



U6/U8 YOUTH MODULES 2nd Edition

Candidate Manual

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SKILLS PRIORITIES FOR U-6/8 and U10/12 PLAYERS

Age	U6
Fitness	Tumbling Balance Running Jumping Turning/Spinning
Technique	Stopping rolling balls with the feet Dribbling Ball striking
Tactics	Orientation (which goal to attack, and which goal to defend) "How to play" (understand basic rules of play)
Psychology	Fair play Emotional control Imagination Courage
Training	30-35 practices per year (Academy-style, 40 minutes/practice) Majority of training activities include a ball for each player No activities with more than 4 players per ball
Competition	3v3 to small goals (no goalkeepers) 25-30 scrimmages per year ("street-soccer" style, with "New Ball!" rule used instead of throw-ins or kick-ins) No formal games, jamborees, or tournaments
Age	U8
Fitness	Agility Eye/foot and eye/hand coordination Continued refinement of gross motor development Introduce concepts of warm-up and cool-down
Technique	Bounce juggling and ball-lifting (with the feet) Change of direction (using pullbacks and basic cuts) Receiving ground balls with inside, outside, and sole of the feet Push pass Block tackle Shooting (ground balls, with inside of the foot and with the instep) Introduce basic throw-in (two-footed) Introduce full volley (from hands)
Tactics	1v1 attacking (courage to dribble toward the goal and at defenders) 1v1 defending (seek to win the ball) 2v1 (wall pass) Recognition of open space Always control the ball on the first touch ("Kicking is not soccer!")
Psychology	Working in pairs Sharing Sportsmanship

	Creativity
Training	60-70 practices per year (Academy-style, 60 minutes/practice) Majority of training activities have 1-2 players per ball No activities with more than 6 players per ball
Competition	4v4 to small goals (no goalkeepers) 10-15 scrimmages per year (“street-soccer” style, with “New Ball!” rule used instead of throw-ins or kick-ins) 10-15 games per year, which may be part of an organized jamboree/festival (using approved U8 rules, no reported scores/standings) No tournaments

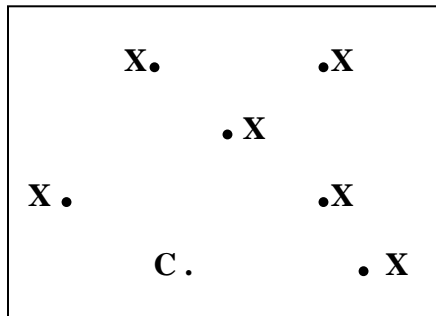
Note: “Introduce” in the curriculum descriptions implies that we want to give players exposure to certain topics at this stage of development, but success is not expected at this stage.

U6 Practical Field Sessions

ACTIVITY 1: “I can do this, can you...?”

Space: Confined Area – 10 by 15 Sq. yds. or Open Area

X •=Players with ball C= Coach



Organization: Coach performs a task or coordinates an exercise with the ball (like stopping the ball with various body parts, dribbling the ball away from teammates, tossing and catching the ball, etc.) and asks players if they can repeat the task.

Objective: For players to begin developing ball skills, area awareness, dribbling, etc.

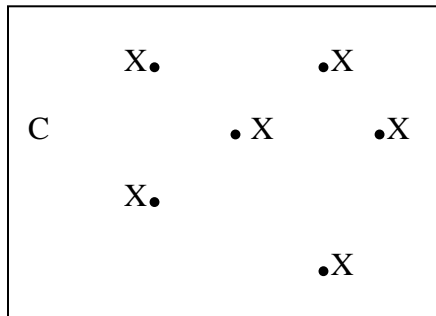
Variation:

- Ask players to come up with their own idea or task for other players to imitate.

ACTIVITY 2: “Body Parts”

Space: Confined Area - 10 by 15 Sq. yds. or Open Area

X •=Players with ball C= Coach



Organization: Players dribbling the ball in a confined or open space, while the coach calls out a body part (like, right knee, left knee, stomach, left elbow, etc.) and players have to stop their ball with that part of the body.

Objective: For players to begin developing ball skills, body parts awareness, listening skills, area awareness, dribbling, spreading out, etc.

Variation:

- Ask a player to call out body parts.
- Players must keep control and stop the ball without touching or been too close to a teammate.

ACTIVITY 3: “Toss and Retrieve”

Space: Open Area

X. .X
C . X .X X. .X

Organization: Coach tosses players’ balls and asks how they can bring it back to him? (Using left foot only; right foot; both feet; head, elbow, etc.)

Objective: For players to begin developing ball skills, team work, communication and problem solving skills, etc.

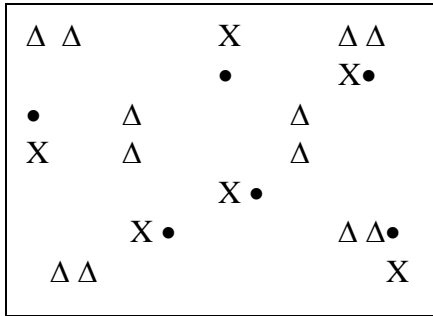
Variation:

- Give players time to come up with their own ways to bring the ball to the coach.
- Ask players to pair up (or in small groups) to retrieve balls.
- Coach changes positions; and ask players to retrieve ball with two (2) backs, two (2) stomachs, three (3) left feet, three (3) heads, etc.

ACTIVITY 4: “Dribble Through Tunnel”

Space: Confined Area – 10 by 15 Sq. yds or Open Area

X ●=Player C=Coach Δ=Cone ●=Ball



Organization: Coach uses cones to make several gates all over the field. Each player with a ball then tries to dribbling in and out of the gates as quickly as possible.

Objective: For players to begin developing ball handling skills, dribbling skills, speed with the ball, etc.

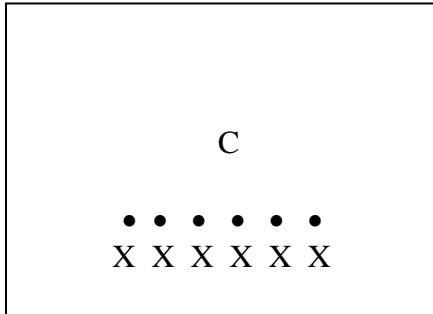
Variation:

- Players can touch cones with their ball and hands
- Players can count how many times they go through the gates

ACTIVITY 5: “Red Light! Green Light!”

Space: Confined Area – 10 by 15 Sq. yds

X •=Player C=Coach



Organization: All players start at the end of the grid, while coach is in the middle of the grid. When coach says “green light” players dribble their balls forward quickly; when coach says “red light” players should stop their balls with a foot on the ball.

Objective: For players to begin developing ball handling skills, dribbling skills, vision, ball control, speed with the ball, etc.

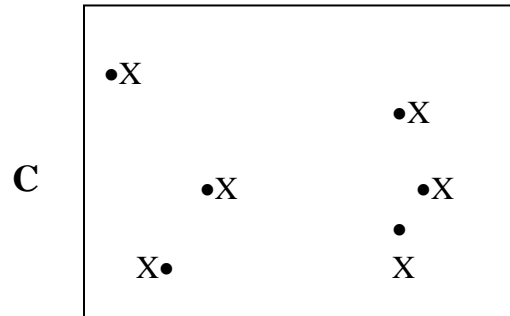
Variation:

- Add “yellow light” for players to dribble slowly
- Use only hand signals instead of verbally
- Change signals faster

ACTIVITY 6: “Everybody Tags”

Space: Confined Area – 10 by 15 Sq. yds.

X •=Player C=Coach



Organization: Every player with a ball dribbling in a confined space, at the same time trying to tag teammates. Players count how many times they tag a player.

Replay activity to beat previous record or score.

Objective: For players to begin developing ball handling skills, dribbling skills, vision, ball control, speed with the ball, etc.

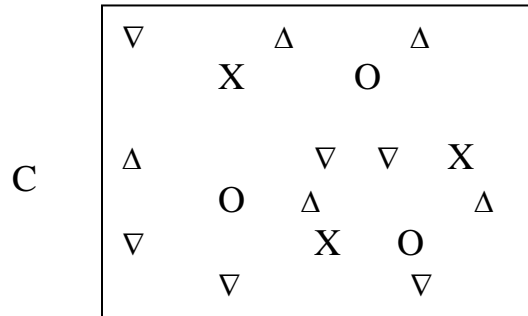
Variation:

- Restrict tagging to specific part of the body

ACTIVITY 7: “Minefield”

Space: Confined Area – 10 by 15 Sq. yds.

C=Coach Δ=Cone Up ∇=Cone Down X=Red Player O=Blue Player



Organization: Coach will place equal number of cones face-up and face-down in the grid. Players are then divided into two groups and given names, for example “blue team” and “red team”. Each team running around the grid without the ball, blue team is turning the cones up while red team turns them down. After 45-50 seconds see how many cones are down or up.

Objective: For players to begin developing ball handling skills, dribbling skills, vision, ball control, speed with the ball, etc.

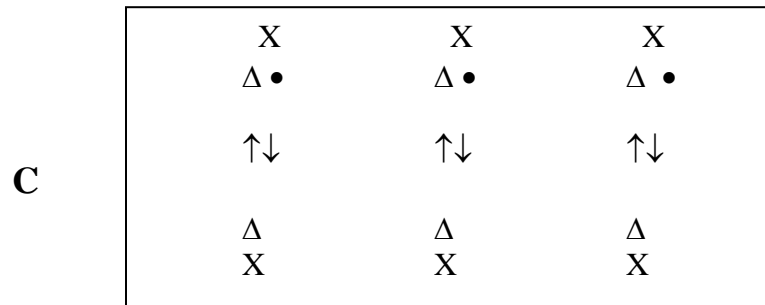
Variation:

- Add balls, so that players will be dribbling around while turning cones.

ACTIVITY 8: “Hit the Target”

Space: Confined Area – 10 by 20 Sq. yds.

X= Players • = Ball Δ=Cone C=Coach



Organization: Players in pairs, standing 10 yds away from each other. Each player should have a cone (preferably tall cones) in front of them. Players will be trying to hit or knock down the cone of their partner. Coach should watch for proper/improper passing techniques. Players count how many times they hit their partners' cone.

Objective: For players to begin developing passing and shooting techniques, as well as improving their passing accuracy, etc.

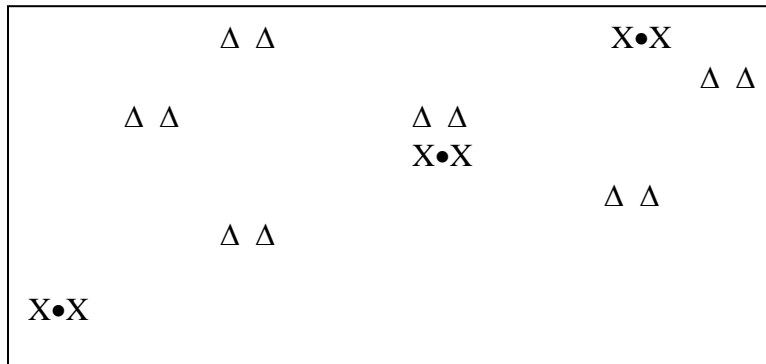
Variation:

- Encourage left foot only
- Increase or reduce passing distance
- Encourage players to hit balls with various foot surface

ACTIVITY 9: “Lots of Goals”

Space: Confined Area – 20 by 25 Sq. yds.

X=Players C= Coach ●=Ball ΔΔ=Goals



Organization: Coach sets up numerous goals around the field. Players in pairs trying to score as many goals as possible within a time frame by passing, shooting, or kicking the ball through the goals set up randomly throughout the field. Repeat activity to improve on previous score or record.

Objective: For players to begin developing passing and shooting technique, as well as teamwork.

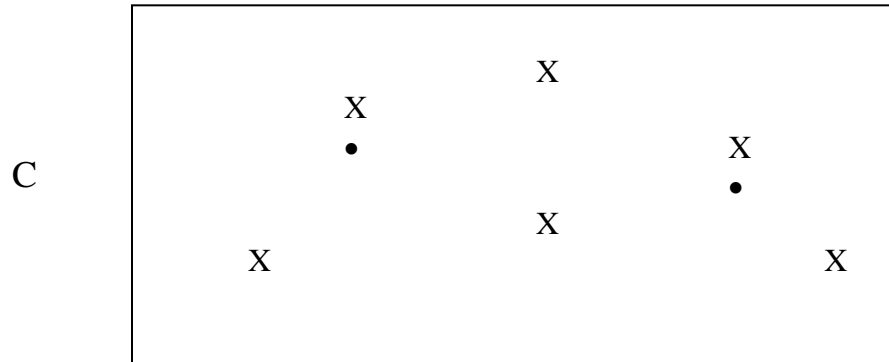
Variation:

- Reduce the time limits
- Reduce number of goals available to shot on.

