

WARM UPS AND COOL DOWNS

Effective Warm Up for Soccer

Can coaches please explain to their players why we do a warm up to reinforce the concept?

Main Objectives

1. To allow the ATP-CP (Alactacid) and the oxygen (lactacid) energy systems to produce energy to get up to speed in preparation for the work they will do.
2. To warm muscles and connective tissue (ligaments and tendons) and stretch them to their working lengths to reduce the chance of injury.
3. To allow us too mentally focus and get ready for the task in hand and practice some of the skills that may be required.

Elements of Warm Up

1. Activities to Raise the Heart Rate - Gradual increase recommended, heat produced in the body warms up the muscles.
2. Game specific movements (Awareness session) - Slow pace – half pace – faster pace. Changes in direction, turning and striding out. Passing – receiving and turning.
3. Stretching - Muscles to” working length”; up to 15 seconds / stretch

ALL MOVEMENT ACTIVITIES CAN BEST BE PERFORMED WITH, RATHER THAN WITHOUT SOCCER BALLS DURING WARM UP.

WARM UPS AND COOL DOWNS

Effective Cool Down for Soccer

Can coaches please explain to their players why we need to cool down to reinforce the concept?

Main Objectives

1. Remove Waste Products of Exercise: Lactic acid is a by-product of exercise and causes muscular soreness and stiffness after a match or training. Light activity afterwards can accelerate the removal of such waste products and help the body to recover more quickly (up to three times more quickly than when players simply stop).
2. To Provide an Opportunity for Stretching Work: Some muscles after activity don't return to their normal length for up to two days, hence stretching immediately when they are still warm can help prevent this.

Elements of Warm Up

1. Game Specific Movements (Awareness session) - Maintain blood flow and assist removal of waste products by low intensity work such as passing, turning, running, changing direction.
2. Longer Hold Stretching - Maintenance of muscle length
3. Limb Shaking - Promotes the return of blood to the heart and feelings of relaxation e.g. players lying on the ground, raised legs with a partner gently shaking their legs.
4. Rehydration - Particularly sports drinks.

ALL MOVEMENT ACTIVITIES CAN BEST BE PERFORMED WITH, RATHER THAN WITHOUT SOCCER BALLS DURING COOL DOWN.

WARM UP AND COOL DOWN FOR TRAINING AND MATCH SITUATIONS

Warm Up and Cool Down are both important parts of any coaching session or indeed any game situation and should be included at all times particularly at a young age where doing so reinforces good habits in players. Due to the great need for players to have as much contact on the ball as possible to aid technical development, I recommend coaches get away from warming up and cooling down without the ball and introduce its use at every session they do, be it at a game or at practice. I will include some practices you can use as a reference.

TECHNICAL ROUTINE TO USE

1. Players standing in the same position have to use one foot to “pull” the ball back with the “sole” of the foot and “push” the ball forward with the “laces” of the same foot. Do the movement with their heads up.
2. Do it in a circle facing North, South, East and West on the call of the coach or have for example ten pulls with the sole and pushes with the laces movements at each direction. Quarter turns on each call going around in a circle.
3. Same idea but drag back with the sole, push forward with the side of the foot not the laces. Bounce on the non-kicking foot as they do it.
4. Inside and outside of the foot, roll the ball to the outside (on top of the ball contact), cut it back with the inside and roll the ball to the inside and cut it back with the outside of the foot. Repeat 10 times either side.
5. Using the inside and the outside of the feet and moving side to side. Move the ball with the inside of the foot then the outside to bring it back but with the same foot. Use a cutting motion. Repeat 10 times either side.
6. Juggling and counting the number of juggles, using both feet and both thighs.
7. Step-Over Turn
8. Drag Back Turn
9. The Cryuff Turn
10. The Inside Hook Turn
11. The Outside Hook Turn
12. Twist Off Turn
13. Matthews Dribble
14. Beardsley Dribble (double Touch)
15. Rivelino Dribble
16. Scissors Dribble
17. Double scissors Dribble
18. Maradona Dribble and turn

WARM UP AND COOL DOWN FOR TRAINING AND MATCH SITUATIONS

For individual dribbles and turns do 10 each one on the calling of that number. It can be three separate routines, 1 to 6, 7 to 12 and 13 to 17.

You can create your own routine from all these ideas that the players have to do for a warm up at the beginning of every session.

