

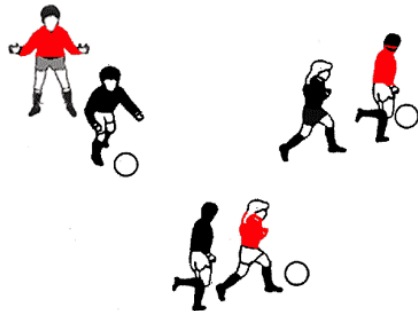
You don't have to have played soccer to enjoy kicking a ball around with your kids in the backyard or park. There are lots of simple things that you can do together that are fun and will help your kids learn and develop the skills that will bring them greater accomplishment and enjoyment. In this hectic and demanding society, you can't ever spend enough quality time with your children, and sharing a soccer experience is a great way to connect!

There are an almost limitless number of games and activities that are suitable for all ages. Some favourites are included here, but don't be afraid to look online for others or create your own. You can also ask your children to teach you what they have worked on at practice. You may find that both of you learn something from the experience!

If you want your kids to improve the answer isn't necessarily more structured soccer in practices and games. Having fun with friends in self-organized games or practicing moves seen on television or YouTube are just as important for young, developing soccer players.

Me and My Shadow

Take turns dribbling the ball. The "Shadow" must stay as close as possible. Later the "Dribbler" can try to lose the "Shadow" by moving off quickly left or right.



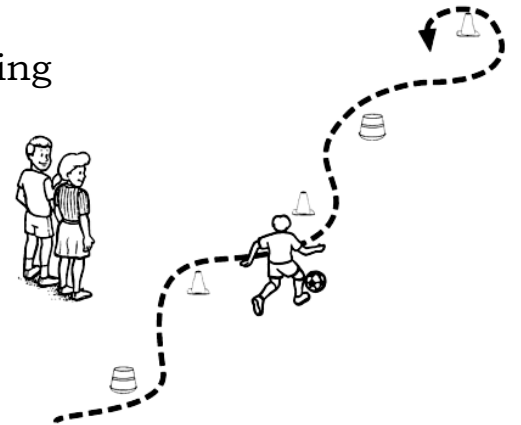
Try quick turns and fakes.

Don't forget to change every once in a while so that Mom or Dad has the chance of running with the ball and the child must try to "Shadow"

Don't Be A Conehead

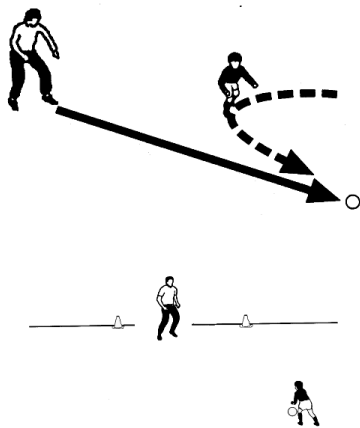
Dribbling in and out of the cones or water bottles (or anything that is safe) is great soccer fun.

Don't be a Conehead and try to avoid knocking over any obstacles.



Go Fetch!

Mom or Dad can send your kid on a little walk. They have to bring the ball back as quickly as possible.



Ask them to try bringing it back in three different ways.

Ball Juggling

Kids really enjoy beating their personal best! The objective is to keep the ball in the air without letting it touch the ground. Kids can use their feet, thighs, head, and chest. If the kid is improving in this skill, Mom or Dad can setup different patterns with the ball.



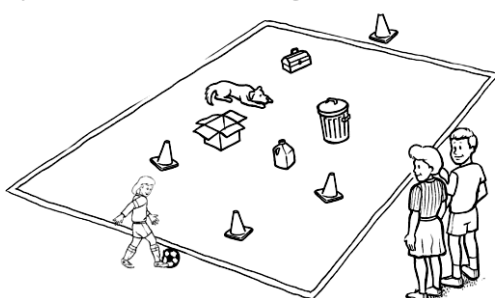
Free Style Soccer Show

Encourage your kid to put on a show. A freestyle soccer show is a series of moves and tricks. You can find many examples of these shows on YouTube.

