



IRISH FA
SKILL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
COACHING MANUAL
(10 - 12 YEARS)

THE COACHING STANDARD



Start and end the practice with fun

Ensure you have a ball to each player when possible or relevant

Simple organisation and lay out of the session

Simple communication/rules of the practice

No “bus queue” of players waiting to play/shoot etc

Develop individuals, not teams

Inspire players with the session, your personality, energy and enthusiasm

Don't over coach, give the players “free” playing time in the session

Give the players questions to answer and choices in technique and decision making

Encourage attacking football

Encourage players to work hard

Smile and have fun!

WARM UP ACTIVITY - DYNAMIC FLEXIBILITY



Aims

- To increase core body temperature
- To prepare muscles and tissues for the activity at hand

AREA

15 yards long as many stations wide as there are groups.

NUMBERS

10 - 20 players can be accommodated in this activity.

LAYOUT

Players are organised into even groups of no more than 6 players per group.

RULES

Players will move to the top of the grid and take a right turn and return to the bottom of the grid. Each dynamic exercise will be performed up to the top cone and the return will be a recovery run. Players should keep a 1 or 2 metre distance between the player in front and behind them to avoid collisions.

THEORY

The purpose of a dynamic warm up is as follows:

- To increase core body temperature at least one or two degrees
- To increase heart rate and blood flow to skeletal tissue which improves the efficiency of oxygen uptake and transport, carbon dioxide removals, and removal and breakdown of anaerobic by products
- To increase activation of Central Nervous System (increasing co-ordination, skill accuracy and reaction time)
- To increase the rate and force of muscle contraction
- To increase the suppleness of connective tissue (resulting in less incidence of musculotendinous injuries)

COACHING POINTS

The dynamic warm up should include exercises for both the upper and lower extremities and progress from low to higher intensity. The activity should include all planes of motion, starting in the sagittal plane (vertical plane splitting the body into right and left halves) and progressing to multidirectional movements. The players should feel like they are warmed up and they should have broken sweat. Begin with slow Jog, walking on toes, arm circles, straight leg kicks and open and close the gate movements. Build to high knees, butt kicks, hip internal rotation, hip external rotation, lunge walk, lateral side stepping and back pedal run,



BALL WORK - MASTERY (TOE TAPS SLAP OVER & INSIDE, OUTSIDE)



Aims

To develop confidence, touch and coordination on the ball with both feet
To develop an instinctive ability to move the ball in relation to stimulus

AREA

20 yards x 20 yards depending on size of numbers.

NUMBERS

10 - 20 players can be accommodated in this drill.

LAYOUT

Coloured cones are spread out evenly inside the grid and the players are asked to stand at a cone. There should be more cones than players. The variety of coloured cones is determined by the coach but 2-3 different colours should be sufficient.

RULES

Players are encouraged to dribble through the grid moving from free cone to free cone. Players are not allowed to queue waiting for a cone but instead should keep on the move with their head up and move to nearest free cone.

DEVELOPMENT

The drill can be progressed so that players are moving to cones in a sequence. For example blue - red - yellow - blue. Coaches can also look for players to perform a different task from cone to cone. For example toe taps from the blue cone, sole rolls from red cone and running with the ball from yellow cone.

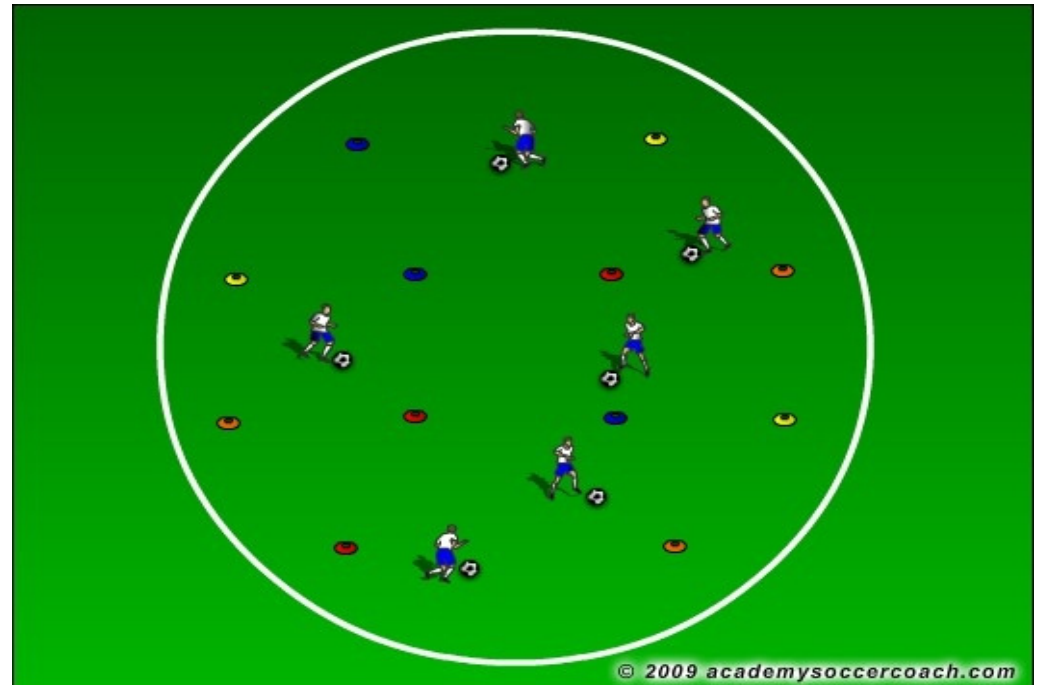
COACHING POINTS

Toe Taps Roll Over

Tap the ball with the inside of your right foot so that the ball rolls slightly across your body. Tap the ball with the inside of your left foot so that the ball rolls back to the starting position. Roll your right foot over the ball (slap) so it moves across your body towards your left foot. Repeat the action but start with the left foot so that the left foot will perform the roll/slap element of the skill.

Inside, Outside

Tap the ball with the inside of your right foot so that the ball rolls across your body. Use the outside of your left foot to move the ball away from your body. Shift your feet sideways so the ball is between them. Tap the ball with the inside of your left foot so that the ball rolls back across your body. Use the outside of your right foot to move the ball away from your body. Shift your feet sideways so the ball is between them and repeat.



SKILL PRACTICE - DRIBBLING & RUNNING WITH THE BALL



Aims

To develop correct dribbling and running with the ball technique and execute the correct strength of touch according to the space
To develop correct decision making from assessing situations and capitalising on opportunities

AREA

15/20 yards x 15/20 yards

NUMBERS

This activity can accommodate numbers ranging from 8 to 20.

LAYOUT

Players are organised into pairs and each pair has a ball. The pairs should be spread evenly throughout the playing area.

RULES

The blue players dribble around the area and the yellows follow their movement. When the coach calls change the blue passes to the yellow and the roles are reversed. The leading player should keep the ball close when they are surrounded by other pairs and when space opens up they can take strong touches and run with the ball.

DEVELOPMENT

To add difficulty the following player can be asked to taps the leading player in back as many times as possible in the time allowed. The leading player will therefore attempt to lose their partner and thus limit the number of touches on their back. Difficulty can also be increase by giving the following player a ball.

COACHING POINTS

Players should be encouraged to keep their head up in order to assess the situation in front of them and capitalise on the opportunities when space opens up. In this practice players will have to execute the correct strength of touch on the ball according to the availability of space i.e. dribbling or running with the ball. Players should be encouraged to make contact with the ball with both feet and are given the opportunity to change direction through feints and turns to lose a close marker.



