

# Training Program



## Under 12 Session Plans

# Coaching U12s

## How to Organize Your Team

*Coaches,*

. We feel it is important to develop technical objectives for these age as well as incorporating group and team tactics at the older ages. We recognize that development varies from child to child and feel it is important at the younger ages to realize the potential in every child and provide appropriate instruction. Plan to have objectives for the year that reflect the skill level of the team your coaching. Here are a few general objectives for the U6 to U12 player:

### U12 Player

- Dribbling moves under pressure
- Role of first and second defenders
- Use of both feet consistently
- Delivering longer balls
- Learning to serve and properly receive flighted balls consistently
- Supporting runs off the ball and more sophisticated combination play
- Recognize roles and responsibilities by position
- Awareness of the numerical positioning system employed by US Soccer
- Introduction of catching the ball and angle play with the keeper

### Formation by Numbering position



# Goal/Objectives Setting

## Goals/Objectives! Why they are Essential

As a coach you play a very large and positive role in your players and their parent's development. You are often seen as much more than a leader in practices & games. Because of your position you really are a teacher, as well as an individual mentor, to be utilized when needed. To excel in this position you must set yourself goals for each individual. The most important aspect in setting these goals is that they are not driven by game results and are measurable. They should be detailed at the start of any season giving you a realistic picture to strive towards. There has been a lot of research done in the soccer world to put guidelines down as what players at each age group should be able to do. We have taken this data and tailored objectives and lessons for age specific groups. Before you sit down and work on the big picture there are a few factors which need to be taken into account.

### Reasons kids drop out of sports:

- Failing to learn or improve skills
- Not having fun
- Not being with their friends
- Lack of excitement, improvisation & creative opportunities
- Lack of exercise, meaningful movement & fitness improvements
- Lack of optimal challenges &/or consistent failure

### Reasons kids play sports:

- To learn & improve their skills
- To have fun
- To be with friends
- To experience the excitement of competition
- To enhance their physical fitness
- To demonstrate their competence

It becomes your role as teacher and mentor to examine your training sessions and see if they are aligned with the reasons kids play and avoid the reasons children search out other activities.

# U12 Day 1

Improving players ability to beat players in 1v1 situations through individual dribbling moves

Free Dribble & 1v1 Moves

## TECHNICAL WARM-UP

**TRAINING AREA** = 30W x 40L. All players in the space have a ball at their feet. Freely dribble throughout the space, performing individual moves. On coaches command players can perform:

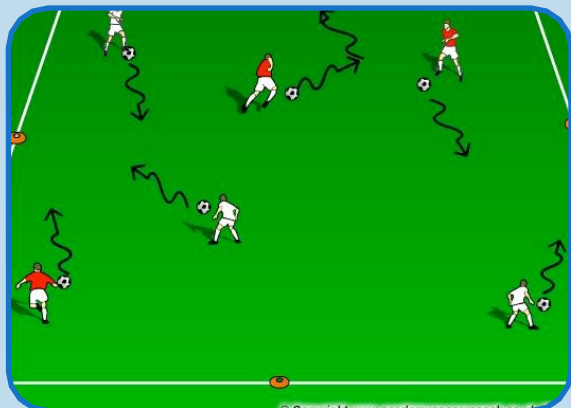
\*Inside-Outside, Step-over & go, pull-push-go, outside cut, inside cut, etc.

### Coaching Points

Dribble with the outside of your foot to accelerate into open space with the ball away from your body (toe down, heel up). Dribble with the inside of your foot to change directions, or maintain possession closer to your body to keep it away from your opponents (heel down, toe up)

\*Where - Into open space by changing direction and speed

\*When - The moment space becomes available & I recognize that I can enter it



## SMALL-SIDED ACTMITY

4v4 Endzone Soccer -

**TRAINING AREA**= 30W x 40L. Build a small "endzone" at each end of the field = 30W x 5L. Score by dribbling into th endzone. Players can only enter the endzone if they are dribbling the ball, or recovering defensively after the person dribbling the ball. 1pt. = dribble into endzone under control; 2pts = beat (1) opponent, and dribble into the endzone under control; 5pts = beat more than (1) opponent, and dribble into endzone under control; \*\*Play to 10pts.

### Coaching Points

Keep your head up when receiving the ball, or in possession to identify areas of the field to penetrate with the dribble.

