



**AYSO RETURN TO PLAY COACHING ACTIVITIES** **AGES 9-12**

*Ready! Set!*



**PLAYSOCCER**®



AYSO National Office  
19750 S. Vermont Ave., Suite #200  
Torrance, CA 9050

## Ready! Set! PLAYSOCCKER!

Please find enclosed a collection of age-appropriate activities that we have specifically selected in conjunction with The Coaching Manual to support your coaching in what is likely a modified environment.

Not every topic is covered since we prioritized increasing distance while reducing contact. Generally speaking, passing and receiving, spatial awareness, technique in isolation are all applicable to our new reality. Other activities will also work if you modify them through this new lens.

At times of challenge, we are forced to provide creative solutions; therefore, please modify the included activities to maximize success with your players in your environment under your local guidelines. Adjusting \*Speed, Space, Opposition will help with modifications but pay particular notice to Space! Reducing player numbers is also an easy solution but be careful to engage players who may not be active.

Regardless of the activity, one thing to keep in mind is to make sure every child in your session is comfortable and willing to participate (depending on personal circumstances, there is likely a spectrum). Remember, for many this has been a very scary time.

On behalf of everyone at AYSO, thank you for hanging in there and helping us get kicking again.

Sincerely,

Scott Snyder  
Director of Sport and Development

Paul Bright  
AYSO Technical Director

AYSO Coach Council

\* Changing the physical SPACE available to players (increasing/ decreasing size of playing area).

Varying the SPEED of the play (adding time constraints or number of touches).

Introducing and varying the amount of OPPOSITION (numbers up or down, opposition/defenders are bunnies and can only hop, etc.).

NOTE: As stay-at-home orders and business restrictions are loosened, we know that there is a desire to return to play as soon as it is deemed safe to do so. To be clear, this document does not constitute permission to return to the fields. Please follow specific rules and regulations set forth by your local public health authorities. Also, check the AYSO Return to Play microsite for updates to this document and other timely information to keep everyone as safe as possible in your Region.



AMERICAN YOUTH SOCCER ORGANIZATION  
19750 S. Vermont Ave., Suite 200  
Torrance, CA 90502  
(800) 872-2976 • www.ayso.org

[Please find a waiver here that you can use in your Region/Club as part of our Return-to- Play plan.](#)

We will continue to update you as we add new information to our [Ready! Set! PLAYSOCCKER! resource website.](#)

Thank you once again for your dedication and we hope you stay safe and well.

### **A Graduated Approach Based on Federal, State and Local Guidelines**

[The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has released guidelines for returning to youth sports.](#)

#### **General Guidance**

The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) offers recommendations on how members of the public can limit the spread of the coronavirus. They currently include:

- **Clean and disinfect** frequently touched surfaces and exercise equipment (including balls).
- Thoroughly wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Wear a cloth face covering that covers your nose and mouth in public settings.
- Stay at least 6 feet away from non-household members. *Note: research is ongoing on appropriate physical distance for bodies in motion.*
- Cover your mouth and nose with tissue when coughing or sneezing.
- Stay at home if you are sick.

#### **Overall – Standard Practice**

- **Healthy Participants Only:** Any players, coaches, spectators who are sick will not be allowed at practices or games.
- Parents, and family members will abide by social distancing regulations and are strongly encouraged to remain inside their vehicles during practice.



AMERICAN YOUTH SOCCER ORGANIZATION  
19750 S. Vermont Ave., Suite 200  
Torrance, CA 90502  
(800) 872-2976 • www.ayso.org

### **Immediate recommendations upon return to practice/play**

#### **Region/Club:**

- Identify strategies for working with public health officials to notify adult leaders, youth and their families if the organization becomes aware of a participant developing COVID-19 who came in contact with others during your activities. [Please click here for recommended reporting protocol.](#)
- Maintain participant confidentiality regarding health status.
- Sanction practices only when official parks and fields become available by local authority.
- Have an action plan in place, in case of notification of a positive test result.
- Provide coaches with a detailed explanation and training on these recommendations.
- Face masks recommended for coaches and volunteers.
- Schedule practices with ample space for player distancing.
- Adhere to AYSO Safe Haven guidelines, i.e., 1:8 adult to child ratio; minimum of 2 adults present; no adult alone with children other than their own. Whenever possible, adult of same gender as players should be present.
- Support coaches with fitness and technique in isolation exercises, grid work and spatial awareness ([appropriate content can be found here](#)).
- Provide physical guides, such as signs and tape on playing fields, to help coaches and players remain at least 6 feet apart.
- Be sensitive and accommodating to parents who may be uncomfortable with returning to play at this time.
- Avoid group events, such as games, competitions, or social gatherings, where spacing of at least 6 feet between people cannot be maintained.
- Limit nonessential visitors, spectators, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations as much as possible – especially with individuals not from the local geographic area (e.g., community, town, city, or county).
- Avoid activities and events such as off-site competitions or excursions.
- Communicate drop off, waiting and pick up protocols for parents to facilitate appropriate social distancing while providing for the safety of all participants.
- Create a communication plan for Region/Club to members and a communication pathway for parents to communicate their concerns or questions with Region/Club leadership (i.e.: BAND app).



AMERICAN YOUTH SOCCER ORGANIZATION  
19750 S. Vermont Ave., Suite 200  
Torrance, CA 90502  
(800) 872-2976 • www.ayso.org

#### **Coach\*:**

- Coaches will send pre-training communication to families ensuring that only healthy participants attend and reiterate expectations and guidelines.
- Coaches should maintain social distancing requirements from players and family members.
- Wearing a face mask is recommended for the duration of the practice.
- Utilize technique in isolation exercises, grid work, fitness and spatial awareness to limit physical contact between players ([appropriate content can be found here](#)).
- Keep players together in small groups/cohorts with one coach and make sure that each group of players and coach avoid mixing with other groups as much as possible. Teams might consider having the same group of players stay with the same coach or having the same group of players rotate among coaches.
- Adhere to AYSO Safe Haven guidelines, i.e., 1:8 adult to child ratio; minimum of 2 adults present; no adult alone with children other than their own. Whenever possible, adult of same gender as players should be present.
- Once regulations permit, consider staging inner-squad scrimmages instead of games with other teams to minimize exposure among players and teams.
- Ensure all players have and handle their own labeled equipment (ball, water bottle, training disks, etc.).
- Coach should be the only person to handle coaching equipment (e.g.: cones, disks, etc.); do not let parents or attendees assist.
- Hand sanitizer or handwashing on arrival / mid-way and end of training session.
- No shared equipment in use (players will be provided with individual bibs/pinnies or can bring game jerseys as requested).
- No physical greeting of players (verbal acknowledgement is expected).
- Stay positive and create a fun environment in this new normal.
- Serve as focal point, or designate the Team Parent/Manager, for notification from team families if a family member becomes ill with COVID-19, tests positive for COVID-19, or comes in contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19.
- Complete and submit [AYSO's Incident Report](#) Form to the Region Safety Director immediately, including team roster.

• *\*A designated volunteer or team parent can be added to help assist coach in accordance with the same health and safety guidance designated for the coach.*



AMERICAN YOUTH SOCCER ORGANIZATION  
19750 S. Vermont Ave., Suite 200  
Torrance, CA 90502  
(800) 872-2976 • [www.ayso.org](http://www.ayso.org)

**Team Parent:**

- Assist Coach, as requested, with communications to families (including safeguard reminders, i.e., only healthy participants attend activities).
- Serve as focal point for notification from team families if a family member becomes ill with COVID-19, tests positive for COVID-19, or comes in contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19. Notify the Coach immediately.
- Maintain social distancing requirements from coach, players and family members.
- Wearing a face mask is recommended for the duration of the practice/games.
- Support identified guidelines for coaches.
- Assist with hand sanitizer or other safety precautions like handwashing on arrival / mid-way and end of training session in support of the coach.
- Help team/teams adhere to AYSO Safe Haven supervision guidelines.



