

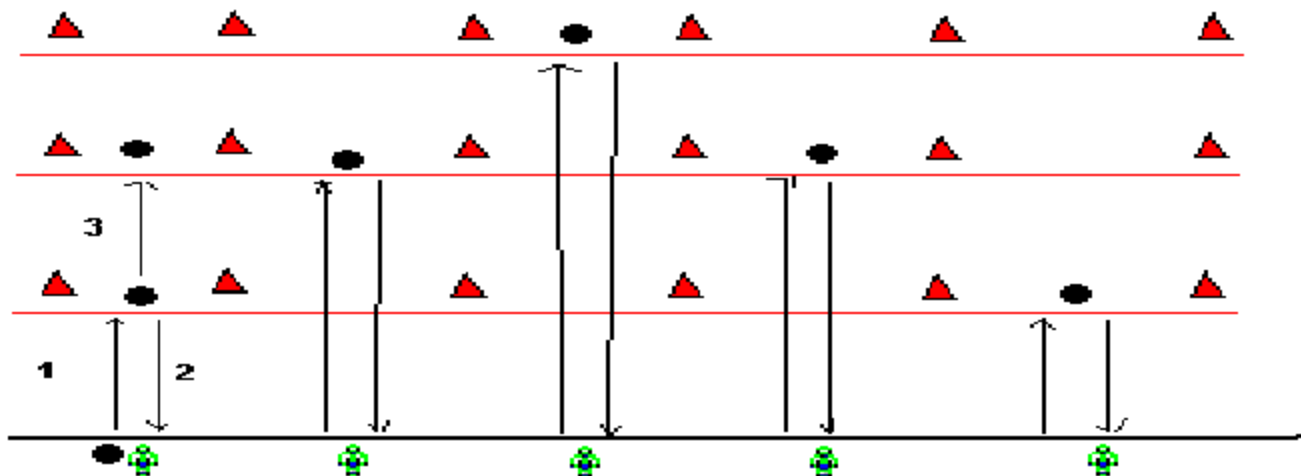
Practice Drills

Defensive

- Drill** Dribble & Leave It Behind Race
Equipment Cones, ball per player
Formation Create 3-5 rows of cones about 10 yards apart

Description

1. Players line up with their balls on the starting line
2. Race to first row of cones and stop their balls
3. Players leave their ball and sprint back to the starting line to touch it
4. Players sprint back to their balls
5. Player dribble to the next row of cones
6. Then repeat the sprint back to the starting line and return again to their ball



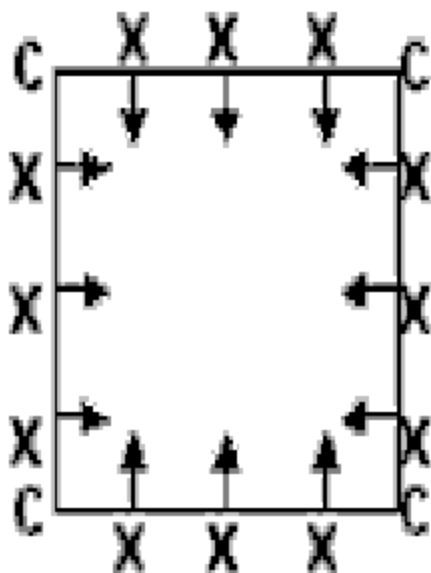
Practice Drills

Dribbling

- Drill** Dribble Across A Square
Equipment cones. Each player has a ball
Formation Use 4 disk cones to make a square about 10 or 12 steps wide (smaller or larger depending on age & number of players)

