

## Soccer Skill – Dribbling

Explain the Key teaching points in 30-60 seconds:

1. Light touches on the ball keeping the ball close to your body (control).
2. Use the inside and outside of your right and your left foot.
3. Keep your head up so that you can see what's happening on the field.

Skills / games:

- **Dribbling in a Grid** - Have all players dribble their ball around in an appropriate sized grid. Indoors this may be half of a basketball court. While they are dribbling encourage these things:
  - Use your right foot, use your left foot
  - Use the inside of your foot, use the outside of your foot
  - Who can find open space? Dribble to the open space you see.
- **Body Parts** – have players dribble and then call out various parts of the body for them to stop their ball with. Example, if you call “elbow” they have to stop their ball with their elbow. The point is for them to keep their ball close to their body when dribbling for better control.
- **Musical Balls** – as players are dribbling, call “switch” and they have to stop their ball and then go find another ball and begin dribbling. When they find a new ball, accelerate into open space with the dribble.
- **Sharks and Minnows** – Have all the players with a ball on one side line and then 2 or 3 sharks that are looking to take the ball away from the minnows. Once their ball is kicked away they become a shark. Play continues until the last person loses their ball (the winner).
- **Knockout** – everyone has a ball inside of a grid. Everyone is trying to knock the other players' ball outside of the grid while maintaining possession of their own ball.

## Soccer Skill – Passing and Receiving

Explain the Key teaching points in 1 – 2 minutes:

Demonstrate correct passing technique with the inside of the foot

1. Place the non kicking foot (plant foot) approximately 6-8" to the side of the ball; knee is slightly bent.
2. Toes of the plant foot face the target.
3. Use the inside of your striking foot, near your arch to kick the middle of the ball.
4. Keep your head over the ball as you strike it, watching the ball at all times.
5. Strike foot follows through to the target.

Demonstrate the correct technique for receiving a pass

1. To receive the pass, set up in the passing position.
2. Receive the ball with the inside of your striking foot.
3. As the ball reaches your foot, bring your foot back slightly with the ball to cushion the impact of the ball.
4. Goal is to stop the ball in front of your feet with your first touch so that you are ready to pass or dribble the ball.

Skills / games:

- **Stationary passing** – Group players so that each player has a partner and one soccer ball. Players should be 15 – 20 feet apart and pass the ball back and forth working on passing and receiving with the proper technique.
- **2 line passing** – create 2 lines approximately 15 feet apart and have the players in one line have a ball. Players will take turns jogging up the field passing the ball back and forth to their partner. Once the group in front has cleared the mid field line the next group will go. This will help players to develop the timing and pace of the pass for a moving target. Teaching point – the pass is made in front of the moving player so the player and ball arrive at the same spot on the field at the same time. This will later lead to the spatial reasoning skills need to play long through balls.
- **Pass Through the Channels** - Group players so that each player has a partner and one soccer ball. Objective of the activity is to practice passing and receiving the ball with a teammate while moving throughout a field space. Outline a field area 30 to 40 yards (square) and use markers to designate 8-12 small goals (2 yds wide) placed randomly throughout the field. Partners move throughout the field area, playing combination passes through the goals to one another as often as possible. Partners are not allowed to pass through the same goal two times in a row. After passing the ball through a goal the receiving players dribbles off towards another goal and the passer must sprints forward to receive a return pass through a different a goal. Each goal

counts 1 point and all partners compete against other teams for the highest total of points. Emphasize accuracy and correct pace of the passes.

- **Connect the Dots** – create groups of 5 to 8 players with one ball. Objective of the activity is to develop passing and receiving skills while moving, complete passes of varying distance, take first touch in the direction of the next pass and to improve endurance. Outline a 30 x 40 yard grid with cones and number players beginning with 1 and continuing until all players in the group are numbered. All players within a group begin moving and passing to the player with the next highest number in the group. When the player with the highest number receives the ball, then that player passes to the player numbered 1 and the circuit begins again. All players are to move continuously throughout the activity. Players should not stop the ball; rather take a touch in the direction of their next pass.

### **Soccer Skill – Juggling**

Explain the Key teaching points in 1 – 2 minutes:

1. Keep your leg straight and lift the leg from the hips. Don't just bend the knee; make the stomach muscles help to raise the entire leg.
2. Keep toes pointed down. This will create a flat surface along the top of the foot for the ball to hit off of.
3. Concentrate on the ball with your eyes and try to hit the center of the ball each time.
4. As you get a "feel" for direction and flight of the ball, try and tell the ball where to go, i.e. how high you want it to go and directionally where you want it to go. This will greatly improve your first touch in soccer.
5. See how many juggles you can get using your feet, thighs, chest and even your head, but no hands!
6. Remember the 3 C's: Core (muscles), Concentration & Commitment!

