

# Training Program

Mike Barr, Director of Coaching  
Gary Stephenson, Assistant Director of Coaching



## Under 8 Season Plan

Eastern Pennsylvania Youth Soccer  
4070 Butler Pike, Suite 100  
Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462  
Ph: 610-238-9966  
EPYSA.org  
gstephenson@epysa.org

## How to Organize Your Team

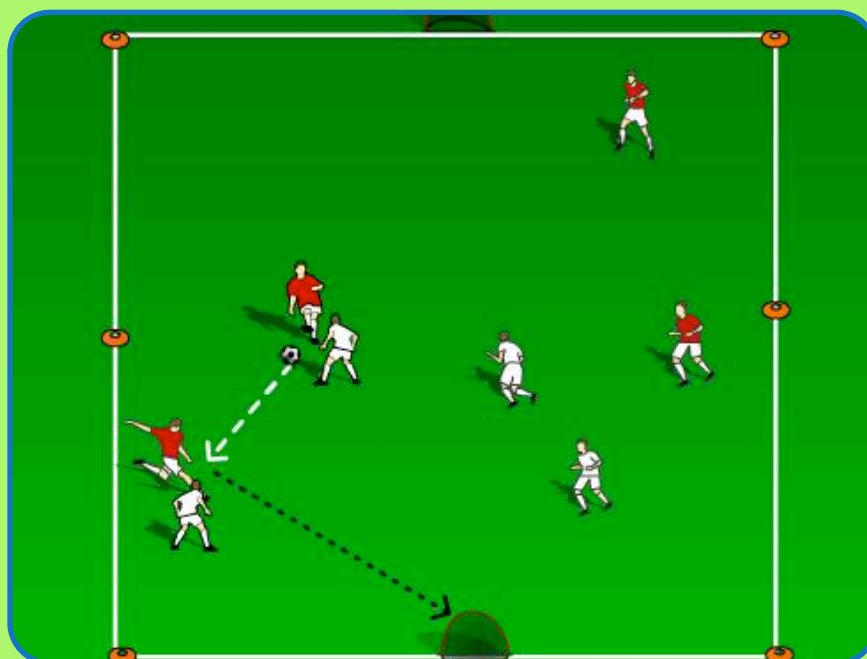
*Coaches,*

We are providing a more refined coaching curriculum to address the ages U6 to U12 for 2015 and 2016. We feel it is important to develop technical objectives for these age as well as incorporating group and team tactics at the older ages. We recognize that development varies from child to child and feel it is important at the younger ages to realize the potential in every child and provide appropriate instruction. Plan to have objectives for the year that reflect the skill level of the team your coaching. Here are a few general objectives for the U6 to U12 player:

### U8 Player

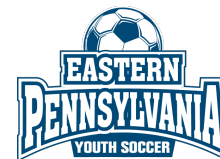
- Introduction of dribbling moves to possess or beat a defender
- Passing and receiving across their body with the inside of the foot utilizing proper technique
- Movement in and out of space
- Striking the ball properly with the instep when shooting
- More acute awareness of roles and responsibilities in transition
- Role of first defender and proper tackling technique
- Introduction of receiving air balls with chest, thigh and instep
- Introduction of combination play
- Introduction of juggling with various surfaces

### Formation by Numbering position



# U.S. SOCCER - Numbering

By Gary Stephenson & Mike Barr



## U.S. Soccer's Numbering System (GK-4-3-3)



# Goal/Objectives Setting

By Gary Stephenson & Mike Barr



## Goals/Objectives! Why they are Essential

As a coach you play a very large and positive role in your players and their parent's development. You are often seen as much more than a leader in practices & games. Because of your position you really are a teacher, as well as an individual mentor, to be utilized when needed. To excel in this position you must set yourself goals for each individual. The most important aspect in setting these goals is that they are not driven by game results and are measurable. They should be detailed at the start of any season giving you a realistic picture to strive towards. There has been a lot of research done in the soccer world to put guidelines down as what players at each age group should be able to do. We have taken this data and tailored objectives and lessons for age specific groups. Before you sit down and work on the big picture there are a few factors which need to be taken into account.

Research from Ewing, M. & Seefeldt, V., (1989). *Participation and attrition patterns in American agency-sponsored and interscholastic sports: An executive summary*. Final report Sporting Goods Manufacturer's Association (North Palm Beach, FL: Sporting Goods Manufacturer's Association) as cited from Weinberg & Gould (2007). *Foundations of Sport & Exercise Psychology*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

### Reasons kids drop out of sports:

- Failing to learn or improve skills
- Not having fun
- Not being with their friends
- Lack of excitement, improvisation & creative opportunities
- Lack of exercise, meaningful movement & fitness improvements
- Lack of optimal challenges &/or consistent failure

### Reasons kids play sports:

- To learn & improve their skills
- To have fun
- To be with friends
- To experience the excitement of competition
- To enhance their physical fitness
- To demonstrate their competence

It becomes your role as teacher and mentor to examine your training sessions and see if they are aligned with the reasons kids play and avoid the reasons children search out other activities.