GAME RELATED PRACTICE



Aims

To develop correct decision making from assessing situations and capitalising on opportunities
To develop confidence and ability in a duel situation

AREA

25 yards long x 15/20 yards wide. Recovering defender box measures 5 yards long and 15/20 yards wide.

NUMBERS

This game can accommodate 6 outfield players, three attacking and three defending along with one goalkeeper.

LAYOUT

Two recovering defenders are positioned inside a marked out area. The attacking players begin the game just in front of this line. The first defender is positioned half way between the goals and this line.

RULES

The practice starts with the coach feeding the ball to one of the three attacking players. After the first touch by the attacker one recovering defender can chase back and help the first defender. The attacking players will aim to get a shot on goal.

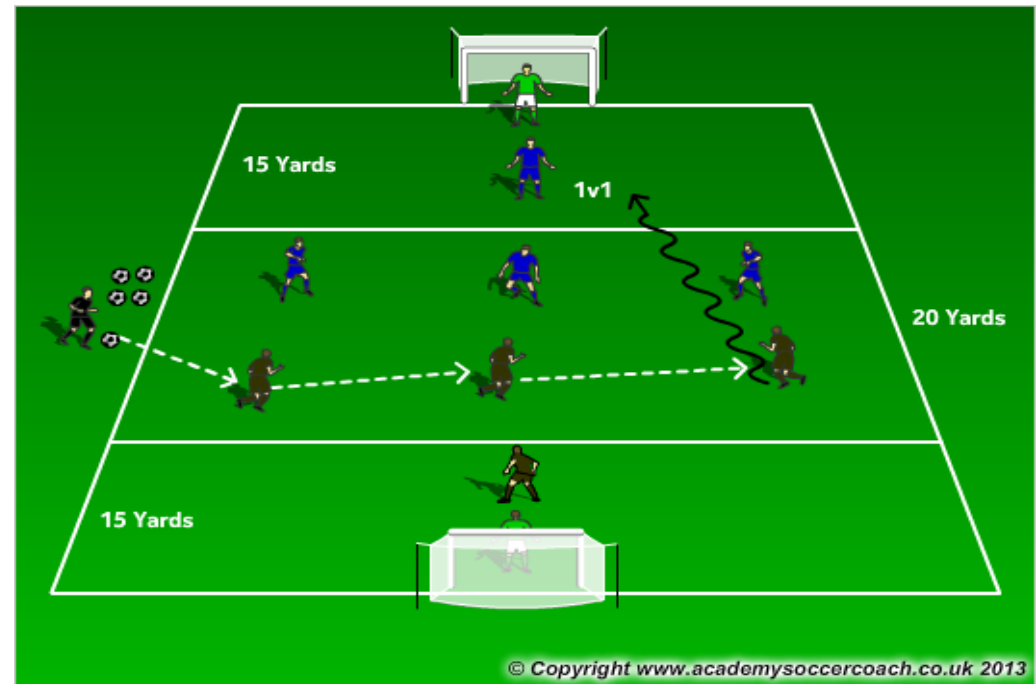
The second recovering defender can be released upon the third touch of the attackers. The teams can be reversed so the attackers become defenders and the defenders become attackers.

DEVELOPMENT

This game can be simply progressed by either adding a second defender to the start of the game, by releasing the two recovering defenders at the same time or by making the practice a 3v3 at the beginning. The game can also be progressed to introduce offside and therefore restrict the attacking players.

COACHING POINTS

Look for the attacking players to penetrate quickly and take advantage of the lack of defenders at the start. If there is space in front encourage the attacking player to drive into it using their running with the ball technique. If they are closed down look at their ability to dribble and protect the ball. Also look at the attacking players decision making and when they should pass or run with the ball. Finally observe selection of when to pass to feet and when to pass into space and correct the weight and type of pass if necessary.



WARM UP ACTIVITY - FREEZE & THAW (BALANCE)



Aims

To develop an understanding of that balance is achieved when the Centre of Gravity is over the supporting base
To explore the centre base and develop balance when a body part moves away from the centre

AREA

20 yards x 20 yards or 30yards x 30 yards depending on numbers.

NUMBERS

This game can accommodate numbers ranging from 10 to 20.

LAYOUT

Participants are encouraged to move through the marked out area remaining in space as much as possible.

RULES

The coach will nominate 2/3 participants to be freezers and the rest to be thawers. When touched by a freezer, the participants must freeze in a balanced position, staying as still as possible. They must remain still until another participant touches them to thaw them out, at this point they can rejoin the game.

The aim is for the freezers is to freeze all the participants. For those who are frozen they must remain as still as possible until they are thawed. The freezers should be changed every minute.

DEVELOPMENT

The game can be varied by utilising different body parts or body positions for participants to freeze in, i.e. on one leg, with arms above head etc. To increase the difficulty of the game the coach will nominate 2/3 participants to be thawers. These players can only thaw out other participants and can also be frozen. This will ensure that participants who are frozen will remain in a balanced position for longer.

COACHING POINTS

Focus on the positions in which the participants freeze, highlight good practice and correct those who are not staying in a balanced position. Pay close attention to body alignment.



BALL WORK - MASTERY (INSIDE, OUTSIDE ROLLOVER & V DRAG & PUSH)



Aims

To develop confidence, touch and coordination on the ball with both feet
To develop an instinctive ability to move the ball in relation to stimulus

AREA

20/30 yards x 20/30 yards.

NUMBERS

This drill can accommodate up to 10/12 players. If there are greater numbers it would be suggested to either increase the area size or create a second playing area.

LAYOUT

A variety of equipment is placed around the playing area. Depending on what is available but cones, gates, poles and mannequins can be used. Ensure similar equipment is not placed directly beside each other.

RULES

Players will dribble around the playing area using the mastery techniques determined by the coach. Players should be encouraged firstly to move to the equipment that is free and therefore play with their head up.

Players should perform one of the two mastery techniques when presented with an obstacle. The coach can also encourage the players to perform the techniques in sequence.



COACHING POINTS

Inside, Outside Rollover

Place your foot on top of the ball, feet shoulder width apart. Without losing contact, roll the ball in line with your standing foot using the big toe side of your foot. Without losing contact roll the ball back to the starting position using the small toe side of your foot. With the sole of your foot, roll and release the ball so that it moves to the other side of body. Repeat this process with the other foot.

V Drag & Push

With the ball positioned outside your left foot, place your right foot on top of the ball and roll it backwards towards the right side of your body. As the ball rolls backwards use the outside hook technique to move the ball forward and outside the right foot. Step 1 and 2 will move the ball in a V direction. Repeat the same action only starting with your left foot.