AMERICAN YOUTH SOCCER ORGANIZATION  
19750 S. Vermont Ave., Suite 200  
Torrance, CA 90502  
(800) 872-2976 • www.ayso.org

### Officials:

#### At all times:

- Stay at least 6 feet from anyone as much as possible.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Spitting or rinsing the mouth with water is to be avoided.
- Cough into elbow.
- Stay home if not feeling well and communicate to the Referee Administrator.

#### Pre-game:

- Prior to arrival, wash hands with soap or alcohol-based solution for at least 20 seconds.
- Arrival in full uniform is recommended.
- Maintain six (6) foot distance from players, coaches, spectators and referee team for all administrative procedures.
- Mask is recommended for pre-game duties.
- No handshakes with coaches, players, or spectators.
- Coin toss options:
  - a. Modified. One player from each team; center official; no handshakes; physical distancing.
  - b. No coin toss. Home team selects the half of the field. Away team will take kick-off.

#### During play:

- Masks **are not** required for referees during active play.
- Assistant referees are *recommended* to wear breathable face coverings unless wearing a mask causes breathing problems.
- Referees are recommended to stay a minimum of six (6) feet away from players, coaches, spectators, and the referee team during dynamic play and stationary play at all times.
- Avoid spitting.
- Cough into your elbow.
- Do not share whistles or, if possible, any other referee equipment.
- If not feeling well during the game at any time, go home immediately.

#### Post-game:

- After the game, applaud the players and coaches, but handshakes are not permitted; fist bumps/elbow bumps are not recommended.
- If shared, wipe down the handles of flags with an alcohol-based rub or wash with soap and water.
- Upon completion of the match, wash hands with soap or alcohol-based solution for at least 20 seconds.



AMERICAN YOUTH SOCCER ORGANIZATION  
19750 S. Vermont Ave., Suite 200  
Torrance, CA 90502  
(800) 872-2976 • www.ayso.org

### Parents

- Ensure your child is healthy. Test child's temperature before departing for soccer practice (if above 100.4, do not attend).
- Drop off and pick up players with special care given to the presence of children coming to and from the activity and receive verbal acknowledgement from the coach each time.
- Please wait in your car and/or adhere to social distance requirements, based on state and local health requirements and as requested by your coach or AYSO officials.
- Limit the use of carpools or van pools, and limit passengers to household members.
- Face masks are recommended.
- Wash your child's clothing after every training/activity (recommendation).
- Sanitize all equipment (ball, cleats, shin guards, etc.) before and after every practice.
- Clearly label your child's water bottle and personal items.
- Ensure your child has hand sanitizing products with them at every session.
- Notify your team/club immediately if your child or family member becomes ill for any reason.
- Do not assist coach with equipment before or after training.
- Check Region and Coach communication regularly.

### Players

- Inform parent if feeling unwell.
- Wash hands before and after training.
- Responsible for cleaning all required equipment after each training sessions (ball, cleats, shin guards, etc.).
- Bring and use your own labeled hand sanitizer at every session.
- Do not touch or share anyone else's equipment.
- Practice social distancing, place bags and equipment at least 6 feet apart.
- No sharing drinks or use of water fountains at facility (players should mark their own water bottles).
- No physical greetings with their teammates (verbal acknowledgement is expected, we are physical distancing not social.).

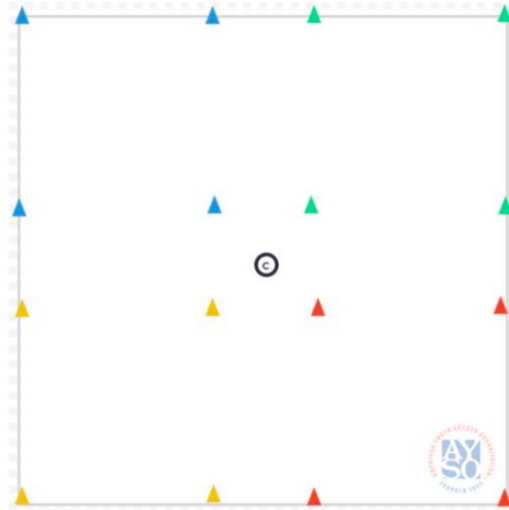
***PLEASE NOTE: This is a live document and is subject to change. As state and local restrictions and guidelines are adjusted in your area with regards to youth sports, AYSO will communicate how to progress. PLEASE continue to check our [microsite](#) for updates.***



## 5 Tips for Modifying Activities to Suit Your Environment and Stage of Reopening

### 1. Technique in Isolation

If you can only work with a small group, consider the Team-Teaching Grid as shown. Each colored grid can have one (or more) players and provide space and central positioning for you to coach. Remember with technique to try and add an applied outcome resembling the game.



2. Can you stagger your team into two groups at different times, i.e., 12 roster of 12: 2 x 6.
3. Restrict the participating numbers in the activity. Just make sure to keep the resting players active or engaged. Also, keep an eye on the time the working players play (fewer players require more rest).
4. Pending space, can you increase your coaching area/playing environment? Thus, providing more distance between players.
5. While it is not easy to replicate *game intensity* when there is no opposition, coaches may challenge their players to increase the competition and intensity of practice. Examples may include “how many can you perform in 60 seconds?” or first player/group/team to perform X.” Or, can you use equipment, i.e., mannequins, poles or tall cones to replace opposition?

Stuck with an activity you want to use but having trouble modifying? Drop us an email to [programs@ayso.org](mailto:programs@ayso.org) and we will have our technical team take a look.

# ACTIVATION

9-12

# Activation Movements to develop Physical Components Warm Up



Written by The Coaching Manual

## Set Up



5 mins



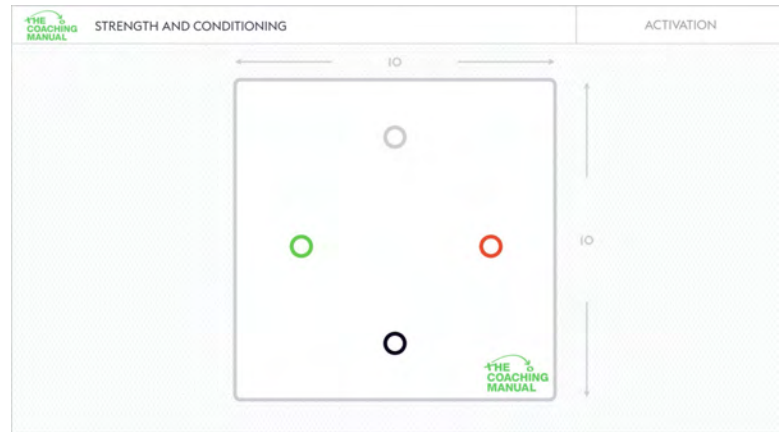
4 players



10x10 area

## Key Coaching Points

- **Correct technique performed at all times**  
The technique of the activation movements is important for the players to develop positive and correct movement habits.
- **Work both sides in equal amounts when applicable**  
In order to develop the whole person and ensure players are physically balanced, both the left and right sides of the body should be developed.
- **Technique over speed**  
Players should focus on the technique of exercises before concentrating on speed.



