



*Sub Junior  
Coaching Handbook*

## ***Introduction***

A big welcome and thank you to all persons who have embraced the role of Team Manager or Team Coach at Football**SSG**.

This is an important, fun and rewarding role and we hope that the assistance that this Handbook provides helps you to help the players as they learn about the game of football.

Should you have any questions regarding the information contained herein, they can be directed via email to :

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## ***Copyright Statement***

This Handbook has been authored and produced by Stuart Cole and is intended for the use by members of Football**SSG** – Small Sided Games and/or by any person who wishes to help improve the skills of young football players. Stuart Cole retains copyright over this entire Handbook and all of its contents.

## **Objectives**

Over the sub junior years, ages Under 6 through Under 9, **FootballSSG** believes that all players should have the opportunity to achieve various developmental objectives.

These are formative years in a child's education, in football as in life. Of course, some children will develop skills more quickly than others, as is the case in most any endeavours that they may undertake in life.

The objectives are designed :

- 🎯 to maintain the player's interest in football
- 🎯 to improve the player's football skills
- 🎯 to encourage the player by allowing them to readily identify the improvements in their football skills
- 🎯 to enjoy their participation in football

The objectives are measured by developmental outcomes, explained in the next few pages, which are designed as baseline outcomes that we encourage each Coach to endeavour to achieve with all their players.

*It's all about the Football !*

*Please note that it may not be reasonably possible to achieve all outcomes with all players.*

## ***Developmental Outcomes – Under 6***

At or approaching the conclusion of an Under 6 season each player should be competent in the following areas :

- 🏆 receive/control a 5m pass with the instep of both feet while stationary
- 🏆 make a correctly weighted 5m pass with the instep of both feet with a stationary ball
- 🏆 make a correctly weighted 10m pass with the instep of both feet with a stationary ball
- 🏆 make a correctly directed shot on a 1m wide gate from 7m away with a stationary ball
- 🏆 dribble the ball through 10 gates along 15m within 30 seconds
- 🏆 header the ball (not be scared) while stationary

### **GOAL KEEPING**

- 🏆 catch a lofted ball in the hands/chest (goalkeeping)

## ***Developmental Outcomes – Under 7***

At or approaching the conclusion of an Under 7 season each player should be competent in the following areas :

- 🏴‍☠️ receive/control a 10m pass with the instep of both feet while stationary
- 🏴‍☠️ receive/control a 10m pass with the outstep of both feet while moving
- 🏴‍☠️ receive/control a lofted pass with both knees while stationary
- 🏴‍☠️ receive/control a lofted pass with the chest while stationary
- 🏴‍☠️ make a correctly weighted 15m pass with the instep of both feet with a moving ball
- 🏴‍☠️ make a correctly weighted 10m pass with the outstep of both feet with a stationary ball
- 🏴‍☠️ make a lofted pass (eg goal kick) >15m with the preferred foot with a stationary ball
- 🏴‍☠️ dribble the ball through 15 gates along 20m within 30 seconds
- 🏴‍☠️ juggle the ball (any part of the body) 5 times
- 🏴‍☠️ header the ball (not be scared) while moving

### **GOAL KEEPING**

- 🏴‍☠️ catch a lofted ball over head in the hands (goalkeeping)
- 🏴‍☠️ catch a lofted ball in the hands/chest (goalkeeping)
- 🏴‍☠️ fall on a rolling ball left and right (goalkeeping)

## ***Developmental Outcomes – Under 8***

At or approaching the conclusion of an Under 8 season each player should be competent in the following areas :

- 🌀 receive/control a 15m pass with the instep of both feet while moving
- 🌀 receive/control a 15m pass with the outstep of both feet while moving
- 🌀 receive/control a lofted pass with both knees while moving
- 🌀 receive/control a lofted pass with the chest while moving
- 🌀 make a correctly weighted 15m pass with the instep of both feet with a moving ball
- 🌀 make a correctly weighted 15m pass with the outstep of both feet with a moving ball
- 🌀 make a correctly weighted 15m lofted pass (cross) with the preferred foot with a moving ball
- 🌀 make a correctly weighted 10m square pass (cross - lofted or not) with the non-preferred foot with a moving ball
- 🌀 dribble the ball through 20 gates along 25m within 30 seconds
- 🌀 juggle the ball using at least two different parts of the body (eg both feet) 10 times
- 🌀 make a correct attacking header while moving
- 🌀 make a correct defensive header while moving

### **GOAL KEEPING**

- 🌀 catch or block a "shot" directed at the body at or about chest height
- 🌀 catch or block a "shot" directed right of the body at or about chest height
- 🌀 catch or block a "shot" directed left of the body at or about chest height

## ***Developmental Outcomes – Under 9***

At or approaching the conclusion of an Under 9 season each player should be competent in the following areas :

- 🕒 receive/control a 10m pass with the instep of both feet while moving, execute a 5m wall pass, receive/control return pass, dribble at pace for 15m
- 🕒 receive/control a lofted pass with the knee or foot (volley) while moving, execute a 5m wall pass, receive/control return pass, dribble at pace for 15m
- 🕒 receive/control a lofted pass with the chest while moving, execute a 5m wall pass, receive/control return pass, dribble at pace for 15m
- 🕒 receive/control a 10m pass (first touch) with any part of both feet while moving and make a correctly weighted 15m pass (second touch) with the instep of both feet
- 🕒 receive/control a 10m pass (first touch) with any part of both feet while moving and change direction left and right (second touch) and dribble away at pace
- 🕒 demonstrate an understanding of defensive positioning (goal side & ball side) in a game situation
- 🕒 demonstrate an understanding of attacking positioning (ball side, moving to space, timing of movement) in a game situation
- 🕒 score four goals from six attempts from the penalty spot (no goalkeeper), placing the ball high left, high right, low left and low right
- 🕒 score one goal from two attempts from a header using correct attacking header technique while moving
- 🕒 clear one cross from two attempts from a header using correct defensive header technique while moving
- 🕒 dribble the ball in a straight line with the preferred foot along 20m within 10 seconds using the roll-over technique
- 🕒 dribble the ball in a straight line with the non-preferred foot along 20m within 15 seconds using the roll-over technique
- 🕒 dribble the ball through 25 gates along 30m within 30 seconds
- 🕒 juggle the ball using at least three different parts of the body at least three times (eg 3x left foot, 3x right knee, 3x head, etc) 20 times

### **GOAL KEEPING**

- 🕒 goalkeeping (to be determined)

# Drills and Training Sessions

## Level 1

The Instep Of The Foot – Technical information designed to provide an understanding of the introductory techniques to educate inexperienced players in the most basic (and important) method by which to pass and receive the ball.

Heading The Ball – Technical information designed to provide an understanding of the introductory techniques to educate inexperienced players in the basics of heading the ball.

Catching The Ball – Technical information designed to provide an understanding of the introductory techniques to educate inexperienced players in the basics of catching the ball.

Dribbling 100 – Session requiring minimal equipment and lasting approximately one hour that will introduce players to and/or enhance their ability to dribble the ball and maintaining control of the ball.

Dribbling 200 – Session requiring minimal equipment and lasting approximately one hour that will enhance a player's ability to dribble and maintain control of the ball and will also introduce players to in-game decision making.

Passing & Receiving 100 – Session requiring minimal equipment and lasting approximately one hour that will introduce players to and/or enhance their ability to pass and receive the ball with an emphasis on passing.

Passing & Receiving 200 – Session requiring minimal equipment and lasting approximately one hour that will introduce players to and/or enhance their ability to pass and receive the ball with an emphasis on receiving.

Goal Keeping 100 – Session requiring minimal equipment and lasting approximately one hour that will introduce players to and enhance their ability to judge the flight of and catch a ball and progresses towards introducing players to spatial awareness.

Heading 100 – Session requiring minimal equipment and lasting approximately forty-five minutes that will introduce players and/or enhance their ability to header the ball without fear of being hurt.

## ***The Instep of the Foot***

Before commencing coaching sessions or drills that relate to passing and receiving for inexperienced players, it is important that we have a good understanding of the best part of the foot to use for passing and receiving of the ball.

This is imperative because good technique is the thing, more than anything else, that we need to focus on when running sessions on passing and receiving.

The first part of the foot that players should master using for passing and receiving is the instep. This is the area highlighted in green on diagram 1.

It is the area from approximately level with the ball of the foot (where the bone is prominent) and along the side of the foot to approximately 1cm – 3cm in front of the ankle bone.

It is the area along side of the foot, not along the top of the foot.

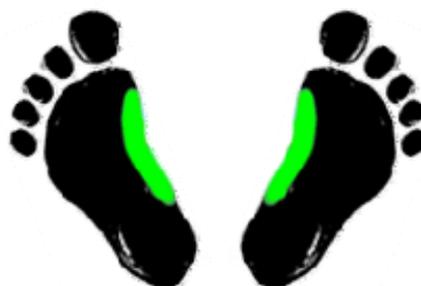


Diagram 1

## ***Receiving The Ball Using The Instep***

Technically, to receive the ball correctly, the player needs to do several things :

- 🕒 judge the path of the ball and get in to a position to receive it, and
- 🕒 place the foot that he is not using to receive the ball firmly on the ground (and not in the direct path of the ball), and
- 🕒 raise the foot that he is using to receive the ball slightly off the ground (approx 5cm – 10cm depending on the size of ball being used), and
- 🕒 ensure that the foot that he is using to receive the ball is in the direct path of the ball, and
- 🕒 relax slightly the foot that he is using to receive the ball and allow the ball to roll in to that foot.



Diagram 2

Diagram 2 shows a technically correct position to receive the ball using the instep of the right foot, remembering that the foot would be raised slightly off the ground and would be relaxed slightly.

If the foot (and leg) are tensed or rigid, instead of being relaxed, the ball will bounce away from the player. As receiving the ball correctly includes taking possession of the ball, it is important that players are coached to relax so that the ball ends up just in front of them, not more than one step away.

### ***Passing The Ball Using The Instep***

Technically, to pass the ball correctly, the player needs to do many things. The following can be considered the “very basics” and we urge all coaches to request a demonstration from FootballSSG to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the technique (there is only so much meaning that can be conveyed on paper) :

- ④ place the non-kicking foot beside the ball and pointing in the direction that the ball is intended to be passed, and
- ④ bend slightly the knee of the non-kicking foot, in the first instance just enough that the leg is not “locked” straight, and
- ④ turn the ankle, or point outwards the toe, of the kicking foot so that the instep of the kicking foot will be the part of the foot that makes contact with the ball (this will also help in ensuring that the kicking foot is tensed and rigid, which is important for accurate passing), and
- ④ keeping the overall body weight forward (ie not leaning backwards) use a sweep-like action to bring the kicking foot in to firm contact with the ball.



Diagram 3

Diagram 3 shows a technically correct position to pass the ball using the instep of the right foot, remembering that the kicking foot would be tensed and rigid.

## Heading The Ball

Before commencing coaching sessions or drills that relate to heading the ball, particularly with inexperienced or less competent players, it is important that we have a good technical understanding of how to header the ball.

This is imperative because good technique is the thing, more than anything else, that we need to focus on when running sessions for inexperienced players.

Some of the key components of a technically correct header (which are required for player safety as much as they are required for making a decisive contact with the ball) include :

- use the “sweet spot” of the head which, as illustrated in diagram 4, is the flat part of the forehead, above the eyebrows and in between the temples, and
- keep the eyes wide open and watch the ball all the way on the head, and
- have the neck and shoulders tensed and rigid.

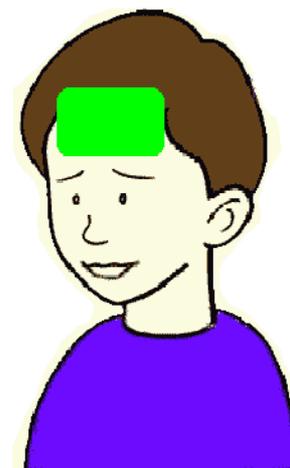


Diagram 4

The above can be considered the “very basics” and we urge all coaches to request a demonstration from FootballSSG to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the technique (there is only so much meaning that can be conveyed on paper).

Particularly for younger players (Under 6, Under 7) and even for much older players who are inexperienced with and/or possibly scared about the ball hurting them, it is often a good idea to introduce heading the ball with a “soft” ball, rather than a football.

