

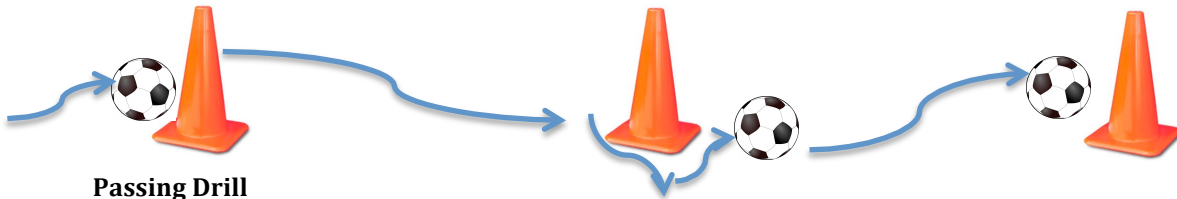
Drills for young Soccer players

JK Soccer - Overview

Preschool soccer parents may be competitive but the pint-sized players just want to have fun. Soccer involves running, kicking a ball and teamwork, and warming up for practice with games is the best way to develop the skills each element of soccer requires. Avoid an emphasis on winning and losing when preschool children take to the soccer field for the first time.

Cone Drill

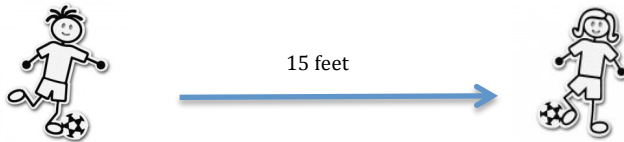
Set up three cones just past midfield. Give the first player in line a ball. Have him touch the ball to the right of the first cone, the left of the second cone and the right of the third cone. Then have the player dribble straight back to the start of the line as fast as he can. When he gets back to the starting point, he should pass the ball to the first teammate in line. Make sure all players get a chance to do this drill twice before moving on to the next drill.



Passing Drill

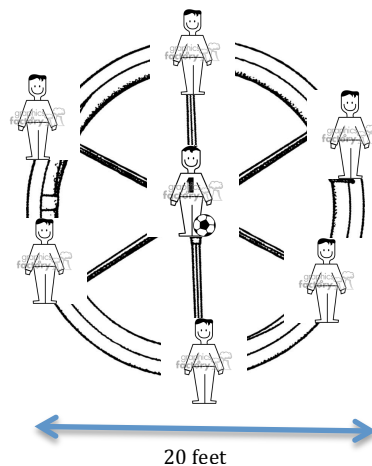
Pair up the players on your team. Give the first group a ball and start them out about 25 yards from the goal. They should be standing about 15 feet apart from each other. On your signal, player A will pass the ball to player B and take off down the field. As player B receives the ball, she passes back to player A and starts running as well. The two players should pass the ball to each other at least three times each before player A takes a shot. Then the two players go back on line and when it's their turn, they switch roles, and player B takes the shot.

Player A passes to Player B, vice versa (up to 3 times)



Spoke in the Wheel Drill

In this drill, all the players on the team form a circle about 20 feet in diameter. The coach selects one player to go in the middle. That player starts out with the ball. She passes the ball to one player in the circle, and that player delivers the ball back to her. She makes three more passes before the coach selects a new player to be the spoke in the wheel. Make sure all players get a chance to be in the middle. This teaches youngsters how to distribute the ball accurately.



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SK Soccer – Overview

Five-year-olds provide plenty of entertainment, some unintentional, for their coach. At times they get mixed up on which goal to run toward and forget that they cannot pick up the ball. Before the drills, have your players warm up so they start thinking about soccer and the practice to come. Have them toss the ball in the air or chase a ball thrown by you or a parent assistant. Drills for this age group need to be simple, fun and keep all the players involved, without waiting in lines.

Volcano Drill

You can work on the 5-year-olds' understanding of changing direction and feints with the Volcano Drill, suggested by Maryland-based youth coach Jim Garland. Mark a grid 20 by 20 yards with plastic cones and scatter plastic disks or "volcanoes," one per player, randomly within. Tell your players to run around the grid on your signal. As they approach a volcano, they must quickly change directions to avoid being burned by the lava. Demonstrate how they should flex one leg slightly to change directions quickly and push off the inside of that foot. Show your players how to exaggerate their change of direction and how to fake one way and then go another.

Follow the Leader Drill

Even the pros sometimes use this drill, but it's simple enough for 5-year-olds, too. Follow the Leader helps your 5-year-olds develop their dribbling skills without defensive pressure, Garland notes. Divide your players into lines of four or five within the same 20-yard-square grid and give each player a ball. The first player in each line leads and moves throughout the grid. The rest of your players follow while dribbling their balls. On your whistle, the last player pushes the ball to a spot five yards in front of the leader, sprints to the spot and becomes the new leader. The new last person repeats the sprint, and so on. Review with your player ways to control the ball and ways for each line to appropriately use the given space.

Two Open Goals

The concept of defense as well as offense begins to appear in the Two Open Goals drills, recommended by Sam Snow, director of coaching education for U.S. Youth Soccer. Set up two teams of three players each in a grid measuring 15 yards square. Set up two goals, each two yards wide, 10 yards apart, fully within the larger grid. Have one team attack and try to score goals through either goal, in either direction, while the other team defends. Both goals are open to keep the game flowing. If this game seems a bit too challenging for your 5-year-olds, instead give each player a ball and let the players dribble and shoot in a freeform manner, Snow suggests.

Two-Ball Game

Help your 5-year-olds grasp the importance of mobility with the Two-Ball Game, also suggested by Snow. Set up a grid measuring 8 by 10 yards and assign your players to two teams of three each. One team starts with both balls and must retain possession of the balls by passing and dribbling for one minute to gain a point. The other team tries to defend and steal the ball from the team in possession. After one minute, give the balls to the other team.

Toe Touches and Tic Toc – Basic Soccer Skills for Gr. 1-2 youths

Video by SNAP Soccer (Florida) : <https://youtu.be/7HKMIG9auOo>

Another excellent resource : U6 and U8 youth soccer practice activities by Matthew Pearson via Slideshare (developed for US Soccer leagues). <http://www.slideshare.net/matt1006uk/us-youth-soccer-practice-activities-u6u8>

For the older players (U10), there is another similar resource (also written by Matthew Pearson) aimed at parent volunteers : <http://www.slideshare.net/matt1006uk/us-youth-soccer-practice-activities-u10?related=2>