



## U14 PRACTICE 1 – USYS CURRICULUM

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### **Date:**

4/6/23 @ 5:00 PM

### **Duration:**

90 minutes

### **Overview:**

- Scrimmage - 25 minutes
- 2v2 to Cross Goals - 10 minutes
- Prized Possession - 10 minutes
- 4v4 to 4 Goals (Attacking) - 10 minutes
- Half-Court Soccer - 10 minutes
- Advanced Scrimmage - 25 minutes

### **Description**

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

### **### OVERVIEW**

Don't stress today! Your main goal is to [learn your players' names](yougotmojo://content/post?postId=6SDJ4sOSedqcr5JpTNUqYU), get them moving and keep them having fun.

The U14 sessions will follow US Soccer's [play-practice-play model](yougotmojo://content/post?postId=17QeiOkq8TQM3FeLcRAVFM). Each session begins with a fun 2v2, 3v3 or 4v4 game, then has three or four activities before a final scrimmage.

Sessions are divided into attacking and defending sessions, based on where your team is on the field and whether you are attacking or defending in that area.

### ### WHAT TO LOOK FOR

- Spaced-out players to make the field big and create openings.
- Players moving off of the ball to create openings for passes
- Passing and receiving to play forward

### ### WHAT TO SAY

\_\_How can we position ourselves to make the field big?\_\_

\*Spread out sideways and longways\*

\_\_What can you do to help your teammate with the ball?\_\_

\*Move into an opening for a pass\*

\_\_When is the best time to pass? To dribble?\_\_

\*Pass when a teammate is in a better position

Dribble when there is space in front of me to attack\*

### ### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Read: [How Are You Going to Remember Their Names?](yougotmojo://content/post?postId=6SDJ4sOSedqcr5JpTNUqYU)
- Soccer 101: [What Is Attacking?](yougotmojo://content/post?postId=3BqaDWUMfONDnh1ekMRXvR)
- Soccer 101: [Passing with the Inside of the Foot](yougotmojo://content/post?postId=4hPvYvNgU3Bd1MdFOXKJ14)
- Soccer 101: [Receiving with Different Parts of the Foot](yougotmojo://content/post?postId=31dQzzj0txgcdq7auTxHqV)
- Read: [What You Need to Know about Play -Practice-Play](yougotmojo://content/post?postId=17QeiOkq8TQM3FeLcRAVFM)

# 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.

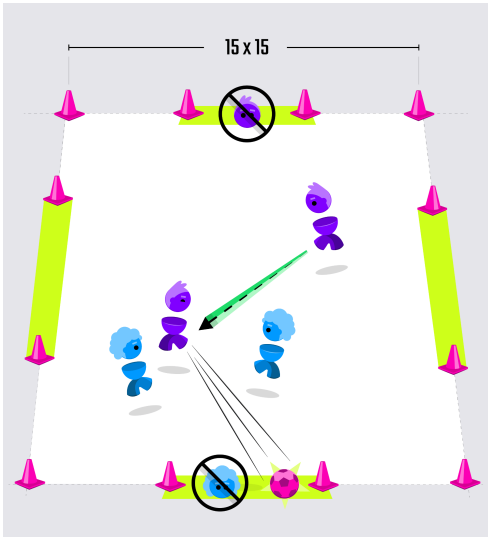
## **DO IT AT HOME**

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

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

# 2v2 to Cross Goals

Duration: 10 minutes



## DESCRIPTION

Glory. Heart. Excitement. This activity forces defenders never to give up and attackers to go for the goal!

## WHAT YOU NEED

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

## SETUP

- Place 4 cones to mark the corners of your grid, recommended size: 15 x 15 yards for every 8-12 players.
- Divide players into 2 teams, one on each endline, and give one team pinnies.
- Create 4 small goals using small portable cones or pairs of cones placed 6 feet apart at the center of each endline and each touchline (Think: North, South, East and West).

- Tell each team they can score on every goal except the one behind them.
- Play starts when 2 players enter from each endline and one team initiates play by passing the ball to each other and advancing towards any of their 3 goals. (As coach, you can play the ball out to the middle of the grid if you prefer.)
- At this point, it's a goal-scoring frenzy! Both sides attack and defend.
- Teams score by kicking the ball into their goal or between the cones, below knee height.
- When a player scores or the ball goes out of bounds, new players rotate in and a new round begins.
- 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 a lot of turnover, since both teams are attacking two of the same goals in a smaller space. If players get too discouraged by this, you can add a rule that attacking teams must score on a different goal each time to limit their scoring options.

