

Wyoming Football Club



**A Parent's Guide
to help 5 to 9 year
old players make
friends with the
football**

Prepared by Kevin Best



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FOREWORD

This booklet has been prepared to help parents, to interact with their children and to introduce them to basic skills in their early years. Volunteer home practice skill work should concentrate on exercise numbers listed below:

- (A) 1, 7, 10, 17 for 5 year olds,
- (B) 1, 3, 7, 9, 10, 11, 16, 17 for 6 year olds,
- (C) 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18 for 7 year olds,
- (D) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 for 8 and 9 year olds.



There are 4 Phases, or Building Blocks, in which players must progress through, in their football years. The phases are: Discovery (Grassroots) (ages 5-9), Skills Acquisition (10-13), Games Training (14-17) and the Performance (18 and beyond).

Football Federation Australia in 2010 made the statement:

"It is not an exaggeration that Grassroots coaches have the biggest influence on the future of football in Australia. By conducting appropriate training sessions for the youngsters in your care, you really do touch the future."

Excerpt from Australian Coaching Council - "Aussie Sports Start"

"Children's natural energy and enthusiasm can be channelled into experiences where they learn about their bodies, and how to cope with others when sharing in movement, games and skill-based activities."

A report prepared by the Australian Players Football Association in 2019 revealed that all the past Australian players interviewed, who have played in the leading competitions around the world, agreed that when they were youngsters, the unstructured friendly play with mates and family and the practicing of skills by themselves, hour after hour, in the backyard or at a nearby park, were the major driving force, which developed their hunger and vision to realise a dream and play at the highest level. All played for a local community club and all spoke of the parental sacrifices of driving them to games and training and of being encouraged to train outside the club football training and weekend matches.

In the first grassroots Block, the development of excellence doesn't really apply yet and fortunately things are still quite simple. The object is to encourage beginners to make friends with the ball.

Children are active learners and they need to move to learn and. in the process, learn to move with skill, precision and enjoyment. Children's play is often spontaneous and unstructured, but, with appropriate encouragement, skills can be developed at the same time. Further, it is important for children to understand how a set of skills, once put together, make up a game that they can enjoy playing.

Every day, children participate in many movement and sporting activities. Clubs can provide the opportunity to further develop skills and to participate in appropriate competitive structures. But parents have a role to play, too. They are in a unique position to support and guide children in developing skills.

Kevin Best

INTRODUCTION



The Club's ABC Program has been developed as a supplement to the FFA Guidelines for the coaching of 5-9 year olds.

It provides a structured training program over a 5 year period. There are 18 basic skill exercises.

All exercises have been designed for simplicity and can be practised at home.

A player can start the Program at any age. The longer a player has been involved in the Program the better the results.

Players can be tested for their proficiency in each of the exercises by referring to "the challenge" and the target levels. The target must be achieved in successive repetitions or, by a time to beat, based on an average of 3 successive attempts. If the sequence is broken the player must start again.

Some skills will be more difficult than others, but the aim is to master them all by practice, practice, practice. Parents should err on the side of perfection with regard to the performance of each skill.

There will undoubtedly be a need for the parent, to seek technical developmental advice from a qualified coach on certain skills, with which a player has difficulty.

Upon the successful completion of the Program, the player will possess good basic skills, which can be further developed by current and future coaches.

The player will possess skills in ball control, heading, passing, striking, receiving, kicking with both feet, eye/foot co-ordination, sprinting, turning, feinting, juggling, dribbling and goalkeeping basics.

BENEFITS

Development of the player

ABC Program will produce a better balanced and better prepared player at the age of 10 than is presently produced. The skills obtained will encourage the player to be more adventurous in a game situation. It is designed to identify deficiencies of a player at an early age and to correct technique problems.

Involvement of the parent

ABC Program is designed with the emphasis on simplicity requiring a minimal amount of equipment on a small area of ground. It provides parents with various tasks, which can be practised, at leisure, in the backyard or the nearest park with their child. It is emphasised that, if possible, the skills should be demonstrated by a qualified coach. The exercises can be practised all year round.

RATIONALE

A more concentrated coaching program can supplement the development of the player at an early age.

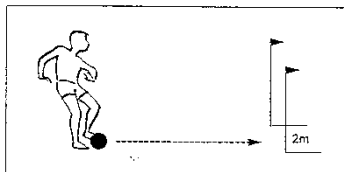
Numerous children drop out of football because they were never trained properly during their early years and cannot cope with the basic skills of the game.

Numerous players over the age of 10 cannot execute a full range of basic skills, because of bad habits developed over many years of neglect.

If good habits can be taught, it goes without saying, the child will be a better player.

PROGRAM SUMMARY

1. STRIKING THE BALL - USING INSIDE OF FOOT

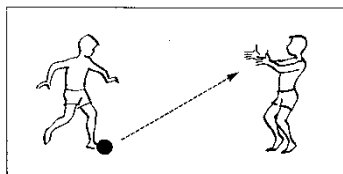


Firmly kick, using the inside of the foot, a stationary ball along the ground through a 2 metre gap (use flag posts) positioned at a set distance (metres) - 3 times each foot in succession.

Target:

L1	L2	L3	L4	L5
5m	10m	12m	14m	16m

2. STRIKING THE BALL - USING THE INSTEP

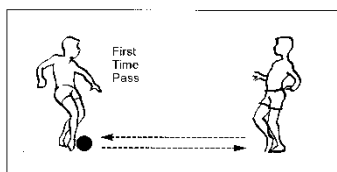


Kick a stationary ball, using the instep of the foot, into the arms of a receiver, positioned at a set distance (metres) - 3 times each foot in succession.

Target:

L1	L2	L3	L4	L5
3m	6m	10m	16m	20m

3. STRIKING THE BALL – A MOVING BALL

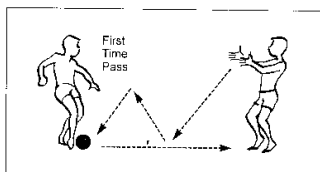


Kick a rolling ball, using the inside of the foot (left/right alternatively), along the ground, back to the server, positioned at a set distance (metres), with accuracy - 10 times each foot in succession. (Also try control with inside of foot and kick the ball back using the same foot).

Target:

L1	L2	L3	L4	L5
3m	6m	8m	10m	12m

4. STRIKING THE BALL - BOUNCING

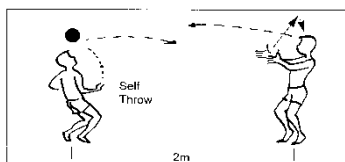


Kick a bouncing ball, using the inside of foot, on the second bounce (half volley), along the ground, back to a server, positioned at a set distance (metres) - 10 times each foot in succession. (Also try control with the inside of the foot and kick the ball back using the same foot).

Target:

L1	L2	L3	L4	L5
2m	4m	6m	8m	10m

5. STRIKING THE BALL - HEADING

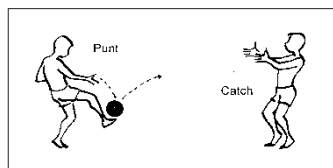


Self throw and head a soft sponge like ball on the full to a partner, positioned at a set distance (metres) - repeat 10 times in succession.

Target:

L1	L2	L3	L4	L5
1m	2m	3m	4m	5m

6. STRIKING THE BALL – IN THE AIR



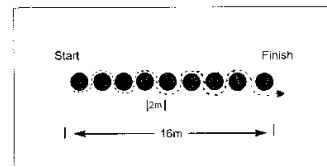
Punt the ball into the arms of a receiver, positioned at a set distance (metres) - 5 times each foot in succession.

(Also try a drop kick, and a self-thrown one-bounce volley.)

Target:

L1	L2	L3	L4	L5
2m	4m	6m	10m	14m

7. RUNNING WITH THE BALL (INSIDE OF FOOT)

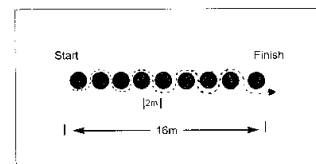


Dribble the ball, using the inside of the foot (left and right alternatively) through 9 cones placed in a straight line two metres apart - to be done in two successive attempts by bettering the target time (seconds).

Target:

L1	L2	L3	L4	L5
15 secs	12 secs	11 secs	10 secs	9 secs

8. RUNNING WITH THE BALL (OUTSIDE OF FOOT)

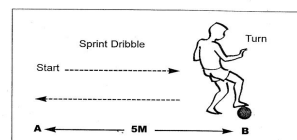


Dribble the ball, using the outside of the foot (left and right alternatively) through 9 cones placed in a straight line two metres apart - to be done in two successive attempts by bettering the target time (seconds).

Target:

L1	L2	L3	L4	L5
17 secs	14 secs	13 secs	12 secs	11 secs

9. RUNNING WITH THE BALL - TURNING

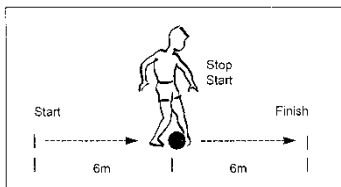


Dribble the ball 5m at speed, stop the ball on line, drag it back with the sole of the foot and dribble it, at speed, back to the start - repeat using each foot for a set number of times.

Target:

L1	L2	L3	L4	L5
5 times	10 times	20 times	30 times	40 times

10. RUNNING WITH THE BALL - CHANGING PACE

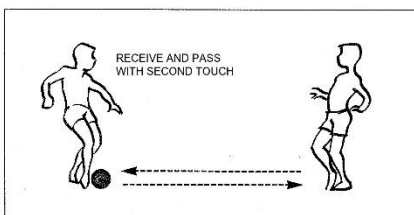


Dribble the ball 6 metres, stop the ball, using the inside of the furthest foot, quickly dribble again (6m) in a straight line, using the inside of the other foot - repeat using each foot for a set number of times. (Also try stopping the ball using the inside of the furthest foot - step over the ball with the other foot and dribble it back, using the outside of the same foot).

Target:

L1 L2 L3 L4 L5
A 10 times 20 times 30 times 40 times

11. FIRST TOUCH – ROLLING BALL

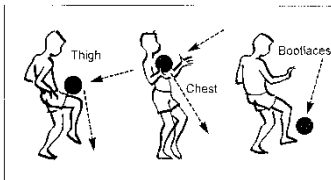


Control (within 1 pace), a rolling ball, kicked by a server at medium pace, and pass back with a quick second touch to server, positioned at a set distance (metres) - repeat 10 times left and right foot.

Target:

L1 L2 L3 L4 L5
A 6m 8m 10m 12m

12. FIRST TOUCH - IN THE AIR

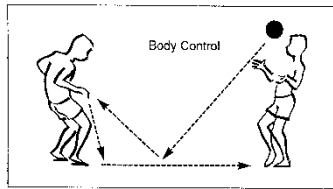


Control, using the selected different parts of the body, a ball thrown in the air and play it back to the server, positioned at a set distance:(metres), on the 2nd touch - 10 times for each (a) chest, (b) thigh. (c) instep.

