

FOOTBALL SKILLS 5-8 YEAR OLDS

1. Ball Handling

Set up: 10 footballs, 6 cones

Circle Body

Using both hands roll the ball around the waist, hand the ball to partner and repeat.

Progression: Roll ball around knees, ankles etc

Figure of 8 between legs

Circle body on the move (while walking, jogging).

Competition: How many times can you circle the body in a minute?

2. Bouncing

- Start by allowing the children to bounce the ball individually with two hands.
- Progress to dominant hand only (other hand behind back). Then non-dominant hand. The players may be allowed to walk/jog/run and bounce the ball while moving within a certain boundary line.
- Each player bounces and catches the ball as many times as possible in 30 secs.

Bounce Relay Race

Divide class into groups of 3-4 with one ball per group.

Teams line up in single file about 10m away from marker.

Each child must bounce the ball once on the way out, at the marker, and once on the way back and hand ball to next in line.

Non-Preferred hand bounce relay

Same as above but players must bounce the ball with their non-preferred hand.

Hand dribble relay race

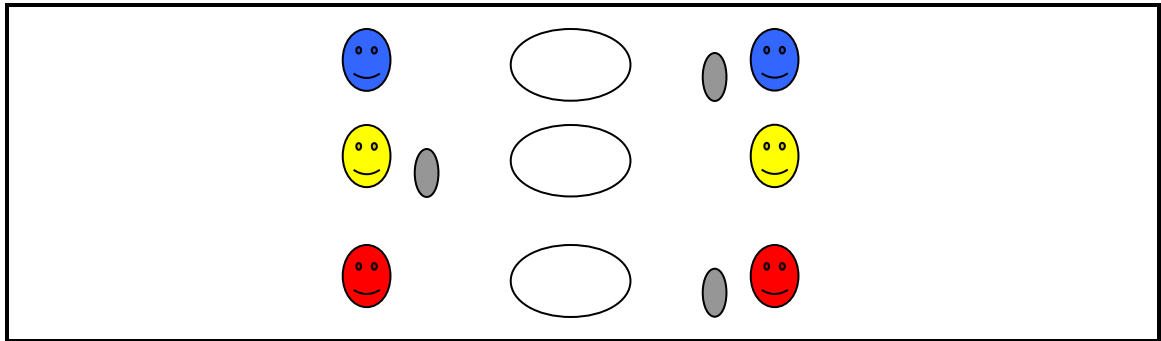
Same formation as above. Each player in turn dribbles (pushes) the ball with one hand out and around the marker and back.

Non-Preferred hand dribble relay

Same as above - players must use the other hand to dribble ball.

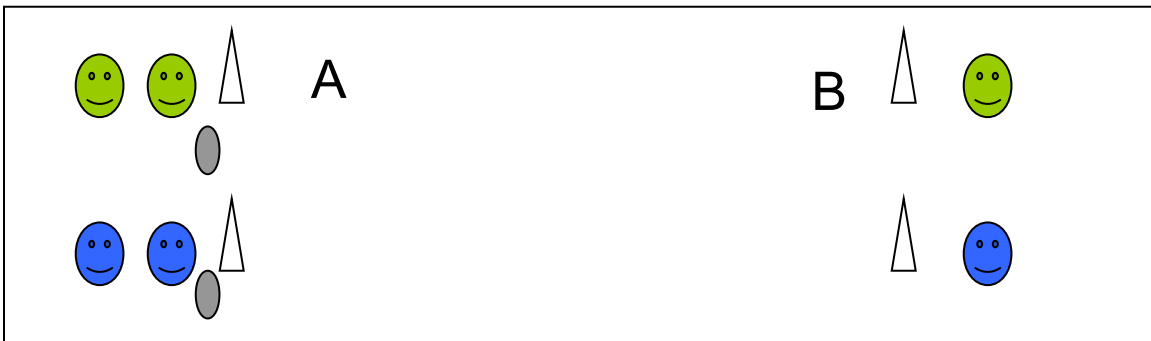
Mark out 3/4 lines by placing 5 cones in each line. First child weaves in and out through the cones while holding or bouncing the ball (depending on their level of coordination) and then back through the cones where he hands the ball to the next person. Ensure variety by instructing the children to hold the ball on their head, or out in front of body. Introduce relay races using the same format.

Drill A: Children partner up. They throw the ball from an overhead position at the ground in front of partner. Partner attempts to catch the ball on the bounce using their two hands. (Children can bounce the ball into a hula in front of partner for accuracy.)



Drill B:

- 3 children in each group. Two children at cone A and one at cone B.
- Start with a ball at cone A. The first child bounces the ball and takes four steps until they have reached cone B. At cone B they throw/hand over/hand pass the ball to the other child who bounces the ball to cone A. Repeat.



BALL & BOUNCE TAG

Using a confined area such as below, break group up into 2 teams of 5, place two teams into box.

