



FOOTBALL  
FEDERATION  
AUSTRALIA

# SKILL TRAINING CERTIFICATE

PARTICIPANT MANUAL  
COMMUNITY COACHING PATHWAY









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# Introduction



## FOOTBALL FEDERATION AUSTRALIA

Welcome to the Community Coach Education Program. Regardless of your playing or coaching background, Football Federation Australia has developed courses to suit all coaching levels and tailored them to ensure training is appropriate for the age of the players the coach is working with.

You may have already downloaded the material which will help you through the course; this resource has all the practices and information you will need to guide you through your community course.

The introductory course is the Grassroots Football Certificate, which many of you would have completed already. If so you will now have a good idea of how to organise your training sessions using the three parts – Beginning, Middle and End. As the needs of players change so too does the terminology used to describe each component. In the Skill Training Certificate we use three session components which are Skill Introduction, Skill Training and Skill Game. In the Game Training and Senior Certificate there are four session components which are called Warm Up, Positioning Games, Game Training and Training Game - these will be explained in greater detail later.

The main purpose of the Community Coach Education Program is to provide you with a range of “tools” to shape your coaching future and to help you plan and conduct suitable age appropriate training sessions. The community courses have been redesigned to be totally practical with a big emphasis on giving the participant many coaching opportunities as well as getting continuous feedback by presenters and your peers throughout.

In the opening pages of this manual you will find valuable information regarding the National Football Curriculum and how the Building Blocks of youth development underpin it. Please take the time to read this information as it will help you to better understand the vision and philosophy for Australian Football. I wish you well with your coaching.

### **Norm Boardman**

National Coach Education Manager  
Football Federation Australia



# The Building Blocks



The National Football Curriculum distinguishes 6 Building Blocks: 4 training Building Blocks and 2 playing Building Blocks.

The FFA Building Blocks Methodology is the framework that provides practical guidelines for coaches working at all levels of youth development in order to help them in answering questions such as:

- What are the mental and physical characteristics of players in the various development stages?
- What type of practices are best suited for specific age groups and why?
- How long should a session go for and how often should I train?
- How do I plan and design my sessions?
- What are points of interest when I coach my team during games?

With the aim to:

- Develop technically proficient players
- Develop tactically aware, proactive players
- Transform the physical and direct style of youth football in Australia to a successful style based upon technique and creativity

- To instil a lifelong passion and love for football in young players
- To create a real 'football culture' in Australia
- The result of this approach must be future generations of players with the skills and habits to make Australia a successful contender on the World stage, both in men's and women's football. Does the Building Blocks methodology guarantee we will develop the next Lionel Messi in Australia? Unfortunately the answer is no, but this structured approach will certainly increase the chance.

There is no magic formula for developing special players but recent scientific research (Coyle; Ericsson, Gladwell; Syed et al) does provide some very interesting insights:

- 1. Talent is not 'innate'.** Messi (or any other outstanding performer in sports, science or art) didn't receive or inherit special 'genes' from birth
- 2. Every world class performer has a history of **many years of deep practice** that started at a young age**
- 3. A condition for many years of deep practice is **intrinsic and sustained motivation**, a characteristic all top performers share. No top performer has ever circumvented these rules!**

This doesn't mean however that geniuses do not exist. The top teachers and coaches Daniel Coyle interviewed for his book "The Talent Code" pegged the genius rate (Messi!) at about one per decade. Let us take a closer look at these insights.

If talent is not innate and excellence is the result of many years of sustained deep practice does that mean that anyone can become a top level player? Theoretically yes, although it's not that simple.

Many people may have heard of the so-called "Rule of 10,000 hours". This rule, introduced by the Swedish scientist Anders Ericsson, basically states that it takes 10,000 hours (or 10 years) of practice to reach a level of excellence in sports, science, art or any other field.

It is apparent that the **quality** of that practice is vital although, interestingly, research conducted by UK professor Mark Williams shows that time invested in **non-organised** practice, such as playing with mates in the park or juggling a ball in the back yard, is at least as important.



# The Building Blocks

## Coaching

Quality of practice is clearly contingent on the importance of **good coaching**. Good coaching means **purposeful** practice and quality **feedback**.

Purposeful practice is always aimed at progress: after all, only by working at what you can't do will you turn into the expert you want to become. And quality feedback is the rocket fuel that propels learning. Without it, no amount of practice is going to get you there because "if you don't know what you are doing wrong you can never know what you are doing right". Good coaches are therefore able to design practice so that feedback is embedded in the exercise, leading to automatic adjustment.

**A good way of visualising what 'purposeful practice' means is to picture something 'just beyond the player's reach' or 'just outside someone's comfort zone', so there is a challenge but not one that is too difficult.**

## Motivation

Intrinsic motivation means that the player has developed a true passion for football and the motivation to become the best they can be comes from deep inside.

The chance of developing a passion for football is of course greater when you grow up in an environment with a real football culture, where you have role models and more and better opportunities. That is why developing a real football culture is so crucial for Australia.

It's also important to realise that it is impossible to 'impose' motivation. Pushy parents or coaches will achieve nothing (or the opposite of what they are looking for) if it isn't the player's own choice.

However if the motivation is intrinsic, the effect is very powerful. One of the differences between good performers and the very best is that top performers are able to "push themselves harder for longer" because their motivation level is higher.

Intrinsic motivation by itself however is still not enough, for only **sustained** motivation leads to excellence.

A prerequisite for sustained motivation is what Professor Carol Dweck calls a 'growth mindset', which basically means that mistakes are embraced and deficiencies confronted ("I can master this, I just have to practice harder"). This mindset sees a setback as a motivational factor.

The opposite is called a 'fixed mindset'; for those people, failure is a de-motivator ("I will never be able to do this, I just don't have the talent")

**Here, it is also worthwhile highlighting the fact that coaches also have fixed or growth mindsets, which can affect their own development as well as that of their players.**





## A growth mindset is a characteristic shared by most top performers

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How can a coach or parent stimulate the development of a growth mindset in players?

- Praise effort, not 'talent'
- Emphasise that abilities can be transformed through application
- Emphasise that challenges are learning opportunities instead of threats

### “Failure is a great opportunity for improvement”

To bring all of the above to life, FFA has developed the Building Blocks Methodology, outlining the logical and progressive steps necessary to achieve our long term goals.

Key points:

- Football is a very complex game and takes at least ten years to master
- A step-by-step, phased approach is required, taking into account the age of the player
- The logical approach we have adopted in the Building Blocks can be summarised like this:
  - simplified situations before complex ones
  - individual skills before team tactics
  - football development before physical preparation
- The age groups stated are guidelines not absolute rules; girls and boys develop at different rates, and players of the same age may be at different developmental stages
- Each Building Block has a clear, distinguishable focus, but the player's development should be viewed as a gradual, ongoing process towards game mastery
- It is an holistic approach, rather than a series of four isolated stages/concepts.

For example, although the focus in the Skill Acquisition Phase is on individual skill development, the player's tactical insight is being developed at the same time, but using the 'hidden learning' approach. The coach uses training exercises which involve as many of the game-specific resistances (team-mates, opponents, direction, goals, etc) as possible, so that game awareness is automatically developed, rather than trying to 'coach tactics'. Equally, technical development doesn't stop at the end of the Skill Acquisition Phase; it continues throughout the Game Training and Performance Phases, although it is now not the main focus.

**Development of tactical insight doesn't suddenly begin in the Game Training phase; it is developed during the Skill Acquisition phase in smaller, simpler situations. Here, the players are introduced to the fundamental individual and team tasks that form the foundation of decision-making in the 11 v 11 game.**

Let's now have a closer look at each individual Building Block.



# Skill Acquisition Phase



- In the Skill Acquisition Phase the coach must focus exclusively on providing a solid foundation of **technical skill**
- If the player does not gain this **skill foundation** during this phase it will be very difficult to make it up later
- No amount of fitness or competitive spirit will ever compensate for deficiencies in **functional game skills**

## Model Sessions

At this age the children are ready for a more structured approach to training. In every session the focus is on one of the core skills, from the beginning until the end of the session ("theme based sessions").

The Skill Acquisition Phase sessions consist of 3 components:

- 1. Skill introduction**, this is the warm-up as well as an introduction to the designated core skill for this session. This is the only part of the session where drill-type exercises should be used, but the creative coach can include elements of decision-making.
  - Flow, no 'stop-start coaching'.
- 2. Skill training**, this is the part of the session where conscious teaching and learning of the designated core skill takes place.
  - Lots of repetition in game realistic scenarios!
  - Task-based coaching
  - Effective feedback
  - Use of questioning (ask players 'why did you choose that option?', 'where do you think there might be more space?', etc)

- 3. Skill game**, a game where as much as possible all the elements of the real game are present but organised in a way that the designated core skill has to be used regularly.

- Skill games are preferably **small sided games** to stimulate the number of repetitions/touches!
- The players play, the coach observes if learning has taken place.

It is also advisable to 'wrap-up' the session at the end, summarising the main points of the session to enhance learning.

Since the Skill Games are games in which all the **Game Specific Resistances** are present (team-mates; opponents; goals; direction; etc) they also provide an ideal opportunity to gradually establish the basic principles of the team tasks during the main moments of the game (e.g. 'make the field small' when defending; 'try to face forward' when attacking).

In other words: the emphasis in the Skill Acquisition Phase is on **Skill Development** but this can/should not be separated from developing insight/game understanding at the same time.

If this approach is applied properly, it will provide a seamless transition into the **Game Training Phase**.



This principle also relates to the concept of Small Sided Football and appropriate coach behaviour:

During the Skill Acquisition Phase, 2-3 sessions of 60-75 minutes plus a game is a safe weekly workload, with the following session planning guidelines:

- Welcome: 5 minutes
- Skill Introduction: 15-20 minutes
- Skill Training: 25-30 minutes
- Skill Game: 20-25 minutes
- Wrap up: 5 minutes

On the next pages you will find three consecutive 6 week cycles (18 weeks program) and 12 Skill Acquisition Phase Model Sessions, 3 for each core skill with increasing difficulty. The 6 week cycles are based on the assumption that the weekly training sessions are on Tuesdays and Thursdays with a game on Saturday.

During the first cycle, Model Session 1 of each core skill is repeated every two weeks. Each time we repeat the Model Session we try to make a step-up (make the session more challenging) but only if the players are ready for it. During the second cycle, Model Session 2 of each core skill is repeated every two weeks and during the third cycle Model Session 3 of each core skill:

Skill Acquisition Phase CYCLE 1	Tuesday	Thursday	Saturday
WEEK 1	First touch <b>MODEL SESSION 1</b>	Striking the ball <b>MODEL SESSION 1</b>	GAME
WEEK 2	Running with the ball <b>MODEL SESSION 1</b>	1 v 1 <b>MODEL SESSION 1</b>	GAME
WEEK 3	First touch <b>MODEL SESSION 1</b> Step up (if possible)	Striking the ball <b>MODEL SESSION 1</b> Step up (if possible)	GAME
WEEK 4	Running with the ball <b>MODEL SESSION 1</b> Step up (if possible)	1 v 1 <b>MODEL SESSION 1</b> Step up (if possible)	GAME
WEEK 5	First touch <b>MODEL SESSION 1</b> Step up (if possible)	Striking the ball <b>MODEL SESSION 1</b> Step up (if possible)	GAME
WEEK 6	Running with the ball <b>MODEL SESSION 1</b> Step up (if possible)	1 v 1 <b>MODEL SESSION 1</b> Step up (if possible)	GAME



# Skill Acquisition Phase

Skill Acquisition Phase CYCLE 2	Tuesday	Thursday	Saturday
WEEK 1	First touch <b>MODEL SESSION 2</b>	Striking the ball <b>MODEL SESSION 2</b>	GAME
WEEK 2	Running with the ball <b>MODEL SESSION 2</b>	1 v 1 <b>MODEL SESSION 2</b>	GAME
WEEK 3	First touch <b>MODEL SESSION 2</b> Step up (if possible)	Striking the ball <b>MODEL SESSION 2</b> Step up (if possible)	GAME
WEEK 4	Running with the ball <b>MODEL SESSION 2</b> Step up (if possible)	1 v 1 <b>MODEL SESSION 2</b> Step up (if possible)	GAME
WEEK 5	First touch <b>MODEL SESSION 2</b> Step up (if possible)	Striking the ball <b>MODEL SESSION 2</b> Step up (if possible)	GAME
WEEK 6	Running with the ball <b>MODEL SESSION 2</b> Step up (if possible)	1 v 1 <b>MODEL SESSION 2</b> Step up (if possible)	GAME

Skill Acquisition Phase CYCLE 3	Tuesday	Thursday	Saturday
WEEK 1	First touch <b>MODEL SESSION 3</b>	Striking the ball <b>MODEL SESSION 3</b>	GAME
WEEK 2	Running with the ball <b>MODEL SESSION 3</b>	1 v 1 <b>MODEL SESSION 3</b>	GAME
WEEK 3	First touch <b>MODEL SESSION 3</b> Step up (if possible)	Striking the ball <b>MODEL SESSION 3</b> Step up (if possible)	GAME
WEEK 4	Running with the ball <b>MODEL SESSION 3</b> Step up (if possible)	1 v 1 <b>MODEL SESSION 3</b> Step up (if possible)	GAME
WEEK 5	First touch <b>MODEL SESSION 3</b> Step up (if possible)	Striking the ball <b>MODEL SESSION 3</b> Step up (if possible)	GAME
WEEK 6	Running with the ball <b>MODEL SESSION 3</b> Step up (if possible)	1 v 1 <b>MODEL SESSION 3</b> Step up (if possible)	GAME



With 3 sessions per week our advice is to limit the duration of the sessions to 60 minutes and rest the players the day before as well as the day after the game. So, with a game on Saturday, we recommend a training session on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday.

### Factors to consider:

- Performance of the players in previous training sessions
- Performance of the players in matches (NB: matches should only be assessed in terms of core skill performance, not 'team tactics'. That way, training and matches are closely and logically linked)

Observation may lead you to conclude that one core skill appears to be especially deficient in most of the players, while another is generally strong.

Possible Cycle Planning changes:

- Replace the stronger skill with the weaker one every second rotation
- Move to a 5-session rotation in which each skill is focused on once, except for the weaker one which appears twice

The best advice for a coach working with players in this age group would be to attend the **FFA Youth C Licence course**.

