



## Saginaw Township Soccer Association

P.O. Box 6155, Saginaw MI 48608

3575 McCarty Road, Saginaw MI 48603

Updated: 3/10/17

### Under 5 & Under 7 Program

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Thank you for your participation with Saginaw Township Soccer. Since this may be your child's first experience with soccer or any sort of team environment we thought we'd give you some basic info on the upcoming season.

#### **GAME SCHEDULES**

- Games are scheduled on Monday's, Tuesday's, Wednesday's, and Saturdays and teams will not have more than two games per week; which last 1 hour each.
- Schedules will be available online as soon as a Coach or parent helper has been assigned to each team. In addition, schedules are also posted on the bulletin board, which is located on the east side of the main complex building.

#### **THE U5 / U7 GAME**

Your child will start the game on the same field each time. Fields 12 and 13 are directly behind the pavilion and close to the restrooms. There are mini fields set up on each large field. The goals will be lettered so you know which mini field you're on. Example: Field 12A1, 12A2, 12A3 & 12A4 for girls and 13A1, 13A2, 13A3 and 13A4 for the boys.

- Your child's game will be divided into two parts.
  1. The first part of the game will be a skill session, which will teach the kid's individual ball skills and some small team play. This will be conducted by Trainers at least 4 of the 10 sessions and by the volunteer coaches the rest of the time.
  2. The second part of the game will consist of a scrimmage in which the team divides in half to play each other, or they may scrimmage another STSA team in the same age group. The coach and parent helper will be on the field with the team the entire time.
- Referees are not assigned to the Under 5 and Under 7 age group because the emphasis is on individual player development by maximizing the amount of touches each player gets on a ball. Recreational competition begins at the Under 9 age group.
- All players are required to have an STSA jersey, shin guards, and soccer socks. The jersey can be purchased at the STSA store.

#### **STSA STORE**

The store will be open the week of August 15th. Store hours for that week are Monday –Friday from 5-7pm. Cleats are not necessary but encouraged, however sneakers or a good athletic shoes may be worn.

## **SAFETY**

Jewelry must be removed before any player is allowed to train or compete. There are no exceptions to this policy, as required by the Michigan State Youth Soccer Association.

## **PICTURES**

Hicks Studio is our partner that provides individual & team soccer pictures for STSA. Dates and package info will be given to the coaches or team parent.

## **WEATHER**

- Please check the STSA website for the weather policy. Even though no one likes to play in the rain, games still take place unless there is lightning.
- Make up games due to weather are not common, however, exceptions may be made if you contact your coordinator and both teams agree.
- Remember to dress your child for the weather. Since the complex is so wide open, it's always a bit cooler here than at home. Hats and gloves are ok. Sweatshirts and long pants are good too!
- Please do not forget a water bottle.

## **NUTRITION**

A proper eating program is just as important to an athlete's success as is a training program. Athletes are like finely tuned cars that require high quality fuel to achieve optimal performance. Please consider the following year round nutritional principles to help your athlete:

- Stay hydrated. Your body is more than 50% water and your muscles depend on water to function properly.
- Fuel up before training. Focus on eating lean proteins, fruits, and vegetables and whole grains to ensure that your body is prepared for training. Eat a meal 3 to 4 hours or a snack 1 to 2 hours before a game.
- Eat to recover. Choose carbohydrate rich foods with some protein within 30 to 60 minutes of finishing a training session or game to help your body recover faster. Whole grains including bread, pasta, rice and potatoes, fruits and low fat milk and yogurt are good choices after training sessions or games.
- For more sports nutritional information, please visit our friends at United States Youth Soccer Association. <http://www.usyouthsoccer.org/assets/1/15/Athlete%20eating%20guidelines.pdf>

## **BOARD MEMBERS ARE PRESENT**

Whenever recreational games are held at the complex, there will be one or two Board Members here. Board members will be visible by wearing **GREEN SHIRTS** or **JACKETS**. Please seek us out if you have questions, concerns, or comments. We are here to help make the soccer experience fun and enjoyable for everyone. We hope this information proves helpful! Please feel free to contact us with questions.

**Please contact your coordinator with questions. Their contact information can be found at [www.saginawsoccer.org](http://www.saginawsoccer.org).**

## COACH / PARENT HELPERS

At this age level, not too much soccer knowledge and strategy is needed. The concentration is the individual player development and getting them comfortable with the soccer ball. All the coaches and helpers need to do is show up and organize the players for the games.

STSA has provided some soccer activities at the end of this document for all of the parents that graciously step in to Coach. The activities that are included, are specifically designed for these age groups to emphasize the development of the basic soccer skills.

