

UR STREET SO ET SOCCER S T SOCCER GAMES ST

CREATING A NATURAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

BY MATT CARROLL



Street Soccer Games

By

Matt Carroll

Published by

WORLD CLASS COACHING

First published October, 2019 by
WORLD CLASS COACHING 12851 Flint Street Overland Park, KS 66213 (913) 402-0030

Copyright © WORLD CLASS COACHING 2019

All rights reserved. No parts of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior written permission of the publisher.

Authors – Matt Carroll
Editor - Tom Mura
Cover Art By - Barrie Smith



Table of Contents

| | |
|-----|---------------------------------|
| 4- | Author Biography |
| 5- | Introduction |
| 6- | Philosophy |
| 7- | World Cup |
| 10- | Hot Spot |
| 13- | Soccer Manhunt |
| 16- | Capture Flag |
| 19- | Posts |
| 22- | Curbs |
| 25- | Basketball Soccer |
| 28- | Horse |
| 31- | Playing in Outdoor Hockey Rinks |
| 34- | Soccer Tennis |
| 37- | Wall Ball |
| 40- | Soccer Kickball |
| 43- | Pyramid |
| 46- | Ball/Goal DIY Ideas |
| 47- | Conclusion |

Bio:

The author Matt Carroll is the current head coach at New Egypt High School, and has been with the program for the last six years. New Egypt has been successful over the course of his time with the team reaching the Central Jersey Group 1 Sectional Finals three times and the New Jersey State Group 1 Finals once. He has worked with the local club teams and recreations programs closely to not only train athletes, but to develop systemic coaching curriculum and coaching education programs. He has his USSF D License and recently won a scholarship to seek his C License thanks to NYC Coaching Education. He previously authored the title *Creating Chaos*.

Intro:

When I read Johan Cruyff's autobiography *My Turn* two things instantly stood out to me.

1. Johan Cruyff played for the u-14 Dutch National Baseball Team as a catcher
2. How passionately he talked about street soccer

The rest of the book is fantastic, and I highly recommend it for anyone interested in the sport (it is required reading for our team's leadership course), but that first chapter when Cruyff talked about the importance of street soccer most stood out to me. He describes it as one of the most important contributions to his development as a player. The street game automatically forces you to require balance as a player, if you are not strong you fall, if you fall you hit the pavement, if you hit the pavement you get hurt. If you are not strong, such as a young wispy Johan Cruyff, you need to find new ways of avoiding defenders, and so the famous Cruyff Turn was actually born on the streets of Amsterdam, rather than the fabled Ajax academy system (although they fostered it).

Cruyff's claim holds weight when you look elsewhere as well. Street soccer is a staple of Brazilian footballing genius, stick ball players from places such as Puerto Rico continue to dominate the MLB, and no game has a more storied history in the US of street pickups to the pros than basketball. Every coach knows this to be true, and we all wish our players would practice on their own, or organize pickup games, or just generally spend more time outside, but the honest truth is that many kids today do not know how to set up these games on their own. From an early age children's lives are often structured for them and many of the freedoms that were once afforded to America's youth (staying out till the street lights went on, walking/riding miles to the park, etc.) are gone. As a result, many of today's players grew up mostly playing the game in highly organized settings rather than those Cruyff describes as so formative.

It is therefore my hope that this book is used in a slightly different manner than most coaching manuals. Maybe it is that practice where you only have 2-3 players show up, or for your own child, or to give your players some ideas that may spark their love of playing soccer in their own time. Maybe one of these drills is the one that gets your players to start playing with some of the neighborhood kids on a regular basis, or makes your son/daughter fall in love with the game, maybe a player is inspired to create their own move on the world stage, or maybe it just makes for a few more creative players. Whatever the end result or intended purpose I hope you enjoy *Street Soccer*.

Philosophy:

The purpose of this book should be a jumping off point for creativity. There is an infinite number of games that can be created between a foot and ball, and they all depend on your setting, number of players, etc., but here are a few basic philosophies that dictate the games included and should give you a baseline for the development of new ones.

Balance:

Balance is key in any street game. Many players ‘know’ that balance is important but don’t really have an understanding of the “why”. There is a distinct advantage in these games to staying on your feet, you don’t end up with scrapes all over your legs and arms. The game ends up being the teacher in this regard.

Touches:

I recently had some sessions where I was training a team and the coach kept trying to suggest we moved to full sided games in a gym for the 8 year olds with throw ins. I indulged him and instantly the game went from high paced, with players getting hundreds of touches and the ball constantly in play, to slow, touches coming every few minutes, and the ball spending 25% of the game out of bounds. To develop players confident on the ball they need to spend time on the ball as much as possible, and on top of it, it is more fun. This is why the popularity of the game of Futsal has skyrocketed recently, players are constantly engaged, spend very little time off the ball, and learn transferable tactical concepts to the 11v11 game.

Creativity:

We all have heard the complaints of the over exuberant parents/coaches. “Boot it”, “get it off your foot”, “shoooooot!”. In street games there isn’t someone in your ear telling you what to do. If it works you keep doing it, if it doesn’t you try to do it differently. Learning is more organic, and organic learning is the type that so often sticks with us the longest and has the greatest impact. Players in the street game are free to express themselves more, they are not forced to conform to strict tactical boundaries or a coaches game plan. By developing this creativity players become more confident in their skills and gain a greater understanding of their own ability.

Leadership:

In street games players choose the game, they amend the rules as they see fit with what's available to them, they pick the teams, they control. From the chaos of this anarchy leaders arise, and our kids today receive so few opportunities to be natural leaders, to solve their own problems, to create their own fun. If you are running one of these during your session let this be the part you step back from, or join in on, but let them figure it out, the less control here the better (as long as everyone's safe).

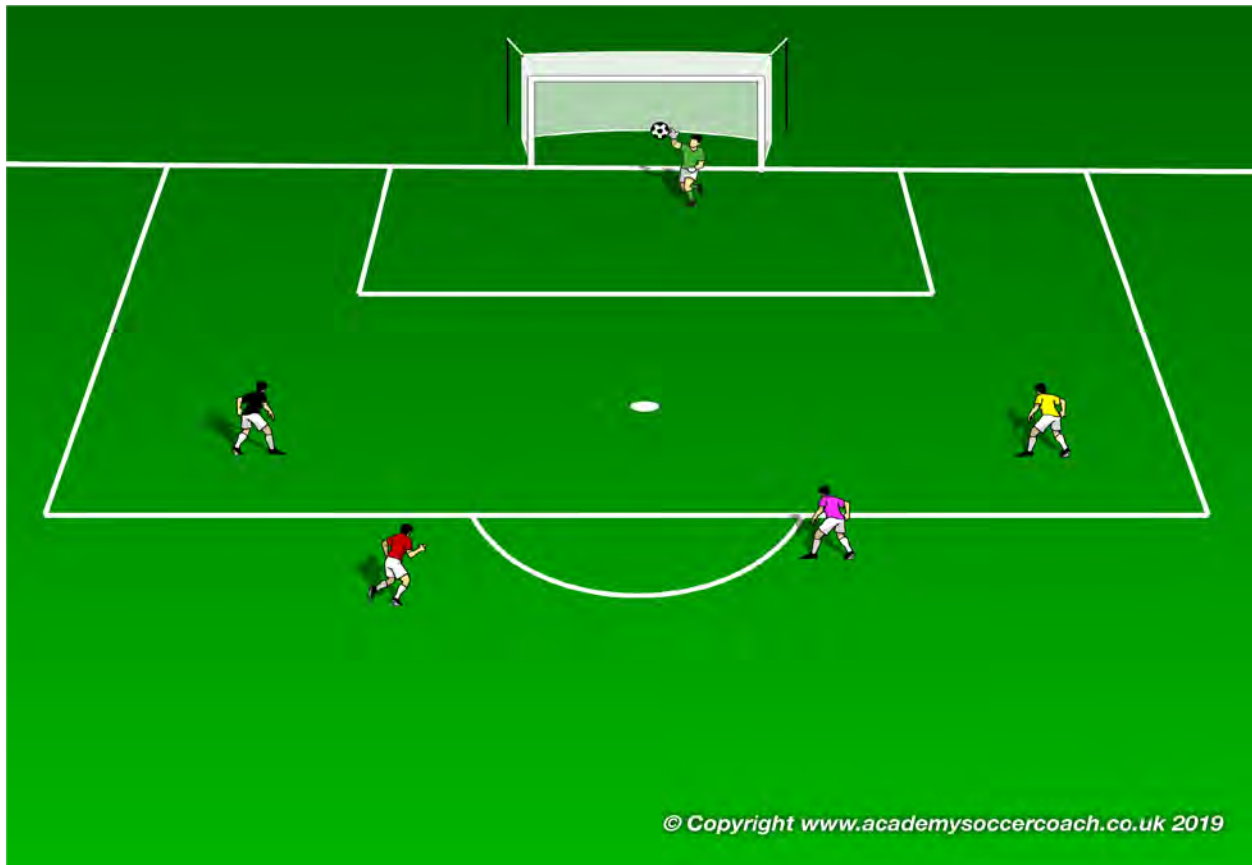
World Cup

Description:

This is a classic, so much so that I debated even putting it in here, but there still is that practice where I announce we are going to play and I get puzzled looks from several kids asking how to play. World Cup is a great game that doesn't require a lot of numbers and allows for constant introductions of 1v1 and 1v2 (or 1v10) situations. I've always played this one on grass but it is easily adaptable to the street.

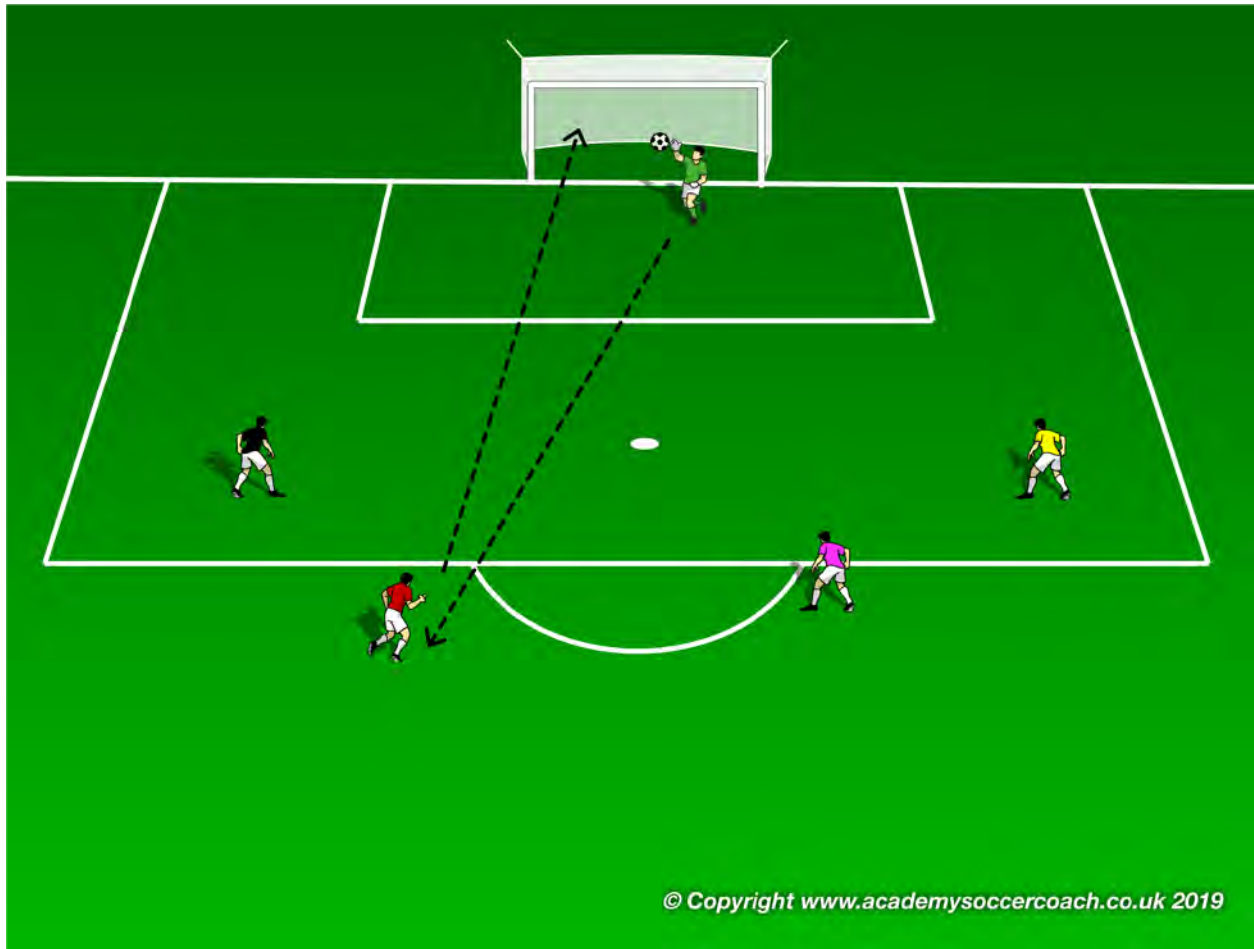
Setup:

You need one goal, at least one ball, and one goalie.

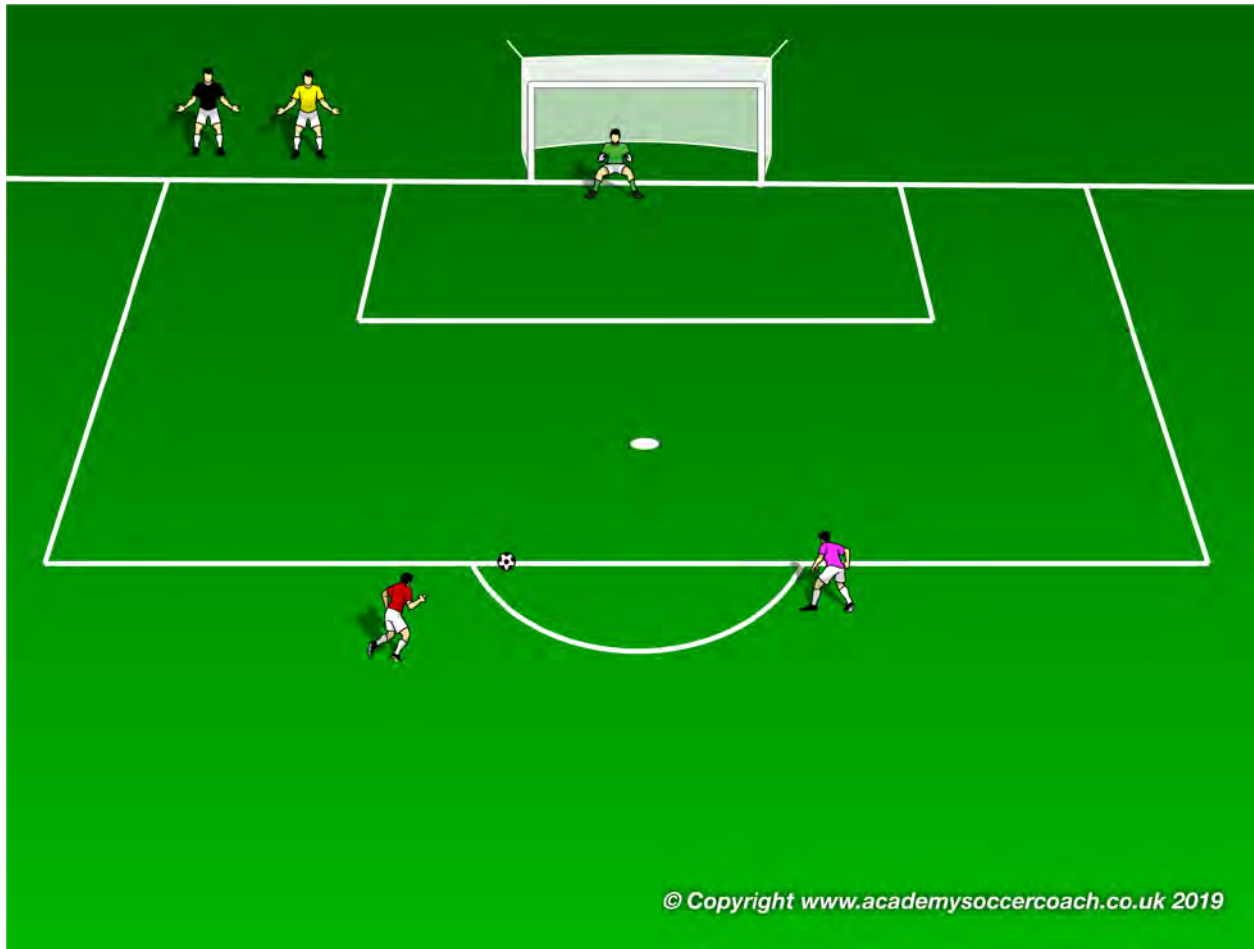


Execution:

All restarts come from the goalie, who punts or kicks a 50/50 ball to the players participating. Every player operates as their own team. The first player to score comes off the field and sits behind the goal.



