



*Grassroots soccer is not about the amount of trophies you win. It's about the difference you make to a young person's life.*

# THE ONTARIO SOCCER ASSOCIATION GRASSROOTS WORKBOOK & PRACTICE PLANS U4-U12

April 2015





## Introduction

Welcome to the second edition of the Grassroots Soccer Provincial curriculum. This resource should be used in conjunction with the first edition of the curriculum. The Ontario Soccer Association has created this resource for Districts, Clubs, Academies, and youth coaches to follow a coaching curriculum that is designed to meet physical literacy needs for players from age 4-12

The information within this document will allow Technical Directors as well as youth coaches to create programs and coaching sessions that are appropriate for the development stage of each player. By implementing the curriculum, along with good coaching methodology, players will benefit from and enjoy practice sessions more. All sessions will focus on player development in a low stress, supportive, positive, fun-filled and safe environment. By coaches creating this environment the players will be excited to learn and be anxious to return.

In general terms a curriculum consists of information that promotes technical, social, physical and psychological development of the players. In addition to the activity examples and sample session plans it includes approaches to teaching and learning. The curriculum helps to remove the 'guess work' in choosing developmentally appropriate content and enables coaches to work on their methodology and coaching style.

## What is Grassroots Soccer?

**FIFA**  
For the Game. For the World.

FIFA's main objective for its Grassroots programme is to bring football to as many people as possible, thus addressing FIFA's mission to "develop the game".

Interacting, sharing, playing, and meeting others – these are all benefits that we promote in grassroots football, while, of course, encouraging enjoyment on the pitch. For some, grassroots football is a recreational activity. For others, it is the practice of football in a club or school environment, with regular training and matches, that is important.

Football for everyone, For the game, for the world. FIFA's grassroots football programme targets boys and girls aged 4-12 years through school, community, and club initiatives. The key concept of the programme is to bring together as many people as possible through football. The grassroots programme advocates exchanges and sharing human values and, of course, promotes the pleasure of practising our marvellous sport.

Of course not all young players will become the stars of the future and they do not all have the skills required to become professional players. So intensive training sessions and complicated tactics are not appropriate.

Sepp Blatter,  
President of FIFA

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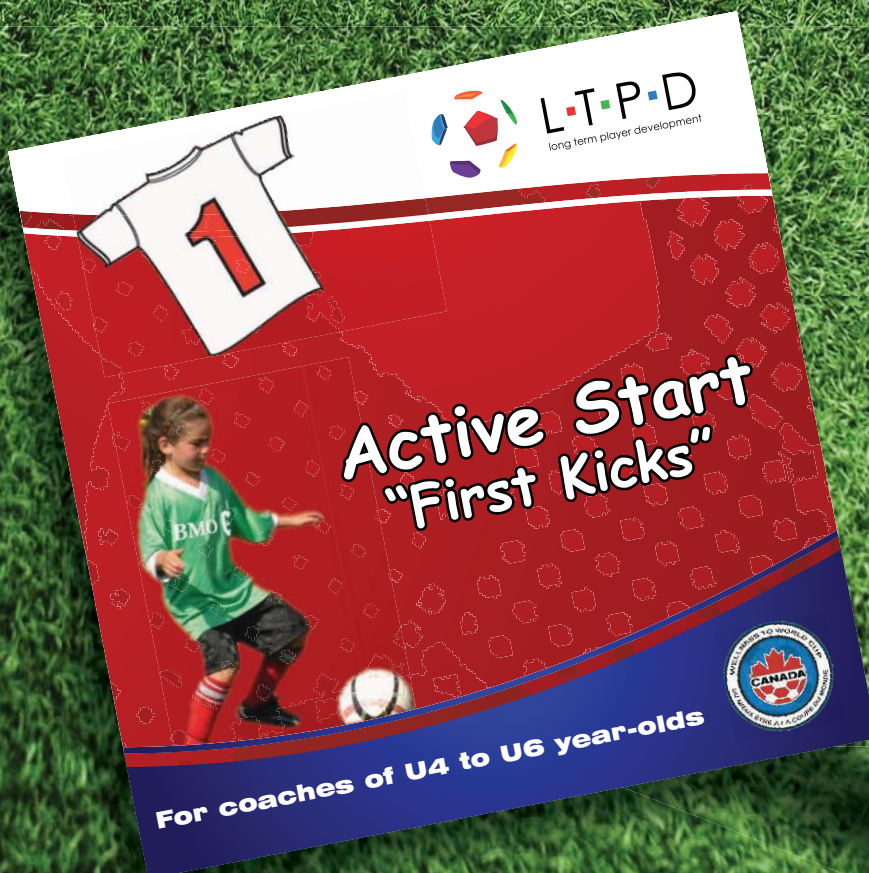




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# Active Start practice plan

## OSA Player Development Model – The Station Concept

The activities provided illustrate how stations can be used during Grassroots practices.

During the practice players will spend an allotted time at each station having fun, developing specific skills and qualities before moving onto the next station. By using station work we create an environment where players are continually motivated and challenged.

The following gives coaches five weeks of session plans. After the five weeks are complete coaches can use the activities provided to create further session plans. In all sessions players will travel through four stations. In these examples one station focuses on Physical Literacy, two stations on movements with the ball and the fourth station is focused around the game with the children playing 1v1.

All sessions take a holistic approach to developing our children and youth. Each game and activity will focus on four main areas of the child's development; these include social/emotional, physical, psychological and also technical.

**Total Practice time:** 40 minutes as per the OSA Recreational and Development Matrix



If working with a larger group organize players into groups of six. Each station has a coach who will lead that specific station for the session. Players rotate every eight minutes with a two minute break in between each station to have a water break and move to the next station.

If working with a smaller group you can still have the four stations and players will move together through all four stations until all are complete.

## Different scenarios based on numbers in attendance

# Players	# Steps & Stations	Coach/Parent/volunteer	Setup 40 minutes typical session
24 - 40	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>① General Movement</li> <li>② Soccer Coordination</li> <li>③ Soccer Technique</li> <li>④ Small-Sided Game</li> </ol>	4	<u>Ideal scenario</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 coaches 4 groups.</li> <li>• Players are spread across stations and rotate clockwise through the four station.</li> </ul>
18 - 30	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>① General Movement</li> <li>② Soccer Technique</li> <li>③ Soccer Coordination</li> <li>④ Small-Sided Game</li> <li>⑤ Small-Sided Game</li> <li>⑥ Small-Sided Game</li> </ol>	3	<u>Second scenario</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 coaches 3 groups.</li> <li>• Coaches required to change their stations over to SSG's on the final part of training.</li> <li>• 1.2.3 first 30 minutes</li> <li>• 4.5.6 final 10 minutes</li> </ul>
12 - 20	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>① General Movement</li> <li>② Small-Sided Game</li> <li>③ Soccer Coordination</li> <li>④ Soccer Technique</li> </ol>	2	<u>Third scenario</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 coaches 2 groups.</li> <li>• 2 groups of players across 2 stations focus on 2 key components.</li> <li>• Coaches required to replace their stations with a different component on the second phase of training. (SC &amp; ST)</li> </ul>

**“The benefit to running a group program is that a larger number of players fosters further participation. Children occasionally absent are not then responsible for practice cancellations, because there are always sufficient players to participate in the activities. And the atmosphere created by a large number of players guarantees lots of fun in every session”**

- Sylvie Béliveau CSA Long Term Player Development Manager  
(Resource: Active For Life website)



# FOUR CORNER DEVELOPMENT MODEL

The Four Corner LTPD model consists of technical, psychological, physical and social/emotional components. Each corner of the model reflects a wide aspect of a player's development that has to be considered. The gradual progressive development of players is fundamental to the enjoyment, technical competency and retention in the game. The Four Corner approach places the player at the center of the development process with soccer experiences that meet the four key needs of the player.



Although priorities will vary during the player's different ages and phases of maturity, the model provides a basic framework for coaches to work within. In addition to the four main components, there are a number of additional 'contributions' from a wide number of people, such as parents, teachers, schools and local clubs.

The model is deliberately interlinked, which means that activity in any one corner will produce a reaction throughout all aspects of the model. For example, a practice on technique may impact physical balance and co-ordination while producing increased confidence and enhanced social standing within the group. The key message to coaches is not to consider any of the programme's aspects in isolation.

As the development pathway for each individual player is unique and diverse, the needs of each player will ebb and flow in all of the four corners. And, while the need for added support for some players will be minimal, others will require much more applied and specific support.

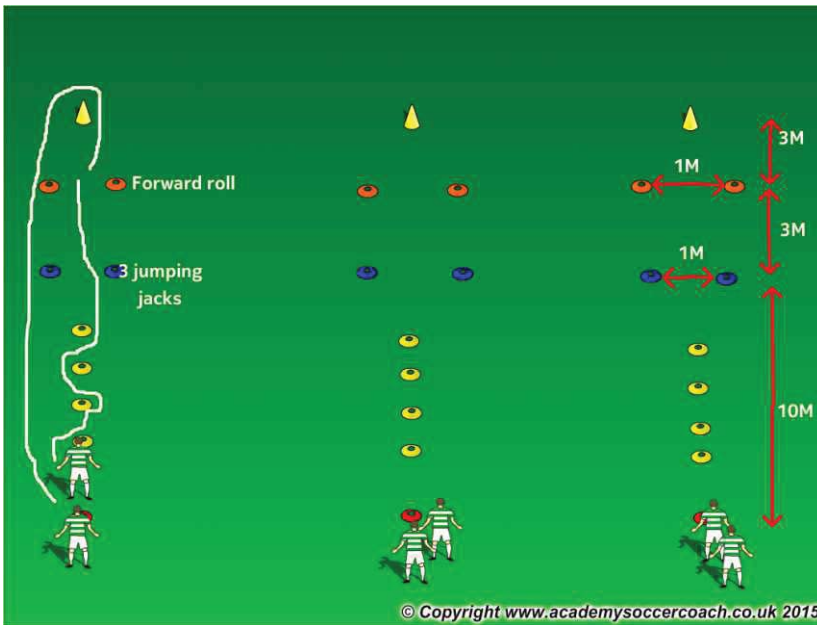
The Four Corner development model is referenced through out this resource using the colour codes found in the diagram to the left.





# Active Start practice plan – Week 1

## STATION A - GENERAL MOVEMENT



**Organization:** Players are placed into 2 or 3s.

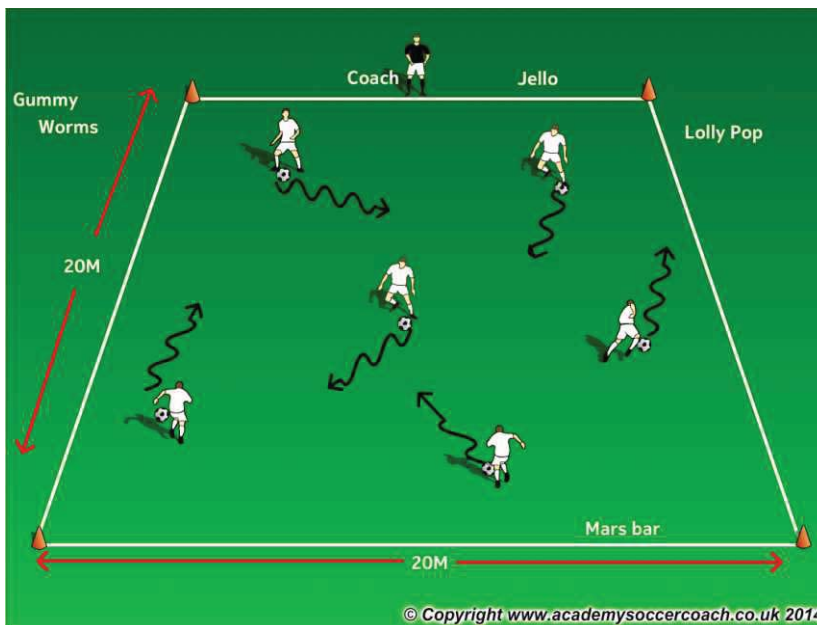
**Procedure:** The 1st player runs in and out of the yellow cones and then sprints to the blue gate. The player performs 3 jumping jacks and then runs backwards to the orange cones where they perform a forward roll. They then run around the end yellow cone and sprint straight back to the start, give their partner a high 5 and then the next player goes. Players waiting perform jumping jacks.

**Time Frame:** 8 minutes

**Emphasis:** Listening  
Different types of running  
Changing direction  
Agility, Balance, Coordination  
FUN!



## STATION B - SOCCER TECHNIQUE - CANDY STORE



**Organization:** 20m x 20m area. Each player has a soccer ball.

**Procedure:** All players dribble inside the area. The area now becomes a candy store and the players explore by shouting out their favourite candies. The coach names each side of the area after a different candy and when the coach calls out that specific candy the players dribble to the correct side and perform a specific challenge. I.e. toe taps, (players touch ball 1 foot at the time using their sole) inside inside etc. (Players use the inside of their feet to knock the ball back and forth between each foot).

**Time Frame:** 8 minutes

**Emphasis:** Listening  
Running with the ball  
Dribbling  
Changing direction  
Agility, Balance, Coordination  
Imagination  
FUN!

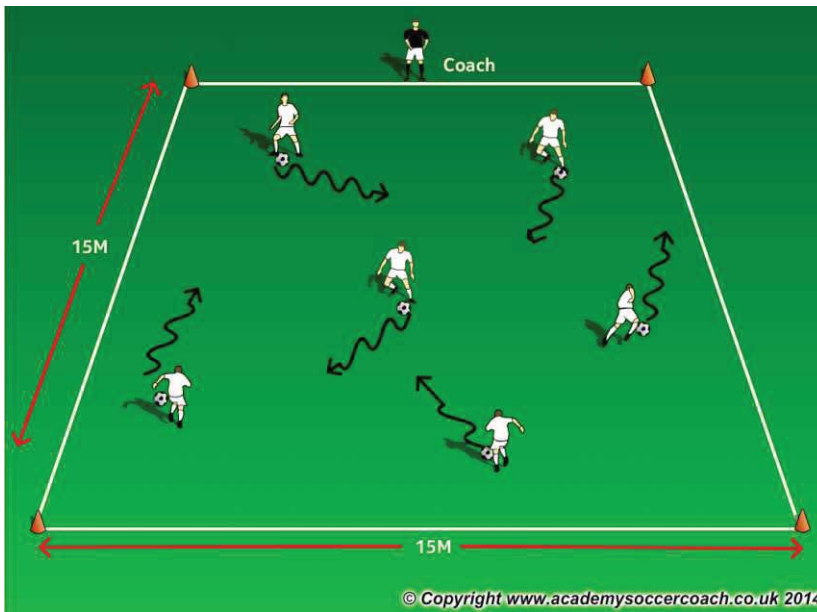






# Active Start practice plan – Week 1

## STATION C - SOCCER TECHNIQUE - BODY BREAKS



**Organization:** 15m x 15m area. Each player has a soccer ball.

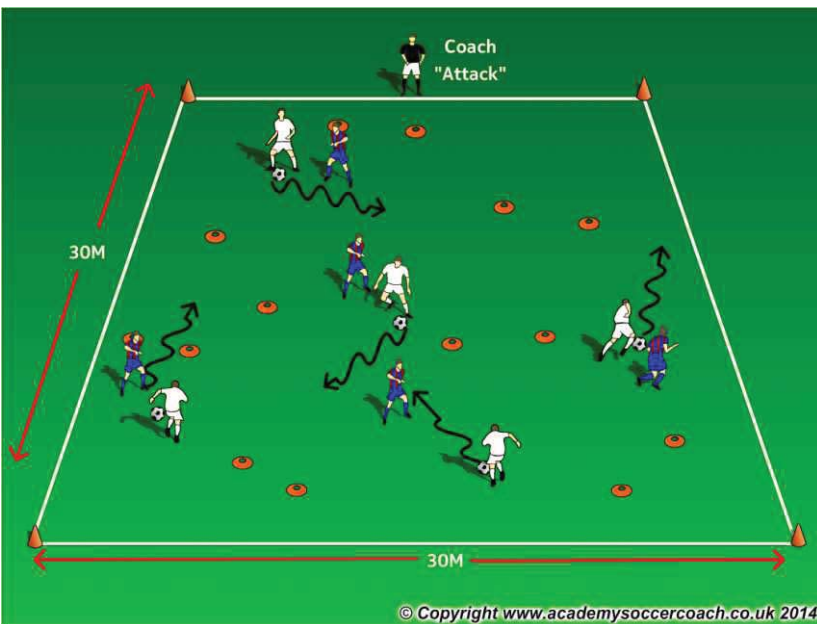
**Procedure:** Players dribble inside the area. The coach calls out a body part and the player must stop the ball and place the correct body part on the ball. The coach calls go for the players to dribble again.

**Time Frame:** 8 minutes

**Emphasis:** Listening  
Running with the ball  
Dribbling  
Changing direction  
Agility, Balance, Coordination  
Imagination  
FUN!



## STATION D - SMALL SIDED GAME - 1V1



**Organization:** Players are paired inside a 30m x 30m area.

**Procedure:** When the coach calls "Attack" the player with ball attempts to dribble through the gates. The player without the ball becomes the defender. If the defender wins the ball he/she then becomes the attacker and vice versa. Players play for 1 minute and score a point every time they go through a gate. Player's cannot go straight back through the same gate. After 1 minute players change partners.

**Time Frame:** 8 minutes

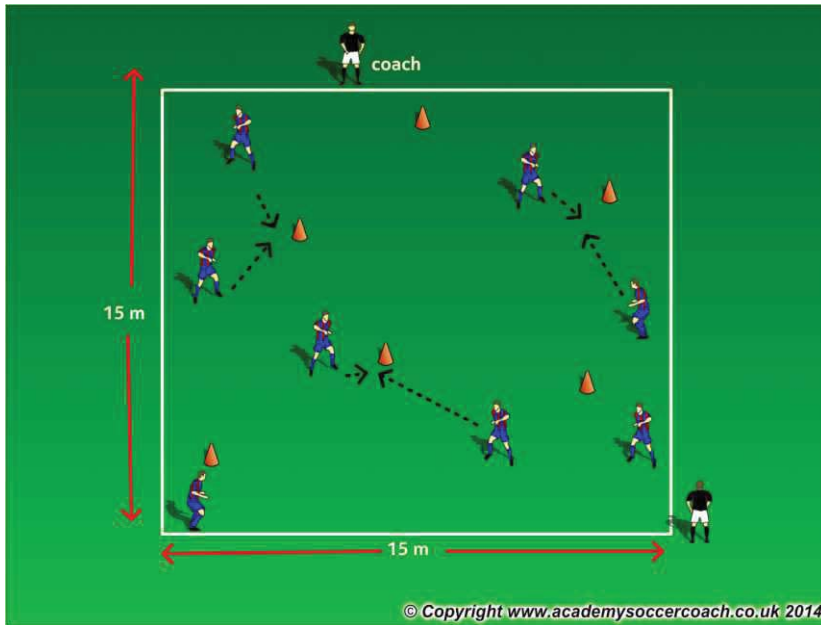
**Emphasis:** Listening  
Running with the ball  
Dribbling  
Changing direction  
Agility, Balance, Coordination  
Imagination  
FUN!





# Active Start practice plan – Week 2

## STATION A - GENERAL MOVEMENT - ELVES AND WIZARD



**Time Frame:** 6 - 8 minutes

**Emphasis:** Running with/without the ball  
Changing direction  
Jumping  
Awareness  
Slowing down, speeding up  
FUN!

**Organization:** Mark out a "cone forest" inside a 15m x 15m field. 8-10 players.

**Procedure:** Elves (players) move around the forest. Whenever two elves meet in the forest, they jump over the cone (one at a time). Can elves jump over the cones before the wizard (parent or coach) catch them!



## STATION B - COORDINATION - CATCH THE ROBBER!



**Time Frame:** 6 - 8 minutes

**Emphasis:** Eye – foot coordination  
Lots of touches on the ball  
Different parts of the foot  
FUN!

**Organization:** Area is 30m x 20m. 8-10 players, each with a ball

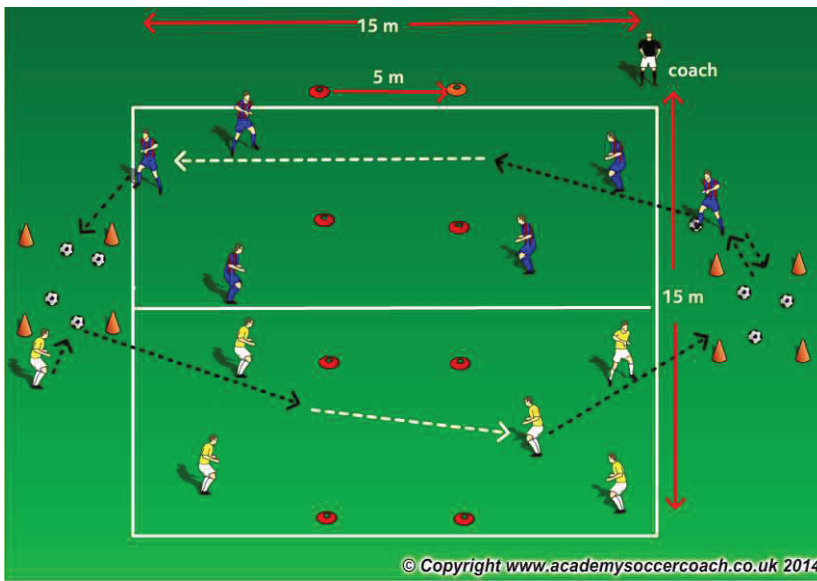
**Procedure:** Each player (officer) dribbles around the area trying to arrest the robber (parent or coach) by passing the ball at their legs. Once all robbers have been caught the players (officer) win the game. Game can be repeated.





# Active Start practice plan – Week 2

## STATION C - SOCCER TECHNIQUE - PASSING



**Organization:** Using cones mark out a 15m x 15m field with a 5m wide "river" down the middle. Mark out a 2m x 2m "ball castle" on each side of the field. Have equal balls on each castle.

**Procedure:** Each team stands in their own half, with children evenly divided on both sides of the river. Players on the same side as their ball castle get the balls from their castle and dribble the ball towards the river. They then pass the ball across the river to their teammates, who quickly run with the ball and place it in the opposite castle.

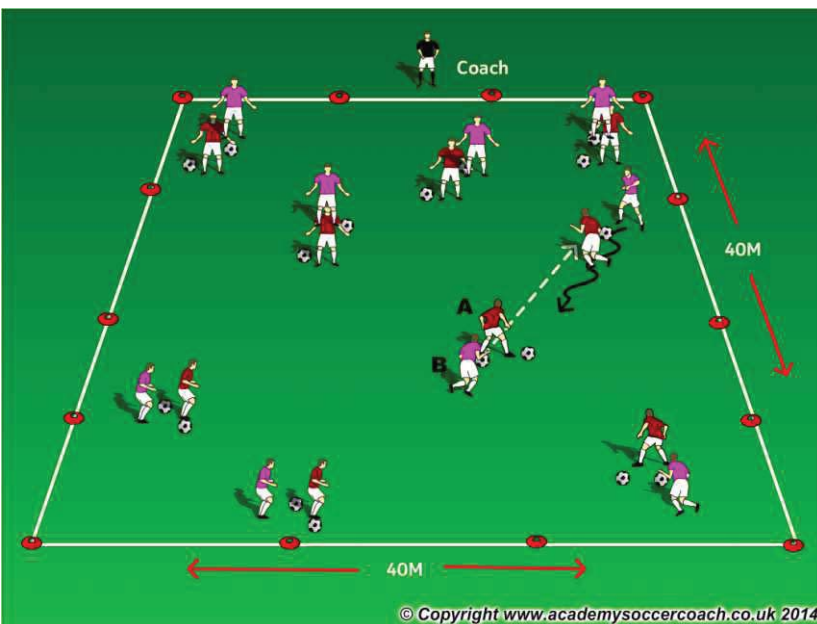
The team with fewer balls in their castle wins. (Duration 1 minute)

**Time Frame:** 6 - 8 minutes

**Emphasis:** Lots of touches on the ball  
Using different technique  
Positive feedback  
FUN!



## STATION D - SMALL SIDED GAME - 1 v 1 TO A BALL



**Organization:** Players placed with a partner. Each player has a ball. One ball is the game ball and one ball is the target ball.

**Procedure:** Players play 1v1 to a ball. Player B players a pass through player A's legs. Once the ball is played the game is live and players compete to hit the target ball with the game ball. Players compete for 2 minutes. Once a goal is scored players switch and restart the game.

**Time Frame:** 6 - 8 minutes

**Emphasis:** Running with the ball  
Dribbling  
1v1  
Changing direction  
Change of speed  
Agility, Balance, Coordination  
Imagination  
Passing  
FUN!





# Physical Literacy

PHE Canada's definition:

Physical Literacy is moving with **competence** and **confidence** in a wide variety of physical activities in multiple environments that benefit the **healthy development** of the **whole person**.

Physical literacy impacts many areas of our lives. For example, competent movers tend to be more successful academically and socially. They understand how to be active for life and are able to transfer competence from one area to another. Physically literate individuals have the skills and confidence to move any way they want; can show their skills and confidence in lots of different physical activities and environments; and use their skills and confidence to be active and healthy.



- Crawling**
- Throwing**
- Running**
- and much More...**

*"The more physically literate your child is the more likely they are to enjoy and succeed in sports. Being able to run, change direction quickly, stop quickly, have good balance, being agile and flexible will help your child enjoy soccer skills like dribbling, passing, shooting and receiving the ball. Physical literacy is fundamental in a child's enjoyment of soccer."*

*Bobby Lennox,  
The Ontario Soccer Association  
Manager, Player Development*

## GUIDELINES FOR COACHES, EDUCATORS AND FACILITATORS WORKING WITH ACTIVE START PLAYERS:

There's a lot more to coaching the very young than just organizing games and practices. During play sessions, coaches have to "do it all": Console kids when things go wrong, praise their successes, mediate conflicts, hear stories, and much more. By actively participating, you can facilitate play and share your enthusiasm. Then there are the little duties like helping players put on uniforms or tie their shoes. Training methods have to be age-appropriate. Physical activities and unstructured games packaged in motivational stories-these are the tools of the trade of this level.

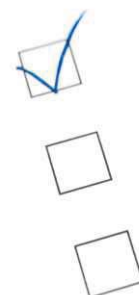
When putting an activity together for these age, make it very **SIMPLE**

- S**imple activities are best.
- I**dle time should be minimal.
- M**ake a game out of a practice.
- P**rovide a range of activities.
- L**et kids have positive experiences.
- E**xtend beyond soccer- specific objectives.

(Resource: Success in Soccer)

## ACTIVE START – CHECKLIST TO SUCCESS

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure you have enough soccer balls for every child                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Be <b>ENTHUSIASTIC</b>                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Use 1 soccer ball per child (they don't like to share their toy)              | <input type="checkbox"/> The more <b>NOISE</b> from the children the <b>BETTER</b> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Check playing area to ensure its safe – No rocks and No holes                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't keep scores   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Remove/reduce distractions. E.g. Swings, pool, dogs, etc.                     | <input type="checkbox"/> "HIGH FIVES" for everyone                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Have the practice organized so that all the children are active, all the time | <input type="checkbox"/> Create the backyard environment                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Have a parent or guardian join in to help supervise and play with their child | <input type="checkbox"/> Have players play 1v1 against their parent                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Keep activities short, a active start child's attention span is short         | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>HAVE FUN!!!</b>  |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure the children leave wanting to come back next week  |













## GRASSROOTS WORKSHOPS

The Player Development Department has been created at the OSA to assist the membership, districts and clubs with their understanding of the Long Term Player Development (LTPD) philosophy and how it is being applied at the Grassroots level of our game in Ontario.

Grassroots Workshops are available for District Associations and Clubs to host. The content of a Grassroots Workshop is found below:

-  2 day course – (14 hours)
-  Course background and objectives, FIFA, CSA, OSA
-  Philosophy of Grassroots Soccer
-  Importance of small sided games
-  How to plan a practical session
-  The characteristics of children and the educational approach
-  Field preparation for a festival
-  Running a festival



## GRASSROOTS WORKSHOPS

The course content of the Grassroots Workshop is designed to provide theoretical and practical knowledge to coaches to work with larger groups of grassroots players. The emphasis in each of the games and sessions will be fun, creativity and self-expression. A player-centred, holistic approach is used to create well rounded, positive young people who love the game of soccer. Understanding why children play soccer is important in the adult management of the game, children play soccer for a variety of different reasons, some are quite different than why adults play soccer.

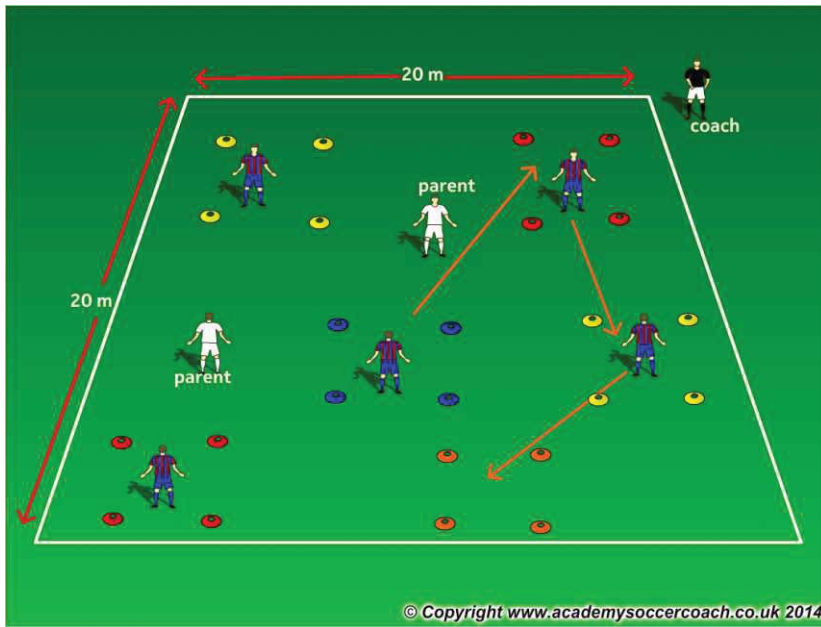
For more information on Grassroots Workshops please email: [grassrootssoccer@soccer.on.ca](mailto:grassrootssoccer@soccer.on.ca)





# Active Start practice plan – Week 3

## STATION A - GENERAL MOVEMENT - FIND AN EMPTY CAGE



**Time Frame:** 8 minutes

**Emphasis:** Changing direction  
Running  
FUN!

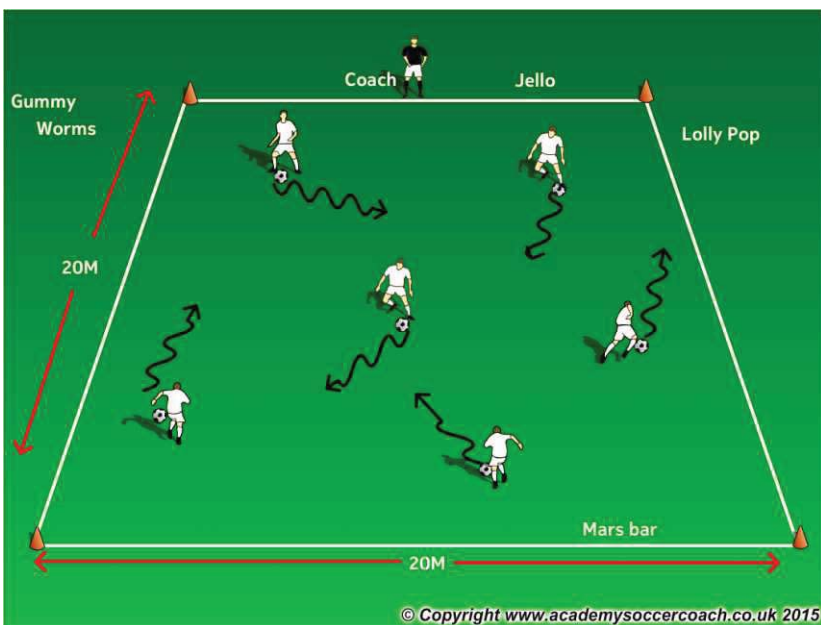
**Organization:** 20m x 20m area. Boxes of 1m x 1m are marked out within the area. 2 or 3 hunters (Parents).

**Procedure:** Players pretend to be different animals in the cage and move in different ways i.e. Skipping, hopping, running backwards. On coach's call, players must find an empty cage to move into. Only one animal per cage.

If a hunter tags a player, he/she becomes a hunter.



## STATION B - GENERAL MOVEMENT - CANDY STORE



**Time Frame:** 8 minutes

**Emphasis:** Listening  
Running with the ball  
Dribbling  
Changing direction  
Agility, Balance, Coordination  
Imagination  
FUN!

**Organization:** 20m x 20m area. Each player has a soccer ball.

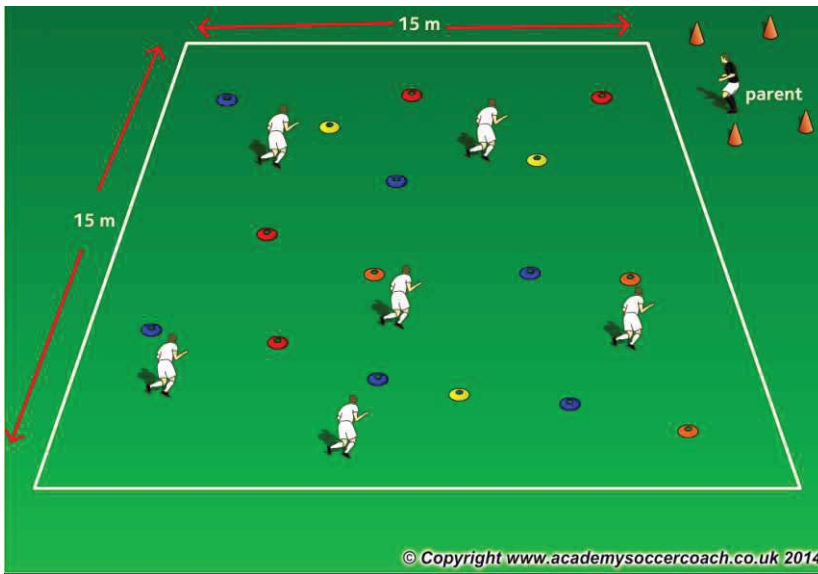
**Procedure:** All players dribble inside the area. The area now becomes a candy store and the players explore by shouting out their favourite candies. The coach names each side of the area after a different candy and when the coach calls out that specific candy the players dribble to the correct side and perform a specific challenge. i.e. toe taps, (players touch ball 1 foot at the time using their sole) inside inside etc. (Players use the inside of their feet to knock the ball back and forth between each foot).





# Active Start practice plan – Week 3

## STATION C - SOCCER TECHNIQUE



**Organization:** Set up a jungle of cones inside of a 15m x 15m field. Mark out a 5m x 2m about 2m away from the field.

**Procedure:** The birds move through the trees. The hunter (parent) is in his/her tent (rectangle box) moving around getting ready for the hunt.

As soon as hunter runs into the jungle to hunt, the birds can save themselves by flying on to the trees (touching the cones), however, each tree can only hold 2 birds at a time.

The hunter can tag any bird who can't find a tree. If any player is tagged, he/she becomes a hunter too.

**Time Frame:** 8 minutes

**Emphasis:** Ball familiarity  
Basic movements  
FUN!



## STATION D - SMALL SIDED GAME – 1 v 1 TO A LINE



**Organization:** 15m x 15m field. 8 players (4 children, 4 parents), soccer balls

**Procedure:** 2 teams, player's vs parents (dolphins and penguins). They all move freely in the ocean. The four shores (side of the area, have numbers, name of city etc.)

When the coach calls the number or name of the shore, kids (penguins) run with the ball as fast as they can to that shore before parents (dolphins) touch them.

The player (penguin) who runs out of the ocean first wins.

**Time Frame:** 8 minutes

**Emphasis:** Running with the ball  
Dribbling  
Agility, Balance, Coordination  
FUN!





# Active Start practice plan – Week 4

## STATION A - GENERAL MOVEMENT - RACE TRACK

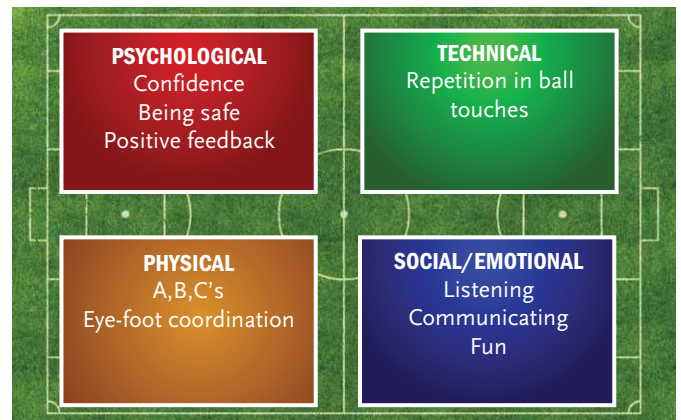


**Time Frame:** 8 minutes

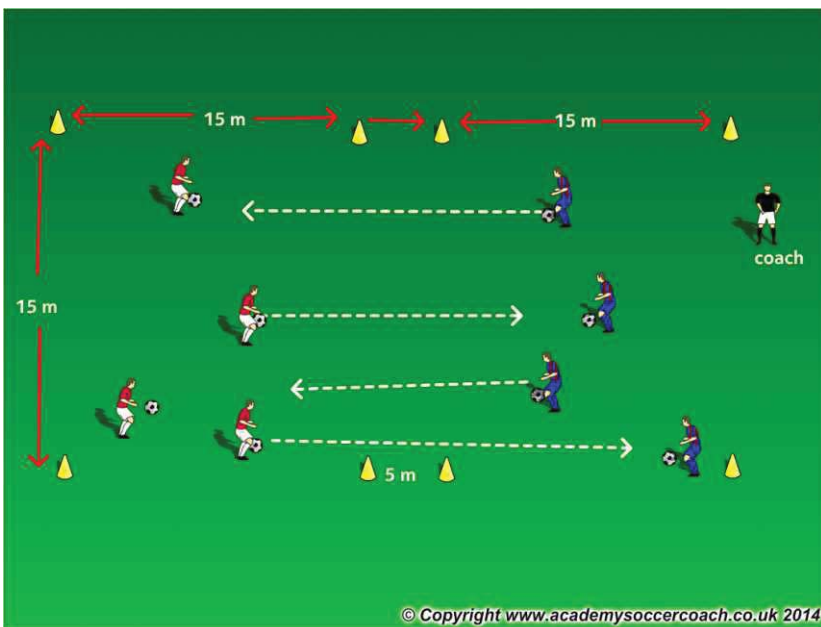
**Emphasis:** Awareness  
Basic movements  
Dribbling/races  
FUN!

**Organization:** 25m x 30m area. Every player has a ball.

**Procedure:** Players dribble around the "race track", and imitate a car on the track: 1st gear = slow, 4th gear = fast, breaks = stop, encourage players to be as animated as they can be, and make car noises.



## STATION B - SOCCER TECHNIQUE -TIDY UP YOUR ROOM



**Time Frame:** 8 minutes

**Emphasis:** Coordination  
Spatial awareness  
FUN!

**Organization:** Create two boxes of 15m x 15m with a 5m neutral zone in between. Every player has a ball.

**Procedure:** Player's shoot the ball out of their room into a friend's room. When the coach stops the game (1 minute), the team with the most balls in their room, has to make funny faces. Game can be repeated.

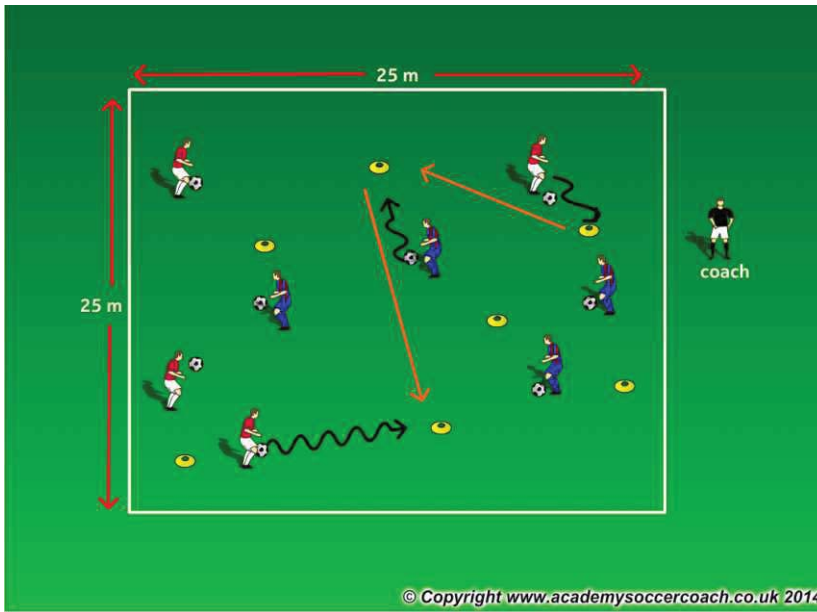






# Active Start practice plan – Week 4

## STATION C - SOCCER TECHNIQUE – BALL SWAP



**Time Frame:** 8 minutes

**Emphasis:** Ball familiarity  
Basic movements  
FUN!

**Organization:** 25m x 25m area, every player has a ball.

**Procedure:** Players dribble around the area, on coach's call, player's pick up their balls, and run to the cone, leave their ball, and go to take another ball and continue to dribble.

**Progression:** Player's are asked to touch the cone or jump on the spot, before running to get their next ball.



## STATION D - SMALL SIDED GAME – 1 v 1 (PLAYER VS PARENT)



**Time Frame:** 8 minutes

**Emphasis:** Running with the ball  
Dribbling  
Agility, Balance, Coordination  
FUN!

**Organization:** 15m x 15m area is divided to 4 equal fields.

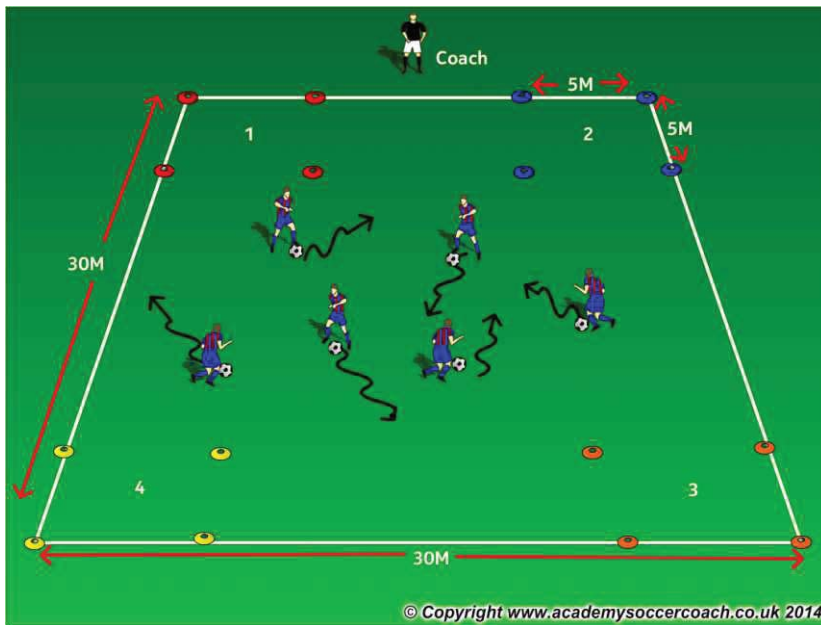
**Procedure:** 1v1 game. Player's vs parents.





# Active Start practice plan – Week 5

## STATION A - GENERAL MOVEMENT



**Organization:** Each player has a ball in a 30m x 30m area. In each corner there is a 5m x 5m area which is numbered as above.

**Procedure:** Players dribble around inside the middle of the area. When the coach calls out a number the players dribble to that specific corner. The 1st player to stop their ball in the correct corner scores 1 point.

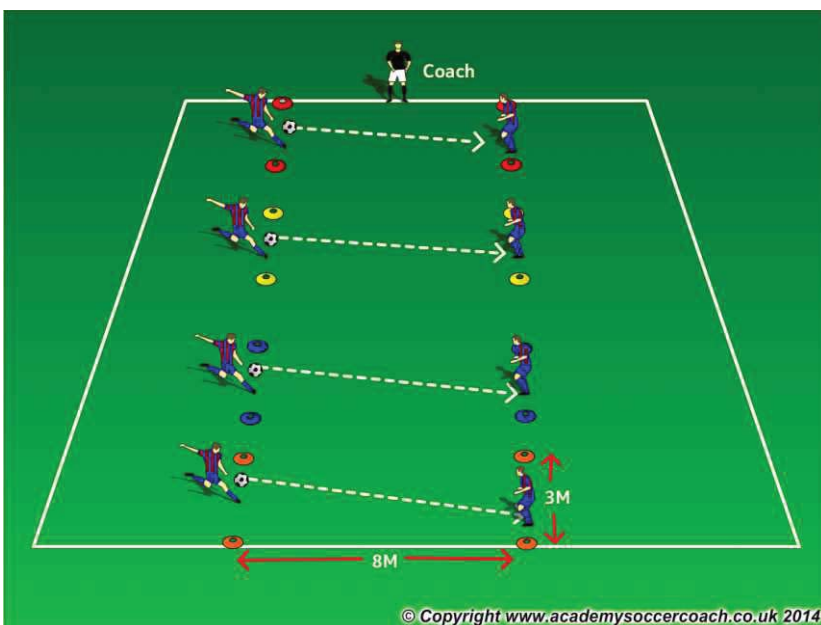
**Progression:** When the players arrive in the corner instead of stopping they perform 5 toe taps and continue to dribble.

**Time Frame:** 8 minutes

**Emphasis:** Listening  
Running with the ball  
Dribbling  
Changing direction  
Agility, Balance, Coordination  
Imagination  
FUN!



## STATION B - SOCCER TECHNIQUE - SHOOTING



**Organization:** Players are in pairs and stand opposite each other in the goals, they are 8m away from each other in a 3m goal

**Procedure:** Players look to strike the ball past their partner. Each time a player scores they score 1 point. After 5 shots the players rotate positions.

**Progression:** Have players practice shooting with both feet.

**Time Frame:** 8 minutes

**Emphasis:** Shooting  
Goalkeeping  
Coordination  
Team work  
FUN!





# Active Start practice plan – Week 5

## STATION C - SOCCER TECHNIQUE - SHOOTING



**Time Frame:** 8 minutes

**Emphasis:** Shooting  
Goalkeeping  
Coordination  
Team work  
FUN!

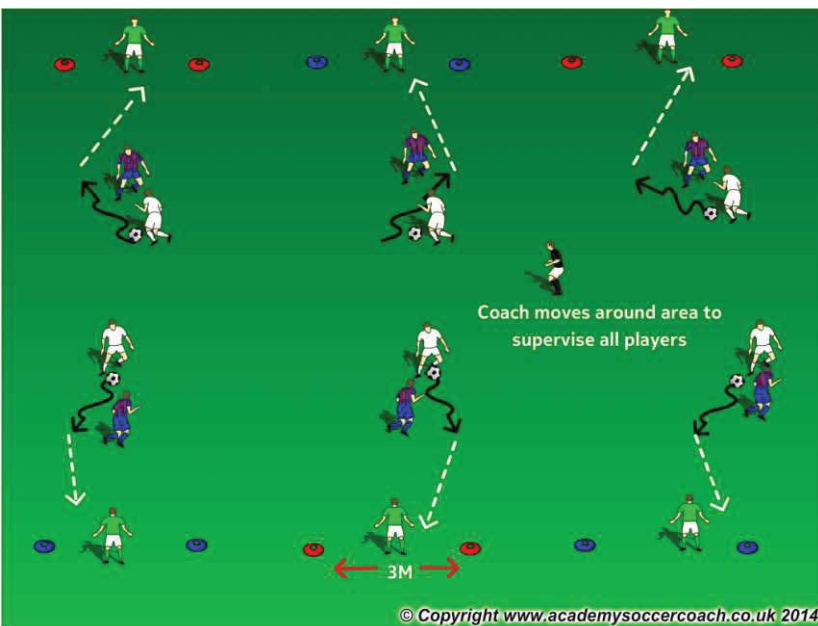
**Organization:** Players are in pairs and stand opposite each other in the goals, they are 8m away from each other in a 3m goal

**Procedure:** Players look to strike the ball past their partner. Each time a player scores they score 2 points. If the players can strike the ball sitting on the cone and score a goal they score 3 points. After 5 shots the players rotate positions.

**Progression:** Have players practice shooting with both feet.



## STATION D - SMALL SIDED GAME - 1 v 1 TO GOAL



**Time Frame:** 8 minutes

**Emphasis:** Shooting  
Dribbling  
Agility, Balance, Coordination  
FUN!

**Organization:** Player placed into groups of 3. They play 1v1 to goal.

**Procedure:** Goalkeeper rolls the ball out and the 2 player's play 1v1. After a goal is scored they player who scored the goal goes in goal.





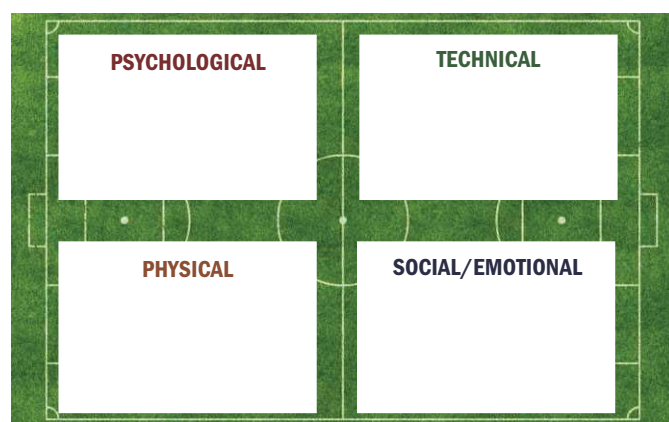
# Active Start practice plan

## STATION A - GENERAL MOVEMENT

For coaches to plan their own sessions

Time Frame: 8 minutes

Emphasis:

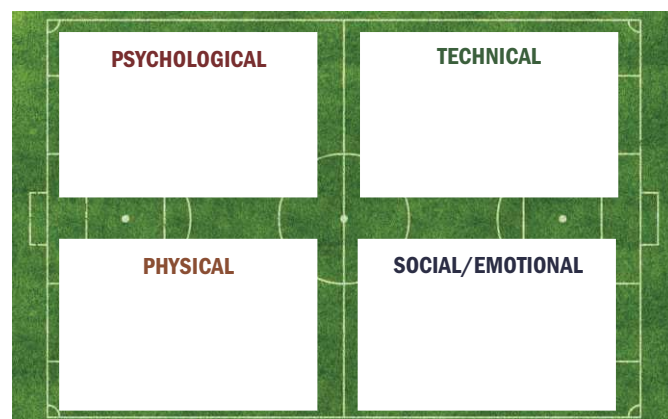


## STATION B - SOCCER TECHNIQUE

For coaches to plan their own sessions

Time Frame: 8 minutes

Emphasis:





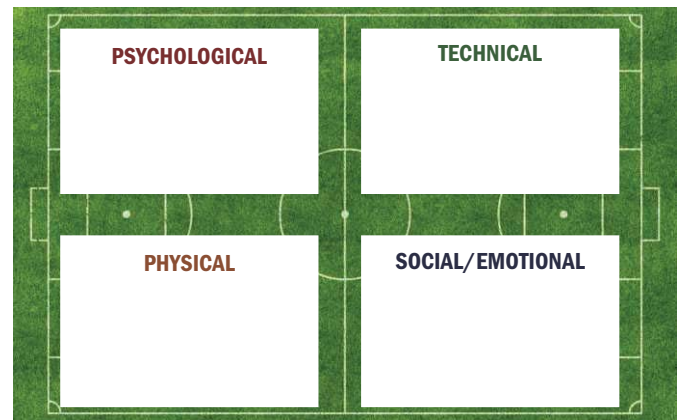
# Active Start practice plan

## STATION C - SOCCER TECHNIQUE

For coaches to plan their own sessions

Time Frame: 8 minutes

Emphasis:

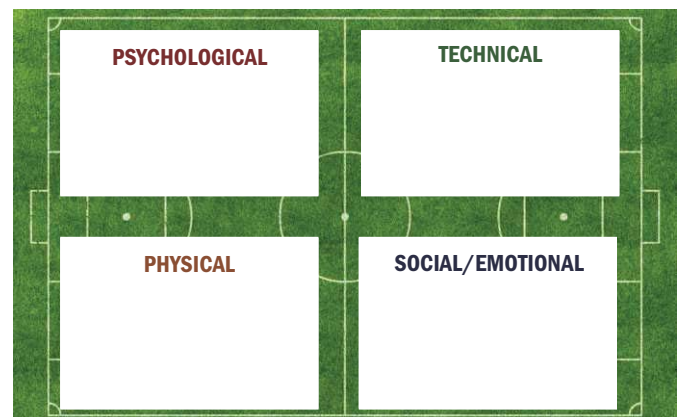


## STATION D - SMALL SIDED GAME

For coaches to plan their own sessions

Time Frame: 8 minutes

Emphasis:



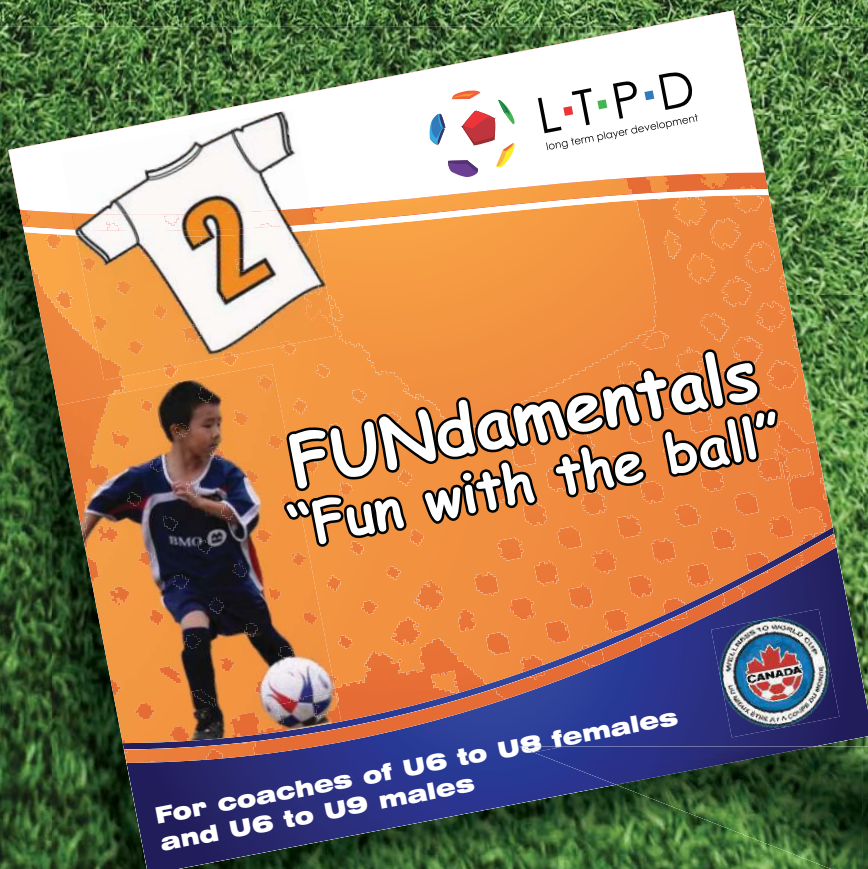




*Grassroots soccer is not about the amount of trophies you win. It's about the difference you make to a young person's life.*

# THE ONTARIO SOCCER ASSOCIATION GRASSROOTS WORKBOOK & PRACTICE PLANS

April 2015





# FUNdamentals Practice Plans

## OSA Player Development Model – The Station Concept

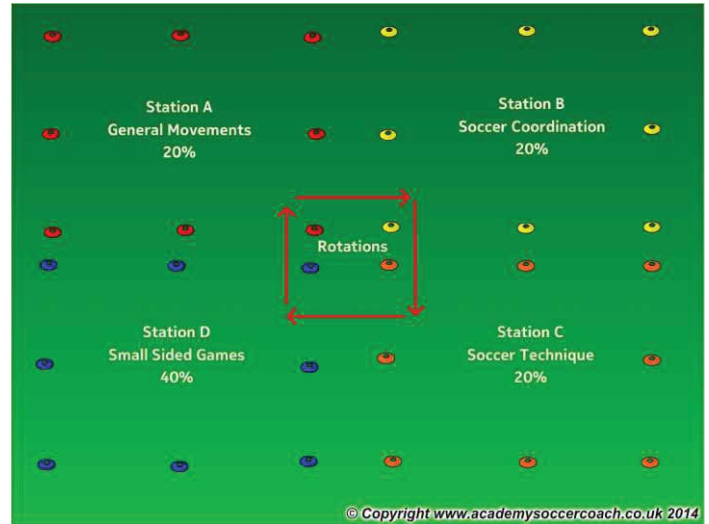
The activities provided illustrate how stations can be used during Grassroots practices.

During the practice players will spend an allotted time at each station having fun, developing specific skills and qualities before moving onto the next station. By using station work we create an environment where players are continually motivated and that they are continually challenged.

The following will give FUNdamentals coaches five weeks worth of practice plans. After the five weeks are complete coaches can use the activities provided to create further session plans. In all sessions players will travel through four stations. In these examples one station focuses on general movements, one station on soccer coordination with the ball, one station on soccer technique and the final station focuses on a small sided soccer game 3v3, 4v4 or 5v5 which includes the retreat line.

All sessions take a holistic approach to developing our youth. Each game and activity will focus on four main areas of the child's development; these include social/emotional, physical, psychological and also technical.

**Total Practice time:** 45 - 70 minutes as per the OSA Recreational and Development Matrix



If working with a larger group organize players into groups of 8-10. Each station has a coach who will lead that specific station for the session. Players rotate every 12 minutes with a two minute break in between each station to have a water break and move to the next station.

If working with a smaller group you can still have the four stations and players will move together through all four stations until all are complete.

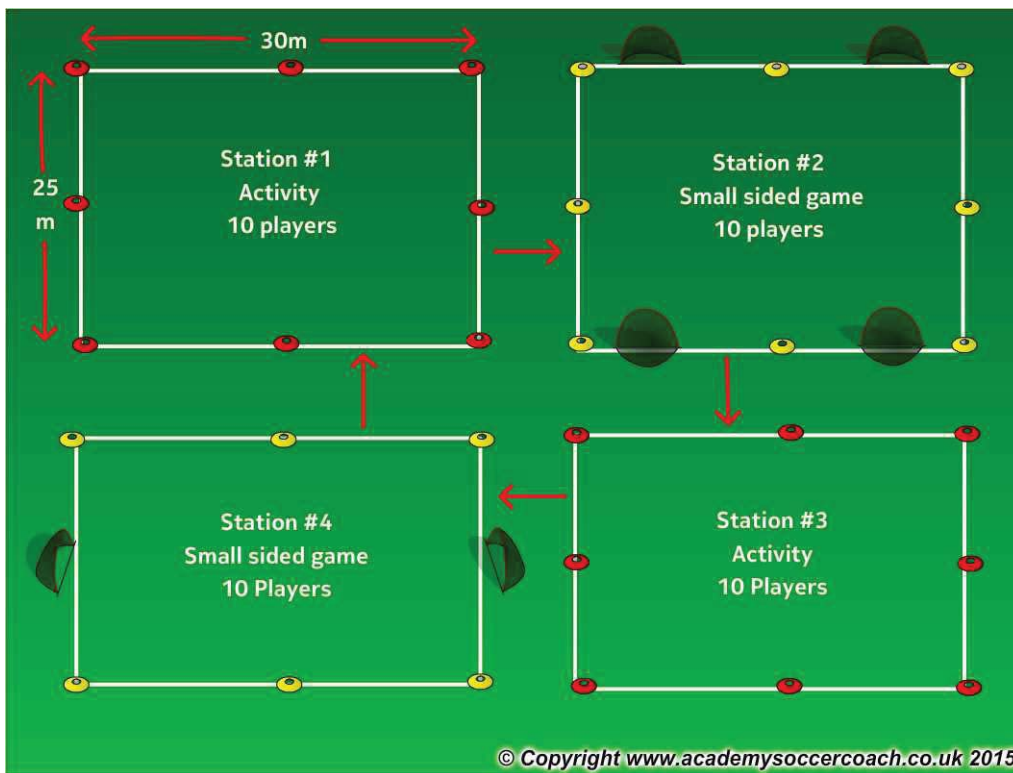
## Different Scenarios Based On Numbers In Attendance

# Players	Stations	# Coach /Parent/volunteer	Setup 1 hr. typical session
24 - 40	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>① General Movement</li> <li>② Soccer Coordination</li> <li>③ Soccer Technique</li> <li>④ Small-Sided Game</li> <li>⑤ Small-Sided Game</li> <li>⑥ Small-Sided Game</li> <li>⑦ Small-Sided Game</li> <li>⑧ Small-Sided Game</li> </ol>	4	<u>Ideal scenario</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 coaches 4 groups.</li> <li>• This requires coaches to change their station over on the second part of the training session.</li> <li>• 1.2.3.4. first 48 minutes.</li> <li>• 5.6.7.8. final - 12 minutes.</li> </ul> *Clubs can run 5 stations depending field and coach availability.
18 - 30	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>① General Movement</li> <li>② Soccer Coordination</li> <li>③ Soccer Technique</li> <li>④ Small-Sided Game</li> <li>⑤ Small-Sided Game</li> <li>⑥ Small Sided Game</li> </ol>	3	<u>Second scenario</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 coaches 3 groups.</li> <li>• Coaches required to change their stations over on the second part of the training session.</li> <li>• 1.2.3. first – 36 minutes.</li> <li>• 4.5.6 final – 24 minutes.</li> </ul>
12 - 20	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>① General Movement</li> <li>② Small-Sided Game</li> <li>③ Soccer Technique</li> <li>④ Small-Sided Game</li> <li>⑤ Soccer Coordination</li> <li>⑥ Small-Sided Game</li> </ol>	2	<u>Third scenario</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 coaches 2 groups</li> <li>• Coaches are required to change one station over with a different component.</li> <li>• 1.2 first – 20 minutes</li> <li>• 3.4 second – 20 minutes</li> <li>• 5.6 final – 20 minutes</li> </ul>



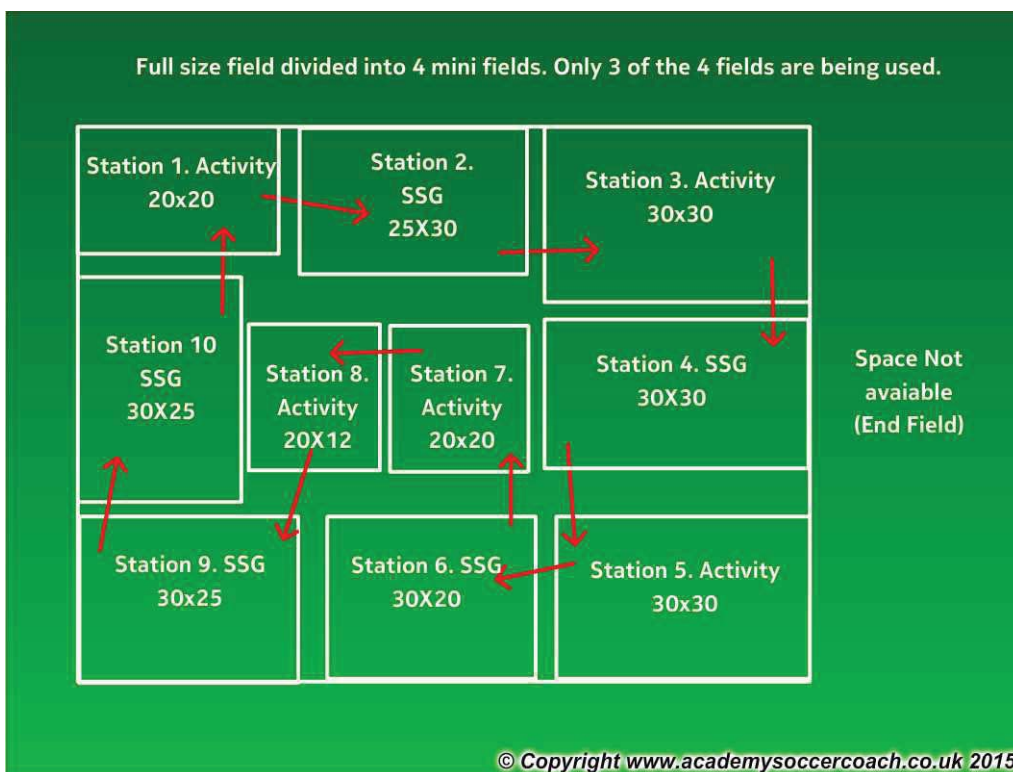


## Sample Field Layouts



“Preferred Training Model, is a station based work program supported by a unified curriculum for kids under the age of 12, many of whom are lacing up cleats for the first time. The emphasis is on skill development and, pivotal, coach education for Canada’s countless volunteers.”

