



**Maple Valley  
Youth Soccer Curriculum**

**Proposed: October 26, 2007**

## MVYSA U10 Soccer Curriculum

### AGE GROUP:

U10

#### Skill Priorities:

Continue with dribbling foci from U8  
Passing with inside and outside of both feet  
Shooting with both feet – using laces  
Receiving the ball with all parts of body  
Heading

#### Tactical Priorities:

Basic Attacking Ideas  
Basic Defending Ideas  
Comprehend 1 vs 1 concepts  
Comprehend 2 vs 1 concepts  
Introduction to 2 vs 2 concepts  
Comprehend roles of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> defenders  
Comprehend roles of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> attackers

It is important to be consistent in coaching and we must make sure that we follow a progressive trend of development for young players. We need to continue to focus on technique during our practices. Creating environments in which players get maximum repetitions of technical skills is key. Players at this age should still work on ball mastery and demonstrate growing familiarity and comfortability with a ball at their feet.

#### Typical Characteristics of U10 Players

- Attention span lengthens from U8 – they start to show the ability to sequence thought and actions
- They start to think ahead and think “if this, then that”.
- They are more inclined towards wanting to play soccer rather than being told to play.
- Demonstrate increased self-responsibility – bringing a ball, water, and all gear should now be their complete responsibility.
- They start to recognize fundamental tactical concepts.
- Children at this age begin to become aware of peer pressure
- Players greatly affiliate with their team or their coach – “I play for the Tigers”.

- Players at this age are extremely rule bound.
- This is still a crucial age for technical skill development.

### Some Recommended Games for U10 Players:

1. *Free Dribble* – Everyone with a ball, use inside, outside, and sole of the foot. Have players dribble with speed (outside of foot), change direction, and perform moves. Coach calls out moves or changes in direction and sets the pace as the manipulator of the session; kids carry the ball towards someone and try a move. *Version 2:* As players get comfortable, coach can walk around and put pressure on players as they are performing dribbling tasks. This adds fun and interaction. *Version 3:* Make the game a knockout game in which players try to knock each other's balls out of the grid while maintaining possession of their own. Note: You may wish to have them perform a skills task before re-entering such as 10 toe touches or juggling 5 times. You do not want players sitting out.

2. *Shield Steal* – Half of players in the group have a ball and half do not. If you do not have a ball you need to steal one from someone who does. If ball goes out of bounds, person who touched it last does not get possession. You can teach players the technical points of shielding as a group at start of activity. Show technique with body sideways, arm providing protection, ball on outside foot, knees bent, and turning as defender attacks, using feel to understand where defender is going. Fix technical shielding errors throughout this activity and make sure entire group knows how to properly shield.

3. *Gates Passing* – Same set up as previous game. However, players are now paired up and must successfully pass the ball through the cones to their teammate to earn a point. Again, players try to accumulate as many points as possible in the time allotted. Similar to previous game, have them pass only with their left foot or right foot, or the outside of their foot.

4. *1 vs 1 To Lines* – In a grid 10 x 10 yards, players line up on opposite sides. The first player in each line alternates attacking the player opposite them. When the attacker dribbles over the line they score a goal. If the defender winds the ball he or she can counter attack to the opposite line to also score a goal. The players switch to the opposite line if a goal is scored or the ball goes out of bounds. The coach rotates the lines so all players get to compete against each other. *Version 2:* Make the grid larger and make this a 2 v 2 or a 3 v 3 game.

5. *1 vs 1 To Two Small Goals* – Same grids as above except now there is a three foot goal in the middle of each line. Attackers try to score by passing the ball through the goal. Defenders can counter attack to the opposite goal if they win the ball. Players switch sides after a goal or the ball goes out of bounds. The coach rotates the lines so all players get to compete against each other.

6. *2 vs 2 to Four Cross Goals* – Teams defend one goal and have the opportunity to score on the other three, you must dribble through a goal to score a point. The goals are on the ends of

a large cross in a square grid roughly 10 yd x10 yd. Have one team of 2 on deck, they come on when a team gets scored on twice. Game is continuous, they must run on immediately.

7. *2 vs 2 To Four Small Goals* – In a 15 x 15 yard grid with a small goal in each corner teams of two attack the two opposite goals and defend their two goals. The coach will set up as many grids as needed to accommodate the players. When the ball goes out of bounds it can be passed or dribbled in to play. The teams should be rotated every three minutes until all groups have played against each other. *Version 2: 3 vs 3 in a 20 x 25 yard grid* - Teams should show a triangle shape in attack.

8. *4 vs 4 End zone Game* – Teams comprised of 4-6 players depending on numbers and space. To score you must pass the ball to a teammate into the opponent's end zone (created with discs). The player cannot go into the end zone until after the ball has been passed. Stress recognizing opportunities and timing of passes.

9. *Triangle Goal Game* – Make a triangle with three cones in the center of the field. The sides of the triangle each serve as a goal mouth so teams can shoot at three different goals. Place 2 goalies in the triangle and the 2 goalies must protect the three goal mouths. Two even teams play a normal soccer game, except they both can score on any of the three faces of the triangle for a point. The game is continuous and if a goalie catches the ball he just throws it out so the game continues. *Version 2: Use two balls at the same time.*

10. *4 vs 4 to Four Small Goals* – In a 30 x 35 yard grid, the same rules as 3 vs 3, but now players must show a diamond shape in attack.

**Reminders:**

Include age appropriate stretching and warm-ups.

Every practice should have a scrimmage.

Practice twice a week, 60-90 minutes

# U70 Combination Play

**OBJECTIVE:** Improve passing technique. Introduce and train combination play (*take-over and wall-pass*)  
Recognize the correct timing and opportunity to pass.

## When do players perform a wall-pass?

- When the 1st defender is approaching quickly & aggressively or when the 1st defender is undecided and is standing still.
- Supporting players must recognize this to provide the correct timing, angle and distance of support.
- Supporting players should one-touch the ball back to the 1st attacker. The 1st attacker must explode into the space behind the 1st defender to receive the return pass.

## When do players perform a take-over?

- The second attacker runs by the first, close in the opposite direction
- The first attacker protects the ball by keeping it on the far side of his or her body from the defender.
- If the defender stays in position to block the path to goal, the first attacker calls the second attacker's name and lets the ball roll to him or her (neither passing it nor stopping it). The second attacker takes the ball away with the same foot as that used by the first attacker where he or she last touched the ball (right foot to right foot, left to left!).
- If the defender slows down to "pick-up" the second attacker, the first attacker can call his or her own name and continue to dribble.

## Some general points:

- Wall-passes and Takeovers are most effective in the attacking half of the field
- Attackers should try to increase the momentum and the speed of the attack. A delay or slowing down favors the defense.

- 1) Colors-Warm Up (15 minutes)—Half of the players in red pennies, half in blue. Ball can never stop, players can never stop moving, and ball cannot leave area of play. **Pass and move variations:** 1-pass and move by passing to anyone, 2-pass and move by only passing to same team, 3-execute wall passes, 4-execute takeovers.

## Coaching Points:

- Stress correct passing and receiving techniques.
- Stress wall-pass and take-over technique and visual cues listed above.

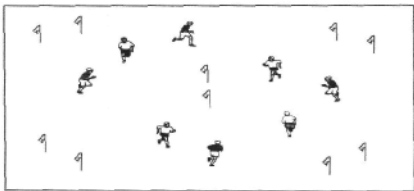
2) **Four goal game (10 minutes)**---In a grid 20x30 yards with four goals measuring 3 feet across in each corner, two teams of three attack two goals and defend two goals. Coach within the game, and work on team shape, specifically stretch, width on attack, and compactness on defense. *Variation:* To encourage combination play: the attacking team will receive 5 points if they combine with a wall pass or takeover before they score. Otherwise, they receive 1 point for scoring. *Recommendation:* Add a "plus" player who always plays for the attacking team if they cannot keep possession long enough to create a combination.



**Coaching Points:**

- Stress recognizing opportunities
- Timing of passes
- Playing away from pressure by changing the point of attack
- Efficiency of touches

3) **5 Goal Game (10 minutes)**---4v4 in 25x30 yard grid. Five 2-yard goals are spread out throughout the grid. The teams score by passing through any of the goals to a teammate. The attacking team must combine with a wall pass or a take-over before they can score. First team to 10 points wins.



