



The Soccer Education Specialists

United Soccer Academy

Recreation Soccer
Training

Curriculum
(9-12 years)



Experience Excellence in Soccer Education

A division of USA Sport Group



Mission Statement

As the premier providers of soccer training on the East Coast we will deliver diverse soccer programs, which are both inspirational and educational. These programs are age and ability appropriate and are found on the principles of safety, learning and enjoyment.

Philosophy

The underpinning principles of our programs:

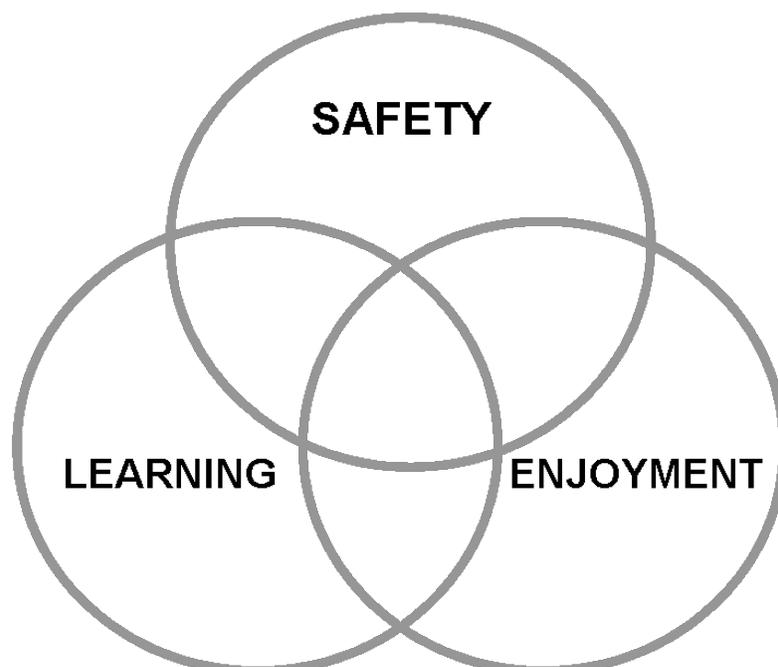
- Safety, learning and enjoyment;
- Maximum participation;
- Structured and progressive learning;
- Identify all potential partners and foster relationships between them;
- Develop positive attitudes.

Three Pillars of USA, Inc. Programs

USA, Inc. have identified three essential elements that are present in all of our own programs and coaching sessions that we call the Three Pillars of Soccer.

It is recognized that all USA, Inc. programs contain the elements of safety, learning and enjoyment. It is your responsibility as a coach to ensure that these elements are at the forefront of your mind in all sessions. All are their own separate entity, yet encompass each other. The USA program identifies a player's age and ability level (from the age and curriculum breakdown model) which will in turn affect the extent to which an element is present at any time during a USA program. It is also recognized that safety, learning and enjoyment are interpreted different at each program level.

We have placed an emphasis upon the individual importance of safety which has to be at the forefront of the coaches mind before learning and enjoyment can take place.



How to Use the Thresholds of Training

The technical and tactical objectives are designed specifically to be delivered over a series of 10 practice sessions but can be adapted for programs of differing lengths & players of varying abilities. It is important that each objective is delivered individually, so that each player can focus on that particular area.

Practice sessions should be planned so that they involve a WARM-UP, an introduction to the technique or skill (FUNDAMENTAL), a progression of the technique or skill (GAME RELATED) and a conditioned and unconditioned scrimmage (CONDITIONED GAME). It is important that each section of the practice session is based on the same “theme”, whether technical or tactical. For example a practice session on control would have elements of control in the warm up, introduction and progression of the technique, as well as the conditioned and unconditioned scrimmage.

USA, Inc. have designed & produced a series of 10 session topics for each threshold level that cover all technical and tactical thresholds. There are learning objectives & outcomes for each session and assumes player success at the previous level. The 10 session topics allow coaches to repeat sessions if necessary over the course of a 10 week season, plus allowing coaches the freedom to add their own input into the program based upon the needs of the players. The players will practice more than twice per week, thus allowing the opportunity for development and skill acquisition to be greatly increased.

