U5 & U6 RECREATIONAL COACHES CURRICULUM

DIRECTOR OF COACHING: PAUL THOMAS
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The purpose of this coaching curriculum is to help educate the novice U5 & U6 coach. We define the novice coach as someone who has limited or no experience working with players aged 4 and 5 years old. Many coaches have either played or coached at some ages but the U5 & U6 player is unique and to be a successful coach in this age group you will need a new skill set.

Before starting the manual and the diploma it is important to understand that the MSYSA’s underlying philosophy for these ages is FUN! It is important that players enjoy their first organized soccer experience. We also believe that all soccer skills highlighted in the manual are taught in an indirect manor, which means, allow the activities to teach the players how to perform a skill.

The manual will examine the following areas:

- Team management
- Understanding your players.
- What to expect from your players
- Coaching your players.
- What to teach your players.
- Practice day
- Game day.
- Lesson Plans.

In conjunction with the manual there will be an online MSYSA U5 & U6 coaching diploma, which will examine the information discussed in the manual, the implementation of the information as well as video’s of what players at these ages will look like during activities and performing skills.

In addition to the online diploma, MSYSA will also be offering clubs and leagues a chance to host an in-service clinic for their coaches. The in-service clinic will be held by the MSYSA coaching education staff and will last between one and two hours depending on the age group. Here we will run through all aspects of the curriculum, which will be delivered in both classroom and on field sessions.
Before embarking on your season as a U5 or U6 coach there are some important things to think about.

Coaching Philosophy
Before you meet with you parents and start coaching your players is it important to think about your coaching philosophy. When composing your philosophy for coaching players at these ages, you should first read through this entire manual. Pay particular attention to the MSYSA’s underlying philosophy, which is to allow players at these ages to enjoy themselves and have fun, while developing skills through activities and games.

Other areas to consider include:
• Soccer Beliefs: Why do you want to coach? What are your responsibilities to each player, the team, yourself and the community? What is a successful season?
• Motivation: Why are you interested in coaching? What do you enjoy most about coaching? What do you like least about coaching?
• Experiences: Past – Childhood? Enriching or inhibiting?

Coaches Equipment
• Cones: Try to get different color and size cones (flat and tower).
• Pinnies: These will help you and the players differentiate between teams.
• Portable Goals: although not essential, it would be ideal if you could get a set of portable goals.
• Balls: Players should be required to bring a ball to practice, however, having some spare balls will help.
• Air Pump: It is guaranteed that players will show up to practice with flat soccer balls.
• First Aid Kit: Just in case.
• Extra Water: Again, just in case.
Assistant Coach(s)

It is important to have an assistant coach (or 2) to help you during the season. These coaches can be useful during practice and games. Having an extra coach can help you with corralling players during practice, dealing with injured players and substitutions on game day. Also, if you have to miss a training session or game, having another coach that the children are familiar with when your are not there is essential.

Other Important Roles

To help the season go smoothly, and to include different parents in the team dynamic, it is also a good idea to ask for the following helpers:

- Schedule Coordinator: this person is responsible for communicating and confirming any changes to the schedule.
- Social Coordinator: this person helps with organizing the snack schedule, birthday celebrations, end of season picnic, etc!

These positions are optional, however, the more help and organization the better!

Coaching Your Own Child

Coaching your own child can become a strange dynamic. Below are some tips on how to handle certain situations as well as important areas to address before the start of the season:

1. Explain that when you both step out of the car onto the field, that you become a coach and your child becomes a soccer player.
2. Explain that, on the field, you will treat them like a player.
3. Explain to your child that they should treat you like one of their teachers.
4. Keep the discussions in the car light hearted. Don't try to coach your child on the car ride to and from games.
5. Some discussion points for after practices and games might include what your child best liked about practice or what might they want to do at the next practice.
Parent Meeting
It is very important to recognize that each player comes with a parent(s). Effective communication with these parents will make your role as the coach more enjoyable. Coordinate a meeting prior to your first training session or game. We recommend inviting the parents to attend the first scheduled parent, to meet and then to watch. Communication of the meeting should be done as soon as you receive your contact list / roster.

During the first meeting with the parents it is important to outline what you are going to be like as a coach (philosophy) and what you expect from them. Both these areas, will allow you to control any unrealistic expectations from parents as well as any potential problems from the side line.

Parent Meeting Topics should include:
1. Coach introduction, including any soccer back ground and why you are coaching.
2. What can parents expect from U5 & U6 soccer?
3. What is the structure for practice and games at your club? For instance, how long will each practice be, what is the format of the game on the weekend and what will you be working on?
4. Players Information: Medical Information, previous experience on other teams, family situation, etc
5. Parent Information: Emergency contact info.
6. Players and parents are responsible for appropriate dress, shin guards, ball and water.
7. Snack Schedule! At these ages the snack can mean more to the player than actually playing!
8. Parent guidelines: outline any boundaries you might have for training and games. For instance; what is the protocol when a player is injured, how do you want them to act on the sideline (no coaching), etc
Before starting practices and games with your team, it is important to understand the following areas of Care and Prevention.

**EMERGENCY ACTION PLANNING**

Have and know how to use the following:
- First Aide Kit
- Ice and plastic bags for emergency use.
- Team safety and information cards.
- Stay calm and reassure the player.

Do the primary survey ABC's:
- **A** = Airway
- **B** = Breathing
- **C** = Circulation

For Airway and Circulation:
- If the player is not breathing - begin rescue breathing (only if CPR certified)
- If the player has no pulse - start CPR (only if CPR certified)
- If necessary, send someone to call 911

**COMMON INJURIES**

**Cuts and Abrasions**
To reduce the risk of infection ALWAYS wear protective gloves and wash your hands before and after contact. Protect yourself and the player. To treat, clean wound and surrounding area, wiping away from the wound. To stop the bleeding, place a sterile dressing over the wound and apply direct pressure. Elevate if necessary. If severe call 911.

**Nose Bleed**
Place the player in a sitting position with the head forward. Apply pressure to just below the bridge of the nose. Use ice when necessary. If you suspect a head or neck injury do not try to control the bleeding. Instead, stabilize the head and call 911.
Care and Prevention

Bruises/Contusions
A crushing injury to a muscle or tendon caused by an outside force, which causes hemorrhaging to surrounding tissue. To treat, apply ice.

