

### **Red Light, Green Light - Age Group U6 and U8 - Dribbling**

Each player should have a ball and stand on the midfield or end line. The coach stands at the end and faces the kids. Coach yells green light and the kids should dribble under control towards the end line. When coach yells red light all the kids should stop the ball with the bottom of their foot. Anyone who didn't stop goes back to the beginning. Once at the end line, pull ball back and dribble as fast as they can back to the other end line.

Variation for older kids – coach raises their arm for red light and lowers it for green light. Object is to have the kids look up while dribbling.

### **MONSTER INVASION - Age Group – U6 – Beginner – Dribbling & concept of field**

Summary: Tell players a Monster is coming to steal their pet ball & they must keep it away from the Monster by dribbling it around, but inside the field. The coach or a parent is the monster. Ideas: drag your leg like Frankenstein, make monster noises, make a face, and say things like "Don't let me get your ball!!" But don't actually scare them. The idea is just to have them try to get away. Don't catch the players, just have fun.

Set-up: A ball for every player. Use disk cones or markers to make a square field about 10 steps by 10 steps (or smaller if you have only a few players)

Teaches: Control Dribbling, the concept of a "field" and staying inside the lines ("in bounds") & that it's bad to go "out of bounds." Controlling the ball while under pressure, using peripheral vision, looking up while dribbling, dribbling in traffic w/ a lot of players nearby.

### **Knock the Cones Over – Age Group U6 - Dribbling**

Coach sets up tall cones around the field. The kids dribble around and try to knock over cones. Coaches pick them back up as they go.

### **Tunnel Dribble - Age Group U6 - Dribbling**

Have parents create a tunnel and the kids dribble through the tunnel and then down to the goal.

### **Sleeping Giant - Age Group U6 and Up - Dribbling**

All kids have a ball and set out 1 less cone than the number of kids. Coach is a giant and lies down or stands and covers eyes. Kids all dribble around designated area. Coach yells, "wake up!" All the kids dribble quickly to a cone. The child left without a cone becomes a giant with the coach. Keeps going as long as you'd like or until there is only child left.

### **Simon Says - Age group: three years old upwards**

Your children will already know how to play this popular game. It's a lot of fun for the little ones and it's great for improving their ball control and concentration.

**Purpose of the Game:** to encourage children to run with the ball, keeping it close to their feet, and to carry out instructions. **Area Needed:** 20m x 20m. **Equipment:** flat cones to mark out the grid and a ball for every player. **Number of players:** whole team. **How to play:** Players dribble round the grid waiting for an instruction from Simon, the King of the Ring (that's you!). When you preface a command with "Simon says" they must do it immediately. For example, if Simon says, "foot" they must stop the ball with that body part immediately. If you don't say 'Simon says' before the command your players should ignore it. If they forget and carry it out, just shout 'gotcha!' or similar. No-one is out of this game. You can add other commands such as "change direction," "go faster," and so on.

### **Follow the Leader - Age Group U6, U8**

Coach dribbles ball while running around the field. Kids all follow and then shoot from where the coach shoots. Have someone else be the leader and end with shooting. Coach adds using just left foot to dribble, just right foot, outside of foot, make a turn, take a throw-in, etc.

### **1<sup>st</sup> to Score - Age Group U6 and Older - Shooting**

Break into groups of 2. Start on opposite sides of the field. Have player 1 throw the ball in to player 2. Player 2 then receives the ball, turns towards goal, and shoots. Players then switch to the other side & switch roles. Then do the same thing with corner kicks & goal kicks.

### **OUCH!!!! - Age Group U6 and Older - Passing**

**Setup** - Build a grid 20X30 (may adjust if too large or small). Every player must be in the grid with a ball.

**Instructions** - The coach jogs around in the grid and players try to kick their balls and hit the coach. The players get a point each time they hit the coach. The coach should yell OUCH each time they are hit to make the game FUN! \* Make sure the players are striking the ball with the proper part of the foot.

**Variations** - If the players are struggling to hit the coach, the coach should stop for a couple seconds to give the players a chance.

Use different parts of the foot: Inside, Instep, Right and Left foot.

### **The Banana Gobbling Gorilla - Age Group U6 - Passing**

To knock down cones for passing accuracy.

A number of cones are grouped in a straight line. The cones represent a big banana tree with bunches of bananas at the top. Each child (gorilla) has a ball (coconut). In order to eat the bananas, the gorilla has to kick his coconut to knock them out of the tree (knock the cones down). The kids can imitate the gorilla (long arms, scrunchy faces, scratching armpits, and gorilla like noises). When all cones have been knocked down, the kids run in to collect the bananas for a feast.

