



Buzzing Bees

Possibly better to be named "Attack the Coach", this activity involves the kids dribbling the ball around a set area chasing the coach.

When within striking distance, the kids "sting" the coach by kicking the ball at them. Coach limps after one sting and falls to the ground after 3 or 4. It's a fun activity that we usually end with (note, do not do this one for kids older than 5!).

Battleships

Get the kids into pairs. From there, have one partner stand on one line with the other on a parallel line with a distance of 6-10 metres between them. In the middle of each pair, place a soccer ball on top of a cone.

The goal is for the kids to kick a ball (not the one on the cone) at the ball on the cone and try to knock it off or "sink the battleship". Each partner takes a turn to see how many times they can knock it off. Kicking accuracy is developed in this activity.

Giant Goals

When the full-size goals are free, have the kids line up in a line (or curve) ready to kick toward goal. One by one call each kid's name and when the name is called, the kid aims for goal with the coach acting as goal keeper (no hands). To make it easier, call 2 or 3 names at a time. This develops goal kicking and is a heap of fun.

Then try swapping it over with the coach kicking to goal and the kids being the ones defending (no hands). This develops their defence skills and quickens reaction times.

Dribble Obstacle Course

Set up the cones and any other props around to make an obstacle course. One by one the kids run through the obstacle course as fast as they can (not competing with anyone else).

This develops their running and also ability to listen to instructions without getting distracted. Once they've done one run through, get them to repeat the course dribbling a ball all the way before ending with a kick at goal. This mimics game time with dribbling and goal kicking.

Proper Soccer

We always end with a game of "Proper Soccer" with the kids split into two teams and playing a small scale game of soccer.

By keeping this for the end of training, it makes the it the real feature of training and game day and the kids end up begging for it. Make it fun by having kids vs parents.

Mud Monster

Setup a square area large enough to hold your players. Each player has a ball, and one volunteers to be the "Mud Monster", mark them out with a bib, and they won't have a ball. The mud monster will try and tag the other kids with soccer balls, by kicking their ball out of the square. The player then has to retrieve the ball, come back into the square and shout "STUCK IN THE MUD", another player has to free them by dribbling a ball through their legs. Try 2 mud monsters if you feel they are not fast enough.

The game continues until the mud monster has tagged all players and no-one can therefore be rescued, or after a certain amount of time has elapsed.

Make sure the kids use little touches and demonstrate what happens if you kick the ball too far in a game.

Make sure the kids use the inside and outside of their feet whilst dribbling - not their toes.

Make sure the kids focus on accurate passing and do not get too flustered once the mud monster comes.

Stop and What?

Give each player a ball and have them stand at the end of the field.

Have the players run while kicking the ball up the field. Call out a command as the players are dribbling with the ball. It could be to roar like lions, drop to the ground and slither like snakes, skip around a tree close by, or it could be the choice of one of the players. After a short time of executing their command (say 30 seconds or so), have the players return to dribbling the ball until the next command is called out.

One Pin Bowling

Give each player a ball and have them line up at the side of the field.

Place a cone with a ball on it about 10 feet from each player.

Have the players kick their ball one at a time at the cone to try to knock the ball off the cone directly in front of them.

For a variation on this game, line up several cones with soccer balls on them like actual bowling pins and see how many "pins" the players can knock down.



What Time is it Mr. Wolf?

Line up all the children but one at one end of the field, each with a soccer ball.

The remaining child, Mr. Wolf, stands at the other end of the field with their back to the rest of the players.

The players call out, "What Time is it Mr. Wolf" and Mr. Wolf must respond with a time (ie. it's one o'clock, it's nine o'clock, etc.). The players count to the number called out while dribbling their ball towards Mr. Wolf.

The question is repeated over and over until Mr. Wolf responds to the players' question with "It's lunch time!" At that point, all the players must change direction and dribble their ball as quickly as possible to the start line before Mr. Wolf tags one of them. Whichever child is tagged then becomes Mr. Wolf.

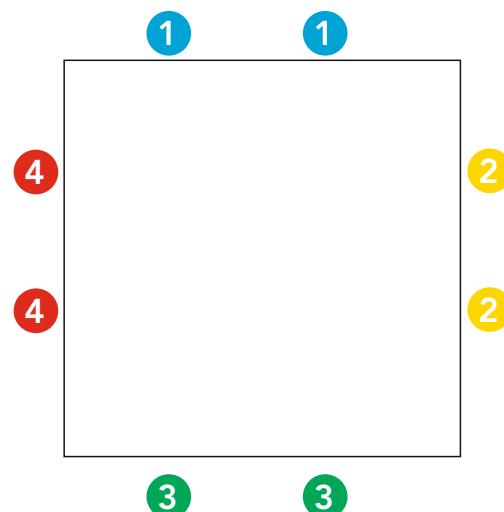


Number Crossing

Mark out a square big enough to hold all your players.