Sprains & Strains
These are frequent injuries in soccer. A sprain is the stretching or tearing of the ligament beyond its normal limits. A strain is a tear to the muscle or tendon, commonly called a 'pull'. To treat use R.I.C.E; Rest, Ice, Compression and Elevation.

Fractures
If a body part does not have a normal appearance or function then suspect a fracture. DO NOT move the player, keep them warm and comfortable, then call 911.

Dislocation
The joint will have a marked deformity with intense pain. If a player can walk immobilize the joint and immediately transport them to hospital. If the player is unable to walk then call 911.

Concussion
Usually due to a clash of heads (although this can be caused in different ways). Player will show signs of possible dizziness, headache, disorientation

INJURY PREVENTION

There are many precautions you can take as a coach to reduce the risk of injury to your players.

- Proper use of equipment (shin guards, no jewelry, uniforms designed for climate).
- Proper fitting shoes, proper type of shoe for surface.
- Upkeep and monitoring of playing service.
- Avoid scheduling training during the hottest periods of the day and when there is intense humidity.
- Adhere to age group recommendations practice and game durations.
- Ample water supply and breaks to give player rest.
- Full rehabilitation of an injury prior to returning to play, determined by a physician.
- Recommended a physical exam by a physician prior to participating.
HEAT ILLNESS

Young children are still not as efficient as adults at dealing with heat or cold.

Heat Cramps
Are a brief severe cramps in the muscles of the leg, arm or abdomen that may occur during or after vigorous exercise in extreme heat. Lack of drinking fluids is a common cause. To treat, place players in a cool place where they can rest and rehydrate.

Heat Exhaustion
The players body is having trouble keeping itself cool. This condition can come on very suddenly. The player's temperature is raised and they may feel sick or dizzy. The player is still sweating and the skin feels clammy. To treat, call 911, place player in a cool place, loosen clothing, rest and rehydrate.

Heat Stroke
The most severe form of heat illness; a life threatening emergency, that requires immediate medical attention. Body temperature is high, skin is hot, red and dry, sweating mechanism is blocked, pulse is rapid and strong, and player may lose consciousness. To treat, call 911 immediately, get player into a cool area, cool the players body with spray or dousing with water, and loosen clothing.

SUMMARY

It is important to be prepared for all eventualities! Follow these general guidelines:

- Always err on the side of caution.
- Be First Aid and CPR certified.
- Record the incident and note all actions you took and how the injury occurred.
- Follow up with a phone call to check on the players condition.
Before starting to coach, we believe it is important to get an understanding of the players you will be coaching. Below are some key elements to consider.

**Why does a U5 & U6 child play soccer?**
In most cases, the player has not asked to be signed up to play organized soccer, the players parent signed them up to play! This means you will get a variety of interest in playing, from the child who will love the environment to ones that do not want to be there.

**Why do children enjoy playing?**
They usually like playing soccer because they have fun, they have an older sibling that plays and/or some of their friends maybe playing.

**Why do children dislike soccer or stop playing?**
They will dislike practice or games, and ultimately not want to continue to playing, if they are not having fun or enjoying themselves. We must ensure that they are able to play with their friends, make sure practice is exciting and fun, and allow them to have success in age-appropriate activities.

**What can they accomplish physically?**
They are in the fundamental movement stage, where locomotive movements such as running and jumping can be achieved, as well as stabilizing activities such as balancing and stopping. They also have high energy levels but only for short periods of time.

**What is their cognitive state?**
They are at the pre-operational stage of their cognitive development. They will have a limited understanding of time, space, and boundaries. They will be imaginative and enjoy activities with simple rules. Long stoppages and instructions will not be processed, they only have short attention spans. Finally, they will only be able to concentrate on one task at a time during activities.

**How will they interact with others?**
They are very egocentric, their main focus is usually on themselves or one object (ball). This can mean they have difficulty sharing (ball), no understand of the team concept and are prone to exaggerate their own needs. It is important to remember that their parents are the most important people in their lives and they need lots of positive reinforcement and praise.
As well as getting an understanding of the player characteristics, we should also look at what we can expect from our players. If we identify some of the age group nuances, we should be able to reduce the amount of surprise when these things occur. Some things to expect include:

**Some players may CRY!** Prior, during and after practices and games we can, and probably will, have players crying. The reason behind this explosion of emotion can be for a variety of reasons. Don’t be afraid to get the parents involved when this happens.

**They will need to take POTTY BREAKS!** Be prepared for the sudden yell, “I need to go potty”! Having parents around for this is essential.

**They will use their HANDS!** Due to the players lack of coordination and balance it is easier to stop the ball with their hands rather than their feet. Do not be surprised when players use their hands to stop the ball, change its direction and even score a goal!

**They will be DISTRACTED easily!** Everything is a distraction for players at these ages. A police siren, rocket ship, airplane and in fact any loud noise will be more important than the game! Do not be afraid to stop and watch:-)

**Your will have to tie plenty of SHOELACES!** You will have to tie shoelaces for your players. Get used to it!

**They are very SPONTANEOUS!** Players at these ages are very spontaneous. They will come up with something that is out of the ordinary and funny. Remember, if you can’t beat them, join them. Be prepared to laugh and be silly!

**They will not stay inside the field BOUNDARIES!** They will have no concept of space. You will spend most of our time corralling players and keeping them inside the field. Employ the new ball theory here; have a spare ball in your hands and when the ball goes out of bounds, throw a new one in.

**The best description of the game is BEE HIVE SOCCER!** The 3 v 3 scrimmage or weekend game will not look like real soccer. Most, if not all, players will be attracted to the ball and will crowd around it. Players on the same team will steal the ball from each other. The players who are not attracted to the game, will not be making great supporting runs - instead they will most probably be picking daisies!
The ‘understanding your players’ and ‘what to expect from your players’ sections can be used to identify some areas that are important to remember when coaching players at these ages.

GREET your players to practice! This will help create a welcoming and safe atmosphere for your players. This can include greeting players to practice with a warm smile, a high five and using their name. Taking time before practice to talk and joke with them. Remember the number one priority is FUN!

