

SHOOTING 5-7 YEARS

All players love shooting, so you already have a head start. Younger players once taught the correct technique, which is an extension of the driven pass (*make it fun, Harry Potter etc.*) should play games that allow you to coach within the game. Striking the ball back and forth with a partner is about as much fun as toothache. Use such games as Cops & Robbers, Magic Ball, Pinball and Wembley. Older players should be coached an attitude towards shooting within small sided games such as Ping it!!, Around the Goal etc.

Shooting at this age is a driven pass possibly with the laces. Once younger players start using their laces then their accuracy begins to suffer, but they should definitely begin the process of correct technique and biomechanics of shooting. Use some of the basic passing games Same as but players must use their laces as opposed to the inside of their foot.

SHOOTING 7-10 YEARS

Shooting at this age is still very much technical based and should be incorporated into game situations. Try to make it fun as success can be difficult as players lack power and accuracy. Previous games like Batman are great as it involves shooting and competition. Technique is still the focus at this age and should be made fun as opposed to shooting back and forth (toothache).

SHOOTING 10-14 YEARS

Players at this age are beginning to refine technique and progress to building on more advanced techniques of shooting. Technique should be less of an issue whereas the players decision/options should be the main focal point. Pressure is essential assuming players have refined basic technique. Evaluate the situation using your knowledge as a coach.

Advanced Techniques:

- Driven & Lofted (consistency)
- Swerve
- Volley

SHOOTING 14+ YEARS

Use many of the session suggestions for the 10-14 age group but add pressure and use small sided games to manipulate scoring opportunities. Realistic situations is key at this age. Manipulate the following:

- Area of the field (attacking third)
- Size of area
- Pressure; created by # of players
- # of touches

TECHNIQUE: Shooting

Mentality:

- aggressive attitude
- shoot at any opportunity
- positive attitude about success of shot

Power:

- round and compact over ball
- horizontal body movement through ball
- stay down on ball with steady head
- strike through center of ball
- landing on shooting foot

Placement:

- early decision of target
- support foot, hips, and shooting knee caps aiming at target when going through ball
- strike ball before advancing keeper sets feet

Volleying:

side foot:

- toe raised
- ankle locked
- lift outer border of foot

Instep:

- preparatory coiling of shoulders
- toe pointed
- ankle locked
- upper leg parallel with ground
- knee top points at target
- power from knee extension

Batman

Players are split into two teams of equal numbers and stand either side of the goal. If you have an odd number you can have a goalkeeper (rotated) otherwise you the coach controls the game from within the goal. Each team member is given a name e.g. Batman, Bat woman, Cat Woman, Robin, The Joker, Penguin, The Riddler, Poison Ivy, (ask the kids if you need any more). Coach calls out a character and kicks out a ball, players play a 1v1 to goal.

Variations: Build up the play and progress to 2v2, 3v3, 4v4, 5v5 etc.

- Aim for the corners.

Shooting Wars

In pairs players shoot between a goal/gate scoring a point every time successful. Extra points can be awarded by making smaller gates in the corner of each goal. Use alternate feet.

Variation: One player acts as a goal keeper standing in the goal. Player shoots but continues to run towards the goal and takes the place as goal keeper. Previous goal keeper moves backwards and strikes at goal. Player continues running towards the goal in case of any rebounds. Players are allowed only one rebound which must be a first time shot.

Batman Returns/Around the Goal

You may wish to change the name of the game or just give players a number. As Batman but encourage players to shoot at the earliest opportunity. Players have to run around the back of the goal before they can run to the ball. Players only need a small window of opportunity to shoot.

Introduce the Position Of Maximum Opportunity (POMO) which is aiming for the far post across the goal when channel of attack is wide. Most difficult place for keeper and a number of things can happen.

Score a goal, keeper saves for a corner, keeper saves for a deflection, post and deflection, hit a defender on the way in for a deflection.

When players run out with their back to goal they should make three looks over their shoulder at opponent. One very early to see where and if they are going to be challenged. Half way to the ball to check if they are going to get there first or whether they should take a defensive position. Finally immediately before they get to the ball to establish choices of shielding or turning to beat and take on defender. When playing 2v2 etc communication is needed to establish choices and positioning of partner as support or defender.

