

**KEITH BOANAS**



# FUN SOCCER GAMES **FOR 12 TO 15 YEAR OLDS**

**PRISON BREAK • JEEPERS KEEPERS • SIX SHOOTER • TRIPLE WHAMMY**



**SIMPLE, ENGAGING, AGE-SPECIFIC SOCCER GAMES – PROVEN  
TO IMPROVE THE ESSENTIAL SKILLS OF ALL YOUNG PLAYERS**



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# Foreword

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Dear Coach,

Welcome to the third in my series of books ***Fun Soccer Games***. We've progressed from ages 5 to 8 on to 9 to 11 year olds in the previous books, so the focus of this one is players aged 12 to 15.

This age group is on the fringe of senior football and players are becoming more aware of the finer elements of the game as well the importance of fitness in physically demanding play. They are beginning to start 'thinking' more about their play as well using their physical strength, which is developing rapidly at this age. Hence, some of the games definitely include some tough decision making and skill factors as well as being physically demanding.

Every game featured can be adapted to suit any age group. Though some of these games might be too technically and physically demanding for beginners, nearly all can be simplified and tweaked to suit your players' requirements. Only you as your squad's coach will know your players' development and ability and can pitch any game at the correct level while still keeping it fun.

I have made every effort to be original and have designed and implemented some completely new games designed to tackle specific areas of the game. The majority of games have an attacking theme, though this obviously means that most of the time defenders and keepers are also being worked. I have targeted two games specifically for keepers – *Jeepers Keepers* and *Sweeper Keeper*. If you're looking for an emphasis on defending then *Tin Pan Alley*, *Pin It To Win It*, *Its Behind You*, *Inside Out* and *Magic Number* should do the job.

I have also included a list of the games indicating difficulty levels and suitable age range. For many of the games its great to encourage some assistance from players with scoring, feeding the ball in and so on, giving you the opportunity to observe.

During my coaching career I have been extremely fortunate to have visited many countries and experienced a variety of cultures. But the one thing I have found is wherever I am people all have the same passion for the game.

Yours in soccer,



Keith Boanas



# My 25 Top Tips for Coaching 12 to 15 Year Olds

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1. Be pre-organised for when they arrive. Have the first game ready to go.
2. Be welcoming, enthusiastic, and remember to smile.
3. Keep explanations simple, let them ask questions.
4. Be inclusive, involve all players.
5. Always encourage and praise.
6. Voice control is more effective at this age, however use a whistle if you have a quiet voice. Stop play to highlight some good points and possibly advise or demonstrate how to improve an error through Q&A and Guide & Discovery = Ask the player if they know or can show a better way.
7. Use visual aids/colours to enhance their observation.
8. Avoid highlighting errors or weaknesses, and do not use negative words.
9. Use your players' names. If a player has a nickname that is fine, but don't make one up, it could upset players.
10. Make sure they know your name or they call you coach, not sir.
11. Use the correct size footballs. Size 4 or 5, though it can be fun to use a mixture including size 1 and 2 skill balls in any of the close control and dribbling games.
12. Mix teams around so players don't dominate.
13. Encourage natural leaders to be good role models for the team.
14. Stay calm and patient with bad behaviour, though at this age a different disciplinary approach may be necessary. Utilise sin bin method if possible but if poor behaviour continues inform parents or guardians that this may affect future participation.
15. Involve players in problem solving. Ask questions and let them discuss amongst themselves, just guide them in the right direction.
16. Have a contingency plan if the practice is not working or they find it too easy or too hard.
17. Politely ask parents and guardians to remain unobtrusive as children need to focus on you and the game and not be distracted.
18. Don't be tempted to join in. This affects your control and is dangerous.
19. Ensure fair play. Don't overlook breaches of rules.
20. Encourage flair and risk taking, they must not be scared to make a mistake.
21. Sessions involving heading the ball are now more part of the game so no need to keep timings in relation to this, however should you decide to revert back to a technical practice then 30 minute sessions are adequate.
22. Use hand ball games to introduce co-ordination and passing and movement.
23. Remember, players watch your body language so stay bubbly. Avoid habits like folding your arms, constantly looking at your watch, getting distracted by a keen parent or looking fed up.
24. Keep them busy. Minimum stoppages, except for drinks, and you can use this time for any questions.
25. Use and encourage humour but take care to avoid overuse of jargon. Remember, what adults see as funny, children may not.

All of the above are in addition to the normal health and safety issues like registers, medical info, field and equipment checks, and the correct playing kit etc.

It is vital that you have an assistant or another adult with you when coaching minors.

Always dress appropriately. Set an example.

# How To Use This Book

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## Contents

The games have been graded according to difficulty and what age they are most appropriate for. The majority of games have been illustrated using 12 players, but in the contents you can find a suggested range of numbers within which the game works well.

Odd numbers are an inevitability of coaching kids soccer. Most of the games in this book cater for odd numbers but others may require uneven sides to accommodate an odd number of players.

## Set Up

The size of the playing area is by no means an absolute and can be varied if you have more or less players. The playing area can also be adjusted according to the ability of your players, whether this requires a smaller or larger area depends on the game.

In order to mark out the area, as a general rule 10 yards is equal to 7 strides. You can use this simple equivalent to mark out the area you need: 20 yards = 14 strides, 30 yards = 21 strides and so on.

## Equipment

The majority of games require little more than some footballs, cones and bibs. Some of the games require goals, though these can be created using cones or poles if goals are not available where you train or you do not have portable goals.

## The Rules

Everything you need to know to run the game successfully once you have set it up.

## Objectives

A quick overview of the skills and techniques promoted in the game.

## Key Skills

Highlights which skills will be worked on in the game enabling you to quickly find a game that's right for your session.

## What To Call Out

Never be lost for words with these concise and constructive phrases. Remember, this is "what to call out" not "what to shout", you should deliver these phrases in a way that your players respond to. Always focus on the positives.

## Coaching Notes

What you need to think about and get players to focus on during the game.

## Development

Are your players finding the game too easy or too difficult? Look to this section for advice on how to tweak the rules to take the game forward.

## Hint

Quick bits of advice that can help the game run more smoothly.

# Game Finder

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Page	Game	Players	Age Range	Difficulty*
1	Through the Gate	8 to 16	12 - 15 yrs	1
2	Prison Break	10 to 13	12 - 15 yrs	1
3	Connect Four	12 to 14	12 - 15 yrs	1
4	Triple Whammy	10 to 13	12 - 15 yrs	1
5	Pin Point	6 to 12	12 - 15 yrs	1
6	Long and Short of It	9 to 15	12 - 15 yrs	1
7	Magic Number	9 to 14	12 - 15 yrs	1
8	Six Shooter	11 to 16	12 - 15 yrs	1
9	Jeepers Keepers	10 to 16	12 - 15 yrs	2
10	Up and Down	10 to 16	12 - 15 yrs	2
11	Tin Pan Alley	6 to 12	12 - 15 yrs	2
12	Best Foot Forward	8 to 12	12 - 15 yrs	2
13	Cut In, Cut Out	8 to 12	12 - 15 yrs	2
14	Bend It Like Becks	10 to 16	12 - 15 yrs	2
15	Inside Out	13 to 15	12 - 15 yrs	2
16	Pick Pockets	8 to 16	12 - 15 yrs	2
17	Spin to Win	12 to 14	12 - 15 yrs	2
18	Tunnel Vision	10 to 12	12 - 15 yrs	2
19	Sweeper Keeper	12 to 16	13 - 15 yrs	2
20	Pin It to Win It	11 to 16	13 - 15 yrs	2
21	It's Behind You	9 to 17	13 - 15 yrs	2
22	Cushion Tennis	2 to 16	12 - 15 yrs	3
23	Inner Circle	10 to 12	13 - 15 yrs	3
24	Around the House	13 to 15	13 - 15 yrs	3
25	Safety Box	14 to 16	13 - 15 yrs	3

\*Difficulty levels are: 1 easy, 2 intermediate, 3 hard.

Games 2, 8, 10, 24, encourage use of floaters though these can be added to other games if needed, Game 22 with or without keepers. Games 3, 10, 13, 15, 16, 20, include either control with the head or attacking and defensive headers as high balls or crosses are involved.

# Through the Gate

1

## The Rules

To start with one team should outweigh the other, so play 8v4 or 7v5. You coach to the side with spare balls.

To score a point a pass must be played through a gate and received by another player. On receiving the ball the player can either immediately pass to a team mate or turn away, depending on the position of the defenders.

If the opposing team gains possession it can then attempt to score a point by passing through a gate.

Change defenders every three minutes. The winners are the group of eight players who score the most points.

## Objectives

Encourages movement and your players' ability to see free space and use it accurately. The game also combines accurate long and short passes.

## Key Skills

Passing and movement, weight and accuracy of passing, timing and angle of runs, first touch and awareness of defenders.

## Set Up

**Area:** 30 yard diameter circle with four  
1 yard gates  
**Players:** 12  
**Equipment:** Cones, balls

## What To Call Out

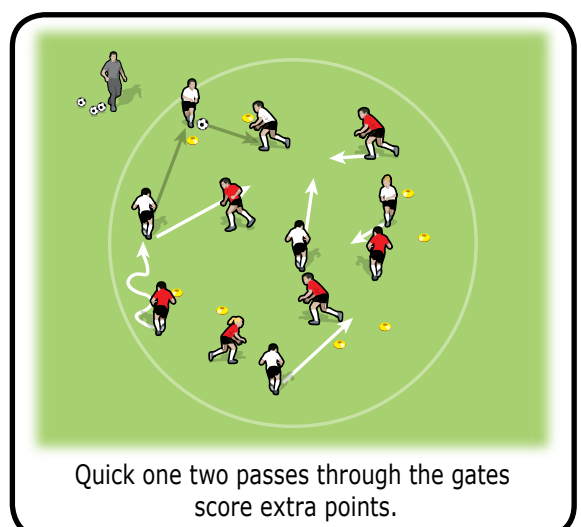
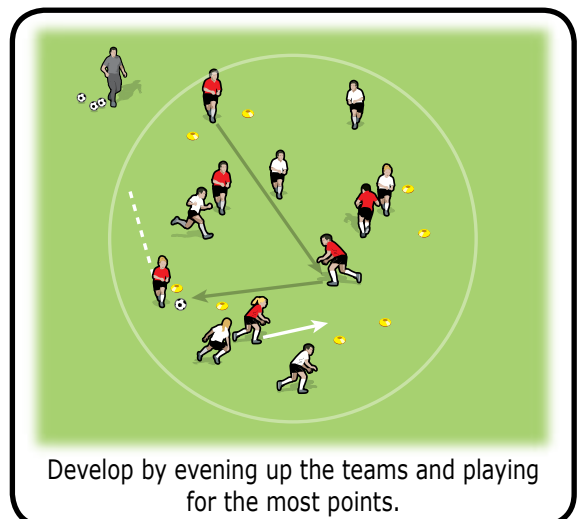
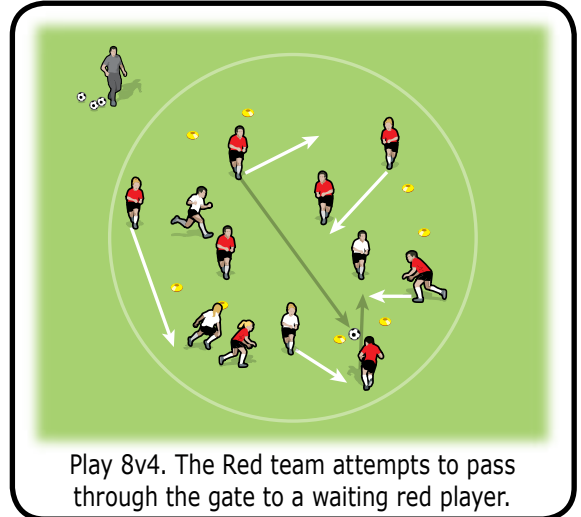
"Get open"  
"Pass"

## Development

- Even up the teams and play to see which team can score the most points in five minutes.
- If the players can achieve a quick one two through the gate, a bonus point can be awarded. Then remove one gate.

## Hint

Add gates or widen the existing gates to make it easier.