This will give coaches a much better understanding of the why's and how's of session planning and season planning, while developing their ability to design their own practices.

### Important:

When the kids start playing 11 v 11 while they are still in the Skill Acquisition Phase, (U12/13) there is a common tendency for coaches to become totally obsessed with results, and forget that the players are still in the skill acquisition phase. This has a very negative effect on training session content as well as Match Day behaviour.

Training must remain focused on skill development; it is poor practice and detrimental to the players to sacrifice critical skill training time in order to conduct unnecessary 'tactical' coaching.

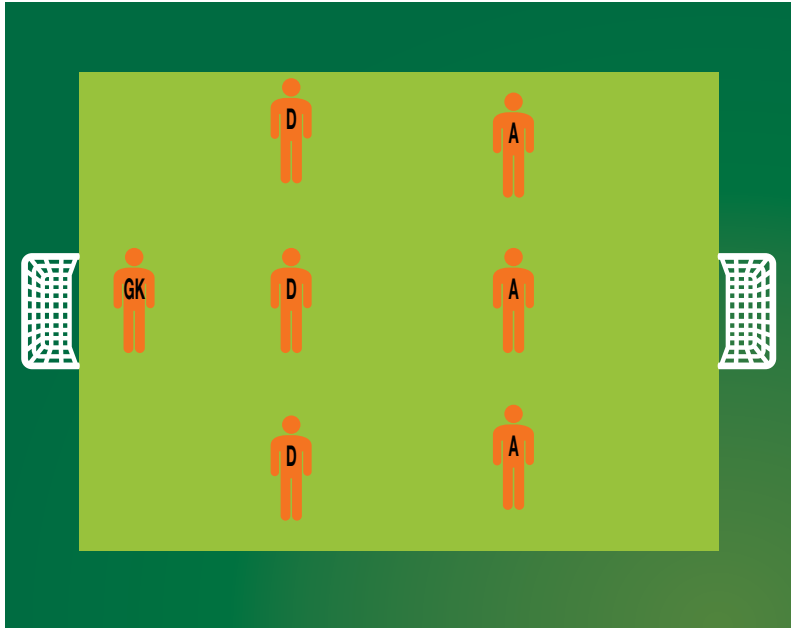
Match Day is when the coach can start developing the players insight and understanding of the basic team and player tasks. This involves reinforcement and elaboration of the basic tasks introduced at training during Skill Games ('Get between the lines', 'Can you face forward?' 'Look for the killer pass', 'Make the field big', etc)

It is also disadvantageous for young players' development to specialise for a specific team position too early; let them experience the various positions and aim for specialisation during the Game Training phase (the rationale for this is excellently explained in the book 'Coaching Outside the Box' by Mairs and Shaw)..





# Small Sided Football



## U/8-9

Teams of 7 players (one goalkeeper and 6 outfield players)

### Coaching tips:

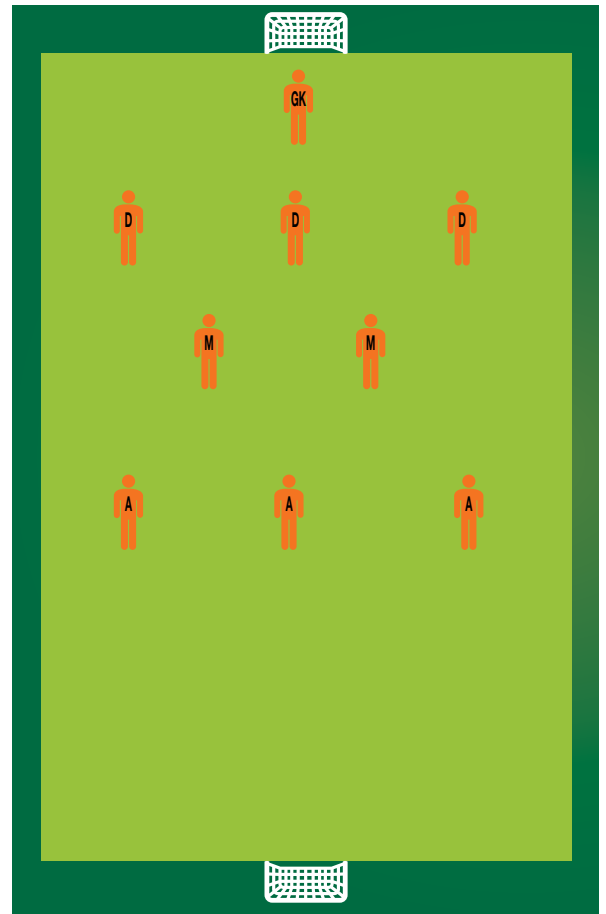
- The players now begin to understand what the game's purpose is (winning by scoring more goals than the opponent)
  - There will still be a lot of individual play but the players start to understand that they have to work together in order to be successful
  - A basic 'feeling' for team play, direction and dealing with an opponent starts to develop
  - Preference and talent for a specific position starts to show: you can start working on a basic organisation (1 in goal; 3 at the back; 3 up front) and a basic understanding of some team tasks (how to defend and attack as a team)
- The coach should still let every player play in every position regularly. One week they want to be goalie, next time the centre forward. Let them!
  - Bigger goals with goalkeepers automatically appeal to aiming and shooting: give them all plenty of opportunities to shoot (or be the goalkeeper).
  - In 7 v 7 football, the coach should still not be too concerned with 'tactics'. The focus in training is on the individual player, so in the weekend game the players should have the opportunity to apply their skills in a game setting. The coach organises the players into two lines of three with a Goalkeeper behind. The players just need simple tasks so they do not become confused or overwhelmed with information (Examples: 'You three try to defend more than you attack' 'you three try to attack more than you defend' 'let's see if we can always have one of our players pushed right up in the middle of the pitch' 'when the opponent has the ball, can we get one of our team near every one of their players on the goal side', etc)
  - At half-time, the coach should rotate players around to experience different aspects of the game (e.g. the three defenders become the three attackers)
  - Aim for equal playing time



## U/10-11

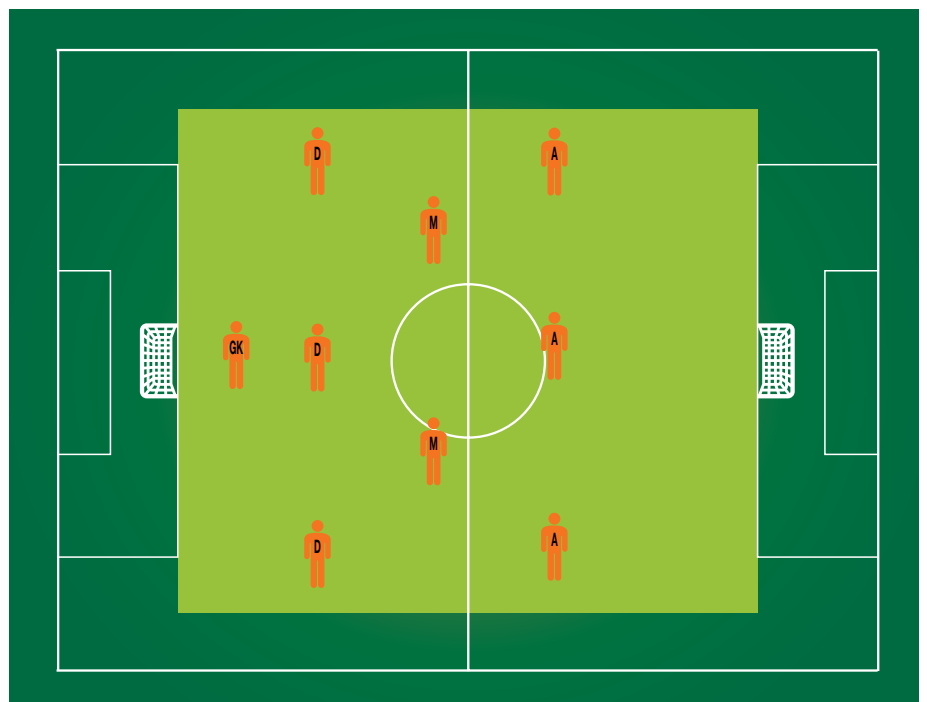
### Coaching tips:

- The understanding of working together as a team develops more and more
- The awareness of the individual roles in relation to teamwork is also developing as well as the understanding for acting without the ball both in defence and attack
- With 8 outfield players a tighter and more strict task allocation and use of space is required
- Preference/ability for specific positions becomes more and more clear
- At this age the kids are very competitive and clever and very quickly develop their motor skills
- All the above means that the coach can raise the bar on all these aspects but:
  - Avoid an information 'overkill'
  - Keep it simple (speak their language)
  - It's their game, it's not about the coach
- In 9 v 9, the coach organises the players into three lines with a goalkeeper behind, preferably in a 1-3-2-3 formation as a guide for team shape
- The coach is still not too concerned with tactics or obsessed with results
- The players still just need simple tasks on match day
- The players should still be regularly rotated, either at half-time or from game to game
- Avoid playing the best players in central positions, and 'hiding' the weaker players out wide
- Aim for equal playing time



## U/11

- With the U/11's it is FFA's preference to play box to box and narrow the field approximately 5m each side. Playing in the length of the pitch is a totally new experience with a different perception and more complexity. As a last step towards the real, full pitch game this format offers the ideal link.





# Important Notes for Candidates

## How will the course be presented?

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### Model Sessions

At the start of each module (One (1) of the Four (4) Core Skills) the presenter will conduct “model” sessions featuring three components – Skill Introduction – Skill Training – Skill Game. The presenter will only highlight one component by detailing the key points within that part of the practice: for example during the **Skill Introduction** of the Model session on First Touch the presenter would cover the key points in more depth than the Skill Training or Skill Game. During the next model session (Striking the ball) they would cover the **Skill Training** in greater depth and in the third (Running with the ball) cover **Skill Game**. After each model session the candidates (you) will be split into groups for the purpose of planning and conducting that particular segment of the session. Those not presenting may be asked to provide feedback to the group and all participants will have the opportunity to plan, conduct, receive and provide feedback on numerous sessions which will provide a great learning opportunity for all.

### Skill Introduction – Get your **SETUP** right

Skill Introduction is similar to warming up in that the aim is to prepare the players physically and mentally for the session objective.

### Skill Training – **FORM**ing of GOOD playing and Training habits

Once the session objective has been established, i.e. passing / Striking etc... this component is used to **practice the technique mostly using positioning games** to provide the players with repeated opportunities to develop the particular technique / skill. During this part the presenter will show how to coach at the community level using demonstrations of good “models” or demonstrating themselves and showing examples of how to encourage and praise the players.

### Skill Game – A **GAME** at the end of training

In the final part of the session the presenter will show how it is all put together based on One (1) of the Four (4) Core Skills in a match like scenario with limited intervention(s) and / or challenges by using C.H.A.N.G.E.I.T. This component **MUST** look like a **football Game**.

## Session Presentation and Peer group Feedback

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After observing / participating in the presenters’ model sessions you will be given time to plan your own component of that session on a given topic. When it is your turn to present an activity you will provide your session plan to the presenter and once the session concludes you will be given feedback in a group setting by your peers as well as the presenter. You will also find a Self-Assessment form within this manual which you will be asked to complete as a method of challenging yourself to improve on your performance.

### Checklists - In this manual you will find some forms:

- The Feedback Checklist and Feedback Checklist Definitions - These show the criteria and explanations which will be used to develop questions around your practice session.
- A Self Reflection Checklist - which you will be asked to fill out following your sessions. This will help you to better understand which areas need more attention and which are already well developed in your practices.
- A Session Planning form - which is to be completed and given to the presenter prior to your practice sessions.

You will need to print off a copy of each of the above documents and bring them with you to the course.

You will also need to print, read, and bring (signed) the code of ethics agreement to the course and hand it in to the presenter these can be found in the manual.



# C.H.A.N.G.E. I.T.

<b>C</b>	<b>COACHING STYLE</b> Provide feedback in the drink break or change of activities without interrupting the game. Use player role models.
<b>H</b>	<b>HOW YOU SCORE/WIN</b> Increase opportunities to score.
<b>A</b>	<b>AREA</b> Increase or decrease the game challenges by changing the size/shape of the playing area, i.e. long and narrow, short and wide, smaller/larger.
<b>N</b>	<b>NUMBERS</b> Use different team numbers of players to overload the advantage of one team or vary the number of turns at goal, etc.
<b>G</b>	<b>GAME RULES</b> Change the rules slightly, i.e. no tackling, minimum number of passes, etc.
<b>E</b>	<b>EQUIPMENT</b> Vary the equipment used, i.e. a bigger goal, smaller goals, more goals.
<b>I</b>	<b>INCLUSION</b> Engage the players in modifying the practices; provide options they could choose from to encourage ownership. Consider what can a player do as opposed to what they can't or your perception of what they can or can't do.
<b>T</b>	<b>TIME</b> Reduce or extend the time to perform actions, i.e. how many passes in 20 seconds, get a shot at goal within 30 seconds.