SKILL PRACTICE - DRIBBLING & RUNNING WITH THE BALL



Aims

To develop correct dribbling and running with the ball technique and execute the correct strength of touch according to the space
To develop correct decision making from assessing situations and capitalising on opportunities

AREA

15/20 yards x 15/20 yards

NUMBERS

10 players, 8 dribblers (blue) and 2 defenders (red)

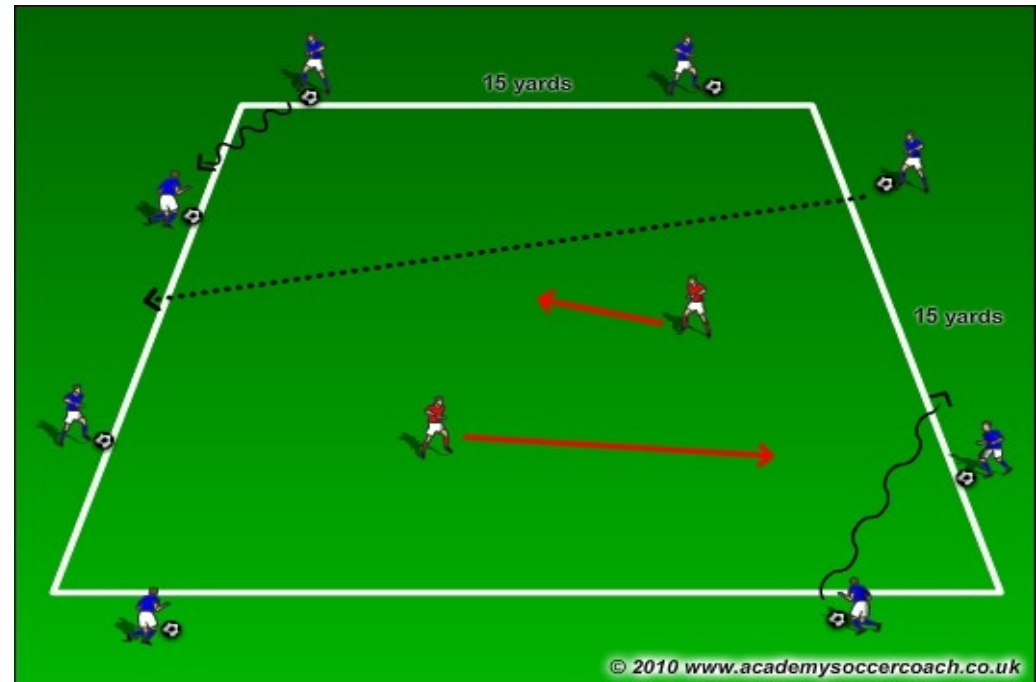
LAYOUT

The 8 dribbling players are evenly spaced out on the outside of the square. The defenders are positioned inside the square.

RULES

Players attempt to dribble across the square or to an adjacent side, avoiding being tagged by the defending players in the middle. Getting across the square is rewarded with two points and dribbling to the adjacent side scores one point.

If the dribbling player is tagged twice by the defending player they must swap positions. The defending player then becomes a dribbling player and the dribbling player becomes the defender. At the start the dribbling players are allowed to wait until it is safe to cross. They should be eventually encouraged to engage the defender to practice their shielding of the ball.



DEVELOPMENT

The drill can be conditioned so that only two players are able to be on one side at any one time. This will increase the need for movement and evaluation of positioning of team mates as well as the defending players in the centre. The drill can also be progressed to add a passing player inside the grid which can be used to play a 1,2 pass in order to successfully get past the defending players in the middle.

COACHING POINTS

Players should be encouraged to keep their head up in order to assess the situation in front of them and capitalise on the opportunities that open up. For example moving across the grid when the defending players are in a disadvantaged position. In this drill players will have to execute the correct strength of touch on the ball according to the availability of space i.e. dribbling or running with the ball. Players should be encouraged to make contact with the ball with both feet and are given the opportunity to reverse or change direction if confronted by a defending player. Players should be encouraged to make positive moves that involve a degree of risk in order to score higher in the drill.

GAME RELATED PRACTICE



Aims

To provide opportunities for dribbling and running with the ball to be utilised in a game situation
To encourage penetration in attack

AREA

25 yards long x 15/20 yards wide. Recovering defender box measures 5 yards long and 15/20 yards wide.

NUMBERS

This game can accommodate 6 outfield players, three attacking and three defending along with one goalkeeper.

LAYOUT

Two recovering defenders are positioned inside a marked out area. The attacking players begin the game just in front of this line. The first defender is positioned half way between the goals and this line.

RULES

The practice starts with the coach feeding the ball to one of the three attacking players. After the first touch by the attacker one recovering defender can chase back and help the first defender. The attacking players will aim to get a shot on goal.

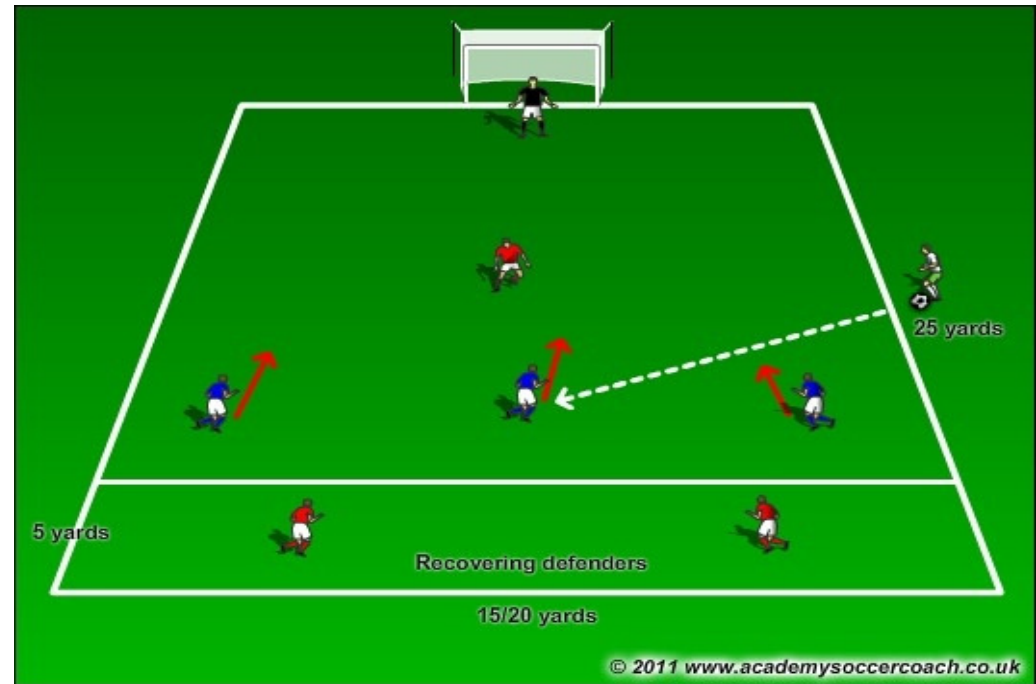
The second recovering defender can be released upon the third touch of the attackers. The teams can be reversed so the attackers become defenders and the defenders become attackers.

DEVELOPMENT

This game can be simply progressed by either adding a second defender to the start of the game, by releasing the two recovering defenders at the same time or by making the practice a 3v3 at the beginning. The game can also be progressed to introduce offside and therefore restrict the attacking players.

COACHING POINTS

Look for the attacking players to penetrate quickly and take advantage of the lack of defenders at the start. If there is space in front encourage the attacking player to drive into it using their running with the ball technique. If they are closed down look at their ability to dribble and protect the ball. Also look at the attacking players decision making and when they should pass or run with the ball. Finally observe selection of when to pass to feet and when to pass into space and correct the weight and type of pass if necessary.



WARM UP ACTIVITY - TECHNICAL RUNNING (AGILITY)



Aims

To develop the basic mechanics of acceleration, deceleration and lateral movement
To relate the activities to situations and movements required in a game

AREA

30 yards x 30 yards.

NUMBERS

Each circuit can accommodate up to 6 players. If there are greater numbers then additional circuits should be created to avoid players standing still for too long.

