

## **SOCCKER CLUB GAMES/DRILLS TO USE DURING PRACTICES**

Enthusiasm is the key to making any game/drill successful. Kids feed off the coach's enthusiasm. Some of these games/drills are better for u6 as opposed to u8 or u9-u11 but, you can modify the game slightly for either age bracket.

- I. Breakout groups of players into 2 or 3 players:
  - A. Set up two cones, have one player pass the ball to the player between the cones. Keep moving the cones around and sometimes make the width between the cones very narrow and other times greater depending on how far away the kids are from the cones. Give kids one point for each successful pass through the cone to the other player. Next group of players that rotates through will try to "break the record."
  - B. "Goalie, Goalie" Game. Have 2 to 3 kids lined up outside the goal pole, have 1 player move to the center of the goal. Coach will then roll or kick the ball towards the goal. If a goal is scored, the kid does not score a point for their "team." Every stopped shot results in a point being scored for the team of kids. The next group rotates in and tries to set the "record" for the most goals prevented.
  - C. Throw ball in air to first player. If the player can run and kick the ball before it hits the ground, the player gets 5 points. If the ball bounces once before it is kicked, the player gets 4 points, two bounces 3 points, etc. Works on trying to have the player make contact with the ball as quickly as possible.
  - D. Opposite foot bowling. For right footed players, have a player kick the ball with their left foot towards either 3, 6 and/or 10 cones (set up as if they were bowling pins). Depending on the age of the player, set the cones as far back as needed. Each knocked over cone results in points earned for the player. This works on teaching the players to use their "other" foot.
  - E. Long range bowling. See above letter D, but use "normal foot to kick but move the cones further back.
  - F. Balloon juggling. You use balloons and give points to the number touched before the balloon hits the ground.
  - G. Soccer ball juggling. See above, but use soccer balls.
  - H. Long rolling kick. Set a cone fairly far away from the coach. Have the coach roll the ball toward the cone. The player kicks the ball as hard as they can while the ball is still rolling. If the ball is kicked past the coach, 1 point is given. Coach can even set up different cones at different distances even past the coach to give even more chances to earn even more points. Coaches can vary how fast and/or bumpy the balls are rolled to the players. Players are encouraged to not stop the

ball and to instead kick the ball while it is still rolling (to stimulate clearing a ball on defense as quickly as possible).

- Alternate version is where players must trap the ball and then clear it
- I. Set up two lines of 4 or 5 cones. Have the players start at one cone and travel in a clockwise position to weave in and out and around the cones until the whole circle is completed. For the first time, players can use both feet to control the ball, the second time players can use the right foot, third time player uses the left foot. Points are scored for each completed circle. Can also have kids try to use different portions of their feet to control the ball.
  - J. Goal scoring games. Players are put behind a cone outside the penalty area. Coaches stand off to the side between that cone and the goal line. Coaches then roll a ball across the middle and the players run up and try to kick the ball into the goal. Games can start very basic and then coaches can switch sides (and even move to different places on the field to simulate passes from different positions). Coaches can also roll the ball and call out what foot the players are suppose to use. Coaches can also throw the ball high in the air and instruct the kids to strike the ball before 2 bounces, 1 bounce and/or no bounce.
  - K. Goal scoring plus additional concentration drill. See above games but this time, add a twist. Players are told either “a,” “b” and/or “c” before the coach rolls the ball. If “a” is called, players have to spin around once before striking the ball, if “b” is called, players have to touch their toes before striking the ball, if “c” is called, players have to do something else (i.e., knee to ground, drop to ground and roll once, jump off the ground, etc.). Players have to concentrate as they try to shoot.
  - L. “Throw in” into middle circle at the field. Players stand on the sideline exactly at the center of the field and throw the ball as hard as they can into the middle circle in the middle of the field. For each ball in the circle, the player gets a point. Alternative versions of this game can have players throw the ball in towards cones set up as bowling pins.
  - M. Trapping games. Players line up just inside the sideline. Coach kicks the ball, rolls the ball or bounces the ball toward the sideline and the players must stop the ball before it crosses the line. Each successful stop results in a point. If the ball crosses the line, no points are given.
  - N. Corner kick aiming game. Players are instructed to kick the balls from the corner and kick the ball between two cones placed where a good corner kick should be headed. For each ball that goes between the two cones, a point is given. Coaches can alter the width of the cones and length from the corner to make the game harder or easier.