Since practices are not held for his age group, the time commitment involved is simply the game time. As a coach / parent helper, you lead the kids in the soccer activities and organize the team for the actual game, after the training session. Most coaches decide to co-coach with another parent. Generally, the coach needs a parent helper for each game anyway.

Please let a Coordinator know if you are willing to help coach or act as a parent helper. Rosters are provided to Coaches as they are assigned to their respective teams however; schedules cannot be completed until all the teams are assigned Coaches.



1ST STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT - PLAYERS AGE 3-5 YEARS

# BEE HIVE

**STAGES COVERED BY ACTIVITY**

Stages 1, 2 & 3 - 3-11 year old players

**THEMES & COMPETENCIES**

**Theme:**

- + 1v1 attacking and defending
- + Dribbling
- + Ball mastery.

**Competencies:**

- + Turns and feints- basic
- + Dribbling basics
- + Fundamental movement skills
- + Beating and escaping an opponent
- + Attacking as an individual
- + Confidence and concentration
- + Defending as an individual.

**WHY USE IT**

'Bee Hive' is a small sided game emphasizing close control and dribbling with the laces. Coaches can introduce the speed of dribble, change of direction and simple attacking and defending strategies.

**SET UP**

15 x 15 yard square with Bee Hives - 3 x 3 yards squares marked with cones in each corner. 12 players organized into 4 teams - each team with a different colored training vest. At least 1 ball for each player.

**HOW TO PLAY**

Story: There are 4 Bee Hives close to a field of flowers with the Bee's favorite pollen. Each Bee has to supply the hive with 3 pollen balls to win the game. 4 teams of 3 'Bees'. Each Bee has a number (or a character name - Buzzy 1, 2 etc). Position each team behind one of the small corner squares (the hive). All the pollen balls are placed in the center of the playing area. The objective is to see which team can supply their hive with 3 pollen balls the quickest. The game starts with the coach shouting out a number. The activity can be progressed by reducing the number of balls in the center and allowing players to 'steal' from another hive.

**COACHING NOTES**

- + Coaching objectives – players dribbling with the laces and performing different turns when collecting the ball.
- + Coaching tip – Use assistant coaches/ parents for 'crowd control' – helping keep players behind the hives and reminding players when it is their turn!
- + Adaptations – add balls to make the activity easier and reduce balls to create 1v1 duels.



- + Coach calls a number.
- + The Bee with that number runs to the center of the 'field'.
- + The Bee dribbles one ball back to the hive



- + Coach can introduce different turns to retrieve the balls.
- + Keep returning to the 'field' to collect the pollen.



- + To progress the activity, reduce the number of balls in play.
- + Players steal pollen from other teams hive to collect 3.



**1ST STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT - PLAYERS AGE 3-5 YEARS**

# CAT AND MOUSE

**STAGES COVERED BY ACTIVITY**

Stages 1 & 2 - 3-8 year old players

**THEMES & COMPETENCIES**

**Theme:**

- + Dribbling
- + Ball mastery.
- + 1v1 Attacking and Defending

**Competencies:**

- + Turns and feints- basic
- + Dribbling basics
- + Beating and escaping an opponent

**WHY USE IT**

Cat and mouse introduces young players to some simple 1v1 concepts, such as the need to keep the ball (attacking) and win the ball from an opponent (defending).

**SET UP**

25x25 yard square with 4 small 2 yard squares 2 yards from the corners (use 2 different colored cones). 3 teams with 4 players in colored training vests. Players from 2 teams have soccer balls (mice) and 1 team without the balls (cats). Additional 16 training vests - place 2 in each mini-square (mouse hole).

**HOW TO PLAY**

Story: The 'Cats' are chasing after the mice and trying to catch their tails (training vests tucked into the shorts of the mice). The mice can dribble to a mouse hole, where they are safe from the mouse. The mouse can only stay in the mouse hole for 5 seconds at a time (use parents to help move the mice along). If a mouse loses its tail, they can dribble their ball to a mouse hole to retrieve a new tail. Once all the tails have gone from the mouse holes change the cats.

**COACHING NOTES**

- + Coaching objectives - Instruct the players to keep the ball moving - standing still helps a defender. Dribble to space and away from pressure.
- + Coaching tip - Young players will have difficulty placing their own tails in their shorts - get parents to help - or players hold the pinnie and the cat has to tag the player to get the tail.
- + Adaptations - To make it more difficult for the mice, reduce the mouse holes to 2-3. If the tag game is going too quickly, make the 'tagger' dribble a ball to slow them down.



- + 2 teams of mice dribble the balls.
- + 1 team of cats without balls chase the mice.
- + Parents help the coach.