LAYOUT

As shown. Keep a safe distance between the players.

RULES

Prior to training, this section can last for up to ten minutes with exercises performed at maximum speed (ensure adequate rest between sprints), depending on what is to follow in the coaching session.

DEVELOPMENT

Specific football techniques can be added to this circuit. For example a dribble activity can be added at the arced run section, and passing, heading or volleys can be added at the end of the ladder or hurdle sections.

COACHING POINTS

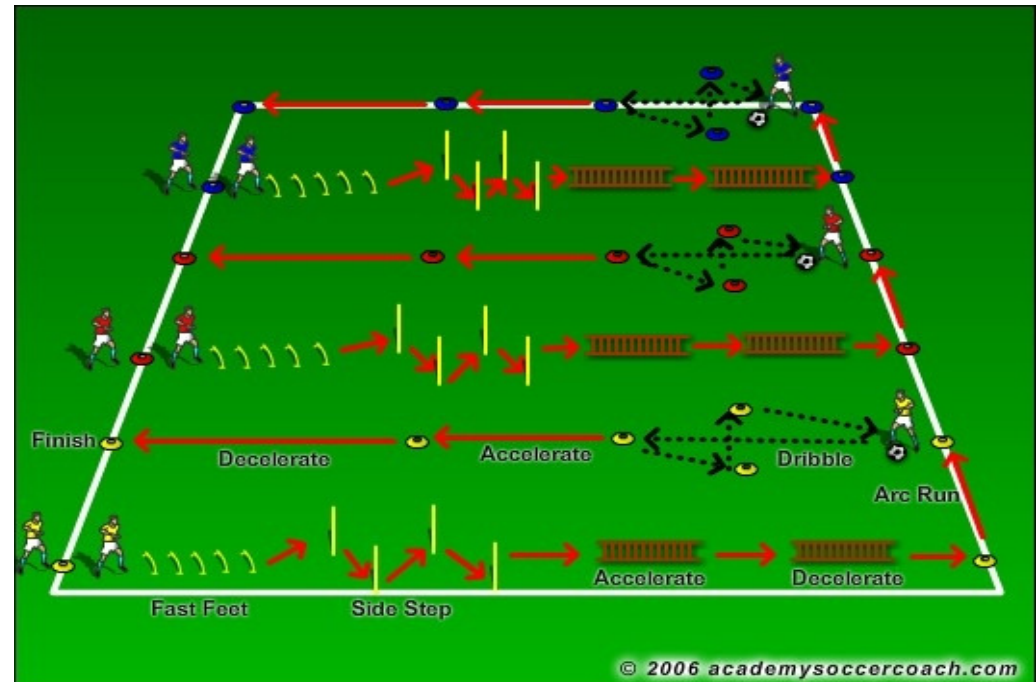
The leading leg run (1 or 2 Foot) will improve precision movement, develops lifting knees and correct arm mechanics. The coach should insist on exactness in movement.

The lateral movement technique first requires the player to stop, and then move off in another direction. Just before stopping, the player leans away from the direction of movement and lengthens the last few strides. The last step is the most important and must be the longest. The ankles, knees and hips are bent, which lowers the centre of gravity and allows the muscles to act as shock absorbers. When the forward body movements have been successfully blocked, then the start technique is used for the change of direction. The first step must be taken in the intended direction. Lateral side stepping will develop the ability to initiate lateral movement. It also develops lifting knees and correct arm mechanics.

Hurdles jumps will develop the potential for initiating movement and clean ball of foot contact. Also develops core control and balance.

Acceleration is the most important part of running in football and is largely determined by the strength of the first step which requires the greatest muscle power, the second a little less and so on. By the fifth step the player should be reaching optimum speed. As the player builds up speed, the body should be in deep lean in order to overcome gravity. On the first step it should be possible to draw a straight line from the ankle of the supporting leg, through the knee, hip, torso, shoulder and ear. The body will straighten by the fifth step. Equally important in acceleration is the length of the first five strides. Players must learn to take a short step first and then progressively longer steps, in order to gain speed quickly. Just like a car, the player should go through the gears in acceleration.

To decelerate and stop effectively bend the hip, knee, and ankle, in order to reduce force, allowing the muscles that cross these joints to act as shock absorbers. The stronger these muscles are eccentrically,



BALL WORK - TURNS (INSIDE CUT & OUTSIDE CUT)



Aims

To develop the ability to change direction (180°) whilst protecting the ball
To develop an instinctive ability to move the ball in relation to stimulus

AREA

20 yards x 20 yards or 30yards x 30 yards depending on numbers.

NUMBERS

This game can accommodate numbers ranging from 8 to 20.

LAYOUT

Players are organised in pairs and are positioned inside a 5 yard x 5 yard area.

RULES

Players will take it in turns to dribble to the end of their grid, perform the turn and dribble back to the start line.

DEVELOPMENT

The drill can be progressed so that one of the pair acts as a defender. The players will start at opposite sides of the grid and will meet in the middle. The attacking player will turn, protect the ball and return to their line. The roles are reverse after a determined number of attempts.

COACHING POINTS

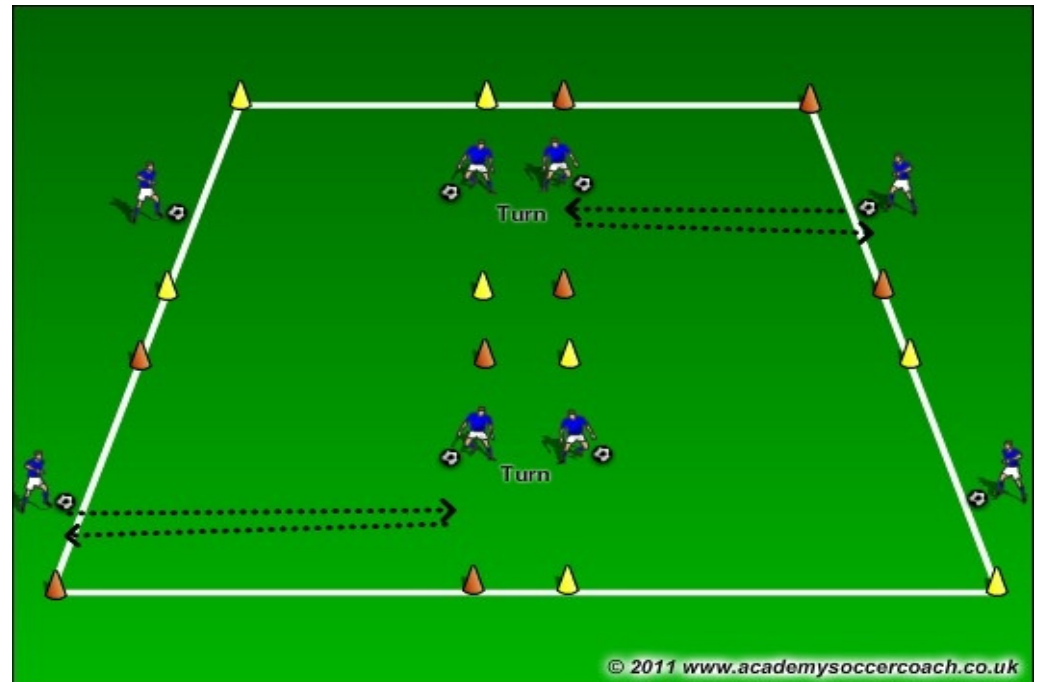
Inside Cut

Hook your foot around the back of the ball coming around the outside of the ball. Use your instep to stop and turn the ball 180 degrees. Push the ball in front of you using the same foot and accelerate away from your opponent. This is a great turn to master so once you have perfected it learn how to perform it with your other foot.

