

U10 SOCCER COACHES MANUAL

Age Group Focus:

The emphasis is on having fun, building character in the framework of a team, continuing to develop ball skills and comfort, and further develop awareness and decision-making during the run of play. At this stage players begin to learn the basics of team play and formation on a small-sided field that mimics a full-sided field and format. No official scores or standings are kept.

Age Group Skill Focus:

Players at this age group at the end of the season should demonstrate the following

- Learn to receive the ball cleanly under light pressure
- Pass the ball accurately short and medium distances
- Learn to shoot with power and finesse
- Learn to defend in groups of 3 players
- Learn to attack in groups of 3 players
- Learn to create and take advantage of space when in possession
- Have a basic understanding of team shape and roles on the field
- Move up and down the field as a unit minimizing gaps between lines (backs, mids, forwards). 10 steps between lines is a good rule of thumb.
- Learn the basic rules of the game: throw-ins, offsides, goal kicks, corner kicks, buildout lines

Typical Practice Format One Hour in Length:

6pm to 6:15pm | **INTRO GAME**

6:15 to 6:30pm | **FUN ACTIVITY NO DEFENDERS. SKILL FOCUS.**

6:30to 6:45pm | **MAIN ACTIVITY**

6:45 to 7:00pm | **END GAME 7 v 7**

LET THE KIDS PLAY! Minimize the amount of instruction and get the kids on the field playing

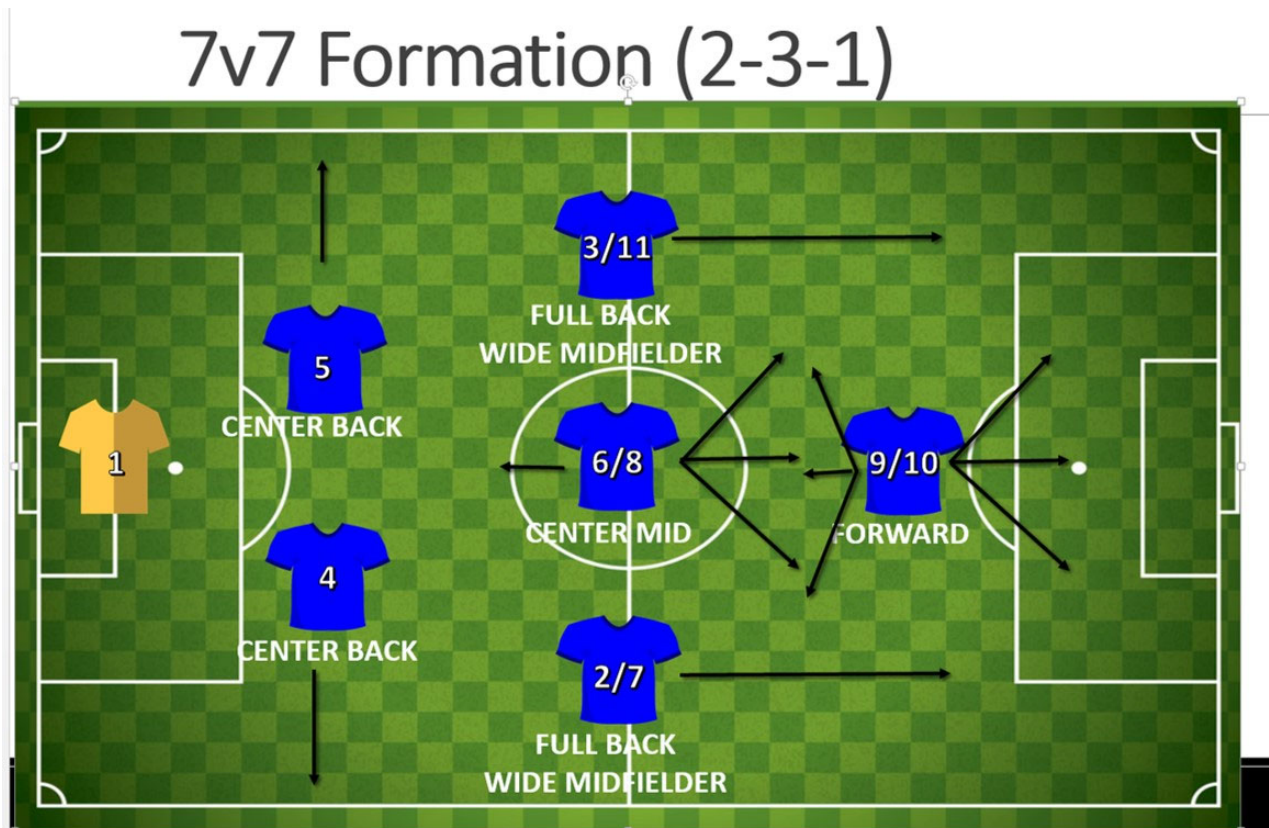
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BASIC GAME RULES AND RECOMMENDED FORMATION

Basic Rules

- 7 v 7 including keepers
- Size 4 soccer ball
- One referee per game scheduled by LYA
- Coaches remain on sideline with their team. Parents sit on sideline opposite team.
- Offsides rule in effect
- Buildout Line in effect (defenders behind buildout line on goal kicks until kick is taken)
- Throw-ins when ball out of bounds on touchline
- Goal kicks and corner kicks when ball out of play over endline
- Entire ball must cross out of bounds line for the ball to be out of play
- All referee decisions are final
- For a full set of rules see the document FIFA Laws of Soccer Modified for LYA U10

Recommended 7 v 7 Formation:



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PRACTICE ACTIVITIES

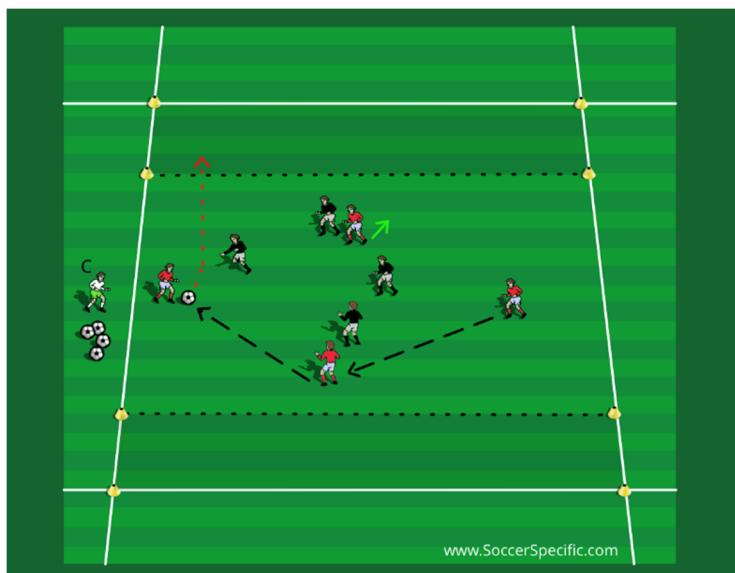
INTRO GAME: END ZONES

Setup:

As players arrive give them a ball and allow them to dribble around the field or pass with a partner. Once you have 6 players, split them into teams and begin playing a game.

