



ALBERTA SOCCER ASSOCIATION  
*The Governing Body of Soccer in Alberta*

# GRASSROOTS SESSION TOOLKIT

Resource for Coaches to Help Run Grassroots Sessions



## INTRODUCTION

Alberta Soccer is committed to the development of Grassroots Soccer Programming by supporting the many parent, youth and volunteer coaches who provide encouragement and instruction to the thousands of children who play soccer in the province.

Alberta Soccer supports the implementation of the Preferred Training Model of delivery as advocated by Canada Soccer and FIFA. The Preferred Training Model uses a station rotation approach which provides an enjoyable and supportive environment for the development of many grassroots coaches across Alberta. The development of the grassroots coach is a key responsibility for Alberta Soccer and every community, in recognizing that it is the coaches' enthusiasm and passion for the game that encourages many youngsters and future players to take up the sport.

*“Not every grassroots player may make a National team player, but every National Team player started out in Grassroots Soccer.”*

## BE THE DIFFERENCE

Alberta Soccer Grassroots provides “first steps” coaching clinics on the Preferred Training Model to districts, clubs and communities. These clinics utilize the Canadian Soccer Toolkit resources, which can be found at: <http://www.canadasoccer.com/canada-soccer-pathway-ltpd--s16879>

The resources are a great initial guide for many coaches taking their first steps into grassroots soccer. The provided information on Long Term Player Development and guidelines on the developmental benchmarks and training “pillars” for soccer development.

The purpose of this document is to provide supplementary coaching activity plans to support further development for coaches. This resource is set out to support the initial three stages of Long Term Player Development: Active Start, FUNdamentals and Learning to Train.

## WHAT IS LONG TERM PLAYER DEVELOPMENT?

Long Term Player Development (LTPD) is a key plan for future programming in grassroots soccer, as it seeks to address many of the adverse effects of training to compete at an early age. The goal of Long Term Player Development is to ensure every player is encouraged to learn, have fun and develop the *right skills at the right time with the right coach*.

<http://www.canadasoccer.com/canada-soccer-pathway-ltpd--s16879>

## SESSION PLANNING

This resource has been developed to help coaches in developing and planning coaching activities that will be appropriate for them and most importantly, the players they are coaching. We encourage all individual's coaching the sport to seek out appropriate coach education courses prior to coaching a team and using these resources. Please visit the Coach section of the Alberta Soccer website to find a course near you.

Although LTPD advocates stages of development, it should be noted that no two player groups are alike, thus a similar session plan will require due consideration for the coaching environment within which it will be delivered. This consideration supports the use of this guide book as a resource to support the understanding, development and delivery of sessions for the coach.

When developing, or building a coaching session, coaches are reminded that we all learn best through doing and repetition – if the players enjoy a drill, there is no harm in repeating this. All session plans should accommodate small adaptations to meet the changing and developing needs of the players. Encourage players to express their wants when preparing any session planning. This may result in a desire for more shooting games, but every shooting game requires a goalkeeper and defenders.

Always plan your sessions to commence and conclude with an activity that provides a ball per player, then recap on what the focus of the session was and provide a homework task for the players to master independently.

### COACHING ACTIVITY TOOLKIT

The Alberta Soccer Toolkit is a resource from which to pick and mix activities to suit the goals and nature of any given practice session. The activities are not presented in an order of delivery or priority, but allows flexibility to make selections that meet the needs of the players.

Each activity plan provides a user-friendly guide to its implementation. A key understanding for coaches is that it is not always what you deliver, but how you adapt an activity to meet the needs of the player's that determines its success. It is therefore recommended that coaches look outside of their chosen stage of delivery and review other activities within the resources that they may be able to adapt for their group.

The enclosed activities are presented to reflect each stage of development and the specific component:  
Set-up; Instructions; options

**SET-UP:** Basic instructions with no dimensional guide-lines as the dimensions are one of the key variables in adapting a session. If the activity does not present a challenge to the player's, then make the space smaller or similarly if the activity is too challenging than make the space larger.

As indicated elsewhere, if a particular activity is presented within one stage of development, this does not mean it should not be used within other stages, it would just likely require adaptations to meet the player's needs.

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Again, these are minimal instructions with a few conditions presented. The instructions may be adapted to include conditions or restraints on the delivery. Also, try to keep all verbal instructions to a minimum. A picture (demonstration) paints a thousand words.



**OPTIONS:** these are recommended options to progress the activity when required. It is important that coaches do not progress because their planning says so, but to reflect the needs of the players.

**TRAINING PILLARS:** Many of the enclosed activities could be viewed to reflect the training pillars within their organization and delivery. This final guideline provides an indication of which pillars can be best reflected within the activities with a minor adaptation.

These pillars are described below:

### Canadian Soccer's 4 Training "Pillars" & Goals

Soccer Technique (ST)	General Movement (GM)	Coordination (CO)	Small Sided Games (SSG)
Present activities with a particular focus upon improving soccer technique such as dribbling	Adaptation of activities to encourage general movement actions familiar to soccer (running, skipping, jumping)	Using activities that encourage the coordination of various body parts to enhance the execution of a specific range of techniques	These are key for players to refine and evaluate their development and performance. SSG may be scrimmages or smaller 2v2 game challenges

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Legend:

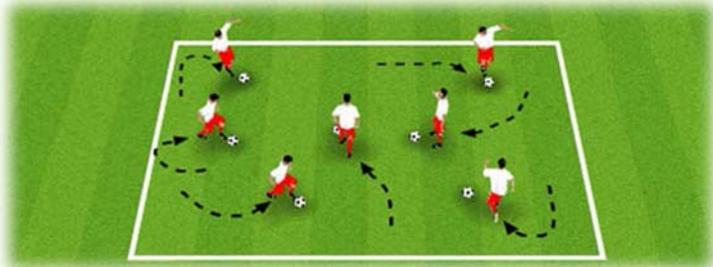
Warm Up Drills **Active****Start Drills****FUNDamentals Drills**

Learn to Train Drills



## WARM-UP ACTIVITIES

### ACTIVITY TITLE: SKILLS SQUARE (ST, GM, CO)



#### Set Up

1. Mark off a square large enough to support free movement of all the players with a ball each
2. Players should be allowed free movement with the ball within the square
3. Encourage players to dribble with increasing pace, thus stretching their bodies ready for a game or practice session

Instructions	Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow players to dribble freely and demonstrate examples of moves to coach other players</li> <li>• Encourage invention and fluid movement</li> <li>• Encourage use of both feet and change of speed in their movement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On the Coach's command of 'change', players should stop their ball, gain possession of another player's ball before dribbling off within the square</li> <li>• 'Flip' on the coach's command by performing a sharp turn or somersault with the ball before exchanging possession with another player's ball and re-commence dribbling</li> <li>• Numbers - The players are each provided with a number and using just one ball, the players move freely, on the coaches' command of a number the player with the ball must identify and pass to the player of the corresponding number. This could be in numerical order to start and then the numbers may be mixed randomly to challenge the player's observation.</li> </ul>

**ACTIVITY TITLE: DISHES & DOMES (ST, GM, CO)****Set Up**

1. Playing area is scattered with a set of cones that are positioned in the usual manner 'domes' or turned upside down 'dishes'
2. Ensure that there is an equal number of dishes and domes
3. Designate players to two teams and position them outside the playing area allocating one team to dishes and one team to domes

