”. Having fun will make the kids want to come back. The uniforms should be identical for all players. Each week before the game portion of the day begins, players will be divided into groups of 4 (3 on the field with 1 substitute/reserve). Based on how many players arrive, pinnies (different colored “vests”) to differentiate the “teams” for games for a particular weekend will be used.

Session Schedule

Sessions (with children) should last one hour and fifteen minutes including organizing time and breaks—NO MORE.

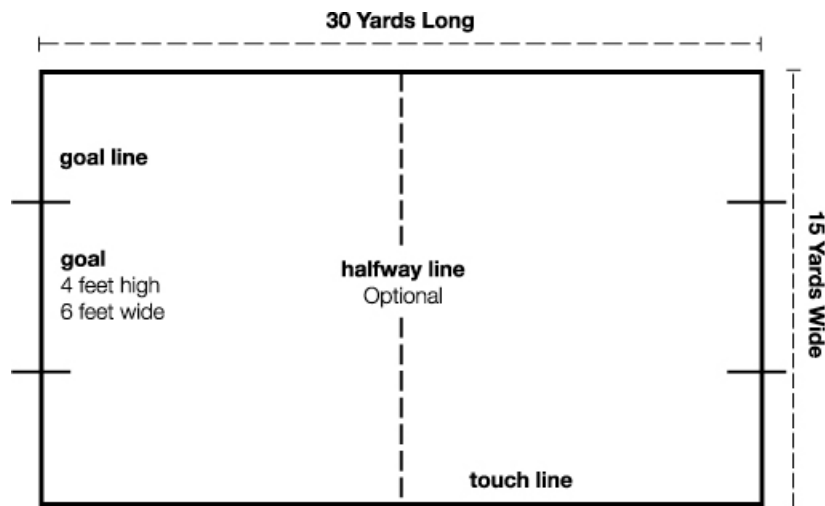
- **15 minutes** Days activity explanation by the Master Coach for all helpers
- **10 minutes** Training Group formation (Master Coach)
- Assigning players to groups (Master Coach)
- **20 minutes** Training Activities (no more than two per session)
- **10 minutes** Game organizing and water break
- **20 minutes** 3 v 3 game (played in two halves of 10 minutes each with a short break at the quarter to make substitutions and get a quick drink)

During the game, one parent from each group assigned by the Master Coach shall be selected to act as the game supervisors for the week. These parents should be requested to keep the game going. All other parents should be encouraged to cheer positively and refrain from “coaching” (giving directions) from the sideline. This is the time for the kids to play – LET THEM!

The following guidelines include the only elements of the Laws of the Game that apply to the AYSO U-5 Division:

The Field:

The recommended field size for U-5 games is 30 x 15 yards marked with lines or cones. See diagram.



The Goals:

The goals in U-5 games should be a maximum of 4 feet high and 6 feet wide or 2 tall cones set 6 feet apart.

The Ball:

A size 3 ball is used for U-5 games.

The Training Group:

Each U-5 training group should have a maximum of 4 or 5 on the group. Games are played with 3 players per group on the field (3v3) and no goalkeepers. Substitutions are made at quarters, halftime and for injuries. A minimum of 2 quarters is required for each player and it is recommended that no one play 4 quarters until everyone has played 3 quarters. Separate boys and girls teams are recommended at all levels.

Player Equipment:

Shoes and shin guards, covered by socks are mandatory at all practice and game activities. Soccer shoes, tennis shoes, or similar type athletic shoes are recommended. The type and condition of cleated shoes must be inspected for safety before use.

The Start of Play:

To start the first and second halves, and following each goal, play is started or restarted with a kick-off in the center of the field. A coin toss is used to determine which group kicks off to start the game and the other group kicks off to start the second half. Following a goal, the group scored upon kicks off.

The Kick-off:

The kick-off is taken from the center of the field with each group in their own half and the group not kicking off at least 5 yards from the ball. Do not insist the opponent be



a minimum of precisely 5 yards from the ball as this is just a guide to give the kicker room to kick the ball without it immediately hitting an opponent. Remember, let them play and do not interfere for technicalities.

Ball In and Out of Play:

The ball is out of play when it completely crosses the touch line (side line) or goal line (end line) either on the ground or in the air. In U-5 games, the game supervisors for the week will determine when the ball is out of play. When the ball goes out of play in U-5 games across the touch line (side lines) or the goal lines (end lines) without a goal being scored, a throw-in is awarded at the point it crossed the line.

Throw-in:

When the ball goes out of play in U-5 games across the touch line (side line) or the goal lines (end lines) without a goal being scored, a throw-in is awarded at the point it crossed the line. The throw-in is awarded to the team that didn't touch the ball last.

Whether the throw-in is properly taken or not, let it go...teach proper technique later. Again, let them play with minimum interruption. Keep the game moving and fun.

Method of Scoring:

A goal is awarded when the ball completely crosses the goal line into the goal. Goals should be enthusiastically celebrated by everyone. In U-5 games, goals are not recorded to determine who wins as everyone is a winner.

Fouls and Other Stoppages:

Deliberate fouling should be rare in U-5 games. Kicking, tripping, handling the ball and dangerous play may occur. There should be few, if any additional reasons to stop play in U-5 games. If a player is "not playing well with others", or if play must be stopped for any other reason (injury, substitution, confusion, or to watch a passing train, butterfly or frog), refocus the players and begin with a free kick or as may be appropriate. Award the restart to whichever team deserves it. Stoppages must not become a lengthy ceremony.

Free Kick:

Play may have to be stopped occasionally to "sort things out" in U-5 games. When this is necessary, correct the situation and then restart with a free kick for the deserving team. The opposing group should be at least 5 yards from the ball in U-5 games. All free kicks in U-5 games are direct free kicks which means, if you're lucky, a goal can be scored directly from the kick without the ball having to be touched or played by another player on the field.

Should you have any questions or require additional information, please contact the National Support & Training Center – Coaching Department at (800) 872-2976.

If you have time, drop us a note about how things are going as this is a new program in AYSO – we are interested in getting feedback.

Training Games for U-5 Players

Bank Robbery

Skill: Dribbling

Number Of Players Required: U5 Training Group

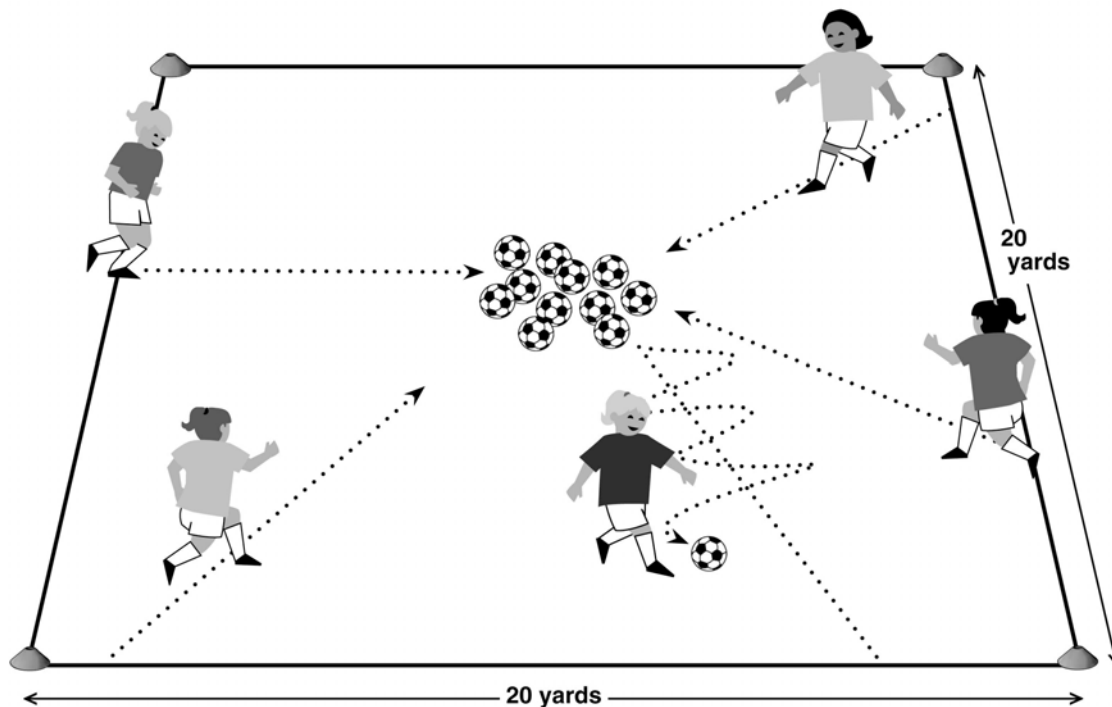
Equipment: 4 or more cones to mark grid, 10 to 12 soccer balls.

Grid Requirement: 20 X 20 yard grid

Organization: Create a 20 X 20 yard grid marked with cones. All players are required to play within the grid.

How The Game Is Played: All players are standing on a line (imaginary boundary line that marks the grid) The coach will yell “Bank Robbery” at that time all players must sprint to the center of the grid collect a ball with her feet and return to the line as quickly as possible stop the ball on the line and return to the center to get another ball. When all the balls have been collected the player who has collected the most balls wins.

Deviations: Allow players to only use left foot, right foot, outside of R or L, or use inside of both feet. Add more balls to the center and enlarge the grid.



