

# Crosfields JFC



## Mini-Soccer Academy Coaching Manual



Paul Smalley 2009

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## ***Introduction***

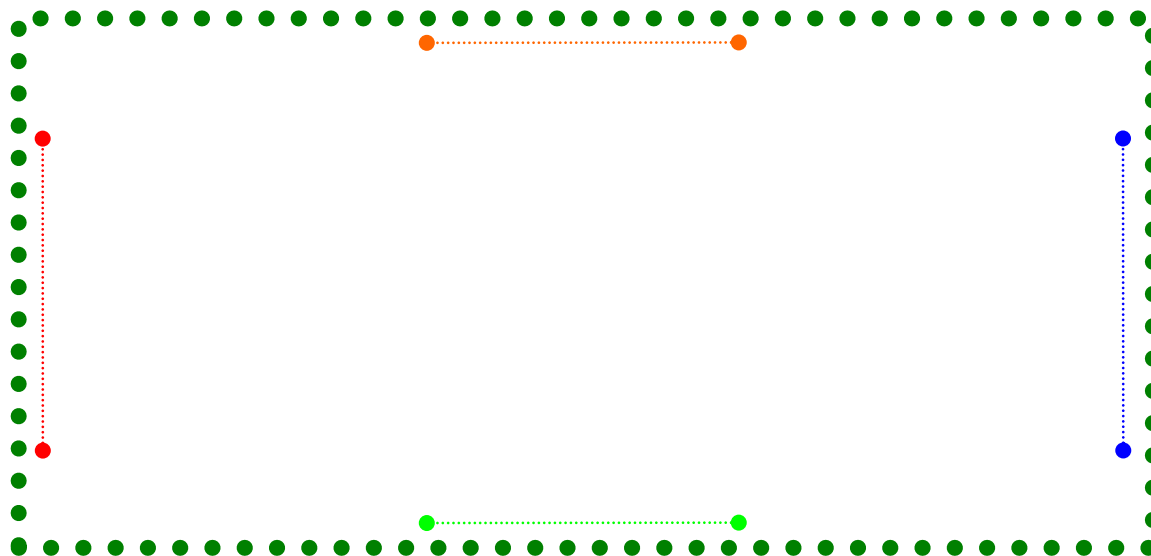
These are the games and drills that we have used with our youngest players at Crosfields since they joined us as 4 year olds almost 18 months ago. They are intended to be fun games that keep all the players active and allow for players of very different abilities to develop together. The number of players in the age group has steadily grown and so some of these ideas can be used (and have been used) with 40 Under 6 players in the Sports Hall, often divided into smaller groups but sometimes not.

The Sports Hall measures 33m by 27m and so all of the games use this as a starting point. Some are half that size (25x15m) many are a quarter that size (10x15). Outside, the space can be varied to suit the age and number of players.

Thanks to the coaches of the current Under 6s who have helped develop many of these games and have tried them out on a week by week basis. Thanks also to Ian Bateman and the FA's Age Specific programme, whose philosophy of Long Term Player Development for football these games are founded on. And finally thanks to Ian Wells and Ian Bateman who I first saw using many of these ideas.

**Skill Drill: 1v1 dribbling gates**

AIM: To develop running with the ball, and dribbling; To develop decision making.



Five players are ideal for this drill.

Using a 7 x15 grid, containing 4 goals 5m wide. One player (defender) starts in orange goal with ball, one player (attacker) in green goal. One or two players wait their turn behind the players in the green/orange goals.

To begin: Defender passes to attacker and cannot move until ball is played by attacker.

To score a point the player must run the ball through either of the side (red and blue) goals. The defender must try to prevent this and play the ball out of play.

When a goal is scored or ball out of play players swap sides and wait their turn

To progress/ Variations:

Rotate the pitch to make a long thin game rather than a short wide one.

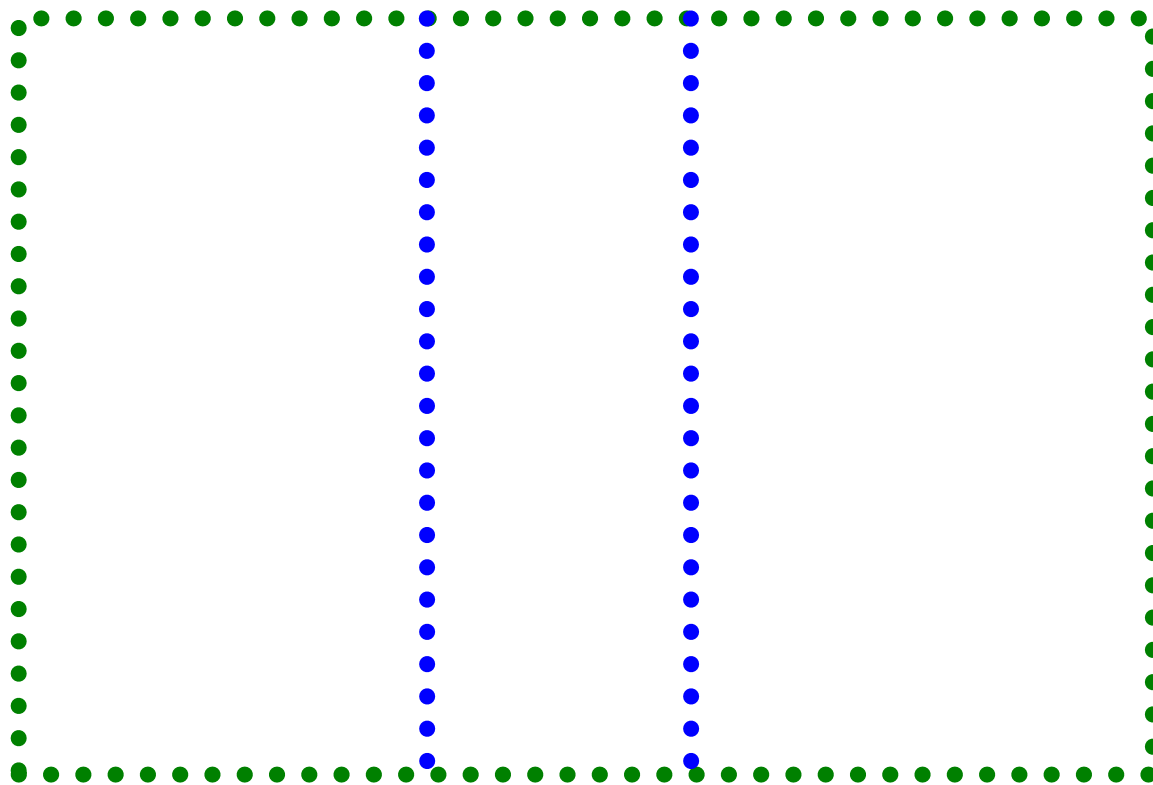
Alter the size of the goals

Alter the position of the goals

Limit the number of touches.

**Team Game: Crocodiles**

AIM: To develop running with the ball and passing; to encourage players to work together. To develop tactical awareness



Using a 10x15 grid, place a line of cones 6m from each end to form a 3m wide river. Choose 2 ‘crocodiles in the middle, the remainder have a partner at each end, with a ball between each pair.

To begin: To score a point each player must pass to their partner without the ‘crocodile’ intercepting. Rotate the crocodiles.