Suggested Session Guide Format

Use the formats below as a guide only. Progression assumes success for players at the previous level and so some flexibility is needed in respect to content and time of any session format. The format below is categorized in parts, although distinct there is room for overlap and amalgamation of parts.

| <u>COMPONENT</u> | <u>(%)</u> | <u>1 HOUR</u> | <u>1.5 HOUR</u> | <u>2.0 HOUR</u> |
|-----------------------|------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Warm Up | 15 | 10 mins | 10 mins | 20 mins |
| Fundamental | 20 | 10 mins | 20 mins | 25 mins |
| Game-Related Practice | 25 | 15 mins | 25 mins | 30 mins |
| Conditioned Game | 35 | 20 mins | 30 mins | 40 mins |
| Cool Down | 5 | 5 mins | 5 mins | 5 mins |

The Thresholds of Training that are offered contain the elements of both technical and tactical objectives in soccer that players at each age level should experience. Players should attain all of the objectives in the “Threshold” category, and several objectives in the “Premier” category. The aim is to challenge every player to his or her highest possible level of development. The technical and tactical aspects cover:

Technical

1. Creative Play
2. Shooting (Accuracy)
3. Receiving & Control
4. Attacking (1v1)
5. Passing (Switch of Play)
6. Passing (Penetration)
7. Changing Direction
8. Defending (1v1)
9. Passing (Possession)
10. Shooting (Power)

Tactical

1. Rules of the Game
2. Creating shooting opportunities
3. Dealing with pressure
4. Attacking in wide areas
5. Switch of play, transfer and creating width
6. Penetration and support
7. Changing point of attack
8. Pressure and positional awareness
9. Width, length, depth and support
10. Set pieces and restarts

Technical (9-12 Years Threshold)

- Creative Play
- Shooting (Accuracy)
- Receiving & Control
- Passing (Switch of Play)
- Passing (Penetration)
- Changing Direction
- Shooting (Power)

Tactical (9-12 Years Threshold)

- Rules of the Game
- Creating shooting opportunities
- Dealing with pressure
- Switch of play, transfer and creating width
- Penetration and support
- Changing point of attack
- Set pieces and restarts

Technical (9-12 Years Premier)

- Attacking (1v1)
- Defending (1v1)
- Passing (Possession)

Tactical (9-12 Years Premier)

- Attacking in wide areas
- Pressure and positional awareness
- Width, length, depth and support

10-week Development Academy Program (9-12 Years)

| | |
|-----------|---------------------------------|
| 1 | Creative Play |
| 2 | Shooting (Accuracy) |
| 3 | Receiving & Control |
| 4 | Attacking (1v1) |
| 5 | Passing (Switch of Play) |
| 6 | Passing (Penetration) |
| 7 | Changing Direction |
| 8 | Defending (1v1) |
| 9 | Passing (Possession) |
| 10 | Shooting (Power) |



Warm Up



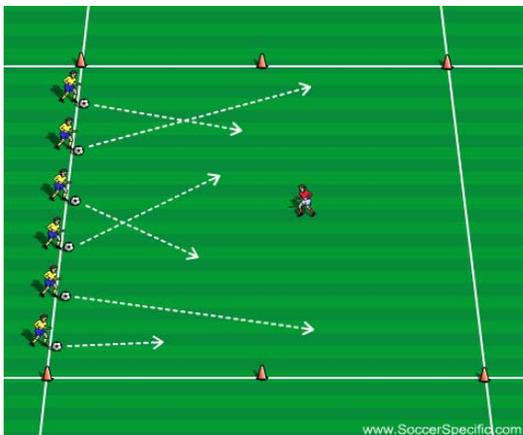
Physical Preparation: Quickness & Reaction

Players are split into pairs and play tag with their partner. Winner is the player that is not the catcher after 30 seconds.

Progression(s):

1. Reduce size of playing area.
2. Introduce use of a soccer ball (1v1 keep ball).
3. Introduce defender to tackle players in possession.

Fundamental



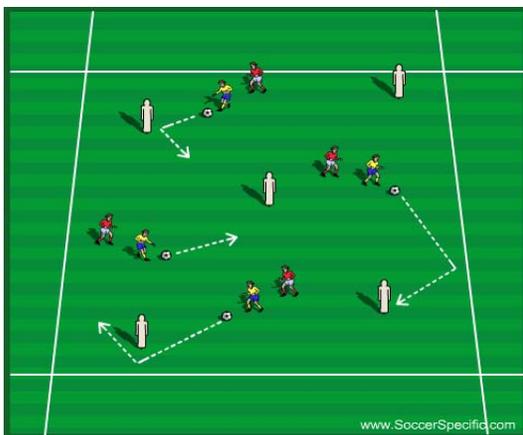
Fundamental: Creative Play

Players line up with ball and aim to successfully dribble to the opposite end line without losing control and/or being tackled by the defender. When a player loses possession of the ball then they also become a defender in the next phase of play.

