

Coaching at the Grass Roots

IT'S PRACTICE TIME!

6-7 year olds

SEASON II PART 1



Dribbling

Key Factors:

1. Heads up!
2. Change speed.
3. Change direction.
4. Use different surfaces of the foot.

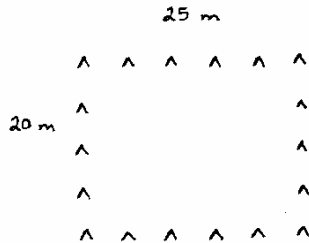
Let's Practice!

6-7 year olds

EQUIPMENT CHECK: Ball for each player, cones, colored bibs.

Warm-up (15 minutes)

25m x20m rectangle



Note: *Have the rectangle just big enough for the players to move around with a little space to spare. Too big an area gives them too much space. They need to be close to other players so, as they move around with the ball, they are forced to look up to avoid colliding with each other.*

All players, each with a ball, are in the rectangle. The coach directs them to move around, keeping the ball at their feet.

After a few seconds, coach yells, “Stop”. Now tell the players that when the coach yells “stop”, they must immediately stop the ball by putting their foot on it.

Direct the players to move again. Yell, “Stop”. Some balls will roll away from players. Tell them that, in a game, if they kick the ball too far ahead of them, they will give it to the other team. Keep the ball close!

Start again. While they are moving, tell them that you are going to yell the command, “Turn”. When they hear “turn”, they are to turn around and move in the opposite direction.

Yell “Turn”. And observe. Yell “turn” three or four times, then “stop”. Observe.

Demonstrate a turn. **The ROLL BACK: putting your foot on the ball, roll the ball back, and turn with it.** Direct the players to practice this turn.

Players move off. Yell “turn” and observe. If most of the players have the idea, go around and help the individuals who do not. If most do not have it, yell “stop” and demonstrate again. This time have them stay in one place practicing the foot and ball movement. Then have them move off.

When the players appear to have the roll back under control, try it with the “other” foot. **Coach, left-footed players use right foot, right-footed players use left foot.**

Now introduce the command “Change”. As the players are moving, tell them you are going to yell “Change”. When they hear this command, they are to move in another direction. To do this, they can use the inside or outside of the foot to push the ball left or right. **Coach, you might have to demonstrate this.**

Have the players move around for two or three minutes with you yelling only the following four commands – “stop”, “go”, “turn” or “change” – on a regular basis. **Coach, vary the commands – do not give them in a pattern.**

At the final stop, do some stretching for 5 minutes.

Coach, this drill can be used several times over many practices. Each time, introduce a different turn using a different surface of the foot – heel, sole, inside, outside, left foot, right foot. Constantly stress that players have to develop the use of both feet and different surfaces of the foot when moving with the ball.

REMEMBER: If the space is “tight” when the players are moving around, they will have to keep their heads up to avoid collisions. This will become automatic as they move. If the space is too large, then they can move around without bumping, so they can keep their heads down.

Constantly, stress that the players do something different each time they turn or change direction – never use the same move two or three times in a row.

Skill (10 minutes)

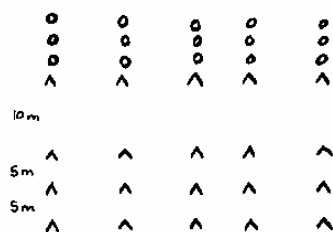
SET-UP

Divide your team into groups of three. (If you have a group of four left over, make two groups of two.)

3 players behind each cone.

1 ball per team.

Ball is placed by the side of the starting cone.



DIRECTIONS GIVEN TO PLAYERS

SAY:

The first player in each line is going to follow this path through the cones. *Coach, demonstrate by showing the route you want them to take. You don't need a ball.*

When I say "go", you will follow the same route.

When you complete the route, to finish the race you **MUST** stop the ball by the side of the cone you started from. If someone does this for you, you will be disqualified.

I will tell the next person when to go.

Ready...go...

1. Declare a winner and assign them one point.
2. Now have the second player go over the same route.
3. Declare a winner and assign one point.
4. Repeat with the third player.

When all have done the same route, the coach picks another route and repeats the game.

Possible routes and variations:

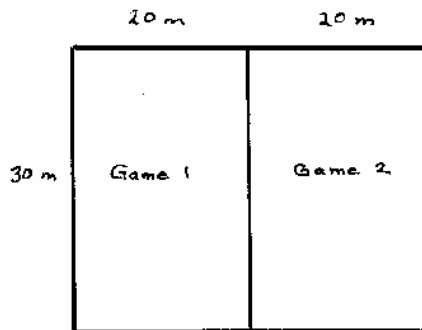
- circle first cone, second cone, loop around the last cone and run straight back.
- zig-zag up and back.
- leave the ball at one cone, just run around the other cones, then bring the ball back.
- use left foot only
- use right foot only

USE YOUR IMAGINATION! There are literally hundreds of variations (not all at once!)

After 10 minutes, ask each team for their point total and declare a winner.

Mini-Game (10 minutes)

Keeping the same groups of 3 (if you have groups of 2, add them onto a team), play two 3v3 or 4v4 games (even 4v3, if needed) in a 20m x30m rectangle. Teams wear colored bibs.



Start with no keepers.

Play to see who can score the most goals. STRESS – before a goal can be scored the player must “beat” (dribble) around one player from the other team.

Let the play go on for five minutes.

After five minutes, take the two teams with the most goals and play them against each other. Play the teams with the fewer goals against each other. Play for five minutes.

Game (10 minutes)

Remove the center line of cones to create a 30m x 40m field.

7v7

Play a 10-minute game with keepers. Every time a goal is scored both teams change keepers.

Have goal kicks, corner kicks, throw-ins, and free kicks for **major infractions** (usually handball, tripping).

When each restart is taken, briefly explain why – a goal kick, a corner kick, a throw-in, a free kick.

For example, **SAY:**

The red team last touched the ball before it went out, so the blue team throws it in.

or

The attacking team kicked the ball over the goal line so the defending team has a goal kick.

or

The defending team put the ball over their goal line so the attacking team has a corner kick.

Keep it simple, keep the players moving. LET THEM PLAY!

Warm-Down (5 minutes)

At the end of the practice, have the players walk with you twice around the field you have played on.

Stop, gather the players in a semi-circle in front of you.

Coach, this becomes the routine way to end every practice and game – no one just runs off! Make any comments necessary, (For example, **SAY:** “Good game!” “Good practice!” “I really liked what I saw!” “Hope you all had fun!” “See you Tuesday night.”) Then send the children to their parents.

Practice is over!

**As a coach, you are in a position to do great things for soccer in Canada!
Set up a simple, but solid, well-planned program and let the children play!**



If you have any questions, comments or feedback about this document, or anything involving the Coaching Centre, please send an email to: ray_clark@soccercan.ca