NORTHBRIDGE FC

DISCOVERY PHASE

COACHING SESSIONS

DISCOVERY PHASE – MODEL TRAINING SESSION

- SESSIONS MUST COMPRISE OF THREE MAIN COMPONENTS
  - THE BEGINNING
    - WARM UP EXERCISES WITH AND WITHOUT THE BALL 10 - 15 MINUTES
  - THE MIDDLE
    - FUN FOOTBALL ACTIVITIES SUCH AS PASSING, SHOOTING AND DRIBBLING

      20 - 25 MINUTES
  - THE END
    - A VARIETY OF SMALL SIDED GAMES

      20 – 25 MINUTES

SESSION STRUCTURE

- WELCOME
- THE BEGINNING
- THE MIDDLE
- THE END
- WRAP UP

MODEL SESSION 1.

Model Session 1

Beginning: Relays

Explanation for relays

- Each player starts with a ball, dribbles around the marker (as shown in diagrams 1 and 2) and returns to the start
- Upon returning to the starting point, the next player starts the same pattern with their own ball

Guidelines for relays

- Avoid long queues
- Keep players as active as possible (don't keep them waiting in line for too long)
- Give the group a quick break for a drink when necessary
- All relays in this section can be performed with and without the ball (the preference is to always use the ball, but it is fine to take the ball out of the relays early in the session)
- The more skill your players acquire, the more the ball should be used and the greater the challenges can be
- If there are more than six players, make another lane of cones and keep it to two players in a line (this avoids long queues)

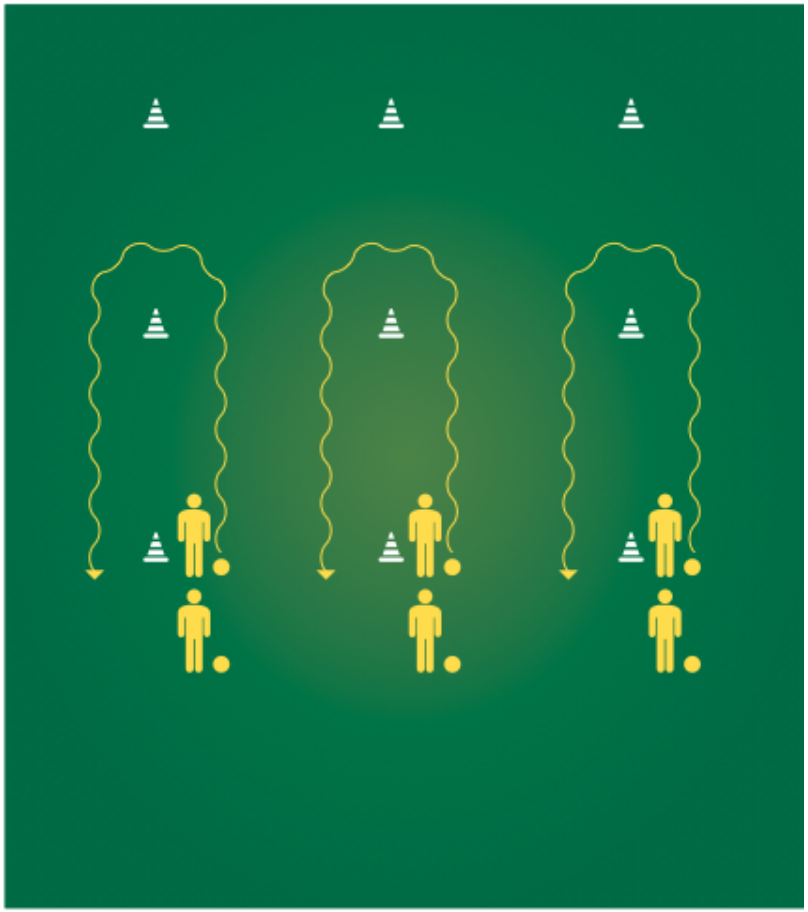


Diagram 1

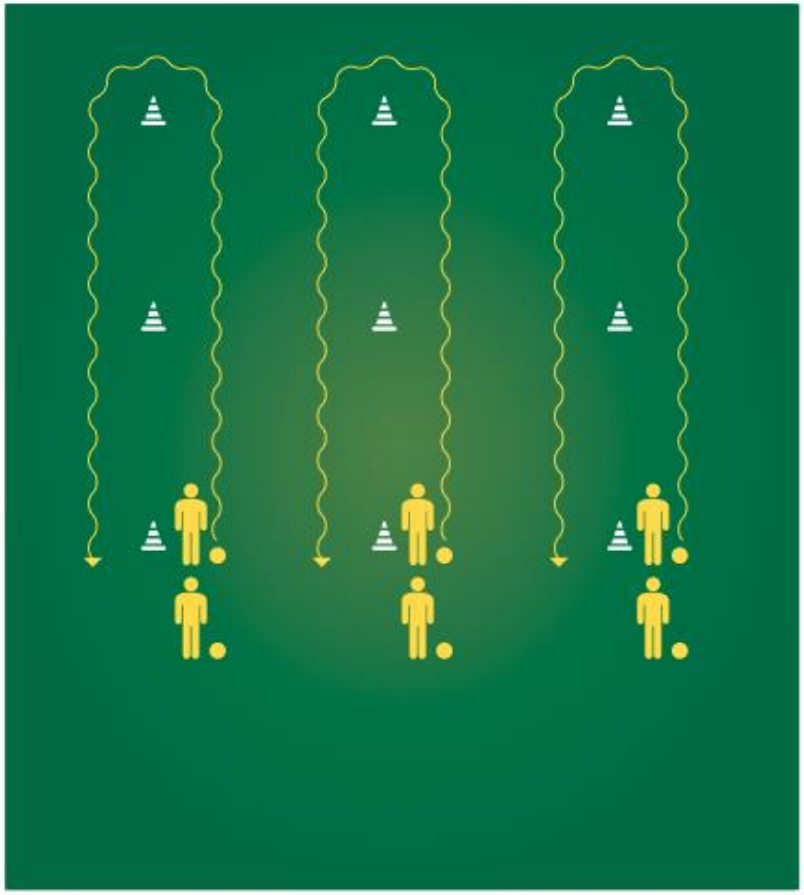


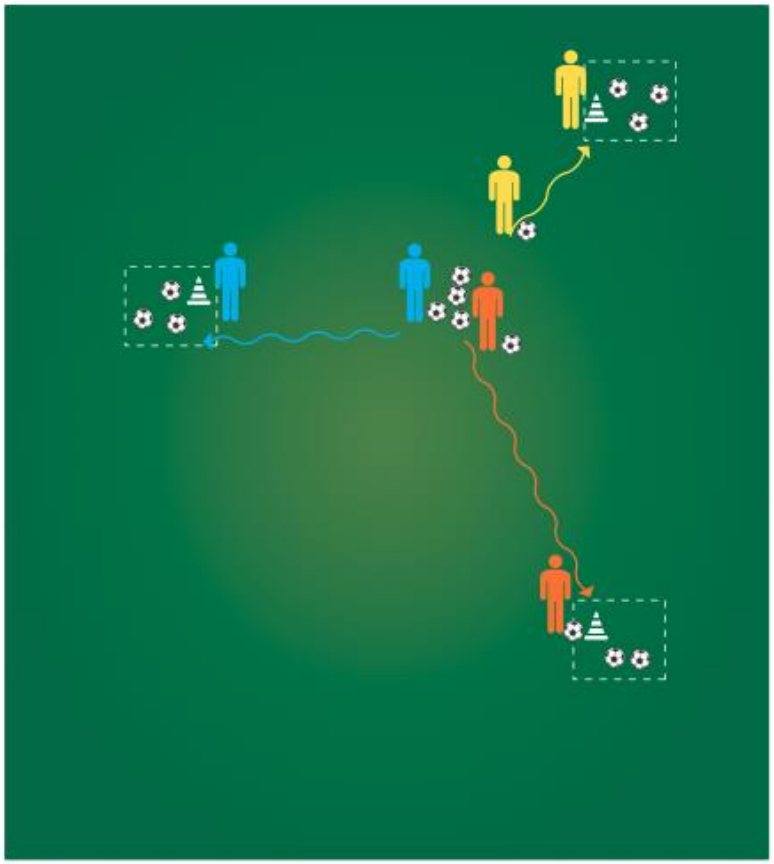
Diagram 2

Middle: Feather the Nest

Mark out a triangle with sides 10m–12m long. Three teams of two players are positioned at each corner with a cluster of balls in the middle of the triangle. The object of the game is to gather as many balls as possible for the corner or 'nest' within a set time period.

One player from each team runs to the middle of the triangle to get a ball and dribbles it to their corner, or nest, and leaves it there. Their team-mate then does the same. When all the balls in the middle of the triangle are gone, players can take them from someone else's nest.

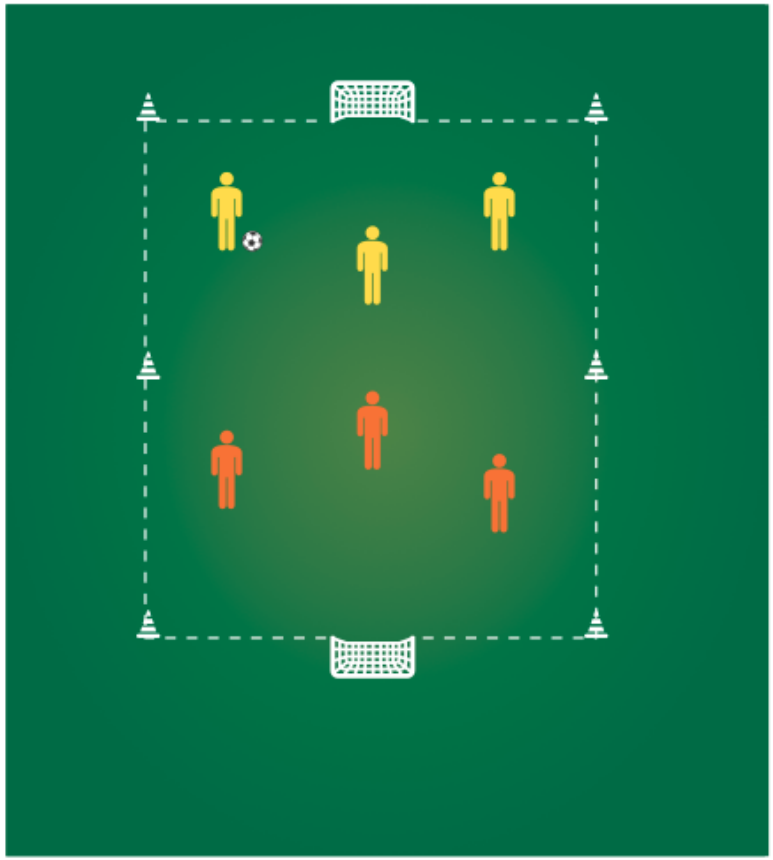
Players are NOT allowed to stop others from taking balls from their nest – no blocking, defending, tackling, etc. No hands! Feet only.



End: 3 v 3 (or 4 v 4, 5 v 5) Training Game

Length: 20m–25m
Width: 14m–18m
Goal: 2m–3m

- "Just let them play"
- You can play with or without goalkeepers
- Short games - 3 to 5 mins in length (with regular drink breaks)



MODEL SESSION 2.