Progression(s):

1. Attackers have time limit to dribble to end line (e.g. 10 secs).
2. Restrict players to specific foot (e.g. preferred, non-preferred).
3. Reduce size of playing area.

Game-Related Practice



Developmental Fours: Creative Player

Players have ball between two and rotate every 60 seconds. The players are encouraged to practice various skills, tricks and moves to beat an opponent and/or change speed and direction.

Principle Focus:

Creative imagination and freedom of self-expression through free play.

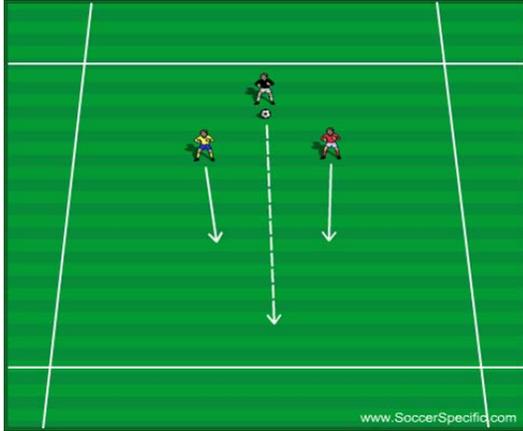
Conditioned Game / Cool Down

Small-sided conditioned game (5v5 maximum). Practice concluded with dynamic cool down.





Warm Up



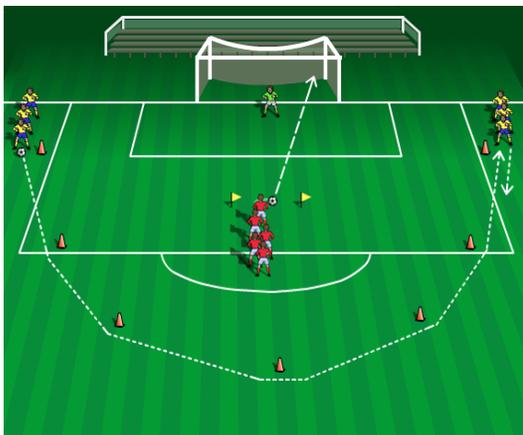
Physical Preparation: Quickness & Reaction

Players compete in pairs for the ball delivered by coach. First player to the ball wins.

Progression(s):

1. Vary start positions (e.g. sitting down, lying on front, knees up).
2. Vary type of delivery (e.g. bounce, spin, angle).
3. Introduce goal for players to score into.

Fundamental



Fundamental: Shooting (Accuracy)

Attackers score as many consecutive penalties as possible before time runs out. Defenders dictate how long attackers have to score by dribbling the ball around the markers to a team mate at the other side. Once defenders return to their starting position, the attacking team stop shooting at goal. Rotate teams.

Progression(s):

1. Restrict players to specific foot (e.g. preferred, non-preferred).
2. Introduce targets in the goal for attacking team to hit.

Game-Related Practice



Developmental Fours: 4v4

The 4v4 game-related practice is set up to encourage players to play in a basic diamond (1-2-1) team shape. Coach should allow players to have the freedom to express themselves and encourage creative skills, tricks and movements in 1v1 situations.

Principle Focus:

Creating shooting opportunities.

Conditioned Game / Cool Down

Small-sided conditioned game (5v5 maximum). Practice concluded with dynamic cool down.



Warm Up



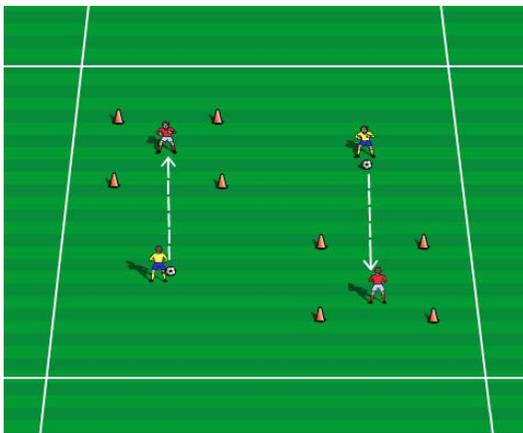
Physical Preparation: Speed, Agility & Quickness (SAQ)

Players in the middle move around randomly and play a wall pass with one of the static players on the outer perimeter. Inner players return to central area prior to moving onto the next available wall player. Rotate players every 30-60 seconds.

