

EasiCoach

SOCCER SKILLS ACTIVITIES

U11-U12



David Clarke

SOCCER COACH WEEKLY

Part of the **EasiCoach Skills Curriculum** – helping grassroots coaches teach core soccer skills to young players

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By David Clarke

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to EasiCoach™ Soccer Skills Activities – the parents’ survival guide to coaching soccer

Dear Beginner Coach, Volunteer Dad or Mum, or “Roped-In” Helper

If the world of soccer coaching seems a little daunting, don’t worry, you are not alone! Like many parents involved in coaching their children:

- You volunteered to help, or were volunteered!
- You don’t know much about soccer, or coaching.
- You don’t want to let the side down.
- You want to do the best you can but don’t have time to go on a course.
- You’re worried about coaching “the wrong thing”.

EasiCoach provides ready-made, age-appropriate, safe training activities, set out clearly on a single page, that even a child could understand.

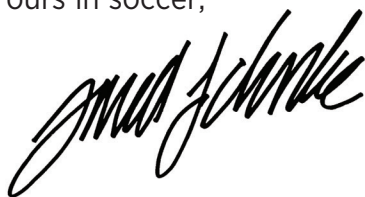
For each activity there is also a relevant game, so the players learn a skill in an activity and then use that skill in a game. This helps to implant the skill into a player’s DNA for them to use throughout their playing adventure. The activities and games are simple and easy to follow, and will make your life easier.

How does this help you? EasiCoach coaching activities will help you to:

- Quickly understand what it is you’re trying to achieve.
- See what you need to do from just a few words and pictures.
- Grasp the key dos and don’ts at a glance.
- Check you have all the equipment you need (never more than basics).
- Cater for more or fewer players at your session.
- Speak to your players with confidence.

But here’s what’s really great about the EasiCoach approach. Follow all the materials in this manual and your players will be learning the right skills for their age group. They will be having more fun, and be on a gradual development pathway that will make them better, more skilful, players and continue playing soccer for longer.

Yours in soccer,



David Clarke

GETTING STARTED

Your EasiCoach Activity Sheets

Each of the activities in this manual covers a simple soccer skill appropriate for U11 or U12 age groups.

Some players in these age groups will have been playing mini soccer for up to two years but don't worry too much if you were not involved previously. Many things are new to everyone involved, and the main objective is for the players to have fun!

Here's what you do to help them.

- Read the Beginners' Guide below.
- In your one hour session, we suggest you run two or (depending on time) three activities from this book, and then play a game.
- Details on how to run a game are below.

The EasiCoach Beginners Guide to U11-U12

Here are the main things you need to know about coaching and organising U11 and U12 soccer. Don't worry, it's not as hard as you think. The good news is that coaching the game has just got simpler!

Length of the session: The coaching, training, games or matches combined should last for no more than 1 hour 30 minutes at U11 and U12. At a typical training session you should plan for no more than three EasiCoach activities, each taking 15-20 minutes including setup and water breaks, followed by a game for 30-40 minutes. Simple.

Set up: Arrive earlier than the players, if you can, to set up the playing area for the chosen activities for the session. Set up two or three EasiCoach activities and be ready for the players to arrive.

Shin pads: Every player wears shin pads or they cannot take part.

Getting Started

Parents: The most influential people in terms of a child's psychological and sociological development are his or her parents. A child's beliefs, values, perceptions, attitudes and goals are shaped by their home influences and have a profound effect in later life. Evidence





suggests that interest and support from the home are vital in a child's overall development. With this evidence, engaging parents in the learning experience of their children, if guided and educated correctly, can lead to positive effects in reinforcing messages of support you offer to the players during the sliver of time you have with them.

Keen though they are to make a difference, unless they are helping, parents are now recommended to stand at least 3 yards back from the edge of the pitch. If space allows, your pitch set up should incorporate a cone or rope barrier to show parents where to stand. Encouragement of players is welcomed and criticism frowned upon.

TIPS FOR DEALING WITH PARENTS

- Organise a pre-season meeting for players and parents.
- Talk to the parents before/after coaching and explain what you are doing and why you are doing it; explain the benefits.
- Use a questionnaire to get the views from the parents, what else can be improved.
- Hold a Parents' Evening – hold evenings when parents can come along with their child and discuss how they are getting on.
- Set them basic tasks – this could be asking for support around setting out equipment or keeping a record of playing time for you.

SOME QUESTIONS YOU COULD ASK PARENTS:

Do your actions on game day:

1. Demonstrate trust in the coach?
2. Centre around the players' needs?
3. Help or confuse the player(s)?

Refereeing and Game Coaching

You might hope not to have to get involved in refereeing, or “game coaching” as it is becoming known, or you might be dead keen to try. These days the objective is a free-flowing game, so the person with the whistle is more of a helper than a referee.



HINTS AND TIPS FOR MATCHES

- Find a piece of grass the appropriate size.
- Use flat markers to highlight the goal area to help the goalkeepers.
- Move the portable goals to the right place.
- Maybe look at using a 3G pitch or commercial provider as a venue.
- Put up the Respect barrier for the parents to stand behind.
- Mark out a small technical area for the coaches and subs near the halfway line.

Using the whistle: Although the emphasis at this age is on using the whistle as little as possible, it's still valuable to start and stop games, highlight dangerous play, stop for injuries or when serious infringements occur. And it's helpful for getting attention, too! But you could just say “Stop!” as an alternative!

GOALPOST SAFETY

Several serious injuries and fatalities have occurred in recent years as a result of unsafe or incorrect use of goalposts. Safety is always of paramount importance and everyone in soccer must play their part to prevent similar incidents occurring in the future.

Guidelines for U11-U12 Soccer

PLAYING AREA

Halfway line: The field of play is divided into two halves by a halfway line. The centre mark is indicated at the mid-point of the halfway line.

Goal size: In the UK, the distance between the posts is 16 feet (US: 18.5 feet) and the distance between the lower edge of the cross bar and the ground is 7 feet (US: 6.5 feet).

The ball: The UK and the US play with a size 4 ball. It should be safe and made of leather or other suitable material.

Number of players: UK and US play 9v9.

A match may not START if either team consists of fewer than six players. The minimum number of players in a team required for a match to CONTINUE is also six. Players must play with and against players only from their own age range (check with local authorities). Each team must not have a squad greater than double the size of the team per age. Any number of substitutes, without being named, may be used at any time with the permission of the referee. A player who has been replaced may return to the playing area as a substitute for another player.

PLAYING EQUIPMENT

Players must wear shin pads and goalkeepers must wear a distinguishing playing top. Shin pads must be covered entirely by the socks. Players must wear the appropriate clothing dependent on the weather.

Correct footwear must be worn for the surface of the pitch e.g. no metal studs on artificial grass pitches.

REFEREES

The Authority of the Referee: Each match is controlled by a referee who has full authority to enforce the Laws for Mini Soccer in connection with the match to which they have been appointed.

Furthermore, referees should also recognize their role is to facilitate the learning of the players, for example, allow young children to take a second attempt at a throw-in if the first is not within the Laws.

DURATION OF THE GAME

In any one day, no player shall play more than 100 minutes in one game. It is the responsibility of the parent/carer or organisation to ensure the child does not exceed this. Each league/competition will determine its own playing time within the maximum time permitted, however, the maximum duration will be two halves of 30 minutes. It is permitted during development matches that the periods of play can be split into equal quarters. The half time interval must not exceed 15 minutes.





A 1-2-3 of Coaching Children

1. USE THE 30 SECOND RULE

The 30 second rule works because children learn best by doing, not listening, and 30 seconds is about as much as most of them can take. So, with that in mind, let them do as much as possible and listen as little as possible. After 30 seconds, many of your audience will have stopped listening anyway, and very little if any of what you go on to say will be heard, let alone understood. Don't waste your time!

Only having 30 seconds to talk can make life easier if you are privately anxious about speaking, or concerned about saying the wrong thing, as it reduces the chance of making a mistake. Being time limited forces you to think carefully beforehand about what you are going to say. The outcome should be reduced waffle and getting to the point more quickly. Children like this simplicity. It is also worth bearing in mind that in chillier climates, players will get cold very quickly if they are standing round listening to you for more than a short period.

Just 30 seconds really only gives you the chance to pick up one point from the activity the players have been doing – a good thing in itself. While you are observing them, think about what you want to say. This can be praise or encouragement, or it can be to offer a suggestion to a common problem that

is occurring. Use your 30 seconds to laser in on just one. That single message is far more likely to get through into their little heads if it is on its own.

One trick to increase attention levels is to get young players as attentive as possible before you start talking, simply by asking them to be quiet, or standing silently waiting for them to quiet down. The rule is not always practical, though. Sometimes, when you are introducing something new, you will have to talk to the players for longer. In these situations, make sure you involve the players either by asking questions, giving them a break from your voice – or by getting volunteers to demonstrate. But if you can do it in 30 seconds – congratulations!

2. WHEN AND HOW TO CORRECT MISTAKES

If a young player is making a mistake, we feel duty bound to do something about it. However, we shouldn't always step in. Young people learn from their mistakes by themselves and from feedback from their peers. They don't want or need an adult telling them every time they don't get something right, or as good as it should be – they know!

You may notice as you start coaching young children that youngsters can be intimidated by corrections. The action of correcting can be counterproductive in itself, with some players not taking on board what they need to change.

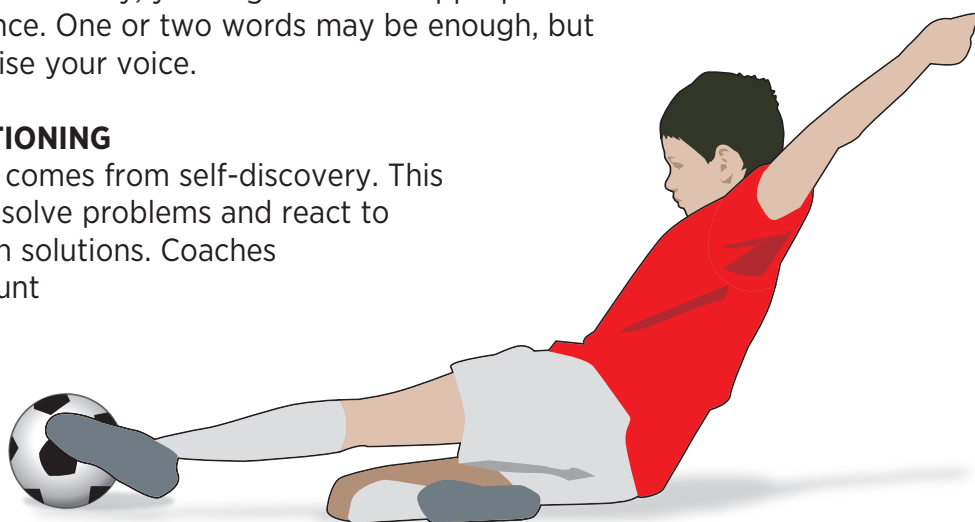
There are some things that we must correct. Anything that can harm the player or someone else, such as kicking, punching, verbal abuse or any other sort of foul play. These are non-negotiable. Do not hesitate to blow the whistle to stop play and highlight the actions of the offender, so that everyone is aware of the issue and can learn.

Other areas we might correct are discretionary. Technical errors, such as taking the ball behind the head for a throw-in, for example. More difficult might be decision-making errors such as wrong options. This is problematic because there are often a number of options.

Most people don't like criticism or corrections at all, let alone in front of others, and children are no different. If at all possible, take the player aside on a one-to-one basis to make a comment. If parents are nearby, you might feel it is appropriate to make the point in their presence. One or two words may be enough, but the key is to “talk” and not raise your voice.

3. COACH BY GENTLE QUESTIONING

Research shows that learning comes from self-discovery. This means players realise how to solve problems and react to situations by finding their own solutions. Coaches should try to reduce the amount of time they spend “telling” the players what to do. Instead, through questioning, they should look to empower their players.



To aid good learning the coach needs to communicate well verbally. The choice of words is often not as important as the way they are told. Remember:

- Don't use jargon or sarcasm.
- Promote positive comments.
- Back up criticism with a way forward.
- Keep sentences short.
- Don't make too many points.
- Summarise at the end – some players may not have understood the first time around.

Gentle questioning

Asking questions is useful because it:

- Gains the attention of the players.
- Lets the coach learn what the players know.
- Involves the players in the learning process.
- Allows the players to express their opinions.
- Helps the coach check for understanding.

Asking the best questions

- Use open questions – questions that cannot be answered with just “yes” or “no”. Start questions with words, like “what”, “how” or “where”.
- Don't use “why”, because it can be construed as negative.
- Wait for the answer, don't hurry the player.
- Listen, don't anticipate the answer. Try not to rephrase the answer once given.

When to “tell” and when to “question”

Tell when:

- You have a short period of time to get your point across.
- Specific instructions are needed. For instance, health and safety issues or laws of the game.
- A larger group makes question and answer sessions unwieldy.

Question to:

- Check your players' understanding.
- Gain feedback.
- Improve your players' learning.

USING YOUR EASICOACH ACTIVITIES AND GAMES

6 STEPS TO EASICOACH SUCCESS

1. Find the activity and game you need.
2. Look at the pictures and read the text.
3. Check what equipment you'll need when you get to the club.
4. Take the book to training.
5. Set up your activity.
6. EasiCoach it!

The second page is a game that will enable your players to put into practise what they learned in the activity

Each game is explained clearly, giving you all the elements required to run the game successfully

The first page is the activity. The title tells you the skill that the players will develop by doing this activity

The age group the activity has been written for along with the skills category that the activity belongs to and its place in that category

The name of the activity – you can tell this to your players: "Today we're going to play..."

CALL OUT gives you some key phrases to tell your players as they do the activity, to help them understand what they should be doing and how they should be doing it

Each activity is explained simply and clearly, step by step

GAME PLAY gives you the vital elements of the game that you should look out for in your players

The diagrams show you what the activity should look like on the pitch. There might be one, two or three diagrams – whatever makes it easiest for you to understand

HOW MANY PLAYERS DO I NEED tells you the ideal number of players required to run the activity so that you adapt to the number players who arrive at training

EasiCoach

SOCCER SKILLS ACTIVITIES

U11

BALL CONTROL

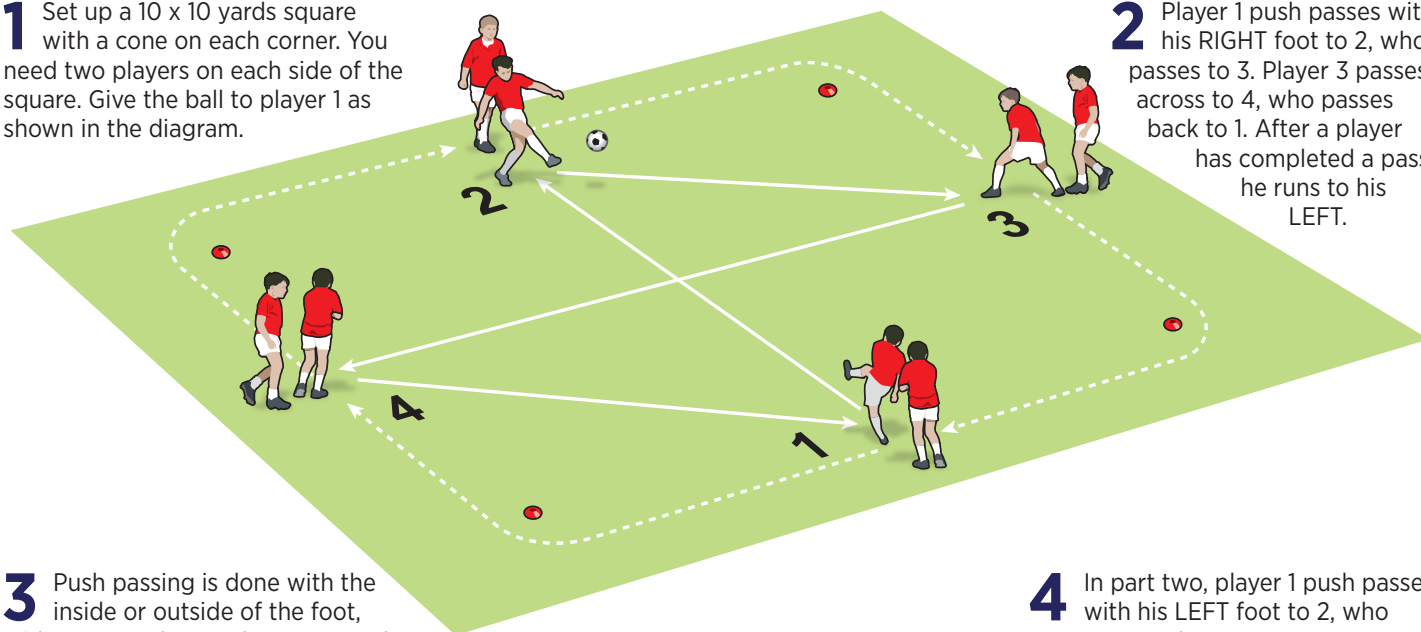
Pass to a team mate 5 and 10 yards using both feet

ACTIVITY: PASSING SQUARE

CALL OUT

“Pass and run to the next cone” • “Head and knee over the ball” “Ankle tight!” • “One touch to control and one to pass”

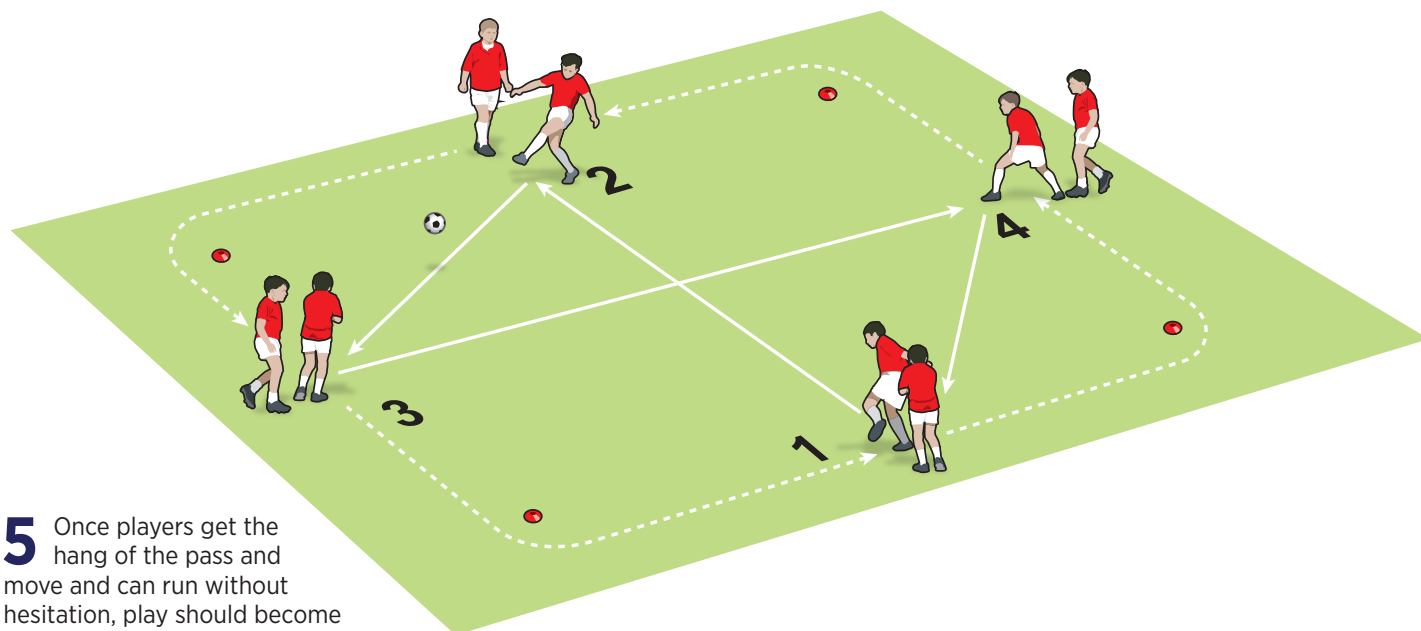
1 Set up a 10 x 10 yards square with a cone on each corner. You need two players on each side of the square. Give the ball to player 1 as shown in the diagram.



2 Player 1 push passes with his RIGHT foot to 2, who passes to 3. Player 3 passes across to 4, who passes back to 1. After a player has completed a pass, he runs to his LEFT.

3 Push passing is done with the inside or outside of the foot, with accuracy key to the pass – make sure players understand where they are running once they have passed the ball.

4 In part two, player 1 push passes with his LEFT foot to 2, who passes to 3. Player 3 passes across to 4, who passes back to 1. After a player has completed a pass, he runs to his RIGHT.



5 Once players get the hang of the pass and move and can run without hesitation, play should become quick and movement will be crisp.

How many players do I need?

We used eight players in this activity.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	Run with the ball	Shot

U11 | BALL CONTROL 1

Pass to a team mate 5 and 10 yards using both feet

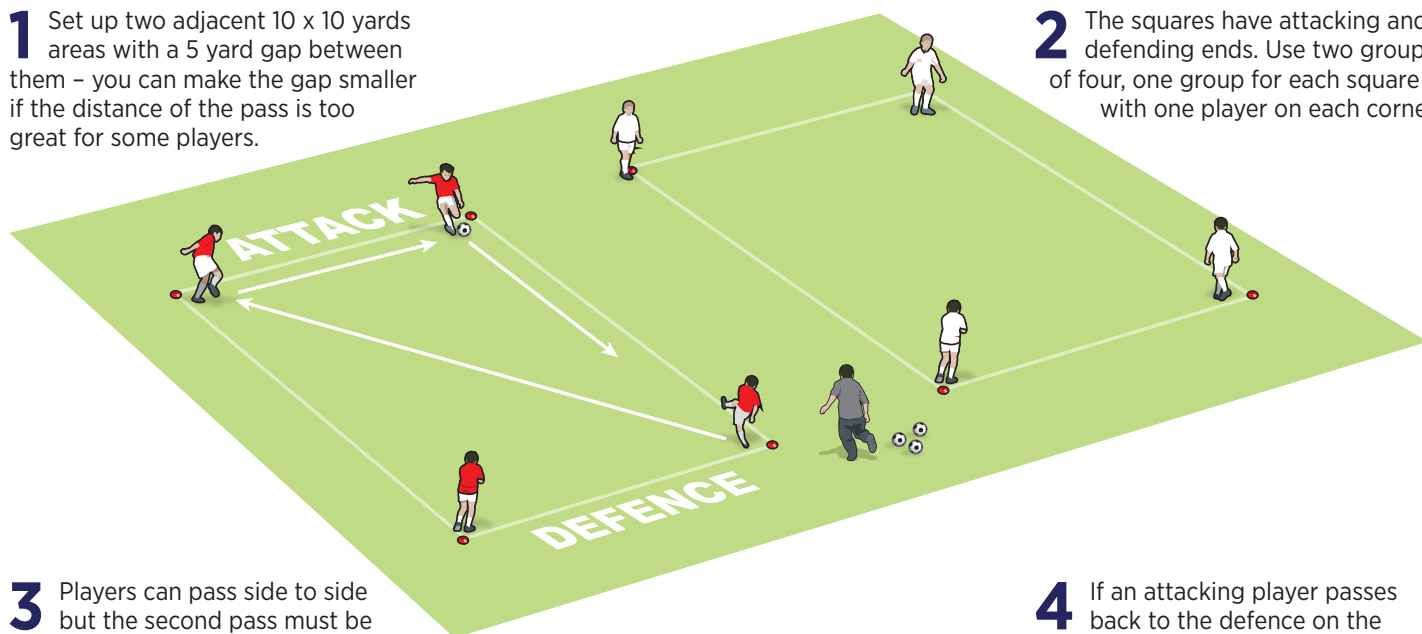
GAME: DOUBLE BOXES

CALL OUT

“Think about where to pass” • “Head and knee over the ball” • “Ankle tight!” • “One touch to control and one to pass”

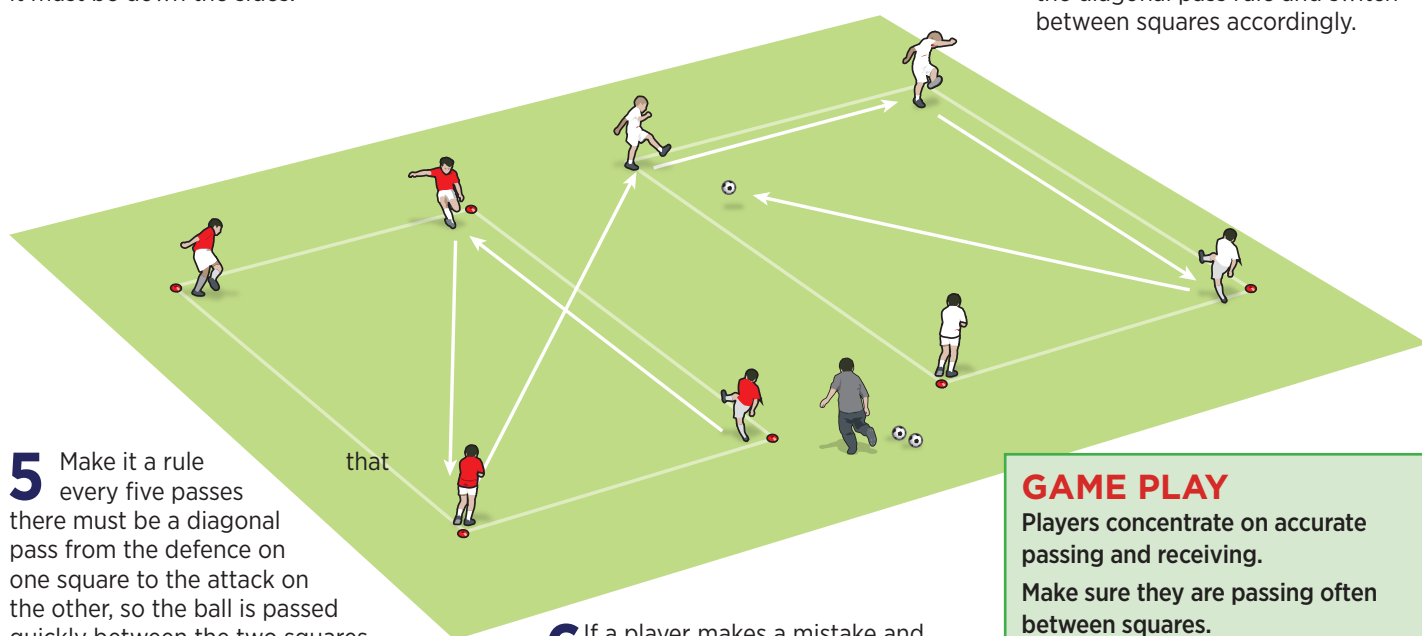
1 Set up two adjacent 10 x 10 yards areas with a 5 yard gap between them – you can make the gap smaller if the distance of the pass is too great for some players.

2 The squares have attacking and defending ends. Use two groups of four, one group for each square with one player on each corner.



3 Players can pass side to side but the second pass must be forwards or backwards. Players can only pass diagonally from defence to attack. When playing back to defence it must be down the sides.

4 If an attacking player passes back to the defence on the diagonal by mistake, the defence must pass the ball to the other square. Players must be aware of the diagonal pass rule and switch between squares accordingly.



5 Make it a rule that every five passes there must be a diagonal pass from the defence on one square to the attack on the other, so the ball is passed quickly between the two squares.

6 If a player makes a mistake and the ball goes out of the square, then the server plays a ball into the other square and play continues.

GAME PLAY

Players concentrate on accurate passing and receiving.

Make sure they are passing often between squares.

Get players to speed up once they get the hang of the session.

How many players do I need?

You need eight players and a server.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	--->	→
	--->	→

Receive turn and pass 5 and 10 yards

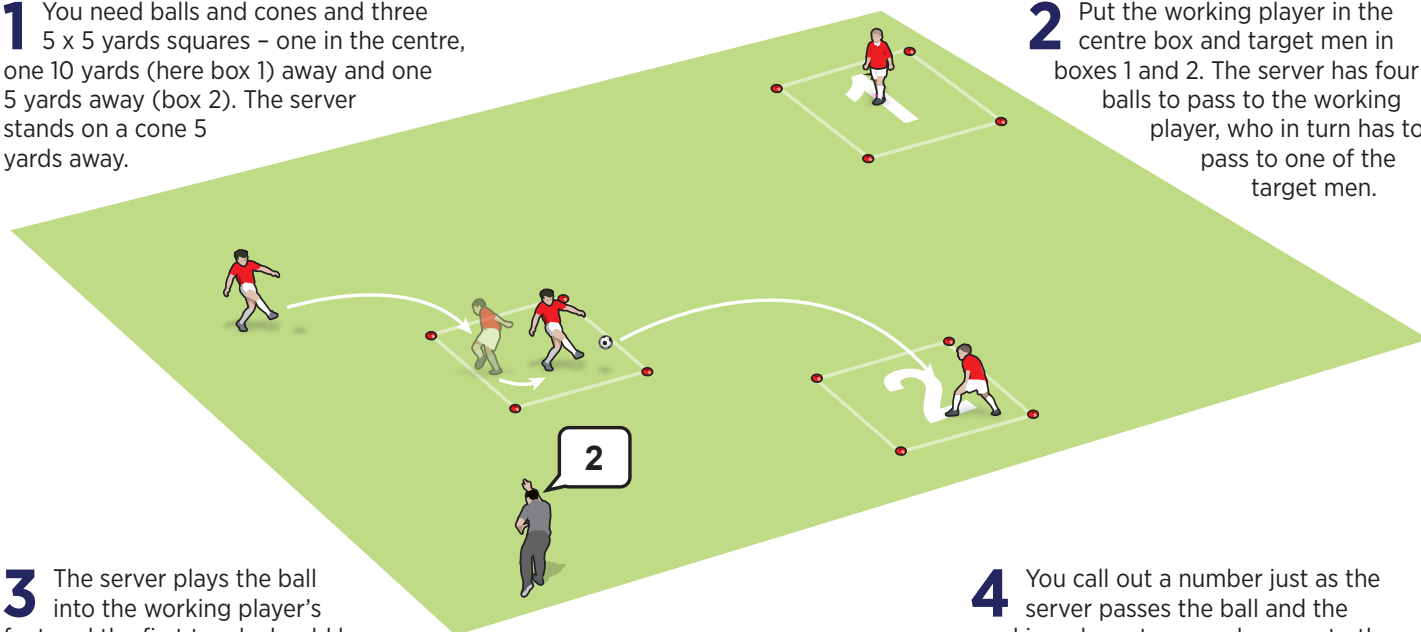
ACTIVITY: FIRST TOUCH

CALL OUT

“Cushion the ball with a light touch” • “Turn and pass first time” • “Listen for the call”
• “Accuracy important – hit the target”

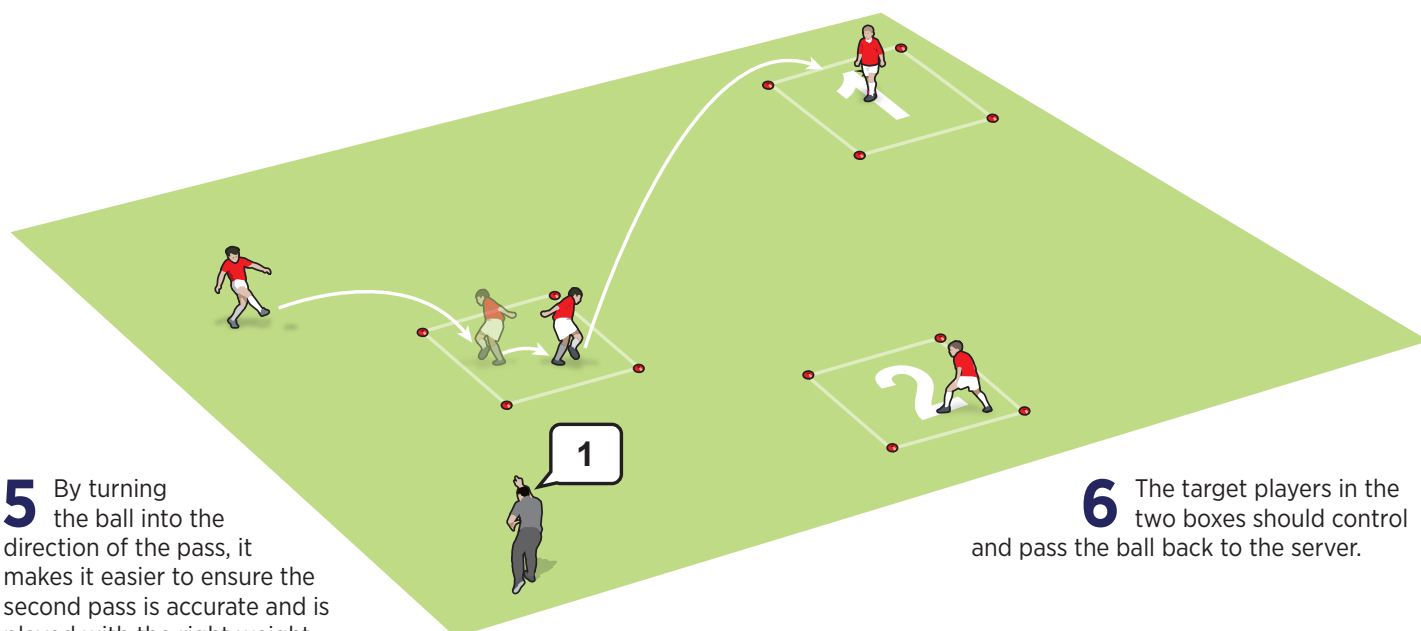
1 You need balls and cones and three 5 x 5 yards squares – one in the centre, one 10 yards (here box 1) away and one 5 yards away (box 2). The server stands on a cone 5 yards away.

2 Put the working player in the centre box and target men in boxes 1 and 2. The server has four balls to pass to the working player, who in turn has to pass to one of the target men.



3 The server plays the ball into the working player's feet and the first touch should be good so the player can turn and get the pass away.

4 You call out a number just as the server passes the ball and the working player turns and passes to the target man in that square.



5 By turning the ball into the direction of the pass, it makes it easier to ensure the second pass is accurate and is played with the right weight.

6 The target players in the two boxes should control and pass the ball back to the server.

How many players do I need?

We used four players and the coach in this activity.

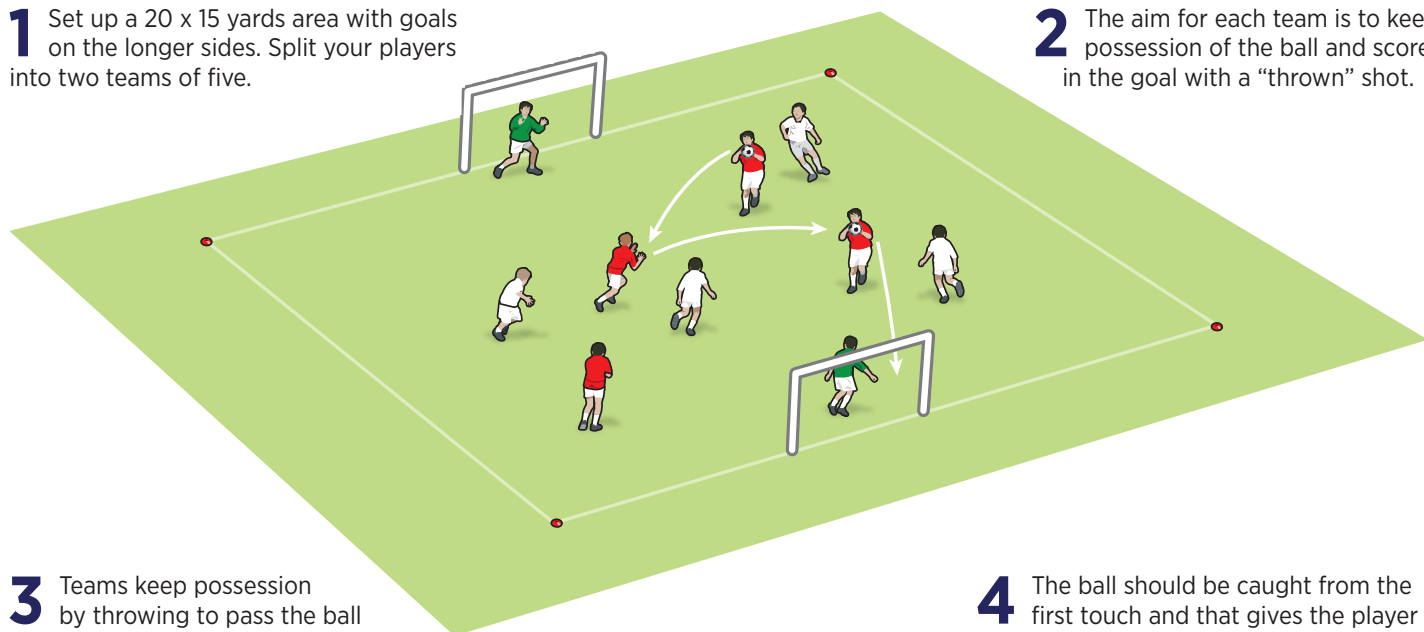
Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	Run with the ball	Shot

Receive turn and pass 5 and 10 yards

GAME: CONTROL, CATCH AND PASS

CALL OUT "Cushion the ball with a light touch" • "Turn and pass first time" • "Listen for the call"
• "Accuracy important - hit the target"

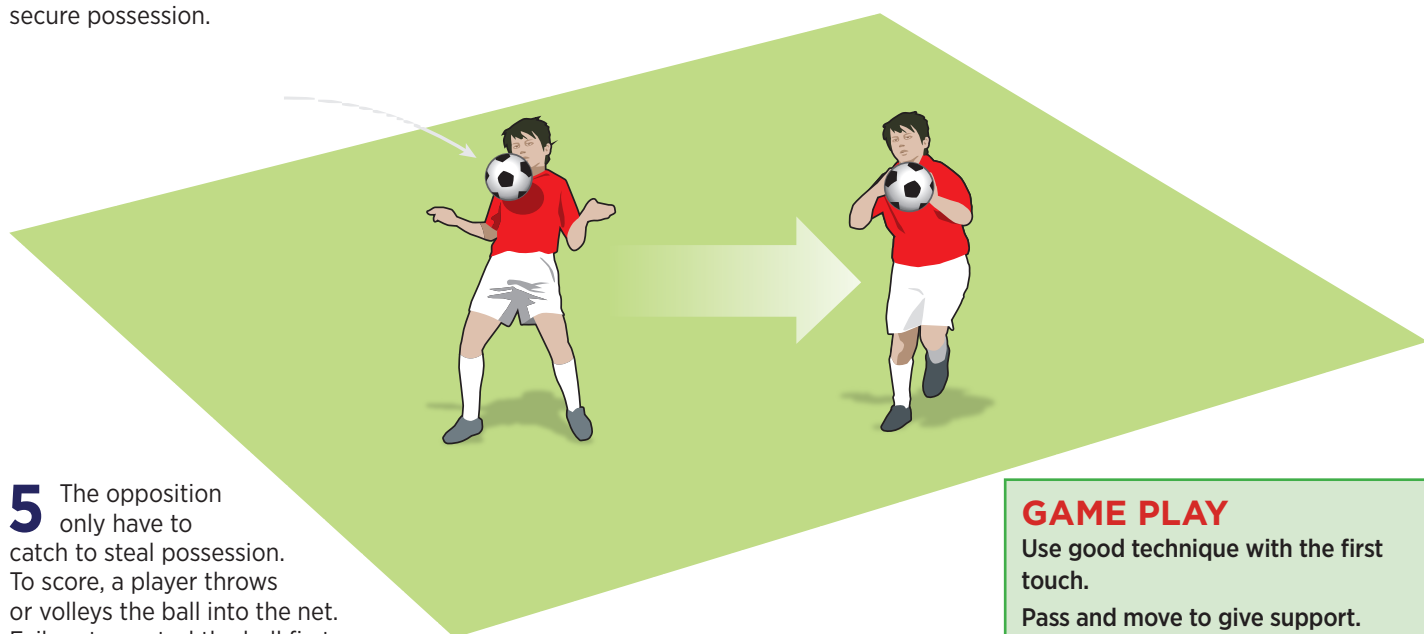
1 Set up a 20 x 15 yards area with goals on the longer sides. Split your players into two teams of five.



2 The aim for each team is to keep possession of the ball and score in the goal with a "thrown" shot.

3 Teams keep possession by throwing to pass the ball and then using a first touch with part of the body but not the hands. Here the player controls the ball on his chest before grabbing it with his hands to secure possession.

4 The ball should be caught from the first touch and that gives the player possession of the ball to then pass again.



5 The opposition only have to catch to steal possession. To score, a player throws or volleys the ball into the net. Failure to control the ball first or dropping the ball results in turnover of possession.

GAME PLAY
Use good technique with the first touch.
Pass and move to give support.
Throw good passes to help team mates.

How many players do I need?

You need 10 players.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	----->	----->
	----->	----->
	----->	----->

Dribble the ball 10 yards with one complete turn

ACTIVITY: TURNING SQUARE

CALL OUT

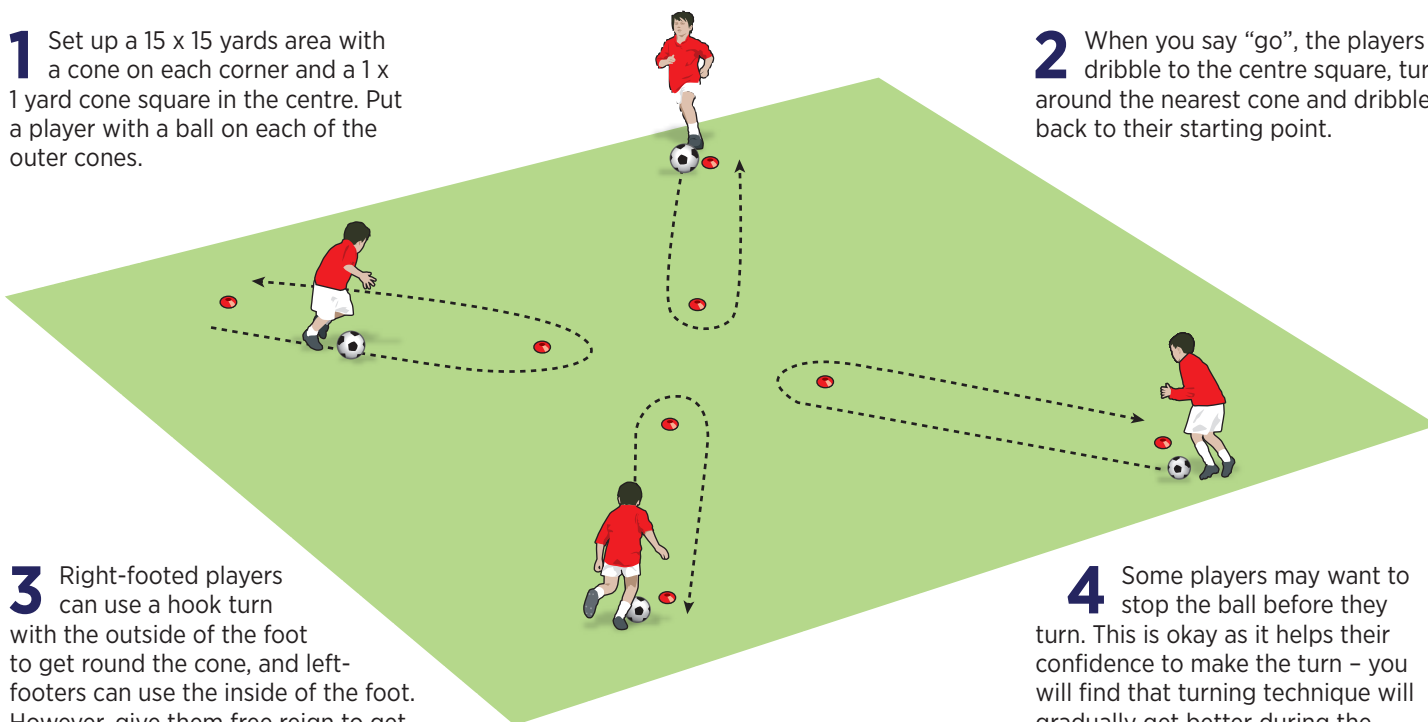
“Keep your eyes on the ball” • “Look up to see where the cone is” • “Look up often as you dribble” • “Turn around the cone using the outside of your foot”

1 Set up a 15 x 15 yards area with a cone on each corner and a 1 x 1 yard cone square in the centre. Put a player with a ball on each of the outer cones.

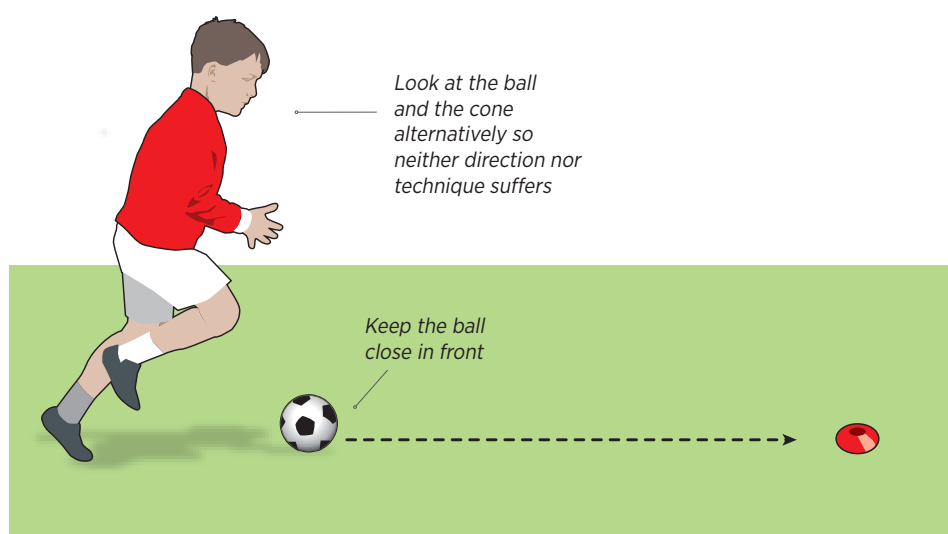
2 When you say “go”, the players dribble to the centre square, turn around the nearest cone and dribble back to their starting point.

3 Right-footed players can use a hook turn with the outside of the foot to get round the cone, and left-footers can use the inside of the foot. However, give them free reign to get around the cone the best way they can at first; just ask them to try and keep the ball close to their feet.

4 Some players may want to stop the ball before they turn. This is okay as it helps their confidence to make the turn - you will find that turning technique will gradually get better during the season.



Dribbling the ball



How many players do I need?

This activity needs at least four players with a player on each corner.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	--->	→
	--->	→

U11 | BALL CONTROL 3

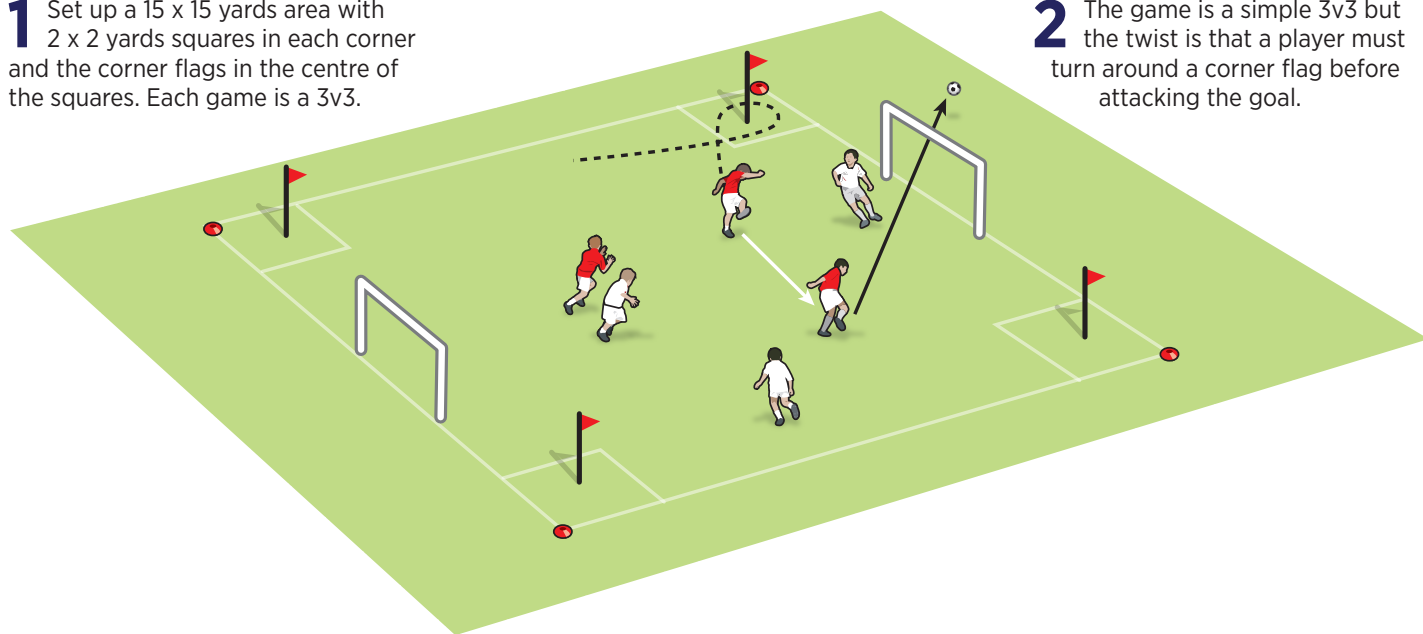
Dribble the ball 10 yards with one complete turn

GAME: ROUND THE FLAGS

CALL OUT

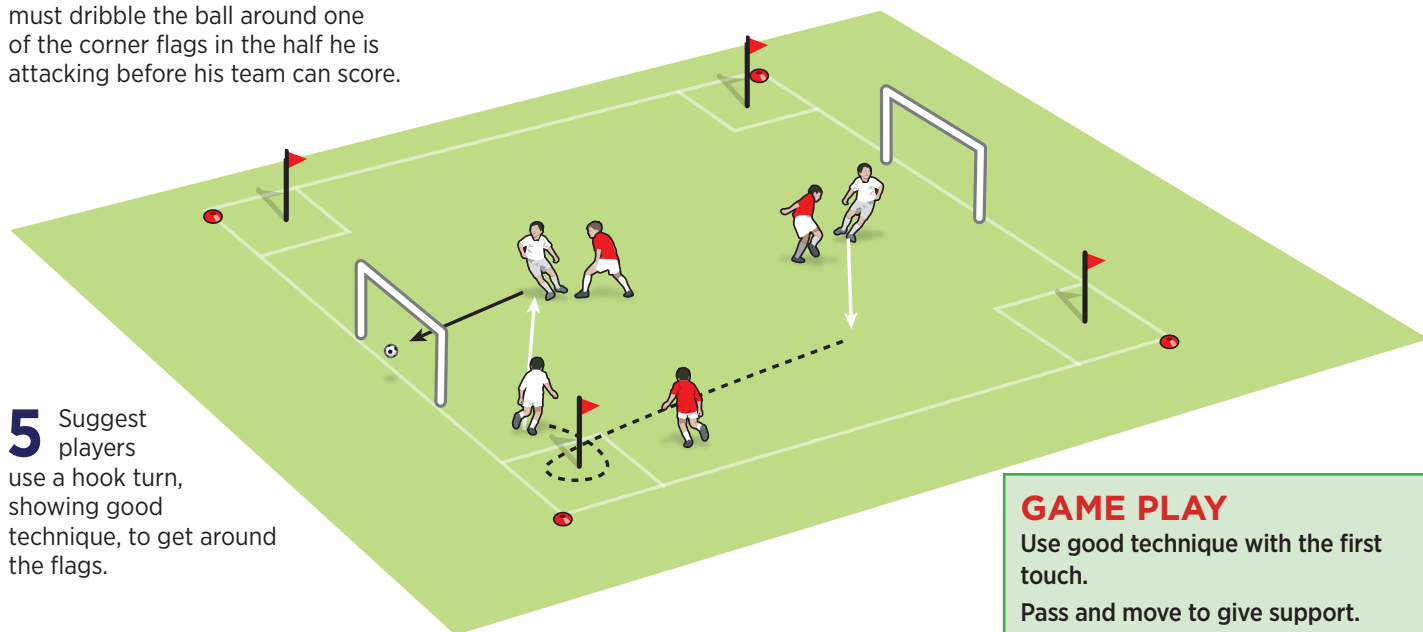
“Keep your eyes on the ball” • “Look up to see where the flag is” • “Look up often as you dribble” • “Turn around the flag using the outside of your foot”

1 Set up a 15 x 15 yards area with 2 x 2 yards squares in each corner and the corner flags in the centre of the squares. Each game is a 3v3.



2 The game is a simple 3v3 but the twist is that a player must turn around a corner flag before attacking the goal.

3 When a team has possession, they attack the opposition's goal as normal, but one of the players must dribble the ball around one of the corner flags in the half he is attacking before his team can score.



4 No tackling is allowed inside the corner squares. All restarts are from next to the goal.

5 Suggest players use a hook turn, showing good technique, to get around the flags.

GAME PLAY

Use good technique with the first touch.

Pass and move to give support.

Throw good passes to help team mates.

How many players do I need?

You need six players in a 3v3.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	Run with the ball	Shot

Run with the ball and pass at speed

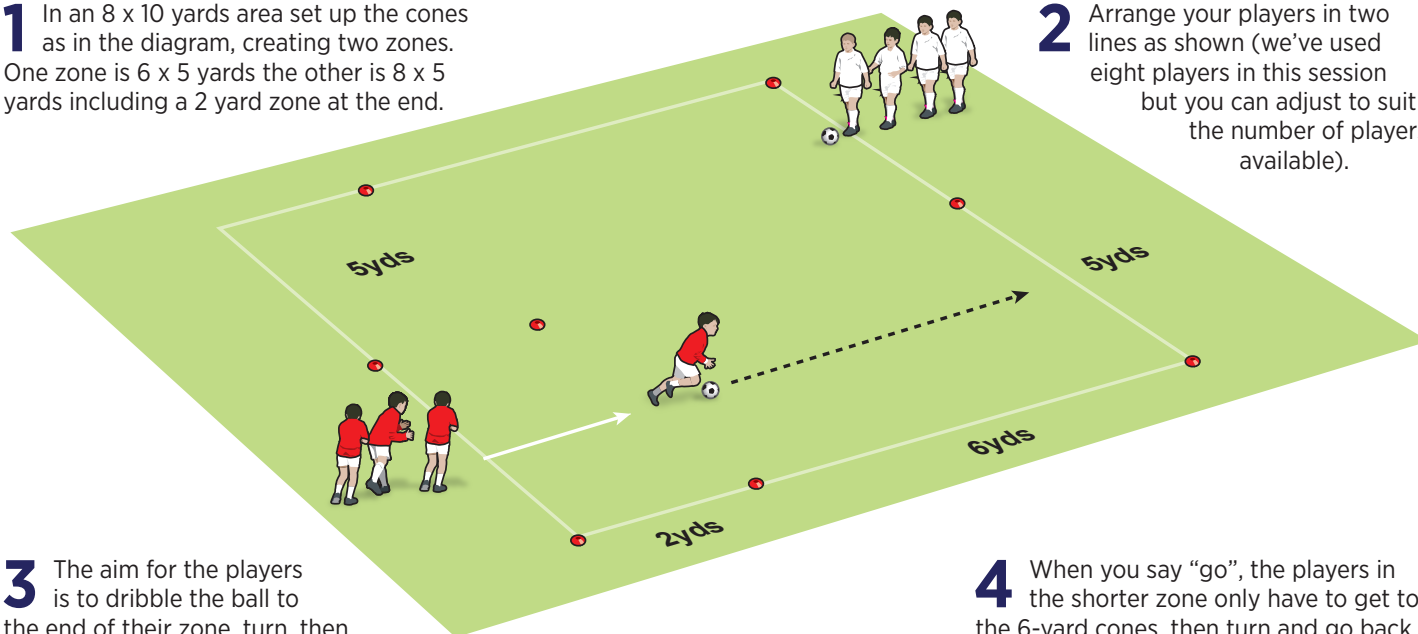
ACTIVITY: DRIBBLE AT PACE

CALL OUT

“Look at the ball for coordination” • “Look up often when dribbling” • “Speed up to beat your opponents”

1 In an 8 x 10 yards area set up the cones as in the diagram, creating two zones. One zone is 6 x 5 yards the other is 8 x 5 yards including a 2 yard zone at the end.

2 Arrange your players in two lines as shown (we've used eight players in this session but you can adjust to suit the number of players available).

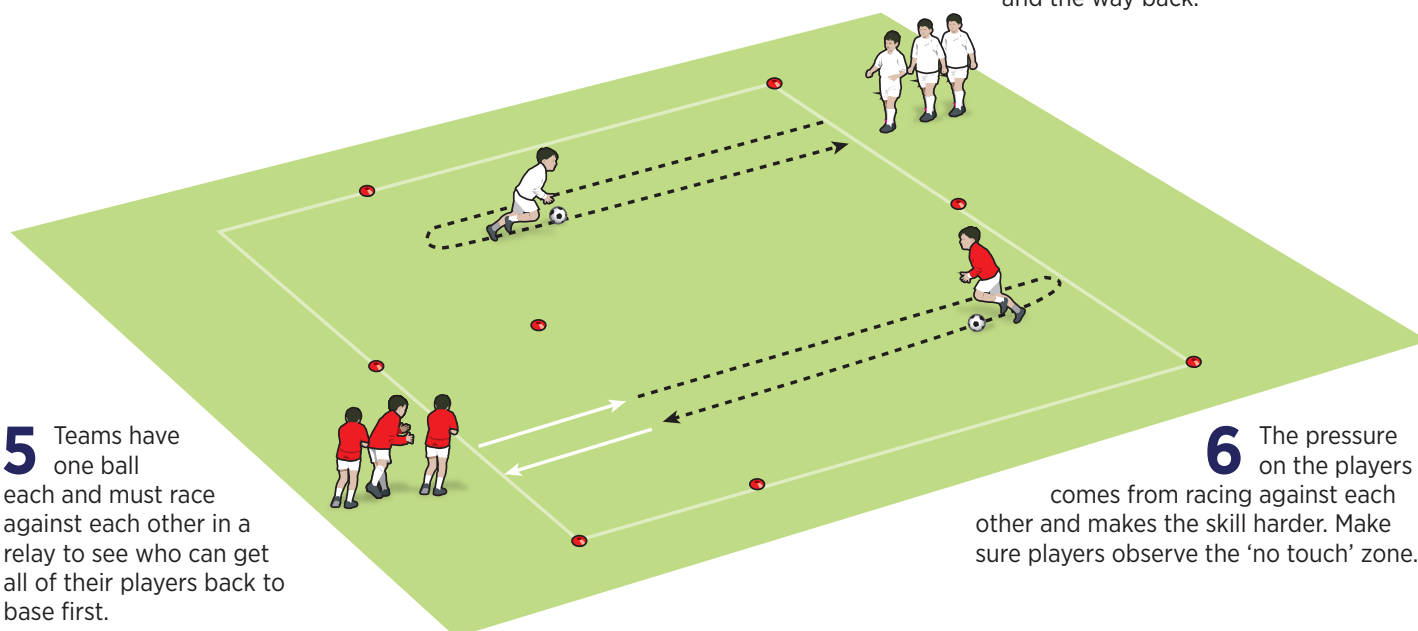


3 The aim for the players is to dribble the ball to the end of their zone, turn, then dribble back again.

4 When you say “go”, the players in the shorter zone only have to get to the 6-yard cones, then turn and go back. The team that has the no touch zone must pass the ball across the zone before touching it again, both on the way out and the way back.

5 Teams have one ball each and must race against each other in a relay to see who can get all of their players back to base first.

6 The pressure on the players comes from racing against each other and makes the skill harder. Make sure players observe the ‘no touch’ zone.



How many players do I need?

We used eight players but you can use as many as you need in this activity.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	--->	--->
	Run with the ball	Shot
	--->	--->

Run with the ball and pass at speed

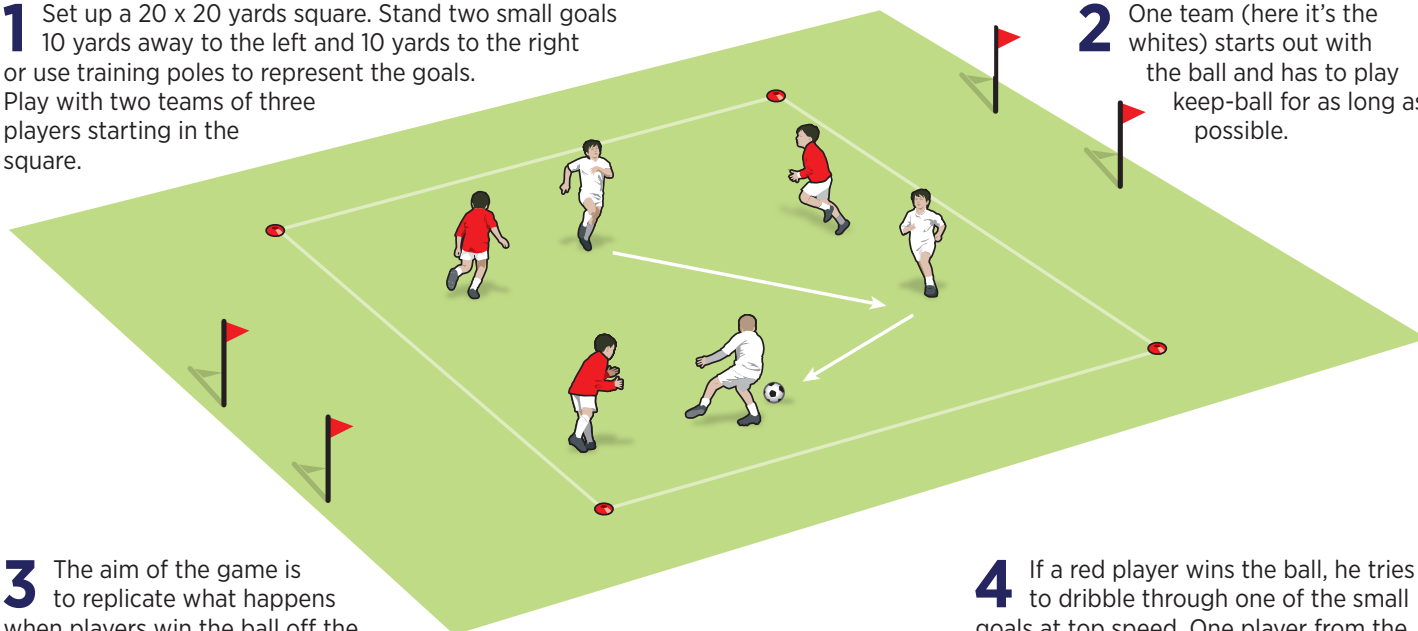
GAME: GREAT ESCAPE

CALL OUT

“Look at the ball for coordination” • “Look up often when dribbling” • “Speed up to beat your opponents”

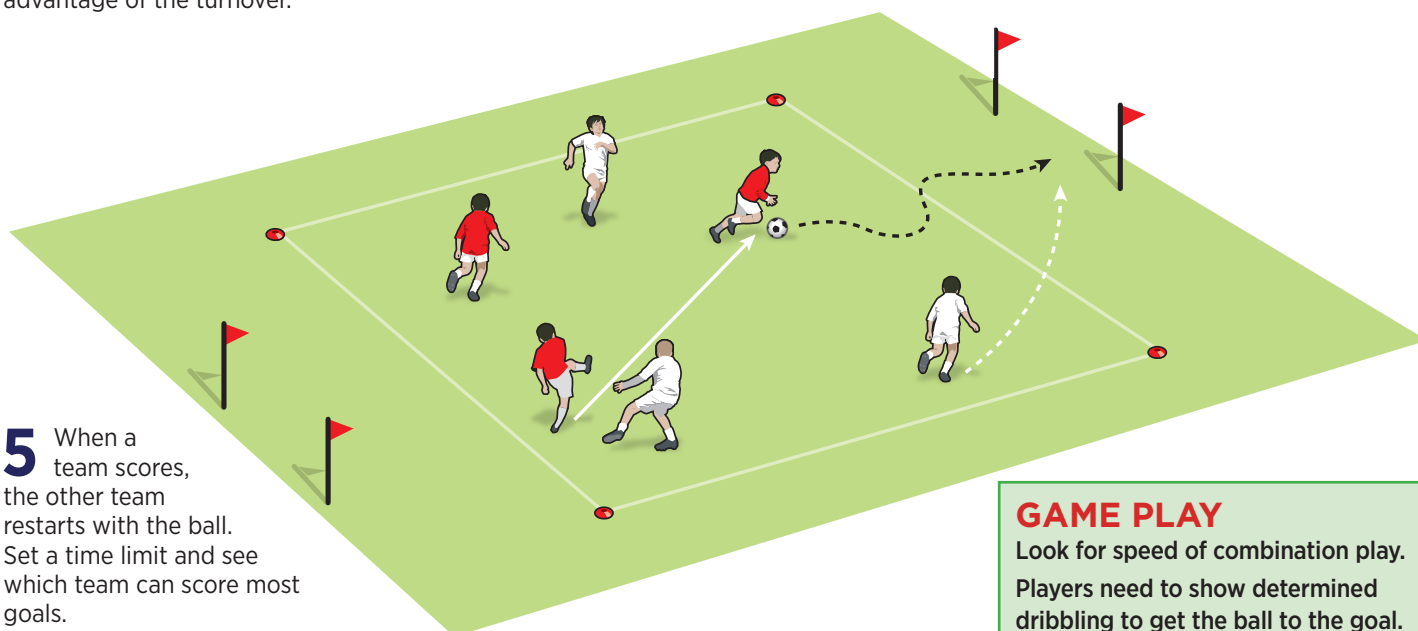
1 Set up a 20 x 20 yards square. Stand two small goals 10 yards away to the left and 10 yards to the right or use training poles to represent the goals. Play with two teams of three players starting in the square.