Target:

L1 L2 L3 L4 L5
A 2m 4m 6m 8m

13. FIRST TOUCH - BOUNCING BALL

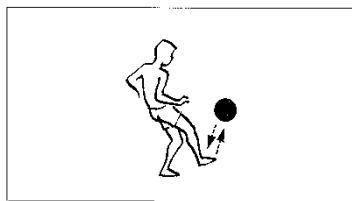


Control (within 1 pace), a bouncing ball (one bounce), on the chest area. thrown at medium pace and pass back. to server, positioned at a set distance (metres) - repeat 10 times.

Target:

L1 L2 L3 L4 L5
A 4m 6m 8m 10m

14. FIRST TOUCH – JUGGLING

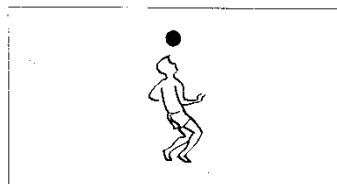


Juggle a ball in the air - no bounces - using feet only (left and right alternatively), for a set number of times in succession.

Target:

L1 L2 L3 L4 L5
A 2 times 5 times 10 times 20 times

15. FIRST TOUCH – HEAD JUGGLING

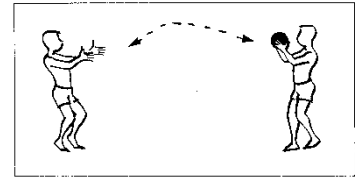


Head a soft sponge like ball into the air - no bounces - for a set number of times in succession.

Target:

L1 L2 L3 L4 L5
A 2 times 5 times 10 times 15 times

16. FIRST TOUCH - CATCHING BY GOALKEEPER

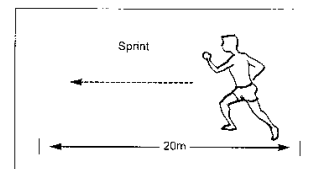


Catch the ball, on the full, in the arms, and bring it to the chest, thrown at medium speed and medium height, from a server, positioned at a set distance (metres) - repeat 20 times in succession.

Target:

L1 L2 L3 L4 L5
A 6m 12m 18m 24m

17. OFF THE BALL – SPRINTING

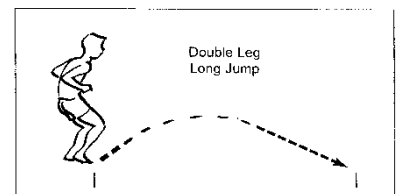


Sprint from a standing start over 20 metre - to be done in three successive attempts by bettering the target time (seconds).

Target:

L1 L2 L3 L4 L5
A 4.50 secs 4.20 secs 4.00 secs 3.75 secs

18. JUMPING FOR POWER



Double leg long jump (cm), from standing start, (measure toe to heel).

Target :

L1 L2 L3 L4 L5
A 130cm 140cm 150cm 160cm

FULL SEASON ACTIVITY SHEET

NAME _____

AGE _____ TEAM _____

DATE STARTED _____

No.	Tick below each exercise is practised	time an	Best Level Achieved	No.	Tick below each time an exercise is practised	Best Level Achieved
1				10		
2				11		
3				12		
4				13		
5				14		
6				15		
7				16		
8				17		
9				18		

1. STRIKING THE BALL - INSIDE OF FOOT

THE CHALLENGE: 6 attempts in succession (3 with right foot, 3 with left foot)

Recommended distance: Level 1 – Less than 10 metres,

Level 2 -10 metres, Level 3 -12 metres, Level 4 -14 metres, Level 5 -16 metres.

Reasons for learning this skill

If a player cannot pass the ball accurately it is unlikely that he/she will be effective in higher levels of the game. Anywhere on the field a player may be required to pass a stationary or near stationary ball to a team mate. The player will need to think about how hard he/she will kick the ball and what side of the team mate he/she will place the ball to guarantee possession is maintained. The skill can also be used to shoot for goal and particularly when taking penalty kicks.

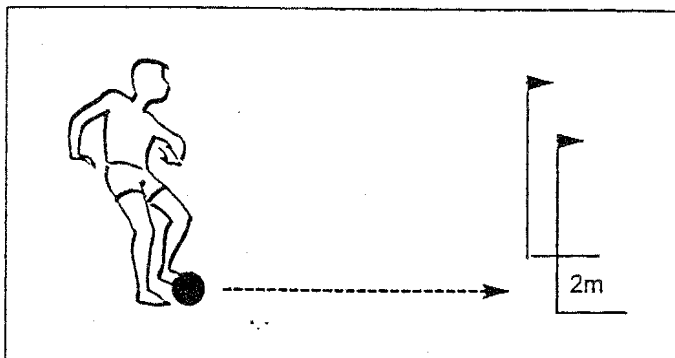
Organisation by coach or parent

Two players, one size 3 ball, 2 cones, one tape measure.

N.B. To avoid injury, players should warm up and stretch properly, before starting any exercises.

Task to practice - the challenge

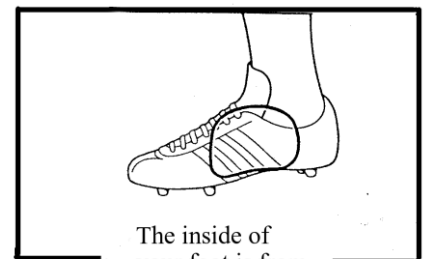
Firmly kick, using the inside of the foot, a stationary ball along the ground through a 2 metre gap (use safety flag posts) positioned at a set distance (metres) - 3 times each foot in succession.



Coaching hints - things to look for

When using the inside of foot:

- approach the ball straight on;
- take a long last stride to provide good balance comfortably beside the ball, to enhance power;
- point non kicking foot toward target with body weight resting on sole, knee slightly bent;
- kicking leg is turned outward from the hip until the inside of the foot is at right angles to the target, the knee is slightly bent, swung back from the hip;
- swing briskly forward from the hip, continue to swing forward toward the target through the centre of the ball, with the foot finishing in the air;
- the ankle muscles of the kicking foot are flexed (locked);
- the opposite shoulder to the kicking foot should be rotated toward the target leaning forward to keep the ball low;
- arms assist balance, head is steady and over ball;
- eyes focused on the ball



The inside of your foot is from your big toe back to your ankle

Additional skills practice

Control the ball with a soft first touch where the ball comes to rest within one step in front of the player who steps up to the ball to kick.

2. STRIKING THE BALL - USING THE INSTEP

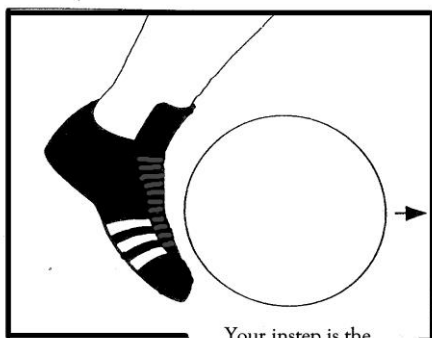
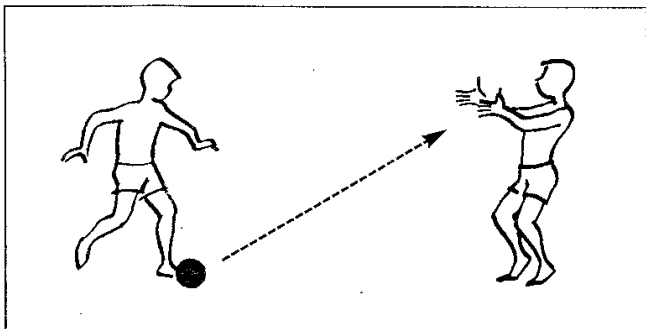
THE CHALLENGE : 6 attempts in succession (3 with right foot, 3 with left foot)

Recommended distance: Level 1 - less than 6 metres,

Level 2 - 6 metres, Level 3 - 10 metres, Level 4 - 16 metres, Level 5 - 20 metres.

Reasons for learning this skill

Anywhere on the field a player may be required to kick a stationary or near stationary. A player must have the ability to kick long balls with accuracy. Most long distance kicks are performed with the instep of the foot. Whether it is to pass to a team mate or to shoot for goal or simply to clear the ball from defence. Long free kicks, goal kicks, penalty kicks, crosses from the flanks, comers are other instances when the instep is used. The skill is also used by defenders to clear the ball from danger - long and wide. The instep kick is used to gain greater power and better elevation. It is the player's main attacking weapon.



Your instep is the area over your laces. It doesn't include your toes

Organisation by coach or parent

N.B. To avoid injury, players should warm up and stretch properly, before starting any exercises.

Two players, one size 3 ball, 2 cones, one tape measure.

Task to practice - the challenge

Kick a stationary ball, using the instep of the foot, into the arms of a receiver, positioned at a set distance (metres) - 3 times each foot in succession.

Coaching hints - things to look for

When using the instep of the foot:

- approach the ball from a slight angle;
- change your running gait (stride) if necessary to allow a long last stride to provide good balance comfortably beside the ball to enhance power;
- point non kicking foot toward target;
- with body weight resting on sole, knee slightly bent;
- the knee of the kicking leg is well bent throughout execution, swung well back from the hip and continues forward toward the target through the centre of the ball and finishes in the air;
- kicking foot toe is pointed down with ankle muscles flexed (locked);
- contact the ball through the middle with the instep of the foot (bootlaces of the boot) in the direction of the target;
- lean back, follow through, strike through centre lower part of the ball to propel the ball up;
- arms assist balance;
- head is steady and down even after the ball has been struck;
- eyes focused on the ball;
- power comes from whipping the lower part of the leg through the ball.

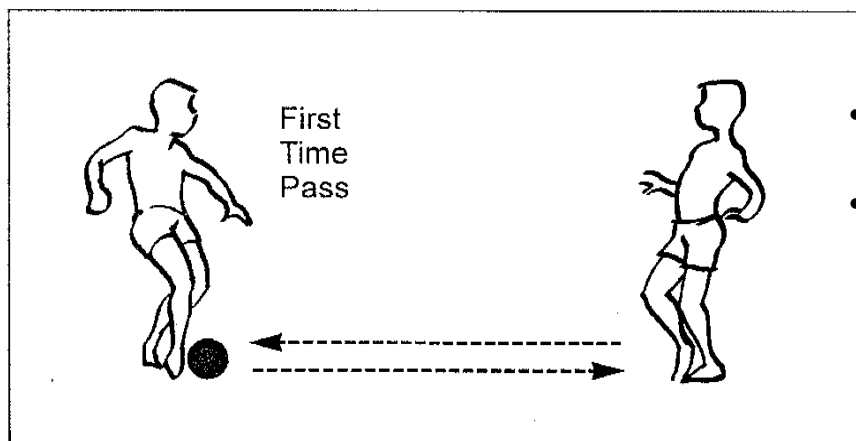
Additional skills practice

- Rolling ball.
- Ball kicked when the player is running whilst dribbling.
- Crossing the ball from the flanks.