**Coaching Points:**

**Kicker**

- Players need to be able to see where the open goals are

**Receiver**

- Receive with a "picture" of what is around them.

4) **5 vs. 5 + GK's Game (30 Minutes)**

**Coaching Points:**

- Stress correct passing and receiving techniques.
- Stress wall-pass and take-over technique and visual cues listed above.

5) **Cool Down (10 minutes)** – juggling, in groups of four, first group that juggles the ball 20 times without the ball touching the ground is the winner. . Statically stretch the large muscle groups

# U10 Combination play

**OBJECTIVE:** Improve passing technique. Introduce and train combination plays (double pass and overlap/run around). Recognize the visual cues, correct timing and options to combine.

## The double-pass combination.

- A double pass is an UP BACK and THROUGH ball.
- Player B (back to opponent's goal) checks on an angle to Player A (facing opponent's goal); this is the visual cue that the double-pass is ON.
- Player A passes the ball to the feet of Player B;
- Player B one-touches it back to Player A and spins past the defender into the space behind the defender created by his original checking run;
- Player A one-touches the ball into the space, ahead of and leading Player B.
- Players perform this combination when one Player (Player B) is tightly marked from behind and is trying to make space live (open) behind the defender.

## The overlap/run-around combination.

- The first attacker dribbles the ball on an inward angle directly at the 1<sup>st</sup> defender and in the direction of his 2<sup>nd</sup> attacker (supporting attacker); this is a visual cue to the 2<sup>nd</sup> attacker to run around behind the 1st attacker into the space being created by the 1st attacker's dribbling action.
- If the defender stays in position to block the first attacker's path to the goal, the ball can be played into the space, created by the 1<sup>st</sup> attacker's dribbling action, to the overlapping player.

### Some general points:

- Double pass and overlap are most effective in the attacking half of the field
  - Attackers should try to increase the momentum and the speed of the attack. A delay or slowing down favors the defense.
- 1) **Colors-Warm Up (15 minutes)**---Half of the players in red pennies, half in blue. Teams playing together in the same space combine passing. Ball can never stop, players can never stop moving, and ball cannot leave area of play. Use entire space, half with balls and split groups into two with pennies. Pass and move variations: 1-pass and move by passing to anyone, 2-pass and move by only passing to same team, 3-pass and move practicing the double pass combination, 4-pass and move practicing the overlap combination.

### Coaching Points:

- Stress passing and receiving techniques...use of the inside and outside of the foot, and the toe when passing
- Reinforce the double pass and over-lap coaching points
- Coach non-verbal cues...angle and timing of runs with and without the ball
- Coach verbal cues..."Hold!"

# U10 Defending (Pressure)

**OBJECTIVE:** This session is designed to teach players the technical points of pressuring the ball. The 1<sup>st</sup> defender's speed of approach, body shape and tackling technique.

1.) **Defensive Stance Warm-up (5-7 minutes):** In pairs passing about 10-15 yds away. When coach signals one player stops ball with the sole of their foot, the other player approaches to defend. Then players back up and passing resumes. *Variation 2:* After a few passes, one of the players lets the ball go through their legs, the other player approaches to defend and 'force' the player in the direction they are facing

## Coaching Points:

- Angle of approach – We want to direct the player one way on the field
- Speed of approach – Approach fast arrive slow
- Body Shape- knees bent, on the balls of their feet
- Mobility – able to make a quick change or adjustment

**Mistakes to watch for:** (these are common mistakes that we want to watch for and correct.)

- Planting their feet once they get to defender
- Sprinting straight at the attacker (diving in)
- Standing straight up

2.) **1v1 to two small goals: (15 minutes):** Set up a multiple 15yd x 10yd grids with small goals at each end. Play multiple 1v1 games for 45-60 seconds per game. Rotate players from field to field.

## Coaching Points:

- Same as above
- Reading the attackers body language- try to anticipate their next move
- Deciding how to win possession of the ball...block tackle or toe poke (see coaching points below)

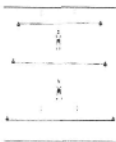
## Coaching Points: (Block Tackle)

- Attack the player fast, closing the distance between yourself and the ball as fast as possible
- Position your feet in a staggered stance, one foot slightly further than the other.
- Your knees should be slightly bent, allowing you to quickly extend your feet either way, in case the attacker tries to dribble past you.
- Extend your arms sideways, to gain some balance and always stay on the balls of your feet, so you can block the ball with either foot
- When you decide it's time to move in for the block, keep your body low and drag the inside of your tackling foot through the ball. It's important that the ankle of your tackling foot is locked and your non-kicking foot is planted firmly near the ball. Otherwise you risk injuring yourself.

## Coaching Points: (Poke Tackle)

- Attack the player fast, closing the distance between yourself and the ball as fast as possible
- Position your feet in a staggered stance, one foot slightly further than the other.
- Your knees should be slightly bent
- If you get close to the attacker and there is an opening to poke the ball away with your toe, do so quickly!

**Visual Cues to Tackle:** opponent has their head down; just as the ball leaves the foot on the dribble; the ball gets stuck under the opponent; the opponent touches the ball too hard and loses control.





# Defending - Pressure/Cover

**OBJECTIVE:** This session is designed to teach the defenders closest to the ball when, where and how to win the ball back for their team. In particular, we will discuss the roles and responsibilities of the pressuring defender (1<sup>st</sup> defender) and the covering defender (2<sup>nd</sup> defender).

**1) Pressure-Cover Warm-up (5-7 minutes):** 3 Players per ball in open space. Player A and Player B, about 8-10 yards apart, pass the ball back and forth. Player C is located about 10-15 yards away from Players A & B. After 3-4 passes between Players A & B, Player A passes the ball to Player C. While the ball is traveling, Player B approaches Player C to apply pressure to the ball; at the same time, Player A provides appropriate cover to Player B (positions herself behind and at an angle to Player B). Player C attempts to split Players A & B with a 1 touch pass. Repeat many times, changing the roles of the 3 players.

## Coaching Points (1<sup>st</sup> Defender):

- Angle of approach – We want to direct the player one way on the field, take away option of advancing forward.
- Speed of approach – Approach fast...arrive slow
- Body Shape- knees bent, on the balls of their feet, one foot slightly angled in front of the other foot
- Decision to delay opponent or to tackle the opponent to win possession of the ball; if 1<sup>st</sup> defender does not have good cover, delaying the opponent is a good decision; if the 1<sup>st</sup> defender has good cover, then the decision to tackle with the toe-poke or block tackle is appropriate just as the ball comes off the foot of the dribbler

## Coaching Points (2<sup>nd</sup> Defender):

- Angle and distance of cover; speed to cover – Stay connected to first defender
- Cover dangerous space between 1<sup>st</sup> defender and you; cannot allow a penetrating pass to split you and the 1<sup>st</sup> defender!
- Be positioned so that, if the 1<sup>st</sup> defender gets beat with the dribble, you can become the 1<sup>st</sup> defender immediately.
- Be ready...see the ball, keep feet moving

**Mistakes to watch for (1<sup>st</sup> defender):** *(these are common mistakes that we want to watch for and correct.)*

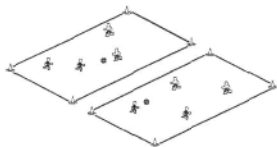
- Planting their feet once they get to the defender
- Sprinting straight at the attacker (diving in)
- Standing straight up

**Mistakes to watch for (2<sup>nd</sup> defender):**

- Running right behind the 1<sup>st</sup> defender
- Running next to the 1<sup>st</sup> defender and creating a flat shape

## **2) 2v2 to lines (20 minutes):**

Create multiple fields that are 20yds x 15yds with 4 cones outlining the field (enough so all players are playing); organize all of the players into teams of 2. Each team will attack the end line opposite them and defend the end line behind them. Players must dribble over the opposite end line to score. Play a tournament format where teams play 2 minute games and then rotate to another field. Scoring goes as follows: 3 pts for the win, 1 pt for the tie, 0 for a loss and, if they have a shut-out, they get 2 bonus pts.