## Animation Practice

### Set Up

Players perform various activation exercises with the movements being led by the coach in the jungle game description. Activation Exercises include;

- Knee Drives x20 (x10 Left and x10 Right)
- Hopping, Jumping Landing 20 seconds
- Tiptoes 20 seconds
- Crab walk to one-hand reach (reach x5 with left hand and x5 with right hand)
- Two-Footed Jump Land x20
- One-Footed Jump Land x20 (x10 Left and x10 Right)
- Spider Crawl 20 seconds

# 9-12 Fundamental Movement and Communication Warm Up

Written by The Coaching Manual



## Set Up

10 mins    10 players    10 balls    10 bibs    10 cones    30x25 area

## Key Coaching Points

- **Stay Alert**  
Be aware of surroundings
- **Concentrate**  
Concentrate on the movements
- **Have Fun**  
Have fun with the movement

## Set Up

Working in pairs players take it in turns to count from 1 to 3 and back to 1. Eventually replace all 3 numbers with football specific movements. For example 1 could be a side step, 2 could be a jump and head, 3 could be forward sprint/backwards jog.

## Make it more challenging:

1. Introduce more numbers/actions.

# 9-12 Agility Balance and Coordination With Passing Warm Up

Written by The Coaching Manual

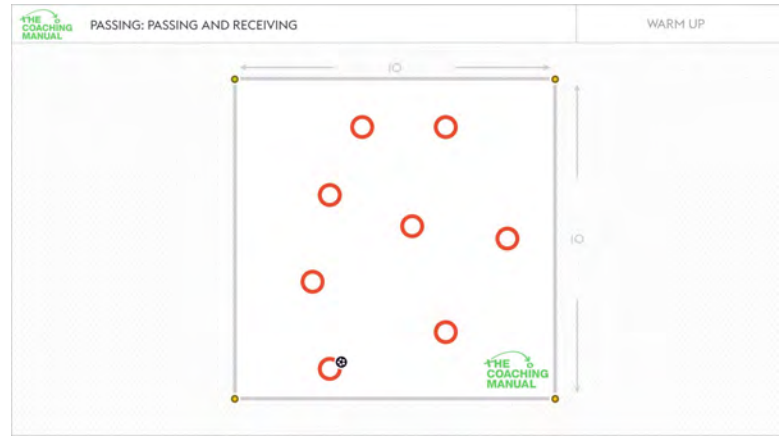


## Set Up

10 mins   8 players   2 balls   4 cones   10x10 area

## Key Coaching Points

- **Agility, balance, coordination & speed-**  
Light on feet with a range of different movements.
- **Weight of pass**  
Players attempt to pass first time so the weight of pass has to be appropriate for the receiving player to play first time.
- **Change of direction**  
Players to be agile and constantly scan to be aware of their surroundings and change direction quickly.



## Practice Animation

### Setup

Players begin in pairs with a tag game. If a player tags their partner they get 1 point and then swap roles. Encourage ABC"s.

### Make it easier:

1. Make the area bigger

### Make it more challenging:

1. Add more footballs

# PASSING/RECEIVING

9-12

# Passing and Receiving Warm Up

Written by The Coaching Manual

## Set Up



15 mins



8 players



4 balls



8 bibs



10 cones



24x20 area



## Key Coaching Points

- **Weight of pass**  
Players should play a firm pass into the receiving players so in a game situation the pass would not get intercepted by the defenders.
- **Body shape to receive**  
When receiving the ball to switch the play, players should receive the ball on the half turn and their back foot. If players are receiving in front of a defender to set the ball back, players should receive on the front foot with their arms out for balance and protection of the ball.
- **Create space to receive**  
Encourage players to move away from defenders to create an angle to receive a pass.



## Practice Animation

### Setup

2 x players at either end of the area and 4 x players working in the area. Yellow player's pass the ball to Blue player's who look to receive, open out play to Yellow's on the opposite side. Yellow's then pass to adjacent Yellow player who plays back inside to a Blue player. 2 balls in play. Rotate roles of players.

### Make it easier:

1. Allow players to have more touches on the ball and focus on their receiving skills

### Make it more challenging:

1. Receiving player in the area sets back to the passers on the outside to pass to another player in the area (3rd man runs to receive)
2. Include 2 defenders in the middle area

# Receiving and Turning Warm Up

Written by The Coaching Manual

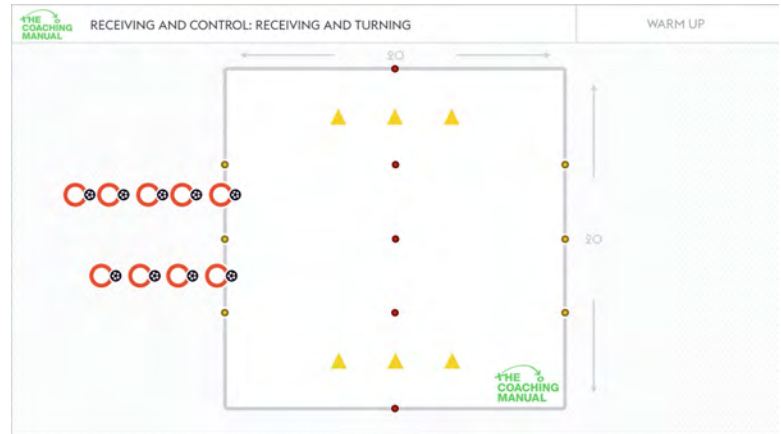
## Set Up

🕒 15 mins    👤 8 players    ⚽ 8 balls    🚧 18 cones    📏 20x20 area



## Key Coaching Points

- Touches on the ball**  
 Using both feet and keeping the ball under control, players should be encouraged to take as many small touches on the ball as possible using the inside and outside of their feet.
- Body shape and turning**  
 Players need to open their body receiving side on to play forward early whilst also maintaining good technique when turning with a low centre of gravity and bent knees.
- Quality 1st touch**  
 Whilst on the ball, players should take a quality first touch in space to then dribble through the activity.



## Practice Animation

### Make it more challenging:

- Player with the ball dribbles out to orange cones, performs a turn and passes to next player at start point. Player with ball at start point dribbles out to orange cones, turns and passes to next player at start point. At the same time, a player dribbles from orange cone to end of the area, turns and passes to player who has arrived at orange cone (once that player has turned and passed their own ball).



9-12

# Passing to Receive and Turn Warm Up

Written by The Coaching Manual

## Set Up

 15 mins    14 players    4 balls    14 bibs    24 cones    25x30 area



## Key Coaching Points

- **Quality of pass**  
Players should focus on the weight, disguise and accuracy of passes into feet or into space.
- **Receiving skills**  
In order to receive the ball, players need to concentrate on receiving the ball on the back foot or front foot depending on the type of pass and the space they have.
- **Body shape**  
To receive, players must hold a side on position whilst communicating verbally and non-verbally.



## Practice Animation

### Setup

Players work in pairs with 1 player on the outside with the ball partner in the 5x5 square waiting to receive.

Player on outside of the square passes to team mate in the square then follows the pass. Player receiving must turn, dribble to opposite cone then perform a turn. Practice then repeats the other way. Players must be aware of the other groups performing the same practice in the same area.

9-12

# Receiving To Play Forward Warm Up

Written by The Coaching Manual

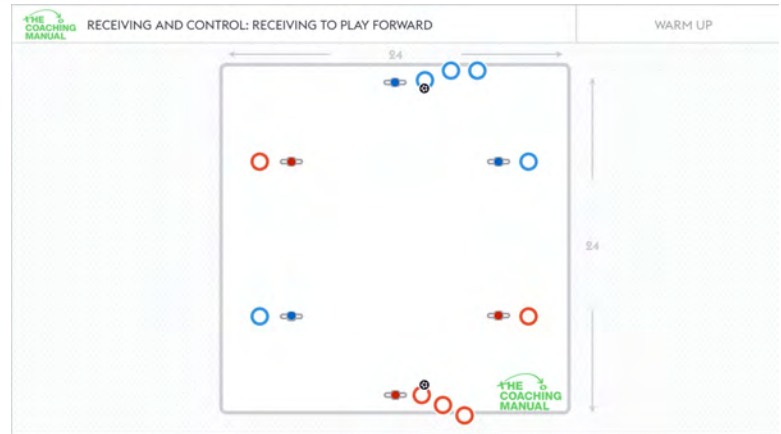


## Set Up

10 mins   8 players   2 balls   24 cones   24x24 area

## Key Coaching Points

- **Movement**  
To receive the ball players must be on an angle with their body open whilst moving away from the mannequin as the ball is travelling to play forward.
- **Receiving skills**  
Players to receive the ball on different feet, front foot or back foot depending on the flight and position of the ball to ideally play with 2 touches.
- **Awareness**  
In order to play forward, attackers should be aware of the ball, space and team mates by keeping their head up and checking their shoulders.



