

U6 SOCCER COACHES' MANUAL

Age Group Philosophy

Create a positive learning environment with fun activities with a soccer ball which keep players moving and challenge a players' coordination, balance, ball comfort and creativity.

Age Group Objective:

If you ask your players at the end of the season would they like to play soccer again next season and they answer YES, then your season has been a success

Key Words:

FUN, MOVEMENT and **BALL COMFORT**

Age Group Skill Focus:

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

- Basic comfort and control dribbling the soccer ball
- Improved balance and body control
- Fun and movement

Typical Practice Format 45 minutes in length:

6pm to 6:10pm | **INTRO GAME**

6:10 to 6:20pm | **FUN ACTIVITY WITH A BALL**

Phase 1: No Defenders

Phase 2: Add Defenders

6:25 to 6:45pm | **END GAME**

Phase 1: Conditioned (Pick one condition and play 6 minutes)

Phase 2: Free Play (Game Rules Apply)

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

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GAME RULES AND FORMAT

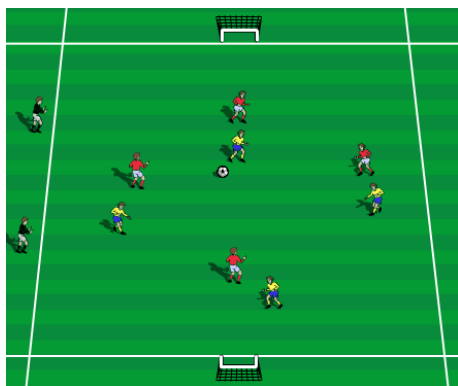
BASIC RULES

- 3 v 3 to PUGG goals with no keepers
- Four periods 10 minutes each period *running* clock with 2 minutes in between each period
- Substitute players on stoppages and one stoppage to sub per period is recommended to keep play moving
- Regardless of when your game starts, you must finish at least 2 minutes before the next game One Coach referee from sidelines. Choose which Coach before each Period. Work Together.
- starts and games are generally spaced ONE HOUR apart
- Fouls at this age group include: handling the ball, heading the ball, slide tackling, body tackling, pushing or interfering with another player without the ball
- Restarts upon a foul: coach/official give the ball to a player on the other team at the spot of the infraction. Play restarts with the player DRIBBLING the ball into play from the spot of the infraction. All players remain 5 GIANT steps away from the ball on restarts. All restarts are INDIRECT (meaning the ball not be kicked directly into the goal)
- Out of bounds. The entire ball must cross the line to be out and **keep the play going if it is close to minimize stoppages**. Restart play with a player dribbling the ball into play from the spot on the line where it went out of bounds.
- No offsides is called
- No coaching on the field. Please limit in-game coaching to substitutions and encouraging players to get move involved in the play when necessary
- Discourage goaltending (one player standing in front of the goal while the ball is in play)
- Encourage freedom of movement and do not restrain players to one half of the field

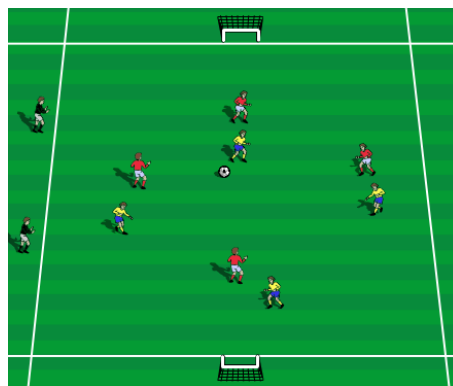
GAME FORMAT:

On game day, there will be two fields set up for the two teams. Each team will split their squads into two with half of their players playing on Field 1 and half of the players playing on Field 2. One coach from each team on each Field. See below diagram:

FIELD 1



FIELD 2



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When splitting the squads, please take the following approach to maximize the players' enjoyment:

- Each team place their TWO MOST COMFORTABLE players on Field 1.
- Each team place their TWO LEAST COMFORTABLE players on Field 2.
- The balance of your players could play on either field and should get opportunities to play on both throughout the season

COMFORT can be measured by factors including a player's speed, agility, size, technical skill, aggressiveness, and awareness.

