

Developmental Considerations:

Kindergarten and 1st grade: 1 ball, one player.

- Do not try multiple step activities
- Do not talk a lot
- Demonstrate a new skill, have them try the new skill, use the new skill in a game or activity.
- Don't ask kids to line up. Say, 'Toes on the Line'
- Very young kids will naturally go to the cone. They won't see a line of cones.
- They won't self-regulate. Give several water breaks. "Three sips and come back"

2nd grade: Almost all K-1 drills are appropriate. Start work in pairs. Line drills are ok in pairs. Try not to have players waiting in lines.

Waiter, Waiter: 2-3 minute warm-up game

- "How do you make the ball your own?", Demonstrate holding ball with sole of foot.
 - "Freeze it" (shows balance and coordination)
 - Have players dribble to a coach and 'freeze the ball' with the sole of the foot. Have them pick up the ball and hand it them and say 'waiter waitier'.
 - Coach tosses or rolls the ball away. Try to have them catch up with it before it leaves the field.
 - Teaches burst of speed, balance, head up, look for coach, and turns.
 - Coach should announce that he or she is on the move. "Head up, come find me"
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Find the Statue: (Gravity)

- 1 ball per player
 - Three or four adults with a ball in hand stationed around half of a field.
 - Players dribble to whichever adult has the ball held over their head. (Like the Statue of Liberty)
 - Start with announcing who has the ball up and change to adult silent play to make them look up from the ball.
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Dribbling Skills with Parent (K-2)

-Have kids go and **pull a parent onto to the field** and do activities together at first part of first practice. All activities are with the ball. Coach should briefly demonstrate each as you change activity. Use watch/timer to time 1 minute activities. (Parents do not dribble.)

- **Follow the leader** with parents weaving at reasonable pace so their child can keep up. 1 minute. Ask kids if they caught up with the parent. Elicit responses.
- Then make **parent follow the player** who is dribbling away with the ball. Did your mom/dad get your ball? Elicit group answers.
- Have parents get a **10 second head start** and go to a space in the field with legs (goals) open. Kids need to look up and find parent, dribble to them then **push ball through their legs to score a goal**. Parent must yell Gooooooool

and wave hands. Then the parent will go to another space in the field and the kid will repeat. Release parents to sidelines to relax.

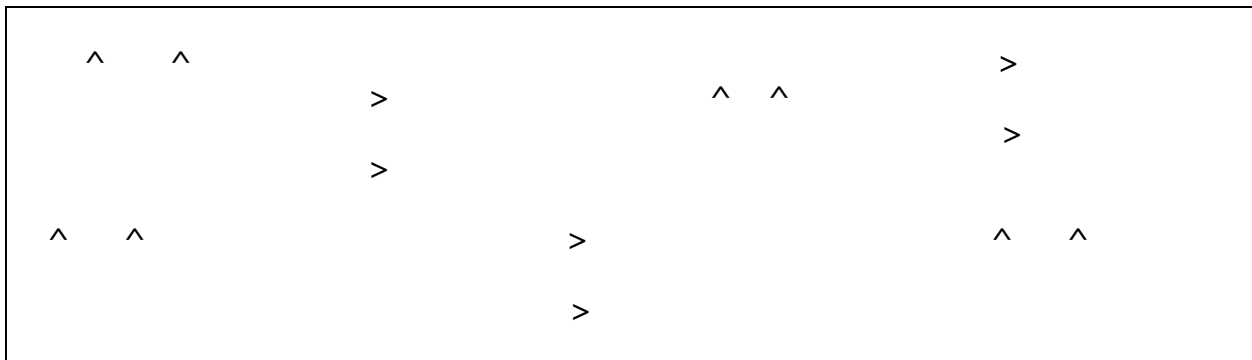
- **Tunnel Ball:** Have parents create gates with their legs spread out. Players dribble to a parent, score a goal through their legs, and then crawl through their legs and go find another tunnel.

