

U-6 Week 5 Practice

1. Pick a point on the field 50 to 75 yards away, like a goal, fence, etc. and tell the kids to go dribble around it or to it and back.

Game Before Skill Work: 10 to 15min.

Spaceman

Set up a 20x20 yard square and have the players start dribbling. Tell them that they are spacemen or women, and have to be aware of the space they are taking up and that as a team they have to cover all of the allotted space. Remind them throughout the drill by asking them, "*Are you watching your space?*" This will help keep their heads up. When you shout, "*Stop,*" the whole area your team is in should be fairly evenly covered by the players. If they are all spaced out, if they are not then they lose and they have to do a punishment that is silly. Like a "Star Jump or a Jumping Jack" something to remind them of what they are trying to accomplish, keep the punishments light hearted/fun. If they are all spaced out then the *coach* loses and has to do a little punishment.

You don't need to spend much time explaining the concept of space before beginning this drill: players will intuitively understand the concept by doing it themselves through discovery. You can periodically give them some little pointers as they dribble. Get your players moving, and then every so often yell, "*Freeze!*" When they freeze, ask, "*Are we covering all the space within this grid or square?*" and "*Are we moving all the time?*"

They will learn that when one player moves out of a space, someone else must move into that space. The whole drill is just a big continuous movement, with everyone keeping their eyes up and concentrating on filling the space. Since they're moving all the time, there are always going to be spaces being created, so there are always spaces needing to be filled. This drill can be a lot of fun.

This game teaches players how to spread out in more game like situations. Coach should say, "find the space" instead of "spread out" and they will be able to better understand where to be on the field!

Skill Work: 10 to 15min.

Have the players dribble around in the same grid as you used in Spaceman while you call out tasks for them to perform. Make it fun every now and again add something silly for them to perform. Technical aspects that can be performed are: (Pull, Push with Laces, Pull, Push with inside of foot, Pull, Push with outside of foot, Toe Taps, Inside – Inside, Dribble with Right Foot Only and Dribble with the Left Foot Only).

Slalom Dribbling: Set up 2-3 line, of 4 or 5 cones in a straight line spaced 5 yards apart. In groups of 2 or 3, one at a time dribble through the cones around the last one and back through. Then the next person goes. Do this a couple of times then make it a race one line against the other. The players all have to sit down when they are finished to win.

Coaching point: Emphasis dribbling with their laces to be faster.

Another Game: 10min.

3 v1 or 4 v1 Keep away game

You might need to involve another parent depending on your numbers of players at practice and have two grids playing at the same time. Make a square grid 15 by 15 yards or two depending on your numbers to play in. Get your players to spread out and pass the ball to keep it away from the one defender. Have the defender wear a penny. If the defender wins they should try to keep it by themselves as long as they can. If the ball goes out of bounds then the defender gets the ball and dribbles back in trying to keep it as long as the player can.

Coaching Points: Have the players pass and receive the ball with the inside of their foot and try to recognize where to go with the ball early. To get open they have to move to the open space, like "Spaceman."

3v3 Game: 10 to 15min.

Finish Practice with some shooting. Have the players in a line starting 10 to 12 yards away from the goal. Tell them to pass you the ball the run off to the side of you. Pass the ball back to them, the player should settle it, dribble, then shoot. You can also get closer and ask them to shoot "First Touch". (Focus on proper technique)