Instructions	Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On the coach's command, the 'domes' players must ensure all cones are turned to represent domes whilst the 'dishes' players should attempt to turn the cones upwards to make dishes</li> <li>• Players can only turn one cone at a time and must not physically limit anyone else from flipping cones</li> <li>• The game should be played to an allocated time and the team with the most correctly flipped cones wins</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instruct players to move in different ways (e.g. skip, hop or crawl).</li> <li>• Have players dribble a soccer ball while flipping cones (right foot only, left foot only, etc.)</li> </ul>

**ACTIVITY TITLE: PHYSICAL LITERACY RELAYS (ST, GM, CO)****Set Up**

1. Players should form teams and stand in line to pass the ball with their hands in sequence

Instructions	Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the first relay, the ball goes over and behind one player, then under and behind the next player</li> <li>• The second relay should have players rotate alternate sideways and pass the ball to the player behind them</li> <li>• Once the ball is with the last player in line, that player should carry the ball to the front of the line and the team repeats the sequence</li> <li>• Teams will move slowly towards the halfway line and the first team to reach the end wins!</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A progression for the second (sideways) relay is for the players to dribble the ball with their feet in between their teammates</li> <li>• Other relays could include bouncing the ball, running whilst passing the ball under their legs with their hands, performing a somersault at the start of the line in order to re-start the sequence.</li> <li>• Coaches and players should be encouraged to invent lots of varied movements to engage within the relays</li> </ul>

## ACTIVE START COACHING ACTIVITIES

### ACTIVITY TITLE: BODY PARTS (ST, GM, CO)



#### Set Up

1. Allocate each player a ball to dribble within a dedicated area (size of area should be appropriate to the number of players and their ability)

Instructions	Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On the coach's command, players dribble freely and seek to maintain possession of the ball</li> <li>• Coach calls out various body part names – upon the call, players must stop the ball with the corresponding body part</li> <li>• E.g. Coach calls out "KNEE", player must stop the ball with their knee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminate the slowest two players on the coach's command. Players will learn to follow commands and react quickly to the ball.</li> <li>• Other commands could include to jump (two feet), hop (one leg), sprint, backwards dribble.</li> </ul>

### ACTIVITY TITLE: TRAFFIC LIGHTS (ST, GM, CO)



#### Set Up

1. Allocate each player a ball to dribble within a square (size of area should be appropriate to the number of players and their ability)

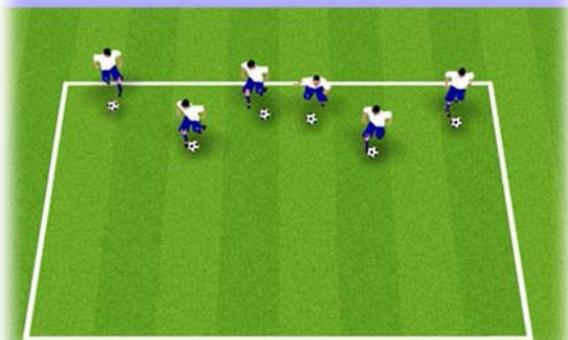
Instructions	Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Players should dribble the ball freely and practice various moves</li> <li>• On the coach's command, players must react to the call and perform the requested task (e.g. stop, turn, etc.)</li> <li>• Focus on dribbling and movement with the ball as well as observation while in possession</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use colored markers instead of calls to initiate an action from the player so players should push the ball slightly further from their control to observe the coach and his actions E.g. Red Cones = Stop, Blue Cones = Cruyff Turn, Yellow Cone = Maradona Spin, etc.</li> <li>• Focus on no more than 3 moves per session</li> </ul>



**ACTIVITY TITLE: DONKEY TAILS (ST, GM, CO)****Set Up**

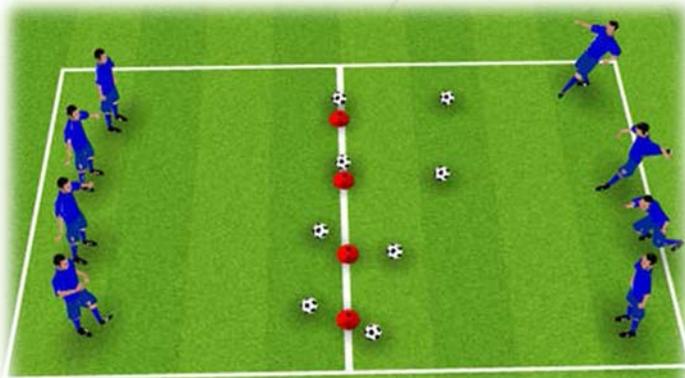
1. Session should take place within a marked area
2. All players start the game with a pinnie tucked into the back of their shorts (donkey tail)

Instructions	Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On the coach's command, players should chase their teammates and 'snatch' the other player's pinnies, whilst avoiding having their pinnie snatched</li> <li>• The focus is on fun (physical literacy) and introduces the concept of tracking and marking players</li> </ul>	<p>Various forms of competition may be used within the game, dependent upon the age of the players.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Everyone chases and if they snatch a pinnie they must give it back straight away, but keep count of how many pinnies they snatch.</li> <li>• Players keep the pinnies and once your pinnie is snatched you are eliminated from the game until the next round.</li> <li>• Play as two teams, donkeys and riders, so the riders should snatch all the donkey tails as quickly as possible, alternating the team roles.</li> <li>• Two teams, all with pinnies and the winning team is the one that gathers their opponents pinnies the quickest.</li> </ul>

**ACTIVITY TITLE: BALL TAPS (ST, GM, CO)****Set Up**

1. Players line up on the first line each with a ball in front of them.

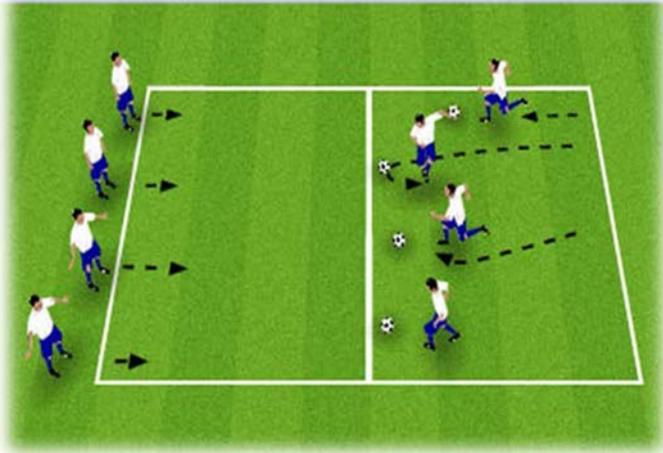
Key Factors (Coaching Points)	Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Players are instructed to perform a given number of ball taps (tapping the ball with the bottom of their foot softly)</li> <li>• Players should ensure the ball is just in front of their body and so they remain balanced throughout, alternating between left and right feet</li> <li>• Focus of this drill is on finding balance and rhythm within performing the requested task sequences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progressions are to maneuver the ball forwards, (with a sequence of roll with the bottom of one foot, stops with the bottom of the other). Once players can move forward encourage backwards and sideways movements.</li> <li>• Further progressions include:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Push with the top of one foot and stop with the same foot (bottom).</li> <li>-Push with the top of one foot and stop with the bottom of the opposite foot.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**ACTIVITY TITLE: COCONUT SHY (ST, GM, CO)****Set Up**

1. Players should work in pairs with one ball between them, and playing within an area that is appropriate for their age and ability.
2. A ball is placed as a target upon a cone between both players.