Sin Bin

A shooting practice game. Coach has all soccer balls. He rolls ball 1 to X1 who must run forward and take first time shot. A few seconds after rolling ball 1, coach rolls ball 2, which X1 must hit first time after striking the first ball. Coaching points: ball 1 is a distance shot and needs power (laces). Ball 2 is a close range shot and needs placing (side foot pass to corner of the goal). If X1 misses both shots, he goes into his team's sin bin; if he scores 1 goal, he is in the game and returns to back of his line. If he scores 2 goals (i.e. both shots) he frees a player on his team who is in the sin bin (first player in, first out). Now it is P1's turn. Have 2 goalkeepers who take it in turns – when not in goal, go behind and retrieve balls for the coach. First team to have all players in the sin bin loses.

Variations: (1) Two goals releases all players in the sin bin (works better with weaker players). (2) Play same format with players closer to goal and coach feeds players volley shots. (3) Same again but even closer and coach feeds players headers.

1v1 To Goal

Players play 1v1 to a goal. Start the game with a laces drive/pass, as soon as opponent touches the ball play begins. Rotate players and for certain groups of players add a scoring system to increase competition.

1v1 To Opposite Goals (Shooting)

Players are placed into two teams and stand at the side of their teams goal. The two goals can be placed 30-50 yards apart dependent on players age and ability. Coach stands on the sideline between both goals and passes in a ball to one of the two teams. The team with possession start the attack whilst at the same time a defender opponent runs out from the other team. Both players are attempting to score in their opponents goal whilst defending their own goal.

Variations:

- To create an advantage play 2v1 to which ever team is served the ball. Good for increasing shooting opportunities and beginning players decision making process to dribble, pass or shoot.
- Progress to 2v2, 3v3, 4v4 etc.

2v2 Central Goal Keeper

Initially there are two players on either side of the goal with a goal keeper. In pairs players shoot at the goal keeper with a stationary ball, and take it in turns between pairs and partners. Rotate goal keeper if necessary.

Variations:

- Shoot with a moving ball, touched to yourself.
- Allow partner to feed for a moving ball shot.
- Use weaker foot.
- Increase distance.
- Play 2v2 around the goal with no front or back to the goal. Players can move freely from one side to the other but cannot run through the goal to get to the other side.

Four Goal Soccer (Shooting)

Two teams play against each other but have two goals to shoot at as well as two goals to defend. Goal keepers are optional depending upon level of players and their degree of success. The aim is to encourage a positive attitude to shooting. Concentrate on accuracy and encourage players to hit the target and team mates to follow up for rebounds.

Around the Goal

Encourage players to shoot at the earliest opportunity. Players only need a small window of opportunity to shoot. Use creativity in an attempt to create the opportunity, offsetting the defender.

Introduce the Position Of Maximum Opportunity (POMO) which is aiming for the far post across the goal when channel of attack is wide. Most difficult place for keeper and a number of things can happen.

Score a goal, keeper saves for a corner, keeper saves for a deflection, post and deflection, hit a defender on the way in for a deflection.

When players run out with their back to goal they should make three looks over their shoulder at opponent. One very early to see where and if they are going to be challenged. Half way to the ball to check if they are going to get there first or whether they should take a defensive position. Finally immediately before they get to the ball to establish choices of shielding or turning to beat and take on defender. When playing 2v2 etc communication is needed to establish choices and positioning of partner as support or defender.

1v1 To Opposite Goals

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Variations:

- To create an advantage play 2v1 to which ever team is served the ball. Good for increasing shooting opportunities and beginning players decision making process to dribble, pass or shoot. When to hold the ball and when to pass or shoot are decisions that need to be practiced so that players can recognize situation when they happen in a game.
- Only one pass is allowed to be made between the two team mates.
- The pass must be played forward to penetrate as opposed to switching point of attack.
- Progress to 2v2, 3v3, 4v4 etc. building up an attack v defense situation.