## Practice Animation

### Setup

Area with 6 x mannequins and player on each mannequin. 2 x balls in play start at each player on end mannequin with receiving player moving to receive back foot and then pass diagonally. 2nd player to receive then plays in to player on opposite end mannequin. All players to follow their pass. Rotate direction of passes.

### Make it easier:

1. Start with the ball in their hands

### Make it more challenging:

1. Add defender
2. Players to receive in front of mannequin to perform a turn/skill and pass (front foot receiving)

# AYSO 10U - 3 GS! Get, Give, Go

Written by American Youth Soccer Organization

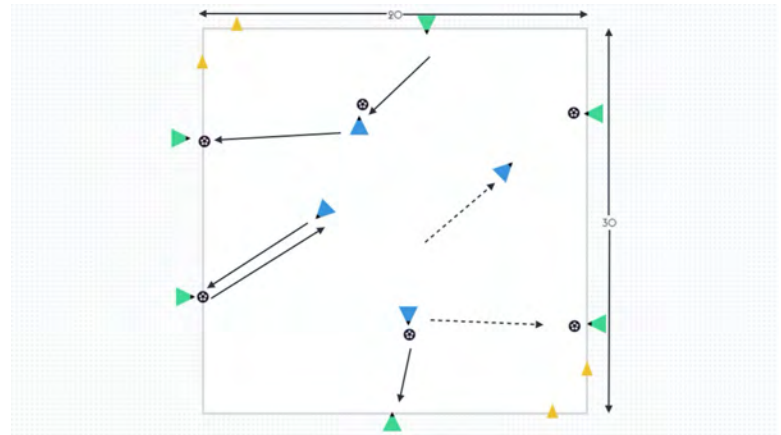


## Set Up

🕒 20 mins    👤 10 players    ⚽ 6 balls    👕 4 bibs    📌 4 cones    🏟️ 30 x 20 area

## Key Coaching Points

- Receiving Technique**  
 Use inside of foot control to receive and take the pace out of the ball.
- Standing Foot**  
 While the ball is still in motion, adjust body position so the non-kicking foot is next to the ball pointing toward the target.
- Passing Technique**  
 With weight over the ball, use the inside of the foot push pass through the middle of the ball.
- Receiving Angles**  
 Emphasize receiving at an angle, with an open body shape so the player can see where the ball is coming from and where it can potentially go to, as well as a shoulder check to know whether the pressure is close or not.
- Communication**  
 Communicate with teammates so no passes are misplaced (verbal communication, eye contact, and body language).



## Practice Animation

### Set Up

Mark 30 x 20 grid. Place a mini-goal in two opposite corners. Split the group and place six players around the outside of the area with a ball and four on the inside without a ball (or half and half).

### How the game is played

- Players on the outside pass the ball using an inside of foot push pass to the players on the inside who take one touch (using inside of foot control) to receive the ball and another to pass it back to the outside target player.
- The inside players then move to find a free outside player so they can repeat.
- Rotate the inside and outside players often.

### Variations/Progressions

- Condition passing and receiving, i.e., receive right foot - pass right foot, receive left foot - pass right foot.
- Instead of having players pass the ball back to the same target player, they must receive, turn and dribble to find a different target to pass the ball to.
- Add a defender (or two) who tries to steal the ball from the inside players and then score on the mini-goals in either of the two corners. Inside players have the choice to send the ball to the same target for one point if pressure is close or receive and turn to play to a new target for two points.

# Passing and Receiving to Keep Possession Technical Practice

Written by The Coaching Manual

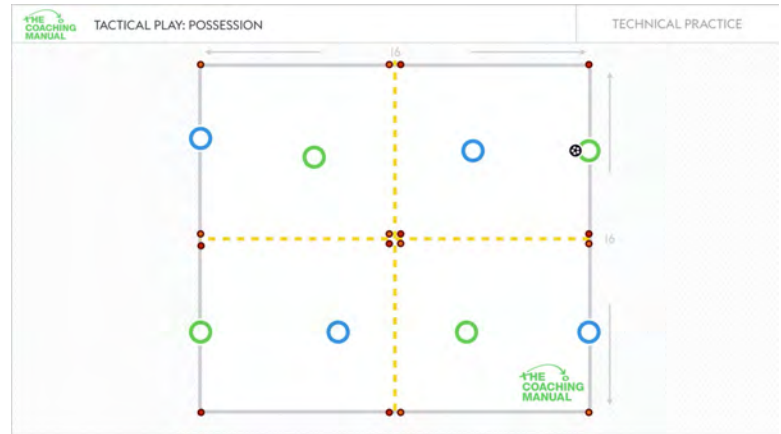


## Set Up

🕒 15 mins    👤 8 players    ⚽ 4 balls    🧥 8 bibs    🚧 14 cones    📏 16x16 area

## Key Coaching Points

- Awareness**  
 Players should perform 3 checks (before they move, as they move, before they receive) to be aware of the surroundings and move as the ball travels to receive in a position to secure possession and play forwards.
- Positioning**  
 Players should use the grids as reference points and move to diagonal/opposite grids from their team mate. This creates diagonal and forward passing lines to receive and combine. Rotation may also occur to swap positions and receive.
- Body shape to receive**  
 Play forward whilst seeing both targets and attempt to receive on back foot, when possible, so that play can go forwards.



## Practice Animation

### Set Up

2 x teams of 4 players with 2 players in middle area and 2 players on opposite end lines. 1 x Ball is played from player on end line into players in the middle to combine and pass out to opposite end line player. End player then transfers to end player on opposite team who plays inside the area for their team to combine.

### Make it more challenging:

- If blue"s have possession, then 2 x green"s in the middle can defend and attempt win possession. Defenders are restricted to 2 x grids and attackers can move anywhere in the area. If defenders win possession they pass to their end player and become attackers

# Receiving To Play Forward Technical Practice

Written by The Coaching Manual

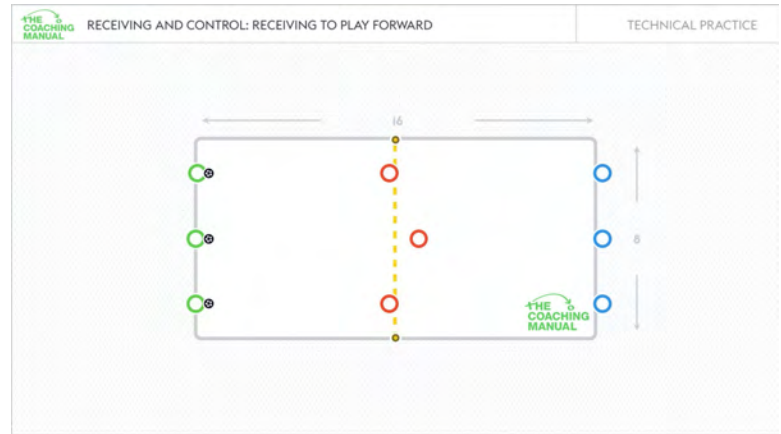


## Set Up

🕒 15 mins    👤 9 players    ⚽ 1 ball    👕 9 bibs    🚧 12 cones    🏟️ 8x16 area

## Key Coaching Points

- **Movement**  
To receive the ball players must be on an angle with their body open whilst using short sharp creative movement as the ball is travelling to play forward.
- **Receiving skills**  
Players to receive the ball on different feet, front foot or back foot depending on the flight and position of the ball to ideally play with 2 touches.
- **Awareness**  
In order to play forward, attackers should be aware of the ball, space and team mates by keeping their head up and checking their shoulders.