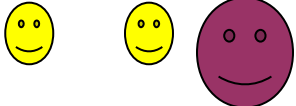
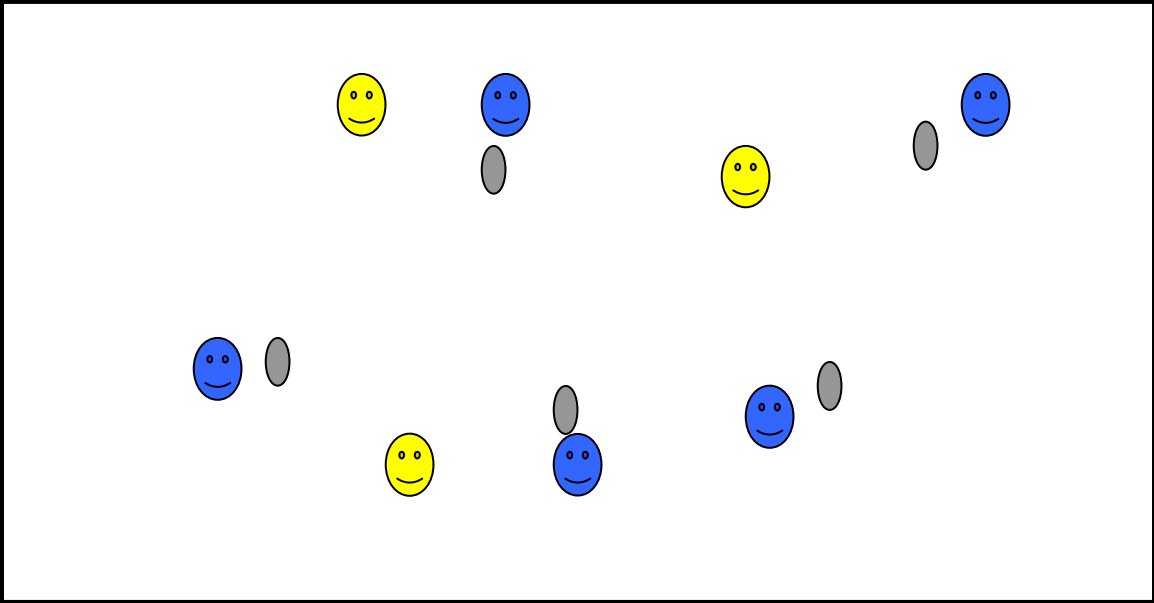
Each member of one team is given a ball.

Team A, each bouncing as they run, chase and try to tag the players of the other team by touching them with the ball.

Players must leave the game and sit down by coach if they are tagged. Encourage players to take four steps between each bounce. Each team tries to tag as many players as they can in one minute. Rotate teams.

Variation:

If players are tagged they do 5 high jumps/5 star jumps and they can continue.



3. Basic Catching

The chest catch (Teaching points)

1. Keep eyes on the ball.
2. Arms held out with elbows close together.
3. Spread fingers to cushion ball and catch the ball in the arms.
4. Pull the ball into chest to protect the ball.

Bounce to partner and catch

Stand facing your partner, bounce the ball in the centre so that it travels to your partner to catch. Move further apart as you improve.

Throw and catch standing

Stand three to four metres from your partner and throw the ball to him with an under-arm/over-head action. Partner catches and repeats.

Progression

1. Throw, Clap and catch - Repeat 10 times.
2. Use one hand – Throw ball up with one hand, catch with the other.
3. Throw while walking and catch.
4. Add some competition, how many catches can you complete in 30 seconds with your partner?

Catching drill A:

Three players in a line 5 metres apart. One player on the outside throws the ball at chest height to the player in the middle to catch using the **w-hand position**. The player in the middle then turns and throws it to the player on the other side to catch it the same way. The player throws it back to the player in the middle and this routine continues. Give each child a chance to be in the middle

Catching Skill Drills B:

Tunnel Relay (Teams of 4/5 players/one ball).

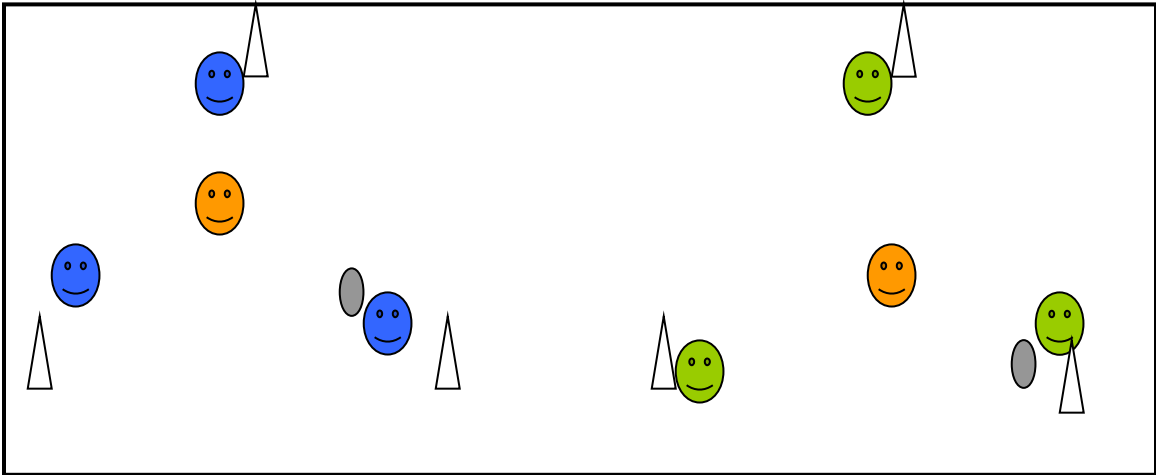
Line up in single file approx 1m apart.

Players stand with feet apart and pass the ball back along through their legs. When number 5 receives the ball he moves to the front of the line and bounces the ball on the way there. Game continues until players revert to original positions.

Variation: Ball passed overhead, around, sideways, through legs.

Catching Game - Piggy in the middle

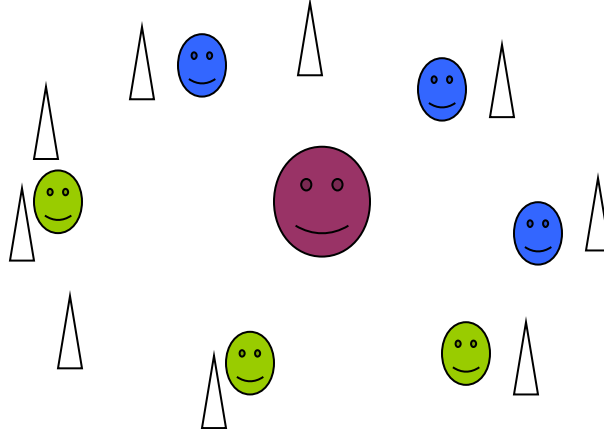
Divide the players into groups of four. One player is the piggy in the middle. The other three players form a triangle around the player in the middle. The players must throw the ball to each other at chest height avoiding the piggy. The piggy must try to intercept the ball. Change the player in the middle after 30 seconds or 1 minute.