Mountains and Ice Cream Cones

- Easy game for younger players. Divide players into two colored teams.
- Spread short disc cones all over field, ½ **pointing up (mountains)** and half **upside down (ice cream cones)**. Team 1 turns all of the 'mountains' into 'ice cream cones' by turning over cones. Team 2 turns ice cream cones into mountains.
- Make it developmental: Try for **30 seconds without balls** so they get the hang of it. **Second round can be dribbling balls.** 1 minute, count mountains and ice cream cones. Repeat. It's always a tie, or one team 'comes back in 2nd round)

-Dribble through gates (pairs of cones) spread around field. (Call them **mini goals** for little ones.) Set watch! 1 minute. Ask them to remember their count. Do it again and ask them to try to get 2 more than they did the first time. **Praise effort.** Some kids will say they did a million. That's great too. Emphasize going to space and not crowding around the same gate. **Head up** and go to an empty gate. You can set up a reward that they can dribble to goal and shoot after completing 5 gates. See how many goals they can get in 2 minutes. (Have an assistant or parent dig balls out of the goals so that kids are not shooting while others are in the goal retrieving their balls.) Tell them to 'GO TO SPACE'.

Use slogans like, "Spaces, Not Faces!"



K-1: Individual, 1 child, 1 ball, dribble through, do a pull back out of the gate.

2+: Individual, dribble with all sides of foot. Only strong foot, only weak foot. Goal only counts if you push it through with the outside of the foot.

2+: In pairs. 2 players 1 ball. Have player without the ball go find a gate. The player with the ball must follow and pass through the gate.

Clean your yard.

Set up cones/split field in two and split teams into either half of field. Scatter as many balls as you have over both halves. The more the better. Have kids kick balls into other half. Kids must stay on their half. Set watch for 1 minute. Blow whistle to freeze and count. Basically they need to get all the balls onto the other half while the other team tries to do the same.

Red Light/Green Light

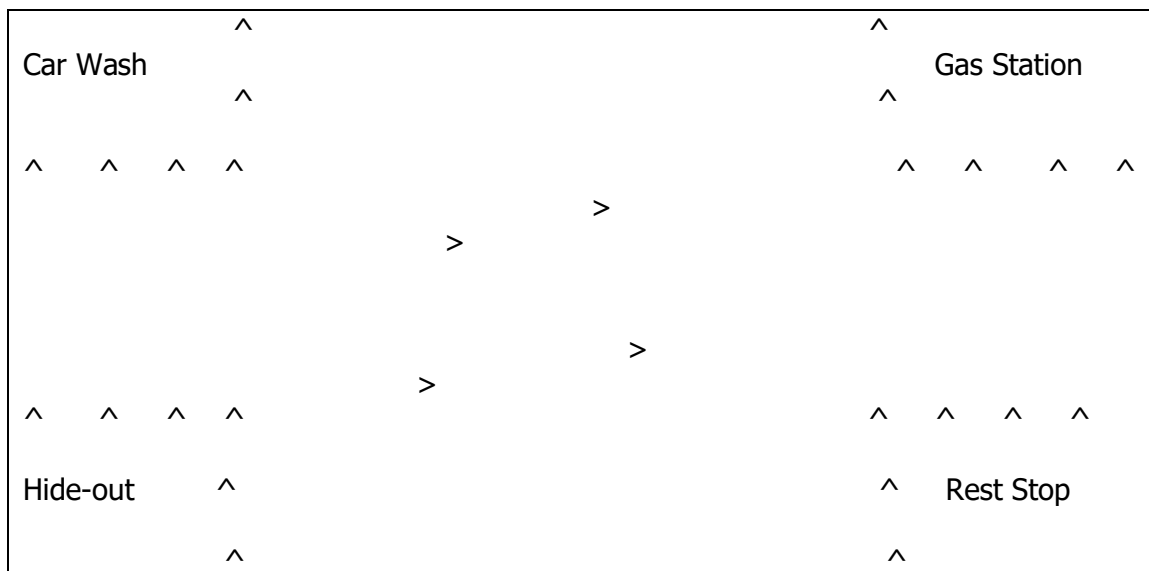
There are many variations on this classic game.

