

20 of the Best Soccer Drills and Games For U8



Soccer Graphics

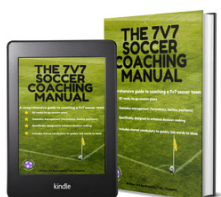


I created these graphics using the Tactics Manager from SoccerTutor. It is a fantastic resource to create, share and organize your soccer sessions and team tactics

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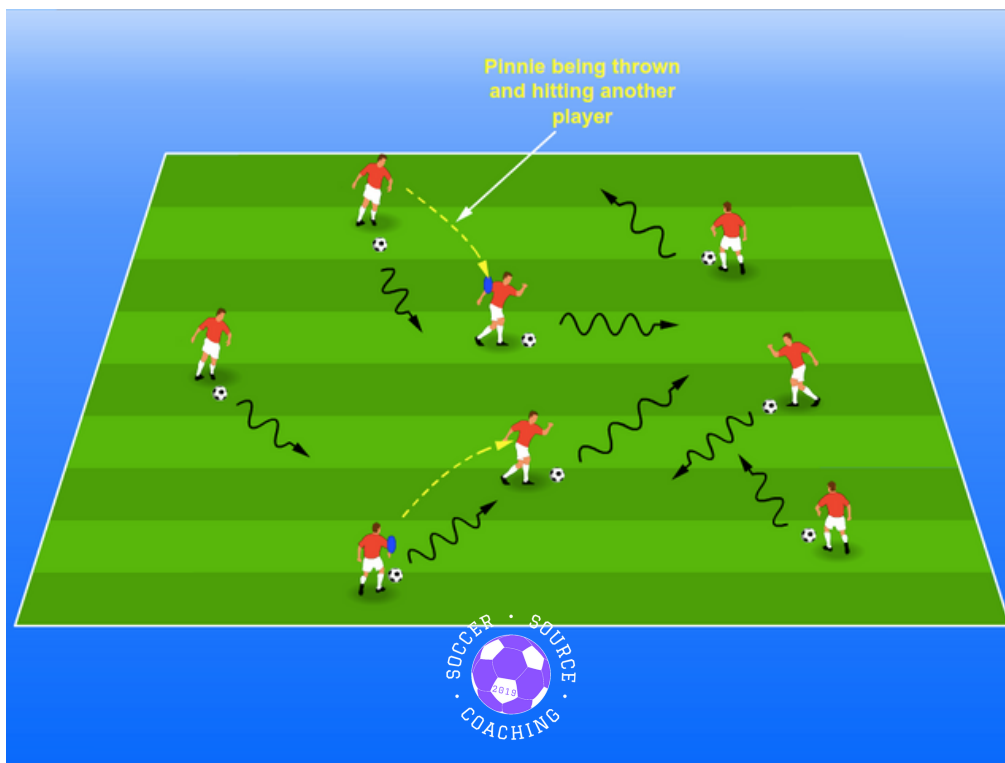
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The 7v7 Soccer Coaching Manual



This is every coach's guide to developing a 7v7 soccer team. It includes 20 structured session plans with diagrams, coaching points, and progressions. Game day tactics and management are also included

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U8 dribbling soccer game Spiderman tag

Purpose:

The purpose of this soccer drill is to help players quickly change directions at speed while maintaining control of the soccer ball

Set up:

1 soccer ball per player

2 pinnies (bib)

10 x 15-yard area

How the game works:

Get your players each in the area with a soccer ball and give 2 players a pinnie (bib) each.

The two players with a pinnie will be called Venom, with the other players being Spiderman.

The players with the pinnies (venom) must try and throw the pinnie at another player (spiderman)

If they hit a spiderman player they will become a venom player with the pinnie.

The rounds will last 2 minutes and the players who have the pinnie when the timer runs out will not get a point, with all the other players without a pinnie getting a point.

The winner will be the player with the most points at the end of the rounds.

Coaching points:

Try and always dribble into space with the ball

Take small touches so you are able to quickly change directions while keeping control of the soccer ball

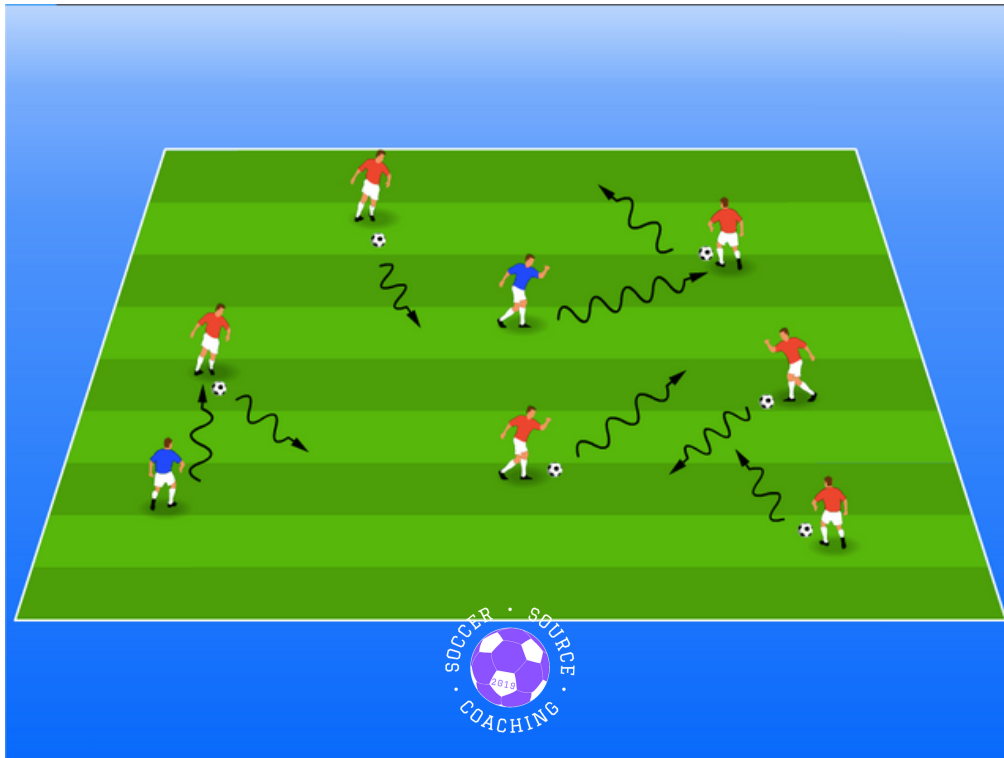
Dribble with your head up so you can see where the venom/spiderman players are

Questions that lead to coaching points:

Where should you be trying to dribble the ball into?

What type of touches is best to keep close control of the soccer ball?

How can we see the players around us?



[Click here for the video](#)

Soccer freeze game or U8s

Purpose:

The purpose of this soccer game is to get players to run and dribble with the ball at their feet in a fun-based soccer game.

Set up:

1 Soccer ball per player

2 taggers

10 x 15-yard area

How the game works:

After you have set up your area give each player in the area a soccer ball and 2 players a pinnie (bib) each to put on.

The players with the pinnie (bib) will be the taggers and they will not have a soccer ball.

Their aim is to tag and freeze as many soccer players as possible.

If a soccer player gets tagged they must freeze where they are and hold onto their soccer ball.

They can be unfrozen if another soccer player dribbles up to them and gives them a high-five.

Play rounds of 2 – 3 minutes, making sure every player has a chance to be the tagger.

Coaching points:

Keep your head up and dribble into the space and away from the taggers.