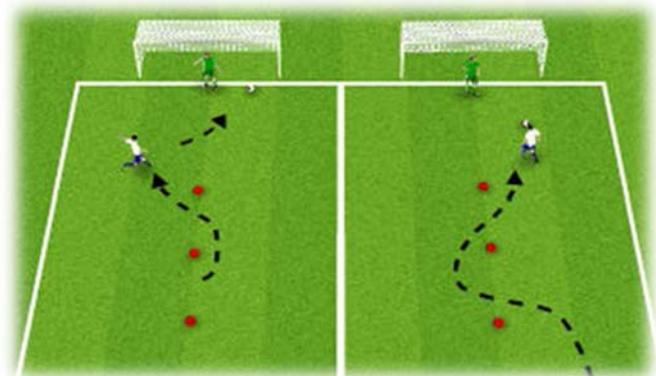
Instructions	Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Players will pass the ball trying to knock the static ball (coconut) off the cone.</li> <li>• Players score one point for each time they successfully knock the ball off the cone</li> <li>• Replace the ball each time it's knocked off and repeat the sequence</li> <li>• Encourage players to use the inside of their foot for greater accuracy whilst considering how their body should be positioned to make a successful pass</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conditions can be applied to players once they have established the game to challenge their development. The easiest progression is to vary the distance from the central ball. Other progressions include: Use inside of foot; use right foot only; use left foot only</li> <li>• This game may also be played between groups of players so a coach may position themselves to observe the whole group and keep count of the teams' scores as both teams compete against each other.</li> </ul>



**ACTIVITY TITLE: TURN N BURN (ST, GM, CO)****Set Up**

1. Split field into 2 equal halves with a dividing center line
2. Players are positioned in pairs across the grid from their partner

Instructions	Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On the coach's command, players with the ball dribble towards the center line and on a second command, players must execute a turn of either the coach's choice or their favorite turn and race to their start position</li> <li>• Coach can request that players turn multiple times</li> <li>• On the command of "Burn", the player without the ball will run across the field and challenge to win the ball before the ball carrier returns to the safety line at the beginning</li> <li>• Ensure roles are switched between partners</li> <li>• Focus of this drill is on close control and dribbling whilst under pressure from an opponent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The coach will control the tempo of this session and may request many turns within the same sequence.</li> <li>• A further organizational change is to have all the players performing the turns with a ball as commanded.</li> <li>• Name the two teams with similar names (sharks and sparks). This time on the coaches' command of one of the names (sharks), that team should leave their balls and try to steal the ball from their partners before they return to their safety zone.</li> </ul>

**ACTIVITY TITLE: DRIBBLE N SHOOT (ST, GM, CO)****Set Up**

1. Set up with a number of goals and a corresponding slalom course.

Instructions	Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Players are encouraged to race by dribbling the ball between the cones and finishing with a strike on goal</li> <li>• Once a player has finished, the player should rotate positions with the goalkeeper, so every player has an opportunity at playing in goal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Straight race against an opponent</li> <li>• Dribble with left/right foot only</li> <li>• Shoot with left/right foot only</li> <li>• Evade a pursuing defender</li> </ul>

**ACTIVITY TITLE: NUMBERS GAME (ST, GM, CO)****Set Up**

1. Ideally this activity is set up around a goal area but may be marked on any field to ensure both sets of players have a similar distance to run and challenge for the ball.
2. Cones are used to mark the approach run
3. Two teams are selected with each player allocated a personal number.
4. Match players by sizes and abilities with a comparable player on the opposing team if possible
5. Goalkeepers may be allocated as a goalkeeper or as a rotating player within the activity

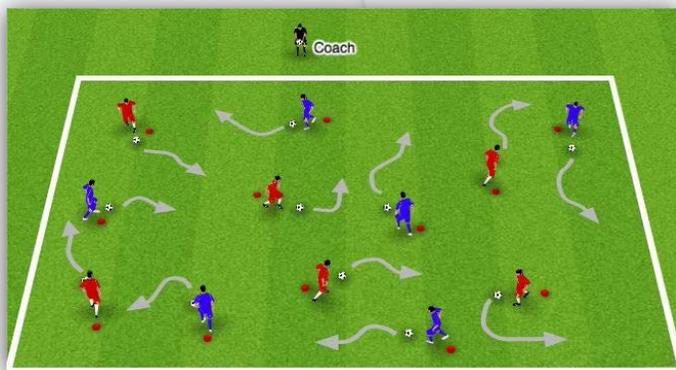
Instructions	Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On the coach's command of a random number, the corresponding player from each team leaves their position to run around the circuit and approach the ball</li> <li>• The first player who assumes possession of the ball should then seek to attack the goal</li> <li>• The opponent should try to steal the ball and attempt to score for themselves</li> <li>• The game should proceed until a goal is scored, the ball goes out of play or the coach provides a 10 second count down.</li> <li>• The activity is then reset and new numbers are called for the next games</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A sitting start</li> <li>• Players perform a somersault before running to approach the ball</li> <li>• Players must use a specified foot or technique</li> <li>• More than one number may be called at any one game – recommended to stretch the field</li> </ul>



**ACTIVITY TITLE: RUNAWAY (ST, GM, CO)****Set Up**

1. Mark a rectangular field with all players assembled in a “safe area” (behind the start line).
2. Each player should have a ball

Instructions	Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The game is as it says – see it do it. The two teams compete to maintain possession of the ball, and whether this is through a dribble or pass, they should seek to play what they see?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Starting with two equal teams encourage self-expression.</li> <li>• There are no targets initially so time how long each team may maintain possession of the ball. The team who holds the ball the longest wins,</li> <li>• Play with unbalanced teams (6V4) and increase the space – this will encourage more dribbling.</li> <li>• Add in target zones at the end of the fields, so teams score by successfully dribbling or passing to a colleague who is positioned within the end zone.</li> </ul>

**ACTIVITY TITLE: SOCCER CHAIRS (ST, GM, CO)****Set Up**

1. This activity is a play on Musical Chairs. The field should be appropriate to the number and age of the players and each player should have one ball.
2. Players should start at a cone – one player per cone (see diagram)

Instructions	Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Players move freely from cone to cone in control of the ball.</li> <li>• On the coaches' signal each player must attempt to get to a cone with possession of the ball as quickly as possible.</li> <li>• The last player to reach a cone doesn't score a point</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include elimination of players by removing cones while players are moving – player who is last or is not able to find a cone is out. Play until a winner is established but be sure resting players have a task and remain engaged.</li> <li>• Introduce this activity without soccer balls.</li> </ul>



