

Soccer Drills for U12



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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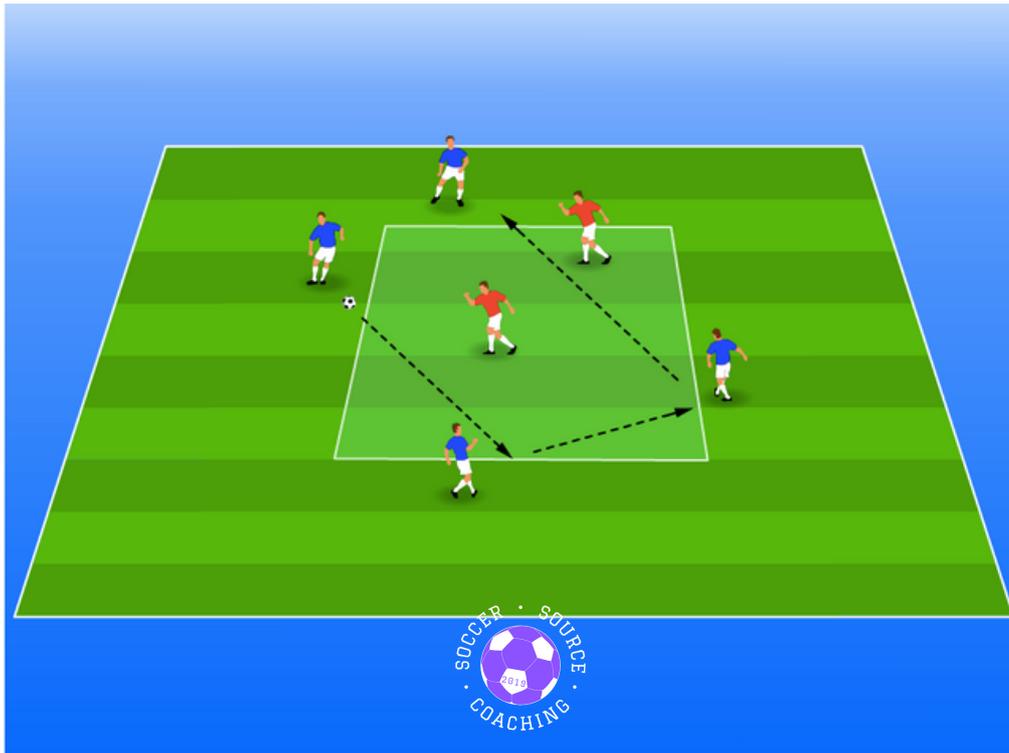
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The 7v7 Soccer Coaching Manual



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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4v2 splitting the defender drill for u12

Purpose:

The purpose of this drill is to drag the defenders out of position so that a large enough space is created to play a pass through the middle of them.

Set up:

1 soccer ball
7 x 7-yard area
6 players (2 defenders, 4 possessing players)
How the drill works:

On the outside, there will be one possession player on each side of the square.

In the middle of the square, there will be 2 defenders.

The players on the outside will score 1 point for every 5 consecutive passes they make and 3 points for every pass that successfully splits the defenders in the middle.

Divide your players into 3 groups of 2.

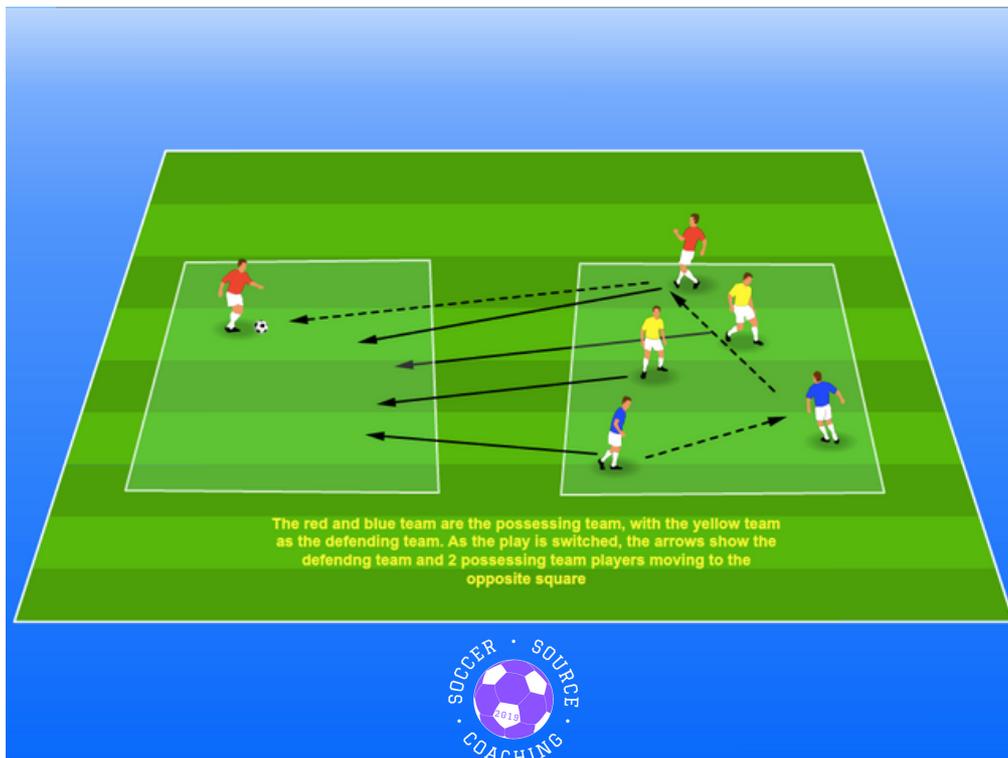
Defending rounds will last 2 minutes, with each team going in the middle twice.

The defending team that has the lowest points scored on them will be the winner.

Coaching points:

Create angles to support the player on the ball and to receive the ball
Receive the ball in an open body position and on the back foot
Be patient while trying to drag the defenders apart to score the most points
Questions that can lead to coaching points:

How can you help support the player on the ball?
What body position should you be in to receive the ball?
What happens if you always try and force the pass that splits the defenders?



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Switching the play 4v2 U12 soccer drill

Purpose:

The purpose of this drill is to get players to keep possession of the ball but be aware of when the space is becoming too congested and look to switch the place.

Set up:

2, 7 x 7-yard areas, 10 yards apart

1 soccer ball

6 players (4 possession players, 2 defenders)

How the drill works:

Split your players into 3 teams of 2

There will always be a 3v2 in 1 square, as there will be one player from the possessing team in the other square.

Once the ball is switched to the other side, 2 players will run and support that player, leaving 1 possession player in the square.

The defenders will then shift to the other square and apply pressure to win the ball back.

Every pass combined by the possessing team counts as 1 point, however, the points only count if a successful switch is made to the possessing player in the opposite square.

If the defenders win the ball they can keep possession of it.

Rounds will last 2 minutes with each team being the defending team twice.

The winning team will be the team that has the least combined points scored against them.