## Practice Animation

### Setup

Area with 3 x players at each end and 3 x players receiving and passing in the middle. Middle players pass to any end player then make a movement to receive from same player, open out and play to another player on opposite end line. Players to stay with own ball. Rotate roles of players

### Make it easier:

1. Start with the ball in their hands
2. Make the area bigger

### Make it more challenging:

1. Add defender
2. Make the area bigger

# Receiving and Control Technical Practice

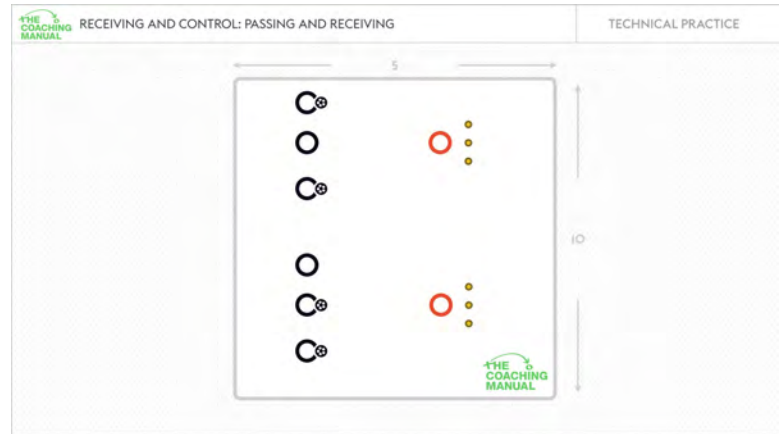
Written by The Coaching Manual

## Set Up

🕒 15 mins    👤 8 players    ⚽ 4 balls    📐 2 cones    🏟️ 20x5 area

## Key Coaching Points

- Ready to receive a pass**  
 Receiving player should be on their toes and in front of the cone ready to receive a pass. When the player has to control the ball, the player's body should always be behind the ball.
- Movement & body shape to receive**  
 Quick feet side to side movement to receive the ball. Body shape must be open to play the pass to the open player.
- Type and weight of pass**  
 Passes need to be on the floor. Players need to consider the weight of the pass into the receiving player as they need to play with 1 touch.



## Practice Animation

### Setup

Players in groups of 4, with 1 player working and 3 servers positioned on cones 5 yards from player. 2 balls with the servers and they pass the ball on the floor to the player without a ball to return in 1 touch. Next ball is then passed and repeated. Rotate roles of players.

### Make it easier:

1. Allow players to have 2 touches, one to control, one to pass.




### Make it more challenging:

1. Servers feed the ball aerial to be passed with half volley.
2. Servers feed the ball aerially to be passed with control and volley.
3. Servers feed the ball aerially to be passed with header.

# Passing and Moving into Space Technical Practice

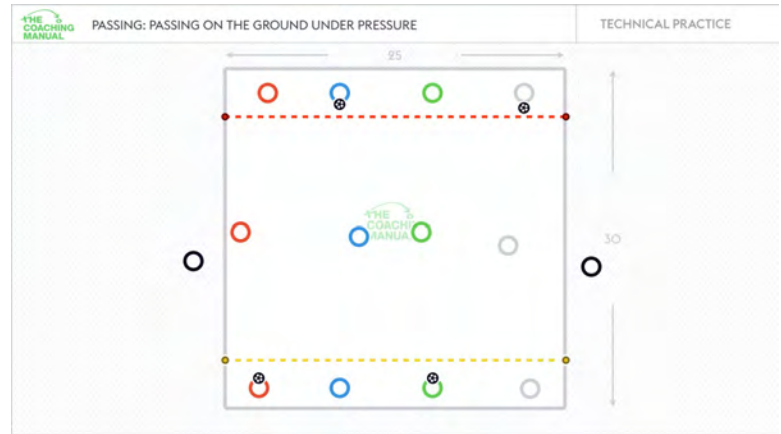
Written by The Coaching Manual

## Set Up

 12 players
  4 balls
  25x30 area

## Key Coaching Points

- Movement**  
 In both the end zone and middle zone, players must look to use creative movement to find passing lines (end zones) and also find and exploit spaces to move forward (central zone).
- Receiving skills**  
 In order to receive the ball, players need to concentrate on receiving the ball on the back foot or front foot depending on the type of pass and the space they have.
- Body shape**  
 To receive, players must hold a side on position whilst communicating verbally and non-verbally.



## Practice Animation

### Setup

Players work in groups of 3 with 1 x player in each end zone 1 x player in middle zone. Player in end zone with the ball passes to teammate in middle zone. Receiving player receives, turns n; passes to opposite player in end zone. Practice is repeated in the opposite direction. Rotate roles of players.

### Make it easier:

1. Make the space bigger

### Make it more challenging:






1. Introduce defenders who can intercept passes
2. Players in end zone can move anywhere within their end zone

9-12

## Combination Play Technical Practice

Written by The Coaching Manual

### Set Up

 15 mins    10 players    6 balls    8 cones    25 x 25 area



### Key Coaching Points

- **Awareness**  
Players should be aware of the space, ball, teammates and other players by checking their shoulder and playing with their head up to move the ball quickly.
- **Movement**  
To create space to combine, players need to use creative movement to find space to combine whilst also being game realistic.
- **Combinations**  
Attackers should use a variety of different passes with different lengths and speed to move the opposition and unbalance defenders.



### Practice Animation

#### Set Up

With players passing following pass around the outside of the area or looking to combine with either of the 2 players in the middle area.

#### Make it easier:

1. Start with the ball in their hands

#### Make it more challenging:

1. 1 x defender in the middle area with 2 attackers looking to move and combine to play out. Defender and attackers can move in either half. 3 attackers vs. 2 defenders in middle area. Defenders locked in their half and attackers free to move in either half.
2. Challenge players individually
3. Limit touches



# 9-12 Tactical Play: Switching Play Technical Practice (9-12)

Written by The Coaching Manual



## Set Up

25 mins    20 players    40x30 area

## Key Coaching Points

- **Movement off the ball**  
Players should use all different movements to receive the ball out wide. Forwards movement in the box needs to be realistic. For example, player who is attacking the front post should make a late run from deep and get across the line of the front post.
- **Quality of cross or pass**  
From wide areas, players should focus on the quality and variety of crosses by either providing driven, low or lofted balls into the final end zone.
- **Switch the play**  
Attackers should concentrate on when they should switch play, waiting for the open space to the wing, passing as quickly as possible to move the defence out of position.



## Practice Animation

### Setup

One goal GK along the end. Units of 4 set up in position as 2 x wide players 2 x central players. LCM passes to LM in wide position. LM back passes to LCM who then switches to RM. RM checks back plays to RCM who then switches to LM. When play enters final third, either wide player crosses whilst remaining players make movements to receive finish past the GK

### Make it more challenging:

1. Add a defender in the box to defend the crosses

## Conditioning with Short Passing

Written by The Coaching Manual

### Set Up

🕒 10 mins    👤 10 players    ⚽ 2 balls    👕 10 bibs    🚧 24 cones    🏟️ 2x 20x10 area

### Key Coaching Points

- **Change of direction**  
At speed, players should look to move forward at pace to replicate counter attacking movements.
- **Get forward**  
As quickly as possible, players should look to move forward as quickly as they can with explosive movements to create and find space.
- **ABC Movements**  
Players should focus on their agility, balance and coordination through the central station.