Coach Says

Created for: U-5 Players

Skill: Dribbling

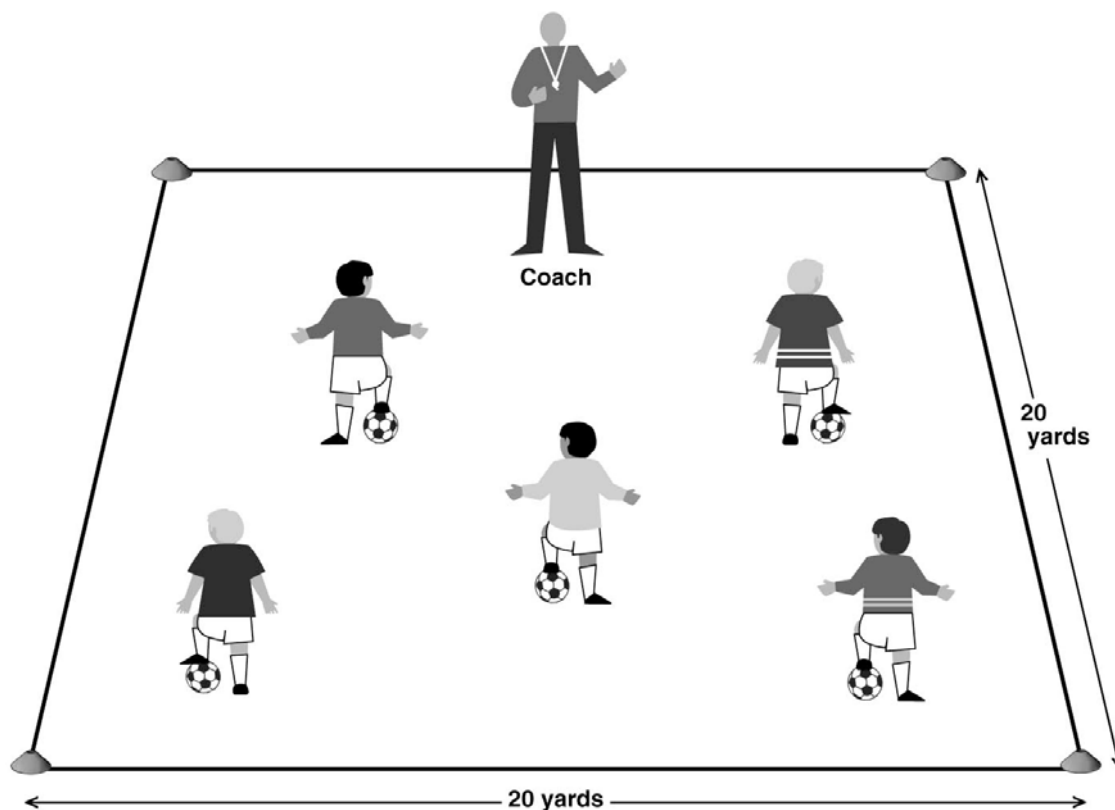
Number Of Players Required: U5 Training Group

Equipment: 4 or more cones to mark grid, 1 ball for each player

Grid Requirement: 20 X 20 yard grid

Organization: Create a 20 X 20 yard grid marked with cones. All players are required to play within the grid and each player must have a soccer ball.

How The Game Is Played: The coach will explain that he or she will tell the players exactly what he would like the players to do. Like: STOP, START, SIT DOWN, SIT ON BALL, ONE FOOT ON BALL, SPED UP, SLOW DOWN, ELBOW ON BALL, and so on, but they must only react if the direction is preceded by "Coach Says," players should continue old activity if direction was not preceded by "Coach Says."



Big Bad Coach

Skill: Dribbling

Number Of Players Required: U5 Training Group

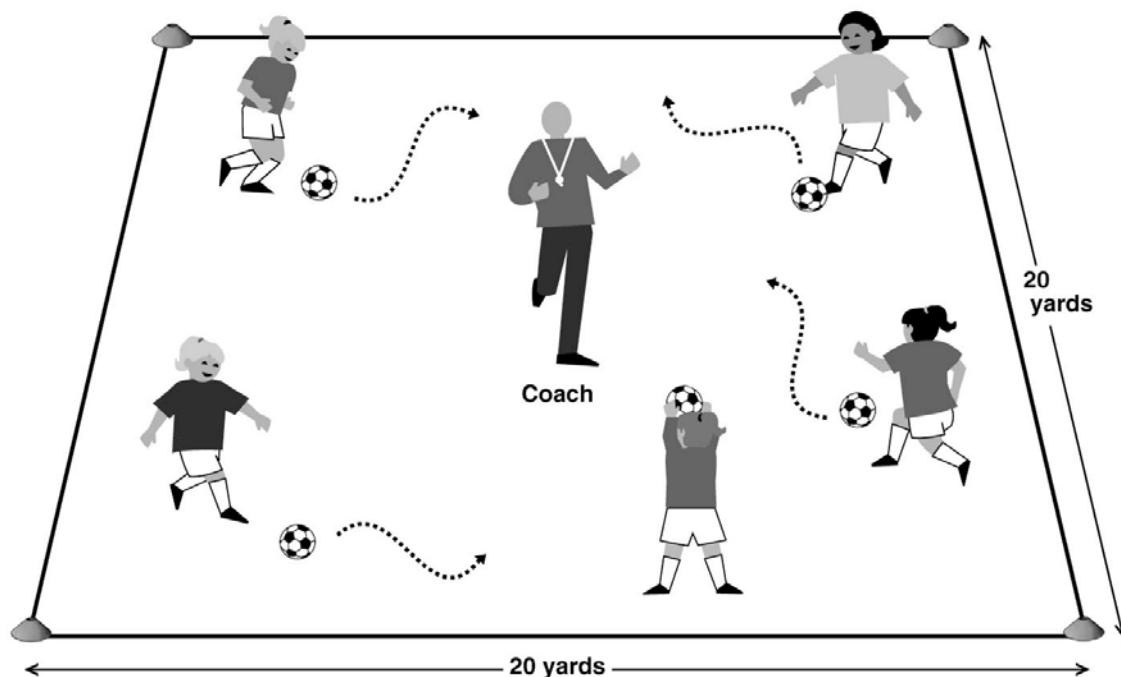
Equipment: 4 or more cones to mark grid, 1 ball for each player

Grid Requirement: 20 X 20 yard grid

Organization: Create a 20 X 20 yard grid marked with cones. All players are required to play within the grid and each player must have a soccer ball.

How The Game Is Played: The player's dribble around the area. The coach must attempt to kick the player's ball out of the grid. Once a player has had her ball kicked out of the grid or has dribbled outside of the grid, she must bring it back into the area and stand with the ball above her head with her legs apart in a stationary position. The player can get back into the game only when a teammate dribbles her ball through their legs.

Deviations: Allow players to only use left foot, right foot, outside of R or L, or use inside of both feet. Coach should play at 20% speed. Increase the speed of play as the players become more comfortable with the game.



Find the

Skill: Dribbling

Number Of Players Required: U5 Training Group

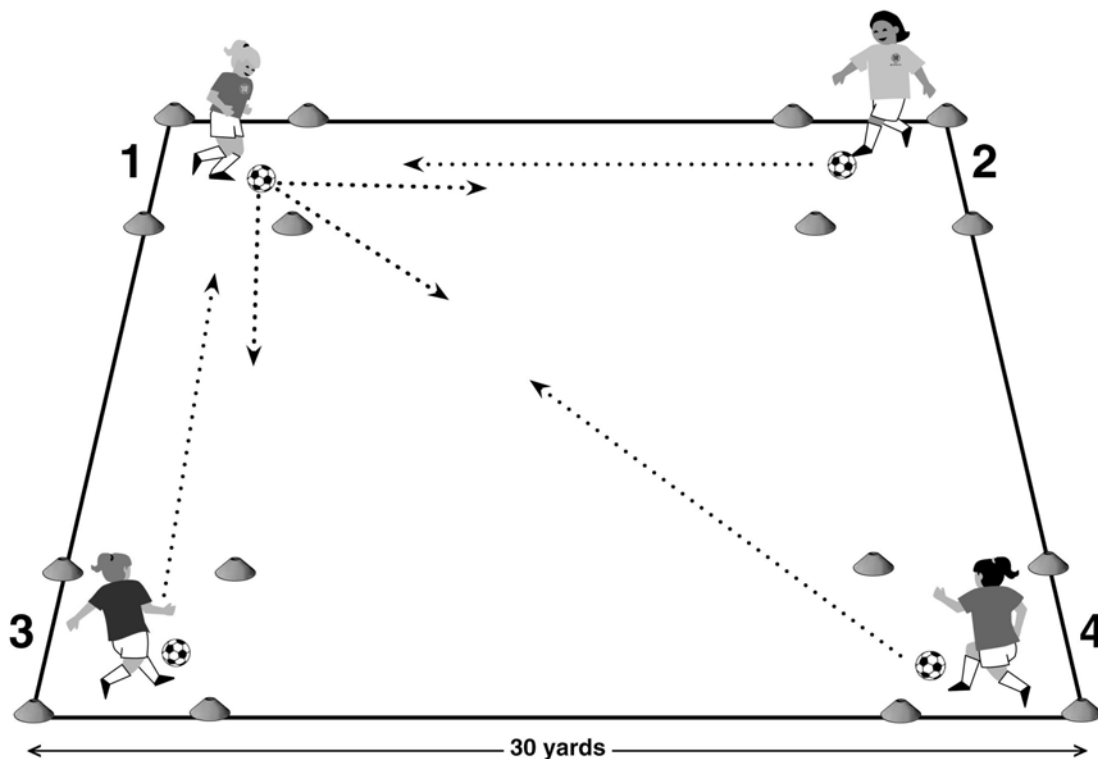
Equipment: 12 or more cones to mark a grid and 1 soccer ball per player.

Grid Requirement: A 30 X 30 yard grid with 5 X 5 yard grids in each corner of the large grid.

