

“Master the ball, don’t let the ball master you”

This section deals with a players ability to make the ball do exactly what they want it to. At Liverpool Football Club the emphasis from U9 to U14 is clearly placed on ball mastery. A minimum of 1 hour session is spent on ball work and technique. Therefore to improve a players individual ball skills and confidence, it is essential that each player receives maximum touches on the ball. Ball Mastery is closely linked with First Touch, Control and Dribbling.

As coaches we need to challenge players at their highest possible level. It has become evident that in order to give players a solid foundation in ball mastery they must master an inside cut and an outside hook. More time should be spent on refining these two skills as they are the most commonly used in the game. All other turns and moves can be practiced in addition to, or mastered later. There are many players who are a jack of all trades and master of none.

5-7 Years

Can players of 5 & 6 years of age do a drag back or a Cruyff turn? Of course they can, it just depends on how you explain and package your content to your players. The turn or move will be a simplified version of the final product but do not underestimate your players. Use the games in the dribbling section to your advantage by making learning for players at this age fun. This section will outline the basic turns & how the explanation is key.

Copy Coach

Self-explanatory. With a ball each players copy what the coach does. Make it fun and challenging.. You can progress this to 'Coach Says' which is obviously 'Simon Says'. Use different parts of the foot in as many different ways which will improve the players soccer skills whilst making it fun & enjoyable.

Mr/Mrs. Freeze (Scissors)

Choose one or more taggers who attempt to kick out players soccer balls on the coaches command. If players get their balls kicked out then they have to do # of juggles to get back in the game again. However, players can freeze the taggers for 3 seconds if they perform a move just as they are about to get their ball kicked out.

Variations:

- Scissors, must be facing taggers when performing move. Encourages players to face taggers in a game and perform a move to get past them.
- Dragback, Cruyff etc.

Three Little Pigs (Drag back turn)

Choose three little pigs who stand in their own little house without a soccer ball. All other players are the big bad wolves and attempt to get into the little pigs houses. They have to perform a drag back turn to get in and out the little pigs houses as quick as possible. Switch pigs around every few minutes.

Variations:

- Use alternate feet
- Drag back push (pulling the V)
- Scissors, Matthews etc. Players get an extra point if they manage to perform a move that beats the pig/defender as opposed to just changing direction.

Monsters Inc. Scare House. (Drag back turn)

Monsters Inc. Scare Floor.(Drag back turn)

Boo is at home alone and stands in her bedroom without a ball. All other players are Mike and Sulley and stand around the outside of an area (on the scare floor outside the bedroom door). Mike and Sulley have to get into Boo's bedroom and out again as quickly as possible performing a drag back turn each time to score a point. Boo is not allowed outside of her bedroom and gets a point each time she successfully defends her bedroom.

Variations:

- Boo ask a friend to help (sleepover).
- Another person (Randall) tries to stop you getting to Boo's bedroom door

Introduction To Inside Cut & Outside Hook / Introduction To Shielding

Begin by introducing turns, moves and ball familiarity skills into fun warm ups and games. On the coaches command players have to:

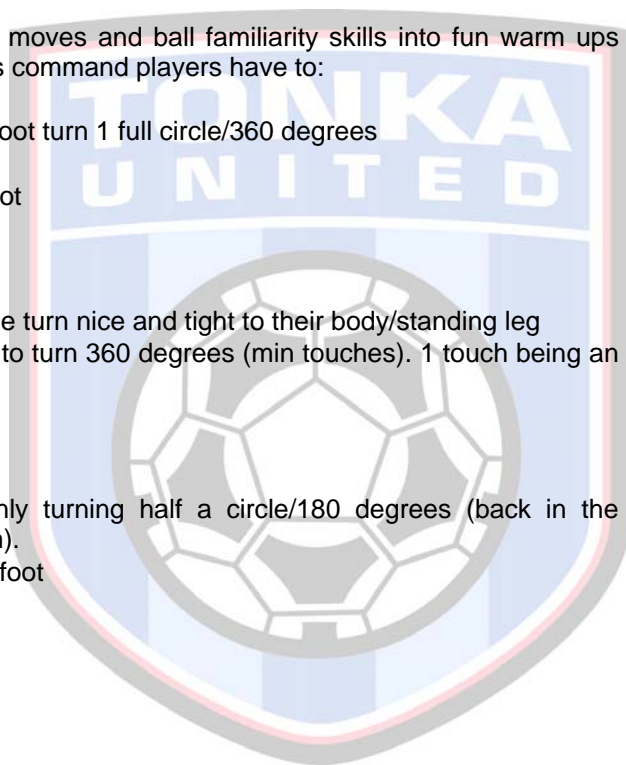
- Using the i/s of their r/foot turn 1 full circle/360 degrees
- I/s of l/foot
- O/s of r/foot, O/s of l/foot

Coaching Points:

- Players should keep the turn nice and tight to their body/standing leg
- Take only 2/3 touches to turn 360 degrees (min touches). 1 touch being an i/s cut or hook.

Variations:

- As above but now only turning half a circle/180 degrees (back in the direction you came from).
- Use l/s or o/s of either foot



Inside Cut & Outside Hook

Coaching Points:

- 1 Dribble in and make a half turn through 180 degrees using inside (i/s) or outside (o/s) of either foot
- 2 Place i/s or o/s on farthest part of ball from player
- 3 Players should exaggerate the movement of the foot to fool defenders into thinking that they are about to make a pass / shoot
- 4 Players should keep the turn very tight to their body

Strength and Weaknesses:

These turns can be used effectively in any area of the field. They have the advantage of being simple and efficient to perform. The 'Outside Hook' holds the advantage in that any move or turn that involves the use of the outside part of the foot immediately puts the attacker's body between the defender and the ball.

Drag Back Turn

Coaching players the successful execution begins with players using the sole of their foot to stop the ball. Once the ball is stopped keep the same foot on the ball and drag the ball back across the body backwards in the opposite direction. The most important coaching point is that you must turn the same way as the ball, keeping it in view. If you stop the ball with the right foot you turn to the right, stop the ball with your left foot you turn to the left.

Coaching Points:

- Dribble in and make a half turn through 180 degrees using sole of either foot
- Use the sole and drag the ball back across the body in the opposite direction
- Turn the same way as the ball, keeping it in view. If you are turning the ball with the right foot you turn to the right, with your left foot you turn to the left. This allows an effective shielding position

Strength and Weaknesses:

The drag back turn is a great way to change direction to escape an opponent. It is simple and quick to execute. However, it should not be viewed as a negative move but one that allow the attacker to change the point of attack, create space and keep possession. This is especially effective in the midfield area where time and space are at a premium and efficient use of the ball in tight areas is a trademark of great players.