This gives the players the confidence to concentrate on the techniques that you are coaching without worrying about whether it’s going to hurt (even when they get it wrong).

## Catching The Ball

Before commencing coaching sessions or drills that relate to goal keeping, particularly with inexperienced or less competent players, it is important that we have a good technical understanding of how to position a player's body and hands to catch a football.

This is imperative because good technique is the thing, more than anything else, that we need to focus on when running sessions for inexperienced players.

Some of the key components of a technically correct goal keeping technique, clearly focussing on the basics – we're not expecting six or seven year olds to make diving saves each week, include :

- 🕒 eyes must be open and watching the ball, and
- 🕒 watch the trajectory of the ball and move the whole body (ie move the feet) so that as much of the body is behind (in the path of) the ball as possible, and
- 🕒 always try to use both hands (this will not always be possible), and
- 🕒 for a low ball, position the hands almost together and with the palms up and thumbs pointing outwards (as illustrated in diagram 5), or
- 🕒 for a high ball, position the hands almost together and with the palms forward and thumbs pointing inwards (as illustrated in diagram 6).



Diagram 5



Diagram 6

The above can be considered the “very basics” and we urge all coaches to request a demonstration from FootballSSG to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the technique (there is only so much meaning that can be conveyed on paper).

Particularly for younger players (Under 6, Under 7) and even for much older players who are inexperienced with and/or possibly scared about the ball hurting them, it is often a good idea to introduce heading the ball with a “soft” ball, rather than a football. The ball should be approximately the size of a football, however, as catching a smaller or larger ball involves a very different experience for the players.

This gives the players the confidence to concentrate on the techniques that you are coaching without worrying about whether it's going to hurt (even when they get it wrong).

## ***Dribbling 100***

### **Target Group :**

Under 6 & Under 7 and inexperienced players of any age.

### **Coaching Objectives :**

Players learn to maintain control of ball while dribbling. Players learn that the faster they run the harder it is to control the ball, particularly when changing direction. Players learn to “look up” to keep an eye on what is happening around them.

### **Equipment requirements :**

Area of 12m x 12m, eight field markers (though four will suffice), one ball for each two players.

### **DRIBBLING 101**

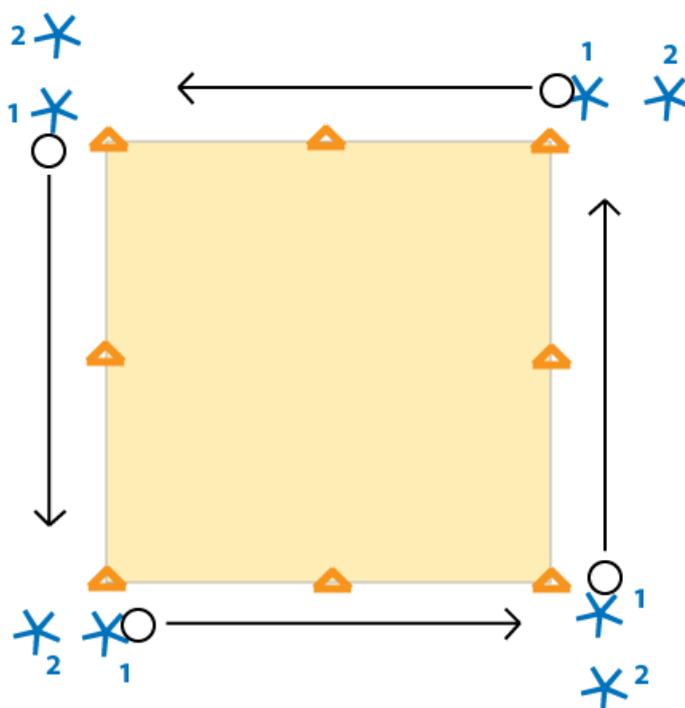


Diagram 7

1. Set up a square of 10m x 10m using field markers as shown in diagram 7.
2. Evenly place players in a line on each corner of the square.
3. The first player in each line (player 1) starts with a ball.
4. The remaining players in each line (player 2) wait in line.

5. All player 1's commence dribbling the ball at the same time and in the same direction (illustrated as counter-clockwise). When they reach the next corner, having dribbled 10m, they pass the ball to player 2 and join the end of the line.
6. Then all player 2's commence dribbling in the same direction. When they reach the next corner, they pass the ball to player 1 and join the end of that line.
7. Once the players have dribbled the ball along all four edges of the square and returned to their original starting point, they will have dribbled 40m.

### **Key Coaching Points :**

- 🕒 start SLOW, it's not a race
- 🕒 coach the players to touch the ball with the instep of their boot and with alternating feet with EVERY STEP that they take
- 🕒 for beginner players, start the players by walking rather than jogging
- 🕒 for more advanced players, encourage them to see how fast they can go while still touching the ball with EVERY STEP

### **Stuart's tips :**

*This drill will take less than five minutes to complete. At these young ages, we need the players to spend more time dribbling, so consider running this drill once in a counter-clockwise direction and then immediately again in a clockwise direction. This extends the drill, and will improve the player's dribbling skills while still retaining their interest.*

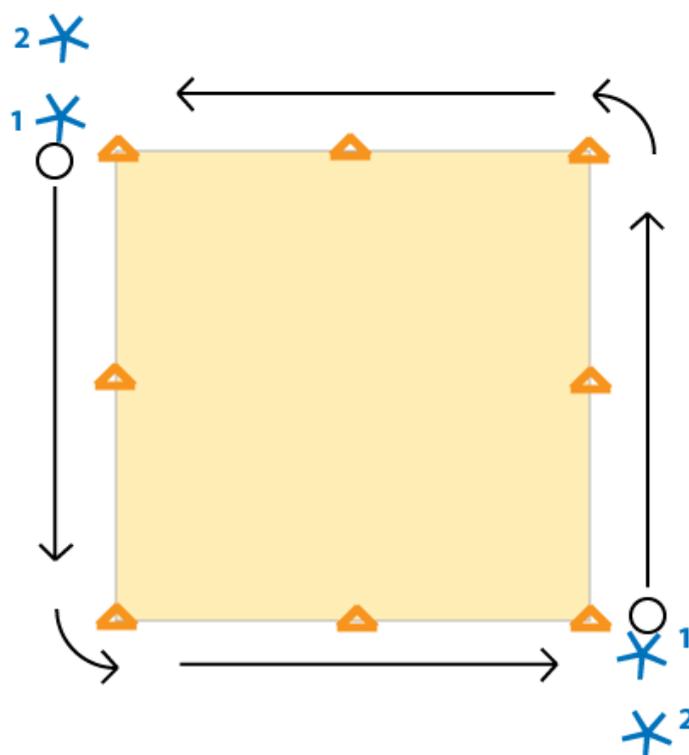
**DRIBBLING 102**

Diagram 8

1. Use the same area.
2. Evenly place players in a line on two diagonal corners of the square (Diagram 8).
3. The first player in each line (player 1) starts with a ball.
4. The remaining players in each line (player 2) wait in line.
5. All player 1's commence dribbling the ball at the same time and in the same direction (illustrated as counter-clockwise). This time they need to retain control of the ball while going around a corner, before continuing along the second edge of the square.
6. When they reach the next corner, having dribbled 20m, they pass the ball to player 2 and join the end of the line.
7. Then all player 2's commence dribbling in the same direction. When they have gone around a corner and dribbled 20m, they pass the ball to player 1 and join the end of that line.
8. Once the players have dribbled the ball along around the square two times (that is, two full circuits around the square), they will have turned four corners and dribbled 80m.

### Key Coaching Points :

- 🕒 start SLOW, it's not a race
- 🕒 coach the players to touch the ball with the instep of their boot and with alternating feet with EVERY STEP that they take
- 🕒 for beginner players, start the players by walking rather than jogging
- 🕒 for more advanced players, encourage them to see how fast they can go while still touching the ball with EVERY STEP
- 🕒 ask the players whether it is easier to turn a corner when they're moving fast or slow (the answer is slow)
- 🕒 ask the players whether it is easier to turn a corner with the instep or the outstep of their boot (the answer is usually the instep at this age)

### Stuart's tips :

*This drill can be used as a progression from the previous drill or, for more advanced players (who may be bored by dribbling 10m in a straight line), this drill could be used as the first drill in your basic dribbling training session.*

*This drill will take less than five minutes to complete. At these young ages, we need the players to spend more time dribbling, so consider running this drill once in a counter-clockwise direction and then immediately again in a clockwise direction. This extends the drill, and will improve the player's dribbling skills while still retaining their interest. It will also improve their coordination with both feet (by having to use both feet to turn the corners). You can encourage the players to try to go more quickly (which will likely see them lose control of the ball as they approach and try to round the corner). Talk to them about this loss of ball control and encourage them to slow down as they get near the corner so that it's easier for them to retain control.*

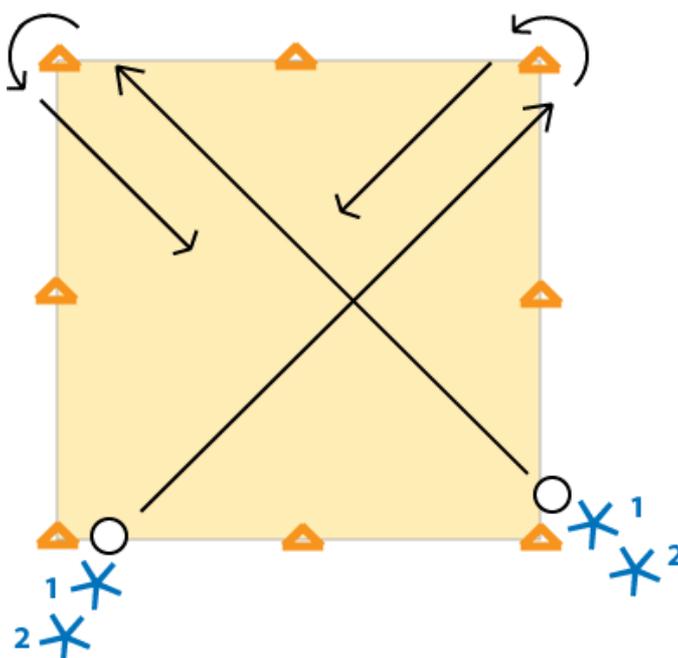
**DRIBBLING 103**

Diagram 9

1. Use the same area.
2. Evenly place players in a line on two corners of the square (Diagram 9).
3. The first player in each line (player 1) starts with a ball.
4. The remaining players in each line (player 2) wait in line.
5. Talk to the players about the need to watch out for other players to avoid collisions and to avoid losing their ball.
6. All player 1's commence dribbling the ball at the same time diagonally across the middle of the square. This time they need to retain control of the ball while going around a corner, before returning back diagonally across the square.
7. When they reach the next corner, having dribbled 30m, they pass the ball to player 2 and join the end of the line.
8. Then all player 2's do the same thing, and so on until all players have had two turns..
9. Once the players have dribbled the ball two times (that is, two full circuits around the square), they will have turned two corners and dribbled 60m, importantly, with their eyes "up" as they need to watch for other players to avoid bumping in to them.