**Coaching Points:**

- Same as above

**Mistakes to watch for:**

Players hanging back and not pressuring the ball as a team when they become defenders

**3) 3v3 Four Goal game (20 minutes):**

In a grid 20x30 yards with four goals measuring 3 feet across in each corner, play 3v3. Each team attacks the 2 goals opposite them and defends the 2 goals behind them. Some questions to ask the players: "can you channel the ball into certain areas of the field to gain possession?" "Can you apply enough pressure on the ball to limit the first attacker's options and make the play predictable?" *Version 2:* If the players are scoring very quickly, change the game so that the attacking team has to score by dribbling through one of the goals; this will allow the defending team more time to get organized.



**Coaching Points:**

- 2<sup>nd</sup> defender must recognize their responsibility to cover the 1<sup>st</sup> defender as the ball is traveling to the opponent (1<sup>st</sup> attacker).

**4) 6v6 Game (15 minutes):**

Unrestricted play. While the game is going on, praise successful defending and connection by the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> defenders.

**COOL- DOWN (10 minutes):** Juggling in 2's and 3's only using their feet or head. Static stretching of the major muscle groups.

# Dribbling Session (penetration)

**Objectives:** To improve the technique of dribbling, help with confidence to take players on and allowing players to recognize when to take players on versus using other options (passing, shooting, shielding).

## **1) Technical Box (Warm-up - 15-20 minutes including dynamic stretching):**

Everyone with a ball, use inside, outside, and sole of the foot. Have players dribble with speed (outside of foot), change direction, and perform moves. Coach calls out moves or changes in direction and sets the pace as the manipulator of the session; players carry the ball towards someone and try a move. *Version 2:* As players get comfortable, coach can walk around and put pressure on players as they are performing dribbling tasks. This adds fun and interaction. *Version 3:* Make the game a knockout game in which players try to knock each other's balls out of the grid while maintaining possession of their own. Note: You may wish to have them perform a skills task before re-entering such as 10 toe touches or juggling 5 times. You do not want players sitting out.

### **Coaching Points:**

- Keep ball within 1 giant step and maintain balance at all times, use arms to help maintain balance
- Try to keep your head up (once comfortable with ball at feet)
- Keep both knees bent and lean over the ball, do not stand upright with ball
- Slow down to change direction
- After making a move, dribbling into an open space or changing direction, you need a burst of speed
- Stress movement of body and burst of speed when doing moves
- Use outside of foot or laces when dribbling for speed
- Use all parts of your feet
- Try new things and be creative

## **2) 1v1 to lines (15 minutes):**

In a 15x10 yard grid, two players play 1v1 and try to score by beating the defender and dribbling over the line opposite them. They play toward the ten-yard lines and use their favorite feints. When the ball goes out of bounds it is dribbled in. Switch partners between grids every 2-3 minutes. Keep score.

### **Coaching Points:**

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1
- When taking on the defender the attacker will have bent knees, the ball close to his or her dribbling foot and be balanced
- He or she will execute a feint or combination of feints to unbalance the defender and dribble behind him or her
- Players should look to attack the defenders front foot to off balance the defender
- Players who are dribbling past an opponent should dribble past them with the foot furthest from the defender

### 3) 2v2 to Four Cross Goals (15-20 minutes):

Teams defend one goal and have the opportunity to score on the other three goals; you must dribble through a goal to score a point. The goals are on the ends of a large cross in a square grid roughly 10yd X 10yd. Have one team of 2 on deck; they come on when a team gets scored on twice. Game is continuous, they must run on immediately.

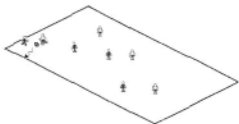


#### Coaching Points:

- Help players to recognize where the open space is and when to attack it on the dribble
- Assist players in recognizing when to dribble at speed (there is open space ahead), and when to slow down (they need to make decisions, combine with 2<sup>nd</sup> attacker, or are getting closer to opponents)
- The first attacker (player with the ball) needs to make a decision on whether to combine with the second attacker or attack the space themselves
- This decision is based on where the first defender is in relation to the field, the goal, the first attacker, and the second attacker

### 4) 4v4 to lines (15-20 minutes):

In a 25x30 yard grid, two teams play to the opposite 30 yard lines. They score by dribbling the ball over end-line in control. When the ball goes out of bounds it can be passed or dribbled in to play.



#### Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in #1, #2 and #3
- Stress attacking the open space on the dribble and recognition of one versus one opportunities.

### 5) 6v6 scrimmage (25-30 minutes):

Depending upon numbers, space will change and numbers will change. Ideally, finish with the number you normally play with in games. Play a regular game with goalkeepers.

#### Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in #3
- Highlight the technique of dribbling
- Reinforce positive decision making opportunities (recognizing opportunities to take players on, how they attack –get in and behind for a shot / attack endline and get cross off, etc.).

### 6) Cool-down (5-10 minutes):

Groups of 5 heading challenge. One player in the middle, four players circle around them. Player in the middle tosses ball to player on the outside who heads in back to player in the middle. Player in the middle then heads to next player on the outside, who then heads it back to player in the middle and so on. Give player in the middle multiple chances to get the ball all the way around the circle, and then switch up players to ensure everyone gets a chance to be the middle player.

# U10 Dribbling

**OBJECTIVE:** To improve dribbling and shielding technique and inspire the confidence in our players to keep the ball (possess the ball) under pressure with the intention to delay play until help arrives, beat an opponent or simply keep possession for your team.

**1) Free Dribble (10 minutes):** Everyone with a ball, use inside, outside, and sole of the foot. Have players dribble with speed (outside of foot), change direction, and perform moves. Coach calls out moves or changes in direction and sets the pace as the manipulator of the session; kids dribble the ball towards someone and try a move. **Version 2:** As players get comfortable, coach can walk around and put pressure on players as they are performing dribbling tasks. This adds fun and interaction. **Version 3:** Make the game a knockout game in which players try to knock each other's soccer balls out of the grid while maintaining possession of their own. **Note:** You may wish to have them perform a skills task before re-entering such as 10 sole of the foot touches or juggling 5 times. You do not want players sitting out.

## Coaching Points:

- Bend your knees and get down low
- Use your arms to keep balance
- Keep the ball close using the inside, outside and sole of the foot
- Keep your head up

**2) Shield-Steal (10 minutes):** use entire space, half of players in the group have a ball and half do not. If you do not have a ball you need to steal one from someone who does. If the ball goes out of bounds, the person who touched it last LOSES possession. When the coach yells freeze, those who have possession of a ball receive a point. Play multiple games. Go over technical points as a group and at the start of the activity, show the shielding technique. Fix technical shielding errors throughout this activity and make sure entire group knows how to properly shield. **Version 2:** make the activity competitive by creating two teams; the team who has possession of the most soccer balls at the end of time is the winner.

## Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points from the Free dribble activity
- Survey the area
- Recognize when and were to change direction
- Body sideways between defender and the ball when shielding
- Arm providing protection when shielding
- Ball on outside foot when shielding
- Spin/turn as defender attacks when shielding
- Hands become your eyes; use them to feel for defender

3) **5 Goal Game (15 minutes):** 4v4+2 or 5v5+2 in 35x40 yard grid. Five 2-yard goals are spread out throughout the grid. The 2 neutral players are always on the attacking team. Each team can score by dribbling through any of the 5 goals. The first team to 10 points wins. Players need to be able to see where the open goals are, and receive the ball with a "picture" of what is around them.

**Coaching Points:**

- Dribbling to keep the ball "Shielding"
- Dribbling to beat an opponent "Inviting a tackle, change of speed, change of direction, feints"
- When to dribble to break pressure: This is used most commonly by midfielders and by forwards. It involves simply getting beside the pressuring defender for a split second. Once beside a defender, sudden, explosive changes in pace or direction and feints are the most common means of breaking pressure.
- Where to dribble to gain space "With any sort of space ahead of him, an attacker will run with the ball forward to gain territory"
- Recognizing what goal is open

4) **4v4 or 5v5 to Four Goals (15 minutes):** Teams defend one goal and have the opportunity to score on the other three, you must dribble through a goal to score a point. The goals are on the ends of a large cross in a square grid roughly 25yd X 25yds. Have one team of 4 or 5 on deck, they come on when a team gets scored on twice. Game is continuous, they must run on immediately. Look for open space and attack it with speed.

