



Smithfield Youth Soccer

Grades 1-2

Development Focus & Practice Activities/Drills

PLAYER DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

4v4

Grades 1 & 2

FOUNDATION PHASE I

SCANNING, RECEIVING, DRIBBLING, SHORT PASSING, AND SHOOTING

Soccer Development

GOALS

- Players develop scanning skills (ME AND MY SCANNING SKILLS)
- Players develop fundamental movement skills (ME AND MY MOVEMENT SKILLS)
- Players develop fundamental soccer skills with and without the ball (ME AND THE BALL)
- Players are introduced to cooperative, low structured team play (ME AND MY TEAMMATES)

Learning objectives

- To develop fundamental movement skills (walking and running, pulling and pushing, bending and twisting, skipping, hopping, leaping, catching and throwing, lifting and carrying, jumping and landing, kicking and dribbling, etc.)
- To develop individual coordinated movements (efficiency, quality, quickness)
- To develop reaction speed and acceleration speed
- To develop spatial awareness (SCANNING) and reduced coordinated movements with teammates
- To play with respect to the rules of the game
- To develop fundamental player actions with a high focus on attacking actions
- To develop the ability to win the ball back
- To introduce and implement team tactical principles
- To develop reflection skills: build self-esteem and self-confidence



The Flag Game - Dribbling in Tight Spaces Soccer Dribbling Drill

The flat game soccer drill is designed to focus on young soccer players learning to dribble in tight spaces.

Drill setup

1. Create a grid that is approximately 10X25 yards.
2. Randomly scatter flags within the grid.
3. To begin the drill, add two fewer flags than the number of players you have.
4. Each player should begin inside the grid with a ball.

Drill Instructions

1. Instruct the players to dribble around freely inside the grid avoiding other players and flags.
2. The congestion of the players and flags will cause the player to look up to check their surroundings continually.
3. When the coach yells "STOP," each of the players must race to a free flag as quickly as possible.
4. The first player to reach the flag five consecutive times wins the game.

Drill Variations

- Reduce the number of flags.
- Instead of keeping score, make the players do some *minor* form of punishment like push-ups, star-jumps, sit-ups. Make sure the action is age appropriate.
- Restrict the players to only use a certain part of the foot or dribbling technique.

Drill Coaching Points

- Make sure the player is regularly lifting their head and checking their surroundings; this will help players find space and avoid other players.
- Make sure players keep the ball close to them while in congested areas; this will help them move the ball more quickly to avoid other players and obstructions.
- Encourage players to use all parts of their feet while dribbling (inside, outside, top, bottom).



Sharks and Minnows FUN Youth Soccer Drill

The Sharks and Minnows dribbling drill focuses on using the body to protect the ball by placing their body in between the ball and the defender.

Drill setup

1. Build a grid approximately 20X25 yards. This field should be adjusted based on the skill level and number of players participating.
2. Two players are designated the SHARK start in the middle of the grid without a ball.
3. The remaining player starts with a ball on one of the end lines.

Drill Instructions

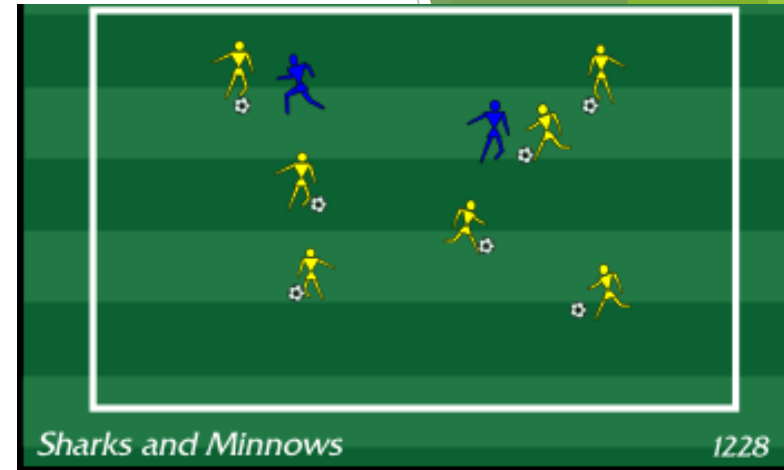
1. The minnows, the players with the ball, attempt to swim from one end line to the other while keeping their ball away from the sharks.
2. The sharks attempt to gain possession and knock the minnows ball out of the grid. Once this happens, the minnow becomes a shark.
3. The last minnow standing wins the competition.

Drill Variations

- Players only use left foot to dribble.
- Players use outside of feet to dribble.
- Players use sole of feet to dribble.

Drill Coaching Points

- Keep the dribblers under control and not panicked once the sharks get near them.
- Inform players to keep the ball close within playing distance.



Ouch! Soccer Drill, Fun U6 and u8 soccer drill

A FUN soccer drill for younger players (U6, U7, and U8) to introduce dribbling, looking up and correctly striking the ball at a target.

