



COACHES CORNER TRAINING GUIDE



Table of Contents

| | |
|--------------|----|
| Introduction | 5 |
| U6 | 6 |
| U8 | 10 |
| U10 | 14 |
| Goal keeping | 22 |





INTRODUCTION

The Coaches Corner Training Guide is a guide that includes techniques for each age group. This helpful tool offers drills and activities geared to further develop players in a fun and engaging way. This text was constructed of basic knowledge and information from a multitude of coaching handbooks.

Each age group has specific activities geared toward their skill level. All drills and activities mentioned are great learning exercises and will stick with each player as they continue to develop as a player. This can be integrated into your practices and in warm-ups before games.

This book is merely a tool for any coach to utilize and does in no way have to be followed. It is just an additional reference for you as a coach to use and implement. This guide is meant to help you as well as the player as you develop your own style of coaching. Remember to have fun and make sure your players are doing the same. A safe and positive environment will always be where your player wants to be and where they are willing to put in effort. With that said I hope you find it helpful and something to use in the future.



Warm Up Games

U6-U8 Players do not really need to do any static stretching, so I prefer to use a quick warm-up tag game to get kids 'juiced up' (excited) for the game of soccer. This in turn will get the kids to both get out of their parents car and tie their shoelaces quicker – I mean who wants to do laps or stand in a circle listening to the coach at this age!?

Note: U6 have difficulty seeing imaginary lines between cones
– lay a lot of disks for sidelines!



Red Rover / Sharks and Minnows

All players start in a line at one end of the grid, while coach is in the middle. Coach calls 'Red rover, red rover, send everybody over' (everybody can be substituted for boys, girls or shirt colors if big numbers). The coach tries to tag players, who in turn try to reach the other side of the grid safely. If they do they turn around and wait for the coach to call again. If they are tagged then they are in the middle with the coach. Can progress to having the kids each with a ball (get them to attempt to look up while dribbling!)

Red Light Green Light

Start all kids on one side-line of a grid. The object is to be the first to the other side. When you (the coach) call 'green light' they move as fast as they can towards the other line. When you call 'red light' they must stop keeping their ball under the control. If they still move or their ball is more than 1 yard from their feet they go back to the start line! Make it fun – if they move their face muscles (coach tries to make them laugh) they have to go back also.

Blob / Link Tag

Coach is it; all the players have a ball in a grid. If the coach tags someone or their ball (usually get the best dribbler first to allow the weaker kids to get more touches), that player's ball is knocked out of the grid and then the two link arms and try and get somebody else. Game continues.

Pac-Man

One player starts with a ball in a grid (usually one of the better players). All the others start in the grid without their balls (placed just outside the grid within easy reach). On command the player with the ball has to dribble the ball under control while attempting to tag others. If he does then they also get their ball and attempt the same.

Freeze Tag

Every player starts with a ball in a grid except two taggers (in different color bibs). After 3 seconds, the taggers are free to tag anyone with a ball. If tagged, they have to freeze with their legs apart and ball by side. They can be released (or unfrozen) by another free player dribbling ball up to them and passing ball through frozen players legs. Swap taggers after 30 seconds or if they freeze everybody!

This can also be played without the ball, just as a tag game. To be unfrozen, free players crawl through the legs of the frozen players.

Hospital Tag

Lay out appropriate sized grid, with a small square in the middle (the hospital). Make 2 players taggers, who have to chase others. If tagged on shoulder for instance, player has to hold shoulder with one hand until they can run into the hospital to free themselves. Game gets amusing if player is tagged 2-3 times in open!

Everybody's it!

Every player starts with a ball in a grid. On command they can hunt each other down and if they can touch their ball against somebody else's then they score a point. This teaches them to be creative, fake to get a view of someone's ball or in turn shield their own ball from attack!

Other Simple Ideas

Can use control ball from air to thigh then dribble away quickly 5 touches. Then use air to foot. Dribble in area. On command 'switch' leave ball and find another. Continue dribbling. All players like opportunities to challenge themselves. For instance, once in a while use outside of foot and left foot – Get players used to using all surfaces of their feet.

Minfield

Two teams turn cones upside down or right way up to score in 30 seconds!

VARIATIONS OF MINEFIELD

Dribble round cone in order to pick up Croquet – same as above only introduce knocking other persons ball away with your ball Outside of foot (still w/knocking ball away). Can dribble around 2 at a time (schemer)

Play and Retrieve

Play individually or pair players up. Show them a couple of ways to retrieve ball then let them be creative! i.e. Throw ball away and give # of **body** parts to bring ball back with # of passes to hit server's feet Coach/Server moves to a different position after he kicks ball away

Remember at these ages we do not want to say the one with the most points chooses a consequence for all the rest! Most players in this age range will lie about their score... especially little boys! A coach should be aware that if he/she plays a game with points and asks the first boy what did you get and he says 'N' (a number), the next will say 'N+1', etc.! Be careful!!

DRIBBLING

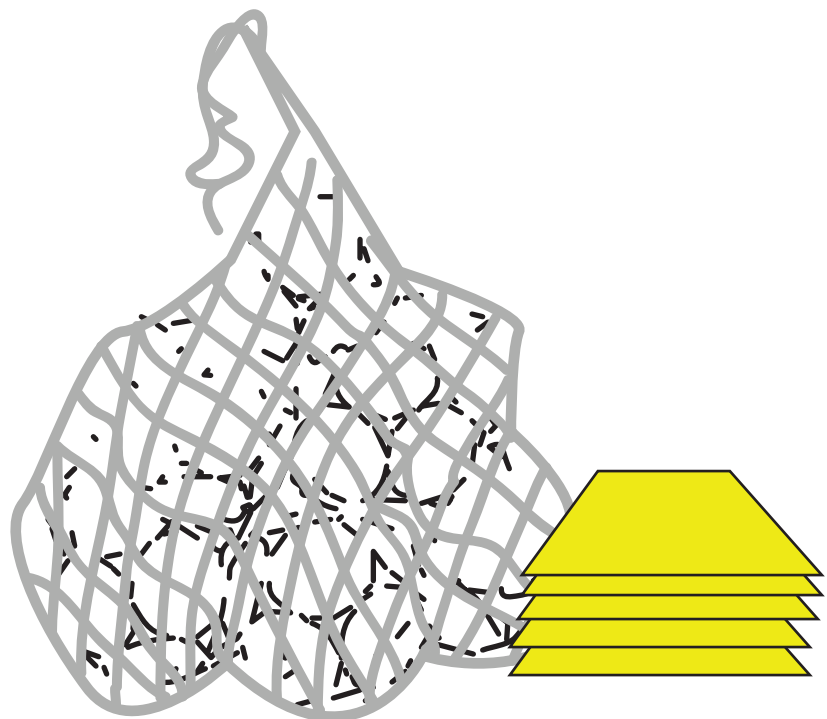
After some fun warm-up activities, ask the coaches to **dribble** in a defined rectangular area. Ninety percent (85%) of all players in the world, prefer to kick a ball with the right foot. Consequently, 85% of all young players will **dribble** the ball round in a counter-clockwise direction. Coaches must recognize this problem and attempt to get their players comfortable with both the left and right foot.

Get the chin off the chest!