**Coaching Points:** Reinforce coaching points covered in previous activities.

5) **6 vs. 6 (includes GK's) Game (25 minutes)**

**Coaching Points:**

- Stress dribbling & shielding technique

6) **Cool Down (10 minutes)** – Controlled juggling (thigh-thigh-foot-foot). Statically stretch the large muscle groups.

# Goalkeeping (body position, footwork, catching)

**Objectives:** To help goalkeepers work on and improve the technical aspects of proper footwork, body position and handling the ball, through team training.

## **1) Dribbling / Hands Warm-Up (15 to 20 minutes):**

One ball per player. All players, including goalkeepers, freely dribble with inside and outside of their feet. Change speed & direction, and perform moves. *Version 2:* The GK's in the group get rid of their soccer balls. The field players call out their names and pass the ball towards them so that the goalkeepers can begin to field the soccer balls with their hands (on the ground first, then change to service in air).

### **Coaching Points:**

- Make sure when catching ball, the hands always lead, not the knees.
- Prior to catching the ball, get into a "Gorilla" shape...shoulders rounded, knees bent, feet square to body, arms out to sides and slightly forward with elbows slightly bent, palms facing forward.
- Always be on balls of the feet, moving while ball is moving, ready to come out to meet the ball or cut down the angle.
- Getting set when shooter plants non-kicking foot to shoot.
- "W" hand position for chest high and overhead balls. The "W" is formed by the thumbs and index fingers.
- Both palms of the hands must always be turned outwards to the ball. This means the body position will have to be adjusted to ensure that both palms get behind the ball. The object is to present the maximum amount of palm and fingers to the ball.
- Hands leading (bent elbows, giving a strong, shock-absorbing effect), shoulders square to the ball.
- Hands together, fingers pointed towards ground for low balls...shovel ball into body (scooping low and into body).

## **2) Shooting Warm – Up (15 to 20 minutes):**

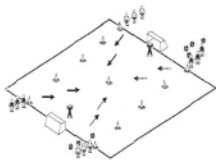
Set up two goals about 40 yards apart and the width of the penalty area, with GK's in each and have players partner up with a ball. Partners dribble and pass together around the area, call out the GK's name and then shoot on net (to warm them up). *Version 2:* Player with ball can play ball outside the area (into the flanks) to their partner to get a cross off. If GK makes save, can quickly throw ball out to player who crossed it. *Version 3:* Partners now try and dribble at GK with partner and try to score.

### **Coaching Points:**

- Coach should be behind goalkeeper (if there is an assistant coach, he can coach another goalkeeper in the other goal) reinforcing coaching points listed in Activity #1

## 2) Shooting Stars (15-20 minutes):

Two goals set about 2 penalty boxes apart with cones separating field into two. Split team into two teams, yellow and blue. Blue has half of their team, with soccer balls, at one side of one goal, and the other half of their team at the other goal (on the opposite side), without soccer balls. Yellow will set up the same way. A blue player in the group with the soccer balls passes across to a blue player opposite them. The blue player receiving the pass tries to run onto it, receive it before the half way mark, and then has 1-2 touches to get a shot off by the halfway mark. Yellow is doing the same task at the same time. Have them switch sides; choose which foot they pass it to and which foot shooter shoots with. *Version 2:* Make it competitive and first team to 10 goals win.



### Coaching Points:

- Coach should be behind goalkeeper (if there is an assistant coach to help, he can work with the goalkeeper in the other goal) reinforcing coaching points listed in Activity #1.

## 3) GK / Team Challenge (15 to 20 minutes):

Split teams into two (blue and yellow). Blue group is at one goal (on both sides of goal) and yellow is at the opposite goal (on both sides of goal). Have a server on the side with all of the soccer balls. Server calls out number of players they want from each team and plays ball into area (number can vary-2/3/4). Players try to score and must keep track of their goals. First team to 10 goals wins. Server can take a shot on a goalkeeper as well to keep them on their toes.



### Coaching Points:

- Coach should again position themselves behind goalkeeper and reinforce coaching points listed in Activity #1

## 5) 6v6 Scrimmage (25-30 minutes):

Depending upon numbers, space will change and numbers may change. Ideally, finish with the number you normally play with in games. Play a regular game with goalkeepers.

### Coaching Points:

- Reinforce positive technical goalkeeping points (on balls of their feet, hands out in front, attack the ball, "W" hand position, etc.).

## 5) Cool-down (10 minutes):

Individual juggling; have them compete to see who gets the most in a 2 minute period.



# Goalkeeping (Throwing-bowl, side arm, round house, baseball)

**Objectives:** To help goalkeepers work on and improve the technical aspects of throwing the soccer ball and to know what type of throw is appropriate in different situations.

## **1) Passing / Throwing Warm-Up (15 to 20 minutes):**

Half of group with soccer balls and half of group without. All players and goalkeepers passing and moving around area. As begin to loosen up, increase the distance players are passing and moving. *Version 2:* Goalkeepers in group now use hands to receive ball and distribute out to players by 1-bowl throw / 2-side-arm throw / 3-round house throw / 4-baseball throw.

## **Coaching Points:**

**Bowl:**

- Ball in dominant throwing hand ("cupped")
- Step forward with one foot, knee bent and put opposite foot behind with knee bent-to get low
- Release ball low and follow through at target
- Most accuracy and least distance

**Side Arm:**

- Arm is extended back slightly behind the body just below shoulder level (note: not straight to the side)
- The ball is delivered with a bit of a slinging, sweeping motion
- Because the arm position is sideways, the best way to put backspin on this throw is by passing the palm of the hand under the ball when releasing it
- Let the ball roll off the middle and index finger and the thumb
- Keep the fingers over the top of the ball so it stays low
- Medium accuracy and distance

**Round House:**

- Ball in dominant throwing hand ("cupped")
- Step forward with one foot and hand without ball facing target, have other hand with ball straight back behind you
- Bring hand without ball down and hand with ball up over (keep hand on top and elbow locked), with shoulder going forward and release ball as hand comes up over shoulder
- Can release ball high (early) or low (late) depending upon point of release and body position (high with knees bent or low with knees bent)
- Least accurate and most distance

**Baseball:**

- Ball starts in the palm of the hand, beside the head, and is thrown straight forward as the keeper steps into the throw
- Some backspin on the ball will help it settle quicker and make it easier to receive
- Keeper can let the ball roll off their fingertips slightly at the end of their release
- Make sure the fingers are slightly over the top of the ball to keep it level
- Medium accuracy and distance

## **2) GK Wars / Team Possession (15 to 20 minutes):**

GK's are playing *GK Wars*, while rest of team is playing a *5v5 possession game* on other side of field.

**5v5 Team Possession:** 4 consecutive passes equals a point. First team to 10 points wins. *Version 2:* Limit touches (3/2/1), then go back to unrestricted.

**GK Wars:** In an area 20-30 yds long and 20-25 yds wide (depending upon ability level of GK's-you will need to adjust) with two goals on either end and a dividing line in between the distance, GK 1 can shoot or throw ball and try to get into GK 2's goal. GK 2 makes the save and can shoot or throw ball into GK 1's goal. GK's cannot go over dividing line. The first GK to score 10 goals wins.

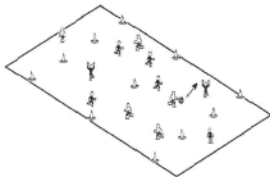


**Coaching Points:**

- Reinforce coaching points listed in Activity #1

**3) Team/GK to Targets (15 to 20 minutes):**

Have a field set up that is 50 yd long x 40 yd wide with two 5 yd x 40 yd zones on either end. Split group into two teams, blue and yellow. Blue needs 4 players on the field, one target player in one zone and one GK who stays on their defensive side of the field. Yellow team does the same, just going in the opposite direction. Blue field players are trying to keep possession and get the ball to their blue target in the zone for 1 point (GK can only use their feet if ball is passed to them on the ground) AND blue field players can chip the ball into their GK's hand, who then can throw the ball (from their own defensive half) into the blue target for 3 points. Yellow team does the same, just going the opposite direction. Once the ball gets to the target and 1 or 3 points is scored, ball starts with other team.