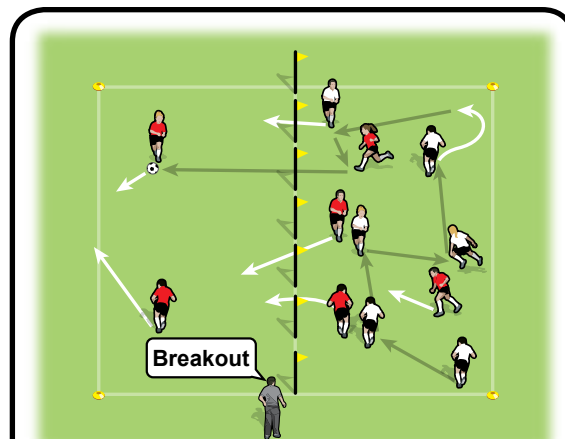
## The Rules

Start by playing a 6v4 in one half with the two remaining players (accomplices) from team playing four (red) waiting in the other half. The aim is for the team with six players (white) to keep possession as long as possible.

The opposing team with four players (red) attempts to win control rather than just knock the ball out. As soon as they win control they look to play the ball between the poles (prison bars) towards their two 'accomplices'.

Once the ball is received by the accomplices, their remaining four team mates 'escape' into the same half. Four of the guards (white team) follow and the situation reverses. The ball must remain on the ground at all times.

A point is scored for every successful breakout.



When the defending team (red) wins possession it attempts to play the ball to the accomplices.

## Objectives

Possession play and counter attack.

## Key Skills

Anticipation, patience, interception, movement and quick, accurate passing.

## Set Up

**Area:** 40x40 yards pitch with a half way line marked with poles

**Players:** 12

**Equipment:** Poles or flags, balls

## What To Call Out

"Intercept"

"Support"

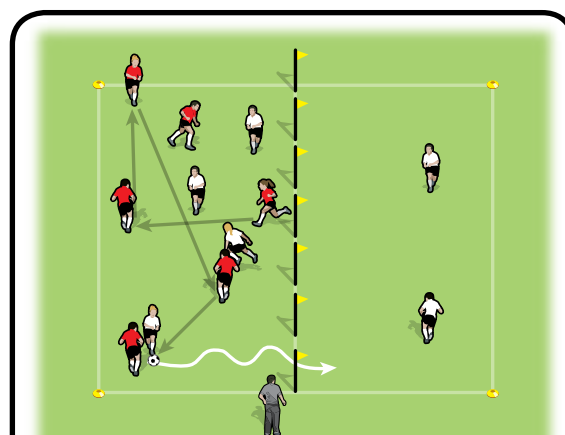
"Breakout"

## Development

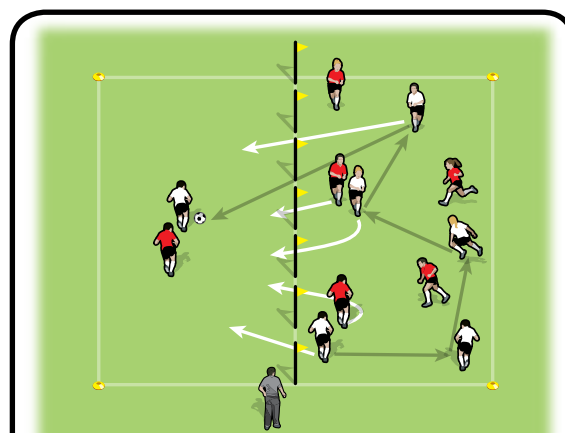
- One of the four can run the ball through the bars if possible. You can also limit the number of touches to two or three to help the four defenders close down the team in possession.
- Play even numbers in one half and 1v1 in the other. After a set amount of passes, e.g. three, the team in possession can pass through the bars. The team should run through the bars and move as quickly as possible to support.
- Teams score a point each time they pass through the bars. First to score six points wins.

## Hint

Use smaller or bigger gaps between the bars in order to change the difficulty.



Develop the game by allowing one player to run through the bars to their accomplices.



Develop further by playing 1v1 in one half and even teams in the other after, say, three passes.

## The Rules

Play 2v1 in each zone with a goal or target at each end. Players are restricted to their zone. At least one attacker must touch the ball in each zone without a defender's touch before they can score.

Players can score at either end. If a defender wins the ball they become attackers and can attack either goal.

Attackers must complete four passes before trying to score. If the defenders score you switch them with four attackers immediately. The team with most goals wins.

## Objectives

Though there are defensive aspects in this game the main purpose is losing marker and retaining possession with short passes ending with a goal.

## Key Skills

When to play forward, first touch, movement/angles and communication, weight and accuracy of pass, and shield from defender.

## Set Up

**Area:** 40x20 yards grid split into four zones

**Players:** 12

**Equipment:** Two goals, cones, balls

## What To Call Out

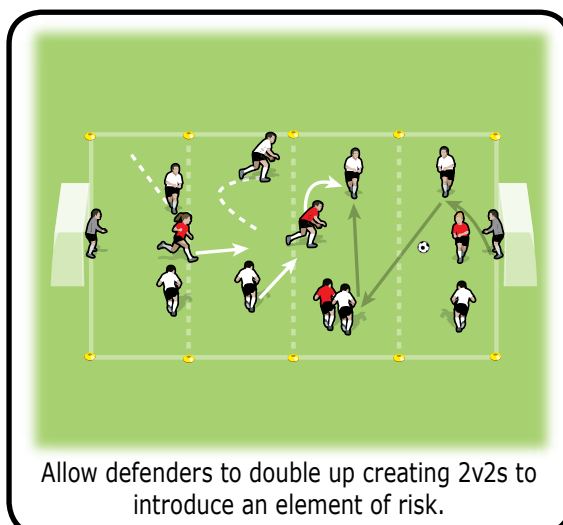
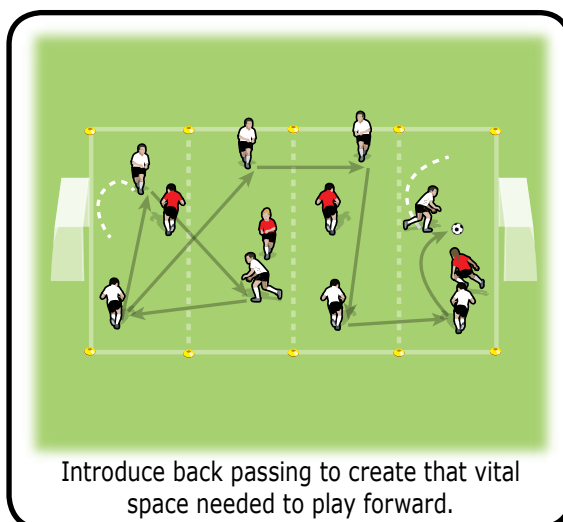
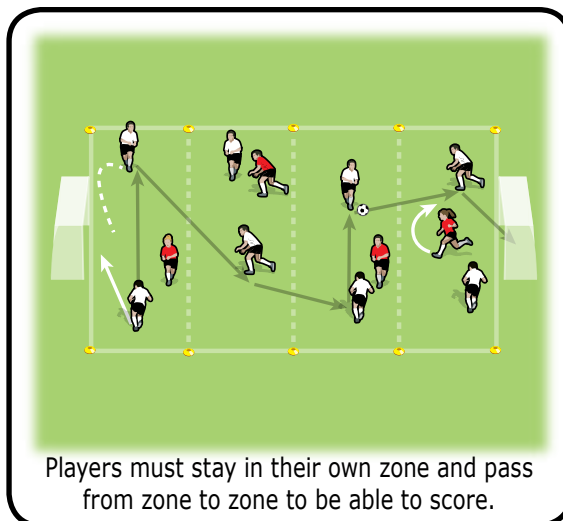
"Heads up"  
 "Good angle"  
 "Pass"  
 "Touch"  
 "Finish"

## Development

- Each forward pass must be a one touch, allow ball to be played back to create more space to play forward
- Allow defenders to leave a zone to double up with a team mate to create a 2v2 in another zone. This introduces an element of risk taking. Any two of the four defenders can be in one zone at any time.

## Hint

On last progression allow keepers to join in to keep possession.



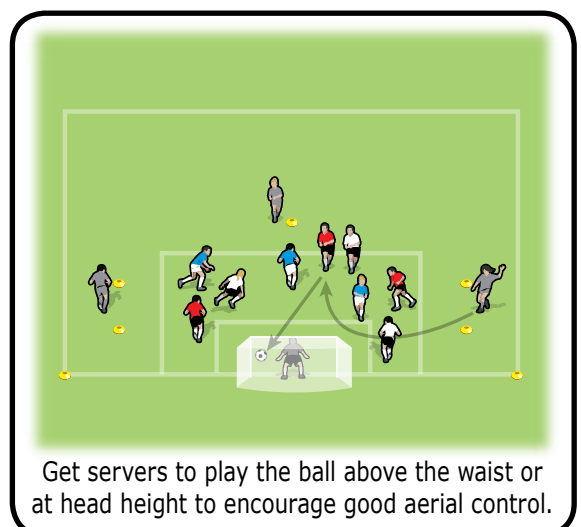
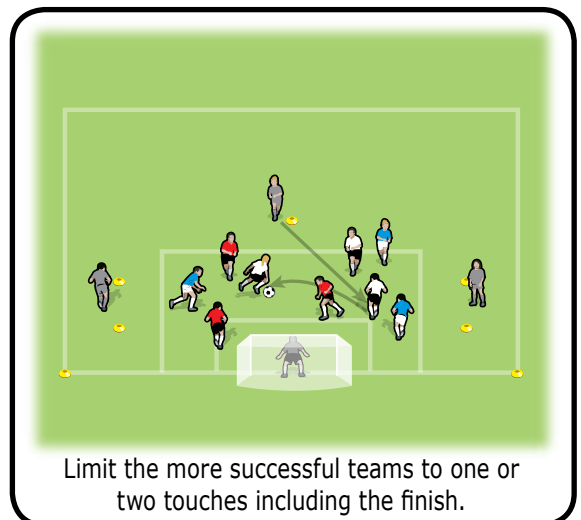
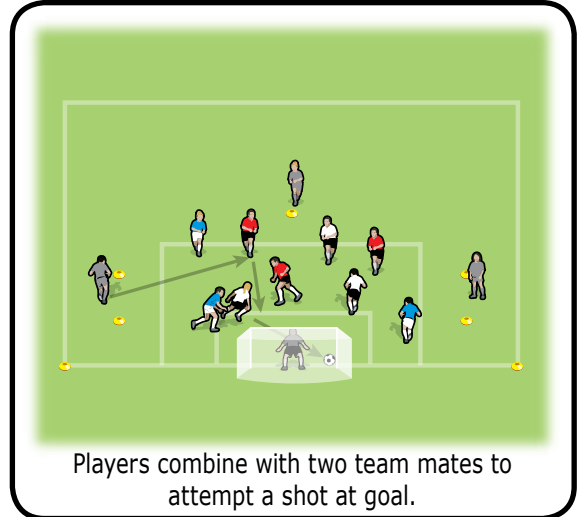
## The Rules

Set up three service points, one on each side. Servers can be players, or you too, and are given numbers or trigger names, such as Giggs, Cole or Rooney.

On your shout a server delivers the ball into the area (not directly to a player).

Play 3v3v3. Players have to react quickly in order to get to the ball first and then combine with two team mates to score. The opposing two teams try to prevent the team in possession from scoring while at the same time trying to win the ball and score.

If an opposing player gets a deflection it becomes their goal. Play the first team to score three and then switch teams. The keeper can be restricted to a small area.



## Objectives

Close range finishing, one touch and quick play, reacting to loose ball/follow ups and bravery.

## Key Skills

Reaction to call/ball. First touch (may be a shot or header). Support from team mates. Dribble and shoot/pass and follow ups.

## Set Up

**Area:** Penalty area or suitable sized grid  
**Players:** Minimum 10 with keeper plus 3 servers/spare team  
**Equipment:** Goal, cones, balls

## What To Call Out

"First time"

"Hold"

"Support"

## Development

- Limit the most successful team to one or two touches including the finish.
- Servers must play the ball above the waist or at head height to encourage good aerial control, volleys or attacking and defensive headers, and at this point the keeper can come forward to catch to add realism.

## Hint

Insist on high balls to encourage heading.

## The Rules

Play 3v3. To begin teams have to score at each end and compete to score the most goals. If the ball leaves the circle you then introduce the next ball.

If the ball hits a cone and crosses the goal line the goal will still count. Goals must be scored below head height (on the ground). The team with most goals wins.

## Objectives

Works on passing and shooting low and accurately.

## Key Skills

Good passing and movement, attitude to shooting, accuracy before power and follow ups.