Model Session 2

Beginning: Stuck-in-the-mud

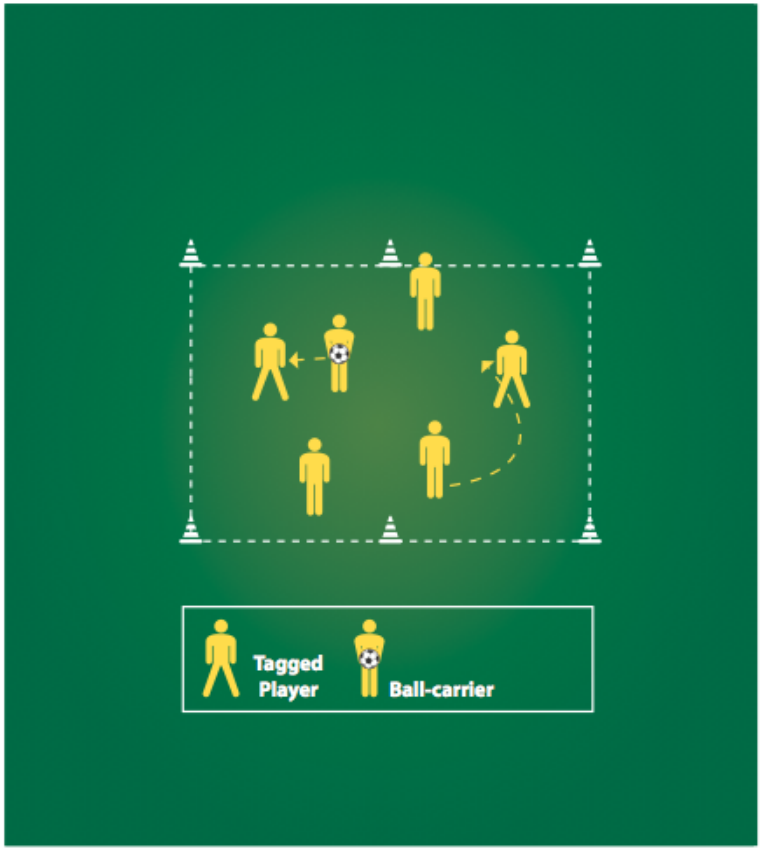
Mark out a 10m × 14m area. Five players try to avoid one player who carries a ball in their hands.

The ball-carrier attempts to tag the runners by touching them with the ball (make sure the ball is not thrown and that players aim for the trunk). If a player is tagged, they are 'stuck in the mud', and stand with their legs wide apart until a team-mate frees them by crawling through their legs.

Each ball-carrier has 30 seconds to tag as many players as possible.
After 30 seconds, change the ball-carrier.

Progression:

- Ball-carrier dribbles the ball around the field and tags the players with their hand, while keeping the ball close to them (if this progression proves difficult for them, make the field smaller)

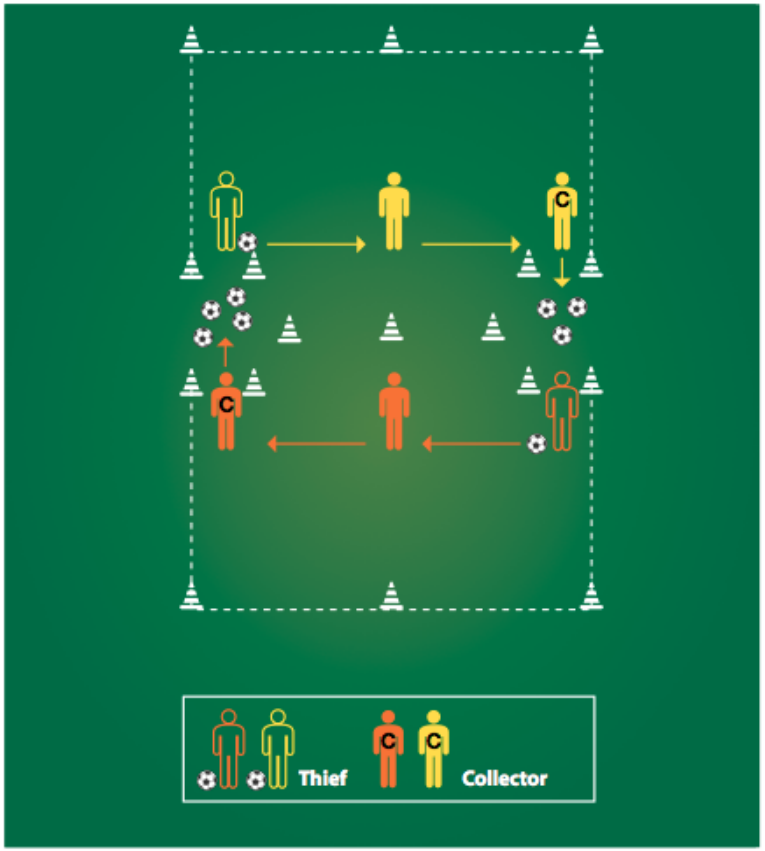


Middle: Robin Hood

Two teams of three split up as shown in the diagram opposite. Each team starts with an equal number of balls in their 'safe'. When the game begins, each team can start stealing balls from their opponent's 'safe' – there is one 'thief' who takes a ball and passes it across the first 'moat' to their team-mate; they then pass it across the second 'moat', to their team's 'collector', who puts it in the team's 'safe'.

Meanwhile, their opponents are doing the same with their balls! After a set time period (e.g. two minutes), see which team has the most balls in their 'safe'. The team that passes and controls the balls best will have the most balls in their 'safe' and will therefore be the winners.

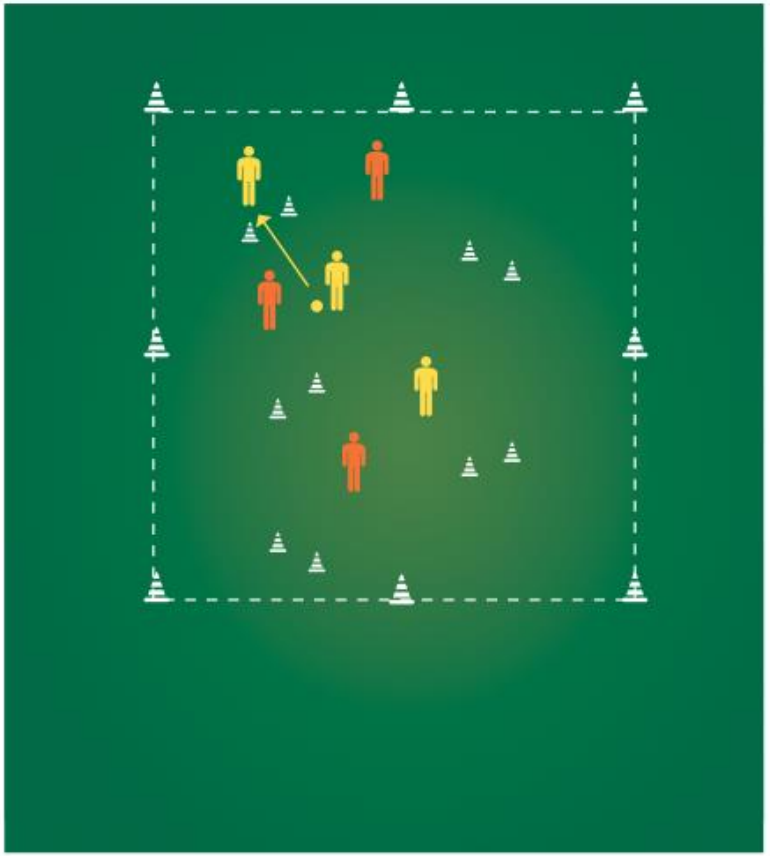
You can't use your hands – feet only!



End: Pass to score

Length: 15m–20m
Width: 15m
Goal: none (make 4 or 5 gates of 1m–2m width inside the area)

- To score a goal, pass the ball through any of the gates to a team-mate
- This game encourages passing



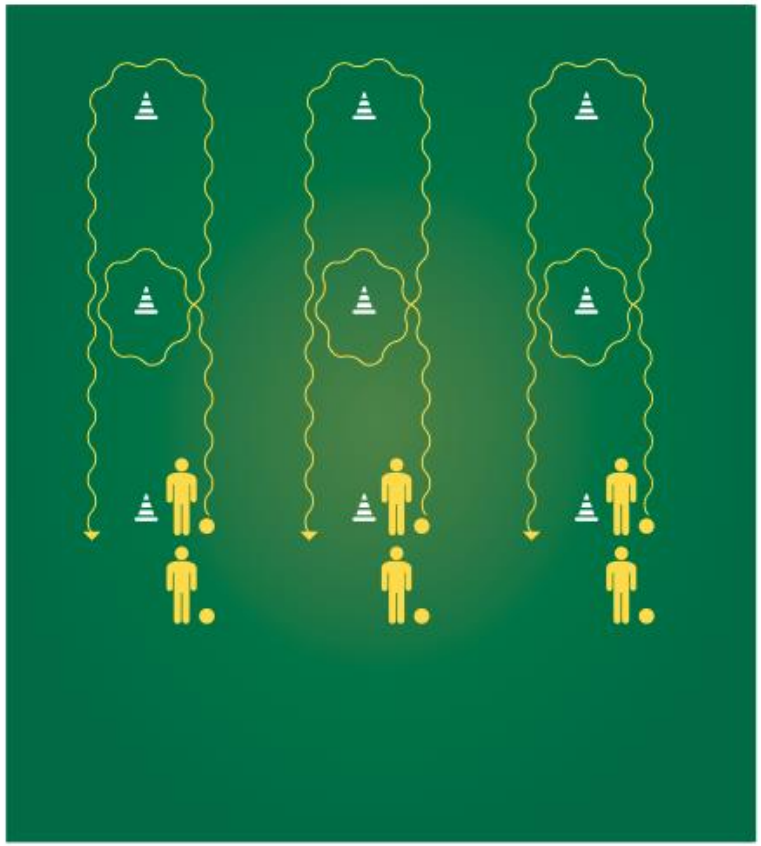
MODEL SESSION 3.

Model Session 3

Beginning: Relay

Explanation for relay

- Each player starts with a ball, and dribbles around the first marker in a full circle (as shown in diagram) then dribbles around the second marker, and then returns to the start
- Upon returning to the starting point, the next player starts the same pattern with their own ball

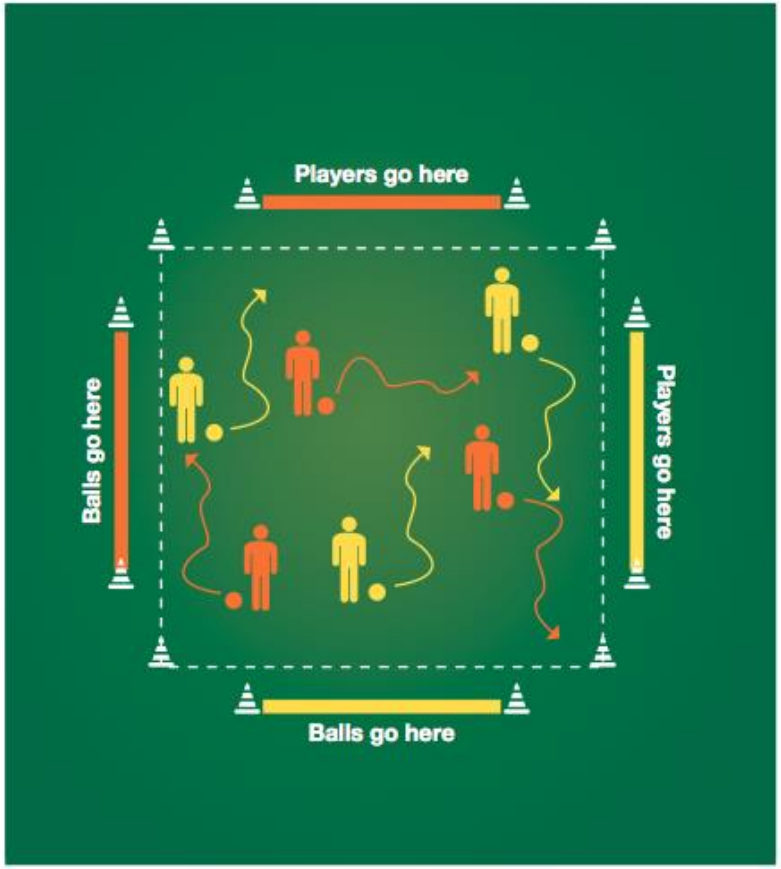


Middle: Empty it! Fill it!