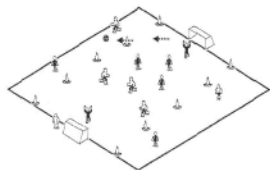


**Coaching Points:**

- Reinforce coaching points listed in Activity #1

**4) Flank Distribution (15 to 20 minutes):**

Set up two goals about 50 yards apart and the width of the field. Mark out the left and right flanks with cones using the width of the penalty area for the size. Goalkeepers should be in goals. Play 5 blue vs 5 yellow (3 blue and 3 yellow on the inside and each flank should have a blue and a yellow player in it). Ball will start with the blue GK, who throws it out to one of the blue flank players. Blue flank player dribbles down, unopposed, gets cross off and three blue in the middle try to score. NOTE: Yellow and Blue in middle are not defending against each other in the first version of the activity. Then Yellow GK gets ball, distributes to one of yellow flank players, who gets cross off for teammates to score, then cycle begins again. Be sure GK's alternate which side they distribute to. *Version 2:* Players in the middle now defend against each other. *Version 3:* Players on flank now defend against each other as well. *Version 4:* Take out flanks and play regular game with only stipulation when the ball goes out of bounds, it is always distributed from the GK's hands.



**Coaching Points:**

- Coach should be behind goalkeeper (If there is an assistant coach, she can work with the goalkeeper in the other goal) reinforcing coaching points listed in Activity #1.

**5) 6v6 Scrimmage (25-30 minutes):**

Depending upon numbers, space will change and numbers may change. Ideally, finish with the number you normally play with in games. Play a regular game with goalkeepers.

**Coaching Points:**

- Reinforce positive goalkeeping throwing technique as well as decision making...what type of throw and when.

**6) Cool-down (10 minutes):**

Groups of 3. One player is the server and has the ball in their hands and the other two are ready to juggle. Server says 2 and 2 which means the server tosses the ball to the first player who has to juggle the ball two times before getting it to the next player who has to juggle the ball twice and get it back to the server (ball should not touch the ground). Server can change numbers of juggles to 1 and 1, 1 and 5, 3 and 4, 4 and 2, etc.

# Goalkeeping - Diving

**OBJECTIVE:** The objective of this training session is to teach goalkeepers the correct diving technique and to provide them with many opportunities to practice.

1) **Warm-up (20 minutes):** *(In the warm-up we are going to go over diving technique in detail. All of the activities will focus on the mechanics of diving properly).*

## a. Basic Diving:

Each player is seated on the ground, with knees bent. Each player places a ball about 2 steps away to the right or left, at a 45 degree angle and in front of them. The keeper must roll down their side reaching out to make the save. Eyes on the ball, one hand on top of the ball and one hand behind the ball, with elbows slightly bent and opposite leg up and bent. As the keeper is rolling towards the ball, they must attempt to force their body in a forward angle, "attacking" the ball and make the save. Finally, the keeper must kick out, with the leg that is up in the air, into a sitting position.

**Version 2:** Two (2) players per ball. One player (keeper) is seated on the ground with knees bent. The other player (the server) is standing with the ball in their hands facing the keeper about 3-5 steps away. The server will roll the ball at a 45 degree angle, slightly in front of the keeper, alternating to the left side and to the right side. Using the technique described above, the keeper will attempt to make the save, kick out and throw the ball back to the server.

## b. Standing Dive:

Each player is standing in ready position...on balls of feet, knees comfortably bent, arms and hands out in front, with elbows bent and palms up. Each player places a ball about 4-5 steps away to the right or left, at a 45 degree angle and in front of them. The keeper must take a large power step towards the ball and collapse in the direction of the ball, rolling down their side and reaching out to make the save. Eyes on the ball, one hand on top of the ball and one hand behind the ball, with elbows slightly bent and opposite leg up and bent. As the keeper is rolling towards the ball, they must attempt to force their body in a forward angle, "attacking" the ball and make the save. Finally, the keeper must kick out, with the leg that is up in the air and get to a standing position.

**Version 2:** Two (2) players per ball. One player (keeper) is standing in ready position...on balls of feet, knees comfortably bent, arms and hands out in front, with elbows bent and palms up. The other player (the server) is standing with the ball in their hands facing the keeper about 5 steps away. The server will roll the ball at a 45 degree angle, slightly in front of the keeper, alternating to the left side and to the right side. Using the technique described above, the keeper will attempt to make the save, kick out, stand up and throw the ball back to the server.

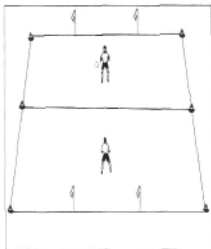
## Coaching Points:

- Use Good footwork (balls of feet) to get in position for the *Dive*
- As the GK dives for the ball, they should step into the dive, always leading and attacking the ball with the hands
- Catch the ball in the "W" grip with one hand on top and one hand behind the ball.
- Land on their side (hip and shoulder), with their opposite knee driving across their body for extra boost and protection.

**Mistakes to watch for:** *(these are common mistakes that we want to watch for and correct.)*

- Diving backwards
- Using hands to get up and letting go of the ball
- Turning on to stomach or back after making the save
- Weak power step, not driving towards the ball (resulting in catching the ball in front of their face)

**2) GK Tennis (20 minutes)** - In a 15 x 30 yard grid, with goals centrally located on each endline. One goalkeeper positioned in each half, defending the goal behind them. Each goalkeeper tries to score in their opponent's goal, from their own half, by throwing the ball (ball MUST bounce on the opponent's side for goal to count).



**3) Four (4) Corner Shooting (20 minutes)**

On a field 20 yards wide x 25 yards long, position two goals at each end. Split group into two teams (red and blue). Position half of the red team in a line behind one corner of the field and the other half of the red team in a line behind the other corner of the field, at the same end. Organize the blue team in the same manner at the other end of the field. Select a goalkeeper for each goal and rotate that player every 5 minutes. The assistant coach is positioned at the midfield line, outside the field, with all the soccer balls. When the assistant coach kicks a ball into the field, the first person in each of the four (4) corner lines enters the field to play. The game becomes a 2v2 + keepers activity. Play continues until the ball goes out of play or a goal is scored. When this happens, the players on the field quickly get back into their original lines, keepers stay on, and the assistant coach kicks the next ball in for the next 4 players. The assistant coach should play the ball toward one of the corner lines (risk/safety management). The head coach should be positioned behind one of the goals in an effort to help/coach the goalkeeper.



**4) 6v6 Game (20 minutes):**

On a 60yds x 40yd field 2 Teams play a game (5 players and a GK). You will score the game normally. You can rotate the keepers through this game.

**COOL-DOWN (10 minutes):** Juggling in 2's and 3's. Static stretching of the major muscle groups.

# Goalkeeping (Punt, Half-volley)

**OBJECTIVE:** The objective of this training session is to help goalkeepers improve their kicking technique (the punt and the half-volley).

## Punt:

**Coaching Points:** *(A punt is usually the kick with the greatest distance; it has a high trajectory and hang time)*

- Start with the ball in both hands, (starting with both hands will allow for more consistency in the drop). Take a short run up (about 2-3 steps) at a slight angle to the kicking direction, (this gets the hip more involved and generates more power.) The plant foot should point towards the target. Drop the ball and kick it upwards with the instep of the foot; follow through and land on the kicking foot. (Do not toss the ball upwards)
- The kicking foot should be straight, directly on line with the target, and should not swing around the body.

## Half-volley or Drop-Kick:

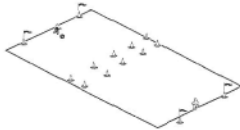
**Coaching Points:** *(A half-volley or drop kick, where the ball hits the ground before being contacted by the foot, gives a lower trajectory ball and the ability to go further distance).*

- The technique is very much the same as a punt, but the ball is dropped to the ground before it is kicked. The kick is timed so the instep of the foot strikes the ball just after it bounces on the ground.
- The drop kick has a distinctive "ba-boom" sound to it. The "ba" is the ball hitting the ground; the "boom" is the foot striking the ball a fraction of a second later.