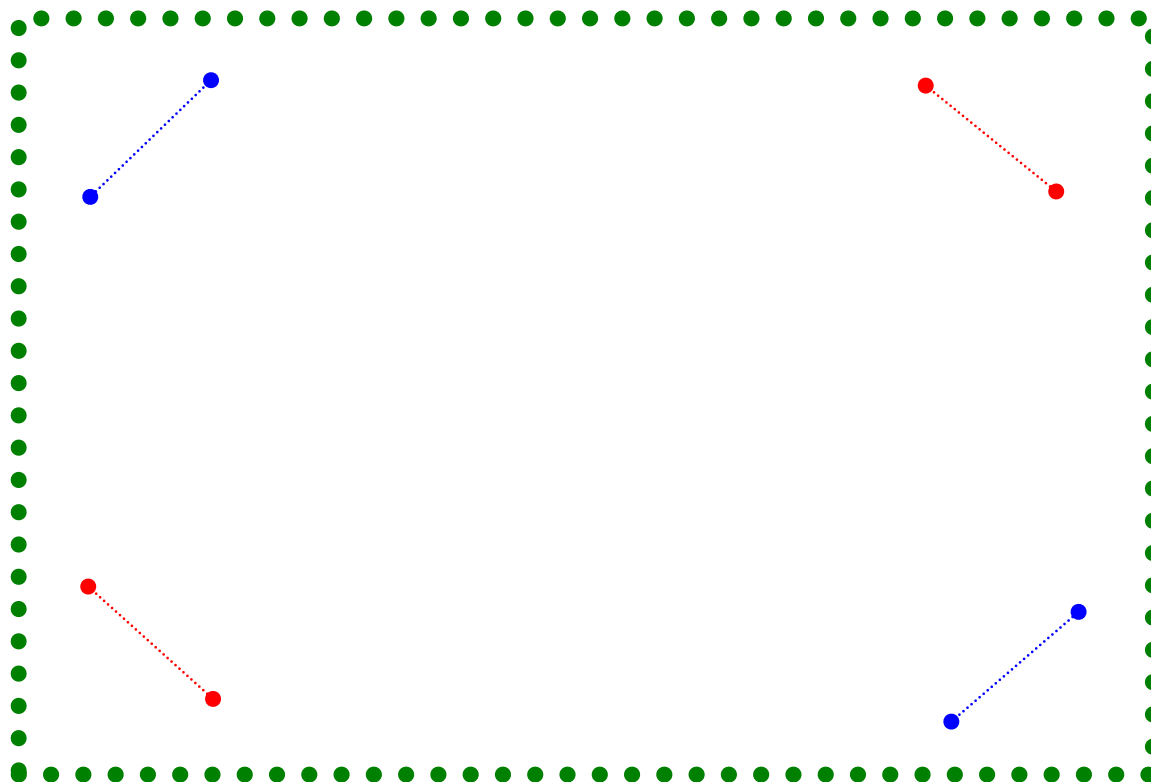
To progress/variations: Change ratio/ number of ‘crocodiles,  
Limit the number of touches.  
Vary width of river.

Key coaching point:

- ask the passing players if the accuracy of the pass or the power of the pass is more important.
- Ask the passing players to experiment with different passes - which is the most accurate

**Team Game: Diagonals**

AIM: To develop running with the ball and passing; to encourage players to work together. To develop tactical awareness



Using a 10x15 grid, containing 4 goals diagonally in each corner, 3m wide. Divide the players into two teams of 4v4 .

To begin: Give each team a ball. To score a point the team must run the ball through either of their opponents two goals.

To progress: Introduce one or two players as “botherers”. Their job is to get in the way – but NOT tackle the player or touch the ball.

Or Use one ball

Variations: Alter the size of the goals

Limit the number of touches.

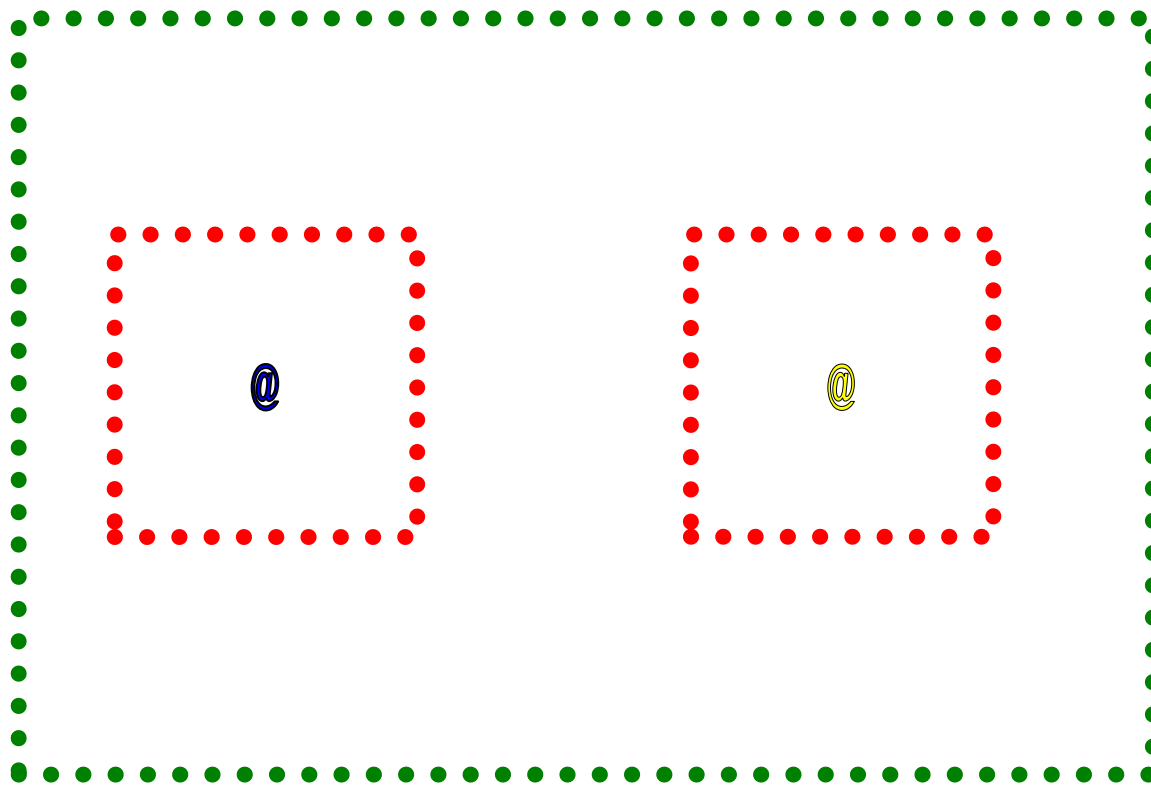
All players must touch the ball before a goal can be scored

Key coaching point:

- ask the players what they can do if the way to a goal is blocked.

**Team Game: Exclusion**

AIM: To develop accurate passing and encourage players to move into space. To develop tactical awareness



Using a 10x15 grid, containing two 4x4 squares (exclusion zones) in red. Place a ball on a cone in the centre of each . Divide the players into two teams of 4v4 .

To begin: give each team a ball. No players are allowed in the two exclusion zones.

To score a point the team must knock the ball off their cone.

To progress: Use one ball

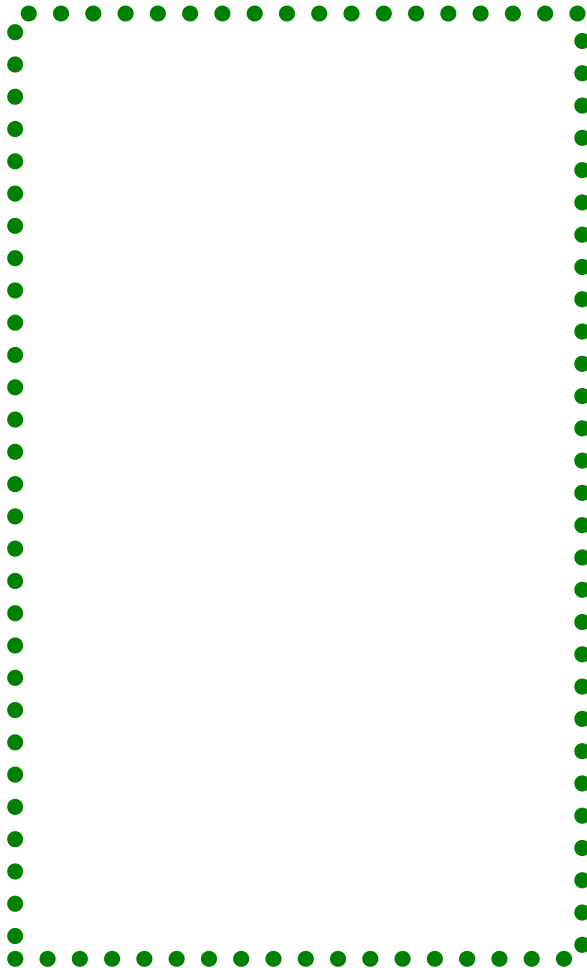
Key coaching point:

- Ask the players if the accuracy of the shot or the power of the shot is more important.
- Ask the players where would be a good place to stand if their team-mate is having a shot.

**Large Game: Farmers and Chickens**

AIM: To develop running and turning technique for dribbling.

Using a 25x15 grid (half the sports hall).



To begin: Choose five players to be farmers. The remaining (15) players tuck a bib in their shorts to form a chicken tail. On the shout of go farmers chase the chickens aiming to pull their tails out. Once caught the chickens join the farmers. The game ends when all chickens have been caught.

Progress/Variations: Farmers can have balls. When they catch a chicken they swap roles with the player they have caught. They take the tail and the caught player takes the ball and becomes the farmer. After a couple of minutes the game is stopped and the chickens are the winners!

Alternatively all players can have a ball.