1v1 First To Score

As above, players are in two teams but within each team they are divided into attackers and defenders (rotate). Attackers and defenders stand to the side of each goal post, all attackers have a ball. On the coaches command an attacker from one team and a defender from the other run out to play 1v1. There are two 1v1's playing simultaneously. Therefore, first team to score get the point.

Variations:

- 2v2/3v3 depending upon space

2v2 Central Goal Keeper

Initially there are two players on either side of the goal with a goal keeper. In pairs players shoot at the goal keeper with a stationary ball, and take it in turns between pairs and partners. Rotate goal keeper if necessary. Progress very quickly (see below).

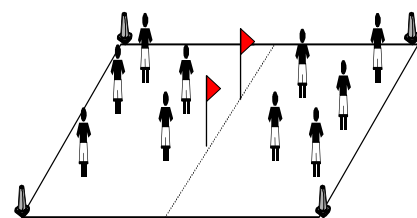
Variations:

- Shoot with a moving ball, touched to yourself
- Allow partner to feed for a moving ball shot
- Use weakest foot and different parts of the foot
- Increase distance

Play 2v2 around the goal with no front or back to the goal. Players can move freely from one side to the other but cannot run through the goal to get to the other side.

Central Goal Keeper

In a small sided field play with a central goal and goal keeper with 3 attackers v's 2 defenders in each half of the field. There is only one ball and players must stay on their designated side of the field. When a goal is scored play continues on the other side and if the keeper saves the shot then the ball is past to the other side. Throw ins are taken from the side lines and at the back of each field. 3v2 gives attackers an advantage and more opportunities to shoot. Defenders are encouraged to win the ball and *pass it wide* of the goal to their attacking team mates on the other side.



Four Goal Soccer (Shooting)

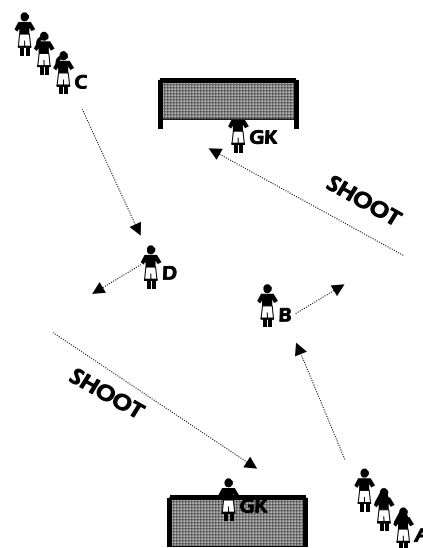
Two teams play against each other but have two goals to shoot at as well as two goals to defend. Goal keepers are optional depending upon level of players and their degree of success. The aim is to encourage a positive attitude to shooting. Concentrate on accuracy and encourage players to hit the target and team mates to follow up for rebounds.

Double Shooting

Player A passes to B who lays ball off for A . B peels off to the right for rebound. A shoots at goal then takes B's place. Simultaneously C passes to player D repeating the same exercise.

Variations:

- One touch



Animal Ball

Two teams with goal keepers (optional) play with two goals 30-40 yards apart. Each team is designated their own half of the field and are not allowed in their opponents half. Coach stands on sideline feeding balls into to each team. Players must shoot to score. Allow both teams to shoot freely for a short time, encouraging an attitude towards shooting.

Variations:

- Allow 1 player to go into the opposite teams half to pressure the other team and collect rebounds.
- Build up the game and allow a 2nd or 3rd attacker into the other teams half.
- Restrict the number of touches of each player.
- Finally remove the center half way line and allow play to continue with more freedom.

Individual/Team Attacking Game

A large working area/small sided field is set up with two goals and goalkeepers. Players are divided into two teams and each individual is given a number which will correspond to a players number on the opposite team. The coach controls at what point the ball is thrown in and what numbers are going to compete for the ball. On the coaches command players sprint out to compete for the ball and score in opponents goal.

Variations:

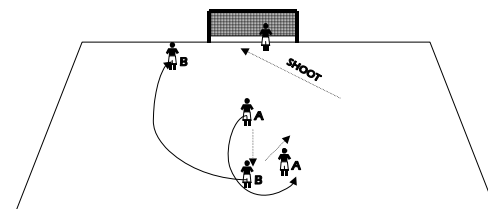
- Players can play multiple 1v1's, 2v2, 3v3, 4v4, 5v5 depending upon the emphasis of the session.

