

Fun Five Series

Activities for the U6 age group





Purpose

- These five fun activities are geared for the U5/6 age groups.
- These are five activities that all coaches can utilize this season at least once.
- A guided discovery section is also included so coaches know what types of questions to ask the players to enhance their learning.
- Have FUN!



U6 Age Group

“Body Parts”



Directions:

Each player has a ball. The coach instructs the players to dribble their ball. When the coach calls out a “body part”, the players stop the ball with that body part. Examples: Foot, head, belly button, knee, etc. Variation: Tell one player that they are to stop the ball with a body part and the rest of the team has to use the same one. This will encourage them to get their heads up while dribbling.



Guided Discovery:

Ask the players how can they make sure they ball can be stopped with a part of their body?
(keep the ball close)

“Moving Goal”

Directions:

Every player has a ball. The coach uses an assistant to help him/her walk around with a “goal” in between them. Pool noodles are good to use for this activity. The players dribble their ball and try and score a goal while the moving goal is going around the playing area.



Guided Discovery:

Ask the players how can they score more goals?
(keeping our head up,
striking the ball as soon as
we see the goal)

Note: Don't be concerned
about technique. Just the
attitude to score goals!



U6 Age Group

"Retrieval"



Directions:

This activity is great for the warm-up! Every player has a ball and goes to the coach. One at a time they give the coach the ball. The coach then tosses the ball out for the players to go retrieve the ball and get it back to the coach. The coach gives them a variety of ways to bring the ball back. Example: Carry the ball and hop back to the coach, skip back to the coach, dribble the ball back, etc. The coach can also move after tossing the ball so the players have to find you.. This activity should replace LAPS!!



Guided Discovery:

Ask the players when you are walking around, how do they find you? (Get their eyes up-not down).

Sharks and Minnows

Direction:

Every player has a ball. Players attempt to dribble from one end of an area to the other. The coach acts as the “Shark” The players try to dribble from one end to the other without the shark tagging them. If a player gets tagged then they become a shark. Go until there are 2-3 sharks left. At first, allow all of the players to make it across. Then tag one at a time as they go across.



Guided Discovery:

Ask the players how do they stay away from the sharks? (get their head and eyes up)

Ask the players when they get by a shark, do they go faster or slower? (FAST)

Red Light-Green Light

Directions:

Every player has a ball. The players line up on one end. The coach calls out red or green light. The players stop their ball on red and go on green. They are trying to get to the other end without having to go back. If a player doesn't stop the ball on red, they are sent back even with the last player.

Part II-add more obstacles (cones) for them to go around from one end to the other.

Part III-Instead of shouting the colors hold up a red and/or green towel, dish cloth, etc.



Guided Discovery:

Ask the players how far the ball should be from their feet?

(It should be close enough so they can always reach it)

Ask the players when you do not shout the colors, where should their eyes be? (UP!)

Contributors

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- Gordon Henderson



Fun Five Series

Activities for the U8 age group





Purpose

- These five fun activities are geared for the U7/8 age groups.
- These are five activities that all coaches can utilize this season at least once.
- A guided discovery section is also included so coaches know what types of questions to ask the players to enhance their learning.
- Have FUN!

U8 Age Group “Gates”

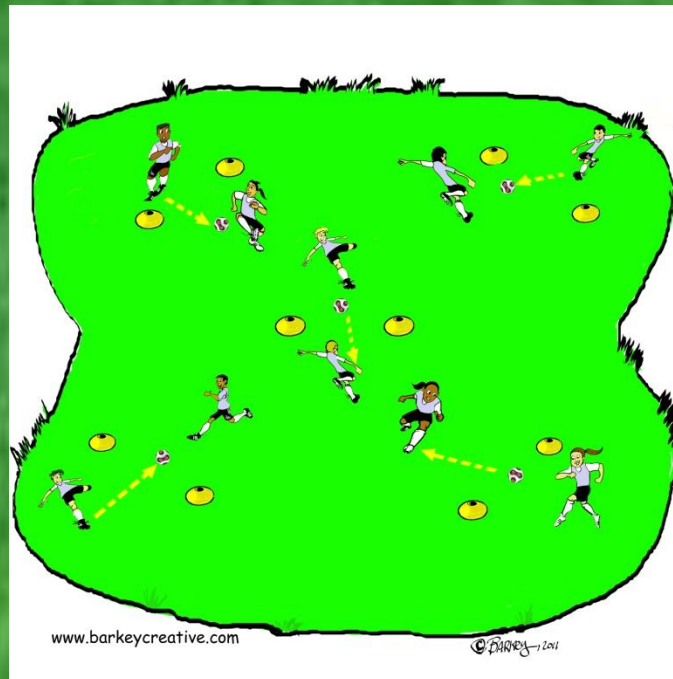
Directions:

Players pair up and share one ball. Small goals or “gates” are made throughout the playing area. The players are instructed to pass the ball through each gate to their teammate who is on the other side. See which pair can pass through the most gates.

Variation 1: Instead of counting gates 1, 2, 3, . . . : Count by 2’s or 3’s to tie in math skills with scoring.

Count out phone number/emergency number, players try to spell their full name, favorite book, movie, etc.

Variation 2: Have a coach/parent walk around and “block” a gate. If a gate is blocked then the two can not go through.

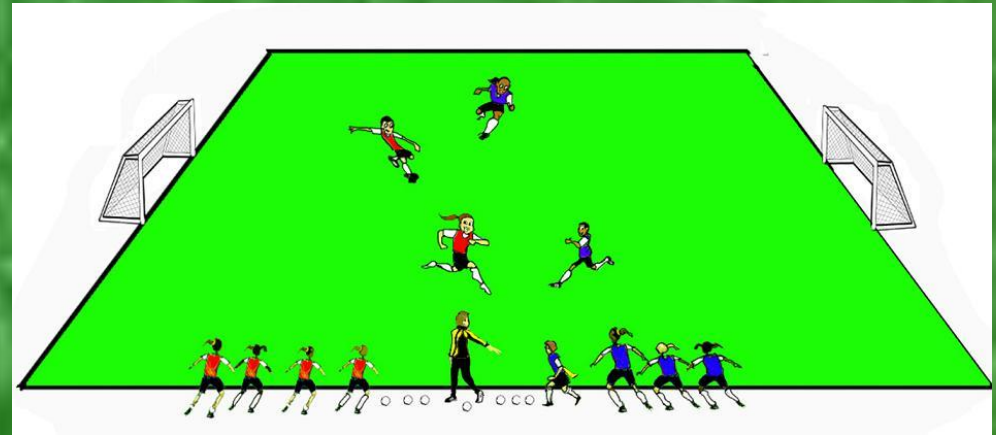


Guided Discovery:

Ask the players what part of their feet should they use when making a pass to their teammates? (inside or outside of their foot)

Ask the players how they can pass through more gates quicker? (by passing the ball as soon as they seen their teammate is ready on the other side.

“Get Outta Here”



Directions:

Create two teams. Make a small field 20-25 yards long by 15 wide. Make two goals on the ends. Each team lines up next to the coach. Each team sends two players to play against the other team's two.

When the ball is scored or it goes out in any direction all four players on the field run off and another two from each team come on.

This game moves fast and they LOVE it!

Guided Discovery:

Ask them what should they try to do when they see the goal?
(shoot)

Ask them what parts of the foot can you use when you shoot?
(inside, outside, laces)

Ask them what should they do if they can't shoot? (get the ball to their teammate so they can shoot)

“Retrieval in Pairs”

Directions:

This activity is great for the warm-up! Players “pair up” and share one ball. One pair at a time they give the coach the ball. The coach then tosses the ball out for the two players to go retrieve the ball and get it back to the coach. The coach gives them a variety of ways to bring the ball back. Example: Bring the ball back with all four hands on it. Bring the ball back with three hands and an elbow.

Part II-Progress to having the pairs pass the ball back to the coach. Give them a specific number of passes to bring the ball back to you. Move around so the players have to find you.. This activity should replace LAPS!!



Guided Discovery:

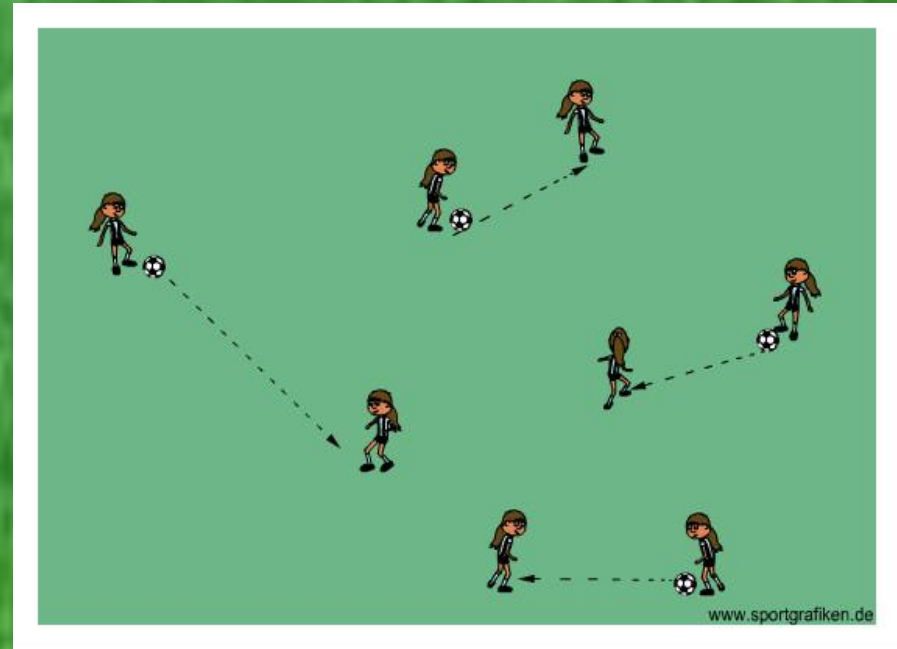
Ask the players when you are walking around, how do they find you? (Get their eyes up-not down).

Ask the players what part of the foot can they use when passing the ball to their teammate? (inside or outside)

“Frienemies”

Direction:

Partners moving and passing in space, painting the field. When Coach calls out key word, e.g. “enemies,” player with ball tries to shield ball from partner trying to win ball, or tries to dribble into space behind partner. After 5-10 seconds Coach calls “friends” to go back to partner passing and dribbling.



Guided Discovery:

How can you keep the ball away from the “enemy”? (shield)

What types of passes should you and your partner make when you are “friends”? (short and longer ones)

Corner Goals

Directions:

Divide players into two equal teams. Make diagonal goals with flags or cones in each corner of the field. When a goal is scored or the ball goes out of bounds, the coach plays in a new ball to keep the game flowing. The object of the game is to score through any of the 4 corner goals by passing or shooting.

Variation: Assign each team two goals to attack and two goals to defend.



Guided Discovery:

Ask the players what should they look to do when they get the ball?
(Score first, if not then pass to a teammate who can)

What types of passes should you make? (long and short)

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Contributors

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- Dr. Tom Turner-Ohio North Youth Soccer



Fun Five Series

Activities for the u-10 age group





Purpose

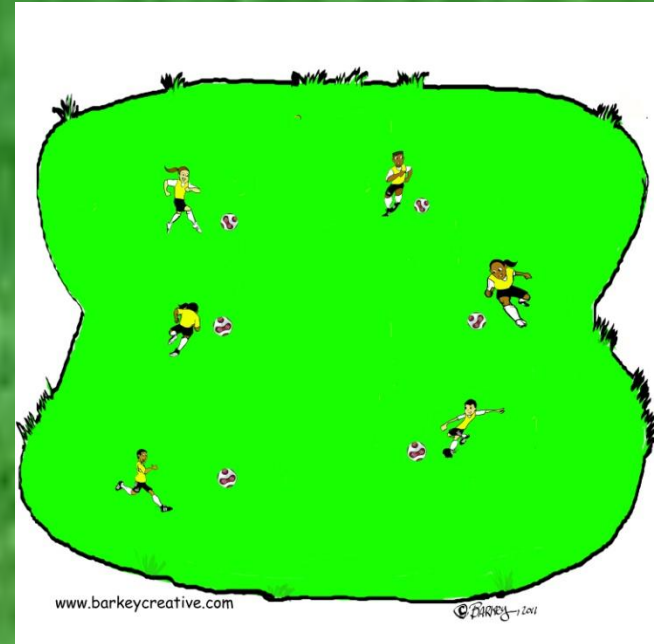
- These five fun activities are geared for the U9/10 age groups.
- These are five activities that all coaches can utilize this season at least once.
- A guided discovery section is also included so coaches know what types of questions to ask the players to enhance their learning.
- Have FUN!

“The Game That Never Ends”

Directions:

Each player has a ball. The coach instructs the players to dribble their ball. Each player is “it”. If a player gets tagged they are frozen. If, however, the player that got tagged by specific player gets tagged then the person who was tagged by them can now be “unfrozen”. So there should always be at least one player left unfrozen.

Variation: Players work in pairs and try to hit another pair’s ball. If they are successful then the same rules apply. The pair whose ball got hit are frozen. They are then unfrozen when the pair that hit their ball get frozen.



Guided Discovery:

Ask the players how do they make sure they do not get “frozen”? (by getting their heads up while they dribble and/or pass)

“Moving Goal Team Game”



Directions:

Make 2 teams of 3-5 players. One “moving goal” is assembled by two coaches/parents, etc. holding a pool noodle, vests tied together. They play like a normal soccer game but the goal “moves” around the field making it more difficult/easier for a team to score. This is a great game to work on spatial awareness for 9 and 10’s.

Guided Discovery:

Ask the players how can they score more goals?
(keeping our head up, spreading out, and passing the ball to the player closest to goal)

“Retrieval In Groups”

Directions:

This activity is great for the warm-up! Players get into groups of 3-4 players. One at a time they give the coach the ball. The coach then tosses the ball out for the players to go retrieve the ball and get it back to the coach. The coach gives them a variety of ways to bring the ball back. Example: Bring the ball back with 5 hands and an elbow, bring the ball back to by passing and everyone has to be involved, which group can bring the ball back to me the quickest? **Note:** The coach should walk/jog after they toss the balls out to each group so the group needs to work on finding the coach.



Guided Discovery:

Ask the players when you are walking around, how do they find you? (Get their eyes up-not down).

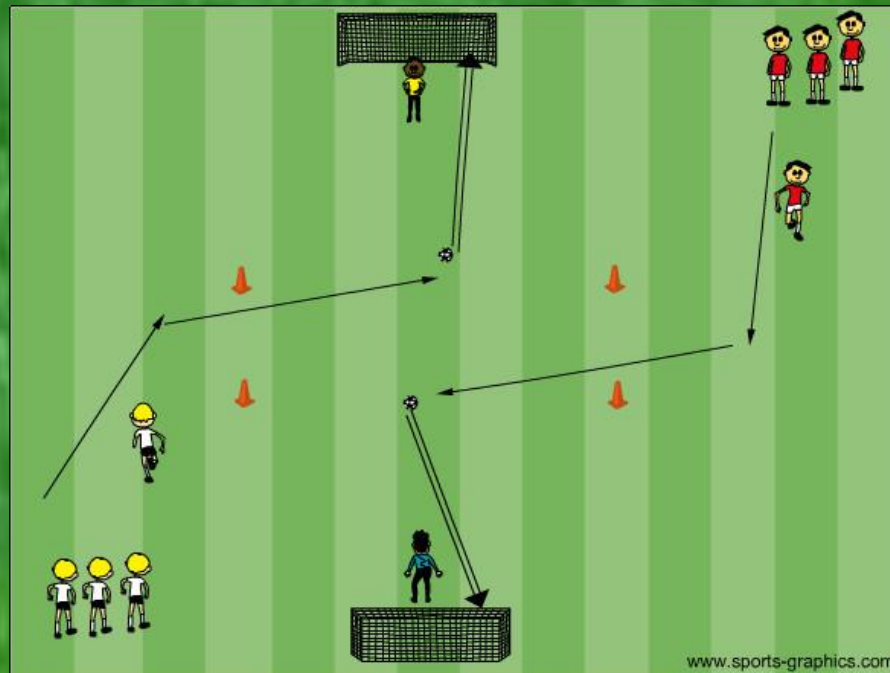
Ask the players when they are passing the ball, how can they get the ball back to you quicker? (making good passes to their teammates with pace)

“MLS Shootout”

Directions:

Organization: 40 x 30 training area with large goals, GKs and two balls placed in the center of the field. Divide players into two equal teams, numbered 1 - 4 and stationed diagonally opposite on each end line. The coach calls out a number and those players must run through the cone gates before entering the field. The first player to score wins.

Variation: Call out two, three or all four numbers. They then come out and play with one ball against each other.



Guided Discovery:

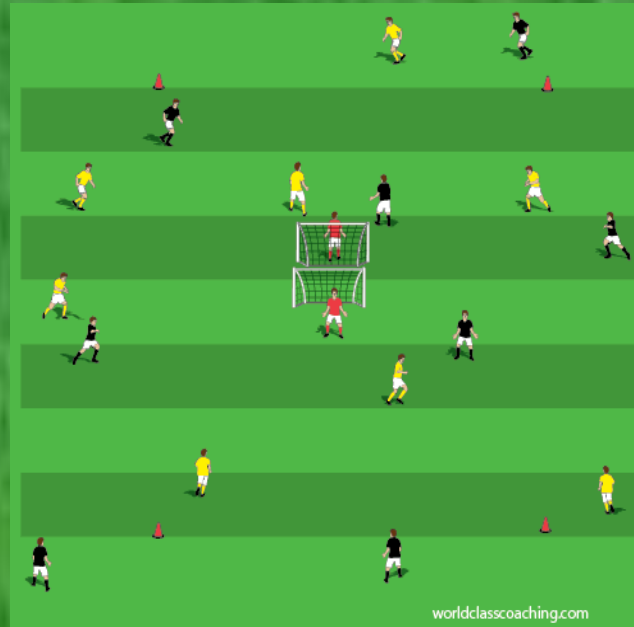
Ask the players how do they keep the ball low when striking the ball? (get their shoulders over the ball)

Ask the players what part of the feet can they use when they strike a ball for distance? (laces/instep)

“Two Sided Goal Game”

Directions:

Half field with a kickback or two goals back to back in the center of a 30 yard area. Two equal teams. The ball starts on the outside of the 30 yard area. It can be dribble, passed, or shot. If the ball is played into the 30 yard area, the team who played the ball in is the only team that can score. Any shot hit from inside the 30 must be a one touch shot. Players can take multiple touches inside the 30 but they can only finish on their first touch. Balls intercepted must take the ball outside the 30 before they are allowed to score. A shot from outside the 30 does not have to be one touch.



Guided Discovery:

Technique: Ask the players what part of the foot they can use to strike the ball far? (laces, instep).

Ask the players how they can create a scoring opportunity? (working together and spreading out)

Contributors

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- Denny Vaninger -Missouri Youth Soccer



Fun Five Series

Activities for the 11-14 age group





Purpose

- These five fun activities are geared for the U11-14 age groups.
- These are five activities that all coaches can utilize this season at least once.
- A guided discovery section is also included so coaches know what types of questions to ask the players to enhance their learning.
- Have FUN!

“Playing Out Of Pressure”

Directions:

Warm Up:

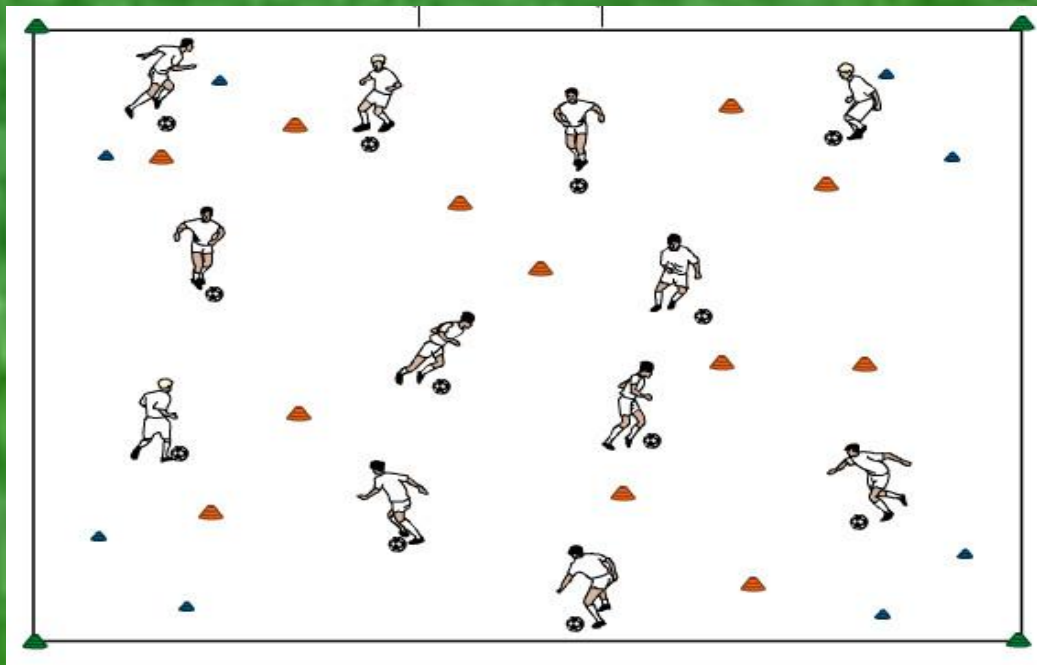
-Each player with a ball moves and turns with outside foot or variations.

-Phase 1:

-Same as above except that 2-3 players do not have balls and try to get them from others. and score when they get a ball. The players dispossessed try to get another.

Phase 2: Play 3v3 +1 (4v4+2) with 4(5) goals in play. Team keeps possession as long as possible while trying to get ball through goals.(go to 4 v 4) Pts. Hold to open for a pass, when and where to risk pass, opening up as support player.

Phase 3: Play 6(8) v 6(8) too Goals (60(70) x 35) with all inbound balls served by the GK on the ground. Go to regular scrimmage. Pts as above



Guided Discovery:

While dribbling, ask them what should they be looking to do after going through a set of cones? (getting their arms out for balance and head up for space)

In Phase 2 and 3 ask them when should you hold for a pass or risk passing the ball to a teammate? (when there is little or no pressure on the ball or teammate)

Barrel Ball



Directions:

Using a barrel, bags or something to hit, the two teams try to pass the ball around and hit the barrel.

You made need to put an arc around the barrel as a “no entry” zone.

Variation: A ball that is “chipped” into the barrel is worth 2 points.

Guided Discovery:

- What types of passes do we need? (short and long)
- Where is your first look? (To hit the barrel with the ball)
- Where do your teammates need to be? (Beside the ball and away from the ball)

“All Up and Back”

Directions:

Two teams play a normal game to goals. The only rule is that all attacking players must be across the midfield line for goal to count.

Variation: All defenders must be behind the midfield line or the goal is worth 2 for the attacking team.



Guided Discovery:

Ask the players when you are walking around, how do they find you? (Get their eyes up-not down).

Ask the players when they are passing the ball, how can they get the ball back to you quicker? (making good passes to their teammates with pace)

“Three Ways”

Directions:

This is a regular small sided game with no goalkeepers. The first team to score in three different ways wins. Both teams agree on how each goal will be scored but the goals must be scored in order.

Example: Goal #1 must be scored on the ground, Goal #2 must be scored off a volley, Goal #3 must be scored from a ball that is passed backwards first.
Nutritional



Guided Discovery:

Depending on the ways they decided to score, base your questions on what you see. Example: What do you need if you are trying to score from a backpass? (Someone needs to play as a target)

“Half Court Soccer”

Directions:

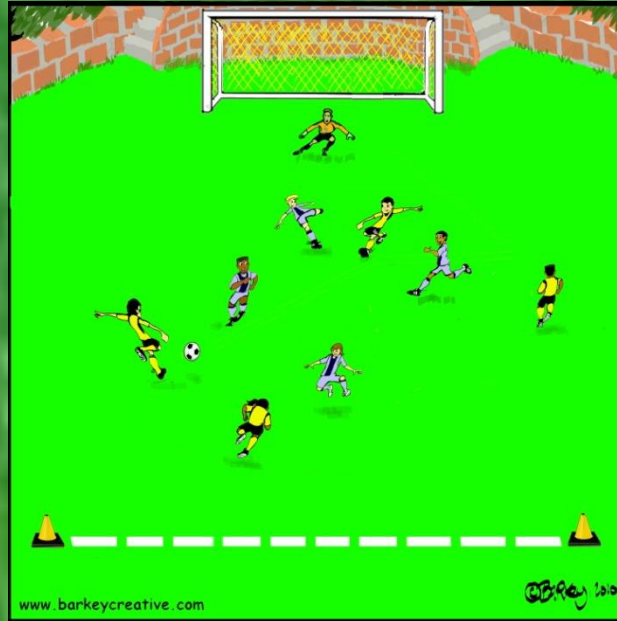
This is a game to one goal similar to half court basketball.

Whenever the defending team wins the ball they must take the ball to a “take-back” line before then can shoot on the one goal.

This game is really fun playing on a normal field with the penalty box being the “take-back” line.

Rules can be created with regard to scoring (i.e. scoring from beyond the take-back line is worth 2 points).

Variation: Play “21” Goals outside the six yard box are worth 2 points-goals inside the six yard box are worth 1 point.



Guided Discovery:

Technique: Ask the players what part of the foot they can use to strike the ball far? (laces, instep).

Ask the players how they can create a scoring opportunity? (by spreading out and serving crosses)

Contributors

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