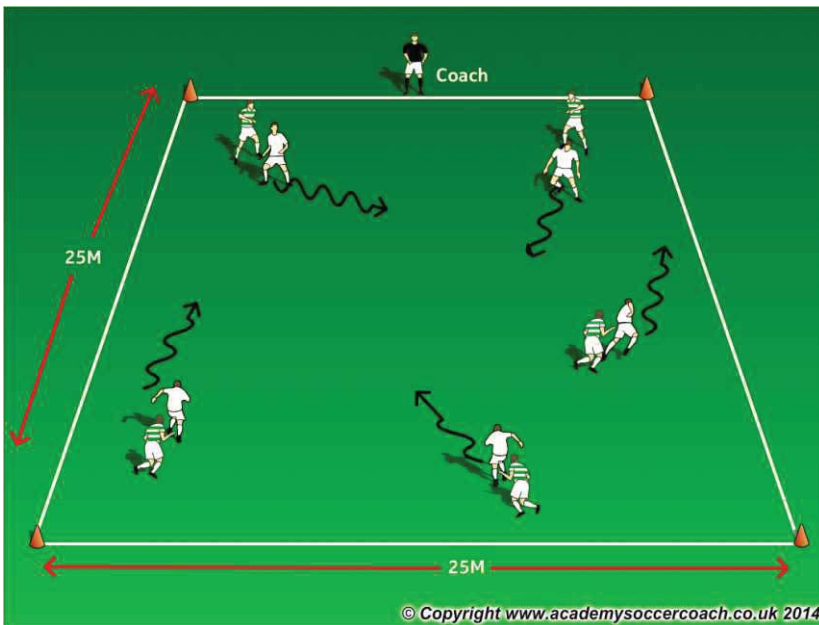
Tony Fonseca,  
Canadian Soccer Association Technical Director





# FUNdamentals practice plan – Week 1

## STATION A - GENERAL MOVEMENT



**Organization:** Players are placed into pairs in a 25m x 25m area.

**Procedure:** 1 player becomes the leader and the 2nd player becomes the follower. Encourage the players to use different movements such as walking, running, jumping, rolling, running backwards and also sideways. After 30 seconds players switch.

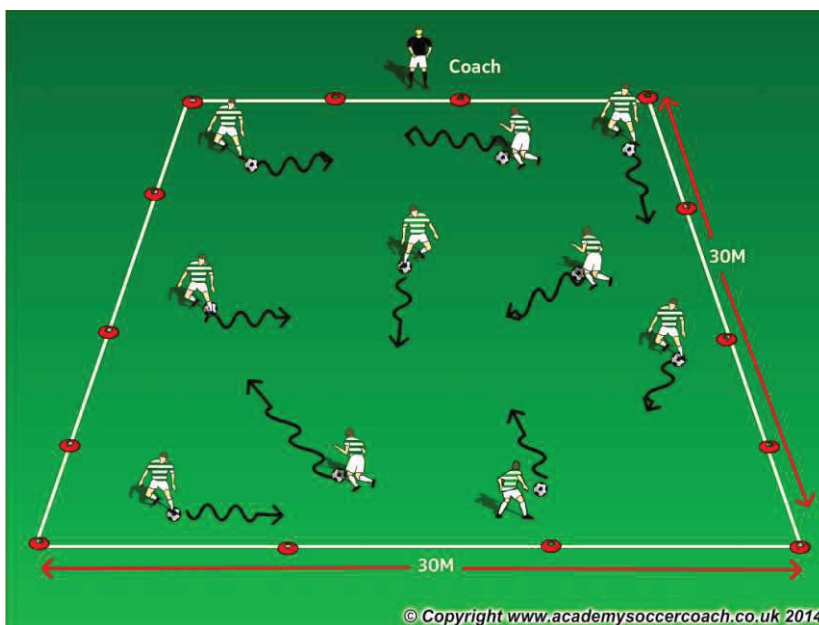
**Progression:** Each player has a ball.

**Time Frame:** 8 - 10 minutes

**Emphasis:** Listening  
Different types of running/movements  
Changing direction  
Agility, Balance, Coordination  
FUN!



## STATION B - SOCCER COORDINATION – BALL FAMILIARITY



**Organization:** Players dribble freely inside 30m x 30m area.

**Procedure:** Players are asked to express them self's and be creative by attacking space and showing different moves. On coaches command players will perform different touches on the ball, for example Toe Taps.

**Time Frame:** 8 - 10 minutes

**Emphasis:** Running with the ball  
Dribbling  
Changing direction  
Agility, Balance, Coordination  
Imagination  
Change of speed  
FUN!





# FUNdamentals practice plan – Week 1

## STATION C - SOCCER TECHNIQUE – NUMBERS GAME



**Organization:** Players are organized into 2 teams. Each player is given a number. Field is 30m x 25m with a goal at each end.

**Procedure:** The coach calls a specific number and that number runs into the field. These 2 players now play 1v1 to goal.

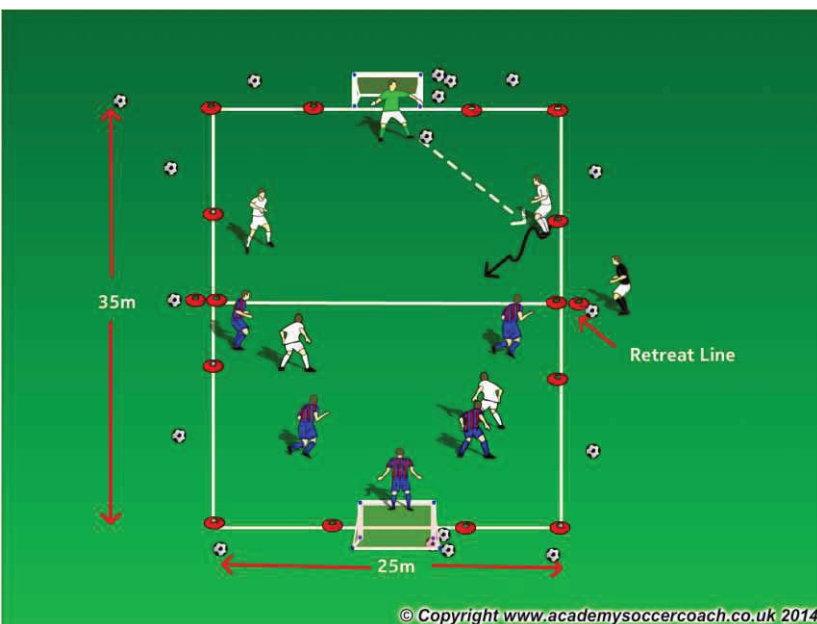
**Progression:** The coach can call out more than one number to create a 2v2 or 3v3.

**Time Frame:** 8 - 10 minutes

**Emphasis:** Listening  
Running with the ball  
Dribbling  
1v1 attacking/defending  
Shooting  
Changing direction  
Agility, Balance, Coordination  
Imagination  
FUN!



## STATION D - SMALL SIDED GAME – 5v5 WITH RETREAT LINE



**Organization:** Players play 5v5 on a 35m x 25m field. The Retreat line is located at the half way line.

**Procedure:** Once the ball goes out for a goal kick or the goalkeeper has control of the ball the opposition must retreat behind the retreat line. Once the player receives the pass from the goalkeeper the game is live. If you have odd numbers you can have the extra player become a neutral player in the game.

**Time Frame:** 8 - 10 minutes

**Emphasis:** Listening  
Running with the ball  
Passing  
Shooting  
Dribbling  
Team work  
Changing direction  
Agility, Balance, Coordination  
Imagination  
FUN!





# Games Based Practices

Placing grassroots players in to a game based practice environment will accelerate the players development of technical ability and game intelligence. Small sided games are clear for children and the space that they play in is appropriate for their bodies. Playing in small sided games gives players enough options to have them thinking, but at the same time does not overload them with too many options were they become stressed and panic.

In a small sided game you are improving young players' technique and skills by giving them a far greater number of ball contacts. The emphasis on control, passing and shooting skills gives the fundamental building blocks of soccer, Plus it's fun for all the players. Players are constantly involved, they attack and defend. The number of passes, touches, shots, saves and 1v1 situations are all increased. Through this players are in the best learning environment where **THEY** get to make the decisions.

The games based approach allows players to become creative, learn from mistakes, be competitive and allows the players to have **FUN!**

## Q. What's the 1st question players ask when they come to practice?

### A. When are we going to play soccer today?

Typical response from the Coach – Towards the end of practice if you work hard.



*“Being physically literate should be the outcome of a high quality movement skills programme that focuses with younger players on developing agility, balance, coordination and speed. These aren't just skills for football, these are core skills that will help you be better in all sports and set you up with a healthy lifestyle forever”*

Nick Levett  
The FA National Development Manager

*“Lets give the players what they want, place them in to game based practices and lets see them develop and fall in love with the game at the grassroots level”*

Carl Horton  
OSA Regional Player Development Manager, West

“Teaching instead of judging” - Bobby Lennox, The Ontario Association Manager, Player Development



# Game Leader Program A Boost For U8 Players

The objective of the Game Leader program is to allow for an improved, child friendly approach to supervising small sided games for children U6-U8 and creating more opportunities for parents to get involved. The Game Leader program has been designed by The OSA Player Development, Referee and Coaching departments. It is supported and endorsed by the Canadian Soccer Association.

The Game Leader will be trained to achieve a few objectives on the field:

1. Enable children to have a fun and rewarding experience while competing in small sided games.
2. Ensure player safety.
3. Implement simplified rules while keeping the game moving -- limiting stoppages and assisting the young players with all restarts.

The Game Leader can be a club representative, coach, parent or a beginning or senior referee who has been selected by the club or district to participate in the Game Leader Instruction program.

# The Game Leader Should



- Be enthusiastic and approachable
- Encourage all children to have fun
- Promote that all children have the opportunity to take restarts
- Ensure the field of play is safe
- Ensure the field is marked out using markers, cones or lines
- Ensure the ball is safe and the correct size for play
- Check that the goals (when available) are safe and appropriate size
- Use the “ready, set, go” prompt to encourage quick restarts to play
- Ask children to pass or dribble the ball into play from all restarts rather than the aimless big kick
- Ensure the opposing team retreats to the halfway line for all goal line restarts
- Encourage team officials and parents to create a safe enjoyable and positive playing environment for all children
- Provide encouragement and praise for both teams. This will facilitate players learning and having more fun
- De-emphasize winning and losing and the score in the game



# Retreat Line

## Rationale

The world of soccer is evolving and Canadian youth must also advance with the game. The modern game now evolves around maintaining possession of the ball, with controlled, precise build up play starting with the goalkeeper. Players must understand the right time to play forward and/or backwards.

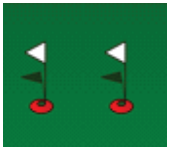
To enable youth players to play this style of soccer they must learn to play through the thirds of the field and have the ability to maintain possession throughout the whole field, while under pressure. Every player on the field must become comfortable in possession of the ball. Possession based soccer should become their default style of play.

By implementing the retreat line at the Grassroots stages we will allow the players to grow in confidence and become better all-round soccer players.

Retreat line – 5v5



### LEGEND



= Retreat Line

## The Procedure

The retreat line will come into play when the ball has gone out for a goal kick or when the goalkeeper has the ball in his/her arms.

All opponents must be behind the retreat line and cannot cross the retreat line until the ball:

- Is touched by a player of the team taking the goal kick OR,
- Leaves the field of play OR,
- Goes over the retreat line. (If the goalkeeper chooses to play the ball across the retreat line prior to the opposition crossing the retreat line 7v7/9v9)



Retreat line – 7v7

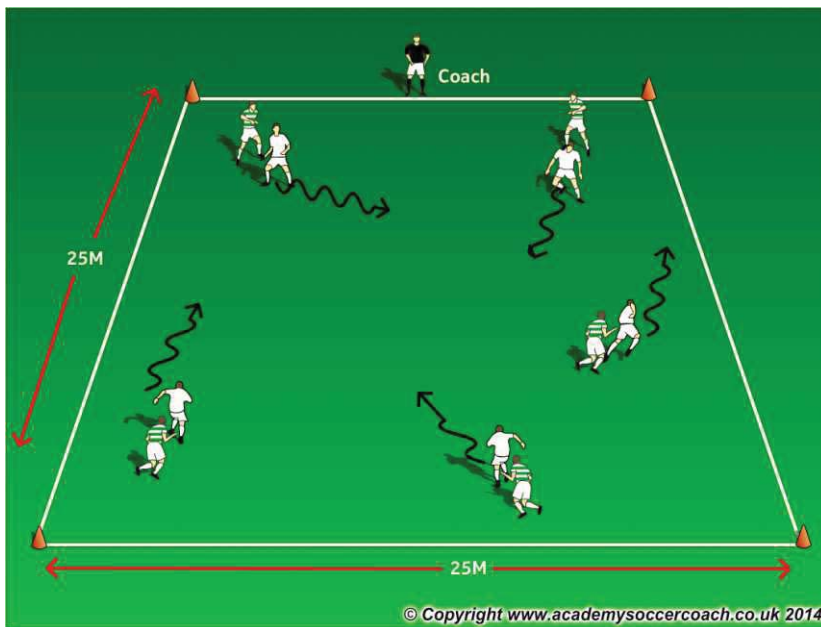


Retreat line – 9v9



# FUNdamentals practice plan – Week 2

## STATION A - GENERAL MOVEMENTS



**Organization:** Players are placed into pairs in a 25m x 25m area.

**Procedure:** 1 player becomes the leader and the 2nd player becomes the follower. Encourage the players to use different movements such as walking, running, jumping, rolling, running backwards and also sideways. After 30 seconds players switch.

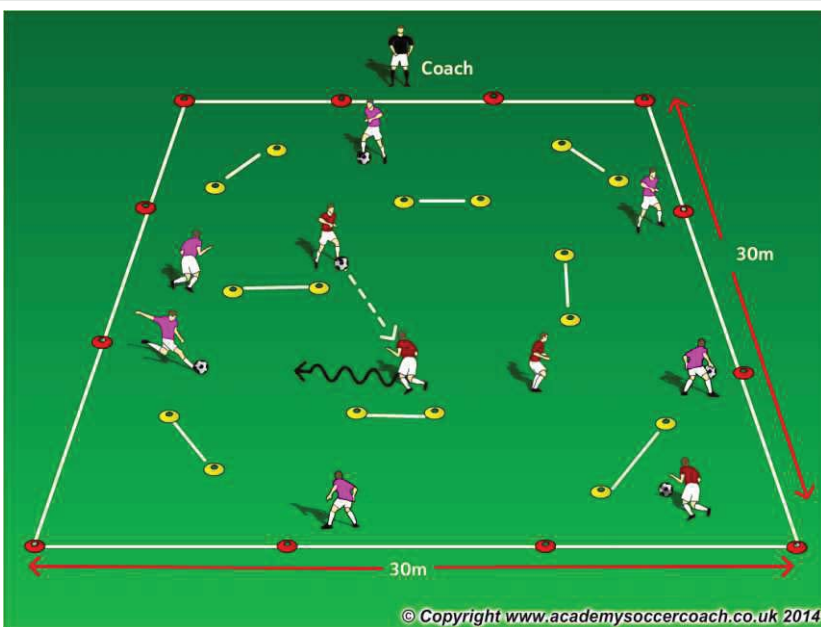
**Progression:** Each player has a ball.

**Time Frame:** 8 - 10 minutes

**Emphasis:** Listening  
Different types of running/movements  
Changing direction  
Agility, Balance, Coordination  
FUN!



## STATION B - SOCCER COORDINATION – PASSING AND RECEIVING



**Organization:** Players are placed into 2s inside 30m x 30m area.

**Procedure:** Players pass and move inside area. Focus should be on how the player passes and receives the ball.

**Progression:** To make it fun/competitive for the players add gates into the area and on the command of "Shopping" players look to pass the ball through the gates. Each gate = 1 point, after 60 seconds pair with the most points wins the competition. Repeat game several times.

**Time Frame:** 8 - 10 minutes

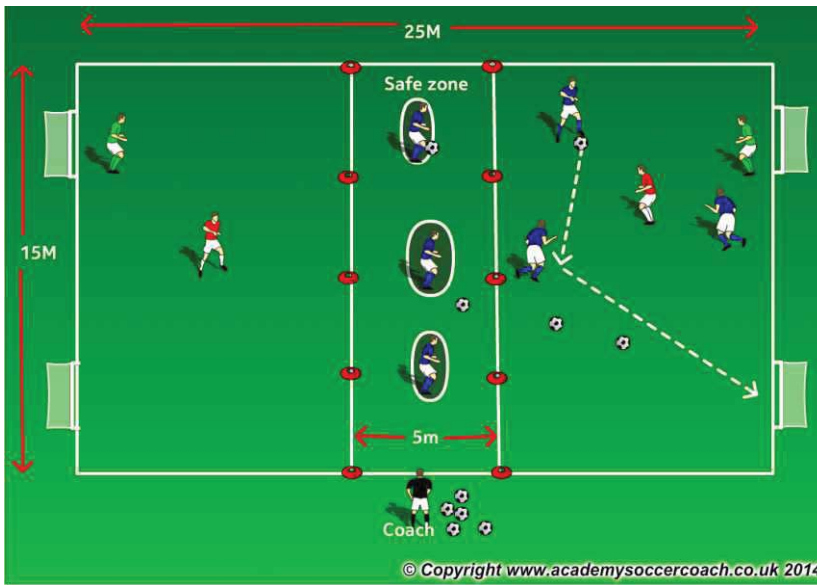
**Emphasis:** Passing - Receiving  
Dribbling  
Changing direction  
Agility, Balance, Coordination  
Imagination  
Change of speed  
FUN!





# FUNdamentals practice plan – Week 2

## STATION C - SOCCER TECHNIQUE – 3v1 TO GOAL



**Organization:** Field size is 15m x 25m with a 5m safe zone in the middle. 3 attackers, 2 defenders and 2 goalkeepers set up as above.

**Procedure:** Activity starts with 3 players in central safe zone, with defender & GK defending the goal at either end. The coach plays a ball into the attackers in the safe zone and they look to attack either end. If attackers' progress is blocked, they can take ball back into safe zone & attack in other direction.

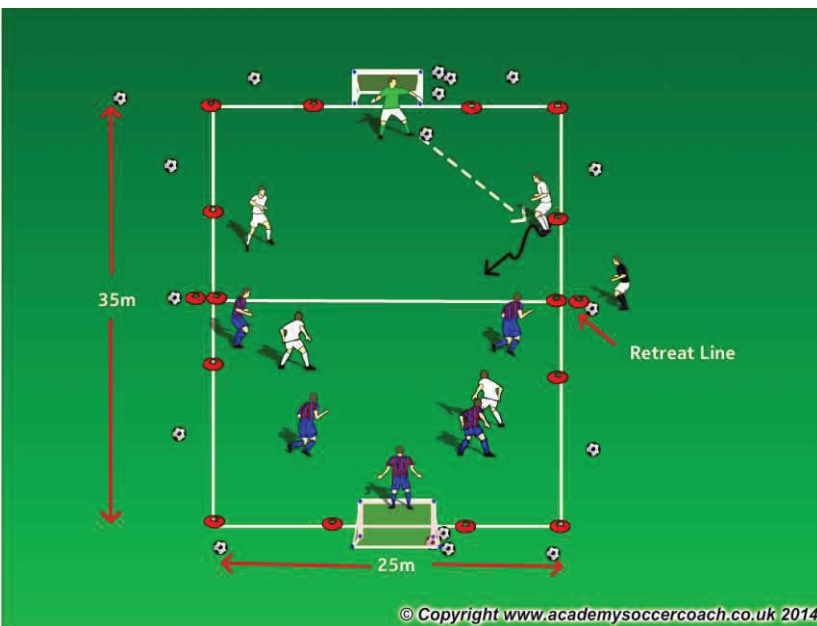
Should the GK save an attempt on goal, the goalkeeper should roll the ball to the defender if possible, who then transfers the ball into the opposite half. Defender receives and attempts to turn & score against GK at that end. Keep rotating the players to allow them all to experience attacking, defending and goalkeeping.

**Time Frame:** 8 -10 minutes

**Emphasis:** Passing - Receiving  
Running with the ball  
Dribbling  
1v1 attacking/defending  
Shooting  
Changing direction  
Agility, Balance, Coordination  
Imagination  
FUN!



## STATION D - SMALL SIDED GAME – 5v5 WITH RETREAT LINE



**Organization:** Players play 5v5 on a 35m x 25m field. The Retreat line is located at the half way line.

**Procedure:** Once the ball goes out for a goal kick or the goalkeeper has control of the ball the opposition must retreat behind the retreat line. Once the player receives the pass from the goalkeeper the game is live. If you have odd numbers you can have the extra player become a neutral player in the game.

**Time Frame:** 8 - 10 minutes

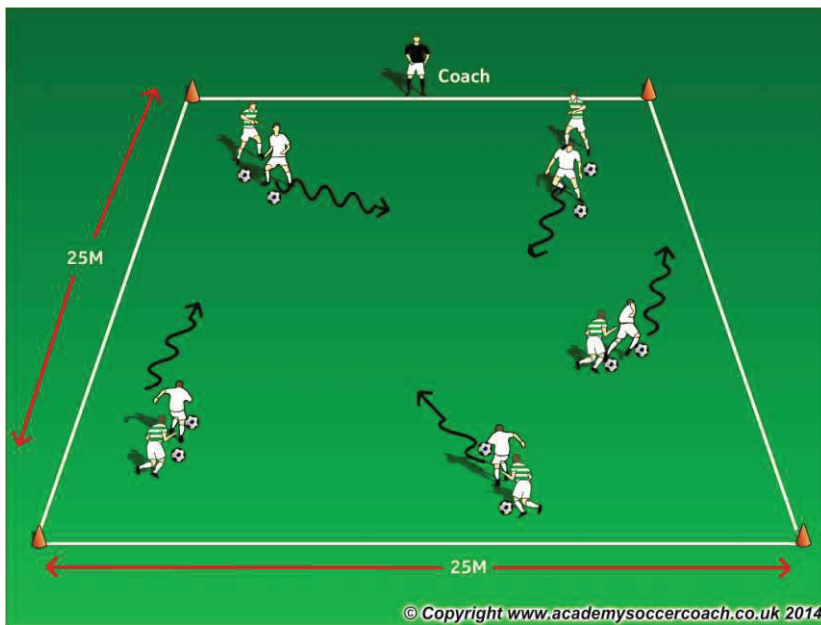
**Emphasis:** Listening  
Running with the ball  
Passing  
Shooting  
Dribbling  
Team work  
Changing direction  
Agility, Balance, Coordination  
Imagination  
FUN!





# FUNdamentals practice plan – Week 3

## STATION A - GENERAL MOVEMENTS WITH A BALL



**Time Frame:** 8 - 10 minutes

**Emphasis:** Listening  
 Different types of running/movements  
 Dribbling  
 Changing direction  
 Agility, Balance, Coordination  
 FUN!

**Organization:** Players are placed into pairs in a 25m x 25m area.

**Procedure:** 1 player becomes the leader and the 2nd player becomes the follower. Encourage the players to use different movements such as walking, running, jumping, rolling, running backwards and also sideways. After 30 seconds players switch.

**Progression:** Each player has a ball.



## STATION B - SOCCER COORDINATION – 1v1 TO GOALS



**Time Frame:** 8 - 10 minutes

**Emphasis:** Dribbling  
 1v1 attacking/defending  
 Changing direction  
 Agility, Balance, Coordination  
 Imagination  
 Change of speed  
 FUN!

**Organization:** Area is 20mx20m with 1 goal in each corner, 1m in width.

**Procedure:** Player A plays the pass to player B. Player B attempts to dribble past player A and dribble through one of the blue goals. If player A takes the ball away from player B he/she then tries to dribble the ball through either of the red goals. Keep rotating the service so that all players are attackers.

**Progression:** Players progress to play 2v2 if success is being achieved.







# FUNdamentals practice plan – Week 3

## STATION C - SOCCER TECHNIQUE – 1v1 TO A GOAL WITH GKs



**Organization:** Players are organized into 2 teams. Each player is given a number. Field is 30m x 25m with a goal at each end.

**Procedure:** The coach calls a specific number and that number runs into the field. These 2 players now play 1v1 to goal.

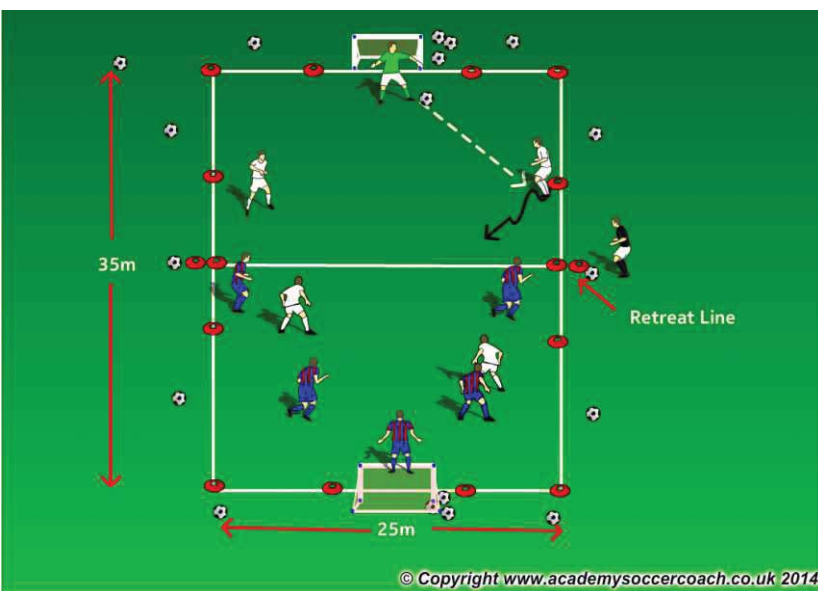
**Progression:** The coach can call out more than one number to create a 2v2 or 3v3.

**Time Frame:** 8 - 10 minutes

**Emphasis:** Running with the ball  
Dribbling  
1v1 attacking/defending  
Shooting  
Changing direction  
Agility, Balance, Coordination  
Imagination  
FUN!



## STATION D - SMALL SIDED GAME – 5v5 WITH RETREAT LINE



**Organization:** Players play 5v5 on a 35m x 25m field. The Retreat line is located at the half way line.

**Procedure:** Once the ball goes out for a goal kick or the goalkeeper has control of the ball the opposition must retreat behind the retreat line. Once the player receives the pass from the goalkeeper the game is live. If you have odd numbers you can have the extra player become a neutral player in the game.

**Time Frame:** 8 - 10 minutes

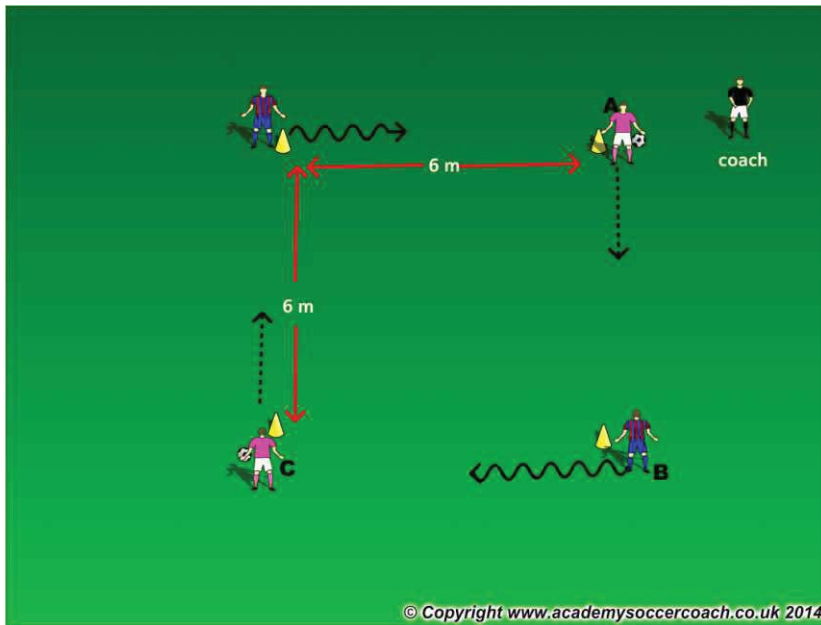
**Emphasis:** Listening  
Running with the ball  
Passing  
Shooting  
Dribbling  
Team work  
Changing direction  
Agility, Balance, Coordination  
Imagination  
FUN!





# FUNdamentals practice plan – Week 4

## STATION A - GENERAL MOVEMENTS



**Organization:** 6m x 6m area, four players and 4 balls.

**Procedure:** 1 player stand at each corner, two players at diagonally opposite corners have a soccer ball in their hands. Player A and C start at the same time. Player A throws the ball to player B. Player B catches the ball and then dribbles to the cone were player C started. Player B now picks the ball up and throws the ball to player C who catches the ball and dribbles to the next cone. The game continues. To progress, players run to different direction

**Time Frame:** 8 - 10 minutes

**Emphasis:** Awareness  
Basic movements  
Dribbling/races  
FUN!



## STATION B - SOCCER TECHNIQUE



**Organization:** 30m x 30m area. Cones are setup around the area. 2 taggers.

**Procedure:** Taggers try to tag players. Players can be safe if they are on a cone. Only one player is allowed on a cone. If a player runs to a cone with a player already on it, the player on the cone must leave.

**Progression:** A ball can be added for non-taggers.

**Time Frame:** 8 - 10 minutes

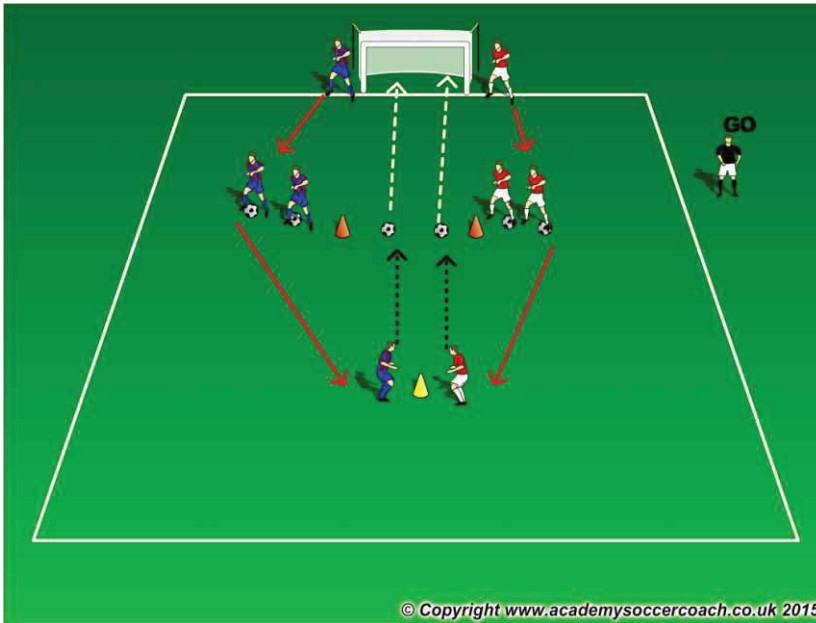
**Emphasis:** Coordination  
Spatial awareness  
FUN





# FUNdamentals practice plan – Week 4

## STATION C - SOCCER TECHNIQUE - SHOOTING



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**Organization:** Mark out a shooting line 8m in front of small goal, and place a starting cone 5m from the line.

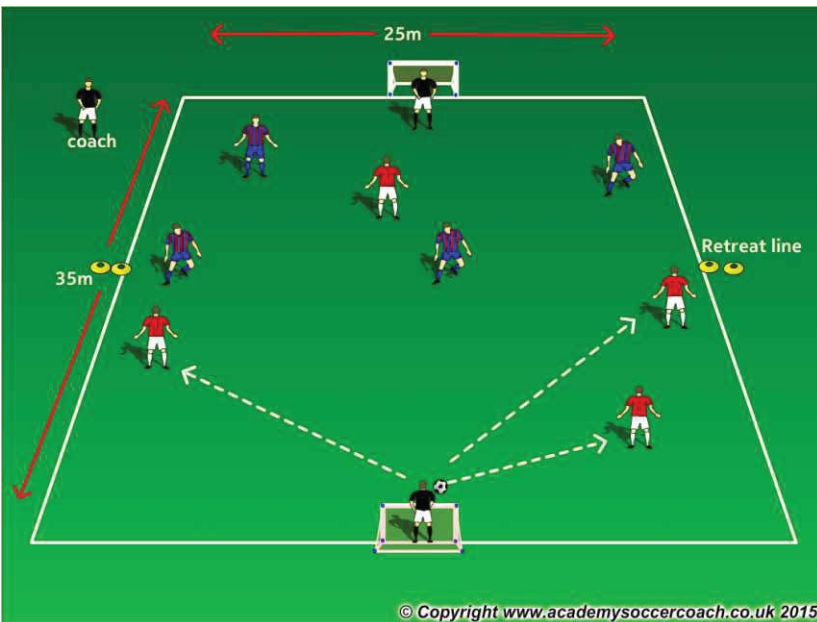
**Procedure:** One player from each team stands at the post and two players with ball at the each side of the line. Two players at starting cone, on coach's signal they must touch the cone, and run in full speed to shoot the ball. The first player to score gets 2 points. Players at the post collect the ball and dribble to shooting line. Two players at the shooting line, place two balls on the line, and run to starting cone and ready for the race.

**Time Frame:** 8 - 10 minutes

**Emphasis:** Changing direction  
Change of speed  
Agility, Balance, Coordination  
Shooting  
FUN



## STATION D - SMALL SIDED GAME – 5v5 WITH RETREAT LINE



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**Organization:** Players play 5v5 on a 35m x 25m field. The Retreat line is located at the half way line.

**Procedure:** Once the ball goes out for a goal kick or the goalkeeper has control of the ball the opposition must retreat behind the retreat line. Once the player receives the pass from the goalkeeper the game is live. If you have odd numbers you can have the extra player become a neutral player in the game.

**Time Frame:** 8 - 10 minutes

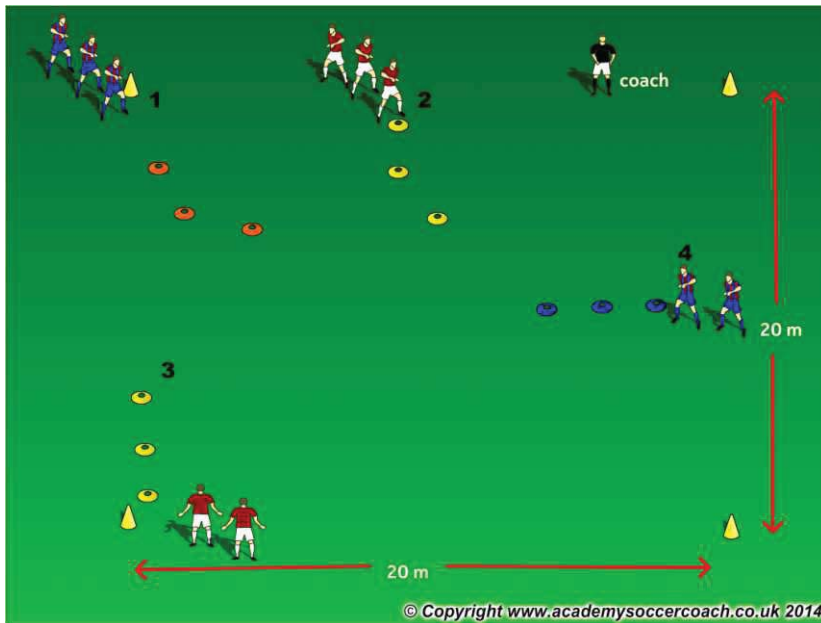
**Emphasis:** Running with the ball  
Dribbling  
1v1  
Changing direction  
Change of speed  
Agility, Balance, Coordination  
Imagination  
FUN!





# FUNdamentals practice plan – Week 5

## STATION A - GENERAL MOVEMENTS



**Organization:** 20m x 20m area as shown. Four different stations.

**Procedure:** Players stay at each station for 60 seconds and then rotate.

- Station 1: Hop on one leg
- Station 2: Bunny Hops
- Station 3: Skip backward
- Station 4: Players decide

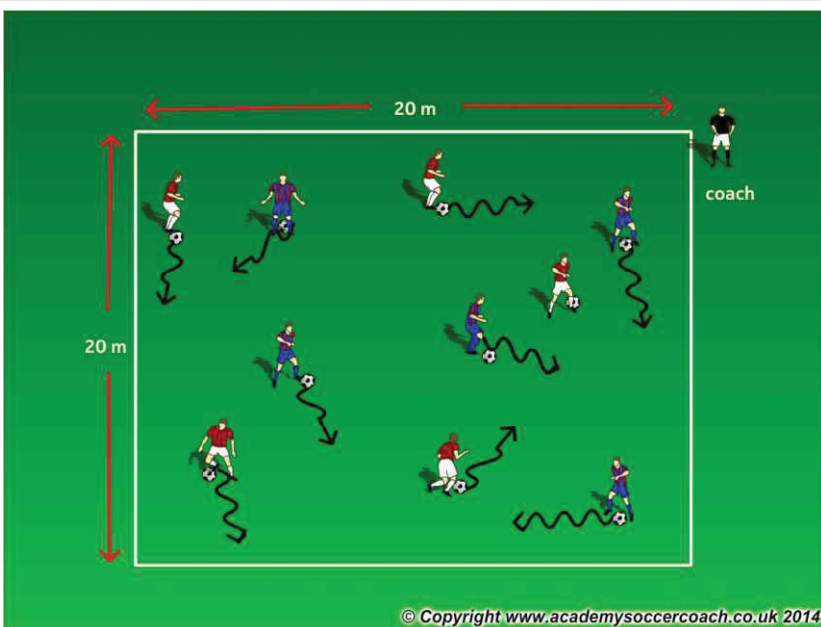
**Progression:** A soccer ball can be added.

**Time Frame:** 8 - 10 minutes

**Emphasis:** Changing direction  
Agility, Balance, Coordination  
Awareness  
FUN!



## STATION B - SOCCER COORDINATION



**Organization:** 20m x 20m area as shown. 10 players. Each player has a ball.

**Procedure:** Players move freely within the area. Players follow coach's commands:

- 1- Salute captain: Raise hand and balance on one leg.
- 2- Scrub the decks: Imitate washing the floor with the ball
- 3- Raise the sails: Move around with ball and swing your arms
- 4- Row the lifeboat: Move the ball backwards.

**Time Frame:** 8 - 10 minutes

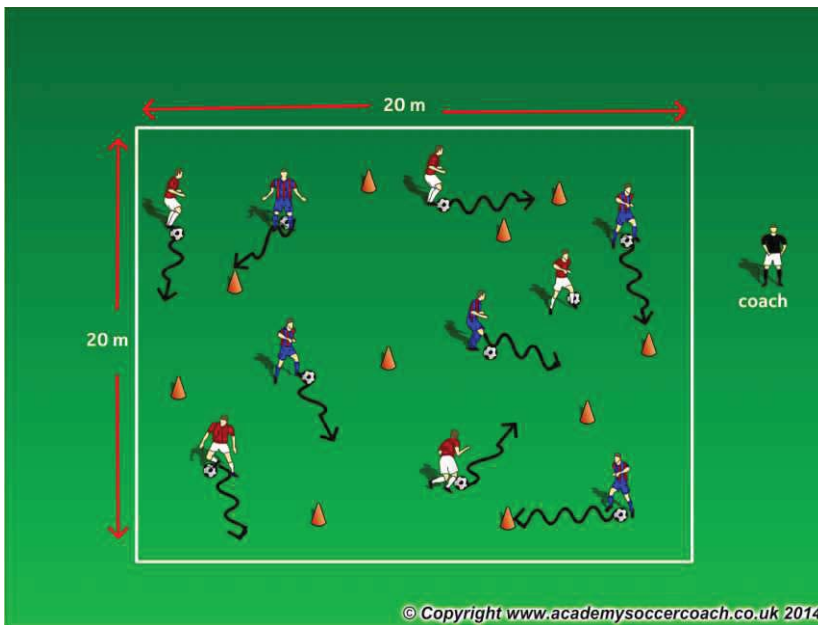
**Emphasis:** Changing direction  
Eye-foot Coordination  
Balance  
FUN!





# FUNdamentals practice plan – Week 5

## STATION C - SOCCER TECHNIQUE – FEINT TO BEAT A PLAYER



**Time Frame:** 8 - 10 minutes

**Emphasis:** Changing direction  
Change of speed  
Agility, Balance, Coordination  
FUN!

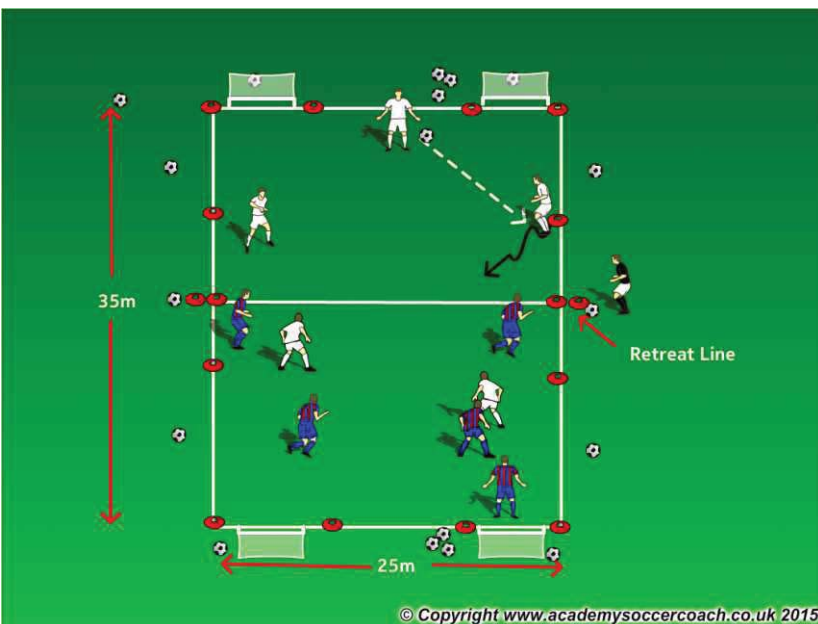
**Organization:** 20m x 20m field as shown. 10 players with ball each. Cones placed inside area.