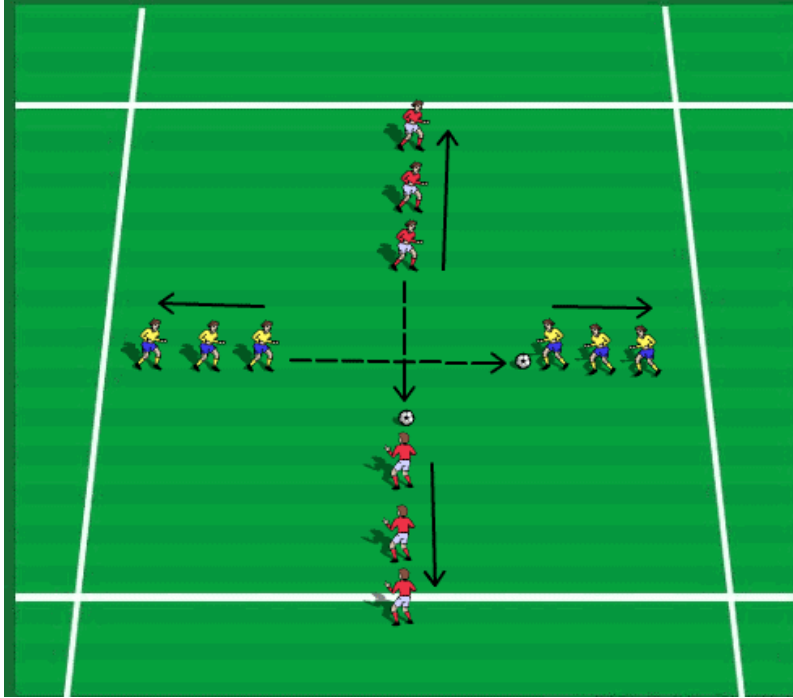
1. Divide into two teams to start (for the scrimmage later if it's a coaching session). A Ball each dribbling, turning controlling the ball, practicing skills at a slower pace if it's a warm up to build to full pace or slowing down if it's a cool down
2. Include changes of pace in this, switching balls between players, Coach can provide passive pressure and can condition the content; the players decide when and where to implement it.
3. Stop on a regular basis to stretch, get them tuned into thinking for themselves and being concentrated early by asking the players to come up with stretches for you.

An example of effective use of a ball during warm up and cool down:

Five minute warm up = 3.5 minutes with the ball (1.5 minutes stretching) i.e. 1 touch / second means 210 extra touches.

Five minute cool down: as above = 210 extra touches. Total is 420 extra touches on the ball per player by just incorporating the use of the ball (Ten minutes either side of the session would provide 820 extra touches if you have the time, and help to reinforce the awareness session).

Warm Up 1: Passing and Moving (A Fun Warm Up)

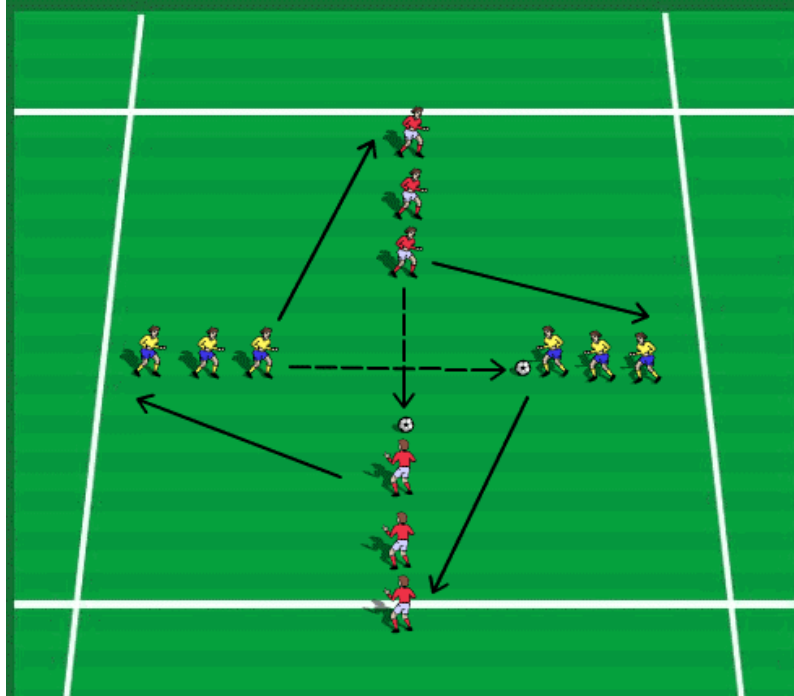


Two balls passing at the same time and across each other.

Player passes then goes to the back of their own line.