### Practice Animation

### Set Up

2 x teams of 5 with one team in each area playing handball and passing and moving. On coaches call, teams have to leave there ball and move quickly through agility stations to opposite area. First team to area gets a point.

### Make it more challenging:

1. Add defender
2. Ball is placed on floor and players pass and move

# Awareness to Receive and Play Forward Technical Practice

Written by The Coaching Manual

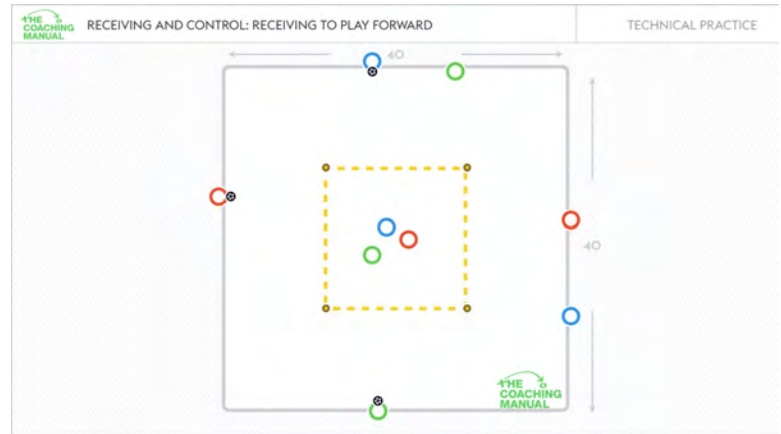
## Set Up

🕒 20 mins    👤 10 players    ⚽ 4 balls    👕 10 bibs    🚧 16 cones    📏 40x40 area



## Key Coaching Points

- Movement**  
 To receive the ball players must be on an angle with their body open whilst using short sharp creative movement as the ball is travelling to play forward.
- Receiving skills**  
 Players to receive the ball on different feet, front foot or back foot depending on the flight and position of the ball to ideally play with 2 touches.
- Awareness**  
 In order to play forward, attackers should be aware of the ball, space and team mates by keeping their head up and checking their shoulders.



## Practice Animation

### Setup

Players work in groups of 3, with 1 player in middle square and 2 team mates anywhere on outside of large area. Player in the middle to receive from team mate, open out and pass to other team mate to receive back. Players to stay with own ball. Rotate roles of players

### Make it easier:

1. Start with the ball in their hands

### Make it more challenging:

1. Add defender
2. Make the area smaller
3. Player in middle square can rotate with team mates without the ball. Player in middle square can bounce ball back to move and receive
4. Limit touches

# Playing Out From The Back Technical Practice

Written by The Coaching Manual

## Set Up



15 mins



14 players



6 balls



14 bibs



14 cones



25 x 25 area



## Key Coaching Points

- Movement**  
 Players should use inventive movement to create space and move off the mannequins to replicate playing out of the back and pass the ball forward.
- Timing**  
 To receive the ball and replicate game realism, players should look to time their runs to receive the ball by not moving too early nor too late.
- Midfield rotation**  
 To combined effectively, players should use rotation in the middle of the field to create space and passing lines to move the ball forward.



## Practice Animation

### Set Up

Balls are worked down the left and right hand sides respectively and players stay in their position (may rotate with another player on same mannequin). Ball starts with GK, who plays to CB then plays to FB. Combination play through midfield with FB overlapping to receive and hit target player (T).

### Make it easier:

1. Start with the ball in their hands

### Make it more challenging:

1. Challenge players individually
2. CM"s from both sides can combine rotate to play out in down either side (left or right)

9-12

# Creating Attacking Overloads to Advance Forwards Technical Practice



Written by The Coaching Manual

## Set Up

15 mins   12 players   10 balls   6 bibs   10 cones   40x30 area

## Key Coaching Points

- **Movement to receive**  
Intelligent movement to create passing lines. Encourage players to move away from the ball before going towards the ball to lose the defender.
- **Awareness**  
Players checking shoulders to gain an understanding of where the space, ball, team mates and opposition are on the pitch. This will allow players to be aware of the movement that is required to create space to receive the ball.
- **Quality of pass**  
Players should now be thinking about the weight of the pass and the angle they are passing the ball to. For example, firm pass into receiving players back foot.



## Practice Animation

### Set Up

Area with mannequins set up in each third. 2 x circuits as ball begins with GK. Players pass and combine through the thirds as the initial passing player makes an overlapping run to receive. Players then rotate positions to follow the pass or join the next circuit.

### Make it easier:

1. Allow players to take longer on the ball to slow the practice down whilst focusing on technique

### Make it more challenging:

1. Vary the patterns combinations to create overlaps.

# DRIBBLING/RUNNING WITH THE BALL

# AYSO 10U - DMTS

Written by American Youth Soccer Organization

20 mins    10 players    10 balls    4 cones  
25 X 25 area



## Key Coaching Points

- Use all major surfaces of both feet.
- Knees slightly bent and body leaning slightly over the ball for balance.
- Players should play with their head up, enabling them to see the field as well as the ball by utilizing peripheral vision as their ability progresses.
- The ball should be kept close using soft touches.
- Players should attempt to touch the ball every other step (or so).
- The ball should never be more than a step or two away.
- Encourage creativity



9-12

# Ball Mastery and Dribbling Warm Up

Written by The Coaching Manual

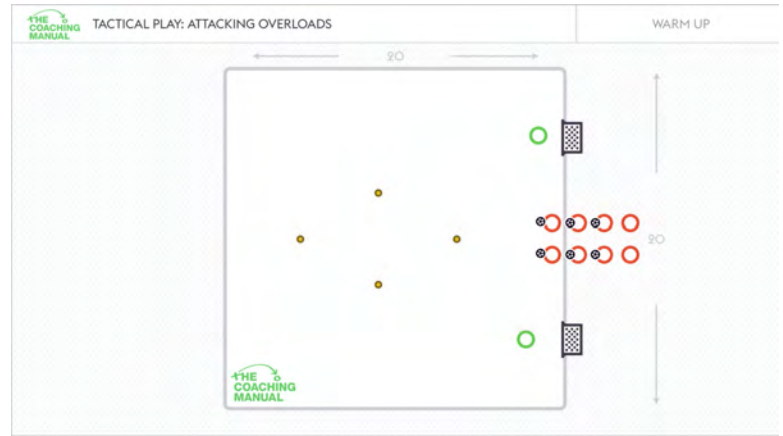


## Set Up

- 10 mins   8 players   8 balls   12 cones   20x20 area

## Key Coaching Points

- **Fundamental movements**  
Encourage players to perform game-specific movements around the cones to develop agility, balance, co-ordination and speed.
- **Ball manipulation skills, tricks, turns & feints**  
Players need to be comfortable in possession of the ball and utilise different parts of the feet to encourage ball mastery.
- **Skills to beat defender and finish**  
Players should have control of the ball and attempt to use ball mastery skills to beat the defender and finish on the small goal.



## Practice Animation

### Setup

Players in 2 groups and begin by performing functional warm up movements around the dribbling obstacle and back to start point. Balls are then introduced as players practice ball mastery skills around the cones. The final progression includes adding a defender so players finish dribbling around the cones to then play a 1v1 to goal.