That player is then “through” to the next round. Once there is only two players left on the field the one that fails to score is “out”. After a player is deemed out everyone but that player returns to the field, repeat until there are only two players remaining and that round is the “World Cup Final”



Variations:

This is the true flavor of World Cup, everyone grew up playing with a different set of rules. You can play with two balls, if you have too many kids do two players knocked out after the first round, no shots inside the six, play with teams of two, make players have to call out their country's name in order to score, have three players in the final with two goals needed to win, etc. The variations are really endless. If you don't have a goal, play with a chalk line on a wall or a garbage can, or the classic, sneakers as posts.

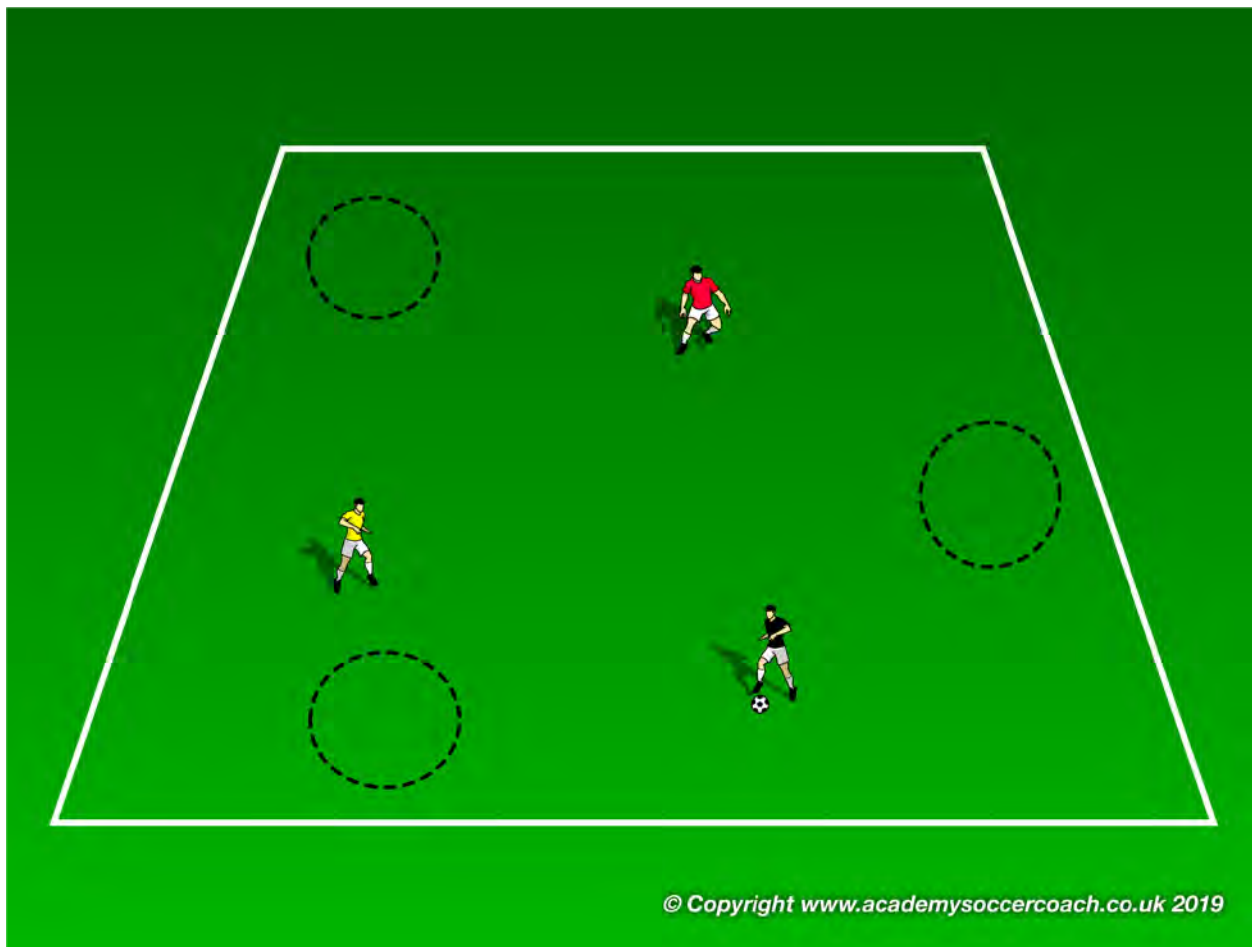
Hotspot

Description:

Hotspot is a great way for kids to develop spatial awareness and getting comfortable being in 1v2 situations but in a natural street setting.

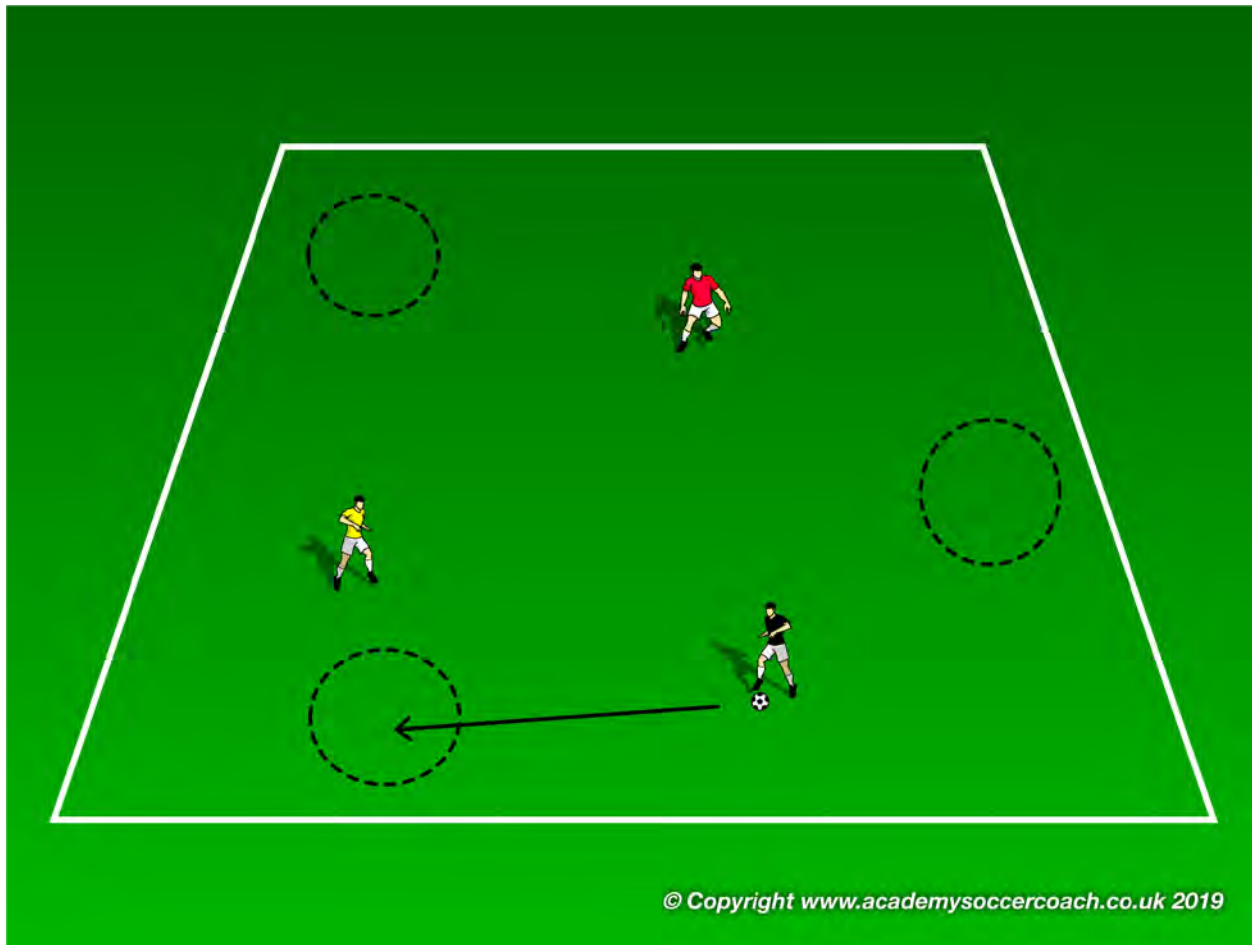
Setup:

There should be at least three zones created that represent the “hotspots”, one ball, and as many players as possible (at least three). These hotspots can be marked out with cones, clothes, or simply noted landmarks that will be identified as the hotspots. The playing area should cover an area dependent on the number of players, the bigger the area and the more hotspots.

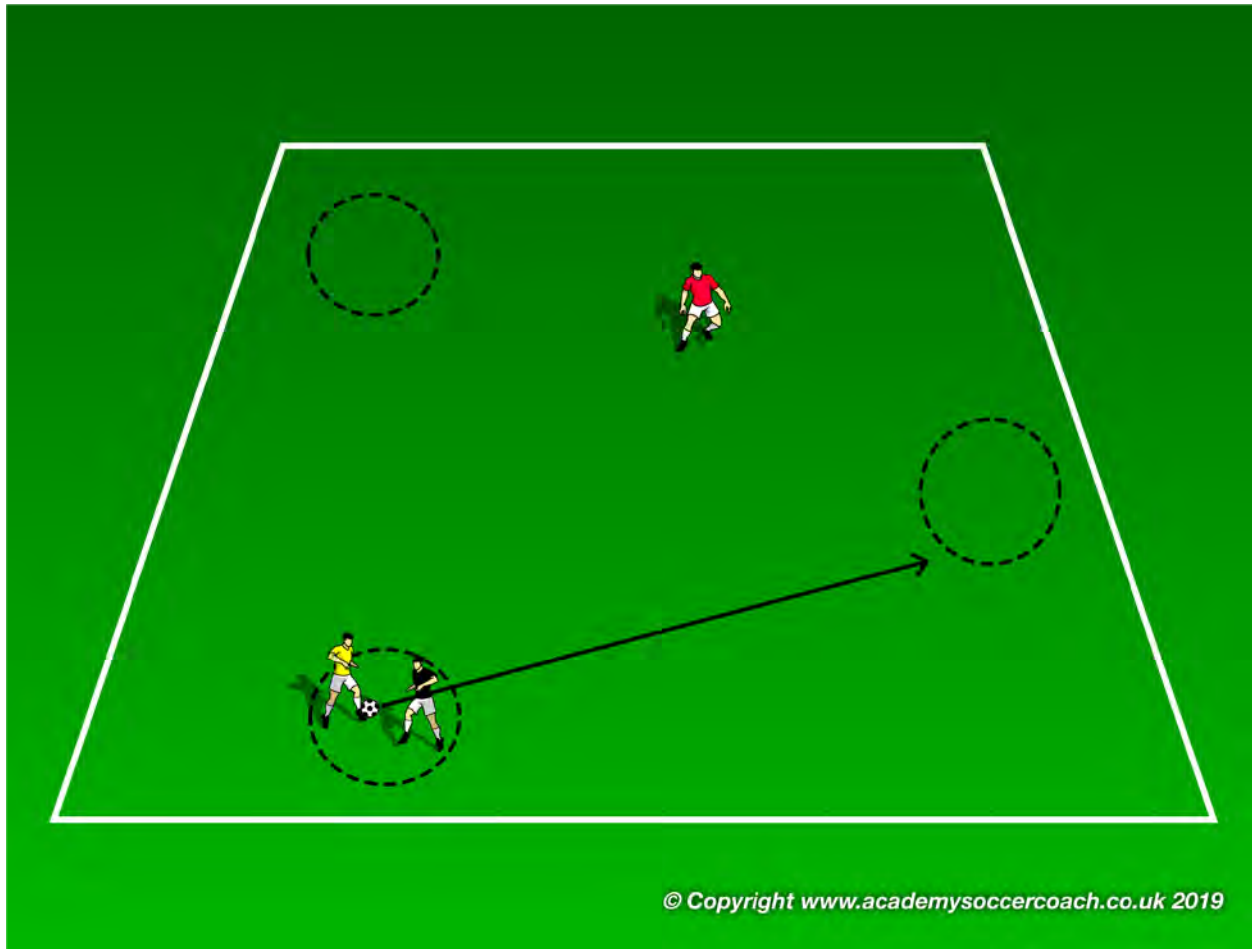


Execution:

One player starts with the ball in the middle of the playing area. They must try to get to the hotspot, when they do they can start to count, every second they count while in the hotspot with the ball they get a point.



The other players try to get the ball back from the player on the ball and start earning their own points by possessing in a different hotspot.



The player in the hotspot can leave the hotspot to go to a different hotspot at any time, but the count is paused.

Variations:

Depending on playing area and number of players, the number of balls and hotspots can vary. The shape and nature of the hotspots can also vary greatly (touching a tree while on the ball, possessing a ball on a manhole cover, etc.).

Soccer Manhunt

Description:

Manhunt is the classic summer game that is basically the middle school version of tag. Soccer Manhunt is essentially the same game, with the addition of the ball.

Setup:

The playing field can be as tiny as someone's yard, or as big as a neighborhood. Every player should have a ball. An area should be designated as a “safe area”. The safe area could be marked out by cones, clothing, or be a physical landmark such as a driveway. It is highly recommended that the playing area has a number of obstacles that will allow the players on the ball to hide or use natural boundaries to escape their defender.