At the youngest ages, teams usually play 3v3. There is no such thing as 3v3! In reality, the game is 1v5 because all players play with their head down concentrating on the ball! We want them to look up to be aware of what is around them. There is a simple activity to help do this, called **Body Part Dribble**. Have all players **dribble** their ball around in the set area and when the coach calls out a certain **body-part**, for instance 'hand' then the players stop the ball with their hand. Try this a few times then the coach does not call out but simply points to the **body part** on his/her own **body**. This will quickly get the players to look up after each gentle touch on the ball.

Find your own space!

Then instead of having to look up for the coach, just let the kids play without bumping into each other. Stop the players when a few are close to each other, then get them to stand with their arms out to the side and twist gently from the waist. If they can touch one another player, they are too close! Then guarantee them that the next time you stop them, they will all find their own space. As a coach, one must stand in an appropriate spot to see the whole field of play. He or she can wait until every player is in their own space before calling stop. This way show the coaches that they can stand in a position to see everybody and recognize certain situations in which to stop the players to make positive points.





Possession & Finishing

U8 Players can still do the warms talked about previously, but additional skills can be learned. Instead of just dribbling and kicking back and forth, we introduce possession/winning the ball and finishing the ball in order to score.

Here are a few drills in order to introduce them to these fundamentals!

Shielding/Turning (for 7-8 year olds)

Introduce the concept of shielding the ball using hands first (younger players will comprehend this infinitely quicker as they are more dexterous with their hands than feet). Each player has a partner with one ball between them. (The Coach should give a good picture to start so they do not go straight down and bang heads). One player tries to keep the ball away from coach. The only rules are that the ball has to remain on the ground and that you can only maneuver it with one hand at a time. If partner (coach) touches the ball with his/her hand possession changes! When coach wins ball, demonstrate that you don't have to run away, just simply place your body frame between the ball and the opponent.

Secondly, tell players not to travel – can stay in one spot and still retain possession. Third, get shielder to keep hip pointing to partner. Fourth, play shielding game using feet. Fifth, give everyone a ball in the rectangle and if coach (without ball) approaches them they are to turn away to shield. Coach can introduce inside and outside of foot turns this way.

Simple Body Fake or Trick!

All kids/players love to learn new tricks! Instructor can use their favorite trick or any Coerver move as long as they break it into very small steps. I prefer to teach tricks without the ball first! Get all participants to stand 3 steps back from their ball to learn the foot positioning first before complicating things with the ball! Lift the left foot up, take a small diagonal step forward (to the left), bend the left knee and drop the left shoulder down. Then lift the right foot up and take a quick hop diagonally forward to the right. When the ball is involved, on the hop push the ball forward in the same direction with whichever part of the foot is comfortable, preferably the right hand side of the laces of the right shoe. Let them practice on their own for 30 seconds. Do not spend long on this exercise. Some players will understand the concept and this will begin to rub off on the players around. I have had a 3 year old do this fake at camp and remember it the next day! Only spend 3-4 minutes on this then move onto another high intensity activity.

Windows '98

Place a number of windows around an area (2 cones close together). 2 players have to **dribble** through the window to score a point. Only rule is not to **dribble** through same window **twice in a row!** The Coach must introduce vision at this point. Head for the window that is open (i.e. no-one around it) so you don't have to stop and wait your turn! Let them play once and then can give some suggestions for the technique to use!

PASSING

Players usually are not psychologically ready for passing to their teammates and are still in the mindset of parallel play – each is playing a separate game in their head. Still it is never too early to give them a concept, as some will get it and again it will begin to rub off on the others in their peer group. Most U8's who have played before are ready for the concept of passing to a team mate.

The following game is ideal to introduce passing to a partner.

Windows '98

Place a number of windows around an area (2 cones close together). 2 players have to pass through the window to score a point. Only rule is not to pass through same window **twice in a row!** The Coach must introduce passing and communication at this point. Let them play once and then can give some suggestions for the technique to use!

Do not berate kids for using their toes! They will use whatever **part** of their foot that is comfortable for them. Simply suggest different areas of the foot and tell them why (more surface area etc.) I like to use the example of when Brazil beat England in 1997 1-0, Romario scored toe-poking the ball in the corner as it was the only **part** of his outstretched **body** that could reach the ball. Ask the coaches if you think the Brazilian coach slammed Romario against the lockers after the game for using his toes?

Advance the game for U8 players by giving double points for left foot or outside of foot passes.

3 teams (3 blue, 3 orange, 3 yellow)

Have to pass through window (gate) to score a point. How many can you score in 30 seconds. If balls collide – deduct 1 point.

Death on the Nile!

10x30 grid. 3 teams of 3 players, and 3 balls. Each team gets one minute in the middle (the river).

Count # of interceptions. Other 2 teams have to play the balls across the 'river' back and forth.

Introduce calling for the ball, then passing to a teammate on same side to open 'channels'.

Within game can coach recommended technique for passing (with inside of foot and why) & receiving. One can also introduce simple deception at this point (faking the pass & knowing defensively what they are trying to read to anticipate).

FINISHING

Too many players will not shoot on goal when given the opportunity, they would rather pass it off whether they are in a better position or not! This mainly stems from the fact that they are feeling pressured and scared to miss, because of what parents, coaches or fellow players may say to them.

As coaches, we must always be positive, encourage kids to shoot when the chance occurs and stamp out any negative comments from parents or players when children miss that target. Even pro's only score 10-15% of their chances!

Finishing

Simply having the coach stand between 2 flags (the goal) and having kids dribble ball in and try to kick it in the goal is enough to start. Of course the goalkeeper (coach) lets most balls in! Then we can progress to other finishing games...

Crab Soccer

Divide the kids into 2 teams of 3-4 players. Set up a grid with a goal at one end. Have one team (each with a ball) stand on the opposite end line from the goal and get them to dribble around the other team (down on hands and feet like crabs with bottoms off the floor). If player scores, have them pick ball up run back to start line and try again. Switch teams after 1-2 minutes.

Get out of here

Play “Get out of here” (works for 8-12 year olds) - Two teams in a line stand at opposite corner flags. The coach stands on the half way line with all the balls. Have the kids name their teams!
Play 1v1 or 2v2 in a 10 x 15 yard grid to 2 yard goals, with the first 1 or 2 from each side coming out as soon as the coach puts a ball on the field. The coach is boss of the balls! Introduce penalty for encroaching! When a goal is scored or the ball goes out of play, the coach shouts ‘Get out of here!’ and the players have to go to the back of their line. As soon as the coach yells, he can put another ball on the field for the next two players from each team to play. The game is continuous till the coach has no balls left. They will soon collect all the balls back! Encourage players to shoot as soon as they see a sight of goal!

4 goal open/close game 25 seconds (3 teams of 2-3 players)

Then introduce four small goals, one each on the mid-lines of the grid described above. Have 3 teams of 3 players. Four goal game with gates. One team is assigned to be gatekeepers, one player standing in each goal and the coach goes in the fourth. They are to act as a gate, designed to close or open the goal (step to the side or in) when directed by the coach pointing or calling name. The other players (each team with a ball) play to score on any open goal by passing through it. Then try game with only one ball on the field. Then develop to... ‘THE GAME!’

Finish with 3 fields of 2v2, with a different method of scoring on each field.

The Coach can use any number of different options! Or go straight to...

“The Game” 3v3/4v4 to goals with one ball!