Catching/Throwing in a Circle

Set-up

8-10 domes laid out in a circle, 3 footballs, and 1 coach



Description

Phase 1

- Coach stands in centre of the circle holding the ball.
- One child stationed at each dome.
- Coach throws ball to one random child who catches it (chest catch) and throws the ball back to the coach.
- Coach continues to throw ball at random to children.

Phase 2

- Coach steps out of drill.
- Children throw ball in anti-clockwise direction to each other.
- When coach shouts 'change direction' they must throw ball in clockwise direction etc. (This challenges the children to think).
- Introduce second or third ball to make it more challenging.

Phase 3

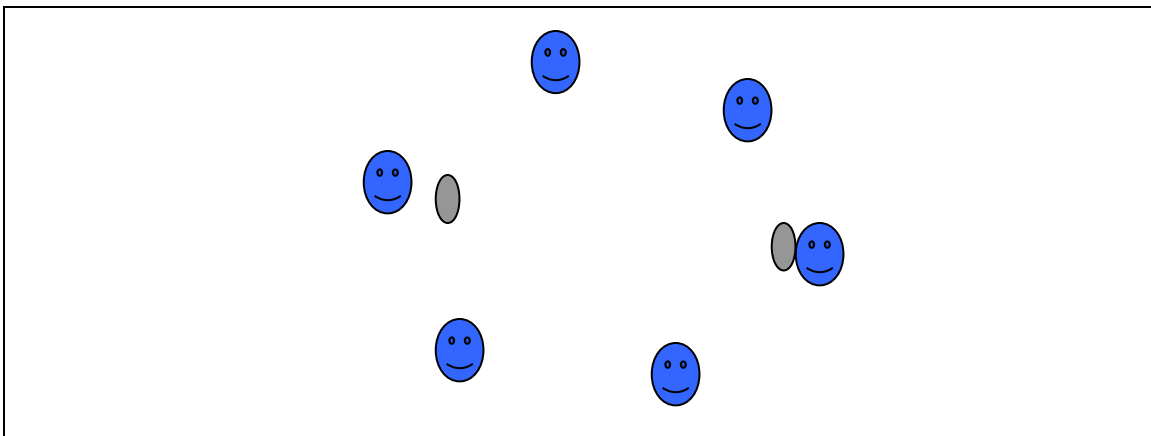
- Similar to phase 2 but children rolls the ball along the ground to each other.
- They must bend down and pick the ball off the ground.

Phase 4

- Similar to phase 2 but children bounce the ball to each other.

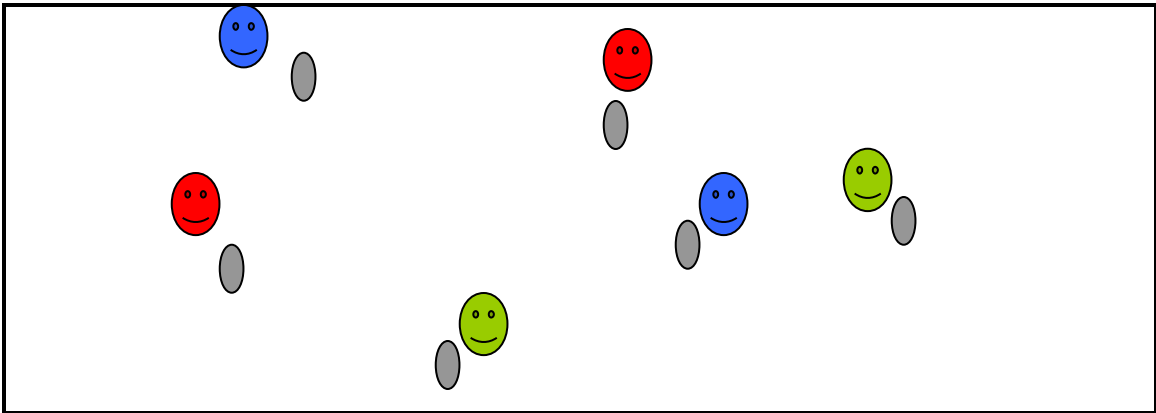
Catching and Throwing

- Have all children in the group form a large circle. They start by throwing and catching one ball around the circle.
- See how many catches they can complete in one minute going around the circle.
- As the children improve, introduce a second ball. See how many catches they can complete in one minute going around the circle.
- To make this more challenging tell the children to change the direction in which they pass the ball a number of times during the minute.
- Finally (with older groups) start again with one ball, the player with the ball can throw the ball to any player in the circle, but then must run to and stand in that player's place. Add in a second ball if group ready.



20-UP THROW

- Toss the ball into the air and clap before catching it.
- Try to do this on 20 consecutive occasions.
- Challenge players to clap more than once before catching.
- Holding the ball in two hands throw the ball “underhand” to your partner by bringing the ball back between both of your legs before releasing it on the way up.



LOW CATCH & CHEST CATCH

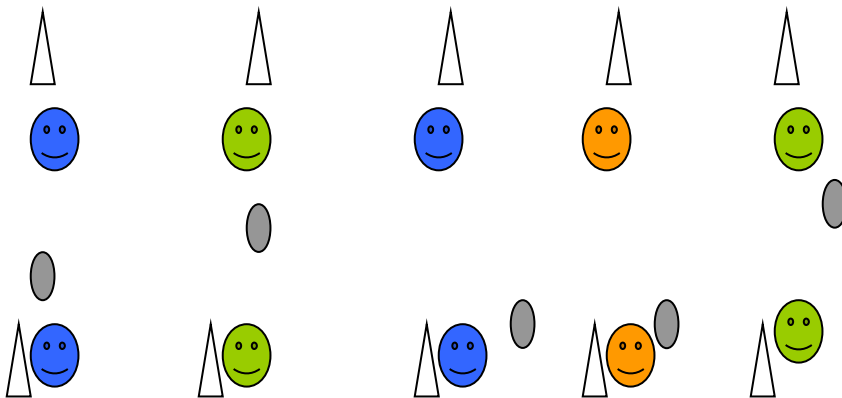
Show all players how to make a “basket” for the chest catch, how to make a “W” with their hands for high catch.