FACILITATOR or coach? At these ages the coach should act as a facilitator, present and guide players through the rules and boundaries of the activities. Allow activities to be the teacher. When you do make coaching points try guiding the players to the answer by asking questions. Finally, coach with high energy, players at these ages will respond better to someone who is outgoing!

Keep soccer FUN, through ACTIVE PARTICIPATION! All aspects of practices and games should be fun for the players. Choose activities where every player can achieve success and the player to ball ration is 1 to 1. The only activity where this ratio should change is in your scrimmage. Also, don't be afraid to join in games and activities with them.

Keep it SIMPLE & SILLY! All games and activities used should be simple to understand and easy to play. Also, the more silly the game, the more fun the players will have.

Keep is SHORT & SWEET! Especially when introducing new activities or skills. Players have short attention spans and will focus more if the coach is expressive and exciting during practice. Give short, effective demonstrations while explaining the new activity or skill.

Keep PRAISING players! Give players consistent positive feedback, both verbally and non-verbally (high five, smile and a pat on the back).

Allow players to EXPERIMENT! Coaches should provide an environment in training and games where players can experiment with new soccer ideas. There should be a freedom to fail!

Do not focus on WINNING and LOSING! Make sure you use activities where no one player can be singled out as a winner. Be creative in this aspect during practices and games.
Keep practices EXCITING, FRESH, FUN & CHALLENGING. Avoid static line drills at all costs. Activities where every player has a ball and is moving are ideal. Activities where players have to line up or share a ball will allow them to lose focus and interest in the game. Remember NO LINES, NO LAPS, NO LECTURES!

45 MINUTE RULE  Soccer contacts should last 45 minutes. Players will go all out for short periods, while it will only take a short time for them to recuperate. Allow for lots of short breaks during your practices.

As well as learning how to coach your players, it is also important to highlight areas of coaching that will restrict learning. We must try to remove these areas from our coaching in order to maximize the learning.

FEAR of failing. We must allow players to make mistakes, both in training and games.

SHOUTING, SARCASM and NEGATIVE feedback. Remember, try to catch them being good!

OVER coaching and LECTURING. Remember the Chinese proverb:

  I HEAR - I FORGET - Don’t spend too much time in the introduction of activities....
  I SEE - I REMEMBER - Briefly demonstrate what you want them to do....
  I DO - AND I UNDERSTAND - Have them try the activity and then make rule changes / corrections....

Lack of SUCCESS. Pushing players into activities and skills that do not fit the age group or level of player, will cause frustration, decrease motivation and affect the fun that players have.

Finally, remember the old adage - ‘if your having fun, the players will be having fun’. If there are smiles on the players’ faces and they are enthusiastic during activities and games, you are doing a great job!
Another key component for coaching in these age groups is to identify what we should teach the players. The characteristics of the players give us the following clues.

**Balance, Coordination & Basic Motor Skills**

Four and five year olds are still learning how to control their bodies and now we are introducing a ball into the equation! Not only should we play games that allow for one ball per player but we should also use activities that do not use a ball and concentrate on general movements of the body; running, changing direction, jumping, hoping, rolling, etc.

**Dribbling, Changing Direction, Turning & Stopping with the Ball**

With our ratio of one ball per player, dribbling is the number one technique players will use. All the games we use at these ages should have some component of dribbling, along with stopping, turning and changing direction. Although balance and coordination is an issue, particularly with the ball, we should still introduce elements of players changing direction, stopping and turning with the ball into our games. Players at these ages will find it difficult to change direction sharply and will do so in big arcs with different surfaces of their feet, which is fine. Stopping the ball with the sole of the foot will be difficult but should still be introduced as well as with the inside of the foot. With turning we should use the same surfaces as stopping the ball and introduce a drag back with the sole of the foot and an inside of the foot turn.

**Shooting & Passing**

We can summarize these players as ‘ME’ orientated, however, they will look to pass the ball occasionally but only if given plenty of time and space to do so (usually kick ins, kick offs and goal kicks). Although you will rarely see a player shooting the ball in a game (players will usually dribble into the goal), shooting or striking the ball with the laces (some will use toes!) should be encouraged through games used in practice. The progression into shooting and passing will be become more important at the U6 age group. Players will be more used to dribbling the ball and have better balance a this age.

Just as important as what to teach we should also be aware of what not to teach! There also some important elements of the game that we shouldn’t teach or expect players at these age groups to do.

**Receiving the Ball.** Because there is very little passing, there are few opportunities for players to receive the ball.
WHAT TO TEACH YOUR PLAYERS??

**Heading.** Players at these age will not head the ball in dynamic (game) activities.

**Support Play.** Players will have no concept of supporting a teammate with the ball and your scrimmages will look like ‘Bee Hive Soccer’.

**Positional Play.** Teaching positions is irrelevant and detrimental to the fun and enjoyment of the players. Expect disorganization and ‘Bee Hive Soccer’!

**Defending.** Players will naturally try to win the ball back after they lose possession. This is as complicated as defending should get!

In summary, we are looking at the following topics to be introduced and working on at the following ages:

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Remember, we are trying to guide our players towards these skills by using activities and games that will require the players to execute them. Do not spend lots of time demonstration and breaking down their technique at these ages. Facilitate and let the game be the teacher!
It is very important that you are organized for practice. At these age groups, players have short attention spans, so it is even more important to plan what activities you are going to use during the session and what progression you will be following.

To help with the planning phase of the practice we have designed a lesson plan for each week of the season. These can be found on the following pages: U5 = Pages 16 to 23, U6 = Pages 24 to 31. The activities used in these lesson plans follow a progression of simple to complex. An overview of the activities in each week can be viewed on the next few pages. The progression can be summarized as follows:

- **Activity 1 OR Warm Up**: Here we introduce movements that the players will use throughout the training session. Start with no soccer ball and add the ball once the players are used to the activity.
- **Activity 2 OR Free Space Game**: Once players are ready to practice both physically and mentally, we introduce an activity where players can explore the playing area. The ratio of player to ball is always 1 to 1.
- **Activity 3 OR Free Space Game**: This activity will be similar to the previous one, with some changes in rules and dimensions. This is done to present the same techniques as before but in a different format, to keep it challenging and fun for the players.
- **Activity 4 OR Directional Game**: Here we add some direction. We do this to replicate the game (in a very general sense) and have players moving in directions that they would in a game.
- **Activity 5 OR 3 v 3 Scrimmage**: We always end the practice with a game of soccer.