Stop Turn

A good turn when moving at speed and moving too fast to do a drag back turn. As ball is moving place right foot on top of the ball to stop it moving, players momentum will allow them to plant their right foot ahead of the ball. Simply turn to the right and take the ball away with the outside of the right foot.

Cruyff Turn

History: Johan Cruyff was one of a number of youngsters who emerged with Ajax of Amsterdam in the late Sixties and came to dominate European and World soccer in the early Seventies. Cruyff was the most outstanding of them all and was seen by many as the natural successor to Pele as the world's greatest player.

Strictly speaking, Cruyff played center forward but he would drop deep to confuse his markers or suddenly move to the wing with devastating effect. Once there "a favorite trick out on the left-wing was to drag the ball behind him with his right foot, turn through 180 degrees and accelerate away outside a bemused defender."

Coaching Points:

- Player fakes to kick/cross the ball with the right foot
- Left foot goes at the side of the ball and the right foot comes around the front of the ball
- The ball is drawn back with the big toe of the right foot in the opposite direction
- As player turns take a natural touch with the left/pivot foot and then accelerate away from opponent
- Reverse all aspects to turn away from player to the right

The Birthday Box Turn (introduce 5 & 6 year olds)

Coaching Points:

- Place left foot at the side of the ball leaving a small gap
- The right foot comes around the front of the ball so that the toes of both feet both are almost touching but leaving a small gap between feet and the ball.
- Once player has made their box around the ball they wrap their present by tapping the ball backwards using the inside of the right foot.
- Reverse all aspects to turn away from player to the right

Strength and Weaknesses:

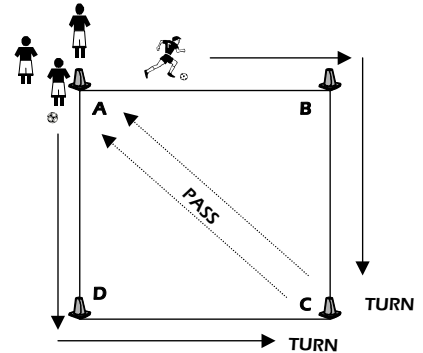
Cruyff applied his patented move to devastating effect when out wide in order to create room for a cross or shot with opposite foot having fooled the defender into thinking he'd been closed down! Again, the positioning of the

Cruyff Turn Progression

Player dribbles the ball from point A to B to C. When at point C, player executes a Cruyff turn to change direction and pass diagonally to player waiting at point A following pass (sprint). Repeat but with 2 players working at the same time. The other player dribbles from A to D, executing a Cruyff turn at C.

Variations:

- Rotate the direction of players around the square so that players experience turning using both feet.
- Players must work at speed including a sharp change of direction at point B and a Cruyff turn at point C.



Cruyff Turn Progression To Goal

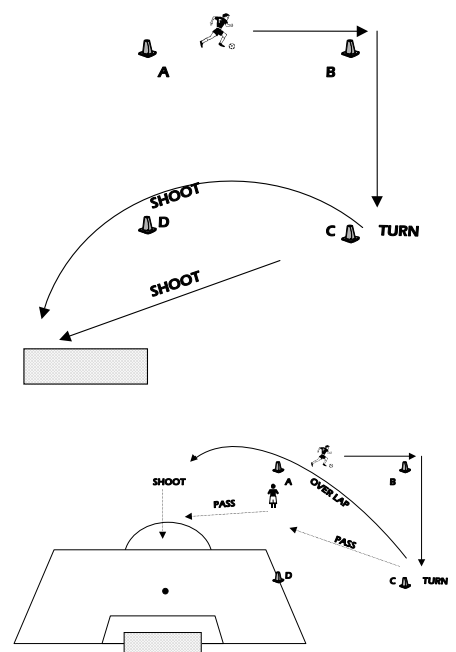
Players dribble from A to B to perform a sharp Cruyff turn at C. Player then dribbles in for:

- 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.



L Shape

Encourage quick and happy feet. Ball is passed from one foot to the other across the body and then pushed past the defender using the inside of foot.

Variation:

- As above but use the sole of the foot to roll/drag the ball across the body, use the inside of the foot to take the ball away.
- As ball is dragged across the body with the right foot, step over the ball with the left foot. As legs are crossed use right foot to tap ball forwards.

Step Over

Effective when player has back to opponent, but can be used when facing an opponent. Ball in between feet, right foot goes around the front of the ball as if to fake taking the ball to the side. Legs are now crossed and weight transferred to the right foot. Left foot comes all the way round to take ball away and accelerate in opposite direction.

Coaching Points:

- Dribble in at opponent at speed until ball is in between feet
- Right foot goes around the front of the ball as if to fake taking the ball to the side.
- Legs are now crossed and weight transferred to the right foot. Left foot comes all the way round to take ball away and accelerate in opposite direction
- **Variation:** As above but take ball away with the same foot that stepped over the ball.

Strength and Weaknesses:

When player has their back to an opponent this is an effective move to use. This turn has the advantage of having a very fast execution while allowing the attacker to shield the ball from their opponent.

Matthews Feint

History:

Sir Stanley Matthews

Matthews, known as the "*Wizard of the Dribble*", was the first true legend of the game. He is best remembered for his part in the 1953 "Matthews Final", when he inspired Blackpool, 3-1 down with 20 minutes left, to an incredible victory over Bolton to take the FA Cup.

Keeping himself incredibly fit, he created history when he played his final professional game, for Stoke, at age 50!

Coaching Points:

- Execute a fake by taking a step to the left, faking a pass with the outside of the left foot
- Drop the left shoulder and bend the left knee.
- The ball is then played with the outside of the right foot changing direction and accelerating away into space.
- Reverse all aspects to beat player to the left
- **Variation:** As above but as players fakes to the left, touch the ball with the inside of the right foot and then take it away with the outside of the right foot.

Strength and Weaknesses:

A move that is simple and efficient to perform. It is especially effective in wide areas of the field to create room to cross in the 18 yard box. Against skilled defenders, it has a disadvantage in that during the fake the ball does not move, just the attacking player's body.

Scissors

Coaching Points:

- Faking a pass with the outside of the left foot as you step to the side you step around the ball with one foot
- Transfer weight bending knee and dropping the shoulder
- As foot is planted on the floor the ball is then played with the outside of the right foot changing direction and accelerating away into space.
- Reverse all aspects to beat player to the left

Strength and Weaknesses:

This is a more advanced move that incorporates a fake intended to make the defender think that there is to be a change of direction of the ball before it actually occurs. The player needs to focus on producing an exaggerated movement to create the disguise to unbalance the defender. It is effective both in wide positions when running at a defender and in central areas when trying to create room for a shot in tight areas. A more skilled defender will 'not buy the fake' because there is only a foot and body (not ball) movement involved in the move.