End Zones:

- Create end zone areas at each end of the field or use half the center circle at one end and the goal box at the opposite end
- Teams score a point by dribbling the ball into the end zone or designated area and then stopping the ball in that area for a point
- Once you have 8 or more players you can split the group and play two games of 2 v 2 or 3 v 3



End Zone Targets

- 2 teams of 4 or 5 players play in half of the 4 v 4 playing field
- 1 player from each team is a TARGET at one end of the playing area: one TARGET in the midfield circle and one TARGET in the goal box
- Teams score by passing to the TARGET player that is on their team
- Rotate TARGET players every 2 minutes

Coaching Points:

- Players look for opportunities to dribble forward to end zone or pass forward to targets
- Awareness of space on the field

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INTRO GAME: MULTIPLE GOALS GAME

Setup:

- As players arrive place them in teams of 2 to 4 players
- Teams play across half of a 3 v 3 or 4 v 4 field
- Use cones to create two goals each 4 yards wide towards the corners of the playing area



Objective:

Teams score a point by dribbling through one of the two cone goals at the end they are attacking. Players must have control when dribbling through the cone goal for the point to count

Progression: Teams score by passing the ball on the ground through one of the cone goals

Coaching Points:

- Players attack the goal if there is space in front of them
- If the other team is blocking a goal, move the ball into space on the other side of the field and attack the other goal
- Defenders work together to block off paths to goal

Note:

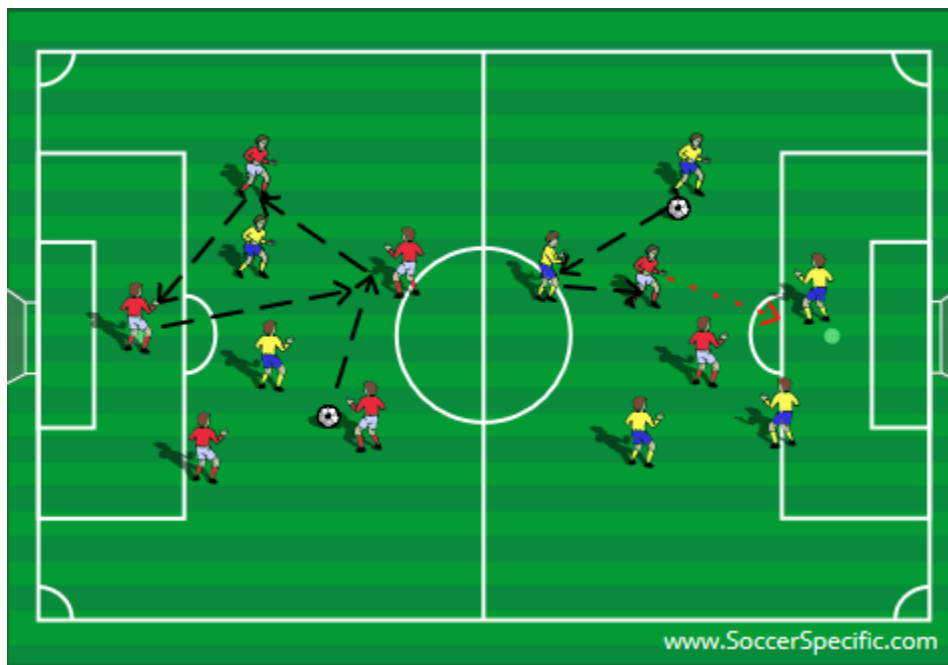
If teams are uneven, switch players so the teams are balanced or you may create one team with more players than the other team. For example: play 4 vs 3 with the team of 3 consisting of stronger players

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INTRO GAME: 4 v 1 to 5 v 2 KEEPAWAY HALVES

Setup:

- 2 playing areas 15 x 15
- Players split into two teams of 5 to 7 players
- 4 v 1, 4 v 2, or 5 v 2 in each playing area
- One soccer ball each playing area plus a supply of extra balls in between with Coach



Objective:

Attackers keep ball away from defenders. Defenders win the ball and attack the goal.

Instructions:

- 1 or 2 players from each team go into the other team's half of the field to defend
- Group of 4 or 5 keep the ball away from the 1 or 2 defenders keeping the ball in their own half of the field
- 4 v 1, 4 v 2, 5 v 1 or 5 v 2 keepaway each half of the field
- When the defender or defenders win the ball, they win a point and then win 3 points when they either score a goal or pass the ball to the Coach in between the playing areas
- Ball out of bounds, coach send in a 50/50 ball
- Play one minute and switch defenders
- Team with the most points at the end of the game wins the game

Coaching Points:

- Quick and accurate passing
- Think ahead before the balls comes to you
- Defenders work together to close down passing lanes
- Defenders quick attack when the ball is won and attackers quickly transition to defending



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FUN ACTIVITY GAME NO DEFENDERS: DRIBBLE IN A CONFINED PLAYING AREA

SKILL FOCUS: DRIBBLING AND TURNING WITH THE BALL

Setup:

- Each player has a soccer ball in a defined space.
- Defined space is approximately 15 x 15 up to 20 x 20



Objective:

Introduce players to the concept of dribbling in a confined area with other players around

Instructions:

- Each player is dribbling a soccer ball inside the playing area constantly moving, changing directions and avoiding other player
- If players collide, two players that collided to dribble their soccer ball out to the edge of the playing area, perform 5 jumping jacks (or ball taps) and return to the playing area
- Coach call out different turns: inside cut Right/Left, Outside turn Right/Left, Pullback Right/Left

Coaching Points:

- Keep your head up and find space to dribble into
- Bigger dribbles into open space, smaller dribbles (closer to the body) in crowded areas
- Turn the ball and dribble to a different area of the square
- Speed and slow down

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FUN ACTIVITY GAME NO DEFENDERS: NAME GAME **SKILL FOCUS: DRIBBLING AND TURNING WITH THE BALL**

Setup:

Each player has a soccer ball in a defined space.

Defined space is approximately 15 x 15 up to 20 x 20



Instructions:

Each player is dribbling a soccer ball inside the playing area

When the coach calls out SWITCH:

- Players dribble towards another player
- Stop the ball with the sole of the foot
- Announce her or his name to the other player
- Then switch soccer balls and resume dribbling

Repeat several times and players switch with different players each time.