Outside Cut

Step in front of the ball to shield it from your opponent. Hook your other foot around the back of the ball coming around the outside of the ball. Use the outside of your foot to stop and turn the ball 180 degrees. Push the ball in front of you with the same foot and accelerate away from your opponent.

Encourage the players to use their upper body to create a physical barrier between them and the opponent.



SKILL PRACTICE - PASSING & RECEIVING



Aims

To coach passing accuracy over 5/10 yards

To develop positive movement away markers before receiving a pass

AREA

10/15 x 10/15 yard area.

NUMBERS

Five players, one at each cone and two at the starting cone.

RULES

Players pass and follow their pass. Ensure that players open up and receive the pass on their back foot. Encourage players to use both feet, i.e. control on the right and pass with the left. The ball must be passed on the outside of the cone.

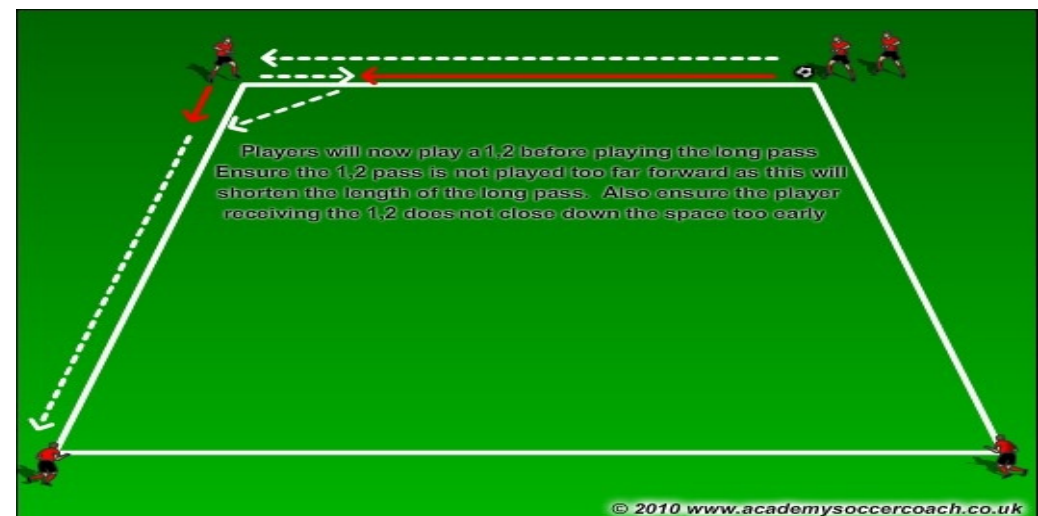
DEVELOPMENT

The exercise can be progressed to add a 1,2 pass before playing the long pass. Ensure the 1,2 pass is not played too far forward as this will shorten the length of the longer pass. Also ensure the player receiving the 1,2 does not close down the space too early. They should play realistic like they are playing a 1,2 round a marker.

COACHING POINTS

Encourage passing through the middle of the ball with the inside of the foot, keeping a strong ankle. The standing foot is beside the ball or just behind, head should be steady and arms out for balance.

Encourage players to make a positive movement to lose the marker. For example move away from the ball and then towards to receive the pass. Coach the timing of this movement so players are not static for too long. Look at the players ability to receive the pass on the back foot and on the half turn to open their body correctly to limit the amount of touches on the ball.



GAME RELATED PRACTICE



Aims

To develop passing accuracy over 10/20 yards

To develop positive movement away markers and opening up upon receiving a pass

AREA

30 yard x 30 yard area.

NUMBERS

5v5. Game can also be played as a 3v3 - 6v6 and the size of area changed accordingly.

LAYOUT

Four gates are placed in the corners of the grid about 5 yards inside the area in each corner.

RULES

Players are spread around the area and are allowed to score through any of the four gates. Players are not allowed to stand in front of the gates and act as goalkeepers.

A point is scored if a player can complete a pass through the gate to their teammate on the other side. This team cannot score through this gate again until they have scored through another gate.

DEVELOPMENT

The difficulty of this game can be increased by either limiting the number of touches for each player or by making the gates smaller. The gates could also be coloured coded and the teams would be required to score points in sequence e.g. red gate - blue gate - red gate etc.

COACHING POINTS

The practice can begin with partial pressure and increase upon continuous successful completion of the task. Look at pass accuracy and type of pass over 10/20 yards focusing on technique and correct decision making. Encourage positive movement away from makers and awareness upon receiving a pass. Emphasise the need to recognise space and time and react accordingly. Finally look at the use of inventive touches, number of touches and ensure that the first touch is used to either create or exploit space.



WARM UP ACTIVITY - DYNAMIC FLEXIBILITY



Aims

- To increase core body temperature
- To prepare muscles and tissues for the activity at hand

AREA

15 yards long as many stations wide as there are groups.

NUMBERS

10 - 20 players can be accommodated in this activity.

LAYOUT

Players are organised into even groups of no more than 6 players per group.

RULES

Players will move to the top of the grid and take a right turn and return to the bottom of the grid. Each dynamic exercise will be performed up to the top cone and the return will be a recovery run. Players should keep a 1 or 2 metre distance between the player in front and behind them to avoid collisions.

THEORY

The purpose of a dynamic warm up is as follows:

- To increase core body temperature at least one or degrees
- To increase heart rate and blood flow to skeletal tissue which improves the efficiency of oxygen uptake and transport, carbon dioxide removals, and removal and breakdown of anaerobic by products
- To increase activation of Central Nervous System (increasing co-ordination, skill accuracy and reaction time)
- To increase the rate and force of muscle contraction
- To increase the suppleness of connective tissue (resulting in less incidence of musculotendinous injuries)

COACHING POINTS

The dynamic warm up should include exercises for both the upper and lower extremities and progress from low to higher intensity. The activity should include all planes of motion, starting in the sagittal plane (vertical plane splitting the body into right and left halves) and progressing to multidirectional movements. The players should feel like they are warmed up and they should have broken sweat. Begin with slow Jog, walking on toes, arm circles, straight leg kicks and open and close the gate movements. Build to high knees, butt kicks, hip internal rotation, hip external rotation, lunge walk, lateral side stepping and back pedal run,



BALL WORK - TURNS (DRAG BACK & CRUYFF TURN)



Aims

To develop the ability to change direction (180°) whilst protecting the ball

To develop an instinctive ability to move the ball in relation to stimulus

AREA

Multiple 10 yard x 10 yard grids.

NUMBERS

Each grid can accommodate up to 4 players. This is to prevent players standing still for too long.

