



Emphasis shifts to pairs and groups of 3-4 players working together on field (attack, defending). Continuing refinement of basic technique in dribbling, passing and shooting. Change of team shape emphasized as the entire team attacks, and entire team defend). Decision making before ball arrives emphasized, should be possible to execute with less pressure, though still difficult to execute when under higher pressure. The why and how should be asked of players. Goalkeepers begin to refine technique- most to all players should play goalkeeper at least once during the season

Ball Control and Basic Footwork

- Refinement of surfaces available to make contact with ball (laces, inside, outside, heel of foot; thigh; head)
- Strength of touch (soft/short versus hard/long)
- Foot work with ball in tighter spaces/higher pressure
- Change of speed with ball and without ball

Dribbling and Avoiding Defenders

- Basic changes of direction with ball (refinement of moves to avoid defender & maintain possession of ball)
- Purposeful dribbling; parts of the field
- Recognition of time and space; ability to maintain possession to allow for teammate options to open

Scoring Goals!

- Strike ball with laces (toe down, ankle locked) **Ability at this age to physically accomplish
- Making contact on center of ball
- Plant foot pointed at target
- Follow through with kicking foot/leg
- Approach to ball at an angle, not straight on to ball
- Introduction to crossing; technique of crossing and finishing off of crosses

Passing

- Good technique when passing the ball with inside and outside of the foot (Plant foot even with ball and pointed towards target, Making contact on center of ball, Follow through with kicking foot/leg)
- Length and type of passes; should begin to be able to see past the closest option to them and seeing options further away
- Combination play and runs off the ball for teammates to receive; give and go, overlap, double pass – runs beginning before player on ball is in trouble (teammate off the ball thinking ahead/anticipating)

Receiving the Ball

- Receiving the ball from the ground and air with multiple surfaces
- Can first touch take you away from pressure and/or into space?
- Importance of first touch in setting up second touch (a shot, a dribble, or a pass)
- Can you play in one touch a shot on goal or pass to teammate?
- Introduction to heading technique

Winning/Challenging for the Ball

- Encouraging player to go/meet the ball in preparation of challenge from defender
- Anticipating contact; understanding acceptable contact (shoulder to shoulder)
- Ability to keep quality technique with physical pressure

Fun and Competition

- Enjoy the game, communicate, and score goals
- So you loss, what could have gone better? What went well?
- Game management; more tempers, game strategy/tactics
- What is the system of the other team? Do they have one or two forwards? How do they attack? How do they defend?

Dribbling and Attacking Defenders

- Numbers up games (3v2, 5v3, 7v5)
- Isolating defenders, use of teammate to beat one or more defenders, and/or cut our more defenders with one pass
- Parts of the field and creating shooting opportunities off of dribble/combinations

Defending

- 1v1 defending principles; footwork, focus on ball and not body movement of opponent, locked ankle in tackles
- Pressure and Cover; 1st player is pressure, 2nd player is cover
- Team defending shape – teammates not in immediate area should be prepared to cut off passing lanes and win the ball