



# Football South Coast Club Coaching Handbook For Players Aged 9-13

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A users guide to provide club coaches with the tools to begin coaching junior and youth soccer in accordance to Federation Football Australia National Curriculum.

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# Introduction

The aim and purpose of this handbook is for Football South Coast to give all our current club coaches working with 9-13 year olds a coaching resource that provides some foundation and structure so that the coach can begin to explore coaching junior soccer in accordance to the FFA National Curriculum.

In addition to the handbook Football South Coast encourages all junior and youth coaches to attend the Skill Training Certificate and Game Training Certificate courses previously known as the Junior Licence and Youth Licence respectively to further enhance not only their junior's experience of soccer but also that of themselves as the coach.



“At FSC we have a belief and passion that junior player development is vital to ensure the quality of football in this region. Junior development is not only about our elite players - it is fundamentally about grass roots development and giving every junior as part of our competition access to great football.

A big part of this process involves our coaches and this booklet is just one of the ways FSC is currently working on to provide all of our coaches with the techniques to effectively train and coach every player that is part of FSC competitions.

Coaches at all levels play a crucial role in ensuring that football is an enjoyable experience for everyone and lay the foundation for the development of better players. Each coach is a significant part of our sport and integral in making football the great sport it is. We hope that you get lots of guidance from this book and thank you for being such a key part of the football family in your time and devotion to our great code.”

Ann-Marie Balliana

Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer  
Football South Coast



“At Football South Coast we build on the 4 core skills from the national curriculum. We provide motivation and a friendly environment for young players to progress at their own rate.

One of the building blocks that we encourage are the discovery phase and the skills acquisition phase. During the discovery phase we allow a lot of varied fun football related games and encourage the beginning of fundamental technique. In other words we just love them to play.

During the skills acquisition phase our FSC coaches provide a solid foundation for technical skill, we provide highly motivated football related activities. The children enjoy the 4 core skills, ball mastery and learn to develop 1v1 practices.

FSC believes that this booklet will guide and develop our grassroots coaches to enhance their knowledge and understanding of what it is to be grassroots coach in our football community.”

Glenn Fontana

Technical Director

Football South Coast



# Who are you coaching?

The FFA has designed a **BUILDING BLOCK** model that illustrates what development phase a player is in depending on their age.



# The Skill Acquisition Phase

*Coaching 9-13 year olds!!!*



When dealing with this age group it's important to know that:

- They are highly motivated and enthusiastic
- They are competitive, like challenges and want to show they're the best
- They are well balanced and coordinated
- They are very adaptive to learning motor skills
- Although still self-centred, they start to learn how to work together
- They are sensitive to criticism and failure (praise is important)
- They are physically and mentally ready for a more structured approach to training

**TECHNICAL SKILLS MUST BE DEVELOPED NOW!!**

# The 4 Core Skills

In the Skill Acquisition Phase the coach must focus exclusively on providing a solid foundation of **technical skill**.

If the player does not gain this **skill foundation** during this phase it will be very difficult to make it up later.

No amount of fitness or competitive spirit will ever compensate for deficiencies in **functional game skills**.

Running  
with the ball

First Touch

Striking the  
ball

1v1



# Description of the Four Core Skills

## First Touch

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Receiving the ball in order to execute what you decided to do prior to the ball arriving

(NB: This includes trapping the ball with the sole)

## Running with the Ball

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Travelling with the ball in order to:

- attack free space
  - commit a defender
  - allow team-mates to make runs/get in position
  - make defenders move
  - create a numerical advantage for the team
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## 1v1

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Faking or changing direction to lose a defender and create space to:

- shoot
- pass
- cross
- run with the ball
- create a numerical advantage for the team

Defender may be in front of you, to the side, behind you or coming at an angle

## Striking the Ball

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Passing, Shooting, Crossing and Heading in order to:

- score goals
  - deliver killer pass
  - eliminate defenders
  - create a 1v1 situation
  - change the point of attack
  - keep possession
-

# Skills Acquisition Phase

## *Designing a training session*



### ***Skill Introduction (The Beginning) (15-20 minutes)***

This is the warm-up as well as an introduction to the designated core skill for this session. This is the only part of the session where drill-type exercises should be used, but the creative coach can include elements of decision-making.

- **Flow, no 'stop-start coaching'.**

### ***Skill Training (The Middle ) (25-30 minutes)***

This is the part of the session where conscious teaching and learning of the designated core skill takes place.

- **Lots of repetition in game realistic scenarios!**
- **Task-based coaching**
- **Effective feedback**
- **Use of questioning (ask players 'why did you choose that option?', 'where do you think there might be more space?', etc)**

### ***Skill Game (The End) (20 Minutes)***

A game where as much as possible all the elements of the real game are present but organised in a way that the designated core skill has to be used regularly.