Mark out a 14m × 14m square.

Players in two teams dribble balls inside the square. Outside the square, each team has two lines marked: one for their balls and one for themselves. On the call 'empty it!' the teams compete to be the first to empty the square.

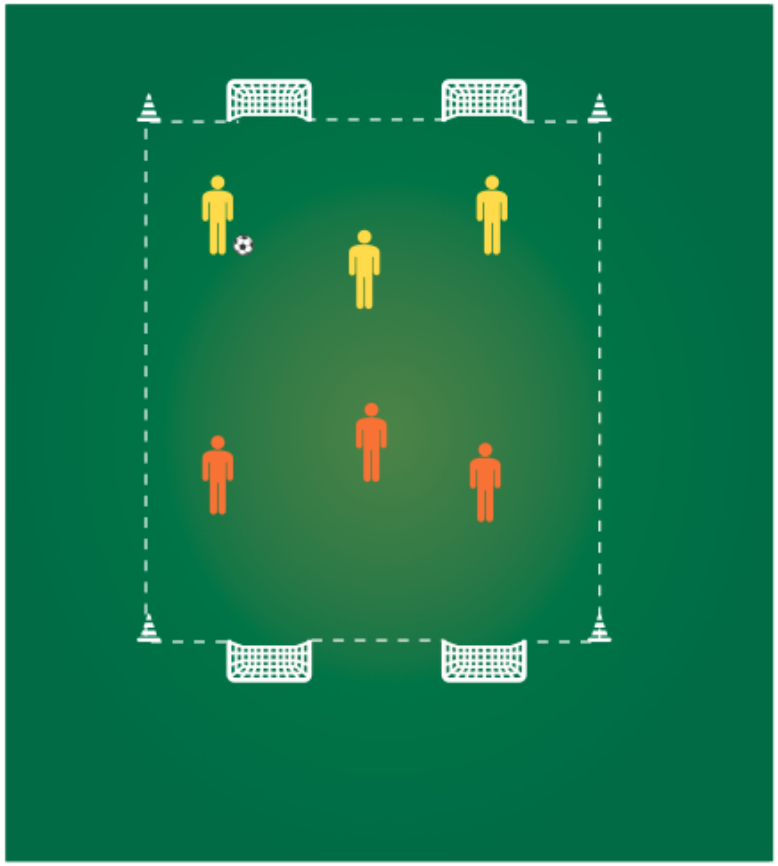
On the call 'fill it!' the teams compete to be the first to get all their balls and themselves back in the square.



End: 4-Goal football

Length: 20m
Width: 15m
Goal: 2 goals (2m wide) on each end-line

- There are no goalkeepers
- Goals can be scored in either of your opponents goals
- This game encourages shooting and scoring



MODEL SESSION 4.

Model Session 4

Beginning: Me and my shadow

Players get into pairs; one is designated as 'leader' and the other as 'follower'.

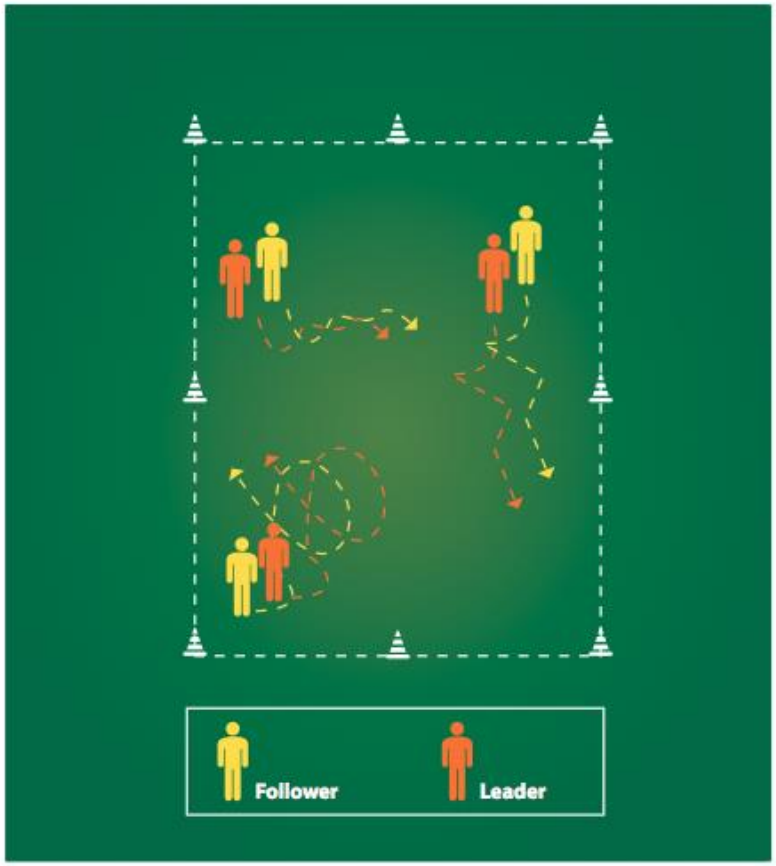
The 'leader' moves around the field, changing speed and direction frequently, and perhaps adding a variation here and there, such as a jump or a ground touch.

The 'follower' then copies everything the 'leader' does.

Change roles regularly and also change partners regularly.

Progression:

- The leader (only) has a ball
- The leader and the follower both have balls
- The follower has a ball (this is a difficult progression so instruct 'leader' to jog at medium speed around the area, with occasional random changes of direction)



Middle: 1 v 1 Mini Games

Make three small areas about 10m × 7m.

Players play 1 v 1 on each mini-field and score by dribbling the ball over the opponents' line.

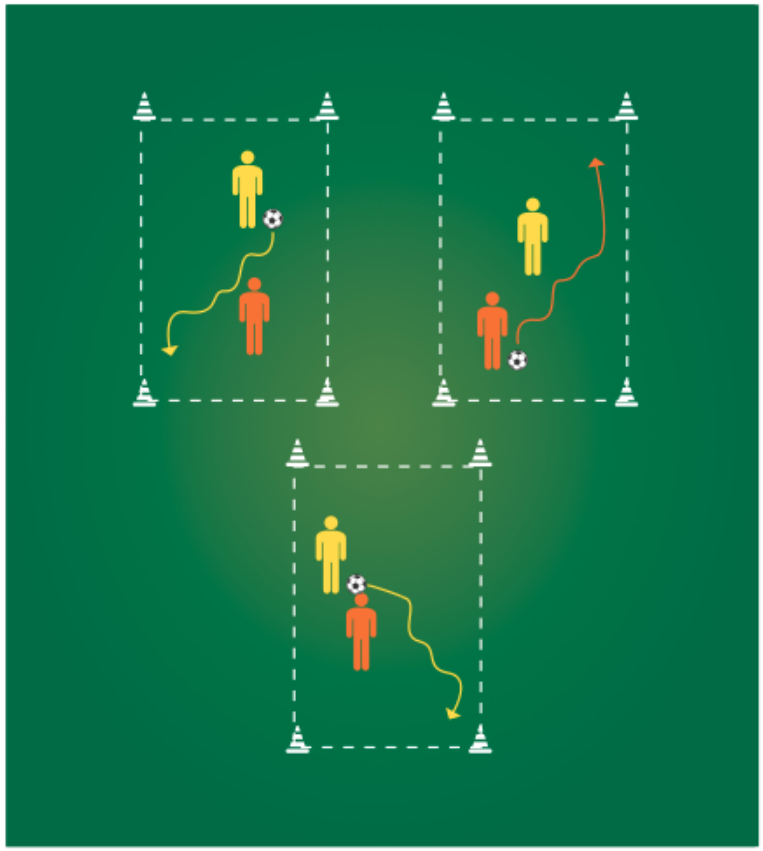
Think of safety when setting up; avoid scenarios where players could dribble into each other by allowing buffer zones.

Keep rotating so opponents are changed regularly. Rotation also allows a period of rest, so control how long rotation takes depending on how fatigued the players seem. You could also give some brief hints to the whole group in order to give them a rest.

Games should be no longer than 1 minute maximum.

If enough cones are available, progress to a small goal on each end-line for players to score in.

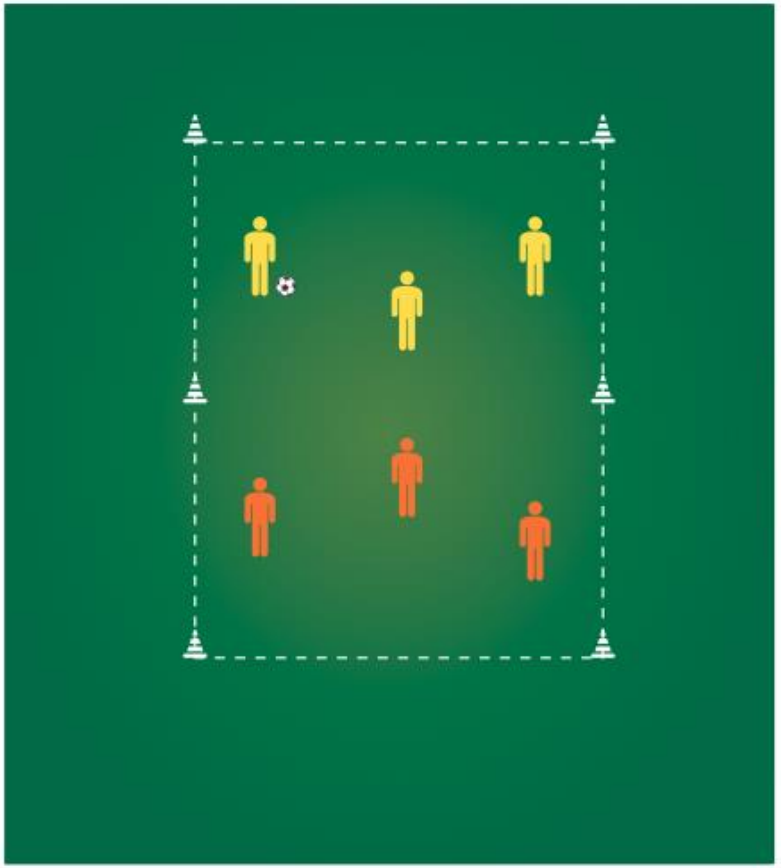
You will also need a good supply of spare balls, as they tend to go everywhere when shooting is introduced.



End: Line football 3 v 3 (or 4 v 4, 5 v 5)

Length: 20m
Width: 15m
Goal: none

- Usual rules, but method of scoring is to dribble the ball across the opponents' end line
- This game encourages dribbling and 1 v 1 skills



MODEL SESSION 5.

