

Spencer Soccer Club

Youth Development Program

Weekday Session Plan Guidance

Under 8

Focus: Dribbling Mastery, Intro to Defending, Attacking, Passing, & Shooting, Plus 1 & 2 Skills Pyramids

Time: Each weekday session lasts for 60 minutes

Planning:

- 1) Print out and read through Weekday Session Plan
- 2) Become familiar with the Plus 1 Skills and Plus 2 triangles
- 3) Arrive at the field 15 minutes prior to scheduled start time
- 4) Set up pug nets and cones to facilitate a smooth session plan

Each Session Plan consists of the following:

- 1) Guidance (the page you are reading)
- 2) Plus 1 or Plus 2 Skills Pyramid Diagram
- 3) Warm-Up Activity*
- 4) Specific Skill
- 5) Activity 1
- 6) Controlled Juggling
- 7) Activity 2
- 8) Activity 3
- 9) Small Sided Game (if time permits)

*Warm Up Activity consists of Individual Ball Warm Up 1 and Individual Ball Warm Up 2 (to be used as guidance for coaches)

Session Structure:

Warm-Up Activity (12 Minutes): Incorporate skills from the Plus 1 Skills triangle into the Warm-Up Activity. Skills Pyramid skills should be introduced one by one and no more than (3) per session. Work in succession of the pyramid and introduce all Plus 1 Skills by session #3. Introduce Plus 2 skills after session #3. Skills introduced in the previous session should be reviewed in every subsequent warm-up activity.

Each week a specific skill is introduced and should be concentrated on by the coaches. The specific skill is the page immediately following Individual Ball Warm-up 2. Specific skills relating to dribbling, Sessions 3 thru 10, should be demonstrated and included in your Warm-Up Activity. Warm-up activities should be cut-down to account for time needed to coach non-dribbling specific skills in Sessions 1 & 2.

Activity 1 (12 Minutes): Activity 1 is a fun activity for the children. Incorporate the activity as described. Find ways that change the activity slightly so that you are not repeating the “exact” drill over and over.

Note: Session #1 focuses on Goal Keepers; the first two activities have been replaced with specific skills to allow coaches to have the time necessary to introduce goal keeping to players.

Snack/Water Break (4 Minutes)

Controlled Juggling (4 Minutes): **Incorporate into every practice.** A few minutes only, players drop the ball to their thigh and foot and try to kick or bounce the ball back to their own hands (repeat). Concentrate more on foot juggling.

Activity 2 (12 Minutes): Same guidance as stated above in Activity 1

Activity 3 (12 Minutes): Same guidance as stated above in Activity 1

Weekday Sessions are not designed to end with a small sided game, if time permits conduct a small sided game using pug nets amongst your own team or group with another team as desired.





PLUS | SKILLS CHALLENGE PYRAMID™

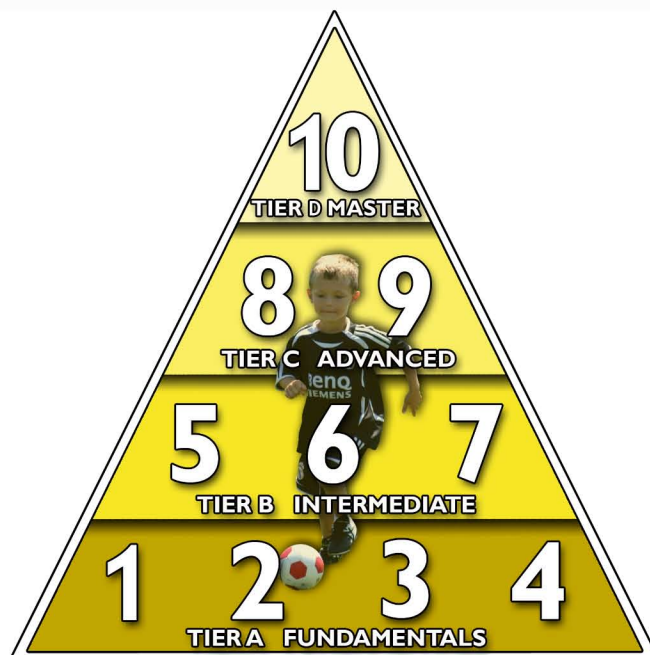
TIER A

1. Laces Dribble – With the toes pointing down towards the ground push the ball forward with the laces, knee bent over ball on contact. After each touch step through with the opposite foot.

2. Foundations – using the inside of both feet push the ball from one foot to the other. On the spot initially then moving forward and back when comfortable

3. Toe Taps Forward – Using the toe end of the sole, tap the top of the ball - alternating left and right feet. On the spot initially, with a slow rhythm and then hopping. Once competent in a stationary position, move forwards.

