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# OVSL Coaches' Guide – U12

Fall 2018 – Age Coordinator: Steven Hollis (614-208-8056)



Featuring Training Program by Warren High School Soccer and US Youth Soccer

# U12 AGE GROUP

This age group mostly consists of players 11 years old and often features the widest range of skill levels among players. Successful coaches are able to challenge the skilled players on their roster while still accommodating and developing players that may be less serious about the sport.

## BASIC RULES

1. **Number of Players:** 9v9
2. **Periods:** 30 minute halves
3. **Referees:** 1 center referee, 2 assistant referees
4. **Out of Bounds Procedures:** Referee will allow only one attempt to complete a legal throw in. Players of the defending team **are not** required to remain behind the center line during goal kicks.
5. **No Headers:** purposeful headers will be considered violations resulting in an indirect free kick for the opposing team.
6. **Substitutions:** substitutions can take place at any play stoppage per the referee's discretion. Substitutes must be waiting at the midline prior to the stoppage of play and must enter the game from the midline.
7. **Positions:** Although this is the age group that many players will be committed to a position, OVSL encourages all players to get time at many positions. No player is to play goalkeeper for more than ½ of the game.
  - a. To help players get an understanding of the Offsides Violation, encourage defensive players not to play deep with their goalkeepers and to use the offsides rule to their advantage.
  - b. Keep formations simple in the first part of the season.
  - c. Adjust your formation based on your players' skill-sets.

## GOALS

1. **This young age group is all about having fun, understanding positions and starting to work as a team:** The larger field allows for more controlled possession. The most successful teams keep the ball out of their own defending half and have players willing/able to work as pairs and trios to advance the ball up-field.
2. **Understanding the Game:** Players at this level should start to understand how to find open teammates and work without the ball. Players should understand pressure and support defensive roles. Teach players how to be physical without fouling and to celebrate their goals without taunting their opponents.

## EQUIPMENT

1. Size 4 ball: every player should have their own ball for practice
2. Water: for every practice and game
3. Cleats: Cleats must be soccer-specific. Baseball cleats and football cleats are not safe for play.
4. Shin Guards: shin guards must be worn UNDER socks.
5. Jewelry: jewelry and accessories (earrings, necklaces, etc) are not to be worn on the field.
6. Uniform: shirts and socks for games will be provided

## PRACTICES

1. Each team should practice once or twice per week (weather permitting).
2. Limit practice times according to your players' attention spans.
3. Keep players engaged. Try to avoid too many drills that require players to wait in line.
4. Get as many touches on the ball as you can.
5. Teach players to defend by jockeying with the attacker instead of lunging for the ball. Encourage defenders to dribble and pass when they aren't near their own goal instead of kicking the ball as hard as they can, as soon as they can.
6. Coordinate with other coaches and hold occasional scrimmages in-place of practices when you can.



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# U12 Training Program

Andy Pinkerton, Head Coach Warren High School Girls Soccer

## U12 MAIN OBJECTIVES:

- Dribbling moves performed at speed and under pressure
- Introduction of the roles of the third defender and third attacker in small sided play
- Field vision and awareness beyond the few players near the ball
- Delivering instep long balls to targets
- Roles by position on defense and attack
- Roles and responsibilities on re-starts
- Receiving air balls on the run
- Recognition of player roles in thirds of the field

## COMPONENTS OF THE GAME

- **Fitness:** Fitness work continues to be done with the ball. Strength can be improved with body resistance and aerobic exercises. Also focus on agility at speed (sharp turns), acceleration, deceleration, reaction speed, range of motion exercises, proper warm-up and cool-down (include static stretching in the cooldown) are highly recommended now.
- **Technique:** moving throw-in, master the qualities of a bouncing spinning ball. Experiment with the qualities of a flighted ball, feints\ with the ball, receiving bouncing and air balls with the thigh and chest, first touch receiving, heading to score goals and for clearances while standing or jumping, outside of foot passing, receiving with either foot, short passing with both feet, bending shots, crossing to near post space and penalty spot space and heel and flick passing. Introduce half volley and volley shooting, chipping to pass and slide tackle. For goalkeepers: W grip, footwork, underarm bowling, side-arm throwing to targets, taking own goal kicks, side-winder kick, low and forward diving and angle and near post play. Introduce deflecting and boxing
- **Psychology:** Keep it fun and enjoyable to foster a desire to play, self-motivation. Focus on teamwork, confidence, desire, mental skills, handling distress, how to learn from each match, fair play, parental involvement and emotional management (discipline)
- **Tactics:** 2v1 defending, 2v2 attacking and defending, roles of 2nd attacker and defender, man-to-man defense, combination passing, playing on and around the ball as a group with purpose, verbal and visual communication for all positions, halftime analysis, general work on all restarts, wall pass at a variety of angles, passing combinations on the move and rotation of all players through the team – everyone plays in each position. Reinforce the principles of defense. For goalkeepers: positional play, basic angle play (ebb and flow) – into and down the line of the flight of the ball, commanding the goalmouth for the goalkeeper and positioning during a penalty kick and communication