Model Session 5

Beginning: Relay

Explanation for relay

- Each player starts with a ball, and dribbles around the first marker and then cuts the ball, changing direction to the left (as shown in diagram 1). Then dribbles around the second marker, and repeats the same pattern (but cuts right this time) on the way back
- Upon returning to the starting point, the next player starts the same pattern with their own ball
- Variation - instead of all players beginning at the one point, they could be split up at either end
- Player 1 now dribbles around the first marker and then passes the ball to player 2 (as shown in diagram 2), who repeats the same movement and passes to player 3

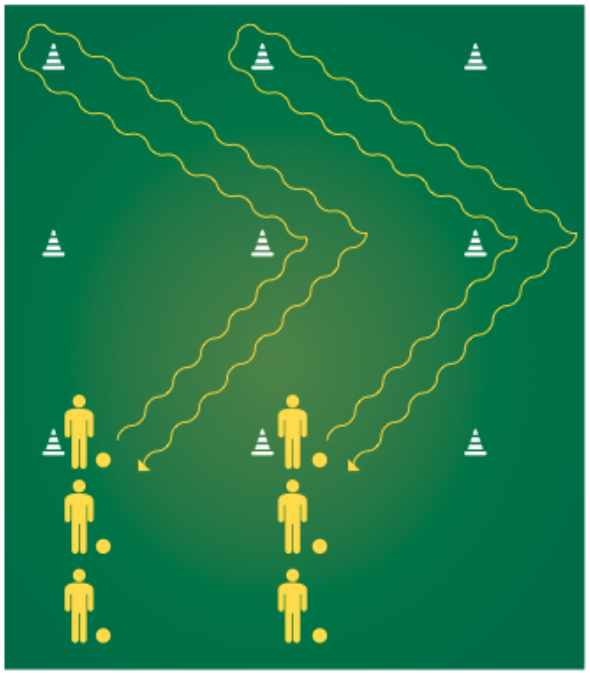


Diagram 1

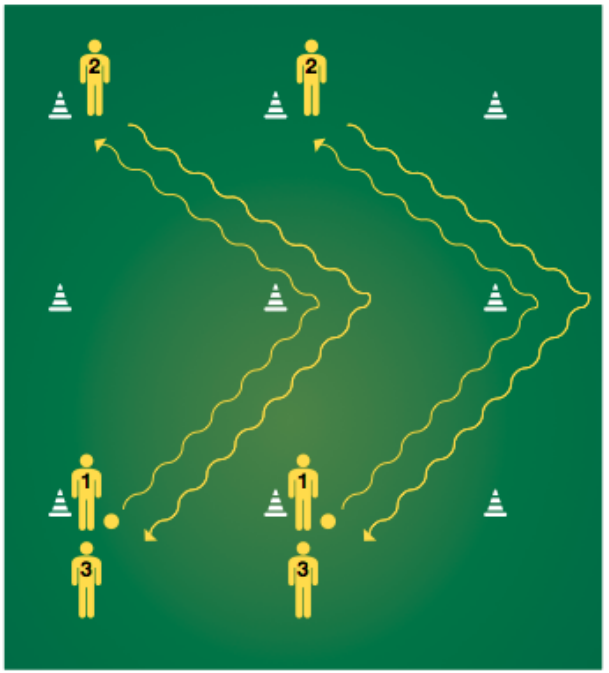


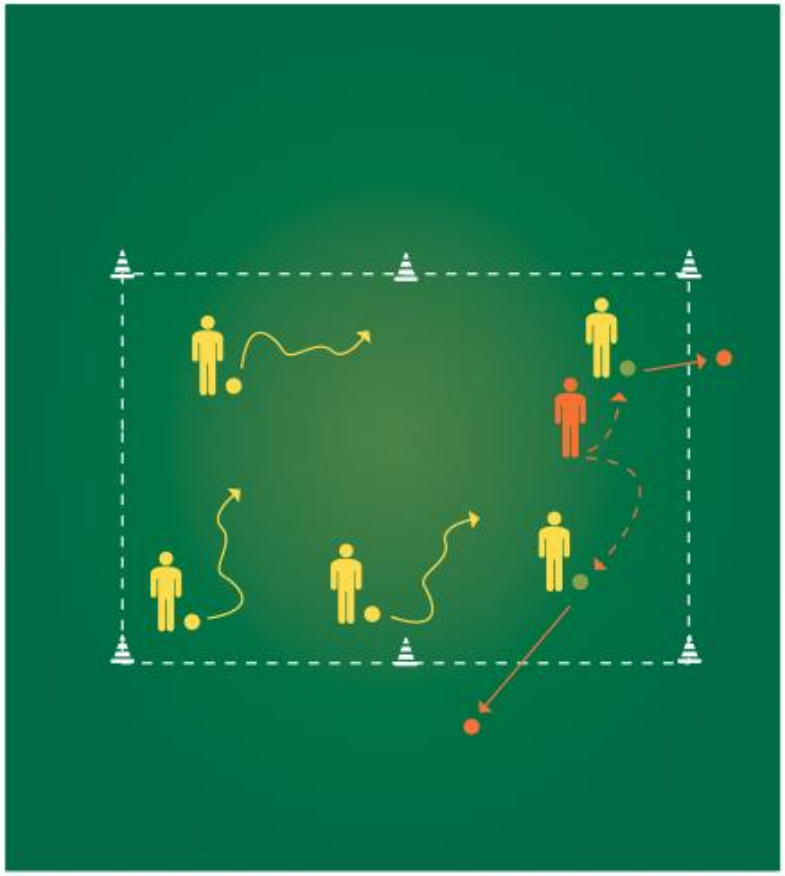
Diagram 2

Middle: Round em' up

Five players dribble their balls inside a 10m × 14m area. On your call 'round 'em up!' the sixth player tries to 'round up' all five balls, by kicking them out of the square.

Allow 30 seconds for players to 'round up' as many balls as possible.

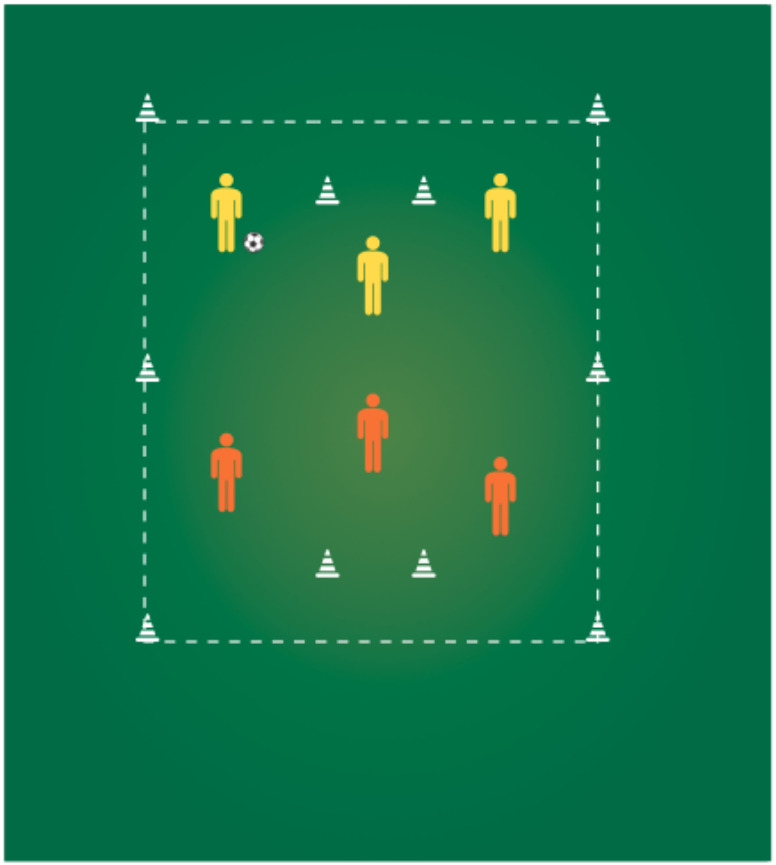
Take turns so each player has a go at rounding up the balls.



End: 3 v 3 (or 4 v 4, 5 v 5) Training Game

Length: 20m
Width: 15m
Gate: 2m–3m

- In this game players can score by passing/shooting the ball through either side of the gate, from in front or behind
- "Just let them play"
- You can play with or without goalkeepers
- Short games - 3 to 5 mins in length (with regular drink breaks)



MODEL SESSION 6.

Model Session 6

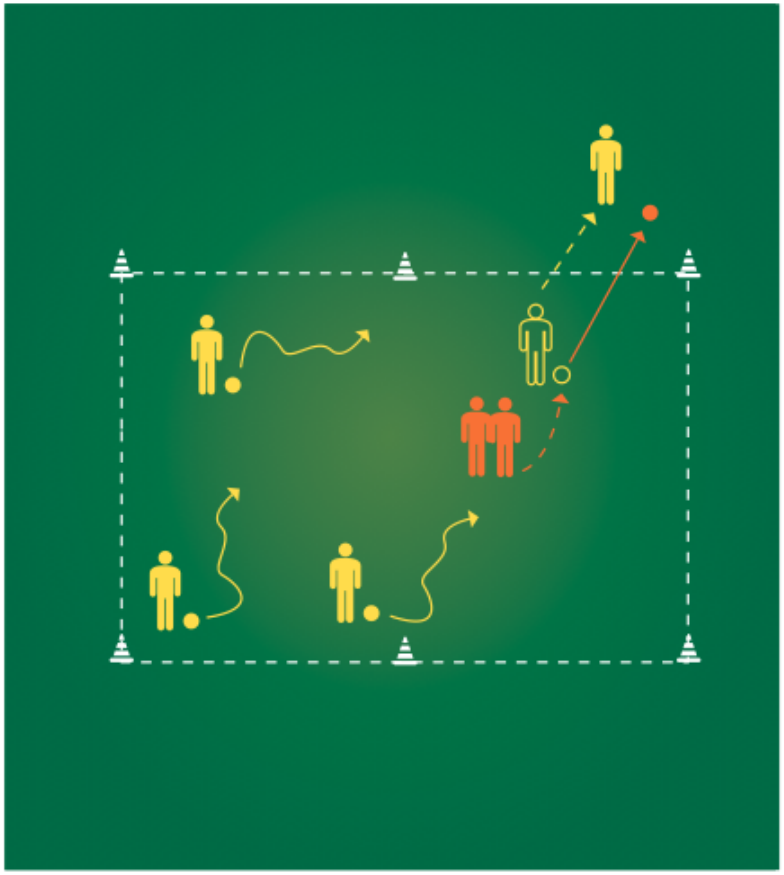
Beginning: Double Trouble

Two players without a ball link hands and move around the area trying to kick other players' balls out.

The other players dribble their balls around the area, trying to avoid having their ball kicked out.

There are two options for this game:

- Change the chasing pair when everyone is out (when a player's ball is kicked out, they fetch it then remain outside until that game is over)
- Change the chasing pair after a set time period by setting the challenge: 'How many balls can you kick out in 30 seconds?' (When a player's ball is kicked out, they fetch it and come back into the area as soon as possible, continuing to dribble and to avoid losing their ball)



Middle: Pairs through the gates

Mark out an area about 7m × 10m and set up four small gates – two cones about two metres apart.

The players run around the area in pairs with a ball between them and pass it through the gates to each other until they have performed a successful pass through each gate.