1) **Warm-up (20 minutes):** In the warm-up we will have all of the players in pairs with 1 ball per pair. Have them punt and half-volley the ball back and forth to each other (about 10 yds apart). After the first 7 minutes, when their legs are warmed-up, increase the distance between them to 15-20 yds.

**\*\*\* in activities #2 and #3 which follow, set up 4 or 5 fields so that all of the players are playing at the same time. Then, after 4-5 minutes, they can switch and play someone else. Create a tournament atmosphere\*\*\***

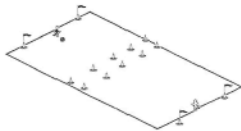
2) **GK Tennis (30 minutes):** Set up an area 20 yds wide x 30 yds long with a large goal on each end. Place an alley-way made from cones which is a dividing line in the middle. Each GK tries to score in the opposite goal by throwing, punting, drop-kicking or striking the ball from the ground. The ball must still bounce in the other players  $\frac{1}{2}$  for the goal to count.



## Coaching Points:

- Same as above
- Watch for small technical problems and fix during this activity. This will help with accuracy.

**3) Goalkeeper Wars (30 minutes):** In an area 36 yds long x 44yds wide with a regulation goal centered at each end. Set up an alley-way as in the last activity. Place many soccer balls either in each goal or next to each goal. Goalkeeper A competes against Goalkeeper B. Each Goalkeeper defends the goal behind them and tries to score on the goal opposite them without going in or past the central alley-way. They can score with the throw, kicking off the ground, punting the ball or half-volleying the ball. The first GK to score 10 goals wins.



**Coaching Points:**

- Same as above

**4) 6v6 Game (20 minutes):**

On a 60 yd x 40 yd field, 2 teams play a regular game (5 players and a GK). Coach the keeper on their kicking distribution technique.

**COOL- DOWN (10 minutes):** Juggling, (35 juggles) with the feet only and then stretch. Static stretching of the major muscle groups.

# Heading / Volleying

**OBJECTIVE:** This session is designed to teach players the technical points of heading and volleying a ball.

## 1) Warm-up: Dutch Circle (15 minutes):

Half of the players (outsiders) create a circle with a diameter of about 25 yards. The outsiders are equipped with soccer balls in their hands. The other half of the players (insiders) are in the circle and do not have soccer balls. The outsiders must always be alert and on their toes ready to serve a lofted ball, at various heights, to an insider. The insiders move around to different outsiders and:



- head the ball to the hands of the outsider that served the ball to them
- head the ball to the feet of the outsider that served the ball to them
- head the ball over the head of the outsider that served the ball to them
- volley the ball with the inside of the foot to the hands of the outsider
- volley the ball with the laces of the foot to the hands of the outsider

*Change insiders and outsiders every 2-3 minutes.*

### Coaching Points: (Heading)

- Keep eyes open and focused on the ball
- Mouth closed
- Surface of contact should be upper half of forehead
- Strike the ball, do not let the ball strike you
- Strike the ball on the upper half of the ball to drive it down; the middle of the ball to drive it level; the lower half of the ball to drive it up
- Players should tighten neck and torso, arch back and drive the head through the ball for maximum power
- Use arms for balance, protection and to create space

Mistakes to watch for: (these are common mistakes that we want to watch for and correct.)

- Heading the ball with the top of head
- Closing eyes before they head the ball
- Not driving towards the ball (resulting in the ball hitting them)

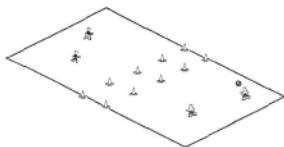
### Coaching Points: (Volleying)

- Keep eyes open and focused on the ball
- Strike the ball, do not let the ball strike you
- Strike the ball on the upper half of the ball to drive it down; the middle of the ball to drive it level; the lower half of the ball to drive it up
- Surface of contact should be in the middle to upper half of the ball
- Players should lock ankle and turn toe up for inside of the foot volley; players should lock ankle and point toe down for instep (laces) volley
- Use arms for balance.



2) **Tennis (20 minutes):** Organize teams of 2, 3 or 4. Set up multiple tennis courts (size depends on the numbers playing). For a doubles game (2v2), set up a grid 30-35 yards long x 15 yards wide. Include a central 3 yard alleyway across the width of the court, made from cones, to represent the net.

**Team A** serves the ball from behind their end line with a volley or half-volley kick to **Team B**. The ball must land in **Team B's** half court to be **GOOD**. However, **Team B** can choose to play the ball before the bounce or after the bounce. Depending on age and ability of the players, the rules can allow 1-2 bounces on a side, with a 3-4 touch limit between teammates (this allows for juggling). Balls can be headed or volleyed to the other **Team's** side.



Points can only be scored by the team that served the ball. If a ball lands in the central alleyway, it is **NO GOOD** (like a tennis ball going into the net). Follow regular tennis rules or adjust accordingly.

3) **Team Handball (20 minutes):** Organize players into 2 teams of 4, 5 or 6. Set up a 35 yard x 50 yard rectangular field with goals centrally located at each end. The 2 teams play this game by tossing the ball (with their hands) to their teammates (similar to basketball). Players can only take a maximum of 3 steps with the ball; then they must pass the ball to a teammate. Goals can only be scored by heading or volleying the ball after it has been thrown by a teammate. If the ball drops on the ground, possession goes to the other team.

4) **6v6 Game (20minutes):** 2 Teams play a regular soccer game. Award 1pt for a goal scored normally; 3points for a goal that is scored as a result of a volley; and 5pts if a goal is scored from a header.

**COOL- DOWN (10 minutes):** Juggling in 2's and 3's only using feet and head. Static stretching of the major muscle groups.

# Heading & Volleying (To Clear)

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**OBJECTIVE:** To help our players recognize when to clear the ball. To help our players improve in the techniques of heading and volleying when clearing the ball.

## **1) Warm-up - Heading Progression (10-15 minutes):**

a) **Seated**--2 players per ball positioned 1-2 feet apart, facing each other. One player sits on the ground with legs out in front and their partner gently serves the ball toward their head. The seated player must head the ball back to their partner. The purpose for this activity is to make sure that the players are using the proper part of their head, tightening their necks and striking through the ball.

b) **Knees**--One partner on knees. When the ball is served, player snaps torso and neck forward to head ball back to their partner.

c) **Standing**--Standing on balls of feet with one foot forward, partner heads ball back to server with power and accuracy.

*Note: This progression can be done in 10-15 minutes once players become familiar with it. It is a quick and effective way to make sure our players master heading.*

## **Coaching Points: (Heading)**

- Keep eyes open and focused on the ball
- Mouth closed
- Surface of contact should be the upper part of the forehead
- Strike the ball on the middle to lower half of the ball
- Players should arch their backs, tighten their necks and snap head and torso through ball for maximum power
- Use arms for balance, protection and to create space

**Mistakes to watch for:** (these are common mistakes that we want to watch for and correct.)

- Heading the ball with the top of head
- Closing their eyes before they head the ball
- Not driving towards the ball (resulting in the ball hitting them in their face)

## **2) Dutch Circle (15 minutes):**

Half of the players create a 25-35 yard outer circle and have balls. These players must always be alert and on their toes. The other half of the players are in the middle of this circle and do not have soccer balls. The inner players check to players on the outside who serve an air ball to them. The inside players play the ball back to the player who served it to them with their head or the inside or instep of their foot (volley). They then check to another person on the outside who has a ball, repeat this process for about 2-3 minutes until coach switches players from outside to inside.



**Coaching Points: (Volleying)**

- Keep eyes focused on the ball
- Use the inside of the foot or the instep of the foot to strike up and through the ball
- Strike the ball, do not let the ball strike you
- Surface of contact should be in the middle to lower half of the ball
- Use arms for balance

**3) Channel Game (20 minutes):** The players will split into 2 teams. On either side of the field there will be channels length wise. The players will play a regular game inside the middle of the field. An attacking player can dribble into the channel in order to cross the ball. No defenders may go in the channels to chase him. 2 points will be awarded for a goal by the attacking team. The defending team will get 1 point every time they defend a cross with a header or volley and clear it out of danger. Focus on timing and direction of their clearances.