If there is space behind a defender, look dribble and change direction to unbalance the defender

\*What - Recognizing 1v1 situations to try and beat your opponent

\*Where - Open space in front, and behind the defender



## EXPANDED SMALL-SIDED ACTMITY

5v5 - 2 goals

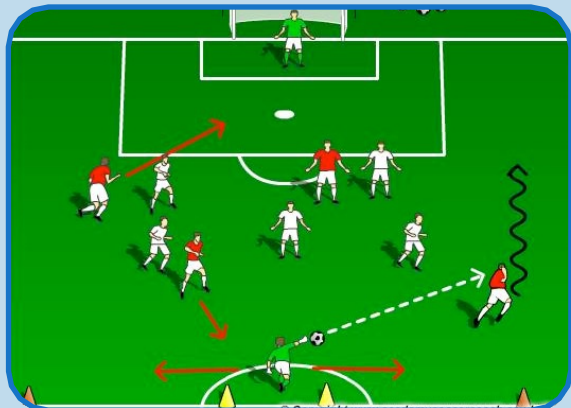
**TRAINING AREA**= 50W x 60L. Place (1) large goal at one end of the field and (3) small goals made from cones at the other end of the field, approximately 3 yards wide. Position balls at each of the field for easy access. Play for set period of time, or number of goals (determined by coach). Players scoring on the small goals, score by passing the ball through the cones. 1pt. = score a goal; 2pt = beat (1) opponent, and score a goal; 5pts = beat more than (1) opponent, and score a goal

### Coaching Points

Dribble with speed & change directions when attacking open space, or an alone defender

Look to pass, and keep possession if there are several defenders around/near the ball

\*Who - The player with the ball\*Why - Taking players off the dribble will open up space for teammates throughout the rest of the field



## GAME

Play 7v7 with specific formations for each team.

Reinforce all points above



# U12 Day 2

Improve player's ability to use the dribble to help set up the pass



## TECHNICAL WARM-UP

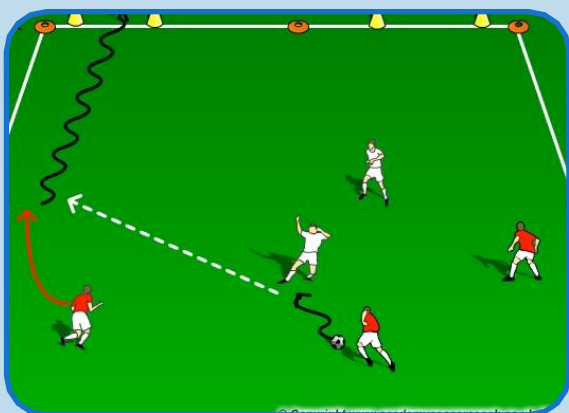
2v0 - Combination Play

**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Place a "defender" (wall man, cone, pole, etc.) in the center of the space. Form (4) lines in each corner of the field with ball. The player with the ball dribbles towards the defender to "commit" them. Then plays pass to teammate. Both players run off the field, and stand in the next line. The next group begins a similar movement.  
\*\*Combinations = Take-over, through ball, overlap, dribble-give/go

### Coaching Points:

Dribble with the laces of the foot when dribbling at speed; Pass with the inside of the foot to be more accurate & strike the middle of the ball when passing

What - The laces of the foot should be used when dribbling at speed; Where - Pass to the open space in front of me



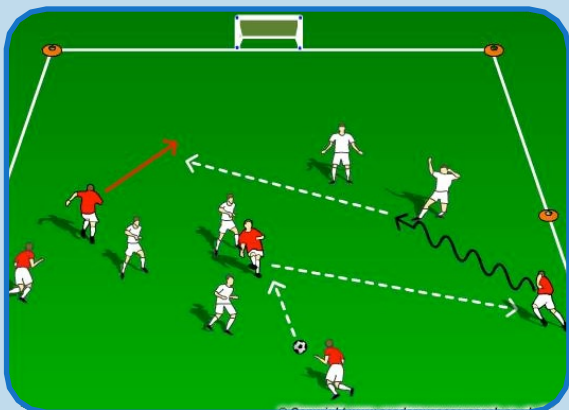
## SMALL-SIDED ACTMITY

3v2 - Dribble Goal

**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Play (2) goals on each end-line using (4) cones. The goals should be 3 yards wide. Designate a group of attackers (3), and a group of defenders (2). Play 3v2, scoring by dribbling through the gate. Rotate attack & defense.  
\*If the defense win the ball they can attack the goals on the opposite endline.

