



SOCCER COACH
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U10 Dribbling

by Mario Prata

OBJECTIVE: To improve dribbling and shielding technique and inspire the confidence in our players to keep the ball (possess the ball) under pressure with the intention to delay play until help arrives, beat an opponent or simply keep possession for your team.

1) Free Dribble (10 minutes): Everyone with a ball, use inside, outside, and sole of the foot. Have players dribble with speed (outside of foot), change direction, and perform moves. Coach calls out moves or changes in direction and sets the pace as the manipulator of the session; kids dribble the ball towards someone and try a move. **Version 2:** As players get comfortable, coach can walk around and put pressure on players as they are performing dribbling tasks. This adds fun and interaction. **Version 3:** Make the game a knockout game in which players try to knock each other's soccer balls out of the grid while maintaining possession of their own. **Note:** You may wish to have them perform a skills task before re-entering such as 10 sole of the foot touches or juggling 5 times. You do not want players sitting out.

Coaching Points:

- Bend your knees and get down low
- Use your arms to keep balance
- Keep the ball close using the inside, outside and sole of the foot
- Keep your head up

2) Shield-Steal (10 minutes): use entire space, half of players in the group have a ball and half do not. If you do not have a ball you need to steal one from someone who does. If the ball goes out of bounds, the person who touched it last LOSES possession. When the coach yells freeze, those who have possession of a ball receive a point. Play multiple games. Go over technical points as a group and at the start of the activity, show the shielding technique. Fix technical shielding errors throughout this activity and make sure entire group knows how to properly shield. **Version 2:** make the activity competitive by creating two teams; the team who has possession of the most soccer balls at the end of time is the winner.

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points from the Free dribble activity
- Survey the area
- Recognize when and were to change direction
- Body sideways between defender and the ball when shielding
- Arm providing protection when shielding
- Ball on outside foot when shielding
- Spin/turn as defender attacks when shielding
- Hands become your eyes; use them to feel for defender



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3) 5 Goal Game (15 minutes): 4v4+2 or 5v5+2 in 35x40 yard grid. Five 2-yard goals are spread out throughout the grid. The 2 neutral players are always on the attacking team. Each team can score by dribbling through any of the 5 goals. The first team to 10 points wins. Players need to be able to see where the open goals are, and receive the ball with a “picture” of what is around them.

Coaching Points:

- Dribbling to keep the ball “Shielding”
- Dribbling to beat an opponent “Inviting a tackle, change of speed, change of direction, feints”
- When to dribble to break pressure: This is used most commonly by midfielders and by forwards. It involves simply getting beside the pressuring defender for a split second. Once beside a defender, sudden, explosive changes in pace or direction and feints are the most common means of breaking pressure.
- Where to dribble to gain space “With any sort of space ahead of him, an attacker will run with the ball forward to gain territory”
- Recognizing what goal is open

4) 4v4 or 5v5 to Four Goals (15 minutes): Teams defend one goal and have the opportunity to score on the other three, you must dribble through a goal to score a point. The goals are on the ends of a large cross in a square grid roughly 25yd X 25yds. Have one team of 4 or 5 on deck, they come on when a team gets scored on twice. Game is continuous, they must run on immediately. Look for open space and attack it with speed.

Coaching Points: Reinforce coaching points covered in previous activities.

5) 6 vs. 6 (includes GK's) Game (25 minutes)

Coaching Points:

- Stress dribbling & shielding technique

6) Cool Down (10 minutes) – Controlled juggling (thigh-thigh-foot-foot). Statically stretch the large muscle groups.