

Pre-K & Kindergarten

Drills & Games

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Warm up Ideas:

1. Body Part Tag:

While dribbling the ball with their feet, have the players stop the ball with various parts of the body (by calling out 'foot', 'back', 'tummy' etc.) while the ball is on the ground.

2. Red Light Green Light:

Coach or Parent is the light. Kids start on opposite end of the field. Players must obey lights to make their way to the other side of the field.

3. Dribble Relay:

The basic game is Team 'A' racing team 'B' by dribbling through a series of gates. If a player loses control and misses a gate they have to regain control and go through the gate.

One variation is to have a small 'square' at the end. The children have to stop the ball in the square, then sprint back and high-five the next player before he/she can start. Another variation is to have several parents positioned at different places along the 'course' and have a different one hold up a number of fingers at random times during the race – and award points to the player that sees it and correctly yells out the number first. This encourages the children to play with their heads up.

4. Tag:

Mark off a grid or circle. Everybody has a ball or start with no ball. Whoever is "it" must dribble to another player and tag her. The other players avoid being tagged by dribbling away from "it." If the player being chased loses her ball outside the grid, dribbles out of the grid, or is tagged, he is "it" and the game continues.

Passing Game Ideas:

1. The Name Game:

Players stand in a circle and pass the ball to one another, but they must call out the name of the person they are passing to. This is great at the beginning of the season, so they (and you!) learn everyone's names. If the players are doing well and you have enough players, add additional balls.

2. Cones vs. Kids:

Have kids stand in a circle and place cones inside the circle. When they pass the ball to each other, they try to knock the cones down.

3. Eggs in a Basket:

Scatter soccer balls all over the field. Have players kick all the balls into the goal as quickly as they can. Kids love being timed at this game so they can try to beat their best time.

4. Clean my Yard:

Divide the team into two groups and have them stand on opposite sides of the field. Give each kid a ball and have them try to kick their ball into the other group's yard. Kids will have a blast trying to keep their yard clean, and play continues until all the balls have been kicked out of the yards.

5. Ouch:

-Each player has a ball. The coach jogs around in a rectangle and the players try to kick their ball so that it hits the coach. The players get a point each time they hit the coach.

-The coach should yell "ouch" each time they are hit to make the game more exciting.

Progressions:

The coach can stop for three seconds or vary how fast they are moving depending on the level of the players. Specify how the players must strike the ball (laces, one foot, other foot)

Dribbling Game Ideas:

1. Pirates of the Caribbean:

-To set-up you will need a cone for the kids to stand behind to begin. You will then need cones down the other end to act as the treasure!

-Tell the young players that this game is "...a fun game called pirates of the Caribbean. What noise do pirates make?" The kids will make an 'arghhh' noise. Then you need to tell them that pirates love treasure and the treasure is down the other end of the island.

-The kids will need to go one at a time and pick up one piece of treasure (cone/pinney) and bring it back to the pirate ship.

-To get the young 3 and 4 year olds to understand this game, play the first round without soccer balls.

-The second time they should kick a soccer ball down with them.

2. Foxes and Chickens:

-The aim for this soccer drill is for the young players to get the tail (pinney or extra pieces of clothing) from the parents. The parents act as the chickens and the kids are the foxes.

-The parents will need to put a pinney half tucked into the back of their pants/shorts.

-The kids have to chase after them and remove the pinney (acting as a tail). Once the kids have all of the pinneys the game ends.

-If there is a really fast parent then all of the foxes can aim to get the last chicken's tail!

3. Sleeping Bear:

You will need the kids lined up next to one another with a soccer ball each at their feet. The coach or a parent will act as the sleeping bear down the other end of the marked out area.

This game is all about getting the kids to take little touches of the soccer ball.

- The kids begin the game by shouting out altogether "What time is it sleeping bear?" The sleeping bear (who will be pretending to sleep talk) will respond with either one-o'clock, two-o'clock, three-o'clock or four-o'clock.

-If the bear says three-o'clock, the kids will take three small touches/kicks of the soccer ball toward the bear. This continues until the kids get close to the sleeping bear.

-The bear will then wake-up and chase the kids back to where they started.

4. Shark Island:

Players try to dribble their ball from one safe zone to the other without losing it to the "sharks". If a player's ball is stolen or kicked away by one of the "sharks" he/she becomes a shark too. Play until there is one dribbler left.

5. Scrimmage

It is important for kids learning to play soccer to play an actual game. However, in kindergarten, most kids are still working on the skills they need to be part of a team. Emphasize fun and teamwork and do not keep score. Use scrimmage time to help them understand basic concepts such as where field boundaries are, how to throw in, and how to pass to teammates. Facilitate goal-scoring to build players' confidence and boost their excitement.