### Coaching Points:

Point your standing leg/plant foot towards the player or space you wish to pass the ball; Follow through with your foot after you pass the ball to increase speed and accuracy when passing  
What - Recognizing the moment to attack & engage the defender with the dribble; Why - To enable commit the defender, which will open more space for my teammates to enter without the ball



## EXPANDED SMALL-SIDED ACTMITY

5v5 to Goal

**TRAINING AREA** = 40W x 60L. Place (2) goals at opposite ends of the field. Play 5v5, shooting/passing the ball into the goal to score. \*Variations: -Scoring a goal = 1pt.; -Committing a defender & scoring a goal = 5pts

### Coaching Points

Where - In front of them into space after I have committed a defender; When - Just before the defender steps in to tackle the ball



## GAME

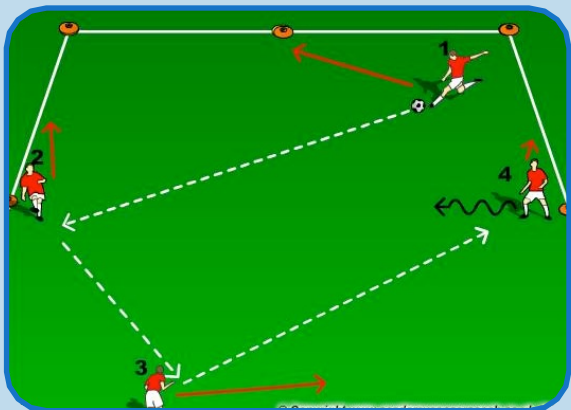
Play 7v7 with specific formations for each team.

Reinforce all points above



# U12 Day 3

## Passing & Receiving



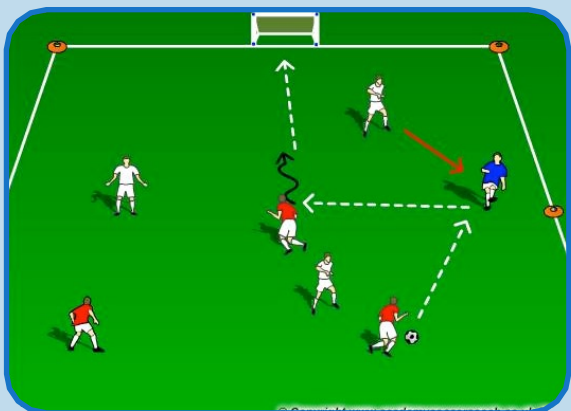
### Sequential Passing

**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Break the players up into even divided groups (3,4,5) as numbers allow. (1) ball between each group. Number each player #1-3,4,5 as numbers allow. Players should pass & receive throughout the space in a sequential manner #1-2-3-4-1. (example). Move into new space after completing the pass. Variations: -Reverse the number order; - Touch restrictions; -Add another ball (for groups of 5+)

### Coaching Points:

Strike the middle of the ball, position the non-kicking/plant foot towards your teammate or target; Use the inside part of the foot when striking the ball – lock the ankle & knee when striking the ball; Head down, and watch foot strike the ball – follow through the ball/pass

## TECHNICAL WARM-UP



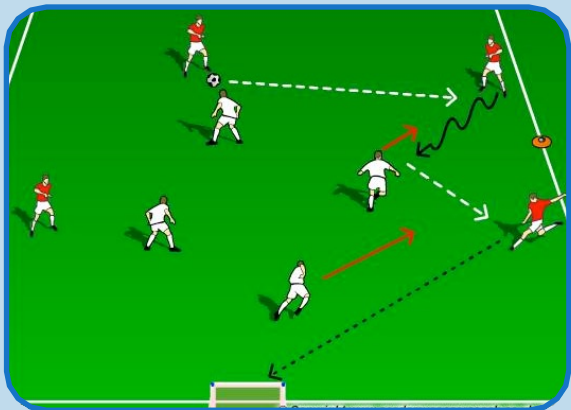
### 3v3 +1 to 1 goal

**TRAINING AREA** = 30W x 40L. Place (1) goal on each end line for the teams to attack. Score by passing the ball in the goal.

### Coaching points

First touch should be across the body – in space away body without pressure; First touch should be across the body – close to the body away from pressure; Move feet underneath the body, and behind the ball to control the ball

## SMALL-SIDED ACTMITY



### 4v4 to 1 goal & 2 counter goals - Dribble/Pass to Score

**TRAINING AREA** = 30W x 40L. Place (2) cones on one end-line, in each corner. Making (2) goals. The goals should be 3 yards wide. Place (1) goal on the opposite end line. Red scores by passing into the goal, white scores by passing through the cones goals.