**Team Game: Football**

AIM: To develop running with the ball, passing and shooting; to encourage players to work together. To develop tactical awareness



Using a 10x15 grid, containing 2 goals 5m wide. Divide the players into two teams of 4v4 .

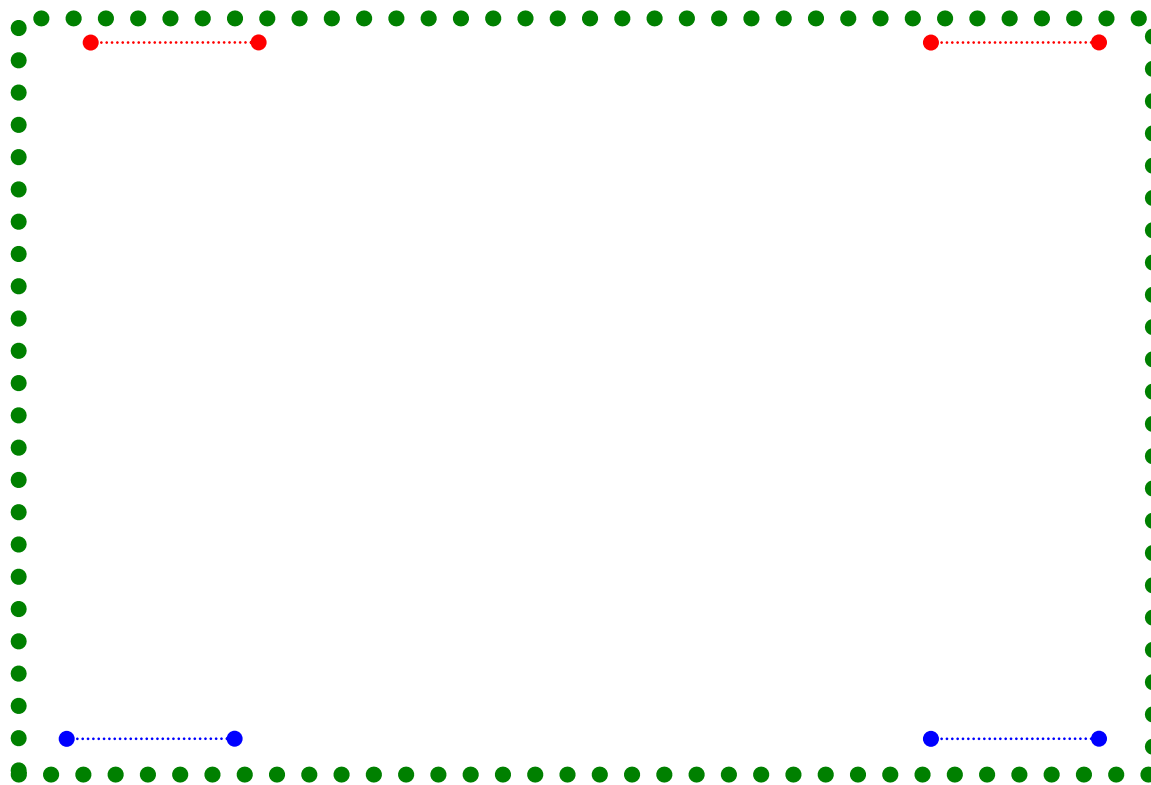
To begin: To score a point the team must shoot the ball through the opposing team's goal.

To progress:

- Variations:
- Alter the size of the goals
  - Limit the number of touches.
  - One point for a pass – two for a goal

**Team Game: Four Corners**

AIM: To develop running with the ball and passing; to encourage players to work together. To develop tactical awareness



Using a 10x15 grid, containing 4 goals 3m wide. Divide the players into two teams of 4v4 .

To begin: To score a point the team must run the ball through either of their opponents two goals.

To progress:

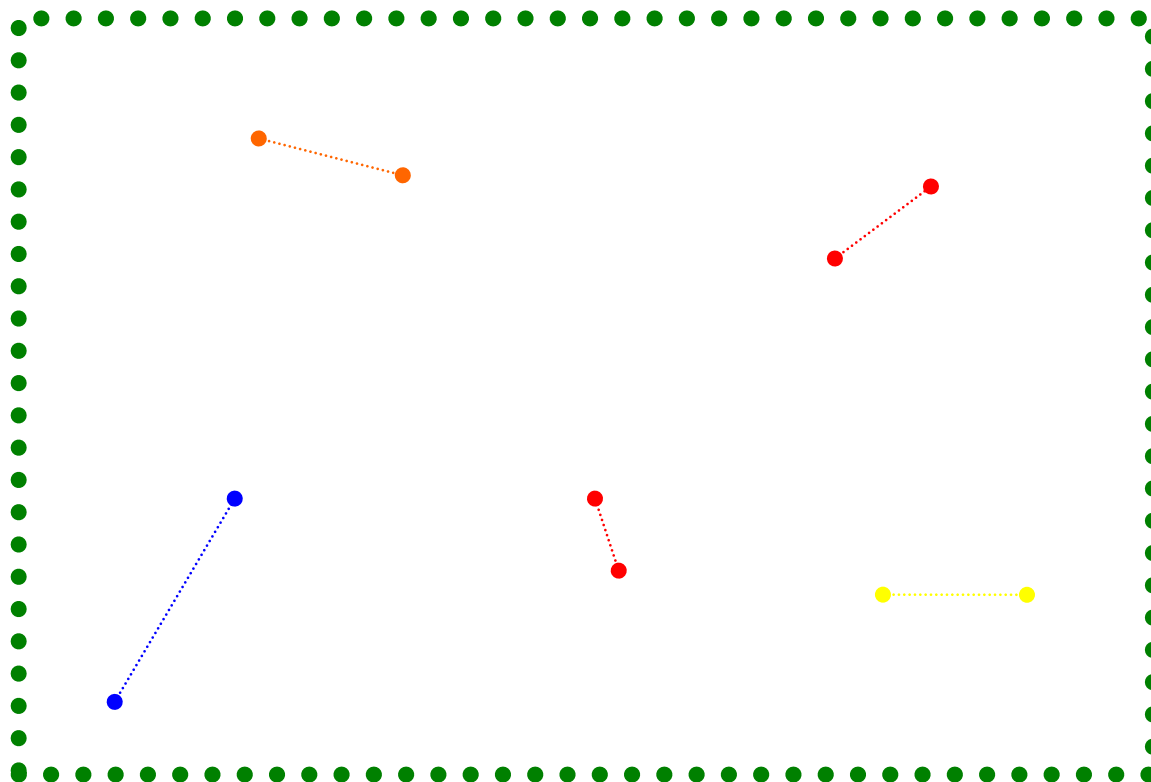
Variations: Alter the size of the goals  
Limit the number of touches.

Key coaching point:

- ask the players what they can do if the way to a goal is blocked.

### Team Game: Passing Gates

AIM: To develop accurate passing and encourage players to work together. To develop tactical awareness



Using a 10x15 grid, containing 5 gates of varying size/colour. Divide the players into two teams of 4v4 .

To begin: give each team a ball. To score a point the team pass the ball through a gate. First team to 5.

To progress/ variations:

Use one ball

Alter the size / position of the gates.

Coach chooses which counts by holding up a cone of that colour.

Key coaching point:

- Ask the passing players if the accuracy of the pass or the power of the pass is more important.
- Ask the passing players to experiment with different passes - which is the most accurate

**Team Games: Keep Possession**

AIM: To develop passing and encourage players to move into space.



Using a 10x15 grid divide the players into two teams of 4v4.

To begin: give each team a ball. To score a point each player in the team must touch the ball once. How many points can they score in a minute.