-Games/Drills that teach basic foundation ball skills. There are 100 variations to this. Be creative and have fun. This one pretends kids are driving cars.

(toe touches, tic tocks, sole role forward, sole role backward)

- Drive around your half of field (or smaller space) without collisions. Steer away from others and go to spaces.
- Say, "It's raining!" Windshield Wipers-tap ball back and forth between feet
- Pump the brakes-tap the top of the ball with the ball of each foot
- Stop-Place foot on top of ball and keep balance

My Variation to turn this into a game: Using ½ field, cone off four areas at each corner 15 x 15. Designate the zones; Car Wash, Gas Station, Rest Area, Hide-out.



- Place some cones around the middle of the space (4-6) for them to dribble around.

- Have kids dribble around the middle not colliding, going to space, not hitting cones.
- Say, "It's really dusty out here. Head to the car wash!" and lead them to the car wash zone and do 'windshield wipers for 30 seconds'. Then back to the driving around the middle.
- "I'm almost out of gas. Head to the gas station". Lead kids to gas station and do toe touches, 'pump the gas' for 30 seconds and back to the dribbling.
- "Boy, I'm tired". Head for the rest area where they need to place the foot on top of the ball and balance while they rest for 30 seconds. Try each foot.
- The fun comes with, "Police Chase". The coach/s become the law and try to kick out the kids' balls while they try to race around and past you to the safe Hide-out.
- Repeat each thing, shortening them as needed based on the ability of athletes. Ask them, "Which one should I do now?" They will always ask for police chase.

OUCH!

Easy and by far the favorite of most younger kids. One or more coach jogs around the field and the kids try to kick the ball into you. Younger kids can't lift the ball so shots tend to be at your feet. When the coach gets hit, yell, "Ouch" or something funny and jump around. Even if the ball just grazes you, make a big deal about it. Slow down for those who are struggling, pretending not to see them approach you from behind. With the youngest players you can even fall down and act like you are struggling. Time it for a minute. Ask them for a break, then one more minute. The more you ham it up and act as if they are 'getting' you, the more they like it. Count down the last 10-15 seconds, again, ham it up saying, "I don't know if I'm going to make it". This game obviously works on dribbling, keeping heads up, aggression, and aim in shooting---and is fun.

Pirate's Treasure

Split an area into **three zones**. I tend to use 1 foot cones to divide the spaces. Vary size of field based on age level. Scatter items (treasure) all around zone 3. It can be pinnies, small disc cones. I empty my entire bag including small air pump, etc.

1	2	3
Players	Coach 1 Coach 2	> ^ # > < < # \$ & > ^ < > & @ \$ ^ < @ > > < & # @

1. Have players run past you to grab treasure and bring it back to their zone. Coaches try to tag them as they go by. They can only grab one piece of treasure at a time. **Round 1 is WITHOUT balls.**
2. Either have players start at other end (because all of the treasure is now in zone 1) or return the treasure to zone 3. **Repeat but this time they must dribble their soccer balls to zone 3, pick up one piece of treasure, and dribble past a coach on the way back.**

Coaching points: Square up to the players and tell them to “go to space”. Shift over slightly to one side leaving a space for them to dribble through. Ask, “Where’s the space?”. Make them run fast through that space and reward them by pretending that they beat you. Explain that you WILL kick their ball out if they dribble right into you. This can be done at many different levels. Younger kids just need to know to go to space and not dribble into your shins. Older kids can practice their moves like stepovers to get by you. With older kids you can assign players to be in the middle.