**Procedure:** Players move freely within the area stopping the ball at each cone and doing a fake/move before exploding past the cone.

**Progression:** Players perform a fake/move as they moving between the cones.



## STATION D - SMALL SIDED GAME WITH RETREAT LINE



**Time Frame:** 8 - 10 minutes

**Emphasis:** Running with the ball  
Dribbling  
1v1  
Changing direction  
Change of speed  
Agility, Balance, Coordination  
Imagination  
FUN!

**Organization:** Players play 5v5 on a 35mx25m field. The Retreat line is located at the half way line. 2 goals are located at each end

**Procedure:** Once the ball goes out for a goal kick or the goalkeeper has control of the ball the opposition must retreat behind the retreat line. Once the player receives the pass from the goalkeeper the game is live. When scoring a goal team in possession has two goals to score on.

If you have odd numbers you can have the extra player become a neutral player in the game who plays for the team in possession.





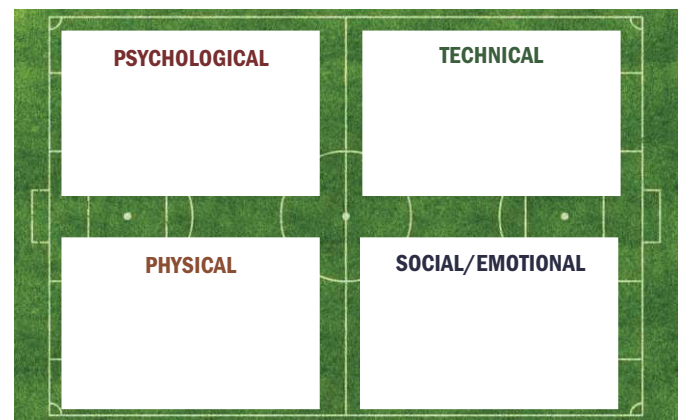
# FUNdamentals practice plan

## STATION A - GENERAL MOVEMENT

For coaches to plan their own sessions

Time Frame: 8 - 10 minutes

Emphasis:

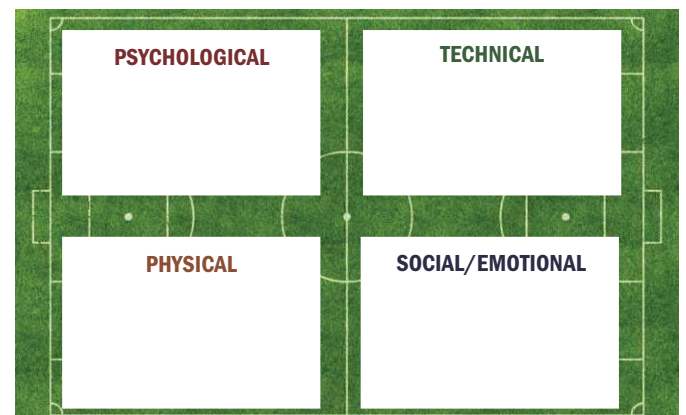


## STATION B - SOCCER TECHNIQUE

For coaches to plan their own sessions

Time Frame: 8 - 10 minutes

Emphasis:





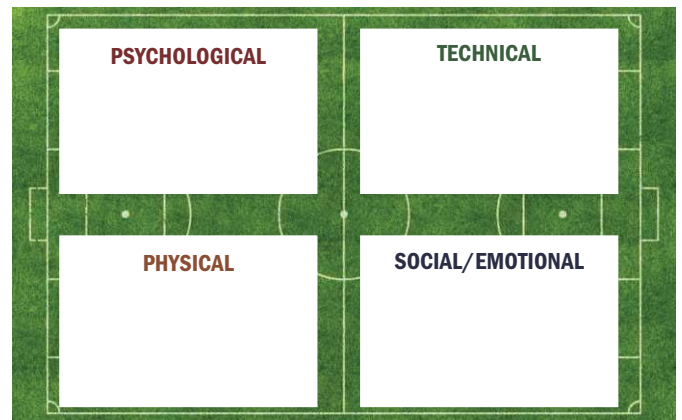
# FUNdamentals practice plan

## STATION C - SOCCER TECHNIQUE

For coaches to plan their own sessions

Time Frame: 8 - 10 minutes

Emphasis:

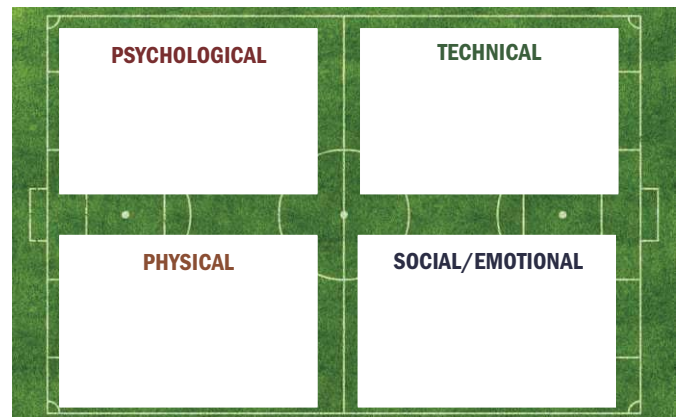


## STATION D - SMALL SIDED GAME WITH RETREAT LINE

For coaches to plan their own sessions

Time Frame: 8 - 10 minutes

Emphasis:





# Coaching Notes

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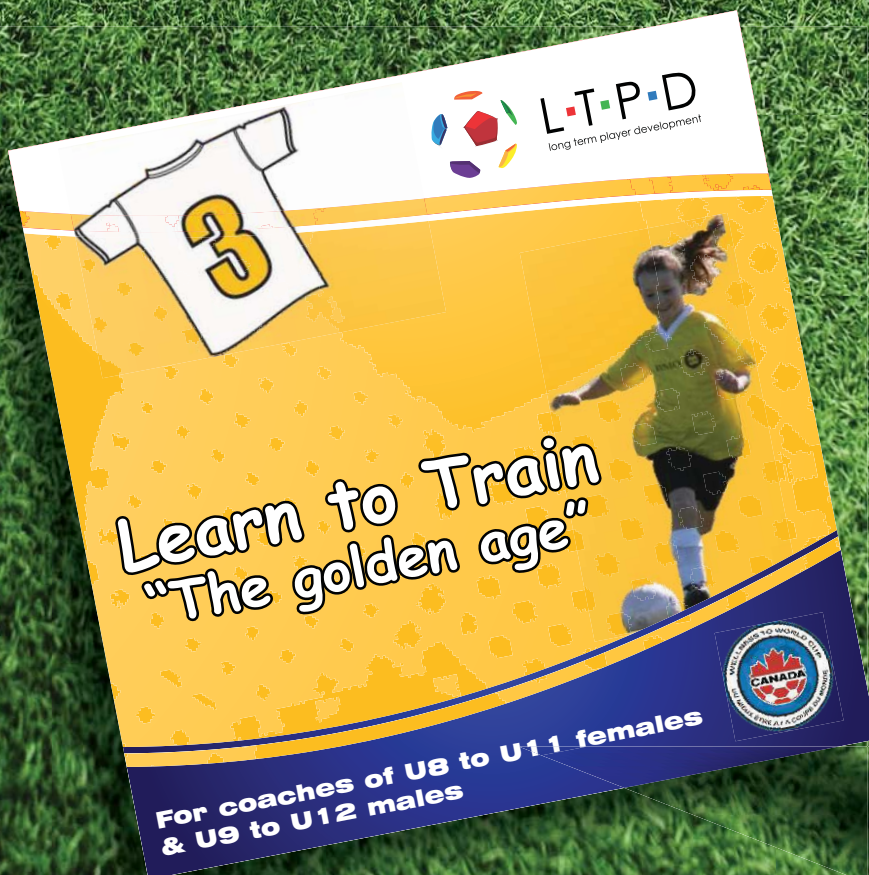




*Grassroots soccer is not about the amount of trophies you win. It's about the difference you make to a young person's life.*

# THE ONTARIO SOCCER ASSOCIATION GRASSROOTS WORKBOOK & PRACTICE PLANS

April 2015





# Learn To Train Practice Plan

## OSA Player Development Model – The Station Concept

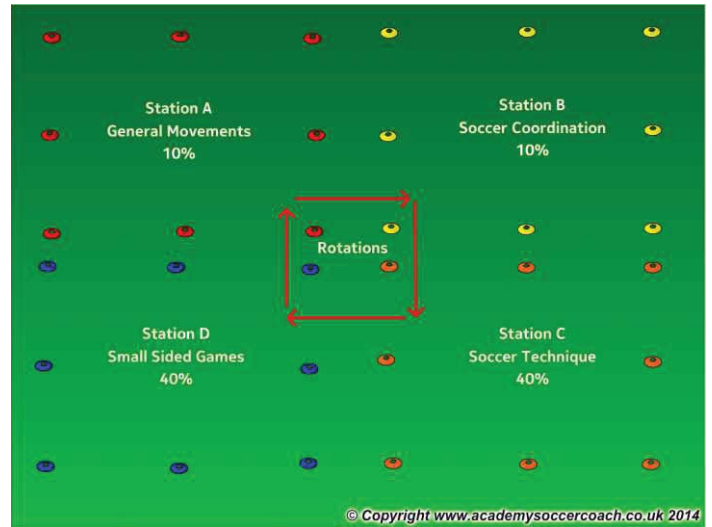
The activities provided illustrate how stations can be used during Grassroots practices.

During the practice players will spend an allotted time at each station having fun, developing specific skills and qualities before moving onto the next station. By using station work we create an environment where players are continually motivated and that they are continually challenged.

In the following activities players will travel through four stations. In these examples one station focuses on general movements, one station on soccer coordination with the ball, one station on soccer technique and the final station focuses on a small sided soccer game 3v3, 4v4 and 5v5

All sessions take a holistic approach to developing our youth. Each game and activity will focus on four main areas of the child's development; these include social/emotional, physical, psychological and also technical.

**Total Practice time:** 45 - 70 minutes as per the OSA Recreational and Development Matrix



If working with a larger group organize players into groups of 10-12. Each station has a coach who will lead that specific station for the session. Players rotate every 12-15 minutes with a two minute break in between each station to have a water break and move to the next station.

If working with a smaller group you can still have the four stations and players will move together through all four stations until all are complete.

## Different scenarios based on numbers in attendance (Scenarios are based on each session being 60 minutes in length)

# Players	Stations	# Coach/Parent/volunteer	Setup
32 - 40	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>① General Movement</li> <li>② Soccer Coordination</li> <li>③ Soccer Technique</li> <li>④ Small-Sided Game</li> <li>⑤ Soccer Technique</li> <li>⑥ Small-Sided Game</li> <li>⑦ Soccer Technique</li> <li>⑧ Small-Sided Game</li> </ol>	4	<u>Ideal scenario</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 coaches 4 groups.</li> <li>• This requires 2 coaches to change their station over to on the second half of the training session.</li> <li>• 1.2.3.4. first 24 minutes</li> <li>• 5.6.7.8. final 36 minutes</li> </ul>
24 - 30	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>① General Movement</li> <li>② Soccer Coordination</li> <li>③ Small-Sided Game</li> <li>④ Soccer Technique</li> <li>⑤ Small-Sided Game</li> <li>⑥ Soccer Technique</li> </ol>	3	<u>Second scenario</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 coaches 3 groups.</li> <li>• This requires one coach to change their station over on the second half of the training session.</li> <li>• 1.2.3. first 18 minutes</li> <li>• 4.5.6. final 42 minutes</li> </ul>
16 - 28	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>① General Movement</li> <li>② Soccer Coordination</li> <li>③ Small-Sided Game</li> <li>④ Soccer Technique</li> </ol>	2	<u>Third scenario</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 coaches 2 groups.</li> <li>• Coaches have allocated activities and then swap groups or activities.</li> <li>• 1.2. first 12 minutes</li> <li>• 3.4. final 48 minutes</li> </ul>



## TALENT SELECTION VS TALENT IDENTIFICATION – What’s the difference?



Talent selection is when coaches choose players on their current abilities on what they can currently do on the field which will have an impact on events that are taking place in the near future. Talent identification is however not what the child can currently do but is a prediction on what a child can do in the future. Both are totally separate, talent selection will help you get results today, while talent identification will help you build stronger teams for the future once players reach the talented pathway.

In our old system where tryouts have taken place talent selection has been promoted as coaches have had the “must win” attitude. This attitude has come about due to the pressure that has been placed on coaches by clubs and parents to win championships and win promotion. Even in the majority of situations, where coaches are volunteers, they have still been under pressure to win to return the following year as the coach. So when it came to tryouts, players that were selected were the bigger, stronger, faster more athletic players, which will help coaches and teams gain short term success. Players that did not match these criteria were told “sorry you are not good enough and you need to work on the following...” However they were not given the opportunity to work on the following because they were not selected to the program.

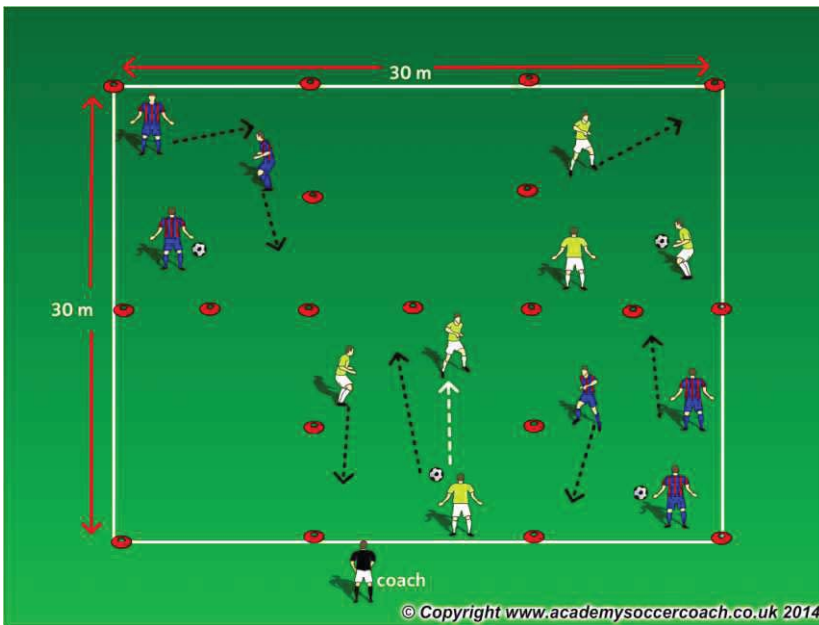
In the new grassroots system The OSA is recommending that no tryouts take place and that “open development sessions” are made available to any player who wishes to play at the development level. Now we can build our player pool and become talent identifiers. Players within the pool may not be the elite athletes at the present moment but they do show high levels of commitment, a high level of coachability, sensitivity to training and the motivation and desire to learn and become better. Now using the holistic approach and focusing on the four corners of the child’s development, physiological, social, physical and technical, we can strive to develop more athletes, better human beings as well as better soccer players.

Talent identification also takes a long term approach to player development, with the focus on training large numbers of players, instead of cutting all but the elite athlete. This approach now gives all children the opportunity to realise their potential and release that potential when they feel the time is right.



# Learn to Train practice plan – Week 1

## STATION A - GENERAL MOVEMENT



**Organization:** A 30m x 30m area is divided into equal smaller boxes. 3 players in each group. Each group has 1 ball.

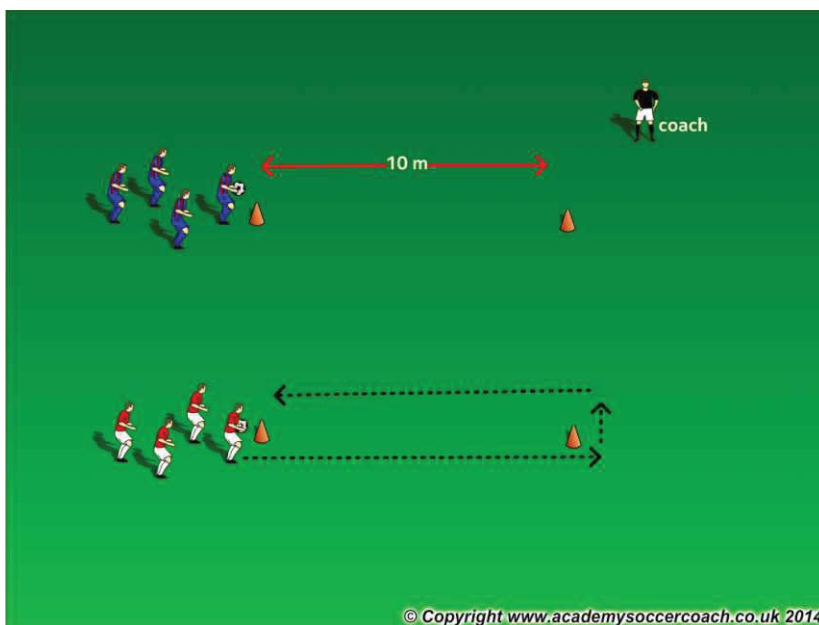
**Procedure:** Players move in their box, passing, and receiving, and are asked to perform different movements. I.e. Step over, Matthew's move. On the coach's call, players move to another box.

**Time Frame:** 12 - 15 minutes

**Emphasis:** Changing direction  
Eye-foot Coordination  
Aware of surroundings  
Balance  
FUN!



## STATION B - SOCCER COORDINATION



**Organization:** Mark out two courses. Two to four players stand at each starting cone. Each team has a ball.

**Procedure:** On coach's call, the first player rolls the ball with hands around the far cone, and back to the next player in line. Which team can complete the activity first?

Variation: Players bounce the ball around the far cone, run with the ball around the far cone or they can head a balloon around the far cone.

**Time Frame:** 12 - 15 minutes

**Emphasis:** Listening  
Running with the ball  
Changing direction  
Eye- hand (foot) Coordination  
FUN!





# Learn to Train practice plan – Week 1

## STATION C - SOCCER TECHNIQUE - DRIBBLING/CREATIVITY



**Time Frame:** 12 - 15 minutes

**Emphasis:** Changing direction  
Change of speed  
Agility, Balance, Coordination  
Shooting, finishing  
FUN!

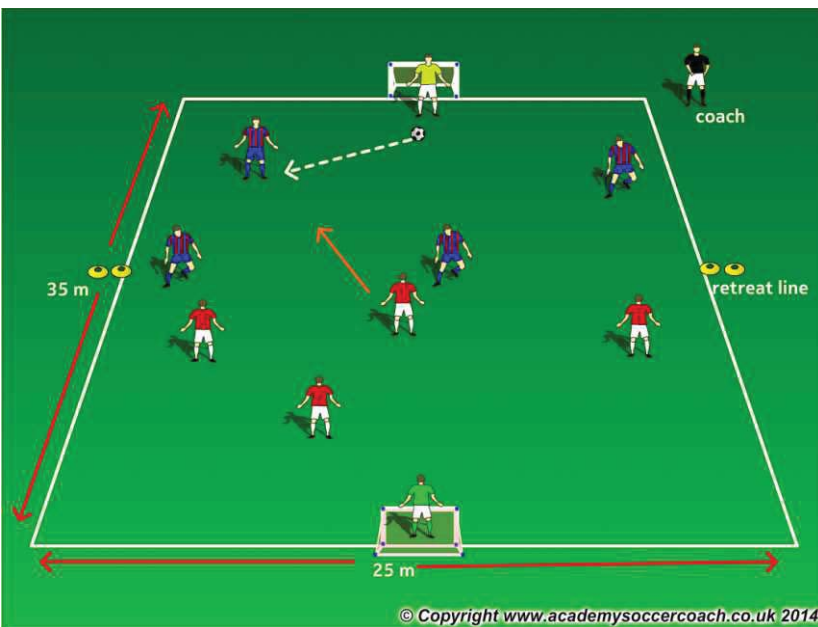
**Organization:** 30m x 15m area is divided to three equal grids, one player is a defender in each grid.

**Procedure:** Attacker runs to 1st defender and performs a dribbling move, when he/she passes the first defender, then he/she runs to 2nd defender performing different dribbling move. Once they pass the final defender the attacker gets to shoot on goal.

**Progression:** This exercise could be done in 2v1 situation, working on when to pass, and when to dribble. Rotate players.

