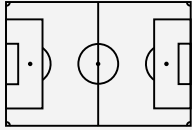


# 8U TECHNIQUES

## FROM THE FIELD



“Teach skill every day! Create training environments where players are challenged and can use those skills in making quick decisions of how, why, and where to use them. Ask players to work on their own self improvement.”

*George Kuntz, AYSO Technical Director,  
Head Coach, Men’s Soccer, UC Irvine, CA*

## DRIBBLING

Dribbling is using the feet to maintain possession of the ball, on the ground, under control, while moving to achieve **Penetration**. The two primary reasons to use dribbling skill are:

- Move the ball into a better position on the field.
- Retain possession of the ball.

The most important element of dribbling is developing a “feel” or “touch” for the ball with the feet...BOTH OF THEM. The key is then to **keep the ball close** by touching it softly.



General Coaching Points:

- Knees slightly bent and body leaning slightly over the ball for balance.
- Arms relaxed and used for balance and protection.
- Touch the ball softly using all major surfaces of the foot.
- Keep the ball close and under control.
- Touch the ball every step or so (ball should never be more than one step away).
- Head up as much as possible (to see the field as well as ball by utilizing peripheral vision).

Scan with your smartphone to see this in action or visit:  
[aysou.video/tech1](https://aysou.video/tech1)

### Common Errors & Corrections

Error	Correction
Ball is played too far ahead & player loses control of the ball.	Move slower and touch ball slower.
Player dribbles the ball into trouble or out of play.	Move slower, touch ball softer, look up.
Player re-positions entire body behind ball before touching.	Use motion of foot to direct ball instead of re-positioning.

### Stopping the Ball:

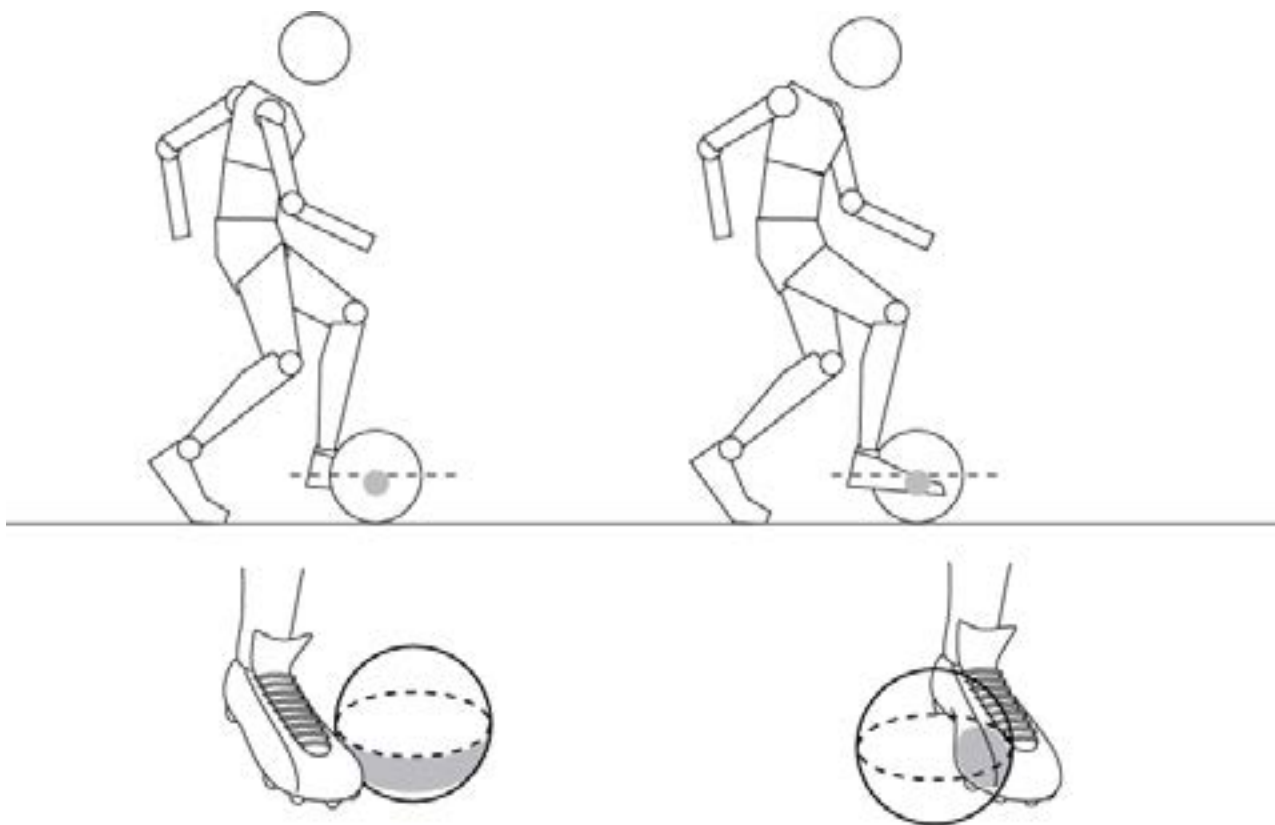
8U players should be able to stop the ball by putting their foot on top of it.

- Balance on planted foot (foot on ground), while keeping playing foot (foot on the ball) firmly on top of the ball.
- Step past the ball with plant foot before stepping on it, keeping in mind the speed at which the ball is rolling.

### Turning with the Ball:

Learning to change direction while dribbling is critical in soccer and should also be introduced at this level.

- Use motion of foot to direct the ball.
- Accelerate after changing direction.



# INSTEP KICK (LACES)

The instep kick is used to kick the ball and, as players get older, for long passes and shots on goal (as seen on right).

## Instructions:

### **Prepare Plant Leg (Supporting, Non-Kicking Foot)**

- Place support foot next to the ball pointed in general direction of target (distance from ball will depend on height of the player).
- Bend knee slightly.
- All weight should be on plant foot.
- Use arms out to sides for balance.

### **Prepare Striking (Kicking) Leg**

- Bend knee (cock lower leg).
- Withdraw leg straight back at hip.
- Lock ankle back and down, toes pointed down.

### **Striking Movement**

- Body should be over the ball, moving forward.
- Keep eyes on ball.
- Set plant knee over ball (eye-knee-ball in line).
- Move thigh of striking leg forward (whip action).
- Strike the center of the ball on the instep (“laces” of the shoes).
- Follow through—move leg straight through toward target:
- Pull leg straight through while maintaining balance.
- Lower body as leg rises.
- Keep ankle locked, follow through and lift knee.
- Step out of the kick.

### **General Coaching Points:**

- Body should be over the ball (forward).
- Eyes on ball.
- Support foot next to ball pointed in general direction of target.
- Lock ankle back and down, toes pointed down.
- Strike the center of the ball on the instep (“laces” of the shoes).
- Follow through—move leg straight through toward target.

### **Practice:**

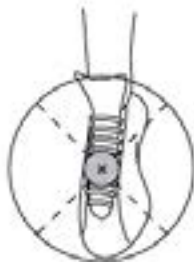
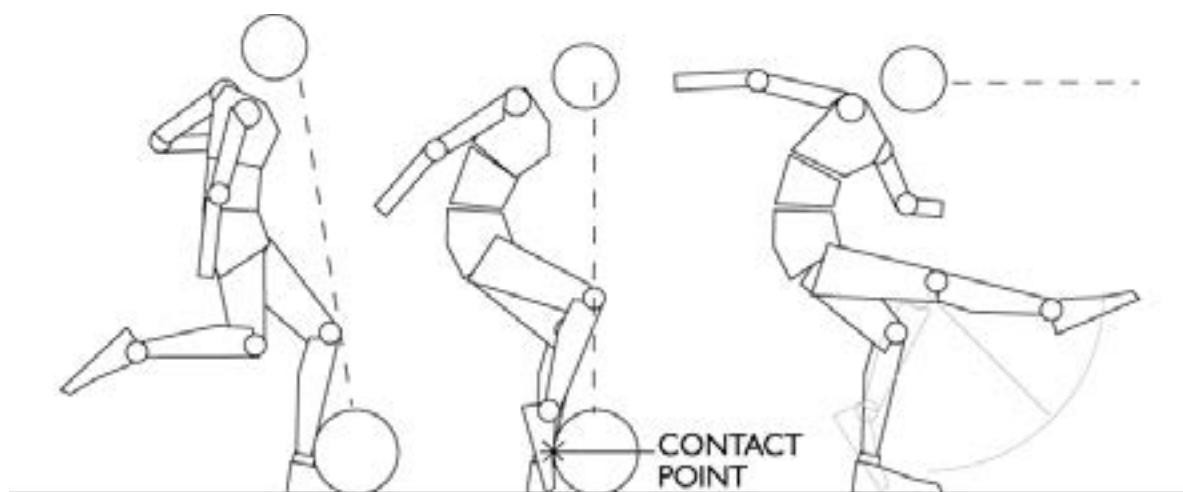
- Planting their foot in the proper place.
- Swinging their leg and foot straight back and forth, ensuring proper body and leg movement.
- Have each player stand with plant foot in proper position and strike lightly until they begin to hit the ball solidly (properly).



To see this in action visit: [aysou.video/tech2](https://www.aysou.video/tech2)

## Common Errors & Corrections

Error	Correction
Planted foot is too far in front, behind or away from ball and/or not pointed in general direction of target.	Review proper technique with player(s).
Knee(s) are locked, not bent.	Review proper technique with player(s).
Ankle is not locked and toes are not pointed.	Lock ankle, point toes.
Ball is stabbed or jabbed.	Encourage player to follow through.
Leg is swung across the body instead of toward the target.	Encourage player to withdraw leg straight back and follow through straight toward target.



# INSIDE OF THE FOOT - PUSH PASS

Used to advance the ball or to maintain possession by passing to a teammate. A consistent and safe technique once mastered.

## Instructions:

### **Prepare Plant Leg**

- Place support foot next to the ball (toe should not be past ball) pointed in general direction of target (distance from ball will depend on height of the player).
- Bend knee slightly.
- All weight should be on plant foot.
- Use arms for balance.

### **Prepare Action Leg**

- Draw leg back from hip.
- Bend knee slightly.
- Rotate leg at hip 90 degrees outward.
- Lock ankle with toe pointed slightly up.
- Inside of foot should face the general direction of target.

### **Striking Movement**

- Body should be over the ball, moving forward.
- Use arms for balance.
- Keep eyes on ball.
- Move leg straightforward toward target, ankle locked and toe up.
- Strike at the center of the ball with the inside of the foot.
- Sole of foot should be off the ground with toe pointed slightly up, and perpendicular to ball (form "T" or "L" with feet).
- Follow through:
  - Pull leg straight through in general direction of target while maintaining balance.
  - Lower body as leg rises.
  - Keep ankle locked and follow through and lift knee.
  - Step out of the kick.

### **General Coaching Points:**

- Place support foot next to ball (toe should not be past ball) pointed in general direction of target.
- Lock ankle with toe pointed slightly up.
- Inside of foot should face the general direction of target
- Keep eyes on ball.
- Move leg straightforward toward target, ankle locked and toe up.
- Strike at the center of the ball with the inside of the foot.
- Sole of foot should be off the ground with toe pointed slightly up, and perpendicular to ball (form "T" or "L" with feet).
- Strike through center of ball and follow through in direction of pass.

### **Practice:**

Before having players strike the ball:

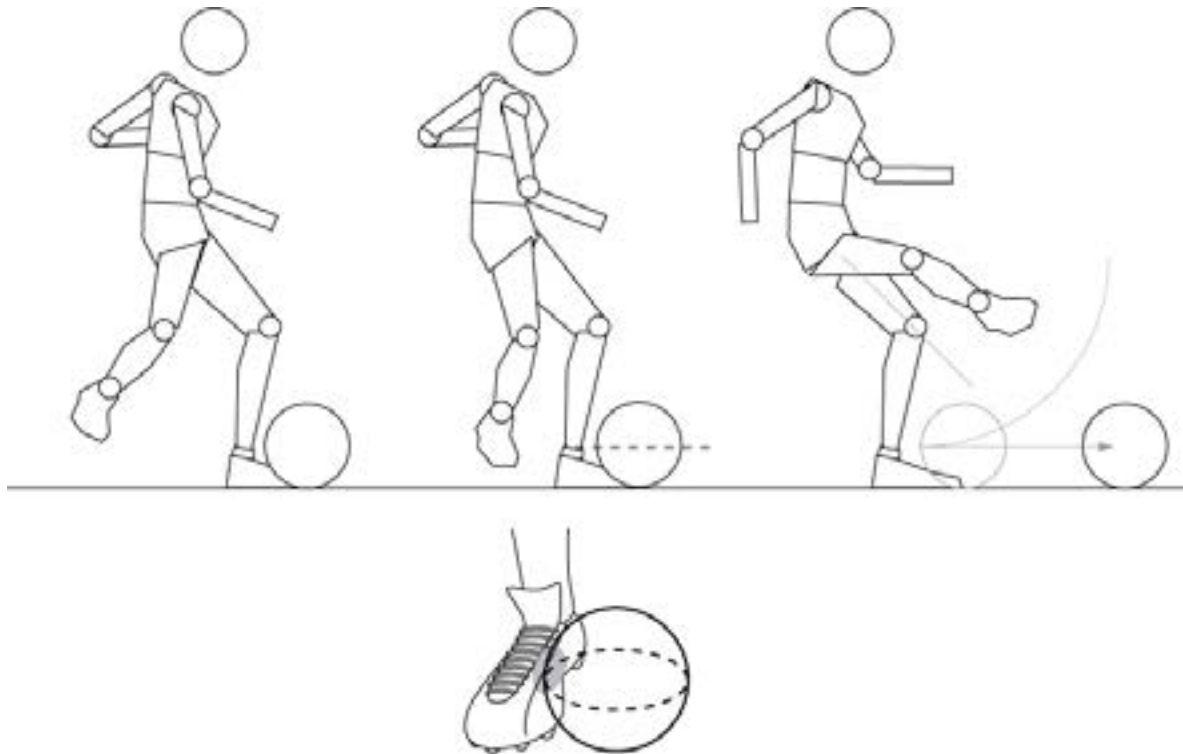
- Have them practice planting their foot in the proper place.
- Have them practice swinging their leg and foot straight back and forth, ensuring proper body and leg movement.



To see this in action visit [aysou.video/tech3](https://www.aysou.com/video/tech3)

## Common Errors & Corrections

Error	Correction
Planted foot is too far in front, behind or away from ball and/or not pointed in general direction of target.	Move planted foot closer to the ball and point in direction of target.
Knee(s) are locked, not bent.	Bend knees slightly.
Ankle is not locked and sole of foot is not parallel to ground and/or facing general direction of target.	Lock ankle and square body to the desired target.





# INSIDE OF THE FOOT - BALL CONTROL

This technique is used to control the ball using the inside of the foot in order to maintain possession and prepare for the next move.

## Instructions:

- Get in line with flight of ball.

## **Prepare Plant Leg**

- Place support foot next to path of the ball.
- Bend knee slightly.
- Put weight on plant leg.

## **Prepare Control Leg**

- Move leg toward the ball.
- Bend knee slightly.
- Rotate leg outward at hip, 90 degrees.
- Lock ankle with toe pointed up to ensure solid contact point.
- Raise foot off the ground and perpendicular to ball (form an “L” with feet).

## **Controlling Movement**

- Keep eyes on the ball.
- Extend the arms to the sides for balance and protection.
- Contact center of the ball with center of inside of the foot (in curve/arch).
- Withdraw action leg straight back as contact is made in order to cushion the ball.
- Prepare ball for your next move—pass, dribble, or shoot.

## **General Coaching Points:**

- On toes (ready to react).
- Get in line with flight of ball.
- Present inside of foot.
- Cushion the ball (by withdrawing the foot).
- Take touch into the best position for next move.

## **Practice** (before having players contact the ball):

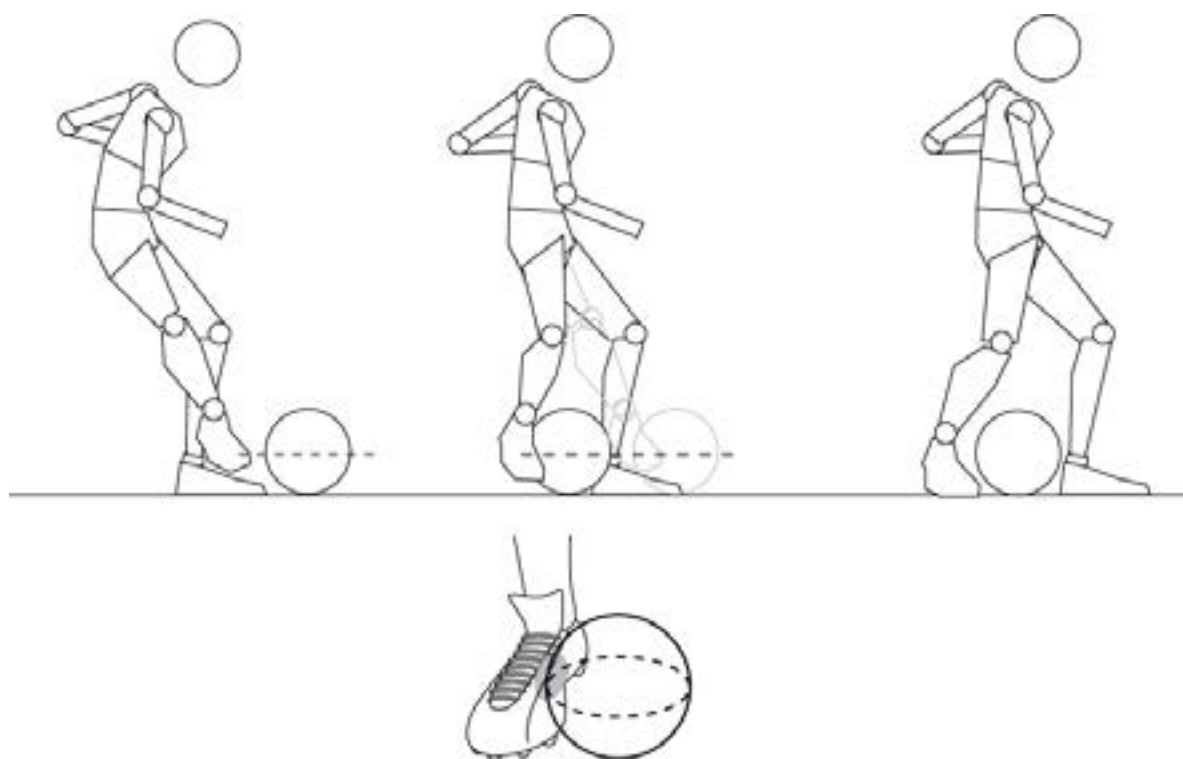
- Have them practice planting their foot in the proper place.
- Have them practice moving their leg and foot straight back and forth in a controlled motion ensuring proper body and leg movement.



