INTERMEDIATE **COACH**

Complete "How-To" for Coaching Teenagers

Fine-Tune Technical Skills & Teach Tactical Awareness

AMERICAN YOUTH SOCCER ORGANIZATION

COACHING SERIES

INTERMEDIATE COACH

AYSO National Office
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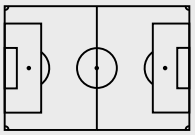
WELCOME TO THE TEAM!

FROM THE ***FIELD***



"Our National Coaching Program is expertly designed, tested and accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Coaching Education. We have a proven method for player development and I am proud of our contribution to the game in the USA."

John Ouellette, AYSO Hall of Fame and Former National Coach

THANK YOU FOR VOLUNTEERING!

Most of you reading this are coaches who have completed the AYSO 12U Coaching Course and want to progress to the next level. The AYSO Player Development Department and National Coaching Advisory Commission is pleased to prepare this manual and course to help you continue your soccer coaching education.

Generally speaking, we now progress from technical to tactical development but as our former national coach John Ouellette always said, "We cannot do tactically what we cannot do technically!" so, we will always place a large level of importance on continued technical development, as well as physical and psychosocial components.

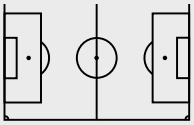
Players finally make the significant leap to 11v11 and face all the relative challenges that come along with that progression; therefore, we must consider this carefully in our planning, teaching and understanding.

Thank you for being part of the AYSO Coaching Team and for doing your part to "enrich children's lives."

NATIONAL COACHING ADVISORY COMMISSION **AYSO PLAYER DEVELOPMENT TEAM**

AYSO

FROM THE
FIELD



"We strive to galvanize the player development pathways of our youth soccer organizations. The common objective is to develop the next wave of youth players. In this collective effort, it is critical to promote a single message and common coaching methodology with respect to player development. AYSO's National Coaching Program is in line and coherent with these efforts."

Dave Chesler, Former U.S. Soccer Director of Coach Education
Current WNT Performance Analysis Coach

THE WORLD'S BIGGEST SOCCER CLUB

Founded in Torrance, CA in 1964, AYSO is a distinguished cornerstone of U.S. Soccer and with approximately 50,000 teams across all age groups; AYSO is the world's biggest soccer club!

Success can be measured in many ways, from the careers of professional players who got their start playing AYSO to the thousands of coaches (youth, high school, collegiate and professional) who developed their passion and understanding of the game in AYSO. Regardless of perspective, our contribution to the US game's success is founded upon our unique **Vision**, **Mission** and **Philosophies**.

KEEP IN
MIND

Any player development or instruction should always include a comprehensive understanding and practical application of our core values.

AYSO VISION

To provide world-class youth soccer programs that enrich children's lives.

AYSO MISSION

To develop and deliver quality youth soccer programs in a fun, family environment based on the AYSO philosophies:

AYSO SIX PHILOSOPHIES

EVERYONE PLAYS®
Our goal is for kids to play soccer—so we mandate that every player on every team must play at least half of every game.

BALANCED TEAMS
Each year we form new teams as evenly balanced as possible—because it is fair and more fun when teams of equal ability play.

OPEN REGISTRATION
Our program is open to all children who want to register and play soccer. Interest and enthusiasm are the only criteria for playing.

POSITIVE COACHING
Encouragement of player effort provides for greater enjoyment by the players and ultimately leads to better-skilled and better-motivated players.

GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP
We strive to create a safe, fair, fun and positive environment based on mutual respect, rather than a win-at-all-costs attitude, and our program is designed to instill good sportsmanship in every facet of AYSO.

PLAYER DEVELOPMENT
We believe that all players should be able to develop their soccer skills and knowledge to the best of their abilities, both individually and as members of a team, in order to maximize their enjoyment of the game.

KEEP IN *MIND*

AYSO Six Philosophies:

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

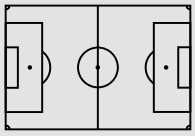
FROM THE ***FIELD***

"It is better to win ten times 1-0 than to win once 10-0."

Vahid Halilhodžić, Bosnian Coach and Former Professional Player

STEWARDS OF THE GAME

FROM THE
FIELD



"We must all work together; coaches, officials and parents to create the optimal performance environments for our players' development.

Players need to play with freedom, confidence and enjoyment in a developmentally rich environment to truly reach their potential."

Scott Snyder
AYSO Player Development Specialist

APPLICATION ON THE FIELD

Referees and coaches are to be Stewards of the Game and work together to ensure that player safety, at the physical and emotional level, is the number one priority on the field. All 7 members of the team (3 referees and 4 coaches) are equal participants and are there for the sole purpose of discussing how to ensure a safe and protective environment for the players to play. The Center Referee shall initiate a brief meeting between referees and coaches before the AYSO match to collectively:

- Identify any potential issues that may impact the ability of players to safely have fun; such as the field, sideline areas, field equipment, players' equipment, the physical and emotional states of participants, and other game related concerns.
- Review and follow a simple process that encourages communication and collaboration when there is a concern or issue with players/participants.

REFEREES

Referees, as Stewards of the Game, are responsible for keeping the game safe, fair, and fun. Referees should support and work with coaches to manage the behavior of players and spectators.

COACHES

Coaches must keep their sideline participation to being: Positive, Instructive and Encouraging at all times. Coaches must ensure respect and support for referees by players, parents, and all other spectators.

PARENTS

Parents are expected to respect coaches and referees, and model positive sporting behavior; and at the same time, maintain realistic expectations.

KIDS ZONE®

KEEP IT FRIENDLY

KEEP IN *MIND*

Sideline critics who scream instructions at players or criticize referees or coaches slow down the learning process and make it less fun for everyone. Consider every time you prepare to kick the ball you receive numerous screams of direction? Scary, confusing and annoying!

Regardles of age group or playing level, ***all*** developing players benefit from a positive sideline. In AYSO, fans (yes, including parents) are asked to be cheerleaders, **not critics or sideline coaches**! Kids Zone® is a unique program that includes a Parent Pledge that moms and dads sign to commit to ***positive, encouraging*** behavior when they're watching the matches. It also includes signs, buttons and other match-day reminders.

Soccer is a ***player's*** game! Players learn the game by trying new things, making mistakes and trying again.

Negative, even violent, behavior of players, coaches and parents involved in youth sports has become almost epidemic in this country. Kids Zone® is a proactive effort to counteract this trend and involves the following elements:

To help execute this program, four basic elements are involved (and available from the AYSO Store):

1. **Kids Zone® Button.** Worn by program supporters at matches and serves as a reminder of the importance of positive sideline behavior.

2. **The Sign.** A large sideline poster lists positive behavior standards and can be posted at the entrance of participating fields. Parents and spectators who will abide by these standards are welcome.

3. **The Pledge.** AYSO requests all parents to sign a pledge that holds them to the Kids Zone® standards.

4. **The Video.** A 12 minute documentary introduces AYSO's principles and its Kids Zone® action plan to new participants. Viewers will also watch a parent intervene to change another parent's negative behavior. In order to make this program work, everyone must help!

KEEP IN *MIND*

Help create a safe and encouraging environment for you and your team by implementing Kids Zone®.

To learn more or visit AYSO.org/kidszone

INTERMEDIATE COACHING

SHOWTIME!

14U is the time to engage our players to prioritize and commit to soccer for the long haul! Hopefully, our players' prior AYSO (or other) experience will have laid the foundational skills necessary to easily transition into the intermediate stage of the game.

From a players' perspective the big shift is from 9v9 to 11v11; therefore, we must address this tactical progression carefully to maximize learning.

At this level, we will strive to educate the players on how to read the game by going deeper into the Principles of Play and Phases of Play in our training and playing environments and focus on functional group roles within a full team system.

We will review numerous formations and discuss strengths, weaknesses and tactics to play against. The Coaching Cycle now provides a clear pathway from match performance to training requirements, (individual, group, team).

Physically, players are going through significant changes, which can take a major toll on their performance so we will introduce planning cycles as we develop a more global picture of our players' individual, group and team objectives.

Ultimately, our goal is to stimulate our players' passion and learning by becoming true students of the game...and to help them fulfill their soccer potential!

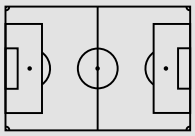
Are you ready?

KEEP IN *MIND*

- Strive to develop each and every player you coach, while at all times embracing the AYSO Philosophies.
- Use this manual as a constant resource and reference throughout your entire season.
- Plan, structure and progress sessions as shown to maximize development and time.
- All coaches improve through continued education!

COACHING METHODOLOGY

FROM THE ***FIELD***



"Success should be measured by the demonstrated & documented improvement of each individual (not results). The role of a youth trainer is to improve the skills & habits of each & every footballer in his or her charge. Ironically, if the club does improve each player, the team results improve."

Johan Cruyff

DEVELOPMENT OVER WINNING

Let's remove any myth related to AYSO, "We play to win!" The purpose of a match is to win! However, the manner in which we obtain the victory becomes a question of development versus winning.

Is there any real development taking place when our players simply punt the ball 30 yards each time they receive it and hope it bounces near a teammate on way to goal? There isn't! Yet, this is how many teams at all ages win matches and measure their success. At AYSO, we feel, it is time to challenge that methodology on the quest for victory.

Prioritizing development over winning does NOT reduce competition (which is instrumental to a player's development). However, a competitive environment does not necessarily need to be entirely league table-dependent.

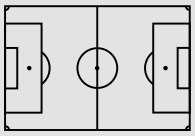
Make your player's better by encouraging them to play with purpose, intent, creativity…skill. Give them quality instruction to develop their skills, the freedom to express themselves (and make mistakes) and the platform to improve…by playing. To echo the comments of the famous Dutch master Johan Cruyff, "Ironically, if the club does improve each player, the team results improve."

KEEP IN *MIND*

A healthy competitive environment for our players should focus on performance as well as outcome (favoring and recognizing ball skills, intent, effort, creativity, etc., as factors of success, not simply the score). Consider the emotional rollercoaster of quantifying success only to when you win the game or score a goal (aspects that are not 100% within any player's control). As adults, how would we like to be measured in that type of scenario?

As coaches, it is our responsibility to respect our individual players' development and skill acquisition on our quest for team victory. Please consider this on your coaching journey.

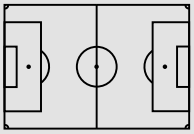
FROM THE ***FIELD***



"Development over winning. Being faithful to it, being really faithful to it every single day. Are the players, are the kids the most important thing? That's what I worry about. That's what I talk about. That's my only goal: making the players and of course, the coaches who teach them, all of us, better!"

Claudio Reyna, Former U.S. Soccer Youth Technical Director

FROM THE
FIELD



"What makes soccer so special is that it's a player's game. In other American sports there is so much impact that a coach can have on the game; in soccer, it's the opposite. I remind coaches all the time that their job is to be a guide for the players. At the end of the day, it's the players who are making the decisions on the field."

Jurgen Klinsmann, Former US Men's National Team

CHARACTERISTICS OF SOCCER (VS. OTHER U.S. SPORTS)

At 14U, we should know the differences between soccer and other U.S. sports. Well, consider this a reminder as you approach your own coaching. From the design of activities and sessions; to coaching persona; to coaching methodology, most characteristics of other US sports don't translate well to soccer.

We need to remember is that soccer is NOT coach-centric. It is player-based. Having "Coach" on our shirts and stepping in with epic motivational speeches and world class plays for every possible scenario…is NOT what is required of a soccer coach. So, as a gentle reminder, here are some key differences between soccer and other US sports, since these strongly impact how the game should be played, viewed and coached. In comparison, soccer is:

- Free-flowing (fewer stoppages).
- Not play-by-play based (free-flowing rhythm promotes player decision making, less coach involvement).
- Low-scoring (more often).
- Requires eye-foot coordination
  (versus eye-hand in baseball, basketball, football).
- Has no physical size requirement.
- Equal opportunity sport (girls and boys are of equal capability and have comparable opportunities).
- PLAYER-based (as game flows, players make the decisions, rather than the coach, and PLAY the game).
- *PLAYER-based (as game flows, players make the decisions, rather than the coach, and PLAY the game).

*Not a typo!

As coaches, it is our responsibility to respect our individual players' development and skill acquisition on our quest for team victory. Please consider this on your coaching journey.

CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE COACHES

Coaching styles differ based on personality and beliefs on how the game should be played. Effective coaches; however, all possess similar characteristics:

1. Positive (Focus On Capabilities And Convey Optimism).
2. Supportive.
3. Individualized (Training And Instruction).
4. Fair (Adjust To Meet Each Athlete's Needs And Strive For Equity).
5. Appropriate (Apply Right Behaviors At The Right Time).
6. Clear (In Their Communications).
7. Consistent (In Their Behaviors).

Source: Quality Coaching Behaviors, Dr. Andrea J. Becker, California State University, Fullerton, CA

KEEP IN
MIND

Whatever coaching persona you may adopt, avoid being the center of attention! Create an environment where the players are the focus and priority. Remember, this is a game for players!

The general qualities of any coach combine into four fundamental attributes that all successful coaches share:

1. Soccer knowledge.
2. Prioritize athlete's well-being and development.
3. Ability to communicate knowledge to the player.
4. Ability to observe and evaluate (coaching eye) to correct any apparent faults (in a positive manner).

PREPARATION AND ORGANIZATION

PREPARATION

Always prepare a written Training Plan! Consider what you wish to work on and what activities you can use to achieve your goal. A written plan ensures smooth transitions, less down time and a more economical use of precious time.

Take a few minutes just before your training session to review your plan and the coaching points you want to make. Consider saving your plans as a coaching library for future seasons/sessions or to share with other coaches in your Region.

APPEARANCE

Appropriate attire is expected when conducting your coaching session. Wearing soccer apparel and footwear go a long way to comforting your players that you know what you are doing related to your role as their "soccer coach."

Sunglasses are discouraged, as players cannot see your eyes. Even with a prescription, remove your sunglasses when in direct communication with your players.

ORGANIZATION

Ideally, set up your area in advance of players and parents arriving. **Upon their arrival, they should see a planned and organized environment, which will immediately set the tone for the session as well as provide confidence for the parents.** In organizing your coaching area:

- Make sure the area is safe (playing surface, physical considerations, sprinklers, etc.).
- Plan for a smooth transition from one exercise to another.
- Minimize the number of cones that you have to pick up or reset.
- Have a place for equipment and breaks.

EQUIPMENT

The more equipment you have to help create a realistic and dynamic training environment the better. Below is a basic list of the minimum equipment you should have as part of your coaching kit:

- AYSO Player Registration Forms – which include the Emergency Authorization.
- Basic first-aid kit*.
- **Players should bring water to *every* session.**
- 16-20 cones (preferably multi-colored, preferably tall and disc).
- 16 scrimmage vests (preferably 2 sets of different colors).
- Extra soccer balls (players should bring a ball to *every* session).
- Pump.
- Extra pair of shin guards (players must wear shin guards at *every* session).
- Pop-up goals (preferred).
- Whistle.
- Charged cell phone (in case of emergency).
- Training plan.

*Be familiar with your first aid kit contents so that you know what you have **and where it is** if needed.

AGE APPROPRIATE UNDERSTANDING AND APPLICATION

The following chart generalizes age characteristics of children ages 12 through 15 years of age. (Note: ***All*** children are unique and often chronological age can conflict with developmental age; therefore, individual application should always be considered.)

KEEP IN *MIND*

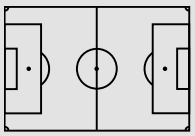
Our players are ***not*** mini-adults; therefore, our training sessions must be adapted to life through ***their*** eyes, ***their*** interests and most important, ***their*** capabilities.

	AGE APPROPRIATE CHARACTERISTICS AND TRAINING ENVIRONMENTS
14U	Tactical development becomes significant; however, technical efficiency should still be prioritized, practiced and perfected. Position-specific training should now be applied to both individuals and small groups. Tactical training should now involve larger more game-like areas and realistic environments. Attacking and defending Principles of Play should be laced throughout the session. Small-sided matches are still a vital learning platform. Coaching methods should consider players' health and fitness due to the major physical changes players are experiencing at this age. Fitness training should now incorporate strength and endurance. Proper form and dynamic flexibility during warm-ups and cool downs are critical at this physically demanding stage of development. Players should now be developing the required desire and discipline to maximize their soccer career.
15U	

COACHING MOMENTS

At the end of the day, it is the coach's job to coach! But having the content is one thing (and we are providing this for you), but knowing ***how*** to effectively communicate, motivate and develop your individual players is another talent.

FROM THE
FIELD



"Football is simple; trainers (coaches) shouldn't make it so complicated."

Johan Cruyff, Dutch Soccer Legend

MANAGING THE COACHING MOMENT…LESS IS MORE

Know in advance who will be at your session. During technical and tactical training, plan and group players to maximize their development. This does not necessarily mean strong with strong and weak with weak. Frequently it is more on a personality or positional basis.

KEEP IN *MIND*

Positive Coaching! Regardless of your personal approach or delivery, **Positive Instruction and Encouragement (P.I.E.)** should *always* be used to instruct and motivate your players. They will respond better to you and it will help keep AYSO a developmentally rich and positive environment.

The coaching environment you create must be safe and conducive to learning. Players must be stimulated to learn and educational opportunities must be well thought out to maximize development.

KEEP IN *MIND*

Players must be given freedom to be creative and find solutions without constant coaching in order to learn from their mistakes. Remember, mistakes are guidelines for improvement!

It is a fine line managing the flow of your session and finding the appropriate time to step in. Occupy a central but sideline position to allow a clear, panoramic view. Methods of intervention:

- **Forced Stoppage** (freeze, get in, make your point, get out).
- **Natural Stoppage** (be careful the coaching opportunity hasn't passed and the situation forgotten).
- **Flow** (talking as the game is playing…but ***avoid*** constant commentary).
- **Individual Reference** (pulling a player aside to make an observation).

PRESENTING YOUR COACHING POINT

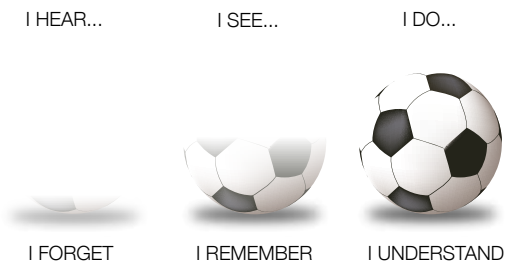
Avoid lengthy speeches! Keep instructions for activities as simple and quick as possible and limited to one point at a time. Where possible, explain in images and provide visual analogies (much easier for kids to grasp). Coaching points or instructions should be:

- Concise (broken down, simple, small pieces of information).
- Accurate.
- Relevent (to a coaching principle or objective).
- **Demonstrated** (whenever possible)!

When addressing your players, make sure ***they*** are not directly facing the sun.

KEEP IN *MIND*

Avoid lengthy speeches! Keep instructions for activities as simple and quick as possible.



LET THE PLAYERS PLAY AND THE GAME TEACH!

VOICE

- Do consider the volume and tone of your voice.
- Avoid being monotone.
- Modulating the intensity of your voice can help emphasize your coaching points and gain the required attention.
- Always maintain control and *never* raise your voice in anger or frustration.

INDIVIDUAL COMPONENTS OF DELIVERY

Questions

Children respond enthusiastically to questions and are stimulated to find the answer. Questions can be:

- Factual: Definitive, simple answers (*what*).
- Conceptual: Requires a higher level of processing and thought (*how*).
- Stimulating: Requires complex reasoning (*why*).

Commanding

Definitive, controlled, lecture (less player-centered).

Guided Discovery

Guides the player through process by posing a *series* of questions whose responses lead to the understanding of a concept (like detectives).

Experimentation

Cause and effect comparison (try it and see, compare).

COMPLETE SYSTEM OF DELIVERY

Say, Show, Do and Review

An effective complete teaching method for any age group:

1. **SAY:** Explain skill or technique (keep it brief especially with younger players).
2. **SHOW:** Effectively demonstrate skill or technique.
3. **DO:** Have players perform skill or technique.
4. **REVIEW:** *Observe, Correct* and *Confirm* proper technique.

Observe (silently). Instead of trying to correct immediately, let them play uninterrupted for a time (they will learn from mistakes) and take notes (preferably written), focusing on *one* effort they can improve.

Correct what you saw in terms of the player's execution, and then provide them with attainable modifications to correct one or two deficits by once again demonstrating.

Confirm accomplishments once success is achieved! Say it out loud, so everyone can hear.

Post Session

Discussion with the players: Do not underestimate the value and impact of a positive comment or constructive feedback to a player after the training session (but keep it concise).

Review your training plan: Note what worked well and what needs to improve.

Evaluate yourself: Encourage constructive feedback from others in relation to your coaching management and session structure.

COACHING YOUR OWN CHILD

If you are coaching your own child at 14U, the chances are you've been doing it for quite some time, so we will simply summarize some pointers to help keep your efforts prosperous on and off the field.

- **Avoid being harder on your own child than the other players because you're worried about perceptions of favoritism.** No matter what you say or how you say it, your comments can often register as a personal attack because they come from mom or dad.

- Don't be afraid to praise your child and acknowledge her strengths and accomplishments at every opportunity. As well as your child they are also a player on the team!

- A good test on how to treat your child on the soccer team is to constantly ask yourself if your reactions to your child's play or behavior are the same as they are to your child's teammates.

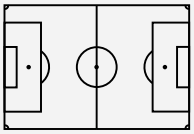
- Another peril of coaching your own children is to leave your coaching hat on when the session/match is over. Limit your post-session soccer discussions once the whistle blows. Once the topic of food is raised, it is probably time to get back to your full-time role.

KEEP IN *MIND*

Savor Every Moment!
It will pass all too quickly!

AGE APPROPRIATE (PLAYER) DEVELOPMENT

FROM THE ***FIELD***



"Learning to be a soccer athlete, there are progressive stages and if you don't get the early stages right, ***in sequence***, then you are fighting an uphill battle in developing an athlete."

Dave Chesler, Former U.S. Soccer Director of Coach Education
Current WNT Performance Analysis Coach

THE SCIENCE OF AGE APPROPRIATE TRAINING

"To provide youth soccer programs ***that enrich children's lives.***"

This vision can ***only*** be achieved if we continually ask ourselves if the activity, method or decision will truly enrich the player's life. To achieve this goal, our training sessions ***must*** be adapted to the player's specific age and stage of development.

Technical, tactical, physical and psychosocial training components should be woven throughout each session; however, ***at all-times*** with deep respect to the player's specific age ***and*** stage of development. At AYSO, we prioritize these important aspects as follows:

Psychosocial
Respect, motivation, confidence, cooperation, competitiveness, etc., and how these emotions and feelings impact a player's development. Also, includes a player's ability to reason, learn and solve problems. **At AYSO, we develop the *whole* person!**

Physical
A player's physical attributes: speed, agility, endurance, strength and power, etc. **At AYSO, we promote a healthy lifestyle through soccer!**

Technical
A player's ability to master ball skills, i.e., ball control, shooting, passing, etc. **At AYSO, we prioritize skill development and ball mastery.**

Tactical
A player's capacity to use their skill and ability ***within*** a game environment, i.e., creating space in midfield, possession and transition, creating width, etc. **At AYSO, we educate our players on playing as part of (and within) a team dynamic.**

KEY DEVELOPMENTAL COMPONENTS IN AYSO INTERMEDIATE TRAINING

PSYCHOSOCIAL

In response to much of the physical and hormonal changes players are going through, they are equally challenged emotionally and cognitively at this stage of development. Respect!

- Self-focused and self-conscious.
- Concerned about physical changes, they often compare themselves to others.
- Strive for independence, but still need guidance with decision-making and judgments.
- Concerned about fitting in.
- Move away from parental/adult influence and tend to understand how to participate with peers for opinions and recognition.
- Demonstrate mood shifts and increased defiance.
- Find justice and fairness to be important.
- Consider the world beyond their own community.
- Move from fantasy to realistic focus on life's goals.
- Can mentally manipulate abstract ideas.
- Challenge assumptions and consider consequences.
- Engage in new kinds of problem solving when prompted. Still working out interactions with opposite gender.
- Look into future, using reasoning to develop expectations for specific outcomes and to formulate long-term goals.

PHYSICAL

The body is working hard to develop so it is a vital time in a player's development and equally vital that we, as coaches, recognize and respect this time…especially when it comes to training, load, overtraining, rest and recovery. Respect!

- Changes in physical appearance can cause embarrassment and self-consciousness.
- Broad range of sexual maturity and growth patterns.
- Puberty is a time of dramatic change for both boys and girls. Hormone-driven changes are accompanied by growth spurts that transform kids into physically mature teens.
- Boys may mature as much as 2 years later than girls.
- Rapid muscular growth.
- Physical appearance can cause misconceptions regarding actual maturity.
- Variation in development can cause stress.
- Fatigue and overtraining can be an issue at this stage so rest and recovery become important elements.
- Skin and complexion problems are often evident, and can cause real emotional stress.
- It's important for players to develop a healthy and well-balanced diet, and quality physical activity to ensure continued growth and proper development during these years.

TECHNICAL

- All in!

TACTICAL

Attacking Objectives	Defending Objectives	Attacking Principles	Defending Principles
Score	*Prevent Scoring*	*Penetration*	*Pressure (delay)*
Maintain Possesion	*Regain Possession*	*Support*	*Cover*
Advance Ball	*Delay Opponents*	*Mobility*	*Balance*
		Width	*Compactness*
		Creativity	*Control and Restraint*

PERSONALITY TRAITS OF SUCCESSFULL ATHLETES

Renowned sports psychologist Dr. Tom Tutko identified key personality traits shared by successful athletes. By recognizing these individual characteristics in their players, the coach can help team motivation and performance. And by building up an individual player's less developed characteristics, the coach can help players maximize their potential. These traits are listed below:

Drive
- Great desire to win or be successful.
- Concentrated desire toward improvement of weaknesses.

Aggression
- Plays hard and stands ground.
- Physical, but not violent, play.

Coach-ability
- Will take coaching and correction in a positive fashion.
- Will perform assigned tasks willingly.

Determination
- Player will not give up easily.
- Player will work hard to improve.

Responsibility
- Will complete assigned tasks.
- Does not shift criticism to other players.

Conscientiousness
- Attempts to do things correctly.
- Does not need constant supervision.

Mental toughness
- Can bounce back after error.
- Accepts strong criticism.

Self-Confidence
- Confident of abilities and knowledge.
- Not upset by pressure or surprises.

Leadership
- Ability to communicate.
- Ability to apply all of the points discussed here.

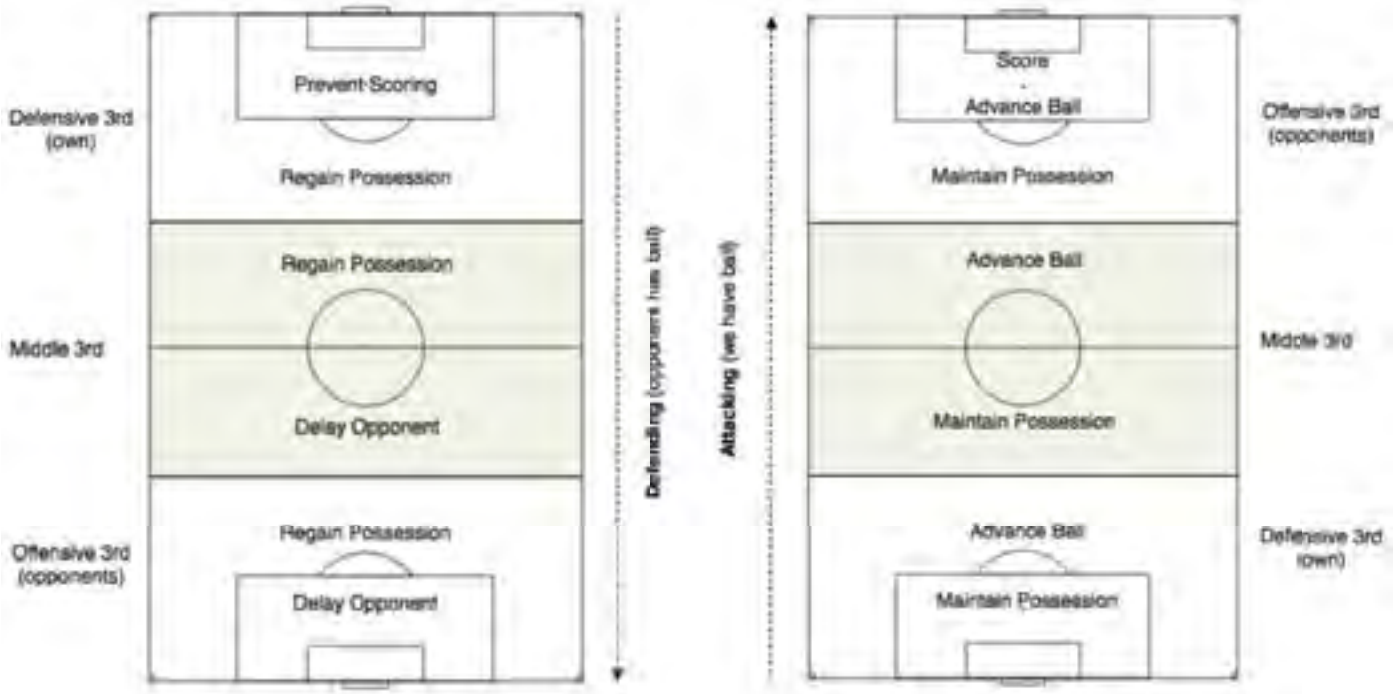
Emotional Control
- Able to control emotion under pressure and adverse conditions.
- Not upset by the mistakes or failings of others.

Trust and Respect
- Ability to trust coach and team members.
- Able to trust and believe in oneself.

ELEMENTS OF SOCCER

OBJECTIVES OF THE GAME

ATTACKING OBJECTIVES			DEFENDING OBJECTIVES		
SCORE	Maintain Possession	Advance Ball	Prevent Scoring	Regain Possession	Delay Opponents
BASED ON A PLAYER'S RELATIVE POSITION TO:					
The Ball	Teammates	Opponents		Location on Field	Time in Game



PRINCIPLES OF PLAY

Used to ***achieve*** the Objectives of the Game, the Principles of Play form the game's basic tactical foundation (and are consistent throughout any formation).

However, it is not enough to just explain the Principles of Play, they must be illustrated and worked on within match-related conditions. Once players understand the Principles of Play, they must be taught to use or exploit them in order to achieve the objectives. Principles of Play will also help players read the game better.

Attacking Principle **countered by** **Defending Principle**

Penetration

Advancing the ball past (in behind) opposing players by dribbling, passing and shooting.

To learn more visit: aysou.video/pressure

Pressure (delay)

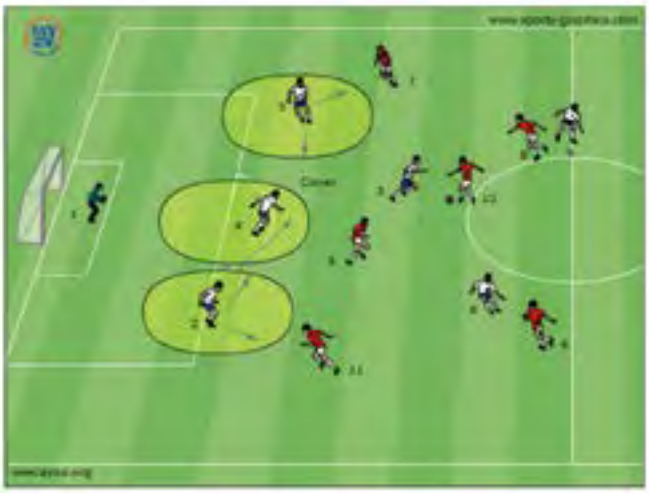
Pressuring opponents in possession by giving immediate chase, denying their options, i.e., dribbling, passing, shooting, etc., or delaying the opponents in order to regain possession.

To learn more visit: aysou.video/pressure

Support

Supporting teammates by creating safe passing options for the player with the ball.

To learn more visit: aysou.video/support



Cover

Supporting the player(s) challenging the ball in case they are beaten. Limits options for 1st attacker.

To learn more visit: aysou.video/cover

Attacking Principle

Mobility

Players interchanging positions (filling in for one another as needed) and moving off the ball. Unbalancing defense, creating numerical advantages and thereby attacking/scoring opportunities.

To learn more visit: aysou.video/mobility

Defending Principle

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.

To learn more visit: aysou.video/balance

Width

Kin of mobility. Attacking on a broad front (players spread out) stretches and isolates the defense and creates space for players to advance.

To learn more visit: aysou.video/width

Compactness

Compressing or restricting the space the attacking team has by "shepherding" them into a confined area making it easier to defend and regain possession of the ball.

To learn more visit: aysou.video/composure

Attacking Principle

Creativity

Creating opportunities for advancement, possession and scoring by utilizing individual skills such as feints and fakes.

To learn more visit: aysou.video/creativity

Defending Principle

Control and Restraint (composure)

Staying calm, disciplined and organized in the face of an attack by maintaining proper defensive techniques and positioning.

To learn more visit: aysou.video/control

The attacking principles ultimately lead us to achieving our attacking objectives – ***to maintain possession, advance the ball and score!***

The defending principles ultimately lead us to achieving our defending objectives – ***to delay the opponents, prevent scoring and regain possession!***

14U players should learn to understand their role at any given time in relation to being in possession, opponents having possession, or the time of transition between both actions. They should understand their role individually as well as part of their positional unit.

Being able to comprehend what to do and when to do it by understanding the principles of play and their related role, will serve as a solid foundation in learning to read the game.

Attacking Roles

Penetrate: 1st Attacker
Support: 2nd (and 3rd Attackers)
Mobility: 2nd (and 3rd Attackers)
Width: 2nd (and 3rd Attackers)
Creativity: Unpredictable

Defending Roles

Pressure: 1st Defender
Cover: 2nd Defender(s)
Balance: 3rd Defender(s)
Compactness: Group
Control/Restraint: Group

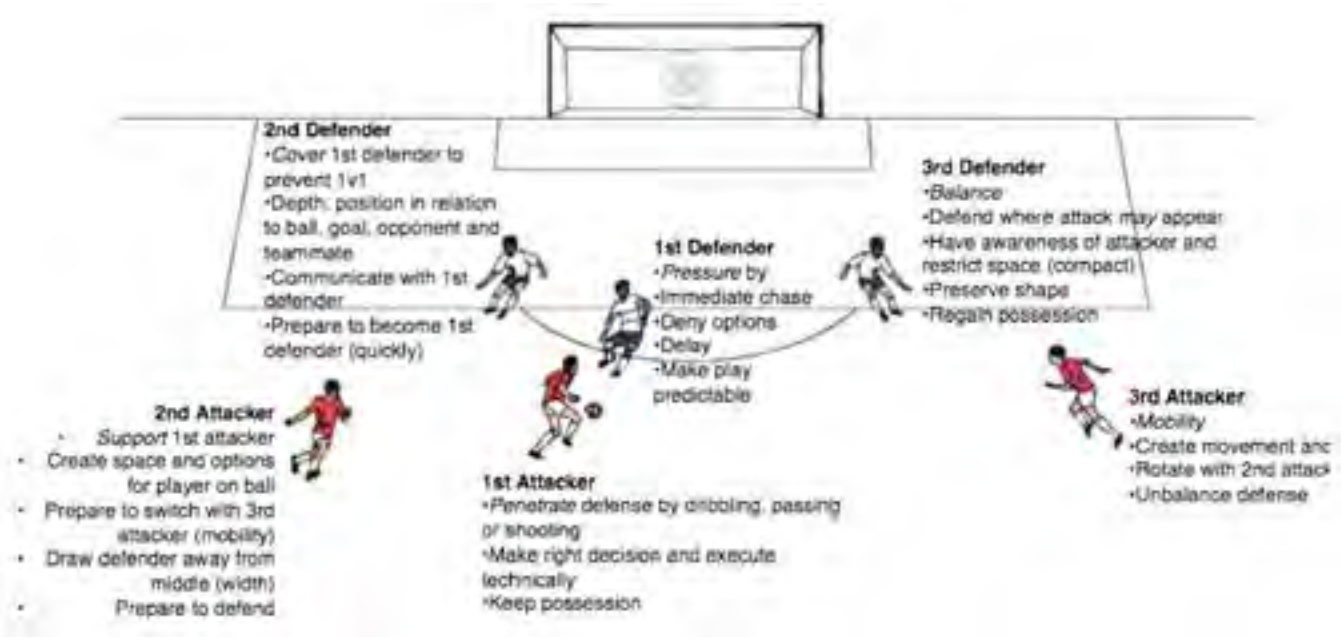
Remember, due to the fluid nature of soccer, players' roles are in constant rotation, and supporting players can be behind, to the side, or in advance of the ball.

The only players with definitive roles are the 1st attacker and 1st defender.

Additional roles (support, mobility, width, creativity ***and*** cover, balance, compactness, control/restraint) can be provided by numerous players.

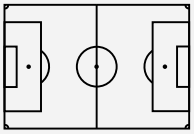
Ultimately, players must understand ***all*** attacking and defending roles to truly master the game.

Check out the training plans on pages 110, 119 and 123 that work on developing the principes of play.



POSITIONS

FROM THE
FIELD



"The Dutch change positions quicker than you can make a cup of coffee."

Paolo Rossi, Italian soccer legend

In general, most 14U players are now focused on one or two positional preferences. This may or may not align with your own opinion so clear communication between coach, player (and parent) must take place for individual and team success.

Regardless of positional preference, ***all*** outfield players should be encouraged to defend AND attack. Players should be given the freedom to be involved in the flow of the game. Your center-back should be encouraged to score goals, your striker encouraged to chase back and stop goal scoring chances.

Players should ***not*** be positioned in straight lines across the field or rooted to one position. They should fill general areas, **not specific spots.** Players should not own positions, but rather occupy them! Emphasize this to your players, as today's player must be able to adapt to whatever position or role is required of them within the team structure.

Everyone Plays! Remember, every player in AYSO must play 1/2 of every game; however, we recommend strongly that each player play 3/4 of every game ***before*** any player plays all four quarters. Players of all abilities improve when they play and the more they play, the better they get.