Drill setup

1. Build a grid 20X30 (may adjust if too large or small).
2. Every player begins in the grid with a ball.
3. The coach and assistant coach start in the grid without a ball.

Drill Instructions

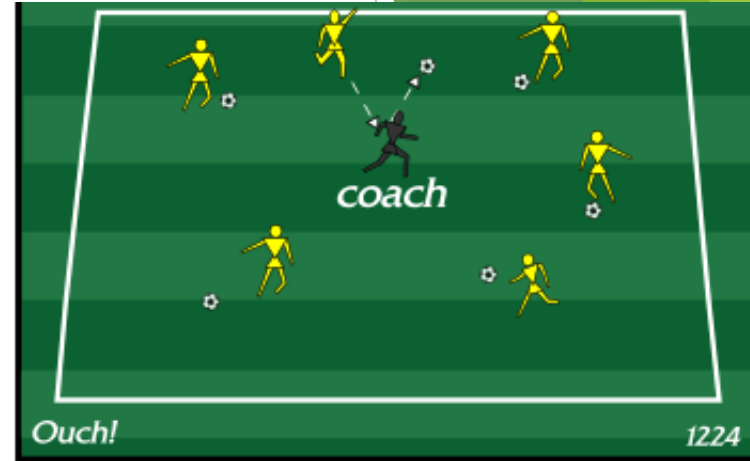
1. The coaches jog around in the grid and players try to kick their balls and hit the coaches.
2. The players get a point each time they hit the coach.
3. The coach should yell OUCH each time they are hit to make the game FUN.
4. For younger players, the coach can walk around their knees.

Drill Variations

- If the players are struggling to hit the coach, the coach should stop for a couple of seconds to give the players a chance.
- Use different parts of the foot: Inside, Instep, Right and Left foot.

Drill Coaching Points

- Encourage players to get their head up and look for the coaches while dribbling.
- Make sure the players are striking the ball with the proper part of the foot.



Soccer Dribbling Drill to Beat a Defender

This dribbling drill is great when teaching young players when and where to dribble, and how to beat the defenders on the dribble.

Drill setup

1. Create a grid 20X10 yards.
2. Mark the halfway with a line of cones about 5 yards apart.
3. Split into groups of three players.
4. A group of three players needs two balls.

Drill Instructions

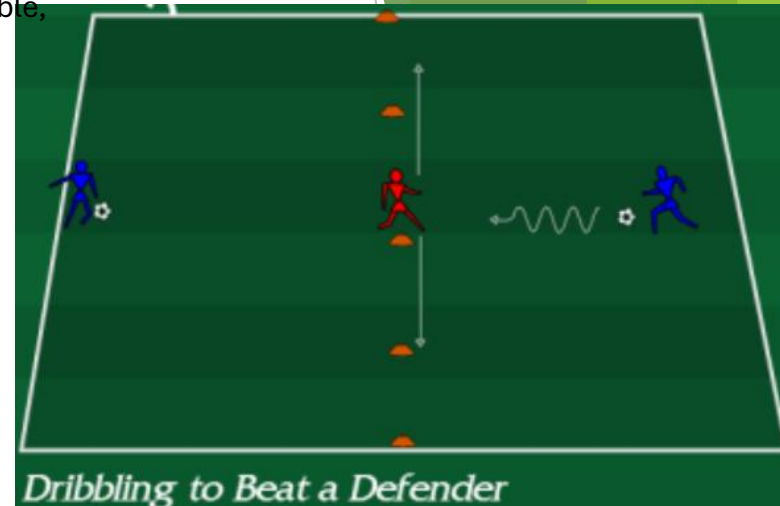
1. Position the defender in the middle line in the grid.
2. The defender in the middle is restricted to only move side to side on the middle line in an attempt to stop the dribbling attacker.
3. Instruct the attacker to approach the defender under control, make his move after making the defender commit, and accelerate to the other side of the grid.
4. If the defender wins the ball, he switches role with the player that lost the ball.

Drill Variations

- None

Drill Coaching Points

- Focus on a controlled approach by the attacker.
- Sell the fake/faint to the defender.
- Make sure the dribbling players change direction.
- Make sure the player accelerates to the other end line once past the defender.



The Numbers Game - 1v1 Competition

This 1v1 soccer drill focuses on 1v1 situations for younger players and works dribbling, shooting, shielding, turning and beating an opponent.

Drill setup

1. Create a small 1v1 field approximately 15X20 with two small goals on each end line.
2. Split the group into two even teams and assign a number to each player in each team. For instance, if you have 5 players in each team, number off 1-5 in each team.
3. One group wears an alternate jersey.