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# Hints and Tips

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- Two weekly training sessions of 60-75 minutes and one game at the weekend is a maximum safe workload for U/9's and U/13s
  - Plan your sessions in advance (if and when possible)
  - Arrive early and set up the area
  - Give clear, short instructions
  - Demonstrate quickly and efficiently
  - Keep session flowing
  - Vary the activities
  - Be enthusiastic and give lots of praise
  - Encourage after mistakes
  - Be patient
  - Have fun (both players and you)
  - Keep everyone active (avoid having players standing around)
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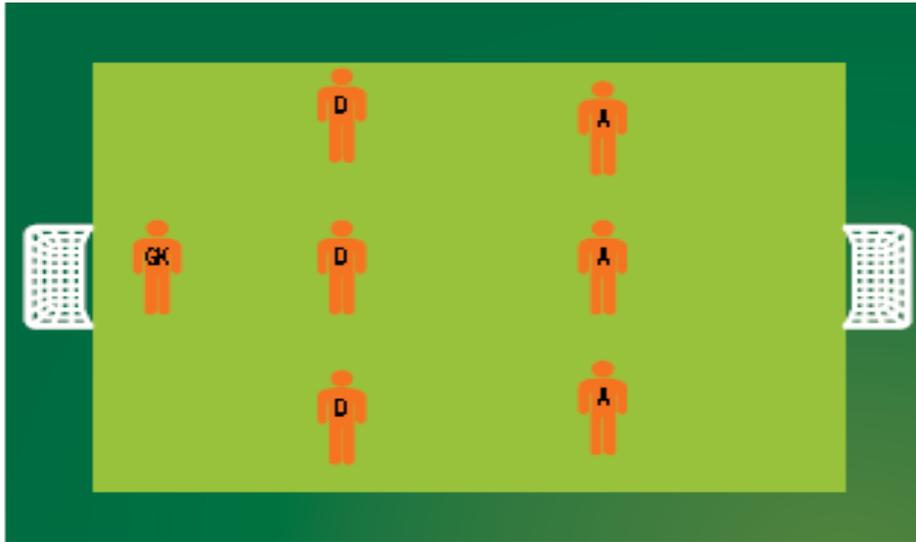
# 4 Core Skills

## *Planning Your Training Week*

|                 | <i>Week 1</i>      | <i>Week 2</i>                | <i>Week 3</i>      | <i>Week 4</i>                | <i>Week 5</i>      | <i>Week 6</i>                |
|-----------------|--------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|
| <i>Tuesday</i>  | <i>First Touch</i> | <i>Striking The Ball</i>     | <i>First Touch</i> | <i>Striking The Ball</i>     | <i>First Touch</i> | <i>Striking The Ball</i>     |
| <i>Thursday</i> | <i>1v1</i>         | <i>Running With The Ball</i> | <i>1v1</i>         | <i>Running With The Ball</i> | <i>1v1</i>         | <i>Running With The Ball</i> |

***Simply rotate the 4 core skills!!!!***

# U/9 Playing Formation

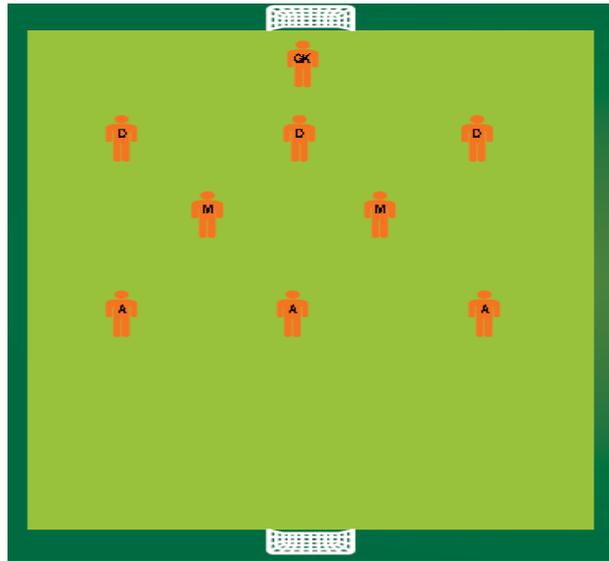


Teams of 7 players (one goalkeeper and 6 outfield players)

## Coaching Tips

- The players now begin to understand what the game's purpose is (winning by scoring more goals than the opponent)
- There will still be a lot of individual play but players start to understand that they have to work together
- A basic feeling for team play
- Preference for a specific position begins to show
- The coach should still let every player play in every position
- In 7 v 7 football, the coach should still not be too concerned with 'tactics'.
- The focus in training is on the individual player, so in the weekend game the players should have the opportunity to apply their skills in a game setting.
- The coach organises the players into two lines of three with a Goalkeeper behind.
- Coach should rotate players around at half time
- Aim for equal playing time