LAYOUT

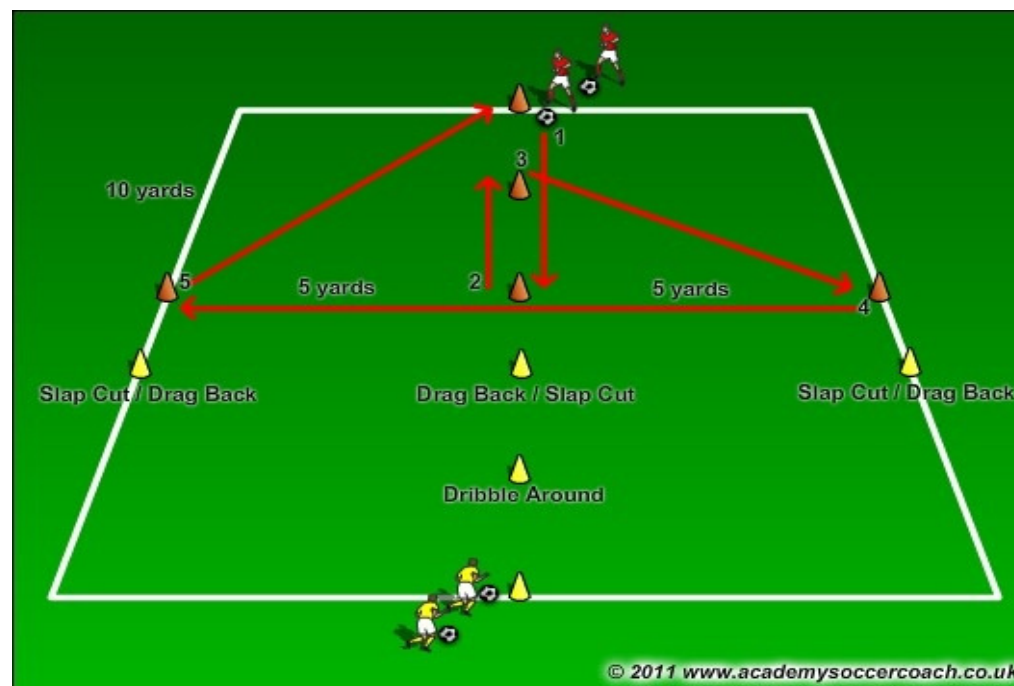
The grid is split up into 5 yard sections and laid out in a triangle shape as shown.

RULES

Players will take it in turn to complete the course. The next player will start as soon as first player has completed their final turn.

Players will dribble towards the second cone and perform either a drag back or cruyff turn and dribble towards the third cone. They will make a quick right turn to the fourth cone and perform either a cruyff turn or drag back and dribble across the area to the fifth cone and perform either a cruyff turn or drag back.

If the players perform a drag back first then their next two turns should be cruyff turns and visa versa.



COACHING POINTS

Drag Back

Put your foot on the top of the ball to stop it. Drag the ball backwards with the same foot whilst turning your body 180 degrees. Push the ball in front of you and accelerate away from your opponent. Add an additional element to this turn after Step 2. Do not turn 180 degrees, instead, flick the ball with the inside of your foot behind your standing leg. This will move then ball 90 degrees. Encourage the players to use their upper body to create a physical barrier between them and the opponent.

Cruyff Turn

Shape as if you are going to pass or cross the ball but instead lift your leg over the ball. Drag the ball behind your standing leg using the inside of your foot whilst turning 180 degrees. Push the ball in front of you with the other foot and accelerate away from your opponent. Add an additional element to this turn in Step 3. Push the ball to the side rather than forward, this is the McGeedy Turn. Encourage the players to use their upper body to create a physical barrier between them and the opponent.

SKILL PRACTICE - PASSING & RECEIVING



Aims

To coach passing accuracy over 10/20 yards

To develop an understanding of angles of support in order to retain possession

AREA

20/30 yards wide x 20/30 yards long.

NUMBERS

This drill can accommodate 9-12 players working in 3 teams of 3 or 4.

LAYOUT

Players are organised into three teams of equal size with a ball for each team. Teams should be spread evenly throughout the playing area and players should be encouraged to stand at least arms reach away from the other members of their team.

RULES

The practice begins with the players passing to only the other members of their team. Players are encouraged to continuously move throughout the area and keep an acceptable distance between the other members in their team.

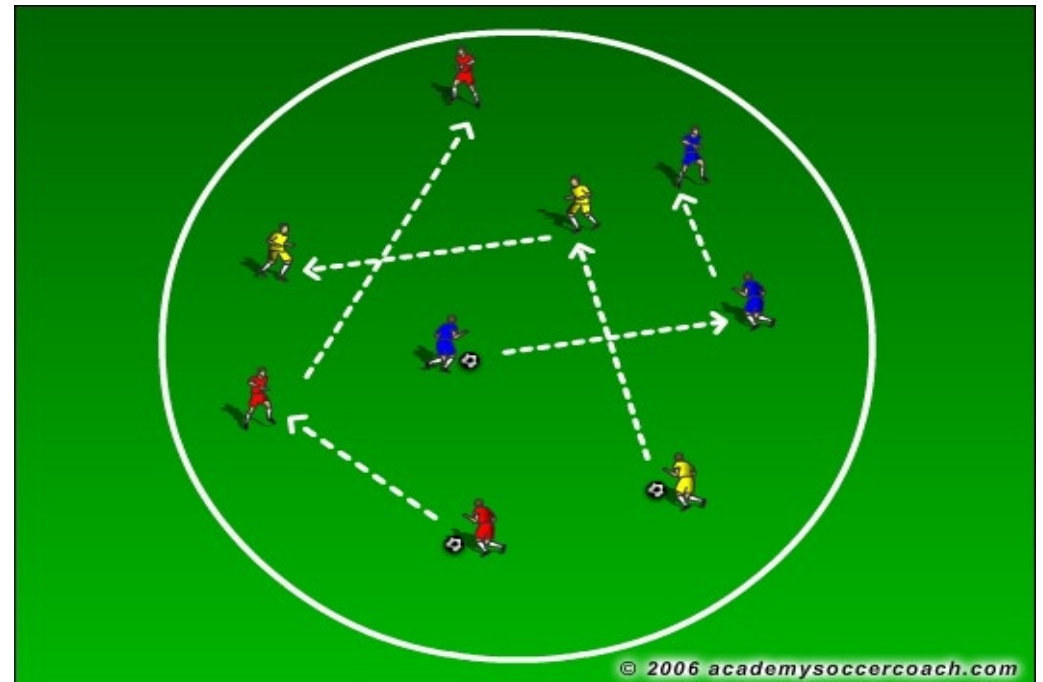
DEVELOPMENT

This practice can be progressed by players passing only to players not in their team. For example players in the yellow team can only pass to players in the blue or red team. The practice can be further progressed by players passing to their own colour, receiving the ball back and then passing to a different coloured player. For example a yellow player would pass to another yellow, receive the ball back and then pass to either a red or blue player.

The practice can also be developed into a possession practice with one coloured team being selected as the defending side and therefore the two remaining coloured teams will work together to maintain possession. The defending side can be swapped every 2/3 minutes or the team that loses the ball can become the defending side.

COACHING POINTS

Look at pass accuracy and type of pass over 10/20 yards focusing on technique and correct decision making. Encourage positive movement into space and awareness upon receiving a pass. Emphasise the need to recognise space and time and react accordingly. Finally look at the use of inventive touches, number of touches and ensure that the first touch is used to either create or exploit space.



GAME RELATED PRACTICE



Aims

To develop short range passing over 10/15 yards and long range passing over 15/30 yards
To develop positive movement away markers and opening up upon receiving a pass

AREA

20/30 yards wide x 20/30 yards long.

NUMBERS

This drill can accommodate 9-12 players working in 3 teams of 3 or 4.

LAYOUT

The playing area is marked out in 4 10 x 10 yard or 15 x 15 yard squares.

