Grassroots

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Preface

The systematic promotion of grassroots football has always been one of FIFA's priorities. FIFA's main objective for its grassroots football programme is to bring football to as many people as possible, thus addressing one of FIFA's missions: "to develop the game".

I am delighted that grassroots football has progressed so much around the world in recent years, regardless of political, religious and cultural environments. Grassroots football is genuinely popular in our societies and occupies a proud position in the world of sport. Determination and initiative are the driving forces of the development of football around the world.

The promotion and development of grassroots football does not just mean financial assistance; it also involves a much wider commitment to setting up the necessary infrastructures to allow member associations, coaches and participants to take an active role in football. Our grassroots programme and the activities that it offers have greatly increased the opportunities to play football all around the world.

Interacting, sharing, playing and meeting others – these are all benefits that we promote in grassroots football, while, of course, encouraging enjoyment on the pitch. For some, grassroots football is a recreational activity. For others, it is the practice of football in a club or school environment, with regular training and matches, that is important.

It is for these reasons that I always encourage children to play football, whatever their level. Playing improves children's techniques and the intelligence of their game and boosts enthusiasm. Football also promotes team spirit and fair play. In a nutshell, football is a school of life.

I am sure that this manual will be an excellent tool for those who want to become involved in grassroots football. The initial beneficiaries will be children, but I believe that the manual will also serve as an first-rate guide for the future development of all aspects of grassroots football.

In regard to football and youth, I hope that all your work is productive and your exchanges are fruitful. I would like to thank you in advance for your contribution to the development of football and to building a better future.

For the game. For the world.

Joseph S. Blatter
FIFA President

The Philosophy of Grassroots Football

In implementing its mission statement, one of the three approaches adopted by FIFA is to "Develop the game". This is manifested in the main objective of FIFA's grassroots football programme: to allow football to be discovered by as many people as possible. The best way of attracting new players to the sport is to give them access to football in their own environment whatever their age, sex, physical condition, skin colour, religion or ethnic origin.

Grassroots football is football for all

FIFA's grassroots football programme targets boys and girls aged 6-12 years through school, community and club initiatives.

The key concept of the programme is to bring together as many people as possible through football. The grassroots programme advocates exchanges and sharing human values and, of course, promotes the pleasure of practising our marvellous sport. For some people, grassroots football is a focus for recreational activities, while for others it is the organised practice of the sport, with training and matches, within a school or club framework.
Of course not all young players will become the stars of the future and they do not all have the skills required to become professional players. So intensive training sessions and complicated tactics are not appropriate.

Play is the best means of learning.
Above all, youngsters should have fun.

The essential elements of grassroots football are relationships, team spirit and fun.
The concept of learning through play while being guided by a coach-educator is a specific approach designed to reach out to the young and create a process to connect to the future. The coach-educator must be dynamic, uncomplicated, passionate and motivational and must always respect the children's physical, physiological and psychological characteristics.

Children are not just miniature adults.

Football is the main recreational activity of countless numbers of children around the world. It is an exceptional tool for social integration and an excellent means of expression. The FIFA grassroots football programme offers everyone the chance to play football, without discrimination and without the need for major infrastructures.
FIFA's programme can complement the initiatives of confederations and member associations that have already established grassroots programmes.
FIFA's grassroots football programme has been drawn up in close cooperation with member associations and involves all the stakeholders in education (governments, NGOs (non-governmental organisations), communities, schools, etc.).

Grassroots football is football for everyone, by everyone, everywhere.

The coach-educator

"Youth prefer to be stimulated instead of being instructed."

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

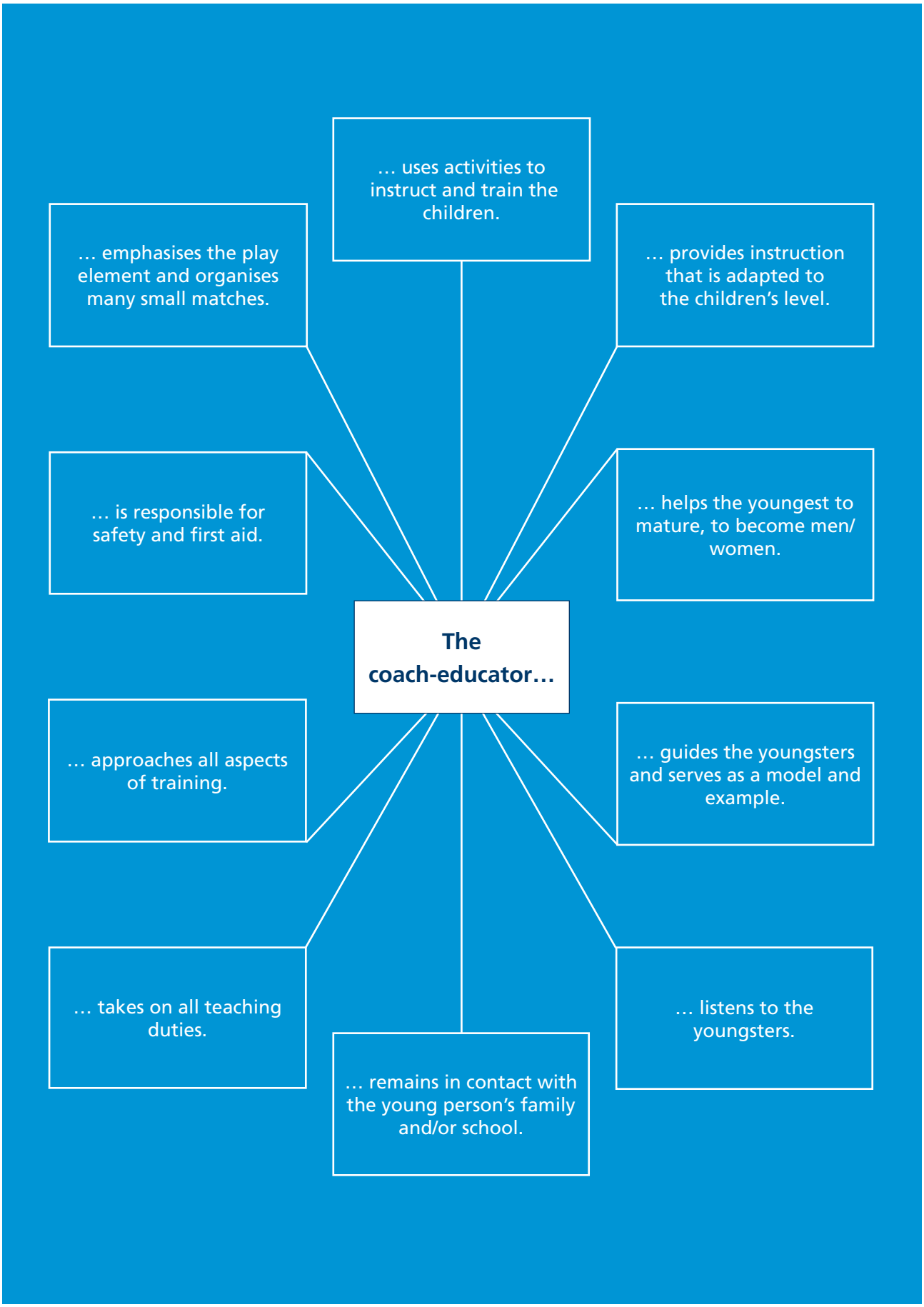
The coach-educator's interest centres on the child. The coach's main, essential mission is to ensure the child's development in sporting, social, psychological and educational terms.
The coach-educator knows the game and knows the players.
Of course a coach will not know everything, even in his/her own subject. However, the coach must have a very good understanding of the messages to be communicated.
Victories and defeats are nothing compared with what football can promote in terms of human and social values. Football is a vital aid in training future citizens and encouraging young people's inclusion in society.
Football can be a marvellous tool in conveying such values as respect, solidarity, mutual support, sharing, etc.

The coach-educator's mission, or indeed vocation, means sharing, giving, communicating and interacting with others and taking enjoyment in this.

A coach-educator's educational mission is essentially to convey knowledge and social skills. To achieve this, the coach must know the child, understand his/her characteristics and take into account age and skills. In short, the coach must **teach through encouragement and achievement**.
Play is children's main activity. Play is an essential need, innate in all children. Thus the main objectives of grassroots football are to introduce children to football and initiate them in the practices of football through play.
Football in **small-sided games**, on small pitches, addresses both of these needs. On small pitches, better suited to their physiological capacities, young footballers get more touches of the ball and learn to control and use the ball.
The coach-educator's mission is to promote **learning through play**. Play is an enjoyable way for children to learn. Play is an excellent way of developing psychomotor skills and allowing children to relax and overcome anxiety. It encourages children to take initiatives and risks and also encourages invention.
Simply enjoying football together and sharing the moment.

"Nature decrees that children should be children before they become adults. If we try to alter this natural order, they will reach adulthood prematurely but with neither substance nor strength."

Jean-Jacques Rousseau


The coach-educator…
… uses activities to instruct and train the children.
… emphasises the play element and organises many small matches.
… provides instruction that is adapted to the children's level.
… is responsible for safety and first aid.
… helps the youngest to mature, to become men/ women.
… approaches all aspects of training.
… guides the youngsters and serves as a model and example.
… takes on all teaching duties.
… listens to the youngsters.
… remains in contact with the young person's family and/or school.

Profile of a coach-educator

The vocation of the coach-educator, in his/her role as a trainer, is to introduce all those boys and girls who want to discover the joys of football to the sport and initiate them in its practice.

In order to achieve the objectives associated with this role as a trainer, the coach-educator's mission in his/her "football school" must be the following:

- to welcome all young players from the age of six without selection;
- to promote a sporting education based on respect and fair play from the youngest age;
- to encourage a spirit based on the enjoyment of playing and the desire to improve.

Without being an expert, the coach-educator must have a certain basic knowledge:

Knowledge of children:

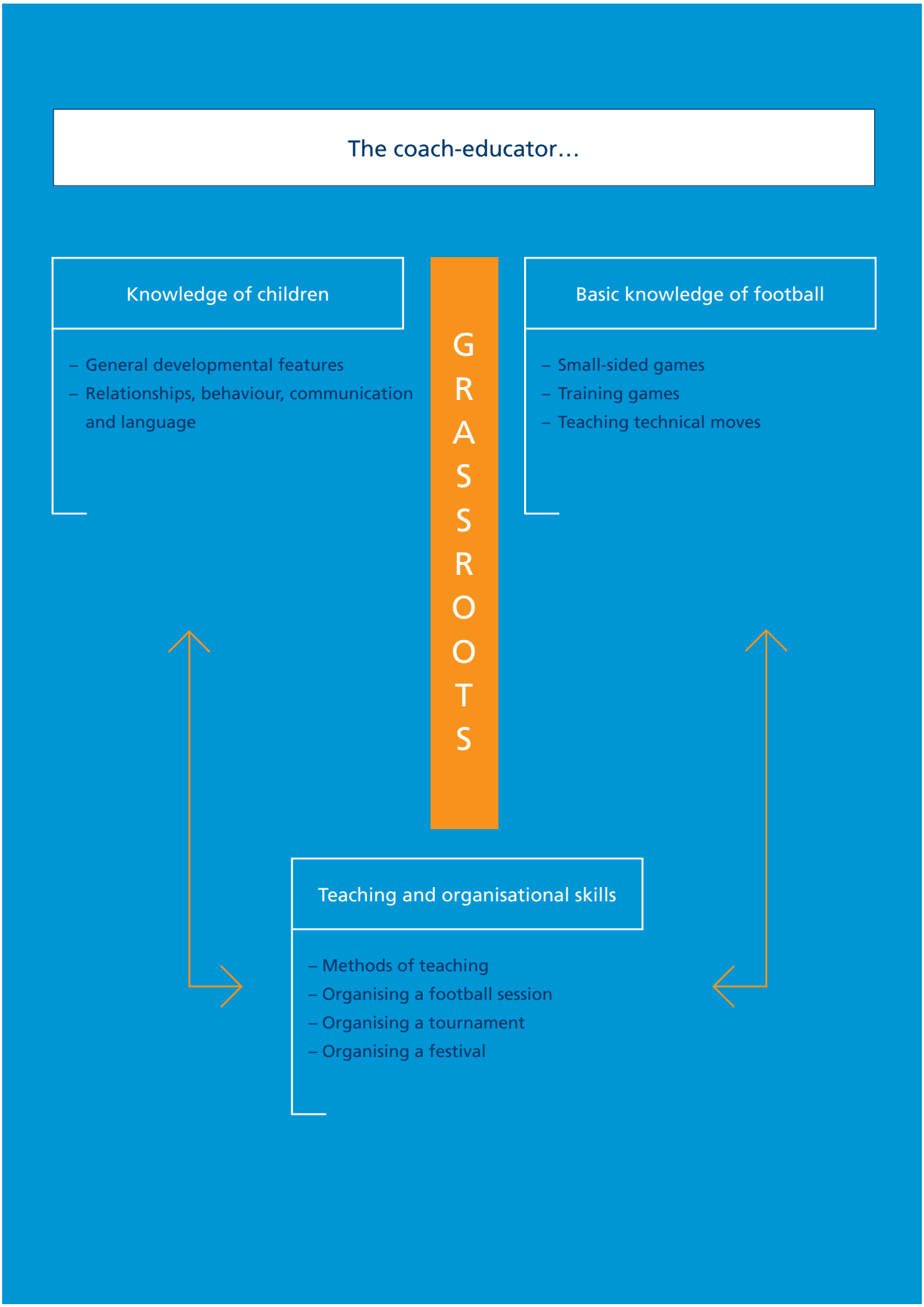
- General developmental features at different ages,
- Relationships, behaviour, communication and language.

Teaching and organisational skills:

- The methods of teaching,
- Organising a football session,
- Organising a tournament,
- Organising a festival.

Basic knowledge of football:

- Small-sided games,
- Training games,
- Teaching technical moves.


The coach-educator…
Knowledge of children
– General developmental features
– Relationships, behaviour, communication and language
GRASSROOTS
Basic knowledge of football
– Small-sided games
– Training games
– Teaching technical moves
Teaching and organisational skills
– Methods of teaching
– Organising a football session
– Organising a tournament
– Organising a festival

Codes of conduct

The coach-educator has a great influence over young players involved in grassroots football. From the very fact that coach-educators spend a lot of time with the children, their own conduct and behaviour will inevitably affect the attitudes and conduct of the children. For this reason the coach-educator must always maintain a positive manner and display an exemplary attitude to all participants, both in physical respects as well as in social and emotional relationships.

The coach-educator must not just be perceived as a football expert or organiser, but also as a guide, educator and example to be followed.

Five foundations for the successful practice of football

A football school is an environment in which children must feel happy and valued:

1. The feeling of safety

Protecting children from physical and emotional harm. A child who does not feel safe will find it difficult to be happy and enjoy the activities.

2. The feeling of being welcome

Feeling welcome whatever the child's age, sex, technical level, physique, culture or language. Football is an environment in which there must be no discrimination of any kind.

3. The feeling of being a "good player"

Every child must feel capable. For this reason children must always be encouraged, emphasising the good points rather than the bad.

4. The feeling of belonging to a group

Being part of the group and feeling accepted by the team are essential to the children.

5. The feeling of being important

Children need recognition for their successes. They must be encouraged to be creative and expressive.

The GOALS of the coach-educator

- Enjoy working with the children.
- Get to know the children very well.
- Be a point of reference for the children.
- Set high standards but be tolerant.
- Listen to the children.
- Keep communicating.
- Instil confidence in the children and reassure them.
- Develop team spirit.
- Encourage initiative and risk-taking in individuals.
- Focus on the "spirit of the game" rather than errors.
- Teach by encouragement.

Behaviour to be avoided

- Constantly shouting or behaving aggressively.
- Training children or asking them to play as if they were adults.
- Forgetting that the main motivation of children is to play football.
- Giving explanations that are too long.
- Presenting technical objectives that are too advanced for the children's ages.
- Organising exercises that become too routine.
- Focusing on one exercise for too long.
- Continuously interrupting play.
- Criticising an individual in front of the group.
- Forgetting to balance the teams.
- Placing too much emphasis on the results.

The Children's Code

- Play for your own enjoyment and not simply to please parents or coaches.
- Enjoy football, develop and flourish through football.
- Learn and respect the rules of the game and the rules of the group.
- Fit in to the group and be a good team-mate.
- Respect your opponents.
- Accept the decisions of referees and coaches.
- Ensure fair play in all circumstances.

The Parents' Code

- Remember that children play football for their own enjoyment, not for that of their parents.
- Encourage rather than force or oblige.
- Encourage children to always respect the rules of the game.
- Never reprimand a child for a technical error or for losing a match.
- Remember that children learn from example.
- Encourage both teams.
- Congratulate both teams irrespective of the result of the match.
- Help to eradicate all physical and verbal abuse from football.
- Respect the decisions of the coaches and referees and teach the children to do the same thing.
- Support, encourage and help volunteers, coaches, organisers and officials in their work. Without them, the children would not have the opportunity to play football.
- Ensure fair play in all circumstances.

The Referees' Code

- Be aware that refereeing a match for children is completely different from refereeing a match for adults.
- Protect the children.
- Put the emphasis on the spirit of the game rather than on errors.
- Do not intervene excessively in a match.
- Allow the children to play.
- Explain any infringements of the rules of the game committed by the children.
- If a player makes a mistake in restarting play, get the same player to repeat the action while explaining his/her error.
- Do not tolerate inappropriate language.
- Remain consistent, objective and polite when indicating infringements of the rules of the game.
- Have an explanatory attitude to refereeing; clarify all infringements.
- Retain a positive and cheerful manner.
- Ensure fair play in all circumstances.
- Ask the children to shake hands before and after the match.

Safety and accident prevention – Ten important tasks for coach-educators

1. Provide a safe environment
The sports installations and equipment must be safe for the children and other participants. Bad weather conditions must be taken into consideration for all grassroots football activities.

2. Safe, appropriate sports equipment and facilities
The existing codes and standards for equipment must be respected. All equipment and facilities must be kept in good condition and must be appropriate for the category of player involved (e.g. size 4 footballs).

3. Planned activities
Badly planned football sessions can result in injuries. Technical skills must be taught in a progressive manner, in particular techniques that involve an element of risk (e.g. headers or tackling).

4. Monitor players who are injured or temporarily incapacitated
Players who are injured or temporarily incapacitated must be exempted from exercises that may cause them harm.

5. Play within age categories
It is initially necessary to allocate children to different groups, including talented young players, not only according to age, but also taking into account height, weight and maturity. Experience and skill should also be considered.

6. Inform the children and parents of the inherent risks of the sport
The inherent risks of football can only be legally accepted by the children – or their parents/guardians – if they are aware of, understand and accept the risks.

7. Closely monitored activities
The practice environment must be appropriately monitored in order to ensure that it is as safe as possible.

8. A knowledge of first aid
Coach-educators must have a basic knowledge of first aid and must keep this knowledge up to date. Appropriate medical assistance must be available during organised activities and nothing must be done that may aggravate an injury.

9. Set out clear rules for the activities and how they are to be carried out
Clear, written rules must be drawn up and distributed before all activities, describing how they work and the behaviour expected.

10. Gather essential information on the health of the children
Coach-educators must have basic information on the health of the children and the risks involved so that they can take the best decisions possible in the event of any problems during a coaching session.
The Coach-educators essential mission is to ensure the protection of the children, not only for the sake of the participants themselves but also to reassure for the parents. Given the large number of children, both boys and girls, who take part in football activities, their protection must be a priority. No one must be left unsupervised. If carried out correctly, the procedures to protect the children will still allow them to enjoy the practice of football.

The characteristics of children and the educational approach

As children grow up, they pass through different stages. Children have different needs and behaviour; they do not all develop in the same way. For this reason it is important to be aware of the specific characteristics and priorities of each of the stages of childhood and adolescence, taking into account physical, physiological and psychological aspects.

The **coach-educator** must realise that a young person is not a small adult. The stages of children's growth and development must be taken into account in order to ensure the best possible approach.

It is the coach-educator's responsibility to be aware of these essential points and to apply appropriate responses in individual cases.

It is important to consider the physical development of each young player and to distinguish their actual age from their physical age.

Furthermore, some children start to play football later than age 6-8, which is when the majority of children start. For this reason it is important for the coach-educator to respect the child's level and have a positive approach to encourage learning.

A coach-educator supervises children playing football; a coach-educator does not train footballers.

The school of football is also the school of life.

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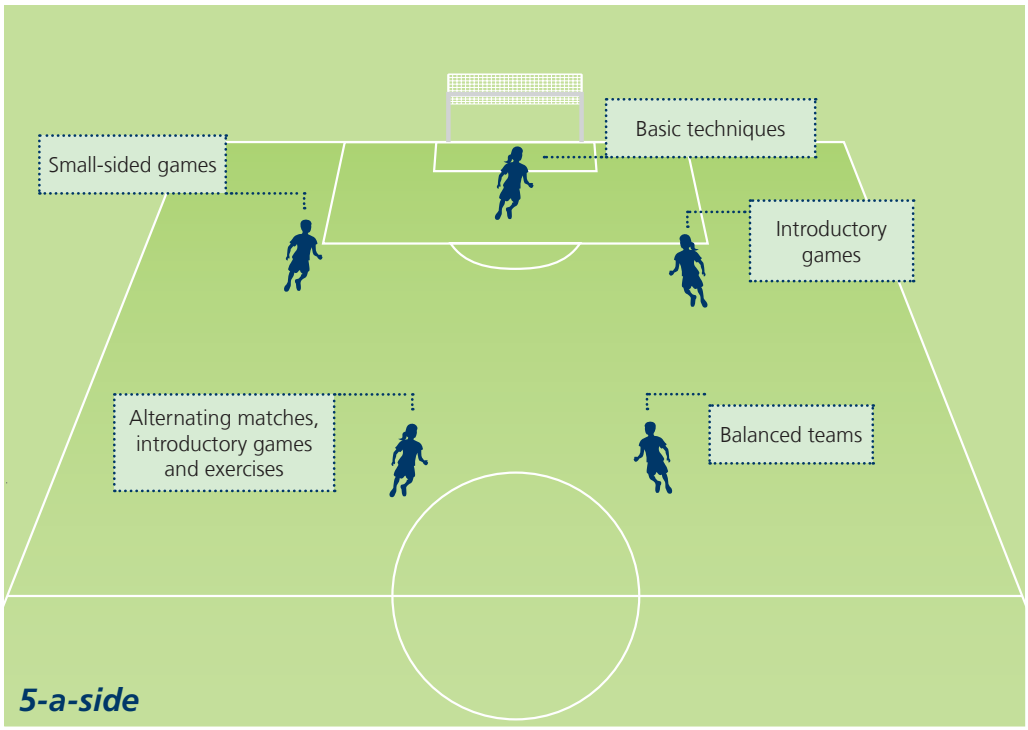
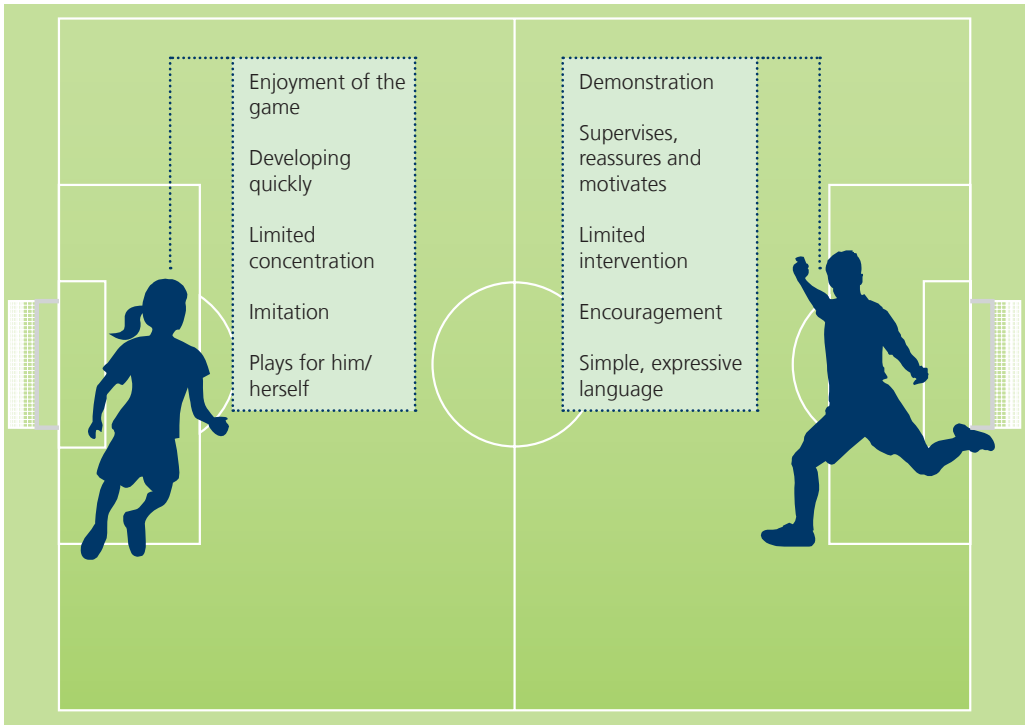
Stages of development and characteristics

Children aged 6-8 – Training content



Children's characteristics

The coach-educator's role



Children's characteristics	Training content
– Fragile, developing quickly, difficulties with coordination – Short attention and concentration spans – Excellent facility for imitation (visual memory) – Likes playing, plays for him/herself, egocentrism – Enjoyment of the game	– Basic football technique, coordination exercises – Introductory games, getting used to the ball – Small-sided games: 4 v 4 and 5 v 5 matches – Alternating matches, introductory games and exercises – Balanced groups or teams
Just a child	**Playing, enjoying**

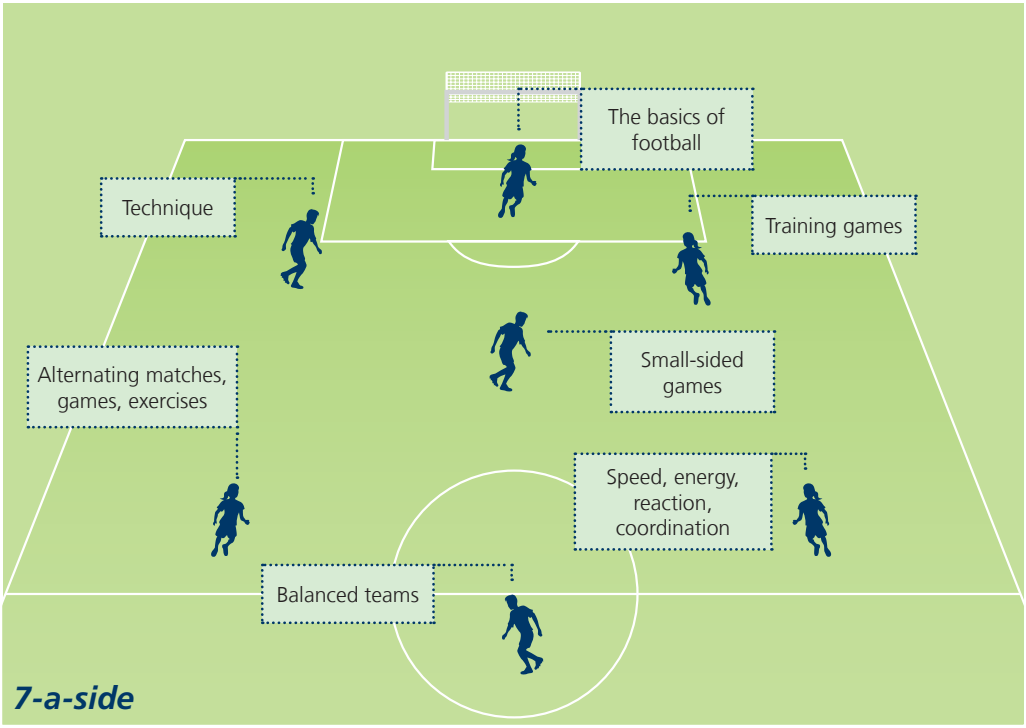
The coach-educator's role

– Supervises games, reassures and motivates
– Demonstrates the exercises
– Simple, expressive language
– Limited intervention / letting the children play
– Teaching by encouragement

