

# FDSA 4U and 6U Coaches Plan

Thank you for volunteering to be a coach with the FDSA. Outlined below are a few tips and logistics that help you with your season. Remember, for these age groups, most of the parents are new to this just like you and their kids.

The following “plan” is just that; it is a plan to help you enjoy the soccer season. The early years of soccer should be based around two concepts: FUN and the BASICS.

The FUN part is very easy for the new coach. Have a smile and the kids will also have a smile! If you show up to the park with an open, happy mind you will soon find that the players on your team will make you laugh every week. It is an enjoyable experience that will help you grow as a person.

The BASICS part of the season some will find a bit more challenging. This is where the “plan” is designed to help. After spending a season attempting to teach the basics to a group of U4 –U6 players I realized that a plan was needed for future coaches. Having coached and played the game at University and the senior level, I was unaware of the challenges of coaching at the lower ages. Following this booklet I feel, will help you and also allow your players an opportunity to learn about the great game of soccer.

# FDSA 4U and 6U Coaches Plan

## **General:**

-Coordinate activities with the rest of your coaching team.

-Confirm vacation schedules and nights you will not be able to attend. If there are nights that no coach can attend, see if any parents are available to run the session. You can also contact the FDSA office and they can try to find a replacement, or you can merge with the team beside you for the evening.

-Get parents to sign up to bring snacks. This is a 12 week practice session and there are 12-13 kids. So every parent is responsible to bring one snack during the summer. I think it works best to have the snacks after the skills and before the game. Bring something cool, not messy, healthy and can be eaten quickly.....DON'T FORGET THE WATER FOR WATER BREAKS, each kid should have there own water bottle.

-At your first team meeting/practice this is a good time to let the parents know a little about yourself and what they can do to help. Parents will usually help out if asked....they just need a little "push." Let the parents know that their assistance would be greatly appreciated and that you will need their help.

**Rule #1:** be nice and have fun.

**Rule #2:** if things aren't working give it a minute then move on.

**Rule #3:** when more than one kid losses focus, change activity

**All drills are provided...if you need more ideas please let us know, we are there to help!!!**

# FDSA 4U and 6U Coaches Plan

## 4U

The goal for this age group is to introduce them to the basic concepts of soccer (dribbling, kicking, running, scoring goals!), help them improve their social skills, and most importantly...Have Fun!

Each team will have 12-13 players.

Games will consist of 3 players (play 3 vs. 3) a side with no goalie. If they absolutely want to play goalie, let them. At this level (U4), games are played amongst each other; therefore you will not be playing vs. other teams. Penny's are provided

Players switch every 3-4 minutes. Have a parent/helper organizing the players on the bench by keeping them in a row or organize those not playing (subs) to do a skill/drill while they wait to keep them occupied.

For the U4 program, the drills call to get some level of parental involvement. As many parents may have other children to mind, it is important to try to find a balance between group and parent involved drills.

# FDSA 4U and 6U Coaches Plan

## Typical Nightly Plan: U4

50 minutes:

Set up area (balls and cones)...5 min. before practice is to start.

5 min. Warm-up

25-30 min. practice ...follow drills sheet provide to you.

5 min. ....snack

10-15 min. game ...get parents to stand around the field. This is to give the kids set boundaries.

5 min. wrap up ...cheer, high 5's, stress positives, skill to practice at home during the week, other...

# FDSA U4 and U6 Coaches Plan

## U6

Each team will have 12-13 players.

Games will consist of 4 players a side with no goalie. 6 players cross over to the opposing team's field and play 4 vs. 4. At this point, both coaches will need to communicate. Kids are to be grouped based on ability and developmental stage. What can happen here is: the weaker or younger players can play on one field and stronger or older players can play on the other field.

Players switch every 3-4 minutes. Have a parent/helper organizing the players on the bench by keeping them in a row or organize those not playing (subs) to do a skill/drill while they wait to keep them occupied.

For the U6 program, the drills call to get some level of parental involvement...especially depending on the child abilities. As many parents may have other children to mind, it is important to try to find a balance between group and parent involved drills.

### **Specific Rules of Play – U6**

The ball starts at centre with one team "passing off" or one coach can start the play by throwing the ball on the field.

When the ball crosses the side lines it is thrown back in by coach or parent.

When the ball crosses the goal line, same as above.

Minor offences such as: hand ball, accidental tripping, or falling on the ball result in a free kick from that area.

Major offences such as: Slide tackle: where the player slides to get the ball, Aggressive pushing: where the player shows no intent to play the ball but rather is just pushing players, Kicking at players: where the player shows no intent to kick at the ball, Yelling out or any other aggressive play.

When any of the above major offences occur, you as the coach need to take action immediately. You may have to stop the game or just call the player aside. It must be explained to the player that this kind of play is not allowed and will not be permitted.

# FDSA 4U and 6U Coaches Plan

## Typical Nightly Plan: U6

50 minutes:

Set up area (balls and cones)...5 min. before practice is to start.

5 min. Warm-up

20-25 min. practice ...follow drills sheet provide to you.

5 min. ....snack

15-20 min. game vs. other team.

5 min. wrap up ...cheer, high 5's, stress positives, location of next week's practice, skill to practice at home during the week, other...

# U4 and U6 Summer 2016

Coaches Tool Kit

This tool kit will give you 4 different training sessions that will be a good start for your coaching of a U4 or U6 team. All activities are laid out and explained within this kit, from the basic layout as a coach you should feel free to adapt and be creative about how you put these sessions into practice. Remember you are working with young players so their imagination is without limits so you can be as fun and creative as you like with this.



# Session 1

## Move Like A Soccer Player

This is a fun activity for players of all ages. With young players it can be used to encourage the players to run, jump, roll and do other important movements in a fun and energetic environment.

### Activity Description –

- Have players moving about the square anywhere they would like to move, in any way they would like to move. After 30-60 seconds introduce them to movements like a soccer player. Still allow the players to move anywhere they like but encourage them to use the following movements.
  - Forward
  - Backwards
  - Sideways
  - Quick changes of direction
- Now move on to crazy movements encourage the kids to be a bit silly, and move in all sorts of different ways.
  - Skipping
  - Rolling
  - Like Monsters
  - Like Crabs
  - Others that you can think of that might be fun

Equipment and set up:

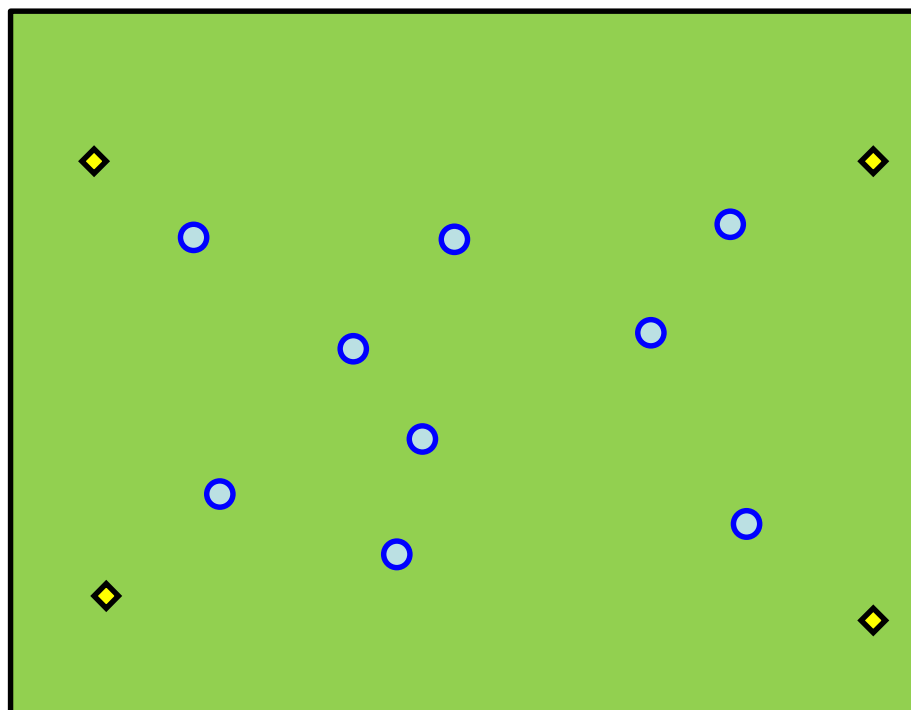
Cones – 4+

Players 3-13

Set Up: Mark out a 12x12 field with cones use enough cones to make the area clear to the players.

**Bring a big smile and lots of enthusiasm!**

Give the players a drink break after this one to give them some time to calm back down.



## Find the Cone or Hoop

This activity is a great extension from “Move Like a Soccer Player” start this activity by having the players place a cone anywhere they would like in the playing area. Then follow the directions below.

### Activity Description –

- Have players moving about the square anywhere they would like to move, in any way they would like to move. After 30-60 seconds introduce them to movements like a soccer player. Still allow the players to move anywhere they like but encourage them to use the following movements.
  - Forward
  - Backwards
  - Sideways
  - Quick changes of direction
- **Progression: Once the players get used to the activity add in some of the following.**
  - Find the Cone: when coach says “cone” players have to find the nearest cone that is empty and run to it.
  - **Add in a ball and continue in the same way.**
  - **If you have colored cones, then maybe give a color and see if they players can get there.**
  - **Start picking up cones so there is no longer a cone per player (like musical chairs), first without a ball then with one.**

Equipment and set up:

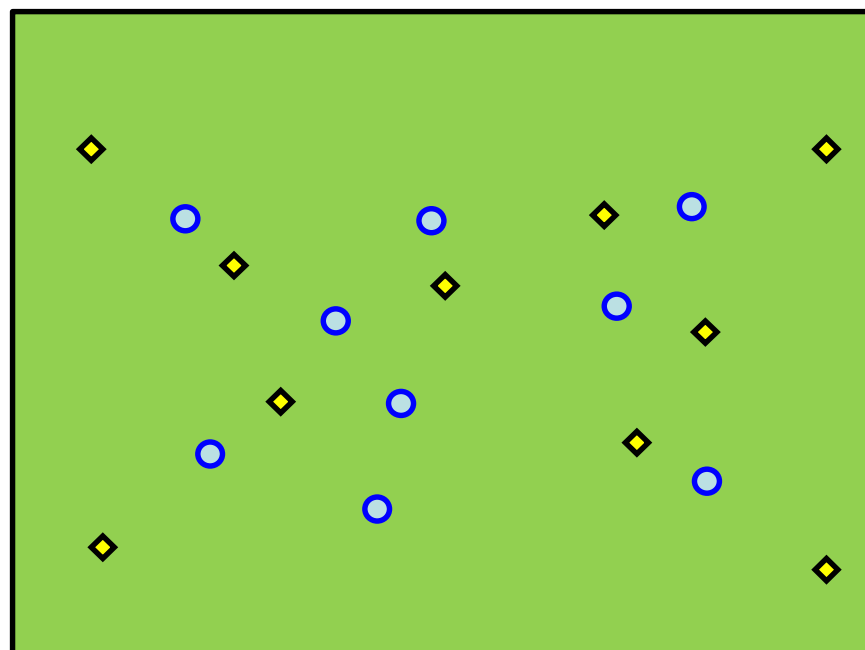
Cones – 4+ 1 per player

Players 3-13

Set Up: Mark out a 12x12 field with cones use enough cones to make the area clear to the players. Plus have 1 cone per player participating

**Bring a big smile and lots of enthusiasm!**

Give the players a drink break after this one to give them some time to calm back down.



## Anatomy Dribbling

This is a fun activity based on movement and dribbling, it fits great with other activities like Red Light Green Light and is very easy to adapt.

All the players have a ball, dribbling within the grid.

- The coach will call out a specific body part and the player will have to stop the ball with that body part.
- Body parts to use: Heel, sole, laces, toe, thighs, rear, stomach, elbow, shoulders, forehead.

Progression

- Use more than one body part.

### Coaching Points

- **Keep close control of ball**
- **Eyes up seeing ball and space**
- **Avoid running into others**

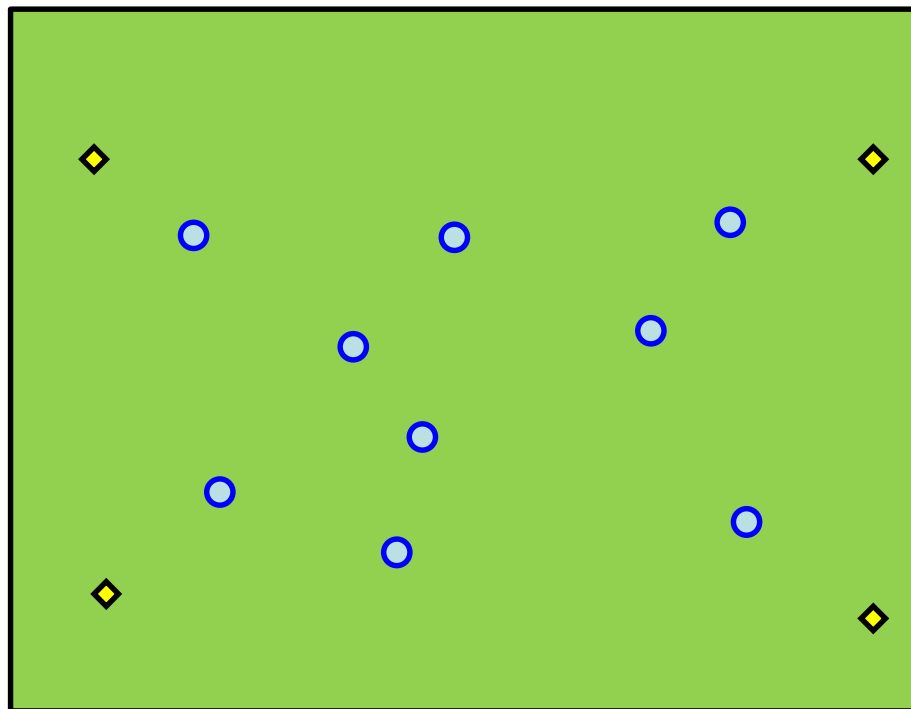
Equipment and set up:

Cones: 4+

Players: 5-20

Set Up: Mark out a 12x12 field with enough cones to make the area clear to the players.