**Key Coaching Points :**

- 🕒 start SLOW, it's not a race
- 🕒 coach the players to touch the ball with instep of their boot and with alternating feet with EVERY STEP that they take
- 🕒 for beginner players, start the players by walking rather than jogging
- 🕒 for more advanced players, encourage them to see how fast they can go while still touching the ball with EVERY STEP

**Stuart's tips :**

*This drill will take less than five minutes to complete. At these young ages, we need the players to spend more time dribbling, so consider running this drill once where the players must go around the corner in a counter-clockwise direction (as illustrated) and then immediately again where the players must go around the corner in a clockwise direction. This extends the drill, and will improve the player's dribbling skills while still retaining their interest. It will also improve their coordination with both feet (by having to use both feet to turn the corners). You can encourage the players to try to go more quickly, however, it's imperative that you keep encouraging them to "look up" or "look over the ball" while they are doing this drill, for their own safety (though any bumps will be VERY minor) and so they start to learn to dribble while not always watching the ball.*

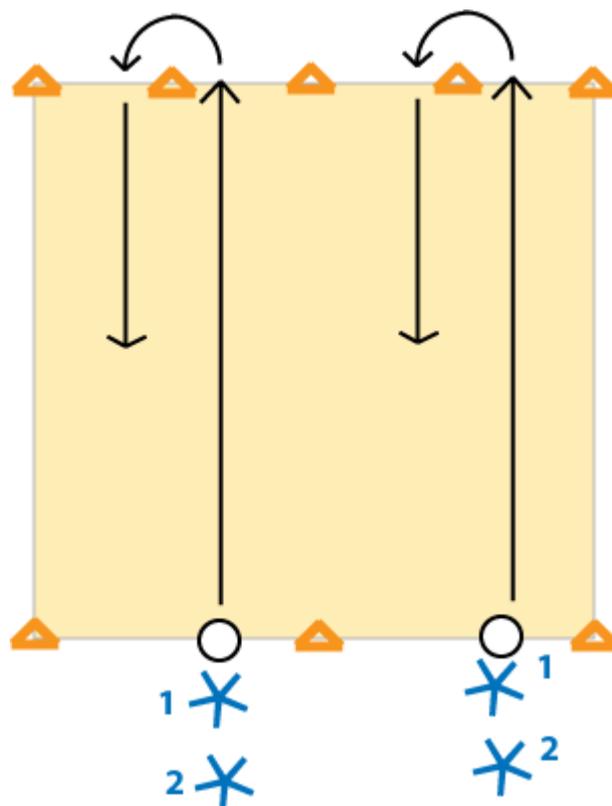
**DRIBBLING 104**

Diagram 10

1. Use the same area (note two field markers have changed position as shown in diagram 10).
2. Evenly place players in two lines (or teams) for a relay race.
3. The first player in each line (player 1) starts with a ball.
4. The remaining players in each line (player 2) wait in line.
5. Talk to the players about the need to try to go as fast as they can without losing control of their ball. Remind them that it's hard to turn a corner when they're going too fast. Remind them to try to touch the ball with every step that they take.
6. All player 1's commence dribbling the ball at the same time diagonally across the middle of the square. This time they need to retain control of the ball while going around a corner, before returning back diagonally across the square.
7. When they reach the next corner, having dribbled 30m, they pass the ball to player 2 and join the end of the line.
8. Then all player 2's do the same thing, and so on until all players have had two turns.
9. Once the players have dribbled the ball two times (that is, two full circuits around the square), they will have turned two corners and dribbled 60m, importantly, with their eyes "up" as they need to watch for other players to avoid bumping in to them.

### Key Coaching Points :

- 🕒 start FAST, it's a race
- 🕒 coach the players to touch the ball with instep of their boot and with alternating feet with EVERY STEP that they take
- 🕒 remember to “look up” to see where the turning field marker is and to SLOW DOWN as you approach that marker so that you can retain control of the ball

### Stuart's tips :

*Kids love competition. This drill, which will take less than five minutes to complete, will help to satisfy their competitive urges and will also challenge them to put into practice the things that they have been learning through the earlier drills. In order to extend the time of this drill, and give the players more valuable dribbling practice, consider running this drill once where the players must go around the corner in a counter-clockwise direction (as illustrated) and then immediately again where the players must go around the corner in a clockwise direction. This extends the drill, and will improve the player's dribbling skills while still retaining their interest. It will also improve their coordination with both feet (by having to use both feet to turn the corners). You can encourage the players to try to go more quickly, however, it's imperative that you keep encouraging them to “look up” or “look over the ball” so they start to learn to dribble while not always watching the ball.*

### Finishing The Session :

After the “hard work” of a training session, players are generally keen to play a game of football. In order to help to re-affirm the learning from a session, it is ideal to have the game be something that requires the players to use the skills that they have just been practicing.

Where this session has focussed entirely on dribbling, the game to finish the training session should also be focussed on dribbling.

An ideal game would be 2 vs 2 in the same 10m x 10m area that has been used for the entire session whereby in order to score, one team must dribble the ball (not kick it) across their goal line (there would be no actual goals set up).

By reducing the teams to 2 vs 2 you will provide the players the opportunity to have the space on the field to put in to practice what they have been learning.

Short games of approximately three minutes will keep the players happy and interested while not making those who are waiting for their turn wait for too long.

## ***Dribbling 200***

### **Target Group :**

Under 6 through Under 9 and players of any age that wish to improve their dribbling skills.

### **Coaching Objectives :**

Players learn to maintain control of ball while dribbling. Players learn two methods of changing direction while dribbling. Players learn to “look up” to keep an eye on what is happening around them. Players learn to make decisions.

### **Equipment requirements :**

Area of 20m x 20m, sixteen field markers (or two for each player), one ball for each player.

## **DRIBBLING 201**

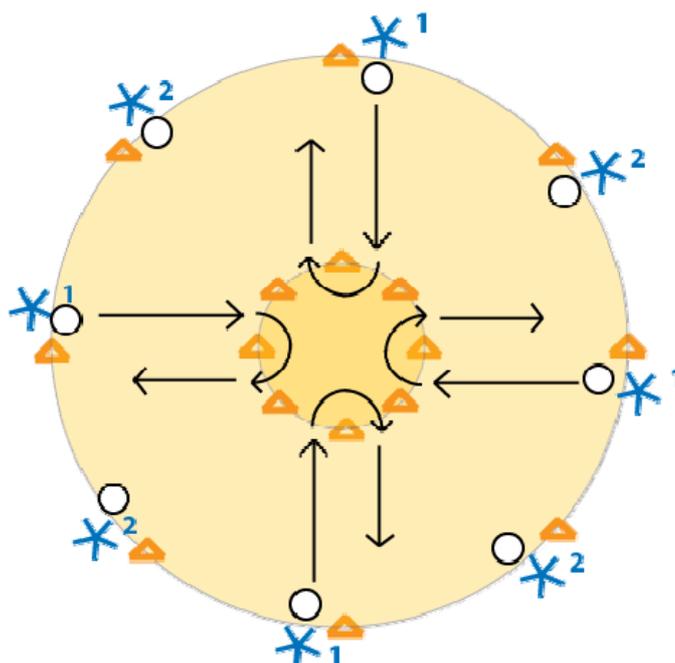


Diagram 11

1. Set up a circle of 20m diameter using eight field markers as shown in diagram 11, with a smaller circle of 3m diameter in its centre with another eight field markers.
2. Place one player on each of the outer circle's field markers. Each player is to have a ball. Give each player a number, half to be number 1 and half to be number 2.
3. When you call "1" all player 1's are to dribble from the outer circle to the inner circle, turn around the field marker with the instep of their right foot and dribble back to their original location. When you call "2" all player 2's are to do the same thing. Repeat three or four times each.
4. Repeat step 3 however instruct the players that when they turn they are to use the instep of their left foot. Again, repeat three or four times.
5. Repeat step 3 however instruct the players that when they turn they are to use the outstep of their right foot. Again, repeat three or four times.
6. Repeat step 3 however instruct the players that when they turn they are to use the outstep of their left foot. Again, repeat three or four times.
7. To finish, if you feel the players are capable, still using the "1" or "2" call, run a couple of races whereby the players have to dribble in and around the field marker and return and stop with their foot on the ball to win.

### Key Coaching Points :

- 🕒 start SLOW, it's not a race (until the last step potentially)
- 🕒 coach the players to touch the ball with the instep of their boot and with alternating feet with EVERY STEP that they take while dribbling
- 🕒 coach the players to make small adjustments to the ball as they are rounding the field marker
- 🕒 coach the players to "look up" so they know which way to dribble and where the field markers are
- 🕒 for beginner players, start the players by walking rather than jogging
- 🕒 for more advanced players, encourage them to see how fast they can go while still maintaining control, both while dribbling and while turning

### Stuart's tips :

*This drill will take less than fifteen minutes to complete. At these young ages, we need the players to spend more time dribbling, so certainly do not hesitate to repeat each step more than three or four times if the player's interest is there.*

*This drill uses dribbling, however, the key learning component that we are looking to achieve relates to changing direction with the ball while dribbling, so don't spend too much time focussing on the dribbling technique, rather concentrate your coaching on turning technique.*

*By requiring the players to use the instep and outstep of both feet, this drill will improve their coordination and their confidence greatly.*

*This is a drill that can (and should) be used many times throughout a season of coaching.*

## **DRIBBLING 202**

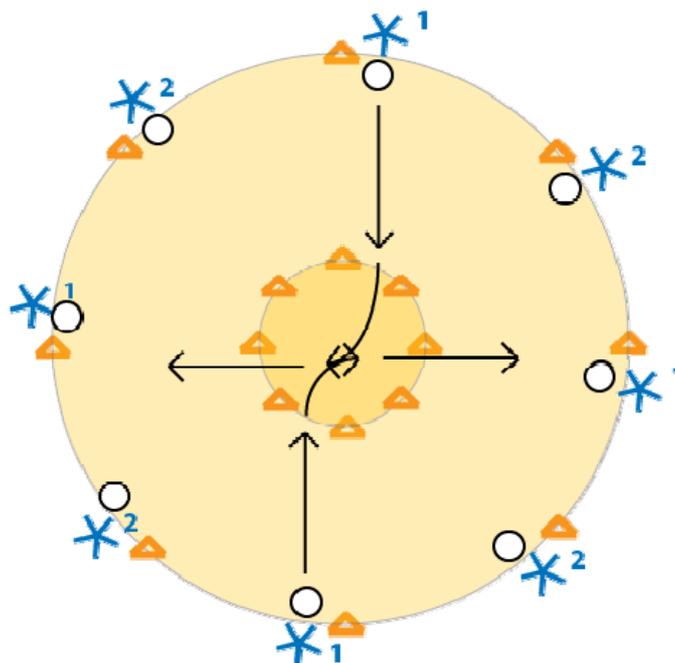


Diagram 12

1. Use the same area and setup whereby half the players are number 1's and half number 2's and each player has a ball (Diagram 12).
2. When you call "1" all player 1's are to dribble from the outer circle to the inner circle, change direction at a right angle using the instep of their left foot and return to when the next player 1 had started from. When you call "2" all player 2's are to do the same thing. Repeat three or four times.

*Note that I have illustrated movement of only two players, because otherwise it appears very confusing with too many lines in the inner circle. When you call "1" or "2" all such numbered players should participate.*

3. Repeat step 2 however instruct the players that when they change direction they are to use the outstep of their right foot. Again, repeat three or four times.

4. Repeat step 2 however instead of turning to the right (as illustrated) instruct the players to turn to their left, using the instep of their right foot. Repeat three or four times.
5. Repeat step 4 however instead of turning to the right (as illustrated) instruct the players to turn to their left, using the outstep of their left foot. Repeat three or four times.
6. Talk to the players about the need to watch out for other players to avoid collisions and to avoid losing their ball.
7. Once the players have completed all steps three or four times they will have dribbled the ball as much as 120m – 160m, changed the direction of the ball 12 – 16 times and importantly, been encouraged (and maybe even realised the need) to “look up” or “look over the ball” while dribbling and particularly while turning to avoid collisions, to go in the right direction and to maintain control of their ball.