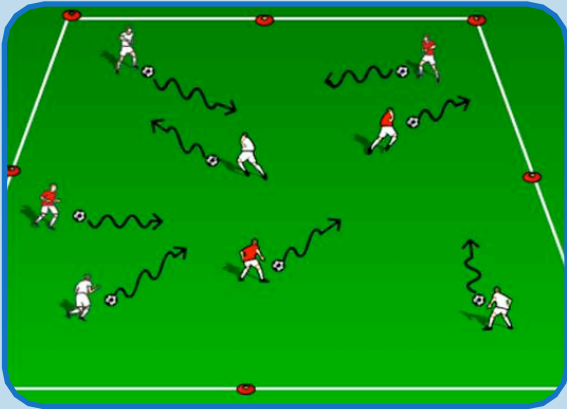
## TECHNICAL WARM-UP

### All the Surfaces - Ball Manipulation

**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Each player has a ball at their feet in the space. Coach should demonstrate how to touch the ball with all the surfaces - Inside, Outside, Bottom (sole), Heel, and Toe. Players should dribble around and wait for the coach to call "PART OF THE FOOT - TOE" - in which they then touch that part of the foot to the ball. Encourage them to use see how fast they can go inside, Outside, Bottom (sole), Heel, and Toe

Technique of Dribbling: -Head up, eyes looking forward, light on your toes - Quick feet to avoid defenders and change direction with the ball

Tactics of Dribbling: -Look for open space. -Keep the ball close when defenders are nearby -Bigger touches into space to go fast



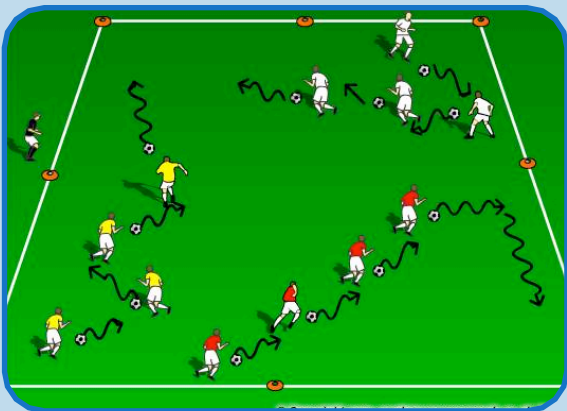
## SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

### Follow the Leader

**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Divide the players into groups evenly. Each player should have a ball. Designate (1) players the group's leader. The leader should dribble throughout the space, changing speed & direction. The rest of the group should keep and not allow large gaps between each other. After 30-45 sec rotate leaders.

Technique of Dribbling: -Head up, eyes looking forward, light on your toes - Quick feet to avoid defenders and change direction with the ball

Tactics of Dribbling: -Look for open space. -Keep the ball close when defenders are nearby -Bigger touches into space to go fast



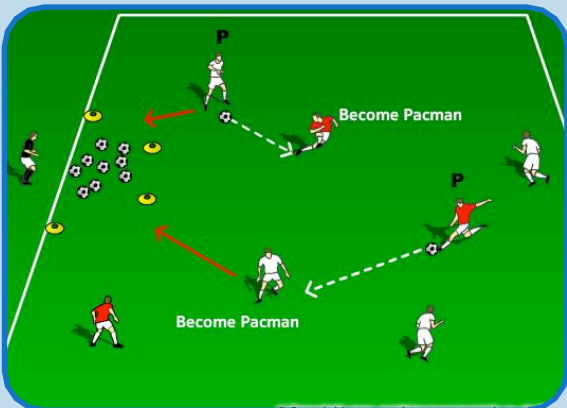
## SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

### Pacman

**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Place the ball in a group, and position cones around them. Coach starts out as pacman. Dribble around and pass the ball into players legs (BELOW THE KNEE). If they get hit, then go and retrieve a ball, and join as pacman. Play until (1) player remains. They get to start as Pacman the next game

Technique of Dribbling: -Small touches to change direction (inside & outside foot) -Large touches to go faster (outside foot) -Bottom of foot (sole) to stop moving and change direction

Tactics of Dribbling & Passing: -Anticipate where the player will run -Pass & dribble into space the player is moving



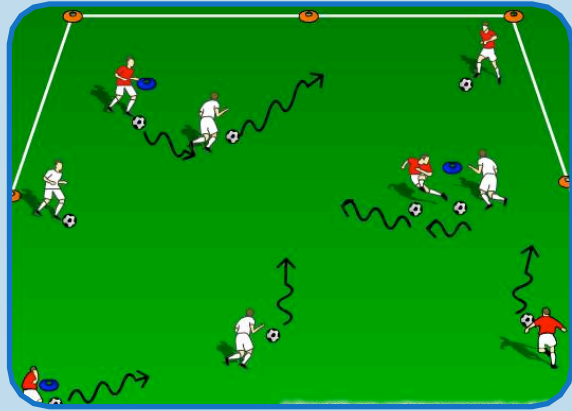
## GAME

Play 4v4. Set up as many fields as the numbers will allow (20W x 30L).

