

Tips/suggestions for Coaching Longmeadow Soccer

Tips and suggestions below can be used by both in-town and traveling coaches and are based on these themes:

Teaching the Coaches Educating the Parents Playing with the Kids

Start with the Fundamentals:

(level /details of explanation should be adjusted for different age groups)

Explain Parts of Ball for touching and kicking

BARE FEET Practice:

(kids are wearing cleats and shin pad too early that they lose touch/feel of the ball; that's why some of them "toe" the ball and " plow through" each other)

TOUCH, KICK, juggle, DRIBBLE, PASS, shield/screen, volley

- with different parts of the foot: instep/laces, inside/outside, toes up/down, relax/withdraw foot/firm ankle, loft/chip etc
- use hand and wrist to demonstrate the scoop motion, ankle lock position and others
- see the ball without looking at the ball (peripheral vision)
- while dribbling lean over the ball; **sudden change** of direction and/or speed
- placement of/weight on non-kicking foot: **"step into the pass"**; lean over, follow through, eye contact, etc
- angle approach while shooting; strike through

Common errors: head down while dribbling, not leaning over ball, not keeping ankle locked, not looking at ball when kicking, plant foot being behind, in front, or too far away from ball, no follow through, striking ball with incorrect area on foot, keeping plant leg locked, being too upright, etc.

TRAPPING (control, control, control): instep/sidestep, thigh/chest, low/high

- balance with arms; "sit on the ball", "cushion/suck the ball", etc

DEFENSIVE MOVE/STANCE (you are defending most of the time, remember the Italian and French teams at the World Cup 06!)

- 1 on 1: "close down", concentrate on ball, "jockey/shadow" attacker, maintain balance while spacing, sliding;
- 2 on 3: drop & cover, no chasing; "You don't have to win the ball to get the ball back"

TACKLE (how to win the ball)

- plant non-tackling foot firmly on the ground; inside of foot and firm ankle; weight right behind ball and “BALANCE”

THROW-IN (opposing team get the ball 80% of the time, Why?)

- teach the grasp of the ball, like in basketball (don't touch center of palm), bend your elbow and from your waist, feet position, etc
- short throw and pass back to the thrower after stepping in the field
- shield the ball

HEADING (Start introducing by age 10-11 or with “soft ball”)

- emphasize on contact location (forehead); eyes open, “away from the ball” before contact, bend from your waist
- combine throw-in and heading practice

GOAL KICK (how often are you stuck on your side of your field?)

- practice kicking (chip/loft)
- how about pass to right/left back and then back to passer and BOOT it (easier/more dangerous)

GOALKEEPING (Why not?)

- basic stance, balance, grasp (hand position) of the ball, ball handling, scoop and give in with tummy
- high, low, bounce catch

REPETITION (of correct technique)– all skills developed from repetitions

- coaches need to be “patient” if you want the players to be “patient”

APPROPRIATE INTENSITY (overload principle)

- It is not the “quantity” that matters, it is the “quality” of the suicide run, drill, or the practice.

EFFICIENCY (we try to teach/talk too much, short attention span, get them “moving”)

- time is precious; remember parents are waiting
- exercise duration
- kids don't need to arrive 45 minutes before the game, for what? It is everybody's time

DEMONSTRATE & PLAY WITH THE KIDS (more effective in gaining respect)

- jog, run, shuffle, back-paddle, sprint, leap, lunge with the kids
- demonstrate the technique, **kids learn by modeling not just listening**
- “do what I do”, not just “what I say”!

(That's why coaches clinic is needed to demonstrate all of the above)

FAIR?

- equal amount of playing time for every kid in the team (the traveling team already been selected), parents pay the same amount!
- we all have favorite players, but don't show it especially about your own kid

WINNING?