Back Yard Jungle Soccer

Let's setup your own "jungle" in the back yard to practice dribbling. Use any safe objects, such as cones and/or plastic water bottles for "trees".

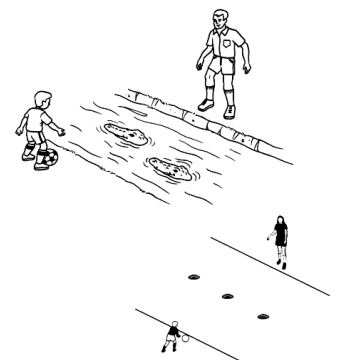
Dad or Mom can be the tiger or the elephant and follow your kid through the obstacles.



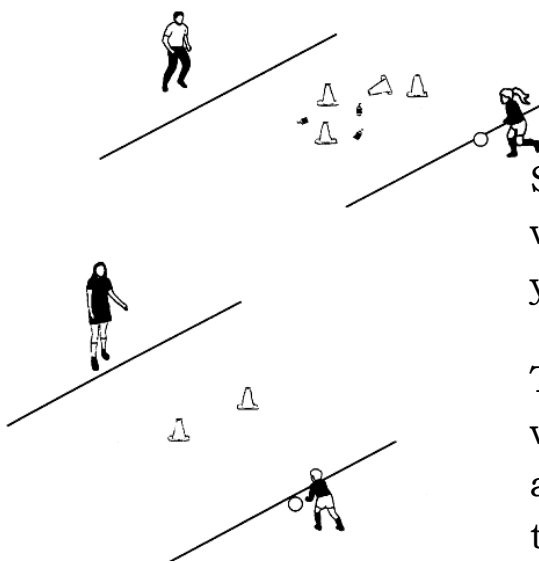
Crocs and Swamps

Crocodiles have a liking for soccer balls. They don't kick them. They eat them.

Set up cones or plastic water bottles in a line. Mom or Dad stands on opposite sides of the "crocodiles" from your kid. Pass the ball back and forth and avoid hitting the cones or water bottles. As your kid gets better at passing, spacing can be increased between Mom or Dad and your kid.



Knock 'Em Down

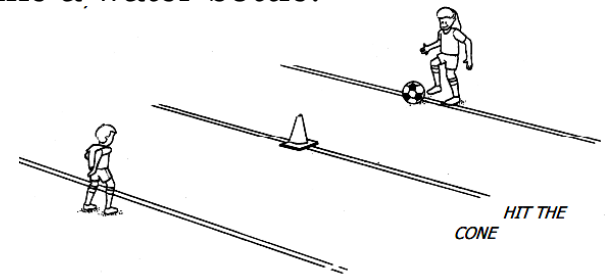


See how many cones or water bottles you and your kid can hit.

Then put two cones/water bottles spaced apart and try to score through them.

Let's Play # 1

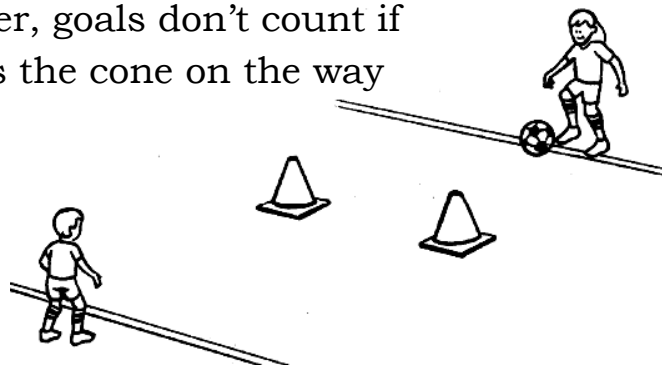
Make sure to stay behind the lines. Both Mom or Dad and your kid try to hit the cone/milk jug. It's great practice for both shooting and passing. Start with three cones/milk jugs, if your kid is finding it difficult. As your kid gets better, use a smaller target like a water bottle.



