



SOCCER SCHOOLS



PLAY THE ARSENAL WAY™

TECHNICAL PRACTICES

An Arsenal Soccer Schools coaching booklet containing technical practices on the topics of passing, turning, shooting, dribbling, running with the ball, receiving and heading. Sessions are designed to be adjusted depending on the age and ability of the playing group.

Please note that this Arsenal Soccer Schools booklet is for use by Arsenal Soccer Schools coaches only. You must not pass on this booklet or any of the information contained therein to any third party and may only use it for internal Soccer Schools coaching purposes.

OBJECTIVE

To develop the player's ability to perform a turn and escape a defender.

ORGANISATION

Players begin the session by working in pairs and using their channel to explore different types of turns.

Players can act as a passive defender for their partner to practise using turns when approaching and attempting to escape a defender.

Players are then positioned at opposing ends of the playing area, attackers (red) are to have a ball each and a bib tucked into the back of their shorts.

When the coach calls a colour of cone, the attacker must dribble out and perform a turn at that cone, on doing so the defender must sprint and attempt to grab the bib from the attacker's shorts before they safely return to their start line.

VARIATIONS

Increase/decrease the length of the channel to adjust difficulty.

COACHING POINTS

Accelerate out of turn.

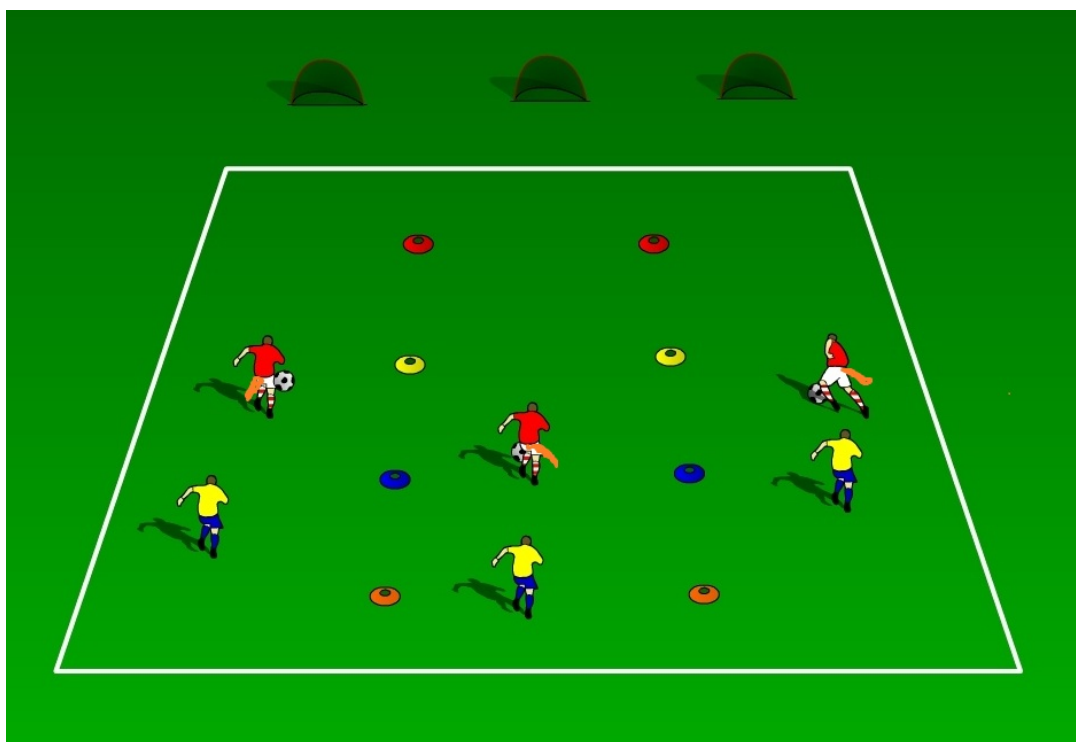
Attacking players to be aware of the defender's positioning.

Add disguise on the turn.

PROGRESSION

The addition of a goal that the attacker can shoot at if they cross the safely line.

Competition - points awarded for successfully escaping the defender and scoring a goal. Points lost if their bib is caught.



OBJECTIVE

To develop turning skills and awareness of pressure.

ORGANISATION

Players grouped in twos or threes with a ball each.

The aim is the lead player (shown on red) to avoid the players chasing (in yellow) getting in front of them.

To stop the chasing players getting ahead of them, the red player should perform quick turns.

Rotate the leading player.

VARIATIONS

Works well as pairs or play with larger numbers.

Add competition.

COACHING POINTS

Encourage good scanning or checking over shoulder.

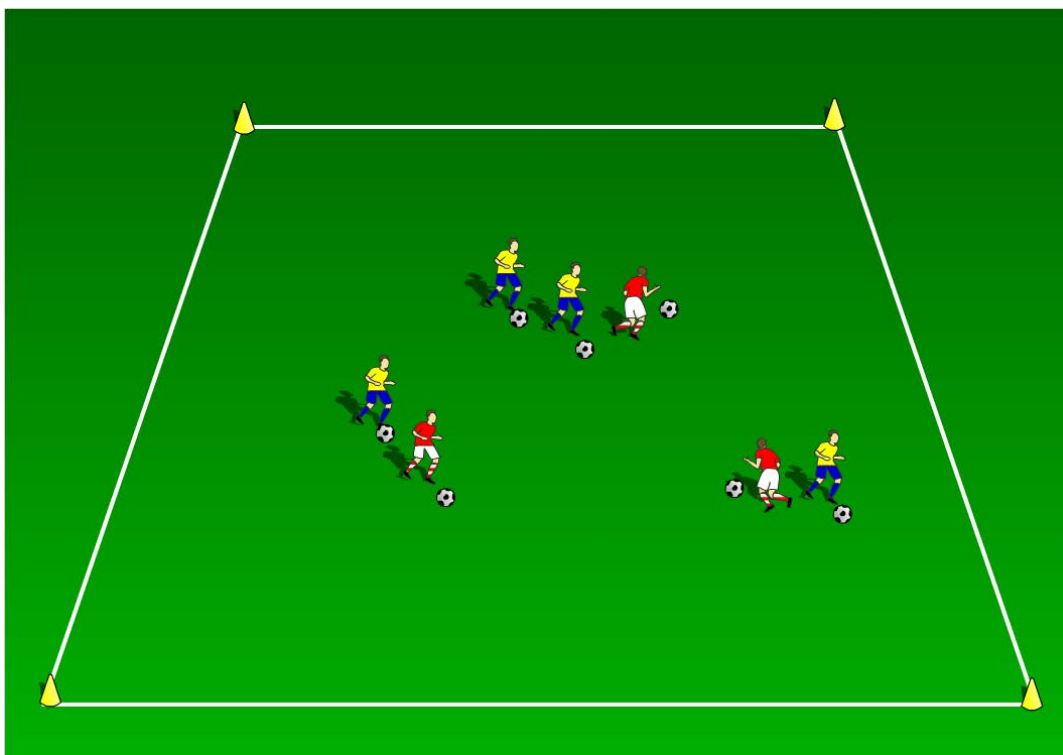
Disguise skills and turns.

Change speed and direction.

PROGRESSION

Can be played with or without a ball.

Can be played as a tag game (tag chest/shoulders of lead player).



OBJECTIVE

To develop turning and awareness of attacking overloads.

ORGANISATION

4 coned areas with a defender in each (yellow). Attackers (in red) try to enter and exit the area without being tagged.

To score a point red players enter the square, perform a turn and escape without being tagged.

Rotate players regularly.

VARIATIONS

Can be played with or without balls.

COACHING POINTS

Recognize when the defender is distracted.

Accelerate out of skill.

Add disguise.

PROGRESSION

Defenders try to win ball (full pressure).