Shooting (with run around combination play)

Player A passes to B and runs around B. On the call B lays ball off to A and then makes a run to the back post. A shoots at goal and B is at back post for rebound. Have a line of players behind A & B. a & B change places after each turn.

Variation:

- Player A runs around B in the other direction shooting with left foot.

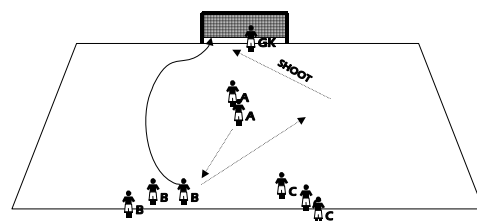


Shooting (lay off combination play)

Player A passes to B and runs to the back of B's line. B takes a touch & lays ball in front of player C on the call. C takes a touch & shoots, B runs towards back post for rebound. Rotate positions A goes to B to C.

Variation:

- As above but all one touch
- Closer or further apart passes
- A passes to D first laying ball off for a 1st time left foot shot from B.



Cruyff Turn Progression To Goal

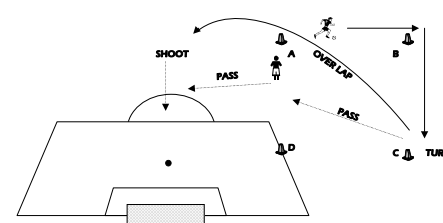
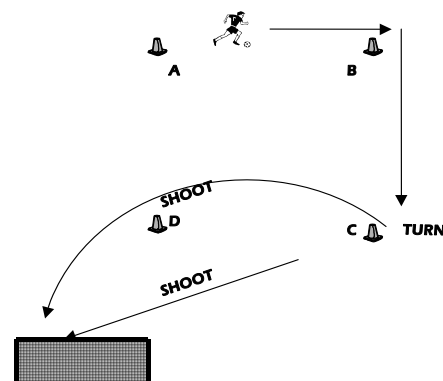
Players dribble from A to B to perform a sharp Cruyff turn at C. Player then dribbles in for:

- a shot on goal
- 1v1 with goal keeper
- Cross ball in for other attackers to run on too. Work from both sides.

Variation:

•(See diagram to right) Same as above with two areas set up either side of the 18 yard box working alternately. Player dribbles from point A to B to perform a Cruyff turn at C. Pass diagonally to opposite player but slightly ahead of them. Follow pass and overlap player to receive ball again for a shot on goal. Player laying ball off follows in for rebound. Repeat from other side.

- NOTE:** Working grid areas can be moved to beyond the 18 yard line for long range shooting, OR;
- Placed in the corner of the field for an effective crossing exercise.

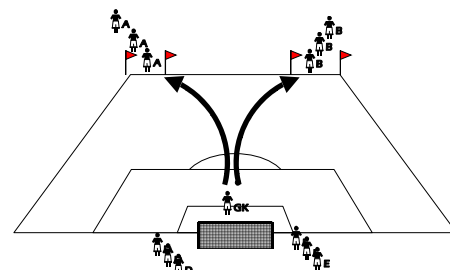


2v2 Shooting/Attacking

Goal keeper punts the ball to player A or B in wide positions. As soon as goal keeper has punted defenders D & E can run out to defend. Attackers need a good touch on the ball and then attack defenders at speed to create a scoring opportunity. Goal keeper can practice kicking skills. Rotate attackers and defenders.

Variation:

- Play 3v3, 4v4 etc.
- Increase or decrease 3 of attackers or defenders.
- Goal keeper begins with a goal kick.