### Coaching Points:

First touch should be across the body – in space away body without pressure; First touch should be across the body – close to the body away from pressure; Move feet underneath the body, and behind the ball to control the ball

**What** - Turning to change the point of attack; **Why** - To keep the ball, and move it to open space to have a better chance to score

## EXPANDED SMALL-SIDED ACTMITY



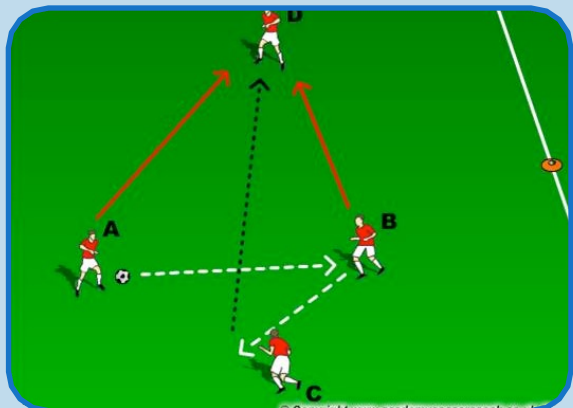
## GAME

Play 7v7 with specific formations for each team.

Reinforce all points above

# U12 Day 4

## Passing & Receiving in Groups



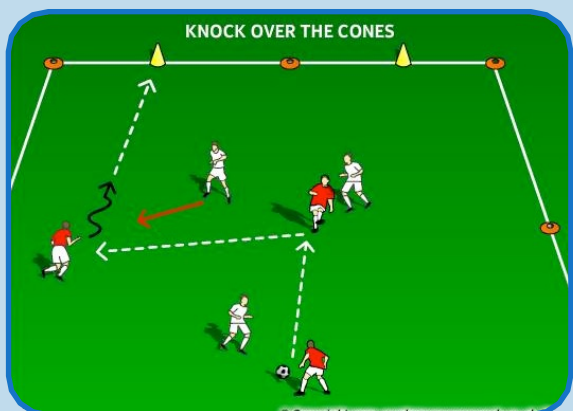
### TECHNICAL WARM-UP

Stay & Play - "If you play the ball down, you stay put"

**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Players should be in groups of (4-5) with (1) ball between them. Horizontal players (A,B) provide off ball support, while penetrating players (C,D) make penetrating passes. A-B-C-D (A,B move off ball in support of D)  
- Repeat pattern & combinations for 90 seconds. Rotate position, roles, and combination pairs.

#### Coaching Points:

Keep head up to direct first touch with the inside of your foot into open space; Move towards the player with the ball with "open" body shape to play in multiple directions; Run without the ball with a curve path to provide a large window for teammate to pass into



### SMALL-SIDED ACTMITY

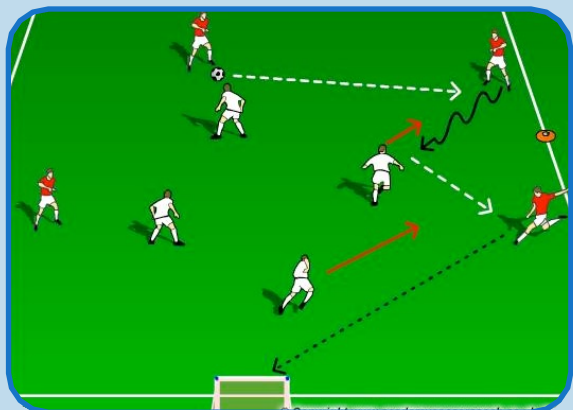
3v3 Knock over the cone

**TRAINING AREA** = 30W x 40L. Set up (2) tall cones on each end-line, representing (2) targets/goals. Score by passing the ball into the cone. Knock both cones over to win the game.

#### Coaching Points:

Time the run to support the ball as it travels towards your teammate; Position yourself at an angle so the player with the ball can see you & the defender; Move feet, and up on your toes as your prepare to receive the ball

**Who** - The player(s) without the ball; **How** - Move towards my teammate with the ball so that my body is open to the field



### EXPANDED SMALL-SIDED ACTMITY

4v4 to 1 goal

**TRAINING AREA** = 30W x 40L. Place (1) goal on each end-line for the group to attack.

Play 4v4. Score by passing the ball into the goal. The goal is equal to the number of successful consecutive passes before the goal is scored.