To see this in action visit: [aysou.video/tech4](https://www.aysou.video/tech4)

### Common Errors & Corrections

Error	Correction
Player misses the ball.	Keep eyes on the ball.
Ball rolls over the controlling foot.	Lock the ankle, point toe slightly up.
Ball bounces off the controlling foot.	Draw the controlling leg back as the ball arrives.





# THROW-IN

For 8U, each region shall have the discretion to use either throw-ins, dribble-ins or pass-ins to restart play.

Used to restart the game after the *entire* ball has crossed the touchline (whether on the ground or in the air).

To see this in action visit [aysou.video/tech5](https://www.aysou.video/tech5)

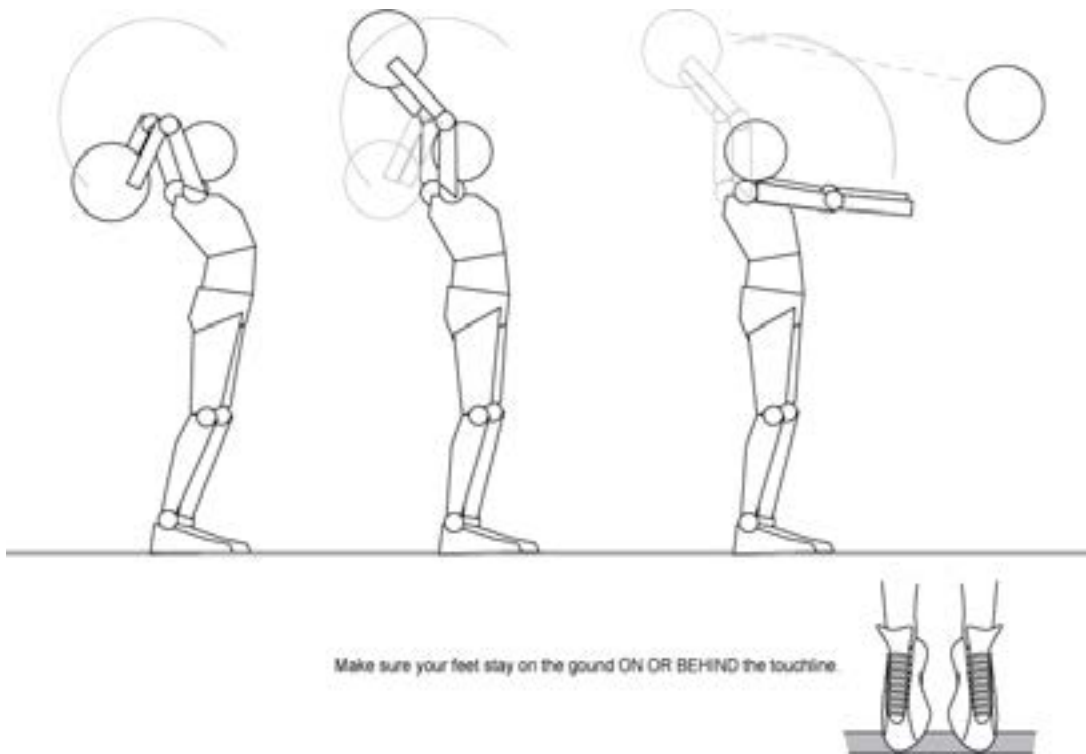
## General Coaching Points:

- Face the field of play.
- Have part of each foot on the ground, either on or behind the touchline when the ball is released.
- Use both hands and deliver the ball from behind and over the head in one continuous motion.
- Use the “W”/Butterfly method of holding the ball (touch thumbs together and grasp ball in hands).
- Feet must be kept on the ground until ball is released.



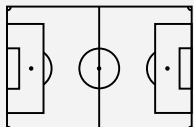
## Common Errors & Correction

Error	Correction
Foot/feet come off the ground during throw.	Have players keep their feet <i>together</i> with knees bent and hold their feet down until they develop feeling of throwing without lifting feet.
Ball slips out of grasp.	Reinforce use of “W”/Butterfly method of holding ball. If player’s hands are small, instruct them to spread hand out until they have a solid grasp.



# 8U TRAINING ACTIVITIES

## FROM THE **FIELD**



“Players should have the freedom to express themselves, be creative, take risks and make mistakes! Learning from trial and error is a key to *all* development and it is crucial that the environment we create (as coaches) promotes this freedom.”

*AYSO Player Development Team*

## KEEP YOUR TEAM ENGAGED

This section will provide you with Age Appropriate training activities (*options*) recommended to help your 8U players practice their skills. The activities are grouped according to the skill that they will most effectively help to teach (and *generally* progress from fundamental to more challenging). Despite all of the coaching techniques that can be utilized, nothing will ever teach 8U players more effectively than just letting them play.

Be creative with the names of the games and modify them to suit *your* players. Use your own creativity and personality; paint in vivid images to effectively communicate with your players in a language *they* can relate to. If an activity is *not* working as intended, modify (increase/decrease) the Speed, Space, and Opposition to maximize success. Let the players work through the adaptations to find success. Remember, all players are different (often regardless of age), so **adapt accordingly to the needs of *your* specific group.**

**Have fun!**

### KEEP IN MIND



The game itself  
is the best  
teacher!

# END ZONE DRIBBLERS

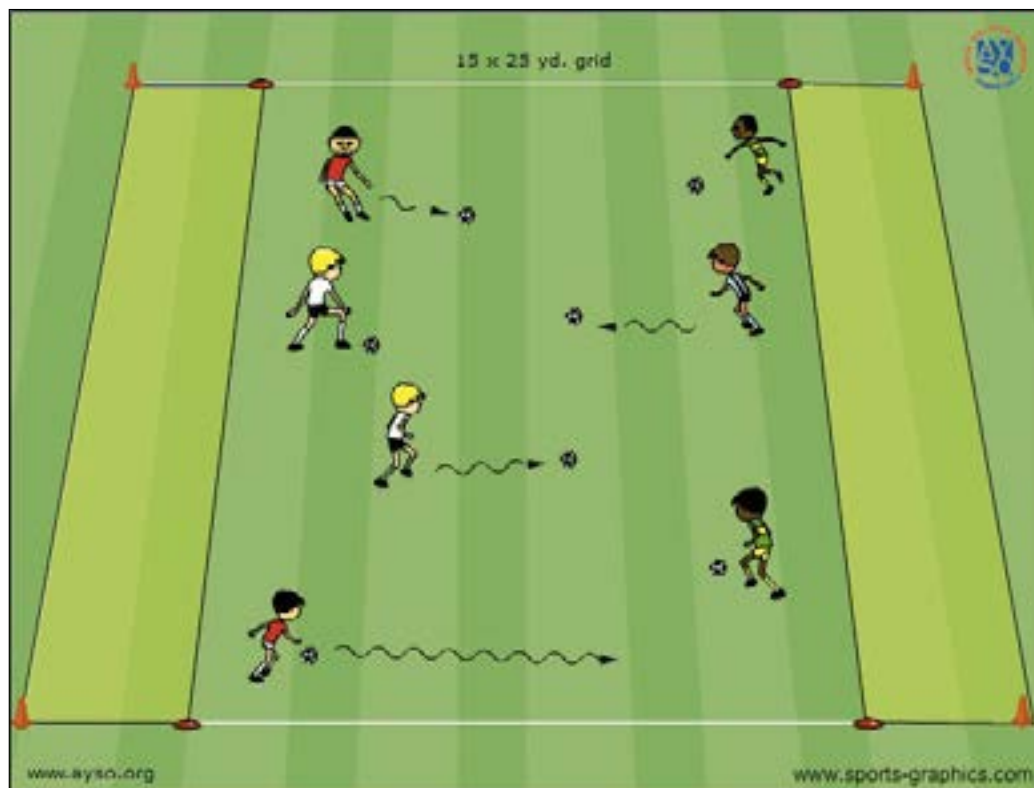
## TECHNIQUE:

Dribbling

## Equipment/

**Organization:** Mark 15 x 25 grid with a five yard “End Zone” at each end. Ball per player. Half of players in one end zone, half in the other.

To see this activity in action visit:  
[aysou.video/endzone](https://www.aysou.video/endzone)



## HOW THE GAME IS PLAYED

- Players dribble end zone to end zone, controlling ball and stopping it in the other zone. Turn, repeat.
- Change speed: slow, half-pace, full-pace.
- Change direction: players dribble diagonally across grid.
- Turns: players must perform a fake or feint in central area before reaching end zone.

## VARIATIONS/PROGRESSIONS

- Players in pairs, one ball per pair. Players must perform four passes in end zone before the other player dribbles to other end.
- Add time challenge.

## COACHING POINTS

- Use all major surfaces of both feet.
- Knees slightly bent and body leaning slightly over the ball for balance.
- Players should play with their head up, enabling them to see the field as well as the ball by utilizing peripheral vision as their ability progresses.
- Ball should be kept close using soft touches (never more than a step or two away).
- Players should attempt to touch the ball every other step (or so).

# AROUND THE COMPASS

## TECHNIQUE:

Dribbling

## Equipment/

**Organization:** Cones are placed north, south, east and west approximately eight yards away from a central spot marked with four cones (one for each player). Four players, one on each point, each with a ball.

To see this activity in action visit:  
[aysou.video/compass](https://www.aysou.org/video/compass)



## HOW THE GAME IS PLAYED

- Players travel around the world.
- Players dribble towards the middle cone and then out to their immediate right.
- They turn and head back to the middle and repeat until they have visited all the coordinates on the compass.
- Rotate players as needed or have secondary grid.

## VARIATIONS/PROGRESSIONS

- Players dribble around the cones.
- Left foot, right foot; outside of foot, inside of foot dribbling.
- At center mark, use drag back turn.
- At outer point, use a different turn or fake.
- Time challenge.
- Change direction and pace.

## COACHING POINTS

- Use all major surfaces of both feet.
- Knees slightly bent and body leaning slightly over the ball for balance.
- Players should play with their head up, enabling them to see the field as well as the ball by utilizing peripheral vision as their ability progresses.
- Ball should be kept close using soft touches.
- Players should attempt to touch the ball every other step (or so).
- Ball should never be more than a step or two away.

# BODY BRAKES

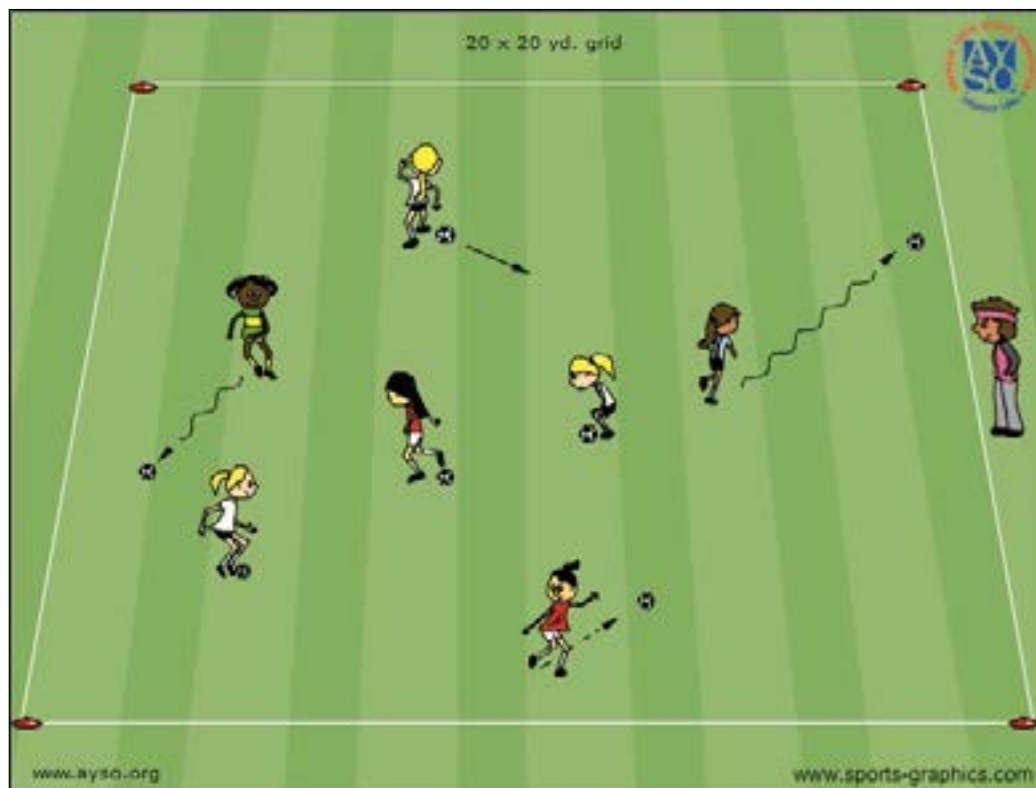
## TECHNIQUE:

Dribbling

## Equipment/

**Organization:** Mark 20 x 20 grid. Ball per player.

To see this activity in action visit:  
[aysou.video/brakes](https://aysou.video/brakes)



## HOW THE GAME IS PLAYED

- Players dribble ball around and through the area, changing pace and directions.
- Coach calls a part of the body, i.e., right knee.
- Players must first stop ball with their foot, then place that part of the body on the ball.
- First player to stop ball gets 10 points.

## VARIATIONS/PROGRESSIONS

- Graduate the pace.
- Set high standards of technique.
- Vary body parts, i.e., elbow, nose, ear, etc. Vary left and right foot to stop ball.
- Add competition (who can execute first).

## COACHING POINTS

- Use all major surfaces of both feet.
- Knees slightly bent and body leaning slightly over the ball for balance.
- Players should play with their head up, enabling them to see the field as well as the ball by utilizing peripheral vision as their ability progresses.
- Ball should be kept close using soft touches.
- Players should attempt to touch the ball every other step (or so).
- Ball should never be more than a step or two away.

# GALAXY BATTLES

## TECHNIQUE:

Dribbling

## Equipment/

**Organization:** Mark a 30 x 30 grid, one ball per player.

To see this activity in action visit:  
[aysso.org/video/galaxy](https://www.aysso.org/video/galaxy)



## HOW THE GAME IS PLAYED

- The grid is the Space Ship and each player must keep their ball on the ship or risk being lost in space. Various commands related to outer-space (or similar theme) are given to the players to dribble their ball in this galactic adventure.
- Cruise: Dribble at light pace around space ship with both feet.
- Hyper Speed: Dribble ball as fast as possible.
- Alien: (Coach) can enter the space ship at any given time and knock the player's ball into space.
- Air Brakes: Each player must stop and place foot on top of ball. (If a player does not stop the ball quickly enough, the Alien can kick ball into space.)
- Force Field: Each player must find a space away from others. (If a player does not find a space beyond arm length of another player, the Alien can kick ball into space.)
- Fighter Pilots: Each player must find a partner and sit down behind each other. (If a player does not find another Fighter Pilot, the Alien can kick ball into space.)
- Space Packs: Players find a partner and jump on each other's back.
- Whenever a player has to go out of the Space Ship to retrieve their ball, they must cover their ears with their hands to prevent internal body explosion.

## VARIATIONS/PROGRESSIONS

- Left foot, right foot; outside of foot, inside of foot dribbling.

## COACHING POINTS

- Use all major surfaces of both feet.
- Knees slightly bent and body leaning slightly over the ball for balance.
- Players should play with their head up, enabling them to see the field as well as the ball by utilizing peripheral vision as their ability progresses.
- Ball should be kept close using soft touches.
- Players should attempt to touch the ball every other step (or so).
- Ball should never be more than a step or two away.
- Change direction and move into space.



# ROB THE NEST

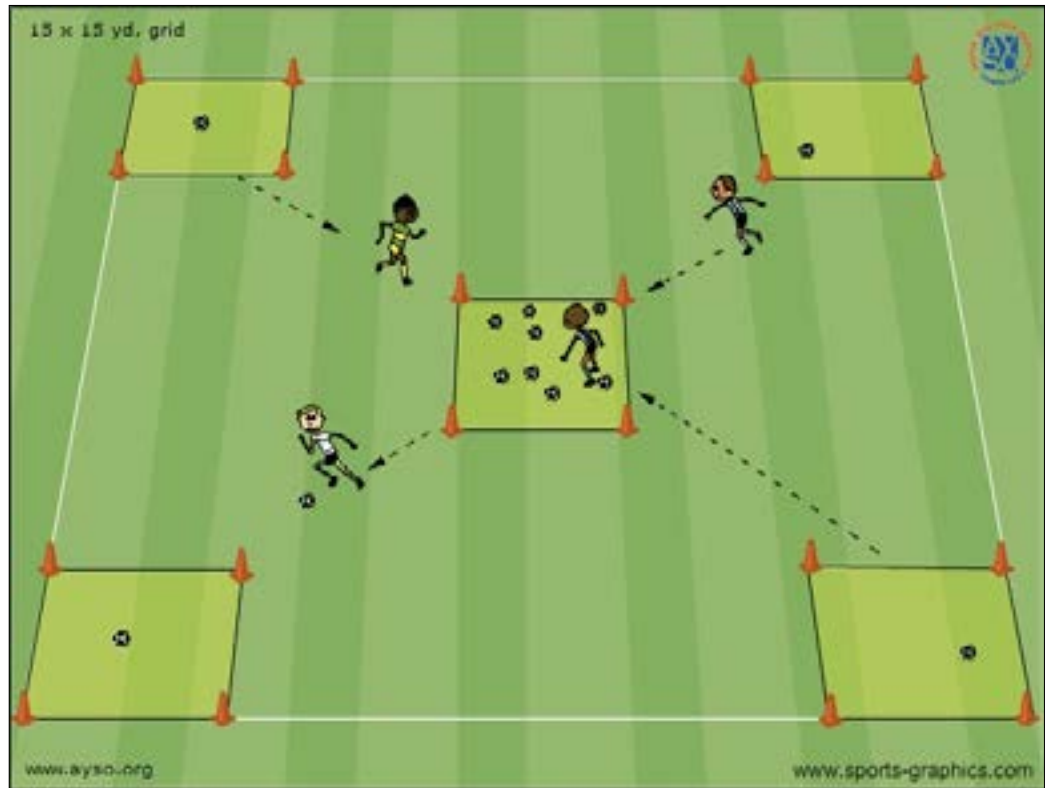
## TECHNIQUE:

Dribbling

## Equipment/

**Organization:** Mark a 15 x 15 grid with a square in each corner and a square in the center. Divide team into each of the four corners. Put all the balls in the middle square.