- + Mice are safe when in the mouse hole.
- + There are new tails for mice in the mouse hole.
- + Cats pull out the mice tails.



- + Remove 2 mice holes to make it more difficult for the mice.



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**1ST STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT - PLAYERS AGE 3-5 YEARS**

# FETCH

## STAGES COVERED BY ACTIVITY

Stages 1 & 2 - 3-8 year old players

## THEMES & COMPETENCIES

Theme:

- + Dribbling
- + Ball mastery.

Competencies:

- + Turns and feints- basic
- + Dribbling basics
- + Fundamental movement skills
- + Beating and escaping an opponent

## WHY USE IT

This activity is a great introduction to dribbling and ball mastery. Players are constantly moving and touching the ball - a fantastic way to activate the players at the beginning of the session.

## SET UP

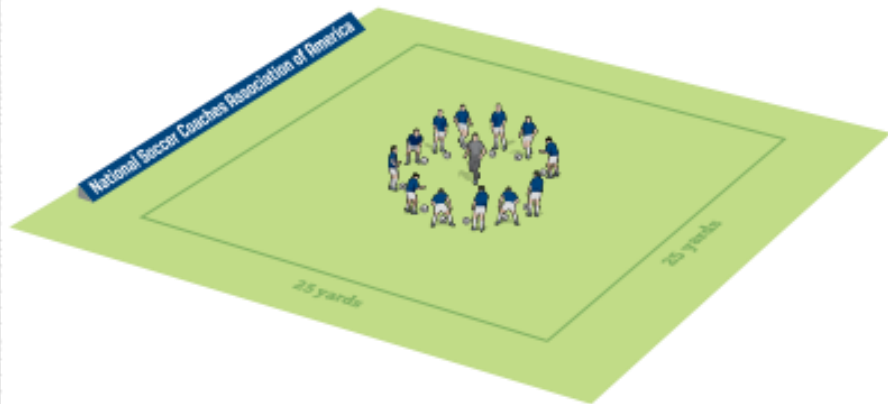
25 x 25 yard area with extra room to roam outside the square. Every player with a ball. 2-3 coaches/parent helpers.

## HOW TO PLAY

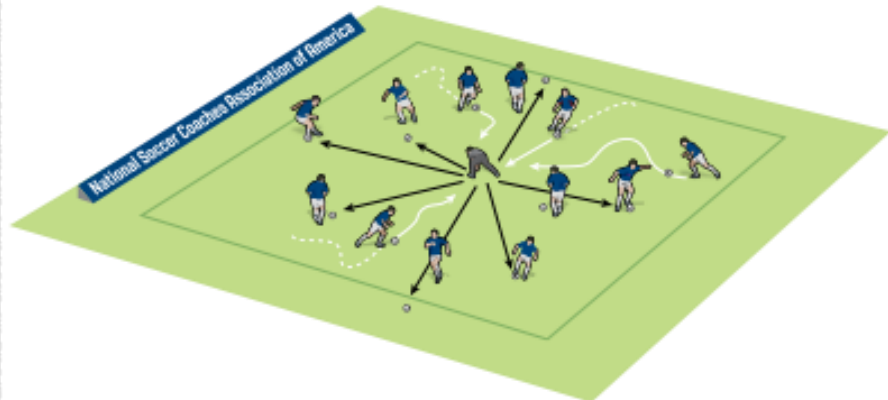
The coach kneels down in the center of the area with the players around with their foot on the ball. The activity begins with the coach rolling a player's ball out into the area - some long and some short. The player chases their ball and then dribbles the ball back to the coach. Involve a 2nd/3rd helper to ensure players are constantly moving. Repeat several times. Add challenges, such as, the player must dribble to a different coach/helper each time, the player has to catch the ball before it stops moving for a point, perform 5 toe taps before returning, left foot only, outside/heel only etc.