Organization: Using cones layout a 30 X 30 yard grid with 5 X 5 yard grids in each corner of the large grid. Place one or two players (depending on the # of players you have at practice) in one of the corner grids, each with a soccer ball.

How The Game Is Played: The coach will designate a number 1 – 4 for each of the small grids. Each small grid will have at least one player who will be randomly dribbling within the grid. The coach will yell a number 1-4 and all players will dribble as fast as they can to the grid # that was called. The player who was playing in the grid that was called must dribble to any one of the three grids that are now empty. First player to the new grid wins.

Deviations: None



LA Freeway

Skill: Dribbling

Number Of Players Required: U5 Training Group

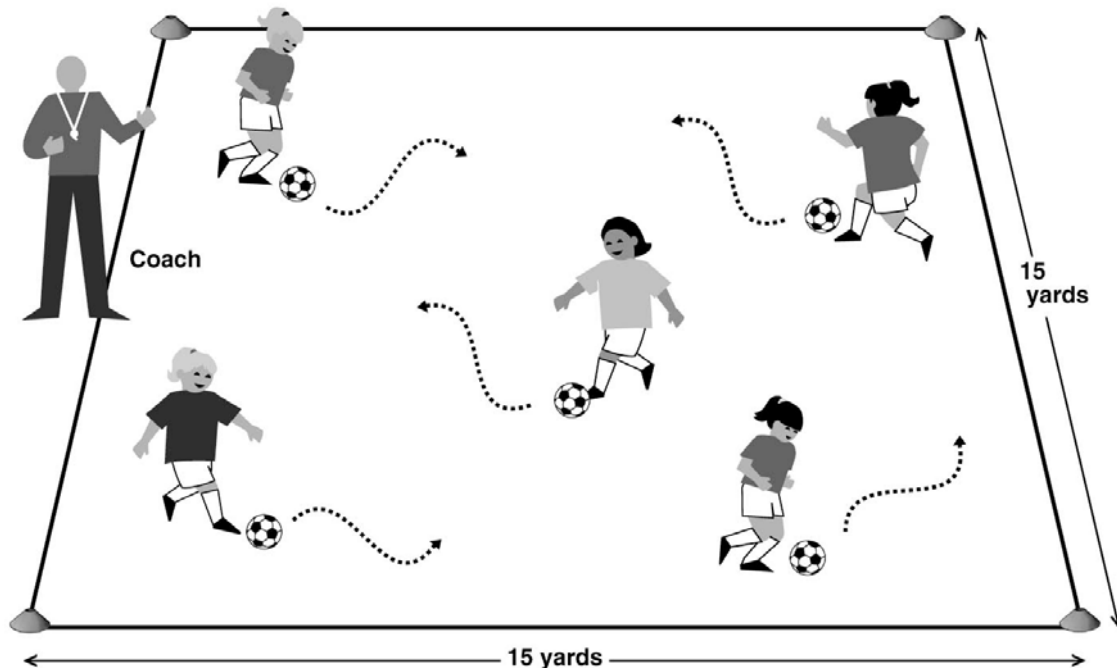
Equipment: 4 or more cones to mark grid, 1 ball for each player

Grid Requirement: 20 X 20 yard grid

Organization: Create a 20 X 20 yard grid marked with cones. All players are required to play within the grid and each player must have a soccer ball.

How The Game Is Played: All players dribble around in the grid. They must react to the following directions given by the LAPD (the coach). "Green" is go, "Yellow" slow down, "Red" is stop with foot on the ball for 3 seconds, "Crash" all must fall to the ground, and "Runaway Speeder" the coach runs in the grid and kicks the balls out of the grid.

Deviations: Allow players to only use left foot, right foot, outside of R or L, or use inside of both feet. Coach play nicely, they are children.



My Ball

Skill: Dribbling

Number Of Players Required: U5 Training Group

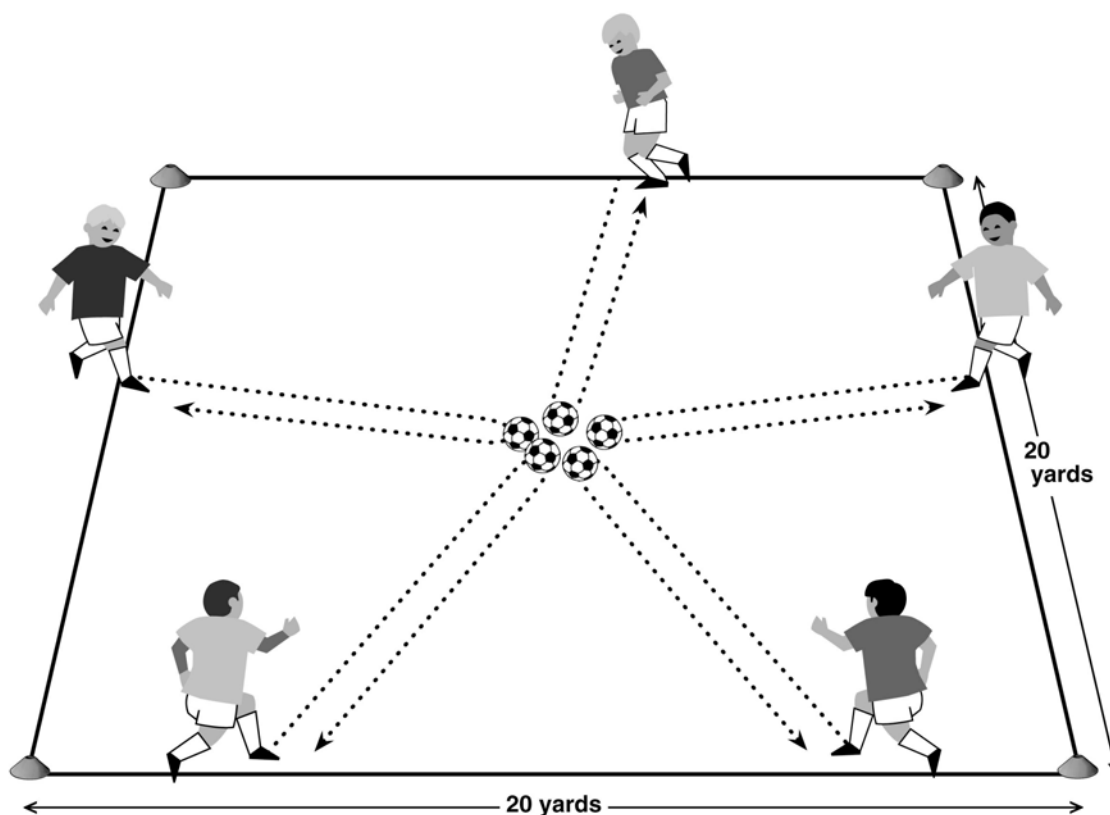
Equipment: 4 or more cones to mark grid, 1 ball for each player

Grid Requirement: 20 X 20 yard grid

Organization: Create a 20 X 20 yard grid marked with cones. All players are required to play within the grid and each player must have a soccer ball.

How The Game Is Played: All players are standing on a line (imaginary boundary line that marks the grid) The coach will call out a player's name, that player must sprint to the center of the grid collect a ball with her feet and return to the line as quickly as possible. The fastest player wins.

Deviations: Allow players to only use left foot, right foot, outside of R or L, or use inside of both feet. The coach can call two or three names at a time. Just have some fun with the game.



Pac Woman

Skill: Dribbling

Number Of Players Required: U5 Training Group

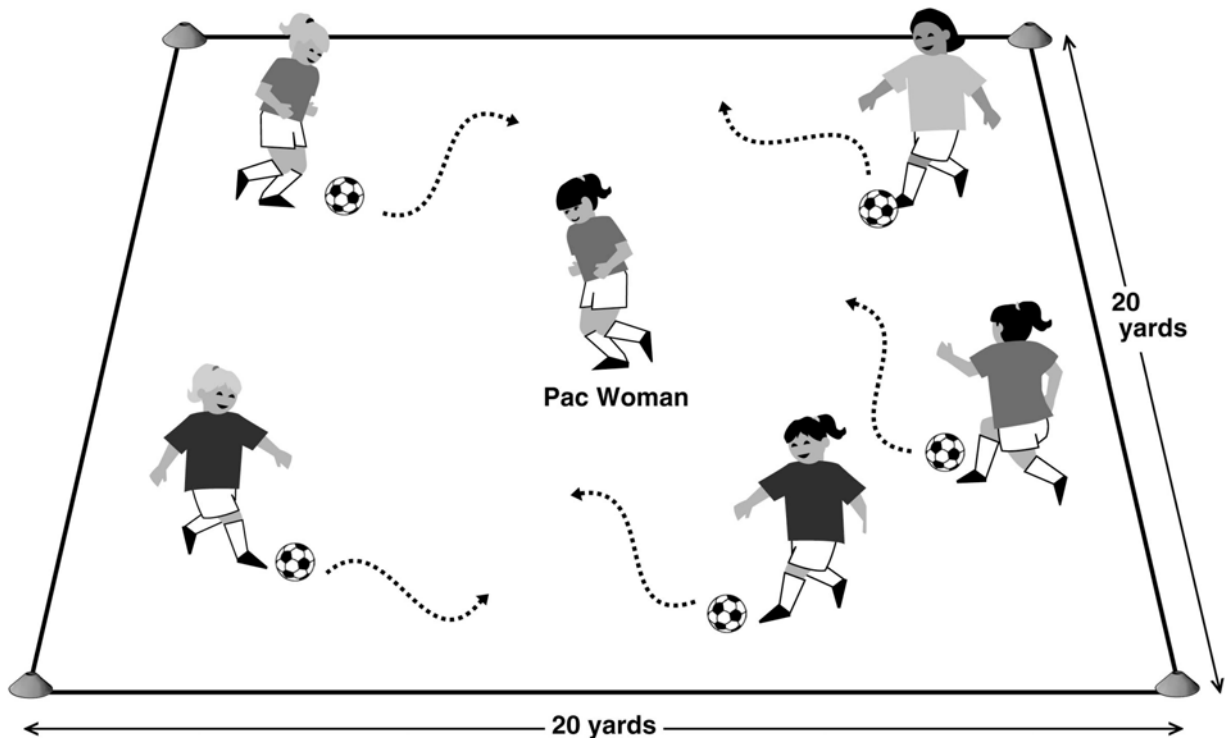
Equipment: 4 or more cones to mark grid, 1 ball for each player

Grid Requirement: 20 X 20 yard grid

Organization: Create a 20 X 20 yard grid marked with cones. All players are required to play within the grid and each player must have a soccer ball.