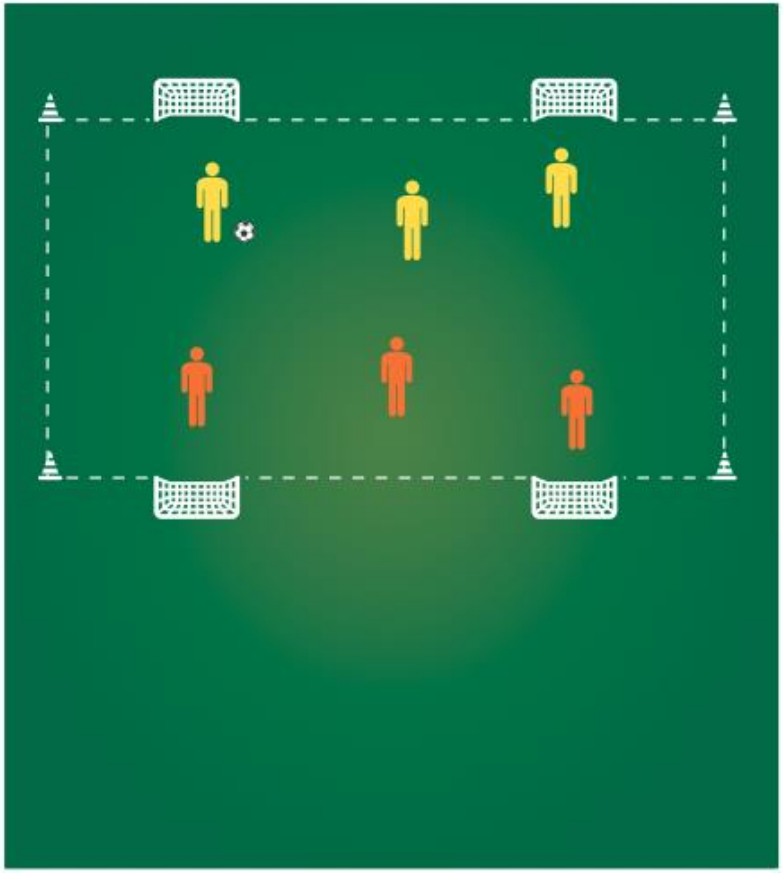
The winning pair is the first to pass through every gate and wait outside the area.

Before moving to the next activity, have a competition to see which pair (one at a time) can pass through the most gates in 20 seconds.

End: Short and wide

Length: 15m
Width: 25m
Goal: 2 goals (2m wide) on each end-line

- This game develops awareness of space



MODEL SESSION 7.

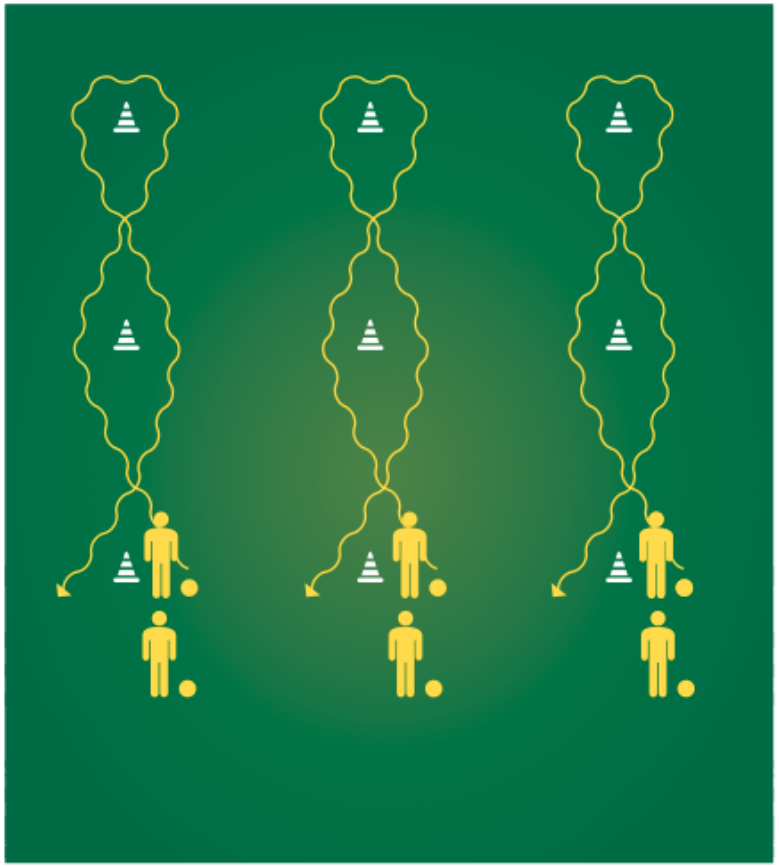
Model Session 7

Beginning: Figure 8 Relay

Explanation for relay

- Each player starts with a ball, and dribbles around the first marker and then the second marker in a figure 8 type direction (as shown in the diagram)
- Upon returning to the starting point, the next player starts the same pattern with their own ball
- **Progressions**

- Players to use their right foot only
- Players to use their left foot only
- Players to use the inside of their foot only
- Players to use the outside of their foot only
- Each group to use one ball only, where the ball is exchanged at each end upon completing the figure 8



Middle: Colour code

This activity should be arranged in a square 15m x 15m and requires at least three cones of two or more colours placed randomly inside the square.

Players dribble their balls round the outside perimeter of the area.

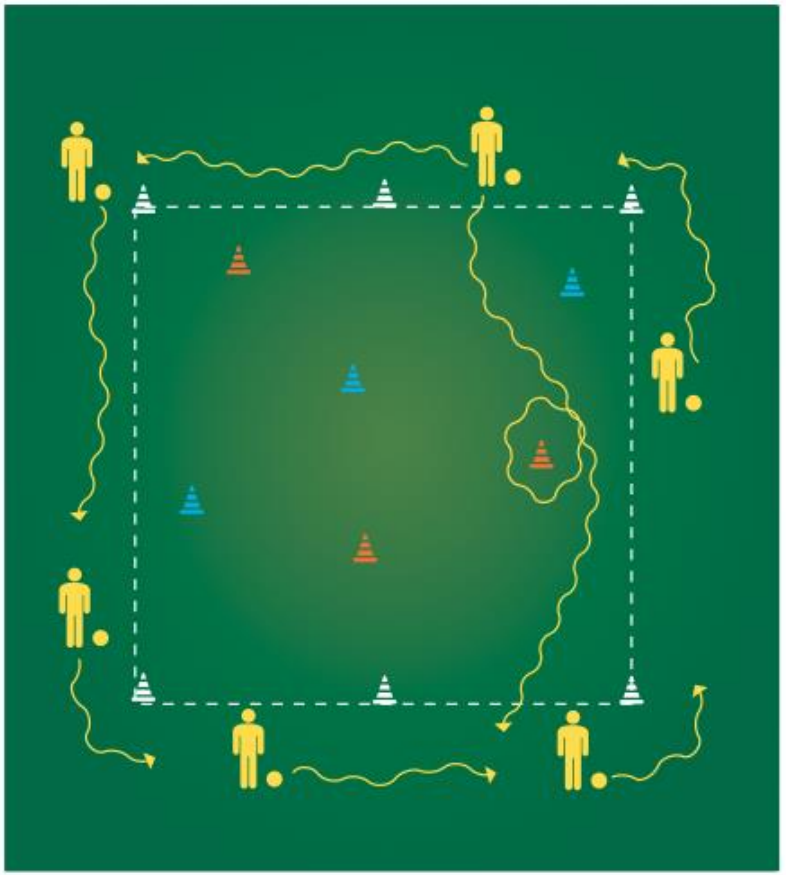
Call out a colour and the kids must dribble into the square, around the cone of that colour, and back outside the square. The winner is the first one back outside with their foot on their ball.

Remind players to keep their heads up and watch out for possible collisions.

Variations:

- Round all cones of that colour
- Players to use their right foot only
- Players to use their left foot only
- Players to use the inside of their foot only
- Players to use the outside of their foot only

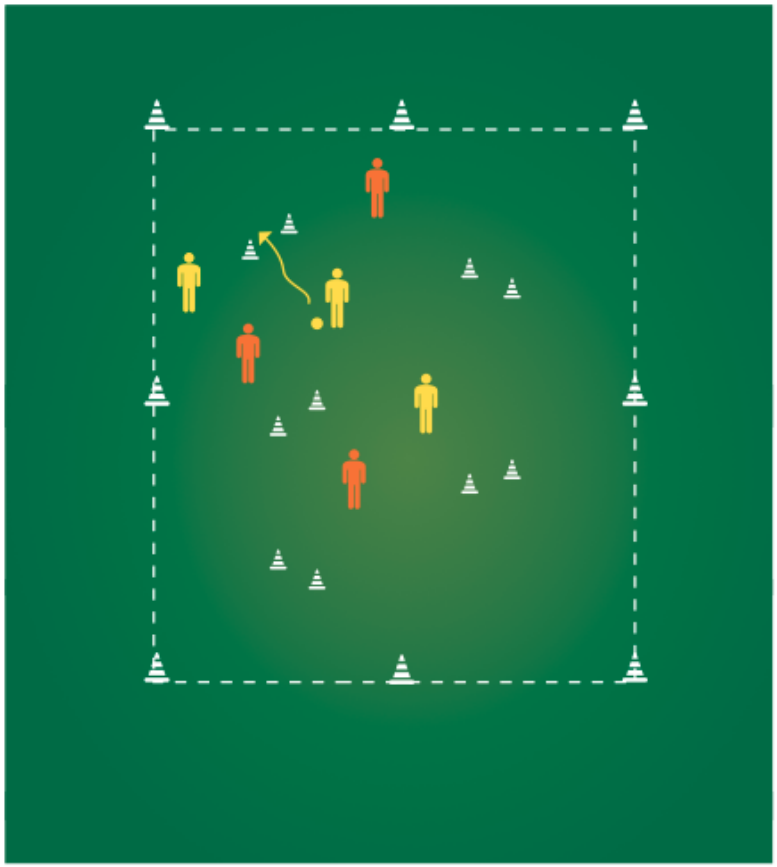
There are more possible variations, limited only by the number and colour of your cones, and your imagination!



End: Dribble to score 3 v 3 (or 4 v 4, 5 v 5)

Length: 15m–20m
Width: 15m
Goal: none (make 4 or 5 gates of 1m–2m width inside the area)

- To score a goal, dribble the ball through any one of the gates
- This game encourages dribbling
- Players cannot score in the same gate consecutively



MODEL SESSION 8.

Model Session 8

Beginning: Dribblers and Collectors

Two players without a ball link hands and move around the area trying to kick other players' balls out. They are the 'collectors'.

When a player's ball is kicked out, they immediately join the 'collectors', so that there are now three players with hands linked chasing the others (then four and five) until everyone is out. Then two new 'collectors' start chasing.

Middle: 1 v 1 Mini Games

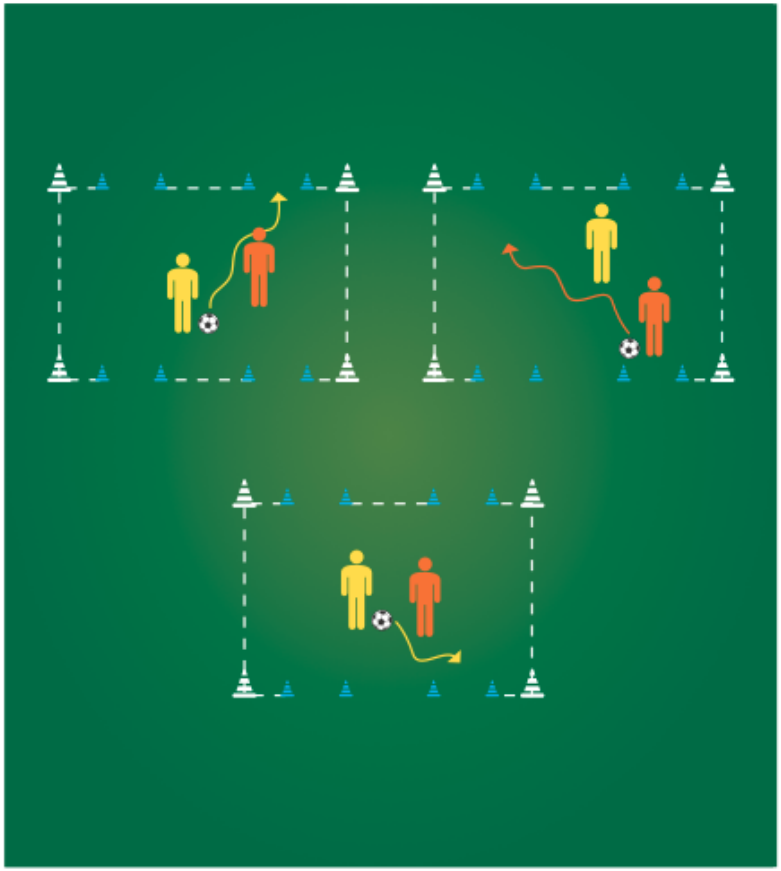
Make three small areas about 10m wide × 7m-8m long (field is short and wide).