## COACHING NOTES

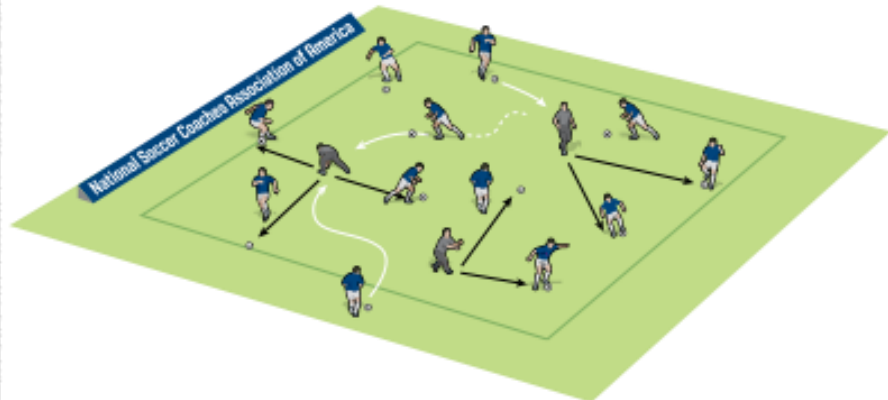
- + Coaching objectives - the coach can add many different skills and objectives. Talk about the 10 surfaces of the feet - inside, outside, laces, heel and sole on each foot and perform moves with each.
- + Coaching tip - If coaching mixed ability groups, experiment ways to differentiate the activity to challenge all players.
- + Adaptations - alternate the serve height and direction and transition into another activity such as body part dribble or a tag game.



- + Players gather around the coach with a ball each.
- + Coach demonstrates some moves.



- + Coach rolls the balls randomly short and long.
- + Players chase attempting to reach the ball before stopping.



- + Additional coaches/parents join in.
- + Player alternate between servers.
- + Servers move to add an additional challenge.



**1ST STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT - PLAYERS AGE 3-5 YEARS**

**PIT STOP**

**STAGES COVERED BY ACTIVITY**

Stages 1, 2 & 3 - 3-11 year old players

**THEMES & COMPETENCIES**

**Theme:**

- + 1v1 attacking and defending
- + Dribbling
- + Ball mastery.

**Competencies:**

- + Turns - basic
- + Dribbling basics
- + Feints and dribble
- + Beating an opponent (2nd stage)
- + Attacking as an individual
- + Confidence and concentration
- + Defending as an individual.

**WHY USE IT**

'Pit Stop' is an excellent activity to activate the interest and focus of young players quickly. Consistent with the our 'individual' focus at the first stage of development, we can differentiate the difficulty of the activity.

**SET UP**

20 x 20 yard square. Randomly place 6 cone gates ('Pit Lane') - 2 yds apart. All players have a ball and can dribble anywhere within the square. Coach can add a number of conditions to the activity to change the emphasis, such as changing the pace of the dribble, changing direction and dribbling to space.

**HOW TO PLAY**

Story: Players are on a race track with many twists and turns. To begin the race, the coach introduces different signals: 'Green Flag' the players can dribble at any speed they wish; 'Red Flag' - there has been an accident and all cars must stop (foot on ball); 'Final Lap' - players must dribble at full speed. Add many other conditions to add turns, ball mastery skills etc. During the race, the carts need refueling and new tires - go through the gates when coach shouts 'Pit Stop'. When a coach/parent stands in between the cones the 'Pit Lane' is closed.

**COACHING NOTES**

- + Coaching objectives - players dribbling with the laces and 'raise their heads' to see if a Pit Lane is closed or open.
- + Coaching tip - Add a points system to add extra excitement - 1pt for a Pit stop and change of direction using the turn of the day.
- + Adaptations - numerous additional conditions can be added to increase or decrease difficulty, i.e. Add a Police Officer (player without the ball) to chase after a speeding carts.



- + All players dribbling anywhere on the race track.
- + Introduce commands - i.e. 'Red Flag' - stop.



- + The coaches/parents have closed 3 of the 'Pit Lanes'.
- + Racing Carts must go to open 'Lanes' for a point.



- + Coaches/parents move in and out of the 'Pit Lanes'.
- + Players must find a different open pit.
- + Add 2 'Police Officers' to chase the speeding Carts.



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**1ST STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT - PLAYERS AGE 3-5 YEARS**

# BODY BALL

## STAGES COVERED BY ACTIVITY

Stages 1 & 2 - 3-8 year old players

## THEMES & COMPETENCIES

Theme:

- + Dribbling
- + Ball mastery.

Competencies:

- + Turns and feints- basic
- + Dribbling basics
- + Fundamental movement skills
- + Beating and escaping an opponent

## WHY USE IT

Young players like to experiment and 'Body Ball' is the perfect way to incorporate laughter and skill development into one activity. Players learn to use different surfaces of the feet and to keep hands off the soccer ball.