3. STRIKING A MOVING BALL

THE CHALLENGE : 20 attempts in succession (10 with right foot, 10 with left foot)

Recommended distance: Level 1 - Beginners, Level 2 - 6 metres, Level 3 - 8 metres, Level 4 -10 metres, Level 5 -12 metres.



Coaching hints - things to look for

- When using the inside of the foot: get behind the flight of the ball as much as possible;
- approach the ball straight on;
- take a long last stride to provide good balance comfortably beside the ball, allowing for the roll of the ball;
- point non kicking foot toward target with body weight resting on

Reasons for learning this skill

Anywhere on the field a player may be required to pass a moving ball particularly one rolling towards the player, which is required to be kicked with the first touch either to pass to a team mate or to shoot for goal. A player must learn to ascertain the speed of an oncoming ball and quickly position his body accordingly - to enable the ball to be played. Good soccer is played quickly at one touch pace along the ground and is played the way the player is facing. Players must be conscious of this requirement and continually adjust their position to facilitate good play.

Organisation by coach or parent

N.B. To avoid injury, players should warm up and stretch properly, before starting any exercises. Two players, one size 3 ball, 2 cones, one tape measure.

Task to practice - the challenge

Kick a rolling ball, using the inside of foot (left/right alternatively), along the ground, back to the server, positioned at a set distance (metres), with accuracy - 10 times each foot in succession. (Also try control with inside of foot and kick the ball back using the same foot.)

sole, knee slightly bent;

- kicking leg is turned outward from the hip until the inside of the foot is at right angles to the target, the knee is slightly bent, swung back from the hip;
- swing briskly forward from the hip, continue to swing forward toward the target through the centre of the ball, with the foot finishing in the air;
- kicking foot ankle muscles are flexed (locked);
- the opposite shoulder to the kicking foot should be rotated toward the target
- leaning forward to keep the ball low;
- arms assist balance, head is steady and over ball;
- eyes focused on the ball.

Additional skills practice

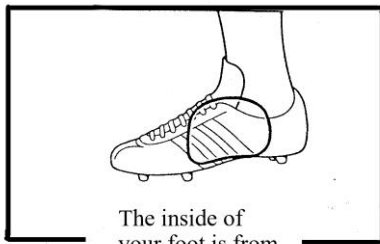
- Ball rolling across from the left and from the right.
- Ball rolling away from the player.
- Ball pass to a third player.
- Ball passed to the server who has sprinted to another position.
- Ball passed when player is on the run.

4. STRIKING A BOUNCING BALL

THE CHALLENGE: 20 attempts in succession (10 with right foot, 10 with left foot)

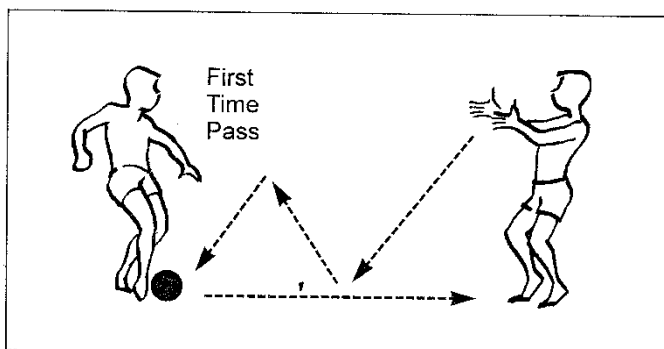
Recommended distance: Level 1 - Beginners, Level 2 - 4 metres, Level 3 - 6 metres, Level 4 - 8 metres, Level 5 - 10 metres.

Reasons for learning this skill



The inside of your foot is from your big toe back to your ankle

Anywhere on the field a player may be required to pass a bouncing ball, particularly one bouncing towards the player which is required to be kicked with the first touch either to pass to a team mate or to shoot for goal. The practice will enhance the eye and foot co-ordination of the player. It is important that players know when the ball is going to bounce and its speed, so that the ball can be passed along the ground to a team mate with the right speed and direction or controlled on the ground if the player is in space. A player must have good eye/foot co-ordination to enhance the ability to pass a bouncing ball to a team mate along the ground. Good soccer is played on the ground. The quicker a bouncing ball can be controlled on the ground the better. Players must be conscious of this requirement and continually adjust their position to facilitate good play.



Organisation by coach or parent

N.B. To avoid injury, players should warm up and stretch properly, before starting any exercises.

Two players, one size 3 ball, 2 cones, one tape measure.

Task to practice - the challenge

Kick a bouncing ball, using the inside of foot, on the second bounce (half volley), along the ground, back to a server, positioned at a set distance (metres) - 10 times each foot in succession.

Coaching hints - things to look for

When using the inside of foot:

- a player must be on his/her toes ready to adjust his/her position at all times;
- make every effort to get behind the flight of the ball;
- approach the ball straight on;
- take an adjusting last stride to provide good balance comfortably beside where the ball will bounce;
- point non kicking foot toward target with body weight resting on sole, knee slightly bent;
- kicking leg is turned outward from the hip until the inside of the foot is at right angles to the target, the knee is slightly bent, swung back from the hip;
- swing briskly forward from the hip, continue to swing forward toward the target through the centre of the ball, with the foot finishing in the air;
- kicking foot ankle muscles are flexed (locked);
- the opposite shoulder to the kicking foot should be rotated toward the target;
- leaning forward to keep the ball along the ground;
- arms assist balance, head is steady and, over ball;
- eyes focused on the ball.

Additional skills practice

- controlling a bouncing ball
- controlling a rolling ball and turning
- controlling a bouncing ball and turning

5. STRIKING THE BALL - HEADING

THE CHALLENGE : 10 attempts in succession

Recommended distance: Level 1- Beginners, Level 2 - 2 metres. Level 3 - 3 metres. Level 4 - 4 metres. Level 5 - 5 metres

Reasons for learning this skill

At this age, it is recommended that only a soft sponge like ball be used when training. Once a player has the confidence of heading a soft ball to one's self he/she should progress to heading the ball to another person or target. Just as you would hit a tennis ball, with a racquet, and with back swing and follow through, so too does the player when he/she heads the ball. The head must be brought back to create the back swing then pushed through the oncoming ball to the target with follow through. Some players have difficulty with this concept and don't actually head the ball but let the ball hit their head and take their eye off the ball. The player may have some success with poor technique, but he/she will not be able to propel the ball harder than it is travelling, unless there is forward thrust through the ball towards the target. To get maximum power from heading the technique has to be correct. Heading cannot be under rated. All players whether they are defending or attacking will be required to challenge for the ball in the air. A player must be prepared to force him/herself into the flight of the ball against opposition players. Heading is usually performed under pressure so practice should progress to that stage as soon as the player has mastered the correct technique. It should be noted that a good player, when the situation warrants, will bring the ball down under control if he/she has the time and space rather than head the ball.

Organisation by coach or parent

N.B. To avoid injury, players should warm up and stretch properly, before starting any exercises.

Two players, one soft sponge like size 3 ball, 2 cones, one tape measure.

Task to practice - the challenge

Self throw and head a soft ball on the full to a partner, positioned at a set distance (metres) - repeat 10 times in succession.

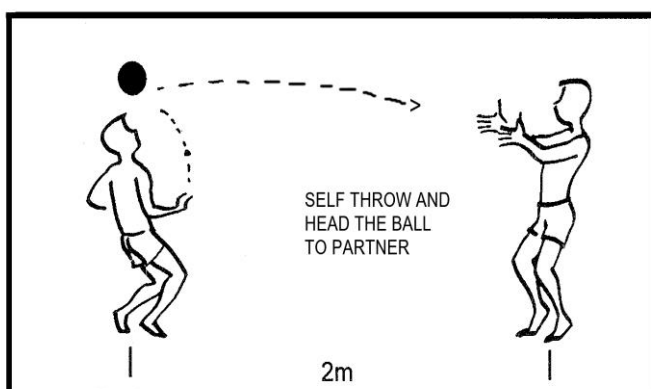
Coaching hints - things to look for

When heading:

- feet apart, one slightly ahead of the other pointing toward the target;
- body weight on the soles, the majority being on the back foot;
- knees bent slightly;
- body leaning slightly back (arching back from the hips is in fact our back swing);
- arms forward and towards the ball;
- head steady;
- appreciate flight and get as much of the body behind the ball, eyes focused on ball;
- keep the eyes open, watch ball on to the head, keep the tongue in the mouth;
- gently push through the ball with the head, contact the ball though the forehead not the top of the head or the nose area;
- head through the top half of the ball to head down;
- head through the bottom half of the ball to head up;
- the neck muscles are flexed;
- the head continues to move toward the target after striking the ball.

Additional skills practice

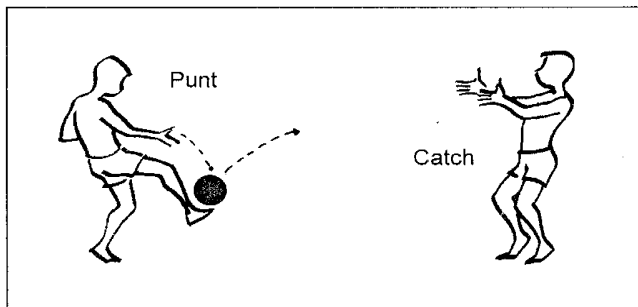
- In threes to create an angle
- Soccer tennis
- Head tennis



6. STRIKING THE BALL - IN THE AIR

THE CHALLENGE: 10 attempts in succession (5 with right foot, 5 with left foot)

Recommended distance: Level 1 - Beginners, Level 2 - 4 metres, Level 3 - 6 metres, Level 4 - 10 metres, Level 5 - 14 metres.



Reasons for learning this skill

Like any other skill, the striking of a high ball in the air or off the ground is not easy. It takes a significant adjustment to the player's preparation and execution to achieve a favourable outcome.

The striking (punting or volleying) of the ball, which is in the air, whether bouncing, or deflected off the receiver, or on the full is, to many, difficult to master. The player may have to play the ball forward or at an acute angle.

The goalkeeper is one player who should be able to strike a high ball well, as they are generally, in a controlled situation, with the ball under control in their hands, when executing the kick.

For field players, the obvious first priority is to control the ball on the ground with the first or second touch. In tight situations, the player's option may be to kick the ball, whilst it is off the ground and in the air. The circumstances of your position, in the field of play, will determine how to strike it. It may be a defensive clearance, a shot at goal or a pass to a team mate (See Diagram 1).



Before striking the ball it is so important that your body position is right behind the flight of the ball, so you are not stretching for the ball. Obviously, as the ball is in the air and ball control has been ruled out, it is important that you do not make the situation worse by kicking the ball higher to a team mate. It would be OK, when clearing the ball, but for shooting and passing, it is better if you are more precise. In this situation, the player must attempt to have the knee, of the striking leg, over the ball at impact. Goalkeepers are currently being taught to side volley the ball, which allows more velocity with less height and more

distance, if performed properly. If side kicking, the knee should be level with the ball on impact. It is the same technique that a player uses, who volleys the ball at an acute angle, e.g 90 degree (See diagram 2).



