

# Practice Activities

**Theme: Small-Group Play**

**Date:**

**Venue:**

**Time:**

**Duration:**

## Human Obstacle Course

You should first do this without the ball and then later with the ball for the players to dribble.

Coach asks one player to make a shape that they can hold for a period of time.

The next player then goes around, through, under or over the first player.

The third player goes through the first two.

This sequence continues until all the players are part of the obstacle course.

At this point allow the first players to go again so they can go through a complete course.

Once all players have gone through, add a ball and now each player must dribble through the course.



## Snake in the Grass

Work in a confined area approximately 15 x 15 yards, with the team.

One player is to be the snake. The snake lies on the ground (belly down) and all the other players must place their hand somewhere on the snake.

When the coach yells 'snake in the grass', the players release and the snake tries to tag them.

The snake must crawl and move like a snake.

Once the snake tags someone, they also become a snake.

The game continues until all players are snakes. players run and jump to avoid getting tagged, but are not allowed to step on a snake!

### Key Points

- Running, jumping, agility, balance.
- Looking for open spaces.
- Very high positive group interaction. A great warm up, or early season ice breaker.



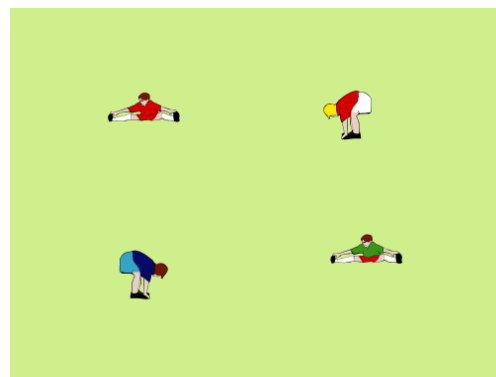
## Toes

Toes is a creative body awareness and challenging activity.

Players are sitting down holding their toes. Through all of the instructions, players must not let go of their toes.

Suggested challenges:

- a) Can you make one leg longer than the other, without letting go of your toes?
- b) Can you make the other leg longer, without letting go of your toes?
- c) How wide can you make your legs, without letting go of your toes?
- d) How small can you make yourself, without letting go of your toes?
- e) Can you make yourself as large as possible, without letting go of your toes?
- f) Can you make yourself as narrow as possible, without letting go of your toes?
- g) Can you get your feet higher than your head, without letting go of your toes?
- h) Can you place your feet behind your head, without letting go of your toes?
- i) The grand finale. Can you stand up and walk, without letting go of your toes?



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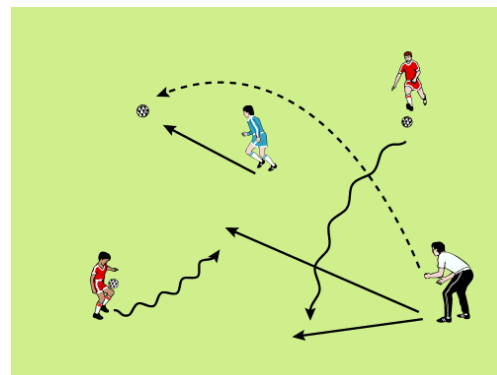
## Find the Coach

This activity is similar to the Retrieve Activity, where the coach has each player hand him/her a ball, which the coach then throws in random directions for the players to retrieve and return to the coach in many different ways, i.e. rolling with hands, bouncing, throwing in the air and catching, etc. However, in each manner of returning the ball, the coach remains in the same spot where he/she threw the ball. 'FIND THE COACH' becomes a more complex activity for two reasons:

1. Each players must dribble the ball back to the coach with their feet.
2. The coach does not stand in one spot as he/she moves in all directions within the space provided for the activity.

By doing so, players not only dribble with speed to get back to the coach, but must dribble with their eyes up.

Did someone say, 'the first step to tactical instruction?' (Dribbling with one's head up leads to decision making).



### Key Points

- Dribbling for possession, dribbling with vision.
- Changing direction, running, balance
- Must keep eyes up, helps with decision making and increasing field of vision
- All players involved at their own level

## The Blob

This is a variation of an age old tag game.

Players are randomly spaced on a half field, or an area of 30 x 40 yards.

The player that is 'it', runs and tries to tag the other players. As a player is tagged, they join hands and begin to form 'the blob'. Joined players try to tag others.

When the blob reaches six players, it can break up and mutate into 2 blobs of 3. Continue until all players are caught.

### Key Points

- Running, changing direction
- Decision making
- Group Success, giving players a sense of belonging



## Tail Tag

This activity is a take-off from flag football and is appropriate for all ages.

All players tuck a T-shirt or scrimmage vest in their shorts. On the signal, the players see how many tails they can gather. If you lose your tail you continue to play.

Play for 30-60 seconds. The player with the most tails wins the round.

VARIATION: (for 9-12 year olds)

Groups of three form a train, placing their hands on the player in the front. You have an engine, passenger car and a caboose. The caboose places the tail in their shorts.

Trains try to avoid each other and the engines try to grab the tails from the other cabooses.

### Key Points

- Changing direction, balance, quickness
- Some deception, players scheme together
- Good for small group interaction



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## Math Dribble

Within a confined area, players stand in random formation, each with a ball. On the command, players dribble to keep control while avoiding touching others. While they dribble, coach calls out a math problem. The players immediately solve the problem by forming the appropriately sized group. This activity organizes groups without asking players to choose a partner or counting off. e.g.: If your next activity requires partners, call out 1+1.

### Key Points

- Dribbling in confined area, changing directions, changing speed
- reaction time, coordination, balance
- Looking for players, moving quickly, and quick reaction time
- Problem solving, forming groups with many different players not just a best friend. Listening skills, paying attention to the stated problems.