## SET UP

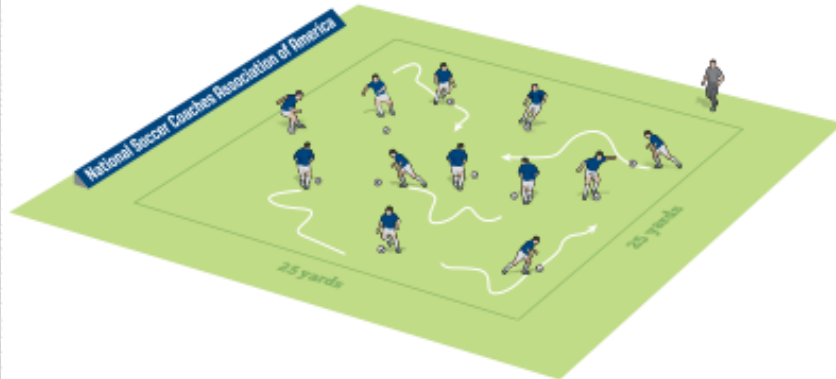
25 x 25 yard area. 12 players each with a ball dribbling around the area.

## HOW TO PLAY

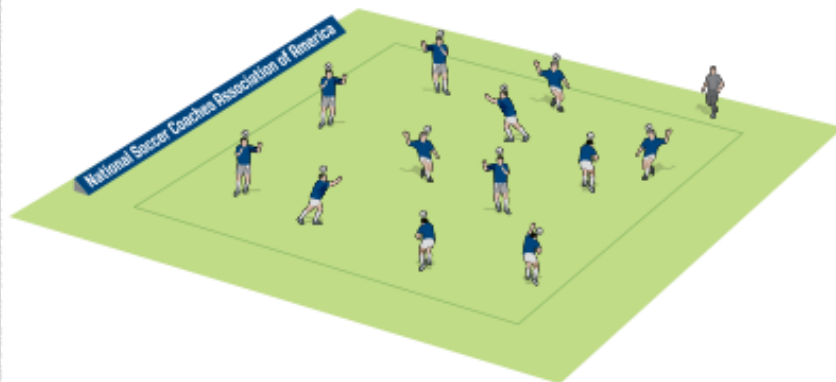
Players dribble around the area listening for the coach's instruction. When the coach shouts out a body part, the players have to place that part on the ball. Start off simple, keeping the instruction to single body parts, such as, 'head', 'tummy' and 'bottom'. Increase the complexity by calling out 'left foot', 'right knee', 'left elbow' etc. As you know, some young players also like to use their hands. One way to introduce the 'no hands rule' is to have the players repeat as a group 'No hands in Soccer' when you call out 'hands' as a body part. Be ready for the smarty pants who tells you that goal keepers use their hands!

## COACHING NOTES

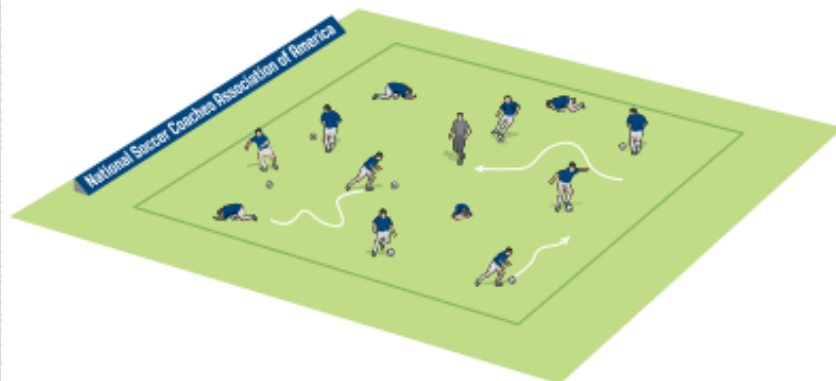
- + Coaching objectives - To get the players moving and touching the ball using different parts of the foot. Also introduce players to 'left' and 'right' and the 'hand ball rule'.
- + Coaching tip - Kneel down so your head height is at the same level as your players to establish eye contact. Avoid wearing sunglasses when you coach.
- + Adaptations - as player become proficient, call out body parts consecutively (i.e. tummy, nose, elbow) or call out two body parts at once. (i.e. right hand and left foot).



- + Players dribble around the area listening for the coach to call a body part.
- + Start with simple parts such as tummy, bottom and head.



- + A good opportunity to teach some rules such as handball.
- + When coach says 'hands', plays repeat 'no hands in soccer'.



- + Increase the challenge by shouting a sequence of body parts.
- + Players need to place 2 body parts on the ball.



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**1ST STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT - PLAYERS AGE 3-5 YEARS**

# CROCODILE SWAMP

**STAGES COVERED BY ACTIVITY**

Stages 1 & 2 - 3-8 year old players

**THEMES & COMPETENCIES**

**Theme:**

- + Dribbling
- + Ball mastery.
- + 1v1 Attacking and Defending

**Competencies:**

- + Turns and feints- basic
- + Dribbling basics
- + Fundamental movement skills
- + Beating and escaping an opponent

**WHY USE IT**

'Crocodile Swamp' incorporates dribbling skills, changing direction and ball mastery. A great warm-up and activation activity.