**Bring a big smile and lots of enthusiasm!**



## Me and My Shadow

This is a fun game for players to play in a pair with their parents, or another player depending on the age group.

### Basic:

- Players play follow the leader with no soccer ball, trying to keep close to the leader. When coach says “stop” everyone stops and we see how far they are apart.
- Players all have soccer ball and follow the same as above.

### Advanced:

- 1 Player with a ball 1 without player without ball follows player with ball trying to stay close.
  - Player without ball follows player with ball.

When players are chasing encourage them to change directions quickly, and change speeds to lose their shadow. Encourage them to use different styles of movement.

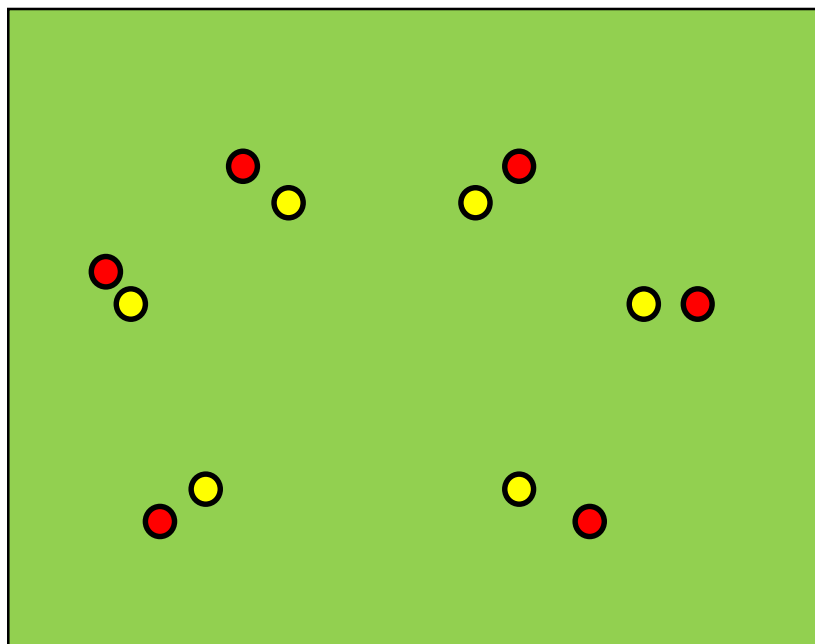
Equipment and set up:

Cones: 4+

Players: 5-20

Set Up: Mark out a 12x12 field with enough cones to make the area clear to the players.

**Bring a big smile and lots of enthusiasm!**



# Session 2

## Can You Do This

Young players like to move and be active, they also need to explore many aspects of the sports world around them. This is set up to give you as coaches an opportunity to play some movement games you like with the kids think of things like:

Simon Says, follow the leader, or just have players on their own or with a partner try different skills some examples might be:

### With a Partner:

- Throwing, Rolling, Bouncing, Kicking a ball back and forth. Make sure to change it up and let them experiment. Using their hands is very important don't be scared to have them do that.
- Playing individual tag games: with and with out a ball. Have players try and tag a partner using the soccer ball. Then have a player try and tag a partner by chasing and kicking a soccer ball.

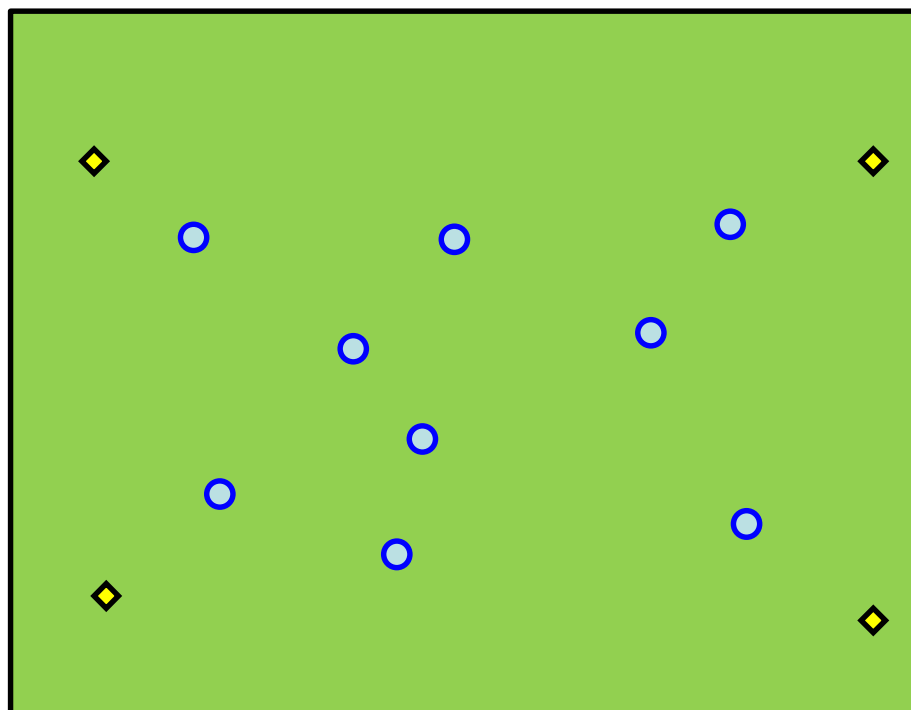
### Individually:

- Players holding ball between the knees or feet, have them hop jump or move around with the ball.
- Throw or bounce the ball with themselves
- Toe touches on top of the ball, right foot then left foot

Be creative anything to have the players moving and having fun is great here.

Equipment and set up:

Keep it simple, the players don't need a specific area marked out to enjoy these sorts of games. Keep them active and moving, having fun and laughing. They will thank you for it.