How The Game Is Played: the Pac Woman chases the players. Any player that dribbles outside the grid or has their ball kicked outside the grid by the Pac Woman, becomes the Pac Woman, the initial Pac Women will use the ball of the player who dribbled out of the grid or whose ball was kicked out of the grid.

Deviations: Allow players to only use left foot, right foot, outside of R or L, or use inside of both feet. Ensure that the Pac-woman plays at speed.



Sharks/Minnows

Skill: Dribbling

Number Of Players Required: U5 Training Group

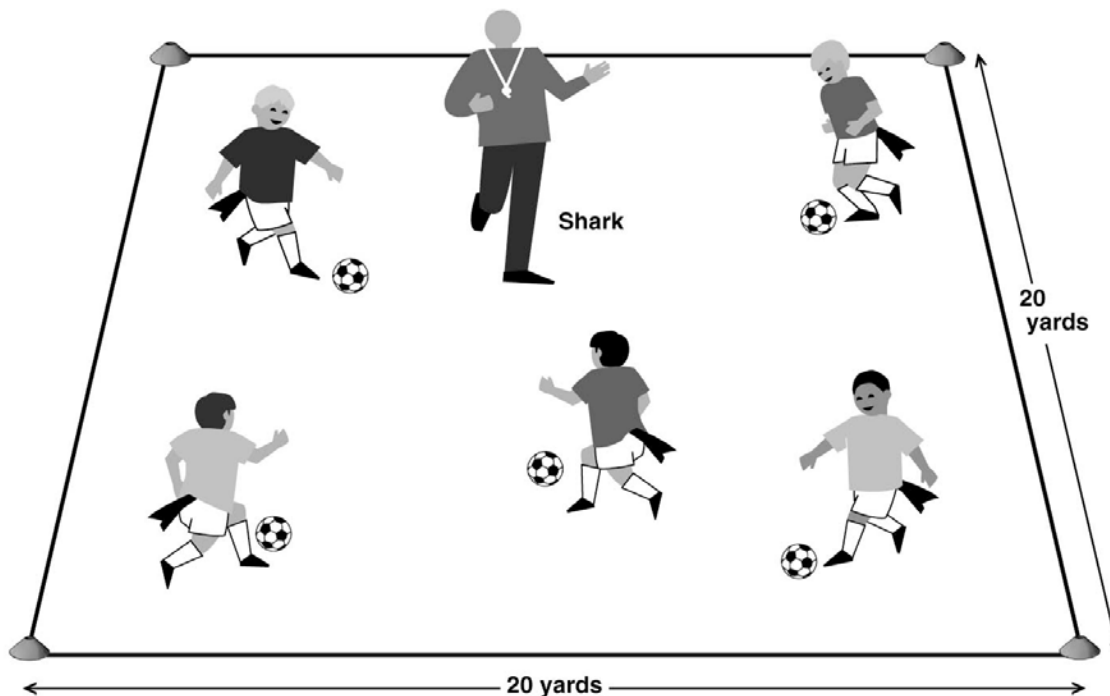
Equipment: 4 or more cones to mark grid, 1 ball for each player and some type of tail (piece of cloth) for each player.

Grid Requirement: 20 X 20 yard grid

Organization: Create a 20 X 20 yard grid marked with cones. All players are required to play within the grid and each player must have a soccer ball and a tail.

How The Game Is Played: The Minnows have a tail in the back of their shorts. The Shark (coach) moves around the grid catching minnows by pulling out their tails. The minnows try to avoid the shark. When a minnow has lost its tail it must leave the grid. Conduct the activity without a ball first and then introduce a ball.

Deviations: Allow players to only use left foot, right foot, outside of R or L, or use inside of both feet.



State Game

Skill: Dribbling

Number Of Players Required: U5 Training Group

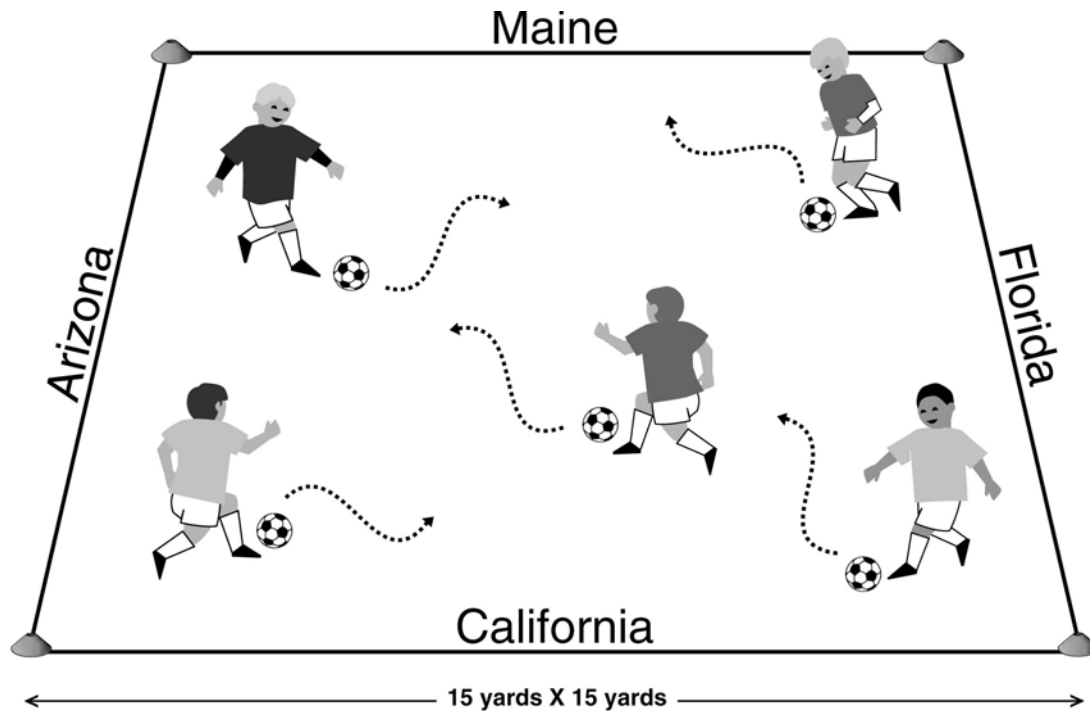
Equipment: 4 or more cones to mark grid, 1 ball for each player

Grid Requirement: 20 X 20 yard grid

Organization: Create a 20 X 20 yard grid marked with cones. All players are required to play within the grid and each player must have a soccer ball.

How The Game Is Played: The coach will give every line on the grid a state name, California, Arizona, Florida, or Maine, makes no difference coach can change the name of the line anytime she wants too. After the players are told the name of the lines the players will dribble around the grid till the coach tell them what state to visit. When the coach yells the state the players must stop the ball on the line that represents the state that was called.

Deviations: Allow players to only use left foot, right foot, outside of R or L, or use inside of both feet. Change the name from states to National Parks. Use the player's names for a line (just be sure to use every players name by the end of the training).



The Big Bad Bear

Skill: Dribbling

Number Of Players Required: U5 Training Group

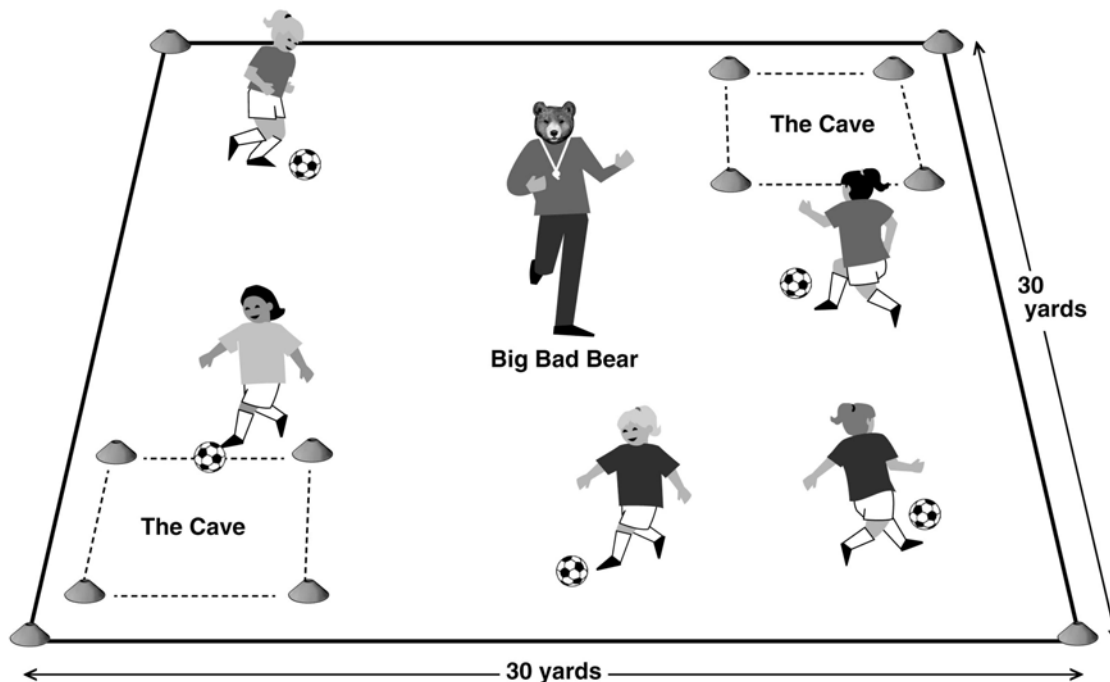
Equipment: 12 cones - 4 cones to mark grid the grid, 8 cones to make two caves and 1 ball for each player.