**4) 6v6 Game (25 minutes):**

2 Teams play a game. 1pt is awarded for a goal. 1 pt is awarded if the defending team clears the ball by heading or volleying it.

**Coaching Points:**

- Same as above
- Keep reminding players to hit the ball on the bottom 1/2 to clear it up and away.

**COOL-DOWN (10 minutes):** Juggling in 2's and 3's only using their feet or head. Static stretching of the major muscle groups.

# U10 Passing (Short)

**OBJECTIVE:** Improve passing technique with the inside and outside of their feet.  
Recognize the correct timing and opportunity to pass.

1) **Gates Passing (10 Minutes)**--- Randomly place many pairs of cones making small goals (1 yard wide) in a large space (30 x 20 yards). Players are paired up and must successfully pass the ball through the cones to their teammate to earn a point. Again, players try to accumulate as many points as possible in the time allotted. Have them pass only with their left foot or right foot, or the outside of their foot.

**Coaching Points:**

**Kicker**

- Stress passing techniques
- Point your toe side-ways and with up locked ankle
- Strike the middle of the ball
- Follow thru to partner
- Knees bent
- Head down...eyes on ball at moment of contact
- Placement foot pointed to target and parallel to ball; pay attention to proper weight and angle

**Receiver**

- Support – get to an angle at which passing lane is clear and have your hips open to the playing field
- Communicate...call for the ball
- Head up
- Move toward pass (check to ball)

2) **3 vs. 1 keep away (10 Minutes)**---In a grid 10x15 yards, play 3 vs. 1 continuous keep away. Three attackers combine to keep the ball away from one defender. When the defender wins the ball, he or she immediately combines with the attackers he or she did not win the ball from and the attacker who lost the ball becomes the defender. Balls out of play are dribbled in or passed in. **Version 2:** Add another defender and play 3v2 keep away.

**Coaching Points:**

- Stress coaching points from above
- Read the situation

**Receiver**

- Support – position yourself at an appropriate angle and distance so that you are a good option for the passer

3) **5 Goal Game (10 Minutes)**---4x4 in 25x30 grid. Five 2-yard goals are spread out throughout the grid. The teams score by passing through any of the goals to a teammate. First team to 10 points wins.



**Coaching Points:**

**Kicker**

- Players need to be able to see where the open goals are

**Receiver**

- Receive with a "picture" of what is around them.

4) **4 vs 4 To Four Small Goals (10 Minutes)**---In a 35 X 30 yard grid with a small goal in each corner teams attack the two opposite goals and defend their two goals. The coach will set up as many grids as needed to accommodate the players. When the ball goes out of bounds it can be passed or dribbled in to play. The teams should be rotated every three minutes until all groups have played against each other.

**Coaching Points:**

- Stress recognizing opportunities
- Timing of passes
- Playing away from pressure by changing the point of attack
- Efficiency of touches

5) **5 vs. 5 + GK's Game(30 Minutes)**

**Coaching Points:**

- Stress passing technique
- Stress recognizing opportunities
- Timing of passes
- Playing away from pressure by changing the point of attack
- Efficiency of touches
- Movement of the ball

6) **Cool Down (10 minutes)** – Juggling." in the next two minutes, let's see who can juggle the most touches without letting your ball hit the ground. If hits the ground, start a new count." . Statically stretch the large muscle groups.

# U10 Passing (long)

**OBJECTIVE:** Improve long passing technique (using different techniques).  
Recognize the correct timing and opportunity to pass long versus short.

## Low drive

- Approach the ball from a slight angle.
- Place the non-kicking foot alongside the ball, pointing in the direction of the target.
- Drive diagonally through the ball, kicking the ball with the inside of instep (laces).
- The knee and body are over the ball at the time of contact.
- Follow through low with the kicking foot.

## Lofted pass

- Approach the ball from a slight angle.
- Place the non-kicking foot alongside but towards the back of the ball, pointing in the direction of the target.
- Drive diagonally through underside of the ball using the upper instep above big toe.
- Lean back slightly at the moment of contact to impart loft on the ball.
- Follow through towards target.

## 1) Inter passing in 2's (10 minutes):

Short Passing & moving in 2's (10-15 yards)...insides, outsides and laces/instep

Gradually increase the distance between the 2 players (20-30 yards)...focus on laces/instep

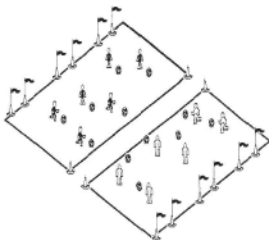
The purpose of this warm-up activity is to clean up the mechanics of passing & receiving, allow lots of repetition and increase the players' technical speed.

## Coaching Points:

- Stress passing techniques
- Survey the playing area at all times so that you can anticipate what to do next with and without the ball.
- Keep body open to as much of the field as possible based on where you are on the field.
- Take first touch toward the target.
- Strike ball with proper weight and proper surface.

## 2) Clean Your Backward (10 minutes)

Break the group into two teams and have each team stay only on their own half of the field. Place a 15 yard buffer zone between halves so that no one can enter or cross. Each player needs a ball. Place three small (3-5yd) goals at the far end of each side of the field. Have both teams shoot balls at the other team's goals in an attempt to score through any one of the small goals (below knee height). Players cannot cross the buffer zone or go into the other half. Balls get recycled naturally in the game. This is a competition and teams need to keep score. Play 2 or 3 games and have teams re-strategize between each game. Teams can play defense but no use of hands. Only shots (or passes) with laces count as goals.

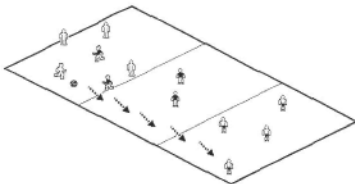


### Coaching Points:

- Stress long passing technique
- Point your toes down and lock ankle
- Placement foot pointed to target and behind the ball, pay attention to proper weight and angle (for air ball pass)
- Placement foot pointed to target and parallel to ball, pay attention to proper weight and angle (for low ball pass)
- Strike the middle of the ball
- Follow thru and land on your kicking (passing) foot

## 3) Three Zone Game (15 minutes):

Split grid into three even zones (zone 1, 2 and 3). Split team into three even teams (3 to 6 players in each zone). Each team occupies a Zone. The Team in Zone 1 starts with the ball. The team in Zone 2 sends two of their players into Zone 1 to defend. The team in Zone 1 tries to possess the ball a minimum of 3-4 passes before attempting to play the ball to the team in Zone 3. If the two defenders win the ball in Zone 1, they turn and attempt to play it down to Zone 3 and then switch zones with the team in Zone 1 (the team in Zone 1 then has to then send two defenders into Zone 3 and try to win the ball back). If the team in Zone 1 is able to play it down to team in Zone 3, they get a point. That means the other two players waiting in Zone 2 are entering into Zone 3 trying to win the ball back. The team that gets to 5 points first, wins. *Variation:* Make a restriction in which the ball played into the other zone has to be in the air.

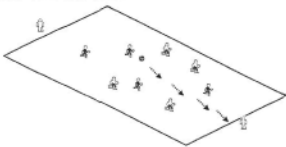


### Coaching Points:

- Stress the proper technical points as well as the proper timing of the passes
- Read the situation. Read the game
- Supporting players must get to an angle that provides a good passing option
- Proper communication by supporting players

**4) 4v4 + 2 Targets (15-20 minutes):**

In a 50x40 yard grid, 4 red versus 4 yellow with targets on opposite end lines. In order to get a point, team must find the Target. *Version 2:* Team must look to find a Target, get the ball back and attack the opposite end and try to get the ball to the other target. Three points if a player finds the Target in one long penetrating pass *from their own half* and one point if a player finds the Target through shorter combinations.



**Coaching Points:**

- Stress on the quality of the pass (which surface of which foot, which direction and why)
  - Stress communication and organization.
  - Reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1 and #2 and #3
  - Encourage finding the end line/target as quickly as possible.
- 5) **8v8 regular game (30-40 Minutes)**  
On a 70x50 yard field with goalies and large goals, play a regular match. This is the US Youth Soccer recommend field size and numbers.
- 6) **Cool Down (6 minutes)**  
Controlled juggling (thigh-thigh-foot-foot) or any combination of 4-6 juggles that will challenge the players. Statically stretch the large muscle groups.