### Make it more challenging:

1. Players encouraged to use non-dominant foot to dribble and finish



9-12

# Running with the Ball Warm Up

Written by The Coaching Manual

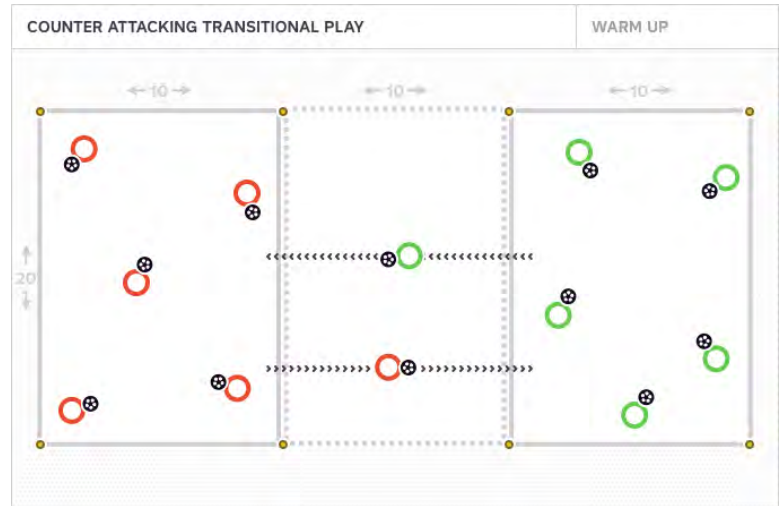
## Set Up

 15 mins    12 players    4 balls    12 bibs    16 cones    40x20 area



## Key Coaching Points

- **Awareness of space, teammates and opposition players**  
Players should be encouraged to have their heads up when dribbling to scan and assess where the ball, space, team mates and opposition are.
- **Change of speed and direction**  
On recognising the opportunity to counter attack, players should have a first touch out of feet and explode into the space
- **Ball mastery moves and turns**  
As the space is constantly changing, players need to continue moving with the ball and use ball mastery skills to maintain possession and be ready to change direction and explode into the space



## Setup

2 x teams of 6 in each area with a ball each and number themselves 1-6. Teams take it in turns to send 1 player at a time into the opposition area coming up with a trigger to send a player out so that the other team isn't made aware. As soon as player moves to enter the opposition area the other team have to send 1 player to their area and it is a race to get to the opposition area first. All players that are in the area have to perform a ball mastery exercise until they move to the other half.

## Make it more challenging:

1. Add a player in the middle zone to combine play in order to get to the other area
2. Add a defender in the middle zone for players to beat when going to the other area
3. Add a defender in each area to put pressure on players who are performing ball mastery and 1v1 moves

# Running With The Ball Carousel Warm Up

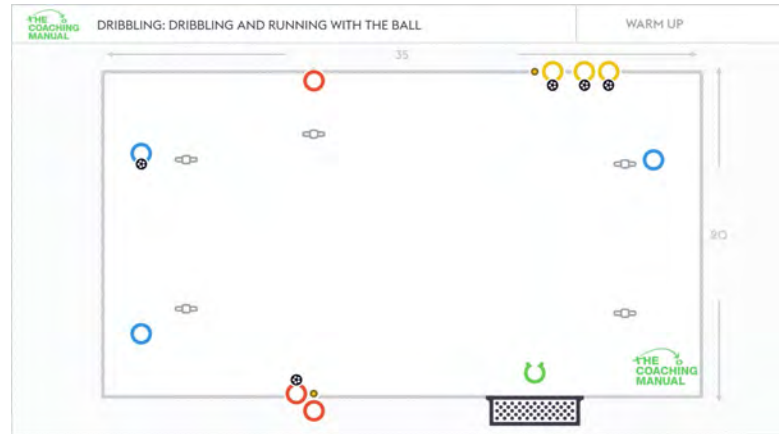
Written by The Coaching Manual

## Set Up

🕒 15 mins    👤 10 players    ⚽ 3 balls    🧥 10 bibs    🚧 6 cones    📏 30x20 area

## Key Coaching Points

- **Head up to scan**  
Players need to be aware of where the ball is at all times as well as team mates and opposition players.
- **Close control**  
Players need to have the ball under control in order to retain possession and travel forwards quickly.
- **End product**  
In a game a dribble or run with the ball needs an end product. This may be a combination, a cross or a shot at goal.



## Practice Animation

## Set Up

Team split into 3 x groups. Dribbling circuit set up with first group dribbling to goal and finishing past goalkeeper. Second group activity involves players dribbling to then combine around the mannequin. The third group dribbles across the length of the area to then play a cross/pass to a team mate. Rotate roles of players so all have a go on each circuit.

## Make it easier:

1. Reduce the distance of the area
2. Remove the Goalkeeper from the goal

## Make it more challenging:

1. Add defenders on all 3 circuit activities
2. Time limit or touch limit to dribble forwards before an end product

# BALL CONTROL

# AYSO 10U - Skillz School

Written by American Youth Soccer Organization



## Set Up



10 mins



10 players



10 balls



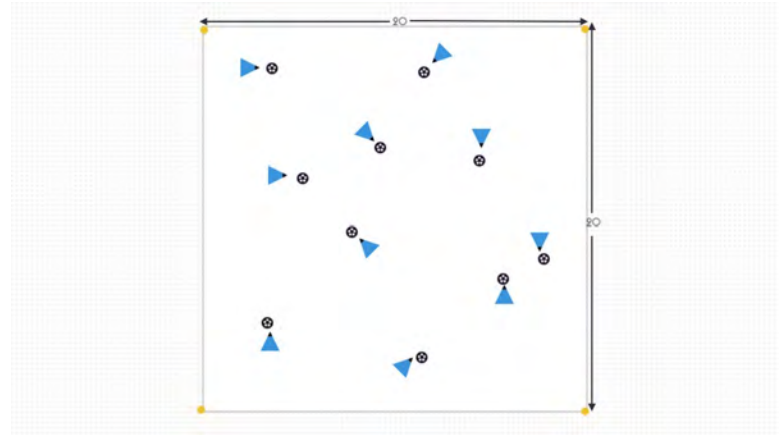
4 cones



20 x 20 area

## Key Coaching Points

- Breathe and relax!
- Let ball drop to foot dont touch too early.
- Arms out to balance.
- Present foot towards the ball (laces).
- Lift ball upwards using laces (do not kick the ball too high).  
Have busy (quick) feet to stay close to the ball.
- Make constant minor adjustments.
- Emphasize constant movement and focus.



## Practice Animation

### Set Up

Mark a 20 x 20 grid, ball per player.

### How the game is played

- Players space themselves throughout grid with a ball.
- To begin and encourage success, players drop ball to ground, let it bounce, kick and catch. One bounce one kick. One bounce two kicks, three kicks, etc.

### Variations/Progressions

1. Remove bounce.
2. Left foot, right foot; two left, two right, etc.
3. Introduce juggling with the thigh.
4. Introduce juggling with the head.
5. Let players try a trick, i.e., Brazilian toes taps, around the world, elastico, etc. Set a time challenge; who can do the most juggles in two minutes.
6. Encourage freedom and creativity!

# AYSO 10U - Skills Circle

Written by American Youth Soccer Organization



## Set Up

-  20 mins
-  10 players
-  6 balls
-  6 bibs
-  9 cones
-  25-30 Yard Diameter Circle area

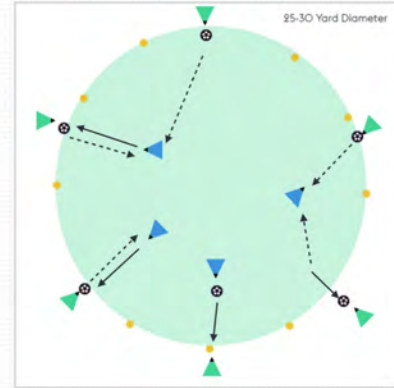
## Key Coaching Points

- Get in line with the flight of the ball.
- Bring thigh up to meet the ball.
- At moment of impact, withdraw surface to cushion first touch (like catching an egg). Be on toes to react to the falling ball.