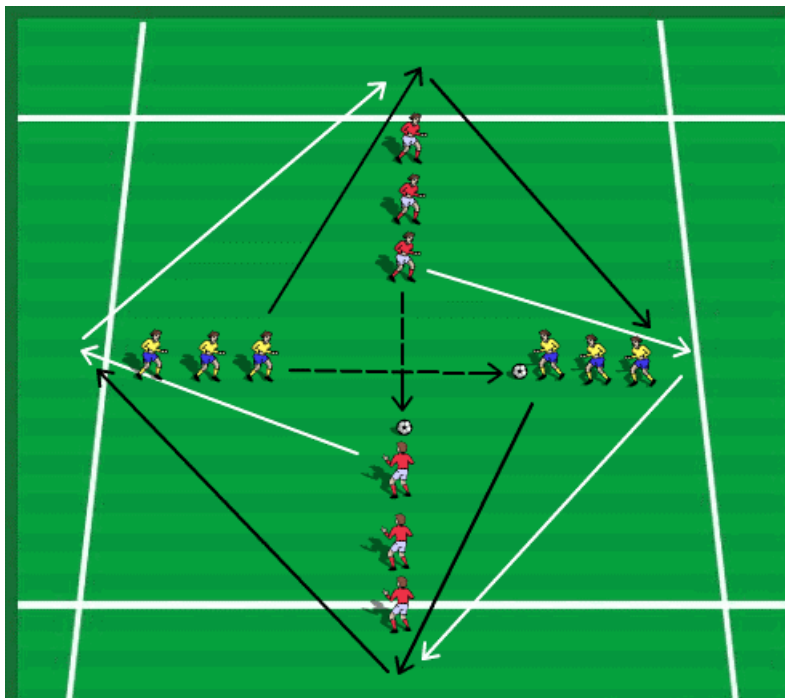
One touch passing if possible.

Here it shows the direction they go. Pass forward and check to the back.

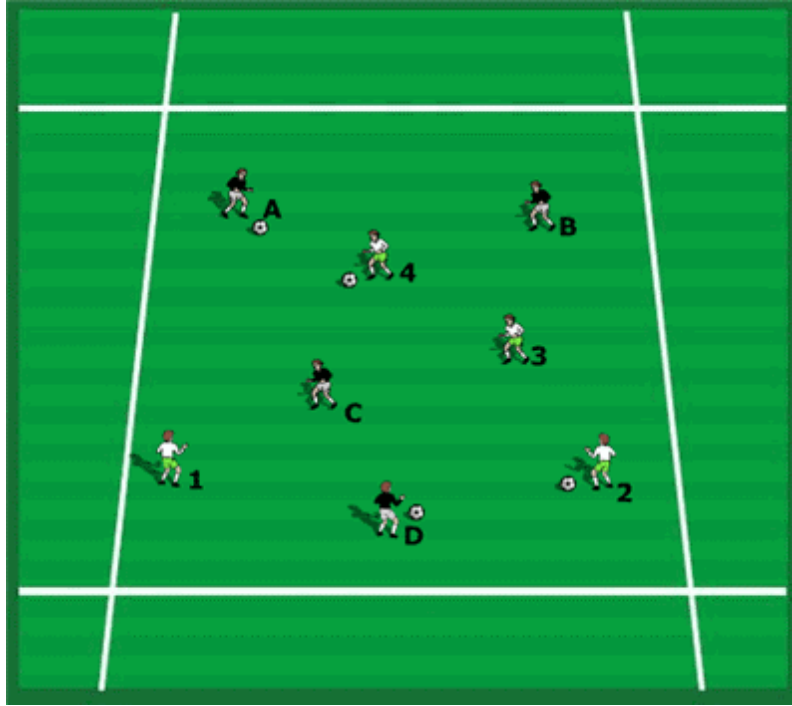


Now they are passing the same way but running one place to the left. Now running two places to the left.

Simple exercise but good for one touch passing and movement off the ball and it keeps the players focused and moving.