2 One team (here it's the whites) starts out with the ball and has to play keep-ball for as long as possible.



3 The aim of the game is to replicate what happens when players win the ball off the opposition in midfield. They must pass it quickly and be able to dribble at speed towards the opposition goal to take advantage of the turnover.

4 If a red player wins the ball, he tries to dribble through one of the small goals at top speed. One player from the white team is allowed to move out of the square to try to tackle him.



5 When a team scores, the other team restarts with the ball. Set a time limit and see which team can score most goals.

GAME PLAY

Look for speed of combination play. Players need to show determined dribbling to get the ball to the goal. Defending team must press and jockey with match-like intensity.

How many players do I need?

We used six players.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	--->	—>
	--->	—>

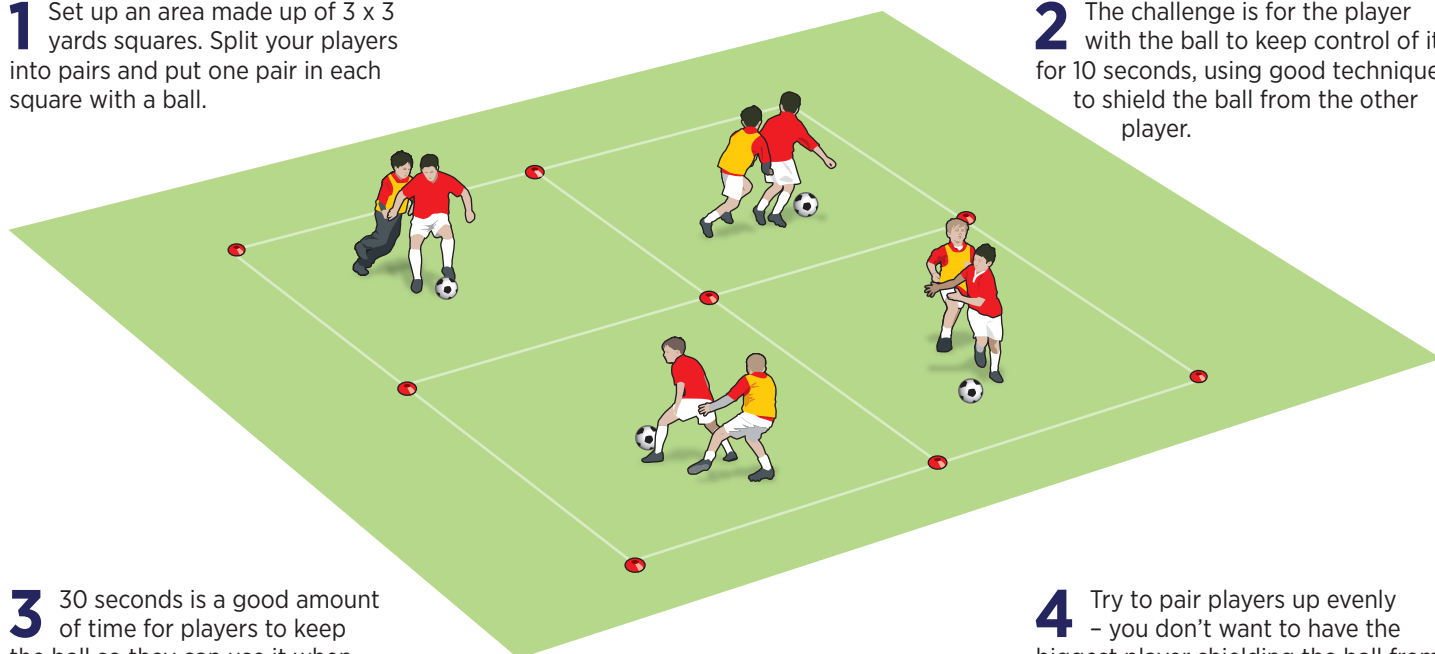
Shielding the ball

ACTIVITY: 30 SECOND CHALLENGE

CALL OUT

“Keep your body between ball and opponent” • “Use touch to keep opponent at arms length” • “Keep the ball close to your body”

1 Set up an area made up of 3 x 3 yards squares. Split your players into pairs and put one pair in each square with a ball.



2 The challenge is for the player with the ball to keep control of it for 10 seconds, using good technique to shield the ball from the other player.

3 30 seconds is a good amount of time for players to keep the ball so they can use it when outnumbered and waiting for team mates. Please experiment with times if players are finding it too easy or too hard

4 Try to pair players up evenly – you don’t want to have the biggest player shielding the ball from the smallest member of the group.

Shielding the ball



How many players do I need?

Players work in pairs.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	--->	—>
	Run with the ball	Shot
	--->	—>

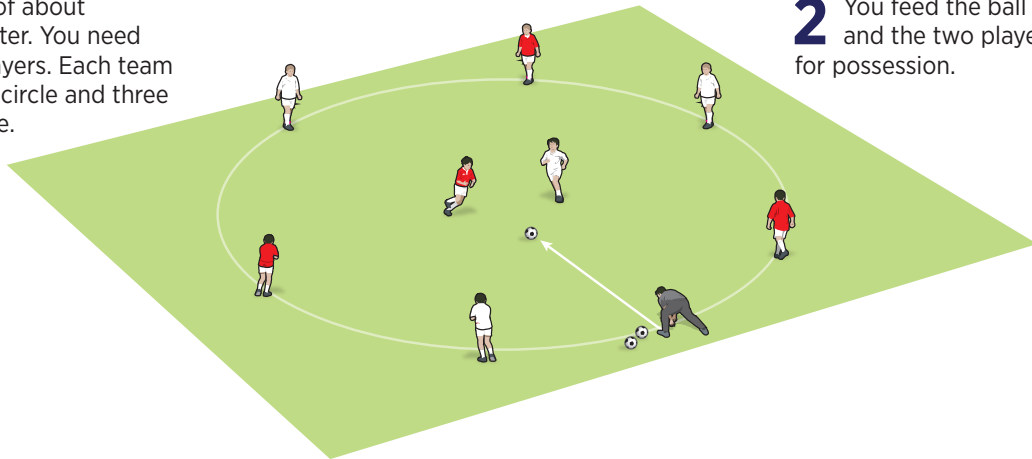
Shielding the ball

GAME: CIRCLE

CALL OUT

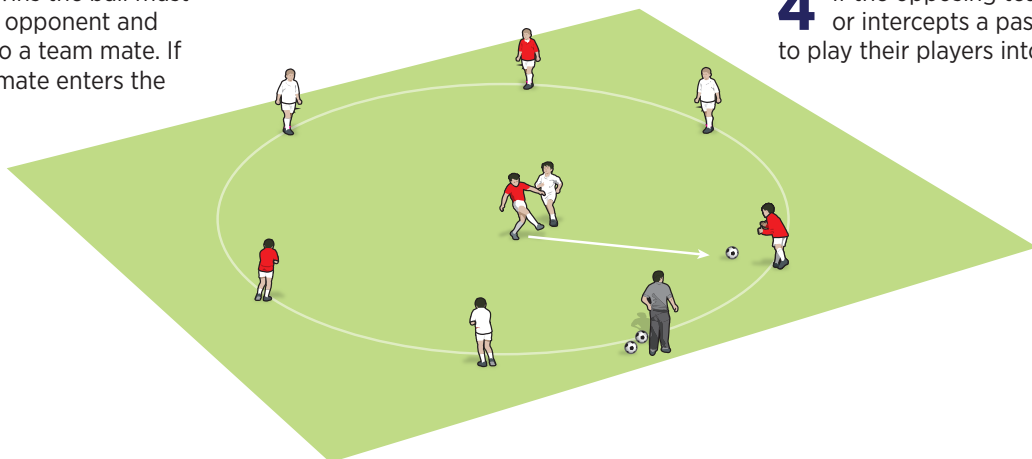
“Keep your body between ball and opponent” • “Use touch to keep opponent at arms length” • “Keep the ball close to your body”

1 Mark out a circle of about 25 yards in diameter. You need two teams of four players. Each team has one player in the circle and three players on the outside.



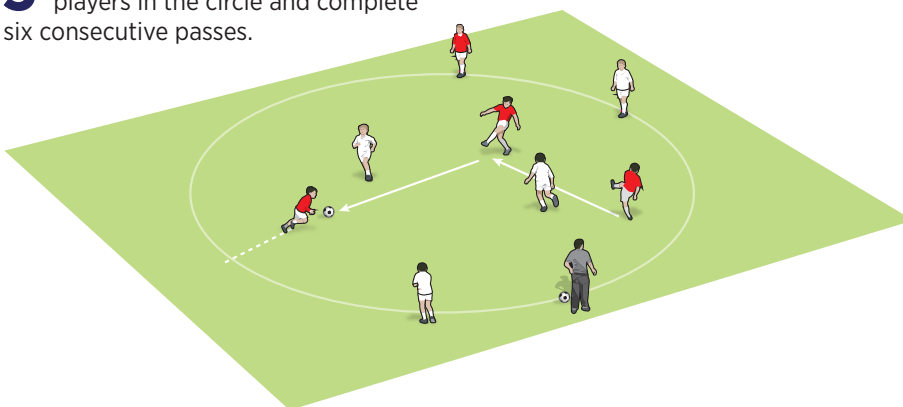
2 You feed the ball into the circle and the two players challenge for possession.

3 The player who wins the ball must shield it from his opponent and attempt to pass out to a team mate. If successful, the team mate enters the circle to make a 2v1.



4 If the opposing team wins the ball or intercepts a pass, they attempt to play their players into the circle.

5 The winning team is the first to have all four players in the circle and complete six consecutive passes.



GAME PLAY

Look for speed of combination play. Players need to show determined dribbling to get the ball to the goals. You want the defending team to press and jockey with match-like intensity.

How many players do I need?

We used eight players in a 4v4, but you can increase the numbers if required (you might also have to increase the size of the circle).

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	Run with the ball	Shot

EasiCoach

SOCCER SKILLS ACTIVITIES

U11

ATTACKING

Beat a player 1v1

ACTIVITY: MIRROR MOVEMENTS TO CONE

CALL OUT "Keep your balance" • "Trick your partner" • "Make a decision and go for the ball"

1 Set up three cones in a line 1 yard apart. Place a ball on each of the two end cones.



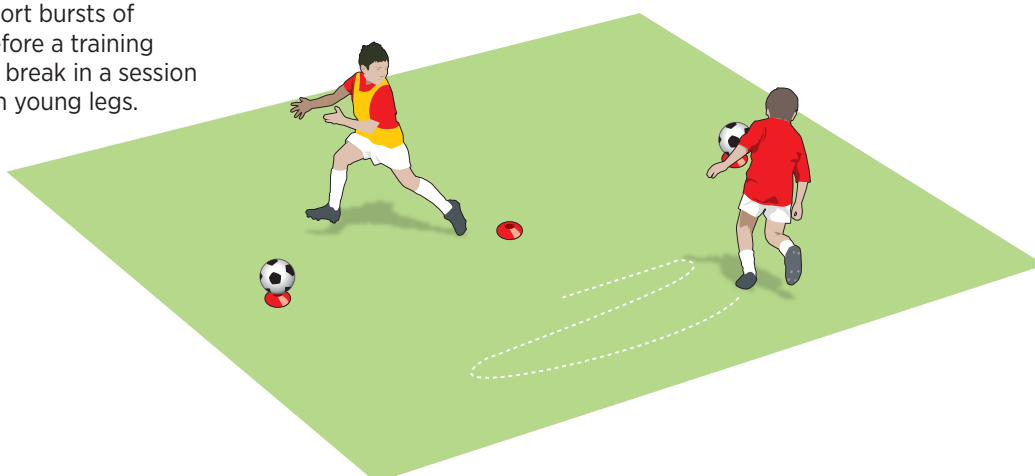
2 Start with two players facing each other over the middle cone. Make one the attacker and the other the defender.

3 The attacker is the lead and must try to fool the defender and get to one of the cones first and knock the ball off - the defender must try to mirror the movement and get there first.



4 Make sure both players are putting the effort in and don't give up if they think the other player is faster than them - the distance is small and it is all about clever movement rather than speed.

5 Run this for short bursts of 30 seconds before a training session or during a break in a session as it can be hard on young legs.



How many players do I need?

Players work in pairs.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	Run with the ball	Shot

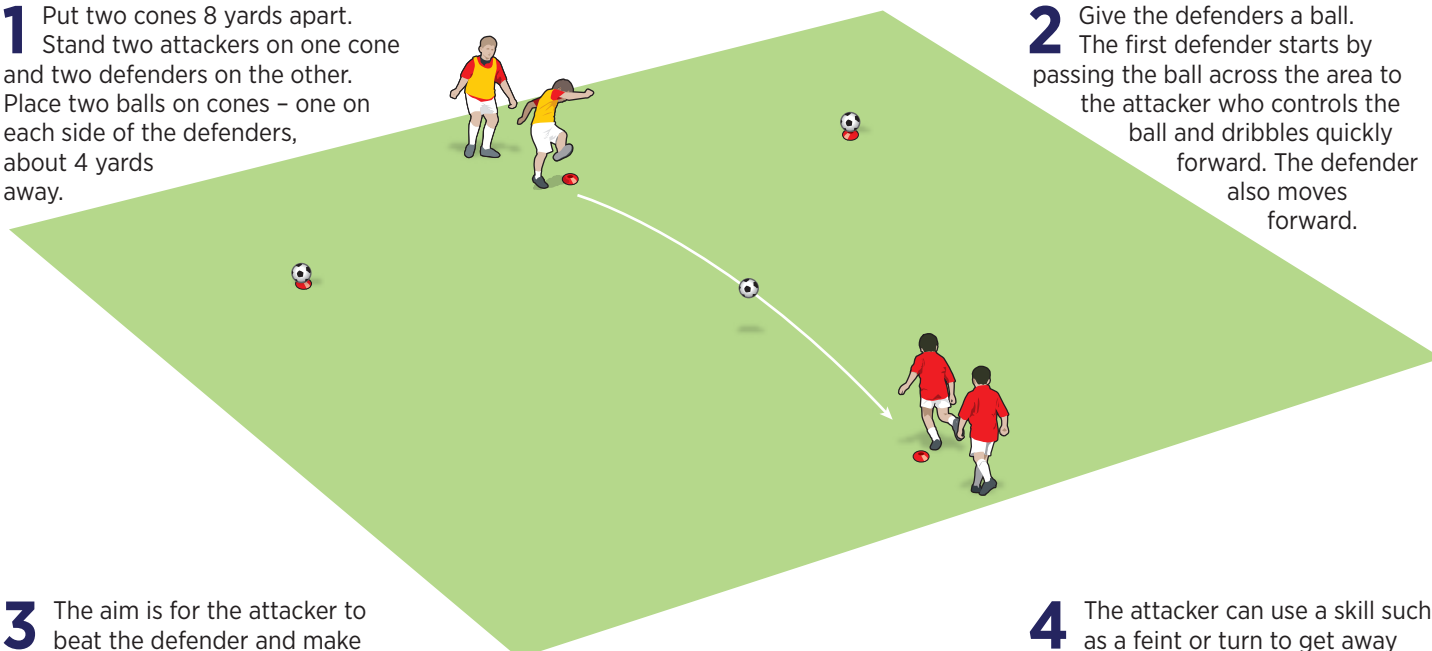
U11 | ATTACKING 1

Beat a player 1v1

GAME: CHOOSE YOUR TARGET

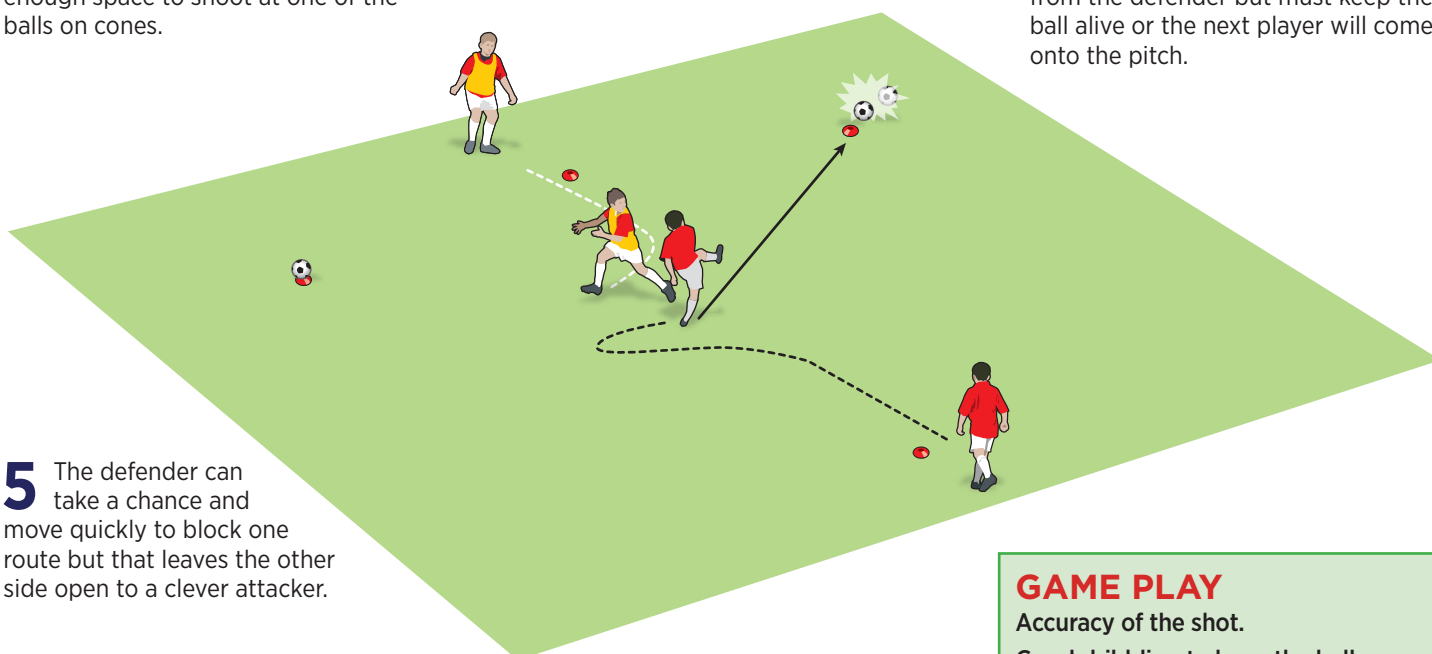
CALL OUT "Keep your balance" • "Trick your partner" • "Make a decision and go for the ball"

1 Put two cones 8 yards apart. Stand two attackers on one cone and two defenders on the other. Place two balls on cones – one on each side of the defenders, about 4 yards away.



2 Give the defenders a ball. The first defender starts by passing the ball across the area to the attacker who controls the ball and dribbles quickly forward. The defender also moves forward.

3 The aim is for the attacker to beat the defender and make enough space to shoot at one of the balls on cones.



4 The attacker can use a skill such as a feint or turn to get away from the defender but must keep the ball alive or the next player will come onto the pitch.

5 The defender can take a chance and move quickly to block one route but that leaves the other side open to a clever attacker.

6 When a move comes to an end, the next players come on. Give each player five goes in each position and count how many balls each one hits to see who wins.

GAME PLAY

Accuracy of the shot.
Good dribbling to keep the ball active.
Defenders can read the body language of the attacker.

How many players do I need?

Players work in fours – there will be a lot of ball retrieving so you may need a helper to gather up the loose ones.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	Run with the ball	Shot

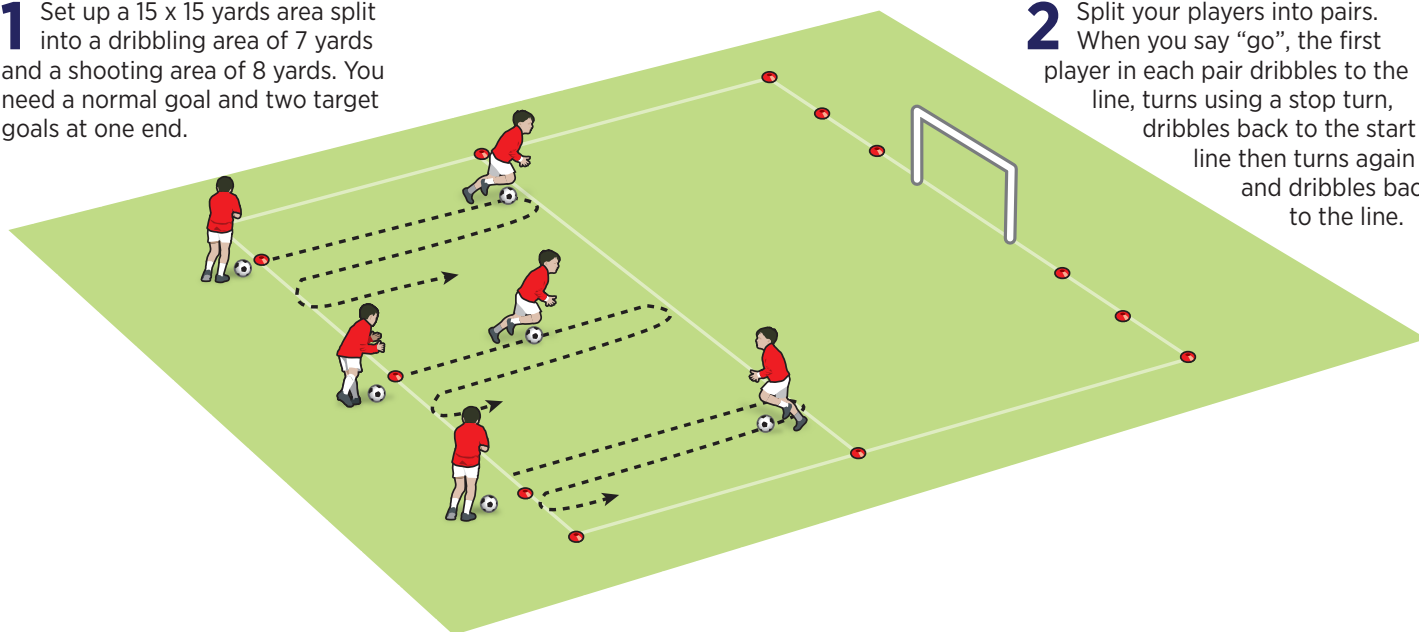
Dribble with the ball and shoot

ACTIVITY: DRIBBLE AND SHOOT

CALL OUT

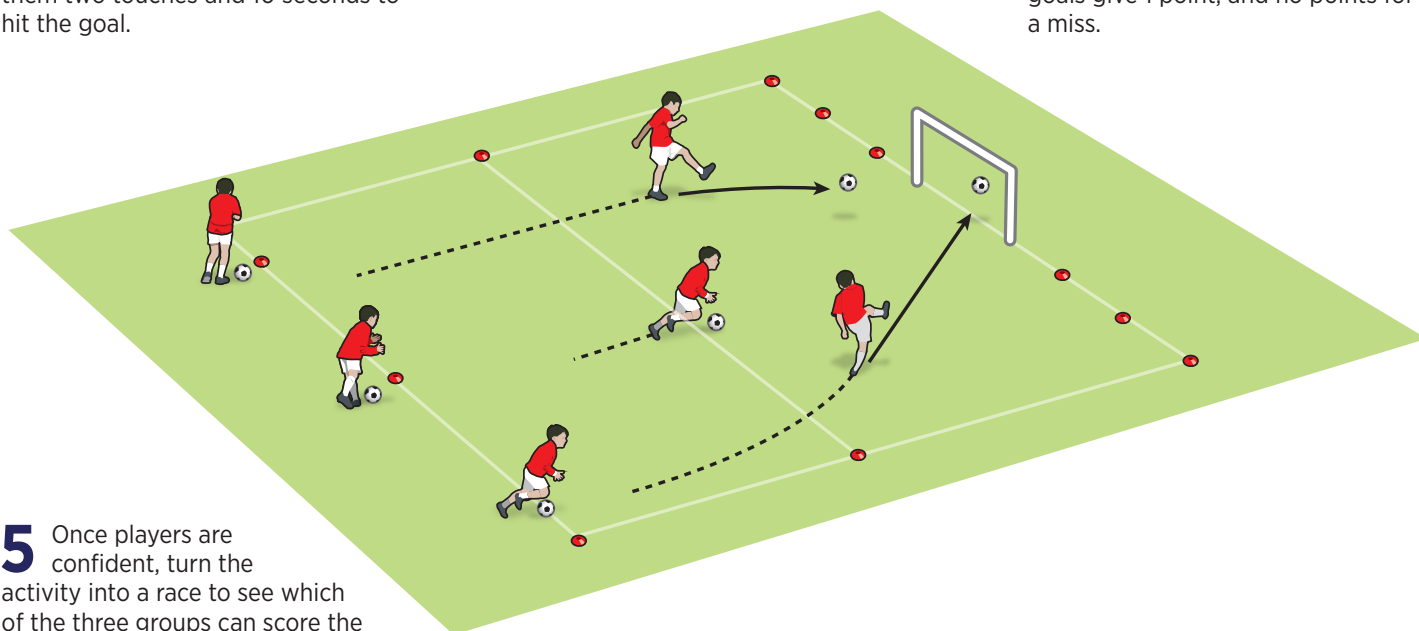
“Keep the ball in front of you” • “Good first touch” • “Accuracy over power” •
“Use a turning skill”

1 Set up a 15 x 15 yards area split into a dribbling area of 7 yards and a shooting area of 8 yards. You need a normal goal and two target goals at one end.



2 Split your players into pairs. When you say “go”, the first player in each pair dribbles to the line, turns using a stop turn, dribbles back to the start line then turns again and dribbles back to the line.

3 The second part of the continues from the line – players run on and shoot at the main goal. Give them two touches and 10 seconds to hit the goal.



4 Give 5 points for scoring and 5 points for scoring in the main goal. If it goes in one of the side cone goals give 1 point, and no points for a miss.

5 Once players are confident, turn the activity into a race to see which of the three groups can score the most points in 1 minute.

How many players do I need?

We used six players in this activity.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	Run with the ball	Shot

U11 | ATTACKING 2

Dribble with the ball and shoot

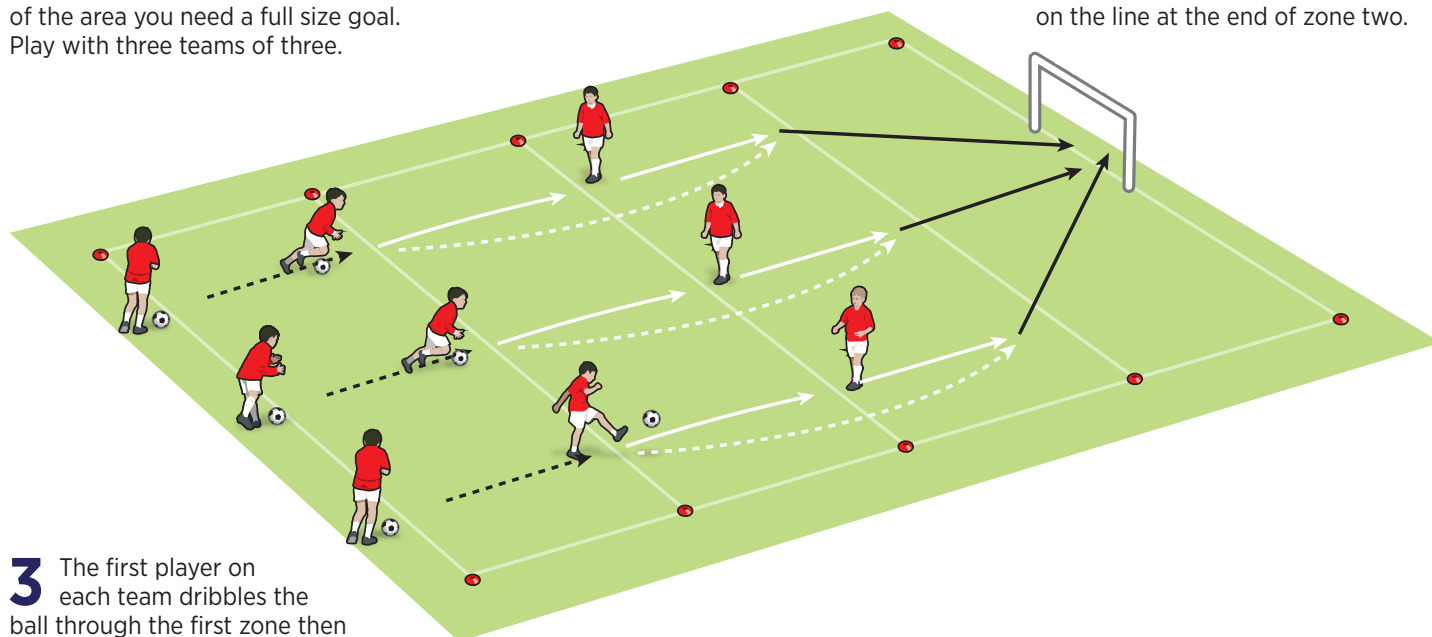
GAME: DRIBBLE, PASS, RECEIVE, SHOOT

CALL OUT

“Keep the ball in front of you” • “Good first touch” • “Accuracy over power” • “Crisp passing” • “Move quickly in the one-two”

1 Set up a 20 x 15 yards area split into four 5 yard zones. At the end of the area you need a full size goal. Play with three teams of three.

2 For each team, put two players on the start line and one player on the line at the end of zone two.

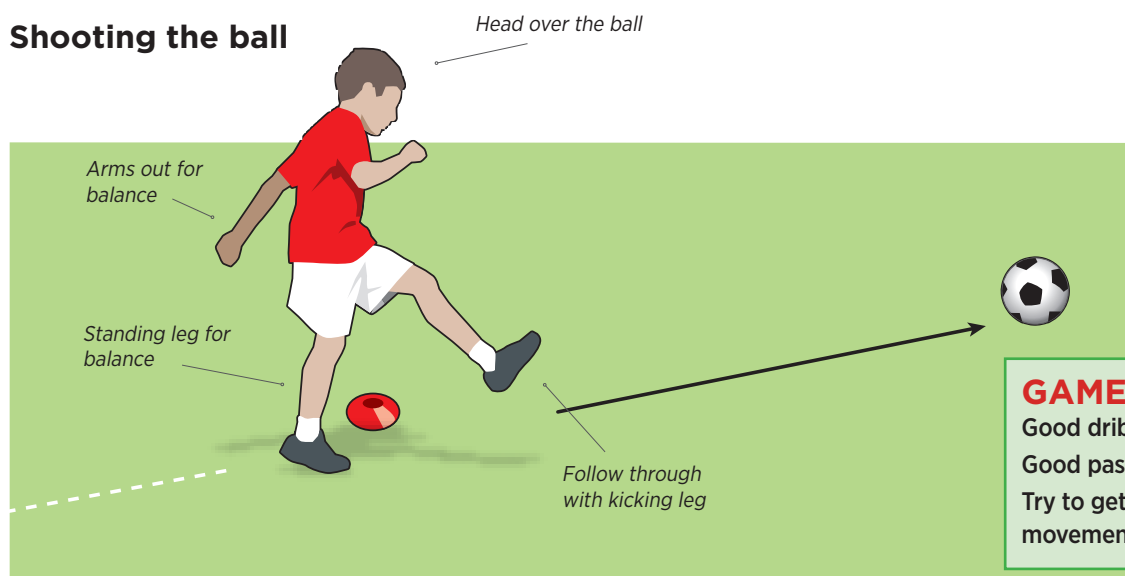


3 The first player on each team dribbles the ball through the first zone then passes across the second zone to his team mate. He then runs past his team mate and receives the ball in the third zone where he has two touches to control and shoot.

4 No players are allowed in the final zone – the ball must be shot towards goal before players get to this zone. After shooting, the player retrieves the ball and runs back to his starting position

5 Race the teams against each other – the first to get both players back to the start line is the winner.

Shooting the ball



GAME PLAY

Good dribbling technique.
Good passing technique.
Try to get players completing the movement without stopping.

How many players do I need?

I recommend using nine players for the session.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	--->	--->
	--->	--->

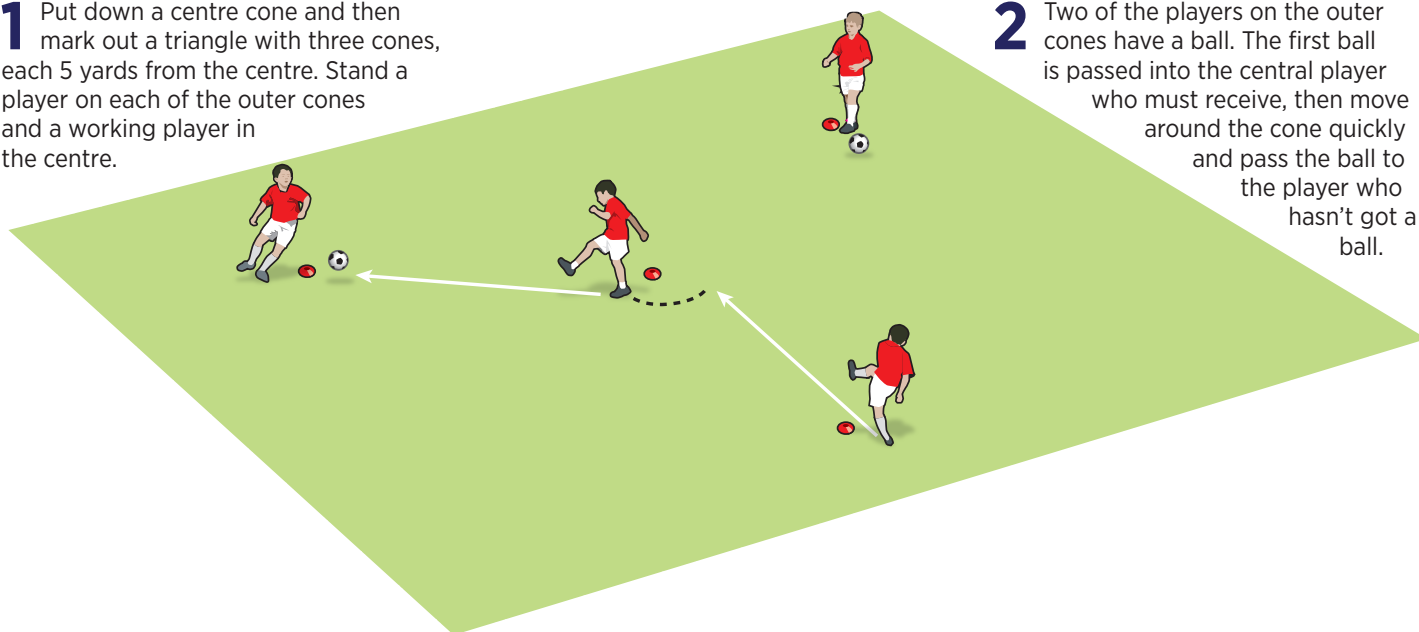
Attacking build up play

ACTIVITY: COMBINE TO SUPPORT

CALL OUT

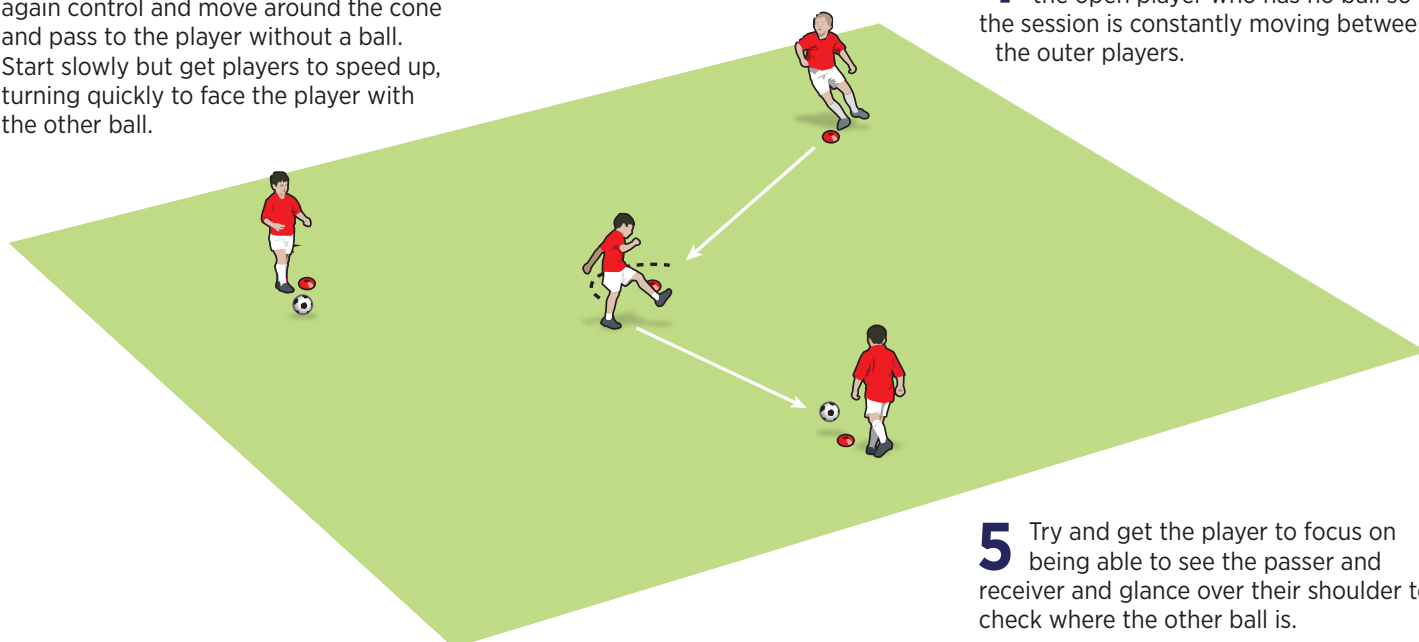
“Look at the player you are passing to” • “Call for the ball” • “Good first touch” • “Accuracy is important” • “Move to the pass”

1 Put down a centre cone and then mark out a triangle with three cones, each 5 yards from the centre. Stand a player on each of the outer cones and a working player in the centre.



2 Two of the players on the outer cones have a ball. The first ball is passed into the central player who must receive, then move around the cone quickly and pass the ball to the player who hasn't got a ball.

3 The central player must then open himself up to the player who has the other ball ready to receive and again control and move around the cone and pass to the player without a ball. Start slowly but get players to speed up, turning quickly to face the player with the other ball.



4 Each time the ball must be passed to the open player who has no ball so the session is constantly moving between the outer players.

5 Try and get the player to focus on being able to see the passer and receiver and glance over their shoulder to check where the other ball is.

How many players do I need?

We used four players in each set up.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	Run with the ball	Shot

U11 | ATTACKING 3

Attacking build up play

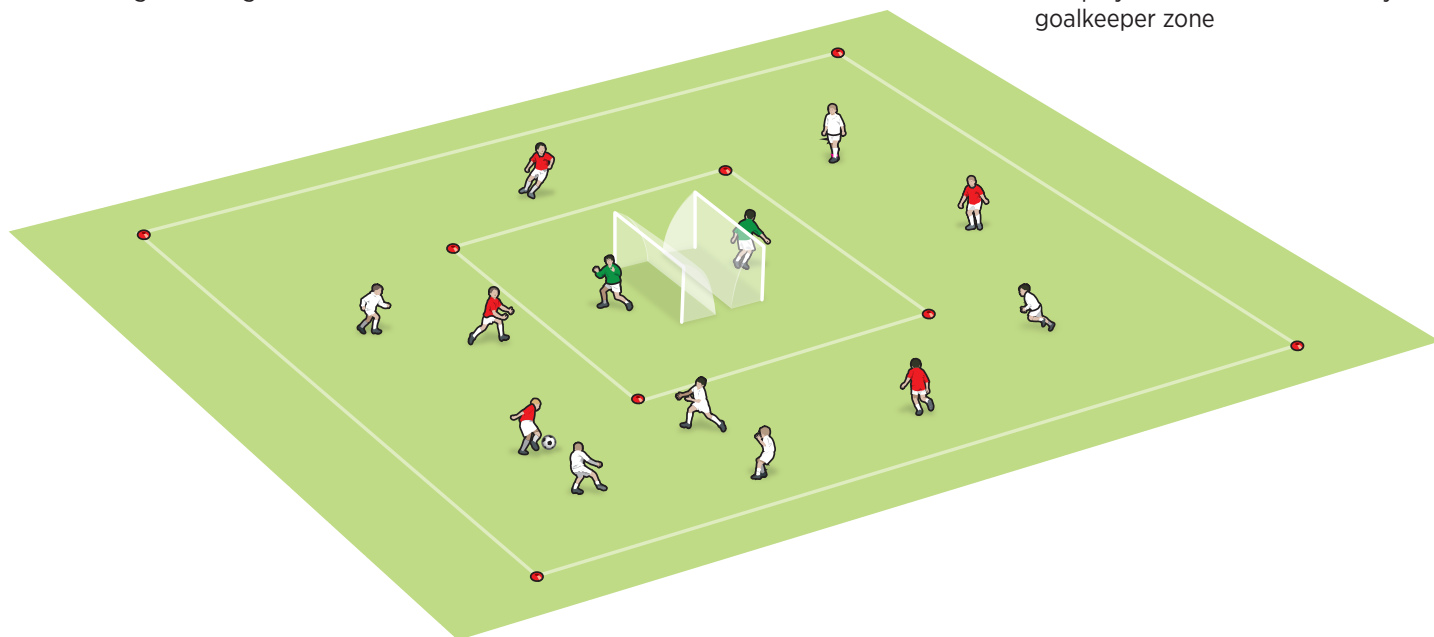
GAME: BACK-TO-BACK GOALS

CALL OUT

“Look at the player you are passing to” • “Call for the ball” • “Good first touch” • “Accuracy is important” • “Move to the pass”

1 Set up a 30 x 30 yards area with two goals back to back in the centre, create a 10 x 10 yards zone around the goals using cones.

2 Teams play a 6v6 around the area trying to score in either goal – the goalkeepers are neutral. The players cannot enter the 10 yard goalkeeper zone



3 Play for a set period of 2 minutes to start with. If one team is dominating rearrange your players so the teams are equal.

4 Explain to the players that they should be scanning the area to see where the spaces on the pitch are and get passes in to them when they create space.

5 To progress the session you can say that players can score from a header in the goalkeeper zone. You can also squeeze the area making the game harder or open it up if players are finding it difficult to create space.

GAME PLAY

Switch play often.
Shoot from distance.
Score with headers when the option is available.

How many players do I need?

I used 14 players for the session.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	--->	—>
	Run with the ball	Shot
	--->	—>

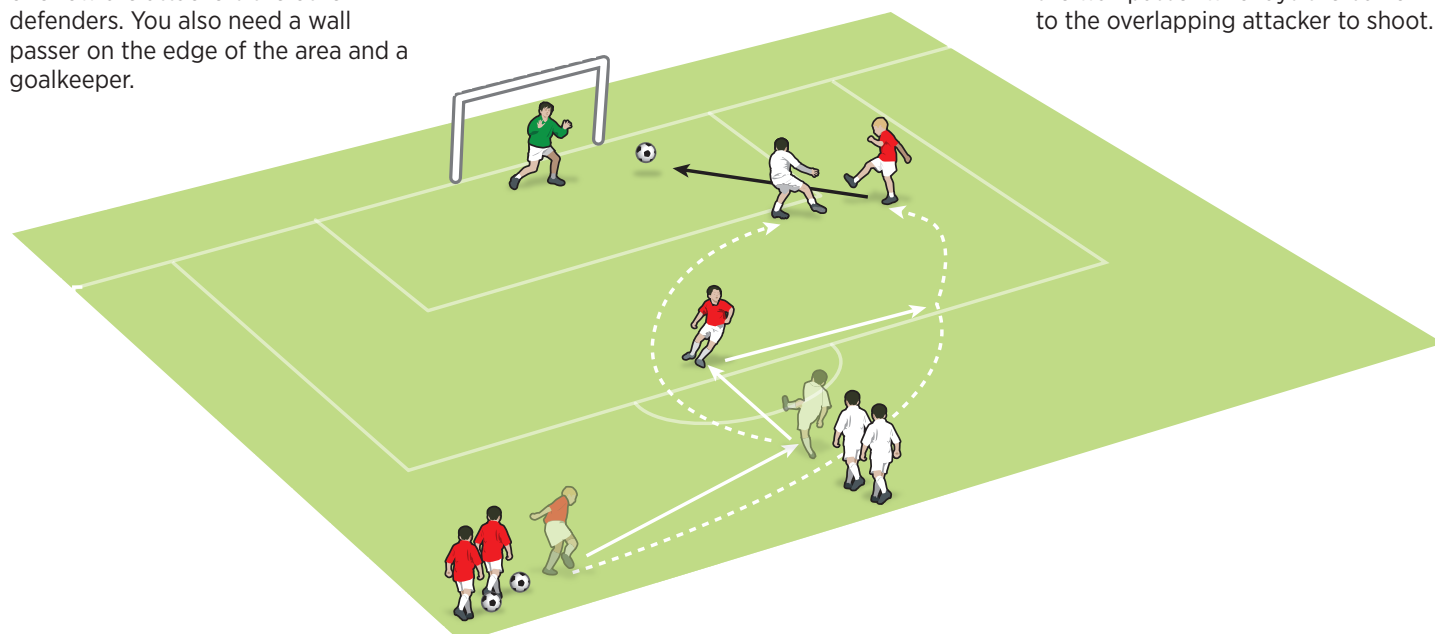
Penetrate the final third

ACTIVITY: COMBINE TO SUPPORT

CALL OUT

“Look at the player you are passing to” • “Good first touch” • “Look up before you shoot” • “Move at the right times”

1 Use the final third of your 9v9 pitch with two rows of players just outside the penalty box – one row are attackers the other defenders. You also need a wall passer on the edge of the area and a goalkeeper.



2 The first attacker passes to the first defender and then overlaps behind him. The defender passes to the wall passer who lays the ball off to the overlapping attacker to shoot.

3 The defender then sprints around the wall passer and tries to stop the attacker from getting a shot away.

4 The first attacker takes the wall passer's place and the wall passer joins the back of the attacking line.

5 See how many goals the attackers score. Switch roles after they have all gone twice.

How many players do I need?

We used eight players but it is easy to run with more or fewer players.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	Run with the ball	Shot

U11 | ATTACKING 4

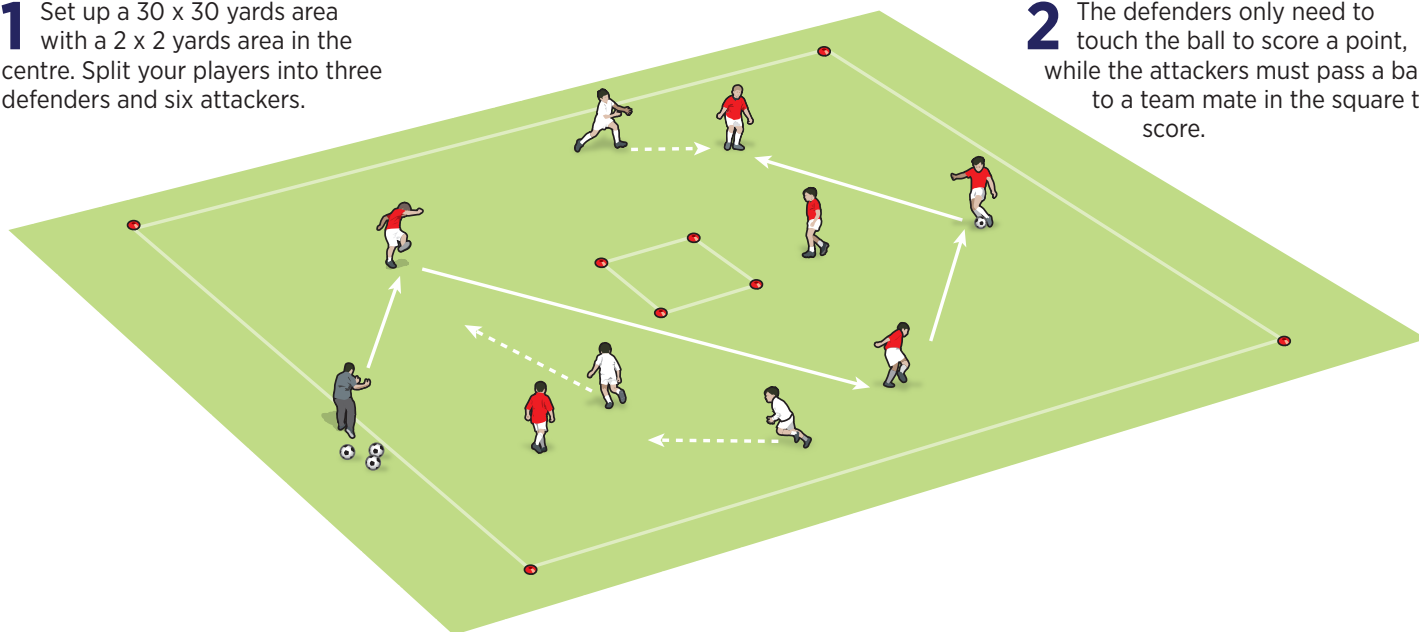
Penetrate the final third

GAME: THE KILLER PASS

CALL OUT

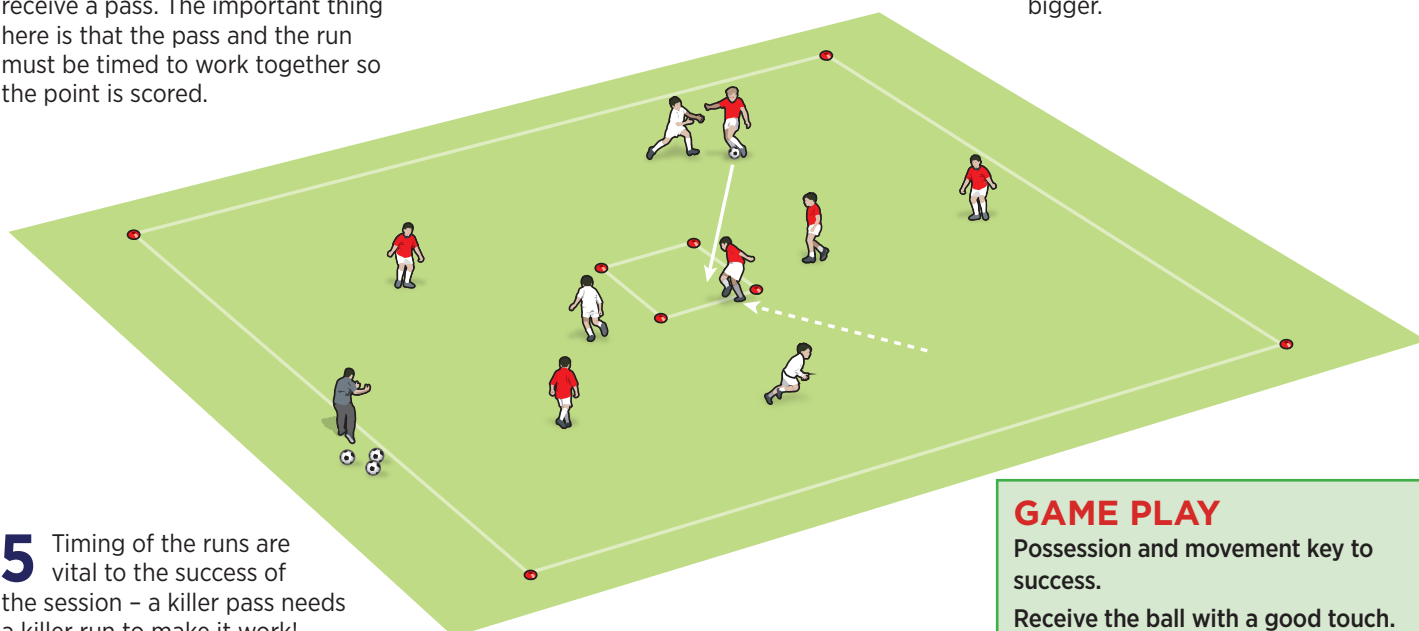
“Look at the player you are passing to” • “Good first touch” • “Look up before you shoot” • “Time your runs into the box”

1 Set up a 30 x 30 yards area with a 2 x 2 yards area in the centre. Split your players into three defenders and six attackers.



2 The defenders only need to touch the ball to score a point, while the attackers must pass a ball to a team mate in the square to score.

3 Players cannot wait in the square, they can only go there to receive a pass. The important thing here is that the pass and the run must be timed to work together so the point is scored.



4 If the players struggle to make the pass, make the square bigger.

5 Timing of the runs are vital to the success of the session – a killer pass needs a killer run to make it work!

GAME PLAY

Possession and movement key to success.

Receive the ball with a good touch.
Have plenty of balls and helpers to retrieve them.

How many players do I need?

I used nine players for the session.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	Run with the ball	Shot

Score a goal

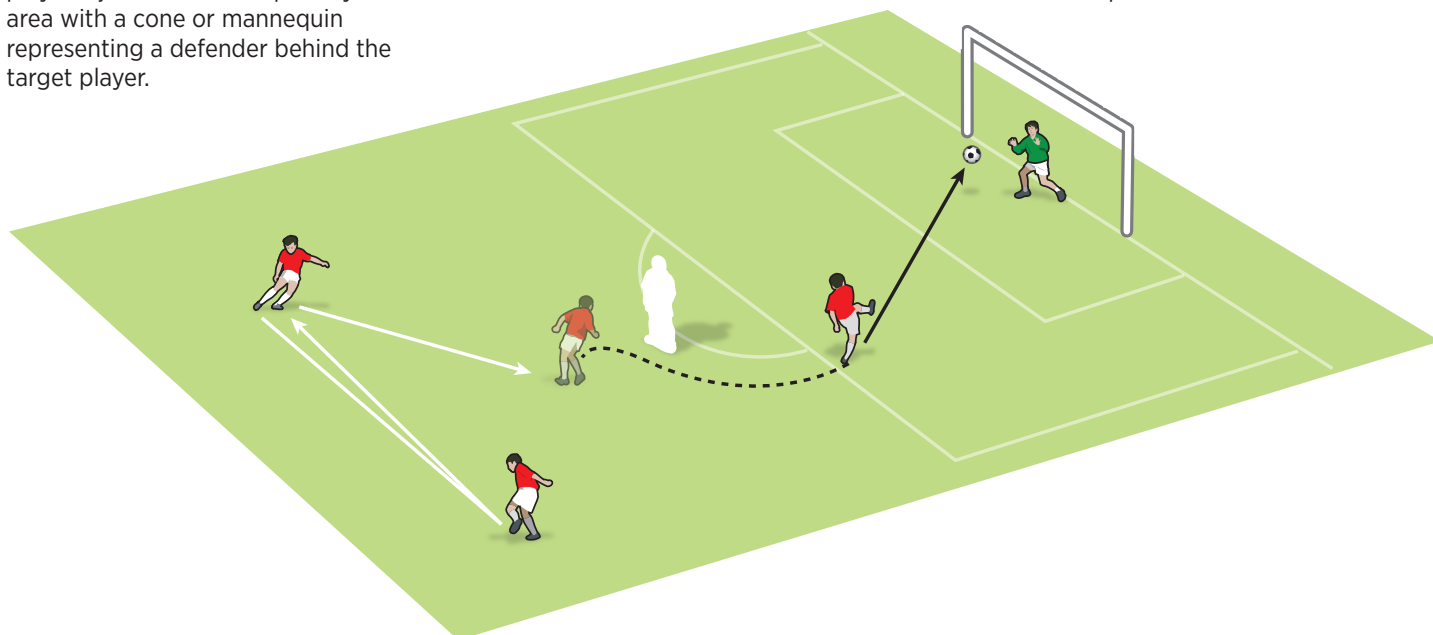
ACTIVITY: LINK PLAY TO GOAL

CALL OUT

“Play a crisp one-two” • “Good first touch” • “Try to go one-touch”
• “Turn, dribble and shoot!”

1 Use the final third of your 9v9 pitch setting up a triangle of players – two servers and a target player – just outside the penalty area with a cone or mannequin representing a defender behind the target player.

2 The activity starts with a crisp one-two between the two servers using good passing technique.



3 A first time pass is played to the target player who turns the defender (mannequin), dribbles towards goal and takes a shot.

4 The shot should be hit across the goalkeeper towards the corner of the goal – the target players should try to go both ways around the mannequin to practise attacking from both sides of the area.

5 You can run this activity as one-touch but you will have to work your players up to that standard as it is quite hard for Under 11s to pass one-touch at speed.

How many players do I need?

You need four players for this activity.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	--->	—>
	Run with the ball	Shot
	--->	—>

U11 | ATTACKING 5

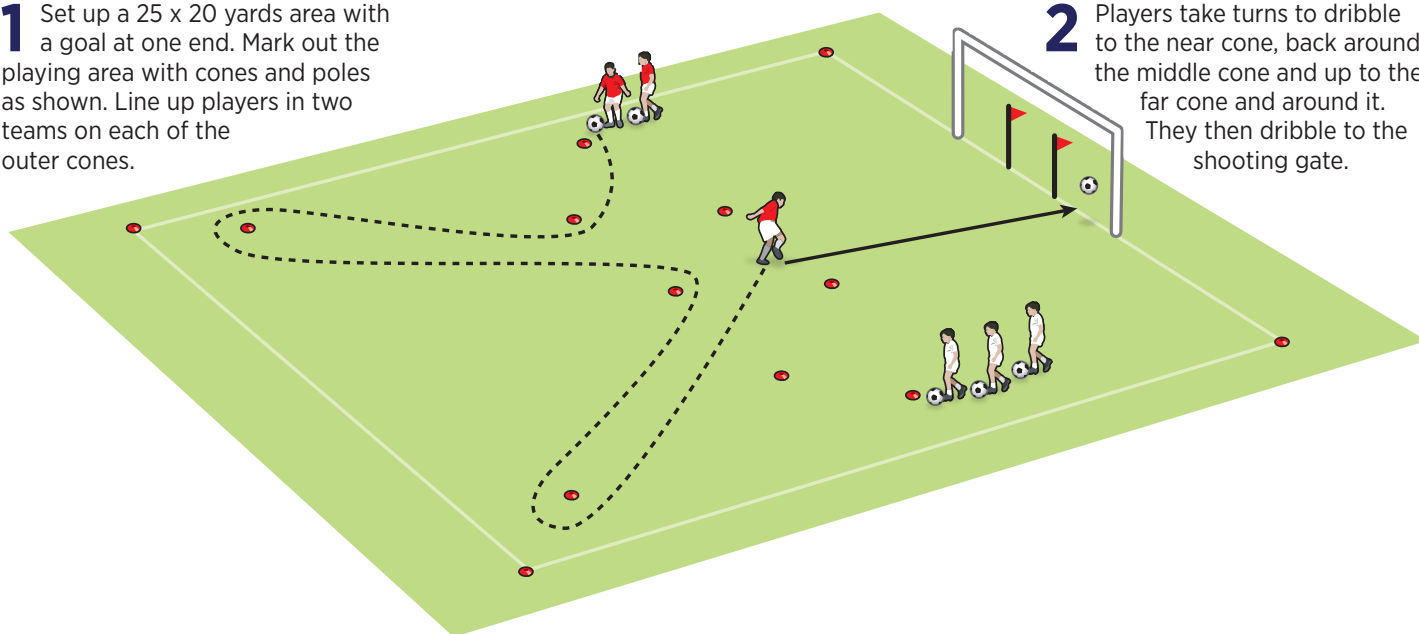
Score a goal

GAME: USE BOTH FEET

CALL OUT

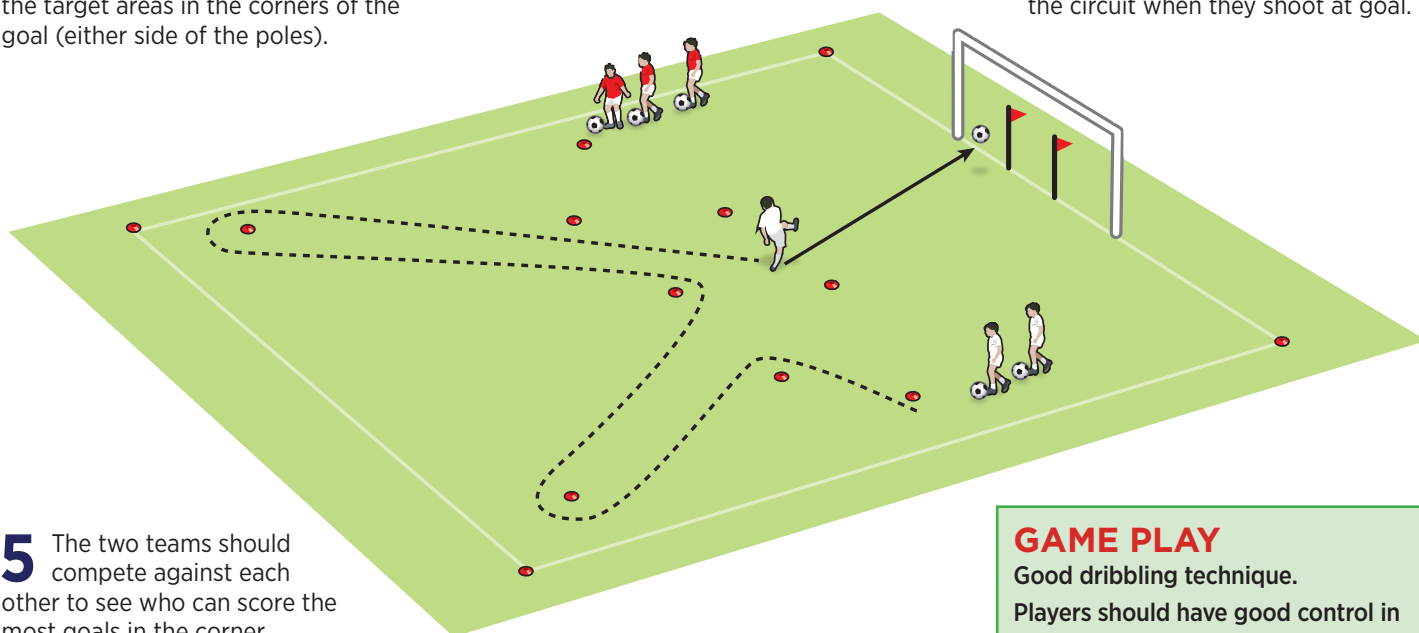
“Look at the ball then keep looking up when dribbling” • “Use a turn” • “Look up before you shoot” • “Aim for the corners”

1 Set up a 25 x 20 yards area with a goal at one end. Mark out the playing area with cones and poles as shown. Line up players in two teams on each of the outer cones.