4. Toe Taps Backward – Using the toe end of the sole, tap the top of the ball - alternating left and right feet. On the spot initially, with a slow rhythm and then hopping. Once competent in a stationary position, move backwards.



TIER B

5. Step-On Turn – Dribble forward, place the sole of one foot on the ball to stop momentum, step beyond the ball with both feet leaving the ball, turn to face the ball and dribble back. Repeat several times using both feet.

6. Drag Back Turn – Dribble forward, stop forward momentum of the ball by reaching forward with one foot and placing the sole of the foot on top of the ball, drag (roll) the ball back down the side of the body away from the defender and accelerate into a dribble.

7. Back Heel – Dribble forward, step beyond the ball, make contact with the heel of one foot sending the ball backwards, turn and accelerate into a dribble.

TIER C

8. Inside Cut – Dribble forward, stop forward momentum of the ball by reaching forward with inside of one foot and 'cutting' the ball back down the inside of the body (away from the defender) in one movement and accelerate into a dribble.

9. Ball Rolls – Using the inside, outside and sole of one foot, roll the ball side to side, backwards and forwards and keeping contact with the ball at all times. Both feet.

TIER D

10. Outside Cut – Dribble forward, stop forward momentum of the ball by reaching forward

LEARN MORE:

To learn how Skill of the Week™ and Skills Challenge Pyramid™ can be incorporated into a comprehensive approach to Player and Coach Development, please contact David Newbery, dave@soccerplus.org, tel: 860-501-1165.

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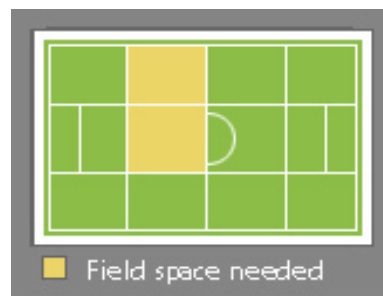
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Materials Needed



Area 20 x 20 yds

- Ball per player
- Cones

Individual Ball Warm Up 1 (Dribbling)

Description:

Players have a ball each. Set the players tasks - don't let the ball stop moving! Don't let the ball go outside the area. Progress to having the players react to the coach's commands. Toe taps, boxes, stop and go, change balls, etc.

Coaching Points

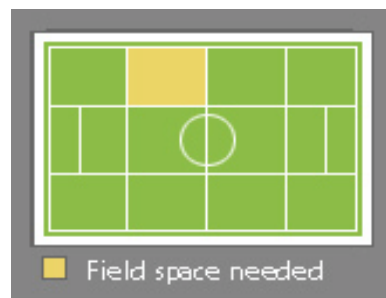
- Keep the ball moving at all times
- Soft touches and keep head up
- Move into the open space

Progressions:

Each time you play add a different movement, turn and mastery skill. For example: Movement sequence: 1) **Dribble with laces** - slow down and push the ball lightly with the laces (left, right and both) 2) **Boxes** – push the ball from side-to-side, right to the left foot and back again, 3) **Toe taps** – hopping from one foot to the other touching the top of the ball with the opposite foot each time. Ball stays does not move. 4) **Sole drag back** – hopping between feet, move backwards dragging the ball back alternating between the sole of the shoes, 5) **Sole push** – push the ball forward with the sole of the shoes, 6) **Laterals** – move to the left by dragging the right foot over the top of the ball (rolling the foot over the top of the ball). Move right with the left foot. Turns: It is anticipated players at the end of this stage of development will be able to perform the following turns 1) **Inside of the foot**, 2) **Outside of the foot**, 3) **Drag back**, 4) **Step over**, 5) **Back heel**. Add others! This is also an excellent opportunity to bring in fundamental movements such as running, skipping, galloping, balancing, dodging etc. As this is your warm up ensure you inject the enthusiasm and excitement with the players.



