



COACHING JUNIORS & YOUTH AT WESTERN

17/10/23

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READ THIS FIRST!

AUTHENTICITY AND EMPATHY

Authenticity and empathy should be the cornerstone of your coaching persona. If you can take these two values with you wherever and whenever you coach, then you'll be leagues ahead of most other coaches in the world.

This document is filled with ideas for how we can engage with players of any age, it has numerous drills you can adapt as well as possible ways we as a coaching community can interpret player pathways. Without authenticity and empathy, none of your messages will get through to players. They won't respond to what you're trying to teach them as efficiently, they'll struggle to understand the reasons for the drills you organise, and they'll create engagement in their own way, as opposed to the structure you want to build within your team.

Even if you aren't a skilled hitter of the ball, or a strategic mastermind, showing empathy and being authentic will allow you to connect with players and help them engage with the fun, social side of sport, ultimately encouraging them to continue with it and progress at their own pace. They don't expect you to know it all and make them into Black Sticks - they'll do that themselves. They need your help enjoying hockey in a protected space where they can have fun and feel safe when making mistakes.

If you're ever struggling with your coaching, or feel as though you don't know enough to 'be a good coach', just remember that instead, being a good person that players can talk to, engage and explore hockey with is far more important.

You will do great, and if you ever feel like you're not doing great, feel free to get in touch and I'll happily join you at a coaching session to work things through.

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WESTERN COACHING PILLARS

Critical for creating fun, engaging hockey that everyone can enjoy!

Please take these pillars to heart when running your training.



Welcoming, fun & passionate

Be a positive role model! Ensure that the environment we're inviting players into is enjoyable, relatable and one that we can all be proud of.



Encourage self-challenge

Give choices to the learners where possible, support a shift to player-driven choice and encourage them to challenge themselves.



Skills are learned and reinforced

Learning is messy. Re-frame mistakes as 'exploration' and make drills look as much like in-game hockey as possible. Remember, progress isn't linear.



Time is used wisely

Try to avoid sending players on laps or giving lectures. Maximise your available time with the ball and stick and ensure they're all 'playing' hockey wherever possible.



Exploration is a priority

There's no one perfect technique. Encourage players to explore different, unique and team-specific ways to solve problems.



Reach players' individual goals

Praise individual successes, and encourage and support the pursuit of individual goals.



Nurture everyone differently

Create different challenge levels. Try to match the difficulty of the drills to the player capability to foster a positive attitude.

5 STAGES OF HOCKEY DEVELOPMENT



DISCOVER HOCKEY:

People discover field hockey in different ways and at various ages and stages of life. A positive and fun first exposure is critical to instilling a desire to get involved in the game.

PLAY & DESIRE TO LEARN:

Proper and appropriate introduction to the basic skills and concepts using a fun, active and learner-centred approach can fuel a desire for continued interest and growth, and a desire to compete and improve.

COMPETE & IMPROVE:

Being part of a team, preparing for competition, and competing is fun and challenging and teaches valuable life lessons. It's also a great way to improve and grow.

FULL ENJOYMENT / PEAK PERFORMANCE:

Players become hooked, love the game and are committed to the sport. For all, the inspiration is fun and continual improvement, as well as the health and social benefits. To some more driven athletes, it's the pursuit of greatness, striving to achieve and perform at the highest possible level.

YOUR PLAYERS. THEIR JOURNEY. SUCCESSSES & PROGRESSION

YOUR TEAM WILL BE UNIQUE

We'll have set up a system that will help you understand your players. This can be as useful or useless as you make it. The following pages display what each stage might 'look like' and also the skills we suggest training within those stages. Please use this to influence your training, so that the players can make the best progress.

THEIR JOURNEYS ARE UNIQUE

Likewise, their journeys will be unique. They'll progress at different rates and some might spend longer in some stages than others. That's ok, and it should be encouraged as this will help them build confidence in their basics while keeping them in teams where they don't feel they're underachieving.

WE NEED TO WORK AS ONE

Western doesn't need robot hockey players, and it certainly doesn't want robot coaches. We NEED you to bring your own style to hockey. Your jokes, demeanour, passion and caring are all amazing attributes that we rely on. We do, however, ask that you follow the stages or skills, as best you can. The kids need the right skills taught and reinforced at the right time so that they can master them and build on them as they progress in hockey.