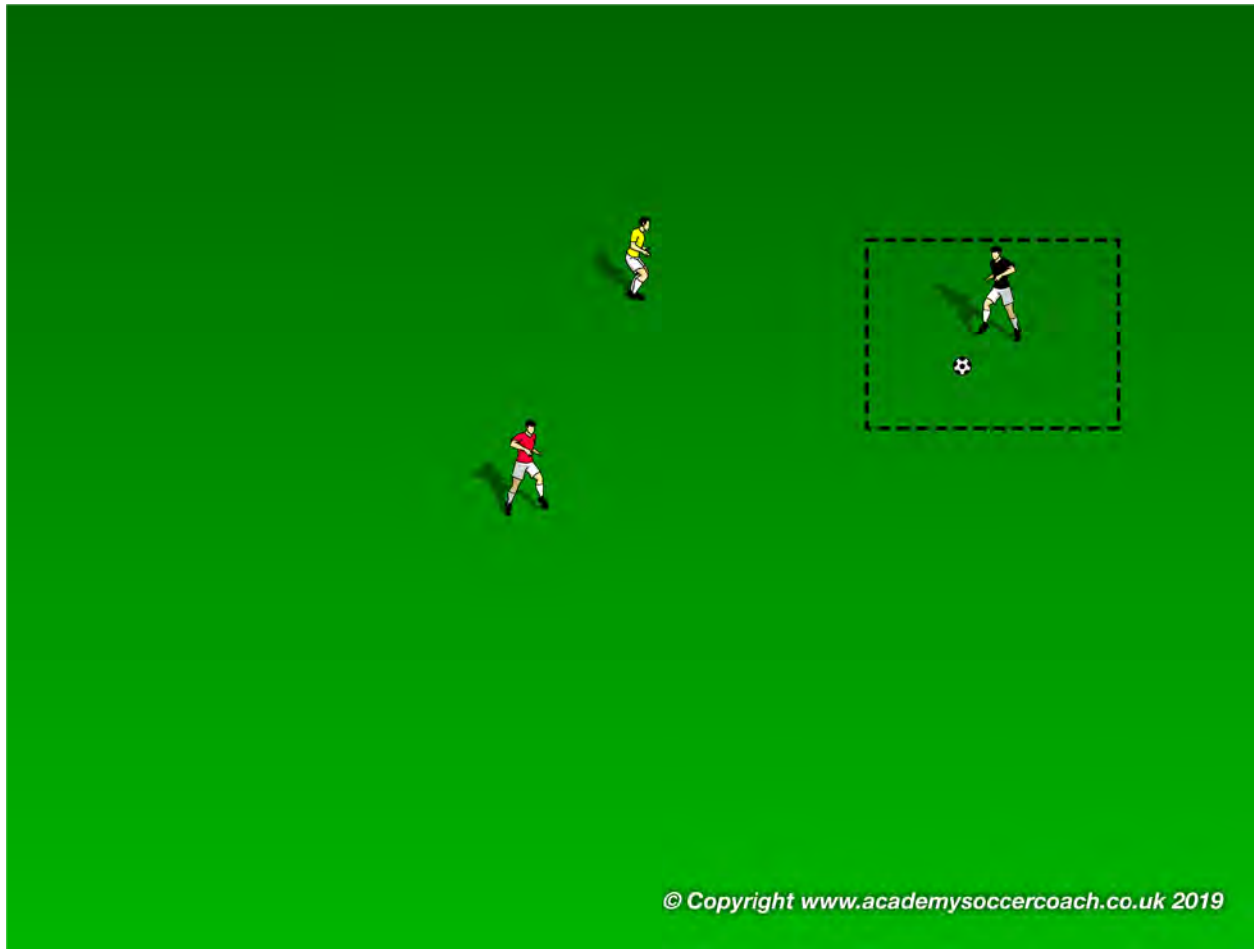


Execution:

One player is nominated as the hunter, the rest of the players with their ball hide in the designated area. The hunter must find all of the players hiding and instead of tagging them, but win possession of their ball.



If possession is won the player that lost their ball now becomes a hunter. Players can move their hiding spots, but must keep possession of the ball. Players that dribble into the “safe area” cannot be dispossessed until they leave that area.



Variations:

This one leaves a lot to the imagination as it is a pretty open sandbox format, with the boundaries really set but the number of players and where players are safely allowed to go. Rules should vary neighborhood to neighborhood.

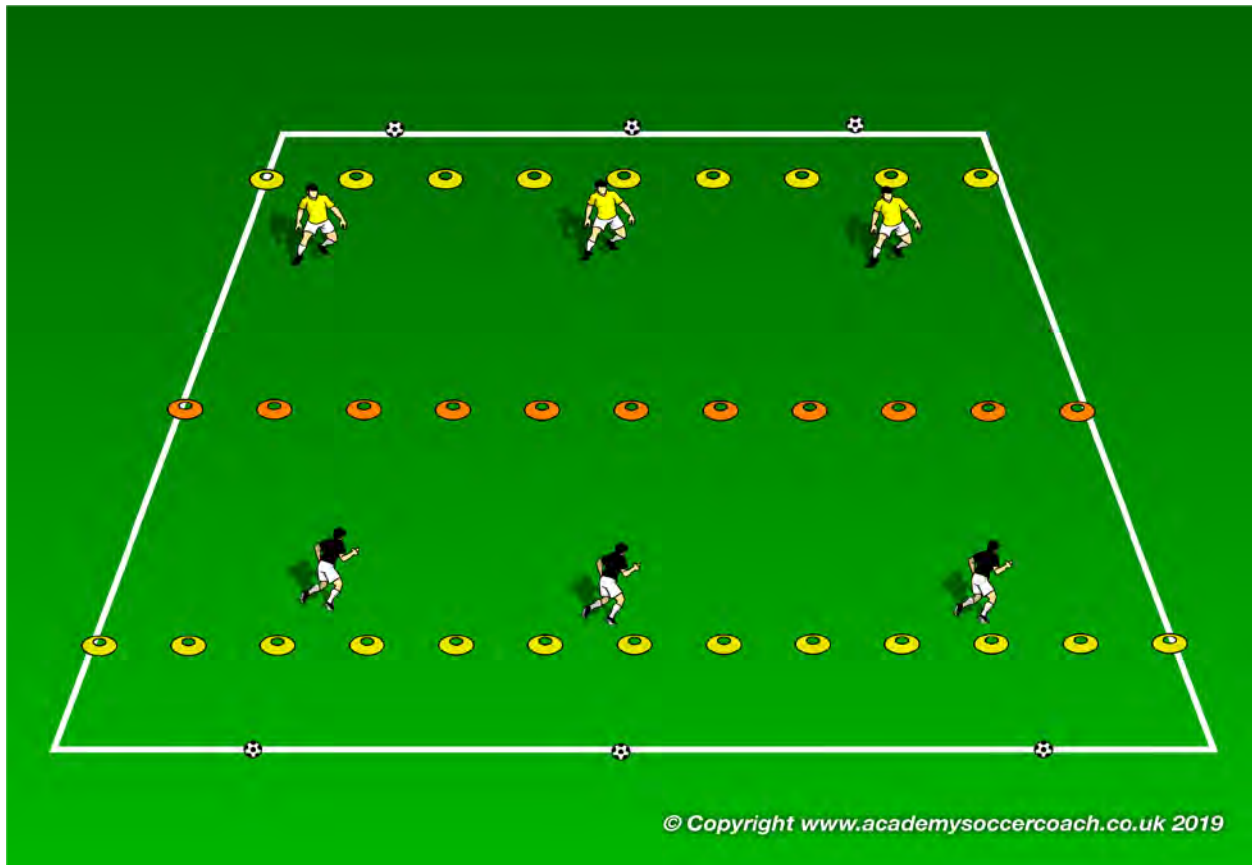
Capture the Flag

Description:

The idea behind Soccer Capture the Flag is to develop the player's ability to find space and lose a mark, therefore both practice on the ball, and off the ball movement.

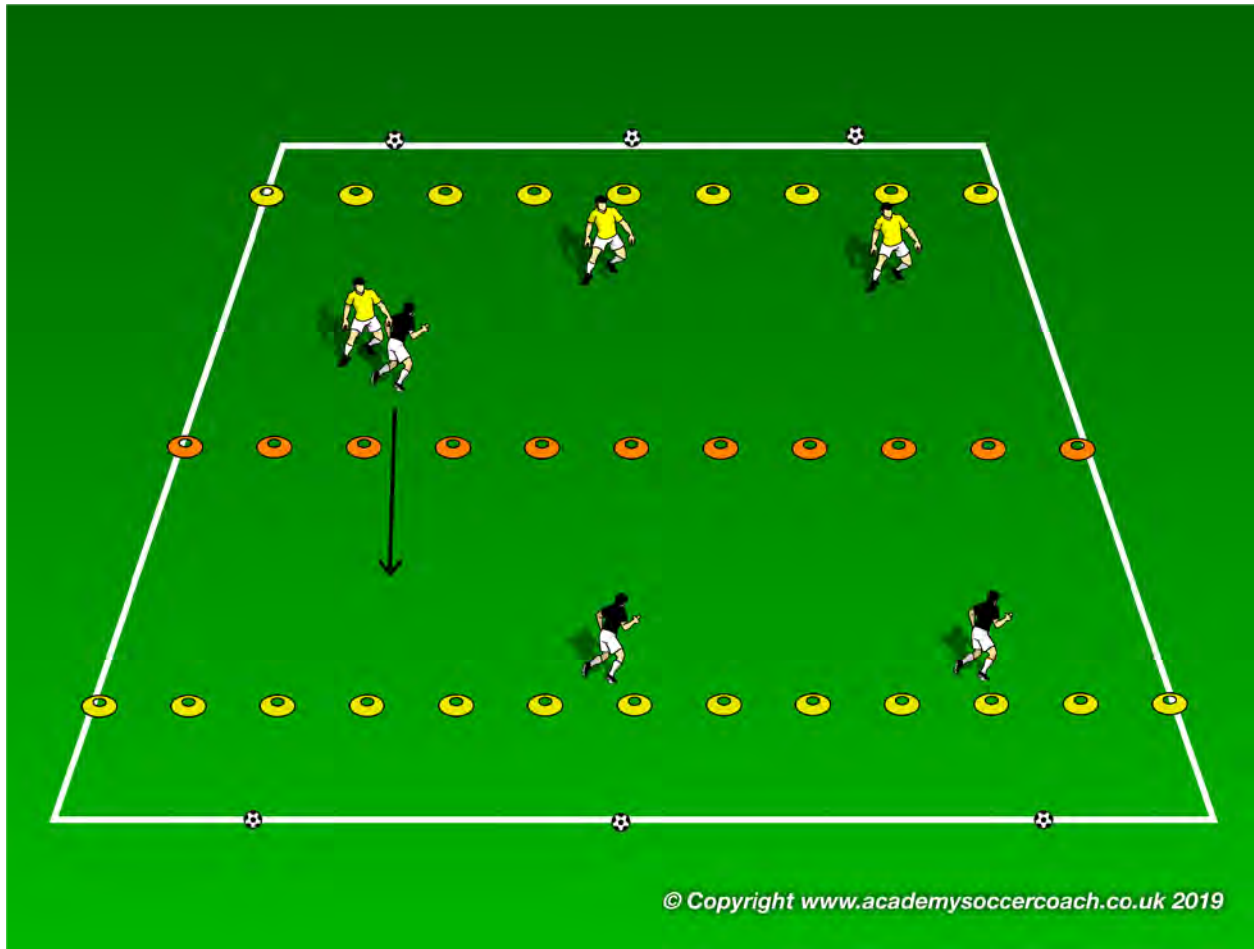
Setup:

Create a designated area based on the number of players and space available. At each end of the area should be three balls that the team on that side should defend and a designated area where the defending team cannot enter. There should be a halfway line as well.

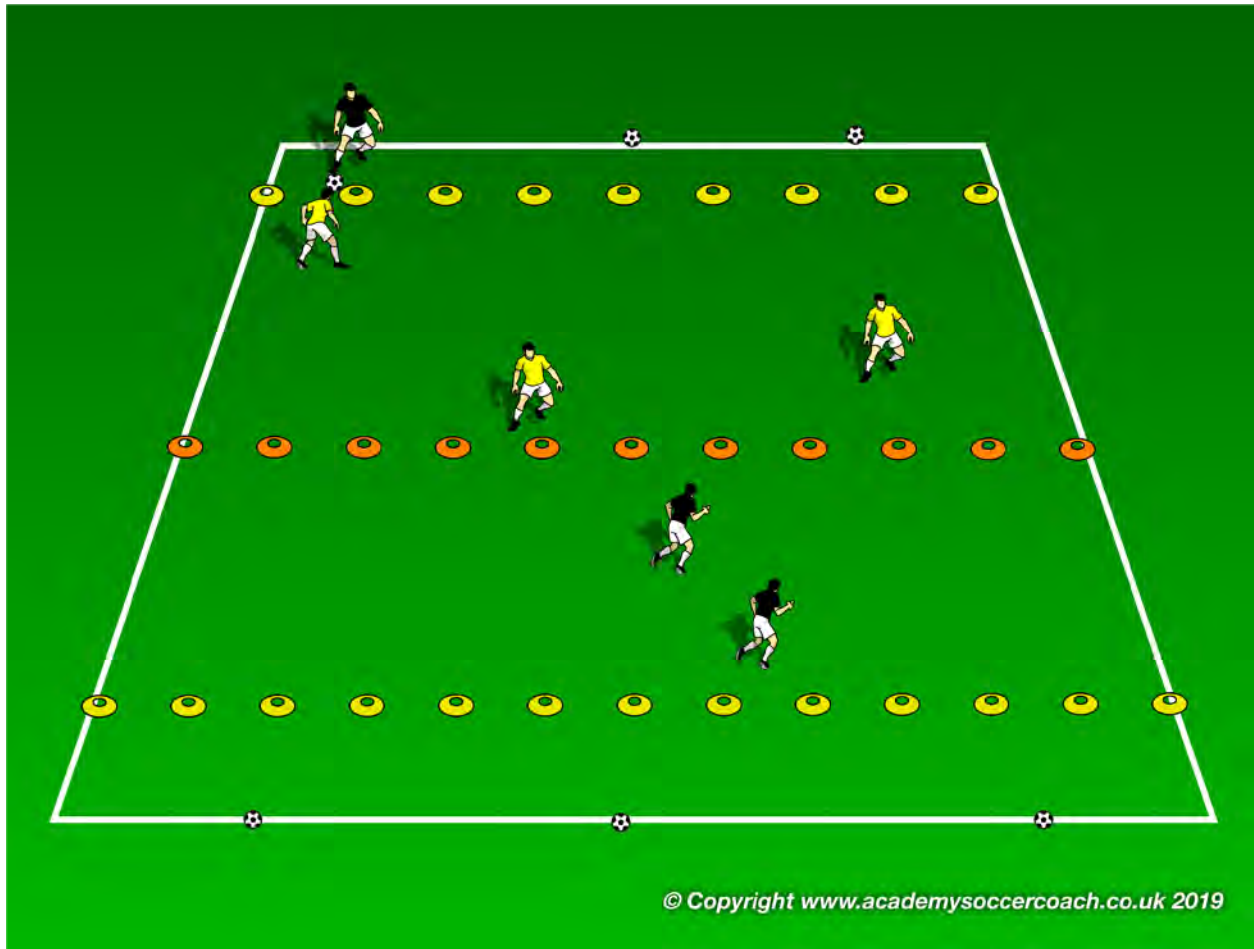


Execution:

Each team starts on their own side of the area by their own balls (which represent the flags). Once the game starts players must attempt to win gain possession of one of the oppositions balls. If they are tagged while doing so in the opposition half they have to go back to their own half and then can try again.



If a player reaches the area that contains the oppositions balls they cannot be tagged and no defenders can enter the area, but once they leave the defenders can attempt to win the ball from them. If the defender wins the balls the attacking player must return to his side and can try again.



Teams can steal back their own balls in the same way. One team wins when they are able to get all the balls to their side.

Variations:

The size of the field and number of “flags” can vary depending on the playing situation.

Win conditions can change to a time limit and whoever has the most balls after a set period or a certain percentage of the balls must be won, etc.

Posts

Description:

This is a classic pickup game when no one wants to play keeper or players are looking for an even greater challenge. The premise is that to win a small sided game or world cup variation players need to hit both posts and then the cross bar to advance or score a goal. Posts lends itself to street soccer style games since true goals are usually difficult to come across, so street sign posts or telephone poles can easily replace them in this game.