General Positional Responsibilities

Position	Own Team with Ball	Other Team with Ball
Goalkeepers	Begin the Attack	Stop Scoring Attempt
Defenders	Maintain Possession Advance the Ball	Stop Scoring Attempt Regain Possession
Midfielders	Advance the Ball Maintain Possession	Delay Attack Regain Possession
Strikers	Score Advance the Ball Maintain Possession	Regain Possession Delay Attack

KEEP IN
MIND

Regardless of positional preference, all outfield players should be encouraged to defend AND attack. Players should be given the freedom to be involved in the flow of the game.

Goalkeepers

- Agile, quick reflexes
- Courage to get ball
- Ability to distribute
- Sure hands
- Ability to read the game
- Confident
- Good communicator

Defenders

- Determination to win ball
- Good tackling technique
- Strong, accurate kick
- Speed to cover opposition
- Attacking qualities
- Patient and disciplined

Midfielders

- Stamina and fitness
- Desire, aggression, hustle
- Good vision
- Ability to read the game
- Solid technique

Forwards

- Desire to score
- Confidence
- Speed
- Accurate, strong shot
- Good ball control
- Solid technique

TRADITIONAL NUMBERING SYSTEM

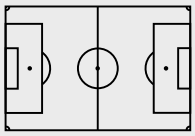
First introduced in 1928, there is a global trend to return to a more traditional numbering system where the jersey number denotes the players' position. For example, the iconic #10 role is usually assigned to the creative midfield maestro, i.e., Pele, Maradona, Messi, Neymar, etc.

This tradition is *not* a rule and AYSO teams can assign any numbers they wish (alphabetical, lucky, etc.).
However, from an educational perspective, traditional numbering can aid communication and help players identify their own positional role and function, as well as their opponents. The insight presented here is purely informative.

Cool trivia: In world soccer, the fans are often nicknamed the "12th man" because their support is equal to having an additional player on the field. Therefore, some clubs like Bayern Munich and Lazio (known for their strong support) retire the number 12 jersey to honor their supporters.
Check out Dave Chesler's (US WNT Performance Analysis Coach) session plan on page 123, which integrates traditional numbering as part of a functional training plan.

SYSTEMS OF PLAY

FROM THE ***FIELD***



"I am not a fanatic for one specific system. But I want the team to understand they are all on the same page. They have to go forward all together, and they have to go backward all together."

Jurgen Kinsmann, Former US Men's National Team

Your system of play is your organizational framework that will maximize your team's overall strengths. Teaching players about systems of play, along with the principles of play and objectives of the game will begin to open them up to the concepts of shape and organization and ultimately help them learn to read the game.

Soccer is a free-flowing and dynamic game (not static). Players must be encouraged and given the freedom to move relative to the ball, their teammates, their opponents, time in the game and the goal. When strikers move up to try to score, the midfielders and defenders must also adjust to the new position. Similarly, when the opposing team gets the ball, the strikers must drop back as the midfielders and defenders move to new positions in order to fulfill their duties.

KEEP IN *MIND*

No system of play will overcome a lack of basic technique or skill. Systems of play must be appropriate for the players on your team. Therefore, find a system of play that fits the ability of ***your*** players instead of trying to fit your players into a particular system.

PROS AND CONS OF SOME POPULAR FORMATIONS

Please note these points are mere ***suggestions*** and ***considerations.*** Ultimately, there is no right or wrong formation! Decisions should be based on ***your*** team's speed, ability, endurance, field size as well as the speed and ability of your opponents. Experiment in training and scrimmages.

1-4-4-2 Strengths

- Balanced attack and defense.
- Multiple attacking options.
- Can adapt to play more defensive (drop player back).
- Easy to play and easy for players to understand.
- Easy to improvise new tactics.

1-4-4-2 Weaknesses

- Can become static, limiting movement and creative play.
- Not particularly strong in any specific area of play.
- Predictable to play against and easy to counter.

Tactics Against a 1-4-4-2

- Can be a static and predictable formation so counter with unpredictable play, i.e., encourage 3rd man runs from midfield, fullbacks to push on and join in the attack.

1-4-3-3 Strengths

- Strong attack, can stretch defense with wide players.
- Ideal for counter-attacks.

1-4-3-3 Weaknesses

- Midfield has large area to cover defensively.
- Vulnerable in wide areas.
- Can limit movement of forwards (2 forwards can make unpredictable channel runs and switch positions).

Tactics Against a 1-4-3-3

- Control the midfield and use wide areas as the opposition only has 3 players covering the full width of the field. However do not over commit defenders forward or you could get caught on the break.

1-4-5-1 Strengths

- Strong midfield, easier to control the pace of the game.
- More defending options.
- Good attacking options if used effectively.

1-4-5-1 Weaknesses

- Striker must be strong (able to hold up ball and hold off defenders).
- Midfielders must be able to support otherwise you limit your attacking options and will encourage the opposition to pressure at all times.

Tactics Against a 1-4-5-1

- Encourage wide defenders to join in the attack at all times to even out the numbers in midfield. There is only 1 player in attack and, therefore, does not require 4 defenders sitting back at all times.

1-5-3-2 Strengths

- Strong midfield and defensive coverage on the center of the field.
- Can switch easily between offensive and defensive modes.

1-5-3-2 Weaknesses

- Requires high-level of physical effort to sustain attacking options.
- Difficult to give full support both offensively and defensively.Tactics Against a 5-3-2

Tactics Against a 1-5-3-2

- Gaining control of the 3-man midfield is the best way to combat the 5-3-2.
- Playing a 3-5-2 would give you a numbers up situation in midfield while giving you good width options to penetrate the defensive approach of the opposition.

1-4-2-3-1 Strengths

- Inherently defensive in nature.
- Creates a solid "spine" throughout the team.
- The two "pivot" players defensively act as a screen for the back 4 (sliding left and right) and not allowing penetrating passes into the final third.
- Offensively, they are an immediate link for defenders to play to.
- The 3 attacking midfield players provide great support to the single striker creating lots of mobility and attacking options.
- The system also allows the outside backs to get forward with the "pivot" players providing cover for them.

1-4-2-3-1 Weaknesses

- Inherently defensive in nature.
- Can be exposed by teams with good wide players.
- If the 2 holding midfielders are not particularly mobile and do not adjust accordingly, the outside backs may get exposed in 1 v 1 situations.
- Offensively, the attacking midfielders must be ready and alert to support the lone striker.
- If left isolated the lone striker may struggle to maintain attacking plays (must be able to hold up the ball).

Tactics Against a 1-4-2-3-1

- A 4-4-2 with 4 midfielders in a narrow diamond could expose the 4-2-3-1's lack of width and space in front of full-backs (the two wide men atop the 4-2-3-1 are wing forwards more than typical left and right midfielders and can compromise space behind them when they compensate for the lack of a second striker in the middle).
- Isolate their full backs and create 1 v 1s in wide areas high up the field quickly before the two pivots adjust.
- Consider playing a deeper back line to try and draw them out a bit (creating space for the two forwards to check to the ball).
- A 4-5-1 could confront the 4-2-3-1 midfield organization (although the 1 striker might be left isolated with their 2 "pivot" players screening).

1-3-5-2 Strengths

- Defensively efficient (2 markers and 1 free player).
- Flexibility.
- Quick transition (constant shift from 1-3-5-2 to 1-5-3-2) depending who is in possession.
- Overload potential in central midfield and offense.
- Wide tactical advantage (extra central midfield player can force opponent to pull a player in from their flank, leaving their remaining flank player 1 v 1).
- The proximity of 3 central midfield players allows constant and close support for forwards as they show for the ball.
- 5 midfielders make it easy to zone cover.

1-3-5-2 Weaknesses

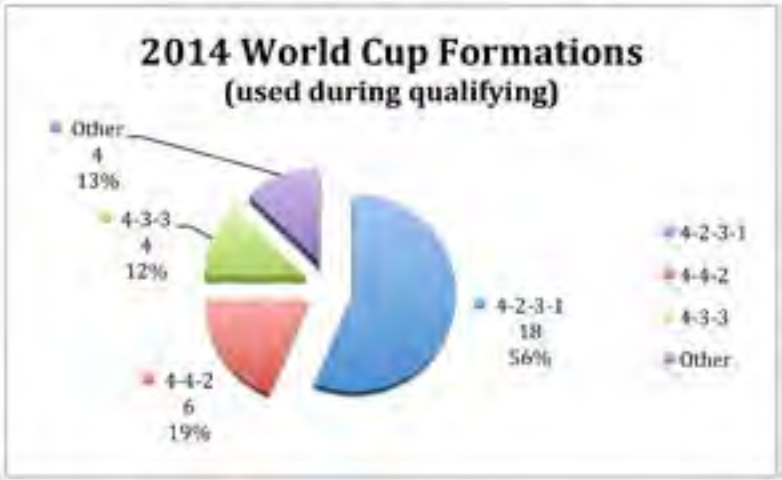
- Requires versatile and mobile players or positional inter change can be a liability.
- Requires tactically efficient players who grasp principles of play.
- Requires a high level of fitness as most will play box-to-box and touchline-to touchline (especially from the wide midfield players).
- Wide defensive isolation and exposure (with only 3 defenders, the gaps behind the R and L midfielders are vulnerable).
- Harder to play out of the back.
- Tendency to drop and defend too deep.

Tactics Against a 1-3-5-2

- Exploit space behind the wide midfielders.
- The team that is slow to push across or prepare for these situations may tactically have their flanks exposed to penetration by the opponent.
- Expose the one defender on each flank (lack of athleticism or tactical understanding may be exploited in individual duels or by combining and outnumbering on a flank).
- Diagonal through balls can exploit defensive 3.
- Attacking improvisation from #7, #9 and #11 can exploit back 3.
- 1-4-4-2, 1-3-4-3 or 1-4-3-3 line-up well against.

Some Considerations for Changing Formation:

- Winning or losing.
- Circumstances of the particular match.
- Player availability, roles, performance, injury or fitness.
- Disciplinary sanctions, i.e., yellow or red cards.
- Weather, field, your next game.

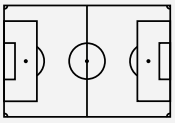


Summary:

- You can't do tactically what you can't do technically!
- Suit your system to available talent.
- No system will overcome a lack of basic skills.
- Players, not formations, win games.
- Any system should consider available talent and the physical and environmental conditions.
- Be open-minded to adapt.

STYLE OF PLAY

FROM THE
FIELD



"My Life and The Beautiful Game."

Pelé

As a major cornerstone to the game in this country, we have a responsibility to help develop our players in a manner consistent with our national teams and ultimately help prepare our players to reach and play at their desired potential.

Therefore, we have decided to share an organizational perspective, not a mandate, but a belief in how the game should be played.

At AYSO, we encourage player freedom, creativity and expression (remember our quest to enrich lives). We believe the game should be played with more intent, more purpose, using the ball to achieve our objectives…not relying on the luck of the bounce.

We should strive to make the ball do the work by keeping it moving, maintaining possession and quickly and proactively transition to create goal-scoring opportunities. All players attack when we have the ball, all players defend when we lose the ball. Our players should be technically efficient to adapt their role to whatever the coach requires to best suit the team.

As previously stated, formations should be tailored to your specific group of players; however, if we could reference two line-ups conducive to the AYSO ***preferred*** style of play they would be 1-4-4-2 and 1-4-3-3.

In short, we want to create exciting soccer players who can play exciting soccer. To summarize:

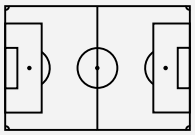
- TECHNICALLY EFFICIENT.
- INDIVIDUAL CREATIVITY AND EXPRESSION.
- DELIBERATE!
- PURPOSEFUL AND CONTROLLED POSSESSION.
- FAST PENETRATION!
- QUICK TRANSITION.
- TEAM UNITY AND TEAM IMPACT.
- ADAPTABLE!

KEEP IN
MIND

We urge you to consider a style of play that encourages player freedom and expression (remember our quest to ***enrich*** lives); however, in reality, we simply want for you and your players to have the most enjoyment you possibly can from this wonderful game, ***whatever*** style you choose to play.

QUALITY TRAINING

FROM THE ***FIELD***



"The coach has to establish a playing environment where everyone is eager to train and perform at their best. Each player should understand what they should bring to each session, i.e., set of standards or expectations. Once everyone on the team understands their role, learning (and fun) develop naturally."

John Kerr, Head Men's Coach, Duke University

THE COACHING CYCLE

- OBSERVE and EVALUATE player and team performance and select elements to work on during training in order to maximize PLAYER DEVELOPMENT. It is important to replicate match conditions into training environments to optimize learning.

- Psychosocial, physical, technical and tactical components are incorporated into a training session: (free play); warm-up; activities I & II; small-sided matches.

- Sound coaching methodology (P.I.E., Say, Show, Do, Review, etc.) is used to develop match characteristics (finishing; short/long play; short combined with long play; ability to keep possession; risk; transition) by applying the Principles of Play. Modify activities to increase success by controlling Speed, Space and Opposition.

KEEP IN *MIND*

Coaching involves **OBSERVING** and **EVALUATING** player and team performance to determine what needs to be worked on (**ORGANIZING** and **COACHING**) during training in order to maximize **(player) DEVELOPMENT.**

MATCH ANALYSIS TO REALITY-BASED TRAINING

Any match analysis (observing and evaluating) should be specific and concise based on numerous fact-finding queries, such as:

- **What** is the main area of focus as it relates to your overall plan or objective? Identify the priority and translate into a training objective, i.e., establishing width when in possession.
- **Who** is involved (specific players and their positions), i.e., #7, #9, #11.
- **Where** on the field is the issue taking place, i.e., flank channels of attacking half.
- **When** in the match is the problem occurring, i.e., during build up phase in defending half of the field.
- **Why** integrates (***technical***, tactical, physical and/or psychosocial) causes relevant to the topic, i.e., to maximize #9 goal scoring abilities.

Also, consider other factors external or environmental that might be relevant, i.e., the field, the weather, the importance of the match, home/away, etc.

After clearly defining the issue or area for improvement, your training session should be designed to present and address the issue in as realistic a representation as possible. When introducing the session make sure all your players clearly understand the objective and the efforts planned within the session to remedy (if match video is available, sitting down with your team and reviewing can be of optimal benefit).

Whatever exercise(s) you plan, reconstruct as realistic an environment as possible, by integrating as many relative elements as possible:

- Teammates.
- Opposition.
- Functional groups.
- Space on the field (real spaces).
- Transitional elements.
- Time.
- Score.
- Rules.

The more realistic environment you recreate the more effective your efforts will be (and this usually involves functional training).

FUNCTIONAL TRAINING

Involves training the specific demands of a position or role and can be individual or group (i.e., forwards playing as a pair in a 4-4-2). Functional training should take place in the area of field where the scenario would occur in a real game.

Many kinds of functional training can be developed for forwards, midfielders, outside backs, inside backs, sweepers, goalkeepers, etc. Each position has its own particular requirements and scope.

The coach's observational and evaluating skills are crucial to designing functional exercises for their players. Some functional training focus:

Goalkeepers

- Dealing with crosses.
- Angle play and starting position.
- Distribution: to throw or kick.
- Playing the role of a sweeper keeper.
- Defensive organization.

Fullbacks

- Defending the goal when the goalkeeper is out.
- Defending against high crosses.
- Defending the counter attack.

Center backs

- Interception of passes.
- Recovering when beaten.
- Communicating with other defenders.
- Zonal defending.

Midfield

- Supporting the attack.
- Creating a 2 vs.1 on attack.
- Switch point of attack.
- Build up through midfield.
- Possession in middle third.

Wide Players

- Attacking from wide.
- Dribbling to beat full-back.
- Cross or go to goal.

Strikers

- Turning and shooting under pressure.
- Meeting crosses.
- Central attacking play.
- Finishing around penalty area.

There are many more techniques that a player can train for to play a specific position. Again, as the coach becomes more aware and observational skills develop, it will become easier to evaluate and identify problems. The coach should understand that these and other methods demonstrated are not instant remedies.

The development of skill in any sport is a long process and is highly dependent on the methodical, patient, and diligent efforts of the coach.

We have included a season-long collection of functional training activities and complete sessions for your consideration.

TEACHING PLAYERS TO READ THE GAME

Top players can analyze the numerous situations they face in any match at any given moment, and figure out solutions in relation to being in possession; the opponent having possession; or the time of transition between both
actions. They understand their role individually as well as part of their positional unit. And they can accomplish all of this…in a matter of seconds.

Can it be taught?
Learning to read the game ultimately takes time, experience and experimentation, but as coaches we can certainly provide some guidance and practice to stimulate learning.

Key Skills

- Concentration.
- Anticipation.
- Spatial awareness to see what's taking place on and off the ball.
- Composure.
- Patience.
- Fitness.
- Quality technique (to execute and help preserve energy).
- Strong tactical awareness.
- Communication.

- Cognitive ability to process what's taking place by asking and processing a series of questions related to teammates, opponents, space, time, the ball, such as:
    - Where is the ball?
    - What third of the field am I in (attacking, defending, middle)?
    - What phase of play are we in (attacking, defending, transitioning to attack, transitioning to defend)?
    - Are we at a numerical advantage or disadvantage?
    - Where is the threat?

- Decision-making ability and confidence to consider potential options and make a choice.

Training

- Use Objectives of the Game and Principles of Play to provide players with a solid understanding of the game's tactical foundation.
- Educate players on phases of play and transitions.
- Create realistic and position-based training activities and environments.
- Small-sided matches offer the ideal platform to educate players on their roles and those of their teammates. Building up from 4v4 to 5v5, 6v6, 7v7 presents incremental pictures for players to absorb. Small-sided matches also provide you with quality windows to stop, step in; make timely and detailed observations and get out!
- Use guided discovery. Presenting the pathway, but allowing players to figure it out for themselves will sharpen the tools players need to adjust and learn.
- Create pressure situations that encourage quick decision-making.
- Constantly change, alter and present different situations and circumstance that replicate match conditions.

Tips To Help Players Read The Game

- Watch and learn. By simply watching matches, players can learn the roles, actions, and decisions of other players (TV, live, on the bench).
- Limit sideline coaching (parents and coaches) as this impedes the decision-making process and learning from the players.
- Encourage pick-up games (without adult or coach supervision). Uninterrupted fun games present more opportunity for freedom, expression, decision-making, adjustments and problem solving.
- Make sure your players are 100% clear on your tactical objectives for any given match as this will help steer their decision-making.

Conclusion

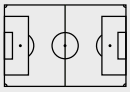
Creating ***complete*** soccer players requires time and commitment from all parties involved. By creating match-like training environments, building up small-sided matches and empowering players to make their own decisions will go a long way in cultivating their ability to read the game.

With matches and quality training, our players should ultimately start to create a mental library of principle-based answers and solutions for any situation they face in a match.

PHASES OF PLAY AND TRANSITION

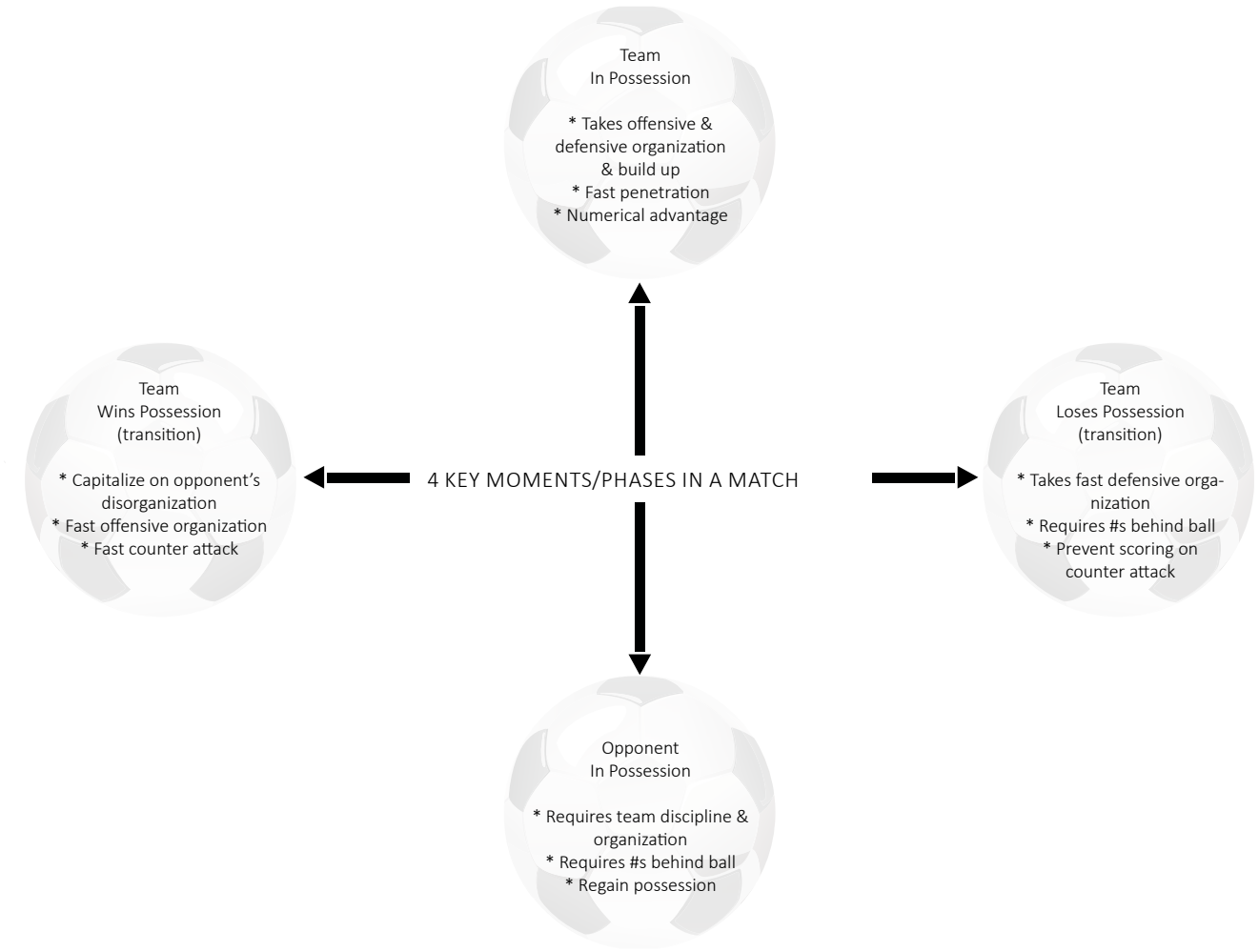
Soccer is free-flowing with constant transitioning from offense to defense and defense to offense. Therefore, players must quickly transition from one phase of play to the next in order to be successful (individually, as part of a group, and as a team). The Dutch first identified 4 key moments or phases in a match, characterized in the diagram below.

FROM THE ***FIELD***



"So much a feature of the way premier league football is played these days is what you do when you win the ball back and how you react when you lose the ball."

Martin Tyler, Renown English soccer commentator and columnist
Manchester United versus West Bromwich Albion, October 2014



Because of this constant ebb and flow, the two most important transitions occur when:

1. A team **wins the ball** and transitions from defending to attacking:
   - Requires a decision to penetrate at speed (to prevent defensive organization) or to maintain possession and look for a better opportunity to penetrate.
   - Requires mental and physical speed to anticipate plays.
   - Requires technical expertise to execute successful play.

2. A team **loses the ball** and transitions from attacking to defending:
   - Requires a decision to press the ball quickly (prevent organization) to regain possession or to drop off and close down passing options and cover dan gerous spaces to prevent a counter.
   - Takes mental and physical speed and technical efficiency.

KEEP IN *MIND*

It is a team's ability to effectively manage and execute within these transitional phases that ultimately make the team successful.

Teams should be trained to be quick in both transitions. Check out the activities on pages 84 and 100 to help coach transition.

PERIODIZATION

Like most things in life, we will achieve better results if we plan accordingly, and soccer is no different. From annual to seasonal to weekly to individual sessions, there should be a defined plan for what you want to accomplish for your players and team depending on what time of year it is.

Your annual plan can initially be broken into 4 periods:

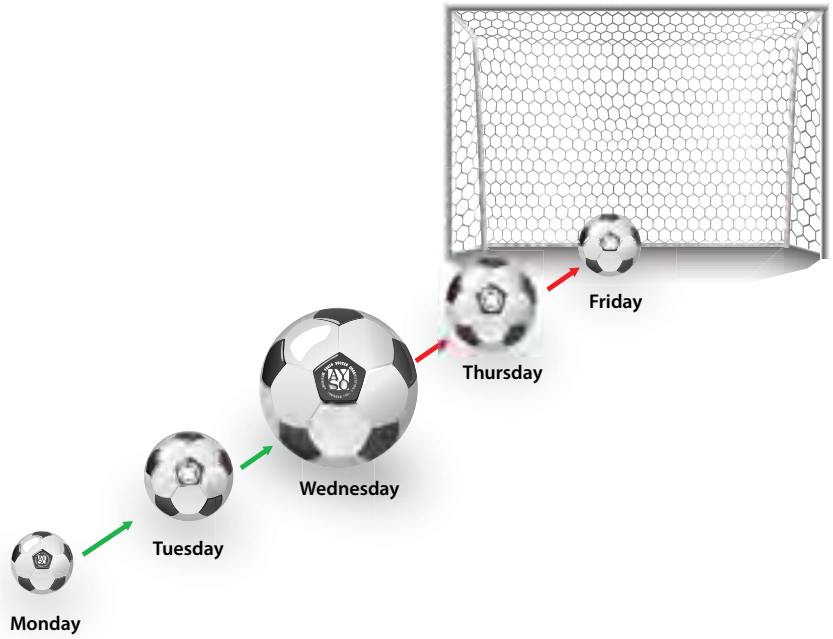
Source: Long-Term Program Development, Kristen Dieffenbach, PhD, West Virginia University, Wade Gilbert, PhD, California State University, Fresno.

For our intermediate players we will focus on weekly planning and individual sessions.

Periodization involves many factors including frequency (how often you train), duration (how long you train), volume (how much you train weekly - the product of frequency x duration) and intensity (how hard you train). From these factors you plan a performance pathway with optimal respect to training load.

Microcycle (weekly)
Each week should have a psychosocial, technical, tactical and physical objective. However, each team is unique; therefore, the microcycle should be adaptable. Also, pending team and individual development, the objectives will constantly shift, so as coach, your plans must also adapt accordingly.

Your goal should be to connect your training sessions into a weekly sequence:



Anchoring the training week with the match (the most demanding activity of your player's week), your training intensity will be:

- At it's lowest point at the beginning of the week.
- Increase closer to the level of game intensity at the middle of the week.
- Decrease again at the end of the week to provide the body enough time to recover for the match.

Note: Match congestion can lead to fatigue (physical and mental) and be detrimental to performance.

More specifically, the week should flow as follows:

Tactical: Activities progress simple a complex.

Technical: Activities progress from unopposed (focus on quality execution) > opposed (increasing speed and competition/opposition).

Physical: Week begins with focus on strength and injury prevention; peaks midweek with endurance; and ends (prior to match) with speed.

The day following a physical overload day should also be considered a recovery day (or can be replaced with a technical or tactical day). There should not be more than 2 overload days in a cycle, and never back-to-back to allow for effective recovery.

Recovery: At this age, puberty alone can place a significant strain on a player's body, not to mention training and playing at a higher sporting level. Therefore, your microcycle should always be respectful to and prioritize training recovery.

Match congestion can quickly lead to fatigue (physical and mental) and be detrimental to performance (elite players can run approximately 5-9 miles in a 90-minute match).

A full match requires 72 hours for full recovery and the day following a match should always be a recovery day.

Note: This is why careful consideration and planning should be taken in regards to tournaments. Back-to-back games, multiple games over a few days are major physical and emotional expenditures for any player! Careful planning and care should be applied to protect your players. Always look for signs of fatigue!

It is important to maximize the learning opportunity without overdoing duration or frequency. Exhaustion and fatigue can be detrimental to learning (slows brain, lessens focus, increases errors) so it is wise to consider you training in terms of the number of quality repetitions or touches as opposed to time.

KEEP IN *MIND*

It is widely accepted that it takes 10,000 hours of deep practice to learn a new skill. However, the real lesson of the 10,000 hours rule is not about the quantity; it's about the ***quality*** of the practice and the environment in which it takes place.

AYSO NATIONAL COACHING PROGRAM
TRAINING DURATION & FREQUENCY RECOMMENDATIONS

Age Group	Frequency	Duration
6U	One activity session/jamboree per week (includes 25 min. game)	1 hour
8U	Once per week, plus game	1 hour
10U	Twice per week, plus game	1 hour
12U	Twice per week, plus game	1 hour
14U	Twice per week, plus game	1 hour

TOPIC-BASED TRAINING

Repetition is a key component to skill development; therefore, just like school, rather than bombard players with multiple topics per lesson, focusing on one general topic, theme, or objective, i.e., defending the counter attack, etc., provides the maximum opportunity to achieve mastery and success.

Seek to gradually build up and progress the topic to approach match conditions, but be realistic with your expectations per session by striving to identify topic-related improvement.

PROGRESSIVE (BUILD UP) TRAINING

It is essential to technical and tactical development to scaffold player challenges by adding different factors into our training sessions. In general, sessions should progress from:

SIMPLE TO COMPLEX and from **UNOPPOSED TO OPPOSED**

Progression of Technical Build-Up

- Technique demonstrated without *pressure.*
- Technique demonstrated while under pressure (passive to full, integrating decision-making).
- Technique demonstrated in match-like situation.

Match Pressure

Training should simulate match conditions as much as possible (most effectively accomplished through small-sided matches). Control methods used to manipulate the playing environment:

- Changing the physical ***SPACE*** available to players (increasing/decreasing size of playing area).
- Varying the ***SPEED*** of the play (adding time constraints or number of touches).
- Introducing and varying the amount of ***OPPOSITION*** (numbers up or down, opposition/defenders are passive, etc.).

KEEP IN *MIND*

Players must first be successful with a technique to build success and confidence before you progress the activity (progression or build up should be paced with your player's success rate). Alternatively, manipulating SPEED, SPACE or OPPOSITION can help enable your players to succeed (i.e., increasing space, touches or numbers).

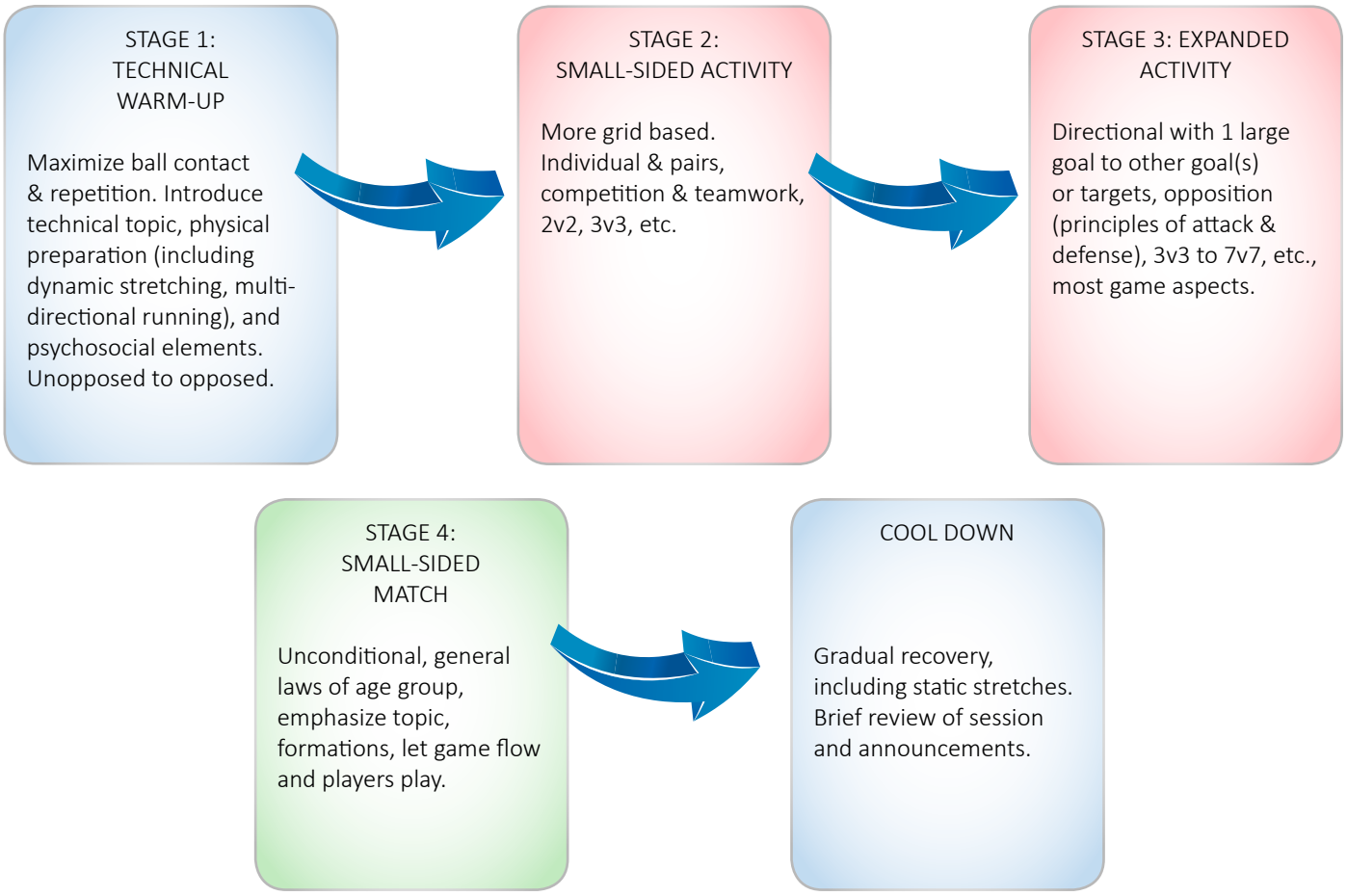
UNEVEN TRAINING NUMBERS

Whether it is due to your age group or attendance at training, a few tips on how to accommodate possible discrepancy, **minimize exclusion** and increase functionality:

- Rotate players in and out (players rest, watch, cheer, stretch).
- Pair up (players participate in activity but take turns with a partner).
- Play as a neutral (can play for either team).
- Play as two players (in numbered activities, i.e., Steven is 1 and 3).
- Help serve or retrieve balls.
- Help you demonstrate or help make small observations, etc. (children can gain a deeper understanding of the skill if they have to explain it to others.)
- Emphasize number up number down practices (5 v 2, etc.).
- Weight the challenge (lower number team has different goal. i.e., less touches, etc.).

BUILDING YOUR 14U TRAINING SESSION

Generally speaking, training sessions should progress as follows:



TECHNICAL WARM-UP

Your warm-up should be dynamic in nature, energize players, maximize ball contact and repetition and introduce the technical component of your session. As well as physical and technical components, the warm-up also provides opportunity to introduce psychosocial elements such as leadership (having a player lead the warm-up), focus, communication and teamwork. Warm-ups should progress from unopposed to opposed (technique to skill).

Warming up prepares the body for physical activity and should involve jogging as well as short sprints and multidirectional running (sideways and backwards). The intensity of the warm-up (especially sprinting) should be increased gradually to prevent a rapid increase in blood pressure.

The warm-up improves blood flow to the heart and increases muscle temperature and pliability (and ultimately, reduces the risk of injury). Warming up should be done *prior* to any stretching. There are two methods of stretching:

- **Dynamic stretching:** Moving limbs through the full range of motion that will be used during the game or training. Dynamic stretching is good for 'waking muscles up' and getting them ready to work hard, i.e., during the warm-up.
- **Static stretching:** Placing a muscle in its most lengthened position and holding for approximately 30 seconds.Cooling down is a good time for static stretching (helps the body recover and gradually return to its normal temperature).

Whether static or dynamic stretches, players should be taught proper form and at all times be required to use quality technique).

SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

- More grid-based.
- Individual and pair work.
- Competition and teamwork.
- 2v2, 3v3, etc.

EXPANDED ACTIVITY

- Opposition (principles of attack & defense).
- Directional play (1 large goal to other goals or targets).
- Expanded numbers (3v3 to 6v6, etc.)
- Most game aspects (including age group laws).

SMALL-SIDED MATCH

Conclude your session with a small-sided match, which should emphasize the training topic and other components of the game.

The match should be (for the most part) unconditional, have general age group rules and some formation guidelines, but **most importantly, it is time to let the game flow…and the players play!**

COOL DOWN AND DEBRIEF

Gradually slowing down the level of activity after training is just as important in reducing the risk of injury as the warming up process before exercise, especially for older players.

The major purpose of cooling down is to bring the body back to a pre-training state and to assist in recovery. Static stretches are more appropriate to the cool down as they help muscles to relax, realign muscle fibers and re-establish their normal range of movement.

During the cool-down process you can review the lessons within your session or discuss announcements but keep it concise and always end on a positive!

FREE PLAY

In our current climate of over-organizing and over-coaching, Free Play is a useful method for players to develop in a natural and safe environment.

Free Play can be used as a pre warm-up upon arrival to prepare players for the technical warm up that will lead to the session's tactical work. Free Play can also be helpful to assess a player's technical level or mental focus so you have a logical starting point when the actual session begins.

In general, Free Play has simple limitations:

- A situation where individuals play without restrictions on time or space, or coaching.
- Players are given general directions on what they should attempt to accomplish and then left on their own.
- Free Play allows players to develop natural abilities in a relaxed, coach-free environment.

Free Play can also be used in an activity or scrimmage to encourage or stimulate our players' creativity.

WATER BREAKS

Proper hydration is vital to all athletes; therefore, we need to make sure our training sessions provide adequate opportunity for rehydration. Some general guidelines:

- Players should hydrate themselves throughout the day not just prior to or at training (to allow for proper absorption into their system).
- Two to three hours prior to participation, players should drink approx. 16 fl. oz. (2 cups) to 20 fl. oz. (2.5 cups).
- Ten to 20 minutes prior to activity the players should drink approx. 7 fl. oz. (0.875 cups) to 10 fl. oz. (1.25 cups) of fluids.
- Break approximately every 10-15 minutes (or as often as needed pending weather and age of players).