Two gates 2m wide placed on each byline, approximately 1m away from each corner marker.

Players play 1 v 1 on each mini-field and score by dribbling the ball through one of the gates.

Think of safety when setting up; avoid scenarios where players could dribble into each other by allowing buffer zones.

Keep rotating so opponents are changed regularly. Rotation also allows a period of rest, so control how long rotation takes depending on how fatigued the players seem. You could also give some brief hints to the whole group in order to give them a rest.



End: Line football 3 v 3 (or 4 v 4, 5 v 5)

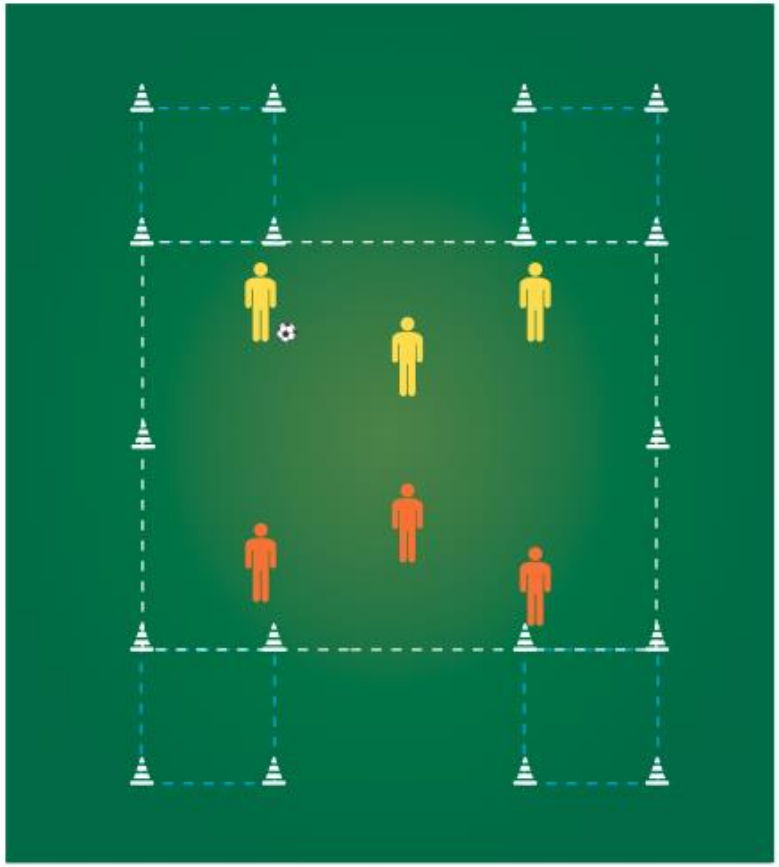
- Field dimension is short and wide

Length:15m -20m
Width: 20m - 25m
Goal: none

- Usual rules, but method of scoring is to dribble the ball across the opponents' end line
- This game encourages dribbling and 1 v 1 skills
- **Progression:**

- Add 2 scoring zones behind each byline (as shown in the diagram)

- To score, players must dribble the ball over the byline, but also stop the ball in the scoring zone



MODEL SESSION 9.

Model Session 9

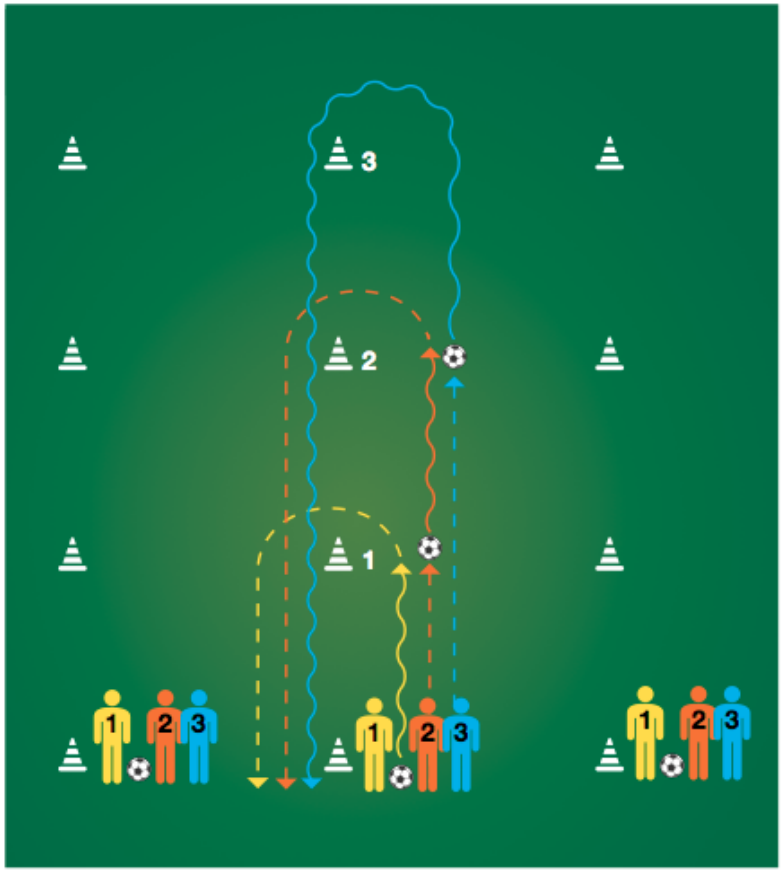
Beginning: Relay

Explanation for relay

- Each group starts with 1 ball
- Player 1 dribbles the ball to marker 1, and leaves it there. Then runs around the marker and tags player 2 at the starting point
- Player 2 runs to the ball, collects it from marker 1, dribbles it to marker 2 and leaves it there, then runs around the marker and tags player 3 at the starting point
- Player 3 runs to the ball, collects it from marker 2, dribbles with it around marker 3 and brings it back to the starting point
- Change the player numbers regularly
- **Progressions**

- Players to use their right foot only

- Players to use their left foot only

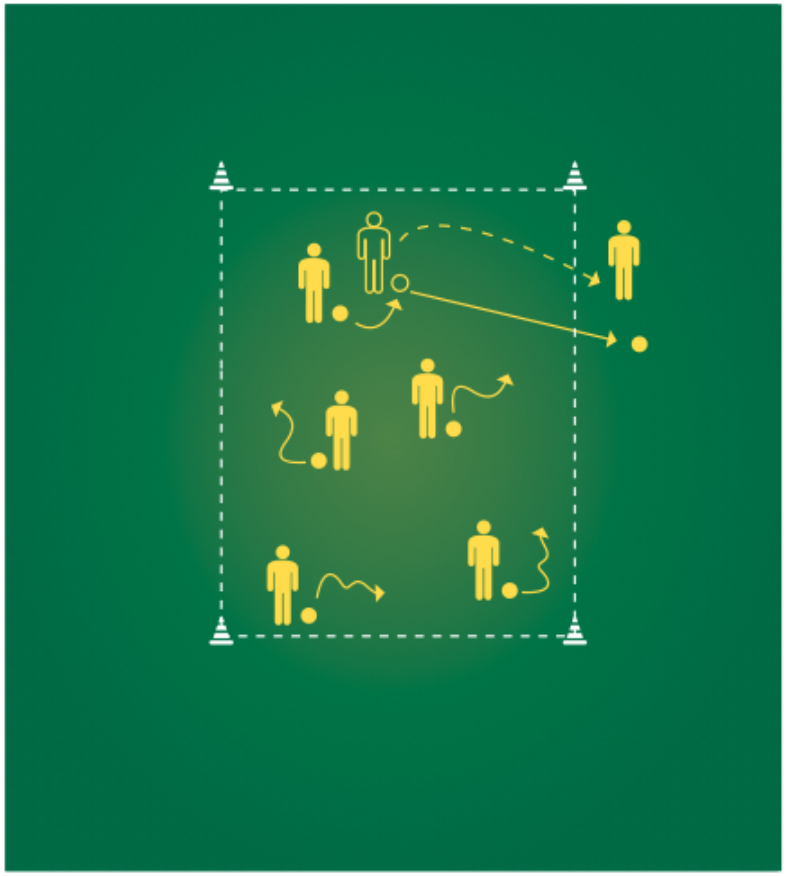


Middle: Beehive

Six players with a ball each dribble around an area about 7m × 10m.

They attempt to kick the other players' balls out of the area while keeping their own ball under control. The players must be careful – while they are kicking someone's ball out, someone else might kick theirs out!

If their ball is kicked out, the player must leave the area immediately without kicking any other balls out. The player can fetch their own ball and wait until there is a winner and the game starts again.

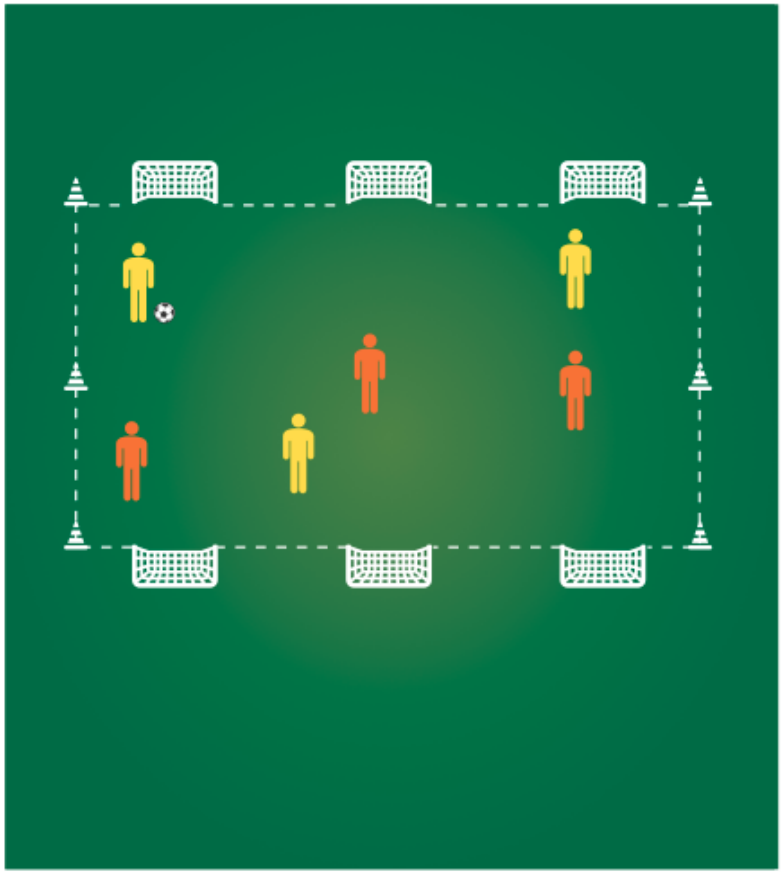


End: 3 v 3 (or 4 v 4, 5 v 5) Training Game - focus on shooting

- Field dimension is short and wide

Length: 15m
Width: 15m - 20m
Goal: 3 goals on each byline (as shown in diagram)

- This game encourages shooting as often as possible



MODEL SESSION 10.