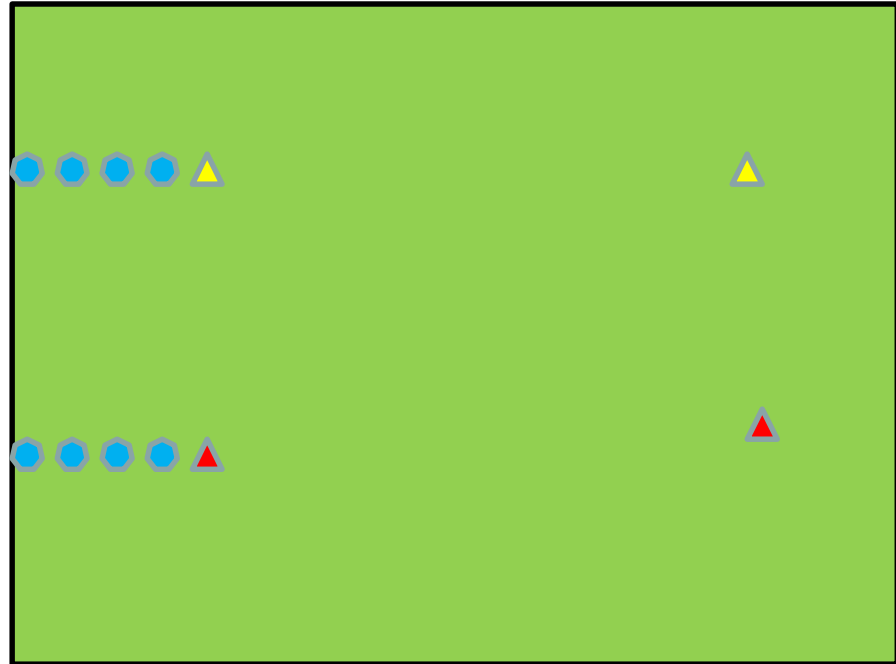


Simple Relay Race players run out around the cones and then back to the start of the line where they sit down.

## Relay Races

Relays include:

- Carrying 1 ball with your hands
- Carrying 2 balls with your hands
- Roll 1 ball with hands
- Roll 2 balls with hands
- Dribble ball
- Bounce Ball with hands
- Throw Ball up and catch in air





## Dribble Through the Jungle

This is a great activity for the players. You can use the parents and the players. Have the parents go first and then the players second. It will provide a good example for the players to try and copy.

I like to frame this activity as the obstacles being poisonous trees, plants or snakes and then the players are much more engaged and excited to be playing.

- Have players and parents line up on one side of grid, have parents dribble through the jungle and back first, then players follow.

Equipment and set up:

Cones: As many as possible

Players: 5-20

Set Up: Mark out a 12x12 field with enough cones to make the area clear to the players. Place cones anywhere in the playing area as obstacles

**Bring a big smile and lots of enthusiasm!**



## TAG!

Kids love tag games, and they are a great game to make practice fun and exciting. Ask your young player if they have a favorite tag game from school, or the park, and use that. Some suggestions might be.

### Activity Description –

- **Freez Tag** – Players playing tag when the “it” player tags a player they are “frozen” in one spot until another player un-freezes them. Players can un-freeze a player by:
  - Running under their arms
  - Crawling under their legs
  - Or other ways (high five etc.)
- **Blob Tag** – Players playing tag when the “it” player tags a player they hold hands or link arms to begin a blob, the 2 players now try to tag other players and add to their blob.
  - Blobs can get as big as coaches want, but at young ages 3 or 4 players is big enough.
- **Tag** – 2 or 3 players are it and they can hold onto a bib when they tag a player they give that player a bib and the tag player becomes it.
- **Other Tag Games** – Anything fun for a tag game you can think of, team tag, capture the flag (use a ball to dribble maybe), tag with a soccer ball.

Equipment and set up:

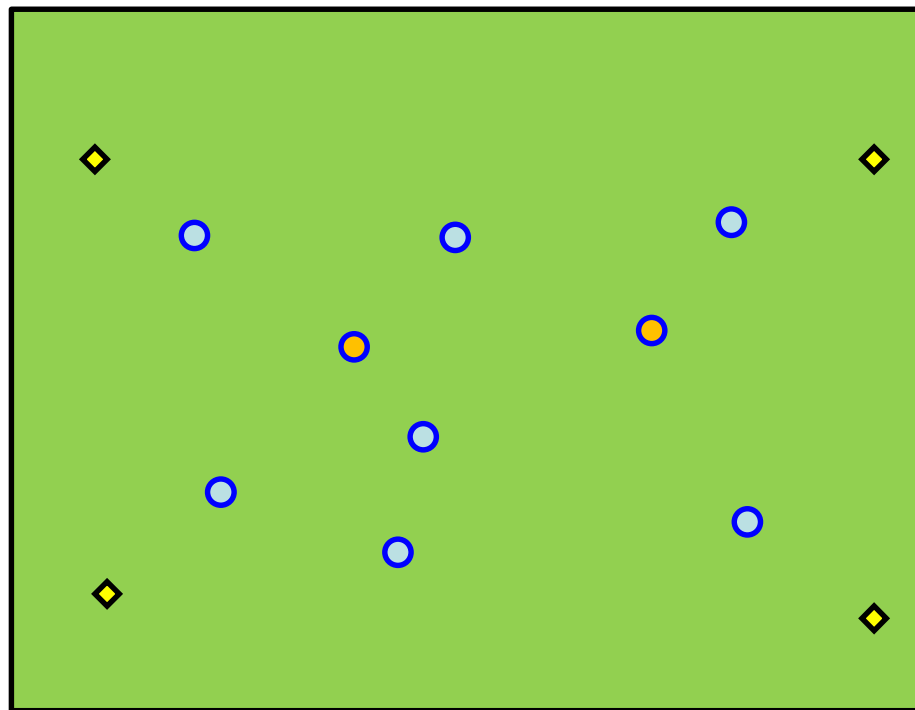
Cones: 4+

Bibs: 2-4 depending on number of “it” players

Players: 5-20

Set Up: Mark out a 12x12 field with enough cones to make the area clear to the players.