Use small touches to keep the ball close to you

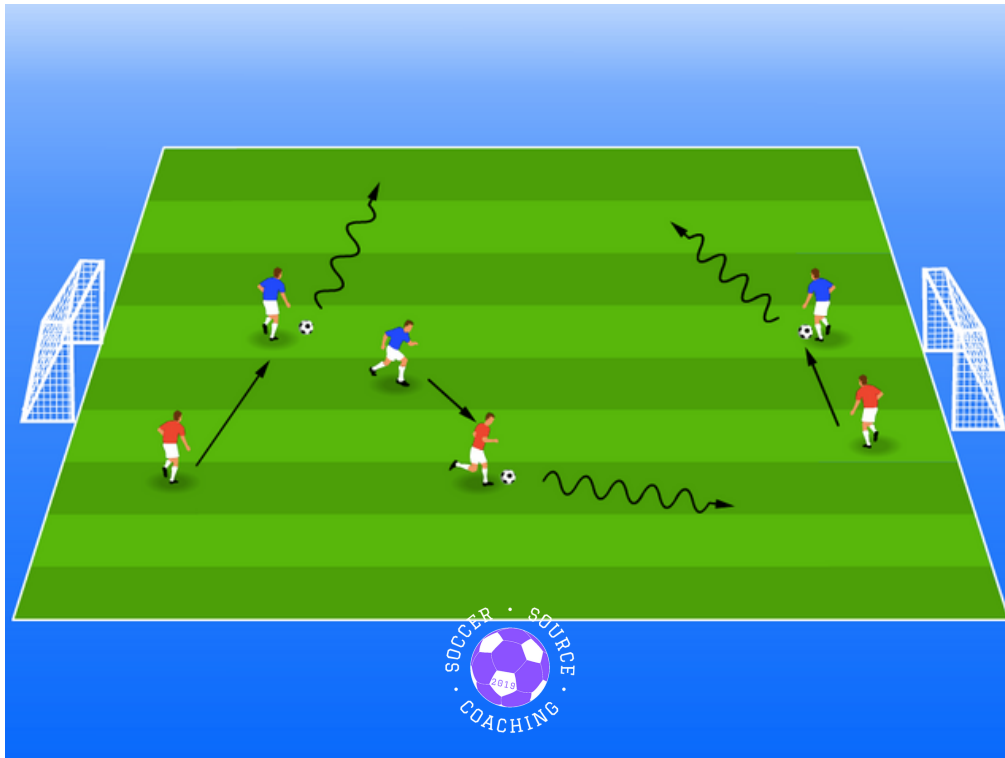
Use quick changes of direction and pace to get away from the taggers

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

Where should you be dribbling your soccer ball?

How can you keep the ball close to you?

What can you do to help you get away from the taggers?



[Click here for the video](#)

2 team soccer ball steal U8 game

Purpose:

The purpose of this soccer drill is to help players work in a team but also teach them how to protect the ball when a player trying to steal it

Set up:

Divide your players into 2 equal teams
Half as many soccer balls as players + 1
10 x 15-yard area

How the drill works:

For example, if there are 8 players in a soccer drill there will be 5 soccer balls (half 8 then +1). This will ensure that there is a winner after each round.

For this drill, each round will last 2 minutes.

The team with the most soccer balls by the end of the round is the winner.

Players can choose to work individually to win the ball back and keep the ball or work as a team.

If you want players to encourage more passing reduce the number of soccer balls down to 3.

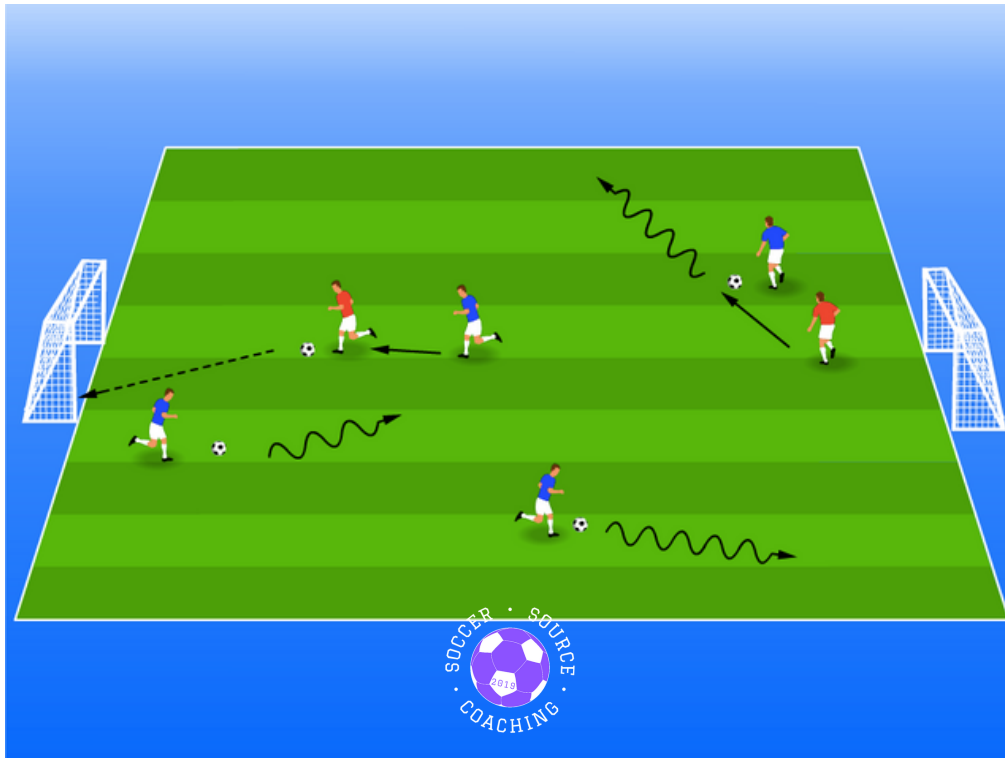
Coaching points:

Protect the ball by placing your body between yourself and the defender
Play with your head up so you can move into spaces away from the defender
Try to find spaces to support your player on the ball so they can pass to you
Questions that can lead to coaching points:

How can you protect the ball from the defender?

Where do you need to be looking when you have the ball?

If you do not have the ball but your teammate does, how can you help them?



[Click here for the video](#)

2 v 4 U8 soccer dribbling game

Purpose:

The purpose of this soccer drill is to get players moving with the ball at their feet while under pressure from defenders

Set up:

2 goals

10 x 15-yard area

6 players (2 defenders, 4 attackers)

4 soccer balls

How the drill works:

Set up your area and give 4 players a soccer ball each, with the other 2 players becoming the defenders.

The attackers must keep hold of their soccer ball and prevent the defenders from stealing the ball.

If the defenders steal their ball they must try and score in either of the goals.

The attackers can try and steal their soccer balls back.

If the defender scores, they will get 1 point, with the attacker then collecting their ball from the goal and dribbling around again.

Coaching points:

Dribble with your head up so you can see where the space and the defenders are

Take small touches to keep the ball close to you

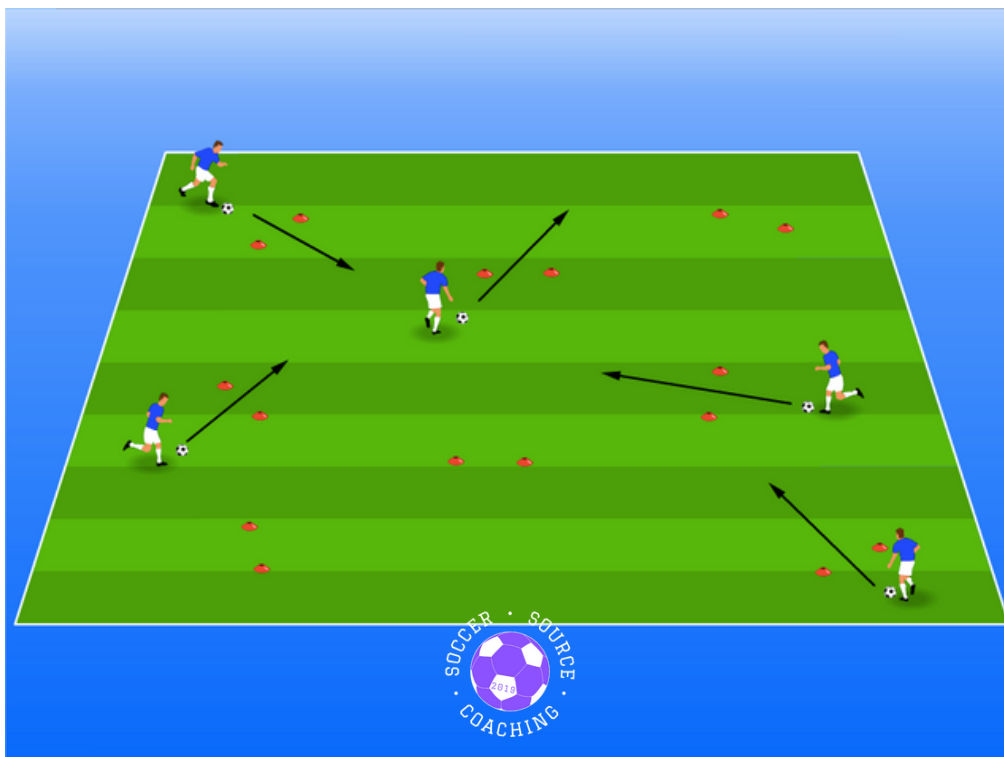
Use a quick change of direction and change of speed to get away from the attacker

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

how do you know where the space/defender is?