Play for 8 minutes, get a water break, and play again.

Reinforce all coaching points above





## Penny Tag

## TECHNICAL WARM-UP

**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Each player has a ball at their feet. They must keep possession of the ball at all times. Give 1/3 of the players a penny to hold in their hand. Players need to dribble after one another and 'tag' them with the penny (NO THROWING). If you get tug, then you take the penny to take someone else. NO TAG BACKS. Play for time, dont end up with the penny!

**Technique of Dribbling** -Use the outside of the foot to go faster into space -Use the inside of the foot to change direction more quickly -Head up, and eyes forward when dribbling

**Tactics of Dribbling** -Find the open space -Change speed & direction often to get away from defenders and tagger



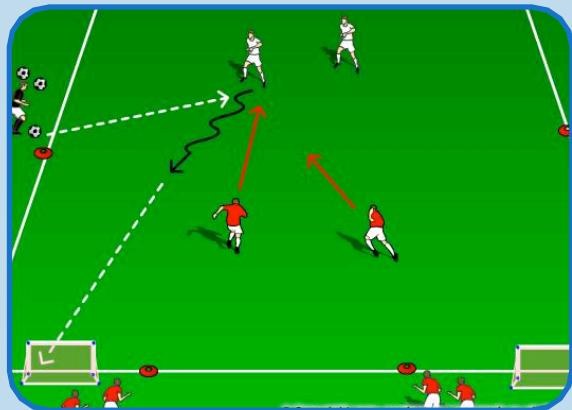
## Freeze Tag

## SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. 1/4 (25%) of the players do not have balls, and 3/4 (75%) of the players have balls at their feet. Players must dribble the ball, and keep possession at all times. Try to avoid being tug. If you get tug, stop the ball and hold it above your head. Wait for a teammate to tag you to reenter the game. The game is over when everyone has been tug

**Technique of Dribbling** -Use the outside of the foot to go faster into space -Use the inside of the foot to change direction more quickly -Head up, and eyes forward when dribbling

**Tactics of Dribbling** -Head up, always looking for open space -Change directions as often as possible to avoid being tug, and to find new space

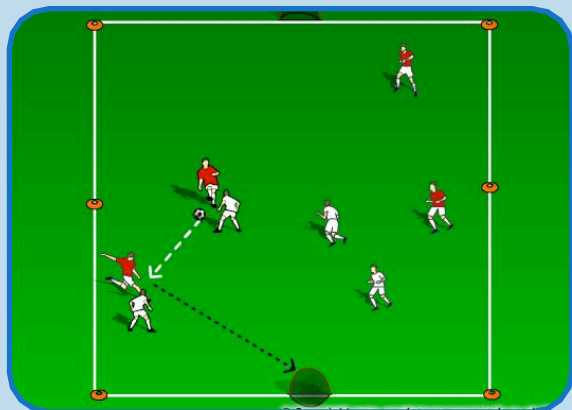


## SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Place (2) cones 3 yards apart on each end-line in the corner to make (4) total goals throughout the space. Position (2) cones between the goals for players to rest. Coach starts with the ball and plays to one team. (2) players from each team run onto the field and play until there is a goal or the ball goes out of bounds. Goals are scored by passing through the cones. Run back to your line and switch.

**Passing & Dribbling Decisions:**

What part of the foot should I use to dribble quickly or slowly?; Why should I keep my head up and looking at the whole field? -How can I change direction if 1 goals has defenders near it?



## GAME

Play 4v4. Set up as many fields as the numbers will allow (20W x 30L).

Play for 8 minutes, get a water break, and play again.

Reinforce all coaching points above



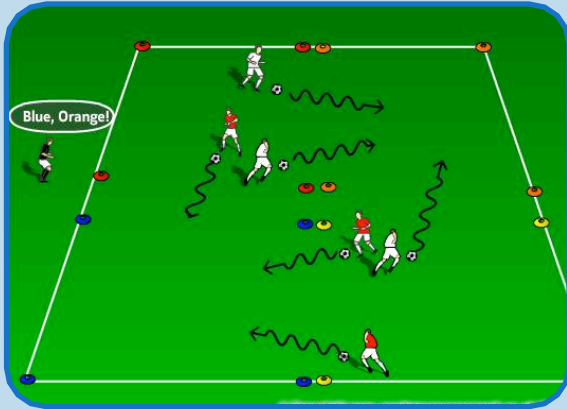
## 4 Colors, 4 Zones

## TECHNICAL WARM-UP

**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Place (4) cones in each Quarter of the space 5W x 12L using (4) different colors. There should be (4) different colored spaces in the grid. Players should each have a ball at their feet. Players dribble around in the space until the coach calls out (1-2) colors. All player rush towards the colored box. **DONT BE LAST!!!** Variations: -Use only R Foot - Use only L Foot -Dribble only with inside of foot -Dribble only with outside of foot

Technique of Dribbling: -Head up, eyes looking forward to open space -Toe down (laces), heel up while dribbling the ball