- It is not about "winning" and it is not about your EGO
- How about winning attitude, hard working together, staying positive to and helping each other, and how "better" players need to help "not so good" players look better
- Soccer is an ultimate "team sport": "win" or "lose" with the whole team.
- "Competitive" means "getting the best out of each other and also your opponent"

Educate the Parents

- Soccer is not a "spectator sport", little league (even professional game) is not supposed to be "entertaining", it is normal to be messy.
- The game is for the kids to PLAY, not to be watched, don't get the kids (or the coaches or referees) TOO excited.
- Soccer is not just "Go, Go, Go" or "shoot, shoot", kids would not be able to hear you or if they do hear you, you are "disturbing" them
- Learn to appreciate the skills or the cooperation of the kids, not just "scoring"
- Car pool, you don't have to watch the game, do some exercise, stay healthy to support your kids by playing soccer with them

Sample Drills

MA Youth Soccer Association:

(http://www.mayouthsoccer.org/download/129_21st_century_player_development_manual.pdf)

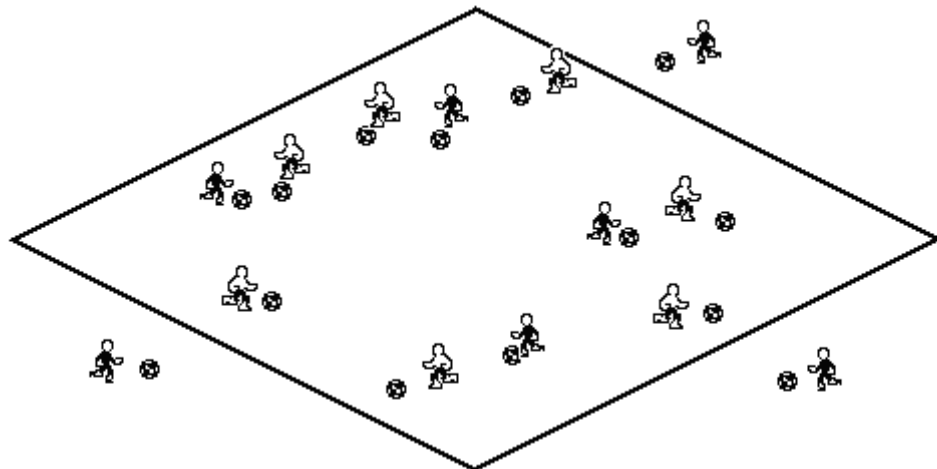
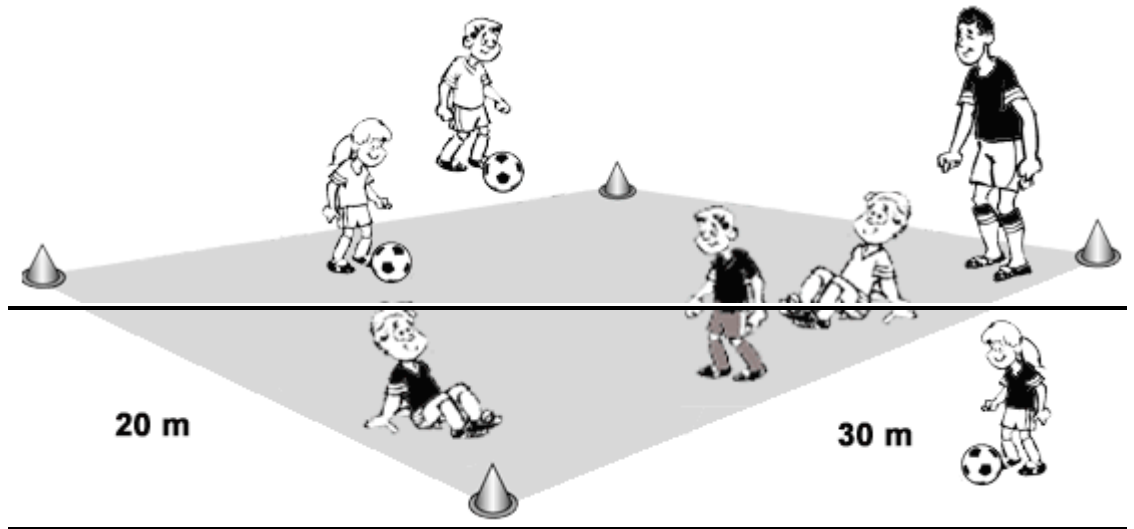
Canadian Soccer Association:

(http://www.canadasoccer.com/coaching/coaching_drills.asp?top=header_c2&sub2=7)

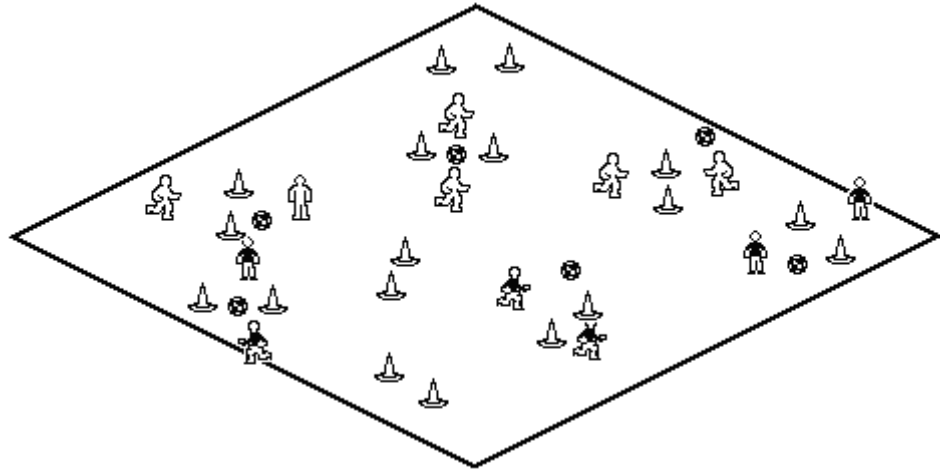
Soccer Academy

(<http://www.mastersport.co.uk/soccerskills.htm>)

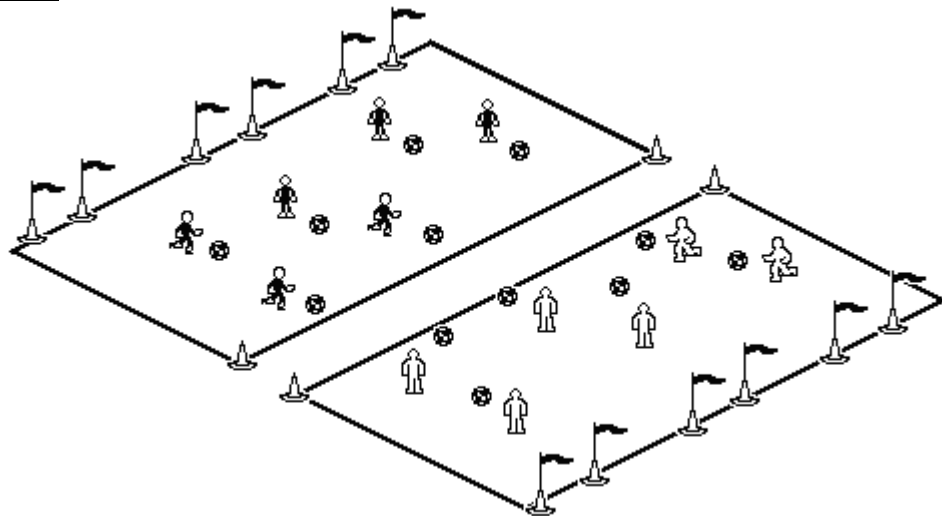
Hand Tag/Freeze Tag/Free Dribble (some players sit, play with ball and try to touch the dribbler) (SimonSays: stop, turn, sprint)