**Bring a big smile and lots of enthusiasm!**



# Session 3

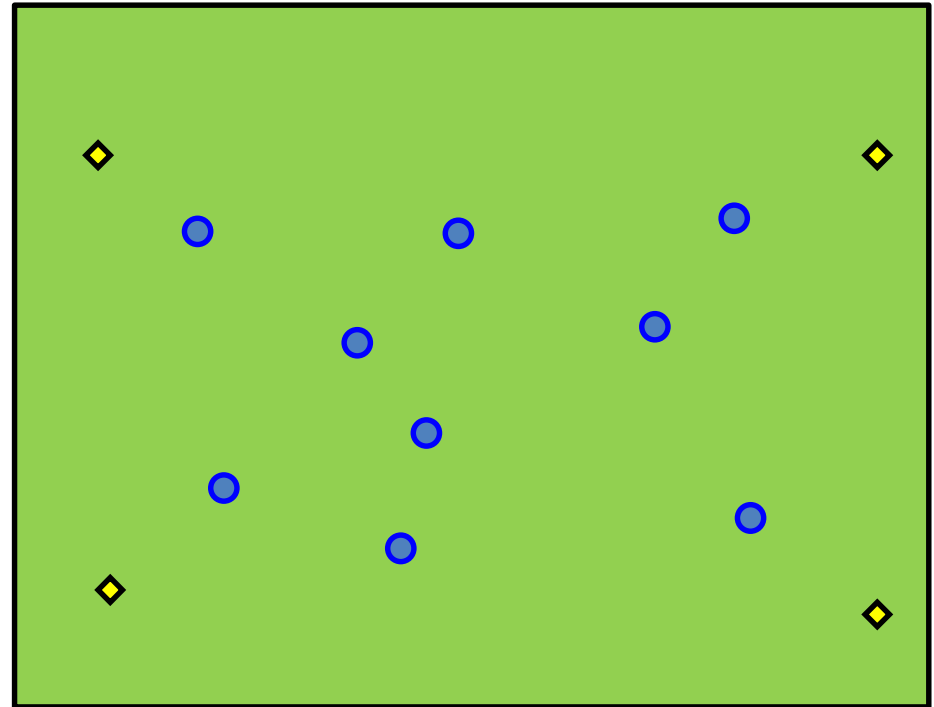
# Simon Says Balance

Practice movement skills with kids in a fun environment. Have parents participate with players.

Find a space where the players can see and imitate you. Then try the following movement combinations before they have to balance on 1 foot. (Remember to say Simon says each time. Simon should also say when to put their foot down)

- Balance on 1 foot
- Turn around and balance on 1 foot
- Jump up and balance on 1 foot
- Run around mom/dad and balance on 1 foot
- Lay on belly get up and balance on 1 foot

- Equipment and set up:
- Cones: 4+
- Players: 5-20
- Set Up: Mark out a 12x12 field with enough cones to make the area clear to the players.
- **Bring a big smile and lots of enthusiasm!**



## Red Light Green Light

This is a fun game that can be done in a set up like this or it can even be done with players lined up across one side and racing to the other side. So many ways to play.

Players dribble in the square, anywhere they like, and at any speed they choose. Try and have players use both feet, and change directions regularly.

When the coach says “green light” the players dribble, when the coach says “red light” players put their foot on the ball to stop it. Have the players balance with their foot on the ball for a little bit before giving the “Green Light”.

### Progressions/Options:

- Play from side to side, and make a race. Players who don't stop right away go back to the start.
- Give a number of touches for example, 3 touches then stop, 2 touches with each foot stop etc.
- Have players change directions each time you say “green light”
- Add in a yellow light, for slow, red for stop and green for run fast. (Maybe yellow is the fast light based on the way their parents drive).

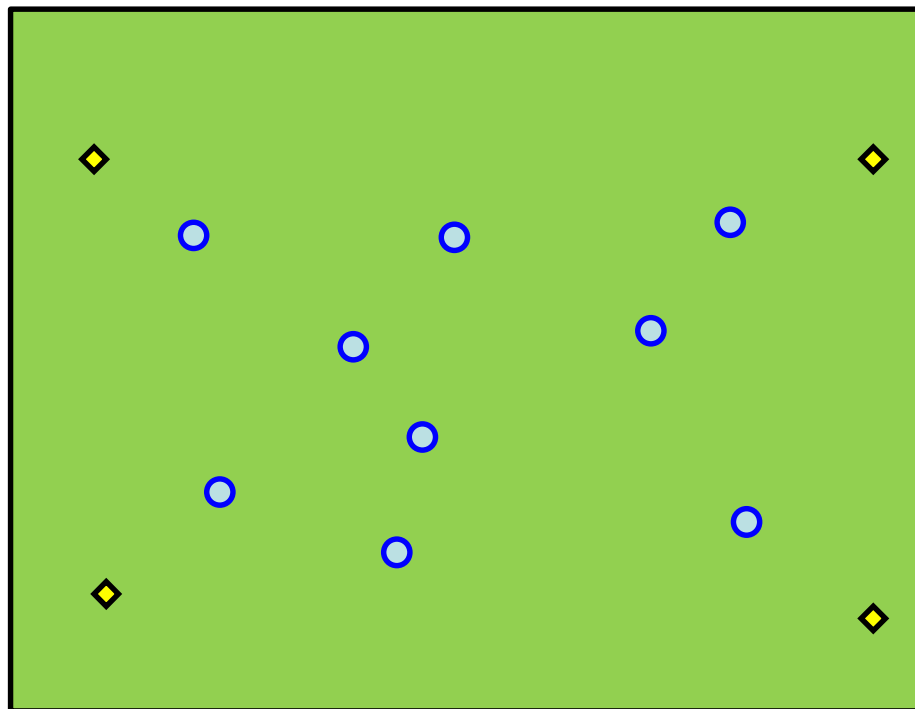
Equipment and set up:

Cones: 4+

Players: 5-20

Set Up: Mark out a 12x12 field with enough cones to make the area clear to the players.

**Bring a big smile and lots of enthusiasm!**



## Raccoon Tails

**Red Team:** Start with a pinny, tucked into their shorts, like a tail. Try to avoid the blue players who will try to grab the tail. If they lose tail, they become a blue player.

**Blue Team:** Attempts to steal the tail from a red player. If successful they tuck tail in and become a red player.

**Competition** -- Coach will yell "stop" or blow whistle and check to see who has a tail before starting again.

Variation

- All players have tails, players attempt to collect as many tails as possible
- 1 player starts as "it" as they steal tails they are joined by new "it" players.
- **Play this game with and without a soccer ball.**

### Coaching Points

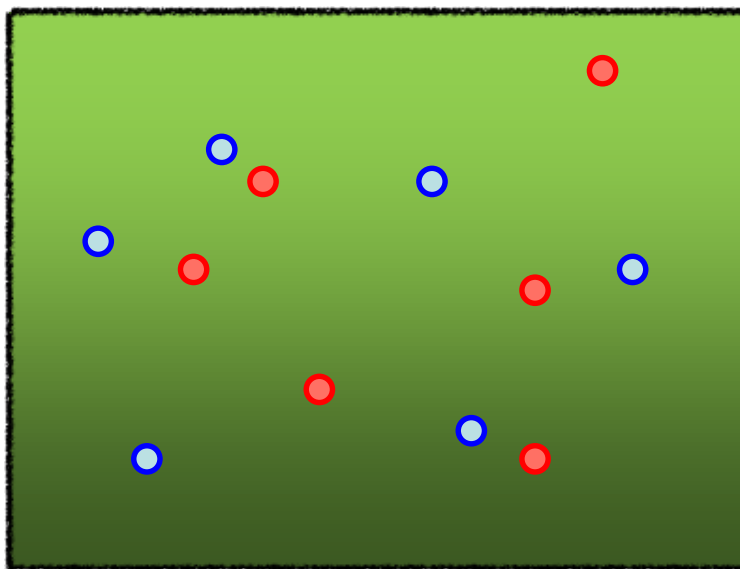
- **Stay low and balanced in order to react to opponents movement.**

Equipment and set up:

Cones: 4+

Players: 5-20

Set Up: Mark out a 12x12 field with enough cones to make the area clear to the players.