Technique of Changing Direction: -Identify space without defenders -Position the ball aware from body - check shoulder for open space - reach for ball to turn -Get low on turn to move fast after change of direction



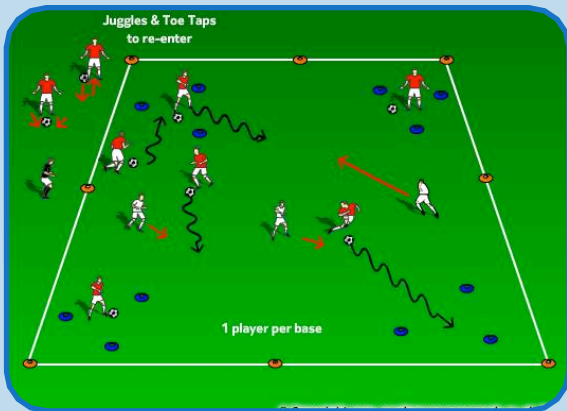
## Base Tag

## SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Place (4) bases made up of 3 cones (4x4x4) throughout the space. Designate a groups of player who are "it" to begin the game. The players who are it, are without a ball. Those who are not it have a ball. Only (1) player can be in a base at a time. If you are in a base, and someone new comes into the base you get "bumped" out. If you get tug outside the base, run over to coach to perform ball skills to enter the game again (juggles or toe taps #). After 2-3minutes, there is no re-entry once tug. Players rest outside space. Coach need to the bases 1 by 1 to ensure there are fewer bases than players remaining

Technique of Dribbling: -Small touches to move quickly into the base; Large touches to move through open space without being tug

Tactics of Dribbling: -Head up, and eyes forward. -Look for open space, or base to enter with dribble



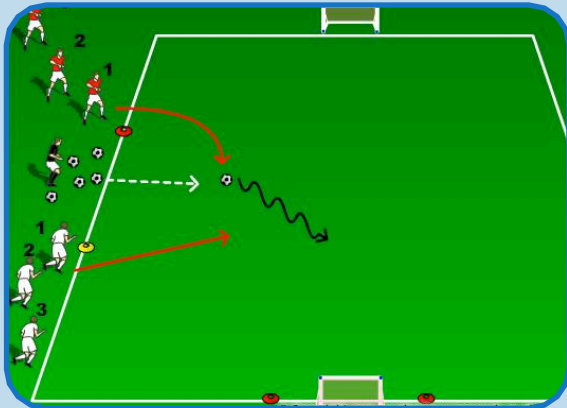
## SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

## Slot Machine Match-ups

**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Place (1) goal at each end of the space. Number the players #1-4 if possible. Position each group, white & red on opposite sides of Coach. Coach will play a ball into the field and call a (#) number(s). If your number is called run onto the field. If a goal is scored, or the ball goes out of bounds, run quickly back to your line. Play 1v1, 1v2, 2v2, 2v3, 3v3 - Rotate numbers

Dribbling Decisions:

-What part of the foot can I use to: stop the ball, go faster, slow down? -Where should I make my 1st touch? -How do I know when to change direction? -What can I do if I am not able to dribble?

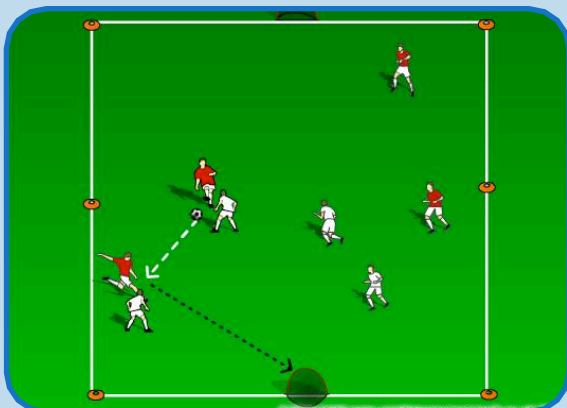


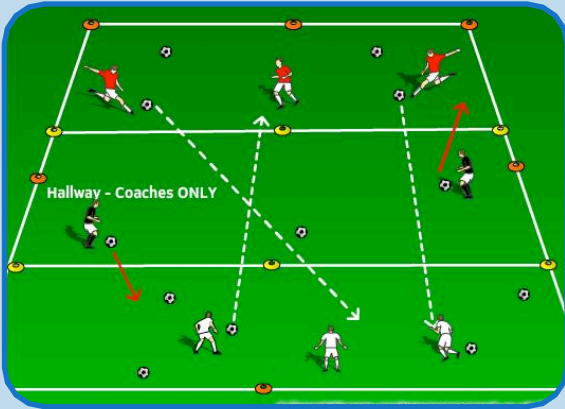
## GAME

Play 4v4. Set up as many fields as the numbers will allow (20W x 30L).

Play for 8 minutes, get a water break, and play again.