Double Scissors

Coaching Points:

- Faking a pass with the outside of the left foot as you step to the side you step around the ball with one foot
- Transfer weight bending knee and dropping the shoulder
- As foot is planted on the floor repeat with the other foot
- The ball is then played with the outside of the left foot changing direction and accelerating away into space.
- Reverse all aspects to beat player to the right

Strength and Weaknesses:

This is a very advanced move that requires the player to coordinate their movement with that of the ball very carefully. It is especially effective both in wide positions when running at a defender at speed and in central areas when trying to create room for a shot in very tight areas. The advantage is that there are two occasions that the defender thinks that the ball is going to change direction before it actually does. Again a more experienced defender will 'not buy the fake' because there is only foot and body (not ball) movements involved in the move. A weakness of this move is that it can take too long to execute. Once the defender has been unbalanced by the first fake, they often have time to recover during the second fake.

Vialli

Player stops the ball with the right foot. At the same time the left foot should be behind the ball and pokes the ball forward from underneath the right foot.

Variation:

Player fakes over the top of the ball as if to stop the ball with the sole of the foot. With the same foot poke/push the ball forward using the laces.

Drag Back L-Turn

Coaching Points:

- Dribble the ball at a defender, then faking with the right foot to play the ball across your body, roll the ball with the sole of the foot towards the left foot.
- This encourages the defender to attempt to play at the ball thus committing themselves.
- Shifting your weight to the left, open up your hips and 'push' the ball past the defender's tackling foot with the inside of the your left foot.
- Accelerate past the defender.
- Reverse all aspects to beat the defender to the right.

Strength and Weaknesses:

An advanced turn, but great for getting out of tight spaces, especially when you are either facing away from the opponents goal or at the touchline. The turning angle is 90 degrees, which is can be used really effectively by a wide player cutting in field. The standing foot allows a barrier to be placed between the attacker and the defender. The key is to remain balanced while shifting your body weight from the standing foot to the accelerating foot once the space is created.

Moves: a technique to create space in the attaching direction to unbalance a defender. This creates the necessary space to continue a dribble or execute a pass or shot.

Drag Back Push/Pulling The V Combination

Coaching Points:

- Drag the ball backwards with the sole of either foot
- As it becomes level with standing leg, open up hips
- And using the inside of the same foot pushes the ball out to the side as to go around a defender.

Strength and Weaknesses:

This is a progression of the drag back turn. The pull part is to drag the ball back from a tackling defenders foot. The push part is to push the ball past the defender into open space. Foot stays in contact with the ball as much as possible. A difficult move to master, but one that is very effective in the high-risk area near to an opponents' goal, because there is movement of the ball during the fake that invites the defender to react and go for the ball. During this time the attacker takes advantage of this 'unbalanced' position of the defender and explodes into the space created.

Maradona

History:

Diego Maradona is quite possibly the greatest soccer player the world has ever seen. Certainly, in the age that Maradona played soccer, it was a higher tempo sport than the one enjoyed by the Brazilian Pele, so the skill that the Argentinean showed can be regarded as extra brilliant. Diego Armando Maradona was blessed with unique skill. As a youngster he would often entertain the crowds at soccer matches at half time, with demonstrations of ball juggling, at which he was extremely adept. It was due to these amazing feats that he would acquire the nickname 'El pibe de oro', (the golden boy).

Coaching Points:

- Dribble in and make a full turn through 360 degrees involving 3 stages.
- Player stops ball with the sole of the right foot
- Step over the ball with the same foot
- The ball should be in between legs, pivot/turn to the left drag the ball backwards
- Increase speed eventually progressing to players standing and pivoting on the ball
- Reverse all aspects to turn away from player to the left

Strength and Weaknesses:

A great deal of foot skill, balance, speed and timing is required to perform this VERY advanced turn! It is most effective when running at a group of players centrally on the field. Like a stop turn and drag back combined.

Littbarski Move

History:

Pierre Littbarski was a German National Team player during the 1982, 1986 and 1990 World Cups. He was an integral part of 3 consecutive final appearances by this world soccer power. A talented winger, with great dribbling skills combined with great speed.

Coaching Points:

- Approach opponent at speed
- Open up hips the way the ball is to be played
- Touch the ball around one side of opponent with the outside of foot
- Run around the other side to receive own pass

Strength and Weaknesses:

Great disguise, speed and timing are required from the player to perform this move most effectively. A great move to use when attacking a defender in wide positions where there is plenty of space to exploit behind the defender.

Step-Over II Turn (also known as 'The Rivelino')

History: With his bandy-legged skills and bandito moustache, Roberto Rivelino was a star in Brazil's dazzling 1970 World Cup win. Famous for his ferocious shooting, the left winger also tormented defenders with his deceptive dribbling skills, particularly his "elastic dribble" trick, which involved rolling his foot over the ball before setting off in the opposite direction.

Coaching Points:

- Dribble in at opponent at speed until ball is in between feet.
- Right foot goes around the front of the ball as if to fake taking the ball to the side.
- All weight is transferred to the right foot.
- Turn in the opposite direction; take ball away with the same foot that stepped over the ball.
- Accelerate away from opponent.
- Reverse all aspects to turn away to the left.

Vialli Move

History: Born in Cremona, Italy in 1964, Gianluca Vialli was at the top of the European & World game from 1985 through to 2000, before 'hanging up his boots' to begin a successful transition into top-level coaching in The Premiership (England). 'Luca', as he was known, won every medal there is in European football - he was captain in 1996 when Juventus won the European Cup. He represented his country 59 times with a tally of 16 goals. He was a powerful forward with excellent technique, and although never prolific in terms of goal scoring Vialli will be remembered for his spectacular goals and tremendous work rate.

Coaching Points:

- As you dribble with a defender along your left side reach out as if to place the bottom of your right foot on the top of the ball.
- Fake a push forward with the laces of the right foot.
- Take a little hesitation hop on your left foot and then push the ball forward again using the laces of your right foot.
- Reverse all aspects if defender is on your right side.

Stop & Poke

Coaching Points:

- As you dribble with a defender along your left, prepare to execute a 'drag back' by lifting your right foot onto the top of the ball and momentarily placing the sole there.
- Then, with a quick shift of the weight forward, take right foot off the ball.
- Then 'poke' the ball in the original forward direction with the toe of the left foot. The momentary hesitation, as if to reverse direction, followed by acceleration after 'the poke' will take you past the defender.
- Reverse all aspects to beat the defender to his/her left.