# **Receiving - Low Balls**

**Objectives:** To improve the technique of receiving soccer balls played on the ground. To help players see different methods of receiving ground balls (inside of foot, outside of foot, across body, through legs, etc.).

## **1) Dutch Circle (Warm-up – 15 minutes):**

Half of the players create a 25-35 yd outer circle and have soccer balls at their feet. These players must always be alert and on their toes. The other half of the players are in the middle of this circle and do not have soccer balls. The inner players check to players on the outside to receive a pass from them. They receive the pass and then play to any player on the outer circle who does not have a ball (except player who passed to them). They then check to another person on the outside that has a ball and repeat this process for about 2-3 minutes until coach switches players on outside and inside. Focus on both front foot and back foot receptions and add in feints (i.e. ball runs through legs, ball runs across body, or take ball early). Work on receiving with both feet and receiving sideways-on.

### **Coaching Points:**

- get body behind the ball and be on toes
- go to the ball, do not wait for it
- keep ankle of receiving foot locked
- cushion ball as it arrives (as you would catching an egg)
- point of contact is the middle of the ball
- keep feet moving before ball arrives
- make your first touch active by pushing the ball in the direction in which you want to go (typically away from pressure)
- get head up before and after receiving
- always try to receive the ball facing the way you want to play

## **2) Numbers Passing (15 minutes):**

Split the team into groups of 4-5 players. Give every player a number. Have them spread out and pass the ball from number 1 to 2, from 2 to 3, etc. through the whole group. The highest numbered player simply passes back to number 1 and the activity continues. Tell all the players that the ball cannot stop moving, and they cannot stop moving. As they become proficient at the activity, introduce another ball to the group; they now have to pay attention to where they are receiving the ball from as well as where they need to play the ball next. **Version 2:** Have the whole team as one group and follow the same information above (but can add more than one soccer ball to group).

### **Coaching Points:**

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1
- Player receiving must have head up to know what they are going to do with the ball before they get it

### 3) **Four Square Passing (15 minutes):**

Form a grid 35yds x 35yds with squares roughly 4 yds across in each corner. Two teams of 4 to 6 players try to score by passing the ball to a teammate who makes a run into one of the four squares. Only players from the attacking team can enter a corner square. Once a player in the square receives a ball, they can pass to a teammate or dribble the ball out for a point. Balls out of play can be passed or dribbled back into play.



#### **Coaching Points:**

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1 and #2

### 4) **Bread and Butter (15 minutes):**

Typical 4 vs. 4 but with an additional 4 players who stand on outside of field and can be used by either team as outlets (can limit the touches of these players if they have the ability (ie: two touches)). If a team gets scored upon, they become the team on the outside and the outside team plays on the field. Use approximately a 20x25 yd area. May restrict the players to 2 or 3 touches to force quicker decisions, and better body position before the ball arrives. Keep score and make the game competitive.



#### **Coaching Points:**

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1 and #2
- when receiving balls with back to goal or in midfield, try to receive sideways on (with body sideways to the length of the field) and look over shoulder before receiving the ball

### 5) **6v6 Scrimmage (25-30 minutes)**

Play a regular game with goalkeepers.

#### **Coaching Points:**

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1 and #2
- Highlight the technique of receiving
- Reinforce positive decision making opportunities (how they receive the ball in relation to where they are on the field and the options they have)

### 6) **Cool-down (10 minutes):**

Top cross bar chip. All players, each with a soccer ball on the penalty mark try to chip the ball to hit the crossbar. Can have them then try from the edge of the penalty area (and farther if they need to be challenged more). Coach can make a competition out of it – when team hits top crossbar certain number of times, they can go home, etc.

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Play a regular game with goalkeepers.

#### **Coaching Points:**

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- Highlight the technique of receiving
- Reinforce positive decision making opportunities (how they receive the ball in relation to where they are on the field and the options they have)

### 6) **Cool-down (10 minutes):**

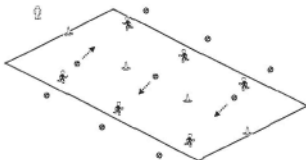
Top cross bar chip. All players, each with a soccer ball on the penalty mark try to chip the ball to hit the crossbar. Can have them then try from the edge of the penalty area (and farther if they need to be challenged more). Coach can make a competition out of it – when team hits top crossbar certain number of times, they can go home, etc.

# Shooting Session #1

**Objectives:** To improve the technique of shooting with the insides and instep of both feet. To foster the confidence to shoot!

## 1) Shooting Through the Cones (Warm-up - 15-20 minutes):

Set up a line of cones about 6 yards apart, representing goals for the players to shoot through. Position two players about 10-15 yards away from and on opposite sides of the line of cones. Players opposite each other proceed to kick (shoot) the ball through their cone goal, back and forth, working on correct shooting technique. It is important that the players work to perfect their preparation touch and that they strike a moving ball. The players should be using both feet to shoot. Scatter extra soccer balls around the playing area.



### Coaching Points:

- Keep ankle of shooting foot locked with toe down
- Non-kicking foot is placed parallel to ball (not behind it or ahead of it) and far enough away that it is comfortable to hit ball and that both ball and non-kicking foot are underneath your hips
- Non-kicking foot should be pointing towards your target
- Your weight should be on the ball of your non-kicking foot
- Both knees bent
- Strike through the middle of the ball...if you made a cross in the back of the ball, hit where the two lines intersect
- Follow through to your target
- Land on your kicking foot
- Keep head down to see what you are kicking
- Lean over ball as you kick, do not stand upright
- Strike ball with laces so that ball strikes hard bone on top of foot
- Encourage players to strike through the ball
- Players may need to make a slightly angled approach towards ball in order to prevent them from kicking ground...this will result in hip of the same leg as the kicking foot being higher than non-kicking foot

## 2) Popcorn (15-20 minutes):

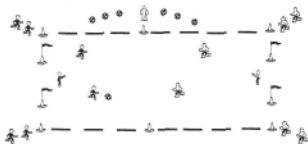
Set up a grid about 30 yds. X 20yds. With a goal on each end. Coach plays balls into 4-5 players who are all competing against each other to get the ball and score in either goal. First to five goals wins. Coach should manipulate service in order that all players are able to have shots and feel some success.

### Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1
- Gives players more opportunities for scoring chances
- Encourage a risky mentality to shoot

### 3) Four (4) Corner Shooting (20 minutes):

On a field 20 yards wide x 25 yards long, position two goals at each end. Split group into two teams (red and blue). Position half of the red team in a line behind one corner of the field and the other half of the red team in a line behind the other corner of the field, at the same end. Organize the blue team in the same manner at the other end of the field. Select a goalkeeper for each goal and rotate that player every 5 minutes. The coach is positioned at the midfield line, outside the field, with all the soccer balls. When the coach kicks a ball into the field, the first person in each of the four (4) corner lines enters the field to play. The game becomes a 2v2 + keepers activity. Play continues until the ball goes out of play or a goal is scored. When this happens, the players on the field quickly get back into their original lines, keepers stay on, and the assistant coach kicks the next ball in for the next 4 players. The coach should play the ball toward one of the corner lines (risk/safety management).

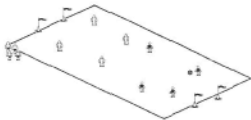


#### Coaching Points:

- Reinforce coaching points listed in activity #1
- Players looking to go to goal quickly

### 4) 4 vs 4 + 4 on deck (15-20 minutes):

Two teams playing to one goal each. First team to two goals stays or if two minutes pass by, the longest team on gets off and new team comes on. Captains on each team keep score.



#### Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1
- Help players to recognize when to use the inside of foot vs. the instep (laces)

### 5) 6v6 scrimmage (25-30 minutes):

Depending upon numbers, space will change. Ideally, finish with the number you normally play with in games. Play a regular game with goalkeepers.

#### Coaching Points:

- Highlight the technique of shooting
- Reinforce positive decision making opportunities (when, how and where to shoot the ball, etc.).

### 6) Cool-down (10 minutes):

Individual juggling. Have players compete to see who gets the most in a 2 minute period.