Grid Requirement: 30 X 30 yard grid

Organization: Create a 30 X 30 yard grid marked with cones. Players must stay within the grid.

How The Game Is Played: The coach is the “Big Bad Bear” and the bear must try to capture the players. The players dribble around the area while the bear tries to capture them. The bear cannot capture the players if they hide in the cave. The players can only stay in the cave for 10 seconds and must go to the other cave to avoid capture. If a player is captured they become a Big Bad Bear and help the other bear capture the remaining players. Last player to be captured is the winner.

Deviations: All Bears must hold hands while trying to capture the remaining players. Bears must always be growling.



The Big Race

Skill: Dribbling

Number Of Players Required: U5 Training Group

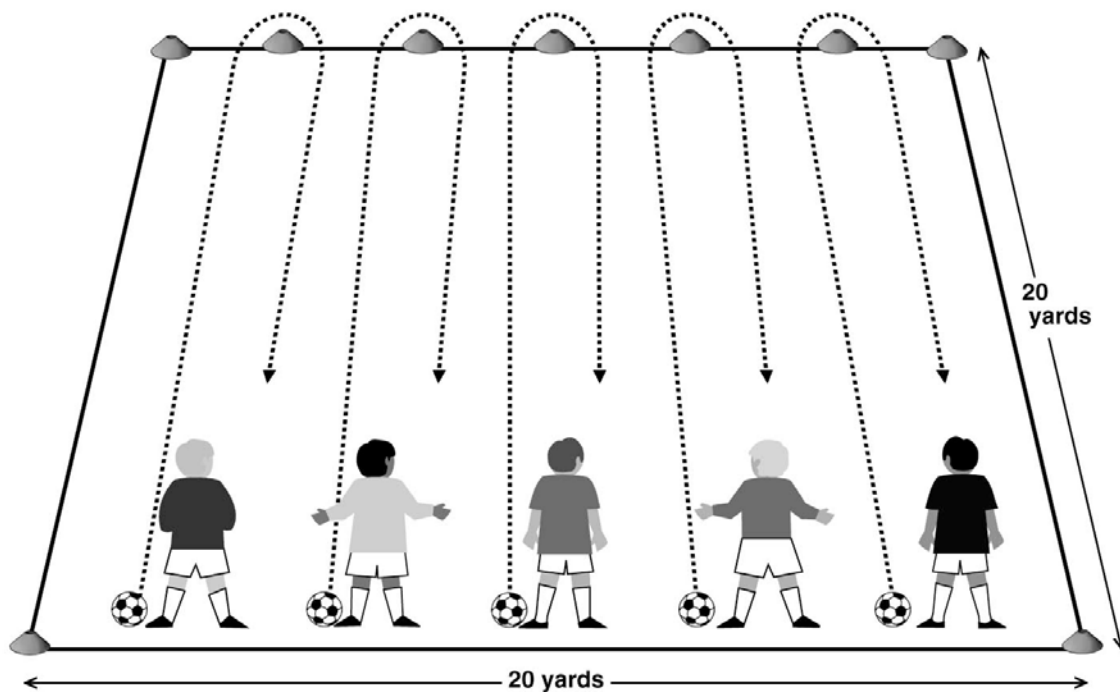
Equipment: 10 or more cones to mark grid, 1 ball for each player and a cone for each player.

Grid Requirement: 20 X 20 yard grid

Organization: Create a 20 X 20 yard grid marked with cones. Place each player across from a cone that is place on the other end of the grid.

How The Game Is Played: The coach will say, "Start your engines" after which he will yell go. The players must dribble their ball around their cone and back to the starting line. The first player back is the race winner.

Deviations: Allow players to only use left foot, right foot, outside of R or L, or use inside of both feet. Have a staggered start. Race in teams of two or three, players. Have the player's race individually against the clock (time trials).



The Big Snake

Skill: Dribbling

Number Of Players Required: U5 Training Group

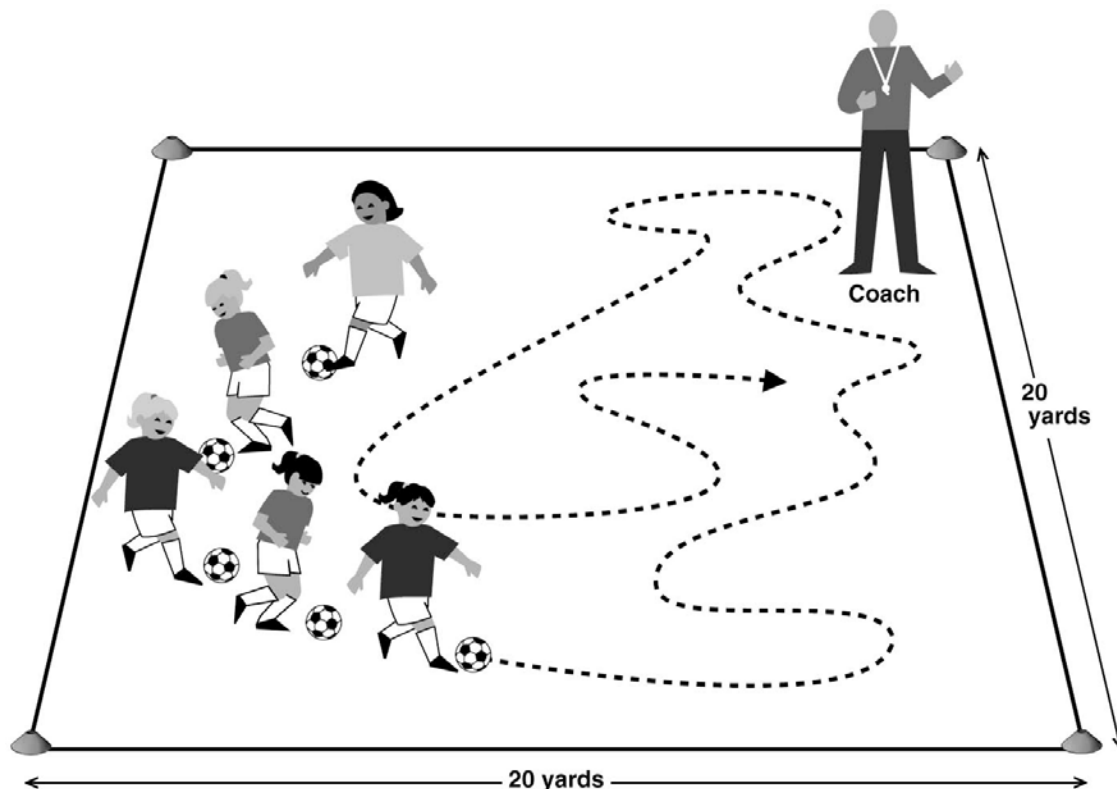
Equipment: 4 or more cones to mark grid, 1 ball for each player

Grid Requirement: 20 X 20 yard grid

Organization: Create a 20 X 20 yard grid marked with cones. All players are required to play within the grid and each player must have a soccer ball.

How The Game Is Played: The players' dribble around the area. All players form a snake like line; each player has a ball at his feet and must follow the lead player (the head of the snake). When the coach yells "new snake" the player at the end of the snake becomes the front of the snake.

Deviations: Allow players to only use left foot, right foot, outside of R or L, or use inside of both feet. Ensure that all players become the head of the snake at one time or another. Have the players add their favorite soccer fake (move) when they are the head of the snake.