Waddle Move

Coaching Points:

- As you dribble with a defender along your left side, reach out and place the bottom of your right foot on the top of the ball.
- Take a little hesitation hop on your left foot and then push the ball forward again using the laces of your right foot.
- Accelerate past the defender.
- Reverse all aspects to beat the defender to his/her left.

Step-Over II Move

Coaching Points:

- Dribble in at opponent at speed until ball is in between feet.
- Left foot goes around the front of the ball as if to fake taking the ball to the inside across your body (to the right).
- Legs are now crossed; the weight is transferred to the right foot, with the ball on the (left) outside of your body.
- Outside of left foot comes back to take ball away and accelerate past the defender in opposite direction.
- Reverse all aspects to beat the defender to the right.

Beardsley Move

Coaching Points:

- While dribbling toward a defender fake a pass or shot to your left with your right foot.
- Exaggerate the movement by turning the hips right, then quickly to the left when changing direction.
- You should take a slight hop on your right foot (putting your right foot down) and take the ball right using the inside of your left foot.
- Reverse all aspects to beat the defender to the left.

Squeazy Push Turn

Although described as a 'turn', this technique actually takes the player 'past a defender'. Therefore is classified, by our coaching staff at Soccer Science, as a 'move'.

Coaching Points:

- With ball on the instep toe area, toe pointing down, lift the foot up and using the sole of the foot roll the ball a few inches in toward other foot.
- Then explode out by pushing the ball back out with the instep area of the foot.

Matthews II Move

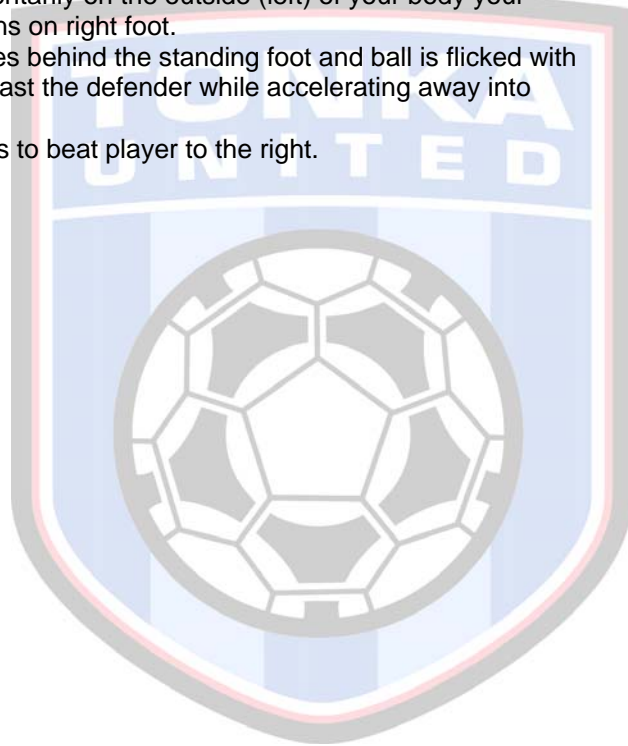
Coaching Points:

- With ball on the instep toe area, toe pointing down, push the ball a few inches in toward other foot.
- Drop the left shoulder and bend the left knee, while at the same time take a small hop onto the right foot.
- The ball is then played with the outside of the right foot changing direction and accelerating away into space.
- Reverse all aspects to beat player to the left.

Step Over Flick Move

Coaching Points:

- Left foot executes the initial part of a step-over (faking to play the ball diagonally across your body).
- With the ball momentarily on the outside (left) of your body your body weight remains on right foot.
- The right foot comes behind the standing foot and ball is flicked with inside of this foot past the defender while accelerating away into space.
- Reverse all aspects to beat player to the right.



7-10 & 10-14 Years

Foundation is key for players at this age in their learning as many players demonstrate poor technique. Although not all players will or should be able to perform these moves in a game, this is what we as coaches should be aiming for. Moves can be introduced in activities such as the Roxburgh warm-up, and many of the games for younger players. Attention should be paid to players technique and their ability to sell the move to an opponent. Progress players into pressure situations once technique has been refined but allow players success. Play 1v1's to a line, gate, goal, etc. to increase pressure on players and to allow them the opportunity to beat an opponent.

Key Factors:

- Go into the move slow
- Sell it to your opponent
- Accelerate into space away from opponent

Progressions:

- Fundamental; Demonstration & work on individual technique
- Increase speed of execution to a disc, cone or passive opponent
- Game related; situation with passive/semi-active opponent to increase players confidence and to demonstrate effectiveness.
- Game Condition; Allow players the opportunity to demonstrate a moves effectiveness in the full game. Give incentive for players to execute the move such as a goal or half a goal, or condition the game so that a move must be performed before a goal can be scored.

10-14 Years

Players should be constantly developing the skills learnt at the ages of 7-10 but with increased speed. Use the last section as a starting point for progressing players to performing turns and moves not only at game speed but more importantly within the game.

Ball Familiarity

All players with a ball dribbling using any part of the foot.

Variations:

- I/S of both feet only
- O/S of both feet only
- I/S of R/F & O/S of R/F only
- I/S of L/F & O/S of L/F only
- Sole of foot only

Use players to demonstrate different ways of using parts of the foot
Any combination you choose. Some examples include:

- I/S, I/S, O/S, O/S (same foot) repeat
- O/S of R/F, I/S of R/F, O/S of L/F, I/S of L/F repeat
- Every third touch use the sole of the foot.

The combinations are endless so use your imagination to stretch players ability and creativity.

Players do not spend enough time familiarizing themselves with the ball and so any exercises or ideas you can give to your players to practice has to be a good thing. Below are some combination ideas that can be used as a foundation to ball familiarization and ball mastery.

Step Ups (Sole Of The Foot)

Place one foot on top of the ball and simply change foot on top of the ball in a rhythm. Touch the top of the ball each time but do not stand on it.

Variation:

- Ball stays still but player moves around the ball whilst performing step ups on the ball.
- Move the ball backwards and forwards
- Sideways only
- As fast as possible for time limit

Sole Of Foot

Allow players to use both feet.

- Roll ball from heel to toe using the sole of the foot. Start off slow and increase speed. Make sure players use the full length of their feet working the ball from heel to toe.
- Make a circular motion with the ball using sole of foot.

Squeezy Push

Ball slightly in front of both feet. Place right foot on top of the ball and roll foot to the outside so that the ball moves slightly towards the left foot. As right foot rolls away squeeze the ball towards the ground pushing the right foot also towards the floor. The ball should pop out between both feet, repeat with left foot, work up a rhythm.

Variation:

- Roll foot inwards so that the ball pops out towards the outside of your feet.