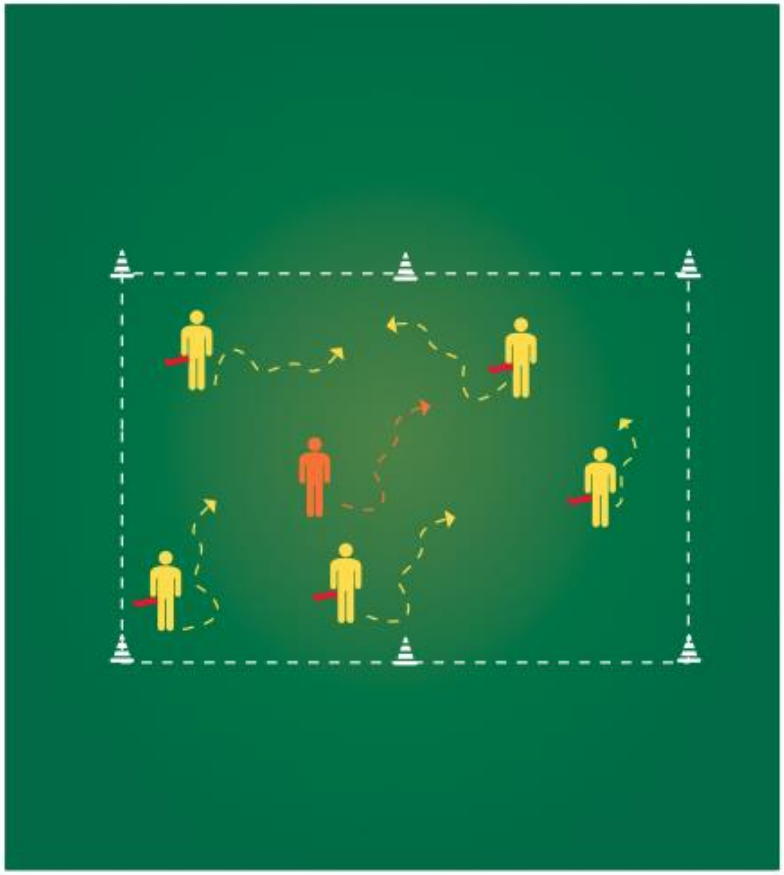
Model Session 10

Beginning: Catch the Tails

One or more players are 'hunters'. They chase the other players and try to remove their 'tails'. If a player's 'tail' is taken, they become a 'hunter'.
(Bibs tucked into shorts can function as 'tails').

Progression:

- The 'hunter' dribbles their ball while trying to remove the 'tails'
- Players with 'tails' dribble their balls while trying to avoid the 'hunter'



Middle: Simon Says

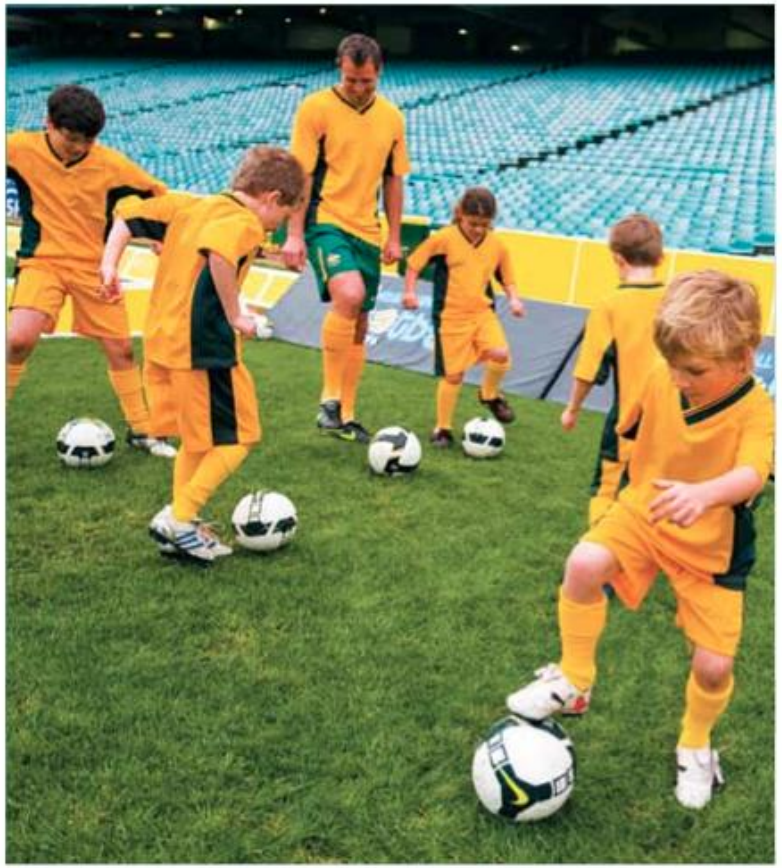
Players dribble freely around the area with a ball each. Give the kids various tasks and challenges, which they must do ONLY if you say 'Simon says' at the start of the sentence. Therefore, sometimes you use 'Simon says' and sometimes you don't – see who's listening!

The players must avoid touching anyone else's ball, and must not let anyone else touch their own ball.

Possible tasks:

- STOP! (Means stop dead with your foot on your ball)
- TURN! (Quickly go the other way with your ball)
- OUT! (Run outside the square and put your foot on your ball)
- CHANGE! (Leave your ball and find another one to dribble; who is the last one dribbling a new ball?)
- LEFT! (Dribble around the area touching the ball only with your left foot)
- RIGHT! (Dribble around the area touching the ball only with your right foot)
- Use your imagination!

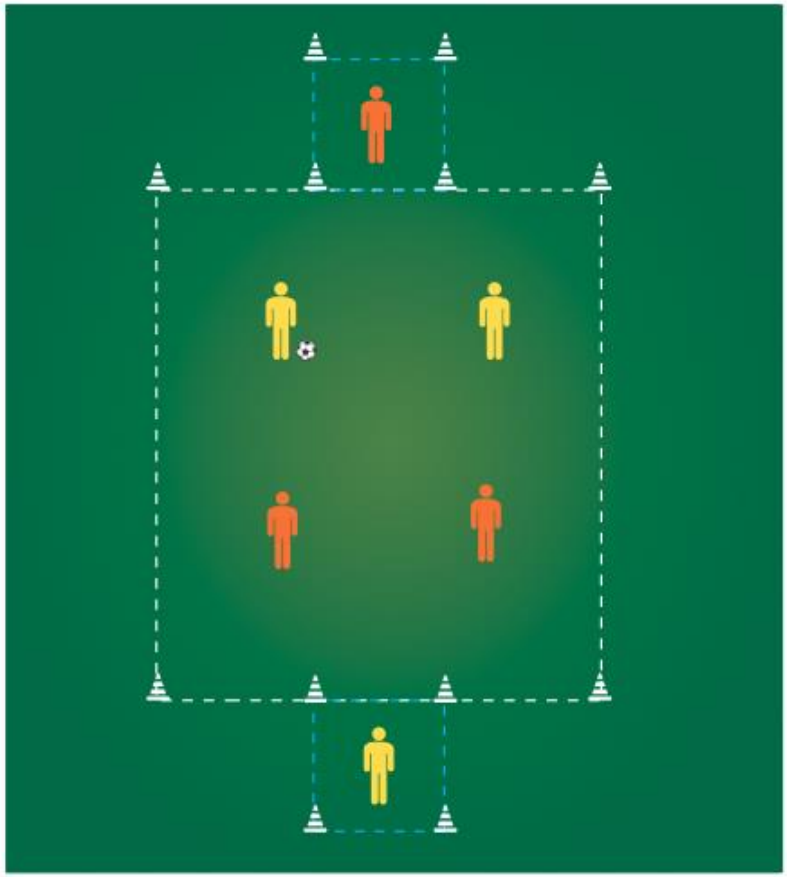
Use instructions like 'Simon says sit next to your ball' or 'Simon says get a drink from your bag', to give the players a rest when needed.



End: 2 v 2 (or 3 v 3, 4 v 4) end zone football

Length: 20m
Width: 15m
Goal: create an end zone (a square 2m x 2m) behind the centre of each byline

- To score the players must pass the ball to their own player in the end zone who must stop/control the ball in the area
- There are no goalkeepers
- Rotate players in the end zone every 1-2 minutes



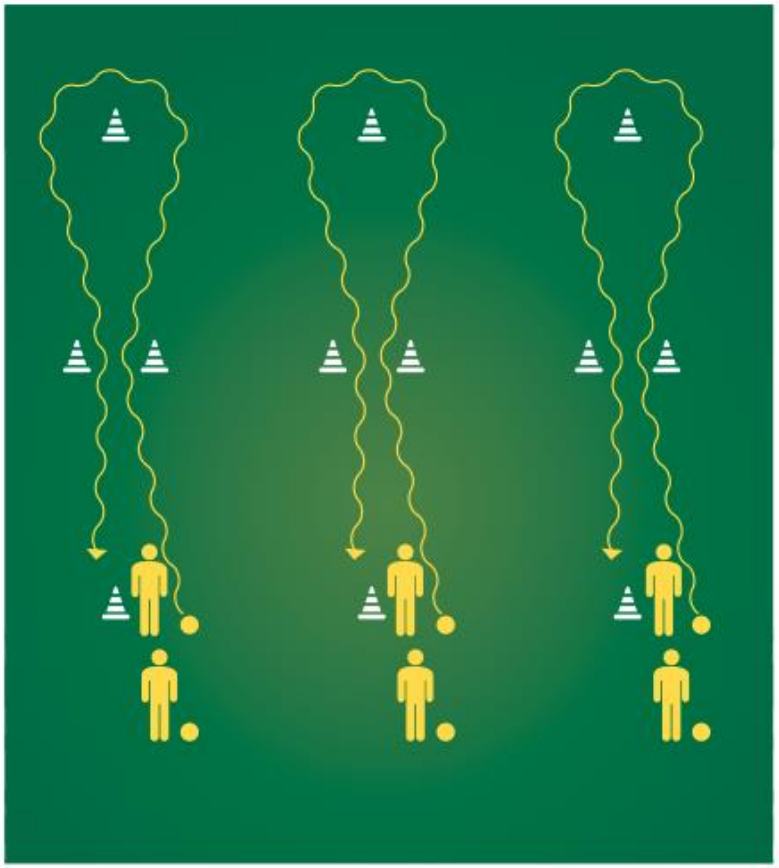
MODEL SESSION 11.

Model Session 11

Beginning: Relay

Explanation for relay

- Each player starts with a ball. Player 1 dribbles their ball through the middle gate and then around the far cone and back through the middle gate again on the way back
- Upon returning to the starting point, player 2 commences the same pattern
- Twelve cones are required
- Vary the width of the gates to increase/decrease difficulty



Middle: Pass and Move

This activity requires two players with a ball and four players without.