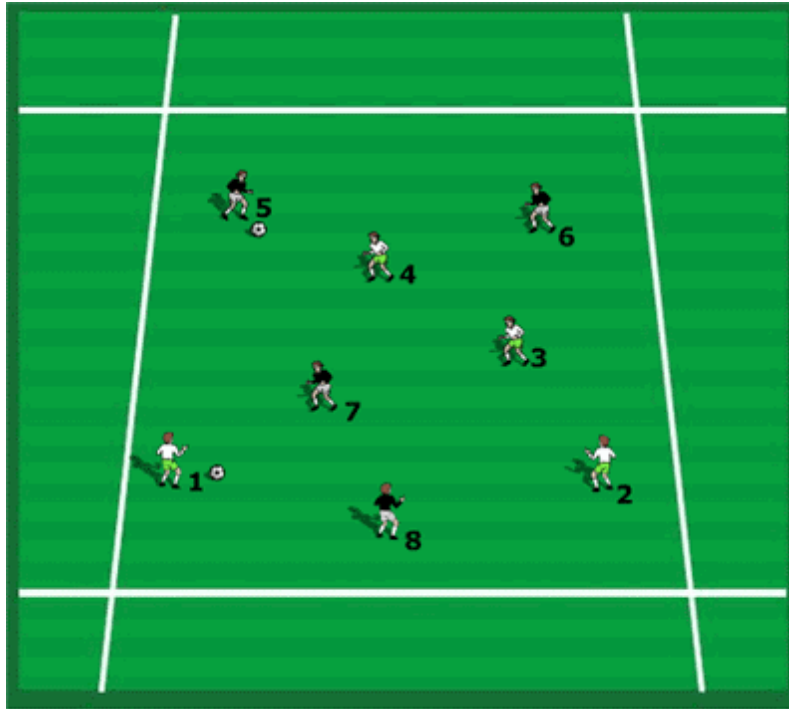
Warm Up 2: Awareness Session



Use one or two balls per team for passing and moving (or more). You can keep it interesting by changing the theme for each awareness session e.g. passing to feet or space, opposite colors, receiving and turning, one touch / two touch, 1-2's, crossovers etc.

This workout is game specific and should particularly be used before actual games. Include stretches.

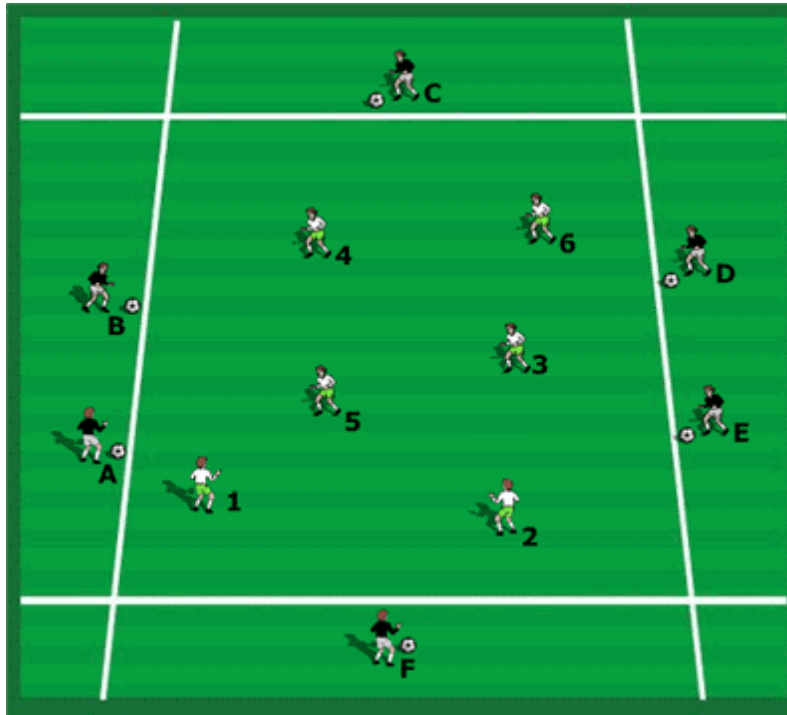
Warm Up 3: The Numbers Game



Numbers game is a good idea to use for both warm up and cool down. Use two balls to start player's number off and pass in sequence. Two balls moving means as soon as one is passed off another arrives so still getting lots of work on the ball. This prepares players for awareness and quick thinking, identifying early where teammates are. Players often start physically and mentally cold in a game, using this helps prepare both aspects.

Incorporating the above sessions with the ball is also more enjoyable for the players as well as being of greater value in their technical and tactical awareness and physical and mental preparation for both practice and games.