Having fun through football

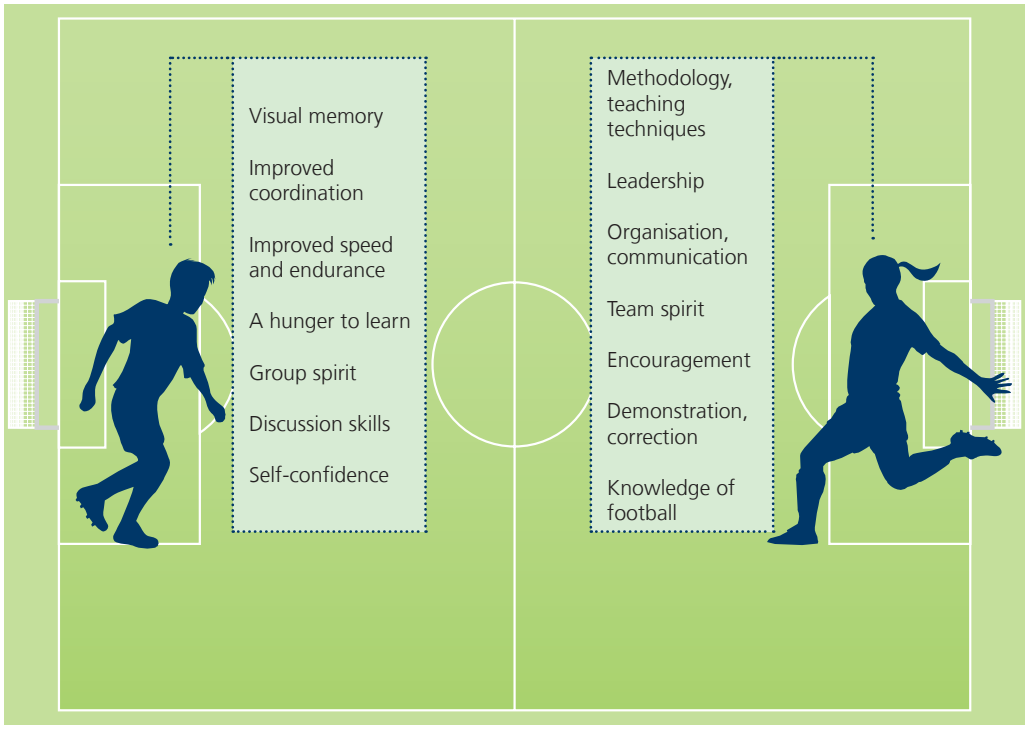
Stages of development and characteristics

Children aged 9-10 – Training content



Children's characteristics

The coach-educator's role



Children's characteristics	Training content
– Improved speed, endurance and strength – Improved coordination – Good visual memory – Good self-confidence – Discussion skills – A hunger to learn and discover – Collective spirit	– Basic techniques (the basics of football) – Basic team organisation – Speed, energy, reaction, coordination – Training games – Small-sided games: 5 v 5, 7 v 7 – Alternating matches, training games, exercises – Balanced groups or teams
A child in a team of friends	**Playing, discovering, experimenting**

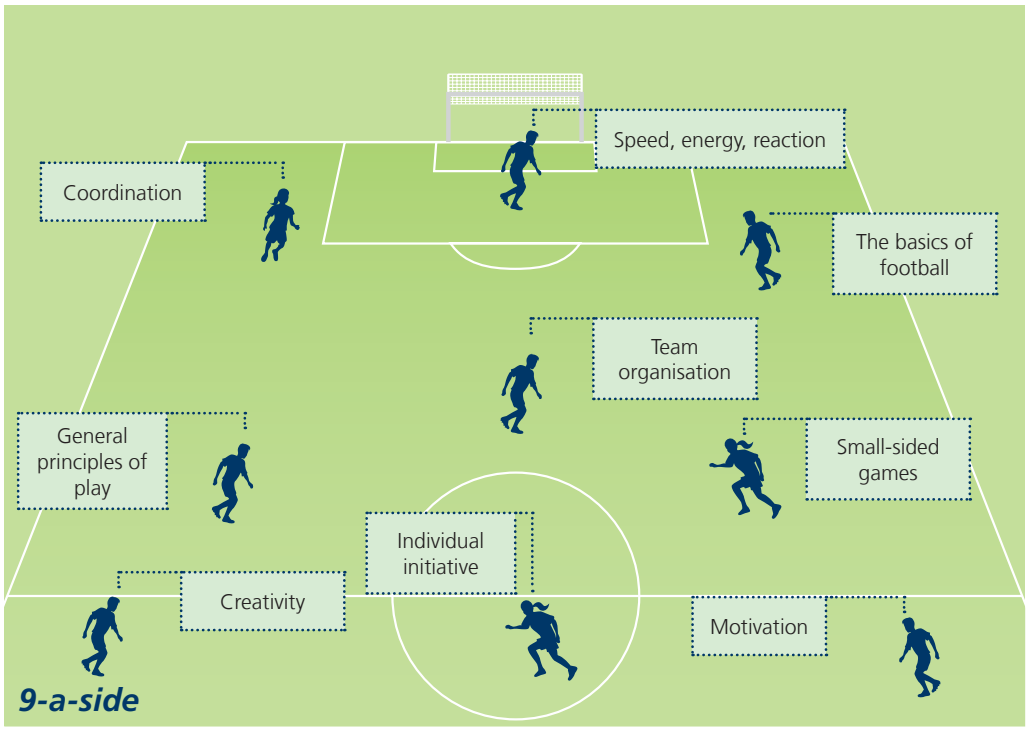
The coach-educator's role

– The Coach-educator's role
– Methodology, teaching techniques
– Emotional and technical leadership
– Organisational and communication skills
– Establishing team spirit
– General knowledge of football
– Demonstration, implementation, correction
– Teaching by encouragement

Learning by playing

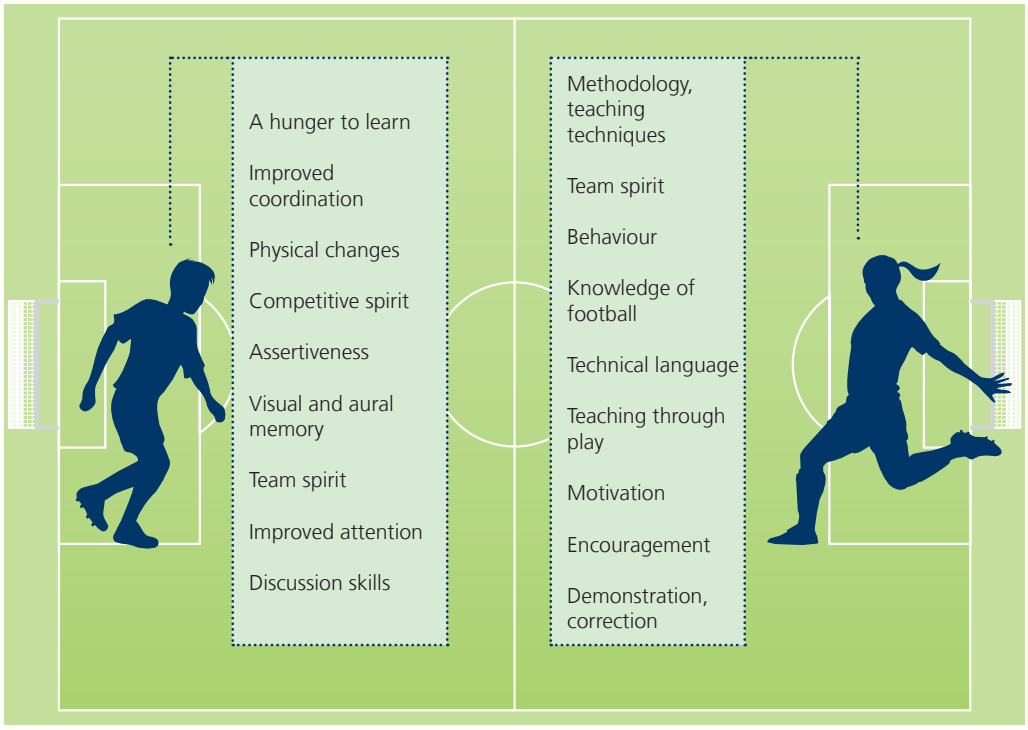
Stages of development and characteristics

Children aged 11-12 – Training content



Children's characteristics

The coach-educator's role



Children's characteristics	Training content
– Significant physical changes – Better balance, better coordination – Improved visual and aural memory – Critical faculties, discussion skills – Improved attention – A hunger to learn – Assertiveness – Development of the competitive spirit – Team spirit	– Speed, energy and reaction – Coordination – Basic techniques (the basics of football) – Basic team organisation (3-2-3) – The general principles of play and motivation – Control of space and movement – Small-sided games: 5 v 5, 7 v 7, 9 v 9 – Promoting creativity – Encouraging individuals to take initiative
A player in the team	**Playing and taking part**

The coach-educator's role
– Methodology and teaching techniques – Establishing a group spirit – Quality of behaviour – Knowledge of football – Technical language – Teaching through play – Motivating the team – Demonstration, implementation, correction – Teaching by encouragement
A footballer in a team

Teaching approach

1. Preparing the session

- Written notes
- General knowledge of football
- Setting the objectives to be achieved
- Choice of exercises, adapted to the children's capabilities
- Preparation in terms of the location and schedule of exercises
- Tailoring instructions depending on the children's level
- Gradual development of exercises, taking children's level into account
- Repetition of exercises and memorisation of situations by the children
- Evaluation of exercises and progress made by the children

2. Organising the session

- Setting out the area for play, providing a suitable space
- Teaching equipment, first-aid kit
- Organisation of exercises and games: distribution of bibs, movement and rotation of players, etc.
- Organisation of teams. It is important that teams are balanced when they compete against each other to make sure that the children remain motivated:
  - Players' level
  - Players' physical characteristics
  - Diversity, adapting the rules if necessary
- Progressive development of exercises and games
- Duration and repetition of exercises
- Rest periods, drinks for the children

3. Motivating the session

- Simple, comprehensive explanations of the objectives of the session
- Presentation of the contents
- Organisation of teams and/or working groups in workshops
- Setting up exercises:

  - Positioning players
  - Demonstration of the exercise
  - Carrying out the exercise, monitoring time taken
- Exercises and motivation:
  - Teaching by encouragement
  - Monitoring comprehension of exercises and the quality of implementation
  - Collective and/or individual correction of exercises
  - Ongoing control of schedule and area
  - Pursuit of technical quality
- Games and motivation:
  - Teaching by encouragement
  - Allowing play to continue, infrequent intervention
  - Encouraging individual initiative
  - Promoting creativity
  - Ongoing control of schedule and area
  - Maintaining the technical balance between teams

4. Concluding the session

- Bringing the children back together and calming down
- Evaluation, discussion, recommendations
- Introduction of the next session
- Putting equipment away
- Overseeing the children's departures.

Mixed-sex participation in football

For many years, numerous countries did not permit young people to play mixed-sex football for cultural reasons. Young girls would only be allowed to play football with other girls, regardless of the age difference between them.

In the field of education, many countries have now adopted mixed-sex schools, in which children are no longer categorised by their gender, but by age or academic level. Mixed-sex participation in sport, and football, by young people has followed suit.

We know from experience that until the age of 12 or 13, there is absolutely no difference in ability between boys and girls, and that young girls go through the same stages of development as boys when learning to play football, in terms of their technique, athleticism, ability to read the game and communication.

It is worth noting that certain countries allow mixed-sex participation in football up to the age of 19 while others do not impose any category restrictions at all on mixed-sex football, which explains why football is so well-developed in these countries.

Allowing boys and girls to play together contributes to the emancipation of the two genders, improves tolerance and promotes mutual respect.

By playing alongside boys, girls gain a more positive image of themselves, increase their self-confidence and become more aware of their abilities.

Mixed-sex participation in football encompasses all the forms of competition in which girls and boys play with and against one another. In other words, we can use the term "mixed-sex football" to refer to any of the following cases:

- a team of boys playing against a team of girls;
- a mixed-sex team (boys and girls) playing against a team of boys;
- a mixed-sex team (boys and girls) playing against a team of girls;
- a mixed-sex team (boys and girls) playing against a mixed-sex team (boys and girls).

Allowing mixed-sex football at least up to the age of 12 – wherever possible and bearing in mind the structure of different societies and the cultural and educational opportunities available – will contribute greatly to the development of women's football in general.

The organisation of tournaments

Introduction

When organising tournaments it should be recognised that the competitive aspect and the results are not the crucial issues and the emphasis should always be put on the concepts of **play** and **enjoyment**.

For this reason, coach-educators involved in organising tournaments should always consider:

- the balance of teams in terms of performance levels;
- the equitable involvement of all participants in terms of playing time;
- the duration of the matches, depending on their number;
- the standard of the opposition from one match to another depending on the previous results;
- the rules of Fair Play on and off the pitch.

Different Formats for Championships and/or Cups

3 teams

Home and away matches

3 teams (2 phases)	
Phase	**Match**
1	A – B
	C – A
	B – C
2	B – A
	A – C
	C – B
4 matches per team	

4 teams

Each team plays the other three teams once

4 teams (1 phase)		
Round	**Match**	
1	1	A – B
	2	C – D
2	3	B – C
	4	D – A
3	5	B – D
	6	A – C
3 matches per team		

5 teams

Each team plays against four others, one team sits out each round

5 teams (1 phase)		
Round	**Match**	
1	1	A – B
	2	C – D
	no match	E
2	3	E – A
	4	D – B
	no match	C
3	5	C – E
	6	A – D
	no match	B
4	7	B – E
	8	C – A
	no match	D
5	9	D – E
	10	B – C
	no match	A
4 matches per team		

6 teams

1) First phase with two pools of three teams:

Two pools of three teams, each team playing the other two teams.

– Pool P1 = A, B and C
– Pool P2 = D, E and F

Solution 1:

Only one match between the teams

6 teams (First phase)		
Pool	**Match**	
P1	1	A – B
P2	2	D – E
P1	3	C – A
P2	4	F – D
P1	5	B – C
P2	6	E – F
2 matches per team		

Solution 1:

Home and away matches

6 teams (First phase)		
Pool	**Match**	
P1	1	A – B
P2	2	D – E
P1	3	C – A
P2	4	F – D
P1	5	B – C
P2	6	E – F
P1	7	B – A
P2	8	E – D
P1	9	A – C
P2	10	D – F
P1	11	C – B
P2	12	F – E
4 matches per team		

2) Second phase:

Two groups of three teams, each team playing the other two teams.

– Group W: the two winners of pools P1 and P2 + the best second-placed team
– Group L: the three other teams

Final Round W		Final Round L	
A	1st P1	D	2nd P1/2
B	1st P2	E	3rd P1
C	Best 2nd P1/2	F	3rd P2

Final Round - Organisation of matches		
Group	**Match**	
W	1	B – C
L	2	D – E
W	3	C – A
L	4	F – D
W	5	A – B
L	6	E – F
2 matches per team		

8 teams

1) First phase: two pools → each team plays the other three teams

Pool 1 - 4 teams		
Round	**Match**	
1	1	A – B
	2	C – D
2	3	B – C
	4	D – A
3	5	B – D
	6	A – C
3 matches per team		

Pool 2 - 4 teams		
Round	**Match**	
1	1	E – F
	2	G – H
2	3	F – G
	4	H – E
3	5	F – H
	6	E – G
3 matches per teams		

If only one pitch is available, the matches of Pools 1 and 2 are played in alternation.

2) Second phase:

Two groups of four teams, each team playing the other three teams.

– Group W: comprising the top two teams of each pool,
– Group L: comprising the bottom two teams of each pool.

Group W		Group L	
A	1st P1	E	3rd P1
B	1st P2	F	3rd P2
C	2nd P1	G	4th P1
D	2nd P2	H	4th P2

Place 1 to 4

Group W - 4 teams		
Round	**Match**	
1	1	A – D
	2	B – C
2	3	A – C
	4	D – B
3	5	C – D
	6	A – B
3 matches per team		

Place 5 to 8

Group L - 4 teams		
Round	**Match**	
1	1	E – H
	2	F – G
2	3	E – G
	4	H – F
3	5	G – H
	6	E – F
3 matches per team		

If only one pitch is available, the matches of Groups W and L are played in alternation.

16 teams

First round: four pools → each team plays the other three teams once

Pool 1: Teams A, B, C and D
Pool 2: Teams E, F, G and H
Pool 3: Teams I, J, K and L
Pool 4: Teams M, N, O and P

Pool 1 - 4 teams		
Round	**Match**	
1	1	A – B
	2	C – D
2	3	B – C
	4	D – A
3	5	B – D
	6	A – C
3 matches per team		

Second Round

Two W groups, comprising the top two teams from each pool, and two L groups comprising the bottom two teams of each pool.

Second Round W1		Second Round W2	
A	1st P1	E	1st P3
B	1st P2	F	1st P4
C	2nd P3	G	2nd P1
D	2nd P4	H	2nd P2

Second Round L1		Second Round L2	
A	3rd P1	E	3rd P3
B	3rd P2	F	3rd P4
C	4th P3	G	4th P1
D	4th P4	H	4th P2

The matches of Groups L1, L2, W1 and W2 are played in alternation.

Semi-Finals:

1st match: Winner of Group W1 against second in Group W2
2nd match: Winner of Group W2 against second in Group W1

Finals:

3rd/4th place match: losing semi-finalists
1st/2nd place match: winning semi-finalists

Organising a festival

The festival

- The number of teams and the facilities available determine the space required for the festival.
- How many teams there are will determine the number and organisation of the pitches and the number of workshops (technical exercises and games with reduced numbers of players).
- Duration of a festival: a maximum of two and a half hours. The amount of time played by each participant should not exceed the match time recommended for his/her age category (see Annexe B).

Workshops and games

- The dimensions of the pitches depend on the number of players and their age.
- The pitches and workshop areas must be marked out and numbered.
- The dimensions of the goals can vary from pitch to pitch.
- Matches may be played with or without goalkeepers.
- The workshops are located between next to the pitches (see: organisation of pitches).
- The number of workshops (1-4) depends on the size of the space available for the festival.
- The primary focus of the workshops is technique.
- The workshops must be supervised (by qualified coach-educators).
- The organiser must specify the types of workshop.

Equipment

- All types of goal can be used. Maximum dimension: 5 m x 2 m.
- Marking out the pitches: tapes, cones, marker discs or lines are all options.
- Bibs of various colours. One set of bibs per activity.
- Footballs: size 4 (290 grammes).
- Matches: one ball per match + goals.
- Workshops: depends on the exercise (balls, bibs, cones, marker discs, small goals).

Organisation

- Announcement of the event / System of registering teams
- Information to be sent to the participating teams.
- Depending on the number of teams, establish the number of pitches and the plan for rotating the teams (copies sent to team managers).
- Prepare the programme and schedule the activities.
- Plan and organise facilities and equipment.
- Organise personnel.
- Set up pitches and workshops (personnel, team managers if in attendance).
- Make sure a first aid kit is available as well as drinks for the children.

Participants

- If possible, there should be only one age group per festival.
- Each team has a coach-educator / team manager (if possible).
- The teams must not have more than seven players (boys/girls).

Activities

- The teams move from pitch to pitch (see diagrams).
- The children should not remain on the same pitch at the end of an activity. Instead, they should move from one pitch to another in the appropriate direction. It should also be ensured that there is a rotation of the goalkeepers and substitutes.
- Only the children and the team managers are allowed on the pitches. Parents and supporters are not allowed onto the pitches ("Let the children play!").
- There is no referee. The team managers / coach-educators supervise the games from the edge of the pitches. For this reason, the pitches should be close to one another.
- The festival organiser may appoint a coach-educator to run a workshop. Otherwise, this role is assumed by the team managers. No special skills are required (see: "Example exercises" chapter).
- The results are not recorded. There is no classification!
- There must be breaks to allow the children to recover and take a drink.
- Make the festival lively, including the workshops if possible (organisation team, team managers if in attendance).

The organiser's role in the festival

Welcome and information

- The organiser welcomes the team managers and coach-educators.
- Half an hour before the activities start, the organiser informs the teams of the arrangement of the pitches and the rotation of teams.

– Each team manager must be given a plan showing the organisation of the pitches and the rotation of the teams to make sure that the festival runs smoothly.
– The organiser should emphasise the rules of fair play on and off the pitches, mainly for the benefit of the parents and other adults rather than the children.

During the festival

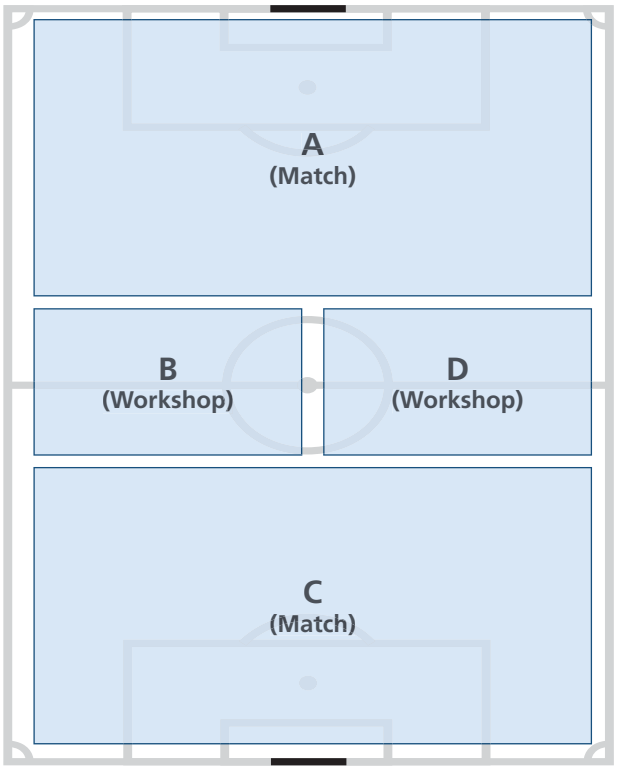
– The organiser should take up a position at the centre of the space used for the festival.
– This position should be the best location to facilitate contact with all the team managers (to answer questions, give instructions, etc.).
– The organiser sets the duration of each rotation and indicates the start and finish of the games and exercises by an audible signal.

End of the festival and review

– At the end of the festival, the organiser calls all the teams and managers together in the middle of the area.
– The organiser makes a closing speech (thanking the children for their participation, efforts, exemplary fair play and also thanking the team managers, parents, supporters, etc.).
– The team managers are also invited to speak and make a brief analysis of the festival.
– Everybody involved should use the experience to make subsequent festivals better by improving the organisation, setting up and quality of the football activities (workshops, technical exercises, matches).

Different configurations

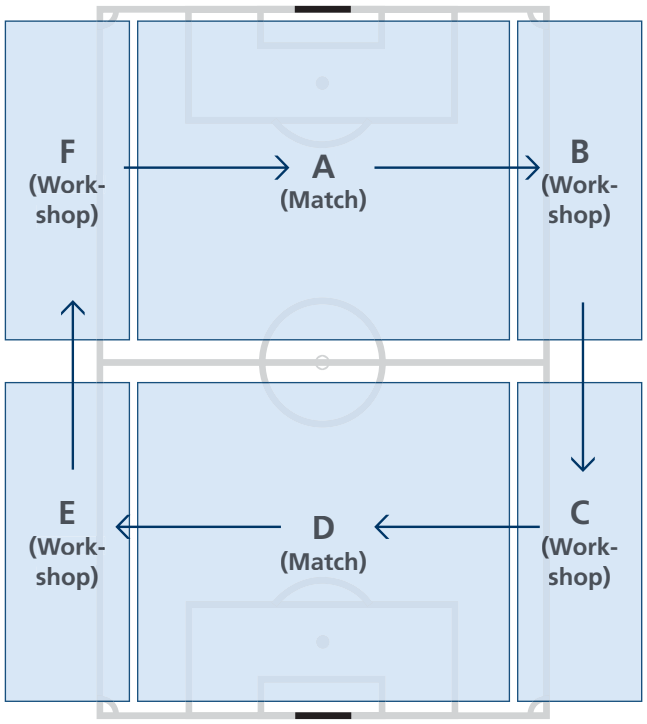
Organisation with 6 teams – 7-a-side football



Round	Pitch A	Pitch B	Pitch C	Pitch D
1	1 v 2	3	4 v 5	6
2	6 v 1	2	3 v 4	5
3	5 v 6	1	2 v 3	4
4	4 v 5	6	1 v 2	3
5	3 v 4	5	6 v 1	2
6	2 v 3	4	5 v 6	1

The matches and workshops take place on pitches A, B, C and D. There are two teams for each match and one team per workshop. The workshops may, for example, feature 1 v 1 or 2 v 2 games, or technical exercises (varying from one workshop to the next).

Organisation with 8 teams – 7-a-side football

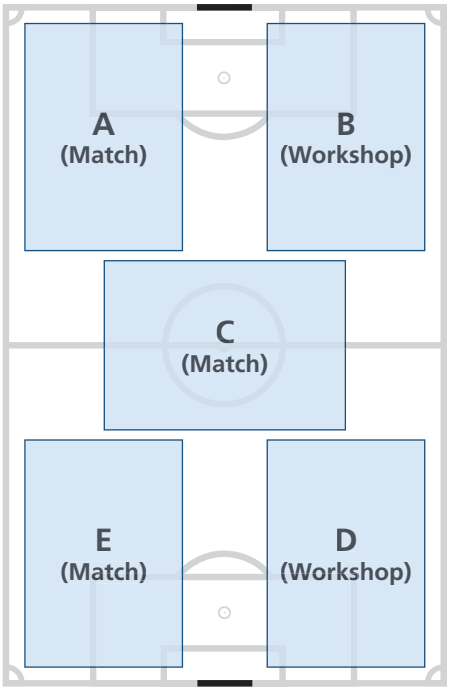


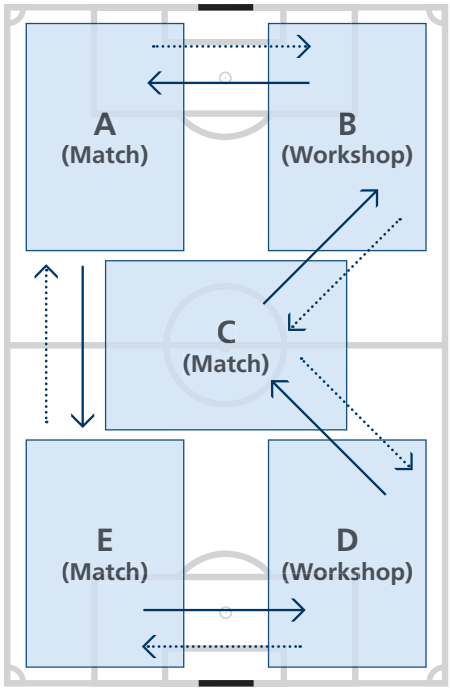
suggested rotation

Matches A and D are held on the main pitch while workshops B, C, E and F take place to the side. There are two teams for each match and one team per workshop. The workshops may, for example, feature 1 v 1 or 2 v 2 games or technical exercises (varying from one workshop to the next).

Round	Pitch A	Pitch B	Pitch C	Pitch D	Pitch E	Pitch F
1	1 v 2	3	4	5 v 6	7	8
2	8 v 1	2	3	4 v 5	6	7
3	7 v 8	1	2	3 v 4	5	6
4	6 v 7	8	1	2 v 3	4	5
5	5 v 6	7	8	1 v 2	3	4
6	4 v 5	6	7	8 v 1	2	3
7	3 v 4	5	6	7 v 8	1	2
8	2 v 3	4	5	6 v 7	8	1

Organisation with 10 teams – 5-a-side football



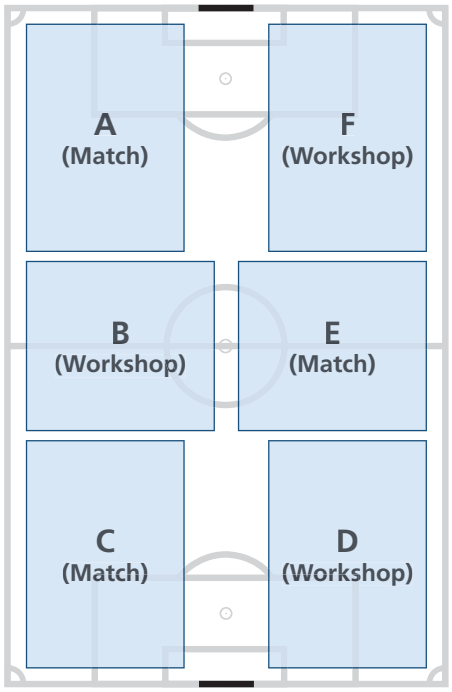


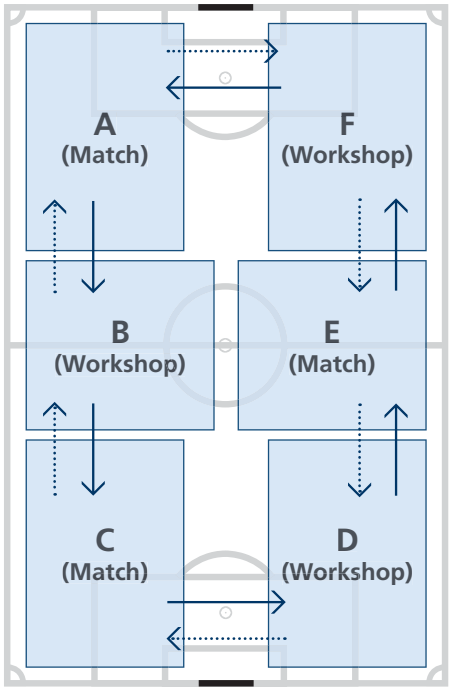
suggested rotation

Teams 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 move from left to right, while teams 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 move from right to left (see diagram). There are two teams for each pitch. The workshops may, for example, feature 1 v 1 or 2 v 2 games or technical exercises (varying from one workshop to the next). Organisation of pitches and workshops:
A = match / B = technical exercise / C = match / D = technical exercise / E = match.

Round	Pitch A	Pitch B	Pitch C	Pitch D	Pitch E
1	1 v 6	2 v 7	3 v 8	4 + 9	5 + 10
2	7 v 5	8 v 1	9 v 2	10 + 3	6 + 4
3	4 v 8	5 v 9	1 v 10	2 + 6	3 + 7
4	9 v 3	10 v 4	6 v 5	7 + 1	8 + 2
5	10 v 2	6 v 3	7 v 4	5 + 8	9 + 1

Organisation with 12 teams – 5-a-side football



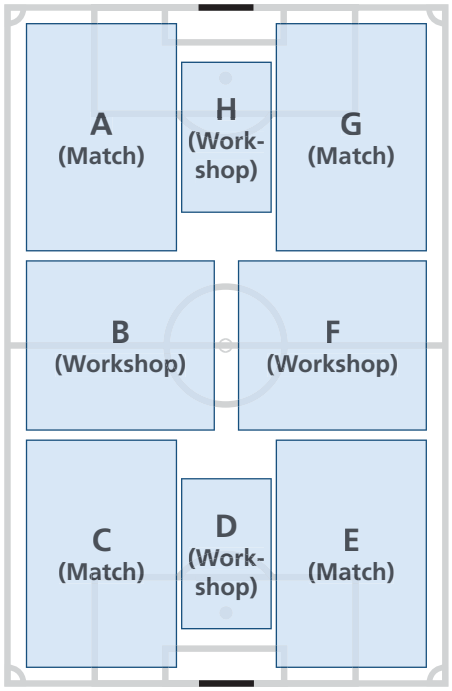


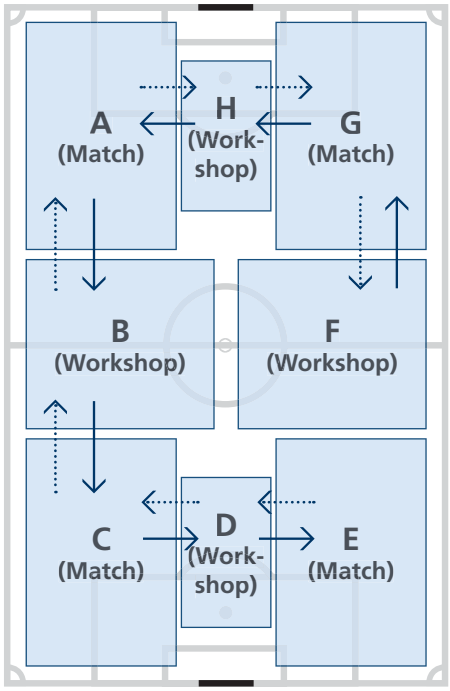
suggested rotation

Teams 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 move from left to right, while teams 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 move from right to left (see diagram). There are two teams for each pitch. The workshops may, for example, feature 1 v 1 or 2 v 2 games or technical exercises (varying from one workshop to the next).
Organisation of pitches and workshops: A = match / B = technical exercise / C = match / D = technical exercise / E = match / F = technical exercise.

Round	Pitch A	Pitch B	Pitch C	Pitch D	Pitch E	Pitch F
1	1 v 7	2 v 8	3 v 9	4 v 10	5 v 11	6 v 12
2	6 v 8	1 v 9	2 v 10	3 v 11	4 v 12	5 v 7
3	5 v 9	6 v 10	1 v 11	2 v 12	3 v 7	4 v 8
4	4 v 11	5 v 12	6 v 7	1 v 8	2 v 9	3 v 10
5	3 v 12	4 v 7	5 v 8	6 v 9	1 v 10	2 v 11
6	2 v 7	3 v 8	4 v 9	5 v 10	6 v 11	1 v 12

Organisation with 16 teams – 5-a-side football





suggested rotation

Teams 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 move from left to right, while teams 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16 move from right to left (see diagram). There are two teams for each pitch. The workshops may, for example, feature 1 v 1 or 2 v 2 games or technical exercises (varying from one workshop to the next).
Organisation of pitches and workshops: A = match / B = technical exercise / C = match / D = technical exercise
E = match / F = technical exercise / G = match / H = technical exercise.

Comments / Advice:
It is possible to run two parallel festivals for larger gatherings:
16-team festival = 2 x 8-team festivals.
20-team festival = 2 x 10-team festivals.
24-team festival = 2 x 12-team festivals.

Round	Pitch A	Pitch B	Pitch C	Pitch D	Pitch E	Pitch F	Pitch G	Pitch H
1	1 v 9	2 v 10	3 v 11	4 v 12	5 v 13	6 v 14	7 v 15	8 v 16
2	8 v 10	1 v 11	2 v 12	3 v 13	4 v 14	5 v 15	6 v 16	7 v 9
3	7 v 11	8 v 12	1 v 13	2 v 14	3 v 15	4 v 16	5 v 9	6 v 10
4	6 v 12	7 v 13	8 v 14	1 v 15	2 v 16	3 v 9	4 v 10	5 v 11
In the next round, teams 9 to 16 move two pitches so that they do not meet the same teams again.								
5	5 v 14	6 v 15	7 v 16	8 v 9	1 v 10	2 v 11	3 v 12	4 v 13
6	4 v 15	5 v 16	6 v 9	7 v 10	8 v 11	1 v 12	2 v 13	3 v 14
7	3 v 16	4 v 9	5 v 10	6 v 11	7 v 12	8 v 13	1 v 14	2 v 15
8	2 v 9	3 v 10	4 v 11	5 v 12	6 v 13	7 v 14	8 v 15	1 v 16

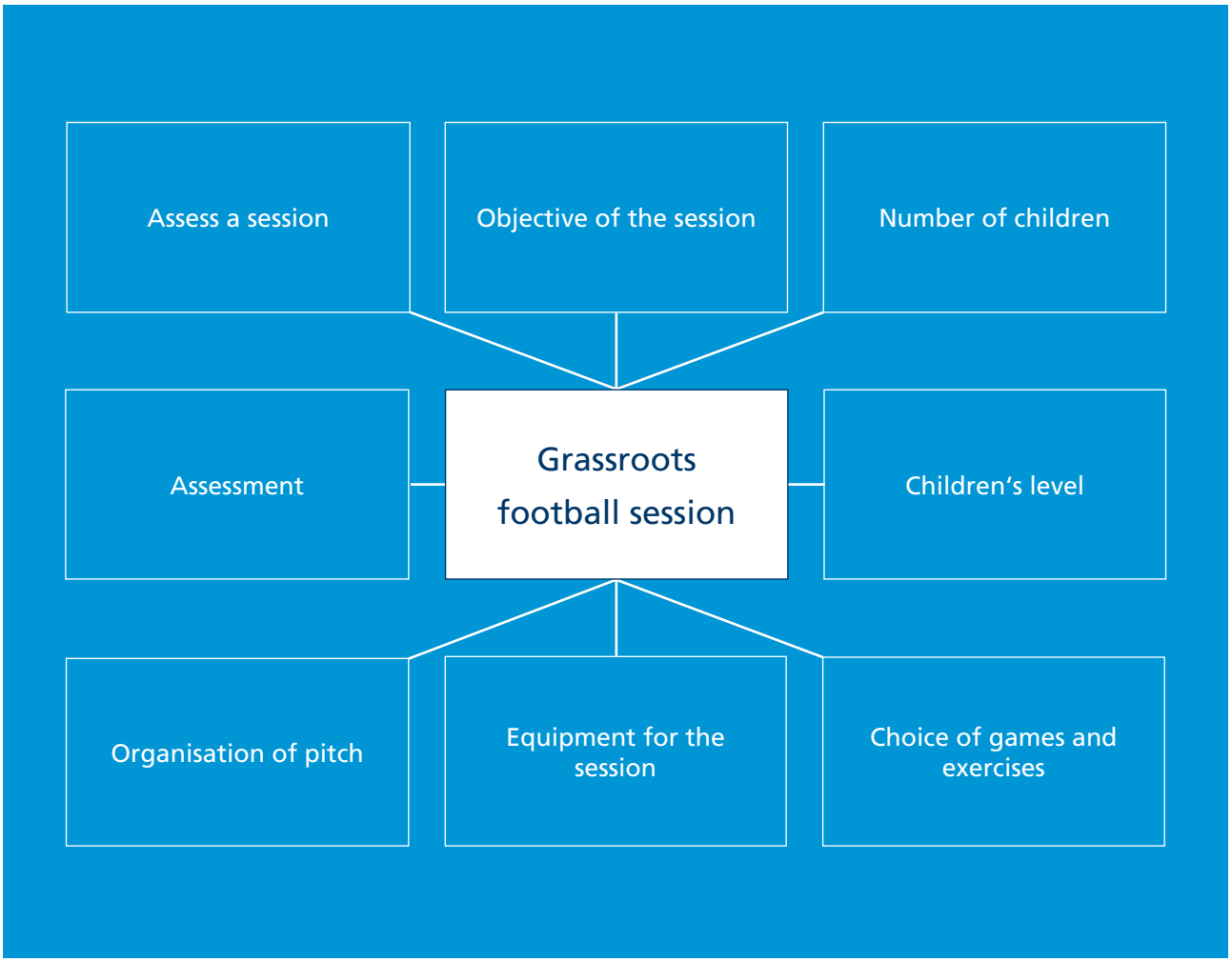
The grassroots football session

The main objective of a grassroots football session is to play football, learn and have fun. The key is to teach the children the basics of football so that they can develop their own physical and mental capacities through the game. It is important for all sessions to emphasise enjoyment and training. The guiding principle is to "learn the game through playing".

First impressions are always important for children: for this reason the coach-educator must be acquainted with all the exercises and should prepare the session in advance with specific objectives. The training sessions must be tailored to the participants' abilities. The coach-educator must get the message across to the children that they are genuinely achieving something. This realisation will make the session all the more pleasant and full of opportunities for play and learning. However, the coach-educator must be prepared to adapt the session and exercises if he/she considers that changes will improve the children's motivation and involvement. Here are a few questions to guide a coach-educator when preparing a training session:

Objectives:
- What do I want to obtain from this session?
- What is the sub ject of the session?

Exercises:
- How many children will take part in the session?
- Will the children enjoy the games and exercises?
- Will they learn anything?
- What are the best games and exercises to achieve the objectives of the session?
- Are the levels of the games and exercises suited to the children's abilities?
- Can I explain the games and exercises in a clear, precise way so that they will understand?

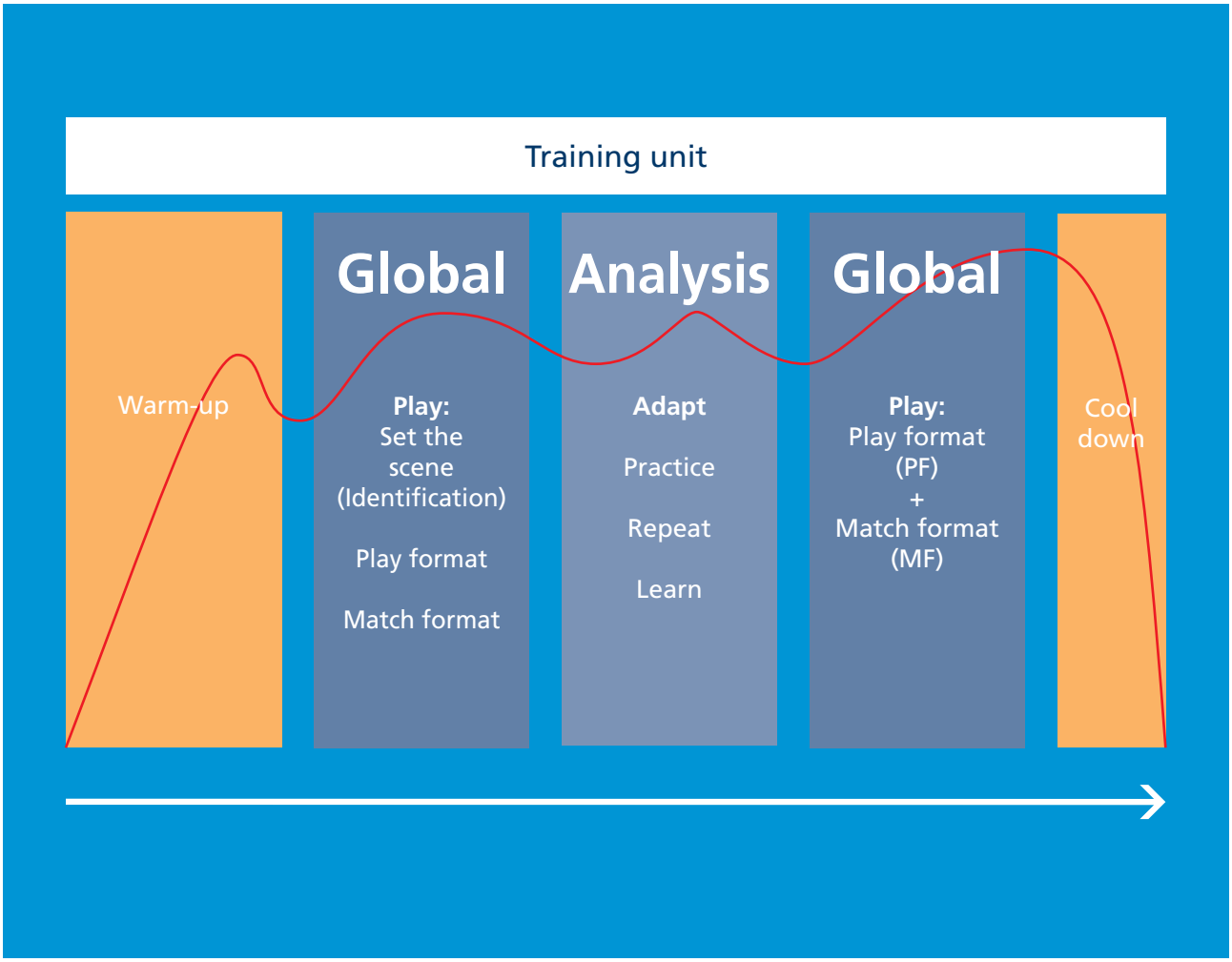


– Do I have enough equipment for this session? If not, can I adapt the session to the equipment available?
– Is there enough space to carry out the prepared games and exercises?
– How can the children help me improve the session?

The structure of the grassroots football session should be adapted to meet the children's needs. Warming up and cooling down should be presented to the children as games, where they can enjoy themselves while doing physical exercises (warm-ups and relaxation).

The main part of the session comprises games and exercises. These should cover a range of activities and be varied. Most importantly, the activities should cover the objectives that the coach-educator has set for the session. The session should include small-sided games as a major component. The main way that children learn is by playing a lot; in this way the children enjoy themselves and come to love football.
Care must be taken not to consider the children as small adults; sessions that have been prepared for adults should not be copied.

With regard to equipment, the coach-educator must be able to adapt to the different situations encountered and find alternative solutions based on his/her knowledge and experience. The equipment should be checked before the children arrive to make sure it is available and ready for the session. Although FIFA provides an equipment kit for every grassroots football project, it may be the case that there is not enough equipment. There may be a lack of bibs or cones or some children may not have suitable footwear. However, the success of the session does not depend on the equipment but rather on the coach-educator's attitude and skills in making the most of the situation.



It is important to keep the parents informed of the exercises carried out; they appreciate being told about the activities their children are involved in. In some cases, the parents can help the coach-educator run the session. It is a good idea to talk to the parents about their roles and responsibilities and involve them in the project.

Organisation of a training session

Plan of an introductory session for children aged under 8 – Duration: 1 hour 15 mins

Recommendations:

- Make sure that all the activities are games and that the children have plenty of contact with the ball.
- Allow a lot of freedom in the play.
- Make light of the results of the games and do not draw up a classification.
- Make the teams and groups balanced and change the games if the difference in the scores becomes excessive.
- Provide positive encouragement for all children.
- The children should have fun while playing; encourage them and do not intervene too often.

<table>
<tr><th>Phase 1</th><th colspan="3">Phase 2</th><th>Phase 3</th></tr>
<tr><th>Warm-up</th><th colspan="3">Alternation of Exercises, Introductory Games, Matches</th><th>Cooling down</th></tr>
<tr><td>Starting up</td><td>Small-sided games</td><td>Basic football technique</td><td>Small-sided matches</td><td>Relaxation</td></tr>
<tr><td>10-15 mins</td><td>15-20 mins</td><td>10-15 mins</td><td>15-20 mins</td><td>5 mins</td></tr>
<tr><td>Technical exercises
Introductory games
Small-sided games</td><td>Introductory games</td><td>Running exercises and movement with the ball</td><td>4 v 4
5 v 5</td><td>Individual relaxation</td></tr>
<tr><td>Psychomotor skills</td><td>2 v 2, 3 v 3, other structured games, sequences of play</td><td>Football relays, circuits, control, running with the ball, passes, shots</td><td>Free play</td><td>Recovery</td></tr>
<tr><td>coordination</td><td>play aspect</td><td>technical and cognitive stimulation</td><td>play aspect</td><td>physical and mental relaxation</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="5">EDUCATION – TEACHING METHOD</th></tr>
<tr><td>Guided discovery</td><td>Guided discovery</td><td>Imitation</td><td>Creativity Spontaneity</td><td>Discussion</td></tr>
<tr><td>Free expression</td><td>Free expression</td><td>Guided discovery</td><td>Free expression</td><td>Putting equipment away</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Organisation</td><td>Organisation</td><td>Organisation</td><td>Organisation</td><td rowspan="3">Assessment</td></tr>
<tr><td>Enlivening
Encouraging</td><td>Demonstration</td><td>Observation</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Enlivening
Encouraging</td><td rowspan="2">Correction</td><td>Enlivening
Encouraging</td><td rowspan="2">Assessment</td></tr>
<tr><td>Correction</td></tr>
</table>

Plan of an training session for children aged 9-12 – Duration: 1 hour 15 mins

Recommendations:

- Make sure there is a lot of freedom in the play, encourage individual initiative.
- Give priority to technique and play; the children should have lots of contact with the ball.
- Offer progressive exercises and adapted games, with simple, precise instructions.
- Make the teams and groups balanced and change the games if the difference in the scores becomes excessive.
- Make light of the results and emphasise the way in which the football is played.
- Emphasise quality in carrying out the exercises; proper implementation rather than quantity or intensity.
- Provide positive encouragement for all children.

Phase 1	Phase 2			Phase 3
Warm-up	**Coordination/Speed – Basics – Games**			**Cooling down**
Starting up	Coordination Speed	Basics (football techniques) **or** Small-sided games	Small-sided matches	Relaxation
10-15 mins	10 mins	15-20 mins	20-25 mins	5 mins
Technical exercises, Small-sided games	Football relays, circuits with and without ball, Workshops	Running exercises and movement with the ball, Workshops	7 v 7 football	Individual relaxation
Psychomotor skills	Psychomotor skills	Technical circuits, Control, Running with the ball, Shots Sequences	Free play	Recovery
		2 v 2, 3 v 3, 4 v 4, 5 v 5, other structured games, sequences of play	play aspect	physical and mental relaxation

EDUCATION – TEACHING METHOD				
Guided discovery	Improvement Coordination Balance Stability	Imitation	Creativity Spontaneity	Discussion
Free expression	Development Speed / Liveliness / Reaction	Guided discovery Introduction Memorising	Free expression Individual initiative	Putting equipment away
Organisation	Organisation	Organisation	Organisation	Assessment
	Demonstration	Demonstration	Observation	
Enlivening Encouraging	Enlivening Encouraging	Enlivening Encouraging	Assessment	
	Correction	Correction		

Play

PLAY is the great joy of childhood, it is through play that children can be themselves. PLAY activities are a proven means of developing various aspects of physical, emotional and mental behaviour.

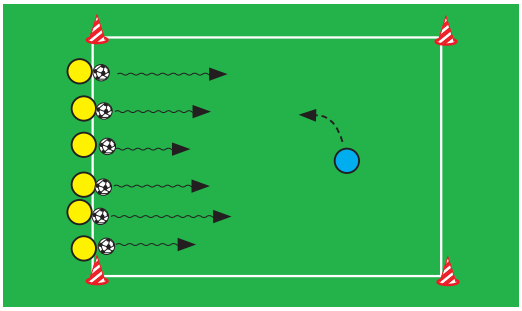
The concept of competition is not eliminated, but it is essential that the competitive structures presented are suited to the children's behavioural characteristics.

The approach is to offer simple, basic situations that are accessible by the children and match their motivation.

The grassroots football approach can be summarised as follows:

- Above all, it is a GAME,
- Presented as PLAY,
- Simplified and adapted to the children's characteristics,
- Grassroots football presents the two basic concepts of football: cooperation and opposition,
- Grassroots football is an excellent means of physical, motor, psychomotor, mental and social training.

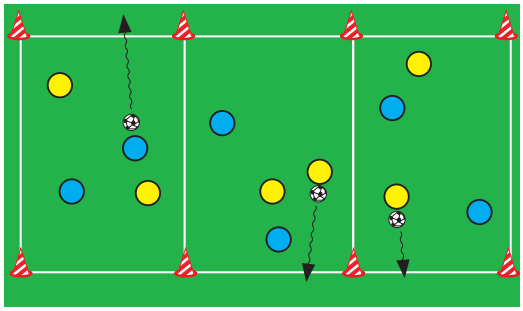
6-8 years old: running with the ball / passing



Warm-up

The hawk game

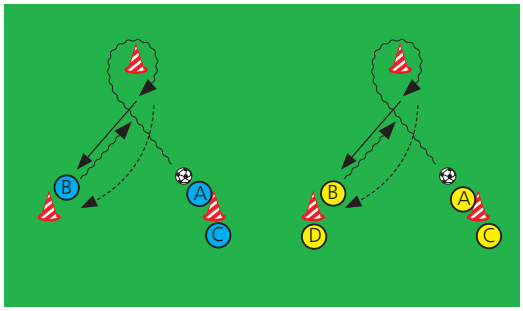
The players stand on a line, each with a ball. Another player, without a ball, faces them. He/she is the "hawk". Upon the signal, the players try to get to the other side of the pitch controlling the ball with their feet. The hawk tries to catch as many players as possible by tapping them on the shoulder. Points are counted. Each player takes it in turn to be the hawk.



Match 1

2 v 2 / 3 v 3: crossing the line

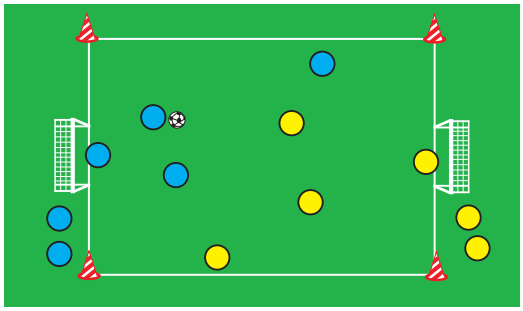
The players are divided into teams of two or three (depending on the number of children). A point is scored by crossing the goal line with ball at feet. Duration: 1-2 minutes. Rotation of teams to change opponents.



Exercise

Running with the ball and passing

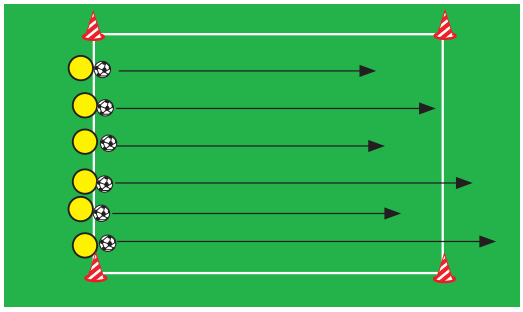
Groups of at least three players are formed. Player A runs with the ball using the inside of the left foot, goes around the cone and passes to player B, still using the inside of the left foot. Player A then runs to take the place of player B. Player B runs with the ball using the right foot, goes around the cone and passes to player C with the inside of the right foot and then runs to take player C's place, and so on.



Match 2

4 v 4 (with goalkeeper)

Two teams of four face each other on a reasonably-sized pitch (with goalkeeper and substitutes). If there are enough children, a three-team tournament is also possible. Free play; coach keeps a low profile; dribbling encouraged.



To conclude

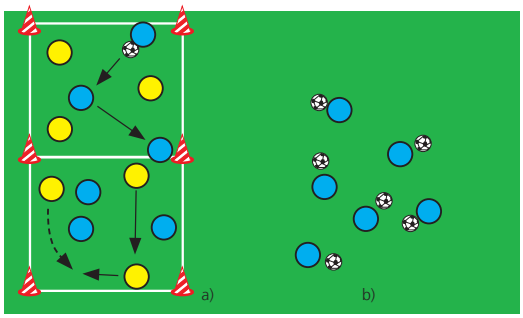
Accuracy game

Each player has a ball. The players face a line drawn on the pitch a certain distance away and then each one strikes the ball to try to get it to stop as close to the line as possible. The closest to the line wins a point. The game consists of several rounds.

Essential points:

– Running with the ball using both left and right feet,
– Close control, many touches of the ball,
– Passes along the ground with the insides of the left and right feet.

9-10 years old: control, running with the ball and passing



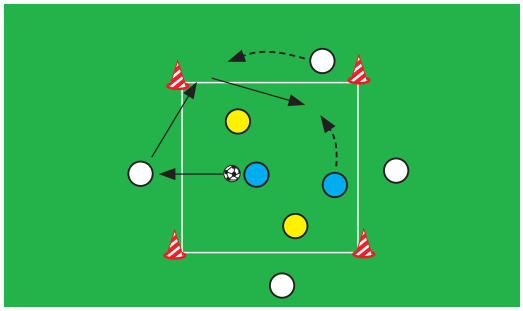
Warm-up

a) Ten passes

Four teams are formed and distributed over pitches of suitable dimensions. The objective is to make as many passes as possible. First the yellow team makes their effort and then the blue team. The passes are counted. Duration: approximately 1 minute each time.

b) Control of the ball

One ball per player: coordination exercises.

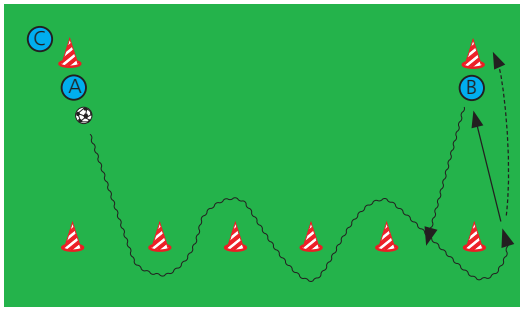


Match 1

2 v 2 + 4 external players

A 2 v 2 game is set up (yellows against blues) with four additional neutral players (in white) at the sides of the pitch. The number of passes is counted. When a team regains possession of the ball, the count starts again from zero. Two pitches can be formed.

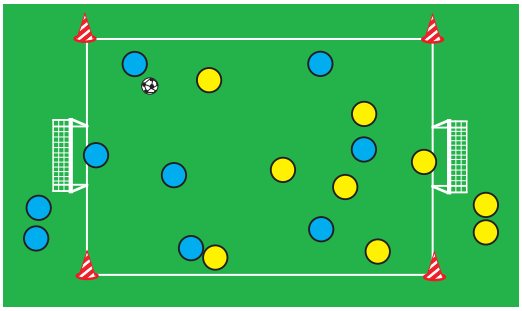
A variation is to use two or three neutral players.



Exercise

Control, running with the ball and passing

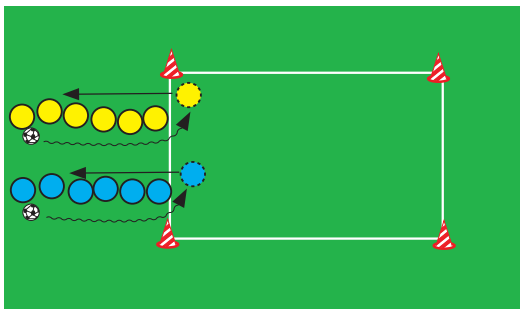
Groups of at least three players are formed. Player A slaloms the ball through the cones using feet and then passes with the inside of the right foot to player B. Player A then runs to take the place of player B. Player B goes through the slalom and passes with the inside of the left foot to player C and runs to take player C's place, and so on.



Match 2

7 v 7 (with goalkeeper)

Two teams of seven face each other on a seven-a-side pitch (with goalkeeper and substitutes). Free play; coach keeps a low profile. Objective: lots of passes. Moves built up through the centre or on the wings; attacking and defensive aspects.



To conclude

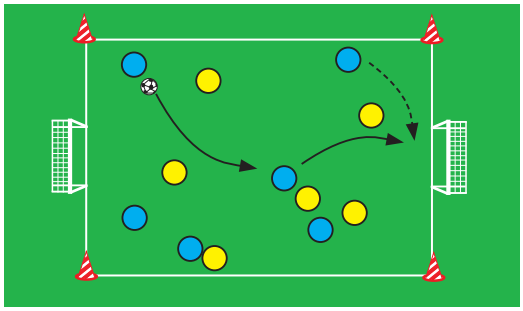
The centipede

The players are arranged in two or three rows. The last player takes the ball to the front of the row using his/her feet (the other players do not move). Once the player has arrived, he/she passes the ball to the last player who then brings the ball to the front of the row, on so on. The "centipede" that crosses the line first, wins. Make the rules of the game clear. Change of direction: change foot to return in the opposite direction.

Essential points:

– Passes along the ground using the inside of the left and right feet,
– Observation of partners,
– The ball is always kept under control.

