

Coaching for beginners

A practical coaching session for 5-to-8 year olds.

The players in this group of development should not be subjected to the technical-tactical, physical and competitive pressures as this is their fun period. An example of a 60-minute coaching session for this phase of development would be as follows.

Arrive early and set up your coaching area as illustrated. Everything has to be in place 10 minutes before the start of your session (see Field Setup diagram). Once organised, you're ready to start with your coaching session that will be enjoyable and educational.

1. INTRODUCTORY PART OF THE COACHING SESSION

1.1 Basic dribbling with the ball around the field of play (5 mins)

When the players arrive and are ready to start with your session, have them first warm up by dribbling their ball around the field of play (see diagram 1.1). Tell them it is not a race but to dribble with the left and right foot and to try and keep their head up. This

is important as good footballers must be able to have vision when they have the ball.

1.2 Juggling the ball (3 mins)

This will be almost impossible for players at this age but you need to start. Juggling is simply keeping the ball off the ground, playing it with all parts of the body except from the arms to the hands. Have the players start by holding onto the ball with their hands and drop it to the instep and see if they can kick and catch it.

If they can do it once, see if they can kick the ball twice and catch it, and so on. Then progress where they drop the ball allowing it the bounce before they kick and catch it. Do the same with the thigh. There is no better exercise than juggling to get confidence and feel for the ball.

2. MAIN PART OF THE COACHING SESSION

2.1 Helpful tactical game (5 mins) - Game 1 Dribble across the grid

Inside the centre grid marked by cones, have all players stand opposite each other with a ball. On a given signal they dribble the ball across to the other side and place it on the line (see diagram 2.1). The team that first has all the balls on the line gains a point. You can then extend the exercise and have the

2.2 Technical-tactical element (10 mins) -Kicking with the inside of the foot

The part used with this technique is the large flat area on the inside of the foot. The advantage with this pass is that it is easy to learn and the large surface area guarantees control and accuracy in passing.

This pass is also known as the push pass, as the ball is 'pushed' rather than struck with a sharp blow. The technique involves the toes of the supporting leg facing

Everything has to be in place 10 minutes before the start of your session.

players dribble across the grid and back to the start.

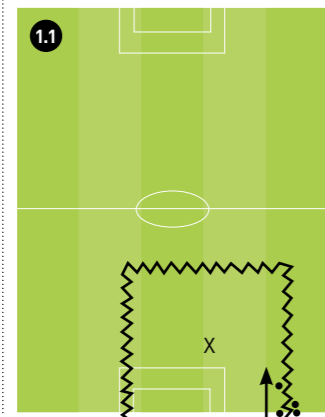
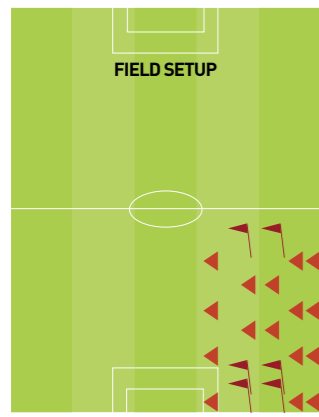
Helpful tactical game (5 mins) - Game 2 Last person in

All players in the grid dribble their ball, keeping possession, and trying to kick another player's ball out of the grid. A player must leave the grid when their ball is kicked out or they dribble the ball outside the grid. The last player with a ball in the grid wins. As the numbers lessen keep reducing the size of the grid.

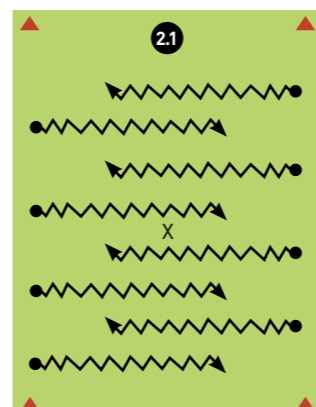
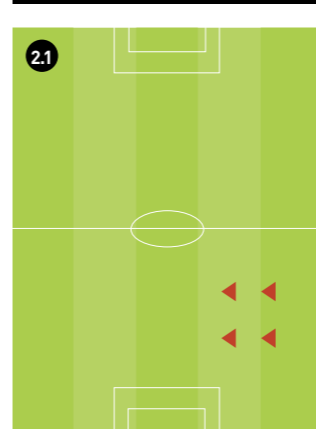
in the direction of the intended pass. The ankle joint is locked and at 90 degrees to the supporting foot. The eyes are fixed on the ball. After contact the inside of the foot follows through, with the player maintaining body balance.

This pass is about accuracy change places and not power.