### **Key Coaching Points :**

- 🕒 start SLOW, it's not a race
- 🕒 coach the players to touch the ball with the instep of their boot and with alternating feet with EVERY STEP that they take while dribbling
- 🕒 coach the players to make small adjustments to the ball as they are rounding the field marker
- 🕒 coach the players to “look up” so they know which way to dribble and where the field markers are

### **Stuart's tips :**

*This drill will take less than fifteen minutes to complete. At these young ages, we need the players to spend more time dribbling, so certainly do not hesitate to repeat each step more than three or four times if the player's interest is there.*

*This drill uses dribbling, however, the key learning component that we are looking to achieve relates to changing direction with the ball while dribbling and “looking up”, so don't spend too much time focussing on the dribbling technique, rather concentrate your coaching on turning and “looking up”.*

*By requiring the players to use the instep and outstep of both feet, this drill will improve their coordination and their confidence greatly.*

*This is a drill that can (and should) be used many times throughout a season of coaching.*

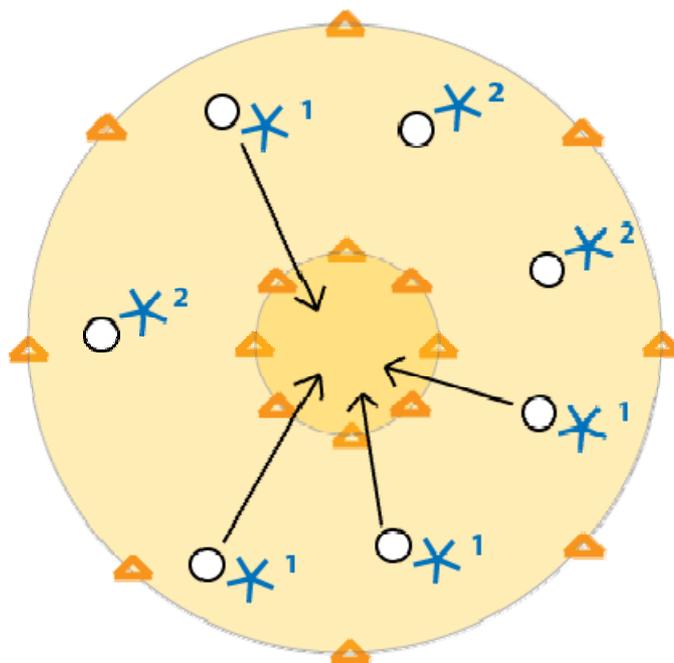
**DRIBBLING 203**

Diagram 13

1. Use the same area and setup whereby half the players are number 1's and half number 2's and each player has a ball (Diagram 13).
2. To start all players are to dribble their ball in which ever direction they prefer. They must keep their ball inside the outer circle but outside the inner circle. They should initially be allowed to dribble their ball for a little while and encouraged to "look up" to avoid a collision with the other players.
3. When you call "1" all player 1's are to dribble their ball as quickly as they can in to the inner circle and stop the ball with their foot on top. When all player 1's have controlled their ball in the inner circle, restart everyone dribbling again as explained in step 2. Repeat this as many times as the players remain interested, randomly calling "1" or "2".

**Key Coaching Points :**

- 🕒 dribble around slowly and then race to the inner circle when your number is called
- 🕒 coach the players to touch the ball with the instep of their boot and with alternating feet with EVERY STEP that they take while dribbling
- 🕒 coach the players to "look up" so they know which way to dribble, where the other players and where the field markers are

**Stuart's tips :**

*This drill will take less than ten minutes to complete, but feel free to go longer while ever the players remain interested.*

*The key learning components in this drill are decision making ( what's the quickest way to turn the ball so I can get in to the middle?), "looking up" and controlling the ball (how fast can I go before I lose control of the ball?), encourage all of these.*

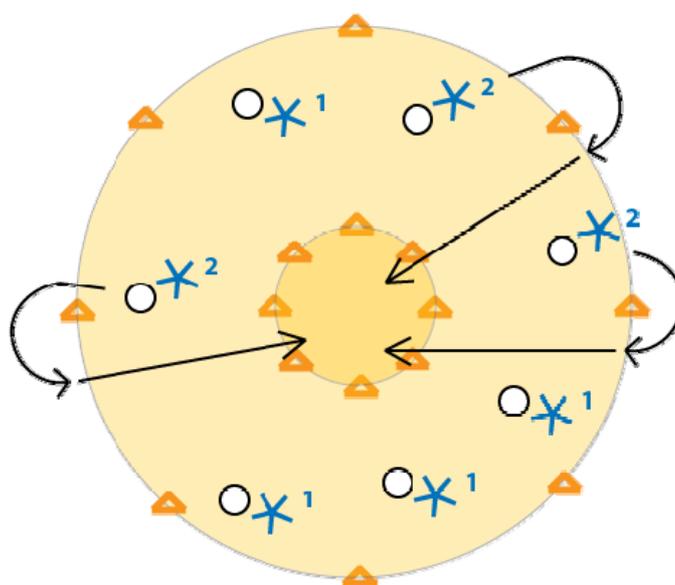
**DIRBBLING 204**

Diagram 14

1. Use the same area and setup whereby half the players are number 1's and half number 2's and each player has a ball (Diagram 14).
2. To start all players are to dribble their ball in which ever direction they prefer. They must keep their ball inside the outer circle but outside the inner circle. They should initially be allowed to dribble their ball for a little while and encouraged to "look up" to avoid a collision with the other players.
3. When you call "1" all player 1's are to dribble their ball as quickly as they can around one of the field markers of the outer circle and then in to the inner circle and stop the ball with their foot on top. When all player 1's have controlled their ball in the inner circle, restart everyone dribbling again as explained in step 2. Repeat this ma many times as the players remain interested, randomly calling "1" or "2".

### **Key Coaching Points :**

- 🕒 dribble around slowly and then race to the inner circle when your number is called
- 🕒 coach the players to touch the ball with the instep of their boot and with alternating feet with EVERY STEP that they take while dribbling
- 🕒 coach the players to “look up” so they know which way to dribble, where the other players and where the field markers are

### **Stuart’s tips :**

*This drill will take less than ten minutes to complete, but feel free to go longer while ever the players remain interested.*

*The key learning components in this drill are decision making ( what’s the quickest way to turn the ball so I can get in to the middle?), “looking up” and controlling the ball (how fast can I go before I lose control of the ball?), encourage all of these.*

*This along with all the stages of this training session will also provide a subliminal learning for the players, that being that they should keep their “ears open” to listen for instructions from their coach.*

*Because the last two stages of this training session have been competitive races, there is probably not any need to run a game at the end of the session.*

## ***Passing & Receiving 100***

### **Target Group :**

Under 6 & Under 7 and inexperienced players of any age.

### **Coaching Objectives :**

Players experience kicking a ball with both feet and with different parts of the foot. Players begin to learn the different behaviour of the ball when kicked in particular ways. Players begin to learn how to control a ball that has been passed to them. Players begin to learn that the best way to control the ball, whether passing or receiving, is by using the instep of the feet.

### **Equipment requirements :**

Area of 15m x 25m, eight field markers, one ball for each player.

### **PASSING AND RECEIVING 101**

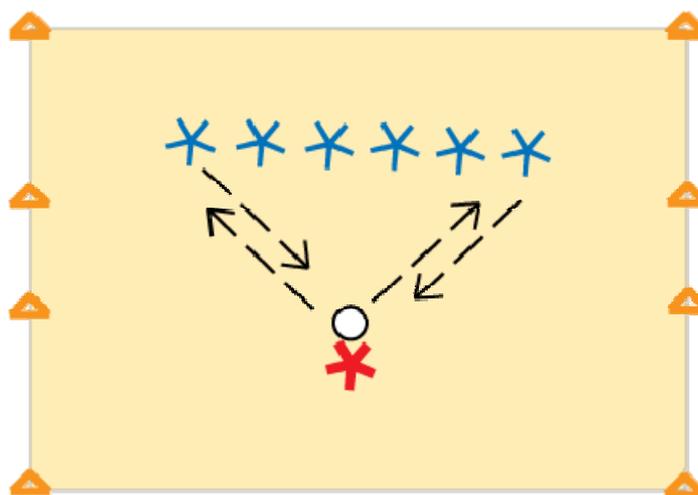


Diagram 15

1. Set up a rectangular area of 15m x 25m using field markers as shown in diagram 15 (the whole area will be used later).
2. Place all the players in a line approximately 1m apart from each other. The Coach should stand approximately 2m – 3m away from the players with the ball at his feet.
3. One player at a time, the Coach gently passes the ball using the instep of his foot to each player using the instep of his feet, encouraging the player accepting the pass to use the instep of his foot to receive the ball.

4. The player is then encouraged to pass the ball back to the Coach using the instep of his foot.

### **Key Coaching Points :**

- 🕒 use the instep
- 🕒 relax the foot when receiving the ball
- 🕒 lock the ankle out when passing the ball
- 🕒 ensure that the players use both feet, half of the time on the left foot and half on the right

### **Stuart's tips :**

*This drill is quite possibly the most boring drill that will ever be undertaken, for the Coach and for the players.*

*This drill is also one of the most important drills that will ever be undertaken.*

*It is crucial that the players start using the correct technique of passing and receiving the ball with the instep of their feet from an early age. This skill forms the foundation of almost every other technical skill that is used in the game of football.*

*Really encourage the players when they get it right. Make it a little bit exciting for them to get it right. Throw praise at them, applaud them, cheer them on, literally. Not only will this over-exuberance encourage all the players to try to get it right (because at this age they revel in recognition), it will help them to retain the learning you are giving them (because children remember really good experiences more than somewhat good experiences).*

*I would also strongly recommend that this drill be revisited several times throughout this session. For example:*

*Drill 101 – (five passes on each foot per player) – approximately 10 minutes*

*Drill 102 – approximately 10 minutes*

*Drill 101 – (five passes left foot only per player) – approximately 5 minutes*

*Drill 103 – approximately 5 minutes*

*Drill 101 – (five passes right foot only per player) – approximately 5 minutes*

*Drill 104 – approximately 10 minutes*

*Drill 101 – (five passes on each foot per player) – approximately 10 minutes*

*Finish with a game that requires the players to pass the ball.*

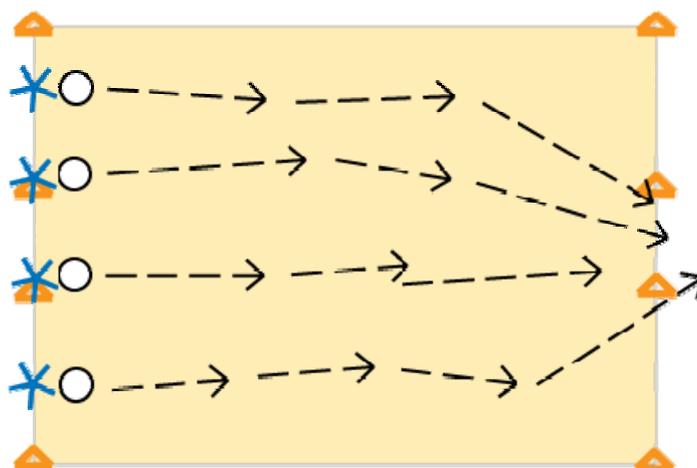
**PASSING AND RECEIVING 102**

Diagram 16

1. Use the same area as illustrated in diagram 16.
2. All players line up at one end of the marked area, each with a ball at their feet.
3. Using the correct technique, the players (all at once), pass their ball as far along the marked area as possible (direction is not initially important) and then follow their ball.
4. The players continue to pass the ball towards the other end of the marked area, finally taking a “shot on goal”.
5. When all players have traversed the marked area, line them up again and go back in the other direction, this time encouraging them only to pass using their left foot.
6. Repeat step 5 using only the right foot. Continue repeating until all players have traversed the marked area six times.

**Key Coaching Points :**

- 🏆 use the instep passing technique, coach the technique

**Stuart’s tips :**

*To begin, encourage the players to walk up to the ball, stop, and then pass the ball forward.*

*As they become increasingly competent in the passing technique, encourage them to walk up to the ball and pass it without stopping. Still focus on the technique (Where should the non-kicking foot be? What part of the foot should you kick with?)*

*When more competent again, encourage them to complete the drill while jogging or running. Keep your focus (and theirs) on the technique.*

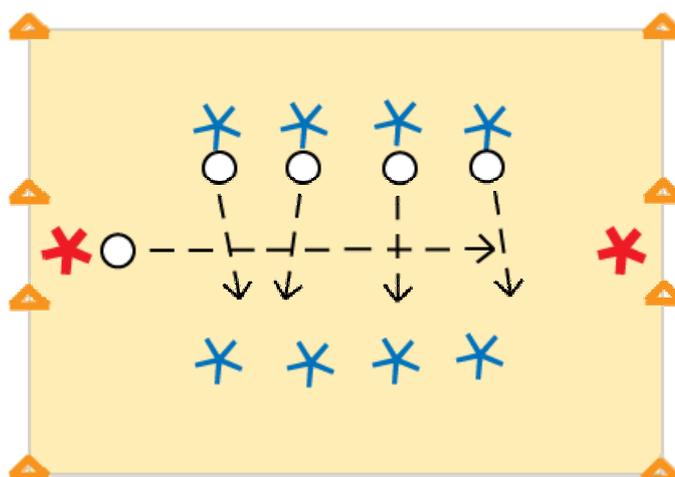
**PASSING AND RECEIVING 103**

Diagram 17

1. Use the same area. You will require two Coaches, sharing one ball as illustrated in diagram 17.
2. Players should be lined in pairs up as illustrated, with one ball between each two players.
3. The Coaches pass their ball down the tunnel and the players have to try to “torpedo” the Coaches’ ball by passing their own ball in to it.
4. The Coaches should pass the ball back and forth many times, always keeping the ball on the ground (no lofted passes) to ensure that the players have ample opportunity to “torpedo” the Coaches’ ball.
5. Encourage the players to pass with both feet.