## Blob Tag

All players are inside the grid, everyone has a ball with the exception of the “it player”

- The “it” player moves around the grid and tries to knock other players balls out of the grid.
- When the “it” player is able to knock a ball out of the grid then the player becomes part of the “it” players new blob.
- The “blob” moves around grid and tries to kick any player’s ball out of the grid.
- If the players ball leaves the grid, he/she joins the “blob”
- Once the chain reaches 6 players it will break apart into two smaller chains.
- Last player dribbling is the winner.

### Progression

- *Change available space*
- *Change the maximum blob size*

### Coaching Points

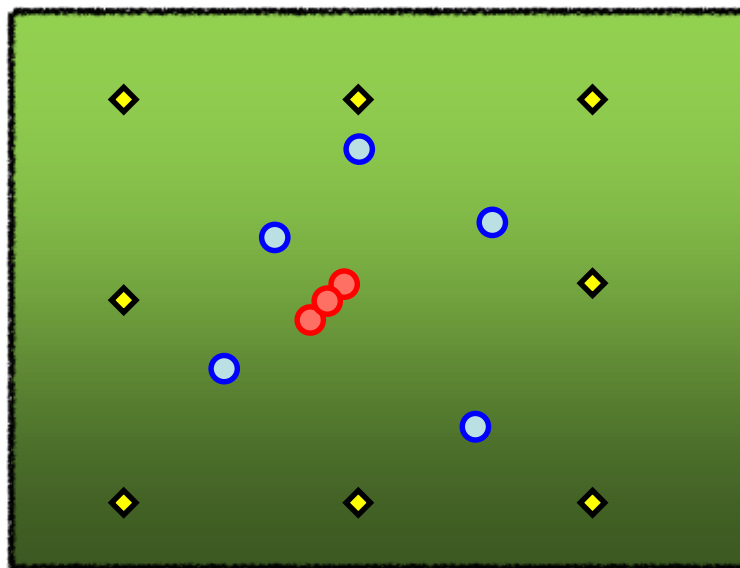
- **Stay away from the “blob”**
- **Move into space (away from “blob”)**
- **Keep control of the ball**
- **Blob must work as a team.**

Equipment and set up:

Cones: 4+

Players: 5-20

Set Up: Mark out a 12x12 field with enough cones to make the area clear to the players.



## Roll and Catch

Organize players in partners and have each partner stand between 2 cones that form a “net”. Have players start by rolling the ball back and forth between themselves. Bending down and collecting the ball. Teach players to get their bodies and hands behind the ball.

Progress to:

- Throwing the ball back and forth
- Bouncing the ball back and forth
- Changing service back and forth

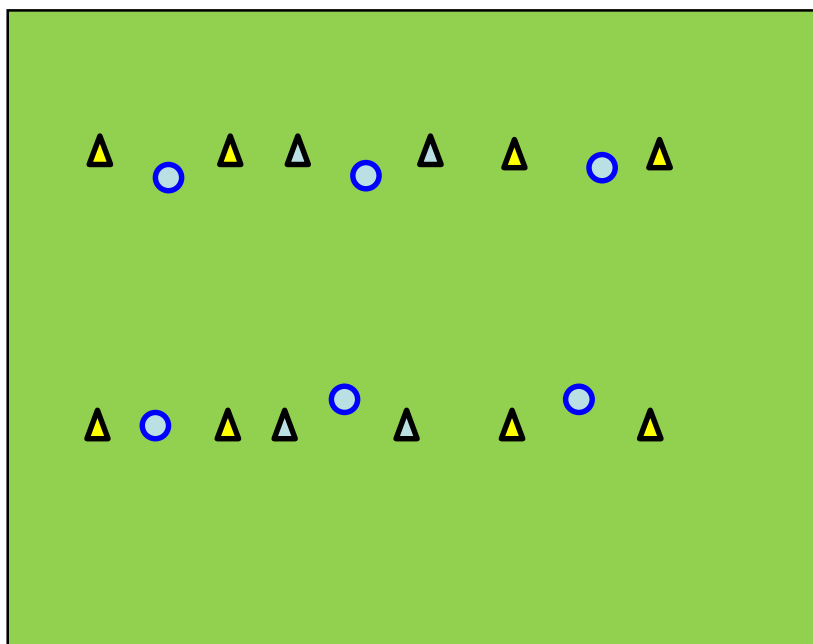
Equipment and set up:

Cones: 2 per player or enough to set up nets side by side so each player is facing a partner in a net.

Players: 5-20

Set Up: Set cones up in little 3m or 4m wide nets and have each player in a net.

**Bring a big smile and lots of enthusiasm**





# Session 4

# Obstacle Course

Set up 4 stations and have the players rotate around each station. If possible have each player with a parent.

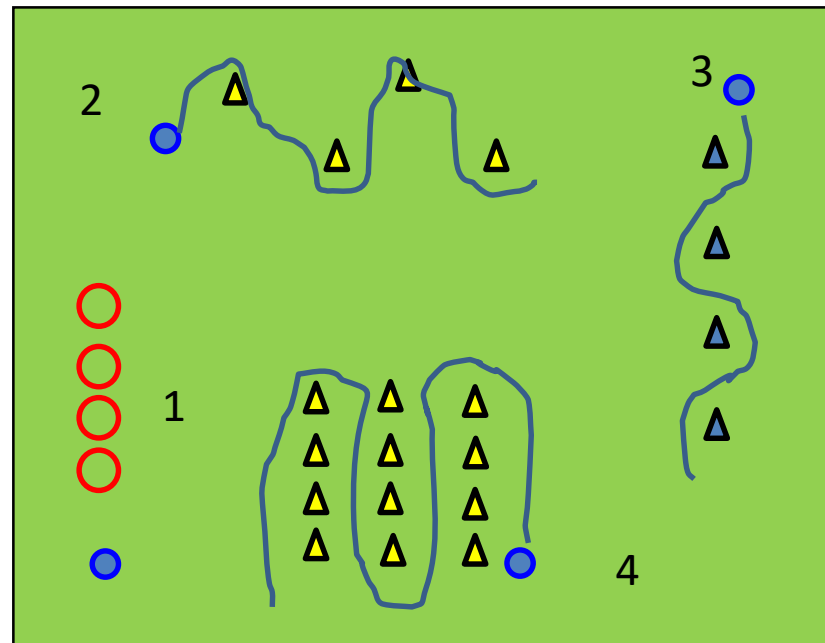
**Station #1:** Use hoops provided in your coaches kit. Set hoops up in a straight line. Have players hop through hoops on 2 feet, 1 foot, skipping, running, and any other movements you think might be fun.

**Station #2:** Set up cones in a slalom course pattern approximately 2 m apart. Have players run through course with and without the ball.