## Set Up

**Area:** 30 yard diameter circle (will encourage more central play)

**Players:** 6

**Equipment:** Two mini goals (could have three or even four), stand up cones in each goal to force shots low into corners

## What To Call Out

"Pass and move"

"Shoot"

"Head down on contact"

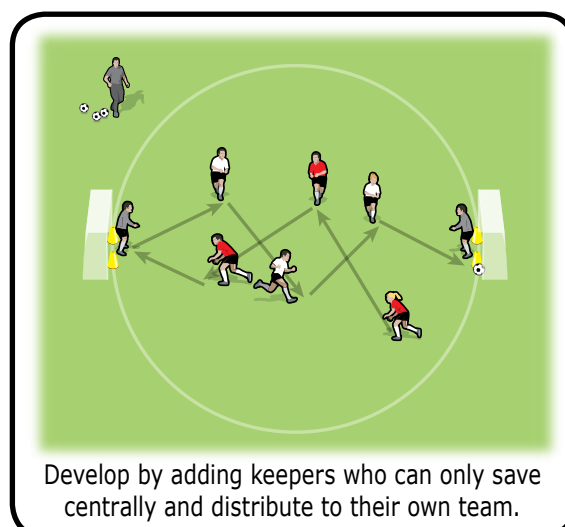
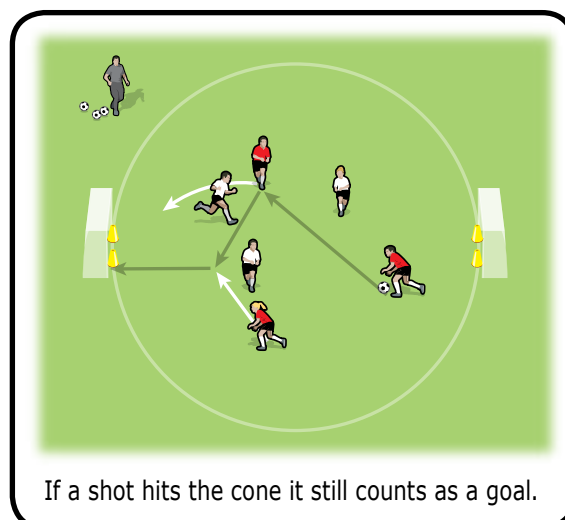
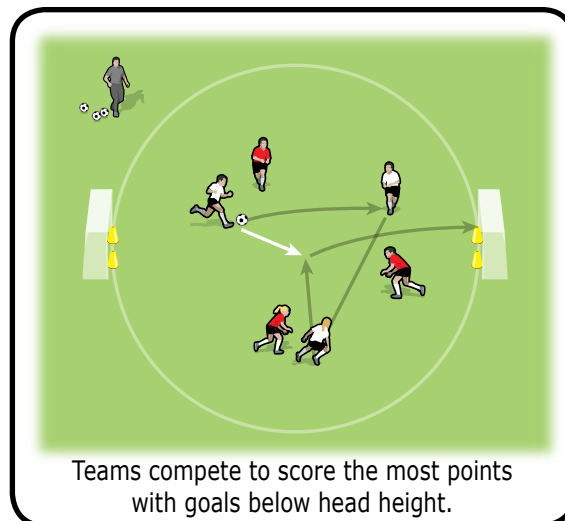
"Keep it low"

## Development

- Introduce a one touch finish, smaller gap, attack one goal defend the other.
- Add keepers but they can only save centrally (between the cones) and distribute to their own team.
- Change the difficulty level by moving the cones closer to the goalposts.

## Hint

Deduct points/goals for missing the target.





## The Rules

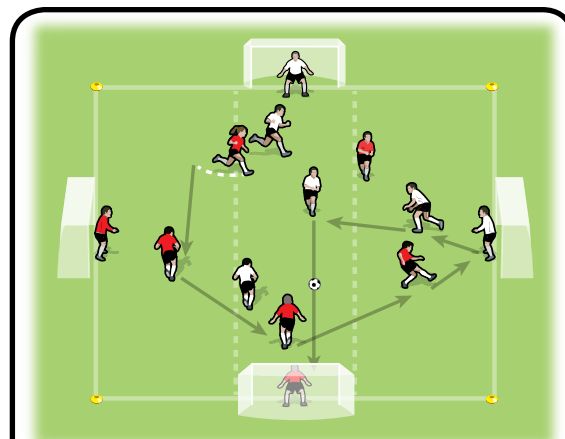
Divide your players into two teams of four. One team can score in the goals at either ends of the field, the other team in the goals at either side.

The team playing lengthways can use an extra player making it a 5v4.

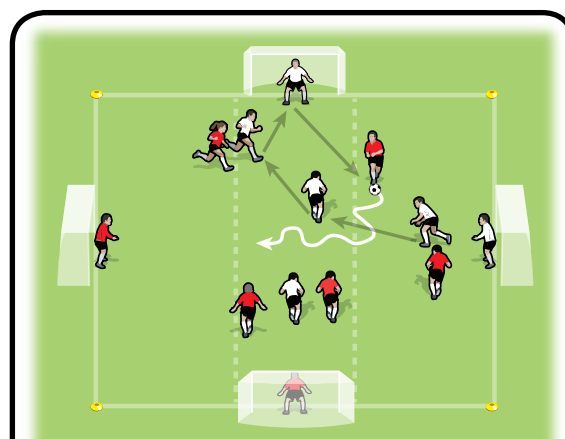
You can play with keepers, depending on the number of players you have. If you are using keepers, after they make a save they serve the ball out to their own side.

All other rules are the same as they are in a normal game of football.

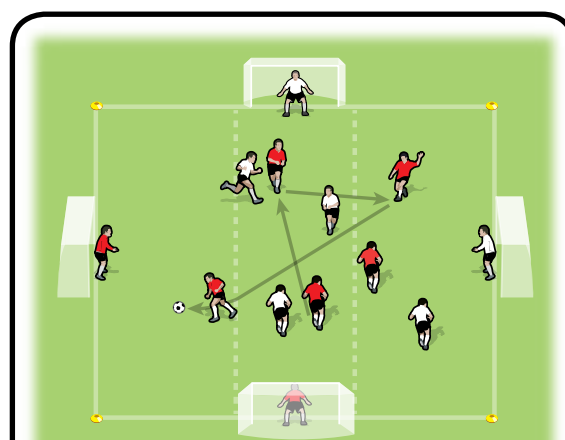
Switch teams around after five goals have been scored.



After a shot the keeper plays the ball out to the opposition.



Encourage players to take on the opposition and dribble the ball.



All players of the team in possession must touch the ball at least once before scoring.

## Objectives

Improves players' ability to make quick decisions on play and enhances awareness and judgement on space and distance.

## Key Skills

Support play angles and distances. Reaction to lost and regained possession. Awareness of space and team mates.

## Set Up

**Area:** 60x30 yards pitch with four goals at each side

**Players:** 9 plus 4 optional goalkeepers

**Equipment:** Four goals, cones or balls

## What To Call Out

"React"

"Look"

## Development

- Play one of the teams on either one or two touches only. Opponents must then beat at least one player before passing or shooting.
- All players of the team in possession must touch the ball at least once before attempting to score.
- Make teams even to become a 5v5 situation.

## The Rules

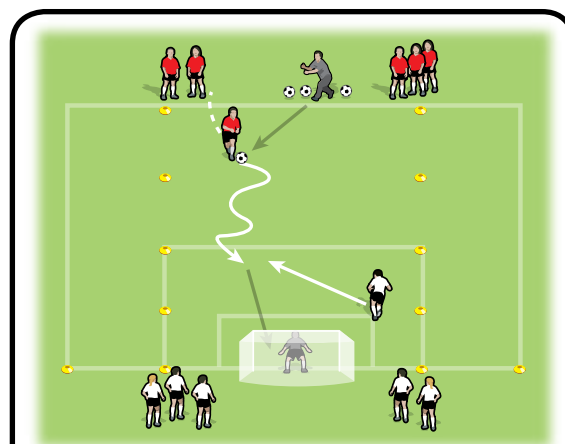
Before each set of games, attackers indicate how many goals they think they will score from six attempts and defenders say how many they think they will stop. All players are aware of the target before play begins.

Players can choose their opponent at any time to make battles more even, as long as everyone is involved!

To start the game serve a ball into an attacker on one side who is opposite a defender – play 1v1.

Switch teams around to attack and defend, you can also use a second keeper. Keep score – the team nearest its prediction wins.

If a draw both teams get a point or they can have a playoff with a selected 1v1 (chosen by teams).



Start with 1v1. Attackers must try to predict how many goals they will get before play begins.

## Objectives

Creates a fun 1v1, 2v2 up to 3v3 competition that benefits attackers, defenders and goalkeepers. Good game for smaller groups or strikers and central defenders.

## Key Skills

Quick reactions, shooting early, defender pressure away from goal, block shot angle and speed of approach.

## Set Up

**Area:** Third of a pitch long (approx 35 yards), coned off to the width of a penalty area

**Players:** 12 plus keeper

**Equipment:** Goal, cones, balls

## What To Call Out

"Play"

"Shoot"

"Block"

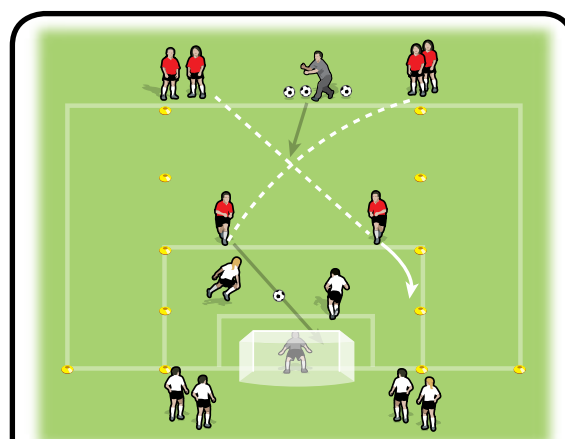
"Magic" when they score

## Development

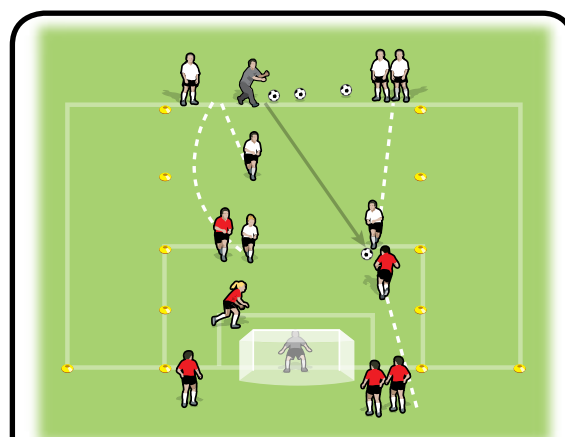
- 2v2 additional combination play and communication for defensive cover including keeper.
- 3v3 the two support players start from the opposite side to the ball.

## Hint

Use a tighter area for smaller groups or those with good ability.



Introduce 2v2 combination play and communication for defensive cover.



Two support players join their team mates and must start from the opposite side from the ball.

## The Rules

Split players into three teams of three.

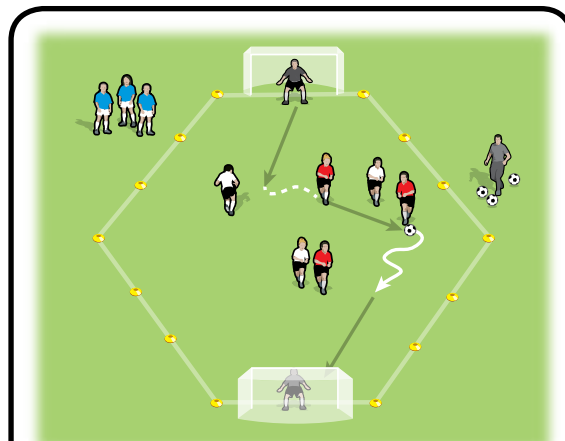
The keeper serves to the first attacking team which uses free play to get a shot through to the opposition goal as quickly as possible.

After a shot or goal the keeper serves to the opposition.

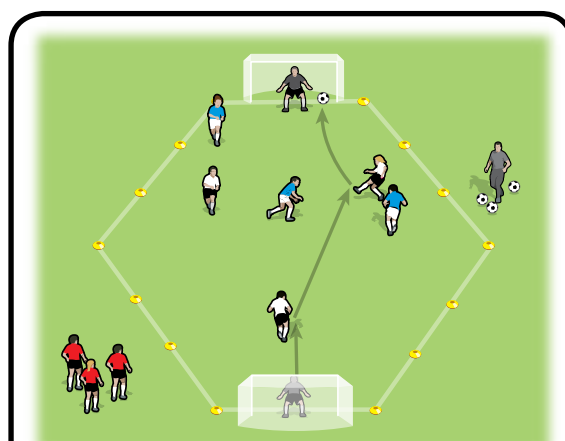
You coach at the side with a good supply of balls.