**Key Coaching Points :**

- 🕒 use the instep passing technique, coach the technique

**Stuart’s tips :**

*Maintain focus on the correct technique for passing with the instep of the foot (Where should the non-kicking foot be? What part of the foot should you kick with?). Encourage the players also when they receive the ball using the correct technique.*

*Chances are that the players will miss with their “torpedo” more times than they will hit. This is not a problem because it means the ball will travel through towards their partners. Take the opportunity to encourage the partner when they receive the ball using the correct technique.*

*As players become more competent with their passing, you can replace the Coaches with two players.*

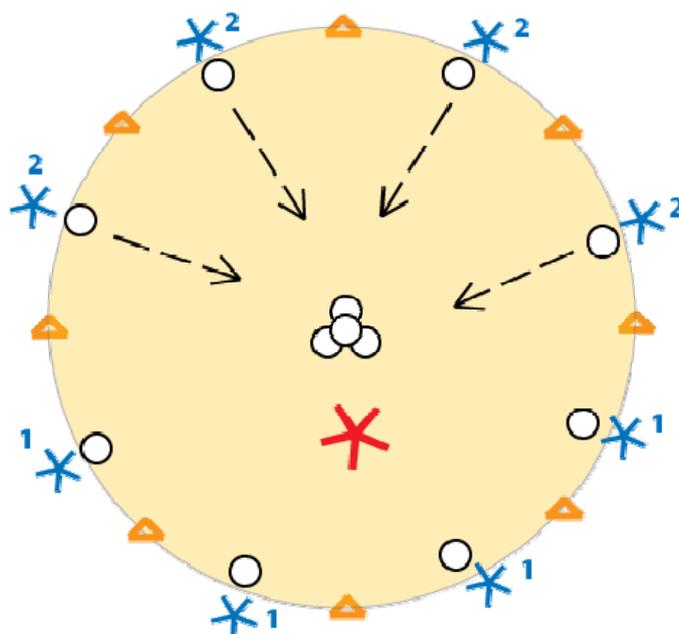
**PASSING AND RECEIVING 104**

Diagram 18

1. Use circular area of 10m diameter as illustrated in diagram 18 with a pyramid of balls in the very centre. The pyramid will require four balls, and each player will also need a ball.
2. Players should be distributed evenly around the circle, and put in to two teams, team “1” and team “2”.
3. When the Coach calls “1” all the players in team 1 try to pass their ball to knock down the pyramid. When the Coach calls (2” the players in team 2 do the same.
4. The Coach has been illustrated inside the circle as he may need to regularly re-build the pyramid.
5. Encourage the players to pass using the correct technique and with both feet.

**Key Coaching Points :**

- 🕒 use the instep passing technique, coach the technique

**Stuart’s tips :**

*Maintain focus on the correct technique for passing with the instep of the foot (Where should the non-kicking foot be? What part of the foot should you kick with?).*

## ***Passing & Receiving 200***

### **Target Group :**

Under 6 & Under 7 and inexperienced players of any age.

### **Coaching Objectives :**

Players experience kicking a ball with both feet and with different parts of the foot. Players begin to learn the different behaviour of the ball when kicked in particular ways. Players begin to learn how to control a ball that has been passed to them. Players begin to learn that the best way to control the ball, whether passing or receiving, is by using the instep of the feet.

### **Equipment requirements :**

Area of 15m x 20m, ten field markers, one ball for each two players.

## **PASSING AND RECEIVING 201**

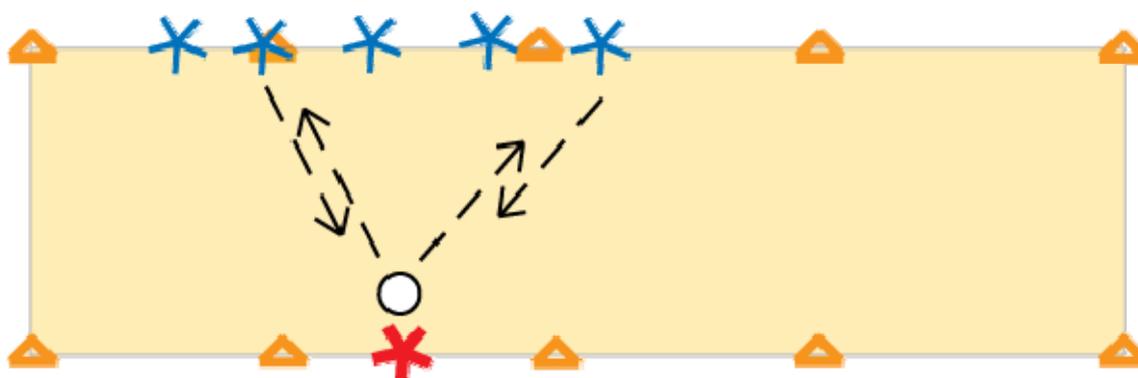


Diagram 19

1. Set up a continuous series of 3m x 3m squares as illustrated in diagram 19 (the whole area will be used later).
2. Place all the players in a line approximately 1m apart from each other. The Coach should stand approximately 2m – 3m away from the players with the ball at his feet.
3. One player at a time, the Coach gently passes the ball using the instep of his foot to each player using the instep of his feet, encouraging the player accepting the pass to use the instep of his foot to receive the ball.
4. Particular attention should be given to the technique of receiving the ball.

5. The player is then encouraged to pass the ball back to the Coach using the instep of his foot.
6. The Coach should always use the correct technique when receiving the ball (assuming, of course, that it comes back in the general direction of the Coach).

### **Key Coaching Points :**

- 🕒 use the instep
- 🕒 relax the foot when receiving the ball
- 🕒 lock the ankle out when passing the ball
- 🕒 ensure that the players use both feet, half of the time on the left foot and half on the right

### **Stuart's tips :**

*This drill is equally as boring as Passing & Receiving 100 and is also equally as important.*

*It is crucial that the players start using the correct technique of passing and receiving the ball with the instep of their feet from an early age. This skill forms the foundation of almost every other technical skill that is used in the game of football.*

*Really encourage the players when they get it right. Make it a little bit exciting for them to get it right. Throw praise at them, applaud them, cheer them on, literally. Not only will this over-exuberance encourage all the players to try to get it right (because at this age they revel in recognition), it will help them to retain the learning you are giving them (because children remember really good experiences more than somewhat good experiences).*

*I would also strongly recommend that this drill be revisited several times throughout this session. For example:*

*Drill 201 – (five receipts on each foot per player) – approximately 10 minutes*

*Drill 202 – approximately 10 minutes*

*Drill 201 – (five receipts left foot only per player) – approximately 5 minutes*

*Drill 203 – approximately 10 minutes*

*Drill 201 – (five receipts right foot only per player) – approximately 5 minutes*

*Drill 204 – approximately 10 minutes*

*Drill 201 – (five receipts on each foot per player) – approximately 10 minutes*

*Finish with a game that requires the players to pass and receive the ball and encourage particularly the receiving aspect.*

## PASSING AND RECEIVING 202

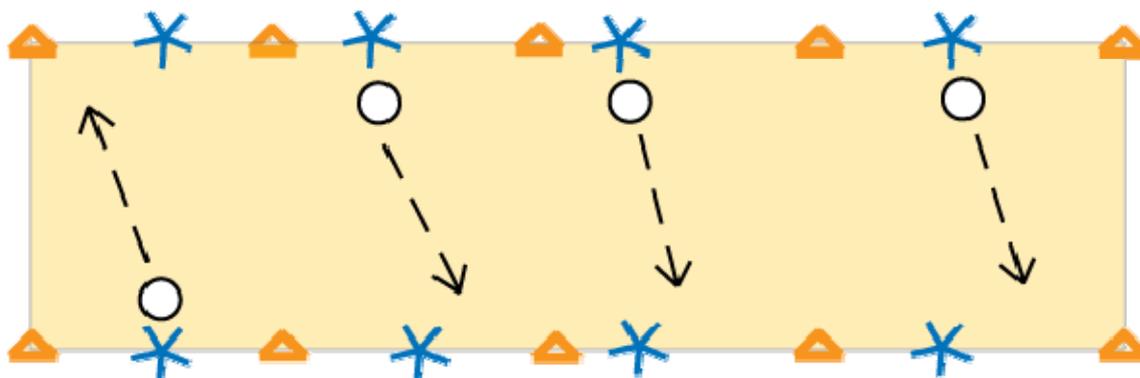


Diagram 20

1. Use the same area. You will require one ball for each two players.
2. Organise the players in to pairs and place one of the pair on opposite sides of each of the series of 3m x 3m squares as illustrated in diagram 20.
3. The players in each pair try to “score” against their opponent (in their 3m x 3m area) by passing the ball across the line without their opponent “receiving” the ball. The “receiving” player will need to move sideways across his goal line to position himself correctly and to “receive” the ball.
4. Coaching instructions should be very limited in respect to the way the players pass the ball and rather should focus on the opposing player receiving the ball in the technically correct way.
5. Allow both players to have 10 – 20 passes (and consequently opportunities to receive the ball).

### **Key Coaching Points :**

- ⚽ use the instep receiving technique, coach the technique

### **Stuart’s tips :**

*Maintain focus on the correct technique for receiving with the instep of the foot (Where should the non-receiving foot be? What part of the foot should you receive with?).*

*Encourage the receiving players to move towards the path of the ball and receive it all in one motion. Offer some encouragement to players who pass the ball using the correct instep passing technique, however, keep the primary focus on the receiving technique.*

*To help encourage correct receiving technique, make it a competition where 1 point is earned for scoring and 3 points are earned for receiving the ball correctly.*

## **PASSING AND RECEIVING 203**

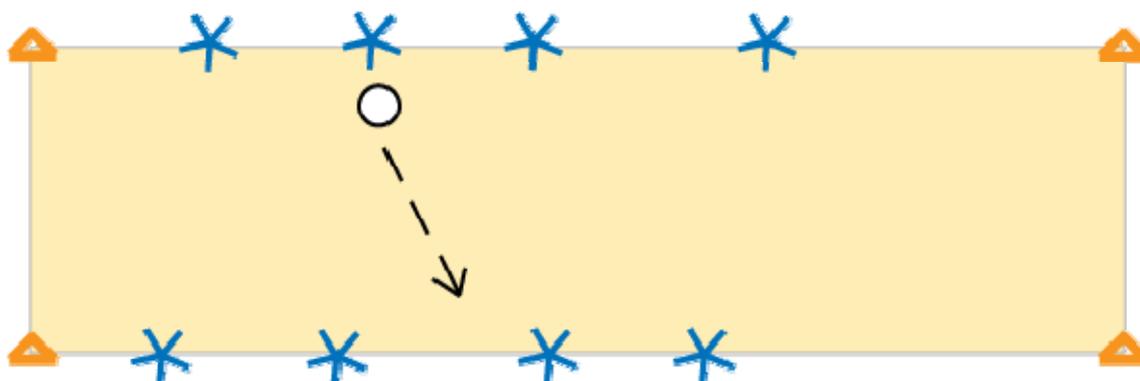


Diagram 21

1. Use the same area (note that now there are only four field markers though). You will require only one ball.
2. Organise the players in to two teams and place each team on opposite sides area as illustrated in diagram 21.
3. The players in each team are to work together to try to “score” by passing the ball across the opposition line without their opponent “receiving” the ball. The “receiving” team will need to work together to cover their goal line with individual players needing to position themselves correctly to “receive” the ball.
4. Coaching instructions should be very limited in respect to the way the players pass the ball and rather should focus on receiving the ball in the technically correct way.
5. Allow both teams to have 20 – 40 passes (and consequently opportunities to receive the ball).