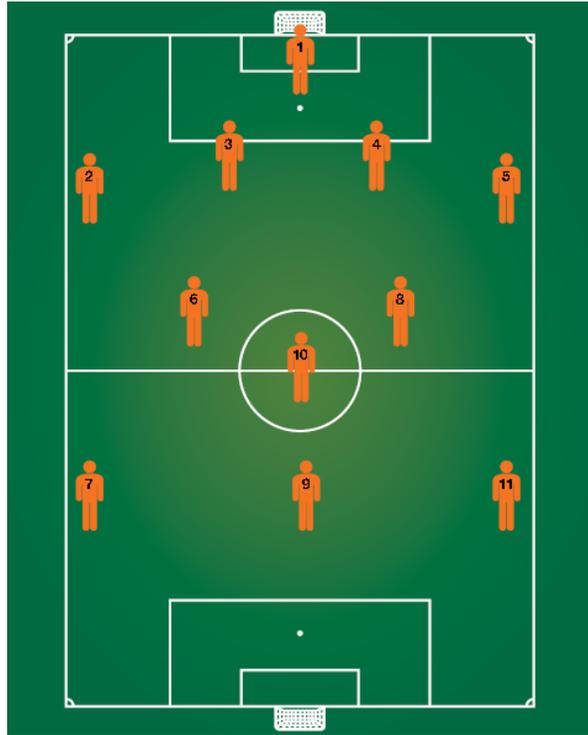
# U/10-U/11 Playing Formation



## Coaching tips:

- The understanding of working together as a team develops more and more
- The awareness of the individual roles in relation to teamwork is also developing as well as the
- understanding for acting without the ball both in defence and attack
- With 8 outfield players a tighter and more strict task allocation and use of space is required
- Preference/ability for specific positions becomes more and more clear
- At this age the kids are very competitive and clever and very quickly develop their motor skills
- In 9 v 9, the coach organises the players into three lines with a goalkeeper behind, preferably in a 1-3-2-3 formation as a guide for team shape
- The coach is still not too concerned with tactics or obsessed with results
- The players still just need simple tasks on match day
- The players should still be regularly rotated, either at half-time or from game to game
- Avoid playing the best players in central positions, and 'hiding' the weaker players out wide
- Aim for equal playing time

# U/12-U/13 Playing Formation



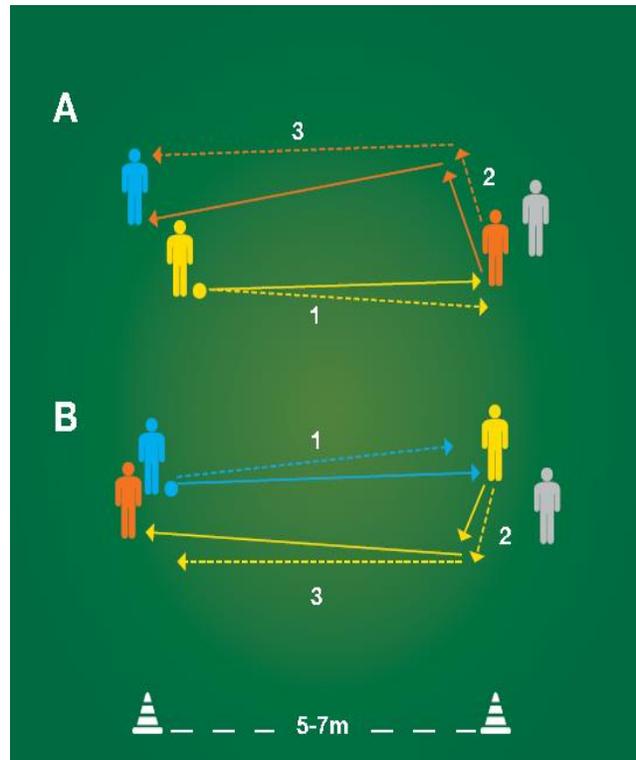
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- The 1-4-3-3 formation is the most suitable formation for a proactive playing style, both in possession of the ball as well as defensively.
  - There are 3 lines with a balanced spreading of the players on the pitch, creating triangles of players: an important condition for 'manicured' positioning play
  - The 1-4-3-3 formation has several shapes and variations, making it a flexible and still up-to date formation
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# Skills Acquisition Phase

## 1<sup>st</sup> Touch - Model Session

### Skill introduction

- Players in fours (fives is also fine, and is a way of reducing intensity, if required) with one ball between them.
- 2 pairs facing each other 5m-7m apart. The yellow player starts by passing the ball to the orange player and following their pass at speed.
- The orange player uses their first touch to move the ball away from the yellow player, and with the second touch passes to the blue player. The orange player follows their pass and jogs to the back of the opposite line.
- In example A, the orange player has moved the ball to the right because the yellow player approached him/her slightly to his/her left side.
- In example B, the yellow player has moved the ball to the left because the blue player approached him/her to his/her right.



