

Soccer Drills

3 vs 1 Finishing Drill

Purpose: Helps develop finishing techniques and instinct when in position to score a goal. Teaches the player to take a shot as quickly as possible.

Procedure: In the penalty box, line-up three forwards, against one defender and one goalie. The ball is played from outside of the box (mix up the services from each side of the box and from behind) to one of the forwards. The forwards are limited to two touch passing and one touch scoring and they are limited to three or less passes. Emphasize getting a shot off quickly and having the forwards that don't shoot attack the goal.

3 vs 1 Shooting Drill

Purpose: Teaches players to see the field and the open teammate.

Procedure: Position players about 30 yards from the goal. Player A lines up on defense and try's to steal the ball and protect the goal. Players 1, 2 and 3 are on offense and try to spread the field and make a series of passes until someone has an open shot. The person with the open shot takes the shot and the other two attack the goal for a possible put-back.

Bow-Tie Drill

Purpose: Teaches footwork for receiving and passing the ball

Procedure: Set up players in couples. Put out 4 cones in a straight line with a normal passing distance between the middle two cones, and place the other two on either side of the other cones about 10 feet apart.. The players stand on the two inside cones and pass the ball to each other. In receiving a pass, the player uses the outside of one foot to direct the ball behind them and then they dribble the ball around the outside cone and back to the inside cone, where they pass to the other player.

Challenge Drill

Purpose: Develops dribbling skills with speed and works on the defender getting back in front of the ball on a breakaway.

Procedure: Setup Player A, 20-30 yards in front of the goal. Place Player B, five yards behind Player A. The coach stands even with Player A and passes the ball towards the goal. Player A must collect the ball, sprint towards the goal, and shoot before Player B can catch him. This drill can be done with or without a goalkeeper.

Cone Race Drill

Purpose: Teaches players to kick the ball hard and follow it all the way to the goal.

Procedure: All players have a ball and start in a line at one end of the field. At the other end of the field (30 or 40 yards away) set up 10 cones in a small circle. At the whistle have all players kick their ball as hard as they can and run after it. The players need to keep kicking and running until they get to the other end of the field. Once they get to the cones and the end of the field, they need to kick the ball through the cones until they knock them all down. Once all of the cones have been knocked down then they race back to the other end of the field. (Variation - set up two or three defenders between the players and the cones.)

First Touch Drill

Purpose: Helps develop passing accuracy from a moving passer to a moving target without defensive pressure

Procedure: One soccer ball for every two players and four cones.

1. Scatter players in pairs in a 20 X 20 yard grid.
2. Each set of players has a ball.
3. On coaches signal, the players begin to move through the grid.
4. The player with the ball passes to their partner, who must pass back on the first touch.
5. Partners continue moving using only one-touch passing.

Five Pass Drill

Purpose: Works on team passing and spacing

Procedure: Split players into even groups (4 vs 4 up to 7 vs 7).

Mark a large grid with cones (approximately 40 yards x 30 yards). A neutral player is placed at each end of the field. To score a goal, a team must make 5 or more passes to teammates and then must make the 6th pass to one of the neutral players without the ball being touched by the opposition. After 5 consecutive passes are completed the team may pass to either neutral player without alternating. Credit is not given for a pass if the ball is passed back to the player from which it came. They still keep possession and play continues).

Give and Go Drill

Purpose: Works on passing, moving without the ball and combination play.

Procedure: Setup three cones. Place four players behind cone A. Set cone B up about 10-15 yards downfield, and lineup two players at cone B. Set up cone C about 20-25 yards downfield from cone A and lineup two players at cone C.

The first player in line at cone A passes the ball to the first player inline at cone B and continues up the field, the player at cone B receives the ball, turns and returns the ball to the player from cone A. This player controls the pass and then makes a long pass to the player at cone C. The player at cone C, then dribbles with the ball to cone A. The player from cone A goes to the end of the line at cone B, the player from cone B goes to the end of the line at cone C and the player from cone C stays in line at cone A.

Gotcha Drill

Purpose: This a great drill for conditioning, dribbling, passing and aggressiveness.

Procedure: Each player will need a ball. Player "1" is "it" and is the only player to start with a ball. All of the other players are around the outside of the grid area. Player "1" dribbles and tries to hit the other players below the waist with the ball. When hit, that player gets a ball and joins player "1". The game is over when all players have been caught. The last player caught starts with the ball for the next game. If the task it to difficult for one player at the beginning of the game, start with two players. Encourage deceptive passing of the ball, look one-way and pass the other, use the outside of the foot. Players not caught should run, jump and use zig-zag movements.

Herky Jerky Drill

Purpose: Demonstrates how changing speed can be used to create space.

Procedure: Set up a 10 X 10 grid with cones. Place 3 or 4 players in a single file line. Have the first player start and tell each follower to stay as close to the person in front of them as they can without passing. Have the leader jog at a constant speed the first time around the grid. The second time around tell the leader to change speeds fast, slow, fast. After they finish talk to the group about how much harder it was to stay close to the person in front of them when the speed was changing.

Horse in the Middle Drill

Purpose: Teaches players how to read the defense when making a pass. Great drill for conditioning and getting a defender to see the field better.