### **Key Coaching Points :**

- use the instep receiving technique, coach the technique

### **Stuart’s tips :**

*This drill is just a team version of Passing & Receiving 202 and it encourages teamwork and communication (though you won’t see it straight away) and the coaching focus is identical. It also simulates a game environment, in so much as, in a real game there will be multiple players trying to win the ball.*

*To help encourage correct receiving technique, make it a competition where 1 point is earned for scoring and 3 points are earned for receiving the ball correctly.*

## PASSING AND RECEIVING 204

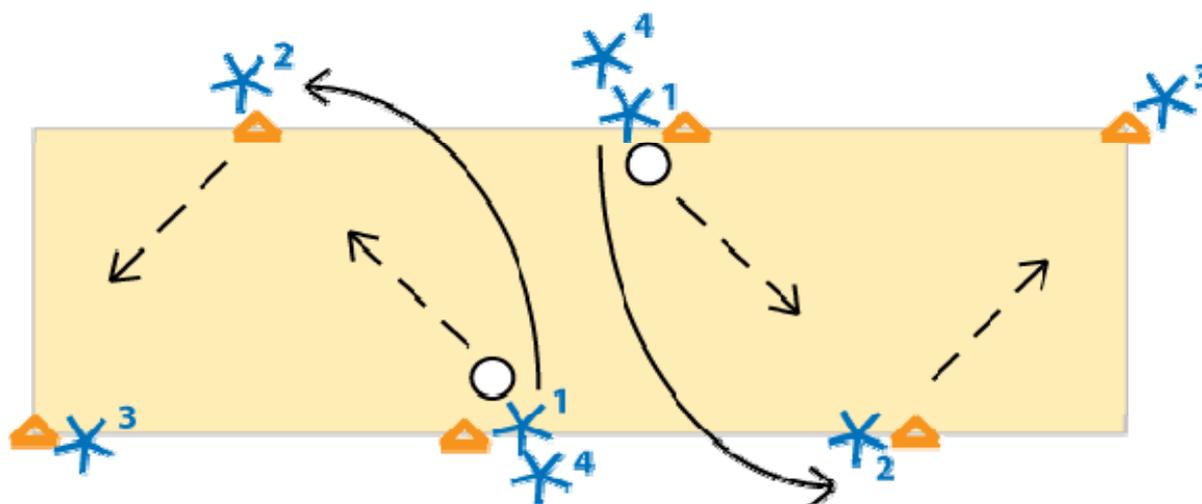


Diagram 22

1. Use the same area, however, arrange the field markers such that you have two triangles of equal sides of approximately 5m as illustrated in diagram 22. You will require two balls.
2. Organise four players on to the corners of the triangles as illustrated in diagram 19. On one of the corners there will be two players, one of whom has possession of the ball.
3. Player #1 passes the ball in an anti-clockwise direction to player #2 on the next corner of the triangle. After he has passed the ball he then jogs to that next corner (effectively following the ball). Player #2 receives the ball using the correct technique, then passes to player #3 and after he has passed the ball he then jogs to the next corner.
4. Player #3 receives, then passes and follows towards player #4. Player #4 receives, then passes and follows towards player #1. And so it goes around.

### Key Coaching Points :

- use the instep receiving technique, coach the technique
- encourage the passer of the ball to concentrate hard on the weight and direction of the pass (to make the receiver's job a little easier and to allow you the opportunity to coach)

### Stuart's tips :

*I have used two triangles in this example as I based the entire session on eight players. This drill can work with squares (4 sides, therefore 5 players), pentagons (5 sides, therefore 6 players), or even straight lines (1 side, therefore 3 players).*

*Encourage the use of both feet by changing direction from counter-clockwise to clockwise. This is also an excellent drill to use when the coaching focus is on passing technique.*

## Goal Keeping 100

### Target Group :

Under 6 & Under 7 and inexperienced players of any age.

### Coaching Objectives :

Players learn and/or enhance their ability to judge the direction of a ball. Players learn and/or enhance their ability to judge the flight of a ball. Players learn and/or enhance their ability to catch a ball.

### Equipment requirements :

Area of 15m x 10m, twenty-four field markers, one ball for each two players.

### GOAL KEEPING 101

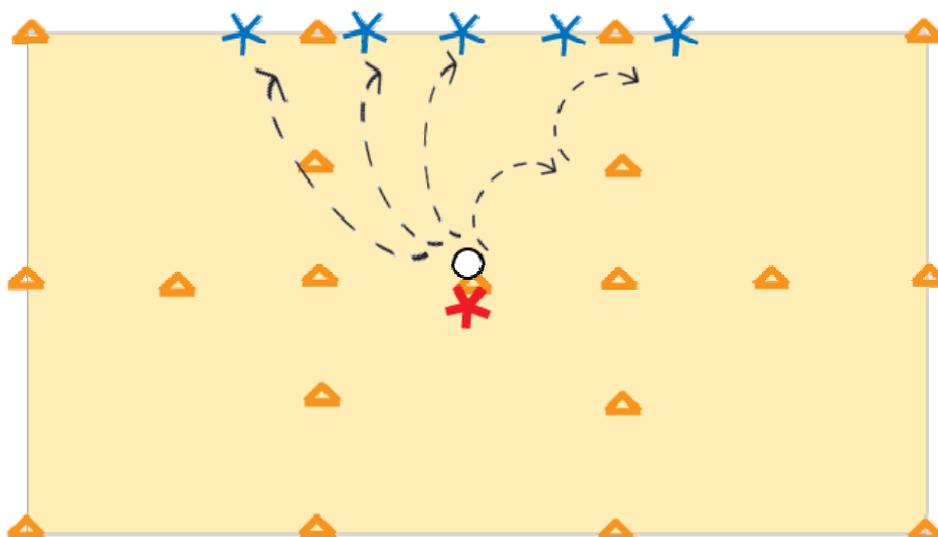


Diagram 23

1. Set up a continuous series of 5m x 5m squares as illustrated in diagram 23 (the whole area will be used later).
2. Place all the players in a line approximately 1m apart from each other. The Coach should stand approximately 2m – 3m away from the players with the ball.
3. Initially the Coach should explain and demonstrate to all the players the correct position for the hands to catch a low ball and to catch a high ball. All the players should be asked to copy the Coach. (Refer page 12, diagrams 5 and 6)
4. Use a game of “Simon Says” (high or low) to ensure the players have the basic hand positions correct. *Note that we have not yet used the ball.*

5. One player at a time, the Coach gently throws the ball to each player having it arrive to the player at roughly stomach height, encouraging the player catch the ball in his hands. Encourage and acknowledge the correct technique.
6. If players seem uneasy about catching the ball, bounce it to them rather than throwing it.
7. After each player has caught several low balls, try throwing some higher balls to them (just above head height) so they can practice using the high ball technique. Again, encourage and acknowledge the correct technique.

### **Key Coaching Points :**

- 🕒 coach the technique
- 🕒 for highly inexperienced players there is nothing wrong with standing closer
- 🕒 as players become increasingly confident and experienced, encourage them to try to catch a ball thrown from farther away

### **Stuart's tips :**

*This drill is targeted primarily at achieving two things:*

- (a) ensuring that the players are not scared of the ball*
- (b) ensuring that the players are using the correct technique to catch the ball*

*Many Coaches will be able to progress through this drill in less than five minutes if they observe that the players are showing no fear of the ball.*

*Nonetheless, this is an important drill in regards to the players learning the very basics of the correct goal keeper ball catching techniques.*

*If players are showing a fear of catching the ball, it may be worthwhile using a softer ball (ensuring it is of approximately the same size as a football) to help them to overcome their concerns. In this case, in a later repeat of this same coaching session, progress to a slightly deflated (and therefore softer) football, and later again to a correctly inflated football.*

## GOAL KEEPING 102

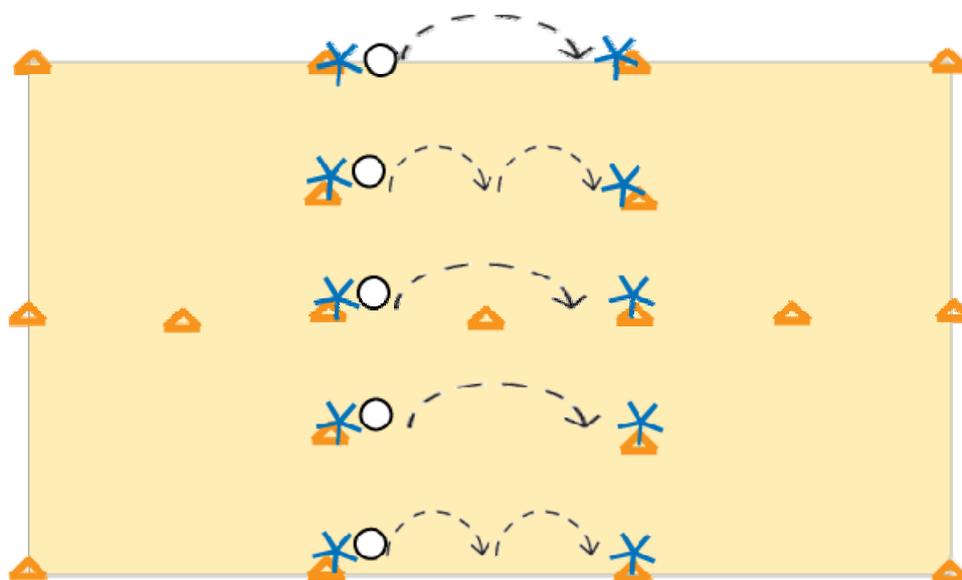


Diagram 24

1. Use the same area (the whole area will be used later) and organise the players in pairs and arrange them in two lines facing each other.
2. Each pair of players takes turns throwing the ball to their partner, who should be encouraged to use the correct technique to catch the ball (whether high or low).
3. After the second player catches the ball, he should then throw it back to his partner, and so it goes on.

### Key Coaching Points :

- 🕒 coach the technique
- 🕒 to help maintain interest and focus, really encourage/praise players who use the correct technique and who show no fear of the ball, regardless of whether they are successful in catching the ball
- 🕒 do not encourage/praise players who catch the ball using an incorrect technique

### Stuart's tips :

*Typically this drill will only last five minutes as it is very difficult to maintain very young players focus on this drill (players are likely to throw the ball too far, be laughing and giggling too much ,etc after just a couple of minutes). **Note that this is a good thing**, if they are laughing they are having fun and not being scared of the ball, one of the key objectives.*

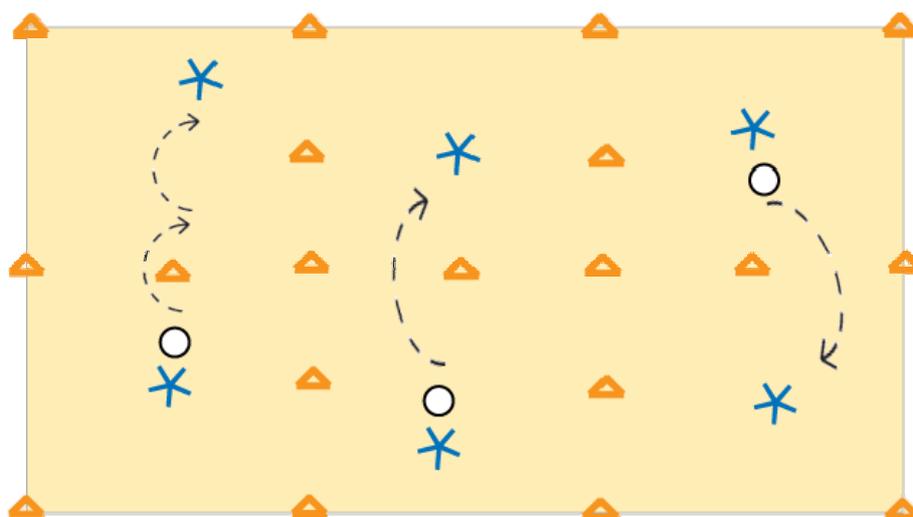
**GOAL KEEPING 103**

Diagram 25

1. Use the same area and distribute the players as evenly as possible between the smaller 5m x 5m squares.
2. This drill is to be played like school-ground “handball”, where the players try to throw the ball to an area of their opponents square that they will not be able to catch. The “catchers” should be moving towards the path of the ball to be able to catch it.
3. Where possible, the “catchers” should move in such a way that they get their body “behind” the ball when catching. This is usually best achieved using lateral movement (side to side).
4. Focus the coaching on the technical aspect of catching, but give some considerable focus to the “catcher” moving towards the path of the ball.