Variation – Set up cones all around an area and have kids dribble in the area and knock over cones. Coaches keep setting them back up.

### **Fox and the Hounds - Age Group U6 and Up fitness & fun**

2/3 of kids are foxes with pinnies as tails, 1/3 are hounds and run around and try to steal the tails. Last 2 or 3 left with tails get to be the next hounds.

### **Freeze Tag - Age Group U6 and Up**

Set-up a designated area based on # of kids. Kids run around & coach tries to catch them. Kids get unfrozen by others.

Variation – Have kids dribble with ball and when frozen have to have another player pass the ball through their open legs to unfreeze them.

### **Old MacDonald - Age Group U6**

Each child dribbles around ½ of the field. Coach sings the old MacDonald song and when he/she calls out chickens – the kids sit on the ball, pig – push ball with nose, frog – ball between legs and hop, kangaroo – ball under shirt and hop.

### **Doctor, Doctor! - Age Group U6 and Up**

Preparation - You will need a marked out area larger area with two smaller areas for the 'doctors houses'. The players need to be split into 2 teams and everyone except two players will need a ball each.

Explanation - Two teams battle it out to win this game of doctor, doctor. Each team will need a doctor who will start in their smaller area (doctor house) without a ball. All the other players start somewhere inside the larger area with a ball each at their feet.

The object of the game is to try and kick the other team's balls outside of the area and retain yours. If a player's ball is kicked out of the area they must leave it and go to ground shouting 'doctor, doctor help!' This player can only retrieve their ball and stand up and carry on once their teams doctor has tagged them. To win the game, a team must pass/kick their ball at the other team's doctor once they come out to tag their team mates who have had their ball kicked out.

The doctors cannot be shot at if they are in their doctor houses. This will encourage the players with balls to attempt to tackle the other players and kick their balls out of the area. The players who are kicking the ball at the doctor must aim for a pass to hit below the knee.

\*\*\* Demonstrate clearly how to shield the ball using your body! \*\*\***Progression**

### **Cats & Dogs - Age Group U6 and Up**

Get into groups of 2. Each has a ball. One is cat, one is dog. They should be about 5 yds. apart. When coach yells, "dogs", the dogs chase the cats to the end line.

### Lion King - Age Group U6 and Up

All kids face down with heads on ball and eyes closed. Coach shouts "Mufasa!" The kids jump up and dribble to the coach.

### Can you Do this? - Age Group U6 and Up

**Setup** - In an unmarked area gather your players without their soccer ball (you can introduce this later in this drill). The coach should come up with short list of activities such as: skipping, one-legged hops, star jumps, log rolls, summer salts, push-ups, etc...

**Instructions:** The coach should start by asking the players "I can do [activity] can you?" The coach should then demonstrate to the players the activity & have the children do the same.

**Variations** – Introduce the soccer ball & change activities to include the soccer ball such as: dribbling, throw-ins, & punting.

### Animal Soccer - Age Group 3 – 7

- **Objectives:**

Fun game for ball control and dribbling (Ages 3 - 7).

**Description:**

Set up a square area 30x30 (adjust area depending on how many players you have) and have each player with a ball inside the area.

Tell the players that you are going to visit the zoo to see the different animals and that they have to copy that animals actions.

**PENGUIN:** players juggle the ball between both feet. looks a bit like a waddle as a penguin would.

- **KANGAROO:** players trap the ball with inside of both feet and jump around trying to keep the ball between their feet.
- **SEA LION:** players throw the ball in the air and try to keep it up using their head.
- **CRAB:** players sit on the floor then lift their bums up, supporting themselves with their hands and feet. They have to dribble the ball around using their feet.
- **TORTOISE:** tell the players that a tortoise is so slow it almost goes backwards. Have the players dribble backwards slowly using the sole of their foot.
- **ROAD RUNNER:** players dribble round at a fast pace.

You can make it more fun for the young ones by adding noises when they copy the animal, e.g. road runner 'meep meep'.

### Penalty Box Soccer - Age group: U7 upwards

**Objective:** To practice scoring goals and marking in the penalty area.

**Set up:** Use the penalty area of a full size pitch or a 30x20 yard grid. Two goals are required, one on each of the long sides of the playing area. You will need 8 to 10 players and two sets of bibs.