Skills / games:

- **Juggling** -Have all players with a ball (or with a partner if only 1 ball per pair) practice juggling. Remind players of the 3 C's. Players have a lot of trouble should drop the ball on their foot and tap it back up to hands (waist level) and catch the ball. Continue dropping and catching until the player is ready to try and touch with foot 2 times or more. Make it a progression: 1 touch, 2 touches, 3 touches, etc.
- **Pairs Touch Activity** – have players in pairs with one ball. One person is the server (passes) and one player is working on first touch out of the air. Have players about 4-6 feet apart. Server is down on one knee and tosses the ball underhand to their partner who taps the ball back to the passer with the inside of their right foot. Server catches the return pass and then

starts all over. After 5 passes times the players switch roles. After both player have used their right foot switch to the left foot and repeat. If time permits, add a one touch with the thigh and second touch with the foot to pass the ball back to the passer without letting the ball touch the ground. May also use chest as first touch and foot (pass back to passer) as the second touch.

### **Soccer Skill – Shooting and Finishing**

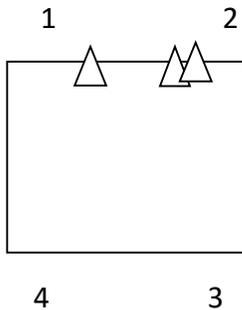
Explain the Key teaching points in 1 – 2 minutes:

1. Place the non-kicking foot (plant foot) approximately 6-8" to the side of the ball; knee is slightly bent.
2. Toes of the plant foot face the target.
3. Toes of the striking foot point down (think about making a "fist" with your toes) and your ankle is locked.
4. Use the top (shoes laces) of your striking foot and kick the middle of the ball.
5. Keep your head over the ball as you strike it, watching the ball at all times.
6. Strike foot follows through to the target, toes continue to point down.

Skills / games:

- **Shooting Warm Up Drill** – Players form 2 lines outside of the 18-yard box. One player stands at the edge of the 18 with his/her back to the goal as a passer. One of the two players at the beginning of the line pass to the passer who lays the ball off to either the right or left side for one of the two players to take a shot. As an extra twist on the drill the two players in line may X on their cuts meaning the player on the left runs to the right and the player on the right runs to the left. The player taking a shot, runs to get the rebound and then delivers the ball back to the lines. This can be done with a goalie so the goalie also gets practice and is a good pre-game warmup drill.
- **Shooting off the Dribble** - Players are divided into 2 groups and form a single file line in the corners of a 20 x 30-yard field, diagonal from each other. In front of each line is a series of 6 cones set up to create a dribbling obstacle course. Goals are set up in the middle of each end line of the field. Goals can be pop up goals or cones. Objective of the activity is to successfully dribble through the obstacle course of cones and then take one preparation touch and then shoot on the goal in front of the player. One point is awarded for each goal scored. The player that shoots quickly runs to retrieve their ball and must dribble the ball back to the back of the line the just came from. Once a player has cleared all of the cones in the obstacle course the next player in line can begin dribbling through the obstacle course. Game is either played for a certain amount of time such as 2 minutes or to a predetermined score, e.g. first to make 10 goals. After the first round players switch lines and the activity starts all over.

- **4 Line Finishing Drill** - Players are divided into 4 equal groups and are positioned in the shape of a square in front of the goal.



Players in lines 1 and 2 have soccer balls. Players in line 1 pass to players in line 3 and players in line 2 pass to players in line 4. Objective of the activity is to control and take a shot on goal using only 2 touches: the first touch is to control the ball (take the touch in the direction that sets up the shot) and the second touch is for the shot itself. Players in line 1 and 2 (passers) switch with players in line 3 and 4 (shooters). Line 1 and 2 alternate turns passing to lines 3 and 4. After 2-3 minutes have players switch lines so they are shooting from the other side of the box.

#### Soccer Skill – **Moves with the Ball**

##### **“Inside Cut”** Teaching Points:

1. Reach with your leg (outside of the ball) and use the inside of your foot (near ankle) to cut the ball,
2. Next, shield with your body (between ball and defender),
3. Accelerate away in the opposite direction and away from the defender.

##### **“Outside Cut”** Teaching Points:

1. Reach with your leg (outside the ball) and use the outside of your foot to cut the ball,
2. Next, shield with your body (between ball and defender),
3. Accelerate away in the opposite direction and away from the defender.

##### **“Step Over”** Teaching Points:

1. Fake like you’re are kicking the ball,
2. Instead, step around the ball and...
3. Plant the foot on the other side of the ball, turning the hips for best effect,
4. Then push the ball in the opposite direction with the outside of the step-over foot and accelerate away.