Progression: Players announce their favorite color or food instead of their name

Coaching Points:

- Keep your head up and find space to dribble into
- Scan the field for players with whom you have not switched
- When Coach calls SWITCH, quickly find and dribble towards a player
- Be under control to be able to stop the ball next to a player
- Look your teammate in the eyes and listen to her or his name

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FUN ACTIVITY GAME NO DEFENDERS: FOOT SURFACES **SKILL FOCUS: DRIBBLING AND TURNING WITH THE BALL**

Setup:

Each player has a soccer ball in a defined space.

Defined space is approximately 15 x 15 to 20 x 20



Instructions:

- Coach instruct players which surface of the foot or which foot to use
- Players dribble in space using that foot or that surface
- RIGHT Foot only / LEFT foot only
- OUTSIDE of the foot only
- INSIDE of the foot only
- SOLE of the foot only

Switch surface every minute or so

Coaching Points:

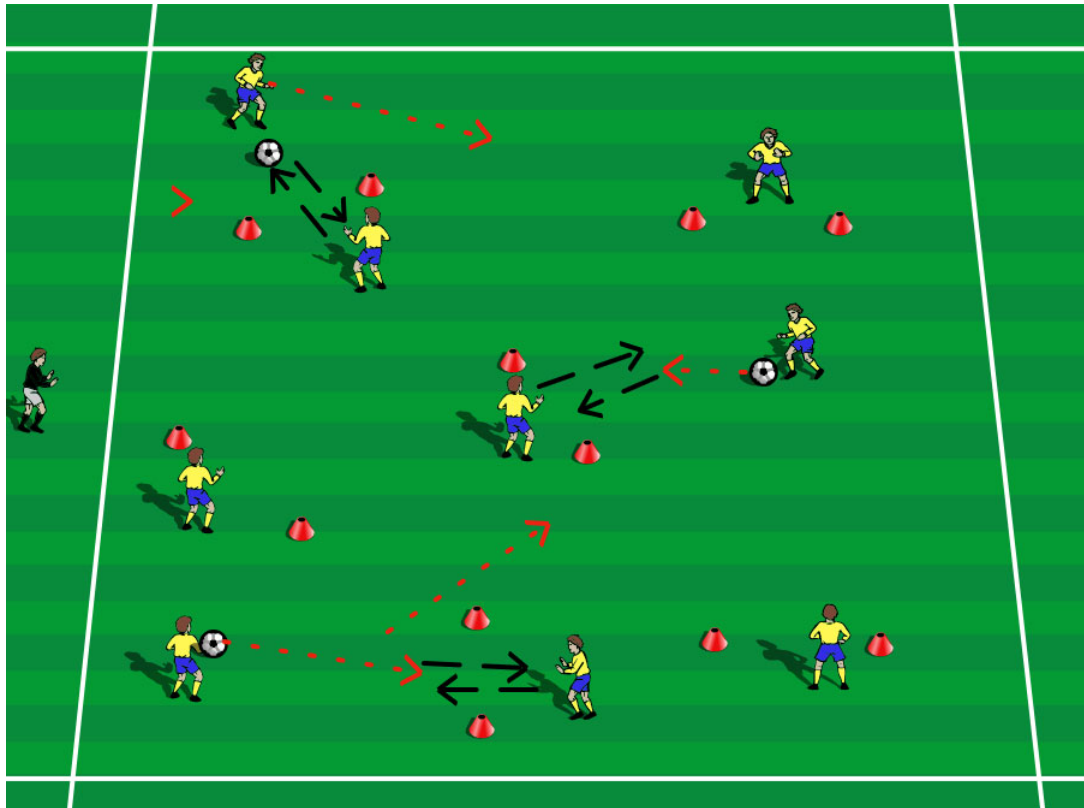
- Make sure players are clear on the location of each surface before each round. Have a player point to the surface identified
- Encourage the players to stick to using the surface identified
- Players turn with the appropriate surface

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FUN ACTIVITY GAME NO DEFENDERS: PASSING GATES

Setup:

- Playing area full 4 v 4 field
- Setup 6 to 8 cone “gates” throughout the playing area. Each gate 2 meters wide
- Half the players without a soccer ball stand inside cone gate (in between cones)
- Half the players have a soccer ball



Instructions:

- Players with a soccer ball dribble around and find a player in cone gate to connect a pass with that player
- Player in cone gate passes back to the player who then dribbles away to find another player to pass
- Play 90 seconds, count the number of passes and switch passers and dribblers
- **Progression:** when player passes to teammate in the cone gate, the players switch roles and the player in the gate dribbles the ball out instead of passing the ball back

What to Look For:

- Dribble with head up scanning for open players
- Make eye contact – call out teammates name in gate before passing
- Accurate pass with inside of foot through the cone gate
- Receive with inside of foot to setup the pass or dribble back

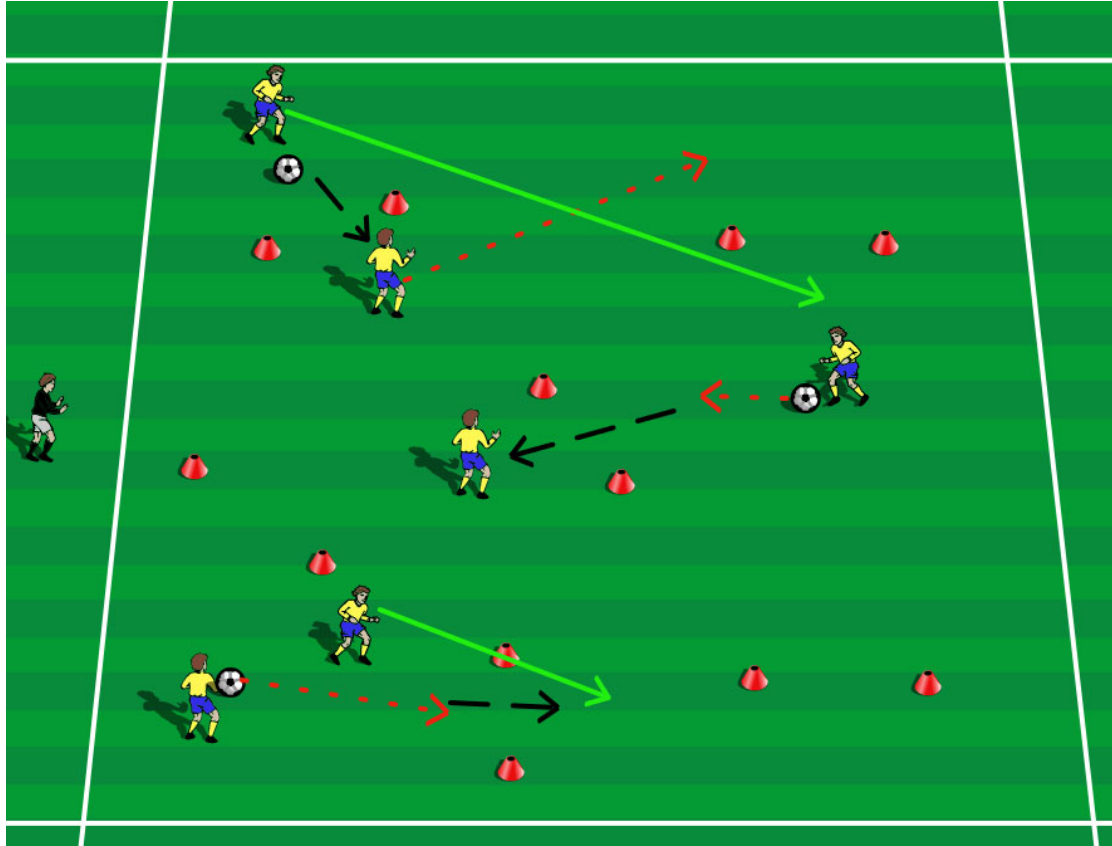


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FUN ACTIVITY GAME NO DEFENDERS: PASSING GATES WITH MOVEMENT

Setup:

- Each player with a partner and 1 soccer ball between 2 players
- Playing area full 4 v 4 field
- Setup 6 to 8 cone “gates” throughout the playing area. Each gate 2 meters wide



Instructions:

- Players dribble around the playing area
- Pass through a cone gate (between the cones) to your partner on the other side
- Then dribble away and find another pair of cones to pass through
- Play for 90 seconds and count the number of passes
- Players switch partners every round

What to Look For:

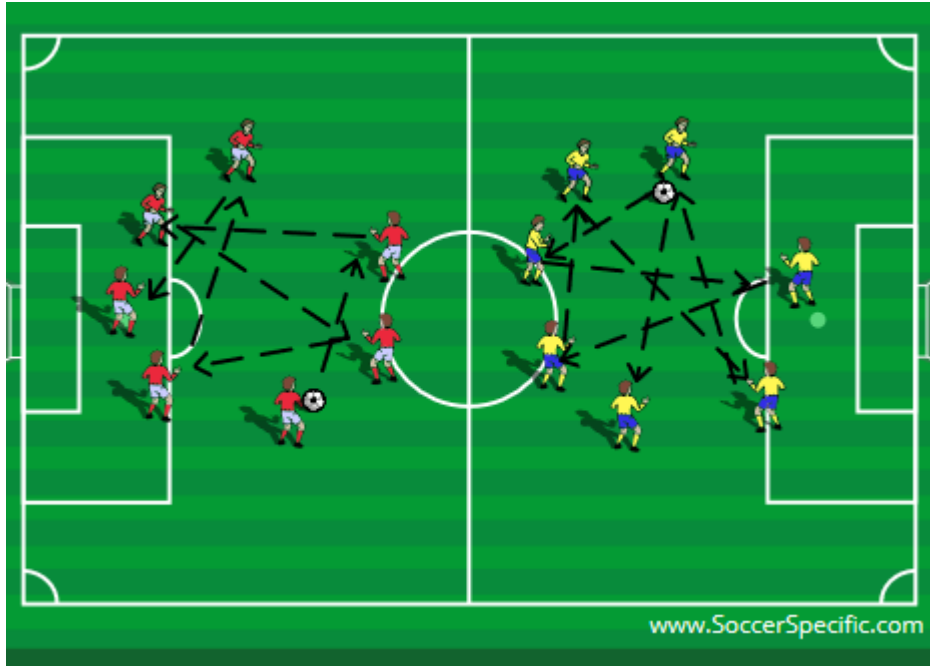
- Players head up scan for open cone gates
- Player without the ball move away from teammate into position to receive
- Accurate passes with inside of the foot through the cones
- Receive the ball inside of foot and then dribble away to another open gate

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FUN ACTIVITY NO DEFENDER: PASSING CIRCLES **SKILL FOCUS: SHORT PASSING AND RECEIVING**

Setup:

- Players split into two teams of 4 to 7 players
- Each team form a circle in one half of the field with one soccer ball



Objectives/Instructions:

- Form a circle and players pass the ball across the circle to a teammate using the inside of the foot
 - Pass the ball with your second touch
 - Make sure everyone is receiving passes
- Play 90 second round and count the number of passes completed
- Progression: add a second soccer ball in each half
- Progression 2: back to one soccer ball each half, after a player makes a pass, she must sit down on the ground and then get back up before being available to receive a pass
- Progression 3: after making a pass, move to a different area (i.e. between different teammates in the same circle)
- Progression 4: after making a pass, move to the OTHER circle

Coaching Points:

- Receive with the inside of the foot so that the ball ends a step in front of you (i.e. "make a pass to yourself")
- Pass with the inside of your foot to push it across to a teammate
- Be aware of which teammates have not received a pass
- Think ahead to where/to whom you are going to pass BEFORE you receive the ball

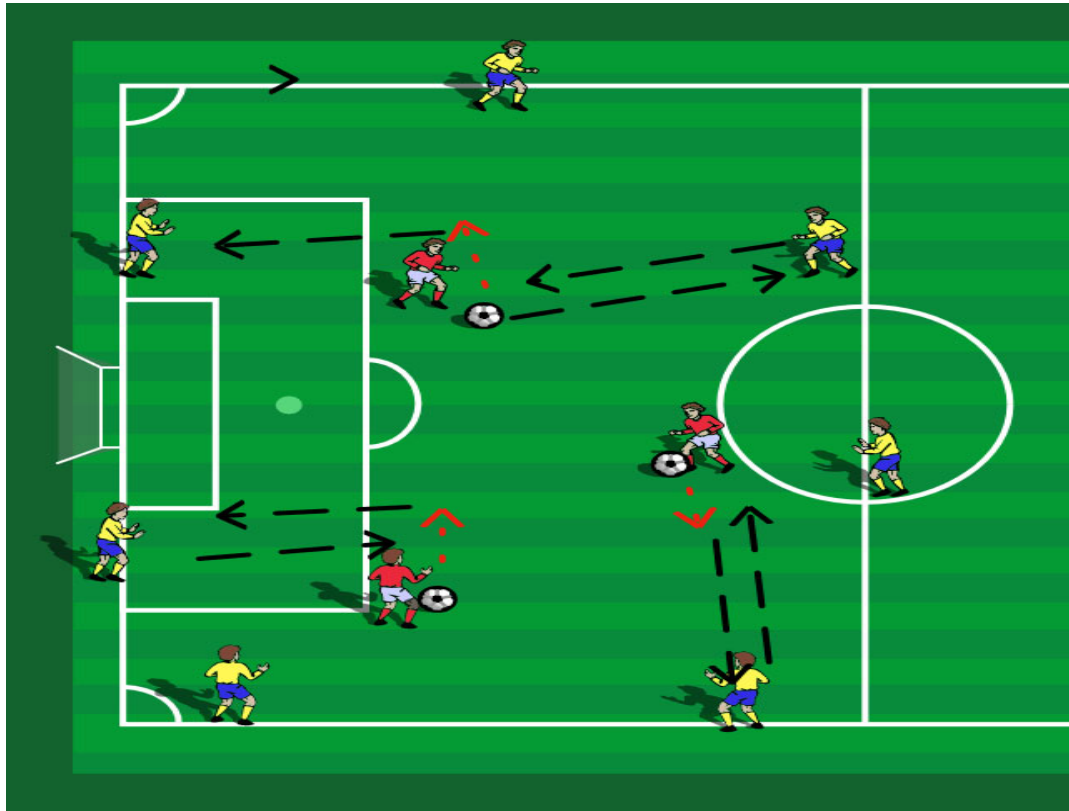
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FUN ACTIVITY NO DEFENDER: INSIDE-OUTSIDE PASSING GAME