To see this activity in action visit:  
[aysou.org/video/robnest](https://www.aysou.org/video/robnest)



## HOW THE GAME IS PLAYED

- Players are foxes trying to steal eggs from the nest.
- Players organize themselves into first, second, third, etc., or one player per square (pending numbers).
- On whistle, one player from each team runs into middle square (nest) and using a drag back turn takes a ball (egg) and then dribbles under control to their corner, stopping the ball with sole of foot inside their square.
- The winning team/player is the one that has the most eggs in their own nest.

## VARIATIONS/PROGRESSIONS

- Left foot, right foot; outside of foot, inside of foot dribble.
- Drag back turn using left then right foot.
- Time challenge.
- Players must first run anti-clockwise around their square before entering through their own square to start play.
- Add some gates for the players to dribble back through.
- When the center nest is empty, players continue for an additional 60 seconds and can steal from each other's nests (nests cannot be protected).
- Rotate players often as needed as this activity can be physically demanding.

## COACHING POINTS

- Use all major surfaces of both feet.
- Knees slightly bent and body leaning slightly over the ball for balance.
- Players should play with their head up, enabling them to see the field as well as the ball by utilizing peripheral vision as their ability progresses.
- Ball should be kept close using soft touches.
- Players should attempt to touch the ball every other step (or so).
- Ball should never be more than a step or two away.

# STEAL OR SHIELD

## TECHNIQUE:

Dribbling and Shielding

## Equipment/

**Organization:** Mark 15 x 15 grid. Players in pairs with one ball.

To see this activity in action visit:  
[aysou.video/steal](https://www.aysou.org/video/steal)



## HOW THE GAME IS PLAYED

- One player starts dribbling the ball and at coach's command, their partner tries to steal the ball away.
- The player that ends up with the ball gets a point.

## VARIATIONS/PROGRESSIONS

- Change the size of the grid as needed.
- Set time before defender can challenge for ball.

## COACHING POINTS

### Dribbling Coaching Points:

- Use all major surfaces of both feet.
- Knees slightly bent and body leaning slightly over the ball for balance.
- Players should play with their head up, enabling them to see the field as well as the ball by utilizing peripheral vision as their ability progresses.
- Ball should be kept close using soft touches.
- Players should attempt to touch the ball every other step (or so).
- Ball should never be more than a step or two away.

### Shielding Coaching Points:

- Knees bent, body is sideways to opponent (increasing distance between opponent and ball).
- Use arm to protect, balance and feel where defender is going.
- Rotate/turn as defender attacks or reaches for the ball.
- Use sole of foot to keep ball under control (touch/roll away from defender).

# SIDELINE SOCCER

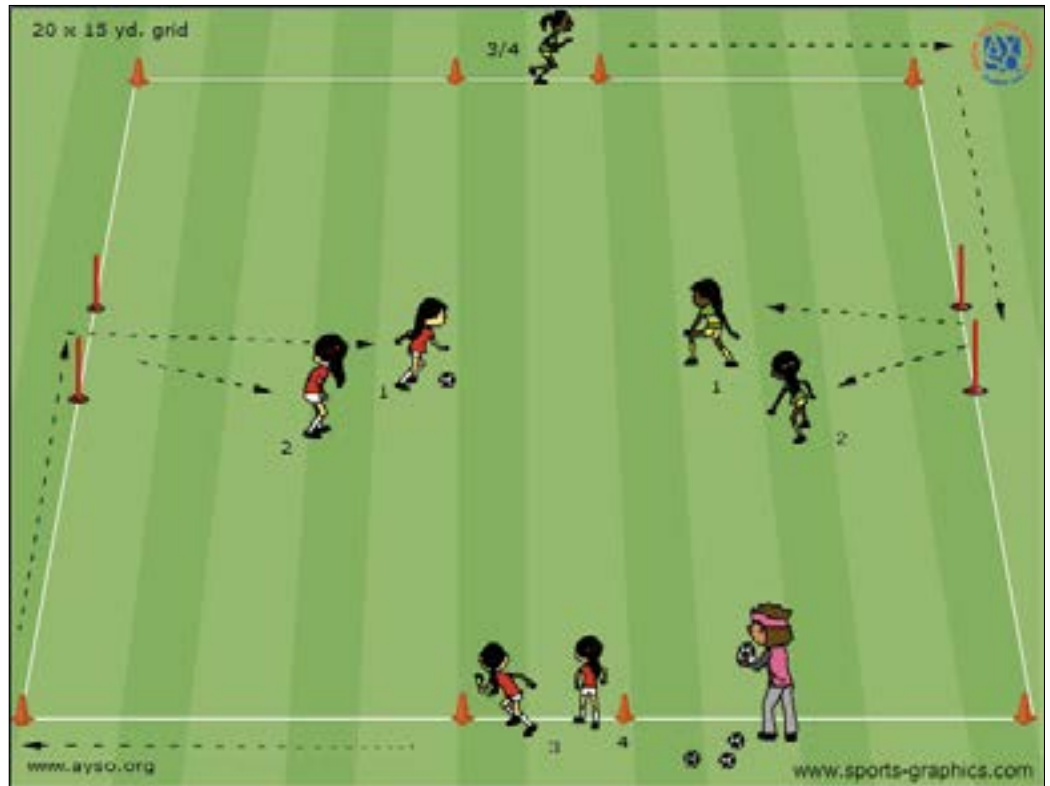
## TECHNIQUE:

Dribbling

## Equipment/

**Organization:** Mark approximately 20 x 15 field with two small goals. Two small gates centered on each sideline with teams lined up in between facing each other. Coach has all the balls and positioned centrally to serve onto field.

To see this activity in action visit:  
[aysou.video/sideline](https://www.aysou.video/sideline)



## HOW THE GAME IS PLAYED

- Players are assigned numbers (same on each side). (Player can play 2 numbers pending attendance, i.e., 3 and 4).
- Coach calls a number(s). That number(s) sprint to their left hand side, around the corner cone, cuts into the goal area and enters the field through the small goal to compete.
- Coach serves (favors) to one of the two players to create offense/defense (and to prevent collision).
- Players play 1 v 1. To score, ball must be dribbled over the goal line.
- Keep score.

## VARIATIONS/PROGRESSIONS

- 2 v 2, 3 v 3.
- Players must pass before they can score.
- Players competing can use their sidelined teammate(s) for support passes.

## COACHING POINTS

- Use all major surfaces of both feet.
- Knees slightly bent and body leaning slightly over the ball for balance.
- Players should play with their head up, enabling them to see the field as well as the ball by utilizing peripheral vision as their ability progresses.
- Ball should be kept close using soft touches.
- Players should attempt to touch the ball every other step (or so).
- Ball should never be more than a step or two away.
- Encourage fakes, feints and creativity.
- Sharp turns around the corners into the field.

# CLEAN YOUR YARD

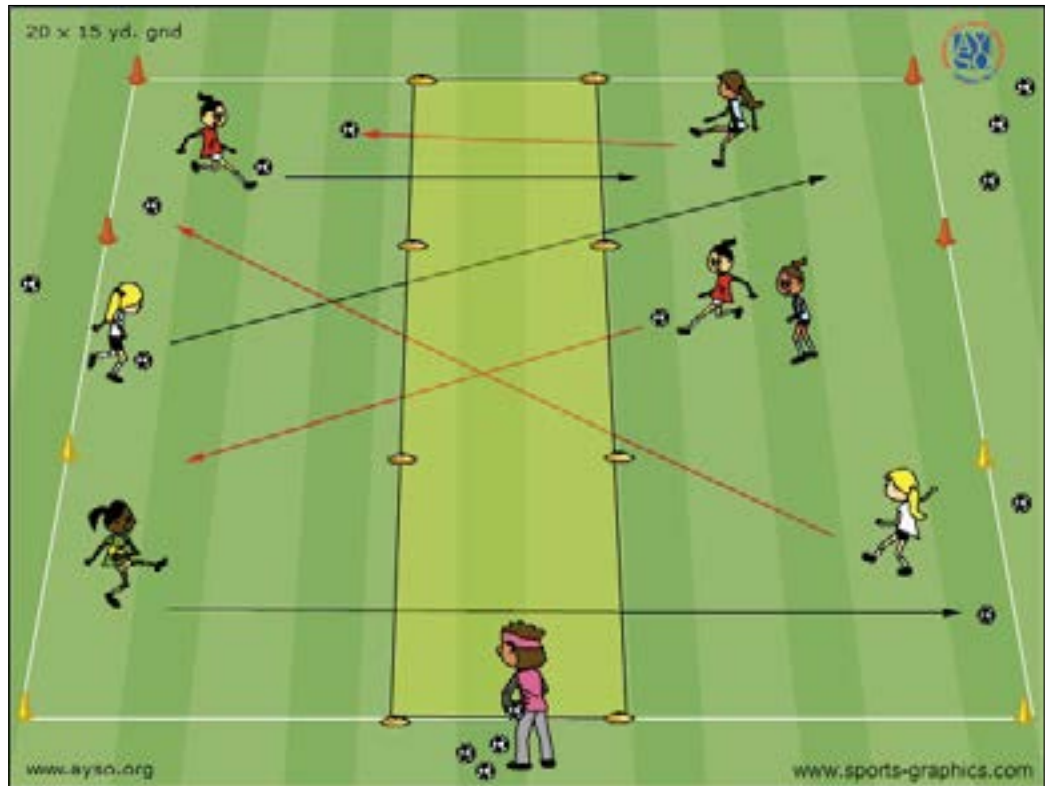
## TECHNIQUE:

Instep Kicking

## Equipment/

**Organization:** Mark a 20 x 15 yard playing area with two big goals on each end line and a 4 yard neutral zone in the center. Divide players into two teams and put one team on either side of neutral zone (coach can clear balls from neutral zone). Ball per player.

To see this activity in action visit:  
[aysou.video/yard](https://www.aysou.org/video/yard)



## HOW THE GAME IS PLAYED

- Both teams try to score on *either* of the other team's goals (directly opposite or diagonally) using instep kick.
- After a player shoots, they can get any other soccer ball in their side of the field and try to score again.
- Players are not allowed into the neutral zone or block their goals.
- After a set period, the team with the most goals wins the game (also the team with the *fewest* number of balls in their yard (side), gets an extra point/goal.
- Coach has plenty of spare balls to help flow. Use rotating players as retrievers if available or create a pair (pending attendance).

## VARIATIONS/PROGRESSIONS

- Left foot, right foot.
- Vary size of grid.
- Prior to shooting back a ball, players must dribble around a cone that has been set up behind their goal area.

## COACHING POINTS

- Body should be over the ball (forward).
- Eyes on ball.
- Support foot next to ball pointed in general direction of target.
- Lock ankle back and down, toes pointed down.
- Strike the center of the ball on the instep ("laces" of the shoes).
- Follow through—move leg straight through toward target.
- Simple decision making by looking for the open goal.
- Encourage quick shooting repetition. Shoot every time they find a ball!

# FOUR CORNER SHOOTING

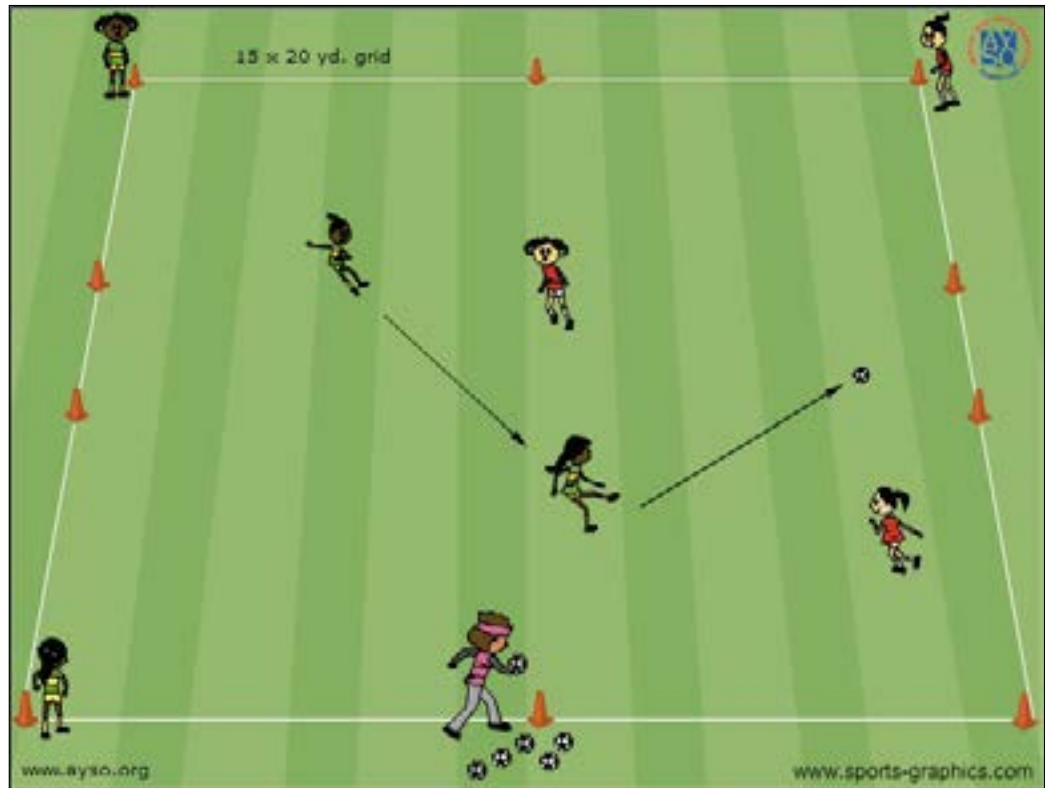
## TECHNIQUE:

Instep Shooting  
(inside of foot control,  
dribbling)

## Equipment/

**Organization:** Mark 15 x 20 grid with a goal at either end. Two teams. Half the players from each team split into two lines on each corner. Coach is on sideline with all the balls.

To see this activity in action visit:  
[aysou.video/fourcorner](https://www.aysou.org/video/fourcorner)



## HOW THE GAME IS PLAYED

- As coach serves ball into play, the first player from each of the four corners comes out to play 2 v 2.
- Play continues until a goal is scored using an instep kick or ball goes out of play. When this happens, all players go off and the next four players enter the field for a 2 v 2. (One corner may only have one player pending attendance. If so, players rotate returning to that corner.)
- Game continues until coach has used all the balls. When this happens, players retrieve balls and dribble them back to coach (team with most gets an extra goal).

## VARIATIONS/PROGRESSIONS

- Left foot, right foot shots.
- Players must pass before shot.
- Player must beat an opponent before shooting.
- Add additional goals on sidelines.

## COACHING POINTS

- Body should be over the ball (forward).
- Eyes on ball.
- Support foot next to ball pointed in general direction of target.
- Lock ankle back and down, toes pointed down.
- Strike the center of the ball on the instep ("laces" of the shoes).
- Follow through—move leg straight through toward target.



# PIN BALL WIZARDS

## TECHNIQUE:

Inside of the Foot Push Pass

## Equipment/

**Organization:** Mark 20 x 20 grid, two teams opposite each other on the end lines, each player has a ball. Approx. 20 tall cones are scattered randomly along the middle of the grid (you can mark this channel with sideline cones).

To see this activity in action visit:  
[aysou.video/wizards](http://aysou.video/wizards)



## HOW THE GAME IS PLAYED

- Players must pass the ball and try and knock down as many cones as possible by using an inside of foot push pass.
- When they knock down a cone they must run, pick it up and place it on a pile beside them outside the grid.
- Winning player / team is those with most pins.

## VARIATIONS/PROGRESSIONS

- Left foot, right foot passes.
- Vary distance.
- Add time challenge.

## COACHING POINTS

- Place support foot next to ball (*toe should not be past ball*) pointed in general direction of target.
- Lock ankle with toe pointed slightly up.
- Inside of foot should face the general direction of target
- Keep eyes on ball.
- Move leg straightforward toward target, ankle locked and toe up.
- Strike at the center of the ball with the inside of the foot.
- Sole of foot should be off the ground with toe pointed slightly up, and perpendicular to ball (form "T" or "L" with feet).
- Strike through center of ball and follow through in direction of pass.



# BORDER WARS

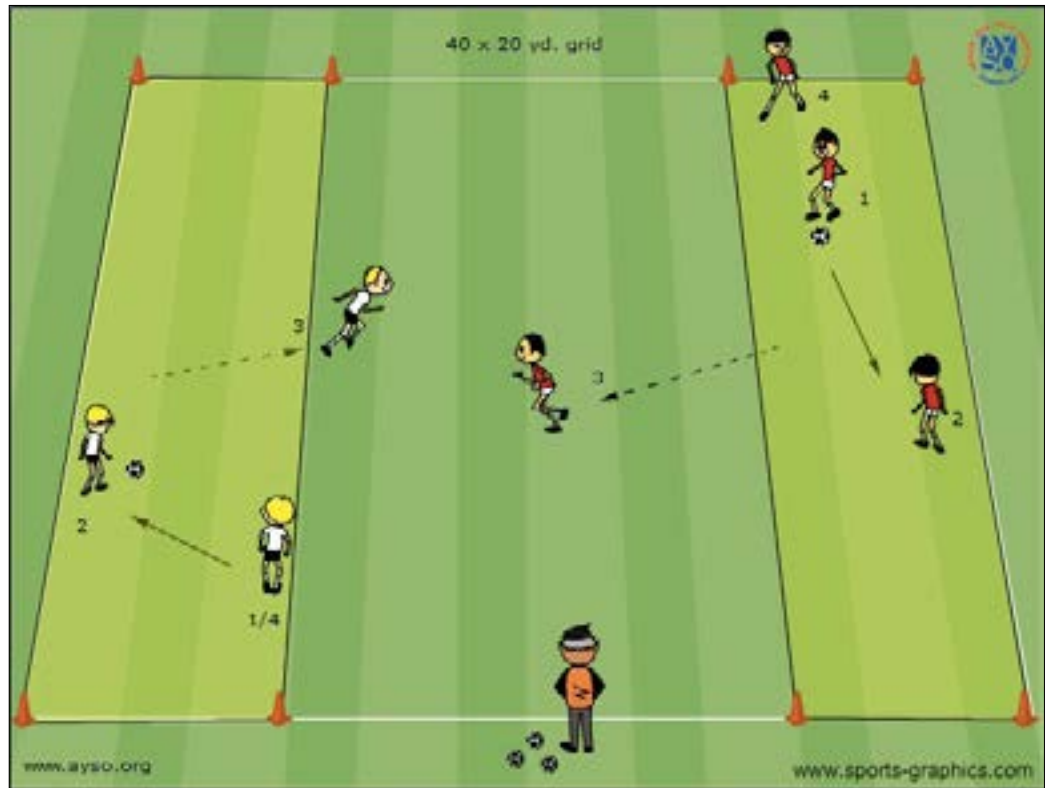
## TECHNIQUE:

Inside of Foot Push  
Pass, Inside of Foot Ball  
Control

## Equipment/

**Organization:** Mark  
40 x 20 grid with 10-yard  
wide zones at each end.  
Two teams. Each team has  
a ball and occupies an end  
zone (border). Players are  
numbered or given names of  
teams or characters (player  
can play 2 numbers pending  
attendance, i.e., 1 and 4).