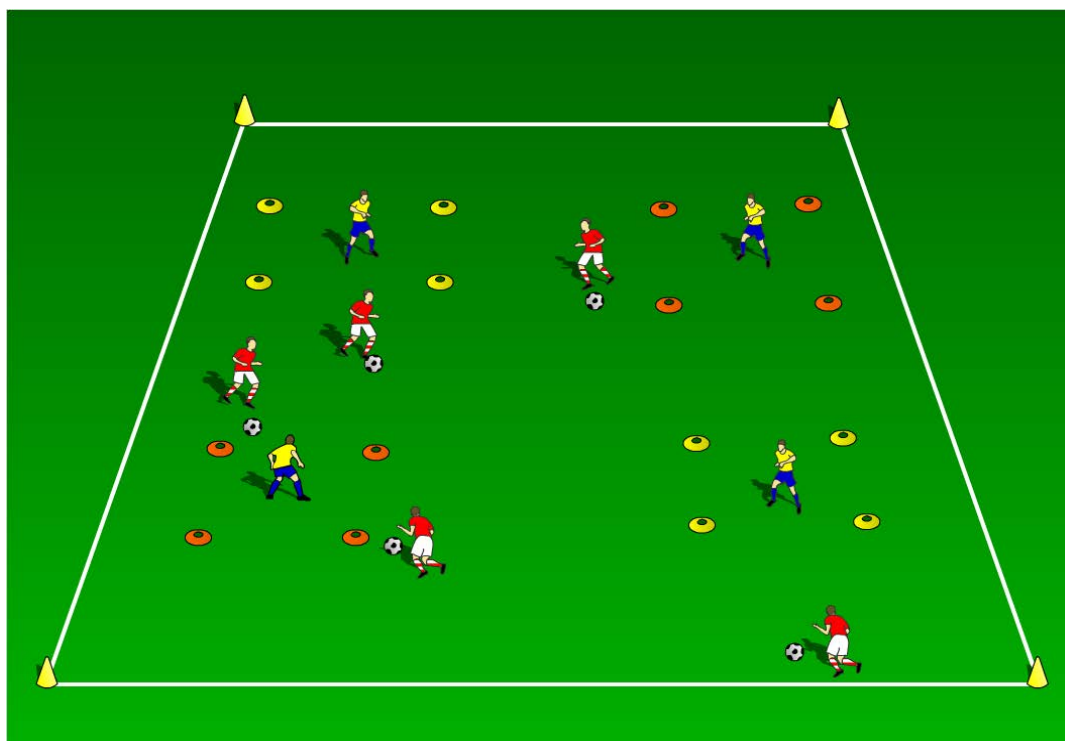
Scoring:

1pt for in and out same side.

2pts for in and out adjacent side.

3pts for in and out opposite side.

4 pts for in, across to opposite side and back out another side.



VARIATIONS

Begin session without the use of goalkeepers.

Vary the types of passes from feeders.

COACHING POINTS

**Types of finish dependent on the situation
(drill using the laces/pass finish using side
of foot).**

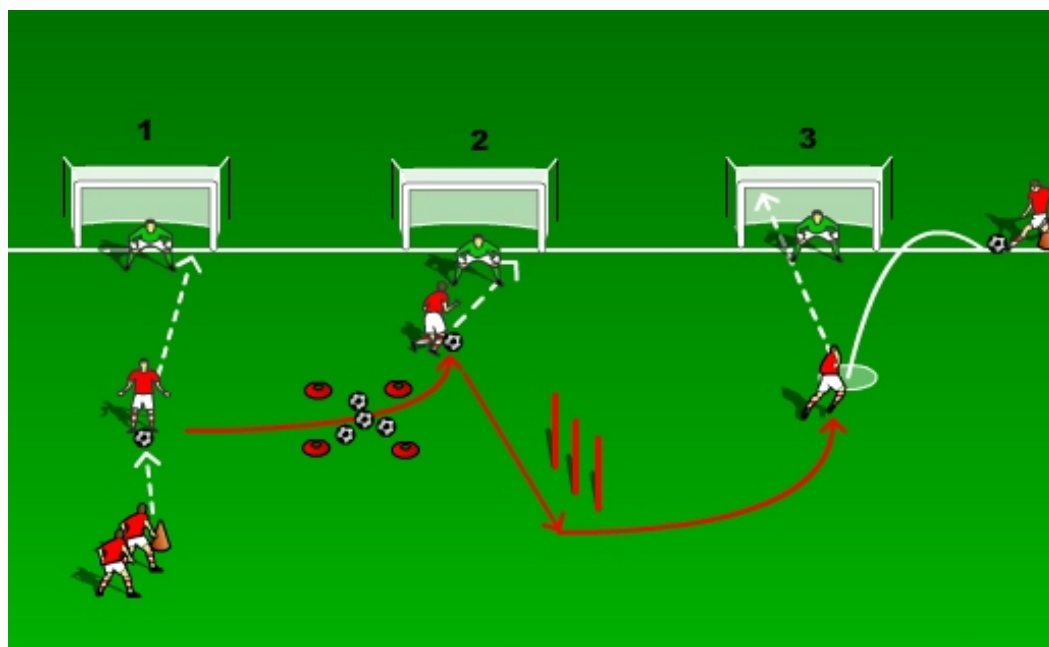
Keep head and knee over the ball.

- ## PROGRESSION

The addition of a passive/active defender the attacker must turn and beat at goal 1.

Competition – players awarded points for goals scored. Bonus points awarded if player scores in every goal of a circuit.

As soon as the player in front has had their shot at goal 2 and moved to goal 3, the next player in the line takes their turn.



OBJECTIVE

Develop individual techniques for a variety of finishing types that occur throughout a match situation.

ORGANISATION

In groups of 3 or 4 set up with a server and an attacker working at each goal. Attackers start the practice in the central area by passing to the server and following their pass, servers pass back into the attacker who shoots first time. After shooting the attacker replaces the server and the player next in line begins the practice again.

Challenge attackers to score using a variety of techniques, shooting with power, finesse, volleying, heading etc.

Ensure that the server plays accurate and suitable passes for the desired finish. If necessary allow servers to throw the ball for headers/ volleys.

Ensure lines/ queues are kept to a minimum.

VARIATIONS

Ensure practice time is equal on left and right feet.

Set appropriate challenges. I.e. bonus points for accurate finishes.

COACHING POINTS

Timing of the run in anticipation of the cross.

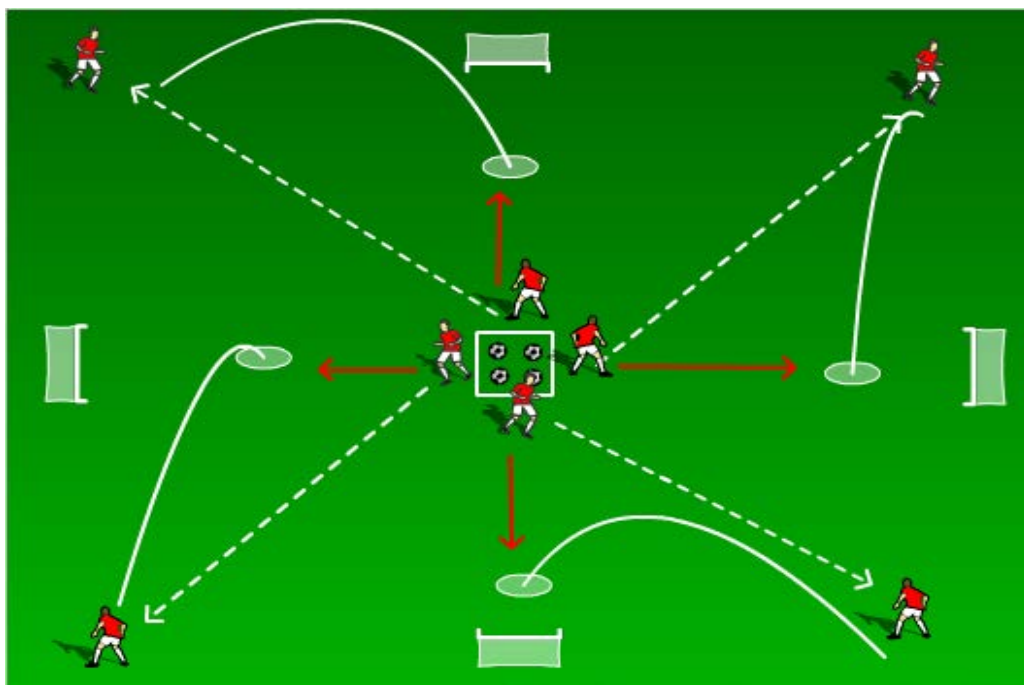
Well balanced in preparation for the shot.