Boxing The Ball (Inside To Inside Alternate Feet)

Ball between both feet, tap the ball from one foot to the other. Bend knees & relax as if jogging on the spot.

Variations:

- Ball remains in the same spot whilst player moves around the ball
- Move dribble around the area by tapping the ball alternately from foot to foot.

Drag Back Push Foundation

Start with the ball in front of the left foot. Drag ball backwards using the sole of the right foot and push ball to the right using the inside of the same foot. Stop the ball using the left foot and repeat. Build up speed slowly.

Drag Back Laces Foundation

Drag ball backwards using the sole of the right foot and when ball is level with standing foot push ball forwards using laces of the same foot. Stop ball with left foot and repeat.

Roxburgh Warm Up

Players dribble around area, on coaches command players have to stop their ball and go find another ball and dribble it away. After a couple of goes add a different variation. This is a simple warm-up but encourages players to keep their head up and look for a spare soccer ball. Add soccer balls to make it easier for players.

Variations to build upon (add one at a time):

- Stop their own soccer ball, go to a different ball and do # of step-ups, go to a different ball do # of side to sides, go to a different ball do # of scissors movements.
- Last ball players always dribble away, possibly add a move to the last ball such as a drag back, Cruyff, inside cut, outside hook.
- Flick it up and do # of juggles
- Right knee, left knee, head, butt

Make sure that if you incorporate a move such as a scissors or drag back that it is the last move in your sequence to emphasize an explosive change of pace. Use your imagination for this one and change variations dependent upon ability of players. Be specific in the tasks you create if your focus is on a particular topic e.g Sole of foot, inside of foot, control etc.

Variations

When players come across another player, line or disc they have to change direction and attack a new space at speed. Emphasize slow into the turn and a sharp change of pace & direction.

Variation:

- Players push pass the ball as if to kick it out of the area. Players have to sprint to try & keep the ball in play. Players must sprint & push themselves. Use inside cut & outside hook to keep ball in play.

Keep It In

In pairs 10 yards from side line. Player A passes the ball towards the sideline, players B runs & attempts to stop the ball from going out, keeping it in play. Player dribbles back to start point and feeds to partner.

Variations:

- I/s cut only
- O/s cut only
- Feed through players legs
- Starting position on the floor
- Keep ball in and play 1v1 with feeder back to starting line

Partner Grid Work

In a 10x10 grid players work in pairs with a ball each standing in opposite corners. Both players dribble to the same corner and perform an inside cut shielding the ball from partner.

Variations:

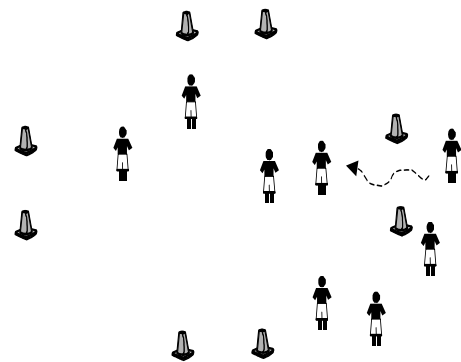
- Increase speed of move, 1st player back to their starting point.
- Outside hook only.
- Inside cut or outside hook to protect/shield and change direction followed by a step over to take ball back to the disc they came from.
- Only 1 player with a ball who is in charge of the game & decides which corner to dribble to. Other player provides some pressure. Start with a diagonal pass.
- Play 1v1 to an upturned disc. Players can only move along the sides of the grid. Either 1st to the disc they are dribbling to or back to starting point. Start with a diagonal pass each time.

Four Goal Soccer

Progress to a small sided game with four goals. Players can score in any of the four goals by dribbling through either side of the goals. The game has no boundaries as such but players should be aware of their playing area. Encourage players to change the point of attack.

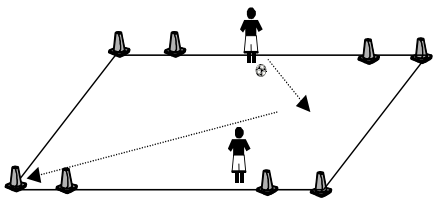
Variations:

- Score a point by passing to a team mate through gate. Team mate must receive the ball to score a point. Encourage good communication.
- Point/goal/half goal scored for each correctly executed drag back turn or push.



1v1 with 2 Gates/goals

Play 1v1 to 2 wide gates. Encourage players to use drag back turn, drag back push, Matthews feint, scissors etc. to change point of attack. Start by dribbling directly to 1 of the 2 gates and change point of attack with a slow approach and sharp change of direction.



1v1 To A Line

Player with the ball passes to opponent opposite to start the game. Player who passes the ball is not allowed to move off their line until their opponent takes a touch. Players try to gain possession and stop the ball on their opponents line. Game continues until a point is scored or it goes out of play behind either players goal line. The game continues when play drifts to the side into other players games. Each restart is taken alternately no matter who scores the goal.

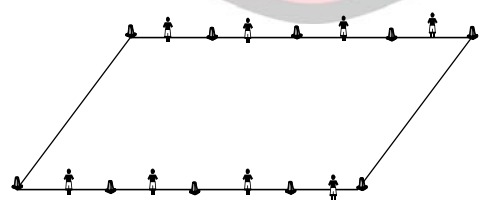


1v1 To Any Goal

Players play 1v1 but can score in any goal. Games are side by side and play continues anywhere in the area. Set up as a 1v1 ladder & play to a line, cone or goal. Start with an inside of the foot pass. Take it in turns starting the game no matter who wins each time.

Variation:

- Play to partners goal only.



1v1 To A Cone

Players have to gain possession and dribble towards a target cone scoring a point when touching the soccer ball against it.



1v1 To a Box/Gate

Players play 1v1 in an open area similar to shadow dribble. Players are given several target areas in which they can try to get into with the ball. Shadow dribble players are given a time limit, but now we give the players a target area in which to get into. Use a gate that players have to dribble through so that play is continuous.

Keep score and change partners frequently to heighten competition.

1v1 Shielding

Set up workable grids and assign 2/4 players per grid. 1v1 keep away within the grid. If you have four players have them rotate after time limit.

Players should continuously move the ball keeping it on their furthest foot. Emphasize the use of hands and arms to make themselves big and the use of their butt to increase distance between defender and ball. Players should know where the ball is at all times. Players of all sizes can effectively shield the ball so long as they demonstrate good technique.

3 Goal Wembley

There are 3 games of Wembley taking place at the same time. As soon as a player scores they rotate to the next game and so on and so forth. If one player and a goal keeper remain, wait until the next player has scored and continue the game.