Warm Up 4: Good Warm Up for Technical Practices

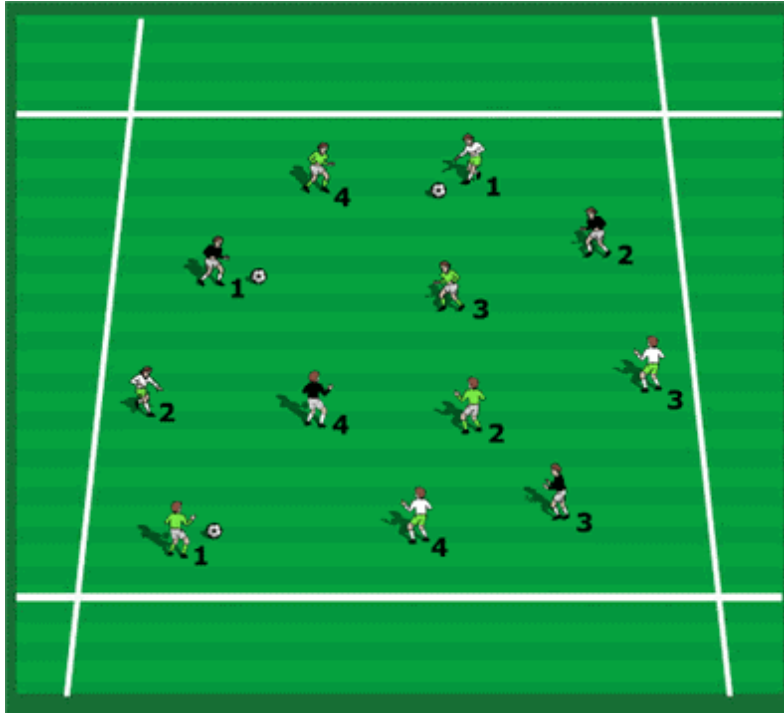


Players rotate around inside the grid in a random way receiving the ball and passing it back using various techniques. Each technique is practiced for a minute then the outside players switch with the inside players. Each player should get lots of work on the ball working on relevant techniques.

Techniques to be practiced can include:

1. One touch passing, 1 – 2's.
2. Two touch passing.
3. Headers.
4. Volleys.
5. Chest, trap, pass.
6. Chest, volley.
7. Chest, thigh, volley / half volley.
8. Use both feet.
9. Front foot / back foot passing.

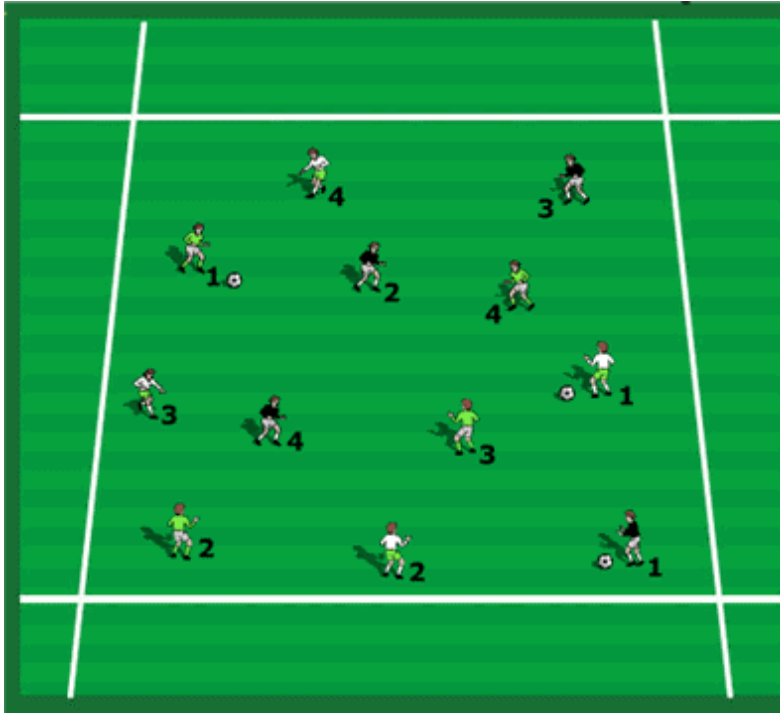
Warm Up 5: Non – Competitive Awareness Numbers “Game” With Teams: Passing in Sequence



1. Working with three teams
2. Within each numbered team each player is numbered off. Teams (1) and (2) work together (with two balls) and team (3) works alone (with one ball)
3. Players must pass in sequence i.e. with teams (1) and (2) working together 1 passes to 2; 2 passes to 3; 3 to 4 and so on up to 8 who passes to 1 and we begin again whilst team (3) players pass 1 to 4.
4. A Player receives from the same person and passes to the same person each time. This develops great awareness of time, space and player positions. There is continuous work on and off the ball.
5. Awareness of: where the player you receive from is and where the player you pass to is. Because of this players begin to anticipate the pass to them and where it is coming from.
6. Also they must look to where it is going to (where is the player they are passing to?). We are trying to create a situation where players are looking two moves ahead not just one.
7. For instance as (1) is about to pass to (2), (3) should be looking to support (2) for the next pass already, looking two moves ahead before the ball leaves (1). Peripheral Vision Development results from this.

Develop: Reduce the number of touches players are allowed each time they receive a pass, all in to begin, then three touch, then two touch then one touch if it is on to do so. This speeds up the decision making process and forces them to look earlier as to where they are passing to.