VARIATION: Call this game Robin Hood. Have volunteers explain what Robin Hood does. (Steal from the rich and give to the poor). Call zone one Sherwood Forest, and coaches are the Sheriff of Nottingham, and zone 3 is the castle.

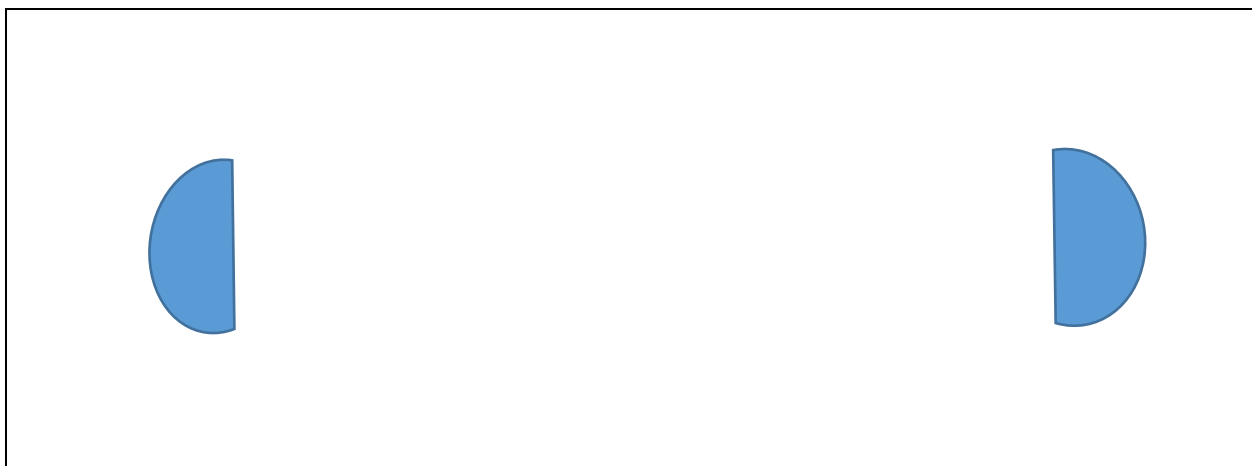
Classic Numbers Game

Use Pinnies to split teams as evenly as possible.

Assign numbers to each team trying to keep it even. (strong player=red team #1, strong player =blue team #1, etc.)

Set up goals facing each other.

Red Team 1,2,3,4,5,6



Blue Team 1,2,3,4,5,6

Call out numbers. 1 means Red #1 and Blue #1 enter field quickly. Coach feeds ball into middle. Call two numbers at a time for 2v2. After a goal or (far) out of bounds players return to their sides.

Goals can be set up **at the end lines** with cones or if you can move the goals together to create a smaller field. If you move solid goals please make sure they are weighted. Another option is to use PUGG pop up goals if you have them.

Variation 1: Place the movable pop up goals in the field like hockey goals and let the kids play around and behind them. It is more exciting.

Variation 2: Players can score on either goal. The last team to touch the ball before it goes in gets the point. This makes kids look up and head to space or open goal.

Sharks and Minnows:

Set up three zones or at least a center zone that players must pass through.