Clean connection when striking the ball.

Body weight over the ball when making contact.

PROGRESSION

Place bibs as targets in the corners of each goal and add goalkeepers.



VARIATIONS

Begin the session without the use of a goalkeeper.

Shooting players can take a touch to control the ball before shooting.

COACHING POINTS

Assess opponents' before shooting.

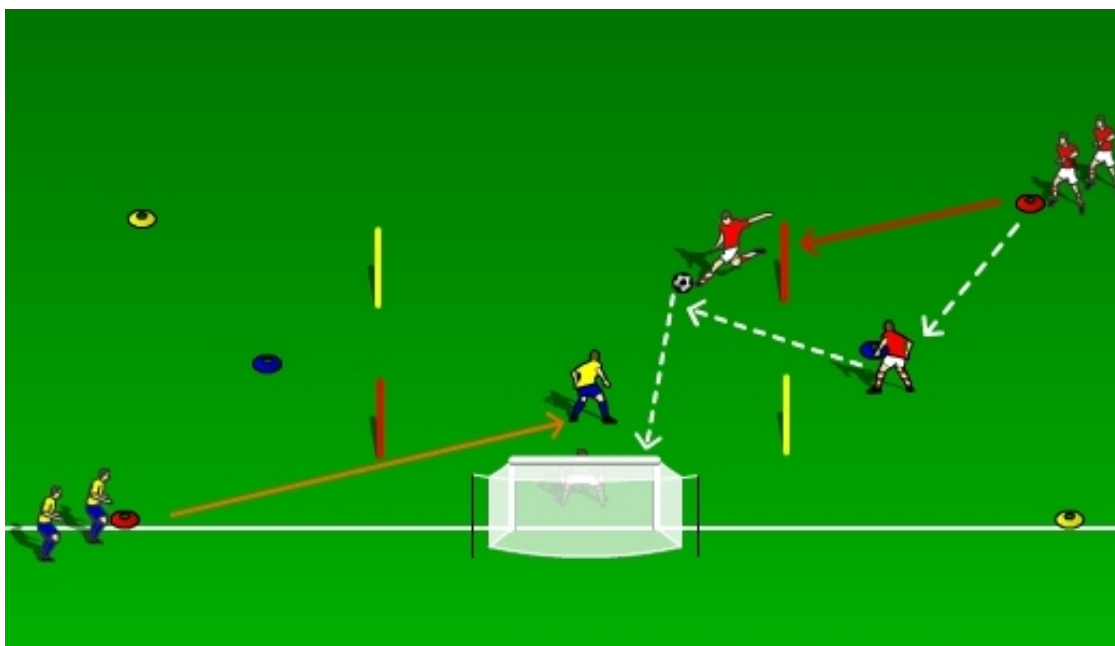
Select appropriate finish (power or accuracy).

Add skill / fake if necessary.

PROGRESSION

After each team has played each role, teams switch sides and shoot using their other foot.

Competition - points accumulated for goals scored.



OBJECTIVE

Develop individual techniques of how to run with the ball effectively and efficiently.

ORGANISATION

The area is divided into 3 zones (1 x safe zone at each end). 1 team operate on the outside of the area (whites) and in pairs pass the ball across the central zone. The red team attempt to get from one end to the other without colliding with the passing teams footballs. If they can successfully navigate the central area they score 1 point. The white team score a point every time they hit a red player's football or the player (below the knee).

Red players have 3 lives, once they lose all 3 they are allowed to join a team mate and assist them in creating space to get across the central area.

Once all players have been eliminated rotate the teams.

VARIATIONS

Introduce team & individual competition.

Add weaker foot challenges.

COACHING POINTS

Recognition of space/ Drive out of tight areas.

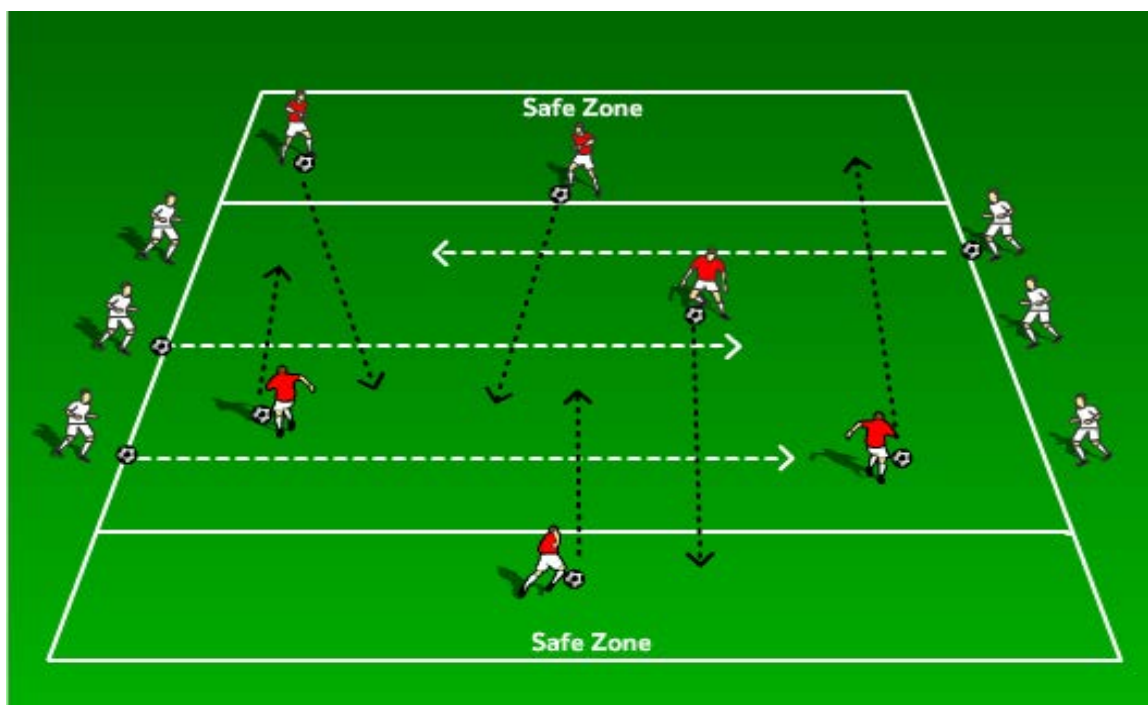
1 touch per stride.

Technique selection smaller or larger touches (Walcott / Cazorla).

Safe side dribbling.

PROGRESSION

Passing players become active defenders within the central zone to play full pressure.



OBJECTIVE

To develop the player's skill of running with a ball when in an attacking situation, before having a shot at goal.

ORGANISATION

Players (red) begin by running with the ball through their channel, before either striking at goal (head on) or turning left/right and shooting at goal.

Time pressure is then added and players must run through their channel and shoot before the coach's countdown ends, but must remain in control of the ball.

Defenders are added for runners to beat before having a shot at goal.

Runners to vary the channel they use.

VARIATIONS

The addition of a goalkeeper in the session, as well as a defender.

Cones can be placed throughout the running channel to add further obstacles.

COACHING POINTS

Run at speed through channels.