## TYPICAL U12 TRAINING SESSION

- Should not exceed 90 minutes
- Warm-up, small group activities, range of motion stretching; approximately 15 minutes
- Use large group activities (six to eight players) to introduce team activities (Technical Warm-Up Activity); approximately 15 minutes
- Continue with directional games (Small-Sided Activity) - Play to targets and/or zones - Functional training; approximately 30 minutes
- Conclude with an Expanded Small-Sided Activity or 7v7 scrimmage (Game), two goals and goalkeepers; approximately 20 minutes
- Finish with cool-down activity, including static stretching; approximately 10 minutes
  - All activities should be challenging, motivating, and involving transitions
  - Sample training drills/activities are attached to this document

# Technical Warm-Up Activities



## 2v0 - Combination Play

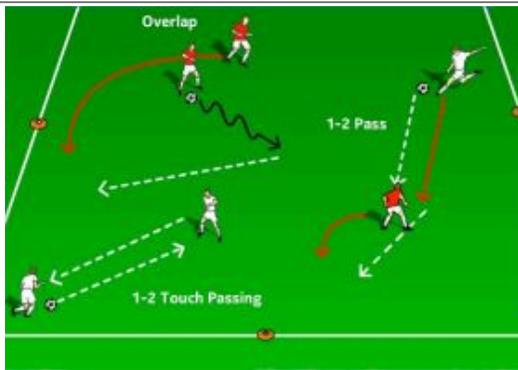
TRAINING AREA = 20W x 30L

Place a "defender" (wall man, cone, pole, etc.) in the center of the space. Form (4) lines in each corner of the field with ball. The player with the ball dribbles towards the defender to "commit" them. Then plays pass to teammate. Both players run off the field, and stand in the next line. The next group begins a similar movement.

\*Combinations = Takeover, through ball, overlap, dribble-give/go.

### Coaching Points

Dribble with the laces of the foot when dribbling at speed; Pass with the inside of the foot to be more accurate & strike the middle of the ball when passing *Who* - The player with the ball, and teammates around the ball; *What* - The laces of the foot should be used when dribbling at speed; *Where* - Pass to the open space in front of me.



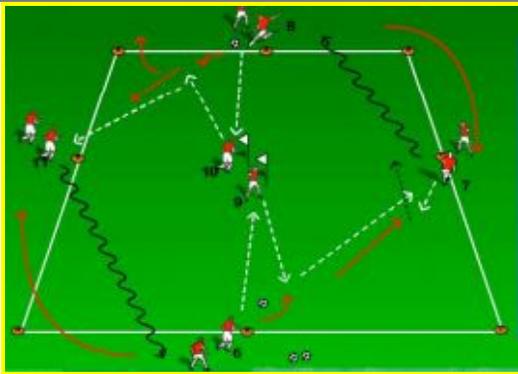
## Attacking Warm-Up

TRAINING AREA - 20W x 30L

Players should be in groups of (2) with (1) ball between them. Dribble & pass to one another throughout the space. Work on various (2) player combinations: -1/2 touch passing, through balls, overlaps, wall passes, etc.

### Coaching Points

*What* - Individual decision when in the attack; *When* - As the player receives the ball and begins attack.