**In short, if the players need to be challenged or it's not working:**

## C.H.A.N.G.E. I.T.



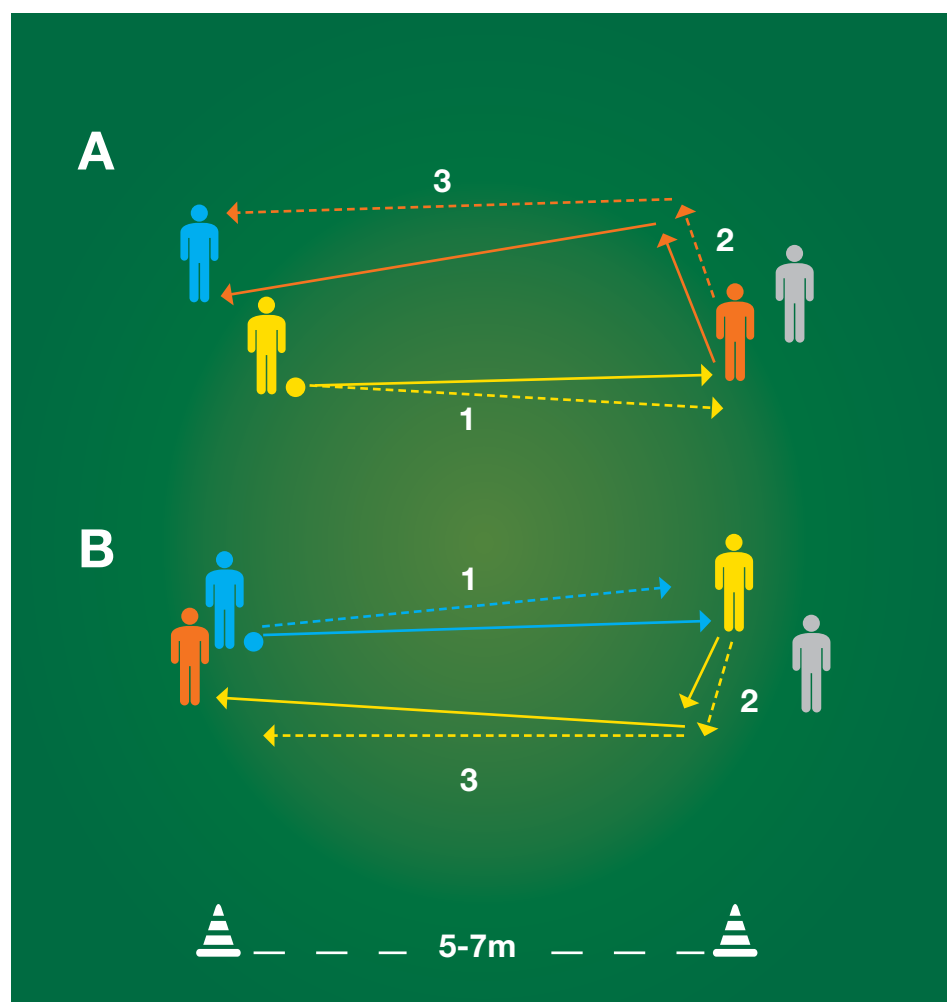
# Skill Training Certificate Timetable

Module number	Session	Time allocated
1	HOUSEKEEPING	20 MINUTES
2	FIRST TOUCH + G.P. SAFETY (PRESENTER'S SESSION)	65 MINUTES
3	FIRST TOUCH + PLANNING (CANDIDATES SESSION, A'S)	70 MINUTES
4	STRIKING THE BALL + G.P. COMMUNICATION ( PRESENTER'S SESSION)	65 MINUTES
<b>END PART 1</b>		
5	STRIKING THE BALL + PLANNING (CANDIDATES SESSION, B'S)	70 MINUTES
6	RUNNING WITH THE BALL + G.P. INCLUSION ( PRESENTER'S SESSION)	65 MINUTES
7	RUNNING WITH THE BALL + PLANNING (CANDIDATES SESSION, C'S)	70 MINUTES
8	THE SKILL ACQUISITION 6 WEEK CYCLE DISCUSSION	20 MINUTES
<b>END PART 2</b>		
9	1 V 1 (PRESENTERS SESSION)	60 MINUTES
10	GROUP'S PLANNING TIME	15 MINUTES
11	FIRST TOUCH (CANDIDATE'S GROUP SESSION)	60 MINUTES
12	STRIKING THE BALL (CANDIDATE'S GROUP SESSION)	60 MINUTES
<b>END PART 3</b>		
13	RUNNING WITH THE BALL (CANDIDATE'S GROUP SESSION)	60 MINUTES
14	1 V 1 (CANDIDATE'S GROUP SESSION)	60 MINUTES
15	ROLE OF THE COACH	20 MINUTES
16	SESSIONS RECAP	40 MINUTES
17	COURSE CLOSURE	20 MINUTES
<b>END PART 4 - COURSE CLOSE</b>		



# Skill Training Model Sessions

## First touch Model Session 1



### 1. Skill introduction

Players in fours (fives is also fine, and is a way of reducing intensity, if required) with one ball between them. 2 pairs facing each other 5m-7m apart. The yellow player starts by passing the ball to the orange player and following their pass at speed.

The orange player uses their first touch to move the ball away from the yellow player, and with the second touch passes to the blue player. The orange player follows their pass and jogs to the back of the opposite line.

In example A, the orange player has moved the ball to the right because the yellow player approached him/her slightly to his/her left side.

In example B, the yellow player has moved the ball to the left because the blue player approached him/her to his/her right.

The coach can also direct the passer to follow the pass by running **directly** at the receiver. Therefore the receiver has the option of going left or right, ideally the receiver will fake to move the ball in one direction, and then with his/her first touch move the ball the other way.

### Concluding Competition:

Which group can complete 10 passes first?



# Skill Training Model Sessions

In this Session we will focus mainly on Skill Introduction and below you can fill in what each letter stands for in the acronym

<b>S</b>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<b>E</b>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<b>T</b>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<b>U</b>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<b>P</b>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

**What is the main purpose of having a good Skill Introduction?**

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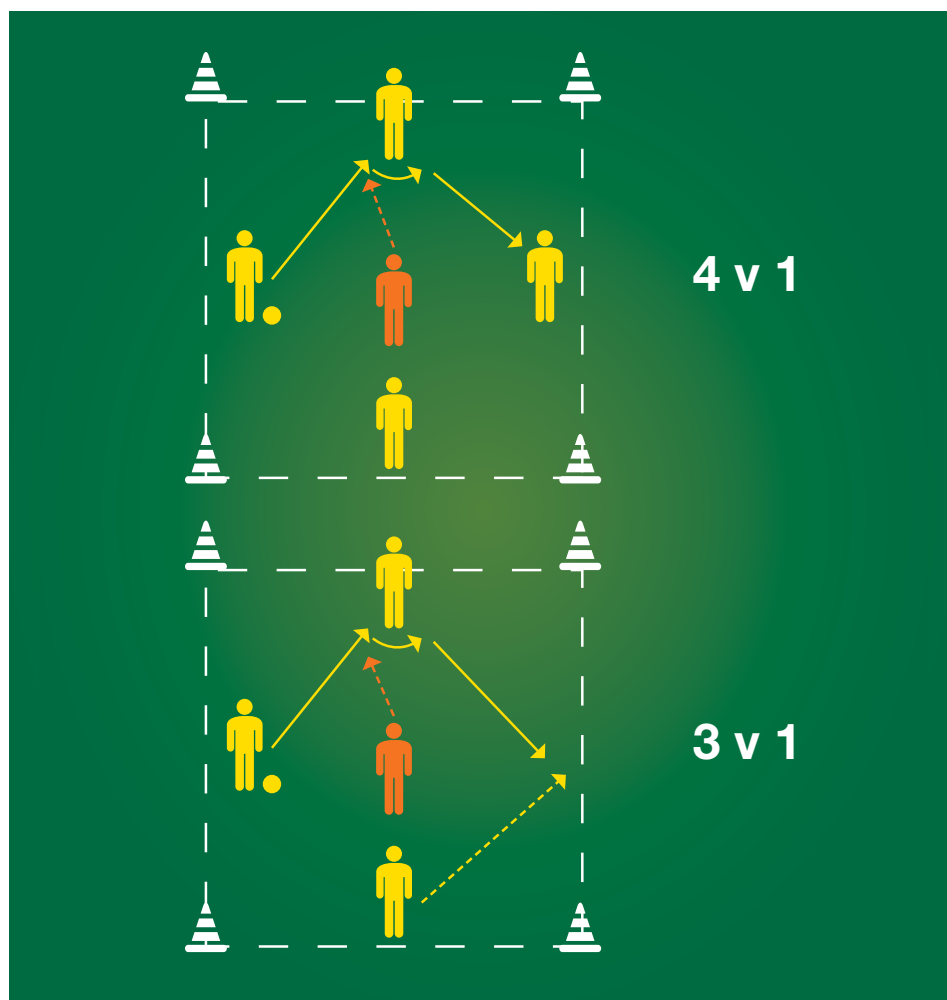
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## First touch Model Session 1



### 2. Skill training component:

Positioning Games with **two touches** as a **mandatory** requirement (i.e. first touch = control the ball, second touch = pass the ball).

Disallowing a direct pass forces the players to have a good first touch in order to move the ball away from the defender(s) and keep possession!

Which positioning game to use depends on the level of the players and ranges from 4 v 1 (easiest), 3 v 1, 5 v 2 and 4 v 2 (most difficult).

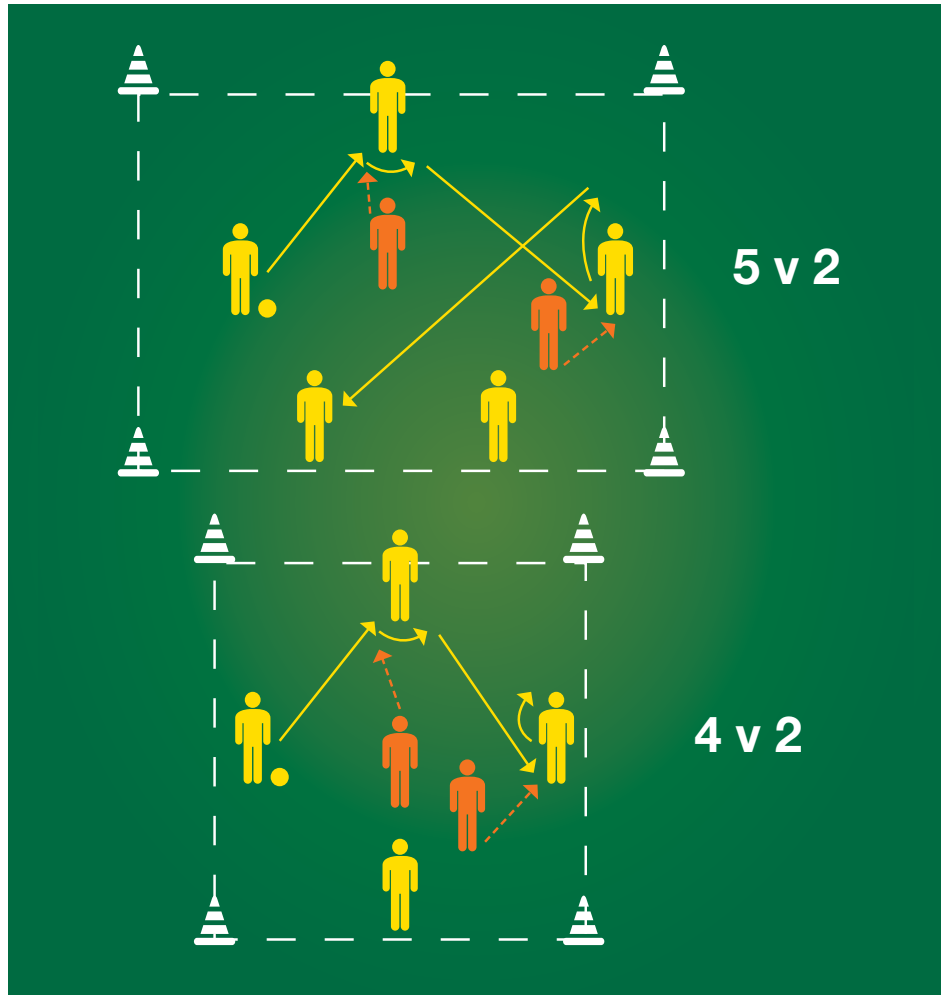
The grid size also depends on the level and capabilities of the players with 15m x 15m as a starting point (15m x 20m for the 5 v 2).

The coach can make the exercise more challenging for the players by simply decreasing the space or easier by making the grids bigger.



# Skill Training Model Sessions

## First touch Model Session 1

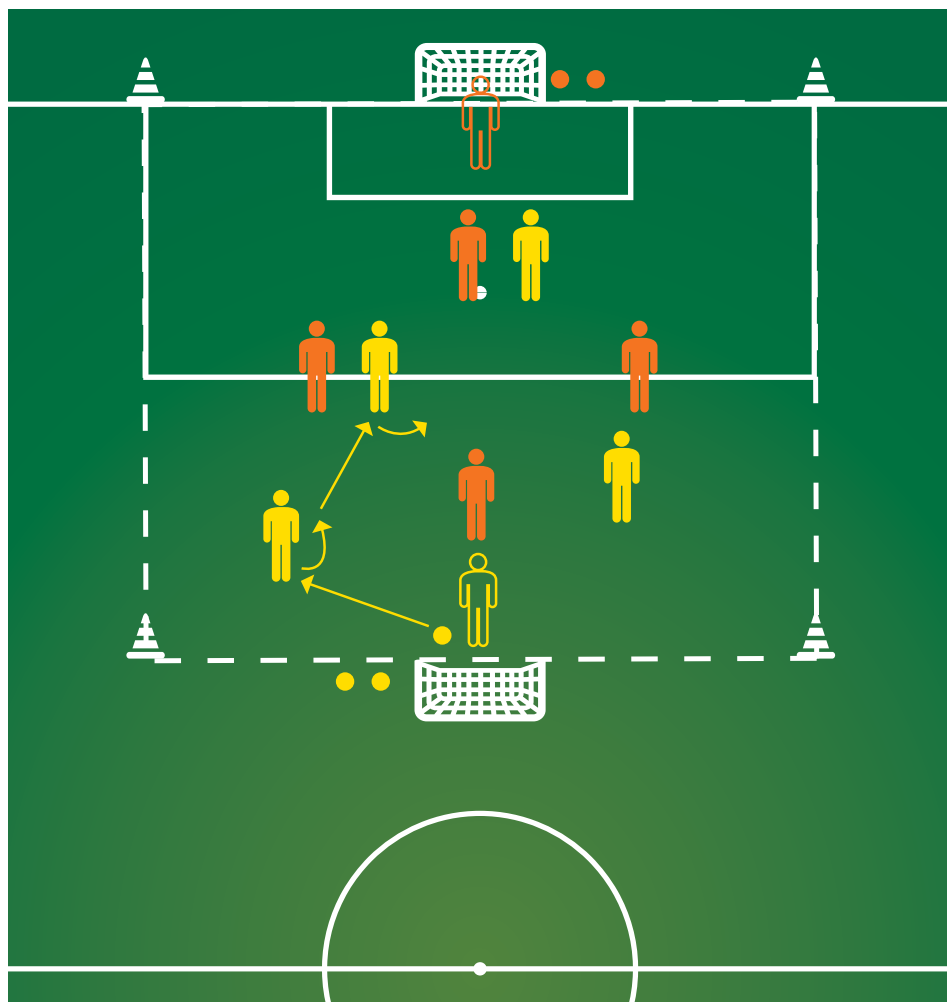


### Possible Coaches Remarks:

- “Move to support as the ball moves”
  - “Make angles (do not stand in the corners)”
  - “Keep your body open to the field”
  - “Move the ball with your first touch away from the defender(s) “
  - “Use body feints to disguise your intention”
- 
- Competition: which defender(s) forces most mistakes in 1 minute



## First touch Model Session 1



### 3. Skill Game:

5 v 5 with the restriction that with every ball contact each player **must take two touches**.

