



## U12 PRACTICE 5 – USYS CURRICULUM

---

**Date:**

4/6/23 @ 5:45 PM

**Duration:**

90 minutes

**Overview:**

- Scrimmage - 25 minutes
- I Want to Be Like - 10 minutes
- One-Touch Finish - 10 minutes
- 4v4 to 4 Goals (Attacking) - 15 minutes
- Fcb Scrimmage - 30 minutes

**Description**

\*This practice is part of the \_\_US Youth Soccer National Grassroots Curriculum\_\_.\*

**### OVERVIEW**

Every player loves to score. Encourage players to try new moves to take a defender on and help them to understand that mistakes are a part of learning. Just because you struggle to beat a defender in training doesn't mean you should stop trying.

**### WHAT TO LOOK FOR**

- Movement off the ball to create openings to shoot
- When shooting with the laces is a players head over the ball, toe pointing down and ankle locked
- Players recognize openings to shoot or pass to create chances
- Confidence to take players on 1v1 to then shoot

### ### WHAT TO SAY

\_\_When near the goal, which surface of the foot should you use to be more accurate?\_\_

\*Inside of the foot and use the plant foot to aim at the target\*

\_\_What can you do if there is not an opening to shoot?\_\_

\*Pass the ball to another player\*

\_\_What should we look like when we are [shooting with the laces](yougotmojo://content/post?postId=30kgCxqFPBZFqjIWfsB8S)?\_\_

\*Head over the ball, toe down, ankle locked\*

\_\_What can we do to help the player on the ball?\_\_

\*Move into an opening and look to combine\*

### ### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Soccer 101: [How to Strike a Soccer Ball](yougotmojo://content/post?postId=6X1NybiZTsSUWt4LxSWslx)

- Soccer 101: [How to Shoot with the Laces and Inside of the Foot](yougotmojo://content/post?postId=30kgCxqFPBZFqjIWfsB8S)

# Scrimmage

Duration: 25 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+.

# I Want to Be Like

Duration: 10 minutes

## DESCRIPTION

This small-sided game promotes dribbling and shooting by restricting forward passing.

## WHAT YOU NEED

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

## SETUP

- Place 4 cones to mark the corners of your grid, recommended size: 40 yards long x 30 yards wide for every 6-10 players. Divide players into 2 teams, one on each endline, and give one team pinnies.
- This game can be played 2v2, 3v3, 4v4 or more. If you have an odd number of players, you can give one team an extra attacker or add a neutral player who is all-time offense.
- Place a goal on each endline using 6 ft. portable goals or pairs of cones placed 6 feet apart. Players score by passing or shooting the ball into the goal or between the cones, below knee-height.
- Play starts when players on one endline initiate play by passing the ball to each other and advancing towards their goal. At this point, either team can score. Both sides can attack, both sides will defend, so whoever has the ball is attacking when they have it.
- "I Want To Be Like..." rules: In this game, forward passing is not permitted in the attacking half. Players can pass back to a teammate, but must dribble or shoot to get forward

- (like soccer heroes Lionel Messi, Alex Morgan or Christian Pulisic).
- There are no corners, throw-ins or goalies. If a ball goes out of bounds, it's a kick-in.
- Play short rounds. The team with the most goals wins the round.
- If you have enough players for 2 grids, you can position yourself in the middle and run two games at the same time so players get more touches on the ball.

## **COACHING TIPS**

Provide specific encouragement and recognition. Think: “Good job dribbling to open space” instead of just “Good job.”

During a scrimmage, continue to emphasize the coaching points you stressed during your practice. If you worked on maintaining possession, stress that in the scrimmage. If you worked on defensive teamwork in your practice, focus on that.

It’s also great to just observe your players and let them play here. Observing enables you to see what’s working and where to focus in future sessions.

## **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+.

# One-Touch Finish

Duration: 10 minutes

## DESCRIPTION

This small-sided game helps players develop their striking and passing skills, with an emphasis on finishing with one touch.

## WHAT YOU NEED

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

## SETUP

- Place 4 cones to mark the corners of your grid, recommended size: 40 yards long x 30 yards wide for every 6-10 players. Divide players into 2 teams, one on each endline, and give one team pinnies.
- This game can be played 2v2, 3v3, 4v4 or more. If you have an odd number of players, you can give one team an extra attacker or add a neutral player who is all-time offense.
- Place a goal on each endline using 6 ft. portable goals or pairs of cones placed 6 feet apart. Players score by passing or shooting the ball into the goal or between the cones, below knee-height.
- "One-Touch Finish" rules: Goals only count if scored with a one-touch finish. Players must score from an assist from a teammate- they cannot drop the ball to themselves.
- Play starts when players on one endline initiate play by passing the ball to each other and advancing towards their goal. At this point, either team can score. Both sides can attack, both sides will defend, so whoever has the ball is attacking when they have it.



- There are no corners, throw-ins or goalies. If a ball goes out of bounds, it's a kick-in.
- Play short rounds. The team with the most goals wins the round.
- If you have enough players for two grids, you can position yourself in the middle and run two games at the same time so players get more touches on the ball.

## **COACHING TIPS**

Provide specific encouragement and recognition. Think: “Good job dribbling to open space” instead of just “Good job.”