**How to play:** Two teams of three or four are in the penalty area with a keeper defending each goal. The game starts with the keeper of the one team throwing the ball to a team-mate. The game is decided by the first goal scored. The team that scores stays on the field and the losing team is replaced by a new team. To keep the game moving, keep plenty of balls in the goal and put a two-minute time limit on each game. If neither team scores in two minutes, both teams go off and two new teams restart the game. Make sure to balance the teams. The winner is the team with the most goals after 20 minutes.

### Body Parts Warm-up Game - u-5, u-6, u-7

**Drill Objective:** This soccer drill focuses on the younger player's dribbling skills and the ability to think quick on their feet while holding the ball close.

**Drill Setup:** Create a grid about 15X15 yards. All the players should be inside the grid with a ball of their own.

**Drill Instructions:** The coach shouts a part of the body that the player uses to stop the ball. For example right foot, left foot, knee, etc.

**Drill Coaching Points:** Encourage players to constantly move and zig-zag while dribbling. Keep Close possession. Head up to avoid collisions.

URL: <http://www.soccerxpert.com/soccerdrills/id1253.aspx>

### **Bunching up Game - Age Group U8 and up**

- 3 or 4 players will be on “Offense” and attack a “Goal”
  - One coach will chase the offense
1. Have a “Chaser” (the Coach or an assistant) who chases the group of attackers to create some pressure and watches to be sure they aren’t Bunching Up.
  2. The Coach gives each player a “treasure”. This can be anything they can carry in their hand (like a patch) or something they tuck in their shorts. The Treasure is something they can keep if they do well, but they lose it if they Bunch Up. They might have to do this game without Bunching Up 3 times to earn the Treasure.
  3. Ideally, split into 2 or 3 groups so lines are minimized and 2 or 3 attacks are occurring at the same time (you will need an Assistant or parent to coach each group, and a “Goal” or a cone goal for each group).

**How the Game is Played:** Put a ball about 20 steps out from the “Goal” and spread 3 or 4 players around the ball so each one is 4 or 5 steps from the ball. The Coach explains the “Rules” to the players and gives them each a “Treasure”. The Coach explains that he will yell “Go” and they will all run to the ball, but the one who gets there first should get the ball and dribble toward the goal, and the others should Spread Out and be “helpers” for the player with the ball, and NOT try to steal the ball from their teammate who has the ball (if your players are young, try to use words they will understand). If the players without the ball get too close to the player with the ball (the Dribbler) when they are running toward the goal, the Coach will call the names of the players who are too close to the player with the ball and they will lose their Treasure (they have to give it back to the Coach). The player with the ball is called the “First Attacker” and the other players should run with the First Attacker and be “Second Attackers” and in position for a pass or a rebound.

1. The Coach is behind the players (the players are between the Coach and the Goal) and yells “Go Go Go” to create some pressure and so the players who are circled around the ball know when to run to the ball.
2. The players must decide quickly who will get the ball. They will then have to spread out and run toward the “Goal” (a real goal or cones). A passive “defender” who is either a parent, an assistant or a Cone is in front of the “Goal”. The onball player has a choice to either pass or dribble around the Defender directly to the goal and when close can shoot.
3. The Coach chases the players to create pressure and to watch them to be sure they aren’t Bunching Up.
4. If the players get too close to the Dribbler, the Chasing Coach will yell the names of the player or players who need to Spread Out. For example, if “John and Sam” are Bunching Up too close to the Dribbler, he will yell “John and Sam, Spread Out”. If John and /or Sam spread out, they get to keep their Treasure, but if they don’t, they have to give their Treasure back to the Coach and the Coach explains why they lost their Treasure. (For older ages you might not need a Treasure).
5. The Team Chant below also might help (this is also courtesy of Coach Troy):

You say “When your teammate has the ball what do you do?” And the team replies: “Stay Away, Stay Away, Stay” Away” – again and again

### **Coach's Revenge**

**Drill Objective:** This drill is designed to be a fun soccer drill. It will focus a bit on young player’s agility while dodging balls kicked at them, and is a great ice breaker or a fun warmup game at the beginning of practice.

**Drill Setup:** Create a grid approximately 25X30 yard grid (the size of the grid can be adjusted depending on the age and number of players). Have all of the teammates spread out on one of the end lines without a ball. The coach or coaches should be in the middle of the grid with every ball.

**Drill Instructions:** On the coach’s command, every player must sprint from one side of the grid to the other while avoiding balls being knocked at them by the coaches in the middle. The Coach attempts to hit the players as they pass from the knee down. If a player is struck by the coach’s pass, those players collect the balls and join the coach’s in the middle of the grid attempting to hit the remaining players.