Progression(s):

1. Vary type of delivery (e.g. volley, header, bounce, spin).
2. Scatter markers in centre for players to slalom through.
3. First player to achieve set number of passes wins (e.g. 10).

Fundamental



Fundamental: Receiving & Control

The receiving player inside the square must control the ball within the defined area and return the ball back to their partner.

Progression(s):

1. Limit number of touches (e.g. 2 touch max).
2. Vary type of delivery (e.g. bounce, spin).
3. Reduce size of area to control the ball.

Game-Related Practice



Developmental Fours: 4v4 + GKs

This game-related practice is set up to encourage players to play in a basic diamond (1-2-1) team shape. Coach should allow players to have the freedom to express themselves and encourage creative skills, tricks and movements in 1v1 situations.

Principle Focus:

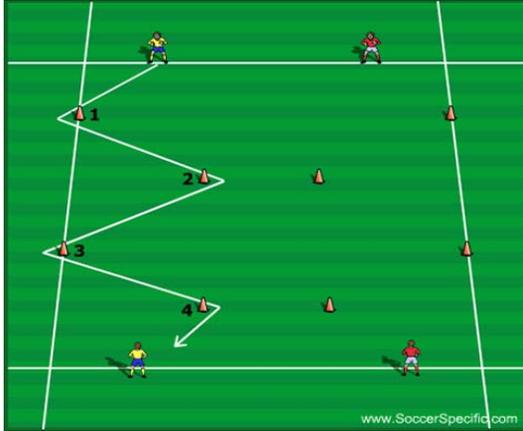
Receiving and controlling the ball under pressure.

Conditioned Game / Cool Down

Small-sided conditioned game (5v5 maximum). Practice concluded with dynamic cool down.



Warm Up



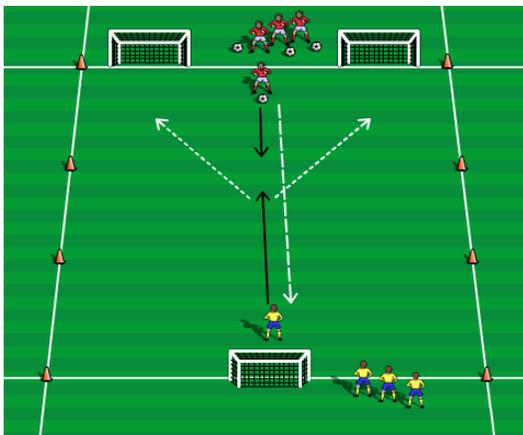
Physical Preparation: Speed, Agility & Quickness (SAQ)

Players sprint in sequence through the slalom of markers. Once they reach the end line the next player begins. Continuous sprints for 30-60 seconds.

Progression(s):

1. Introduce use of a soccer ball.
2. Perform 'figure of eight' between middle markers (2 & 3).
3. Backward sprints / sideways running.

Fundamental



Fundamental: Attacking (1v1s)

Defender passes the ball to attacker to create a 1v1 scenario. The attacker attempts to dribble past the defender and score into either of the two corner goals. If the defender wins the ball they score into the opposite goal.

Progression(s):

1. Attacker has set time limit to score (e.g. 10 secs).
2. Attacker must be in final third to score.
3. Vary type of pass (e.g. inside, outside, driven, curved).

Game-Related Practice



Developmental Fours: End Zone (Dribbling)

This 4v4 game-related practice is set out to encourage players to play in a basic diamond (1-2-1) team shape. A point is scored when a player successfully dribbles the ball under control into the opposition end zone. Coach should allow players to have the freedom to express themselves and encourage creative skills, tricks and movements in 1v1 situations.

Principle Focus:

Exploiting 1v1 situations and creative dribbling in wide areas.