- Fluids can be water or sports drinks.
- Rehydration should occur after the activity and ideally be completed within 2 hours.
- Rehydration should contain water to restore hydration status, carbohydrates to replenish glycogen stores and electrolytes to speed hydration.

Also, for efficiency, consider using water breaks to reiterate some brief coaching points from the previous segment or introduce your next activity.

TIPS FOR A GREAT TRAINING SESSION

With limited training time per week, it's important to maximize the productivity of each and every session. Better information, clearer feedback, increased technical time per player, team tactics, team fitness, team-building…results!

These pointers will help create an economical training session for you and your players and maximize your time and results:

PLANNING

- Have your session planned and written outin advance to address objectives, content, structure, and flow.
- Arrive in time to have as much of your session laid out as possible (prior to your players arriving). Players should be able to step straight onto the field and start training, not wait on the coaching space to be organized.This sets an immediate tone of competence, respect and expectation.
- Organize your coaching space to minimize down time. Use different colored cones to separate grids and to limit transitions. Use different colored scrimmage vests to help clarify roles within activities (definitive colors are easier for players to work with). Make sure balls are properly inflated and you have enough to keep activities flowing. Use flags, nets, etc., to help create realistic match environments.
- Activities should be dynamic and energetic; inclusive vs. exclusive; flowing vs. static; fun vs. boring.
- Each technical or tactical aspect, likely has a predictable number of general coaching points. Make note of these per activity and look for optimal coaching moments to present.
- Know in advance what players are going to be in attendance to plan your activities, assign teams or groups (balanced or other depending on purpose).

COMMUNICATION

- Make sure your players fully understand the activity; it's directions and objectives. Use quality diagrams (or QR codes if available) to help bring the activity to life. Be clear in your explanations.
- Limiting your players' focus to one or two objectives per session provides a realistic learning opportunity (but bombarding them with five or six can be detrimental and simply confuse them).
- If you find yourself amidst a lengthy speech you can forget the players' uptake (regardless of the topic or your delivery). Get in, make your point and get out! 30 seconds or less is a good guideline for you to make any points.

Often wasted, use water breaks to reiterate key coaching points or to introduce the next activity.

Consider using a stopwatch to time your set up, activities, progressions, coaching points, breaks, etc. Staying on track will help maximize productivity and learning.

Keep your tone friendly but with an expectation of effort and performance.

STANDARDS

- You put a lot of effort and time into your session and; therefore, you should expect an equitable response and return from your players.
- Like everyone else, players have off days, but where they might struggle technically or physically during a particular session, they can always compensate with effort or attitude.
- Hold players accountable for their effort, commitment and performance (particularly basic technical execution).

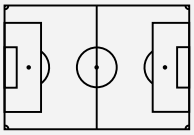
TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENT

Skill development is a commitment made by both player and coach. At AYSO, we prioritize the need for continued skill development and this section advances the main technical aspects previously introduced in 12U and below.

Your Training Plan should reflect and cater for constant technical development. Throughout your training session, expect and demand quality technique, make corrections when appropriate, and then quickly move on.

Remember, you cannot do tactically what you cannot do technically!

FROM THE FIELD



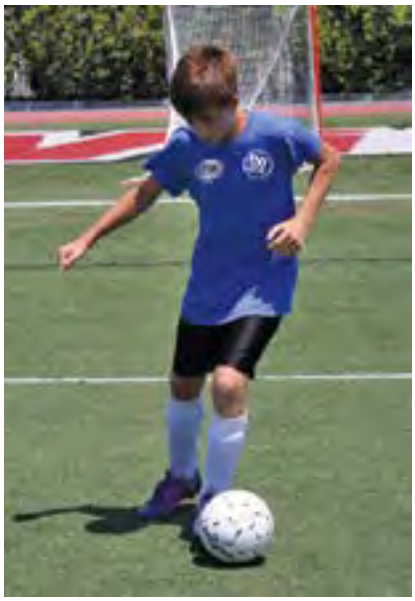
"Teach skill every day! Create training environments where players are challenged and can use those skills in making quick decisions of how, why, and where to use them. Ask players to work on their own self improvement."

George Kuntz,
Head Coach, Men's Soccer, Cal State Fullerton University

DRIBBLING

Often viewed as a talent that a player is born with, dribbling is a skill that can be easily acquired and improved at all ages.

Firstly, let's distinguish between dribbling and running with the ball:
Dribbling: Close control, touching the ball almost every step using all surfaces of the foot while under pressure of an opponent.
Running with the ball: Long strides, pushing the ball ahead, usually without opposition, and running after it.



Building upon the foundations taught in previous age groups, we will now look closer into the following technical components of dribbling:

- Vision
- Touch
- Turning
- Beating an Opponent
- Shielding

To see this in action, visit:
aysou.video/tech1

Vision

Players need to be aware of their surroundings, i.e., teammates, opponents, position on field, etc., in order to help decision-making. Coaches can improve players' vision while dribbling by considering the following points:

- The dribbling player should focus on the opponent's waist.
- The ball should be visible to the dribbler just inside the lower part of their vertical peripheral vision (allowing the dribbler to see the opponent and the ball at the same time).
- When attacking an opponent with a move, players should be able to see the player and the ball, keeping the ball just inside their peripheral vision.
- Don't let the eyes shift downward - keep focus point ahead.

Be wary of exercises that require players to keep their head's down, i.e., dribbling between lines of cones.

Check out the activity on page 97 that helps develop this aspect of dribbling.

To see this in action, visit:
aysou.video/tech15

Touch

We need to improve our player's first touch efficiency! We need to improve our player's second, third and fourth touch efficiency!

A player's touch can be improved by creating environments that maximize ball contact. Free-play, warm-ups,
activities, breaks, etc., can all involve the ball.
At 14U, our players are far from the finished article and; therefore, still require one-on-one time with the ball. Be creative in your design and delivery, but make sure your players get ample technical repetitions in every training session to boost their touch, confidence and development.

If you want a simple activity that will guarantee improvement, look no further than juggling. Simple, maximum repetitions, infinite first touches (hopefully)!

For a more detailed suggestion, check out the activity on page 96 that helps develop this aspect of dribbling.

Turning

Turning or an abrupt change of direction while dribbling is a cornerstone of good dribbling. The turn may be used to go around an opponent, to move into open space, or to maintain possession of the ball (usually accomplished by players executing turning movement or "moves" with the ball).

It is not the intent of this text to teach all of the possible moves a player might need, but rather summarize several key points when utilizing any turning move:

- Incorporate a feint/fake to unbalance opponent.
- Employ a change of pace from moderate/slow during the move to an explosive burst at the end.
- Change of direction.
- Protect the ball.

To see this in action, visit:
aysou.video/tech16

BEATING AN OPPONENT

It could be argued that we are restricting the creativity from our players. Nowhere do we get the opportunity to give this freedom back to our players than when they are trying to beat an opponent.

To see this in action, visit: aysou.video/tech17

Regardless of philosophy or style, does anyone ***not*** appreciate Cristiano Ronaldo in full flight or Lionel Messi dribbling past his third opponent on his way to goal? Once again, we should consider this in our approach to coaching.

Effective attacking players must have the ability to beat an opponent when dribbling and there are several key points to make when instructing players on how to beat an opponent:

- Attack front foot of defender.
- Incorporate a feint/fake with a change of direction to unbalance opponent.
- Try to cut the ball toward the back of the opponent.
- Employ a change of pace from slow/moderate during the move to an explosive burst at the end.
- If the opponent is retreating then attack at speed.

The best way to develop a player's ability to beat an opponent is to play 1 vs. 1. Check out the training activity on page 96 that helps develop this important skill.

Shielding

Players must maintain possession of the ball under the challenge of an opponent and develop the attitude that no opponent can take the ball away from them.

To see this in action, visit: aysou.video/tech18

Some technical considerations related to shielding:

- The player's body should be between the opponent and the ball.
- The player in possession turns a shoulder toward the chest of the defender.
- Arms should be used to feel for opponent and for protection and balance.
- The ball is controlled with the foot farthest from the opponent.
- The player in possession should be balanced, arms out, with knees bent, lowering the body's center of gravity.
- Head should be on a swivel to gauge surroundings.

BALL CONTROL

In simple terms, the tactical objective of ball control is to receive the ball and maintain possession for the next move. There are numerous ways of controlling a ball (coaching points summarized below), but no matter what controlling surface is used, certain technical points remain the same:

- Maintain eye contact with the ball.
- Move into the line of flight of the ball.
- Arms are in a comfortable position for balance.
- Body is in a relaxed and balanced position.
- Ball is cushioned on contact utilizing proper technique.
- Prepare ball for the next move.

BALL CONTROL SKILLS

Inside of the foot (ground ball)

- Controlling leg is turned outward at the hip with knee slightly bent.
- Support leg is slightly bent at the knee.
- Foot is turned outward so that inside of foot is directed toward path of the ball.
- Foot, with toe raised, is offered toward ball and is withdrawn upon contact with the ball.
- Inside of foot should contact top half of ball.
- Ball should remain close.

Top of instep (air ball)

- Support leg is bent at knee.
- Lift controlling leg from hip with knee bent.
- Height of receiving foot from ground depends on flight of ball.
- Receiving foot is relaxed.
- Ball taken on laces near the toes.
- Foot is withdrawn on impact.
- Ball should remain close.

Inside of foot/drag control (ground or air ball)

- Support leg is slightly bent at knee.
- Upper body leans slightly backward.
- Controlling foot swings across front of support leg.
- Foot is turned inward at knee.
- Cushion ball with inside of foot and drag across body in a single motion.
- Ball should remain close.

Wedge (air ball)

- Controlling leg is turned outward at the hip with knee slightly bent.
- Foot is turned outward so that inside of foot is directed toward path of ball.
- Support leg with knee bent is located ahead of ground contact point.
- Ball is allowed to contact ground.
- Inside surface of controlling foot makes a roof over ball at time of contact.
- Withdraw leg at the hip.
- Ball should remain close.

To see this in action, visit:
aysou.video/tech6

Top of thigh (air ball)

- Support leg is bent at the knee.
- Controlling leg is raised from hip with the knee bent to a position near 60° measured from the support leg. This angle can change depending on the flight of the ball.
- As ball makes contact, withdraw thigh and let ball drop to ground.
- Ball should remain close.

Chest (air ball)

- Both knees are slightly bent - body is balanced, arms out.
- Hips are forward and chest back.
- As ball makes contact with chest, cushion by flexing knees and relaxing upper body.
- Allow ball to drop to ground.
- Ball should remain close.

Chest (driven ball)

- Body leans forward - body is balanced, arms out.
- Hips are back and chest out.
- Upper body is over ball at time of contact.
- Ball is directed to ground.
- Ball should remain close.

To see this in action, visit:
aysou.video/tech19

PASSING

Being limited to one type of passing technique is like playing a round of golf with only one club. For maximum performance, players should now be able to execute all types of passing:

- Instep drive.
- Push pass (inside of foot).
- Outside of foot pass.
- Lofted ball.

To see this in action, visit:
aysou.video/tech20

Not only is proper passing technique vital, but players must learn to choose the type of pass best suited for a particular situation. In order to assist the player in making these decisions, the coach should know the five characteristics of a good pass:

1. Accurate.
2. Correct pace (speed or weight).
3. Well timed (delivered at appropriate time).
4. Deceptive.
5. Successful in advancing the ball or maintaining possession.

Teach players when to keep the ball and when to pass. Rather than using talks, use games to illustrate the key points. As with any learning situation, mistakes will be made, and players should be encouraged to learn from the situation.

Good passes make things appear easy, but bad passes increase pressure and limit the options of the receiver. Good passes result from good technique. Hold players accountable for their passing execution at all times.

Check out the training plan on page 115 to help develop passing techniques.

HEADING

We must confront any apprehension related to heading by prioritizing proper technique. Heading can be used in attacking to finish or pass, or it can be used to win a 50-50 ball. Accuracy is essential.

Defensively, it can be used to clear a ball from a dangerous situation (emphasis here should be placed on power and distance to move the ball clear of the danger zone).

The basic techniques for heading the ball are as follows:

- Contact the ball flat on the forehead, above the eyes (not the crown).
- Keep eyes open.
- Keep mouth closed.
- Neck should be kept rigid.
- Propel trunk forward from waist to meet ball.
- Arms should be used for balance and protection.
- Follow through after contact.

To see this in action, visit:
aysou.video/tech21

These basic techniques apply whether heading face on, turning to change direction or jumping up to head in the air. When turning to change direction, however, contact with the ball is made more to one side of the forehead (but not the temple).

When heading on goal, the ball should be struck on its upper half to direct the ball downward. This will result in a shot that is more difficult for the goalkeeper to save.

To head the ball defensively, the lower half of the ball should be struck for maximum height and distance. This gives other defending players time to reorganize and reduces the immediate threat of a shot on goal.

Note: For 14U, heading is now limited to a maximum of thirty (30) minutes per week with no more than 15-20 headers, per player. There is no restriction on heading in matches.

GOALKEEPING

Role and Requirements

Arguably the most specialized position on the field, the goalkeeper has three main areas of responsibility:

- Stop shots/crosses to prevent goals.
- Support defense.
- Initiate/participate in attack.

Goalkeepers should have a solid understanding of the *Laws of the game* (lack of knowledge can present goal-scoring opportunities for opponents).

Psychosocial

More than any other position on the field, the goalkeeper must be strong psychologically. This includes being confident, courageous, and accepting responsibility. It is also important that the goalkeeper is secure enough to handle the reality that almost any mistake can end up in the back of the net.

Physical

Modern goalkeepers require flexibility, strength, power, endurance, agility, quickness, and coordination of movement. They should be one of the fittest players on your team. Goalkeepers require thorough and specific warm-ups that should stress flexibility and agility exercises.

Technical

While natural ability is relevant to this position; catching, punching, deflecting, distribution and diving require specialized techniques. Only through position-specific coaching and deep practice can the goalkeeper become competent in each discipline.

Tactical

To anticipate opponents and make correct decisions when initiating the attack, the goalkeeper must be well versed in tactics to help direct their defenders in their positioning and roles.

Basic "Set" Position

- Eyes on the ball.
- Feet shoulder width apart.
- Trunk bent slightly forward from hips.
- Forearms almost parallel to ground and elbows bent with hands slightly cupped and pointing slightly upward.
- Knees slightly bent for power and feet are pointing in the direction of the ball.
- Weight on balls of the foot.

Collecting Position

- Body behind ball.
- Waist bent.
- Feet slightly apart.
- Palms stretched outward to roll ball up into chest.
- More difficult balls may require dropping on one knee - perpendicular to path of ball and rolling ball up into body.

To see this in action, visit:
aysou.video/tech22

Catching
Basics rules for catching include:

- Hand positioned in a "W" or "butterfly," thumbs behind the ball.
- Body behind ball.
- Catch on fly (not on bounce) if possible, and guide catch into body.

Catch at Waist

- Control ball by bending trunk.
- Keep elbows in.
- Palms up.
- Roll ball from palms to body to absorb shock.

Catch at Chest

- Palms downward and elbows slightly in front of chest.

Catch At/Above Head

- No margin of error.
- Make sure hands are properly placed.
- Concentrate on strength of hands.
- Keep forearms parallel.
- Bring ball into body quickly.

Putting the Ball Away
Regardless of the type of shot, keepers should always finish the save by "putting the ball away."

Once the save is made:

- Keep eyes on ball while "hugging" into chest.
- Breathe and look around for teammates.
- Distribute the ball.

To see this in action, visit:
aysou.video/tech12

Punching
Punching is used when a ball is uncatchable due to speed, pressure, or risk. When in doubt, punch out!

- Clench fists to make flat surface.
- Use two fists when possible.
- Hit ball slightly below center.
- Never punch across mouth of goal.
- Direct your punch to start attack.
- Moving forward, punch forward and vice versa.
- Deflect with open palm if necessary.

Parrying and Tipping
If a goalkeeper cannot catch the ball, or is uncertain, they should parry or tip the ball to safety.

- When diving, the goalkeeper can parry with one or two hands depending on the type of shot.
- Height and speed of the ball determines whether the goalkeeper catches or deflects and whether they can use one or two hands.
- If the ball is moving away from the body at pace, the goalkeeper will usually extend with one hand to give them more reach. If the shot is closer to the body but has too much pace, the goalkeeper may use two hands.
- The goalkeeper should use the hand closest to the ball. If the ball is over shoulder height, the goalkeeper will deflect using the top hand, if it is below shoulder height, the goalkeeper will typically use the lower hand.
- When the ball is above the head and the goalkeeper is unsure if they can catch the ball safely, the goalkeeper should use a large surface area (open hands) to tip the ball over the bar.

Diving
Diving is a lateral movement to reach the ball when there isn't time to move the ball any other way.

Diving Forward (smother): Used to deal with challenging low shots and also in fast conditions, i.e., rain.

- Arms and hands extend to meet the ball, wrists and elbows close together, palms up.
- While capturing the ball, the goalkeeper stays low to the ground as possible and pushes body forward, through the save, sliding onto the forearms (keeping forearms close together).
- Hips stay low throughout.
- Goalkeeper will typically take a wider stance (higher risk) when making this save.
- The goalkeeper must safely control the ball with the hands first and then smother the ball.

To see this in action, visit:
aysou.video/tech23

Diving To Save Low Balls:

- The body stays low to the ground and the eyes view the ball through the space (window) created by the arms as the save is being made.
- Shoulders are low and close to the knees (the further apart, the slower the goalkeeper will be to execute).
- Hands point forward, slightly in front of the body to meet the ball in a contour shape.
- Take a lateral step to the side that the ball is going.
- Toes should be face where the ball has come from, not the direction that the body is moving to (if the toes point to the side the hips will rotate).
- When diving right, step with the right foot and keep the right shoulder close to the right knee (and vice-versa).
- Secure the ball with one hand behind the ball and one hand on top. The ground should act as the third hand.

Diving To Save Mid-range Balls:

- Shoulders are low and close to the knees (the further apart, the slower the GK will be to execute).
- Take a lateral step to the side that the ball is going.
- Toes should be face where the ball has come from, not the direction that the body is moving to (if the toes point to the side the hips will rotate).
- Hands point forward, slightly in front of the body to meet the ball in a contour shape.
- When diving right, step with the right foot and keep the right shoulder close to the right knee (and vice-versa).
- Goalkeeper must hold their upper body higher and control the ball while in the air. One hand behind the ball the other on top.
- Goalkeeper saves and places the ball on the ground as they make contact with the ground.

Reloading (getting back to feet after a dive)

- Goalkeepers must be able to get back to their feet quickly, especially if they have given up a rebound or deflection.
- From a diving position, the goalkeeper should kick their top leg forward, away from their body to provide momentum and lift the upper body off of the ground.
- Chest, hands and head face the field of play.
- Goalkeeper may use a fist to support their weight and help them push the body up into a kneeling position (one knee in the ground and one up). From there the goalkeeper should stand and be in the set position, facing the field and ready for the next play.

Dealing With Crosses

Catching Crosses:

To see this in action, visit:
aysou.video/tech24

- Goalkeeper should assume the correct starting position in relation to the ball and the goal.
- The body position should be an open stance in order to see the ball and to see position of attacking players inside the area.
- Assess the flight of the ball.
- Communicate early, clear, and concise to defenders.
- Attack the ball (late, hard and fast – quickest and shortest route).
- Take off inside leg. Momentum of jump should propel you upward and forward (or upward and backwards if moving towards the back post).
- Take the ball at highest point, elbows flexed, and watch the ball into the hands.

Punching Crosses:

- Punch through the bottom and middle of the ball.
- Punch for good height, distance and width.
- Recover quickly to defend the goal.

General:

- If the goalkeeper's decision is not to come for the cross the priority is to defend the goal.
- The goalkeeper should practice catching crosses from different angles, distances and trajectory.
- Introduce attackers and defenders only when the goalkeeper is comfortable and confident in coming to catch the cross.

Distribution

The goalkeeper starts the attack by throwing or kicking the ball back into play. Accuracy and maintaining possession are the prime objectives. Distance is secondary.

Throws:

- Underhand roll (bowling): quick, short and accurate. Ball shouldn't bounce.
- Sidearm (sling style): distance, accuracy and quick distribution with a spin.
- Overhand (arc style): most distance, less accurate, may take too much time, allowing for interception.

To see this in action, visit:
aysou.video/tech13

Kicks:

- Volley (punt): greatest distance, less accurate, can relieve pressure or create numerical advantage.
- Half-volley: played low to give accuracy and less distance.
- Right foot kick: serve ball with left hand and vice-versa.
- Check out the training activity on page 76 to help develop goalkeeping distribution.

To see this in action, visit:
aysou.video/tech14

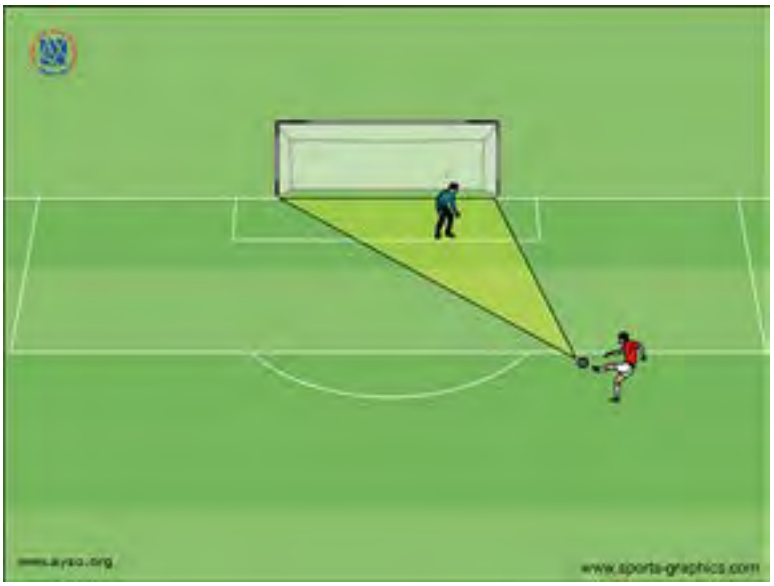
Positioning and Angle Play

The only time the goalkeeper's feet should be on the goal line is during a penalty kick (FIFA Law 14 requires the goalkeeper to have a part of each foot in contact with the goal line until the penalty-kick is taken).

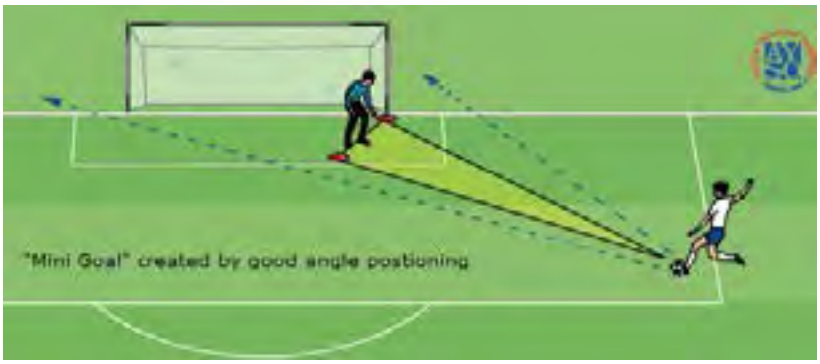
Other times the goalkeeper should use angle play to improve the chances of making a save. Angle play means reducing uncovered goal-area available to the shooter by moving toward the shooter.

The basic rule of angle play is to draw an imaginary line from each goal post to the shooter, forming a triangle. Move out from goal line thus reducing size of triangle (i.e., creates two triangles of smaller size, one on each side of goalkeeper).

Coaching Points:



- Always protect the near post, so move forward favoring the near post until you can touch both imaginary lines from shooter to each goal-post.
- If not time properly, coming out will expose the goal to a chip or loft shot.
- Goalkeepers should position themselves to utilize defenders to block part of the goalmouth.
- Position body in the "Ball Line" (in line with ball and the middle of goal).
- Remaining in the "Ball Line," Goalkeeper can come out as far as they feel they cannot be beaten at the near post (post nearest to the ball).
- Ensure the save is made in the "Mini Goal" (imaginary small goal created by having the goalkeeper positioned in line with ball and middle of goal. If a shot goes wide of the "Mini Goal" one can assume the ball will be wide of the real goal).
- Always execute correct saving techniques, ensuring any loose balls are away from danger.
- 3 times a goalkeeper can start getting off the-goal line:
  1. When the ball is too far to get chipped.
  2. When there is a defender in the way, so they can't get chipped.
  3. When the forward is facing away from goal so they can't get chipped.



Check out the training activity on page 77 to help develop goalkeeping angle play.

1 v 1 Situations

- The goalkeeper must get to the ball before the opponent shoots.
- The goalkeeper must be decisive by moving out on the proper angle, covering the goal with a parallel dive, and having the hands toward the near post.
- Encourage the goalkeeper to play up between the goals and penalty-line when the ball is in the opponents' half of the field, moving back as necessary.
- Body position should be on the front foot in anticipation of the through ball.
- The goalkeeper should advance when the ball is out of the attackers feet (shooting distance) putting the burden on the attacker while watching for a poor touch as their chance to attack the ball.
- Delaying and staying "big" for as long as possible will also give defenders a chance to recover towards the goal or even win the ball from the attacker.

Misc. Goalkeeping Coaching Tips:

- Goalkeeper should direct defenders.
- Encourage players to listen to the goalkeeper on commands to mark, cover, pass back, etc.
- Teach players and goalkeeper how to pass back without violating the Laws.
- Rotate younger goalkeepers. Always have two or three in reserve.
- Involve your goalkeeper in all field drills, as well as goalkeeper drills. Playing with their feet is part of the modern goalkeeper's game.

RESTARTS

Since so many goals are scored from restarts, it is important to teach the attacking and defending principles relating to each of them.

There are eight restarts:

1. Kick-off
2. Throw-in
3. Corner kick
4. Goal kick
5. Direct free kick
6. Indirect free kick
7. Dropped ball
8. Penalty kick

Players must be aware of their own roles and the roles of their teammates.

Attacking players should use movement and space to their advantage in completing the set play. Movement by the attacking players, particularly decoy runs, will help create the space needed to successfully complete the desired play.

With the exception of the throw-in and dropped ball, all restarts give an immediate advantage of space to the attacking team by requiring the defending players remain ten yards from the ball until it is put into play.

The defense must be well coached on restarts because the offense has the advantage of possession and determines the set play situation.

Let's take a look at each of the restarts in more detail.

KICK-OFFS

- To start the game at the beginning of a half or after a goal has been scored, the attacking team must play the ball forward from the center spot a distance at least equal to the circumference of the ball.
- The player taking the kick-off may not touch the ball again until another player has touched it, and all defending players must be at least 10 yards from the ball (outside the center circle) until the ball has been played.
- A goal can be scored directly from a kick-off.
- Attacking players participating in the kick-off should be as close together as possible to obtain maximum use of the center circle.
- The primary objectives of the attacking team are to retain possession and to allow time for penetration into the opponent's half of the field.
- The primary objective of the defense is to apply immediate pressure to the ball, mark the players who have penetrated the defending half of the field, and to regain possession of the ball as quickly as possible.

Kicking the ball as far up field as possible on kick-off should be discouraged by the coach. Remember, the objective is to retain possession, and it makes no sense to give the ball away.

A popular kick-off is for an attacker to kick-off to another attacker who, in turn, passes back to a midfielder (allowing sufficient time for forward players to penetrate the defense), who then passes to an open player as the play develops. Attackers should read weaknesses in the defense and make their runs according to those gaps.

THROW-IN

The most frequent restart in soccer, the throw-in is awarded to the opponents of the player who last touched the ball when the whole of the ball crosses the touch line, either on the ground or in the air.

Many players and coaches treat throw-ins very casually and use it only as a way to get the ball back in play. This is especially true if the ball is in the middle of the field where the potential for attacking or the risk of being scored on seems remote.

Throw-ins, however, should be viewed as a tactical weapon and an opportunity to start an attack.

It is important to remember that the first player to receive the ball from a throw-in is exempt from offside, and the attacking team can take a penetrating position before the ball is thrown to them.

On defense, the defenders must be careful not to be influenced into poor positions, which allow an attack on their goal.

Coaching points:

- Player must face the field of play.
- Part of each foot shall be either on the touch line or on the ground outside the touch-line.
- The thrower must use both hands and deliver the ball from behind and over the head in one continuous motion.

Some common technical errors:

- Holding the ball incorrectly which does not allow the thrower to generate any power.
- Lifting the rear foot while making the throw, particularly when using a run-and-throw technique.
- Not throwing the ball for ease of control by the receiver.
- When possible, the ball should be thrown to the receiver's feet.
- The players off the ball do not move and are easily marked out of the play.
- After the ball is released, the thrower does not immediately move into the play.

Players should understand some general attacking and defending tactics of a throw-in:

Attacking Tactics

- Take the throw-in quickly to take advantage of defending players who lose concentration and to prevent them setting up defensively.
- Throw to an unmarked player when possible or into space for a teammate to run onto.
- Throw the ball forward, toward the attacking goal, to put more defending players on the wrong side of the ball.
- Throw the ball for easy control by the receiving player (considering height and speed of throw).
- Mobility (movement) by receiving players is important to create space for the throw-in.

CORNER KICKS

Defending Tactics

- Delay the action to set up defensively.
- Maintain defending concentration.
- Mark attacking players goal-side while ball is being retrieved.
- Mark open zones.
- Mark the thrower.
- Apply immediate pressure to the player with the ball.
- Remember that a player is not in an offside position directly from a throw-in.
- Defenders usually do not take throw-ins in their defending third of the field (unless the throw-in can be quickly taken for the team's advantage).

The corner-kick should be considered an immediate scoring opportunity and is well suited to set plays. It is important to remember that a goal can be scored directly from a corner-kick. A player who receives a ball directly from a corner-kick cannot be judged offside.

Attacking Tactics

- When setting up the attack for the corner, a player should be positioned close to the goal and in front of the goalkeeper in order to challenge for balls played into the goal-box.
- As many other attacking players as possible should be included in the attack, however you must be prepared to deal with balls that are cleared by defenders back towards your own goal.
- Attackers can be deployed in various positions outside the eighteen-yard line and should make runs to strategic locations around the goal.
- The runs should not begin until the ball is kicked, and they should be timed so the player arrives at the correct position running full speed as the ball arrives. This will allow the player to gain increased height on air balls and will add velocity to the scoring attempt.

There are three strategic areas that must be played in as the players make their runs:

1. Just outside the near post. This player has the option of shooting on goal by kicking or heading, letting the ball pass by untouched to another attacker or heading the ball to another player, usually near the far post.
2. The area just outside of the far post. The player in this area should be looking for balls kicked long, balls being passed back, or balls allowed to pass through by the teammate on the front post.
3. Around the penalty mark. This player should look primarily for partially cleared balls. The rest of the attackers should move to various positions near the goal in staggered runs from outside the penalty area. By beginning their runs at different times and coming from different directions, they can create confusion in the defense.

Defending Tactics

- The defense must react quickly and organize when the referee calls for a corner-kick.
- Each player should be aware of the various defending assignments involved with this set play and should immediately move into the closest unfilled position (encourage good communication between your players to ensure that all vulnerable areas are covered).
- Always attempt to have defenders in equal or greater numbers than attacking players (the safest way to defend is by having numerical advantage).
- Current defending strategy calls for the goalkeeper to play midway between the goalposts just inside the goal line and facing the kicker. This allows for a balanced defense against attacks to the near or far posts.
- The goalkeeper should take charge of the penalty area with both his physical and verbal presence.
- A defender should also be quickly positioned near the goal line ten yards from the ball to prevent a low crossing shot to the goal-area and to help defend against a short corner-kick. If a short corner-kick is evident, an additional defender should move toward the corner to assist.

There are several other key areas or zones which must be covered by defenders:

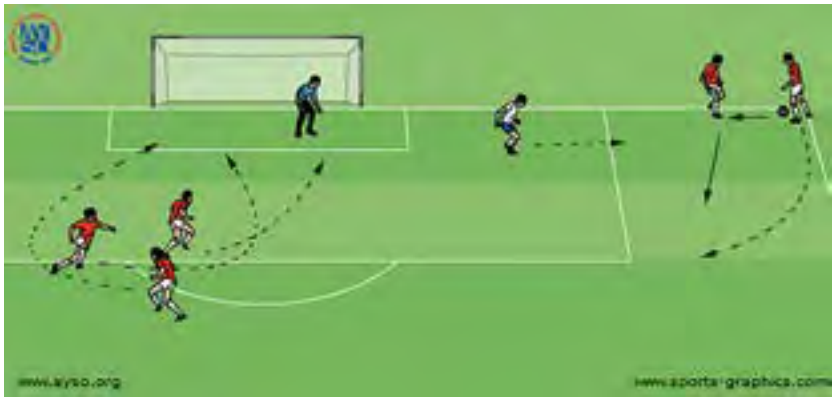
- Players should be positioned at the near and far posts with responsibility for the areas in front of them.
- An additional defender should be positioned in the area of the penalty-kick mark. These defenders should react to the flight of the ball and not to attacking players who move into or through their zone.
- Other defenders that do not have a fixed position can be used to closely mark specific attacking players by standing between them and the goal (goal-side). The defenders should use their position and speed to beat the attackers to the ball and play it away from the danger area. Generally, clearing balls should be played high, wide, and far.

Short Corner-kick

A short corner kick is an effective tactic when it can be taken quickly before the defense can set up.

The player receiving the corner kick should move to a position on the goal line so that when the ball is received, the rest of the team will be onside and ready to participate in the play.

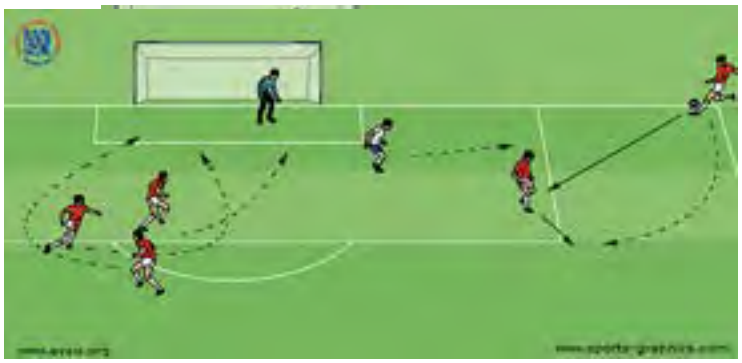
If the short corner is marked by a defender, the attacker receiving the corner should be closer than ten yards from the corner arc to take advantage of the ten-yard zone (permits time for the kicker to move onto the field into a support position).



The ball can then be dribbled, passed, or shot on goal. If the defense has packed the penalty area with players, the short corner can be used to draw the defenders toward the ball and then chipped behind them to initiate an attack.

Attacking runs should be delayed until the ball is kicked in the direction of the goal or they will reach the target area prior to the ball (leaving the space to run into).

Short Pass Corner-kick



The short pass corner-kick is very similar to the short corner-kick and is an attempt to create the impression that a long corner-kick is going to be taken. This is usually a set play and is intended to catch the opposition by surprise.

As the kicker approaches the ball to take the cornerkick, a teammate, usually a midfielder, breaks toward the corner to receive the kick.

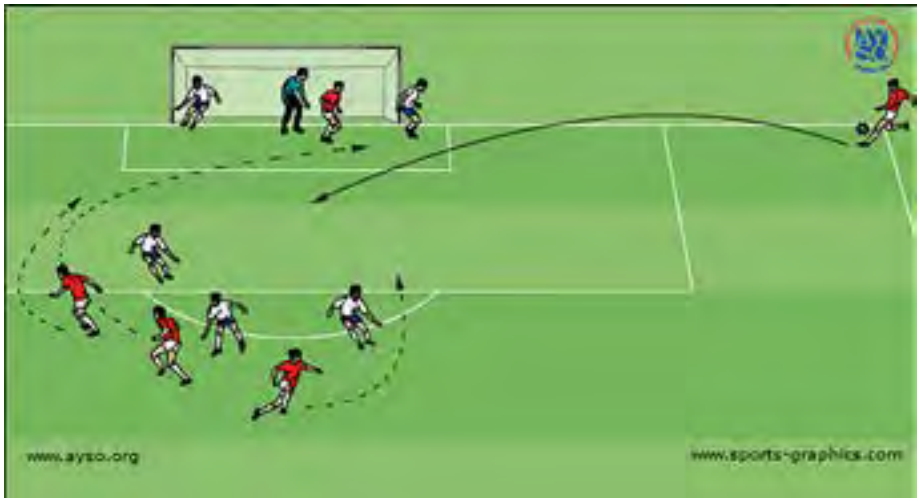
The kicker then immediately moves into an on-side position to support the player with the ball. The receiver then has the option to shoot on goal, pass or dribble to a more advantageous position.

As with the short corner-kick, the other attackers should not begin their runs until the receiver shoots or crosses the ball toward the goal. This again will allow the attackers to arrive at the correct area at full speed.

The short corner kick can also be used:

- When a small forward line finds it difficult to win possession of a ball played in the air.
- Where the player taking the kick cannot reach the center of the goal for physical reasons or due to conditions such as high winds or muddy field.

Long Corner-kick



There are two types of long corners, the in-swing and the out-swing.

When setting up for the long corner, one attacker should be positioned near the goalkeeper in the goal area. It is very important that this player be aware of the defenders to ensure an onside position after the ball is played.

The ball should be kicked into one of the three strategic areas previously mentioned where it can be played by one of the attackers moving into position.

It can be beneficial to have your taller players making near post runs and runs in front of the goal to challenge in the air.

GOAL KICKS

A goal kick is awarded when the whole of the ball passes over the goal line, either on the ground or in the air, having last touched a player of the attacking team. A goal may be scored directly from a goal kick, but only against the opposing team.

Attacking Tactics

- The most common goal kick is the long goal kick that plays the ball as far up field as possible to play the ball into the opponents' half of the field and increase the chances for an attack.
- One of the disadvantages of this kick is the accuracy to maintain possession.
- When making a long goal kick, the kicker should use an instep drive.
- Especially in the lower age divisions, the ball should be played to the wings to prevent a direct shot on goal if possession is lost (risk diminishes as ball can be kicked further up field).
- Attacking players should look for open areas of the field to become targets to receive the ball.
- The player receiving the ball should be quick to move to the ball, and teammates should move to supporting positions.
- Alternatively, the short goal kick is used to play the ball out to a teammate who is "unmarked" and who can then begin the attack from the defensive half of the field.