11-12 years old: work in front of goal



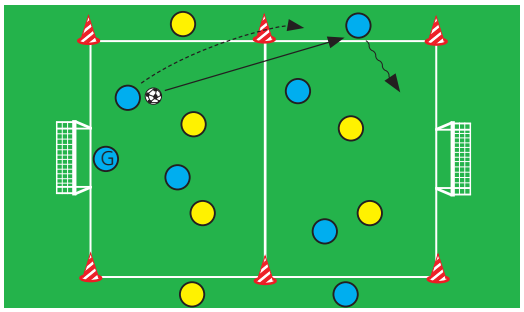
Warm-up

a) Volleys

Two teams are formed. The ball is struck on the volley and caught with the hands. Each player acts as a goalkeeper.

b) Control of the ball

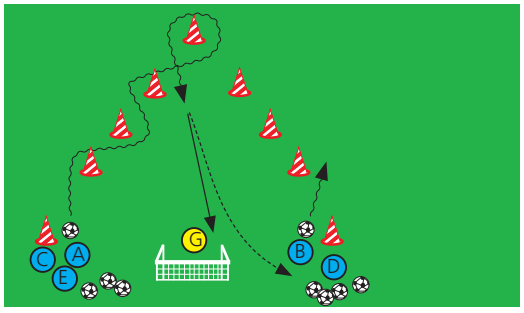
One ball for two players: coordination exercises.



Match 1

5 v 5 + 2 wingers per team

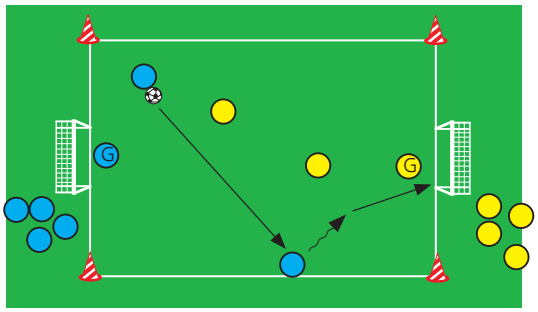
A 5 v 5 match is set up (yellows against blues), each team has wingers positioned on each of the attacking wings. The objective is for the players to use the wingers as much as possible. When a winger receives the ball, he/she enters the pitch at that position, preferably at a point favourable to the attacking team. The player passing the ball to the winger then becomes the next winger. If the winger receives the ball from the goalkeeper, no change takes place; the winger passes the ball back to a team-mate and stays on the wing.



Exercise

Running with the ball and shooting at goal

Two groups of at least six players are formed. Player A negotiates the slalom with the ball at his/her feet, goes around the last cone and shoots at goal with the right foot. Player B then takes the ball through the slalom, goes around the last cone and shoots with the left foot. Players change side after each shot. The goalkeeper is substituted after several series of shots.

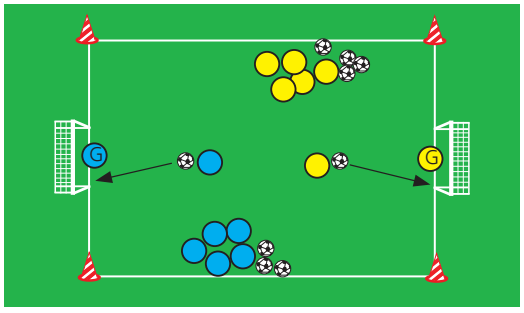


Match 2

3 v 3 (with goalkeeper)

Two teams of three face each other on a pitch of appropriate dimensions (with goalkeeper and substitutes). Free play. Regular substitutions. Game played at a high pace.

Objectives: quick moves, initiative in attack, spirit of attack/defence and involvement of goalkeepers in the play.



To conclude

King of the penalties

Two groups are formed. An elimination series of penalties is organised: if a player scores, he/she goes through to the next round. The two winners are "Kings of the penalties".

Essential points:

– Passes along the ground and shots along the ground at goal (adjusted size), using the inside of the left and right feet,
– Awareness of team-mates and goal (vision).,
– The ball is always kept under control.

Small-sided games

Small-sided games are very beneficial for the participants. Studies have been conducted to show, and observations confirm, that children get more enjoyment and learn more from playing in small-sided games with adapted rules. They get more touches of the ball, learn more quickly and have to make more decisions during the match (greater concentration is required because the ball is never far away). The children are also much more involved in the game (more movement and practice) and enjoy it much more than playing on a large pitch. Fewer players on the pitch and smaller teams ensure that each participant gets more individual attention. There are also more goalscoring opportunities (which is what children want) and the goalkeepers are more often in action (except in 4-a-side matches which usually do not have goalkeepers). Children are also more involved in the attacking and defensive movements and in this way they are more often exposed to a wide range of football situations. They enjoy themselves and learn more.

Statistics back up the benefits of small-sided football compared with 11-a-side football. Some of these statistics show that:

- Players touch the ball five times more often in 4-a-side football and 50% more in 7-a-side.
- Players are three times more often in one-against-one situations in 4-a-side football and twice more often in 7-a-side.
- Goals are scored every two minutes in 4-a-side football on average and every four minutes in 7-a-side.
- Goalkeepers are involved in the action two to four times more often in 7-a-side football than in 11-a-side football.
- The ball is out of play 8% of the time in 4-a-side football, 14% in 7-a-side and 34% in 11-a-side.

In small-sided games, each player:

- Plays all the time
- Receives the ball more often.
- Is always trying to score a goal.
- Has the freedom to play.
- Is always encouraged by the coach-educator.
- Is supported by his/her parents and coach-educators.

Playing for the fun of it

For children, the most important thing is to play. They play for the pleasure of playing. Contesting matches is an essential part of training and children learn better by playing. It leads to improved skills and independence, facilitates initiative and decision-making (creativity) and also improves relationships with, and consideration of, others. From a more tactical point of view, it is a matter of vision, attack and defence. However, every grassroots football session should include a free play period. The coach-educator withdraws at this time and keeps a distance. This allows the children to play without restriction and put the skills that they have learnt into practice.

The playing area

The dimensions of the pitch are an important consideration. The pitch must be suited to the age, skill and number of players. A small pitch with a large number of players is difficult to play on and requires great technical skill and vision. In general, we cannot presume that children aged 6-12 have these skills. Children have different characteristics depending on their physical and technical development. For these reasons, not all small-sided games are recommended for all ages. It is important to follow a logical development in which children move on from 4-a-side games (without goalkeepers) to eventually play 9-a-side football.

Age / Small-sided games	6-8 years	9-10 years	11-12 years
4 v 4	X	X	X
5 v 5	X	X	X
7 v 7		X	X
9 v 9			X

Goals / equipment

The size of the goals should correspond to the children's age. Small children = small goals, big children = big goals. If possible, use goals with nets. Nets make the games much more enjoyable. If only 7-a-side goals are available, these can be reduced in size using markers. Otherwise, make goals using marker discs, cones or poles. It should also be easy to distinguish the two teams. A sufficient number of bibs in different colours should be provided.

Techniques in play

Technical skills, such as keeping possession of the ball, shooting at goal, passing, control, running with the ball

and heading are all used in play. Pressure from opponents helps in the teaching and improvement of these skills. It is important to ensure that all parts of play coached. If, for example, the emphasis in a specific session is on dribbling, the format of the activities should be carefully chosen to promote dribbling.

Small-sided game formats and exercises

Football basically consists of two ideas: score goals and prevent the opponents scoring. The best manner of emphasising these objectives is to use adapted small-sided game formats applied to different exercises.

- The smallest format of play is 1 v 1.
- In this format, the focus is on the technical aspects of dribbling and protecting the ball.
- The children must also learn to impose their presence and use their body correctly.
- It is simply "me and the ball"!

As soon as another participant is added to the exercise (2 v 1), the situation changes. The child can now pass the ball and must decide (by him/herself) which option to choose: keep the ball or pass it?

The next level, with several team-mates and opponents, necessitates improved vision, a better concept of team play and creativity. The greater the number of participants, the more complex the play becomes. For this reason, it is important to take the children's ages into account and allow them to progress from small-sided games to matches on larger pitches.

Another key point: in small-sided games, children get many touches of the ball and cannot "hide". To the contrary, they have to actively seek the ball. Small-sided games are very intense. They should not be underestimated and a match should not last too long. Substitutes should be available at the side of the pitch and used regularly; this allows the rhythm of play of the game/exercise to continue at a high level.

Depending on the age and skills, formats without goalkeepers can also be used. Initially, it is important to make sure that goals can be easily scored. This encourages the children to shoot at goal and also teaches technique. The most advanced participants need more opposition and must learn to score goals when under pressure. This requires better technique, at a more advanced level, thus requiring goalkeepers to be introduced. It is also important to teach goalkeepers about tactics. Small-sided games are perfect for teaching goalkeepers about the tactical aspect of play (shots on goal, high-pressure situations, the opportunities to initiate attacks or counter-attacks, etc.).

In summary, players get many more touches of the ball in small-sided games. They make more passes and find themselves in 1 v 1 situations more often. Repetitions of situations in which they must make decisions help the children to learn and gain a positive experience. Their active participation in the game improves their enjoyment of playing. The game is easier for them to understand and, more importantly, the children enjoy themselves and have freedom of expression with the ball at their feet.

The basic techniques

In grassroots football, the basic techniques can be divided into three categories:

– **Control of the ball**
– **Running with the ball**
– **Striking the ball**

1. Control of the ball

a.Control
b. Keepy-uppy

Control

To control the ball is to master it. Properly controlling the ball means that a move will be successful. The control movements to focus on are: directed control and gathering the ball while moving – these introduce speed into the play.

Keepy-uppy

If repeated regularly, keepy-uppy develops the skills of dexterity, coordination and balance in young footballers. These skills favour the more rapid acquisition of other techniques.

2. Running with the ball

a. Without obstacles
b. With obstacles = dribbling

Running with the ball

This is how an individual moves in free space with the ball. When a player is running well with the ball, he/she is in control of it at all times: this requires good balance and excellent stability. Running with the ball while keeping the head up allows a continuous flow of information to be received and allows movement to be adapted to play.

Dribbling

This is how an individual moves with the ball when faced by opponents. Dribbling allows the player in possession of the ball to eliminate one or more opponents by:

– making a manoeuvre and taking individual risks,
– setting up a team move,
– gaining time to allow support from team-mates,
– deceiving an opponent (the concept of the feint).

3. Striking the ball

a. Passes
b. Shots on goal

Passing

The action of giving the ball to a team-mate. This is an essential part of team play. As the core of the game, passing allows a team to:

– keep possession of the ball,
– set up attacks,
– change the direction of play,
– counter attack,
– provide a decisive or final pass.

Crosses are a type of short or long pass, usually leading to a shot. They serve as the last pass.

Shooting

An action with the objective of dispatching the ball into the opponent's goal. It is the logical conclusion, the culmination of an attack. It is what football is all about.

Shooting requires technical qualities (striking the ball well, accuracy), physical qualities (power, coordination, balance) and mental qualities (determination, audacity, self-confidence).

4. Special techniques

- **Headers**
- **Volleys**
- **Defensive manoeuvres**
- **Goalkeeping techniques**

Headers

Headers can be associated with MASTERY of the ball (keepy-uppy and control) and STRIKING the ball (passes and shots). Heading is an essential skill for defending and marking.

Volleys

Directly striking an aerial ball, without any prior control:
- before it touches the ground (volley),
- just as it touches the ground (half-volley).

Defensive manoeuvres

- Dispossessing an individual opponent of the ball,
- Winning the ball when in the possession of the opposing team (interception),
- Contesting an opponent for the ball within the limits allowed by the laws of the game (defensive duel),
- Slowing down an attack (shutting down),

It is essential for a player to learn not to throw him/herself into a tackle and to defend standing up.

Goalkeeping techniques

The goalkeeper

The goalkeeper's role is to prevent the ball from entering his/her goal.

The goalkeeper is the only player in the team allowed to handle the ball (except for throw-ins), but only in the area around the goal known as the penalty area.

The goalkeeper's special training is a long-term process which starts in childhood and only ends when the goalkeeper finally retires. This training goes through certain stages:
- first steps in goalkeeping,
- learning the goalkeeper's techniques,
- developing the goalkeeper's essential physical qualities,
- acquiring mental strength.

Basic goalkeeping techniques – 6-10 years old

Technical preparation
- first contact with the ball, first experience "in goal",
- gradually learning the goalkeeper's techniques,
- introduction to playing the ball with the feet.

Physical preparation
- physical qualities (stamina, speed, coordination, suppleness, etc.) are developed through different games.

Psychological preparation
- accepting defeat,
- respecting the coach, team-mates, opponents and referee,
- learning to be "alone",
- making the goal the "castle" to be defended.

11-14 years old

Technical preparation

– continuing improvement of the acquired techniques,
– moving on to the "big pitch" and the "big goal",
– working on high balls,
– improving playing the ball with feet,
– the goalkeeper's role in the team,
– increasing the difficulty of the situations encountered.

Physical preparation

– the development of specific physical qualities (stamina, speed, suppleness, relaxation) by means of special exercises,
– coordination exercises, with and without the ball.

Psychological preparation

– making the right decisions, taking command,
– self-control and staying calm,
– maintaining concentration,
– making the goal his/her territory.

Technical preparation for goalkeepers

Positioning

– initial positioning,
– movement,
– regaining position.

The goalkeeper's interventions

– catching the ball (on the ground, medium height, high, from a rebound, etc.),
– the various dives,
– high balls,
– one-against-one,
– reflex stops.

Returning the ball to play

– clearances with the feet (along ground, volley, half-volley),
– throw-outs,
– returning the ball to play after a back pass from a team-mate.

Free kicks

– positioning the wall,
– the goalkeeper's position,
– command and communication.

The main individual tactics

How to teach tactics

1. Allow the children to play (small-sided games, etc.),
2. Provide content (tactical culture),
3. Set up relevant situations (themed games),
4. Set up situations/problems (attack/defence with instructions to opponents),
5. Free or directed play with review and dialogue with the players.

General principles

- All players must help their team-mates,
- Everyone participates in attack,
- Everyone participates in defence. Defence starts as soon as the ball is lost.

The main individual tactics are simple principles that a player learns in order to make the best decisions during a particular passage of play. These principles can be written out and displayed in the changing rooms.

Main individual tactics for attacking

- Play the ball immediately, don't let your team-mates lose their markers for nothing. Lose your marker immediately after passing the ball.
- Always try to be in an unmarked position.
- Pass and get into position to:
  - help a team-mate,
  - call for the ball,
  - support a team-mate.
- Avoid unnecessary confrontations. It is better to eliminate an opponent quckly than take the longer option of dribbling around them.

When faced by an opponent:

- Take the ball to the opposite side from your opponent,
- Shake off your opponent by quick bursts, feints and sudden changes of direction,
- Take the ball to the left and then pass to the right and vice versa,
- Do not carry the ball too far, progress should be made by short and long passes.
- Use cross-pitch balls to a team-mate in a good position,
- Avoid playing down the centre in your own half, if the ball is lost it could be dangerous,
- Don't pass the ball into crowded areas, play it to a team-mate who is in free space,
- Play the ball between two opponents to a team-mate who calls for it,
- Always support a team-mate who has the ball,
- Run to meet the ball, don't wait for it to come to you,
- Don't let the ball go past without controlling it. Otherwise an opponent may get there first,
- Don't waste time with fancy footwork,
- Play in a sensible, simple, useful manner. This is the most difficult thing to achieve. It is in this way that a good player can be recognised.

Main individual tactics for defending

- Always keep between your opponent and your goal,
- Always watch your opponent and the ball,
- Try to counter the opponents' attacking build-up as soon as possible by marking,
- Don't give your opponent space. Slow your opponent down when they run with the ball (shutting down),
- Try to get to the ball before your opponent, or otherwise hinder them when they receive the ball. Contest all balls,
- Mark your opponent on the side of the ball, in other words the side where he/she will make the pass,
- When a high ball comes in, jump a moment earlier than your opponent,
- Do not dribble in your penalty area,
- Avoid cross-pitch passes from the outside to the inside,
- Play on the outside along the touchline,
- Don't hit the ball randomly, build an attack from the back,
- If you lose the ball, strive to recover it,
- Avoid ineffective tackles, don't throw yourself at an opponent who has the ball. Wait until your opponent changes the weight on his/her feet before challenging them,
- Never turn your back on an attacker,
- Push your opponents towards the touchline,
- Carefully follow play, even if the ball is far away,
- A good defender never gives up,
- The goalkeeper must command his/her area.

Example exercises

Here are some example exercises that can be used for a range of grassroots football activities. The difficult ranges from one to three stars depending on the complexity of the exercise. The exercises set for the children should gradually become more difficult. The players' ages and the equipment, organisation, etc. should also be taken into account.
The coach-educator should also consider the individual circumstances in order to make best use of the resources and make sure that the children can carry out the exercises.

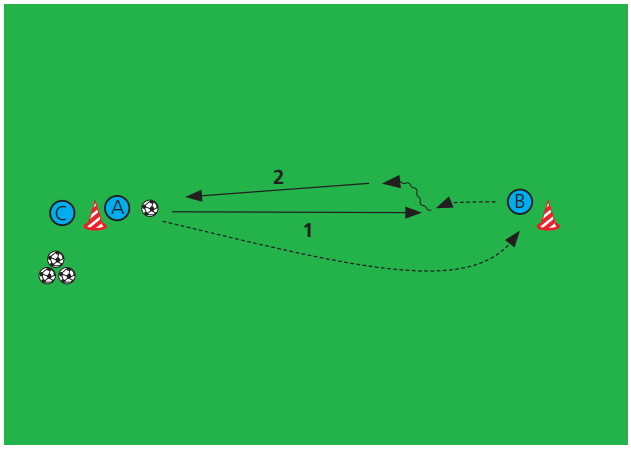
Classification of exercises

- Introductory games / relays (shuttles) / coordination games (circuits)
- Exercises
- Training games (1 v 2, 2 v 3, etc.)
- Small-sided games (1 v 1, 2 v 2, 3 v 3, etc.)

Technique drill 1 — Passing and controlling the ball

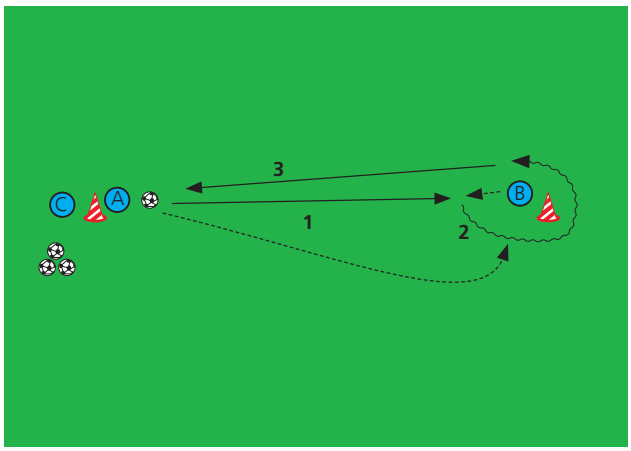
Exercise 1 — Difficulty: ★

- Pass from A to B, from B to A (1, 2).
  1. With the right foot only.
  2. With the left foot only.
  3. First with the left, then with the right, etc.
- Player chases the ball to the other side.
- Meet the ball when receiving the pass. Variation: Move away (from opponent) before meeting the ball.



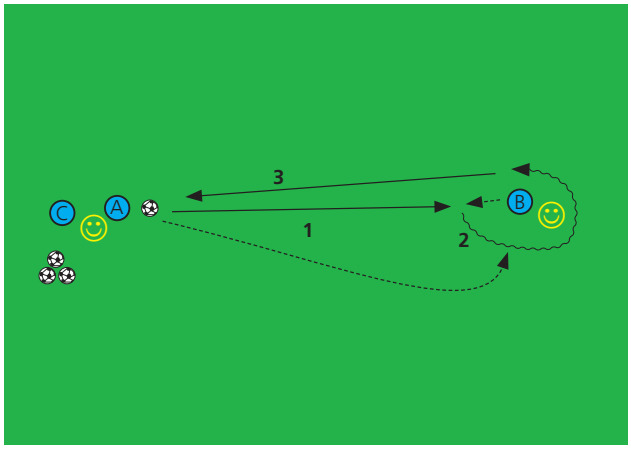
Exercise 2 — Difficulty: ★

- Pass from A to B, from B to A, first with the right foot, then with the left, etc. (1).
  1. Control the ball to the left and take the ball around the cone with the right foot (2). Pass with the right foot (3).
  2. Control the ball to the right and take the ball around the cone with the left foot. Pass with the left foot.
  3. First with the left, then with the right, etc.
- Player chases the ball to the other side.
- Meet the ball when receiving the pass. Variation: Move away (from opponent) before meeting the ball.



Exercise 3 — Difficulty: ★★

- Same as Exercise 2.
- Players take the place of cones.
- Light pressure when controlling the ball, dribbling and passing. Organisation/material



3 players (optimum) or more
1 ball (plus a spare)
2 cones
Max. duration of exercise: 6-8 minutes

Coaching points:
- Pass with inside of foot, low, with left and right foot
- Meet the ball when receiving the pass
- Ball in front of the body
- Players of the same standard exercise together
- Orientation (head high, look at player)
- Differentiation (pass, receive and move)

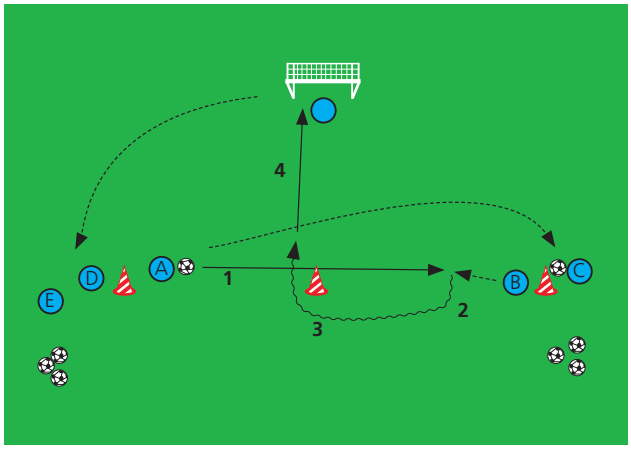
Technique drill 2 — Shooting (increasing difficulty)

Exercise 1 — Difficulty: ★

- Pass with left foot from A to B (1).
- B controls the ball and runs with it to the left in the direction of A (2).
- Take the ball around the cone with the left foot (3) and shoot with the left (4).

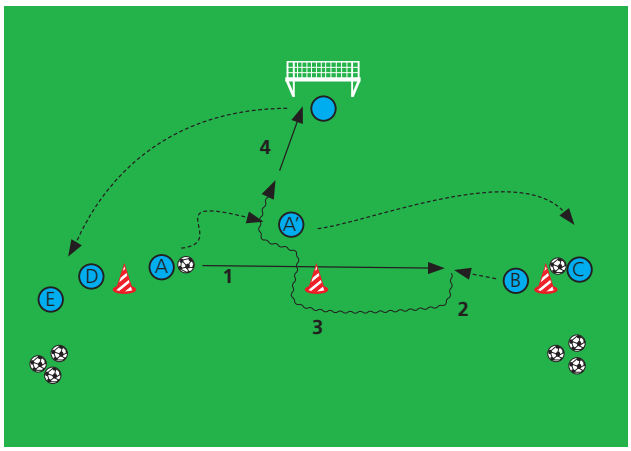
Then from the other side:

- Pass from C to D.
- Receive and run with the ball to the right in the direction of C.
- Take the ball around the cone with the right foot and shoot with the right.



Exercise 2 — Difficulty: ★★

- Same as Exercise 1.
- A becomes a defender (on way to other side), first passive, then active.



Organisation/material
5 players (optimum) or more
Several balls (2 children, 1 ball)
3 cones
Max. duration of exercise: 8-10 minutes

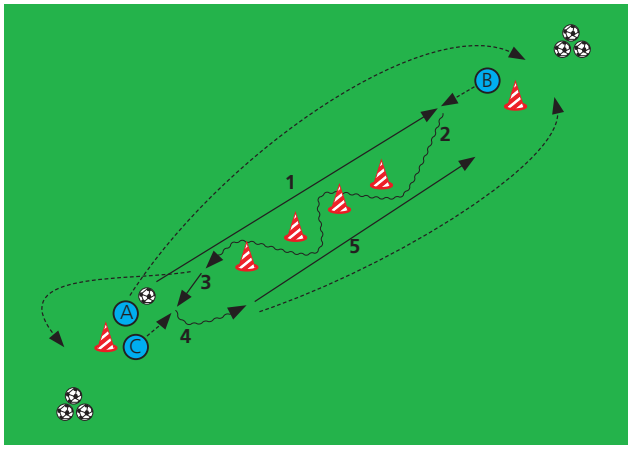
Coaching points:

- Pass and shoot with inside of foot, low, with left and right foot
- Ball in front of the body
- Players of the same standard exercise together
- Orientation (head high, look at player, go for goal)
- Differentiation (pass, shoot, receive and move)
- Feint when dribbling

Technique drill 3 — Passing, receiving and dribbling

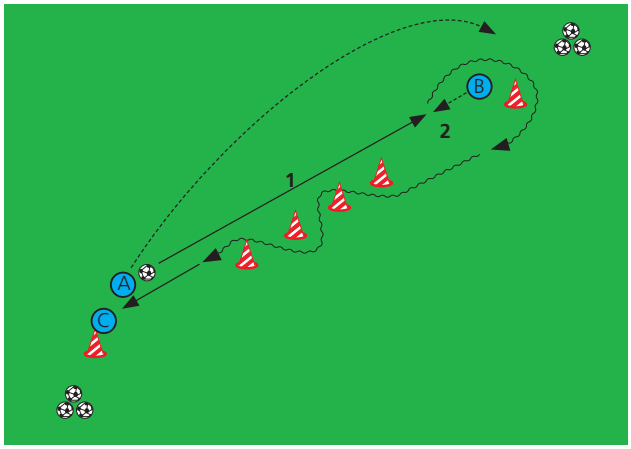
Exercise 1 — Difficulty: ★

- Pass with left foot from A to B (1).
- B meets the ball, controls it and takes it left (2) before dribbling round the cones.
- Pass with the right foot to C (3).
- C meets the ball, controls it and takes it right (4).
- C passes to A with the right foot (5).
- C meets the ball, controls it and takes it right before dribbling round the cones.



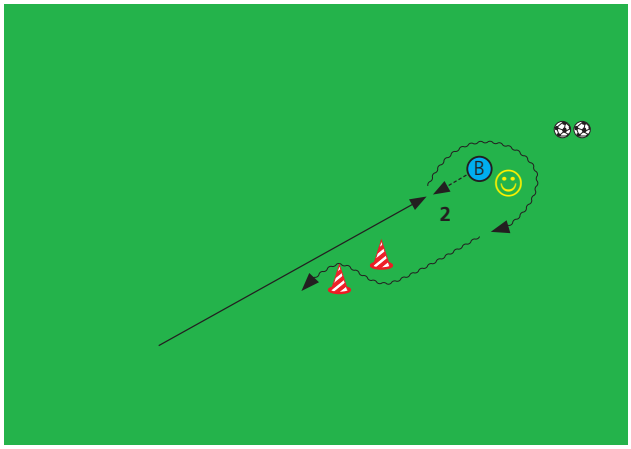
Exercise 2 — Difficulty: ★★

- Same as Exercise 1.
- B receives the ball with his back to the cone and takes it round the cone to the right with his left foot. B then starts dribbling, etc.
- C receives the ball with his back to the cone and takes it round the cone to the left with his right foot.



Exercise 3 — Difficulty: ★★★

- Same as Exercise 2.
- Players take the place of cones.
- Light pressure when controlling the ball, dribbling and passing.



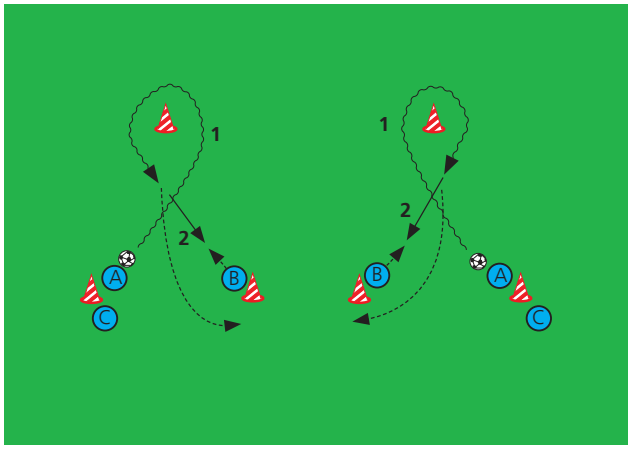
Organisation/material
3 players (optimum) or more
1 ball (plus a spare)
6 cones
Max. duration of exercise: 6-8 minutes

Coaching points:
- Pass with inside of foot, low, with left and right foot
- Meet the ball when receiving the pass
- Short steps when dribbling the ball
- Ball in front of the body
- Body between ball and opponent
- Players of the same standard exercise together
- Orientation (head high, look at player)
- Differentiation (pass, receive and move)

Technique drill 4 — Passing, receiving and dribbling

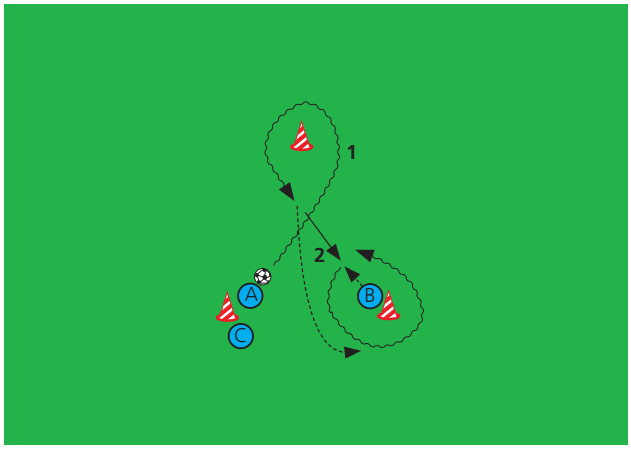
Exercise 1 — Difficulty: ★

- A begins by dribbling anti-clockwise round the top cone
- Then passes to B
- B meets the ball, controls it and then dribbles in the direction of C.
- Dribbling and passing with left and right foot.