### Concluding Competition:

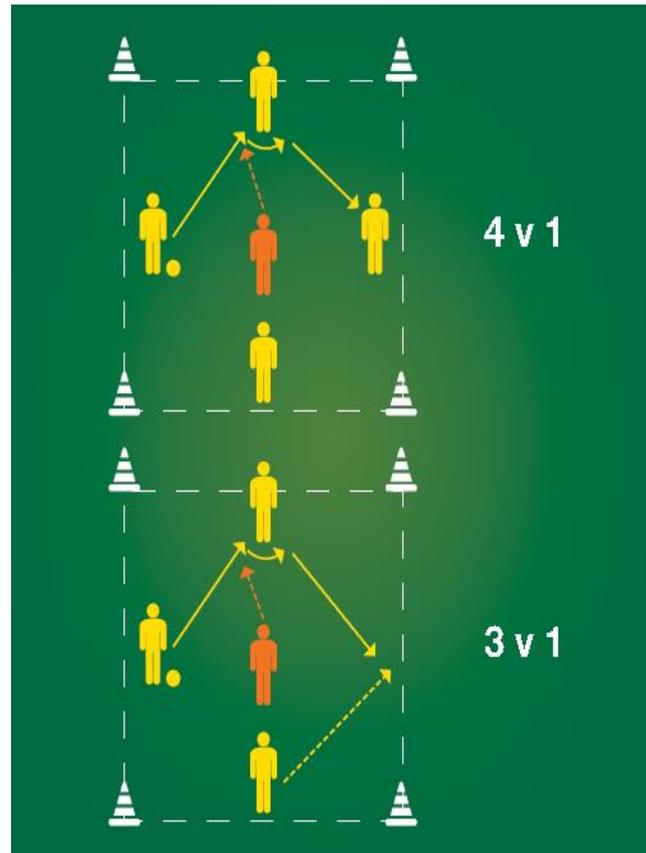
Which group can complete 10 passes first?

## First Touch - Model Session

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### Skill Training

- Positioning Games with two touches as a mandatory requirement (i.e. first touch the ball, second touch = pass the ball).
- Disallowing a direct pass forces the players to have a good first touch in order to move the ball away from the defender(s) and keep possession!
- Which positioning game to use depends on the level of the players and ranges from 4 v 1 (easiest), 3 v 1, 5 v 2 and 4 v 2 (most difficult).
- The grid size also depends on the level and capabilities of the players with 15m x 15m as a starting point (15m x 20m for the 5 v 2).
- The coach can make the exercise more challenging for the players by simply decreasing the space or easier by making the grids bigger.