NOTE: Always have another activity in the back of your mind! The players may not enjoy certain activities and in this situation it is important to have a back up activity to switch to!

Field organization will also help you to reduce the amount of time used to set up the grids for the activities and introducing them. We suggest getting to the practice site at least 10 minutes before training, this will allow you to survey the location for any safety issues and address the playing area. When laying out the field for the practice, we suggest setting up the biggest area first and then working inwards from there. At these ages the grid size remains the same and the only transitioning you will need is to add or remove cones in the center of the field. This can and should be done while players are having a brief water break.

Remember, players just want to enjoy practice and have fun. The points outlined above as well as the lesson plans included in the curriculum should help you to achieve that goal in every practice!
## RECREATIONAL COACHING CURRICULUM

### U5 TRAINING ACTIVITIES & PROGRESSION

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Please NOTE:
- A session plan based on the lesson plan breakdowns for each week can be found in this curriculum.
- It is important to note that players / teams will sometimes not take to an activity and coaches should have a backup activity they can use in this scenario.
- Activities that are in written in italics should be used for the warm up prior to the weekend game.
## Week 1, Lesson 1
- **Warm Up:** Movement Game
- **Activity 1:** Tag
- **Activity 2:** Chain Gang
- **Activity 3:** Clean My Room
- **Game:** 3 v 3 to Goal

## Week 2, Lesson 1
- **Warm Up:** Hee Bee Dee Gee Bee’s
- **Activity 1:** Everybody’s It
- **Activity 2:** Freeze Tag - Dribbling
- **Activity 3:** Cowboys & Indians
- **Game:** 3 v 3 to Goal

## Week 3, Lesson 1
- **Warm Up:** Foxes & Rabbits
- **Activity 1:** Simon Says
- **Activity 2:** Pirate Ship
- **Activity 3:** Hospital Tag
- **Game:** 3 v 3 to Goal

## Week 4, Lesson 1
- **Warm Up:** Freedom to Move
- **Activity 1:** Interactive Dribbling
- **Activity 2:** Colors
- **Activity 3:** Strike Out
- **Game:** 3 v 3 to Goal

## Week 5, Lesson 1
- **Warm Up:** Coaches Challenge
- **Activity 1:** Trip to the Zoo
- **Activity 2:** Freeze Tag - Passing
- **Activity 3:** Cookie Monster
- **Game:** 3 v 3 to Goal

## Week 6, Lesson 1
- **Warm Up:** Freedom to Move
- **Activity 1:** Sleeping Lions
- **Activity 2:** Treasure Hunt
- **Activity 3:** Treasure Island
- **Game:** 3 v 3 to Goal

## Week 7, Lesson 1
- **Warm Up:** Hide & Seek
- **Activity 1:** Interactive Dribbling
- **Activity 2:** Sharks & Minnows
- **Activity 3:** Road Runner
- **Game:** 3 v 3 to Goal

## Week 8, Lesson 1
- **Warm Up:** I can do this, can you?
- **Activity 1:** Body Part Dribbling
- **Activity 2:** Red Light, Green Light
- **Activity 3:** Color Shooting
- **Game:** 3 v 3 to Goal

**Please NOTE:**
- A session plan based on the lesson plan breakdowns for each week can be found in this curriculum.
- It is important to note that players/teams will sometimes not take to an activity and coaches should have a back up activity they can use in this scenario.
- Activities that are in written in italics should be used for the warm up prior to the weekend game.
Recreational Coaching Curriculum

Game Day

Pre Game
The pre-game will consist of you greeting players to the field and taking the warm up. The warm up is used to prepare players for the game, however, at these ages it should consist of having players move around with the soccer ball and have fun!

Game
The game at these ages is usually 3 v 3 or 4 v 4 (depending on the league), with one coach allowed on the field to help facilitate the game for the players. It is important the the coach on the field allows them to play and only get involved if the ball needs to be restarted. The assistant(s) coach should be in charge of substitutes and keeping them organized. Try to play all players 50% of the time. Finally, be encouraging and provide lots of positive reinforcement!

Post Game
This usually entails snack time for the players, do not try to impart any words of wisdom to the players on how the game went or the result! U5 and U6 players are more conceded with what snack they are getting rather than the game. Give everyone a high five and a good job!
Tactics - What will the game look like?
When analyzing how the game will look and why, we have to take into consideration the physical, cognitive and psycho-social characteristics we outlined earlier in the manual.

When they have the ball they will go in one direction and not necessarily the correct one!

Players will have little to no concept of passing, their teammates, supporting teammates when not in possession of the ball and they will even take the ball away from their teammates.

The game will look nothing like ‘real’ soccer and that’s ok. Do not try to fix this picture, allow the players to have FUN while playing and facilitate the game for them.
Activity: Welcome Game
Area: 20 x 25 yards.
1. Description: Organize the team into a circle with only one ball between the group. Start with the ball in your hands, say your name and then hand the ball to the person to your right.
2. When the ball returns to the coach, now all the players must say the name of the person before the ball gets passed.
3. Pass the ball to a random person, now the person passing says the name.

Activity: Red Light, Green Light
Area: 20 x 25 yards.
Description: Players dribble around and wait for commands:
• Red Light = Stop. Introduce stopping the ball with the inside & sole.
• Green Light = Go.
• Yellow Light = Toes taps, sit on ball, etc.
• Monster Truck = Coach tries to steal players soccer balls. Introduce turning to get away from the monster truck, either drag back or inside turn.
• Crash = Players fall to the ground & pretend to be hurt.

Activity: Coaches Challenge
Area: 20 x 25 yards.
Description: Each player has a ball. Players take it in turns to give the ball to the coach. The coach throws it and gives the player direction with how to bring it back. For example: carry it, bounce it, hop with the ball, jump like a rabbit, dribble it, use left foot to dribble it, etc.

Continue to work on stopping and turning with the ball during this activity.