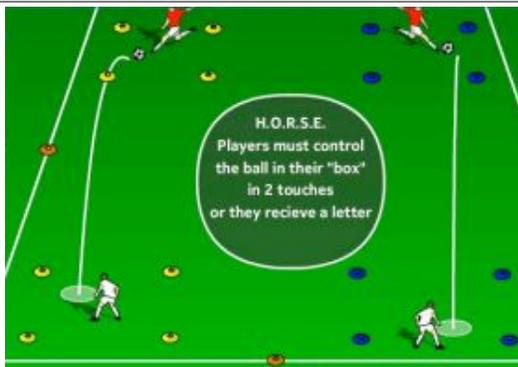
## GKs Mix with Field Players

TRAINING AREA = 20W x 30L

The number of balls should equal the number of GKs involved in the warm-up. Field players should pass the ball around the space. When the GK makes eye contact with the player; the field player in possession should take a touch and "shoot" on the GK. The objective of the shot is to go towards the GK (no around them, not over them, and not past them). Shots should be taken from 12-15 yards away. \*Only shoot on GK's command.

### Coaching Points

Hands should make early contact and let their hands make contact on the ball. Do not wait for the ball to make contact with the body; Players should move their feet quickly, with short strides, and step towards the ball.



## H.O.R.S.E.

TRAINING AREA = 20W x 30L

Build (4) "boxes" at opposite ends of the field, across from one another, 5x5x5. Players alternate turns serving the ball to one another. The ball must be played in the air, and land inside the "box." The players must control the ball INSIDE the box in 2 touches or less before the return service. Play until one player acquires H.O.R.S.E., then change opponents.

Accumulate a letter (just like basketball version) - Service outside opponents box; Control of service; outside box.

### Coaching Points

Angle of approach should have curved, or 45° angle path towards ball – keep hips open ; Strike the bottom half of the ball, plant foot behind the ball; Foot should strike the center of the bottom of the ball to produce back spin.

# Technical Warm-Up Activities



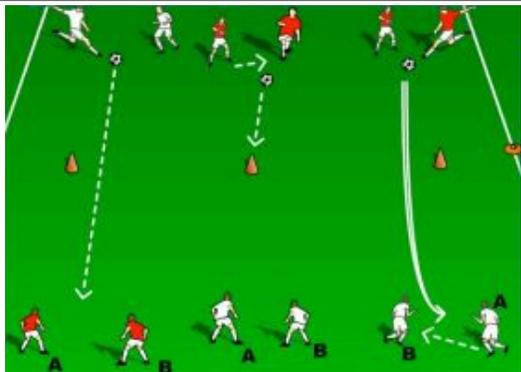
## Individual Partner Defending Technique

TRAINING AREA - 40W x 30L

Players in 2-3 groups with (1) ball. Each group works on "defensive technique." \*1v1 Defensive Technique - dribbling \*1v1 Defensive Technique - no turn \*1v2 Defensive Technique - intercept pass Players should go through each type of defending situation and rotate. Player in possession (dribbling/passing) tries to beat the defender. Rotate offense defense each turn. Rest after 45 sec, stretch 90 sec, repeat.

### Coaching Points

Approach quickly to the ball – long strides; Slow down as you approach the ball – short, choppy strides; Bend knees, weight on toes when pressuring the ball; Move feet, hips, and head as the offensive player moves the ball.



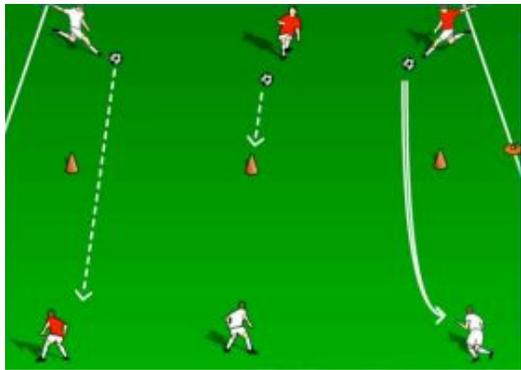
## Team Carnival Shooting

TRAINING AREA = 10W x 30L

Position (1) tall cone in the center of the space. The objective is to shoot the ball into the cone and knock it over for a point. Play to (3) points then change roles & opponents. Player A = Shooter Player B = Receives missed shot & passes to A.

### Coaching Points

Laces = toe down, heel up – strike the center part of the ball. Watch your head make contact with the ball; Inside foot = heel down, toe up – strike the center of the ball. Watch your head make contact with the ball; Follow through with the shot – land on the foot that strikes the ball to increase speed & pace of ball.