Every coach has experienced a kid tugging on his/her shirt asking ‘when are we going to scrimmage?’ A coach should always try to let the kids scrimmage for a third or so of practice in the format that they will play in season.

For the younger kids this will be 3v3. The coach should be the ‘boss of the balls’ serving balls into play until they are all out of play. Each player must retrieve one ball to the coach to resume game.

Please don’t make any kid sit out. Play games of inclusion! If you have an odd number, play 3v4 or 4v5. Don’t be too set on even numbers – it doesn’t matter. If teams are wildly uneven fix things by having one or two players switch teams.

Excite kids with their own development. You have to be very organized!

Review objectives of soccer activities...

- 1. Get players to solve problems**
- 2. Foster cooperation and teamwork**
- 3. When does the coach control the game as opposed to the players?**
- 4. Use games that bring out an aspect of the real game**
- 5. Excitement – get kids ‘juiced up!’**
- 6. Create environments to bring ideas out. Show kids how to survive!**

U10

Transitioning & Passing

U10 Players have acquired all the basic skills to the game. Its not time to further develop their skill set. We will focus on transitioning - winning the ball, possessing the ball, and then up the field to score. Passing is how possession and transitioning are achieved.

WARM-UP

Many of the warm-up activities introduced in the U6-U8 and U8-U10 modules are still applicable or can be made more challenging/appropriate by some minor coaching adjustments. It is preferable to use a quick warm-up tag game to get U10-12 kids 'juiced up' (excited) for the game of soccer. This in turn will get the kids to get both out of their parents' car and tie their shoelaces quicker. Good habits can be formed now though and when changing the taggers after '30-60 second intervals, a coach can introduce some basic stretches or utilize some ball gymnastics.

Pick 2 games to show them as examples, for instance one without a ball to get them enthused and having fun, and then one to get a ball involved in a simple exercise.

Line Tag

Have all players pair up and stand shoulder to shoulder. Break one pair up and give one player a colored vest to hold in hand. They then attempt to tag the other player. If they do they drop the vest and roles change. The runner can escape by joining shoulder to shoulder with one of the other pairs, in which case the player on the far end becomes the runner. Can progress to having 2 taggers and see how it affects the players thinking. Can you see a link to the real game?

Star Wars or "Running bases" game

This activity works for most U8 through U14 players. Set up 2-4 random bases (a base = 4 cones set as a small square, where a player cannot be tagged)

The coach appoints 2 or 3 people as being IT (the taggers then are given a colored training vest to hold in their hand). The objective is for them to get rid of the vest by tagging another player. If a tagger touches another player, he or she drops the vest and the new tagger has to pick it up (no tag backs). Only 1 allowed on a base at a time. The last one on base is safe (the other player then has to move away).

Then play the game with the taggers without a ball, but everyone else with a ball. Later introduce new rule: tagger has to touch ball, not person! Then make it more challenging by having the taggers only tag by touching a ball with their foot. Stop. Coach can introduce shielding with hands, then play again.

Coach players in game – point out good things!

Highlight smart play – ask player why he/she is doing it...

If one player is struggling – the coach can play and bale him out (dribble into him accidentally)

DRIBBLING

Remember to notice and encourage players using both left and right feet! Then play the above 'Star Wars' game with the taggers without a ball, but everyone else with a ball. Then make it more challenging by having the taggers only tag by touching a ball with their foot.

Stop. Coach can introduce shielding with hands, then play again.

Shielding/Turning

Introduce the concept of shielding the ball using hands first (younger players will comprehend this infinitely quicker as they are more dexterous with their hands than feet). Each player has a partner with one ball between them. (The coach should give a good picture to start so they do not go straight down and bang heads). One player tries to keep the ball away from coach. The only rules are that the ball has to remain on the ground and that you can only maneuver it with one hand at a time. If partner (coach) touches the ball with his/her hand possession changes! When the coach wins the ball, demonstrate that you don't have to run away, just simply place your body frame between the ball and the opponent. Secondly, tell players not to travel - can stay in one spot and still retain possession.

Third, get shielder to keep hip pointing to partner. Fourth, play shielding game using feet. Fifth, give everyone a ball in the rectangle and if coach (without ball) approaches them they are to turn away to shield. Coach can introduce inside and outside of foot turns this way.

Then go back to the running bases game again and see if players can now shield and keep ball during game. Coach can introduce another tagger!

If one player is struggling - the coach can play and bale him out (dribble into him accidentally)

Ball Wars!

Everyone has a ball, dribbling in a fairly small grid. Each player can score a point by dribbling around and hitting their ball against somebody else's. This encourages both attacking and defensive play. It is guaranteed that the coach will be asked 'what happens if he kicked his ball against mine as I was kicking towards his?' Give both a point. Points don't matter. Challenge the individual to beat his/her own personal score each time.

Ball Tag!

Then in a 20 x 30 yard grid introduce a 2 team competition, blues against orange 8v8. Blues start inside grid without a ball. Orange begin outside grid and then are timed to get a ball (from a pile just outside the grid) pass it among themselves and try to hit the blue players with the ball below the knee! If hit this time have to kneel down on one knee, but can knock balls away with other foot.

Time it, then change teams.

Find your own space!

All dribble in a reasonable size grid trying not to bump into each other. Again encourage players to use both left and right feet. Stop the players when a few are close to each other, then get them to stand with their arms out to the side and twist gently from the waist. If they can touch one another player, they are too close! Then guarantee them that the next time you stop them, they will all find their own space. As a coach, one must stand in an appropriate spot to see the whole field of play.

He or she can wait until every player is in their own space before calling stop. This way show the coaches that they can stand in a position to see everybody and recognize certain situations in which to stop the players to make positive points.

Simple Body Fake

All kids/players love to learn new tricks! Instructor can use their favorite trick or any Coerver move as long as they break it into very small steps. I prefer to teach tricks without the ball first!

Get all participants to stand 3 steps back from their ball to learn the foot positioning first before complicating things with the ball! Lift the left foot up, take a small diagonal step forward (to the left), bend the left knee and drop the left shoulder down. Then lift the right foot up and take a quick hop diagonally forward to the right. When the ball is involved, on the hop push the ball forward in the same direction with whichever part of the foot is comfortable, preferably the right hand side of the laces of the right shoe. Let them practice on their own for 30 seconds. Do not spend long on this exercise. Some players will understand the concept and this will begin to rub off on the players around. I have had a 3 year old do this fake at camp and remember it the next day!

Coerver feints/moves

For the coaches who have not seen or heard of Wiel Coerver, he is an ex-professional player and coach from the Netherlands who introduced a program emphasizing 1 v 1 moves to beat an opponent. His videos and books break down each move and explain it in simple terms. They are available in the OYSA office library and are well worth a look! You will be amazed at what the under 8 player in Holland can do with the ball! Here are a couple of the moves explained

The Scissors

Standing behind the ball, swing your left foot around the front of the ball from left to right, put toes on ground, bend the left knee, drop the left shoulder, then quickly move the right foot to the left side of the ball and push it forward diagonally to the right with the laces of the right shoe. Remember that the first 3 steps after a move have got to be at pace so the defender does not catch you! Repeat, increasing speed and agility, and practice move with both feet.