Coaching points:

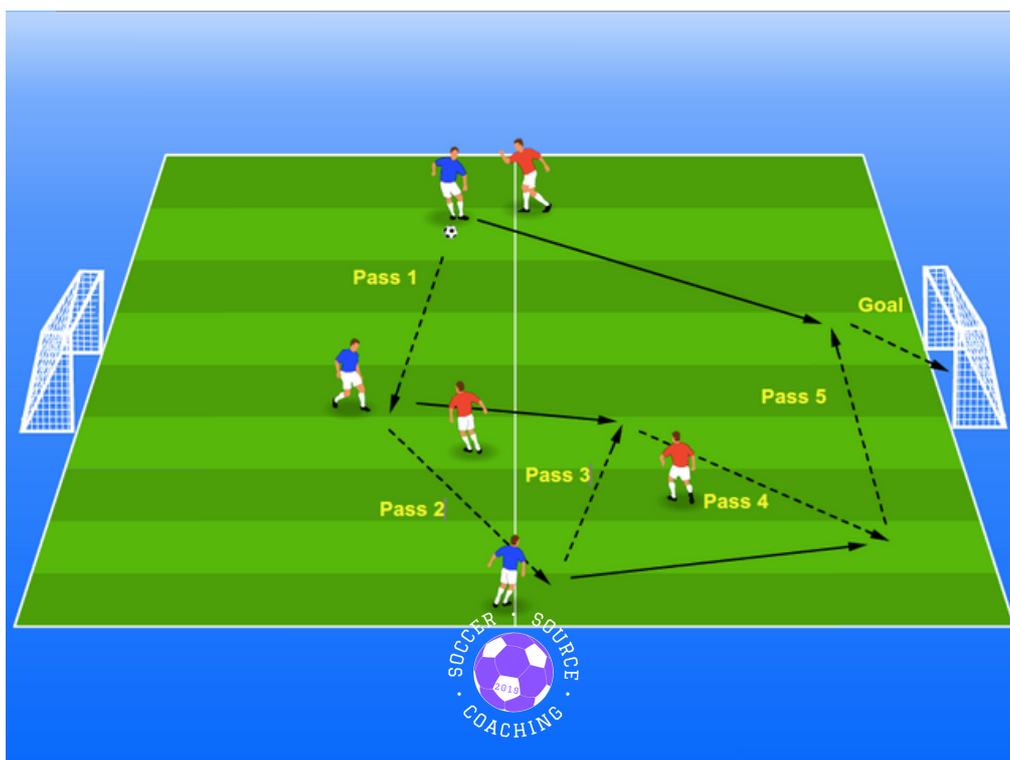
Play with your head up and communicate with your teammates so you know when to keep possession or switch the play. Pass and control the ball on your back foot (foot furthest away from the ball), with the inside of your foot. If you are the player in the opposite square you should constantly be moving to find spaces and angles to receive the ball.

Questions that lead to coaching points:

How will you know when to switch play or keep possession?

What part of the foot should you be passing the ball with?

How can you help your team if you are the player in the opposite square?



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3v3 possession small-sided-game for U12

Purpose:

The purpose of this soccer drill for u12 is to encourage players to keep possession in a build-up to a goal.

Set up:

- 1 soccer ball
- 2 goals
- 15 x 20-yard area
- 2 teams of 3

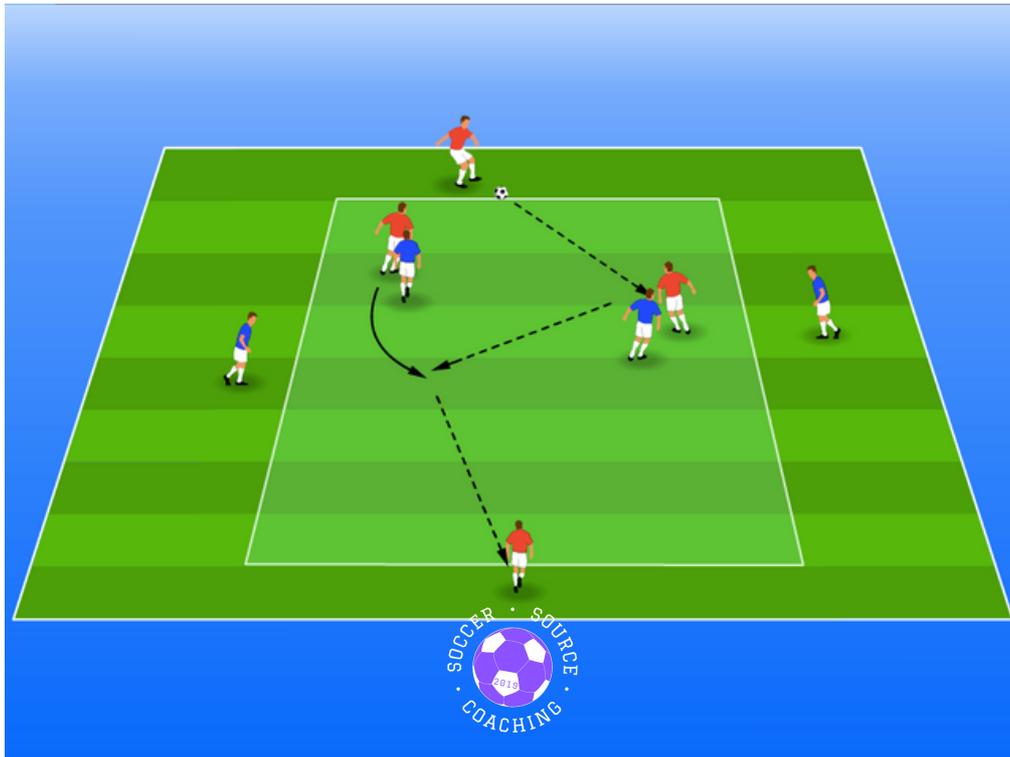
How the drill works:

Divide your players into 2 teams, this will be a regular game of soccer, however, if a team is able to combine 5 passes before they score the goal will be worth 3 points instead of 1.

Coaching points:

When keeping possession of the ball, spread as wide as possible to create more space in central areas
 If you do not have the ball on the possessing team, try to create an angle in space to receive the ball
 Whether you are on the ball or not you should be constantly scanning the area so you know what is going on around you
 Questions that can lead to coaching points:

- How can you create as much space as possible in central areas if your team is in possession of the ball?
- If you do not have the ball and you are on the possessing team what should you do?
- What should you do so you always know what is going on around you?



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2v2 u12 possession square

Purpose:

The purpose of the u12 soccer drill encourage players to play the ball forward with their back initially to the goal

Set up:

10 x 10 -yard area

1 soccer ball

8 players (2 teams of 4)

How the drill works:

On the inside of the square, there are 2 players from each team, with the remaining 2 players from each team standing on the outside of the square opposite each other.

A point is scored when a team successfully gets the ball from 1 target player to another target player on the opposite side.

The winning team of the round will be the team that has scored the most points.

After 3 mins swap the players in the middle and outside.

There will be 6 rounds in total.