**Station #3:** Set up 1 line of cones with cones approximately 2 m apart. Have players run through course with and without the ball.

**Station #4:** Set up 3-4 lines of cones with about 2m between lines. Have players side shuffle through cones facing in different directions, then see if they can dribble through also.

- Equipment and set up:
- Set up a space approximately 15mx15m
- Players: 5-20
- Set Up: Set cones up in little 3m or 4m wide nets and have each player in a net.
- **Bring a big smile and lots of enthusiasm**
- **Give players opportunity to move in many ways, hopping, skipping, jumping, running sideways, backwards etc.**



## Fishes and Whales

This is a fun dribbling activity that keeps every player active with a soccer ball, get a coach or parent to act as the whale in the middle, or have the kids play this role.

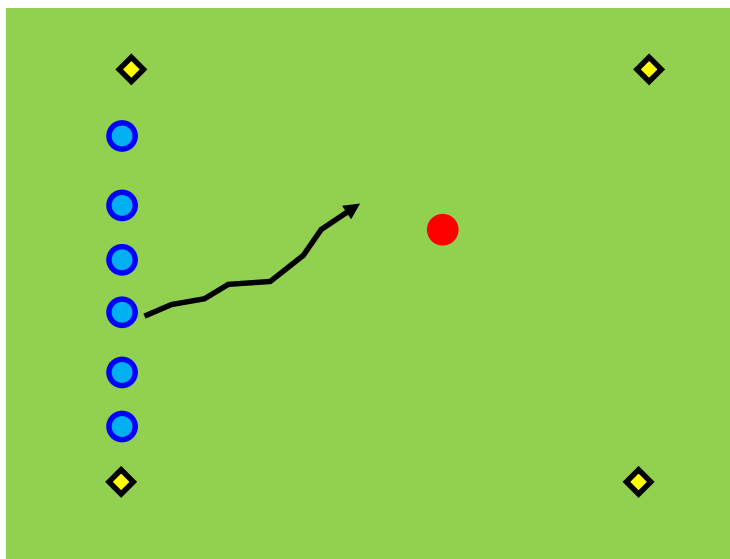
Set up players on one end of the square, their objective is to dribble all the way across the square and stop at the other side. Have 1 whale in the middle (start with a coach or parent, and allow the players to get back and forth across the ocean a couple of times). Once the whale knocks your ball out of the square you become a whale also, continue until everyone is a whale.

Equipment and set up:

Cones: 4 or at least enough to mark our the playing area

Players: 5-20

Set Up: Set up a 15x15 square with players at one end of the square, and 1 whale in the middle.



## Shoot on Mom or Dad

Organize parent and player with a goal each, have them take turns shooting on each other across the square. The players will enjoy the opportunity to shoot on their mother or father.

Encourage the parents to act up during this session, when they score or get scored on. It can be fun for the young player to see their parents excited by scoring a goal.

This is usually as much fun as the parents make it so encourage the parent to engage the young players with some laughing and fun parts.

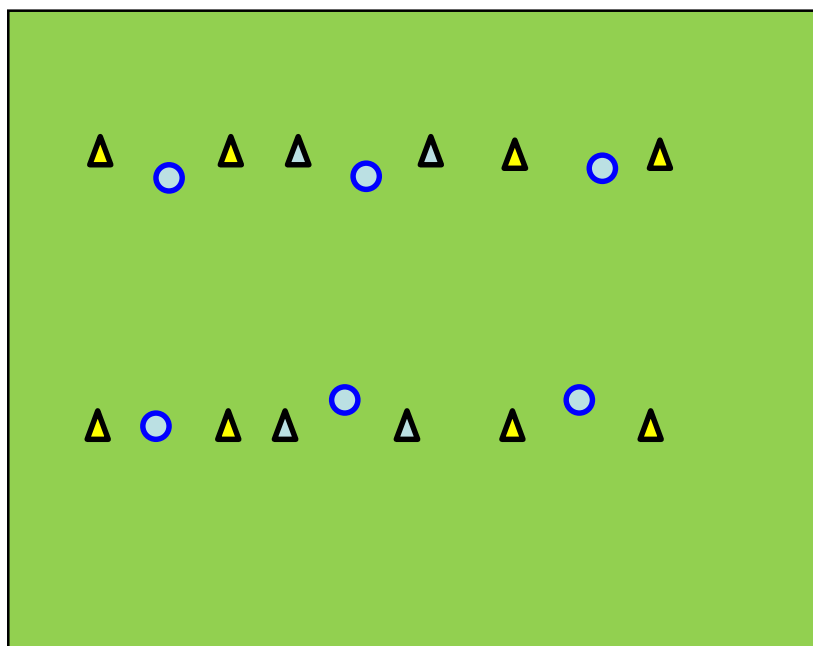
Equipment and set up:

Cones: 2 per player or enough to set up nets side by side so each player is facing a partner in a net.

Players: 5-20

Set Up: Set cones up in little 3m or 4m wide nets and have each player in a net.

**Bring a big smile and lots of enthusiasm**



## Sharks

One player is designated as the shark. The rest of the players have the ball and are dribbling around in the square.

- One "Go" the shark enters the square and tries to win the ball from the other players.
- Once the player has lost the ball they become a shark also.

Progression

### Coaching Points

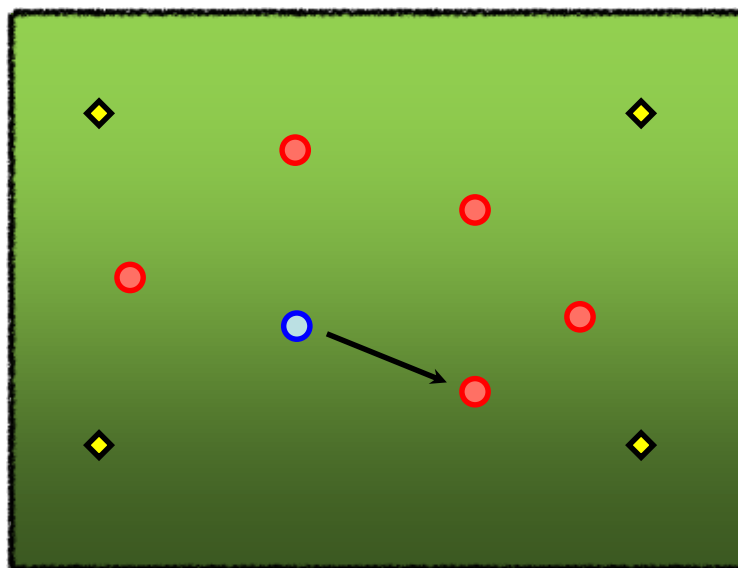
- **Encourage proper body position when challenge for the ball**
- **As the number of sharks increase encourage cooperation between the sharks for win the ball from the opponents.**

Equipment and set up:

Cones: 4+

Players: 5-20

Set Up: Mark out a 12x12 field with enough cones to make the area clear to the players.