Organisation by coach or parent

Two players, one size 3 ball, 4 cones and a tape measure. N.B. To avoid injuries, players should warm up and stretch properly, before starting any exercises.

Task to practice - the challenge

The player is required to punt (kick) the ball into the arms of another player or person who is positioned a set distance away. The challenge is to perform the task 5 times with each foot (left and right) in succession. The receiver must be able to catch the ball without moving. If the successive routine is broken the player must start again. As well as technique awareness, emphasis should also be on accuracy over the 10 attempts.

Coaching hints - things to look for

- Determine the velocity of the ball.
- Get behind the flight of the ball.
- Ascertain where you will strike the ball.
- Ascertain what kicking height, and if low height is required, have your knee over or to the side of the ball upon impact.
- If side on kicking, turn side on and follow through at the target with your whole body returning to face the target. (See diagram 2)

Additional skills practice

- Try a game of forcing back.
- In front of goal, have players volley punt the ball into the goal on the full.
- Have the player bounce the ball in front of goal to volley the ball into goal on the full.

7. RUNNING WITH THE BALL - INSIDE OF FOOT

THE CHALLENGE : The average of 3 attempts in succession (using the inside of the foot). Recommended time: Level 1 - Beginners, Level 2 - 12 secs, Level 3 - 11 secs, Level 4 - 10 secs, Level 5 - 9 secs.

Reasons for learning this skill

Dribbling is one of the finer parts of the game and will be a valuable asset to any player, particularly in tight situations. It will develop opportunities for better field positioning. A player must be able to run with the ball whilst evading defenders by cutting the ball back across his/her body whilst keeping control of the ball. A player when he/she receives the ball will have to decide whether to pass to a team mate, shoot for goal or dribble. This skill will give the player confidence to dribble at defenders and enhance the player's balance (weight distribution) whilst on the ball. A player should be coached "split vision" (have your eyes half on the ball and half looking ahead and around the field whilst dribbling). A coach will generally advise players not to dribble in tight situations in the back third of the field but rather to pass the ball out quickly or clear long. Also, some coaches advise players to think to pass in the first instance then to dribble as a last resource. Which ever is the situation, if a player cannot dribble under pressure it will limit his/her ability to maintain possession for the team.

Organisation by coach or parent

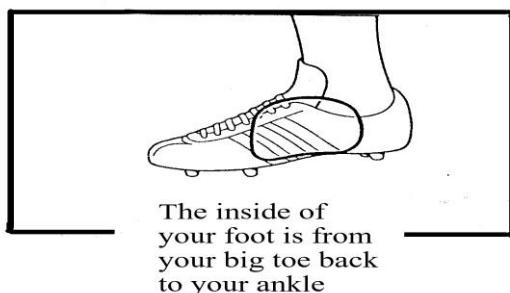
N.B To avoid injury, players should warm up and stretch properly, before starting any exercises.

Two players, one size 3 ball, 9 cones, one tape measure, one stop watch. If available, use approved safety poles in place of cones to enhance the realism of an opposition player.



Task to practice - the challenge

Dribble the ball, using the inside of the foot (left and right alternatively) through 9 cones placed in a straight line two metres apart - to be done in two successive attempts by bettering the target time (seconds).



The inside of your foot is from your big toe back to your ankle

Coaching hints - things to look for

When dribbling:

- shorter running strides to ensure easy contact with the ball;
- keep the ball close to the feet;
- slow jogging to three-quarter pace movement;
- push the ball softly ahead;
- keep the ball about one pace away to allow for a quick change of direction;
- to provide doubt in the opposition go through the motions to strike the ball hard then at the last second softly cut the ball back using the inside of the foot;
- have your eyes half on the ball and half looking ahead and around the field whilst dribbling i.e. "split vision";



- head up to remain aware of the changing circumstances in the game;
- protect the ball when under pressure by placing the body between the player and the ball and controlling with the furthest foot.

Important Progressive training practice

Familiarisation of moving the ball around using the sole of the foot.

Start with foot on ball as per below photo.

1. Roll the ball across your body to the other foot using the sole of the foot and control it using the sole of the foot of the other foot. Repeat 20 times side to side.
2. Take the foot off the ball and place it beside the ball whilst at the same time placing the other foot (the standing foot) on to the ball. Repeat 20 times.
3. Roll the ball backwards and spin your body 90 degrees facing the ball and control the ball with the sole of the same foot. Repeat 20 times each leg.
4. Roll the ball forward and control with the same foot. Repeat 20 times each leg.

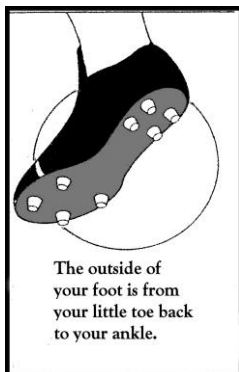
8. RUNNING WITH THE BALL - OUTSIDE OF FOOT

THE CHALLENGE : The average of 3 attempts in succession (using the outside of the foot) **Recommended time:** Level 1 - Beginners, Level 2 - 14 secs, Level 3 - 13 secs, Level 4 - 12 secs, Level 5 - 11 secs.

Reasons for learning this skill

The technique of using the outside of the foot will enable the player to fend off opposing players and keep the players body between the ball and the opponent. Dribbling is one of the finer parts of the game and will be a valuable asset to any player, particularly in tight situations. It will develop opportunities for better field positioning. A player must be able to run with the ball whilst evading defenders by changing direction and by maintaining possession. A player when he/she receives the ball must decide whether to pass to a team mate, shoot for goal or dribble. This skill will give the player confidence to dribble at defenders, enhance the player's balance (weight distribution) whilst on the ball. A player should be coached "split vision"

(have your eyes half on the ball and half looking ahead and around the field whilst dribbling). A coach will generally advise players not to dribble in tight situations in the back third of the field but rather to pass the ball out quickly or clear long. Also, some coaches advise players to think to pass in the first instance then to dribble as a last resource. Which ever is the situation, if a player cannot dribble under pressure it will limit his/her ability to maintain possession for the team.



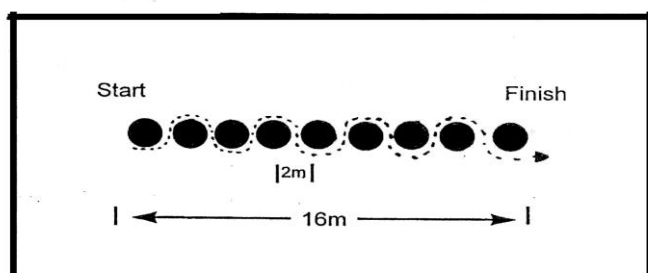
Organisation by coach or parent

N.B To avoid injury, players should warm up and stretch properly, before starting any exercises.

Two players, one size 3 ball, 9 cones, one tape measure, one stop watch. If available, use approved safety poles in place of cones to enhance the realism of an opposition player.

Task to practice - the challenge

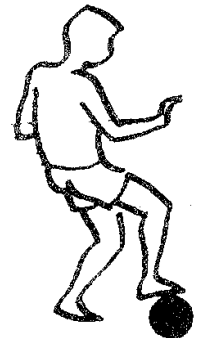
Dribble the ball, using the outside of the foot (left and right alternatively) through 9 cones placed in a straight line two metres apart - to be done in two successive attempts by bettering the target time (seconds).



Coaching hints - things to look for

When dribbling:

- shorter running strides to ensure easy contact with the ball;
- slow jogging to three-quarter pace movement;
- push the ball softly ahead using the outside of the foot;
- keep the ball about one pace away to allow for a quick change of direction;
- have your eyes half on the ball and half looking ahead and around the field whilst dribbling i.e. "split vision";
- receive an opponent by a change of direction;
- protect the ball when under pressure by placing the body between the player and the ball and controlling with the furthest foot.



Important Progressive training practice

Familiarisation of moving the ball around using the sole of the foot

Start with foot on ball as per below diagram.

1. Roll the ball across your body to the other foot using the sole of the foot and control it using the sole of the foot of the other foot. Repeat 20 times side to side.
2. Take the foot off the ball and place it beside the ball whilst at the same time placing the other foot (the standing foot) on to the ball. Repeat 20 times.
3. Roll the ball backwards and spin your body 90 degrees facing the ball and control the ball with the sole of the same foot. Repeat 20 times each leg.
4. Roll the ball forward and control with the same foot. Repeat 20 times each leg.

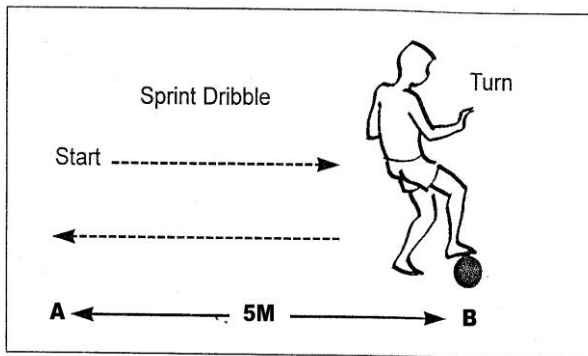
9. RUNNING WITH THE BALL - CHANGING DIRECTION

THE CHALLENGE No.1: The recommended number of attempts in succession (half with right foot, half with left foot)

Recommended repetitions: Level 1 - Beginners, Level 2 - 10 times, Level 3 - 20 times, Level 4 - 30 times, Level 5 - 40 times.

THE CHALLENGE No.2: The average time, after two attempts in succession.

Recommended times: Level 1 – Beginners, Level 2 – 22 secs, Level 3 – 20 secs, Level 4 – 18 secs, Level 5 – 16 secs.



Reasons for learning this skill

During a game every player should be looking for the best option for the movement of the ball for the best advantage of the team. There will be times when there are no positive options in front of the player and he/she has to turn with the ball to look for further options behind and to the side. This could happen anywhere on the field. It is in the interest of the player to keep a watchful attention to the movement of all players on the field to assess the options available and to always have an "escape route". One situation is when a player is required to get the ball out of trouble quickly. If the player has no other options whilst dribbling he/she must be able to stop the ball and start dribbling in another direction e.g. reverse, and at the same time protecting the ball from the opposition and looking for further options to pass to a team mate or to shoot for goal or to dribble.

Organisation by coach or parent

N.B. To avoid injury, players should warm up and stretch properly, before starting any exercises.

Two players, one size 3 ball, 2 cones, one tape measure.

Task to practice - the challenge

1. Dribble the ball 5 metres at speed, stop ball on line, drag it back with the sole of the foot and dribble at speed back to the start - repeat using each foot for a set number of times.
2. Dribble the ball 5 metres at speed from A, stop ball on line (B), drag it back with the sole of the foot and dribble at speed back to the start (A) then perform another turn quickly back to B. Do 5 turns in all and return to the start (A). Perform 2 times and take an average.

