



U14 PRACTICE 3 – USYS CURRICULUM

Date:

4/6/23 @ 5:00 PM

Duration:

90 minutes

Overview:

- Scrimmage - 25 minutes
- Hot Box - 10 minutes
- Half and Half - 10 minutes
- 4v4 to Small Goals (Attacking) - 15 minutes
- Advanced Scrimmage - 30 minutes

Description

This practice is part of the __US Youth Soccer National Grassroots Curriculum__.

OVERVIEW

The focus of today's session is small group attacking including combination play and switching the point of attack.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

- Communication (verbal and non-verbal) between attacking players
- Players without the ball are moving to create openings
- Team shape—with players high, wide and behind

WHAT TO SAY

__What can the player on the ball do to help create an opening or more space for their teammate?__

Dribble at the defender to force them to make a decision

__Where can a teammate be to help the player on the ball?__

Back, to the side or in front

__What does it mean if we are spread out?__

We have players supporting high, wide and behind

__What does it mean to switch the point of attack?__

*Play the ball to the other side of the field to relieve

[pressure](yougotmojo://content/post?postId=

LFSVNRE7kisLSd7iv7vqK)*

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Soccer 101: [Receiving with Different Parts of the

Foot](yougotmojo://content/post?postId=31dQzzj0txgcdq7auTxHqV)

- Watch: [The Importance of Positive Feedback](yougotmojo://

content/post?postId=6SD08JOkE8fDQ0BtDihcUH)

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.

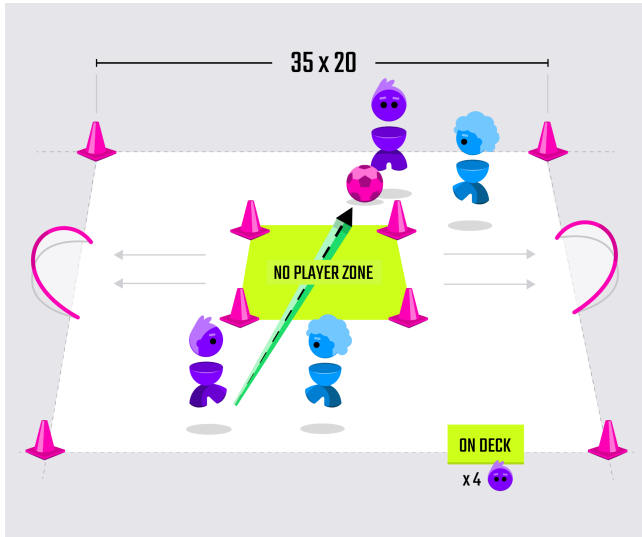
DO IT AT HOME

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

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

Hot Box

Duration: 10 minutes



DESCRIPTION

This small-sided game helps players solve problems and switch the point of attack when faced with an obstacle.

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.
- “Hot Box” rules: Use 4 additional cones to create a square or rectangle in the middle of the field. Players must play around the box. The ball can pass through it, but players cannot enter.
- 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 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.

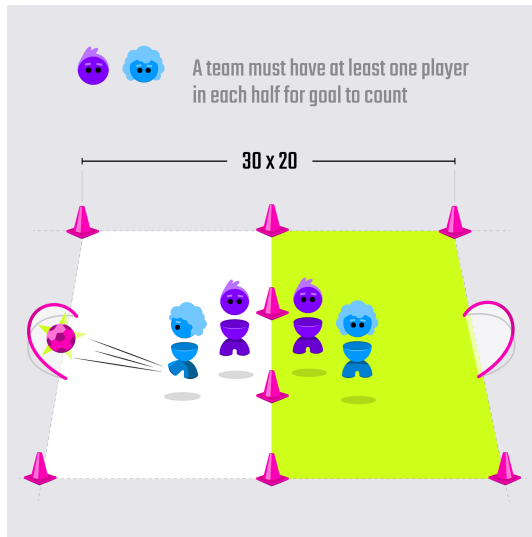
DO IT AT HOME

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Half and Half

Duration: 10 minutes



DESCRIPTION

This small-sided game encourages players to practice shooting with accuracy from a distance.