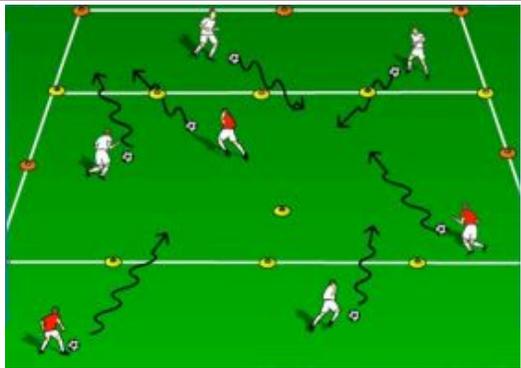
## Technique Shooting

TRAINING AREA = 20W x 30L

Put players in groups of (2) with (1) ball between them. Place a tall cone in the middle of the space. Position (1) player from each group on either side of the cone. Alternate taking turns "shooting" to knock the cone over. Play until (5) - rotate partners. Variations: Instep Drive; Curled Shot; Bent Shot

### Coaching Points

Laces = toe down, heel up – strike the center part of the ball. Watch your head make contact with the ball; Inside foot = heel down, toe up – strike the center of the ball. Watch your head make contact with the ball; Curled = heel down, toe up – strike the inside central part of the ball with inside part of the foot. Sweep leg across the ball – follow through and bring knee up toward face ("kiss the knee" – to increase spin); Bent = toe down, heel up – strike the inside central part of the ball with the laces. Wrap foot around the outside of the ball as player finishes shot. Roll hips towards goal after striking the ball.



## Zone Changes

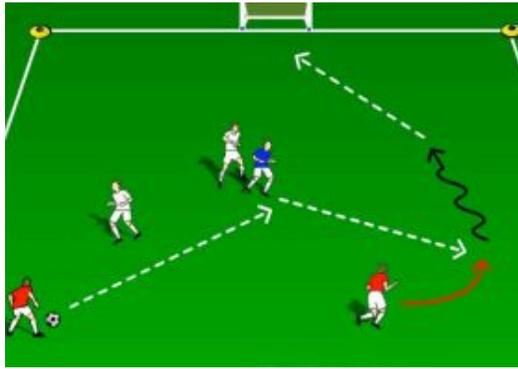
TRAINING AREA = 30W x 40L

Make (3) zones in the space. The endzones of the space = 30W x 10L, with the middle zone = 30W x 20L. Each player has a ball in the space. On coach's command players are to dribble under control into a new zone. In order to enter the zone they perform a move: Step over & go; Scissors; Double Scissors; Outside or Inside foot cut; Drag-push-go.

### Coaching Points

First touch should be into space with the outside of the foot (laces) – quickly accelerate to ball; Take a touch with each step (outside of the foot); Keep weight on toes, knees bent to change direction quickly. *What* - Dribble to penetrate into a new zone/open space; *Where* - The angle of the 1st touch when penetrating should allow the player to dribble at speed with long strides.

# Small-Sided Activities



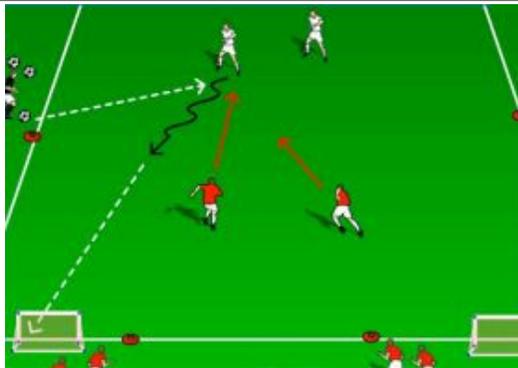
## 2v2+1 to (1) Small Goal

TRAINING AREA = 20W x 30L

Position (1) small goal on each end-line for the teams to attack. Red (2) v White (2) +1 (neutral player). Score by passing the ball in the goal.

### Coaching Points

*What* - Decision to pass, dribble, or shoot; *Who* - The player in possession of the ball; If there is pressure on the ball and limited space behind the defender (pass); If there is limited pressure on the ball, and available space behind the defender (dribble).



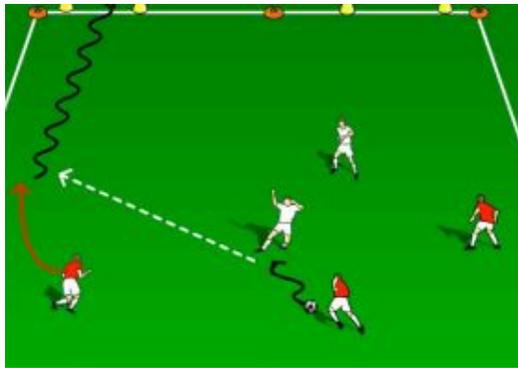
## 2v2 Score on Two Goals

TRAINING AREA = 20W x 30L

Place (2) cones 3 yards apart in each corner forming a "goal" for total of (4) goals. Coach starts with the balls. Coach plays ball to one team. While the ball travels, the team who did not receive the ball runs on to defend against the team in possession. Both teams score by passing/shooting the ball through the "goals."