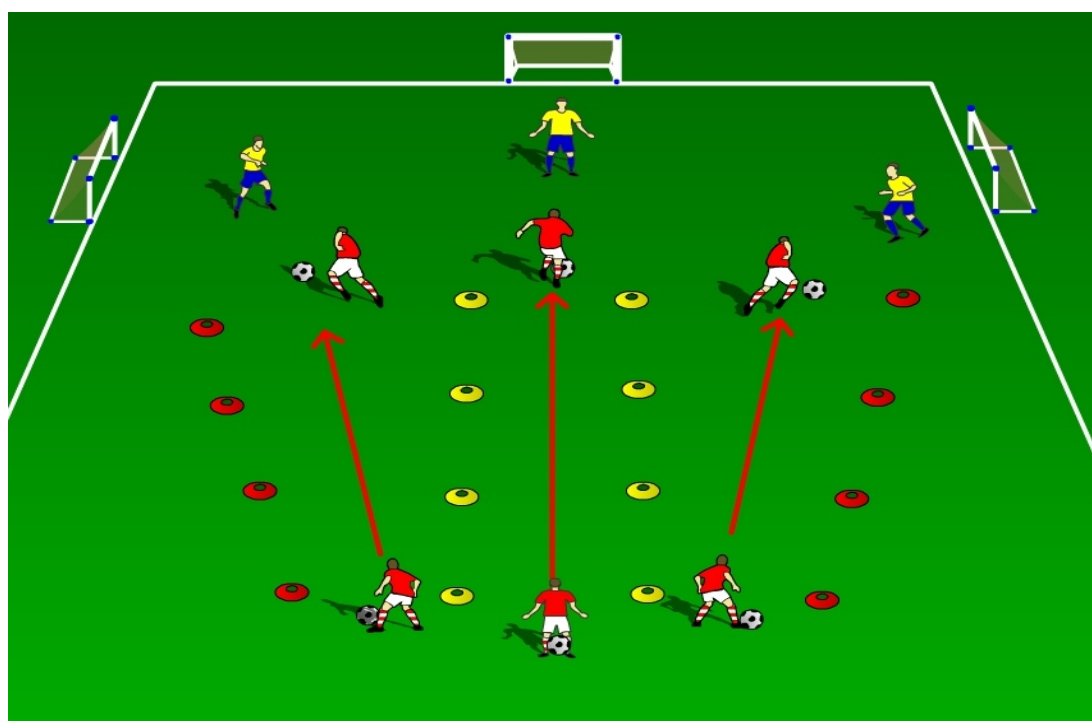
Maintain close control.

Awareness of defenders.

Skill to create space for shot.

PROGRESSION

Competition – points awarded first player to run through their channel and score, bonus points awarded for correct running with the ball technique.



OBJECTIVE

Develop individual techniques of how to run with the ball effectively and efficiently while under pressure.

ORGANISATION

3 team competition. 1 team of defenders (white) and two teams of attackers (reds & blues)

Attackers score a point for their team every time they dribble successfully across the area.

Defenders set up with 2 inside and 2 outside of the area. They score 1 point every time they win the ball from an attacker and dribble it to one of the outside cones.

If an attacker loses his/her ball they can join their team and combine with their teammates to create space to run with the ball.

VARIATIONS

Introduce team & individual competition.

Add weaker foot challenges.

COACHING POINTS

Recognition of space/ Drive out of tight areas.

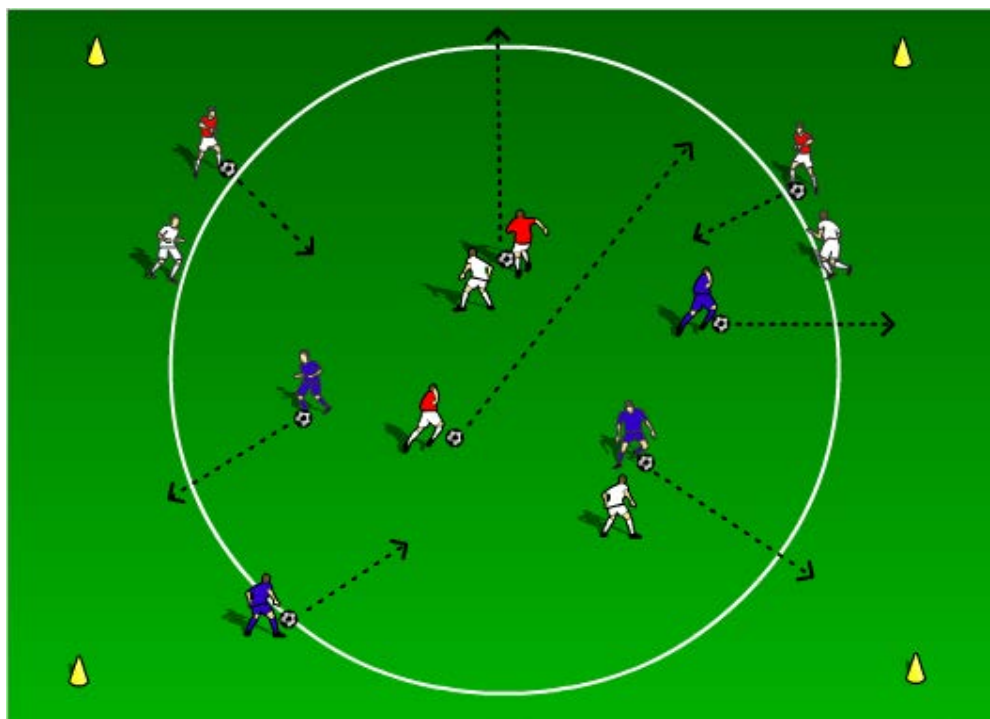
1 touch per stride.

Technique selection smaller or larger touches (Walcott / Cazorla).

Safe side dribbling.

PROGRESSION

Once a player loses the ball they become a defender leaving 1 eventual winner.



TECHNICAL PRACTICE RECEIVING TO PLAY FORWARD

OBJECTIVE

Develop individual techniques of how to receive with an open body to play forward.

ORGANISATION

20 x 20 Area. Teams of 3 or 4. 1 ball per team.

Two players from each team are placed around the outside of the area. Teams play through the central player to the opposite outside player.

All teams play at the same time creating interference

Encourage game realistic tempo and quality throughout.

Challenge players to use both feet and different types of turn, inside, outside, Cruyff, no touch.

VARIATIONS

Add competition/ races.

Ask outside players to “hide” from central player to challenge their scanning.

COACHING POINTS

Scanning and awareness of teammates & opposition.

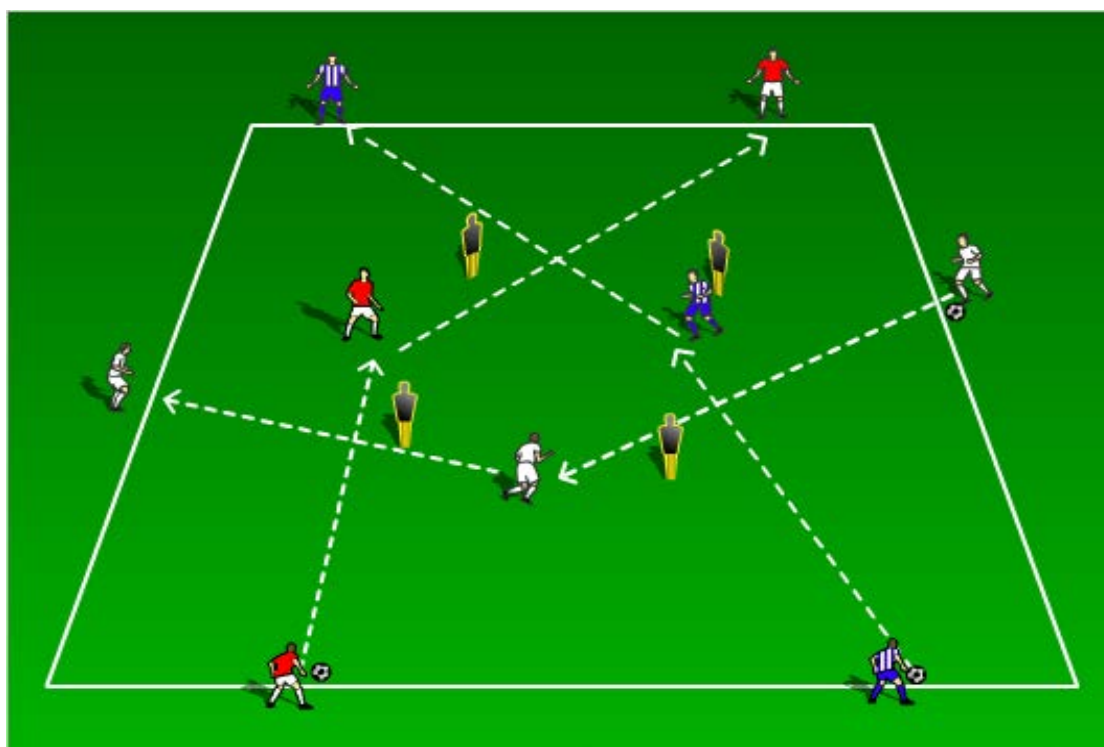
Open body shape to see both teammates.