2 Players take turns to dribble to the near cone, back around the middle cone and up to the far cone and around it. They then dribble to the shooting gate.

3 When a player reaches the shooting gate he must hit one of the target areas in the corners of the goal (either side of the poles).



4 Try to get players to use different feet from each side of the circuit when they shoot at goal.

5 The two teams should compete against each other to see who can score the most goals in the corner.

GAME PLAY

Good dribbling technique.
Players should have good control in the turn.
Vital both feet are used to shoot.

How many players do I need?

We used six players in two teams of three, but you can add more players to each team.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	Run with the ball	Shot

EasiCoach

SOCCER SKILLS ACTIVITIES

U11

DEFENDING

Recover when the ball is lost in transition

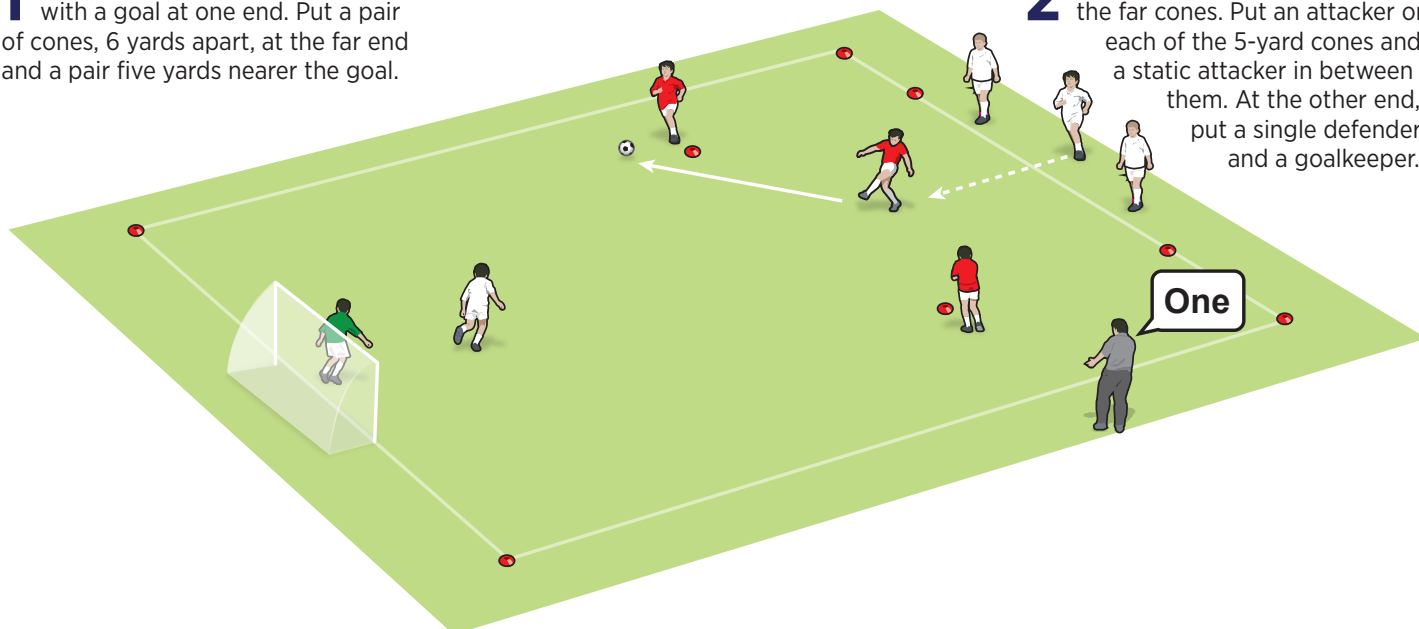
ACTIVITY: RECOVER POSITION

CALL OUT

“Try to get back behind the ball” • “Don’t stop running” • “Know where the ball is” • “Block shots if you can”

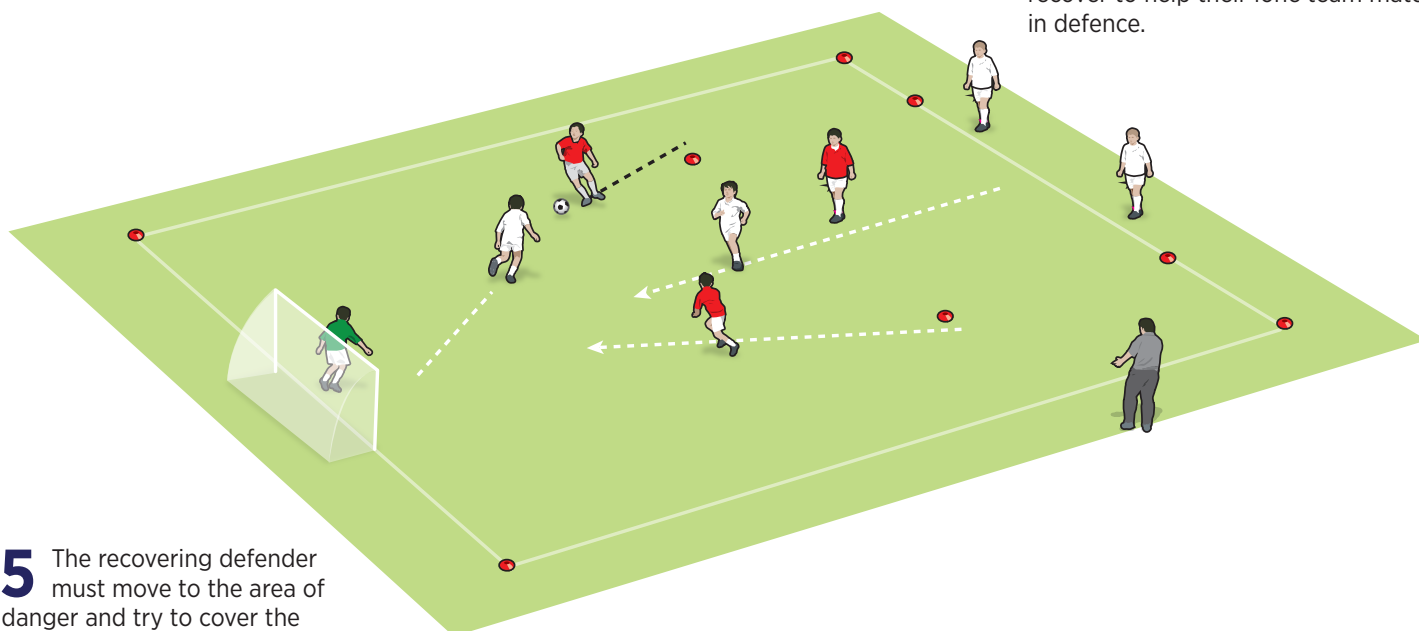
1 Mark out a 20 x 10 yards area with a goal at one end. Put a pair of cones, 6 yards apart, at the far end and a pair five yards nearer the goal.

2 Three defenders start between the far cones. Put an attacker on each of the 5-yard cones and a static attacker in between them. At the other end, put a single defender and a goalkeeper.



3 Play starts with a pass from the static attacker to either of his two team mates.

4 When the attacker receives the pass the coach shouts out a number of defenders who can recover to help their lone team mate in defence.



5 The recovering defender must move to the area of danger and try to cover the attacker without the ball.

How many players do I need?

We used eight players for this activity.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	Run with the ball	Shot

U11 | DEFENDING 1

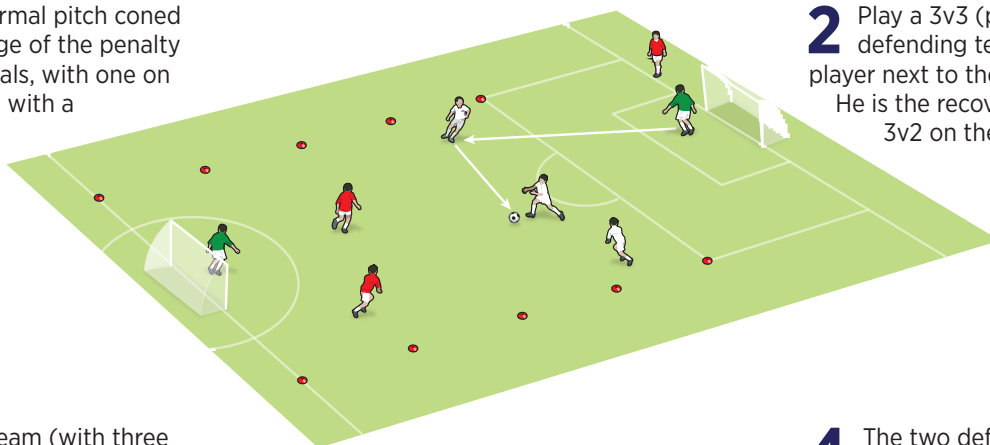
Recover when the ball is lost in transition

GAME: COUNTER THE COUNTER ATTACK

CALL OUT

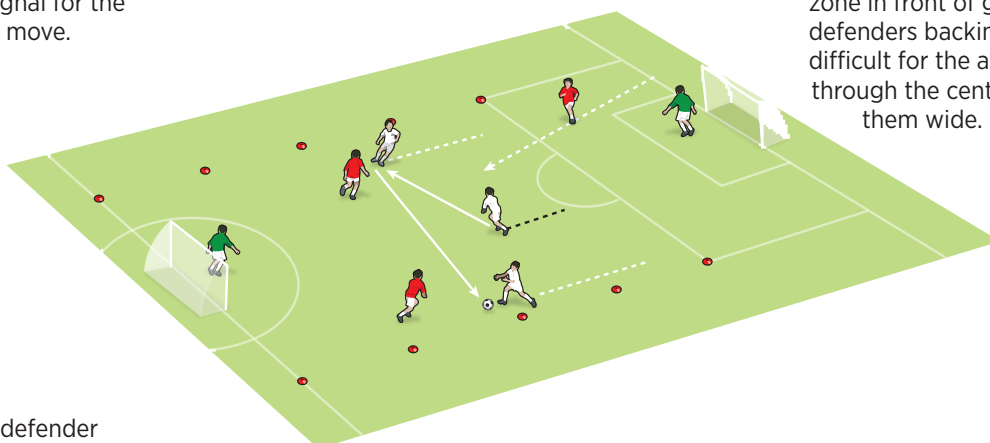
“Try to get back behind the ball” • “Don’t stop running” • “Know where the ball is” • “Block shots if you can”

1 Use half your normal pitch coned off along the edge of the penalty area. Use normal goals, with one on the halfway line and with a keeper in each goal.



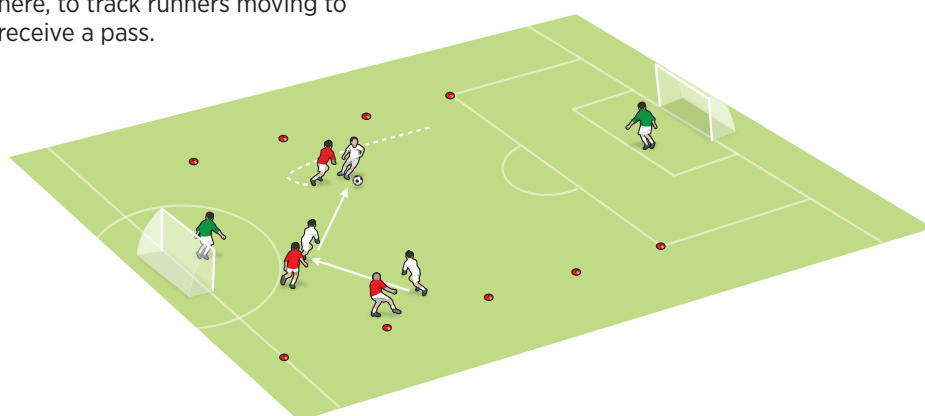
2 Play a 3v3 (plus keepers). The defending team starts with a player next to the opposition’s goal. He is the recovering player, leaving 3v2 on the pitch.

3 The attacking team (with three players on the pitch) starts the game with a pass out from the keeper. This is the signal for the recovering player to move.



4 The two defenders must back off from the attackers, covering the central areas of the attacking zone in front of goal. With the defenders backing off, it makes it difficult for the attackers to penetrate through the central area and forces them wide.

5 The recovering defender must decide whether to cover space behind the defenders or, as here, to track runners moving to receive a pass.



GAME PLAY

Quick reactions.
Good positioning.
Look for match-like pressing.

How many players do I need?

We used eight players for this game.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	→	→
	→	→

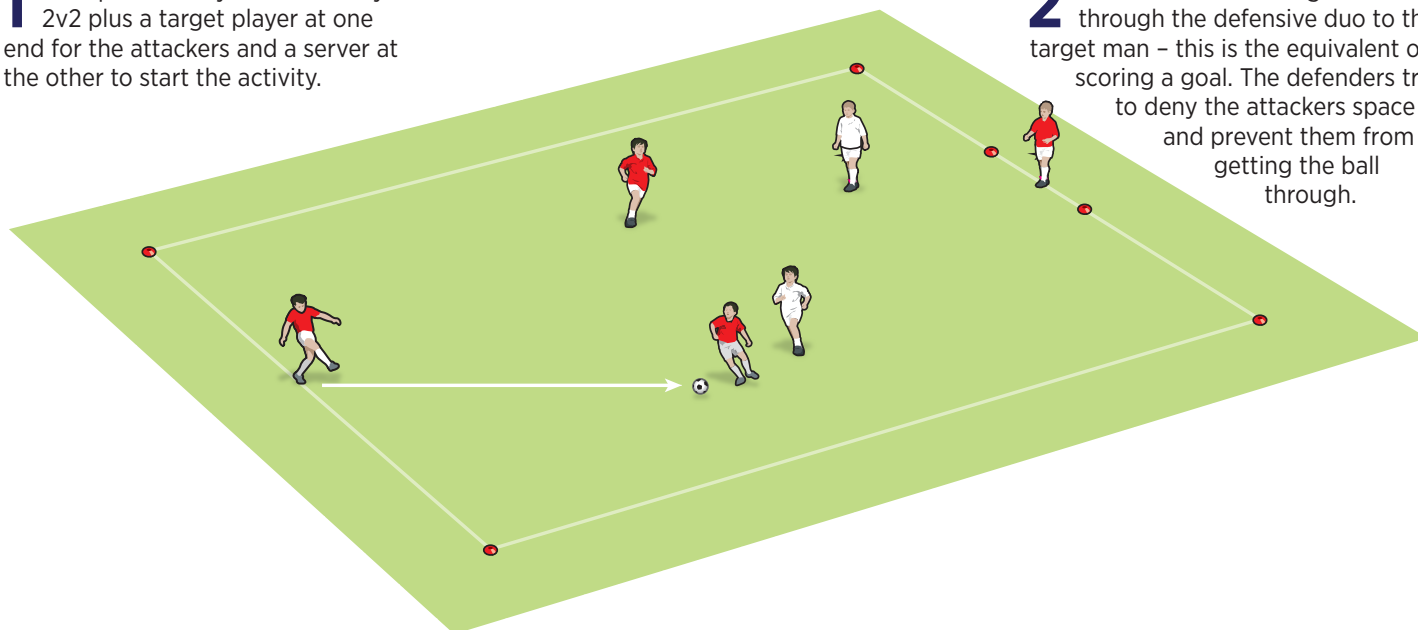
Block passing routes

ACTIVITY: BLOCK POSITIONING

CALL OUT

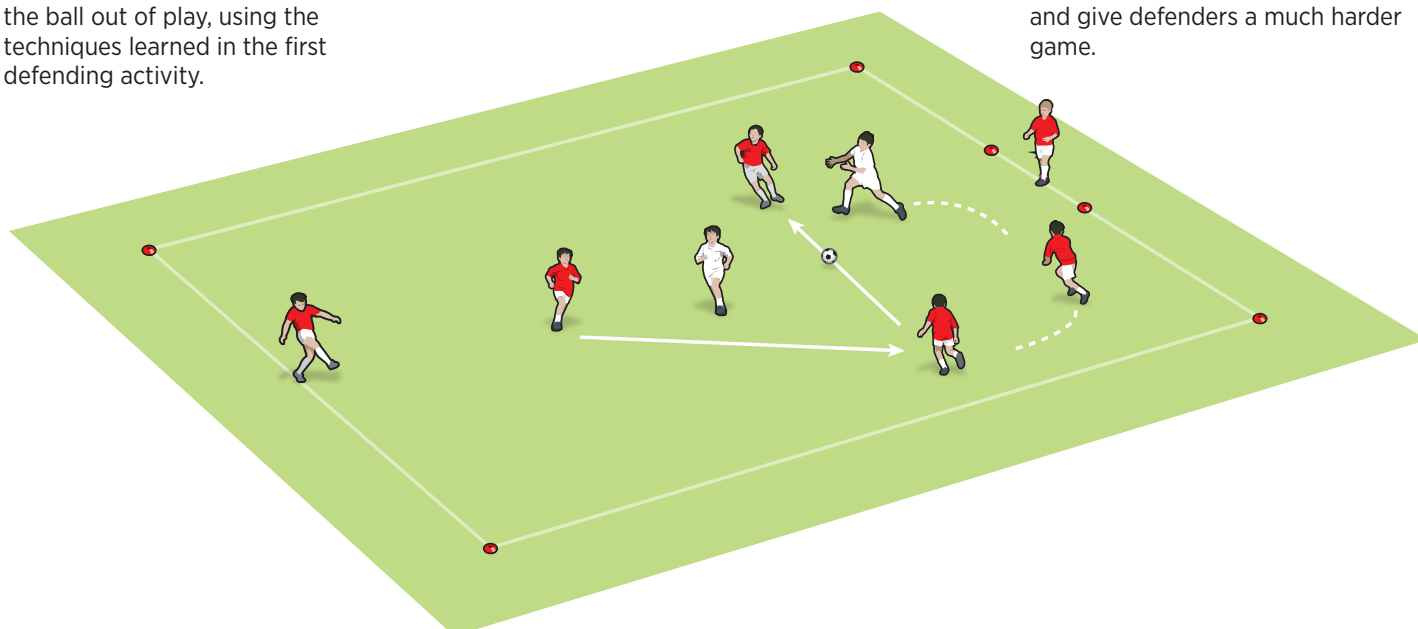
“Check where the passing options are” • “Support your team mate” “Know where the ball is” • “Block passes or intercept the ball if you can”

1 Set up a 10 x 15 yards area. Play 2v2 plus a target player at one end for the attackers and a server at the other to start the activity.



2 The attackers aim to get the ball through the defensive duo to the target man – this is the equivalent of scoring a goal. The defenders try to deny the attackers space and prevent them from getting the ball through.

3 Success to the defenders is winning possession or forcing the ball out of play, using the techniques learned in the first defending activity.



4 Introduce attacking support players to advance the session and give defenders a much harder game.

How many players do I need?

We used eight players for this activity but you can vary the numbers to shift the challenge between attack and defence.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement

U11 | DEFENDING 2

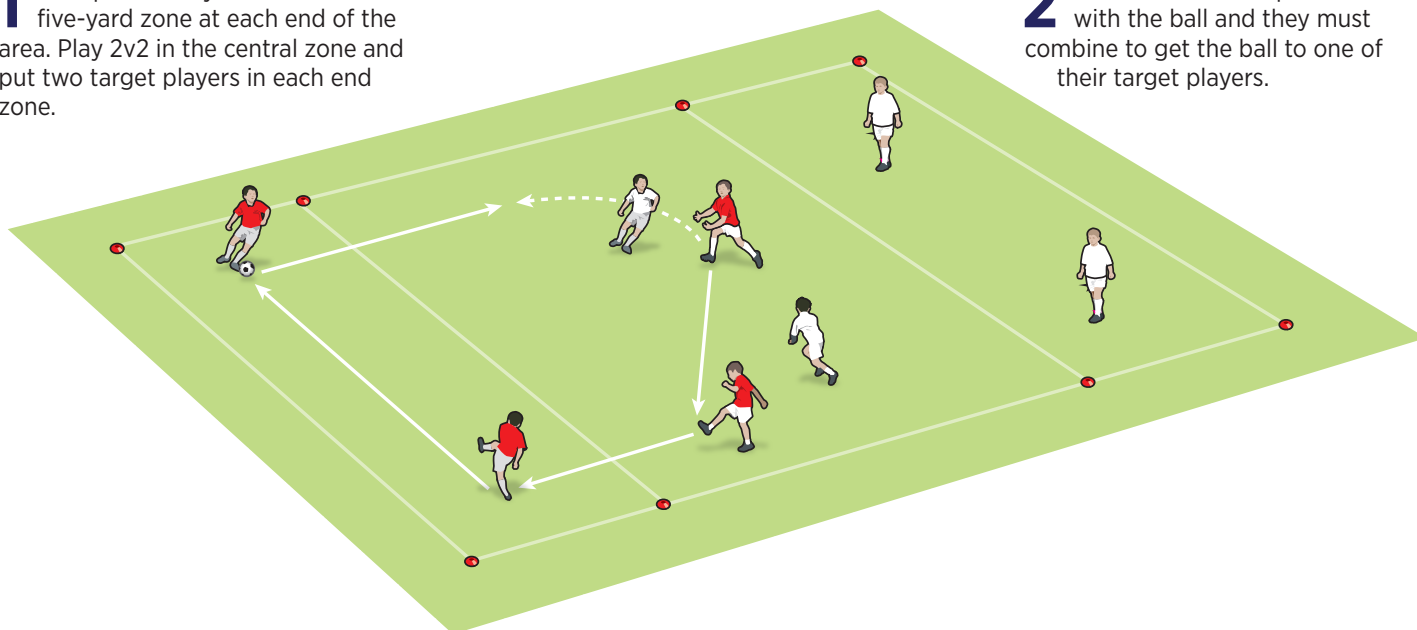
Block passing routes

GAME: BLOCK POSITIONING

CALL OUT

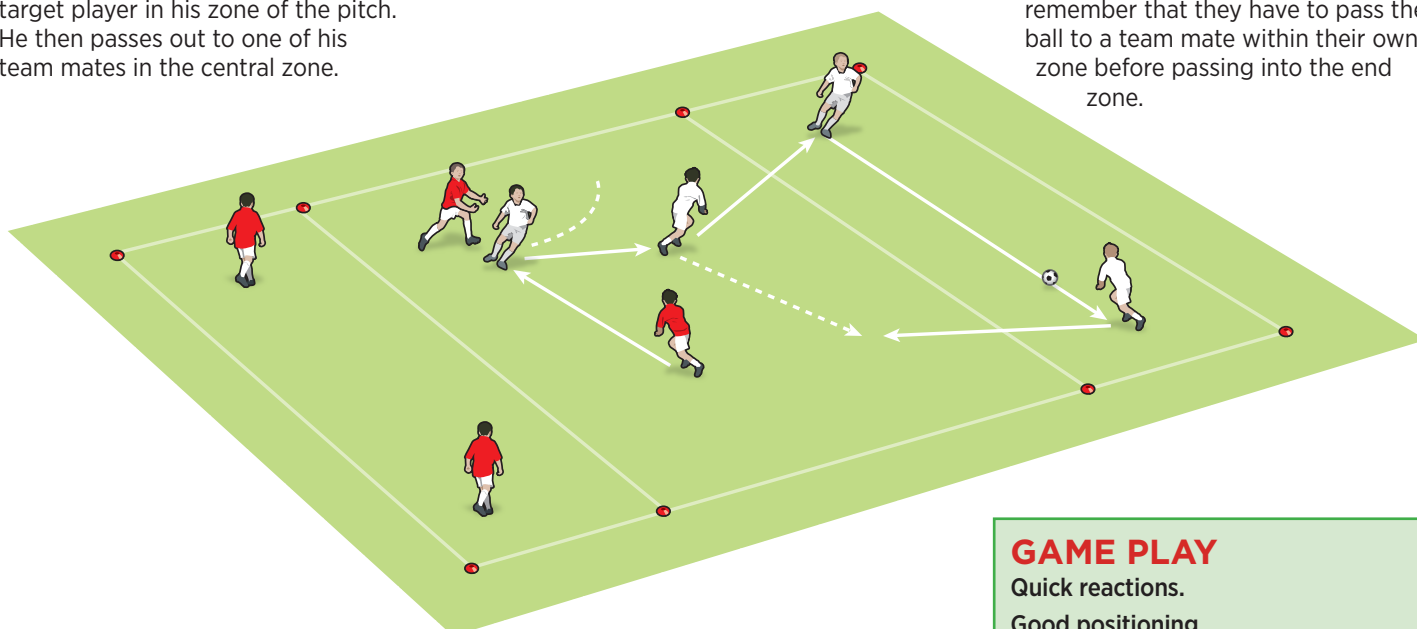
“Check where the passing options are” • “Support your team mate” “Know where the ball is” • “Block passes or intercept the ball if you can”

1 Set up a 20x15 yards area with a five-yard zone at each end of the area. Play 2v2 in the central zone and put two target players in each end zone.



2 One of the central pairs starts with the ball and they must combine to get the ball to one of their target players.

3 The target player controls the ball and passes to the other target player in his zone of the pitch. He then passes out to one of his team mates in the central zone.



4 The aim is to keep the ball for as long as possible. Players must remember that they have to pass the ball to a team mate within their own zone before passing into the end zone.

GAME PLAY

Quick reactions.
Good positioning.
Look for match-like pressing.

How many players do I need?

We used eight players for this game.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	Run with the ball	Shot

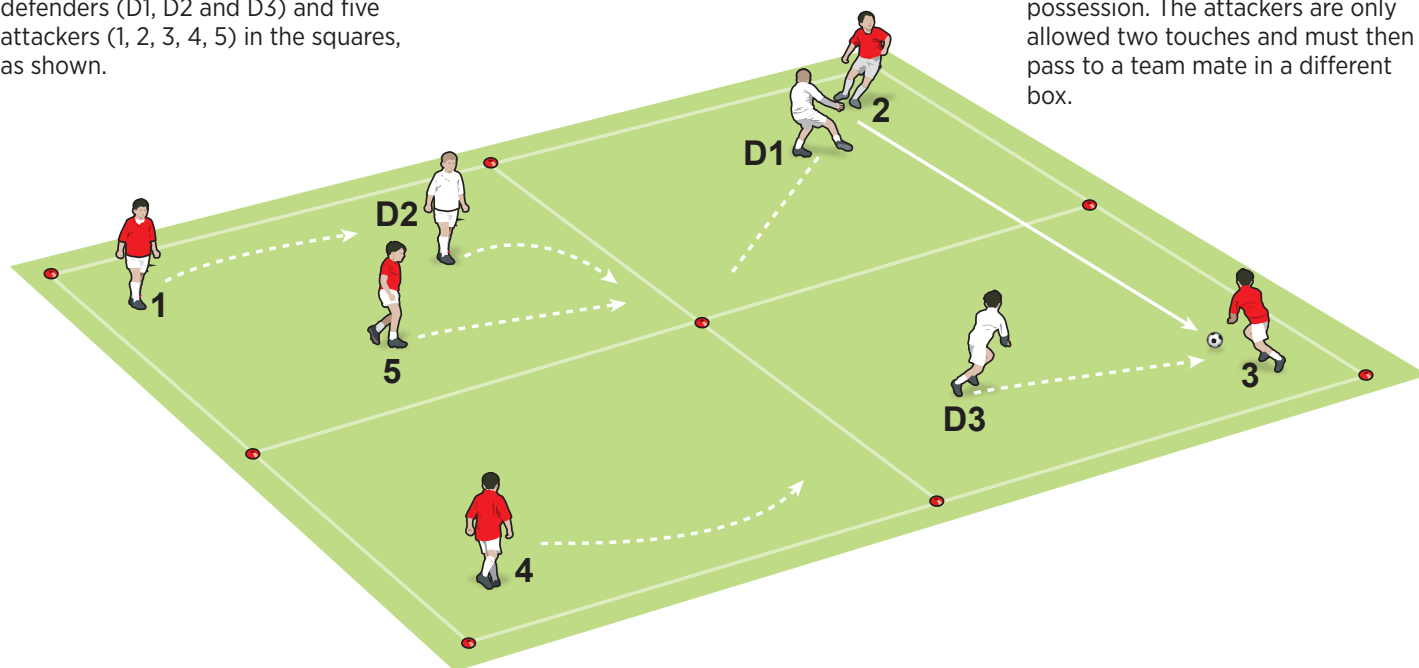
Full pitch pressure to win the ball

ACTIVITY: PRESSURE ZONES

CALL OUT

“Close down quickly” • “Don’t commit until you see a good chance to win the ball” •
“Try to force a mistake” • “Win the ball”

1 Set up an area with four 5 x 5 yards squares. Position three defenders (D1, D2 and D3) and five attackers (1, 2, 3, 4, 5) in the squares, as shown.



2 The aim is for the defenders to pressurise the attackers and gain possession. The attackers are only allowed two touches and must then pass to a team mate in a different box.

3 Here, D1 pressurises player 2, closing him down so that his only option is to pass to player 3. D3 sees this and immediately moves to close down 3.

4 The attacking players should move within their squares to make themselves available for a pass, while the defenders should move to try and close down the passing routes.

5 If winning the ball becomes too easy, take out a defender, keep the same numbers and enlarge the playing area, or remove the two-touch restriction..

How many players do I need?

We used eight players for this activity.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	Run with the ball	Shot

U11 | DEFENDING 3

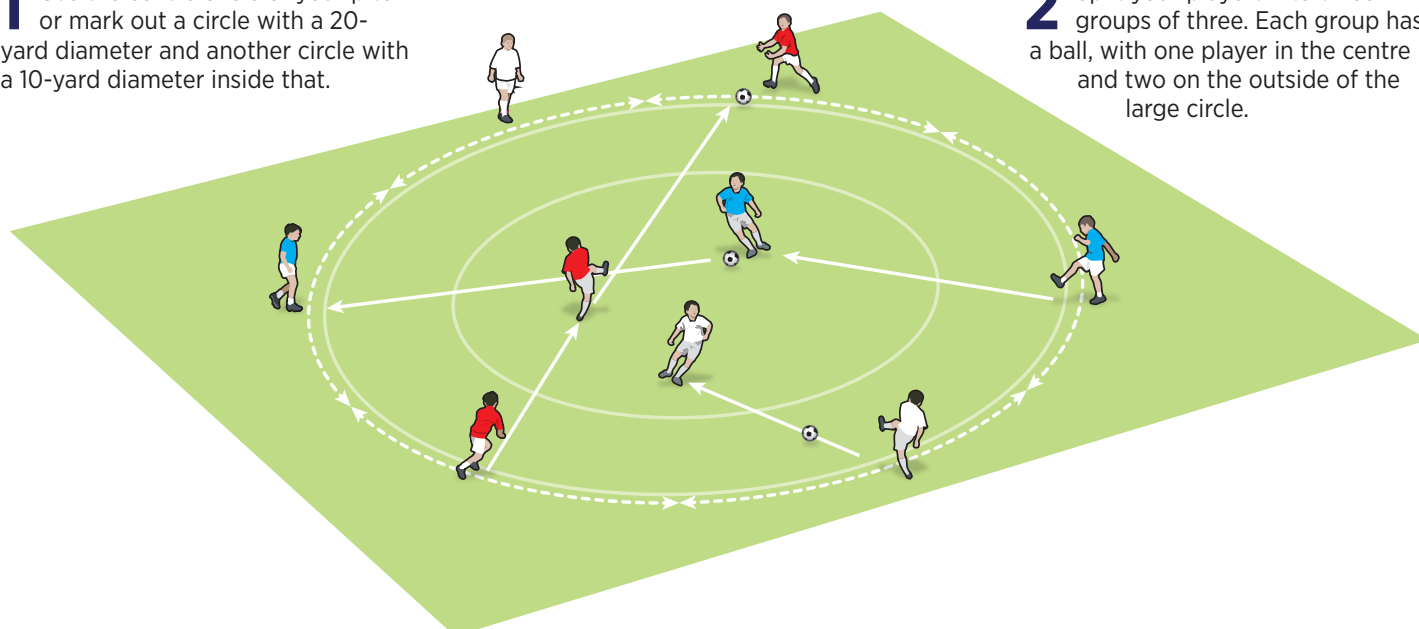
Full pitch pressure to win the ball

GAME: PRESSURE ZONES

CALL OUT

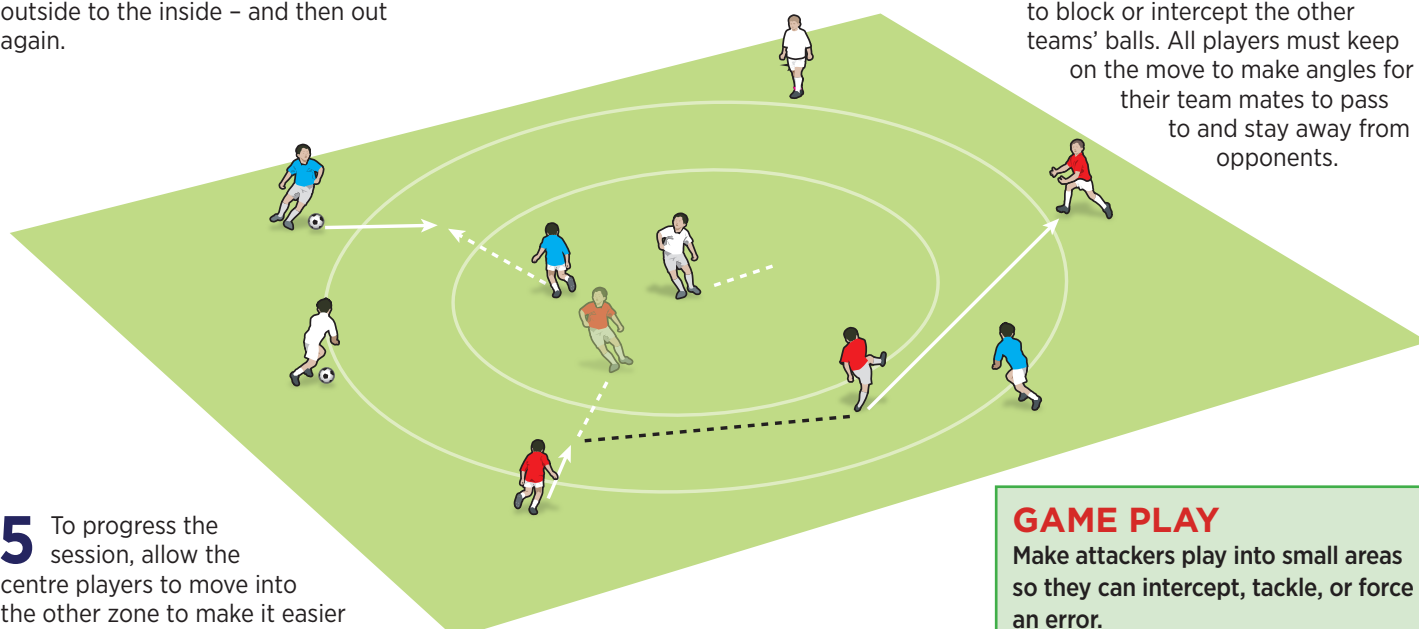
“Close down quickly” • “Don’t commit until you see a good chance to win the ball” •
“Try to force a mistake” • “Win the ball”

1 Use the centre circle of your pitch or mark out a circle with a 20-yard diameter and another circle with a 10-yard diameter inside that.



2 Split your players into three groups of three. Each group has a ball, with one player in the centre and two on the outside of the large circle.

3 Play starts with three players on each team passing from the outside to the inside – and then out again.



4 The idea is to keep your own passing going while also trying to block or intercept the other teams’ balls. All players must keep on the move to make angles for their team mates to pass to and stay away from opponents.

5 To progress the session, allow the centre players to move into the other zone to make it easier to get the pass. They can dribble around the circle and lay off a pass to the third player.

GAME PLAY

Make attackers play into small areas so they can intercept, tackle, or force an error.

Prevent any first-time passes.

How many players do I need?

We used nine players for this game.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	----->	----->
	----->	----->
	----->	----->

U11 | DEFENDING 4

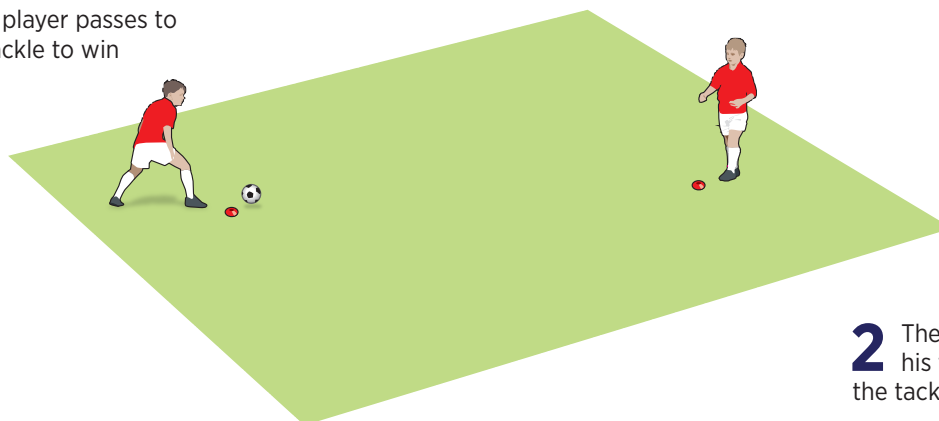
Make a slide tackle

ACTIVITY: SLIDE TACKLE

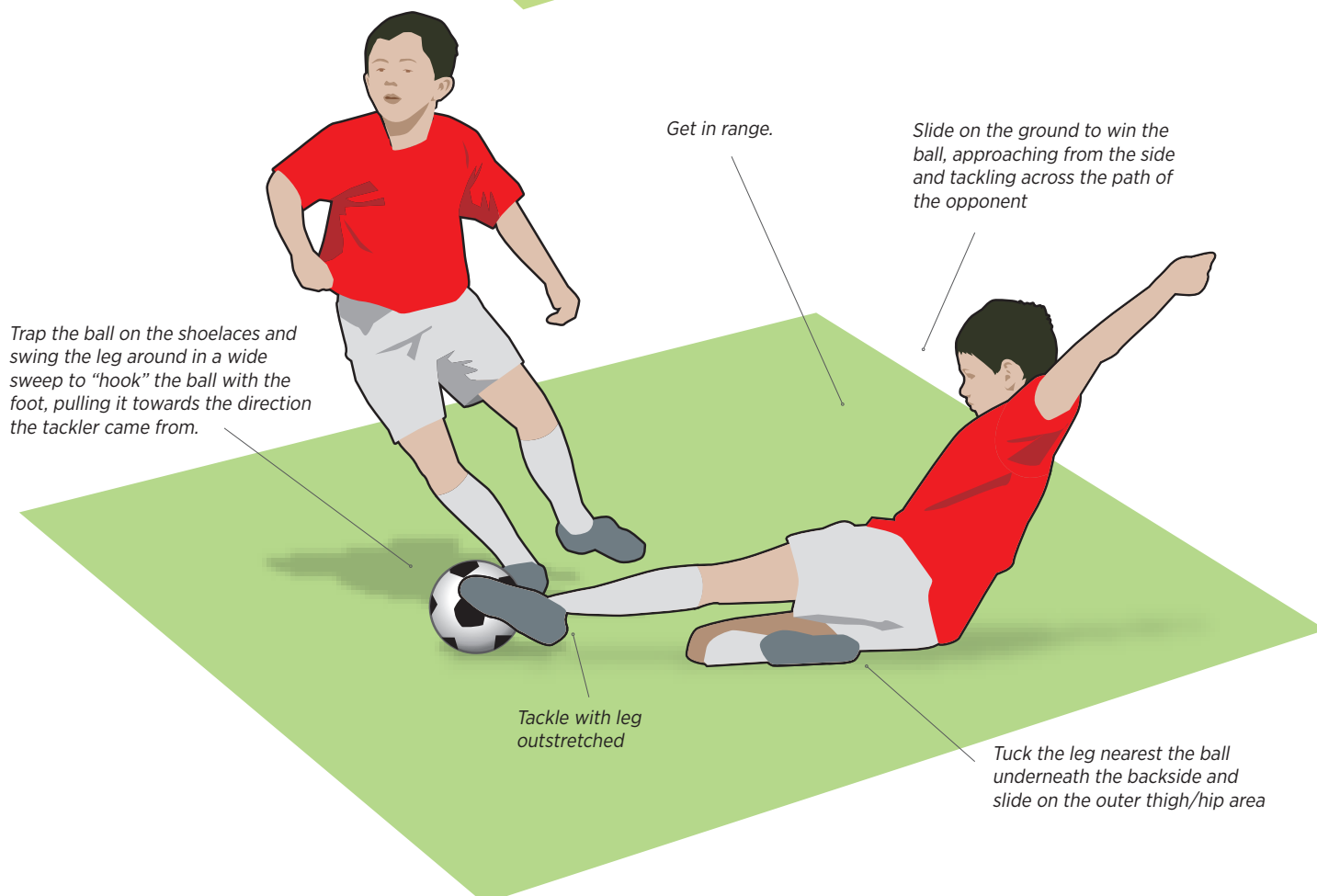
CALL OUT

“Get in range before you slide” • “Slide on your hip” • “Hook the ball with your foot”
• “Get back on your feet quickly”

1 Set players up in pairs with a ball between them and two cones that are 10 yards apart. One player passes to the other then tries a tackle to win the ball back.



2 The tackler must get on his feet quickly whether the tackle is successful or not.



How many players do I need?

Players work in pairs.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	----->	----->
	----->	----->

U11 | DEFENDING 4

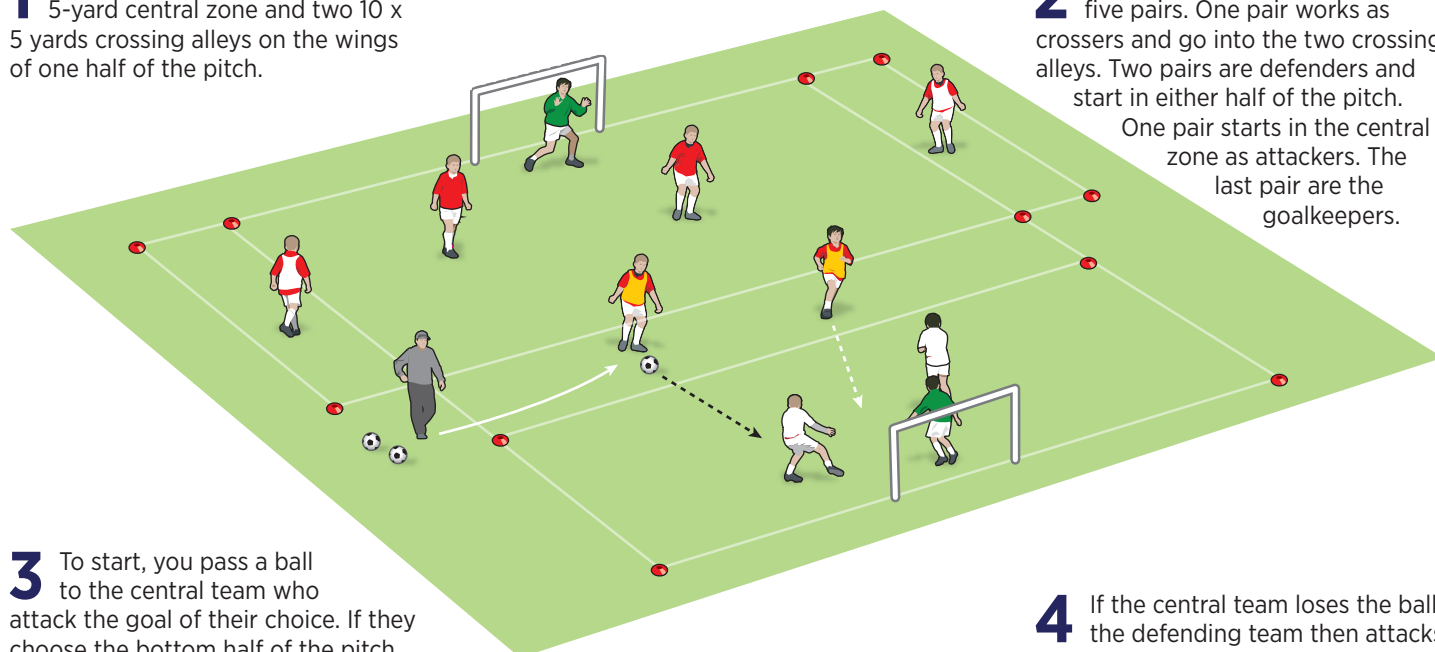
Make a slide tackle

GAME: DEFEND THE DRIBBLE, DEFEND THE CROSS

CALL OUT

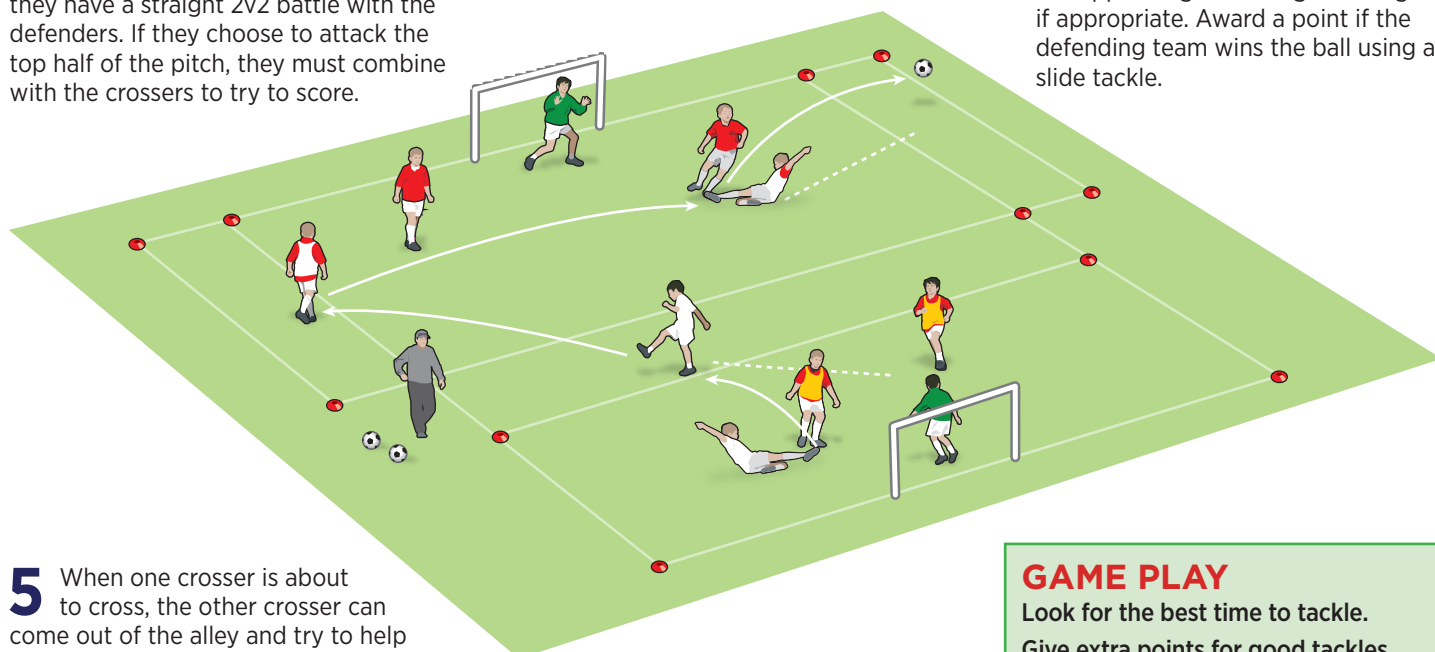
“Get in range before you slide” • “Slide on your hip” • “Hook the ball with your foot”
• “Get back on your feet quickly”

1 Set up a 30 x 15 yards area with a 5-yard central zone and two 10 x 5 yards crossing alleys on the wings of one half of the pitch.



2 You need 10 players split into five pairs. One pair works as crossers and go into the two crossing alleys. Two pairs are defenders and start in either half of the pitch. One pair starts in the central zone as attackers. The last pair are the goalkeepers.

3 To start, you pass a ball to the central team who attack the goal of their choice. If they choose the bottom half of the pitch, they have a straight 2v2 battle with the defenders. If they choose to attack the top half of the pitch, they must combine with the crossers to try to score.



4 If the central team loses the ball, the defending team then attacks the opposite goal - using the wingers if appropriate. Award a point if the defending team wins the ball using a slide tackle.

5 When one crosser is about to cross, the other crosser can come out of the alley and try to help the team score.

GAME PLAY
Look for the best time to tackle.
Give extra points for good tackles.
Pressing play will create chances to get tackles in.

How many players do I need?
This uses 10 players in the game, split into five pairs.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	--->	--->
	--->	--->
	--->	--->

EasiCoach

SOCCER SKILLS ACTIVITIES

U11-U12

SKILLS

U11-U12 | SKILLS 1

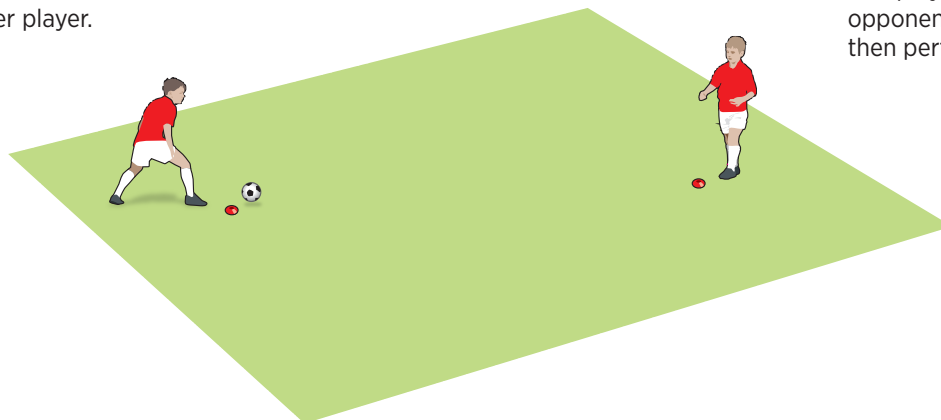
180° Spin

ACTIVITY: SKILLS SESSION

CALL OUT "Fake to kick but roll the ball" • "Spin to face the opposite direction"

1 Set up two cones 10 yards apart. One player has a ball and moves towards the other player.

2 When the players meet, the ball player shields the ball from his opponent to the outside and front, then performs a 180° spin.



Fake with the near foot as if about to kick the ball forward with the laces...



...Instead, roll the front sole of the foot up over the top of the ball



Spin towards the opposite direction while dragging the ball back using the foot touching the top of the ball



After finishing the spin, you will end up positioned in the other direction, the foot used to touch and draw the ball back is on the ground, and the ball is in position to move forward.



How many players do I need?

Players work in pairs

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	--->	→
	Run with the ball	Shot
	--->	→

U11-U12 | SKILLS 2

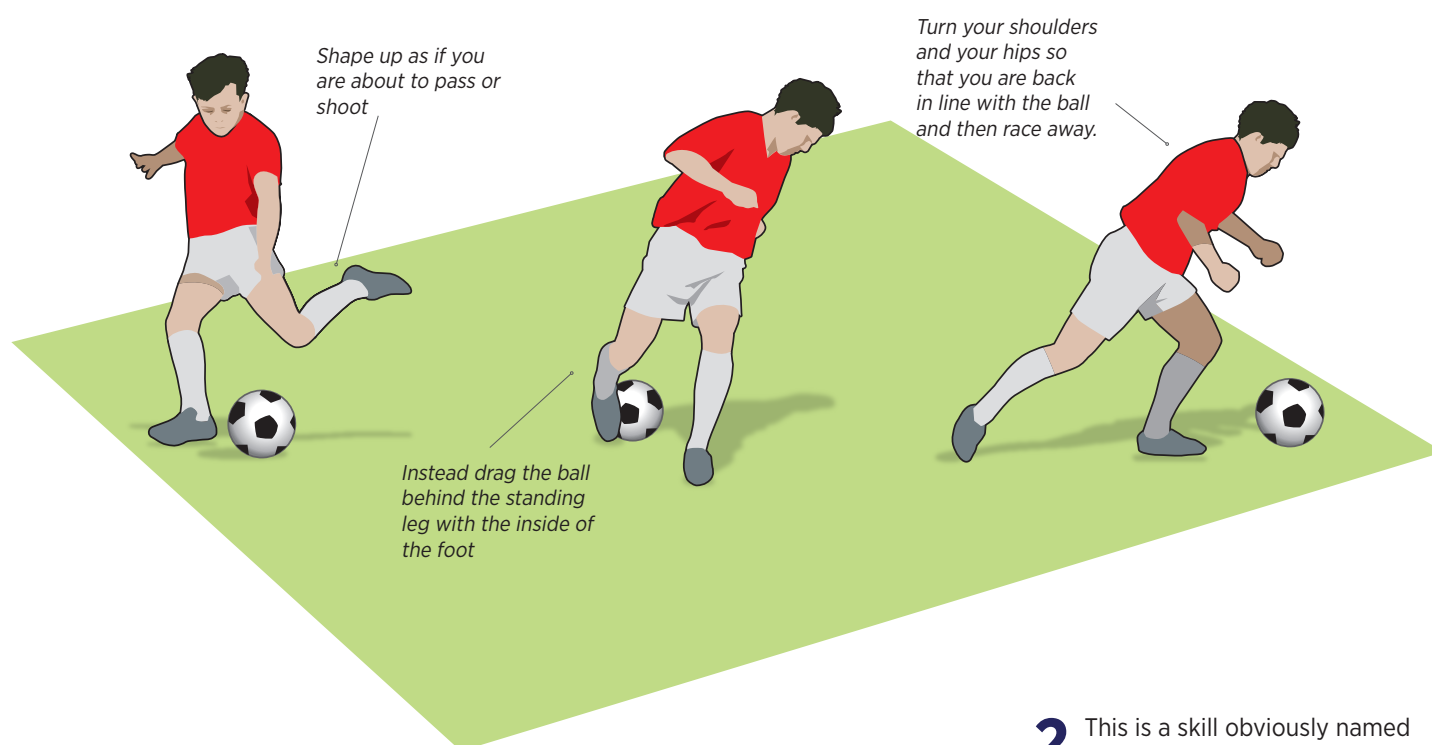
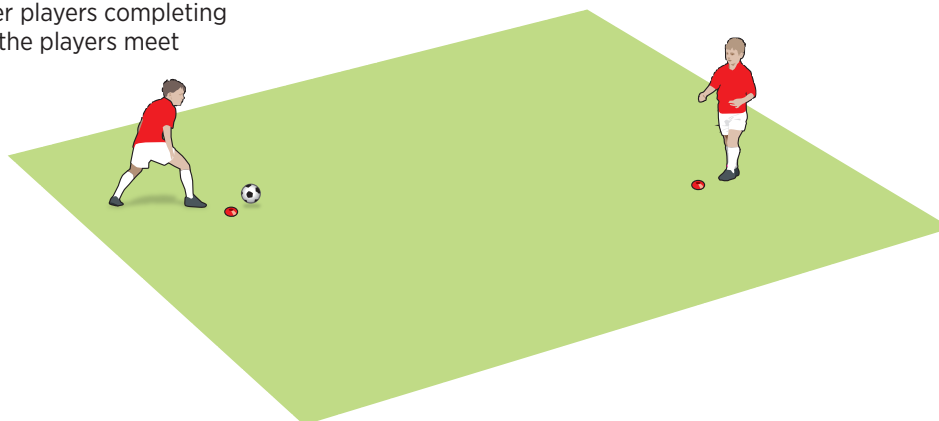
The Cruyff turn

ACTIVITY: SKILLS SESSION

CALL OUT

“Shape up as if you’re going to pass or shoot” • “Drag the ball back behind your leg”
• “Turn and go”

- 1 Set up two cones 10 yards apart. One player has a ball and moves towards the other players completing a Cruyff Turn as the players meet



- 2 This is a skill obviously named after the brilliant Dutchman Johan Cruyff. Get your players to give it plenty of practise, use lively feet and they will soon be the envy of their team mates. This trick is great for losing an opponent.

How many players do I need?

Players work in pairs.

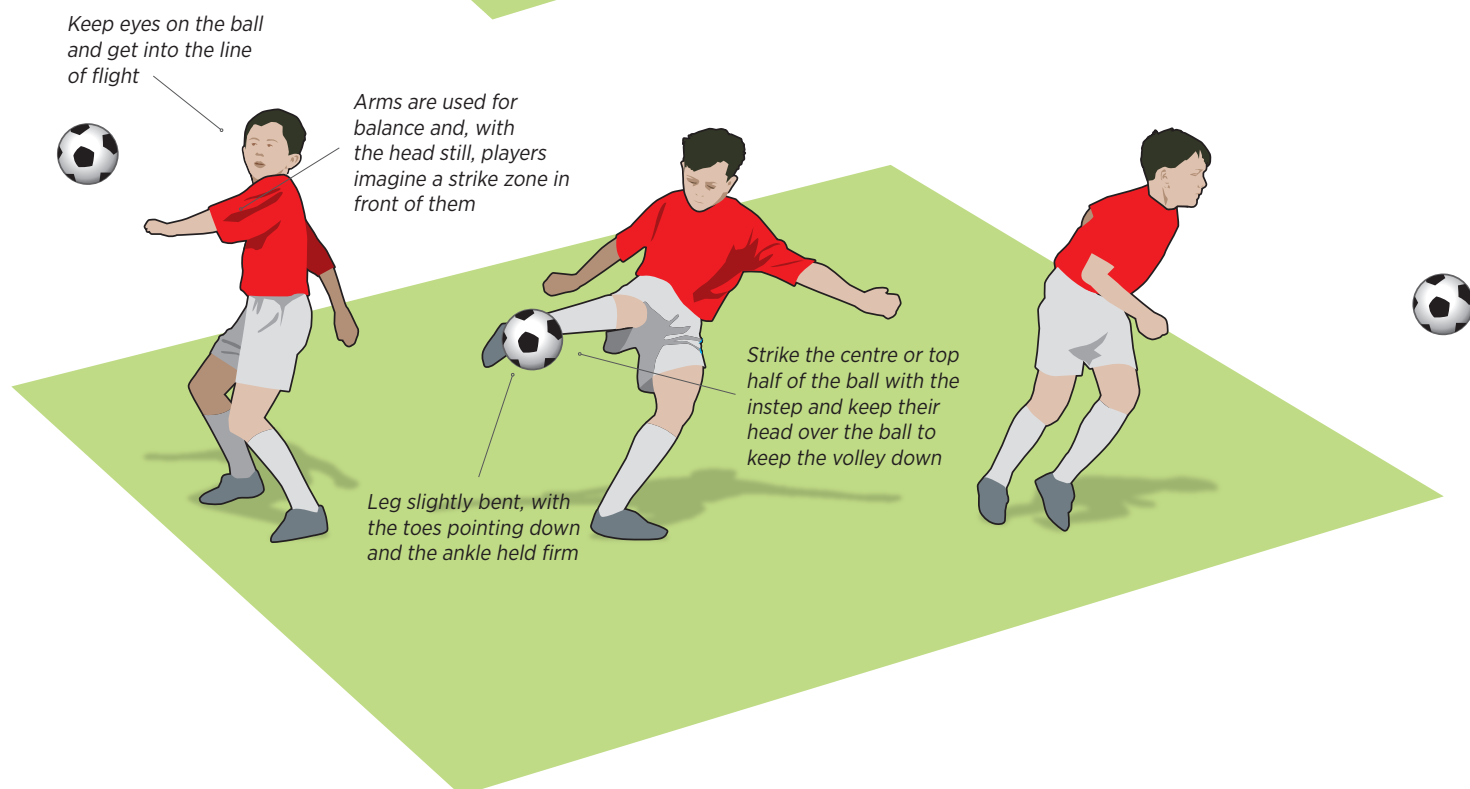
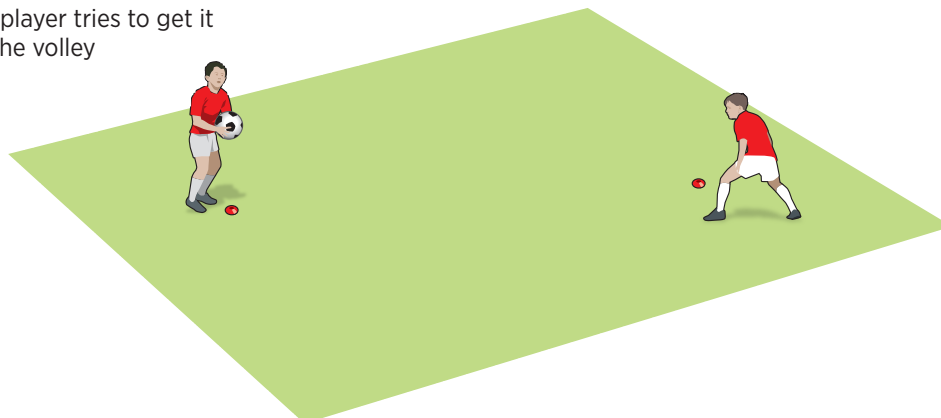
Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	----->	----->
	----->	----->
	----->	----->

Volley

ACTIVITY: SKILLS SESSION

CALL OUT "Focus on the ball" • "Point your toes down" • "Hold your ankle firm" • Strike the centre of the ball"

- 1 Set up two cones 10 yards apart. One player serves the ball with a throw and the player tries to get it back to him on the volley



How many players do I need?