<p><b>PSYCHOLOGICAL</b> Positive reinforcement Confidence Being safe Fun</p>	<p><b>TECHNICAL</b> Dribbling 1v1 attacking/defending passing, Shooting</p>
<p><b>PHYSICAL</b> Speed A,B,C's Change of direction</p>	<p><b>SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL</b> Listening Communicating Peer interaction</p>

## STATION D - SMALL SIDED GAME WITH RETREAT LINE



**Time Frame:** 12 - 15 minutes

**Emphasis:** Running with the ball  
Dribbling  
1v1  
Changing direction  
Change of speed  
Agility, Balance, Coordination  
Imagination  
Creativity  
FUN!

**Organization:** Players play 5v5 on a 35m x 25m field. The Retreat line is located at the half way line.

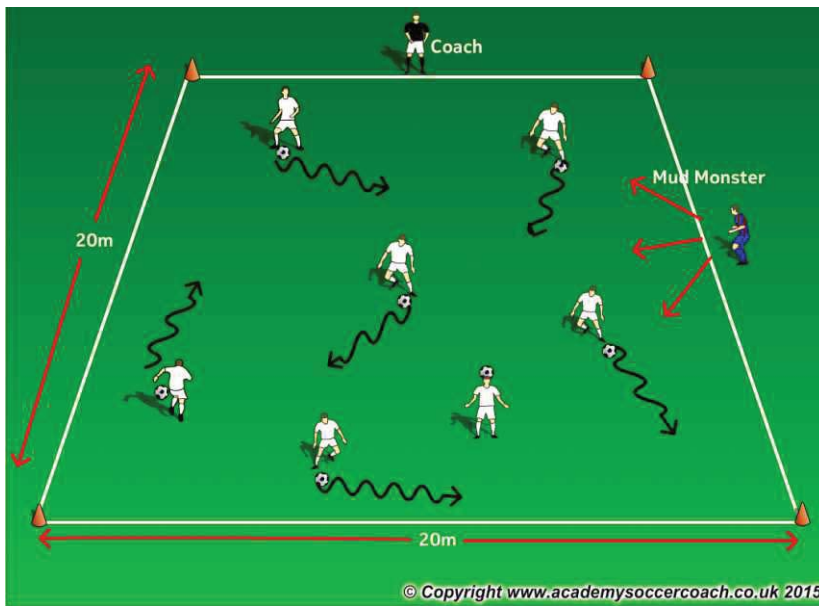
**Procedure:** Once the ball goes out for a goal kick or the goalkeeper has control of the ball the opposition must retreat behind the retreat line. Once the player receives the pass from the goalkeeper the game is live. If you have odd numbers you can have the extra player become a neutral player in the game.

<p><b>PSYCHOLOGICAL</b> Fun Confidence Being safe</p>	<p><b>TECHNICAL</b> Dribbling 1v1 Shooting</p>
<p><b>PHYSICAL</b> Speed A,B,C's Change of Direction</p>	<p><b>SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL</b> Listening Communicating Fun with friends</p>



# Learn to Train practice plan – Week 2

## STATION A - GENERAL BASIC MOVEMENT



**Time Frame:** 12 - 15 minutes

**Emphasis:** Changing direction  
Running  
Spatial awareness  
FUN!

**Organization:** 20m x 20m area. All players have a soccer ball except the mud monster.

**Procedure:** All players dribble around inside the area. 1 player at a time is selected to become the "MUD MONSTER". When the coach says go the Mud monster comes in and attempt's to tag the players. If a player is tagged they must stand with their legs apart, holding the soccer ball and their head shouting, "help, help I'm stuck in the mud" to be freed a player who is dribbling crawls through the back of their legs. Each player gets to be the mud monster for 1 minute.



## STATION B - 3v2 SHOOTING



**Time Frame:** 12 - 15 minutes

**Emphasis:** Turning  
Changing direction  
Shooting  
Passing  
Receiving  
FUN!

**Organization:** A 9v9 size goal, a few balls, 10 to 12 players. Mark out field as shown (18 yds. box if it's possible), and 3 cones 10m from 18 yds. line.

**Procedure:** The first passer initiates the 3v2 with a pass into the penalty box.

(Extra defender juggles on the side, and will rotate each round)

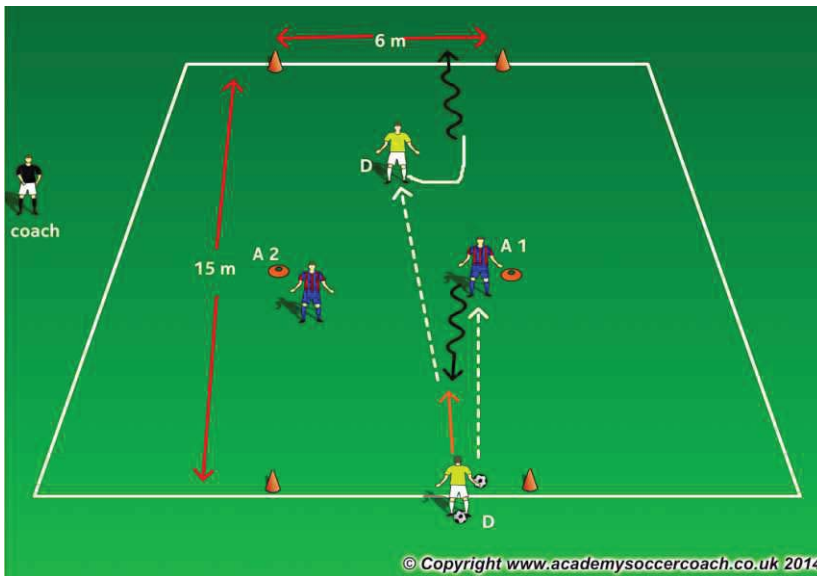
Attackers can only shoot after receiving and controlling the ball. When the first ball goes out of the field or into the goal, the next passer passes into penalty box. Team switch their roles after two or three rounds.





# Learn to Train practice plan – Week 2

## STATION C - SOCCER TECHNIQUE - INDIVIDUAL DEFENDING



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**Organization:** field is marked out 15m x 6m, it could be varied depend on the age and the ability of players.

**Procedure:** Divide players to two teams. One team (attackers) receive the ball from the defender and try to pass the defender and cross the line.

Attacker will rotate every round. Same procedure will take place on the other side.

**Progression:** 2 defenders vs 1 attacker

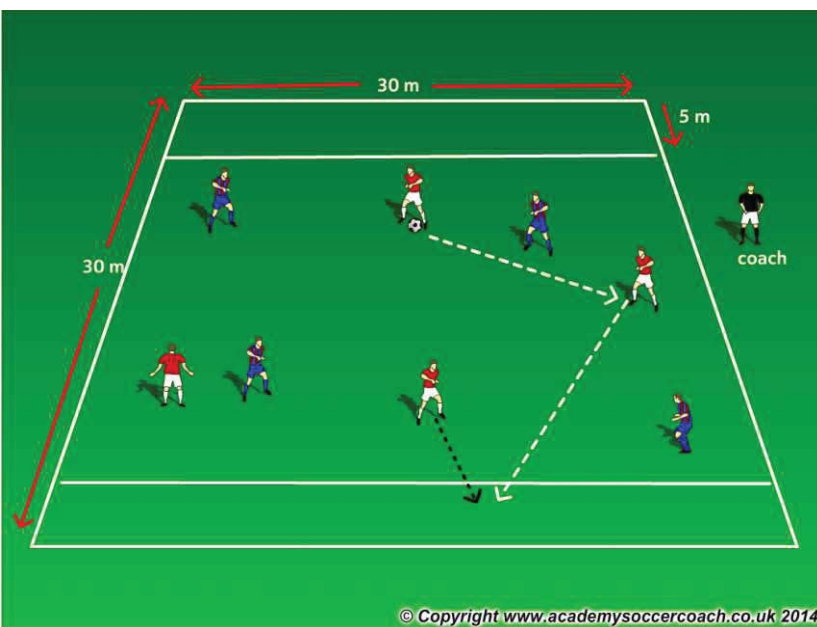
If the defender intercepts the ball, they will pass it to their teammate on the other half, who will receive and turn to cross the line.

**Time Frame:** 12 - 15 minutes

**Emphasis:**  
 Patience  
 Body position  
 1v1 mentality  
 Angle of approach  
 Element of surprise  
 Speed of approach  
 Fun!



## STATION D - SMALL SIDED GAME - END ZONE GAME



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**Organization:** 30m x 30m area, with two end zones as shown in diagram.

**Procedure:** Teams score a point by passing the ball into end zone where it will be received by teammate. Players can't wait for the ball in end zone, they must run to end zone to receive the ball.

**Time Frame:** 12 - 15 minutes

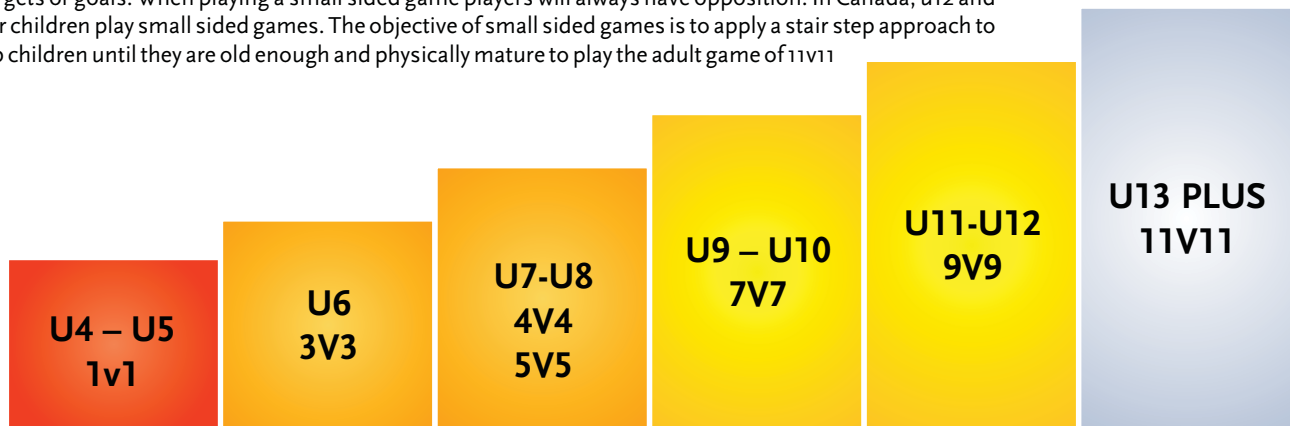
**Emphasis:**  
 Running with the ball  
 Dribbling  
 1v1  
 Changing direction  
 Change of speed  
 Agility, Balance, Coordination  
 Imagination  
 FUN!





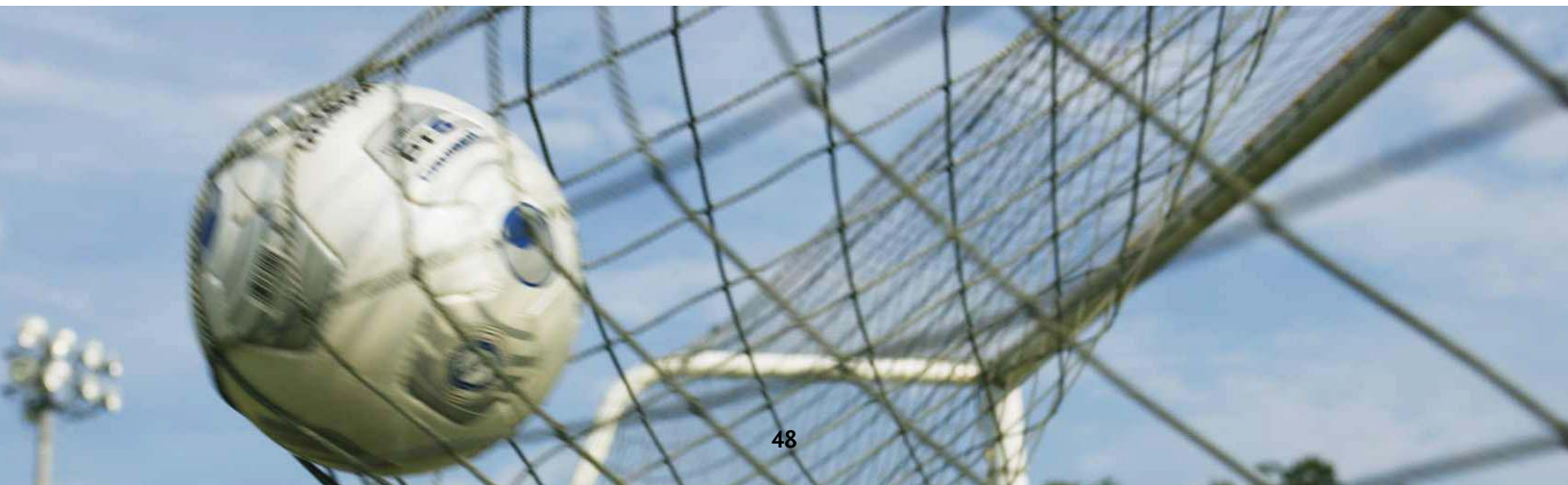
## What is a SSG or Small Sided Game?

A SSG or small sided game is any game that is played with less than 11v11. Any small sided game will always have targets or goals. When playing a small sided game players will always have opposition. In Canada, u12 and younger children play small sided games. The objective of small sided games is to apply a stair step approach to develop children until they are old enough and physically mature to play the adult game of 11v11



## What are the benefits of small sided games?

- More touches
- More shots on goal
- More saves by the goalkeeper
- More 1v1 attacking
- More 1v1 defending
- Ball in play longer
- Easy to organise
- Spatially appropriate
- Physically appropriate
- Cognitively appropriate
- Experience technical and tactical situations
- Constant transition from attack to defence
- Most importantly its FUN!!!







# Creating an Inclusive environment for Grassroots players

The very thought of attending a trial puts fear into most of us adults. Think how you feel when you go for a job interview. Can you imagine what a child feels? One of our guiding principles in Grassroots Soccer is that there are opportunities for all. We want all children to be allowed access to programs that they have decided that they want to join. During their Grassroots Soccer years, if a child decides that they want to be a part of a development program and the family can meet the added time, financial, travel and practice commitment, they should be allowed to. If they want to be the best that they can be, then allow them to be that. Don't deny children opportunities to participate in programs." Lets include as many children as possible in our Development programs. They want skills, lets give them skills.



## How?

When clubs are preparing the Grassroots age groups for the new season we should be thinking of how we can develop as many players as possible. In the past clubs have held tryouts where the best players get selected and the weaker players are not given the opportunity. Instead of tryouts clubs should hold "Open development sessions" where players and parents can attend to find out more information about the development program. This gives all parties involved the opportunity to find out what is needed at the development level and then the families can make the best decision for their child, rather than the coach making the decision on a player based on ability, strength or size. Clubs now have the ability to create game day rosters which will allow for more players to be involved.

## What is a "Game day roster?"

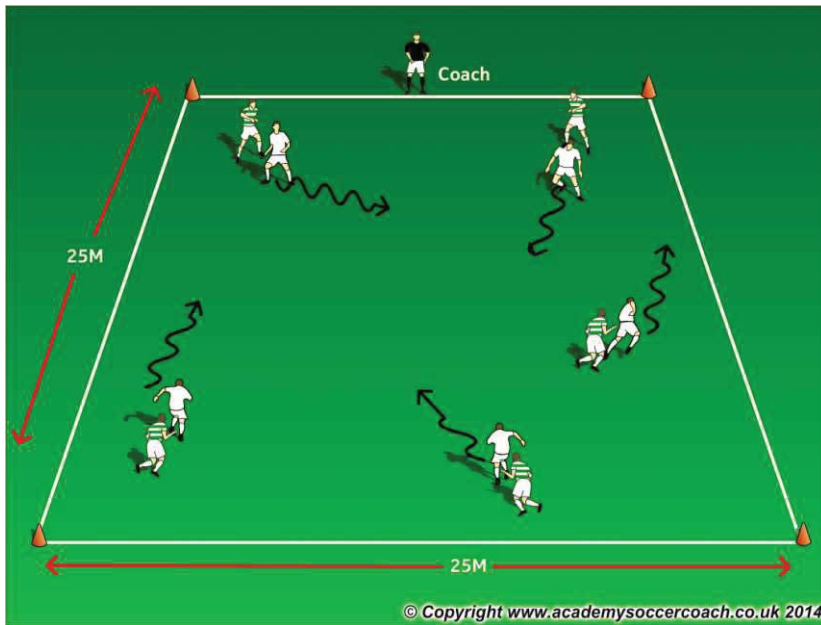
At the development level of Grassroots soccer no longer does a club or team have to roster a specific player to a specific team. Players are registered within the clubs development program as a development player. Clubs can fill as many game day rosters as their resources will allow. This would include things such as coaches, facilities etc. Once a player is registered as a development player they can be placed on different game day rosters each week (if the club has multiple game day rosters) which will now allow for appropriate competition on a weekly basis. An example is below.





# Learn to Train practice plan – Week 3

## STATION A - GENERAL MOVEMENT



**Time Frame:** 12 - 15 minutes

**Emphasis:** Running  
 Skipping  
 Side steps  
 Changing direction  
 Changing speed

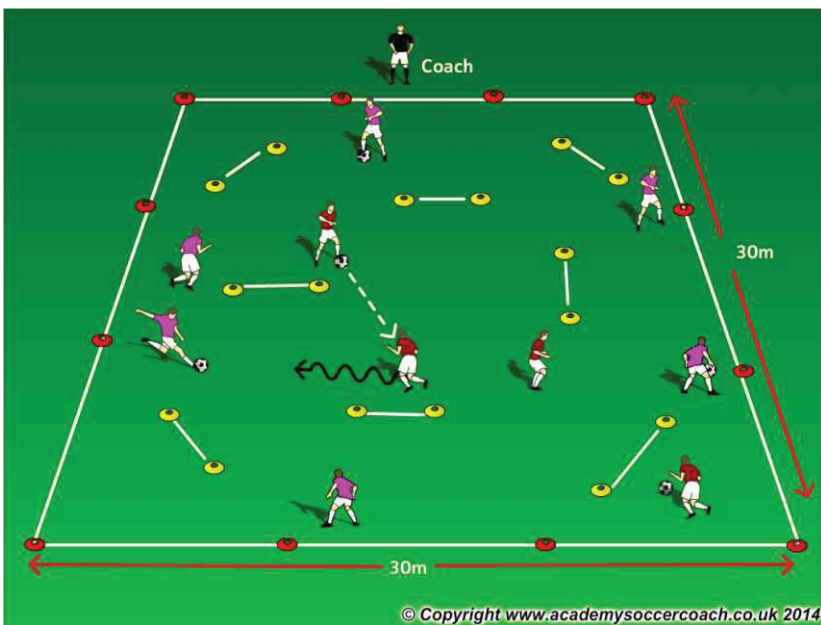
**Organization:** Players are placed into pairs in a 25m x 25m area.

**Procedure:** 1 player becomes the leader and the 2nd player becomes the follower. Encourage the players to use different movements such as walking, running, jumping, rolling, running backwards and also sideways. After 30 seconds players switch.

**Progression:** Each player has a ball.



## STATION B - PASSING AND RECEIVING



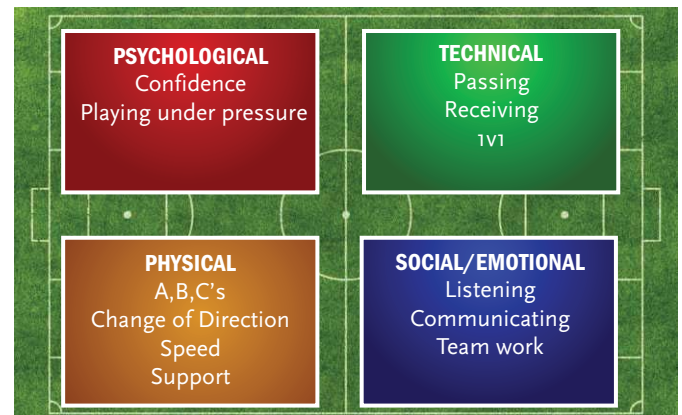
**Time Frame:** 12 - 15 minutes

**Emphasis:** Changing direction  
 Spatial Awareness  
 Passing  
 Receiving  
 Support  
 FUN!

**Organization:** Players are placed into 2s inside 30m x 30m area.

**Procedure:** Players pass and move inside area. Focus should be on how the player passes and receives the ball.

**Progression:** To make it fun/competitive for the players add gates into the area and on the command of "Shopping" players look to pass the ball through the gates. Each gate = 1 point, after 60 seconds pair with the most points wins the competition. Repeat game several times.





# Learn to Train practice plan – Week 3

## STATION C - HOW TO PLAY OUT FROM THE BACK



**Time Frame:** 12 - 15 minutes

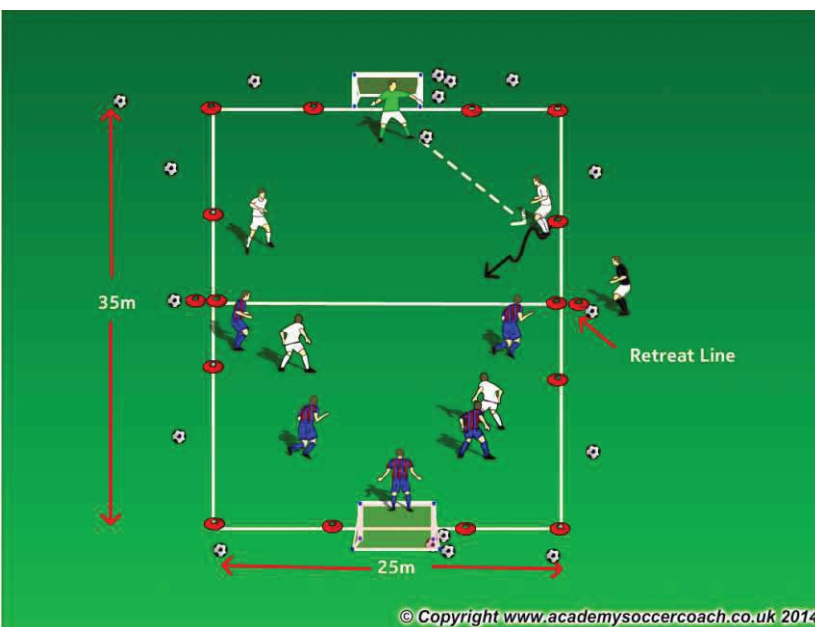
**Emphasis:** Patience  
Body position  
Passing/receiving  
Support  
Decision making  
Awareness  
Learning different roles  
FUN!