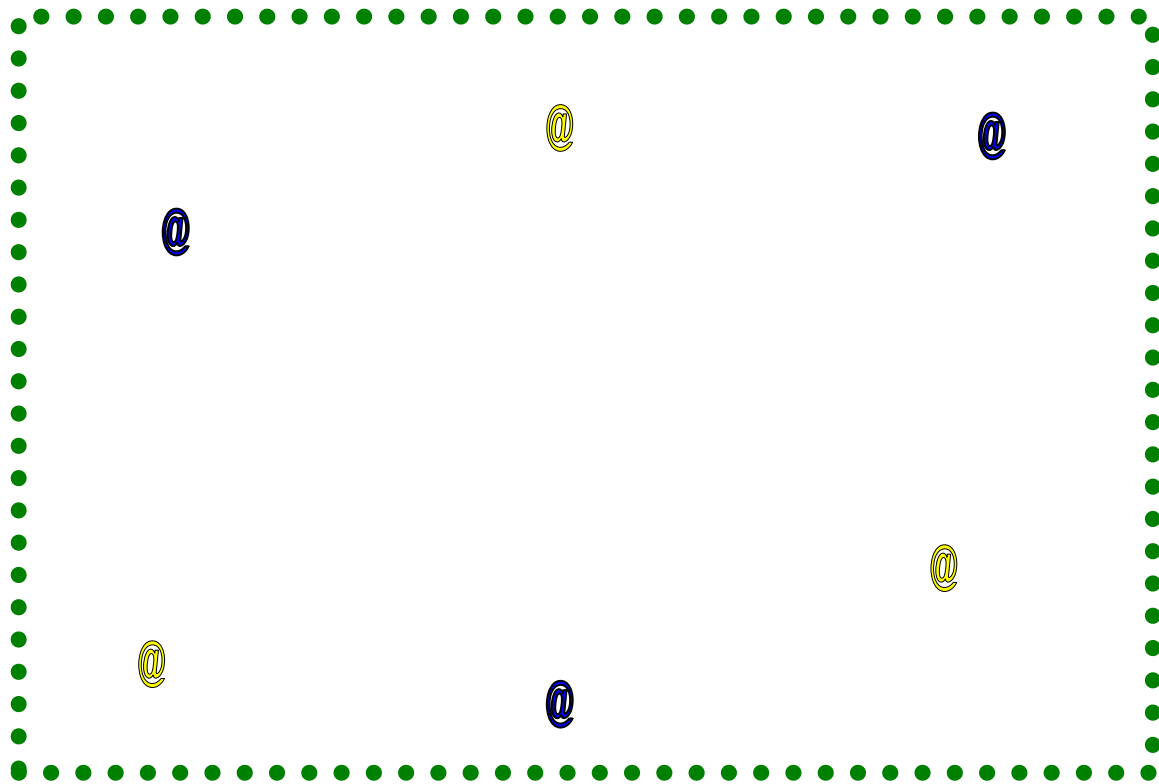
To progress: Use one ball

Key coaching point:

- Ask the players if the accuracy of the pass or the power of the pass is more important.
- Ask the players if it is better to stand near to their team-mates or far away from them
- Ask the players if they should be stood still or moving

**Team Games: Knock Off**

AIM: To develop accurate passing. To develop tactical awareness of positioning.



Using a 10x15 grid, place 3 blue cones and 3 yellow cones around the area, with a ball on each cone. Divide the players into two teams of 4v4 .

To begin: give each team a ball. To score a point the team must knock the ball off their three cones.

To progress: Use one ball

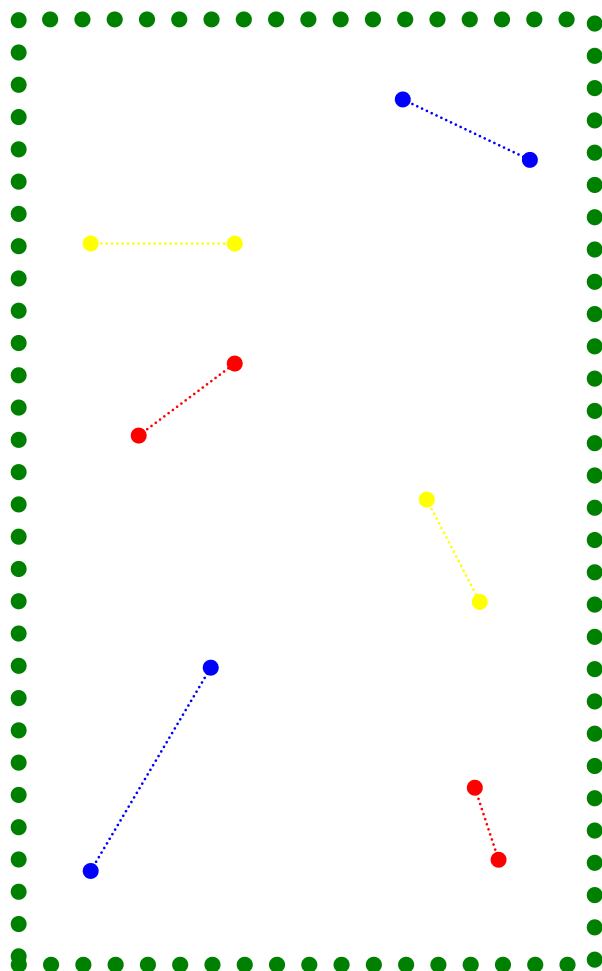
Variation: alter number and position of targets.

Key coaching point:

- Ask the players if the accuracy of the shot or the power of the shot is more important.
- Ask the players where would be a good place to stand if their team-mate is having a shot.

### Large Multiball Game: Passing Gates

AIM: To develop accurate passing and encourage players to work together. To develop tactical awareness



Using a 25x15 grid (half the sports hall).

To begin: Each pair has a ball. They try to pass the ball through any gate. Then through a different gate.

Variations/ Progress: Alter the size / position of the gates.

Coach chooses the colour to pass through by displaying a cone of that colour.

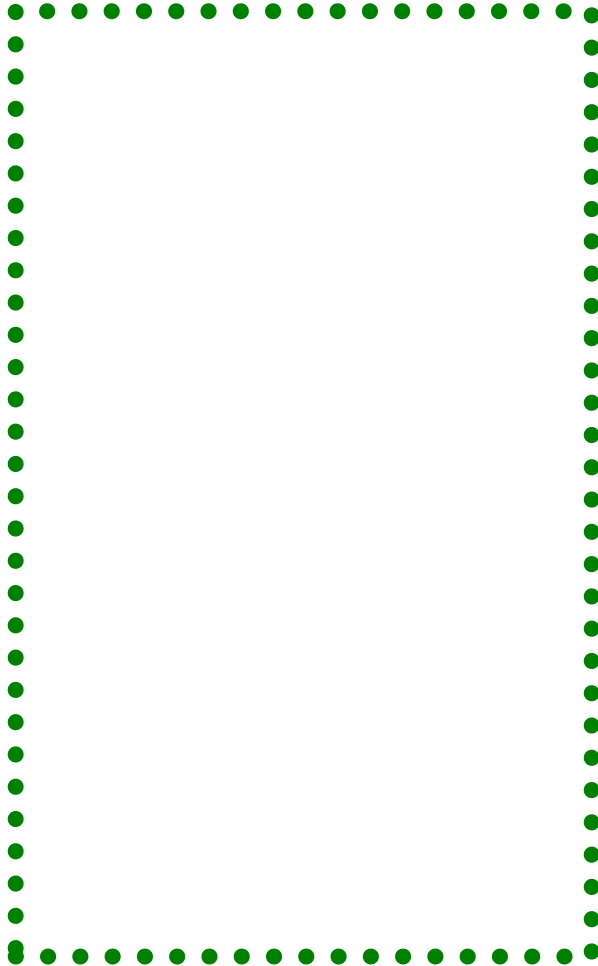
Introduce a couple of players as “botherers”. Their job is to get in the way – but NOT tackle the players or touch the balls. Rotate botherers

Key coaching point:

- Ask the passing players if the accuracy of the pass or the power of the pass is more important.
- Ask the passing players to experiment with different passes - which is the most accurate

### **Large Multiball Game: Passing Lines**

AIM: To develop successful passing technique.



Using a 25x15 grid (half the sports hall).

To begin: Each pair has a ball. They choose a straight line on the hall floor and pass the ball to one another.

Variations/ Progress: As players become confident they can move further apart.

Players should be encouraged to experiment using different parts of their feet to pass the ball.

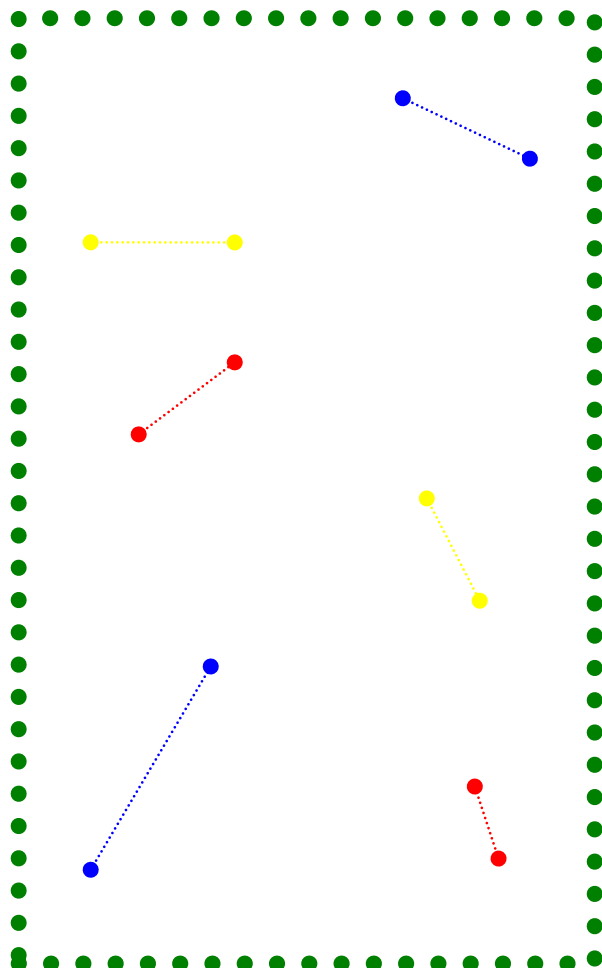
As they gain confidence, players can experiment with different ways of receiving the ball.