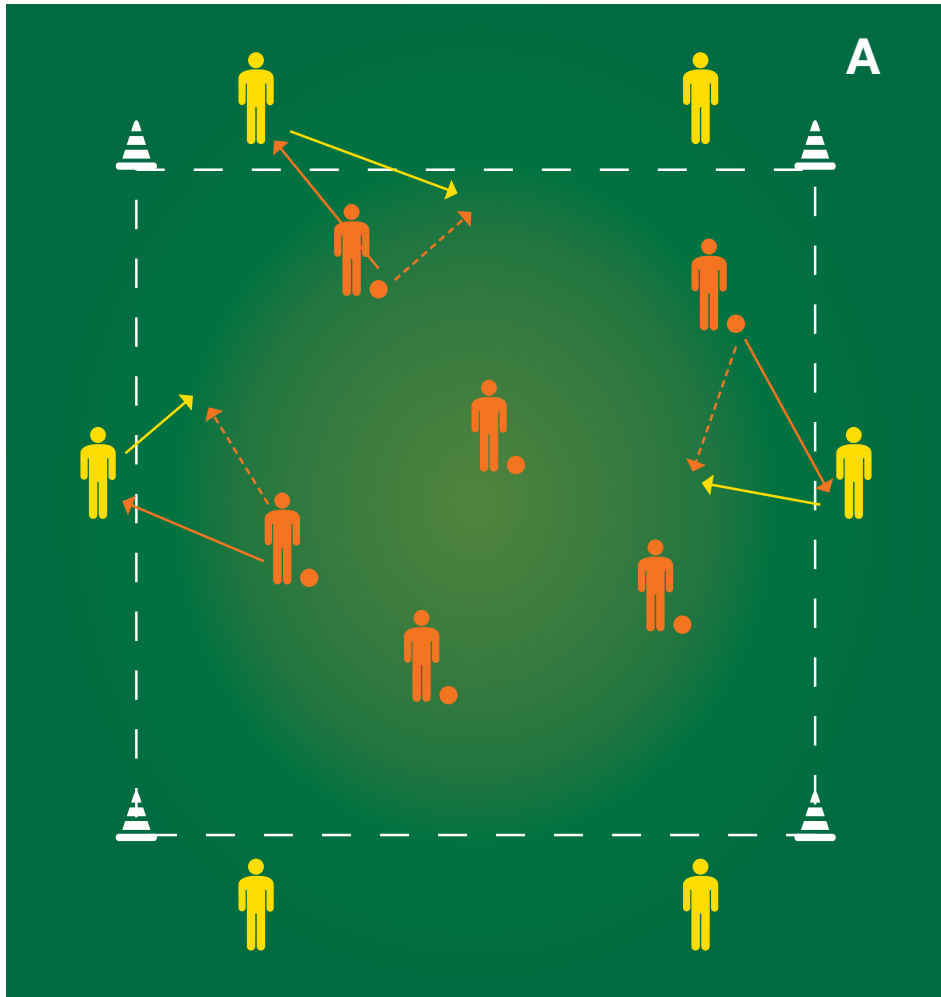
Disallowing direct play forces the players to have a good first touch in order to move the ball away from the defender(s) and keep possession!

The coach can make the game more challenging by simply decreasing the space or more easy by making the field bigger or creating a numerical advantage for the team in possession of the ball by adding a 'joker'.



# Skill Training Model Sessions

## Striking the ball Model Session 1 (short passing)



### 1 . Skill introduction

In a grid of approximately 20m x 20m (dependent on group size) half of the players position themselves outside the grid without a ball and the other half with a ball inside.

The players inside the grid dribble freely until they can pass to a 'free' player on the outside who then passes the ball back to the same player (see diagram A)

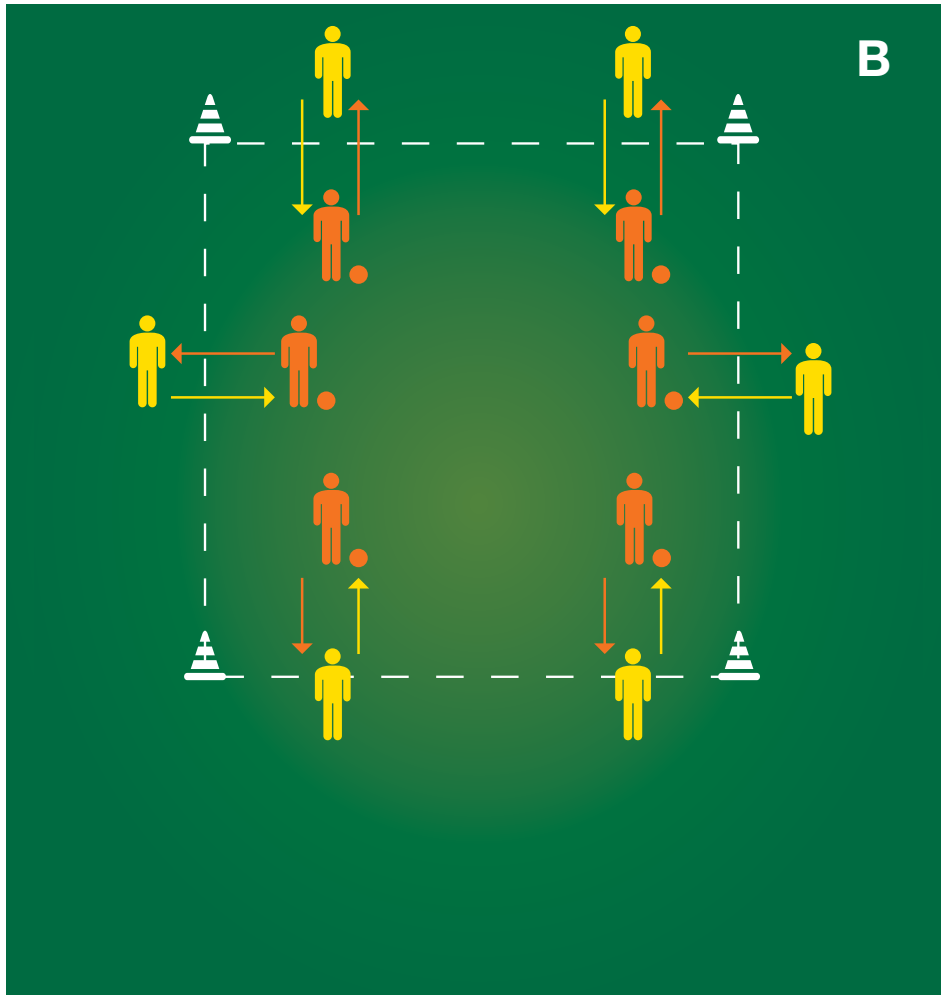
Change roles every two minutes, players must use left / right foot on coaches call i.e. 2 min left foot only; then 2 min right foot only.

### Possible Coaches Remarks:

- "Only pass the ball when the passing line is 'open' and make sure someone else is not passing to that player at the same time"
- "Pass the ball precise and with the right speed"
- "Look where you run when asking for the ball back and make an angle for the return pass"



## Striking the ball Model Session 1 (short passing)



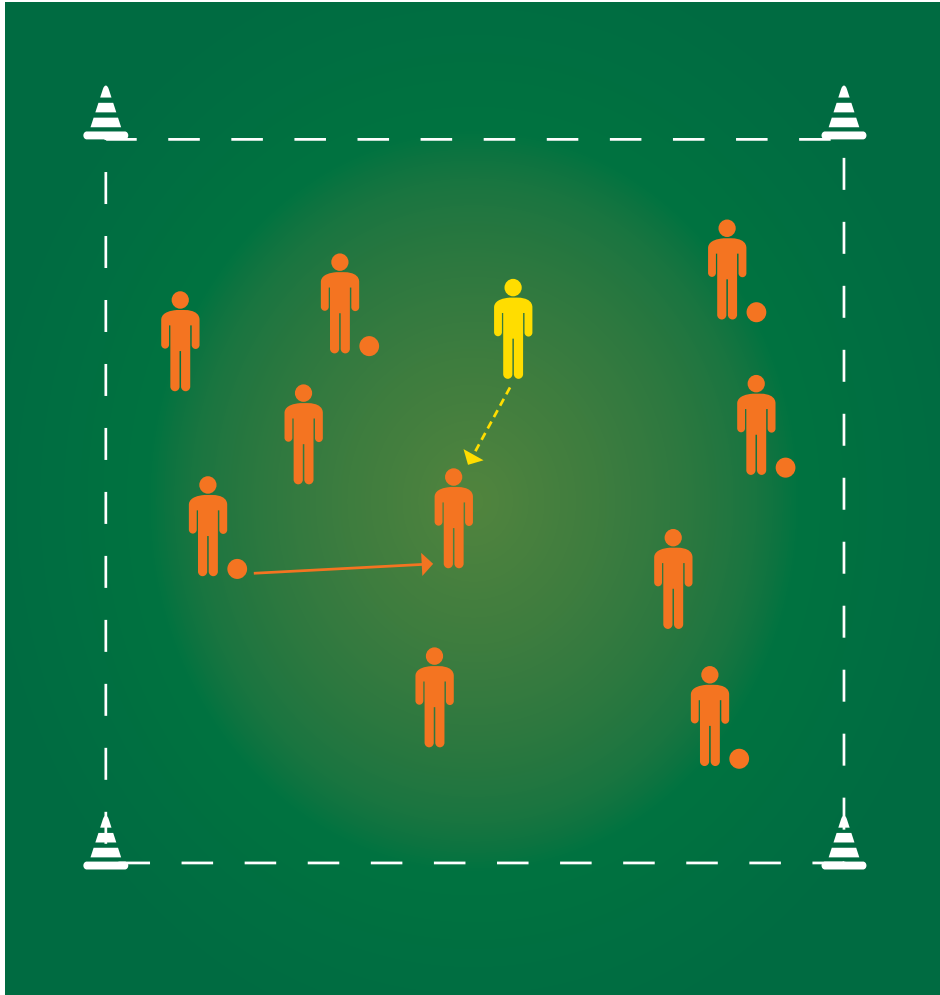
- Next the players form pairs with one ball and position themselves at the edge of the grid, 3m on either side of the line (see diagram B)
- The players move towards each other while playing one touch passes until they have reduced the distance to 1m-2m. Then they move backwards again continuing to pass until they have reached their starting position
- Right foot only
- Left foot only
- Right-left alternately

This exercise challenges the players to work on the 'weight' and accuracy of their pass using both feet over varying distances



# Skill Training Model Sessions

## Striking the ball Model Session 1 (short passing)



### Concluding tagging game

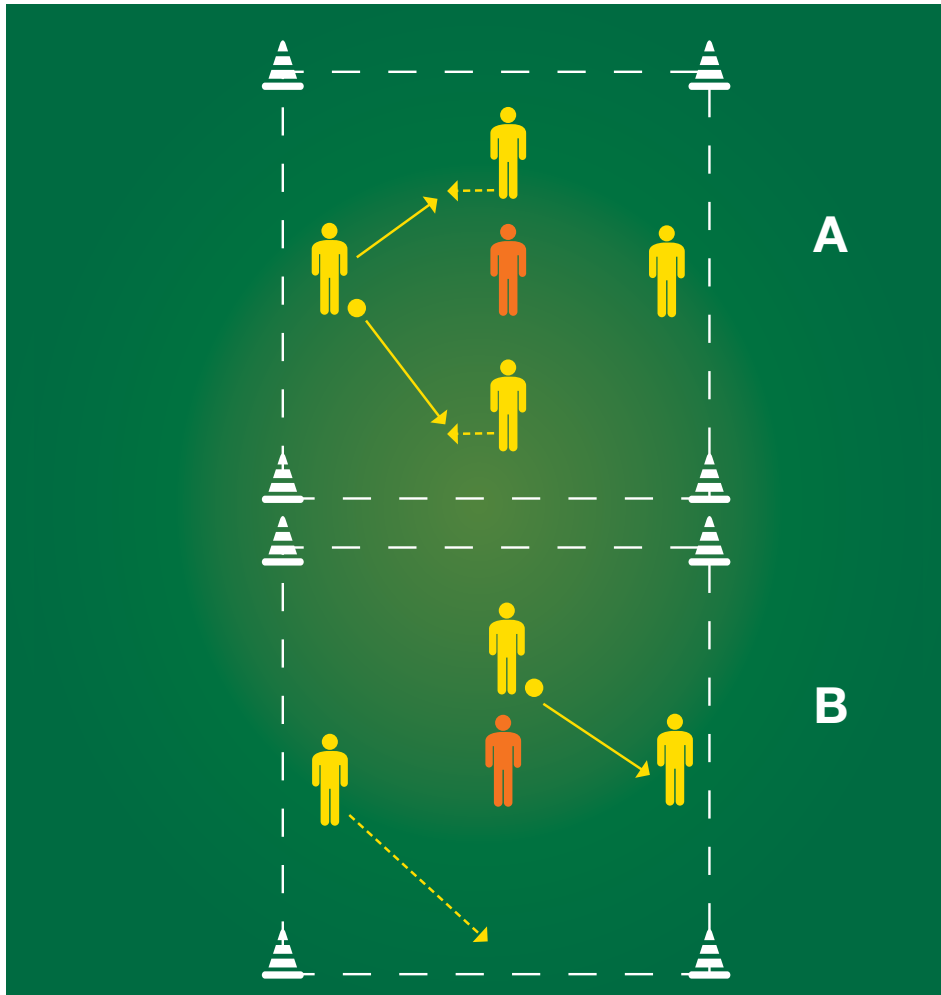
- All players go into the same grid we used for the previous exercises. Half of them have a ball at their feet, the others are without ball
- One player is appointed 'tagger' and carries a bib in their hand
- The tagger can only tag a player without ball. If the tagger succeeds in tagging a player without ball, both swap roles
- The players with ball can help their team-mates without ball by passing a ball to them when they are being chased by the tagger
- Any balls that roll out of the grid may not be fetched back, so the passes need to be accurate.