## FUNDAMENTALS COACHING ACTIVITIES

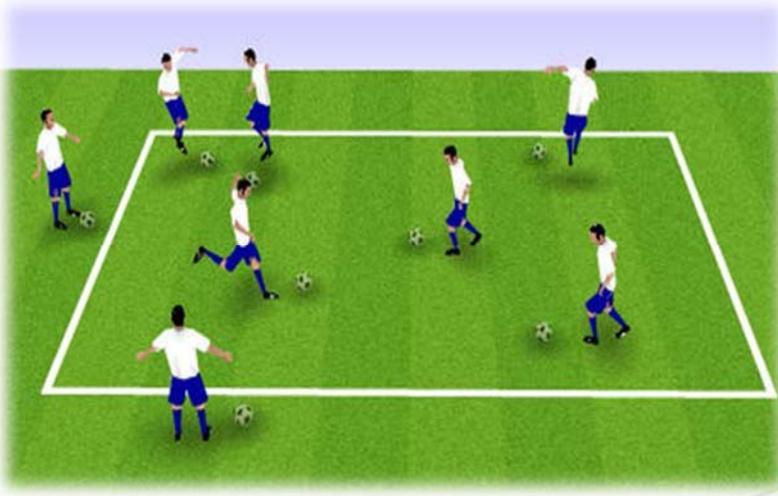
### ACTIVITY TITLE: SEE IT DO IT (ST, GM, CO)



#### Set Up

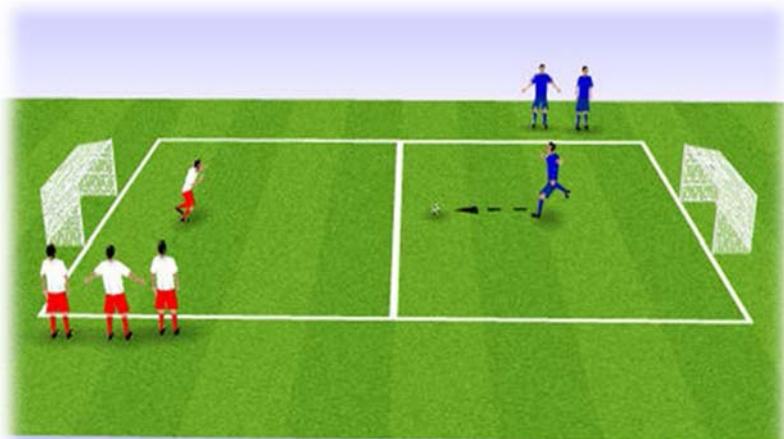
1. This activity takes place in a rectangular field with the dimensions to match the number of players and their abilities.
2. The teams do not need to be equally balanced in terms of numbers or ability.

Instructions	Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Players move freely from cone to cone in control of the ball.</li> <li>• On the coaches' signal each player must attempt to get to a cone with possession of the ball as quickly as possible.</li> <li>• The last player to reach a cone doesn't score a point</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Game rules may be adapted to include elimination of players by removing cones while players are moving – player who is last or is not able to find a cone is out. Play until a winner is established but be sure resting players have a task and remain engaged.</li> <li>• Introduce this activity without soccer balls.</li> </ul>

**ACTIVITY TITLE: KING/QUEEN OF THE RING (ST, GM, CO)****Set Up**

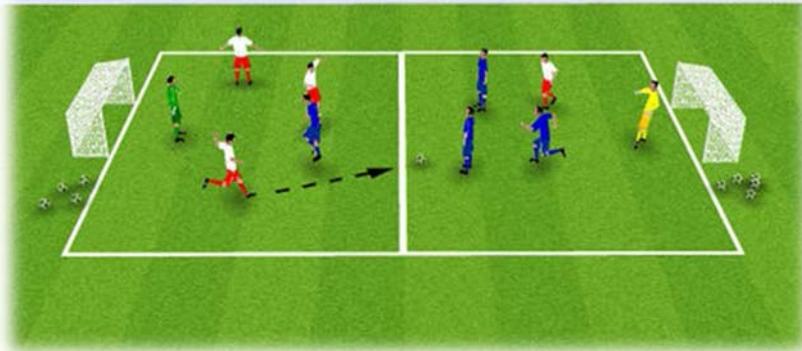
1. All players should be placed within a ring (or square) dependent on number of players, age and ability
2. Players commence activity by simply dribbling within the ring, with the coach encouraging them to try new moves they could use within a game

Instructions	Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Once warmed up, on the coach's command, the game commences and the players are instructed to maintain possession of their ball while attempting to challenge and knock their opponents ball from the ring</li> <li>• If a player loses possession of their ball but retrieves it before it leaves the ring, they are permitted to continue playing</li> <li>• The ball must be knocked from the ring before the dis-possessed player is eliminated from the game</li> <li>• Players must maintain possession of the ball (shielding) and keep it moving at all times.</li> <li>• Players are not permitted to keep it guarded while standing still</li> <li>• The last player left in the square is declared the winner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Condition the players to use just one foot, either right or left</li> <li>• Coach can challenge the winner to attempt to win a second game which can be very challenging as the other players will band together to eliminate the king or queen in the second game</li> </ul>

**ACTIVITY TITLE: GOALIE GOALIE (ST, GM, CO, SSG)****Set Up**

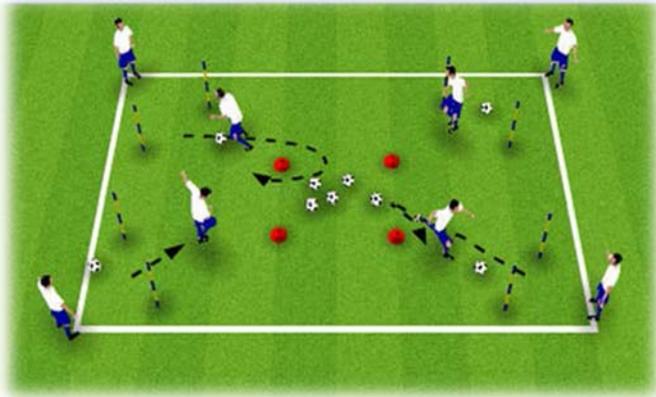
1. Play this activity on a mini field with two goals and dimensions that meet the age and ability of the players
2. Each half should measure in depth, a distance that challenges the player's strength and ability to strike the ball (e.g. for 7-year-old players-10 yards)
3. Divide the group into two teams who position themselves to one side of each goal and line up in the playing order (try to limit the size of the teams where possible so everyone is active and match the players (size or strength) so they are shooting against someone of similar size/ability)

Instructions	Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One player starts as a defender (defending goal) while the attacker attempts to shoot on goal from within their half of the field.</li> <li>• Once a player shoots, they return to their team and the next player enters the field as a defender – this rotation should be quick as the opponents are not required to await the rotation before taking their shot</li> <li>• The player sequence is as follows: enter the field, defend, shoot and leave the field.</li> <li>• The defending player must receive the ball within their half of the field in order to gain a shot on their opponents. If they simply block (without control) the ball back to their opponents' half of the field they relinquish their shot.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specify the number of touches a player may perform in their control and shot (e.g. control and shoot within two touches so the focus is upon a good controlling touch)</li> <li>• Specify a specific foot to shoot with</li> <li>• Specify a particular surface to shoot with (inside, outside or top of foot)</li> <li>• Specify the type of shot: bend the ball, drive it below head height, chip shot</li> </ul>