Key coaching point:

- Ask the passing players if the accuracy of the pass or the power of the pass is more important.
- Ask the passing players to experiment with different passes - which is the most accurate

### Large Multiball Game: Running Through the Gates

AIM: To develop running with the ball technique



Using a 25x15 grid (half the sports hall).

To begin: Each player has a ball. They try to run the ball through any gate. Then through a different gate.

Variations/ Progress: Alter the size / position of the gates.

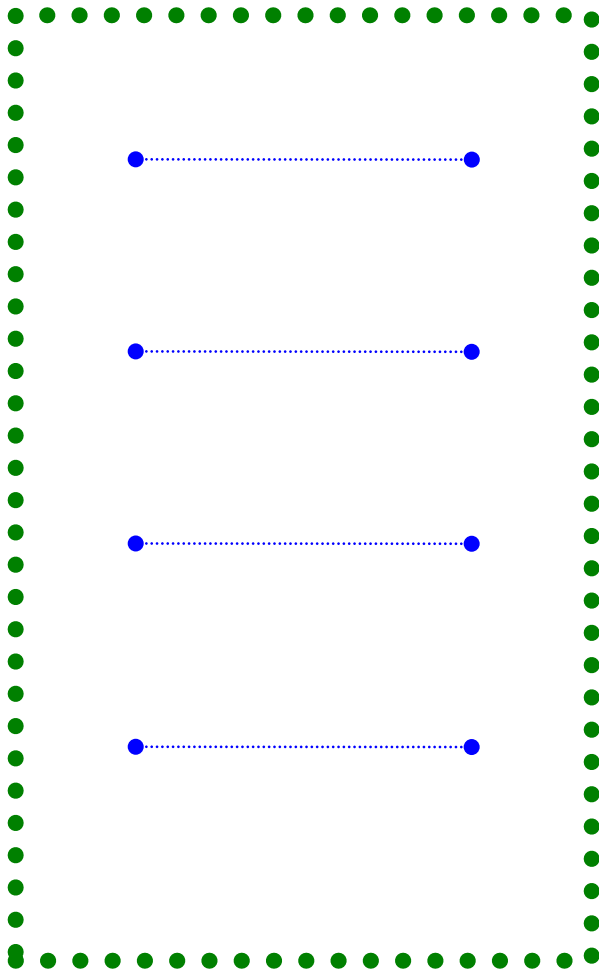
Coach chooses the colour to run through by displaying a cone of that colour.

Introduce a couple of players as “botherers”. Their job is to get in the way – but NOT tackle the players or touch the balls. Rotate botherers

**Large Technical drill:**

AIM: To develop successful on the ball technique.

Using a 25x15 grid (half the sports hall). Place pairs cones 10m apart, a ball to each cone.



To begin: 2 or 3 players stand behind each cone (max 5 per pair of cones)

Players should set off at the same time of their partners.

Run with the ball and stop it in front of the cone opposite. Stand behind that cone

Variations/ Progress: Use 'other' foot.

Look sideways and drag foot over ball.

Go backwards dragging ball

Go forwards dragging alternate feet over ball.

Do a trick on the way

Introduce a cone halfway along:

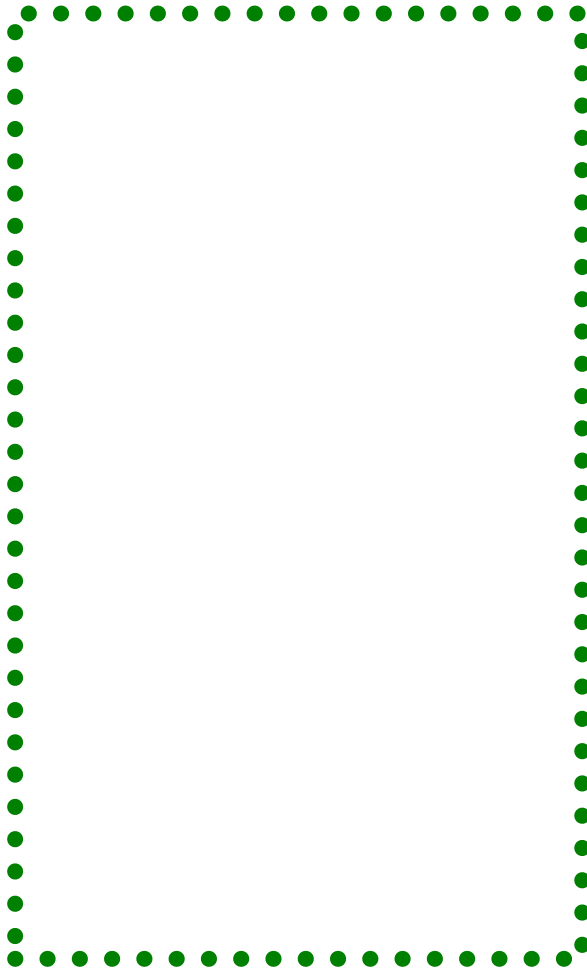
Pass form the cone.

Turn around at the cone.

**Large Game: Lines**

AIM: To develop running and turning technique. Develop balance and agility.

Using a 25x15 grid (half the sports hall) and the lines painted on the floor.



To begin: Players run around. Coach shouts out a colour (red, black, yellow, orange) and the players run to that colour line and stand still.

Variations/Progression: Rather than running, players are instructed to jump with feet together / hop / move anyway but forwards

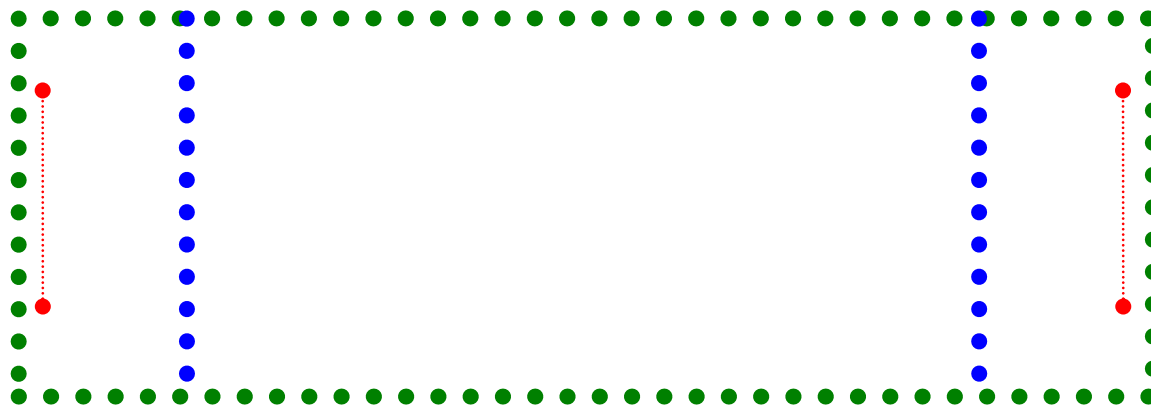
On the line players stand like a frog (both hands on line between feet) or like a giraffe (at tall as possible) or like a star (as wide as possible)

If players stand on two feet they have two points of contact with the line. Try suggesting that they have 3, 1, 4, 5 points of contact with the line. If they join with a partner they can have between 2 and 10 points of contact!

This game can be played with each player having a ball.

### Long Thin Shooting Game

AIM: To develop running with the ball and shooting; to encourage players to work together. To develop tactical awareness



Using a 7x30 grid, place a line of cones 5m from each end. Divide the players into two teams of 4v4 .

To begin: To score a point the team shoot the ball through the opposing team's goal.

No player is allowed over the 5m line.

To progress/variations:

- All players must touch the ball before a goal can be scored

- Limit the number of touches.