#### Coaching Points:

Pass into space in front of teammates so they can run onto the ball - non-kicking foot/plant foot should point to the space the ball will travel; Toes down, heel up to drive the ball across the space - to move the ball quickly

**What** - Knowing when to move to support the ball;

**When** - If there is a defender near the ball and I am closest to the ball.



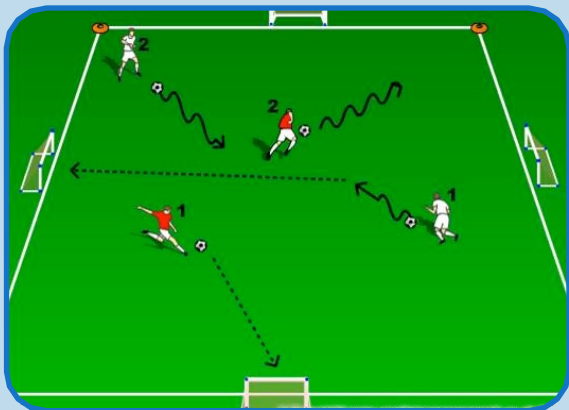
### GAME

Play 7v7 with specific formations for each team.

Reinforce all points above

# U12 Day 5

## Improving Shooting Technique



### TECHNICAL WARM-UP

Numbered Shooting Technique

**TRAINING AREA** = 30W x 40L. Place (4) goals on each side of the space. All player should have a ball at their feet. Number each color/group evenly (1-4). Players will dribble around the space, and when the coach calls their "#Number" they then look to shot on goal (closest, or farthest). Variations - Shooting Technique (at coach's discretion): Driven; Curled; In-step Drive; Lofted

Coaching Points:

First touch when receiving should be away from the body into space; Place plant foot/non-kicking foot behind ball (elevate ball); Place plant foot/non-kicking foot next to the ball (keep ball lower); Strike the middle of the ball to keep the ball lower; Strike the bottom of the ball to elevate the ball



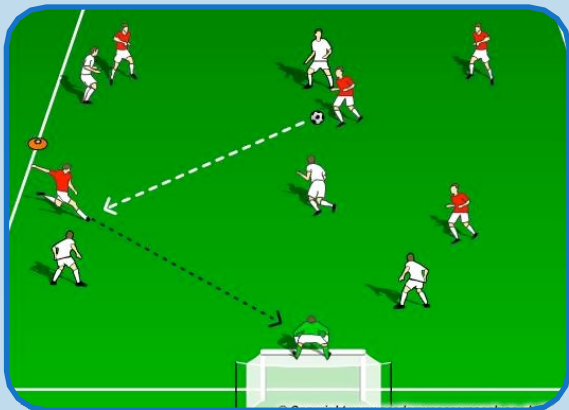
### SMALL-SIDED ACTMITY

2v2 Continuous

**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Place 1 large goal at each end of the field. Position players in each corner of the field. Ball starts from the GK. Play until there is a goal, or ball out of bounds. Then switch groups. Ball always with the GK of the team in possession. Variations: Play for time; Play for total score; Play series of games (2 of 3)

Coaching Points:

Application of technique (shooting); What - The decision to shoot on goal, and the technique used; Who - The player in the best shooting position, with the ball; Where - The part of the goal that the shooter aims for with their shot



### EXPANDED SMALL-SIDED ACTMITY

5v5 to Goal

**TRAINING AREA** = 40W x 50L. Place (1) large goal on each endline. Play 5v5 with GKs. Variations: Play for time; Play for total score; Play series of games (2 of 3)

Coaching Points:

Application of technique (shooting); What - The decision to shoot on goal, and the technique used; Who - The player in the best shooting position, with the ball; Where - The part of the goal that the shooter aims for with their shot



### GAME

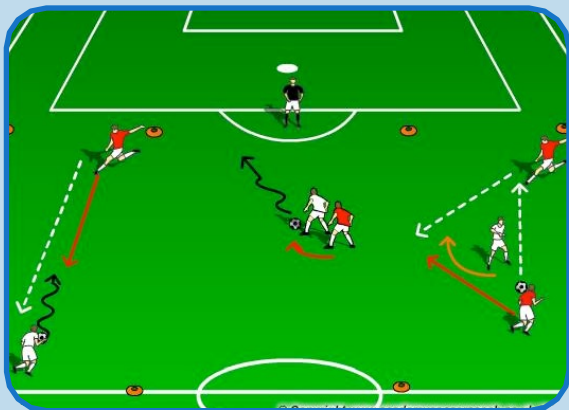
Play 7v7 with specific formations for each team.