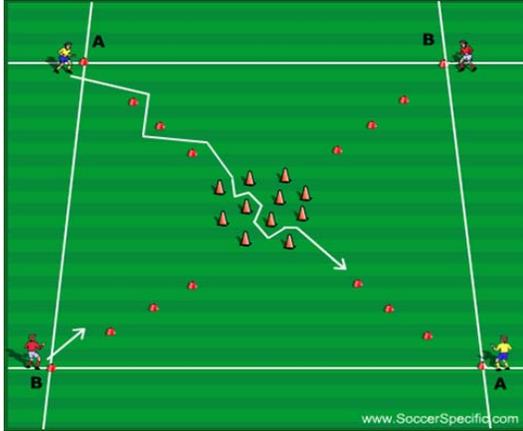
Conditioned Game / Cool Down

Small-sided conditioned game (5v5 maximum). Practice concluded with dynamic cool down.





Warm Up



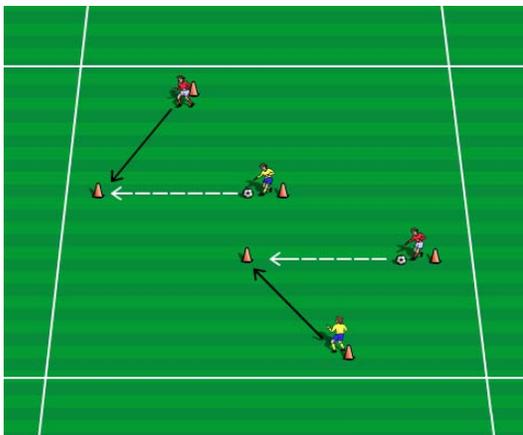
Physical Preparation: Speed, Agility & Quickness (SAQ)

Players slalom through markers and exchange positions with the team mate diagonally across from them.

Progression(s):

1. Touch set number of cones before sprinting to partner (e.g. 5).
2. Introduce use of a soccer ball.
3. All four players start at the same time.

Fundamental



Fundamental: Passing (Switch of Play)

Two players occupy any two corners of a triangle identified by markers. The player without possession sprints to the unoccupied corner of the triangle and demands the ball. On this command, the player in possession passes the ball to their partner. The player that passed the ball now moves to the unoccupied corner.

Progression(s):

1. Increase distance between passes.
2. Limit number of touches (e.g. 2 touch max).

Game-Related Practice



Developmental Fours: Four Goal (Wide)

This 4v4 game-related practice is set out to encourage players to play in a basic diamond (1-2-1) team shape. A point is scored when a player successfully scores into either of the two opposing corner goals. Coach should allow players to have the freedom to express themselves and encourage creative skills, tricks and movements in 1v1 situations.

Principle Focus:

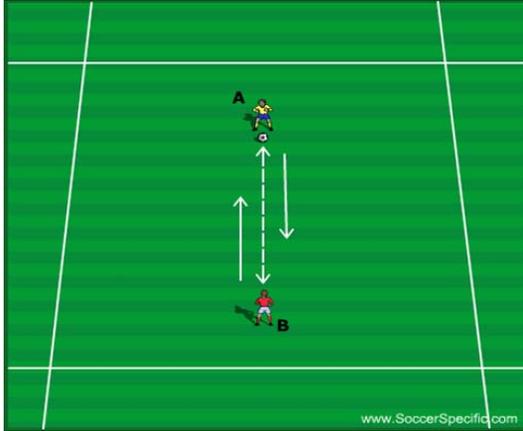
Switch of play and creating width.

Conditioned Game / Cool Down

Small-sided conditioned game (5v5 maximum). Practice concluded with dynamic cool down.



Warm Up



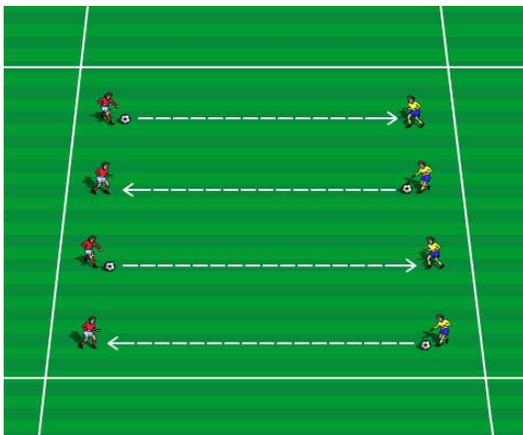
Physical Preparation: Quickness & Reaction

Players A and B play one touch wall passes with each other. When player A stops the ball with the sole of their foot, both players quickly exchange positions.

