

Practice Activities

Theme: Individual Offense and Defense

Date:

Venue:

Time:

Duration:

I Can Do Something, Can You

This is a fun, creative and empowering activity.

The challenges from the coach can be with and without a ball.

Examples:

The coach says, "I can do something without the ball, can you?" and begins skipping, at which time the players skip in a random fashion within a defined area.

The coach then repeats the challenge and demonstrates another movement.

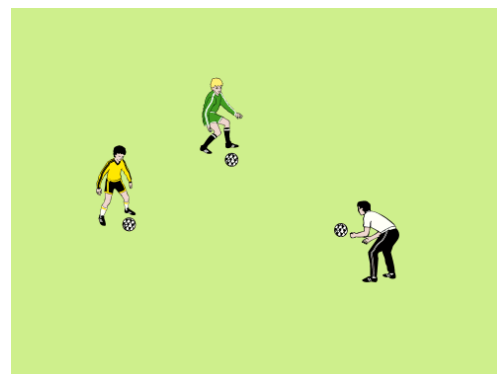
Hopping, running and clapping, walking backwards, whatever you can think of).

After the players get the hang of it, the coach then asks the players, "Who can show us something they can do without the ball? (Be ready for anything)"

After several opportunities for the players to express themselves, the coach now goes through the same challenging phase, but this time with a ball.

i.e. "I can do something with the ball, can you?"

And then again, involve the players with the chance to show what they can do with the ball.



Ballnastics - Individual

1. Stationary ball

Touch the ball with the sole of the foot alternating feet as fast as you can. Younger players (5,6,7 year olds) will have difficulty with the coordination of the right and left feet. They will need more time. Older players (8 and older) will have a body rhythm and will be able to be challenged to develop faster foot movement.

a) How many touches in 20 seconds? In 30 seconds? Then ask, can you improve on your last try?

b) Using only the sole of the foot, can you move the ball forward, backward, sideways? The task can either be for time or a fixed distance.

2. Stationary ball - jumping (U8 and older)

With feet together, can you jump forward and backward over the ball. Try to keep your feet together. How many jumps in 20 seconds? In 30 seconds?

3. Jump side to side. (U8 and older)

How many jumps in 20 seconds? In 30 seconds?

4. Bouncing and catching the ball with both hands.

a) Can you bounce the ball and jump at the same time?

b) Can you jump up and with both hands throw the ball to the ground as hard as you can to get the highest bounce possible? Jump up and catch the ball?

c) While jumping and bouncing, can you bounce the ball through your legs, turn and catch it?

5. Tossing and catching (U8 and older)

a) Lying on your back, can you toss the ball straight up and catch it? How many times in row?

b) Lying on your back, can you toss the ball straight up, sit up and catch it? How many times in a row?

c) Lying on your back or sitting up, can you toss the ball straight up, stand up and catch it, either before it hits the ground or after one bounce? How many times in a row?

d) Standing, can you toss the ball high in the air, jump up and catch while you are in the air?

e) Standing, can you toss the ball in the air, quickly sit down and get back up and catch the ball before it hits the ground or after one bounce?

f) Standing, can you toss the ball in the air, do a forward roll, get up and catch the ball, before it hits the ground or after one bounce?

SAFETY NOTE: Coaches make sure that your players are able to do a forward roll correctly!

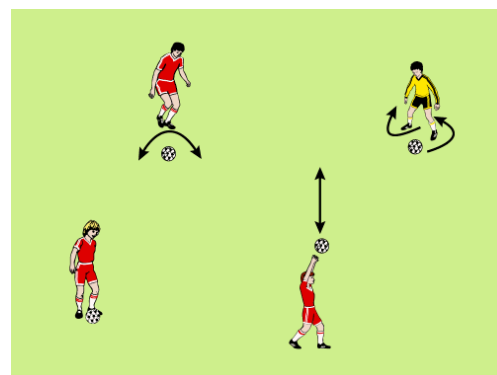
6. Rolling and Stretching.

a) Standing with your legs apart, can you roll the ball with your hands through your legs in a figure eight fashion?

b) Place one leg forward, the other behind you. Can you roll the ball with your hands around your front foot? Switch feet.

c) Sitting down, legs together and straight. Can you, without letting go and with both hands on the ball, roll the ball to your toes? Can you go past your toes? Don't drop the ball.

d) Sitting with legs straight, but apart in a "V" shape. Can you roll the ball along the outside of your leg, around your foot, over to the other foot, and behind the back? Can you do this five times? Reverse direction.



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Body Part 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 body part and player immediately stops the ball with that body part. Call 'right elbow', 'chin', 'left knee' etc.

Vary by playing "Simon Says"

Key Points

- Dribbling in a confined area, close control, changing direction, changing speed.
- Reaction time, reinforce knowledge of body parts.
- Reading the environment, looking and moving into open spaces
- Working within a group, positive interaction. Listening skills, tuning into exactly what the coach/leader is saying.



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.



Everybody's It

Within a confined area, players stand in random formation, each with a ball.

Each player dribbles within area attempting to tag anyone while maintaining control of the ball. Each time a player tags someone, he/she receives a point.

Key Points

- Dribbling, changing direction, changing speed. Using all foot surfaces, close control.
- Balance, expanding peripheral vision agility.
- Shielding, getting away from players, looking to attack players. Quick decision making.
- Positive interaction within entire group. Developing an attack and defensive posture.