**SET UP**

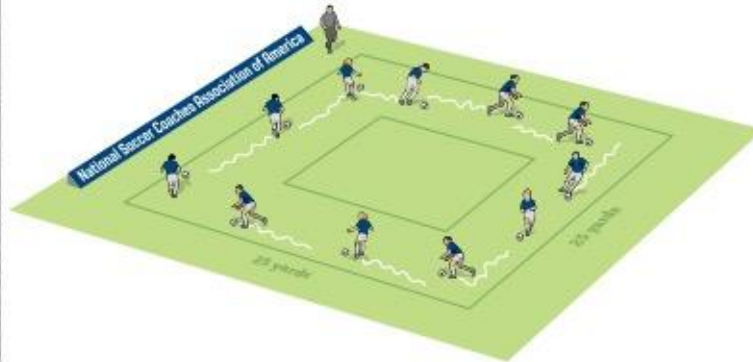
25x25 yard square and a smaller 10x10 yard square in the center. The smaller square is a 'no-go zone' and players should stay out until the coach instructs players to enter.

**HOW TO PLAY**

Story: Players are lost in a Floridian swamp full of crocodiles. As long as the players stay outside the swamp they are safe, but to score a point they must take a risk and cross the swamp and avoid a crocodile. To help the players become orientated and familiar with the activity, get the players dribbling in the large square. Introduce the direction of the dribble - left or right. Then, explain that the center square is the swamp - as the players dribble, the coach calls 'Cross the Swamp' and the players must travel with the ball directly across, one side to the other. Add different ways to change direction, moves to beat an opponent etc. Then add the 'Crocodile Coach' in the swamp and points for crossing the swamp without the Crocodile touching the ball. Play for up to ten minutes.

**COACHING NOTES**

- + Coaching objectives - Repetition and reinforcement of dribbling and ball mastery skills are essential- introduce inside and outside of the foot cut moves.
- + Coaching tip - At an early age, teach players to perform cut moves using the correct foot and surface of the foot, so that the ball is furthest away from pressure.
- + Adaptations - Create a team game - split the players into 4 teams of 3 players and 1 team are the crocodiles and the other 3 teams try to cross the swamp.



- + Start with introducing the rules of the game.
- + Players dribble inside the big square following the coach's commands.



- + Introduce the 'Swamp' and add the Crocodile.
- + Players earn a point each time they cross the swamp.
- + The Crocodile has to touch a ball.



- + Add 4 teams, 1 team are crocodiles in the swamp.
- + The other 3 teams have to cross using 'special moves'.



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**1ST STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT - PLAYERS AGE 3-5 YEARS**

# PYRAMID CHALLENGE

**STAGES COVERED BY ACTIVITY**

Stages 1 & 2 - 3-8 year old players

**THEMES & COMPETENCIES**

**Theme:**

- + 1v1 attacking and defending
- + Dribbling
- + Ball mastery.

**Competencies:**

- + Turns and feints- basic
- + Dribbling basics
- + Fundamental movement skills
- + Beating and escaping an opponent
- + Attacking as an individual
- + Confidence and concentration
- + Defending as an individual.

**WHY USE IT**

In this fun and fast paced activity, the Egyptians (players) must avoid the Serpent Snake to build their pyramids. The dribbling activity also emphasizes take on moves to beat a defender and is an opportunity a coach to teach dribbling to space.

**SET UP**

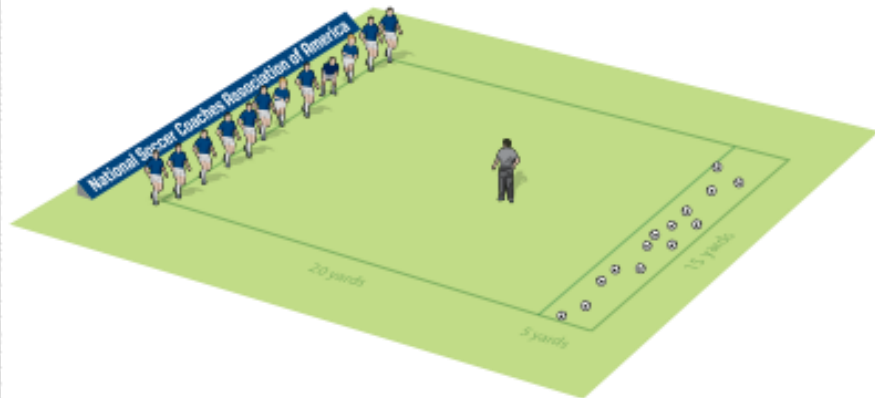
15 x 20 yard area with an additional 5 yard end zone at one end. 14 balls of similar size are randomly placed in the end zone - each ball represents a 'pyramid stone'. All players start at the end of the area with a ball, facing the end zone. The 'Serpent Coach' stands in the middle of the area.