RULES

One attacking team will take up one square and the other attacking team will split up to take position in a free square each. The defending team are positioned in the centre of the grid and will take turns in defending against each attacking side.

The attacking team must complete the determined amount of passes and then play a long pass into one of the other three squares (in this example the ball is passes to the yellow player in the top right square). On the movement of this pass the other two attacking players move into this square along with one blue defender to make a 3v1. The red team will then each position themselves in a free square.

If the defending team win the ball they will pass into one of the free squares to allow the other attacking team to start their passing attempt. The defending team will be rotated every 2/3 mins.

DEVELOPMENT

The drill can be progressed in a number of ways. An additional defender could be allowed to create a 3v2 situation and therefore further challenge the attacking players. The attacking player could also be encourage to play a range of long passes after their determined of short passes. For example they can pass square the first time but the next time the long pass has to be played diagonally. Finally the determined amount of passes can be increase and the number of touches per player can be decreased.

COACHING POINTS

Look for the movement of the attacking players in the 3v1 situation, their passing accuracy and passing tempo. When the ball is moved into one the other grids look at the players reaction time, work rate and pace to get into the correct grid. With the defending players observe their ability to direct play and put pressure on the ball.



WARM UP ACTIVITY - BODY PART CLUSTERS (BALANCE)



Aims

To develop an understanding of that balance is achieved when the Centre of Gravity is over the supporting base
To explore the centre base and develop balance when a body part moves away from the centre

AREA

20 yards x 20 yards or 30 yards x 30 yards depending on numbers.

NUMBERS

This game can accommodate numbers ranging from 10 to 20.

LAYOUT

Participants are encouraged to move through the marked out area remaining in space as much as possible.

RULES

Participants move around the marked area, the coach calls out both a number and a body part, i.e. 4 and right leg. In this case the participants must get into groups of 4 and all balance on their right leg.

The coaches can award the best cluster with a point. The coach can continue the game, varying the pace, group numbers and body parts.

Ensure all participants take care not to bump into each other and are aware of the space in which the game is taking place.

COACHING POINTS

Focus on the positions in which the participant balance, highlight good practice and correct those who are not staying in a balanced position. Pay attention to body alignment and question participants to reinforce good practice.



BALL WORK - FEINTS (FAKE, TAKE & SCISSORS, TAKE)



Aims

To develop the ability to trick an opponent with body and ball movement and create space.
To develop confidence, touch and coordination on the ball with both feet

AREA

20/30 yards x 20/30 yards.

NUMBERS

This game can accommodate up to 10 or 12 players. If there is a greater number it would be necessary to set up a second grid.

LAYOUT

A selection of cones are placed in the middle of the grid, roughly spaced one metre apart. A selection of cones are also placed in a straight line on two sides of the grid. These cones are also spaced out one metre apart.

RULES

Players will start at the bottom of the grid with the numbers split evenly between both cones. The player at the left cone will start first and dribble into the grid and through the middle cones. The player must use the feints at each cone and navigate diagonally through the cones to the corner cone. The player at the right cone will then start.

After dribbling through the centre cones the players move down the other side of the grid slaloming through the cones using the feints determined by the coach. Upon completion the players will then join the back of the other group.

COACHING POINTS

Fake, Take

With the ball between your feet lift your preferred foot as to push the ball outside with your small toe. Miss the ball so your foot now plants past the ball. The ball is once again between your feet. With the outside of your other foot push the ball sideways to beat your opponent. Add an additional fake to this feint to make it even more confusing for you opponent - fake, fake, take.

Scissor, Take

With the ball between your feet lift your preferred foot and bring it towards your other foot behind the ball. Circle around the front of the ball with your preferred foot bringing it back to its original position. With the outside of your other foot push the ball sideways to beat your opponent. Add an additional scissors to this feint to make it more difficult for you opponent to read your movement.



SKILL PRACTICE - SHOOTING



Aims

To develop shooting accuracy from 18 yard or less
To create game specific shooting scenarios

AREA

20 x 20 yards.

NUMBERS

This game can accommodate 5 outfield players and 1 goalkeeper. If there are greater numbers a second playing area should be created.

LAYOUT

One goal is positioned at one end of the playing area. Players are positioned on each corner of the playing area with three balls each. The remaining outfield player stands in the middle of the playing area.

RULES

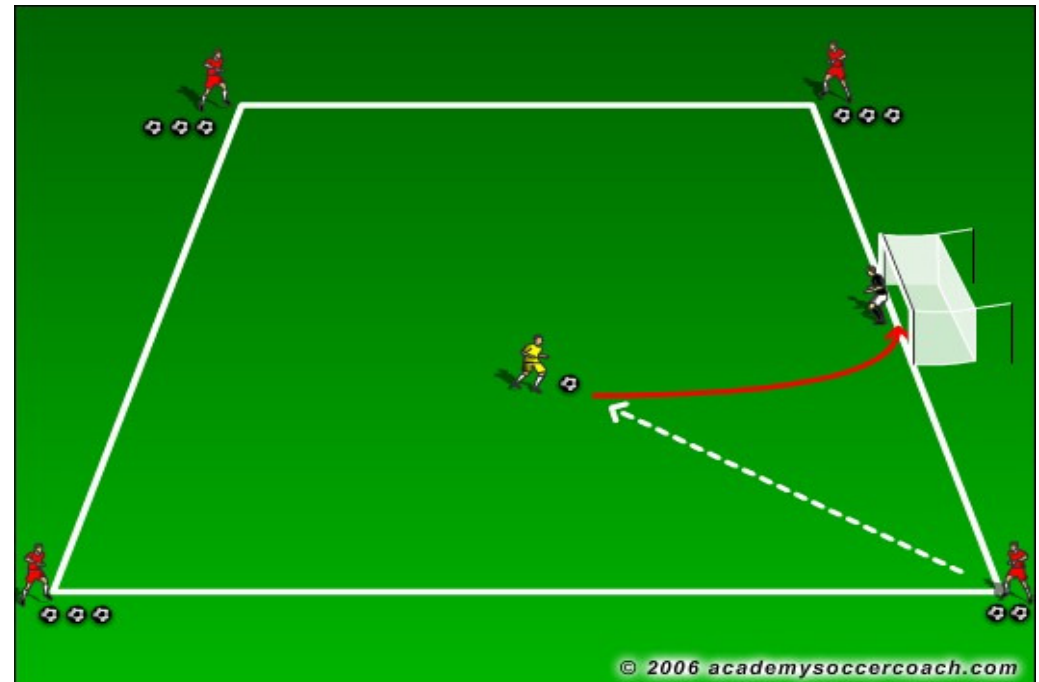
The corner players will pass the ball in rotation to central player who must control the ball and shoot. The central player will therefore receive two passes with their back to goal and two passes facing the goals. The players switch positions once all the twelve balls have been passed.

DEVELOPMENT

This game can be progressed in a variety of ways. The weight and flight of the service can be varied to challenge the central player. A defender can also be added in the central position to put greater pressure on the central players touch and ability to find and exploit space.

COACHING POINTS

Encourage a high tempo practice with everything working in correct sequence. Look at the central players touch and ability to get their shot off quickly after receiving the ball. Encourage a variety of finishes and shooting techniques. Once opposition is added look at the ability to beat an opponent with movement and pace.



GAME RELATED PRACTICE



Aims

To develop build up play in a game environment

To develop shooting accuracy from a distance of 18 yards or less

AREA

30/40 yards wide x 40/50 yards long.