Coaching hints - things to look for

- shorter running strides to ensure;
- easy contact with the ball;
- keep the ball close to the feet;
- slow jogging to three-quarter pace movement;
- push the ball softly ahead;
- head up to remain aware of the changing circumstances in the game;
- when wanting to turn, step up beside the ball and place the other foot onto the ball with the sole of the foot;
- when the ball is under control bring the foot on the ball back causing the ball to roll backward;
- the speed of the ball should be ample to allow the player to turn and within two paces be able to start dribbling again in the opposite direction;
- protect the ball when under pressure by placing the body between the player and the ball or keeping it at the furthest point.

Additional skills practice

- Cruyff turn
- Back heel
- Inside turn
- Outside turn

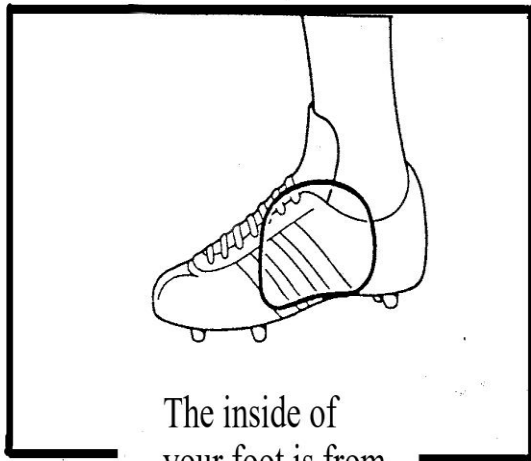
10. RUNNING WITH THE BALL - CHANGING PACE

THE CHALLENGE: The recommended number of attempts in succession (half with right foot, half with left foot)

Recommended repetitions : Level 1 - Beginners, Level 2 - 10 times, Level 3 - 20 times, Level 4 - 30 times, Level 5 - 40 times

Reasons for learning this skill

When dribbling a player should be looking for options to pass to a team mate or to shoot for goal or to dribble further. A player will regularly be harassed by an opponent who is trying to win possession of the ball. One of the best ways to lose an opponent even if he is faster is to put him/her into two minds about what you intend to do with the ball. One of the tactics that can be employed is to dribble hard then quickly stop the ball then to dribble hard again in the same direction whilst at all time protecting the ball from the opponent. A player should perform this change of pace early when he/she receives the ball to put the defender in two minds from the outset. Leaving doubt in the opposition, a player will be a great asset in creating space for him/herself.



The inside of your foot is from your big toe back to your ankle

Organisation by coach or parent

N.B. To avoid injury, players should warm up and stretch properly, before starting any exercises.

Two players, one size 3 ball, 3 cones, one tape measure.

Task to practice - the challenge

Dribble the ball 6 metres, stop the ball, using the inside of the furthest foot, quickly dribble again (6m) in a straight line, using the inside of the other foot - repeat using each foot for a set number of times, (Also try stopping the ball using the inside of the furthest foot - step over the ball with the other foot and dribble it back, using the outside of the same foot.)

Coaching hints - things to look for

- shorter running strides to ensure easy contact with the ball;
- keep the ball close to the feet;
- slow jogging to three-quarter pace movement;
- push the ball softly ahead;
- head up to remain aware of the changing circumstances in the game;
- deceive an opponent by a change of pace or/and direction;
- slowing down whilst shielding the ball or even stopping then feinting to turn to go back then accelerating ahead away from that spot;
- protect the ball when under pressure by placing the body between the player and the ball and controlling with the furthest foot.

Additional skills practice

- Stop, feint to go forward, turn.

11. FIRST TOUCH - THE ROLLING BALL

THE CHALLENGE : 10 attempts in succession

Recommended distance: Level 1 - Beginners, Level 2 - 4 metres, Level 3 - 6 metres, Level 4 - 8 metres, Level 5 - 10 metres.

Reasons for learning this skill

The control of the ball is essential in the game, as without control the players are rudderless. It is like driving a vehicle without a steering wheel. Good players always have time on the ball. They are always looking for space on the field away from any opposition player. They also have the discipline to get to the ball as quickly as possible even if there is no opposition. An analogy to illustrate this observation is: "The way you cross a busy road. Do you cross slowly and wait for the vehicle to just miss you or do you walk quickly and reach the other side well before the vehicle arrives?" Extra seconds allow players to have time on the ball before being challenged for possession. More time on the ball allows you to decide a better course of action. The first touch of the ball relies on a series of probabilities:

- How you arrive at the spot. Be aware that the ball will not always come straight to you, so be prepared to quickly adjust your position.
- What part of the body will you use to control the ball with your first touch.
- You could be running away from the ball player.
- You could be running toward the ball player.
- You could be stationary.
- You could have free space around you.
- You could be tightly marked by an opposition player.

POSITIONING - Your object is to get behind the ball as quickly as possible so that you can relax and cushion the ball with one foot just off the surface in the air, with your other foot holding you up and supporting your next motion.

In most situations, the first to the ball wins the ball and then, to maintain possession, may need to use their body to shield the ball away from an opponent or two.

As long as you are in contact with the ball, you are entitled to shield the ball from someone who doesn't.

It is far better to control a ball when it comes into the proximity of the player, irrespective of the difficulty, rather than to let it pass unattended, particularly if you don't know who is behind you. **TECHNIQUE** - The correct posture is to control the ball with your body slightly side on, not front on, and to use your furthest foot. Let the ball come past your

standing foot (see diagram left).

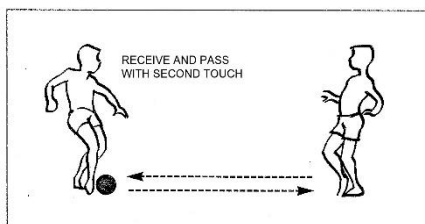
In other words, if you turn side on with your left shoulder facing the ball, you would use the inside of your right foot for the first touch.

By doing this avails you of several options for your second and third touch.

It is important that by standing side on gives you better vision of what's happening around you and offering more options than only looking from where the ball comes.

EXECUTION - A quick second touch can be used to put doubt in an opposition player who will react to your first touch. It is very successful if you can execute a "one two" or "left right" or "right left" if facing an opponent. The quicker the better, using each foot, in sequence.

A third touch will present itself, which you will deal with, and be dependent on, the clear space you have created or which is presented.



OPTIONS -

- (A) 180 degrees turn behind: One of these important and effective options is to slow the ball progress with one foot whilst immediately using the other foot to progress the movement of the ball along the same path, but under control, together with you turning 180 degrees. In plain terms, it could be classified as similar to a "stop start" done as quickly as possible.
- (B) 90 degrees turn right: Side on stance with left shoulder towards ball. Only use your furthest foot (in this example your right foot) with a 90 degrees angle and

with a first touch to the right and quick second touch in desired direction.

- (C) 90 degrees turn left: Same setup as (A) but this time only use a first touch to the left just behind your standing foot and a quick second touch in desired direction immediately after turning left yourself following the ball.

Organisation by coach or parent

N.B. To avoid injury, players should warm up and stretch properly, before starting any exercises.

Two players, one size 3 ball, 2 cones, one tape measure.

Task to practice - the challenge

Control (within 1 pace), a rolling ball along the ground thrown at medium pace and pass back to server, positioned at a set distance (metres) - repeat 10 times.

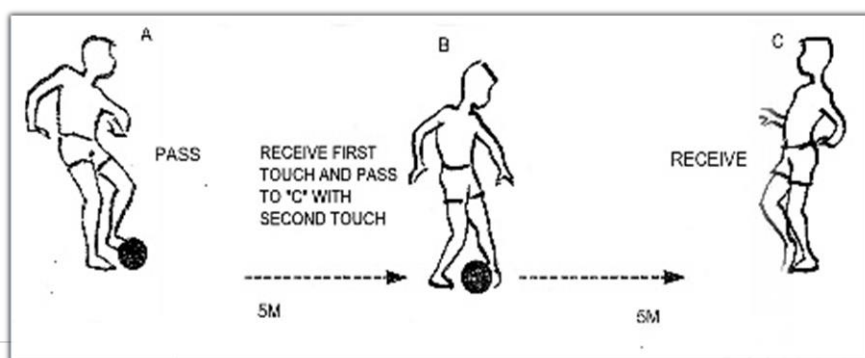
Coaching hints - things to look for

When receiving the ball:

- position in the line with the movement of the ball as quickly as possible;
- decide which foot should be used and body turning slightly side ways;
- adopt a relaxed and balanced position with your one foot holding you up taking all the weight and the other foot, just centimetres off the ground, used to cushion the ball, before the receiving surface is exposed to the ball;
- withdraw the receiving surface when the ball makes contact, so the ball can be cushioned by the furthest foot beside your body;
- angle the receiving surface so as to present you with an advantage for the next action;
- the eyes are focused on the ball throughout.

Additional skills practice

- Control and turn
- Control and shoot



12. FIRST TOUCH - IN THE AIR

THE CHALLENGE: 30 attempts in succession (10 with chest, 10 with thigh, 10 with the instep of the foot) Recommended distance: Level 1 - Beginners, Level 2 - 2 metres, Level 3 - 4 metres, Level 4 - 6 metres, Level 5 - 8 metres.

Reasons for learning this skill

Not all balls that come to the player are on the ground. If the ball comes in the air, the ball must be controlled by a part of the body in the air and brought to the ground as quickly as possible to set the player up for his/her second touch. The player must get behind the flight of the ball as quickly as possible, and be as relaxed as much as possible when contact is made to cushion the ball and direct it in the desired direction. The player could use the chest, the thigh or the instep of the foot. Other options for the player are to head the ball straight to a team mate or to head for goal. The skill used will depend on the pressure exerted by the opposition. The more time that a player has the easier it is to control the ball.

Organisation by coach or parent

N.B. To avoid injury, players should warm up and stretch properly, before starting any exercises.

Two players, one ball, 2 cones, one tape measure.

Task to practice - the challenge

Control, using the selected different parts of the body, a ball thrown in the air and play it back to the server, positioned at a set distance (metres), on the 2nd touch - 10 times for each (a) thigh, (b) chest, (c) instep.