**Key Coaching Points :**

- 🕒 coach the technique
- 🕒 as players become increasingly competent in catching the ball in the technically correct way, adjust the focus towards them moving to the ball.
- 🕒 encourage players who “attack” the ball

**Stuart’s tips :**

*This drill should last for approximately ten minutes, with the initial focus being on the correct ball catching technique and then shifting towards players moving in to a position to give themselves every opportunity to catch the ball, using lateral movement as much as possible.*

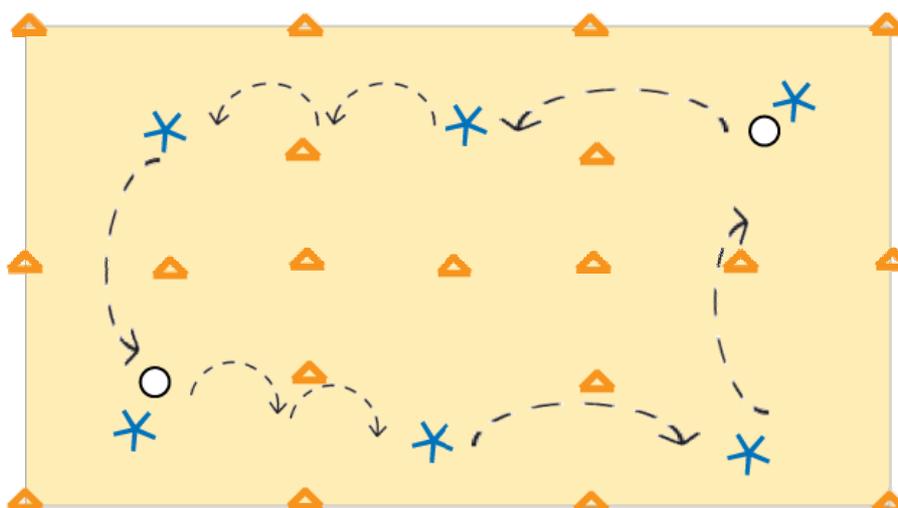
**GOAL KEEPING 104**

Diagram 26

1. Use the same area and distribute the players as evenly as possible between the smaller 5m x 5m squares.
2. Two of the players will start with a ball and throw it in a counter-clockwise direction to the next square. Their throw should be aimed to make it harder for the “catcher” (in that next square) to catch the ball.
3. When the “catcher” catches the ball, he should immediately throw it in the same counter-clockwise direction to the next square. And the game goes around and around with the challenge being to see which ball can catch up to the other one.
4. Where possible, the “catchers” should move in such a way that they get their body “behind” the ball when catching. This is usually best achieved using lateral movement (side to side).
5. Focus the coaching on the technical aspect of catching, but give some considerable focus to the “catcher” moving towards the path of the ball.

**Key Coaching Points :**

- 🎯 coach the techniques of moving and catching
- 🎯 encourage the players to throw the ball quickly as this helps to develop their “next play” thinking

**Stuart’s tips :**

*This drill should last approximately ten to fifteen minutes. Adjust the direction from counter-clockwise to clockwise each time one ball catches up the other.*

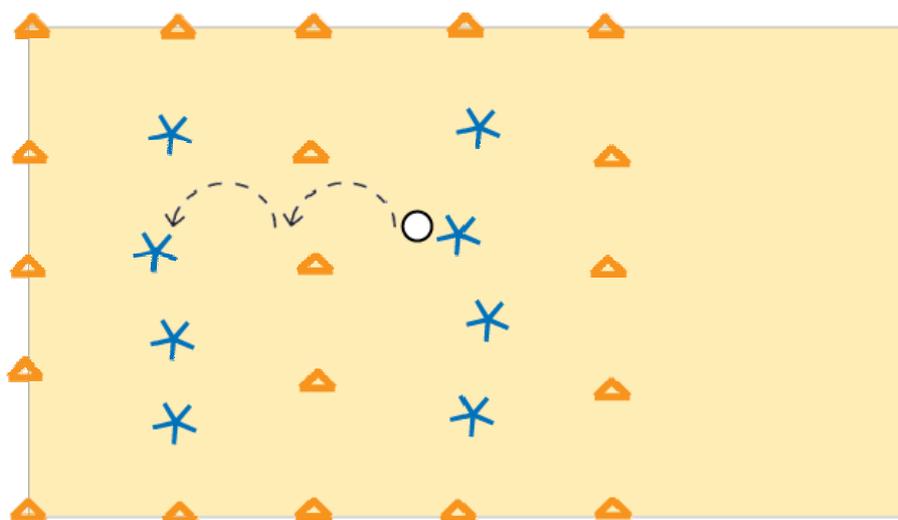
**GOAL KEEPING 105**

Diagram 27

1. Use the same area (note that some of the field markers have changed position creating two areas of 5m x 10m) and distribute the players in to two teams.
2. This drill is essentially like a game of catching volleyball, one team against the other.
3. Encourage players to move to and “attack” the ball in order catch it (and therefore help their team to win).

**Key Coaching Points :**

- 🕒 coach the techniques of moving and catching
- 🕒 encourage the players to be aware of their team mates when going for a ball

**Stuart’s tips :**

*This drill should last approximately ten to fifteen minutes, and if you do the scoring “first to five points” you can change the teams around many times to help ensure that every player has the opportunity to “win”.*

*This drill is a progression of Goal Keeping 103 and adds the key aspect of spatial awareness, something that is crucial for any football player (indeed for any form of team sport).*

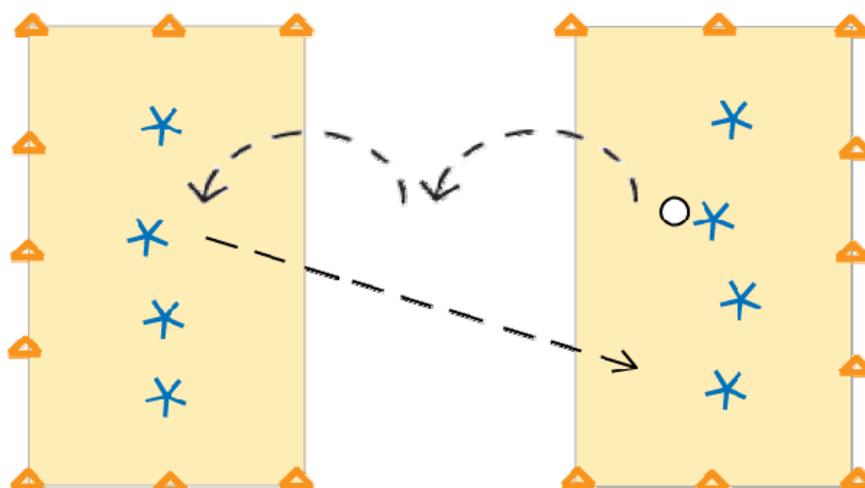
**GOAL KEEPING 106**

Diagram 28

1. Use the same area (note that some of the field markers have changed position creating two areas of 5m x 10m with a void of 5m between them) and distribute the players in to two teams.
2. Players are to either throw or kick the ball from their area to try to cross the “line”, as marked by the field markers, of the other team. To gain a point they can cross either the 10m line at the back or either of the shorter 5m lines.
3. The players in the team receiving the ball are only allowed to use goal keeper catching techniques to prevent a goal being scored. They must use their hands. If they use their feet to stop the ball, it should be counted as a goal against their team anyway.
4. Encourage players to move to and “attack” the ball in order catch it (and therefore help their team to win).

**Key Coaching Points :**

- 🏀 coach the techniques of moving and catching
- 🏀 encourage the players to be aware of their team mates when going for a ball

**Stuart’s tips :**

*This drill should last approximately ten to fifteen minutes and brings together the skills that the players have been developing throughout the session in to a much more game realistic situation.*

*If the players are competent and confident in their own goal keeping abilities, this drill should go without a “goal” being scored. This is a good measure of the competency of the players.*

## Heading 100

### Target Group :

Under 6 & Under 7 and inexperienced players of any age.

### Coaching Objectives :

Players are introduced to heading a ball using a correct technique. Players learn not to be scared of the ball. Players learn the importance of keeping their eyes open and watching the ball all the way on to their head. Players begin to learn how to judge the trajectory of a ball to be able to position themselves for a header.

### Equipment requirements :

Area of 5m x 10m, six field markers, one “soft” ball approximately equal size of a football, one slightly deflated football and one normally inflated football.

### HEADING 101

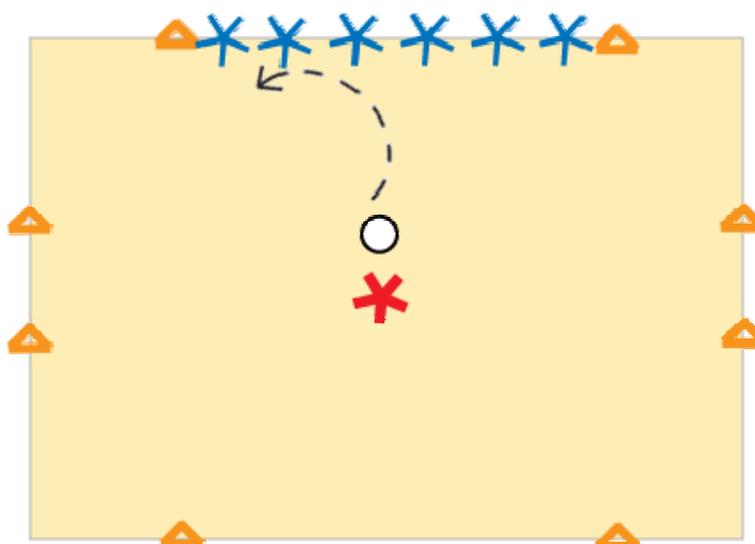


Diagram 29

1. Set up an area using field markers incorporating a 5m x 5m square plus, on opposing edges of the square and approximately 2m outside the edge, a gate 1m wide, as illustrated in diagram 29.
2. Place all the players in a line approximately 1m apart from each other. The Coach should stand approximately 1m – 2m away from the players with the ball.
3. One player at a time, the Coach gently throws the “soft” ball to each player having it arrive to the player at head height, encouraging the player header the ball.

*Encourage and acknowledge the correct technique, however, definitely also encourage players who header the ball using an incorrect technique. Remember, at this age/stage players are likely to be fearful of the ball hitting them. Your encouragement and praise will help build their confidence.*

4. After every player has experienced (or at least attempted) heading the ball two or three times, go through the players again giving them five to ten headers in a row, with the last couple using the slightly deflated football.