Drill Instructions

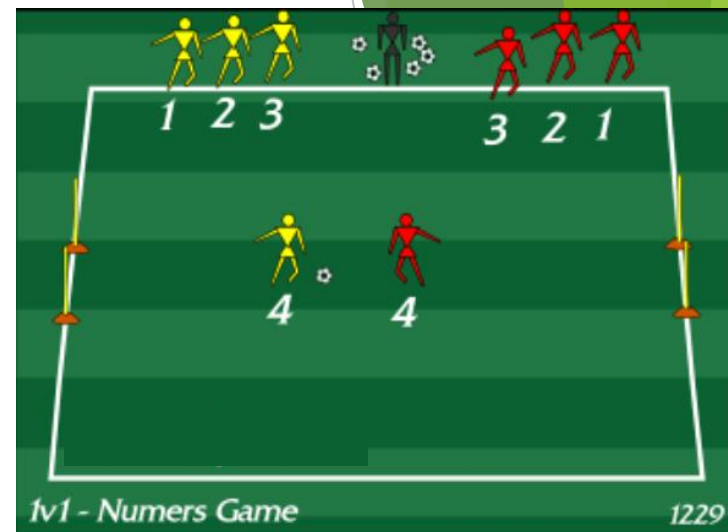
1. The coach plays a ball into the area and calls out a number.
2. Those players assigned to that number sprint onto the field and play a 1v1.
3. The game continues until a team scores a goal or the ball goes out of bounds.

Drill Variations

- Have more than one 1v1 going at the same time.
- Call out two or more numbers to create a 2v2 or 3v3.

Drill Coaching Points

- Encourage players to take on their opponent.
- Encourage players to shoot when they have a chance of a goal.
- Instruct the players to protect the ball when necessary.



Four Corners Aggressiveness and Fitness Soccer Drill

This soccer drill focuses on aggressiveness in winning 50/50 balls and fitness. This drill will be more beneficial for players under 8 and older.

Drill setup

1. Create a grid that is 20x20 yards.
2. Create 4 teams and have them stand at each of the four corner cones.
3. The coach positions himself outside the grid near the middle of 2 side cones with an abundant supply of soccer balls.

Drill Instructions

1. The coach plays a ball into the center of the grid and shouts out a command (such as “GO”) to begin play.
2. The first player in each of the 4 lines must sprint after the ball in an attempt to reach the ball first.
3. Once a player wins the ball cleanly, the player must hold possession from the other players for 5 seconds before passing the ball back to the coach.
4. If any player steals the ball from the person in possession, that player then attempts to hold possession for 5 seconds.
5. A team scores a point by successfully holding possession for 5 seconds and making a return pass to the coach.
6. The first team to reach 5 points wins.

Drill Variations

- The coach can play different types of balls such as flighted balls, bouncing balls, rolling balls, balls with large amounts of top or back spin.

Drill Coaching Points

- Players should be taught to go after the ball aggressively with speed, determination and vigor.



1v1 soccer drill, 1v1 soccer, attacking soccer, defending soccer

This 1v1 soccer drill is a great drill for focusing on teaching players attacking and defending skills.

Drill setup

1. Create a 30X30 grid. Adjust the size of the grid based on the age, number, and skillset of the players.
2. Split your team into groups of two with one ball per group.
3. Randomly set up small windows, about 2-3 yards, with training sticks, flags, or disc cones within the area.
4. Assign a group of players per window.
5. Each group begins at their window.

Drill Instructions

1. Each team plays one vs. one using their goal only.
2. Award a point each time dribbling across the goal line.
3. Players can score from either side of their own goal.
4. Players play 1 to 2-minute games and rotate players.

Drill Variations

- Open it up where each pair can score on any of the other goals. They are still paired up with only their partner and should not interfere with any other teams.

Drill Coaching Points

Attacking: Head up and aware of other players, change of direction, close control, and change of pace.

Defending: Bent Knees, aware of the attacker, tracking attacker's movement and protecting the goal.



Traffic Jam Soccer Dribbling Game

The Traffic Jam Dribbling Game is a fun dribbling game that the kids will have a blast playing.

Drill setup

1. Create a grid approximately 30X30 yards.
2. Randomly place tall cones and training sticks (flags will work as well) in the middle of the grid.
3. Split the group into four even teams.
4. Each team starts on the corners of the grid with one ball per group.

Drill Instructions

1. On the coach's command, the first player from each line will race through the "Traffic Jam" (training sticks and cones) in attempt to not hit a stick, cone, or another player.
2. Once the player makes it through the traffic jam, instruct them to dribble with speed to the line they are facing and pass the ball to the first player in line.
3. That player should immediately head towards the traffic jam with speed in an attempt to get through the traffic jam first.
4. At first, don't keep score, merely let the players enjoy the close calls before playing the game.
5. After 8-10 minutes, combine the two teams that are facing each other into one team.
6. Next, have the players race through the traffic jam to the cone on the opposite side of the grid, around that cone and back through the traffic jam.
7. As each player finishes the race, they must sit down to signify to the group that they have completed the race.
8. The team that has all the players sitting down first wins the game.

Drill Coaching Points

- Since all 4 players should be entering the center area at the same time make sure players are looking ahead of them with their head up.
- Remind players to keep the ball close when entering the traffic area.