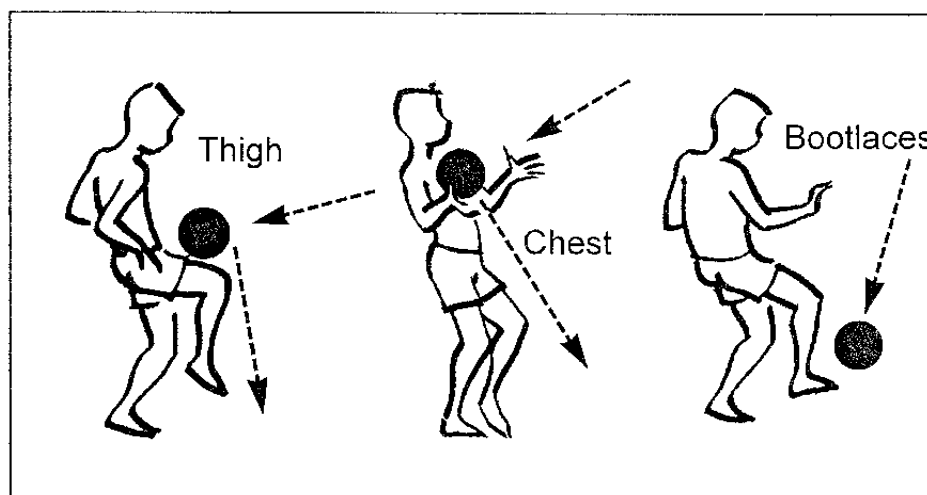
Coaching hints - things to look for

When receiving the ball:

- position in the line with the movement of the ball as quickly as possible;
- decide which part of the body should be used;
- let the weight of the body rest entirely on the non receiving leg;
- adopt a relaxed and balanced position before the receiving surface is exposed to the ball;
- withdraw the receiving surface when the ball makes contact so the ball can be cushioned onto the receiving part of the body and will fall to the player's feet;
- the first touch should set up the player for the second touch;
- the eyes are focused on the ball throughout.

Additional skills practice

- Shooting
- Control along the ground
- Volleying in the air



13. FIRST TOUCH - THE BOUNCING BALL

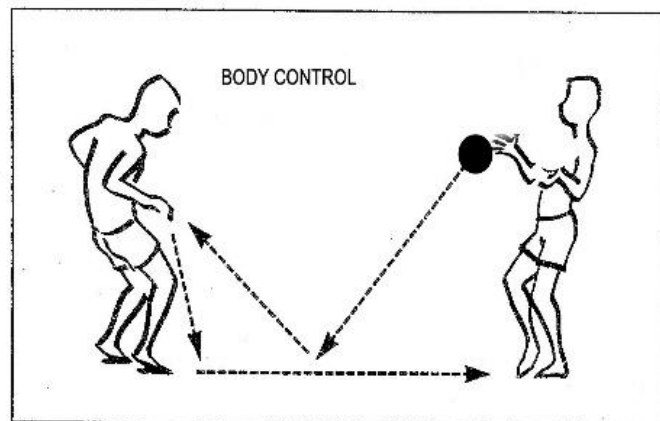
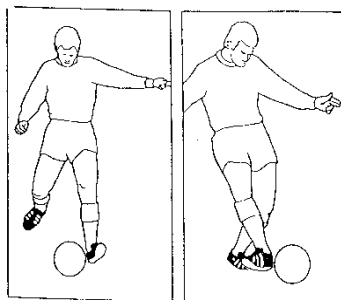
THE CHALLENGE : 10 attempts in succession

Recommended distance: Level 1 - Beginners, Level 2 - 4 metres, Level 3 - 6 metres, Level 4 - 8 metres, Level 5 - 10 metres.

Reasons for learning this skill

In most situations the first to the ball wins the ball. The ball however will not always sit up for the player and he/she will need to use their body to advantage. The skill may be used all over the field. The more difficult ball is the one that bounces in front of the player which is best cushioned by the body and brought under control with the second touch on the ground by the foot. It is far better to control a ball when it comes into the proximity of the player, irrespective of the difficulty, rather than to let it pass unattended. The task is made more difficult if an opponent is also fighting for the ball. Practising this

skill will eradicate the fear that some players have of the ball hitting them particularly in the mid body area e.g. the stomach. It will also illustrate the importance of getting the body behind the ball and its flight.



Coaching hints - things to look for

When receiving the ball:

- position in the line with the movement of the ball as quickly as possible;
- decide which part of the body should be used;
- adopt a relaxed and balanced position before the receiving surface is exposed to the ball;
- withdraw the receiving surface when the ball makes contact so the ball can be cushioned onto the receiving part of the body and will fall to the player's feet;
- angle receiving surface so as to play an advantage for the next action;
- the eyes are focused on the ball throughout.

Additional skills practice

- Throw-ins - ball back to the thrower

Organisation by coach or parent

N.B. To avoid injury, players should warm up and stretch properly, before starting any exercises.

Two players, one size 3 ball, 2 cones, one tape measure.

Task to practice - the challenge

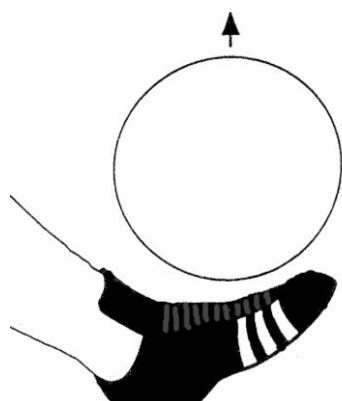
Control (within 1 pace), a bouncing ball (one bounce), on the chest area, thrown at medium pace and pass back to server, positioned at a set distance (metres) - repeat 10 times.

14. FIRST TOUCH - JUGGLING

THE CHALLENGE :The recommended number of attempts in succession (alternately using the right foot and with left foot)

Recommended repetitions: Level 1 - Beginners, Level 2 - 2 times, Level 3 - 5 times, Level 4 - 10 times, Level 5 - 20 times.

Reasons for learning this skill



This skill will be used alternatively), for a set every time the player touches the ball. The skill will enhance the players first touch on the ball so critical in the game. There is a misconception that juggling has little to do with the game of soccer. Rather something that belongs

in a circus. There is little doubt that this skill is not factually seen in the game but rather in minute segments with the player using his/her individual ball technique skills. It can be stressed also that good soccer players can juggle at least 1000 times when they get older (age 16). If this is accepted then it is plain that players need to practice and become proficient at this skill. Conquering this skill is no guarantee of success. However, it is only a stepping stone in becoming a complete player. Becoming friends with the ball is the main theme of this exercise whilst at the same time developing an intimate touch essential for success in the game. Like most skills, mastering it will not be achieved overnight.

Organisation by coach or parent

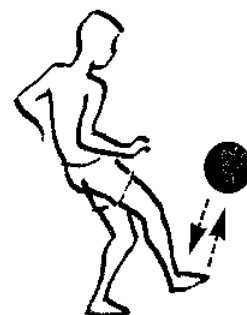
N.B. To avoid injury, players should warm up and stretch properly, before starting any exercises. One player, one size 3 ball.

Task to practice - the challenge Juggle a ball in the air - no bounces - using feet only (left and right

Coaching hints - things to look for

When juggling:

- position in the line with the movement of the ball as quickly as possible;
- decide which part of the body should be used i.e. left foot/ right foot alternately;
- let the weight of the body rest entirely on the non kicking leg;
- adopt a balanced position before the receiving surface is exposed to the ball;
- relax be well balanced and composed,
- apply adequate power to ball;
- angle receiving surface so as to play an advantage for the next action i.e. the other foot;
- the eyes are focused on the ball throughout.



Additional skills practice

- Hopping.
- Tapping the top of stationary ball with the sole of the boot left foot then right foot alternately.
- Kicking the ball at the end of a string or rope.

15. FIRST TOUCH - HEAD JUGGLING

THE CHALLENGE : The recommended number of attempts in succession

Recommended repetitions: Level 1- Beginners, Level 2 - 2 times. Level 3 - 5 times, Level 4 - 10 times. Level 5 - 15 times



Reasons for learning this skill

At this age, it is recommended that only a soft sponge like ball be used when training. To be a complete player, heading must be mastered. Defensive players and strikers receive many high balls, which have to be dealt with instantly in the air due to the inability to control the ball on the ground in the first instance because of pressure from the opposition. Defenders head the ball to clear for safety and strikers head the ball to score goals. Juggling is the starting point to develop a good technique for heading. It provides the player with an easy practice, which can be undertaken at home. A good player at age 14 should be able to juggle 200 times if he has been practising for several years. It should be noted that a player can still play the game effectively if he/she cannot juggle. The skill, however, will enhance his/her finite touch on the ball and eradicate any fears he/she may have of heading the ball. Heading practice should not be ignored. It is a major facet of the game.

Organisation by coach or parent

N-B. To avoid injury, players should warm up and stretch properly, before starting any exercises. One player, one soft sponge like size 3 ball.

Task to practice - the challenge

Head the ball into the air - no bounces - for a set number of times in succession.

Coaching hints - things to look for

When head juggling:

- feet apart, one slightly ahead of the other pointing forward,
- body weight on the soles, the majority being on the back foot,
- knees bent slightly,
- the whole body should be loose and easy in a bouncy motion,
- body leaning slightly back (arching back from the hips is in fact our backswing),
- arms forward for balance,
- head steady,
- appreciate flight and get as much of the body under the ball, eyes focused on ball in an upward position,
- keep the eyes open, watch ball on to head, keep the tongue in the mouth,
- gently push through the ball with the head,
- contact the ball though the forehead not the top of the head or the nose area,
- head through the bottom half of the ball in an upward movement to eliminate any body adjustment before the next contact,
- the neck muscles are flexed (locked).

Progressive training practice

- head tennis
- head net ball
- heading against a wall
- heading with partner

16. FIRST TOUCH - CATCHING BY THE GOALKEEPER

THE CHALLENGE : 20 catches in succession

Recommended distance: Level 1- Beginners, Level 2 - 6 metres, Level 3 - 12 metres, Level 4 - 18 metres, Level 5 - 24 metres.

Reasons for learning this skill

Like most skills in soccer, it is good positional sense to get behind the flight of the ball so that, if he/she did nothing else, the ball would hit his/her body. To get your body behind the ball, the player has to work hard and fast and must change position after anticipating the flight of the ball. The quicker the player can get into position the more

time he/she will have on the ball and the better chance that he/she will be able to perform the selected skill. This applies to the goalkeeper as well. The advantage a goalkeeper has over other players is that he/she can pick the ball up in the penalty area. If a goalkeeper can cleanly and



The correct position for the hands when catching the ball.

effectively control the ball in his/her hands/arms then he/she will be a great asset to the team. Like other players as soon as the goalkeeper has possession of the ball he/she has to think about sensibly distributing the ball to a team mate.

Organisation by coach or parent

N.B. To avoid injury, players should warm up and stretch properly, before starting any exercises.

Two players, one size 3 ball, 2 cones, one tape measure.

Task to practice - the challenge

Catch the ball. on the full, in the arms and bring it to the chest, throw, at medium speed and medium height, from a server, positioned at a set distance (metres) - repeat 20 times in succession.