Relaxed body part to receive the ball.

Intelligent movement between players (angle & distance).

PROGRESSION

Add pressure, passive (tag players in possession) then full.



OBJECTIVE

To develop the player's ability to receive the ball with directional purpose.

ORGANISATION

The session is organised as per diagram.

Players work in pairs, one is assigned the role of feeder (red) and the other the role of receiver (yellow).

The feeder passes the ball to his/her partner and shouts a colour at the same time, corresponding to one of the cones surrounding the receiver. The receiver must control the ball whilst moving to the correct cone, dribble round it and pass the ball back to the feeder.

Focus is on the quality and direction of the receiver's first touch depending on the colour called by the feeder.

VARIATIONS

Receivers are facing in the opposite direction until the moment the feeder passes the ball and calls a colour.

COACHING POINTS

Awareness/ scanning of area.

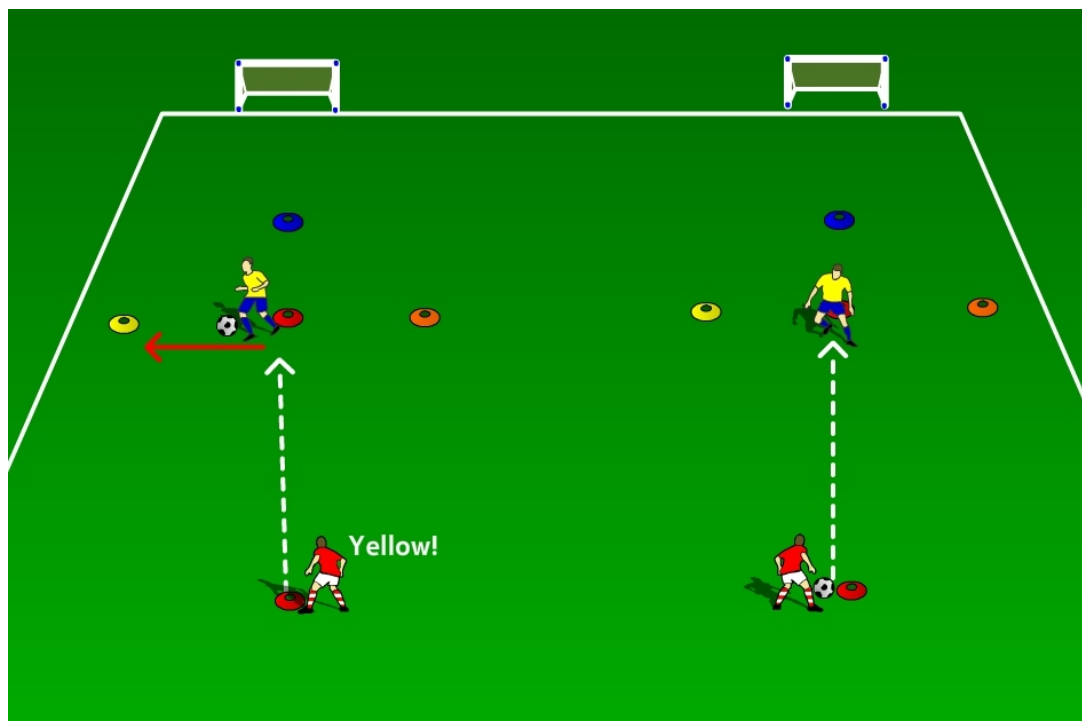
Body position to receive.

Relaxed body part when receiving.

PROGRESSION

Competition:

1. Speed competition to receive the ball correctly, dribble around the correct cone and pass the ball back.
2. Add defender. Receiver must turn and score in the small goal. Defender scores by winning ball and playing to server.



OBJECTIVE

To develop receiving and turning techniques.

ORGANISATION

Set as below players grouped in threes with a ball each and one player in the small middle circle and two on opposite sides of larger one.

Player on outside passes to centre player.

Player in middle circle receives and turns to pass to player to third player.

This works well with a large group, as there is more “interference” in the small middle circle

Rotate middle players.

VARIATIONS

Increase/decrease area sizes.

Before receiving the pass, outside players make a run to the centre for give and go or away for lofted pass.

COACHING POINTS

Look over shoulder before ball arrives.

Relaxed body part when receiving.

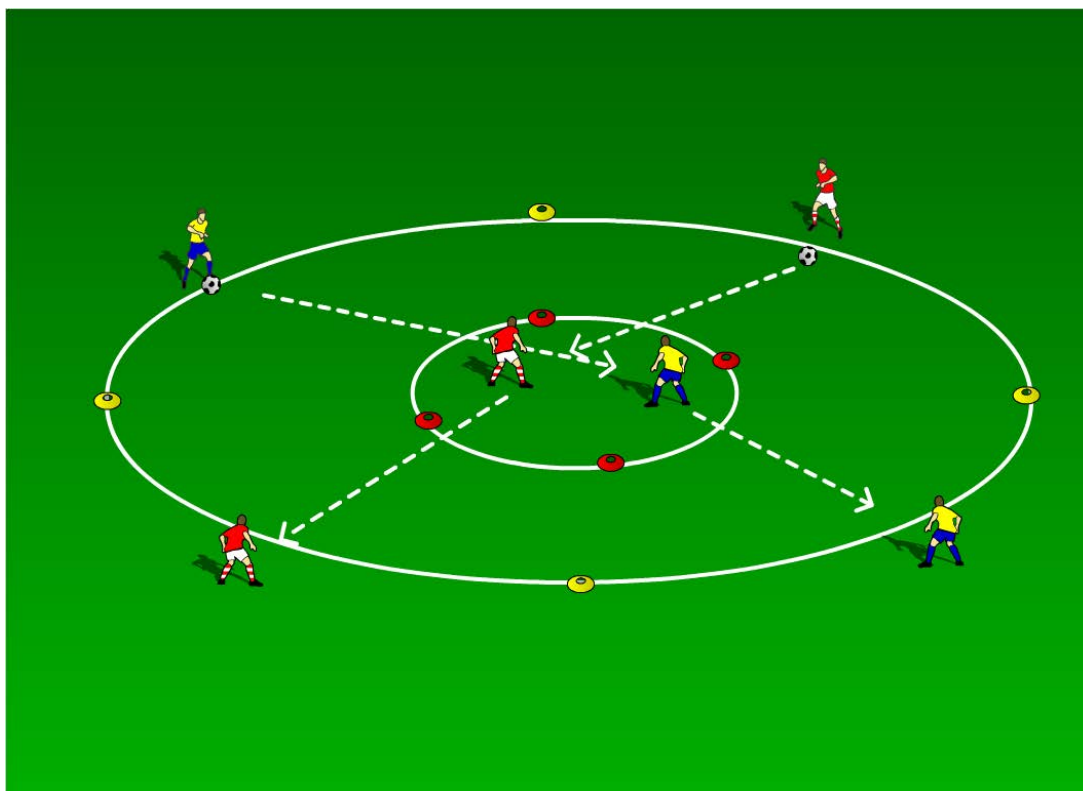
Pass selection.

PROGRESSION

Add defender in middle circle.

Make games 1v1 in middle circle.

Competition for number of successful repetitions in set time.



OBJECTIVE

Develop individual passing and receiving techniques in tight areas. Focussing on individual movement, angles, distances of support and awareness.

ORGANISATION

2 teams of 6 players set up with 4 players on each side of the area and two central players, Wilshere and Arteta (highlighted).