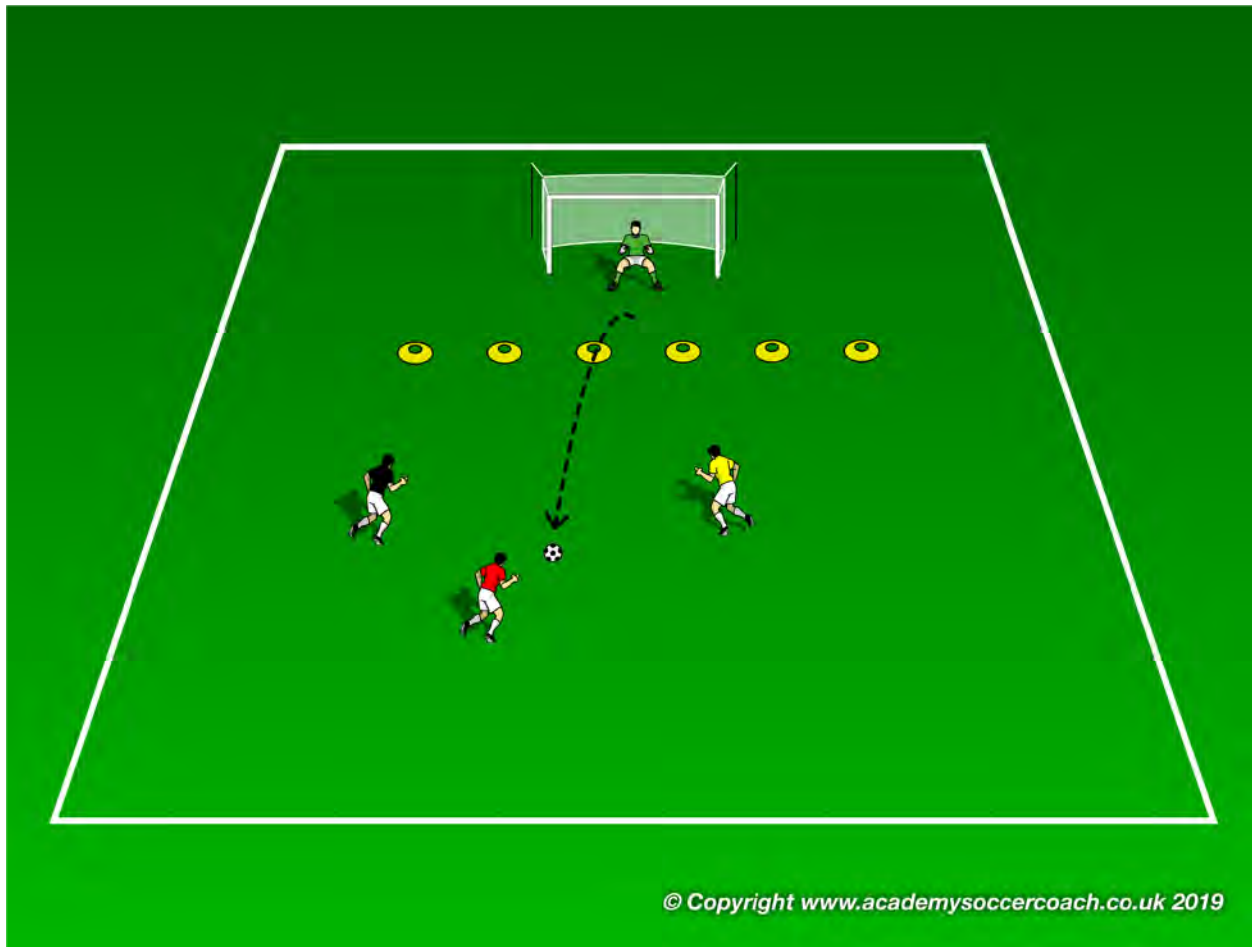
Setup:

Can either be set up like world cup with one post, or as a game with two posts with each team defending one of them. Field conditions will vary, it is just important that the posts be something that is firmly planted and not something that will break if kicked at. Some imaginary or marked off barrier should be placed around the goal where neither attackers nor defenders can go.

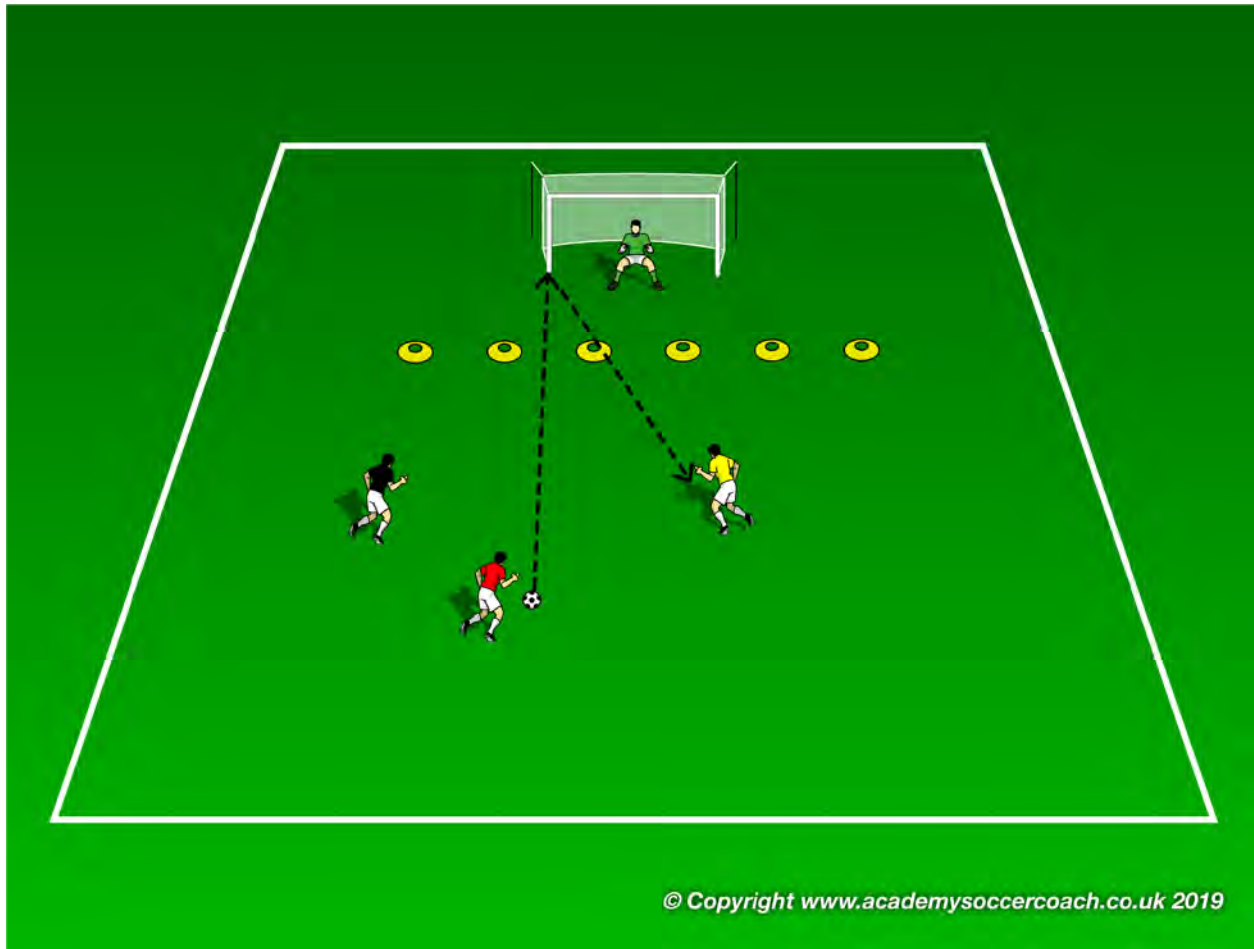


Execution:

The world cup version operates with the same rules as the regular game, but with the post operating as the goal.



In the game version the posts should be preferably lined up and it should be designated the height in which a goal can be scored on the post. Restarts should come directly off the rebound, so if someone scores the deflection off the post onto the field is live.



Team with the most goals wins.

Variations:

Multiple posts can be used so that a team/player may be able to score on multiple posts, or may need to score on them in a certain order.

Curbs

Description:

Curbs is an accuracy game that can be played on basically any street. It allows for variability as well so that the game can be altered to whatever playing space available.

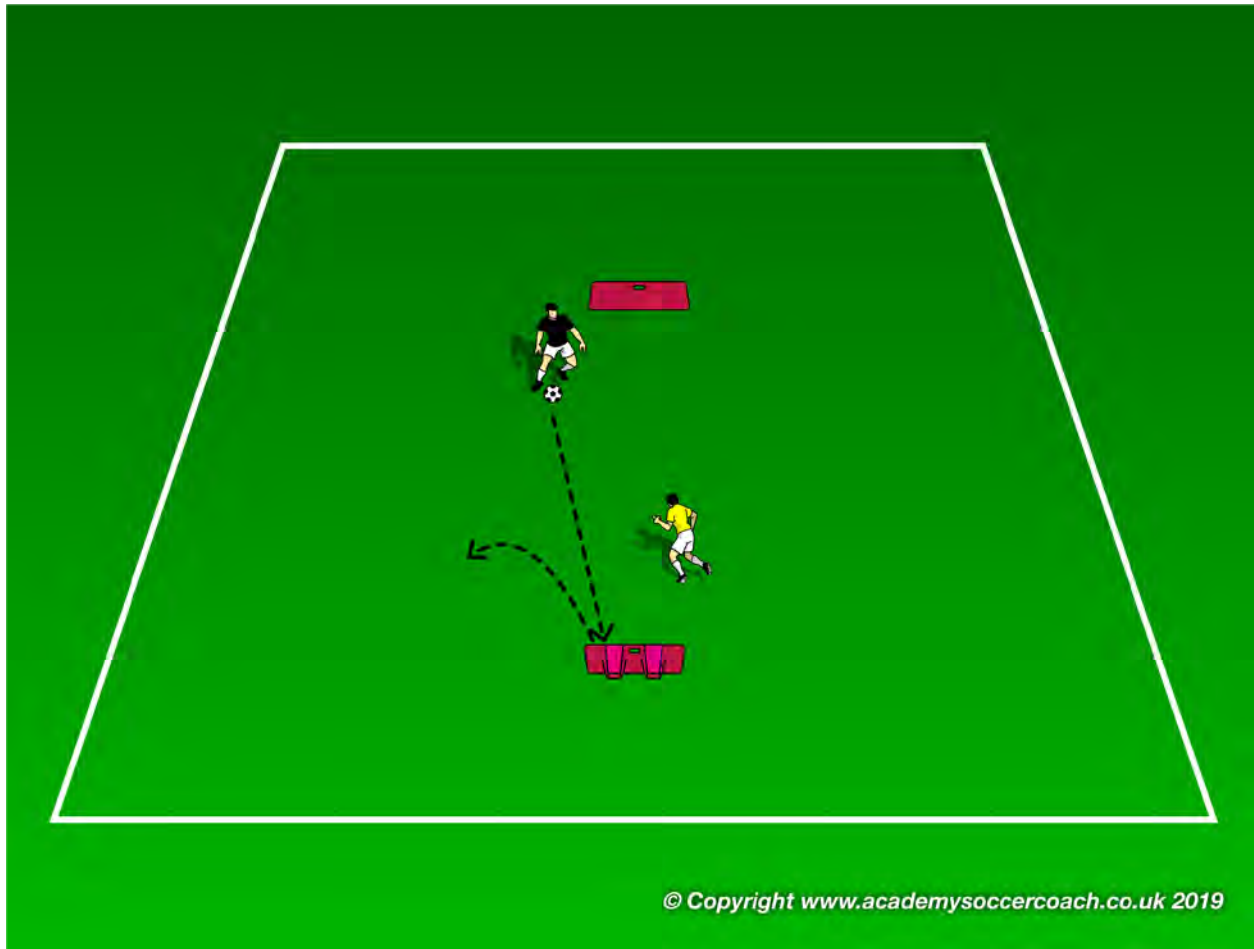
Setup:

Two teams face off with at least two marked off areas of the curb set as the goals. Boundaries should be defined as the curbs.

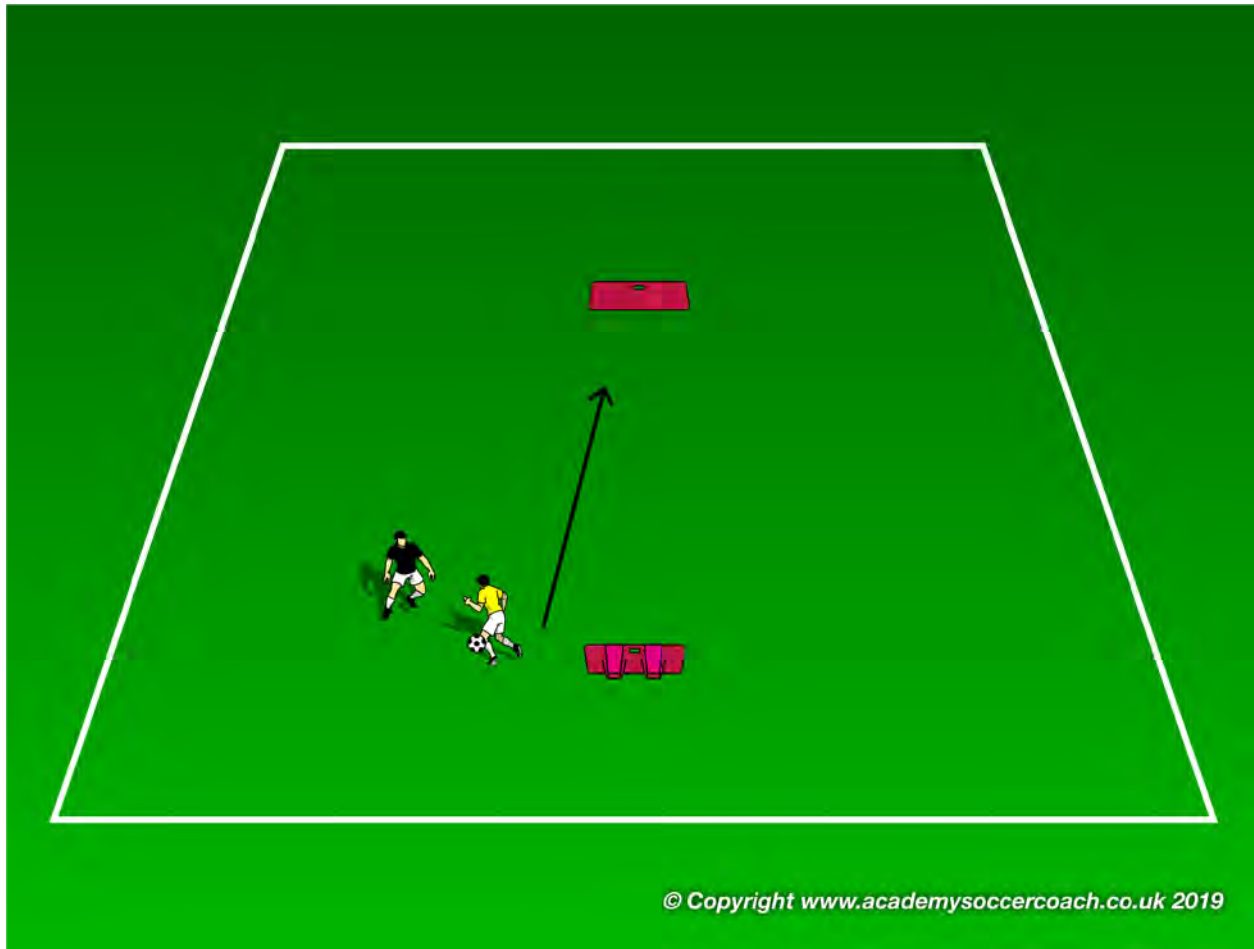


Execution:

Once the team on the ball scores they must take the rebound off the curb and attempt to score on the 2nd goal.