This may be difficult to discern in WEEK 1 and it will be a fluid process. Just because a player stands out on Day 1, does not keep her on Field 1 for the season. You will see some players make remarkable strides in a short amount of time. Coaches work together to make the teams as even as possible.

What Happens When One Team Has Less than 6 Players?

- If the One Team has less than 6 players and the Other team has more than 6 players, you may share a player or players to even out teams

Coaches please work together to keep players MOVING and ENGAGED

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PRACTICE ACTIVITIES

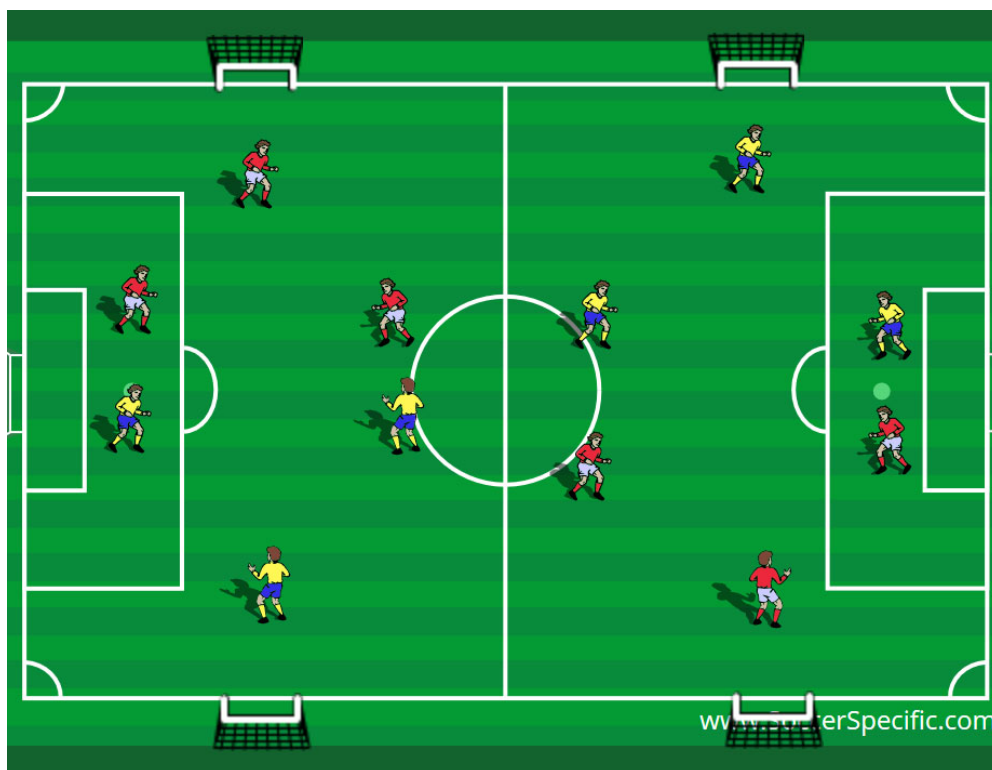
INTRO GAME FREE PLAY: 3 v 3 x 2

Setup:

- 2 playing areas each half a 3 v 3 field
- Goals on the sideline / end of each playing area
- May use cones or End Line in place of PUGG goals
- 3 v 3 each playing area

Instructions:

- One coach per field (or 1 coach in center circle between fields)
- Supply of soccer balls
- Normal game rules apply
- Play 4 or 5 minute games and rotate teams
- Each team play the other 3 teams