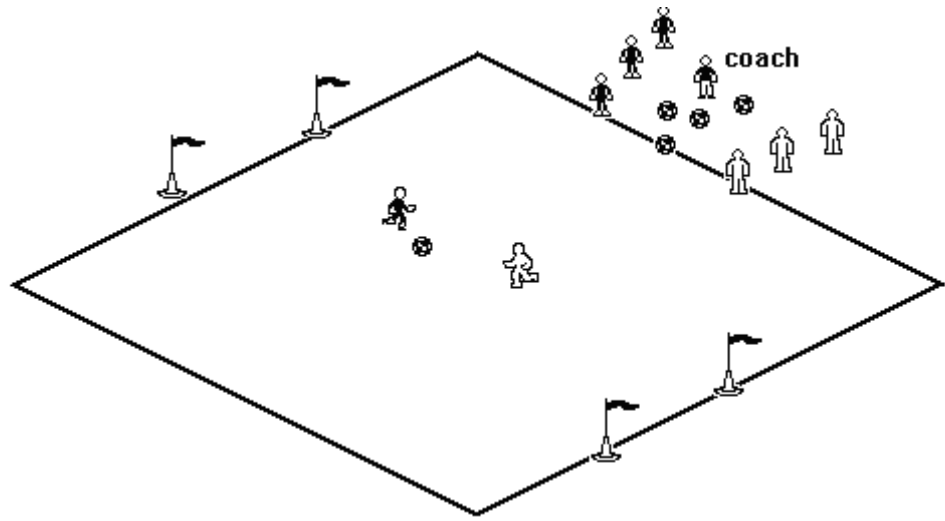
Gates/Gates Passing



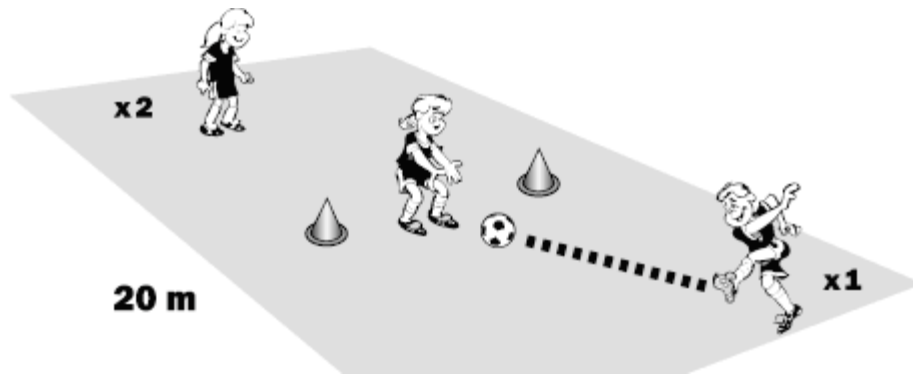
Clean Your Backyard



1 v 1/ 2 v 2/ 3 v 3

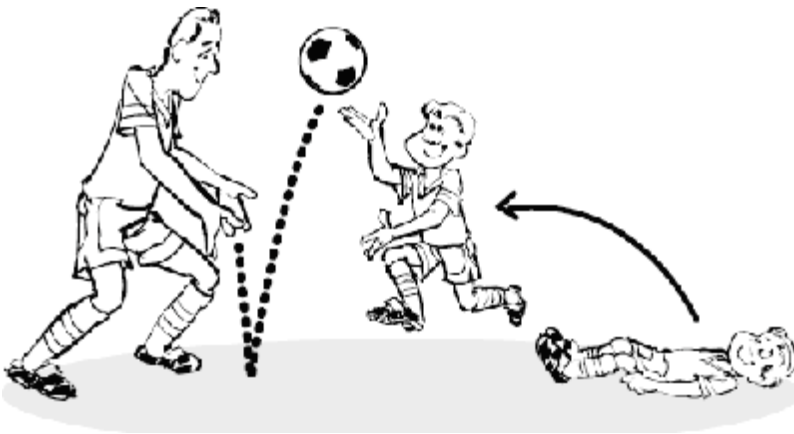


Shooting Drill



Goalkeeping Drill

1. The player lies down before getting up to catch the ball, which has been bounced by the parent. The first player to catch the ball 5 times wins



2. The player rolls the ball between the parent's legs. The parent turns and falls on the ball. The parent then rolls the ball between the player's legs and the player turns and falls on the ball