If the defending team is able to win possession the first teams counter starts over again and they need to get two curbs in a row again.



Variations:

- The number of curbs can vary based on number of players, or desired difficulty
- The rules can be changed so that if there is over 5 curb goals the points don't restart
- To increase difficulty there can be a required order that the curbs need to be hit

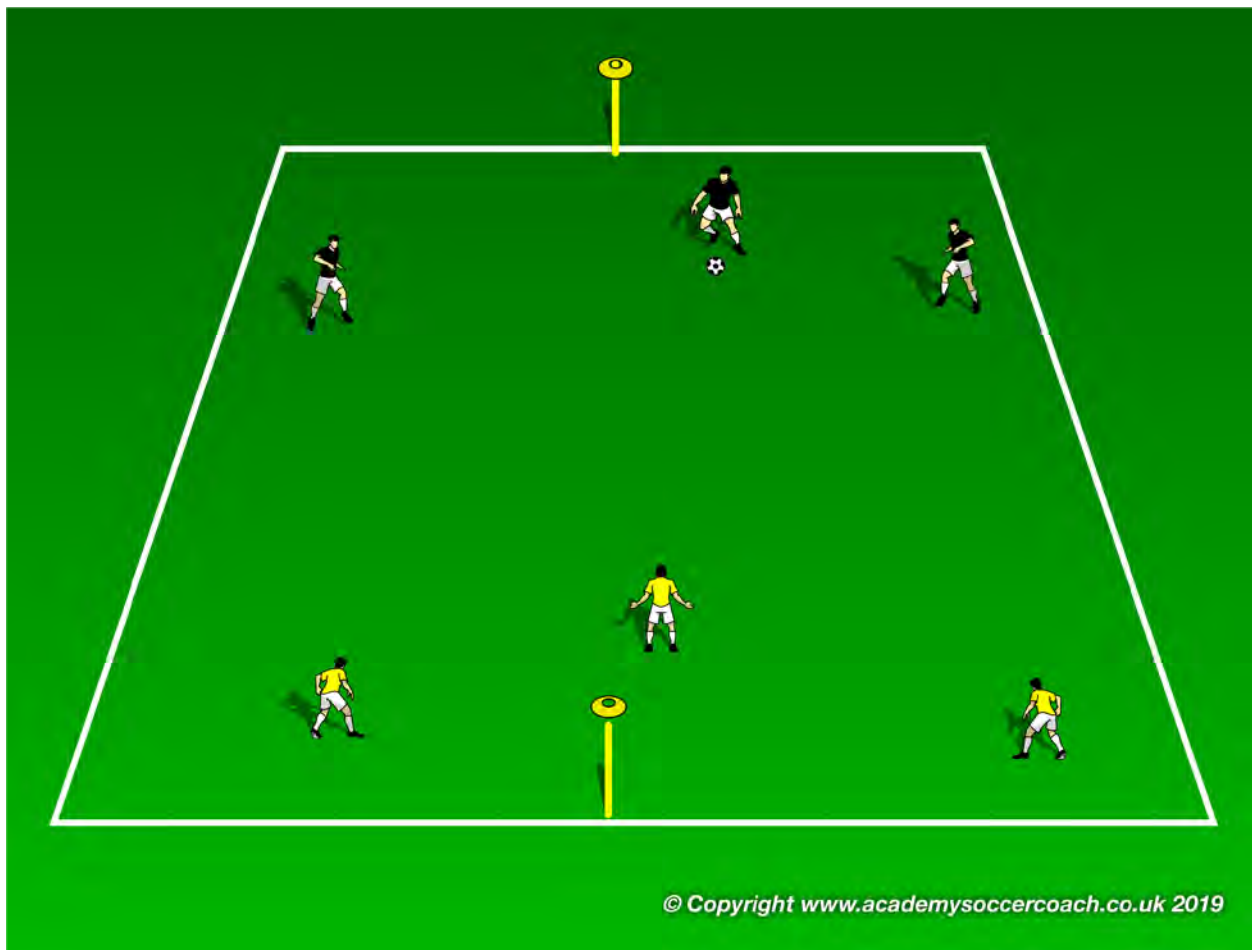
Basketball Soccer

Description:

Basketball has long been a sport that has thrived on products created via the street game, and part of that success is availability. Nearly every neighborhood has some type of basketball court available to them, the Basketball Soccer game takes advantage of the abundance of courts to create a hybrid of the two games which combines the unique athletic talents of both games into one singular entity

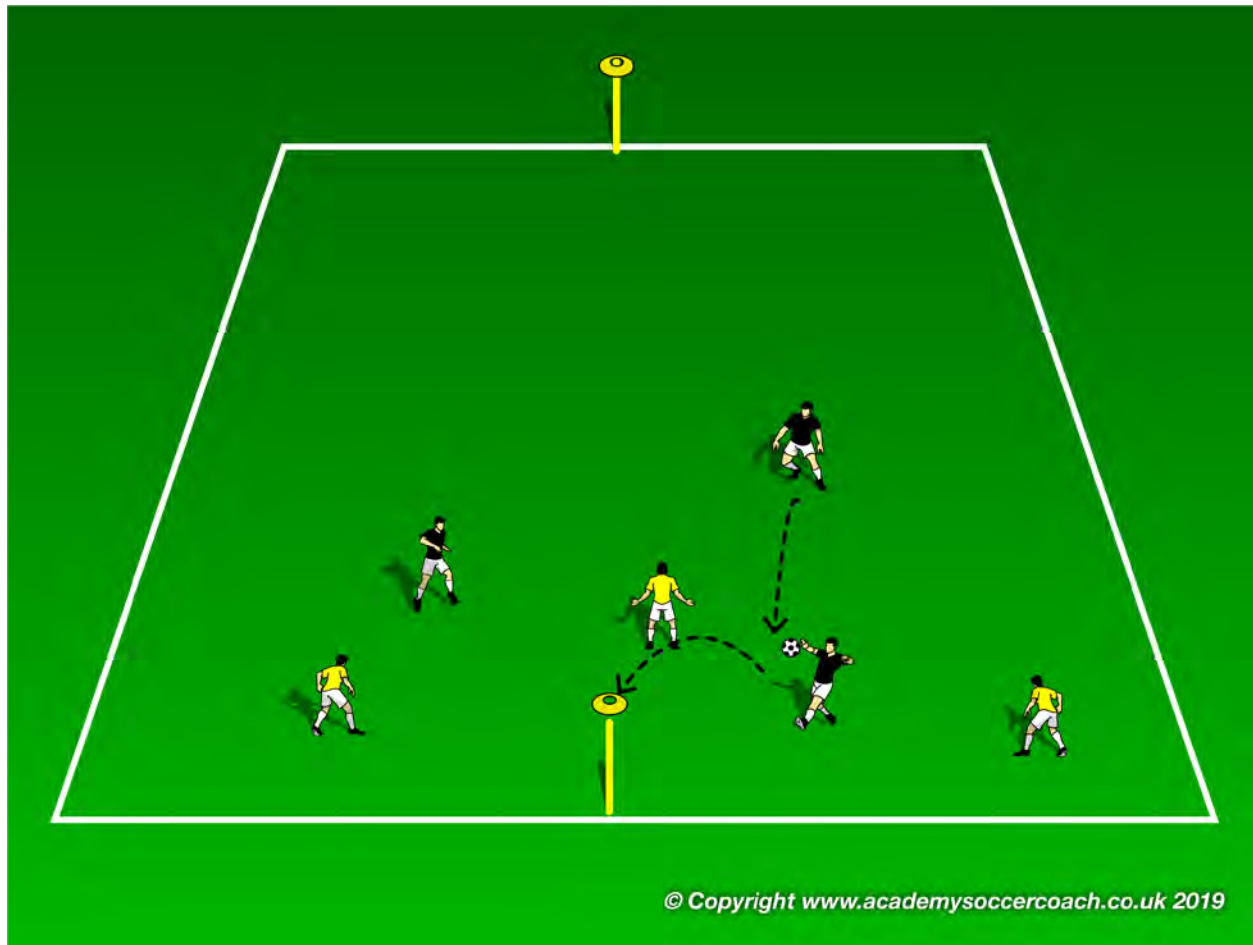
Setup:

Find any available basketball court. Need at least one ball and two equal teams.

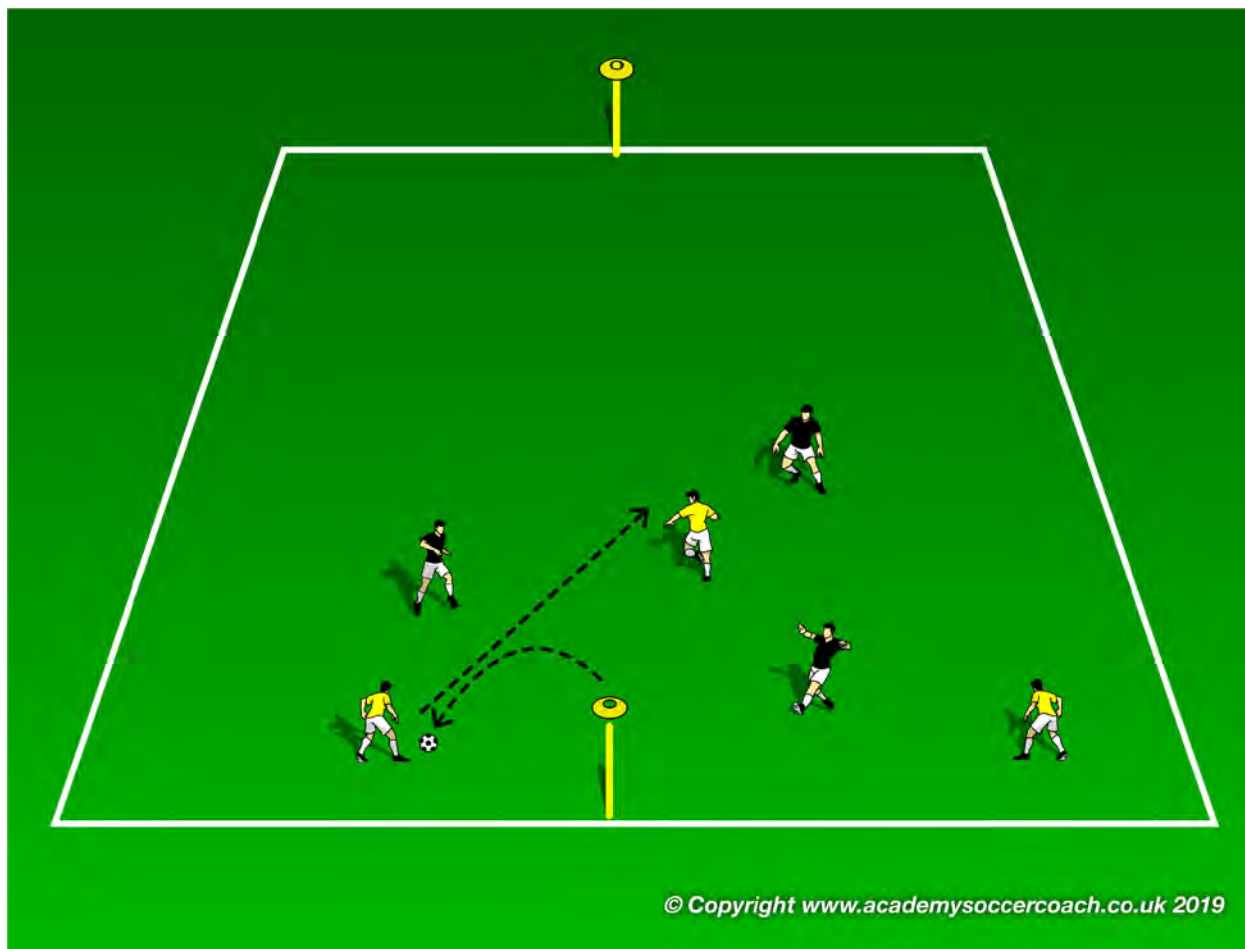


Execution:

The game is played as a normal soccer game with one team heading towards one hoop and the other team attempting to score on the other. A team attempts to score by one player flicking the ball up to one of his teammates who then catches the ball.



The player that catches the ball must then shoot from wherever they are standing. The rebound can be tapped back in with the hand, but cannot be caught. If the rebound is not tapped it must be brought down with the players' feet and play again resumes.



Variations:

The game can be played half court if necessary with one team designated as attack and one as defense. Once the defending team wins possession they must dribble to half court to become the attacking team.

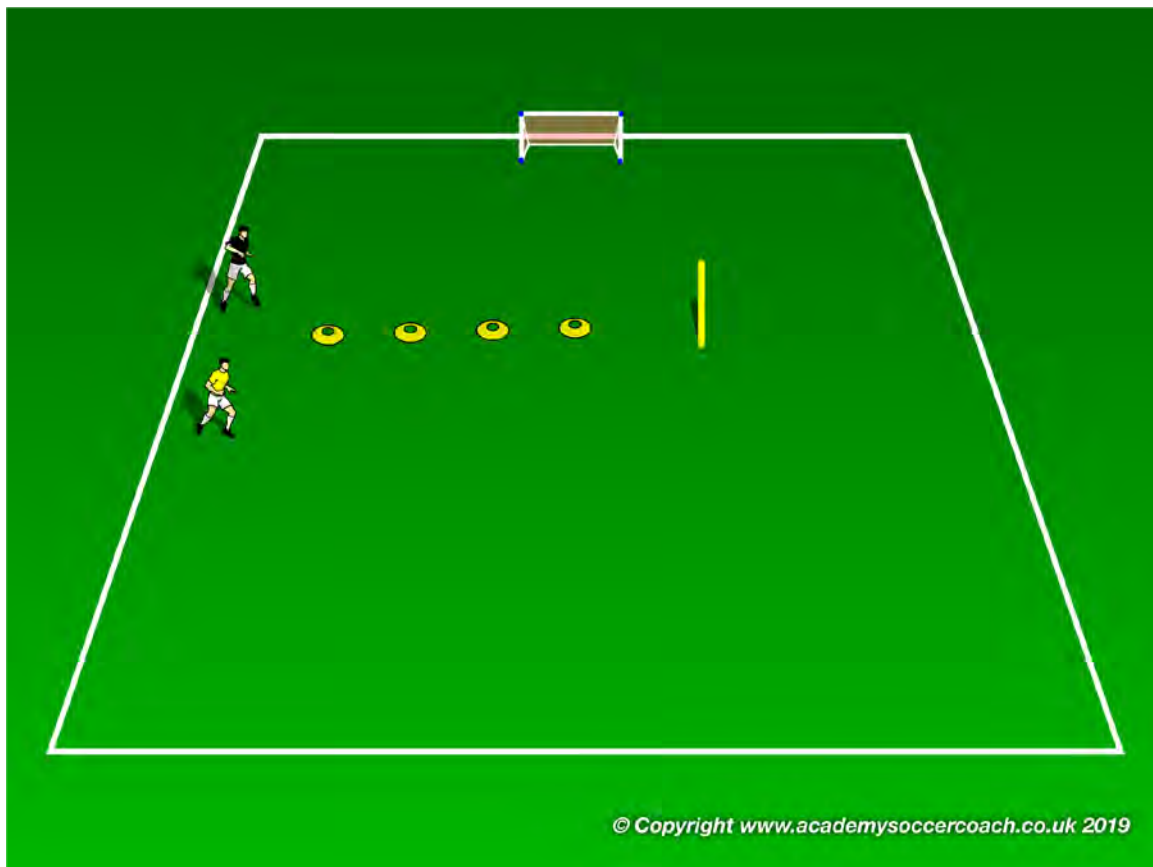
Horse

Description:

This is a traditionally basketball orientated game but, for anyone that has watched the *Joga Bonita* commercial with Ronaldo and Zlatan, it can easily be transitioned to soccer. It is a skill based game that puts pressure on players to perform actions they may or may not be comfortable with, and to do so under pressure.