SKILL FOCUS: PASSING AND RECEIVING

Setup:

- Half of a 7 v 7 field
- 3 players each with a soccer ball in the center of the playing area
- Remaining players form a circle around the perimeter of that half of the field



Instructions:

- Inside players pass to a player on the outside
- Outside player take 1 setup touch and pass back to the same player
- Inside player receive, dribble and then pass to another player outside
- Play 90 seconds, count your passes, and then switch 3 new inside players
- Prog: Pass to a player outside who then dribbles inside, players switch roles each PASS
- ALTERNATE: 2 teams of 6 player each team with 1 player each side of square and 2 players inside with a ball. Inside players pass ONLY to teammates

What to Look For:

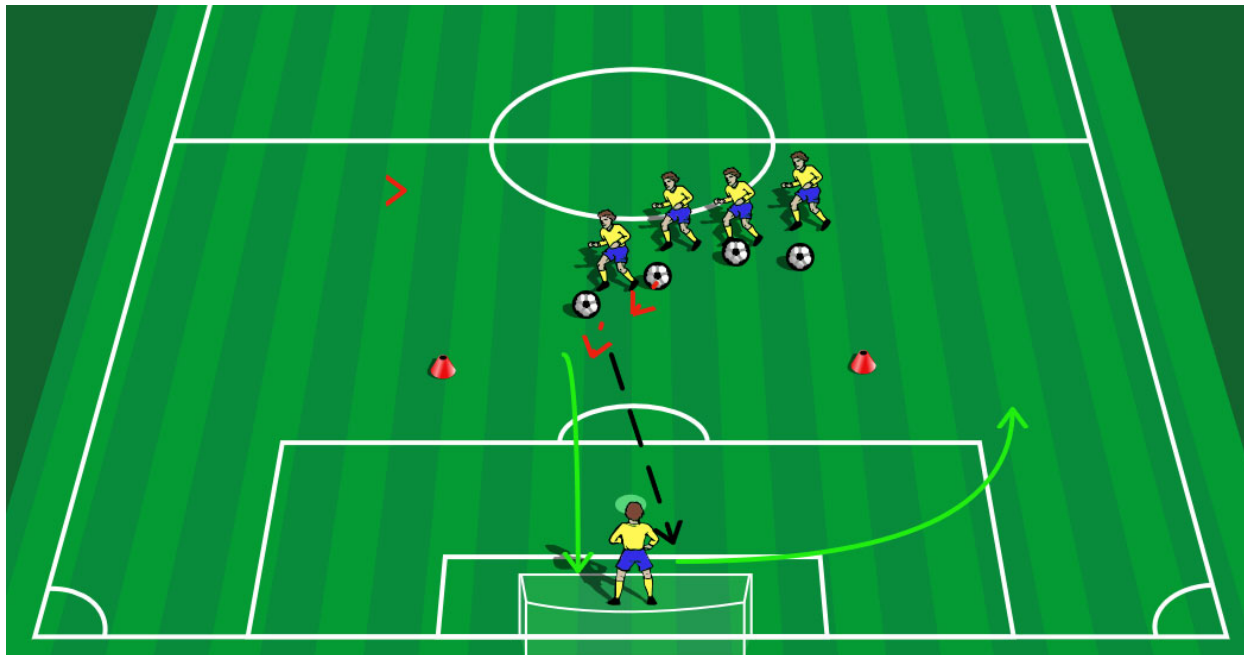
- Eye contact between inside and outside player before making pass
- Accurate and firm passes on the ground
- Setup touch out of your feet using the inside of your foot (pass to yourself)
- Inside players get "sideways on" to be able to quickly turn and pass to another player outside

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FUN ACTIVITY NO DEFENDER: THUNDER AND LIGHTNING **SKILL FOCUS: STRIKING THE BALL WITH POWER and GOALKEEPING**

Setup:

- One player start in goal
- Remaining players with a ball at Buildout Line
- Cones set out 12 yards from goal where players must shoot on or behind



Instructions/Objective:

- First shooter tries to score by shooting from behind the line marked by the cones
- Shooter then immediately runs into to play keeper against the next shooter in line
- Keeper rotates out to the back of the shooting line
- If a player misses her shot AND gets scored upon, she is out
- Players that are OUT remain behind the goal
- OPTION: Players that are OUT may catch a missed shot to return to play

What to Look For:

- Shooters head up to find open space of the goal
- Shooters strike the ball with the laces, lock the ankle and follow through towards the goal
- Keepers get to spot quickly and strong wrists hands in diamond shape to knock down shots

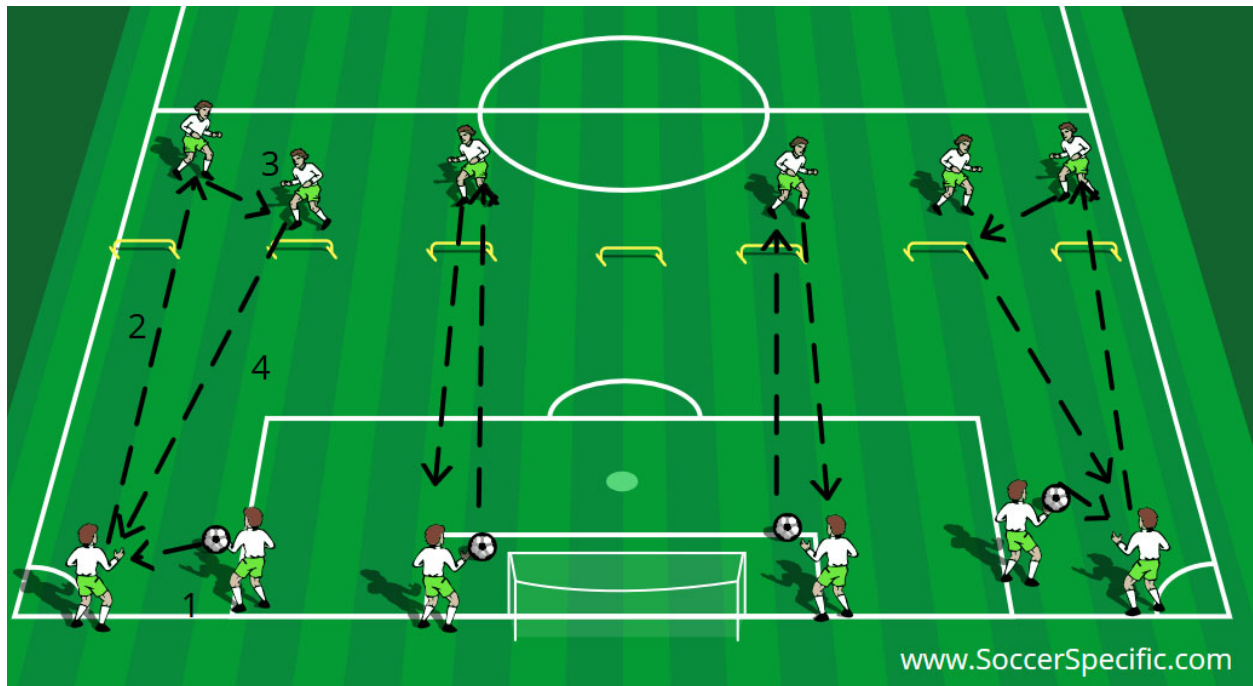
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FUN ACTIVITY NO DEFENDERS: 4 PLAYER LONG PASSING

