



## Fun Games



Fun Games are activities which further help to develop Technical Proficiency while exposing players to limited decision making (Tactical Prowess).

As drills are mostly organised in lines, lanes, circles, squares or triangles, and result in linear movement, players only attend to what is happening in a limited area of their vision. Fun Games and Grid Games generally take place in a defined space but allow random movement within that space, e.g. a grid, court, or a field. To develop peripheral vision and awareness of team-mates and opponents, Fun Games (for younger players) or Grid Games (for more technically advanced players) are used to introduce non-linear movement and prepare players for the type of movement that takes place during games.

From a Technical Proficiency point of view Fun Games provide an alternative focus for the outcome of the technique or skill being developed, challenging the players to use the skill to participate in a variety of situations.

The 'Family of Games' identifies 4 main types of game, which are progressively more challenging, as follows:

1. Target Games – Roll, throw, kick or strike an object at a target
2. Court Games – Opponents share the same space or are divided by a net
3. Field Games – Opposing teams take turns to bat and field
4. Invasion Games – Progressively invading the opposition's territory (from no invasion to full invasion) to attack a goal

Coaches should use the 'Family of Games' to select the appropriate game to suit the ability of their specific group. Young players should begin playing Target Games and progress gradually. Starting with Full-Invasion Games is not appropriate for young players as they require competency at not only technical skills but also tactical and team play skills.

**Target Games** are the simplest form of Fun Games and challenge players to use their technique to hit a target. Starting in 1's or 2's build the numbers to involve unstructured group work. Progress from playing in a cooperative to a competitive manner.

**Court Games** require players to pass the ball over an obstacle like a net or zone to a receiver (problem solving). They require only limited decision making skills but do require communication, spatial awareness and match-related running.

**Field Games** are those games that are based on alternating the player striking/kicking the ball and fielders. They require greater decision making and spatial awareness in relation to where, when and how to move or play the ball.

**Invasion Games** gradually require players to work as a team to invade opposition territory. Games progress from non-invasion (e.g. where players must complete a task without any direct opposition), to part-invasion (e.g. a possession game between two teams in a grid or a game where certain players are limited to a zone), to full-invasion (e.g. invading opposition territory to attack a goal). As part of the range of Fun Games, invasive skills are introduced through mainly non-invasive and part-invasive games. These games allow players to develop positional sense, but limit the type of opposition that players encounter as they continue to develop. Players must make decisions on where and when to move as in a real 'game' situation, and are encouraged to develop an awareness of time and space. These games also help develop characteristics of Team Play, e.g. support play and communication.

### **Let the Kids Decide!**

As Coach you should also allow Players to develop their own games on occasion. This gives them the opportunity to interact with the elements of play on a different level, using initiative and problem solving to bring order and enjoyment to their own creation.