The last player standing wins!

**Drill Coaching Points:** Players must sprint from one side of the grid to the other. Players should lift their head to avoid being struck with the ball. Encourage players to have fun!

### **World Cup - Age Group U8 and Older**

Break up into groups of 2. Use 1 less ball than teams. Let each group choose a country’s name. The coach serves up the balls and the group who doesn’t score is out.

### **Snake in the Grass Soccer Game**

Drill Objective: This is a great soccer game for under 6 and under 8 soccer players. This soccer game is designed to work on young players coordination and body movements.

Drill Setup: Create a small grid approximately 15X15 yards. All of the players should be inside the grid. The coach should designate two players to be the "snakes" by lying on their stomachs. Each of the players begin with one of their hands on the snakes in the grass.

Drill Instructions: When the coach yells "SNAKE IN THE GRASS" the non-snake players attempt to avoid the snakes as the snakes attempt to slither around on their stomach and touch a non-snake

player. As a player is touched, that player too becomes a snake. The activity continues until everyone is a snake.

Drill Coaching Points: This soccer game is designed to work on young soccer players balance, coordination and body movement. As the children attempt to avoid the snakes, they will move in all directions and should be encouraged to run, jump, cut, turn, etc to avoid the snake.

URL: <http://www.soccerxpert.com/soccerdrills/id1289.aspx>

### **Soccer Tag – U4 – U8**

Drill Objective: This soccer drill is good for younger players ages under 5 through under 8. This is a fun soccer drill that allows players to gain confidence on the ball while getting a lot of touches.

Drill Setup: Build a grid that is approximately 20X20 (or larger depending on the number of players involved). Each player should have a ball and position them inside the grid.

Drill Instructions: Instruct the players to tag (touch) other players within the grid. Once the player gets tagged they must hold that area of the body that was tagged while still dribbling while avoiding other tags and attempting to tag others. If players are tagged a 2nd time they must hold both tagged areas while dribbling. If the player is tagged a 3rd time, the player must move to the outside of the grid and perform an exercise such as 25 toe touches, 4 juggles, 25 foundation touches, or push-ups before rejoining the game.

Drill Coaching Points: Keeping the ball close to the player. Head up where they can see ball and players. Use all parts of the foot while dribbling (inside, outside, bottom, heel, top)

URL: <http://www.soccerxpert.com/soccerdrills/id1256.aspx>

### **Monster Turns – U6 – U8**

Drill Objective: This drill focuses on the U6 and U8 players dribbling skills. The added pressure allows the players to turn away from pressure while remaining in control of the ball.

Drill Setup: Create a 20x25 yard grid. Adjust the size of the grid based on the number of players and the skill level of the players. All players should be in the box with a ball and 2 coaches will be the "Monsters" in the game.

Drill Instructions: Have the players dribble in the grid. To receive a point a player must dribble at the monster, execute a turn to get away from the monster without being tagged by the monster. Play for 30-45 seconds and play again and have each player to attempt to beat their own score.

Drill Coaching Points: Players should keep the ball close within playing distance. Players should accelerate to get away from the monster.

Drill Variations: Use sole of foot to turn. Use inside of foot to turn. Use Outside of foot to turn.

URL: <http://www.soccerxpert.com/soccerdrills/id1227.aspx>

### **Frogger – U6 – U8**

Drill Objective: This dribbling drill is for U6 and U8 players. This drill will assist the younger player with dribbling under minimal pressure.

Drill Setup: Build a grid 20X30 (may adjust if too large or small). Every player must be in the grid with a ball except for 2 players who will be the FROGS.

Drill Instructions: All of the players will start on one side of the grid and try to make it to the other side. The two FROGS must hop and try to tag the other players as they try to get to the other side. When a player is tagged, they both become a frog. Play continues until only 2 players are left, who become the frogs for the next game.

Drill Coaching Points: Start getting the players dribbling to get their heads up to avoid the frogs.

URL: <http://www.soccerxpert.com/soccerdrills/id1225.aspx>

## Circle Keep-Away Passing Game

**Drill Objective:** This is a fun passing game for younger players that allows them to focus on the passing game while playing keep away.

**Drill Setup:** With cones, mark off a circle. Have each of the players position themselves just inside the circle, with 2 designated players in the middle holding a yellow penny (alternate colored jersey) in their hands.

**Drill Instructions:** 1. The two players in the middle will act as defenders while the rest of the players around the circle will play keep away from these defenders.