Set up one cone for every person in the group, placed in pairs, one opposite the other in two lines.

Ask all players to attempt to throw the ball back and over without letting the ball hit the ground x 20 times

If there are parents available encourage them to stand at a cone each and throw the ball to 2 players at cone opposite.

Throws will be high and players take turns catching the ball.

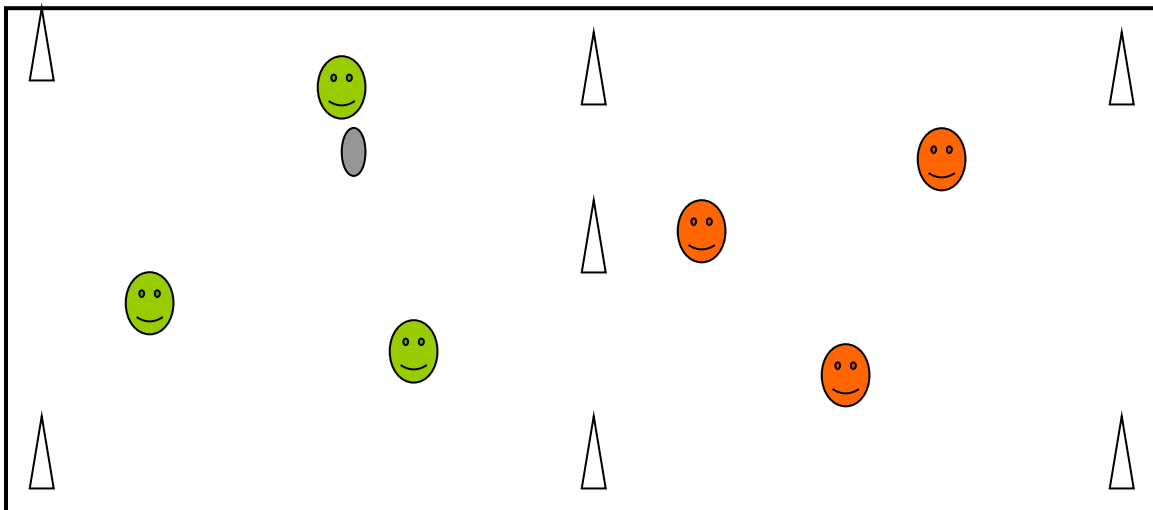


CATCHING GAME **No-Mans-Land**

Set up cones to outline areas as below.

Split group up into pairs with one ball between two pairs, game will be 2 V 2.
Place 1st pair one into Box A and 2nd pair into Box B. The ball starts in Box A

The object of the game is to attempt to throw the ball into the opposite zone without the opposition catching. All throws MUST be underarm throws and must go above head-height. The opposition will attempt to catch the ball overhead before the ball hits the ground. A ball out or a successful clean catch gets a point for the catcher's team.



4. THE PUNT KICK

1. Explain skill and why it is used.
2. Give 3-4 key teaching points.
3. Demonstrate skill.

The punt kick – teaching points

1. Eyes on the ball.
2. Hold ball out in the right hand.
3. Take step forward with left leg.
4. “Drop” the ball onto right foot.
5. Kick with the instep (laced part) of the boot.
6. Follow through in the direction of the target.

Ball between 2 to practice skill (punt kick to partner and catch).

Add some competition, how many passes can you complete in 30 seconds?

Most important is to take the step before you kick – “Step and Kick”

Progressions

1. Player two punt kicks to player one. He then moves in behind player three. Player one kicks to player three. Player three punt kicks to player one and moves in behind player two and so on.
2. Player two punt kicks to player one and jogs across following the direction of the ball. Player one punt kicks to player three, jogs across, following the direction of the ball and so on.
3. Organise a competition of progression (1). Each group has one minute to perform as many successful punt kicks as possible. Repeat the drill for a second minute giving them the chance to beat their record (a score is registered if the ball is caught)

Practice using both feet.

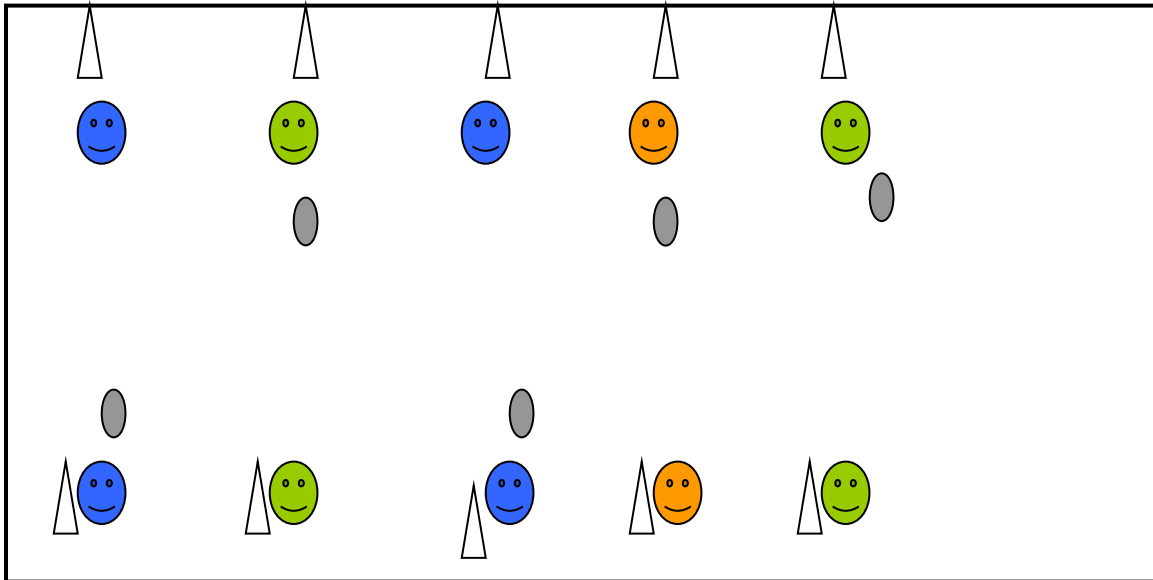
PUNT KICK PASSING

- One cone for every person in-group, placed in pairs, one opposite the other in two lines. Do not give any balls out until all children are in position and you have finished explaining teaching points and demonstration.

Ask all players to attempt to kick pass the ball back and over without letting the ball hit the ground x 10 times, if the ball hits the ground then they must start again from 0.

If players complete the task with the dominant foot ask them to use non-dominant foot.

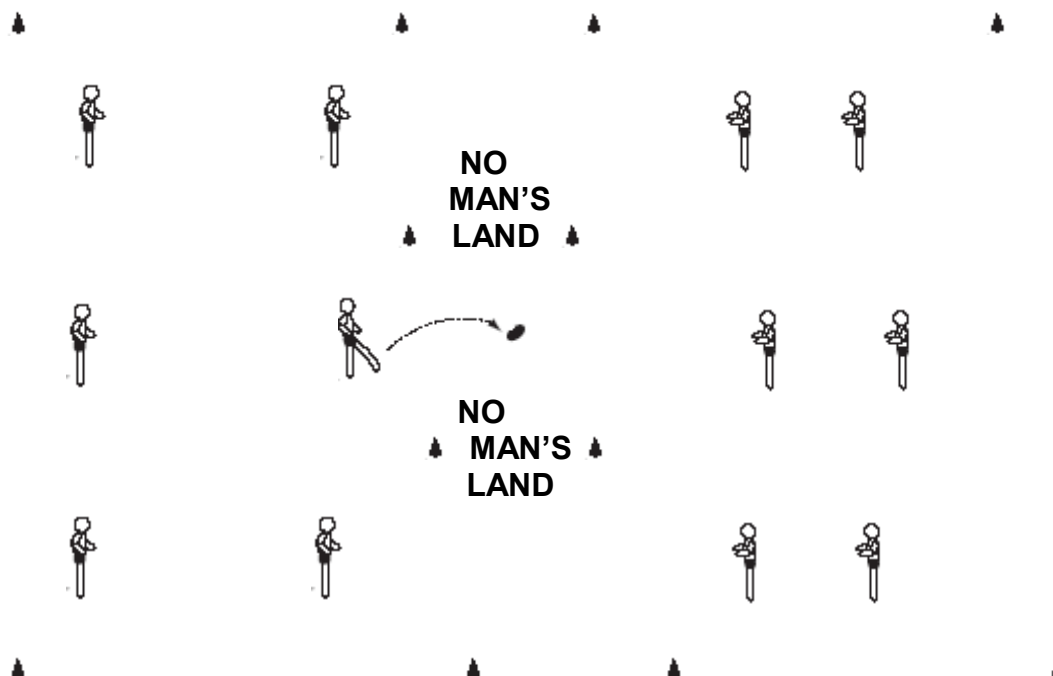
To increase difficulty move cones further back.



KICKING GAME

(Use at least 2 footballs) – Start with 1 ball, then add another.

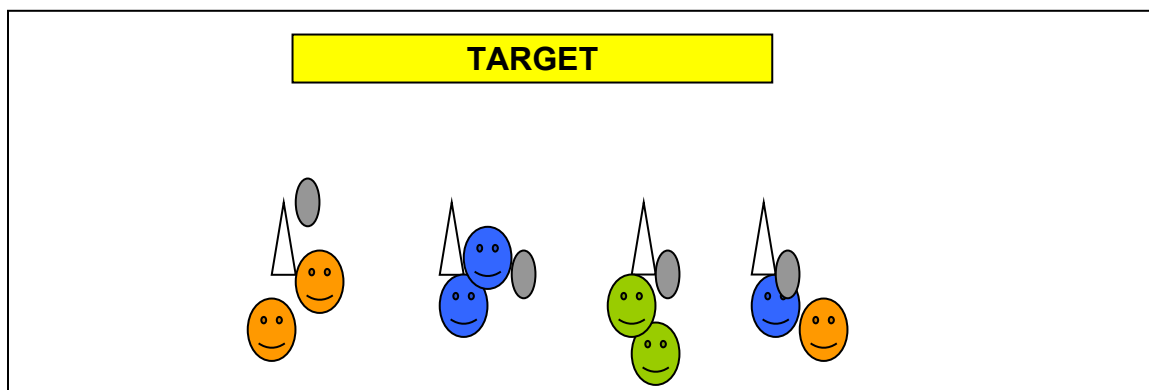
No Man's Land: Using cones set up a large square that consists of 3 areas (with the middle area narrower than those either side of it). 2 teams either side of no mans land. The object of the game is to kick a football and get it to bounce in your opponent's zone before they catch it. A point is awarded if successful. If the ball is kicked outside the area or in 'No Man's Land' a point is awarded to the other team. The ball must be passed at least twice amongst the team before the ball is kicked in order to ensure everyone gets a turn on the ball.



Practice using both feet.