## Get Outta Here

A modified playing area with two small goals and cones for the boundaries is all that is necessary to create the field of play. Next, all of the available balls are placed at the feet of the coach who is standing at the middle of the field on one of the touch lines. (This is absolutely necessary to keep the activity moving).

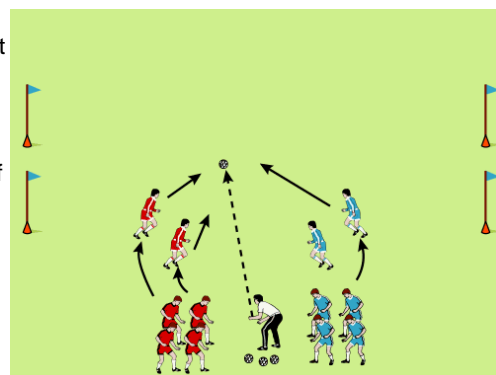
Divide the players into two groups. The groups then line up in pairs on either side of the coach at the middle of the field. The play is begun by the coach playing a ball onto the field. At this point there is no 'ready, set, go' or 'play' or any other spoken cues given by the coach. The idea is to see which of the players is perceptive enough to know that the game is on when there is a ball on the field.

Now the real FUN part for the coach. When a ball goes out of bounds, the coach shouts "Get Outta Here.", at which point, a pair of players from both teams race onto the field and enter the play. The coach plays one of the ball at his feet into the game enabling him/her to pass a ball to a player who hasn't had a lot touches, or into an open space that might improve upon bunching.

In the event a goal is scored, "Get Outta Here" only applies to the team who were scored on while the team that scored the goal stay on the field ready for more action.

When the coach is completely out of balls, the game is halted and ALL of the players run with haste to get all the balls back to the coach so that the game can be resumed.

Trust me, it works and they LOVE IT!!



### Key Points

- Dribbling, short passing, receiving
- Quickness, sprinting, anaerobic endurance
- Working in pairs, two player combinations
- Concentration, team work

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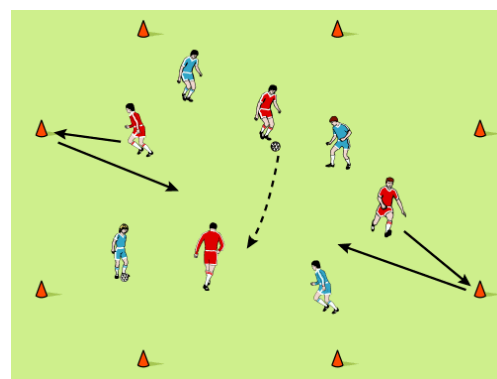
**Duration:**

## Touch the Cones (4v4)

Work with two teams of 6-9 players, 1 ball (Ok to use more) and 10-20 cones. Play on half or full field, depending on the size of your teams and age of your players. Place the cones evenly on the side and end lines around the field. Play a normal small-sided game to goals. Each time a player passes a ball, they must run and touch a cone and then they can run back to the ball. It can be the closest one or the furthest one. This is a great game for reducing the 'bee-hive' effect.

### Key Points

- Dribbling, passing, receiving, heading and shooting under game speed and pressure.
- All the physical demands of a game. Short and long distance running. Changing direction, fighting for balls, etc.
- Running in and out of support of the ball.
- Provides opportunities for equal participation, particularly if you have a few players who have a tendency to dominate the play.



## Edge of the World

Each player has a ball, in a confined area.

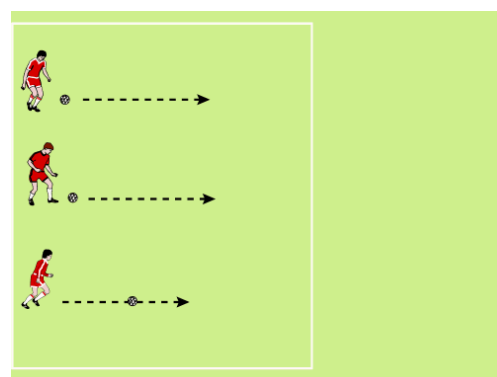
Players start at one end of the area and pass their ball to the other end line. They must run after their own ball and control it before it 'falls off the edge of the earth.'

Players can only strike the ball once when passing it. The challenge is to get as close to the line without going over.

Why not try it with a partner? The partners run to control each other's ball.

### Key Points

- Proper pacing of pass. Passing accuracy.
- Sprinting.
- Creates tendency for immediate movement after the ball following a pass.
- Self-pacing activity. Allows players to take safe risks.



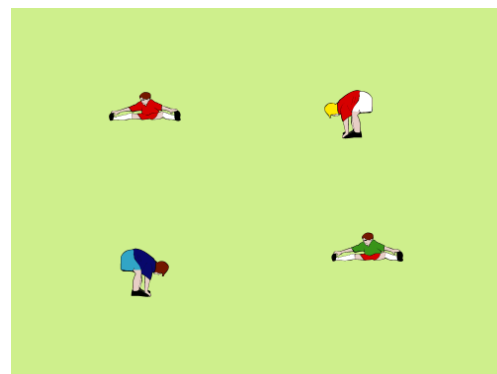
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- The grand finale. Can you stand up and walk, without letting go of your toes?



# Practice Summary

Theme: Small-Group Play

Date:

Objectives:

Time:












Venue:

## Practice Roster


## Equipment List


## Drills

Total Duration 60 Minutes

Drill	Duration (minutes)
 Human Obstacle Course	5
 Snake in the Grass	5
 Toes	5
 Find the Coach	5
 The Blob	5
 Tail Tag	5
 Draw	5
 Get Outta Here	5
 Touch the Cones (4v4)	10
 Edge of the World	5
 Toes	5

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## Notes

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