Procedure: Put together groups of three. Set-up a rectangle with cones, 10-20 feet long and 5-10 feet wide, depending on age group. Position a player at each end of the rectangle, giving one a ball. Position a player in the middle and try to have the two end players try to pass the ball back and forth to each other without the defender getting the ball.

Invisible Man Drill

Purpose: Helps develop passing and collecting skills with subtle defensive pressure.

Procedure: Place four cones in a square 10 yards apart to make a 10 X 10 area. Position three players in a straight line spread out in the 10 X 10 area. Players B and C should be looking in the direction of Player A. Player B (the middle player) can move laterally but not forward or backward. Player C moves either right or left to receive a pass from Player A. Player B then faces Player C, and Player A moves either right or left to receive a pass from Player C. After several times change defenders (Player B).

Pass Dribble Pass Drill

Purpose: Develops passing accuracy and receiving skills from a moving passer to a moving target.

Procedure: Position two players in a 15 X 15 yard area. Player A will pass to Player B who will dribble into open space and turn and pass back to player A, who has moved to an open area.

Positional Game Drill

Purpose: Teaches possession and passing skills. Moving without the ball and looking for open areas, etc.

Procedure: Set-up a small field (30 X 30) with cones. Play 7 vs 4, where the team of seven tries to keep possession of the ball under pressure from the team of 4. The team of seven can score by passing the ball ten times to each other. The team of 4 can score by dribbling the ball outside of the cones.

Pressure Drill

Purpose: Teaches defenders to close on the ball quickly and keep pressure on the ball.

Procedure: Divide players into groups of three. Player 1 is standing by the coach who rolls the ball or tosses to Player 2. Player 2 must control the ball and make a pass to Player 3. After the coach gets the ball to Player 2, Player 1 immediately tries to close on Player 2 to prevent Player 2 from controlling the ball and making the pass to Player 3.

Receive and Turn Drill

Purpose: Works on passing, moving without the ball and combination play.

Procedure: Set up three cones. Place four players behind Cone A. Set cone B up about 10-15 yards down field, and line up two players at cone B. Set cone C up about 10-15 yards down field, and line up 2 players at cone C. The first player in line at cone A passes the ball to the first player in line at cone B. The player from cone B who received the ball turns with the ball and passes to the player at cone C. The player at cone C then dribbles the ball back to cone A. The player at cone A goes to the end of the line at cone B, the player from cone B goes to the end of the line at cone C, and the player from cone C goes to the end of the line at cone A.

Red Light Green Light Drill

Purpose: Fundamental foot skills for dribbling. Helps teach young children to keep the ball close and under control.

Procedure: Just like the game we played in our youth, the coach or one of the players is "IT". He or she stands at one end of the field with his or her back to the others and calls out red light, green light one two three and then turns around. The players meanwhile have been dribbling toward him or her and must stop, with their foot on top of the ball, when the player turns around. Anyone moving must go back to the beginning and start over. If a player reaches the person who is "IT" they are the winner.

Shooting Gallery Drill

Purpose: Helps develop instep shooting technique, practice attacking and defending with small groups.

Procedure: Two teams of four players. Evenly distribute 12 cones in a 10 X 10 circle. Goals are scored by knocking down cones, players are not allowed into the circle but must shoot from outside of the circle. Start off with two balls (one for each team). Each team can score points by knocking down a cone. Balls that stop in the circle are dead and cannot be retrieved. If a ball goes completely through the circle it can be played by the team retrieving it. The player that doesn't have a ball can either defend or try to get open for a chance to shoot at a cone.

Sidewinder Drill

Purpose: Helps to assess how well a player is able to change directions and accelerate. (Stop and start).

Procedure: Place two cones ten feet apart. On coaches signal, players move laterally to touch one cone and then the other in the opposite direction. To make it competitive count the number of times each player touches both cones within a minute.

Star Drill

Purpose: Helps develop passing and receiving skills with subtle defensive pressure.

Procedure: Position five players to form a five point star. Place one defender in the middle of the star. Challenge your players to make as many consecutive passes as possible without losing the ball or allowing the defender to touch the ball. Players are not allowed to pass the ball to the player next to them. Explain to your players that this is because they need to have spacing in a game when making a pass or they will not clear the defense.

Three Play Drill

Purpose: Teaches teamwork and passing the ball while moving.

Procedure: Line-up players in groups of three. Set-up a rectangle 10-20 feet long and 5-10 feet wide. Place a player with a ball at each end of the rectangle. Station one player in the middle. Begin by having one of the players on the end pass the ball to the player in the middle. The player in the middle must return the ball immediately and then turn to receive a pass from the other player. Continue until the group has completed 5-10 passes to each side. You can make it competitive where the group to make 5 passes to each end first wins.

Wall Shot Drill

Purpose: Develops the ability to create space for shooting.

Procedure: Line-up two offensive players (player 1 and 2) about 10 feet in front and on each side of the goal. Place a defender (player A) in the center of the offensive players. Place a fourth player (player B) 20 feet from the goal. Player B must pass to player 1 or 2 and then move to an open space for a return pass. Once player B receives the return pass he should take a shot on goal.

Windows Drill

Purpose: Great drill for passing

Procedure: Set-up "windows" around an area (2 cones placed close together). 2 Players have to pass the ball to each other through the window to score a point. The only rule is that you can't pass through the same window twice.