If you want the soccer ball to stay close to you, what type of touches should you take?

How can you quickly get away from the defender?



[Click here for the video](#)

Speed Dribbling U8 soccer drill

Purpose:

This ball mastery U8 drill aims to help players get lots of repetition of using a skill or turn to change direction.

Set up:

15 x 20-yard area
1 soccer ball per player
6 gates

How it works:

Set up your area and spread your 6 gates around the area (the gates should be roughly 1 yard wide) and make sure all your U8 soccer players each have a ball.

For each gate, a player dribbles through to give them 1 point, with the player collecting the most points becoming the winner for the round.

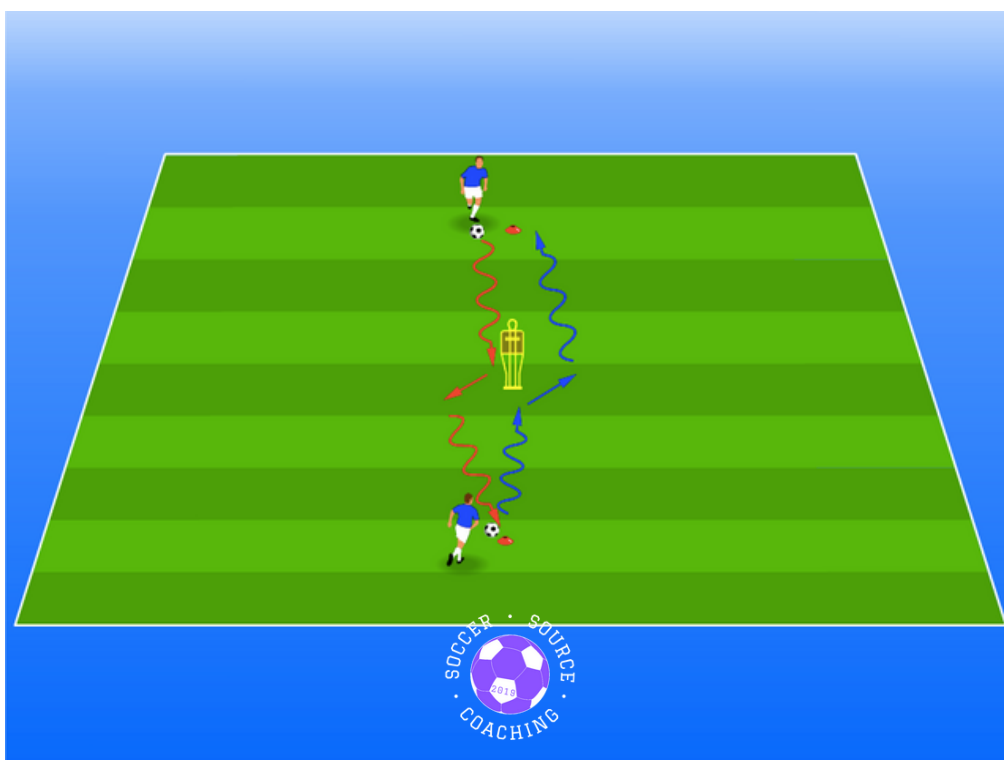
As a progression, you can now start introducing some soccer skills they must perform when they dribble through a gate.

Make sure you encourage players to practice using the skills with both feet

Coaching points:

Players should dribble with their heads up so they can see where the space is
Small touches to keep the ball under control
The skill should be performed quickly with a big touch, change of direction, and accelerate into space.
Questions that can lead to coaching points:

How do you know where the space is and which gate to dribble to?
What type of touches do you want to take to keep the ball under close control?
When your skill, what speed should it be at and what should you do next?



[Click here for the video](#)

Soccer skill drill for U8s

Purpose:

The purpose of this drill is for players to practice using soccer skills to beat and dribble past defenders with a small amount of pressure

Set up:

3 cones per pair
1 soccer ball per player

How it works:

Set up 2 cones opposite each other 15 yards apart with 1 cone in the middle (this cone will act as a defender). Players will dribble towards the middle cone and perform a skill that will take them both to either side of the cone, to avoid bumping into each other players will need to dribble with their heads up.

After their skill, players will accelerate to the cone in front of them and perform a turn so they are now facing each other again, ready to dribble to the middle cone to perform the skill again.

Coaching Points:

Dribble with your head up so you can see your partner and when to use a skill while approaching the middle cone
Close ball control as you approach the cone, quick skill, and change of direction with a big touch out of your feet

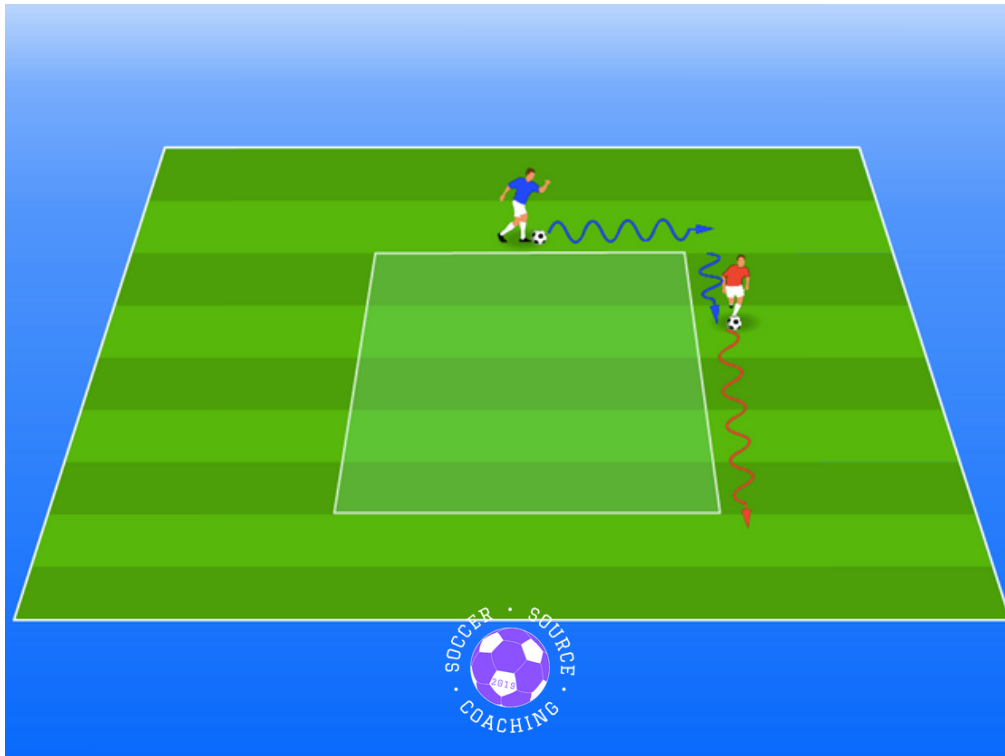
Accelerate away from the middle cone and towards the opposite cone.

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

Where should you be looking when you are dribbling your soccer ball?

What should you do when approaching the middle cone, how do you beat the defender?

What must you do after you have performed your skill to get away from the defender?



[Click here for the video](#)

Try to catch me U8 soccer game

Purpose:

The purpose of this drill is to help players practice different types of touches when dribbling and changing direction.

Set up:

1 6x6 yard square (1 square per pair)

1 soccer ball per player

How the drill works:

Set up your square and get your players into pairs with a soccer ball.

The players will start on opposite sides of the square with one player becoming the tagger and the other player trying not to get tagged.

As soon as the player is tagged the round will end with both players heading back to the opposite sides of the square to start the next round.

At the end of each round swap the roles round with the two players.

You can introduce different touches and turns players can use to get around the square. For example inside of the foot only, left foot, or right only as well.