Description

1. Spread players around the square, all facing inward
2. All players start on "Go" & each player dribbles across the square & back. (Tell them to dribble to the imaginary line on the opposite side of the square, make a turn & dribble back to where they started. Point out at the first of the game that the cones create an imaginary "Starting Line" and "Turning Line" for each player).
3. " Must do a "Pullback", a "Stop/Turn", a "Cutback" or a "Hook Turn" to turn. (Do a Pullback, aka a "Drag Back", by putting the bottom of the foot on top of ball to stop it & pull it back in the direction you came from. Do a Hook Turn by pulling the toes up & turning the foot so the outside of the foot can "hook" the ball, stop it & pull it back. A Cutback uses the inside of the foot to hook the ball). See photos of a Pullback (called a "Drag Back"), Hook, Cutback & Stop/Turn at www.fa-soccerstar.com (click "Turning" on the left side and then "How To Master" on the right side above the photo).
4. Tell players to look up while they dribble so they don't run into each other (don't worry, there won't be many collisions).
5. Each player keeps count of his or her trips across the square. The first to 12 is the winner (each time he turns is "one"). Tell players to yell "Done" when finished and ask each player his score after each game.
6. Play 3 games; 1st to 12, then to 10, then to 8. Play at the start of practice as a warm-up and at the end of practice until dribbling skills improve or your team gets tired of this game. For beginners, let them decide how to turn using the method they are most comfortable with. For advanced or select players, require a Pullback one game, then a Hook, then a Cutback. Let a "Stop/Turn" count for a Pullback.
7. After your team has played this game in a few practices, make the square larger so it is less crowded. This will let players speed up when they get in open space. Tell them that they can go faster if they kick the ball in front of them, but they MUST still keep control of the ball. If they kick it too far, they won't be able to make their turn. In most games, a player will lose the game if he or she loses control of the ball even once. The game is self-teaching, but it is helpful for the coach to be encouraging and to point out how players can improve their performance.



PLAYERS DRIBBLE
ACROSS SQUARE
& BACK
X = Players C = Cones

- Drill** First and Second Defender Teach
- Equipment** 1 ball per group of 6
- Formation** A line of 3 players and a line of ball passers (coaches, parents, or other players)

Description

How To Teach First Defender/Second Defender and a Basic Zone Defense. If your team is young or inexperienced with a Zone Defense (assuming you play a zone), spend 10 minutes demonstrating how First Defender/Second Defender and a basic Zone Defense works. Following is a simple way to demonstrate: If, for example, you use 3 FB's, put 3 players in front of a goal, about 5 steps apart for this exercise (I prefer my FB's to be fairly close together, about a short pass or 5-10 steps apart, depending on circumstances; if they are too far apart they are easy to penetrate). Put parents or other players to the left, right and center to simulate attackers and have them throw a ball around (throw it using their hands); have them throw it and stop & wait for the FB's to shift so there is a First Defender & one or 2 Second Defenders. For example, if the ball is on the right side, the RFB should be the First Defender and within 3 steps of the ball (to apply pressure & not allow a clear shot or pass) and the CFB should have shifted so he is the Second Defender and is out from the Near Post and in a line between the ball & the goal about 5 steps behind the First Defender, and the Far FB (in this case the Left) should have shifted to cover the center of the goal (he must stop at the Center or he will leave the goal front open to attack and he must stay alert for opponents getting behind him & quickly move to the ball if it is passed to the Far Post side. In this case the LFB would be the Third Defender). Another example: if the ball is thrown to the center, the CFB becomes the First Defender & both the LFB & RFB become Second Defenders & move within 5 steps of the First Defender but stay behind him closer to the goal (one on each side about 5 steps to the side) ; in this way, either of them are prepared to confront the Onball Attacker and become the First Defender if the Attacker gets past the CFB; in a real game at least 2 of your MF's must drop back to help the FB's when your goal is under attack and to cover the ball if it is toward the sideline, allowing your FB's to stay closer to the goal (these MF's will run a lot & probably will need to be subbed a lot). Teach the First Defender that if he gets beat, the Second will be there to slow down the Attacker & he must continue after the ball & either become the First defender again or become a Second Defender.

