

U8 SESSION#1

The first week of the eight-week program will focus on the development of dribbling skills. Most of the teaching will be “hidden” within several games that promote comfort on the ball and locomotor movement. The main teaching component will be the second exercise, Free Dribble, which allows for several moves to be taught, and for the players to put those movements into a sequence of moves. There is a fifth activity that can be used if the group of players is not ready to spend as much time as expected in the Free Dribble activity. In this practice, players will be able to dribble at speed using the laces, turn using the bottom, inside, and outside of both feet, and will have a basic comprehension of what shielding is.

- 1) **Gates**---Randomly place many pairs of cones making small goals (1 yard) in a large space (30 x 20 yards) and have players dribble their balls through the goals for a point. Players try to accumulate as many points as possible. Have players count their total points in the time you provide them. After doing it once, ask them to improve their score by 2 and play the game again. Challenge each child individually. **Version 2:** Players can only dribble through goals with their right foot or their left foot. Note: You may need to make a rule disallowing players from dribbling back and forth in one goal or just two goals. **(10-15 minutes)**



- 2) **Free Dribble**---Everyone with a ball, use inside, outside, and sole of the foot. Have players dribble with speed (laces/instep dribble), change direction (“spin in” with inside of foot and “spin out” with outside of foot), and perform moves. Coach calls out moves (giving each move the name of a female or male U.S. National Team member is quite effective) or changes in direction and sets the pace as the manipulator of the session, kids carry the ball towards someone and try a move. **Version 2:** As players get comfortable, coach can walk around and put pressure on players as they are performing dribbling tasks. This adds fun and interaction. **Version 3:** Moves can be combined so that players are doing 3-4 moves in sequence. Then the sequence can be done with the non-dominant foot. Again, the coach can challenge the players by saying “I’m going to pick out two of you to demonstrate for the group.” Then ask the other players to watch the player closest to them. Each week, one or two more moves can be added in. **(10-15 minutes)**



- 3) **Knock Out**---In same space as previous activity have players dribble balls while trying to knock other player's balls outside of the grid. Players can never leave their own ball. If their ball gets knocked out have them retrieve it quickly and get back into the game. (You may wish to have them perform a skills task before re-entering such as 10 toe touches or juggling 5 times). **(15 minutes)**



- 4) **Game : 4 V 4 to small goals --- Dual Field-- 4V4 with no goal keepers 40 x 25 yard grid. (45 minutes)**