To see this activity in action visit:  
[aysou.video/wars](https://www.aysou.org/video/wars)



## HOW THE GAME IS PLAYED

- Both teams pass a ball to each other in sequence: 1 to 2 to 3, etc., using an inside of foot pass and controlling using inside of foot control.
- Encourage the players to move to a new patch of grass immediately after passing.
- Call out a number. The players with that number run across to the opposite border (end zone) and try to steal the ball or knock it out of the playing area. The first player to succeed wins a point for their team.
- The first team to 10 points wins.
- Once a number is called, the rest of the team do not have to pass in sequence any more.

## VARIATIONS/PROGRESSIONS

- Call out two numbers and/or restrict the number of touches the players in possession are allowed.

## COACHING POINTS

### Coaching Points Inside of Foot Push Pass:

- Place support foot next to ball (toe should not be past ball) pointed in general direction of target.
- Lock ankle with toe pointed slightly up.
- Inside of foot should face the general direction of target
- Keep eyes on ball.
- Move leg straightforward toward target, ankle locked and toe up.
- Strike at the center of the ball with the inside of the foot.
- Sole of foot should be off the ground with toe pointed slightly up, and perpendicular to ball (form "T" or "L" with feet).
- Strike through center of ball and follow through in direction of pass.

### Coaching Points Inside of Foot Control:

- On toes (ready to react).
- Get in line with flight of ball.
- Present inside of foot.
- Cushion the ball (by withdrawing the foot).
- Take touch into the best position for next move.

# GATE BALL

## TECHNIQUE:

Inside of Foot Ball Control

## Equipment/

**Organization:** Mark 30 x 30 grid, players in pairs, one ball per pair (combine three pending attendance). Make 6-10 small gates with cones (have more gates than pairs) placed randomly in grid.

To see this activity in action visit:  
[aysou.video/gate](https://www.aysou.video/gate)



## HOW THE GAME IS PLAYED

- Players move through the grid from gate to gate.
- One player passes to the other who then controls the ball using the inside of foot.
- After each goal, the pair move onto another set of empty gates to score.
- Each pair counts how many goals they score in a set period of time.

## VARIATIONS/PROGRESSIONS

- Left foot, right foot control and passing.
- Add time challenge.
- Increase number of times pair must pass ball through gates before moving on.

## COACHING POINTS

- Quality passing technique.
- Quality inside of foot control:
  - On toes (ready to react).
  - Get in line with flight of ball.
  - Present inside of foot.
  - Cushion the ball (by withdrawing the foot).
  - Take touch into the best position for next move.

# BE RIGHT BACK!

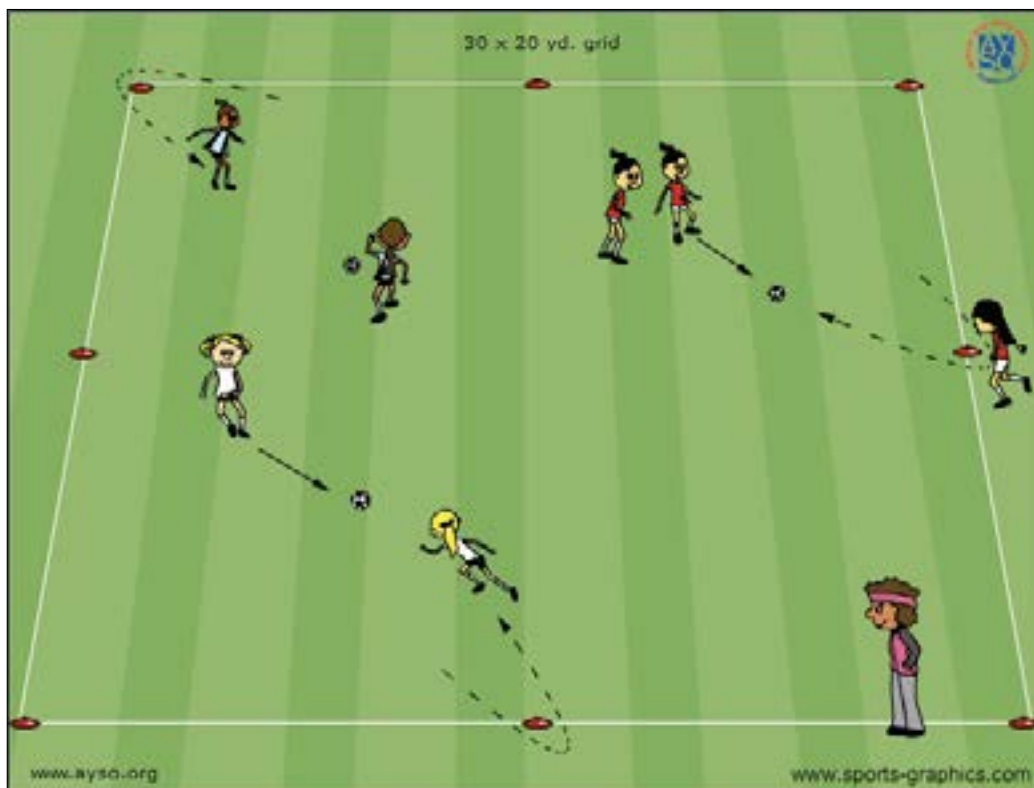
## TECHNIQUE:

Inside of Foot Push Pass, Inside of Foot Ball Control

## Equipment/

**Organization:** Mark an area 30 x 20 with 8 cones evenly placed around the edges of the grid. Players in pairs, one ball per pair (combine three if needed pending attendance).

To see this activity in action visit:  
[aysou.video/beback](https://www.aysou.video/beback)



## HOW THE GAME IS PLAYED

- One player passes to their teammate, pivots, shouts "Be right back!" and runs around one of the cones lining the grid.
- Once they round the cone, they check back in to receive the ball back from their teammate who is waiting in the grid with the ball.
- The player who remained in the grid then passes to their teammate and they run around a different cone to receive the ball.

## VARIATIONS/PROGRESSIONS

- To begin with the player remaining in the grid is stationary and then progresses to dribbling around the grid.
- Increase grid size.
- Condition passing (left foot, right foot).
- Condition ball control (left foot, right foot).
- Condition number of touches to control and pass (3, 2).

## COACHING POINTS

- Inside of foot push pass techniques.
- Inside of foot ball control techniques.
- As the player comes back to receive the pass, their teammate should pass it as soon as eye contact has been made.
- When receiving the ball, players should touch the ball into the area they want to move into.

# 8U TRAINING PLANS

## RUN YOUR SESSION LIKE A PRO

It is a great pleasure to present a collection of 8U Training Plans from all across the soccer globe, including AYSO, Division 1 Universities, U.S. Soccer, and the NSCAA. This broad perspective from top level youth coaches is representative of today's game and will give you a solid base to use for your in-season training sessions **or a solid framework to help design your own plans.**

Plans are grouped by topic and (and *generally* progress from fundamental to more challenging).

### KEEP IN MIND



As with all sessions, you will need to **customize and adapt each session** and activity to your **own** players' stages of development and levels of ability (grid size, numbers, equipment, etc.). Some activities will work more effectively than others, pending numerous variables, so try them out and have fun with it (*they are only suggestions*).



# TRAINING PLAN 8U DRIBBLING

## STAGE 1

(Technical Warm-up)

- \* Max. ball contact, repetition
- \* Introduce topic
- \* Physical prep. (dynamic)
- \* Unopposed-opposed

To see this activity in action visit: [aysou.video/8u1](https://www.aysou.com/video/8u1)

## ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 20x20 grid. 1 ball per player.
- Players dribble through grid changing pace and direction.
- Coach calls body part, i.e., right knee. Players must first stop ball with foot, then place that part of body on ball.
- First player to execute gets 10 points.
- > Control tempo.
- > Add competition. Who can execute first?

Player leads stretching (v. light at this age, more habit forming and introduce proper form).



## COACHING POINTS

- Introduce dribbling technique.
- Movement, touch on ball.
- Preparation.
- Freedom.
- Fun!

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☒  
PHYSICAL ☒  
TECHNICAL ☒  
TACTICAL ☐

## STAGE 2

(Small-Sided Activity)

- \* Individual & pairs
- \* Competition & teamwork
- \* 2v2 and 3v3...

To see this activity in action visit: [aysou.video/8u2](https://www.aysou.com/video/8u2)

## ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 30x30 grid. 1 ball per player.
- Grid is Space Ship & each player must keep ball on ship or be lost in space.
- Add numerous commands: Cruise, Hyper Speed, Alien, Air Brakes, Force Field, Fighter Pilots, Space Packs.
- When players leave ship to retrieve ball, they must cover their ears to avoid internal explosion. Create atmosphere, tell the story, animate.
- > Left, right, different parts of foot.



## COACHING POINTS

- Quality dribbling technique.
- Spatial awareness.
- Fun!

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☒  
PHYSICAL ☒  
TECHNICAL ☒  
TACTICAL ☐

## STAGE 3

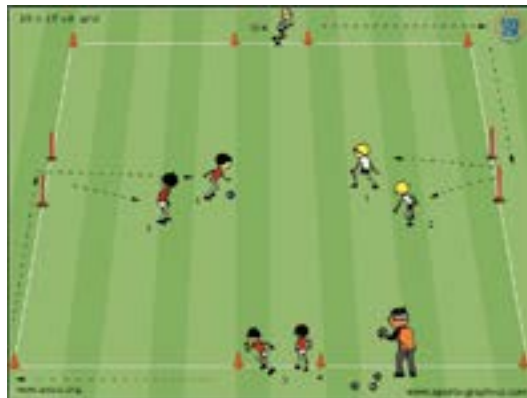
(Expanded Activity)

- \* Opposition (attack & defense)
- \* Directional play (w/ goals or targets)
- \* Expanded numbers (3v3 to 7v7...)
- \* Most game aspects

To see this activity in action visit: [aysou.video/8u3](https://www.aysou.com/video/8u3)

## ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 20x15 grid w/ small goals.
- Two small gates centered on each sideline w/ teams lined up in between facing each other.
- Players are numbered (same each side).
- Coach calls number(s). That number(s) sprint to their left, around corner cone, cuts into goal area and enters field through small goal to compete.
- Serve to favor one player (attack/ defense, avoid collisions).
- 1v1, to score player must dribble through gates. Give team names, keep score!
- >2v2, 3v3.
- >Players must pass before scoring.
- >Sideline players support.



## COACHING POINTS

- Quality dribbling technique.
- Change of pace and direction to explode past opponent.
- Creativity.
- Individual effort and competitiveness.
- Sharp turns around corners.
- Fun!

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☒  
PHYSICAL ☒  
TECHNICAL ☒  
TACTICAL ☐

## STAGE 4

(Small-Sided Match)

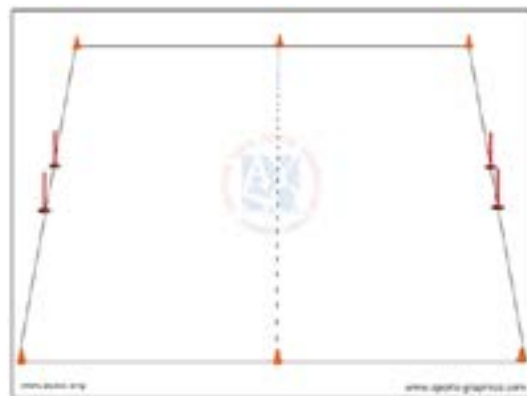
- \* Unconditional
- \* Emphasize topic
- \* Age group laws
- \* Formations
- \* Let them Play!

Cool Down/Debrief

## ORGANIZATION/RULES

- Small-sided match with general rules.
- To score, players must dribble the ball through goal and stop ball with foot.
- > Add additional goals on either sideline.

Player leads stretching (v. light at this age, more habit forming and introduce proper form), **brief** review on lesson and any announcements.



## COACHING POINTS

- Emphasize quality dribbling technique but let them play.

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☒  
PHYSICAL ☒  
TECHNICAL ☒  
TACTICAL ☐



# TRAINING PLAN 8U DRIBBLING

CREATED BY  
Region 688

## STAGE 1

(Technical Warm-up)

- \* Max. ball contact, repetition
- \* Introduce topic
- \* Physical prep. (dynamic)
- \* Unopposed-opposed

To see this activity in action visit: [aysou.video/8u4](https://www.aysou.com/video/8u4)

## ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 20x15 grid. 1 ball per player.
- Player takes name of their favorite dog, i.e., Fido (pet or favorite animal). Holds ball in hands and 1 at a time, hand their ball to coach, who tosses the ball away from the group in any direction within grid (dog park).
- Coach instructs players to retrieve ball in a variety of ways, i.e., dribbling, skipping, using a knee and elbow.
- Players bring their ball back to the coach as instructed as quickly as possible.
- > Coach moves positions.
- > Players work in pairs.

Player leads stretching (v. light at this age, more habit forming and introduce proper form).



## COACHING POINTS

- Introduce dribbling technique.
- Movement, touch on ball.
- Physical coordination.
- Simple decision making.
- Follow directions and movement education.
- Creativity.

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☒  
PHYSICAL ☒  
TECHNICAL ☒  
TACTICAL ☐

## STAGE 2

(Small-Sided Activity)

- \* Individual & pairs
- \* Competition & teamwork
- \* 2v2 and 3v3...

To see this activity in action visit: [aysou.video/8u5](https://www.aysou.com/video/8u5)

## ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 30x30 grid w/ a 5x5 square in each corner. Split players into each square w/ ball each.
- Label each of the small grids spring, summer, fall and winter (or a similar picture for the kids to visualize).
- Each square will have at least 1 player dribbling within.
- Coach shouts a "season" and all players dribble fast to that grid.
- Player who was playing in the grid that was called must dribble to any one of the 3 grids that are now empty. First player to the new grid wins.
- > Left, right, different parts of foot.



## COACHING POINTS

- Use all major surfaces of both feet.
- Knees should be slightly bent and body leaning slightly over ball for balance.
- Players should play with their head up, enabling them to see the field as well as the ball by utilizing peripheral vision as their ability progresses.
- Ball should be kept close using soft touches.
- Players should attempt to touch ball every other step (or so).
- Ball should never be more than a step or two away.

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☒  
PHYSICAL ☒  
TECHNICAL ☒  
TACTICAL ☐

## STAGE 3

(Expanded Activity)

- \* Opposition (attack & defense)
- \* Directional play (w/ goals or targets)
- \* Expanded numbers (3v3 to 7v7...)
- \* Most game aspects

To see this activity in action visit: [aysou.video/8u6](https://www.aysou.com/video/8u6)

## ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 15x20 grid w/ small goal at either end. Two teams. Half players from each team split into two lines on each corner. Coach on sideline with all the balls.
- As coach serves ball into play, 1st player from each of the 4 corners comes out to play 2v2. Play continues until a goal is scored using an instep kick or ball goes out of play. When this happens, all players go off and the next four players enter the field for a 2v2.
- Game continues until coach has used all the balls. When this happens, players retrieve balls and dribble them back to coach (team with most gets an extra goal).



## COACHING POINTS

- Quality dribbling technique.
- Change of pace and direction to explode past opponent.
- Creativity.
- Individual effort and competitiveness.

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☒  
PHYSICAL ☒  
TECHNICAL ☒  
TACTICAL ☐

## STAGE 4

(Small-Sided Match)

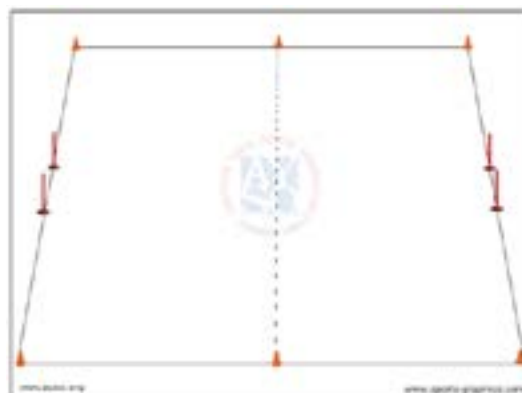
- \* Unconditional
- \* Emphasize topic
- \* Age group laws
- \* Formations
- \* Let them Play!

Cool Down/Debrief

## ORGANIZATION/RULES

- Small-sided match with general rules.
- To score, players must dribble the ball *through* goal and stop ball with foot.
- > Add additional goals on either sideline.

Player leads stretching (v. light at this age, more habit forming and introduce proper form), **brief** review on lesson and any announcements.



## COACHING POINTS

- Emphasize quality dribbling technique but let them play.

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☒  
PHYSICAL ☒  
TECHNICAL ☒  
TACTICAL ☐



# TRAINING PLAN 8U DRIBBLING

CREATED BY  
Alsop  
AYSO Soccer Camps

## STAGE 1

(Technical Warm-up)

- \* Max. ball contact, repetition
- \* Introduce topic
- \* Physical prep. (dynamic)
- \* Unopposed-opposed

To see this activity in action visit [aysou.video/8u7](https://www.aysou.com/video/8u7)

## ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 15x15 grid w/ square in each corner and a square in the center (w/ all balls).
- Divide team into each of 4 corners. Players/foxes try to steal eggs from nest. Players organize into 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc., or 1 player per square (pending numbers).
- On whistle, 1 player from each team runs into middle *nest* and using a drag back turn takes an *egg* & dribbles under control to their corner, stopping the ball with sole of foot inside their nest.
- Winning team/player is one with most eggs in their own nest.
- > Foxes can steal from each other's nests.

Player leads stretching (v. light at this age, more habit forming and introduce proper form).



## COACHING POINTS

- Use all major surfaces of both feet.
- Knees slightly bent and body leaning slightly over the ball for balance.
- Players should play with their head up.
- Keep ball close using soft touches.
- Players should attempt to touch the ball every other step (or so).
- Ball should never be more than a step or two away.

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☒

PHYSICAL ☒

TECHNICAL ☒

TACTICAL ☐

## STAGE 2

(Small-Sided Activity)

- \* Individual & pairs
- \* Competition & teamwork
- \* 2v2 and 3v3...

To see this activity in action visit [aysou.video/8u8](https://www.aysou.com/video/8u8)

## ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 20x20 grid. 1 ball per player.
- Numerous small cone gates are set up.
- Players dribble through grid changing pace and direction.
- On coach's command the players dribble through as many different gates as they can until the coach calls them to slow down. (5-10 second bursts of action).
- > Left foot, right foot.



