PRACTICE

AGE: 6 TO 7
04/4/2022 - 40 MINUTES

Have parents join
team by scanning
with camera.

OVERVIEW

- Scrimmage – 20 minutes
- Team Ball Tag – 10 minutes
- Snake – 10 minutes

Practice Notes:

Scrimmage
20 minutes

DESCRIPTION

The best part of the practice, obviously.

WHAT YOU NEED

- 4 cones
- 1 ball
- 2 goals

SETUP

- Set up a goal on each endline and divide your players into 2 teams with one team in pinnies (if you have them) to scrimmage. Use small goals, large goals or pairs of cones placed arms-length apart.
- Grid size should adjust to the age of players:
  - for 5 and under, recommended size: 30 yards long x 20 yards wide
  - for 7-8, recommended size: 35 yards long x 20 yards wide
  - for 9-10, recommended size: 60 yards long x 40 yards wide
  - for 11+, recommended size: 75 yards long x 50 yards wide
    But don't let grid size stop you from playing—you can scrimmage with whatever space you have.
- Goalies are optional for ages 9+. There are no corner kicks or throw-ins. If a ball goes over the sideline, restart play with a kick-in. Keep it simple.
- Goal kicks are optional for balls that cross the endline but miss the goal. The team with possession should back up to midfield to receive it. Otherwise, the coach can play a new ball in to restart play.

WHAT TO EXPECT

For many players, scrimmage is the best part of practice, perhaps because it most closely resembles the real game—and they come to play. This is their time to shine, not the coach's time to puppeteer. Pay attention to how they're putting concepts from the practice session into play while scrimmaging and during breaks, point out examples of players doing this well.

COACHING TIPS

Try to ensure players are evenly balanced—if you have a few strong players, make sure they're evenly split between teams. Provide more specific encouragement and

praise than direction: "Good job dribbling to a new space," for example, vs. just "Good job." You can add rules to encourage players to do what you want them to do (ex: if a player is keeping the ball too long, add a rule that players can only use 3-4 touches.)

MAKE IT HARDER

Increasing grid size makes it harder for defenders. Decreasing grid size makes it harder for attackers.

MAKE IT EASIER

Decreasing grid size makes it easier for defenders. Increasing grid size makes it easier for attackers.
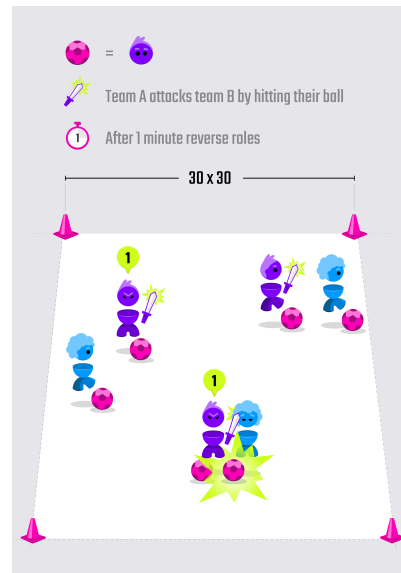
CHANGE IT UP

You can put 2 goals on each endline instead of one goal per endline. More goals: more fun.

Additional Notes:

Team Ball Tag
10 minutes

DESCRIPTION

New favorite, right here! This activity focuses on dribbling, passing, and team building strategy (and players love it!).

WHAT YOU NEED

- 4 cones
- 1 ball per player
- 1 pinnie per 2 players

SETUP

- Place 4 cones to mark the corners of your grid, recommended size: 20 yards long x 30 yards wide.
- Every player has a ball. Divide your players into 2 teams and give 1 team pinnies.
- Team A will have 1 minute to attack by passing their balls and hitting the balls of the players on Team B. Each time a Team A ball hits a Team B ball, Team A gets a point.
- After a minute, reverse roles as Team B tries to hit the balls of the Team A players for 1 minute, and keep score again.
- After each team has had a turn at "it," ask the teams to develop a new strategy and then repeat, with each team having a chance to attack again,

trying to beat their own score from the previous round.

WHAT TO EXPECT

With older players, some balls may go up in the air and hit a player instead of a ball. Remind players to keep the ball on the ground and encourage them to aim for accuracy over power.

Some players may be slow to retrieve their ball after getting tagged, allowing the other team to tag the ball multiple times. Encourage players to move quickly to retrieve their balls.

COACHING TIPS

Encourage the attacking players to pass the ball on the ground as flat as a board. Recognize teamwork by complimenting teammates who help to retrieve their teammates' balls and the players who work together to attack an opposing player.

MAKE IT HARDER

Making the space larger makes it harder for attackers to tag balls

MAKE IT EASIER

Making the space smaller makes it easier for attackers to tag balls

CHANGE IT UP

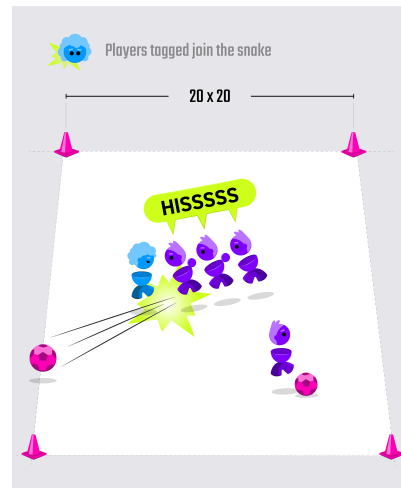Give the attacking team fewer balls to encourage them to work together to attack.

If you allow both teams to attack at the same time it can be chaotic (but fun!) and forces players to measure risk vs. reward as teamwork becomes even more vital (which is such a powerful lesson).

Additional Notes:

Snake
10 minutes

DESCRIPTION

Let'ssss teach playerssss to communicate and move as a team, while developing agility and coordination.

WHAT YOU NEED

- 4 cones
- 1 ball per player

SETUP

- Place 4 cones to mark the corners of your grid, recommended size: 20 x 20 yards.
- Ask for a volunteer to be the Snake. Every other player has a ball.
- Players dribble while the Snake tries to tag them. If tagged, that player joins the Snake by holding onto the back of their shirt, running along with them to tag others.
- Each additional player that gets tagged does the same, making the Snake grow longer. Any player that is part of the Snake can tag others.
- Tags only count if all the players in the Snake are connected.
- Play stopssss when all players become part of the Snake. Once this happens, ask for another volunteer to be the new Snake and start over.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Sometimes, the Snake falls apart because players are uncoordinated or not paying attention, or a fast player breaks it up. Just remind them, a tag doesn't count if they're not connected.

COACHING TIPS

Encourage Snake members to communicate about who they are about to tag so they all move together. Sometimes, they figure out how to trap a player by surrounding them in a corner of the grid. If they don't figure it out first, suggest this to them and see if they can succeed. For fun, encourage players to make hissing snake noises.

MAKE IT HARDER

Making the grid smaller makes it harder to get away from the snake.

MAKE IT EASIER

Making the grid larger makes it easier to get away from the snake.

CHANGE IT UP

If snakes are too scary, they can instead be a Hungry Caterpillar.

Additional Notes: