



Kickin' it with the Cougs Soccer Skills Program

U4 & U6 skills sessions



Age Group: 3 & 4 yrs

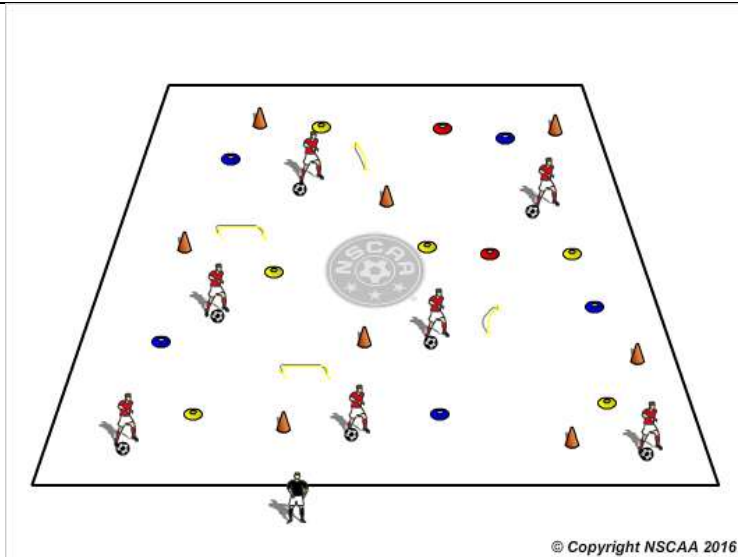
Key points for coaches:

- Balance and coordination of these children will be limited. Incorporation of jumping, two foot hopping, skipping, sideways movement, crawling, rolling on side are possible. Some children may be able to hop on one foot once or twice in succession.
- The attention span of these children will be limited – maintain an energy in your voice, when talking, get down at the child's level (crouch, kneel). Keep things moving and if the kids are doing something a little different be positive and supportive.
- Keep activities short – one activity or game can be layered to create more options. For example the Zoo Animal game – multiple animals to have children move in different levels (ground – snake, worm, frog; middle – monkey, puppy, rabbit, kangaroo; taller – elephant, giraffe, orangutan). Normally a focus of 4-5 minutes.
- Encourage any guardian to join their child (especially the 3 yr olds) to help deal with shyness – kids love to beat their mom or dad (make sure parents let that happen!).
- To provide encouragement, in training games, the use of a number of 1 v 1 games allows the child to work on their skills. Great opportunities for parents to get involved as little ones love to beat mum and dad.

NOTE

Each of these activities can be done in a multiple station format OR individually (e.g. on or two per soccer session). The key elements is to success EAR – Engaging; Active; Relaxed .

Animals in the Zoo




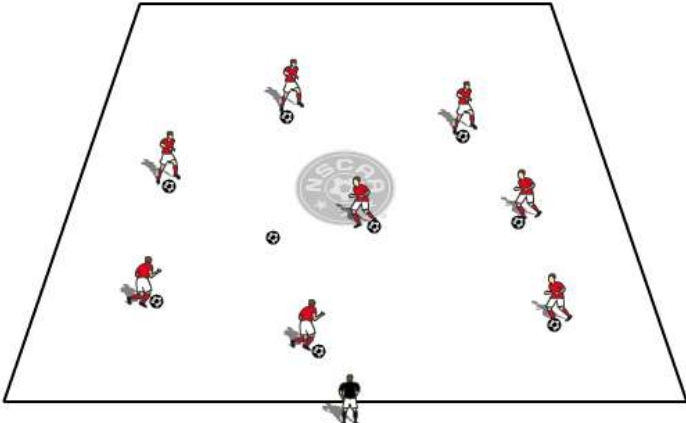
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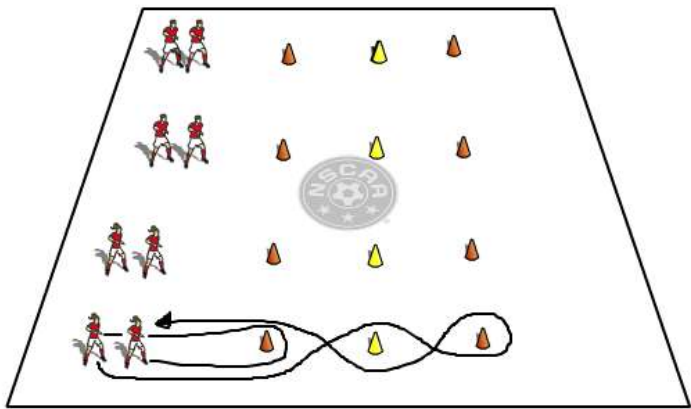
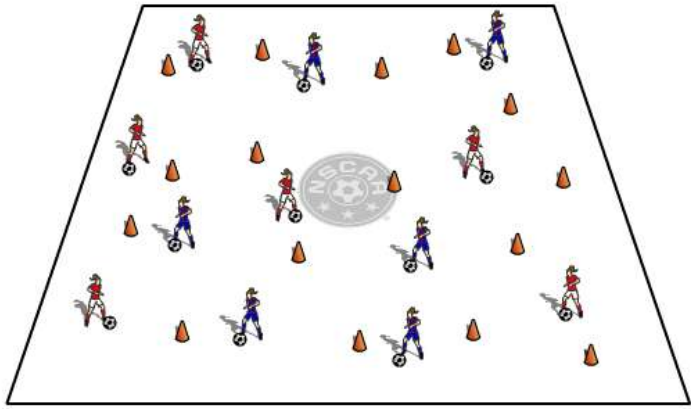
Children begin without a ball, can then incorporate a ball.


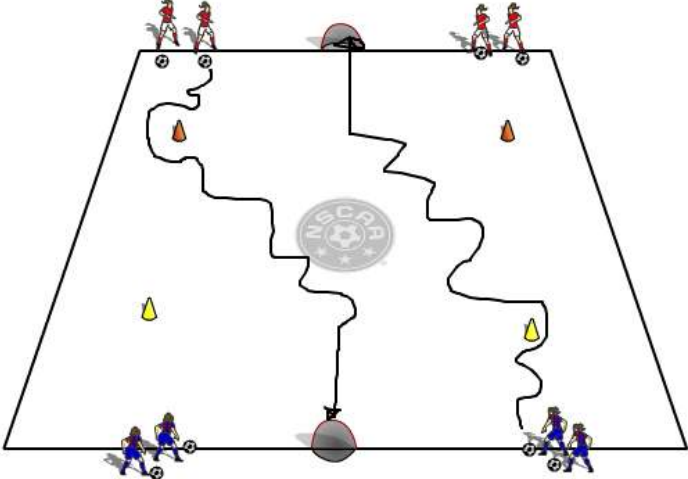
Distribute a variety of different coloured cones, taller cones, hurdles etc that the children can jump over, crawl under or run around as they use their imagination to act like an animal in a zoo that the zoo keeper (coach) calls out. Examples include: Snake, worm, lizard, turtle (low lying animals); frog, rabbit, lion, dog, monkey, wolf (mid height); elephant, giraffe, gazelle (tall/leaping).

Variation:

When the zoo keeper tells the animals to “get back to their yellow/red/blue cage, they do so before the zookeeper catches them. If caught, two jumping jacks.

Dog Park	 <p>© Copyright NSCAA 2016</p>	<p>Each child has their own “doggie” or soccer ball. To begin with children learn various foot skills by making their doggie do tricks:</p> <p>Sit doggie – player places the sole of their foot lightly on top of the ball.</p> <p>Wag your tail – player stays in one spot and uses the sole of their left/right foot to move the ball in little circles on the spot.</p> <p>Roll over – either tap the ball sideways with the inside of both feet OR use the sole of the left or right foot to roll the ball in a sideways direction (lateral).</p> <p>Sniff the ground – move the ball in little zig zag patterns by using the side of the big toe (inside of foot) and outside of baby toe (outside of foot).</p> <p>Turn around – use the outside, inside or bottom of foot to move in opposite direction.</p> <p>Children then take their dog to the dog park to move around. Can ask the children to take their doggie for a drink (blue cones), or have a nice treat (milk bone-yellow cones). Can then go and sniff for rabbits in the bushes (orange cones). Create goals using tall cones or pop up nets (one or two per side of the grid depending upon resources). These are dog kennels. After having a drink, eating a dog bone and sniffing a bush or tree, the doggie has to go for a rest in a dog kennel (passing or shooting into net). How many dog kennels can you put your doggie in before a specific time period (up to 45 -60 seconds)?</p>
Soccer ball dance	 <p>© Copyright NSCAA 2016</p>	<p>You are the dance caller and call out various dance directions for the children to follow with their partner (soccer ball). Examples</p> <p>Spin your partner round and round – use the inside or outside of foot to move ball in a circle.</p> <p>Swing your partner round the floor – move the ball in a tight zig zag pattern using light touches on the ball –can you keep your head up so you do not run into another dance couple?</p> <p>Move forward and backward using the bottom of both feet (alternating).</p>

<p>Choo choo train</p>	 <p>© Copyright NSCAA 2016</p>	<p>First player in each line starts the engine and takes it down the tracks, turns around and comes back to pick up a truck or caboose.</p> <p>Players have to hold hands while moving down the railroad tracks. Can have three trucks coupled together (hold hands) as they go down the tracks and back to the station. Who can get the train back to the station first without coming off the tracks (let go of one or more hand).</p> <p>NOTE: To avoid injury risk with younger children, do not make it a competition.</p> <p>With advanced groups (or 5 & 6 yr olds), can they take a soccer ball down the tracks and back – can have the engineer drive the ball OR make where the engineer has to pass the ball along the train for other train engineers.</p>
<p>Bob the builder</p>	 <p>© Copyright NSCAA 2016</p>	<p>A game emphasizing dribbling and passing/shooting accuracy.</p> <p>Each child is given their own bulldozer (ball) to drive in the construction zone. Their task is to bulldoze as many houses, apartments, condominiums; hotels etc (ask them to name some building where people might live).</p> <p>“Bob”, the coach, does not want to have any buildings knocked down so tries to steal a bulldozer. Ifs/he loses their bulldozer; they have to get it back from Bob.</p> <p>Bob also tries to rebuild the homes by standing the cones upright using his foot only.</p> <p>How did the bulldozer operator avoid “Bob”? What did they have to do to knock a building over? If “Bob” took their bulldozer, how did they get it back?</p> <p>Variation:</p> <p>Have one half of the children with a “bulldozer”, the other half without a ball. The children without the ball try to prevent any houses being knocked over while the child with the bulldozer tries to knock as many houses over as possible. If a house is knocked over, the child protecting the home can only stand it back up using his/her foot. Which group of players can have the most houses knocked over within 1 minute (or a few minutes if need be). Can switch roles to see who can knock the most homes over after a set time period.</p>

<p>Fireman</p>	 <p>© Copyright NSCAA 2016</p>	<p>Emphasis on running with the ball, keeping close control, heads up and foot dexterity. Each firefighter has their own fire engine (ball). The firefighters split into two groups and take their fire truck into one of two fire halls (blue cones and yellow cones in diagram).</p> <p>When the coach (fire chief) sounds the alarm, the firefighters drive their trucks to put out the fires. To put the fire out, the fire truck must be right beside the home WITHOUT knocking it over. The firefighter then pumps water onto the fire by tapping their fire truck with the sole of their foot (toe taps – 3 times per foot – alternating feet to develop coordination and balance).</p> <p>The fire chief calls out how many fires each firefighter has to put out.</p> <p>After a busy day fighting fires, the firefighters go back to their fire halls to have breakfast, lunch or dinner.</p>
<p>Go to goal. Each game 3-4 minutes long before taking a break.</p>	 <p>© Copyright NSCAA 2016</p>	<p>Two sets of players face one another across a grid (15 to 18 yds apart)</p> <p>On a go command, one player from each side dribbles a soccer ball around one of their two cones before shooting in the other team's goal. The player, who scores first, gets a point for their team.</p> <p>The must celebrate when the score.</p>
<p>2 v 2 or 3 v 3 games</p>	<p>Have the children play two v two inside a grid 15 yds wide by 18 to 20 yds long. Two goals per end line. Can have one ball in play, or two balls.</p> <p>Play for 3 minutes – kids this age tire quickly.</p>	



Kickin' it with the Cougs Soccer Skills- Practice Sessions

Age Group: 5 & 6 yrs

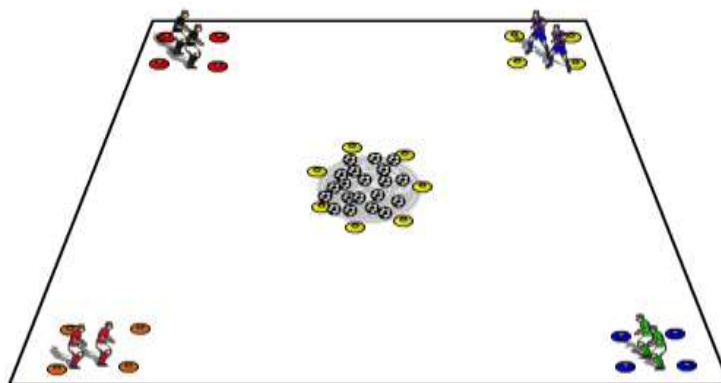
Key points for coaches:

- While coordination is improving, there will be variations in abilities based upon growth rate and level of activity experienced in their day to day environment. Can add one foot hopping as part of the agility/coordination elements. In addition, the ability to move while walking or SLOWLY jogging backwards can be added.
- The mental aspects of the player are still egocentric (me) but beginning to understand the ideas of cooperation (especially the 6 yr olds). For this reason, in small sided games, the "bumble bee" concept is common where all the children follow the ball as they want it. Some children will stay away from the group which should be used as an example of finding great space.
- Duration of activities should still be quite short (up to 8 minutes) with one or two variations of the activity to stimulate the child. E.g. When dribbling the ball in an area, who can dribble using their right foot only? Now who is able to use their left foot only? I bet you can dribble the ball using both feet? Make it a game, and the kids will rise to the challenge.
- Because of the nature to want the ball, can emphasize a lot of individual footwork skills and ability to run with the ball under control by incorporating a variety of 1 v 1 up to 2 v 2 games – dribble to an end zone, dribble past the coach, dribble to score. Can certainly build to 3 v 3 matches but encourage and praise situations where players are able to run with the ball and change direction.

NOTE to COACHES

Create 4 grids (10 players per grid). Each grid 18 by 18.
Each grid takes one of the following activities. The children rotate through each grid after 10 minutes.

Squirrels and nuts 10 minutes



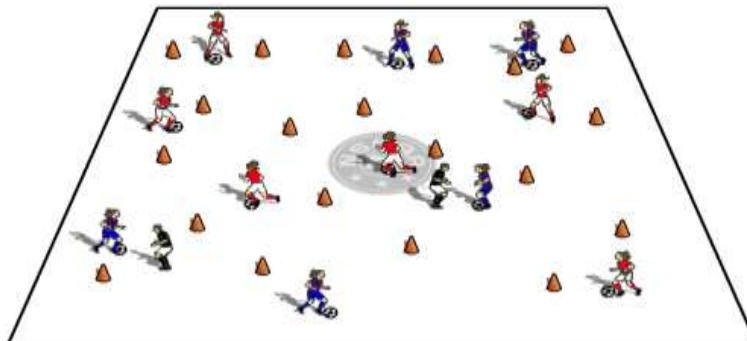
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Squirrels and nuts

Two squirrels per nest. They try to get past the owl (coach) circling around the oak tree to grab an acorn and take it back to their nest. When they do, the next squirrel can go. Who can get 4 nuts into their nest first? (16 acorns in the oak tree).

Have the children - carry the ball in their hands; hop with ball between their knees; run with ball at their feet. If the owl catches the squirrel, they have to take the nut back to the tree and go to their nest.

Bob the Builder
 Variation 2
 10 minutes



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Age: 3 to 6 yrs

Emphasis: running with the ball, close control, changing direction, passing/shooting.

Bob the builder

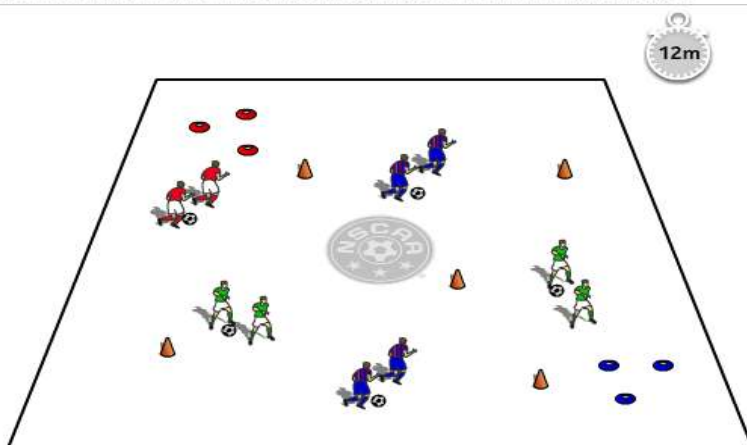
Each player is given their own bulldozer (ball). They have to drive their bulldozer around the construction site and knock down the buildings. Ask the children what kind of buildings people live in (possible answers - houses, apartment blocks, hotels, condos etc.).

Bob (coach) does not want the buildings knocked down so tries to stop the bulldozer hitting the buildings. If "Bob" steals a bulldozer, the driver has to try to get it back. How long will it take to knock all the buildings down? How did each driver keep their bulldozer close? What did they do to see where "Bob" was? How did they prevent having their bulldozer taken away? Did they have their bulldozer close to the houses or far away to knock them over?

Version 2:

Give one half of the players a ball. The other half without a ball. The players with balls are trying to knock the houses over BUT the players without are looking to rebuild by standing the cones upright again. Make it a timed event...how many building still stand at the end of time? Switch roles?

Truck and trailer
 10 minutes



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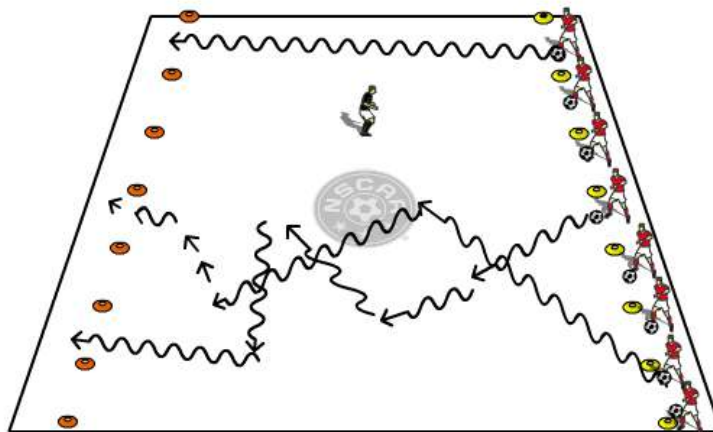
Truck and trailer

The front player is the tractor and the back is the trailer (ball is the valuable cargo). The trailer has to stay within three or four steps of the tractor who moves through the potholes (blue); fire hydrants (red); houses (tall orange) changing directions while the trailer stays close WITHOUT hitting a house, fire hydrant or pot hole. Make sure the tractor goes at a moderate speed. Switch roles every 30 seconds to a minute.

To add more complexity, give both players a ball and now the back player has to try and stay close to the front player.

Variation, can change the game to soccer marbles where one player is trying to hit the other players marble...how many times can he/she do so in a set time. Switch roles.

Swamp monster
10 minutes

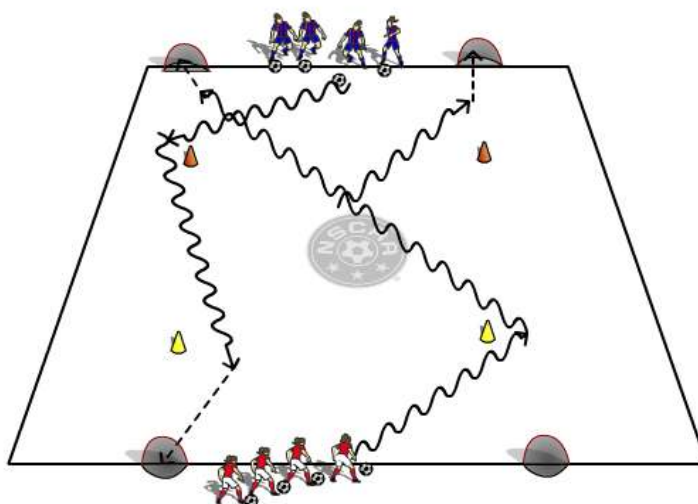


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Swamp monster

Each player has a speed boat that they are getting across the swamp to see their grandma (one one side) and their own house (on the other). The swamp monster (coach all hunched over with a silly face) tries to catch the speed boats as they go zooming by. If caught, the boat driver becomes a crab OR an alligator. The game continues until there is one boat left. Should the crabs and alligators sit an a straight line or staggered? Why? See if the kids can think it through.

1 v 1 soccer (one ball per player)
10 minutes



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1 v 1 to two goals (no opposition).

Grid size: 15 yds wide and 18 yds long.

When coach says go, the first player from both teams (each has a ball) has to move around one of the cones closest to their nets then go and score in one of the other goals.

When each player scores, they celebrate.

3 v 3 games
20 minutes.

Create fields of 15 to 18 by 20 to 24

Teams of 5 – 2 resting, 3 play...these little ones will runs around for a minute or two then stand...this is when they can switch.