- Drill** Fullbacks ("FB's") how to clear the ball
Equipment Ball per Pair
Formation Line up as far as they can reach with their kicks

Description

Teach your Fullbacks ("FB's") how to clear the ball by kicking it hard away from your goal. Practice this & tell them to point their toes down & push the toes against the bottom of the shoe to lock the ankle, keep eyes on the ball, strike the ball low, stand straight up or lean back while striking it (do not lean over the ball or it will stay low), & follow thru. An efficient way to practice this is to pair up players who can kick the ball about the same distance and have them kick it as far as they can to each other. This will also let you see who needs help and who has a good leg

Practice Drills

Conditioning

Drill House Building

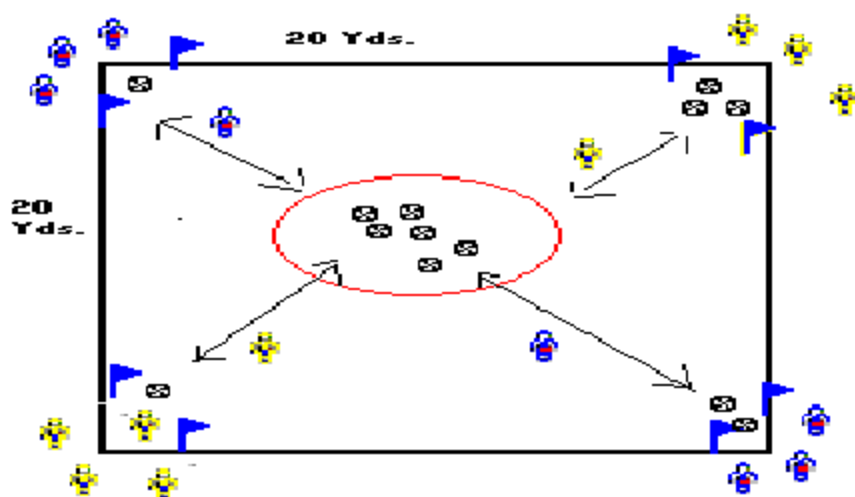
Equipment 1 ball per player placed into a center circle, 8 cones

Formation 1 pair of cones at the corner of a square area. Divide team into 4 groups

Description

1. One player at a time leaves their designated area (pair of cones at the corners), called their house, to come into the center to retrieve a ball and then return it to their house (i.e. they are building their house).
2. Then the next player proceeds to repeat until all the balls have been removed from the center.
3. See which teams obtains more balls to build their house.
4. Return balls to the center and replay.

Additional options: ask players to perform a move such as a pull back, cryuff, etc at the center. Allow players to steal a ball from the center or any other house (players at the house must allow the ball to be stolen).



- Drill** Mark Up Behind Opponent Practice
Equipment 1 ball and playing field
Formation Divide team up using pinny. Various formations.

Description

On the other team's goal kicks, punts, throw-ins, & free kicks, mark up behind an opponent & then step in front & steal the ball, or, if the ball goes past you, box out the opponent and win the ball".

Setup practice situations where one team marks up behind a player during:

1. Goal kick
2. Throw in
3. Free Kick

For example, demonstrate how to "mark up" behind an opponent on the opposing team's throw-in (to "mark up" means to stand closely behind an opponent, who is called your "mark"). Then, demonstrate how: if the ball is thrown to your "mark", you can step in front of him & steal the ball; or, if the ball is thrown over your head, you can "box out" your "mark" so you can beat him to the ball; or, if your "mark" gets the ball, you can try to steal it when he turns. The same tactic applies to Goal Kicks & Punts. (I realize these demonstrations are boring, especially to younger players, but there is no good alternative unless you want to stretch it out over 4 or 5 practices and teach it in small doses). If you're allowed to coach during games, you should teach this during games by reminding your players. Here's how to teach this during games: Teach: "Don't get thrown over" (When the other team has a throw-in). (During the game, be specific when giving instructions. For example, "John, move back 10 steps so you don't get thrown over"). Teach: "Don't get goal kicked or punted over" (by the other team). (Be specific if giving instruction. For example, "John, run back to the halfway line"). If you are allowed to, remind your players to not get thrown over, punted over or goal kicked over during the game by yelling to remind them. Here's how to do this: yell specific instructions to specific players, such as: "John, run back to the halfway line" or, "John, move back 10 steps so you don't get thrown over" or, "Matt, Don't get thrown over" (or "punted over" or "goal kicked over"), or "Matt, Mark up behind a man" (on the other teams throw-ins, goal kicks, & free kicks) or, on the other teams corner kicks, "John, Mark a man goalside". Don't yell in a mean way, just in an instructional way. After a few games your players will start to do this without having to be reminded. However, sometimes when they're tired, you will still have to remind them.