Warm Up 6: Semi – Competitive Awareness Numbers Game: Passing in Sequence



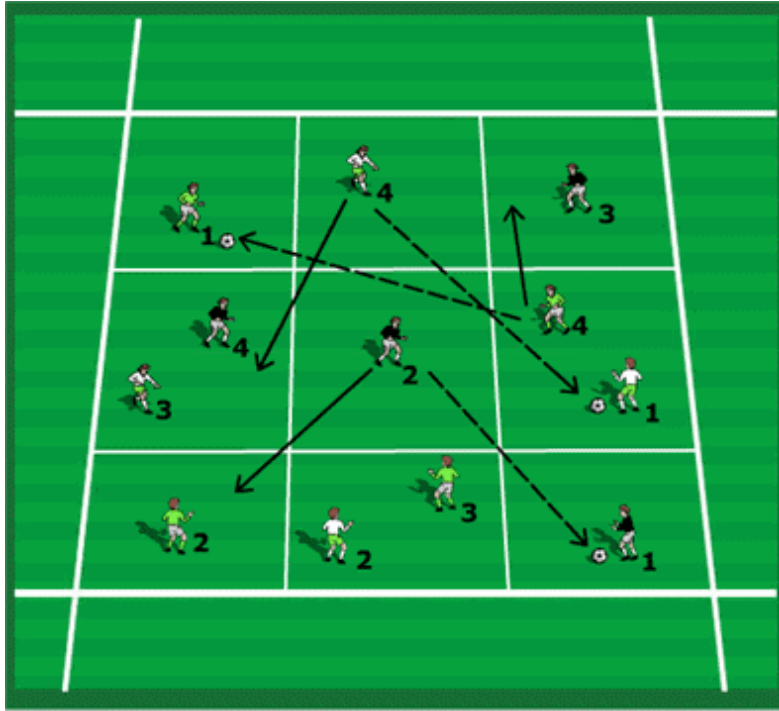
Now have 3 teams passing separately 1 to 4 in each team, with a ball each team.

Develop: Count the number of passes each team get in a certain time frame adding a competitive element to the game. Who can get the highest number of passes made in a given time frame?

Emphasize:

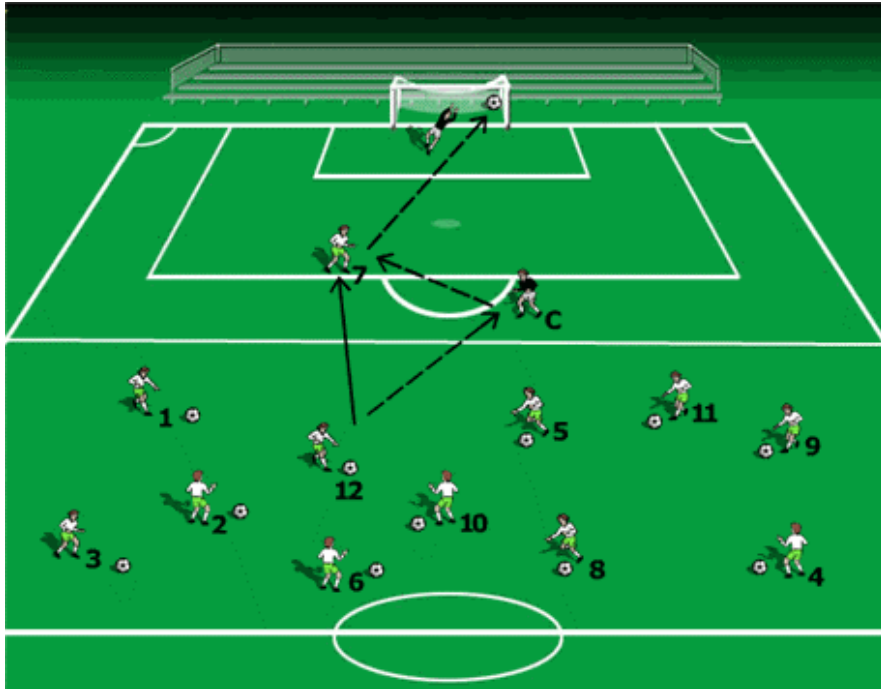
1. Movement “off” the ball to open up angles for passes between other players.
2. Communication verbally between players to help them identify where they are; passing player can call who they are passing to, receiving player can ask for the pass.
3. Ensure players spread out throughout the area to have them playing both long and short passes.
4. Encourage fewer touches on the ball at each reception to move it around the field more quickly helping players develop good transitional play.

Warm Up 7: Awareness Numbers Game Working in Three Zones



1. Conditioning the players to pass and move by setting the rule they need to move into another area once they have passed.
2. Divide the field up into sixths and ask players to make a pass in one area then they must move to another area to receive the next pass. This can cause players to pass long or pass short and vary the range and distance of the passes and the support as they are required to move once they have made their pass.
3. Here we are using three teams of four players.
4. Here players pass and move into other zones to receive the next ball that is coming. This ensures players get the idea of passing and MOVING off the ball, not passing and then standing. Can say players must pass to space so they pass into another zone next to the one the player they are passing to force them to move to the ball.

Warm Up 8: Dribbling, Passing and Shooting



Dribbling and turning then a number is called and that player plays a 1 – 2 with the coach and gets a shot at goal. By adding a finish with a shot at goal you are creating an end product for the players to aim for.