Players work in pairs.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	--->	—>
	Run with the ball	Shot
	--->	—>

U11-U12 | SKILLS 4

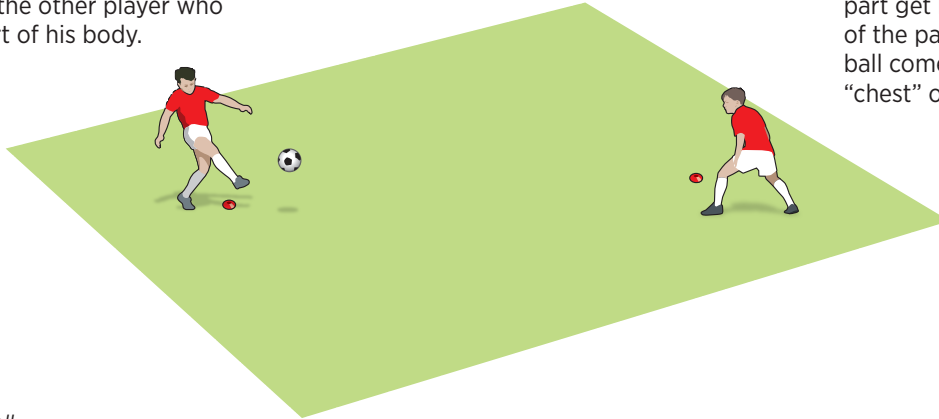
First touch

ACTIVITY: SKILLS SESSION

CALL OUT

“Good first touch important!” • “Get into line with the flight of the ball quickly” • “Relax the contact area to cushion the ball”

1 Set up two cones 10 yards apart. One player has a ball and serves lofted passes to the other player who controls with part of his body.



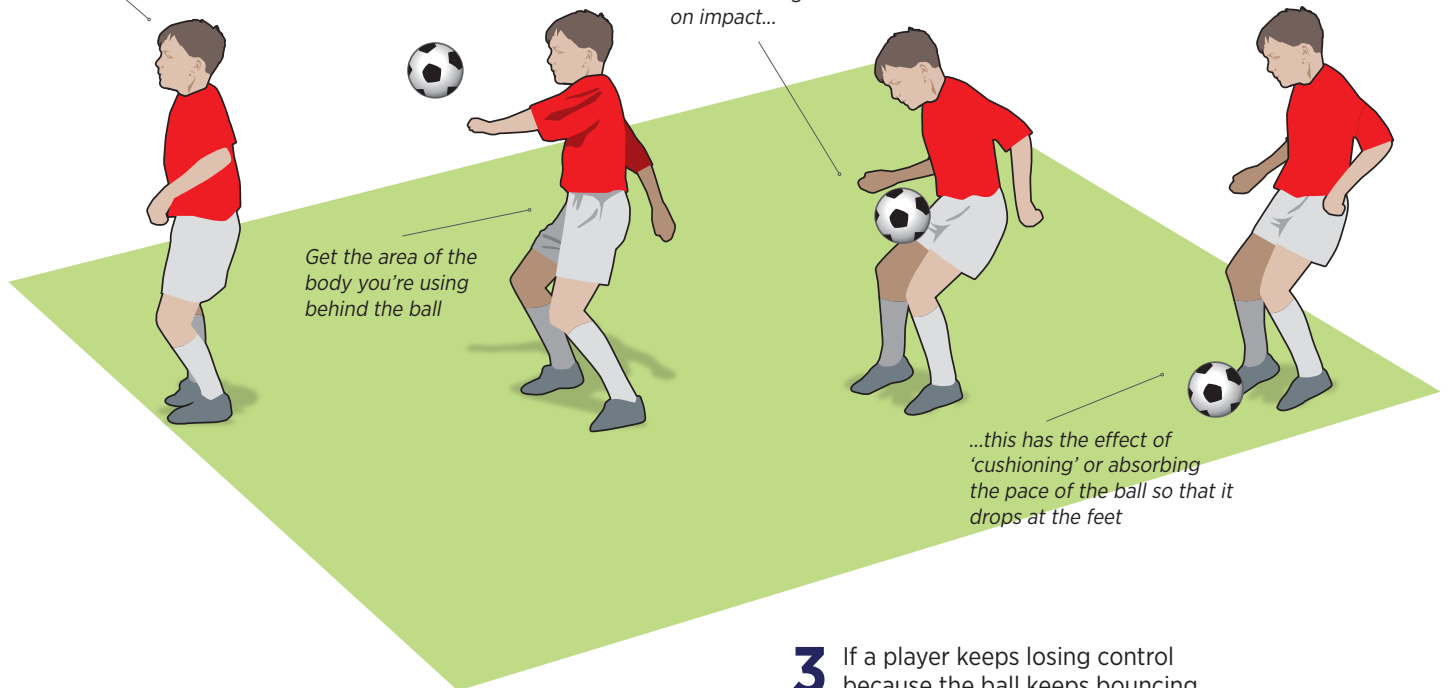
2 If a player is indecisive when choosing the controlling body part get him to shout out the name of the part he intends to use as the ball comes to him, for example “foot”, “chest” or “thigh”.

Keep eyes on the ball and get into the line of flight

Take the ‘sting’ out of the ball by pulling back the controlling surface on impact...

Get the area of the body you’re using behind the ball

...this has the effect of ‘cushioning’ or absorbing the pace of the ball so that it drops at the feet



3 If a player keeps losing control because the ball keeps bouncing off them, encourage them to relax and exaggerate the movement.

How many players do I need?

Players work in pairs.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	----->	----->
	----->	----->
	----->	----->

Jockeying

ACTIVITY: SKILLS SESSION

CALL OUT

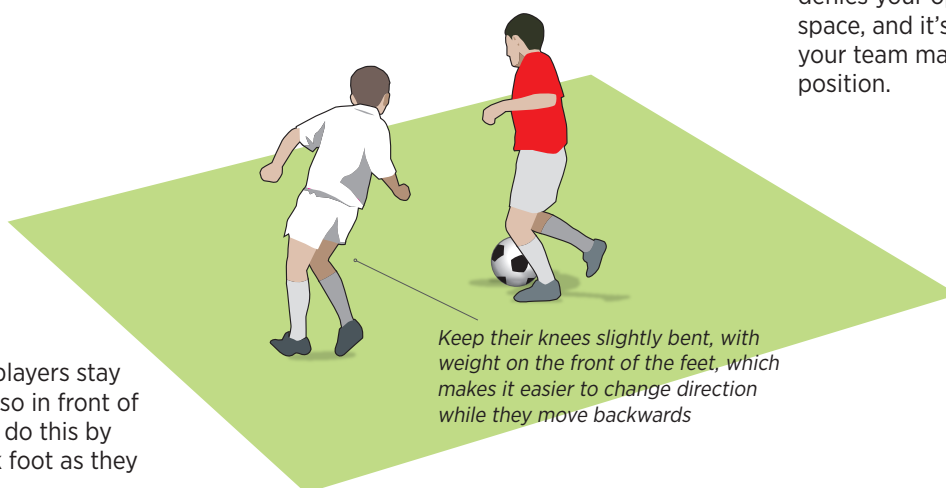
“Keep your eye on the ball” • “Get side on to the ball” • “Get in a good position to block the route”

1 Set up two cones 10 yards apart. One player has a ball and moves towards the other player.



2 You don't always need to tackle an opponent to dispossess them or slow their progress. Jockeying denies your opponent time and space, and it's a good tactic to allow your team mates to get back in position.

3 Make sure your players stay goal-side, and also in front of your opponent. They do this by turning off their back foot as they move backwards.



4 Tell them to stay within an arm's length of their opponent to increase the pressure on them.



How many players do I need?

Players work in pairs.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	--->	→
	--->	Shot →

U11-U12 | SKILLS 6

The stop turn

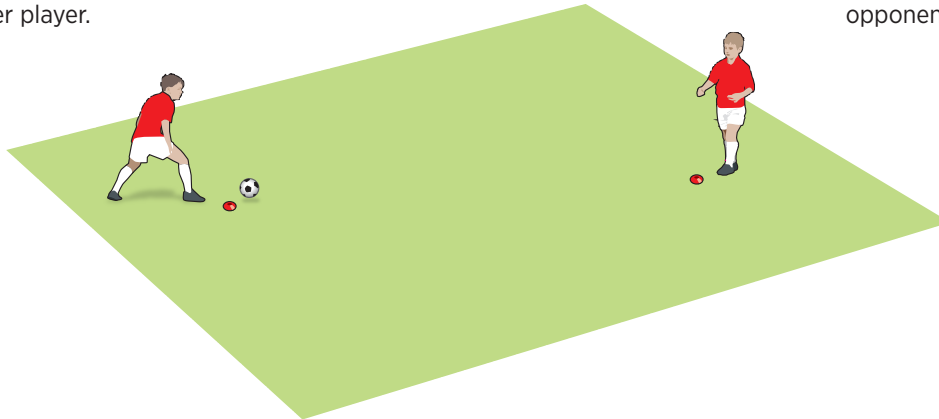
ACTIVITY: SKILLS SESSION

CALL OUT

“Use the ball of your foot to stop the ball” • “Turn quickly” • “Get the ball out from under your feet”

1 Set up two cones 10 yards apart. One player has a ball and moves towards the other player.

2 When the players meet, the ball player shields the ball from his opponent and performs a stop turn.

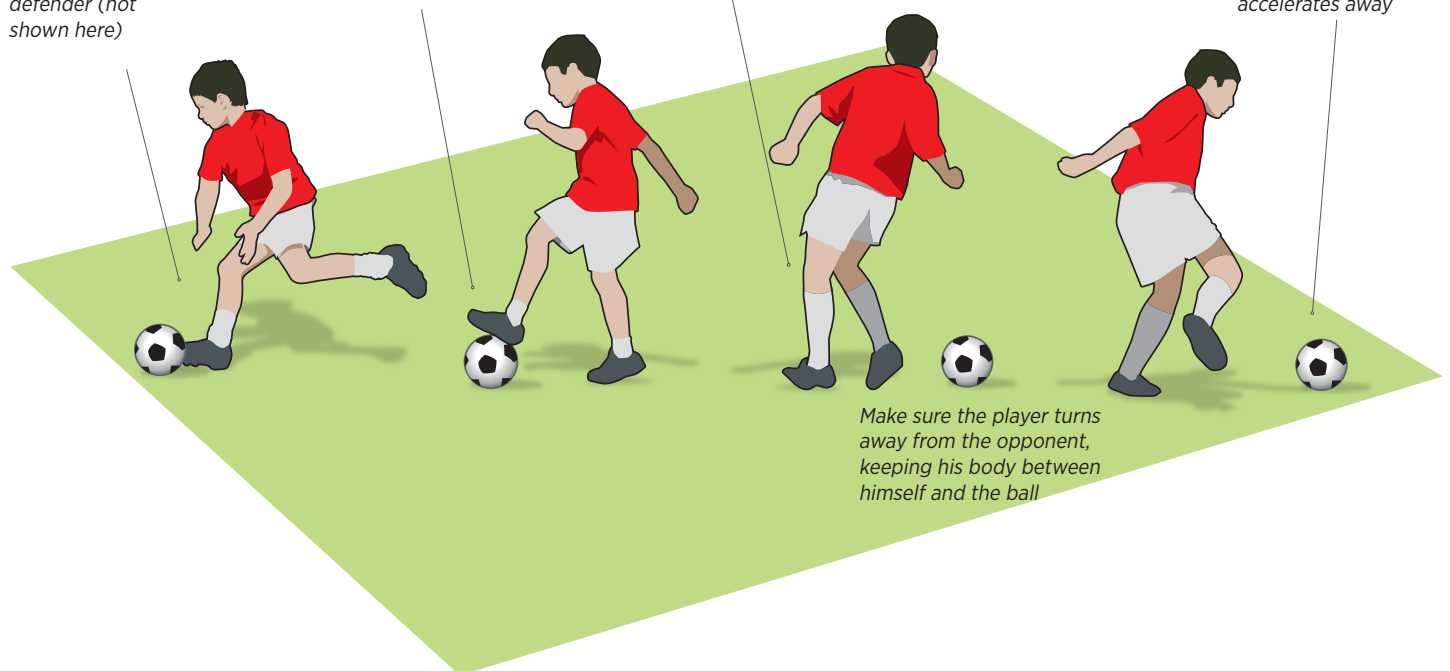


The player dribbles the ball at speed under pressure from a defender (not shown here)

He stops suddenly, halting the ball with his foot

The player pivots on his standing leg to move off with the ball in the opposite direction.

Pushing the ball out from under his feet he pushes off on his standing leg and accelerates away



Make sure the player turns away from the opponent, keeping his body between himself and the ball

How many players do I need?

Players work in pairs.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	----->	----->
	----->	----->
	----->	----->

The feint

ACTIVITY: SKILLS SESSION

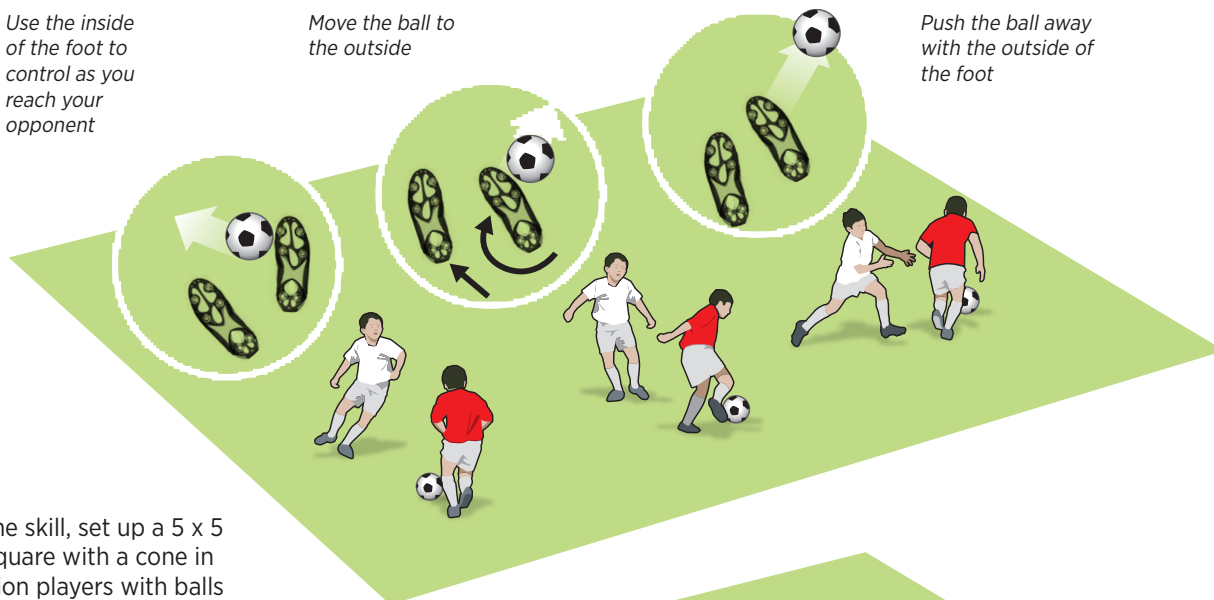
CALL OUT

“Lean one way and go the other” • “Use the outside of the foot to push the ball away”
• “One touch to get out the square” • “Choose the goal you are aiming for early”

Use the inside of the foot to control as you reach your opponent

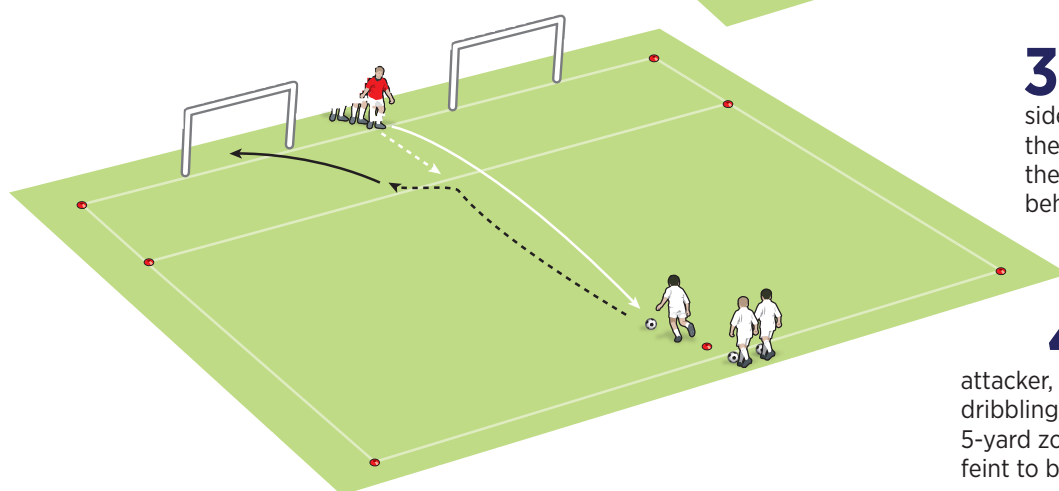
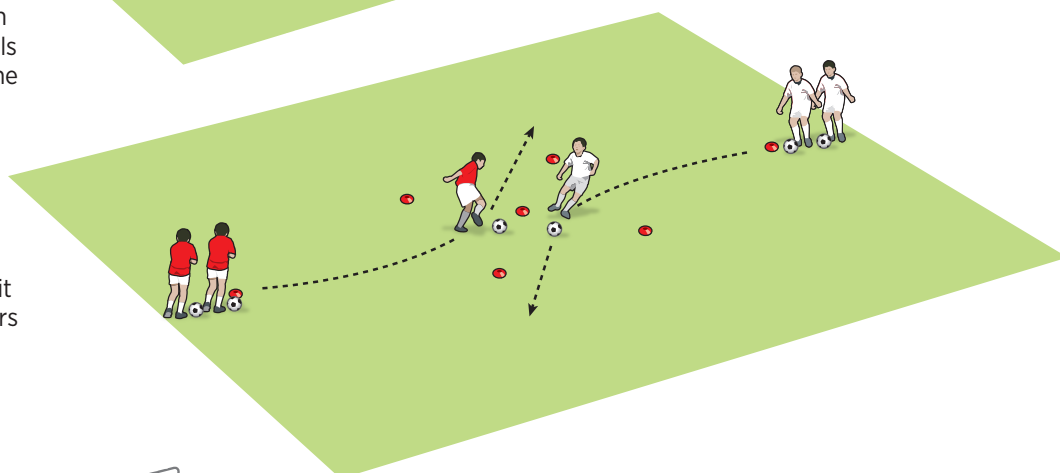
Move the ball to the outside

Push the ball away with the outside of the foot



1 To practise the skill, set up a 5 x 5 yards cone square with a cone in the centre. Position players with balls in two lines, 8 yards either side of the square.

2 Players run towards each other into the cone square and feint one way (here it's left) when they hit the centre cone. Practise with players feinting both left and right.



3 Set up a 45 x 20 yards area with two goals on one of the long sides and a 5-yard zone in front of the goals. Defenders line up between the goals and attackers line up behind a cone on the opposite side.

4 The ball is played from a defender to an opposing attacker, who runs towards the defender dribbling the ball. The defender stays in the 5-yard zone and the attacker must play a feint to beat him, then score in either goal.

How many players do I need?

Players practise in pairs. We used three pairs for the two games, but you can change the numbers to suit.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	--->	--->
	--->	--->

EasiCoach

SOCCER SKILLS ACTIVITIES

U11-U12

RESTARTS

U11-U12 | RESTARTS 1

Kick-off

ACTIVITY: THE LAW

CALL OUT

“Pass the ball to a team mate” • “Now dribble the ball” • “Support the player with the ball”

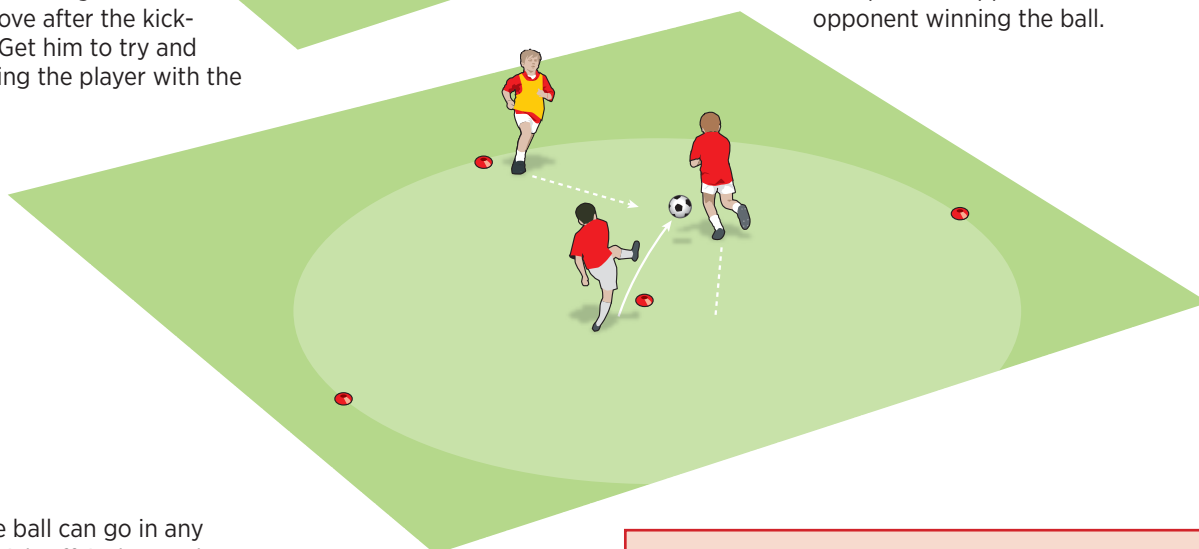
1 Mark out a circle measuring 10 yards across and place a cone in the centre. The centre cone represents the centre spot on the pitch.



2 Have two players take the kick-off from the centre cone – one passing forward into the opposition half and the other receiving and running forwards with the ball.



3 Have one opposition player stand 5 yards away from the kick-off on the edge of the circle. He can move after the kick-off has been taken. Get him to try and block any runs, forcing the player with the ball to pass.



4 The move finishes with either a pass back to the first player, a dribble past the opponent or the opponent winning the ball.

5 Remember: The ball can go in any direction from kick-off, it doesn't have to go forward.

LAWS OF SOCCER

Start and restart of play

Procedure: A kick-off is taken at the centre of the playing area to start the game and after a goal has been scored.

Opponents must be 7 yards away from the ball and in their own half of the field. In Mini Soccer a goal cannot be scored directly from a start or restart of play.

How many players do I need?

Work with players in threes with different players taking the kick-off.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	----->	----->
	----->	----->

U11-U12 | RESTARTS 1

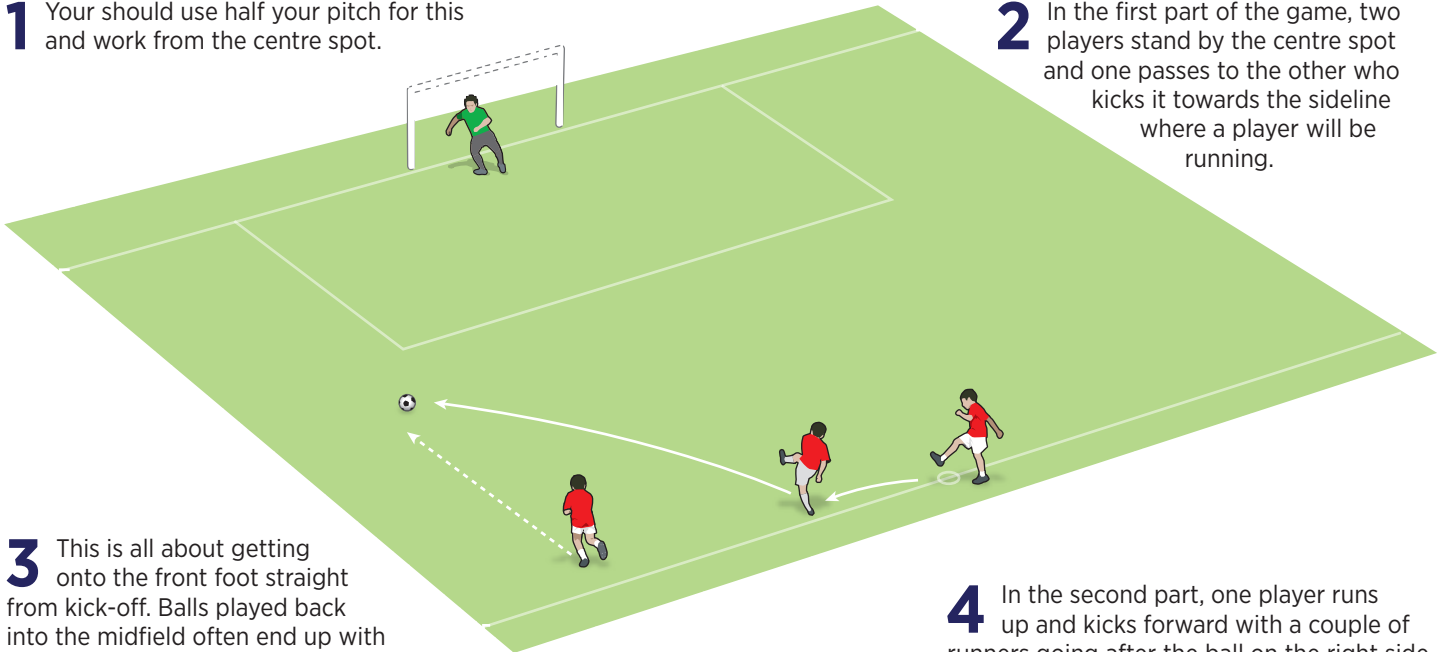
Kick-off

GAME: FORWARD MARCH!

CALL OUT

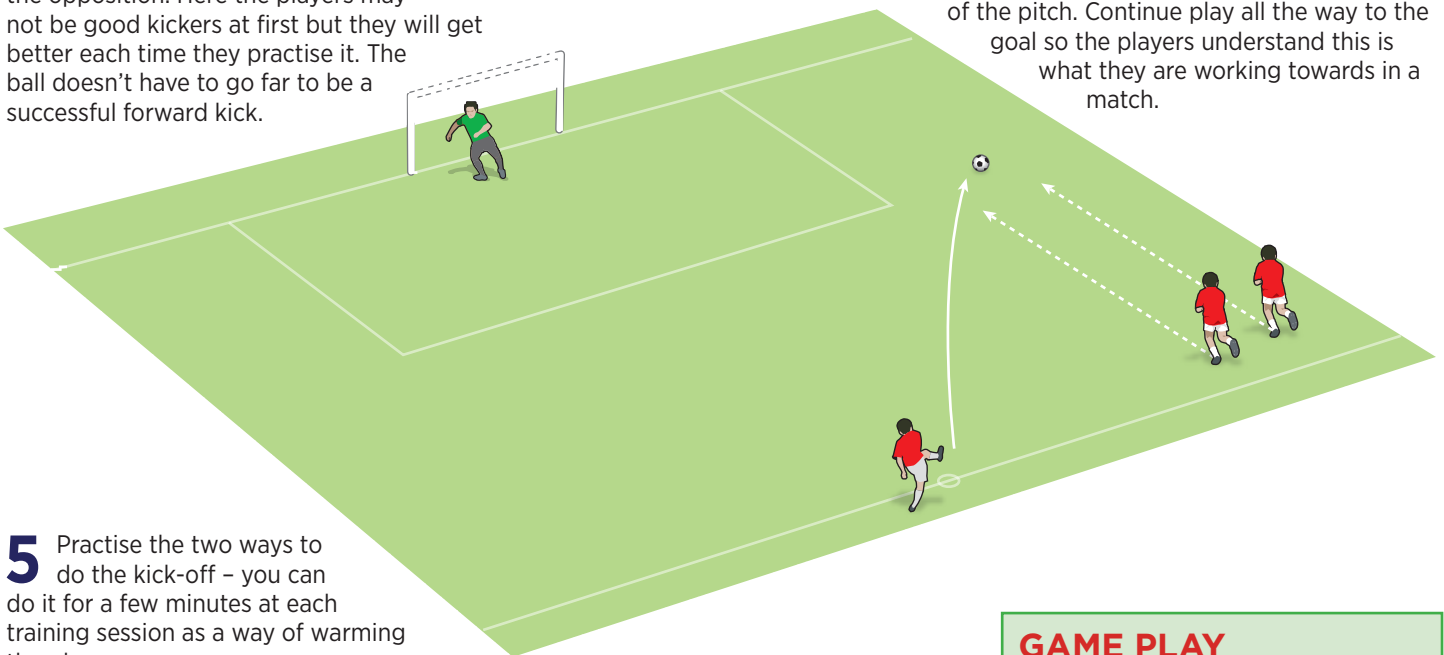
“Pass the ball to a team mate” • “Now dribble the ball” • “Support the player with the ball”

1 You should use half your pitch for this and work from the centre spot.



2 In the first part of the game, two players stand by the centre spot and one passes to the other who kicks it towards the sideline where a player will be running.

3 This is all about getting onto the front foot straight from kick-off. Balls played back into the midfield often end up with the opposition. Here the players may not be good kickers at first but they will get better each time they practise it. The ball doesn't have to go far to be a successful forward kick.



4 In the second part, one player runs up and kicks forward with a couple of runners going after the ball on the right side of the pitch. Continue play all the way to the goal so the players understand this is what they are working towards in a match.

5 Practise the two ways to do the kick-off - you can do it for a few minutes at each training session as a way of warming the players up.

GAME PLAY

Timing is key to the kick-offs.
Be positive.
Praise players for good attempts.

How many players do I need?

This is a three man kick-off but you can add defenders if you have odd numbers of players.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	Run with the ball	Shot
	----->	----->
	----->	----->

U11-U12 | RESTARTS 2

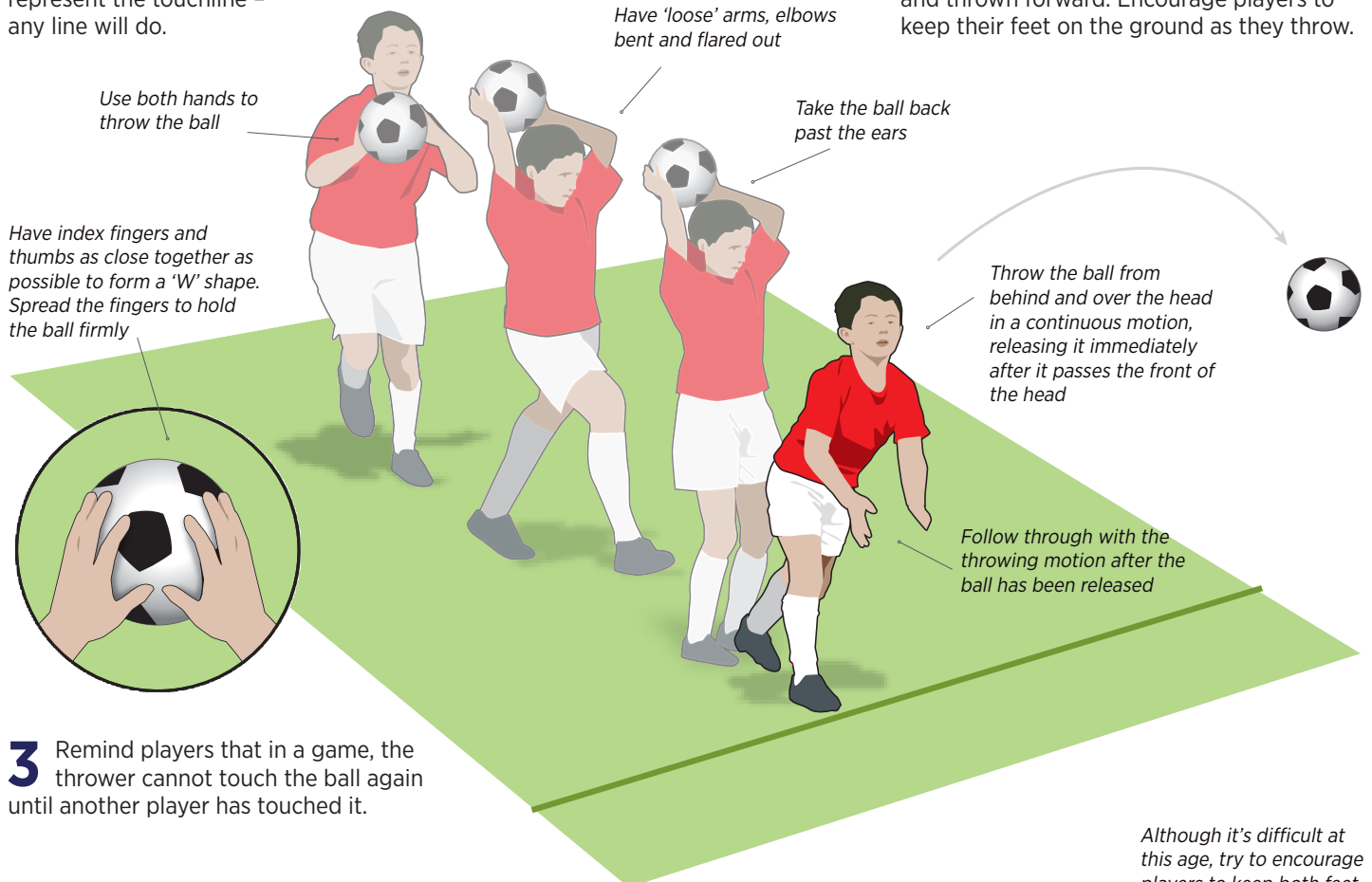
Throw-in

ACTIVITY: THE LAW

CALL OUT "Ball behind your head" • "Feet on the ground"

1 Line your players up on what would represent the touchline – any line will do.

2 Get each player to practise throw-ins. You want to see the ball behind the head and thrown forward. Encourage players to keep their feet on the ground as they throw.



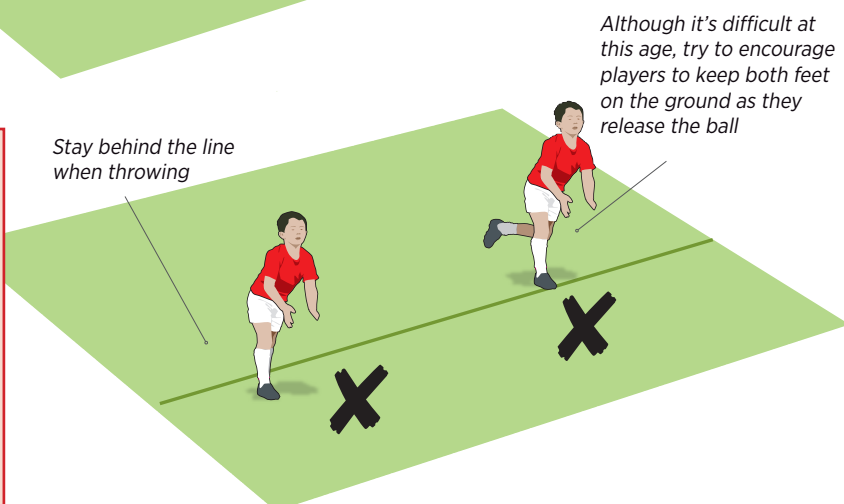
3 Remind players that in a game, the thrower cannot touch the ball again until another player has touched it.

LAWS OF SOCCER

Throw-ins

At the moment of delivering the ball, the thrower:

- Faces the field of play.
- Has part of each foot either on the touch line or on the ground outside the touch line.
- Uses both hands.
- Delivers the ball from behind and over their head.
- The thrower may not touch the ball again until it has touched another player.



How many players do I need?

Players work individually.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	----->	----->
	----->	----->

Run with the ball Shot

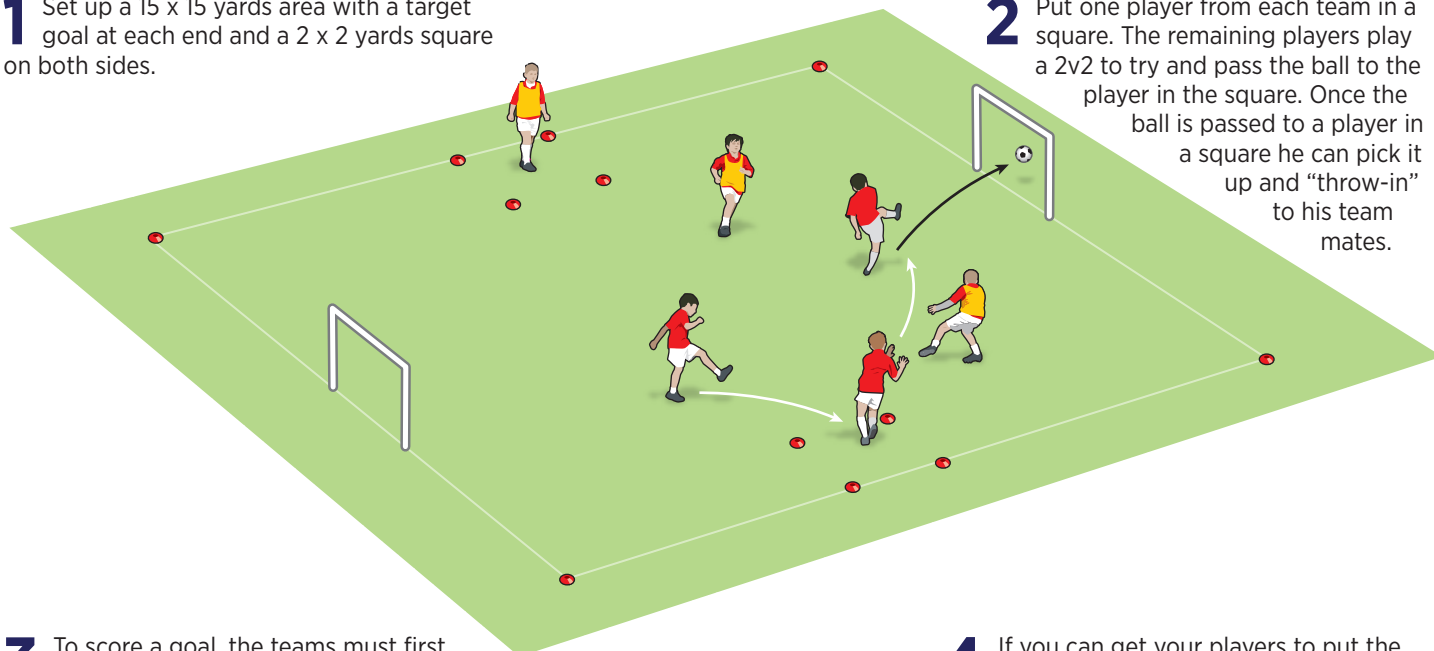
U11-U12 | RESTARTS 2

Throw-in

GAME: SCORE FROM THROW-INS

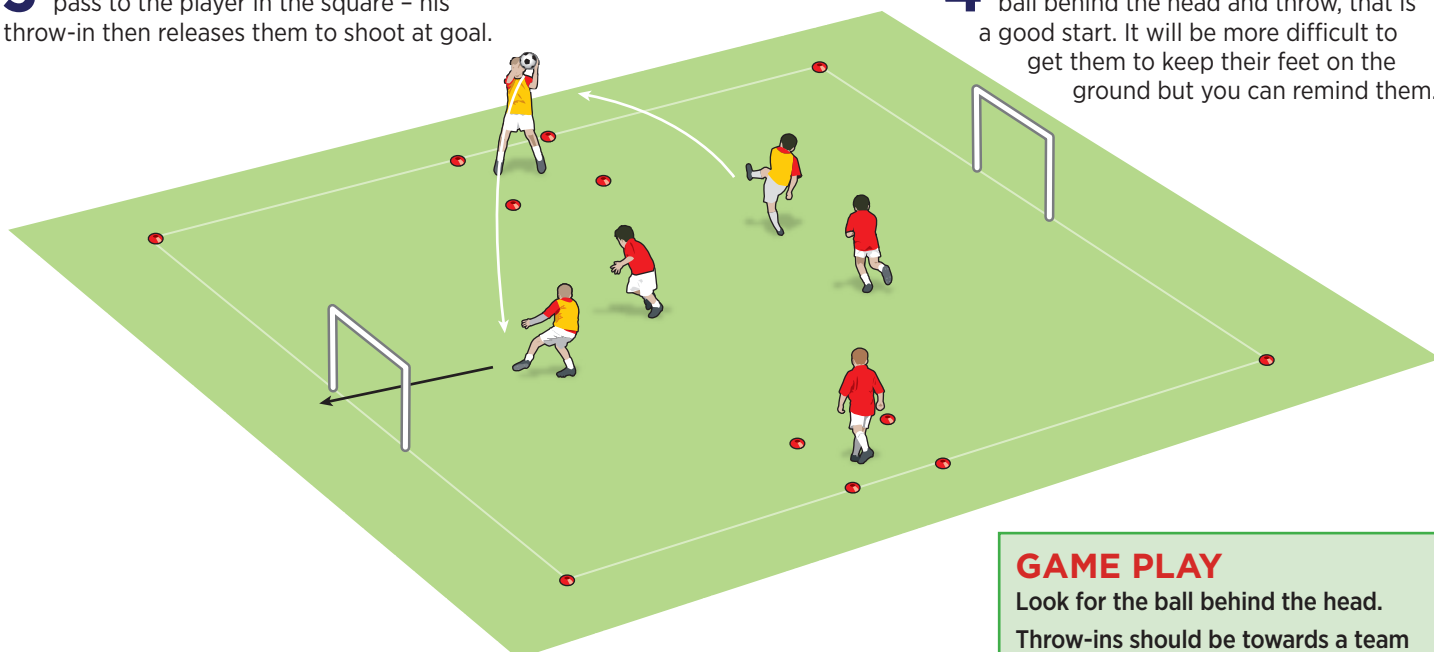
CALL OUT "Ball behind your head" • "Feet on the ground"

1 Set up a 15 x 15 yards area with a target goal at each end and a 2 x 2 yards square on both sides.



2 Put one player from each team in a square. The remaining players play a 2v2 to try and pass the ball to the player in the square. Once the ball is passed to a player in a square he can pick it up and "throw-in" to his team mates.

3 To score a goal, the teams must first pass to the player in the square - his throw-in then releases them to shoot at goal.



4 If you can get your players to put the ball behind the head and throw, that is a good start. It will be more difficult to get them to keep their feet on the ground but you can remind them.

GAME PLAY
Look for the ball behind the head.
Throw-ins should be towards a team mate.
Remind players that their feet should be on the ground.

How many players do I need?

You need six players in a 3v3.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement

Corner kick

ACTIVITY: THE LAW

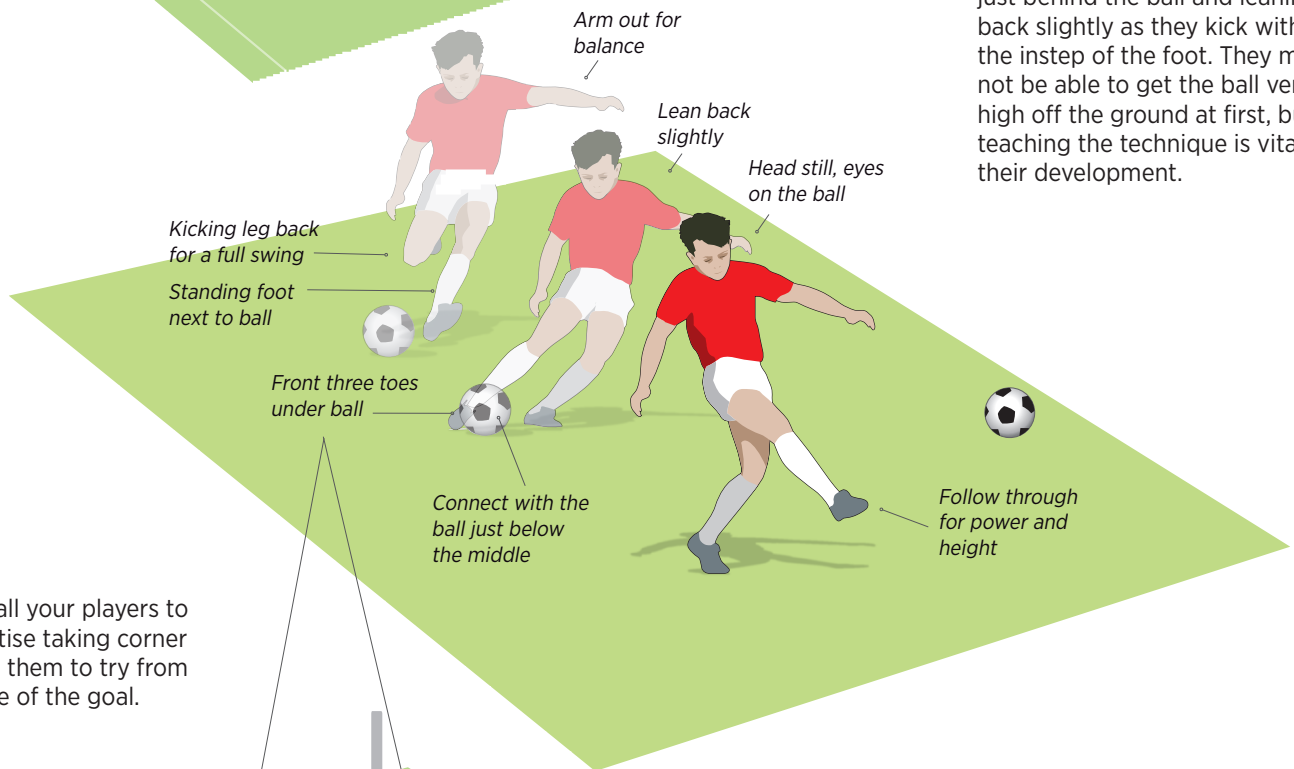
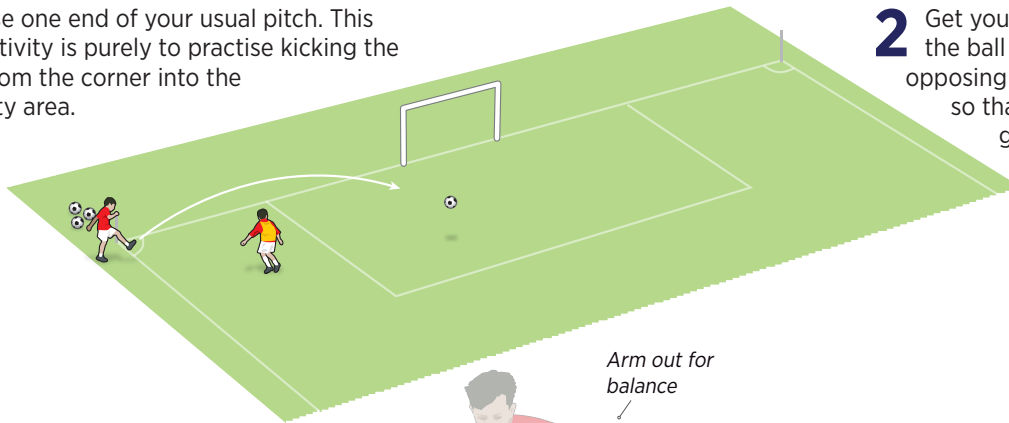
CALL OUT "Place the ball near the corner" • "Kick towards the penalty area"

1 Use one end of your usual pitch. This activity is purely to practise kicking the ball from the corner into the penalty area.

2 Get your players to take turns crossing the ball in from the corner. Put an opposing player 5 yards from the corner so that the kicker has to think about getting the ball over or past him and into the area.

3 Show players the technique of putting the standing leg just behind the ball and leaning back slightly as they kick with the instep of the foot. They may not be able to get the ball very high off the ground at first, but teaching the technique is vital to their development.

4 Get all your players to practise taking corner kicks. Get them to try from either side of the goal.



LAWS OF SOCCER

Corner kick

The ball is placed inside the corner arc – or touching one of the lines – at the corner nearest to where the ball went out.

The corner flag post cannot be moved.

Opponents must be 7 yards from the corner flag until the ball is in play.

The ball is kicked by a player of the attacking team.

How many players do I need?

Get all your players to have a go.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	----->	----->
	----->	----->

U11-U12 | RESTARTS 3

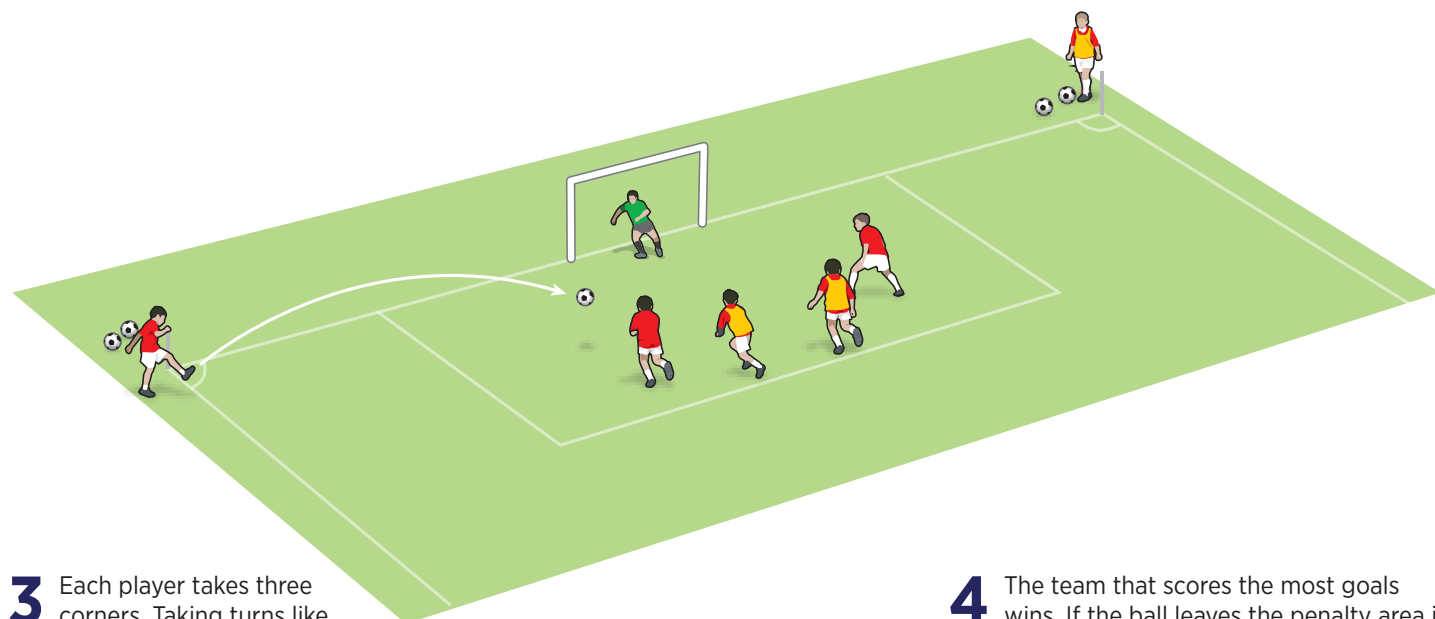
Corner kick

GAME: CORNER KICK BATTLE

CALL OUT "Place the ball near the corner" • "Kick towards the penalty area"

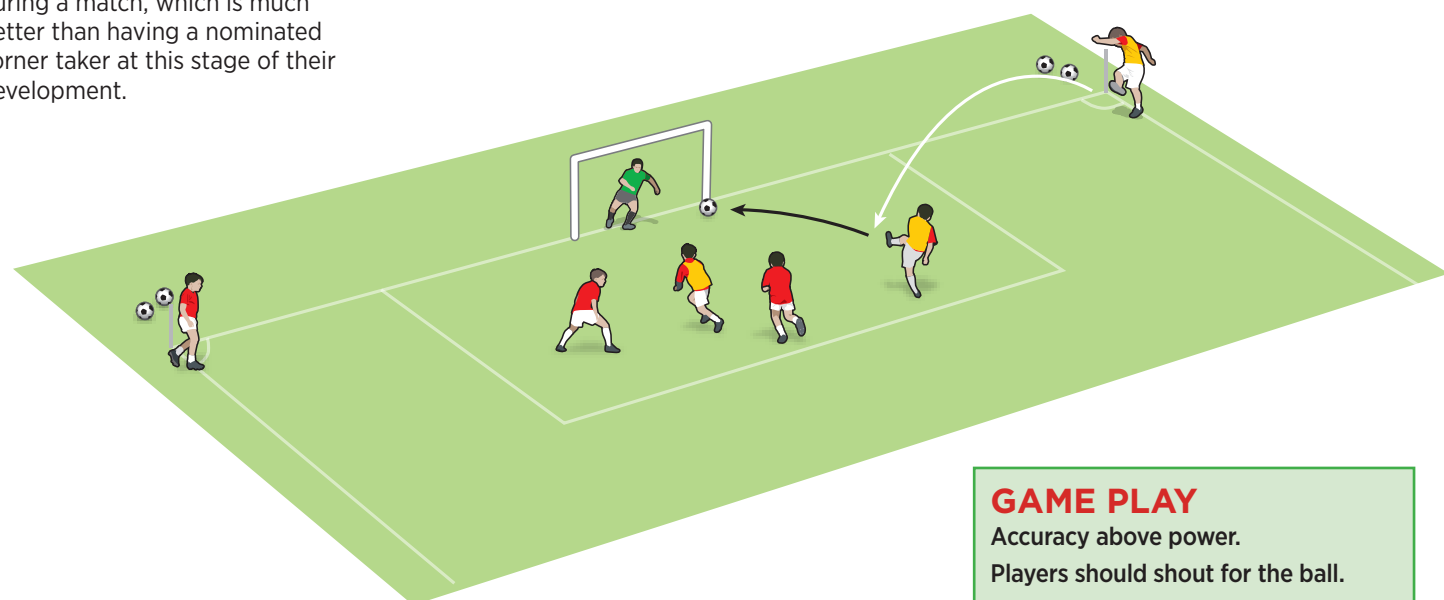
1 Use one end of your usual pitch. Put a player from each team on the two corners and put the other players in the penalty area in a 2v2.

2 The teams take turns to take three corners each. The players in the penalty area attack their own corner and defend their opponents' corner.



3 Each player takes three corners. Taking turns like this means that any of your players will be able take corners during a match, which is much better than having a nominated corner taker at this stage of their development.

4 The team that scores the most goals wins. If the ball leaves the penalty area it is dead and the other team takes their turn.



GAME PLAY
Accuracy above power.
Players should shout for the ball.
Movement to the ball.

How many players do I need?

I used seven players with two teams of three players and a goalkeeper. Players take turns to take corners.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	Run with the ball	Shot

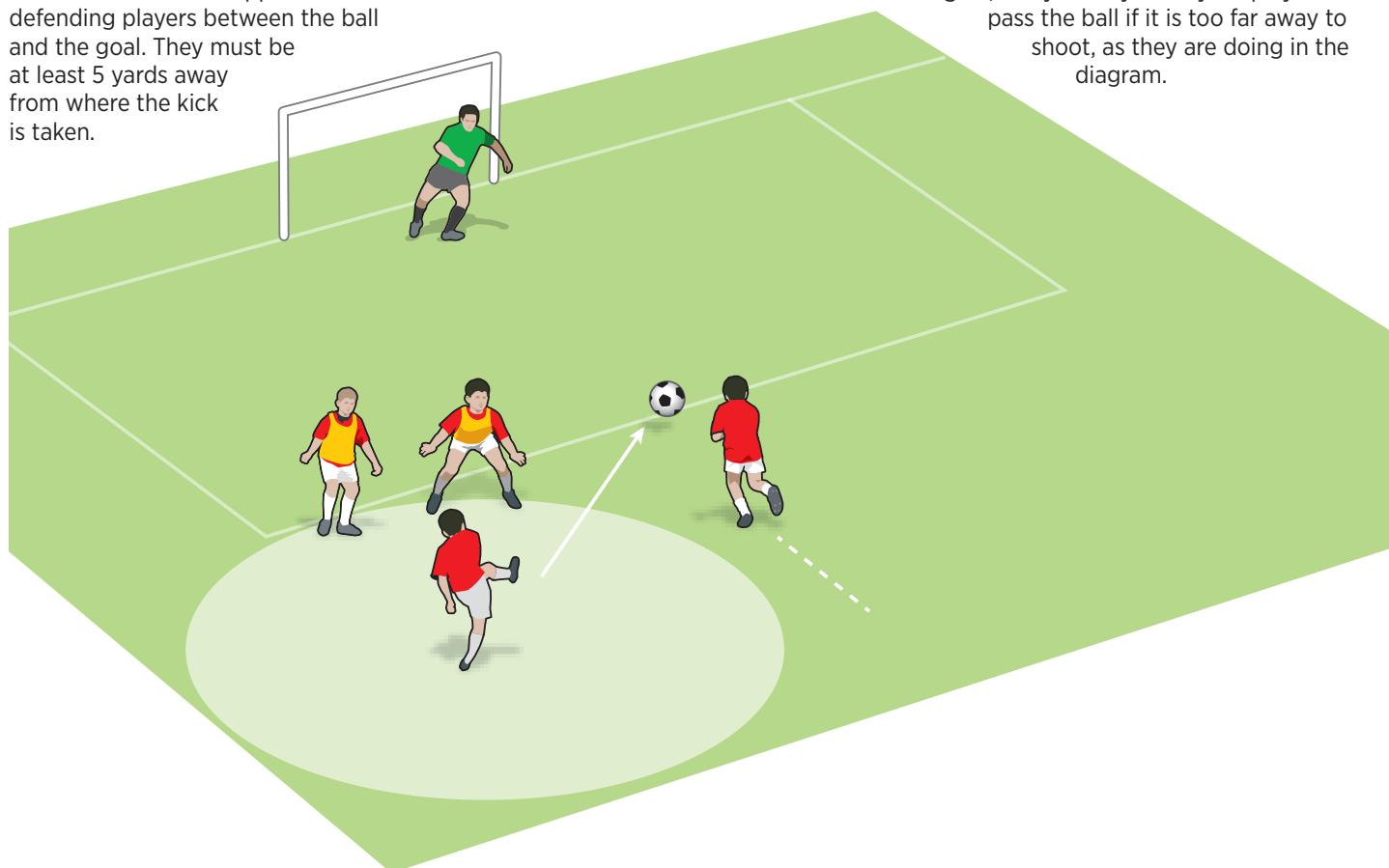
Free kick

ACTIVITY: THE LAW

CALL OUT

“Understand the ball must be still when it is kicked” • “Understand one player takes the kick” • “Kick the ball forwards”

1 Set up a free kick situation in front of goal, but not in the penalty area. You will need a player to take the kick and a team mate to support him. Put two defending players between the ball and the goal. They must be at least 5 yards away from where the kick is taken.



2 When you say “go”, the player takes the kick. All free kicks are direct at this age group, so he is allowed to shoot straight at goal, but you may want your players to pass the ball if it is too far away to shoot, as they are doing in the diagram.

3 Whether the free kick taker chooses to pass the ball or shoot at goal, the important thing is to avoid hitting the players directly in front of him, as this may prompt a counter-attack.

5 In reality there are few free kicks in mini soccer, but players need to know what to do in the event of one being given to them.

4 Once the free kick has been taken, the kicker cannot touch the ball again until another player has touched it.

LAWS OF SOCCER

Free kick

All free kicks are direct and opponents must be 10 yards from the position the infringement took place.

The ball must be stationary when kicked.

How many players do I need?

We've used five here, but get all your players to have a go. Remember to change round your attackers, defenders and goalkeeper.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	Run with the ball	Shot

U11-U12 | RESTARTS 4

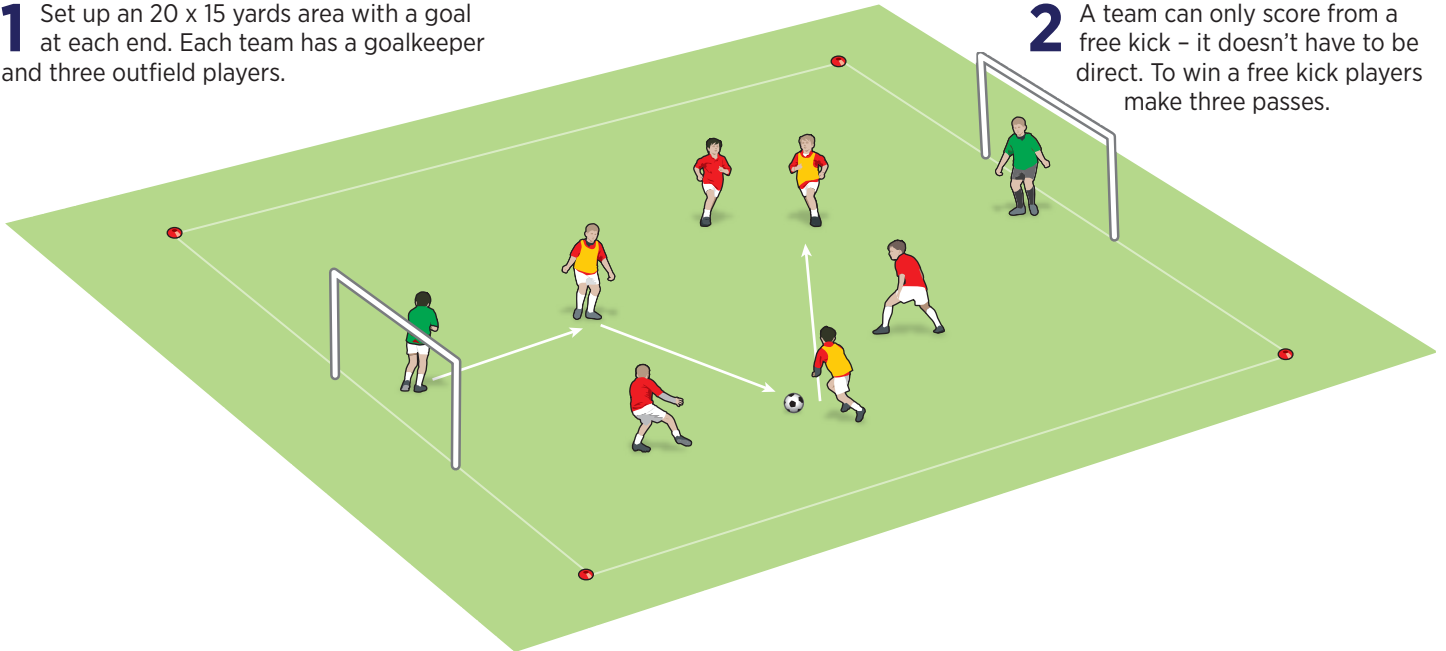
Free kick

GAME: FREE KICK GAME

CALL OUT

“Understand the ball must be still when it is kicked” • “Understand one player takes the kick” • “Kick the ball forwards”

1 Set up an 20 x 15 yards area with a goal at each end. Each team has a goalkeeper and three outfield players.



2 A team can only score from a free kick - it doesn't have to be direct. To win a free kick players make three passes.

3 The free kick is given where the player received the third pass.



4 Set up each free kick as it would be in a match with players standing the correct distance away (5 yards).

5 Sometimes the three pass rule will not work so you may need to say one of the passes has to be in the attacking half of the pitch if the passing is too easy, and if it is too hard say they only need two passes.

GAME PLAY

Accuracy above power.
Every player takes one.
Try passing moves and ask the players for free kick ideas.

How many players do I need?