The games last three to five minutes. Then you rotate the teams.

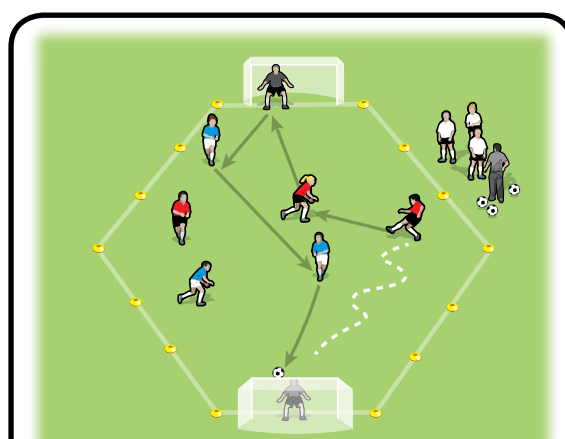
Record all player's possible shots, shots taken, shots on target and shots off target on a notepad. Use this information to feedback to players and then set new targets to help improve play.



Keeper serves to the attacking team (reds) who pass quickly to attempt a shot at goal.



After a shot or goal the keeper serves to the opposition.



Encourage use of weaker foot to score.

## Objectives

Improves attitude to shooting, accuracy/power, support play and follow ups.

## Key Skills

Creating space and good body shape to receive the ball for a potential first time shot. Attitude to shoot, first touch, angles, support communication and accuracy/power rebounds.

## Set Up

**Area:** 30x30 yards diamond shaped pitch

**Players:** 9 plus keepers

**Equipment:** Two goals, cones, balls

## What To Call Out

"Can you shoot"

"Angles"

"Call"

## Development

- Restrict touches and don't allow dribbling to encourage quick shooting.
- Identify and encourage use of the players' weaker foot only to score.

## Hint

Use spare players to help record players' attempts.

## The Rules

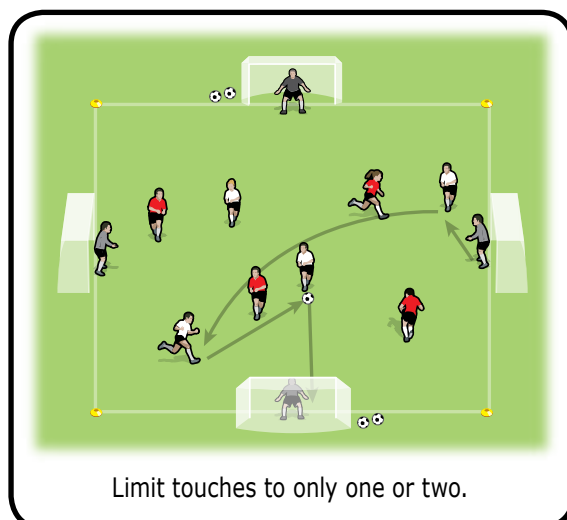
Split the squad into two teams of four players plus four neutral goalkeepers.

Play the games for five minutes and then rotate the neutral keepers. The team in possession can shoot at any goal.

On scoring a goal or making a save, the keeper then serves the ball to the opposite team who cannot shoot back at the same goal.

Keep a tally of the team or individual keepers who have the most clean sheets.

→ PASS → RUN - - - - - GROUND COVERED ~~~~~ DRIBBLE



## Objectives

Multi purpose game that works on goalkeepers' shot stopping techniques, narrowing angles, secondary saves and quick distribution. The game also focuses on strikers on quick play snap shots, rebounds and close range tap ins.

## Key Skills

**Keepers:** ready position, footwork, techniques, reactions, decision making and distribution.

**Strikers:** creating space, decision making, accuracy/power, combination play and rebounds.

## Set Up

**Area:** 40x40 yards pitch

**Players:** 8 plus 4 goalkeepers

**Equipment:** Four goals or cones, balls

## What To Call Out

"First time"

## Development

- Limit the number of touches to one or two.
- If the keeper saves the shot he can throw overarm to any striker who can then receive double points if he scores from a header or volley.



## The Rules

Play with two teams of five players, you can use a floater if you have an odd number or one team is weaker.

When in attack, a goal only counts if all the attacking team, except the goalkeeper, are on or over the halfway line when the goal is scored. If a goal is not scored in this way then the attackers retain possession until they are over the line. And when the last player crosses the line they can then score.

All defenders must be in the defending half or any goal will count double, this encourages quick attacks and recovery runs.

## Objectives

Counter attack quickly and push forward as a team, and recover as a team to defend.

## Key Skills

Reacting to gained or lost ball, speed and direction, passing and forward runs, defend and delay, and recovery runs to mark players or space.

## Set Up

**Area:** 60x40 yards pitch with halfway line

**Players:** 10 plus 2 goalkeepers

**Equipment:** Two goals, cones, balls

## What To Call Out

"Can score"

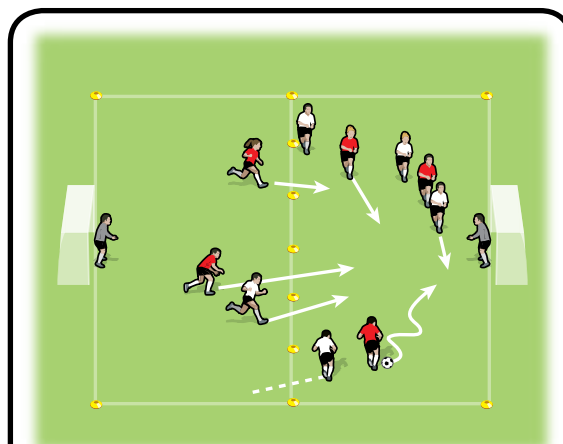
"Quick play"

## Development

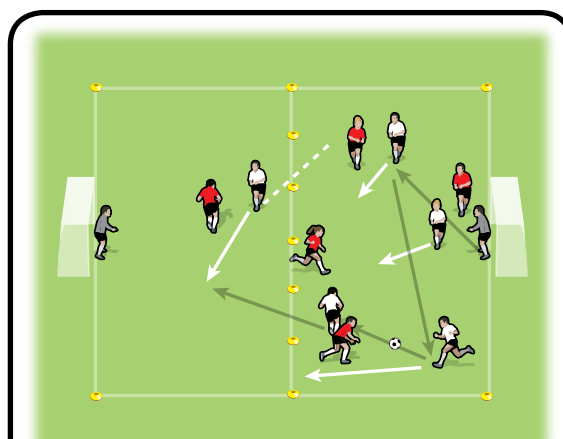
- Introduce a minimum of three passes before the ball goes over the halfway line to encourage playing out.
- All players must remain in one half until the ball is either dribbled or passed over the halfway line.

## Hint

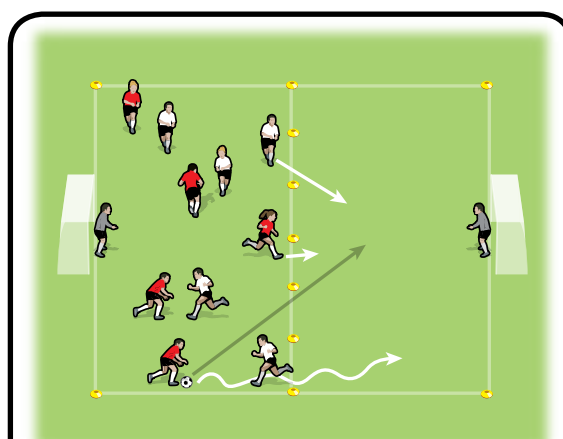
Change the size of the pitch for extra fitness work.



The attackers must be on or over the halfway line for a goal to count.



Introduce a minimum of three passes before the ball goes over the halfway line.



All players must remain in one half until the ball is dribbled or passed over halfway line.

## The Rules

Three attackers play against two defenders in each channel in order to attempt a shot on goal.

Attackers get six attempts and then you rotate the teams including the goalkeepers.

If defenders win possession by blocking a shot they can try to play through the coned gate to score a bonus point in the event of a tie. See which defensive duo concedes the least goals.

## Objectives

Encourage players to defend calmly under pressure, especially when outnumbered. Concede fewer goals than opponents.

## Key Skills

Delaying before making a move, working with team mates to press the ball and force it away from goal, angles and distance from the man on the ball and blocking shots.

## Set Up

**Area:** Two 12x40 yards channels, each with a goal at one end and a gate at the other

**Players:** 10 plus 2 goalkeepers

**Equipment:** Two goals, cones, balls

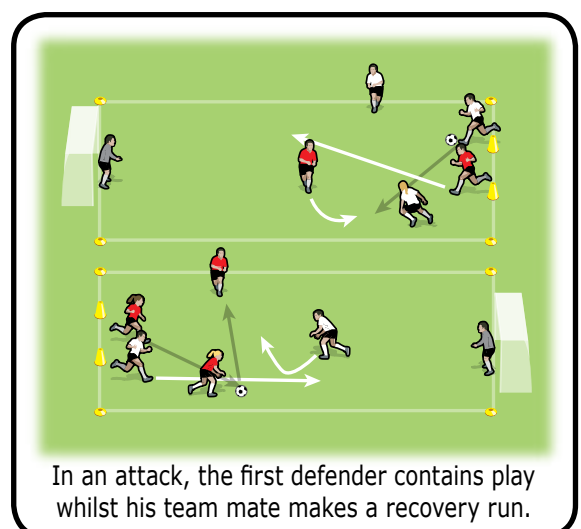
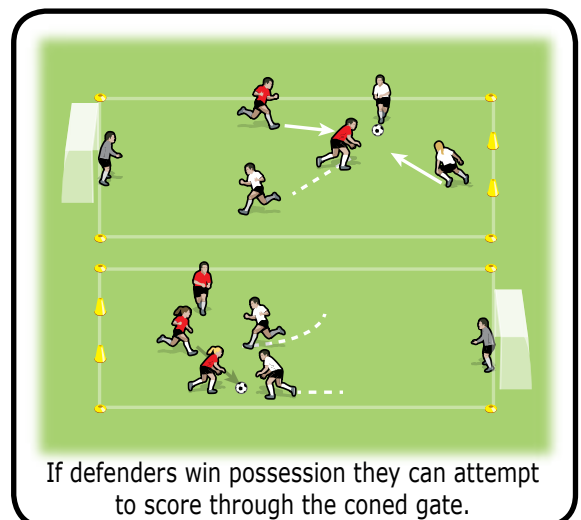
## What To Call Out

"Don't dive in"

"Be patient – can you win it and get through the gate"

## Development

- Add an offside line to work on defending higher and good communication to force the attacking team offside.
- Begin with one attacker and defender on the goal line. An attacking player starts with the ball and must pass to a team mate. This triggers a reaction from the first defender and a recovery run from the second defender. Defender one cannot commit until defender two is back.



## The Rules

Play 2v2, 1v1, 2v2 in each zone. Players each secure a bib to their weaker leg so you can see which foot they are using to pass or shoot.

Use a floater (maybe a two footed player) who plays for the team in possession, but he cannot score.

Don't allow backpassing to keepers. Players are restricted to zones to encourage passing.

Award a free kick to the opponents if a player uses the wrong foot. Play to three goals or ten minutes.

## Objectives

Develops weaker foot to pass and shoot.

## Key Skills

Creating space to receive, first touch, movement on the ball, communication, angle of support, controlling and passing the ball with the weaker foot.

## Set Up

**Area:** 60x40 yards split into three zones

**Players:** 12

**Equipment:** Two goals, cones, balls

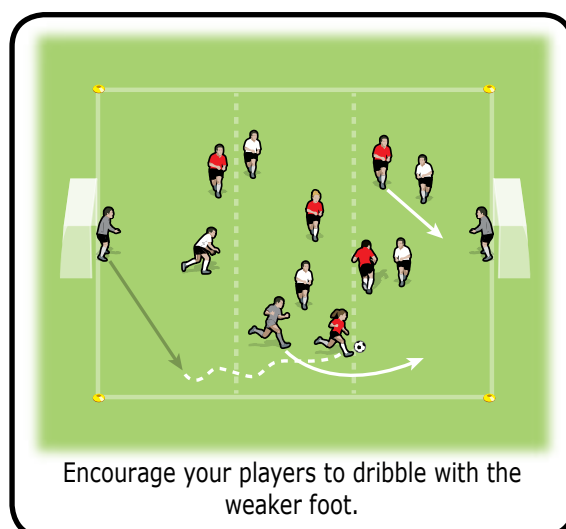
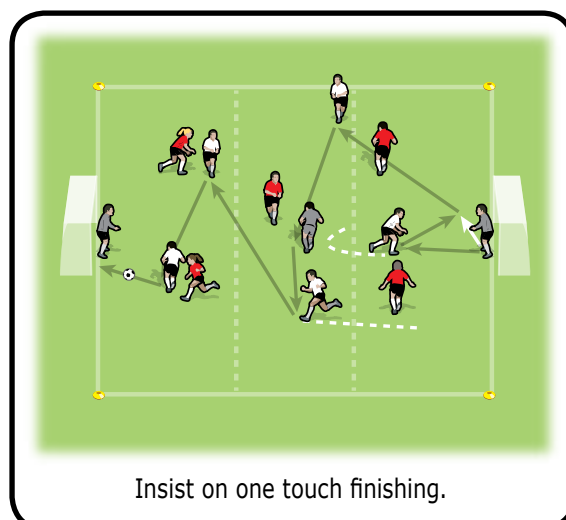
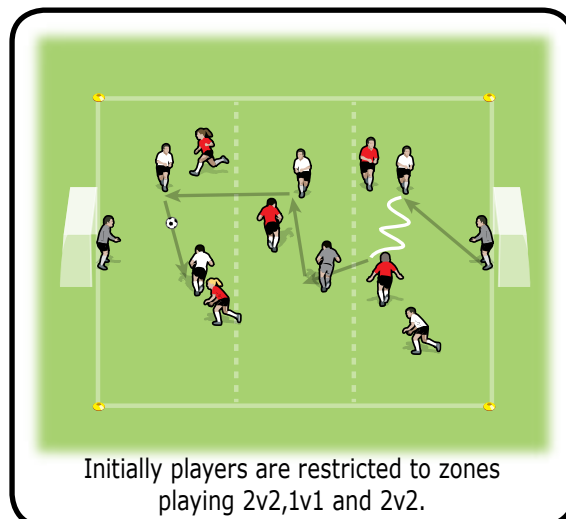
## What To Call Out

"Left" or "Right"

"First time get open"

## Development

- Allow free movement between the zones and require a one touch finish with the weaker foot.
- Insist on dribbling with the weaker foot to build confidence.
- Finish with one team restricted to zones whilst the other team has free movement.



## The Rules

Play two teams of four in a 4v4 or you can add an overload player to make up for differing abilities.

Players must run the ball into an end zone by exploiting the space available. Ball control is particularly important in the zones.

If a team scores it retains possession and attacks the opposite end. Score up to ten and then switch teams.

## Objectives

Improves running with the ball into space, and straight and diagonal runs.

## Key Skills

Receiving the ball with space in front to outside or inside, first touch speed control, awareness of defenders' distance and angles.

## Set Up

**Area:** 30x60 yards with two 10 yard end zones split into three, two outside and one central area

**Players:** 8

**Equipment:** Cones, balls

## What To Call Out

"Shout"

"Open up"

"Big touch"

"Use your speed"

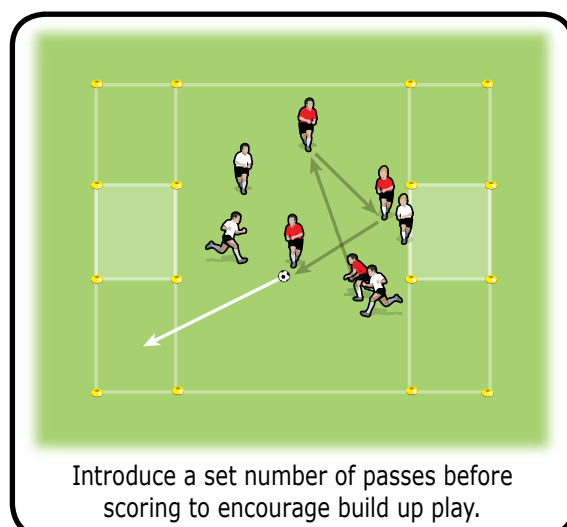
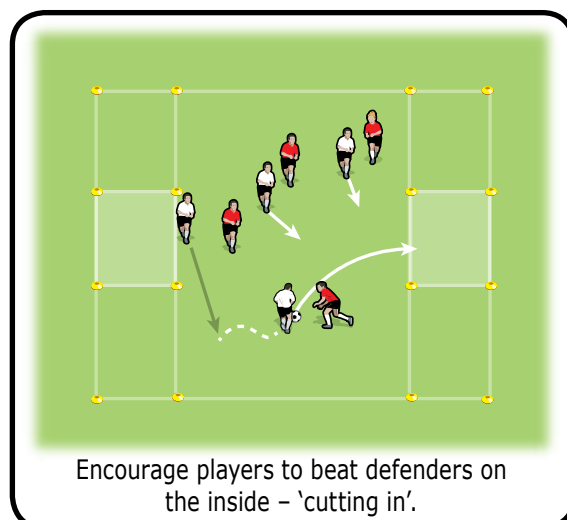
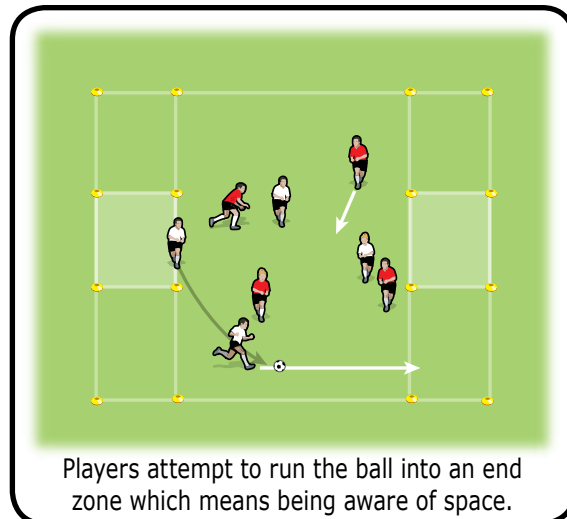
"Cut in or cut out"

## Development

- Give extra points for cutting inside as this would threaten the goal in a proper game, but make sure the players understand a point for outside is better than none at all.
- Introduce a set number of passes, between three to five, before scoring to encourage build up play. Teams can only score one end then the opponents counter attack.

## Hint

You could add goals at each end to finish with shot.





## The Rules

Play with or without keepers. Divide the players into 5v5, 6v6 or you can add floaters if teams differ in ability.

Players can move anywhere on the pitch including around the back of the small goals. However, goals can only be scored from the middle and defending thirds. This will force bending and lobbing techniques.

Keep score of any goals in either of the goals.

## Objectives

Develops trick shots, swerving, lobs and chip shots.

## Key Skills

Encourages players to create space with the ball, gives them time to get their heads up to see opportunities and try different shooting techniques. Not using keepers will give players more confidence to try and score over and around the obstacle.

## Set Up

**Area:** 60x40 yards pitch

**Players:** 10 to 14 players

**Equipment:** Two goals at each end with two smaller goals 10 yards in front of them. (Or poles, flags)

## What To Call Out

"Head up"

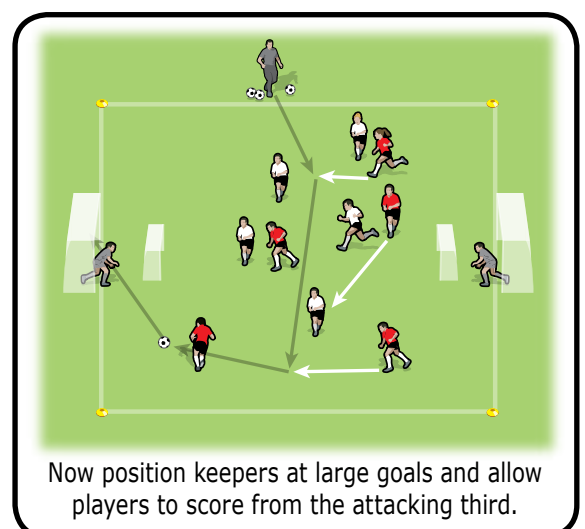
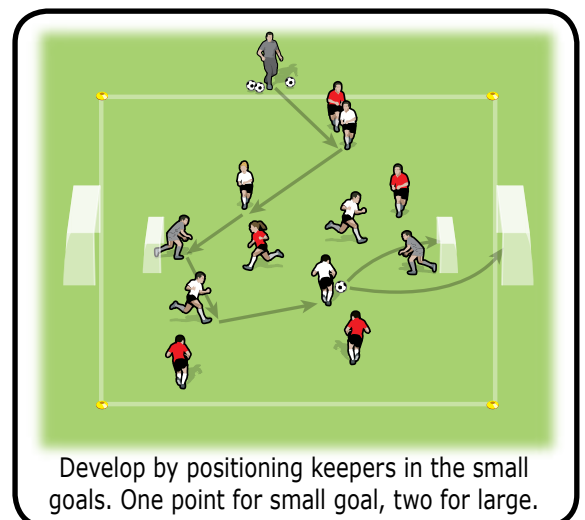
"Try lob"

## Development

- Put keepers into the small goals. Allow one point for a goal scored in the small goal and two points for goals scored in the larger goal.
- Position the keepers in front of large goals. Players can now score from the attacking third.

## Hint

Use as an unopposed warm up game with more balls to practice.



## The Rules

Position the keeper in the large goal, and other keepers in the mini goals if you have spare players.

You serve the ball to the team attacking the large goal. If they fail to score the keeper links with the defenders to counter attack the mini goals.

The team defending the large goal will try to defend to the outside away from the centre, and the team defending the mini goals will defend towards the centre.

Mix up the teams every 15 minutes.

## Objectives

Teaches understanding about defending to the inside or the outside and why.

## Key Skills

Speed and angle of approach of the first defender, angle and distance of support of the second defender, cover and communication by the third defender. Covers balance and recovery runs of any others, so this is a more advanced version of Pin It Down.

## Set Up

**Area:** 50x70 yards pitch (wider rather than longer)

**Players:** 12 plus keeper

**Equipment:** One central goal, two mini goals as wide as possible on the end line

## What To Call Out

"Show inside, show outside"

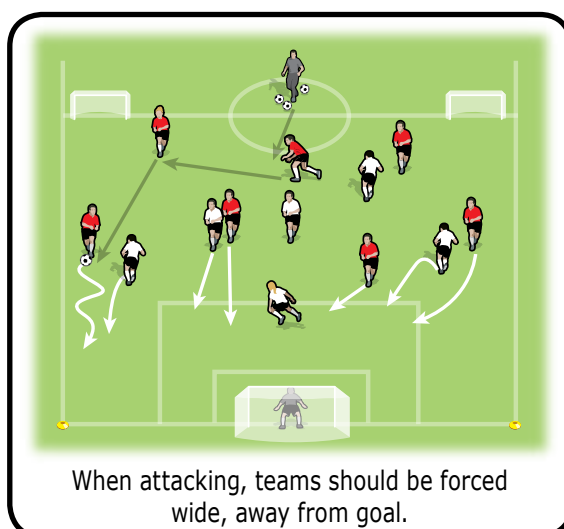
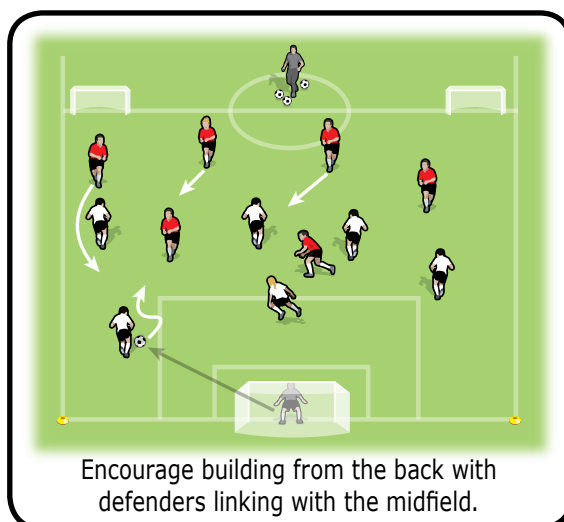
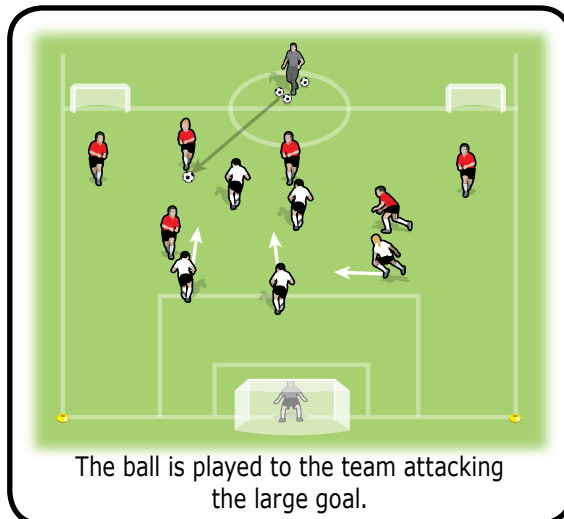
"Support"

## Development

- Add an extra attacker to outnumber the defenders.
- Serve the ball out to a wide attacker to create a 1v1 situation. The defender attempts to force the attacker to the endline without allowing them to cross. Counter attack using the fullback who plays through the midfield.

## Hint

Prioritise the team that is protecting the main goal.



## The Rules

Split your players up into four teams of three. Place four or more 'pieces of gold' (balls) in each pocket.

Each team begins the game at its own pocket of gold. On your command players are free to 'pick' other teams pockets by sprinting to steal balls and taking them back to their own pockets. (Each player must deposit the ball they stole themselves.)

Play for about 90 seconds. The teams win a point for each ball deposited in their pockets and the team with the most balls in total gets a bonus point. Play a number of rounds until a team reaches 20 points.

## Objectives

Improves running with the ball and dribbling.

## Key Skills

Good sprinting, ball stealing with a good turn, decision making (run with ball or dribble depending on space), good control at the pocket. Development improves head up quality of technique on long pass high or low, and first touch (from aerial control).

## Set Up

**Area:** 50x50 yards square with four 5x5 yards pockets in each corner

**Players:** 12

**Equipment:** 16 or more balls

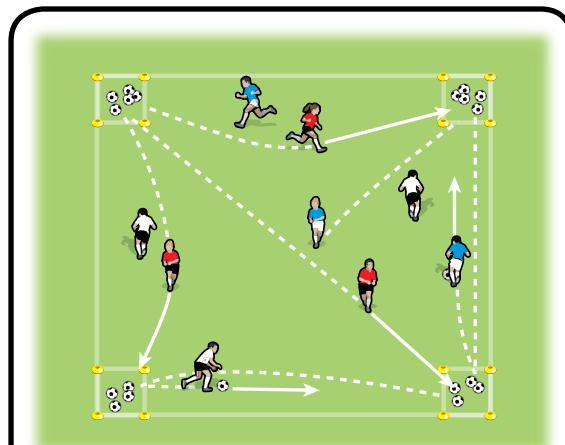
## What To Call Out

"Attack space"

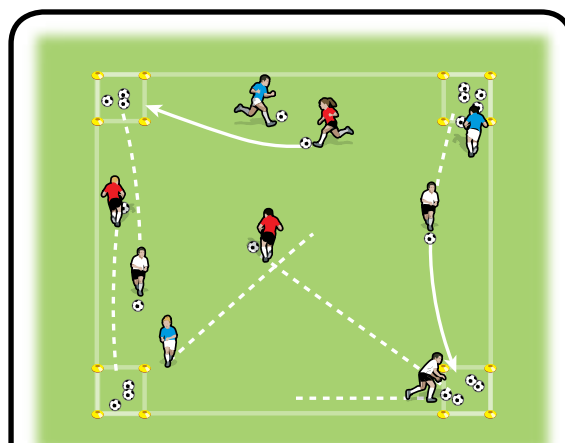
"Keep control"

## Development

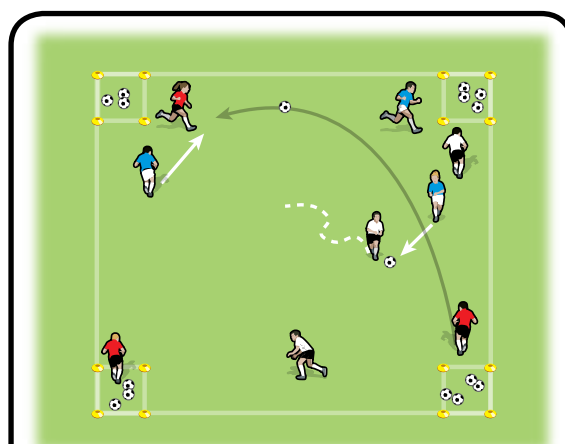
- Randomly introduce two or three extra balls to guarantee a winning team.
- Once a player steals a ball he has the option of finding a team mate who is positioned near the team's pocket. The player can either play a long lofted ball or driven pass to his team mate who then deposits the ball. At any point in either development you can introduce stealing any loose balls or block tackles.



Players sprint to the other teams' pockets to steal the balls and return them to their own pocket.



Each player must deposit the stolen balls themselves. The team with the most points wins.



Allow the players to use a lofted ball or driven pass to a team mate waiting at a pocket.

## The Rules

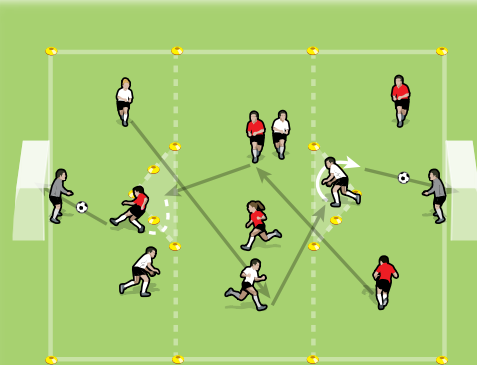
Play 5v5. Only the strikers are allowed in the coned triangle. Passes can only be made from in front of the triangle. Keepers must stay on their line.

Start the game with two balls in play, one at each end, to create lots of action.

In attack, players not involved in the attack can tackle to win the other ball. Defenders cannot defend the area in front of the triangle. Only strikers can score.

Rotate position of all players. Keep each striker's score and team scores.

→ PASS → RUN - - - - - GROUND COVERED ~~~~~ DRIBBLE



Using two balls, teams combine to feed their striker, who spins and shoots.

## Objectives

Encourages a striker with his back to goal to go for one touch control, turn and shoot. Improves passing into feet of the striker.

## Key Skills

Maintaining possession, decision making, timing passes, passing techniques and first touch shooting.

## Set Up

**Area:** 60x40 yards pitch, with three 20 yards zones, large cone 5 yards in from a 20 yard line at tip of triangle

**Players:** 12

**Equipment:** Goals, cones, balls

## What To Call Out

"Hit the striker"

"Spin"

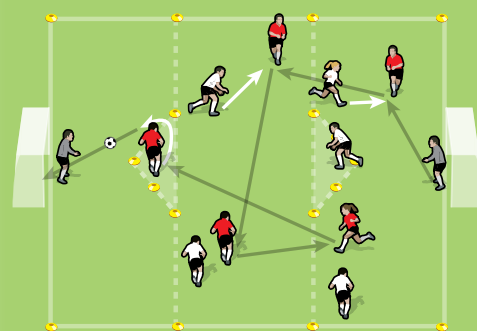
"Shoot"

## Development

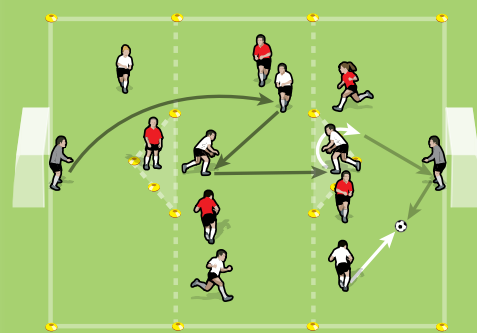
- Revert to only one ball. All normal rules apply except the striker has to stay in the triangle. Rotate the striker after a set amount of shots or a goal.
- Allow other players to follow up rebounds and saves. Encourage the keeper to come off his line after the first shot.

## Hint

Award a free pass, spin and shot if the defenders encroach in the triangle area.



One ball. Defenders attempt to stop the attackers passing to their striker.



Encourage support play to take advantage of rebounds.

## The Rules

The ball cannot be played over the top of the shaded zones, it can only be played through the 'tunnel'.  
 Players can use the width of the pitch in the end zones.  
 Only the neutral players are allowed in the shaded zone.  
 Initially, the neutral players are only allowed to move along the 30 yard central line, in the development they can move along the entire length of the pitch.

## Objectives

Improves central attacking and defending.

## Key Skills

Passing forward with straight or diagonal passes, close control and dribbling, defending centrally and forcing outside.

## Set Up

**Area:** 60x40 yards with a channel approx 30x24 yards in the centre. Wide areas in front of the goals  
**Players:** 10, plus floaters if you have extra players  
**Equipment:** Two goals, balls

## What To Call Out

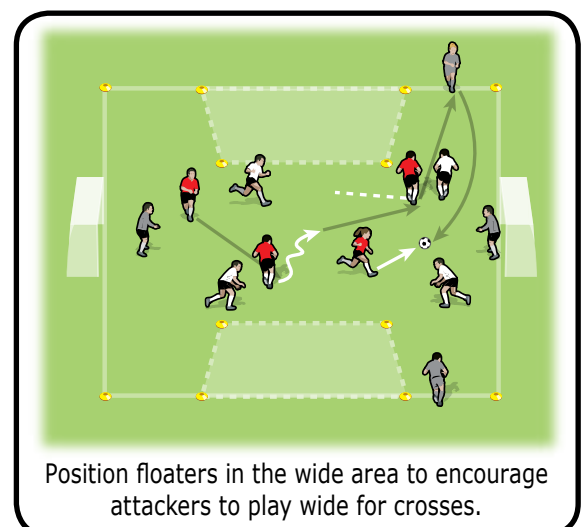
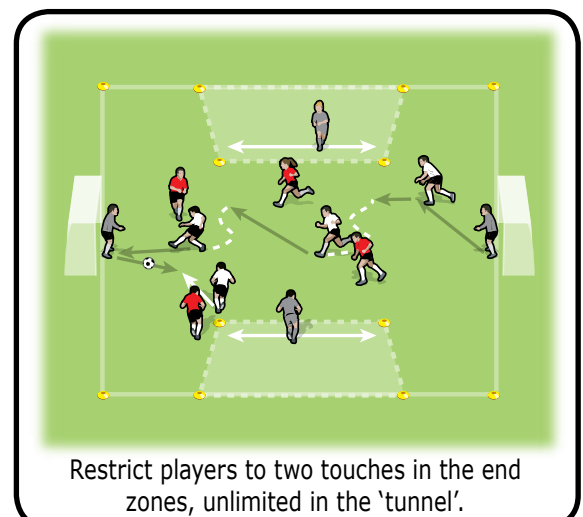
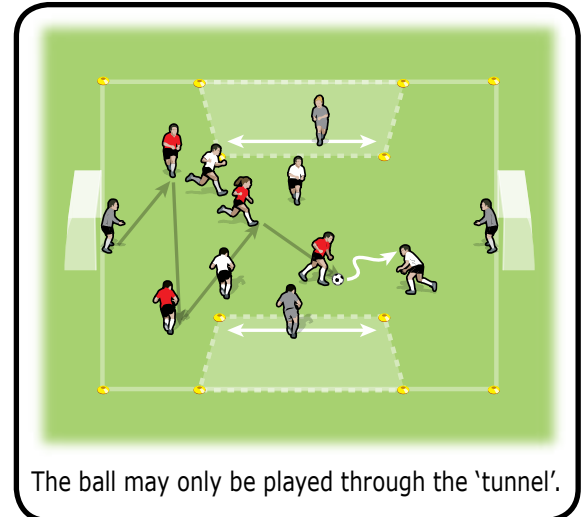
"Play forward"  
 "Dribble"  
 "Shoot"  
 "Go wide"  
 "Show to middle"

## Development

- Restrict the defenders when in the end zones to only two touches. Once the ball enters the 'tunnel' revert to unlimited touches.
- Position floaters in the wide area to give attackers the option to play out wide for the floating player to cross. Encourage attacking and defensive headers at this point.

## Hint

Don't overcrowd the game as space will be at a premium, but use a realistic area to add pressure.





## The Rules

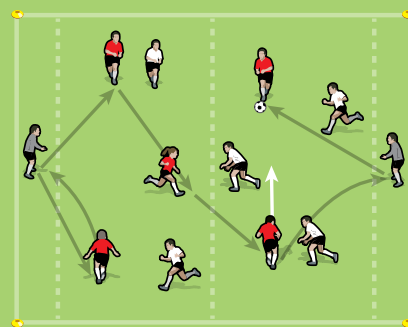
The sweeping keeper in the end zone can use the full width of the pitch.

The aim is for a team to get the ball from one keeper to the other and back again. A point is scored each time this is achieved. The first team to score ten points wins.

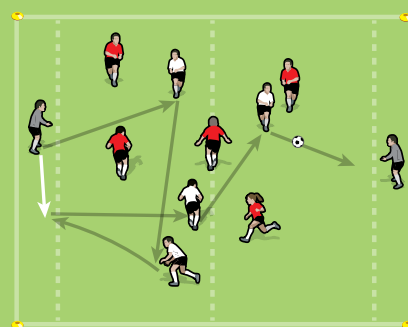
Before attempting to get the ball to the opposite end, it must be returned to the starting keeper at least once.

Initially only two defenders can be in the defending half to encourage success and awareness of space. Keepers play for either team when in possession. Keepers can catch or control the pass from the opposite end zone but they can only use their feet or head from a back pass.

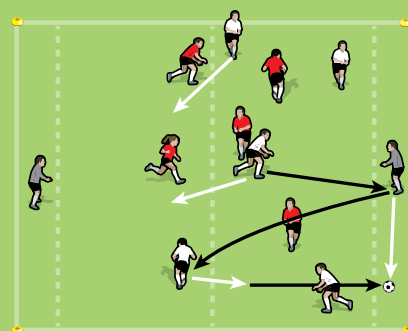
→ PASS → RUN - - - - - GROUND COVERED ~~~~~ DRIBBLE



The objective is to get the ball from one keeper to the other and back again.



The ball must be returned to the starting sweeper keeper at least once.



Encourage flighted passing and keeper movement to stretch play.

## Objectives

Encourages playing out from defence and retaining possession using the keeper.

## Key Skills

**Keeper** – eye on the ball, move into line, good footwork, control techniques, distribution and support angles.

**Outfield** – reactions, creation of space, distance of support, awareness of defenders, communication, technique of pass forward or back.

## Set Up

**Area:** 60x40 yards pitch with halfway line and two 5 yard end zones

**Players:** 12

**Equipment:** Balls

## What To Call Out

"Find the keeper"

"React"

"Angles"

"Find space"

## Development

- Insist on a certain type of distribution and control from the keeper such as feet or chest to control and passing only with the feet.
- Allow the players to move freely around the whole pitch and encourage the team in possession to try and stretch the play using different passes like clipping the ball slightly off the ground.

## The Rules

Play 9 attackers v 3 defenders. Attackers are restricted to two touches only. Place plenty of spare balls outside the pitch.

If the defenders win the ball they can score a goal through any one of the gates.

The attackers must try and complete a set number of passes (e.g. ten), they can then also try to score.

Count the number of passes and goals scored.

Switch the defensive team at ten-minute intervals.

## Objectives

Improves defending and pressure as a unit and fitness.

## Key Skills

Defence working together to pressure the ball into a tight area quickly. Using support angles to stop a pass and force an error. The timing and decision to do this will depend on the distance from the ball. Anticipating when and where a pass will be played. This is helped by the two touch restriction.

## Set Up

**Area:** 50x30 yards grid

**Players:** 12

**Equipment:** 16 cones for 10 goals (two 5 yard goals in each corner and one either side), balls

## What To Call Out

"Support"

"Win it"

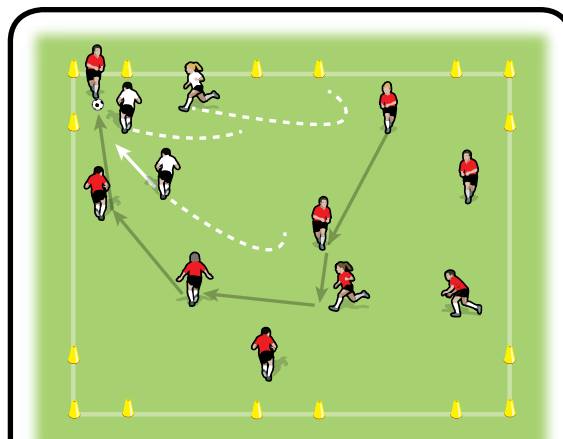
"Score"

## Development

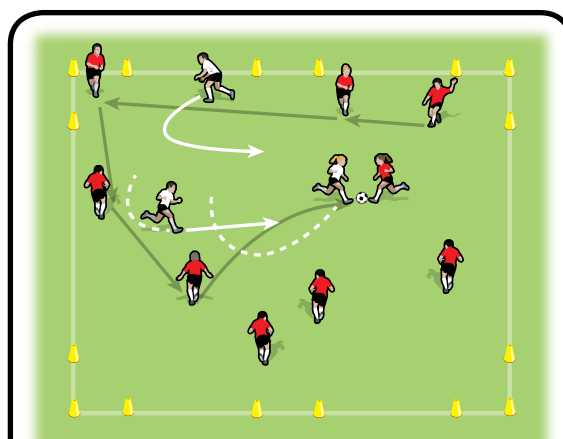
- Change the number of touches that are allowed, less to make it harder or more to make it easier, e.g. one touch should encourage even more effort to press the ball as it reaches a player.
- Change the overload to a 4v8. Allow unlimited touches. The back four work as a unit to encourage one defender to try and cover the space where a pass is anticipated.

## Hint

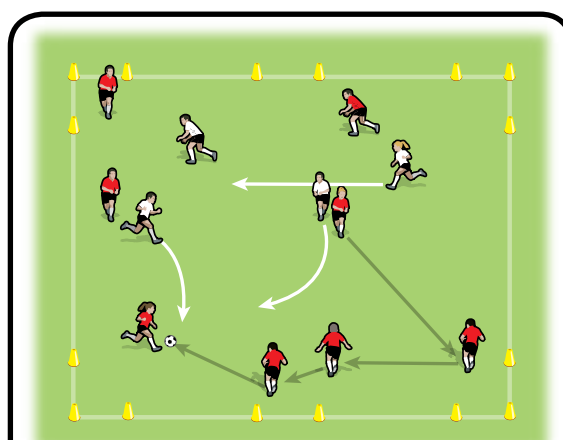
Prioritise keeping score for defenders as it is their game.



Attackers try to complete a set number of passes before attempting to score.



Develop by changing to one touch, encouraging the defenders to close down more quickly.



Add another defender who should cover the space where a pass is anticipated.

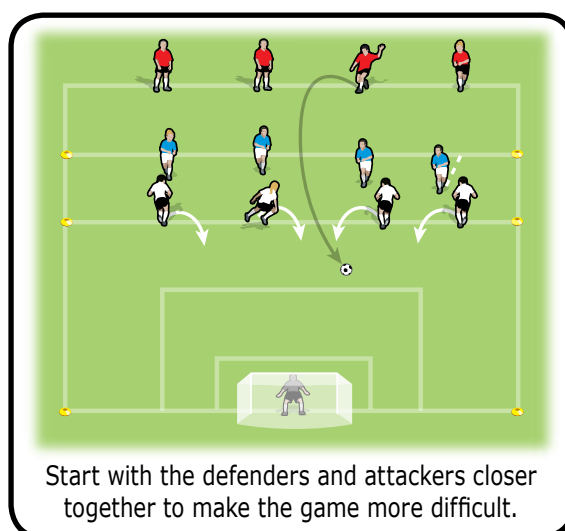
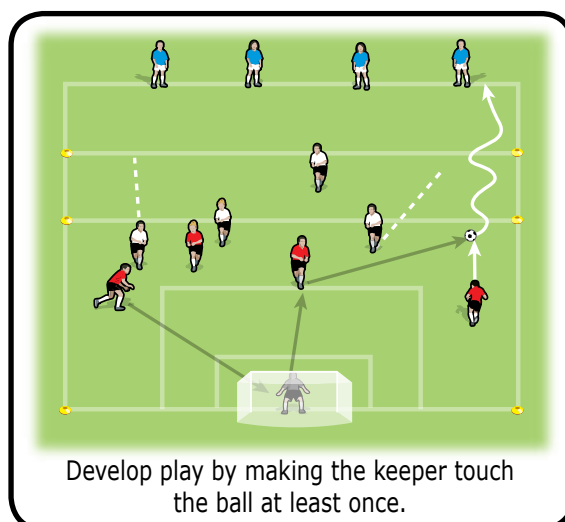
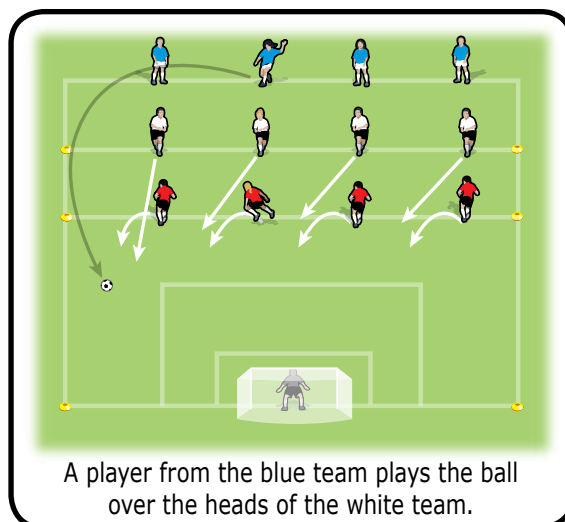
## The Rules

Split your squad into three teams of four players. Goalkeepers are optional, or you can use a spare player as a sweeper. Attackers start on the 40 yard line.

The red team defends against the white team. A player from the blue team plays the ball over the heads of the white team, the keeper remains in the 6 yard area. Players should react as soon as the ball is played.

If the red team can control the ball and pass it to reach any of the blue team on the halfway line it scores a point. If the white team wins possession it can attack the goal as normal.

Keep playing until a goal is scored or missed, or the ball is played to the blue team. Restart play from the halfway line. If the ball goes into touch continue with a throw in. Whites then switch with the reds and the red team switches with the blue team.



## Objectives

This game focuses on the best way defenders can deal with a ball that is played into the space behind them.

## Key Skills

Speed to ball, recovery runs of each player to provide support and cover, communication including keeper, and play forward at the first opportunity.

## Set Up

**Area:** 40x30 yards with defensive line 25 yards out

**Players:** 12

**Equipment:** Goal, balls, cones

## What To Call Out

"React"

"Can you keep it?"

"Play out"

## Development

- The ball must be touched by the keeper or sweeper at least once before it is returned to the serving team.
- A player can dribble the ball to the serving team (this encourages running with the ball if there is space available).
- Start with the defenders and attackers on the same line or bring them a little closer together.

## Hint

Allow keepers to come and collect if possible, but the teams must still play out.

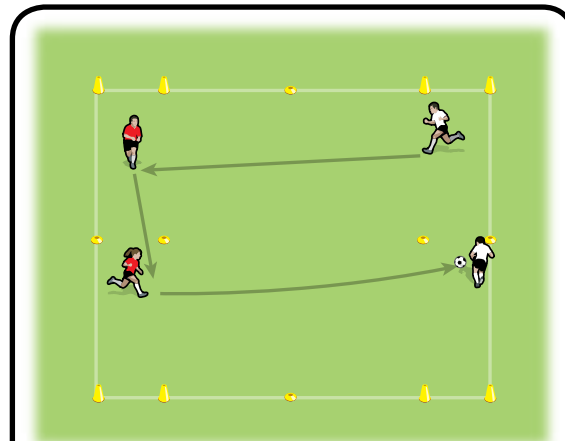
## The Rules

You act as the umpire.

The object of the game is for the attacking team to drive a low ball through the opponent's zone. If the ball exits the zone because of a poor touch or without a touch a point is scored.

Players should work off two touches, one to control and then one to return the ball. Alternatively, the player can choose to pass to a team mate who then must hit the ball first time.

If a point is scored, possession returns to the scoring team who then serves the ball.



You act as the umpire. Teams use low drives through the opposition's zone.

## Objectives

Improves ball control both on the ground and in the air. Limited pressure fun game.

## Key Skills

Eye on the ball, judging weight and angle of pass and flight when the ball is in the air. How to take pace off the ball (cushion) and set up for return.