Reinforce all coaching points above





## Clean your room

## TECHNICAL WARM-UP

**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Make (3) Channels 20W x 10L. The middle channel is called the HALLWAY and is FOR COACHES ONLY. Divide the players evenly, and place them in the outside channels. Players should try to kick the ball into the other team's room. The goal is to have as few balls as possible at the end of time. Players are restricted to their zones, and coaches can send balls from the hallway back into their rooms. After a set period of time end the game and check to see who has the most balls - messiest room - to determine a winner. Clean Room = fewest balls Dirty Room = most balls

### Technique of Passing:

- Strike the middle of the ball
- Position your non-kicking foot alongside the ball, pointed at your target
- Lock your angle, toe up, heel down
- Follow through the ball



## Kick the Coach

## SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

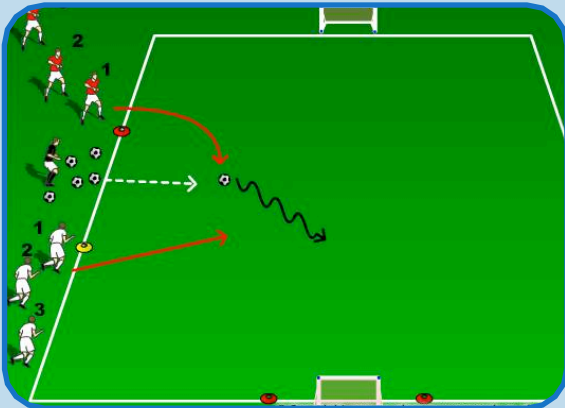
**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Each player should have a ball at their feet. Players are to dribble around and try to "kick the coach" = pass the ball into the coach (below the knee). Points are scored for hitting the coach. Play for time - record scores.

### Technique of Passing:

- Distance of the ball away from body will allow for more speed & weight on the ball
- Last touch before striking the ball should be in front of player and towards target
- Follow through the ball to keep control and place ball below knee

### Tactics of Passing:

- Pass ball into space where coach is moving
- Head up and look forward to see available spaces to move & pass



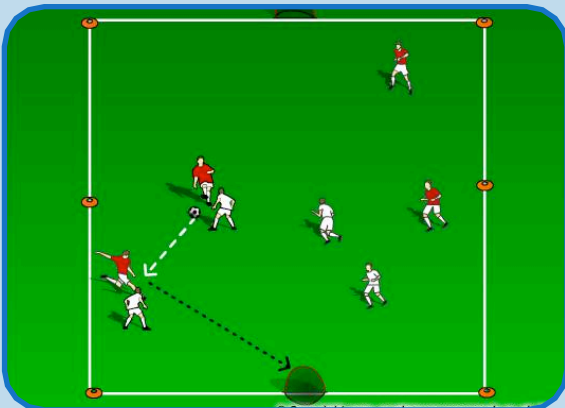
## Slot Machine Match-ups

## SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Place (1) goal at each end of the space. Number the players #1-4 if possible. Position each group, white & red on opposite sides of Coach. Coach will play a ball into the field and call a (#) number(s). If your number is called run onto the field. If a goal is scored, or the ball goes out of bounds, run quickly back to your line. Play 1v1, 1v2, 2v2, 2v3, 3v3 - Rotate numbers

### Passing & Dribbling Decisions:

- What part of the foot can I use to: stop the ball, go faster, slow down?
- Where should I make my 1st touch?
- What should I do if I cant dribble?
- Who I should I look to if I cant score?



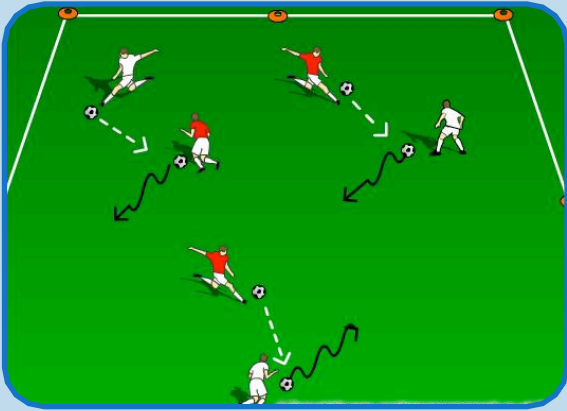
## GAME

Play 4v4. Set up as many fields as the numbers will allow (20W x 30L).

Play for 8 minutes, get a water break, and play again.

Reinforce all coaching points above





## Ball Tag

## TECHNICAL WARM-UP

**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. All players should have a ball at their feet. Players should dribble throughout the space and try to tag someone else's ball by passing their ball into the other ball. After they have tagged someone's ball, then should try to tag someone else. Players can tag the same player twice until they have tagged everyone

### Technique of Passing:

- Distance of the ball away from body will allow for more speed & weight on the ball
- Last touch before striking the ball should be in front of player and towards target

### Tactics of Passing:

- Pass ball into space where ball is moving
- Head up and look forward to see available spaces to move & pass



## Gates Passing

## SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

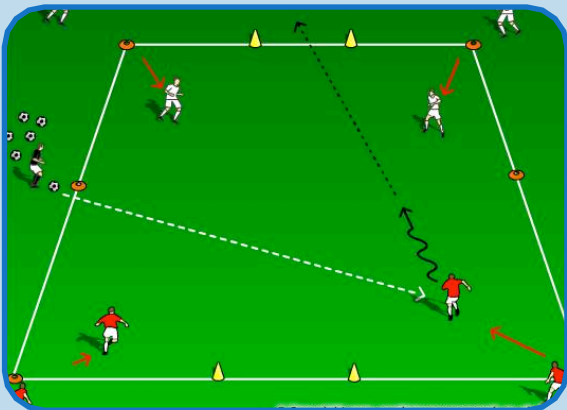
**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Place a pairs of cones (2-3 yds wide) throughout the space making several gates. Players should work in pairs with (1) ball between them. Players are to pass to one another through each gate. Count the number gates passed through during specific time period. Players have to go through each gate once before they can go through the same gate again.