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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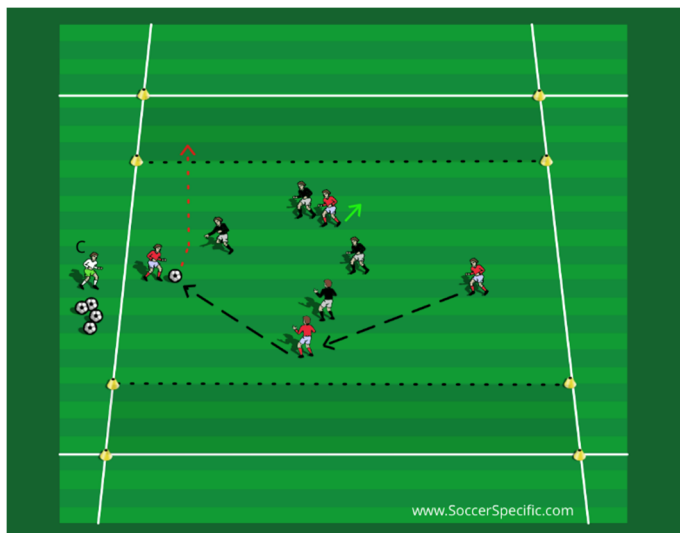
INTRO GAME: END ZONES and END LINES

Setup:

As players arrive give them a ball and allow them to dribble around the field
Once you have 4 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 Lines Game

- Teams play on Half a 3 v 3 or 4 v 4 field and play across the field side line to side line
- Teams score points by dribbling the ball to the end line and stopping the ball on the line
- Once you have 8 or more players you can split the group in 2 and play 2 v 2 up to 3 v 3 each half of the field

Coaching Points:

- Look for players to dribble quickly to the line if there is space in front of them
- BIG DRIBBLES into space
- SMALLER DRIBBLES (closer to the body) as the player gets close to the end line

Note:

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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: play continuous so that after a goal is scored, the player can keep dribbling back into the playing area and try to score in the other goal

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

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

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

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: BODY PARTS

Set-up:

Each player dribbles their ball throughout a 15 x 20 yards grided area.

Structure grid size smaller or larger based on the numbers of players present.

Ideally you want enough space available to run into as the exercise progresses.



Objective:

To have fun! Players need to be able to change direction and speed. Tight touches are encouraged while maintaining ball control. Players must be able to listen to the coach's instruction as the exercise progresses. Vision is all important as players need to see the open spaces within the grid and move into it or out of it as it fills up.

Progression:

1. The coach will call out a specific part of the body. As he does, the player will stop their ball with that part of the body.
2. Utilize the heel, sole, laces, toe, outside of the foot, thighs, rear, stomach, elbows, shoulders, forehead and anything else that may be appropriate.

Coaching Points:

- Keep close control of the ball
- Eyes up seeing ball and space
- Keep arms out for balance
- Avoid running into each other
- Develop a comfort level between the ball and the player

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FUN ACTIVITY GAME NO DEFENDERS: FOOT SURFACES

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: OPPOSITES ATTRACT

Setup:

Each player with a soccer ball

Playing area 15 x 15 up to 20 x 20



Instructions:

- Players dribble around the playing area
- Dribble towards another player
- As you get close to the player, turn the ball and dribble away in the opposite direction
- Continue dribbling and find another player to repeat
- Use different surface to turn

Progression: Coach instruct which foot surface to use to turn (outside of foot, inside of foot, sole of foot)

Coaching Points:

- Smaller dribbles (closer to body) as you approach another player
- Sharp “speedboat” turns as opposed to slow “cruise ship” turns.
- Look over your shoulder before turning so you know there is no one behind you
- After turn take 2 bigger dribbles into space

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FUN ACTIVITY GAME NO DEFENDERS: FOLLOW THE LEADER

Set-up:

Players need to be in groups of twos.

Each group will have one ball per group of two.

Grid size should be approximately 20 x 20 yards.



Objective:

For players to get comfortable on the ball while changing direction and speed.

Progression:

1. The player with the ball will dribble while following the player without the ball.
2. The player dribbling will try and maintain a close distance between him and his partner.
3. The player without the ball leads by walking fast. As coach feels they are technical enough, the leader may start jogging slowly, increasing the difficulty for the playing following dribbling.
4. Allow players to switch.