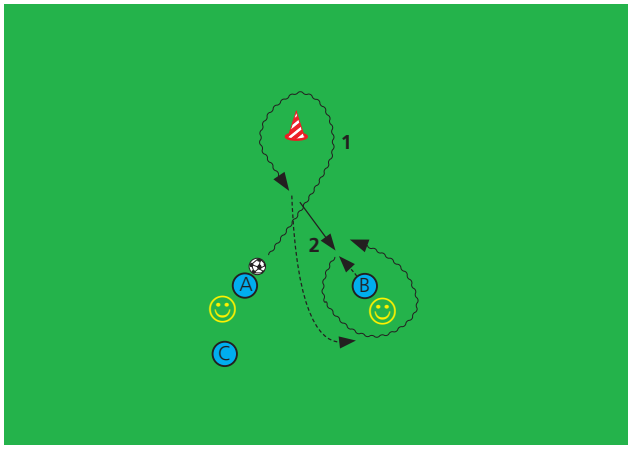
Exercise 2 — Difficulty: ★

- Same as Exercise 1.
- B receives the ball with his back to the cone and takes it round the cone on the inside and outside. B then starts dribbling, etc.



Exercise 3 — Difficulty: ★★

- Same as Exercise 2.
- Players take the place of cones.
- Light pressure when controlling the ball, dribbling and passing.



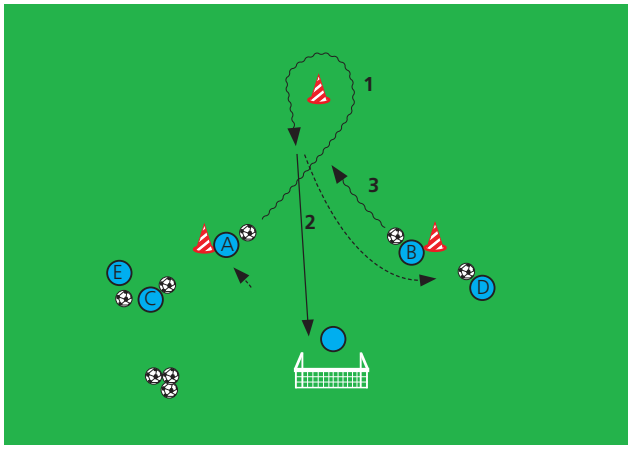
Organisation/material
3 players (optimum) or more
1 ball (plus a spare)
3 cones
Max. duration of exercise: 6-8 minutes

Coaching points:
- Pass with inside of foot, low, with left and right foot
- Meet the ball when receiving the pass
- Short steps when dribbling the ball
- Ball in front of the body
- Body between ball and opponent
- Players of the same standard exercise together
- Orientation (head high, look at player)
- Differentiation (pass, receive and move)

Technique drill 5 — Shooting (increasing difficulty)

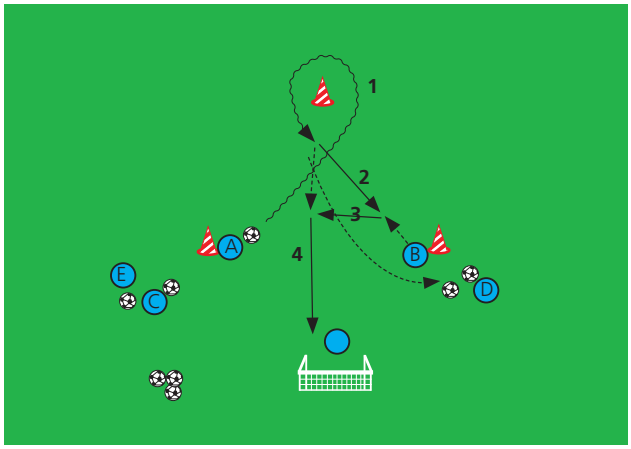
Exercise 1 — Difficulty: ★

- A begins by dribbling anti-clockwise round the top cone with his right foot (1).
- A then shoots with his right foot (2).
- B dribbles clockwise round the cone with his left foot.
- B then shoots with his left foot.



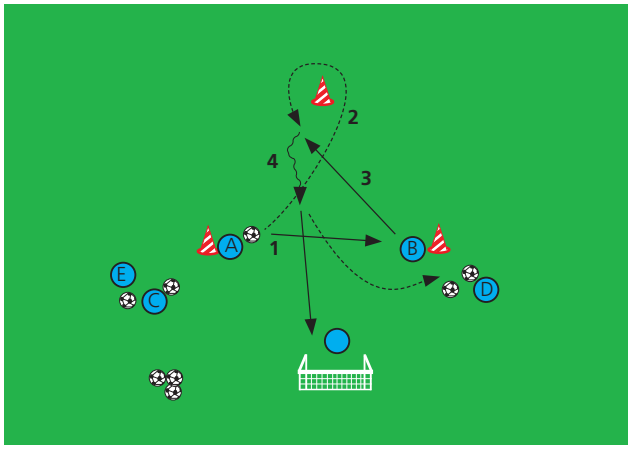
Exercise 2 — Difficulty: ★★

- A begins by dribbling anti-clockwise round the top cone with his right foot (1).
- A then passes with his right foot to B and moves into space (2).
- B meets the ball and passes to A (or plays a one-two) (3).
- A controls the ball and goes on to shoot (4).
- B takes a ball and starts dribbling.
- etc.



Exercise 3 — Difficulty: ★★

- A passes to B (1).
- A runs round the cone into space and shows to B (2).
- B passes to A, either in front of him or to feet (3).
- A controls the ball and goes on to shoot (4).
- B takes a ball and passes it to C.
- etc.



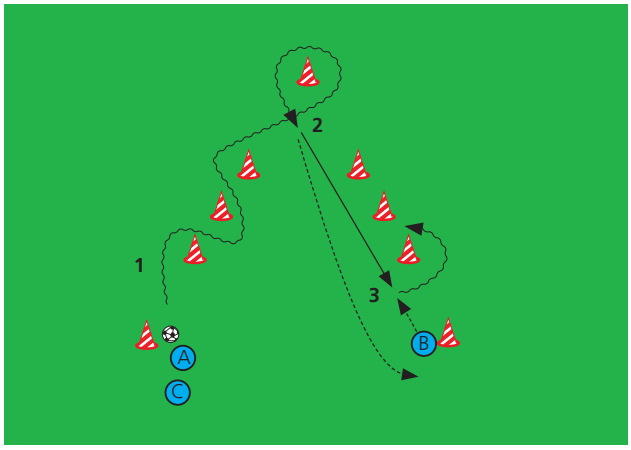
Organisation/material
5 players (optimum) or more
Several balls
3 cones
Max. duration of exercise: 8-10 minutes

Coaching points:
- Shoot/pass with inside of foot, low, with left and right foot
- Short steps with and to the ball
- Ball in front of the body
- Players of the same standard exercise together
- Orientation (head high, look at player)
- Differentiation (shooting)

Technique drill 6 — Dribbling, passing and receiving

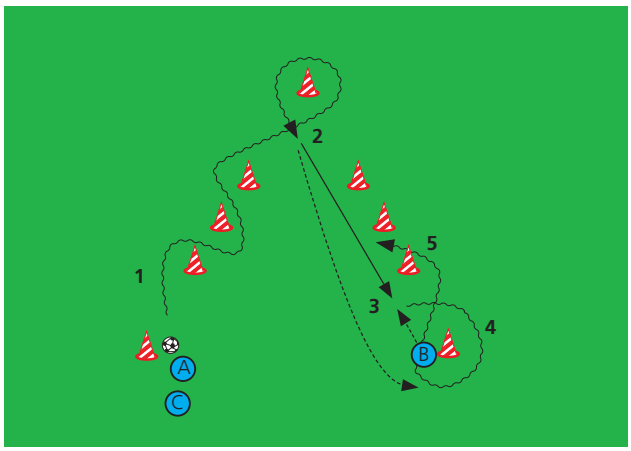
Exercise 1 — Difficulty: ★

- A starts dribbling round the cones (1).
- A then passes with his right foot to B (2).
- B meets the ball, controls it to the right and then dribbles towards C (3).
- B passes with left foot to C.



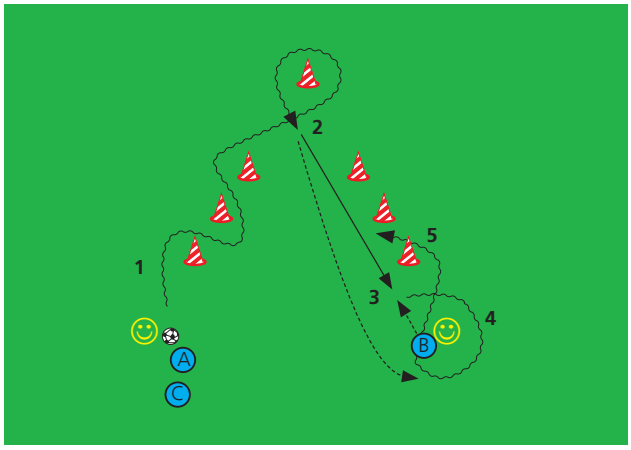
Exercise 2 — Difficulty: ★★

- Same as Exercise 1.
- B receives the ball with his back to the cone (3) and takes it clockwise round the cone with his left foot using short steps. B then starts dribbling (5).
- Same procedure on the other side, but anti-clockwise using the right foot.



Exercise 3 — Difficulty: ★★★

- Same as Exercise 2.
- Players take the place of cones.
- Light pressure when controlling the ball, dribbling and passing.



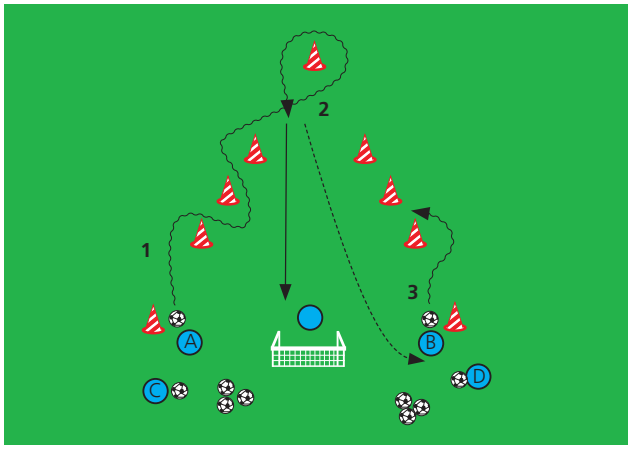
Organisation/material
3 players (optimum) or more
1 ball (plus a spare)
9 cones
Max. duration of exercise: 6-8 minutes

Coaching points:
- Pass with inside of foot, low, with left and right foot
- Meet the ball when receiving the pass
- Short steps when dribbling (rhythmisation)
- Ball in front of the body
- Body between ball and opponent
- Players of the same standard exercise together
- Orientation (head high, look at player)
- Differentiation (pass, receive and move)

Technique drill 7 — Shooting (increasing difficulty)

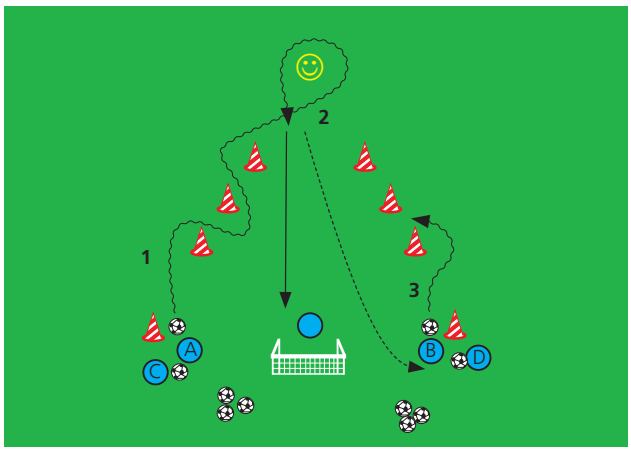
Exercise 1 — Difficulty: ★

- A starts dribbling round the cones (1).
- A then shoots with his right foot (2).
- B starts dribbling round the cones (3) and then shoots with his left foot.



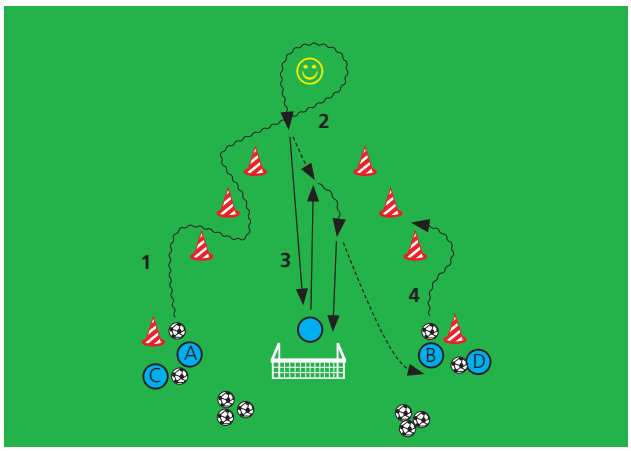
Exercise 2 — Difficulty: ★★

- Same as Exercise 1.
- A dribbles round an opponent instead of a cone (2).



Exercise 3 — Difficulty: ★★★

- Same as Exercise 2.
- A plays a one-two with the goalkeeper. Pass to goalkeeper, return pass to A, who controls the ball and shoots (3).
- B starts dribbling (4).



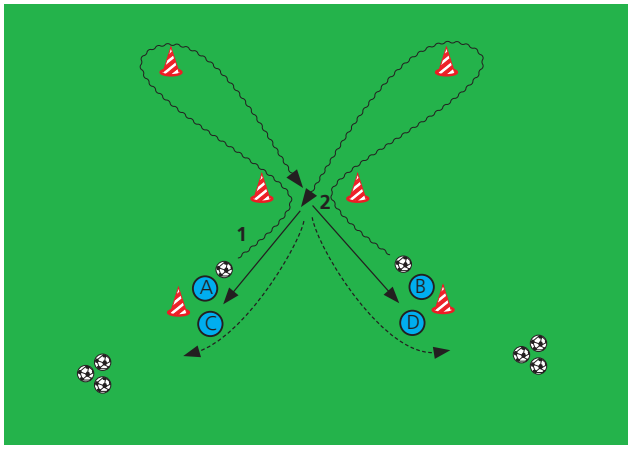
Organisation/material
5 players (optimum) or more
1 ball (plus a spare)
9 cones
Max. duration of exercise: 8-10 minutes

Coaching points:
- Shoot with inside of foot, low, with left and right foot
- Short steps when dribbling (rhythmisation)
- Ball in front of the body
- Body between ball and opponent
- Players of the same standard exercise together
- Orientation (head high, look at goal)
- Differentiation (shooting)

Technique drill 8 — Dribbling, passing and receiving

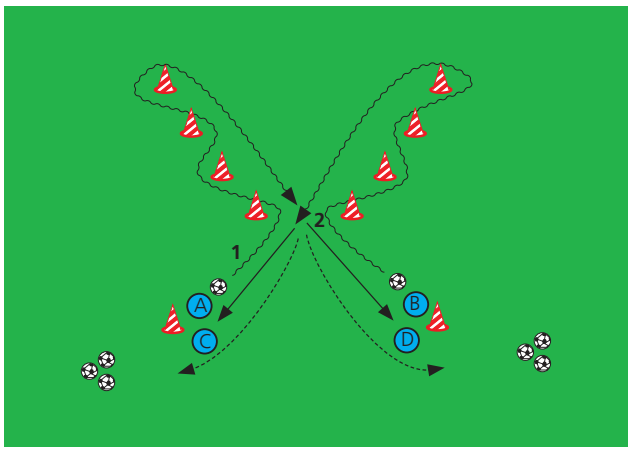
Exercise 1 — Difficulty: ★

- Players A and B start dribbling round the cones at the same time (1).
- They then pass to C and D with their left and right foot respectively (2).
- C and D run on to the ball and dribble it round the cones.
- Where possible the players should start, dribble and pass at the same time.



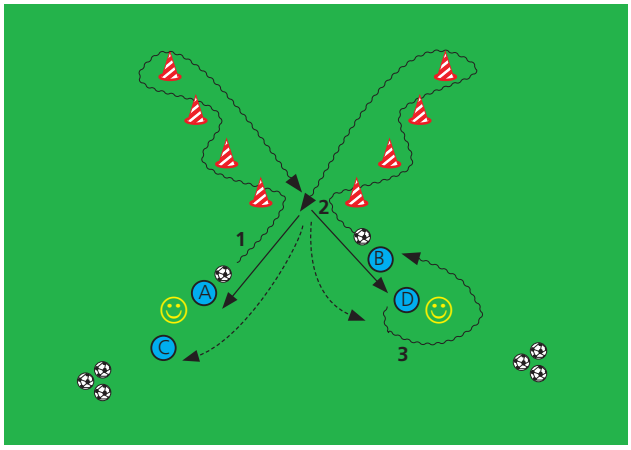
Exercise 2 — Difficulty: ★–★★

- Same as Exercise 1, but with an additional two cones on each side.



Exercise 3 — Difficulty: ★★★

- Same as Exercise 2, except that opponents take the place of the „start cones".
- Control the ball with back to opponent, turn inside and run round (3).



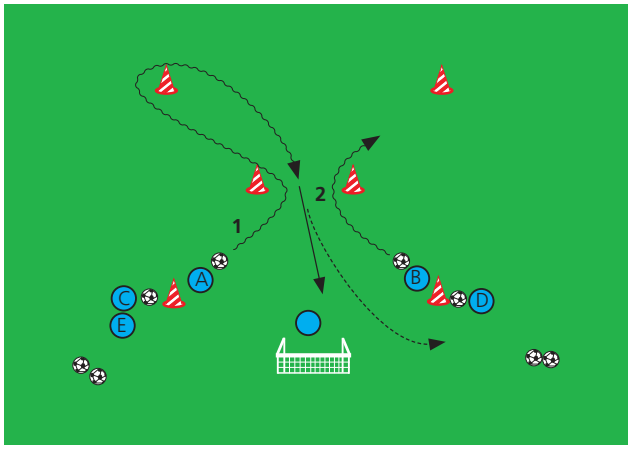
Organisation/material
4 players (optimum) or more
2 balls (plus spares)
6–10 cones
Max. duration of exercise: 6–8 minutes

Coaching points:
- Pass with inside of foot, low, with left and right foot
- Meet the ball when receiving the pass
- Short steps when dribbling (rhythmisation)
- Ball in front of the body
- Body between ball and opponent
- Players of the same standard exercise together
- Orientation (head high, look at player)
- Differentiation (pass, receive and move)

Technique drill 9 — Dribbling, passing and receiving

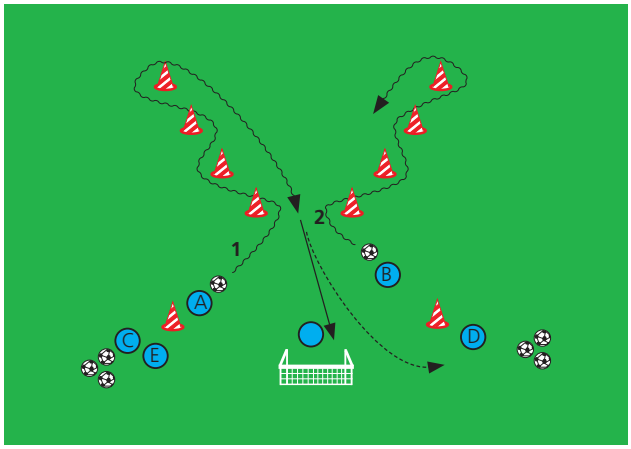
Exercise 1 — Difficulty: ★

- Player A starts dribbling round the cones (1).
- A then shoots with the left foot (2).
- Player B starts dribbling round the cones (1).
- B then shoots with the right foot (2).
- etc.



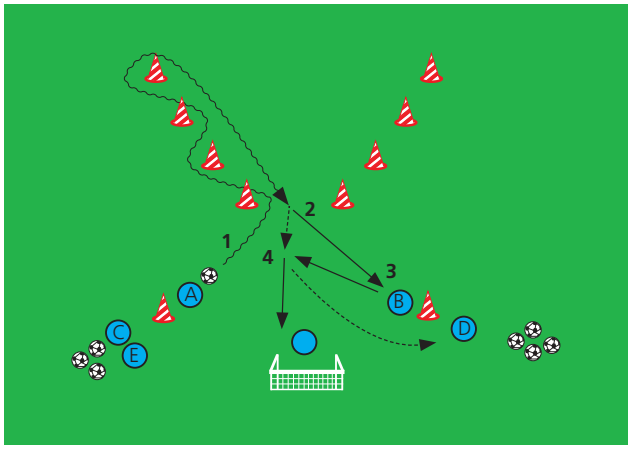
Exercise 2 — Difficulty: ★–★★

- Same as Exercise 1, but with an additional two cones on each side.



Exercise 3 — Difficulty: ★★★

- Same as Exercise 2, but with a one–two before shooting – pass to B (2), return pass from B to A (3), who controls the ball and shoots (4).



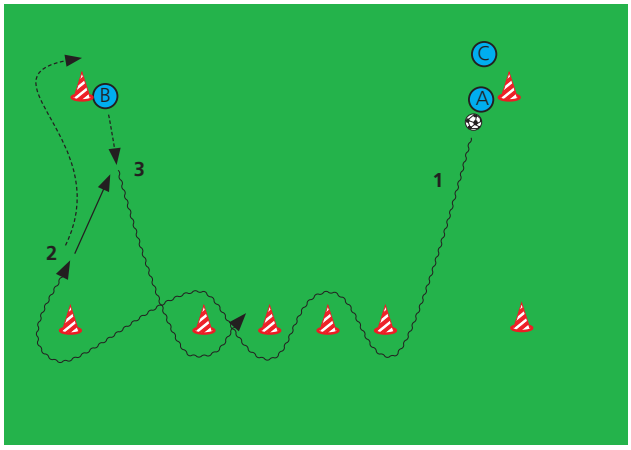
Organisation/material
6 players (optimum) or more
2 balls (plus spares)
6–10 cones
Max. duration of exercise: 8–10 minutes

Coaching points:
- Shoot/pass with inside of foot, low, with left and right foot
- Meet the ball when receiving the pass
- Short steps when dribbling (rhythmisation)
- Ball in front of the body
- Players of the same standard exercise together
- Orientation (head high, look at goal)
- Differentiation (shooting)

Technique drill 10 — Dribbling, passing and receiving

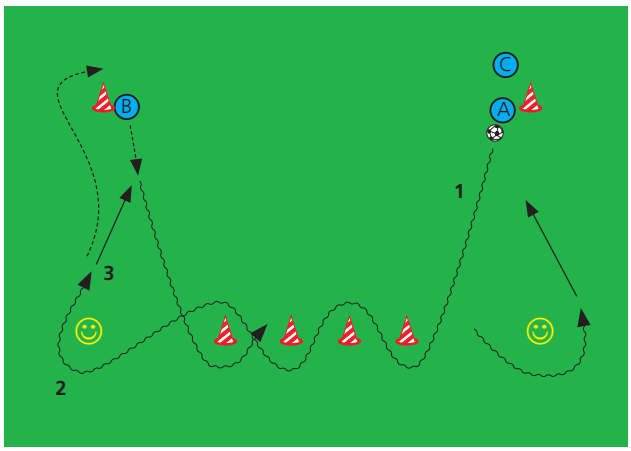
Exercise 1 — Difficulty: ★–★★

- A starts dribbling round the cones (1).
- A then passes to B with the left foot (2), B meets the ball, controls it and then dribbles in the direction of C.
- B passes to C with the right foot.



Exercise 2 — Difficulty: ★★–★★★

- Same as Exercise 1.
- A dribbles round an opponent at the end of the slalom (2). Body between ball and opponent, keep ball on outside with left foot. Then pass to B (3). etc.
- Same procedure on the other side, but using the right foot.



Organisation/material
3 players (optimum) or more (Exercise 2)
1 ball (plus a spare)
8 cones
Max. duration of exercise: 6-8 minutes

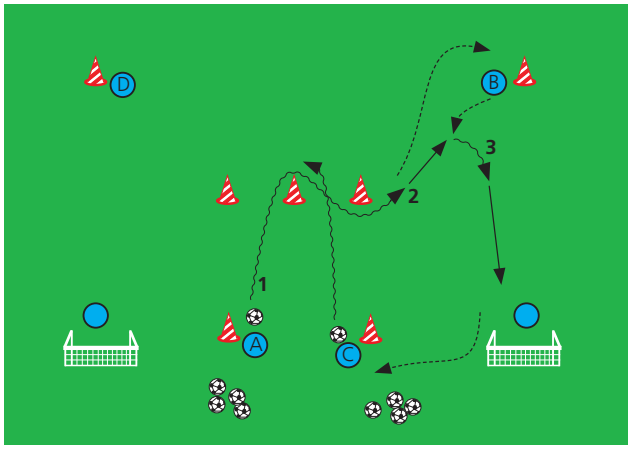
Coaching points:
- Pass with inside of foot, low, with left and right foot
- Meet the ball when receiving the pass
- Short steps when dribbling (rhythmisation)
- Ball in front of the body
- Body between ball and opponent
- Players of the same standard exercise together
- Orientation (head high, look at player)
- Differentiation (pass, receive and move)

Technique drill 11 — Shooting (increasing difficulty)

Exercise 1 — Difficulty: ★★

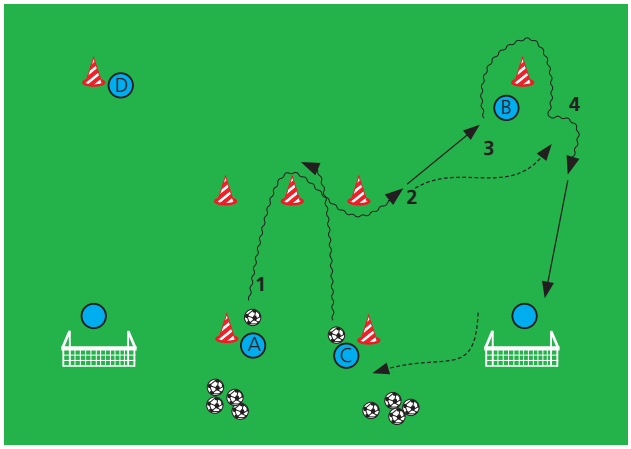
A starts dribbling round the cones (1).
– A then passes with his right foot to B (2).
– B controls the ball and goes on to shoot (3).

Runs: A to B, B to C, C to D, D to A ...



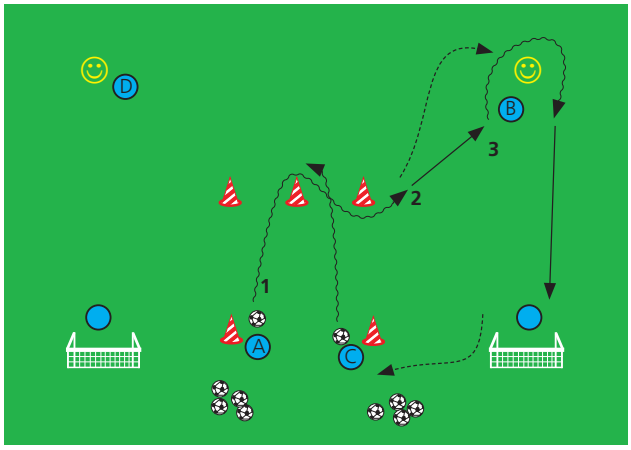
Exercise 2 — Difficulty: ★★★

– Same as Exercise 1.
– B controls the ball and dribbles it round the cone behind him (3). Ball to be controlled and dribbled with the left foot.
– A stands in the path of B, passively or actively (4).



Exercise 3 — Difficulty: ★★★

– Same as Exercise 2.
– B controls the ball and dribbles it round an opponent standing behind him (3). Ball to be controlled and dribbled with the left foot.