Materials Needed



Area 20 x 20 yds

- Ball per player
- Cones

Individual Ball Warm Up 2 (Dribbling)

Description:

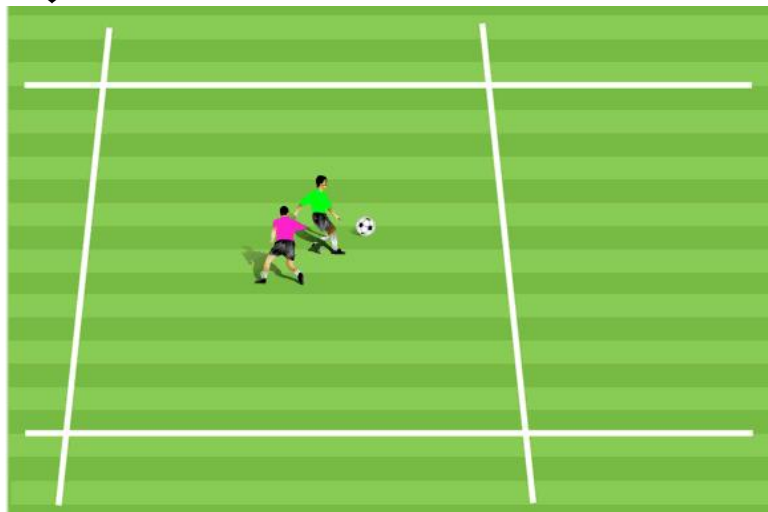
Each player has a ball and dribbles around the inside of the square. The coach challenges the players to complete a variety of tasks within 30 seconds. For example 1) Travel to all 4 sides of the box in any order, 2) How many touches on the ball can you get with your right foot or left foot?, 3) How many people can you tag?, 4) How many soccer balls dribbled by other players can you tag?

Coaching Points

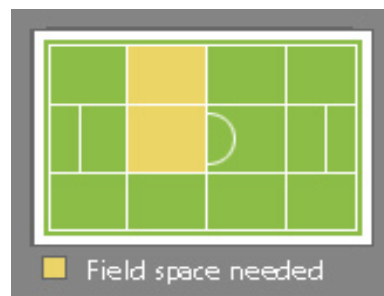
- Keep the ball moving at all times
- Keep your head up
- Move into the open space

Progressions:

As this is the warm up the coach must inject enthusiasm and energy into the players at this stage of the practice. Coaches can be creative with these small 30 second games. Introduce skills from the appropriate Skills Challenge Pyramid



Materials Needed



Area 30 x 20 yds

- Ball per player
- Cones

Take On - Hesitation (Dribbling, Creating Space)

Description:

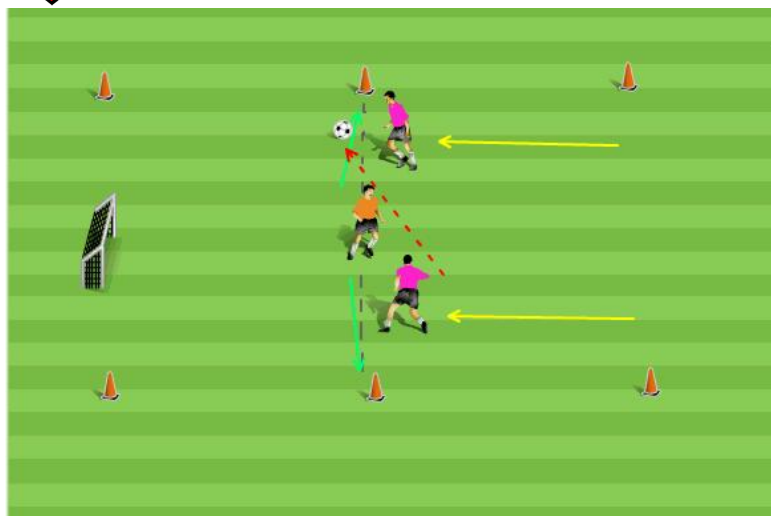
One ball per player in an open grid to begin. Isolate the skill by performing on-the-spot. The hesitation move requires the attacker to momentarily pause in the dribble causing the defender to either overrun or stop. The attacker can then accelerate away. Progress to 1) performing the skill on the move, 2) 1v1 passive defending, 3) 1v1 active defending 4) Game with gates & 5) Small sided game.

Coaching Points

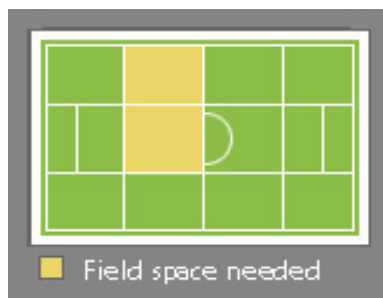
- Determine a speed of approach that works for each individual
- Realistic movement to unbalance the defender
- Accelerate away leaving defender behind

Progressions:

The freedom to experiment and practice 'take on' skills against an opponent is critical to their development. The more proficient a player becomes in dribbling and creating space as a young player, the more confident they will become in a game situation and the more likely they are to perform the skill. Repetition is very important, but ensuring the technique is correct is essential (the players are able to 'sell' the opponent and escape). This activity is a good warm-up with the ball. The starting point will depend on the players proficiency - the skill can be progressed from performing on one spot, to a small sided game. To emphasize the skill in a small sided game award points/goals to a player who takes on a defender.