**ACTIVITY TITLE: SHOOT ON SIGHT (ST, GM, CO, SSG)****Set Up**

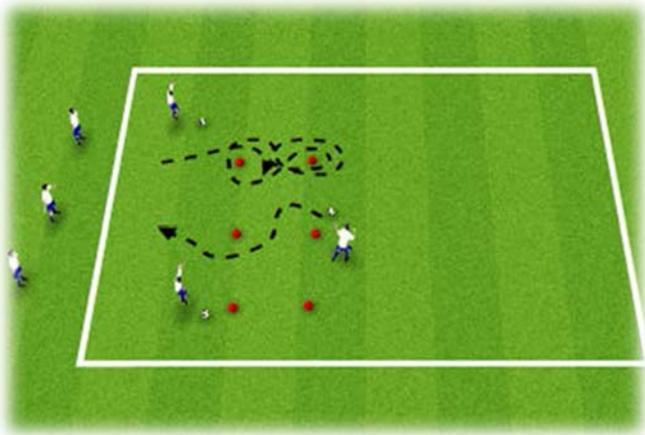
1. The game is played on a field with the dimensions to match the players' strength and ability to shoot the ball.
2. Each half is divided by a distance measured just outside of the players shooting range, to challenge them.
3. The group is divided into two teams and allocated to one half of the field, then each side nominates a "cherry picker" to play within their opponents' half of the field.

Instructions	Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The game is played with all the players confined to their allocated half of the field, so it appears to be overloaded with defenders opposed to attackers.</li> <li>• The objective is to encourage the players to accept shooting opportunities from a long distance.</li> <li>• The role of the cherry picker is to seek deflections and/or prevent their opponents from gaining a clear shot at goal.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The focus of the drill is to affect the players' attitude to shooting, opposed to passing the ball. Even if there is an opponent positioned between themselves and the goal, players should elect to shoot and see where the deflections may arrive?</li> <li>• Once the session has addressed the attitude of the players to shoot, it is important to observe the shooting technique, where dividends are gained by low hard shots made towards the goal. The players' positions should be rotated around the field on regular intervals, including the cherry picker and goalkeeping roles.</li> <li>• Use right/left foot to shoot</li> <li>• Shoot on minimum (two) touches</li> <li>• Shoot on volley.</li> </ul>

**ACTIVITY TITLE: FOUR HOUSES (ST, GM, CO)****Set Up**

1. This activity takes place within a field layout similar to the diagram, so within a large square there is a central square to hold the balls and then four additional zones (houses) at each corner of the larger square, within which the teams are designated.
2. The activity will require a large supply of soccer balls, minimum one per player.

Instructions	Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The task upon the coach's command, is to retrieve as many balls from the central zone to each team's home as quickly as possible. However only one player is permitted to leave their house at any given time.</li> <li>• This is a great team-building activity with a technical focus upon speed development and many supplementary technical conditions that may be applied within.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carry the ball home (hands).</li> <li>• Dribble (feet) the ball home.</li> <li>• Perform ten ball taps before returning the ball home.</li> <li>• Perform 5 keep ups before returning the ball home.</li> <li>• Execute a specific turn before returning the ball home.</li> <li>• The team that retrieves the most balls is declared the winner. Then in a repeat challenge the players, in the same race format (one at a time) return the balls to the central zone. So, the team that retrieved the least amount of balls should have a game advantage.</li> <li>• Once all the balls have been taken from the central zone, allow the teams to steal from each other. So, one player from each is permitted to leave their home and go to steal from another team, but all the remaining players must remain at home and are not permitted to guard their supply of balls.</li> </ul>



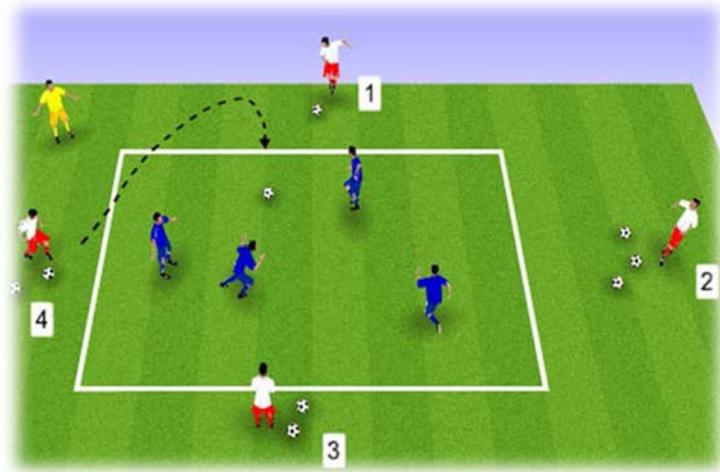
### ACTIVITY TITLE: BAKED BEANZ (ST, GM, CO)

#### Set Up

1. This is a dribbling relay activity with players working in pairs.
2. Each pair has two cones placed before them and one ball, the distance between the cones will be dependent upon the challenge required by the players.
3. Players should commence the drill without the ball first and then add in the ball to focus on technical development.

Instructions	Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The players are instructed to run around and between the two cones in a figure of 8 pattern for two loops.</li> <li>• They then return to their partner who repeats the sequence. In a running race the first pair to complete the sequences wins, however in the activities the emphasis should be on technique and movement patterns, not speed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow players to dribble through the sequence without any restrictions so they find their own way through</li> <li>• Right foot only (inside and outside of foot)</li> <li>• Left foot only (inside and outside of foot)</li> <li>• Inside of both feet (left foot around one cone and right foot around the other)</li> <li>• Outside of both feet (left foot around one cone and right foot around the other)</li> <li>• Drag through – no conditions except when passing between the cones the player must drag the ball with the bottom of their shoe</li> <li>• Place spare balls on the two cones so the players must avoid knocking these off the cones in a competition</li> </ul>



**ACTIVITY TITLE: BLITZ (ST, GM, CO)****Set Up**

1. Two teams are selected with one team positioned inside a large grid and their opponents outside the grid with a supply of balls.
2. The objective is for the outside players to serve the balls above head height into the square and their opponents (inside the square) to meet the balls and prevent them from hitting the floor - hence Blitz, bombs being dropped on a city.

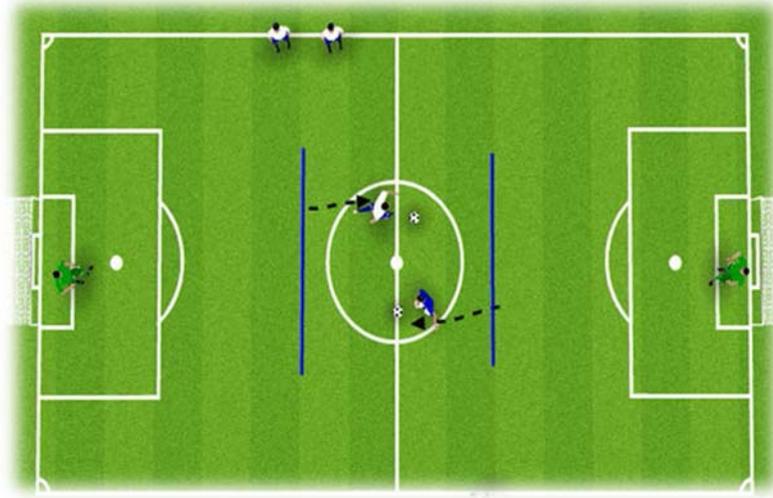
Instructions	Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The outside players are allocated a number and supply of balls, on the coach's command of corresponding numbers, those players may serve the ball into the square. Service could be made from hand of foot (drop volley).</li> <li>• The blue team are to defend the square by either heading or volleying the ball away before the ball hits the floor.</li> <li>• The white team will get one point for every hit, teams rotate roles once all the balls have been served. The winning team is the one with fewest hits on the city.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More servers may be added to the drill, or a goal on one side to present a target for the defending players to clear into</li> <li>• Request that the defending team must make a pass before the ball is played away from the square</li> </ul>



**ACTIVITY TITLE: TRAMLINES (ST, GM, CO)****Set Up**

1. This is a challenging passing activity for players working in pairs.
2. The initial drill is played around two cones and encourages the players to receive and move the ball on the player's first touch, so they must play around and along the channel of cones on two touches.