Teams play simultaneously, through the central players and to any of the outside players in their team.

The coaching focus should be on the central players' supporting movement, awareness, first touch and pass selection. Encourage high tempo and combination play in tight areas.

After passing to an outside player, the opposite central player must receive the next pass.

VARIATIONS

Introduce races - first to 20 passes.

Add passive defender.

COACHING POINTS

Angles and distances of support.

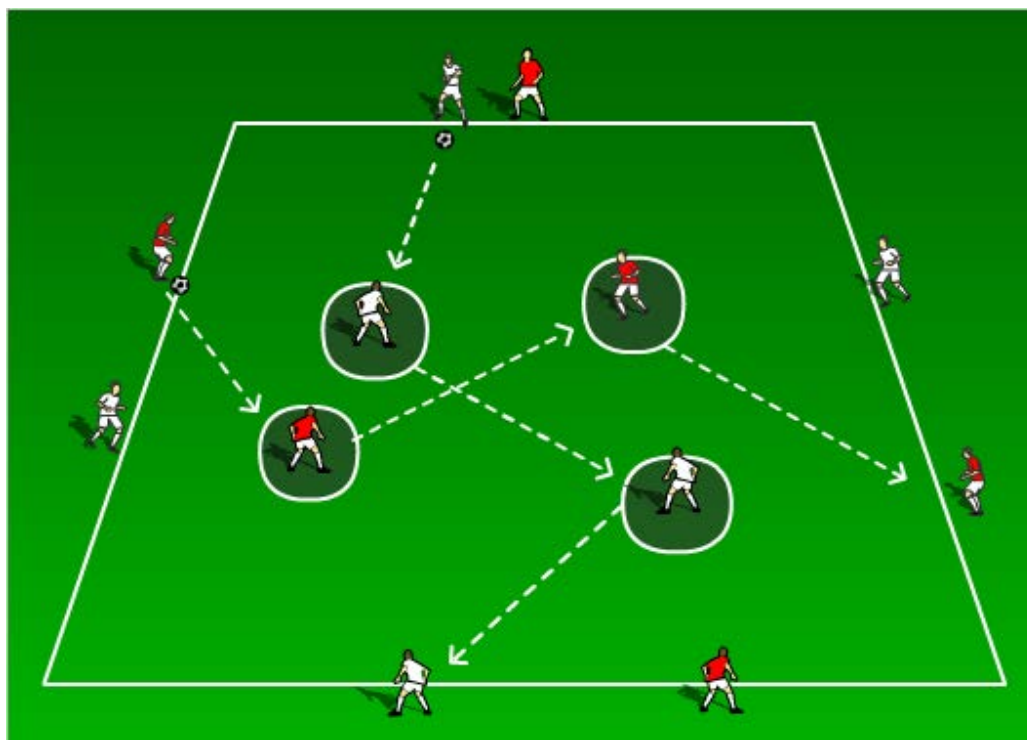
Scanning / Awareness of teammates and opposition.

Open body shape to receive.

Relaxed body part to receive the ball.

PROGRESSION

Make the practice competitive by playing with one ball. Outside players can only tackle opponents on the same side of the area.



OBJECTIVE

To develop the player's passing technique across a range of different distances, with emphasis on movement after the pass is made.

ORGANISATION

Feeders (red) are situated around the edge of the playing area, with a ball each initially.

1. Passers (yellow) move around the playing area, communicating clearly when they want the ball. They control the ball before passing it back.
2. Feeders are to work with a ball between two, and passers are now to receive a short pass from a feeder before taking it into the area and executing a long pass to another feeder.

Vary the type of pass, (along the floor/ in the air) and teams swap roles.

VARIATIONS

The playing area can be increased to increase difficulty.

COACHING POINTS

Technique for different types of passing is to be explored.

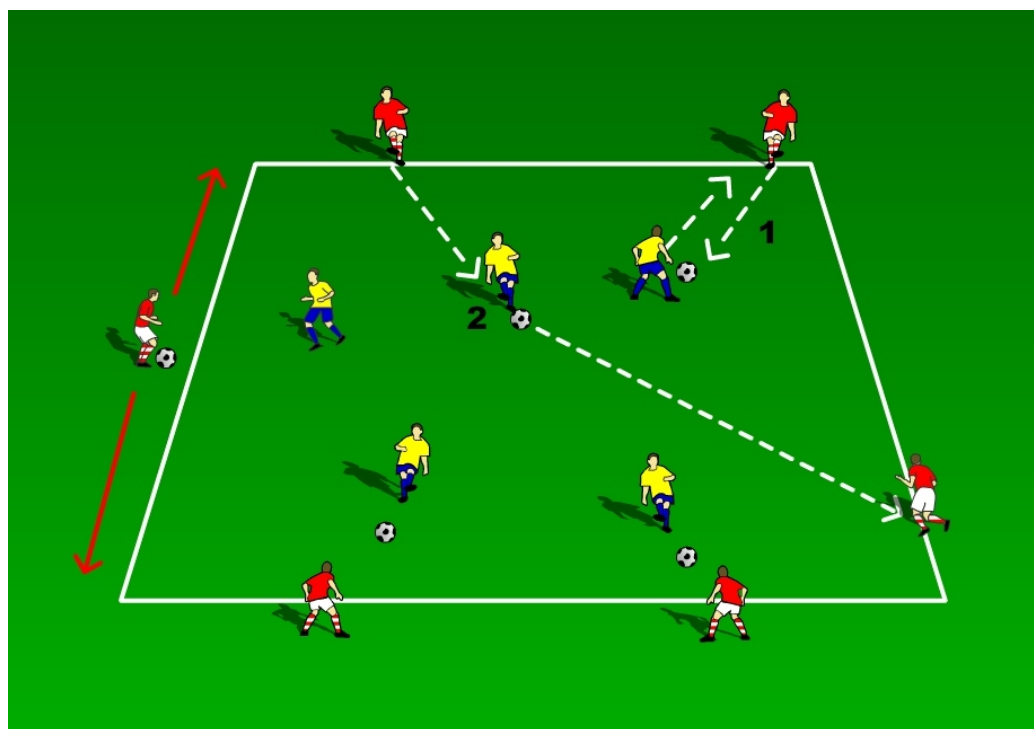
Angles and distances of support.

Awareness of teammates.

PROGRESSION

Conditions on the number of touches allowed by passers e.g. 1st time pass.

Competition – points awarded for the number of successful passes made in an allotted time.



TECHNICAL PRACTICE LONG DISTANCE PASSING

OBJECTIVE

To develop a variety of long passing techniques.

ORGANISATION

Set as below with lines of three players and each line with a ball.

Start by asking the players to pass short to the player nearest on line.

Next ask the players to vary the combination play (one, two?) and type of turn by middle player (no touch).

Then ask the players to play a long pass when they see a good opportunity.

VARIATIONS

Increase/decrease distance between players.

COACHING POINTS

Vary on pass selection (driven, curled, lofted).