### **Key Coaching Points :**

- 🕒 take the time to ensure that every player understands the correct part of the head to use when heading the ball
- 🕒 really really really encourage players to keep their eyes open (this is the main reason that players fail to correctly execute a header) ...eyes must be open
- 🕒 using the “soft” ball means that even if the player misjudges the trajectory of the ball and it hits them in the face, it will not hurt them
- 🕒 progress to the deflated football when your players are heading with the correct part of the head 70%+ of the time

### **Stuart’s tips :**

*This drill should last approximately ten to fifteen minutes, assuming that you successful progress from the “soft” ball to the deflated football.*

*Do not lose sight of the fact that the players could be scared of the ball. Introducing them to heading using softer balls to start will help them to overcome their fears, however, understand that each time you progress to a harder ball some of their fears will return.*

*Particularly for players that are very inexperienced in heading, encourage them even if their technique is not perfect. Heading is a learned action that requires a lot of practice and the players will only want to practice if they believe they are progressing.*

*For this drill and the others in this session it is advisable to have people (eg parents, but not players) assisting the Coach by quickly retrieving the ball when it goes somewhere that it shouldn't, something that is likely to happen a lot until the players become competent in heading.*

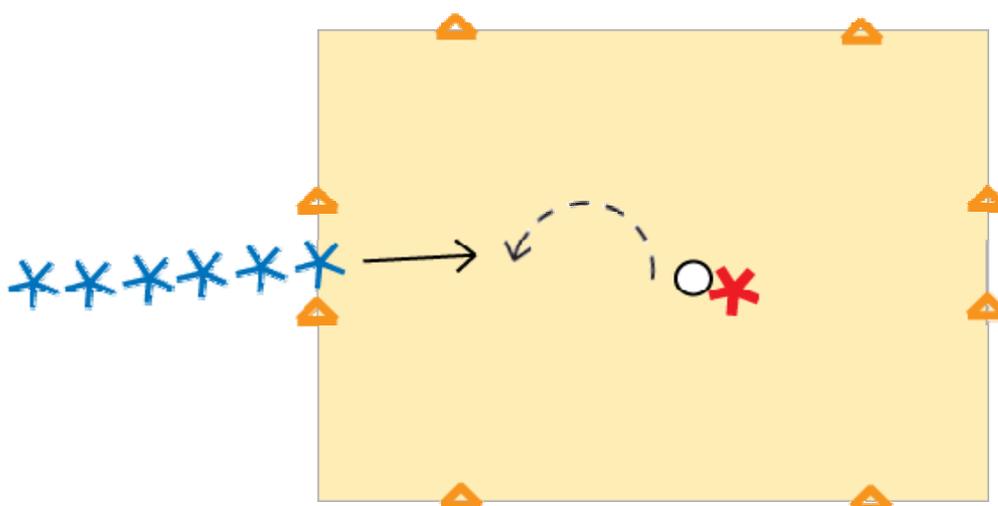
**HEADING 102**

Diagram 30

1. Use the same area and whichever is the “hardest” ball that you have successfully progressed the players to in drill 101.
2. Place all the players in a single line in one gate. The Coach should stand approximately 4m – 5m away in the centre of the area as illustrated in diagram 30.
3. One at a time the players should be called to move towards the Coach, who will throw the ball to them at head height for them to header is back to them.
4. Start the players moving slowly (even walking) until they are more often than not able to header the ball back in the direction of the Coach, then ask them to speed up a little (eg to a jog) and finally do the exercise running.

**Key Coaching Points :**

- 🕒 be sure to continue to coach the key technical aspect, particularly eyes open
- 🕒 this drill introduces the need to judge the trajectory of the ball while the player is moving

**Stuart’s tips :**

*This drill should last approximately five to ten minutes, giving each player the opportunity to correctly header the ball up to five times.*

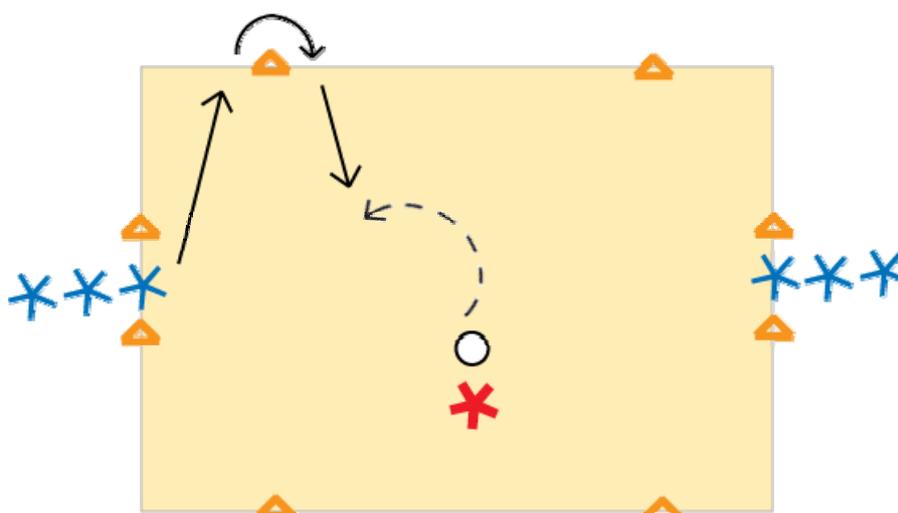
**HEADING 103**

Diagram 31

1. Use the same area and whichever is the “hardest” ball that you have successfully progressed the players to in drill 101.
2. Place all the players in to two teams, each in a line in a gate. The Coach should stand approximately 4m – 5m away in the centre of the area as illustrated in diagram 31.
3. One at a time and from alternating teams, the players are called to run around the outside field marker, as illustrated in diagram 31, and towards the Coach, who will throw the ball to them at head height for them to header is back to them.
4. Points are scored when a player successfully makes a header on the ball.

**Key Coaching Points :**

- be sure to continue to coach the key technical aspect, particularly eyes open
- this drill introduces the need to judge the trajectory of the ball while the player is moving

**Stuart’s tips :**

*This drill should last approximately ten to fifteen minutes. Give each player the opportunity to be on the winning team by mixing the teams up regularly (eg first to five wins).*

*As the players become increasingly competent in this skill, you can make it more difficult by only awarding points if the header comes back to the Coach, or more difficult again by awarding points if the header comes back to the Coach’s chest, or his feet, or above his head.*

*A good way to finish a session on heading is to play a normal game involving all the players in the team and to give “bonus” goals if any of the players do a header during the game.*

# Drills and Training Sessions

## Level 2

The Instep vs The Outstep Of The Foot – Technical information designed to provide an understanding of the introductory techniques to educate inexperienced players in the two most common methods by which to pass and receive the ball.

Behaviour Of The Ball – Instep vs Outstep – Technical information designed to provide an understanding of the general behaviour of the ball when received using the instep of the foot and the outstep of the foot.

Passing & Receiving 300 – Session requiring minimal equipment and lasting approximately one hour that will introduce players to and/or enhance their ability to pass and receive the ball with an emphasis on experimenting with the use of the instep and the outstep of the foot.

Heading The Ball – Technical information designed to provide an understanding of the introductory techniques to educate inexperienced players in the basics of heading the ball.

## ***The Instep vs The Outstep of the Foot***

Throughout Level 1 we have learned that the first part of the foot that players should master using for passing and receiving is the instep. This is the area highlighted in green on diagram 32.



Diagram 32

It is the area from approximately level with the ball of the foot (where the bone is prominent) and along the side of the foot to approximately 1cm – 3cm in front of the ankle bone.

It is the area along side of the foot, not along the top of the foot.

Another often-used area of the foot is referred to as the outstep. This is the area highlighted in diagram 33.

It is the area from the toes, across the top of the arch of the foot, almost to the outside ankle, and all the way down to the sole of the foot.



Diagram 33

The outstep is an area of the foot that is only slightly curved and is regularly used for passing and receiving a football by players who are wrong footed and consequently cannot use their instep.

It is also regularly used when receiving the ball and/or when dribbling by players who wish to turn while keeping the ball away from their opponent (eg if a player has the ball on their right foot and their opponent is on their left side, they can turn to the right using the outstep of their right foot and in so doing keep their body between their opponent and the ball.

When passing or receiving using the outstep of the foot, the player's toes should be pointed downwards slightly and inwards towards the instep of his other foot such that the outside ankle is

## ***Behaviour of the Ball – Instep vs Outstep***

With practice and by constantly being encouraged to experiment (particularly during training) players will gain a conditioned understanding of the behaviour of the ball when it strikes various parts of the body.

In coaching terms, two of the easiest techniques to help provide this understanding are :

- receiving the ball with the instep of the foot, and
- receiving the ball with the outstep of the foot.

When a player receives the ball with the instep of their foot, as illustrated in diagram 34, the ball should come under their control immediately in front of them.

This statement assumes of course that the player's first touch when receiving the ball is sufficiently competent to truly bring the ball under control.

Using the instep of the foot to receive a ball is by far and away the most often used technique of receiving a ball. Simply, this is because it is the technique that allows the greatest and most predictable control of the ball and because, generally, a player will want the ball to come under their control directly in front of them.



Diagram 34

When a player receives the ball with the outstep of their foot, as illustrated in diagram 35, the ball should come under their control slightly in front of them and to the side of their body. In diagram 35, the outstep right foot has been used to receive the ball and so it has come under control slightly in front and just to the right of the player.

Again, this statement assumes that the player is competent in the technique.

Using the outstep is less regularly used, however, when this technique is mastered it can be a very potent weapon in the player's arsenal.

When used correctly, it will allow a player to protect the ball from an opponent, to create space for himself and can lead to extremely fast "turning" on the ball.



Diagram 35

## Passing & Receiving 300

### Target Group :

Somewhat experienced through to intermediate players of any age.

### Coaching Objectives :

Players experience receiving and passing a ball with both feet and with the instep and the outstep of the foot. Players learn control the ball with their first touch and experience the different behaviour of the ball when received using the instep and the outstep of their foot.

### Equipment requirements :

Area of 5m x 10m, six field markers, one "soft" ball approximately equal size of a football, one slightly deflated football and one normally inflated football.

### PASSING & RECEIVING 301

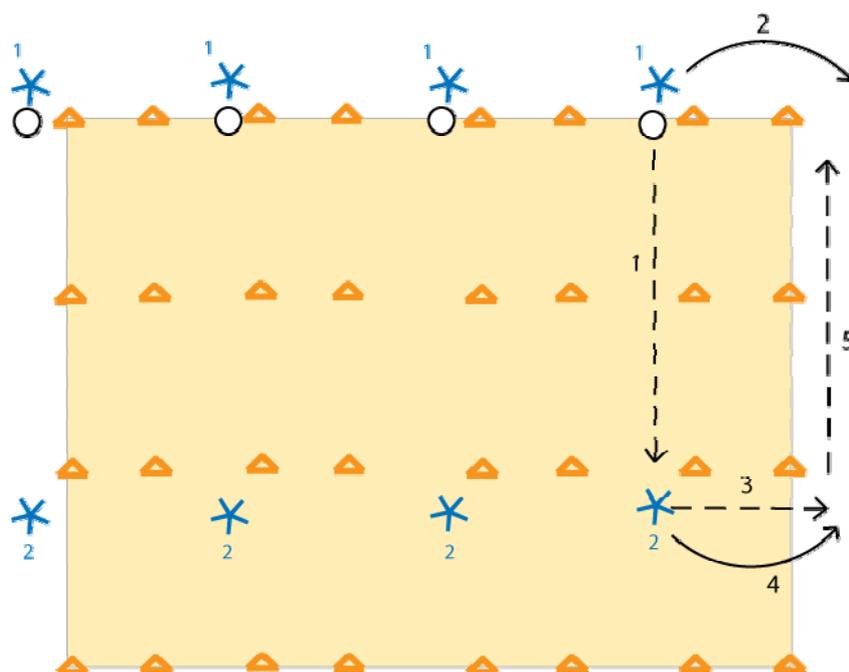


Diagram 36

1. Set up a series of four pairs of cones, 1m apart, with each series separated from the next by at least two metres. Set up one series for each two players involved in the drill. The set up is illustrated in diagram 36.

2. Organise the players in to pairs and give each player in the pairing a number of either 1 or 2, such that there is a 1 and 2 in each pairing. All players "1" are given a ball for the pair. Arrange the players as illustrated in diagram 36.
3. All players "1" should pass the ball to their partner, as illustrated by ball movement 1 in the diagram. As soon as they have passed the ball they should move to the field marker to their left, as illustrated by player movement 2 in the diagram, and prepare themselves to receive the return pass.
4. When the original pass arrives to players 2, they should receive the ball on the instep of their right foot, with the first touch sufficient that it move the ball to their right approximately 1m – 1.5m (to the other side of the field marker), as illustrated by ball movement 3 in the diagram. After making their first touch these players should move to their right, as illustrated by player movement 4 in the diagram, in preparation to make the return pass, as illustrated by ball movement 5 in the diagram.
5. And so it goes around.
6. After the players have made and received approximately 10 passes, ask them to change the direction from counter-clockwise to clockwise, which will mean that they should be using the instep of their left feet for both passing and receiving.
7. After the players have made and received approximately 10 passes, ask them to change the direction back to counter-clockwise and instruct them to use the outstep of their right foot to receive the pass.
8. After the players have made and received approximately 10 passes, ask them to change the direction from counter-clockwise to clockwise, which will mean that they should be using the outstep of their left foot to receive the pass.
9. Ask the players to describe the different behaviour of the ball when receiving using the instep compared to the outstep. Ask the players to describe how they needed to position their bodies in order to direct the ball around the field marker with their first touch, comparing instep versus outstep. Ask the players to describe which type of pass receiving left the body weighted in the best direction to make the movement towards the ball in order to make the return pass.