The Roll-Over

Standing behind the ball, roll the ball across the body (left to right) with the sole (cleats) of the right foot so ball is moving, then swing the right leg back around the front of the ball from left to right, bending right knee and dropping shoulder, then take ball away with the outside of the left foot. Again, remember that after the move, the player on the ball has got to get away quickly.

The great thing about these moves is that you can practice them inside on a rainy day, because you

don't need a ball to quicken foot speed. Try faking the dog or cat out! Try to see the real thing 'live' at one of the OYSA Coaching Clinics.

American Football

Create a playing field of 15 x 30 yards, but make the last 5 yards of each end an end zone. A touch down is scored by keeping possession and creating an opportunity to dribble into the end zone. If this is done with the ball under control, then a touch down is scored.

PASSING

COACHING POINTS (Passing):

Keep on toes all the time (be ready), look up and take 'snapshot', make decision who to pass to, then head down and keep eye on ball, ankle locked with toe up, swing leg in straight plane, follow through center of ball.

COACHING POINTS (Receiving):

Keep on toes all the time (be ready), get body behind line of ball, look up take 'snapshot', make decision where to turn when ball is controlled (away from pressure), then keep eye on ball, offer largest area of contact to ball, cushion ball by giving slightly on contact, trap towards the ground, push ball out to side 1/2- 1 yard (away from pressure) to enable to take in stride.

Keep-Away

This is an excellent exercise for warming up. Instead of having players standing around in a line waiting to shoot at goal before a game, have them gently warm up playing 3 v 1, or 5 v 2 keep-away for 15-30 second intervals. This gives players a lot more touches on the ball and produces a good feel for the particular playing surface, while alternating aerobic and anaerobic exercise. When an opposing coach sees this happen, he knows that the other coach knows what he is doing and begins to worry!

Soccer Golf

Place a number of cones around an area. Each player has a ball and tries to strike each cone in turn (varying distances) counting the number of kicks (strokes). The player taking the least strokes wins, rewarding accuracy.

Windows'95

Place a number of windows around an area (2 cones close together). 2 players have to pass through the window to score a point. Only rule is not to pass through same window twice in a row! -The Coach must introduce passing and communication at this point.

Advance the game by using left foot pass only, outside of foot passes, or play in groups of three to four and introduce the wall pass (see combination below). 2 teams (5 blue, 5 orange). Have to pass through window (gate) to score a point. How many can you score in 30 seconds. If balls collide - deduct 1 point. Keep ball moving. If ball stops deduct 1 point.

Same game only partners cannot talk (verbally communicate) Then play Blue v Orange with 3 balls. Other restrictions include limiting touches, ball never stops, left foot passes, etc.

Death on the Nile!

20 x 30 grid. 3 teams of 4 players, and 3 balls. Each get one minute in the middle. Count # of interceptions. Other 2 teams have to play the balls across the 'river' back and forth. Introduce calling for the ball, then passing to a teammate on same side to open 'channels'. Techniques being used

include-, passing & receiving, chipping, defending etc. We have to challenge our players cognitively. Other changes can include- points for passes, keep ball moving, time limit to play ball.

Keeper's Nest

One player (keeper) guards, but cannot touch the ball. The keeper may stand over the ball. The objective is for the other three players to get to the ball away from the keeper (using hands, feet or either), without being tagged and frozen by the keeper. The keeper's goal is to freeze the other three players. Once a player is frozen, he can remain frozen until all players are frozen, or until the ball is snatched away by the other players, or until the player counts to 10.

Keeper's Nest 3v1

Place three cones in a triangle 10 yards apart. One player is inside the triangle as the keeper. The other three try to possess the ball and score goals by moving the keeper out of position and playing through the triangle. If the keeper intercepts the ball, the player who played the ball last becomes the new keeper.

3v3, 4v4 Passing & Moving

Play in a grid 15x25 yards. Two teams of three/four playing with a ball each. All they are to do is to keep possession in the area without bumping into the other team. Coach should stress team shape (triangle/diamond) always to be in a position where you can see the ball i.e. be passed to! Introduce communication and the importance of looking around before receiving and passing! Receiver's first touch should be in the direction where they want to go next.

3v3 or 4v4 'American Football!'

Play 4v4 but instead of making goals for the teams to score in, create an end zone at either end of the small field. A team can score a 'touch-down' (6 points) if they pass the ball to a teammate standing in the end zone. Think up any number of variations for an extra point! Then restrict a player waiting in the end zone to staying in there a maximum of three seconds and then has to get out similar to basketball.

Advance the game by not allowing any player to stand still in the end-zone, or then limit access to the zone to 3 seconds at a time for any player.

Chip Pass to Target

Create three 10 x 10 yard adjacent grids, and three teams of 4 players. Place one team in each square. The team in the middle (team B) have to sit down in their grid, but can move about. The object is for team A to chip the ball to team C over the heads of team B. For team C to score a point, the ball has to be brought down under control (remaining in the grid or at the coach's discretion).

Team C then has '3 touches, one to control, one to lay off a short pass and one to chip the ball back to team A. Whichever team is the first to play the ball out of the playing area, or allows team B to make a contact, switches position into the middle.

COMBINATION/TRANSITION

Possession/Transition Game (4 v 2) - Set up 2 adjacent squares of 15 x 15 yards and pick two teams of four players. Start with 4 v 2 in one of the squares, with the other 2 staying in the adjacent square. The 4 try to keep possession in their area. If one of the 2 wins the ball they play the ball into the adja-

cent square to their teammates and then join them in the square to keep possession.

When the transition takes place, the nearest two opposing players also move across the center line to become the 2 trying to win the ball back from the 4. Play continues.

Wall Pass (2 v 1) - In a 20 x 15 yard grid play 2 v 0 to get the feel of a one-touch wall pass. Then add one defender into the grid, and make the offensive pair play 2 v 1 and produce a wall pass to beat the defender and score by stopping the ball on the end line under control. The players with the ball turn round and repeat the exercise, trying to score as many times as possible by utilizing the wall pass. Get player A with the ball to dribble at speed at the defender to start the move. Player B then must read the visual cue and create an appropriate angle to either side of the defender in order to allow the opportunity for the wall pass. As the players get better technically, and more accustomed to the players around them, the coach should point out further visual cues. For example, if Player A wants to play a wall pass to the left, then he may want to run to the right of the defender (as he faces him). This will not only open up space on that side by drawing the defender away, but it can also be read as a cue for a teammate to create an angle for a wall pass on that side.

Add deception by having the initial pass made with the outside of the foot.

Overlaps (2 v 1) - In a similar vein, overlaps can be created down the flanks. In an open space, practice player A dribbling towards the middle of the grid, with player B making an overlap outside (into the space created) from behind the player with the ball. He must communicate that he has read the visual cue and is overlapping the player with the ball who cannot see him.

The coach makes the games and the rules simple. One should allow scheming but not cheating.

Have a lot of balls around as a coach, so that you can shout 'ball's out' or 'get out of here' to make the play somewhat continuous for plenty of repetition.

