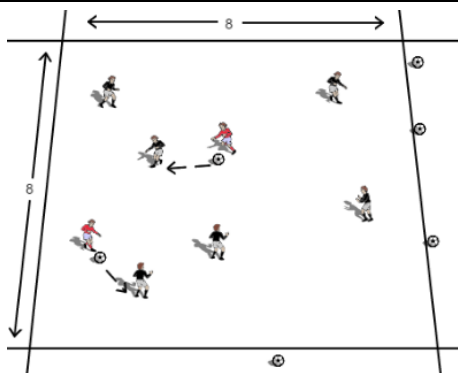




ARKANSAS
RISING

4v4 / Under 6 / PreK, K & 1st Practice #5 Striking the Ball



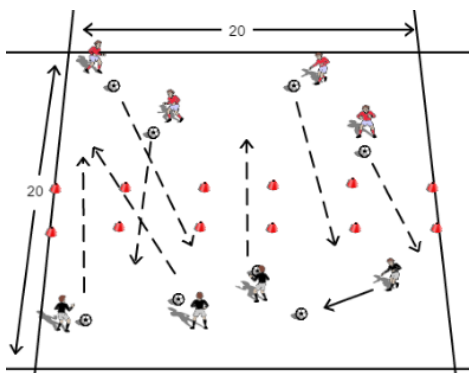
Minions (Technique/Cardiovascular) 8x8yd grid

- One player has a ball, and all the others do not.
- Object is for player to hit other players below the knee with their ball. If a player gets hit, they have to get another ball and join as a minion.
- Play until there is one player left. Start a new game with the winner being the new minion.
- If a player is hit above the knees, it doesn't count.
- If players aren't being hit fast enough, make grid smaller, or add a coach minion into the game.

Coaching Points:

- To be accurate, show players how to use the inside of their foot to strike the ball.
- Stress timing of pass. Can you pass into the space where the person is running into?
- Use peripheral vision while dribbling to see where you want to go next.
- Can players dribble the ball to better set up their next pass?

(10 mins)



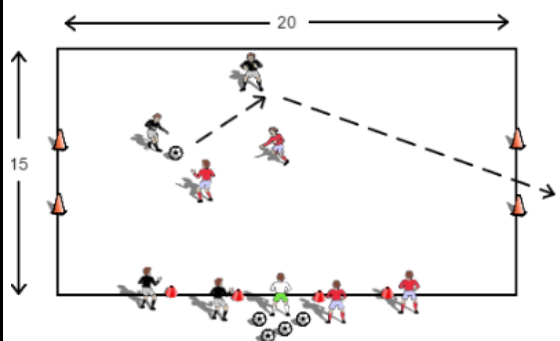
Junkyard Soccer (Technique) Increase to a 20x20yd grid

- Split players into two teams. Place two lines of cones down center and create a 2yd "safe zone" in middle of grid.
- Both teams are on opposite sides of safe zone, and every player has a ball.
- Object is to have the fewest number of balls on your side when time is called.
- Play for 1 minute, count balls, and restart game.
- If ball goes out of bounds, it must be dribbled back in before it can be kicked over.
- If ball stops in safe zone, it doesn't count for either team.

Coaching Points:

- Have fun!
- Encourage the use of different parts of the feet to strike ball back (inside/laces).
- Encourage a direction of kick. Can you kick the ball into space away from the other players, instead of kicking right at someone?

(10 mins)



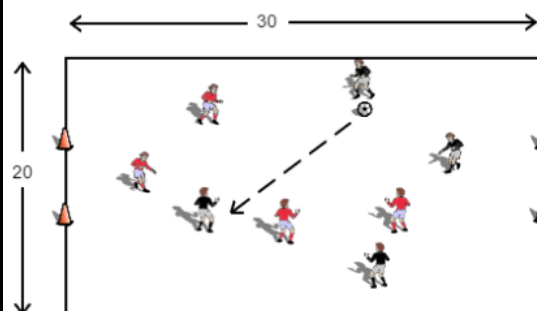
2v2 Get Out of Here! (Technique) Decrease the grid to 15x20yds

- Add a 2yd goal to each side of your field, and make four lines of players. Coach needs to be in middle of the lines with the balls. Give pennies to two of the lines, who are on the same team.
- A ball is played by the coach into the field, and the first person in each line comes out and tries to score in the opposite goal. When the ball goes out of bounds, or a goal is scored, coach yells "get out of here!"
- Players leave the field, and return to the end of their line by running around outside of field with ball. Keep score and challenge teams to remember the score and be competitive!

Coaching Points:

- Encourage working together and movement off the ball to open space for a shot on goal.
- Players should use inside of feet or laces to pass and shoot.
- Communication

Get excited when you see players not using their toes! Encourage players to look for goal first, and if they can't score, can they pass to their teammate who can? (15 mins)



Scrimmage (Holistic) Expand your grid to 30x20yds (same size as your game field)

- Play 4v4. If your numbers are short, decrease size of field to 25x15 and play 3v3.
- Cones for goals are 2yds wide (same as for a game)
- There are no goalkeepers

Coaching Points:

- None! Just sit back and let them play. For kindergarten, we play continuous restarts, meaning when a ball goes out, a coach just kicks another one in. Feel free to grab the parents to use as 'bumpers' around the field to keep the game moving. If a goal is scored, bring ball back to center of field and show the players where they should stand to restart. Have fun and get excited!

(20 mins)

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Practice Conclusion: Bring your players in for the last five minutes of practice and recap your session using open-ended questions. What part of our foot should we use to be accurate in a pass? (inside). Can we shoot using the inside of our feet too? (Of course! It's very accurate!) What's another part of our feet we can use to kick the ball? (laces). Why is kicking with the toe not a great idea? (it's difficult to be accurate kicking with it since it's the shape of a point). Have a team cheer, and dismiss the team!