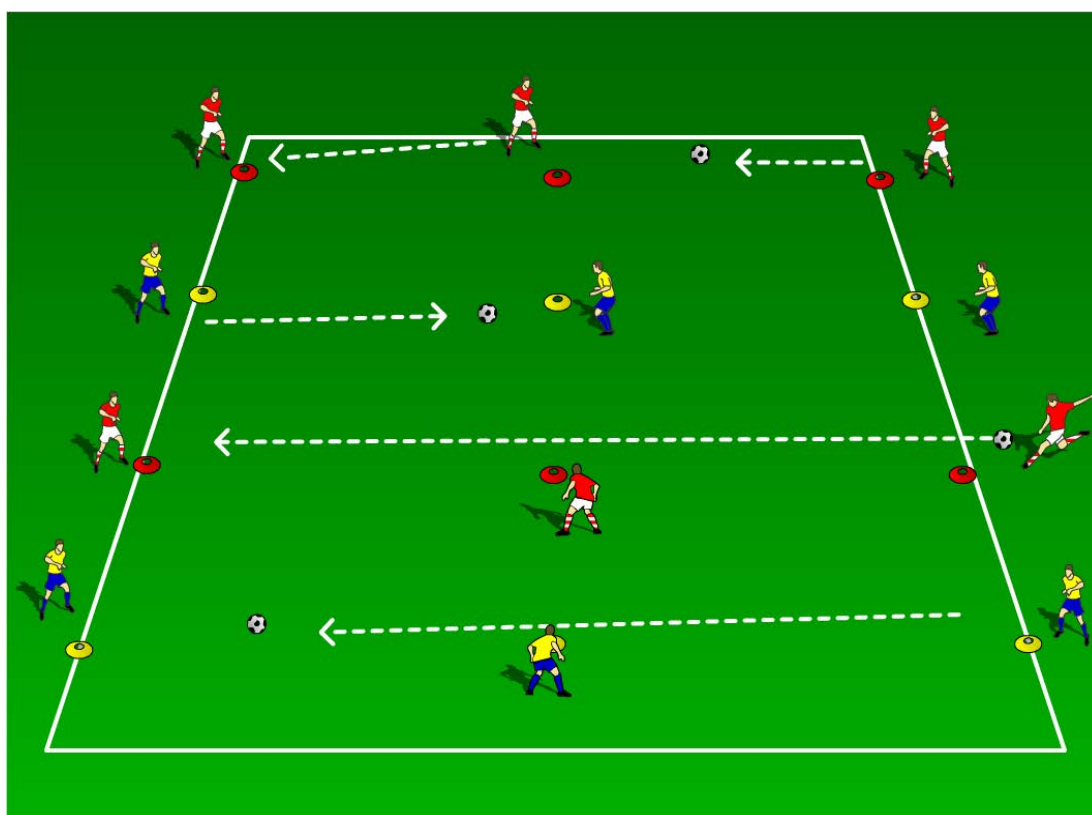
Well balanced when striking.

PROGRESSION

Recognize opportunities in play to swap middle play with an outside player.

Add a defender.

Add magic ball (can be passed anywhere!).



OBJECTIVE

To explore different ways of heading the ball, depending on team mate positioning and game scenarios.

ORGANISATION

Feeders (red) are positioned around the playing area with a ball in hands each, initially.

1. Headers (yellow) are to work around the playing area, finding a free feeder, receiving a throw and heading the ball back to them using the correct technique.

Using a similar format, different types of headers are explored by the players e.g. attacking headers to feeders feed, defending headers over the feeder.

2. Finally, feeders share a ball between 2, and headers are to use glancing and backward flick headers.

Groups are to switch roles following each progression.

VARIATIONS

Heading players are not allowed to use feeders situated next to each other.

COACHING POINTS

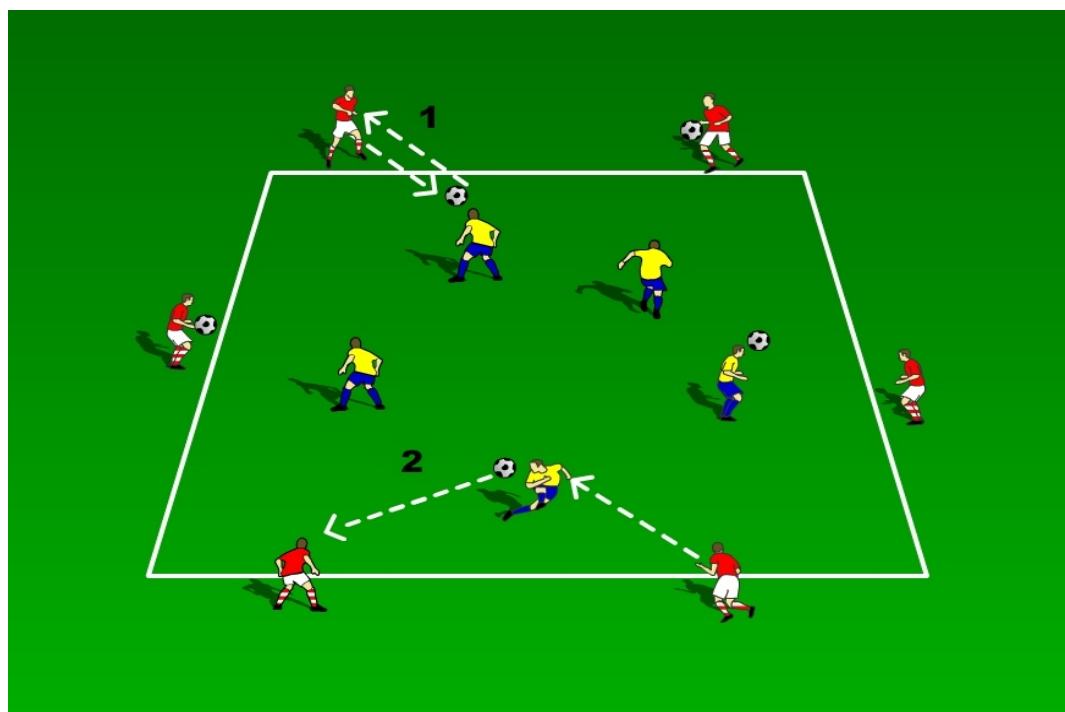
Players are to use their forehead to strongly head the ball.

Eyes are to be open when heading the ball.

Headers can use a run up and neck muscles to generate pace on the ball.

PROGRESSION

Competition -points are awarded for completing a certain amount of successful headers in an allotted amount of time.



OBJECTIVE

To develop heading techniques to generate accuracy, distance and power.

ORGANISATION

Set as below with lines three to six players.

Player first in line has a ball and serves over the line of players to furthest player who heads it back.

The server catches ball, passes it to player next in line and runs to back of queue.

In this way, the groups “leapfrog” forward.

The sequence is repeated until the groups have covered a set distance (10 - 15 metres).

VARIATIONS

Manipulate number in each team to increase intensity (smaller number) or challenge (greater number).

COACHING POINTS

Players are to use their forehead to strongly head the ball.

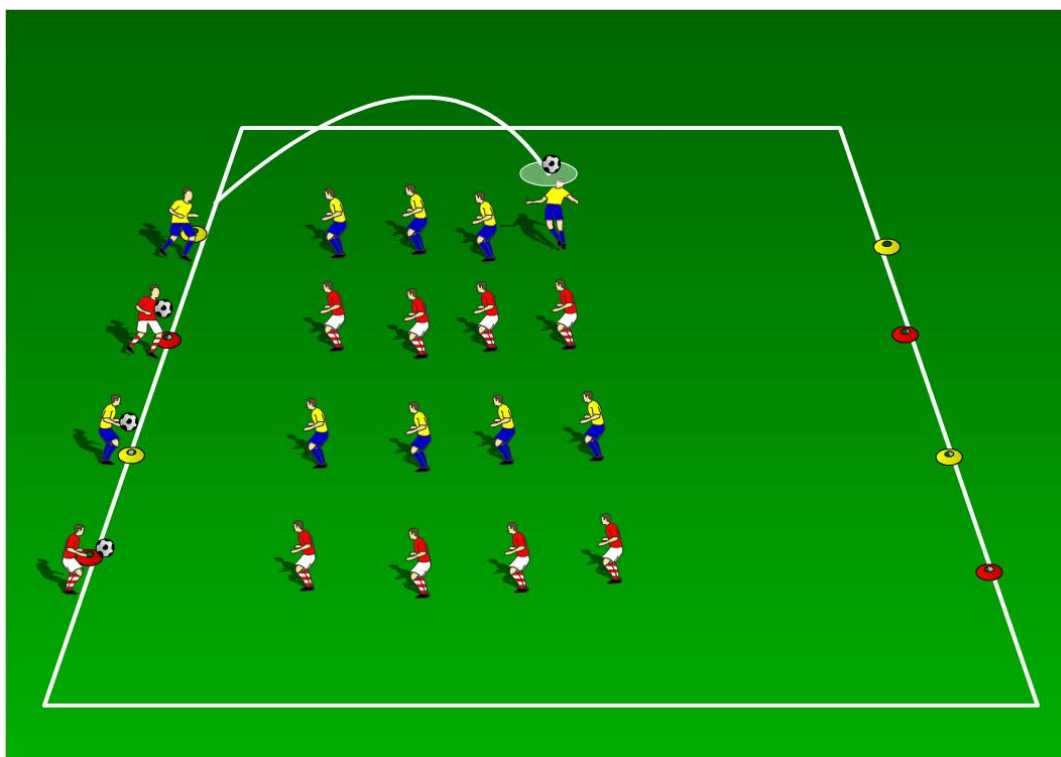
Eyes are to be open when heading the ball.