Instructions	Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Players should be encouraged to use a specific foot and consider their body position when receiving, moving and playing the ball.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The second activity is played between two players with no cones, but a ball each, so the players pass and receive a ball at the same time. This activity encourages players to consider the movement of the ball and the strength of their touch on receiving the ball.</li> <li>• Once the basic movement patterns have been mastered, players should be encouraged to rotate the directional play, so instead of receiving on their left and passing on their right, they play the opposite direction, hence receive on their right and pass with their left foot.</li> <li>• They may be instructed to play off one foot, hence players should receive on the outside of their right foot and pass with the inside of the same foot.</li> </ul>

**ACTIVITY TITLE: US PENALTY SHOOT-OUT (ST, GM, CO)****Set Up**

1. Field should reflect diagram with dimensions adapted to meet the needs and abilities of the players
2. Game is set up with two goalkeepers and opposing strikers
3. Ensure sufficient soccer balls to keep the drill flowing
4. Strikers start by standing at their start (blue) line with a ball positioned on the center line
5. On Coach's command, strikers race towards their opponents' goals and attempt to score first.

Key Factors (Coaching Points)	Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on reaction time, speed, and decision making</li> <li>• Attackers may choose to shoot first time or dribble the ball towards the goal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start the drill with smaller goals and no goalkeepers to challenge the player's accuracy on goal</li> <li>• Start the strikers in various positions to challenge their speed and agility (e.g. start by laying on their fronts or backs, or perform a somersault before racing towards the ball)</li> <li>• Use only one ball so attackers must compete for it</li> </ul>

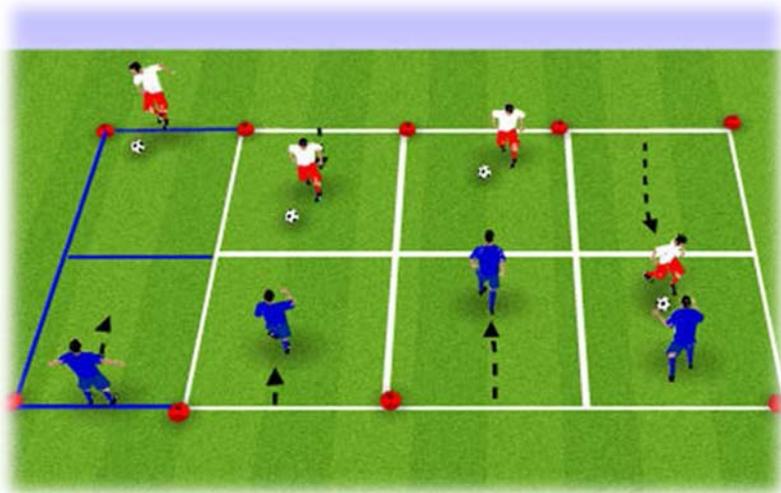
**ACTIVITY TITLE: CROSSFIRE (ST, GM, CO)****Set Up**

1. This activity takes place in a square grid (approx. 10X10yards) and offers a 1 v 1 non-stop dribbling activity.
2. There should be two teams of ideally three or more players (although if numbers permit - offer multiple squares to avoid long lines of waiting players).

Instructions	Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On the coach's command, the first player attempts to dribble successfully across the square and play the ball for their colleague, if successful, the dribbler's colleague repeats the sequence and attempts to evade their opponents challenge.</li> <li>• The defender remains within the square until they gain possession of the ball, upon which time they must dribble the ball to one of their colleagues who will then repeat the sequence, with the attacker who was dispossessed becoming the new defender.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is a fast-paced activity and the coach should support the need for the attacker to assume risks in making their moves. There will be lots of changes in possession.</li> <li>• A further option would be to increase the square in size and play differing team sizes, 2v2, 3v3.</li> </ul>

## LEARN TO TRAIN COACHING ACTIVITIES

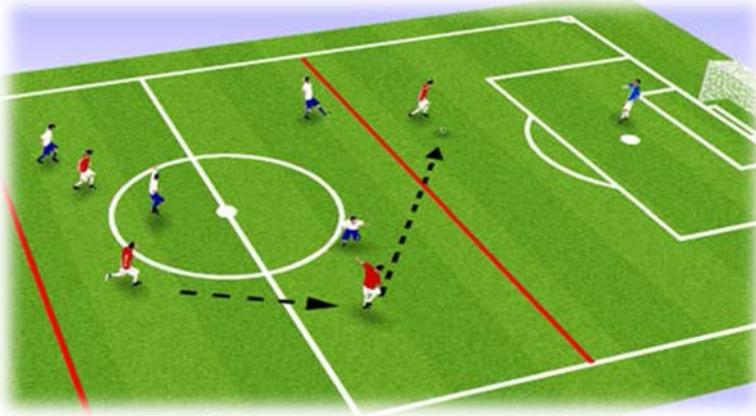
### ACTIVITY TITLE: ON GUARD (ST, GM, CO, SSG)



#### Set Up

1. The field is set out in a series of eight grids as in the diagram.
2. The grids should match the age and ability of the players, so the total width is similar to that of a competitive field and depth allows players to attack their opponent at speed.

Instructions	Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the first phase of this drill the players play 1 v 1 against each other. The defender passes to the attacker to start the session. The attacker should be encouraged to attack their opponent directly.</li> <li>• A goal is scored if the attacker can dribble beyond their opponent (defender) and get the ball safely in possession across the end line.</li> <li>• If the defender wins possession of the ball they should adopt an attacking role and attempt to cross the opposite end zone to score. The players must maintain play in their respective zones.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The progressions for this drill is to combine the first two squares and split the field down the middle, so the players now play a 2 v 2 challenge. This will encourage support and combination play.</li> <li>• The final progression will be to omit all the divides and play a 4 v 4 game. Here the complexity of wide and deep support play becomes the focus.</li> <li>• This activity may be used to coach game principles from either an attacking or defending perspective.</li> </ul>

**ACTIVITY TITLE: BREAKOUT (ST, GM, CO, SSG)****Set Up**

1. The dimensions of the field should reflect the ability and number of players (e.g. 60X40 yards for U12 players).
2. The field should be divided into thirds and the players will be confined to play within the middle zone, the two end zones should be a minimum of 20 yards in length.
3. The game requires two teams of players and goalkeepers in either goal.