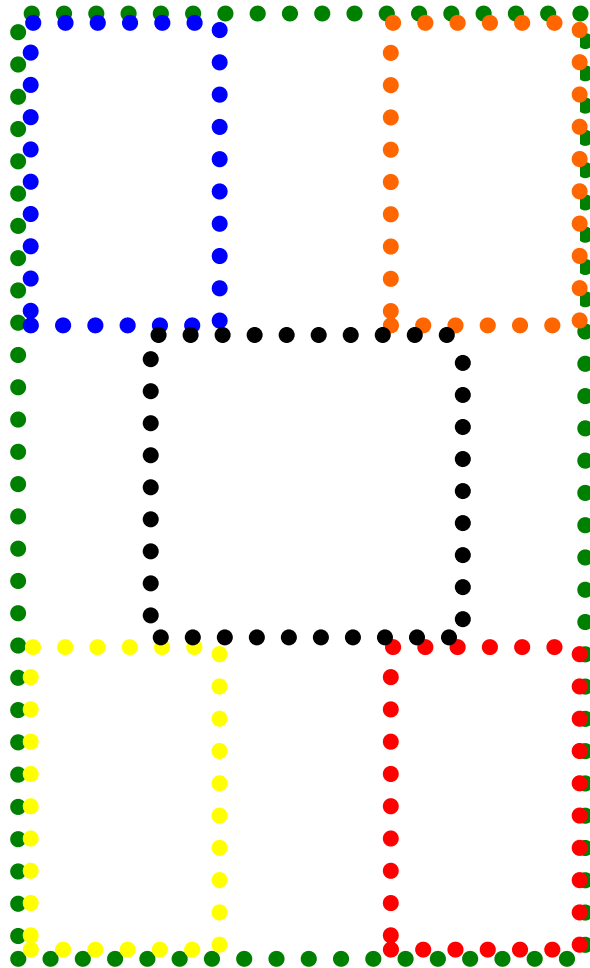
- All the team must retreat to their line after scoring.

- Introduce a goalkeeper.

### Large Game: Magic Rectangles

AIM: To develop running and turning with the ball.

Using a 25x15 grid (half the sports hall) containing 4 coloured squares (10x5m) and one white 10x10 square in the centre



To begin: Give each player a ball in the centre.

The coach holds up a cone (Red, blue, yellow or orange). Each player runs with the ball to the square of that colour. The coach then shows a different coloured cone.

Progress 1: Do a trick on the way.

Progress 2: Swap balls with a friend between each colour.

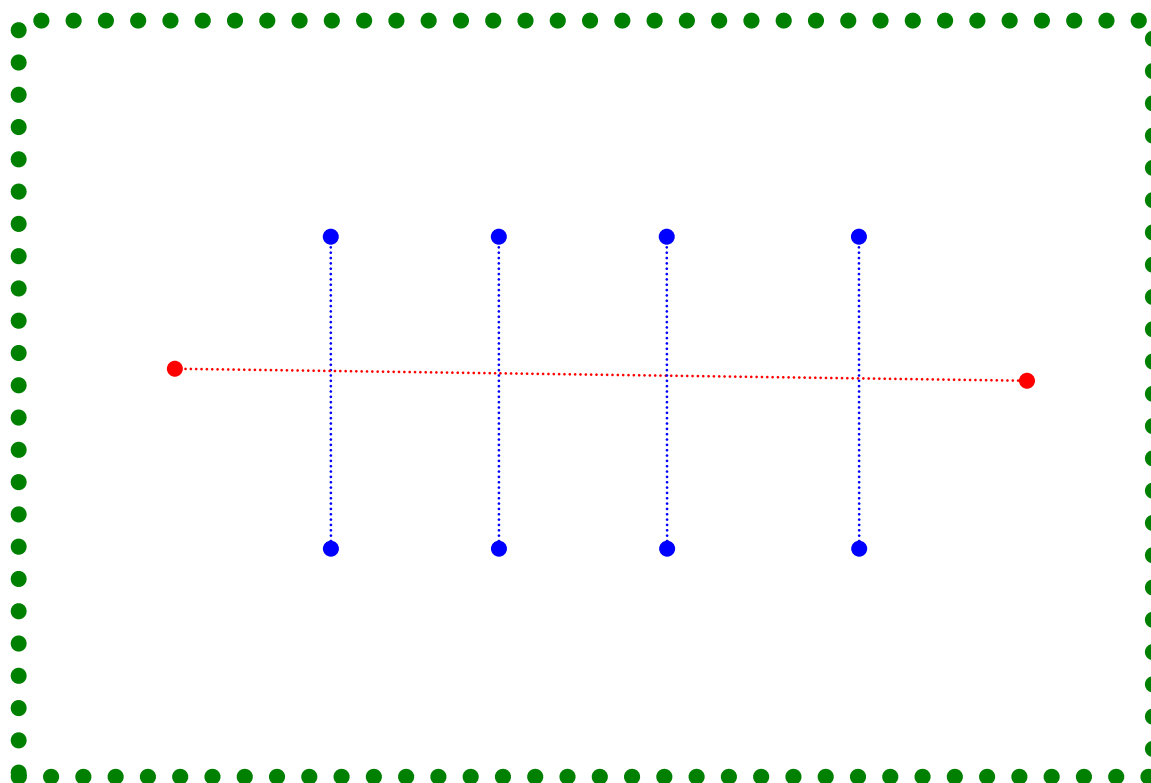
Between each colour go into the white square and practice turns tricks

Give a different skill to practice in each square ( heading, kick-ups, alternating feet on top of ball)

Show two colours (eg Red, blue) so players go to blue via red.

### **Mosquito**

AIM: To develop passing technique. To develop agility and all around vision.



Using a 10x15 grid, place four pairs (5m apart) of blue cones 3m apart. Place a red cone at each end.

To begin: the four pairs of players have a ball between them and must pass it to their partner. The mosquito starts on one of the red cones and scores a point upon reaching the other red cone. The mosquito is out if the ball hits him below the knee. Rotate mosquito.

To progress/ variations:      move cones  
Have two mosquitoes who must start to run at the same time.

Do not allow the mosquito to stop or go backwards.  
Passes only with left/right foot

Key coaching point:

- ask the passing players if the accuracy of the pass or the power of the pass is more important.
- Ask the passing players to experiment with different passes - which is the most accurate

**Team Game: Over the line**

AIM: To develop running with the ball and passing; to encourage players to work together. To develop tactical awareness



Using a 10x15 grid, place a line of cones 3m from each end. Divide the players into two teams of 4v4 .

To begin: To score a point the team must run the ball over the opposing team's line.

To progress:

- Variations:
- All players must touch the ball before a goal can be scored
  - Limit the number of touches.
  - All the team must retreat behind their line after scoring.

### ***Passing Lines***

AIM: To develop successful passing technique.



To begin: Using a 10x15 grid. Each pair has a ball. They choose a straight line on the hall floor and pass the ball to one another.

Variations/ Progress: As players become confident they can move further apart. Players should be encouraged to experiment using different parts of their feet to pass the ball.

As they gain confidence, players can experiment with different ways of receiving the ball.

Players can move to a cone between each pass – to encourage movement.

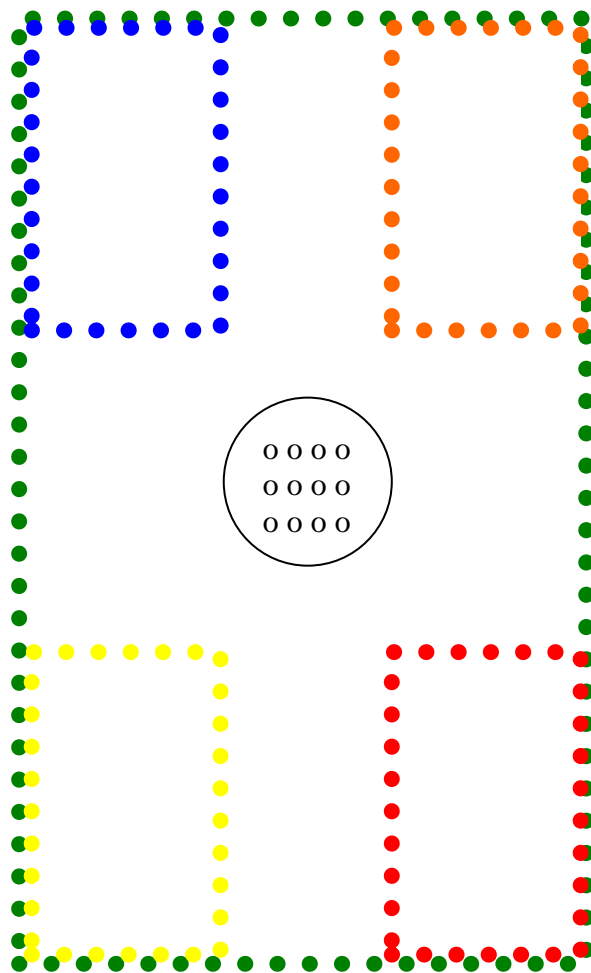
Key coaching point:

- Ask the players if the accuracy of the pass or the power of the pass is more important.
- Ask the players to experiment with different passes - which is the most accurate

**Large Multiball Game: Robin Hood**

AIM: To develop running and turning with the ball.