## COACHING POINTS

- Players should move ball w/ both feet and both inside and outside of each foot.
- Ball should be in front of the player a distance of one stride.
- On coach call, the player must get their head up to observe other players and vacant gates.
- As players speed up their stride lengthens & ball remains in front of them.
- A turn is made using sole of the foot.
- Despite time pressure, ball should always be under control. should attempt to touch ball every other step (or so). \* Ball should never be more than a step or two away.

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☒

PHYSICAL ☒

TECHNICAL ☒

TACTICAL ☐

## STAGE 3

(Expanded Activity)

- \* Opposition (attack & defense)
- \* Directional play (w/ goals or targets)
- \* Expanded numbers (3v3 to 7v7...)
- \* Most game aspects

To see this activity in action visit [aysou.video/8u9](https://www.aysou.com/video/8u9)

## ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 20x20 grid w/ 2 small goals. 2 teams. All players w/ ball.
- 1 team has only taggers & stands outside grid; other team finds a space within grid.
- On command, taggers try to tag all players inside grid (but keep control of their own ball). When a player is tagged they pick up ball and shout for help (can be freed by teammate if a ball is passed between their legs). Once freed, players can shoot for goal!
- Winning team is the team with taggers who can freeze everyone the quickest in set period.
- Each goal by freed dribblers adds on 5 seconds to tagging team time.
- Rotate inside players every 2-3 minutes.



## COACHING POINTS

- Close control & ball familiarity.
- Head up as often to know where the defenders are & where goals are.
- Avoid and beat defenders with quick turns or skills.
- Keep body in between defender and ball to protect it (shield).
- Encourage players to try specific turns and skills for themselves (drag-back or scissors).

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☒

PHYSICAL ☒

TECHNICAL ☒

TACTICAL ☐

## STAGE 4

(Small-Sided Match)

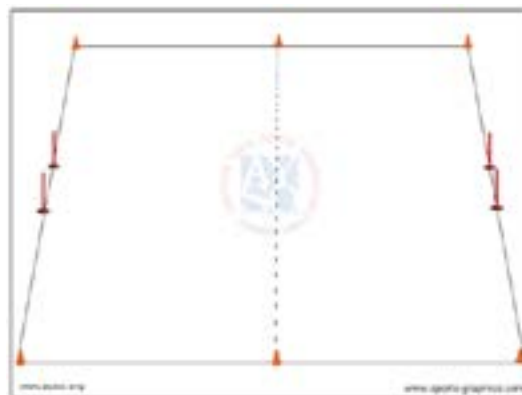
- \* Unconditional
- \* Emphasize topic
- \* Age group laws
- \* Formations
- \* Let them Play!

Cool Down/Debrief

## ORGANIZATION/RULES

- Small-sided match with general rules.
- 2 balanced teams of 3 plus a floating player who plays for whichever team has the ball.
- To score, players must dribble the ball through goal and stop ball with foot.
- > Add additional goals on either sideline.

Player leads stretching (v. light at this age, more habit forming and introduce proper form), *brief* review on lesson and any announcements.



## COACHING POINTS

- Emphasize quality dribbling technique but let them play.

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☒

PHYSICAL ☒

TECHNICAL ☒

TACTICAL ☐

# TRAINING PLAN 8U DRIBBLING

CREATED BY

Barker

NSCAA

## STAGE 1

(Technical Warm-up)

- \* Max. ball contact, repetition
- \* Introduce topic
- \* Physical prep. (dynamic)
- \* Unopposed-opposed

To see this activity in action visit [aysou.video/8u10](https://www.aysou.com/video/8u10)

## ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 20x20 grid. 1 ball per player.
- Numerous cone gates are set up.
- Players dribble through grid changing pace and direction.
- On coach's command the players dribble through as many of the different gates as they can until the coach calls them to slow down. (5-10 second bursts of action).
- > Coach may introduce a turn back through the gate as a progression.

Player leads stretching (v. light at this age, more habit forming and introduce proper form).



## COACHING POINTS

- Players should move ball w/ both feet and both inside and outside of each foot.
- Ball should be in front of the player a distance of one stride.
- On coach call, the player must get their head up to observe other players and vacant gates.
- As players speed up their stride lengthens and the ball remains in front of them.
- A turn is made using sole of the foot.

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☒  
PHYSICAL ☒  
TECHNICAL ☒  
TACTICAL ☐

## STAGE 2

(Small-Sided Activity)

- \* Individual & pairs
- \* Competition & teamwork
- \* 2v2 and 3v3...

To see this activity in action visit [aysou.video/8u11](https://www.aysou.com/video/8u11)

## ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 20x20 grid.
- Half the players try to dribble through as many gates as are open.
- Open is when a player is not in the middle of the gate.
- Coach calls switch and "gatekeepers" either open or close their gate.
- Activity is 30-45 seconds and the players switch roles.
- The more switches the coach calls the more dynamic the game becomes.
- > Coach may introduce a turn back through the gate as a progression.



## COACHING POINTS

- Players should keep their heads up to identify open gates and other players moving in the area.
- Controlling surface is the outside (little toe) or inside (big toe) of both feet.
- Each stride should touch the ball.
- Players should try to react quickly to gates opening and closing by keeping the ball close and being able to change direction cutting the ball to a side or turning completely using the sole of their foot.

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☐  
PHYSICAL ☒  
TECHNICAL ☒  
TACTICAL ☐

## STAGE 3

(Expanded Activity)

- \* Opposition (attack & defense)
- \* Directional play (w/ goals or targets)
- \* Expanded numbers (3v3 to 7v7...)
- \* Most game aspects

To see this activity in action visit [aysou.video/8u12](https://www.aysou.com/video/8u12)

## ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 20x15 field with gates at one end.
- Coach plays the ball to one team and that player must try to dribble through one of the two gates.
- The opponent gives chase and if they can win the ball they play it back to the coach.
- Coach alternates which team begins with the ball.



## COACHING POINTS

- Dribble at speed to gate opposite if the defender can be beaten with speed.
- Dribble the ball across the defender to the other gate keeping the body between the defender and the ball.
- If the defender gets between the ball and the goal decide which gate to attack with speed and/or a move.
- Try to keep moving the ball to off balance the defender and in order to accelerate.

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☒  
PHYSICAL ☒  
TECHNICAL ☒  
TACTICAL ☒

## STAGE 4

(Small-Sided Match)

- \* Unconditional
- \* Emphasize topic
- \* Age group laws
- \* Formations
- \* Let them Play!

Cool Down/Debrief

To see this activity in action visit [aysou.video/8u13](https://www.aysou.com/video/8u13)

## ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 20x15 field w/ two small goals.
- Mark line 3-5 yards in front of each goal.
- 2v2 play. Each out of bounds, the coach introduces a new ball.
- Play is continuous. Upon the coach's command the players tag out of the game and tag in two teammates.
- No player can be in the area of the goal until the ball has been dribbled.
- A goal can be scored once the ball has been dribbled beyond the 3-5 yard line.

Player leads stretching (v. light at this age, more habit forming and introduce proper form), **brief** review on lesson and any announcements.



## COACHING POINTS

- Players have the option to dribble or pass to support.
- They must decide if they can dribble into the scoring zone and shoot.
- When players see they have space to dribble into the zone they should take it.
- Touch the ball with each stride of the dribble and keep the ball in front.
- Last touch before the shot should put the ball out to the side for the shot. \* Before receiving the ball look for the space to attack on the dribble.

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☒  
PHYSICAL ☒  
TECHNICAL ☒  
TACTICAL ☒

# TRAINING PLAN 8U PASSING

CREATED BY  
Kuntz  
Cal State Fullerton

## STAGE 1

(Technical Warm-up)

- \* Max. ball contact, repetition
- \* Introduce topic
- \* Physical prep. (dynamic)
- \* Unopposed-opposed

To see this activity in action visit [aysou.video/8u14](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aysou.video/8u14)

## ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 20x20 grid. 2 players play against each other and share a ball.
- They place 2 cones anywhere from 2-8 yards apart. They choose! Players pass back & forth to each other (inside of foot).
- Ball must never stop, must always stay on ground, & must go thru the 2 cones w/out touching them.
- Whenever an error occurs, other person receives a point. Keep score.
- Because the ball must never stop, players have to play 1-2 touch. The closer the 2 cones are the closer the pairs are probably going to be. The farther apart they are, the more they will have to move laterally.

Player leads stretching (v. light at this age, more habit forming and introduce proper form).



## COACHING POINTS

- Quality push pass technique (placement of plant foot, preparing to strike ball, swing of leg and pace of pass).
- Quality of receiving/controlling the pass (preparing body, cushion ball on contact, move in path of pass).
- Movement off ball.
- Suitable weight, timing and accuracy of pass.

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☒  
PHYSICAL ☒  
TECHNICAL ☒  
TACTICAL ☐

## STAGE 2

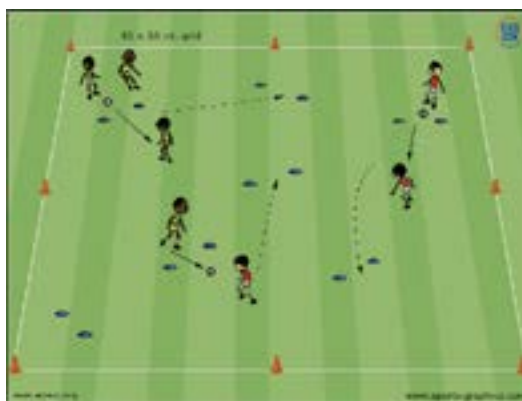
(Small-Sided Activity)

- \* Individual & pairs
- \* Competition & teamwork
- \* 2v2 and 3v3...

To see this activity in action visit [aysou.video/8u15](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aysou.video/8u15)

## ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 30x20 grid, players in pairs, 1 ball per pair. Place 6-10 small cones/ gates (have more gates than pairs) randomly in grid.
- Players pass ball through gate using inside of foot passing and receiving technique and move onto spare gate.
- Pair w/ most gates in 1 minute win.
- > L foot, R foot control & passing.
- > Increase number of times pair must pass ball through gates before moving on.
- > Change speed/time, number and size of gates.



## COACHING POINTS

- Quality push pass technique (placement of plant foot, preparing to strike ball, swing of leg and pace of pass).
- Quality of receiving/controlling the pass (preparing body, cushion ball on contact, move in path of pass).
- Movement off ball.
- Suitable weight, timing and accuracy of pass.

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☒  
PHYSICAL ☒  
TECHNICAL ☒  
TACTICAL ☐

## STAGE 3

(Expanded Activity)

- \* Opposition (attack & defense)
- \* Directional play (w/ goals or targets)
- \* Expanded numbers (3v3 to 7v7...)
- \* Most game aspects

To see this activity in action visit [aysou.video/8u16](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aysou.video/8u16)

## ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 30x30 playing area. mark four small goals (1 yard wide), 5 yards in front of each corner.
- 2 teams 3v3 score in any of the four goals (only from the front).
- Score by passing through (retaining possession).
- When ball goes out of play, restart with kick-in.



## COACHING POINTS

- Quality push pass technique (placement of plant foot, preparing to strike ball, swing of leg and pace of pass).
- Quality of receiving/controlling the pass (preparing body, cushion ball on contact, move in path of pass).
- Movement off ball.
- Suitable weight, timing and accuracy of pass.

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☒  
PHYSICAL ☒  
TECHNICAL ☒  
TACTICAL ☒

## STAGE 4

(Small-Sided Match)

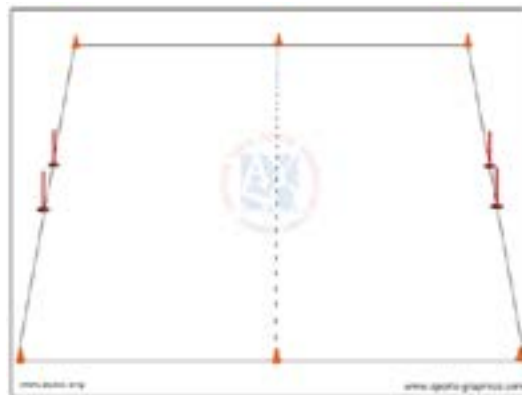
- \* Unconditional
- \* Emphasize topic
- \* Age group laws
- \* Formations
- \* Let them Play!

Cool Down/Debrief

## ORGANIZATION/RULES

- Small-sided match with general rules.

Player leads stretching (v. light at this age, more habit forming and introduce proper form), **brief** review on lesson and any announcements.



## COACHING POINTS

- Emphasize quality passing & receiving techniques but let them play.

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☒  
PHYSICAL ☒  
TECHNICAL ☒  
TACTICAL ☒



# TRAINING PLAN 8U PASSING/RECEIVING

CREATED BY  
Benavidez  
Region 677

## STAGE 1

(Technical Warm-up)

- \* Max. ball contact, repetition
- \* Introduce topic
- \* Physical prep. (dynamic)
- \* Unopposed-opposed

To see this activity in action visit [aysou.video/8u17](#)

## ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 30x20 grid w/ 8 cones around edges of grid.
- Players in pairs, one ball per pair.
- 1 player passes to teammate, pivots & runs around 1 of the cones lining the grid.
- Once round cone, they check back in to get ball back from teammate waiting in grid w/ ball.
- The player who remained in grid then passes to their teammate & they run around a different cone to receive ball.
- Player remaining in grid is stationary & then progresses to dribbling around the grid.
- > L foot, R foot passing & control.
- > Condition touches to control and pass (3, 2).

Player leads stretching (v. light at this age, more habit forming and introduce proper form).



## COACHING POINTS

- Inside of foot push pass techniques.
- Inside of foot ball control techniques.
- As the player comes back to receive the pass, their teammate should pass it as soon as eye contact has been made.
- When receiving the ball, players should touch the ball into the area they want to move into.

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☒  
PHYSICAL ☒  
TECHNICAL ☒  
TACTICAL ☐

## STAGE 2

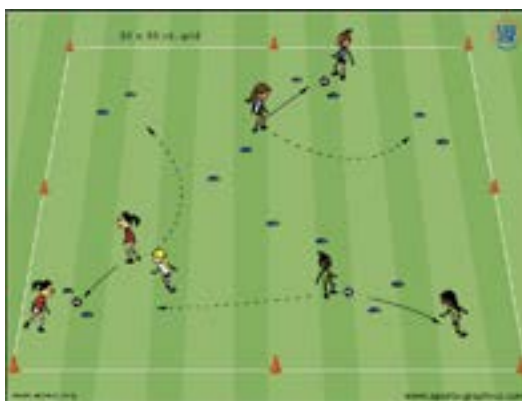
(Small-Sided Activity)

- \* Individual & pairs
- \* Competition & teamwork
- \* 2v2 and 3v3...

To see this activity in action visit [aysou.video/8u18](#)

## ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 30x20 grid, players in pairs, 1 ball per pair. Place 6-10 small cones/gates (have more gates than pairs) randomly in grid.
- Players pass ball through gate using inside of foot passing and receiving technique and move onto spare gate.
- Pair w/ most gates in 1 minute win.
- > L foot, R foot control & passing.
- > Increase number of times pair must pass ball through gates before moving on.
- > Change speed/time, number and size of gates.



## COACHING POINTS

- Quality push pass technique (placement of plant foot, preparing to strike ball, swing of leg and pace of pass).
- Quality of receiving/controlling the pass (preparing body, cushion ball on contact, move in path of pass).
- Both feet to receive and pass.
- Movement: players need to take controlling touch, look up to find teammate and deliver good instep pass.
- Spatial awareness.
- Competition.

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☒  
PHYSICAL ☒  
TECHNICAL ☒  
TACTICAL ☐

## STAGE 3

(Expanded Activity)

- \* Opposition (attack & defense)
- \* Directional play (w/ goals or targets)
- \* Expanded numbers (3v3 to 7v7...)
- \* Most game aspects

To see this activity in action visit [aysou.video/8u19](#)

## ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 30x20 grid w/ zone at either end.
- Two small gates/goals per end.
- Divide players into 3v3, 4v4, etc, with one ball.
- Each team needs to connect a pass through each of the 4 gates to win.
- > Use both feet.
- > Change locations of gates within grid.
- > Once a team has successfully connected a pass at each goal, they must do 3 toe taps (or similar skill).
- > Reduce size of gates (once successful with larger size).
- Stipulate that each team member must connect and receive a pass through a gate.



## COACHING POINTS

- Quality push pass technique (placement of plant foot, preparing to strike ball, swing of leg and pace of pass).
- Quality of receiving/controlling the pass (preparing body, cushion ball on contact, move in path of pass).
- Both feet to receive and pass.
- Movement: players need to take controlling touch, look up to find teammate and deliver good instep pass.
- Spatial awareness.
- Competition.

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☒  
PHYSICAL ☒  
TECHNICAL ☒  
TACTICAL ☒

## STAGE 4

(Small-Sided Match)

- \* Unconditional
- \* Emphasize topic
- \* Age group laws
- \* Formations
- \* Let them Play!

Cool Down/Debrief

To see this activity in action visit [aysou.video/8u20](#)

## ORGANIZATION/RULES

- Small-sided match with general rules.
- Place a goal/gate at each end of the grid.
- To score, players must connect a pass to a teammate who has run through the goal/gate to receive the ball.
- > Add goals/gates on either sideline.

Player leads stretching (v. light at this age, more habit forming and introduce proper form), **brief** review on lesson and any announcements.



## COACHING POINTS

- Emphasize quality passing and receiving technique but let them play.

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☒  
PHYSICAL ☒  
TECHNICAL ☒  
TACTICAL ☒

# TRAINING PLAN 8U PASSING

CREATED BY  
Region 688

## STAGE 1

(Technical Warm-up)

- \* Max. ball contact, repetition
- \* Introduce topic
- \* Physical prep. (dynamic)
- \* Unopposed-opposed

To see this activity in action visit [aysou.video/8u21](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aysou.video/8u21)

## ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 40x30 grid w/ 3 10x10 squares as shown. Each square represents a famous soccer team w/ a group of 3 players, 1 ball.
- Each team of 2 or 3 makes short passes while moving around in their area.
- On coach command:
- **Barcelona**-each group passes ball clockwise to next area & continues passing & moving w/ the ball they receive.
- **Liverpool**-Teams dribble ball clockwise to the next area and continue passing and moving.
- **Juventus**-Each group passes ball counter clockwise to next area and continues passing & moving w/ ball they receive.

Player leads stretching (v. light at this age, more habit forming and introduce proper form).



## COACHING POINTS

- Quality passing technique.
- Quality first touch efficiency.
- Movement off ball.
- Suitable weight, timing and accuracy of pass.

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☒  
PHYSICAL ☒  
TECHNICAL ☒  
TACTICAL ☐

## STAGE 2

(Small-Sided Activity)

- \* Individual & pairs
- \* Competition & teamwork
- \* 2v2 and 3v3...