### Coaching Points

Defensive technique = cover the ground, get down, & stay down!; Tackle the ball: when the ball is AWAY from offensive player; *Who* - The player closest to the ball; *What* - Applying pressure on the player with the ball; *When* - With the other team in possession.



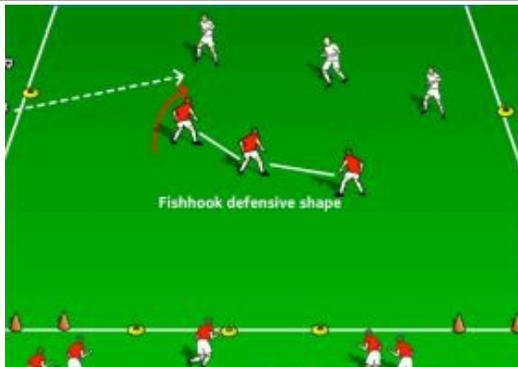
## 3v2 - Dribble Goals

TRAINING AREA = 20W x 30L

Play (2) goals on each end-line using (4) cones. The goals should be 3 yards wide. Designate a group of attackers (3), and a group of defenders (2). Play 3v2, scoring by dribbling through the gate. Rotate attack & defense. "If the defense wins the ball they can attack the goals on the opposite endline."

### Coaching Points

Point your standing leg/plant foot towards the player or space you wish to pass the ball; Follow through with your foot after you pass the ball to increase speed and accuracy when passing. *What* - Recognizing the moment to attack & engage the defender with the dribble; *Why* - To enable commit the defender, which will open more space for my teammates to enter without the ball.



## 3v3 Score on Two Goals

TRAINING AREA = 20W x 30L

Place (2) cones 3 yards apart in each corner forming a "goal" for a total of (4) goals. Red players to white. While the ball travels, the team who did not receive the ball runs on to defend against the team in possession. Both teams score by passing/shooting the ball through the "goals."

### Coaching Points

Player closest to the ball = 1st defender (pressure direct the ball); Player closest to the pressuring defender = 2nd defender (support the ball); Player furthest from the ball = 3rd player (balancing defender); "Fishhook" defensive shape (NIKE SIGN).

# Small-Sided Activities



## 4v4 - 3 Zones - 1 Goal

TRAINING AREA = 30W x 40L

Make (3) zones in the space. The end zones of the space = 30W x 10L, with the middle zone = 30W x 20L. Each player has a ball in the space. Place (2) cones on the end-line 8 yards wide making (1) goal for each team to attack. Players cannot enter the final attacking zone unless it is with the dribble. When the offense dribbles in to the final attacking zone, only (1) defender can follow. This will set up a 1v1 in the attack space. Red (4) v White (4). Score by dribbling through the cones

### Coaching Points

Head up as the ball travels to you to receive the pass; Position the body with open position to attack multiple angles, and weight on toes. *When* - The moment the player with the ball identifies available space to attack & enter; *Why* - Space behind the defender allows for more scoring chances if successful dribble penetration occurs.



## 4v4 - 4 Goal Game

TRAINING AREA = 30W x 40L

Place (2) goals on each end-line in the corner making total of (4) goals in the space. Red (4) v White (4). Each team's GK defends (2) goals. Score by shooting into the goal.

### Coaching Points

Laces = toe down, heel up – strike the center part of the ball. Watch your head make contact with the ball; Inside foot = heel down, toe up – strike the center of the ball. Watch your head make contact with the ball; Follow through with the shot – land on the foot that strikes the ball to increase speed & pace of ball; *When* - after we have received the ball, and taken a touch away from our body; *Why* - to help increase accuracy for scoring chances.



## 4v4 - 4 Goal Game GK

TRAINING AREA = 30W x 40L

Place (2) goals on each end-line in the corner making a total of (4) goals in the space. Red (4) v White (4). Each team's GK defends (2) goals. Score by shooting into the goal.

