



*Emphasis shifts to groups and lines of players (defenders, midfielders, forwards) working together on field to attack and defend. Continuing refinement of basic technique in dribbling, passing and shooting; advanced techniques applied as needed (bending ball, chipping ball, etc). Player and team shape emphasized regularly (team attacks, team defends). Decision making before ball arrives emphasized, should be possible to execute with more pressure. The why and how should be asked of players, problem solving allowed by players. Goalkeepers begin to refine technique- 1-3 players begin to take role of goalkeeper more consistently*

**Ball Control and Basic Footwork**

- Continued comfort to make contact with ball with all surfaces under high pressure
- Foot work with ball in tighter spaces/higher pressure
- Body mechanics – years of puberty

**Dribbling and Avoiding Defenders**

- 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!**

- Quality ball striking ability (Strike ball with laces, toe down, ankle locked, make contact with center of ball, plant foot pointed at target, knee and shoulder over the ball, angle of approach)
- Crossing the ball; finishing off of crosses
- Corner kicks, Direct and In-direct kicks strategy begin to be discussed in attack (and defending)
- Body positioning; framing goal when possible

**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?
- Refinement of 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
- Goal scoring opportunities; ability to anticipate and frame body to goal as much as possible
- Moments of transition (mentality and team shape are important)

**Fun and Competition**

- Enjoy the game, communicate, and score goals
- So you loss, what could have gone better? What went well?
- Game management; 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 out more defenders with one pass
- Parts of the field and creating shooting opportunities from attack on defenders

**Defending**

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