FINISHING

Get out of here

Play "Get out of here" (works for 8-14 year olds) - Two teams in a line stand either side of the coach (standing on the half way line with all the balls). Name them team France and team Brazil Play 2v2 in a 15 x 20 area (or 3v3 in 20x30) grid to 2 yard goals, with the first 2 from each side coming out as soon as the coach puts a ball on the field. The coach is boss of the balls! Introduce penalty for encroaching! When a goal is scored or the ball goes out of play, the coach shouts 'Get out of here!' and the players have to go to the back of their line. As soon as the coach yells, he can put another ball on the field for the next two players from each team to play. The game is continuous till the coach has no balls left. He can then ask the players what they can do to rectify the situation... They will soon collect all the balls back!

4 goal open/close game 25 seconds (3 teams of 3)

Then introduce four small goals, one each on the mid-lines of the grid described above. Have 3 teams of 3 players. Four goal game with gates. One team is assigned to be gatekeepers, one player standing in each goal and the coach goes in the fourth. They are to act as a gate, designed to close or open the goal (step to the side) when directed by the coach pointing. The other players (each team with a ball) play to score on any open goal by passing through it. Then try game with only one ball on the field.

Then develop to...

Finish with 2 fields of 4v4, with a different method of scoring on each field.

Field 1: Head to score.

Field 2: All 4 have to be in opponents half of field for their goal to count!

Option: Have to go around the back of goal and dribble/pass through cones the opposite way. The Coach can use any number of different options!

Jurassic Park

30 x 20 or 30 x 30 yard grid, with 6 mini goals around border. Start with 5 orange inside grid with 5 balls, blues are outside. On command they have to come in and steal the balls to score. When scored the ball is dead. Time how long it takes to kill all 5 balls. Swap roles.

Numbers Up

Going to one goal. Add pressure - (i.e. 2v 1, v2). Provide target for defender if they win the ball. Looking to shoot as quickly as possible, by having body in correct position, showing good 1st touch when receiving ball. 1st touch should be away from pressure. Disguise your shots.

Quick Fire!

Pull one goal all the way up the field to the outer edge of the 18 yard box. Play 5v2 in an area 18x36 yards with two full size goals 18 yards apart. Play for 1 minute at a time, with the 5 having to make 5 passes before shooting. If the defenders steal the ball they go for goal also. You can add goalkeepers at any time.

Cooler Ball!

Can play 4v4v4. Put large cooler / trash can (or similar) in middle of field and have 1 ball and the three teams play against each other! To score a team simply has to hit the target. Kids will play this game forever!

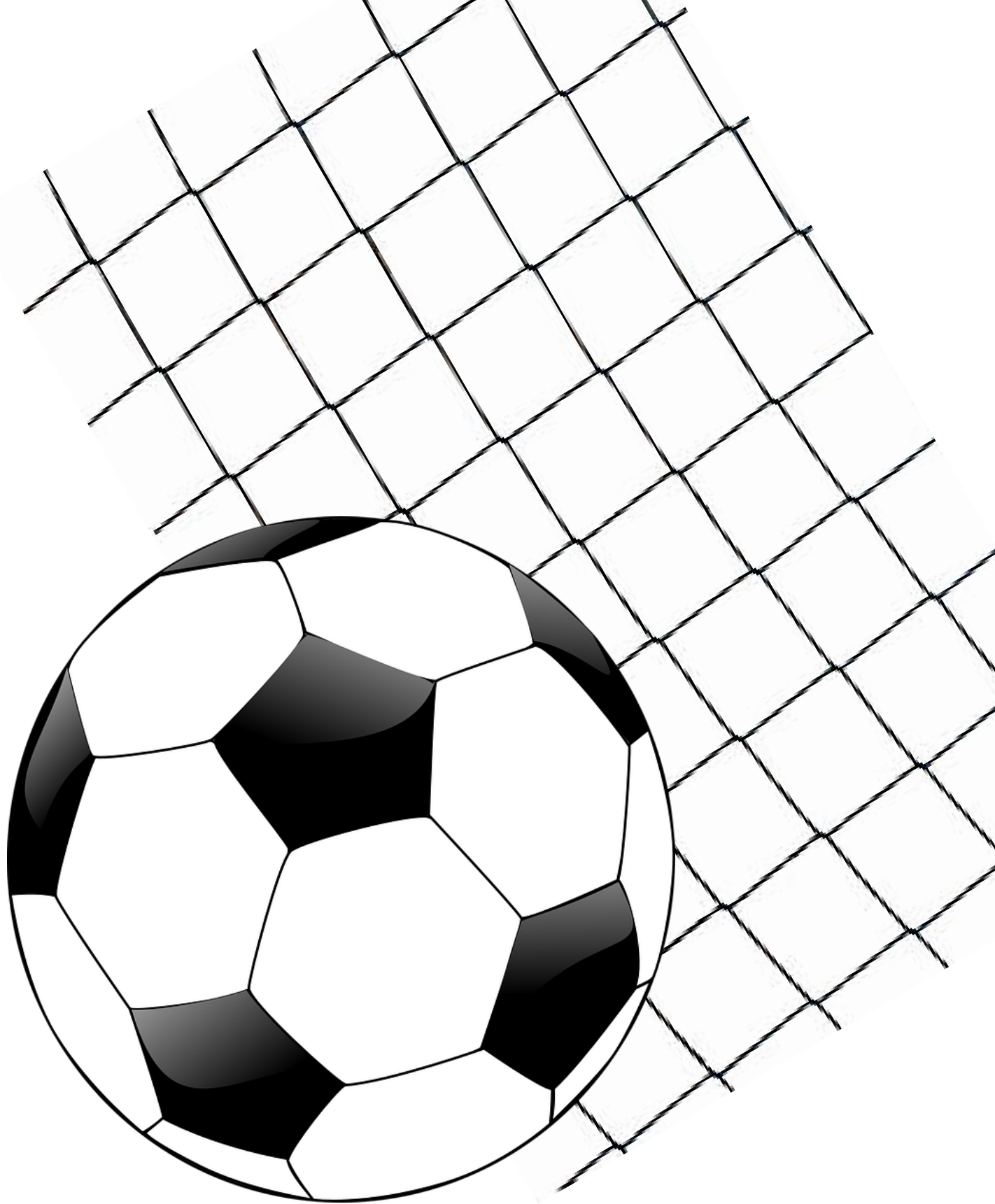
Triangular Goals

Create Triangular goals (3 flags 2 yards apart in a triangle shape) in the middle of the penalty area. Play 4v4 in penalty box. One team has 4 attackers, the other 3 keepers and 1 defender. If ball goes out of box, or keepers/defender makes a save, switch. Let each team captain keep scores. Then go to larger area - 6v6 or 8v8 in between halfway line and edge of 18 yard box. Open goals up to 6 yards wide.

Advance the activity appropriately by asking players to play 3 passes before shooting or chip over goals to teammate! Have to score with a volley or half volley, etc.

"The Game" 8v8, 9v9 to goals with one ball!

A coach should always try to let the players scrimmage for a third or so of practice in the format that they will play in season. For the U10-12 age group this will be any number from 8v8 to 1 v 1.





Goal Keeping

The U10 goalkeeper is ready to take a major step in his or her development. Up to this point, many players have probably taken turns playing in goal, but at this age the player that wants to concentrate on the position of goalkeeper usually makes him or herself known. It is, however, important that all players still do a lot of dribbling and passing exercises as all goalkeepers need to be good with their feet too.