Defending Tactics

- Each of the defending players should have a specific assignment on goal kicks.
- Although the Laws permit it, tactically it is not a good idea to have defenders within the goal area.
- Each attacker should be kept in view and marked by a defender.
- It is important to mark the attackers closely but not so tightly that the player can move off into open space.
- Defenders also must be careful not to give attackers too much space to operate in.
- After the goal kick has been taken, the defender should move to the ball and attempt to control it.
- If the defender is unable to control the ball, then pressure should be applied to minimize the options of the opposing player receiving the ball.

FREE KICKS

A free kick is awarded for either a penal or non-penal foul and other technical infractions.

The free kick is used to put the ball into play by shooting or passing to a teammate.

A penal foul results in a direct free kick from the spot of the foul, and a goal may be scored directly from that kick. If the defense commits a penal foul in its own penalty area, a penalty kick is awarded to the attacking team.

Non-penal fouls result in the awarding of an indirect free kick. An indirect free kick must touch another player from either team before a goal can be scored.

The greatest concern by the defense should be for those free kicks that are awarded near the penalty area. This is where the attacking team can most effectively attack the goal.

In most cases a wall should be used to defend in this situation.

In order for players to distinguish between a direct and indirect free kick, the Laws require the referee to raise his hand for an indirect kick and to keep it raised until the ball is played by a second player.

Defensive Wall

Attacking Tactics

- It is often advantageous to try to take the kick quickly before the defense has time to set up the wall.
- If the wall is already set, be sure that all the attacking players understand their responsibilities.
- Most effective techniques involve plays designed to go around or over the wall. This could be a chip shot over the heads of the defenders in the wall or a pass to a teammate making a run to a predetermined position (use decoy runs if you choose this option).

Defending Tactics

- As soon as a free kick is awarded near enough to the goal to present an immediate threat (this will vary with the age and skill level of the players), the defending team should begin setting up a wall between the ball and the goal to prevent a clear shot at goal.
- FIFA Laws require the defenders to be ten yards from the ball.
- The goalkeeper is responsible for determining how many players are needed in the wall to best defend the situation. The closer to the goal and the center of the field, the more defenders required in the wall. The goalkeeper should move to the near post and direct the end person in the wall so that the near post is sufficiently protected, then move to a position halfway between the remaining vulnerable area (between the far post and the nearest point in the wall).
- The players in the wall line up next to one another, shoulder to shoulder, with their hands positioned for protection. They should attempt to keep opponents out of their wall to prevent shots made through the wall.
- One technique you may consider is to number your defending players, or those players likely to be nearby, if a wall is needed. Then the goalkeeper can simply state the number of players to be in the wall, and the correct players can immediately move into position.
- For obvious reasons, the players you choose to be in the wall must have a fair amount of courage to defend the kick.
- The remaining defenders should be positioned to defend a specific area around the wall or mark up man-toman. They should be careful, though, not to be too close to the goal line than the wall to keep the attackers concerned about offside.
- The nearest defender not in the wall should be responsible to directly attack the ball and pressure the shooter.

Direct Kicks

Awarded when a penal-foul is committed, the direct kick is indicated by the referee blowing the whistle and pointing toward the goal of the offending team.

ATTACKING TACTICS

- The kick should be taken as quickly as possible to prevent defensive organization.
- Players should remember that a signal from the referee is not necessary to begin play.
- Plays should be fairly simple and easy to execute quickly.
- If the defense is able to set up, be sure that all of the attacking players know their assignments.
- If the kick is taken on goal, it should be followed up in case of rebounds.
- Additional players should be brought forward to participate in the play and increase the pressure on the defense.
- Be sure, however, to have appropriate defensive cover at midfield to clear any balls played back towards your own half or to defend a counter-attack.

Defending Tactics

- If the kick is to be taken close enough to shoot on goal, a wall should be formed.
- If not, defenders and midfielders should quickly move goal-side of the ball and try to get numerical superiority.
- Attacking players should be closely marked and the defense must be alert to a quick shot.
- The nearest defender to the ball must challenge the kick as soon as the ball has moved to apply pressure.
- The goalkeeper should be positioned with a view of the ball.
- After the kick is cleared, the defense should strive to maintain possession and attack.

Indirect Kicks

Awarded when non-penal fouls are committed, they are taken from the point of the infraction and may be taken immediately.

In order for a goal to be scored, the ball must touch a second player before going into the goal.
Attacking Tactics

- As with direct kicks, the attacking team should try to play the ball quickly before the defense is set.
- The most common way to play an indirect kick is to have one player make a very short pass to a teammate who can then shoot directly on goal (being careful not to over hit the pass allowing the defense to close in denying the shooting opportunity).

Defending Tactics

- The defending tactics for indirect kicks are the same as direct kicks except special consideration must be given to the short pass being made by the attackers.
- Immediate pressure should be put on the player receiving the pass to deny the shooting opportunity

DROPPED BALL

A dropped ball is used to restart the game after a necessary stoppage by the referee. A goal may be scored directly from a drop ball. Any player may challenge for the ball (including the goalkeeper). There is no minimum or maximum number of players required to contest a dropped ball. The referee cannot decide who may or may not contest a dropped ball.

Tactics:

- The referee will usually call two players together, one from each team.
- The ball is dropped, not bounced, between the players and cannot be touched by either player until it hits the ground.
- After touching the ground, the ball is deemed in play.
- If the dropped ball occurs near the goal, defending players should be positioned to clear the ball and remove the threat of attack.
- Likewise, attacking players should be prepared to support the dropped ball and shoot on goal.

PENALTY KICKS

When a defender commits a penal-foul inside their penalty area, a penalty kick is awarded to the attacking team. The ball is placed on the penalty-kick mark, centrally located 12 yards in front of the goal. Penalty kicks favor the shooter.

All players must be outside the penalty area and 10 yards from the ball and at least 12 yards from the goal line, with the exception of the goalkeeper and the shooter.

The ball cannot be played until the referee blows the whistle.

Attacking Tactics

The shooter should place the ball firmly on the penalty mark so it will not move prior to the kick. Use a favorable lie for the best strike (tee it up). Do not place the ball in a hole at the penalty mark (reposition the ball if necessary).

- Accuracy over power (balls struck low and hard into the corners are usually most effective).
- The kicker should decide his/her placement prior to the shot and not deviate.
- The kicker should avoid giving away their placement by either looking too blatantly to one area or by the angle of their approach.
- Teammates should be positioned around the penalty area and be alert to missed shots that may rebound off the goal or goalkeeper (if the ball rebounds off the goal, it must be touched by another player from either team before the shooter can play the ball again).

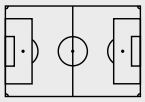
Defending Tactics

- The goalkeeper must be positioned with a part of both feet on the goal line between the goalposts and is not permitted to move their feet off the goal line until the penalty is struck.
- The goalkeeper may play anywhere on the goal line and is not limited to the midpoint between the posts.
- As the ball is about to be struck, the goalkeeper should make an informed guess as to the direction of the kick and move or dive in that direction to attempt a save.

- The goalkeeper should look at the direction of the shooter's approach, the planted foot and the shooter's body movement to gain insight to the direction of the kick.
- Defenders should be positioned around the penalty area with several located on both ends of the penalty-arc to be nearest the ball.
- They should be alert to rebounds and should move to the ball as soon as it is kicked in order to clear it from the goal area.
- It is important that defenders be positioned on both sides of the penalty area to cover all angles of deflection.

INTERMEDIATE TRAINING ACTIVITIES

FROM THE
FIELD



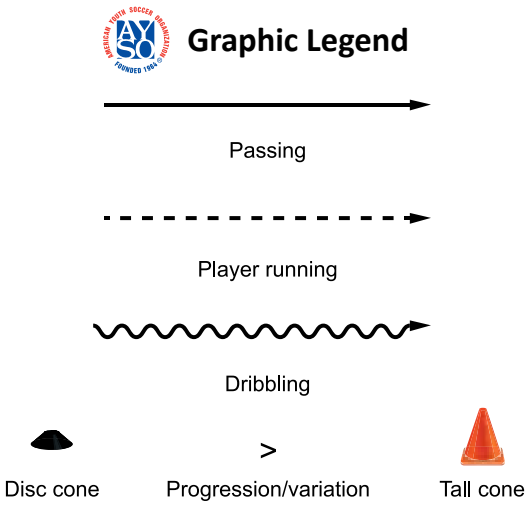
"Players should have the freedom to express themselves, be creative, take risks and make mistakes! Learning from trial and error is a key to all development and it is crucial that the environment we create (as coaches) promotes this freedom."

AYSO Player Development Team

This section will provide you with training activities specifically designed for 14U players. The activities are grouped according to skill and the position/role that they will most effectively help to teach (and generally progress from simpler to more challenging).

If an activity is not working as intended, modify (increase/decrease) the Speed, Space, and/or 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.**

INTERMEDIATE GOALKEEPING ACTIVITIES



SHOT STOPPING

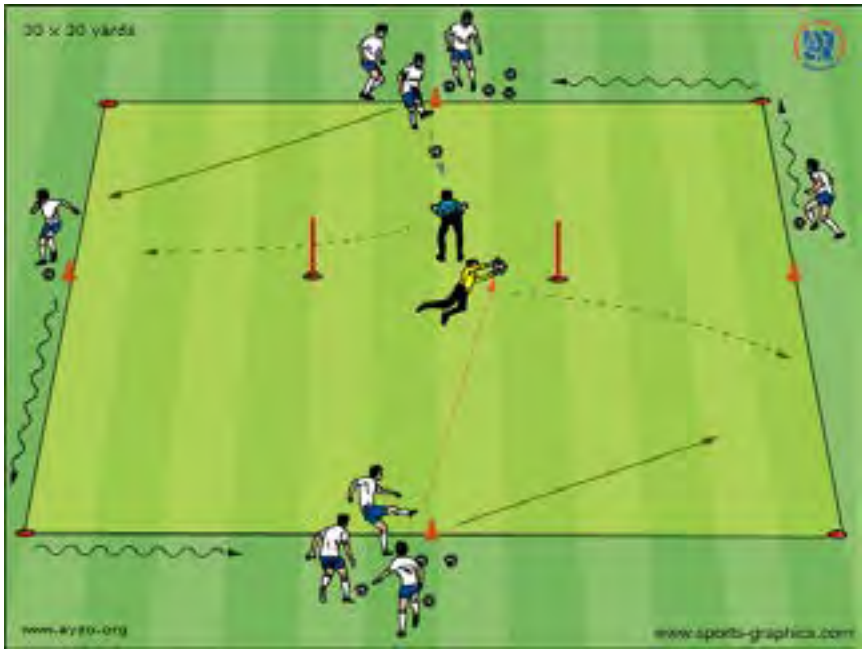
STAGE 2: SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

by: Marty Walker, Assistant Coach,
YALE University Men's Soccer, CT

ORGANIZATION:

- 30 x 30 grid with central goal marked with poles.
- 2 GK's,12 field players.

To see this activity in action visit:
aysou.video/shotstop



INSTRUCTIONS

- Players strike balls towards centrally located gates.
- GK's save, then serve ball wide to moving player who receives on the move (shown in diagram).

VARIATIONS/ PROGRESSIONS

- Vary strikes, i.e., drives, curved, chips, high/low, left, right, etc.
- Vary distribution, i.e., i.e., underhand "bowling" throws, sidearm "sling" throws, overhand "arc/sling" throws.

COACHING POINTS

- GK must "set" before ball is struck: weight forward balanced on balls of feet; head relaxed; feet shoulder width apart; knees bent; bent at waist; hands out in front w/ palms diagonally down and slightly towards each other; elbows slightly in front of trunk.

Correct handling techniques:

Scoop

- Collapse leg & bend knee 'K' position to throw body weight forward.
- Shoulders forward, elbows in.
- Palms towards ball 'little fingers touching.' Lead with hands.
- Soft hands strong wrists.
- Hand & arms form ramp for ball to be taken into the body and secured.
- Head steady eyes on the ball Utilized for driven shots along ground.

Basket

- Hands & arms parallel.
- Fingers point towards the ground.
- Feet in split stance.
- Body behind the ball.
- Basket is formed by upper body (flexed at waist; the arms & hands).
- Ball is brought into body to secure it.
- Utilized for driven balls mid–trunk height or lower.

High Contour

- Spreading hands as wide as possible in a contour to fit around ball, with fingers up & thumbs almost touching.
- Utilized for receiving high balls – chest level and above.

Low Contour

- Formed like high contour but with fingers down & pinkies almost touching.
- Utilized for receiving low balls – waist level and below.
- Face opposition at all time and adjust body position for angled shots adjusting to ball line and arc accordingly.
- Regardless of the type of save, GK's should always finish the save by "putting the ball away" by "hugging" into chest.
- Hold, deflect or parry.
- Ensure any loose balls are away from danger.
- Because it is a quick-fire game, goalkeepers must stay focused at all times.
- Goalkeepers must recover and react after shot and/or save.
- Discuss footwork, i.e., shuffle: used when to travel a short distance in their goal quickly. Level hips, don't cross feet.

GOALKEEPING (DISTRIBUTION)

by: Niall Foy, AYSO Section 12
Resource Specialist

STAGE 1: TECHNICAL WARM UP

ORGANIZATION:

- 25 x 25 yard square.
- Players work in pairs.

To see this activity in action visit:
aysou.video/distribution

INSTRUCTIONS

- Players lightly jog through grid bouncing, catching and exchanging ball with their partner. Players should perform dynamic stretching to make sure back, shoulders, neck, etc., are appropriately warmed up.
- GK's line up 10 yards opposite partners and throw & catch in pairs. Rolling the Ball: The ball should be thrown from a low position with a straight arm.
- Players will roll the ball back and forth in pairs, then have the target player moving and make sure the goalkeeper throws to reach partner in stride, like a good pass.
- Sidearm Throw: The ball being thrown from the side of the body at waist height with a straight arm to generate a more powerful action. Again in pairs, practice the throw first to a stationary partner, then moving.

VARIATIONS/ PROGRESSIONS

- Goalkeeper Possession Game Throwing Square (shown in digram) Four GK's in a square with one defender in the middle. Extra GK and defender added when required.
- GK's throw the ball around the square, using a roll or sidearm throw to teammates on either side, or an overhand throw to the player diagonally across, keeping the ball away from the defender.
- GK's receive the ball with their feet before picking it up to throw; if the ball can't be received cleanly the defender may challenge for the ball. If the defender in the middle are GK's, they can exchange places with an outside GK if they win the ball. You can vary the number of players outside and number of defenders based on ability and the number of players available.
- If defenders win the ball, they can take a shot on goal. If the GK saves the ball, the game restarts.

COACHING POINTS

- Roll: GK's should receive the ball with their feet, like a field player, then pick it up for their throw. The release point of the ball should be low, so the ball rolls smoothly. Rolls should get there as quickly as possible, put some speed on the ball! A moving receiver should be able to take the ball in their stride.
- Side Arm: As before, the release point should be low. The ball should not be high and looping; it should hit the ground 2 to 3 yards away from the target so it has time to settle. Some backspin on the ball will help this happen. Again, the throw should have some pace on it. GK's receive the balls with their feet.
  Game: Encourage quick decision making- find the open player fast, before the defender closes down.
- Throws should find their teammates feet and be on the ground (not bouncing) to prevent loss of possession.

ANGLE PLAY & STARTING POSITION

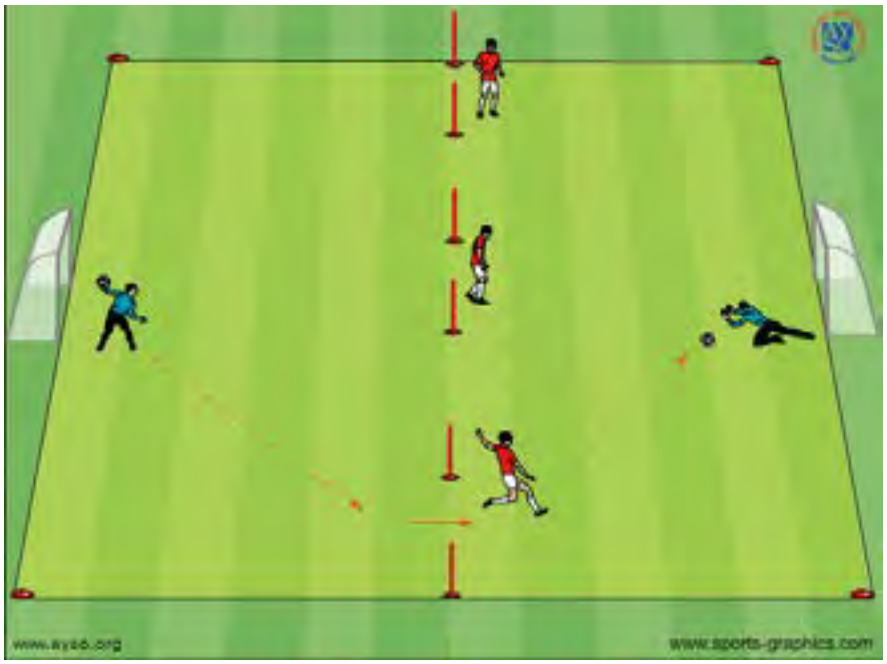
STAGE 2: SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

by: Leon Othen, Goalkeeper Director,
Everton America Soccer Club

ORGANIZATION:

- Area the size of 2 penalty areas (depending on age).
- Ideally, 2 goals.
- Cones or poles to create 3 gates.

To see this activity in action visit:
aysou.video/angle



INSTRUCTIONS

- GK distributes ball to server 1, 2 or 3.
- Server must control the ball and take a heavy touch through their gate and shoot at opposite goal.
- Note: If all players are GK's, middle players must make the save before turning and shooting.
- Coach can work on different positioning by dictating how many touches servers have before shooting.

VARIATIONS/ PROGRESSIONS

- Add speed with Wide v Middle game: when GK distributes wide, the middle player can defend. When GK plays to middle, both wide players defend.
- If defender wins the ball then they attack the other goal.

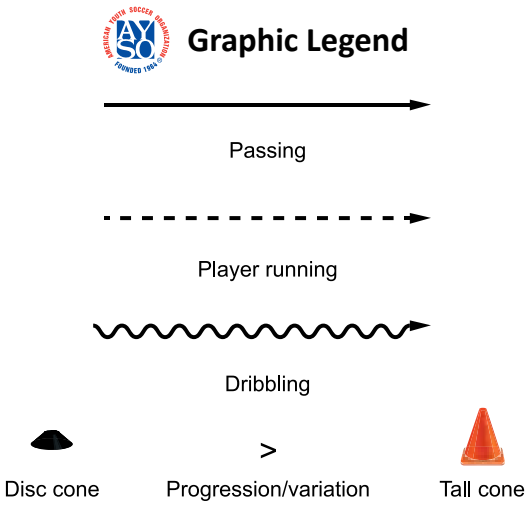
COACHING POINTS

- Position body in the "Ball Line" (in line with ball and the middle of goal).
- Ensuring you are still in the "Ball Line," you can come out as far as you feel you cannot be beaten at the near post (post nearest to the ball).

- Ensure the save is made in the "Mini Goal" (imaginary small goal created by having the GK positioned in line with ball and middle of goal If a shot goes wide of the "Mini Goal" one can assume the ball will be wide of the real goal).
- Correct saving techniques, ensuring any loose balls are away from danger.
- Identify the 3 times a goalkeeper can start getting off the goal line:

1. When the ball is too far for you to get chipped.
2. When there is a defender in the way, so you can't get chipped.
3. When the forward is facing away from goal so you can't get chipped.

INTERMEDIATE DEFENDING ACTIVITIES



INDIVIDUAL DEFENDING

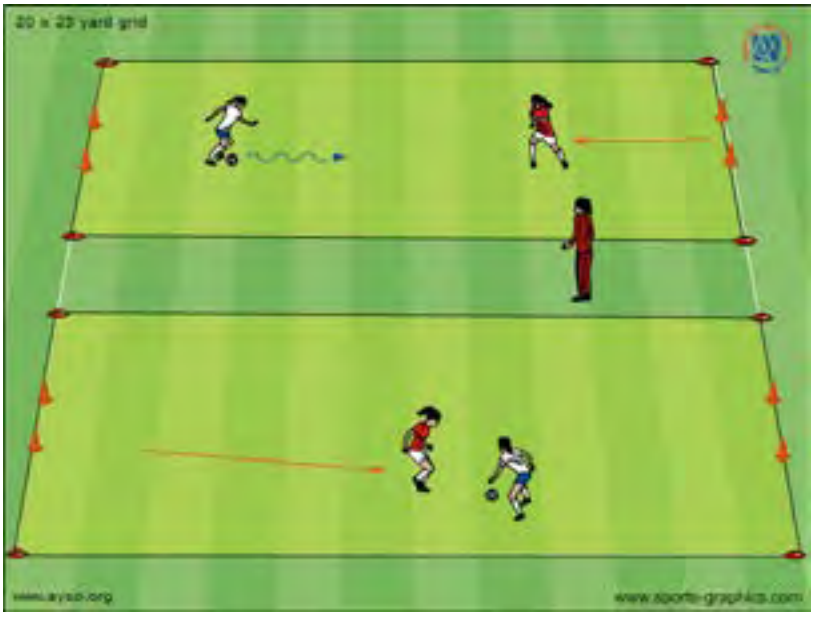
STAGE 2: SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

BY: Adam Arentz,
AYSO Region 165

ORGANIZATION:

- Mark 20 x 25 grid with goals.
- Place cones to create 2 channels + 5 yard central buffer zone.
- Play 1v1.

To see this activity in action visit:
aysou.video/individual



INSTRUCTIONS

- Defender plays the ball (kick or throw in) to the opposing Attacker who then dribbles at speed toward the goal.
- Defender must close the space between herself and the attacker quickly and prevent attacker from scoring.
- Defender is awarded a point for each successful defense of her goal.
- Attacker is awarded a point for each goal scored.
- Players switch roles after each round.

VARIATIONS/ PROGRESSIONS

- Defender can tackle when appropriate.
- If ball is won, Defender becomes Attacker.
- Attacker starts in the middle of grid, Coach serves ball:
- Defender must quickly intercept ball if possible.
- If not, Defender must prevent Attacker from turning and going to goal.
- Defender must select appropriate angle of challenge to force Attacker to the side most favorable to Defender (angle which forces Attacker away from goal or into the smallest space).

COACHING POINTS

- Reduce space between you and Attacker quickly (immediate chase/pressure!).
- Defender must maintain proper defensive posture.
- Body balanced and in athletic stance (preferably on the balls of the feet).
- Body positioned side on to attacker (helps direct Attacker's movements).
- Maintain proper marking distance.
- Maintain goal side position.
- Patience! Do not over commit.
- Use body position to reduce space for Attacker (channel toward the touch lines).
- Utilize defensive feints to keep Attacker off balance and prone to mistakes.

DEFENDING (COVER: SECOND DEFENDER ROLE)

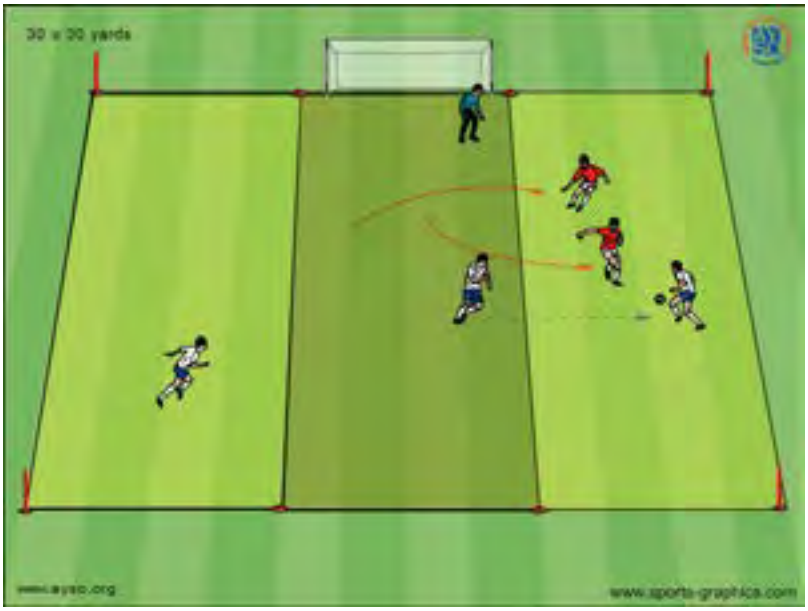
STAGE 2: SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

by: Adam Arentz and Mike Gassner, AYSO Section 1

ORGANIZATION:

- 30 x 30 grid divided into 3 channels with full sized goal.
- 2 v 3 with goalkeeper.

To see this activity in action visit:
aysou.video/second



INSTRUCTIONS

- Defenders must work together to
- prevent goal scoring chances.
- Defenders must both be in same channel at all times. No more than 2 attackers per channel.
- Player closest to ball assumes role of 1st defender and applies immediate pressure; partner assumes the role of 2nd defender and provides cover.
- Switch roles to give every player experience.
- Encourage defenders to gain possession of the ball when appropriate.

VARIATIONS/ PROGRESSIONS

- 2 defenders in only 1 channel, then 2 defenders in 2 adjacent channels, and then full field.
- When players demonstrate understanding, remove the channels and let them play.

COACHING POINTS

- Coach should briefly review the role of 1st and 2nd defenders before beginning.
- Players must be aggressive, yet under control and patient.
- Defenders must work together to close down and deny space for player with the ball.
- 1st defender (closest to the ball) *pressures* the attacker, while the 2nd defender *covers* potential escape routes.
- 2nd defender must choose the proper angle of support relative to the marking defender.
- 2nd defender should be prepared to become 1st defender if her teammate is beaten.
- In addition to *pressuring* the ball and providing *cover*, defenders must work to prevent quality shooting angles/opportunities.
- Defenders pick and choose when to apply pressure:
  - Poor first touch.
  - Slow or flighted pass.
  - Attacking player's head is down.
- Defenders should read visual clues from attackers.
- Players must communicate at all times.
- Defenders must use proper defending technique/body position.

DEFENDING (BALANCE: THIRD DEFENDER ROLE)

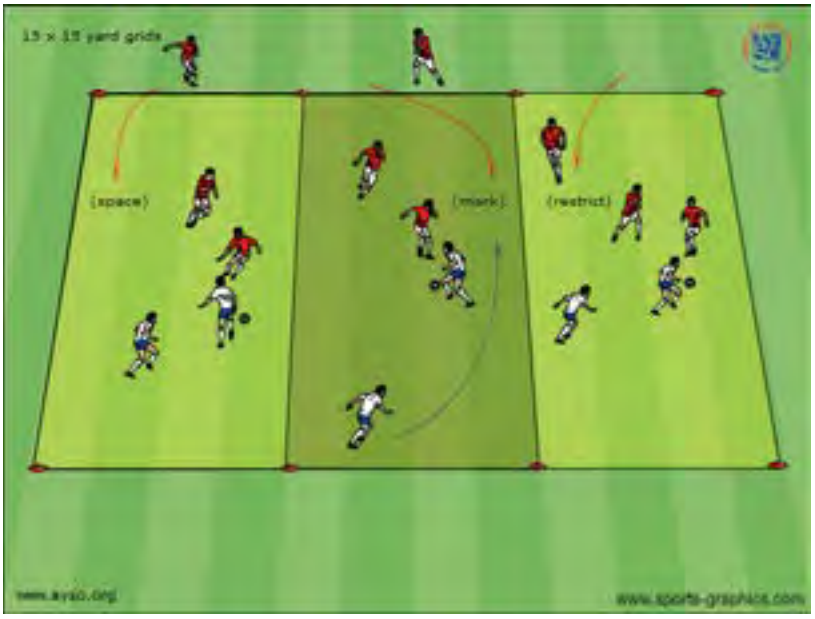
STAGE 2: SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

by: Adam Arentz and Mike Gassner,
AYSO Section 1

ORGANIZATION:

- 15 x 15 grids. 2 v 3.

To see this activity in action visit:
aysou.video/third



INSTRUCTIONS

- Attackers start with the ball at opposite end of grid from defenders.
- Attackers try to get to the opposite side of the grid with the ball under control.
- 2 defenders start inside the grid with 1 defender waiting outside the touchline.
- Player closest to ball assumes role of 1st defender and applies pressure.
- Player second closest to the ball assumes the role of 2nd defender and provides cover.
- 3rd defender must wait 3 seconds before entering grid to provide balance by defending where the threat may appear.
- Switch roles after each turn.
- Rotate players after each turn.

VARIATIONS/ PROGRESSIONS

- Progress to 3v3 when a player demonstrates understanding of defensive roles.

COACHING POINTS

- Coach should briefly review the role of 1st, 2nd and 3rd Defenders before beginning.
- 1st defender must close space to the attacker quickly and apply ***pressure*** (immediate or delay).
- 2nd defender must choose the proper angle of support relative to the marking defender and provide ***cover***.
- 3rd defender provides the ***balance*** and must decide whether to defend space (dangerous through ball) or to mark the 2nd attacker, or to attempt to restrict space.
- Players must communicate at all times and work as a group.
- In addition to ***pressuring*** ball and providing ***cover***, defenders must work to prevent quality shooting angles/opportunities.
- Defenders pick and choose when to apply pressure:
  - Poor first touch.
  - Slow or flighted pass.
  - Attacking player's head is down.
- Defenders should read visual clues from attackers.
- Players must communicate at all times.
- Defenders must use proper defending technique/body position.

BACK 4 ZONAL DEFENDING

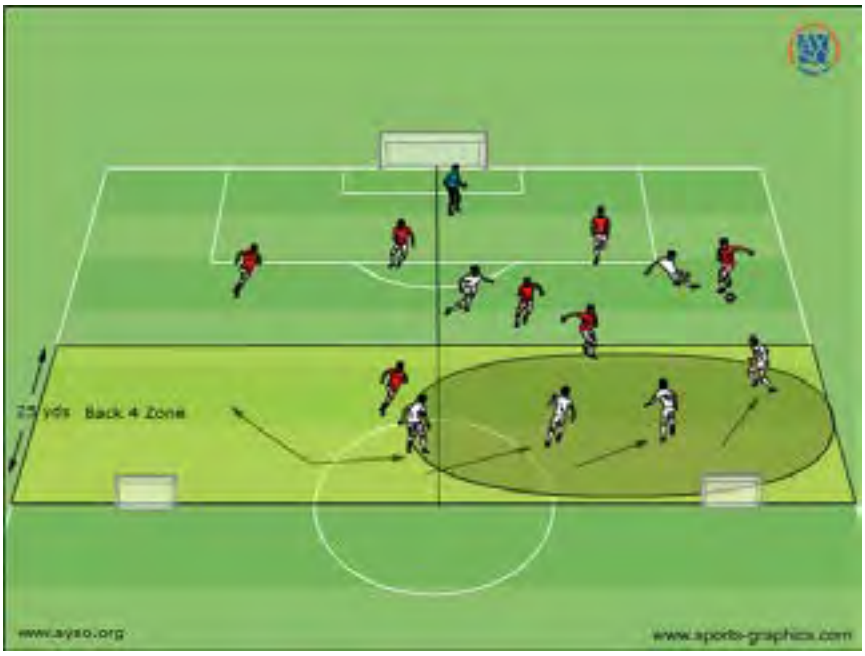
STAGE 3: EXPANDED ACTIVITY

by: Scott Snyder,
AYSO Player Development

ORGANIZATION:

- 1/2 field split into 2 horizontal zones and 2 vertical zones. The back 4 zone should be approximately 25 yards from the half-way line.
- 1 full size goal and 2 smaller gate goals on half-way line.
- 2 teams lined up: 7 red (1-4-1-2) plus GK vs. 6 white (4-2).
- Start from the red GK (vary as needed).

To see this activity in action visit:
aysou.video/back



INSTRUCTIONS

- Red GK distributes ball to the red back 4 to attack and score in either of the two smaller goals on the half way line.
- White back 4 cannot leave the back 4 zone!
- The two white forwards are free to move where they choose.
- The red team are free to move where they choose.
- Attacking team should look to vary the point of attack and switch often to challenge the defensive unit movement.

VARIATIONS/ PROGRESSIONS

- Increase field size to provide more space and time.
- Play 2 touch in the defending back 4 zone.
- Mandatory 2 touches for attacking team to provide defenders more time to adjust and organize.
- Challenge back 4 compact and get all players into one defensive quadrant as a unit.
- Replace small gates with full size goals and 2 GKs.
- Replace small gates with another regular goal and play a 8 v 8.

COACHING POINTS

- Prioritize how to shift the defending block; how to *compact* the pitch; and how to defend deep.
- Defensive unit communication and reaction relevant to the movement of the ball.
- When defending zonally (as a block) the spacing must remain fairly *compact*.
- Back 4 should travel and move together, especially when adjusting to balls in wide areas and switches of play.
- *Pressure, cover, balance, compactness and control/restraint* are all in play.

FUNCTIONAL TRAINING FOR WING BACKS AND FULL BACKS

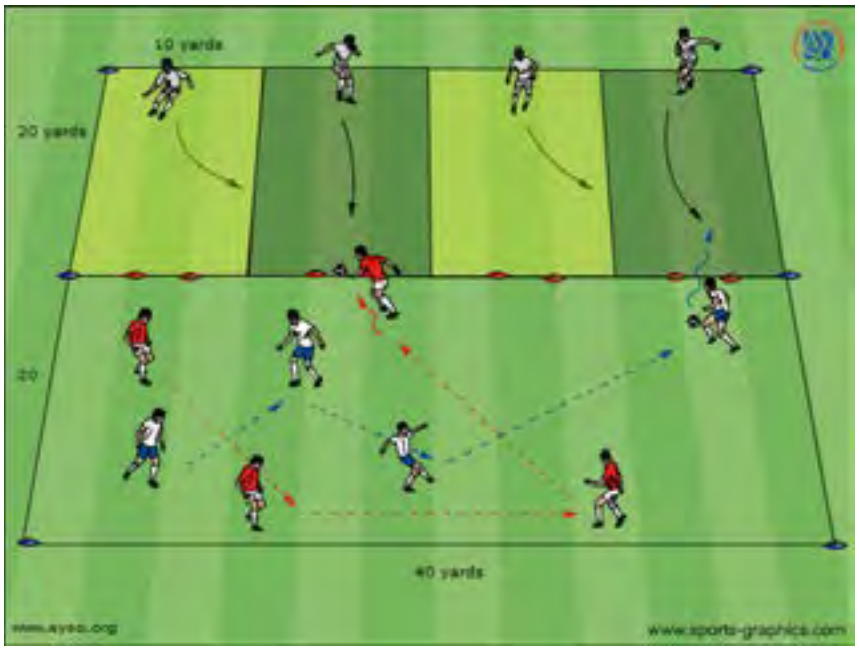
by: David Lavery,
AYSO Soccer Camps

STAGE 2: SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

ORGANIZATION:

- In a 40 x 40 grid create 4 defensive grids 20 x 10 each.
- Also create one 40 x 20 possession grid alongside as shown.
- 3 teams of 4 players.
- 1 team of 4 splits into each defending grid.
- 2 teams possess ball in possession grid, 2 balls in play, 1 per team.
- 3 minute rotations.

To see this activity in action visit:
aysou.video/wing



INSTRUCTIONS

- Each team in the possession grid plays 5 passes within their team.
- Then 1 player will penetrate by dribbling into 1 of the 4 defending grids and take on the defender 1 v 1.
- Attacker will look to dribble over the end line, defender looks to dispossess and dribble through the gate at the top of the grid (transition).
- Note: If defender to left or right (directly) is not being engaged, the become a "passive" support player but don't leave their own grid (pressure by presence).
- Keep score.

VARIATIONS/ PROGRESSIONS

- Control number of passes and types of passes to free the attacker.
- Add time restraint to encourage quick tempo.
- Attacker is selected by coach (keep players engaged and ready to react).

COACHING POINTS

- 1 v 1 defensive fundamentals.
- *Pressure*, angle of approach, distance, stance.
- *Control/Restraint* (composure) until good communication (verbal or non verbal) or opportunity to steal arises.
- Quality passing and first touch, *mobility* off the ball, execute.

TRANSITION TO DEFENSE (3V3 & 4V4)

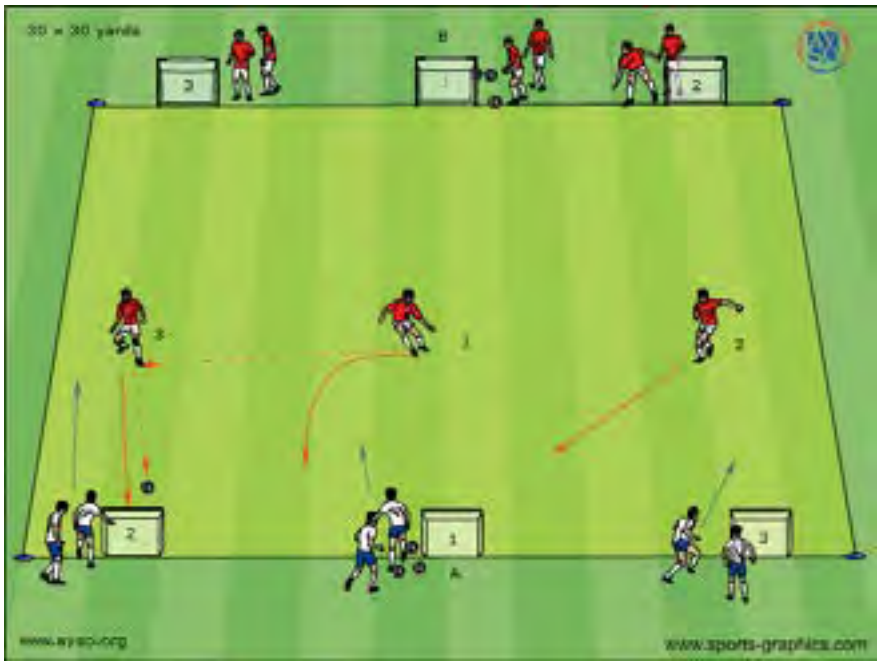
BY: David Thorburn, Technical Director, Whitby Iroquois Soccer Club, Canada

STAGE 2: SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

ORGANIZATION:

- Mark a 30 x 30 field with 3 small goals at each end.
- For 3v3 game, 3 teams of 2 players on each end line spread between the goals as shown.
- The 2 central players from each team have a ball each.