Principles Of Attack

Penetration:

- getting ball behind defenders

Depth:

- support behind and in front of the ball

Width:

- support on the side of the ball
- stretch defense to create holes

Mobility

- attack defense to penetrate and unbalance defense

Creativity / Improvisation

Role Of The First, Second & Third Attackers

First Attacker (Penetration)

Player with ball

Most important player on the field

First attacker must achieve penetration:

- through dribbling
- through passing
- through shooting

Second Attacker (Balance)

Player in immediate support of first attacker

Proper angle:

- so 1st attacker has options
- by proper angle and moving into

Proper distance:

- so defender cannot mark both player
- available for quick passes

Third Attacker (Mobility)

Attempt to disturb balance of defense by making runs behind defense

Combines with other players to add variety to the attack

5v5

Small sided field is split into 2 halves with 2 attackers and 3 defenders in each half. Defenders start with the ball and have to get the ball to 1 of their attackers in the next half of the field. On doing so attackers have to dribble the ball over the end line to score a point for their team. Rotate attackers & defenders.

Variations:

- Limit 3 of passes attackers can make to encourage dribbling and tackling.
- Play to goals.
- Add goal keepers.
- Allow a supporting defender to play 3v3 in attacking half once ball has been played into attackers.

Channel Game (width in attack)

Play 6v6 with 2 wide channels and a neutral player in each channel. The 2 neutral players are the only players allowed in the wide channels and play for which ever team has possession of the ball. The role of the wide players is to receive the ball as a full back, carry the ball down the channel and cross the ball into the box. Rotate the players into the channel positions.

Variations:

- Add two additional neutral players, 4 in total, 1 in each half and side of the field. They must stay in their half of the field
- Add defenders into the channels
- Inside players can overlap into the wide channel area to exchange places with the wide players

Additional Coaching Points:

- Coach players in the channels to take the ball to the bye line
- Coach attacking players to make near, far and late runs into the box
- Allow wide players to have the vision to play an early ball into the box or take the ball to the bye line

Diamond Game (width in attack)

Mark out a large diamond area in the middle of the field. Players of both teams are not allowed to enter the diamond and the ball is not allowed to be played over or through the diamond. Forces players to play the ball wide.

Variations:

- Increase or decrease the size of the diamond
- Allow the two central midfielders to play only within the diamond

Back To Goal (2v1)

Players are generally encouraged to play the way they are facing, but in the attacking third of the field we wish to encourage players creativity. All of the following should be progressed from passive to semi-active to game related. Start in grids and progress to playing to goal.

Variations:

- A passes to be who controls and shields the ball from defender C. A makes a run to receive pass from B who simultaneously rolls off the defender to support A.
- As above but B uses outside of right foot or inside of left foot one touch pass to A.
- Player B controls and shields the ball from C. Player B does a Matthews fake, scissors or step over and then takes the ball to the left past the defender.
- Player B controls and touches the ball with the inside of the right foot so as to take the ball to the left. Attacker B now side ways on to defender C and drawn them to the left hand side does a Cruyff turn to take the ball in the opposite direction to the right.

Once all the variations have been identified allow players to play still in their grids but with full pressure. The attacking player has a decision to make on how to best get to the end line.

Back To Goal (To Goal)

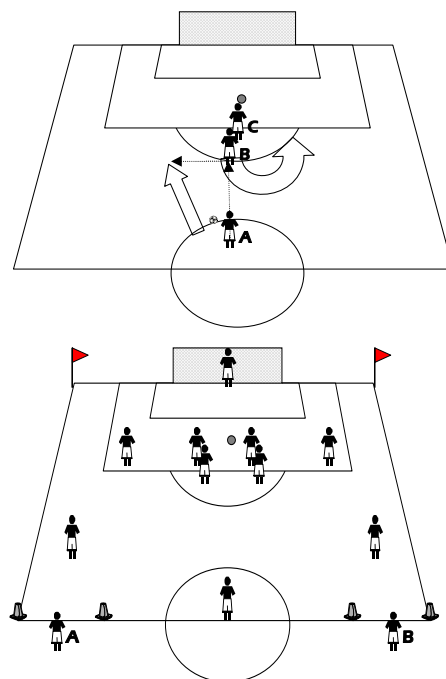
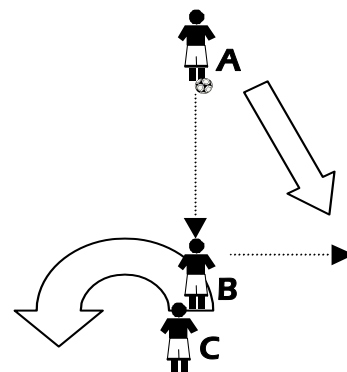
As above but playing now to goal. Players can line up behind B and act as a defender C, and players can line up behind A. Rotate after each turn and play with a goal keeper.