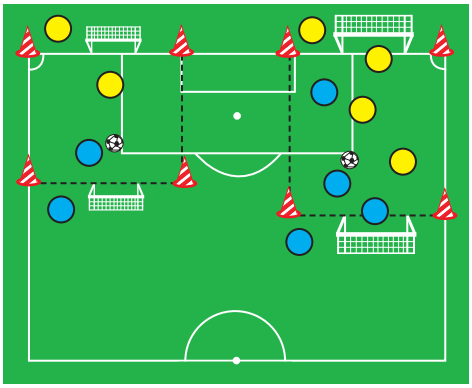
Organisation/material
6 players (optimum) or more
Several balls
7 cones
Max. duration of exercise: 8-10 minutes

Coaching points:
– Shoot with inside of foot, low, with left and right foot
– Short steps when dribbling (rhythmisation)
– Ball in front of the body
– Body between ball and opponent
– Players of the same standard exercise together
– Orientation (head high, look at goal)
– Differentiation (shooting)

Game formats

1 v 1/2 v 2

- Size of pitch to suit number of players
- Small goals (all types)
- No goalkeepers/substitutes optional

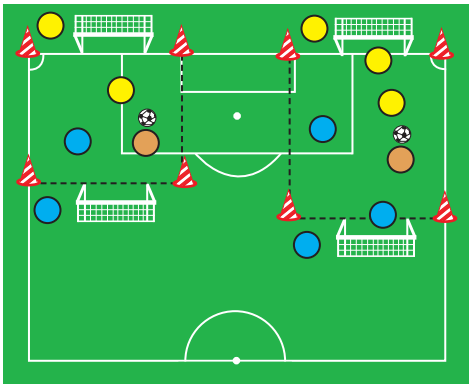


3 v 3 / 4 v 4 (+goalkeeper)

- Size of pitch to suit number of players
- Children's goals
- No goalkeepers/substitutes optional

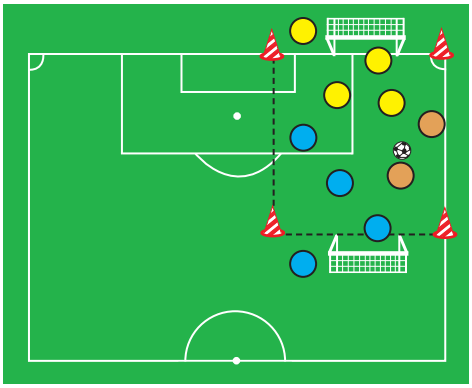
2 v 1/3 v 2/4 v 3 (+ goalkeeper)

- Size of pitch to suit number of players
- Children's goals
- Goalkeepers/substitutes optional
- Extra player is neutral (always in possession)
- Rapid transition from defence to attack



4 v 2/5 v 3 (+ goalkeeper)

- Size of pitch to suit number of players
- Children's goals
- Goalkeepers/substitutes optional
- Extra player is neutral (always in possession)
- Rapid transition from defence to attack

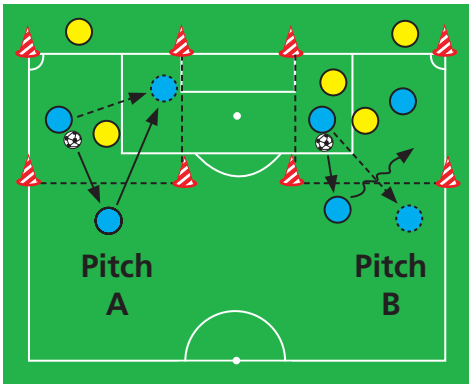


Game formats

1 v 1 + 1 (4 players) / 2 v 2 + 1 (6 players), 3 v 3 +1 (8 players)

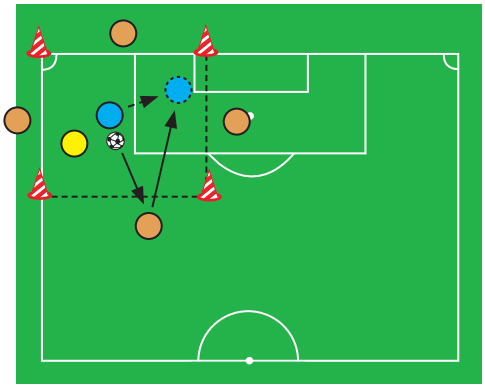
– Size of pitch to suit number of players
– No goals

– Pitch A: Pass to off-pitch player, return pass to on-pitch player
– Pitch B: Pass to off-pitch player, on-pitch player and off-pitch player swap places (the off-pitch player moves the ball onto the pitch)



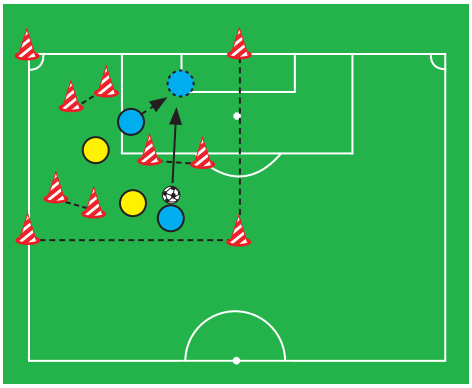
1 v 1 + 4/2 v 2 +4

– Size of pitch to suit number of players
– No goals
– Pass to off-pitch player, return pass to on-pitch player



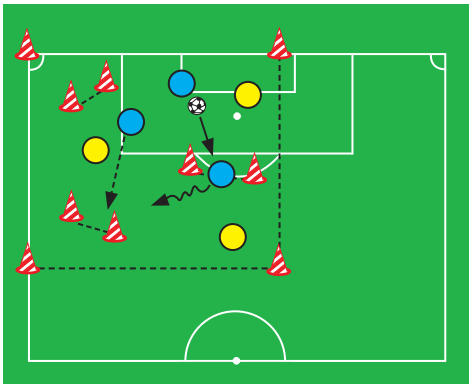
2 v 2/3 v 3 (through the gates)

– Size of pitch to suit number of players
– Random number of gates (cones/poles)
– Pass through the gate



3 v 3/4 v 4 (through the gates)

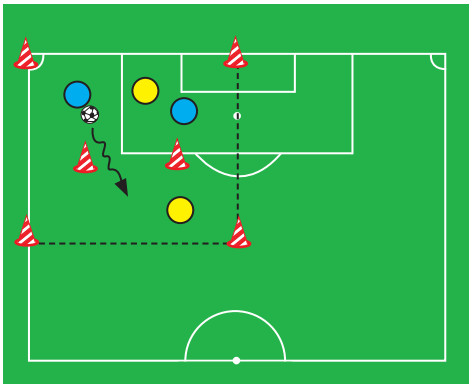
– Size of pitch to suit number of players
– Random number of gates (cones/poles)
– Players have to show in the gate
– Control and run with the ball before passing to the next player in a gate



Game formats

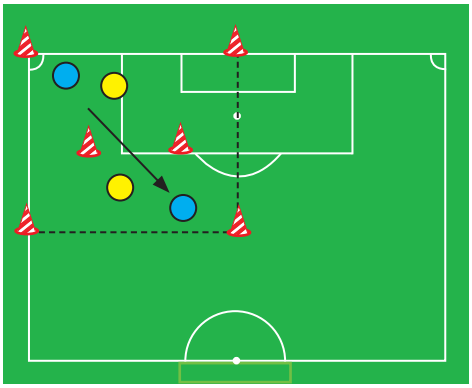
2 v 2/3 v 3/4 v 4 (with one gate)

– Size of pitch to suit number of players
– Dribble through the gate



2 v 2/3 v 3/4 v 4 (with one gate)

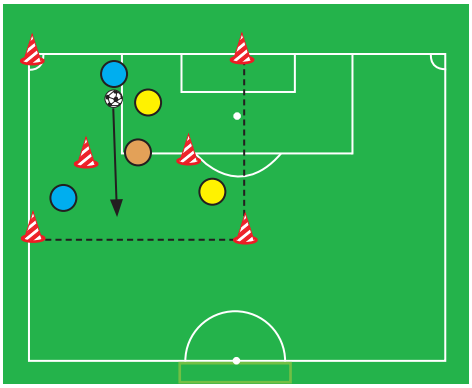
– Size of pitch to suit number of players
– Pass through the gate



2 v 2/3 v 3/4 v 4 (with one gate)

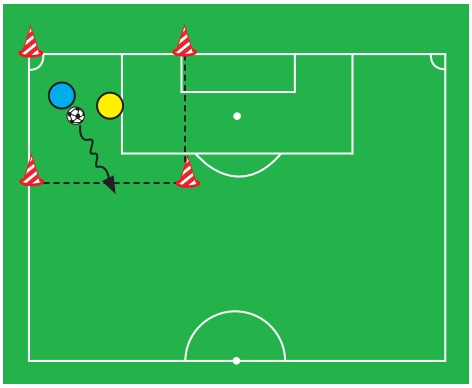
– Size of pitch to suit number of players
– Neutral goalkeeper
– Shoot through the gate

– For advanced players:
Pass through the gate to team-mate



1 v 1/2 v 2/3 v 3/4v4 (with touchline gates)

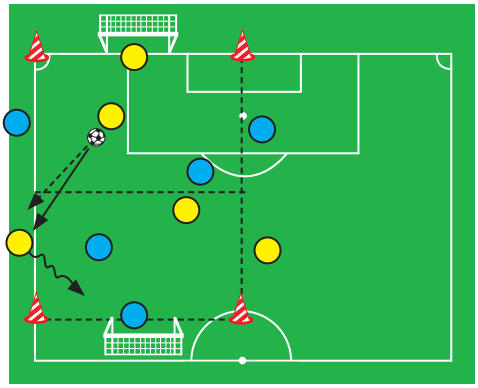
– Size of pitch to suit number of players
– Dribble over the touchline (touchline gates)



Game formats

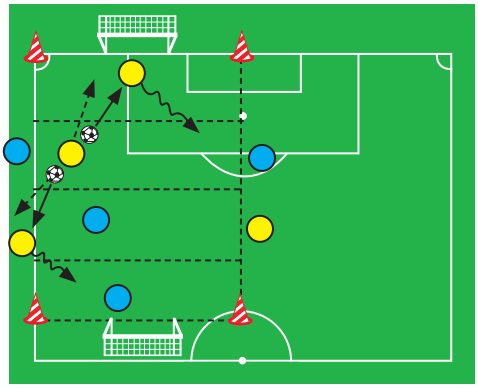
1 v 1 + 2/2 v 2 + 2/3 v 3 + 2/4 v 4 + 2 (with zones)

- Size of pitch to suit number of players
- 2 goals with goalkeepers
- Two off-pitch players from each team in the attacking zone
- Variation:
  The off-pitch players are in the defensive zone
- Players swap positions following a pass to an off-pitch player.
  The off-pitch player becomes an on-pitch player.
- The players do not swap positions when the goalkeeper plays the ball to an off-pitch player.



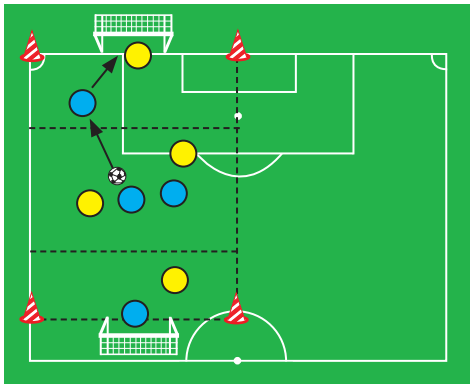
2 v 2 + 2/3 v 3 + 2/4 v 4 + 2 (with zones)

- Size of pitch to suit number of players
- 2 goals with goalkeepers
- Two off-pitch players from each team in the attacking zone or the defensive zone
- The goalkeeper can be switched, too.
- The striker dribbles into the attacking zone and may not be challenged there by a defender (one-on-one with the goalkeeper).
- The players do not swap positions when the goalkeeper plays the ball to an off-pitch player.
- Players swap positions following a pass to an off-pitch player.
  The off-pitch player becomes an on-pitch player.



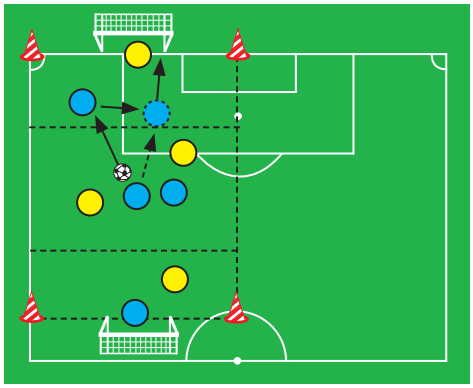
2 v 2/3 v 3/4 v 4 (with shooting area)

- Size of pitch to suit number of players
- 2 goals with goalkeepers
- One player from each team provides an out ball in the attacking zone
- The player in the attacking zone is passed to from the midfield.
- The attacker then shoots on goal.
- The player who played the pass to the attacking player from midfield becomes the attacking player.



2 v 2/3 v 3/4 v 4 (with shooting area)

- Size of pitch to suit number of players
- 2 goals with goalkeepers
- One player from each team provides an out ball in the attacking zone
- A midfield player plays a one-two with the player in the attacking zone. He then shoots on goal.



Guidelines for developing a grassroots football plan

It is very important to analyse the existing situation of grassroots football in a country before starting up the programme. The context can vary considerably between different Member Associations; the personnel involved in the development of the programme should adapt to the existing situation. Specific issues must be considered before the programme is launched so that the vision and objectives of FIFA's grassroots football programme can be fulfilled.

Guidelines

Analysis of the situation in a country

- Population,
- Administrative and technical organisation at national, regional and local levels,
- The educational system,
- Sports policies,
- The existence of a grassroots football structure,
- Sports infrastructures and facilities,
- Links between the Member Association and government ministries.

The practice of football

- A study of football throughout the country, in all provinces and regions, will show the extent to which the sport is practised in all sectors.
- Determining the facilities available in all sectors, in particular in rural areas, offers vital information, such as the number of children who have access to football equipment and under what conditions.
- The availability of coach-educators and equipment, as well as the different types of tournament organised throughout the country, will give an indication of the needs of each sector.
- Can a programme be launched in the various sectors, or a seminar organised to study the feasibility of the programme?
- Are their official links between Member Association staff, leagues, clubs, communities and schools?
- Guarantees for the continuity of the grassroots football programme in rural areas and other regions must be based on the stability of those involved, including the communities and ministries of health, youth, sport and education. These bodies must not only be present, but also active in working towards a common objective.

Analysis of needs

- Coach-educators: number and qualifications,
- Development of grassroots football,
- Activities: competitions, tournaments and festivals,
- Equipment, materials,
- Infrastructures,
- Grassroots football committee.

AIMS

- To introduce grassroots football to boys and girls (aged 6-12),
- To promote the philosophy of grassroots football,
- To develop the activities of grassroots football,
- To increase participation in grassroots football programmes,
- To improve training and match equipment,
- To instruct teachers (including women) to become coach-educators.
- To encourage parents and volunteers to get involved,
- To establish links and build relationships between all partners,
- To put a legitimate structure for the development of grassroots football in place,
- To appeal to an audience and increase recognition,
- To seek out sponsors and partners.

The stages of implementation

1. Initial consultations: coach-educators, teachers, parents, etc.,
2. Bringing together the essential people: an executive committee, key individuals, etc.,
3. Preparation and presentation of a development plan,
4. Consultation seminars and meetings: Member Association's, ministries, sponsors, etc.,
5. Submission of a final plan: federation's technical department,
6. Approval: Member Association / FIFA,
7. Launching the plan: FIFA grassroots football project,
8. Plan for implementation: short/medium/long-term development plan

Principles for a successful grassroots football programme at national level

- **CONSULTATION:** the need for consultation with all stakeholders in order to ensure that all points of view are taken into account and, if possible, represented in the plan.

– **PARTICIPATION:** to increase the number of people involved in the sport.
– **QUALITY:** the desire to improve and develop the game at all levels. The provision of high-quality technical support.
– **SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY:** offering an alternative to the everyday lives of children from disadvantaged areas.
– **EQUALITY:** making sure that the underdeveloped areas of the sport (football for girls, players with disabilities, football in schools) receive support and appropriate services.
– **PARTNERSHIP:** recognition that the development of football requires a partnership approach involving all sectors of the sport and society.

If grassroots football is not encouraged, football at the highest level will suffer

Recommendations

The main recommendations for the successful promotion of a grassroots football programme are as follows:

– Football must be accessible to all without discrimination on the basis of gender, race or social status. Anyone who wants to play football must know that it is possible to do so through their school or community, using the facilities available in the country.
– Trained coach-educators must ensure that the required standards of discipline and behaviour are observed by all. An appropriate psychological approach is needed for the successful development of young people, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds.
– All children are entitled to education and health services, irrespective of their family's background and educational history. These are essential considerations that must be taken into account. Young players must be asked about their progress at school, their healthcare arrangements and the involvement of their parents in their everyday life.

– The development of relationships between children from different cultural, religious and geographical backgrounds must be encouraged in order to reduce the differences between them and increase respect on and off the pitch. The attitude must always be to emphasise fair play when faced with difficult situations on the pitch, when assessing victories and defeats and in order to give a positive slant on, and draw lessons from, all circumstances.
– Every effort must be made to ensure that everyone involved receives equal treatment irrespective of differences in terms of physical, mental or psychological development. Respect can break down barriers and improve the friendship between communities.

Coach-educators must focus on the technical and human development of children and encourage the most advanced to seek out football schools, clubs and community teams. This encouragement will certainly lead to other children improving their standard of play, and by extension, their maturity.

As play has been established as the best manner of teaching, it is important that selection processes do not just focus on individual talent but also take into account all the children participating in the sessions and playing sport together. Children enjoy sport and this must be encouraged by the coach-educator. The objective is for the children to look forward to each session and gradually develop a passion for football.

The grassroots structure in Member Associations

The objective of organising grassroots football structures within Member Associations is to offer as many boys and girls as possible the opportunity to play football without restriction.

Each Member Association should have a National Technical Director (TD) who is responsible for all technical matters within the Association.

A grassroots football manager works under the TD and is responsible for the grassroots football department. This department has two main missions:

– the organisation of tournaments and festivals,
– the training of football coaches responsible for children's football.

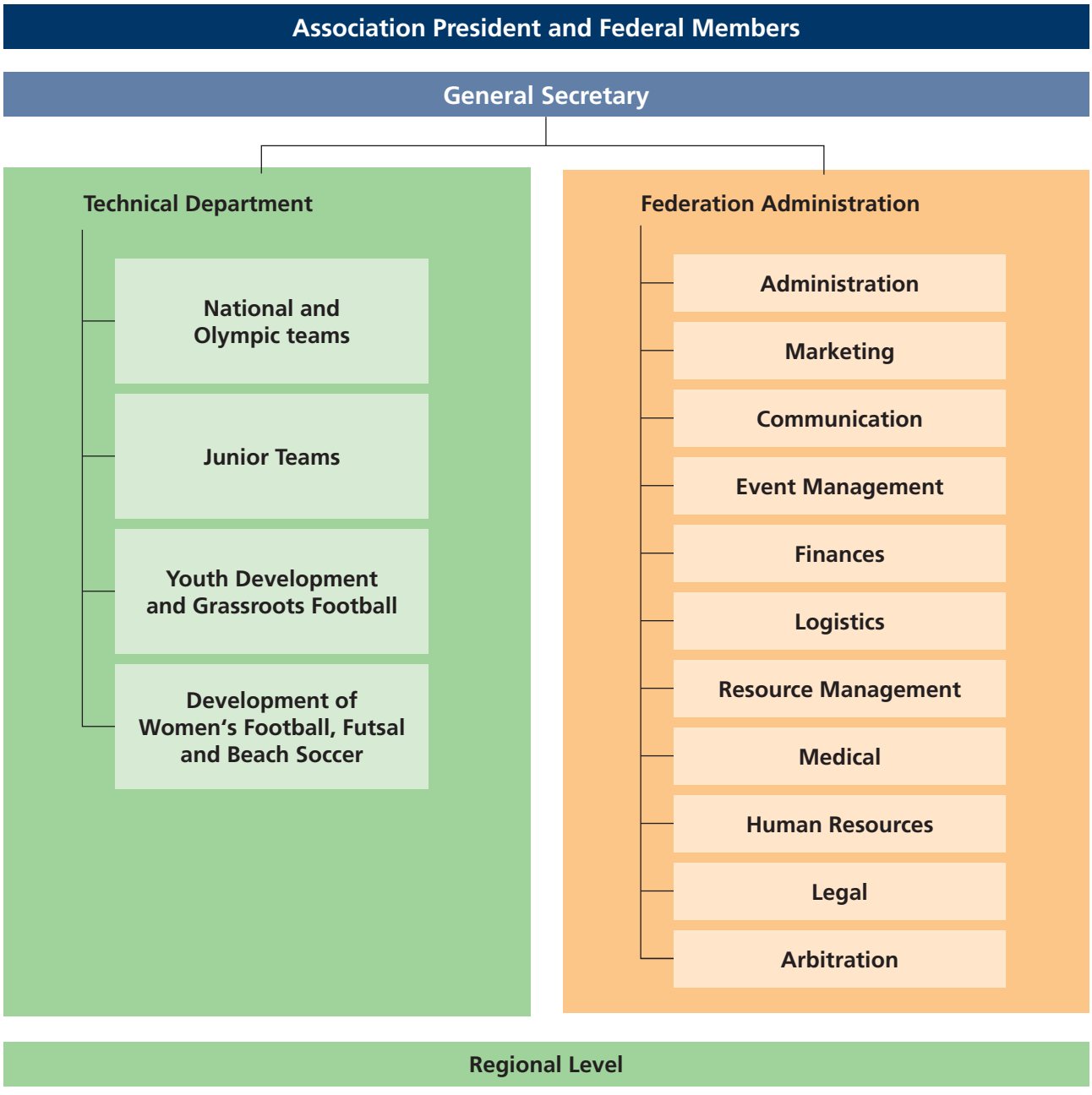
Some Member Associations that are well advanced in their development plans may implement decentralised structures at regional and local level with regional and local managers responsible for running the structure.

The base of the structure is formed by schools and clubs. Coach-educators are essential; they are indispensable to the success of a national grassroots football programme: the coaches must learn how to organise a festival, prepare a tournament and work with the children to ensure the success of the project.

Example organisational structure

The grassroots football department is thus part of the Member Association's Technical Department, together with other programmes such as women's football and Futsal. The member association should incorporate regional and local football organisations when this is possible, as these have closer links with schools, clubs and communities. Decentralised structures, supported by their own Technical Departments, can take over from, or assist, the Member Association's Technical Department for any regional or local activities that are implemented.

Structure of a national association (Example)



Structure of a grassroots football department

- Head of Department + Grassroots Football Manager
- Members of the National Association
- Representatives of the public authorities (ministries of sports and education)
- Coach-educators
- Parents
- Representatives of women's football

National technical structure (Example)

<table>
<tr><th colspan="4">National Technical Department</th></tr>
<tr><th>Elite</th><th>Youth</th><th>Women's Football</th><th>Futsal/Beach Soccer</th></tr>
<tr><td>•National and Olympic Teams
•Junior Teams
•U20
•U18
•U17
•U16
•U15
•U14
•Women's Football Teams
•Futsal Teams
•Beach Soccer Teams</td><td>Increase the numbers playing the sport and develop loyalty.

Grassroots Football

Offer youngsters aged 6-12 the opportunity to play football without restriction and guide the most talented towards performance football.</td><td>•Recreation and friendship
•Health and fitness
•Social integration
•Official to promote the recreational aspect (result not important)
•Championships, tournaments</td><td>•Fun
•Important for technical development of young footballers
•Indoor or outdoor
•Championship, tournament</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Training:
Training and refresher courses for coaches, coach-educators and instructors.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Sports development, training, health and social integration.</td></tr>
</table>

Opening up the social environment. Organisation and participation in events and activities organised by national and local authorities, NGOs (non-governmental organisations), schools, universities and sponsors.

Training pitches and competition pitches

Links between the Member Association, clubs and schools

Setting up a school football programme is only possible with the total support of the teaching world and educational organisations. Schools are the sole responsible bodies and are exclusively authorised to organise sport in primary schools.

It is thus necessary for Member Associations to collaborate in a common project, for example, by setting up a joint association/schools committee in charge of sport and signing an agreement specifying the roles and competences of each party.

The various partners involved are:
- teachers,
- parents,
- club officials,
- coach-educators.

Voluntary work

Voluntary work is also an important aspect in the development of grassroots football programmes. Member Associations should make great efforts to recruit volunteers to help with projects. These volunteers can be parents, teachers or community leaders. Even if volunteers do not have a formal role in the Member Association's structure, their participation can be crucial to the success of grassroots football in the country. Some volunteers are happy to help with the administrative tasks while others prefer to organise tournaments and festivals or simply help with the transport of the children.

Grassroots Football Manager

The role of Grassroots Football Manager is essential to the success of the programme. The manager is responsible for all aspects of the various activities of grassroots football:

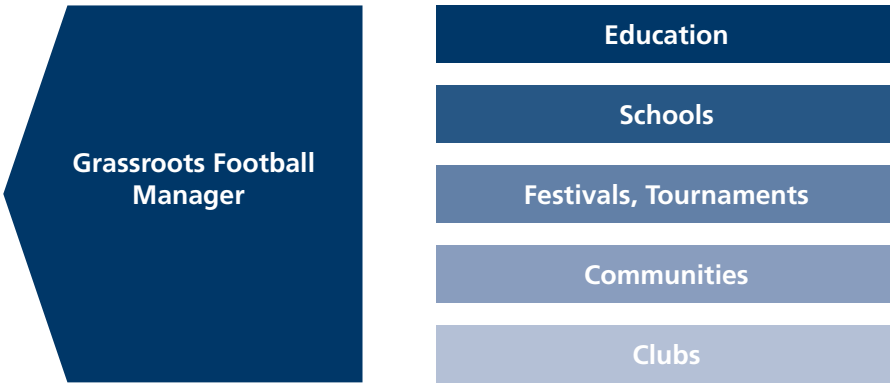
- organising festivals, tournaments and festivals,
- developing grassroots football structures in schools, clubs and communities,
- the general coordination of activities,
- drawing up a calendar of activities,
- setting up meetings with local and regional representatives,
- maintaining regular contact with schools and clubs,
- training and updating grassroots coach-educators.

Ideally, this person has a sound background in grassroots football and sufficient technical knowledge to encourage development. Above all this person must be an EDUCATOR.

The protection of children

As stated in the chapter on the coach-educator, a policy to ensure the protection of children must form the basis of all grassroots football initiatives promoted by Member Associations. This policy must clearly define child protection, what is acceptable to the Member Association and what is not, the procedure for complaints and claims and the role of the Association. It should also be noted that the child protection programme can be a useful tool for developing relations with other partners such as the government and certain sponsors.

As the circumstances are different in every country, these guidelines should be adapted to the particular situation of the Member Association.



FIFA
FIFA

Establishing links with governments

What link with the government?

No government can neglect sport and the benefits that it can bring to the population. Football is a vehicle for the promotion of health, education, team spirit and fair play. These concepts are also central to national government objectives and are values upheld by modern societies. The objectives of the grassroots football programme are similar to values promoted by many countries:

- Offering the means to practise sport everywhere, in the street, at schools, in clubs, etc. Football should be accessible to all without reference to gender, race or location.
- Allowing children to play together, with football facilitating communication and exchanges.
- Sport is good for health, promoting as it does strong messages such as well-being, a balanced life and feeling good physically.
- Sport can be a tool for education by teaching: observance of the rules of the game, the practice of exercises and codified play, respect for opponents and partners, the desire to be the best, pushing oneself beyond one's limits, the joy of winning and coping with the distress of losing, etc.
- Sport is part of life, associated with fun, pleasure and emotion.

Why is the relationship with governments important?

Football is usually practised in clubs. The degree of structure offered by these clubs depends on the economic situation of the country and the development of football (popularity, funding, human resources, volunteers, goodwill and the association's structures).

But football is not only practised within clubs: football is universal and is played everywhere. The recent media coverage of street football and the development of Futsal, sometimes associated with the neighbourhoods of major cities, reminds us that football is played everywhere that young people have the freedom to express themselves and the means to buy or make a ball. Schools are an important breeding ground for footballers. The sport is a taught subject in the majority of educational systems.

For these reasons, it can be seen that sport, and particularly football, forms a natural part of governmental programmes, for example:

- The national education ministry may promote programmes of football in school curricula. This is reinforced by exchanges and matches between classes and different educational establishments. The ministry may even organise national football days, etc.
- The ministry of youth and sport facilitates access to national sports structures and promotes programmes for the young (children's day, sports festivals, etc.).
- The ministry of health associates the practice of football with greater well-being, a balanced life, education on nutrition and strong messages against using drugs and other harmful substances, etc.
- Urban policy and the opening up of rural areas is encouraged by organising or adapting sports festivals, employing coach-educators, providing opportunities for youngsters to meet, organising recreational days, etc.
- The situation of women: encouraging the practice of football by both sexes and mixed football for young children.

Who are the favoured partners?

The ministries in charge of education, health, youth and sport must be involved in the grassroots football programme as a priority. It should be noted that the portfolios of ministries and other government departments are allocated in different ways in different countries: the ministries to be contacted are thus given by way of example only.

Ministry of Education

This ministry manages the majority of educational establishments in the country, drawing up educational programmes and delivering educational resources.
The advantages of acting through this network of schools can be identified as follows:

- Access to all schools in the country, including those located in the least accessible regions, rural areas or on remote islands.
- The benefit of the existing educational network, in particular for communication with schools: the organisation of matches and training, the distribution of equipment, activity reports, etc.
- The potential involvement of teachers – whether qualified in sports or not – for the delivery of sports content. A high-quality cooperation can be established, including training schoolteachers and involving them in competitions between schools and in regional football leagues.
- Relations with clubs, guiding those schoolchildren interested in more regular practice towards local clubs, and having club coach-educators participate in school activities.

It is important to establish a relationship with this ministry, particularly in countries in development where the practice of the sport is not always consistent or properly framed. The economic situation sometimes hinders access to structures (even at the most basic level) and especially the purchase of sports equipment, most notably footballs.