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 2 small goals on each endline using 6 ft. portable goals or pairs of cones placed arms-length apart. Split the field in half horizontally with cones down the midline of the field, ending in the middle of each touchline.
- “Half and Half” rules: players score by passing or shooting the ball into the goal or between the cones below knee-height, but a goal only counts if there is at least one player from the scoring team in each half of the field- both the attacking and defending half, on either side of the midline.
- 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 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.

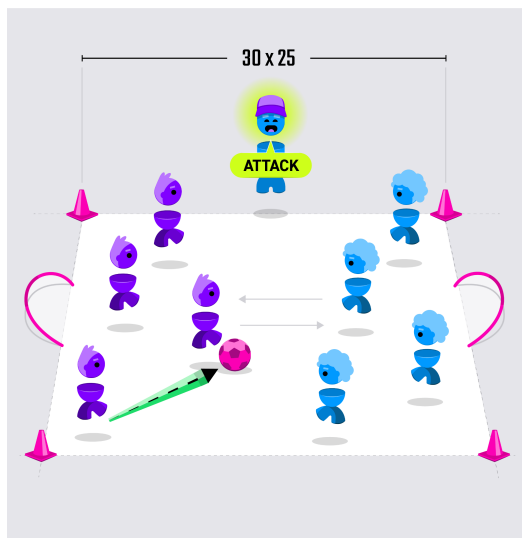
It’s also great to just observe your players and let them play here. Observing enables you to see what’s working and where to focus in future sessions.

DO IT AT HOME

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

4v4 to Small Goals (Attacking)

Duration: 15 minutes



DESCRIPTION

Players work on team attacking, passing and shooting skills while scrimmaging 4v4.

WHAT YOU NEED

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

SETUP

- Place 4 cones to mark the corners of a grid for every 8-12 players, recommended size: 30 yards long x 25 yards wide.
- Place a small portable goal or pair of cones placed 6 feet apart on each endline.
- Divide players into 2 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 goal.
- Players scrimmage and score by shooting the ball into the goal or between 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.
- If you have enough players for 2 grids, you can position yourself in the middle and run 2 activities at the same time so players get more touches on the ball.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Younger players will often run parallel when they are attacking instead of spreading out to create width and depth. Encourage them to spread out (like an open hand instead of a fist).

Older players may start using moves and fakes to get to the goal. At younger ages, players will primarily use changes of speed and direction to get around defenders.

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

COACHING TIPS

When they gain possession of the ball, encourage players to create chances to score by immediately looking for open space and taking the ball somewhere new and closer to their goal.

If blocked by a defender, an attacker's first thought should be, "Can I get around this player by dribbling? If not, can I get it to a teammate who can?" If going around the opponent to the right, they should use their right foot. If going around to the left, use the left foot. This keeps the ball on the foot furthest from the defender.

MAKE IT HARDER

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

MAKE IT EASIER

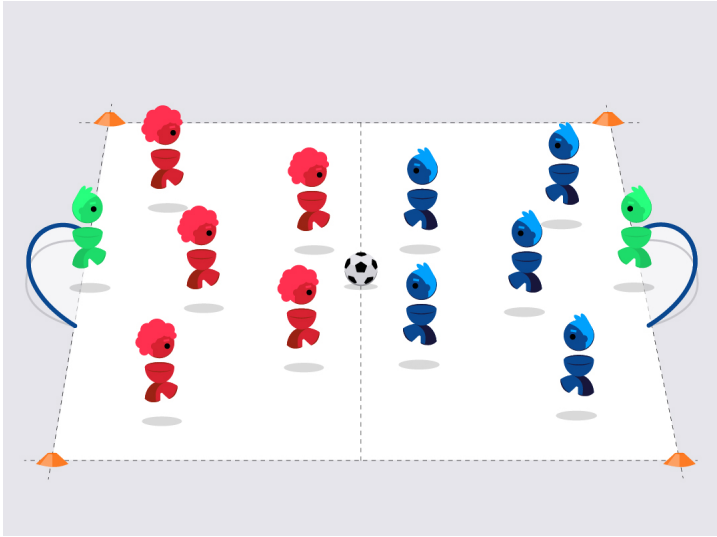
Making the space larger makes it easier for attackers to beat defenders.

DO IT AT HOME

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

Advanced Scrimmage

Duration: 30 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+.