Variations:

- Add 1 or 2 defenders.

Attack V's Defense (5v4 Half Field)

Progress to attack V's defense half field with the central midfielder playing a ball into attacking players feet. Attackers have to check away from defenders to receive a ball from the central midfielder. Defending team have to get the ball to players A & B. Rotate target players.



1v1 To Opposite Goals

Players are placed into two teams and stand at the side of their teams goal. The two goals can be placed 30-50 yards apart dependent on players age and ability. Coach stands on the sideline between both goals and passes in a ball to one of the two teams. The team with possession start the attack whilst at the same time a defender runs out from the other team. Both players are attempting to score in their opponents goal whilst defending their own goal. There are off sides.

Variations:

- Play 2v1 to create an attacking advantage. Good for making process to dribble, pass or shoot. When to hold the ball and when to pass or shoot are decisions that need to be practiced so that players can recognize situation when they happen in a game
- Only one pass is allowed to be made between the two attackers
- The pass must be played forward to penetrate as opposed to switching point of attack

Progress to 2v2, 3v3, 4v4 etc. building up an attack v defense situation

2v2 & 3v3 To Opposite Goals

Same as 1v1 building on attacking combination play.

Variations:

- Time limit per 2v2/3v3 game

Additional Coaching Points:

- Wall passes, overlaps & takeovers
- Penetrative pass
- Angles of support
- Communication

4v4 & 5v5 To Opposite Goals

Non-stop Attack (Crossing & Heading)

Play 3v3 in 20x40 area. Goals are quite close, 2 ball retrievers behind each goal, two goal keepers and 1 person on each side of the field crossing the ball in. The 6 players playing 3v3 have a goal to attack and a goal to defend. The crosses come in alternately and the game is non-stop. Count the # of goals scored for each team. Rotate in ball retrievers and crossing players into the attacking & defending positions. Quality service is essential.

Variations:

- Assign roles to players, so as to attack front post, back post, delayed run etc. Or allow players to assign runs.
- Assign an attacker to always stand in front of the goal keeper.

Clear The Decks (Attacking heading & crossing)

Split players into 3 teams of 4. One group acts as attackers, 2 stand inside penalty area to head the ball into the goal, 2 stand outside the penalty area as support players. Defenders defend goal with no goal keeper. Other 4 players act as retrievers behind the goal and crossing the ball into the penalty area. Note that the 6 yard area is no mans land. Defenders attempt to head the ball clear of the penalty area, if successful the ball is returned to the crossers and if not cleared two attacking players on the edge of the penalty area can combine with other attackers.

End To End Heading Game

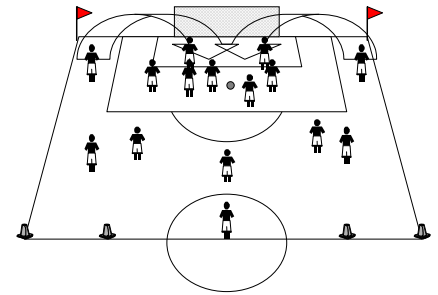
Divide players into 2 teams each with a goal keeper. Play in a large enough area to accommodate all players with a goal at each end and a wide channel for a winger from each team to play inside. Teams play 2 touch soccer and try to get the ball quickly to their own winger, who is restricted to the attacking half of the field and cannot be tackled in their channel. Winger crosses the ball for attacking players to attempt to score with headers whilst being challenged by defenders. At the conclusion of every attack goal keeper plays out to a defender to try and play to winger in wide channel. Corners, throw ins, free kicks etc. can be played as usual.

Boxed-In Game

Play 3 attackers v's 4 defenders without a goal keeper who are restricted to the penalty area. Outside the box play 5 attackers v's 3 defenders who are not allowed in the penalty area and attempt to keep possession and try to set up crosses from varied positions into the box for team mates to score with headers. Defending team have two wide gates on half way line in which to score.