Progression(s):

1. Any player can stop the ball (other player reacts).
2. Players let ball run past them for partner to sprint and receive.
3. Reduce passing distance between players.

Fundamental



Fundamental: Passing (Penetration)

Players play continuous wall passes with each other.

Progression(s):

1. Increase distance between passes.
2. Limit number of touches (e.g. 2 touch max).
3. Vary type of pass (e.g. inside, outside, driven, curved).

Game-Related Practice



Developmental Fours: Four Goal (Long)

This 4v4 game-related practice is set out to encourage players to play in a basic diamond (1-2-1) team shape. A point is scored when a player successfully scores into either of the two opposing corner goals. Coach should allow players to have the freedom to express themselves and encourage creative skills, tricks and movements in 1v1 situations.

Principle Focus:

Penetrating passes, speed of play and providing support.

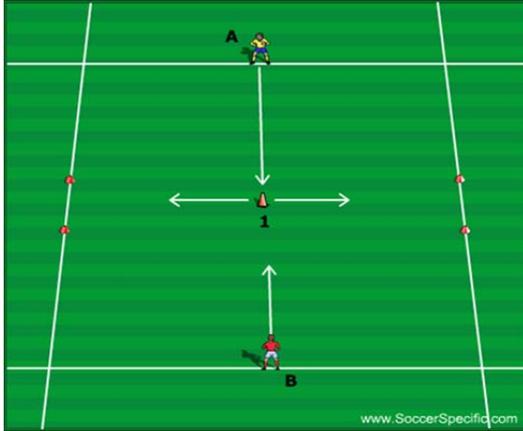
Conditioned Game / Cool Down

Small-sided conditioned game (5v5 maximum). Practice concluded with dynamic cool down.





Warm Up



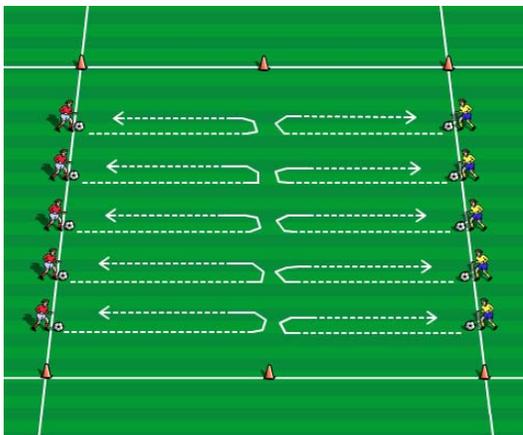
Physical Preparation: Quickness & Reaction

Player A sprints to and touches central cone (1) to change direction and sprint through either of the two side gates. Player B reacts to the movements of Player A by attempting to tag them.

Progression(s):

1. Introduce use of a soccer ball.
2. Introduce goals for players to score into.
3. Reduce sprinting distance of defender.

Fundamental



Fundamental: Changing Direction

Players dribble the ball towards the middle markers and perform a specific turn to change direction. Players then return to their starting position.

Progression(s):

1. Attackers have set time limit to perform turn (e.g. 5 secs).
2. Restrict players to specific foot (e.g. preferred, non-preferred).
3. Vary type of turn (e.g. inside/outside cut, drag back).

Game-Related Practice



Developmental Fours: Four Goal (Dribbling)

This 4v4 game-related practice is set out to encourage players to play in a basic diamond (1-2-1) team shape. A point is scored when a player successfully dribbles through a gate and passes to a teammate. Coach should allow players to have the freedom to express themselves and encourage creative skills, tricks and movements in 1v1 situations.

Principle Focus:

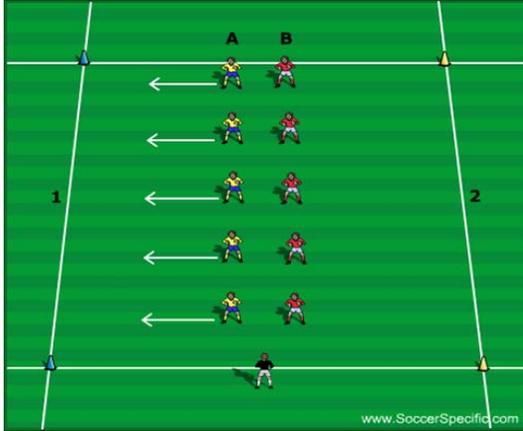
Changing direction and the point of attack.

