

REACH FORTH

Sports played. Lives changed.

U14 DIVISION (Ages 12-14)

This practice manual is setup for teams to work on specific skill areas for 2-3 weeks in a row to allow coaches adequate practice time to teach the skill fundamentals. With each skill set, example drills have been suggested (full explanations of the drills can be found at the end of the manual). Many of these have been provided through the Byte Size Coaching resource and have been effective for coaches in the past. This manual is intended to provide a guideline for coaches when planning practices over the course of the summer. Teams may vary on the drills they use or the focus of their practice however we hope this resource provides some consistency within this age group and provides a starting point for coaches.

Weeks 1-3

Dribbling/Ball Control and Throw In Focus

1.) Dribbling/Ball Control

A.) Rules and Technique: At this age level, players should be comfortable dribbling the ball with both feet and with the inside/outside of the feet. Work with players to increase control and speed of dribbling. Also continue to develop ball control using other parts of the body (ie knees, chest, head).

B.) Practice (Drills)

- Have the kids dribble through pylons (approx 10), then shoot on goal. Form two lines to maximize player activity and interest

- Build onto the first drill by having the two lines race each other. Players have to race through the pylons keeping the ball close to them. They have to go both ways through the pylons and then back to the next player in line. After they complete their portion of the relay, they sit down. First team finished wins - Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner/Dessert

2.) Throw Ins

A.) Rules and Technique: At this age, throw-in is a skill that all players should be able to do properly and effectively. Instruction and skill development should be done in practice so that in the game situation, incorrect throws will be called by the referee and possession changed (not corrected during the game as in younger divisions). Work with players to increase throwing

accuracy and distance once the basic form has been established.

B.) Practice (Drills)

- Have players divide into pairs and stand “throwing distance” apart. Players alternately take turns throwing the ball to their partner with proper technique. The receiving player has to control the ball with whatever body part the coach is working on currently (ie feet, knees, chest, head). Once the players are able to control the ball, have them pass the ball back to their partner one touch with that same body part.

Weeks 4-6

Passing and Shooting Focus

1.) Passing

A.) Rules and Technique: Focus should be on teaching players to pass with both left and right feet with both stop and one-touch passing. Coaches should also begin to focus on effectively passing back from forward to defense strategically, while being able to pass from one side of the field to the other.

B.) Practice (Drills):

- Form 2 lines at half. (Players stand 30 ft from each other) Players pass the ball back and forth to each other, then shoot on goal.
- Form 2 lines at half. (1st player fires ball into the corner flag area, 2nd player runs to the ball and crosses the ball to player 1 who shoots on goal.) This drill teaches players to work the corners and works on long passes and corner crosses.
- “Good Bye Drill”
- “Monkey in the Middle”

2.) Shooting

A.) Rules and Technique: Players should focus not necessarily on being able to shoot while the ball is stopped but be able to shoot while the ball is moving like in a game type situation

B.) Practice (Drills)

- Use passing drills above with focus on taking the shot at the end of the drill
- “Pylon Knock Over”

Weeks 7-8

Defending, Goalkeeping, and Positioning Focus

1.) Defending

A.) Rules and Technique: at this level, players should have an advanced understanding of what makes up good defending. The defender should be able to remain calm during play and make good decisions with the ball. (Not just kick it out of play when under pressure) They should be able to make a good pass up to their midfielders to start the play out of the zone.

B.) Practice (Drills)

- Form 2 lines, have 2 players pass to each other and try and score on net. Have 1 defender come out to try and stop the players from scoring
- Have the forward line and half backs move the ball around and try and score on 3 defenders. Teaches both the forwards and midfielders to work together to beat the 3 defenders.
- Defending a free kick. Coaches should focus on teaching advanced techniques for defending free kicks and corner kicks. Simulate game type situations by setting up where kids should stand while defending these specific situations. Each defender should mark an offensive player by standing between that player and the net. The goalie should captain where everyone should stand and coordinate a wall if possible. The key is defending quickly so you don't get caught off guard!
- 3 vs 3

2.) Goal Keeping

A.) Rules and Technique: Work with goalkeepers to continue to improve the foundational skills of cutting down the angles for oncoming forwards, and covering up rebounds inside the box.

B.) Practice (Drills)

- Penalty kicks on net
- players take turns shooting on the goalie
- 2 on 1 Rush

3.) Positioning

A.) Rules and Technique: Players should have an advanced understanding of where they should be during gameplay. It is important that coaches focus on not just moving the ball forward, but also moving it back to midfield and back to the defence; help players understand the advanced strategy of this part of the game

B.) Practice (Drills)

- Position the players on the field and kick the ball to various parts of the field. Blow the whistle when a player gets out of position and blow the whistle quite regularly to help reinforce where each of the players should be.

Weeks 9-10

Dribbling/Ball Control and Throw In Focus

1.) Dribbling/Ball Control

A.) Rules and Technique: Continue to work with players to establish good ball control using different parts of the feet and body. Provide players with time during practices to work on this individually. This is a skill that requires a significant amount of practice time dedicated to it (even at the SR level). Return to previous drills to continue the development of this skill.