Let's Play # 2

Working as a team both Mom or Dad and your kid score goals between the two cones. How quickly can you score 10 goals? What is the most goals scored together?

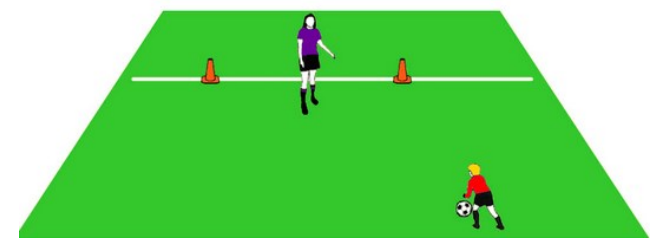
To make it harder, goals don't count if the shot touches the cone on the way through.



Shooting and Stopping

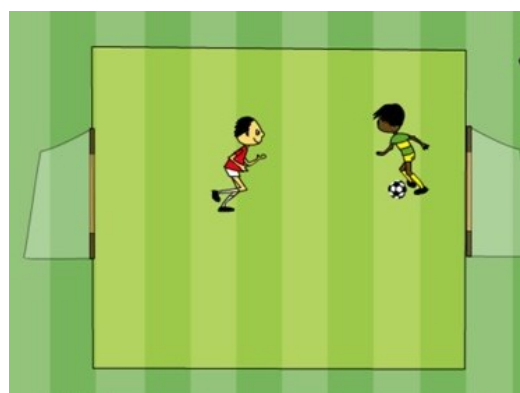
Mom or Dad makes a goal with cones or water bottles. Your kid shoots a static ball at Mom or Dad and as they get better, the ball can be rolled slowly from the goal to encourage a one-time shot.

Your kid also takes a turn in the net and Mom or Dad shoots on the net. The objective is not to score on your kid, rather to encourage your kid to be moving to the corners of the net to stop shots.



One-on-One

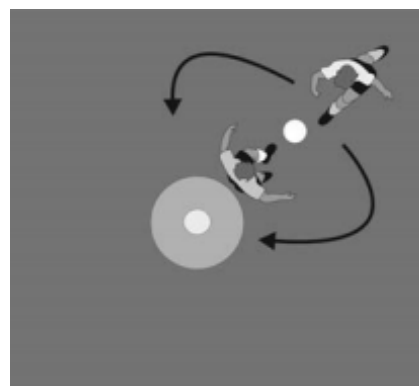
Set up two nets on either ends of the back yard. The ball is placed in between the two nets. Mom or Dad stands beside one net and your kid beside the other. Mom or Dad yells, "Go" and everyone runs to get the ball. Whoever gets to the



ball first has to try to score, while the other has to defend their net. Mom and Dad should ensure equal opportunity for your kid to score and defend.

Kick the Can

Kick the can is a great one-on-one game. All you need is a can, garbage can, or milk jug. Mom or Dad defends against your kid, trying to stay two steps away from the can.



This is great for practicing individual ball control skills. Next, it is your kid's turn to defend and Mom or Dad try to hit the can.

The Saskatchewan Soccer Association (SSA), in partnership with World of Soccer, is pleased to be able to provide the Byte Size Coaching Curriculum as a resource for all registered coaches in Saskatchewan. The Byte Size Coaching Curriculum is an age-specific, developmentally appropriate set of activities and training plans designed by Tony Waiters that is easy to understand and instruct, and most importantly fun!

Many of the activities provided above come from the Byte Size Coaching Curriculum. For more activities suitable for young players from Under 4 through Under 18, visit the www.sasksoccer.com, or contact the SSA or your local Member Organization.