WE HAVE SOME DRILLS AT THE END TO GET YOU STARTED

You'll all have your own drills you love running, and if the kids love them too, then we fully encourage you to use them! If you're looking for some more inspiration, though, there are some at the end you're welcome to adapt.

WE WOULD LOVE TO MEASURE PROGRESSION

To help our players we'll be proposing one training session towards the end of the season that follows a pre-set format in which we can see how the kids have progressed over the year and if any should be moved up a 'stage'. Any results from these sessions will not be a reflection on you and the players should NOT be made aware that this is happening! They'll feel tested and the pressure will most likely make them perform poorly.

WE WOULD LOVE YOUR FEEDBACK

At the end of the season we'd love to hear your thoughts on how things went, difficulties you faced and what you found worked well for your team!

IMPORTANT!

WHEN TEACHING SKILLS,
OR RUNNING GAMES,
PLEASE BE RIGOROUS
WITH TECHNIQUE.

WHILE THE CHILDREN
ARE HAVING FUN, IT'S
IMPERATIVE WE INSTIL
GOOD FUNDAMENTALS
THAT THEY CAN BUILD
THEIR GAME ON.

Good technique early means they won't get left behind when it comes time to develop. During games, they'll be able to focus on decision making and action vs. fears of making technical skill based mistakes.

1

DISCOVER HOCKEY

Example demographics/teams include:

NEW PLAYERS	FUN/MINI STICKS
YOUTH B	DIVISION 4

Skills introduction

Grip	Basic grip Hitting grip
Ball carrying	Running with the ball Changing direction Change of pace
Elimination	Dragging (L-R/R-L)
Distribution	Forehand push pass Forehand 'slap' push pass Reverse upright pass
Receiving	Forehand & reverse open receiving Forehand closed receiving Basic movement/changing angles
Goalscoring	Forehand push/flick
Winning the ball	Footwork Forehand/reverse stick tackle Forehand/reverse stick interception
Goalkeeping	Ready position Balance Clearing the ball (R/L foot)

Tactical introduction

General concepts	Manipulating space & time 360 degree vision Recognising passing lanes Passing & moving
Defensive concepts	Understanding dangerous space Interception mentality Angles of approach Creating/defending small spaces
Offensive concepts	Triangle play & possession Positioning & structure 1v1 attacking strategies

NOTE: Many of the more advanced skills will be picked up on a player's own time as they begin to want to improve their hockey game at their own pace. This should be noted and encouraged.

Indications for further development (one or many):

BASICS COMPETENCE	DESIRE FOR KNOWLEDGE
DISPLAY OF FURTHER SKILLS	

2

PLAY & DESIRE TO LEARN

Example demographics/teams include:

DEVELOPING PLAYERS	KIWI/KWIK STICKS
YOUTH B/A	DIVISION 4/3

Skills introduction

Grip	Frying pan grip Short handle grip
Ball Carrying	One-handed dribbling Forward lifted dribble
Elimination	Change of pace (in contest) Body positioning to protect the ball Lifting the ball (Forehand/reverse)
Distribution	Forehand sweep Forehand one-touch/deflection Forehand lifted pass Forehand upright hit Forehand short handle hit
Receiving	Bouncing ball receiving
Goalscoring	Forehand upright hit/chip/choke Rebounding & positioning Forehand/reverse stick deflection
Winning ball	Jab/poke tackle
Goalkeeping	Footwork Angles/positioning

Tactical introduction

General concepts	Prescanning before receiving Communication strategies
Defensive concepts	Man-to-man Engaging distance & timing Defending roles Regaining & transitions
Offensive concepts	2v1 attacking strategies Verbal/non-verbal communication Transfer awareness Recognising numbers up/down Attacking roles

NOTE: Many of the more advanced skills will be picked up on a player's own time as they begin to want to improve their hockey game at their own pace. This should be noted and encouraged.

Indications for further development (one or many):

COMPETENCE IN HOCKEY	DESIRE TO EXCEED
DISPLAY OF FURTHER SKILLS	

3

COMPETE & IMPROVE

Example demographics/teams include:

INVOLVED PLAYERS	KWIK STICKS
YOUTH A	DIVISION 2/1

Skills introduction

Ball carrying	Small space control Deception - Body/stick feints
Distribution	Reverse sweep pass
Goalscoring	Forehand deflection in the air Reverse stick sweep shot Reverse stick tomahawk
Winning the ball	Channel/double team Recovery defence
Goalkeeping	Aerial saves (glove/stick sides) Diving & sliding saves Defensive management

Tactical introduction

Defensive concepts	Verbal/non-verbal communication Zonal/numbers down defence Marking ball side/help side Front marking Goal-side marking Delaying/channelling attackers Circle defence
Offensive concepts	Counter-attack/transitional play 3v2 attacking strategies

NOTE: Many of the more advanced skills will be picked up on a player's own time as they begin to want to improve their hockey game at their own pace. This should be noted and encouraged.

