



Small-Sided Games

Introducing Challenges

Why?

Sometimes the other team does not provide a sufficient level of challenge resulting in an unbalanced score-line, or a coach may want to prepare players for more difficult opponents. By including challenges in practice, players will be ready to try to implement them in games.

Note: players can be challenged individually, as a team, or the entire group.

Dribbling

- Minimum # of touches per player (player must take at least # of touches)
- Dribble-in restarts – get a game restarted quickly (transition to attack)
- Make a (designated) move before attempting a pass (1v1)

Passing (& Receiving)

- Teammate must score before a player can score again (playmaker role)
- Every player on a team touches the ball before a goal can be scored
- Two feet – a player must use both feet during an individual possession
- Pass v Kick – loss of possession if a player kicks the ball without purpose
- Coach your pass – passing player must provide information with their pass
- Call for pass – player must call for the ball in order to receive a pass

Shooting

- Shoot from outside a box or before a line for any shot/higher scoring goal
- One touch finish – require teamwork before a shot
- Left foot finish – develop non-dominant foot (technique)
- Shoot from a cross provided by a wide player
- Miss & Run – shooting player retrieves ball if shot is missed (accuracy)

Support Play

- Point per player – a goal is worth the number of players in opponents' half
- Back pass – play ball backwards (if possible) after winning possession
- Combination play – perform a combination with a teammate (e.g., overlap or wall pass) before shooting
- 2 many – if two players from the same team go to the ball, a foul is called and opponent receives possession (angle and distance of support)
- Place cones on field to designate channels (up) and zones (across)

Systems of play

- Scoring player becomes goalkeeper for their
- Rotate positions after a team scores a goal
- Play within a desired system (e.g. 2-1 vs. 2-1) and encourage movement along (left/right) and between (up/back) lines of players