Coaching points:

Create space for yourself to receive the ball with 2 movements (The first movement drags the defender away, and the second movement goes towards the space you want to receive the ball)

Scan the area before receiving the ball so you know whether or not you can turn

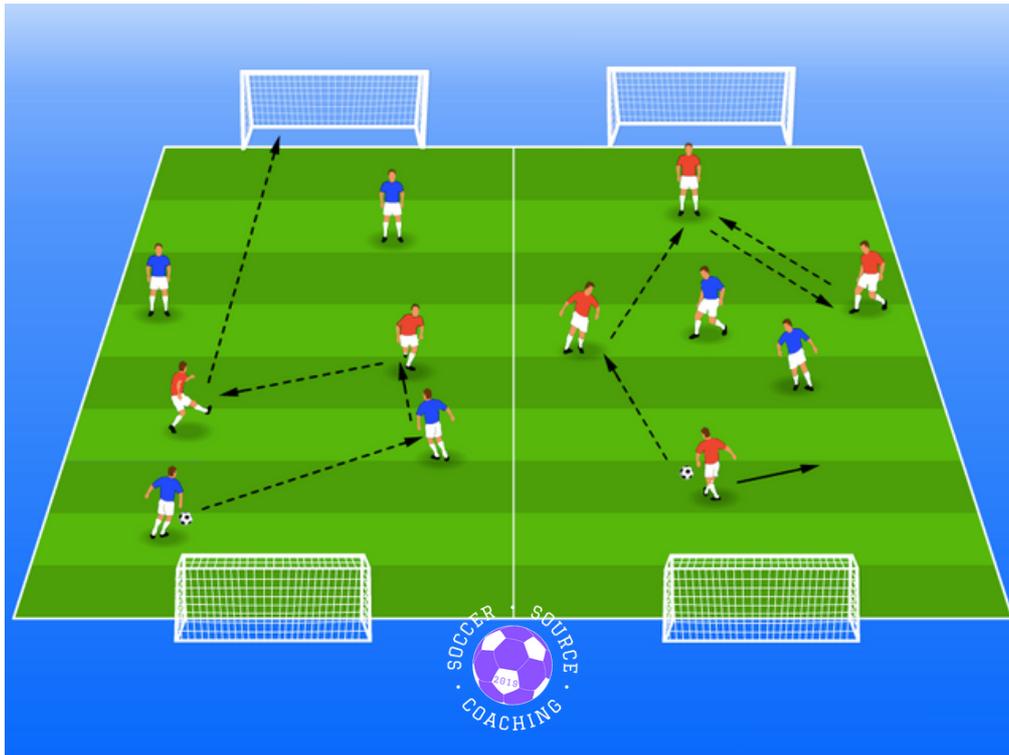
Give information with the pass (eg. time, space, pressure, teammates, defenders)

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

How can you create space for yourself?

What can you do so you know if you can turn on the ball or not?

How can you help teammates when you pass to them?



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4v2 race to score possession game

Purpose:

The purpose of this is to help players keep possession of the ball in a competitive environments

Set up:

12 players divided into 2 teams of 6

2 soccer balls

2, 10 x 15-yard areas

4 goals

How the drill works:

Set up your areas and place the teams of 6 in each area, with the goals opposite each other on the 10-yard lines.

Both teams will select 2 players to become defenders in the opposing team's area, which will create a 4v2.

The round is won when a defending team manages to score a goal first.

rounds will last 3 minutes, if no goals are scored after 3 minutes the round will be a tie.

In total there will be 6 rounds to ensure that every player has two chances to be the defender.

Coaching points:

Look to receive the ball on the back foot, in an open body position.

When you are not on the ball, you should constantly be scanning and looking for space, teammates, and defenders

Communicate with your teammates and give them information with the pass

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

How should you look receive the ball in soccer, which body position?

When you are not on the ball what should you be doing/ what should you be looking for?

What can you do to help make your teammates make better decisions on and off the ball?



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1v1 soccer drill with bounce players

Purpose:

The purpose of this soccer drill is to encourage your u12 soccer players to get past the defender using combination passing as well as dribbling skills

Set up:

4 players (2 players in the middle and 2 bounce players on the outside)

10 x 15-yard area

2 goals 1 soccer ball

How the drill works:

2 players will be in the middle and they will be playing a regular 1v1, however, the 2 players on the outside will act as neutral players.

If a player is able to combine with an outside player and score a goal the goal will be worth 3 points instead of 1.

Coaching points:

Play with your head up and identify spaces to attack, then decide if it will be best to dribble into those spaces or combine passes

Be confident when taking your 1v1s, try different skills and movements

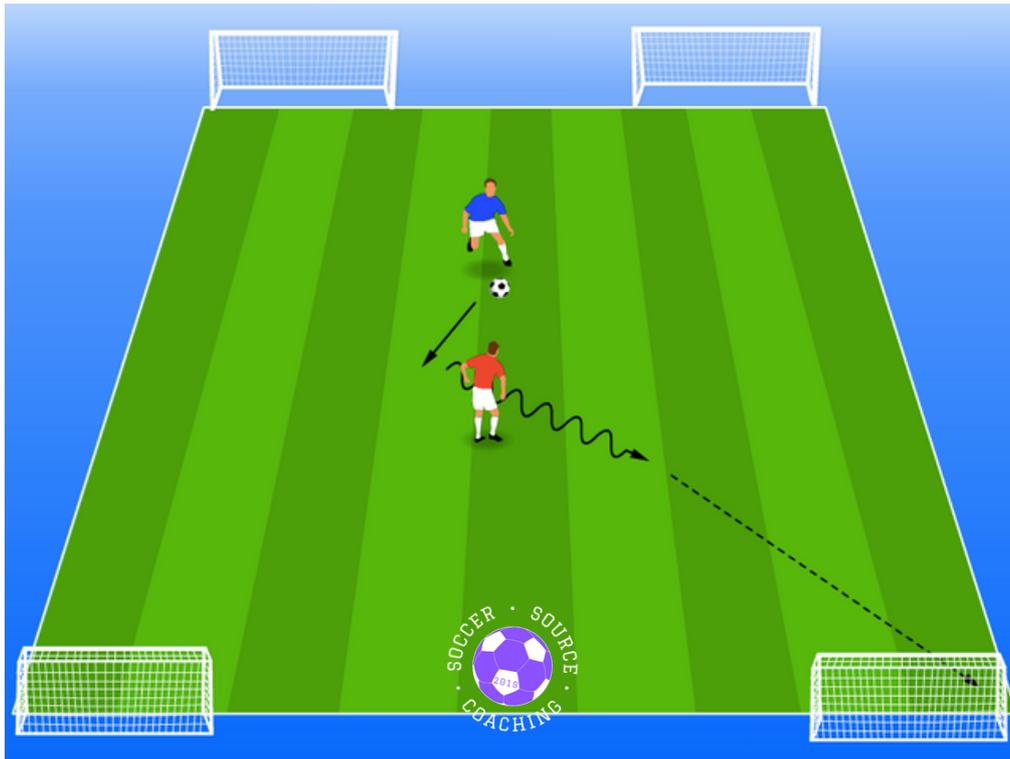
Draw the defender out to create space behind for you to attack.

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

What should you be looking for when you are scanning the area?

How can you keep the defender on their toes?

What can you do to create space behind the defender?



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2 goal 1v1 U12 soccer drill

Purpose:

The purpose of this 1v1 u12 soccer drill is to help players identify spaces to attack when dribbling with the ball.

Set up:

10 x 15-yard area

1 soccer ball

4 goals

2 players

How the drill works:

Set up your area and place 4 goals in each of the corners.