### Variations to make easier or more difficult:

- 2 or more taggers
- More (or less) players with a ball



## Striking the ball Model Session 1 (short passing)



### 2. Skill training component - Positioning games

Depending on the ability of your players, choose any of the 3 'basic' positioning games i.e. 4 v 1; 3 v 1 and 4 v 2. All have similar objectives but with varying degrees of resistance and complexity.

See diagrams above:

A. 4 v 1 (grid size 10m x 10m – 15m x 15m)

B. 3 v 1 (depending on the level of the players)

#### Possible Coaches Remarks:

"The player on the ball must always have a player to their left and right that they can play to"

"But do not stand in the corners, your angle is much smaller if you do that"

With 3 v 1 this means that "you have to move each time the ball moves" (see diagram B)

"Position yourself in a way that you can see the whole grid" ("with your back to the line")

**"Play the ball to the proper foot of your team-mate (i.e. away from the defender) and with the proper speed and precision"**

Please note that 3 v 1 asks for a lot of running and is therefore quite exhausting for players this age. Use regular drink breaks to allow for recovery



# Skill Training Model Sessions

In this component we will focus mainly on Skill Training and below you can fill in what each letter stands for in the acronym.

<b>F</b>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<b>O</b>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<b>R</b>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<b>M</b>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

**What is the main purpose the Skill Training?**

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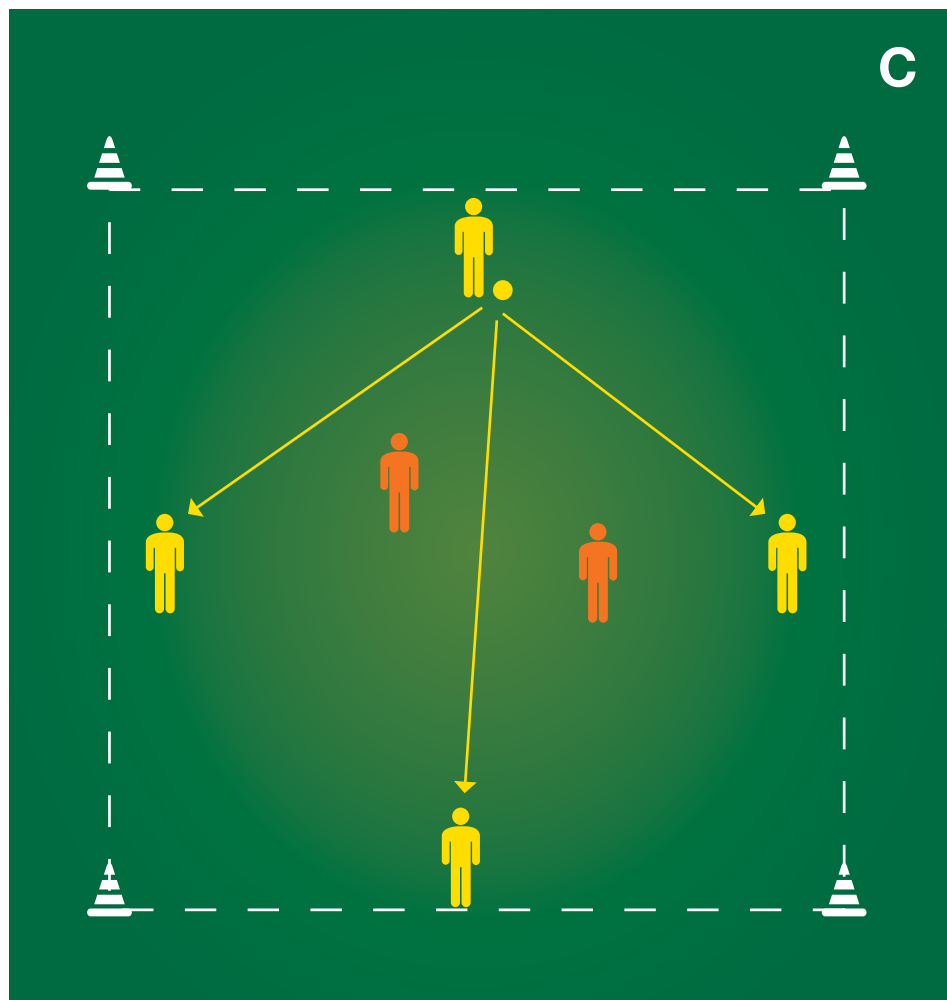
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## Striking the ball Model Session 1 (short passing)



4 v 2 (diagram C) grid size 12m x 12m – 15m x 15m depending on level of players

### Possible Coaches Remarks specifically for 4 v 2:

“Now the player on the ball must always have a player to their left, right and in between that they can pass to”

“Especially look to pass through the 2 defenders, that’s the most important pass! We call that the killer pass”

### Step up:

Make the grid smaller

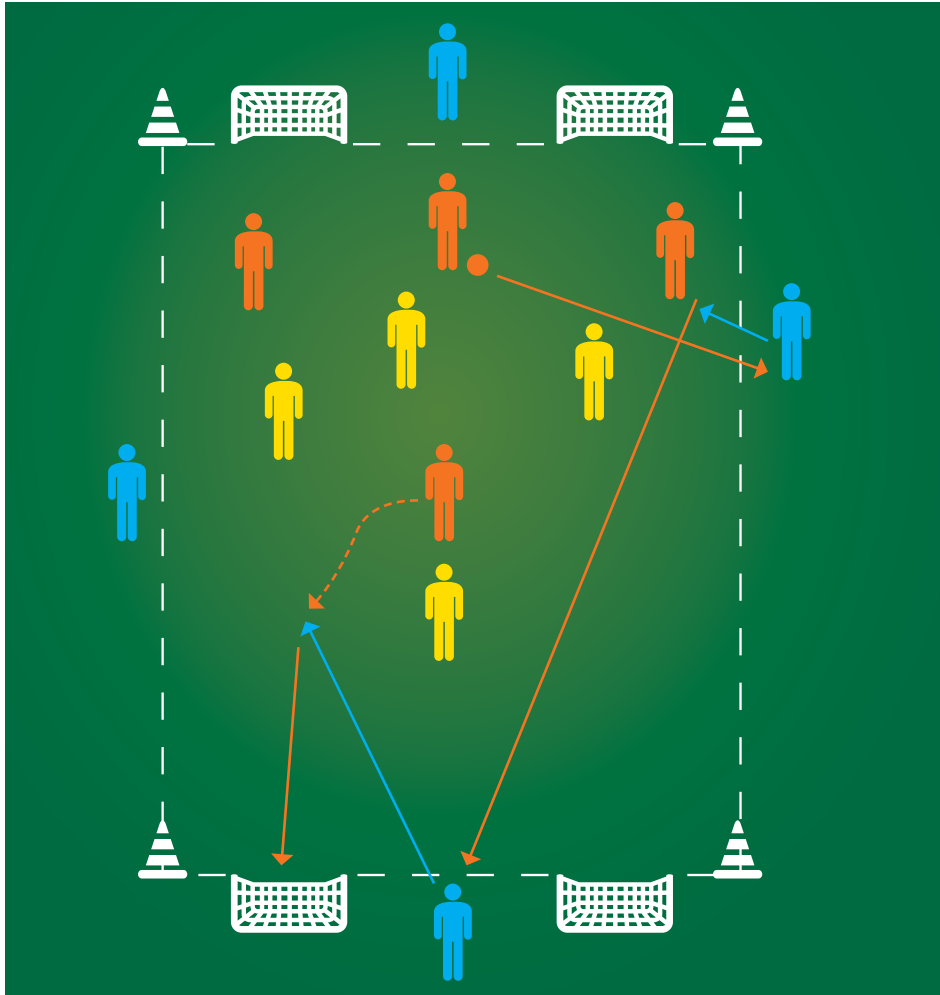
### Step down:

Make the grid bigger



# Skill Training Model Sessions

## Striking the ball Model Session 1 (short passing)



### 3. Skill game

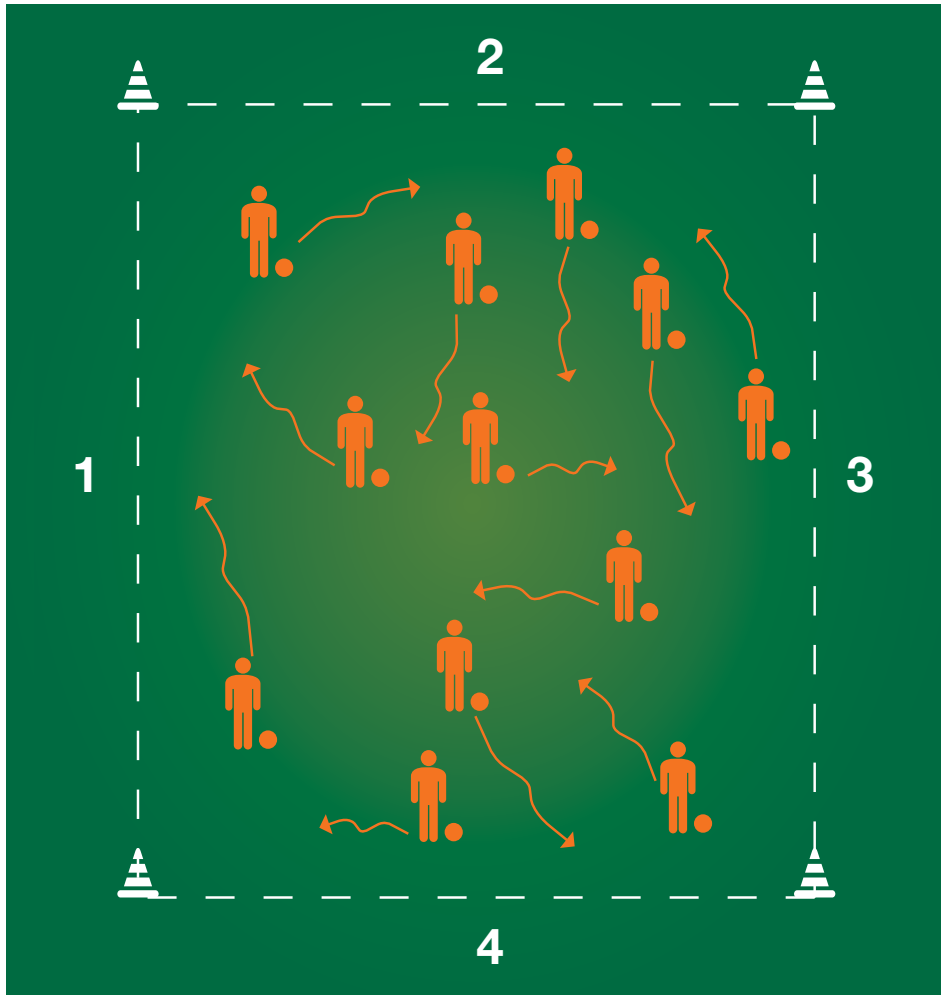
- 4 v 4 with 4 neutral players (walls) on a pitch of approximately 20m x 30m
- 4 small goals placed as shown (2m wide)
- The team in possession of the ball can use the wall players (8 v 4)
- Rotate teams after 3 min or after each score: scorers stay on
- Depending on level of the players: 2-3 touches max in order to get an emphasis on passing

#### Possible progressions:

- Wall players must play the ball direct
- Goals count as double if scored by a so-called **3rd man combination** (see diagram)



## Running with the ball Model Session 1



### 1. Skill introduction

All players running with a ball freely in a grid of approximately 30m x 30m to warm up.

First 2-3 minutes: "low speed/intensity", "use both feet".

Next 2-3 minutes: "accelerate when you see a free space in front of you; now only use your right/left foot".

Now split the players into 4 groups and number them 1 to 4 placing them on all 4 sides. When the coach calls a number, these players run with the ball as quickly as they can across the area and back (opposite group will need to move back to give the others room to turn!).

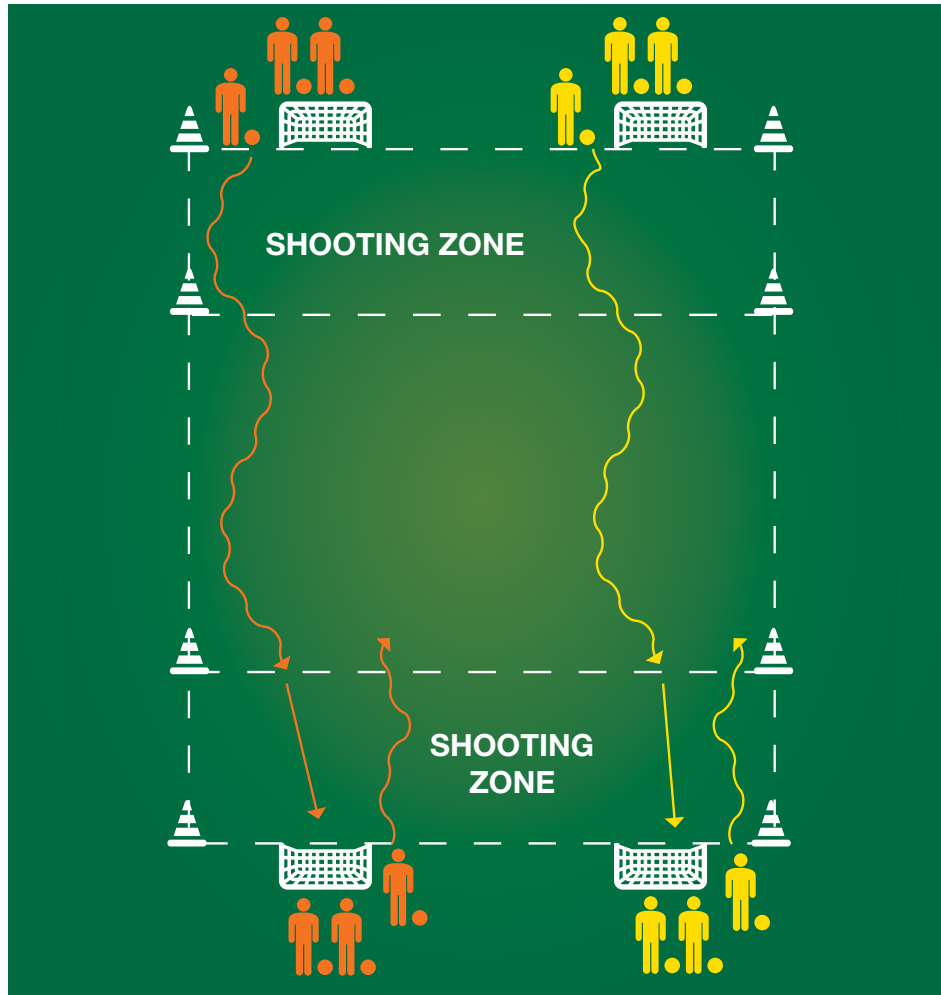
Now 2 groups at the same time: "take care; vision; if necessary slow down and then accelerate again".