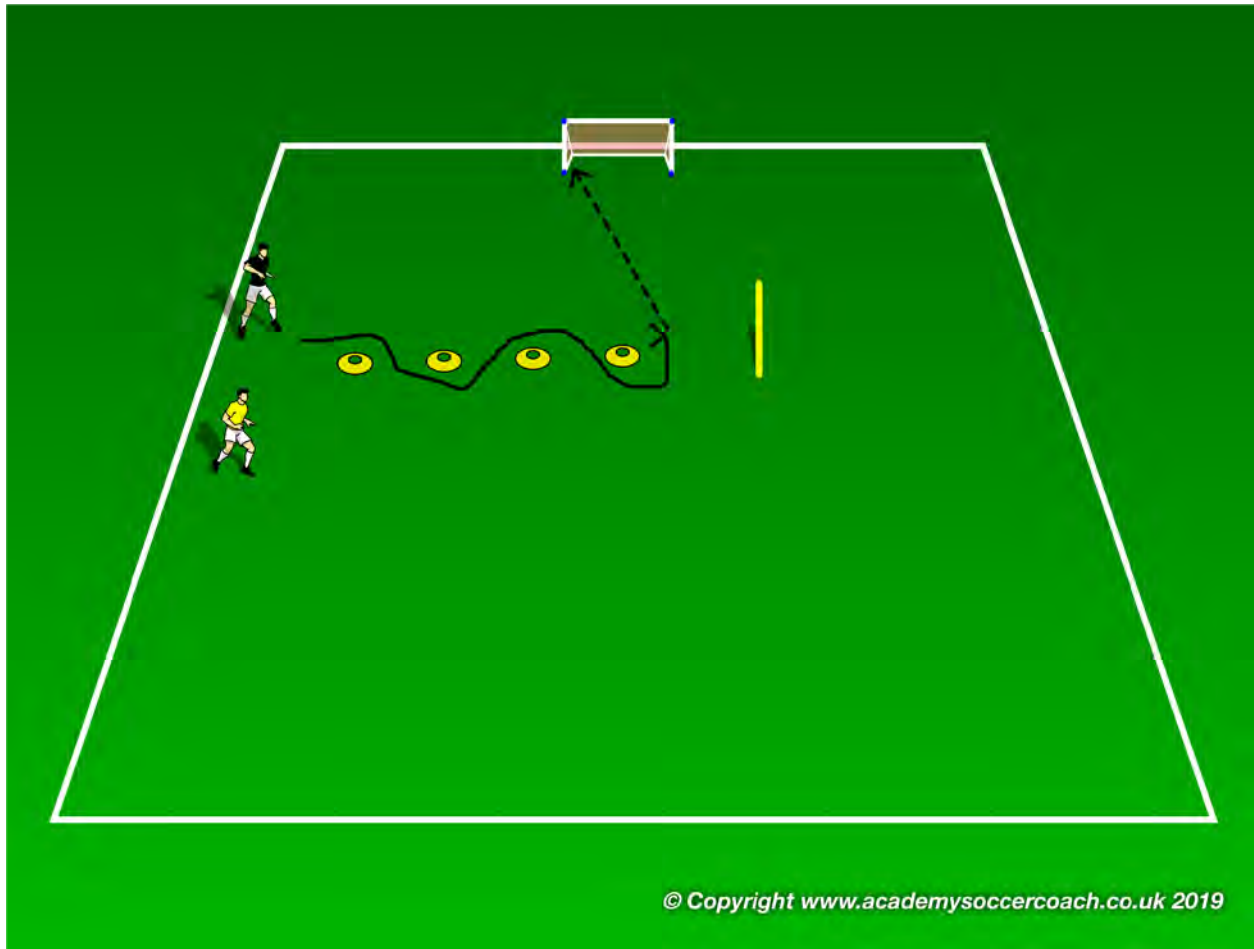
Setup:

Need a ball and at least two players. The environment will determine the setup.

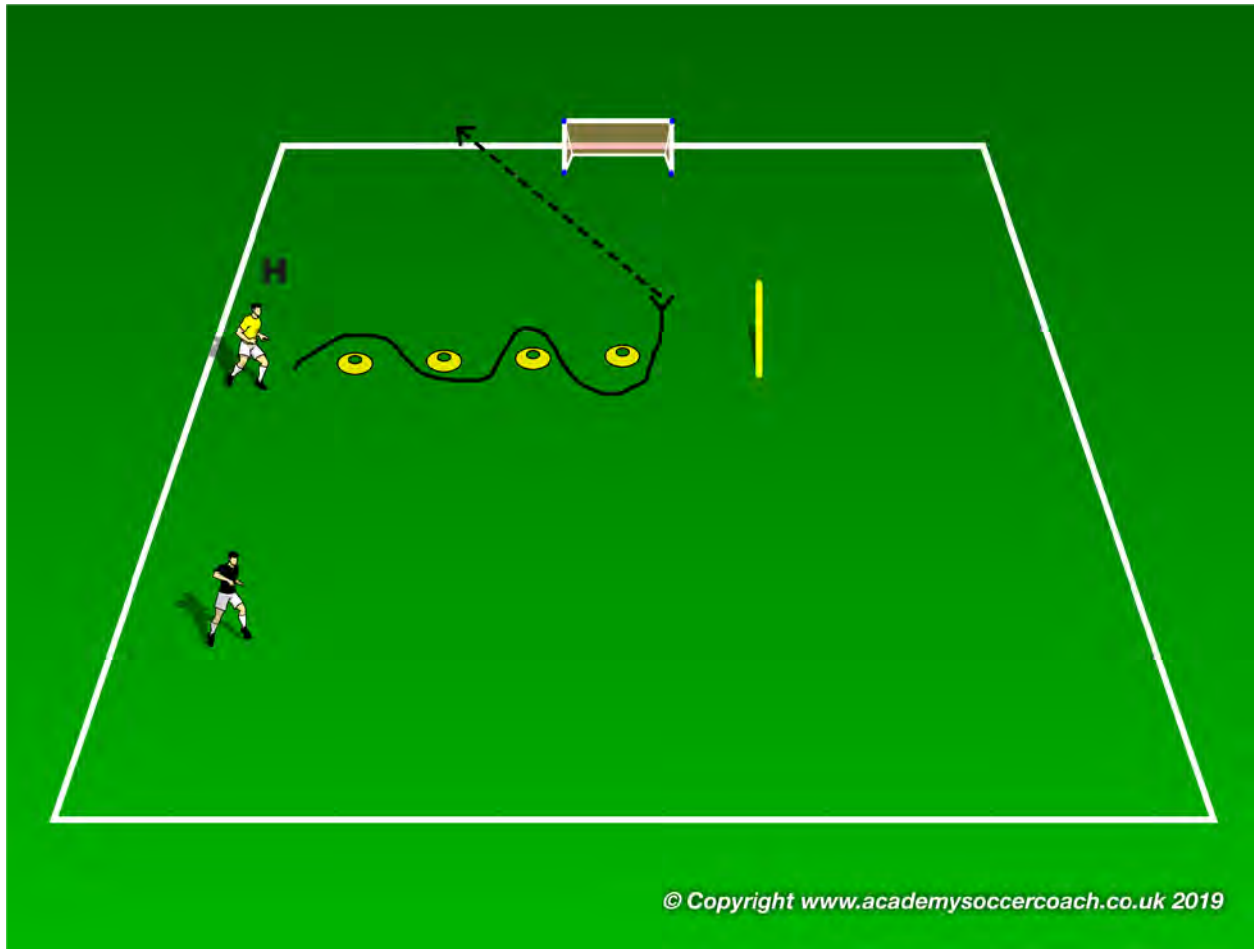


Execution:

Once it is decided who will go first (usually via rock, paper, scissors, shoot) that player explains the action they are going to perform and then performs that action (a shot, a juggle, a move, a pass, etc.).



The next player then must repeat that task. If they are successful and there is another player it is that player's turn. If they are successful and it is only two players it is their turn to call out and perform a move. If they fail to perform the move they "get" a letter from HORSE.



Once they receive all the letters in HORSE they are out.

Variations:

Because of the variability of the game the game will vary based on the location. If you have a goal your game may include shots, if you only have a street sign it may be passing to the street sign. The variability is only limited by imagination.

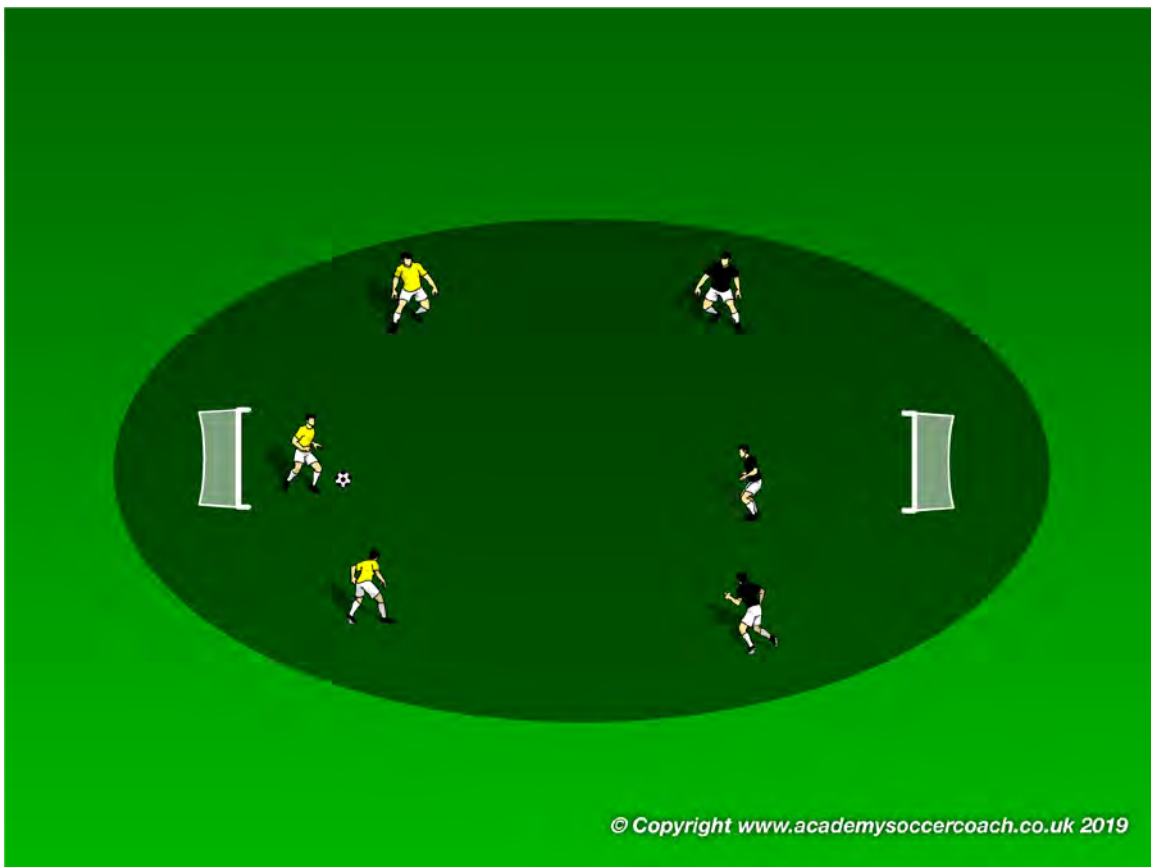
Playing in Outdoor Hockey Rinks

Description:

This game is basically outdoor indoor soccer. Outdoor hockey rinks are not as common as basketball courts but they often have nets, and the boards mean far fewer out of bounds. Fewer out of bounds means more touches on the ball, which means greater technical development.

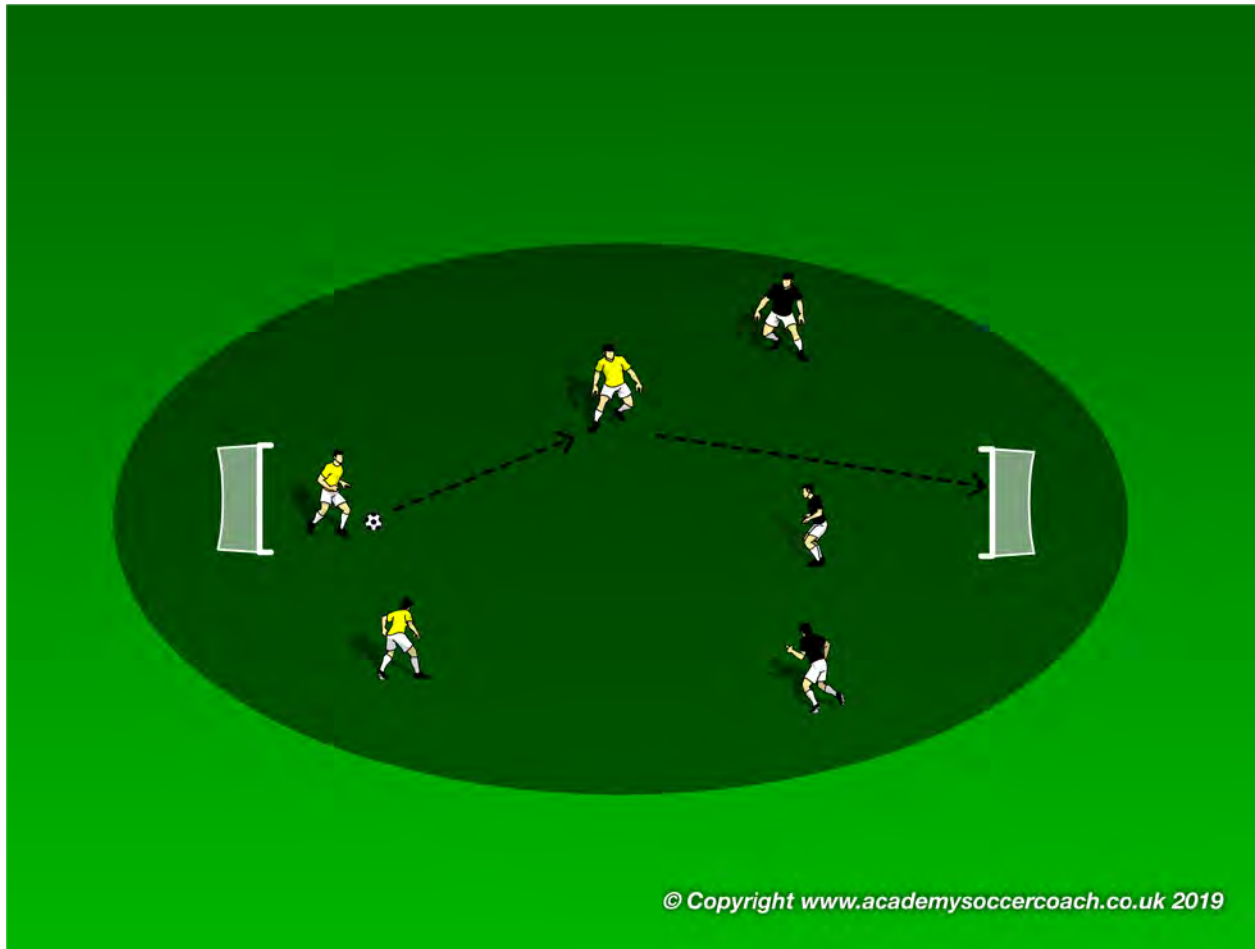
Setup:

Two equal teams and at least one ball. Rink should have two available goals.