### Technique of Passing:

- Use the inside of the foot to strike the middle of the ball
- Put your non-kicking foot next to the ball, and point it to your teammate
- Follow through with your kick/pass

### Tactics of Passing:

- Pass to your teammate, or where they will be



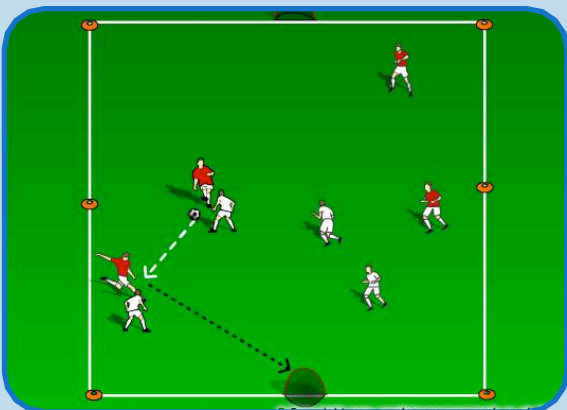
## 2v2 Continuous

## SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Place (2) tall cones 5 yds wide on each endline, making a goal. Position players in each corner of the space. The game begins when the coach plays the ball to one team. The game is played until there is a goal, or the ball goes out of bounds. Players run off, and the next group steps on. Play for time or number (#) of goals scored

### Passing & Dribbling decisions:

- Do I need to take small touches or big touches when dribbling?
- Where should I look first when I receive the ball?
- Who can I look to if I have a defender near me?
- What can I do to help me teammate if they have the ball?



## GAME

Play 4v4. Set up as many fields as the numbers will allow (20W x 30L).

Play for 8 minutes, get a water break, and play again.

Reinforce all coaching points above

## TECHNICAL WARM-UP

### Gates Dribble

**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Place a pairs of cones (2-3 yds wide) throughout the space making several gates. Each player should have a ball at their feet. Count the number of gates dribbled through in a specific amount of time. Players have to go through each gate before they can go through the same gate again. Variations - -R foot only -L foot only -Inside foot dribble - Laces dribble

#### Technique of Dribbling:

-Head up, eyes looking forward to open space -Direct touches towards space that you want to enter

#### Tactics of Dribbling:

-Smaller touches to get through gate -Larger touches in space to a new gate



## SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

### Gates Passing

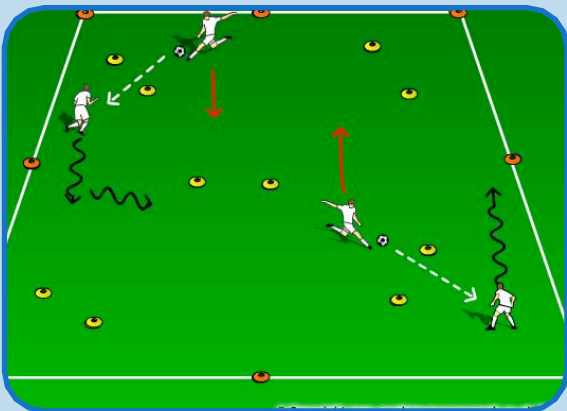
**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Place a pairs of cones (2-3 yds wide) throughout the space making several gates. Players should work in pairs with (1) ball between them. Players are to pass to one another through each gate. Count the number of gates passed through during a specific amount of time. Players have to go through each gate once before they can go through the same gate again.

#### Technique of Passing:

-Use the inside of the foot to strike the middle of the ball -Put your non-kicking foot next to the ball, and point it to your teammate -Follow through with your kick/pass

#### Tactics of Passing:

-Pass to your teammate, or where they will be



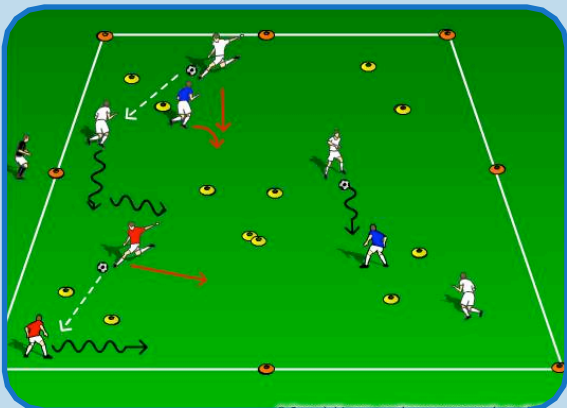
## SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

### Gates Passing with Defenders

**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Place a pairs of cones (2-3 yds wide) throughout the space making several gates. Players should work in pairs with (1) ball between them. Players are to pass to one another through each gate. Pass for time to collect the highest number of gates. Players have to go through each gate before they can go through the same gate again. Defenders can steal the ball and dribble around to keep the ball away from the pairs. Pairs should steal ball back from defender and keep counting their gates.