**Look out for collisions!**



# Skill Training Model Sessions

## Running with the ball Model Session 1



### Concluding Competition

Relay. Grid: 30m x 20m; 4 small goals and a 5m-7m shooting line at each end.

Two equal teams (orange and yellow) positioned as shown in a 30m x 20m grid; each player with a ball;

On the coach's signal the first player from each team start running with the ball to the opposite goal. When they enter the shooting zone they pass/shoot the ball into the empty goal. As soon as the ball passes the goal line the next player can start running with the ball in the opposite direction.

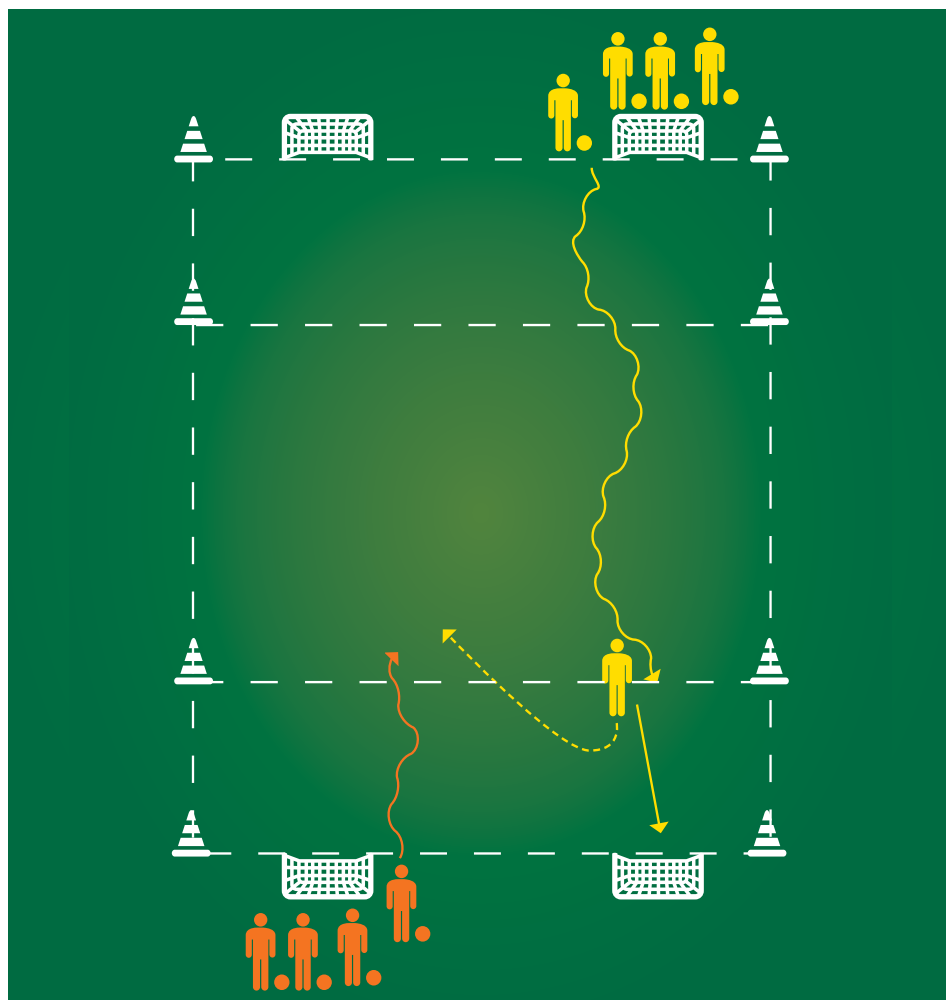
If the ball DOES NOT go into the goal the player who took the shot MUST go and touch the player waiting to run with the ball before they can start.

Which team can complete one full sequence first?

- Use right foot only
- Use left foot only
- Each player runs twice (first time right foot, second time with left)



## Running with the ball Model Session 1



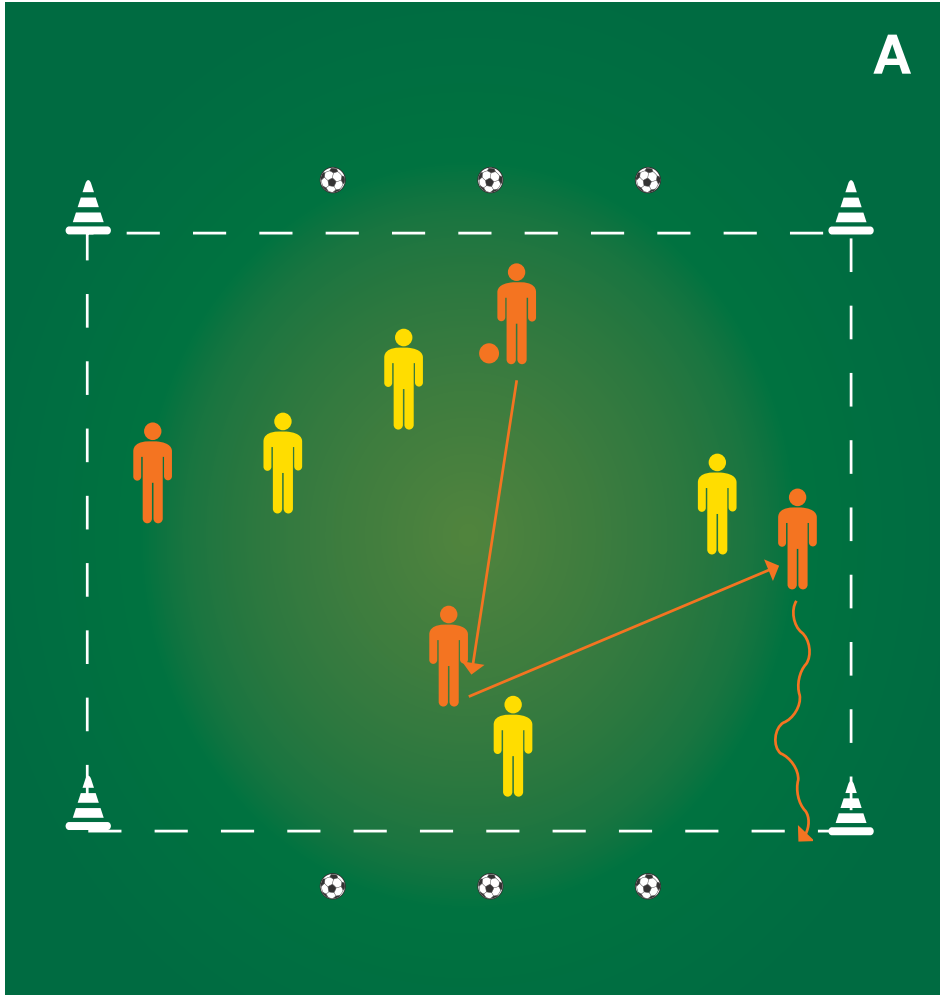
### 2. Skill training component

- A grid of 30m x 20m; 4 small goals and a 5m-7m shooting line at each end
- Evenly split teams positioned as shown
- Minimum 4, maximum 8 players per grid; if the group is bigger then make two grids
- The exercise starts with the first player of the yellow team running with the ball to the opposite side and shooting the ball into the goal. They can only shoot once they have crossed the line into the shooting zone
- As soon as the yellow player shoots at goal, the first orange player starts running with the ball to the opposite side
- As soon as the yellow player has had their shot at goal, they turn and chase the orange player to try and catch up with them and prevent them from scoring
- Count the goals! Which team scores the most goals?.



# Skill Training Model Sessions

## Running with the ball Model Session 1



### 3. Skill game

4 v 4 line football

Grid size approximately 30m wide by 20m long (pitch shape is short but wide)

#### Explanation of the game:

4 v 4 small sided game; to score a goal a player must run with the ball across the opponent's by-line (see diagram A).

#### Possible Coaches Remarks:

- "Spread out; use the width of the grid"
- "We must have a centre forward and 2 wingers"
- "run with the ball whenever you see space in front of you"
- "don't be afraid to take on opponents"
- "when a defender is chasing you use the feints you learned earlier"



In this component we will focus mainly on the Skill Game and below you can fill in what each letter stands for in the acronym.

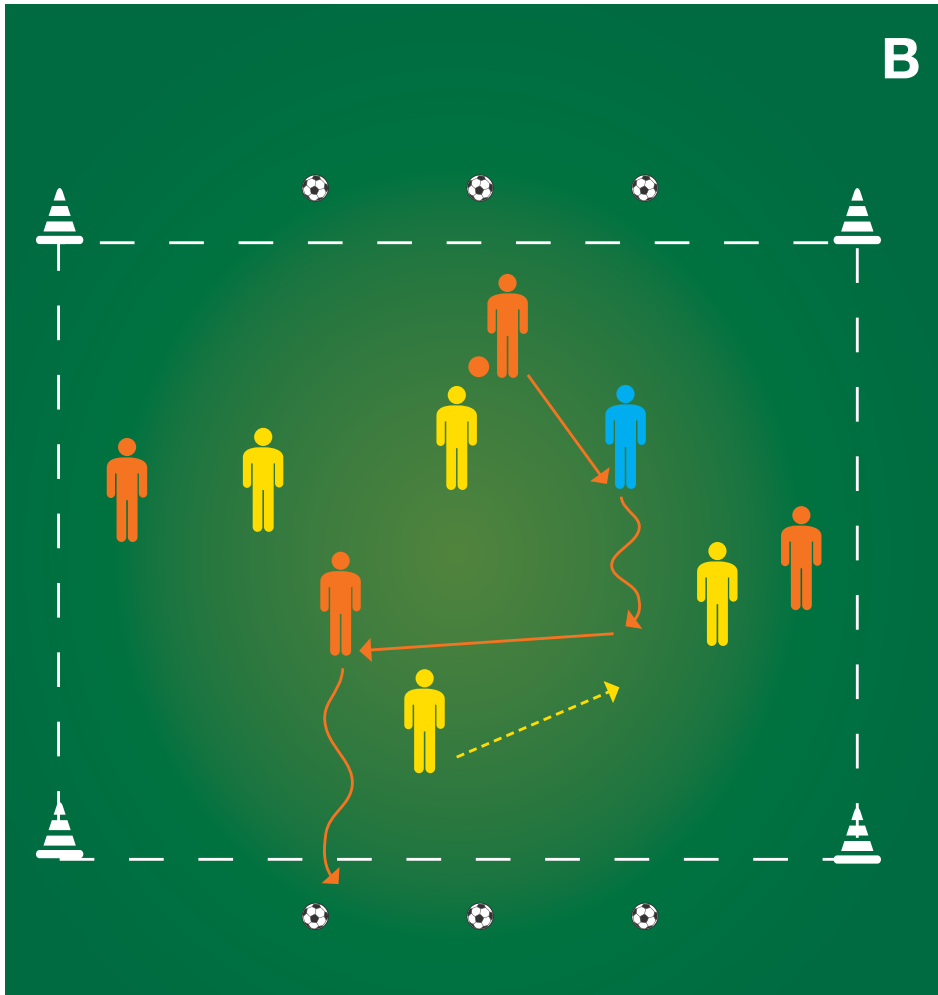
G	<div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div>
A	<div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div>
M	<div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div>
E	<div></div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div>

What is the main purpose the Skill Game?



# Skill Training Model Sessions

## Running with the ball Model Session 1



Assess how the game goes: do all players run with the ball regularly and are goals being scored? If the answer is no, make it easier:

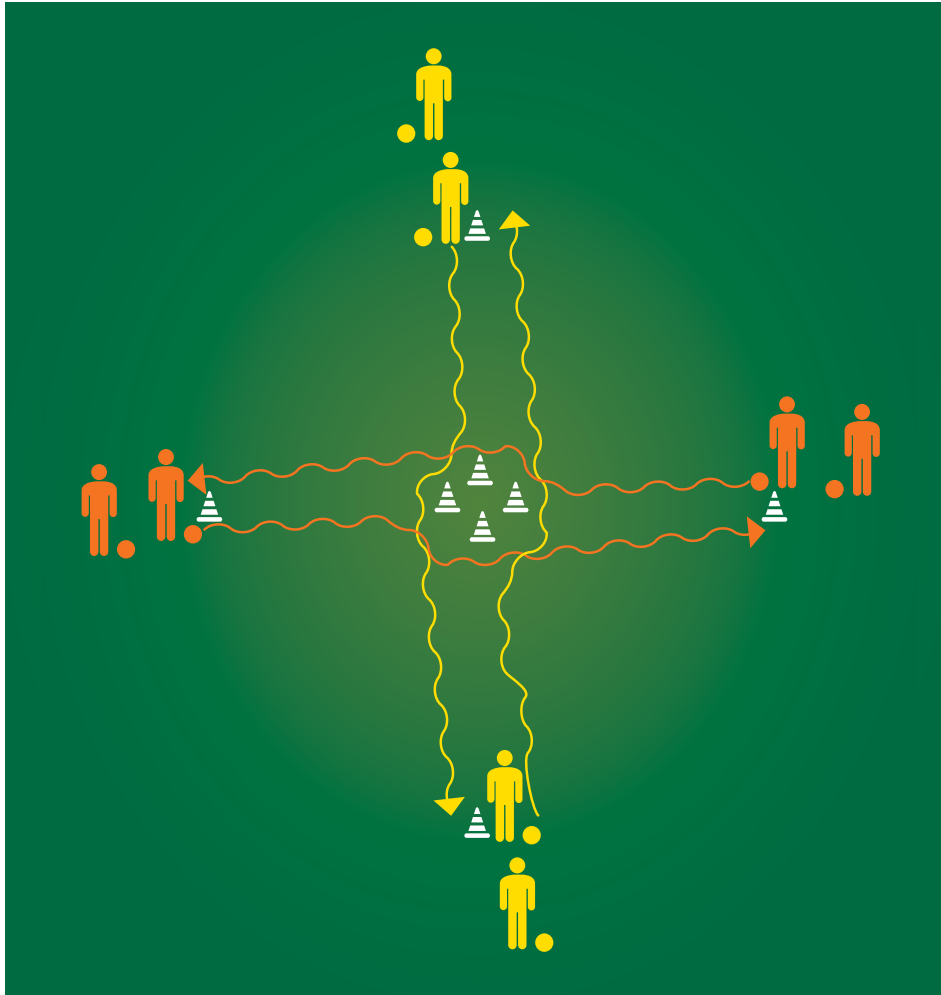
- Make the pitch wider
- Add a neutral player ("joker") who always plays with the team that has the ball (numerical advantage of 1 player; see diagram B)
- If still too difficult: bigger numerical advantage (2 jokers)

### If too easy:

- Make the field more narrow
- Scoring zones rather than the whole line



## 1 v 1 Model Session 1



### 1. Skill introduction

4 markers placed 12-15m opposite of each other with 4 markers centrally in a diamond 1m-1.5m apart (see diagram).