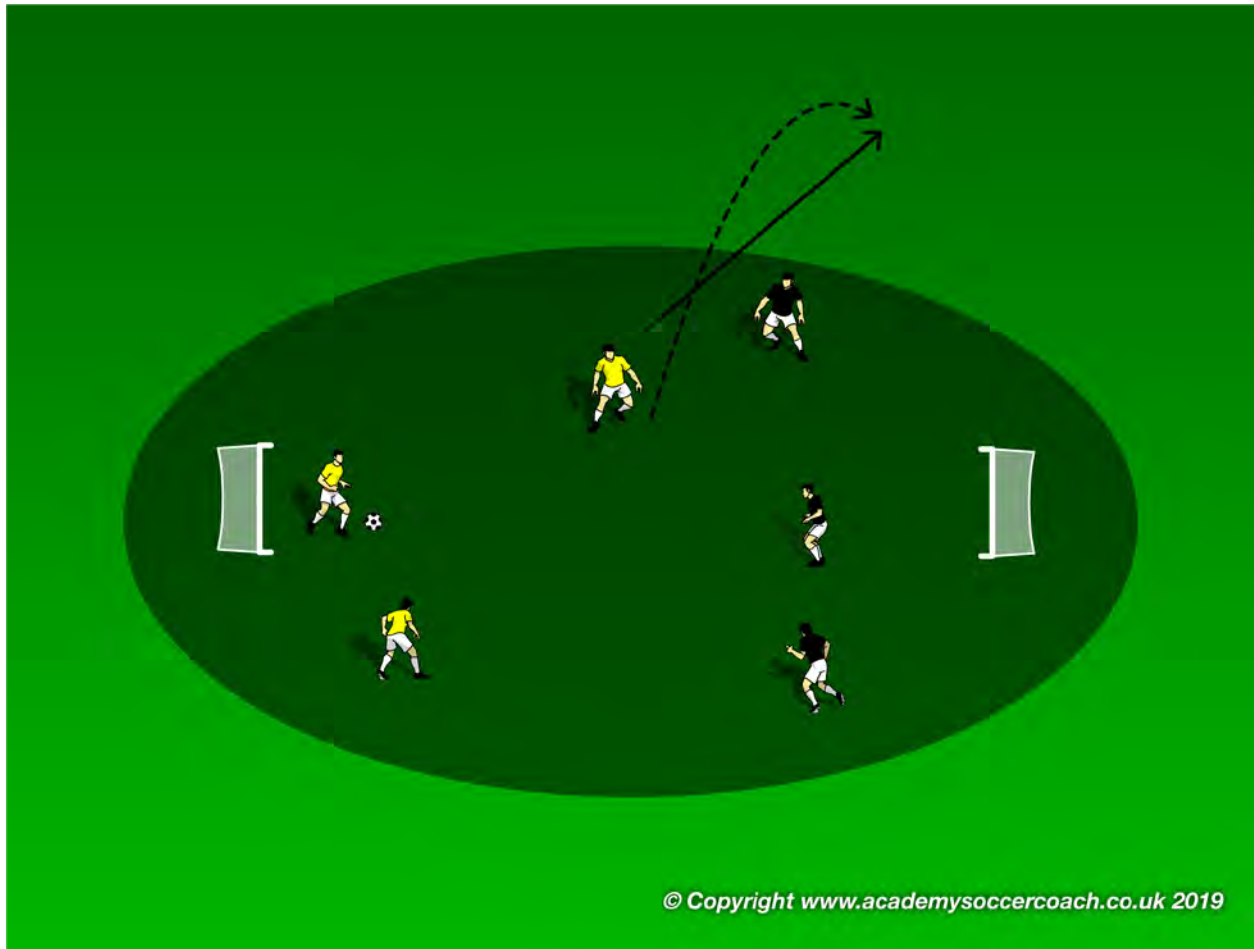


Execution:

Game is played as a normal directional game but balls are played live off of the boards of the hockey rink.



If the ball goes from a pass or a 50/50 out the player that retrieves the ball must throw the ball in for a 50/50 and then run back into the rink to get active in play once again.



Any shot that goes out of the rink results in the goalkeeper of the defending team resetting play.

Variations:

If numbers are low the game can be played half court with the same principal of Basketball Soccer. The defending team must win the ball and make it to half to become the attacking team.

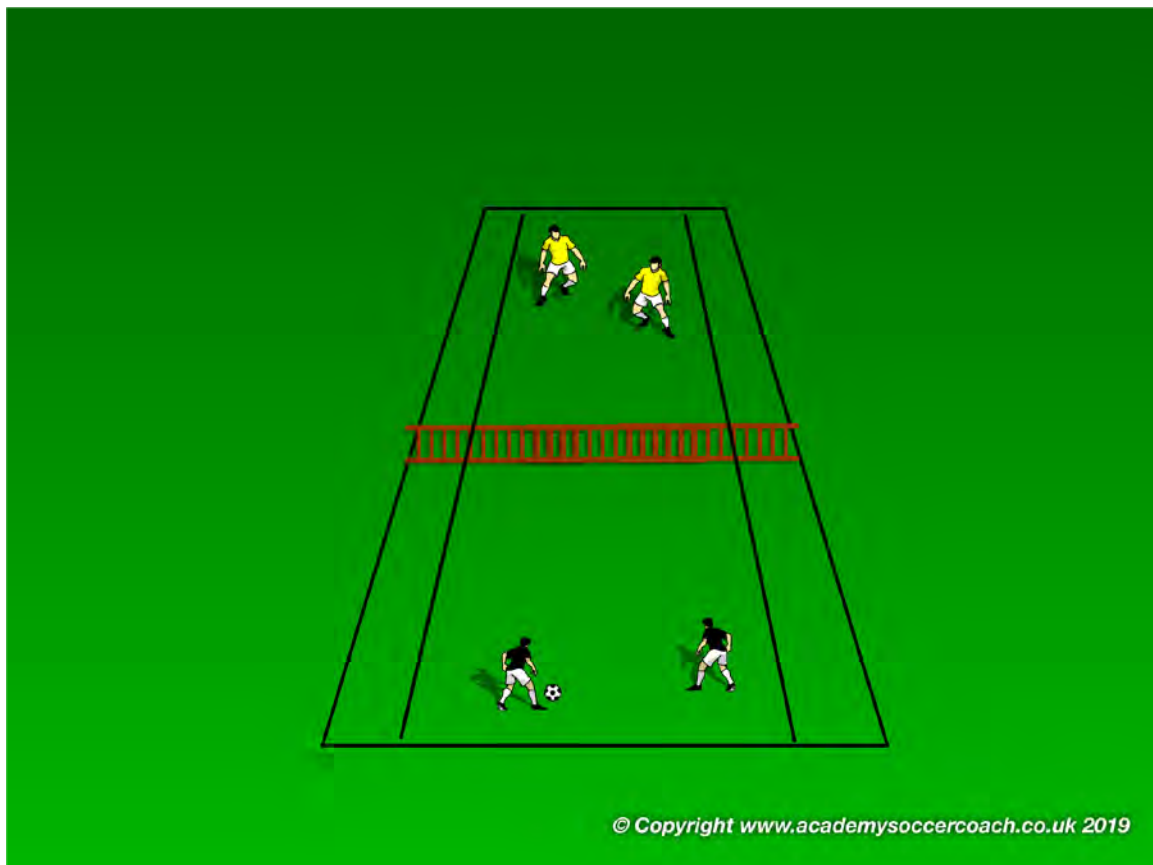
Soccer Tennis

Description:

Again, although not as prevalent as basketball courts, many towns have public tennis courts that can be used to play Soccer Tennis. Soccer Tennis is often used by professional teams as a light fun training session with expensive soccer specific tennis nets, but using a local court can give players that experience without the cost.

Setup:

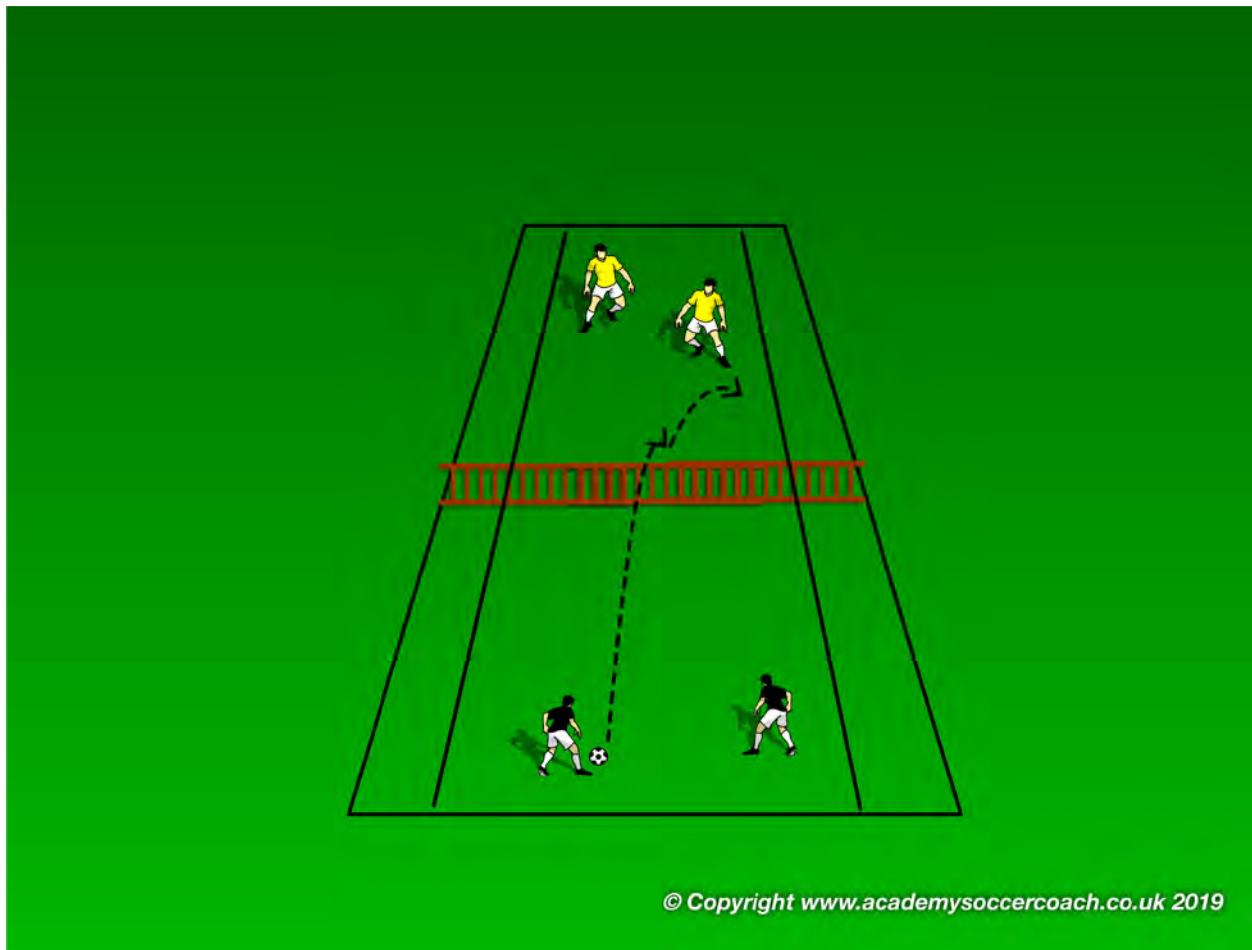
Players line up in either singles (1v1) or doubles (2v2). With doubles players should use the fully lined court, singles exclude the outer box.



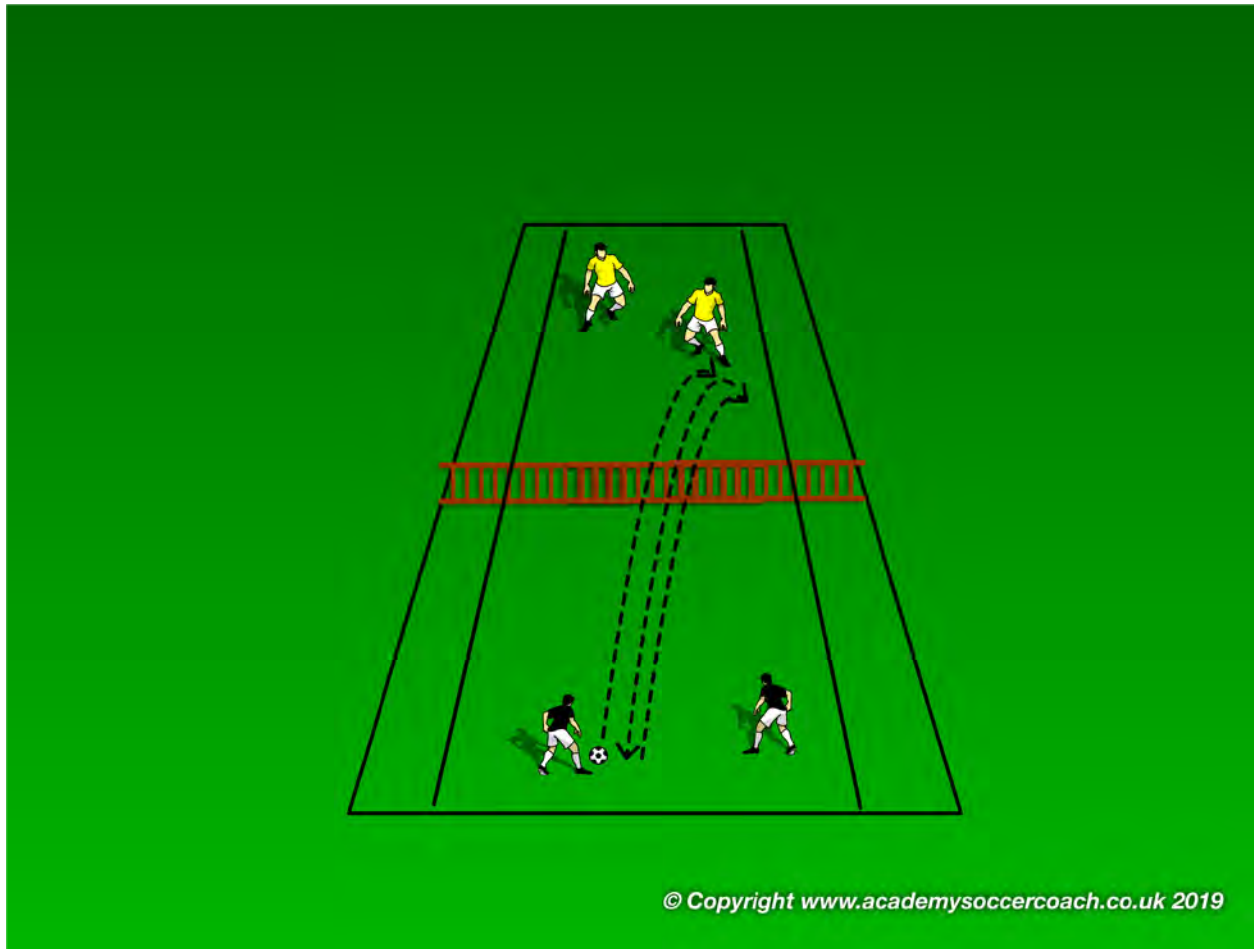
Execution:

The game is played with one team starting play with a serve, where they play a ball off the ground from the back line of their side of the court over the net onto the other side of the court. The receiving team has one bounce on the ground to play the ball back over the net. The players

can take multiple touches on their body, as long as the ball does not touch the ground. If the ball drops to the ground the attacking team receives a point, games can be played to 11 or 21.