The requirements and training of this position are specific and must be dealt with in a patient and understanding manner. It is helpful for every young goalkeeper to get basic instruction from an older keeper who has gone through proper training. Exposing a player to diving and defending break-aways (1 v 1) without proper preparation usually ends in injury and discouragement, and should be avoided. All keepers enjoy playing out on the field, and should thus be encouraged to participate in all areas of practice to improve their vision, technical foot skills and overall development.

Proper instruction for goalkeepers in this age group can improve them tremendously. They have generally reached the age where they will not move out of the way of a hard shot, and should therefore concentrate on receiving all types of balls and on distribution. It is at this age group that they should also be exposed to proper diving techniques. Many good instructional videotapes are available from the OYSA office and your local libraries. Once the player has the basic goalkeeping tools, he or she can be worked into all the team's training. The goalkeeper should always be a part of the team and certain parts of training should emphasize the goalkeeper's involvement more than others.

POSITIONING

The Ready Position:

Start by teaching players the “ready position”, the stance that all young goalkeepers should adopt anytime they prepare to stop a shot, whether during practice or in a game. The ready position involves being balanced on the balls (or front) of the feet, bending comfortably at the knees while keeping as tall as possible, and having the hands relaxed through the fingertips.

To add to this the player should be shifting weight from foot to foot at speed in order to increase his reaction time and jumping ability.

Hand Positioning:

It is imperative that young goalkeepers are taught the correct hand positioning for both low and high balls. In both cases, the hands should form a supple web that surrounds the back side (closest to the goal) of the ball. (Remember to always play with an appropriate sized ball for the age group that you are coaching). Coaches should also remember that at this age, players often have difficulty judging the height and speed of a moving ball.

For low balls the hand position resembles an ‘M’, with fingers pointed down and palms facing forward. The little fingers of both hands are almost touching.

For high balls the hand position resembles a ‘W’, with fingertips pointed up and palms facing forward. The thumbs of both hands are almost touching.

This Diagram is from OYSA recommended Tony Waiters’ book ‘Coaching the Goalkeeper’ available from World of Soccer (800) 762-2378

COACHING POINTS:

It is stressed that whenever possible, the young goalkeeper should try to get two hands behind the ball (no show diving!) as quickly as possible. This means that we have to encourage the young goalkeeper to have quick feet, attack the ball and move forward to meet the flight of the ball.

When meeting the ball, the goalkeeper should also use their body to form two barriers, a cushion and a wall. Try to get the goalkeepers to cushion the ball towards their bodies with their hands. The goalkeeper can absorb the force of the shot by relaxing slightly at the moment of contact. We do not want to form a brick wall that the ball will just bounce off back towards the attacking player! The wall will be created behind the cushion by the goalkeeper’s legs or body.

A goalkeeper should always be on the balls of his/her feet to be ready to react to different and developing situations.

Practice:

At practice utilize 1:1 technical work at this age group. Emphasize that the hands are supposed to cushion the ball into the chest area. A good practice exercise for this is to work in pairs with one throwing the ball, the other catching with one hand pretending that the ball is a water-filled balloon! Alternate the catching hand and vary the service. Make the catching player move his or her feet. This can be developed into two hands using the correct hand positioning getting the players to not let the ball make a sound as they catch it. Coaches should try this too; it is more difficult than it seems!

Collecting Balls

Before going into the methods of collecting/saving/catching different types of balls, stress the importance of being ready to move in the direction of the shot. A good goalkeeper makes difficult

saves look routine by anticipating his or her movements well in advance. If a young goalkeeper can concentrate for 5 minutes on the opposition attack, he or she will learn much about where the most danger will come from. Things to look for include: which foot the forward favors, which way they are likely to turn with their back to goal and which side of the field they prefer to attack down. In most games of this age group the coach can help by identifying simple patterns to his or her players. Players at this age often have difficulty judging the height and speed of a moving ball, therefore, wherever the ball is coming from tell the goalkeeper to be on their toes and ready to move their feet to get their body behind the line of the ball.

Ground Level:

In the handling of ground balls (rolling), the main concern is to get the body between the ball and the goal. Goalkeepers should learn to 'shuffle' (side step) to the rolling ball and attempt to create two barriers (the cushion and wall) between the ball and the goal. The cushion is the goalkeeper's hands in the 'M' position, and the wall will be the goalkeeper's legs. Again once behind the line of the ball, the goalkeeper can attack it by moving forwards to meet it. Once the keeper is certain of the line of the ball he should position one foot to the side of the ball, kneel down on the opposite knee (forming the wall) and make a ramp leading to his chest with his hands and arms.

Get the body behind the ball no matter how slowly the ball is traveling. As the ball travels up the ramp, the hands and forearms should curl around the bottom of the ball and hold it into the safety of the chest. It should not be 'scooped' as young keepers have a tendency to be too keen and the ball can end up slipping out and into the net! The goalkeeper can alternatively attempt to bend from the waist and maintain fairly straight legs to collect a ground ball. This is sometimes preferred because of a bigger body surface forming 'the wall' and also for speed of distribution from a standing position.

With no pressure a goalkeeper should be encouraged to come away from his goal line and field the ball with his feet. His or her first touch, however, should be at an angle away from the goal and/or direction of pressure (where ball has just come from). It should be reinforced that the young keeper should also play to their strongest foot.

Waist Level:

Again, instruct the goalkeeper to get directly behind the ball and field it with the fingers relaxed towards the ground. As the ball makes contact, the goalkeeper can absorb the force of the shot by giving or withdrawing slightly. By curling around the ball from the waist, a majority of this force is absorbed.

Chest Level:

Teach the goalkeeper to get behind the shot and allow the ball to make contact with the fingertips of both hands. Do not attempt to clasp the ball from both sides. Form a net with the hands around the ball in the 'W' position, with thumbs together and finger tips upward. Pull the ball into the chest for safety.

Overhead Level:

Handling high shots requires sure hands because in this case, the hands are the only wall between the ball and the goal. The hands must be outstretched and fairly relaxed to absorb the shot's force. Again, the hands must make contact on the backside of the ball and not the sides. To help ensure that this happens, ask the keeper to keep his thumbs touching whenever he goes for the ball. Many young goalkeepers will move their arms from their sides in large arcs to meet in the middle above their head, although by the time they have done this the ball has often gone through already! Get the keepers to get in the habit of always moving their arms in straight lines towards the line of flight of the ball. Pull the ball to the safety of the chest as soon as possible.

Jumping:

When the shots are overhead, a goalkeeper should still attempt to make two barriers between the ball and the goal. The goalkeeper can do this by jumping up vertically, although we must encourage our young goalkeepers to attack the ball (move forward to collect it rather than wait for it to come to them). During practice, the coach should ask his players to jump as high as they can, firstly from a still position with hands by their sides, then allowing them to use their arms to thrust upwards, and then finally taking a few steps forward, taking off on one foot, and using one knee and both of their arms to thrust upwards. Which of the three methods saw them leap highest? If the goalkeeper can anticipate quickly and get behind the line of the ball, then he can afford himself most time to get vertical. It is vital that our young goalkeepers practice jumping and holding on to high balls.