The 2 players in the middle will be playing a 1v1 against each other; instead of defending and scoring 1 goal each, they will be scoring and defending in 2 goals each.

The winner will be the player who scores the most goals at the end of a 4-minute round.

Coaching points:

Try to convince the defender you are going in one direction when you are trying to go in the opposite direction

Combine a skill with a sharp change of direction at speed to help beat the defender

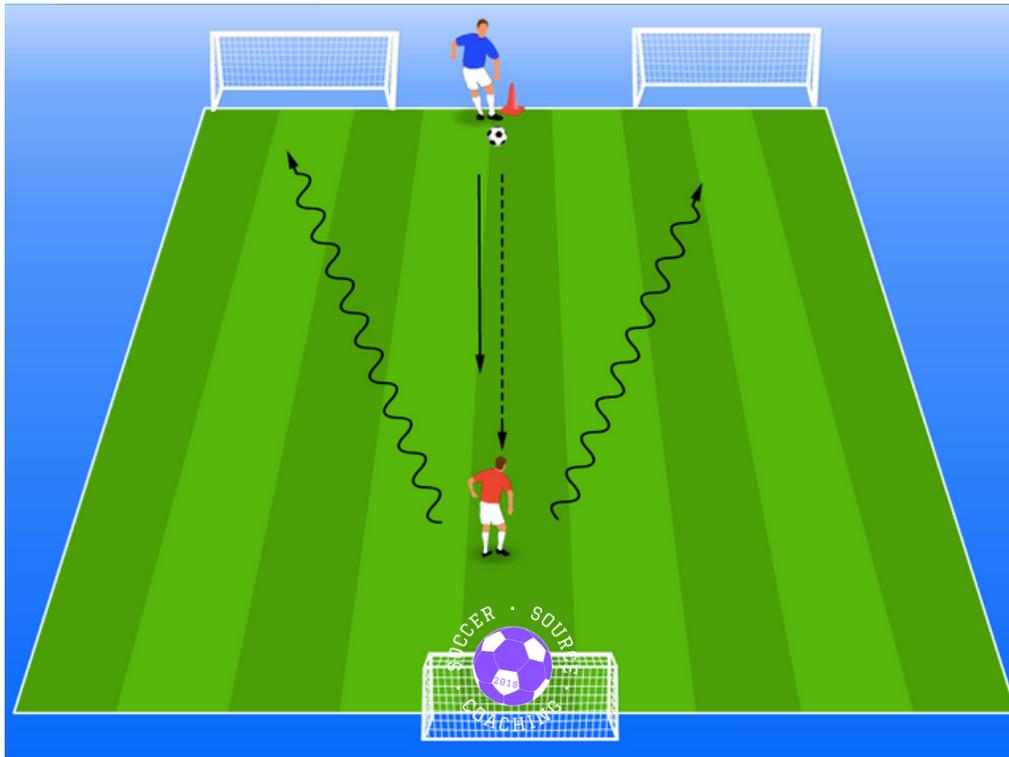
Keep your head up to easily find spaces to attack

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

What can you do to help score a goal against the defender?

What can you combine to effectively dribble past the defender?

Why should you keep your head up when dribbling?



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Defender vs attacker 2-goal soccer drill

Purpose:

The purpose of this u12 soccer drill is to get a lot of repetition of identifying and attacking the space.

Set up:

3 goals
1 soccer ball
2 players
1 cone
10 x 7-yard area

How the drill works:

Place the cone down and set up 2 goals 5 yards apart on either side of the cone.

Directly opposite the cone place a goal 7 yards away.

The defender will start with the ball on the cone and pass it to the attacker who will start on the goal opposite the cone.

The attacker must score in either of the 2 goals on either side of the cone.

If the attacker can dribble through one of the goals they will get 3 points or if they are able to pass it through the goal they'll get 1 point.

The defender can steal the ball and try to score in the goal opposite them for 1 point.

There will be 6 rounds of minutes, with players swapping roles after each round.

The player with the most points is the winner.

Coaching points:

Use a quick skill or body feint combined with a change of speed and direction to help beat the defender.

Keep your head up while dribbling so you know where the space is that you want to attack.

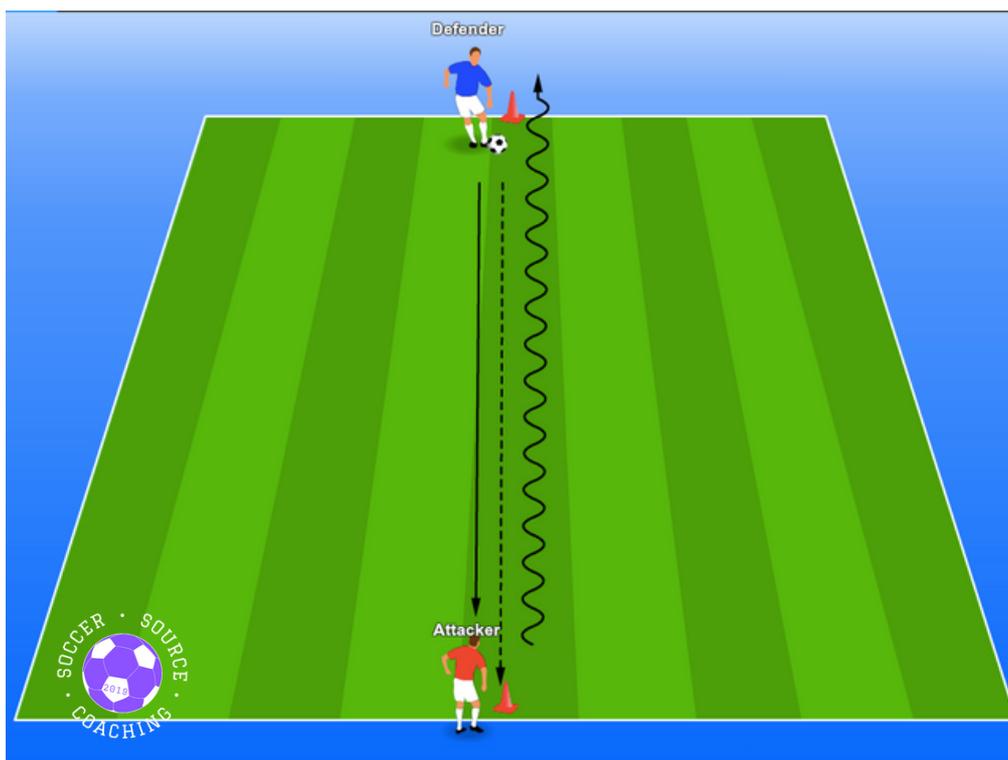
The first movement should be away from the space you want to attack, the second movement should be towards the space you want to attack.

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

How can you beat the defender?

Where should you be looking when you have the ball?

What should you do to disguise your intentions when dribbling with the ball?



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U12 1v1 get past the cone soccer drill

Purpose:

The purpose of this drill is to encourage players to be confident and drive past opposition defenders

Set up:

2 cones, 10-yards apart

1 soccer ball

2 players

How the drill works:

Set up your 2 cones 10 yards apart and opposite each other.

The defender will start with the ball on one cone and pass the ball to the attacker on the opposite cone.