Variations:

- Allow defenders to play off sides by pushing up as much as possible in the penalty area.
- Change around/manipulate ratio of attackers to defenders to focus attention on defending.



6v6/7v7 Closing Down Game

Play a small sided game with goal keepers with the following condition. The defender closest to the player with the ball has to shout out “one” to indicate clearly that it is that players responsibility to pressure the ball. Failure to do this will result in a free kick against the defending player.

Variations:

- As players defensive organization improves the next player in a covering position shouts out “two” to indicate that they are the covering defender.
- Possibly progress to a third defender which could become difficult when the ball is in the center of the field as the 2nd & 3rd defenders roles are

Man-Marking Game

Good for players to learn how to mark closely and how to escape this marking; also to practice the sweepers role.

Play small-sided game with the condition that each player in each team is responsible for marking & tackling their own opponent. Players can only mark & tackle their assigned opponent, if they break the condition then a free kick will be awarded against them. Each team has a sweeper who is restricted to playing in their own half of the field and two touches. The sweeper can cover team mates and intercept or tackle.

Four Goal Soccer

Play with a goal in each corner of the field. Each team attacks & defends 2 goals. Encourage attacking team to draw defenders to 1 of the 2 goals before switching play to the less defended goal.

All Up & All Back Game

To develop compact team play & attacking in numbers.

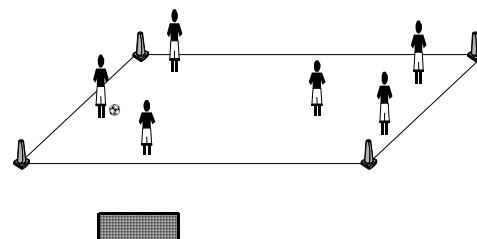
Play small sided game with a half way line. All players on the scoring team must be in their attacking half of the field for the goal to count.

4v2 Attack To Goal

Play 4v 2 to a goal set 10-15 yards back from the rectangular area. Attacking players have to create as many scoring opportunities as possible and turn them into goals.

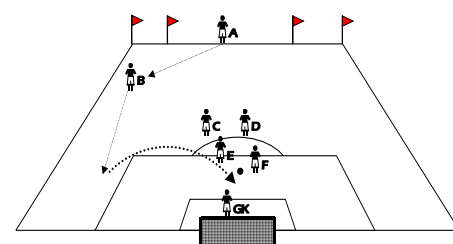
Variation:

- Restrict # of touches.
- Introduce off sides.
- Increase the size of the area extending to the goal.
- Add a 3rd defender.
- Add a goal keeper.



4v2 Attack To Goal Combination Play

Player A passes wide to oncoming B who takes ball down the wing to cross for players C & D. E & F are defenders. Rotate players.

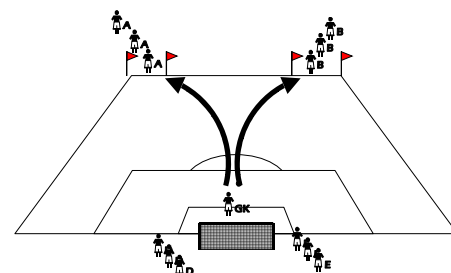


2v2 Shooting/Attacking

Goal keeper punts the ball to player A or B in wide positions. As soon as goal keeper has punted defenders D & E can run out to defend. Attackers need a good touch on the ball and then attack defenders at speed to create a scoring opportunity. Goal keeper can practice kicking skills. Rotate attackers and defenders.

Variation:

- Play 3v3, 4v4 etc.
- Increase or decrease 3 of attackers or defenders.
- Goal keeper begins with a goal kick.



5v5 & 2v2 Attack v's Defense (8v8)

Play begins at the half way line 5v5 attack v's defense with goal keepers. If a goal is scored ball starts at half way line again, defending team aim for target players in other half of field through wide gates. If played through wide gates players in other half play 2v2 to goal. Players must stay in the half of the field they are assigned to. Throe ins, corners etc. apply.

Variation:

- Change start position middle & wide.
- Rotate positions
- Open up field so players can go anywhere, however the ball must be played through the wide gates to score.