Instructions	Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The two teams compete to maintain possession of the ball in the central zone, this will require positive possession play (using width and depth in support).</li> <li>• On the coach's command of 'breakout', the team in possession may set one attacking player free by playing a pass into their respective attacking end zone. Only one of the attacking team may pursue the ball to attempt an attack on the opposing goal.</li> <li>• Once the play is concluded, the goalkeeper should serve the ball back into the central zone to recommence the game.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow the defending team to send a retreating defender in pursuit of the attacker.</li> </ul> <p>Coaching considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The 'breakout' pass is best served by a deep laying player who has effective vision of all the passing options. So, the team in possession should not react once the command is given, but seek to maintain possession and find the best possible pass out.</li> <li>• The goalkeepers should be conditioned to start each play from their goal-lines, to avoid them becoming a standing sweeper.</li> <li>• The coach should vary the commands and allow both teams attacking options, to keep all the players engaged.</li> </ul>

**ACTIVITY TITLE: BINGO BANGO (ST, GM, CO)****Set Up**

1. Field dimensions should be adapted to meet the needs and ability of the players and not reflective of the diagram.
2. Players line up in a zig-zag formation with a goal marked at one end
3. If numbers permit, multiple goals may be made alongside each other

Instructions	Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The players assume the zig-zag formation and are instructed to pass the ball down the line, before the last player in the chain takes a strike at goal. The first team to score wins.</li> <li>• Once the strike has been taken, all the players (including the goalkeeper) rotate their positions through to assume a new role in the chain.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One touch only</li> <li>• Two touch only</li> <li>• Right or left foot only</li> <li>• Ball is played in the air only, hence aerial control</li> <li>• A session could have two or more sets of players competing against each other so the first team to score wins</li> </ul>



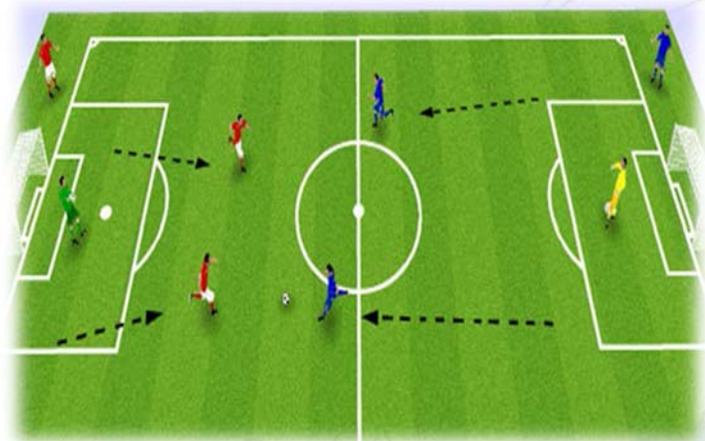
**ACTIVITY TITLE: CIRCLE ACTIVITIES (ST, GM, CO)****Set Up**

1. Simple warm-up activities that focus upon technique.
2. Any number of players form a circle to allow sufficient space to challenge the weight and accuracy of their passing.
3. Several spare balls are required for additional progressions.

Instructions	Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This initial drill encourages players to bond and communicate. Instructions and conditions (adaptations) are applied according to needs of the group.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call the pass: call the name of the player that an intended pass is aimed for. Then once the ball is played, the passer must run and follow their pass to assume a new position in the circle formation.</li> <li>• Show me: On receipt of the ball, players must dribble across the circle and perform a move they will replicate in next game (Maradona spin, scissors etc.)</li> <li>• Play on two touches (specify which foot) and players should be encouraged to keep the ball moving at all times.</li> <li>• Balls in, starting with one ball progress to as many as the group may manage at once.</li> <li>• 1-2 n play: In this progression the player (in possession) dribbles across the circle and plays a give n go with two outside players. The first pass is returned to the dribbler on one touch, then the dribbler passes to a player on either side of the player who makes the initial return pass. The second player who receives the ball then progresses into the center of the circle to repeat the sequence, whilst the initial dribbler takes the place of the player who now enters the circle. Again, once the players have grasped the sequencing, add more balls into the mix to challenge them.</li> <li>• Two forward one back: The sequence of this drill is to pass the ball forward two players and back one (the ball is always on the outside of the circle). This encourages the players to be observant and always assume an open body for the next ball. The players may again be challenged by adding more balls into the drill.</li> <li>• Inside not out. Start this drill slowly, so the players may gain the concept. The condition is that the</li> </ul>

ball should never be passed to an outside player, only to a player entering the circle. So, the sequence is the middle player in possession of the ball, must pass the ball to next player entering the circle; once the first passer has played the ball, they must turn and leave the circle, heading directly to an outside player, these two players switch positions, so the outside player enters the circle to receive a pass from the player who is still within the circle, the sequence then continues. The challenge is that players must always be alert to the sequence and keep their head up to observe the movements of their partners within the drill. Additional balls may be added to challenge the players once the sequence is understood.

**ACTIVITY TITLE: KING LOUIS (ST, GM, CO, SSG)**

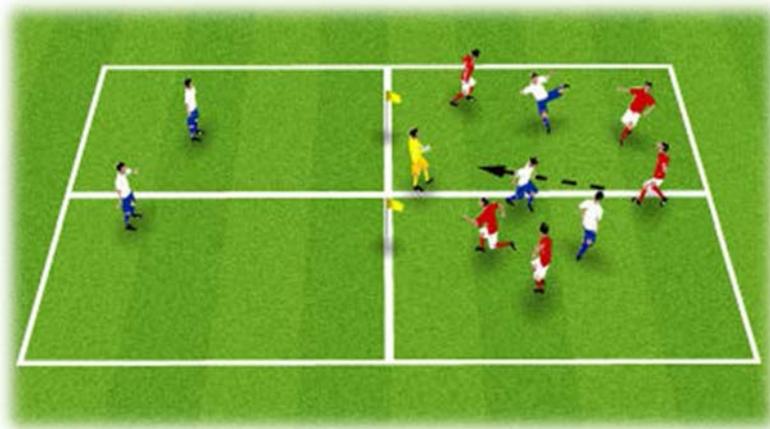


**Set Up**

1. A mini field with two goals is required where the field dimensions should reflect the age and ability of the players.
2. There should also be a good supply of balls and sufficient players to rotate through two to three lines (6 players each side)

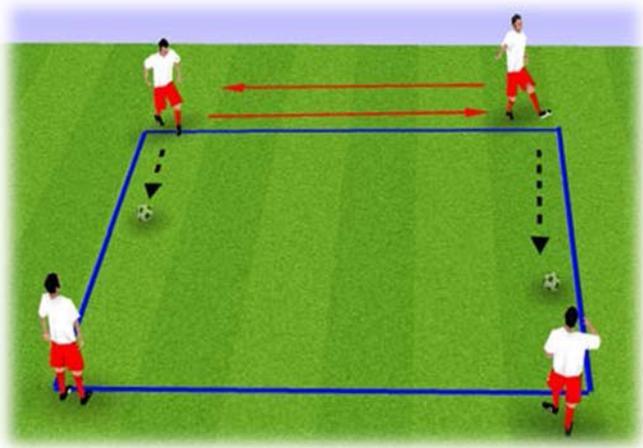
Instructions	Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The players play 2 v 2 starting from a position on either side of their goal.</li> <li>• The goalkeepers serve the ball to their attackers who combine and attempt a strike on their opponent's goal.</li> <li>• Immediately following an attack, the attacking players assume a defensive role opposing two new attackers who are served the ball by their keeper (while the previous defenders withdraw from the field). The sequence for the outfield players is to attack, defend and retreat from the field. This is a quick game that requires the players to maintain their focus.</li> </ul>	<p>This game may be played 1v1, 2v3, 3v3 etc. The focus is to encourage players to create a one on one dribbling opportunity and then follow up and finish with a strike on goal.</p> <p>Coaching considerations are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive attitude in attack</li> <li>• Quick decision making, dribble, pass or shoot</li> <li>• Support play, how and where</li> <li>• Transition to defend, focus and attitude.</li> </ul>