If the attacker is able to dribble past the cone the defender started on they will get 3 points, however, if the defender is able to steal the ball and dribble past the cone the attacker started on they will get 1 point.

Each round will last 2 minutes and there will be 6 rounds in total.

The players will swap roles at the end of each round.

The player with the most points will be the winner.

Coaching points:

Attack quickly and with purpose

Use small touches to draw the defender, then a skill/body feint combined with a sharp change of direction and speed to beat them.

Keep your head up and look at the defender's body position, look at how they react to skills, and try to find a weakness in how they are defending you.

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

How should you attack?

What can you do to increase your chances of beating the defender?

How can you find a weakness in the defender to exploit?



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1v1 finishing drill for U12s

Purpose:

The purpose of this drill is to help players score more goals while under pressure.

Set up:

15 x 10-yard area

2 goals

4 goals

1 soccer ball

2 players

How the drill works:

Set up your area and goals and place a cone half a yard inside of each of the goal posts.

This will create gates in the corners of your goals.

This will be regular 1v1, however, if a player is able to score a goal that goes through the gate in the corners then the player will receive 3 points.

If they score a goal without it going through the gates it will be worth 1 point.

The winner will be the player who has the most points after a 3-minute round.

Coaching points:

Use the inside of your foot to place the ball into the corners of the goals

You don't always need to get past the player to shoot

Use a variety of skills and body feints so you become harder for the defender to read.

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

What part of your foot should you use to place the ball in the goal?

Do you always have to beat the defender to get a shot off on goal?

How can you be unpredictable while dribbling?



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Win the header U12 defensive soccer drill

Purpose:

The purpose of this drill is to help players improve their defensive heading ability.

Set up:

2 cones

3 players

1 soccer ball

How the drill works:

set up your cones 7 yards apart from each other.

1 player will start with the ball on 1 cone (player 1), with the other 2 players waiting on the opposite cone (players 2 and 3).

Player 1 will throw the ball in the air toward players 2 and 3.

Players 2 and 3 will then compete to win the header.

Whoever wins the header will get 1 point, however, if the player wins the header is able to head it back to player 1, and if player 1 catches it, they will get 3 points.

Coaching points:

You should be in a side-on-body position when heading the ball

Give yourself space so run and meet the ball instead of jumping from a stationary position

Keep an eye on the ball, time your jump, and make contact with the ball using your forehead.

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

What body position should you be in when heading the ball?

How can you increase your chance of winning the header?

Which part of the head should you use to head the ball?



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2v2 defending square U12 soccer drill

Purpose:

The purpose of this drill is to improve how your u12 players defend as pair

Set up:

7 x 10-yard area

6 players (2 attacking players, 2 defending players, 2 neutral players)

1 soccer ball

2 goals

How the drill works:

The 2 neutral players will be on the outside of the area, opposite each other on the 7-yard lines.

Two goals will be placed opposite each other on the 10-yard lines.

The goal for the attacking players is to get the ball from 1 neutral to another neutral player.

If they do this they will get 1 point.

If the defending team is able to force the ball out of bounds they will get one point, however, if they are able to win the ball back and score a goal it will be worth 3 points.

A neutral player cannot pass to a neutral player.

There will be 3 rounds of 4 minutes, so all the teams will play each other and the team with the most points at the end of the 3 rounds being the winners.

Coaching points:

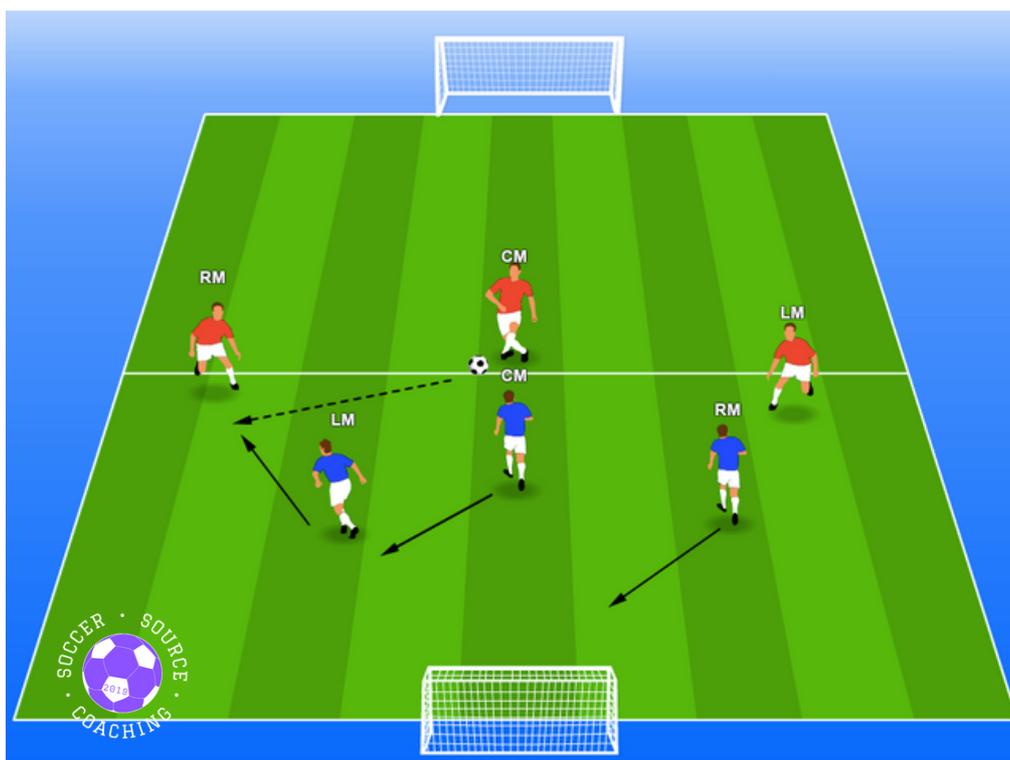
While one defender is pressing the ball the other should be covering
The player closest to the ball should be the player pressing
Force the attackers into a mistake before stepping in to win the ball

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

If you are not the defender pressing, where should you be?

Who should pressure the attacker with the ball?

When is a good time to step in and try to win the ball?



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U12 3v3 soccer defending game

Purpose:

The purpose of this drill is to get players defending as a unit in a game-similar scenario

Set up:

15 x 20-yard area

1 soccer ball

2 goals

6 players (2 teams of 3)

How the drill works:

This will be a normal game of soccer, with the regular rules being applied.

However, if the defending team is able to successfully force the attacking team into a mistake in the defending team's half then they will get 1 point.

If the defending team is able to win possession of the ball and score a goal from this scenario then they will get 3 points.

In each team, there should be a left midfielder, a right midfielder, and a central midfielder.