Activity: Jake & the Netherlands Pirates
Area: 20 x 25 yards.
Description: Name all four sides of the grid; Captian Hook, Izzy, Jake, . When the coach shouts the name of a place, all the players must go to that side. Other commands include:
• CAPTAIN ON DECK: Players place one foot on the ball and salute.
• MARBLES: Players do a forward role.
• PEG LEG: Players hop on one leg.
• Invent new commands.

Continue to work on stopping and turning with the ball during this activity.

Activity: 3 v 3 to Goal
Area: 20 x 25 yards with two goals.
Description: Split players into two teams. Each team defends and attacks a goal.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity: Foxes and Rabbits</th>
<th><img src="image1.png" alt="Foxes and Rabbits" /></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Area:</strong> 20 x 25 yards.</td>
<td><strong>Description:</strong> Start without a ball. Give each player a vest. Players then place the vest in the sides of their shorts. Coach starts as the fox and is trying to catch the rabbits by stealing their vests. When a vest has been stolen they become a fox and help the coach. Continue until one player remains. Play again.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity: Red Light, Green Light</th>
<th><img src="image2.png" alt="Red Light, Green Light" /></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Area:** 20 x 25 yards.        | **Description:** Players dribble around and wait for commands:  
  - Red Light = Stop. Introduce stopping the ball with the inside & sole.  
  - Green Light = Go.  
  - Yellow Light = Toes taps, sit on ball, etc.  
  - Monster Truck = Coach tries to steal players soccer balls. Introduce turning to get away from the monster truck, either drag back or inside turn.  
  - Crash = Players fall to the ground & pretend to be hurt. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity: Body Part Dribbling</th>
<th><img src="image3.png" alt="Body Part Dribbling" /></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Area:** 20 x 25 yards.      | **Description:** Players dribble around the area and wait for the coaches commands. When the coach shouts a body part the players must stop the ball with that part of the foot. Continue. **Progression:** Ask players to come up with their own commands.  
Continue to work on stopping and turning with the ball during this activity. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity: Colors</th>
<th><img src="image4.png" alt="Colors" /></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Area:** 20 x 25 yards with a box in each corner. Give each box a color name. | **Description:** Each player dribbles around the area freely. When the coach shouts a color every player must stop the ball in that box. **Progression:** Name multiple colors to try and catch players out.  
Continue to work on stopping and turning with the ball during this activity. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity: 3 v 3 to Goal</th>
<th><img src="image5.png" alt="3 v 3 to Goal" /></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Area:</strong> 20 x 25 yards with two goals.</td>
<td><strong>Description:</strong> Split players into two teams. Each team defends and attacks a goal.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activity: Treasure Hunt.
Area: 20 x 25 yards.
Description: Coach places different items inside the area; cones, balls, bibs, etc. Split players into three teams and place them in a different corner. When the coach starts the game players from each team must retrieve one piece of treasure at a time and take it back to their corner wearing it. When all the treasure has been retrieved the game is over. Start over.

Activity: Body Part Dribbling
Area: 20 x 25 yards.
Description: Players dribble around the area and wait for the coaches commands. When the coach shouts a body part the players must stop the ball with that part of the foot. Continue.
Progression: Ask players to come up with their own commands.
Include commands:
• Turn with the inside of the foot OR sole of the foot.
• Stop the ball with the inside of the foot OR sole of the foot.

Activity: Follow the leader
Area: 20 x 25 yards.
Description: Start without the ball. Players follow the leader and complete the actions of the coach. For example; Hop, Skip, Jump, Role, Side to Side, Dribble etc.

Continue to work on stopping and turning with the ball during this activity.

Activity: Cookie Monster
Area: 20 x 25 with cones at end as shown.
Description: Players line up on the end line opposite the coach. Game rules are when the coach is facing the players they shout ‘COOKIE MONSTER ARE YOU HUNGRY’. They dribble when the coach turns their back. When the coach faces, all players must freeze! Players are trying to steal some of the cookies from the cookie monster and dribble back to their end line. If a player is caught dribbling by the coach they must do a fun activity & re-start.

Continue to work on stopping and turning with the ball during this activity.

Activity: 3 v 3 to Goal
Area: 20 x 25 yards with two goals.
Description: Split players into two teams. Each team defends and attacks a goal.
Activity: Tag
Area: 20 x 25 yards.
Description: Players start the game by running around the area changing direction. Coach is ‘IT’ and is trying to tag the players as they run around the area. If a players is tagged they grab a vest and help the coach tag the rest of the players. Continue until one player remains.

Activity: Follow the leader
Area: 20 x 25 yards.
Description: Start without the ball. Players follow the leader and complete the actions of the coach. For example; Hop, Skip, Jump, Role, Side to Side, Dribble etc.

When dribbling include:
- Turn with the inside of the foot OR sole of the foot.
- Stop the ball with the inside of the foot OR sole of the foot.

Activity: Interactive Dribbling.
Area: 20 x 25 yards with gates.
Description:
1. Players start by dribbling around the area.
2. Players dribble through as many gates as possible in 1 minute.
3. Players are trying to avoid the coach who is trying to steal their soccer balls.
4. Once players move through a gate they must turn back through using either the inside of the foot OR sole.

Activity: Sharks & Minnows
Area: 20 x 25 yards with two 3 yard n-zones.
Description: Place players on one end line with soccer balls. The coach starts in the center as the shark. When the coach shouts “MINNOWS ARE YOU READY” the players on the end line shout “YEAH” and go. Players are trying to get across the field to the opposite side without having their ball stolen. When a player has their ball stolen hey become a shark as well. Continue until one player remains.

Activity: 3 v 3 to Goal
Area: 20 x 25 yards with two goals.
Description: Split players into two teams. Each team defends and attacks a goal.
Activity: Hee Bee Dee Gee Bees  
**Area:** 20 x 20, 10 x 10 and 5 x 5.  
**Description:** Listen to the commands of the coach:  
- Move without touching your teammate with 5 x 5.  
- Jog without touching your teammate with 5 x 5.  
- Full speed without touching each other 10 x 10.  
- Introduce the ball and around 10 x 10.  
- Open up to 20 x 20 and dribble at full speed.

Activity: Interactive Dribbling.  
**Area:** 20 x 25 yards with gates.  
**Description:**  
1. Players start by dribbling around the area.  
2. Players dribble through as many gates as possible in 1 minute.  
3. Players are trying to avoid the coach who is trying to steal their soccer balls.  
4. Once players move through a gate they must turn back through using either the inside of the foot OR sole.