## Set Up

**Area:** Two 10x20 yards long split in two with 10 yards between the channels

**Players:** 4

**Equipment:** Cones, balls

## What To Call Out

"Change serve"

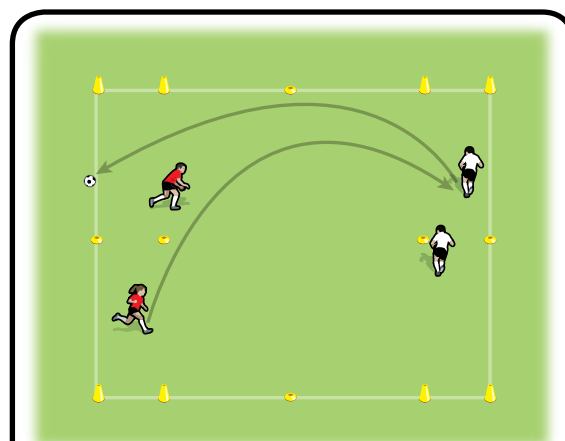
"Take a touch"

"First time"

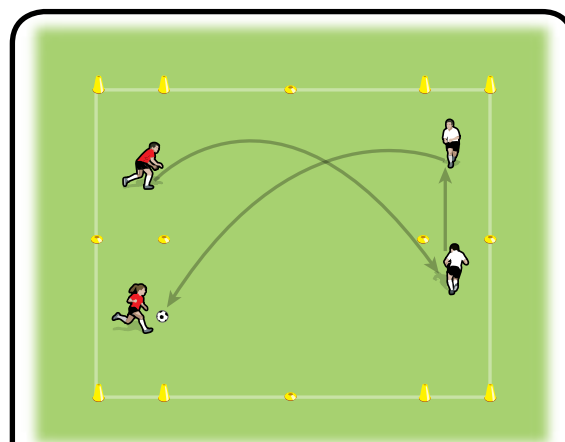
"Relax"

## Development

- Set up in the same way as in the initial game but allow chip shots and swerves.
- Increase the distance between the zones from 10 yards to 20 yards to encourage lofted balls. This will demand greater accuracy from passing players as over-hit balls will not count.



Develop the game with chip shots and swerves.



Encourage lofted balls by increasing the distance between zones from 10 to 20 yards.

## The Rules

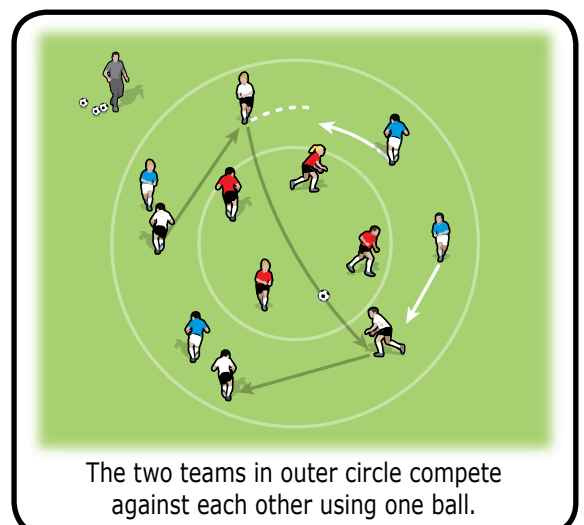
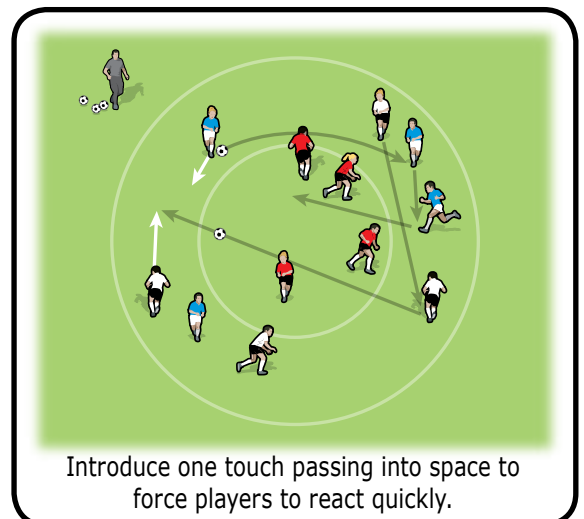
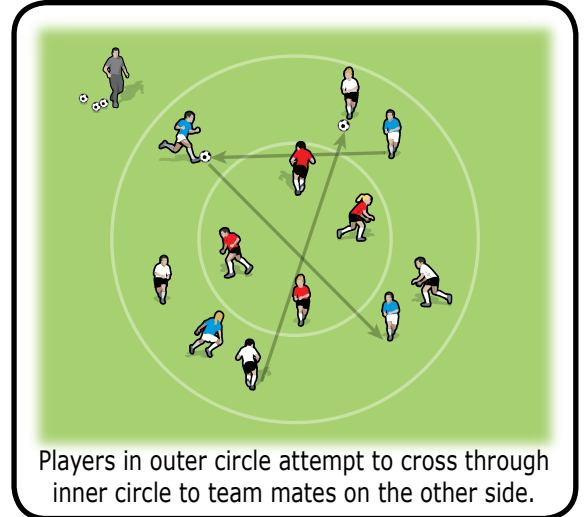
Position three to four players in the small inner circle while two teams of three or four players play in the outer circle. The players in the outer circle may not enter the inner circle.

Each team in the outer circle has a ball and can score a point by passing the ball across the inner circle to a team mate on the other side.

Passes must be below waist height and must go between at least two defenders to count. The ball must be controlled in the outer circle.

Play the first team to ten points and then switch the defenders.

→ → ———— ~~~~~  
PASS RUN GROUND COVERED DRIBBLE



## Objectives

Improves low driven passes with pace to beat defenders.

## Key Skills

Angles to receive, head up, striking ball firmly, and first touch/control.

## Set Up

**Area:** Large circle with smaller one inside, the size is dependent on the age of players

**Players:** 12

**Equipment:** Balls

## What To Call Out

"Good angles"

"Split pass"

## Development

- The passing team must play one touch. Passes can be made into space for a team mate to react.
- Use only one ball and the two teams on the outside compete, but they still must not enter the inner circle.

## The Rules

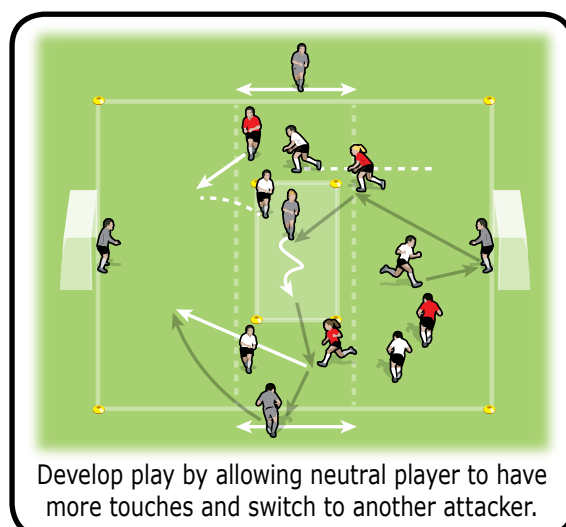
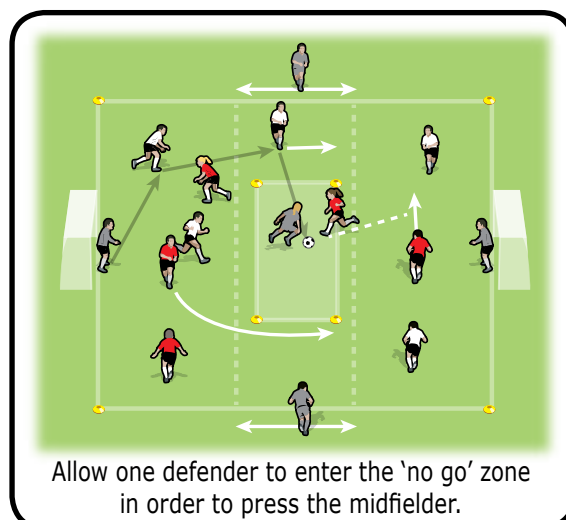
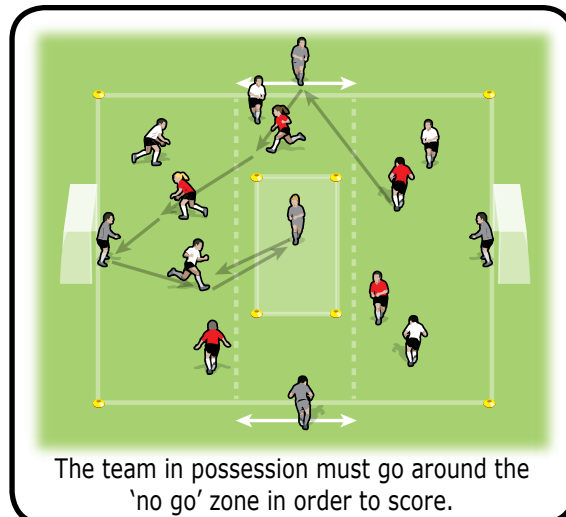
Position a neutral midfielder player in the central 'no go' zone who must stay in this zone.

The neutral midfielder can play one twos with any player in possession.

The ball must not cross the box to another player.

Position neutrals on the outside line of field as shown.

Award a point every time player gets around the house (the 'no go' zone) in possession and a further point if a goal scored. Play to ten points and then switch teams.



## Objectives

Encourages wide play and use of wide areas.

## Key Skills

Getting ball wide early, passing, running with the ball, dribbling, and use of midfield pivot player to create opportunities.

## Set Up

**Area:** 60x40 yards pitch with 10x20 yards box ('no go' zone) placed in the centre

**Players:** 10 plus 4 neutral players

**Equipment:** Two goals, cones, balls

## What To Call Out

"Head up"

## Coaching Notes

Early passes to feet, good combination play.

## Development

- Allow one player from the team in defence to enter the 'no go' zone and press the midfielder if they are close enough to affect play.
- Allow neutral midfielder more touches and the ability to switch play to another attacker.

## Hint

Make the central box smaller and have 1v1 in the box.



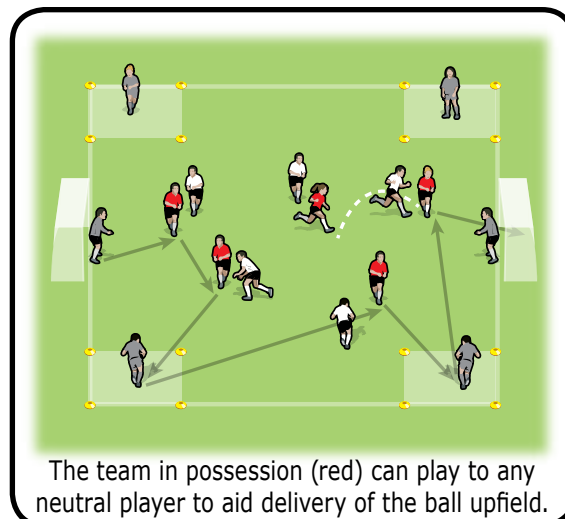
## The Rules

Play even teams. Use a floating neutral player if needed. Four neutral players who cannot be tackled stay in their boxes and play for the team in possession.

The keeper starts the game by serving the ball to a team mate who can play to either neutral player in the full back position.

The receiver can then play the ball back infield or directly down the line/channel to a neutral player in the forward position who looks to deliver an effective cross/pass.

The keeper can pass direct to a neutral full back.



## Objectives

Encourages use of wide defenders and width in attack to get the ball forward and deliver crosses.

## Key Skills

Good passing into the box, first touch with head up, and good technique and decision on delivery.

## Set Up

**Area:** 70x50 yards pitch 10x20 yard box in each corner

**Players:** 16 (5v5 plus 4 neutrals and 2 keepers)

**Equipment:** Two goals, cones, balls

## What To Call Out

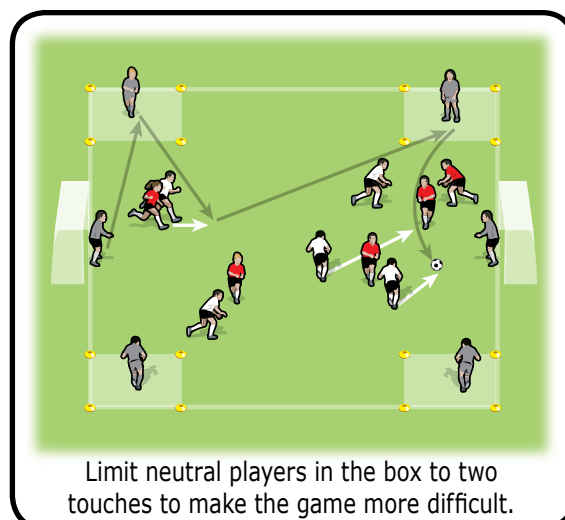
"Go wide"

"Safe"

"Play forward"

"Cross"

"Score"



## Development

- Limit players in the box to two touches.
- If a ball starts in the left defender's box, for example, insist that it must reach the opposite diagonal box before the final delivery. This encourages switch play and diagonal passes.

## Hint

Use smaller or bigger boxes depending on players' ability.