Coaching points:

When defending stay compact as a 3, forcing the opposition to wide areas

The player closest to the ball should pressure

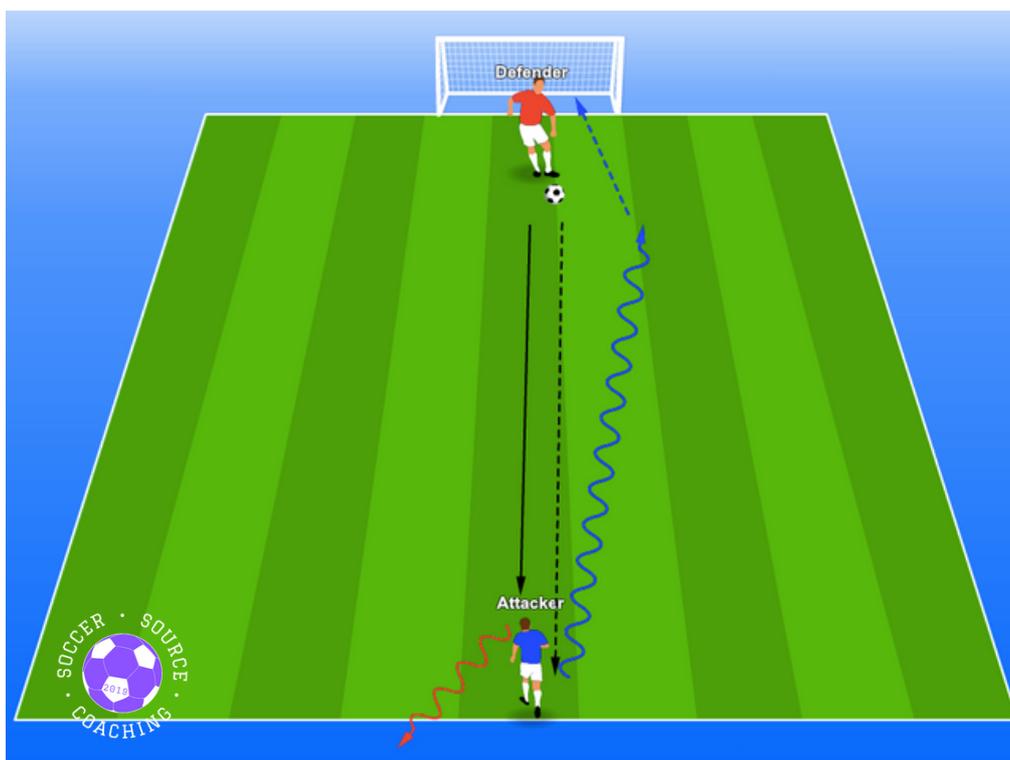
Be patient and force the opposition into a mistake to regain possession

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

What areas should you try to force the opposition into?

Which player should pressure the ball?

When should you step in to win the ball?



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1v1 defending u12 soccer drill

Purpose:

The purpose of this soccer drill is to improve a player's 1v1 defending ability

Set up:

10 x 15-yard area

1 soccer ball

1 goal

2 players

How the drill works:

Set up your area with the defender defending and starting by the goal with the ball.

The defender will start the drill by passing the ball to the attacker who is on the opposite side of the area.

The attacker will have to try and score in the goal, if they manage to do this they will get 1 point.

If the defender can stop them from scoring, they will get 1 point, but if the defender can win the ball and dribble past the line the attacker started on, they will get 3 points.

There will be 4 rounds of 3 minutes with players swapping roles at the end of each round.

The player with the most points will be the winner.

Coaching points:

Pressure the attacker quickly to restrict the amount of space they have

Try and stand them up at an angle to force them to where you want them to go

Wait for the attacker to make a mistake, then step in to try and win the ball

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

Why should you pressure the attacker quickly?

How can you force the attacker to where you want them to go?

When should you step in to win the ball?



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Game realistic repetition defensive u12 drill

Purpose:

The purpose of this drill is to teach players how to stay in defensive shape while playing a match.

Set up:

1 half of a 9v9 pitch
1 large goal, 3 pug goals
7 players (1 goalkeeper, 6 outfield players)
6 attacking players
How the drill works:

For this drill adjust the formation and numbers that are suitable for your players and team.

The attacking team will start with the ball at halfway and their aim is to try and score the main goal against the defensive team, if they score they will get 1 point.

If the defensive team is able to win the ball back they will get 1 point but if they are able to score in either of the 3-pug goals located on the halfway line they will get 3 points.

If you want to focus on transitioning back to a defensive shape, then the ball will start from the halfway line with the attackers when the ball goes out of bounds.

However, if you want to focus on keeping it game realistic then you can apply regular soccer rules.

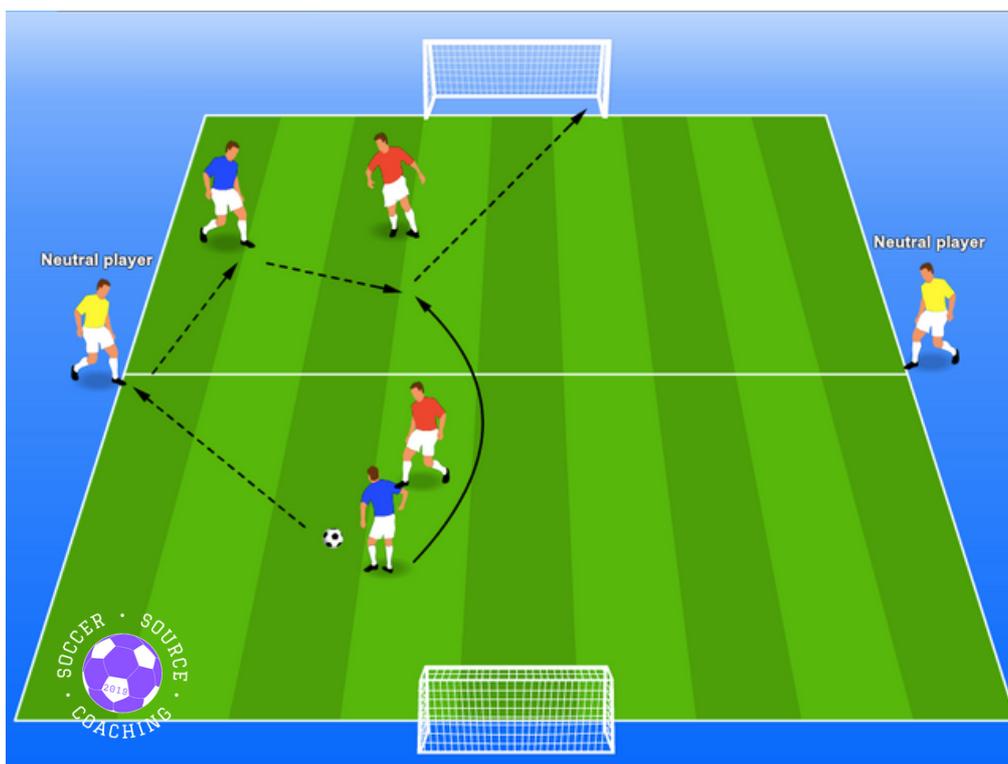
Coaching points:

Communicate with each and give your teammates information to help them be more aware of what is going on around them

Stay compact as a defensive unit and force players into wide areas away from goal.
The player closest to the ball should be the player pressing

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

How can you help teammates be more aware of what is going on around them?
What areas should you try to force the opposition attackers into?
Which player should pressure the player with the ball?



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2v2 u12 attacking drill with bounce players

Purpose:

The purpose of this soccer drill is to help players combine passes to go forward and attack

Set up:

15 x 20-yard area

2 goals

6 players

1 soccer ball

How the drill works:

Set up your area and divide your players into 3 teams.