Coaching points:

Take small quick touches to keep the ball under close

Slow down once you approach the corners but accelerate out of the corners

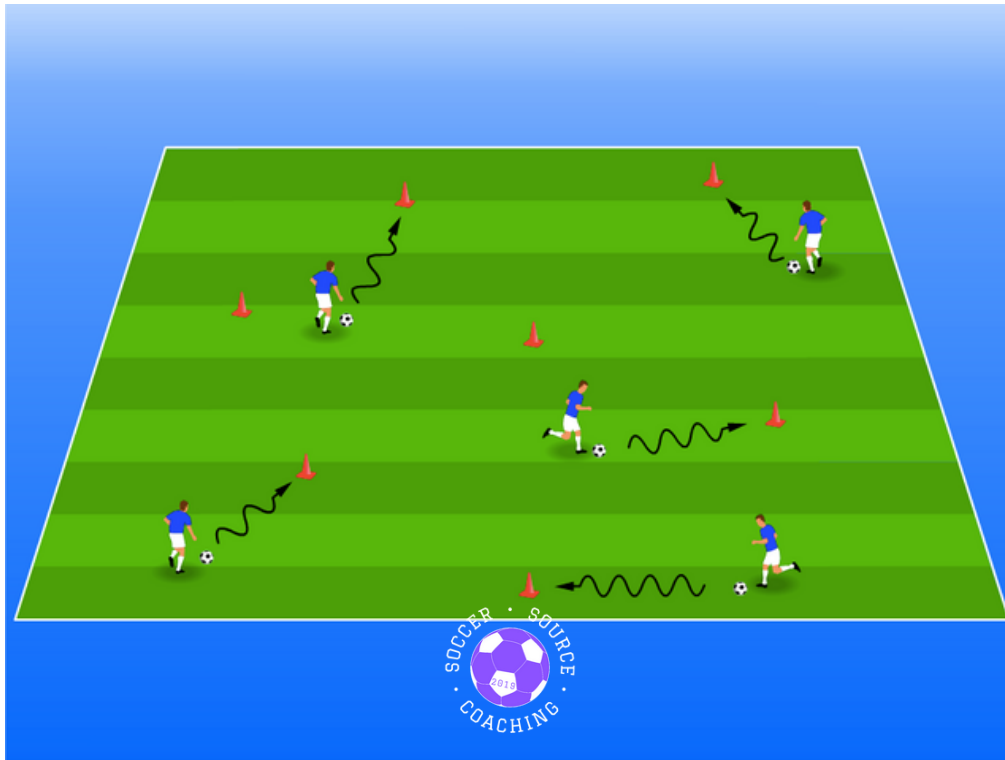
Keep your head up so you are aware of where the tagger is and so you can change direction accordingly

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

What type of touches of the ball do you need to take to keep the ball close to you?

How should you change your speed going into the corners/coming out of the corners?

What should you make sure you are doing while dribbling so you know where the tagger is?



[Click here for the video](#)

U8 Soccer skills challenge drill

Purpose:

To get as much repetition of a specific soccer skill as possible

Set up:

15 x 16-yard area
1 soccer ball per player
10 cones

How the drill works:

Set up your area and spread out 10 cones across the area, make sure that every player has their soccer ball. This is a great drill to use for practicing different types of skills while making it competitive as well.

Every time a player dribbles up to one of the 10 cones in the middle they must treat the cone like a defender and perform the desired soccer skill to be able to get past them. Give your players some practice rounds so they can get the hang of the skill, then you can make it more competitive.

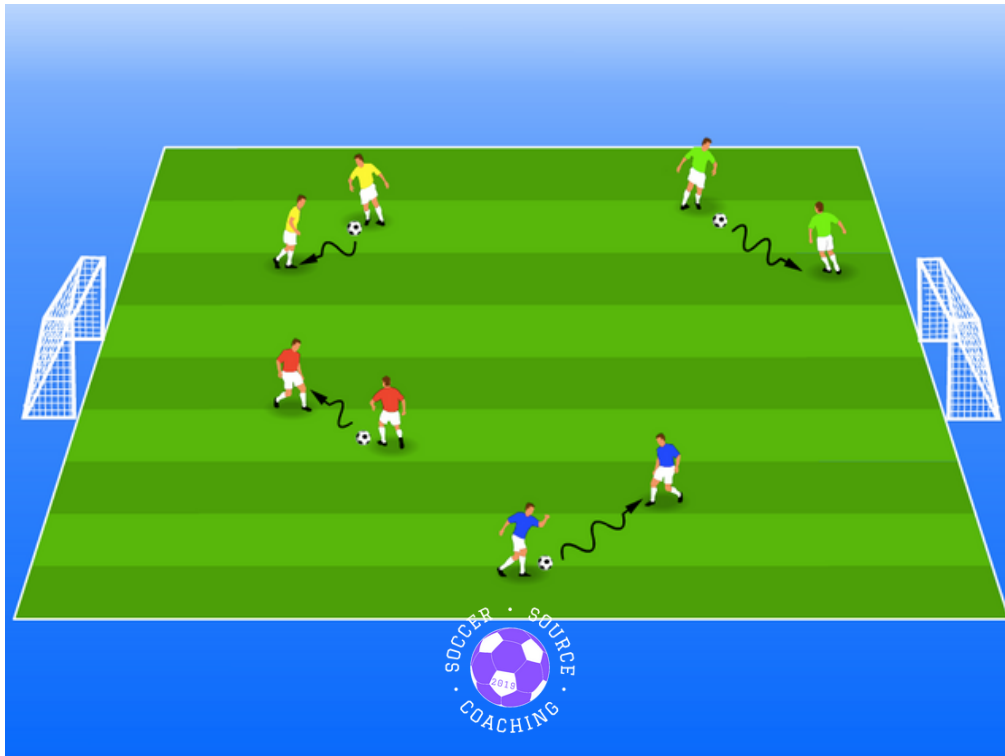
To make the soccer drill more competitive you can introduce a time limit where players try to perform as many skills of the cone as possible. The player with the highest score will be the winner.

Make sure you vary the skills being used and players are practicing the skills using both feet.

Coaching points:

Dribble with your head up, try to find cones in space that no one else is at
Perform the skill slowly to start with, as you are more confident try and test yourself by going a bit faster.
After you have performed your skill make sure you use a change of direction and accelerate away
Questions that can lead to coaching points:

Where should you be looking when you are dribbling the soccer ball?
How can you test yourself if you are getting more confident/ How can you make it easier if you are finding it hard?
What should you do after you have performed the skill on a cone?



[Click here for the video](#)

1v1 Chaos U8 soccer game

Purpose:

The purpose of this drill is to encourage players to practice 1v1 scenarios in a pressure-free, game-realistic environment.

Set up:

20 x 30-yard area

2 pug goals

1 soccer ball per pair

How the drill works:

Set up your soccer field and make sure every player has a partner with every pair having a soccer ball.

If there is an odd number the group can work as 3 with one player becoming the magic player.

This will work as a normal 1v1 but with all pairs playing on the field and scoring the same goals, when the ball goes out of bounds play will resume with a dribble on.

You can introduce different rules and ways of scoring to help get the desired outcome.

For example, players will get 3 goals instead of one if they can use a certain skill on the defender or if they can score a goal in front of the defender or behind their defender.

Players will play rounds of 3 minutes, then at the end of the round, they will find a new partner.

The player who has scored the most goals at the end of all the rounds will win the winner.