To see this activity in action visit [aysou.video/8u22](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aysou.video/8u22)

## ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 20x20 grid w/ small goal on each side with cones.
- 5 attackers & 2 defenders (two headed monster).
- Defenders (two headed monster) must link by holding a scrimmage vest while chasing the attackers.
- Attackers must make 5 consecutive inside of foot push passes inside the area before they can dribble through a goal to score.
- > If the 2 defenders win the ball they may break their link and attempt to score in any of the four goals.
- Keep score.



## COACHING POINTS

- Quality passing technique.
- Quality first touch efficiency.
- Emphasize receiving at angle, w/ open body shape so player can see where the ball is coming from and where it can potentially go to, as well as a shoulder check to know whether pressure is close or not.
- Communicate with team mates to prevent misplaced passes (verbal communication, eye contact and body language).

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☒  
PHYSICAL ☒  
TECHNICAL ☒  
TACTICAL ☐

## STAGE 3

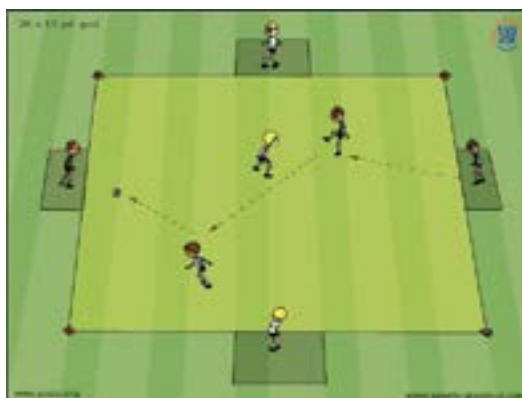
(Expanded Activity)

- \* Opposition (attack & defense)
- \* Directional play (w/ goals or targets)
- \* Expanded numbers (3v3 to 7v7...)
- \* Most game aspects

To see this activity in action visit [aysou.video/8u23](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aysou.video/8u23)

## ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 20x15. 2v1, w/ 2 target players for either team on sides in designated areas.
- 2 attackers play across length of grid, while 1 defender adds pressure (& tries to regain possession and find their target/outlet).
- Object is to pass ball from 1 target across to opposite target keeping possession. If so, 1 point is awarded.
- If defender wins ball, they get 1 point; if defender can clear to either of their target players, 2 points.
- Both target players have to touch ball without opposition winning it before any point is awarded to attackers.
- Both attackers must make at least 1 pass before it can be played to opposite target.
- >Defender's target can join in (2v2).
- > Rotate players often (esp. def.) and adjust numbers based on attendance.



## COACHING POINTS

- Game gets easier w/ quality passing & control.
- Spatial awareness.
- Encourage good movement off ball.
- Encourage good communication (important in keeping possession).
- Encourage effort by defender.

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☒  
PHYSICAL ☒  
TECHNICAL ☒  
TACTICAL ☒

## STAGE 4

(Small-Sided Match)

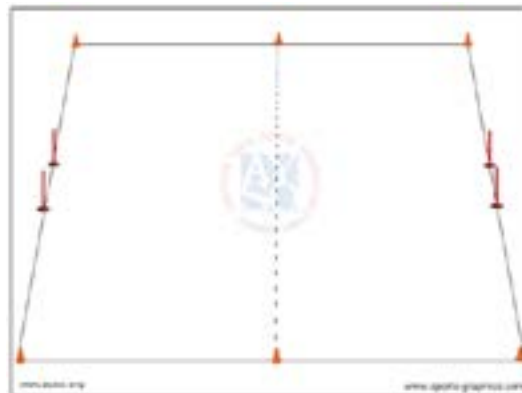
- \* Unconditional
- \* Emphasize topic
- \* Age group laws
- \* Formations
- \* Let them Play!

Cool Down/Debrief

## ORGANIZATION/RULES

- Small-sided match with general rules.

Player leads stretching (v. light at this age, more habit forming and introduce proper form), **brief** review on lesson and any announcements.



## COACHING POINTS

- Emphasize quality passing & receiving techniques but let them play.

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☒  
PHYSICAL ☒  
TECHNICAL ☒  
TACTICAL ☒

# TRAINING PLAN 8U FINISHING/SHOOTING

CREATED BY  
Region 688

## STAGE 1

(Technical Warm-up)

- \* Max. ball contact, repetition
- \* Introduce topic
- \* Physical prep. (dynamic)
- \* Unopposed-opposed

To see this activity in action visit [aysou.video/8u24](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8u24)

## ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 30x20 area w/ two small goals on each end labeled A & B. Grid is split into 3x10 yard sections. 1 ball each.
- Players are numbered 1-7 and dribble ball in central grid, performing turns, moves, changing pace, and direction.
- Coach calls number 1-7 and A or B goal. Player whose number is called, performs a drag back turn and dribbles their ball at pace to the specific goal and simply strikes the ball using instep kick into the empty goal, collects ball and rejoins group.
- > Left foot, right foot.
- > Player must strike at goal within 2, 3, 4 yards from central grid (mark line(s) w/ cones).

Player leads stretching (v. light at this age, more habit forming and introduce proper form).



## COACHING POINTS

- Body should be over the ball (forward).
- Eyes on ball.
- Support foot next to ball pointed in general direction of target.
- Lock ankle back and down, toes pointed down.
- Strike the center of the ball on the instep ("laces" of the shoes).
- Follow through—move leg straight through toward target.
- Keep quick flow, lots of shots. 3 seconds to get shot off.
- Quality dribbling and turning technique.

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☒  
PHYSICAL ☒  
TECHNICAL ☒  
TACTICAL ☐

## STAGE 2

(Small-Sided Activity)

- \* Individual & pairs
- \* Competition & teamwork
- \* 2v2 and 3v3...

To see this activity in action visit [aysou.video/8u25](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8u25)

## ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 30x20 area w/ 2 small goals on each end labeled A & B. Grid is split into 3x10 yard sections. Players in pairs. Central grid has a gate for each pair (gates are numbered).
- Players pass ball back & forth using inside of foot passing and receiving (2 touch).
- When coach calls gate number and goal (A or B), pair at that gate go 1v1 to goal.
- Player in possession of ball at time of call, becomes attacker and dribbles to goal and shoots using instep kick. Player not in possession becomes defender and gives chase (passive to start).
- Keep score.
- > L foot, R foot passes, control & shots.
- > Passive to full pressure defending.
- > Have 2 pairs per gate, 1 ball, creating 2v2.
- > Add cone(s) in goal to hit.



## COACHING POINTS

- Body should be over the ball (forward).
- Eyes on ball.
- Support foot next to ball pointed in general direction of target.
- Lock ankle back and down, toes pointed down.
- Strike the center of the ball on the instep ("laces" of the shoes).
- Follow through—move leg straight through toward target.
- Quality passing & receiving.

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☒  
PHYSICAL ☒  
TECHNICAL ☒  
TACTICAL ☐

## STAGE 3

(Expanded Activity)

- \* Opposition (attack & defense)
- \* Directional play (w/ goals or targets)
- \* Expanded numbers (3v3 to 7v7...)
- \* Most game aspects

To see this activity in action visit [aysou.video/8u26](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8u26)

## ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 20x15 area w/ 2 small goals. Two small gates centered on each sideline with teams lined up in between facing each other. Coach has all the balls and positioned centrally to serve onto field.
- Players are assigned numbers (same each side).
- Coach calls a number(s). That number(s) sprint to their left hand side, around the corner cone, cuts into the goal area & enters field through small goal to compete & shoot on goal.
- Coach serves (favors) to one of the two players to create offense/defense (& to prevent collision).
- > 2v2, 3v3.
- > Players must pass before they can score.
- > Players competing can use their sidelined teammate(s) for support passes.



## COACHING POINTS

- Body should be over the ball (forward).
- Eyes on ball.
- Support foot next to ball pointed in general direction of target.
- Lock ankle back and down, toes pointed down.
- Strike the center of the ball on the instep ("laces" of the shoes).
- Follow through—move leg straight through toward target.
- Take the shot!
- Sharp turns around the corners into the field.

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☒  
PHYSICAL ☒  
TECHNICAL ☒  
TACTICAL ☒

## STAGE 4

(Small-Sided Match)

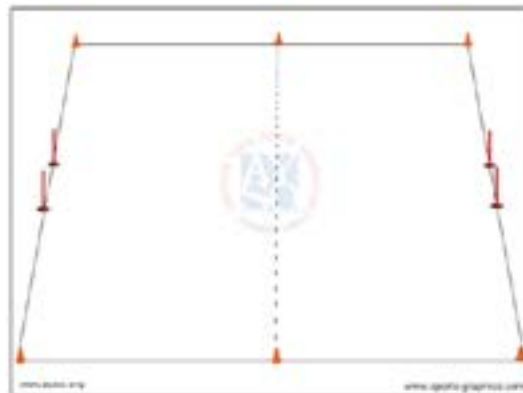
- \* Unconditional
- \* Emphasize topic
- \* Age group laws
- \* Formations
- \* Let them Play!

Cool Down/Debrief

## ORGANIZATION/RULES

- Small-sided match with general rules.
- Place a goal/gate at each end of the grid.
- > Place additional goals/gates on either sideline.

Player leads stretching (v. light at this age, more habit forming and introduce proper form), **brief** review on lesson and any announcements.



## COACHING POINTS

- Emphasize quality shooting technique but let them play.
- Establish a confident and free learning environment; where players are *encouraged* to take the shot without fear of missing.

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☒  
PHYSICAL ☒  
TECHNICAL ☒  
TACTICAL ☒



# TRAINING PLAN 8U FINISHING/SHOOTING

CREATED BY  
Region 688

## STAGE 1

(Technical Warm-up)

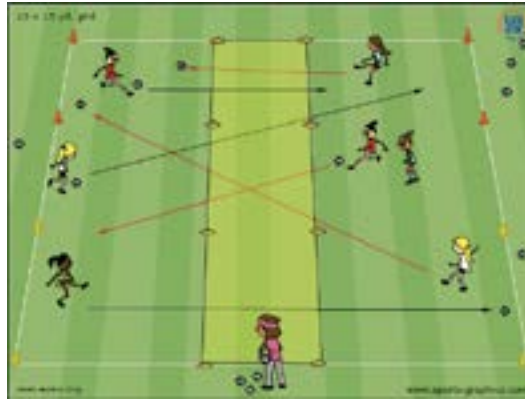
- \* Max. ball contact, repetition
- \* Introduce topic
- \* Physical prep. (dynamic)
- \* Unopposed-opposed

To see this activity in action visit [aysou.video/8u27](https://www.aysou.com/video/8u27)

## ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 20x15 area w/ two big goals on each end line and a 4 yard neutral zone in center.
- 2 teams. 1 on either side of neutral zone (coach clears balls from neutral zone). Ball per player.
- Teams try to score through either of opponents goals (opposite or diagonally) using instep kick.
- After shots, player can get any other soccer ball in their side of the field and try to score again.
- No goal blocking or entering neutral zone.
- After set period, team w/ most goals wins (also team with fewest balls in their yard (side), gets extra point/goal).
- Coach has plenty of spare balls to help flow.
- > L foot, R foot. Vary size of grid.

Player leads stretching (v. light at this age, more habit forming and introduce proper form).



## COACHING POINTS

- Body should be over the ball (forward).
- Eyes on ball.
- Support foot next to ball pointed in general direction of target.
- Lock ankle back & down, toes pointed down.
- Strike the center of the ball on the instep ("laces" of the shoes).
- Follow through—move leg straight through toward target.
- Simple decision making (look for open goal).
- Encourage quick shooting repetition. Shoot every time they find a ball!

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☒

PHYSICAL ☒

TECHNICAL ☒

TACTICAL ☐

## STAGE 2

(Small-Sided Activity)

- \* Individual & pairs
- \* Competition & teamwork
- \* 2v2 and 3v3...

To see this activity in action visit [aysou.video/8u28](https://www.aysou.com/video/8u28)

## ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 20x20 grid, 2 teams on opposite end lines, each with ball. Approx. 20 tall cones are scattered randomly along the middle of the grid.
- Players must try and knock down as many cones as possible by using an instep kick.
- When they knock down a cone they must run, pick it up and place it on a pile beside them outside the grid.
- Winning player / team is those with most pins.
- > Left foot, right foot passes.
- > Vary distance.
- > Add time challenge.



## COACHING POINTS

- Body should be over the ball (forward).
- Eyes on ball.
- Support foot next to ball pointed in general direction of target.
- Lock ankle back & down, toes pointed down.
- Strike the center of the ball on the instep ("laces" of the shoes).
- Follow through—move leg straight through toward target.

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☒

PHYSICAL ☒

TECHNICAL ☒

TACTICAL ☐

## STAGE 3

(Expanded Activity)

- \* Opposition (attack & defense)
- \* Directional play (w/ goals or targets)
- \* Expanded numbers (3v3 to 7v7...)
- \* Most game aspects

To see this activity in action visit [aysou.video/8u29](https://www.aysou.com/video/8u29)

## ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 20x15 grid w/ goal either end. 2 teams. Half players from each team split into 2 lines on each corner. Coach on sideline w/ the balls.
- As coach serves ball into play, 1st player from each of the 4 corners comes out to play 2 v 2.
- Play continues until a goal is scored using an instep kick or ball goes out of play. When this happens, all players go off and the next 4 players enter the field for a 2 v 2.
- Game continues until coach has used all balls. When this happens, players retrieve balls and dribble them back to coach (team with most gets an extra goal).
- > Left foot, right foot shots.
- > Players must pass before shot.
- > Player must beat an opponent before shooting.
- > Add additional goals on sidelines.



## COACHING POINTS

- Body should be over the ball (forward).
- Eyes on ball.
- Support foot next to ball pointed in general direction of target.
- Lock ankle back & down, toes pointed down.
- Strike the center of the ball on the instep ("laces" of the shoes).
- Follow through—move leg straight through toward target.

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☒

PHYSICAL ☒

TECHNICAL ☒

TACTICAL ☒

## STAGE 4

(Small-Sided Match)

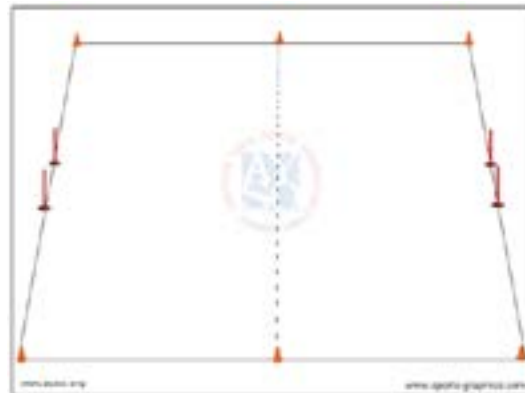
- \* Unconditional
- \* Emphasize topic
- \* Age group laws
- \* Formations
- \* Let them Play!

Cool Down/Debrief

## ORGANIZATION/RULES

- Small-sided match with general rules.
- Place a goal/gate at each end of the grid.
- > Place additional goals/gates on either sideline.

Player leads stretching (v. light at this age, more habit forming and introduce proper form), **brief** review on lesson and any announcements.



## COACHING POINTS

- Emphasize quality shooting technique but let them play.
- Establish a confident and free learning environment; where players are *encouraged* to take the shot without fear of missing.

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☒

PHYSICAL ☒

TECHNICAL ☒

TACTICAL ☒

# TRAINING PLAN 8U CONTROL

CREATED BY  
Region 688

## STAGE 1

(Technical Warm-up)

- \* Max. ball contact, repetition
- \* Introduce topic
- \* Physical prep. (dynamic)
- \* Unopposed-opposed

To see this activity in action visit [aysou.video/8u30](https://www.aysou.com/video/8u30)

## ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 15x15 playing area. Players into pairs with one ball for each pair.
- Players should be no more than 10 yards away from another group.
- Each pair must pass back and forth to each other within the grid.
- When the coach shouts "change" the players not on the ball switch to another player to begin passing with.

Player leads stretching (v. light at this age, more habit forming and introduce proper form).



## COACHING POINTS

- Quality first touch efficiency: use of inside & outside of the foot.
- Move into line with the ball in time to receive it- soft control out of your body.
- Read speed and movement of ball, be willing to move forward/back to receive it.
- Take first touch into space or towards the player you will be passing to.
- Look to open your body to be able to see the play and make an easier pass.

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☒  
PHYSICAL ☒  
TECHNICAL ☒  
TACTICAL ☐

## STAGE 2

(Small-Sided Activity)

- \* Individual & pairs
- \* Competition & teamwork
- \* 2v2 and 3v3...

To see this activity in action visit [aysou.video/8u31](https://www.aysou.com/video/8u31)

## ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 30x30 grid w/ labeled sidelines (cartoon theme throughout activity, i.e., Flintstones). Pairs pass ball using all area. On coach command players perform move:
- **Barney**: Players pass ball thru partners' legs who spins & collects ball w/ drag back or Cruyff turn.
- **Fred**: Players run towards each other and perform take-over (watch timing).
- **Wilma**: player chips ball softly over crouching partner, leaps them & collects ball w/ drag back turn.
- **Bam-Bam**: Pairs do 10 1-touch passes.
- **Dino**: Player serves ball in air for partner to control and pass ball back.
- Add a location/story/action: Barney & Fred went bowling: Players must do a Barney and Fred & dribble their ball to the Bowling Alley.



## COACHING POINTS

- Quality passing and receiving.
- Quality touch and technique.
- Quality turns.
- Aerial control: Align w/ flight of ball. Bring surface up to meet ball. At moment of impact, withdraw surface to cushion first touch (like catching an egg). Be on toes to react to falling ball.

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☒  
PHYSICAL ☒  
TECHNICAL ☒  
TACTICAL ☐

## STAGE 3

(Expanded Activity)

- \* Opposition (attack & defense)
- \* Directional play (w/ goals or targets)
- \* Expanded numbers (3v3 to 7v7...)
- \* Most game aspects

To see this activity in action visit [aysou.video/8u32](https://www.aysou.com/video/8u32)

## ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 15x20 grid. Coach has soccer balls on sideline.
- Divide players into 3 groups: 2 attacking groups and 1 defending.
- Coach serves ball to 1 of the lines (on ground or in air to challenge control).
- 1st player in each of the 3 lines enters field. (2v1)
- The 2 attackers must get ball over the opposite end-line (or to a small goal) under control.
- If attackers score, they get 1 point. If defender steals ball & scores, she gets 2 points.
- If ball goes out of bounds or a goal is scored, coach serves another ball & new players enter the field.



## COACHING POINTS

- Quality passing and receiving.
- Combination play.
- Quality touch and technique.
- Aerial control: Align w/ flight of ball. Bring surface up to meet ball. At moment of impact, withdraw surface to cushion first touch (like catching an egg). Be on toes to react to falling ball.
- Defending (intercepting passes).

