

## WEEK 1: Soccer Ball Dribble Basics

The first week of the season can be a little chaotic. Typically, at the U8 level, there is 45 minutes of practice, 45 minutes of scrimmage. For this first week, expect to lose at least 15 minutes out of the practice to introduce the players to each other and the coach.

### Activity 1: Ice Breaker (5-10 minutes)

- Hand out the team schedule to parents
- Hand out a little write-up introducing the coach, experience, coaching philosophy, what the parents can expect from you, what you expect from them.
- Have each player write their name on a name tag. At the U8 level, this is fun and it will also help the coach to learn each player's name more quickly.
- Have the players choose a team name!

### Activity 2: Warm Ups - Ball Gymnastics (5 minutes)

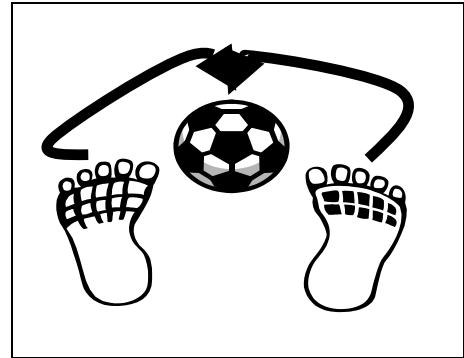
Stationary ball tabs – the Hat Dance.

*Hat Dance.* Lightly touch ball with bottom of the right foot then with the bottom of the left foot. The ball should remain still.

Two repetitions, 30 seconds each. Have the players count the number of taps. At the end of the repetition, ask each player for their count. Praise their efforts!!!! Encourage the players to beat their score on the second repetition.

Purpose/Coaching Points:

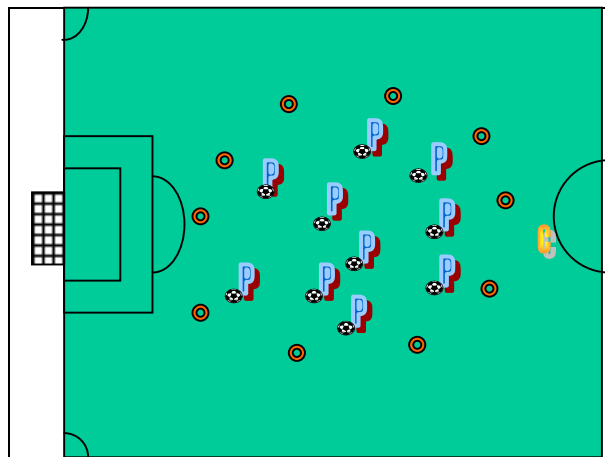
- Develop foot quickness



### Activity 3: Body Part Dribbling (5-10 Minutes)

This is another good ice breaker! Encourage the players to have fun with it. Players dribble their balls without touching any other players. Players stop the ball with named body part. Coach calls out the body part to use to stop the ball.

- left foot
- right foot
- hand
- knee
- elbow
- head
- stomach
- bottom



Purpose/Coaching Points:

- To improve dribbling in a confined space
- improve reaction time
- listening skills.

**Water Break!!!!**

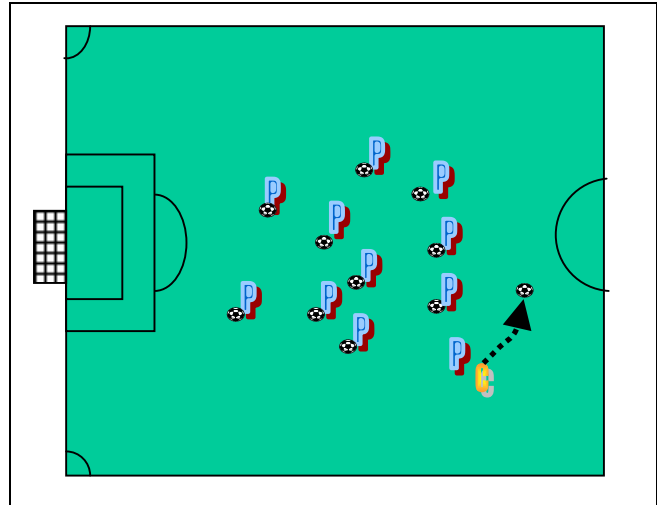
### **Activity 4: Ball Retrieval (5-10 minutes)**

Players hand the ball to coach one at a time. Coach tosses ball away about 10 yards or so, player retrieves the ball as fast as possible. Coach moves around the field, encouraging players to get their balls to him/her. Every 30 - 60 seconds, have the player use a different body part to bring the ball back.

- left foot
- right foot
- hand
- knee
- elbow
- head

Purpose/Coaching Points:

- **Encourage quick thinking and problem solving.**
- **Ball/Body awareness.**



**Water Break!!!!**

### **Activity 5: Maze Dribble Relay (5-10 minutes)**

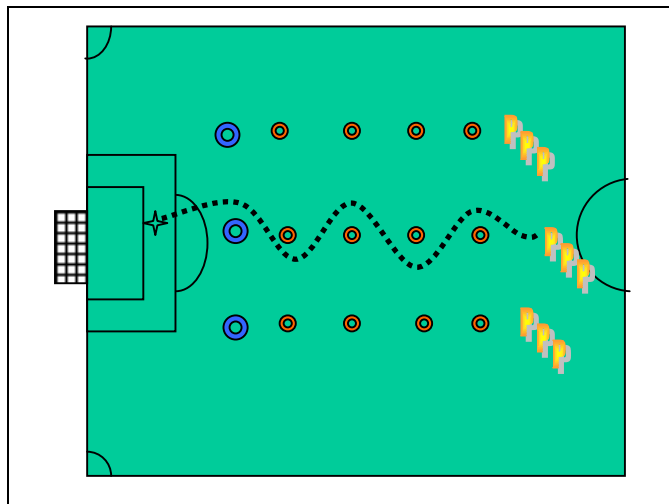
Three lines of players. All three lines dribble through the cones as shown and shoot on a goalie. Goalie can be a coach or helper.

Round 1: Cycle the players through quickly.

Round 2: Relay race. Next player starts when previous player shoots.

Purpose/Coaching Points:

- **Develop foot quickness**
- **Improve ball control for close, side-to-side movement**
- **Develop shooting skills**



**Water Break!!!!**

*Scrimmage.*