Coaching points:

Try to beat the defender with a skill, change of direction, and a change of pace

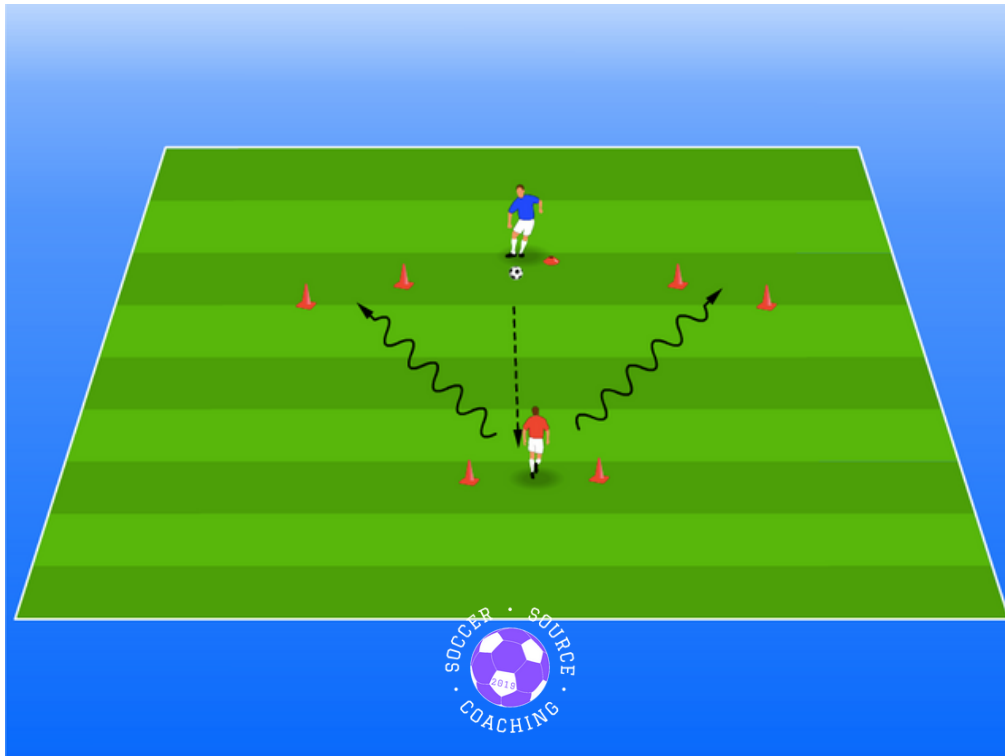
Dribble with your head up so you can see what is going around you, that way you can make the best decisions

Be confident try new skills and ideas

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

What are some different ways you can beat the defender?

Where should you be looking when you are dribbling?



[Click here for the video](#)

Guess the gate 1v1 U8 soccer drill

Purpose:

The purpose of this drill is to encourage players to use skills to change direction to beat the defender

Set up:

1 soccer ball per pair

3 goals

5 x 10-yard area

How the drill works:

Create your area and place 2 goals in the corners of the area at a 45-degree angle on the 10-yard line and one goal in the center of the opposite 10-yard line.

The players will work in pairs with one player being a defender and the other being an attacker.

The defender will start with the ball and pass it to the attacker, as soon as the attacker has taken a touch the defender can pressure the attacker.

To score 3 points the attacker must score in either goal to the left or right of the defender, if the defender wins the ball they can then score in the opposing goal that the attacker started on which will be worth 1 goal.

Coaching points:

Use your body shape to convince the defender you are going to go in one direction when you want to go in the other direction.

Your first touch should be out of your feet

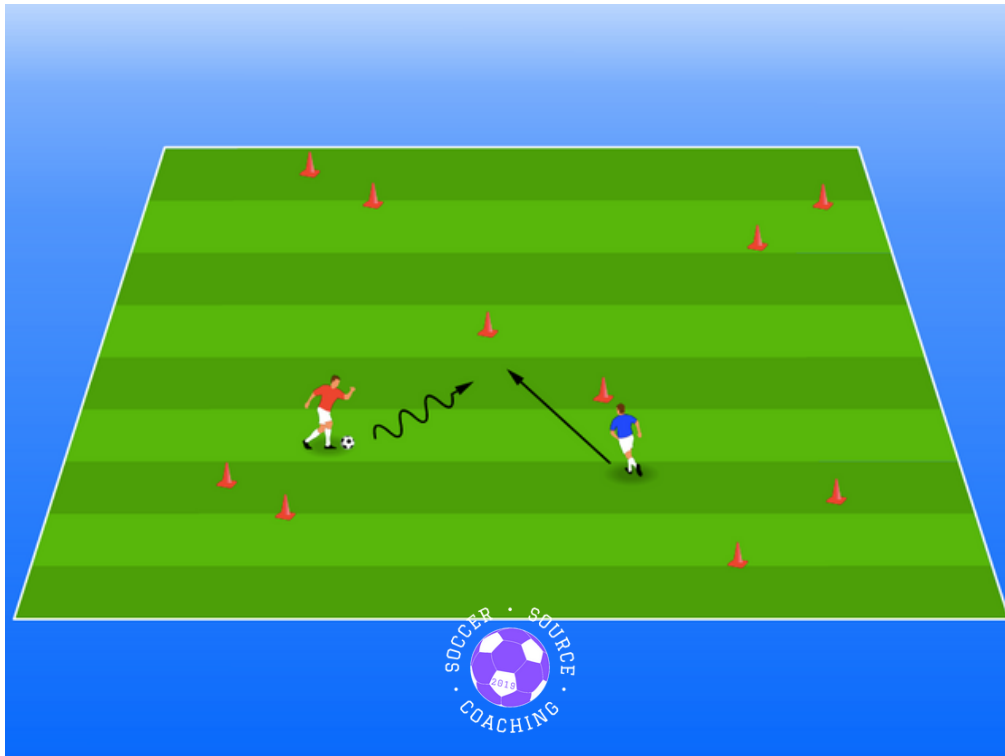
Combine body feints, skills, change of pace, and direction to help confuse the defender

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

How can you use your starting body position to help confuse the defender?

What should your first touch be like?

What can we do to help make beating the defender even easier?



[Click here for the video](#)

Can't come through! U8 soccer drill

Purpose:

The purpose of this drill is to encourage players to change direction more spontaneously and react to what is going on around them

Set up:

15 x 20-yard area
1 soccer ball per pair
6 gates
How the drill works:

Create your area, divide your players into pairs, and spread your 6 gates around the area.

In their pairs 1 player will be a defender with the other being an attacker, the attacker with the ball must try to dribble through as many gates as possible however they cannot dribble through a gate that a defender is blocking.

at the end of the round, the players will swap roles with the player in the pair dribbling the most gates becoming the winner.

Coaching points:

Dribble with your head up so you can see what is going on around you
Use quick changes of direction and acceleration to get through the gates
Take small touches to keep the soccer ball close to you
Questions that can lead to coaching points:

How can you see what is going on around you?
What can you do to get through more gates before the defender gets there?
How can you keep the ball close to you?



[Click here for the video](#)

1v1 U8 soccer ladder drill

Purpose:

Similar to the other soccer drills for U8, the purpose of this drill is to get a lot of 1v1 experience in a small area and provide the opportunity to work to the top of the ladder if they win their 1v1s

Set up:

5 x 10-yard area (1 area per pair)

1 soccer ball per pair

2 goals per area

How the drill works:

Create your areas and place 1 pair of players in each area with one soccer ball.

This will be a regular 1v1.

Rounds of 3 minutes can be played, with the player scoring the most goals moving up the ladder and the player scoring the least amount of goals down the ladder.

You can give players extra goals if they can beat the defender using a certain skill or goal scored. It will be a regular 1v1 soccer game however players will be able to dribble the ball back into play.

Coaching points:

Practice using different soccer skills to beat the defender

Use quick changes of direction and speed to beat the defender

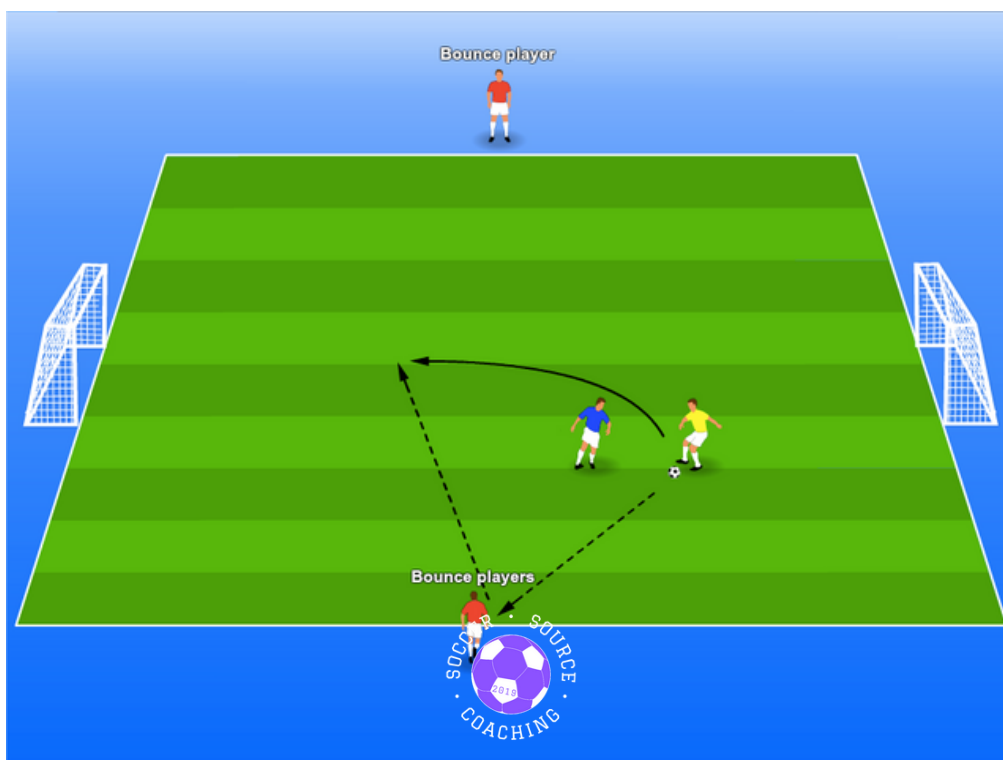
Watch how the defender reacts to your skills so you can figure out a way to get past them

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

What can you do to keep the defenders guessing and on their toes?