Using a 25x15 grid (half the sports hall) containing 4 coloured squares (10x5m)



To begin: Divide the players equally between the four coloured squares (matching bibs are a good idea). Place sufficient balls for one per player in the black circle in centre of the space.

On the coach's signal. Each player runs and collects a ball, taking it back to their square. Then on the coaches signal players return the ball *stopping* it in the centre circle.

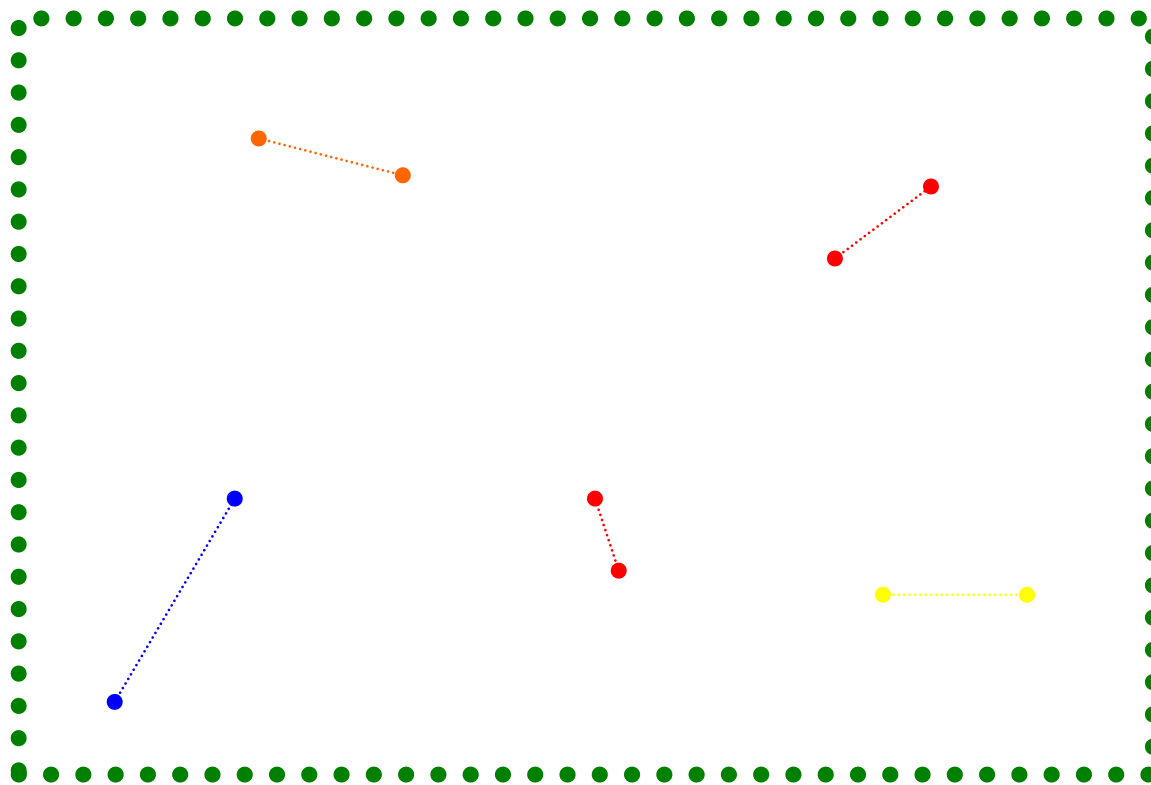
Progress 1: Once the players are competent it can be done as a race.

Progress 2: Introduce a couple of players as "botherers". Their job is to get in the way – but NOT tackle the players or touch the balls. Rotate botherers

Progress 3: players can also steal balls from the opposing teams' squares. The game ends after 2 minutes on the coaches signal.

**Team Game: Running Gates**

AIM: To develop running with the ball and encourage players to work together. To develop tactical awareness



Using a 10x15 grid, containing 5 gates of varying size/colour. Divide the players into two teams of 4v4 .

To begin: give each team a ball. To score a point the team pass the ball through a gate. First team to 5.

To progress: Introduce one or two players as “botherers”. Their job is to get in the way – but NOT tackle the player or touch the ball.

Or Use one ball

Variations: Alter the size / position of the gates.

**Technical Drill: Simple Shooting**

AIM: To develop shooting technique.



Using a 10x15 grid, containing 1 goal 5m wide.

To begin: Players stand 5m away from the goal with a ball each. They shoot into the goal.

To progress/ variations:

- Alter the size of the goals
- Introduce a goalkeeper
- Start further away
- Run with the ball before the shot.

**Technical Drill: Shooting 2v1**

AIM: To develop shooting technique.



Using a 10x15 grid, containing a goal 5m wide.

To begin: Two attackers start from blue cones. One defender starts from yellow cone.

Attackers try to score. Feed the ball from behind

To progress: Start from further back.

Both players must touch ball before shot.

Feed the ball from the goal

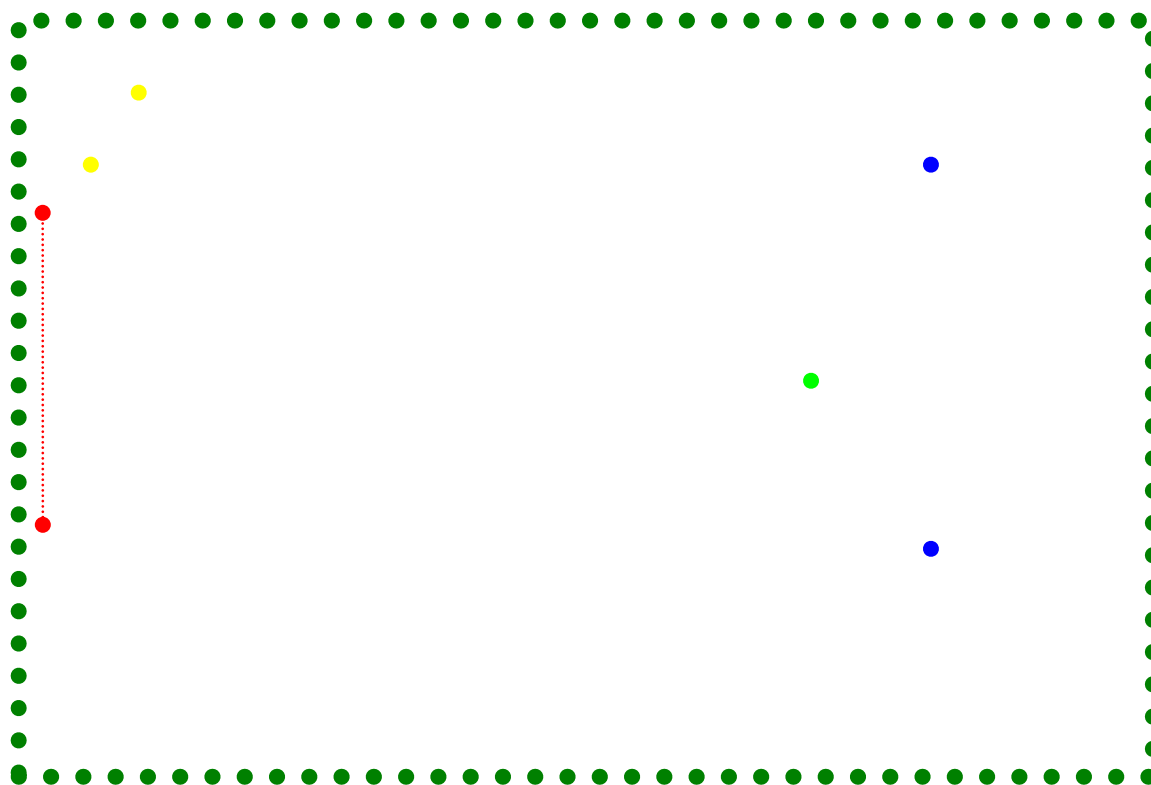
Feed the ball from side.