**HOW TO PLAY**

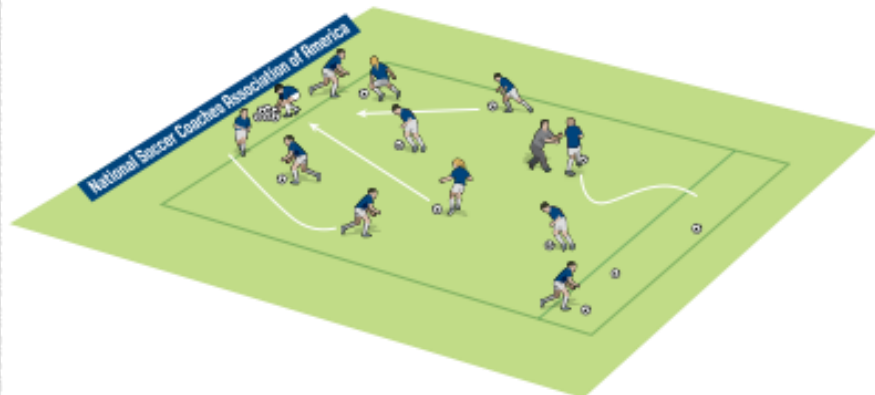
Story: The Egyptians are attempting to build a magnificent pyramid from stone situated at the end of the valley. The Egyptians must avoid the Serpent - at first without the ball - collect a stone and return back to the pyramid building site to build a 3 level and 14 ball pyramid (9 on the bottom, 4 on the next level and 1 on top). If the Serpent tags an Egyptian or touches a stone, the Egyptian becomes a Serpent. Egyptians win the game if they build a pyramid - they lose if the Serpent captures all the Egyptians before building the Serpent.

**COACHING NOTES**

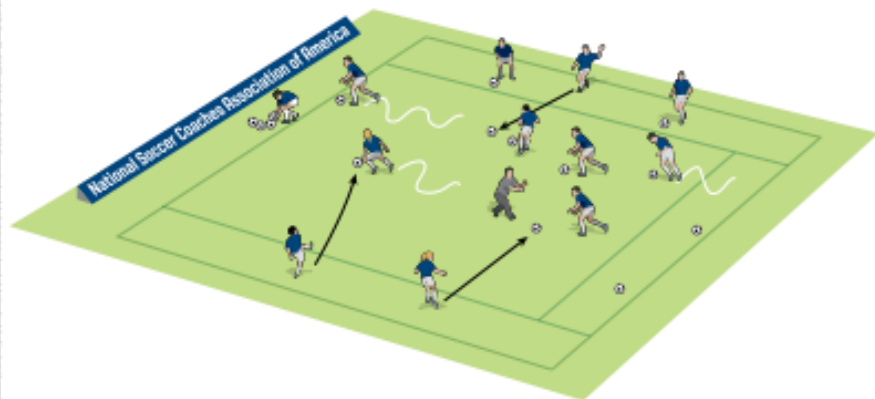
- + Coaching objectives - players dribbling with the laces and performing different take-on moves to beat the 'Serpent'.
- + Coaching tip - Discuss with players Big Space and Little Space.
- + Adaptations - Players dribble balls in both directions, captured players go to the sides and fire (pass) boulders to hit the Egyptians below the knee.



- + Egyptians start at opposite end of the valley to the stones.
- + Serpent in the middle.
- + Egyptians start without a ball.



- + Egyptians avoid Serpent's tag.
- + On the return trip, Egyptians dribble the ball.
- + Egyptians build a 3 tiered pyramid.



- + Add cones wide for width.
- + Captured Egyptians pass boulders from the sides.



**1ST STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT - PLAYERS AGE 3-5 YEARS**

**CAN YOU?**

**STAGES COVERED BY ACTIVITY**

Stages 1 & 2 - 3-8 year old players

**THEMES & COMPETENCIES**

Theme:

- + Dribbling
- + Ball mastery.

Competencies:

- + Turns and feints- basic
- + Dribbling basics
- + Fundamental movement skills
- + Beating and escaping an opponent

**WHY USE IT**

'Can You?' is a terrific activity to commence a training session with young players and has almost endless variations and possibilities. The coach demonstrates an activity and asks the players - can you do that?