### Coaching Points

As the player with the ball looks up then down, the GK should take small steps to get in position; Place my weight on my toes, and point my body towards the ball; *When* - The player gets ready to strike the ball I should move my hands into position; *Why* - Because the visual cue of shooting will help me to be more prepared.



## 5v5 Targets

TRAINING AREA = 30W x 50L

Position (1) from each team at the end of the space behind the end-line. 4v4, players look to connect with their target through an aerial pass behind the defense. The pass must be controlled with (2) touches to score a point. *Variations* - \*Aerial pass controlled with 1 touch = 2pts.; \*Aerial pass made with 1-touch pass = 4pts.

### Coaching Points

When receiving the ball, the first touch should be away from the body with the inside of the foot to allow for a lofted/aerial pass; Speed of approach to the ball should be medium pace, with an angled/curved path to strike the ball; *What* - Look up and make eye contact before you make the pass; *When* - Make the pass when you do not have any pressuring defenders, and there is space to play an aerial pass.

# Expanded Small-Sided Activities



## 4v4 (1) Goal & (2) Counter Goals

TRAINING AREA = 30W x 40L

Place (1) small goal on one end-line, and on the opposite end place (2) cones in each corner 3 yards apart making (2) goals. Red (4) v White (4). Score by passing through the cones & goal. Rotate goals to attack.

### Coaching Points

*What* - Decision to penetrate (shoot/dribble) or possess the ball; *Who* - The player(s) without the ball; *When* - As the ball travels to their teammates; *Why* - The support & movement of teammates will help the player with the ball better understand their options - dribble, shoot, or pass.



## 4v4 + GKs to 1 Large Goal

TRAINING AREA = 40W x 50L

Place 1 large goal at opposite ends of the field on each endline. Red v White score by passing/shooting the ball into goal.

### Coaching Points

As the player with the ball looks up then down, the GK should take small steps to get in position; Place my weight on my toes, and point my body towards the ball; *When* - The player gets ready to strike the ball I should move my hands into position; *Why* - Because the visual cue of shooting will help me be more prepared.



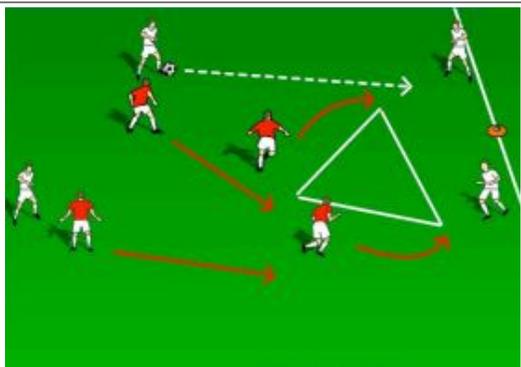
## 4v4 - 2 Large Goals

TRAINING AREA = 30W x 40L

Place (1) large goal on each end-line for each team to attack. Place a line 10 yards from the goals on each side. Goals scored from behind the line = 3pts, goals scored inside the line = 1pt. Red (4) v White (4). Score by shooting ball into the goal.

### Coaching Points

*Where* - the direction of my first touch should be towards the goal as often as possible when in shooting range; *When* - after we have received the ball, and taken a touch away from our body; *Why* - to help increase accuracy for scoring chances.



## 4v4 - (4) Goal Game

TRAINING AREA = 30W x 40L

Place (2) cones 3 yards apart in each two corners forming a "goal" for total of (4) goals. Score by passing the ball through the goal.

### Coaching Points

Player closest to the ball = 1st defender (pressure direct the ball); Player closest to the pressuring defender = 2nd defender (support the ball); Player furthest from the ball = 3rd player (balancing defender); "Fishhook" defensive shape (NIKE SIGN).

# Expanded Small-Sided Activities



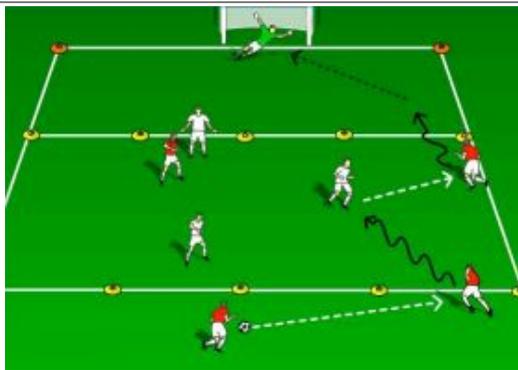
## 5v5 - 3 Goals & 1 Big Goal

TRAINING AREA = 30W x 40L

Place (2) cones along each end-line 3 yards apart making a goal, for total of (3) goals on one end-line. If possible, the middle goal should be a different color to distinguish from other goals. The opposite end line should have (1) large goal. Red (4) v White (4). Each team's GK defends (2) goals. Score by shooting into the goal.