I played a 4v4 game for this practice.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	Run with the ball	Shot

U11-U12 | RESTARTS 5

Penalty kick

ACTIVITY: THE LAW

CALL OUT

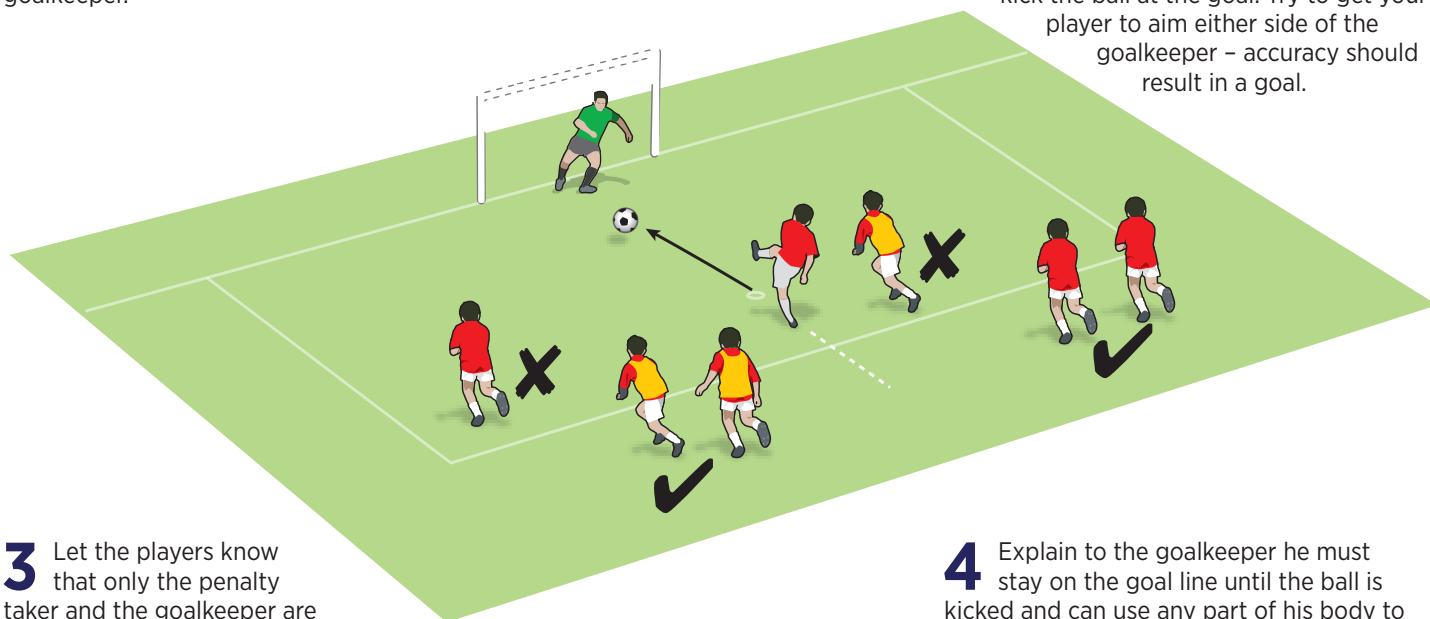
“Understand the ball is kicked from a static position” • “Understand one player takes the kick” • “Kick the ball forwards” • “Only kick the ball once”

1 Set up using a penalty area, a penalty spot with a goal and a goalkeeper.

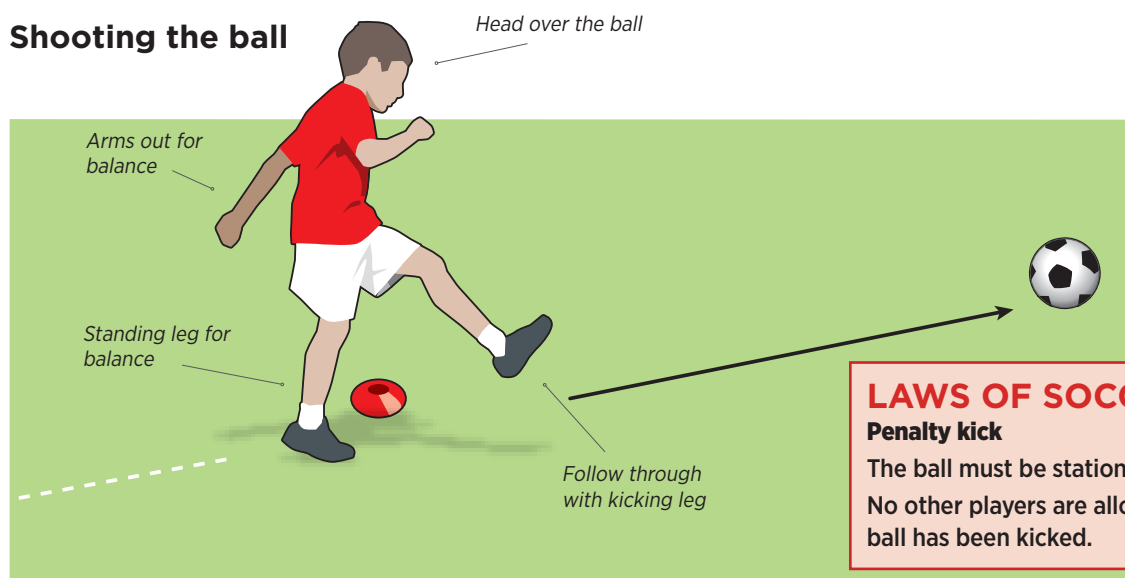
2 The players should take turns to take penalties – take a four step run up and kick the ball at the goal. Try to get your player to aim either side of the goalkeeper – accuracy should result in a goal.

3 Let the players know that only the penalty taker and the goalkeeper are allowed in the penalty area when the kick is taken.

4 Explain to the goalkeeper he must stay on the goal line until the ball is kicked and can use any part of his body to stop the shot.



Shooting the ball



LAWS OF SOCCER

Penalty kick

The ball must be stationary when kicked.

No other players are allowed in the area until the ball has been kicked.

How many players do I need?

Get all your players to have a go.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	--->	—>
	Run with the ball	Shot
	--->	—>

U11-U12 | RESTARTS 5

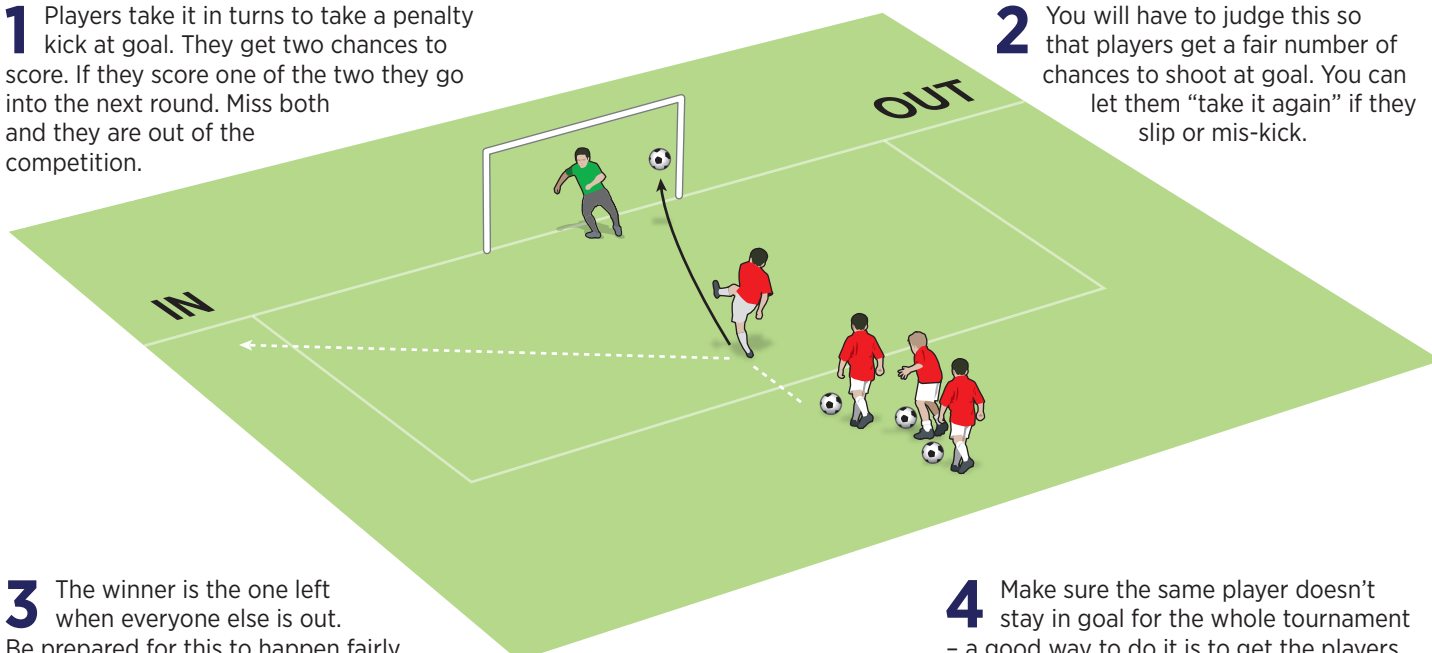
Penalty kick

GAME: IN OR OUT

CALL OUT

“Understand the ball is kicked from a static position” • “Understand one player takes the kick” • “Kick the ball forwards” • “Only kick the ball once”

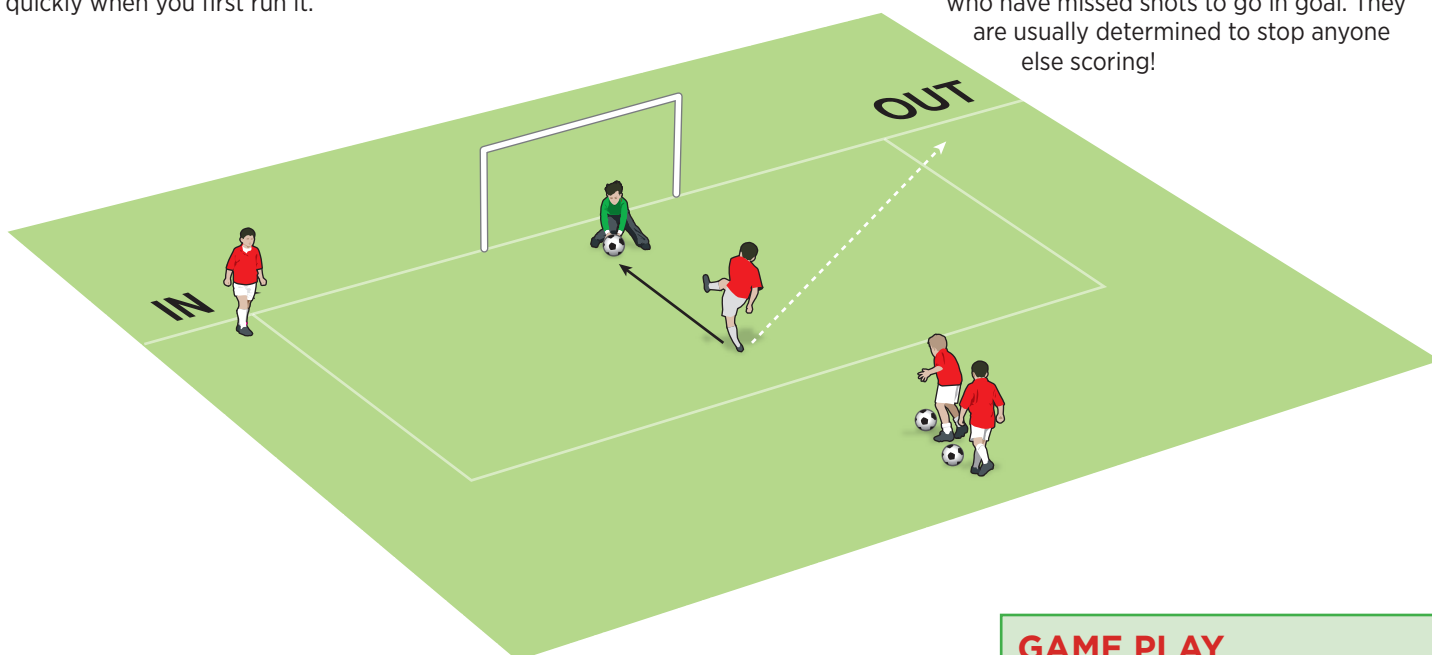
1 Players take it in turns to take a penalty kick at goal. They get two chances to score. If they score one of the two they go into the next round. Miss both and they are out of the competition.



2 You will have to judge this so that players get a fair number of chances to shoot at goal. You can let them “take it again” if they slip or mis-kick.

3 The winner is the one left when everyone else is out. Be prepared for this to happen fairly quickly when you first run it.

4 Make sure the same player doesn't stay in goal for the whole tournament – a good way to do it is to get the players who have missed shots to go in goal. They are usually determined to stop anyone else scoring!



GAME PLAY

Accuracy above power.
Every player takes one.
React to a rebound.

How many players do I need?

Get all your players to have a go.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	Run with the ball	Shot

EasiCoach

SOCCER SKILLS ACTIVITIES

U11-U12

GOALKEEPING

Correct diving technique

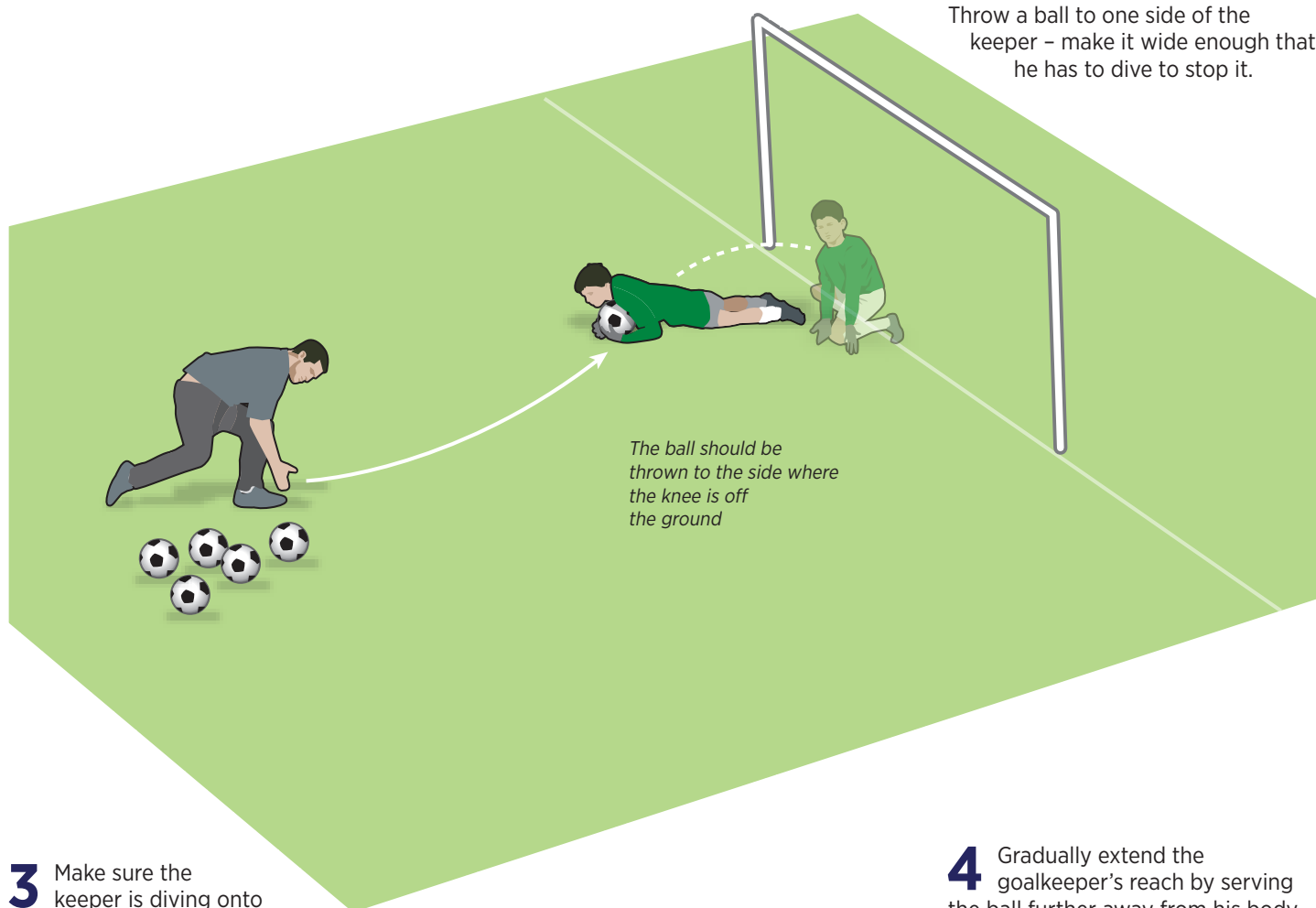
ACTIVITY: CORRECT DIVING TECHNIQUE

CALL OUT

“Stretch for the ball” • “Time your dive” • “Arms in front of you” •
“Land on your side”

1 Use the penalty area of your pitch
- have a good number of balls ready to be thrown to the keeper.

2 The goalkeeper should kneel on one knee and face you, the coach, or a nominated server. Throw a ball to one side of the keeper - make it wide enough that he has to dive to stop it.



3 Make sure the keeper is diving onto the side of his body so he can see the ball clearly.

4 Gradually extend the goalkeeper's reach by serving the ball further away from his body so he has to react more quickly and improve his diving.

How many players do I need?

Individual work with goalkeepers.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	--->	—>
	Run with the ball	Shot
	--->	—>

U11-U12 | GOALKEEPING 2

Punching the ball

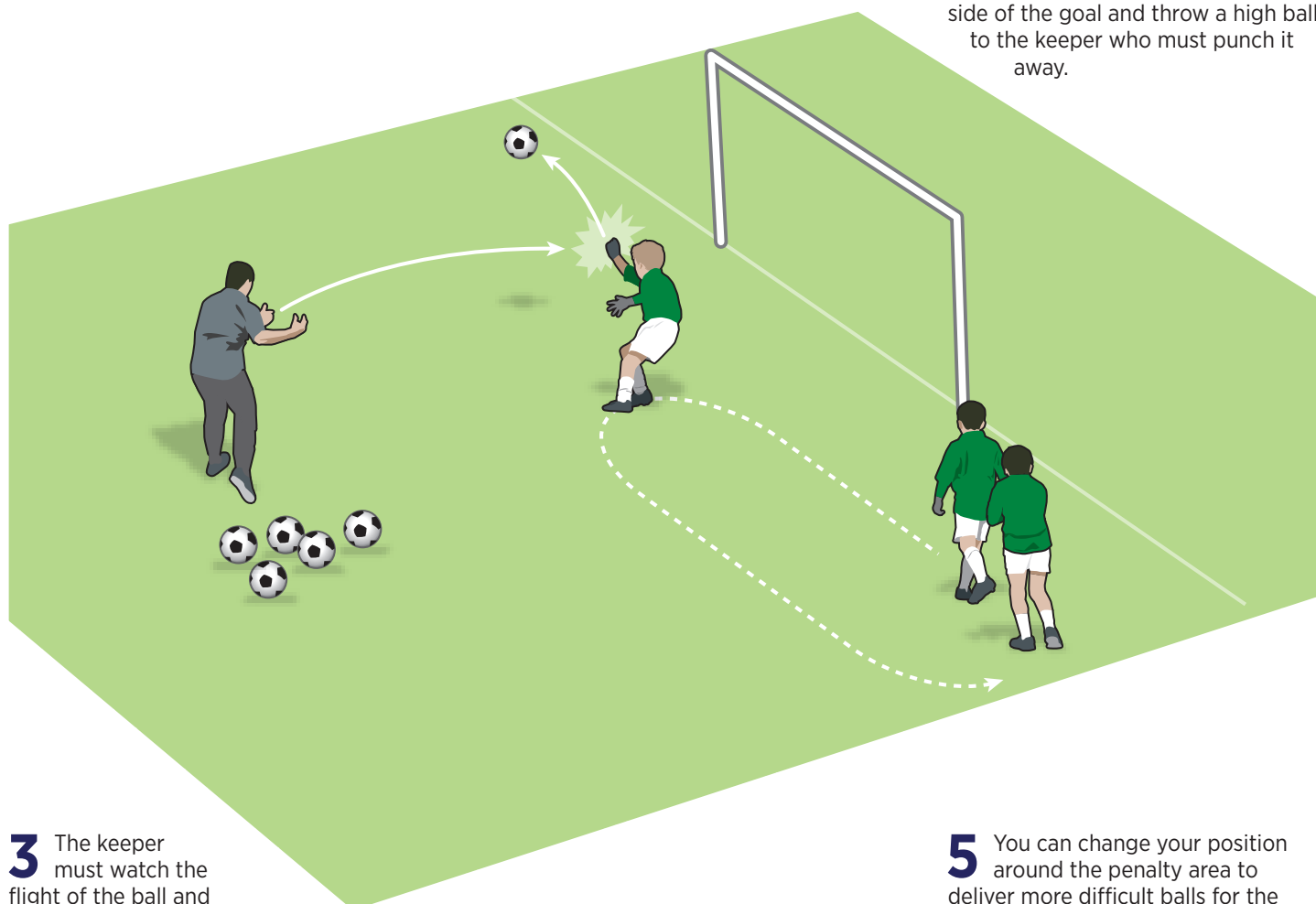
ACTIVITY: PUNCHING THE BALL

CALL OUT

“Punch high and far” • “Watch the flight of the ball” •
“Punch with one or two hands”

1 Use the penalty area of your pitch
- have a good number of balls ready to throw to the keepers.

2 Line up your keepers to the side of the goal. Get them to come forward one at a time. Stand to one side of the goal and throw a high ball to the keeper who must punch it away.



3 The keeper must watch the flight of the ball and propel himself towards it to punch right through the bottom part of the ball so it travels far and high out of the danger area.

4 After making the punch, the keeper must get to his feet quickly and run round to the back of the line.

5 You can change your position around the penalty area to deliver more difficult balls for the goalkeepers to deal with.

How many players do I need?

Work with your goalkeepers.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	--->	—>
	Run with the ball	Shot
	--->	—>

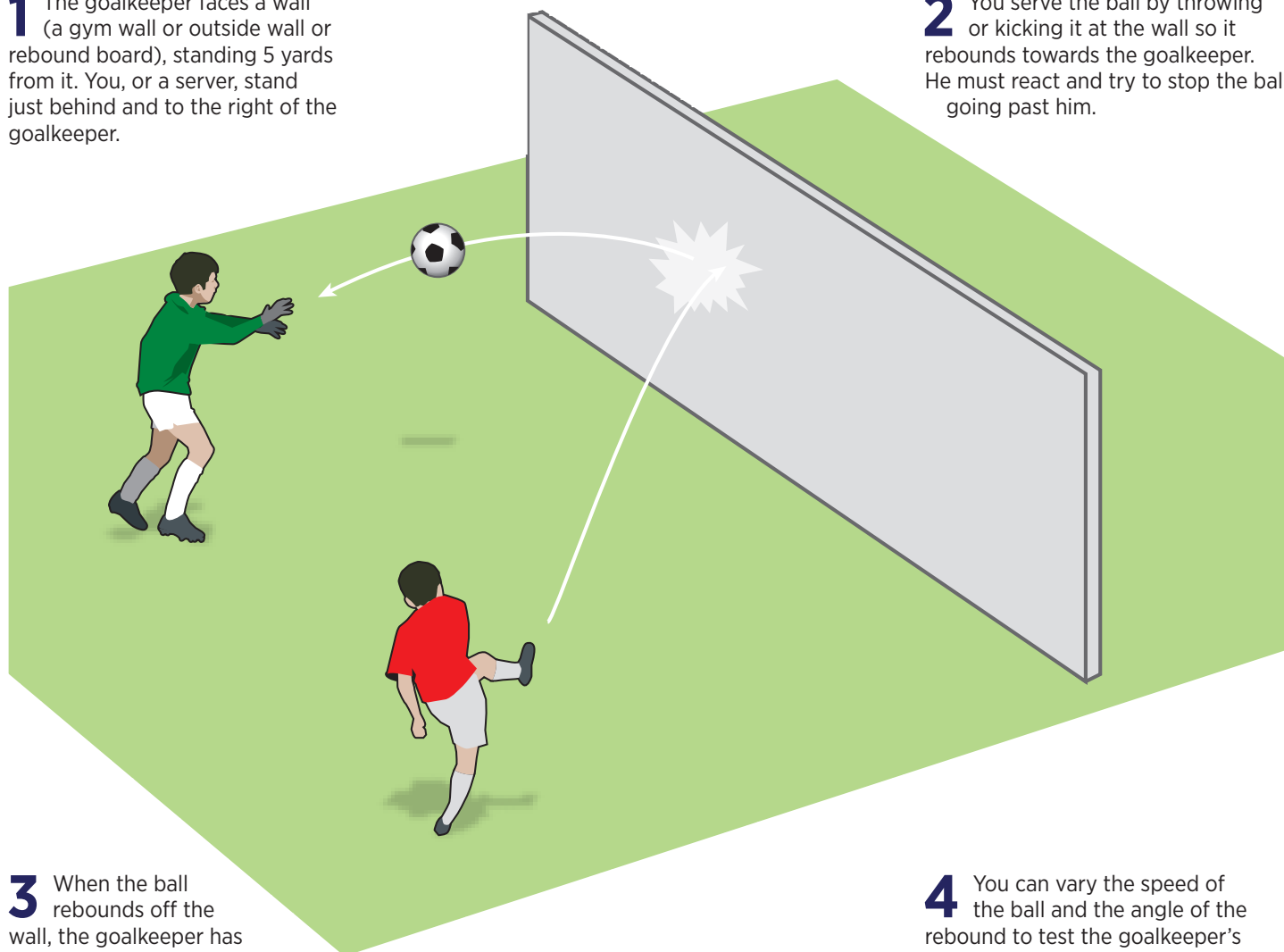
Shot stopping reactions

ACTIVITY: SHOT STOPPING REACTIONS

CALL OUT “Concentrate on the ball” • “React to the bounce” • “Don’t let the ball beat you”

1 The goalkeeper faces a wall (a gym wall or outside wall or rebound board), standing 5 yards from it. You, or a server, stand just behind and to the right of the goalkeeper.

2 You serve the ball by throwing or kicking it at the wall so it rebounds towards the goalkeeper. He must react and try to stop the ball going past him.



3 When the ball rebounds off the wall, the goalkeeper has to move or dive quickly to stop the ball by catching it or by pushing the ball away. After each save, the keeper must return the ball to you and prepare for the next rebound.

4 You can vary the speed of the ball and the angle of the rebound to test the goalkeeper’s reactions fully. You can also move him closer to the wall to give him less time to react.

How many players do I need?

Individual work with goalkeepers – or goalkeepers can work in pairs and alternate roles of keeper and server.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	--->	—>
	Run with the ball	Shot
	--->	—>

Quick reactions and positioning

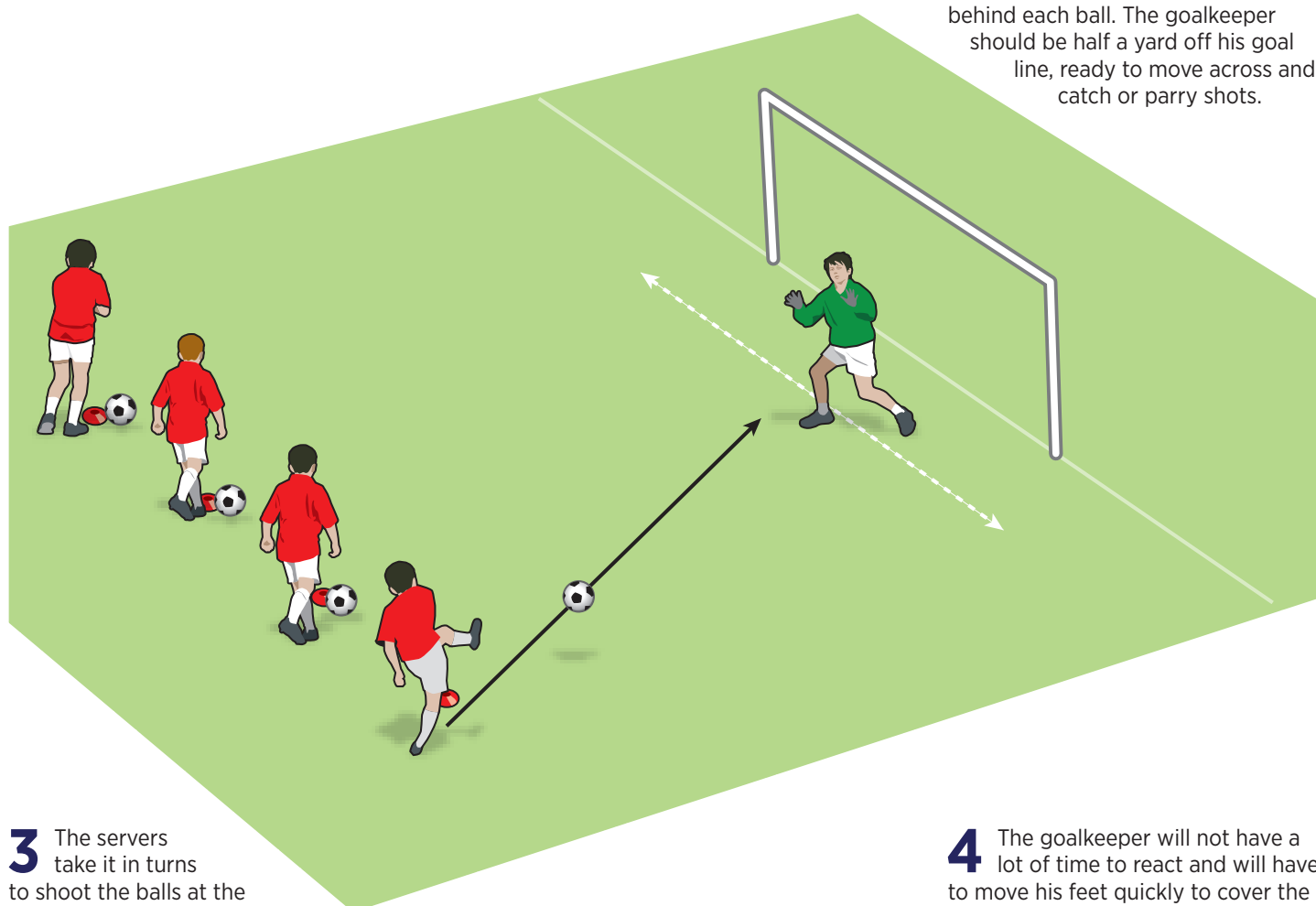
ACTIVITY: QUICK REACTIONS AND POSITIONING

CALL OUT

“On the balls of your feet ready to pounce” • “Block the shot with hands or feet” • “Don’t let the ball beat you”

1 Set up in the penalty area of your normal pitch. You need a goal and several balls.

2 Line up the balls across the width of the penalty area, about 8 yards from the goal. Put a server behind each ball. The goalkeeper should be half a yard off his goal line, ready to move across and catch or parry shots.



3 The servers take it in turns to shoot the balls at the keeper until all the balls have been used – they can choose any of the balls when it is their turn to shoot.

4 The goalkeeper will not have a lot of time to react and will have to move his feet quickly to cover the shots coming in at different angles.

How many players do I need?

Individual work with goalkeepers plus servers – this is a good opportunity for your strikers to practise their shooting.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	Run with the ball	Shot

U11-U12 | GOALKEEPING 5

Gather a rolling ball

ACTIVITY: THE LONG BARRIER

CALL OUT

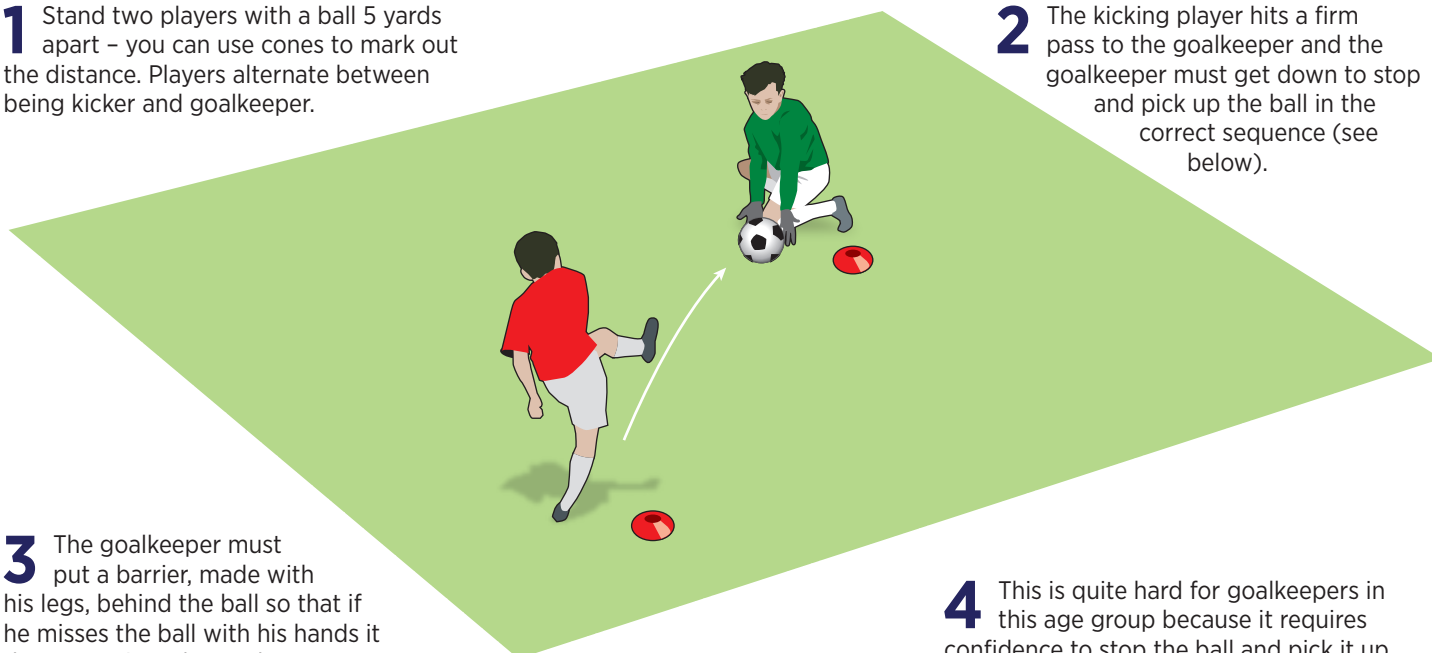
“Use a long leg as a barrier behind your hands” • “Pick the ball up” •
“Clutch it to your chest”

1 Stand two players with a ball 5 yards apart – you can use cones to mark out the distance. Players alternate between being kicker and goalkeeper.

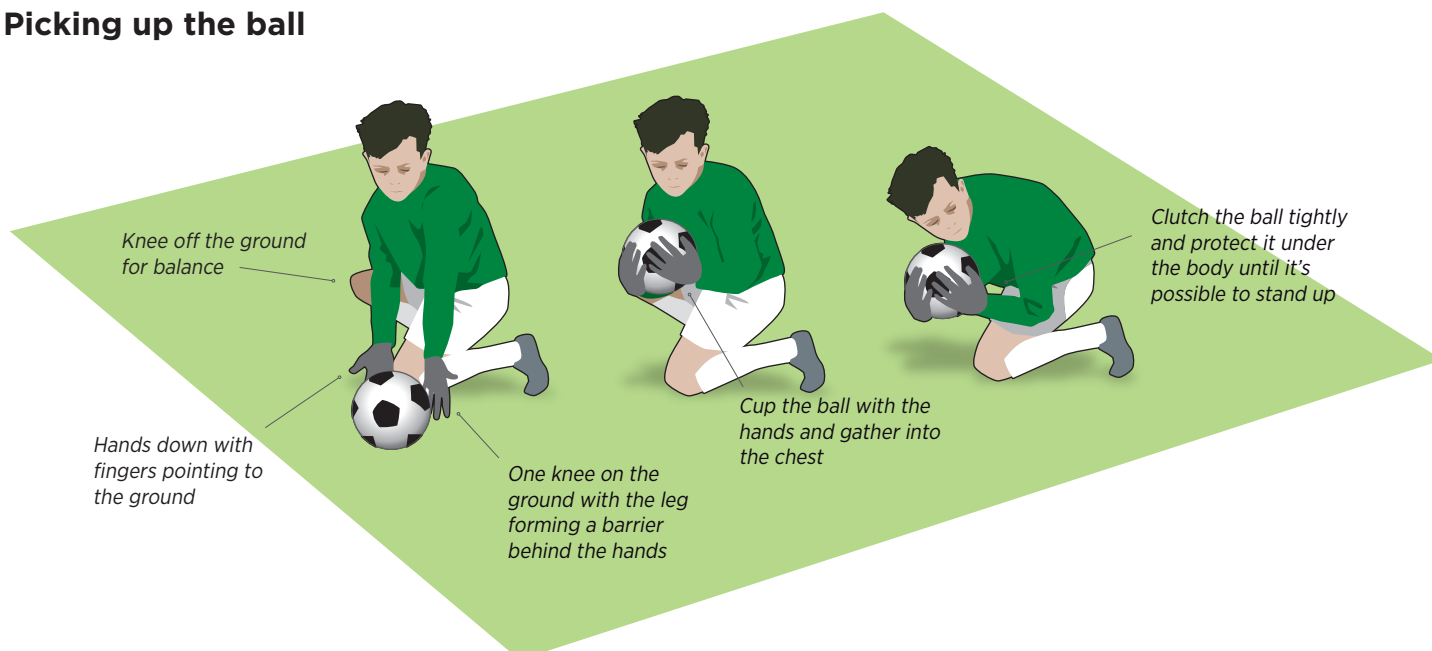
2 The kicking player hits a firm pass to the goalkeeper and the goalkeeper must get down to stop and pick up the ball in the correct sequence (see below).

3 The goalkeeper must put a barrier, made with his legs, behind the ball so that if he misses the ball with his hands it doesn't go into the goal.

4 This is quite hard for goalkeepers in this age group because it requires confidence to stop the ball and pick it up. When in a crowd of players it is difficult to judge when to pick the ball up.



Picking up the ball



How many players do I need?

Individual work with a goalkeeper and a server.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	----->	----->
	----->	----->
	----->	----->

U11-U12 | GOALKEEPING 6

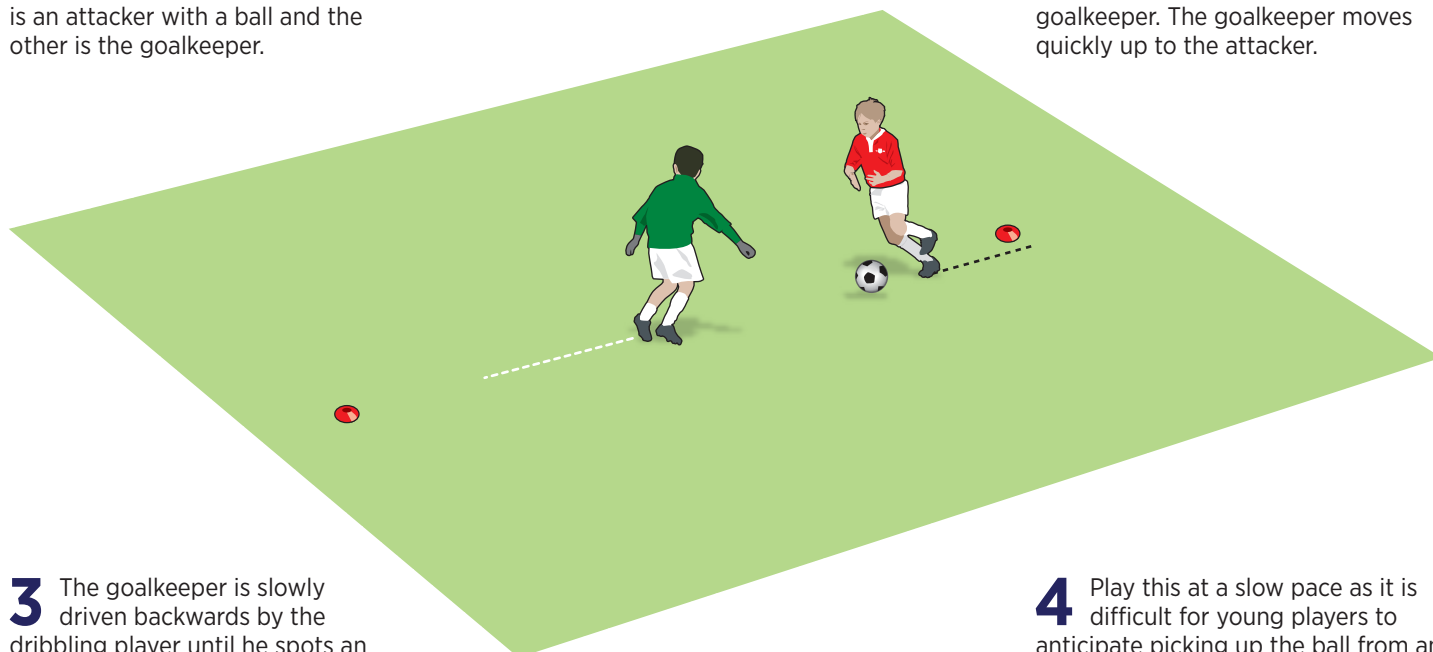
Stopping a ball at striker's feet

ACTIVITY: STOPPING A BALL AT STRIKER'S FEET

CALL OUT

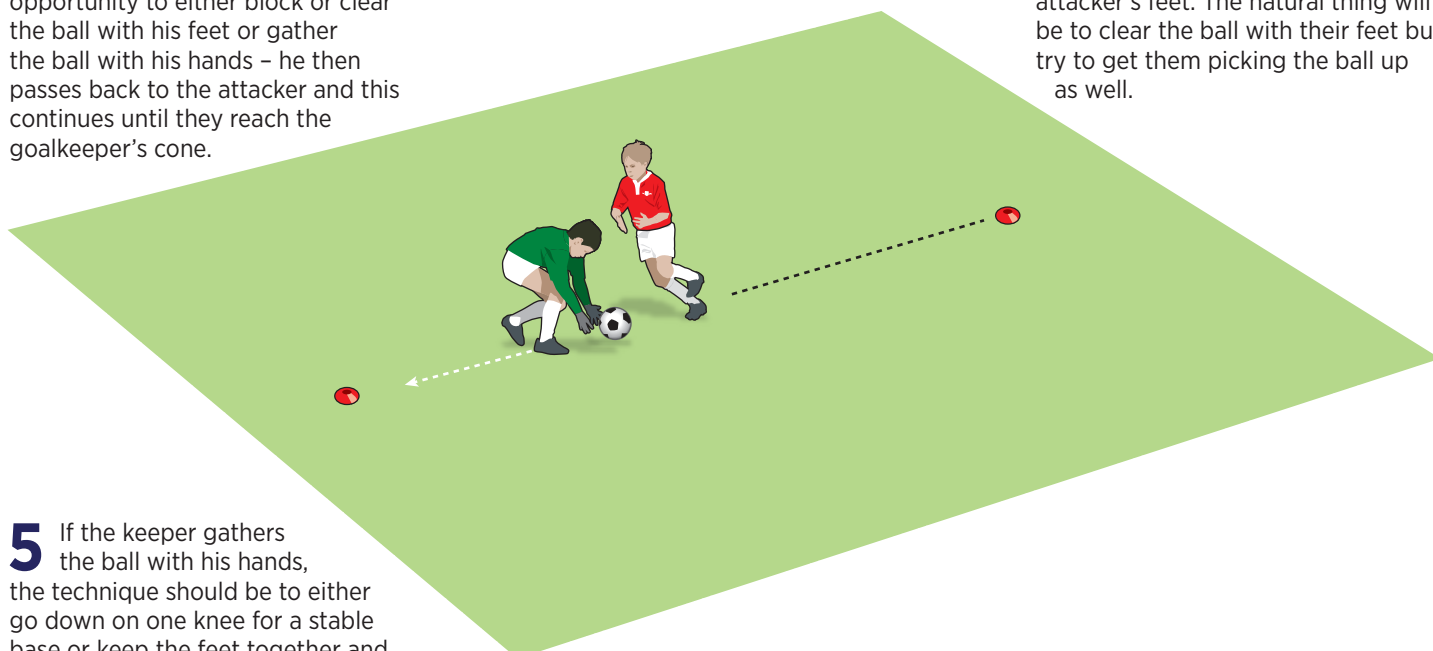
“Choose your moment to block the ball” • “Gather it with your hands” •
“Clear it with your feet”

1 Place two cones 8 yards apart with a player on each cone – one is an attacker with a ball and the other is the goalkeeper.



2 The attacker starts with the ball, dribbling towards the goalkeeper. The goalkeeper moves quickly up to the attacker.

3 The goalkeeper is slowly driven backwards by the dribbling player until he spots an opportunity to either block or clear the ball with his feet or gather the ball with his hands – he then passes back to the attacker and this continues until they reach the goalkeeper's cone.



4 Play this at a slow pace as it is difficult for young players to anticipate picking up the ball from an attacker's feet. The natural thing will be to clear the ball with their feet but try to get them picking the ball up as well.

5 If the keeper gathers the ball with his hands, the technique should be to either go down on one knee for a stable base or keep the feet together and bend to scoop the ball up.

How many players do I need?

Players work in pairs.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	--->	—>
	Run with the ball	Shot
	--->	—>

Goalie wars

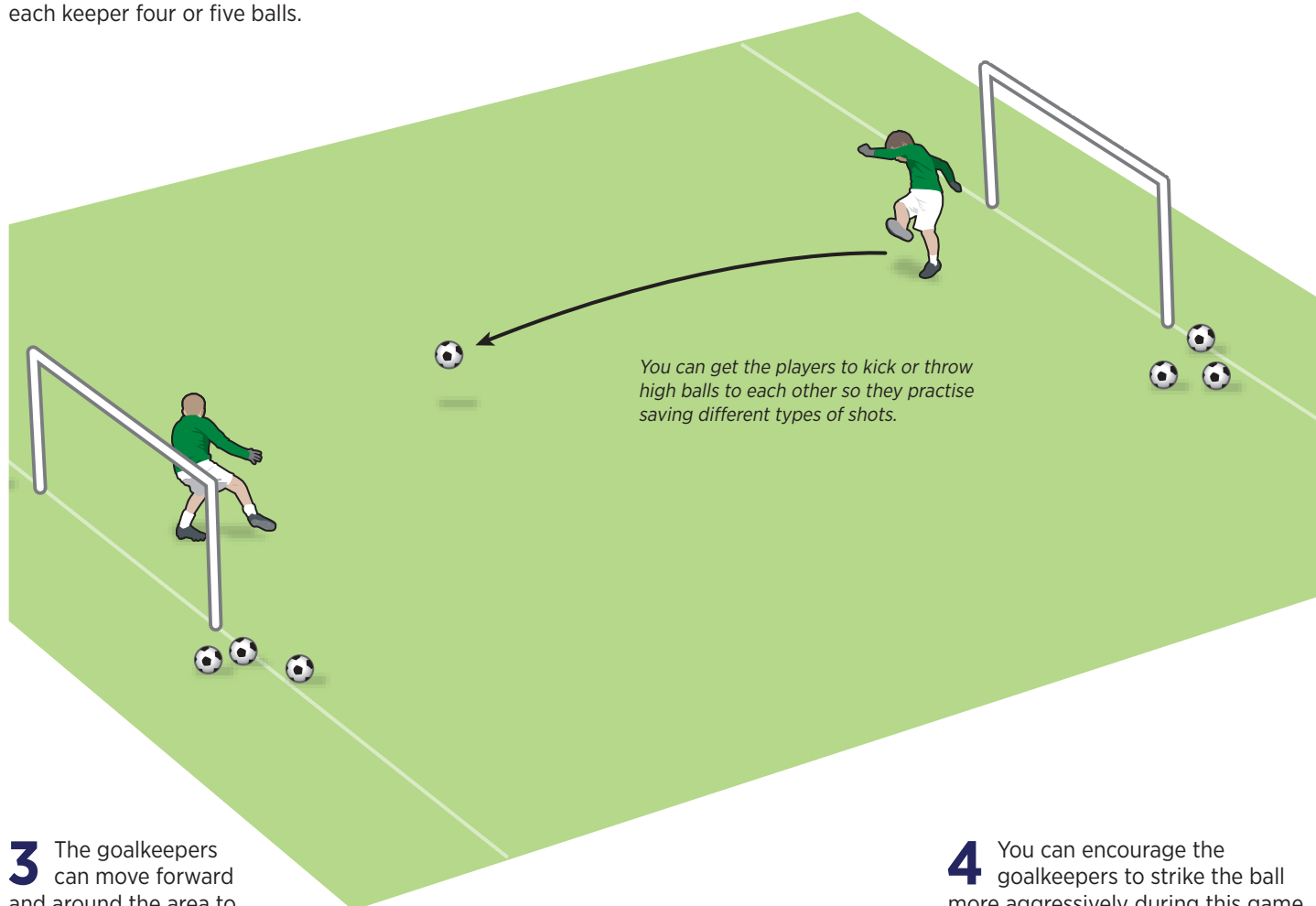
GAME: SAVE AND DISTRIBUTE

CALL OUT

“Kick with accuracy” • “Try to score” • “Use good gathering technique” • “Remember the long barrier”

1 Set up a 10 x 10 yards area with a portable goal at each end. Put a goalkeeper in each goal and give each keeper four or five balls.

2 The goalkeepers take turns to kick towards the opposite goal and try to score.



3 The goalkeepers can move forward and around the area to retrieve any wayward balls. If they gather one close to the goal they can try and throw it into their opponent's net.

4 You can encourage the goalkeepers to strike the ball more aggressively during this game, which not only gives them good shot stopping practice but also helps with goal-kicking technique.

GAME PLAY

Cover the goal.
Try power shots.
Use good technique.

How many players do I need?

Players work in pairs.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	--->	—>
	--->	—>

U11-U12 | GOALKEEPING 8

Stop the striker 1v1

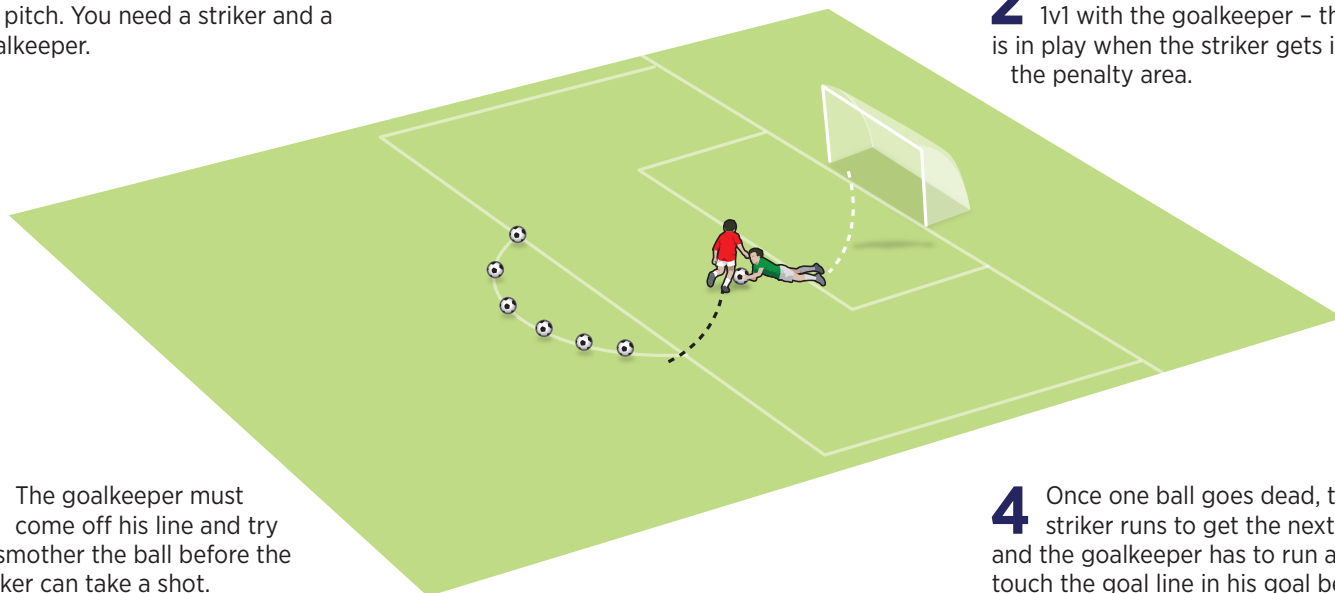
GAME: CLEAN SHEET

CALL OUT

“Come off your line” • “Race back to your line” • “Turn and face the attacker” • “Speed is the goalkeeper’s friend and the attacker’s enemy”

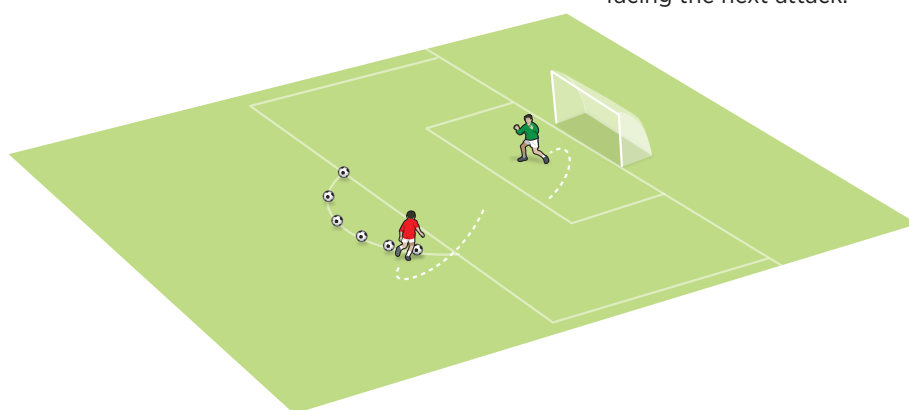
1 Use the penalty area of your pitch. You need a striker and a goalkeeper.

2 The striker has seven balls to go 1v1 with the goalkeeper – the ball is in play when the striker gets into the penalty area.

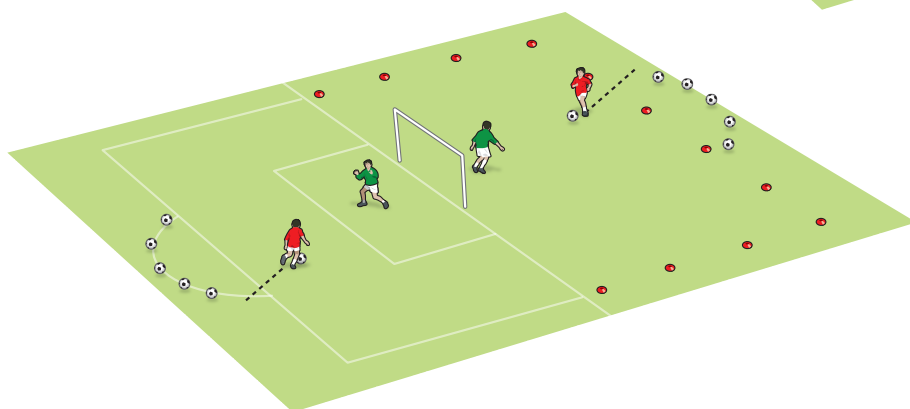


3 The goalkeeper must come off his line and try to smother the ball before the striker can take a shot.

4 Once one ball goes dead, the striker runs to get the next ball and the goalkeeper has to run and touch the goal line in his goal before facing the next attack.



5 If you have two keepers, remove the net and run back-to-back sessions.



GAME PLAY

Quick reactions.
Good positioning.
Determination to get the ball.

How many players do I need?

Players work in pairs.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	--->	--->
	--->	--->
	--->	--->

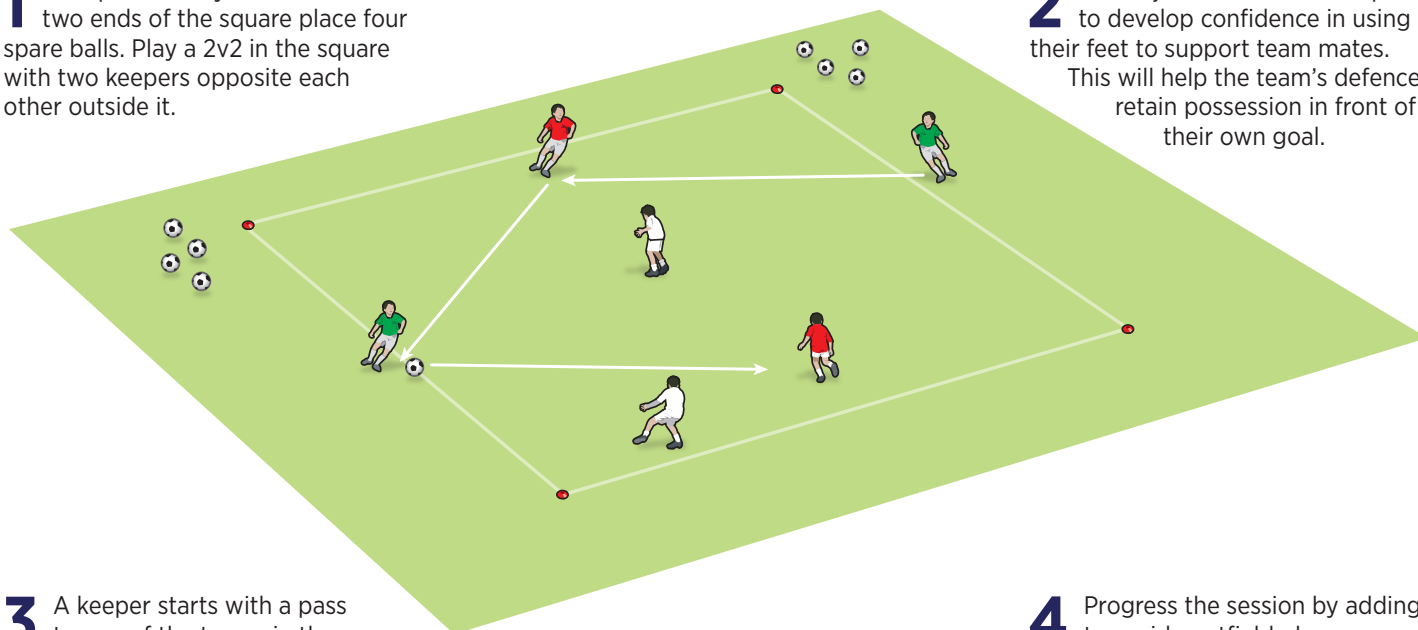
Footwork matters most

ACTIVITY: KEEPER FEET

CALL OUT

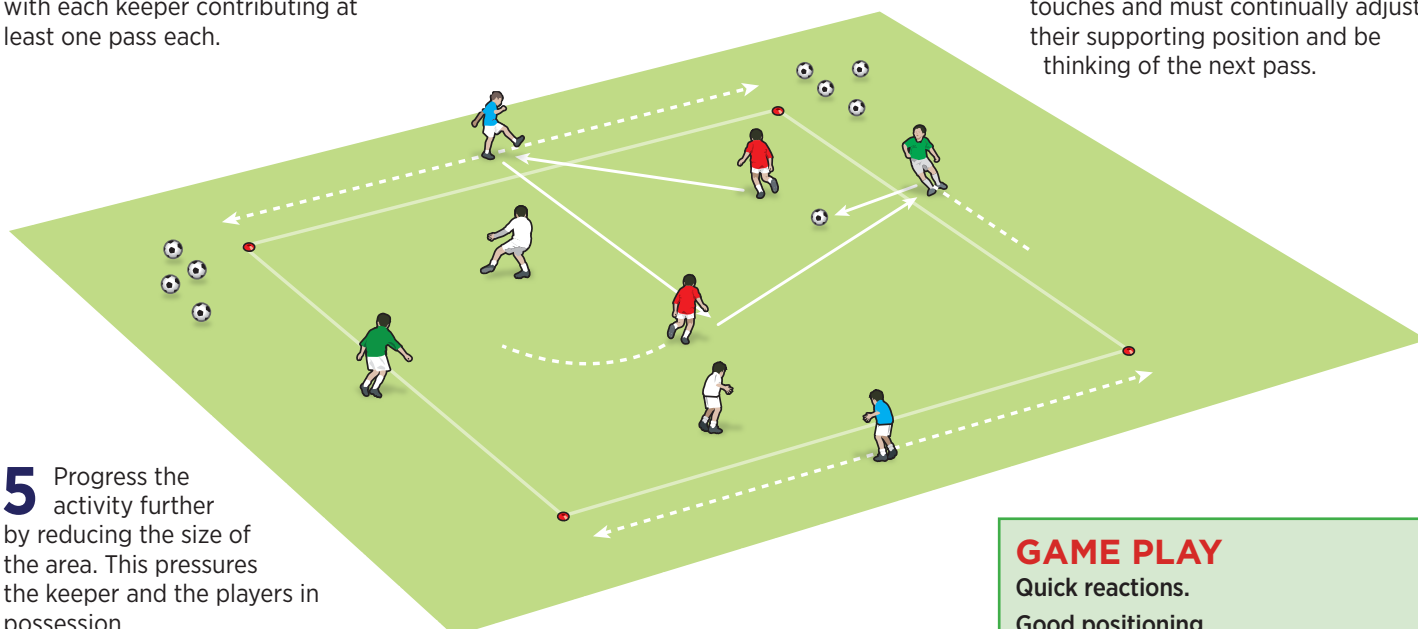
“Good first touch” • “Pass to the keeper” • “Accurate passing” • “Good weight of pass or lose the ball”

1 Set up a 15 x 15 yards area. On two ends of the square place four spare balls. Play a 2v2 in the square with two keepers opposite each other outside it.



2 The objective is for the keepers to develop confidence in using their feet to support team mates. This will help the team's defence retain possession in front of their own goal.

3 A keeper starts with a pass to one of the teams in the square – keepers play for the team in possession. Points are awarded if a team makes five consecutive passes with each keeper contributing at least one pass each.



4 Progress the session by adding two wide outfield players, one on either side. The wide players also play for the team in possession. The keepers are now limited to just two touches and must continually adjust their supporting position and be thinking of the next pass.

5 Progress the activity further by reducing the size of the area. This pressures the keeper and the players in possession.

GAME PLAY

- Quick reactions.
- Good positioning.
- Determination to get the ball.

How many players do I need?

We used six players plus two in the development.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	Run with the ball	Shot

U11-U12 | GOALKEEPING 10

Playing as a sweeper

GAME: SWEEPER KEEPER

CALL OUT

“Concentrate on where the ball is” • “Move to intercept passes” • “Run with the ball if there is space” • “Recover to block long passes”

1 Set up a 35 x 20 yards area with 10-yard zones at each end and a 15 yard centre zone. Play 3v3, with goalkeepers in the end zones and two players from each team in the centre zone.

2 Play starts and restarts with the goalkeeper. The goalkeeper brings the ball out, spots a team mate in space and plays a quick pass.

3 After making the initial pass, the goalkeeper can move into the centre zone while his team has possession, to play a 3v2. If his team loses possession he must return to the end zone.

4 Players can only go into the goalkeeper zones when their team has possession. Here the red keeper intercepts the white team's attack, enabling him to set up a counter attack before the white keeper can get back to his goal.

5 This is a great way to integrate your goalkeepers into a session, so they are involved with the attacks, but they also have to be quick to recover if they lose possession. It's a fast game so rest players often.

GAME PLAY

React to the position of the ball.
Quick play from interceptions.
Remember first and foremost
YOU'RE THE KEEPER!

How many players do I need?