To see this activity in action visit:
aysou.video/transition



INSTRUCTIONS

- To start play, the first 3 players attack the oppositions 3 goals (unopposed). As soon as any of these players scores or puts the ball over the end line, the opposition attacks in groups of 3.
- The last player from the team in possession that scored or put the ball over the end line, must run and touch the crossbar of that goal or the closest goal before transitioning to defending his own goal with his other 2 teammates.
- This is continued end-to-end with 3 players attacking and then defending.
- The defending team stay on until a goal is scored against them or the ball crosses over their end line.
- During the game, if a natural transition occurs in open play, the same principles apply.

VARIATIONS/ PROGRESSIONS

- 4v4 or 5v5 (the field size must be adjusted accordingly).
- Remove the condition of touching the cross bar.

COACHING POINTS

- The team in transition from attack to defense must pay attention to the space just vacated by the scoring player (who is temporarily out of the game as he runs to touch the cross bar).
- In the diagram, after the shot, Player (1) (B) immediately curves their run to isolate the pass to the wide attacking Player (2) (A). As this happens, defending team (B) Player (2) must move over and offer cover
- to the transitioning player (1) (B).
- Try to win the ball back by applying immediate *pressure*.
- Communication from *covering* player.

  Channel player to the *covering* player.
- Delay to allow the out of position player back in.
- Reorganize.
- *Pressure* as a group.
- Speed of play!

PLAYING OUT FROM THE BACK

(POSSESSION WITH ACCURATE PASSING AND COMPOSURE)

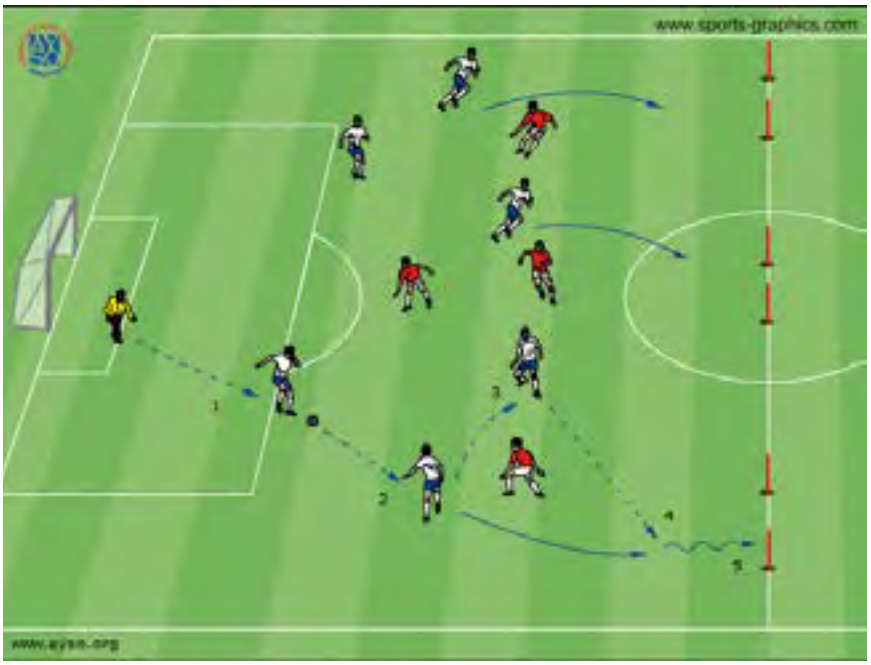
by: Chris Volk,
Head Coach, UC Irvine, Men's Soccer

STAGE 3: EXPANDED ACTIVITY

ORGANIZATION:

- Half field to 3 counter goals (small goals or poles 2 yards apart).
- GK in large goal + 6 v 4 (5).

To see this activity in action visit:
aysou.video/playing



INSTRUCTIONS

- Players build possession from the back and distribute to 3 counter goals at midfield.
- Possession can start with either the GK or at midfield with the opposing team.

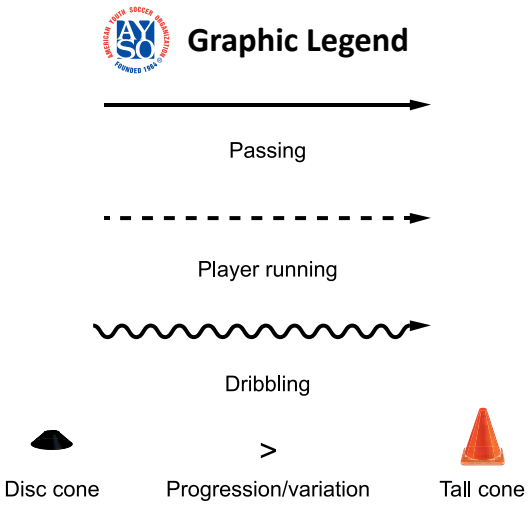
VARIATIONS/ PROGRESSIONS

- Limit only the outside backs to be able to go forward to the wide counter goals.
- Increase from 4 to 5 opposing players to create more pressure on the midfielders.

COACHING POINTS

- Emphasize the role of the GK in the initial distribution and support of the back four.
- Players must recognize the ***pressure*** created by the opposing players (4 or 5).
- The distance and angle of ***support*** will be determined by the opposing ***pressure***.
- ***Penetration*** (when to dribble or when to pass) is vital to maintaining possession.
- Accurate distribution to the 3 counter midfield goals is key to initiating the build-up.

INTERMEDIATE MIDFIELD ACTIVITIES



PASSING AND RECEIVING (COMBINATION PLAYS)

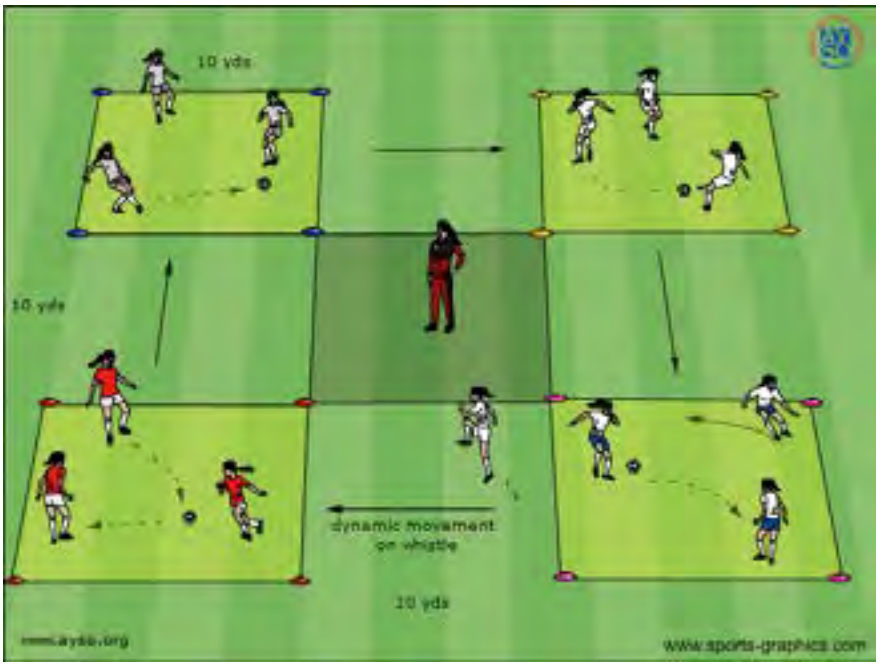
STAGE 1: TECHNICAL WARM UP

by: Scott Snyder, AYSO
Player Development Department

ORGANIZATION:

- 4 x 10x10 squares laid out as diagram in 30x30 area.
- Use different colored cones to mark each grid.
- Split players evenly through 4 grids, 1 ball per group per grid.
- Have spare balls ready as needed.

To see this activity in action visit:
aysou.video/passing



INSTRUCTIONS

- Players pass & move within group using 2 touches (1 to control and 1 to pass).
- On Coach whistle, players leave the ball & react to the next grid (clockwise or counter-clockwise) performing dynamic exercises as they go.
- Upon arrival in next grid, they begin passing and moving again.

DYNAMIC EXERCISES:

- High Knees.
- Heels Kicks.
- Side Shuffles.
- Skipping With High Arm Swings.
- Leg Over And In.
- Leg Out And Over.
- Carioca.
- Knees, shoulders, clap (timed together!).
- Sprint (gradual build up).
- Backwards run.
- High kicks.
- Diagonal sprints (players must watch middle and adjust quickly to avoid collisions).
- Sprint to color on command.
- Stretch as needed.

VARIATIONS/ PROGRESSIONS

- One touch.
- Change direction.
- On Coach command, each player in possession drives ball to the next grid. Player in next grid peels off to receive the pass and continues passing and moving.

COACHING POINTS

- Play the pass in with pace.
- Quality first touch *into* desired area (accuracy and weight).
- Spatial awareness.
- Fluid movement.
- Accountability for technique!
- Proper form with dynamic exercises.

GATE BALL! DECISIVE POSSESSION

(POSSESS WITH PURPOSE)

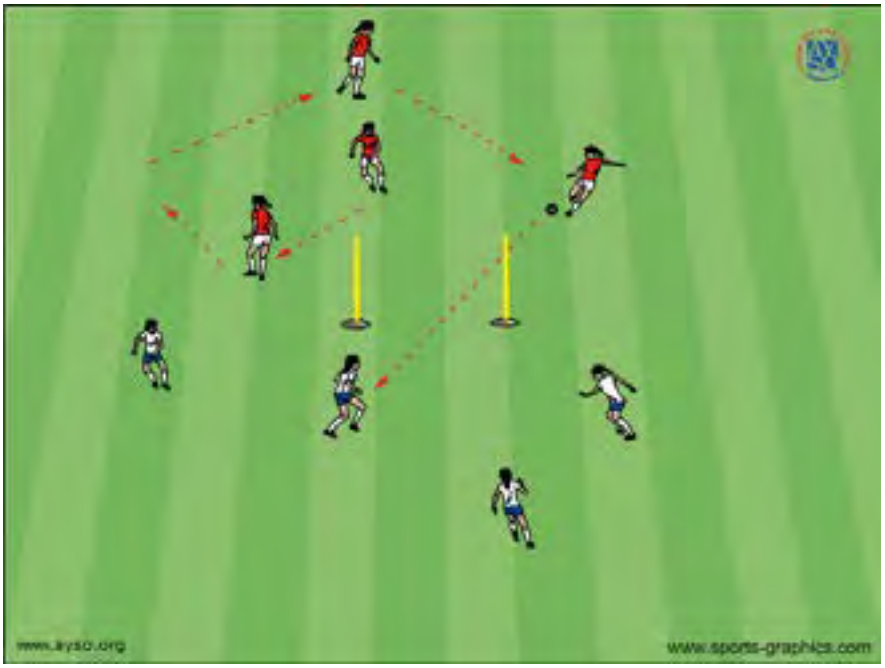
by: Michael Blair, AYSO NCAC,
Flagstaff AYSO Revolution

STAGE 2: SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

ORGANIZATION:

- Mark a gate 5 yards apart using cones or poles in an open area of play.
- 2 teams (< 5v5 to maintain high tempo. Set 2 grids as needed.)

To see this activity in action visit:
aysou.video/decisive



INSTRUCTIONS

- Teams are split and each team plays on one side of the gate.
- The ball is served by one team through the gate to the opposing team.
- The team receiving the ball must play the ball back through the gate, but only after each player has played the ball only once each.
- The ball must remain in motion and not come to a stop.
- The final player to touch the ball must play the ball through the gate.
- If any of the steps are not followed, i.e., they miss a player, the other team gets the point.

VARIATIONS/ PROGRESSIONS

- Start with a maximum of 2 touches per player and progress to 1 touch.
- If tempo is too slow, player on ball must play through the gates on Coach command or add a time restraint.
- Play with multiple balls in play. Each team serves a ball to the other team at the same time to start play.
- Add a defender on each side.

COACHING POINTS

- Encourage players to focus on their first touch efficiency.
- Encourage quality but quick tempo.
- Players will naturally work their body around the ball and adjust their vision in order to see and play the ball to their teammate.
- Encourage players to play the final ball towards the gate to play their teammate in to the gate.
- Players will begin to communicate in order to call for the ball;determine who is left to play the ball to; where they would like the ball played to themselves, etc.
- Encourage different strategies of play (playing a deep ball, playing a ball softly through the gate, playing wide balls through the gate, etc).

ASSERTIVE AND DIRECTIONAL FIRST TOUCH
(AND SWITCHING PLAY)

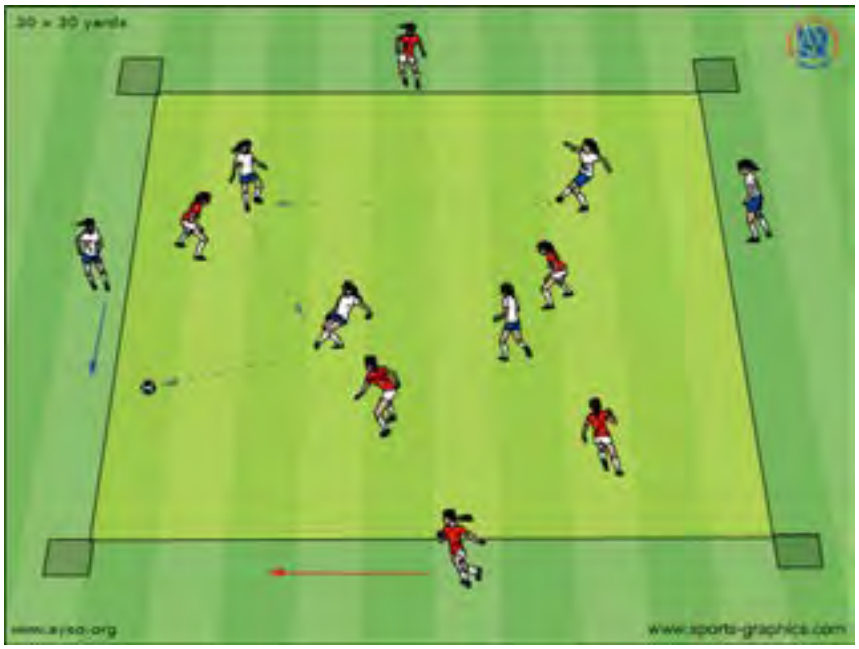
by: David Lavery,
AYSO Soccer Camps

STAGE 2: SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

ORGANIZATION:

- Create 30 x 30 grid with a 2 x 2 box in each corner.
- 2 players from each team go on outside of grid (mirroring).
- Minimum 3 v 3 maximum 5 v 5 in middle grid.

To see this activity in action visit:
aysou.video/assertive



INSTRUCTIONS

- Players in middle possess the ball until an opportunity to pass the ball to their teammate on outside appears.
- Once outside player has ball, they try to score by dribbling the ball into the box on their left or right.
- Opposition players on opposing sides of the square (outside players) can block a box by standing in it (only stand in a box to left or right on your side).
- If no box is available, pass ball back into middle and look to switch the play quickly.

VARIATIONS/ PROGRESSIONS

- Add players from both teams on each side of grid.
- Add extra box to middle of each side (adds more players, reduced distance, and increased demand on quality touch).

COACHING POINTS

- Open body to receive ball.
- Accurate and assertive first touch towards target.
- Be aware of where the space is.
- If both options are not available, look to switch play quickly and efficiently.

POSSESSION PLAY IN MIDDLE THIRD

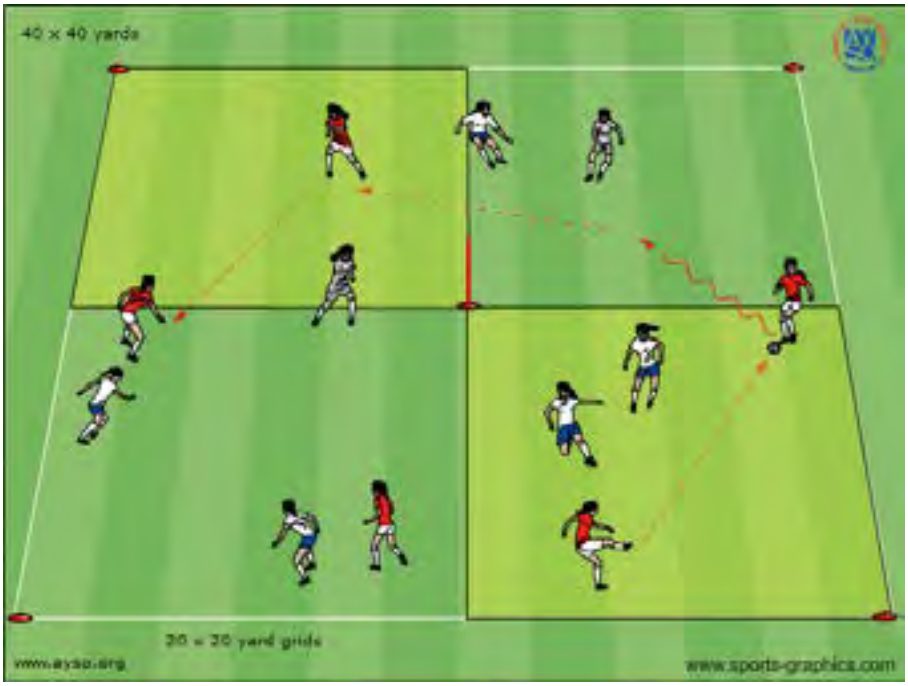
STAGE 2: SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

by: Scott Juniper, Head Coach,
UC Irvine Women's Soccer

ORGANIZATION:

- Mark a 40 x 40 field comprised of four 20 x 20 grids with a pole or flag to mark the middle of the field. Play 5 v 5 + 2 neutral players.

To see this activity in action visit:
aysou.video/possession



INSTRUCTIONS

- The team in possession must pass or dribble the ball through all four boxes to score a point.
- It is possible for a single player to dribble through all four boxes, to connect with passes only or a combination of both.
- The team without the ball must prevent them scoring a point by winning the ball. Once the win the ball they must attempt to possess through all four boxes themselves.

VARIATIONS/ PROGRESSIONS

- With younger groups consider adding more neutral players. Older groups consider using less neutral players.
- For younger players award a point for every new box they can move the ball to without losing the ball.
- Consider using a two-touch or three-touch maximum to encourage quick passing.

COACHING POINTS

- Solve the problem as a team.
- Create space for your team by spreading out and using the whole field.
- When your team has possession constantly look around and know where your teammates are.
- When you have the ball, keep looking around to see as many options as possible.
- Where possible, receive the ball across your body with the inside of the farthest foot.
- If there are no teammates available when you have the ball be confident to dribble into spaces.
- When your team has possession and you are in space, call for the ball with confidence.
- Play with a quick one, two or three touch tempo when possible.

21! ATTACKING POSSESSION (POSSESS IN FINAL THIRD)

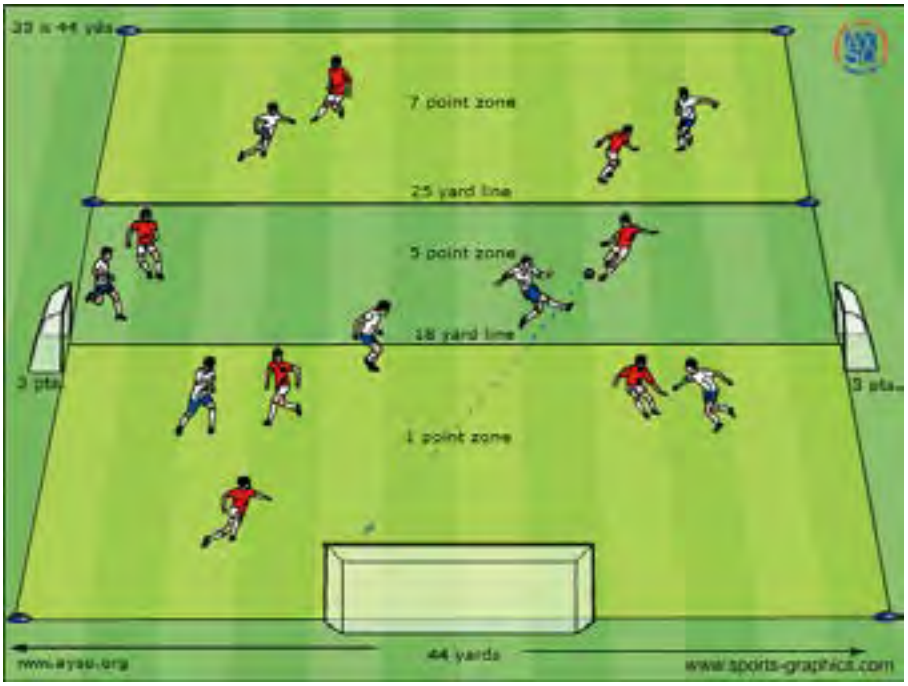
STAGE 2: SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

by: Michael Blair, AYSO NCAC, Flagstaff AYSO Revolution

ORGANIZATION:

- Mark 35x44 yard grid (approx. depth of final third and width of 18 yard box). Large goal at center of 44 yard side.
- 3 zones by marking line of cones at 18 yard and 25 yard lines.
- 2 smaller goals on outside at 18 yard mark for the defense to score in.
- 2 teams.

To see this activity in action visit:
aysou.video/21attacking



INSTRUCTIONS

- Offense vs Defense. Both teams have opportunity to score. 1st team to 21 points wins.
- Offense shoots in large goal: goal inside 18 yard box = 1 point; goal from 18-25 yard zone = 5 points; goal outside 25 yard line = 7 points.
- Defense scores on either of the 2 smaller goals = 3 points.
-
- Headed or volley goals = 10 points.
- Teams switch from offense to defense when there is a winner.

VARIATIONS/ PROGRESSIONS

- Teams can be modified to play uneven (5v4, 6v4, etc.)
- Add a GK.
- Allow play to continue outside of the main grid to encourage greater width/ depth play.

COACHING POINTS

- Possess to score!
- Use width: possess from outside-in.
- Use depth: penetrating runs and possession to draw in the defense and then drop for a higher scoring opportunity.
- Crisp, creative passing with appropriate weight and accuracy. Ball should be played to players' feet or to the end of their run.
- Encourage players to make creative runs (overlaps, angled, penetrating, etc.)
- Players should shoot whenever they get the opportunity.
- Encourage players to use the entire field of play with their shape and spacing.

3 TEAM POSSESSION (OFF THE BALL MOVEMENT)

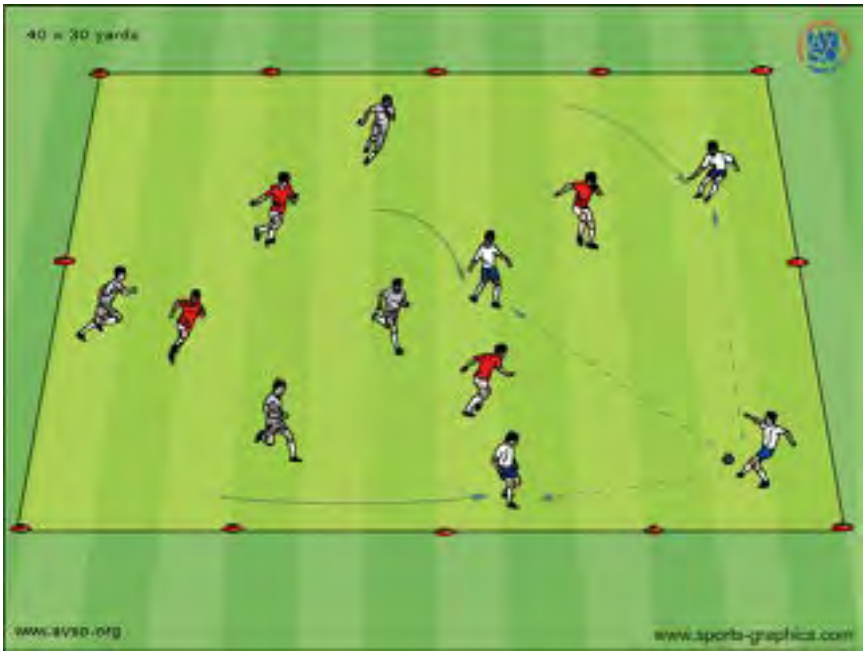
STAGE 2: SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

by: Bryan Alcantara,
Coaching Coordinator, The New York Cosmos

ORGANIZATION:

- Mark 40 x 30 grid.
- 3 teams in different colors.

To see this activity in action visit:
aysou.video/3team



INSTRUCTIONS

- While 2 teams work together to keep possession, the third team must try to win the ball back.
- If the team in the middle wins the ball back, they must complete 1 pass in order to free themselves.
- The team that loses the ball or knocks it out, goes in the middle.

VARIATIONS/ PROGRESSIONS

- Add touch limitations to increase difficulty. Players will need to support each ball must faster.
- Add 4 gates on the field that the attacking teams can score in by completing a pass through the gates. This will add purpose to the possession and make things a little more directional.

COACHING POINTS

- Work on the overall shape of the groups, making sure that players aren't crowding and they aren't blocking other passing options.
- Communication must be both verbal and visual when a player wants the ball.
- Prioritize quality passing technique.
- Positive first touch to keep ball moving.
- Movement off ball to always provide at least 2 options.
- Movement off ball to create opportunities to switch the field (pivot).

SEQUENCE POSSESSION

STAGE 2: SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

by: Richie Williams, Head Coach,
Former US 17U Men's National Team

ORGANIZATION:

- 45 x 30 grid(s). 10-11 players per grid.
- 2 groups working with slightly staggered start (to allow 1st player to get to 2nd cone to receive first pass from the other side).
- Passing sequences with flags as defenders.

To see this activity in action visit:
aysou.video/sequence

INSTRUCTIONS

- Player 1 passes to Player 2, who lays it back to Player 1 to play long to Player 3.
- Player 3 combines with Player 2 using a wall pass and then plays to Player 4 who lays it back to Player 3 to play long to Player 5.
- Player 5 wall passes with Player 4 and then Player 5 dribbles to the end of the line.
- Players always rotate by advancing one cone in the sequence.
- Players alternate which side they start from.

VARIATIONS/ PROGRESSIONS

(3 minutes each):

- Player 5 dribbles halfway and then passes to end of line.
- Player 5 drives ball with laces to end of line.
- Vary the sequence.

COACHING POINTS

- Timing of runs.
- Turning with the ball.
- Pulling away from the defender (flags) in order to create space to receive the ball.
- Quality of the pass, touch and movements.

ATTACKING FROM MIDFIELD (USING ATTACKING PRINCIPLES OF PLAY.)

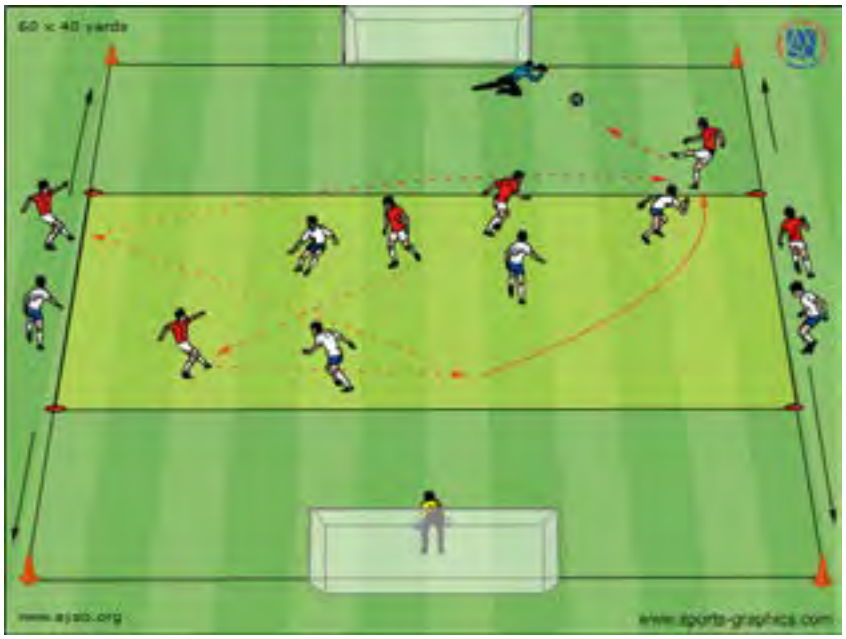
by: John Ouellette,
AYSO national coach emeritus

STAGE 3: EXPANDED ACTIVITY

ORGANIZATION:

- 60x40 grid divided into thirds w/ a goal at each end. GK's in goal.

To see this activity in action visit:
aysou.video/attacking



INSTRUCTIONS

- 4v4 in central grid with a neutral-player on each touch line (can use length of grid).
- Teams must connect as many passes as needed to safely play a ball out wide to a teammate on the wing (neutral player).
- Neutral player plays ball back into empty grid to the teammate who played it out.
- As soon as ball enters empty grid, defenders can enter grid to regain possession and deny the shot.

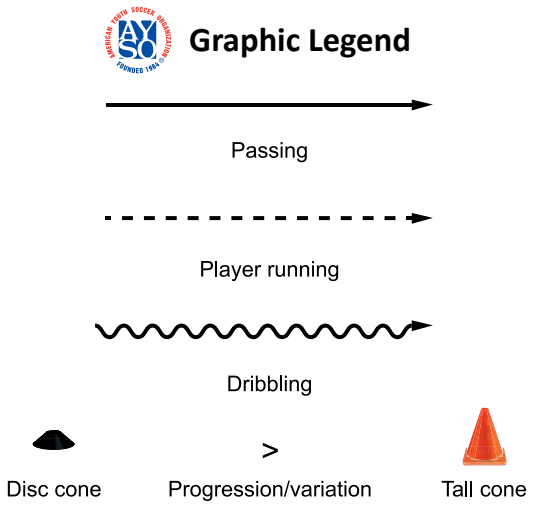
VARIATIONS/ PROGRESSIONS

- Wide players may defend each other.
- Once ball is played by neutral player, all players join the attack.
- Wide players can dribble into zone to cross to teammates.

COACHING POINTS

- Shape and organization are critical for success.
- *Mobility* and *creativity* are essential (encourage creativity, let them express themselves).
- Players must create space in a limited area.
- 1st touch efficiency!
- Weak side play must be recognized.
- Players must constantly change the point of attack to unbalance the defense.

INTERMEDIATE ATTACKING ACTIVITIES



1V1 DRIBBLING

(WHEN AND WHERE TO DRIBBLE. PENETRATE SPACES WITH THE BALL.)

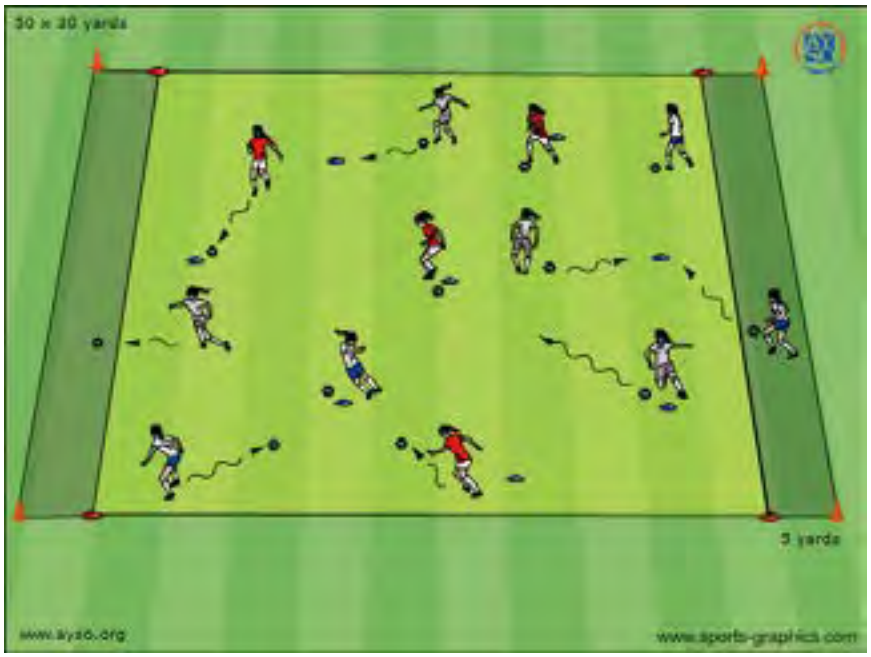
by: Niall Foy, AYSO Section 12
Resource Specialist

Stage 1: Technical warm up

ORGANIZATION:

- 50 x 30 yard grid with 2 end zones approximately 5 yards deep.
- 3 teams (4 red, 4 grey, 4 blue).
- Randomly place 8 cones throughout the grid.

To see this activity in action visit:
aysou.video/1v1



INSTRUCTIONS

- Players dribble through the grid and attack one of the cones (cone acts as a passive defender).
- Players accelerate away from the cone (change of pace) after the move and find another cone to attack.
- Players should perform feint moves on the cones (i.e., side steps, step overs, scissors, Maradona, etc).
- Players should change directions as they move around the playing area using turns, i.e., drag backs, outside/inside hooks, etc.

VARIATIONS/ PROGRESSIONS

- Add static defenders (grey team) to add a small amount of passive pressure.
- Winner Stays On (4 vs 4). A team scores a point by dribbling into the opposition's end zone. If red score, blue step out and grey step in. Red team would then attack the opposite end zone and the game would continue.

COACHING POINTS

- Dribble with head up, glancing down at the ball on contact if needed.
- Relaxed dribbling mainly with the outside and inside of the foot.
- Acceleration after a move.
- Change of pace: slow into a move, fast out of a move.
- Change direction using good quality turns.

DRIBBLING

(VISION AND SPATIAL AWARENESS.)

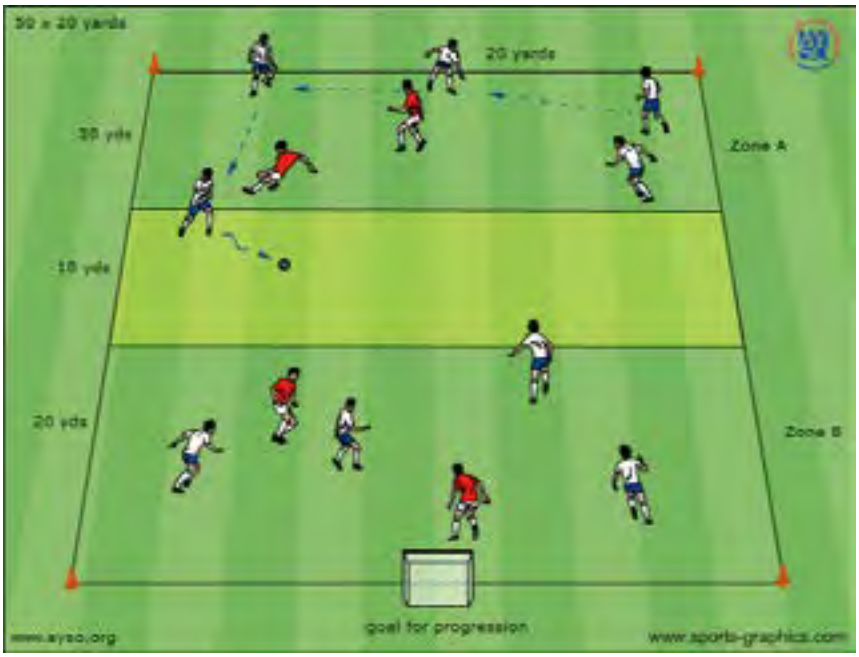
by: James Harrop,
Pateadores Soccer Club

STAGE 2: SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

ORGANIZATION:

- Mark 50 x 20 grid. Two 20 yard zones (A and B) separated by a 10 yard central zone.

To see this activity in action visit:
aysou.video/dribbling



INSTRUCTIONS

- Play two 5 v 2 games of keepaway.
- Players must make "x" amount of passes.
- Once achieved, one player from Zone A can run the ball across the central zone into Zone B and start again.
- Work as a team to get players to escape Zone A.
- Try to make a quick break. Zone A players support escaping players by spreading out and using space.
- Escaping players need to ensure they carry the ball at speed and be composed to make the right decision when entering Zone B.

VARIATIONS/ PROGRESSIONS

- Zone A goes to 6 v 3. Same central zone.
- Zone B is 1 v 1 with a goal. The player who escapes out of Zone A creates a 2 v 1 in Zone B to goal.

COACHING POINTS

- Patience in possession.
- Recognize moment to *penetrate.*
- Positive attitude.
- Be explosive.
- Be conscious of target area, not just the action of dribbling.
- Keep touches tight.
- Focus the activity on decision making as much as dribbling technique.

DRIBBLING (SHIELDING)

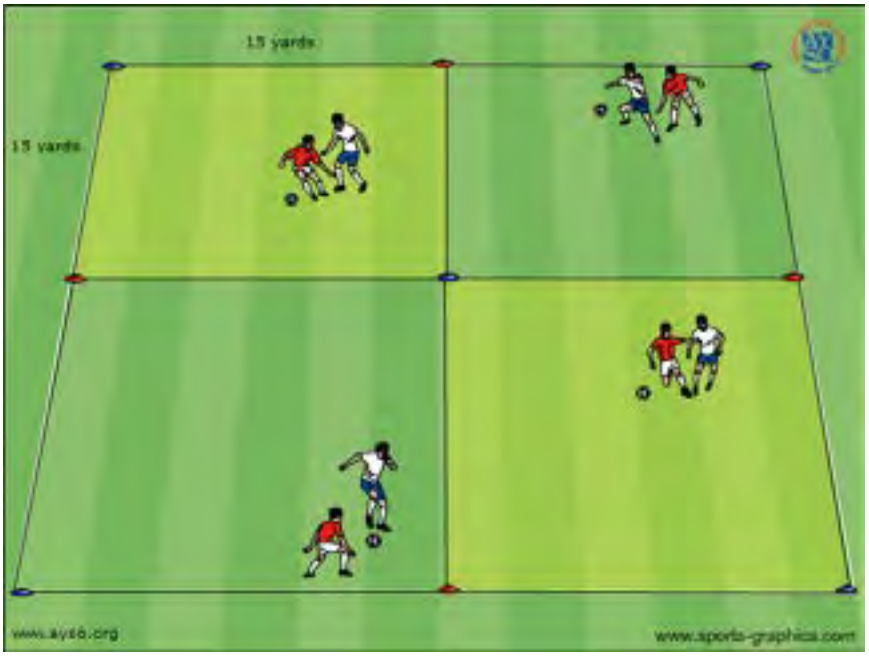
STAGE 1: TECHNICAL WARM UP

by: Roy Collins, AYSO Soccer Camps,
CT State Youth Soccer

ORGANIZATION:

- Create multiple 15 x 15 boxes.