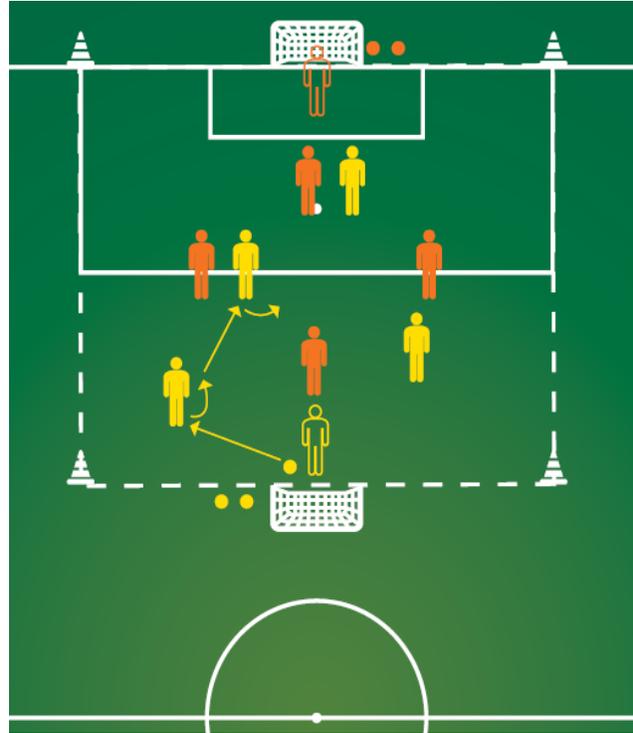


## First Touch - Model Session

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### Skill Game

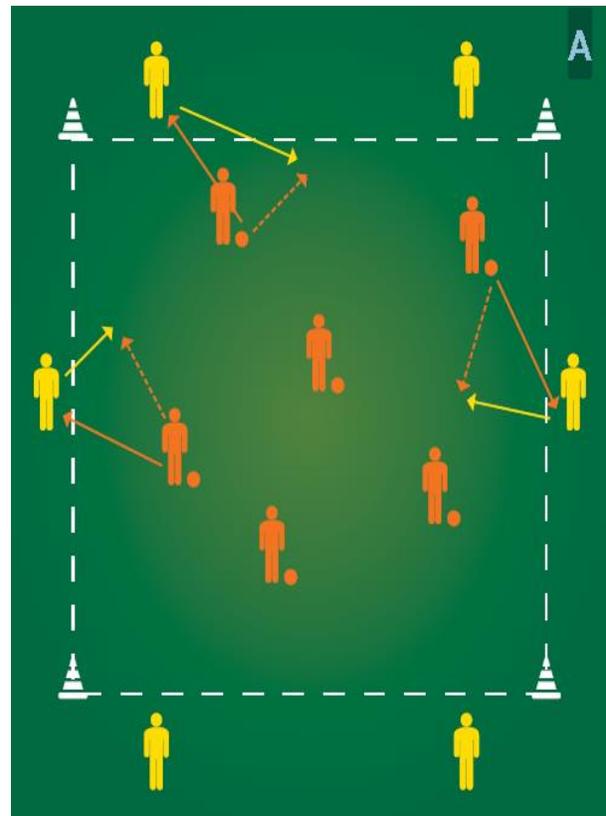
- 5 v 5 with the restriction that with every ball contact each player must take two touches.
- Disallowing direct play forces the players to have a good first touch in order to move the ball away from the defender(s) and keep possession!
- The coach can make the game more challenging by simply decreasing the space or more easy by making the field bigger or creating a numerical advantage for the team in possession of the ball by adding a 'joker'.



## Striking The Ball - Model Session

### Skill Introduction

- In a grid of approximately 20m x 20m (dependent on group size) half of the players position themselves outside the grid without a ball and the other half with a ball inside.
- The players inside the grid dribble freely until they can pass to a 'free' player on the outside who then passes the ball back to the same player (see diagram A)
- Change roles every two minutes, players must use left / right foot on coaches call i.e. 2 min left foot only; then 2 min right foot only.



#### Possible Coaches Remarks:

- "Only pass the ball when the passing line is 'open' and make sure someone else is not passing to that player at the same time"
- "Pass the ball precise and with the right speed"
- "Look where you run when asking for the ball back and make an angle for the return pass"

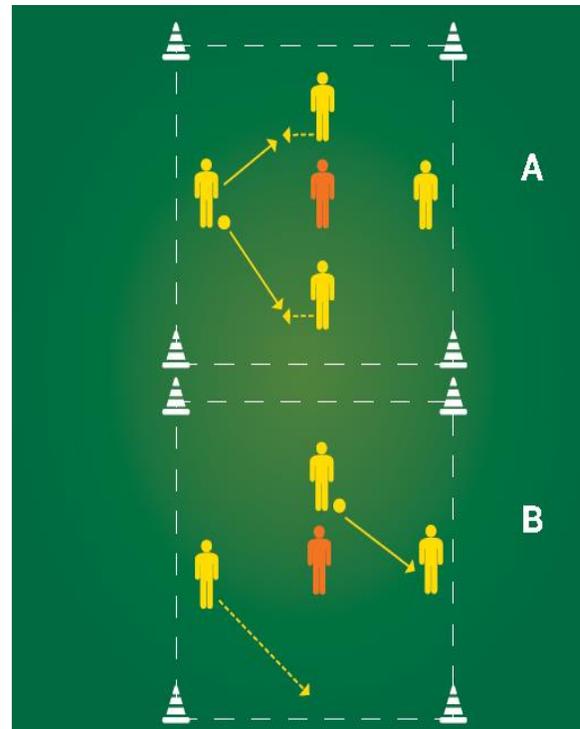
## Striking The Ball - Model Session

### Skill Training

- Depending on the ability of your players, choose any of the 3 'basic' positioning games i.e. 4 v 1; 3 v 1 and 4 v 2. All have similar objectives but with varying degrees of resistance and complexity.
- See diagrams on the right: 4 v 1 (grid size 10m x 10m – 15m x 15m) 3 v 1 (depending on the level of the players)