Coaching hints - things to look for

Before receipt of ball:

- feet should be comfortably apart (no more than the width of the shoulders) pointing toward the ball;
- body weight on the soles;
- knees bent slightly;

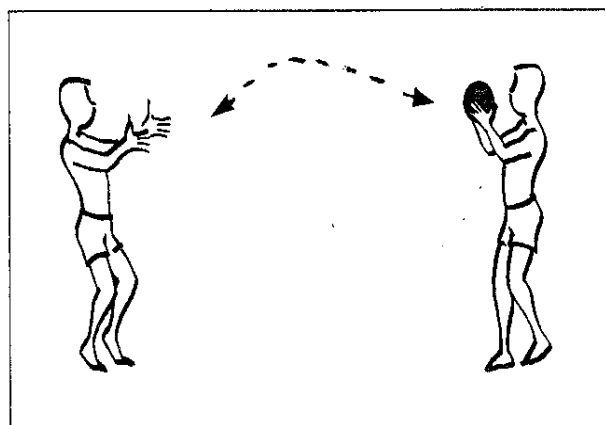
- lean forward slightly focus;
- eyes on ball;
- keep arms in front of body, elbows well bent, forearms close together and parallel;
- palms face the ball, fingers widespread and pointing upward;
- get in line with the ball and the middle of the goals;
- get body behind ball.

Receiving the ball

- extend arms, use both hands - fingers spread;
- keep hands and ball in view;
- lean forward slightly, allow ball to come into body;
- bend from the waist, legs straight, feet close together;
- control the ball either with the hands and/or forearms whichever is the most appropriate and the most comfortable for the keeper to enable him/her to bring the ball to the chest as efficiently as possible under control for security;
- use hands and forearms;
- body always behind ball.

Additional skills practice

- Varying heights and distances.



17. MOVEMENT OFF THE BALL - SPRINTING

THE CHALLENGE 1 : The average of 3 attempts in succession over 20 metres

Recommended time: Level 1 – 6.00 secs, Level 2 - 4.50 secs, Level 3 - 4.20 secs, Level 4 - 4.00 secs, Level 5 - 3.75 secs.

THE CHALLENGE 2: The average of 2 attempts in succession – there and back 3 times over 5 metres

Recommended time: Level 1 – 17 secs, Level 2 - 14 secs, Level 3 - 13 secs, Level 4 - 12 secs, Level 5 - 11 sec

Reasons for learning this skill

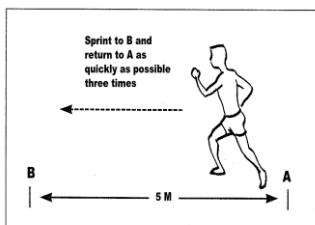
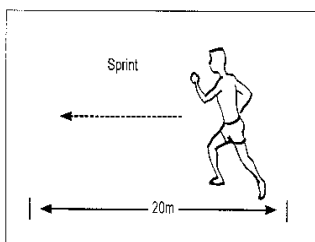
No matter what position the player plays extra speed will be an advantage. No matter how fast a player is there will always be another who is faster. The number of occasions that a player is required to sprint in a game will depend on his/her understanding of the game and the desire to get involved which will be ultimately be dependent on the fitness of the player. Soccer has developed over the years into a fast and technical game where speed particularly over the first 5 metres is critical. The first player to the ball wins the ball. Fitness also plays a part and players must be fit to perform at their peak for the duration of the game. A big percentage of sprinting will be done off the ball. A player will be required to sprint for 12% of the game with all positional players approximately the same intensity in the modern game. When one compares that percentage with an average of 2% that a player touches the ball it is obvious that attention be made to this skill. Improving speed should not be ignored as it is one of the three main characteristics of a good player, i.e. speed of movement, speed of thought, speed of control.

Organisation by coach or parent

N.B. To avoid injury, players should warm up and stretch properly, before starting any exercises.

Two players, 2 cones, one tape measure, one stop watch.

Task to practice - the challenge



1. Sprint without the ball from a standing start over 20 metres. Times to be kept for three successive attempts.

2. Sprint without the ball from a standing start over 5 metres and back to start 3 times as quick as possible. Place your foot next to and touch a cone on the ground at each turn. Timing to be kept for two successive attempts.

Coaching hints - things to look for

When coaching runners you should note:

- technique should be introduced very early in a runner's career and emphasised regularly - but not forced;
- many runners have an eccentric or ungraceful style, but on analysis are applying force efficiently;
- the upper body carriage should be very slightly forward or upright, but never back as this causes a deceleration

component;

- the head is held relaxed, straight and still;
- the arms are a major component in the creation of balanced forward motion and should move from the shoulders without causing body sway;
- the angle of the elbows should be 90 degrees approximately with the hands held slightly clenched;
- the magnitude of the swing depends on the speed of the runner, but should never be overdone as stride cadence is affected and energy wasted;
- in the arm swing the hands move from just behind the hips to chest height at the very most and swinging across the body is to be avoided;
- the ball of the foot should land momentarily ahead of the heel. When sprinting the foot plant is higher on the ball and toward the toes, but the heel will still strike the ground in the support of the foot in its lateral and linear plant position;
- the lateral extent is limited to a straight line which the feet touch, but do not cross each others path. A cross over gait creates excessive hip movement, while a spreading of the feet affects the line of applied force, thus reducing forward velocity;
- the linear position of the foot dictates the stride length, an important part of a runner's ability to develop efficient forward motion;
- over extension creates a waste of energy and there appears to be a direct relationship between oxygen intake and stride length;
- under striding is also less efficient, but is not so detrimental as an overly long stride.

Additional skills practice

- With the ball.
- Defending back.
- Shooting when breaking away.
- Running backwards turning and sprinting ahead at a given signal (left and right).

18. MOVEMENT OFF THE BALL - JUMPING

THE CHALLENGE :

The average of 3 attempts in succession

Recommended distance: Level 1 - Beginners, Level 2 - 140 cm, Level 3 - 150 cm, Level 4 - 160 cm, Level 5 - 170 cm.

Reasons for learning this skill

Strength is one characteristic of a good player. Strength will give the player confidence. It will give him/her explosive power when he/she is running. It will enhance his/her explosion off the mark. The feet and legs of a player are his/her weapons and his/her tools of trade. The stronger and fitter that a player can be will benefit his/her ability to play the game and enjoy it. Double leg bound will provide practice for players as well as give the coach an avenue to measure improvement. It will enhance balance as well. Upon landing the player should remain standing upright for approximately 5 seconds similar to gymnasts when they land after a performance. Strength training can be incorporated into training of young players as long as it is only against their own body weight

Organisation by coach or parent

N.B. To avoid injury, players should warm up and stretch properly, before starting any exercises.

Two players, 2 cones, one tape measure.

Task to practice - the challenge

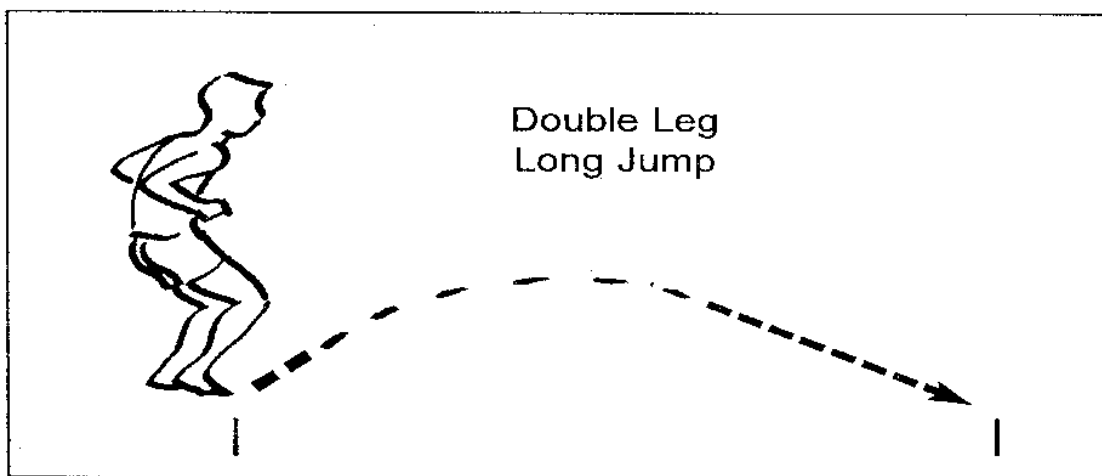
Double leg long jump (cm), from standing start, (measure from starting toe to finishing heel).

Coaching hints - things to look for

- the player stands on the soles of the feet (side by side);
- in a bending action with the knees bent as low as comfortable;
- pushing up as powerfully as possible, the player attempts to jump ahead as far as possible;
- arms push up from a low position to assist lift;
- head and upper body forward before final push up and forward thrust;
- head and upper body remain forward upon landing;
- landing is on heel then sole with the player attempting to stay in a stationary position in a crouched position with arms out in front for balance;
- player then straightens legs standing in the landing spot for 5 seconds.

Additional skills practice

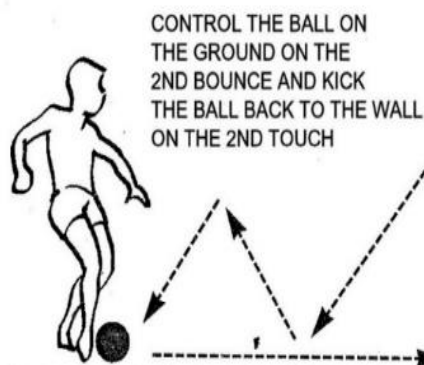
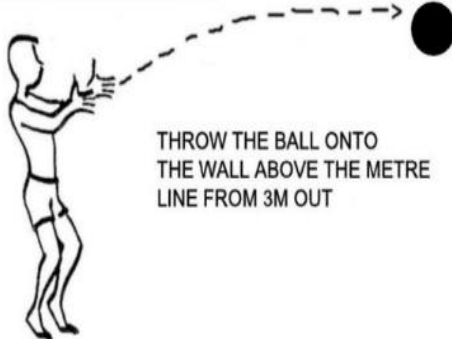
Hopping, jumping a rope, running up stairs, running up hills, maze running.



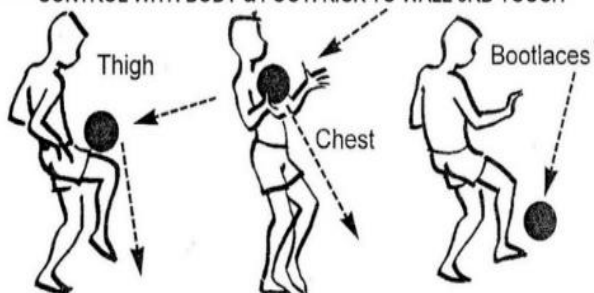
KICK WALL PRACTICE

KICK WALL PRACTICE

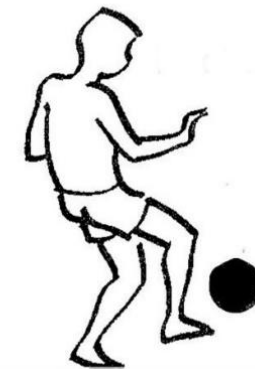
CONCRETE SURFACE - FOOTWEAR WITH NO STUDS



ALSO, USE THE THIGH, CHEST AND BOOTLACES BEFORE THE BALL BOUNCES TWICE. CONTROL WITH BODY & FOOT. KICK TO WALL 3RD TOUCH



Repetition Target: Level 1 - 10, L2 - 20, L3 - 30, L4 - 40, L5 - 50



KICK WALL PRACTICE BALL CONTROL IN THE AIR

Once you lose control start again, counting hits.