Materials Needed



Area 20 x10

- Ball per player
- Cones
- Training Vests
- Goals

Defending 2v1 (Defending)

Description:

Create an imaginary line across the width of the area – the defender must remain within 2 ft of this line. The defender, starting in the center of the square passes a ball to one of the two attackers standing in either corner. On receipt, the attackers proceed forward and attempt to penetrate the center line, beat the defender and score a goal.

Coaching Points

- Slow play
- Don't over commit
- Patience
- Back to goal – no turns
- Let attackers make mistakes
- Balanced and balls of feet

Progressions:

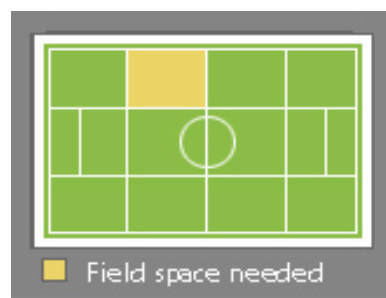
Ensure players understand 1 v 1 defending before progressing to 2v1.

Progression/Variations

Play 2 attackers v 1 defender - One goal at each end of the area. From the defensive end of the field, the defender passes the ball firmly along the ground to one of the attackers standing in the corner at the other end. On receipt, attackers attack the defender and attempt to score a goal. If the defender wins the ball, he/she can score. 6 players to an area – 2 defenders and 4 attackers - next defender and two attackers start when ball leaves the area or a goal is scored. Gradually introduce coaching points 1) Don't over commit to the ball or support attacker, 2) Slow down the play, 3) Use body feints to force a mistake, 4) Patience 5) stay balanced and on balls of feet



Materials Needed



Open area

- One ball per player

Controlled Juggling (Relaxation)

Description:

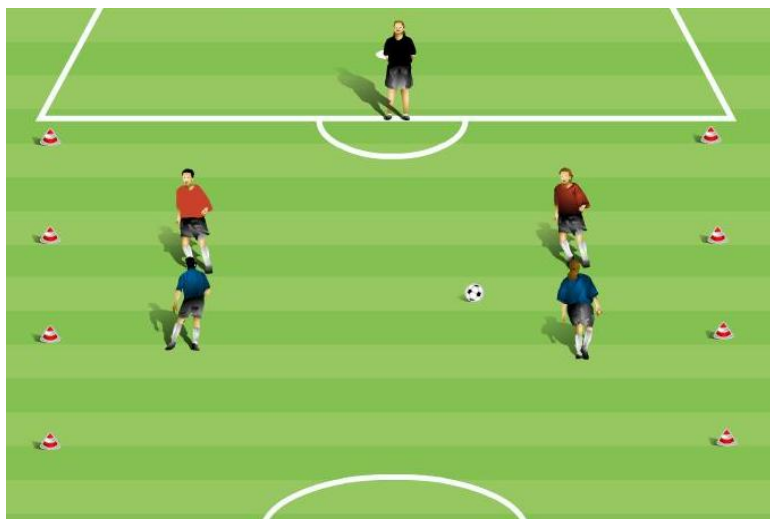
Players start with the soccer ball in their hands. They drop the ball on their thigh (juggle it once), and catch it. As they get better at it, they can try juggling the ball from one thigh to the other thigh and then catch it.

Coaching Points

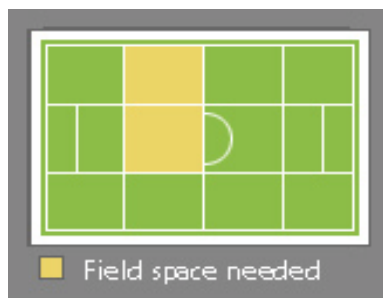
- Fun
- Thigh, foot - eye coordination
- Soft touches
- Preparation Touches

Progressions:

The coach can suggest any combination that is reasonable for this age group. This is used to help develop your players confidence on the ball and develop their foot/thigh - eye coordination.



Materials Needed



20 x 25 yards

- Group of players
- Cones
- Large supply of balls

2 v 2 to Touchline (Attacking)

Description:

Coach serves ball into the Blue players. Blue controls and attacks the red players' touchline. If red wins the ball, red players attempt to return it to the blue touchline. A point is awarded to the players who successfully stop the ball on the touchline.