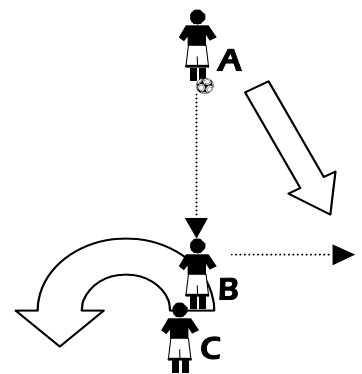
Back To Goal (1v1)

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:

- 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.

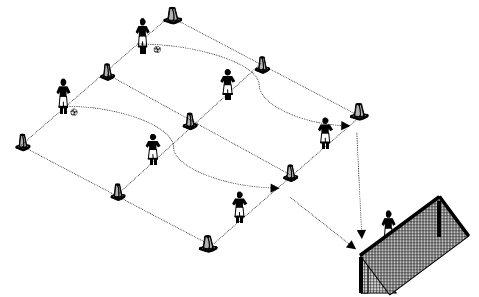
Once all the variations have been identified allow players to play still in their grids but with full pressure. The attacking player has a decision to make on how to best get to the end line.



1v1v1 to Large Goal

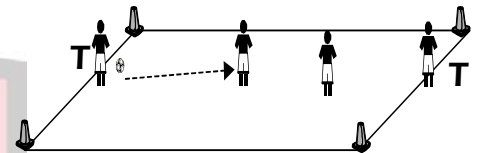
Players attempt to beat a defender in the first box and then if successful try to beat a second defender with the final reward being a shot on goal. Defenders stand on the back line of their box closest to their goal and are only allowed to come off their line when the attacker enters their box. You may add additional defenders and change the size of the defenders box, depending upon the age of your players; but make sure they experience some success.

Change defenders and attackers frequently. Several lanes can be set up side



1v1 w/Target Players

T (target player) plays ball into team mate once they have checked away taking passive opponent with them (Important). Player receives ball taking glance over shoulder to make decision to shield or turn. Aim is to pass ball to target player opposite to score a point. Player who scores point receives ball again from target player. Rotate target players after # of points.



1v1 "Megs"

Players play 1v1 in a designated area and score a point each time they manage to meg their opponent. Player with the ball is encouraged to keep the ball the ball moving and be creative as possible in an attempt to expose the defender.

Play 2 minute games and then change players around. Players keep their own score.

1v1 Shadow

In pairs, working between two discs facing each other both with a ball so that there is an imaginary line between the two discs. One player is in control of the game and works from disc to disc at random never crossing the imaginary line between their partner. Players must start in the middle each time.

The aim is for the leader to lose their partner (shadow) by moving the ball from side to side. Change who is in control after a few minutes.

Variations/restrictions to build up players level of skill

I/S of feet only

O/S of feet only (difficult and awkward)

I/S of feet, outside of feet to change direction

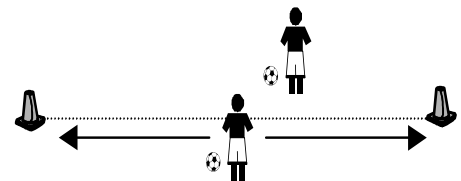
R/F only

L/F only

Sole of foot only

Point scored if they manage to lose their shadow and get to the up side down disc (creating a well for the ball) before their shadow. If you lose control of you soccer ball you lose control of the game.

Incorporate moves such as feints, scissors and step over. Progress to only one person having a ball, opponent is not allowed over the line but can attempt to stop ball touching disc and can steal if partner loses control over the line



A player's first touch is fundamental to the level at which they play the game. Which came first, the chicken or the egg? Juggling is a great teacher of control and should be used as an activity when players have any opportunity to be stood still, such as at the start or end of a session, or when you need an extra minute to organize your next practice. Although control involves the retraction or cushioning of a bodily surface, which is the opposite to juggling, they are complimentary to each other.

Important coaching points to remember when coaching control:

- Get your body in line with the ball.
- Select body surface.
- Relax body surface to cushion/control the ball.
- Guide the ball into space away from opponent, & to where the ball is to be played.

Players must experience controlling the ball with all parts of the body in a variety of combinations. Design, develop & progress sequences which build upon players skill level.

5-7 Years

Young players need to be presented with a fun activity, which will be your job as a coach to be as creative as possible.

7-10 Years

Passing & control are fundamental skills at any age but are essential if players are to progress to possession related activities later in this age range. First touch & control should also focus on creating space for the individual in situations that place increasing demands on players.

10-14 Years

The quicker players in this age range can get to game situations the better. This is where the foundation work in the years before pays dividend. The space you give players must be demanding taking players out of their comfort zone. With older players it may be a good idea to start at the game related stage & then if necessary work backwards.

14+ Years

Players should be placed in situations specific to their position. They should have experiences that replicate situations in which they will be controlling the ball in a game. Functional work is key for players and needs to be position specific.

Juggling/Keepy Ups

Variation is the key to juggling and needs to be made fun and interesting to players who in general do not practice enough in their own time. Juggling is great as an introductory and cool down activity which as a coach you should instill in your players to practice at any given opportunity. Allow players to call out their favorite thing in the whole world whilst juggling such as:

Each syllable is a juggle with a part of the body.

“I love poke mons”, “I love charazard”, “I like my coach” or “Ice cream“, etc.

The important factor to remember is that we are associating something each player enjoys with an activity that we would like them to practice in their own time. It is same principle of calling a game ‘Poke Mons’ or ‘Toy Story’ as opposed to ‘Tag’. Set your players realistic targets as opposed to how many juggles can you do. Set juggling combinations as homework for players but be strict in checking and monitoring who has been practicing and reward those players that have spent the time.

Variations:

- Thighs only, feet only, head only etc.
- Try juggling without backspin, which puts the foot in a locked position as if striking the ball.

Use combinations such as:

- R/thigh, l/thigh, head, foot (laces control)
- R/foot, l/foot, r/thigh, l/thigh
- Around the world

Use your knowledge as a coach and ability as a player to be creative in your combinations.

Avoid elimination games & practices & use juggling combinations as a means for players to re-enter the game or practice. It has already been stated that exercise as punishment should be avoided & makes more sense to use soccer specific skills where punishment would otherwise be used.

Eggsellent

Each player has a ball/egg and on the coach's command/signal players toss the ball/egg in the air and try to prevent the egg from breaking before it hits the floor.

Variations:

- Self feed from hands.
- No hands flick up ball in the air (variations).
- Control– turn, move or pass or shot (a means to an end).
- Laces control (imagine your foot is an elevator), thigh, chest etc.
- I/s of r/foot, l/s of l/foot (wedge)
- O/s of r/foot, o/s of l/foot (wedge)
- Create combinations of all the above
- Feed the ball for a partner
- After feeding to partner apply pressure

Note:

Change the name of the game to Bond 007 and the ball is now a bomb that Bond has to diffuse by touching it before it hits the floor. What are the players interested in at the moment? Use your imagination.