Reinforce all points above



# U12 Day 6

## Individual Defending



### TECHNICAL WARM-UP

Individual Partner Defending Technique

**TRAINING AREA** - 40W x 30L. Players in a groups 2-3 with (1) ball. Each group works on "defensive technique."

\*1v1 Defensive Technique - dribbling

\*1v1 Defensive Technique - no turn

\*1v2 Defensive Technique - intercept pass

Players should go through each type of defending situation and rotate. Player in possession (dribbling/passing) tries to beat the defender. Rotate offense-defense each turn. Rest after 45 sec, stretch 90 sec, repeat.

#### Coaching Points:

Approach quickly to the ball – long strides; Slow down as you approach the ball – short, choppy strides; Bend knees, weight on toes when pressuring the ball; Move feet, hips, and head as the offensive player moves the ball



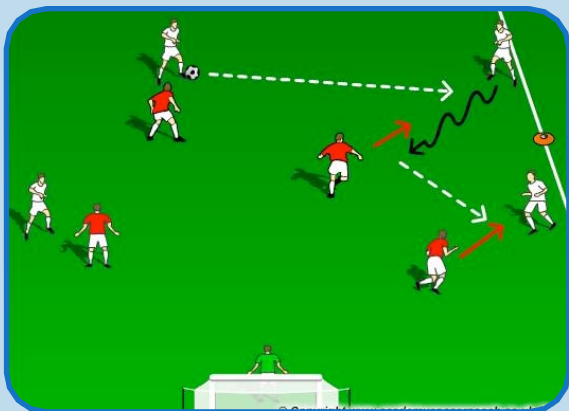
### SMALL-SIDED ACTMITY

2v2 score on two goals

**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Place (2) cones 3 yards apart in each corner forming a "goal" for a total of (4) goals. Coach starts with the balls. Coach plays ball to one team. While the ball travels, the team who did not receive the ball runs on to defend against the team in possession. Both teams score by passing/shooting the ball through the "goals."

#### Coaching Points:

Defensive technique = cover the ground, get down, & stay down!; Tackle the ball: when the ball is AWAY from offensive player



### EXPANDED SMALL-SIDED ACTMITY

4v4 score on one large goal & two goals

**TRAINING AREA** = 30W x 40L. Place (2) cones 3 yards apart in each two corners forming a "goal" for a total of (2) goals. Place one large goal at the opposite end.

Play for pre-determined amount of time. Red team defends large goal, and white defends two goals. After each period change the goals defended.

#### Coaching Points:

Defensive technique = cover the ground, get down, & stay down!; Tackle the ball: when the ball is AWAY from offensive player;

What - The direction to apply pressure, or force the ball;

**Why** - This is to encourage the opposition to go away from the goal, and towards your supporting teammates



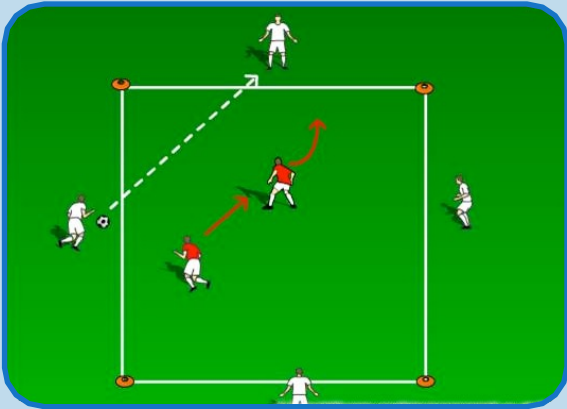
### GAME

Play 7v7 with specific formations for each team.

Reinforce all points above

# U12 Day 7

## Defending in Pairs



### 4v2 Possession & Penetration **TECHNICAL WARM-UP**

**TRAINING AREA** = 12W x 12L. Place (1) play on the outside of the space, on each side of the square. Position (2) defenders inside the space. The defenders may not leave the space, but can block, or intercept passes.