#### Passing & Dribbling Decisions:

-What should I do pass or dribble? -Who am I looking for to know if I should pass or dribble? -Where should we go to keep possession of the ball?



## GAME

Play 4v4. Set up as many fields as the numbers will allow (20W x 30L).

Play for 8 minutes, get a water break, and play again.

Reinforce all coaching points above



## TECHNICAL WARM-UP

### Cone Destruction - Builders & Breakers

**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Place 8-10 tall cones throughout the space. Give 3/4 (75%) of the players balls (breakers). The other 1/4 (25%) of players are without balls (builders). **BREAKERS** = The players with the ball should try to dribble/pass into the cones and "knock them over." **BUILDERS** = Players without the balls can tackle the ball and knock away the ball. The players without the ball can "save" the cones by standing them back up once they've been knocked down. Objective = To have all the cones knocked over at one time.

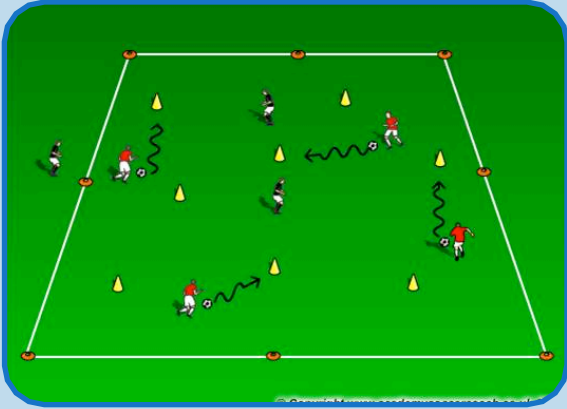
\*\*Coach should select builders & breakers

Technique of Dribbling:

-Head up, eyes looking forward to open space -Toe down, heel up (laces) -Inside foot

Tactics of Dribbling:

Identify space without defenders -Small touches to change direction -Large touches to move quicker in open space



## SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

### Cone Destruction - Builders & Breakers + Partners

**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Place 8-10 tall cones throughout the space. 3/4 (75%) of the players should be in pairs with one ball between them (breakers). The other 1/4 (25%) of players are without balls (builders). The players with the ball should try to dribble/pass into the cones and "knock them over." Players without the balls can tackle the ball and knock away the ball. The players without the ball can "save" the cones by standing them back up once they've been knocked down. Objective = To have all the cones knocked over at one time.

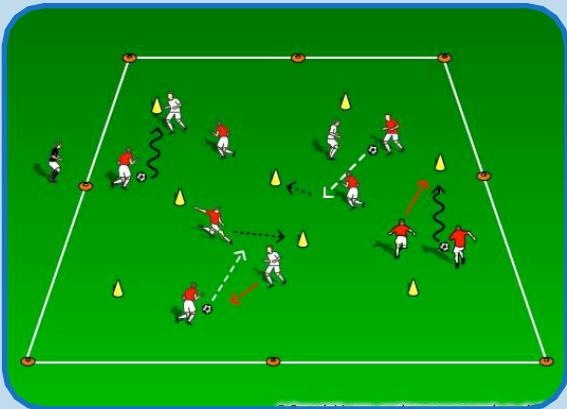
\*\*Coach should select builders & breakers

Technique of Passing:

-Watch your eyes make contact with the ball -Strike the center of the ball

Tactics of Passing:

-If you don't have the ball, move so your teammate can "see" you with the ball & their eyes -If you can't dribble, then look for your teammate to share the ball and move the defender



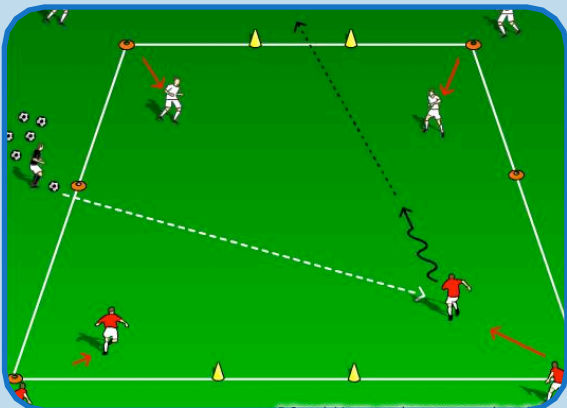
## SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

### 2v2 Continuous

**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Place (2) tall cones 5 yds wide on each end-line, making a goal. Position players in each corner of the space. The game begins when the coach plays the ball to one team. The game is played until there is a goal, or the ball goes out of bounds. Players run off, and the next group steps on. Play for time or number (#) of goals scored

Passing & Dribbling decisions:

-Do I need to take small touches or big touches while dribbling -How can I get into open space? -Where should I look first when I receive the ball? -Who can I look to if I have a defender near me? -What can I do to help my teammate if they have the ball?