NUMBERS

This game can accommodate 12 outfield players and 2 goalkeepers.

LAYOUT

Two players from the red team are placed either side of the top goal and two players from the blue team are placed either side of the bottom goal. Four/five reds and four/five blues will play against each other in the playing area.

RULES

The players within the playing area must keep possession of the ball and their aim is to eventually find the target player and receive a lay off for a shot at goal. Once this is completed the player taking the shot should swap with the target player.

If a goal is scored play starts again with the goalkeeper passing to their team.

DEVELOPMENT

This game can be progressed in a variety of ways. Restrictions can be placed on the number of touches for the attacking players. The target players can be limited to either one or two touches. The coach can also place a time limit on the attacking side for creating a goal scoring opportunity. This will encourage a quick tempo of passing and speed of movement.

COACHING POINTS

Encourage a high tempo and accuracy of passing between all players. Encourage positive movement away from markers and receiving the ball in space. Encourage strong hold up play from the target players. Focus on the timing and angles of runs from the players that receive the lay off pass.



WARM UP ACTIVITY - TECHNICAL RUNNING (AGILITY)



Aims

To develop the basic mechanics of acceleration, deceleration and lateral movement
To relate the activities to situations and movements required in a game

AREA

30 yards x 30 yards.

NUMBERS

This circuit can accommodate up to 10 players. If there are greater numbers then a second circuit should be created to avoid players standing still for too long.

LAYOUT

As shown. Keep a safe distance between the players.

RULES

Prior to training, this section can last up to ten minutes with exercises performed at maximum speed (ensure adequate rest between sprints), depending on what is to follow in the coaching session.

DEVELOPMENT

Specific football techniques can be added to this circuit. For example a dribble activity can be added at the Zig Zag section, and passing, heading or volleys can be added at the end of the ladder or hurdle sections.

COACHING POINTS

The [Dead Leg Run](#) builds co-ordination and limb mobility, develops correct arm action and encourages a fast snap of exercising arm and leg.



The [Leading Leg Run \(1 or 2 Foot\)](#) will improve precision movement, develops lifting knees and correct arm mechanics. The coach should insist on exactness in movement.

The [Lateral Movement](#) technique first requires the player to stop, and then move off in another direction. Just before stopping, the player leans away from the direction of movement and lengthens the last few strides. The last step is the most important and must be the longest. The ankles, knees and hips are bent, which lowers the centre of gravity and allows the muscles to act as shock absorbers. When the forward body movements have been successfully blocked, then the start technique is used for the change of direction. The first step must be taken in the intended direction. [Lateral Side Stepping](#) will develop the ability to initiate lateral movement. It also develops lifting knees and correct arm mechanics.

[Hurdles Jumps](#) will develop the potential for initiating movement and clean ball of foot contact. They also develop core control and balance.

[Acceleration](#) is the most important part of running in football and is largely determined by the strength of the first step which requires the greatest muscle power, the second a little less and so on. By the fifth step the player should be reaching optimum speed. As the player builds up speed, the body should be in deep lean in order to overcome gravity. On the first step it should be possible to draw a straight line from the ankle of the supporting leg, through the knee, hip, torso, shoulder and ear. The body will straighten by the fifth step. Equally important in acceleration is the length of the first five strides. Players must learn to take a short step first and then progressively longer steps, in order to gain speed quickly. Just like a car, the player should go through the gears in acceleration.

BALL WORK - FEINTS (FLIP FLAP & STEP OVER)



Aims

To develop the ability to trick an opponent with body and ball movement and create space
To develop confidence, touch and coordination on the ball with both feet

AREA

Separate 10 yard x 10 yard grids.

NUMBERS

This drill can accommodate 4 players within each grid.

LAYOUT

Four players are positioned at a cone each within the grid.

RULES

Players will move diagonally and meet in the centre of the grid and perform the feint and then dribble onto the cone behind their opponent. At this point the players will dribble to the right/clockwise around the grid to the next cone. At this point the next group of players to move off their cone.

DEVELOPMENT

The coach can encourage the players to perform the feints in a sequence or in combination. Opposition can also be created with only one player on the diagonal having a ball.

COACHING POINTS

Flip Flap

Start with the ball between your feet lift your foot and make contact with the ball with the inside of this foot. As the ball moves across your body move the same foot so that it moves past the ball. Use outside of this foot to move the ball back to the starting position.

Step Over

With the ball between your feet lift your preferred foot and bring it towards your other foot in front of the ball. Turn to body to face the direction of your preferred foot. Turn your body back whilst pushing the ball sideways with the outside of your preferred foot. This is a great skill to master so once perfected learn how to perform it with your other foot.



SKILL PRACTICE - SHOOTING



Aims

To develop shooting from in and around the 18 yard box

To develop crossing technique as well as correct timing and movement inside the box

AREA

40/50 yards wide and 30/40 yards long. One goal at one end.

NUMBERS

3 stations of 4/5 players. Maximum of 15 players plus goalkeepers.

LAYOUT

Three stations positioned outside the 18 yard box. Another two stations positioned in the channel areas halfway between the byline and the 18 yard box.

RULES

A dribbles and shoots and then goes back for a second ball. B then dribbles and shoots and after runs round the edge of the box to receive a pass from the coach. A crosses the ball into the box for the run of C. A and C move into the box to receive the cross from B.

The groups will rotate in the sequence A to B, B to C, C to A. The ball into the channel will be changed to the other side at the halfway point.

DEVELOPMENT

Success is achieved by a successful strike on goal and through correct timing and movement of runs into the box. As the drill progresses the players can be given targets to hit for example Player C's first strike must be hit across goal. Opposition can be added once a high level of success is achieved. Remember to swap the position of the coach/layoff man so that players are crossing using their other foot.

COACHING POINTS

Encourage a high tempo practice with everything working in correct sequence. Look out for correct timing of runs for the cross into the box so that players are not taking up their position too early and therefore becoming easy to mark. Also ensure that the two players are crossing and varying their runs into the box with one near post and one far post in a staggered position. Once opposition is added look at the ability to beat an opponent with movement and pace.



GAME RELATED PRACTICE



Aims

To develop build up play in a game environment

To develop shooting accuracy and finishing from crosses from a distance of 18 yards or less

AREA

40 yards x 50 yards.

NUMBERS

12 outfield players plus two goalkeepers.

LAYOUT

The pitch is split to include a middle playing area measuring 30 yards x 50 yards and four channel areas measuring 5 yards x 25 yards. Two goals are placed at either end of the playing area. Each team will have two wide players in the channels of their half.

RULES

The game will begin with the goalkeeper passing to one of their four outfield players in the middle playing area. The attacking team must play wide before they can have a shot on goal. If the attacking team score directly from a cross it is worth 2 points.

The wide players should be rotated for players in the middle playing area every 2 minutes.

DEVELOPMENT

The game can be progressed to leave the channels free. Players are only allowed to enter the channel to receive a pass, this will encourage correct weight of pass and timing of run. Defenders can also be allowed into the channel to make the game more realistic. Further progression can be made by limiting the number of touches or by playing through both channels before a cross to encourage switch play.

COACHING POINTS

Encourage a high tempo and accuracy of passing between all players. Encourage positive movement away from markers and receiving the ball in space. Focus on the timing and angles of runs from the crossed ball. Ensure players understand a staggered approach to receiving a cross with the player at the near post being closer to the goal than the back post player. Finally observe the attacking players' finishing and intervene if necessary.