Cushion Control

Players work in groups of four, two feeders and two workers. Feeders stand still whilst workers control and then switch positions. Adds movement to the practice, Encouraging players to control the ball with different parts of the body and then move into space.

Variations: (similar to above)

- Thigh control.
- Chest control.

Note: Cushion control is the relaxation of the control surface, with the end result of getting the ball under control on the ground as quickly as possible.

Wedge Control “First touch is a pass to yourself”

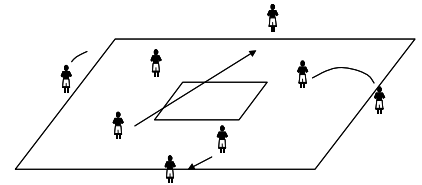
Wedge control focuses on the first touch as a change of direction. Use some of the ideas above and begin with players feeding to themselves and progress to a feed from a partner and then with pressure.

- I/s of r/foot, l/s of l/foot (wedge)
- O/s of r/foot, o/s of l/foot (wedge)
- Create combinations of all the above
- Use chest as a change of direction & creating space for the individual.

Emphasize where appropriate using the ground to take pace off the ball.

Yes Please!

Half the group have soccer balls standing around the outside of the square. All other players stand within a smaller square set within the large area. Players in the middle have to run to any of the outside players to receive a ball, pass it back and then run through the middle box before receiving another pass from a different player. Players must say yes please to receive a ball.

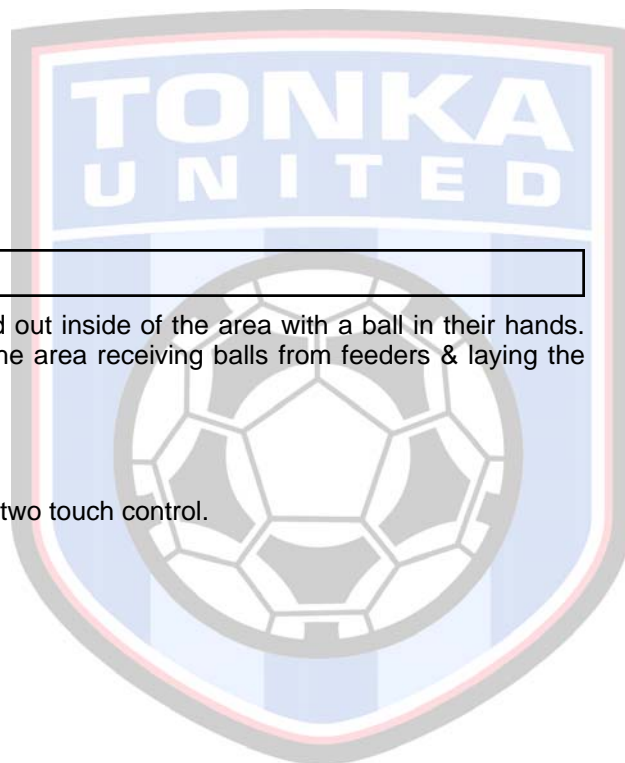


Variations:

- Two touches using inside of foot to control and pass.
- Use outside of foot to pass.
- One touch only.

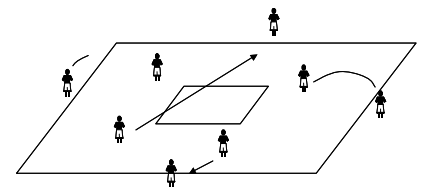
Feeder Variations:

- Along the floor
- Difficult bounce
- Header back
- Chest, thigh etc.



Yes Please 2!

Half the players are spaced out inside of the area with a ball in their hands. Other players run around the area receiving balls from feeders & laying the ball back.



Variations:

- Ball fed along ground, two touch control.
- One touch only.
- Chest control.
- Thigh control.
- Inside of foot control.
- Headed straight back.
- Head control/cushion.

Control Under Pressure

Similar set up as yes please with half the players spread out around the outside of the area. Players in the middle are paired as an attacker & defender. Attackers have to receive a ball from any of the outside players and play the ball back without an interception from defender. Begin with a pass/feed on the ground. Rotate attackers, defenders & feeders.

Variations:

- One touch only.
- Progress to balls in the air.
- Pass/feed is into space for player to receive & then pass to an open player on the outside.

Conkers ???

Player has both soccer balls. Passes one to their partner who controls ball to the side into space. Player passes second ball to partner who has to control and attempt to hit the first soccer ball. Repeat. Note that the player controlling the ball is not allowed to move closer to the ball when receiving the second pass.

Variation:

- Control with different parts of foot (inside of left foot, right foot. Outside of left foot and right foot).

Passing Rotation

In groups of 3 with varying distances between players; or create a kite shape with 4 players which offers width and depth (see short, short, long in 10-14 Years passing section).

- Receive i/s of r foot, pass i/s of r foot
- Receive i/s of l foot, pass i/s of l foot
- Receive i/s of one foot, pass o/s of same foot

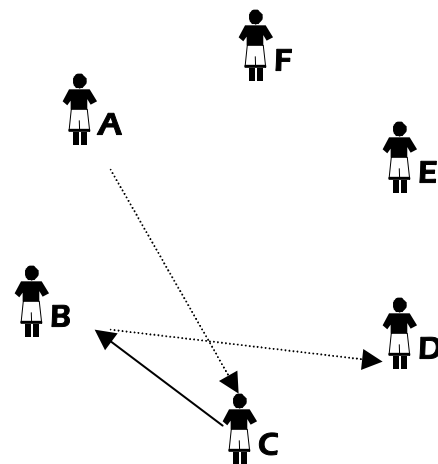
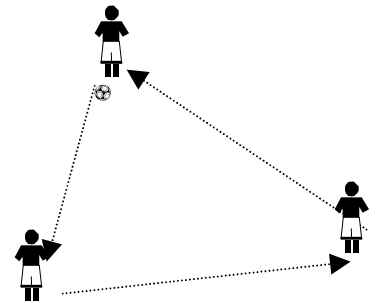
Coaching points:

- Open body shape when receiving
- Cushion ball when receiving, good first touch
- Quality pass

Variations:

In groups of 6 with varying distances apart

- Receive i/s of r foot, pass i/s of r foot in a clockwise direction all players follow their pass. There must be at least 2 players where the ball starts. Try 2/3/4 balls.
- First pass misses out a player, receiver sets ball back to the player who was missed out. Long, set back, long, set back (repeat).
A to C to B to D to C to E etc.
- As above but players follow their pass. Two players are needed where the ball starts.
- As above but as C sets the ball back to B they must run around B and back to their position to receive the set back from D.
- Try short, short, long (Start with a backwards pass). Using i/s of of both feet