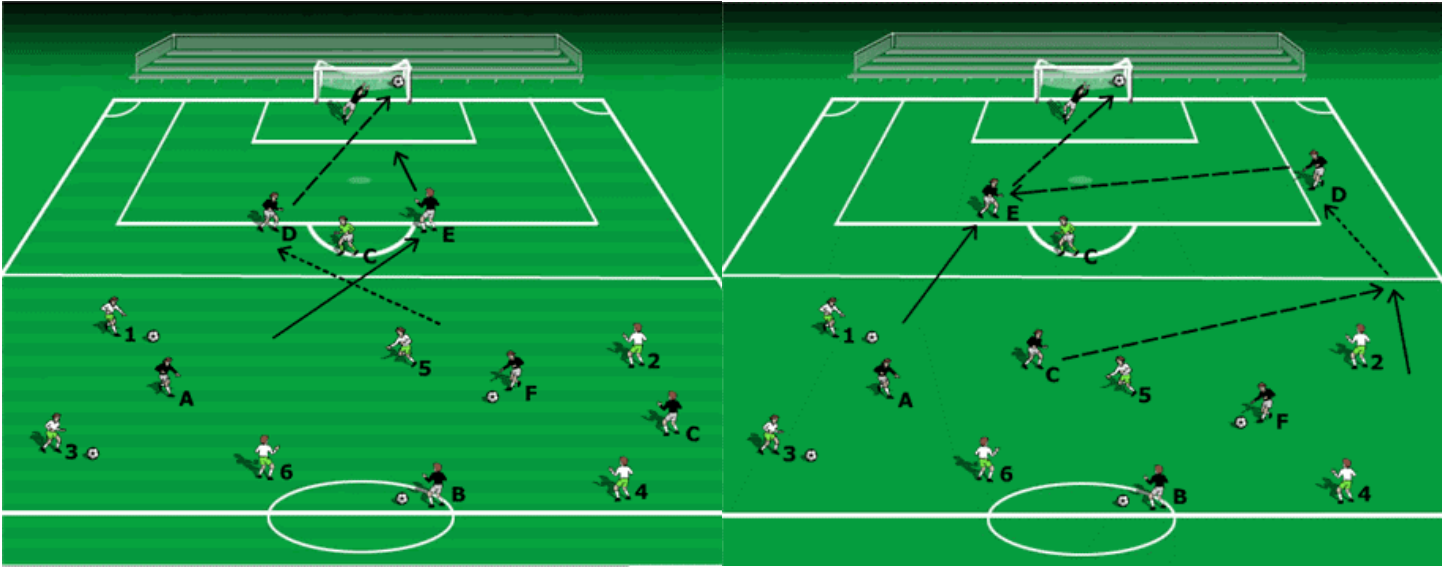
In this we are getting dribbling skills, you must focus on one dribble for example the “Matthews”, and have players practice this in the dribbling area.

Coaching Points:

1. Dribbling Skills
2. Decision Making (“when and where” to pass)
3. Passing (timing and accuracy), playing wall passes with the coach.
4. Shooting (Players focus on hitting the target, promote accuracy and then power in that order).

You can do variations on the theme but the main point is everyone is moving and getting warmed up and you are introducing a theme they can follow, could be 1 -2's, could be crossing and finishing, could be 1 v 1 finishing with the keeper, could be receiving and turning and finishing. Main thing is it avoids the lines and the standing and waiting around where players are not warmed up properly plus it is warm up work for the keeper also. Eventually have the players make the decision “when and where” to break out the dribbling area and attack the goal.

Warm Up 9: Combination Plays, Decision Making, When to Attack



Two Teams: Passing to own teammates but attacking the goal alternately (allows the ball shot at goal and the player to get back to the group before the same group goes again). Players are attacking in one's (1 – 2 with coach or dribbling around the coach to shoot). Change by passing to the opposite team only.