SKILL FOCUS: BALL STRIKING LONG PASSES

Setup:

- Half the playing fields
- Players in groups of 3 or 4
- 1 or 2 players on or near the end line with a soccer ball
- 1 or 2 players between the buildout line and the midfield zone



Instructions:

- Player with ball pass short to partner
- Partner takes a “setup touch” and then pass long to player across the buildout line
- Player receiving the ball passes short to partner who then passes long back
- Alternate receiving player and long passer each time
- Receiving player raise hand to player knows to whom the pass should be made
- If only 1 player on an end, then eliminate the short pass
- ALTERNATE GAME: Players on endline catch or knock the ball down with hands as a keeper would do to practice keeping skills

What to Look For:

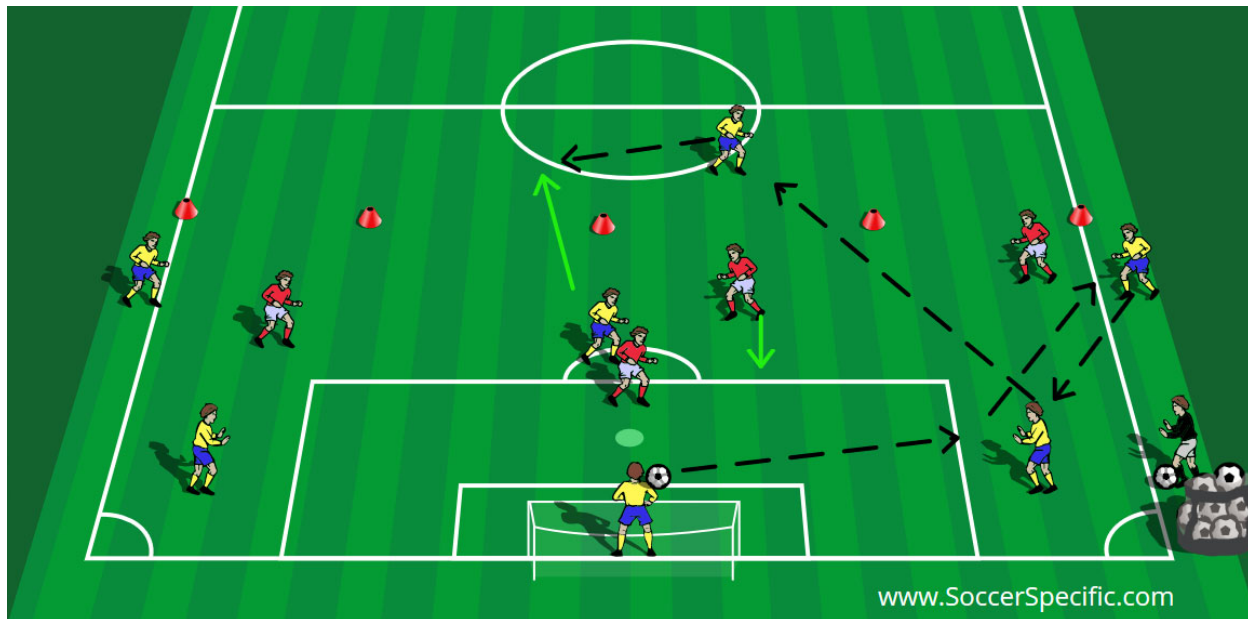
- Setup touch out in front so players do not have to back up to kick the ball
- Strike the ball with the laces, ankle locked and toe down to provide power
- After striking the ball follow through and land on the striking foot to provide accuracy
- Keepers keep hands in a diamond with stiff wrists

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MAIN ACTIVITY: 7 v 4 BUILDOUT vs ATTACK
FOCUS: BUILDING OUT OF THE BACK AS A TEAM

Setup:

- Split players into two teams
- Half 7 v 7 field with goal at one end and Buildout Line create “Midfield Zone”
- Team of 7 Keeper plus back 6 building out away from goal
- Team of front 4 or 5 attacking the goal
- ALT: 6 v 3 or 6 v 4



Objective:

- Buildout team scores by possessing the ball in the “Midfield Zone”
- Front 4 or 5 score on the goal to earn points