#### Possible Coaches Remarks:

- "The player on the ball must always have a player to their left and right that they can play to"
- "But do not stand in the corners, your angle is much smaller if you do that"
- With 3 v 1 this means that "you have to move each time the ball moves" (see diagram B)
- "Position yourself in a way that you can see the whole grid" ("with your back to the line")
- "Play the ball to the proper foot of your team-mate (i.e. away from the defender) and with the proper speed and precision"
- Please note that 3 v 1 asks for a lot of running and is therefore quite exhausting for players this age. Use regular drink breaks to allow for recovery



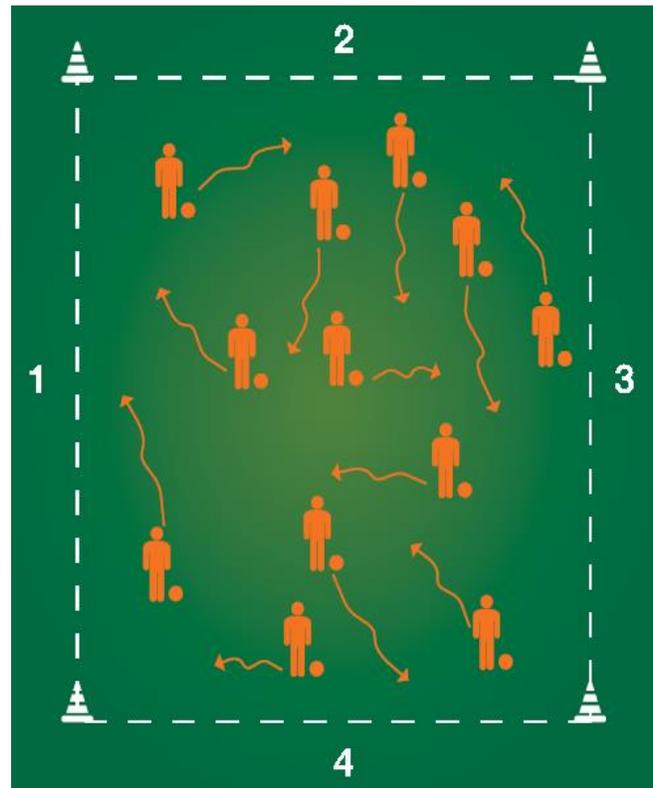


## Running With The Ball - Model Session

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### Skill Introduction

- All players running with a ball freely in a grid of approximately 30m x 30m to warm up.
- First 2-3 minutes: “low speed/intensity”, “use both feet”.
- Next 2-3 minutes: “accelerate when you see a free space in front of you; now only use your right/left foot”.
- Now split the players into 4 groups and number them 1 to 4 placing them on all 4 sides.
- When the coach calls a number, these players run with the ball as quickly as they can across the area and back (opposite group will need to move back to give the others room to turn!).
- Now 2 groups at the same time: “take care; vision; if necessary slow down and then accelerate again”.



Look out for collisions!

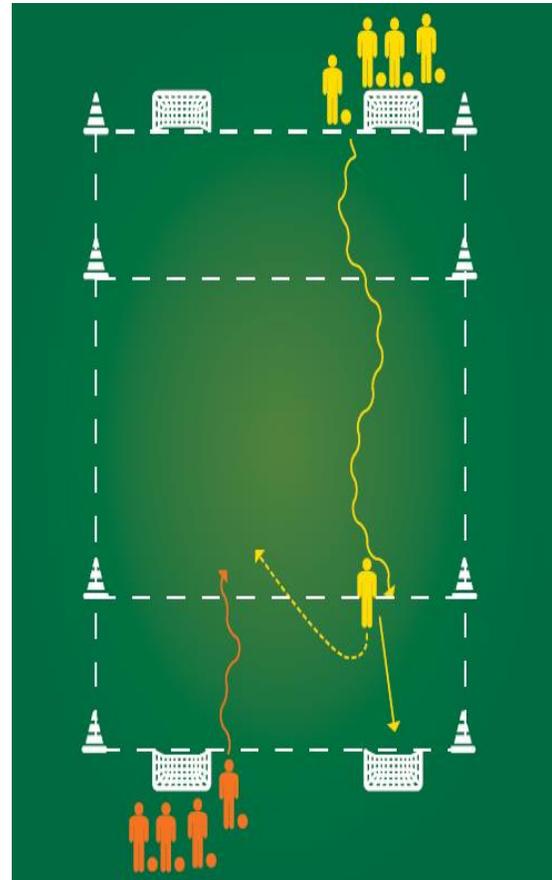
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## Running With The Ball - Model Session

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### Skill Training

- grid of 30m x 20m; 4 small goals and a 5m-7m shooting line at each end
- Evenly split teams positioned as shown
- Minimum 4, maximum 8 players per grid; if the group is bigger then make two grids
- The exercise starts with the first player of the yellow team running with the ball to the opposite side and shooting the ball into the goal. They can only shoot once they have crossed the line into the shooting zone
- As soon as the yellow player shoots at goal, the first orange player starts running with the ball to the opposite side
- As soon as the yellow player has had their shot at goal, they turn and chase the orange player to try and catch up with them and prevent them from scoring
- Count the goals! Which team scores the most goals?.