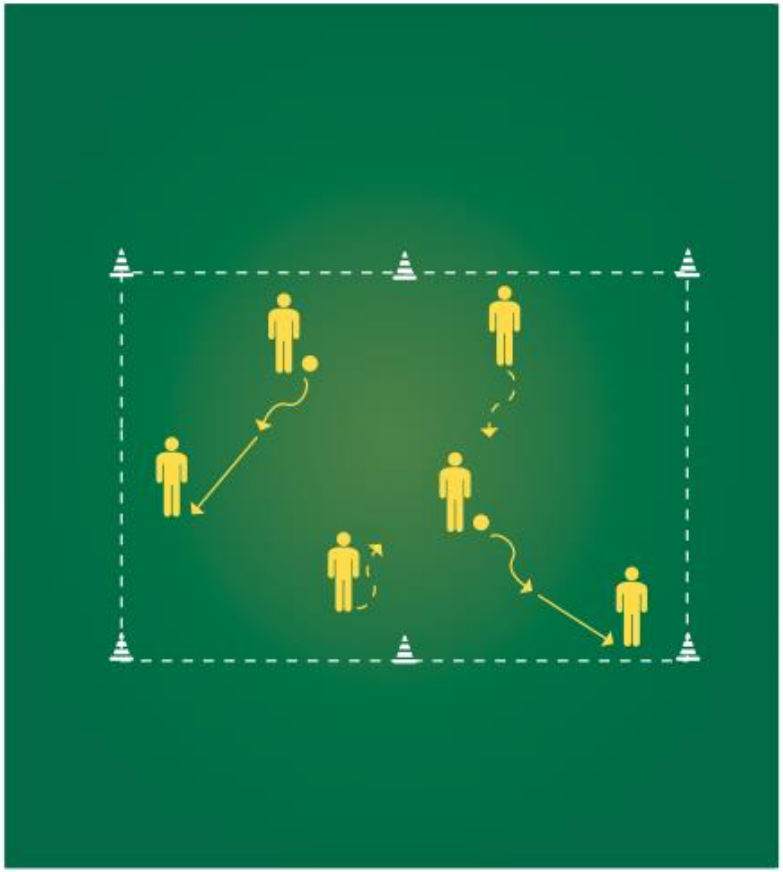
The players with the balls start by dribbling, while the other players move freely around the area. When the ball carriers see another player ready to receive the ball, they pass to them, then move to another part of the area. When a player receives the ball, they dribble until they can see another player who is ready to receive the ball. They then pass the ball to that player and move. Players are constantly moving, either looking to receive one of the two balls, or looking to pass to one of the players without a ball.

Progression:

- Three players with a ball and three without

This activity helps develop vision and communication and introduces the concept of passing the ball to a team-mate, which is often difficult to grasp for a naturally self-centred under-seven!

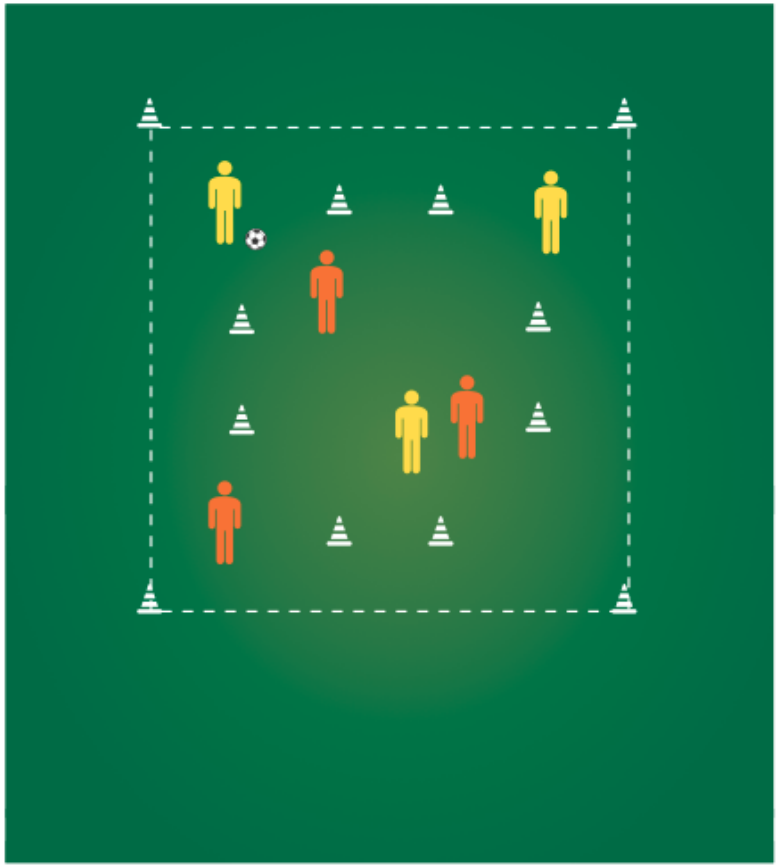
Passing will begin to be more evident from under-eights upwards.



End: 4 sided football 3 v 3 (or 4 v 4, 5 v 5)

Length: 20m
Width: 20m
Gates: 4 gates of 1m–2m wide inside the area (as shown in the diagram)

- Players can score by passing the ball through any one of the 4 gates (and from either side) to one of their team-mates
- This game encourages passing and supporting



MODEL SESSION 12.

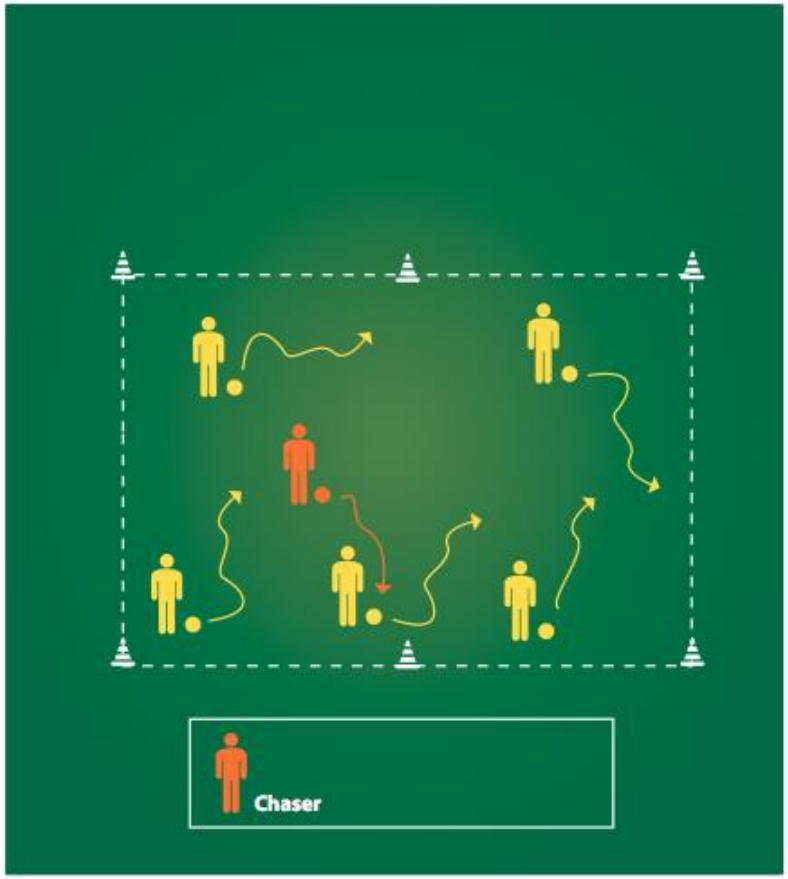
Model Session 12

Beginning: Dribble Tag

In an area about 10m × 14m, players dribble their balls around.

A 'chaser' is nominated and they try to tag the other players while keeping control of their own ball. The other players avoid him or her while keeping control of their balls.

If you are the tagger you must carry a bib so everyone knows who the chaser is.



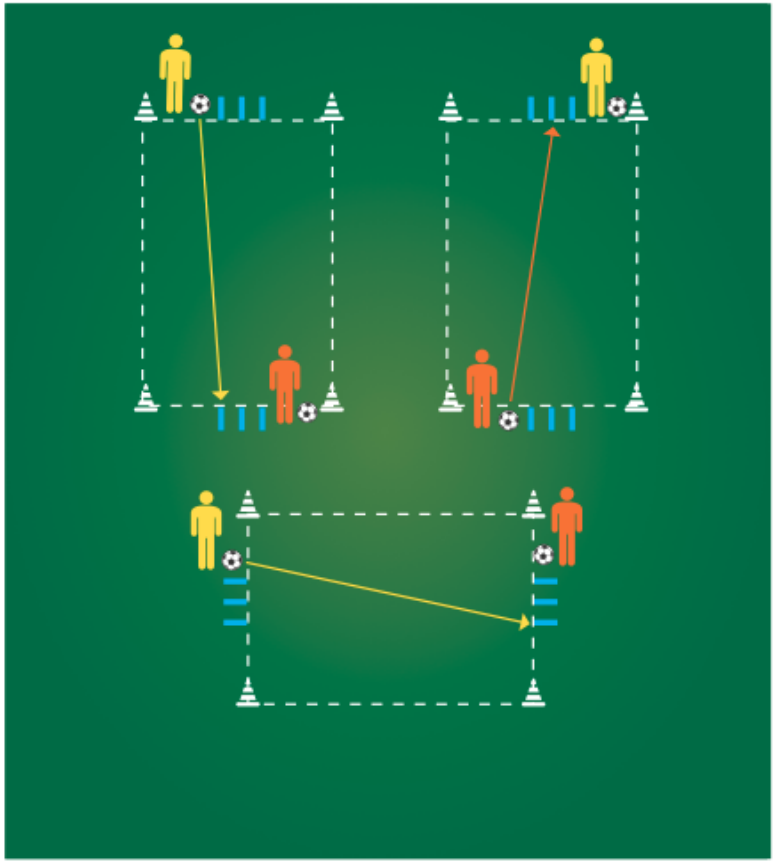
Middle: Hit the target

Make three small areas about 10m × 7m.

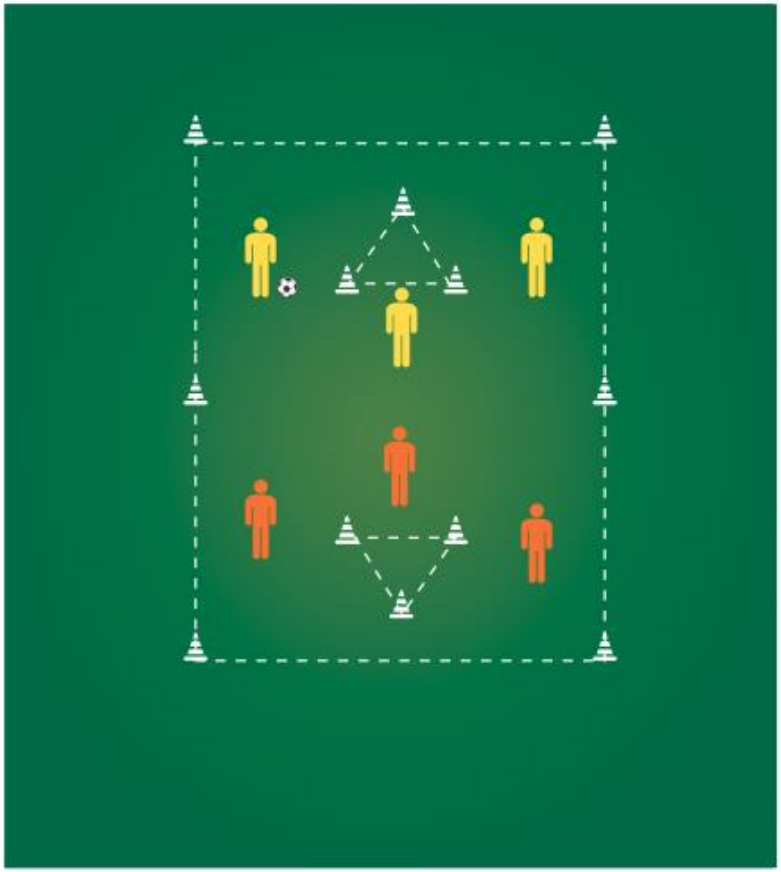
To score, players must hit the target to get points.

Targets may include 3 tall cones, water bottles, balls, empty plastic bottles etc.

Players will receive 1 point for every target which is knocked over or hit (like ten pin bowling).



End: Triangular goal football 3 v 3 (or 4 v 4, 5 v 5)

Length: 20m
Width: 15m
Goal: triangular goal, 2m-3m per side, 2m-3m inside the field

- To score players must shoot or pass through any one of the 3 sides of the triangle of their designated goal
- This game encourages passing and shooting from different angles