Treasure Hunt

Skill: Dribbling

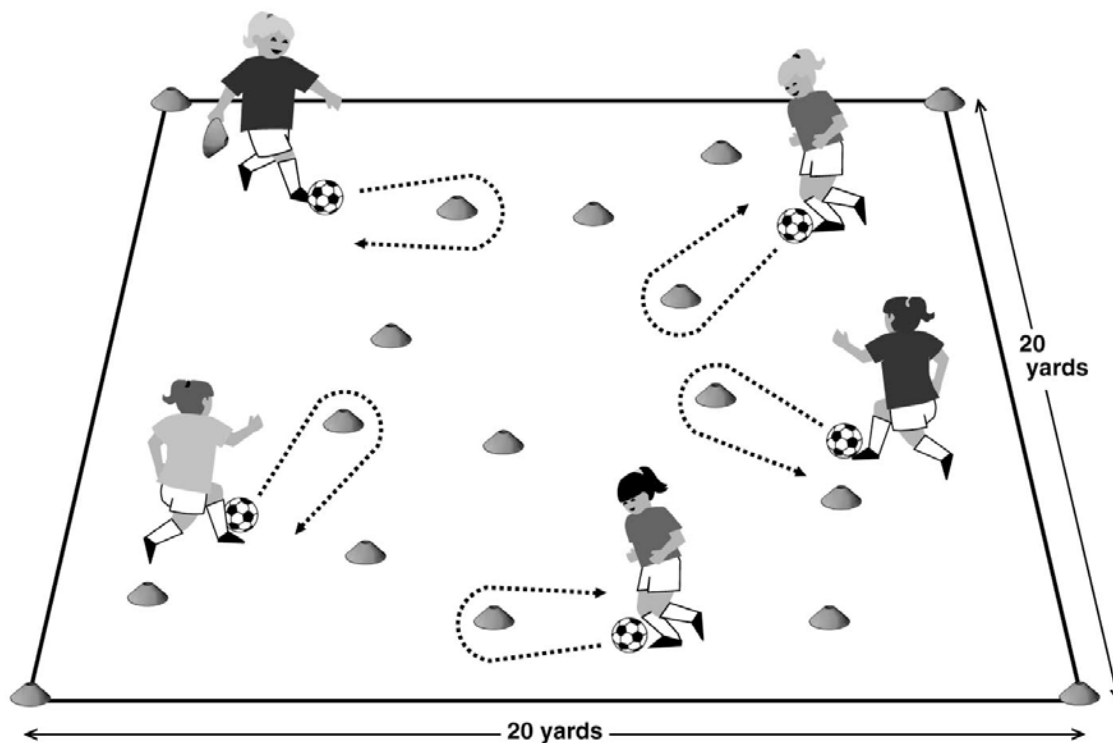
Number Of Players Required: U5 Training Group

Equipment: 10 to 14 pro cones that will be placed randomly in the grid, 1 ball for each player

Grid Requirement: 20 X 20 yard grid

Organization: Create a 20 X 20 yard grid marked with cones. All players are required to play within the grid and each player must have a soccer ball.

How The Game Is Played: Players dribble around the grid keeping the ball close. The object of the game is to collect as many discs as possible, while dribbling around the grid. Once all cones have been picked up, the player with the most cones is the winner. Deviations: Allow players to only use left foot, right foot, outside of R or L, or use inside of both feet.

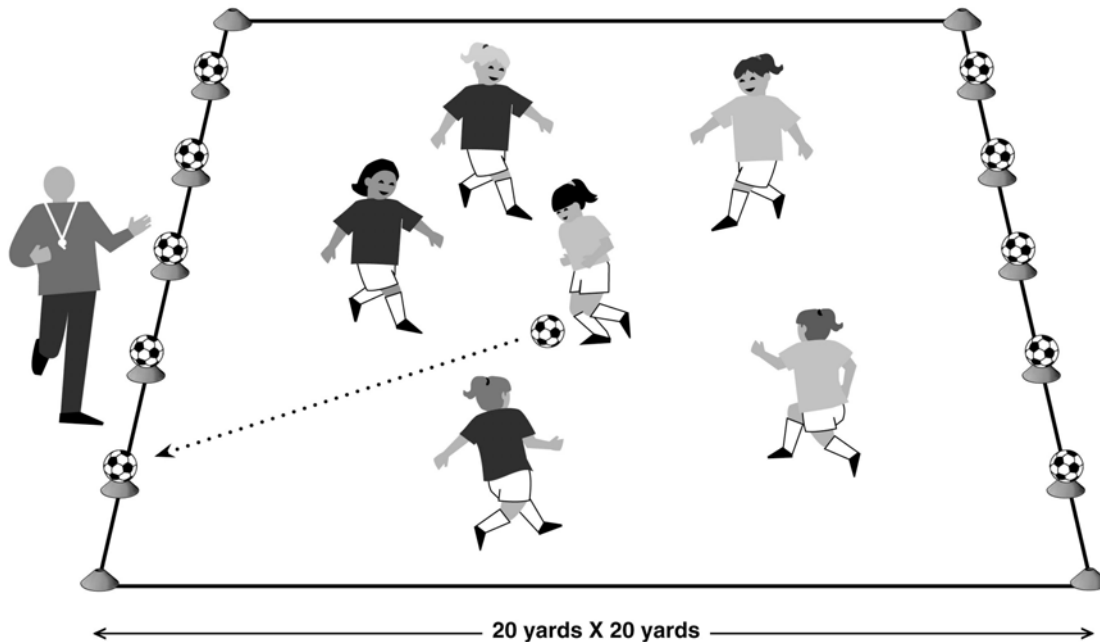


Knock It Off

Skill: Passing/Shooting

Number Of Players Required: U5 Training Group

Equipment: 14 or more cones, 4 to mark grid and 10 to place balls on, 11 soccer



balls.

Grid Requirement: 20 X 20 yard grid

Organization: Create a 20 X 20 yard grid marked with cones. Place 5 cones with a ball on it along each end line.

How The Game Is Played: The coach will role a ball into the grid and say “Go”. Each team fights for possession, the team that gains possession attacks and the other team tries to regain possession. The game is won when all the balls on the end line that a team is attacking are knock off the cones. If the ball goes out of play the coach will role it back into the grid. Coach determines which team attack which end line.

Deviations: Can only shoot with the foot the coach designates. Let any team attack any ball, team that knock off the most balls wins. Have players on the same team alternate knocking off the ball (one player can’t knock off two in a row).

One Pin Bowling

Skill: Dribbling

Number Of Players Required: U5 Training Group

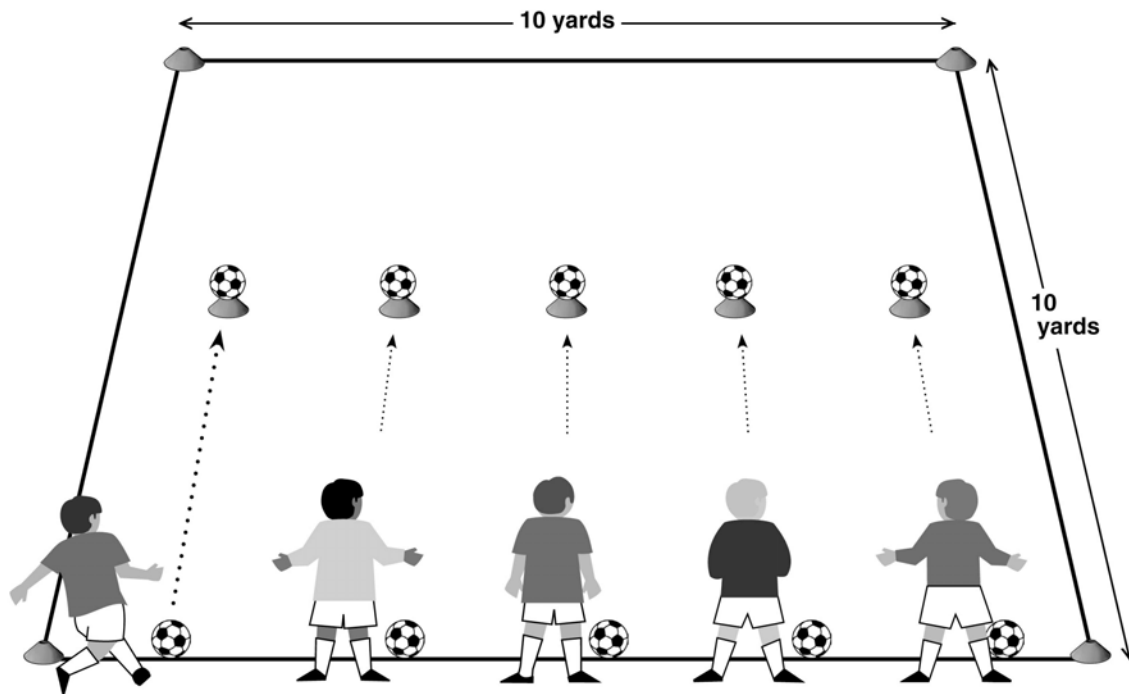
Equipment: 10 or more cones to mark grid, 2 balls for each player and a cone for each player.

Grid Requirement: 10 X 10 yard grid

Organization: Create a 10 X 10 yard grid marked with cones. Place each player across from a cone with a ball placed on the cone located at the mid point of the grid.

How The Game Is Played: One at a time each player tries to knock the ball of the cone directly in line with her. Let each player try it once before you start over from player 1. After each player has attempted five shots, the player who has knocked the most balls off the cone is the winner.

Deviations: Have players strike the ball with the left and right foot. Change the distance that the balls are away from the players. Try to get all five balls at the end of the grid by the end of the training session.