Conditioned Game / Cool Down

Small-sided conditioned game (5v5 maximum). Practice concluded with dynamic cool down.



Warm Up



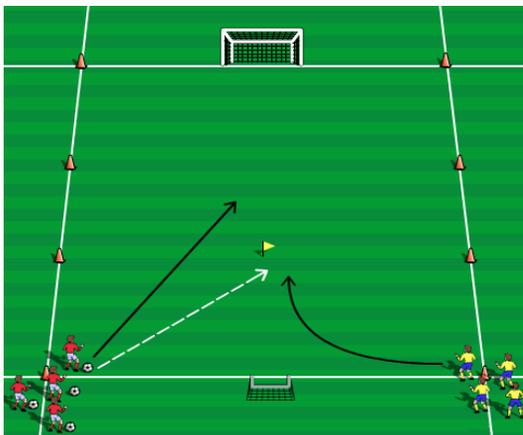
Physical Preparation: Quickness & Reaction

On coaches command, players A & B sprint to the specified line (1 or 2). The players furthest from line (defenders) attempt to tag their partner (attackers). Coach uses verbal, visual and kinaesthetic cues.

Progression(s):

1. Vary start position (e.g. sitting down, lying on front, knees up).
2. Introduce use of a soccer ball.
3. Players perform the opposite from coaches command.

Fundamental



Fundamental: Defending (1v1)

The defender passes the ball towards the flag for the attacker to step onto and drive towards the goal. Attacker must be in final third to score. The defender aims to get goal side as quickly as possible and before winning possession. If the defender wins the ball they must attempt to score into the opposite central goal.

Progression(s):

1. Increase distance between defender and attacker.
2. Defender has set time limit to win the ball (e.g. 5 secs).

Game-Related Practice



Developmental Fours: Four Goal (Across)

This 4v4 game-related practice is set out to encourage players to play in a basic diamond (1-2-1) team shape. Two basic 4v4 games are played across the width and length of the defined area. Coach should allow players to have the freedom to express themselves and encourage creative skills, tricks and movements in 1v1 situations.

Principle Focus:

Movement (with and without ball) and game awareness.

Conditioned Game / Cool Down

Small-sided conditioned game (5v5 maximum). Practice concluded with dynamic cool down.



Warm Up



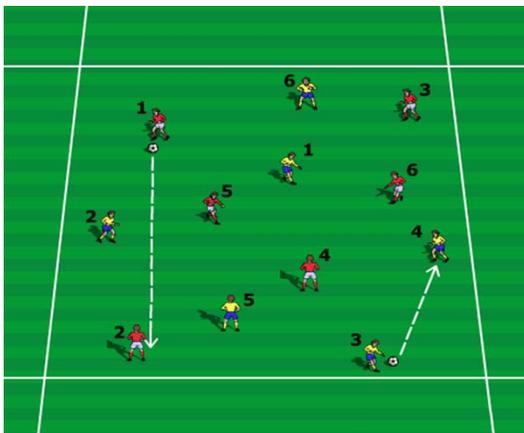
Physical Preparation: Speed, Agility & Quickness (SAQ)

Players sprint around defined area and touch as many different markers as possible in 30 seconds.

Progression(s):

1. Players only touch markers of a specified color.
2. Players turnover opposition markers (and correct their own).
3. Introduce use of a soccer ball.

Fundamental



Fundamental: Passing (Possession)

Sequence passing in two groups where players are numbered from 1-6 and can only pass to a team mate preceding and/or proceeding their own number (e.g. 1 to 2, 2 to 3, 5 to 4, etc).

Progression(s):

1. At coaches discretion, numbers are reversed from 1-6 and 6-1.
2. Limit number of touches (e.g. 2 touch max).
3. Restrict players to specific foot (e.g. preferred, non-preferred).

Game-Related Practice



Developmental Fours: Possession Box

This 4v4 game-related practice is set out to encourage players to play in a basic diamond (1-2-1) team shape. A point is scored when a select number of successful passes have been completed (e.g. 5 consecutive passes). Coach should allow players to have the freedom to express themselves and encourage creative skills, tricks and movements in 1v1 situations.