Max. 2 players with ball line up at the markers. On the coaches call two players opposite each other start dribbling to the other side. In the middle they perform a prescribed or free feint to go around the **right side** of the markers and accelerate to the opposite marker. After 2 minutes: now go around the **left side** of the markers.

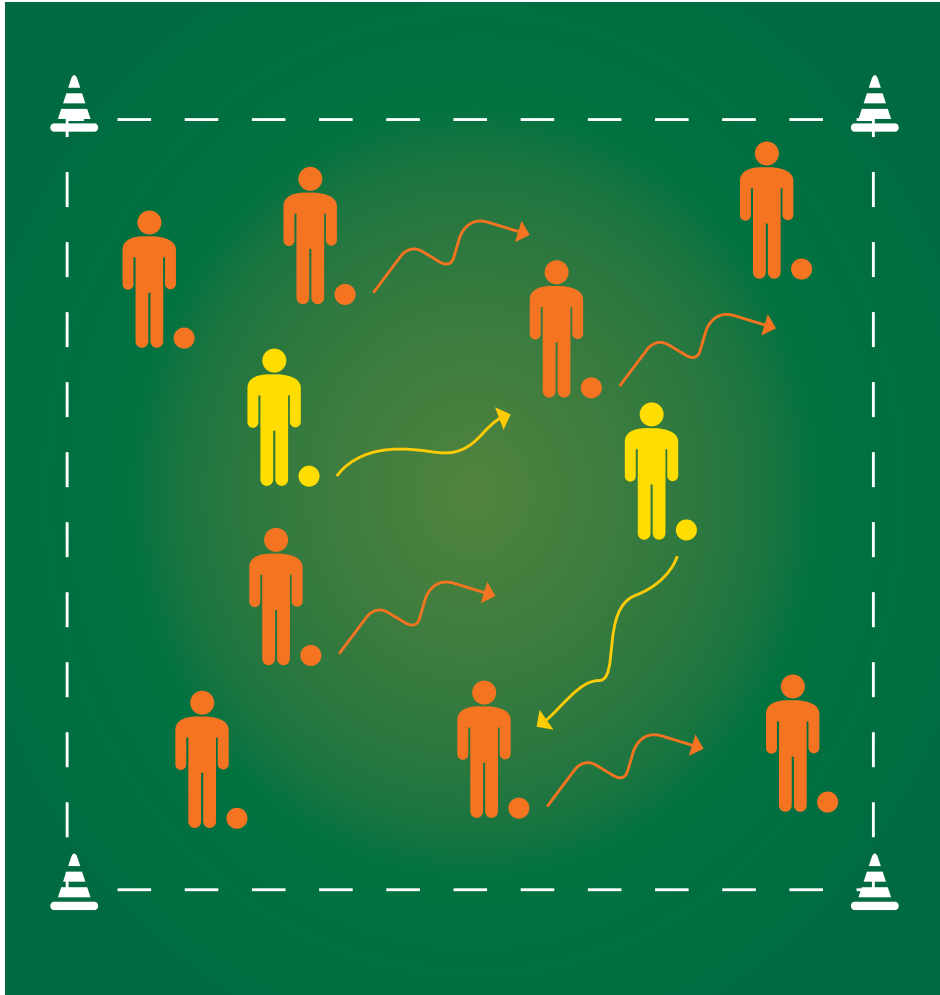
### Progression:

- Speed up tempo (maintain proper execution)
- Take out the markers (perception and communication)



# Skill Training Model Sessions

## 1 v 1 Model Session 1



### Concluding tagging game:

All players move with a ball inside a 15m x 15m grid while 1 or 2 “taggers” (holding a bib in their hands) chase the other players and try to “tag” them.

All players (taggers and runners) MUST keep their ball under control at all times.

A player who is tagged or loses control over the ball or runs out of the grid must change roles with the tagger.

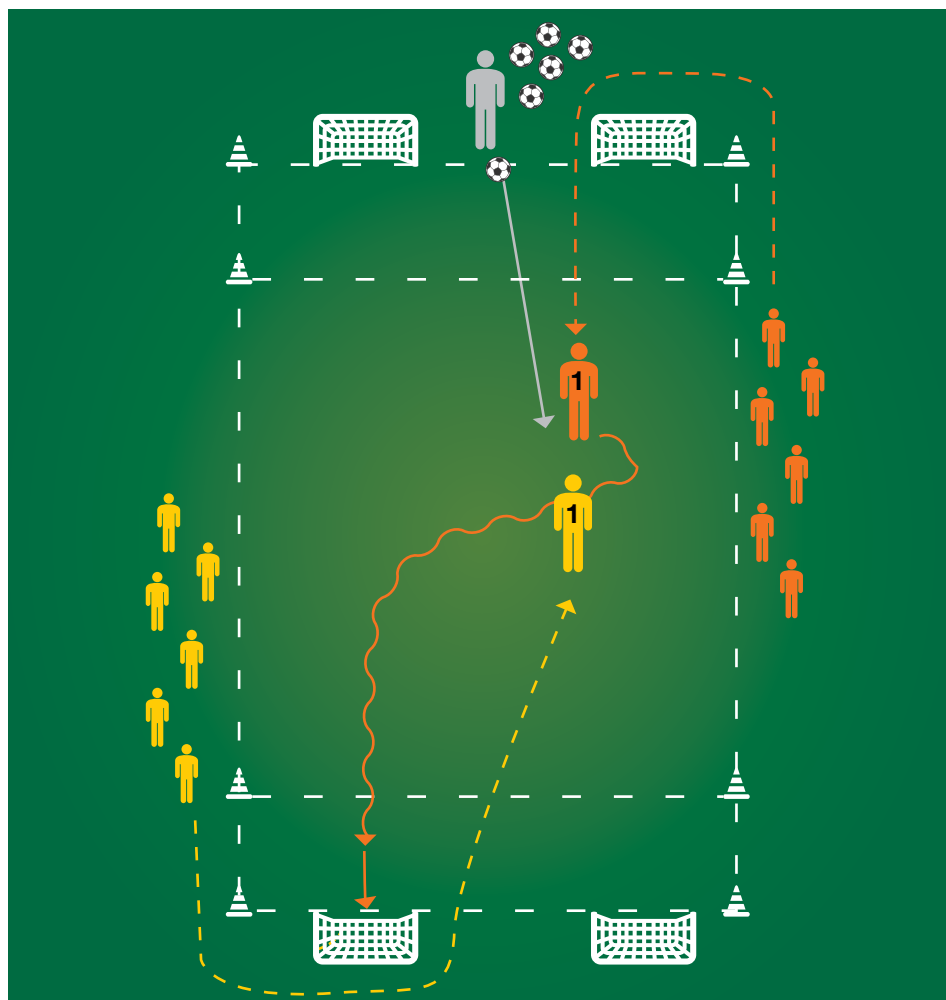
The same rules apply for the tagger(s): they cannot tag someone unless they have the ball under control.

### To make it easier/more difficult (for taggers):

- More/less taggers
- Smaller/bigger grid



## 1 v 1 Model Session 1



### 2. Skill training component:

In a grid of approximately 20m x 30m two small goals are placed on each byline with markers on the corners and on the sideline at 5m from the corners to mark the 'scoring zone'.

Two teams of 6 players maximum line up behind the markers on the sideline as shown. The coach is positioned with the balls between the two goals on one side of the pitch.

On a signal from the coach orange #1 and yellow #1 sprint around the corner marker and the nearest goal. The coach serves in favor of the orange player who take on the yellow player at maximum speed. The attacker can finish in either of the 2 goals but must finish from INSIDE the 5m 'scoring zone'. If the defender wins the ball they can score in one of the opposite goals (one attempt max. each). When the action has ended the players line up on the opposite side.

The coach can manipulate the 1 v 1 through the **angle** with which they serve the ball.

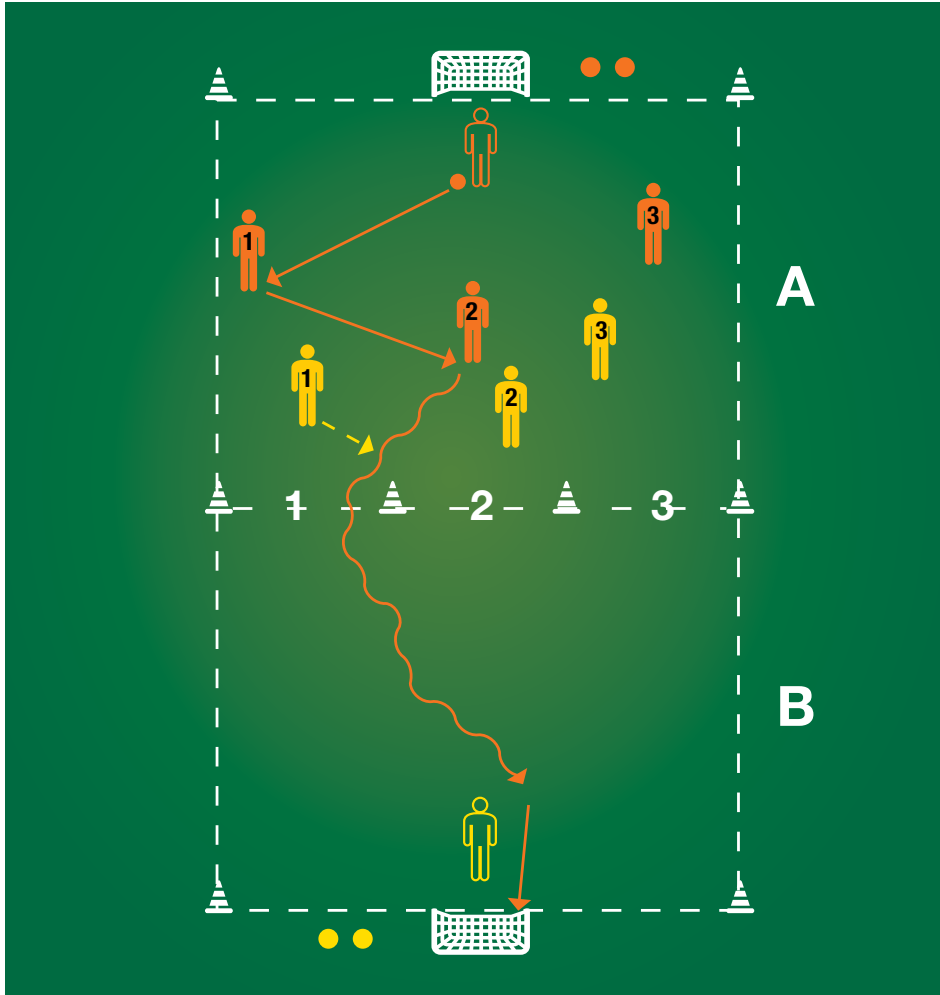
### Possible Coaches Remarks:

ATTACKER	DEFENDER
"Go at the defender with speed"	"Show the attacker one way"
"Use a feint to put the defender off balance"	"Bend your knees and stand on your toes so you're able to change direction quickly"
"Threaten to go to one side then suddenly attack the other"	"The best moment to commit is when the attacker takes a heavy touch or slows down"



# Skill Training Model Sessions

## 1 v 1 Model Session 1



### 3. Skill game

3 v 3 on a pitch (20m wide x 40m long) with big goals and goalkeepers. Placed on the halfway line are 3 equal sized 'gates' as shown in the diagram. Each player (orange or yellow) must defend their 'own' designated gate when the opponent has the ball (i.e. player #1 defends gate 1, player #2 defends gate 2 etc).

The orange goalkeeper starts the game with all outfield players of both teams in grid A. The orange team combines till one orange player beats their opponent 1 v 1 and moves through one of the gates into grid B and tries to score.

If orange scores the game starts again in grid A.

If yellow wins the ball in grid A they can immediately score. If yellow scores, the game restarts in grid B with possession for yellow.

If the yellow goalkeeper wins the ball in grid B, the game restarts in grid B with possession for the yellow team.

#### Step up:

- The attacking team must make a 1 v 1 effort within 30 seconds otherwise the possession goes to the opponent
- Narrow the pitch (smaller gates)

#### Step down:

- Introduce a 'joker'
- Widen the pitch (bigger gates)







**Notes:**



[illegible]



## Notes:



# Checklist

This checklist with handy ACRONYMS can assist to recall key points of sessions if you find it is easier for you to refer to this list then it is available here.

The Skill Training component should always begin with SETUP then if conducting Skill training component you can simply refer to SET before looking to FORM. The same would be used with the GAME at the end simply refer to SET then GAME.

SKILL INTRODUCTION		SKILL INTRODUCTION COMPONENT INTRODUCES THE SESSION OBJECTIVE THROUGH EFFECTIVE ORGANISATION
<b>S</b>	<b>SETUP / ORGANISATION</b>	Is it Safe? Reduced chances of collisions, Goals secured? Shin pads on? Framing and Quick start. Are the Balls, Bibs, Markers in the right place? Poles, area size? Numbers correct? Shape?
<b>E</b>	<b>ENGAGE</b>	Are all players' involved, maximum touches on ball? Lots of repetitions through efficient group management, Communication (coaching each other) use of both feet
<b>T</b>	<b>TASK</b>	The players' task(s) are clearly explained / demonstrated.
<b>U</b>	<b>UNDERSTAND</b>	Observe the players actions. Do they demonstrate that they understand the task i.e. where to run / pass? If not reinforce by finding a "role model" within the group, use Q and A or as a last resort demonstrate.
<b>P</b>	<b>PERCEPTION / DECISION EXECUTION</b>	As many of these three actions should be present as often as possible.

