



U8- WEEK 5

Date:

4/6/23 @ 5:45 PM

Duration:

60 minutes

Overview:

- Capture the Balls - 10 minutes
- 5 Goal Game - 10 minutes
- 4v4 to 4 Goals (Defending) - 10 minutes
- Scrimmage - 30 minutes

Description**GETTING STARTED WITH PRACTICE:**

These are set up in the play-practice-play format, which means you will open with a scrimmage as your kids are arriving, and close with a scrimmage after learning the skills included in the activities here. You will need to adjust your times accordingly.

Start the opening scrimmage the same way we did in previous weeks, with players being added to the game as they arrive

PLAYER ACTIONS: Protect the goal, Steal the ball

KEY WORDS: block your goal, get back

GUIDED QUESTIONS: What should you do if you see your goal is not protected? Where should you go if you see the opponent with the ball is closer to your goal than you are?

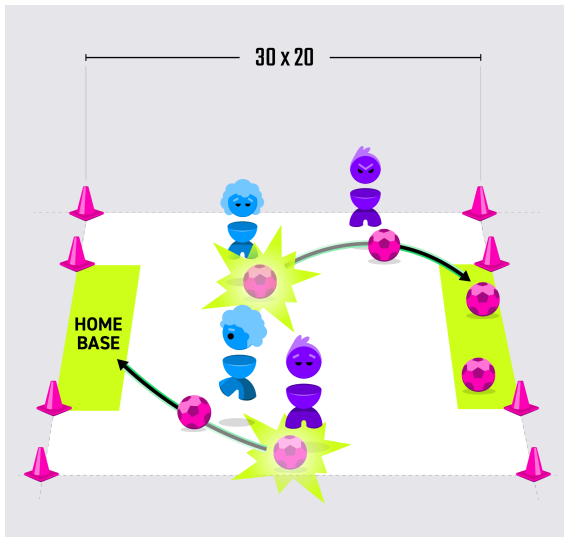
ANSWERS: Move your body so it is between the ball and your goal.
Get back so you are closer
to the goal and steal the ball if you can.

NOTES: All comments should be directed at the team without the
ball. Help them recognize the moments
they need to get back to protect their goal and when to step to the
ball to try to steal it.

Thanks to our friends at Massachusetts Youth Soccer for this
practice plan!

Capture the Balls

Duration: 10 minutes



DESCRIPTION

It's Capture the Flag—soccer-style. Build teamwork, strategic thinking and multiple ball skills with this throwback.

WHAT YOU NEED

- 12 cones
- 1 ball per player
- 1 pinnie per player

SETUP

- Place 4 cones to mark the corners of your grid, recommended size: 30 x 30 yards.
- Depending on how many players you have, divide your group into teams of 3-5.
- Use a normal field shape if you have 2 teams. If you have 3 teams, create a triangle-shaped field. With 4 teams, create a square field.

- With your cones, create a “Home Base” for each team: * For 2 teams, create 3 x 3 yard squares at each end of the field. * For 3-4 teams, put the squares in the corners of a triangle- or square-shaped field.
- Place all the balls (about 1 per player) equidistant from the home bases in the middle of the field. Tell players that the goal is to have the most balls in their home base when you call time.
- Teams will compete to capture as many balls as they can by dribbling or passing them to their base. Players can steal balls from other teams’ home bases. Players may not use their hands, sit on or lay on the balls.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Players may show some hesitancy at first to try to steal from others. They may also get discouraged when their balls are stolen. Encourage them to have fun- they can always try to steal their balls back!

You may see natural leaders or “captains” emerge during this game- make a mental note of what you observe.

COACHING TIPS

Provide a 10-second countdown before both starting and ending the game to give players a sense of how much time is left. After 1 round, ask teams to go back to their home bases and come up with a new game plan. Give them about 15 seconds. Then, walk over and ask each group what their plan is before beginning again.

If one team is dominating, assess whether players are unevenly matched and if so, change up teams so players are more evenly balanced.

MAKE IT HARDER

Making the field smaller or reducing the number of balls makes it harder for players to steal and defend balls.

MAKE IT EASIER

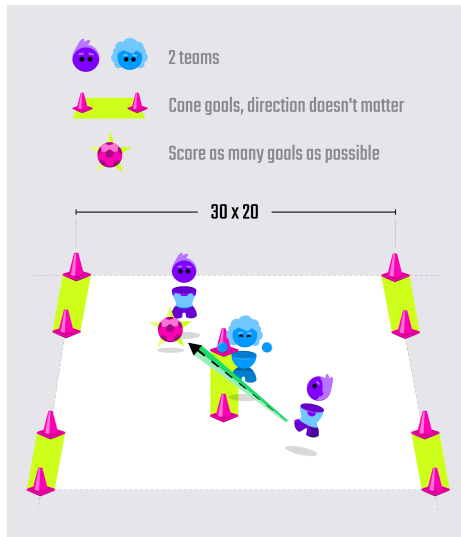
Making the field larger or adding more balls makes it easier for players to steal and defend balls.

DO IT AT HOME

Players can keep working on their skills at home with a game we call [2-for-1 Dribbling](#), only available with MOJO+.