## GAME

Play 4v4. Set up as many fields as the numbers will allow (20W x 30L).

Play for 8 minutes, get a water break, and play again.

Reinforce all coaching points above



## TECHNICAL WARM-UP

### All the Surfaces - Ball Manipulation

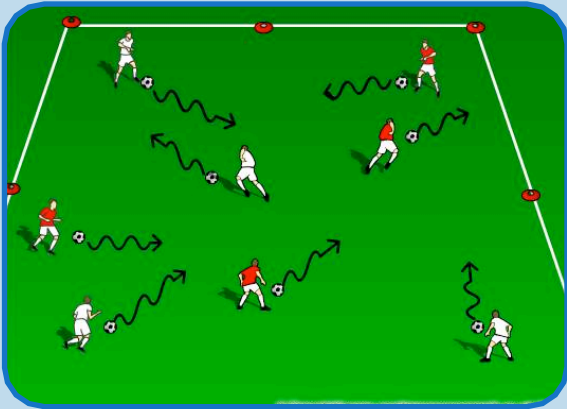
**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Each player has a ball at their feet in the space. Coach should demonstrate how to touch the ball with all the surfaces - Inside, Outside, Bottom (sole), Heel, and Toe. Players should dribble around and wait for the coach to call "PART OF THE FOOT - TOE" - in which they then dribble with that part of the foot to the ball. Encourage them to use see how fast they can go inside, Outside, Bottom (sole), Heel, and Toe

#### Technique of Dribbling:

-Head up, eyes looking forward, light on your toes -Quick feet to avoid defenders and change direction with the ball

#### Tactics of Dribbling:

-Look for open space. -Keep the ball close when defenders are nearby -Bigger touches into space to go faster



### 4 Colors, 4 Zones

## SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

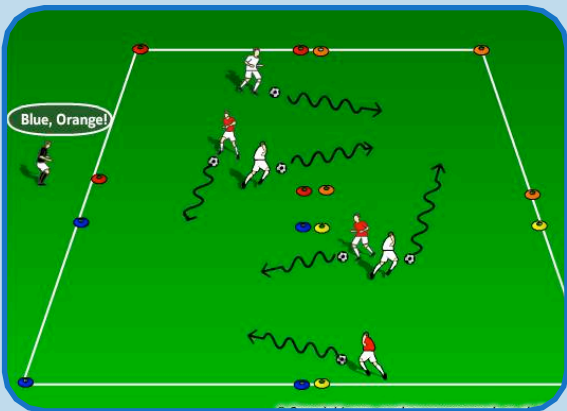
**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Place (4) cones in each Quarter of the space 5W x 12L using (4) different colors. There should be (4) different colored spaces in the grid. Players should each have a ball at their feet. Players dribble around in the space until the coach calls out (1-2) colors. All player rush towards the colored box. DONT BE LAST!!! Variations: -Use only R Foot - Use only L Foot -Dribble only with inside of foot -Dribble only with outside of foot

#### Technique of Dribbling:

-Head up, eyes looking forward to open space -Toe down, heel up (laces) - Inside foot

#### Technique of Changing Direction:

-Identify space without defenders -Position the ball aware from body - check shoulder for open space - reach for ball to turn -Get low on turn to move fast after change of direction



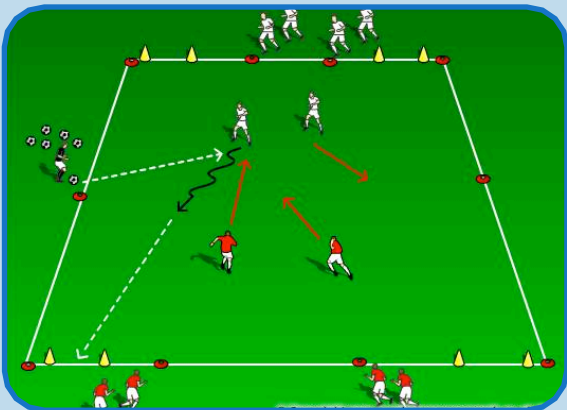
## SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

### 2v2 with (4) Goals.

**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Place (2) cones 3 yards apart on each end-line in the corner to make (4) total goals throughout the space. Position (2) cones between the the goals for players to rest. Coach starts with the ball and plays to one team. (2) players from each team run onto the field and play until there is a goal or the ball goes out of bounds. Goals are scored by passing through the cones. Run back to your line and switch.

#### Passing & Dribbling Decisions:

-What part of the foot should I use to dribble quickly or slowly? -Why should I keep my head up and looking at the whole field? -How can I change direction if 1 goal has defenders near it? -Who can I look to if I can not dribble?



## GAME

Play 4v4. Set up as many fields as the numbers will allow (20W x 30L).

Play for 8 minutes, get a water break, and play again.

Reinforce all coaching points above