Coaching Points:

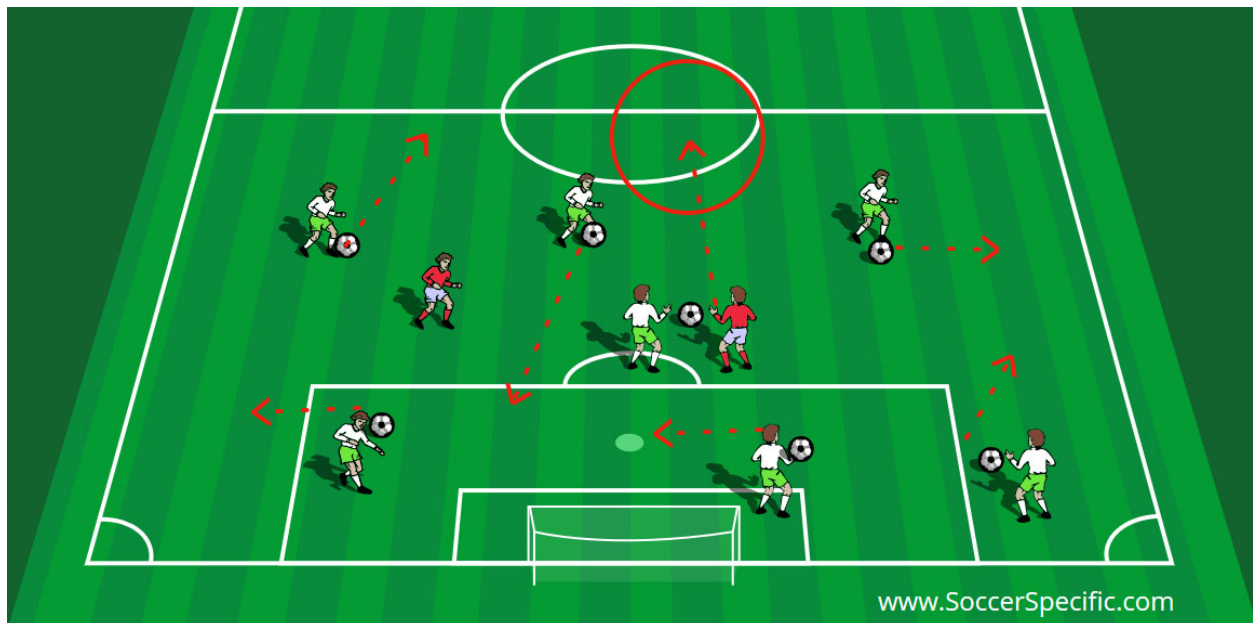
- Keep close control of the ball
- Eyes up seeing ball and man
- Utilize the outside and inside of the foot to cut the ball
- Keep the gap close between the leader and the man with the ball
- Avoid running into each other

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FUN ACTIVITY GAME WITH DEFENDERS: PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN

Setup:

- Half of a 3 v 3 field
- 2 or 3 defenders (PIRATES) wear or carry a yellow pinnie
- Remaining players with a soccer ball



Instructions/Objectives:

- Players with a ball dribble around the playing area
- 2 or 3 defenders try to steal the soccer ball and dribble it into the center circle (the SHIP)
- Players lose a ball and teammates can pass to them to keep it away from the defenders
- Play until all balls are deposited in the SHIP or 2 minutes, whichever comes first
- Adjust the number of PIRATES up or down based on their success in stealing soccer balls
- Play enough rounds that each player gets to be a PIRATE at least once
- PROG: Coach be the CAPTAIN and reside inside the center circle and PIRATES can pass to the CAPTAIN or dribble into the circle

What to Look For:

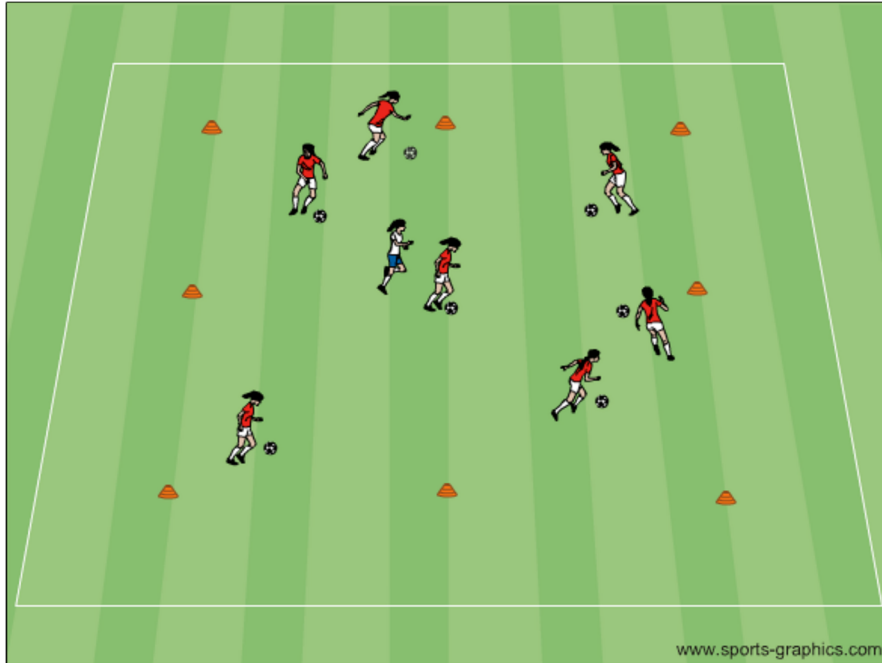
- Dribbling players be aware of where the PIRATES are
- Dribbling players look for SPACE to dribble into
- BIG dribbles into space
- Small, close dribbles when in tight quarters
- Body control to turn away from PIRATES

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FUN ACTIVITY GAME WITH DEFENDERS: STUCK IN THE MUD

Setup:

- 2 or 3 players without a ball designated as CHASERS. All other players with a ball
- Playing area 15 x 15 up to half a 3 v 3 or 4 v 4 field
- Ratios: 1 CHASER to 5 dribblers | add a 2nd CHASER at 7 dribblers or more



Objective:

Players with a ball dribble inside the square and try to avoid their soccer ball getting touched by one of the two CHASERS

Instructions:

- Players with a ball are dribbling in space while CHASERS try to touch a players' soccer ball
- If a CHASER touches a soccer ball, the player dribbling that ball is STUCK IN THE MUD. Move INSIDE the playing area and hold the soccer ball above your head and open your legs wide
- Other players with a ball can get you UNSTUCK by dribbling or passing their ball through your legs. Then you return to the game dribbling away from the CHASERS
- Make the grid smaller or larger depending on outcomes

Play for one minute and count how many players are STUCK IN THE MUD at the end of the game
Switch CHASERS. Give every player a chance to be a CHASER

Coaching Points:

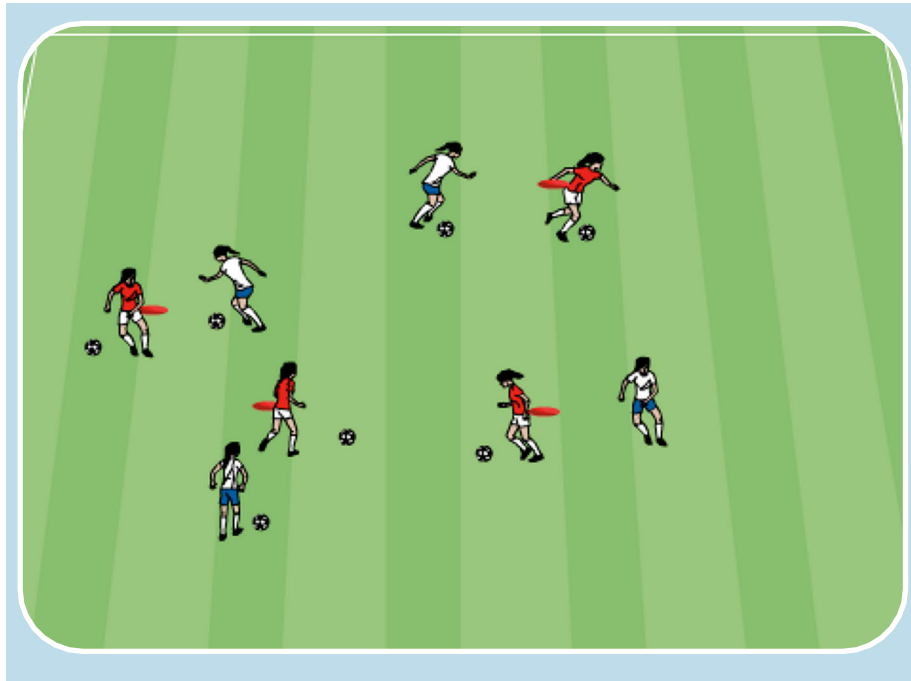
- Find space away from CHASERS and get there
- Be ready to quickly change directions and dribble away
- Find teammates who are STUCK and push the ball between their legs