As well as soccer skills what else can you use to beat the defenders?

How can you make sure you are adapting your skills to ensure that you can continue to beat the defender?



[Click here for the video](#)

Give and Go 1v1 soccer game for U8s

Purpose:

The purpose of this drill is to help players understand how passing and moving can help give them the advantage in a 1v1 scenario

Set up:

15 x 20-yard area
 4 players per area
 1 soccer ball
 2 goals

How the drill works:

Create your area with 2 goals on either side with 2 players in the middle and 2 players on the outside on opposite sides.

It will be a normal 1v1 however the player on the ball can pass and receive the ball to and from the outside players.

The defender can close down the angles of the outside players when they are on the ball however they cannot steal the ball.

After 5 minutes the players from the middle will swap with the players on the outside.

Coaching points:

Play with your head up so you can see spaces to exploit to dribble into or receive a pass
 Your first movement should be away from the space (to drag the defender away from the space) the second movement should be towards the space you want to receive the ball
 You should be passing and receiving the ball in an open body position
 Questions that can lead to coaching points:

What are you looking for when you are playing with your head up?
 How can you create space for yourself?
 What body position should you be passing and receiving the ball in?



[Click here for the video](#)

Protect the soccer ball U8 drill

Purpose:

The purpose of this soccer drill is to help players learn how to shield the soccer ball and protect it from other players trying to steal it.

Set up:

Circle 6 yards in diameter

2 players per circle

1 soccer ball per pair

How the drill works:

Set up your circle areas 6 yards in diameter with one of the players in the pair having the ball and the other player trying to win the ball back.

The player without the ball has 10 seconds to try and win the ball back, if they manage to win the ball and maintain control of it they will get 3 points. If they can knock the ball out of the area they will get 1 point.

However, if the player in possession of the ball is can control the ball for 10 seconds they will get 3 points.

Coaching points:

Keep a side-on position when protecting the soccer ball, while controlling the ball on the front foot

Your knees should be bent with your butt sticking out to help stabilize yourself and to brace for contact from the player trying to win the ball back.

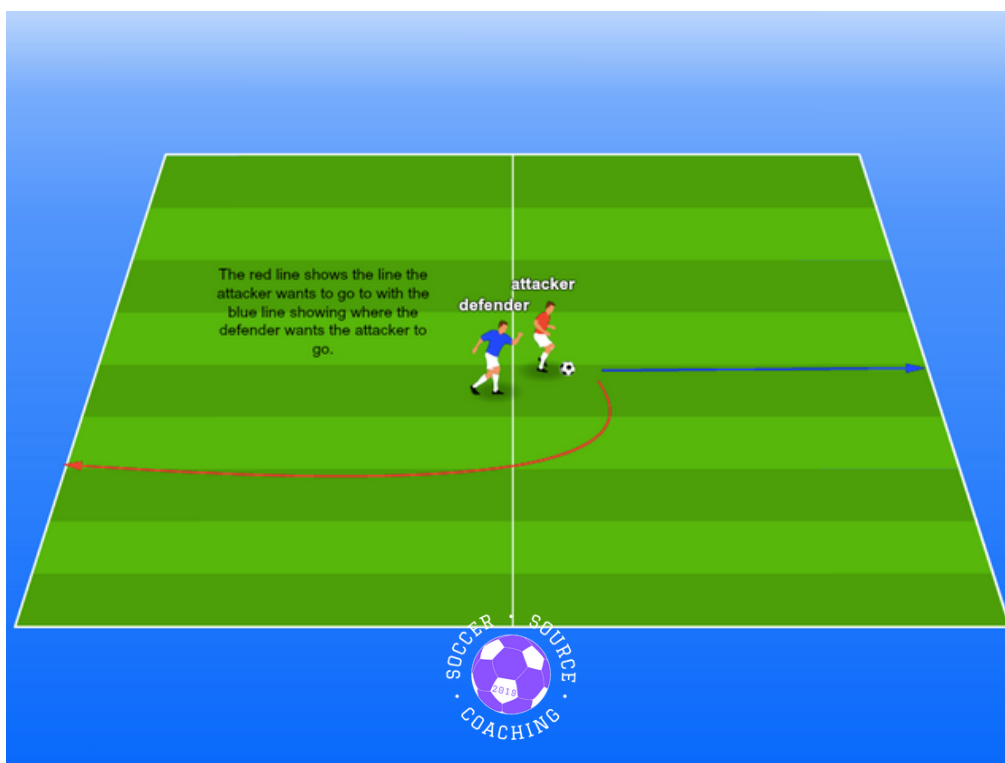
Using your front foot keep the ball moving by taking small touches so your body will always be between the ball and the player trying to steal it.

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

What body position should you be in while protecting the soccer ball?

How can you help stabilize yourself to brace yourself against an opposition player trying to win the ball?

How can you always make sure that your body is always between the ball and the opposition player?



[Click here for the video](#)

You go this way! 1v1 U8 soccer game

Purpose:

The purpose of this drill is to help your u8 soccer player to defend when the striker has their back to goal in front of them

Set up:

1 soccer ball per pair

7 x 10-yard area

How the drill works:

Set up your area with 1 player becoming the defender and the other the attacker.

Both players will start on the halfway line of the area facing the same direction with the attacker having the ball and the defender an arms-length behind the attacker.

When the attacker says 'go' the attacker must try and turn the defender and dribble past the line behind them.

The defender must try to steal the ball and dribble past the line they are both facing to start with.

If the attacker can dribble past the defenders' line then they will get 2 points.

If the defender can dribble past the attackers' line then they will get 3 points however if they can force the attacker out of bounds or get the ball out of bounds they will get 1 point.

Coaching points:

Stand an arm's length away from the attacker (too far away and the attacker will have too much space, too close and the defender could get turned a lot easier)

Stand in a side-on-body position so you are able to easily adjust to changes in direction

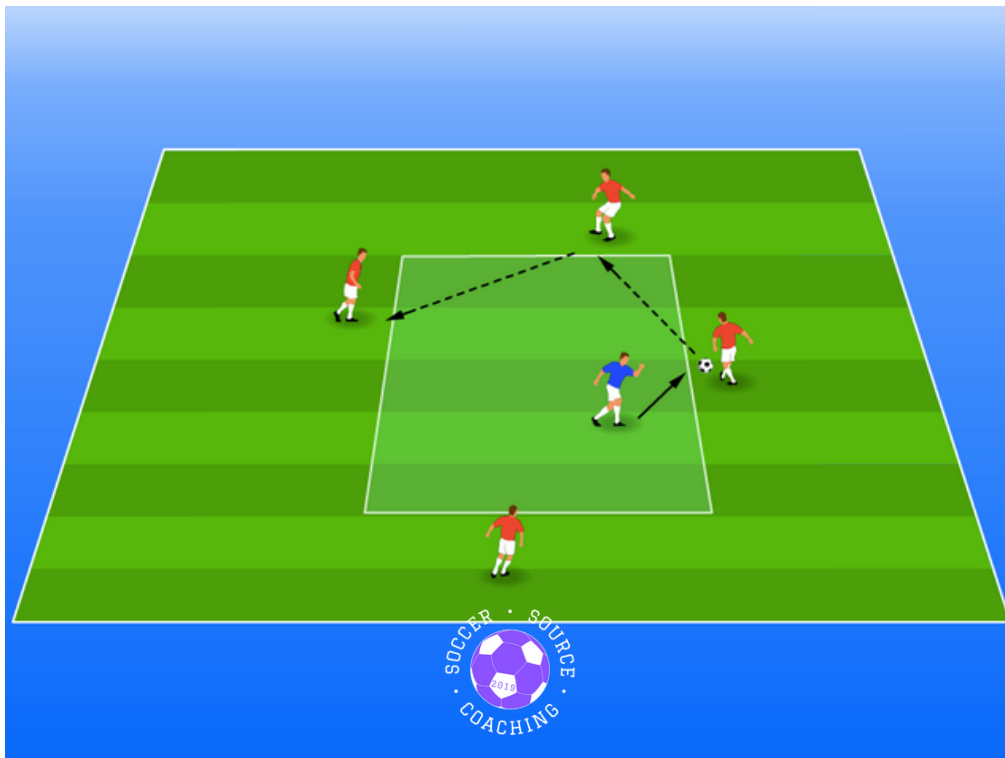
Force the attacker backward

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

How far away should you be from the attacker?