Set up 4 groups as even as you can, and number each of them. They each have a ball, and have to dribble to the other side of the square, and back again, trying to see if they can beat their partner. Call out each number group separately first (2, 4, 1, then 3) so they each go one at a time and know what to do (as a warmup)

Next do 2 groups, 1 - pause - then 3. Then 2 - pause - then 4. Do this one more time swapping them around a bit, then get all 4 to go at once. This teaches them to not only keep the ball close, but to control it whilst watching for other players. legs of the caught player.



Relays

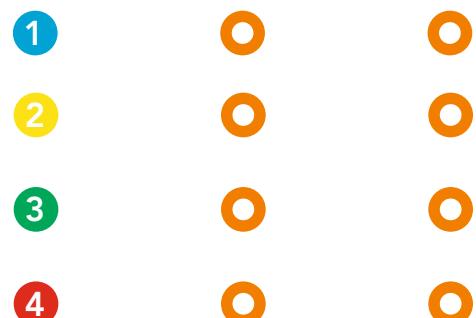
Put your team into 2 or 4 (depending on your league).

Each line up behind a number, 1 ball for each group.

First run around first cone and back, then around the second cone and run back, tag the next player, go to the back of the line and sit down. First to have all players sitting down wins.

Next do it with a ball.

Next dribble to second cone, stop at first cone. Pass to the next player waiting, who stops the ball. Run to the ball, touch it with your hand, and the next player runs.

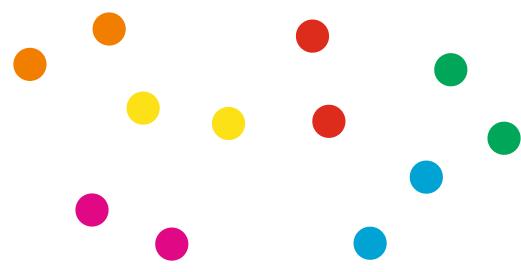


Goals, goals goals

Split your whole team into partners. Each pair get 1 ball, they need to alternate passing and dribbling, and dribble through as many goals as they can. They need to swap to each player before going to the next goal.

After a certain period of time, call time up, find out who scored the most goals.

You cannot go through the same goal twice in a row!



Egg stealing

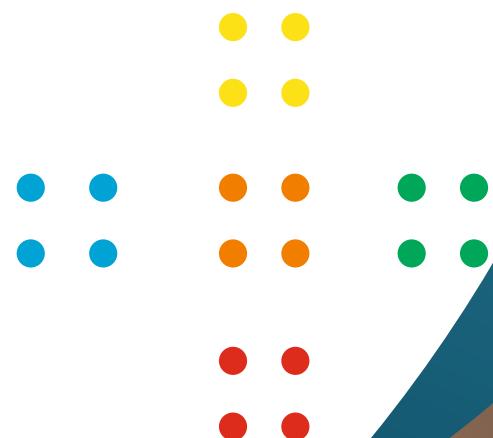
Split your team into 4 groups as even as you can. Put several balls in the middle square. You have to get as many 'eggs' from the middle square into your own 'nest', when the last ball is taken it's time up.

Only 1 person can go at a time, the second player can only leave the nest when the first returns. And you HAVE to dribble the balls, no kicks or passing.

The second round, when the balls disappear from the middle square, you can then steal balls from other 'nests', still only one travelling at a time.

Round 3 continues straight away, whereby all players can leave at any time to steal an egg from another nest.

Stop the drill after a certain time and see who has the most after each round.





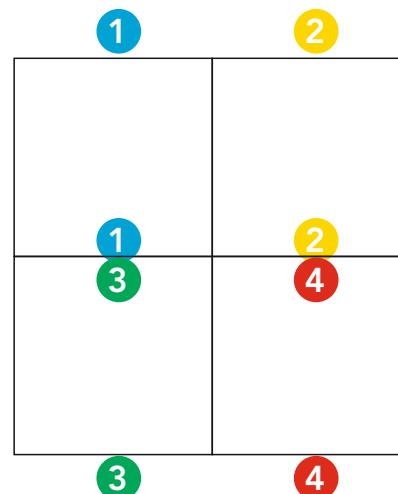
Four square

Split your team into squares (4 squares for 8 players, 5 squares for 10 players etc)

Each pair has a ball, they need to dribble it to the other side of the square, and trying to get past their partner.

Pass the parcel

Have the pairs pass the ball to each other, by stopping with one foot, and passing back quickly with the other via a 1-2. They need to alternate their feet and not use the same one each time.