We used six players in this game.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	Run with the ball	Shot

EasiCoach

SOCCER SKILLS ACTIVITIES

U11-U12

HEADING

U11-U12 | HEADING 1

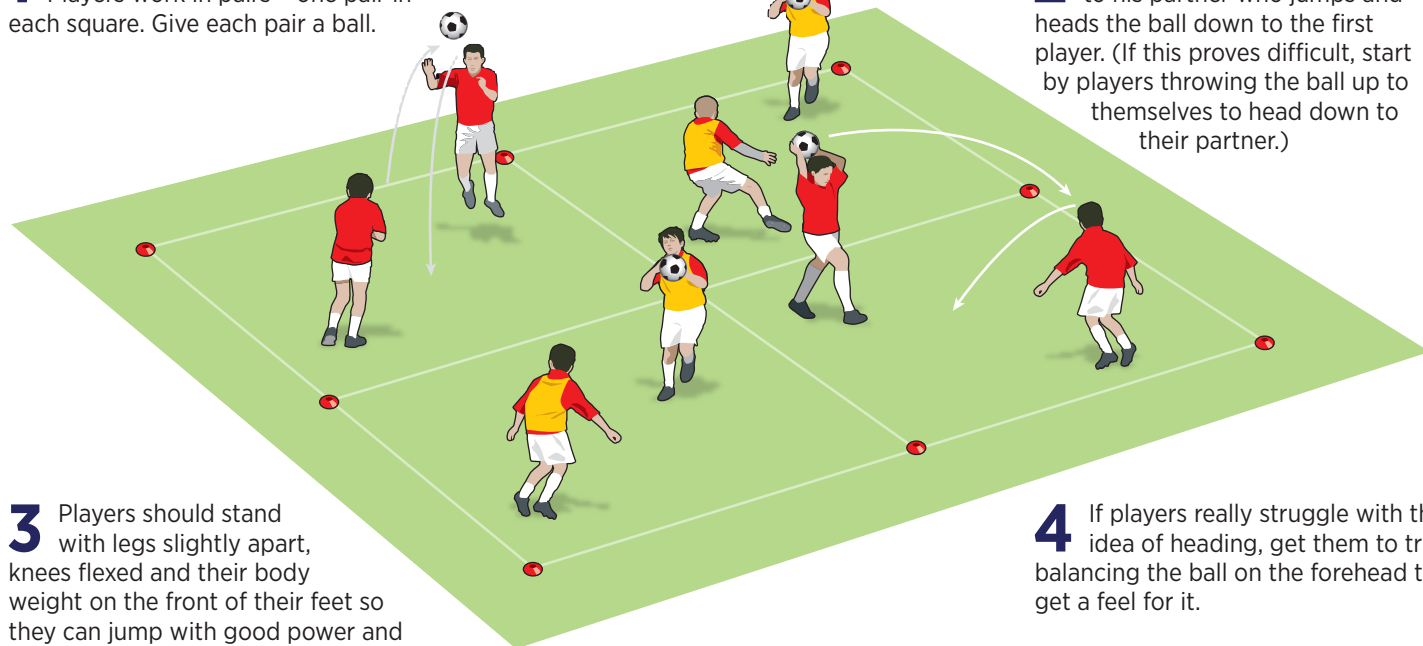
Correct heading technique in attack

ACTIVITY: ATTACKING HEADERS

CALL OUT

“Eyes open look at the ball” • “Put your weight on the balls of your feet” •
“Head the ball down”

1 Set up a grid of 5 yard squares. Players work in pairs – one pair in each square. Give each pair a ball.



2 One player throws the ball up to his partner who jumps and heads the ball down to the first player. (If this proves difficult, start by players throwing the ball up to themselves to head down to their partner.)

3 Players should stand with legs slightly apart, knees flexed and their body weight on the front of their feet so they can jump with good power and balance. They must aim to head the ball above the middle so that it goes downwards.

4 If players really struggle with the idea of heading, get them to try balancing the ball on the forehead to get a feel for it.

Making an attacking header

Use arms to gain height in the jump and remain balanced

Use middle part of the forehead

Keep eyes open and on the ball

Head the ball down

Keep knees flexed to spring into the jump



Note: When starting with heading technique I tend to deflate the balls so they are not so hard when players practise heading in training. As the players get older they can practise with fully pumped up balls.

How many players do I need?

Players work in pairs.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	----->	----->
	Run with the ball	Shot
	----->	----->

U11-U12 | HEADING 2

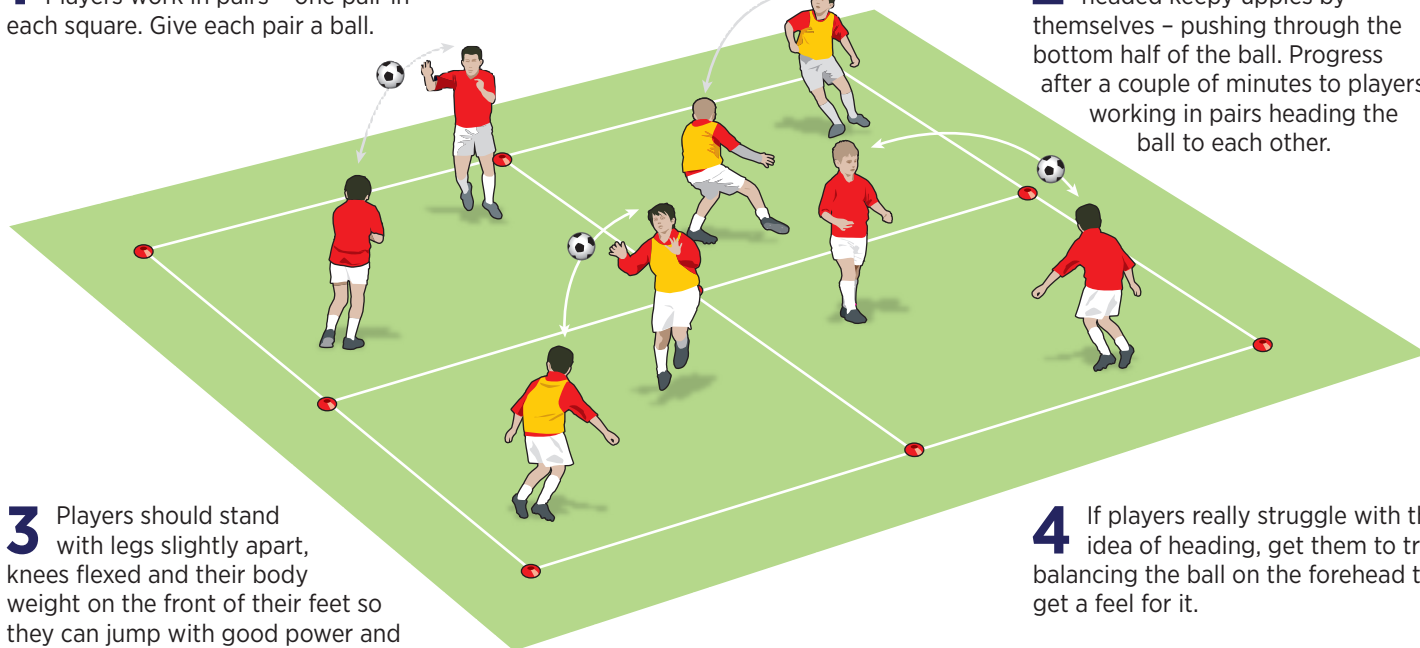
Correct heading technique in defence

ACTIVITY: DEFENSIVE HEADERS

CALL OUT

“Eyes open look at the ball” • “Put your weight on the balls of your feet” •
“Push upwards through the bottom of the ball”

1 Set up a grid of 5 yard squares. Players work in pairs – one pair in each square. Give each pair a ball.



2 Start with players doing simple headed keepy uppies by themselves – pushing through the bottom half of the ball. Progress after a couple of minutes to players working in pairs heading the ball to each other.

3 Players should stand with legs slightly apart, knees flexed and their body weight on the front of their feet so they can jump with good power and balance. They must aim to head the ball below the middle so that it goes upwards.

4 If players really struggle with the idea of heading, get them to try balancing the ball on the forehead to get a feel for it.

Making a defensive header

Head the ball up and away

Use top part of the forehead

Keep eyes open and on the ball

Use arms to gain height in the jump and remain balanced

Keep knees flexed to spring into the jump

Note: When starting with heading technique I tend to deflate the balls so they are not so hard when players practise heading in training. As the players get older they can practise with fully pumped up balls.

How many players do I need?

Players work in pairs.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	----->	----->
	----->	----->

U11-U12 | HEADING 3

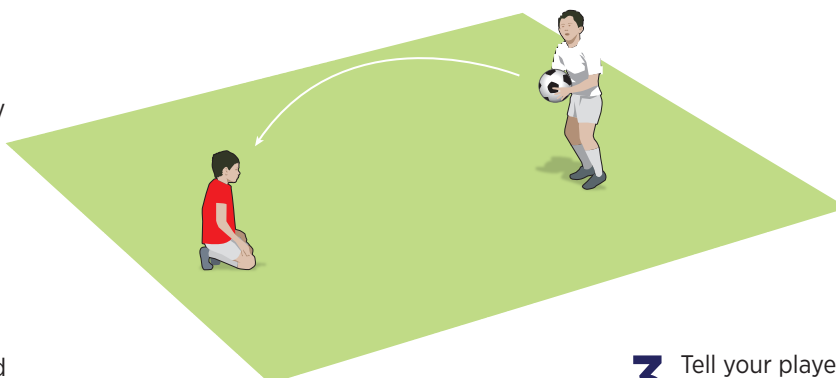
Fun heading race

GAME: HEAD TO HEAD

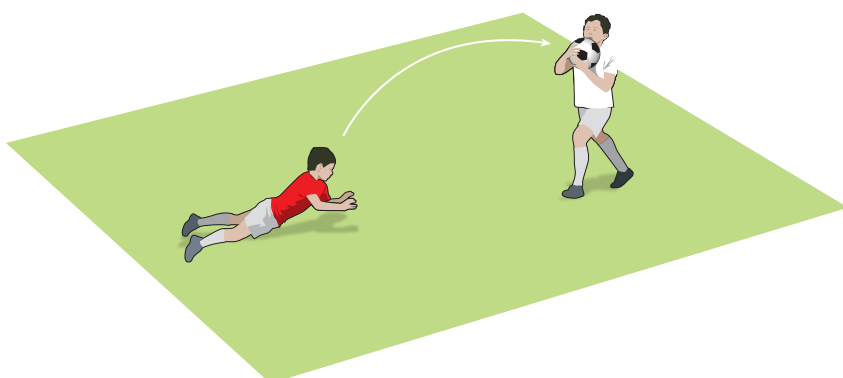
CALL OUT

“Throw the ball slightly in front of the player” • “Spring forward and head the ball back” • “Keep your eyes on the ball and mouth shut”

1 Get your players into pairs with one player as the server and the other the header. The header must start by kneeling up with his arms by his sides.



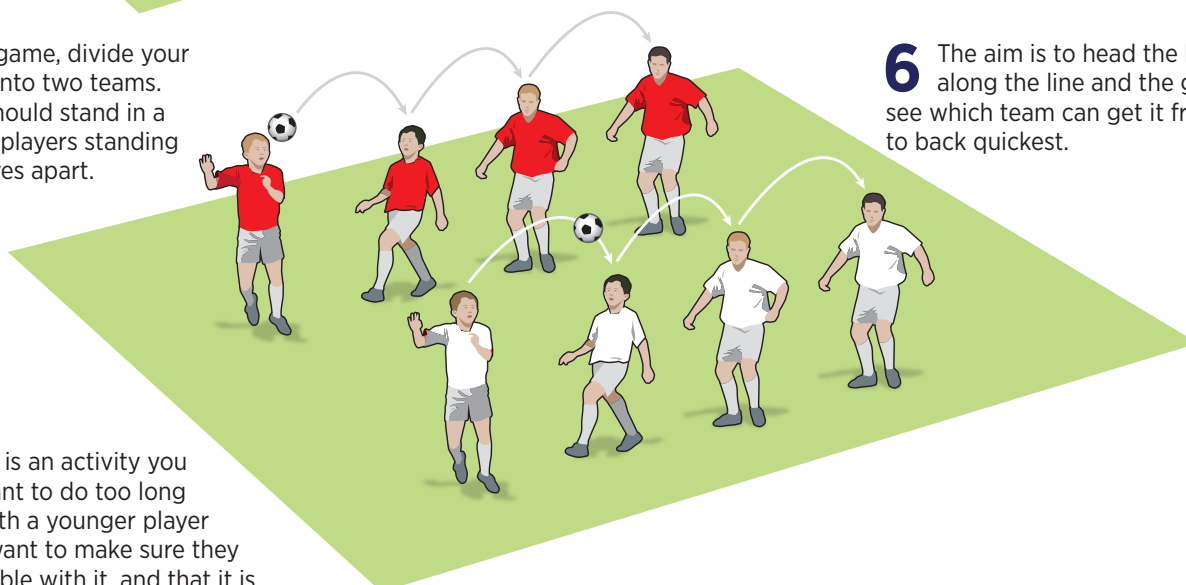
2 The server throws the ball and the player dives forward to head the ball, follow through and end up on his arms.



3 Tell your players to try to contact the ball and not let it contact them, and hit it on the hard part of their head using their whole body to follow through.

4 Make sure the players are taking turns to head and catch – try five headers then swap thrower and header

5 For the game, divide your players into two teams. Each team should stand in a line with the players standing about 2 metres apart.



6 The aim is to head the ball back along the line and the game is to see which team can get it from front to back quickest.

7 Heading is an activity you don't want to do too long especially with a younger player but you do want to make sure they are comfortable with it, and that it is something they are not afraid of because it is a very important part of the game.

How many players do I need?

Players work in pairs to start with. We used eight players in a 4v4 for the heading race.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	--->	→
	Run with the ball	Shot
	--->	→

EasiCoach

SOCCER SKILLS ACTIVITIES

U12

BALL CONTROL

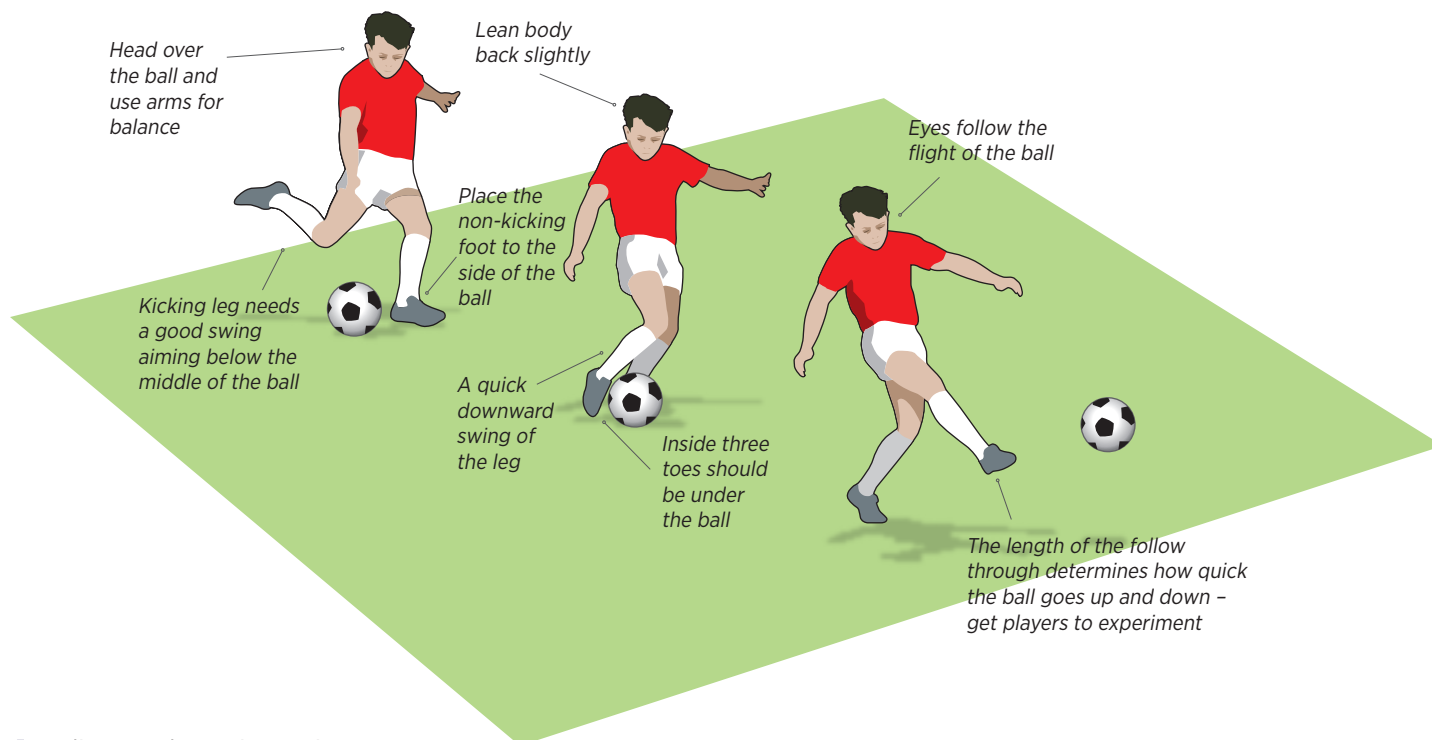
Pass 8 yards to a team mate

ACTIVITY: MAKE A LOFTED PASS OVER CONES

CALL OUT

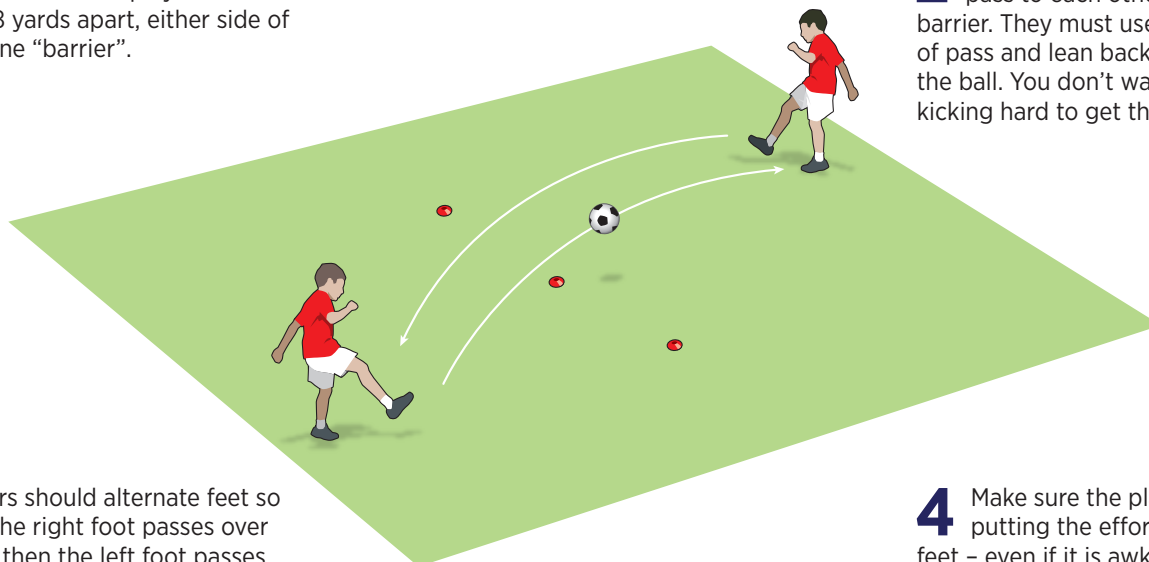
“Look to where the pass is going” • “Use the inside of the foot near the toe to lift the ball over the cones” • “Be accurate with both feet”

Making a lofted pass



1 Split your players into pairs. Set up so that the players are standing 8 yards apart, either side of a three cone “barrier”.

2 The aim is for the players to pass to each other over the cone barrier. They must use a good weight of pass and lean back slightly to lift the ball. You don’t want to see them kicking hard to get the lift.



3 Players should alternate feet so that the right foot passes over the cones then the left foot passes over the cones.

4 Make sure the players are putting the effort in with both feet – even if it is awkward for them at first.

How many players do I need?

Players work in pairs.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	--->	→
	Run with the ball	Shot
	--->	→

U12 | BALL CONTROL 1

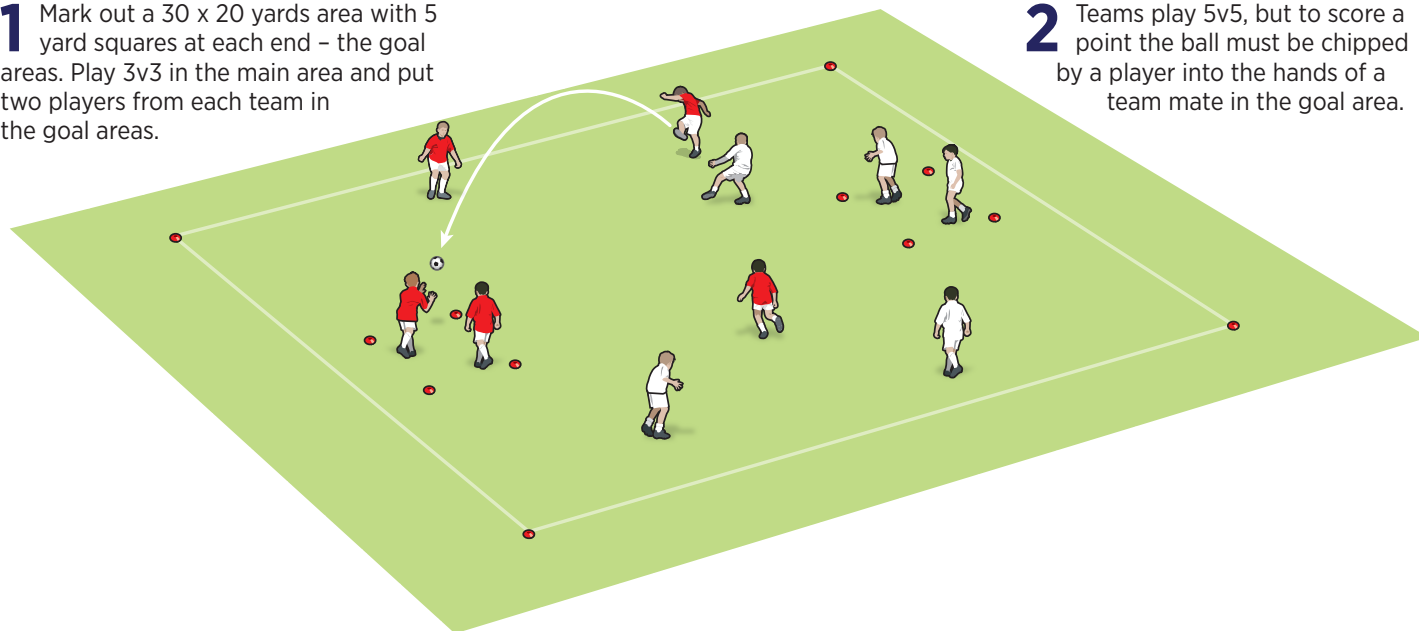
Pass 8 yards to a team mate

GAME: FOOL THE DEFENDER

CALL OUT

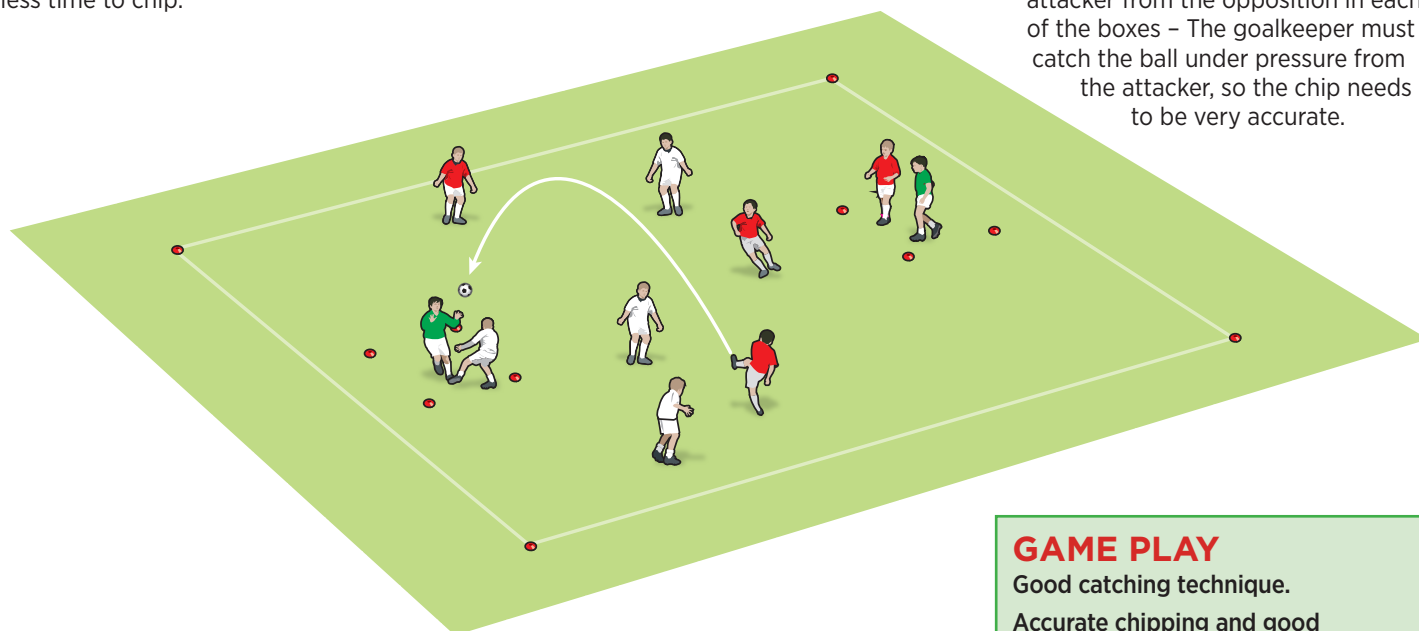
“Look where the chipped pass is going” • “Use the inside of the foot near the toe to lift the ball” • “Be accurate with the chip” • “Keep control of the ball”

1 Mark out a 30 x 20 yards area with 5 yard squares at each end – the goal areas. Play 3v3 in the main area and put two players from each team in the goal areas.



2 Teams play 5v5, but to score a point the ball must be chipped by a player into the hands of a team mate in the goal area.

3 Opponents should try to press as normal to give the attacking team less time to chip.



4 Advance the game so there is both a goalkeeper and an attacker from the opposition in each of the boxes – The goalkeeper must catch the ball under pressure from the attacker, so the chip needs to be very accurate.

GAME PLAY

Good catching technique.
Accurate chipping and good technique.
Look for match-like pressing.

How many players do I need?

We used 10 players in this game.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	--->	—>
	--->	—>

Receive, control and pass

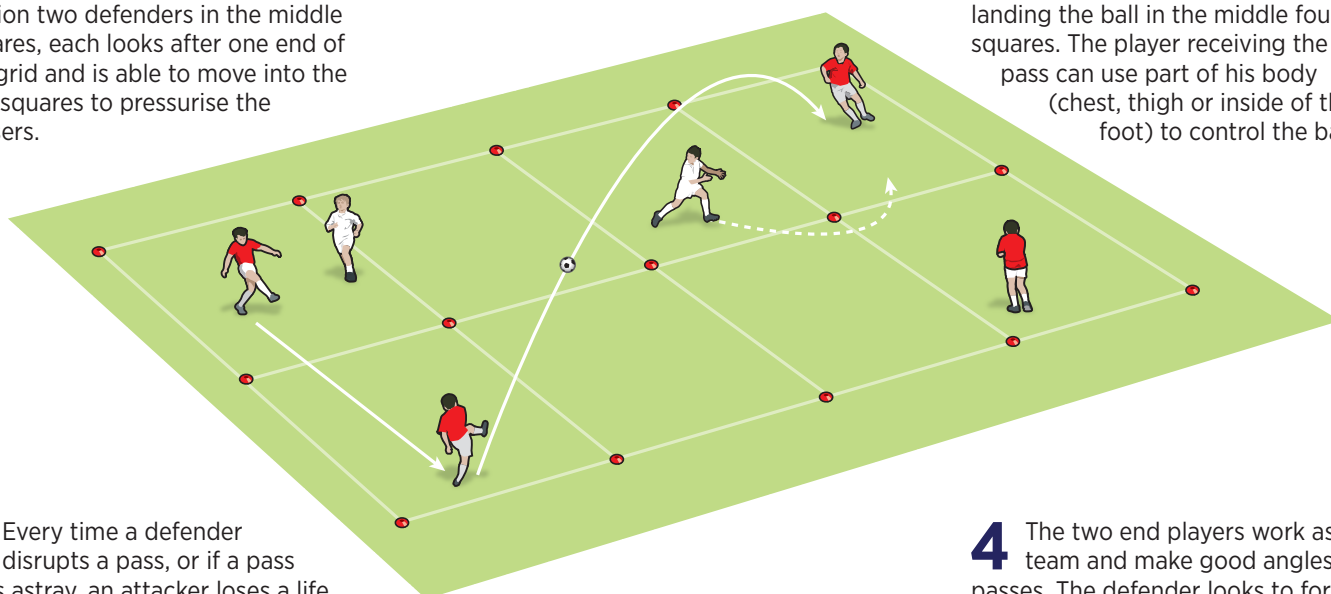
ACTIVITY: FIND A TEAM MATE UNDER PRESSURE

CALL OUT

“Call for the ball” • “Keep your eyes on the ball” • “Use part of your body or the inside of the foot to control the ball”

1 Mark out eight 10 x 10 yards squares arranged in 4 x 2 grid. Put a passing player in each of the end squares. Station two defenders in the middle squares, each looks after one end of the grid and is able to move into the end squares to pressurise the passers.

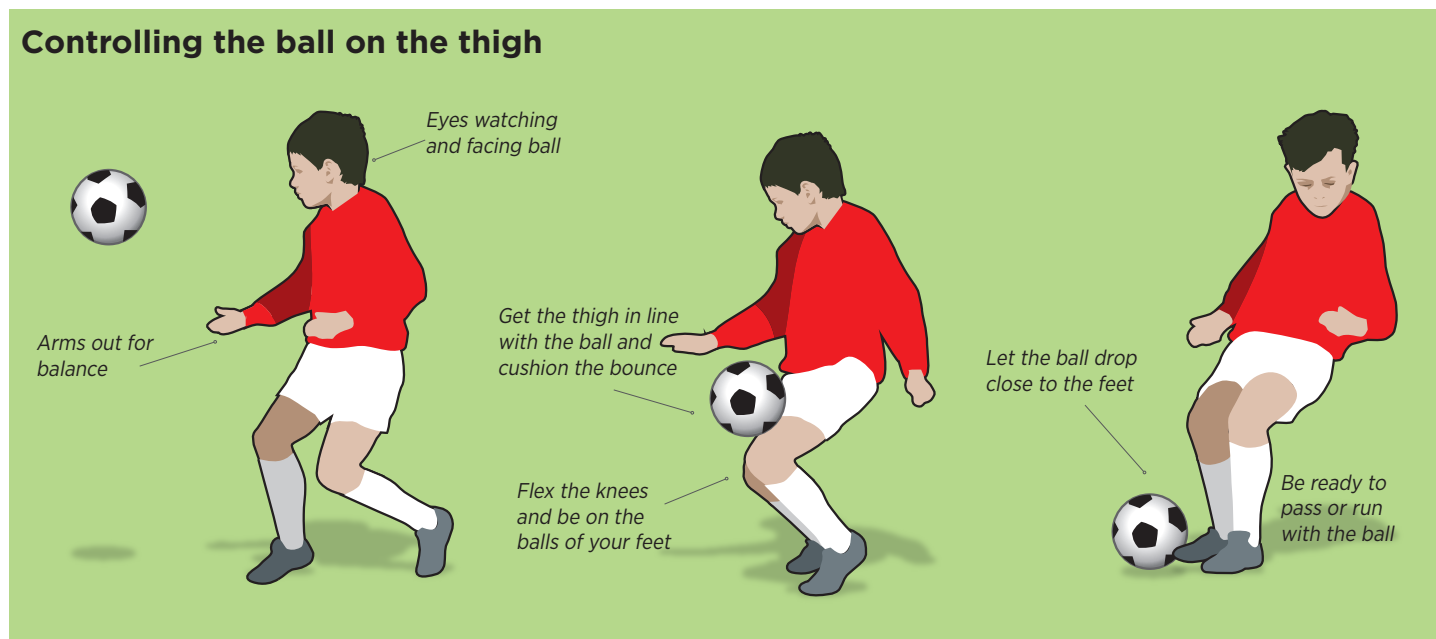
2 The passing players aim to make lofted passes to team mates at the other end of the grid without landing the ball in the middle four squares. The player receiving the pass can use part of his body (chest, thigh or inside of the foot) to control the ball.



3 Every time a defender disrupts a pass, or if a pass goes astray, an attacker loses a life. When an attacker completes a pass, a defender loses a life. First to lose three lives loses the game.

4 The two end players work as a team and make good angles for passes. The defender looks to force a player to use his weaker foot and make mistakes.

Controlling the ball on the thigh



How many players do I need?

We used six players for this activity

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	----->	----->
	----->	----->
	----->	----->

Run with the ball Shot

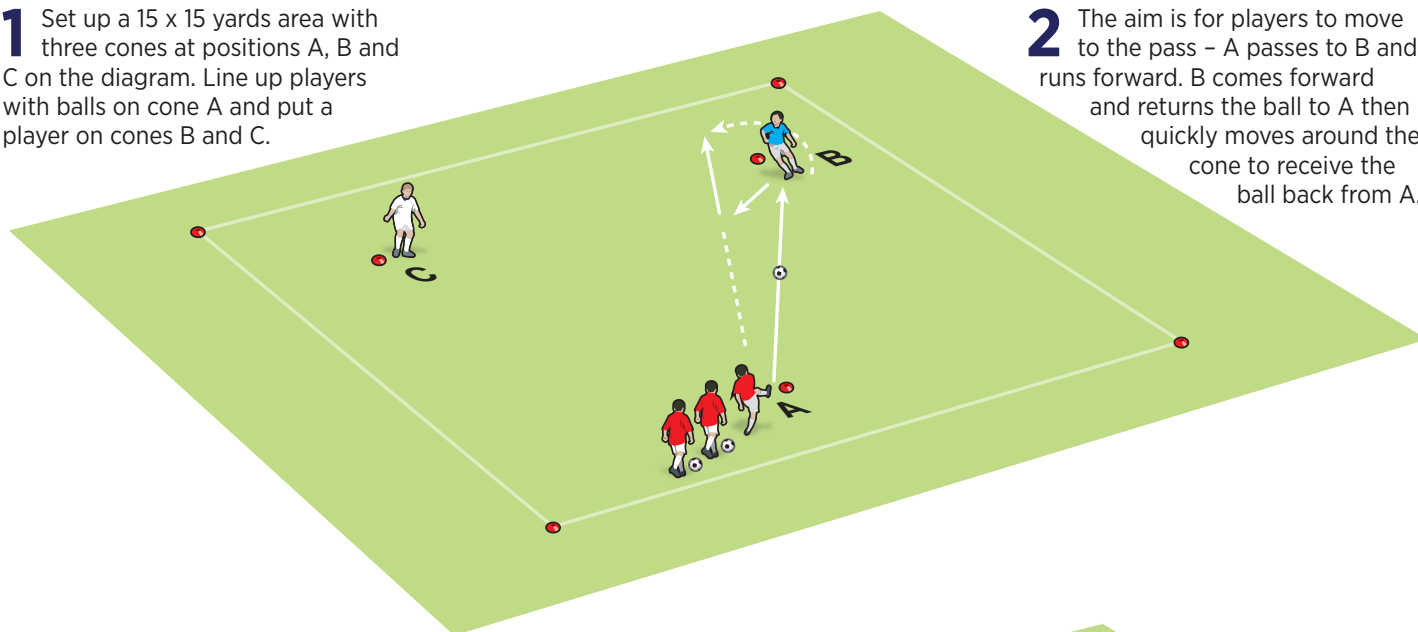
Receive, control and pass

GAME: PASSING COMBINATIONS

CALL OUT

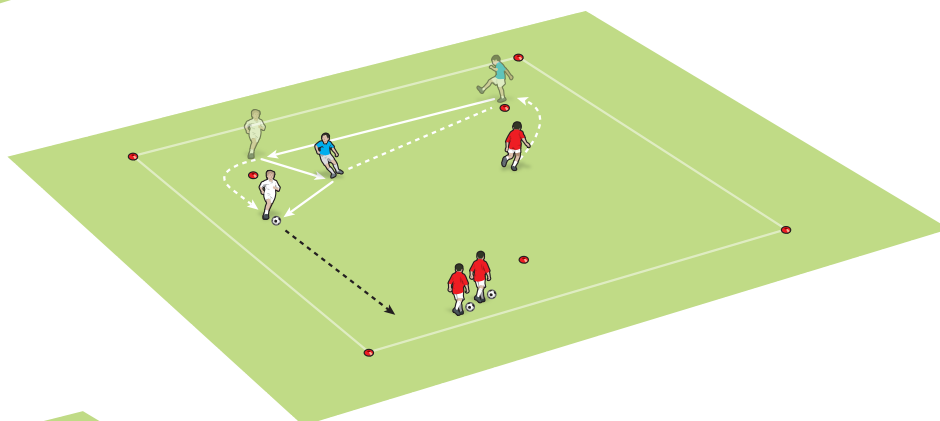
“Call for the ball” • “Keep your eyes on the ball” • “Use part of your body or the inside of the foot to control the ball”

1 Set up a 15 x 15 yards area with three cones at positions A, B and C on the diagram. Line up players with balls on cone A and put a player on cones B and C.

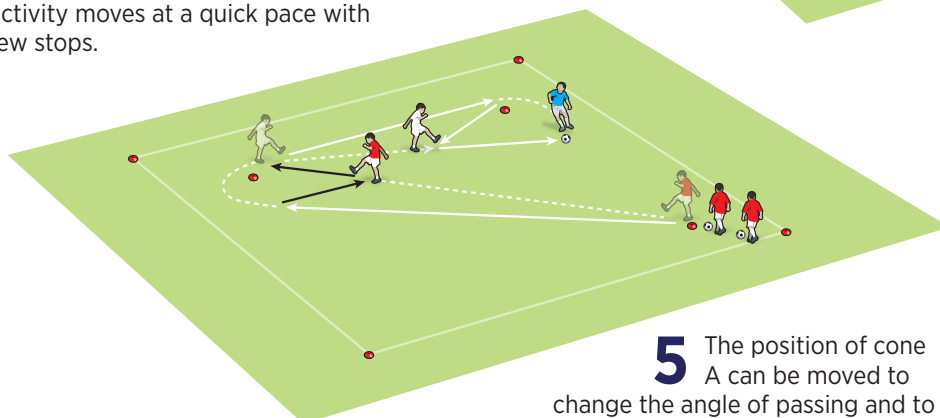


2 The aim is for players to move to the pass – A passes to B and runs forward. B comes forward and returns the ball to A then quickly moves around the cone to receive the ball back from A.

3 B now passes to C who returns it runs around the cone then gets a pass back. C dribbles the ball back to cone A.



4 Players move up one cone each time – A moves to B, B moves to C and C goes back to the beginning. This should be done quickly so the activity moves at a quick pace with few stops.



5 The position of cone A can be moved to change the angle of passing and to make it a longer or shorter pass.

GAME PLAY

Players concentrate on accuracy of the pass.

Movement key to success.

Understanding will help with movement.

How many players do I need?

We used five players in this activity.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	→ (dashed arrow)	→ (solid arrow)
	→ (dashed arrow)	→ (solid arrow)

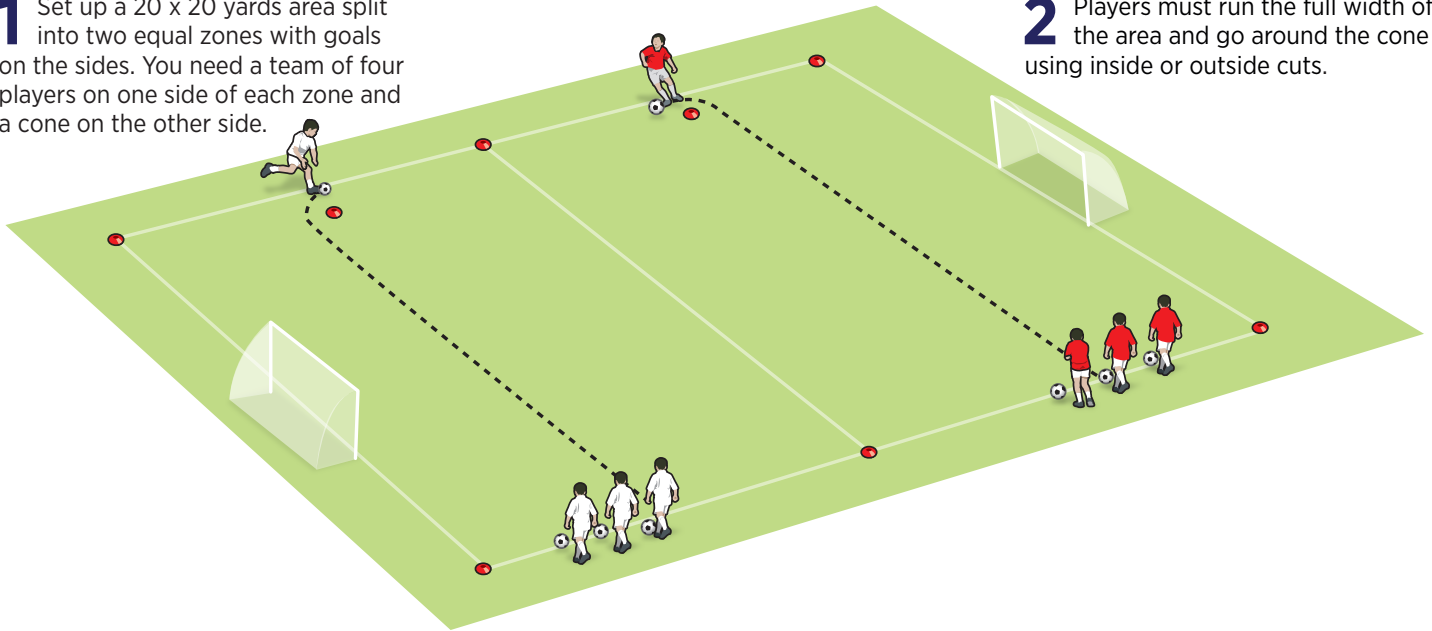
Dribble the ball and turn with it

ACTIVITY: TURNING RACE AND SHOOT

CALL OUT

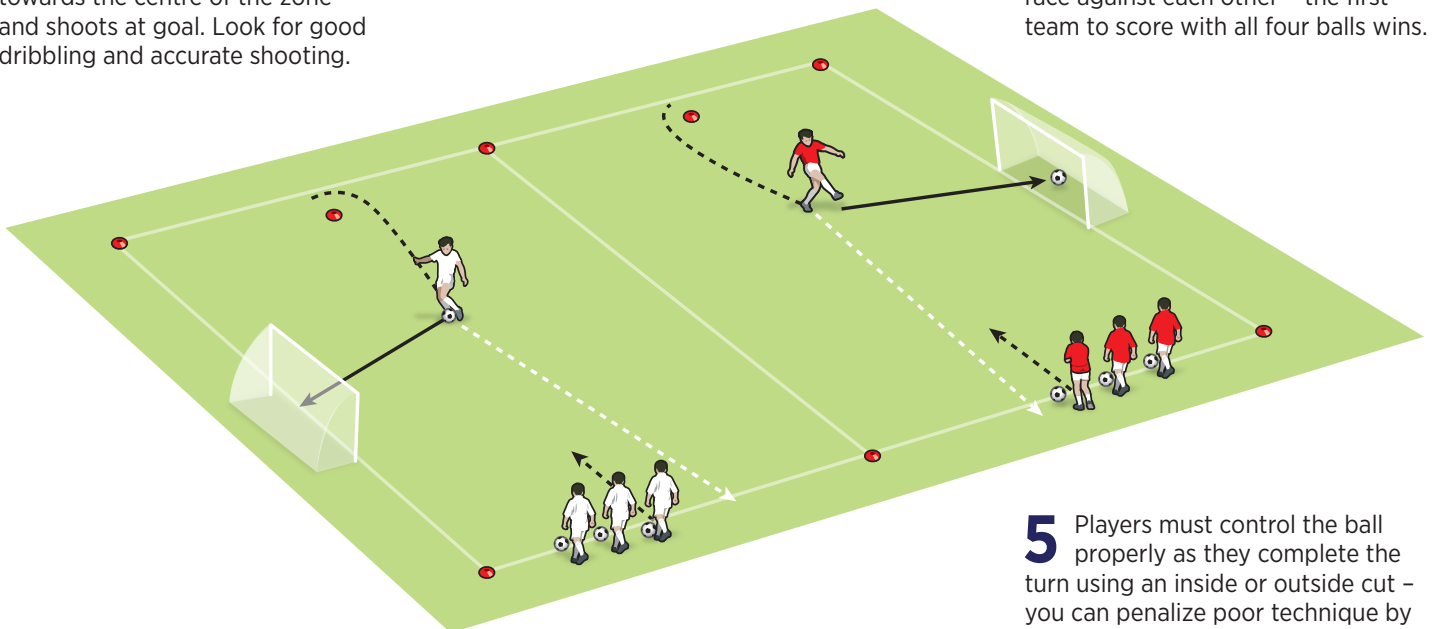
“Keep your eyes on the ball” • “Look up to see where the cone is” • “Look up often as you dribble” • “Turn around the cone using the outside/inside of your foot”

1 Set up a 20 x 20 yards area split into two equal zones with goals on the sides. You need a team of four players on one side of each zone and a cone on the other side.



2 Players must run the full width of the area and go around the cone using inside or outside cuts.

3 Once the turn has been completed, the player dribbles towards the centre of the zone and shoots at goal. Look for good dribbling and accurate shooting.



4 As soon as the ball hits the net the next player goes. The teams race against each other – the first team to score with all four balls wins.

5 Players must control the ball properly as they complete the turn using an inside or outside cut – you can penalize poor technique by sending the player back to the start.

How many players do I need?

Eight players took part in this activity, but you could adjust the numbers in each team.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	--->	--->
	--->	--->
	--->	--->

U12 | BALL CONTROL 3

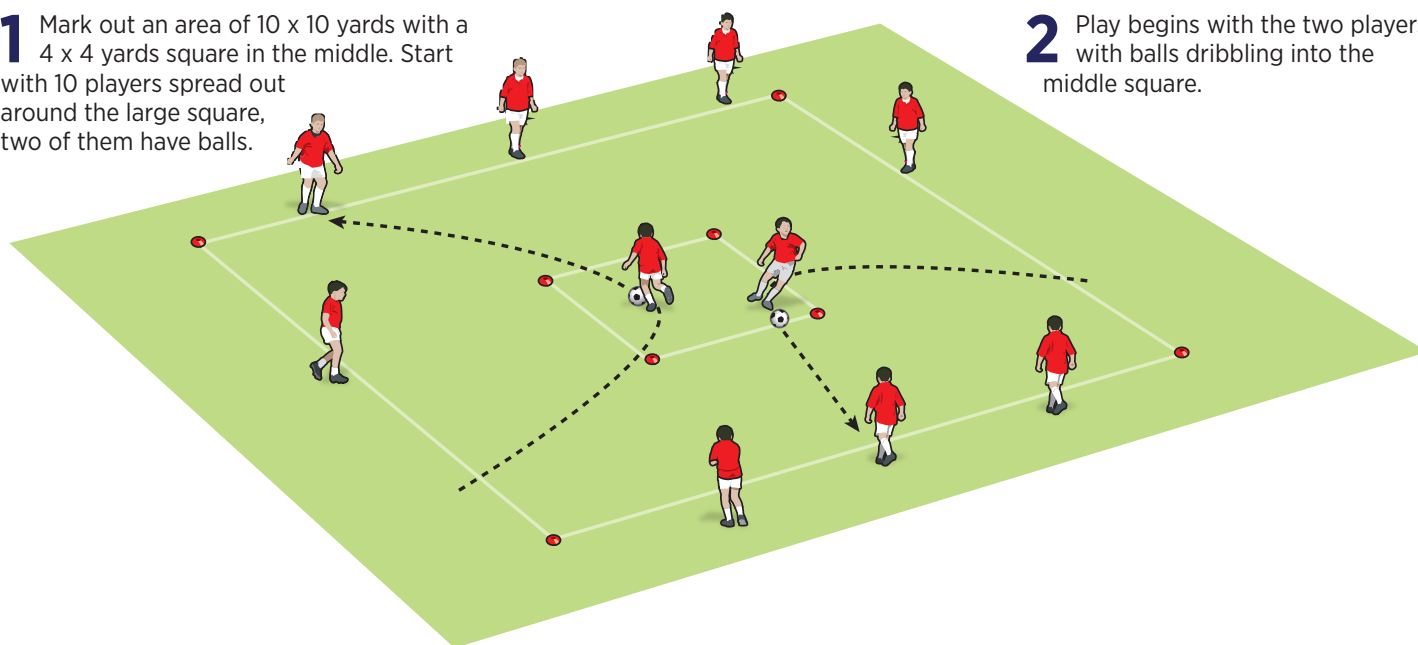
Dribble the ball and turn with it

GAME: DRIBBLE TURN

CALL OUT

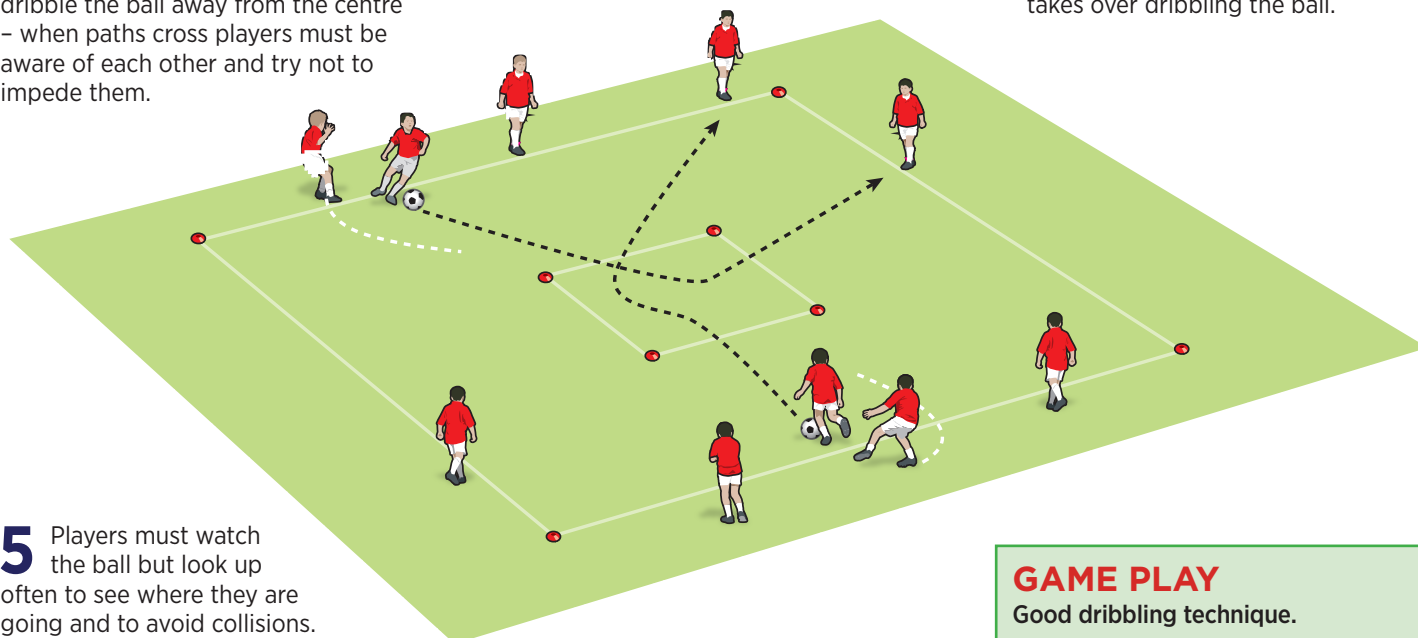
“Keep your eyes on the ball” • “Look up to see where the cone is” • “Look up often as you dribble” • “Keep control as you turn”

1 Mark out an area of 10 x 10 yards with a 4 x 4 yards square in the middle. Start with 10 players spread out around the large square, two of them have balls.



2 Play begins with the two players with balls dribbling into the middle square.

3 Inside the middle square, players must change direction and dribble the ball away from the centre – when paths cross players must be aware of each other and try not to impede them.



4 The ball must be dribbled to a team mate on the side who takes over dribbling the ball.

5 Players must watch the ball but look up often to see where they are going and to avoid collisions.

GAME PLAY

Good dribbling technique.
Avoid other players.
Swift changes of direction.

How many players do I need?

We used 10 players in this session.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	→	→
	→	→

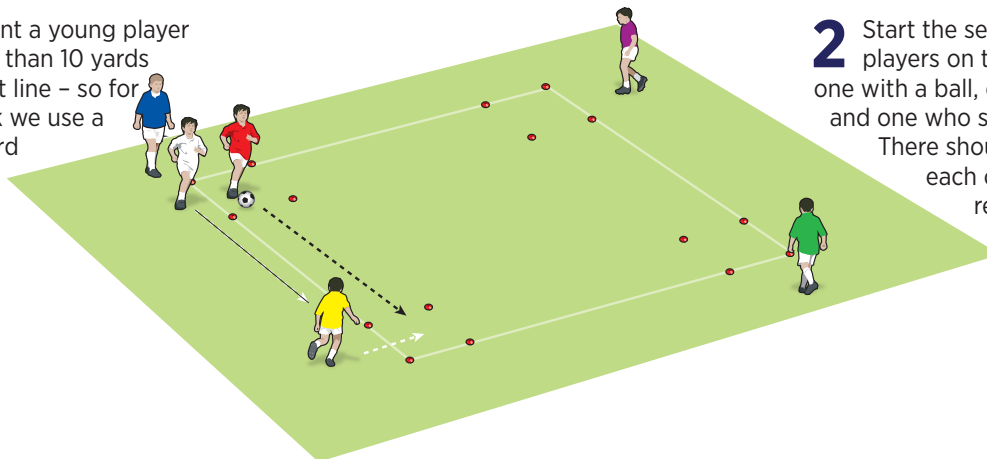
First touch control

ACTIVITY: REACT WITH SPEED

CALL OUT

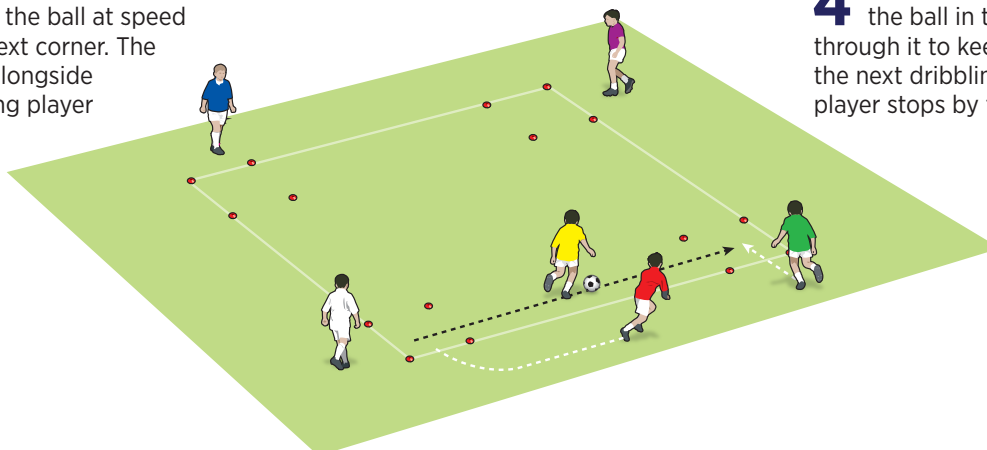
“Keep your eyes on the ball” • “Look up to see where to stop the ball” •
“Stop the ball in the box”

1 The longest sprint a young player will make is less than 10 yards and not in a straight line – so for this activity to work we use a square with one-yard boxes on each corner and with five yards between boxes.



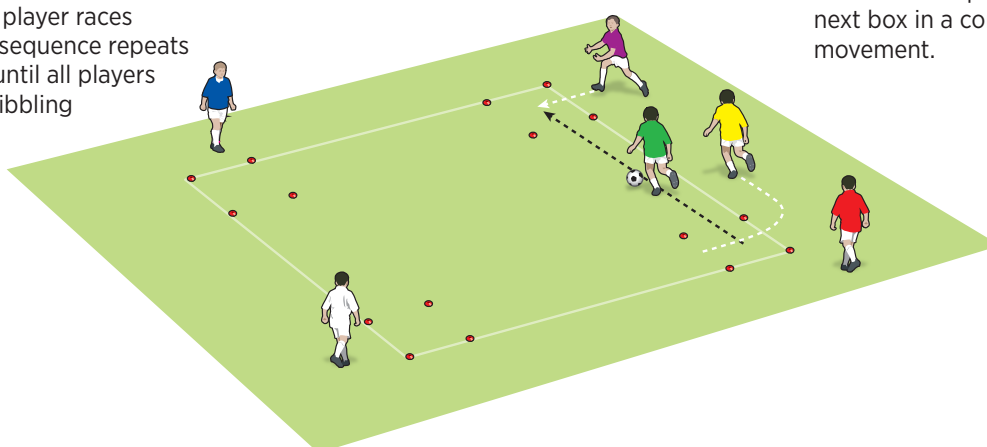
2 Start the session with three players on the first corner – one with a ball, one to race against and one who stays on the corner. There should be one player on each of the other corners, ready to pick up the incoming ball and dribble it to the next square.

3 When you say “go”, the first player dribbles the ball at speed to the box on the next corner. The racing player runs alongside putting the dribbling player under pressure.



4 The dribbling player must stop the ball in the square, running through it to keep out of the way of the next dribbling player. The racing player stops by the square

5 The player on the corner then dribbles at speed to the next corner and the first player races alongside him. The sequence repeats around the square until all players have had a go at dribbling and racing.



6 This game is all about speed, with two players racing to the next box in a continuous sprint-rest movement.

How many players do I need?

We used six players in the session.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement

U12 | BALL CONTROL 4

First touch control

GAME: CONTROL AND CATCH

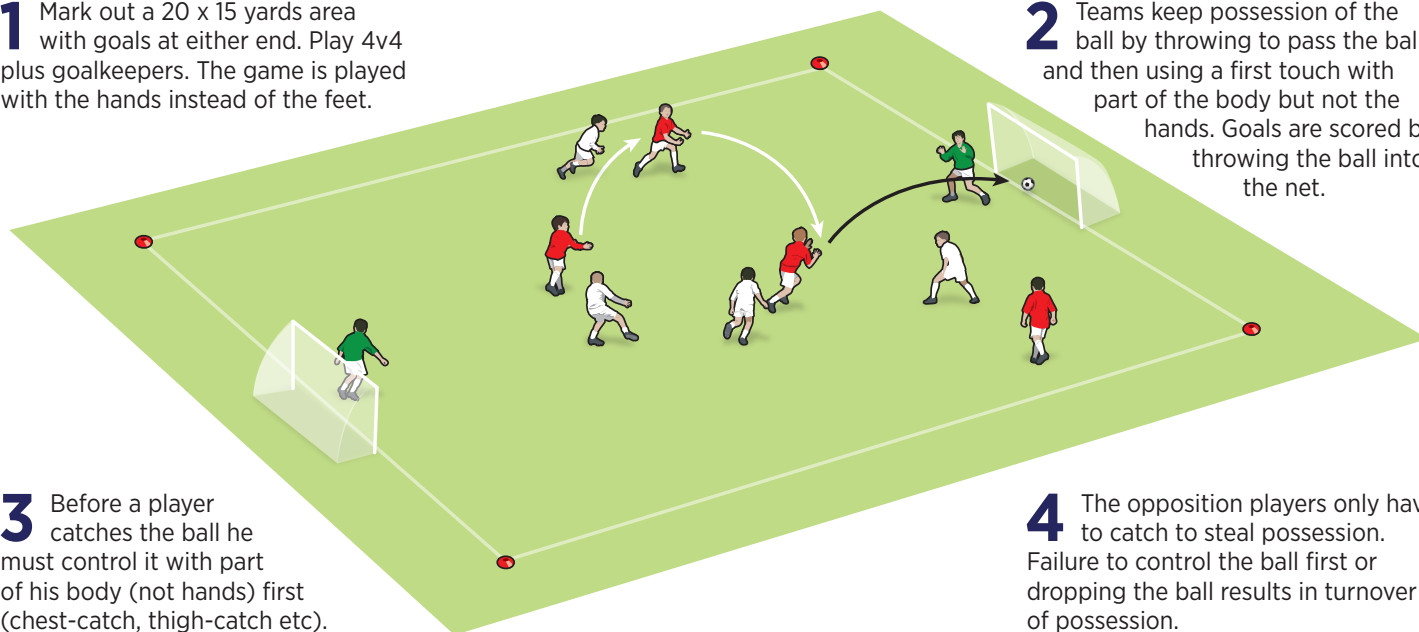
CALL OUT "Keep your eyes on the ball" • "Look up to see where to stop the ball" • "Make a good first touch"

1 Mark out a 20 x 15 yards area with goals at either end. Play 4v4 plus goalkeepers. The game is played with the hands instead of the feet.

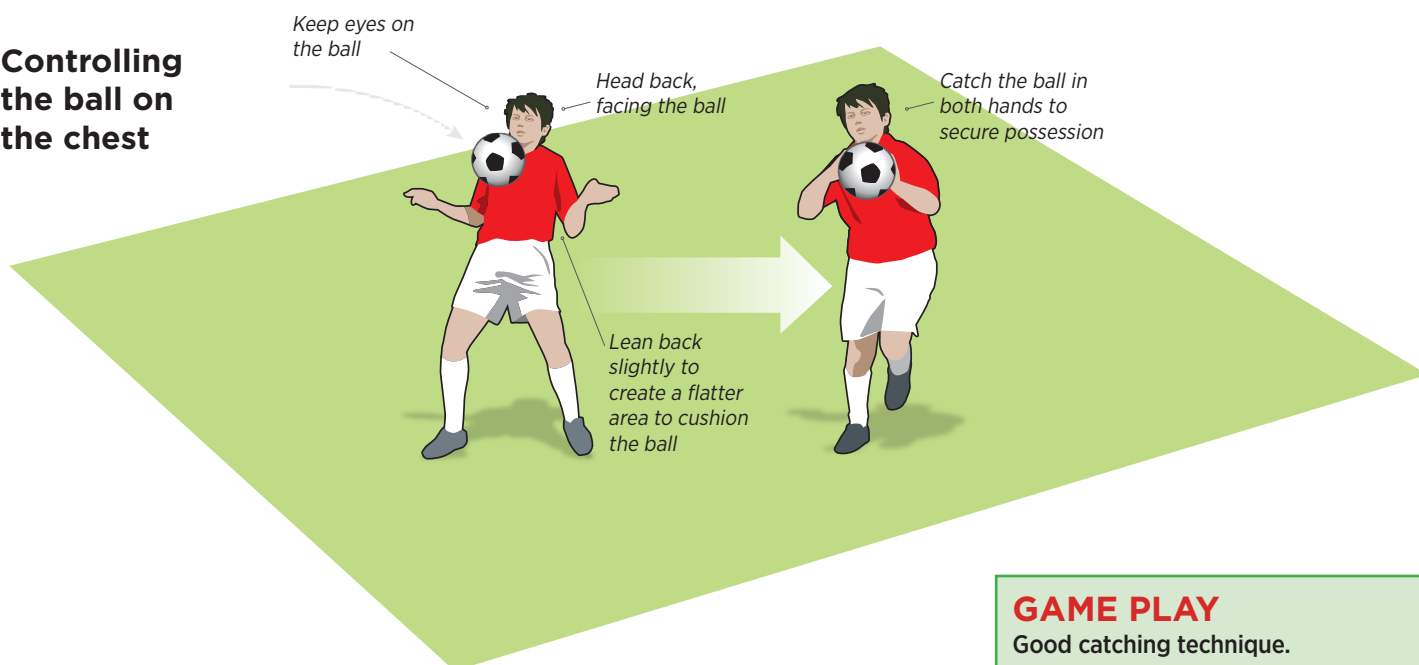
2 Teams keep possession of the ball by throwing to pass the ball and then using a first touch with part of the body but not the hands. Goals are scored by throwing the ball into the net.