Shooting Gallery

Skill: Passing/Shooting

Number Of Players Required: U5 Training Group

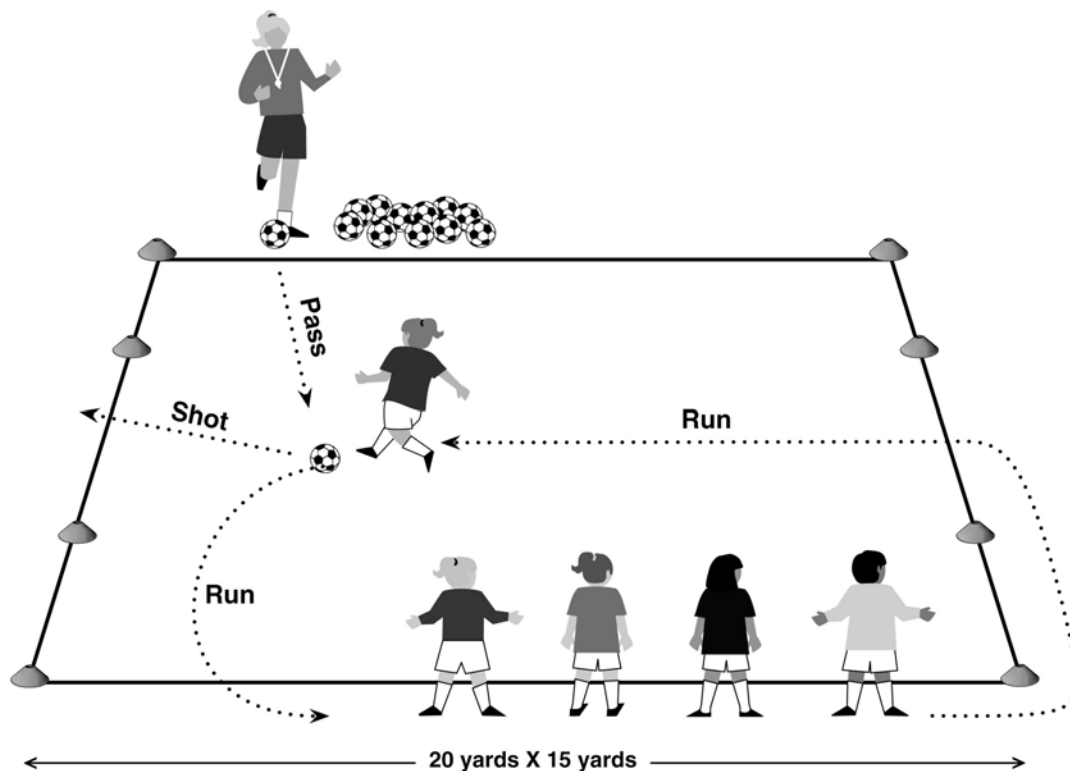
Equipment: 10 or more cones to mark grid, a lot of soccer balls (at least 2 per player).

Grid Requirement: 15 X 20 yard grid

Organization: Create a 15 X 20 yard grid marked with cones. Mark two goals with cones on each goal line. The coach will be located on the opposite touch line from the players with a good supply of soccer balls.

How The Game Is Played: The coach will call the name of the first player in line, when the name is called the player will run between the near 2 cones, receive a pass from the coach so the player can shoot on goal and return to end of the line.

Deviations: Coach and players will switch sides. Players should look to one touch the shot on goal.



Target Practice

Skill: Passing/Shooting

Number Of Players Required: U5 Training Group

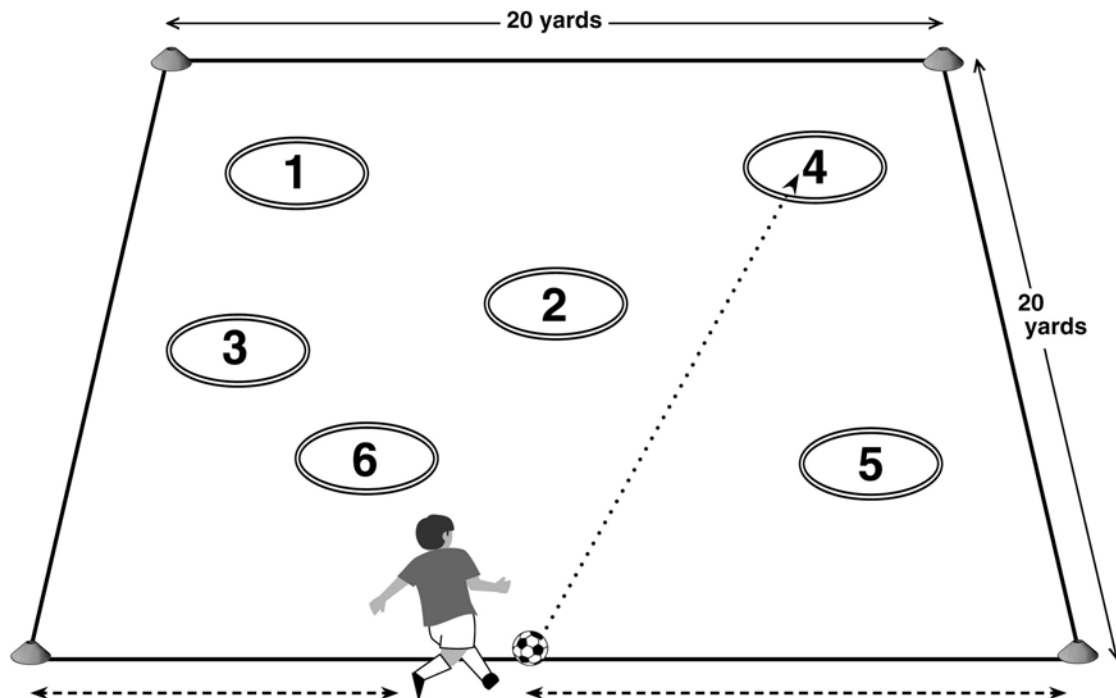
Equipment: 4 cones to mark grid, 6 or more hoops, 1 ball for each player.

Grid Requirement: 20 X 20 yard grid

Organization: Create a 20 X 20 yard grid marked with cones. Place 5 or 6 hoops (hula hoops work well) randomly within the grid.

How The Game Is Played: One at a time each player tries to kick and have his or her ball stop within the hoop. The first player to keep a ball within all the hoops is the winner. After a miss the next player is up. Players can shoot from any place on the line.

Deviations: Allow players to only use left foot, right foot, or the outside of R or L.



Target Practice Two

Skill: Passing/Shooting

Number Of Players Required: U5 Training Group

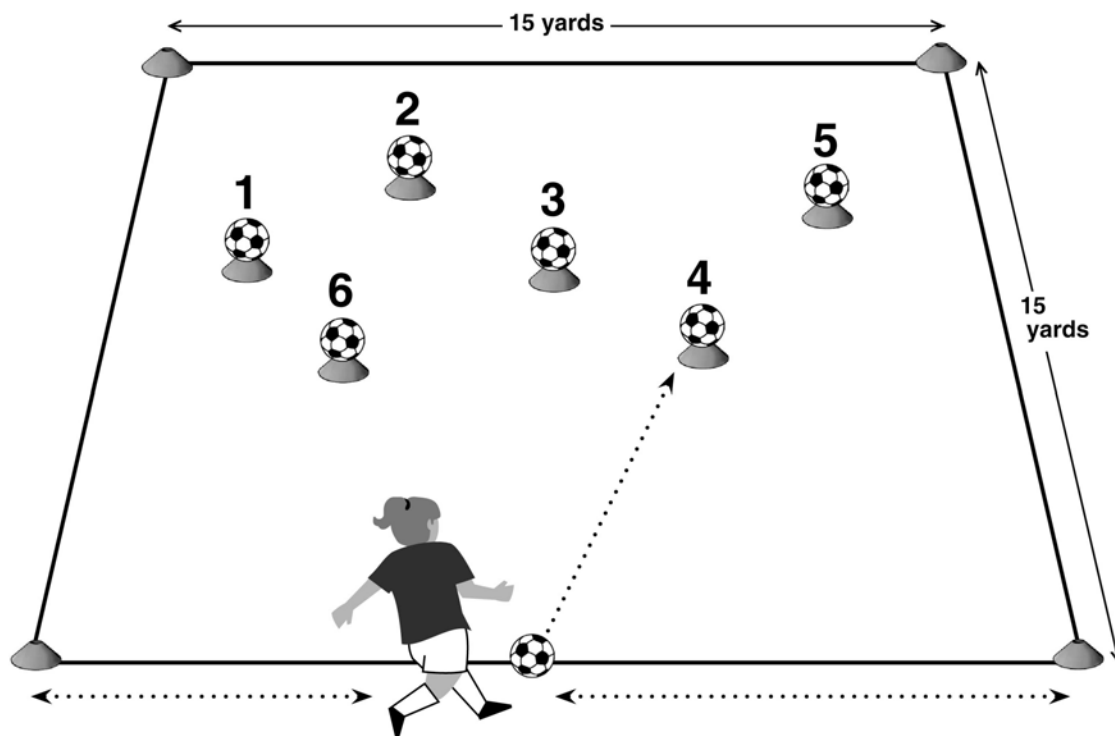
Equipment: 4 cones to mark grid and 6 cones to place soccer balls on, 7 or 8 soccer balls.

Grid Requirement: 20 X 20 yard grid

Organization: Create a 20 X 20 yard grid marked with cones. Place 5 or 6 cones with soccer ball on top of them randomly within the grid.

How The Game Is Played: One at a time each player tries to knock a ball off of the cones one ball at a time. After a miss the coach resets the balls and next player is up. Players can shoot from any place on the line. The first player to knock all six balls of the cones is the winner.

Deviations: Allow players to only use left foot, right foot, or the outside of R or L. Inside R or L. Instep R or L.