- **Stops and Turns** - Group players in pairs with each pair sharing one ball. Have all players spread out on one of the lines on the field. Each pair should be at least 5 yards apart to give each group plenty of room. Place cones approximately 15 yards across from each group. The first person will dribble to the cone and make a 180 degree turn in front of the cone and then take one dribble and pass the ball to their partner. The player that just passed follows the pass and gets ready for their next turn. Rotate the three turns explained above (inside cut, outside cut and step over) every 2 minutes.
- **Protect your Ball / Shielding** - Players remain in pairs with a ball and spread out all over the field. If possible, have 10 x 10 yard grids marked off. The offensive player (attacker) starts with the ball inside the grid and the defender starts outside the grid. All groups will start on the whistle. On the whistle defenders come into the grid and try to poke the ball away from the attacker. Go for 30 seconds and rotate. The attacker use their moves (inside cut, outside cut, step over) to protect their ball from the defender and use their body to “shield” the ball away from the defender. Note: the step over is an excellent move for shielding as the move naturally puts the body between the defender and the ball.
- **Numbers** - Players all have a ball and are dribbling in a grid. Explain to them that you’re going to give the 3 moves a number: 1 = inside cut, 2 = outside and 3 = step over. Once they have warmed up then call out a number and they have to make the appropriate move. Continue to randomly call numbers for 3-5 minutes. May take a quick 15 sec. break every minute or so.
- **Like Magnets** - Have all players dribbling inside an appropriate sized grid for the number of players. The space should be a little congested and they should have to turn frequently to avoid running into another player. As the players are dribbling about, anytime they come close (within 2 feet) of another player both should act like they are magnets with similar charges and they repel each other. This will encourage them to make lots of turns and often they will need to turn several times in a row as they come closer to other “magnets”. Note: they should keep the ball close to their body except if they see green open space in front of them in which case they should change speeds and explode into the open area.
- **Freeze Tag** - Have all but 2 players with a ball in a 25 x 30 yard grid. The two players without a ball start off outside the grid and will be the chasers once the game begins. When you say go the chasers enter the grid and try and tag as many players as they can who must keep their dribble will they evade chasers. A player that is tagged is considered frozen and must sit on their ball until another player unfrozen player can dribble over and tag them so they are released to dribble again. Play for 3 minutes or until all players are frozen. Repeat the game several times with the last 2 players to be frozen serving as the chasers.

## Soccer Skill – Defense

Key teaching points in 2-3 min’s:

1. Close down attacker
2. Close down space while the ball is moving, i.e. move **as** the ball moves
3. Turn your body to a “side on” position
4. Keep your eyes focused on the ball
5. Pressure the ball while maintaining enough space to contain the dribble
6. Force the dribble away from danger or to helping defenders
7. The movement backwards from the side on position is called “jockey”  
Demonstrate how this is done.

#### Skills / Games:

- **Defensive Jockeying** - Group players into pairs and have them line up along the sideline of the field. Have the first players on the line with their backs to the field. All players are in the role of defenders and all will get into the ready position which is outlined above. Remind them that they should be side on and their eyes on an imaginary ball. On your command, players will practice jockeying across the field about half speed. Once the first group is half way across the field the second group can begin. Practice this several times.
- **Defense 1 vs. 1** - Group players in pairs with each pair having a soccer ball. Have one of the players from each group on the side line and have the other player 15 yards away. Players with the ball will pass to their partner and then they will sprint to close down the space. Note the defender should begin to move immediately “as the ball is still moving” but slows down to a controlled speed when they are in a range of 6-10 feet depending on their own speed and quickness. After the space is closed, the defender wants to be “side on” and close enough to pressure the ball but not too close where they will be susceptible to being beat by the offensive player off of the dribble. Eyes should be down and focused on the ball. The offense dribbles up the field about half speed and the defense jockeys to remain in the proper position but does not try to steal the ball. After the drill is finished the players switch position and repeat the drill. Purpose of this drill is to work on the technique not to try and beat a player or to steal the ball.
- **Defense 1 vs. 1** - Group players in pairs with each pair having a soccer ball. Have one of the players from each group on the side line and have the other player 15 yards away. Players with the ball will pass to their partner and then they will sprint to close down the space. Note the defender should begin to move immediately “as the ball is still moving” but slows down to a controlled speed when they are in a range of 6-10 feet depending on their own speed and quickness. After the space is closed, the defender wants to be “side on” and close enough to pressure the ball but not too close where they will be susceptible to being beat by the offensive player off of the dribble. Eyes should be down and focused on the ball. The offense dribbles up the field about half speed and the defense jockeys to remain in the proper position but does not try to steal the ball. After the drill is finished the players switch position and repeat the drill. Players are now going full speed making this a “live” drill.

- **2 vs. 2 Live** - Combine 2 of the pairs from the 1 vs. 1 drill above to create 2 vs. 2 teams. If there's an odd number have 3 teams on one grid and just rotate a team in each time. Set up a grid 20 yards wide by 25 yards long. 2 players on one end of the field start with the ball and kick to the ball the length of the field to the other two players who become attackers. The defenders sprint out to "close down the space" and assume the correct defense stance/position. The player who is guarding the player with the ball is the 1<sup>st</sup> defender and the other player is the 2<sup>nd</sup> defender. 1<sup>st</sup> defender has responsibility for guarding the ball and the 2<sup>nd</sup> defender has responsibility for helping the 1<sup>st</sup> defender and for their man. If the ball is passes then the roles are reversed. Defenders should be encouraged to talk to each other to build confidence and trust in each other. Switch offense and defense each time or for groups of 3 rotate offense to defense to out. Players out come back into the drill as offense.