To start the game players “volley for serve” with one team kicking the ball over to the other side of the court and both teams having playing the ball back and forth over the net 3 times, after that the ball is live and whoever scores the first point gets to serve the ball first.



Variations:

- Required points to win can change
- Certain parts of the body can be banned (i.e. no thigh balls)
- Players can be given an additional bounce to play a bounce pass to a teammate in doubles

Wall Ball

Description:

Wall Ball is a classic game played with tennis balls thrown against a wall in the United States, but in Europe it is played by foot, the foot game playing more like squash. The game can be played anywhere where player can find a wall and a ball and teaches control and accuracy.

Setup:

A large wall is needed, either indoor or outdoor, a ball, and at least two players/teams. A line should be designated on the wall where the ball cannot go below, should be at least waist high.



Execution:

The game starts with one player kicking the ball against the wall, the other team/player then getting one bounce off the wall to play it off the wall again.



This continues until one team/player cannot get the ball over the line or the ball bounces twice.



The team that is not up to hit the ball cannot block the receiving team from hitting the ball but also does not have to move from their original position. Once a team/player has failed to hit the ball over the line with one bounce they receive an out. After 10 outs that team/player loses the game.

Variations:

- There can be multiple teams or play like traditional American Wall Ball with everyone except the kicker receiving an out if the ball bounces twice.
- The number of outs to lose can vary
- The line can be as high or as low as desired and can be a drawn or imaginary line

Soccer Kickball

Description:

Kickball is an American classic playground game and only needs a few minor tweaks to make it more soccer specific. It is a game that requires strategic thinking, players must anticipate what will be required in a variety of situations before each pitch, and technical accuracy to complete the appropriate kick.

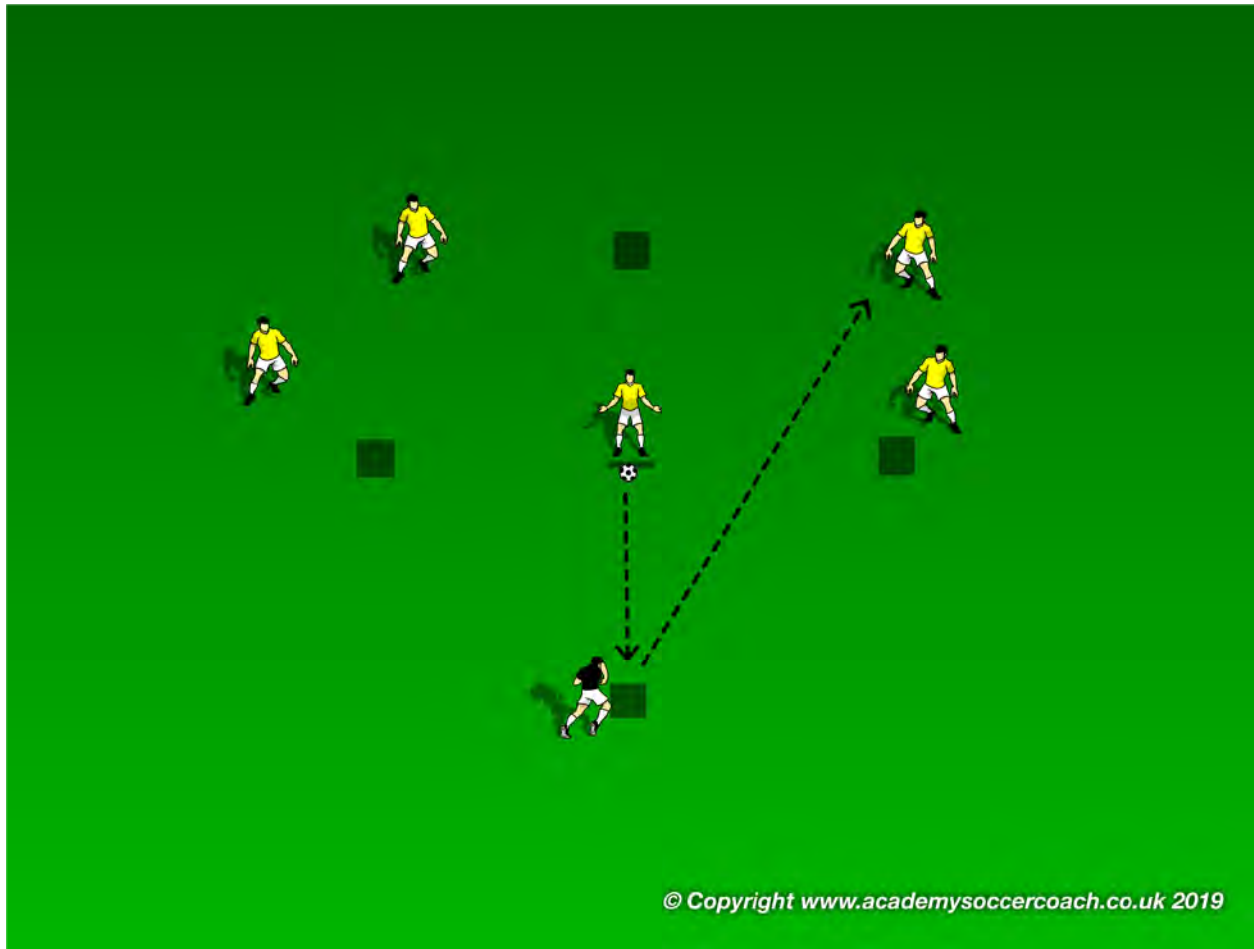
Setup:

Can be played on the street, on a softball field, or grass. Four bases must be set up in a diamond with at least 5 players on each team.

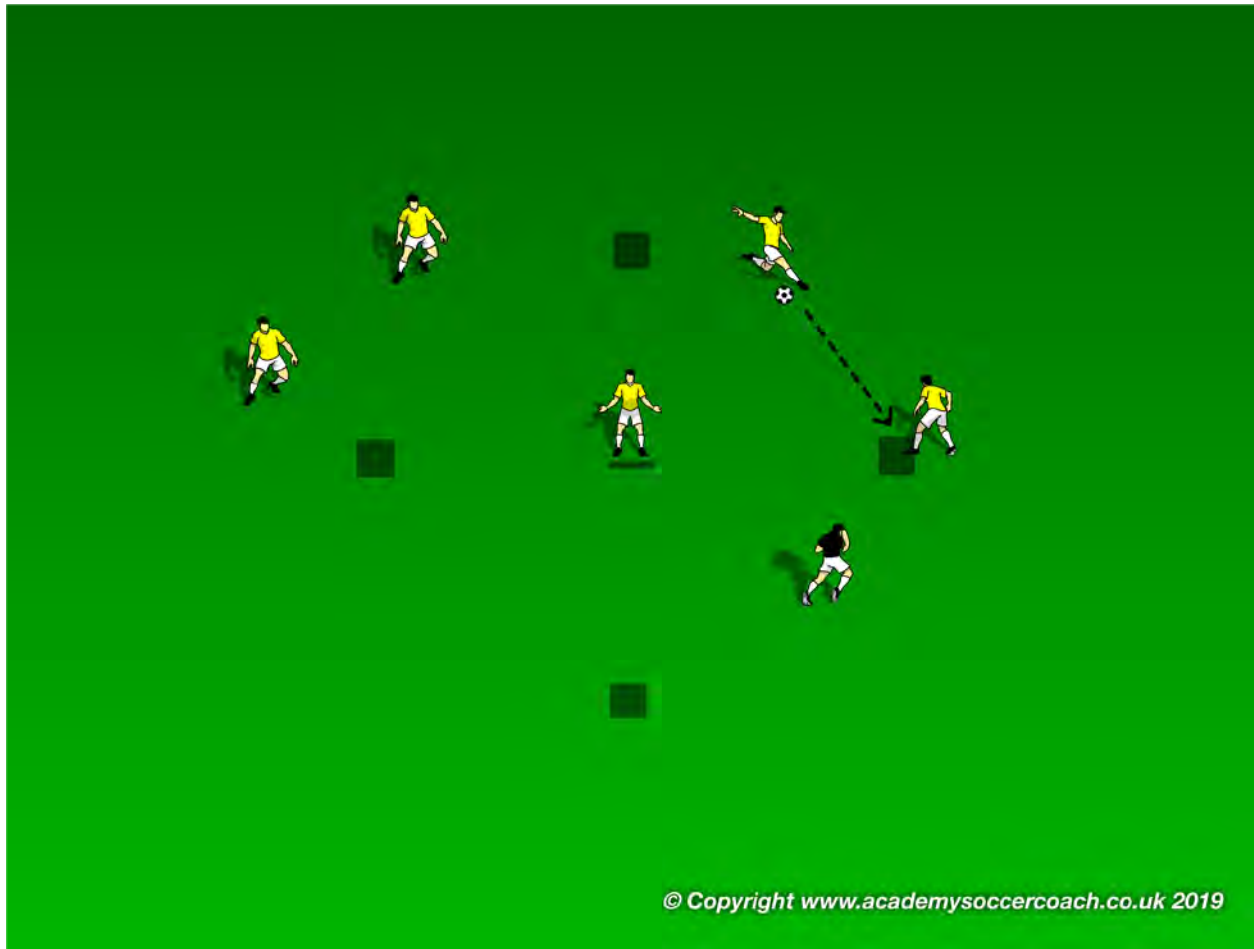


Execution:

The game follows normal kickball rules. One player on the defensive side is the pitcher and rolls a ball from a place between first and third base, the rest of the defensive players are lined up in various positions. The attacking team creates a batting order and sends up one player at a time to home plate to kick the pitched ball.



Teams get three outs and then teams switch. The key difference is to get a player out the ball cannot be thrown to a base, they must be kicked.



Variations:

- Pegs can be implemented if it is deemed safe enough
- Steals can be implemented with the catcher needing to catch and drop kick the ball to second base

Pyramid

Description:

Pyramid is a simple juggling game that makes the normally individual task competitive

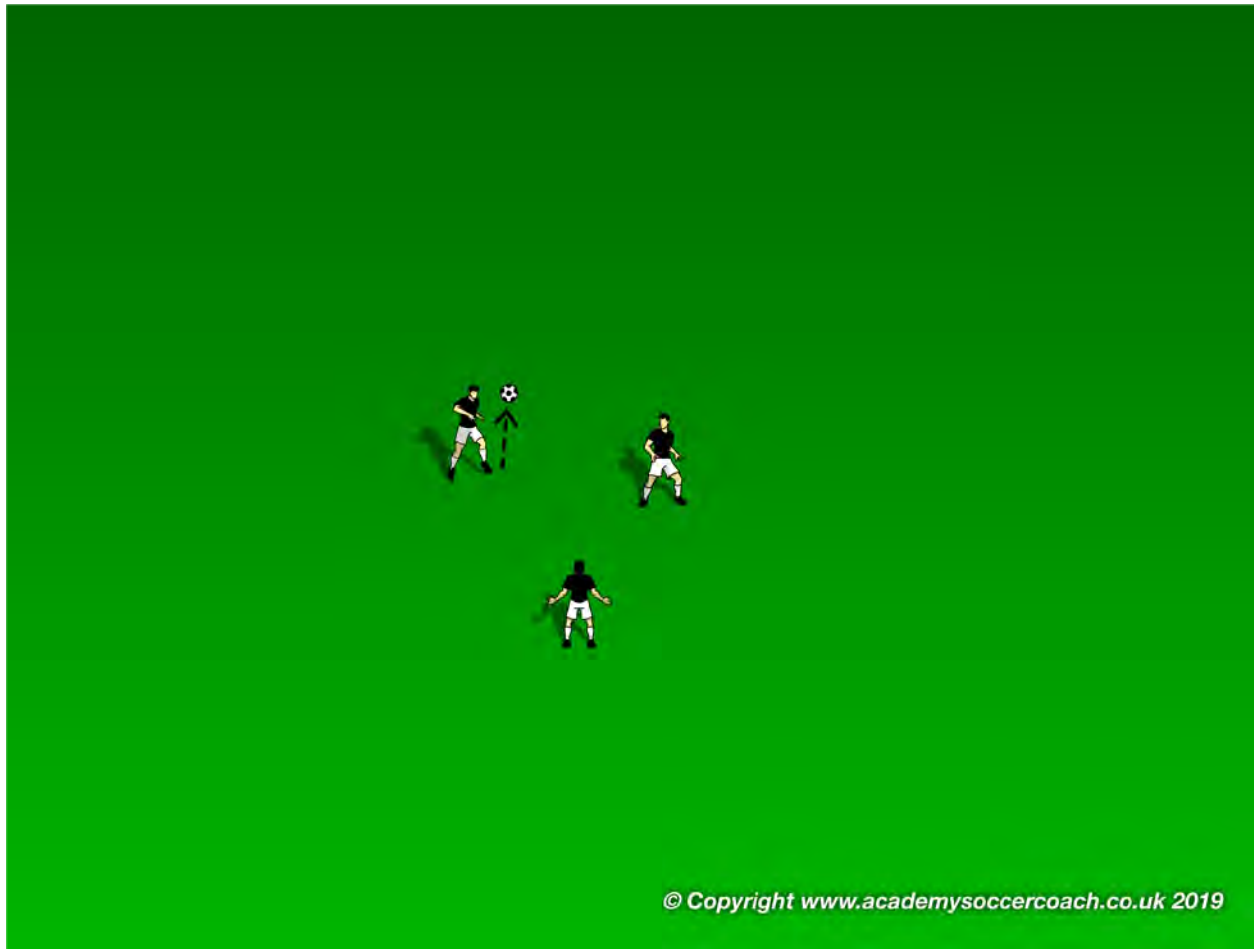
Setup:

There must be at least two players and at least one ball. Players are generally set up in a circle.



Execution:

One player starts with the ball in their hand and they must complete one juggle, they then pass the ball to the next player who must also complete one, when the ball comes back to the original player they must then move to two, and so on and so forth.



The game ends when all of the players except one cannot complete the required juggles. If none of the players can complete the required juggles the round starts over until one of them can.



© Copyright www.academysoccercoach.co.uk 2019

Variations:

- Different rules can be in place that determine how the juggles occur, such as starting from the feet, no thigh, headers only, etc.
- Number of players, order of turns, etc. can also vary

Ball/Goal DIY Ideas

One of the difficult tasks of getting kids to play street soccer is the equipment. To play the full game you need a huge grass pitch, two very expensive goals, and at least one ball (till someone puts it in the retention pond). Often kids see they don't have these requirements and choose just not to play so here is some D.I.Y. suggestions to cure the issue for at least two of these requirements. Some have been mentioned in drills but heres a good shortlist.

Ball

Tennis ball

Volleyball

Socks rolled into a ball

Literally anything round that won't break your foot

Goals are usually the bigger issue and you have to get a little more creative

Goals

Lacrosse nets

Garbage Cans (into the can or hit the can itself)

Articles of clothing such as a shoe or sweaters

Chalk on a wall

Chalk on the curb

Chalk out a designated "endzone" area

Mailbox (no do not shoot at the mailbox, this may be a felony, use it as a designated dribble area)

Target man who can use his hands

Car Tire (not attached to a car, these give great rebounds)

Conclusion:

All of the information included in this book is merely suggestions to get players started playing in less structured more “play” like games with limited resources. These games should be varied based on the players, atmosphere, supplies available, etc. and should not be avoided just because some aspect is missing. Players should adapt and change the games to suit what they have available. It is my hope that with this outline there really should be no excuse for someone to not pick up a ball and play just because they don’t have 22 players, a pitch, a goal, or even ball. It is my belief that this type of unstructured game like play, especially at the younger age groups, not only develop player’s technical ability, awareness, and athleticism, but love for the game.