N.B.: In some countries, not all the schools are managed by the ministry. This is particularly the case for religious communities and international schools financed from abroad. It is important that grassroots football programmes avoid segregation and integrate these schools.

The Ministry of Youth and Sport

The relationship with this ministry is equally important, in particular with regard to:

- Sports structures: access to, and the maintenance of, these structures is essential, for matches between schools or for establishments that do not have their own practice facilities.
- Making coach-educators available to teach youth workers and schoolteachers, and for the supervision of football programmes: training, matches, etc.

Ministry of Health

It is important to instil healty attitudes in children and grassroots football programmes are an excellent way of getting the message across on health and sports, for example:

- Refraining from taking illegal or harmful substances,
- Good nutrition and hygienic, healthy behaviour.

The ministry may also provide more direct assistance, for example:

- Medical support provided by nurses, trainers or doctors during sports gatherings,
- Making doctors available to provide medical checkups for the children,

– The supply of medicines or first-aid kits to certain schools or for matches between educational establishments.

Other governmental bodies

Other governmental bodies may be involved in implementing the programme. For example:

– Regions and towns: integrating the programme into regional and community activities, etc.
– Environmental agencies: associating football programmes with a respect for nature, the protection of sources of drinking water, the management of waste, etc.
– Women's organisations: participation and the fight against sexual discrimination through mixed teams, encouraging girls to play football, etc.

Other non-governmental partners

Towns and communities

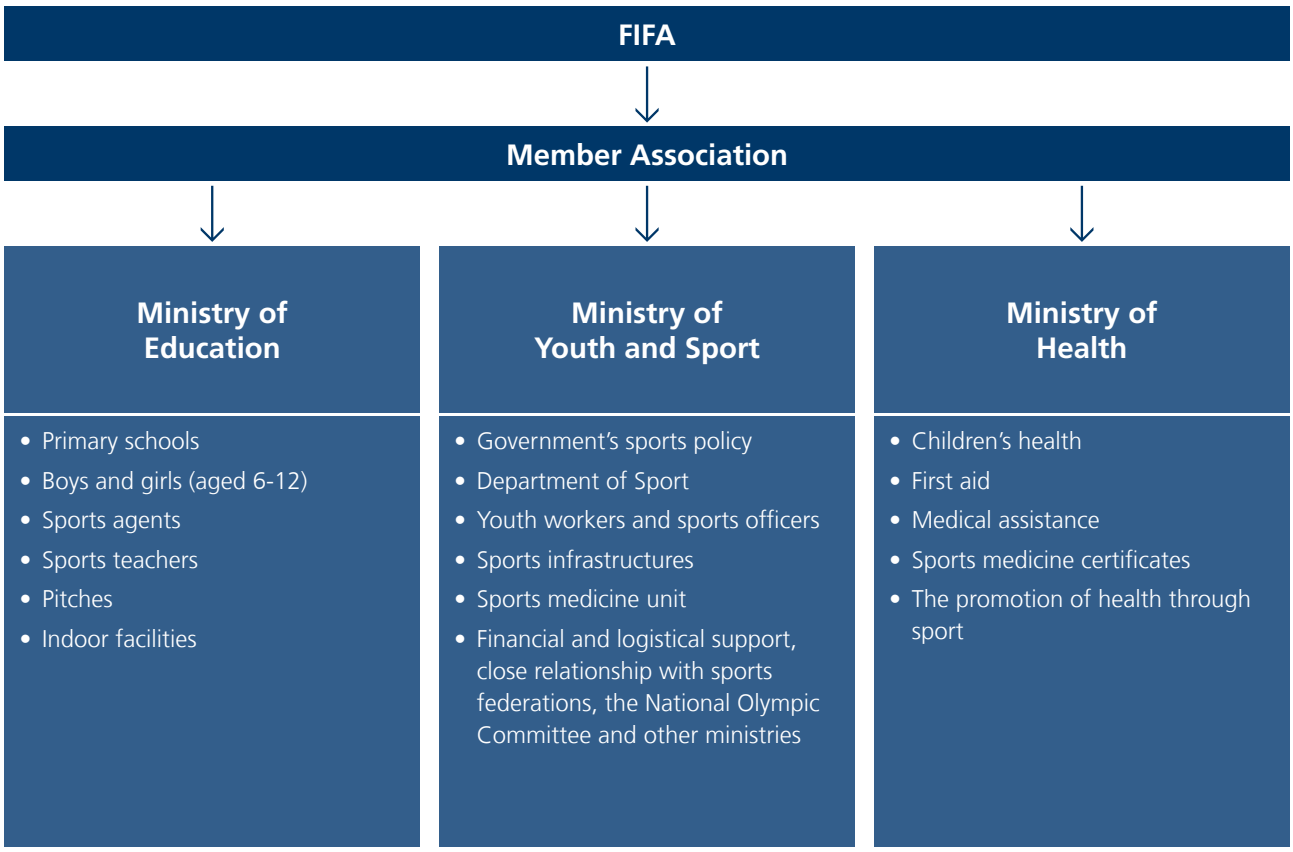
Regional and local communities are the basis of social life in many countries. A relationship may be established directly with regions or some towns, depending on their importance. In this case, all the issues previously described for governments apply:

– The use of land belonging to the communities or regions,
– The assistance of the departments of sport of the communities and regions,
– The network of schools managed by the regions and communities, and indeed by the ministry.

NGOs

Non-Governmental Organisations often benefit from assistance from the state or external organisations (UNICEF, the Red Cross, the European Union, etc.) and act on behalf of the government in well-targeted sectors, in particular development and assistance projects. These organisations have objectives that can be associated with football development activities, for example:

– First-aid instruction by the Red Cross during training sessions for coach-educators and schoolteachers,
– UNICEF health campaigns (education about malaria, etc.) linked to matches between school establishments,
– Financial partnership with the European Union for sporting and educational development programmes.



Sponsors

There is the potential for many sponsors to link their image to a grassroots football programme. The association with sport, health, education, and youth, a national programme, etc. are all attractive elements for marketing an enterprise.

Sponsorship may take many different forms. Most frequently it is the provision of sports equipment (bearing a logo or commercial slogan), the supply of prizes or a financial contribution (in return for media coverage).

The steps to be taken

It is essential, before undertaking any contact with the ministerial body, to draw up an agreement in order to ensure that the project will be realisable and viable.

The Grassroots Football Project

The following stages should be observed:

- The draft version of the project must receive the support of the executive committee of the National Association,
- The project must form part of the Association's long-term vision, for a minimum of four years, and must be incorporated in the long-term development plan drawn up with FIFA's development officers,
- The project must, in particular, provide: details of the objectives, criteria for success, sports content, calendar of action, budget and finance plan.
- The project should draw on the resources of the Member Association's Technical Department and must involve the regional football leagues.
- The final dossier must receive the approval of the National Association's executive committee.

N.B.: The participation of partners from the private sector, and indeed NGOs, is positive for the dossier.

The relationship with the government

The following points should be respected for meetings with a ministry:

- Draw up a concise, effective presentation file, or prepare a video presentation if appropriate.
- Present the project in an objective manner, in a "win-win" format, in other words expressing that the ministry and football in the broadest sense will both benefit from the implementation of the project (as well, of course, as the actual beneficiaries as presented in the project's objectives).
- Present the interest in collaborating in a successful project, demonstrating the commitment of all the parties.
- Present the other partners in the project, both private or public, without forgetting FIFA and the relevant confederation, if involved.
- Draw up a calendar of meetings and actions, in particular for the start-up phase of the project.
- If a steering committee is set up to manage the project, propose that the ministry receives a place as a member (N.B.: Always make sure that the football members are in the majority on the steering committee. Control of the project must not be lost to other parties).
- Propose that an agreement is drawn up and the content approved.

N.B.: If the laws of the country allow, and if necessary, the ministry's support in obtaining import exemptions for sports equipment should be requested.

Communities	NGOs	Sponsors
• Local associations • Municipalities • District / provinces / regions • Villages • Parents • Local facilities • etc.	• Youth programmes • Assistance programmes • Vulnerable groups in society • Social integration • Educational programmes • Anti-drugs campaigns • The fight against poverty • etc.	• Hotels, banks, enterprises • Event organisers and personalities • Sports infrastructures • Financial and logistical support • Grassroots football projects • etc.

Content of the agreement

The agreement should be uncomplicated in order to avoid any problems of interpretation. The involvement of a third party, for example a football league or ministry department, should be avoided. The Member Association and the ministry must be directly involved.

Proposed content:

- Names of the two parties,
- Concisely present either, 1) each of the parties and their interest in setting up the project, or, 2) the common interest of both parties,
- The subject of the agreement with a list of the commitments of each party,
- The duration of the agreement and the conditions for cancellation,
- The date of commencement of the agreement,
- Any monitoring activities: a report on the previous year and the plan of action for the coming year,
- The option for renewing the agreement,
- Methods to resolve disputes,
- The signatures of both parties.

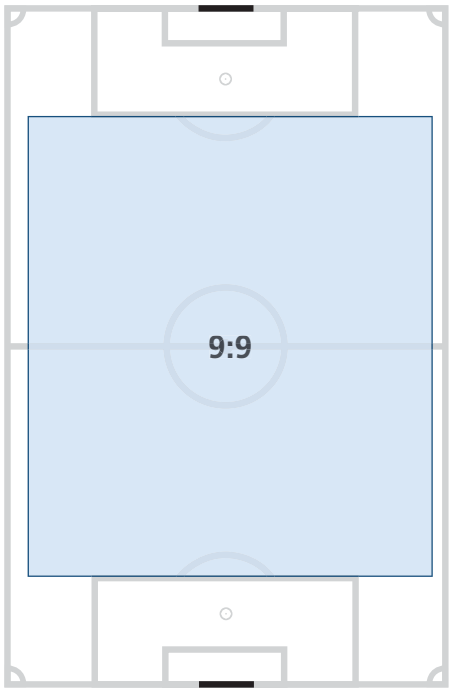
10

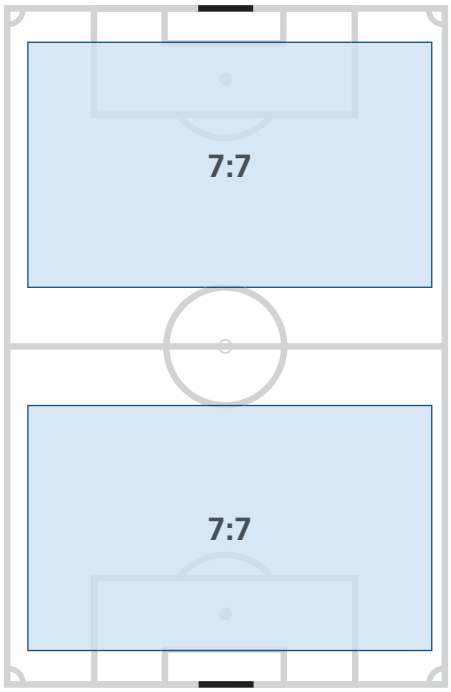
Annexes

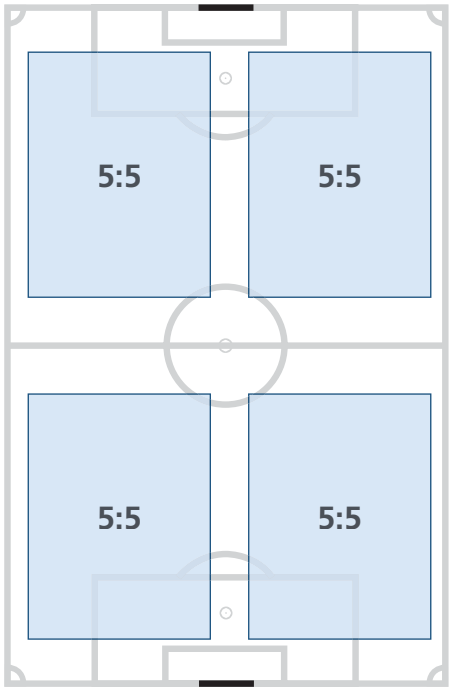
ANNEXE A.
Laws of the Game and regulations for small-sided games

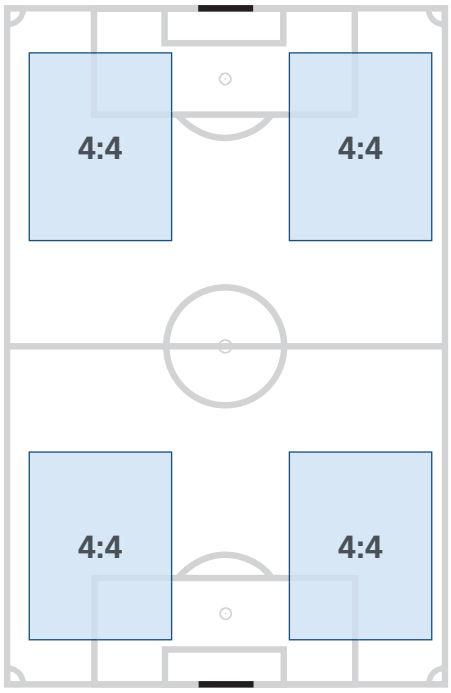
Dimensions of the pitch – football matches

4 v 4	Minimum: 12 m x 20 m	Maximum: 15 m x 25 m
5 v 5	Minimum: 20 m x 30 m	Maximum: 25 m x 35 m
7 v 7	Minimum: 30 m x 45 m	Maximum: 35 m x 50 m
9 v 9	Minimum: 45 m x 60 m	Maximum: 50 m x 67 m









Match formats

Match format depending on age	*Pitch size*
6-8 years old	
4 v 4 without goalkeeper (4 v 4)	From 12 m x 20 m to 15 m x 25 m
4 v 4 with goalkeeper (3+1 v 3+1)	From 12 m x 20 m to 15 m x 25 m
5 v 5	From 20 m x 30 m to 25 m x 35 m
9-10 years old	
4 v 4 without goalkeeper (4 v 4)	From 12 m x 20 m to 15 m x 25 m
4 v 4 with goalkeeper (3+1 v 3+1)	From 12 m x 20 m to 15 m x 25 m
5 v 5	From 20 m x 30 m to 25 m x 35 m
7 v 7	From 30 m x 45 m to 35 m x 50 m
11-12 years old	
4 v 4 without goalkeeper (4 v 4)	From 12 m x 20 m to 15 m x 25 m
4 v 4 with goalkeeper (3+1 v 3+1)	From 12 m x 20 m to 15 m x 25 m
5 v 5	From 20 m x 30 m to 25 m x 35 m
7 v 7	From 30 m x 45 m to 35 m x 50 m
9 v 9	From 45 m x 60 m to 50 m x 67 m

Refereeing

6-8 years old

No referee (coach-educators at side of pitch – Let the children play!)

9-10 years old

Refereeing optional (with and without referees)

11-12 years old

With referees

Duration of matches in a tournament

This depends on the format of the tournament and the time available. The total time of play (in other words of all the matches played by a team) must be roughly equal to a full match.

Example:

9-10 years old: 4 matches of 12 minutes = 48 minutes

Duration of matches in a championship:

6-8 years old

2 x 15 / 20 min.

9-10 years old

2 x 20 / 25 min.

11-12 years old

2 x 25 / 30 min.

Equipment

Goals: Maximum dimension: 5 m x 2 m. Cones and poles can be used if no proper goals are available. Futsal goals can also be used (3 m x 2 m).
Goals (large, heavy goals) must be properly secured so that they are safe and cannot be moved by players or supporters.

Footballs: 6-10 years old Size 4 (max. 290 grammes)
11-12 years old Size 4

The lines are marked out depending on the equipment available (5 v 5, 7 v 7, 9 v 9). A halfway line is required for 4 v 4 / but there is no penalty area.

Laws of the game

6-8 years old

No offside and no restriction on back pass to goalkeeper. Otherwise, the standard FIFA Laws of the Game apply (handball, fouls, etc.).

9-10 years old

- Offside from the penalty line.
- The goalkeeper's thrown and kicked clearances should not go beyond the halfway line (except for balls along the ground).
- When the ball is in play, the goalkeeper (and all other players) can clear beyond the halfway line. Otherwise, the standard FIFA Laws of the Game apply (handball, fouls, etc.).

11-12 years old

- Offside from the halfway line, back pass rule applies (as for 11-a-side).
- The goalkeeper's thrown and kicked clearances can go beyond the halfway line (as for 11-a-side).
- Standard FIFA Laws of the Game apply.

Medical care and treatment

- A first aid kit should be kept near the pitch if possible.
- Make sure that emergency telephone numbers are to hand: ambulance / doctor on call / hospital.
- Organise drinks breaks (encourage drinking water often in small quantities). Ideal quantity of water: 200 ml every 15-20 mins.
- Players should warm up before a match. All the children should do this together if possible.
- Cooling down after the match (all together as Fair Play activity).
- Goals must be properly secured so that they are safe and cannot be moved.

Spectators

- Distance from the edge of the pitch (for safety): 2-3 m.
- No spectators (or parents) in the area reserved for children and coach-educators.

Fair Play

- Organise welcome and farewell sessions for all the teams before and after the tournament.
- Players and coach-educators should shake hands before and after each match (see Annexe E).

ANNEXE B.
4-, 5-, 7- and 9-a-side football

4- and 5-a-side football

There are many options for play depending on whether a goalkeeper is used or not:

- 4 v 4 without goalkeeper or goal (keeping the ball, passing game, stop line),
- 4 v 4 without goalkeeper, small goals (2 or 4),
- 3 v 3 with goalkeeper
- 4 v 4 with goalkeeper.

The five benefits of 4- and 5-a-side football

1. The children discover football through the variety of games offered.
2. Opportunity for both boys and girls to play in considerable numbers.
3. Festival atmosphere (festivals, training sessions, activities, parties).
4. Helps with the development of the children's intellectual, emotional and motor skills.
5. The priority is on play rather than winning.

Five principles to emphasise during practice

1. Make sure all activities are games.
2. Do not allow any form of competition or classification.
3. Make sure all the children play and enjoy themselves without restriction.
4. Organise and prepare sessions and festivals.
5. Offer high-quality supervision (the importance of the human touch).

Examples of organisation

Principles:

- Four to six 5-a-side pitches can be arranged on a full-size football pitch (11-a-side). Matches can take place simultaneously on these pitches as well as relays and school games.
- Two or three 5-a-side pitches can be arranged on a half-size football pitch. Matches can take place simultaneously on these pitches as well as relays and school games.

It is recommended that:

- The existing lines are used: touchline, goal line and goal area of the 11-a-side pitch.
- Cones are used to finish marking out the 5-a-side areas (additional lines need not be drawn).

Procedure:

- Depends on the number of teams, each team taking it in turn to participate in (at least):
  - Two matches.
  - one school game adapted to football,
  - one relay.

4-a-side football

The pitch

4 v 4 without goalkeeper from 12 m x 20 m to 15 m x 25 m
4 v 4 with goalkeeper from 12 m x 20 m to 15 m x 25 m

- Four cones or poles, each placed 3 m from the corner along the touchline can be used to indicate the two penalty areas without marking any lines. The goalkeeper can handle the ball inside this area.
- Penalty spot: 4 metres from the goal.
- If proper goals are not available, use two cones or poles placed 3 m apart.

The teams

- A team is made up of four players (boys and girls) without a goalkeeper. If a team does play with a goalkeeper, there are three outfield players.
- Four substitutes are allowed. Substitutions can be made at any time during the match.
- Substituted players continue to participate in the match and can return to the pitch as substitutes themselves.
- In festivals, all players must participate on an equal basis.

The Laws of the Game

- The following rules of football are used:
  - All free kicks are direct.
  - No offside.
  - A penalty is awarded if the referee considers that a serious foul has been committed inside the penalty area.
  - Kick-off, free kicks, corner kicks, goal kicks: opponents must stand back 3 m.
- Football: Size 4.
- Refereeing: informative refereeing (no whistle) from off the pitch.

5-a-side football

The pitch

5 v 5 from 20 m x 30 m to 25 m x 35 m

- Four cones or poles, each placed 4 m from the corner along the touchline can be used to indicate the two penalty areas without marking any lines. The goalkeeper can handle the ball inside this area.
- Penalty spot: 5 metres from the goal.
- If proper goals are not available, use two cones or poles placed 4 m apart.

The teams

- A team is made up of five players (boys and girls) of which one is the goalkeeper.
- Five substitutes are allowed. Substitutions can be made at any time during the match.
- Substituted players continue to participate in the match and can return to the pitch as substitutes themselves.
- In festivals, all players must participate on an equal basis.

The Laws of the Game

- The following rules of football are used:
  - All free kicks are direct.
  - No offside.
  - A penalty is awarded if the referee considers that a serious foul has been committed inside the penalty area.
  - Kick-off, free kicks, corner kicks, goal kicks: opponents must stand back 4 m.
  - Corner kicks, goal kicks: opponents must be at least 4 m away when the kick is taken.
- Football: Size 4.
- Refereeing: informative refereeing (no whistle) from off the pitch.

7-a-side football

Seven reasons to play 7-a-side

1. Can be adapted to the existing facilities.
2. Allows a significant number of boys and girls to play.
3. Facilitates a smooth transition between 5-a-side and 9-a-side football.
4. It introduces the zones of play and player positions.
5. Develops team play.
6. Introduces the rules.
7. Encourages progress and development.

Seven rules to observe during practice

1. Make sure all the children play and enjoy themselves.
2. Allow a lot of freedom in the play.
3. Make light of the results and emphasise the way in which the football is played.
4. Use relationships (friendships) to create a team spirit.
5. Do not allow purely physical training (always use a ball).
6. Emphasise techniques and the play aspect.
7. Present progressive exercises and adapted games.

The basic formations

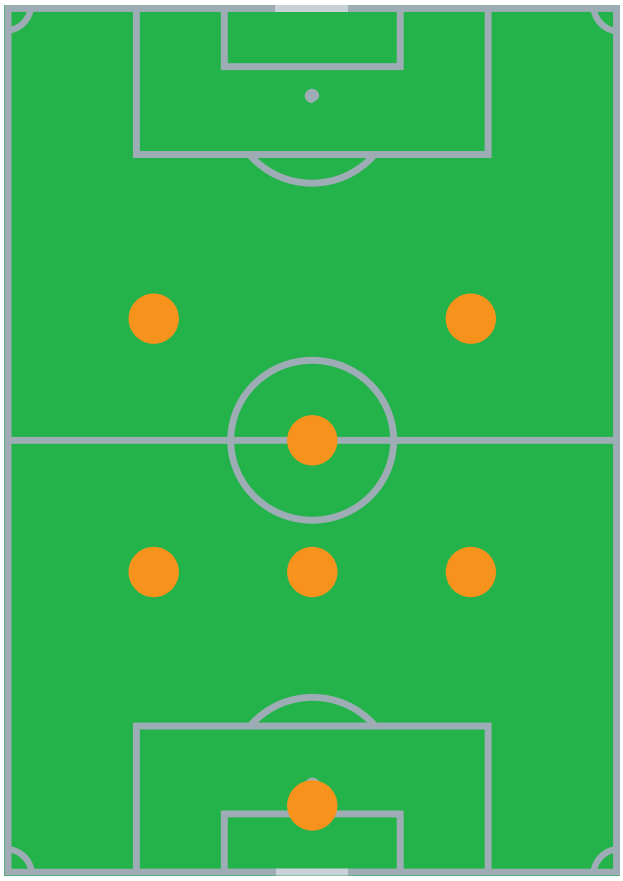
The success of 7-a-side football depends, in addition to technical abilities, on establishing a simple formation understood by all the players.

The coach-educator develops the bases of an organised game through the different formats played:

– Selection of formation and a coherent style of play.
– Players' positions.
– Organisation of the formation.

3-3

3-1-2



Behaviour in matches

There are two situations in a match that require different behaviour.

Team in possession of the ball	Team does not have possession of the ball
• Move forward • Lose markers • Support/backup • Passes, dribbling, shots	• Fall back while facing the ball • Covering (slow down the opponents' progress) • Marking • Interceptions • Duels

The pitch

7 v 7 from 30 m x 45 m to 35 m x 50 m

- Four cones or poles, each placed 10 m from the corner along the touchline can be used to indicate the two penalty areas without marking any lines. The goalkeeper can handle the ball inside this area.
- Penalty spot: 8 metres from the goal.
- If proper goals are not available, use two cones or poles placed 6 m apart.

The teams

- A team is made up of seven players (boys and girls) of which one is the goalkeeper.
- Seven substitutes are allowed.
- Substitutions can be made at any time in the match during a stoppage of play, with the approval of the coach-educator.
- Substituted players continue to participate in the match and can return to the pitch as substitutes themselves.
- In festivals, all players must participate on an equal basis.

The Laws of the Game

- The following rules of football are used:
  - All free kicks are direct.
  - A penalty is awarded if the referee considers that a serious foul has been committed inside the penalty area.
  - Kick-off, free kicks, corner kicks: opponents must stand back 6 m.
  - Offside: determined by an imaginary line passing through the penalty spot.
- Football: Size 4.
- Maximum duration of play: 50 minutes. No extra time.
- Refereeing: informative refereeing (no whistle) from off the pitch.

9-a-side football

Nine reasons to play 9-a-side

1. Can be adapted to the existing facilities.
2. Allows a significant number of boys and girls to play.
3. Facilitates a smooth transition between 7-a-side and 11-a-side football
4. Encourages more rational positioning on the pitch.
5. Ensures a better balance between the lines of defence, midfield and attack.
6. Develops the use of the channels.
7. Emphasises attacking play.
8. Develops adapted individual and team responses.
9. Encourages progress and development.

The teaching methods bring together training procedures, learning the basic formations and how to behave in matches.

9-a-side football assists learning because of the reduced playing space:

- It increases the opposition and the number of duels compared to 7-a-side.

– It also requires technical manoeuvres to be quicker and more accurate.
– The coach-educator should thus emphasise the acquisition of techniques (control, running with the ball, striking the ball). Controlling the ball with different parts of the body during play is the dominant feature of the training sessions. The coach-educator can also develop the bases of an organised game through the different formats played:
– Selection of formation and a coherent style of play.
– Players' positions (see diagrams).
– Organisation of a formation (coordinated movements of players, movement of the ball, covering, etc.).

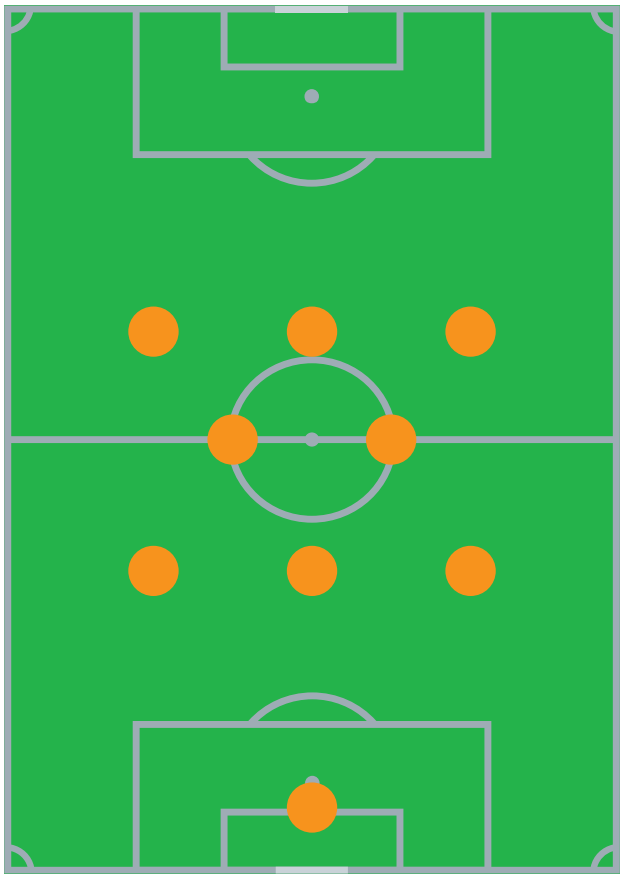
The basic formations

The success of 9-a-side football depends on establishing a simple formation understood by all the players (see example below).

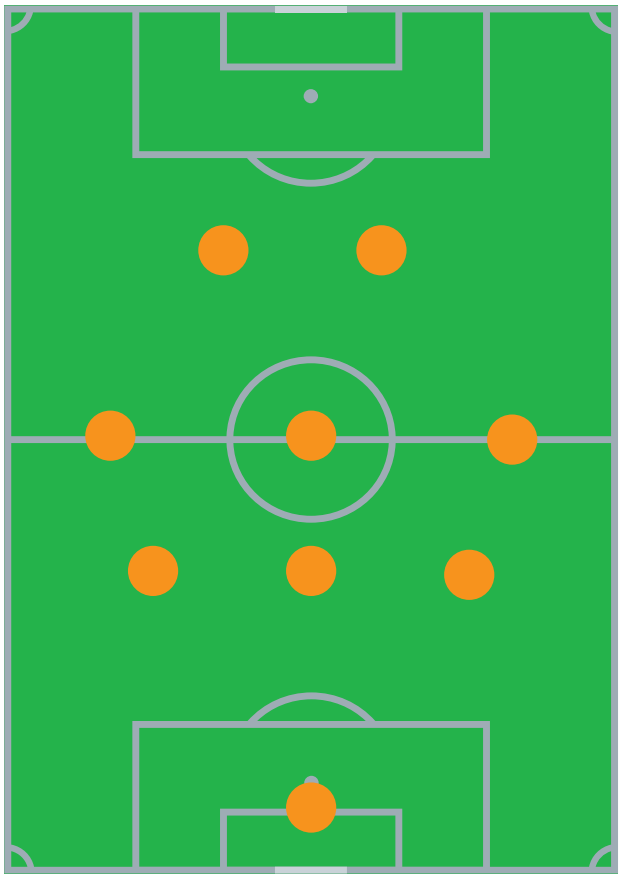
Features:

– Formation in three lines: balance, better occupation of the pitch.
– Play through the channels (wingers and defenders for 3-2-3 / midfielders and defenders for 3-3-2)
– Development of attacking play (more shots).