During a scrimmage, continue to emphasize the coaching points you stressed during your practice. If you worked on maintaining possession, stress that in the scrimmage. If you worked on defensive teamwork in your practice, focus on that.

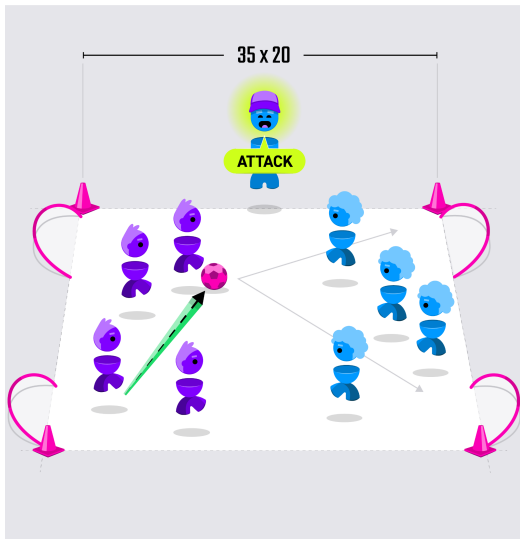
It’s also great to just observe your players and let them play here. Observing enables you to see what’s working and where to focus in future sessions.

## **DO IT AT HOME**

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

# 4v4 to 4 Goals (Attacking)

Duration: 15 minutes



## DESCRIPTION

It's 2 goals—and twice the fun! This scrimmage develops attacking, passing and receiving skills.

## WHAT YOU NEED

- 8 cones
- 1 ball per 4 players
- 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**

Expect younger players to run parallel when they are attacking (instead of one running ahead). There will also likely be more dribbling than passing, depending on the experience of the players.

Attackers may be so excited, they may burst out wildly and make mistakes, enabling turnovers.

## **COACHING TIPS**

Placing the goals in the corners of the grid makes defenders work harder. As one attacker advances with the ball, their teammates (the attackers without the ball) should try to run between defenders so the attacker with the ball can pass them the ball to try to score.

Attackers should avoid staying close to each other and holding the ball or passing it slowly—this makes it easier for the defense.

## **MAKE IT HARDER**

Making the space smaller makes it harder for attackers to beat defenders.

## **MAKE IT EASIER**

Making the space larger makes it easier for attackers to beat defenders.

### **CHANGE IT UP**

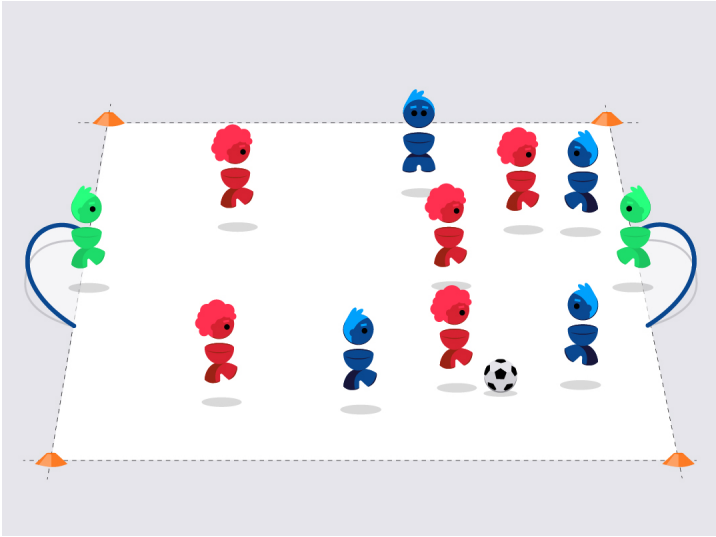
To help players develop ball control and speed dribbling skills, you can adjust the game so that players must dribble through the goal in control of the ball in order to score. This makes it harder for attackers but does encourage them to dribble with speed when a goal is open.

### **DO IT AT HOME**

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

# Fcb Scrimmage

Duration: 30 minutes



## DESCRIPTION

It's time to put everything you've practiced into action. This is scrimmage, FC Barcelona-style.

## WHAT YOU NEED

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

## SETUP

- Use 4 cones to make a rectangular space, recommended size: 20 yards long x 15 yards wide. Place goals at each end.
- Try to play with teams of equal size. If you have an extra player, that's OK. Have them switch between teams so everyone can practice playing with an advantage or

- disadvantage.

## **WHAT TO EXPECT**

Scrimmage is every player's favorite part of practice. Don't worry about whistles, offside, or corner kicks. Here, we want to emphasize the fundamentals of the game without losing sight of the fun.

## **COACHING TIPS**

Feel free to give your players feedback and ask them about their strategy on the field.

Encourage players to spread out, no matter what zone they're in and whether they have possession. Make sure they know the value of moving constantly without the ball.

Players should ask themselves, "Where is the defense? What can I do to attract them so I can create space for my teammates?"

Encourage players to think about how to set up a finish. Where should they go? How should they coordinate a plan of attack?

Stay positive and remember to praise players when using the Barça style—passing the ball, finding space for their teammates and having fun.

## **MAKE IT EASIER**

Remove a defender or two, to help your offense focus on finishing.

Restrict the defenders from pressing.

## **MAKE IT HARDER**

Install side lanes and restrict movement of certain players.