The Mosquito

Skill: Passing

Number Of Players Required: U5 Training Group

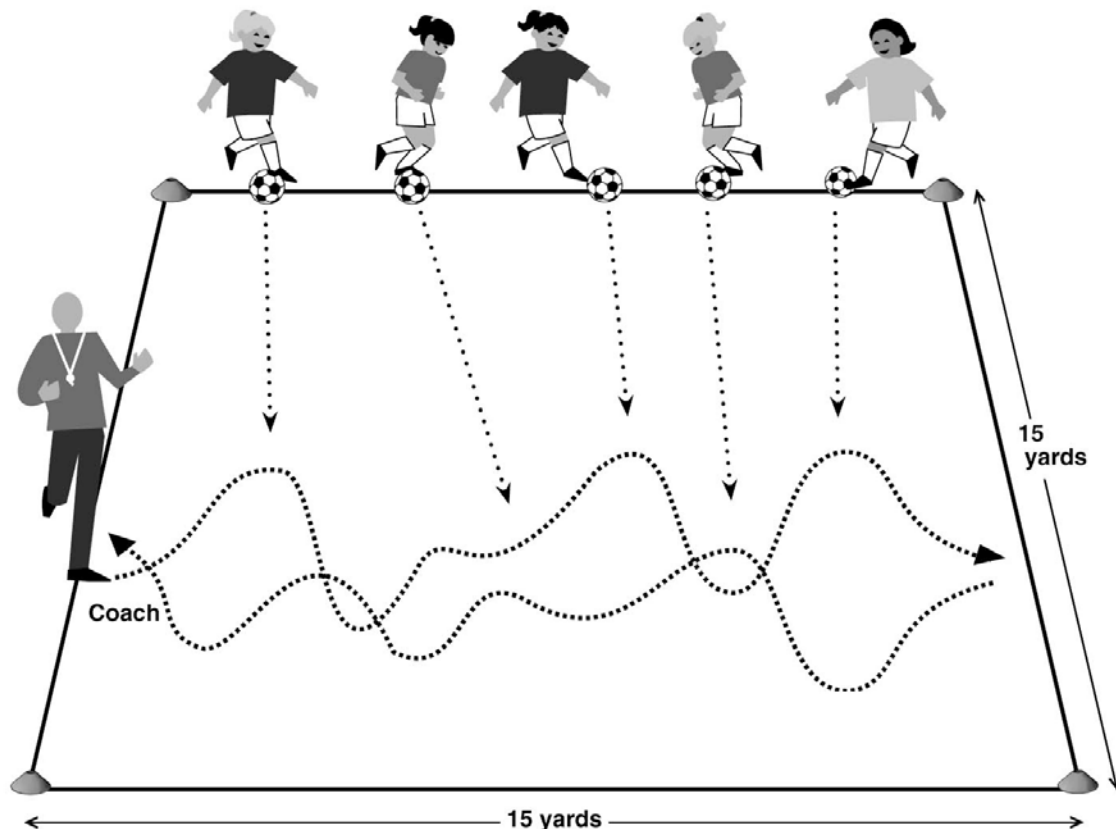
Equipment: 4 cones to mark grid, 1 ball for each player.

Grid Requirement: 15 X 15 yard grid

Organization: Create a 15 X 15 yard grid marked with cones. Place all players on one end of the grid with a ball at their feet. Coach (the Mosquito) will center himself at a mid-point of the grid.

How The Game Is Played: The Coach (the Mosquito) will dash (as best he can) across the grid trying to avoid being hit with the balls that the exterminators (players) are shooting at him. Before heading back to the starting point the coach will allow the players to collect their ball and line up on the other side of the grid for one more go at the Mosquito.

Deviations: Tell players which foot to use.



My Buddy

Skill: Passing

Number Of Players Required: U5 Training Group

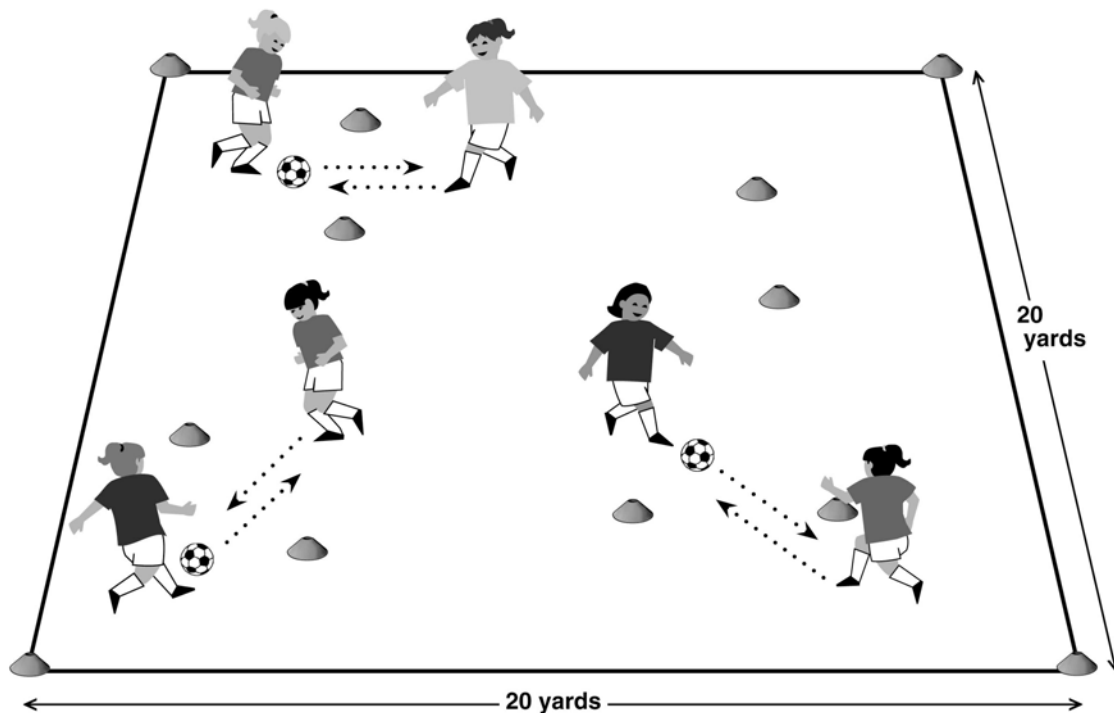
Equipment: 12 or more cones to mark grid and goals. Group players in pairs, 1 ball for every pair.

Grid Requirement: 20 X 20 yard grid

Organization: Create a 20 X 20 yard grid marked with cones. Create 4 or 5 goals that are arbitrarily placed in the grid. Group players in pairs, 1 ball for every pair.

How The Game Is Played: Both players in the pair will move to a goal with one of the players dribbling to one of the goals in the grid. When the pair gets to a goal they then pass the ball through the goal 3 times to score a goal. Pairs move throughout the area until they have completed all the goals in the grid. If another pair is at a goal, players must go to a goal that is vacant.

Deviations: None



Into The Well

Skill: Throw-In

Number Of Players Required: U5 Training Group

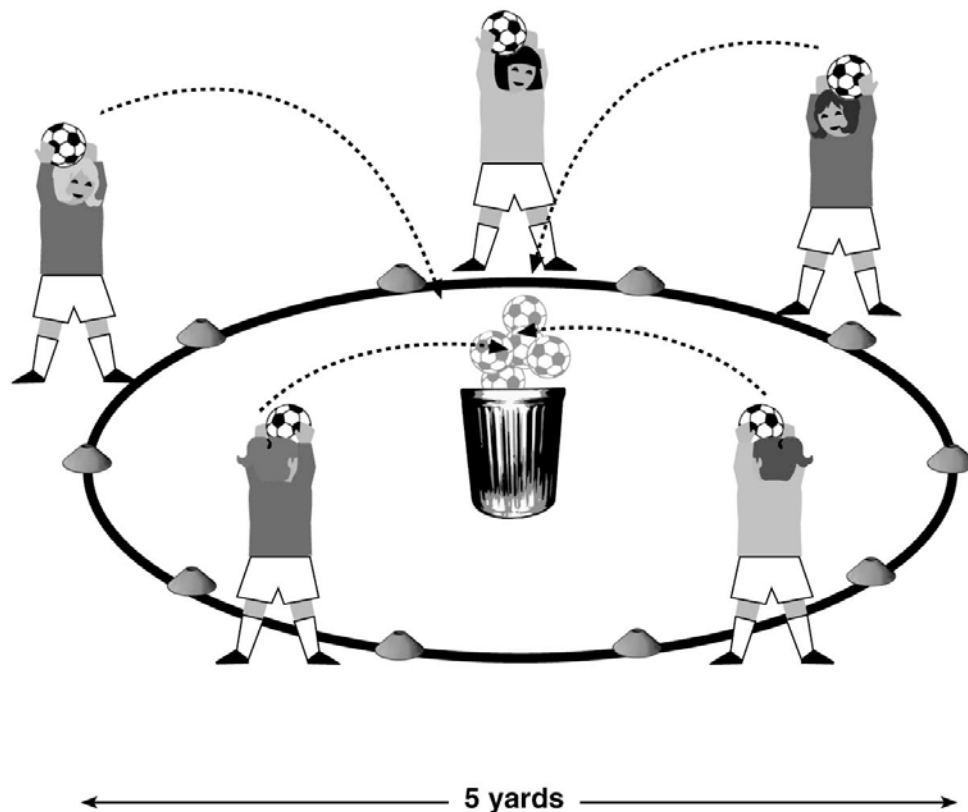
Equipment: 10 or more cones to mark grid, 1 ball for each player and a trashcan.

Grid Requirement: 5-yard diameter circle.

Organization: Circle the players (5 yard diameter circle) around a target (trash can) with soccer ball in hand.

How The Game Is Played: The players attempt to throw the balls into the trashcan all at once. The object is to improve the number of balls that go into the trashcan, not to have a winner. Have the teamwork on improving the number of balls in the target.

Deviations: Increase the circumference of the circle. Allow a parent to move around the circle carrying the target.



To The Line

Skill: Throw-in

Number Of Players Required: U5 Training Group

Equipment: 4 or more cones to mark grid, 1 ball for each player and some thing that can be used for a line (rope, cones, or a piece of pvc).

Grid Requirement: 20 X 20 yard grid

Organization: Create a 20 X 20 yard grid marked with cones. Place all players at one end of the grid with a ball in hand. Mark a target line of some type placed about 2 yards apart.

How The Game Is Played: The coach will have the first player on the line try to hit the first target line with a Throw-in. Coach goes from player one to the end of the line. On the second throw-in the second target line will be the goal and so on and so on. Use a point system for the team outcome. If all five players hit the first line award five points. Two points for all that hit the second line. Try to top the previous total.

Deviations: None