3-2-3



3-3-2



Behaviour in matches

There are two situations in a match that require different behaviour:

Team in possession of the ball	Team does not have possession of the ball
• Move forward • Lose markers • Support/backup player with ball • Passes • Dribbling • Shots	• Fall back while facing the ball • Covering (slow down the opponents' progress) • Marking • Interceptions • Duels

The pitch

9 v 9 from 45 m x 60 m to 50 m x 67 m

– These dimensions (approximately) correspond to half an 11-a-side pitch.
– The goals are 6 x 2 m (approximately).
– The penalty spot is 9 m from the goal.
– The centre circle has a 6 m radius.

The teams

– A team is made up of nine players (boys and girls) of which one is the goalkeeper.
– Seven substitutes are allowed.
– Substitutions can be made at any time in the match during a stoppage of play, with the approval of the coach-educator.
– Substituted players continue to participate in the match and can return to the pitch as substitutes themselves.
– In festivals, all players must participate on an equal basis.

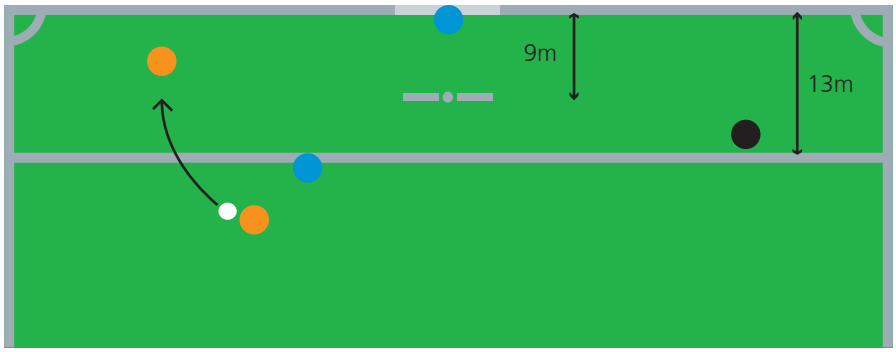
The Laws of the Game

– The following rules of football are used:
  • All free kicks are direct.
  • A penalty is awarded if the referee considers that a serious foul has been committed inside the penalty area.
  • Kick-off, free kicks, corner kicks: opponents must stand back 6 m.
  • Offside: identical to 11-a-side, although the offside area is marked out by the goal line, the touchlines and an internal line drawn 13 m from the goal line.
– Football: Size 4.
– Maximum duration of play: 60 minutes. No extra time.
– Refereeing: informative refereeing (no whistle) from off the pitch.

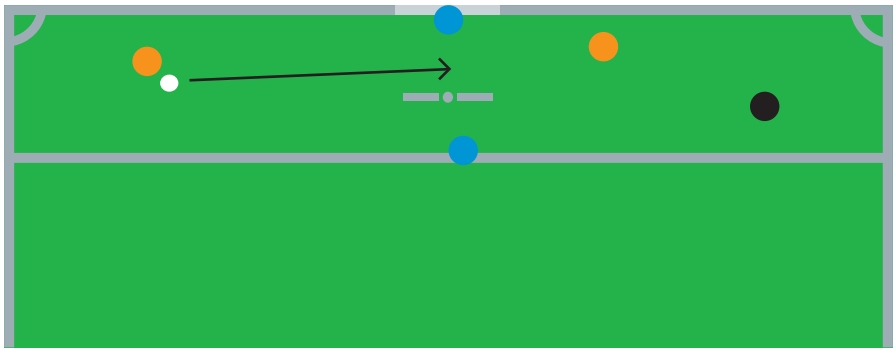
7-a-side and 9-a-side football

Offside rule:

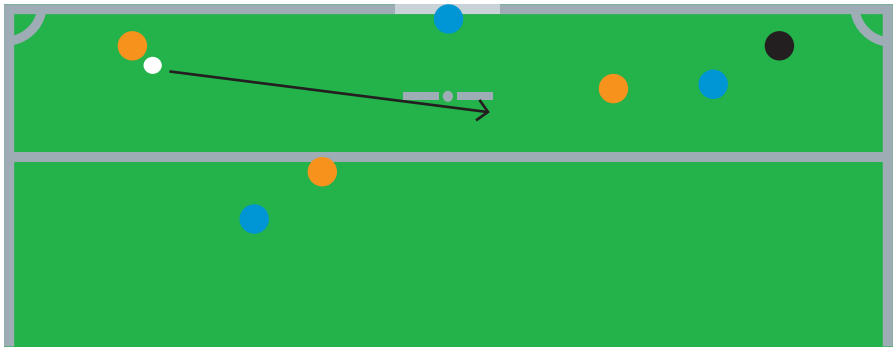
Identical to 11-a-side, although the offside area is marked out by the goal line, the touchlines and an internal line drawn 13 m from the goal line (see diagram).



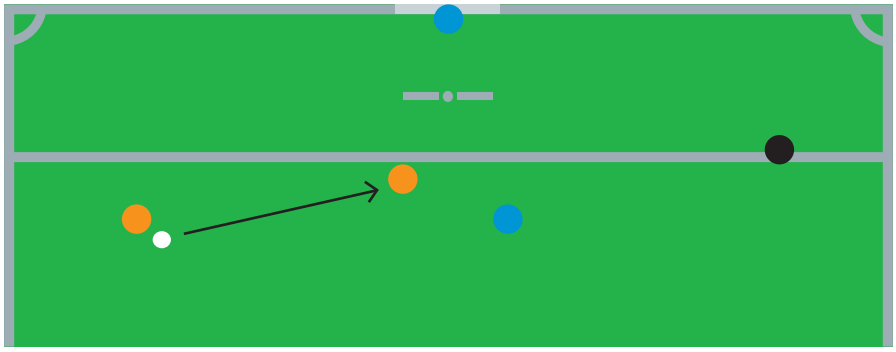
Offside: player in front of the ball in the offside area.



Offside: player in front of the ball in the offside area.



Not offside: player in the offside area, but behind the ball.



Not offside: player in front of the ball, but not in the offside area.

ANNEXE C.
Medium-term development plan

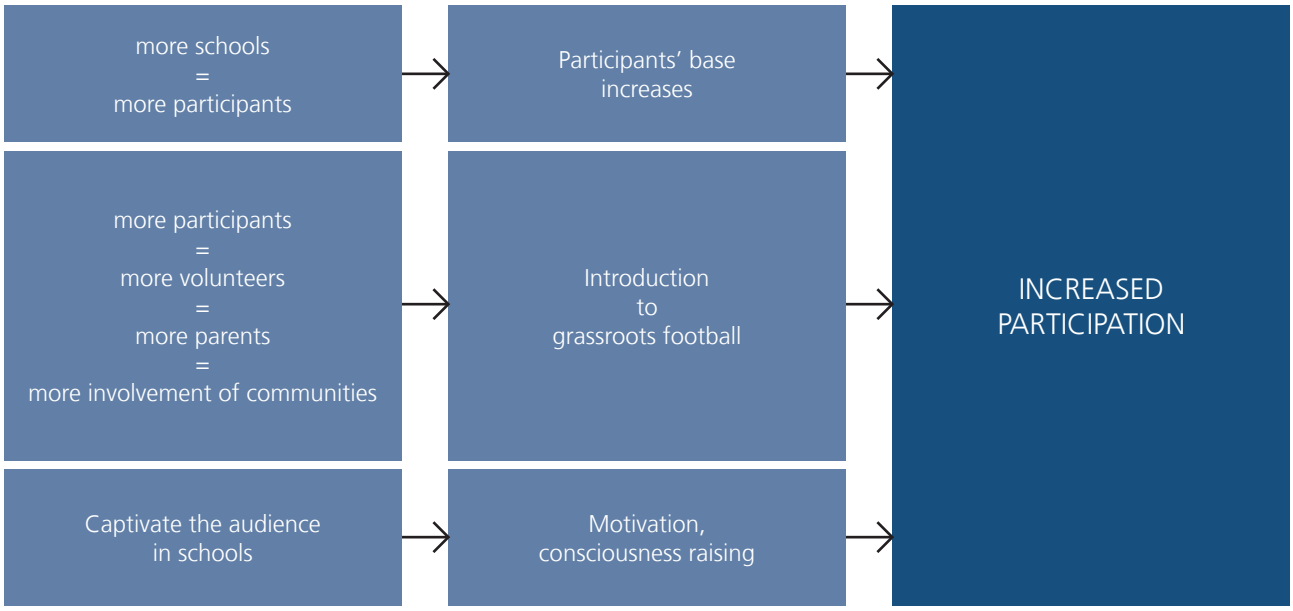
Aims

– To establish a grassroots football unit within the Technical Department of the Member Association.
– To set specific objectives on the following subjects:
  • Football for children,
  • School football,
  • Football in communities,
  • Grassroots football,
  • Training coach-educators,
  • Organising matches and competitions.
– To prepare a detailed plan for development at local, regional and national levels.

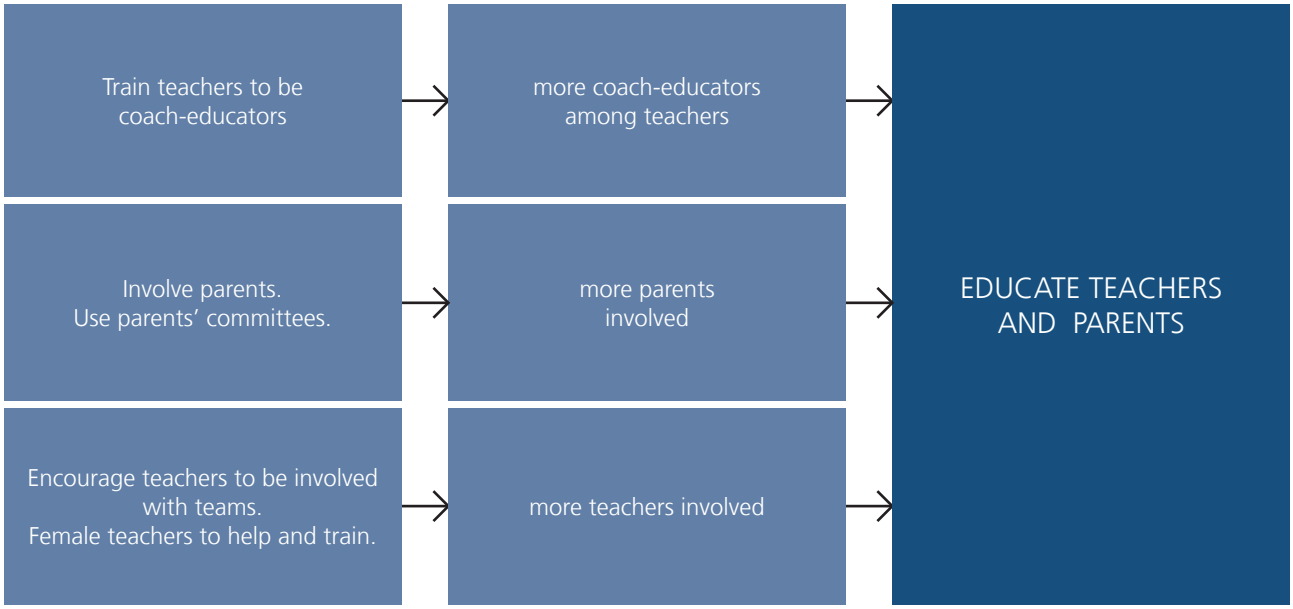
Objectives to be achieved (3 years)

– Increase participation (6-12 year olds / boys and girls),
– Improve the standards of coach-educators and increase the number of training courses,
– Organise more festivals and tournaments (various formats adapted to the circumstances),
– Improve communication and develop relations with partners,
– Improve sports facilities,
– Encourage the teachers, volunteers and parents who become involved,
– Establish a professional unit for the development of grassroots football within the Technical Department.
– Sign agreements with ministries, primarily the Education Ministry.

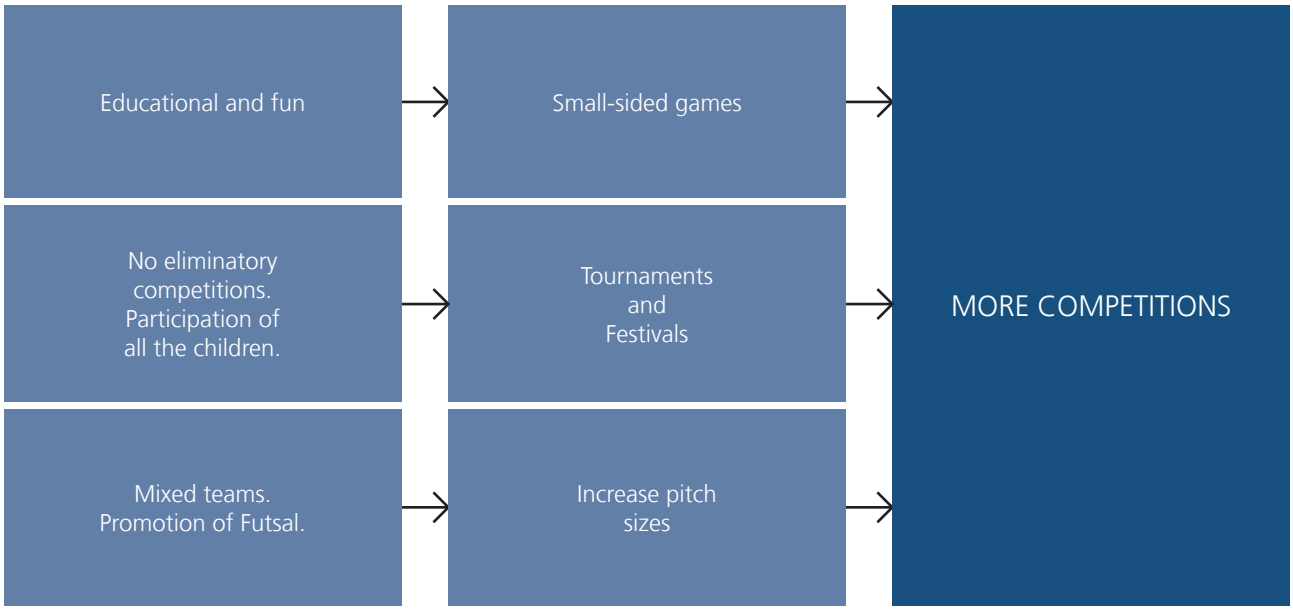
School football



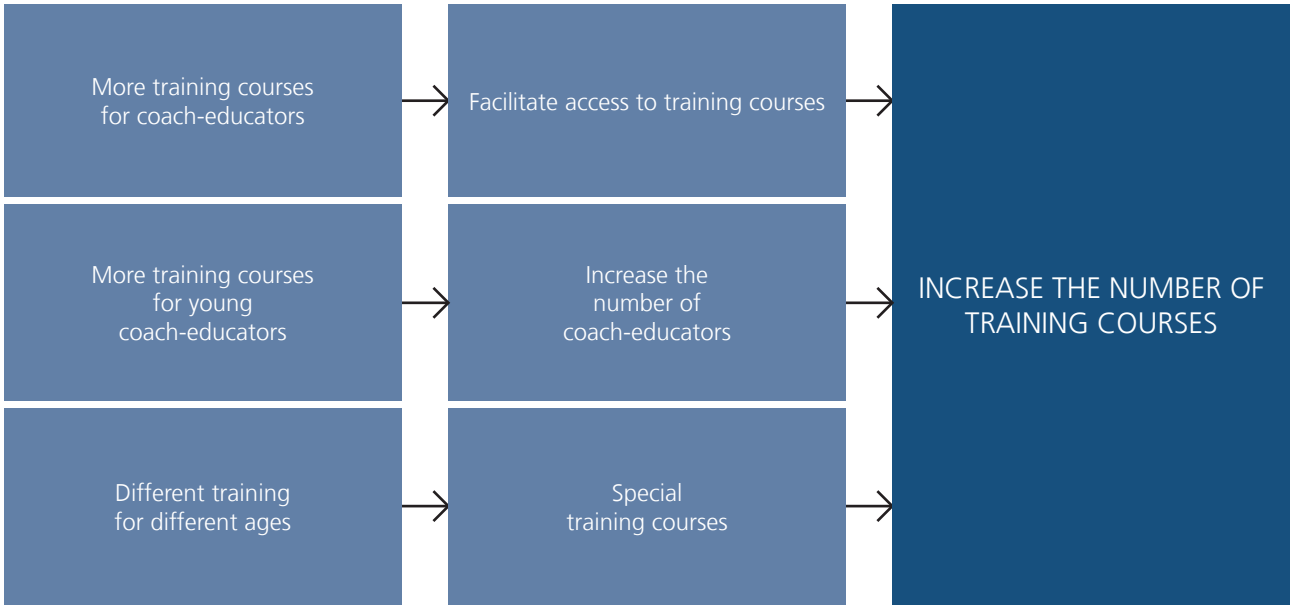
Create partnerships



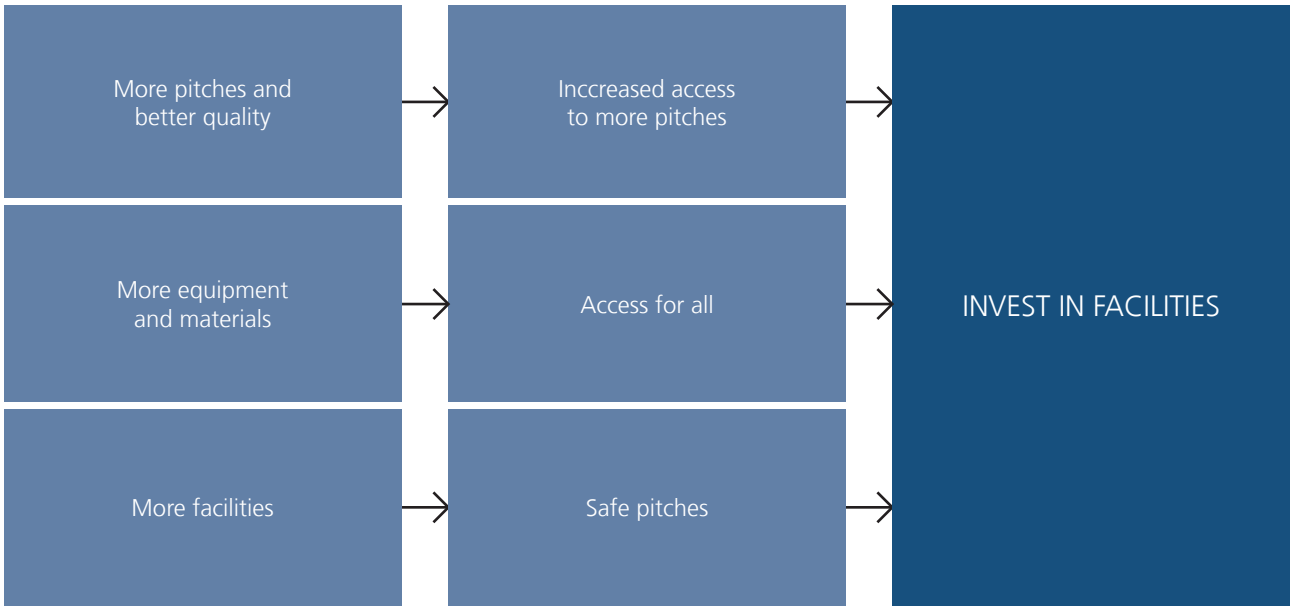
Competition formats



Coach-educators



Training and match facilities



Setting up a three-year development plan

Objectives	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 3 (Ii)
Impact	**Local**	**Regional**	**National**	**National**
Structure	Set up: • a grassroots football development unit; • a management committee.	Establish: • a grassroots football department in each region; • links with communities.	Establish a well-organised grassroots football department within the Technical Department of the Member Association.	Employ qualified personnel (e.g. local coordinators, grassroots football manager, etc.)
Participation	Launch of FIFA grassroots football pilot project in primary schools.	Develop grassroots football activities in primary schools.	Introduce 4-, 5-, 7- and 9-a-side football competitions.	Introduce Futsal and Beach Soccer. Promote community football.
Coach-educators	FIFA grassroots football training courses for teachers and young coach-educators.	Develop more training courses for different groups.	Increase access to coach-educator training (parents, teachers, etc.)	Increase the number of training courses for coach-educators.
Activities	Launch of the FIFA grassroots football project. Tournaments and festivals.	Develop joint tournaments and festivals for primary schools in the region.	Establish a national tournament for primary schools for different age groups. Also national festivals.	Introduce other tournaments and festivals (Futsal, Beach Soccer).
Equipment	Use existing materials and equipment.	Improve existing materials and equipment. Establish links with the government.	Broaden the range of existing equipment and provide new equipment.	Improve existing materials and equipment.

ANNEXE D.
Example statement

Trinidad and Tobago Grassroots Football Programme
Statement made by the former international player Travis Mulrane at the end of a grassroots football course.

As a former international footballer, I have had many great experiences during my career. These experiences started off in the ghetto, leading onto joining a village club side. Eventually I was selected for the national team. I'm happy to have been asked to share this marvellous experience that is grassroots football.

Over the last three days I have learned a lot about the importance of working with children and I have very much enjoyed my time spent helping them with the many games. Simply watching these youngsters use their natural talent among children of their own age has filled me with enthusiasm and reminds me of the time when I played as they now do. I had never realised that the art of teaching children meant more than simply becoming a coach-educator; you must also be a counsellor, a friend and, happily, someone who brings joy into the children's lives.

Remarkably, this group of children has shown an intelligence that seems far ahead of what you would expect for children of their age. Their motor skills and movements are so confident, even when faced with determined opponents.

During the exercises, I learnt a lot about the role of the coach-educator and how to encourage children to further improve the technique that seems to come so naturally to them. I found it amazing that some of the children were so advanced even though they had never received any formal training.

This fantastic experience has encouraged me towards a new career, one in which I can use my knowledge and experience acquired playing football at a high level. My desire to work with children, especially in small communities in my own country, increased immensely during the training course I attended just before the course with the children. This training course gave me a lot of advice on football education and was taught in the most straightforward and organised manner.

On behalf of my fellow coach-educators, I would like to express my gratitude to FIFA. The knowledge communicated to us during the coach-educator training course is now guaranteed to reach many villages in rural districts in Trinidad and Tobago.

Our commitment to this project will be pursued with the greatest of dedication and the fruits of our work will be recognised, we hope, in the years to come.

FIFA
FIFA

ANNEXE E.
FIFA Fair Play Code

Fair Play Code

The FIFA Fair Play Code for football encapsulates all of the sporting, moral and ethical principles for which FIFA has always stood and for which it will continue to fight in the future, regardless of the influences and pressures that may be brought to bear.

The ten golden rules not only serve as a credo for FIFA as world football's governing body, but they also reinforce the sense of fraternity and cooperation among the members of the worldwide football family.

1. Play fair

Winning is without value if victory has been achieved unfairly or dishonestly. Cheating is easy, but brings no pleasure. Playing fair requires courage and character. It is also more satisfying. Fair play always has its reward, even when the game is lost. Playing fair earns respect, while cheating only brings shame. Remember: it is only a game. And games are pointless unless played fairly.

2. Play to win but accept defeat with dignity

Winning is the object of playing any game. Never set out to lose. If you do not play to win, you are cheating your opponents, deceiving those who are watching, and also fooling yourself. Never give up against stronger opponents but never relent against weaker ones. It is an insult to any opponent to play at less than full strength. Play to win, until the final whistle. But remember nobody wins all the time. You win some, you lose some. Learn to lose graciously. Do not seek excuses for defeat. Genuine reasons will always be self-evident. Congratulate the winners with good grace. Do not blame the referee or anyone else. Be determined to do better next time. Good losers earn more respect than bad winners.

3. Observe the Laws of the Game

All games need rules to guide them. Without rules, there would be chaos. The rules of football are simple and easy to learn. Make sure you learn them; it will help you to understand the game better. Understanding the game better will make you a better player. It is equally important to understand the spirit of the rules. They are designed to make the game fun to play and fun to watch. By sticking to the rules, the game will be more enjoyable.

4. Respect opponents, team-mates, referees, officials and spectators

Fair Play means respect. Respect is part of our game. Without opponents there can be no game. Everyone has the same rights, including the right to be respected. Team-mates are colleagues. Form a team in which all members are equal. Referees are there to maintain discipline and Fair Play. Always accept their decisions without arguing, and help them to enable all participants to have a more enjoyable game. Officials are also part of the game and must be respected accordingly. Spectators give the game atmosphere. They want to see the game played fairly, but must also behave fairly and with respect themselves.

5. Promote the interests of football

Football is the world's greatest game. But it always needs everybody's help to maintain its greatness. Think of football's interests before your own. Think how your actions may affect the image of the game. Talk about the positive things in the game. Encourage other people to watch and play fairly. Help others to have as much fun from football as you do. Be an ambassador for the game.

6. Honour those who defend football's good reputation

The good name of football has survived because the vast majority of people who love the game are honest and fair. Sometimes somebody does something exceptional that deserves our special recognition. They should be honoured and their fine example publicised. This encourages others to act in the same way. Help to promote football's image by publicising its good deeds.

7. Reject corruption, drugs, racism, violence, gambling and other dangers to our sport

Football's huge popularity sometimes makes it vulnerable to negative outside interests. Watch out for attempts to tempt you into cheating or using drugs. Drugs have no place in football, in any other sport or in society as a whole. Say no to drugs. Help to kick racism and bigotry out of football. Treat all players and everyone else equally, regardless of their religion, race, sex or national origin. Show zero tolerance for gambling on games in which you participate. It negatively affects your ability to perform and creates the appearance of a conflict of interests. Show that football does not want violence, even from your own fans. Football is sport, and sport is peace.

8. Help others to resist corrupting pressures
You may hear that team-mates or other people you know are being tempted to cheat in some way or otherwise engage in behaviour deemed unacceptable. They need your help. Do not hesitate to stand by them. Give them the strength to resist. Remind them of their commitment to their team-mates and to the game itself. Form a block of solidarity, like a solid defence on the field of play.

9. Denounce those who attempt to discredit our sport
Do not be ashamed to stand up to anybody who you are sure is trying to make others cheat or engage in other unacceptable behaviour. It is better to expose them and have them removed before they can do any damage. It is equally dishonest to go along with a dishonest act. Do not just say no. Denounce those misguided persons who are trying to spoil our sport before they can persuade somebody else to say yes.

10. Use football to make a better world
Football has an incredible power, which can be used to make this world a better place in which everyone can live. Use this powerful platform to promote peace, equality, health and education for everyone. Make the game better, take it to the world, and you will be fostering a better world.

Handshake before and after the match

In 2003, the FIFA Executive Committee approved an addition to FIFA's Fair Play strategy and pledged to encourage greater efforts to boost fair play within the game.
A crucial part of this pledge was the decision to introduce handshakes not only before kick-off but also at the end of each match. The executive resolved to incorporate this gesture at all FIFA final tournaments with immediate effect.

The objectives of the post-match handshake are:
- To provide an appropriate and dignified end to the match, thus bringing the match full circle - opening procedure/ closing procedure.
- To guarantee an "official" end to the proceedings through a gesture that shows mutual respect and one that is in the true spirit of the game.
- To have the possibility of teams and match officials leaving the pitch more or less "together".
- To ensure players send a correct signal to the fans: "Despite a hard battle, emotions, disappointment or frustration, look, we are still friends, We are thanking our opponents and the match officials for a good game and have accepted the result. So, stay calm, and remember that no matter what is at stake in a match, it is ultimately only a game to be contested in accordance with the Laws of the Game and not to be dwelled upon once it reaches its conclusion and we leave the pitch."
- To ensure that this two-minute procedure has the side effect of "cooling" heated tempers prior to television interviews, which take place immediately after the end of the match.

The procedure for post-match handshake:
- Final whistle.
- The match officials meet in the centre circle.
- They signal for the teams to join them in the centre circle.
- The captains of the two teams are responsible for ensuring that each player comes and lines up behind their team captain.
- The two captains begin the handshake procedure, with the teams following as in the procedure before the match. The players do not have to be in a set position in the line-up. Each player should also shake hands with the match officials.
- After the handshakes, the players wave to the fans and leave the pitch together with the match officials.

This procedure is being implemented at all FIFA final tournaments and, at the same time, all Member Associations and confederations have been encouraged to introduce this gesture at the national and continental levels.

MY GAME IS
FAIR PLAY
FIFA

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Concept:	FIFA Education and Technical Development Department
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Typography:	FIFA Production
Translations:	Hurst & Freelancers
Photos:	Chilean Football Association, Chinese Football Association, Hungarian Football Association,
	Mauritius Football Association, Vanuatu Football Association
Printing:	RVA Druck und Medien, Altstätten, Switzerland