TARGET PRACTICE

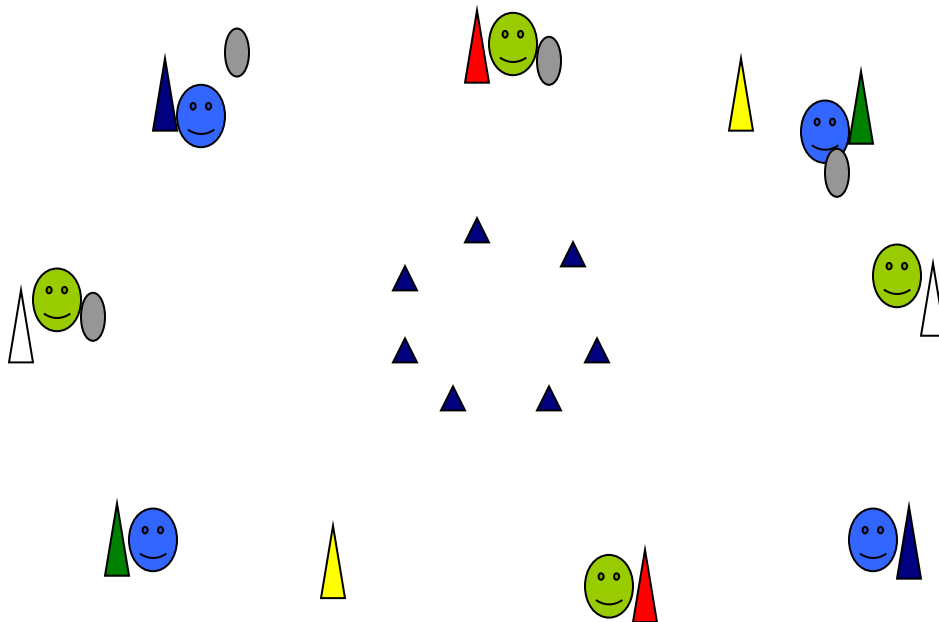
- Have 4 groups of 2 players, one cone for each group. Give each group a name e.g. Dublin, Cork, etc.
- Each group has one ball and players take it in turns to kick from the hand at a target (e.g. 6m X 3m square of cones). If the ball lands in the target before hitting the ground a point is awarded.
- Each player will take three kicks in total at the target and retrieves ball directly after kicking. The team with the highest score wins. Change groups to different cones after the 3 kicks each.
- Vary distance between cones and target, Use Left and Right Foot.



KICKING PRACTISE

Set up – football between every 2 players, 8-12 cones in outer circle, small inner circle of cones of same colour (6-8m between circles).

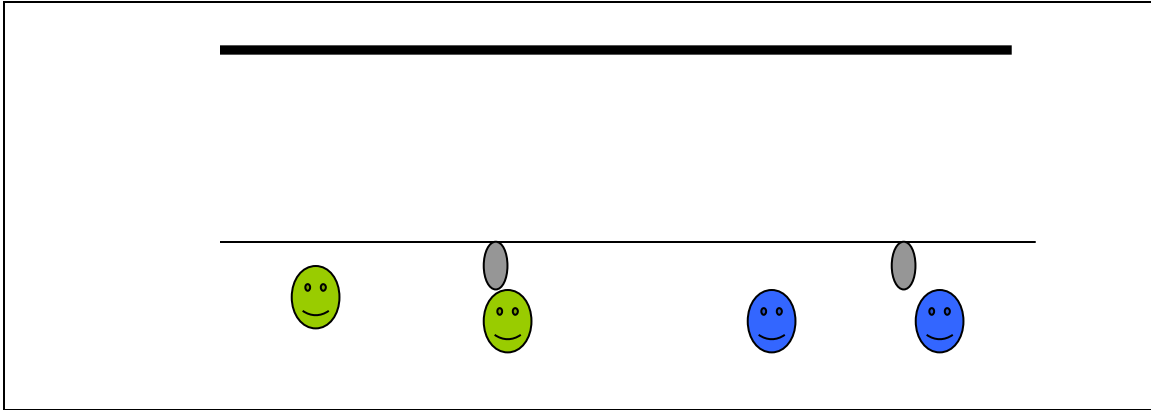
- Have 4 sets of 2 players, one football and a colour for each group.
- Player with ball stands at their own coloured cone in the outer circle with partner opposite at same coloured cone.
- Their aim is to kick the ball towards their partner landing it in the inner circle, partner gets ball and kicks back.
- A player is not allowed take 2 kicks in a row from the same coloured cone – must move to a spare cone and partner follows at other side.
- If the ball lands first time in the inner circle that pair are awarded 2 points.
- See which pair can get the most points in 2 minutes. Then try kicking with other foot



CATCH & KICK

(For Indoor/Wall)

- One ball between two players. Player 1 kicks the ball from behind the line against the wall and player 2 catches the ball after it has hit the wall and repeats.
- Teams aim to get 10 successful catches and kicks in a row



SHOOTING

Set-up

- 1 goal with net
- 10 agility poles
- 2 lines with 5 poles in each line.
- 1 coach + 1 helper.

Description

- First child weaves in and out through the poles (without touching them) while holding or bouncing the ball (depending on level of co-ordination).
- When he reaches end of line he kicks at goal from the hand.
- Child retrieves ball and return to back of line.
- Challenge children to bounce ball on the run also.

The punt kick – teaching points

1. Eyes on the ball.
2. Hold ball out in the right hand.
3. Take step forward with left leg.
4. “Drop” the ball onto right foot.
5. Kick with the instep (laced part) of the boot.
6. Follow through in the direction of the target.

Most important is to take the step before you kick –

“Step and Kick”

Practice using both feet.

5. HAND PASSING

Teaching Points

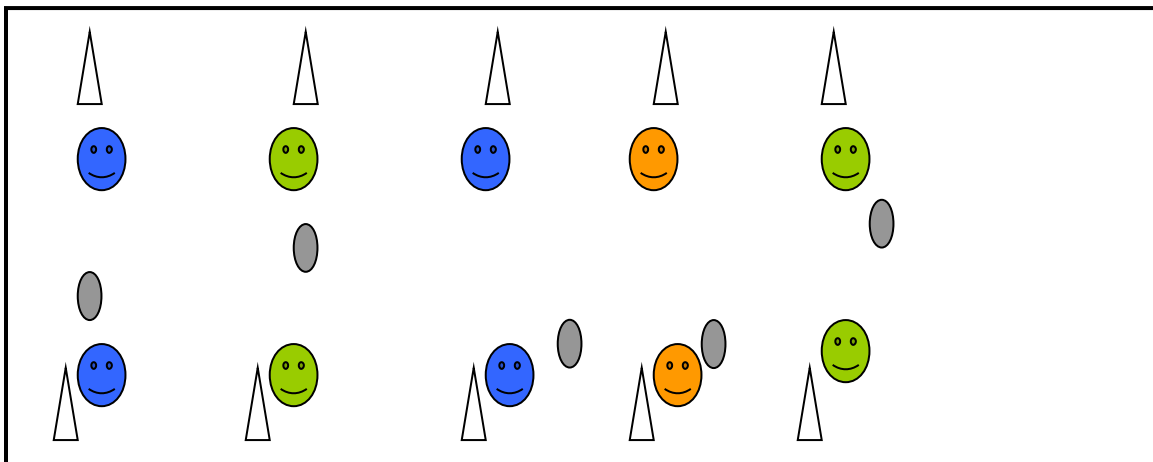
- Hold ball in palm of one hand, face the target, swing back and extend striking hand.
- Lean forward, strike the ball, keep supporting hand steady.
- Follow through with striking hand, stepping forward with opposite foot.
- One cone for every person in-group, placed in pairs, one opposite the other in two lines.