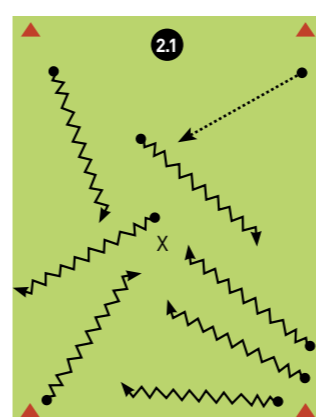
Common faults: Eyes are not fixed on the ball; ankle joint is not locked and hard; toes of the kicking foot are not pointing out and away from the ball; kicking



Set up a grid inside your training area measuring 5m x 5m for a tactical game



Have players race each other (above) or keep possession of their ball (below)

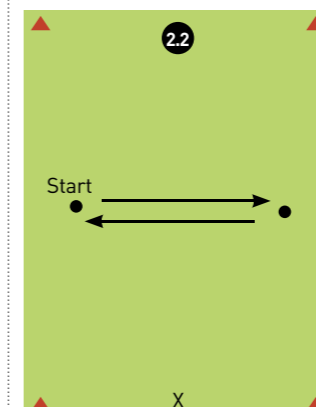
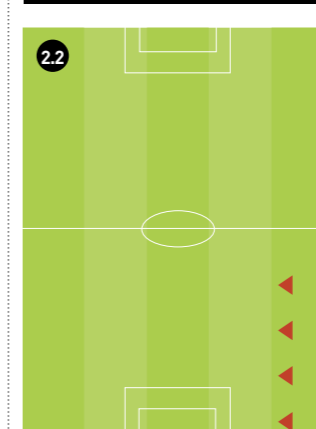


foot moves across the supporting leg after contact, indicating poor balance; no follow through after kick.

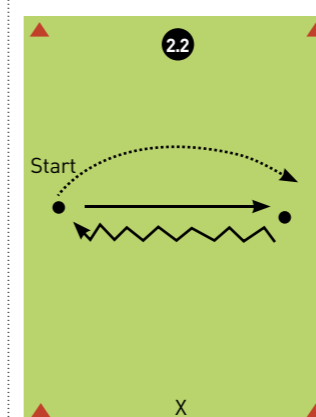
2.3 Shooting elements (10 mins)

Inside the grid marked by

Set up an area inside training area for a passing drill

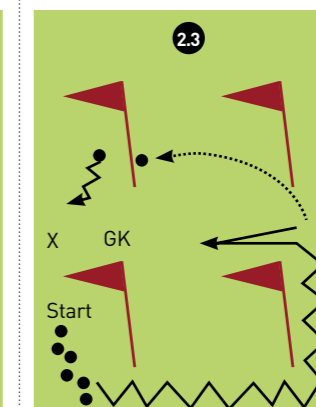
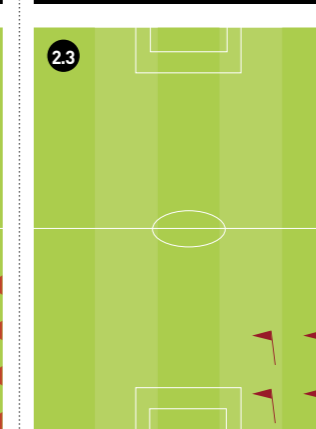


Have players pass with the inside of the foot, and then run to the opposite side



flags, have all the players (except goalkeeper) stand behind the goal line with a ball each. The player behind the goal line dribbles the ball out and around the post placed five metres

Dribble around the first flag, take a shot, and return to the back of the line



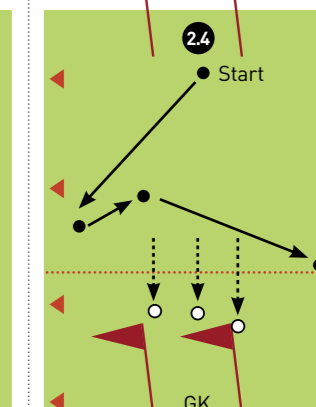
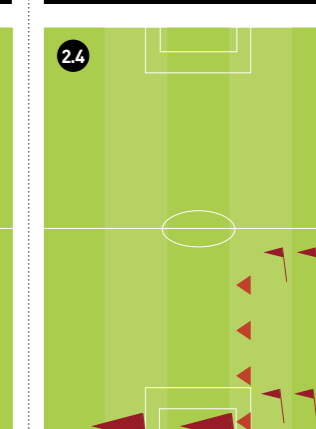
from goals and shoots at goal with their right foot. Following the shot at goal, the player runs behind the goal, collects the ball and stands behind the last player.

After five minutes the exercise continues from the opposite side with players shooting with their left foot.

2.4 Small pitch soccer (20 mins) -Zone Fun Game

Zone is the ability to recover goal side of the ball, cover an area, and press any player entering that zone. Five-to-eight year olds are too young to understand the correct zone formation play, however you can introduce a very simple zone fun game. When the attacking team has a goal kick or throw in, count to five and by the time you say five the defending team should all be in their half. If this happens then its just play on. If any defending player is in

Be sure to encourage free expression doing small-sided games



the attacking half by the count of 5 then a free penalty kick is awarded at half way. End the second half of the game with free expression, no conditions.

3. CONCLUDING PART OF THE COACHING SESSION

3.1 Summary of the coaching session (2 mins)

Talk very briefly about the session — what was good and what can be improved.

on. If any defending player is in

LEGEND

- Ball ●
- Coach X
- Dribble [wavy line]
- Flag [flag icon]
- Cone [triangle icon]
- Run without ball [dotted line]
- Shot at goal [dashed line]
- Movement of ball [solid arrow]