Coaching Points

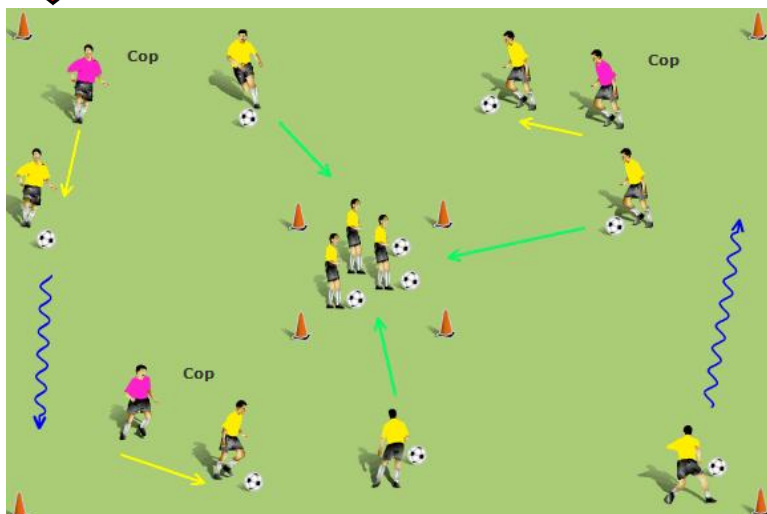
- Measure proper distance to execute the move
- Face the defender going forward at speed
- Explode past the defender
- Keep ball close to your stride
- Accuracy of the pass
- Accuracy of the pass
- No defensive pressure = dribble

Progressions:

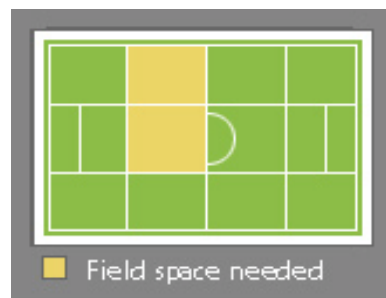
Option A: Can be used in 2 v 2, 3 v 3, 4 v 4

Progressions:

- 1 Start with the defensive players walking out to defend the attackers applying NO pressure
- 2 Defenders now jog at 50% towards the attackers applying little pressure
- 3 Defenders now runs full speed toward the attackers applying full pressure



Materials Needed



Area: 30 x 30 yds

- Ball per player
- Cones
- Training Vests

Cops and Robbers (Dribbling)

Description:

'Robbers' have a ball each which they dribble around the soccer streets. The 'Cops' (who don't have a ball) have to get a touch on the robber's ball in order to send them to the jail in the middle of the area. Once in jail the robber must sit on their ball and call out "HELP". The only way a robber can be saved is by a fellow robber, who must dribble their ball into the jail and give them a high five. The cops aim is to get all the robbers into the jail.

Coaching Points

- Head up
- Close Control
- Shield the ball to protect

Progressions:

Story

The robbers have stolen treasure (the soccer ball). But hot on the robbers tails are the cops who are looking to send the robbers straight to jail. The question is can the cops get all the robbers in the jail at once? Good Luck!!!

Variations

For some players getting a touch on the robber's ball may be too hard. If this is the case play the game with robbers having a training vest tucked into the back of their shorts, if the cop pulls the training vest out then the robber must go to jail. To make the game harder add more cops per game. This will ensure more pressure is on the robbers.



Match 3 v 3 (Game)

Description:

A small sided game 3v3 is a good way to finish a practice session. Use the opportunity to emphasize the theme of the session - award points for a particular move in addition to scoring a goal. Let the players play with little or no coaching - 15-20 minutes at the end of the session.

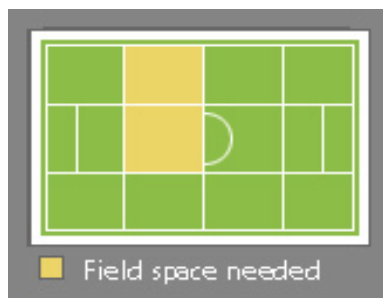
Coaching Points

- Little or no coaching
- Encourage players to try skills practiced during the session

Progressions:

The final activity of most practice sessions should focus on the theme of the session. Conditions can be added by the coach to emphasize the theme. For example, the coach can award a point (goal) if a player performs a turn learned during the session. Other conditions/progressions include: 1 or 2 touches, 1 touch finish, All players must touch the ball before scoring, Add a plus player (an extra player for the team in possession of the ball), 3 goals - one scored with the right foot, one with the left foot and one with the head (or any surface).

Materials Needed



Area 30 x 15 yds

- Balls
- Cones
- Training Vests
- Small Goals