Variations: Alter the size of the goals

Introduce a goalkeeper.

**Technical Drill: Shooting 3v2**

AIM: To develop shooting technique.



Using a 10x15 grid, containing a goal 5m wide.

To begin: Three attackers start from blue/ green cones. One defender and one goalkeeper starts from yellow cone. Attackers try to score. Feed the ball from behind

To progress: Start from further back.

All attackers must touch ball before shot.

Feed the ball from the goal

Feed the ball from side.

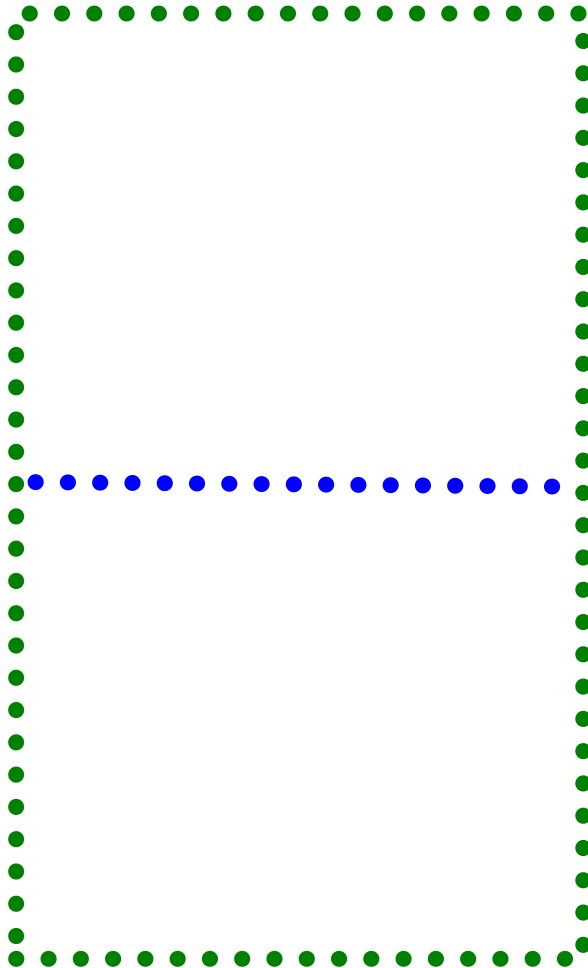
Player on green cone stands with back to goal and receives the ball.

Variations: Alter the size of the goals

**Large Game: Tidy Your Beds**

AIM: To develop kicking technique for long passing and shooting.

Using a 25x15 grid (half the sports hall), divided in two. Divide the players into two teams of 10. Each team must stay on their side of the line (their 'bedroom').



To begin: Give each player a ball..  
Each team aims to tidy their bedroom by kicking all the balls into the opposing 'bedroom' After 1 minute (approx) coach stops play and the winning team is the side with the least balls in their bedroom.

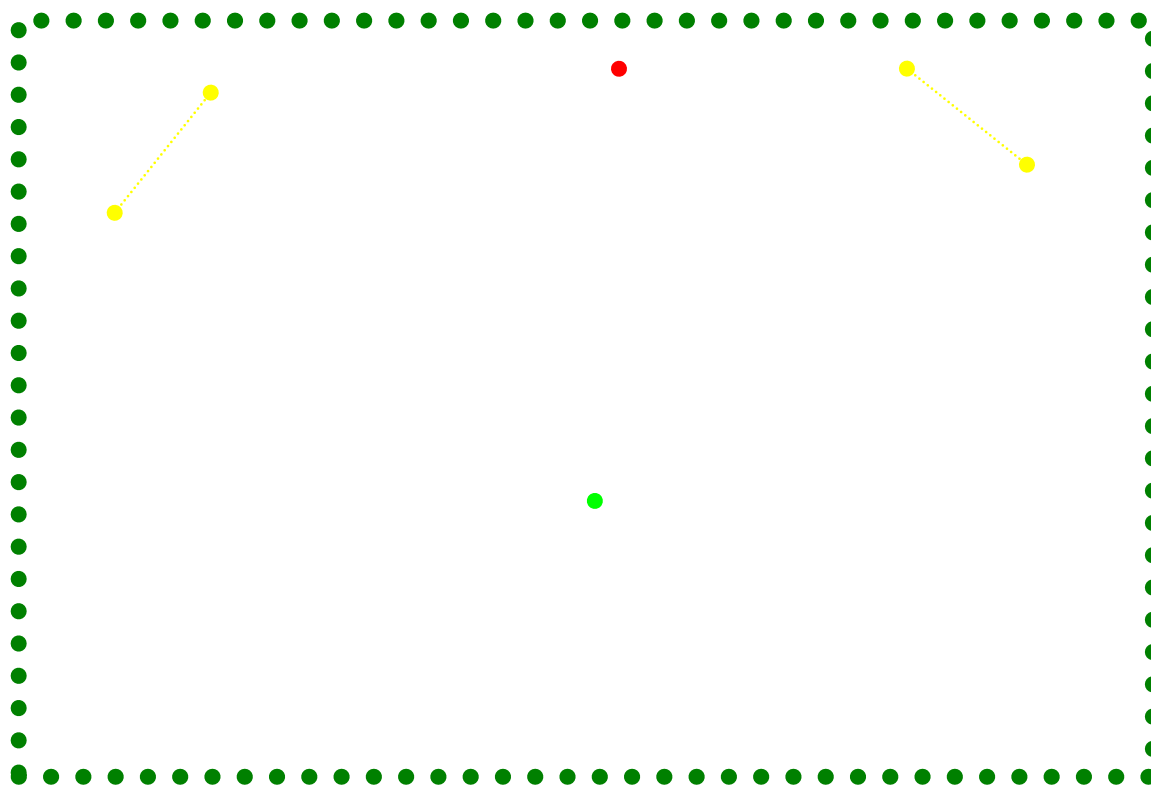
Variations: Limit the number of touches.

Ask players to experiment with using different parts of the foot to kick the ball. Which is most powerful? Which is most accurate?

Pass to a team-mate before tidying the bedroom.

### ***Tig Game***

AIM: To develop running and turning technique. Develop balance and agility



Using a 10x15 grid, containing 2 yellow gates. One defender stands on the yellow cone 4/5 runners wait on the green cone.

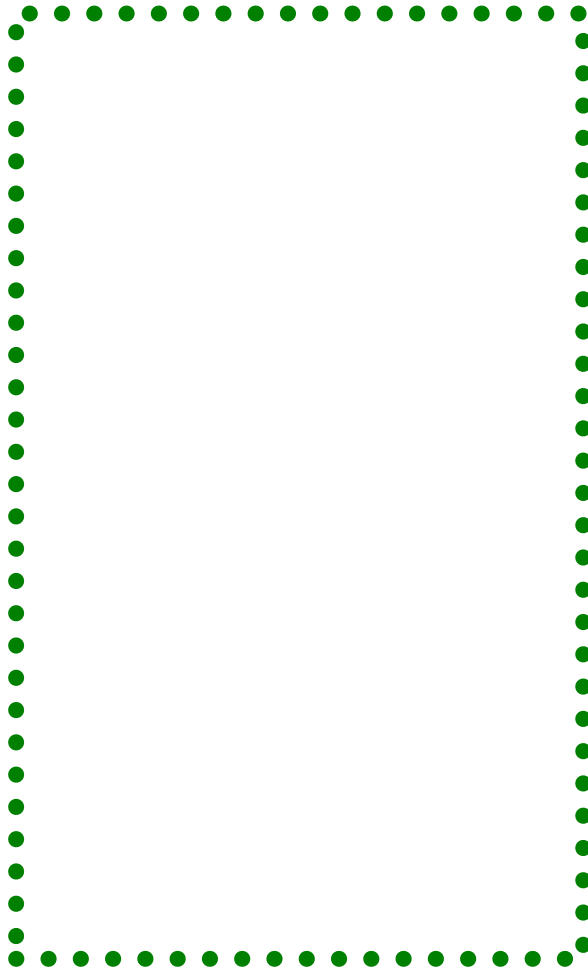
To begin: The runners must try, one at once, to run through either of the yellow gates. The defender stops them by touching them with both hands. Rotate defender.

Variations: Alter the size / position of the gates.

**Large Game: Traffic Lights**

AIM: To develop running and turning technique

Using a 25x15 grid (half the sports hall).



To begin: Give each player a ball.  
When the coach shows the red cone  
players stop. Green cone players run  
with the ball.

Variations: Yellow cone do a  
trick/ some skill/do a turn.  
Blue cone swap balls  
with another player