Principle Focus:

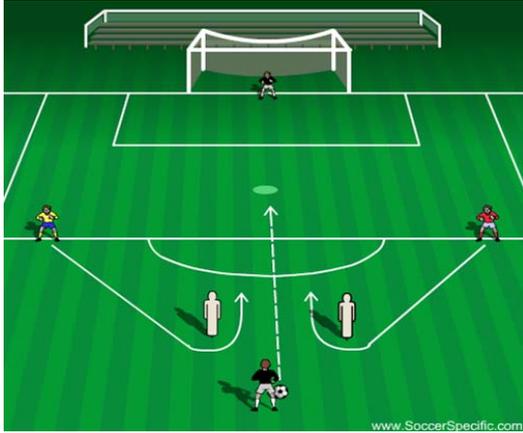
Ball retention, creating length and depth, and providing support.

Conditioned Game / Cool Down

Small-sided conditioned game (5v5 maximum). Practice concluded with dynamic cool down.



Warm Up



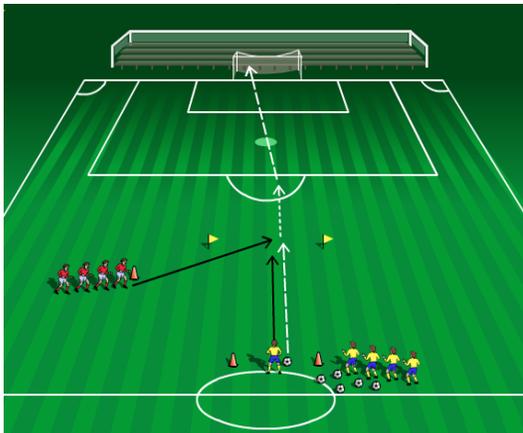
Physical Preparation: Quickness & Reaction

On coaches command, players sprint around the mannequins and compete for the ball delivered by the coach. First player to the ball shoots at goal. Coach uses verbal, visual and kinesthetic cues.

Progression(s):

1. Vary start positions (e.g. sitting down, lying on front, knees up).
2. Players sprint around the opposite mannequin.
3. Vary type of delivery (e.g. bounce, spin).

Fundamental



Fundamental: Shooting (Power)

Defender plays a pass through the gate for attacker to run onto and drive towards goal. Once the ball is through the gate the defender attempts to track back and win possession. The attacker must shoot at goal before reaching the penalty area. Players rotate.

Progression(s):

1. Introduce goalkeeper.
2. Vary type of delivery (e.g. volley, bounce, spin).
3. Reduce distance between attacker and defender.

Game-Related Practice



Developmental Fours: One Goal

This 4v4 game-related practice is set out to encourage players to play in a basic diamond (1-2-1) team shape. Both teams play towards the same goal and a point is scored when a player scores into the goal. Coach should allow players to have the freedom to express themselves and encourage creative skills, tricks and movements in 1v1 situations.

Principle Focus:

Creating shooting opportunities.

Conditioned Game / Cool Down

Small-sided conditioned game (5v5 maximum). Practice concluded with dynamic cool down.

50 Different Ways to Say 'Good Job'

During Practice:

1. Well done!
2. Terrific!
3. That's the way to do it!
4. That's a real improvement!
5. Good thinking!
6. Keep up the good work!
7. That's it!
8. That's better!
9. Outstanding!
10. Fantastic!
11. Fine work!
12. Magnificent!
13. Wonderful!
14. You're really working hard today!
15. That's looking good!
16. Good work!
17. That's the right way to do it!
18. Top stuff!
19. I think you've got it now!
20. Tremendous!
21. Perfect!
22. That's better than what I can do!
23. That's a great effort!
24. You're getting better!
25. Now you've got the hang of it!
26. You're getting better every day!
27. You're learning fast!
28. I knew you could do it!
29. I'm so proud of you!
30. That's much better!
31. Superb!
32. That's amazing!
33. Great work!
34. That's as good as I have seen!
35. Keep it up!
36. Spot on!
37. You are doing much better today!
38. Keep on trying!
39. Excellent - I'm impressed!
40. Very imaginative!

After Practice:

1. That was really good!
2. I'm proud of your efforts today!
3. That's the best you've ever done!
4. You did really well today!
5. You must have been practicing!
6. That was great, you remembered!
7. You worked well today!
8. Great effort out there today!
9. You really are learning quickly!
10. You're nearly getting there!

USA coaching staff honors Grassroots Soccer
by *always* creating a **POSITIVE** learning environment!