Summary:

To summarize, no matter what type of shot, the goalkeeper should do the following:

- 1. Side-step quickly behind the line of the ball*
- 2. Attack the ball whenever possible*
- 3. Create two barriers between the ball and the goal, or have as much of body behind ball as possible*
- 4. Absorb the ball's force by cushioning*
- 5. Bring the ball to the safety of the chest*
- 6. Concentrate until the ball is in the hands*
- 7. All goalkeepers need a good warm-up of all the above and some basic diving (explained below)*

These basic concepts must be taught before placing a child in the position of goalkeeper

Narrowing Angles

Generally speaking, if the opposition is attacking down the middle of the field, the goalkeeper will want to stay in the middle of his goal. If however, they are attacking the goal from the side he will want to move slightly in that direction to cover his 'near post' (the goal post nearest the shooter) because the ball when shot can travel to that side of the goal more quickly than to the other side. Most professional goalkeepers will tell you that they would much prefer to get beaten with a shot to the far post than the near post.

As explained in the 1996 supplement, a coach can easily demonstrate where the young keeper should position him or herself by tie-in a piece of rope to each goalpost and having the shooter hold them to form a triangle. The goalkeeper should try and position himself on the line that bisects the triangle (see diagram).

A coach can very easily demonstrate what 'narrowing the angle' means by getting each player in turn to place their ball on the penalty spot and stand behind it. Ask the player how much of the goal he can see unprotected. Then ask the player what his chances are of scoring.

Then move forward to the edge of the 6-yard box and ask the player the same questions. The same concept is utilized whether the attacking team is coming at the goalkeeper from the middle or the sides. Obviously we do not want the keeper to come out too far as the ball could be deliberately chipped over his or her head, although at this age group this is rare. As a general rule if the forward has the ball at his feet, then the goalkeeper can advance at least 6 yards. The coach should reinforce that the keeper should always be in the ready position.

Diving

Young players will both head, slide tackle and dive for the ball, whether we want them to or not, therefore, it is imperative that they be taught the correct techniques from the outset. The first dives should be taught in practice from a seated or kneeling position. The coach or partner kneeling 3-4 yards away will roll a ball (slowly) to an agreed side about one yard from the keepers upright body. The keeper's arm is to produce a 'long barrier' between the ball and the imaginary goal behind him. Again we want to encourage our keepers' to attack (move forward towards) the ball, so they will dive to their side but slightly towards the ball. The player will do this by placing his hand (on the side of the body that he is going to dive) on the ground, fingers spread, with the little finger almost touching the ground. This hand is to move in a straight line at this distance from the ground at all times, keeping the arm as straight as possible.

The opposite hand should move across the body, again trying to have the thumbs nearly touching, but this hand will end up half behind and half on top of the ball in order to control it. In essence the bottom arm attacks the ball, the body rotates and the bottom elbow is tucked in. The goalkeeper will end up lying on his or her side arm outstretched to make as long a barrier as possible. Again, the 'barrier' must be flexible enough to absorb the force of the ball and not rebound it to the attacker. The ball must again be brought into the body in a controlled fashion as soon as it is under control. The knee of the top leg should be brought up also for protection. It is very important that the coach alternates the player doing the exercise regularly (every 1-2 minutes). It is extremely tiring utilizing sets of muscles that are not used very often. The coach should try it sometime! The practice should continue with balls rolling to each side (the partner telling the keeper which side he is rolling to). When the keeper is competent (and agreeable) the service can speed up and finally not let the keeper know which side it is going to, in order to increase his reflex speed.

As the goalkeeper matures throughout the season, the coach can determine whether it is prudent to advance the goalkeeping practice to starting from a kneeling position (making a slightly longer barrier), then crouching, and graduate to a standing 'ready' position with feet shoulder width apart. Then the partner can serve the ball from a longer distance using his feet, getting the keeper to move his feet (side-stepping) to make the save as easy as possible.

Remember that if the keeper can make two barriers then he should. Again, we want to encourage the goalkeeper to attack the ball. When in a standing position, the first step must be forward at a 45 degree angle towards the side of the ball. The goalkeeper's feet must be pointed upfield.

Landing is an extremely important issue when diving for a ball. Young goalkeepers have a tendency to dive stomach-first giving a superman impression. This is wrong as it goes against our key factors of having our eyes on, and our body behind, the ball. It can also be very painful.

For a 'collapse' save (for a ball fairly near to the body) it is essential for the goalkeeper to land on his/her side, breaking their fall first with the side of the leg, hip and then shoulder. For a ball further from the keeper's body, the dive will more closely resemble a dive into a swimming pool with the keeper's forearm and then shoulder landing first. Again, in both cases the goalkeeper should then pull the ball in to the body in a controlled fashion, keeping it safely out of the reach of attackers.

As this stage is reached and the coach feels that the goalkeeper work can be incorporated into a team shooting exercise, then the coach should first concentrate on emphasizing the above coaching points to the keeper, while the assistant controls the rest of the team shooting. It is often helpful for the coach to stand behind the net to see things from the goalkeeper's perspective. Remember that all players need to be warmed up properly, especially the goalkeeper, and thus it is advisable to have the players shooting from a longer distance first. Try to encourage the keeper to concentrate in practice as to which foot certain players will use and where they like to shoot. This can help concentration and anticipation in games.

The progression described above can be utilized for a basic warm-up prior to a practice or game.

Ball Distribution

Once the ball is successfully collected and controlled, the goalkeeper must make a quick decision on the method of distribution, whether to roll, throw, pass or punt the ball back into play. Remember that the keeper is trying to distribute the ball to a teammate in space and in such a way that it is fairly easy to bring down under control. Most players at this age will be most accurate if they roll, pass or throw the ball. Again, goalkeepers should be encouraged to distribute the ball to the sides of the goal and to try to switch the play to the opposite side from where the pressure (ball) has just come.

Roll:

Rolling the ball to a teammate who is fairly close and does not have an opposing player near him involves a motion very similar to bowling. The goalkeeper's feet are usually moving in that direction and the strongest arm provides the rolling force, while the other hand simply helps guide the ball in the appropriate direction.

Throw:

There an abundance of different throwing techniques a goalkeeper can use. It is best to expose the young players to all of them and then they will decide which ones they favor. Most frequently seen are the underarm throw, the sidearm slingshot, the baseball pitch and the overarm throw.

The over-arm throws are slightly more difficult for a teammate to control, so it is vital that the keeper allows for this in looking to see where the nearest member of the opposition is. This action is similar to a tennis serve, holding the ball in one hand (the strongest serving arm), but the feet are positioned firmly on the ground one foot in front of the other.

Pass:

Quite regularly in the game these days, one will see a long ball played over the defense that rolls straight to the keeper and the opposition forwards give up the chase. If a keeper has been regularly involved in field play practice (all have at the younger age groups) then he will have time to control the ball and pass to a teammate in space. This may even be done outside of the penalty area. It is recognized that it is often difficult for a younger player to look up and take a 'snapshot' of where players are before concentrating on the ball, however, a simple call of 'time' by a defender will allow him to relax sufficiently in order to control the ball, look up and pass. If the goalkeeper is attempting to control the ball with his feet, he should try to do this when the ball is not heading directly to his goal! The coach can help the players practice this.

Punt:

There are times when the players in front of the goalkeeper will all have a member of the opposition fairly close by. The coach can teach his players to move into space, but sometimes a goalkeeper will have to punt the ball. To most easily get a young keeper to do this, get him to hold the ball in both hands, then walk forward after a few steps drop the ball and attempt to kick just after the ball bounces. This technique will set up the desired motion. The keeper must keep the toes of the kicking foot pointed down and remember to follow through the ball as far as possible. This skill requires a lot of practice before it can be done successfully on a regular basis. The coach should emphasize accuracy before power to start with.