There will be a 2v2 in the middle with 2 players as neutral players on opposite 20-yard lines.

The neutral players will act as a left midfield and a right midfield for the teams in the middle.

The two teams in the middle will set up as central midfielder and striker.

Each round will last 3 minutes and there will be 6 rounds to ensure that all the teams have played each other twice.

A team will win a round if they score more goals than the opposition.

Coaching points:

Create space for yourself with your first move away from the space to drag the defender away and then your second movement should back towards the space.

Your first thought should be to go forward

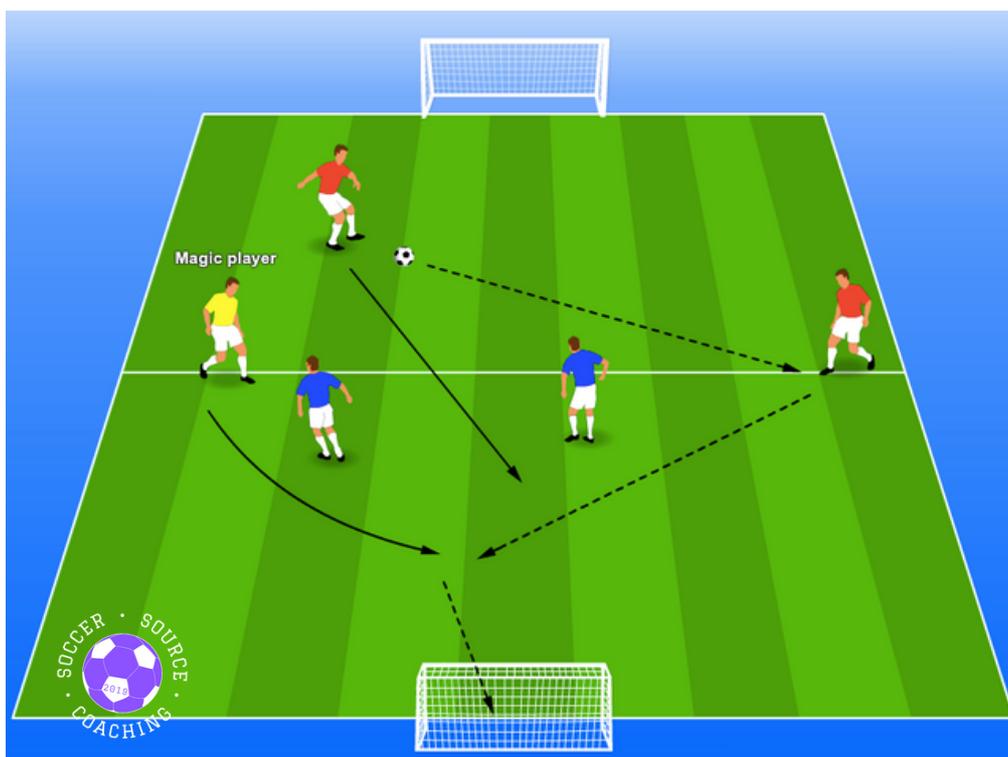
Wide players need to create angles to help support the players in the middle.

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

How can you create a space for yourself?

When you get the ball what should your first thought be?

What can the side players do to help support the players in the middle?



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2v2 with a magic player soccer drill

Purpose:

The purpose of this drill is to become more efficient at taking advantage of attacking overloads

Set up:

15 x 20-yard area

2 goals

5 players

1 soccer ball

How the drill works:

Set up your area and divide your players into 2 teams with 1 magic player.

The role of the magic player is on the same team as the team that has possession of the ball.

This should always create an attacking overload.

There will be 5 rounds of 3-4 minutes so that each player is able to play as the magic player.

The team with the most goals at the end of the round will be the winner.

Coaching points:

Attack quickly to try and catch the opposing team off guard

If you are the magic player your main focus should be to consistently scan and find space to support the team on the ball

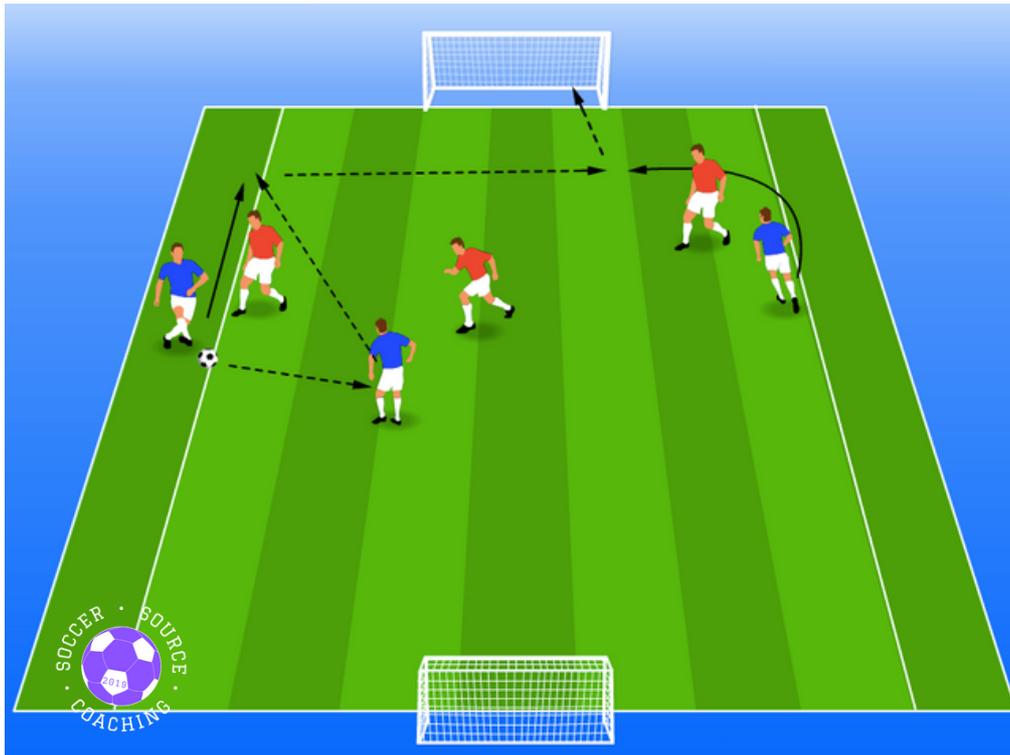
When you are attacking use the whole width of the pitch to create as much space as possible in central areas

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

Why should you attack quickly?

What should your priority be if you are the magic player?

How can you make as much space as possible in central areas?



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3v3 u12 attacking game to get the ball wide

Purpose:

The purpose of this drill is to encourage your players to get the ball wide and attack from wide areas.

Set up:

15 x 20-yard area

2 teams of 3

2 goals

1 soccer ball

cones to mark a wide area

Set your mini soccer pitch and create 2 channels, 3 yards in from the sidelines with your cones.