## **COACHING TIPS**

Encourage players to immediately look for an open goal on receiving the ball, and then get there with speed. Support attackers should move into positions that enable them to attack a goal immediately if the ball is passed to them.

## **MAKE IT HARDER**

Adding a rule to limit each player to 2 touches on the ball per turn makes it harder for attackers.

## **MAKE IT EASIER**

Making the grid larger makes it easier for attackers.

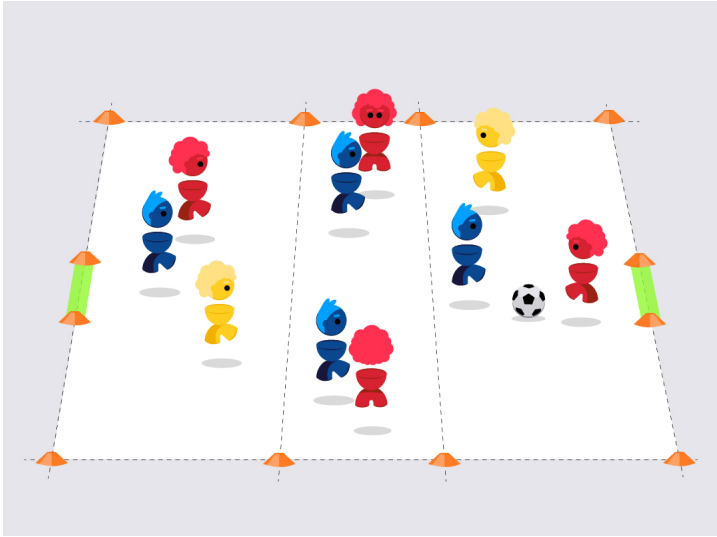
## **DO IT AT HOME**

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



# Prized Possession

Duration: 10 minutes



## DESCRIPTION

Whatever you do in this game from FC Barcelona—don't lose the ball... the prized possession.

## WHAT YOU NEED

- 8 cones
- 1 ball
- 1 pinnie per player
- 2 small goals

## SETUP

- Use 4 cones to make a rectangular space, recommended size: 20 yards long x 15 yards wide. Place mini goals (or pairs of cones placed 2 yards apart) on each end. Then, use 4 more cones to divide the space into three zones, a narrow zone in the middle and two wider scoring zones on the ends.

- Divide players into 2 teams of 4 and 2 jokers (or neutral players).
- The team with possession (in red) sends 1 player to each scoring zone and 1 player to each side. The recovery team (in blue) sends 2 players to the middle zone and 1 player to each scoring zone. They must stay in their areas. The jokers are free to move wherever they want, helping the team with the ball.
- Every time the red team passes the ball from one scoring zone to the other, they get a point. Dribbling the ball through the middle zone is worth 3 points.
- When the blue team recovers possession, they try to score a goal for 1 point. If they do, the teams switch roles, and play again.
- Play short rounds and ask each team to keep track of their score.

## **WHAT TO EXPECT**

In this game, players discover what it takes to maintain possession of the ball: spacing, situational awareness and teamwork.

Make sure your players are thinking of the smartest pass rather than the longest pass.

Encourage your players to use the neutrals wisely.

Because dribbling through the middle is worth more than passing, players are incentivized to pass to teammates in open space. This is what FC Barcelona calls passing with advantage.

## **COACHING TIPS**

Players should ask themselves: “Do I have enough room from here to complete a long-distance pass? If not, how can I create that space, or who can I rely on that’s closer?”

The best way to break 1 v 1 pressure is by passing and dribbling.

## **MAKE IT EASIER**

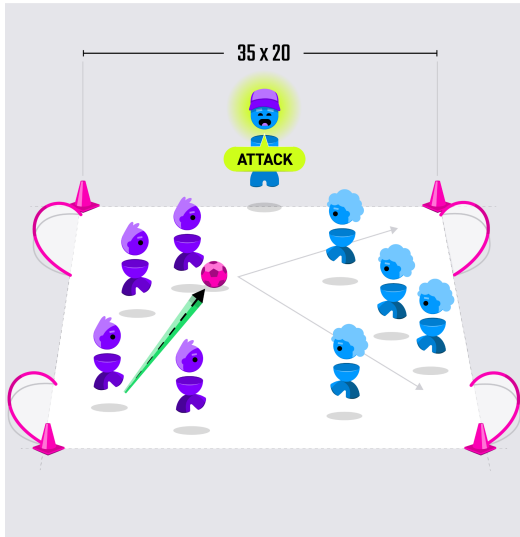
Make the space wider than 25 yards, forcing the defenders to cover more ground.