SKILL TRAINING – refer to SET to ensure the start to this component is effective

SKILL TRAINING		SKILL TRAINING COMPONENT ASSISTS THE FORMATION OF GOOD PLAYING HABITS
<b>F</b>	<b>FACILITATE LEARNING</b>	Practices provide enough repetition of the skill to facilitate learning
<b>O</b>	<b>OBSERVE PLAYER ACTIONS</b>	The coach observes and provides positive feedback on things like, players "coaching" each other, shape i.e. One player left and one right.
<b>R</b>	<b>ROLE MODELS</b>	The coach identifies and presents good role models of correct technique and skill i.e. Perception, Decision and Execution.
<b>M</b>	<b>MODIFY</b>	The coach observes to identify the opportunity to modify the session using C.H.A.N.G.E.I.T. to challenge the players.

THE SKILL GAME COMPONENT HELPS THE COACH ASSESS HOW MUCH LEARNING THAT HAS TAKEN PLACE DURING THE FIRST TWO COMPONENTS.

SKILL GAME		refer to SET to ensure the start to this component is effective
<b>G</b>	<b>GAME</b>	The game looks like football, i.e. Goals, two teams, objectives, direction.
<b>A</b>	<b>ASSESS</b>	There is opportunity for high volume of repetition of session objective / focus to allow assessment
<b>M</b>	<b>MONITOR / MODIFY</b>	Note how effective the players are in the use of Perception, Decision and Execution. Is there a need to challenge the players further?
<b>E</b>	<b>EVALUATE</b>	Reflect on the effectiveness of the session delivery. Self and Players. How much did they learn?



# Acronym Definitions

CANDIDATE NAME:		TOPIC:	
<b>SKILL INTRODUCTION</b>			
<b>S</b>	<b>SETUP / ORGANISATION</b>	Is the area safe, limited chance of collisions, maximum use of equipment, size of area, brief explanation to "frame" the session and Quick start?	
<b>E</b>	<b>ENGAGE</b>	No long queues, maximum ball contacts, develop passive pressure, encourage communication (coaching each other) the use of both sides of the body.	
<b>T</b>	<b>TASK</b>	The coach must clearly <b>explain</b> and <b>demonstrate</b> the task at hand.	
<b>U</b>	<b>UNDERSTAND</b>	The coach uses different methods to assess or reaffirm the players' understanding such as Q and A, demonstration, role modelling (players perform the correct actions and demonstrate for others)	
<b>P</b>	<b>PERCEPTION, DECISION, EXECUTION</b>	The practice puts players into a range of decision making situations where possible. How often are they using these three P,D,E?	
<b>THE SETUP INTRODUCES THE SESSION OBJECTIVE</b>			

CANDIDATE NAME:		TOPIC:	
<b>SKILL TRAINING</b>			
<b>F</b>	<b>FACILITATE LEARNING</b>	The practice should allow lots of repetition of the given core skill and the group management allows opportunities to learn by doing. How often is P,D,E being used?	
<b>O</b>	<b>OBSERVE PLAYER ACTIONS</b>	To aid observation the coach should vary their coaching positions and use various methods to provide feedback on the players' performances on the run, i.e. thumbs up, well done, good effort etc... check for understanding as well	
<b>R</b>	<b>ROLE MODELS</b>	The coach identifies and presents good role models (uses players as examples) of the correct technique and / or skill	
<b>M</b>	<b>MODIFY</b>	The coach needs to identify how and when to challenge the players by using the C.H.A.N.G.E.I.T. methodology whilst keeping the integrity of the session	
<b>THE SESSION HELPS THE FORMATION OF GOOD PLAYING HABITS</b>			

CANDIDATE NAME:		TOPIC:	
<b>SKILL GAME</b>			
<b>G</b>	<b>GAME</b>	The coach sets up a game that actually replicates a football game with goals, Direction, opponents, objectives and helps to make it competitive!!! (real)	
<b>A</b>	<b>ASSESS</b>	The coach sets up a practice that provides many opportunities for the players to develop their technique into skill	
<b>M</b>	<b>MONITOR / MODIFY</b>	How and when the players use the given core skill (P, D, E?) Is the game too easy / too hard? is one team or the other dominating ? or an individual dominating?	
<b>E</b>	<b>EVALUATE</b>	The players, session and self-reflect on the process. What would I do differently?	
<b>A GAME TO ASSESS PLAYERS AND SELF REFLECT ON SESSION</b>			



# Candidate Self Reflection

CANDIDATE NAME:		TOPIC:
<b>SKILL INTRODUCTION</b>		<b>WHAT COULD I DO DIFFERENTLY NEXT TIME?</b>
<b>S</b>	SETUP / ORGANISATION	
<b>E</b>	ENGAGE	
<b>T</b>	TASK	
<b>U</b>	UNDERSTAND	
<b>P</b>	PERCEPTION, DECISION, EXECUTION	
<b>THE SETUP INTRODUCES THE SESSION OBJECTIVE</b>		

CANDIDATE NAME:		TOPIC:
<b>SKILL TRAINING</b>		<b>WHAT COULD I DO DIFFERENTLY NEXT TIME?</b>
<b>F</b>	FACILITATE LEARNING	
<b>O</b>	OBSERVE PLAYER ACTIONS	
<b>R</b>	ROLE MODELS	
<b>M</b>	MODIFY	
<b>THE SESSION HELPS THE FORMATION OF GOOD PLAYING HABITS</b>		

CANDIDATE NAME:		TOPIC:
<b>SKILL GAME</b>		<b>WHAT COULD I DO DIFFERENTLY NEXT TIME?</b>
<b>G</b>	GAME	
<b>A</b>	ASSESS	
<b>M</b>	MONITOR / MODIFY	
<b>E</b>	EVALUATE	
<b>A GAME TO ASSESS PLAYERS AND SELF REFLECT ON SESSION</b>		



# Session plan

**Topic (Session objective):**.....

**Name:** .....

**Organisation details:**.....

**Balls:**.....

**Bibs:** .....

**Markers:**.....

**Players:**.....

**Game instructions/demonstration:** .....

.....

.....

.....

.....



# Coaches Code of Ethics Agreement Form

**PLEASE COMPLETE ALL FIELDS - PRINT CLEARLY**

**Title ..... First Name ..... Surname .....**

**FFA Accreditation Level .....**

**Mailing Address .....**

.....

.....

**State ..... Postcode .....**

**Phone number - Home..... Work.....**

**Mobile ..... Fax .....**

**Email address .....**

**Country of Birth ..... Date of Birth .....**

## **I AGREE TO THE FOLLOWING TERMS:**

1. I agree to abide by Football Federation Australia's Code of Ethics.
2. I acknowledge that Football Federation Australia may take disciplinary action against me, if I breach the code of ethics.
3. I understand that Football Federation Australia is required to implement a complaint handling procedure in accordance with the principles of natural justice, in the event of an allegation against me.
4. I acknowledge that disciplinary action against me may include de-registration from Football Federation Australia's Coach License Registration and the National Coaching Accreditation Scheme.

Please refer to the Harassment free Sport Guidelines available from the Australian Sports Commission Website  
<http://www.ausport.gov.au/ethics/memprot.asp>

I have read the Football Federation Australia Coaches Code of Ethics and agree to comply with its directives.

**Signature..... Date.....**

**Signature of Parent/Guardian (if under 18) .....**



# Coaches Code of Ethics

- I will respect the rights, dignity and worth of all players and ensure that everyone is treated equally.
- I will ensure that the players are involved in a positive environment, and that the game and training is a positive and enjoyable experience.
- I will respect all players' individuality and help them reach their own full potential.
- I will be fair, considerate and honest with all players.
- I will be professional and accept responsibility for my actions and encourage players to demonstrate the same qualities.
- I will make a commitment to my team, and myself, that I will continue to improve my own knowledge of the game through coach education and various training programs. I will coach my players to play within the rules and in the spirit of the game of Soccer (Football).
- I will avoid any physical contact with the players and should it be required it would be appropriate to the situation and necessary for the player's skill development.
- I will refrain from any form of personal abuse towards my players. Also I will be aware of any forms of abuse directed towards my players from other sources while they are in my care.
- I will refrain from any form of harassment towards my players.
- I will provide a safe environment for training and competition, by ensuring the equipment and facilities meet safety standards.
- I will show concern and caution towards sick and injured players and allow for further participation in training and competition only when appropriate.
- I will not engage in the use of crude, foul or abusive language that may be determined offensive or engage in any conduct detrimental to the image of the game when on or off the field.
- I will refrain from arguing with the referee and / or assistant referees regarding decisions they make.
- I will treat participants, officials and spectators with courtesy and respect

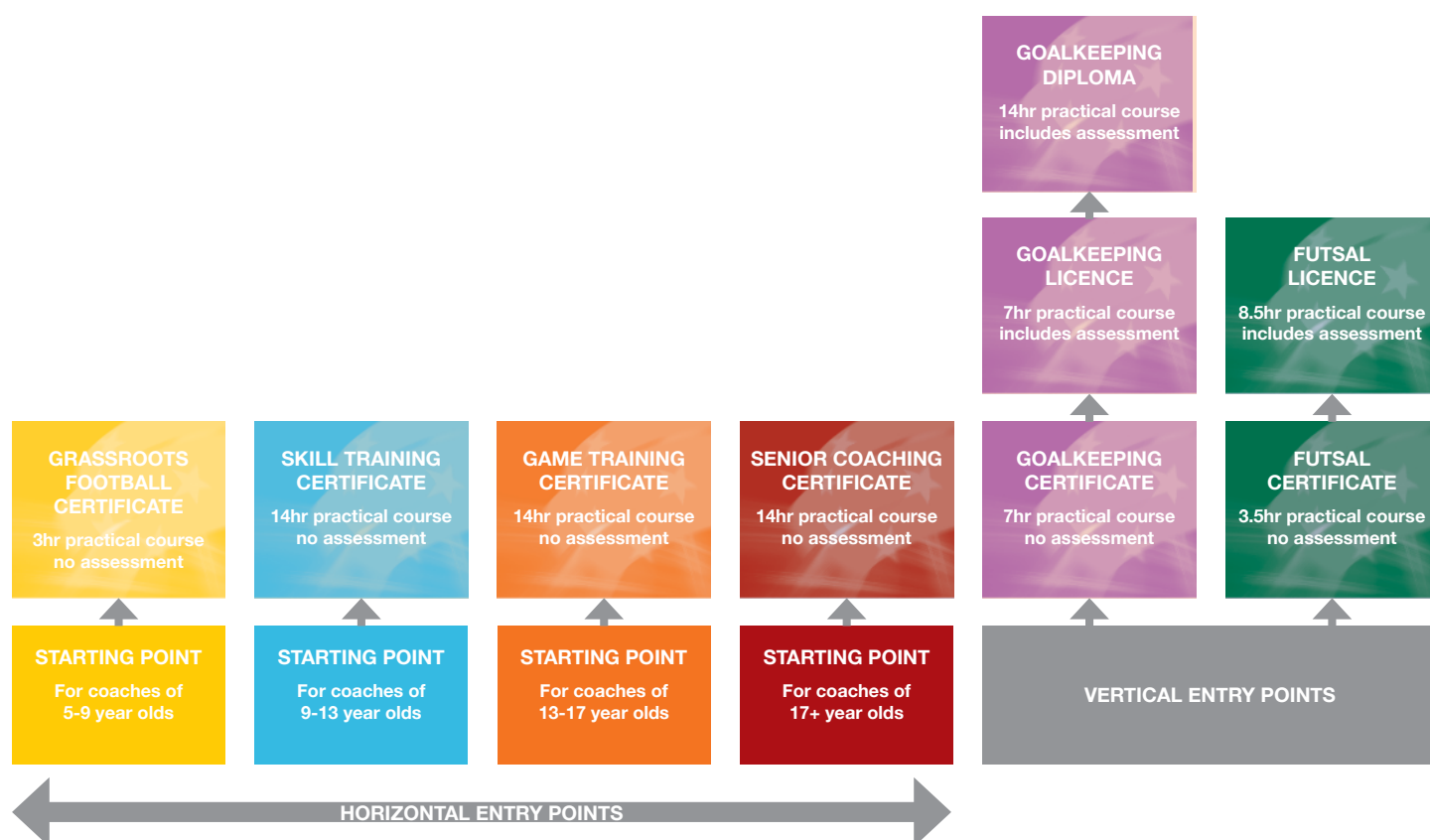
## **This code is designed:**

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- To emphasise the elements of enjoyment and satisfaction to junior players and coaches involved in Soccer (Football).
- To make adults including parents and coaches aware that young players play Soccer (Football) to satisfy themselves and not necessarily to satisfy adults or members of their own peer group.
- To improve the overall health and fitness of Australia's youth by encouraging participation in Soccer (Football) and making it attractive, safe and enjoyable for all to play.
- To remind administrators, coaches, referees and parents that Soccer (Football) must be administered, taught and provided, for the good of those young people who wish to play Soccer (Football), as ultimately it is "their game".



# Getting involved



## How do I become a Presenter and / or an Assessor?

Should you wish to become a Presenter and / or an Assessor you must attend the State workshop conducted by your Member Federation annually, however should circumstances prevent your attendance you can be “mentored” in the process by attending and assisting on at least one course (M.F.’s discretion) at the level at which you would like to present and/ or assess. An application form is also available on the FFA website which should be processed through your Member Federation.

## What qualification do I need to be able to present a course?

You need to have at least the same level Certificate as the one which you are presenting, i.e. Skill Training Certificate = Skill Training Certificate.

PRESENTER / ASSESSOR LEVEL	TYPE	Accreditation Required to become a Presenter or Assessor
GRASSROOTS FOOTBALL CERTIFICATE	Presenter	Grassroots Football Certificate
SKILL TRAINING CERTIFICATE	Presenter / Assessor	Skill Training Certificate
GAME TRAINING CERTIFICATE	Presenter / Assessor	Game Training Certificate
SENIOR CERTIFICATE	Presenter / Assessor	Senior Certificate



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- Australian Sports Commission
- Member Federations



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# FOOTBALL FEDERATION AUSTRALIA

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**Better Coaches, Better Football**