ACTIVITY 10: “Pac-Man”

Space: Confined Area – 20 by 25 Sq. yds

X=Players C= Coach •=Ball



Organization: Two players with balls, while all others run freely in the confined area. Players with balls dribble and attempt to hit the other players **BELOW THE KNEE** by passing, shooting, or kicking the ball at them. The player that gets hit gets his or her ball and becomes a “Pac-Man”. This game continues until everybody plays the role of the Pac-Man.

Objective: For players to begin developing passing and shooting technique, as well as the pace of their shots.

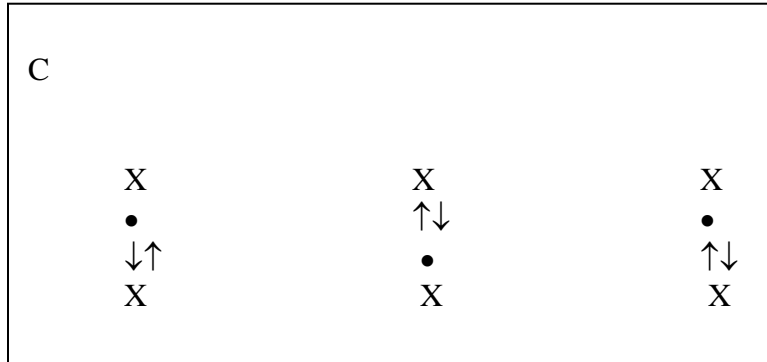
Variation:

- Everybody has a ball dribbling in a confined area while the two Pac-Men wear a colored vest; they try to hit the balls of the other players.

ACTIVITY 11: “Passing in Pairs”

Space: Confined Area – 20 by 25 Sq. yds.

X=Players C= Coach ●=Ball



Organization: Players in pairs, standing 5 yds away from each other and passing to each other. Coach should gradually increase the passing distance to 8 yds, 10 yds, etc.

Objective: For players to begin developing passing and shooting technique.

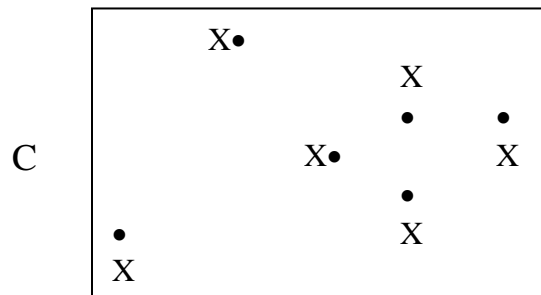
Variation:

- Encourage players to use both feet
- As the distance increase encourage players to use instep or laces to strike the ball.

ACTIVITY 12: “House Dribble”

Space: Confined Area – 10 by 15 Sq. yds

X=Players C= Coach ●=Ball



Organization: Every player with a ball each dribbling inside the grid. Coach will give out commands like stop, turn – players change direction, sit, clear the house – players dribble fast out of the grid, change – players leave their ball and get another ball, etc.

Objective: For players to become comfortable at dribbling and manipulating the ball without pressure.

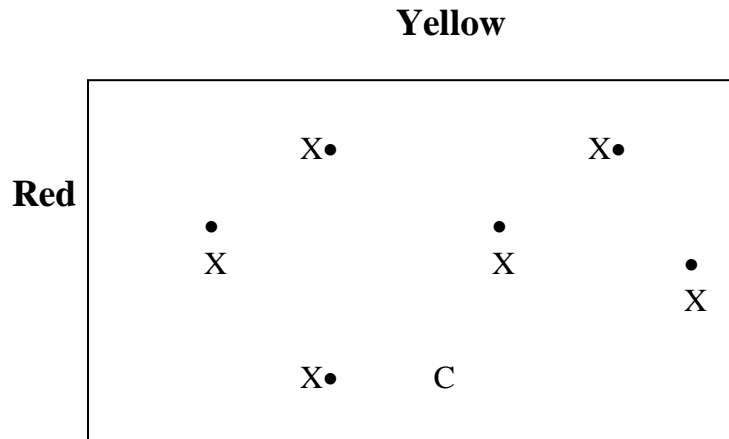
Variation:

- Call out body parts for players to stop their ball with
- Instead of calling out the body parts, simply touch a body part.

ACTIVITY 13: “Color Dribble”

Space: Confined Area – 15 by 25 Sq. yds.

X=Players C= Coach ●=Ball



Organization: Every player with a ball each dribbling inside a grid. Coach places vest or bibs with different colors randomly around the grid. Coach calls out a color, players will need to dribble fast to the area where that color bib or vest is.

Objective: To get players to develop their vision by looking around while dribbling.

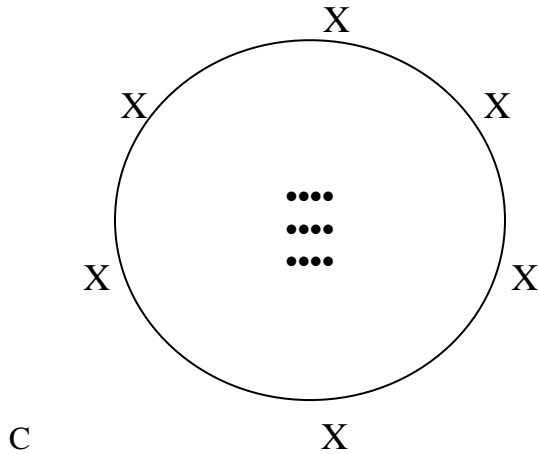
Variation:

- Change the locations of the color bibs or vests.
- Call out multiple colors at the same time

ACTIVITY 14: “King of the Balls”

Space: Confined Area – 15 yds radius

X=Players C= Coach ●=Ball



Organization: Coach places several balls (12 – 16 balls) in the middle of the circle; while players will be standing around the circle. At the coach’s signal players will sprint to the middle of the circle and dribble a ball back to their corner; and sprint back again to get another ball. Play will stop when all the balls have been taken from the middle.

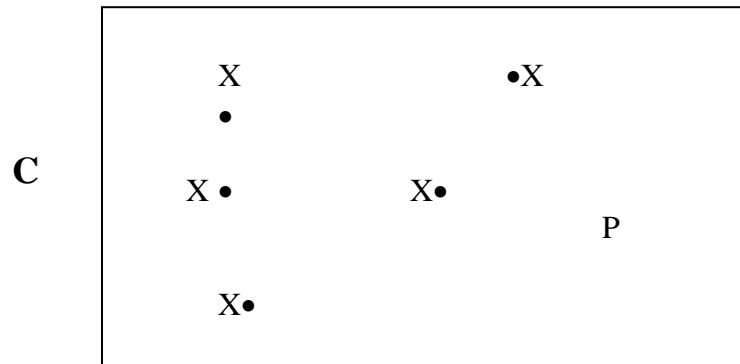
Objective: For players to learn changing directions and dribble with speed.