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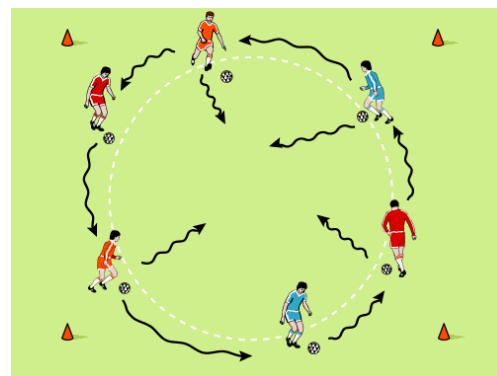
Cross Over

Players work in a circle formation, each with a ball.

Players dribble around the circle. On the coach's signal, the players attempt to cross through the circle without touching each other. If group is large, have players count off by two. When the coach calls number one or two, players quickly turn and dribble across the circle without touching other players or their soccer balls.

Key Points

- Dribbling changing direction, close control.
- Balance, agility, quick reaction time.
- Looking for space, reading the environment.
- Working within a group.



Pac Man

Players work in a 20 x 20 yard area, with one player with the ball.

Player with the ball dribbles and attempts to hit the other players below the waist by passing the ball at them. Players try to avoid getting hit with the ball. Once a player is hit, he gets his ball and becomes the second 'Pac Man'.

Game continues until all players have been hit and have a ball.

Key Points

- Dribbling and passing, trying to hit a moving target. Encouraging quick preparation and passing of the ball. Deceptive passing and use of either foot.
- Cardiorespiratory endurance fitness, agility, jumping.
- Looking for players, chasing, tracking, playing to a target. The first step in teaching players to attack someone with the ball. Emphasis on creating an assertive and attack posture with the ball.
- Allows all ability levels to play equally. Allows each player to be successful. If players are hit early, they will dribble longer. If they manage to avoid getting hit until the end, their challenge greatly increases.



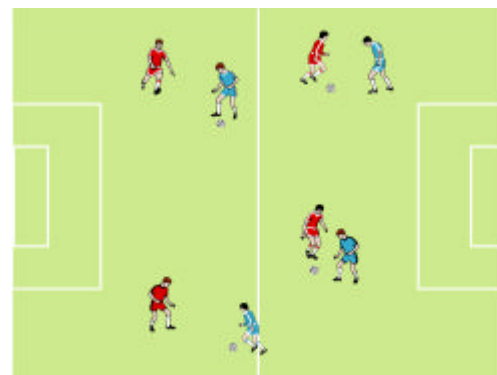
Balls Galore

Play on a half or full field with goals. Divide the players into two teams of 6-11 per team, including goal keepers, with 3-6 balls.

Play a normal small-sided game, with the exception of playing with more than one ball. If the players always chase after one ball in a bee-hive fashion, give them more honey!

Key Points

- A high degree of dribbling, passing, receiving, heading and shooting during a game.
- All the physical demands of a game. Short and long distance running. Changing direction, fighting for the ball, etc.
- A great opportunity for the execution of individual and group tactics. The game breaks down into many 1v1 duels, 2v1, 2v2, 3v1 3v2, 3v3, and so on under real pressure of a match. Some players will stay in the back and defend calling for help; some players will track others the length of the field; some will take leadership roles.
- A very high opportunity for success in scoring goals and becoming very involved in the game. Players call for help from teammates. Opportunity for creativity through a highly motivating game. Problem solving and risk taking skills.



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Small-sided 4v4, no goalkeepers

The final activity of every practice session should be a small-sided match randomly selected by the coach (do not pick captains to choose teams). The coach should simply divide by shirt colours, count off, or just split the group in two.

This small-sided match should ideally be a four vs four scrimmage without goalkeepers. The feedback from the coach should continue to be positive, but reduced to let children play. This is their time and their game. The coach should concentrate on observing player behaviours and to make sure that the players are safe.

The area should be adjusted to meet the needs of the players, but generally an area 25-30 yards wide and 35-40 yards in length should work.



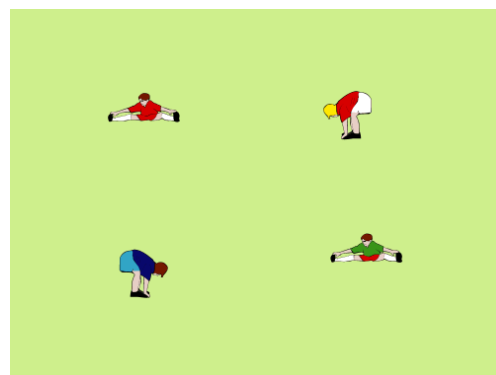
Toes

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?



Practice Summary

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Date:

Objectives:

Time:











Venue:

Practice Roster

Equipment List

Drills

Total Duration 65 Minutes

Drill	Duration (minutes)
 I Can Do Something, Can You? (in pairs)	5
 BallNastics - Individual	5
 Body Part Dribble	5
 Math Dribble	5
 Everybody's It	5
 Cross Over	5
 Pac Man	5
 Balls Galore	5
 Small-sided 4v4, no goalkeepers	20
 Toes	5

Notes