Scoring for offense: # of consecutive passes; maintain possession for set period of time; # of split pass between defenders  
Scoring for defense: # of deflected passes; -# of intercepted passes; - # of times defenders can win possession and dribble outside the space under control & in possession

#### **Coaching Points:**

Defensive pressure on the ball (speed, body stance, angle, distance); Approach quickly to the ball – long strides; Slow down as you approach the ball – short, choppy strides; Bend knees, weight on toes when pressuring the ball; Move feet, hips, and head as the offensive player moves the ball



### **SMALL-SIDED ACTMITY**

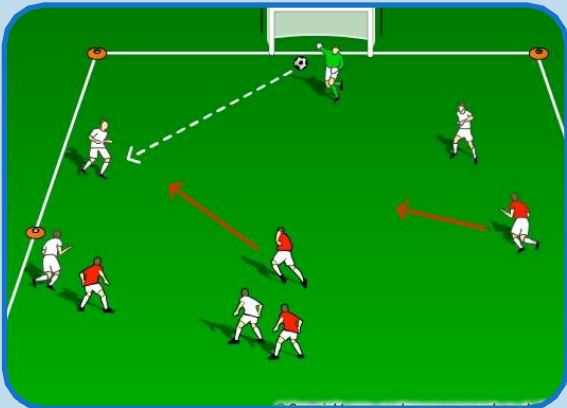
3v3 to 1 goal

**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Place (2) tall cones on each end-line 5 yards apart making (1) goal on each endline. Red v White. Score by passing the ball on the ground through the goal.

Variations: Play for set period of time; Play to a specific number (#) of goals; Double points if goal comes after a steal; -Double points if a goal comes after an interception

#### **Coaching Points:**

Defensive pressure on the ball (speed, body stance, angle, distance);  
**Who** - The 2nd defender, or place who is closest to their teammate defending the ball;  
**Why** - The 2nd defender can help to cover any mistakes made by the 1st defender



### **EXPANDED SMALL-SIDED ACTMITY**

5v5 to 1 goal

**TRAINING AREA** = 30W x 40L. Place (1) goal on each end-line for teams to attack.

Variations: Play for set period of time; Play to a specific number (#) of goals; Double points if goal comes after a steal; -Double points if a goal comes after an interception

#### **Coaching Points:**

Defensive pressure on the ball (speed, body stance, angle, distance);  
**Who** - The 2nd defender, or place who is closest to their teammate defending the ball;  
**Why** - The 2nd defender can help to cover any mistakes made by the 1st defender



### **GAME**

Play 7v7 with specific formations for each team.

Reinforce all points above

# U12 Day 8

Improve GK handling & footwork - I



## TECHNICAL WARM-UP

GKs mix with Field players

**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. The number of balls should equal the number of GKs involved in the warmup. Field players should pass the ball around the space. When the GK makes eye contact with the player; the field player in possession should take a touch and "shoot" on the GK. The objective of the shot is to go towards the GK (no around them, not over them, and not past them). Shots should be taken from 12-15 yards away. \*Only shoot on GK's command.

### Coaching Points:

Hands should make early contact and let their hands make contact on the ball. Do not wait for the ball to make contact with the body; Players should move their feet quickly, with short strides, and step towards the ball.



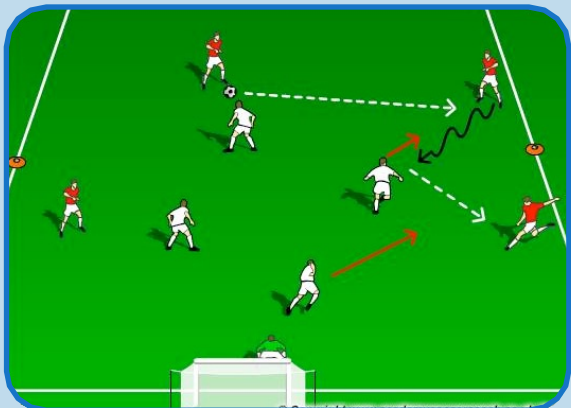
## SMALL-SIDED ACTMITY

4v4 - 4 goal game

**TRAINING AREA** = 30W x 40L. Place (2) goals on each end-line in the corner making a total of (4) goals in the space. Red (4) v White (4). Each team's GK defends (2) goals. Score by shooting into the goal.

### Coaching Points:

As the player with the ball looks up then down, the GK should take small steps to get in position; Place my weight on my toes, and point my body towards the ball



## EXPANDED SMALL-SIDED ACTMITY

4v4 to 1 large goal

**TRAINING AREA** = 30W x 40L. Place (1) on each end-line for each team to attack. Red (4) v White (4). Score by shooting into the goal.