5 Goal Game

Duration: 10 minutes



DESCRIPTION

Two teams compete trying to score in either direction through five small goals.

WHAT YOU NEED

- 10 cones
- 1 ball
- 1 pinnie per 2 players

SETUP

- Place 4 cones to mark the corners of your grid, recommended size: 30 yards long x 20 yards wide for every 6-12 players.
- Use pairs of cones placed 6 feet apart to create a goal at each end of each endline, 4 goals in all, plus a 5th goal in the center of your grid.
- Divide players into two teams, one on each endline, and

- give one team pinnies.
- Play starts when an equal number of players enter from each endline and one team initiates play by passing the ball to each other and advancing towards any of the 5 goals. You can play 2, 3 or 4 players on each side.
- Play short rounds, a couple minutes long. Play is continuous through the round. If a player scores or the ball goes out of bounds, just play a new ball in. Between rounds, rotate teams so that all players get turns attacking and defending.
- If you have enough players for 2 grids, you can position yourself in the middle and run 2 games at the same time so players get more touches on the ball.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Defenders may get discouraged since there are 5 different goals on which to score and the only way to regain possession is to steal or intercept the ball. If turnovers are not happening naturally, rotate roles between rounds so everyone gets turns attacking and defending.

COACHING TIPS

When players with the ball attract multiple defenders to the area they're attacking, they need to change the goal they look to attack (this is called "changing the point of attack"). Encourage them to do so quickly, while their teammates look for open space where they can receive a pass.

Encourage players, when they receive a pass through a goal, to make their first touch towards the direction they want to go next. If they use that touch to simply stop the ball, defenders are more likely to get close enough to steal the ball.

CHANGE IT UP

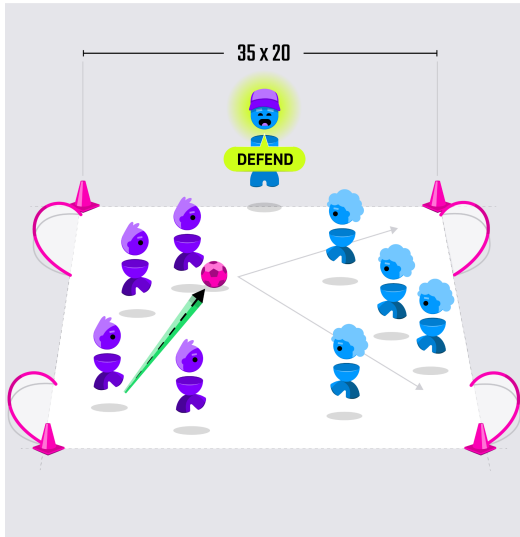
If players are having great success, you can limit them to 2 touches each time they receive the ball.

DO IT AT HOME

Players can keep working on their skills at home with a game we call [1v1](#), only available with MOJO+.

4v4 to 4 Goals (Defending)

Duration: 10 minutes



DESCRIPTION

This quick transition game forces players to both attack and defend immediately when the ball changes ownership.

WHAT YOU NEED

- 8 cones
- 1 ball
- 1 pinnie per 2 players
- 4 small goals

SETUP

- Place 4 cones to mark the corners of your grid, recommended size: 35 yards long x 20 yards wide for every 8-12 players.
- Place a small portable goal or pair of cones placed 6 feet apart at each end of each endline, 4 goals in all.
- Divide players into two teams, one on each endline, and

- give one team pinnies.
- Play starts when 4 players enter from each endline and one team initiates play by passing the ball to each other and advancing towards their goals.
- Players scrimmage and score by kicking the ball into either of their goals or through the cones, below knee height.
- If a player scores or the ball goes out of bounds, new players rotate in and a new round begins.
- There are no goalies, corners or throw-ins. If a ball goes out of bounds, it's a kick-in.
- If you have enough players for 2 grids, you can position yourself in the middle and run 2 games at the same time so players get more touches on the ball.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Especially at younger ages, attacking players are still learning to dribble and pass, and may rush to the ball in their excitement, which can benefit defenders. However, with two goals to defend, defending players can still get frustrated. If turnovers are not happening naturally, rotate players so everyone gets turns attacking and defending.

COACHING TIPS

Encourage defenders to work together to try to get the attackers to pass the ball sideways or back and take away time and space. Taking away time means getting pressure to the ball and slowing the attacker down. Taking away space means staying connected and compact, preventing attackers from getting down the field.

If individual defending is good, can the group of defenders come together and get compact? This also helps overcome individual defending mistakes. The first defender provides pressure, the next provides cover, and the other defenders provide balance. As a group, can they be like a fist? Nothing gets through the fingers.

MAKE IT HARDER

Making the space larger makes it harder for defenders.

MAKE IT EASIER

Making the space smaller makes it easier for defenders.

CHANGE IT UP

To help players develop ball control and speed dribbling skills, you can adjust the game so that players must dribble through the goal in control of the ball in order to score.

Scrimmage

Duration: 30 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.

DO IT AT HOME

Players can keep working on their skills at home with a game we call

[1v1](#), only available with MOJO+.