### Coaching Points

Laces = toe down, heel up – strike the center part of the ball. Watch your head make contact with the ball; Inside foot = heel down, toe up – strike the center of the ball. Watch your head make contact with the ball; Follow through with the shot – land on the foot that strikes the ball to increase speed & pace of ball; *When* - after we have received the ball, and taken a touch away from our body; *Why* - to help increase accuracy for scoring chances.



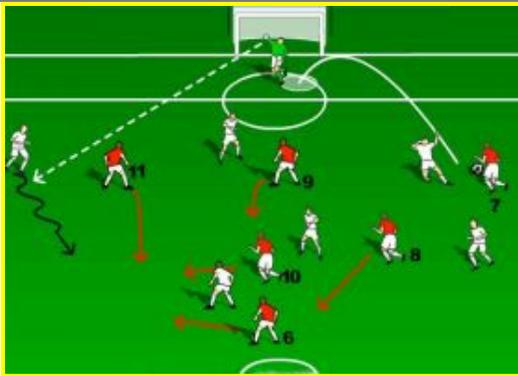
## 5v5 - 3 Zones - 1 Goal

TRAINING AREA = 30W x 40L

Make (3) zones in the space. The end zones of the space = 30W x 10L, with the middle zone = 30W x 20L. Each player has a ball in the space. Place (1) goal on each end-line for each team to attack. Players cannot enter the final attacking zone unless it is with the dribble. When the offense dribbles in to the final attacking zone, only (1) defender can follow. This will set up a 1v1 in the attack space. Players can shoot the ball in the middle zone of the space. Red (4) v White (4). Score by shooting the ball through the goal.

### Coaching Points

If there is space behind the defender = dribble penetration; If there is space in front of the attacker = dribble to shoot on goal; Allow the ball to be received across the body - Push ball out away from the body to take space (dribble or shot); Take touch with inside of the foot away from pressure – backwards, or side ways to maintain possession.



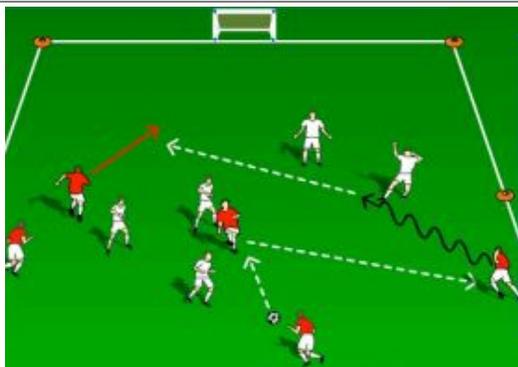
## 6v6 to Goal

TRAINING AREA = 50W x 60L

Position (1) large goal at opposite ends of the field. Score by shooting the ball in the goal. Goal = 1pt. Aerial Service & Goal = 2pts. Aerial Passes in buildup, Aerial Service, & Goal = 4pts.

### Coaching Points

*When* - Players without the ball should make runs into space when my head looks up and then goes back down to strike the ball; *Where* - In wide areas, or deep areas away from the field - I should look to play aerial passes; *Why* - Aerial passes will allow me to get in behind the defense quickly.



## 7v7 - 3 Goals & 1 Goal

TRAINING AREA = 50W x 60L

Place (1) large goal at one end of the field and (3) small goals made from cones at the other end of the field, approximately 3 yards wide. Position balls at each of the field for easy access. Play for set period of time, or number of goals (determined by coach). Players scoring on the small goals, score by passing the ball through the cones. 1pt. = score a goal; 2pt = beat (1) opponent, and score a goal; 5pts = beat more than (1) opponent, and score a goal.

### Coaching Points

Dribble with speed & change directions when attacking open space, or an alone defender. Look to pass, and keep possession if there are several defenders around/near the ball. *Who* - The player with the ball. *Why* - Taking players off the dribble will open up space for teammates throughout the rest of the field.

# Game



Play 8v8 with specific formations for each team.

Reinforce all points from practice.

GK-3-2-2