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☒  
PHYSICAL ☒  
TECHNICAL ☒  
TACTICAL ☒

## STAGE 4

(Small-Sided Match)

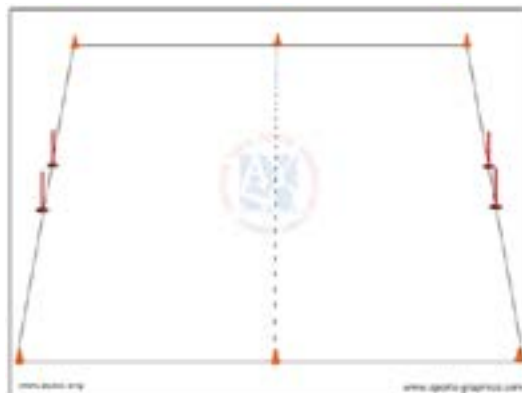
- \* Unconditional
- \* Emphasize topic
- \* Age group laws
- \* Formations
- \* Let them Play!

Cool Down/Debrief

## ORGANIZATION/RULES

- Balanced small-sided match with general rules.

Player leads stretching (v. light at this age, more habit forming and introduce proper form), **brief** review on lesson and any announcements.



## COACHING POINTS

- Emphasize quality control techniques but let them play.
- Game conditions should validate what was covered in training (quality control, 1st touch efficiency).

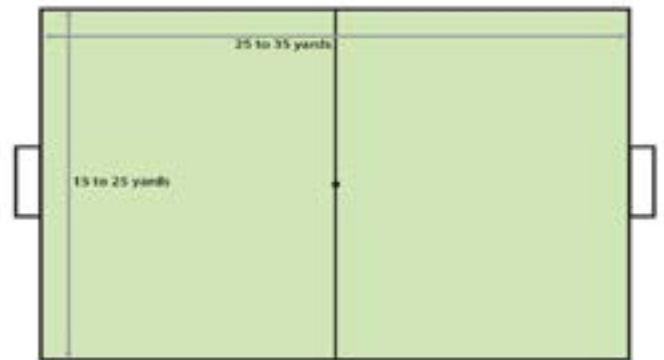
PSYCHOSOCIAL ☒  
PHYSICAL ☒  
TECHNICAL ☒  
TACTICAL ☒

# 8U PROGRAM GUIDELINES

## PLAYING THE GAME

### Field

- **Dimensions:** 25-35 yards long, 15-25 yards wide.
- **Markings:** Distinctive lines recommended.
  - Halfway line the width of the field, marked equidistant between the goal lines.
- **Goals:** The maximum size is 4' high x 6' wide.



### Ball

- Size 3

### Players

- **Numbers:** Four per team on field; no goalkeepers. Six maximum on roster.
- **Substitutions:** Approximately midway through each half, at halftime and for injuries.
- **Playing Time:** All players, unless injured, are required to play at least half of every game.
- **Teams:** Separate girls and boys teams should be promoted at all levels of play.

### Players' Equipment

- **Footwear:** Soccer shoes are recommended (or similar type athletic shoes). The type and condition of cleated shoes must be inspected for safety before use.
- **Shinguards:** MANDATORY for both practices and games, and must be covered entirely by socks.
- **Jerseys:** Rolled or tied up sleeves are permitted, provided that the referee approves it is done in a safe manner.

### Duration of Game

- Matches should have two equal halves not to exceed 20-minutes each.
- Halftime shall be a minimum of 5 minutes and a maximum of 10 minutes. No added time.

### Official

AYSO-certified 8U officials or higher are required for 8U games. The 8U official should briefly explain any infringements to the player(s) and encourage proper play and sporting behavior. As with all games, every effort should be made to keep the game moving and free from stoppages for doubtful infractions. Let them play and enjoy.

### Assistant Referees/Club Linesmen

If available, qualified assistant referees who have completed Assistant Referee Certification may be used to assist the referee. This is an opportunity for new assistant referees to begin getting experience.

If qualified assistant referees are not available, club linesmen (untrained volunteers who may be affiliated with one of the teams/clubs) may be recruited from the spectators, to assist the referee with calling the ball in and out of play only. This is an opportunity for parents to get involved.

# 8U MATCH KNOWLEDGE

## KNOW THE TERMS

### **The Start of Play**

To start the first and second halves and following each goal in all age group games, play is started or restarted with a kick-off in the center of the field. A coin toss is used to determine which team kicks off to start the game and the other team kicks off to start the second half. Following a goal, the team scored upon kicks off.

### **The Kick-off**

The kick-off is taken from the center of the field with each team in their own half and the team not kicking off at least 5 yards from the ball. Do not insist the opponent always be 5 yards from the ball, as this is just a guide to give the kicker room to kick the ball without it immediately hitting an opponent. Remember, let them play and do not interfere for technicalities.

### **The Ball In and Out of Play**

The ball is out of play in all age group games when it completely crosses the touchline (side line) or goal line (end line), either on the ground or in the air.

### **Method of Scoring**

A goal, in all age group games, is awarded when the ball completely crosses the goal line into the goal.

### **Fouls**

The opposing team must be at least 5 yards from the ball when free kicks are taken in 8U games. The following are the fouls most likely to occur in 8U games: kicking, tripping, pushing, holding, handling the ball and dangerous play (the most frequent call in 8U games). Officials must remember that there is no need to stop play for technical violations that do not interrupt the flow of the game. It's a player's game and not a game of how many infractions can be identified, so keep the fun going and let them play.

### **Misconduct**

Misconduct should be rare in 8U games. There is no need for the public cautioning and sending off of young players. Officials should work cooperatively with the coach when an 8U player may need a "time out."

### **Free Kicks**

All free kicks in 8U games are indirect free kicks. Opponents must be at least 5 yards from the ball or on the goal line between the goal posts during free kicks.

### **Offside**

No offside.

### **The Throw-in**

For 8U, each region shall have the discretion to use either throw-ins, pass-ins or dribble-ins to restart play. Opponents should be 5 yards from ball.

### **The Goal Kick**

A goal kick is awarded to the opposing team, in 8U and older, when the attacking team is last to touch the ball before it crosses the goal line but not scoring a goal. The goal kick may be taken from the general vicinity of the goal. The opposing team must be at least 5 yards from the ball when the goal kick is taken in 8U games.

**The Corner Kick**

A corner kick is awarded to the opposing team, in 8U and older, when the defending team is last to touch the ball before it crosses the goal line but not scoring a goal. The opposing team must be at least 5 yards from the ball when the corner kick is taken in 8U games.

**Hand Ball**

A hand ball infraction occurs when a player handles the ball. The “hand” includes the entire arm up to the top of the shoulder. Instinctive, self-protective reactions are not penalized at this young age. Accidental contact (ball striking hand or arm with no intent by the player) is not an offense and should not be penalized.

**No Heading!**

Consistent with the US Soccer mandates on heading the ball, heading is banned for all division players 11U (12U for programs without single age divisions) and below in both practices and matches. An indirect free kick will be awarded to the opposing team if a player age 10 or younger deliberately touches the ball with his/her head during a match. The indirect free kick will be taken from the place where the player touched the ball with his/her head.

Players 10 years old and younger, approved to play up in a division where heading is allowed, are still prohibited from heading the ball. The player, parents and coaches are responsible for ensuring the player does not head the ball in practice or in matches consistent with the standards set by US Soccer.

# APPENDIX A:

## SAFETY AND RISK MANAGEMENT

### SAFE HAVEN INTRODUCTION

Agreeing to a background check is also required for each volunteer. Safe Haven® is both a child AND volunteer protection program.

The child protection aspect is intended to prevent child abuse, promote education and awareness, enforce policies and screen and train volunteers. It includes proactive steps that promote a positive, healthy environment for children. Volunteer protection comes into play as a result of volunteer training, certification and continuing education. The Volunteer Protection Act of 1997 provides certain legal protections for volunteers *who have been trained and certified and act in accordance with a written job description*. Safe Haven includes these three elements, giving volunteers the highest degree of protection available under the law.

#### KEEP IN MIND



To ensure the safety of both children and volunteers, each volunteer is **required** to take a class or online training session called AYSO's Safe Haven® focusing on safety and appropriate behavior with children as well as other on-field issues.

**To coach in AYSO, you MUST complete this course!**

### RISK MANAGEMENT BASICS

Covered in detail within our Safe Haven course, below are some general excerpts regarding risk:

#### Supervision

- One adult for every 8 or fewer children.
- **At least 2 adults present at ALL times.**
- At least 1 adult of the same gender as players.
- Adults should never be alone with a child except their own (including transporting a child in a car).
- Team Coach is responsible for players on team until they are picked up or otherwise leave the area.
- **No child shall be left unsupervised** after a game or training session.
- When necessary to speak privately with a child, select a spot out of earshot but within sight of others.
- The AYSO "Buddy System" requires a minimum of 3 players whenever children are allowed to enter a restroom alone, etc. Necessary for preventing player-on-player abuse.
- Adult supervisors of children must ensure that players are not allowed to abuse other players during AYSO activities.



**Physical contact with children should be:**

- In response to the need of the child only.
- With the child's permission.
- Respectful of any resistance or hesitation.
- Careful to avoid private parts (hug from the side only).
- In the open, never in private.
- Brief in duration.
- Age and developmentally appropriate.

**Social Media!**

To help address the growing need to protect children from abuse, which includes the invasion of privacy rights and/or volunteers from misunderstandings and false accusations, the following recommendations are suggested for electronic communications and the use of social media sites, such as Facebook or Twitter.

- Maintain transparency in communications with children while protecting children's identity and privacy. It is the responsibility of adults to maintain appropriate boundaries!
- All communications regarding AYSO activities and participation in the program must be directed to parents and guardians including voice messages, e-mails and text messages (it is up to the child's parents to communicate necessary information).
- If, for older players or youth volunteers, parents/guardians allow direct communications with a player or youth volunteers, parents must still be copied on any and all messages.
- Adults should refrain from private, personal, on-going electronic conversations with children.
- It is not advised to provide player access to your personal social media site (i.e., Facebook). Settings should be set to 'Private.'

The lines between personal, private and public are becoming very thin in today's tech-dominant world, please be responsible and fully aware of the challenges!

## GENERAL GUIDELINES TO INJURY MANAGEMENT

In dealing with injuries, the coach must be competent and in control of the situation and remain calm to prevent panic. When at all unsure, GET professional help!

**DO NOT**

- Try to diagnose a serious injury.
- Touch the injury, but rather ask the injured player to move the affected area. A serious injury will not allow movement by the injured player and will give the coach a clue to the seriousness of the injury.

**DO**

- Seek professional help for all but minor injuries.
- Put the child's welfare ahead of the team's needs. AYSO philosophy emphasizes healthy competition in a proper perspective. Playing youngsters with serious injuries is incompatible with our value system.

**Is a player ready to return to play?**

- Can the player walk without limping?
- Can the player run in a straight line? Or cut from side to side?
- Can the player execute other demands of the game?
- Is the player safe from further injury?
- If the answer is no to any of these, do *not* return player to the game.

## General Care and Treatment of Injuries or Conditions

Injury	Treatment
<b>Blisters</b>	Don't pop blister or cut dead skin away. Cover with Vaseline. Apply blister-specific Band-Aids or moleskin (cut piece out to surround blister, do not place directly on blister).
<b>Sprain</b> (Ankle, Knee, Wrist, Elbow)	Pressure wrap, ice for 20 minutes per hour during first 48 hours. Elevate when possible. <b>RICE - Rest   Ice   Compression   Elevation</b>
<b>Muscle Strain</b> (Pull)	RICE
<b>Contusion</b> (Bruise)	RICE
<b>Cramp</b>	Apply light pressure with hand. Stretch muscle with steady pressure. Ensure player is well hydrated.
<b>Nose Bleed</b>	Direct pressure (pinch nostrils.) Sit player up. Don't blow nose.
<b>Bleeding</b>	See Safe Haven
<b>Cut or Abrasions</b>	Stop bleeding with direct pressure. Wash with antiseptic. Close with adhesive strip or butterfly. Cover with dry sterile dressing.
<b>"Wind Knocked Out"</b>	Lie on side or back. Encourage slow, relaxed breathing. Try to reduce anxiety.
<b>Heat Exhaustion</b> - Player Feels Cool, Clammy and Damp. Pale.	Move to shade. Douse with cool water. Loosen restrictive clothes. Give fluids.
<b>Unconsciousness</b>	Check airway, breathing, and pulse. Don't move (risk of spinal injury). <b>Get help!</b>
<b>Concussion</b> (Possible With or Without Consciousness)	Look for loss of memory, confusion, headache, dilated pupils, nausea. Do not send player back into game. Refer to CDC's signs & symptoms. <b>If any doubt, get help.</b>
<b>Choking</b> - Object Blocking Wind Passage	Use Heimlich Maneuver. <b>Get help!</b>
<b>Fracture/Dislocation</b>	Immobilize area. <b>Get help!</b>
<b>Heat Stroke</b> - Player Feels Hot, Dry, Dizzy, Shallow Breathing.	<b>Professional help immediately!</b>
<b>Hypothermia</b>	Shield from wind and cold, wrap in warm blankets and cover head. <b>Get Help!</b>

**When at all unsure GET professional help!**

**In addition to AYSO's Safe Haven, we strongly suggest a first aid class or certification.**

# APPENDIX B:

## TEAM MANAGEMENT

### ORGANIZING THE TEAM

#### 1. Develop a Team Goal.

“Development over Winning” or “Players having FUN while learning about soccer” are good bases for a team goal. Develop in conjunction with your players and parents.

#### 2. Develop a Coaching Philosophy.

You can base your personal coaching philosophy on your own perspective or the AYSO Coach Pledge (see *Appendix D*).

#### 3. Conduct a Parents’ Meeting!

- Discuss AYSO’s Vision, Mission and Six Philosophies! Remember, **this is what makes AYSO unique!**
- Explain your Coaching Philosophy, your guidelines and expectations. Share your coaching experience or lack thereof and team policies regarding:
  - Equipment brought to practice by each player: water, ball (properly inflated), shin guards, appropriate clothing, footwear, (sunscreen), etc.
  - Attendance at practices and games.
  - Player and parent behavior. You can discuss expectations of players and parents based on the Player and Parent Pledges as well as introduce Kids Zone.
  - Encourage communication regarding any player injuries
  - Discuss concussion awareness, Safe Haven, etc.
- Discuss the team’s goal(s).
- Introduce the small-sided match and why we play it.
- Educate parents briefly on the *Laws of the Game* specific to this age group. Distributing the ABC’s of AYSO (contact your Regional Commissioner for more info) is a great way to introduce new parents to soccer and AYSO.
- GET HELP – You will need:
  - Assistant Coaches
  - Team Manager for administrative duties such as phone calls, coordinating carpools, etc.
  - Team Parent to develop snack schedule, plan social activities, etc.

### MATCH DAY MANAGEMENT

#### Prior to Match Day

- Remind parents where and what time your team will meet.
- Ask parents to have players arrive approximately 30 minutes prior to kick-off in order to account for late arrivals, warm-up and prepare accordingly.

#### Match Day

- Check Your Equipment before You Leave Home: make sure you have all the equipment you need.

### Before the Match

- Arrive early: at least 10 minutes before the time you expect your players.
- Gather team: begin “free play activity” as players arrive.
- Conduct a warm-up, which should include a ball per player or pair. Avoid long lines. Players need to get moving and familiar with the ball.
- Talk: Excite them about getting ready to play.
- Remind them to have fun and to do their best!
- Review training that was practiced and how it should be integrated into the game.
- A quick reminder of the rules can be most beneficial (pending age).



### After the Match

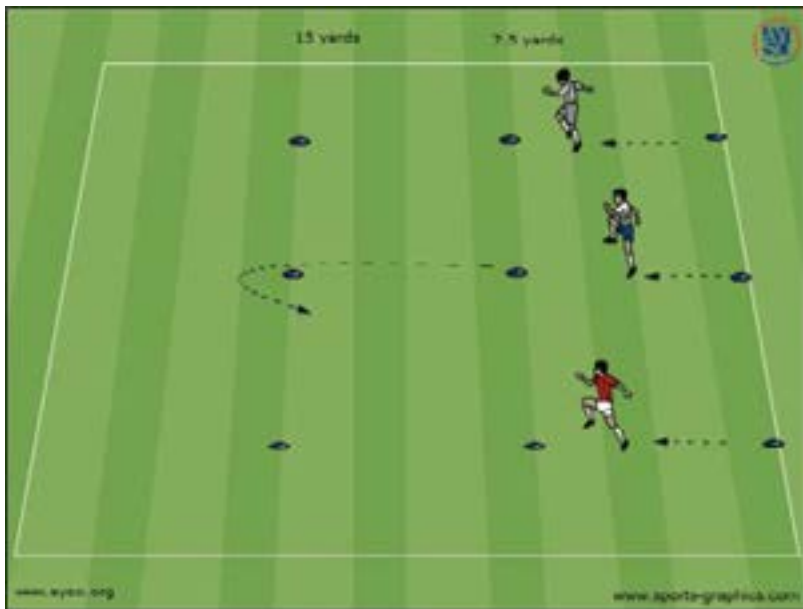
- Limit any post match speeches! At the most a very brief review of what went well.
- Ask if anyone is hurt.
- Thank the players for participating and congratulate players who worked particularly hard.
- Remind players (and parents) of next practice or match.
- Wish them well for the remainder of their weekend!

# APPENDIX C:

## DYNAMIC STRETCHES

### GET READY TO PLAY

Dynamic stretching, in conjunction with static (pending the player's specific need) help prepare the muscles, increase the range of motion and warm up the body. Exercises can either be done freely within an open grid (more suitable for younger players) or organized similar to the option below.



Mark 10 x 15 yards area with a starting cone, a middle cone 7.5 yards from the starting one and an end cone 15 yards from starting one.

Create three sets of cones to have three groups of players working at the same time. Players perform dynamic stretches until the halfway point (cone) and then jog to the end cone, before returning to the starting cone (by jogging forwards or backwards). The process moves continuously until a dynamic stretch has been completed for each main body part.

**Suggested dynamic stretches (to see this in action visit: [aysou.video/stretches](https://www.aysou.com/video/stretches))**

- Skipping
- Jogging forwards with arms rotating in forwards circles
- Jogging backwards with arms rotating in backwards circles
- Knees into the chest
- Heels to the backside
- Side shuffle
- Opening the leg (up and over motion)
- Closing the leg (up and over motion)
- Cariocca
- Swing leg across body
- Forward lunges

#### Coaching Points

- TPF (Teach Proper Form).
- Select player to lead the stretches (leadership, responsibility, reward, esteem).