**Organization:** Players set up as above.

**Procedure:** S plays ball into the goalkeeper. The goalkeeper now looks to distribute the ball to one of his/her team mates. As soon as the player receiving the ball touches the ball the 2 strikers are released to pressure the ball. The team in possession now look to get the ball to T or S to score a point. If the Strikers win possession they head to goal. All players rotate through all positions.



## STATION D - 5v5 WITH RETREAT LINE



**Time Frame:** 12 - 15 minutes

**Emphasis:** Patience  
Body position  
Passing/receiving  
Support  
Decision making  
Awareness  
FUN!

**Organization:** Players play 5v5 on a 35m x 25m field. The Retreat line is located at the half way line.

**Procedure:** Once the ball goes out for a goal kick or the goalkeeper has control of the ball the opposition must retreat behind the retreat line. Once the player receives the pass from the goalkeeper the game is live. If you have odd numbers you can have the extra player become a neutral player in the game.





# Learn to Train practice plan – Week 4

## STATION A - GENERAL MOVEMENT



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**Organization:** 5m x 5m area as shown. 5 players, 4 have balls. Players with the ball are on the outside of the square, evenly spaced.

**Procedure:** Players attempt to dribble across the square or to a different side, avoiding being tagged by the player in the middle.

Getting across gains 2 points, dribbling to the closest side gets you 1 point.

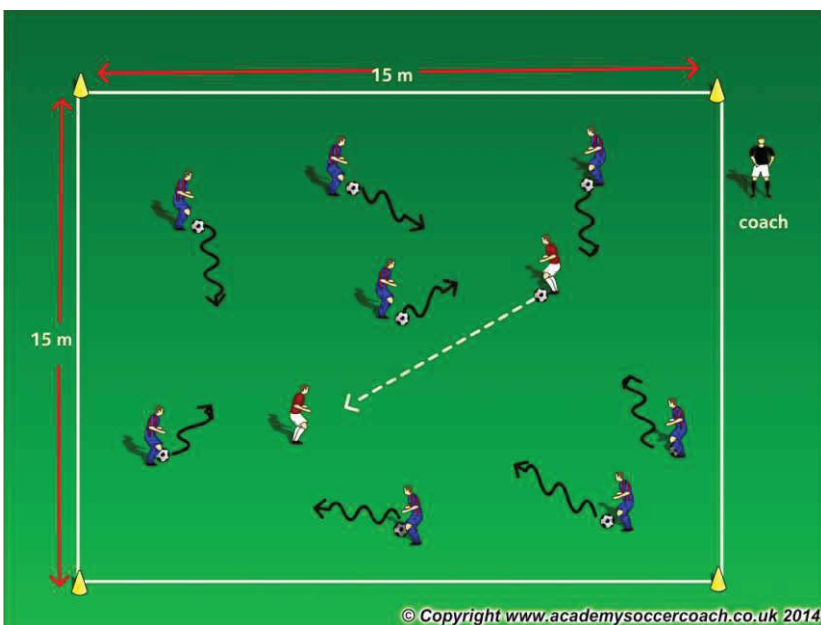
If an outside player is tagged 3 times, He/she becomes the tagger.

**Time Frame:** 12 - 15 minutes

**Emphasis:** Changing direction  
Eye-foot Coordination  
Running with the ball  
FUN!



## STATION B - SOCCER COORDINATION



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**Organization:** 15m x 15m area. 8-10 players with a ball each. 2 additional players with 1 ball between them.

**Procedure:** Players dribbling and move freely within the area. The pair of players with one ball between them moves within the area passing to one another, avoiding dribbling players.

The pair will be changed every 1 minute.

**Progression:** Add more "pairs" passing amongst the dribblers. Or reduce the area. A pair with more passing sequence will win.

**Time Frame:** 12 - 15 minutes

**Emphasis:** Communication  
Passing/Receiving  
Running with the ball  
Changing direction  
Spatial Awareness  
Lots of touches  
FUN!





# Learn to Train practice plan – Week 4

## STATION C - SOCCER TECHNIQUE – PASSING/POSSESSION



**Time Frame:** 12 - 15 minutes

**Emphasis:** Passing  
Receiving  
Communication  
Changing direction  
Change of speed  
Agility, Balance, Coordination  
Spatial Awareness  
FUN!

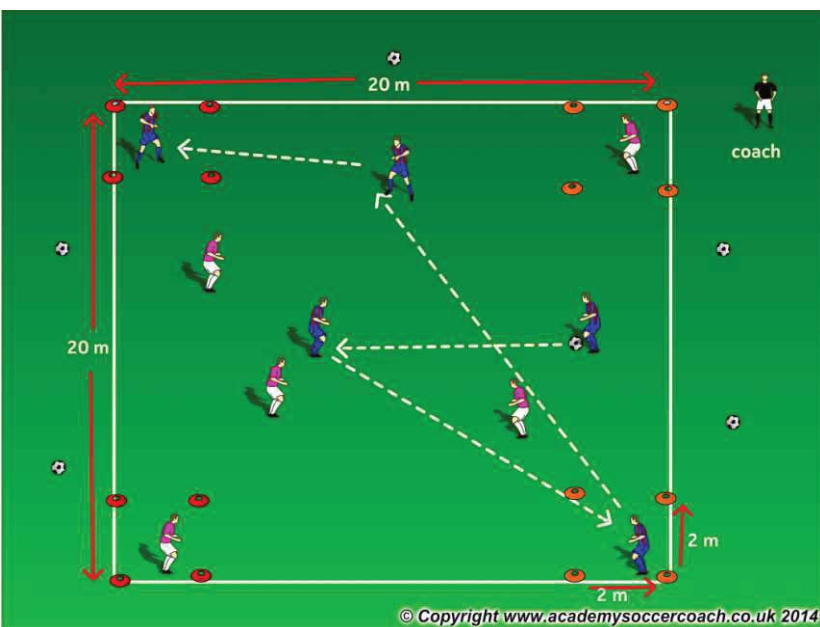
**Organization:** 40m x 40m area. 10 players are organized into 2 teams of 5, 2 targets, and a server (S). One ball to play, and a few balls around the field. Server may move around the outside of the area.

**Procedure:** Practice starts with a pass into play by the server. Team in possession can use targets and server to keep possession. Targets can move to open square to help the team.

Team scores by passing the ball to a target into designated area.



## STATION D - SMALL SIDED GAME – TARGET ZONES



**Time Frame:** 12 - 15 minutes

**Emphasis:** Running with the ball  
Passing  
Receiving  
Possession  
Changing direction  
Change of speed  
Agility, Balance, Coordination  
Imagination  
FUN!

**Organization:** 20m x 20m area (could be modify according to age). 10 players in two teams of 5. Two players from each team are target players in designated area (2m x 2m).

**Procedure:** Team in possession must pass to one target player, get it back and play to other target player in order to score.





# Learn to Train practice plan – Week Week 5

## STATION A - GENERAL MOVEMENT



**Time Frame:** 12 - 15 minutes

**Emphasis:** Changing direction  
Eye-hand (foot) Coordination  
Running with the ball  
Stop and start to run  
FUN!

**Organization:** 30m x 20m area. 12 players, 8 inside the grid (3 with the ball in their hands), and 4 outside (taggers).

**Procedure:** On coach's signal, players outside of the grid try to tag players without the ball. If a player has the ball, he/she cannot be tagged. Players with the ball can pass the ball to players to stop them being tagged.

**Progression:** Game can be played with ball at player's feet.



## STATION B - SOCCER COORDINATION



**Time Frame:** 12 - 15 minutes

**Emphasis:** Using both feet  
Running with the ball  
Changing direction  
Good balance  
Spatial Awareness  
Lots of touches  
FUN!

**Organization:** 30m x 25m area (could be modified according to age). 10-12 players each with ball at their feet.

**Procedure:** Players moving and dribbling freely within the area performing various moves. Players are encouraged to use both feet.

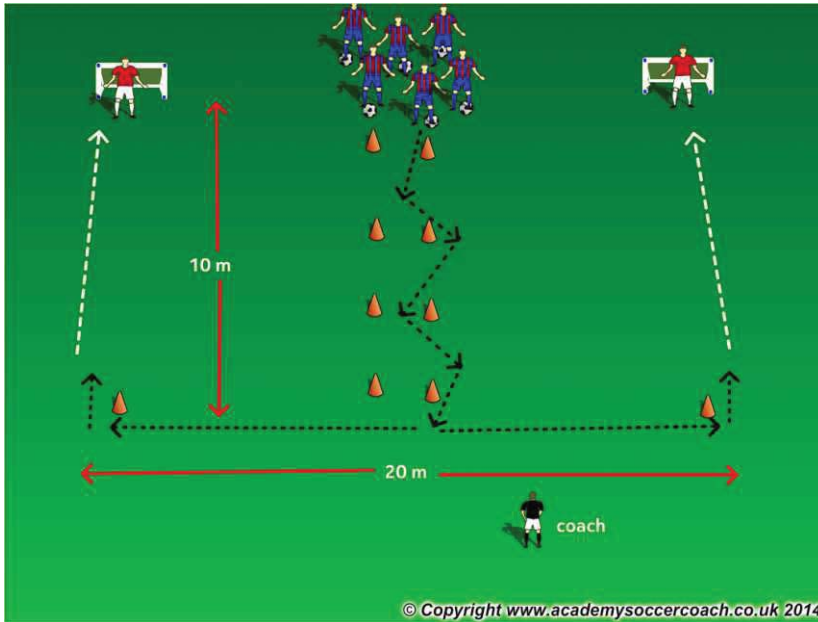
**Progression:** Add 2-3 defenders.





# Learn to Train practice plan – Week 5

## STATION C - SOCCER TECHNIQUE – DRIBBLE AND SHOOT



**Time Frame:** 12 - 15 minutes

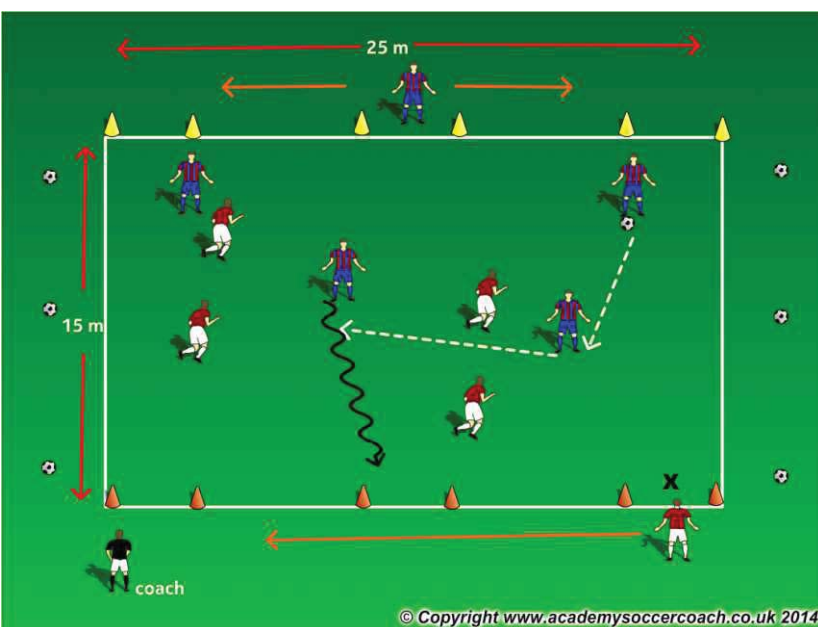
**Emphasis:** Dribbling  
Shooting  
Goalkeeping  
Agility, Balance, Coordination  
FUN!

**Organization:** Area is 20m x10m (age appropriate), 2 goals, cones, balls, and two Gks

**Procedure:** Players dribble to the shooting cones, do a 90 degree turn around the cone and shoot. 2 stations are set up next to each other, so two players can go at the same time to cut down on players waiting. Note: Alternate the players so they can use both feet.



## STATION D - SMALL SIDED GAME – 4V4 TO 3 GOALS



**Time Frame:** 12 - 15 minutes

**Emphasis:** Running with the ball  
Dribbling  
1v1  
Passing and Receiving  
Possession  
Changing direction  
Change of speed  
Agility, Balance, Coordination  
FUN!

**Organization:** 25m x15m area. Two teams of 5, 3 gates used as goals on 2 sides of the area. 1 player from each team stays outside of the field and can move behind any of the goals to defend them.

**Procedure:** 4v4 game to score on any of the opponent open goals, team in possession can't score on a goal that is covered by opponent.





# Learn to Train practice plan

## GOALKEEPING ACTIVITIES - HAND DISTRIBUTION/BALL PICK UP



**Time Frame:** 12 - 15 minutes

**Emphasis:** Distribution on the ground  
Body behind the ball  
Eyes on the ball  
Ball pick up  
Agility, Coordination, Balance  
FUN!

**Organization:** Players are placed into 2 teams of 6v6 on a 30m x 30m area with a 5m end zone at both ends.

**Procedure:** The team in possession aims to score a point by saving the ball in an end zone. Players must distribute the ball (roll) on the ground to a team mate. When in possession players are only allowed 3 steps. The opposition cannot knock the ball out of a player's hand but can intercept a pass by making a save. Only 1 player from each team is allowed in the end zone at any time. Players are only to use their hands.



## GOALKEEPING ACTIVITIES - OVER ARM DISTRIBUTION/CATCHING



**Time Frame:** 12 - 15 minutes

**Emphasis:** Distribution on the ground  
Body behind the ball  
Eyes on the ball  
Ball pick up  
Agility, Coordination, Balance  
FUN!

**Organization:** Players are placed into 2 teams of 6v6 on a 30m x 30m field with a goal at both ends.

**Procedure:** The team in possession aims to score a point by scoring in their opponents goal with an over arm throw. To keep possession players must distribute the ball (roll or throw) to a team mate. When in possession players are only allowed 3 steps. The opposition cannot knock the ball out of a players hand but can intercept a pass by making a save. All players play as goalkeepers and any player can play in the goal. Players are only to use their hands.







# Learn to Train practice plan

## GOALKEEPING ACTIVITIES - SAVING THE GATES



**Time Frame:** 12 - 15 minutes

**Emphasis:** Distribution  
 Body behind the ball  
 Eyes on the ball  
 Ball pick up, Diving  
 Dribbling  
 Agility, Coordination, Balance  
 FUN!

**Organization:** Players are placed into to 2 teams of 5 or 6. 1 team of goalkeepers start in the goals and the other goalkeepers dribble the ball inside the area.

**Procedure:** When the coach calls "save" the players with the ball dribble toward a goal and roll the ball at the goal for the goalkeeper to make the save. Once the goalkeeper makes the save he/she dribbles inside the area and the players that were dribbling now become the goalkeepers.

If the Goalkeeper makes the save they score 1 point.

**Progression:** Once the goalkeepers become comfortable making the save players can progress to using their feet to pass the ball with more pace.



## CREATE THE BEST ENVIRONMENT FOR ATHLETES

**PLAY FUN** SSG  
**ROLE MODELS**  
**FRIENDS**  
**IMITATE**  
**BEST NO FEAR LOVE**  
**EXPERIENCE INDIVIDUALS**  
**COMPETITIVE LISTEN TO PLAYERS**





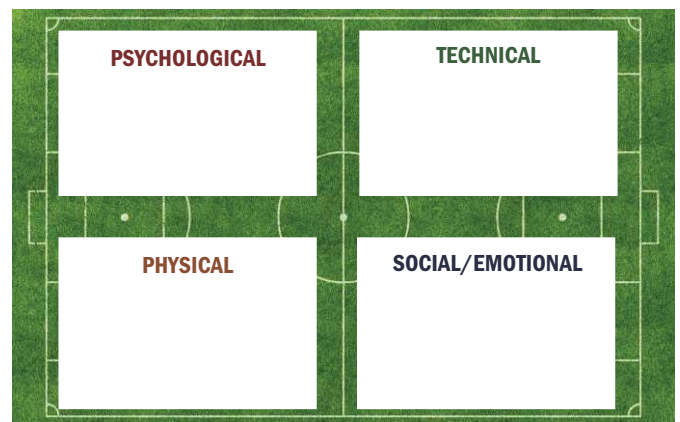
# Learn to Train practice plan

## STATION A - GENERAL MOVEMENT

For coaches to plan their own sessions

Time Frame: 12 - 15 minutes

Emphasis:

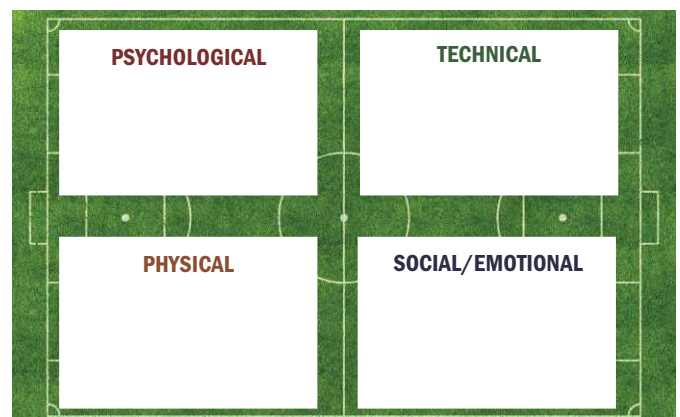


## STATION B - SOCCER COORDINATION

For coaches to plan their own sessions

Time Frame: 12-15 minutes

Emphasis:





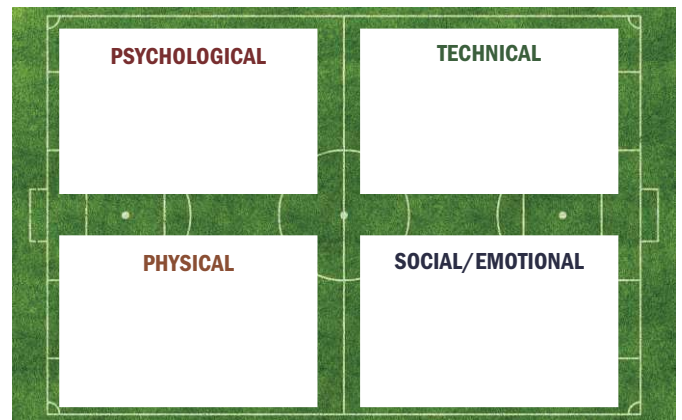
# Learn to Train practice plan

## STATION C - SOCCER TECHNIQUE

For coaches to plan their own sessions

Time Frame: 12-15 minutes

Emphasis:

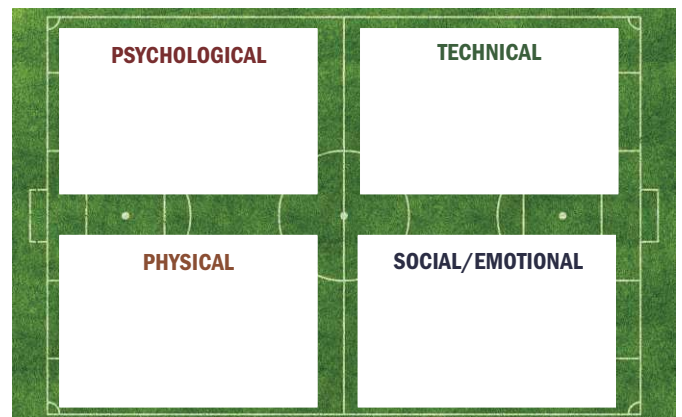


## STATION D - SMALL SIDED GAME

For coaches to plan their own sessions

Time Frame: 12-15 minutes

Emphasis:





For more information on grassroots soccer development please contact: [grassroots@soccer.on.ca](mailto:grassroots@soccer.on.ca) or visit [www.ontariosoccer.net/grassroots](http://www.ontariosoccer.net/grassroots)



## Ontario Soccer Association Resources

- The Ontario Soccer Association Recreation Matrix
- The Ontario Soccer Association Development Matrix
- "Wellness To World Cup" Brochure
- Player Evaluation Forms
- Game Organization Guide
- U8 Festival Guide
- Game Leader Information
- Retreat Line Information
- Active Start Brochure
- FUNdamentals Brochure
- Learn To Train Brochure
- Soccer For Life Brochure
- CS4L LTPD for parents
- OSA LTPD Video
- OSA Grassroots Video

Printed documents are uncontrolled. For the most recent version of this document please visit [www.ontariosoccer.net](http://www.ontariosoccer.net)

To contact The Ontario Soccer Association call 905-264-9390 or visit [www.ontariosoccer.net](http://www.ontariosoccer.net)

## Acknowledgments

The OSA would like to acknowledge time and support in developing this resource from technical leaders in the province.

The OSA would like to acknowledge the other readily available documents, resources and suppliers we reference in creating this curriculum:

