

## **Recreational Coaches' Practice Session: U7 60 minutes**

### "Freeze!" (5 minutes)

On the coach's command, all players run as fast as they can within the playing area. When the coach yells "freeze" players should attempt to stop as fast as possible. After 3-4 attempts, ask them to stop as fast as possible and stand on one leg until you say "go" again. This allows them to develop coordination. Encourage them to run around without running into another player.

### "Body Part Dribbling" (5 minutes)

On the coach's command, all players dribble their ball as fast as they can within the playing area. Encourage them to dribble without running into another player or allowing their ball to touch other balls or players. When the coach yells "freeze" players should attempt to stop the ball as fast as possible with the bottom of their foot. They should keep their foot on top of the ball until you say "dribble" again. Encourage players to dribble straight ahead with their laces. When changing directions, encourage them to use the inside, outside, or sole of the foot to change directions. Discourage dribbling the ball with the toes. After 3-4 attempts, have the players stop the ball with their knee, when you say "freeze", without touching the ball with their hands. Encourage them to keep their knee on top of the ball until you say "dribble" again. After 3-4 attempts, have the players sit on the ball, when you say "freeze", without touching the ball nor ground with their hands.

### Red Light..Green Light!(5 minutes)

Every player has a ball at the starting line. Designate a finish line approximately 15-25 yards away. Players attempt to be the first to drive their car (dribble the ball) over the finish line. On the coach's command of "green light!", players dribble towards the finish line. On the coach's command of "red light!", players must "hit the brakes"(stop their ball immediately with the bottom of the foot). Any player that cannot stop their ball immediately must go back even with the last person. Variation: Vary the surfaces of the foot that the player must dribble or stop the ball with. Vary the body surface that the players stop the ball with (ex: elbow, knee, head). Try the game first without the ball.

### "New Ball!" (10 minutes)

Play game with two small goals. Every time the ball goes out of play, the coach immediately yells "NEW BALL!" and rolls a new ball into play. As soon as the ball goes out of bounds, try to get the players to leave that ball alone (parents can help here!) and pursue the new one that is in play. After all the balls are gone, players gather them up and bring them back to the coach. Do not allow the parents to chase the balls. This allows the players to recover a bit before you play again.

### The Game(20-25 minutes)

## **Recreational Coaches' Practice Session: U7 Week #2, 45 minutes – 60 minutes**

### **Topic: Dribbling**

**"Try this..."(5 minutes):** Coach demonstrates various exercises with the ball (ex: tossing ball into the air and receiving it with the foot, thigh, chest and then dribbling away at speed)

Variations of the game Allow the kids to invent something to do.

**The Sprinkler(5-10 minutes):** Every player with a ball. On coach's command, players hand balls to coach and coach tosses the balls in various directions. Players must bring the ball back to the coach as quickly as possible while dribbling with their feet....NO HANDS! ☺

Variations of the game After a few minutes, start to throw the ball a little further so the players get to kick the ball a little longer on their way back. When they get back to you. Make them stop the ball with the

bottom of their foot, and keep their foot on top of it, until you pick it up and throw it again. You can also throw the ball shorter and tell them to touch it 20 times with their laces and/or inside of foot before they get back to you. After 5 minutes of different variations, throw the players balls in different directions and then begin to move around the area so that the kids have to look up to see where you are while they are dribbling the ball back.

### **Many Goals(5-10 minutes):**

In a designated area, set up numerous (5-7) cone goals ranging from 3-6 feet in width. Every player has a ball and on the coach's command they attempt to dribble (see below) through as many goals as possible in a time period.

Variations to the game: Players cannot dribble through the same goal twice in a row. Players must perform a "LUNGE STEP" (see below) before dribbling through a goals. Two teams compete by adding total points scored.

### **Coaching Technique: Dribbling**

Best Used For:

- Running with the ball at your feet
- Penetrating the positions of the opposing team
- Evading challenges from defender(s)
- Manipulating the ball

How to Perform It:

1. Maintain control of the ball while moving at speed.
2. Unbalance the opponent by using deceptive moves with feints and changes of direction and speed
3. Advance the ball with light touches while using predominantly the insides, and also the outsides of the feet
4. To run at your fastest, use your laces with your toe pointing down
5. Keep your head up to see where defenders, teammates and open spaces are
6. Develop two favorite moves, one on either side of your opponent (left/right)

Watch Out For:

- Keeping your head down doesn't allow for you to know your available options
- Running too fast for your skill will cause you lose control of the ball

### **Coaching Technique: Lunge Step**

Best Used For:

- One-v-One Situations against a defender with space in behind them
- Unbalancing the opponent by shifting your weight in order to get the opponent to go in one direction, while you take off in the other

How to Perform It:

1. Step (Lunge) with your right leg to the right-side of the ball with every intention of going in that direction, putting all your body weight on your right leg
2. Make sure your hips are facing towards the right-side of the ball in order to sell the fake and that your foot is placed in front of the ball
3. With your opposite foot (left), use the outside of the foot with your toe pointing down, push the ball in the left direction away from the defender
4. Accelerate into space with a quick burst of speed

Watch Out For:

- Not accelerating fast enough away from the defender
- Bending at the knee during the lunge, while putting all your weight onto that leg

### **The Game(25-30 minutes)**

Award extra points for successful "lunge steps" during the game!

**Recreational Coaches' Practice Session:  
U7 Week #3, 60 minutes**

**Topic: Receiving with the Inside of the Foot and Push Passing**

**Coaching Technique: Push Pass**

**Best Used For:**

- Short or medium distance passing
- Shooting at short distances for accuracy

**How to Perform It:**

1. The inside of your passing foot remains square to the target throughout the motion
2. The toes of your striking foot are pointing up and the ankle is locked in place
3. Your body should be square of the target (hips are facing the target)
4. Your shoulders and center of gravity are forward throughout
5. The "plant" foot is pointing in the direction of the target and is next to the ball.
6. Strike in the middle to top-half of the ball with the inside of your foot slightly off the ground.
7. Follow through towards the target with your striking foot still open and square.

**Watch Out For:**

- Your toe pointing down instead of being up
- Having a "floppy" ankle at the point of contact with the ball, make sure the ankle is "locked" throughout the movement
- The "plant" being too far behind or in front of the ball

**Coaching Technique: Receiving the Ball With the Inside of the Foot**

**Best Used For:**

Controlling the ball from short passes, long passes, bouncing balls, or when dribbling

**How to Perform It:**

1. Receiving with the inside of the foot is similar to the push pass: toe up, ankle locked, foot slightly off the ground and try to cushion the ball slightly in front of you. As the ball makes contact with the receiving foot, withdraw the foot backwards a bit to cushion the ball.

**Watch Out For:**

- Having your toe pointing down, this will cause the ball to hop over your foot

**Partner Passing (5 minutes):**

Partners stand approximately 5 feet apart from each other with a ball. On the coaches' command the players try to push pass the ball, very gently, back and forth to each other, concentrating on the proper technique (see above). After a few minutes of practicing, make it a fun game by seeing how many passes they can do in a minute. After a few minutes, have the players play 2 touch (receive the ball with the inside of the foot with one touch and then pass it back to their partner with the inside of the foot with the second touch). After a few minutes of practicing, make it a fun game by seeing how many they can do in a minute.

**The Sprinkler(5-10 minutes):** Players work in pairs with a ball. On coach's command, players hand balls to coach and coach tosses the balls in various directions. Players must bring the ball back to the coach as quickly as possible while passing back and forth to each other. Have the players perform a certain number of passes before getting the ball back to you.

Variations of the game: After a few minutes, start to throw the ball a little further so the players get to pass the ball a little longer on their way back. When they get back to you.

**Many Goals(5-10 minutes):**

In a designated area, set up numerous (5-7) cone goals ranging from 3-6 feet in width. Players work in pairs with a ball and on the coach's command they attempt to pass (see below) through as many goals as possible in a given time period.

Variations to the game: Players cannot pass through the same goal twice in a row. Two teams compete by adding total points scored. Have the players perform a "1-2" by one partner passing through the goals first and then the other partner passing it back with one touch to their partner outside of the goal.

**"New Ball!" (10 minutes)**

Play 4v4 game with two small goals. *Award the players a goal for a successful pass in the game. Award them 5 goals if they can score as a result of a good pass!* Every time the ball goes out of play, the coach immediately yells "NEW BALL!" and rolls a new ball into play. As soon as the ball goes out of bounds, try to get the players to leave that ball alone (parents can help here!) and pursue the new one that is in play. After all the balls are gone, players gather them up and bring them back to the coach. Do not allow the parents to chase the balls. This allows the players to recover a bit before you play again.

**The Game(20 minutes)**

*Award the players a goal for a successful pass in the game. Award them 5 goals if they can score as a result of a good pass!*

**Recreational Coaches' Practice Session:  
U7 Week #4, 60 minutes**

**Topic: Receiving with the Inside of the Foot and Push Passing**

**Coaching Technique: Push Pass**

**Best Used For:**

- Short or medium distance passing
- Shooting at short distances for accuracy

**How to Perform It:**

1. The inside of your passing foot remains square to the target throughout the motion
2. The toes of your striking foot are pointing up and the ankle is locked in place
3. Your body should be square of the target (hips are facing the target)
4. Your shoulders and center of gravity are forward throughout
5. The "plant" foot is pointing in the direction of the target and is next to the ball.
6. Strike in the middle to top-half of the ball with the inside of your foot slightly off the ground.
7. Follow through towards the target with your striking foot still open and square.

**Watch Out For:**

- Your toe pointing down instead of being up
- Having a "floppy" ankle at the point of contact with the ball, make sure the ankle is "locked" throughout the movement
- The "plant" being too far behind or in front of the ball

**Coaching Technique: Receiving the Ball With the Inside of the Foot**

**Best Used For:**

Controlling the ball from short passes, long passes, bouncing balls, or when dribbling

**How to Perform It:**

1. Receiving with the inside of the foot is similar to the push pass: toe up, ankle locked, foot slightly off the ground and try to cushion the ball slightly in front of you. As the ball makes contact with the receiving foot, withdraw the foot backwards a bit to cushion the ball.

**Watch Out For:**

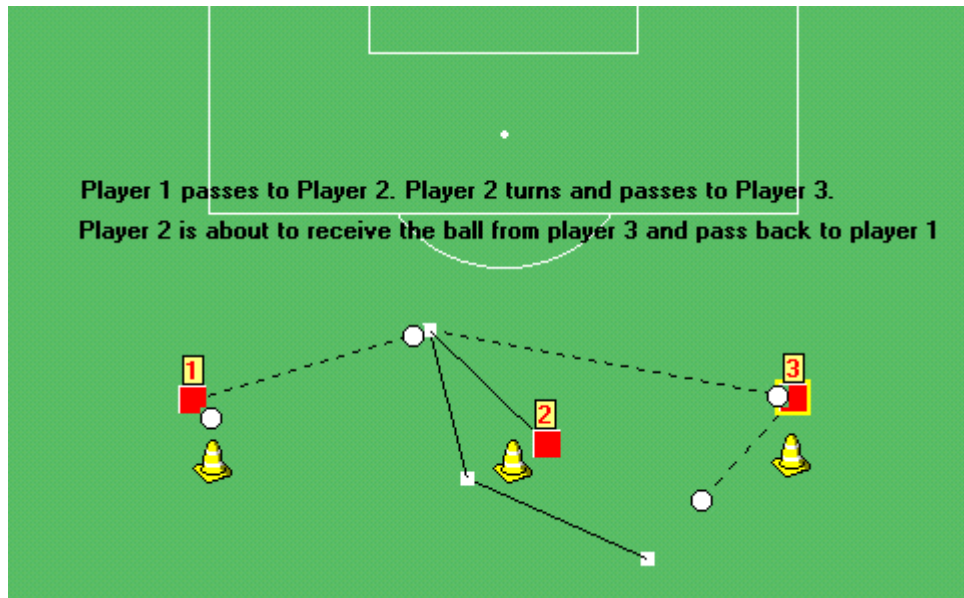
- Having your toe pointing down, this will cause the ball to hop over your foot

**Partner Passing (5 minutes):**

Partners stand approximately 5 feet apart from each other with a ball. On the coaches' command the players try to push pass the ball, very gently, back and forth to each other, concentrating on the proper technique (see above). After a few minutes of practicing, make it a fun game by seeing how many passes they can do in a minute. After a few minutes, have the players play 2 touch (receive the ball with the inside of the foot with one touch and then pass it back to their partner with the inside of the foot with the second touch). After a few minutes of practicing, make it a fun game by seeing how many they can do in a minute.

**Passing Relays:**

Divide your team into groups of threes (see diagram). Player 1 passes to player 2, Player 2 takes a controlling touch toward player 3 and passes. Player 3 receives and passes to player 2. Player 2 takes a controlling touch toward player 1 and passes. 1st team to get the ball back to player 1, using the proper techniques, WINS!



**Many Goals(5-10 minutes):**

In a designated area, set up numerous (5-7) cone goals ranging from 3-6 feet in width. Players work in pairs with a ball and on the coach's command they attempt to perform "1-2"s through as many goals as possible in a given time period.

Variations to the game: Players cannot pass through the same goal twice in a row. Two teams compete by adding total points scored. Have the players perform a "double pass" by one partner passing through the goals first and then the other partner passing it back, with one touch, through the goal.

**The Game**(20 minutes)

*Award the players a goal for a successful pass in the game. Award them 5 goals if they can score as a result of a good pass!*