## Practice Animation

### Set Up

Create a circle of cones within a 25 x 25-yard grid. Position eight players on the outside of the circle with balls as servers and four players inside the circle.



## How the game is played

- Inside players move towards any player on the outside.
- The server throws (easy lob) to the receiver to control the ball using their thigh and then accurately pass the ball back to the server using inside of foot push pass.
- Player then moves to a free server.
- Rotate inside and outside players often.

## Variations/Progressions

1. Vary the number of servers to players.
2. vary circle size pending success level of players.
3. The coach can walk through the circle as a passive defender.

# ATTACKING/FINISHING

# Finishing From Wide and Central Positions Technical Practice

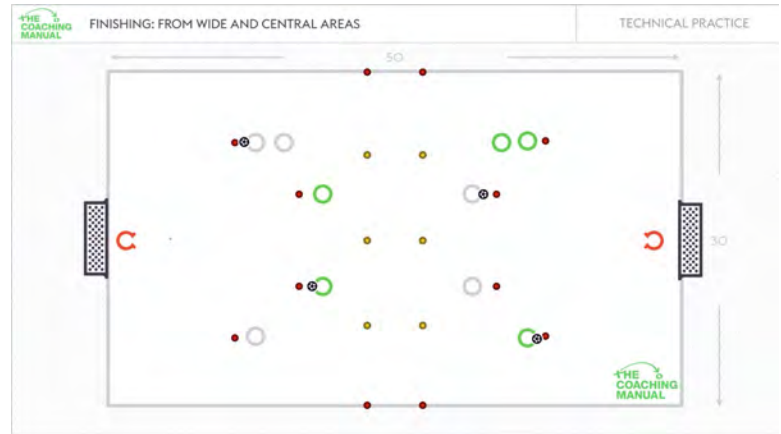
Written by The Coaching Manual

## Set Up

🕒 15 mins    👤 12 players    ⚽ 10 balls    🧥 12 bibs    📌 28 cones    🏟️ 50x30 area

## Key Coaching Points

- Technique to finish**  
 Players should focus on their technique to finish on goal. This may be with laces, inside of foot, outside of foot, header or by being creative in front of goal.
- Movement to combine and finish**  
 Players should work together and develop verbal and non-verbal communication to move in relation with each other and combine to finish on goal.
- Anticipation to finish rebounds**  
 Both players should be in a position to react to any rebounds or spills by the goalkeeper and finish on goal. The player who does not take the shot should read the cue from their team mate and begin to move towards goal as the ball is struck.



## Practice Animation

### Set Up

Groups working in each half with 2 x players positioned on cones centrally who look to combine and finish with the team mate following up for rebounds. 2 x players positioned on wide cones as player with the ball either attacks wide and crosses for team mate or drives inside to shoot as team mate follows in for rebounds. Rotate starting point of players (centrally and wide).

### Make it more challenging:

1. Introduce 1 x defender who can win the ball and dribble to middle zone for 1 point.

# Finishing Technical Practice

Written by The Coaching Manual

## Set Up



20 mins



12 players



10 balls



12 bibs



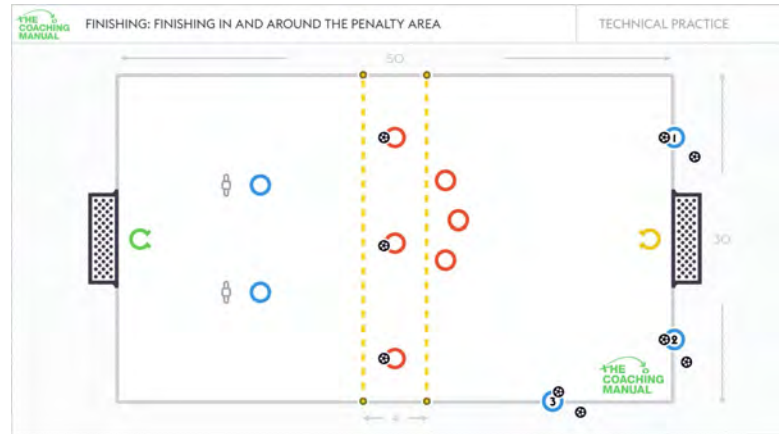
10 cones



50x30 area

## Key Coaching Points

- Attitude to shoot**  
 Players need to take shots early and have a positive attitude in front of goal to finish past the goalkeeper and react to any rebounds
- Finishing Techniques**  
 The focus when finishing should be on the technique to finish quickly and effectively, with inside, laces, outside of the foot as well as headers being utilised. Players should always focus on making good contact with the ball
- Accuracy before power**  
 Before finishing, players may have a quick glance to assess the position of the goalkeeper and then select an area of the goal to aim for. Players should strive to get the ball on target and test the goalkeeper, and then add power to their accurate attempt at goal



## Practice Animation

### Set Up

Finishing Circuit: Blue attacker (left side of pitch) receives ball from red players in central area to dribble past mannequins to shoot and follow in for rebounds. Red attacker (right side of pitch) receives ball 1 from corner of pitch to finish, ball 2 from a pull back close to goal to finish and ball 3 from a cross to finish. Rotate roles of players so all players have opportunity to finish on both circuits and be servers.

### Make it easier:

1. Remove goalkeepers to allow players to purely focus on technique

### Make it more challenging:

1. Players must finish in 1 or 2 touches
2. Players must focus on finishing with their non-dominant foot



# Switching Play to Cross and Finish Warm Up

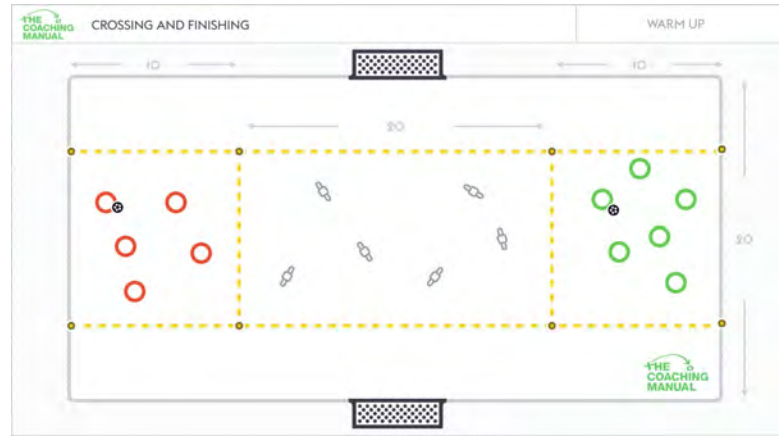
Written by The Coaching Manual

## Set Up

🕒 15 mins    👤 10 players    ⚽ 6 balls    👕 8 bibs    📌 12 cones    📏 45x20 area

## Key Coaching Points

- **Quality of cross**  
When crossing the ball players should be hitting and area for their team mate to run onto.
- **Type of cross**  
Encourage players to try all different types of crosses, lofted, driven, swerve/curl
- **Timing of runs to finish**  
Start of with slow movement into the box, when the players head goes down to cross the ball the forward should use explosive movements to attack the ball.



## Practice Animation

### Setup

Players divided into 2 teams with each team in 20x10 area passing and moving. On coaches call, teams deliver and cross the ball from one area to another.

### Make it easier:

1. Take away the mannequins in the middle and focus on the techniques
2. Get the players in pairs and work on crossing techniques

### Make it more challenging:

1. Add a defender in to the finishing stage
2. Add an overlap in before the cross