Instructions

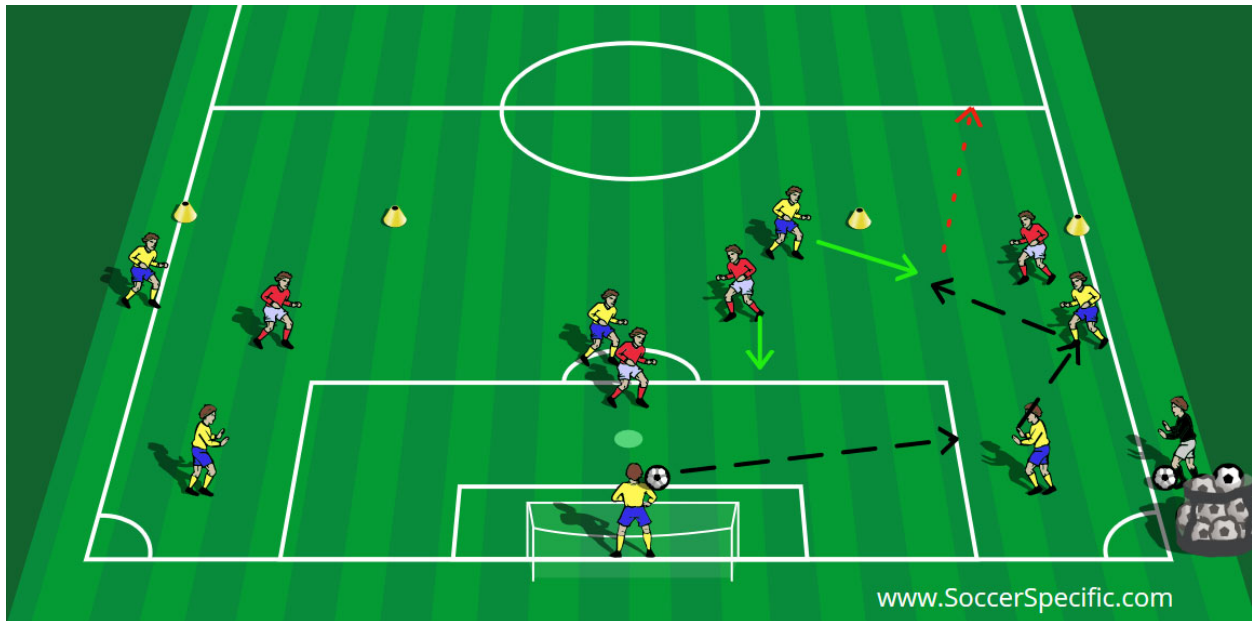
- All restarts start with a ball played in by the Coach
- Restart with team 6 or 7 in “team shape” and front 5 in a 3-2 formation
- Play until a team scores a point or ball out of play
- Prog: buildout team earn points by connecting 2 passes past the buildout line
- Prog 2: Add a target player past buildout line that buildout team tries to connect pass with past buildout line

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MAIN ACTIVITY: 7 v 4 BUILDOUT WIDE vs ATTACK
FOCUS: BUILDING OUT OF THE BACK AS A TEAM USING WIDE AREAS

Setup:

- Split players into two teams
- Half 7 v 7 field with goal at one end
- 2 wide cone “goals” on the wide edges of the Buildout Line
- Team of 7 Keeper plus back 6 building out away from goal
- Team of front 4 or 5 attacking the goal
- ALT: 6 v 3 or 6 v 4



Objective:

- Buildout team scores by dribbling or passing through one of the wide cone goals
- Front 4 or 5 score on the goal to earn points

Instructions

- All restarts start with a ball played in by the Coach
- Restart with team 6 or 7 in “team shape” and front 5 in a 3-2 formation
- Play until a team scores a point or ball out of play
- Prog: buildout team earn points by connecting 2 passes past the buildout line
- Prog 2: Add a target player past buildout line that buildout team tries to connect pass with past buildout line

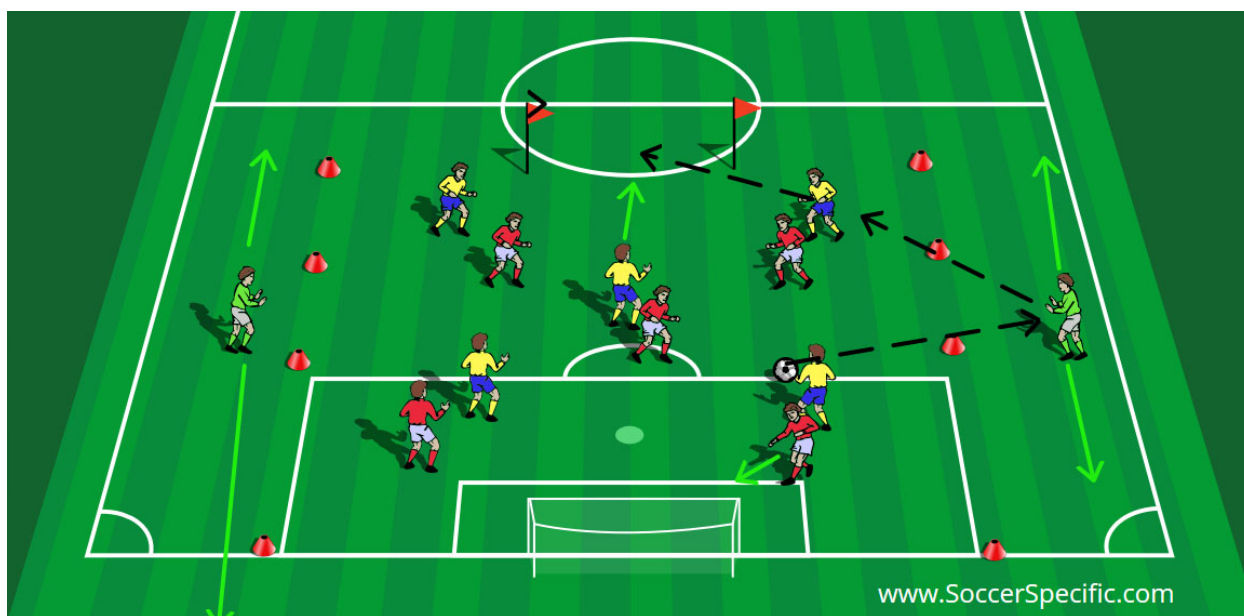
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MAIN ACTIVITY: 5 v 5 + 2 WIDE

FOCUS: MIDFIELD SWITCH POINT OF ATTACK TO LESS CROWDED SIDE OF FIELD

Setup:

- Half a 7 v 7 field with wide channels 5 yards wide each side of field
- One normal goal at end of the field
- One goal same width created using 2 corner flags or 2 cones at the bottom of the midfield circle
- 2 teams of 5 players play a 2-1-2 formation no keepers
- 1 “Neutral” attacking player in each wide channel



Instructions/Objective:

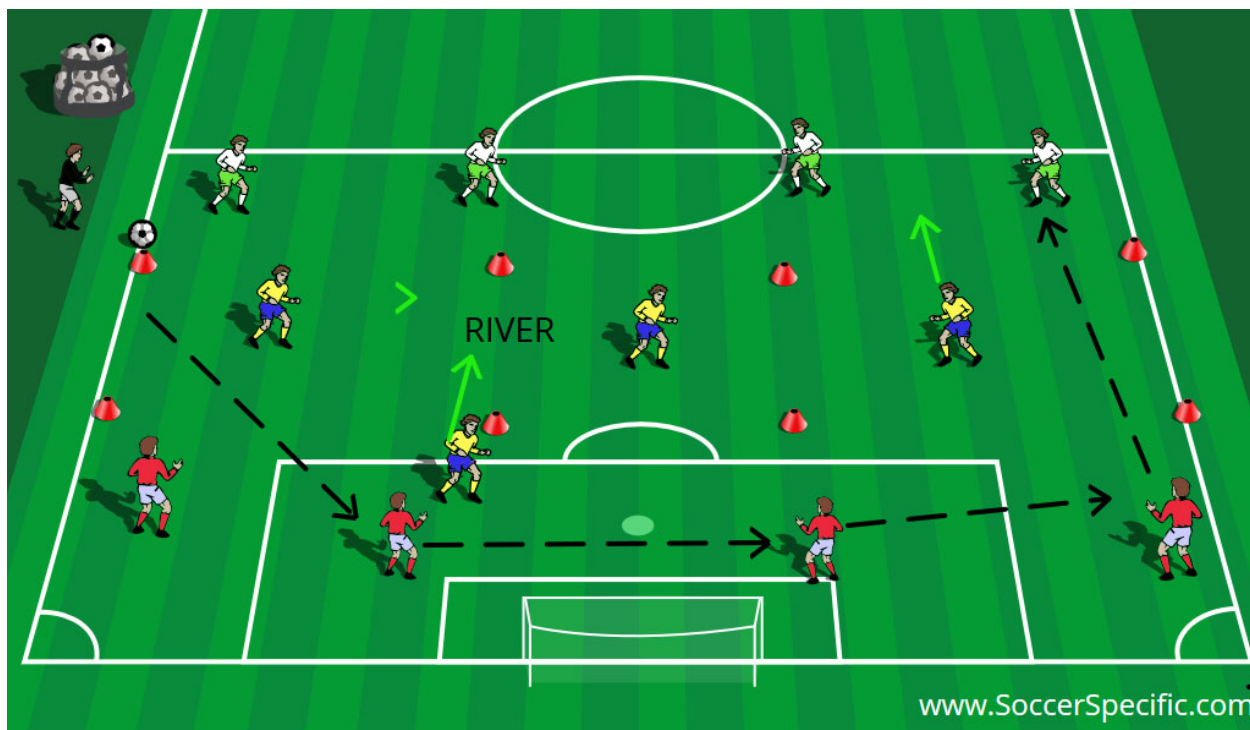
- Coach serve a ball into play
- Teams attack the goal
- Team may use wide neutral attacking players in possession
- Wide neutrals play with whichever team has the ball and must remain in channel
- Players can leave the middle and defend the wide players
- Play 3 minutes and switch neutral players
- Prog: Teams must switch from one wide channel player to the other before attacking the goal

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MAIN ACTIVITY: CROSS THE RIVER PASSING GAME FOCUS: BUILDING THROUGH MIDFIELD WITH PASSES

Setup:

- 3 teams of 4 players
- Half Field with a 5 yard deep channel “the river” splitting the field in half (back of channel is the Buildout Line)
- Coach on sideline with supply of soccer balls
- Team of 4 vs 1 defender in one end of playing area
- 3 defenders remain inside the middle channel
- 3rd team 4 players in the opposite end



Instructions:

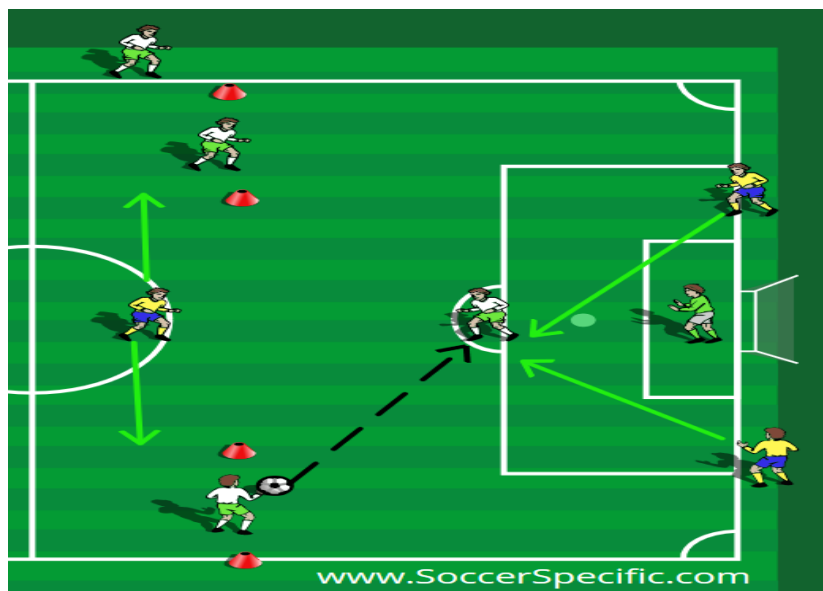
- Coach serve a ball into the team of 4 v 1
- Team of 4 keepaway from 1 and then pass “across the river” to the team on the other side
- Once ball goes across the river, 1 player from inside the river goes and defends the other side while 1st defender goes into defend the river
- The defenders in the river must stay in the river and can intercept passes
- Defender win the ball and pass the ball to the coach (may pass to a teammate to pass to Coach)
- Defenders are given points each time the attackers pass the ball across the river
- Defenders get points deducted each time they get the ball to the Coach
- Play 3 minutes and rotate defending teams so each team defends once
- Team with LOW score is the winning team
- ALTERNATE: 3 teams of 3 players or if odd number of players add a NEUTRAL attacker or defender

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MAIN ACTIVITY: 3 v 3 + 1 to GOAL
FOCUS: FINISHING ON GOAL / RECOVERING DEFENDER

Setup:

- Half of a 7 v 7 Field with a Goal
- One team of 3 to 6 attacking players
- One team of 4 to 6 defending players including a keeper
- One attacker start just outside the penalty box
- The other two attackers begin in cone gates setup wide either side of center circle
- One attacker starts with the ball
- Keeper plus 1 defender starting either side of goal
- 3rd defender starts inside the center circle



Instructions/Objectives:

- Attacker start play with a pass to the attacking player just outside the penalty box
- Once the ball is served into play, 2 defenders beside the goal close and defend
- All 3 attackers join together to attack 2 defenders plus the keeper
- Coach count to 5 and then send the 3rd defender in to help defend
- Attacker try to score on goal
- Defenders win the ball and pass to Coach in the center circle
- Play the first of 20 seconds, goal scored, ball out of play, or defenders pass to Coach
- Attackers rotate positions each time
- Defenders rotate positions each time
- Play 6 minutes and switch attacking and defending teams

What to Look For:

- Team of 3 work together to create an attack
- Space of the 2 attackers behind and beside the front attacker
- Shoot on goal as soon as there is an opening. Encourage LOTS of SHOTS

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END GAME SCRIMMAGE

Setup:

- Teams sharing a practice field scrimmage 7 v 7 including keepers for the last 20 minutes of practice
- Game day rules in effect
- Play 2 periods 10 minutes each
- 2 minute break in between periods to review team tactics
- Each Coach gets one FREEZE moment during the game to stop play and review team shape/positioning with their team should they choose to do so



Objective:

- Game day rules in effect. Focus on your skill of the day.

Instructions

- Game day rules apply

Note:

If teams are uneven, switch players so the teams are balanced even if a player or players are playing for the "other" team during the scrimmage