## Running With The Ball - Model Session

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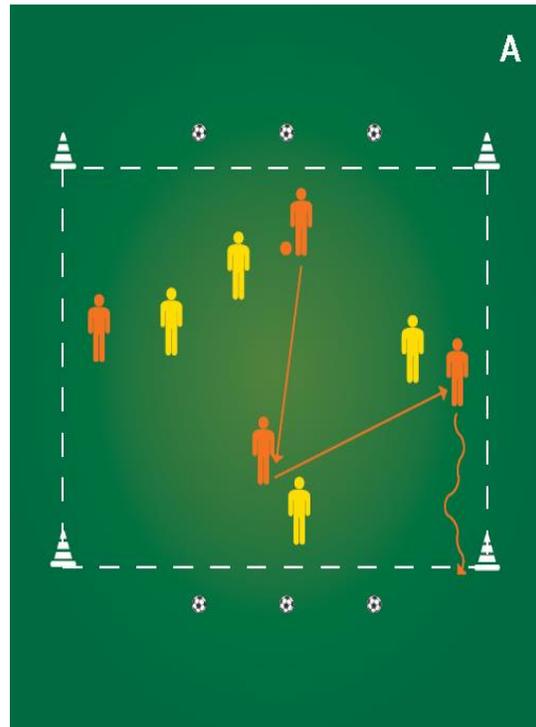
### Skill Game

#### 4 v 4 line football

- Grid size approximately 30m wide by 20m long (pitch shape is short but wide)
- Explanation of the game:
- 4 v 4 small sided game; to score a goal a player must run with the ball across the opponent's by-line (see diagram A).

#### Possible Coaches Remarks:

- "Spread out; use the width of the grid"
- "We must have a centre forward and 2 wingers"
- "run with the ball whenever you see space in front of you"
- "don't be afraid to take on opponents"
- "when a defender is chasing you use the feints you learned earlier"

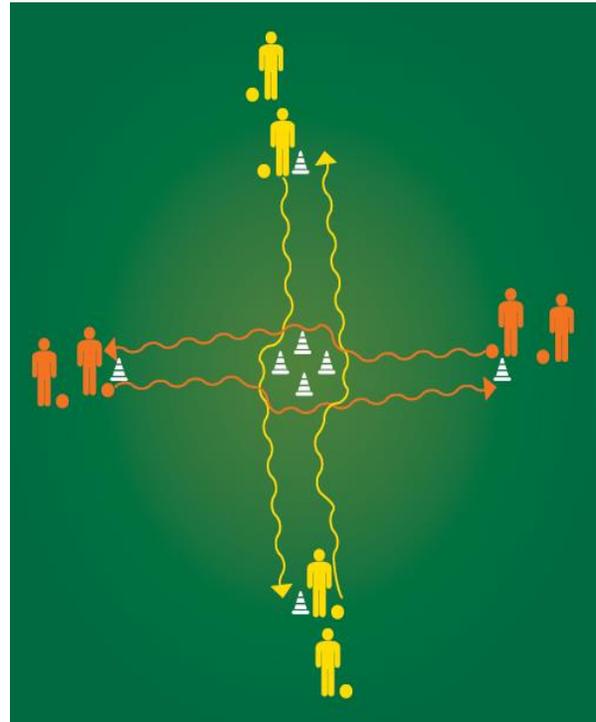


## 1v1 – Model Session

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### Skill Introduction

- 4 markers placed 12-15m opposite of each other with 4 markers centrally in a diamond 1m-1.5m apart (see diagram).
- Max. 2 players with ball line up at the markers. On the coaches call two players opposite each other start dribbling to the other side. In the middle they perform a prescribed or free feint to go around the right side of the markers and accelerate to the opposite marker.
- After 2 minutes: now go around the left side of the markers.