- O. Corner kick bowling. Cones are placed in the middle of the goalie box and there are a few bonus cones. Players take corner kicks and get points for knocking over cones.
- P. Goal kick goal. Players kick goal kicks in the proper direction. Players are instructed to kick the ball as hard as they can toward a line of cones. For each additional cone the ball travels past, an additional point is given.
- Q. Goal kick aiming for cones. Cones are set up diagonal toward the sideline in a crescent moon shaped pattern and players are instructed that the first cone is worth 10 points and each additional cone is worth an additional 10 points. In other words, if the player hits the 10<sup>th</sup> cone, the player gets a 100 points.
- R. Goal scoring target practice game. Players are placed off center behind the cone and the coach rolls the ball through the middle and the player has to “one touch” strike the ball and not just score a goal, but hit a cone placed somewhere in the goal to score points.
- S. Different dribbling. Players are instructed to begin dribbling and the coach will then yell out different ways to dribble. For example, coach can yell front of foot, back of foot, bottom of foot, top of foot, left foot, right foot, right side of foot, left side of foot and players then need to dribble as directed.

## II. Full team games:

- A. Red light/green light. Players start on one sideline and whenever coach yells “red light,” player must stop the ball from moving and must place a foot on top of the ball. When “green light” is yelled, players start dribbling forward until the next red light. Kids try to dribble from one side to the other. Once kids learn the basics, coach can add “blue light,” players “sit” on the ball, “purple light,” forehead on the ball, “yellow light,” elbow on the ball, etc.
- B. Dribble to the coach. Put players on one sideline and the coach is on the sideline, when the coach faces the players, they cannot be dribbling and the foot must be on the ball, coach slowly turns around and players can start dribbling only to make sure they stop when the coach decides to again turn back around. Teaches the kids to keep the ball close to them. If the coach sees the player’s balls moving, players must go back to where they started.
- C. Team building, beat the parents goal scoring game. A great game to end practice. Put all the parents in one goal. Put all the kids with balls at top of the penalty box. Explain how if one player tries to score, it would be difficult, but if the players work as a team and to all dribble down towards the parents at the same time and have all the kids shoot on the parents at the same time. Have the kids start themselves and then put all the players in the goal and have the parents try to score but warn parents “do not kill the players.”

- D. Shark circle drill. Put all the parents in the inner circle in the middle of the field and have all the players stay outside of the circle. Each player is given a ball and told to aim for the parents in the inner circle. Each parent hit earns the players 1 point. Each parent of the child that the child hits, earns the child 10 points. You can make one parent or coach worth 100 points. Again, can switch players and parents in the circle and warn the parents “not to kill the players.”
- E. Duck hunt. Put all the players on any line, sideline and/or penalty box line and have all the parents off to the side at a right angle. Line all the players up with balls and instruct players to cheer to have the parents start coming across the line of view. Players are instructed to stay on the line and aim the ball toward the parents. A ball that hits any parent gets 1 point. Any ball that hits the player’s parent gets a 100 point, any ball that hits the coach gets a 1000 points. Do several rounds and then have the players and parents switch and warn the parents not to kill the players.
- F. The “horde.” Put 2 or 3 players at the center line to dribble to the goal at your instruction. Put all the other players on the sideline. First “go” starts the player. Second “go” the rest of the kids, i.e., the horde. In the “first round” give the player a head start to start dribbling before starting the hoard chasing after the player. Causes the kid to dribble fast and try to score a goal before the hoard gets to them. Begin having some of the hoard members go to the sideline and each player that finishes joins the hoard.
- G. Length of kick game. Have each player put the ball on either the goal kick line and/or penalty kick line and have the players aim for either a cone or mid field line or another spot. Ball closest to the cone or line wins each round. Again, you can have players versus parents for this drill to end practices.
- H. Battle of the cones. Put one set of players on one side of the penalty area line and the other set of players on the other and have cones set up directly in the middle and have the players begin aiming to try to knock down the cones and the team that hits over the most number of cones wins. You can have bonus cones worth more to increase the enthusiasm. You can also have the players versus parents game for this game as well.
- I. One on one game. Have players start on either side of the penalty area and have one ball in the middle. Coach then starts both players and they have to run to the ball and dribble it back to their line. To even up different challenges, ball can be thrown in the area or started slightly closer to one child to make things competitive after one or two rounds. Mix up the match ups. You can even have two balls and two kids.