2 Sharks in pinnies in middle of space.

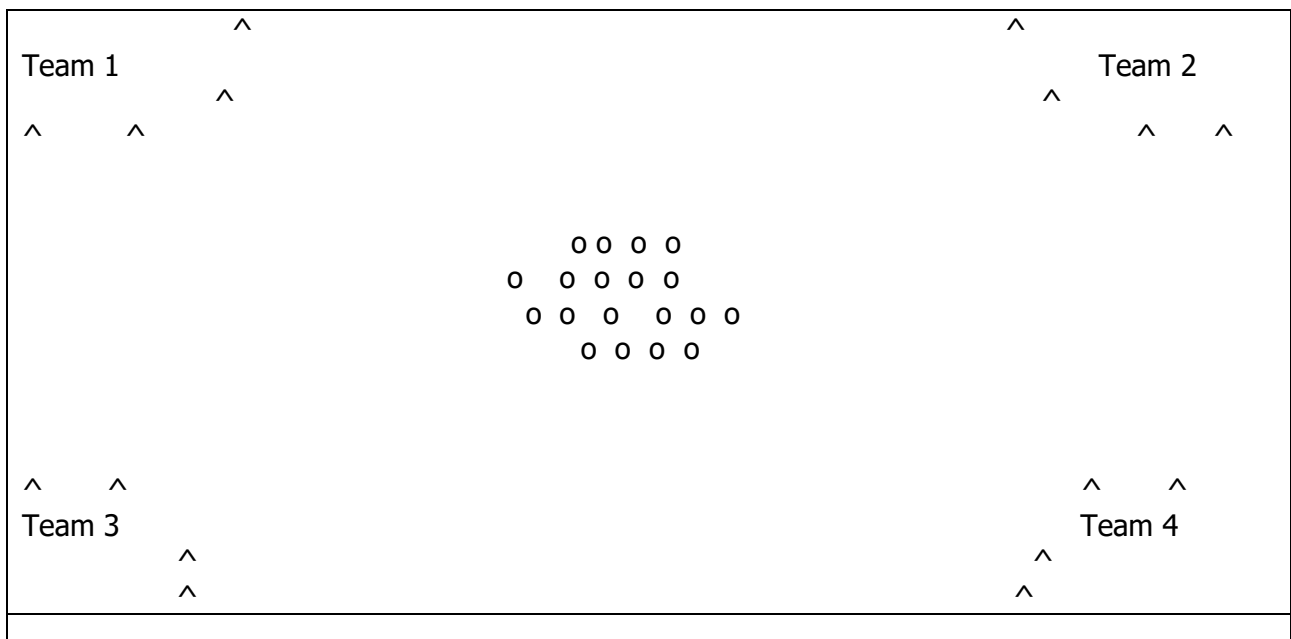
Start without balls. Players must pass through center area to the other side. If they are tagged, they become a shark. Minnows can only stay in safe areas for 5 seconds.

Progress to dribbling. Sharks must kick their balls out of area for them to become shark. Have sharks hold pinnies.