Adaptations for hand-passing:

Ask all players to attempt to hand-pass the ball over and back without letting the ball hit the ground x 20 times, if the ball hits the ground then they must start again from 1.

If players complete the task with the dominant hand ask them to use non-dominant hand.

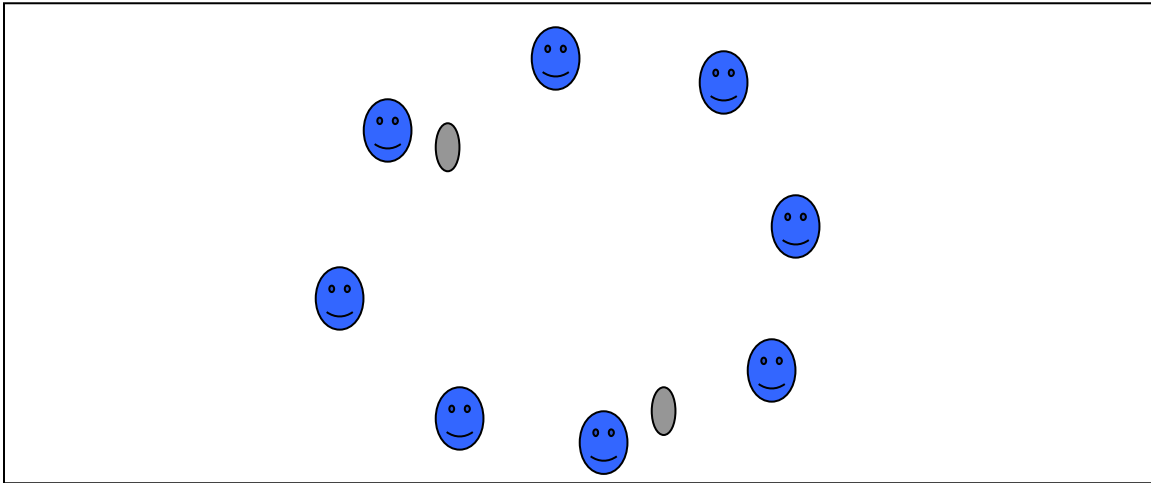
To increase difficulty move cones further back.



Practice using both Hands

HAND PASSING GAME/DRILL

- Have all children in the group form a large circle. One ball must be fist passed around the circle.
- As the children improve, introduce another ball. To make this more challenging tell the children to change the direction in which they pass the ball.



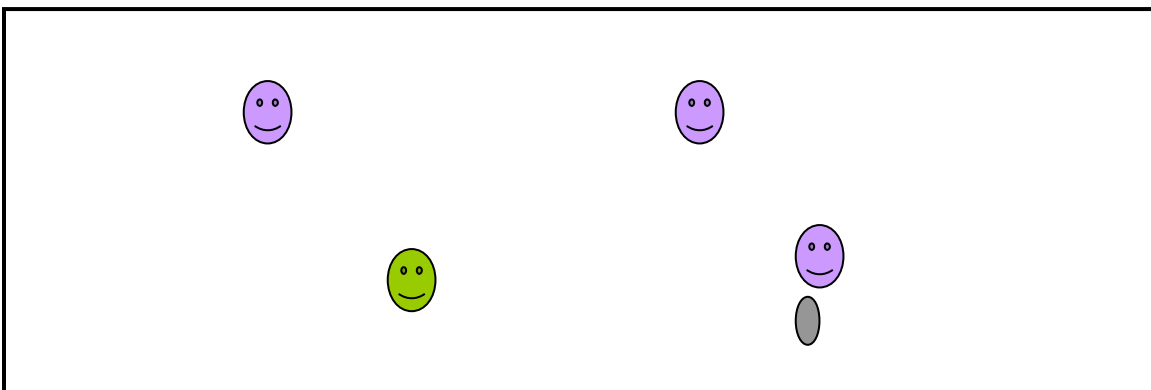
PASS & MOVE

Set up 4-8 cones to mark out boundary square and a ball between 2 or 3 players. Each group of 2-3 players take one ball and instruct players to pass the ball to a partner and then run to somewhere else on the grid.

Players on receiving the ball must run 4 steps with the ball before passing to another member of the group. Continue this for one minute.

Set groups a challenge of achieving 25 passes in one minute.

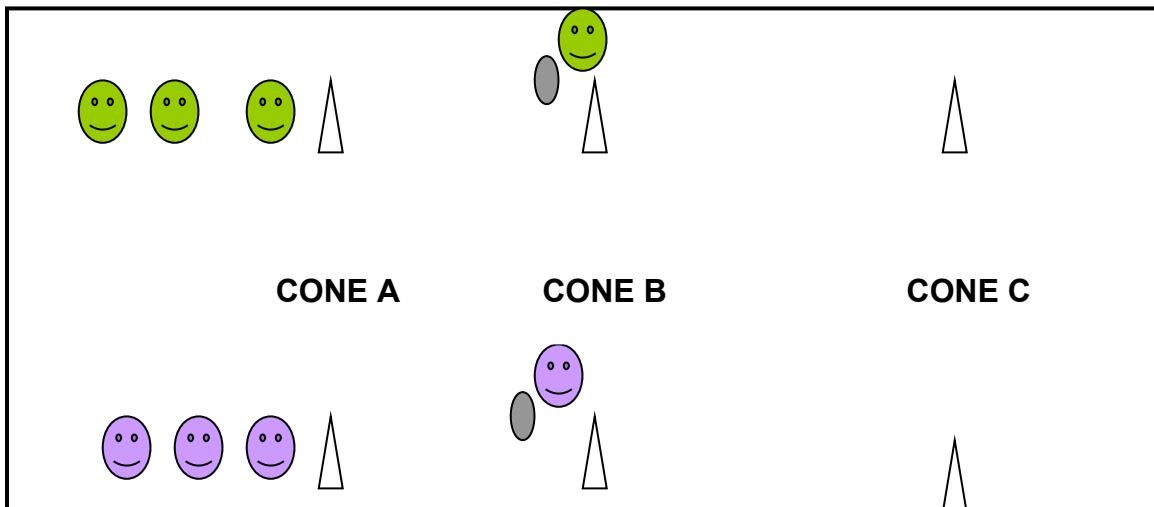
Introduce opposition players wearing bibs who are attempting to intercept balls being passed within any of the groups formed.



6. OVERHEAD CATCH

Demonstrate the catch: Eyes on the ball, Fingers wide apart and thumbs behind the ball in “W” shape, Arms stretched out in front of forehead. Tell players to imagine jumping “over a river” as they jump

- In groups of 4 as below, 3 players per group at cone A and select a player / parent to stand with a ball at cone B.
- Player B must hold the ball outstretched on their fingertips. On the signal players start running from cone A and approaching cone B attempt to jump up and snatch the ball from the fingertips of player B.
- On catching the ball, the player continues to run out round cone C, bouncing the ball after every four steps and on the return trip they return the ball to the player/parent who will hold ball outstretched at cone B for the next player in the line.



Practice jumping from different leg to catch each time.

7. Pick Up/Crouch Lift

Teaching Points:

- Supporting foot to be placed alongside and a little ahead of the ball.
- Cupped hands held in front of ball (not at sides), with thumbs almost touching.
- Swing lifting leg to lift ball upwards and forwards into cupped hands

Ball between 2 to practice skill. Add some competition, how many pick-ups can you complete in 30 seconds?

Pick Up - Drill One

One ball per player.

Walk in a circle or square formation holding footballs, on the coaches command, place the ball down carefully and walk to crouch-lift the nearest ball.

Pick Up - Drill Two

3 groups of players – 3 cones per group. Player one crouch lifts the ball at the first cone and replaces it at the second cone jogging back to the end of the line – next player goes immediately.

Note:

Make sure the player rises into the playing position before replacing the ball.

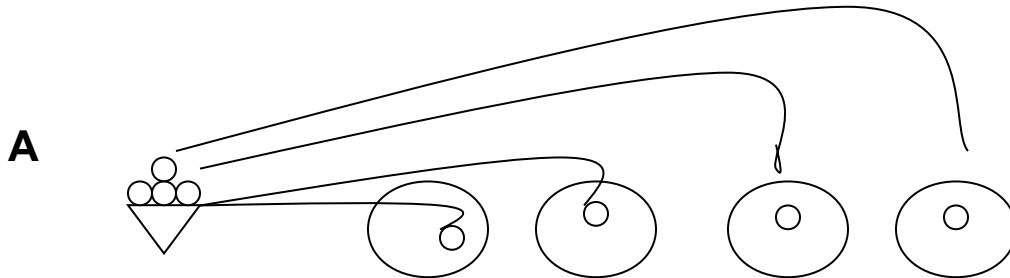
Pick up game

Select 10 players to play the game. Place 9 balls inside the grid. Players must pick up the nearest ball to them and then move on to the next ball and repeat until the coach blows the whistle. On the whistle the player who does not have a ball in their possession is out of the game. Take one football away for each turn. The last player with a ball is the winner.

Practice using both feet.

RUN & CARRY

Set up as below:



- Player 1 attempts to remove balls from hula-hoops and place into the basket A.
- Player 1 then touches Player 2 who replaces all balls in hula-hoops.
- Repeat this until all players have removed all the balls and replaced all balls.
- Set this up as a race between groups. Players can be instructed to bounce after every 4 steps when carrying a ball.



8. The Dribble

Set up:
Square 10m * 10m
1 football per player

Dribble, trap + stop

Players in a square/area
One ball per player
Dribble ball on the ground.
Stop on signal and trap the ball.

Key points:
Do not kick too hard.
Look for free spaces to move into.
Place foot on top of ball to stop.

Dribble, stop + pass

Work in pairs (one ball between two) in a square/area
Dribble ball to free space, stop the ball and pass

Key points:
Step back from the ball after stopping.
Look up to where receiver is.
Move after passing

Dribble around cones

Divide players into groups of 2-3. The first player in each group must dribble the ball in and out of the cones in a figure of eight type fashion back to start. The first player leaves the ball for the second player and goes to the back of the line. Players must use both the inside and outside of the foot to dribble the ball through the cones.

Practice using both feet

Rules for Football mini-game

Aim: To develop the basic technical skills of football (catching and kicking) in a game environment.

- The ball may be caught in the hands and played away by kicking it – no hand passing, (throwing is allowed for the younger ages to keep the game moving).
- The ball may be carried for 4 steps – players are restricted to 1 bounce per possession before playing the ball away.
- The ball may be lifted off the ground with the hands, provided the player involved is on his feet.
- No intentional body-contact is allowed or tackling of player with ball (encourage players to flick ball away instead of physically tackling player), but incidental contact is permitted e.g. both going for a ball.
- Pitch is divided into 2 zones – players to remain within the zone to which they are assigned.
- Scoring options:
 - 2 points over the bar, 1 point under.
 - 1 point for a high catch/difficult catch/catch ball before it touches ground.
 - 1 point for a block