To see this activity in action visit:
aysou.video/shielding



INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 v 1.
- Attacker must keep possession of ball and stay within the box.
- Defender must apply pressure while attacker moves around the box.
- Attacker must dribble into space and away from defender, shielding the ball as needed.

VARIATIONS/ PROGRESSIONS

- Players rotate every minute.
- Players can rotate squares.
- Add colored cones and award points for shielding and dribbling to specific cones.
- 2 attackers to provide outlet option.
- Add outlet players on outside square.

COACHING POINTS

- Correct body position:
- Side on between ball and opponent.
- Arms up for protection and to "feel" and keep opponent away from ball.
- Keep head up to identify outlet or look for support pass or create space to keep possession.
- Close control of the ball:
- All parts of foot to manipulate/ control ball.
- Always moving the ball.
- Soft but firm touch to maintain control.
- Body feints can create space to get away from opponent.

DRIBBLING TO CREATE SCORING OPPORTUNITIES

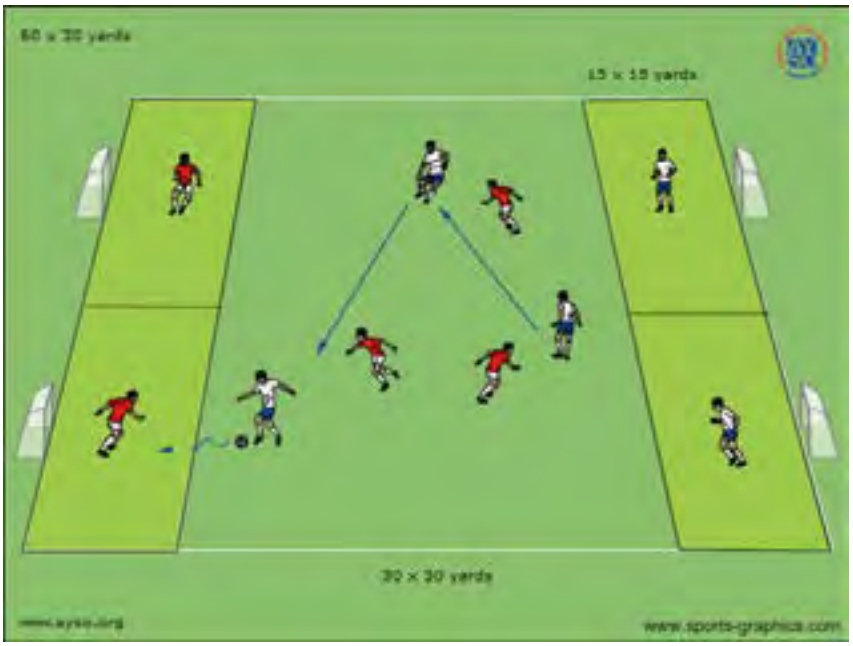
STAGE 2: SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

by: Marc Davis,
AYSO Soccer Camps,
Southeast SC, U13G

ORGANIZATION:

- Create a 60x30 field with 15x15 corner squares with small goals, leaving a middle section of 30x30.
- 2 teams of 5 place a defender in 2 squares at one end of field and leave 3 to play against opposition in middle section.

To see this activity in action visit:
aysou.video/creating



INSTRUCTIONS

- Play 3v3 in middle section.
- Players must attempt to work an opportunity to break into one of the two corner squares making a 1v1 to goal.
- Attacking players must attempt to dibble passed and beat the defender to score.
- The defender attempts to win the ball and play back to their team of 3 in the middle section.

VARIATIONS/ PROGRESSIONS

Dribble into and beat defenders in *opposite* corners.

Dribble into and beat defenders in *any* corners (easier).

COACHING POINTS

- Be positive! Look for opportunities to *penetrate* to corner squares.
- Head up to see where defenders are and close control in small spaces.
- Show a change of speed and direction to break into corners and in 1v1 situations.
- Be *creative* with fakes/feints. Express yourself!

TRANSITION TO ATTACK (ATTACK AND COUNTER ATTACK)

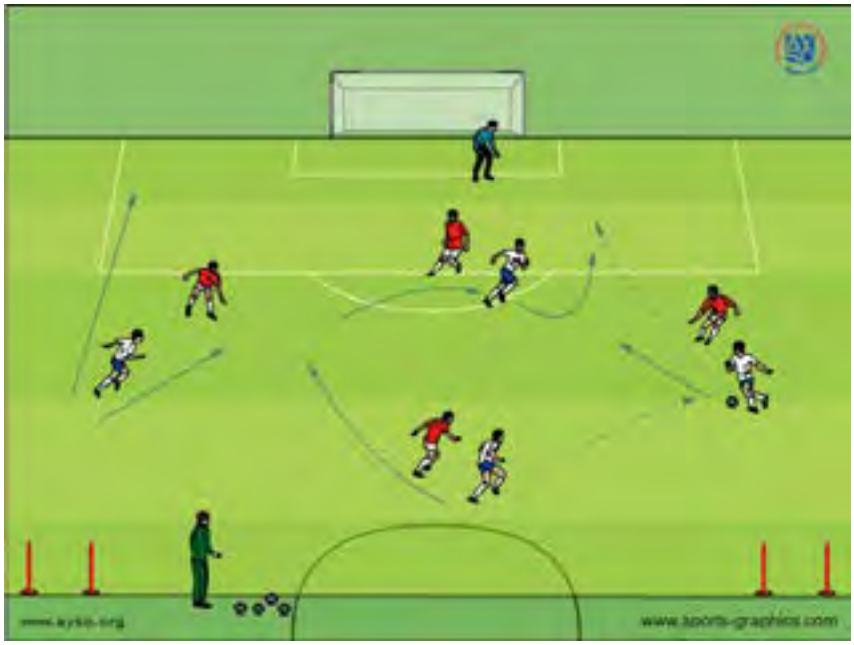
STAGE 3: EXPANDED ACTIVITY

by: George Kuntz, Head Coach,
Cal State Fullerton University
Men's Soccer

ORGANIZATION:

- Half field with one large goal.
- 2 counter goals (cones or poles) wide on either side of the center circle on the half way line.
- 3 sets multi-colored scrimmage vests.
- Spare balls.

To see this activity in action visit:
aysou.video/transition2



INSTRUCTIONS

- Create scoring and counter attacking opportunities for each team providing coachable moments.
- 4v4 to goal (10-15 minutes).
- Team A attacks the large goal, Team B attacks the counter goals (representing wide players or forwards in transition).
- Teams switch sides/roles.

VARIATIONS/ PROGRESSIONS

- Restrict touches.
- Add conditions, i.e., must be first touch finish.
- Use a neutral player (extra attacker) to increase success.
- Add time restriction to encourage quick transition.

COACHING POINTS

- Quality technique (passing, shooting, dribbling). Isolate foot positions for each technique to help influence outcome.
- Preparation Touch (1st touch). First touch is important in control and all areas of technique. Teaching the correct way to control or prepare the ball is vital at developmental ages.
- Vision. See and anticipate what might happen next. In transition, it's vital to get things started in at tack with the first steal as to expose the opponent while they are still in an attacking shape and not yet defensively organized.
- Encourage a quick transition at a fast but controlled tempo.
- Coach longer passes from defenders.

PENETRATION IN THE FINAL THIRD

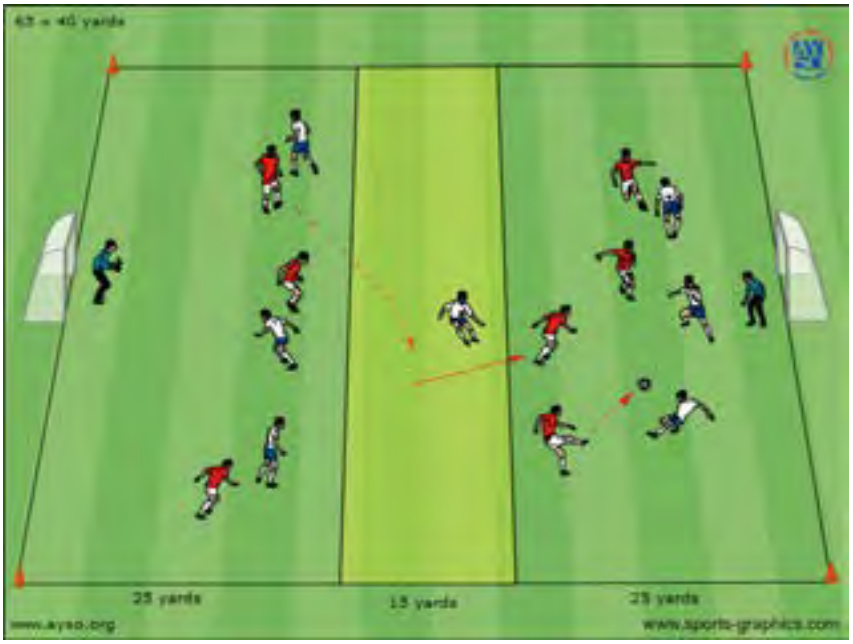
by: Robert Benavidez,
AYSO NCAC

STAGE 3: EXPANDED ACTIVTY

ORGANIZATION:

- Mark a 65 x 40 yard field with goals and goalkeepers.
- Mark a center third, 15 yards wide splitting the area into thirds.
- Play 3 v 3 (4 v 4) in the two end zones, with one (two) additional attackers from each team in the center third.

To see this activity in action visit:
aysou.video/penetration



INSTRUCTIONS

- Once the defensive team has won possession of the ball, and made a pass to a teammate in the center third, the attackers in the center third then work together with the 3 attackers in the final third to create an opportunity to penetrate into the attacking zone in order to create a scoring opportunity.
- Once the ball has penetrated into the attacking third, the attacker(s) from the center third join the attack thus creating a numbers up situation.

VARIATIONS/ PROGRESSIONS

- Change the amount of pressure applied in the middle third from the defensive players.
- Change the method of penetration (passing/dribbling).
- Allow one player from the defensive third to make an attacking run.

COACHING POINTS

- Passing fundamentals (accurate, correct pace, well timed, deceptive, and successful in advancing the ball or maintaining possession) - correct action.
- Dribbling fundamentals (vision, touch, the ability to turn, the ability to beat a defender or shield) correct action.
- Make the defender commit and then penetrate either with the pass or the dribble.
- Movement off the ball to create opportunities for teammates.
- Playing a ball to a target player versus playing a ball to space.
- Combination play (wall pass, overlapping runs, diagonal runs, take overs).
- Maximize the use of space and your teammates.
- Possession versus penetration.

PENALTY BOX FINISHING

by: Scott Snyder,
AYSO Player Development

STAGE 2: SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

ORGANIZATION:

- Extend penalty box by approximately 10 yards.
- Two midfield servers positioned at edge if box.
- Two defenders, two attackers and a GK in the box.

To see this activity in action visit:
aysou.video/penalty

INSTRUCTIONS

- Two midfield players pass ball back and forth waiting on a striker to become free to receive a pass.
- Once the ball is played in, the same midfield player enters the area to join the 2 strikers.
- The 3 attackers combine to score (3 v 2).
- Switch roles after 5 attempts on goal.
- Grouping that scores the most goals per 5 attempts win (keep it competitive).

VARIATIONS/ PROGRESSIONS

- Vary the start position of the midfielders.
- Add 2 more servers on the wings.
- Require certain combinations to score, i.e., wall pass, overlap, etc.
- Condition the strike at goal, i.e., low drive, placement, chip, volley, etc.
- Add a third defender and allow both servers to join the play (4 v 3).

COACHING POINTS

- Create realistic environment (tempo, intensity, quality).
- Players should look to strike quickly when good opportunities arise. Take the shot!
- Supporting players should follow up on any and all potential rebounds or deflections.
- Understanding between strikers, i.e., takeovers, overlaps, specific runs (long/short), decoys, etc.
- Verbal and non-verbal communications between strikers.
- Strikers should beware of offside runs and movement, i.e., curve their runs, be aware of the line.
- ***Mobility*** off the ball to create space, I.e., check away from where you want to run into.
- ***Creativity*** to ***penetrate*** and create space.
- Confidence to want the ball and take the chance.
- Combinations with the midfield players.
- Consider technical options at time of effort, i.e., range, power, placement, chip, volley, header, etc.
- Decision making to pass, shoot, dribble.

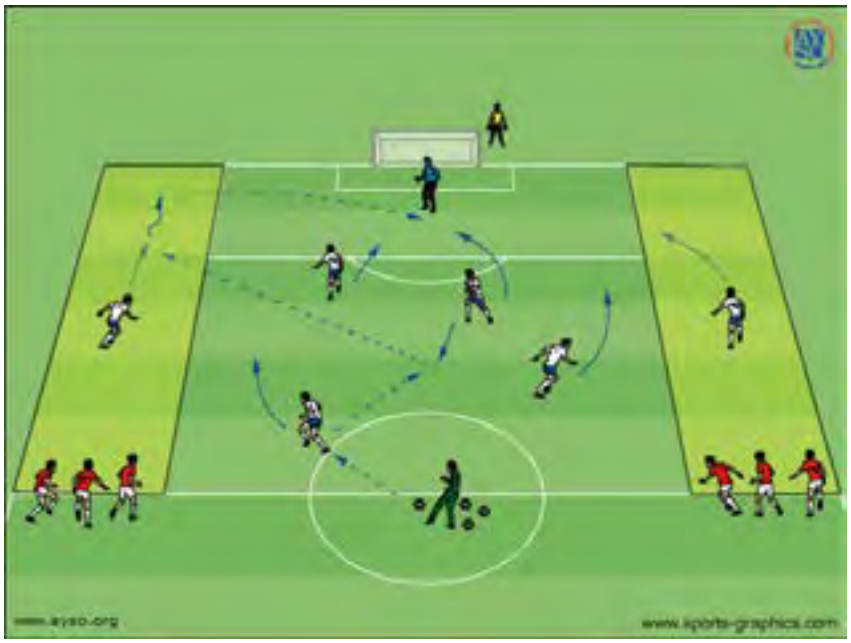
CROSSING AND FINISHING

by: Stewart Boniface, Asst. Coach,
Portland Timbers ODP, 1998 Boys

ORGANIZATION:

- Half pitch with cones extending from corner of penalty area to halfway line.
- 2 groups of 6 plus 2 GK's.
- Each group contains 2 attackers; 2 midfield & 2 wide players.
- Each group works separately, with 2nd. set of players ready to take-up position on half way line, beside coach.

To see this activity in action visit:
aysou.video/crossing



INSTRUCTIONS

- Coach passes into midfielders who combine before playing into attackers.
- Attacker plays ball out to wing for wide player to take forward & cross into penalty area for attackers to finish.
- Midfielder's push forward to edge of penalty area & opposite side wide player attacks far post from cross.
- Once attack is concluded: 2nd group establish position, GK's change places & activity reco-mences from coach.
- 1st group quickly return to half way to prepare for next attack.
- After predetermined number of attacks: players change roles within group.
- Delivery & type of cross from wide player may vary (near, far post, lofted, driven, pulled back to edge for midfielders).
- Encourage flowing combination play, to establish good tempo of forward passing moves.
- Attackers coordinate movement (stag-gering entry to prevent becoming flat) into penalty area to cover all areas.
- Good body shape & footwork to pre-pare for clean contact when striking on goal.

VARIATIONS/ PROGRESSIONS

- Introduce 2 defenders who (passively) mark attackers in build-up phase, but track & defend goal in penalty area, realistically.
- Introduce 3rd defender to track back on goal from midfield position, after challenging (1v2) initial midfield play into attackers.

COACHING POINTS

- Accuracy & weight of initial pass into attacker.
- Receiving, communication & combin-ing skills of 2 attackers.
- Precision & speed of pass to wide player (when played in front & when played into feet).
- Timing, velocity & trajectory of cross delivered from wide player.
- Assessing build-up play whilst making runs.
- Timing & coordination of run from opposite flank player with attackers.
- Timing & coordination of runs from midfield to edge of penalty area.
- Attackers and/or midfielders be ready when the ball arrives. Don't be sur-prised, expect it to come to you!

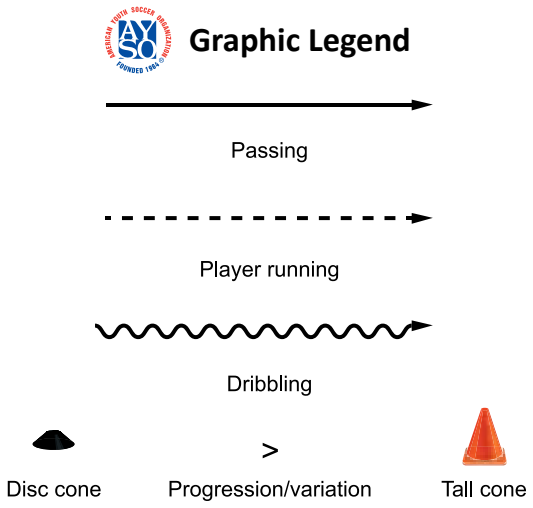
INTERMEDIATE TRAINING PLANS

It is a great pleasure to present a collection of 14U Training Plans from all across the soccer globe, including AYSO, Division I Universities, US 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.

The Training Plans focus more on functional training for specific demands of a position or role, either for an individual player or unit, i.e., midfield players. The Plans are grouped by topic and generally progress from simpler to more challenging. Functional training should ideally take place in the area of the field where that scenario would occur in a real game.

Please note, 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.

INTERMEDIATE GOALKEEPING TRAINING PLANS



TRAINING PLAN DIVING TECHNIQUES

CREATED BY
Leon Othen, GK Director,
Everton America

STAGE 1

(Technical Warm-up)

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

To see this activity, visit:
aysou.video/int1

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- Diving preparation.
- GK's in pairs (or with a coach).
- One GK working:
  1. GK sittiing down. Server throws ball to either side.
  2. GK on knees. Server rolls ball to either side.
  3. GK on one knee. Server throws head height ball to side that foot is on floor.
- Alternate GK's after each exercise.
- GK specific dynamic movement, stretching and activation.

COACHING POINTS

1. Two hands to catch, roll on soft parts of body.
2. Try to save the ball in front of knees. Go with two hands. Bottom hand is aimed to stop the ball,top hand on top to stop ball coming loose.
3. Push off on standing leg, ensuring foot is facing forward.

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☑
PHYSICAL ☑
TECHNICAL ☑
TACTICAL ☐

STAGE 2

(Small-Sided Activity)

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

To see this activity, visit:
aysou.video/int2

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- GK shuffles from post around a cone placed in the middle of the goal and dives to save thrown serve at post.
- Ensure both sides are worked.
  - Low service.
  - High service.
  - Various service from kicked ball.

COACHING POINTS

- Ensure leading foot comes forward and faces server.
- Bend inside leg knee to get low and push off that leg.
- Elbows out from under your body.

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☑
PHYSICAL ☑
TECHNICAL ☑
TACTICAL ☐

STAGE 3

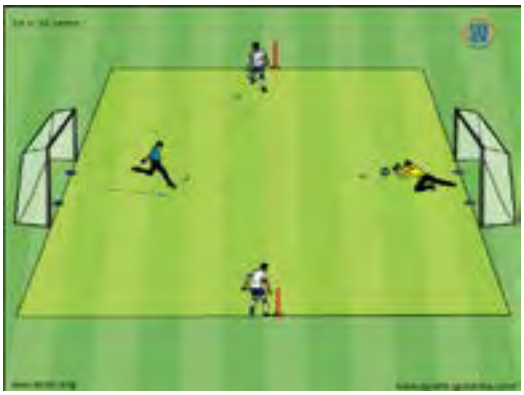
(Expanded Activity)

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

To see this activity, visit:
aysou.video/int3

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- GK rolls to wide server, server sets to GK who shoots at other GK.
- Coach dictates if this is done first time or with two touches (wide server must set ball in same half that it came from).
- Points awarded for hitting corners of goal to encourage dive.



COACHING POINTS

- Be "set" as the ball is struck
- Bodyweight forward.
- Good decisions in handling: catch, tip or parry the ball.

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, visit:
aysou.video/int4

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 2 v 2 plus Goalkeepers.
- Players cant cross half way line.
- One player may cross halfway line
- 2 v 2 free play.
- Static stretching with additional focus on upper body and back, brief review on session and any announcements.

Player leads static stretching, *brief* review on lesson and any announcements.

COACHING POINTS

- Constantly moving into position based on position of ball.
- Ensure any parry's are away from danger.
- Second save if necessary.

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☑
PHYSICAL ☑
TECHNICAL ☑
TACTICAL ☑

TRAINING PLAN DEALING WITH CROSSES

CREATED BY
John Pascarella, Asst. Coach,
Sporting KC, MLS

STAGE 1

(Technical Warm-up)

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

To see this activity, visit:
aysou.video/int5

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- Basic catching and activation for crossing.
- GK stands across from a partner or coach roughly 10 yards apart.
- Coach bounces the ball hard off the ground between them.
- GK must time his steps and jump toward the ball so as to take it high and with his weight/momentum moving him forward as well as upward to catch.
- > Moving backward.
- > Punching & catching in groups of 3 (shown).

COACHING POINTS

- Rhythm and timing of attacking the ball high in the air.
- Momentum of the jump should take you upward AND forward

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☑
PHYSICAL ☑
TECHNICAL ☑
TACTICAL ☐

STAGE 2

(Small-Sided Activity)

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

To see this activity, visit:
aysou.video/int6

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- Crossing with pressure.
- Service (from hands initially) from wide areas into the near post, mid-goal area and back post area:
  - -No pressure
  - -Passive pressure
  - -Full pressure from attackers
- > Serves now come from 2 touch crosses from foot service.
- > GK must successfully distribute ball to either of the 2 target players.
- > Change sides.

COACHING POINTS

- Taking up the correct starting position.
- Rhythm and timing of attacking the ball high in the air.
- Momentum of the jump should take you upward and forward to catch; and upward and backward when moving backward (toward the back post). This momentum is important to fight off challenges from the opposition and is less forceful when jumping straight upward to catch.

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, visit:
aysou.video/int7

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- Crossing activity with distribution, backpass and switching play.
- Server A crosses the ball to the GK.
- After he collects the cross he throws wide (and supports his pass) to Server B on the opposite side.
- Server B takes the ball forward a few steps and then turns and plays ball back to the GK.
- GK collects the back pass in 1 touch and plays a diagonal pass to the original server with the 2nd touch.
- Following this action, reverse sides.

COACHING POINTS

- Taking up correct starting position.
- Rhythm & timing of attacking ball high in air.
- Momentum of jump should take you upward and forward to catch; and upward & backward when moving backward (toward back post). This momentum is important to fight off challenges from the opposition & is less forceful when jumping straight upward to catch.
- Realistic throwing into path of teammate and support position for the back-pass.
- Good kicking technique when switching play.

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, visit:
aysou.video/int8

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- Channel Game with GKs.
- General rules apply.
- Regular small-sided game with incentive of having wide players who can cross, unopposed, into the penalty area.
- Static stretching, brief review on session and any announcements.

COACHING POINTS

- Constantly moving into position based on position of ball.
- Ensure any parry's are away from danger.
- Second save if necessary.

PSYCHOSOCIAL ☑
PHYSICAL ☑
TECHNICAL ☑
TACTICAL ☑

TRAINING PLAN GK 1 ON 1

CREATED BY
Marty Walker, Asst. Coach,
Yale University, CT

STAGE 1

(Technical Warm-up)

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

To see this activity, visit:
aysou.video/int9

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- Use penalty box.
- 10 balls, 2 GK's working.
- GK's move around the box in GK motion.
- On coaches command, GK's either "close" a ball down or "claim" a low ball.
- > Add double saves to coach command.
- GK specific dynamic movement, stretching and activation.

COACHING POINTS

- On the "close" command, GK should approach the ball lowering GK position with hands lowered by side.
- On the "claim" command, GK leads with forward foot towards a ball to "claim" at the feet of an attacker.

PSYCHOSOCIAL	☑
PHYSICAL	☑
TECHNICAL	☑
TACTICAL	☐

STAGE 2

(Small-Sided Activity)

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

To see this activity, visit:
aysou.video/int10

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- Field players (attackers) positioned from various starting points drive to goal to take on the GK 1 on 1.
- Rotate GK's.
- Upon save, GK distributes ball back to starting cone.
- > Alter the attackers' starting points.
- > Alter the distance of the attackers' starting point.

COACHING POINTS

- Defend goal & defend space behind defenders.
- Anticipate & assess through ball.
- Starting position related to ball.
- Advance when ball is out of attackers feet. Be confident.
- Delay, stay big, put onus on attacker.
- Force attacker wide or back.
- Body position: front foot. Lead with hands 'looking through the window.' Head should be tucked in behind hands.

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, visit:
aysou.video/int11

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- Approximate half field with a marked 20 yard zone.
- Possession game. GK's protect 1 goal, 10 field players. Rotate GKs.
- When either team combines for 3 passes, on the third pass, they can release a player into 1 on 1 with GK.
- On save, GK distributes ball back to the attacker's opponents.
- > Vary the number of passes required to release the striker.
- > Allow a defender to track attacker.
- > Add second goal at opposite end.

COACHING POINTS

- GK focuses as play develops and anticipates a through ball.
- Focuses on decision-making based on starting position related to ball.
- Advance when ball is out of attackers feet. Be confident. Delay, stay big, put onus on attacker.
- Force attacker wide or back.
- Body position: front foot. Lead with hands 'looking through the window.' Head should be tucked in behind hands.

PSYCHOSOCIAL	☑
PHYSICAL	☑
TECHNICAL	☑
TACTICAL	☐

STAGE 4

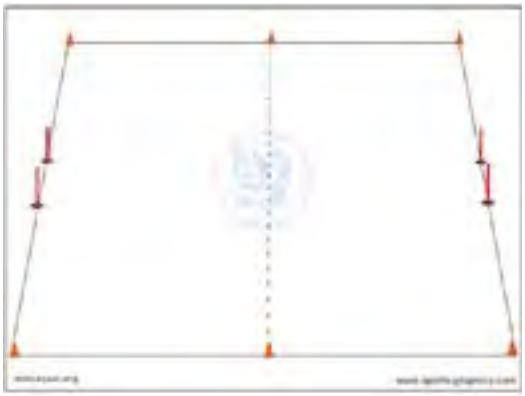
(Small-Sided Match)

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

Cool Down/Debrief

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 60 x 40.
- 2 goals with GK's.
- 6 v 6.
- Open play match with rules and general formations.
- Static stretching with additional focus on upper body and back, ***brief*** review on session and any announcements.

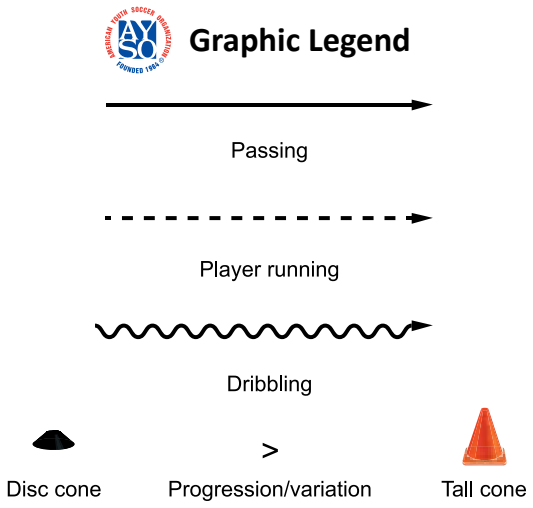


COACHING POINTS

- Play!
- Encourage quality starting position, anticipation of shots or through balls.
- Concentration.
- Quality approach and execution of save.

PSYCHOSOCIAL	☑
PHYSICAL	☑
TECHNICAL	☑
TACTICAL	☑

INTERMEDIATE DEFENDING TRAINING PLANS



DEFENDING PRINCIPLES OF PLAY

CREATED BY
Adrian Parrish, D.O.C.,
KY Youth Soccer Assn.

STAGE 1

(Technical Warm-up)

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

To see this activity, visit:
aysou.video/int12

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 4 attackers vs. 2 defenders.
- Place a 5 x 5 grid inside a 20 x 15 inner grid.
- 4 attackers pass the ball around outside of inner grid.
- 1 defender steps out of the inner grid to apply pressure.
- At all times there must be 1 defender in the inner grid.
- If the defenders win the ball they keep possession.
- Switch roles after 2 minutes.

COACHING POINTS

- 1st defender applies immediate ***pressure***.
- Shape the body to force the attacker to play the ball into the 2nd defender.
- Defensive ***cover*** needs to limit the options of the attacking players.
- Anticipate pass, play on front foot.
- Apply heavy ***pressure*** on slow pass, weak first touch and when space is limited.

PSYCHOSOCIAL	☑
PHYSICAL	☑
TECHNICAL	☑
TACTICAL	☐

STAGE 2

(Small-Sided Activity)

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

To see this activity, visit:
aysou.video/int13

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 40 x 25 yard grid with two small goals on either end.Identify the 4 defenders as the team's midfielders.
- 6 attackers vs. 4 defenders.
- 6 attackers keep the ball and score a point for every 8 consecutive passes.
- The 4 defenders attempt to win the ball and score in either of the two small goals.

COACHING POINTS

- Defenders pick and choose when to apply ***pressure***:
  -Poor first touch.
  -Slow or flighted pass.
  -Attacking player's head is down.
- Defensively, the team shifts and remains ***balanced*** to deny the attackers the opportunity to ***penetrate***.
- Remain ***compact*** and patient.
- Tackling technique, step into the challenge, get ball in between the player and the 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, visit:
aysou.video/int14

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 60 x 50 yard field.
- 7 defenders (1 GK, a back 4 and midfielders) vs. 4 midfielders and 3 strikers.
- Attacking team score in the bigger goal. 2 target players stand in between 2 counter goals.
- Defensive team score by passing the ball to a target player in a target goal.
- Upon receiving the ball, the counter player switches the ball out to the other side and passes it back to the attacking team.

COACHING POINTS

- Players to stay connected and ***compact***.
- Midfielders to defend the passing lane and deny ***penetration***.
- When the balls does ***penetrate***, players transition back goal-side.
- Concentration/organization.
- Counter attack.

PSYCHOSOCIAL	☑
PHYSICAL	☑
TECHNICAL	☑
TACTICAL	☐

STAGE 4

(Small-Sided Match)

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

Cool Down/Debrief

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 9 v 9 with GKs.
- General rules apply.
- 1 team plays in a 4-2-2 formations. (Coach this team if you are working with the Back 4 and the GK on defensive shape.)
- The other team plays in a 2-4-2. (Coach this team if you are working on defensive shape in the midfield.)
- Static stretching, brief review on session and any announcements.

COACHING POINTS

- Play!

PSYCHOSOCIAL	☑
PHYSICAL	☑
TECHNICAL	☑
TACTICAL	☑

GROUP DEFENDING

CREATED BY
Ian Barker, Director of Coaching Education, NSCAA

STAGE 1

(Technical Warm-up)

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

To see this activity, visit:
aysou.video/int15

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 18x20 grid, 2 teams (5 vs 3+2).
- The team of 5 seeks to keep possession.
- The team of 3 seeks to dispossess and transition the ball to their 2 teammates outside the space.
- Every time the 3 force the 5 to lose control out of the space or find their teammates they gain a point.
- Play 2-3 minutes and switch teams.

COACHING POINTS

- Individual defending technique.
- Angle of approach, body shape, closing speed and distance.
- Communication, both verbal and non verbal.
- Keep play in front and avoid split pass.
- Do not chase the ball, rather organize as a group.
- Upon winning the ball look for the quick outlet pass.

PSYCHOSOCIAL	☑
PHYSICAL	☑
TECHNICAL	☑
TACTICAL	☐

STAGE 2

(Small-Sided Activity)

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

To see this activity, visit:
aysou.video/int16

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 18x44 yards, 2 teams.
- 4 vs. 3 with 4 goals.
- Team of 4 begins with the ball.
- Team of 3 organizes to win the ball back and counter.
- Next possession the teams switch roles.

COACHING POINTS

- Get immediate ***pressure*** to the ball.
- Force the play in one direction.
- Communicate from behind to 1st def.
- Move as the ball is moving.
- One defender must get to the ball.
- One defender must ***cover***.
- One defender must be dropped to defend both a man and space.
- Success is turning a 4 vs. 3 into a 2 vs. 3 with effective group defending.

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, visit:
aysou.video/int17

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 50x60 yards, 2 teams.
- 4 vs. 2 in each half with 6 goals
- Ball starts with a team or 4 seeking to play the ball forward under pressure from two opponents.
- Options:
- Players must stay in their half
- Once a ball is played forward one player may support.
- A third player may step up to press.
- Unconditioned play.

COACHING POINTS

- If ball can't be ***pressured*** (2 forwards vs. 4 backs with the ball) position to channel the ball and make play predictable.
- Move as ball is moving to get effective ***pressure*** to the ball
- Be aware of threat away from the ball while defending the immediate threat.
- Move as a group sideways and long ways to be ***compact*** at the ball.
- Communicate from behind to be effective as a group.

PSYCHOSOCIAL	☑
PHYSICAL	☑
TECHNICAL	☑
TACTICAL	☐

STAGE 4

(Small-Sided Match)

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

Cool Down/Debrief

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 7 vs. 7.
- Have the GK's begin with the ball each time and ask them to distribute by hand or from the ground into their half.
- Initially have defending team drop to half way line when opposing GK has it.
- End with unconditioned play.
- Static stretching, brief review on session and any announcements.

COACHING POINTS

- Defending from the front may not mean winning the ball, but directing play.
- Respond to direct ***penetration*** by shot, pass or dribble with immediate ***pressure*** and team shift.
- Drop back on an angle to stay compact & to not concede too much space to attack into.
- Avoid crossing over a teammate defensively to be in good shape to counter attack.
- As a team of 7 (including GK determine where you set up to confront opponent.

PSYCHOSOCIAL	☑
PHYSICAL	☑
TECHNICAL	☑
TACTICAL	☑

DEFENDING THE COUNTER ATTACK

CREATED BY
George Kuntz, Head Coach, Cal State Fullerton, Men's Soccer

STAGE 1

(Technical Warm-up)

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

To see this activity, visit:
aysou.video/int18

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 10 x 15 grid.
- Players in groups of four (2 attackers and 2 defenders).
- Attacking players keep possession with shadow defending from the opponent for 1 minute each.
- Switch roles.

COACHING POINTS

- Shadow defenders Immediate *pressure* on the ball (without taking the ball) take away time and space.
- Select proper angle of challenge an angle to limit options.
- Select proper speed of challenge – quickly, but not too fast, so cannot be easily beaten.

PSYCHOSOCIAL	☑
PHYSICAL	☑
TECHNICAL	☑
TACTICAL	☐

STAGE 2

(Small-Sided Activity)

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

To see this activity, visit:
aysou.video/int19

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 2v2+1 in 15 x 20 yard area.
- 4 balls, 8 cones, 10 bibs (4 of each color and 2 neutral).
- Teams try to complete 5 consecutive passes to score a point.
- Defenders try to limit possession.
- > No neutral player.
- > Play directionally to goal lines.
- > Play to small goals (preferred). This will depend on what the coach wants out of the defending...space or goal.

COACHING POINTS

- Immediate *pressure* on the ball – take away time and space.
- Read the play / win the ball.
- Select proper angle of challenge – defend attacker at an angle to limit options.
- Select proper speed of challenge – quickly, but not too fast, as to be easily beaten.
- 2nd defender distance, body angle.

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, visit:
aysou.video/int20

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 36 x 20 yards, large goal, 4 balls, 8 cones, 10 scrimmage vests (4 of each color and 2 neutral).
- Play 4v3 to goal.
- Team of four attacks goal.
- After defending team wins ball, they can score by passing into the target player on opposite end line.
- > Add neutral attacker.

COACHING POINTS

- Read the play.
- 1st defender apply immediate *pressure* on the ball-limit options.
- 2nd defender – *cover*, read the play then win the ball through an interception.
- Body position – cut then close.
- Proper foot position.

PSYCHOSOCIAL	☑
PHYSICAL	☑
TECHNICAL	☑
TACTICAL	☑

STAGE 4

(Small-Sided Match)

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

Cool Down/Debrief

ORGANIZATION/RULES

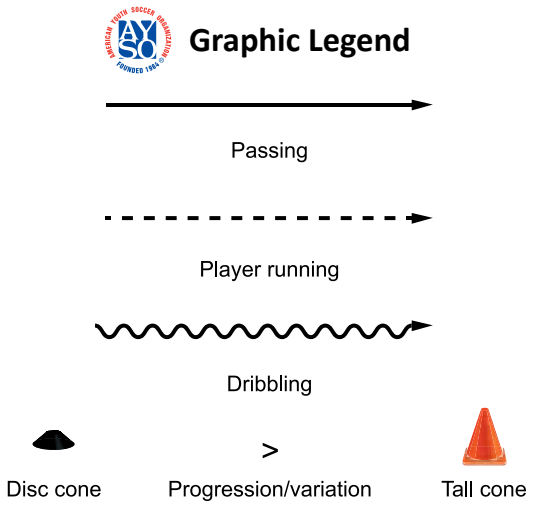
- 5 vs. 5 plus GK's.
- Unconditioned match.
- Static stretching, brief review on session and any announcements.