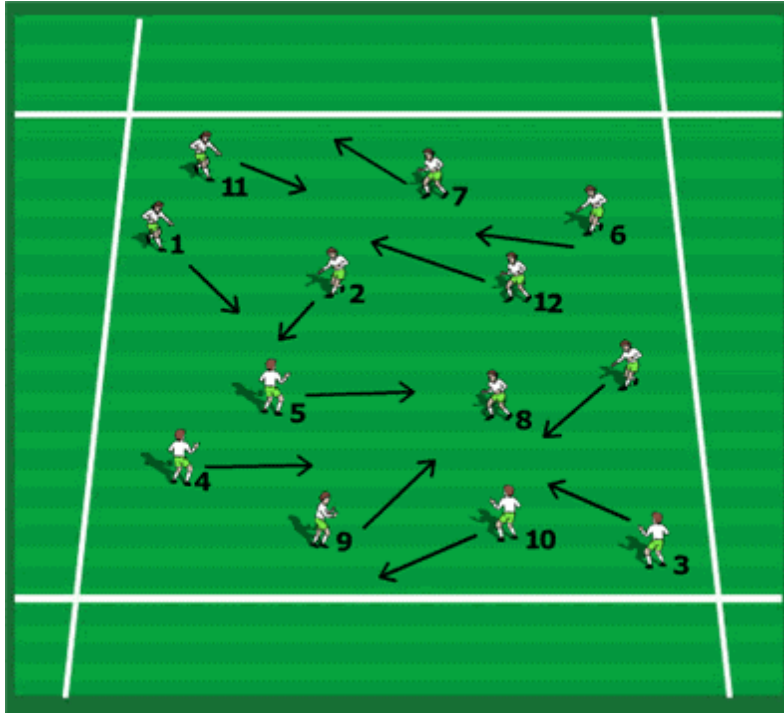
Combination Play: In two's (a player without a ball from the same team must support and make a 1 – 2, an overlap run, crossover or diagonal run to receive and shoot or act as a decoy). Coach acts as passive opposition. (D) Makes a diagonal run (E) makes a diagonally opposite run, (D) can shoot and use (E) as a decoy or pass to (E) to shoot and follow in for rebounds.

Develop: Passing to opposite colors and only an opposite color can support in two's (improves peripheral vision and awareness, identifying when the break is on and who it's with). All the players are constantly work passing and moving (no standing in lines awaiting a turn) then have to decide when and where to go.

Coaching Points:

1. Passing and Support play.
2. Decision – When and where to attack.
3. Technique – of the pass (timing, weight and accuracy).
4. Timing of the runs.
5. Execution of the shot – Accuracy and Power.
6. Rebounds.

Warm Up 10: Movement

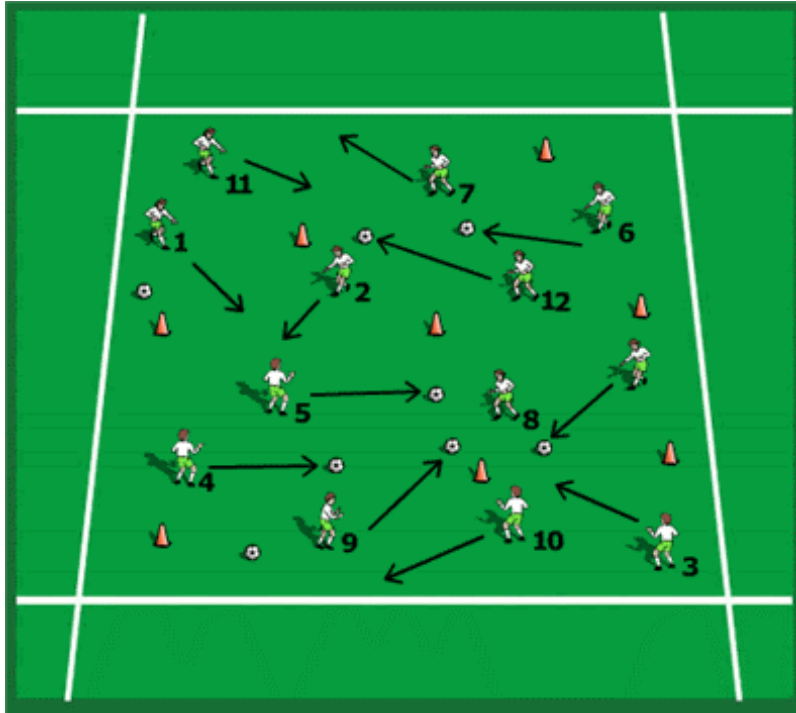


Players can move anywhere. This involves them using anticipation, decision making, reaction and perception and well as co-ordination and fast feet to find space to move into without bumping into people.

Peripheral vision development is starting to be introduced without the ball. Usual coach commands can be start and stop so they are practicing acceleration, deceleration and lateral movement all in the one exercise.

You can also use the commands turn, jump (for a header) check, sit down and so on for which they have to do a short sprint after the command then stop on the call stop. All these are specific movements in the game.

Warm Up 10: Movement



Introduce balls and cones to the area.

Players jog in and out of them until the coach commands a sequence of events. Players have to sprint and touch the cones or balls with their hands. Once the sequence is completed they continue jogging.

Variations:

1. Ball only once (as above)
2. Cone only once
3. Ball then cone once each
4. Ball then cone then ball
5. Ball then dribble it 2 yards and stop it then touch a cone
6. Jump to head an imaginary ball then touch a cone
7. Sit down then up and touch 2 balls
8. And so on.