**ACTIVITY TITLE: CHANGEOVER TO ATTACK (ST, GM, CO)****Set Up**

1. The field dimensions should match the age and ability of the two teams.
2. There is a central goal marked by flags or cones and the squad is split into two equal teams. The activity is to encourage quick passing and possession soccer to create a scoring opportunity

Instructions	Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teams (in this illustration) play a 5 v 3 possession game in one half of the field and the objective for the team with greater numbers (reds) is to keep possession of the ball to create a positive shooting opportunity. If they (attackers) shoot and score the ball should be retrieved by the two opposition players who are on the opposite side of the field, they will then commence the next cycle, so the remaining white players and three opponents (red) will follow the play and cross to the opposite side of the field. So now the white team must combine and create an opportunity to score in the goal.</li> <li>• Within the game, rules should be established for the required number of passes or time before a shot may be taken.</li> <li>• If the goalkeeper saves a shot, they will turn and serve the ball to the opposite side of the field. If a shot is missed (wide or high) the game similarly continues that side of the goal.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change the number of players permitted to cross the centerline, so it creates a 5 v 4, 3 v 2 dependent upon the theme you wish to focus upon.</li> <li>• Condition the number of passes before a shot is taken</li> <li>• Condition the number of touches on each play</li> <li>• If the defenders gain possession of the ball they may pass (wide of the goal) to a colleague on the opposite side, who can shoot on the goal. Again, the parameters should be established (number of passes or opponents to enter that side before a shot is taken) ahead of the game and in relation to the activity objective.</li> </ul>

**ACTIVITY TITLE: PASSING SQUARES (ST, GM, CO)****Set Up**

1. The recommended grid size is 10X10yards with four players.
2. The activity follows the simple sequence of one touch passing across the grid, to the opposing corner.
3. Once players have passed the ball they move to switch to adjacent positions with their partner and retrieve the next pass in the sequence before repeating.
4. The focus is upon weight and accuracy of the pass.

Instructions	Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The pass should be aimed into the opposing corner (space) for the running player to receive.</li> <li>• The player making the run should approach the corner and ball with an open body in order to make an accurate one touch return pass.</li> <li>• The progressive sequence is to commence with all the players remaining in their corners, then introduce one pair switching positions, before progressing so all four players are moving beyond the pass.</li> <li>• It is also important that players attempt to make passes off the leading foot, so using both the right and left foot to play off.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage players to pass with different surfaces (outside of the foot)</li> <li>• Try to add a diagonal pass to the sequence, so one pair play a diagonal pass across the square and move, but the opposing pair maintain a straight pass and move. In this sequence, players need to consider a curved run in order to open their bodies and make an accurate diagonal pass.</li> </ul>



**ACTIVITY TITLE: THREE ZONE GAME (ST, GM, CO, SSG)****Set Up**

1. This activity is a progression of the Passing Through drill. It takes place on an adapted field for 8 v 8 and to meet the requirements of the players.
2. The game is played to regulation rules with the initial condition that each player (in this case both teams playing a 3-2-2 formation) must remain within their allotted zone.
3. The focus of the game is to encourage players in the possession zone, to look forward into the next zone for players who are adopting positive support positions.

Instructions	Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the ball is in the central zones, then both defending players and attackers need to be alert to adopting positive support play and observing opportunities to penetrate the opposition lines.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The next progression is to allow players to carry the ball across zones on the condition that if a player does cross into a new zone, their position must be covered by a retreating player from the zone they are entering.</li> <li>• Once the players have gained an understanding of their supporting roles, all conditions should be withdrawn to observe the players understanding and application of the principles. Then also the requirement to rotate roles in order to maintain their team shape.</li> </ul>

**ACTIVITY TITLE: PASSING THROUGH (ST, GM, CO)****Set Up**

1. This drill takes place in and around a grid that should be measured to match the number, age and ability of the players taking part in the activity.

**Instructions**

- The objective is for one team to pass the ball through the grid to their colleagues on the opposite side of the grid without their opponents intercepting the pass.
- The ball may be played from either side and must be received in control by a team-mate on the receiving side of the grid to gain a point.
- If the opponents gain possession of the ball, then they resume the game by playing across the grid to their team-mates.
- The ball may be played back to the initial passer (to retain possession) or straight through the grid (from external (support) players to change angles and passing options) but no point will be awarded unless possession is played through a central player.

**Options**

- Various conditions may be applied to increase the demands of the activity, such as each central player must play the ball before a point may be scored (encouraging support play).
- The game is played until one team achieves three points and then the central players should be rotated.
- Adding more central players will also increase the complexity of the drill.

**ACTIVITY TITLE: CHANNEL GAME (ST, GM, CO, SSG)****Set Up**

1. The size and dimensions of the field should reflect the number of players' available, age and ability.
2. The theme is to encourage team play through wide positions.
3. The game consists of two teams playing within the in-field. Two neutral 'floating' wide players are positioned in the designated channels, where they play unopposed.

Instructions	Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The attacking team seeks to play through the wide players in order to score. A goal can only be achieved if an attempt on goal is sought within two plays from a wide player.</li> <li>• If the attacking team does not achieve a strike on goal within two plays, they should seek to maintain possession and re-set the play through the wide players before seeking another attempt on goal.</li> <li>• The wide players must decide whether to play an early cross (into space), or cut a pass back to a deep laying attacker (in space). The attackers must consider the timing and angle of approach to achieve a strike on the goal.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The game may be progressed by introducing a defending player into the channels.</li> <li>• The players may also be conditioned to restrict the numbers of touches, to increase the tempo of the game.</li> </ul>

**ACTIVITY TITLE: TWO WIDE ONE NARROW (ST, GM, CO, SSG)****Set Up**

1. The field dimensions will be dependent upon the player's age and ability.
2. The activity does not need to be played on a regulation field but should offer one large central goal to encourage central attacking, two smaller wide goals to encourage spreading the ball and direction of the play.
3. The number of players may also be adjusted according to the players available, but the team defending the central goal should play with a goalkeeper (so in this example it will encourage 4 v 3 outfield players in favor for the attackers).

Instructions	Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This activity should be played to soccer rules except for the off-side rule. Although this rule may be appropriate for the team attacking the central goal in older age groups.</li> <li>• Once a team scores a goal, both teams switch ends and alternate the differing attacking and defending principles (defending centrally or wide positions).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The potential options will be dependent upon the goals of the activity.</li> <li>• Defending - force play wide/central</li> <li>• Attacking - counter attack, wing play or seeking to play direct penetrating passes.</li> </ul>