Variation: Each player with a ball each around the circle; on coach’s command players should dribble to the coach who will be standing at the center of the circle and dribble back to their position outside the circle.

ACTIVITY 15: “Pirate”

Space: Confined Area – 15 by 25 Sq. yds.

X=Players C= Coach ●=Ball P=Pirate



Organization: One player without a ball (he/she is the pirate), every other player with a ball dribbling inside the grid. The pirate tries to kick out as many balls as possible within a set time (say 50 seconds). Players who lose his/her ball gets back into the grid after performing five (5) jumping jacks.

Objective: To develop dribbling abilities and change directions to evade challenges from the pirate.

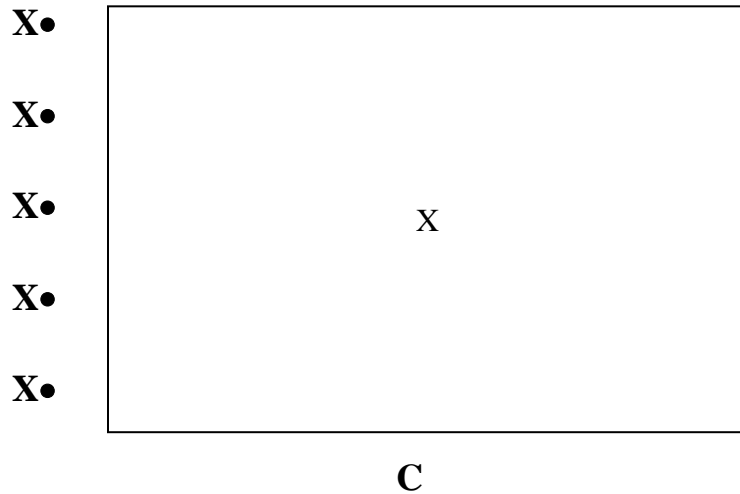
Variation:

- Each player who loses his/her ball becomes an additional pirate. Play stops when there are no more balls in the grid.
- Players try to kick everyone else’s ball out of the grid while keeping their own ball protected.

ACTIVITY 16: “Storm the Castle”

Space: Confined Area – 15 by 20 Sq. yds.

X=Players C= Coach ●=Ball



Organization: Every player with a ball each lined up at one end of the grid. One player (defender of the castle) without a ball stands in the middle of the grid. On the coach’s command, all the players with the ball dribble across the grid to the opposite end. The defender of the castle tries to kick as many balls as possible out of the grid. Players who lose their ball perform five (5) jumping jacks before joining the other players.

Objective: To develop dribbling skills and change of speed to go past a defender.

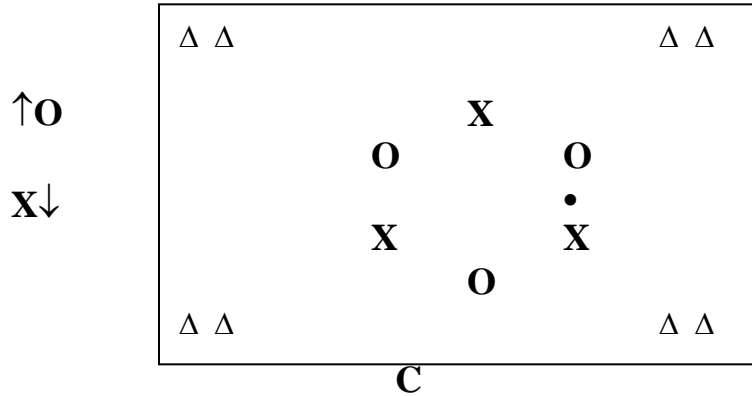
Variation:

- Players who lose their ball become an additional defender of the castle.

ACTIVITY 17: “Four Goal Game”

Space: Confined Area – 20 by 25 Sq. yds.

C=Coach Δ=Cone ●=Ball X=Red Team O=Blue Team



Organization: Play a 3v3 with four goals made up of cones at the corners of the grid. Each team can score through the two goals at the opposite side.

Objective: To develop dribbling, passing skills, teamwork, and vision.

Variation:

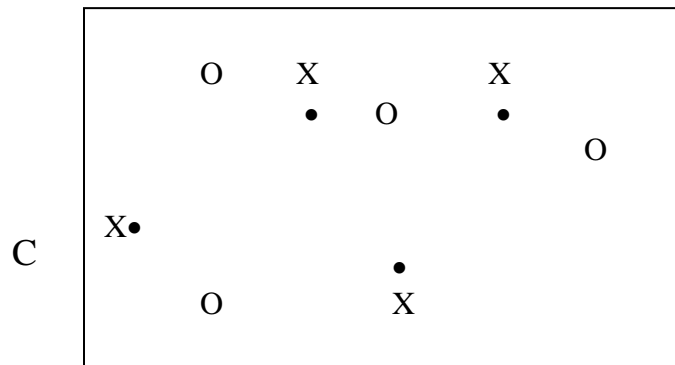
- Remove one goal from each side so that each team can only score on one goal.

U8 Practical Field Sessions

ACTIVITY 1: “Nutmeg”

Space: Confined Area – 25 by 30 Sq. yds.

X•=Players with ball O= Players without balls C=Coach



Organization: Players are divided into two (2) groups. Each player in one group stand with their legs open in the grid, while the other group with a ball each tries to “Nutmeg” (that is push the ball between standing player’s leg) as many players as possible in 30-60 seconds. Players cannot nutmeg the same player in succession.

Rotate roles.

Objective: Improve dribbling, vision, speed with the ball, and changing directions with the ball.

Variation:

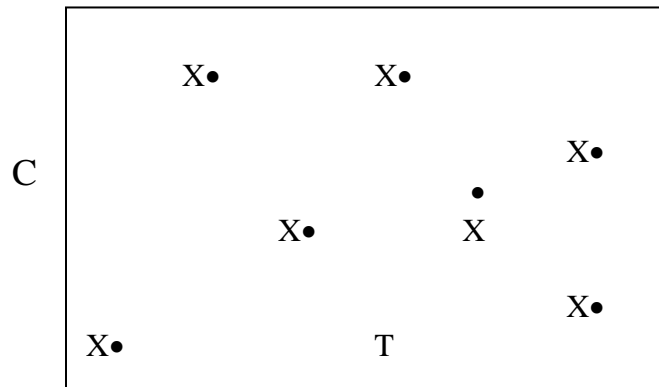
- Add a defender who tries to take the ball away from any of the dribblers.

Dribblers who lose the ball become the new defender.

ACTIVITY 2: “Freeze Tag”

Space: Confined Area – 22 by 35 Sq. yds.

X•=Players with ball C= Coach T=Tagging Player



Organization: Every player with a ball in the grid. One player without a ball (tagger) tries to “freeze” players by touching them. Player who is frozen must stand with his/her legs open and wait for a teammate to “unfreeze” him/her by dribbling their ball through his/her legs. The tagging player tries to freeze the whole team within 60 seconds.

Objective: To improve dribbling and changing directions.

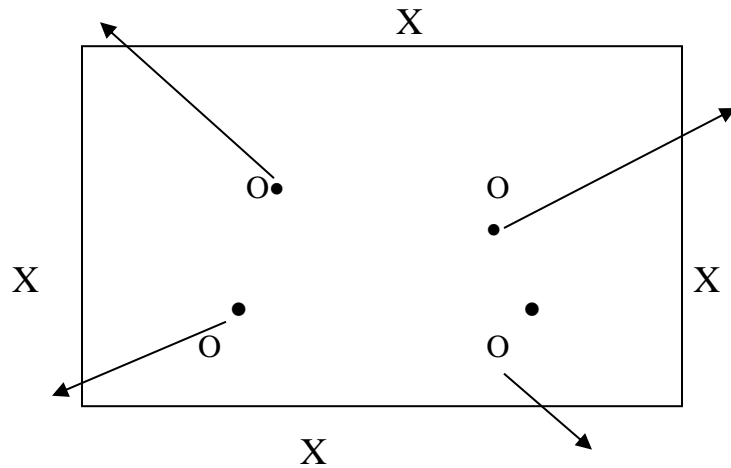
Variation:

- Increase the number of player tagging to two (2).

ACTIVITY 3: “Jail Break”

Space: Confined Area – 25 by 30 Sq. yds.

X●=Players without ball O= Players with balls



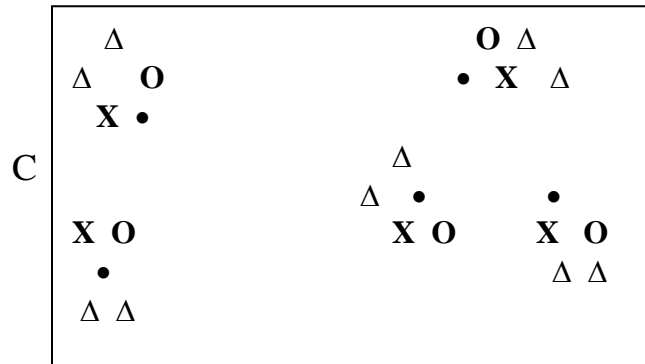
Organization: Divide team into two (2) groups. The players in the first group each have a ball inside the grid (prisoners). The other group stands along the perimeter of the grid (guards). The players inside the grid try to break out of jail by dribbling past the guards along the perimeter of the grid. Prisoners return inside the grid and attempt to break out again through another side. The prisoner who can break out the most times in 60 seconds is the winner. The guards are not allowed in the grid and are cannot chase prisoners outside the grid. They can only move literally along the grid perimeter. Rotate roles

Objective: To improve dribbling to beat an opponent, changing direction, and accelerating with the ball.

ACTIVITY 4: “Multi Goal”

Space: Confined Area – 30 by 35 Sq. yds.

X=Red Team O=Blue Team •=Balls C=Coach Δ=Goals



Organization: Players are divided into two (2) groups. Each player is matched up against a player from the other team with a ball (1v1). Each attacker tries to score by dribbling through as many goals as possible in 60 seconds. If a defending wins the ball or the ball goes out of bounds, the defender becomes the attacker and play is continuous. Note: - this is a physically demanding game; give players plenty of rest (60 seconds work and 120 seconds rest).

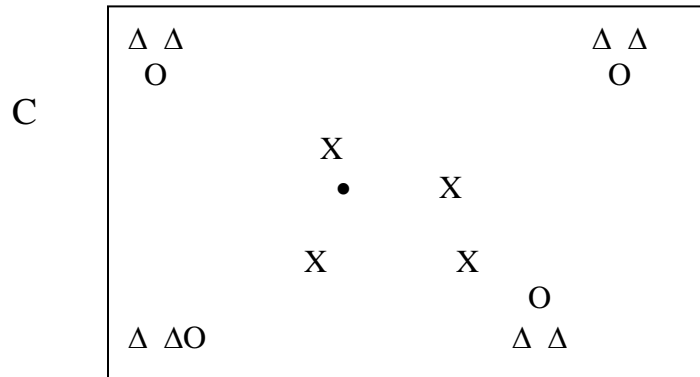
Objective: To improve dribbling past defenders, changing direction and acceleration away from defender.

Variation: Make it a 2v2, 3v3 game with just one ball. Attacking teams tries to score by dribbling through any of the goals.

ACTIVITY 5: “Open the Gate”

Space: Confined Area – 30 by 40 Sq. yds.

X=Players with a ball O=Players standing at the gate C=Coach Δ=Gate • Ball



Organization: Players are put in two (2) groups. One group with a ball inside the grid passing the ball to each other; while the other stand in front of four (4) gates.

The coach opens or closes the gates by pointing to a particular gate. Whenever a gate is open, the passing players try to put the ball through the open gate. The passing team can only pass the ball through the gate. Coach should have supply of balls at his feet and serve a new ball every time the team kicks one out of the grid.

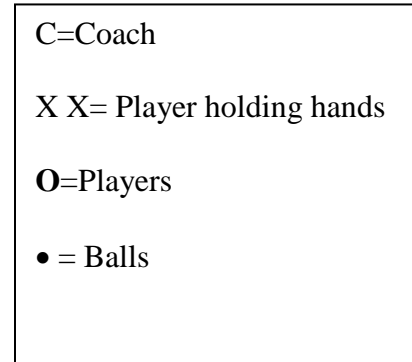
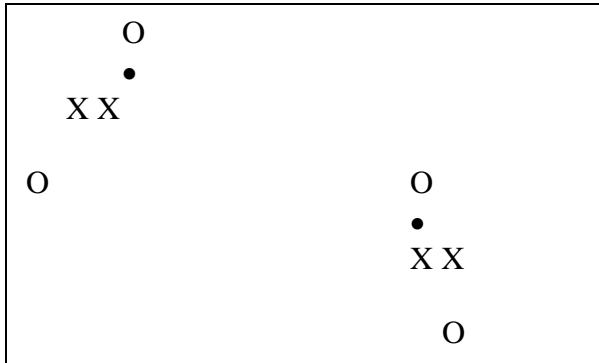
Rotate roles.

Objective: To improve passing, develop vision, and reaction time.

Variation: coach can open more than one gate or close all gates to allow players just pass the ball around. Also add a defender to make it 4v1.

ACTIVITY 6: “Moving Goals”

Space: Confined Area – 30 by 40 Sq. yds.



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Organization: 2 teams of 4 players each.

2 pairs of players form a goal by holding outstretched hands. The two (2) goals move around the grid. The objective is for each team to score points by passing the ball through the moving goals to a teammate on the other side of the goal.

Rotate roles.

Objective: To develop passing and team cooperation.

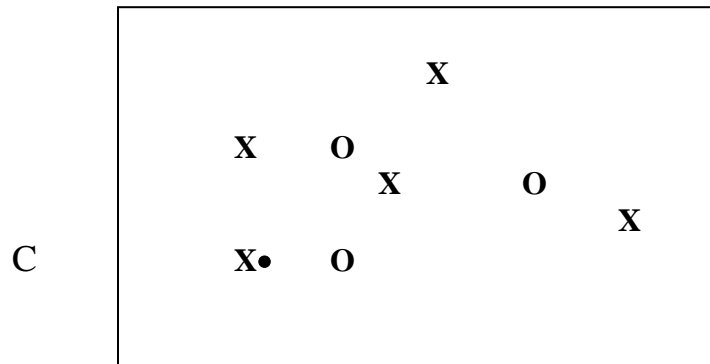
Variation:

- Let four (4) players keep the ball away from two (2) defenders in the grid while trying to score points by passing through a moving goal.

ACTIVITY 7: “Possession Handball”

Space: Confined Area – 30 by 40 yd.

C=Coach ●=Ball X=Red Team O=Blue Team



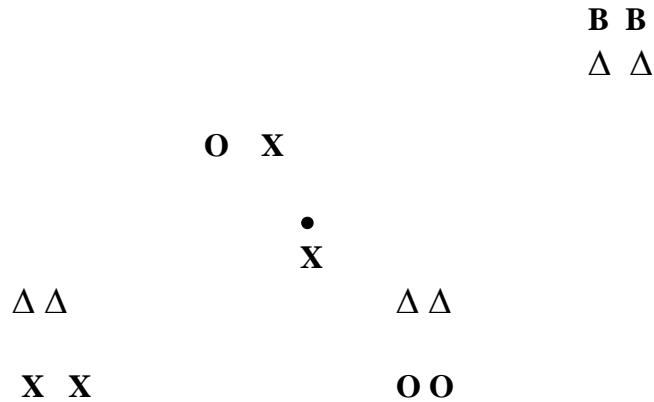
Organization: Coach puts players into two (2) groups of with number advantage to one team (5v3). Players pass the ball to teammates with their hands but can only roll it on the ground. Team with five (5) passes wins.

Objective: To teach players to support the player with the ball by moving away from defenders.

Variation: Make it a 4v4 possession game, with players passing the ball with their feet.

ACTIVITY 8: “Three Goal Game”

Space: Open Area



Δ=Cone

X= Red Player

O=Green Player

B= Blue Player

• = Ball

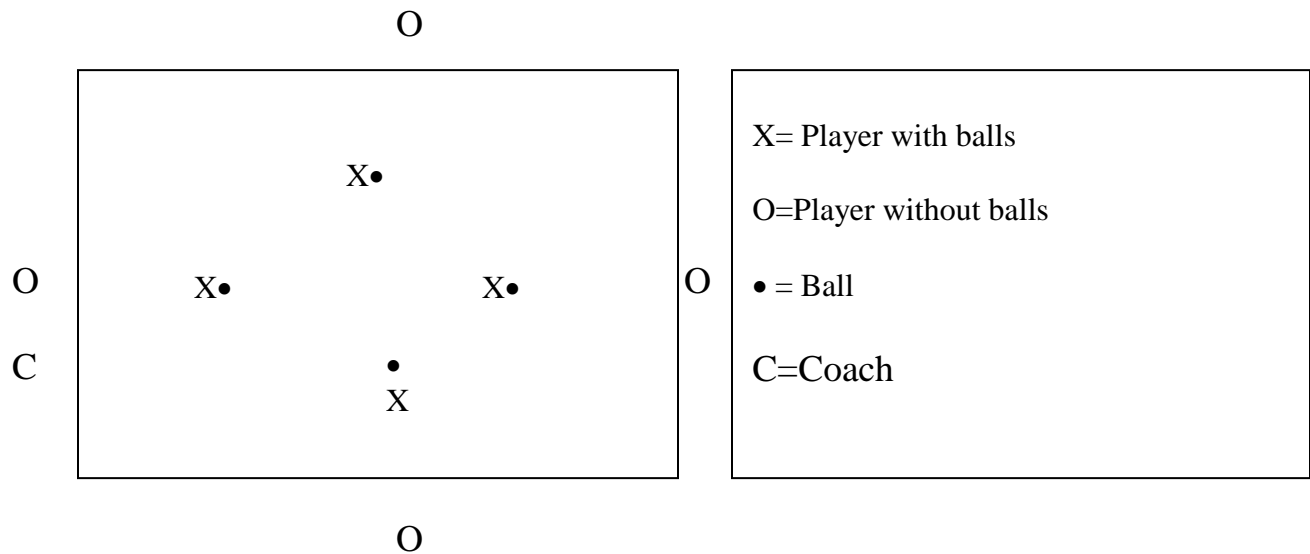
Organization: Three teams of three (3) players each. One player from each team defends one goal and attacks the other two goals in a 1v1v1 inside the playing area. The other two (2) players from each team sit 5 yds. behind their goal. Play is continuous with no boundaries but goals can only be scored from inside the playing area. Rotate roles frequently.

Objective: To improve dribble past defenders, creativity, and fitness.

Variation: Make it a 2v2v2. That is two (2) players from each team on the field.

ACTIVITY 9: “Cowboys and Indians”

Space: Confined Area – 35 by 35 Sq. yds.



Organization: Players are divided into two groups, one inside the grid, each player with a ball. The other team stands around the grid. On coach's command three (3) of the outside team enters the grid and tries to kick all the balls out of the grid. Once a player loses his/her ball he stays in the grid and help his teammates keep their balls. Play stops when all balls are kicked out; the winning team is one who clears all the balls in the quickest time.

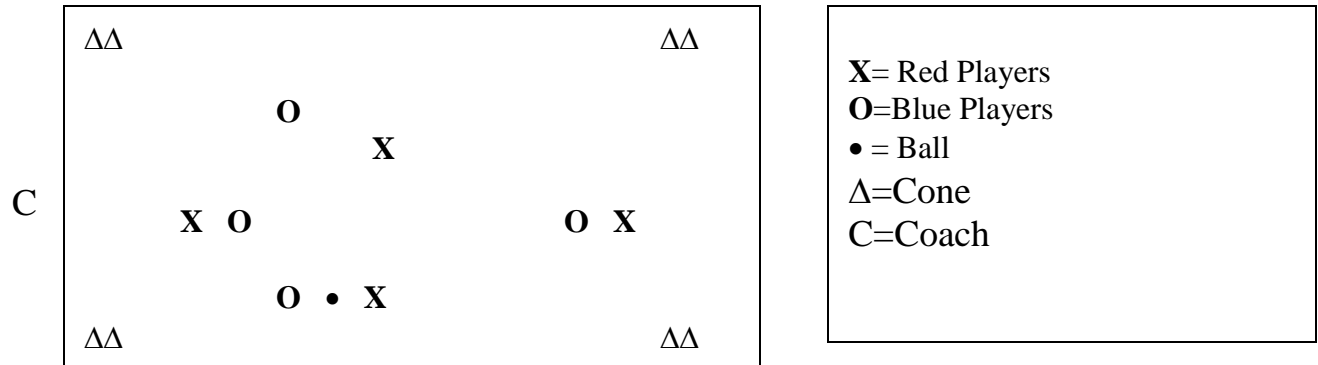
Rotate roles.

Objective: To improve dribbling, shielding, vision, passing, and teamwork.

Variation: Make all the outside players enter the grid at the same time.

ACTIVITY 10: “Four Goal Game”

Space: Confined Area – 20 by 40 Sq. yds.



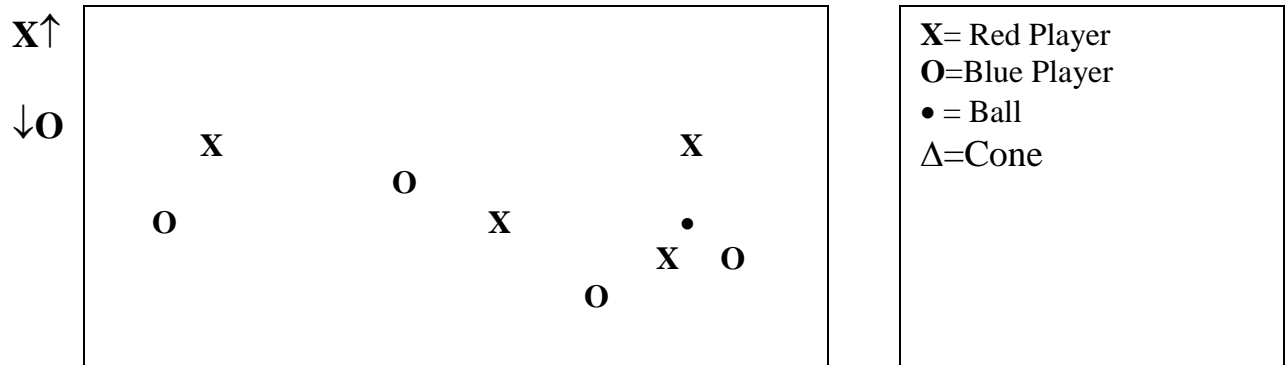
Organization: Players play a game of 4v4 with four goals made up of cones. Each team can score through the two goals at the other end.

Objective: To improve dribbling, passing, and vision. Players will also develop awareness of when to switch play to the other side.

Variation: Coach can remove one goal from each side of the grid.

ACTIVITY 11: “End Line Dribble”

Space: Confined Area – 20 by 45 Sq. yds.



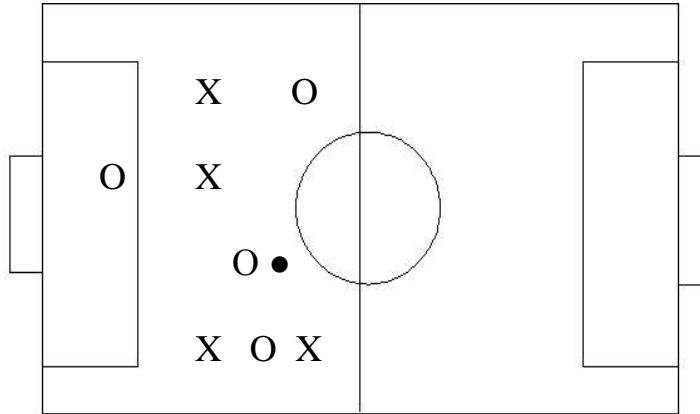
Organization: Players divided into two (2) teams. Two (2) teams playing against each other in a grid that is wide and short; teams score a goal by stopping the ball on the end line. Each team attacks the opposite end line and protects its own end line.

Objective: To develop dribbling, vision, and creativity.

Variation: Add a neutral player who plays for the team in possession of the ball (for example 4v4 with neutral player)

ACTIVITY 12: “Clear the Half”

Space: Confined Area – 30 by 50 Sq. yds.



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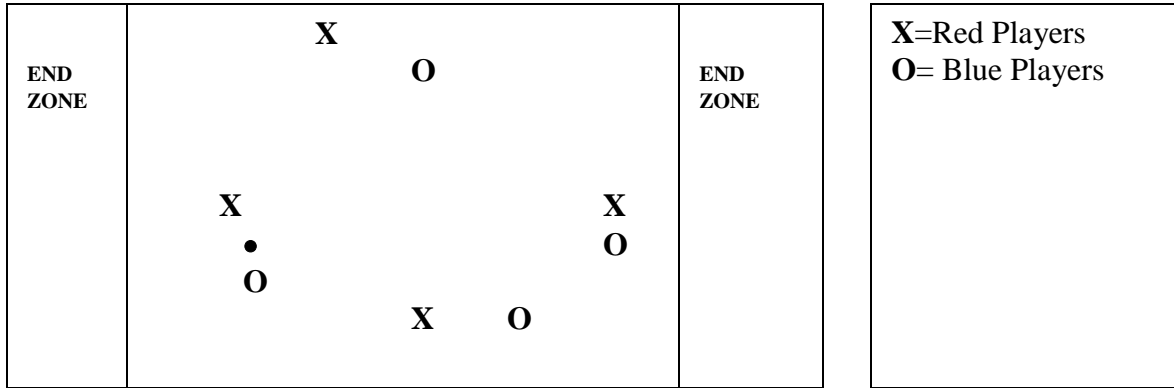
Organization: Two (2) teams play a regular game with no goalkeeper. A goal only count if the whole team crosses into the opponent’s half before the goal is scored. Also the goal counts double if any of the defending team’s players remained in the other half.