### III. Games for Younger Kids:

- A. Forest through the Trees – Have all of the kids on one side of the field, with the parents in the middle of the field. The parents are the “trees” and they cannot move. They can stretch and try to touch. The kids run from one side of the field through the trees to the other without getting touched. In the next round, the kids bring their balls with them as they try to dribble through the trees. In the third round, the trees become slow-moving trees and/or zombies.
- B. The “Bear” Game (or the Fuzzy Pink Rabbit game if the kids might be scared of a bear) – Set up a large square. On one side, build a cave outside the square (or multiple caves). The kids dribble in the square until the bear comes and then all of the kids dribble the ball into the cones. Of course, you can start with kids having no balls and simply running. Once the kids start learning to stand near the cave, have the bear come out of the cave, so that the kids have to dribble around the bear to get back into the cave.
- C. Dribble Freeze Game – All of the kids start on a sideline with a ball and the coaches throw the balls to the other side of the field so the balls are approximately evenly spread out. A coach says “GO” and the kids run to get their balls. The coach stands on the sideline, facing away from the kids. The kids start dribbling back towards the coach to try to pass the sideline. After a few seconds, the coach raises his or her arms to look like a T and slowly spins around. If the coach sees any kid without their foot on the ball unmoving, the kid has to take 20 steps back.

### IV. Different types of scrimmages:

- A. Coach divides the kids into two teams and they scrimmage each other. If one team scores a goal, the team gets to take a kid off of the other team. The team on which the goal was scored gets to take a player (or the coach selects the player) and the player switches teams.
- B. Opposite Foot Scrimmage – The teams scrimmage against each other, but players are only allowed to use their non-regular foot.
- C. Passing Scrimmage – Players must pass the ball after the second touch or a penalty is called. The third kick must be passed to a teammate.
- D. Passing Before Scoring Scrimmage – The players must pass the ball to at least three teammates before they can score. If an opposing player touches the ball, the players must start again trying to achieve three passes.
- E. Unbalanced Scrimmage – The whole team scrimmages 1, 2 or 3 players. Most kids seem to want to be one of those 1, 2 or 3 players.

- F. Multiple Ball Scrimmage – I call this “Silly Soccer”. At uneven intervals, a coach adds one or two extra balls during the scrimmage. The kids do not know when the balls will be coming. Those balls are in play whenever the coach decides.
  
- G. Capture the Flag Scrimmage – Five balls are placed on each end line. The kids must try to steal all five balls and bring them back to their side. If the kids are on the other team’s side, they can get tagged and have to go to jail (Jail is in the corner of the field). There are many different variations of the rules. The kids must not use hands when getting balls. The kids must kick the balls back. Once tagged out of the jail, everyone gets free walk-backs, including the person that tagged the other people out of the jail. No one can take any balls with them when they are going back to their side after being tagged out of the jail. This is a very fun game to have parents vs. the team play each other.