# APPENDIX D:

## PLEDGES

### AYSO COACH PLEDGE

*In my words and action, I pledge to:*

1. Enthusiastically support and practice the AYSO vision to “enrich children’s lives” by embracing our Philosophies of: **Everyone Plays®, Open Registration, Balanced Teams, Positive Coaching, Good Sportsmanship and Player Development.**
2. Stay informed about sound principles of coaching and child development.
3. Respect the game and know the Laws.
4. Emphasize to my players that they must abide by the *Laws of the Game* at all times.
5. Develop a true respect for all referees judgments.
6. Develop a team respect for our opponents and each other.
7. Ensure a safe environment for my players.
8. Never yell at or ridicule a player.
9. Always set a good example.
10. Remember that soccer is a game and all games should be fun.
11. Let the players play without constant instructions or commentary from sidelines.
12. Role model good sporting behavior.

### AYSO PLAYER PLEDGE

*In my words and action, I pledge to:*

1. Play for the sake of playing a game, not just to please a parent or coach.
2. Always give my best effort and work as hard for my teammates as I do for myself.
3. Treat all players as I would like to be treated.
4. Be a team player.
5. Be a good sport and support good plays whether they are made by my team or my opponents.
6. Abide by the *Laws of the Game*.
7. Cooperate with my coaches, teammates, opponents and the referee.
8. **Never argue with or complain about referee calls or decisions.**
9. Control my temper when I feel I have been wronged.
10. Not use offensive or abusive language.
11. Remember that the object of the game is to win, but the goal is to enjoy myself and give my best effort.








# AYSO PARENT PLEDGE

*In my words and action, I pledge to:*

1. Attend and participate in team parent meetings as requested.
2. Be on time or early when dropping off or picking up my child for training or a game.
3. Ensure my child is supported and encouraged by family or loved ones at games.
4. Encourage my child to have fun and keep sport in its proper perspective.
- 5. Define winning for my child as doing his/her very best and appreciate Development over Winning.**
6. Endeavor to understand the Laws (rules) of soccer and support the efforts of referees.
7. Honor the game and show respect for all involved including coaches, players, opponents, spectators and referees.
- 8. Applaud and encourage players from both teams and not yell out instructions** (as this causes confusion to the players and ultimately hinders development).
9. Refrain from making negative comments about the game, coaches, referees or players, especially from the sidelines.
10. Encourage others to refrain from negative or abusive sideline behavior.
11. As parents, keep the game in perspective for our children (as a pastime, sport, fun, exercise).
12. Abide by the tenets of Kids Zone for appropriate sideline behavior and support AYSO's vision to "enrich children's lives."

# APPENDIX E: TRAINING PLAN

Topic: _____		Region: _____				Age: _____		Date: _____	
everyone plays		balanced teams		open registration		good sportsmanship		positive coaching	
player development									

<p><b>STAGE 1</b></p> <p>TECHNICAL WARM-UP</p> <p>Topic-related</p> <p>Max ball contact</p> <p>Unopposed to opposed</p> <p>Integrate physical</p>	<p><b>Organization/Rules</b></p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p>		<p><b>Coaching Points</b></p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>DURATION: _____</p> <p>INTENSITY: _____</p> <p># OF INTERVALS: _____</p> <p>INTERVAL TIME: _____</p> <p>RECOVERY TIME: _____</p>
<p><b>STAGE 2</b></p> <p>SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY</p> <p>Individual &amp; pair work</p> <p>Competition &amp; teamwork</p> <p>2v2 and 3v3, etc.</p>	<p><b>Organization/Rules</b></p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p>		<p><b>Coaching Points</b></p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>DURATION: _____</p> <p>INTENSITY: _____</p> <p># OF INTERVALS: _____</p> <p>INTERVAL TIME: _____</p> <p>RECOVERY TIME: _____</p>
<p><b>STAGE 3</b></p> <p>EXPANDED SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY</p> <p>Principles of attack &amp; defense</p> <p>Directional play (w/ 1 full goal to targets or goal)</p> <p>Expanded numbers (3v3 to 6v6, etc.)</p> <p>Most game aspects/laws</p>	<p><b>Organization/Rules</b></p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p>		<p><b>Coaching Points</b></p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>DURATION: _____</p> <p>INTENSITY: _____</p> <p># OF INTERVALS: _____</p> <p>INTERVAL TIME: _____</p> <p>RECOVERY TIME: _____</p>
<p><b>STAGE 4</b></p> <p>SMALL-SIDED MATCH</p> <p>Unconditional Formations Laws</p> <p>PLAY!</p> <p>COOL DOWN / DEBRIEF</p>	<p><b>Organization/Rules</b></p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p>		<p><b>Coaching Points</b></p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>* _____</p> <p>DURATION: _____</p> <p>INTENSITY: _____</p> <p># OF INTERVALS: _____</p> <p>INTERVAL TIME: _____</p> <p>RECOVERY TIME: _____</p>

# APPENDIX F:

## VIP

### VIP PROGRAM

#### **Integrating the “VIP” Player into Your Region**

A VIP (Very Important Player) is a player whose physical and/or mental challenges make it difficult to successfully participate on a mainstream soccer team.

What is successful participation? It should be defined by the player’s enjoyment and the safety of all team members.

The player who has only a physical disability is likely to have many of the expectations and capabilities of a non-disabled player and should be coached accordingly. Every effort should be made to integrate these players into mainstream teams, as much as safety allows.

VIP is an AYSO program designed to provide a quality soccer experience for VIP players. VIP teams offer many players with disabilities the least-restrictive and safest environment in which to learn and enjoy the game of soccer. Contact your Regional Commissioner, Regional Coach Administrator, Regional VIP Administrator or the AYSO National Office to obtain AYSO’s special VIP training materials and information on how to begin a VIP program.

# APPENDIX G:

## AYSO COACHES CORNER, Q&A

### QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

**My team is very strong and often is many goals ahead early. Understanding a blowout doesn't really help anyone, what can I do to contain it within reason?**

This is a delicate topic but a very important one. Although we do not have an official policy on this, from a coaching perspective, the challenge is *not* to penalize the winning or scoring team (the purpose of the game after all), but not humiliate or discourage the opposing team who are being easily beaten. A few pointers for consideration:

- Coaches should be proactive *early* in the game if they see an obvious disparity.
- Winning team should *not* be penalized, i.e., reducing players, stopping scoring or sitting better players.
- Losing team should *not* be patronized, i.e., blatant efforts like playing two players down.
- Rather, we should look at some *proactive and challenging coaching conditions* for coaches potentially *about* to run up a score:
  - Rotate players' positions on winning team (GK plays striker, strikers play GK/defender, etc.)
  - Introduce a specific number of passes to score (again, a reasonable challenge that is less noticeable).
  - Ball needs to be played "wide" before being put into offensive area.
  - Selected players can only shoot using weaker foot.
  - Players must perform a specific turn or move, i.e., step-over before shooting.

In actuality, there is no guaranteed way to lessen a blowout or ensure it doesn't happen; however, a proactive awareness and effort by the winning coach *can* help lessen the impact. It should also be noted that prioritizing "development over winning" from day one could help the player's perspective.

**Why do we have to be trained to coach the kids?**

Age Appropriate training and certification benefits *all* members of the organization. Most importantly, **our players** receive Age Appropriate and current coaching methods, which ultimately boosts their soccer (and personal) development, as well as their overall AYSO experience.

**Our volunteer coaches** are given insight to the modern game; learn about our wonderful organization (what makes AYSO unique); and are introduced to the most innovative and current coaching methodologies and activities. This not only provides great education, but also a comfort level to coaching their selected age group (maximizing their volunteer experience). After all, coaches need to have fun as well!

Coach training provides **our parents** with the comfort of knowing that the individual working with *their* child is Age Appropriately trained and qualified. As well as soccer-specific training, the fact each coach has been trained and certified in our child and volunteer protection course, Safe Haven, further promotes a confidence level for our parents when they hand over their precious ones each week.

Locally, we create a strong reputation for quality programming for our **Regions** to stimulate their volunteer and player base. And finally, **nationally**, requiring age-specific coach training separates ourselves from other youth sports groups in our resolute commitment to Player Development.

In conclusion, coach training is a major component in ensuring our players; parents and coaches enjoy their AYSO experience to the max!

### Why “no goalkeepers” until 10U?

Soccer games without goalkeepers provide a better experience for young children for several reasons, which is why not only AYSO but U.S. Youth Soccer and the U.S. Soccer Federation discourage the use of goalkeepers at the 8U level and below.

First of all, the goalkeeper is denied a chance to run around and chase the ball. The boy or girl who must guard the goal is being prevented from doing what he or she signed up for- play soccer!

Depending on the game, the young goalkeeper is in danger of being bored (if the action is on the other end) and getting discouraged if the ball keeps flying into the goal.

In the worst-case scenario, players who are forced to play goalkeeper at the early ages lose their enthusiasm for the sport.

Also, we want young players to shoot at goal as much as possible, because striking the ball is such an important skill for players to master. Young kids are more likely to shoot often when they’re aiming a goalkeeper-free net. With a goalkeeper there, they become apprehensive, looking for the perfect shot that they are not physically mature enough to pull off.

Very young kids are not physically prepared to make saves. They may get in front of a tough shot now and again, but they just don’t have the tools for the position’s requirements and are inclined to feel devastated when scored upon.

In fact, not using goalkeepers makes the coach’s job much easier because the coach doesn’t need to cajole players to take turns in goal.

The use of goalkeepers at such young ages also creates a temptation for the coach to make his bigger and more advanced athletes play goalkeeper, because this will greatly increase his team’s chances of winning. In other words, the use of goalkeepers encourages the results-driven approach to coaching that hinders long-term player development and can take the fun out of soccer. The players who are more advanced athletically at the young ages shouldn’t be kept from enjoying field play so that the coach can rack up some wins.

When goalkeepers are used, at the 10U level for example, the goalkeepers should be rotated frequently. Even players who enjoy playing goalkeeper should not be restricted to the position and should get plenty of time playing in the field. Players shouldn’t specialize at any one position until they are well into their teens.

Many of the nation’s best goalkeepers- Hope Solo, Tim Howard, Brad Friedel and AYSO alum Brad Guzan- spent much of their youth as field players. This not only prevented them from burning out on the position, but honed the foot skills goalkeepers need and their ability to read the game, which is crucial to being a good goalkeeper.

### Kids don’t juggle in a game, so why is it so important?

Diego Maradona was once asked why he worked so hard in training perfecting tricks and juggling the ball, to which he answered, “Because I can.”

Tapping the ball in the air over and over means players are learning to hit the sweet spot while developing a good touch. Juggling with feet, thighs and all controlling surfaces trains players to be comfortable with the ball and develops striking and controlling skills.

Juggling helps with foot-eye coordination, and is a great way to work on balance. It also develops the weak foot. A key to developing soccer skills is to play with the ball as much as possible, and juggling can be done anytime, anywhere and on your own. If you can encourage your players to juggle, you’re giving them a way to work on their skills outside of organized practice and games (an important element in development).

Ball mastery gives players a competitive edge and makes tactical understanding easier to comprehend.

**Why Does AYSO play “small-sided” matches at 6U, 8U, 10U and 12U?**

The most influential soccer organizations in the world all agree that small-sided matches are the best way to develop soccer players. Almost every national soccer program from Brazil, Spain, England and the United States as well as the largest professional clubs including Barcelona, Manchester United and the Los Angeles Galaxy promote small-sided matches as the best tool to develop young players. This is formally confirmed in the US Soccer Player Development Initiatives.

Small-sided matches encourage young players to be engaged in the game at all times. They have more touches on the ball, which helps players build confidence on the ball. It also allows for coaches to spend more time on each player helping them develop their individual skills. It allows the younger players to make less complex decisions as they learn the game. Lastly, it allows for more opportunities for goals and success and excitement for the young players.



# APPENDIX H:

## GLOSSARY

**Activity:** Drill or exercise.

**Balance:** Reading the attack and providing an equal or greater number of defenders than attackers at the point of attack, while simultaneously covering the vital area near the goal.

**Center:** To pass the ball from a wide position on the field into the penalty area, i.e., crossing.

**Clear:** A throw or kick by the goalkeeper or a kick by the defender in an attempt to get the ball away (clear) from the goal area.

**Control/Restraint (Composure):** Staying calm, disciplined and organized in the face of an attack by maintaining proper defensive techniques and positioning.

**Combination Play:** Passing combinations executed by two or more players, i.e., wall pass.

**Compactness:** Compressing or restricting the space the attacking team has by “shepherding” them into a confined area makes it easier to defend and regain possession of the ball.

**Corner kick:** Awarded to the opposing team when the defending team is last to touch the ball before it crosses the goal line but not scoring a goal. The opposing team must be at least ten yards from the ball when the corner kick is taken in 12U games. Refer to the *Laws of the Game* for further details.

**Cover:** A player creates a second defensive line in order to provide defensive support of a teammate or teammates.

**Delay:** Slowing down the attack by closing the gap and denying space to allow the defense to get organized.

**Dribble:** A way of advancing the ball by a series of short taps with one or both feet.

**Dynamic:** Moving, i.e., dynamic stretching (during warm up).

**Far Post:** Side of the goal or goal post farthest from the ball.

**Forward:** Striker. Primarily an attacking player.

**Functional Training:** Training specific demands of a position or a role. This can be for an individual player or for a group (i.e., forwards playing together as a pair in a 1-4-4-2). Functional training should take place in the area of the field where that scenario would occur in a real game.

**Goalkeeper:** The last line of defense. The goalkeeper is the only player who can use his hands within the field of play (limited to within the penalty area).

**Goal line:** Define ends of the field.

**Grid:** A marked (usually with cones), restricted playing area.

**Half-volley:** Kicking the ball just as it is rebounding off the ground.

**Handball:** Illegal act of intentionally touching the ball with the hands or arms.

**Heading:** A method of scoring, passing, and controlling the ball by making contact with the head. No heading at 12U and below.

**Inside of the Foot – Push Pass:** This technique is used to advance the ball or to maintain possession by passing to a teammate.

**Inside of the Foot – Ball Control:** Technique used to control the ball using the inside of the foot in order to maintain possession and prepare for the next move.

**Instep Kick:** Technique used for long passes and strong shots on goal using the instep of the foot.

**Lob:** Or chip. A high, soft kick, which lofts the ball over the heads of the opponents or goalkeeper.

**Match:** Game.

**Marking:** Guarding an opponent.

**Midfielder:** A player who is primarily responsible for moving the ball from the defenders to the forwards.

**Mobility:** Players changing positions (filling in for one another when necessary) and moving off the ball creates numerical advantages and thereby attacking/scoring opportunities.

**Near Post:** Side of the goal or goal post closest to the ball.

**Obstructing:** Preventing the opponent from going around a player by standing in the path of movement.

**One-Touch Pass:** A pass made without controlling (trapping) it first.

**Overlap:** The attacking play of a defender or midfielder going down the touch-line past his or her own winger.

**Penetration:** Advancement. Moving the ball and/or players past an opponent in order to get into position to shoot and/or score, and is achieved by shooting, dribbling, and passing.

**Pitch:** Another name for the field of play.

**Pressure:** Action of a defender to restrict time and space available to the offensive player.

**Physical:** A player's physical attributes: speed, agility, endurance, strength and power, etc.

**Psychosocial:** Respect, motivation, confidence, cooperation, competitiveness, etc., and how these emotions and feelings impact a player's development. Includes a player's ability to reason, learn and solve problems.

**Screen / Shielding:** Retaining possession and protecting the ball by keeping your body between the ball and opponent.

**Set Play:** A planned offensive movement to be executed at a free kick or corner kick.

**Shoulder-Charge:** Legally upsetting an opponent's balance by shoulder-to-shoulder contact.

**Sliding Tackle:** Attempting to take the ball away from the opponent by sliding on the ground and using the feet or legs to block and hold the ball.

**Static:** Stretching against muscle and holding for approximately 30 seconds (best suited to cool down).

**Striker:** A central forward position with a major responsibility for scoring goals.

**Support:** Supporting teammates by creating safe options for the player with the ball or movement to influence opponent's position to help a teammate receive the ball.

**Tackling:** Attempting to or taking the ball away from an opponent when both players are playing the ball with their feet.

**Tactical:** A player's capacity to use their skill and ability within a game environment (competition), i.e., playing out of the back, possession and transition, offense/defensive and quick transition, etc.

**Takeover:** A 2 vs. 1 combination play in which the two offensive players move toward each other and the ball is transferred from one player to the other.

**Technical:** A player's ability to master ball skills, i.e., ball control, shooting, etc.

**Through Pass:** A pass that goes between two players and behind the defense.

**Throw-In:** Used to restart the game after the entire ball has crossed the touchline, whether on the ground or in the air. Replaced with dribble-in or kick-in at 8U and 6U.

**Touch line:** Define sides of the field.

**Training (team):** Practice (individual).

**Trap:** Controlling a ball by means of the feet, thighs, or chest.

**Two-Touches:** One touch is used to control the ball and the second touch is used to pass the ball.

**Volley:** Kicking the ball while it is in flight.

**Wall Pass:** A pass to a teammate, followed by a return pass on the other side of the opponent. Also called "give-and-go" or "one-two."

**Warm-Up:** The warm-up activity should physically prepare your players for the session as well as introduce the technical component of your session, i.e., dribbling or ball control, etc.

**Width:** Attacking on a broad front (players spread out) stretches the defense and creates space for players to advance.

**Wing:** Area of the field near the touch-line.

**Winger:** Name given to the right and left outside forwards.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## THANK YOU!

AYSO National Coaching Advisory Commission

John Ouellette, AYSO National Coach Emeritus

George Kuntz, Cal State Fullerton

Jim Liston, CATZ

AYSO Soccer Camps / UK International Soccer  
(Marty Walker, Nik Alsop, Gary Gamble, Marc Davis,  
Stuart Barlow, Roy Collins, Lee Hartley)

Dave Chesler, US Soccer

Ian Barker, NSCAA

Robert Benavidez, Region 677

Adam Arentz, Region 165

John Kerr and Mike Brady, Duke University

Amanda Vandervort, NSCAA

John Kerr Sr.

Tim Penner, National Academy of Sports Medicine, Certified Personal Trainer

Players: Jillian Nelson, Jorgia Jasper, Olivia Snyder, Maddie Snyder,  
Jarod Fountaine, Nathan Miller, Ikaika King

Scott Gimple, AYSO National

Scott Snyder, AYSO National

[illegible]

# NOTES

[illegible]



# AYSO VISION

is to provide world class youth soccer programs that enrich children's lives.

# AYSO MISSION

is to develop and deliver quality youth soccer programs which promote a fun, family environment based on AYSO's Six Philosophies:

## AYSO SIX PHILOSOPHIES

- Everyone Plays®
- Balanced Teams
- Open Registration
- Positive Coaching
- Good Sportsmanship
- Player Development



AYSO National Office

19750 S. Vermont Ave., Suite 200, Torrance, CA 90502



everyone plays®