# **Extra Dribbling Activities**

This section includes some extra dribbling games, they can be used anywhere in any practice, to replace other activities that are already in place.

## North and South

This is a great game to encourage players to try and dribble quickly while having to control the ball and quickly turn corners. Be sure to encourage players to keep the ball under close control.

**Start:** Begin by explaining the space to the players, and pointing out the 2 gates (black cones in diagram), give a name to each gate. Example North and South or maybe 1 and 2.

**Objective:** Dribble out 1 gate around the grid and in through the other gate, for example of the coach says north, dribble out the north gate around the grid to the south gate and dribble back in through the gate.

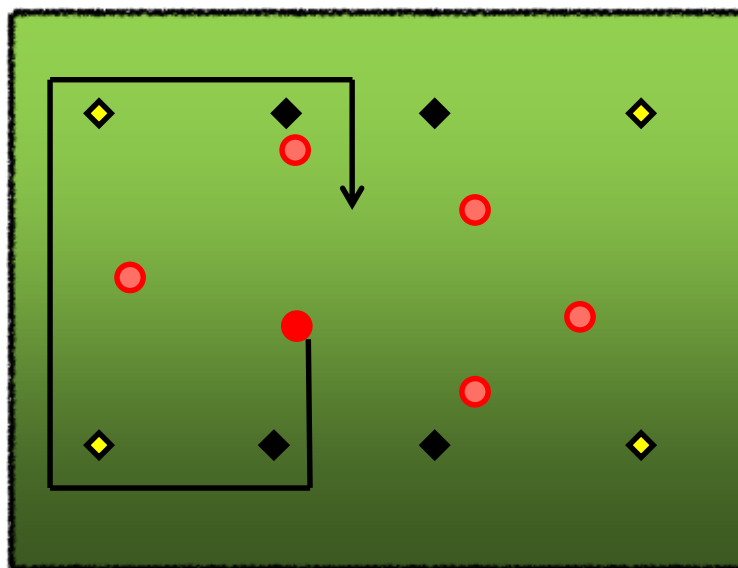
**Organization:** All players with a ball dribbling around in square, waiting for the coaches command. Once they hear the command they dribble out around and back in as quickly as they can.

Equipment and set up:

Cones: 4+, 4 traffic cones (for gates in black)

Players: 5-20

Set Up: Mark out a 12x12 field with enough cones to make the area clear to the players.



## Indy 500

This is a great game to encourage players to try and dribble quickly while having to control the ball and quickly turn corners. Be sure to encourage players to keep the ball under close control. Encourage players to have extra fun by making car noises and pretending to be race car drivers.

This game happens outside the grid, with players trying to dribble around the grid as fast as they can. On coaches command they should start dribbling and try to get all the way back to the start line as quickly as possible. Make sure players race in both directions.

### Additions

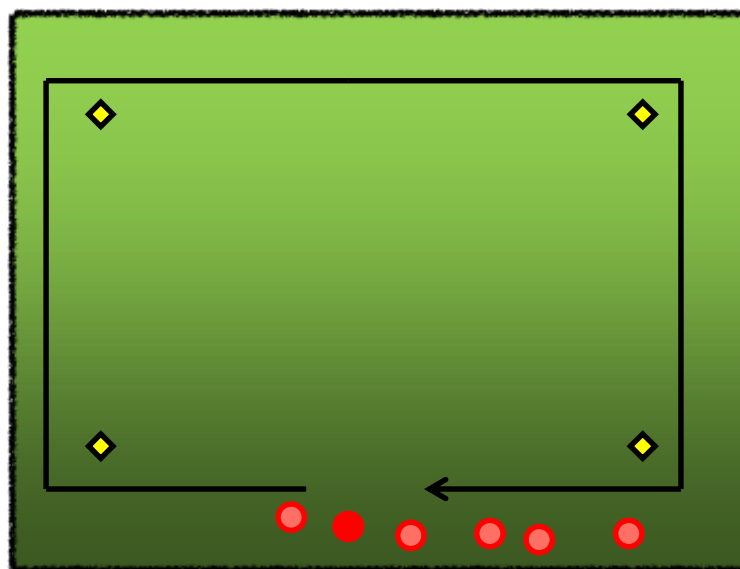
- **Change:** Command can indicate racers must change direction mid race.
- **Warning flag:** Racers must slow down as there was a caution.
- **Stop:** All players must stop with their foot on the ball as quickly as possible.

Equipment and set up:

Cones: 4+

Players: 5-20

Set Up: Mark out a 12x12 field with enough cones to make the area clear to the players.





## Nuts and Squirrels

This is a fun and energy filled game for the players they get lots of practice dribbling and running.

**Set Up:** The nuts (balls) all start in the middle of the square. The Squirrels all start in their nests.

On the coaches command squirrels are allowed to leave their nest 1 at a time to go get a nut. They have to bring the nut all the way back to the nest before the next squirrel can go. Once all the nuts are gone from the middle the squirrels can steal nuts from other nests until the coach says stop.

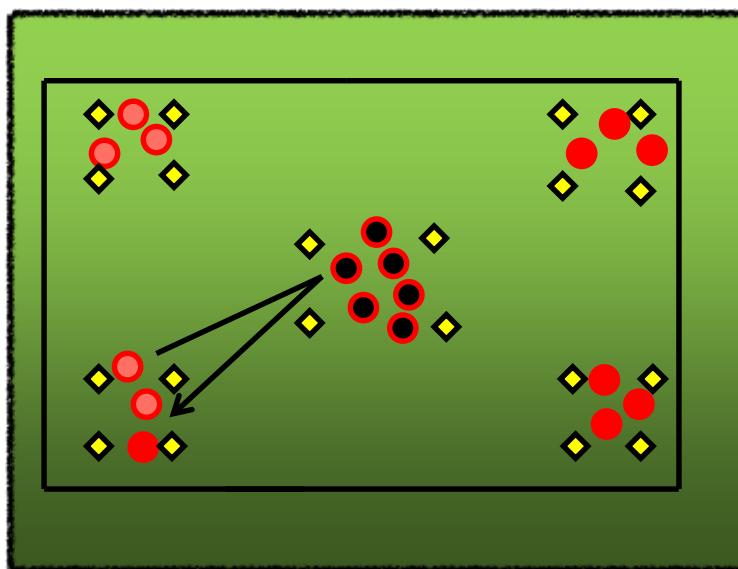
Encourage playres to dribble quickly but under control and to stop the ball in the nest each time.

Equipment and set up:

Cones: Lots

Players: 5-20

Set Up: Mark out a 12x12 field with enough cones to make the area clear to the players.



# Other Resources

- [www.soccerexpert.com](http://www.soccerexpert.com)
- [www.footy4kids.co.uk](http://www.footy4kids.co.uk)
- [www.bettersoccercoaching.com](http://www.bettersoccercoaching.com)