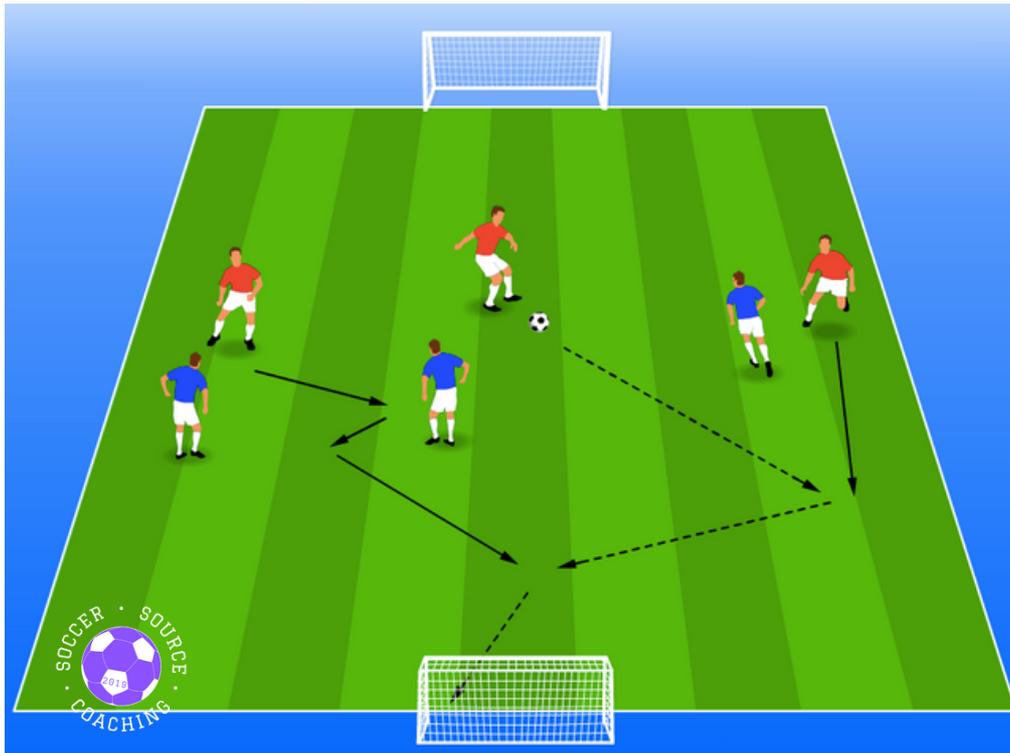
This will be a normal 3v3 game of soccer however if a team is able to score with the involvement of a player receiving the ball in a wide channel then that goal will be worth 3 goals instead of 1.

Coaching points:

If you do not have the ball, but your team is in possession of the ball, try to find a space in a wide area to receive the ball
Support the player in a wide area by giving them an option to play forward and backward
You should be looking to receive the ball in an open body position and on the back foot.

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

Where should you try and find space to support your teammate?
How can you support the wide player if they cannot go/backward?
What body position should you be in to receive the ball?



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3v3 soccer game to split defensive lines

Purpose:

This soccer drill will encourage your players to make passes to teammates that split defenders in a game scenario

Set up:

15 x 20-yard area

2 goals

2 teams of 3

1 soccer ball

How the drill works:

This will be a regular 3v3 soccer game however if a team is able to score a goal where a successful pass was played between 2 defenders then the goal will be worth 3 points instead of 1.

The team with the most points by the end of the game will be the winner.

Coaching points:

To create more space in central areas players need to spread as wide as possible when their team is in possession of the ball

Create space for yourself by initially dragging the defender away from the space you want to move into

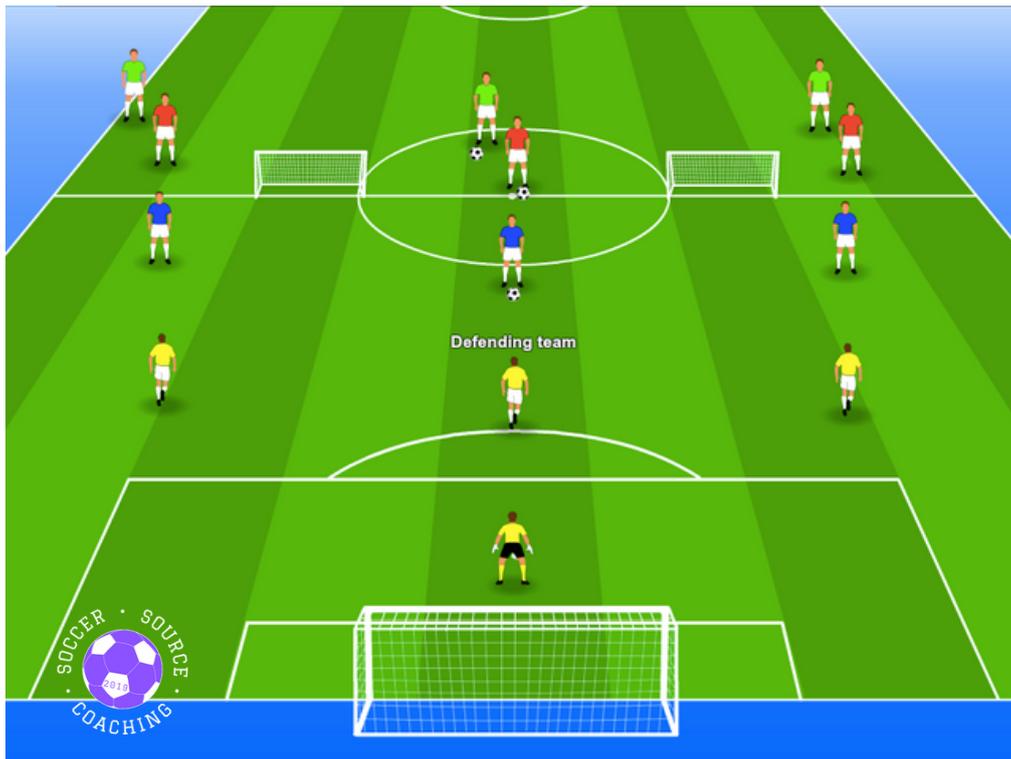
When playing a defensive splitting pass to teammates, ensure the ball is played in front of them so they can run onto it.

Questions that can lead to coaching points:

How can you create more space in central areas?

What can you do to create space for yourself?

When passing to a teammate where should the ball be played to them?



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Attacking in 3's u12 soccer drill

Purpose:

To help your u12 soccer team quickly and purposefully attack

Set up:

- 4 teams of 3
- 3 soccer balls
- 1 goal (can choose to play with a goalkeeper)
- Half a 9v9 soccer pitch
- 2 pug goals

How the drill works:

There will be 1 defending team of 3 and 3 attacking teams of 3.

The attacking teams will start with the ball and attempt to score in the main goal.

If they do this they will get 3 points.

However, if the defending team is able to steal the ball and score in either of the 2 pug goals placed on the hallway line they will get 1 point.

If the ball goes out of bounds or a goal is scored then the next attacking team can begin their attack with the defending team resetting.

There will be 4 rounds of 4 minutes to ensure every team has a chance to be the defending team.

Teams keep a tally of their score throughout all the rounds with the team having the most points by the of the 4 rounds being the winners.

Coaching points:

- Attack quickly, to give the defending team less time to organize
 - Attack using the whole width of the pitch
 - Lose your marker through different movements so you can receive the ball in space.
- Questions that can lead to coaching points:

- Why should you attack at speed?
- Why should you attack using the whole width of the pitch
- How can you lose your marker?