Communication & Support

Undoubtedly the goalkeeper has the best view of the field of play, particularly in his own half. The keeper therefore must be encouraged to communicate with his defenders and midfield players. We have already seen how a defender can make a call of 'time' to his keeper, and in this way the relationship is dynamic and players should be communicating with each other constantly. This communication should always be positive. Constructive analysis must only come from the coach.

As with all game situations, a player who wants to control the ball should call for it, and this is no different for young goalkeepers. They should be encouraged to call 'keeper's ball' for any ball that they feel they can control (both in practice and matches). This is a real safety issue as a player that does not call for a ball he is going towards risks getting run into by another player. Having every player in practice call for every ball that they want to control, as well as every ball they want to receive from a teammate, gets them learning good habits from an early age. The goalkeeper should learn this too, and also to give instructions for the defense to go wide, come in, or to a specific player to hold position or drop back to cover. This develops trust and will eventually be used to take advantage of the opposing team's weaknesses and break down an attack.

Fun Games to help develop Goalkeeping Skills

All games with players using their feet!

Soft Catch

Play game in pairs throwing and catching ball. Try to make no sound as the ball hits the hands (almost impossible!)

The heading game 1v1

In 10x5 yard grid, players take it in turn to head ball over opponent's goal line by pulling ball back and using their own momentum to head the ball. The player who is attempting to stop the ball can use their hands or dive if necessary. They can also advance as far as they like so if they

stop ball they are in a better position to score. Then make it competitive and play for 1 minute and then the winner moves up the ladder, the loser moves down. If tied use 'rock, paper, scissors' as a tiebreaker. Do 8-10 rotations to establish a championship!

The heading game 2v2

Players are paired up to play 2v2 in a 10x10 grid. One pair has ball and tries to advance down field heading to each other. Once they get near the other teams goal line then one of them can attempt to head it past their line to score. The other team stays on their goal line and attempt to save ball. Once the ball hits the ground or is saved, the two heading retreat to their goal line and the other 2 begin to try to keep the ball in the air and advance up the field to score. Can do as a competitive ladder as above.

American Football

Create a playing field of 15 x 30 yards, but make the last 5 yards of each end an end zone. A touch down is scored by keeping possession and creating an opportunity to dribble into the end zone. If this is done with the ball under control, then a touch down is scored.

Death on the Nile!

20 x 30 grid. 3 teams of 4 players, and 3 balls. Each team get one minute in the middle as goal-keepers (crocodiles in river trying to intercept the ball!) Count # of interceptions. Other 2 teams have to play the balls across the 'river' back and forth. Introduce calling for the ball, then passing to a teammate on same side to open 'channels'. Goalkeeping techniques being used include – anticipation, setting position for shot, receiving balls, etc. If ball is intercepted have keeper distribute back to coach on sideline.

Keeper's Nest

One player (keeper) guards, but cannot touch the ball. The keeper may stand over the ball. The objective is for the other three players to get to the ball away from the keeper (using hands, feet or either), without being tagged and frozen by the keeper. The keeper's goal is to freeze the other three players. Once a player is frozen, he can remain frozen until all players are frozen, or until the ball is snatched away by the other players, or until the player counts to 10.

Keeper's Nest 3v1

Place three cones in a triangle 10 yards apart. One player is inside the triangle as the keeper. The other three try to possess the ball and score goals by moving the keeper out of position and playing through the triangle. If the keeper intercepts the ball, the player who played the ball last becomes the new keeper.

3v3 or 4v4 'American Football!'

Play 4v4 but players use their hands to pass. Concentrate on proper hand position under pressure. If a player has the ball in his or her hands then they cannot move their feet. Players cannot grab the ball if it is in a players hands! Instead of making goals for the teams to score in, create an end zone at either end of the small field. A team can score a 'touch-down' (6 points) if they pass the ball to a teammate standing in the end zone. Think up any number of variations for an extra point! Then restrict a player waiting in the end zone to staying in there a maximum of three seconds and then has to get out similar to basketball.

Advance the game by not allowing any player to stand still in the end-zone, or then limit access to the zone to 3 seconds at a time for any player.

Get out of here

Play "Get out of here" with goalkeepers! - Two teams in a line stand either side of the coach (standing on the half way line with all the balls). Name them team France and team Brazil Play 2v2 in a 15 x 20 area (or 3v3 in 20x30) grid to 2 yard goals, with the first 2 from each side coming out as soon as the coach puts a ball on the field. Each team appoints a goalkeeper (or rotate) so there is always a keeper in goal at each end. The coach is boss of the balls! Introduce penalty for encroaching! When a goal is scored or the ball goes out of play, the coach shouts 'Get out of here!' and the players have to go to the back of their line. As soon as the coach yells, he can put another ball on the field for the next two players from each team to play. The game is continuous till the coach has no balls left. He can then ask the players what they can do to rectify the situation... They will soon collect all the balls back!

Numbers Up

Going to one goal. Add pressure - (i.e. 2v 1, v2). Provide target for defender if they win the ball. Looking to shoot as quickly as possible, by having body in correct position, showing good 1st touch when receiving ball. 1st touch should be away from pressure. Disguise your shots.

Quick Fire!

Pull one goal all the way up the field to the outer edge of the 18 yard box. Play 5v2 in an area 18x36 yards with two full size goals 18 yards apart. Play for 1 minute at a time, with the 5 having to make 5 passes before shooting. If the defenders steal the ball they go for goal also. You can add goalkeepers at any time.

Cooler Ball!

Can play 4v4v4. Put large cooler / trash can (or similar) in middle of field and have 1 ball and the three teams play against each other! To score a team simply has to hit the target. Add 5 yard exclusion zone around cooler and introduce a goalkeeper to this area. Kids will play this game forever!

Triangular Goals

Create Triangular goals (3 flags 2 yards apart in a triangle shape) in the middle of the penalty area. Play 4v4 in penalty box. One team has 4 attackers, the other 3 keepers and 1 defender. If ball goes out of box, or keepers/defender makes a save, switch. Let each team captain keep scores.

Then go to larger area - 6v6 or 8v8 in between halfway line and edge of 18 yard box. Open goals up to 6 yards wide.

Advance the activity appropriately by asking players to play 3 passes before shooting or chip over goals to teammate! Have to score with a volley or half volley, etc.

Finish with 2 fields of 4v4, with a different method of scoring on each field.

Field 1: Head to score.

Field 2: All 4 have to be in opponents half of field for their goal to count!

Option: Have to go around the back of goal and dribble/pass through cones the opposite way.

The Coach can use any number of different options!

"The Game" 8v8, 9v9 to goals with one ball!

A coach should always try to let the players scrimmage for a third or so of practice in the format that they will play in season. For the U10-14 age group this will be any number from 8v8 to 11v11.

Objectives of soccer activities

1. Get players to solve problems
 2. Foster cooperation and teamwork
 3. When does the coach control the game as opposed to the players?
 4. Use games that bring out an aspect of the real game
 5. Excitement - get kids 'juiced up!'
 6. Create environments to bring ideas out. Show kids how to survive!
- Happy Goalkeeping!

