



Sharks & Minnows

Play in a large grid.

Half the players have balls and are the minnows. The rest don't have a ball and are the sharks.

The Minnows start at one end of the grid. The Sharks stand on the opposite line.

The Minnows must try to cross the Shark's line without losing possession of their ball.

The Sharks defend their line, trying to kick the Minnows' balls out of the defined area.

Minnows who successfully dribble across the Shark's line go back for round two.

Each Minnow who loses their ball join the Sharks. The last Minnow left in is the winner.

Bumper cars

Objective: This game improves dribbling skills, passing technique and encourages players to keep their heads up.

Age group: U5s to U9s (you also need a few willing adults)

Number of players: Whole team.

Set up: Create a 20x30 yard playing area with flat cones and a smaller rectangle just outside the playing area.

How to play: The players and the adults dribble a ball around the playing area. The children try to bump (pass) their "car" (the soccer ball) into an adult's "car."

If an adult's car is "bumped," the adult must take their car to the repair shop (an adjacent, small area designated by cones), and cannot leave until they count to 10.

Adults (coaches and parents) should encourage the children ("you can't catch me" etc.) so that the kids try very hard to bump their car.

As many parents as possible can play – kids LOVE to send their parents to the repair shop. Older siblings also are great targets.

Turtles & Eels

Just like Sharks and Minnow but the new Shark is an Eel that shocks the turtles trying to dribble across to the other line. Once an Eel shocks a turtle, the turtle lays on its back wiggling like a shocked turtle. The turtle counts to 10 then can get back up and dribble to the other side. The last one to the line becomes part of Team Eel. Play until everyone is an eel.

Beep, beep!

Number of players: Whole team.

Equipment required: Flat cones, a ball for every player.

Age group: U4s to U8s.

Set-up: Create a playing area big enough for all your players to move around in freely. Give each player a flat cone to hold. They are told to pretend that they are cars and the cone is their steering wheel.

How to play: Begin the game by telling your players to move in different ways around the playing area – forwards, with little steps, big steps, hop, move sideways, go backwards, etc.

- Encourage your players to keep their heads up and avoid crashing their car. Tell them to use their horn and go “beep, beep” if another “car” comes too close.
- Progress the game by giving the players a ball each. Now they dribble their ball around in the grid, again trying to avoid “crashing” into another player.

Coaching points:

Encourage players to move around the grid with their heads up and look for spaces to move into.

Ask:

- How can you avoid crashing your car?
- Should you look at the ball while you’re dribbling? Why not?