### Progression:

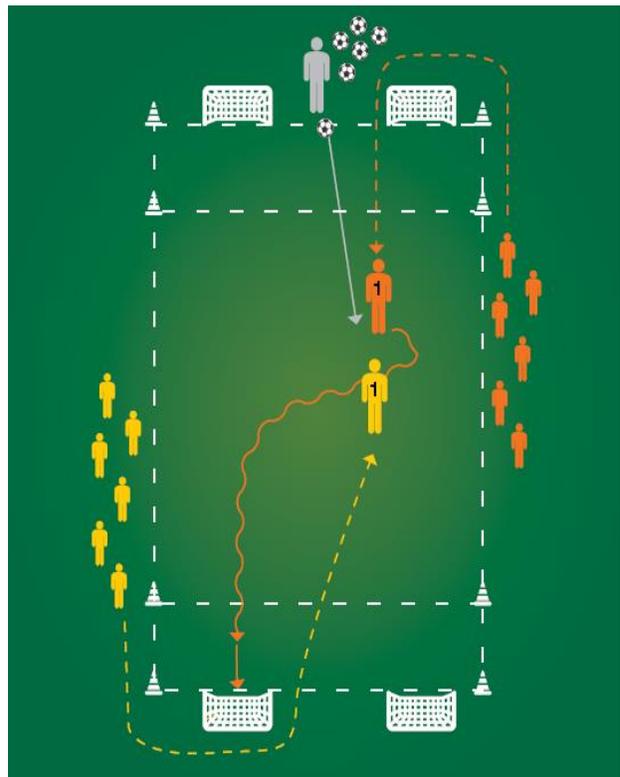
- Speed up tempo (maintain proper execution)
- Take out the markers (perception and communication)

## 1v1 – Model Session

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### Skill Training

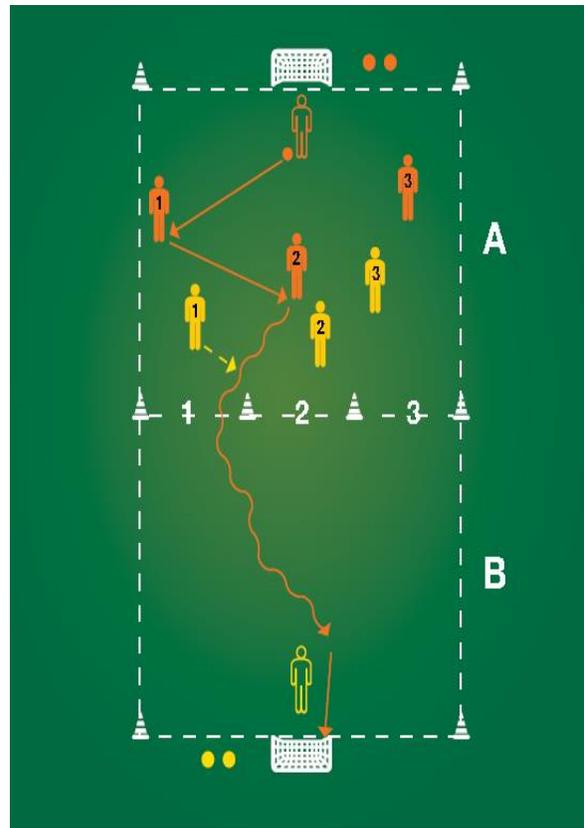
- In a grid of approximately 20m x 30m two small goals are placed on each byline with markers on the corners and on the sideline at 5m from the corners to mark the 'scoring zone'.
- Two teams of 6 players maximum line up behind the markers on the sideline as shown. The coach is positioned with the balls between the two goals on one side of the pitch.
- On a signal from the coach orange #1 and yellow #1 sprint around the corner marker and the nearest goal. The coach serves in favor of the orange player who takes on the yellow player at maximum speed. The attacker can finish in either of the 2 goals but must finish from INSIDE the 5m 'scoring zone'. If the defender wins the ball they can score in one of the opposite goals (one attempt max. each).
- When the action has ended the players line up on the opposite side.
- The coach can manipulate the 1 v 1 through the angle with which they serve the ball.



## 1v1 – Model Session

### Skill Game

- 3 v 3 on a pitch (20m wide x 40m long) with big goals and goalkeepers.
- Placed on the halfway line are 3 equal sized 'gates' as shown in the diagram. Each player (orange or yellow) must defend their 'own' designated gate when the opponent has the ball (i.e. player #1 defends gate 1, player #2 defends gate 2 etc).
- The orange goalkeeper starts the game with all outfield players of both teams in grid A. The orange team combines till one orange player beats their opponent 1 v 1 and moves through one of the gates into grid B and tries to score.
- If orange scores the game starts again in grid A. If yellow wins the ball in grid A they can immediately score. If yellow scores, the game restarts in grid B with possession for yellow.
- If the yellow goalkeeper wins the ball in grid B, the game restarts in grid B with possession for the yellow team.



# Session Plan – Skills Acquisition (9-12 Years)

**DATE:**

**VENUE:**

**CORE TOPIC:**

**Skill Square** – Move of the week as players arrive prior to session starting

**Skill Introduction (15-20 mins)**

**Skill Training (25-30 mins)**

**Skill Game (20-25 mins)**

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