3 Before a player catches the ball he must control it with part of his body (not hands) first (chest-catch, thigh-catch etc).

4 The opposition players only have to catch to steal possession. Failure to control the ball first or dropping the ball results in turnover of possession.



Controlling the ball on the chest



GAME PLAY
Good catching technique.
Accurate passing and shooting.
Look for match-like pressing.

How many players do I need?

We used 10 players in this game.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	----->	----->
	----->	----->
	----->	----->

EasiCoach

SOCCER SKILLS ACTIVITIES

U12

ATTACKING

U12 | ATTACKING 1

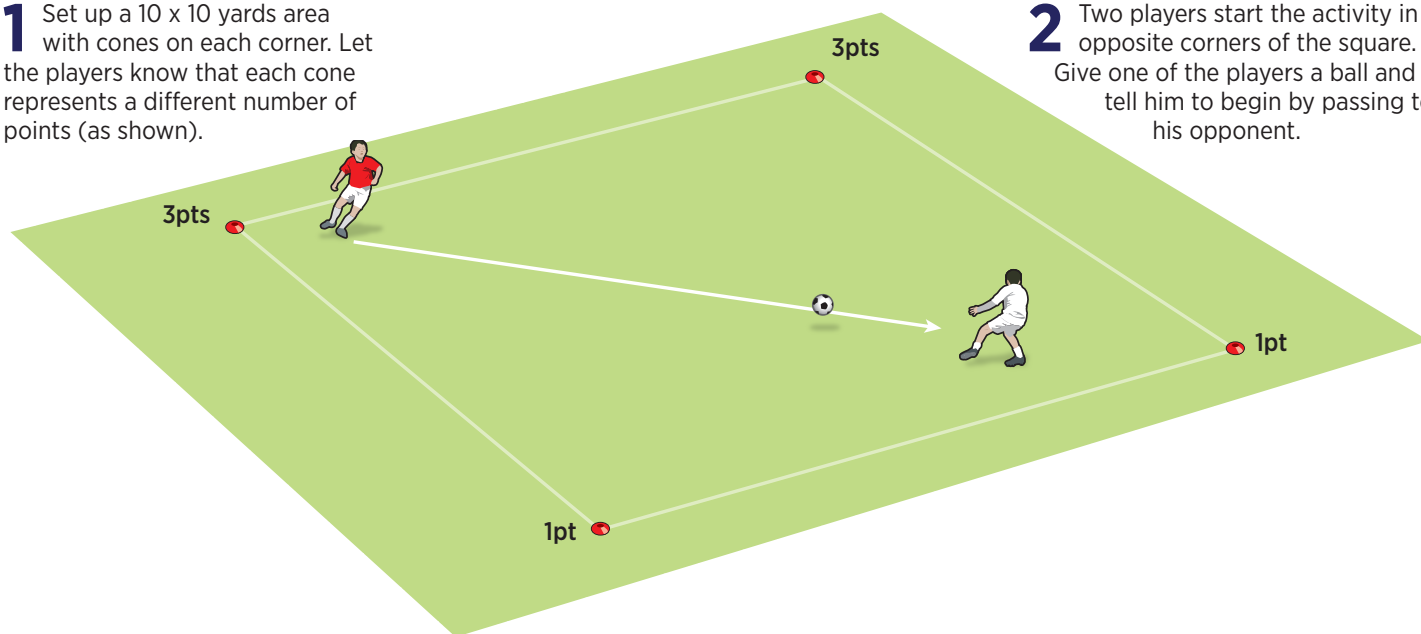
Develop turning skills

ACTIVITY: WIN THE 1v1s

CALL OUT

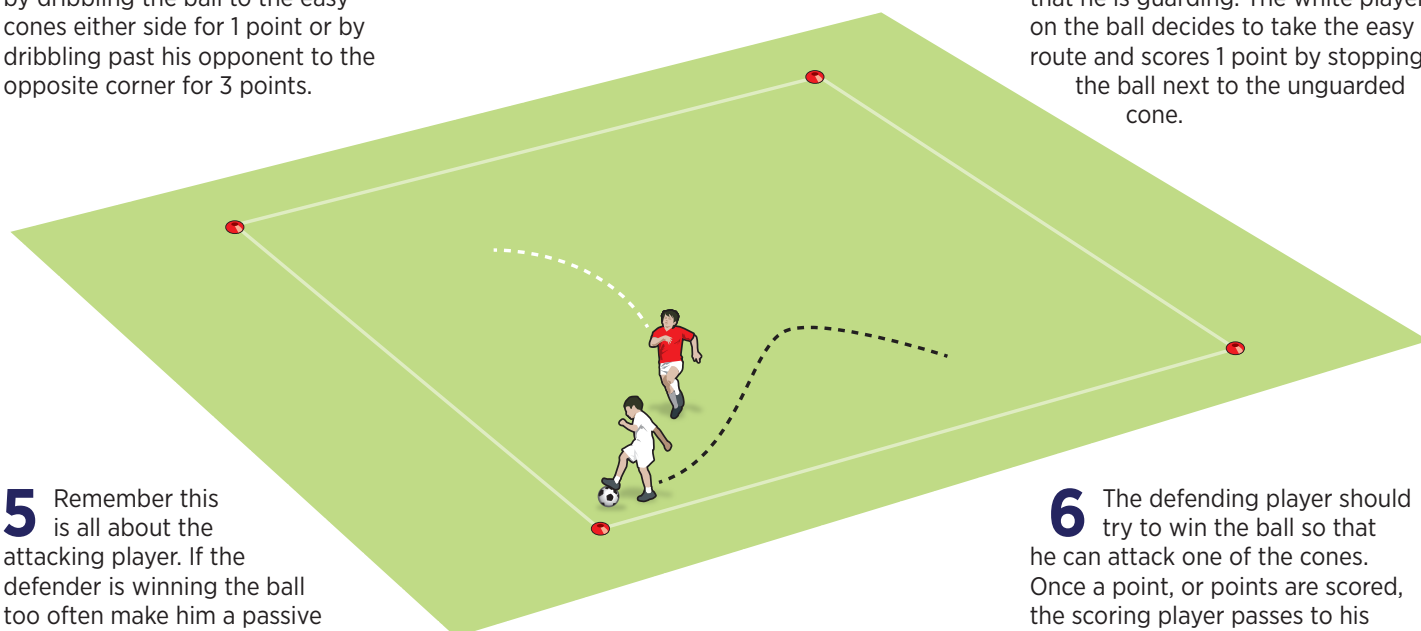
“Make quick decisions” • “Change direction to fool the defender” • “Keep your body between the defender and the ball” • “Keep control of the ball”

1 Set up a 10 x 10 yards area with cones on each corner. Let the players know that each cone represents a different number of points (as shown).



2 Two players start the activity in opposite corners of the square. Give one of the players a ball and tell him to begin by passing to his opponent.

3 The player who receives the ball must try to score points either by dribbling the ball to the easy cones either side for 1 point or by dribbling past his opponent to the opposite corner for 3 points.



4 Here the red player forces play away from the 3-point cone that he is guarding. The white player on the ball decides to take the easy route and scores 1 point by stopping the ball next to the unguarded cone.

5 Remember this is all about the attacking player. If the defender is winning the ball too often make him a passive defender.

6 The defending player should try to win the ball so that he can attack one of the cones. Once a point, or points are scored, the scoring player passes to his opponent and they begin again.

How many players do I need?

You need two players per square. Set up as many squares as you can and have your squad practising in pairs around the pitch.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	Run with the ball	Shot

U12 | ATTACKING 1

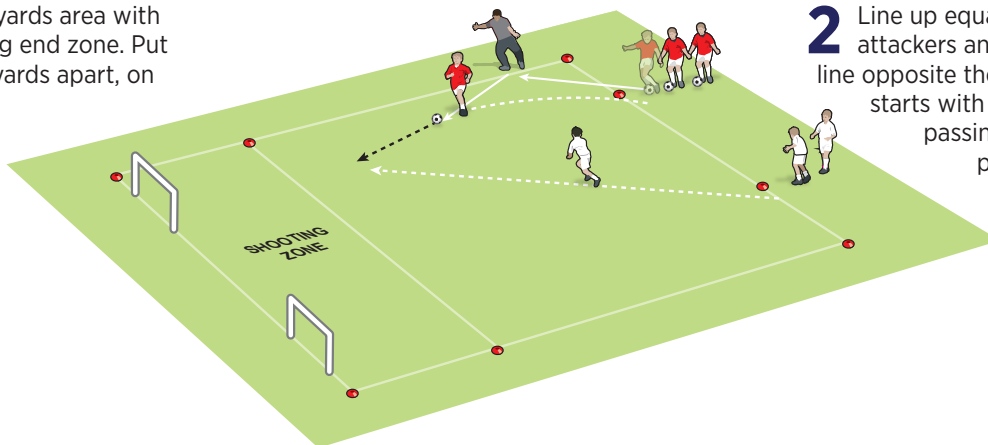
Develop turning skills

GAME: FOOL THE DEFENDER

CALL OUT

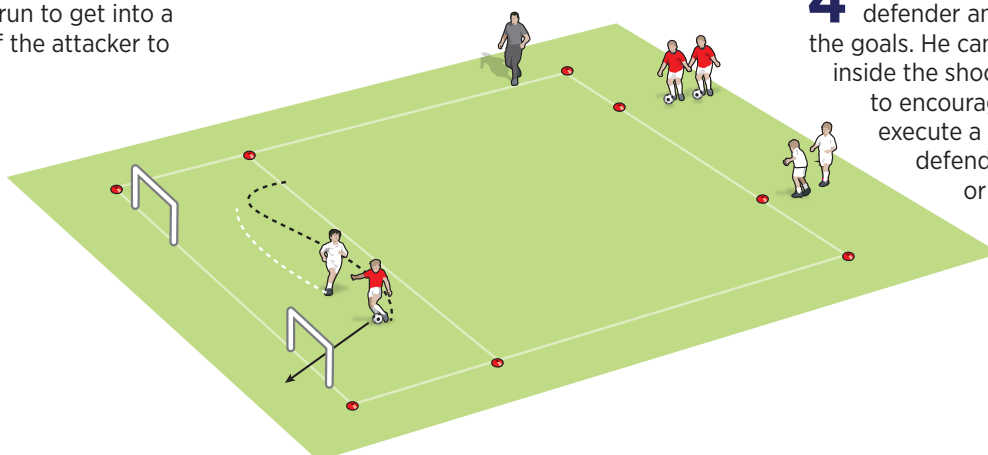
“Make quick decisions” • “Change direction to fool the defender” • “Keep your body between the defender and the ball” • “Keep control of the ball”

1 Set up a 20x20 yards area with a 5-yard shooting end zone. Put two small goals, 12 yards apart, on the end line.



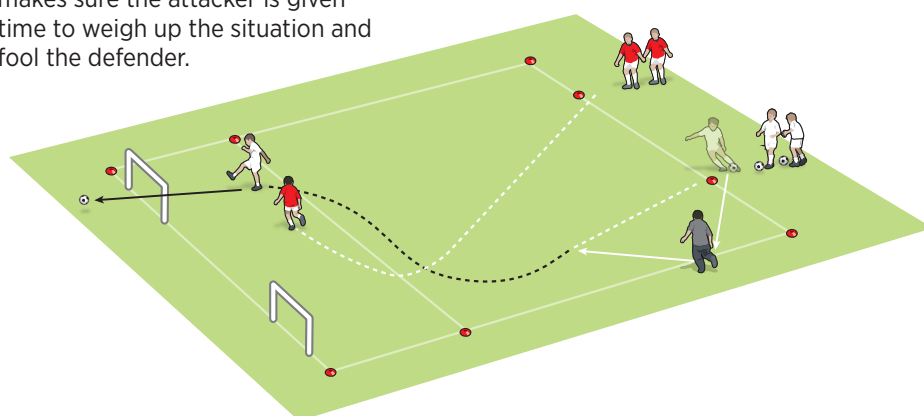
2 Line up equal numbers of attackers and defenders on the line opposite the two goals. Play starts with the first attacker passing to a server, who passes down the line for the attacker to run on to.

3 At the same time the first defender must run to get into a position goal side of the attacker to try to stop him.



4 The attacker aims to avoid the defender and score in one of the goals. He can only score from inside the shooting zone. You need to encourage the attacker to execute a skill to beat the defender. It can be a feint or a simple turn.

5 The defender can only tackle inside the shooting zone - this makes sure the attacker is given time to weigh up the situation and fool the defender.



6 Try the session from both sides of the area to let the attackers try different angles of attack.

GAME PLAY

Good ball control.
Dribbling technique important to speed of attack.
Accurate shooting into the goals.

How many players do I need?

We played the game with two lines of three players, but you can add more to each line.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	Run with the ball	Shot

Dribble with the ball and shoot

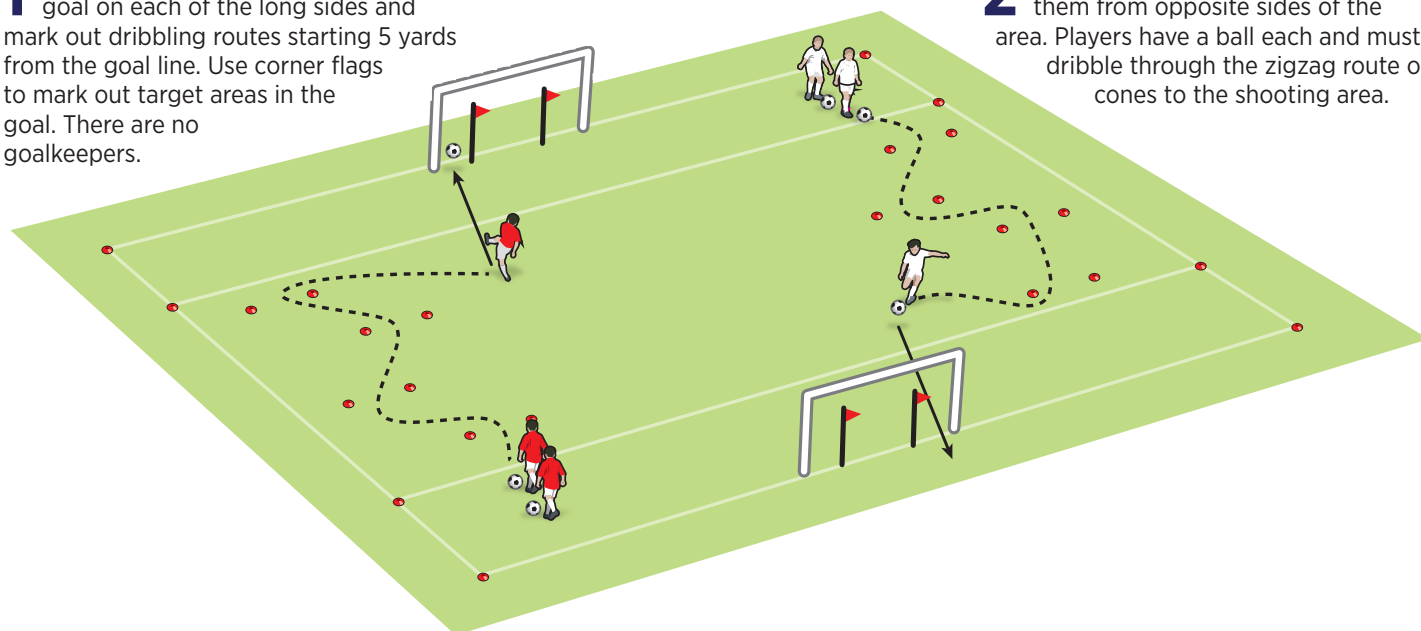
ACTIVITY: WIN THE 1v1s

CALL OUT

“Keep the ball in front of you” • “Good first touch to get the ball out of your feet” • “Accuracy over power” • “Keep control of the ball”

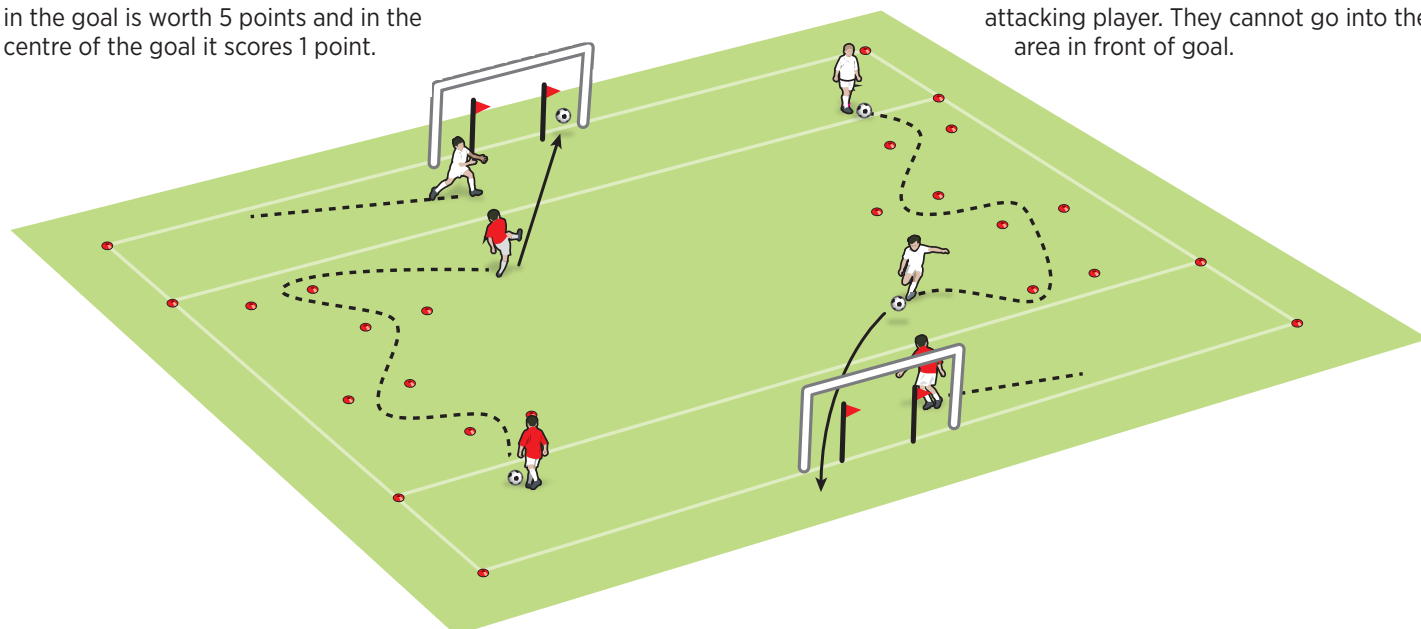
1 Set up a 20 x 40 yards area with a goal on each of the long sides and mark out dribbling routes starting 5 yards from the goal line. Use corner flags to mark out target areas in the goal. There are no goalkeepers.

2 Put players in two teams and start them from opposite sides of the area. Players have a ball each and must dribble through the zigzag route of cones to the shooting area.



3 After passing the last cone a player has three seconds to pick his spot and shoot. Scoring outside either flag in the goal is worth 5 points and in the centre of the goal it scores 1 point.

4 In the progression make one attacker a defender on each team and they try to block any shot from the attacking player. They cannot go into the area in front of goal.



How many players do I need?

We used six players in this activity.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	Run with the ball	Shot

U12 | ATTACKING 2

Dribble with the ball and shoot

GAME: FINAL THIRD CREATIVITY

CALL OUT

“Keep the ball in front of you” • “Good first touch to get the ball out of your feet” • “Accuracy over power” • “Keep control of the ball”

1 Use half your 9v9 pitch with dribbling cones in the centre circle and a 1v1 box half way to the penalty area.

2 Start with three attacking players on the centre spot, a defender in the square and another in the penalty area. Put a server to the right of the square and a goalkeeper in the goal.

3 The first attacker dribbles through the cones and passes wide to the server. He then runs through the square and receives a pass back from the server.

4 At this point, the attacker has one defender behind and one in front and must move quickly to create a chance. He needs to move past the defenders and make room to get a shot on goal.

5 Coach the players to focus on the attacking moment and that speed will be enough to get them past the defenders. Once the shot has been taken, all the players quickly swap roles and the next player gets ready to go.

6 This is all about dribbling with quick one-twos in the first part of the drill. Players are learning to control the ball look up, pass and move into space to receive the ball back.

GAME PLAY

Good ball control.
Dribbling technique important to speed of attack.
Accurate shooting into the goals.

How many players do I need?

We used seven players in this activity.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	Run with the ball	Shot

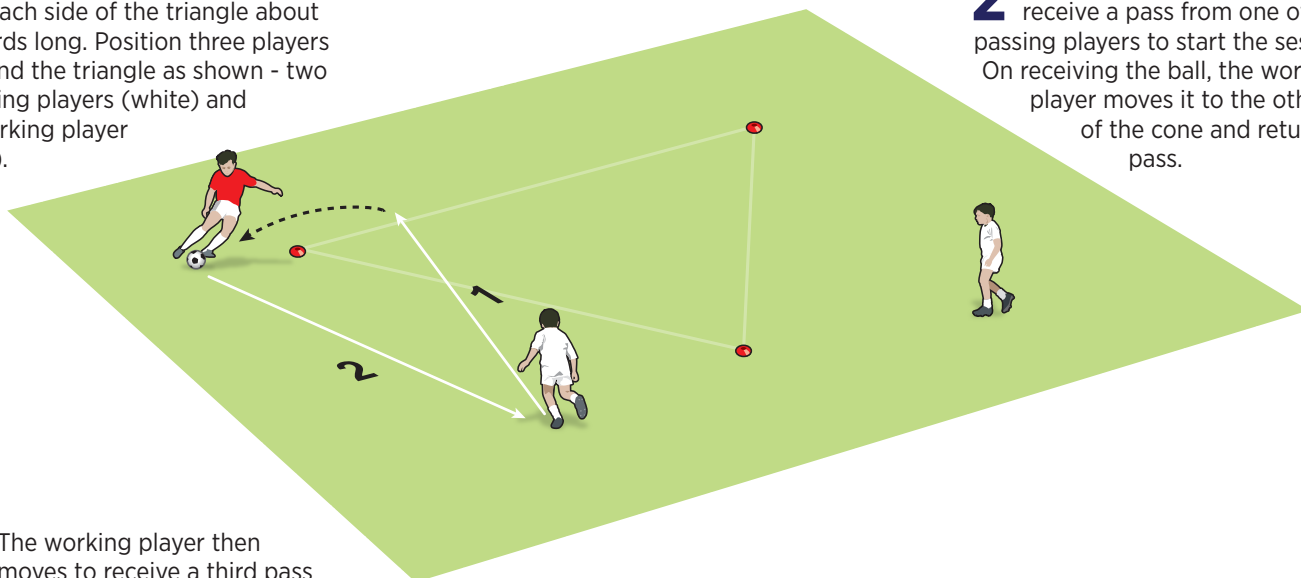
Attacking build up play

ACTIVITY: PASS AND MOVE

CALL OUT

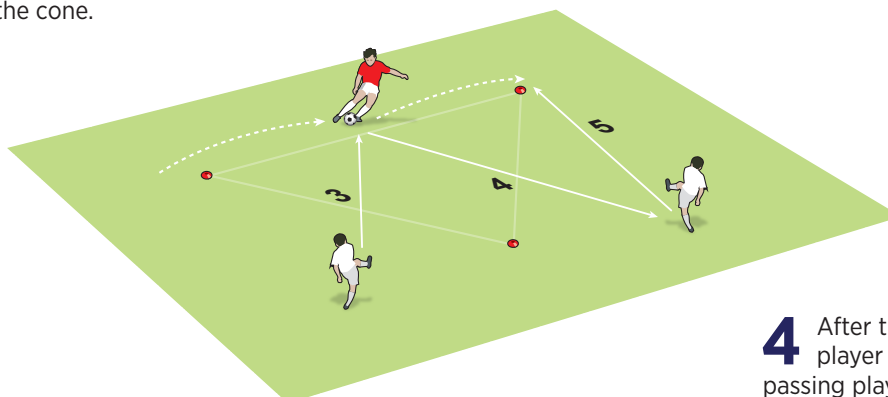
“Look at the player you are passing to” • “Good first touch to get the ball out of your feet” • “Look where you are passing” • “Move to receive the pass”

1 Set up a triangle of cones with each side of the triangle about 4 yards long. Position three players around the triangle as shown - two passing players (white) and a working player (red).



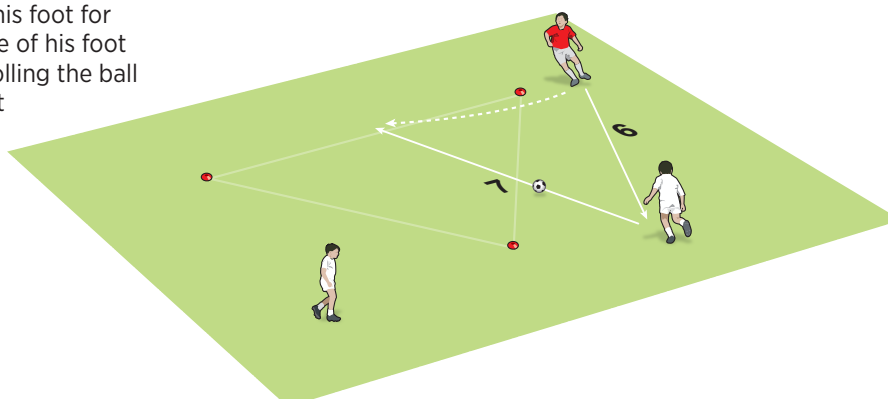
2 The working player moves to receive a pass from one of the passing players to start the session. On receiving the ball, the working player moves it to the other side of the cone and returns the pass.

3 The working player then moves to receive a third pass on the opposite side of the cone.



4 After the third pass, the working player passes to the second passing player and plays three passes around the far cone.

5 Get each player doing this, first using the inside of his foot for passing, then the outside of his foot for passing and finally rolling the ball under his foot to move it from side to side.



How many players do I need?

Each set up uses three players.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement

U12 | ATTACKING 3

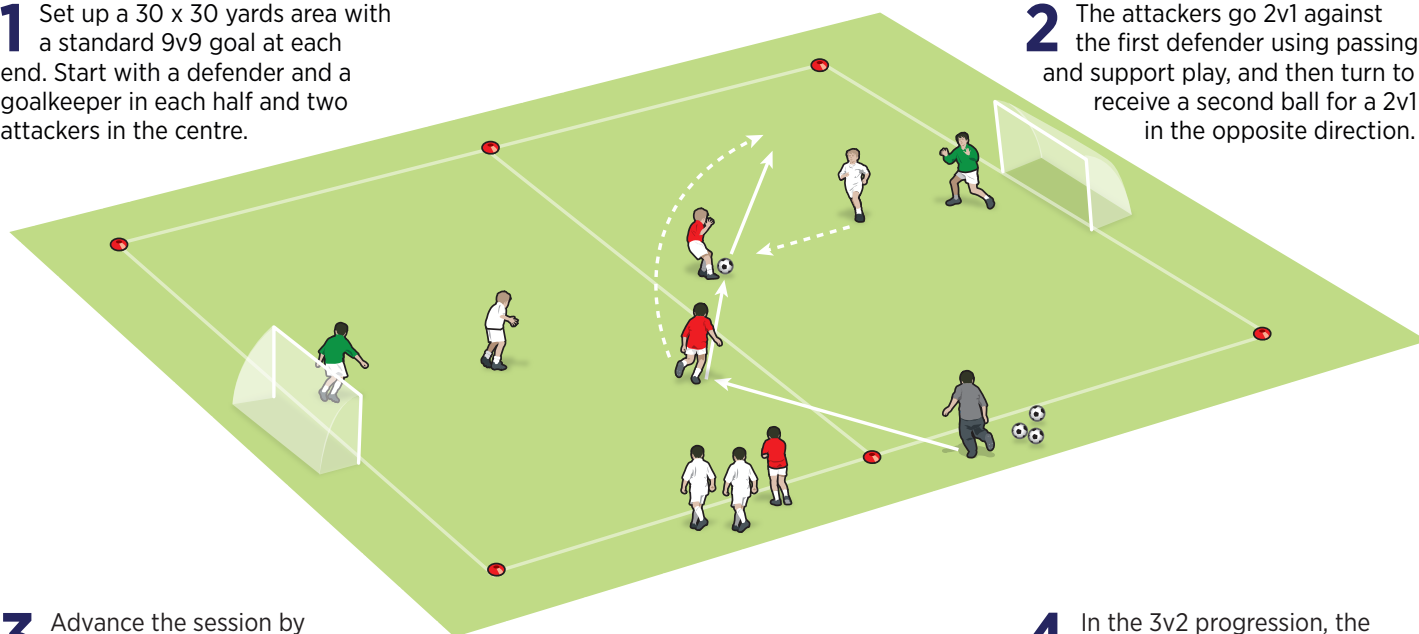
Attacking build up play

GAME: OVERLAP TO CREATE SPACE

CALL OUT

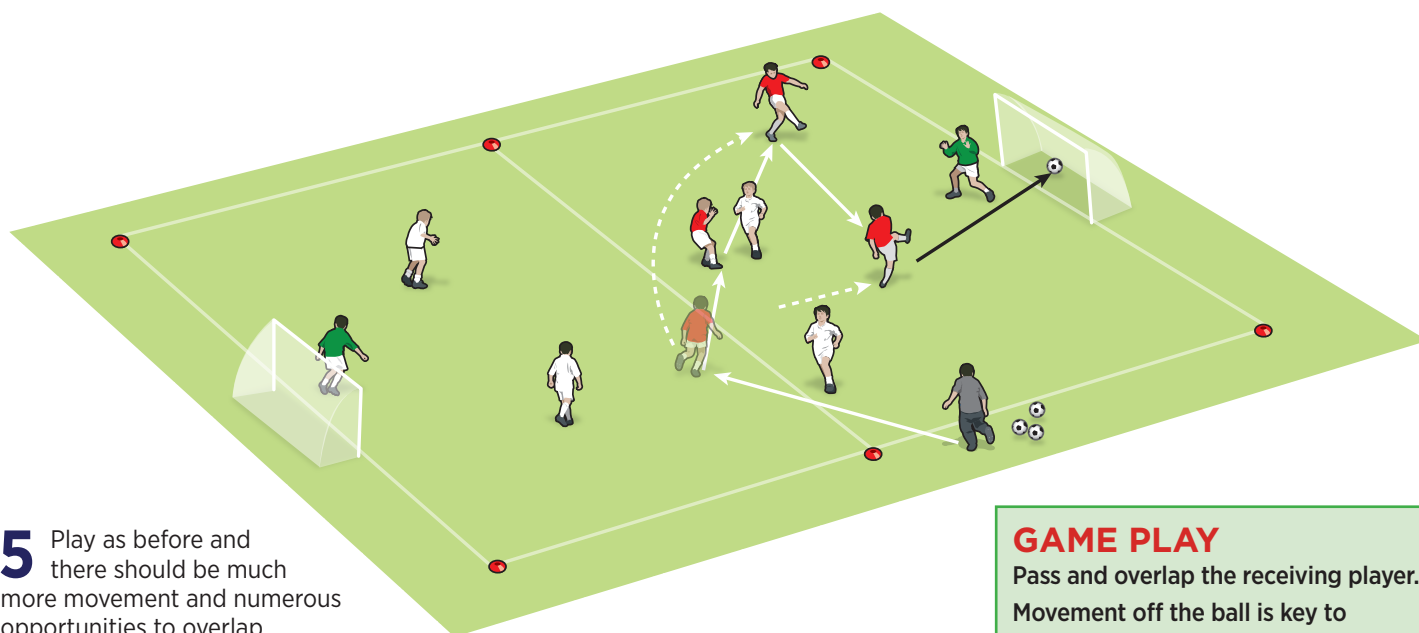
“Look at the player you are passing to” • “Good first touch to get the ball out of your feet” • “Look where you are passing” • “Move to receive the pass”

1 Set up a 30 x 30 yards area with a standard 9v9 goal at each end. Start with a defender and a goalkeeper in each half and two attackers in the centre.



2 The attackers go 2v1 against the first defender using passing and support play, and then turn to receive a second ball for a 2v1 in the opposite direction.

3 Advance the session by bringing on three more players and make it three attackers and two defenders in each half.



4 In the 3v2 progression, the link play between attackers is important to split the defenders and get behind the defence.

5 Play as before and there should be much more movement and numerous opportunities to overlap.

GAME PLAY
Pass and overlap the receiving player.
Movement off the ball is key to success.
Accurate shooting into the goals.

How many players do I need?

We used nine players in this game.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	Run with the ball	Shot

U12 | ATTACKING 4

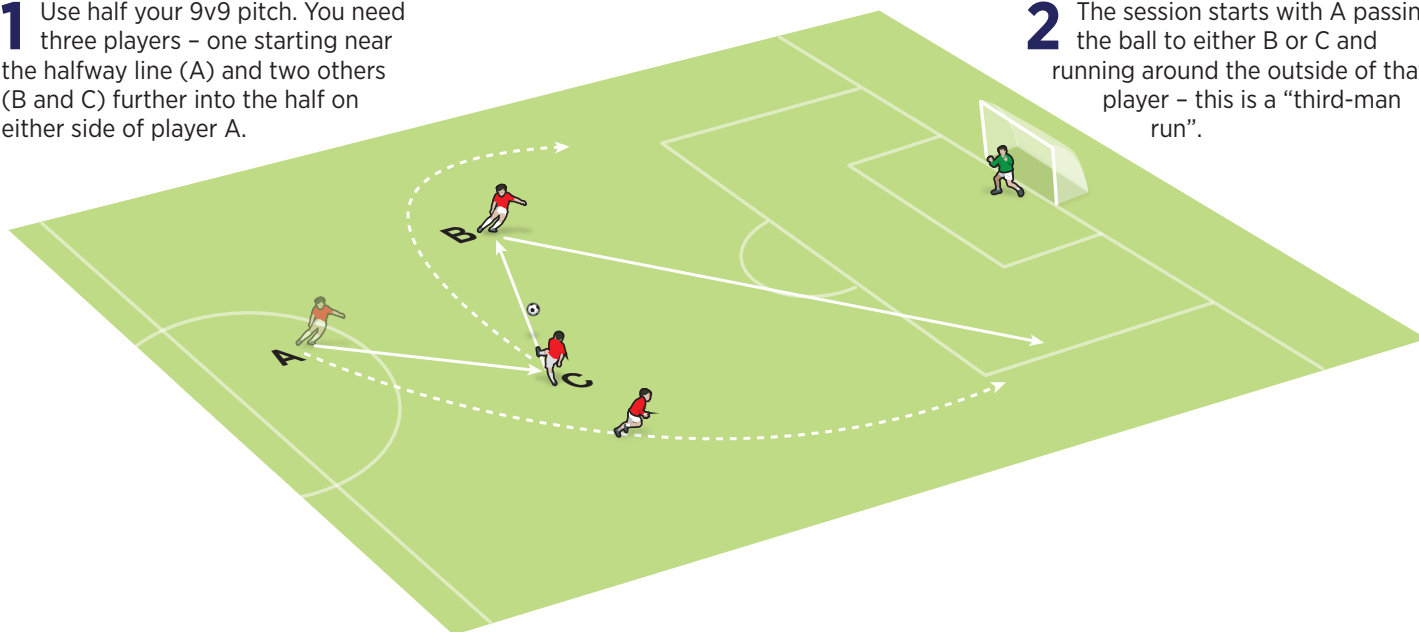
Passing and support play

ACTIVITY: THIRD MAN RUNNING

CALL OUT

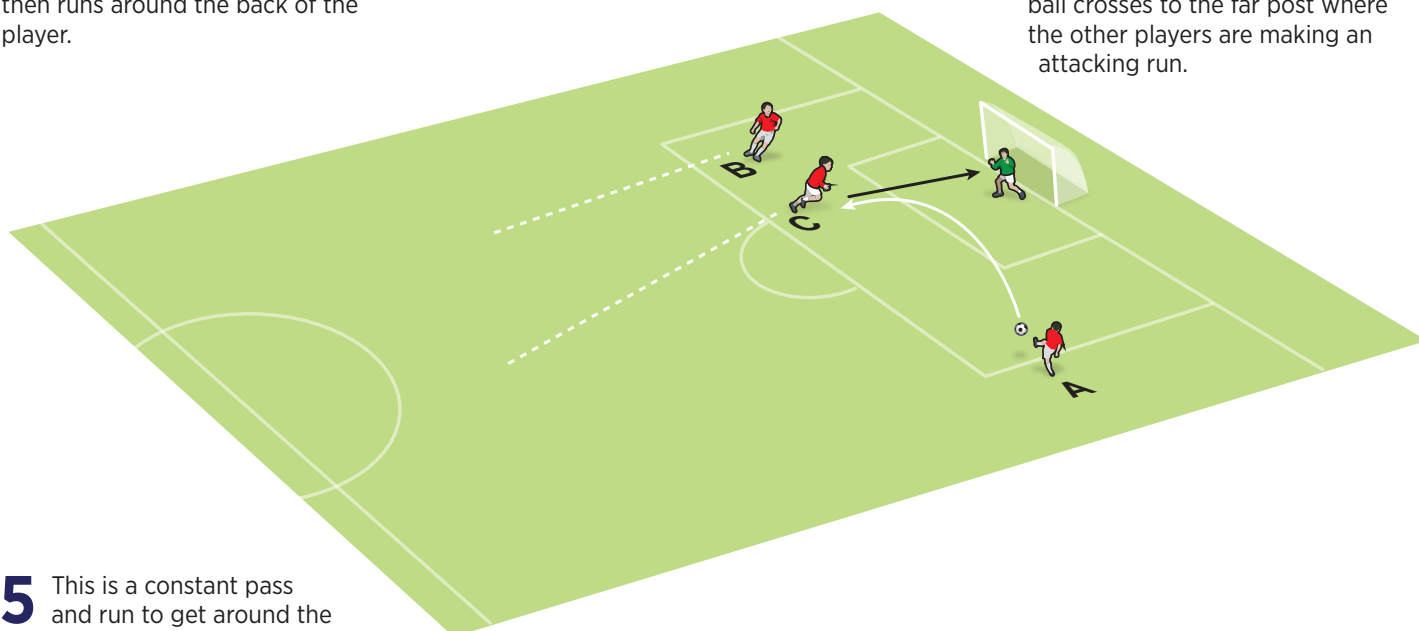
“Accuracy is important” • “Good first touch” • “Look where you are passing” •
“Move to receive the pass”

1 Use half your 9v9 pitch. You need three players – one starting near the halfway line (A) and two others (B and C) further into the half on either side of player A.



2 The session starts with A passing the ball to either B or C and running around the outside of that player – this is a “third-man run”.

3 The receiving player passes to the other player first time and then runs around the back of the player.



4 After a minimum of three passes, the player with the ball crosses to the far post where the other players are making an attacking run.

5 This is a constant pass and run to get around the outside of the player with the ball. A great way to warm up before a match.

How many players do I need?

Each set up uses three players.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	Run with the ball	Shot

U12 | ATTACKING 4

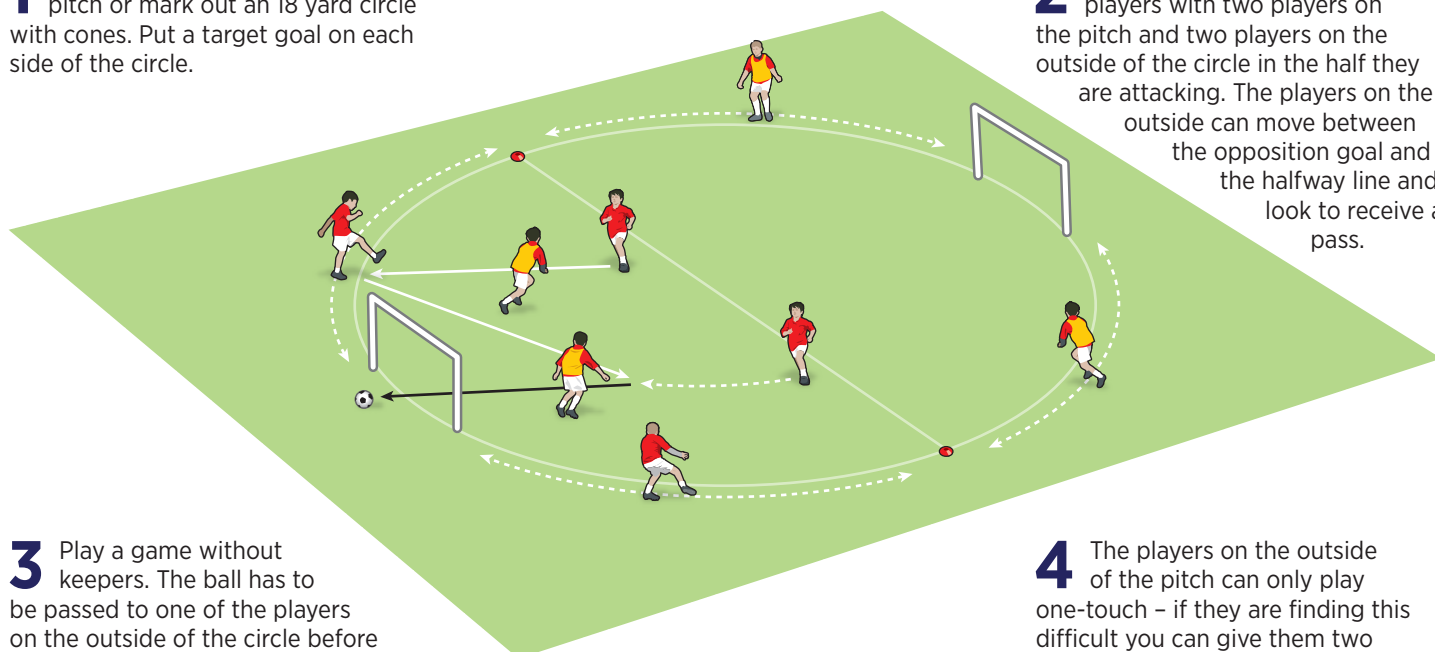
Passing and support play

GAME: CENTRE CIRCLE GAME

CALL OUT

“Accuracy is important” • “Good first touch” • “Look where you are passing” •
“Move to receive the pass”

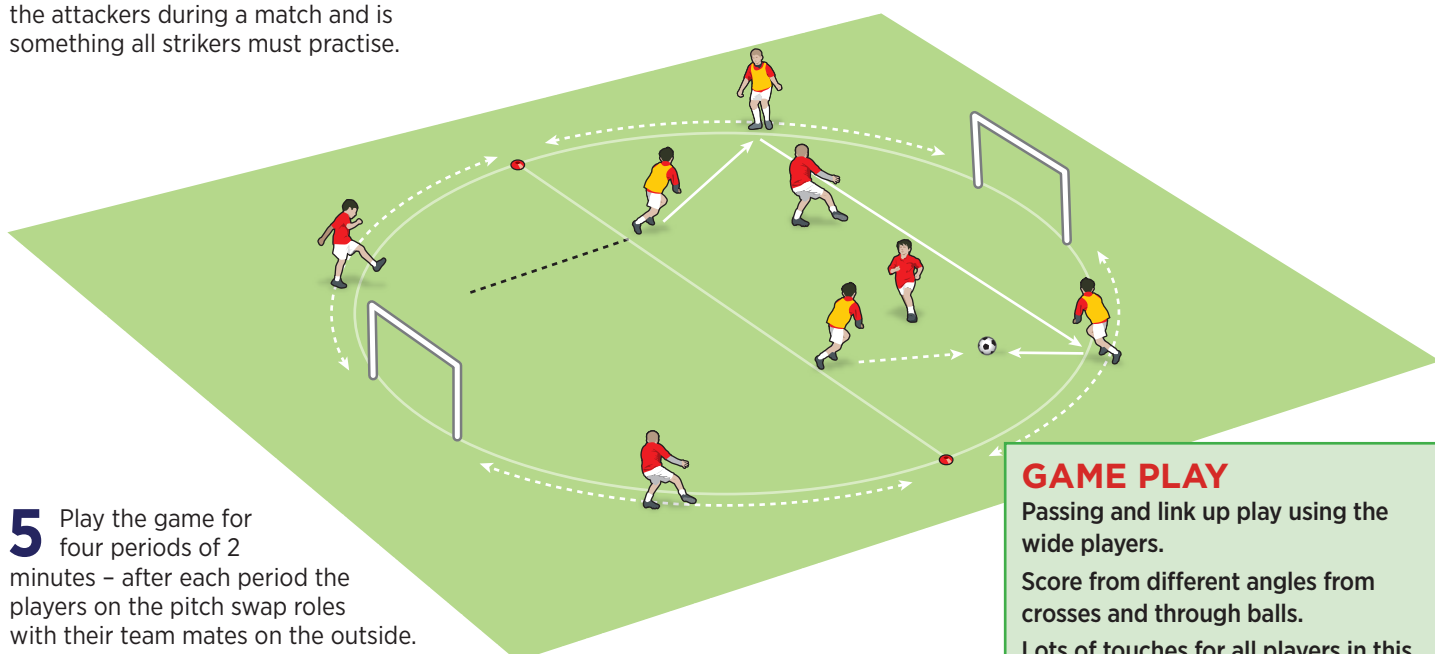
1 Use the centre circle of a full size pitch or mark out an 18 yard circle with cones. Put a target goal on each side of the circle.



2 You need two teams of four players with two players on the pitch and two players on the outside of the circle in the half they are attacking. The players on the outside can move between the opposition goal and the halfway line and look to receive a pass.

3 Play a game without keepers. The ball has to be passed to one of the players on the outside of the circle before the team can shoot at goal. This represents wide players passing into the attackers during a match and is something all strikers must practise.

4 The players on the outside of the pitch can only play one-touch – if they are finding this difficult you can give them two touches, one to control and one to pass.



5 Play the game for four periods of 2 minutes – after each period the players on the pitch swap roles with their team mates on the outside.

GAME PLAY

Passing and link up play using the wide players.

Score from different angles from crosses and through balls.

Lots of touches for all players in this game.

How many players do I need?

This uses eight players in a 4v4

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	Run with the ball	Shot

U12 | ATTACKING 5

Score a goal

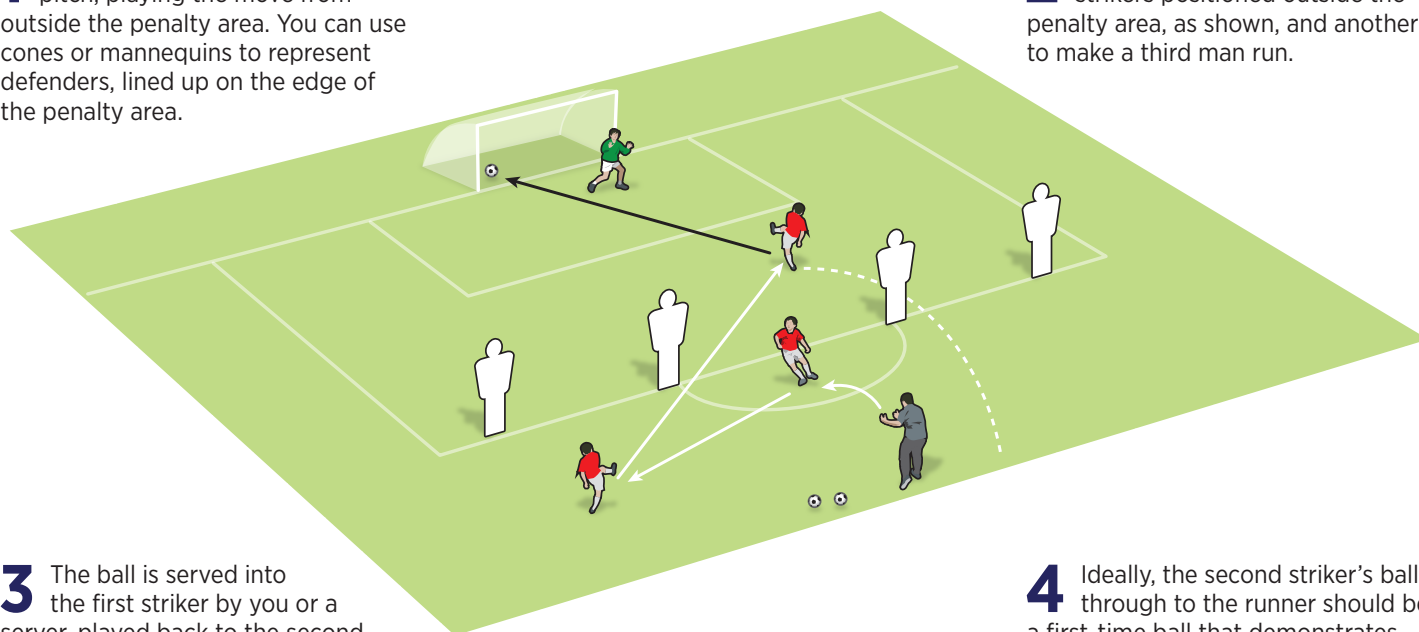
ACTIVITY: INTERPLAY TO GOAL

CALL OUT

“Shoot across the keeper” • “Good first touch” • “Look where you are shooting” • “Move to receive the pass”

1 Use the final third of your 9v9 pitch, playing the move from outside the penalty area. You can use cones or mannequins to represent defenders, lined up on the edge of the penalty area.

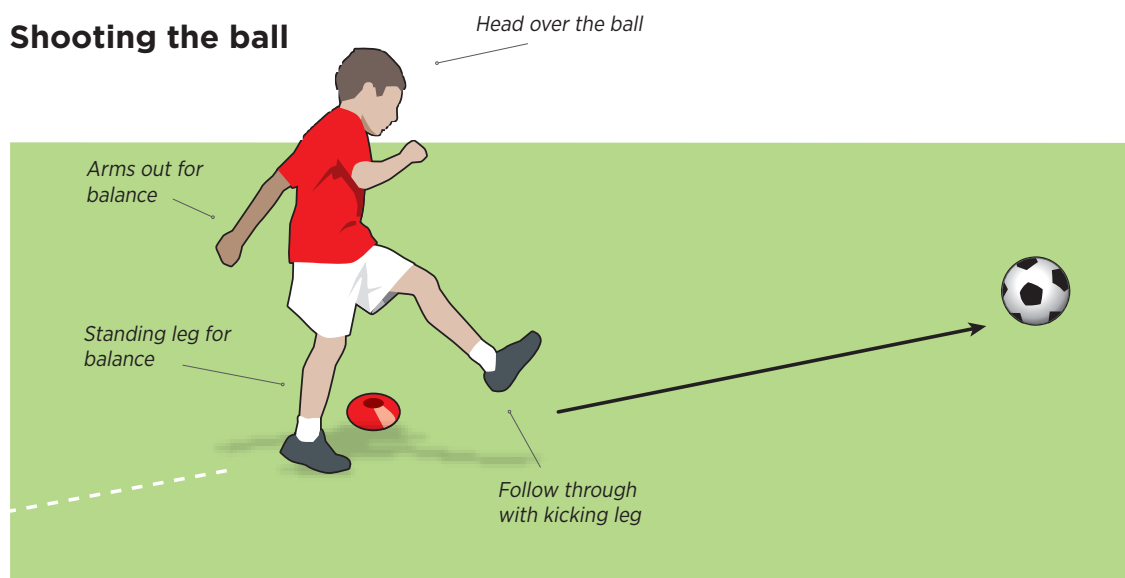
2 You need three players – two strikers positioned outside the penalty area, as shown, and another to make a third man run.



3 The ball is served into the first striker by you or a server, played back to the second striker who feeds it through for the remaining player to make a third man run and finish.

4 Ideally, the second striker’s ball through to the runner should be a first-time ball that demonstrates vision and creativity.

Shooting the ball



How many players do I need?

Each set up uses three players.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	--->	—>
	--->	—>

U12 | ATTACKING 5

Score a goal

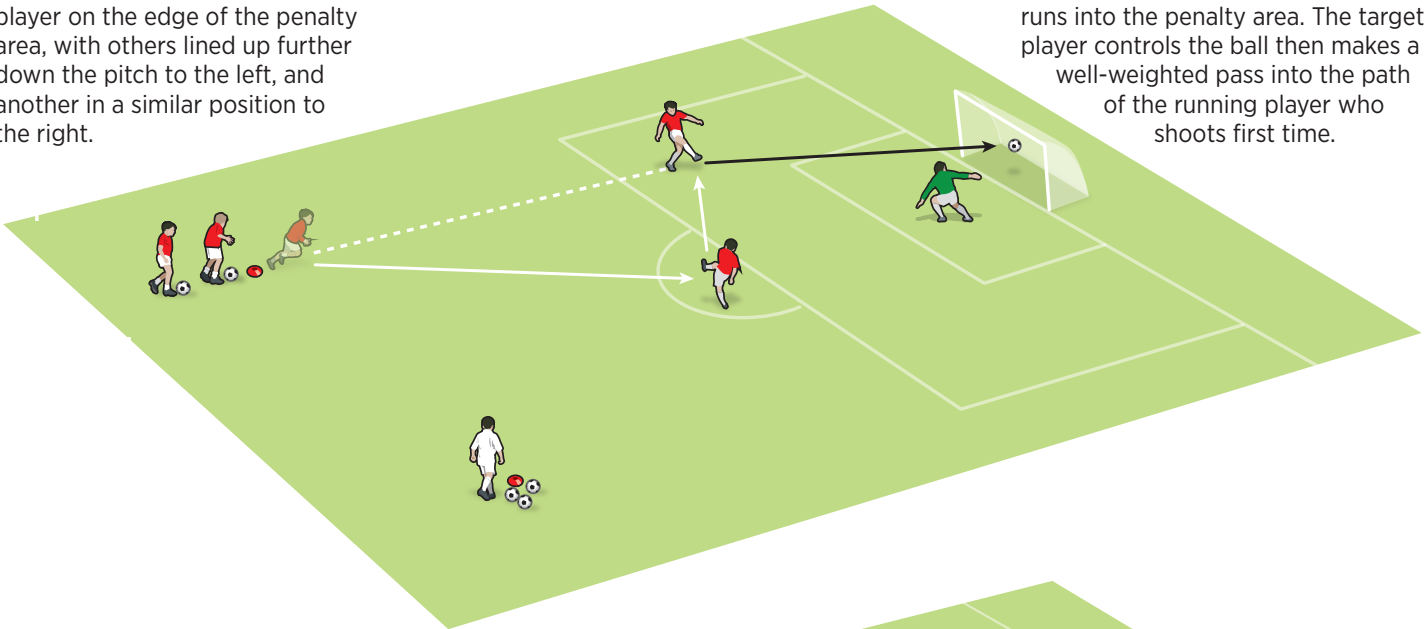
GAME: PASS OR TURN AND SHOOT

CALL OUT

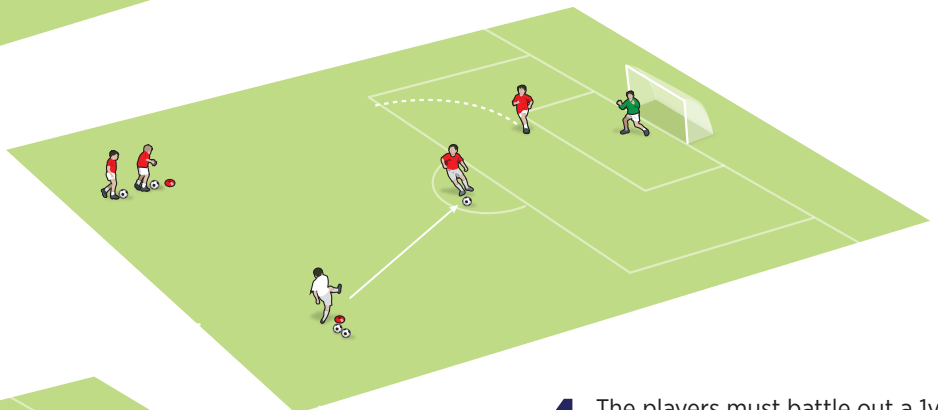
“Shoot towards the corners” • “Good first touch” • “Look where you are shooting” • “Move to receive the pass”

1 In a third of a pitch, set up a goal and goalkeeper. Place a target player on the edge of the penalty area, with others lined up further down the pitch to the left, and another in a similar position to the right.

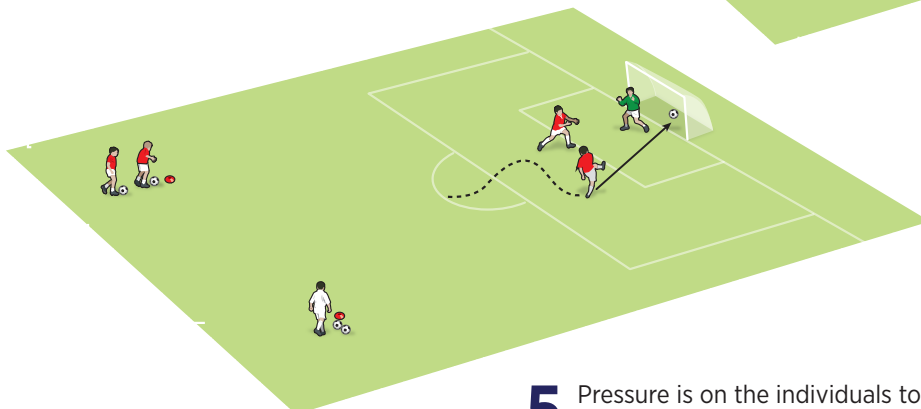
2 The first player in line passes into the target player and then runs into the penalty area. The target player controls the ball then makes a well-weighted pass into the path of the running player who shoots first time.



3 In the second part of the game the target player gets a ball from the player on the other side. The first player reacts after shooting to defend against the target player.



4 The players must battle out a 1v1 to see who can win out – look for good technique here.



5 Pressure is on the individuals to make the most of attacking and defending responsibilities.

GAME PLAY

Control is vital to getting a good shot on goal.

Good first touch.

Accurate shooting into the goals.

How many players do I need?

We used six players in this game.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	--->	--->
	Run with the ball	Shot
	--->	--->

EasiCoach

SOCCER SKILLS ACTIVITIES

U12

DEFENDING

U12 | DEFENDING 1

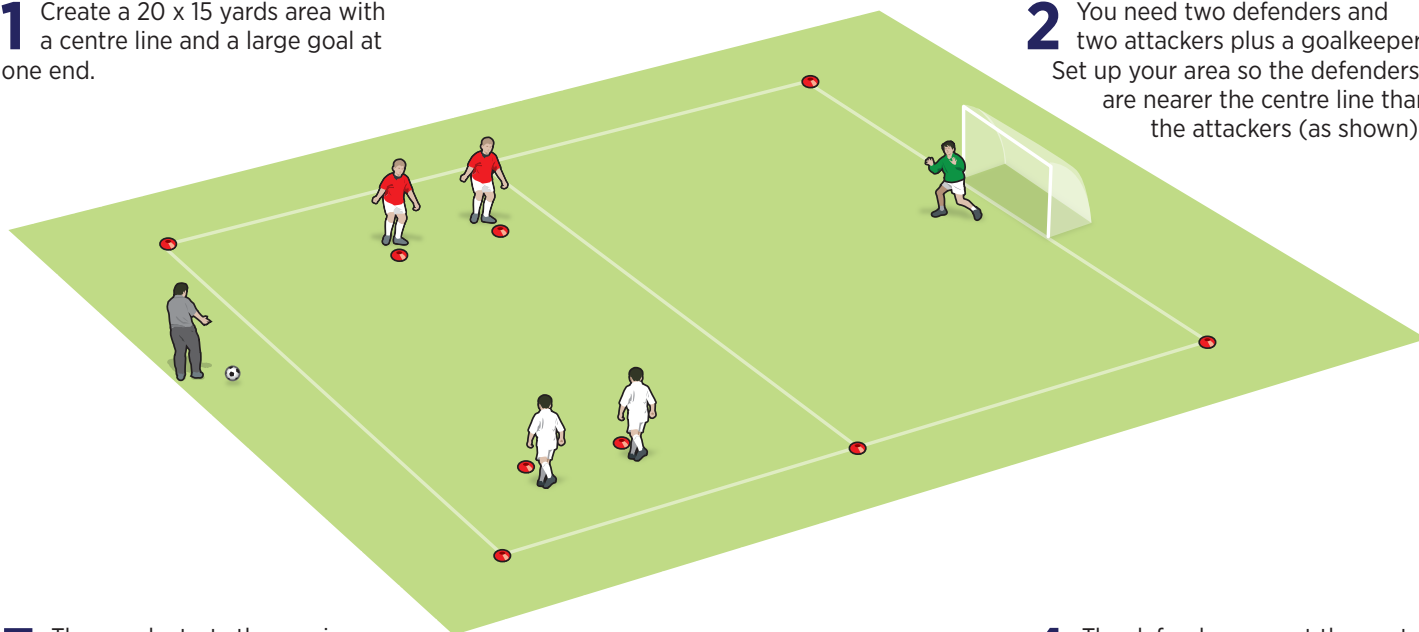
Recover when the ball is lost in transition

ACTIVITY: COVER AND SUPPORT

CALL OUT

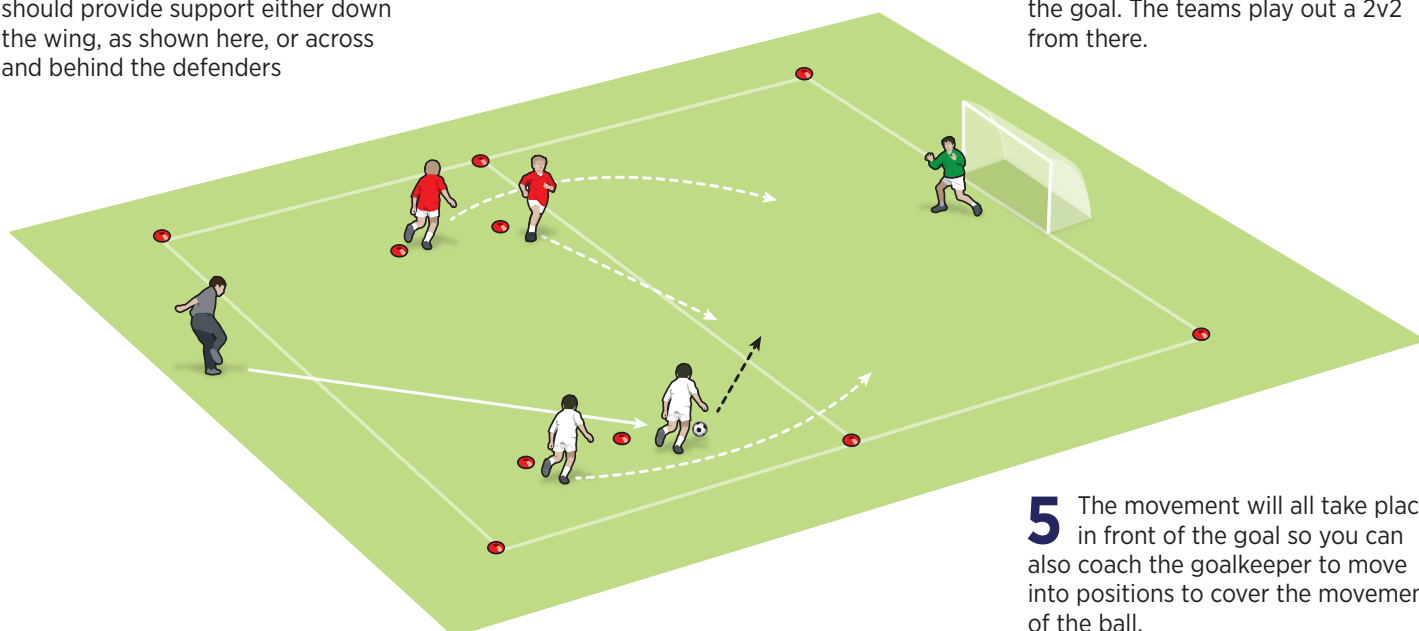
“Try to get back behind the ball” • “Get back to where you should be” • “React quickly” • “Can you delay the play?”