B.) Practice (Drills)

- Have the kids dribble through pylons (approx 10), then shoot on goal. Form two lines to maximize player activity and interest
- Build onto the first drill by having the two lines race each other. Players have to race through the pylons keeping the ball close to them. They have to go both ways through the pylons and then back to the next player in line. After they complete their portion of the relay, they sit down. First team finished wins
- Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner/Dessert

2.) Throw Ins

A.) Rules and Technique: By now all players should be improving both accuracy and strength of throw ins. Review this skill as needed during practice.

B.) Practice (Drills)

- Have players divide into pairs and stand “throwing distance” apart. Players alternately take turns throwing the ball to their partner with proper technique. The receiving player has to control the ball with whatever body part the coach is working on currently (ie feet, knees, chest, head). Once the players are able to control the ball, have them pass the ball back to their partner one touch with that same body part.

Weeks 11-12

Passing and Shooting Focus

1.) Passing

A.) Rules and Technique: Review the technique for passing with left and right feet and one-touch passing. Coaches should also continue to focus on effectively passing back from forward to defense strategically while being able to pass from one side of the field to the other.

B.) Practice (Drills):

- Form 2 lines at half. (Players stand 30 ft from each other) Players pass the ball back and forth to each other, then shoot on goal.
- Form 2 lines at half. (1st player fires ball into the corner flag area, 2nd player runs to the ball and crosses the ball to player 1 who shoots on goal.) This drill teaches players to work the corners and works on long passes and corner crosses.
- “Good Bye Drill”
- “Monkey in the Middle”

2.) Shooting

A.) Rules and Technique: Review the technique for shooting while the ball is moving as in a game setting. Return to drills as necessary.

B.) Practice (Drills)

- Use passing drills above with focus on taking the shot at the end of the drill
- “Pylon Knock Over”

Week 13

Defending and Goalkeeping Focus

1.) Defending

A.) Rules and Technique: Continue to work with players on making good decisions with the ball on defense and proper positioning when facing oncoming forwards

B.) Practice (Drills)

- Form 2 lines, have 2 players pass to each other and try and score on net. Have 1 defender come out to try and stop the players from scoring

- Have the forward line and half backs move the ball around and try and score on 3 defenders.

Teaches both the forwards and midfielders to work together to beat the 3 defenders.

- Defending a free kick. Coaches should focus on teaching advanced techniques for defending free kicks and corner kicks. Simulate game type situations by setting up where kids should stand while defending these specific situations. Each defender should mark an offensive player by standing between that player and the net. The goalie should captain where everyone should stand and coordinate a wall if possible. The key is defending quickly so you don't get caught off guard!

- 3 vs 3

2.) Goal Keeping

A.) Rules and Technique: Give goalkeepers opportunities to refine their skill/technique by using them in practice drills throughout the season. Return to specific goalkeeping drills from earlier in the season.

B.) Practice (Drills)

- Penalty kicks on net

- players take turns shooting on the goalie

- 2 on 1 Rush

3.) Positioning

A.) Rules and Technique: Return to teaching on positioning strategy from earlier in the season. Work with players to further practice moving the ball back and forth among defence, midfield, and forwards. Return to drills as necessary.

B.) Practice (Drills)

- Position the players on the field and kick the ball to various parts of the field. Blow the whistle when a player gets out of position and blow the whistle quite regularly to help reinforce where each of the players should be.

Drills and Games 3 vs 3

Organization:

- Field size 20 x 30 yards.
- Goal is 3-yards wide.
- No goalkeepers.
- Goals only count below knee height.
- When ball goes out of play, game is restarted by:
 - Sideline - throw-in (or pass-in - opponents must be 5-yards away).
 - Endline - goal kick or corner kick (5-yard rule), depending on which player last touched ball.
- After a goal, re-start with center kick (opponents must retreat within two paces of own goal).
 - In practice with numbers greater than twelve have two 3 vs.3, or if less than 12, have 3 teams and a separate practice operating and rotate teams in and out of the 3 vs.3 game. Teaching:
- Encourage at least one player to go fully wide on goal kicks.
- Encourage attacking teams to always have a rear-supporting player.
- Encourage players to pass, dribble and communicate with each other.
- On throw-ins, encourage one of the non-throwing attackers to look for a forward shooting chance - and not to go too close to thrower.

Target:

- To outscore opposing team. (Courtesy of ByteSize Coaching Resources)

Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner/Dessert

Designate 4 areas as above using pylon markers. Each player has a ball and when the coach calls out one of the "spots" players race to get to that spot.

Goodbye Drill

Position 3 players in a 10-yard by 10-yard grid so that they each occupy a corner of the grid. Player A passes the ball to Player B, then will say "Good bye" and run to the unoccupied corner of the grid. Player B then passes to Player C and runs to the corner that Player A previously occupied etc. Repeat this action several times. After players feel comfortable with the spacing provided by the 10-yard grid, remove the pylons. Request that all players travel in 3's repeating the movement in open space.

Monkey in the Middle

4-6 players form a circle with one person in the middle who attempts to get the ball from the person in the middle. When they take the ball, the person who made the bad pass then goes to the middle.

Pylon Knock Over

This drill teaches accuracy while shooting and also makes it fun. Put a bunch of pylons in the goal area. The kids come across the 18 yard line and have to shoot and try to knock the pylons over. When all the pylons are knocked over, the game is over.