**SET UP**

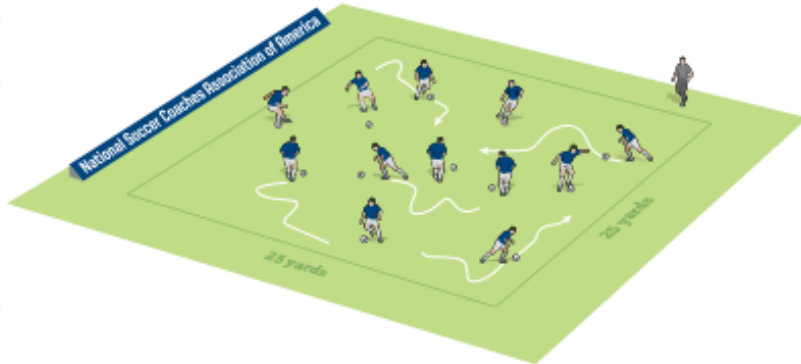
25 x 25 yard area. 12 players each with a ball dribbling around the area.

**HOW TO PLAY**

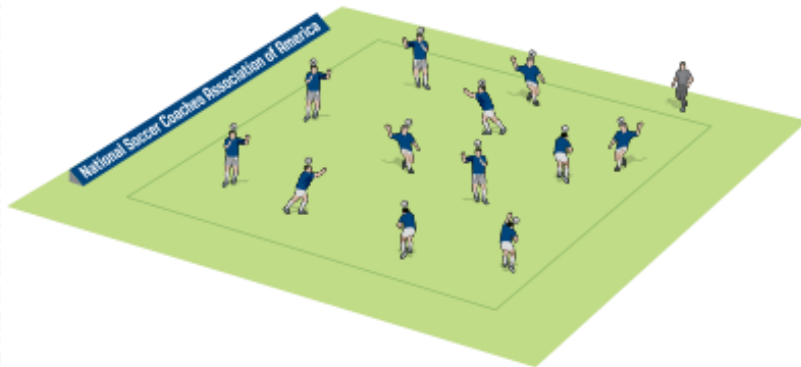
Ask players to dribble around the area using their laces part of their shoe. After 1-2 mins, ask players to come close and place a foot on top of the ball. Explain how to play - the players must copy what the coach demonstrates. Start with fundamental movement skills, such as running, skipping, galloping, balancing, dodging etc. Then introduce the ball and add new movements each time you play. E.g. 1) Dribble with laces - slow down and push the ball lightly with the laces (left, right and alternate) 2) foundations - push the ball from side-to-side, right to the left foot and back again, 3) Toe taps - hopping from one foot to the other touching the top of the ball with the opposite foot each time. 4) Sole drag back - hopping between feet, move backwards dragging the ball back alternating between the sole of the shoes, 5) Sole push - push the ball forward with the sole of the shoes.

**COACHING NOTES**

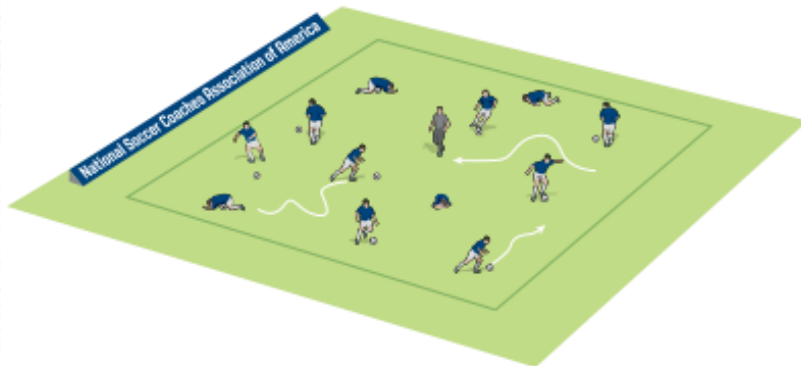
- + Coaching objectives - the coach can add many different skills and objectives. Talk about the 10 surfaces of the feet - inside, outside, laces, heel and sole on each foot and perform moves with each.
- + Coaching tip - Start the activity without a ball and include fundamental movement skills.
- + Adaptations - the coach can add all sorts of movement patterns, turns and tricks to keep the game new and exciting for the players.



- + Players gather around the coach with a ball each.
- + Coach demonstrates some moves.



- + On the coach's command, players perform movement patterns.
- + Simple dribbling moves at first and then more challenging moves.



- + Add in basic turns such as drag back, inside of the foot, step-on and step-over.



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