Objective: To encourage team compactness and support, and improve game fitness.

Variation: Take all restrictions off and play regular game.

ACTIVITY 13: “End Zone Game”

Space: Confined Area – 35 by 35 Sq. yds. with 10 yd. end zones



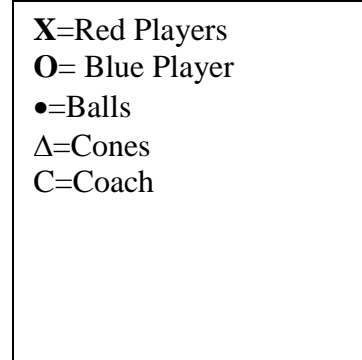
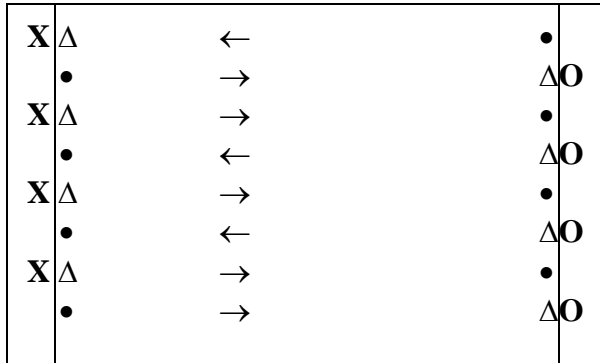
Organization: Two teams play in a grid that has two (2) end zones. A goal is scored by passing the ball into the opposite end zone for a teammate who must control the ball before it leaves the end zone. The ball cannot be dribbled into the end zone and players can not wait in the end zone for a pass. Defending players are not allowed in the end zones.

Objective: To develop passing and support, forward and diagonal passing, forward and diagonal runs.

Variation: Take off all restrictions and add a goal to both sides.

ACTIVITY 14: “Team Battleship”

Space: Confined Area – 30 by 35 yd.



C

Organization: Divide players into two (2) teams; each player with a ball and cone (preferably tall cones) in each 5 yd. end zone. On the coach’s command all players will shoot their ball in an attempt to knock down the other teams’ cones. Players cannot defend their cones after shooting. After every player has finished shooting, they gather their balls back and prepare to shot again. The first team to knock down all the other team’s cones wins (that is, sinks that team’s battleship).

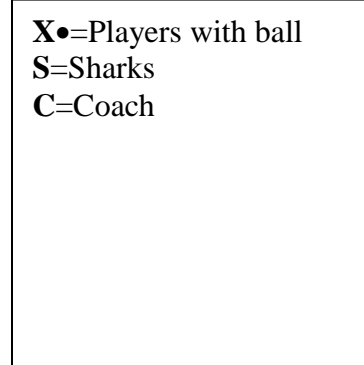
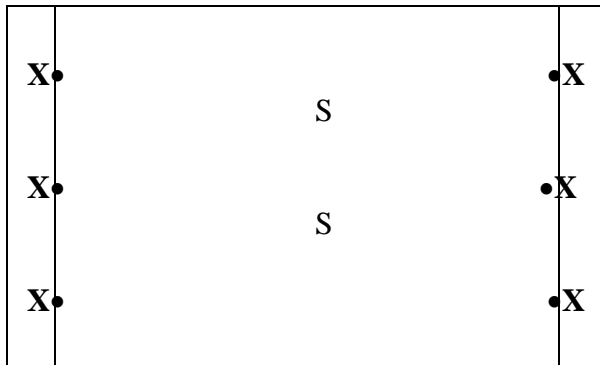
Objective: To improve shooting technique and accuracy of shots.

Variation:

- Increase the shooting distance
- Encourage players to use their weaker foot.

ACTIVITY 15: “Island to Island”

Space: Confined Area – 30 by 35 Sq. yds.



C

Organization: A grid with a 5 yd. end zone on both ends. Assign two players on a color bib to be sharks. Sharks cannot kick the ball out when players are in the island (5 yd. zone). The other players (swimmers) with a ball try to dribble from one island to the other while the sharks try to kick their balls out. Swimmers become sharks when they lose their balls; and swimmers can start from either island.

Objective: To improve dribbling past defenders, changing direction, vision, creativity, and speed with the ball.

Variation:

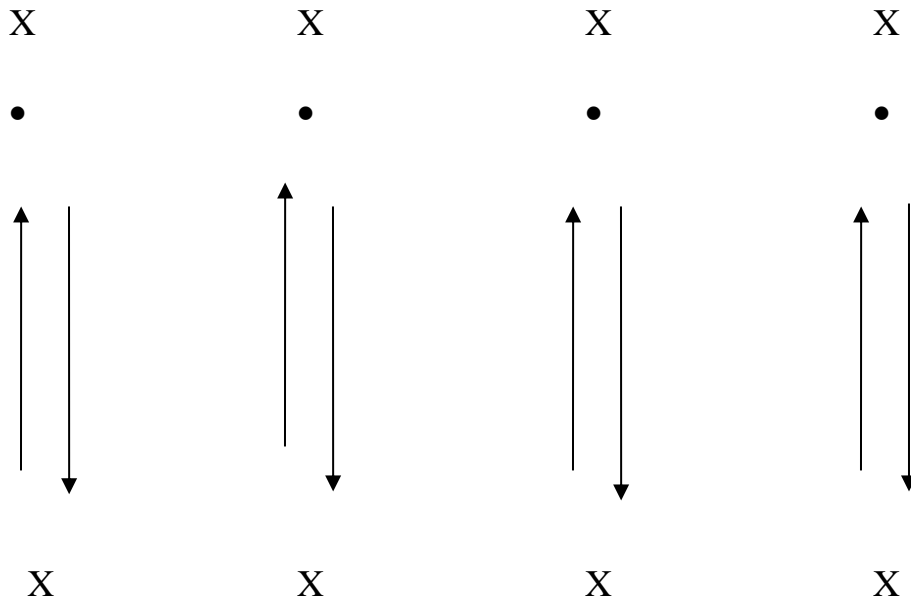
- Swimmers can not stay more than 5 seconds in the island
- Make the island further away from each other

ACTIVITY 16: “Passing”

Space: Open Area

X=Players

●=Balls



Organization: Players in pairs with a ball each. Every players standing 5 – 7 yd. apart from each other, and passing the ball to their partner.

Objective: To improve passing and receiving technique of each player.

Variation:

- Gradually increase the distance
- Encourage players to use both feet.
- Receiving the ball with soft touch