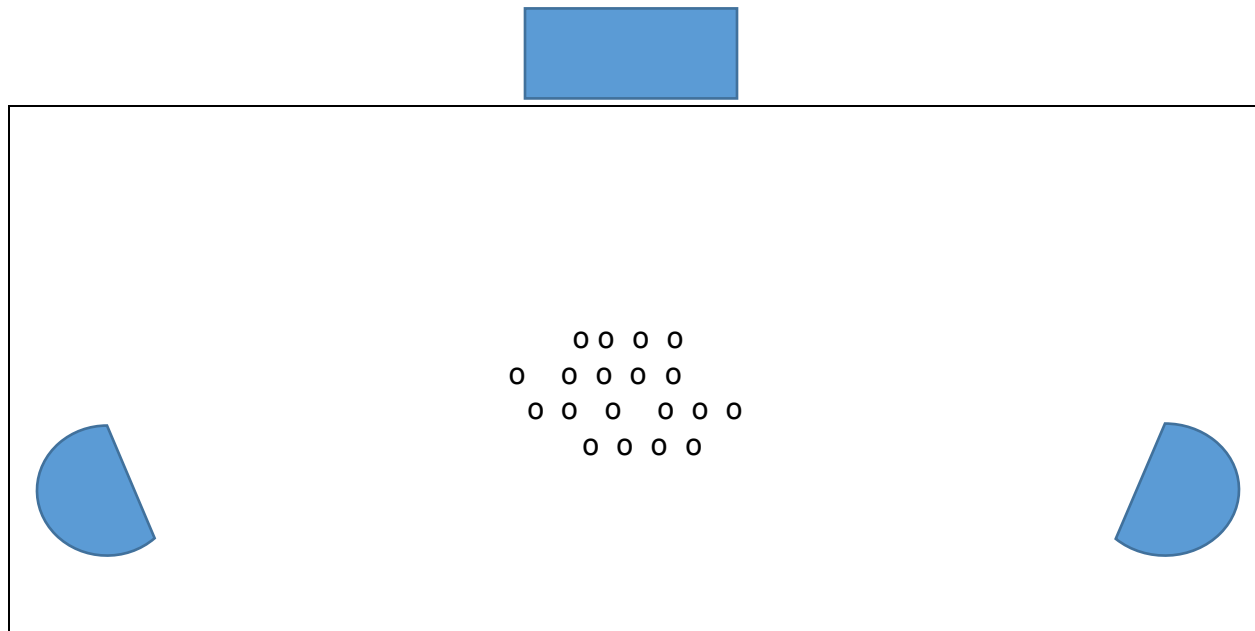
Rob The Nest

Divide into **three or four even teams**. Create a zone for each. Place all balls in the middle- the more the better. Everyone starts in their zone. Coach says go/whistles and they race out to get a ball (**using a pull back or inside foot turn**) and brings it back to their zone.

1. Easiest level ends there.
2. Next level allows kids to **go to other team's zones to get their balls and bring them back.**
3. Play for a designated time (one or two minutes) and repeat.



Alternate: If you have access to pop-up goals you can use them along with the main goal as the home base for each team



Space Ships and Asteroids (Soccer version of Freeze Tag/Stuck in the Mud)

Designate two or three players as **Asteroids in pinnies**. They have **soccer balls in their hands**. The other players are Space Ships. The Space Ships dribble their balls around staying in the designated grid (30 x 30). The Asteroids chase the Ships around trying to throw their balls at the balls of the Space Ships. If their ball gets hit, the Space Ship needs to stand with the ball above their head, legs spread, waiting for a **power up**. They should be calling out for help from their fellow Space Ships who will free them by dribbling a ball through their legs. **Game ends at a specific time (1 or 2 minutes) or when all of the Space Ships have been tagged**. The last surviving Space Ships can be the Asteroids for the next round. Add or reduce number of Asteroids if needed.

Alternate: Kindergarten and 1st grade might need the coach to be the Asteroid.

Classic Knockout.

- 20x20 area. Players dribble their ball around, **coach can chase** and kick their balls out
- Re-entry can be through a gate or by doing an activity like 5 toe touches
- **Players can be 'It'** with a pinnie. This adds competition.

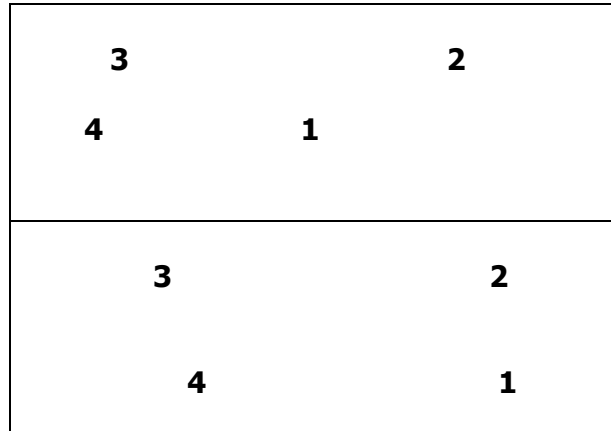
Older players skill development: Shielding the Ball

Teach how to shield the ball. Have players move around a space and coach should try to knock their balls out. If they shield properly the coach has to give up and move on to someone else. Use body to block the ball. Use arms to block coach (Iron Bar) without swinging arm which is a foul.