What body position should you be in when defending an attacker with their back facing you?

What direction should you force the attackers in?



[Click here for the video](#)

Monkey in the middle U8 soccer drill

Purpose:

The purpose of this drill is to help your u8s soccer players be comfortable receiving and passing under pressure.

U8 soccer game monkey in the middle

Set up:

1, 7 x 7-yard square

1 soccer ball

5 players

How the drill works:

Set up your 7x7 yard square and place 4 players on each side of the square with 1 player in the middle, the player in the middle will be the defender with the other 4 players trying to keep possession of the ball.

The possession players must try to get as many passes in a row as possible, if the defender is able to steal the ball then they will become a possessing player with the player who lost the ball becoming the defender

There are lots of different varieties of rondos' you can use depending on what your outcome is. For u8s' my main focus is to get the players passing using the inside of their foot, receiving the ball on the back foot, and moving to create options for their teammate on the ball.

Coaching points:

Pass with the inside of your foot

Receive the ball in an open body position

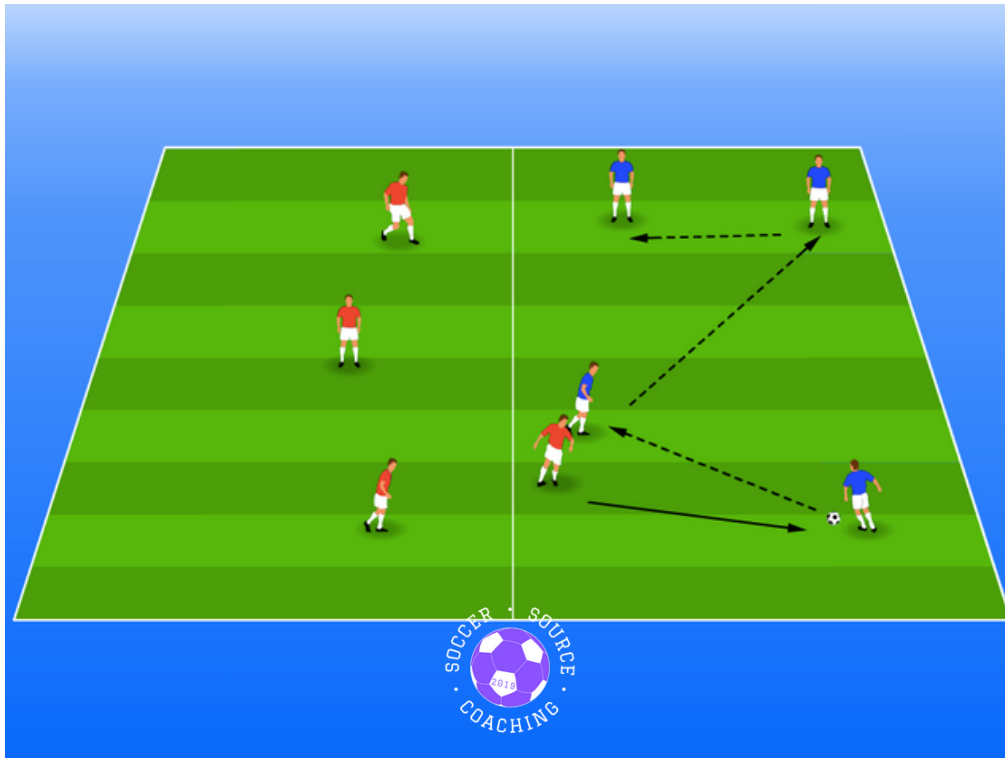
Create angles to support your teammate on the ball

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

What part of the foot should use to pass the ball?

What body position should you be in to receive the ball?

How can you support your teammate on the ball?



[Click here for the video](#)

Keep the ball! U8 passing drill

Purpose:

The purpose of this drill is to help your u8 soccer players gradually get used to passing and receiving under pressure.

Set up:

10 x 15-yard area split in half
8 players divided into 2 teams of 4
1 soccer ball

How the drill works:

Set up your area and divide it in half and split your players into 2 teams with one in each half. One team will start with the ball in their half and they will be the possessing team, the other team will be the defending team.

Once the possessing team makes 5 passes without pressure 1 defender from the defending team can come into the area to try and win the ball back.

If the possessing team is able to make 5 passes in a row again then another defender will enter their area and for every five passes, they will get 1 point (including when they are passing without pressure), Even if all the defenders are in the other teams' area.

The phase of play will come to end either when the ball ends up going out of bounds, or if a defender can steal the ball and either dribble or pass the ball back into their half where they will now become the team in possession.

The team with the most points after 5 minutes will be the winners.

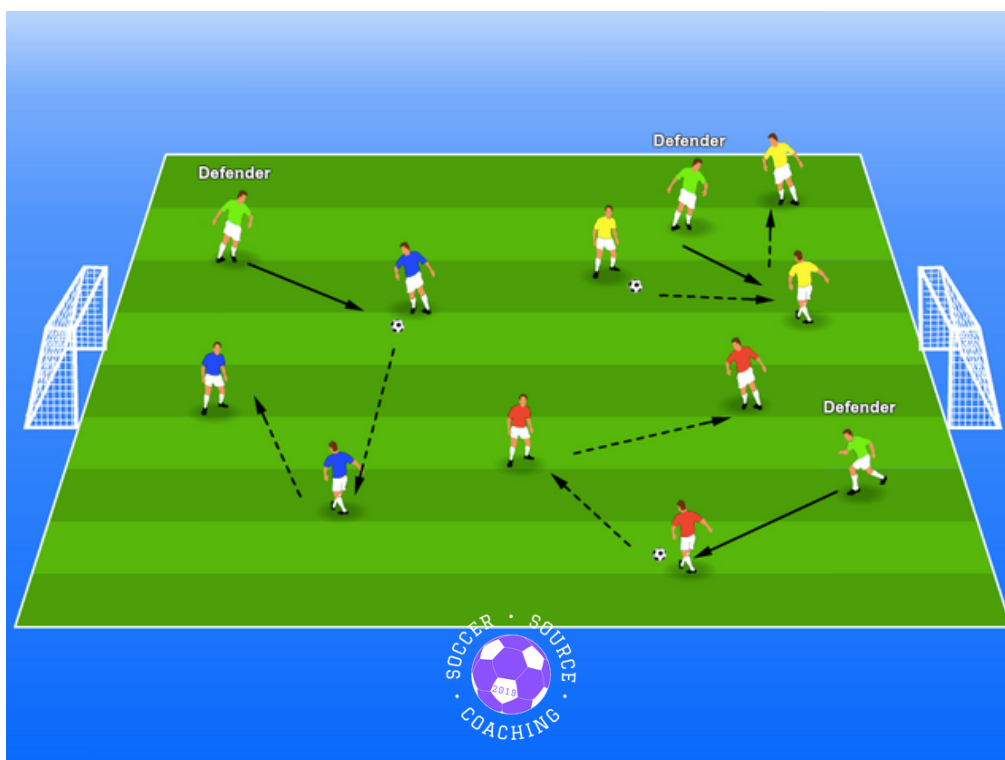
Coaching points:

Communicate with your teammates so they know if you are in space and where the defenders are
Receive the ball in an open body position to keep as many options open to you as possible
Check your shoulders and scan the area you are working in so you know where teammates and defenders are.
Questions that can lead to coaching points:

How can you help your teammates on the ball/what information can you give them?