### Coaching Points:

Hands should make early contact and let their hands make contact on the ball. Do not wait for the ball to make contact with the body; When - The player looks up, then down - should be ready for a shot



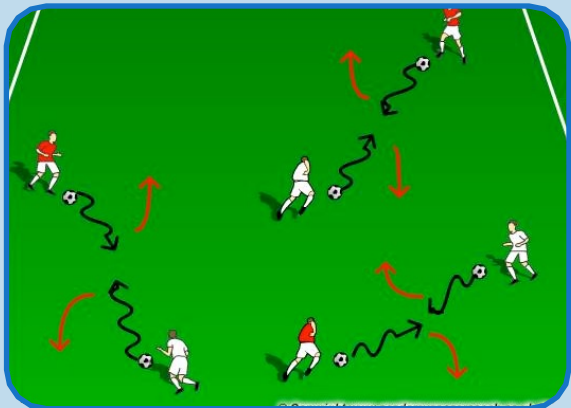
## GAME

Play 7v7 with specific formations for each team.

Reinforce all points above

# U12 Day 9

## Dribbling & Turning



### TECHNICAL WARM-UP

How close can you get?

**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Each player has a ball at their feet dribbling in the space. When the coach yells, "GO!" the players make eye contact with one another and begin to dribble towards one another. They should dribble at normal speed, and try to get their balls as close to each other as they can, before turning away at the last minute. After they turn away they should accelerate into open space and wait for the next "GO!" Turns: Inside foot, Outside foot, Drag back, Pull back

#### Coaching Points:

Push the ball away from body, plant foot/standing foot should be away from the ball, and under the body; Reach for the ball with 1 foot (inside, outside, or bottom of foot); Take a touch to change direction of the ball, second touch should be into space to accelerate into a new direction



### SMALL-SIDED ACTMITY

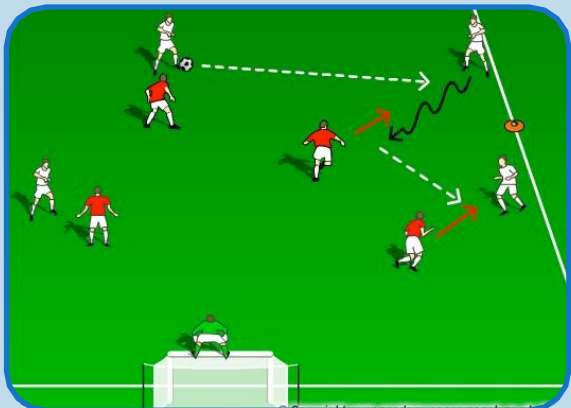
3v3 to 4 goals - Dribble to Score

**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Place (2) cones on each end-line, in each corner. Making (4) goals. The goals should be 3 yards wide. Play 3v3. Dribble through the gates to score.

#### Coaching Points:

Application of technique (dribbling, receiving);

**What** - Turning away from pressure; **Who** - The player with the ball



### EXPANDED SMALL-SIDED ACTMITY

4v4 to 1 goal & 2 counter goals - Dribble/Pass to Score

**TRAINING AREA** = 30W x 40L. Place (2) cones on one end-line, in each corner. Making (2) goals. The goals should be 3 yards wide. Place (1) goal on the opposite end line.

Play 4v4. Score by passing the ball in the goal, or by dribbling through cone goals.

#### Coaching Points:

While in possession head up and look for pressuring defender. Check all around the area for open space; 2<sup>nd</sup> touch when turning, needs to be pushed into space 3-5 yards away from body to allow for multiple steps to accelerate away from pressure; How - Checking over my shoulder while dribbling, taking a touch away from my body, and quickly accelerating into open space away from pressure



### GAME

Play 7v7 with specific formations for each team.

Reinforce all points above



# U12 Day 10

4 v 4 Have Fun

**\*\*Set up as many fields as possible 30W x 40L – no GKs – (1) goal on each end line. Play for 8 minutes, 2 minutes for water. change opponents each match\*\***



## Activity 1

### Pass lead to points

The number of consecutive passes made before a goal is scored = number of points awarded for goal. Encourage players to move without the ball, and the look up to find an open teammate



## ACTMITY 2

### Join the play

Everyone must be in the attacking half (across the half line) for goals to count. This will help the players/team stay together and avoid gaps or space in between the players on the field.



## ACTMITY 3

### 1 touch finish

In order to score, the shot must be a "one-touch" shot/finish. Players need to continuously pass the ball until, they are able to get off a shot quickly with 1 touch.



## ACTMITY 4

### Free Play

Play 4v4 with specific formations for each team.

Reinforce all coaching points above