King of the Ring:

- Knock out from a designated confined space. No one is allowed to stand still. Everyone has a ball and is dribbling around protecting their ball while trying to knock out other people's balls. Last one in the ring is the winner.
- Have players who are "out", be active with an activity such as short one-touch passing or tick tocks.

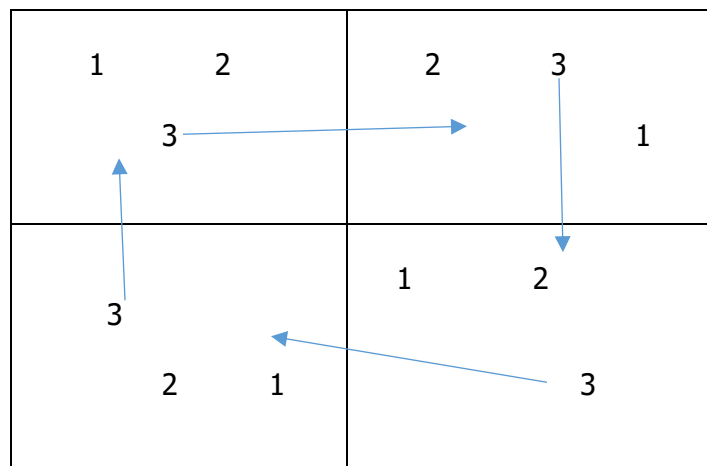
Numbers Knockout:



- Players dribble around their space until their number is called then they leave their ball and run into the other space and try to knock out the other player's balls.
- Play until all balls are knocked out or for 15 seconds.
- Players remain in the other grid and play continues.

Clockwise Knockout:

Place even numbers in four boxes. Designate player 1,2,3 for each box.



Players dribble around their box, not colliding, going to space.

Coach calls out a number (3) who will leave their ball and go to the next box clockwise and attempt to knock out the other players balls in that box. The 'knockout player' stays in the new box and dribbling starts again until coach calls out another number.

-Have group A rest and have group B do the same but across the square the other way, executing a turn around when they cross the far line. Have them do it two or three times.

-Then have them ALL do it simultaneously. It seems like a recipe for disaster, but after one pass, they are staggered and they learn to know where the ball is, who is around them, and how to slow down and speed up to get through.

The Blob

- Player have ball in confined area. One player is the blob. He chases and kicks out a ball. The other player is now part of the blob.
- The players must hold hands and chase down the other player's soccer balls.
- As players get knocked out they join the blob.
- Increase communication/fun/coordination

2+ Progression:

- Start with 3 in the blob acting as defense. 3 v the blob.
 - Dribble around the blob
 - Pass around the blob
 - Do not dribble into the blob or hide behind the blob. Try to score.
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Break the Chain K-1

- Divide into 2 teams facing each other on different lines
 - Assign numbers to each team.
 - Call out numbers one at a time. Coach feeds ball into middle. The players with corresponding numbers need to try to kick the ball past the line (chain) of the opposite team, thus breaking the chain. Goals are scored by kicking the ball through the opponent's line. Opponents shift over and try to kick the ball back into the middle to help their player.
 - Coach can set play for a time limit if there is not goal.
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Hand Ball Warm-Up (10 Minutes) 2nd grade+

- Players progress to playing a possession game using only their hands. Ten (or 5) passes equal a goal.
- The players are not allowed to move with the ball in their hands. Players must move off the ball to create passing options.
- The players are only allowed to hold the ball for three seconds.

Alternate progression:

- Have a player in an end zone which you can throw (after 4 passes?)
 - Have an end zone that a player must into to receive the pass.
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Go to Jail (or In the Swamp, or whatever you want to call it)

- Fast paced small sided game. Set up three different colored teams.
- One team in the goal (jail, swamp)
- Two teams on the field.
- Coach is in front of goal with team that is 'out'.