2. Start with the first pass being free, then as the defenders win the ball, they switch places with the player that lost the ball to the defender. In this case, the current defender would just drop their yellow penny and join the attackers. The new defender will grab the yellow penny and hold it in their hand.

3. If the pass goes outside of the circle, the player that made the bad pass, or the player that did not properly trap the ball will take the place of the defender that has been in the middle the longest.

4. If the attacking players are able to put together 10 passes make the defenders do a quick lap around the circle (Lap of shame as we call it) or some other form of quick and fun punishment.

5. The attacking players can move about the circle.

**Coaching Points:** Clean, crisp passes. Good first touch into space or towards the next pass. Good communication. Fun.

**Drill Variations:** Change the size of the circle to fit your players age and skill level. Make the grid smaller to make the game harder for the attackers to keep possession, or make the grid larger to make the game a bit easier for the passers. Make the circle smaller for tighter and quicker passing. Limit the number of touches.

URL: <http://www.soccerxpert.com/soccerdrills/keep-away-passing-game.aspx>

## Shooters & Shaggers - Age Group U8

- **Setup** - Organize your team into groups of 2. One player will be the shooter while the other player will be the shagger. The Shagger will only shag balls for their shooter as they are paired up as a team in this competition. Organize an arc of cones approximately 10 yards from goal with no keeper in the goal.
- **Instructions** - Each shooter will begin at the start cone while their shagger will begin behind the goal. At the first cone, each shooter will take turns shooting on goal in attempt to score the goal with a direct shot into the goal without it hitting the ground (no bounce). If the ball bounces before scoring a goal, or if they miss the goal, the shooter retrieves the ball from their shagger and continue shooting from the same cone. However, if the player is able to strike the ball into the goal without it bouncing, the player will get to continue to the next cone. The first 3 players to successfully scored from each of the 5 cones win. Now switch and let the shaggers shoot and the shooters shag balls.  
**Variations** - - For younger players who are unable to lift the ball very well should be modified to scoring hard shots with pace on the ball.
  - To get all the players participating at the same time, have each player start with their own ball (no shaggers) and have them keep up with their same ball throughout the entire shooting game. Have half of the group start on the finish cone and work backwards while the other group start on the start cone.
- **Coaching Points** - - Watch the angle of approach, make sure they come at the ball at a good kicking angle
  - Make sure their planting foot is not too close or too far from the ball.
  - Make sure the player is locking their ankle

## Sharks and Minnows - Age Group U8

**Setup** - Build a grid approximately 20X25 yards this field should be adjusted based on the skill level and number of players participating. Each player should have a ball except for 2 sharks.

**Instructions** - The players with balls (the minnows) attempt to protect their ball from the two "Sharks". The Sharks attempt to gain possession and knock the minnows (ball) out of the grid. Once this happens, the minnow can run around the grid once and return to the game. Each minnow has two changes, and the last 2 minnows remaining become the sharks in the next round.

**Variations** Players only use left foot to dribble, outside of feet, sole of feet.

**Coaching Points** - Keep the dribblers under control & not panicked once the sharks get near them. Keep ball close.

## Dribble Across the Square – U8 & Up

Make a square with cones about 15yds apart. Have kids start with a ball on all sides. Have them dribble to the opposite side, turn, and go back about 10 times. Work on turning, speed dribbling, looking up.

## Brazilian Passing Game – U8 & Up

X                    O  
  
O                    X  
  
X                    O  
  
O                    X

S

X = Cone with Player   O= cone with player and ball   S= Start position of players with balls

Very important to make sure when you start balls are staggered as above. Players will progress through the drill by passing the ball to the players without a ball and receiving a ball at the same time from the player on the other side that has a ball. Go all the way through the channel and then dribble back to the start. Objective is to get through the passing channel as quickly as possible with effective passes.

Coaching Points:

Make sure ball is properly weighted so the player moving forward does not have to stop their run forward or deviate from the middle that much.

Quality passes to feet from the player running through

Using the correct feet for each pass for the player in the middle (left vs right foot)

Head up as the player progresses through

Make sure you pay attention on the outsides and pass as soon as the player releases the ball and makes eye contact with you.

Variations:

You can close the space or open the space up depending on age or speed of play to make it harder or easier

Add more players in the passing channel to make the players hold concentration longer and get a higher work rate/more endurance

Start Two touch and progress to making one touch passes for players in the middle.

You can add a goal at the end of the channel and get your goalkeeper involved by having the players finish with a shot on goal after the last pass.