### **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+.

# 4v4 to 4 Goals (Attacking)

Duration: 10 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**

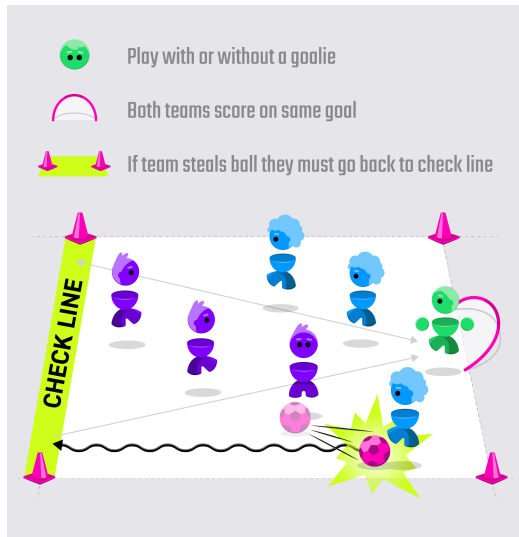
To help players develop ball control and speed dribbling skills, you can adjust the game so that players must dribble through the goal in control of the ball in order to score. This makes it harder for attackers but does encourage them to dribble with speed when a goal is open.

### **DO IT AT HOME**

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

# Half-Court Soccer

Duration: 10 minutes



## DESCRIPTION

This small-sided game helps players develop their attacking and defending skills while squeezing the game into half the space.

## WHAT YOU NEED

- 6 cones
- 1 ball
- 1 pinnie per 2 players
- 1 goal

## SETUP

- Place 4 cones to mark the corners of your grid, recommended size: 20 yards long x 30 yards wide for every 6-10 players. Divide players into two teams, one in pinnies.
- This game can be played 2v2, 3v3, 4v4 or more, with an optional additional player as goalkeeper. 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 the endline using a 6 ft. portable goal or pair of cones placed arms-length apart. Players score by shooting the ball into the goal or through the cones below knee height. Add cones along the other endline to mark the “check line”.
- “Half-Court Soccer” rules: Teams scrimmage on one half of the field, and both score on the same goal. If a player steals the ball from an opponent, they must “clear” the ball by taking it across the checkline before they can try to score.
- Play starts when you play the ball onto the field from a touchline. 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 3-5 minute 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**

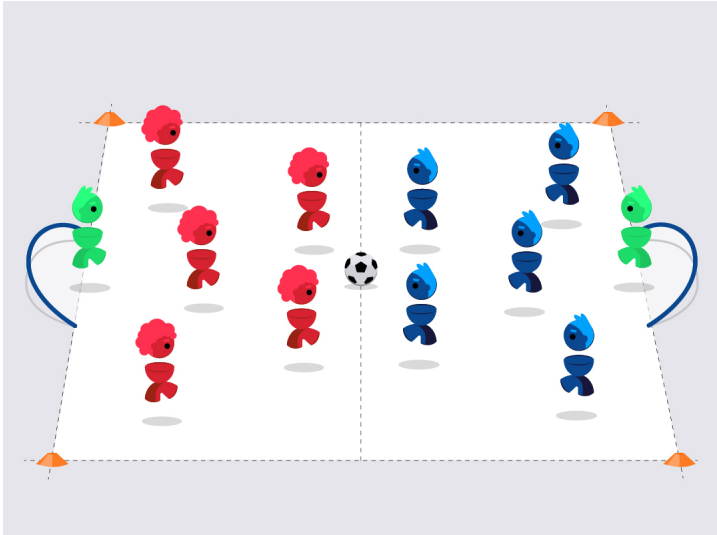
Players can keep working on their skills at home with a game we call



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

# Advanced Scrimmage

Duration: 25 minutes



## DESCRIPTION

It's time to practice what it's like to play a match at full speed. This is an advanced scrimmage, FC Barcelona-style.

## WHAT YOU NEED

- 4 cones
- 1 ball
- 1 pinnie per player
- 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.
- Divide players into 2 teams, and get ready to play at full speed. That means with all the rules and regulations of an actual game.

## **WHAT TO EXPECT**

Scrimmage is every player's favorite part of practice—and now, we're taking it to the next level.

Here, we're playing in a 3-2 formation, but you can use whatever tactics you want.

Players should have as much fun as possible, while still learning the flow of what it's like to play a full match.

## **COACHING TIPS**

Engage players in discussion about their play. Feel free to ask them questions about their decision making.

Encourage players to think about how to move without the ball and create space or passing lines for their teammates.

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 every time the ball switches sides and create an inherent advantage.

## **MAKE IT HARDER**

Expand to a full-size playing field. Game on.

## **DO IT AT HOME**

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