Indications for further development (one or many):

HOCKEY EXCELLENCE	DESIRE TO EXCEED
CONSISTENT APPLICATION	FURTHER INVOLVEMENT

4

FULL ENJOYMENT / PEAK PERFORMANCE

Example demographics/teams include:

TOP-LEVEL PLAYERS	YOUTH A
DIVISION 1	PREMIER GRADES

Where to from here:

This is where we really need to focus on encouraging players to pursue their own personal goals. By now, their skills will be improved through competitive play, exposure to higher coaching and through their own personal drive.

High performance coaching opportunities will ensure our players remain driven and find enjoyment through their personal successes. Those wanting to go on to higher hockey endeavours must have some kind of backing at the club to do it so we're not reputed to leave players with few opportunities after Pregs.

Creating life-long hockey players through these methods will ensure we can maintain a healthy club with high-end players who pass on their skills to the up-and-coming generations.

Creating :

DESIRE TO GIVE BACK	SOCIAL ENJOYMENT
KEEPING HOCKEY FIT	

TIPS TO BECOME A GREAT CHILDREN'S COACH

PRIORITISE THE LOVE FOR SPORT OVER LEARNING THE SPORT

Coaches who prioritise the love for sport and physical activity ask themselves – “what am I doing to make sure the young people I coach want to come back for more?”. Key to this is making sure your coaching sessions are:

- *Fun*
- *Social*
- *Novel and varied*

LOOK BEYOND THE SCOREBOARD TO MEASURE SUCCESS

Coaches who look at more than the scoreboard might define success as:

- *My athletes progress against development goals set at the start of the season.*
- *My athletes display great sportsmanship.*
- *My athletes can learn lessons from sport that they can then apply to other areas of their life (e.g. teamwork, dealing with adversity, etc)*
- *My athletes are happy and want to keep playing sport.*

COACH FOR ALL YOUNG PEOPLE - UNDERSTAND THAT ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL

Great coaches know that applying a one size fits all approach often neglects or doesn't work for many of the young people they coach. This means they:

- *Don't just focus on the most talented athletes.*
- *When necessary, adjust their coaching style and approach (e.g. how they communicate feedback) based on the individual.*
- *Take a constraints-based approach to work with groups of young people with mixed ability at the same time. To do this, great coaches will provide different rules for different individuals in a training session, so that a session's objective is easier for some and harder for others.*
- *Design sessions and activities that promote a learning environment focussed on building young people's confidence, competence, connection and character.*

VALUE COMPETITION AND KNOW HOW TO USE IT IN A DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE WAY

When it comes to using competition well, great coaches:

- *Avoid replicating the adult-version of competition for tamariki and young rangatahi, and only introduce it when its developmentally appropriate.*
- *Understand how competition incentivises and influences different behaviours around:*
 - *Selection.*
 - *Strategy, such as positioning and game-time.*
 - *Parent behaviours.*

WORK WITH PARENTS POSITIVELY

You won't know what the parents of the young people you coach can offer until you talk to them. Ways in which great coaches connect with parents include:

- *Pre-season meetings, where you outline your coaching philosophy, approach and vision for the season. This could be 30 minutes before a training or a game.*
- *Texts and emails throughout the season with athlete-updates – try make a goal to send a text or email to each parent at least once during the season providing an authentic update about their child – what they excelling at and what have they developed or progressed in?*