Activity: Pirate Ship  
**Area:** 20 x 25 yards with a shark cage.  
**Description:** Players dribbling around freely and wait for the captains commands!  
- Scrub the deck: players move the ball back & forth with the sole of the foot  
- Captain on Deck: players stand straight up with one foot on the ball and salute the captain.  
- Shark Attack - coach chases all the players into the shark cage! Ask players to turn away from your with either the inside OR sole of the foot.

Activity: Cookie Monster  
**Area:** 20 x 25 with cones at end as shown.  
**Description:** Players line up on the end line opposite the coach. Game rules are when the coach is facing the players they shout ‘COOKIE MONSTER ARE YOU HUNGRY’. They dribble when the coach turns their back. When the coach faces, all players must freeze! Players are trying to steal some of the cookies from the cookie monster and dribble back to their end line. If a player is caught dribbling by the coach they must do a fun activity & re-start.  
Continue to work on stopping and turning with the ball during this activity.

Activity: 3 v 3 to Goal  
**Area:** 20 x 25 yards with two goals.  
**Description:** Split players into two teams. Each team defends and attacks a goal.
Activity: Movement.
Area: 20 x 25 with two 5 yard boxes. Place vest randomly on the ground.
Description: Name the small boxes RED & YELLOW. Players start the game with no ball, running and jumping over the vests. On the coaches commands players run to a box. Other ideas include; stop at a vest then jump over, hop over a vest, do a forward role over a vest, chip the ball over the vest.

Activity: Pirate Ship
Area: 20 x 25 yards with a shark cage.
Description: Players dribbling around freely and wait for the captains commands!
- Scrub the deck: players move the ball back & forth with the sole of the foot
- Captain on Deck: players stand straight up with one foot on the ball and salute the captain.
- Shark Attack - coach chases all the players into the shark cage! Ask players to turn away from your with either the inside OR sole of the foot.

Activity: Treasure Hunt.
Area: 20 x 25 yards.
Description: Coach places different items inside the area; cones, balls, bibs, etc. Split players into three teams and place them in a different corner. When the coach starts the game players from each team must retrieve one piece of treasure at a time and take it back to their corner wearing it. When all the treasure has been retrieved the game is over. Start over.

Continue to work on stopping and turning with the ball during this activity.

Activity: Chain Tag
Area: 20 x 25 yards.
Description: Players dribble around the area. When the coach tags a player they join the coach in the chain, without the ball. Continue until one player remains.

Continue to work on stopping and turning with the ball during this activity.

Activity: 3 v 3 to Goal
Area: 20 x 25 yards with two goals.
Description: Split players into two teams. Each team defends and attacks a goal.
Activity: Everybody’s IT!
Area: 20 x 25 yards.
Description: Start with no soccer ball. Each player is ‘IT’ and is trying to tag other players below the knee. Play the game for 2 minutes and see how many points each player has. Continue.
Progression: Add the ball!

Activity: Simon Says
Area: 20 x 25 with large goal.
Description: players dribble around the area waiting for the coach to give a command with ‘SIMON SAYS’ in front of it. If the coach doesn’t say Simon Says the players continue to dribble.
Introduce ‘SIMON SAYS’:
• Turn with the inside of the foot OR sole of the foot.
• Stop the ball with the inside of the foot OR sole of the foot.

Activity: Trip to the zoo
Area: 20 x 25 yards.
Description: No ball. Listen to the commands of the coach:
• Strut like a peacock: lift knees high in the air
• Slither like a snake: on the ground move like a snake
• Hop like a rabbit: keep both feet together & jump forward
• Walk like an elephant: heavy steps on all fours
• Act like a tiger: pace and growl on all fours

Activity: Jake & the Netherlands Pirates
Area: 20 x 25 yards.
Description: Name all four sides of the grid; Captian Hook, Izzy, Jake,.
When the coach shouts the name of a place, all the players must go to that side. Other commands include:
• CAPTAIN ON DECK: Players place one foot on the ball and solute.
• MARBLES: Players do a forward role.
• PEG LEG: Players hop on one leg.
• Invent new commands.

Continue to work on stopping and turning with the ball during this activity.

Activity: 3 v 3 to Goal
Area: 20 x 25 yards with two goals.
Description: Split players into two teams. Each team defends and attacks a goal.
Activity: Movement.  
**Area:** 20 x 25 with two 5 yard boxes. Place vest randomly on the ground.  
**Description:** Name the small boxes RED & YELLOW. Players start the game with no ball, running and jumping over the vests. On the coaches commands players run to a box. Other ideas include: stop at a vest then jump over, hop over a vest, do a forward role over a vest, chip the ball over the vest.

Activity: Hide and Seek  
**Area:** 20 x 25 yards with cones randomly spread around the area.  
**Description:** Play with no ball to start. Players follow the coach as he / she moves around the area. When the coach shouts “its time to catch a munchkin” the players try to get to a cone before the coach can tag them. Remove cones randomly to make the game harder.

Activity: Freedom to move  
**Area:** 20 x 25 yards.  
**Description:**  
- Players try to avoid cones when running around the area.  
- Players stop at a cone and then jump over the cones.  
- Players hop over the cones.  
- Players have a cone each, throw it in the air & try to catch it.  
- Create different things for the players to do.

Activity: Sharks & Minnows  
**Area:** 20 x 25 yards with two 3 yard n-zones.  
**Description:** Place players on one end line with soccer balls. The coach starts in the center as the shark. When the coach shouts “MINNOWS ARE YOU READY” the players on the end line shout “YEAH” and go. Players are trying to get across the field to the opposite side without having their ball stolen. When a player has their ball stolen hey become a shark as well. Continue until one player remains.

Activity: 3 v 3 to Goal  
**Area:** 20 x 25 yards with two goals.  
**Description:** Split players into two teams. Each team defends and attacks a goal.
### Activity: Movement
**Area:** 20 x 25 with two 5 yard boxes. Place vest randomly on the ground.  
**Description:** Name the small boxes RED & YELLOW. Players start the game with no ball, running and jumping over the vests. On the coaches commands players run to a box. Other ideas include; stop at a vest then jump over, hop over a vest, do a forward role over a vest, chip the ball over the vest.  
Introduce stopping the ball with the inside and sole of the foot.