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FUN ACTIVITY GAME WITH DEFENDERS: FOXES AND FARMERS

Setup:

- Players split into 2 teams of 4 to 7 players per team each player with a ball
- One team tucks a pinnie into the back of their shorts giving FOX TAILS
- The team without the pinnies are FARMERS
- Defined space is approximately 15 x 15 to 20 x 20



Objective:

FARMERS try to pull the FOX TAILS (pinnies) from the FOXES until there is only one FOX left. The last FOX remaining wins the game.

Instructions:

- Players dribbling in space with FARMERS trying to steal FOX TAILS
- If a FOX loses her tail, she becomes a FARMER chasing the other FOX TAILS
- Last player with a FOX TAIL wins the game
- If a player runs away from her ball to avoid losing her FOX TAIL, she loses her
- If a player runs away from her ball to take a FOX TAIL, the TAIL is returned to the FOX
- Switch FOX and FARMERS at the end of each round
- ALTERNATIVE: 2 or 3 FARMERS without a soccer ball chase FOXES who are dribbling balls

Coaching Points:

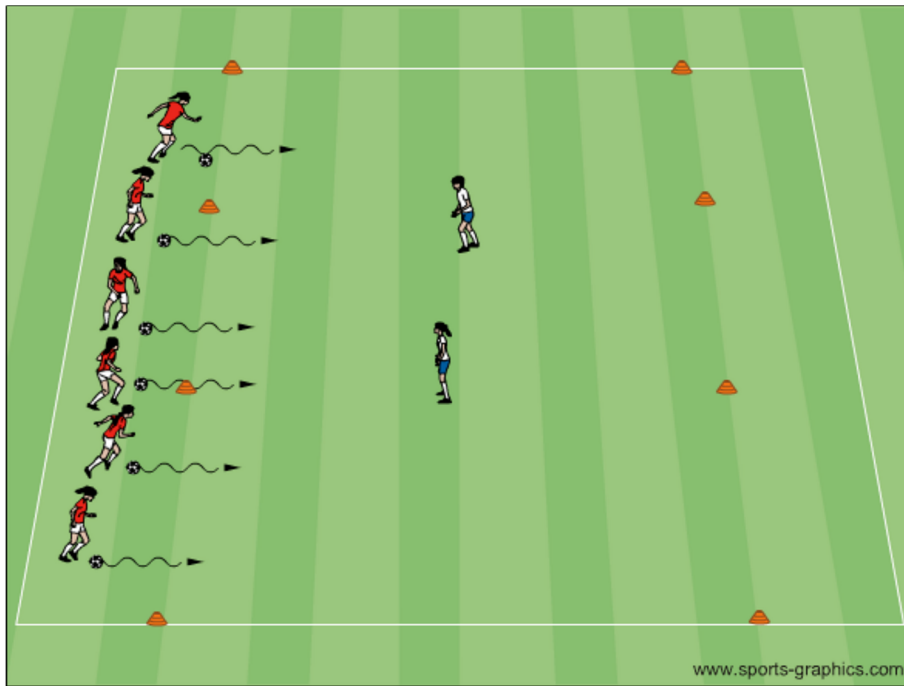
- Head up scanning the field while dribbling
- Be ready to quickly change directions and dribble away
- FARMER can work together to “corner” a FOX

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FUN ACTIVITY GAME WITH DEFENDERS: SHARKS AND MINNOWS

Setup:

- Playing area is half of a 3 v 3 or 4 v 4 field
- 2 or 3 Players are SHARKS without a ball in the middle of the playing area
- All other players are MINNOWS with a ball on one side of the field



Objective:

MINNOWS try to dribble across the playing area and stop their ball on the other sideline without having their soccer ball touched by a shark

Instructions:

- Coach calls GO and MINNOWS try to dribble across the playing area
- SHARKS try to touch as many soccer balls as possible
- If a player's ball is touched, he joins hands with that SHARK and tries touch a MINNOW ball
- A round is completed when all players are either SHARKS or end up as MINNOWS on the other side of the field
- Repeat back to the original sideline and repeat rounds until there are no more MINNOWS
- Add or remove SHARKS to at the beginning of play to impact players' success rates

Coaching Points:

- MINNOWS find space and dribble into space quickly
- MINNOWS push the ball further ahead into open space (**BIG DRIBBLES into open space**)
- MINNOWS dribble closer to the body as you get closer to the opposite line so that you can stop the ball on the line (**SMALL DRIBBLES when less open space**)
- SHARKS work together to "corner" MINNOWS

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END GAME FREE PLAY: 3 v 3 x 2

Setup:

- 2 playing areas each half a 3 v 3 field
- Goals on the sideline / end of each playing area
- May use cones or End Line in place of PUGG goals
- 3 v 3 each playing area



Instructions:

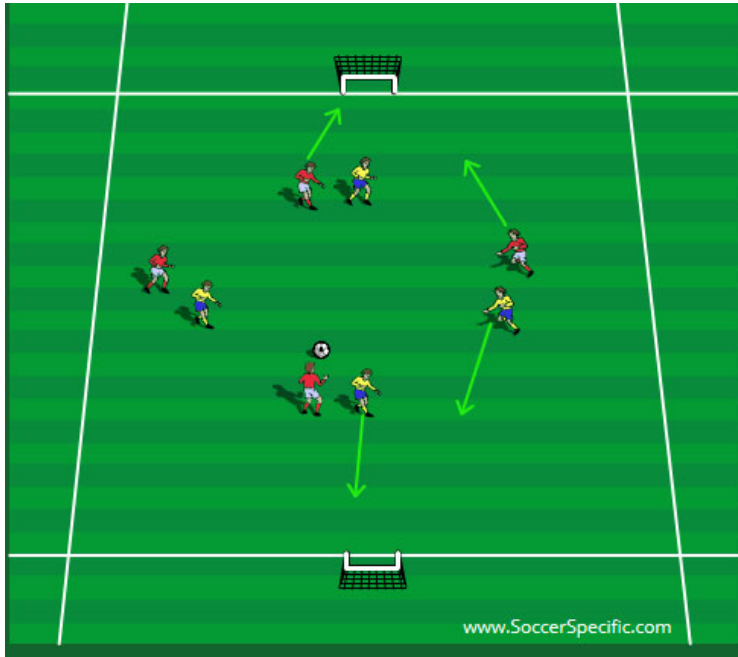
- One coach per field (or 1 coach in center circle between fields)
- Supply of soccer balls
- Normal game rules apply
- Play 4 or 5 minute games and rotate teams
- Each team play the other 3 teams

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END GAME: FREE PLAY 3 v 3 or 4 v 4

Setup:

- Split players into two teams
- Play 3 v 3 up to 4 v 4 with a PUGG goal at each end
- No more than 4 players per team on the field at a time
- Have a supply of soccer balls beside the field to keep playing moving



Instructions/Objective:

- Game day rules apply

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 v 3 with the team of 3 consisting of stronger players

CONDITIONS THAT MAY BE ADDED TO GAMES:

Coach may apply ONE condition for a portion of the END GAME

- One Goal Game: 3 teams of 3 players. 2 teams play 3 v 3, 1 team rest. Play until first goal and team that scores stays on. Play 2 minute games max.
- Goals count double when everyone on your team is past midfield when the goal is scored
- Play with Two goals at each end (2 PUGGS one end and 2 cone goals other end) similar to the INTRO game. Switch Directions after 3 minutes.
- Opposite Directions: One team attack PUGG goals on the ends, the other team attack cone goals on the sides. Switch directions after 3 minutes.
- No Go Zone: Normal game of 3 v 3 or 4 v 4, but players not permitted in center circle