1 Create a 20 x 15 yards area with a centre line and a large goal at one end.



2 You need two defenders and two attackers plus a goalkeeper. Set up your area so the defenders are nearer the centre line than the attackers (as shown).

3 The coach starts the session with a pass to the attacker nearest the centre line, who then attacks the goal. The second attacker should provide support either down the wing, as shown here, or across and behind the defenders



4 The defender nearest the centre line must go to the ball, while the other defender should make a deeper run to cover the player and the goal. The teams play out a 2v2 from there.

5 The movement will all take place in front of the goal so you can also coach the goalkeeper to move into positions to cover the movement of the ball.

How many players do I need?

Five players are needed for this activity.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	Run with the ball	Shot

U12 | DEFENDING 1

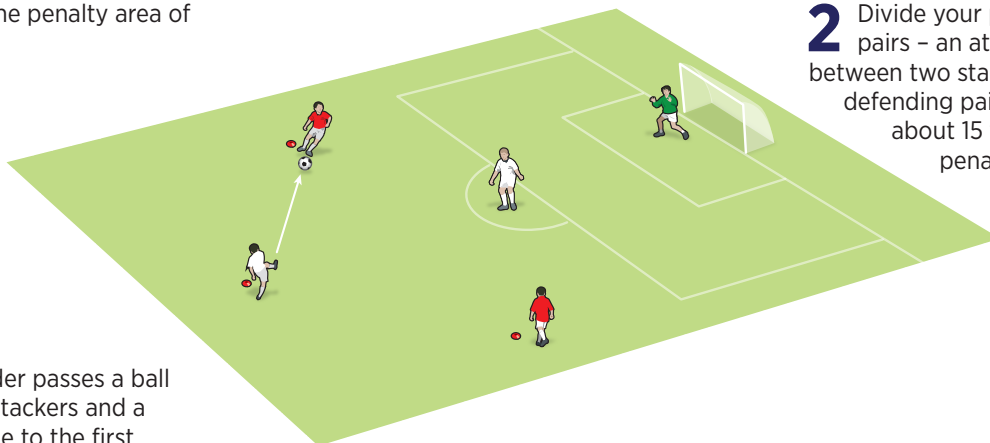
Recover when the ball is lost in transition

GAME: COUNTER THE COUNTER ATTACK

CALL OUT

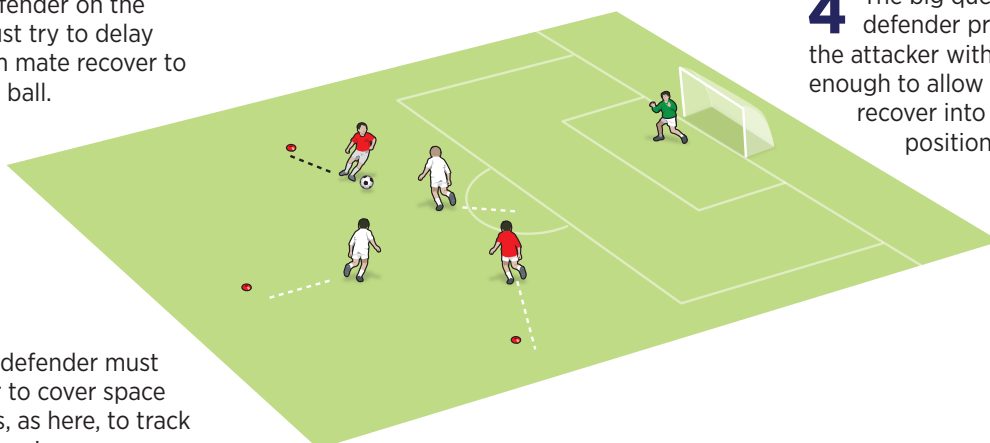
“Try to get back behind the ball” • “Get back to where you should be” • “React quickly” • “Can you delay the play?”

1 Set up outside the penalty area of your 9v9 pitch.



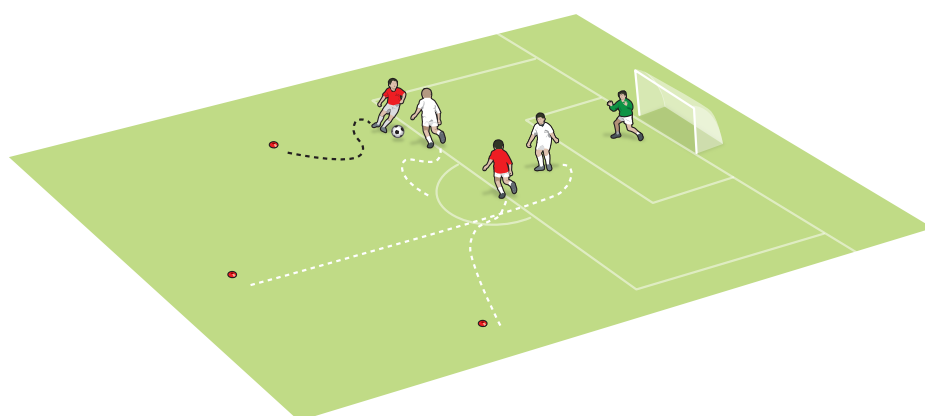
2 Divide your players into two pairs – an attacking pair split between two starting points and a defending pair with one starting about 15 yards outside the penalty area and the other on the edge of the area.

3 The first defender passes a ball to one of the attackers and a 2v2 commences. Due to the first defender’s position the attackers have a temporary 2v1 advantage. In this situation the defender on the edge of the area must try to delay play and let his team mate recover to get back behind the ball.



4 The big question is can the defender pressure and isolate the attacker with the ball long enough to allow his team mate to recover into a good defensive position?

5 The recovering defender must decide whether to cover space behind the attackers, as here, to track runners moving to receive a pass.



6 Allow each side three goes as attackers and three as defenders. Award 1 point for each goal scored and one for every successful defence.

GAME PLAY

Quick reactions.
Close off passing options.
Allow your team mate to recover.

How many players do I need?

Five players are needed for this game.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	Run with the ball	Shot

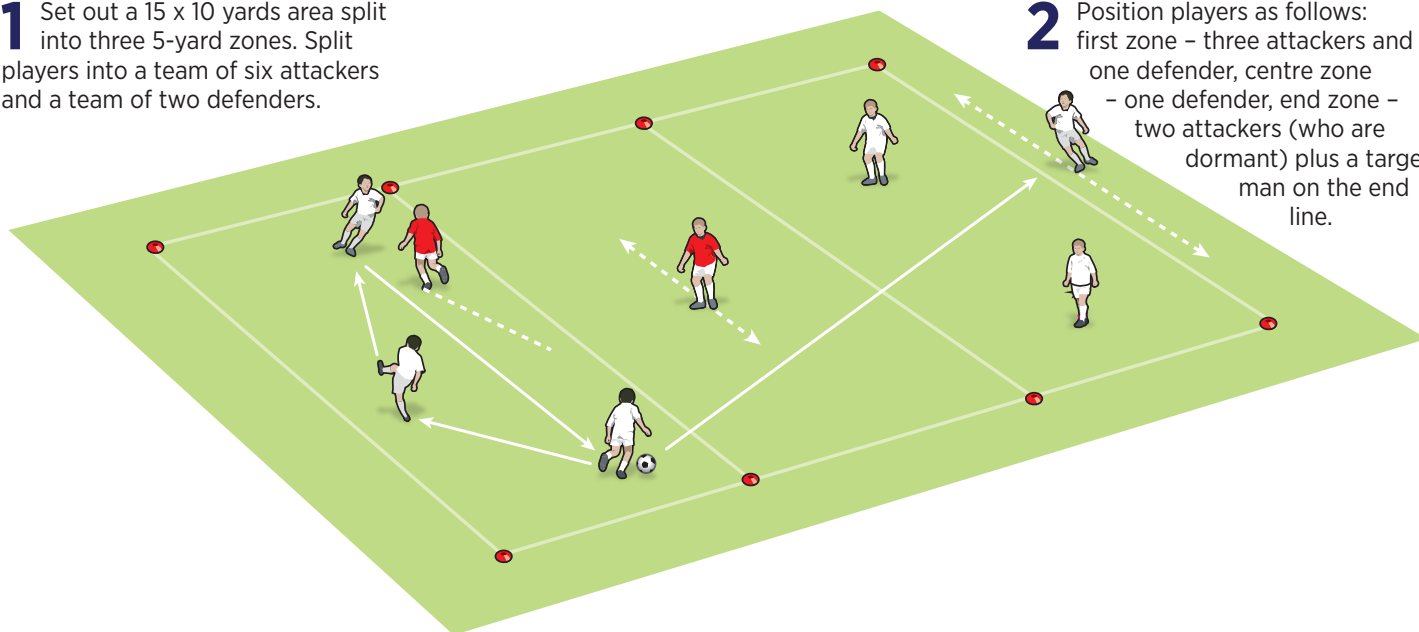
Block passing routes

ACTIVITY: BLOCK POSITIONING

CALL OUT

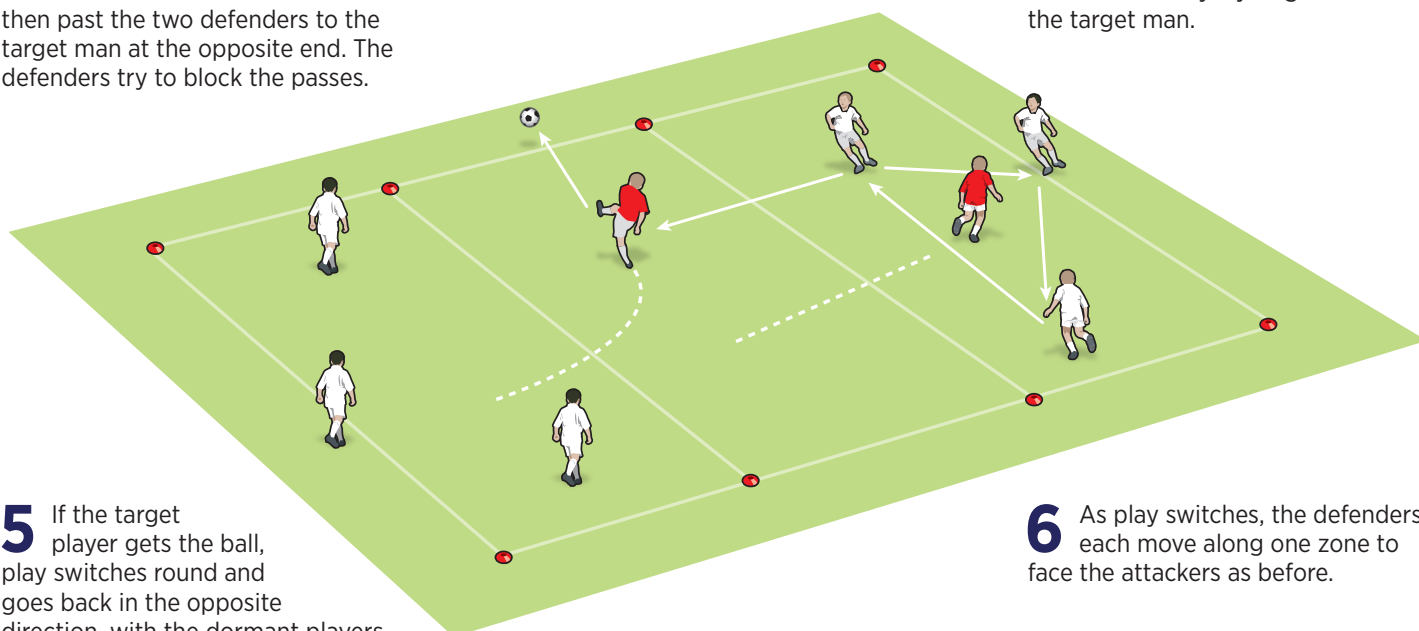
“Check where the passing options are” • “Support your team mate” • “Know where the ball is” • “Block passes or intercept the ball if you can”

1 Set out a 15 x 10 yards area split into three 5-yard zones. Split players into a team of six attackers and a team of two defenders.



2 Position players as follows: first zone - three attackers and one defender, centre zone - one defender, end zone - two attackers (who are dormant) plus a target man on the end line.

3 The aim is for the attacking players in the first zone to pass the ball between themselves and then past the two defenders to the target man at the opposite end. The defenders try to block the passes.



4 The attackers must make at least three passes in the first zone before they try to get the ball to the target man.

5 If the target player gets the ball, play switches round and goes back in the opposite direction, with the dormant players becoming active and their opposite numbers becoming dormant.

6 As play switches, the defenders each move along one zone to face the attackers as before.

How many players do I need?

We used eight players in this activity.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement

U12 | DEFENDING 2

Block passing routes

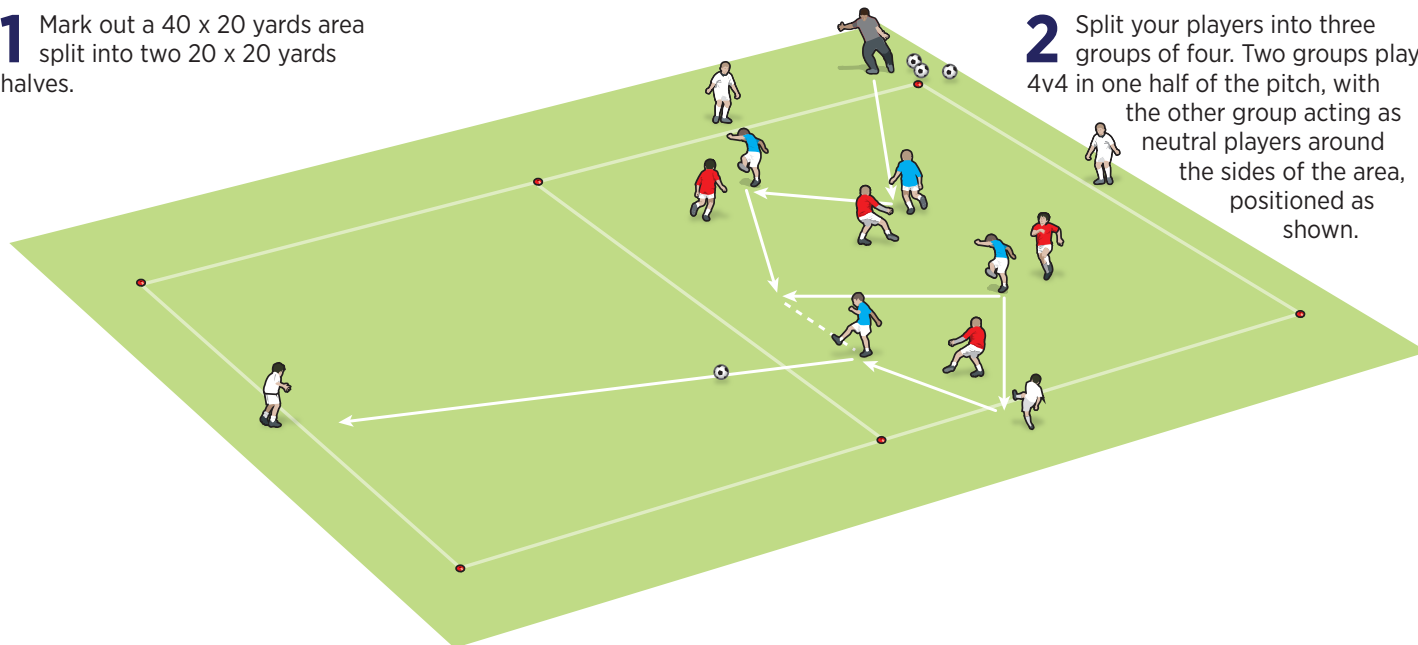
GAME: BLOCK POSITIONING

CALL OUT

“Check where the passing options are” • “Support your team mate” • “Know where the ball is” • “Block passes or intercept the ball if you can”

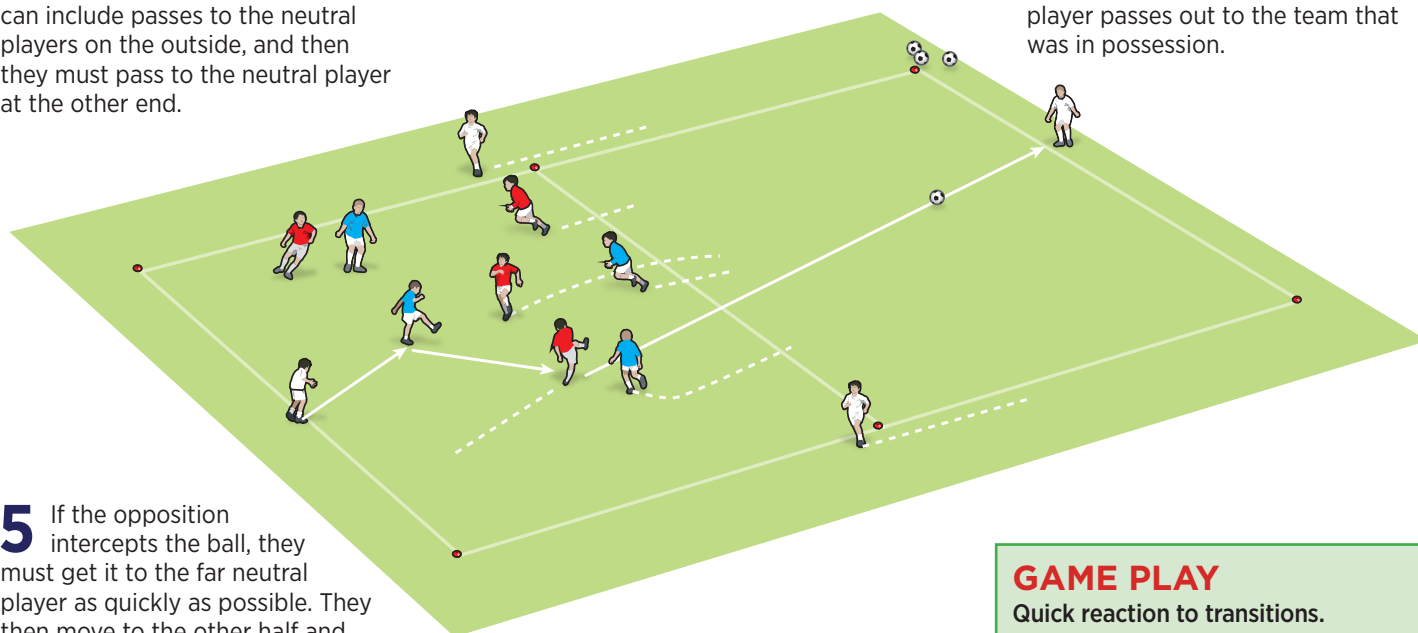
1 Mark out a 40 x 20 yards area split into two 20 x 20 yards halves.

2 Split your players into three groups of four. Two groups play 4v4 in one half of the pitch, with the other group acting as neutral players around the sides of the area, positioned as shown.



3 The coach passes a ball into the area. The team that wins the ball must make five passes, which can include passes to the neutral players on the outside, and then they must pass to the neutral player at the other end.

4 If the pass to the neutral player is successful, everyone moves into the other half and the neutral player passes out to the team that was in possession.



5 If the opposition intercepts the ball, they must get it to the far neutral player as quickly as possible. They then move to the other half and retain possession.

GAME PLAY

Quick reaction to transitions.
Press play and win the ball.
Look up and see the pass.

How many players do I need?

We used 12 players in this game.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	--->	--->
	--->	--->
	--->	--->

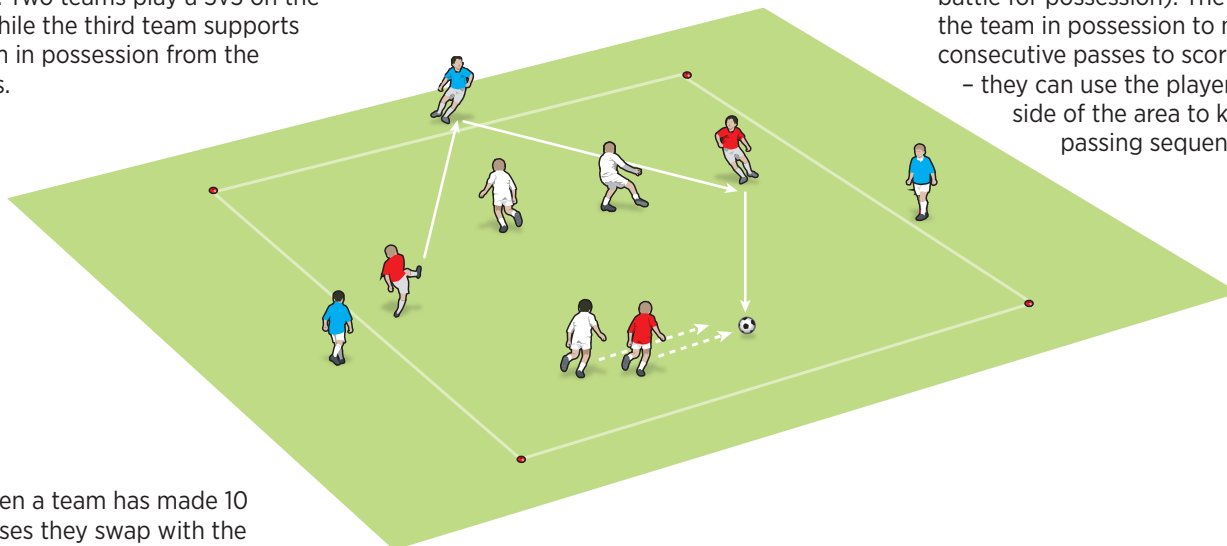
Full pitch pressure to win the ball

ACTIVITY: 6V3 COMBINATIONS

CALL OUT

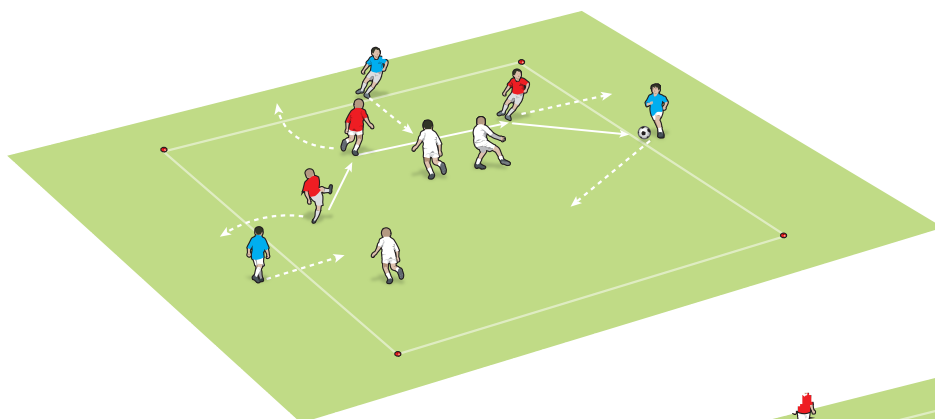
“Close down quickly” • “Don’t commit until you see a good chance to win the ball” • “Try and force a mistake” • “Win the ball”

1 Mark out a 16 x 16 yards area. Split the players into three teams of three. Two teams play a 3v3 on the pitch, while the third team supports the team in possession from the sidelines.



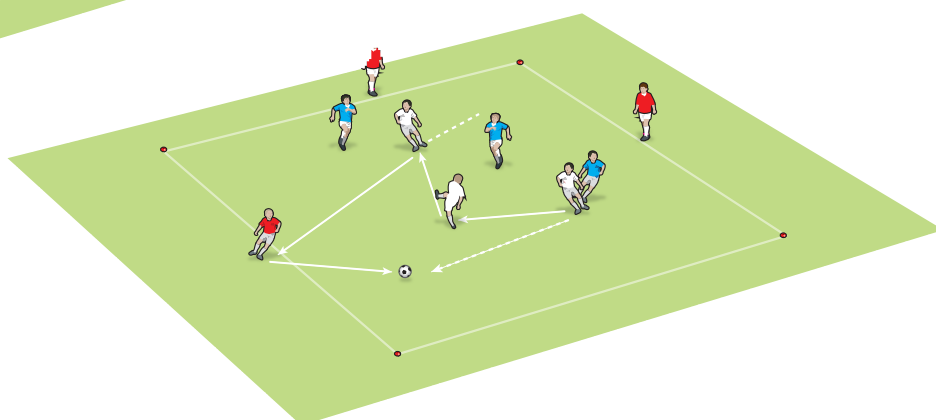
2 Start by giving one team the ball (or throw the ball in and let them battle for possession). The aim is for the team in possession to make 10 consecutive passes to score a point – they can use the players on the side of the area to keep the passing sequence going.

3 When a team has made 10 passes they swap with the team on the outside of the pitch and become support players.



4 The defending team has to work hard to stop the other team getting 10 passes. Make sure you change the defending team often.

5 The defenders should win the ball before the 10 passes have been completed. Experiment with the number of passes to make it easier or harder for the passing team.



How many players do I need?

You need nine players for this activity.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	Run with the ball	Shot

U12 | DEFENDING 3

Full pitch pressure to win the ball

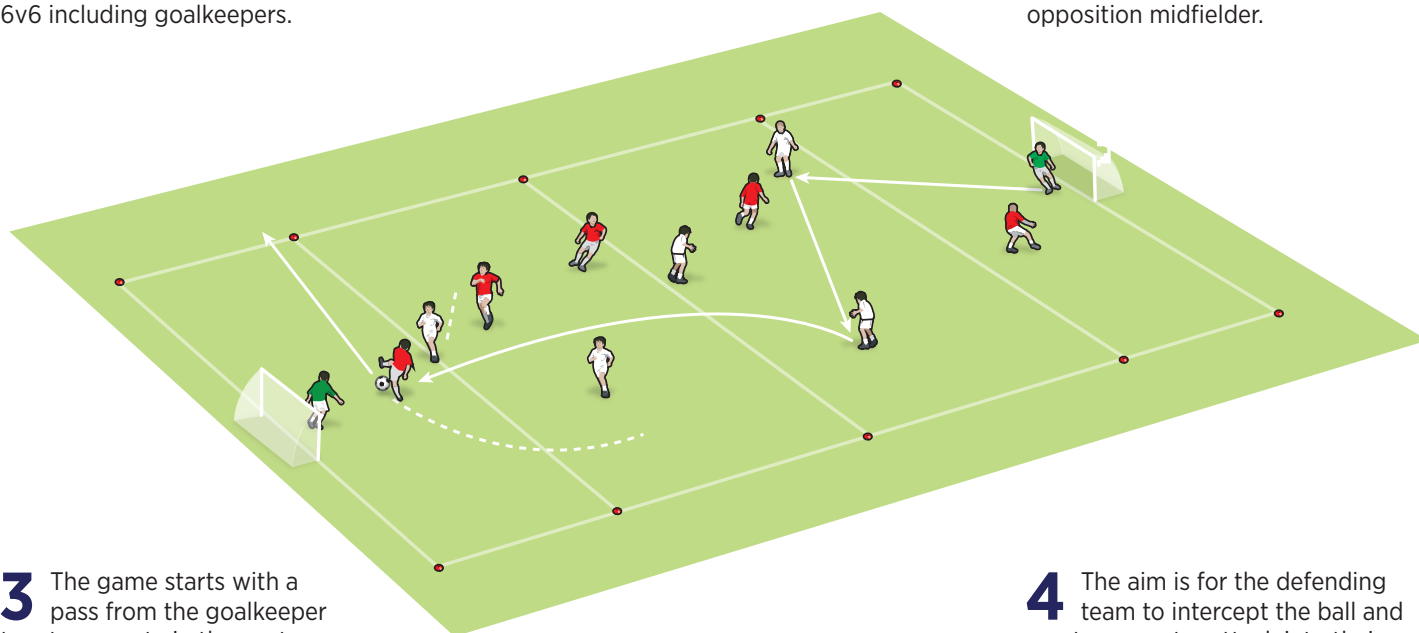
GAME: PASSING RACE

CALL OUT

“Close down quickly” • “Don’t commit until you see a good chance to win the ball” • “Try and force a mistake” • “Win the ball”

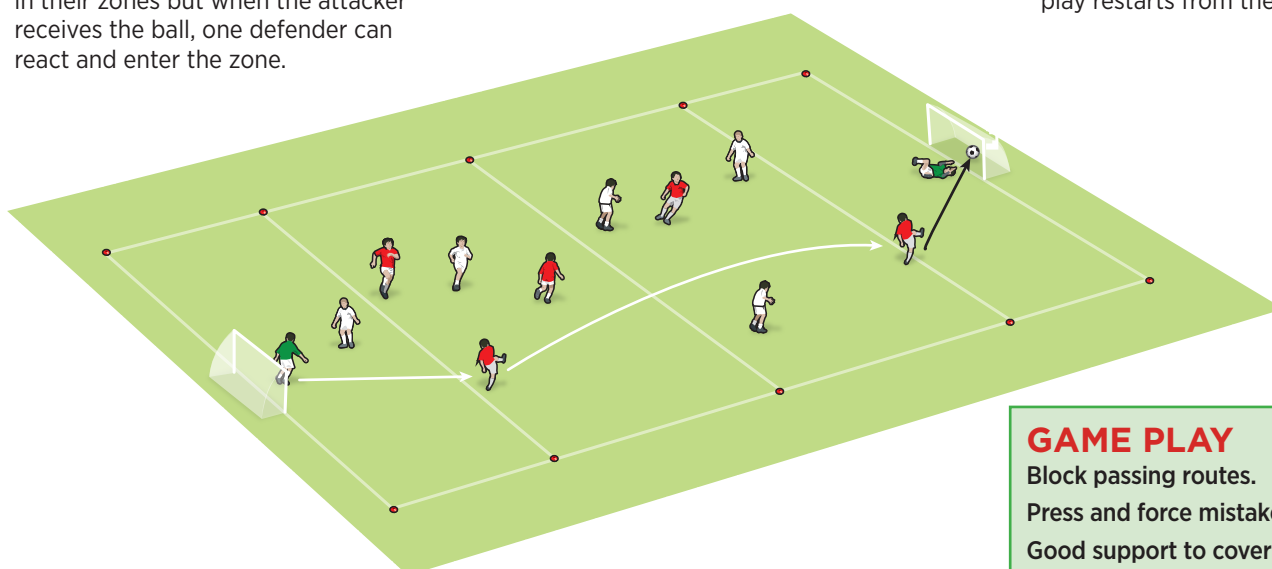
1 Set up a 50 x 20 yards area split into four zones. The centre two zones should be 15 yards and the end zones 10 yards. Split your players into two teams playing 6v6 including goalkeepers.

2 Set up so the end zones have a keeper and an opposition attacker and the middle zones have three defender/midfielders and one opposition midfielder.



3 The game starts with a pass from the goalkeeper to a team mate in the centre zone and the game goes live on the team mate’s first touch. Players must stay in their zones but when the attacker receives the ball, one defender can react and enter the zone.

4 The aim is for the defending team to intercept the ball and create a counter attack into their attacker. If the defending team puts the ball out from an interception, play restarts from their goalkeeper.



GAME PLAY

Block passing routes.
Press and force mistakes.
Good support to cover the lone attacker.

How many players do I need?

We used 12 players in this session.

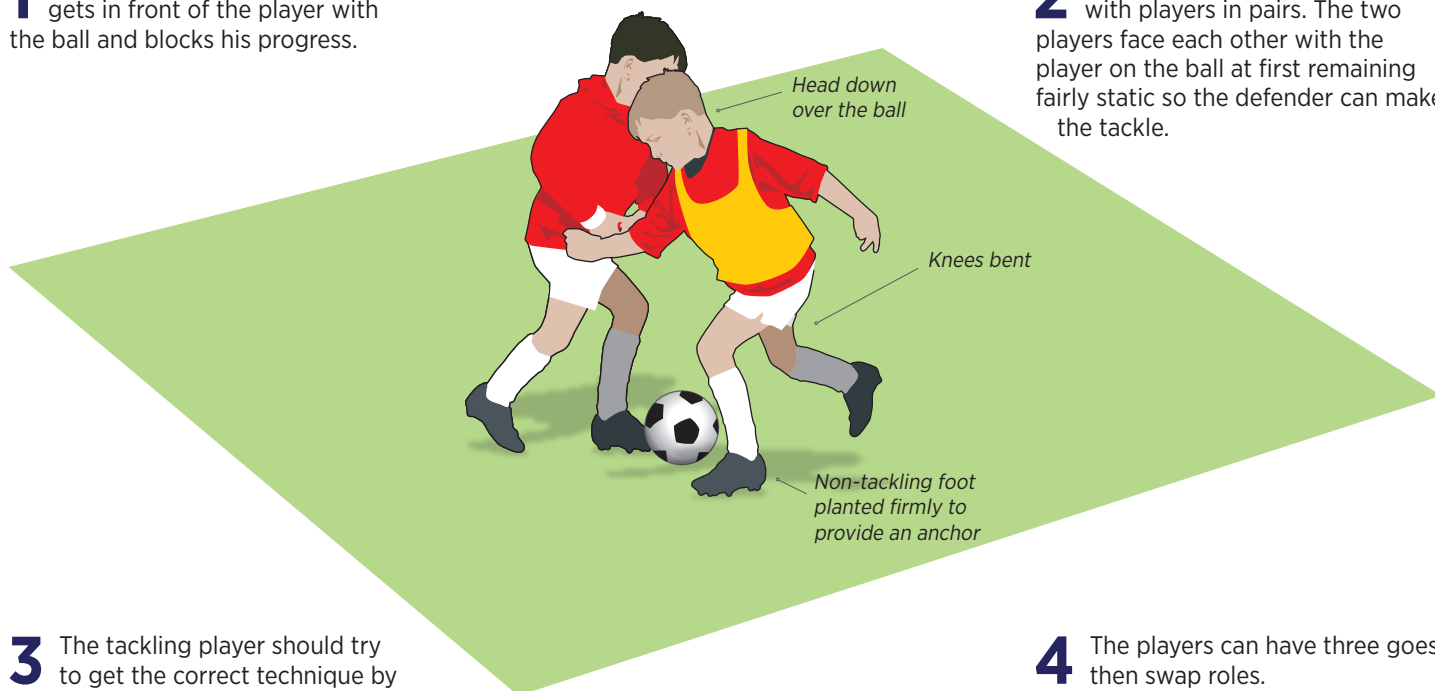
Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	Run with the ball	Shot

Make a block tackle

ACTIVITY: THE BLOCK TACKLE

CALL OUT "Head over the ball" • "Bend your knees" • "Lock your ankle"

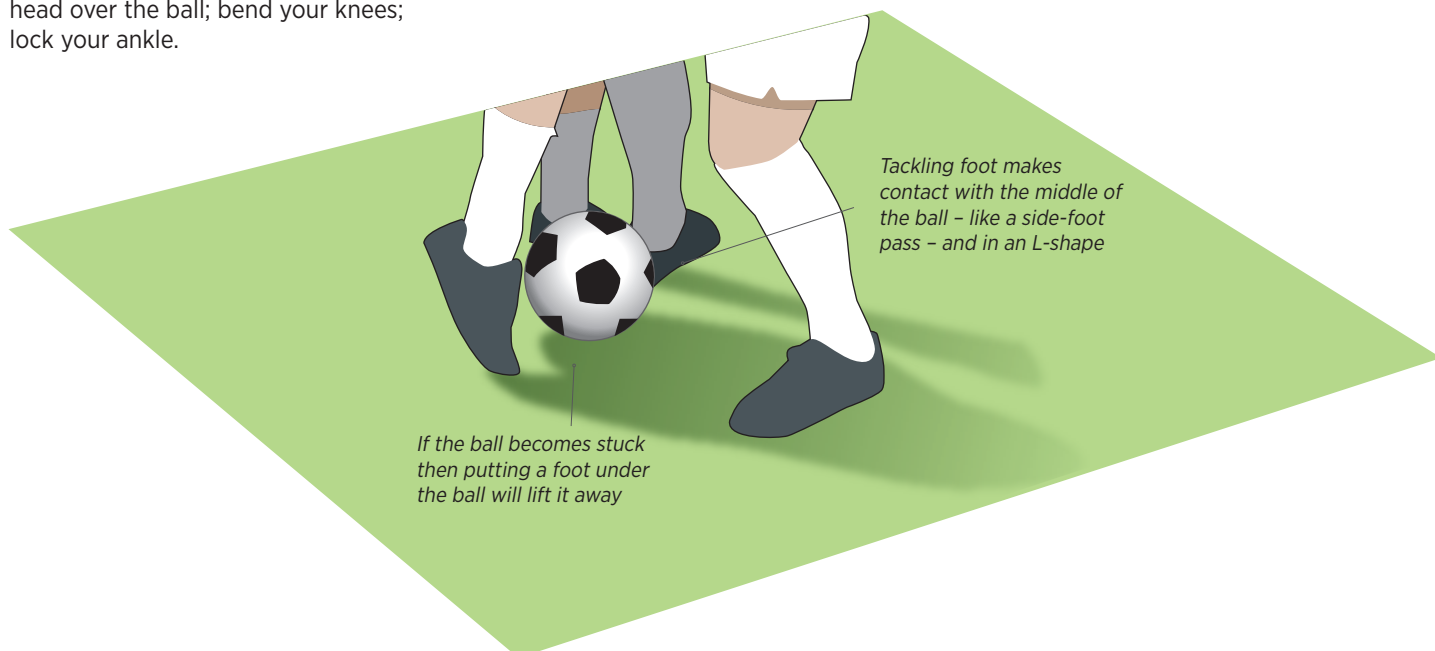
1 In a block tackle the defender gets in front of the player with the ball and blocks his progress.



2 Run through the block tackle with players in pairs. The two players face each other with the player on the ball at first remaining fairly static so the defender can make the tackle.

3 The tackling player should try to get the correct technique by going slowly through the checklist: head over the ball; bend your knees; lock your ankle.

4 The players can have three goes then swap roles.



How many players do I need?

Players work in pairs.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	----->	----->
	Run with the ball	Shot
	----->	----->

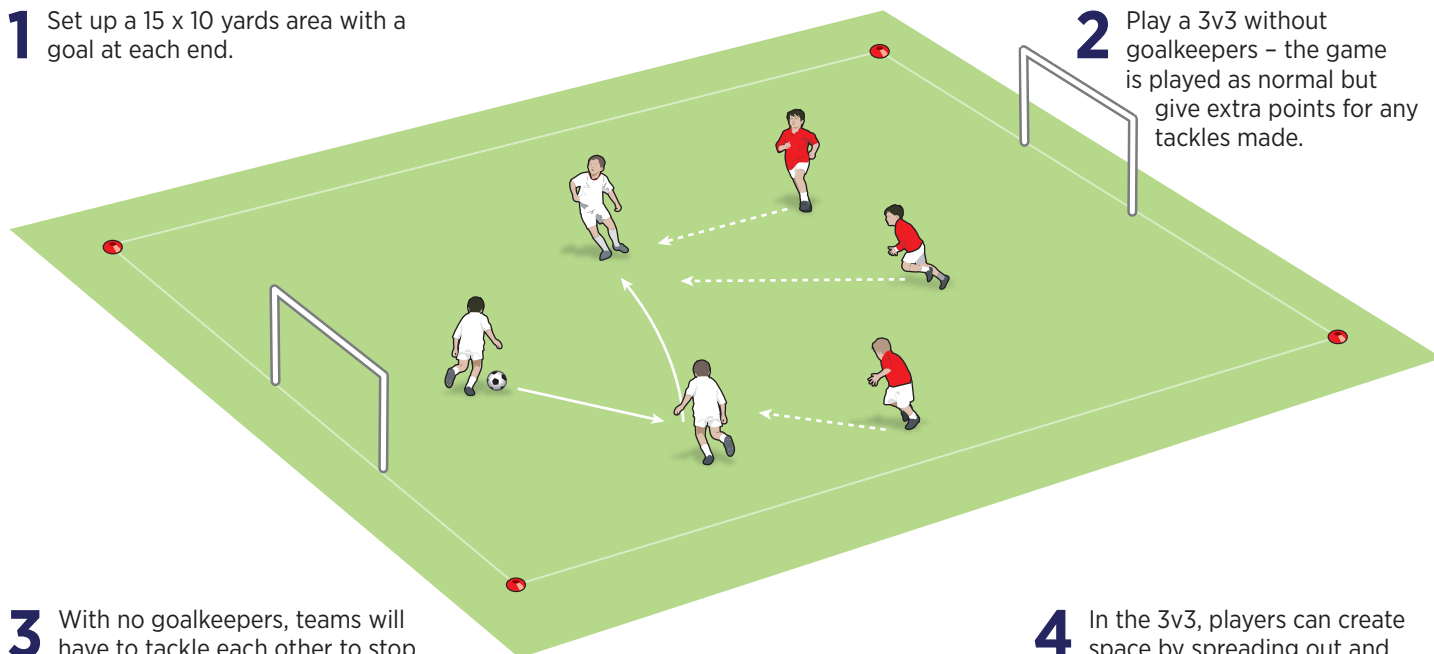
U12 | DEFENDING 4

Make a block tackle

GAME: TACKLE IN A 3V3

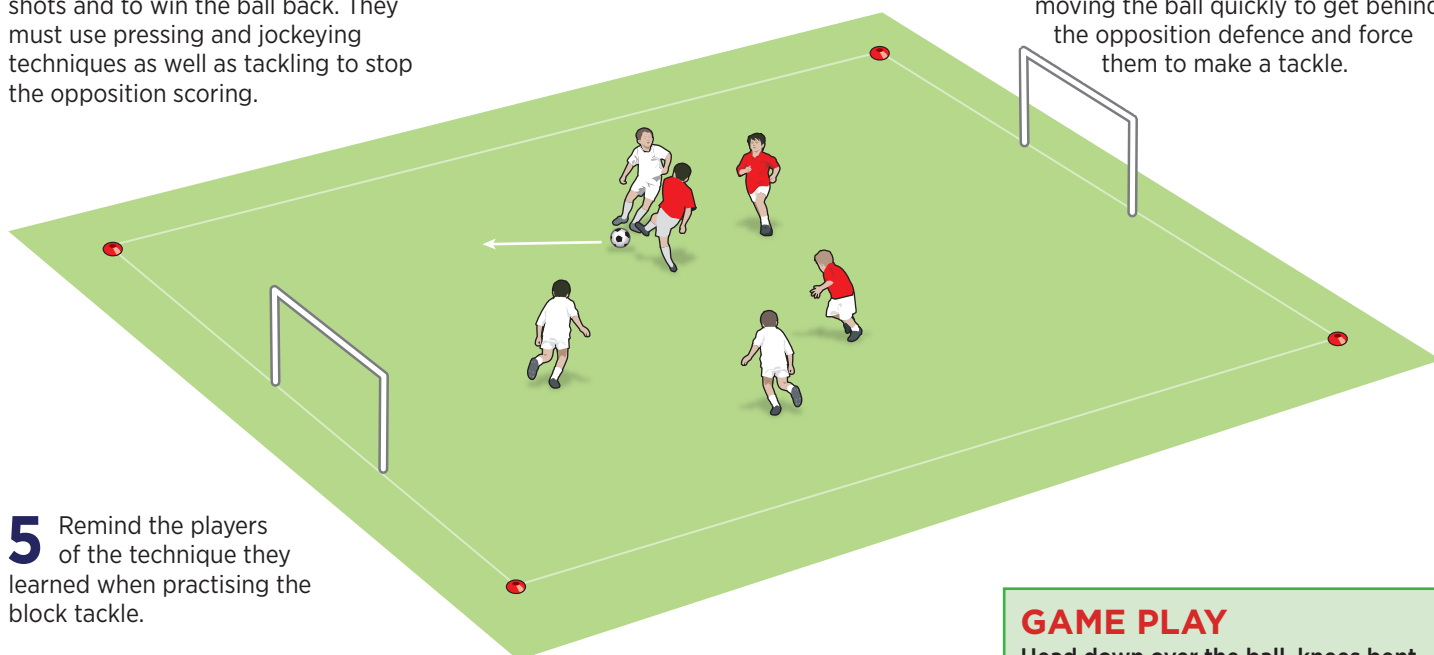
CALL OUT

1 Set up a 15 x 10 yards area with a goal at each end.



2 Play a 3v3 without goalkeepers – the game is played as normal but give extra points for any tackles made.

3 With no goalkeepers, teams will have to tackle each other to stop shots and to win the ball back. They must use pressing and jockeying techniques as well as tackling to stop the opposition scoring.



4 In the 3v3, players can create space by spreading out and moving the ball quickly to get behind the opposition defence and force them to make a tackle.

5 Remind the players of the technique they learned when practising the block tackle.

GAME PLAY

Head down over the ball, knees bent.
Firm standing leg.
The knee and ankle locked so the leg is strong.

How many players do I need?

This game uses six players.

Key	Player movement	Ball movement
	Run with the ball	Shot

EasiCoach

SOCCER SKILLS ACTIVITIES

U11-U12

RESOURCES

Parental checklist: U11 skills

NAME OF PLAYER:	Beginning	Developing	Mastering
DATE:			
BALL CONTROL			
1 Pass to a team mate 5 and 10 yards using both feet			
2 Receive turn and pass 5 and 10 yards			
3 Dribble the ball 10 yards with one complete turn			
4 Run with the ball and pass at speed			
5 Shielding the ball			
ATTACKING			
1 Beat a player 1v1			
2 Dribble with the ball and shoot			
3 Attacking build up play			
4 Penetrate the final third			
5 Score a goal			
DEFENDING			
1 Recover when the ball is lost in transition			
2 Block passing routes			
3 Full pitch pressure to win the ball			
4 Make a slide tackle			

Notes: This assessment checklist is intended as a guide to progress only. Assess your child's progress against the three criteria above for 10-year-olds. For example, is your child mastering the concept of dribbling towards the opposition goal (for a 10-year-old)? Some skills will be mastered (for a 10-year-old) in a short space of time. Only the most able will master all the skills by the time they move to U12, but this doesn't matter. Some take longer to develop than others. Make copies of this page and regularly reassess your child's progress as a way of providing praise.

Parental checklist: U12 skills

NAME OF PLAYER:	Beginning	Developing	Mastering
DATE:			
BALL CONTROL			
1 Pass 8 yards to a team mate			
2 Receive, control and pass			
3 Dribble the ball and turn with it			
4 Fun heading race			
ATTACKING			
1 Develop turning skills			
2 Dribble with the ball and shoot			
3 Attacking build up play			
4 Passing and support play			
5 Score a goal			
DEFENDING			
1 Recover when the ball is lost in transition			
2 Block passing routes			
3 Full pitch pressure to win the ball			
4 Make a block tackle			

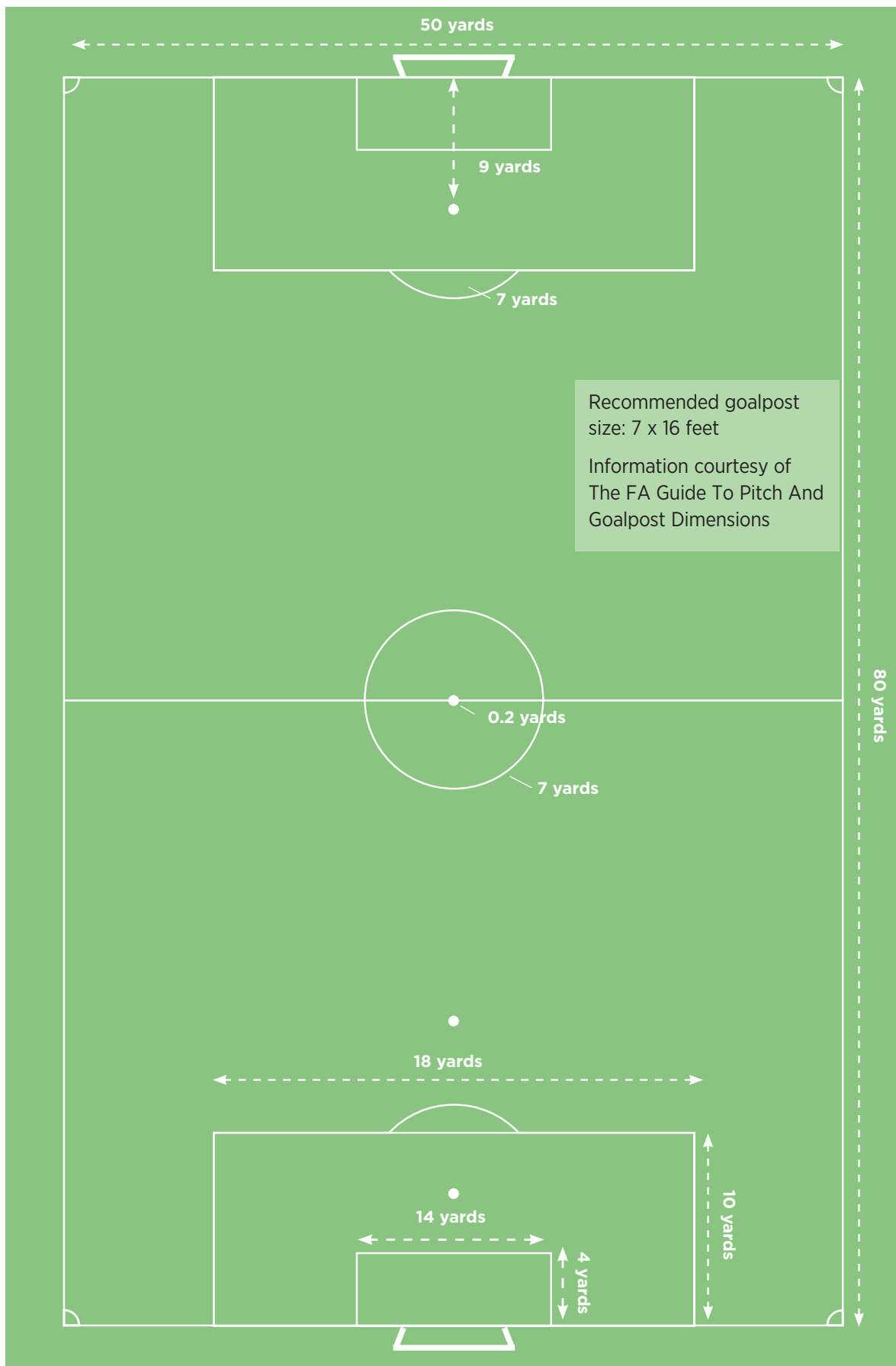
Notes: This assessment checklist is intended as a guide to progress only. Assess your child's progress against the three criteria above for 11-year-olds. For example, is your child mastering the concept of dribbling forward and shooting inside the penalty area (for an 11-year-old)? Some skills will be mastered (for an 11-year-old) in a short space of time. Only the most able will master all the skills by the time they move to U13, but this doesn't matter. Some take longer to develop than others. Make copies of this page and regularly reassess your child's progress as a way of providing praise.

Parental checklist: U11-U12 skills

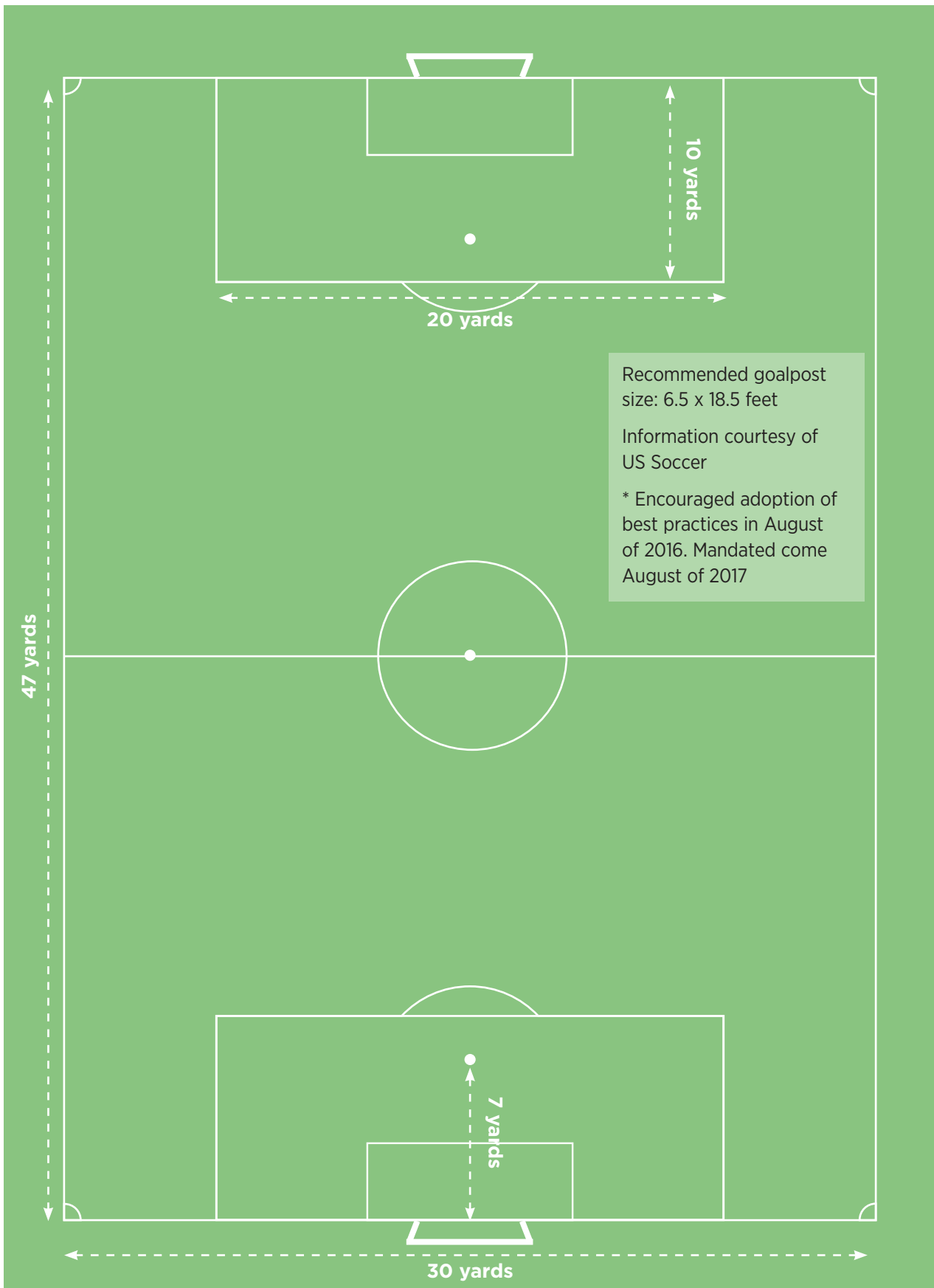
NAME OF PLAYER:	Beginning	Developing	Mastering
DATE:			
SKILLS			
1 180° Spin			
2 The Cruyff turn			
3 Volley			
4 First touch			
5 Jockeying			
6 The stop turn			
7 The feint			
RESTARTS			
1 Kick-off			
2 Throw-in			
3 Corner kick			
4 Free kick			
5 Penalty kick			
GOALKEEPING			
1 Correct diving technique			
2 Punching the ball			
3 Shot stopping reactions			
4 Quick reactions and positioning			
5 Gather a rolling ball			
6 Stopping a ball at striker's feet			
HEADING			
1 Correct heading technique in attack			
2 Correct heading technique in defence			

Notes: This assessment checklist is intended as a guide to progress only. Assess your child's progress against the criteria above for 10 to 11-year-olds. For example, is your child mastering the concept of free kicks (for a 10-year-old)? Some skills will be mastered (for a 10-year-old) in a short space of time. Only the most able will master all the skills by the time they move to U13, but this doesn't matter. Some take longer to develop than others. Make copies of this page and regularly reassess your child's progress as a way of providing praise.

FA RECOMMENDED PITCH SIZE U11-U12



US SOCCER PITCH SIZE U11-U12*



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David Clarke

As Head Coach of Soccer Coach Weekly, David Clarke provides thousands of subscribers worldwide with drills, insight, interviews and webinars covering all aspects of coaching. Soccer Coach Weekly is now in its ninth season with over 400 issues produced.

Dave has coached grassroots teams for 20 years, from U7s to U16s and has always had as his goal to help young players to be the best they can.

Dave's qualifications include: UEFA B license and FA youth module 1, 2 and 3, the Coerver Youth Module, and he has been a lecturer and presenter for the National Soccer Coaches Association of America.



How EasiCoach Was Created...

EasiCoach Soccer Curriculum™ has been created by the people who publish Soccer Coach Weekly coaching magazine. We have been publishing sports coaching advice for grassroots coaches since 2003.

Covering the key core skills required for consistent player development across five age ranges from U7 to U16, EasiCoach follows the latest guidelines on player development and has been approved by senior national coaching development officers.

As a coaching tool aimed at helping beginner coaches, volunteer assistants and helpers, EasiCoach offers a guaranteed programme of skills development activities every season.

EasiCoach is owned by Green Star Media Ltd, which provides informed, easy-to-follow advice for 450,000 soccer, rugby and basketball coaches in more than 80 countries. For more information, please visit www.greenstarmedia.net

SOCCER COACH WEEKLY



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The Best Soccer Drills Every Week!

SCORE LIKE POGGBA

Work Your Strike Force

Pass, turn, shoot then move quickly to get back into position - this session encourages your players to get to the ball first and shoot quickly.

WHY USE IT? This drill is a variation of the 'Pass, Turn, Shoot' drill. It is a great way to improve your players' ability to pass, turn, shoot and then move quickly to get back into position. It is also a great way to improve your players' ability to work together as a team.

SET UP: The drill is set up on a half of the pitch. The coach stands in the middle of the half. There are four players in each half. The players are divided into two groups of two. Each group is given a ball.

HOW TO PLAY: The coach starts by passing the ball to one of the players in each half. The player then passes the ball to the other player in their half. The player then shoots the ball towards the goal. The other player in their half then moves quickly to get back into position. The coach then repeats the drill with the other group.

TECHNIQUE: The player who shoots the ball should use a firm, straight strike. The player who moves quickly to get back into position should use a quick, short pass.

5 Minute Technique: Dribbling

Each player has a ball - one used to be in the centre.

The players make one change of direction and make a change away from the direction of play.

Fitness: First touch and pass

The working player receives and passes.

Then the working player receives and passes.

Defenders Into Strikers

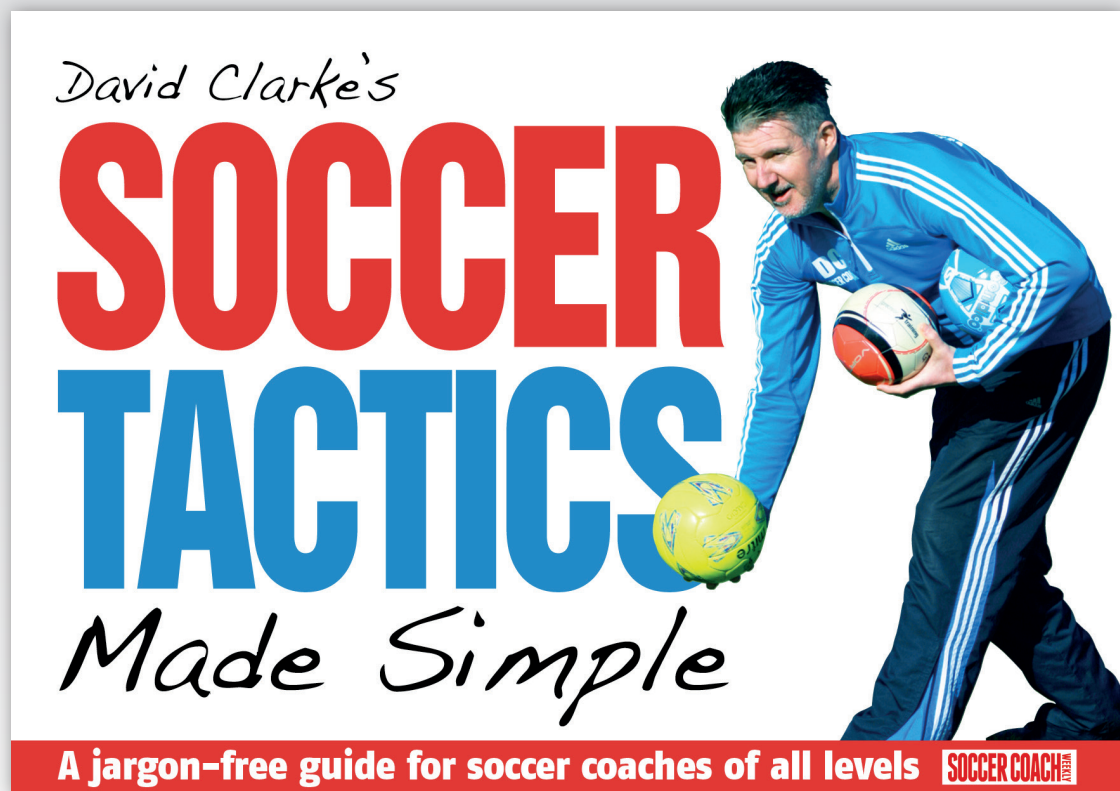
Thiago Silva and David Luiz can offer an attacking surprise.

TIPS FOR ATTACKING CENTRE BACKS

When you are attacking, you should be looking for the ball. You should be looking for the ball in the half. You should be looking for the ball in the half. You should be looking for the ball in the half.

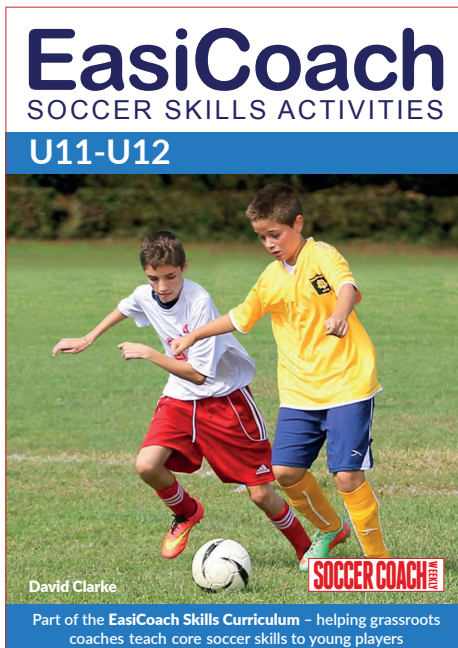
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EasiCoach is from the author of the best-selling *Made Simple* manuals



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EasiCoach provides ready-made, age-appropriate, safe training activities, set out clearly on a single page, that even a child could understand.

For each activity there is also a relevant game, so the players learn a skill in an activity and then use that skill in a game.

Follow all the materials in this manual and your players will be learning the right skills for their age group.

They will be having more fun, and be on a gradual development pathway that will make them better, more skilful, players and continue playing soccer for longer.