- Coach feeds ball into the mix. Keep game moving, feeding balls as needed.
 - When one team scores, the other team on the field 'goes to jail'
 - Yell, "Red, on the field" and roll out a ball.
 - If one team is dominating, feed ball favorably to even things out.
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Proper Foot Contact for One Touch Passing: 1+,2+

Use "Happy Feet" Technique

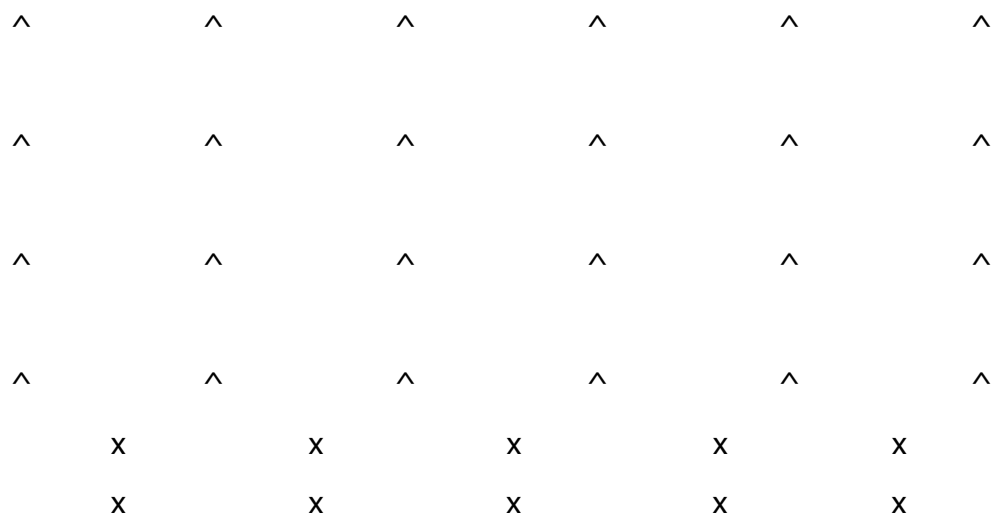
Ball should make contact with the ankle slightly

If the ball pops up, this means they made contact on the toe.

Say No to the Toe

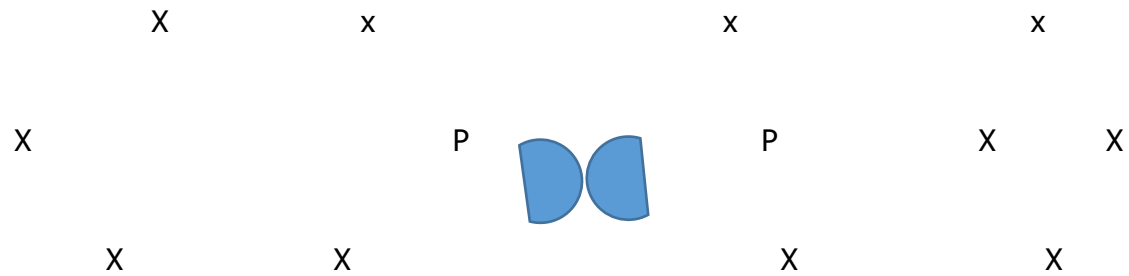
Line/lane drills are fine.

Two players in each lane. One dribbles, the other rests but must pay attention.



- Small touches/keep the puppy on the leash
 - Use a turn at the end/pull-back/chop turn/outside of the foot
 - Stop/go in the middle
 - Drop off the ball kindly at the feet of your partner.
 - Practice fist touch. Push with proper pace and direction.
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Pirates of the Pugg:



Set up two goals opposite each other. (Can be cones if needed) Use colors to identify Pirates.

Set up reasonable size field for chasing down player's balls. Pirates (without soccer balls) chase all other players to capture their soccer ball and score back in either goal. Once a player's ball has been scored by a pirate, they become a pirate too until there is one or two left who are the winners and can be the pirates in the next round. If things are going too slow add pirates.