



# Grades 5-6 Session 3: Combination Play

Category: Tactical: Combination play  
Skill: U12

Pro-Club: Loudoun Soccer Club  
Dan Raben, Leesburg, United States of America

## Description

### 2v2 games (10 mins)



**Objective:** activate players from the start by scrimmaging

**Duration:** 5-10 minutes

**Description (rules, number of players, grid size, etc.):**

\*two small sided fields to play 2v2 or 3v3

\*add players to game as they arrive

**Key Points:**

few if any - get them playing!

### combination play (10 mins)



**Objective:** emphasize passing and receiving techniques, movement off the ball, playing within windows

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Description (rules, number of players, grid size, etc.):**

\*4 lines of players, with center square marked in cones. 1st player in each line starts with a ball.

\* 1st player in each line must dribble through center square, then pass to next player in opposite line. Process repeats, with 1st player moving to end of that line.

\* Progression: players must perform a combination play before switching roles:

Double Pass (3 quick 1-touch passes)

Wall Pass (give and go): player from inside passes to outside player. Outside player receives ball, then plays 2nd touch pass to inside player. Inside player plays 1-touch pass back into space.

**Key Points:**

Head up while dribbling, head up to make eye contact with teammate

Outside players: demand ball

Attacking first touch when receiving – change pace

Double Pass - "step into" (come to it) and hit through your one touch pass to ensure proper weight is used and the ball stays on ground

Wall-pass: check at angle and open up your hips to the play, play 1-touch, use up-field foot when possible, hit thru the ball

### Get Out of There! (15 mins)



**Objective:** use combination play in attack toward goal

**Duration:** 15 mins

**Description (rules, number of players, grid size, etc.):**

\* Coach plays ball into space and calls a number ("Two" means 2v2) and players enter field. Add obstacles before entry if desired.

\* Objective: teams attempt to score goal.

\* Play until ball is out of bounds, goal is scored, or coach yells "Get Outta There!"

\* Players return to lines for next play.

\* Bonus point for combination play

\* Variation: coach calls color instead of number for numbers up sequence (Red = 3 for red, 2 for white)

\* Variation: play with large goals and goalkeepers

**Key Points:**

\* Attack with urgency to create #s up situations

\* identify #s up (2v1) and combine with teammate, or use "threat" of combination to dribble

\* Attack through window - burst of speed with dribble, pass to teammate, or shot on goal

\* 2nd attacker (teammates off the ball): "drift away" to create space for teammate

Play within teammate's vision

### 7v7 game (20 mins)



**Objective:** apply concepts and techniques from previous activities into full game

**Duration:** 15-20 mins

**Description (rules, number of players, grid size, etc.):**

two teams

full rules (throw-ins, corner kicks, etc.)

**Key Points:**

team shape - stay connected as the ball moves up and down the field, and to offer supporting options

combination play - use in middle third of field to generate scoring changes.

finishing - crack a shot when the window is open and you're within range



# Grades 5-6 Session 4: Game Day Prep

Category: Tactical: Playing out from the back  
Skill: U12

Pro-Club: Loudoun Soccer Club  
Dan Raben, Leesburg, United States of America

## Description

### small sided games (10 mins)



**Objective:** activate players from the start by scrimmaging

**Duration:** 5-10 minutes

**Description (rules, number of players, grid size, etc.):**

\*two small sided fields to play 2v2 or 3v3

\*add players to game as they arrive

\* play with regular restarts (throw -ins, goal kicks, corner kicks).

**Key Points:**

few if any - get them playing!

### throw-ins (10 mins)



**Objective:** emphasize passing and receiving techniques, and throw -in technique

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Description (rules, number of players, grid size, etc.):**

\*players in two groups - one group forming a circle, and the other group inside it. Place a small square of cones (5x5 yards) inside the middle of the circle.

**Activity:**

1. players on the inside run through the square toward a teammate on the outside.

2. players on the outside throw s-in the ball to teammate on the inside.

3. player on inside receives the ball, and passes back to teammate on outside.

4. repeat process by running through square and finding a new open teammate.

Rotate rolls every 2 minutes.

Progression: after inside player receives throw -in, dribble through square and pass to open outside player. Repeat by running through square and receiving ball from different outside player.

**Key Points:**

\*throw -in technique: "lock" both feet on the ground. Both hands on the ball. Bring ball straight back behind head, and then release forward.

\* throw -in strategy - release ball toward teammates' feet.

\* showing for the ball - make eye contact with teammate on outside, call for the ball, and then check to it. Avoid standing/waiting for thrower.

\* receiving the ball: get body balanced (on toes, feet shoulders' width, knees bent, weight forward), use

foot, thigh, chest, etc. to receive ball

\* passing technique: connect back to thrower's feet - step in with placement foot, lock ankle (toe up, heel down) of kicking foot, hit through.

\* **6th grade only:** can introduce heading technique (chin up, neck stiff, mouth closed, eyes open, stagger feet, arms out, use forehead for contact, hips forward with shoulders back - then snap forward).

### 7v7 game (30 mins)



**Objective:** apply concepts and techniques from previous activities into full game

**Duration:** 30 mins

**Description (rules, number of players, grid size, etc.):**

two teams

full rules (throw -ins, goal kicks, corner kicks, etc.)

play two 13-minute halves to replicate game. Adjust formation and positions each half.

**Key Points:**

\*team shape - stay connected as the ball moves up and down the field, and to offer supporting options

\*transition - pushing up quickly to join the attack, dropping back quickly to defend goal

\*finishing - crack a shot when the window is open and you're within range

\* decision-making - possess from defensive third to middle third, use of 1v1 moves in middle third and final third.