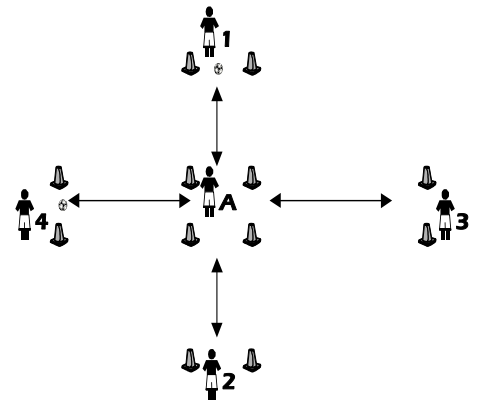


Sequence Control

In groups of 5, 1 player stands in the middle square as receiver and feeders stand between 1 of the 4 gates. Player in box receives a pass from each feeder in the sequence 1-2-3-4-4-3-2-1, playing the ball back through the gate where it came from. Feeders call out their number before passing each time. Two touch to begin with.

Variations:

- One touch only.
- Other foot.
- All feeds come from gate #1 along the ground, but the ball must be passed through each gate in sequence 1-2-3-4-4-3-2-1.
- As above but feeder calls out to receiver which gate they should pass through. A good early call is essential.
- Vary size (accuracy) & distance (short & long) between gates.



Check To the Ball

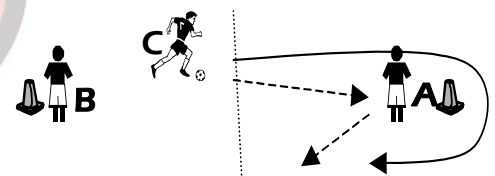
In pairs each player stands next to a disc, 1 with a ball. Player without ball checks towards the ball to receive a pass from partner. Player receives the ball with back foot opening up the body to take ball behind them. Player receives & dribbles around their own disc & then partner checks towards the ball to repeat.

Variations:

- Receive with inside of left foot/right foot.
- Receive with outside of left/right foot.

3's Passing & Receiving

In groups of 3, 2 players (A & B) stand in front of the 2 discs, player C with the ball stands at either disc. Player C dribbles towards player A to about half way playing a pass to player A & then runs around player C. Player A takes a touch & then plays a pass back to C to continue sequence. Rotate positions which should be continuous if executed correctly.



Variations:

- Pass from half way point but receiver plays a 1 touch pass. Player C must now make a sharper run to receive 1 touch pass back from A.
- As soon as player A receives they play a long pass immediately. Receiver is allowed two touches.
- Individual player makes the decision to play a short or long pass & also dictates how many touches receiver can take. How?

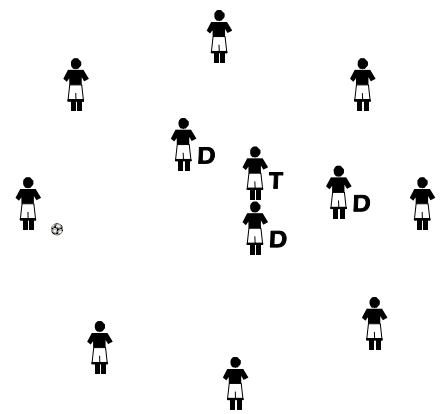
Player with the ball must make a call of "hold" if they wish the player to hold onto the ball (2 touches). If they want a 1 touch pass back they simply call "yes". Encourage communication for all variations. When player with the ball wishes to swap they call "take" and receiver dribbles ball away while C takes their position at the disc.

Possession To Target Player

Players around the outside aim to make 10 passes without defenders getting the ball & are encouraged to play to target player T as much as possible. Focus on players 1st touch.

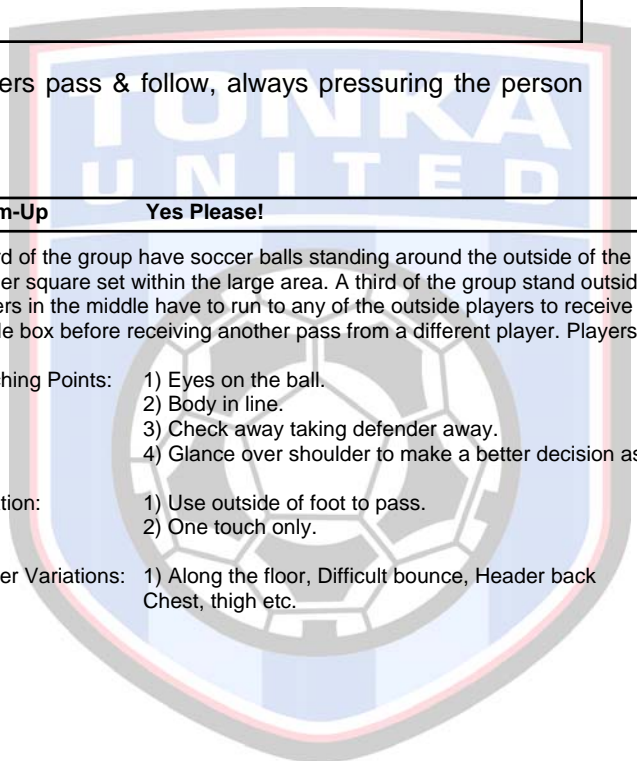
Variations:

- Player T is encouraged to play simple pass back.
- Player T is encouraged to play difficult pass behind them.
- Increase/decrease # of passes.
- Restrict # of touches.
- Increase/decrease space or defenders.



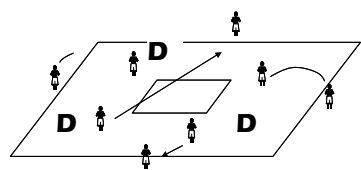
Pass & Follow

In small groups of 5/6 players pass & follow, always pressuring the person with the ball.



Warm-Up Yes Please!

A third of the group have soccer balls standing around the outside of the square. A third of the group stand within a smaller square set within the large area. A third of the group stand outside the inner square and act as defenders. Players in the middle have to run to any of the outside players to receive a ball, pass it back and then run through the middle box before receiving another pass from a different player. Players must say yes please to receive a ball.



- Coaching Points:
- 1) Eyes on the ball.
 - 2) Body in line.
 - 3) Check away taking defender away.
 - 4) Glance over shoulder to make a better decision as to what to do with the ball.

- Variation:
- 1) Use outside of foot to pass.
 - 2) One touch only.

- Feeder Variations:
- 1) Along the floor, Difficult bounce, Header back Chest, thigh etc.