COACHING POINTS

- Read the play.
- Immediate *pressure* on the ball – limit options.
- Win the ball through an interception or tackle.
- Body position – cut then close.
- Good *pressure* and *cover*.

PSYCHOSOCIAL	☑
PHYSICAL	☑
TECHNICAL	☑
TACTICAL	☑

INTERMEDIATE MIDFIELD TRAINING PLANS



RECEIVING

CREATED BY
Neil Graham, Youth Director,
Scottsdale Soccer, AZ

STAGE 1

(Technical Warm-up)

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

To see this activity, visit:
aysou.video/int21

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 30x30 grid. Half of the players around outside of grid w/ ball and other half inside area without ball.
- On coaches command, inside players check towards a player on outside and demand ball.
- They should receive & control the ball and then pass back to the same player.
- After a set amount of time, players on inside switch with players on the outside.
- Encourage different surfaces of the foot for balls received on the ground, as well as use of thigh, chest & foot for receiving balls in air.
- > Players should receive & control ball then look to pass to a different player on the outside.

COACHING POINTS

- Body mechanics, body position, balance, get in line with flight of ball.
- Look to 'cushion' the ball with whatever surface selected to control ball.
- Good control of ball should instantly have you set up and facing wherever you want to pass the ball next.

PSYCHOSOCIAL	☑
PHYSICAL	☑
TECHNICAL	☑
TACTICAL	☐

STAGE 2

(Small-Sided Activity)

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

To see this activity, visit:
aysou.video/int22

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- Set up 40x40 grid with a 30x30 inner grid. On the inner grid, center a gate on each side.
- Split players into two teams to play possession.
- Players earn points by passing the ball through the gates to be successfully received and controlled by a teammate to maintain possession.
- >2 balls.

COACHING POINTS

- Body mechanics, body position, balance, get in line with flight of ball.
- Look to 'cushion' the ball with whatever surface selected to control ball.
- Good control of ball should instantly have you set up and facing wherever you want to pass the ball next.
- Vision and understanding to take first touch away from pressure.

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, visit:
aysou.video/int23

ORGANIZATION/RULE

- 40x40 grid with four gates just inside each corner.
- Two teams play possession.
- Each team places 2 players in 2 diagonally opposite corners behind gates.
- Players in the middle play possession and try to find either gate player with a pass on the ground or in the air.
- If a gate player successfully receives and controls the ball, the player who passed switches places with the gate player.
- A goal/point is then awarded to that team.
- >Multiple balls.

COACHING POINTS

- Body mechanics, body position, balance, get in line with flight of ball.
- Look to 'cushion' the ball with whatever surface selected to control ball.
- Good control of ball should instantly have you set up and facing wherever you want to pass the ball next.
- Vision and understanding to take first touch away from pressure.

PSYCHOSOCIAL	☑
PHYSICAL	☑
TECHNICAL	☑
TACTICAL	☑

STAGE 4

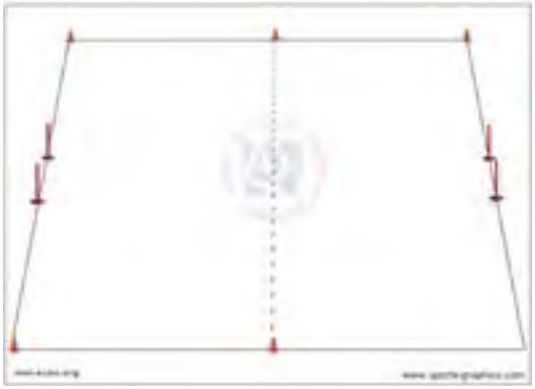
(Small-Sided Match)

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

Cool Down/Debrief

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 60x40 field with 2 goals and GK's.
- 2 teams.
- Formations.
- No restrictions.
- Regular division rules.
- Static stretching, brief review on session and any announcements.



COACHING POINTS

- Reiterate first touch efficiency and receiving techniques.
- Play!

PSYCHOSOCIAL	☑
PHYSICAL	☑
TECHNICAL	☑
TACTICAL	☑

POSSESSION PLAY

CREATED BY
Austin Daniels, Technical Director,
AZ Youth Soccer Assn.

STAGE 1

(Technical Warm-up)

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

To see this activity, visit:
aysou.video/int24

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 30 x 30 grid.
- 3 groups: red, white, grey.
- 1 & 2 balls per group.
- Short combinations. Players pass in colored sequence (red to white to grey...)
- >Change sequence.
- >Control number of touches.

COACHING POINTS

- First touch efficiency to control ball "into" purposeful direction.
- Body position to receive pass.
- Vision to gauge space, teammates and opponents.
- Speed and accuracy of the pass.

PSYCHOSOCIAL	☑
PHYSICAL	☑
TECHNICAL	☑
TACTICAL	☐

STAGE 2

(Small-Sided Activity)

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

To see this activity, visit:
aysou.video/int25

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- Half field set up.
- 6 v 6 possession keep away to gates.
- 7 gates (3 each end and 1 central).
- 3 touch.
- Points are scored each time a team successfully passes through a gate for a teammate to control and maintain possession.
- >2 touch.
- >Vary points per goal (outer, inner, central).

COACHING POINTS

- First touch efficiency to control ball "into" purposeful direction.
- Body position to receive pass.
- Vision to gauge space, teammates and opponents.
- Speed and accuracy of the pass.
- Decision making on when to play short or long balls, or when to dribble.
- When to change the point of attack.
- Communication (verbal and nonverbal).

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, visit:
aysou.video/int26

ORGANIZATION/RULE

- 6 goal game. Unlimited touch.
- 3 goals to defend and 3 goals to attack.
- 2 teams.
- >Dribble through the goals instead of passing.
- >Can only score off a "one touch" pass.
- >2 touch.
- >Vary points per goal (outer, inner, center).

COACHING POINTS

- First touch efficiency to control ball "into" purposeful direction.
- Body position to receive pass.
- Vision to gauge space, teammates and opponents.
- Speed and accuracy of the pass.
- Decision making when to play short or long balls, or when to dribble.
- When to change the point of attack.
- Stretching field from side to side and end to end.
- Transition.
- Counter attack.
- Communication (verbal and non-verbal).

PSYCHOSOCIAL	☑
PHYSICAL	☑
TECHNICAL	☑
TACTICAL	☑

STAGE 4

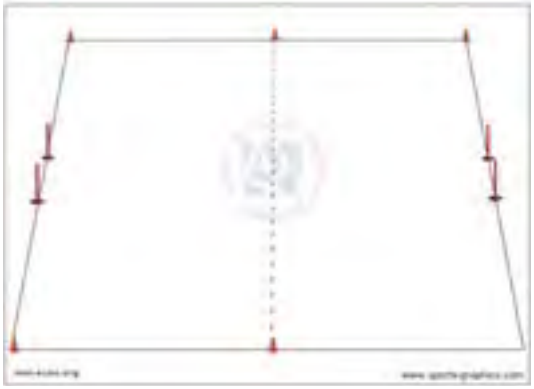
(Small-Sided Match)

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

Cool Down/Debrief

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 6v6 or 7v7 small-sided match with GKs.
- Unlimited touch.
- General rules apply.
- Use formations.
- Static stretching, brief review on session and any announcements.



COACHING POINTS

- Emphasize quality techniques but let them play.
- Game conditions should validate what was covered in training (purposeful possession, quality passing/receiving, movement/vision).

PSYCHOSOCIAL	☑
PHYSICAL	☑
TECHNICAL	☑
TACTICAL	☑

POSSESSION PLAY

CREATED BY
Richie Williams/Anthony Latronica,
Former US 17U Men's National Team

STAGE 1

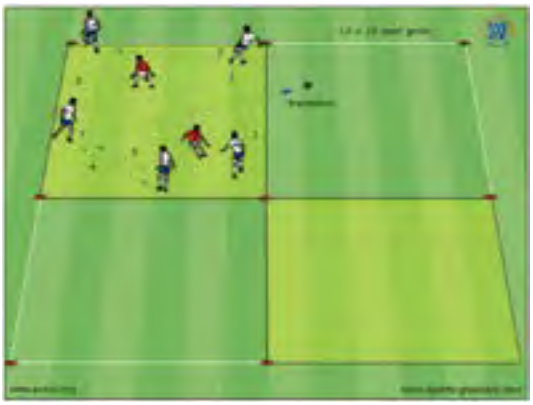
(Technical Warm-up)

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

To see this activity, visit:
aysou.video/int27

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 5v2 transition game.
- Four 10x10 yard grids.
- Possession game: 5 attackers keep ball from 2 defenders.
- Player that loses possession switches with one of the defenders in the middle.
- Once ball goes out of bounds, coach serves a new ball.
- Once attackers complete 5 passes, at any point in time, they can play ball to a showing teammate in the adjacent grid.
- All players transition to that grid and possession resumes.
- Dynamic movement, stretching and activation.



COACHING POINTS

- Speed of play.
- Technical passing and receiving.
- Support angles.
- Movement off the ball.
- Game awareness.
- Communication.
- Spatial awareness (progression).
- Set the tone for training and the topic.

PSYCHOSOCIAL	☑
PHYSICAL	☑
TECHNICAL	☑
TACTICAL	☐

STAGE 2

(Small-Sided Activity)

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

To see this activity, visit:
aysou.video/int28

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 45x30 grid(s). 10-11 players per grid.
- Passing sequences w/ flags (defenders).
- 2 groups working w/ staggered start (to allow 1st player to reach 2nd cone to receive 1st pass from other side.
- Red A passes to B, who turns and passes to C who pulls away from the flag and passes to D. D turns either way and passes to E. E finishes sequence by dribbling at pace to end of the line.
- Players always rotate by advancing 1 cone in the sequence.
- Players alternate sides.
- > E dribbles halfway and passes to end.
- > E drives ball with laces to end of line.
- > Vary the sequence.

COACHING POINTS

- Timing of runs.
- Turning with the ball.
- Pulling away from the defender (flags) in order to create space to receive the ball.
- Quality of the pass, touch and movements.

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, visit:
aysou.video/int29

ORGANIZATION/RULE

- 44 x 45 yards (top of penalty box to half field, width of penalty area).
- Possession: 8 v 8 + 2 neutral.
- Functional position-specific.
- Teams line up in a 4-1-3.
- > Add gates as goals at each end (score by passing or dribbling through).
- > Add points for 5 successful passes.
- > Restrict touches.

COACHING POINTS

- Transition.
- Team shape.
- Small group tactics building up to a 4-1-3.
- Compactness, possession.
- All defending and attacking principles.

PSYCHOSOCIAL	☑
PHYSICAL	☑
TECHNICAL	☑
TACTICAL	☑

STAGE 4

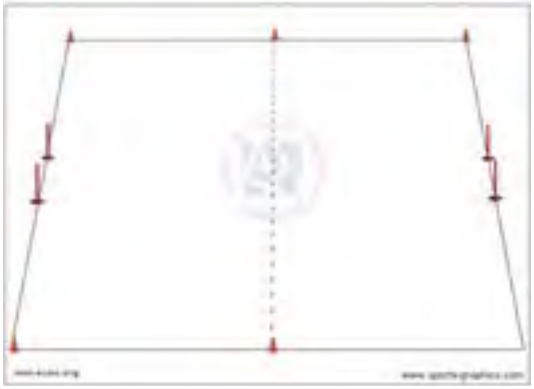
(Small-Sided Match)

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

Cool Down/Debrief

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 60x40 field with 2 goals and GK's.
- 2 teams.
- Formations.
- No restrictions.
- Regular division rules.
- Static stretching, brief review on session and any announcements.



COACHING POINTS

- Place each team in a formation (to create an environment where the principles of play can be reinforced and applied to positional-specific roles for each player).
- Prioritize topic but allow players to play, to create, and to explore new ideas through minimal interruption.

PSYCHOSOCIAL	☑
PHYSICAL	☑
TECHNICAL	☑
TACTICAL	☑

PASSING, RECEIVING AND TURNING

CREATED BY
Michael Brady, Assoc. Head Coach, Duke University Men's Soccer

STAGE 1

(Technical Warm-up)

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

To see this activity, visit:
aysou.video/int30

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- One ball between 2 players.
- No space restriction.
- Stationary passing over 10 yards 1 touch, 2 touch., etc to get a little warmed up and lots of touches on the ball.
- > Pair start moving with unlimited touches and execute a turn every 2nd or 3rd time they receive the ball.
- Dynamic movements, stretching and activation.

COACHING POINTS

- Do not stop the ball.
- Close control.
- Experiment and use imagination to try different turns.
- Encourage expression and creativity.
- Address quality passing and receiving to set the expectations for the session.

PSYCHOSOCIAL	☑
PHYSICAL	☑
TECHNICAL	☑
TACTICAL	☐

STAGE 2

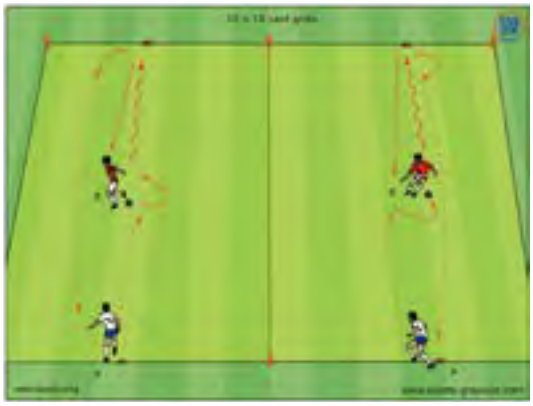
(Small-Sided Activity)

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

To see this activity, visit:
aysou.video/int31

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 2 players 1 ball. 10x15 grids. 1 min segments.
- Player A serves, Player B works. B checks fromtop of box to A who passes on ground to reach B at center of box. B executes a turn, dribbles back to far end of box, executes another turn and passes ball back across grid to A.
- Sequence of turns:
  1. Receive w/ inside of 1 foot, turn in direction of that foot & other foot makes next touch to destn.
  2. Receive w/ inside of foot and turn in direction of other foot so second touch is also w/ initial foot.
  3. Receive w/ outside of foot turning quickly in same direction to destn. (repeat w/ other foot).
  4. Fake as if to stop ball, quickly open legs and let ball run through, turn quickly & head for destn.
  5. Touch ball w/ outside of 1 foot, quickly spin in other direction, get to ball quick & head for destn.



COACHING POINTS

- Turns at far end of the grid should be varied and done with both feet.
- Turn #1, the server instructs, "turn" early and clearly. Challenge for this turn is to keep the ball moving and in close contact.
- Turns #2-5, server instructs, "man on" early and clearly. Challenge for these turns is executing at speed, keeping the ball relatively close and adding in body fakes and change of pace to separate from opponent.

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, visit:
aysou.video/int32

ORGANIZATION/RULE

- 4v4, 5v5, 6v6 depending on numbers.
- Field 40x40, 45x45, 50x50.
- 4 small goals in the middle of each sideline.
- Only stipulation to score is that the player who scores must receive a pass and execute a turn before they shoot.
- Once they have executed a turn they can dribble to goal and score or shoot immediately after the turn.

COACHING POINTS

- Communication from passer to receiver: early, clear w right tone, calm/urgent pending situation.
- Player receiving pass & executing turn needs to be aware of where they are & where they want to go. Also, what turn will best serve situation. If simplest one is an option-choose it as it will be efficient and less physically demanding.
- Be aware of the next phase after the turn (shot or dribble) but be prepared to adapt. Players don't have to score on 1st turn but can be patient and wait for the right turn to score from (don't force it).

PSYCHOSOCIAL	☑
PHYSICAL	☑
TECHNICAL	☑
TACTICAL	☑

STAGE 4

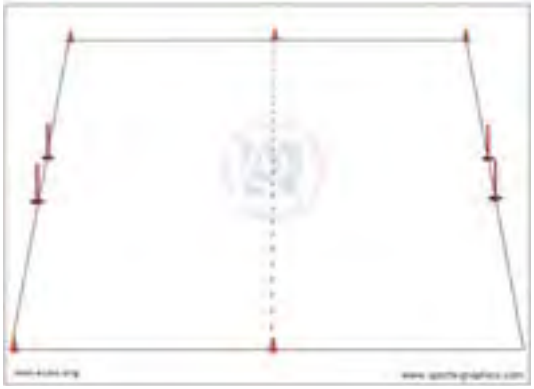
(Small-Sided Match)

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

Cool Down/Debrief

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- Normal match conditions to goal with an emphasis on making the correct choice when presented with an opportunity (or need) to turn.
- If a team executes a received pass and turn in the sequence leading to a goal that goal counts double.
- Reinforce to play the game normally and only turn when the game demands it not because the coach has been focusing on it.
- Static stretching, brief review on session and any announcements.



COACHING POINTS

- Place each team in a formation (to create an environment where the principles of play can be reinforced and applied to positional-specific roles for each player).
- Prioritize topic but allow players to play, to create, and to explore new ideas through minimal interruption.

PSYCHOSOCIAL	☑
PHYSICAL	☑
TECHNICAL	☑
TACTICAL	☑

PASSING, RECEIVING
(COMNINATION PLAYS)

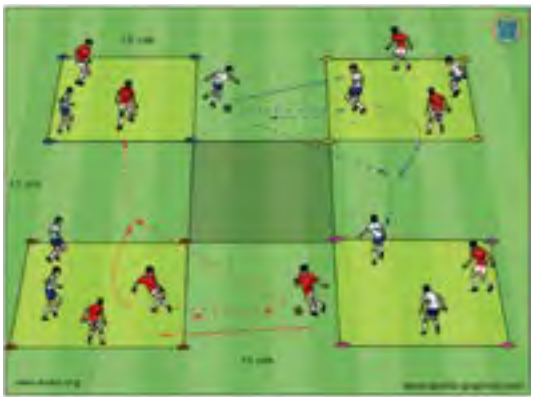
CREATED BY
Scott Snyder,
AYSO Player Development

STAGE 1
(Technical Warm-up)

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

To see this activity, visit:
aysou.video/int33

ORGANIZATION/RULES
- Four 10x10 grids as shown. 2 teams split evenly into grids, 1 ball per team.
- 1 Player from each team pass from grid to grid and follow their pass (1 team clockwise, the other counter- clockwise).
- Receiving players show to receive pass but stay inside grid.
- 1 touch to control, one to pass.
- >Players play give and go (shown).
- >On whistle, players leave ball and explode to next grid performing selected dynamic exercise, i.e., heel kicks, high knees, skipping, sprinting, etc.



COACHING POINTS
- Players should be alert and have awareness of space and other players.
- Quality passing (accuracy and weight).
- Quality first touch.
- Keep quick but controlled tempo.
- Engage players. Activate!
- Timing of runs and passes.
- Communication (verbal and non verbal).
- Proper form while executing dynamic exercises.

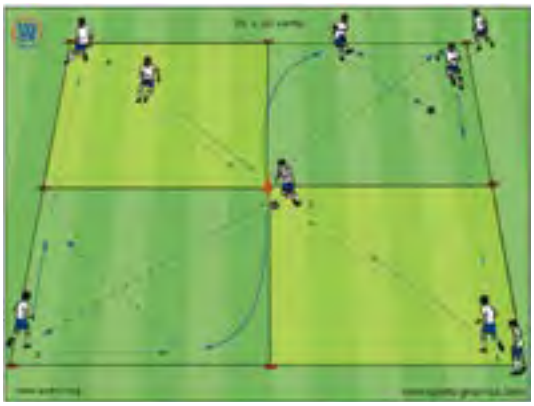
PSYCHOSOCIAL	☑
PHYSICAL	☑
TECHNICAL	☑
TACTICAL	☐

STAGE 2
(Small-Sided Activity)

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

To see this activity, visit:
aysou.video/int34

ORGANIZATION/RULES
- 20x20 grid with a central cone. 2 balls. Minimum 8 players. 1 central player(s).
- Player 1 passes to Player 2 who receives ball, passes to Player 3 and moves towards outside middle cone.
- Player 3 plays a give-and-go with
- Player 2, and then drives forward with the ball towards Player 4.
- At approximately the outside middle cone, Player 3 passes to Player 4 who restarts the sequence.
- All players follow their pass.
- >1 touch passing where possible.
- >2 balls.
- >Switch directions.
- >Add passive defender to each side.



COACHING POINTS
- Positioning to successfully receive the ball and pass.
- Quality passing (accuracy and weight).
- Timing of runs and passes.
- Quality first touch.
- Communication.
- Keep fast/controlled tempo.

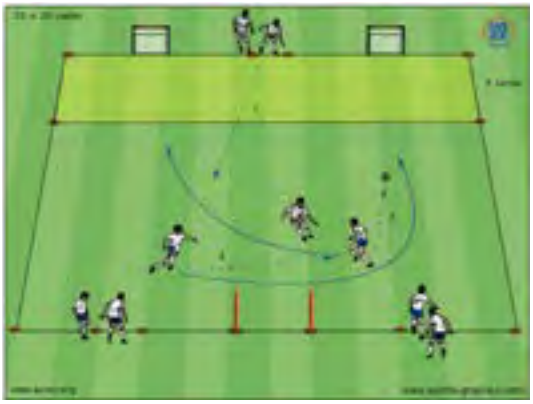
PSYCHOSOCIAL	☑
PHYSICAL	☑
TECHNICAL	☑
TACTICAL	☐

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, visit:
aysou.video/int35

ORGANIZATION/RULE
- 20x20, 2 mini goals at 1 end in 5 yd. zone.
- At opposite end line, mark a central gate.
- Defenders line up between goals. 2 teams of attackers line up opposite goals.
- Defender drives ball to either attacker.
- Once attacker touches ball, defender enters grid to pressure.
- 1 attacker from either side of gate, attack end zone (can score in either goal but must be in end zone).
- Attackers must combine to beat defender, i.e., give and go, overlap (shown), etc.
- If defender wins ball he must get ball through gate by passing or dribbling.
- Defenders rotate. Attackers switch sides.
- Rotate defenders and attackers.
- Create point system.
- > 2 defenders, 3 attackers.
- > Add time restraint for quick tempo.



COACHING POINTS

Attackers: Quality 1st touch into direction he wants to exploit.
- Close control. • Decision to beat defender or combine.
- Change of pace/direction to beat defender.• Creativity. • Disguise intentions.• Communicate with teammate.

Defenders: • Quality pass (driven
• Steal ball or delay. • Direct attacker using defensive body shape. • Composure.
• Consider recovery run to cover goal than chase attacker.

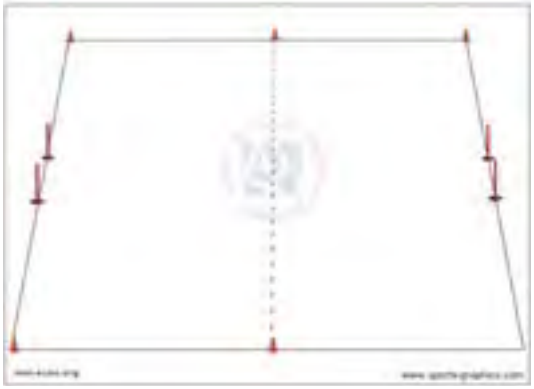
PSYCHOSOCIAL	☑
PHYSICAL	☑
TECHNICAL	☑
TACTICAL	☑

STAGE 4
(Small-Sided Match)

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

Cool Down/Debrief

ORGANIZATION/RULES
- 60x40 field with 2 goals and GK's.
- 2 teams.
- Formations.
- No restrictions.
- Regular division rules.
- Static stretching, brief review on session and any announcements.



COACHING POINTS
- Place each team in a formation (to create an environment where the principles of play can be reinforced and applied to positional-specific roles for each player).
- Prioritize topic but allow players to play, to create, and to explore new ideas through minimal interruption.

PSYCHOSOCIAL	☑
PHYSICAL	☑
TECHNICAL	☑
TACTICAL	☑

ATTACKING FROM MIDFIELD
(USING ATTACKING PRINCIPLES OF PLAY)

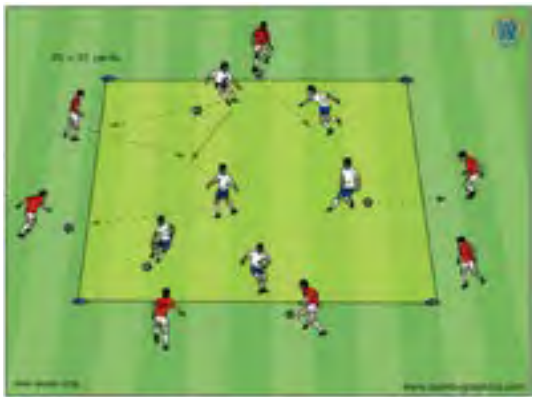
CREATED BY
John Ouellette, AYSO National
Coach Emeritus

STAGE 1
(Technical Warm-up)

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

To see this activity, visit:
aysou.video/int36

ORGANIZATION/RULES
- 30 x 30 grid, 6-8 players with a ball inside grid and 6-8 players on outside of grid without a ball.
- Players on inside of grid, dribble towards players on outside and perform a wall pass (give and go).
- Switch roles after 3 minutes.
- > Consider using passive defenders after a bit of time.



COACHING POINTS
- Players inside should switch directions.
- Use of space is critical for successful wall passes.
- Quality dribbling, passing and 1st touch efficiency.

PSYCHOSOCIAL	☑
PHYSICAL	☑
TECHNICAL	☑
TACTICAL	☐

STAGE 2
(Small-Sided Activity)

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

To see this activity, visit:
aysou.video/int37

ORGANIZATION/RULES
- 60 x 40 grid divided into thirds with a goal at each end. GK's in goal.
- 4 v 4 in middle grid w/ a neutral player on each touch line (limited to length of middle grid).
- A team must connect 4 passes before the ball can be played to an outside neutral player.
- The neutral player must play the ball back to the player who passed to him.
- The ball is played back into the empty grid for the original player to run onto for a 1 v 1 with the GK.
- Defenders cannot leave middle grid.
- The team who scores 3 goals wins.

COACHING POINTS
- Shape and organization are critical for success.
- Mobility and creativity are essential (encourage creativity, let them express themselves).
- Players must create space in a limited area.

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, visit:
aysou.video/int38

ORGANIZATION/RULE
- 60x40 grid divided into thirds w/ a goal at each end. GK's in goal.
- 4v4 in mid- grid w/ a neutral player on each touch line (can use length of grid).
- Teams must connect as many passes as needed to safely play a ball out wide to a teammate on wing (neutral player).
- Neutral player plays ball back into empty grid to the teammate who played it out.
- As soon as ball enters empty grid, defenders can enter grid to regain possession and deny the shot.
- >Wide players may defend each other.
- >Once ball is played by neutral player, all players join the attack.
- >Wide players can dribble into zone to cross to teammates.

COACHING POINTS
- 1st touch efficiency!
- Weak side play must be recognized.
- Players must constantly change the point of attack to unbalance the defense.
- Shape and organization remain critical.

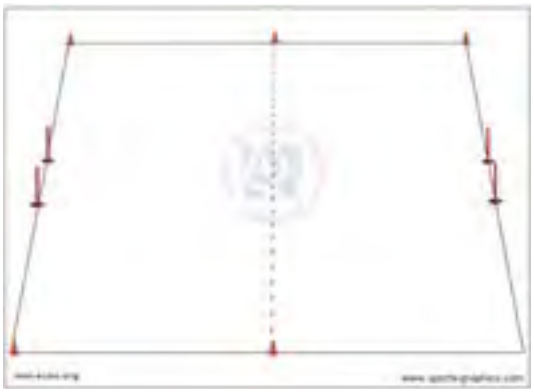
PSYCHOSOCIAL	☑
PHYSICAL	☑
TECHNICAL	☑
TACTICAL	☑

STAGE 4
(Small-Sided Match)

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

Cool Down/Debrief

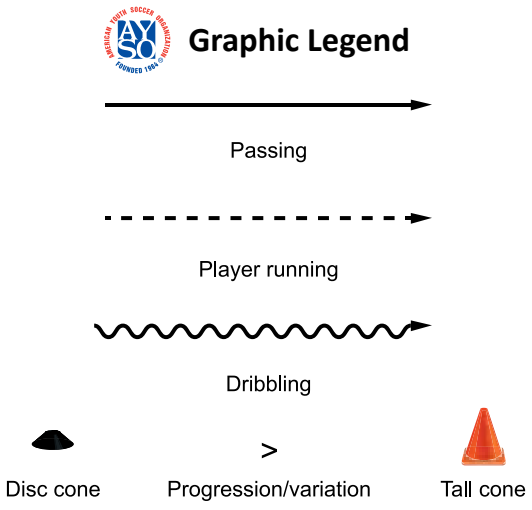
ORGANIZATION/RULES
- Small-sided match with GKs.
- General rules apply.
- Vary the formations.
- Static stretching, brief review on session and any announcements.



COACHING POINTS
- Play!

PSYCHOSOCIAL	☑
PHYSICAL	☑
TECHNICAL	☑
TACTICAL	☑

INTERMEDIATE ATTACKING TRAINING PLANS



SHOOTING/FINISHING

CREATED BY
John Kerr, Head Coach, Duke University
Men's Soccer

STAGE 1

(Technical Warm-up)

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

To see this activity, visit:
aysou.video/int39

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 2 groups work in quarter field. 4 small goals on each end line.
- Each team numbers players 1-7.
- Players pass and move in sequence (1-2, 2-3...7-1)
- > One touch passes 3-4 yards.
- > Two touch passes 10-14 yards.
- > Driven strikes 15-20 yards.
- > Upon call from coach for specific number, the player from each team receives the ball, takes touch out of feet and strikes on goal. First to score gets a point (per diagram white #7).
- > Reverse the sequence.
- Dynamic movements, stretching and activation.

COACHING POINTS

- Quality first touch efficiency.
- Quality passing (and striking technique.
- Communication between players to maintain sequence (including next player to receive ball).
- Spatial awareness to align space and teammates.
- Anticipate pass with a look over the shoulder.

PSYCHOSOCIAL	☑
PHYSICAL	☑
TECHNICAL	☑
TACTICAL	☐

STAGE 2

(Small-Sided Activity)

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

To see this activity, visit:
aysou.video/int40

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- Double penalty area with large goals and GK either end.
- 2 gate goals either side of large goals.
- Mark players entrances w/ disc cones.
- Spare balls with each of the 4 groups.
- Defender plays to diagonal attacker releasing 3 attackers (2 from 1 gate, 1 from the other) v 2 defenders.
- Attackers score in large goal, defenders score in either gate goals or large goal.
- Alternate starting sides.
- Points: large goal 2 points; gate goals 1 point.
- > If goal is scored or ball goes out, switch roles, i.e., attackers defend and serve the ball. Keep switching.
- > Restrict touches.

COACHING POINTS

- Attackers should penetrate, support and provide width (and mobility) as needed to take advantage of overload.
- Quality passing (accuracy and weight).
- Timing of runs and passes.
- Quality first touch.
- Communication.
- Composure & quality of final shot.
- Rebounds. Follow in the shot!
- Attacking combinations, i.e., wall pass, overlaps, etc.
- 1v1 creativity.

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, visit:
aysou.video/int41

ORGANIZATION/RULE

- Double penalty area with large goals and GK either end.
- 2 teams line up in 2 zones (marked off with cones). 4v2 per zone stay in zones.
- 2 attackers should try to maintain possession, get free, combine and get shots on goal.
- > Upon 3 successful passes, an additional attacker can join the front 2 to create a 3 v 4.
- > Permit another attacker creating a 4 v 4.
- > Add time restriction to get shot off.

COACHING POINTS

- Quality instep kicks/strikes
- Look at spacing of players, width, movement.
- Attackers must work to be free. Also, must work as a pair to create chances.
- Communication on both sides of the ball.
- Transition from attacking to defending and vice-versa.
- Timing of runs.
- Composure and quality technique of final shot.
- Keep game flowing.

PSYCHOSOCIAL	☑
PHYSICAL	☑
TECHNICAL	☑
TACTICAL	☑

STAGE 4

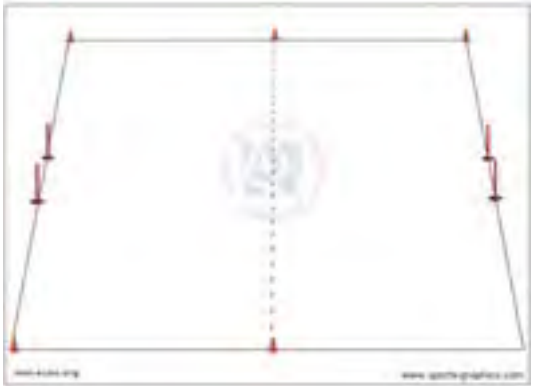
(Small-Sided Match)

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

Cool Down/Debrief

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- Small-sided match with general rules per age division.
- Static stretching, brief review on session and any announcements.



COACHING POINTS

- Emphasize quality shooting and finishing 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	☑

COUNTER ATTACKING

CREATED BY
John Ouellette, AYSO National Coach Emeritus

STAGE 1

(Technical Warm-up)

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

To see this activity, visit:
aysou.video/int42

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- Create three or four grids of four players in a 20 x 15 yard grid.
- X1 passes to X2 who makes a 1 touch pass to X3, who makes a 1 touch pass to X4, who delivers a 1 touch long pass to X1.
- You can also play in reverse X4 to X3 to X2 to X1 for the long ball.
- > Move players from location to location.

COACHING POINTS

- Players should only take a controlling touch if absolutely necessary.
- Speed of play is critical.
- Quality passing techniques.

PSYCHOSOCIAL	☑
PHYSICAL	☑
TECHNICAL	☑
TACTICAL	☐

STAGE 2

(Small-Sided Activity)

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

To see this activity, visit:
aysou.video/int43

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 60x40 grid w/ 3 target goals as shown.
- Split into 2 grids (20 yards & 40 yards).
- 4v4 possession in the 20 yard grid.
- As soon as possession is lost the team that has won the ball must try to get the ball as quickly as possible (can now play outside of the initial grid) to one of the players in the gates in the other grid (no more than 3 passes or 4 secs).
- The team that lost possession defends.
- 1 point for connecting to near gate. 3 points for connecting to deep gates.
- First team to 10 points wins.
- The activity is restarted by team who went on the attack.

COACHING POINTS

- Look for heads up and quick counters.
- Do not allow players to pause or stop playing when possession is lost.
- Look for quick thinkers.
- Look for quick team play.

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, visit:
aysou.video/int44

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 30x25 grid w/ a goal & GK on each end.
- 1st team to 5 goals wins.
- 6v6 (3 in grid and 3 on end line) told what goal to attack.
- Coach serves ball to start activity.
- 3v3. Team w/ ball attacks, the defending team attempts to regain possession for a quick counter on other goal.
- If attacking team misses, defending team goes back to their end line. A new group of 3 players comes out with a ball and straightaway attacks the other goal.
- If GK makes a save he plays the ball to his teammates already on the field.
- Teams play until goal is scored or shot missed.
- Allow only 5 touches or 5 seconds for a shot on goal after possession has been gained.

COACHING POINTS

- Look for quick counters.
- Players must play as direct as possible.
- Shape/Organization should allow for quick transition.
- All players must play both sides of the ball if counters are going to materialize.

PSYCHOSOCIAL	☑
PHYSICAL	☑
TECHNICAL	☑
TACTICAL	☑

STAGE 4

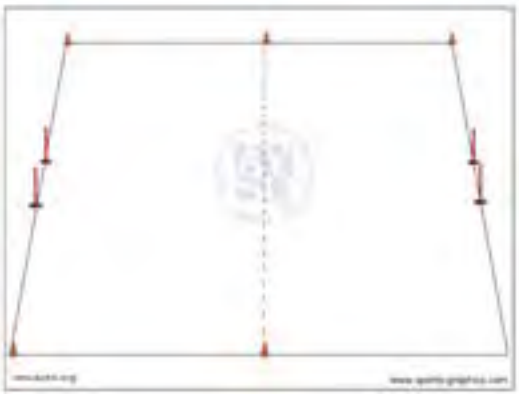
(Small-Sided Match)

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

Cool Down/Debrief

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- Small-sided match with GKs.
- General rules apply.
- Vary the formations.
  Static stretching, brief review on session and any announcements.



COACHING POINTS

- Play!

PSYCHOSOCIAL	☑
PHYSICAL	☑
TECHNICAL	☑
TACTICAL	☑

SMALL GROUP PRINCIPLES OF ATTACK

CREATED BY
Dave Chesler, US Soccer,
Director of Coaching Development

STAGE 1

(Technical Warm-up)

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

To see this activity, visit:
aysou.video/int45

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- 3 Groups of 4 players organized as
- shown between 2 markers @ 35 yards.
- Players in functional positions as labeled.
- Approx. 15 reps., high intensity.
- > Progress from 2 to 1-touch passing.

COACHING POINTS

- Technical Mechanics: proper weight, accuracy of each pass. (varies by position)
- Timing of runs to support: constant movement.
- Disguise passing intent, e.g., Serve across your body/re-direct to opposite side.

PSYCHOSOCIAL	☑
PHYSICAL	☑
TECHNICAL	☑
TACTICAL	☐

STAGE 2

(Small-Sided Activity)

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

To see this activity, visit:
aysou.video/int46

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- Distribute field players into 4 groups at either side of 2 facing goals w/ GK's.
- Play starts with 1st attacker running with the ball at an approaching opponent.
- Approx. 8 reps., high intensity.

COACHING POINTS

- Running with the ball- engage 1v1 and commit to the ball.
- (1st attacker) Dribble to create a passing channel, then pass to a space that his teammate may run on to and attack the opponents goal.

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, visit:
aysou.video/int47

ORGANIZATION/RULES

- Mark 3 zones within the playing area create a middle zone that is 10yd. deep.
- Attacking team unrestricted movement.
- Whites (def) must transition into a 3-2-1 & players must remain within their zone.
- Approx. 3 reps., med-high intensity.

COACHING POINTS

- Effective MOBILITY to effectively SUPPORT the teammate with the ball.
- Recognition of opportunities to overload with 1st- 2nd attackers supporting the ball carrier.
- Refine the movement and roles of the 6, 8 and 10 relative to one another.
- Connect the movement and roles of the 9 and 10 to one another. Example: When the 9 runs wide, 10 may choose to move into the highest central position.