Headers can use a run up and neck muscles to generate pace on the ball.

PROGRESSION

Run competition first team to finish line.

Running player has to zigzag through line of teammates.



OBJECTIVE

To develop correct technique when heading at goal.

ORGANISATION

Teams compete in pairs against each other in a small grid, as demonstrated below.

Teams take turns to attack each other's end of playing area.

One player runs up the side of the playing area with ball in hand. They then feed the ball underarm to their oncoming attacking teammate who must attempt to head the ball past the opposing team to score.

Regardless of the outcome (score/miss) the opposing team attack the other end of the playing area in the same way.

To score the ball must cross the line below head height.

VARIATIONS

Size of the playing area can be increased/decreased to adjust difficulty.

Players dribble up the side of the playing area.

COACHING POINTS

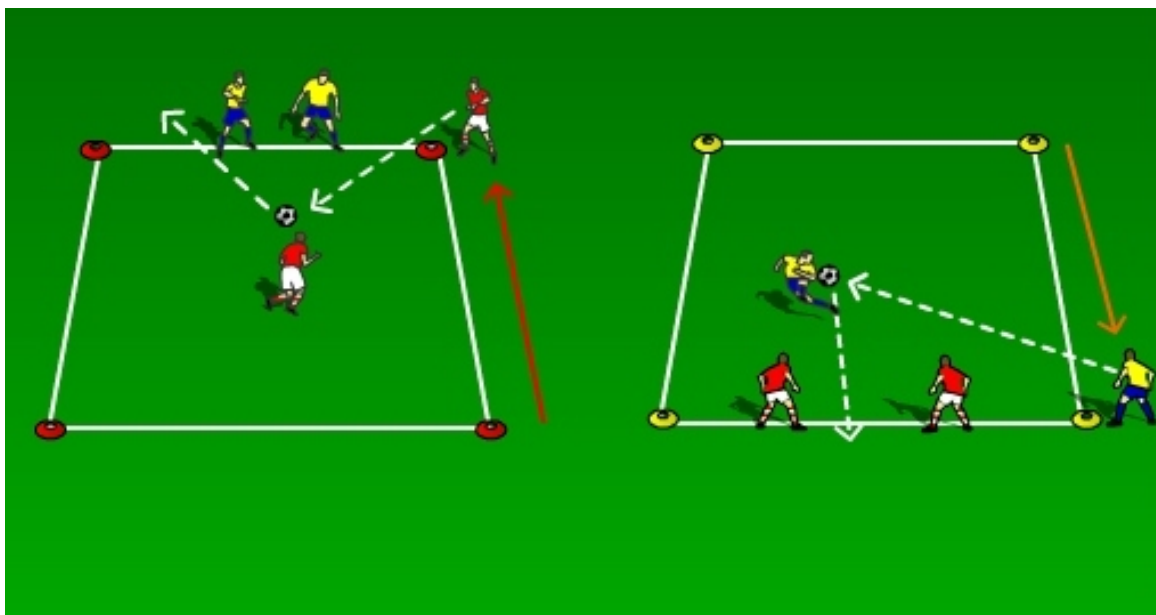
Headers made using the forehead and aimed downwards.

Heading player is to attack the ball by moving onto it.

Timing of runs to attack ball.

PROGRESSION

Competition - Numerous playing areas are set up next to each other. Add ladder /league competition.



OBJECTIVE

Develop individual techniques of how to beat players in a 1 v 1 situation.

ORGANISATION

10 x 10 Areas. 2 players per area.

Start with no ball, play a variety of tag games. I.e. how many corner cones can you touch before being tagged by your partner? Play the same game with a ball each while encouraging ways to off balance a defender with feints, tricks etc.

Progress to 1 v 1 ladder competition.

Defender starts on a cone, passes to the attacker on the opposite cone.

1 point for stopping the ball on one of the available cones

3 points for stopping the ball on the "defenders cone"

If the defender wins the ball he/ she scores by stopping the ball on any cone.

VARIATIONS

Add ladder competition.

Bonus points for outrageous skills/ nutmegs.

COACHING POINTS

Distance between defender when executing skill.

Off balance defender with feints/ changes in direction.

Be creative and have NO fear.

Slow down before the skill and accelerate away.

PROGRESSION

Alter numbers to play 1 v 2.

Remove central line and play 2 v 2.



OBJECTIVE

To develop ball mastery and introduce new tricks, turns and skills.

ORGANISATION

Set as below with one or two taggers chasing other players, every player has a ball each.

When tagged, the tagged player has to perform a ball mastery skill such as 3 step overs.

Coach or players decide what and how many skills to perform.

The player is then released and can return to game.

Rotate players appropriate.

VARIATIONS

Ball mastery skills can be performed in boxes in each corner.

Chasing and tagging can be done without a ball.

Add new and challenging skills.

COACHING POINTS

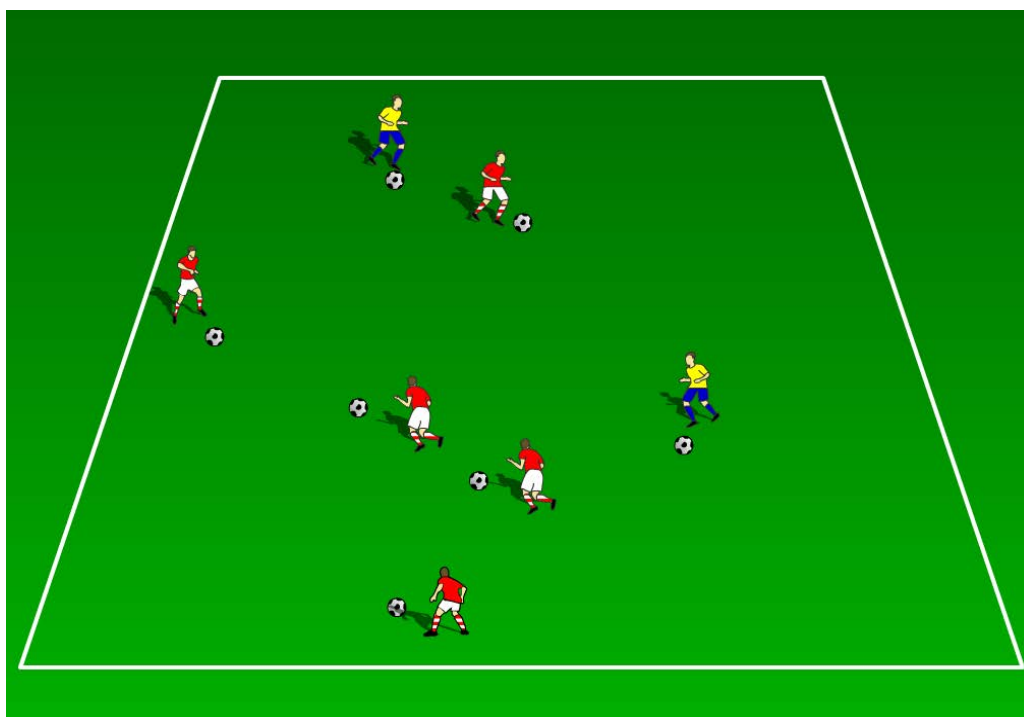
Awareness when dribbling.

Add disguise to skills.

Accelerate out of skill.

PROGRESSION

Taggers play without balls, have to win ball and perform ball mastery skills before joining game. Player losing ball becomes defender.





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All coaching session diagrams created with the Session Template software at www.academyfootballcoach.co.uk