Car Crash Demerits

All players have a ball in a marked out square. They all need to dribble the ball and keep it close constantly for a period of time. They all start with 10 points, each time you "collide" with another player, you lose a point.

After some time call time's up, and see who (honestly) didn't lose many points.

Coach says

All players have a ball each and dribble around the square. The coach gives 5 commands:

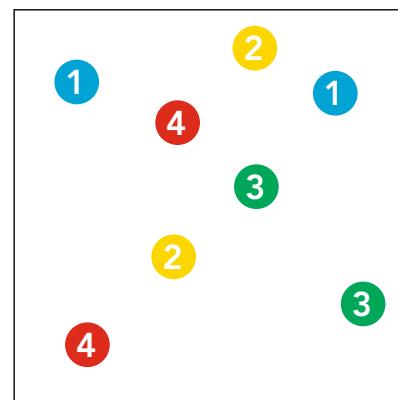
BUM: you need to stop dribbling and put your head on the ball.

HEAD: you need to stop and sit your bum on the ball

LEFT KNEE: you need to stop and put your RIGHT knee on the ball

RIGHT KNEE: you need to stop and put your LEFT knee on the ball

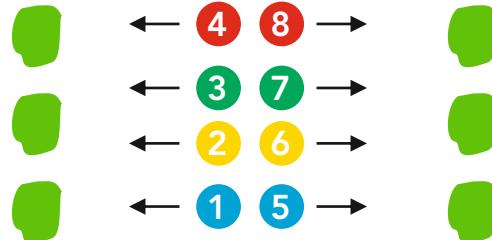
CHANGE: you need to go and quickly change to another ball



Rats and Rabbits

Setup your players in 2 groups in parallel lines. One side is Rats, the other is Rabbits. When you call "RATS", the rats need to run and touch a bib on one side, and the rabbits need to try and tag them before they get there.

Call RABBITS, and it's the other way around. Players need to listen very carefully as the coach could say it at any time rats.



Stuck in the Mud - (Mud Monster Advanced)

Half the team inside a square with a ball each, the rest of the team outside the square's edge. The team on the outside passes the ball to their teammates on an opposite sides trying to hit player's legs or their ball on the inside. They need to talk to each other.

When a player on the inside is hit, they stop, put their legs apart, hold the ball above their head and shout "stuck in the mud!". A teammate must dribble a ball through their legs for them to be unstuck and continue playing.

The game ends after a short time or when all players on the inside are stuck. After a short time, swap the two teams over, and see if they can get more players stuck inside.



Pirates of the Caribbean - U4

Kids soccer drills need to be fun... and this one certainly delivers! Pirates of the Caribbean is a game designed for coaching the U4 age group. It needs a lot of energy from you as a coach.

Preparation

Take a look at the simple layout of the drill below. To set-up you will need a cone for the kids to stand behind to begin. You will then need coloured cones down the other end to act as the treasure!

Explanation

To begin you will need to get the kids excited about playing soccer. Tell the young players that this game is "...a fun game called pirates of the Caribbean. What noise do pirates make?" The kids will make an 'arghhh' noise. Then you need to tell them that pirates love treasure and the treasure is down the other end of the island.

The kids will need to go one at a time and pick up one piece of treasure (cone/pinney) and bring it back to the pirate ship.

1. To get the young 3 and 4 year olds to understand this game, play the first round without soccer balls.
2. The second time they should kick a soccer ball down with them.

Progression

A nice little progression to this and other kids soccer drills is adding cones leading up to the treasure so the kids have to weave in and out of them before getting to the end. By placing the cones down the young players have to dribble the soccer ball in different directions - not just straight.

You could also encourage a race parallel with each other to see who can get the most treasure in the quickest time!



Foxes and chickens!

Another fun kids soccer game is foxes and chickens. This game is exciting and gets the kids to change direction with the soccer ball at their feet.

Preparation

Depending on the number of kids playing you will need to set-up a grid that the young players will not try and leave. You will need some pinneys, enough soccer balls for one-each and some helpful parents!

Explanation

The aim for this soccer drill is for the young players to get the tail (pinney) from the parents. The parents act as the chickens and the kids are the foxes. The parents will need to put a pinney half tucked into the back of their pants/shorts. The kids have to chase after them and remove the pinney (acting as a tail). Once the kids have all of the pinneys the game ends. If there is a really fast parent then all of the foxes can aim to get the last chicken's tail!

Progression

A useful progression to this drill is to play the first game without soccer balls and then introduce them into the second game. This will help the young players understand what they have to do.

Once the kids are comfortable with the parents having the tail see if the kids can be the chickens for a while. This drill can be used for older players by having all chickens and foxes dribbling a ball as a fun warm up game to any session.