PSYCHOSOCIAL	☑
PHYSICAL	☑
TECHNICAL	☑
TACTICAL	☑

STAGE 4

(Small-Sided Match)

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

Cool Down/Debrief

ORGANIZATION/RULES

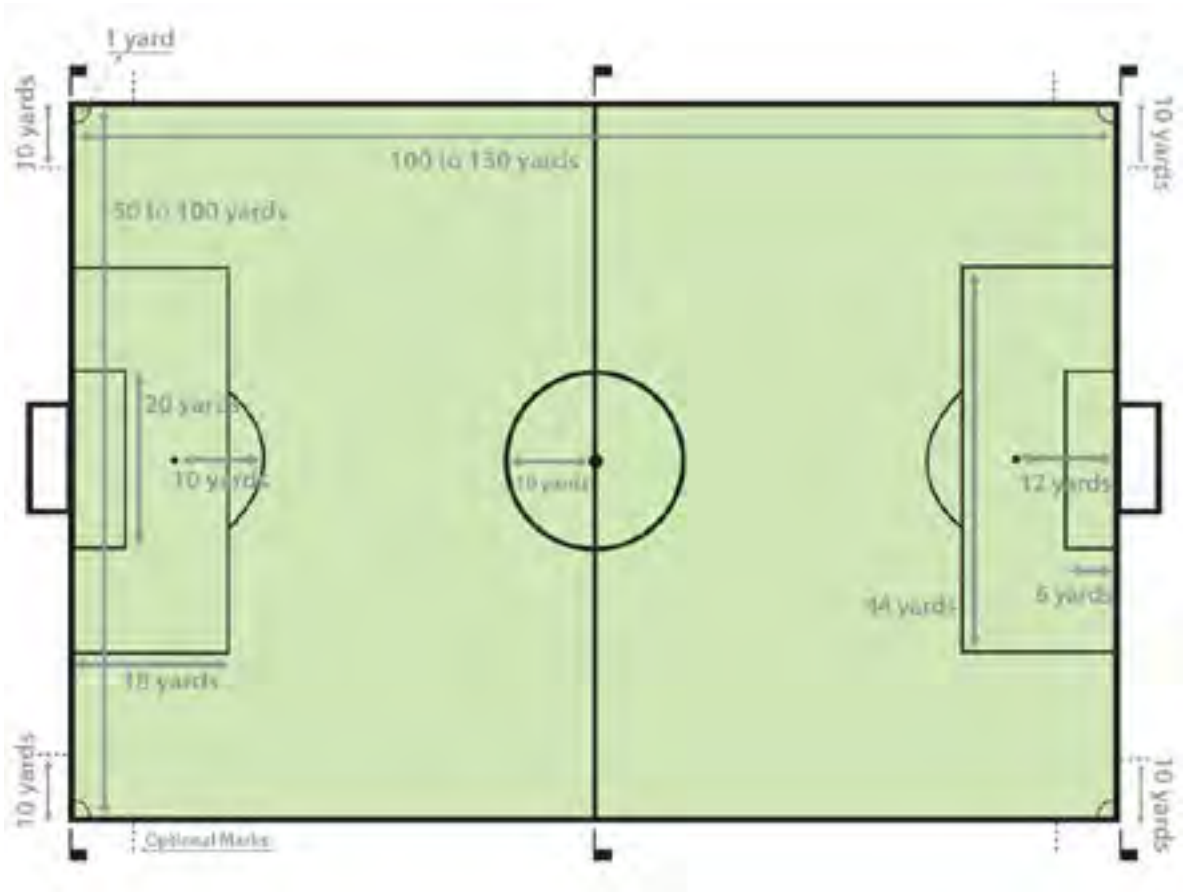
- Focus Team: 1-2-1-3 system to reflect the attacking group of six.
- Opposition: 1-3-2-1 in order to challenge the roles of the 6, 8 and 10.
- FIFA Rules.

COACHING POINTS

- Observe and assess the movement and roles of the 6, 8 and 10 in attack.
- Observe and assess the combinations between the 9 and 10.
- Encourage ambitious flank play and quality service from the 11 and 7.

PSYCHOSOCIAL	☑
PHYSICAL	☑
TECHNICAL	☑
TACTICAL	☑

14U PROGRAM GUIDELINES



Goals

The maximum goal size is 7’ high x 21’ wide.

The recommended goal size is 6.5’ high x 18.5’ wide.

Ball

- Size 5

Players

- Number: 11 per team on field; one of which is a goalkeeper. 15 maximum on roster (12 minimum).
- 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 athletic shoes).
- Shinguards: MANDATORY for both training sessions 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.

Referee

- AYSO-certified regional referees or higher.

Maximum Duration of Half

- 35 minutes.
- Halftime shall be a minimum of 5 minutes and a maximum of 10 minutes. No added time.

MODIFICATIONS: As players get older, commitments and availability can be a challenge; therefore, with older ages to help create or maintain the program you can modify matches from 11 vs. 11 to 5 vs. 5, 7 vs. 7, etc. Just play!

The duration of the game does not need to change, just the size of the field of play. Some "suggested" modifications:

8v8, 9v9, 10v10
Field Dimensions: 70-80 yds long x 45-55 yds wide.
Markings: Distinctive lines recommended.

- Halfway line the width of the field, marked equidistant between the goal lines.
- Center circle with an eight-yard radius in the center of the field.
- Corner arcs with a one-yard radius at each corner of the field.
- Goal area in front of each goal measuring 5 x 16 yards.
- Penalty area in front of each goal measuring 14 x 36 yards.
- Penalty mark ten yards from the goal line.
- Penalty arc extending in an eight-yard radius from the penalty mark.
- **Goals:** Maximum 7' high x 21' wide.

5v5, 6v6, 7v7
Field Dimensions: 55-65 yds long x 35-45 yds wide.
Markings: Distinctive lines recommended.

- Halfway line the width of the field, marked equidistant between the goal lines.
- Center circle with an six-yard radius in the center of the field.
- Corner arcs with a one-yard radius at each corner of the field.
- **Goals:** Maximum 6.5' high and 18.5' wide.

3v3, 4v4
Field Dimensions: 25-35 yds long x 15-25 yds wide.
Markings: Distinctive lines can be used but are not required. Field can be marked using 20 disc cones to mark all four sides.

- **Goals:** Maximum 4' high and 6' wide OR four tall cones, two each set 6' apart.

14U LAWS OF THE GAME

INTRODUCTION

The AYSO National Coaching Commission in cooperation with the National Referee Commission has prepared this information to assist coaches in learning and understanding the *Laws of the Game*. As your coaching experience increases, so will your need for additional instruction. Our courses are designed to support those needs as they arise. You should obtain a copy of "Guidance for Referees and Coaches" to supplement you training and understanding of AYSO policies and interpretations of the Laws.

AYSO is an affiliate member of US Soccer, the national governing body of soccer in the United States recognized by FIFA (Federation Internationale de Football Association), the international governing body of soccer. All AYSO matches are played in accordance with the FIFA *Laws of the Game* and the AYSO National Rules and Regulations.

Since FIFA meets annually to consider changes to the Laws and AYSO considers proposed changes to its National Rules and Regulations each year at the AYSO Annual General Meeting, it is strongly recommended that each year you obtain the current AYSO edition of the FIFA *Laws of the Game* and the AYSO National Rules and Regulations to familiarize yourself with the most recent changes.

As you gain knowledge and experience as an AYSO coach you will find that your understanding of the *Laws of the Game* and of the job of the officials will increase. To truly understand officiating, we recommend strongly that you "walk a mile in his shoes". That is, try your hand at actually refereeing some matches. Experience as a referee can only improve your skills as a coach and is well worth the effort. Thank you again for volunteering your time and talents.

Some Points of Difference (AYSO and FIFA)

LAW	FIFA	AYSO
#1 Field Size	Full	Modified pending age division
#1 Goal Size	Full	Modified pending age division
#2 Ball Size	Size 5	3, 4, 5 pending age division
#3 Substitutions	Up to 3 during play	Multiple per half

LAW 1: THE FIELD OF PLAY

Essential Facts About the Field of Play:

- Regular season play: Goal dimensions and field size at discretion of the region.
- Post-season play-off games: The field must conform to all requirements of Law 1.
- A coach's area shall be marked, where possible, ten (10) yards on either side of the halfway line, and at least one yard from the touch line.
- Touch lines: Define sides of the field.
- Goal lines: Define ends of the field.
- Goals: 8 feet high and 8 yards wide.
- Halfway line: Divides field in half and belongs to both halves.
- Center mark: Location for kick-off.
- Center circle: 10-yard radius from center mark.
- Penalty area: Area in which goalkeeper may use hands and where certain fouls result in a penalty kick.
- Penalty mark: 9-inch spot 12 yards from goal line indicates location for penalty kick.
- Penalty arc: 10-yard radius from penalty mark.
- Goal area: Defines location for goal kicks.
- Corner area: 1-yard arc defines location for corner kicks.
- Corner flag: At least 5 feet high with non-pointed top. Locates corner of field. May not be moved or removed during corner kicks.
- Optional equipment: Goal nets, halfway flags (1 yard outside touch line).

LAW 2: THE BALL

Essential Facts Regarding the Ball:

- The referee approves the game ball.
- Ball cannot be replaced without the referee's permission.
- The size used in AYSO matches is regulated according to age division: Size 3: 6U, 8U Size 4: 10U, 12U Size 5: 14U+

LAW 3: THE NUMBER OF PLAYERS

Essential Facts Regarding Number of Players:

- 11 a-side is the norm. AYSO Age Specific Recommendations: 6U/8U: 4 a-side; 10U: 7 a-side; 12U: 9-aside; 14U+: 11 a-side.
- A player who has been sent off may not be replaced.
- Substitutes come under the jurisdiction of the referee.
- One player on each team must be designated as the goalkeeper.
- Field players may change places with their goalkeeper at any normal stoppage in play. The referee must be notified that the change is taking place.
- In AYSO, each team member must play a minimum of one half of the match.
- Play may be stopped at any time by the referee to attend to an injured player who may be replaced or the team may play short while the injured player recovers. Only the injured player receives credit for playing that quarter. A dropped ball is used to restart play if the ball was in play at the time of the stoppage.

LAW 4: THE PLAYERS' EQUIPMENT

Essential Facts Regarding Players' Equipment:

- Jersey, shorts, footwear, and shinguards covered by stockings are required. Rolled or tied up sleeves are permitted, provided that the referee approves it is done in a safe manner.
- Shinguards are required in all practices and games.
- The goalkeepers must be distinguishable from all other players on the field.
- Players may not wear anything that could endanger either themselves or another player.
- Casts or splints, jewelry, watches and articles of adornment are not allowed.

LAW 5: THE REFEREE

Essential Facts Regarding the Referee:

- Should interfere with the game as little as possible, penalize only deliberate breaches of the Law, and not whistle for trifling or doubtful offenses.

- Authority includes all pre-match, half-time and post-match activities.
- May refrain from penalizing if it is to the advantage of the team against which the offense was committed.
- Is official record and timekeeper, and may add any time lost through accident or other cause.
- May stop the match and suspend or terminate play for any reason deemed necessary such as: the elements, interference by spectators, or other cause.
- Shall submit a detailed report of any misconduct.
- Allows no person other than the players and assistant referees to enter the field of play without permission.
- May stop the match to have an injured player attended.

LAW 6: THE ASSISTANT REFEREES

Essential Facts Regarding the Assistant Referees:

- Indicate when the ball is out of play.
- Indicate which side is entitled to a goal kick, corner kick or throw-in.
- Indicate when a player may be penalized for being in an offside position.
- Indicate when a substitution is requested.
- Assist the referee in the control of the match in accordance with the Laws.
- May signal any misconduct, incident, or breach of the Laws which occurred out of view of the referee.
- Assistant referees' decisions may be overruled by the referee.
- Referee decisions may not be overruled by an assistant referee.
- Referees may consult with and accept the decision of neutral assistant referees to determine whether or not a legal goal was scored.

LAW 7: THE DURATION OF THE MATCH

Essential Facts Regarding the Duration of the Game:

- Matches should have two equal halves.
- The teams will defend each goal for one half.
- Halftime shall be a minimum of 5 minutes and a maximum of 10 minutes.
- Allowance shall be made, at the discretion of the referee, for time lost due to injury, substitution, time wasting or other cause.
- Time shall be extended to permit a penalty kick to be taken at or after the expiration of the normal time period.
- The referee is the sole timekeeper for the match.
- FIFA Law requires a match terminated by the referee for any reason to be replayed in its entirety. In AYSO, the referee submits a game report to the governing body (Region) who will determines whether or not the game will be replayed, if the score will stand, or if a team shall be declared in forfeit.

LAW 8: THE START AND RESTART OF PLAY

Essential Facts Regarding the Duration of the Game:

- Matches should have two equal halves not to exceed 35-minutes each.
- The teams will defend each goal for one half.
- Halftime shall be a minimum of 5 minutes and a maximum of 10 minutes. No added time.
- Time shall be extended to permit a penalty kick to be taken at or after the expiration of the normal time period.
- The referee is the sole timekeeper for the match.
- FIFA Law requires a match terminated by the referee for any reason to be replayed in its entirety. In AYSO, the referee submits a game report to the governing body (Region) who will determines whether or not the game will be replayed, if the score will stand, or if a team shall be declared in forfeit.

Essential Facts Regarding the Start of Play:

- Play is started with a kick-off from the center mark:
  - At the beginning of the match.
  - At the beginning of the second half.
  - Following a goal.
  - At the beginning of overtime periods.
- Play is restarted with a dropped ball where the ball was when the play was stopped while the ball was in play:
  - Following an injury where no foul occurred.

    - For outside interference.
    - For needed repairs to the ball or field equipment.
    - For any cause not mentioned in the Laws.
- The team winning the coin toss chooses which goal it will attack in the first half. The other team must kick off.
- The ball is in play from a kick-off once it has been kicked and moves forward.
- Every player must remain in his own half of the field, and players of the team not taking the kick-off must remain at least ten yards from the ball until the ball is in play.
- The player taking the kick-off shall not touch the ball a second time until it is has been touched by another player. The penalty for this "double touch" is an indirect free kick.
- A goal may be scored directly from a kick-off.
- The kick-off shall be retaken for any infringement occurring before the ball is in play.
- The dropped ball is in play once it has touched the ground.
- The dropped ball is retaken if it is touched by any player before it has touched the ground or if it goes out of play without being touched by a player.

LAW 9: THE BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY

Essential Facts Regarding Ball In and Out of Play:

- The ball remains in play until the entire ball has crossed the outside edge of either the goal line or touch line either on the ground or in the air.
- It is the position of the ball and not the player playing the ball which determines whether or not the ball is out of play.
- The ball is out of play when the referee has stopped play.
- The ball remains in play unless signaled out of play by the referee.

LAW 10: THE METHOD OF SCORING

Essential Facts Regarding Method of Scoring:

- The ball must completely cross the goal line between the goalposts and under the crossbar for a goal to be scored.
- Only the referee may award or disallow a goal.
- The referee may accept the opinion of a neutral assistant referee regarding a possible goal that the referee did not see.
- The position of the ball is relevant when determining whether a goal has been scored, not the position of the goalkeeper.
- A goal should not be awarded if an outside agent (spectator, dog, etc.) has interfered with play prior to the ball entering the goal.
- A goal should not be awarded if the *Laws of the Game* were violated by the attacking team immediately prior to the ball entering the goal.
- The referee may reverse his decision regarding the scoring of a goal as long as play has not yet been restarted.

LAW 11: OFFSIDE

Essential Facts Regarding Offside:

- A player is in an offside position if he is nearer to the opponents' goal line than both the ball and the second to last defender being in an offside position in itself is not an offence. A player is not in an offside position if:
    - He is in his own half of the field of play or
    - He is level with the second last opponent or
    - He is level with the last two opponents
- The player in an offside position is only penalized if, at the moment the ball is touched or played by a teammate, the referee considers him to be actively involved in the play by:
    - Interfering with play or
    - Interfering with an opponent or
    - Gaining an advantage from being in that position
- There is no offside offence if a player receives the ball directly from:
    - A goal kick or
    - A throw-in or
    - A corner kick
- The punishment for being offside is an indirect free kick for the opposing team.
- The indirect free kick is taken from the location of the offside player.

- The referee may or may not declare a violation of the Offside Law depending upon his judgment of the circumstances.

LAW 12: FOULS AND MISCONDUCT

Essential Facts Regarding Fouls:
There are two categories of fouls; direct free kick fouls from which a goal may be scored directly and indirect free kick fouls from which a second player on either team must touch or play the ball before a goal may be scored. If a direct free kick foul is committed by a player in his or her own penalty area, the opponents are awarded a penalty kick (see Law 14).

Essential Facts Regarding Direct Free Kick Fouls:
There are ten direct free kick fouls of which the following seven must be considered by the referee to be careless, reckless or done with excessive force:

1. Kicks or attempts to kick an opponent
2. Trips or attempts to trip an opponent
3. Jumps at an opponent
4. Charges an opponent
5. Strikes or attempts to strike an opponent
6. Pushes an opponent
7. Tackles an opponent

The other three direct free kick fouls require only that they be committed.
1. Holds an opponent
2. Spits at an opponent
3. Handles the ball deliberately (except for the goalkeeper inside his own penalty area)

Essential Facts Regarding the Indirect Free Kick Fouls:
The following are the eight indirect free kick fouls:
1. Plays in a dangerous manner
2. Impedes the progress of an opponent
3. Prevents the goalkeeper from releasing the ball from his hands
4. Commits any other offence, not previously mentioned in Law 12, for which play is stopped to caution or dismiss a player
5. Goalkeeper controls the ball with his hands for more than six seconds before releasing it from his possession
6. Goalkeeper, having released the ball into play, touching it again with his hands before it has been touched by another player
7. Goalkeeper touching the ball with his hands after it has been deliberately kicked to him by a teammate
8. Goalkeeper touching the ball with his hands after he has received it directly from a throw-in by a teammate.

Essential Facts Regarding Cautionable Offenses:
There are seven reasons a player may be cautioned and shown a yellow card.
1. Unsporting behavior
2. Dissent, by word or action,
3. Persistent infringement of the *Laws of the Game*
4. Delays the restart of play
5. Failure to respect the required distance during corner kicks, free kicks or throw-ins
6. Enters or re-enters the field of play without permission of the referee
7. Deliberately leaving the field of play without the permission of the referee

Essential Facts Regarding Sending-Off Offenses:
There are seven reasons a player may be sent off the field and shown a red card.
1. Serious foul play.
2. Violent conduct.
3. Spits at an opponent or any other person.
4. Denies the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball.
5. Denies an obvious goal-scoring opportunity to an opponent moving toward the player's goal by an offence

punishable by a free kick or a penalty kick.
6. Using offensive, insulting, or abusive language and/or gestures.
7. Receiving a second caution in the same game.

LAW 13: FREE KICKS

Essential Facts Regarding Free Kicks:

- Direct free kicks are awarded for direct free kick fouls and a goal may be scored directly against the opponents
- Indirect free kicks are awarded for indirect free kick fouls and certain technical infractions. After the ball is in play, it must touch or be played by a second player from either team before a goal can be scored.
- The opposing team must remain at least ten yards from the ball until the ball is kicked into play.
- The ball is in play from a free kick once it has been kicked and has moved or, in the case of the defending team taking the kick from within their own penalty area, when the ball completely leaves the penalty area.
- The player taking the free kick may not play the ball a second time until it has been touched by another player. The penalty for violation is an indirect free kick for the opponents from the point of the infraction.

LAW 14: THE PENALTY KICK

Essential Facts Regarding Penalty Kick:

- A goal may be scored directly from a penalty kick.
- The kick is taken from the penalty mark located twelve yards from the goal line.
- The ball is in play once it has been kicked and moves forward.
- All players must be on the field of play, outside the penalty area, ten yards from the ball, and must stand behind the penalty mark, except for the kicker and the opposing goalkeeper.
- The defending goalkeeper remains on the goal line between the goalposts facing the kicker until the ball has been kicked.
- The kicker must wait for the referee's signal before taking the kick.
- The player taking the penalty kick may not play the ball twice in succession without it first touching another player (penalty is an indirect free kick for the opposing team).
- For infringements of the Law by the defending team, the kick shall be retaken if a goal has not been scored.
- For infringements of the Law by the attacking team, except for the kicker playing the ball twice in succession, the kick shall be retaken if a goal was scored.
- For infringements of the Law by both teams, the kick shall be retaken regardless of the outcome.

LAW 15: THE THROW-IN

Essential Facts Regarding Throw-In:

- The throw-in shall be taken from the point at which the ball left the field.
- The thrower must face the field and part of both feet must remain on or behind the touchline.
- The ball must be thrown with both hands from behind and over the head.
- Opposing players must stand no less than 2 yards from point at which the throw-in is taken.
- The ball is in play as soon as it is both released and has entered the field of play.
- The thrower may not play the ball a second time in succession (penalty is an indirect free kick for the opposing team from the point of the infraction).
- If the ball is improperly thrown in, it shall be retaken by a player of the opposing team.
- A goal may not be scored directly from a throw-in.
- Exception to Offside Law is permitted for the first person to receive the ball from a throw-in.

LAW 16: THE GOAL KICK

Essential Facts Regarding Goal Kick:

- The ball may be placed anywhere within the goal area.
- The ball is in play once it has been kicked beyond the penalty area.
- Opposing players must remain outside the penalty area until the ball is kicked into play beyond the penalty area.
- A goal may be scored directly from a goal kick, but only against the opposing team.
- The player taking the goal kick may not play the ball twice in succession (penalty is an indirect free kick for the opposing team).
- Exception to Offside Law is permitted for the first person to receive the ball from a goal kick.

LAW 17: THE CORNER KICK

Essential Facts Regarding Corner Kick:

- The ball is placed within the corner arc at the nearest corner flag post.
- A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick.
- The ball is in play after it has been kicked and moves.
- Opposing players must remain ten yards from the corner arc until the ball is in play.
- The corner flag must not be moved or removed during the taking of the corner kick.
- The kicker may not play the ball twice in succession (penalty is an indirect free kick for the opposing team).
- Exception to Offside Law is permitted for the first person to receive the ball from a corner kick.

SAFETY AND RISK MANAGEMENT

SAFE HAVEN INTRODUCTION

Agreeing to a background check is 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.

To coach in AYSO, you MUST complete this course!

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.

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. If in doubt, sit them out!

General Care and Treatment of Injuries or Conditions

Injury	Treatment
Blisters	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).
Sprain (Ankle, Knee, Wrist, Elbow)	Pressure wrap, ice for 20 minutes per hour during first 48 hours. Elevate when possible. **RICE - R**est **I**ce **C**ompression **E**levation
Muscle Strain (Pull)	RICE
Contusion (Bruise)	RICE
Cramp	Apply light pressure with hand. Stretch muscle with steady pressure. Ensure player is well hydrated.
Nose Bleed	Direct pressure (pinch nostrils.) Sit player up. Don't blow nose.
Bleeding	Apply direct pressure. Bandage. If continues, get professional help.
Cut or Abrasions	Stop bleeding with direct pressure. Wash with antiseptic. Close with adhesive strip or butterfly. Cover with dry sterile dressing.
"Wind Knocked Out"	Lie on side or back. Encourage slow, relaxed breathing. Try to reduce anxiety.
Heat Exhaustion- Player Feels Cool, Clammy and Damp. Pale.	Move to shade. Douse with cool water. Loosen restrictive clothes. Give fluids.
Unconsciousness	Check airway, breathing, and pulse. Don't move (risk of spinal injury). **Get help!**
Concussion (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. **If any doubt, get help.**
Choking- Object Blocking Wind Passage	Use Heimlich Maneuver. **Get help!**
Fracture/Dislocation	Immobilize area. **Professional help immediatley!**
Heat Stroke- Player Feels Hot, Dry, Dizzy, Shallow Breathing.	**Professional help immediatley!**
Hypothermia	Shield from wind and cold, wrap in warm blankets and cover head. **Get Help!**

When at all unsure, GET professional help!

In addition to the Universal Safe Haven Module required for this course, we strongly suggest a coaches' first aid class or certfication.

CONCUSSION AWARENESS **(Summary From Cdc Heads Up Initiative)**

- A concussion is a brain injury caused by a bump or blow to the head area.
- Even a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious.
- You cannot see a concussion, but you can recognize the symptoms.
- Symptoms can show up right after the injury or sometimes not until after days or even weeks.
- If a player reports any symptoms of a concussion, or if you or a parent notices any symptoms, seek medical attention right away!

Symptoms Observed By Athlete:

- Headache or "pressure" in head.
- Nausea or vomiting.
- Balance problems or dizziness.
- Double or blurry vision.
- Sensitivity to light.
- Sensitivity to noise.
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy.
- Concentration or memory problems.
- Confusion.
- Does not "feel right".

If you think a player has a concussion:

- Remove player from play.
- Inform player's parents or guardians about the known or possible concussion and inform of the symptoms listed above.
- Ensure player is evaluated by health care professional (don't try to judge severity of injury yourself).
- Allow player to return to play only with permission from an appropriate health care professional.

To prevent concussions:

- Ensure that they follow their coach's rules for safety and the *Laws of the Game*.
- Practice the use of proper soccer techniques, especially when heading the ball.
- Practice good sportsmanship at all times.
- Wear the proper protective equipment.
- Protective equipment should fit properly, be well maintained, and be worn consistently and correctly.
- Be aware of all the signs and symptoms of a concussion.

Note: Heading for players in 14U is limited to a maximum of thirty (30) minutes per week with no more than 15-20 headers, per player. There is no restriction on heading in matches.

HEALTH, FITNESS AND NUTRITION

STAYING HEALTHY

Fitness
Fitness can be defined as a combination of speed, strength, stamina, suppleness and skill and should be specific to meet the demands of the sport. Speed and stamina are two main components of fitness that all soccer players require (and vary depending on the player's role in the team). There are two types of stamina that we will address: aerobic and anaerobic.

Aerobic Conditioning
Aerobic fitness uses oxygen to perform exercise. Physical exercise such as jogging constantly improves the body's ability to transport oxygen to the muscles and allows the athlete to work at a constant rate without being completely fatigued. Aerobic exercise helps to build athletic stamina for sustained performance.

Anaerobic Conditioning
Anaerobic fitness is high intensity exercise without the use of oxygen. High-energy activities such as sprinting and jumping require the use of energy (ATP, glycogen) that is stored in the muscles. This happens when the body needs to get energy quickly. Anaerobic capacity can be improved by performing high intensity exercises for short durations.

Soccer-Specific Fitness
Soccer players need a combination of aerobic and anaerobic fitness. Some positions require a higher level of aerobic fitness, while others require more anaerobic-specific fitness.

Midfield Players tend to cover the most distance during a game as they are expected to continuously link with the offense and defense. Because of this, midfield players need a more all-round fitness profile with an emphasis on both aerobic and anaerobic capacity.

Attackers and Defenders need more training that prioritizes speed. Although defenders and attackers can often get more rest time than midfielders, they are also required to perform sprints at a faster speed to be successful in their crucial phases of play. For improvements in acceleration, repeated sprints of around six seconds in duration will be effective.

Hydration
With 70-75% of your total weight made up from water, it is essential to stay hydrated throughout the day, not just prior to activity. Ultimately, fluid intake is based on the size of the player, temperature, humidity and length of game (minutes played) or practice. In general, players need:

- Two to three hours prior to participation, players should drink approx. 16 fl. oz. (2 cups) to 20 fl. oz. (2.5 cups).
- Ten to 20 minutes prior to activity the players should drink approx. 7 fl. oz. (0.875 cups) to 10 fl. oz. (1.25 cups) of fluids.

Children don't sweat as effectively as adults and without adequate fluid replacement, fatigue can quickly set in (when the body loses as little as 5% of its water it can reduce physical performance by 20-30%). Therefore, it is essential for soccer players to regulate their fluid intake in order to play at their top level. Water is adequate before a game, while sports drinks can be used at halftime or after the game to help replenish lost electrolytes and carbs (they also taste good so kids are more likely to drink them).

The Importance Of What We Eat
Soccer players require the right level of energy, which can be produced from eating a balanced diet high in carbohydrates. Carbohydrates provide the most energy to the body and can be split into 'simple' or 'complex'. It is important to know the right types of foods to eat and which foods provide the best source of energy.

'Simple' carbohydrates (sugar) can be found in candy, soda, sweets and cakes, and while they can provide energy, players can experience highs and lows from this type of food. Simple sugars are still a good source of energy but should be consumed from natural foods such as fruit and vegetables.

Complex' carbohydrates (starches) take longer to break down providing a longer lasting energy source. Starches include grain products such as bread, crackers, pasta and cereals. Eating whole grain starches also provides the body with fiber, which is another important nutrient to aid digestion.

Foods that contain protein such as meats are an integral part of an athlete's diet. Foods rich in protein help to build, maintain and replace damaged tissues. While all meats contain protein, there are some that are easier to digest than others. White meats (chicken and fish) are easier to digest than red meats (beef) and can be eaten to provide the right protein levels. Milk, yogurt, eggs, soybeans are also good sources of lean protein.

Healthy Snacks
Many younger soccer players run from school directly to practices or games and have no time to stop for a highenergy snack to boost energy for performance. To stay fueled, players should keep water and healthy snacks accessible in their backpacks, lockers and coolers. Some healthy suggestions:

Bananas and other whole fruits, low-fat muffins, trail mix, whole grain crackers and cheese, fruit snacks, raisins, yogurt, carrots, apple wedges with peanut butter, granola bars, string cheese, and pretzels.

NOTE: At your team meeting, find out about any food allergies, i.e., peanuts, to avoid dangerous situations.

Recovery Tips
Vital for 14U players, recovery techniques should be applied before, during and after each game or training session to maximize performance and reduce injuries.

- Players need up to 72 hours between sessions to fully recover.
- Experts suggest eating carbohydrates and protein within 30 minutes after intense activity to replenish energy stores and speed recovery. Instruct your players to eat a sandwich, fruit or other snack right after a game.
- Sleep is vital for recovery and maximum sports performance. Youth soccer players typically need seven to nine hours of sleep. Not usually an issue for 14U players, encourage your players to get the sleep they need.
- Skim chocolate milk is an effective drink to boost recovery.

DYNIAMIC WARM-UP

PHYSICAL PREPARATION

Dynamic movement and stretching helps prepare the muscles, increase the range of motion and warm up the body. Exercises can be incorporated into your technical warm-up and 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 (For short video demonstrations visit aysou.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).

TEAM MANAGEMENT

ORGANIZING THE TEAM

1. **Develop a Team Goal.**
   "Development over Winning" or "Total Player Development" 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 C).

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.
   - Discuss the team's goal(s).
   - 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.
   - Encourage parents to keep you informed about player health/readiness to participate.
   - Review CDC Concussion Signs & Symptoms and direct parents to the Safe Haven for Parents site.
   - 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.
- Remind them to have fun and to do their best!
- Review training that was practiced and how it should be integrated into the game.

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 A: PLEDGES

AYSO COACH PLEDGE

In my words and action, I pledge to:

1. Enthusiastically support and practice the AYSO mission 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:

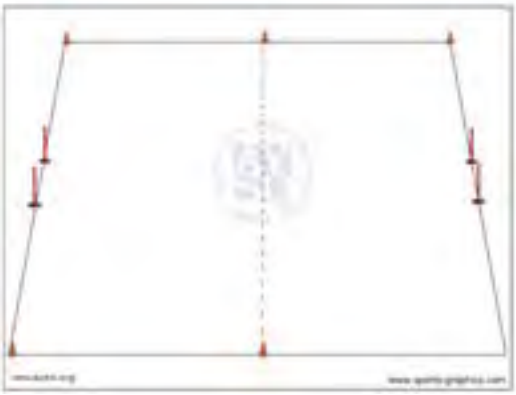
1. Play for the sake of playing a game, not just to please a parent or coach.
2. Always give my best effort and work as hard for my teammates as I do for myself.
3. Treat all players as I would like to be treated.
4. Be a team player.
5. Be a good sport and support good plays whether they are made by 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.

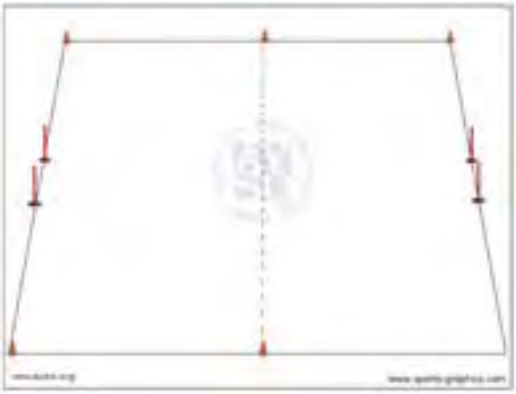
AYSO PARENT PLEDGE

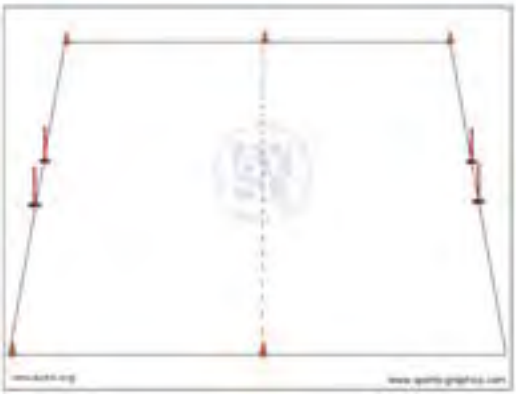
In my words and action, I pledge to:

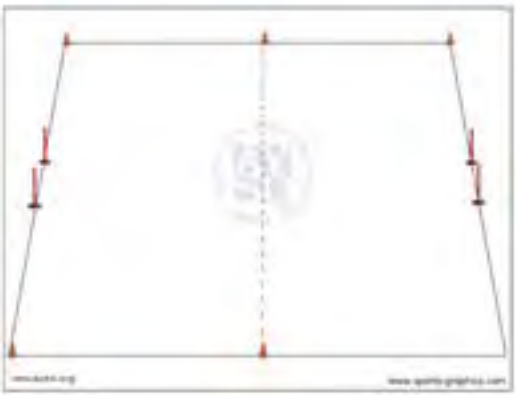
1. Attend and participate in team parent meetings as requested.
2. Be on time or early when dropping off or picking up my child for training or game.
3. Ensure my child is supported and encouraged by family or loved ones at games.
4. Encourage my child to have fun and keep sport in its proper perspective.
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 B: TRAINING PLAN

STAGE 1 Technical Warm-up	Organization/Rules		Coaching Points
* Max. ball contact, reps. * Introduce topic * Physical prep. (dynamic) * Unopposed to opposed	• _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____		• _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ PSYCHOSOCIAL ☐ PHYSICAL ☐ TECHNICAL ☐ TACTICAL ☐

STAGE 2 Small-sided Activity	Organization/Rules		Coaching Points
* Individual & pairs * Competition & Teamwork * 2v2 & 3v3..	• _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____		• _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ PSYCHOSOCIAL ☐ PHYSICAL ☐ TECHNICAL ☐ TACTICAL ☐

STAGE 3 Expanded Activity	Organization/Rules		Coaching Points
* Opposition (attack & defense) * Directional play (w/goals or targets) * Expanded #s. (3v3 to 7v7...) * Most game aspects	• _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____		• _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ PSYCHOSOCIAL ☐ PHYSICAL ☐ TECHNICAL ☐ TACTICAL ☐

STAGE 4 Small-sided Match	Organization/Rules		Coaching Points
* Unconditional * Emphasize topic * Age group laws * Formations * Let them Play! Cool Down/Debrief	• _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____		• _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ PSYCHOSOCIAL ☐ PHYSICAL ☐ TECHNICAL ☐ TACTICAL ☐

APPENDIX C: PLAYER EVALUATION

Player: _____ **Number:**_____ **Age:**_____ **Position:**_____

TECHNICAL	**RATING**	**COMMENTS**
Ball Control	1 2 3 4 5	
Receiving	1 2 3 4 5	
Passing	1 2 3 4 5	
Dribbling	1 2 3 4 5	
Running with the Ball	1 2 3 4 5	
Finishing	1 2 3 4 5	
Creativity	1 2 3 4 5	
TACTICAL		
Offensive Awareness	1 2 3 4 5	
Defensive Awareness	1 2 3 4 5	
Position-Specific Awareness	1 2 3 4 5	
PHYSICAL		
Agility & Balance	1 2 3 4 5	
Speed	1 2 3 4 5	
Endurance	1 2 3 4 5	
Strength	1 2 3 4 5	
Explosiveness	1 2 3 4 5	
Perception & Awareness	1 2 3 4 5	
PSYCHOSOCIAL		
Competitiveness	1 2 3 4 5	
Confidence	1 2 3 4 5	
Teamwork	1 2 3 4 5	
Leadership	1 2 3 4 5	
Communication	1 2 3 4 5	

1: Needs Improvement ***2: Below Average*** ***3: Average*** ***4: Above Average*** ***5: Skill Mastery***

APPENDIX D: COACH REFLECTION

Technique/Topic: _____

PREPARATION: Did I...	**YES**	**NO**	**COMMENTS**
Prepare a written training plan			
Arrive timely to prepare coaching area			
Use Free Play (upon player arrival +)			
Introduce objective/topic			
COACHING: Did I...			
Effectively demonstrate where possible			
Involve player(s) where possible			
Observe and correct			
Effectively present coaching points			
Progress/modify activity (speed, space, opposition)			
Scrimmage (emphasize topic but let them play!)			
ASSESSMENT: Did I...			
Minimize verbal instructions			
Teach appropriate laws where possible			
Minimize use of 3 Ls			
Provide adquate water breaks			
Engage and inspire the players			
Educate!			
Accomplish the goals of my training plan			
Finish on time			

One thing to improve for next training session: _____

APPENDIX E: 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 F: 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!

APPENDIX G: 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.

Resraint: 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. 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 the 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 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.

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.

Periodization: Planning and management of our players' global training and playing cycle. From seasonal planning (including transitional periods and off-season), to macrocycle planning (12-week season programming), to microcycle planning (weekly programming), to individual session planning (considering content and load).

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 (suited for coll-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.

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.

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NOTES

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

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