Any amount of touches and bounces before you hit the wall. Use any part of your body for control.

The ball must hit the wall on the full above ground level.

Wall hits: one point

Level 1 = 5 points

Level 2 = 10 points

Level 3 = 15 points

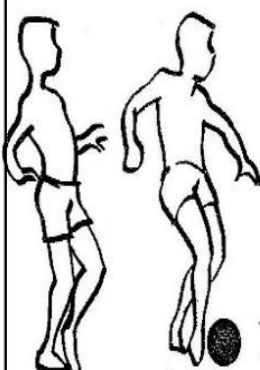
Level 4 = 20 points

Level 5 = 25 points

HOW MANY POINTS CAN YOU GET?

KICK WALL PRACTICE

CONCRETE SURFACE - FOOTWEAR WITH NO STUDS



3m from wall (2 players alternate)

Return pass (1 touch)

A. Right foot only

B. Left foot only

C. Right/left foot alternate

Repetition Target: Level 1 - 10, Level 2 - 20, Level 3 - 30, Level 4 - 40,

KICK WALL PRACTICE

CONCRETE SURFACE - FOOTWEAR WITH NO STUDS



3m from wall

Return pass (1 touch)

A. Right foot only

B. Left foot only

C. Right/left foot alternate

Repetition Target: Level 1 - 10, Level 2 - 20, Level 3 - 30, Level 4 - 40,

GOALKEEPERS

IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL CANDIDATES AGE 8+

POSITIONING

- STANCE AND FOOTWORK
- 1V1 DEFENCE TECHNIQUE
- GOOD TACKLERS

COMMUNICATING

- ORGANISING

STRIKING THE BALL

- PLAYING OUT - DISTRIBUTION
- GOAL KICK, VOLLEY, DROP KICK, THROWING

FIRST TOUCH (LOW, MID, HIGH)

- CATCHING – W, CUP, SCOOP
- DIVING
- GOOD FOOT CONTROL
- SAFETY FIRST – PARRYING, DEFLECTING, PUNCHING
- QUICK REFLEXS – RECOVERY

RUNNING – QUICK

JUMPING – HIGH, LONG



UNDERSTANDING CHILDREN BETTER

Children watch carefully, to learn about life from people they love and trust. They need a village atmosphere, where they are surrounded by people they can trust and to develop people skills. A team environment is the ideal stage for the positive development of a child where there is lots of input.

These experiences and mentoring will go a long way for them to become well-adjusted and balanced members of our society. Children with good moods, confidence and positive expectations usually produce successful outcomes in school sports, making friends, and in life itself. The values, beliefs and habits you instil in the child will become the foundation they'll use forever. Both positive and negative patterns of thinking become well entrenched by the time a child reaches adolescence. Concentrate on the positive at all times.

CREATING FRIENDSHIP QUALITIES

Children learn their first lessons about making friends from observing us. Coaches can demonstrate the qualities and effort necessary to make new friends and keep old friendships going. Let children see what is required to have quality friendships. Let them hear you speaking to their parents about the game and other things. They will learn a lot from your good example. With your positive model, they will naturally begin to develop the attributes of a loyal friend.

ACKNOWLEDGING ACHIEVEMENTS

Children thrive on encouragement. Any evidence of success, even just remembering to do the practices, is a reason to celebrate and acknowledge the child's effort. If we keep our comments honest and sincere, children will feel supported and empowered. Remember that we may be the coach but it is still the child's game. Children love to hear about their worth and abilities, especially spoken aloud by people whom they love and respect, e.g. "Well done, Johnny". Children are naturally positive and upbeat about who they are, but criticism or ridicule from parents or coaches can make even a young person to doubt themselves. Children achieve countless successes every day; let us take the time to acknowledge them for as many of these successes as possible. Providing the praise is sincere. It's inconceivable that we could never acknowledge a child too much. Be careful though, children can sense when you are being dishonest, so if you don't believe the child has a particular quality, you are better to focus on other positive qualities that they possess. Acknowledging: increases motivation. improves a child's self-esteem gives children self-confidence teaches children to trust their decisions motivates children to seek goals develops responsibility.

USING POSITIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Some children may build up resistance if they feel pressured to treat the exercises as "work" rather than "play". You may have to relearn some of the ways you give directions or ask for a particular kind of behaviour by paying special attention to the words you use. For example: "Don't panic" is a signal to panic without any solution to the situation. "Panic" is the last instruction heard and is therefore the image, which will be retained. It would be best to say something like: "Johnny, look around and cover the defence" or "Jim, look up and play it forward". Providing a positive statement rather than a negative one

ENCOURAGING POSITIVE THINKING

Children worry at times, and a negative child will often fall into the pattern of constantly worrying. The practice of eliminating negatives is a highly desirable process. Together, you will conclude that positive thinking is always better. It is easier and wiser to coach a happy, healthy child than to repair an adult.

An easy way to explain to children how to eliminate negative thoughts is to compare our mind to a garden. Children can easily understand this analogy. 'Our mind is like a garden. And in our garden are both flowers and weeds. Flowers are the positive thoughts and there are many different types of them. Just like there are many different flowers. Each one is different and looks different and smells different. The same applies to negative thoughts; there are many different types of these negative thoughts, and they are like weeds' and have to be eliminated.

PROVIDING A SOLUTION

Children don't have to be happy all the time. If the truth be told, sometimes a good vent is the best for everyone. Often it clears the air and provides the impetus for change. Young children have a unique and powerful capacity to accept whatever "truths" we present to them with conviction and assurance. Every problem has a solution and opportunity within it. As the familiar adage says, "Every dark cloud has a silver lining."

GIVING ADDED RESPONSIBILITIES

Children are much more capable than we typically believe. Once a child has entered the preschool years, complete dependency upon adults is unhealthy and counterproductive to the child's further development. Children may try to feign dependency at times, as an excuse to have others do things for them. They may well see certain advantages in pretending to be less capable than they are. However, it is nature's design for children to assert their own independence. If you give children responsibility, they will almost always respond well. Children should be allowed to take risks, unless, of course, they are life threatening. They should be allowed to make mistakes too. Making mistakes is part of life. In fact, "getting it wrong sometimes" (a better phrase than "failure") is a normal part of creativity. Failure, should always be looked at as something temporary, a stepping stone to any eventual success.



WHAT MAKES A CHAMPION?

1. CONCENTRATION

Tiredness and discomfort are common problems in sport. They are physical signals, the interpretation of which is critical in maintaining concentration. Most people regard them as an indication that they have reached maximum effort and interpret them as signals to slow down or stop—amber lights or red lights. However, good players regard them as an indication that they haven't reached their maximum effort, but are approaching it. It is a trigger for them to press on to reach maximum effort. It is a green light.

If you learn to improve your concentration, and preserve it when you are bored or when you are under pressure you will become a better player.

2. PRESSURE

Champions cope well with pressure situations. In moments of crisis they stay calm, keep a clear head, and use their commonsense to handle the situation.

Many champions claim that the level of pressure, which you experience, is determined by the way you perceive the relationship between the pressure situations you face, and your confidence and ability to cope with them.

The person who thinks the most simply and clearly in pressure situations is usually the one who performs best.

The greater the pressure, the more attention the better players devote to their basic skills and the more rigidly they stick to their plans and their routine. Patience is definitely a virtue in moments of crisis.

3. THINKING

The proper use of the mind is the one thing, which separates champions from the merely good players.

The top players know how to think, how to concentrate and what to do in tough situations.

The good players think a lot about situations, particularly how they are going to attack the situations. They assess the situation, determine what is important and what is required, decide on a plan of action and then apply their physical skills in the necessary manner. They play the odds and percentages.

4. PERSISTENCE

It is often said that persistence takes the champions 90% of the way.

Lack of persistence is a killer in sport. It is easy to be persistent when things are easy or are going your way. The test of persistence occurs when things get tough, when the pressure is high, when there are obstacles in the way, when you have to overcome the odds, setbacks or failures, and when you have to push yourself to your mental and physical limits.

5. SETTING GOALS

Winners and successful people choose challenging, realistic and achievable goals.

Make your target and don't stop until you achieve it.

6. SELF CONTROL

Good players are able to preserve their physical and mental skills under pressure situations.

Good players can keep a cool head and use their common sense under pressure.

7. SELF MOTIVATION

In any sport the players who reach the top or try to get to the top are self-motivated, because the best part of motivation comes from within.

8. BELIEVING IN YOURSELF

If you believe in yourself and your ability to cope with any situation, and the demands, which it places on you, you will give yourself a good chance of performing well.

9. HONESTY WITH ONESELF

In order to become a good player, you must be painfully honest with yourself.

10. COPING WITH MISTAKES

The measure of a good sportsman is the way in which he copes with his mistakes and disappointments.

11. CONCENTRATION ON THE BASICS

Good players pay particular attention to the basics and the less spectacular parts of their game.

12. PAST EXPERIENCES

Good players get strength and persistence from their experiences.

13. LUCK

Too many players blame their losses or poor performances on bad luck. Good players seldom do this. They blame themselves and their efforts for any misfortunes, which they encounter.

14. HUNGER

No matter how much talent and ability you have, you will never make it to the top unless you are hungry for success.

**"IF YOUR DREAM IS POWERFUL AND
YOU CHASE IT HARD ENOUGH,
IT CAN COME TRUE!"**

Craig Johnston



AN INSIGHT INTO THE ROLE OF THE COACH

"Coaches don't make players. They help players make themselves"

"If you accept a coaching job you must have more drive within yourself than your most dedicated player"

"A coach's primary aim is to make sure that the players don't get any worse than when he/she started."

"A coach's job is to get players playing to their ability, to give them opportunity and to help them achieve excellence."

"The ultimate experience of any coach is to have a significant contribution to the development of a player who one day plays for his/her Country."

"In the relationship with players almost all the coach's time will be spent on transferring knowledge to players and making sure they know what is expected of them."

"The whole concept of coaching revolves around not what players do when you're with them, but what they do when they're away from supervision."

"Coaches should not make a good player a cautious one. Let him/her run free on his/her own ability."

"Coaches must be satisfied with their own performance. It is only of limited value if the team wins but you have had a poor game."

"When the team wins, everyone takes a share of the credit. When the team loses it's the same way".

"Football is a game of decisions. It is the coach's role to teach players to make the right one."

"It's players who win games. If it was the coach, he/she would never lose."

"In order to earn the respect of the players, a coach must present the team with a sound training program and. with well planned and organised sessions."

"It is a duty of coaches to encourage players to play at the highest level that their skills warrant - otherwise they will never know how good they are."

"Coaches should develop players, not embellish their own egos."

Let's Go



Fly High

Enjoy

FULL TIME