Why should you receive the ball in an open body position?

Before you receive a pass what should you have already done?



[Click here for the video](#)

Crazy 4 team U8 passing drill

Purpose:

The purpose of this passing drill for u8s is to help them become more aware of their surroundings by constantly scanning the area.

Set up:

4 teams of 3
 3 soccer balls
 2 goals
 15 x 20-yard area
 How the drill works:

Set up your area with 2 goals, divide your players into 4 teams, and select one of those teams to become the attacking team.

The attacking team will not have a soccer ball, while the 3 possessing teams will have a soccer ball per team.

The attacking team must try to steal the soccer balls from the possessing teams and score as many goals as they can within 4 minutes.

At the end of the 4 minutes, a possessing team will become the new attacking team, the rotation will continue until all teams have had a turn being the possessing team.

The winning team will be the team that scored the most goals while they are the attacking team.

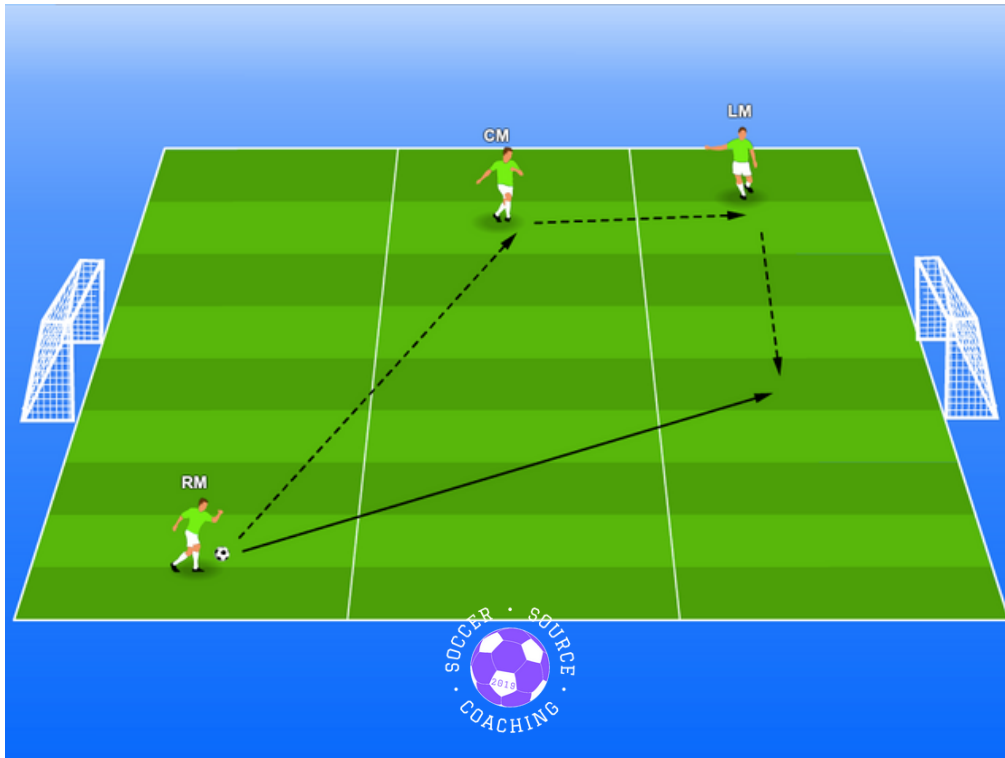
Coaching points:

Constantly scan the area around you so you can see the attackers, your teammates, other teams, and spaces to move into
 Receive the ball in an open body position to give yourself more passing options when you receive the ball
 Your first touch should be away from pressure and towards the space
 Questions that can lead to coaching points:

Why should you be constantly scanning the area around you?

Why should you receive the ball in an open body position?

Where should your first touch take you?



[Click here for the video](#)

U8 passing attacking drill

Purpose:

The purpose of this drill is to help your u8s pass the ball forward to create goal-scoring opportunities.

Set up:

20 x 25-yard area divided into vertical thirds

4 teams of 3

2 goals

1 soccer ball per team

How the drill works:

Set up your area, divided into thirds with 4 teams of 3 and 1 soccer ball per team.

The aim of this drill is for the teams to score as many goals as they can however individuals cannot dribble through the sections to go forward the ball must be passed forward.

You can also make this more challenging by introducing the last line as an offside line so players must check their runs or allow goals to count as double if a pass is successfully played to a teammate between two players.

The team that scores the most goals will be the winning team.

Coaching points:

Scan the area so you already know what you are going to do with the ball before you have received the pass from a teammate

Use the whole width of the area when attacking

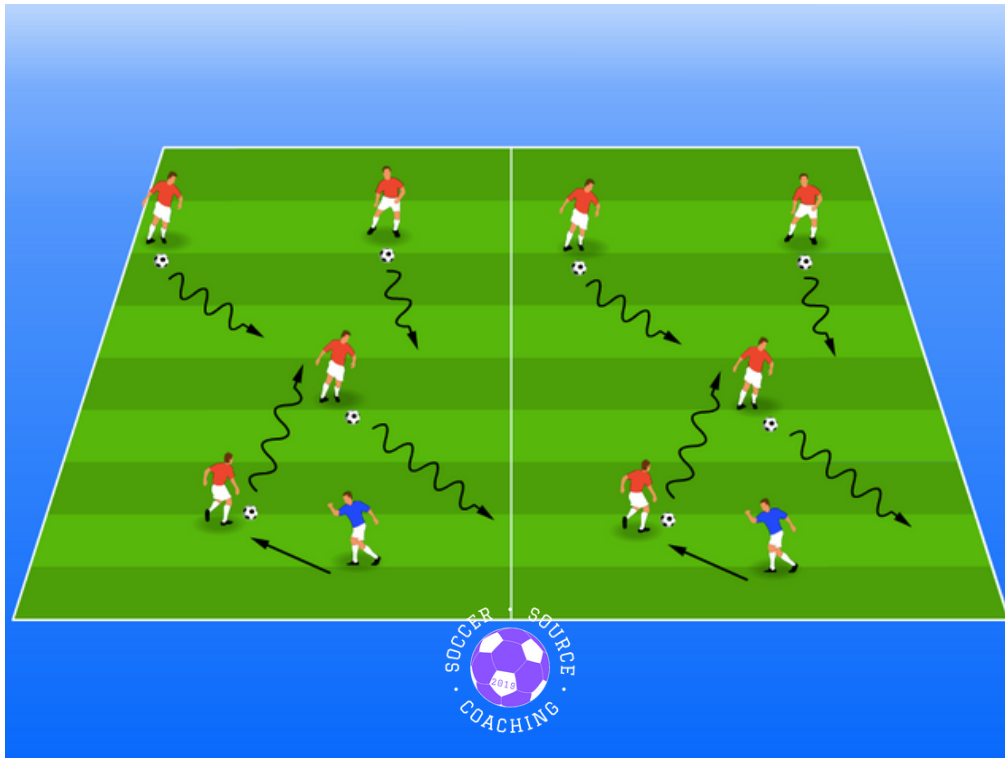
Try to take a few touches on the ball as possible

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

Why should you scan the area before you receive the pass?

Why do you want to use the whole width of the pitch when attacking?

How many touches should you take when trying to attack quickly?



[Click here for the video](#)

Get out of my area! U8 tagging game

Purpose:

Similar to the other soccer drills for U8, the purpose of this soccer drill is to encourage lots of changes of direction while keeping control of the soccer ball.

U8 soccer game, get out of my area!

Set up:

1 soccer ball per player

2 taggers (without a soccer ball)

10 x 15-yard area

How the drill works:

Set up your area and divide it in half, placing a tagger in each half.

Evenly split the rest of the soccer players into each half with their soccer balls.

If a player with a soccer ball gets tagged in one half they will move over to the other half.

This will continue until the end of the round where the winner will be the tagger who has the least amount of players with a soccer ball in their area.

Each round will last 2 to 3 minutes with enough rounds being played so that everyone has a chance to be the tagger.

Coaching points:

Dribble with your head up and move into space away from where the tagger is

Take small touches so you can easily change direction while keeping control of your soccer ball

Use a change of pace to get away from the tagger

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

Where should you be looking when dribbling with your soccer ball?

Why should you take small touches when dribbling your soccer ball?

How can you get away from the tagger?