### Activity: Tag
**Area:** 20 x 25 yards.  
**Description:** Players start the game by running around the area changing direction. Coach is ‘IT’ and is trying to tag the players as they run around the area. If a players is tagged they grab a vest and help the coach tag the rest of the players. Continue until one player remains.  
Introduce the ideas of turning away from the defending player with the inside and sole of the foot.

### Activity: Chain Tag
**Area:** 20 x 25 yards.  
**Description:** Players dribble around the area. When the coach tags a player they join the coach in the chain, without the ball. Continue until one player remains.  
Continue to reinforce the idea of turning away from the defender.

### Activity: Clean My Room
**Area:** 20 x 25 yards with a 5 yard channel in the center of the grid.  
**Description:** Split the players into two groups and place a group in each half. Each player has a ball. Play for 1 minute. Objective is for players to kick their balls into the oppositions half of the field (room) to make it look untidy. Players with the least number of balls in their rooms after a minute wins the game!  
Introduce the concept of striking the ball with the laces.

### Activity: 3 v 3 to Goal
**Area:** 20 x 25 yards with two goals.  
**Description:** Split players into two teams. Each team defends and attacks a goal.
Activity: Hee Bee Dee Gee Bees  
Area: 25 x 25, 15 x 15 and 5 x 5.  
Description: Listen to the commands of the coach:  
  • Move without touching your teammate with 5 x 5.  
  • Jog without touching your teammate with 5 x 5.  
  • Full speed without touching each other 10 x 10.  
  • Introduce the ball and around 10 x 10.  
  • Open up to 20 x 20 and dribble at full speed.  
  • Introduce stopping the ball with the inside and sole of the foot.

Activity: Everybody’s It  
Area: 20 x 25 yards.  
Description: Each player is ‘IT’ and is trying to tag each other. Play the game for 2 minutes and see how many points each players has. Continue.  
Introduce the ideas of turning away from the defending player with the inside and sole of the foot.

Activity: Freeze Soccer.  
Area: 20 x 25 yards.  
Description: Players start the game with soccer balls. Coach is ‘IT’ and is trying to tag players. If players are tagged they must sit on their soccer ball. Players can be freed by being tagged by a teammate. Play for 1 minute or until all players are frozen!  
Continue to reinforce the concept of turning away from defenders.

Activity: Moving Target  
Area: 20 x 25 yards.  
Description: Place players on the end line with a ball each. Coach stands to the side with a ball. When the coach shouts ‘PULL’, the players attempt to dribble to the opposite side of the grid. The coach tries to hit the players with their soccer ball below the knee. If a player is hit, they join the coach. Continue.  
Introduce the concept of striking the ball with the laces.

Activity: 3 v 3 to Goal  
Area: 20 x 25 yards with two goals.  
Description: Split players into two teams. Each team defends and attacks a goal.
Activity: Foxes and Rabbits
Area: 20 x 25 yards.
Description: Give each player a vest. Players then place the vest in the sides of their shorts. Coach starts as the fox and is trying to catch the rabbits by stealing their vests. When a vest has been stolen they become a fox and help the coach. Continue until one player remains. Play again.

Activity: Simon Says
Area: 20 x 25 yards.
Description: Players dribble around the area waiting for the coach to give a command with 'SIMON SAYS' in front of it. If the coach doesn't say Simon Says the players continue to dribble.

Introduce:
• Turn with the inside of the foot OR sole.
• Stopping the ball with the inside of the foot OR sole.

Activity: Pirate Ship
Area: 20 x 25 yards with a shark cage.
Description: Players dribbling around freely and wait for the captains commands!
• Scrub the deck: players move the ball back & forth with the sole of the foot
• Captain on Deck: players stand straight up with one foot on the ball and salute the captain.
• Shark Attack - coach chases all the players into the shark cage! Ask players to turn away from your with either the inside OR sole of the foot.

Activity: Hospital Tag
Area: 20 x 25 yards with 5 x 5 yard hospital.
Description: Players dribble around the area, while the coach is trying to pass the ball and hit them below the knee. If a player is hit, they must dribble to the hospital and do 10 toe taps (be creative with this) before returning to the game. Play for 1 minute and change who the catcher is.

Introduce the concept of striking the ball with the laces.

Activity: 3 v 3 to Goal
Area: 20 x 25 yards with two goals.
Description: Split players into two teams. Each team defends and attacks a goal.
Activity: Freedom to move  
**Area:** 20 x 25 yards.  
**Description:**  
- Players try to avoid cones when running around the area.  
- Players stop at a cone and then jump over the cones.  
- Players hop over the cones.  
- Players have a cone each, throw it in the air & try to catch it.  
- Create different things for the players to do.

Activity: Interactive Dribbling.  
**Area:** 20 x 25 yards with gates.  
**Description:**  
- Players start by dribbling around the area.  
- Players dribble through as many gates as possible in 1 minute.  
- Players dribble through a gate and then turn back through using either the inside or sole of the foot.  
- Players are trying to avoid the coach who is trying to steal their soccer balls.

Activity: Colors  
**Area:** 20 x 25 yards with a box in each corner. Give each box a color name.  
**Description:** Each player dribbles around the area freely. When the coach shouts a color every player must dribble and stop the ball in that box.  
**Progression:** Name multiple colors to try and catch players out.  

Continue to reinforce using the inside OR sole of the foot to turn and change direction.

Activity: Strike Out.  
**Area:** 20 x 25 yards.  
**Description:** Players dribble around the area, while the coach is trying to pass the ball and hit them below the knee. If a player is hit, they are out of the game and help the coach try to catch players. Continue.  

Introduce the concept of striking the ball with the laces.

