

Games for U-4's

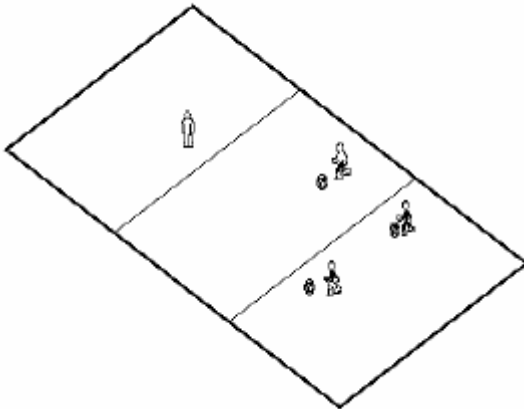
Game: 5 to 10min.

Red Light – Green Light

When the coach says “green light”, players dribble their ball with their feet. When the coach says “red light”, players must stop their ball and stand still. When the coach says “green light” again, the players begin to dribble their ball again. Have fun with their imaginations...have the players make “brake’ sounds when coach says “red light” and have them make loud “motor sounds” when coach says “green light”.

The coach gives praise for creative movement, whether the ball is being carried with the hands or dribbled with the feet. The coach applauds

RED LIGHT GREEN LIGHT



Game: 5 to 10min.

Freeze Tag - This is always a winner. They love it. The key point here is for the players to not bump into one another. This is a great space awareness activity. They also learn to develop as a team as they help each other out when frozen. Make sure you are the “it” person and always make a grid with cones (15 by 15) or they will keep on running. The players should dribble the ball around and you try and tag them. If you tag them they are frozen they have to freeze for 3 seconds. To give everyone a feel for the game you may want to start with the players not dribbling a ball, but instead just running.

Game: 5 to 10min.

Dribble and Shoot

This is simply to prepare for the game. Each player takes a turn at dribbling the ball the length of the field and into the goal. Discourage a long shot with the toe, and have them tap the inside of the foot or laces, so they feel where the ball should touch the foot. This drill gives them the confidence that they can do it during the game, so make sure they eventually get the ball into the goal, even if it takes several tries.

Game: 5 to 10min.

Camp Town Races

Line up all the players on one end of the field. They each have a ball. On the whistle, they all dribble to opposite end, shoot ball into goal, get ball out of goal, and run back and finish with a shot on opposite goal. The first one to finish is the winner. Ask them "Who is going to win the race?" They all learn to say "The player who can dribble it the straightest!" A variation is to start half at one end and half on the other. This really teaches them to try to do it fast while maintaining possession. This drill really helps players deal with the balls that pop out of the bunch.

Teach the parents

During one of the last practices of the season have a scrimmage between the parents and the players (with the coaches helping the players). This serves a couple of purposes. The kids love this game. They get a chance to show their parents what they can do and they enjoy beating their parents. (The parents never win, the coaches make sure of that....) Also, since many of the parents have never played soccer it shows them how difficult the game really is. The hope is that a parent may now think twice before yelling at a child for missing an "easy" shot in a game. Everybody seems to enjoy this scrimmage.

Skill Work: 5 to 10min.

Dribble Around Cones – This is pretty straight forward. Place cones (maybe two lines) and allow them to dribble through the cones. You can do this in a circle format as well. I wouldn't do this too often since they need different challenges. (You can ask them to use both feet to dribble, then try one foot only right and left).

Game: 5 to 10min.

Target Practice – This is a chance for them to hit a target. Place either cones or bowling pins about 5 yards apart from a player and get them to practice knocking them down. They will love the challenge. Get them to try and kick the ball off the cone.

Game: 5 to 10min.

Shooting On Goal – This is a basic dribbling and shooting drill. Have more than 1 line if needed. Get them to dribble and shoot on a goal. You may change this by getting them to hit a ball that's passed to them by the coach. They love this fun activity because they get to shoot. It's important to throw this in once in awhile.

Skill Work: 5 to 10min.

Dribble Around Obstacles – Again, with the circle you made with cones, place cones or toy bowling pins inside or anything else you might have in mind and get the children to dribble around and tell them to try and avoid knocking the pins down or touching the cones.

Game: 10min.

Ball Tag or "OUCH "

Every player has a ball, and must dribble around inside the circle. One player is "it". Make sure all the players know who it is! All the other players try to hit that player's ball with their own ball. If they do, then they become "it". The coach calls out who is "it", and can make sure that everyone gets a turn (if one player is it for too long, just announce another name). A variation on this is for the coach to be the target rather than a ball.

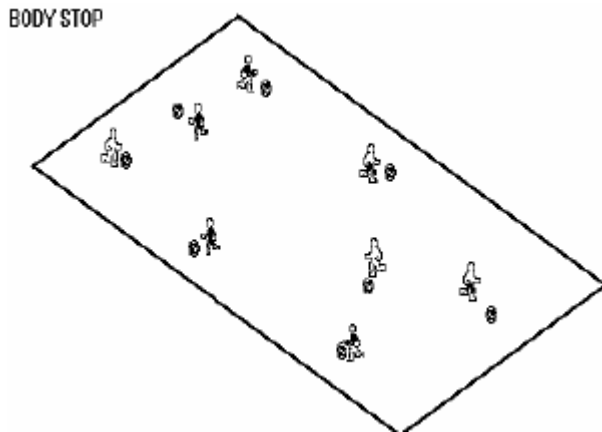


Warm-up

Kids this age don't take long to warm up, but you should to begin with some fun exercises. Have them run around the outside of a circle 15 yards in diameter, spaced about 2 seconds behind each other. This gets everyone running at once, without it really being a race. Then dribble the ball around the outside of the circle. This is very hard for the players, because it requires them to change direction, keep control of the ball, etc. However, dribbling is just about the only thing that players of this age do, so it is the best skill to practice. Go round twice in each direction, keeping the ball close. Encourage them to use the inside of the foot to touch the ball.

Game: 10min.

Body Part Dribbling



In a 15 x 20 yard area, each player has a ball. The players dribble freely in the area. When the coach says "NOW", the players must stop the ball with any body part. Keep it going

Variation: After the players try it a few times, the coach will yell out a specific body part. Each player must try to stop the ball with that body part. Keep it going.

The coach gives praise for creativity and asks each player what body part they used.