Activity: 3 v 3 to Goal  
**Area:** 20 x 25 yards with two goals.  
**Description:** Split players into two teams. Each team defends and attacks a goal.
### Activity: Trip to the Zoo

**Area:** 20 x 25 yards.

**Description:** No ball. Listen to the commands of the coach:
- Strut like a peacock: lift knees high in the air
- Slither like a snake: on the ground move like a snake
- Hop like a rabbit: keep both feet together & jump forward
- Walk like an elephant: heavy steps on all fours
- Act like a tiger: pace and growl on all fours

### Activity: Coaches Challenge

**Area:** 20 x 25 yards.

**Description:** Each player has a ball. Players take it in turns to give the ball to the coach. The coach throws it and gives the player direction with how to bring it back. For example: carry it, bounce it, hop with the ball, jump like a rabbit, dribble it, use left foot to dribble it, etc.

When asking players to dribble back, introduce the concept of turning with either the inside or sole of the foot to change direction.

### Activity: Freeze Tag - Passing

**Area:** 20 x 25 yards.

**Description:** Players start the game with soccer balls. Coach is ‘IT’ and is trying to tag players by passing the ball and hitting them below the knee. If players are tagged they must sit on their soccer ball. Players can be freed by being tagged by a teammate.

Introduce the concept of striking the ball with the laces.

### Activity: Cookie Monster

**Area:** 20 x 25 with cones at end as shown.

**Description:** Players line up on the end line opposite the coach. Game rules are when the coach is facing the players they shout ‘COOKIE MONSTER ARE YOU HUNGRY’. They dribble when the coach turns their back. When the coach faces, all players must freeze! Players are trying to steal some of the cookies from the cookie monster and dribble back to their end line. If a player is caught dribbling by the coach they must do a fun activity & re-start.

Continue to work on stopping and turning with the ball during this activity.

### Activity: 3 v 3 to Goal

**Area:** 20 x 25 yards with two goals.

**Description:** Split players into two teams. Each team defends and attacks a goal.
Activity: Freedom to move
Area: 20 x 25 yards.
Description:
- Players try to avoid cones when running around the area.
- Players stop at a cone and then jump over the cones.
- Players hop over the cones.
- Players have a cone each, throw it in the air & try to catch it.
- Create different things for the players to do.

Activity: Sleeping Lions
Area: 20 x 25 yards.
Description: Players start by pretending they are asleep (with their soccer balls) inside the jungle! The coach creeps through checking they are asleep. When the coach lets out a loud roar the players try to catch the lion and pass their soccer balls to hit them.

Introduce the concept of striking the ball with the laces.

Activity: Treasure Hunt
Area: 20 x 25 yards.
Description: Coach places different items inside the area; cones, balls, bibs, etc. Split players into three teams and place them in a different corner. When the coach starts the game players from each team must retrieve one piece of treasure at a time and take it back to their corner wearing it. When all the treasure has been retrieved the game is over. Start over.

Activity: Treasure Island
Area: 20 x 25 yards with cones spread around the area.
Description: Place players on one end line. Players must try to dribble through the area without touching the cones. If a player touches a cone they must wear it for the rest of the game. Play for 2 minutes. Player with the least amount of cones wins.

Activity: 3 v 3 to Goal
Area: 20 x 25 yards with two goals.
Description: Split players into two teams. Each team defends and attacks a goal.
Activity: Interactive Dribbling.
**Area:** 20 x 25 yards with gates.
**Description:**
- Players start by dribbling around the area.
- Players dribble through as many gates as possible in 1 minute.
- Players dribble through a gate and then turn back through using either the inside or sole of the foot.
- Players are trying to avoid the coach who is trying to steal their soccer balls.

Activity: Hide and Seek
**Area:** 20 x 25 yards with cones randomly spread around the area.
**Description:** Play with no ball to start. Players follow the coach as he / she moves around the area. When the coach shouts “its time to catch a munchkin” the players try to get to a cone before the coach can tag them. Remove cones randomly to make the game harder.

Continue to reinforce turning away from the defender.

Activity: Sharks & Minnows
**Area:** 20 x 25 yards with two 3 yard n-zones.
**Description:** Place players on one end line with soccer balls. The coach starts in the center as the shark. When the coach shouts “MINNOWS ARE YOU READY” the players on the end line shout “YEAH” and go. Players are trying to get across the field to the opposite side without having their ball stolen. When a player has their ball stolen hey become a shark as well. Continue until one player remains.

Activity: Road Runner.
**Area:** 20 x 25 yards with two 3 yard n-zones.
**Description:** Place players on one end line with soccer balls. The coach starts in the center as the coyote. Players are trying to get across the field to the opposite side without being hit below the knee by the coaches soccer ball. When a player has been hit they become a coyote and help the coach. Continue until one player remains.

Introduce the concept of striking the ball with the laces.

Activity: 3 v 3 to Goal
**Area:** 20 x 25 yards with two goals.
**Description:** Split players into two teams. Each team defends and attacks a goal.
Activity: I can do this, can you?
Area: 20 x 25 yards.
**Description:** players spread out inside the grid and wait for the coaches challenge: Balance on one leg. Skip, Hop, jump. Throw a ball in the air and catch it. Bounce the ball and catch it. Throw the ball, clap and catch it. Throw the ball, spin and catch it. Juggle once on the thigh, foot, etc. Come up with more challenges as a coach.
**Progression:** Players come up with their own challenges.

Activity: Body Part Dribbling
Area: 20 x 25 yards.
**Description:** Players dribble around the area and wait for the coaches commands. When the coach shouts a body part the players must stop the ball with that part of the body. Continue. Make sure to include stopping the ball with the inside and sole of the foot.
**Progression:** Ask players to come up with their own commands.

Activity: Red Light, Green Light
Area: 20 x 25 yards.
**Description:** Players dribble around and wait for commands:
  - Red Light – Stop. Show with the inside and sole of the foot.
  - Green Light – Go.
  - Yellow Light – Toes taps, sit on ball, etc.
  - Crash – Players fall to the ground & pretend to be hurt.
  - Monster Truck – Coach tries to steal players soccer balls. Introduce turning away from the monster truck with inside and sole of the foot.

Activity: Color Shooting
Area: 20 x 25 yards with four goals as shown and 15 x 20 center area.
**Description:** Players start by dribbling in the center area. When the coach shouts out a color all the players dribble towards that goal and shoot. They must shoot before leaving the center area.
Introduce the concept of striking the ball with the laces.

Activity: 3 v 3 to Goal
Area: 20 x 25 yards with two goals.
**Description:** Split players into two teams. Each team defends and attacks a goal.