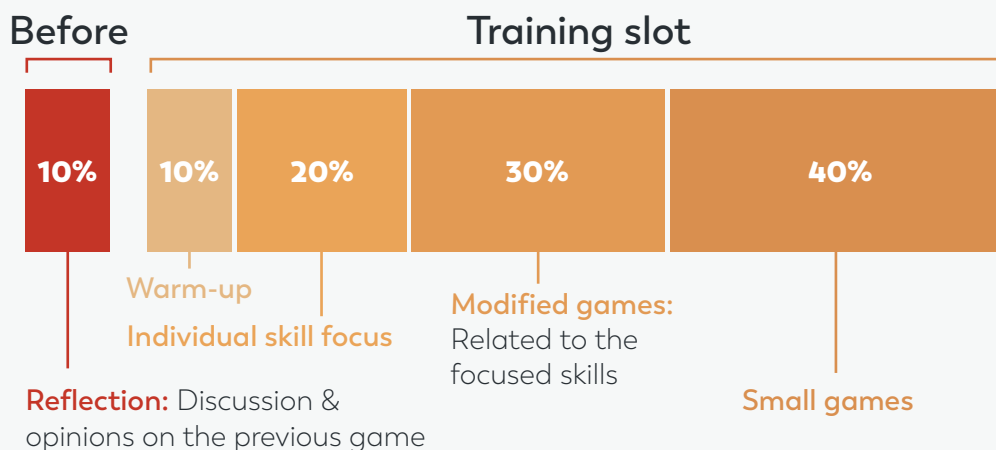
INCLUDE WILLING PARENTS IN PLAY

Kids love spending time with their parent. Make the most of this by trying to include parents not only in encouraging their child, but engaging with them, too. Look through the drills you have planned and see how they might be included. Some ideas might be:

- *Get the parents to grab a stick and be their child's partner.*
- *Have parents roll balls to their kids in drills so they can trust they won't get hurt.*
- *Do parent/kid games from sports days like three legged races or wheelbarrows.*

PLANNING A TRAINING SESSION

To help organise your training, consider using the following as a guideline to ensure fun, feedback, variety and progression:



ADDITIONAL TOOLS TO ENLIVEN YOUR SESSIONS

To make trainings a little more stimulating, we've added a box to the shed with different balls, minion-like 'cones' or targets if you like and we hope to keep adding to it as we can. Feel free to use these as you see fit, but please put them back in the box for the next coach when you're done!

HELPFUL DRILLS TO GET YOU STARTED

The drills in the following pages are sorted by **primary skill (or concept)** with icons describing secondary skills that are utilised. For example, a dribbling 'obstacle course' with a shot at goal at the end might be primarily 'ball control' with a secondary skill of 'shooting'.



Major skills learned
e.g. dribbling/carrying



Minor skills learned
e.g. shooting (left), offensive concepts (right)

Each of these drills also has variations which you can use to add flavour or to introduce skills in different stages of player progression. For example, a dribbling drill might initially be stage 1 - discover hockey, but can have variations that make the drill harder or more varied so that you can introduce skills from later stages (2-4).

Using the 'dribbling/carrying' icon as an example



Stage 1
Discover



Stage 2
Play



Stage 3
Improve



Stage 4
Enjoy

REMEMBER, MAKE THESE DRILLS YOUR OWN. ADD YOUR OWN FLAVOUR, KEEP IT FUN AND ENSURE YOUR PLAYERS ARE MAKING INDIVIDUAL AND TEAM PROGRESS!

THE ICONS' REPRESENTATIONS

Please refer back to the pages outlining stages 1-4 for what skills/concepts you should involve within these drills as their specific levels.

SKILLS



DRIBBLING & CARRYING THE BALL

Grips, body position, running with the ball, changes of speed/direction, drags, elimination, 3D skills etc.



PASSING & RECEIVING

Push pass, slap pass, one-touch, open/closed receiving, receiving bouncing balls, receiving on the move, overheads etc.



HITTING & SCORING

Hitting, pushes on goal, flicks, deflections, rebounding, chip/choke shots, reverse sweep, tomahawk etc.



TACKLING & INTERCEPTIONS

Footwork, interceptions, forehand/backhand tackling, jab/poke tackles, channelling, double teams, recovery defence etc.

CONCEPTS



GENERAL CONCEPTS

Manipulating space & time, 360 vision, recognising passing lanes, communication, prescanning etc



OFFENSIVE CONCEPTS

Triangles, positioning, 1v1, 2v1, 3v2, attacking roles, recognising numbers, counter-attacking etc.



DEFENSIVE CONCEPTS

Recognising dangerous space, interception plays, small games, man-to-man/zone marking, channelling, circle defence etc.

WARM-UP GAMES

Ideas for getting kids excited and warmed up



Player/Attacker



Team 2/Defender



Cone (if needed)



Player run with ball

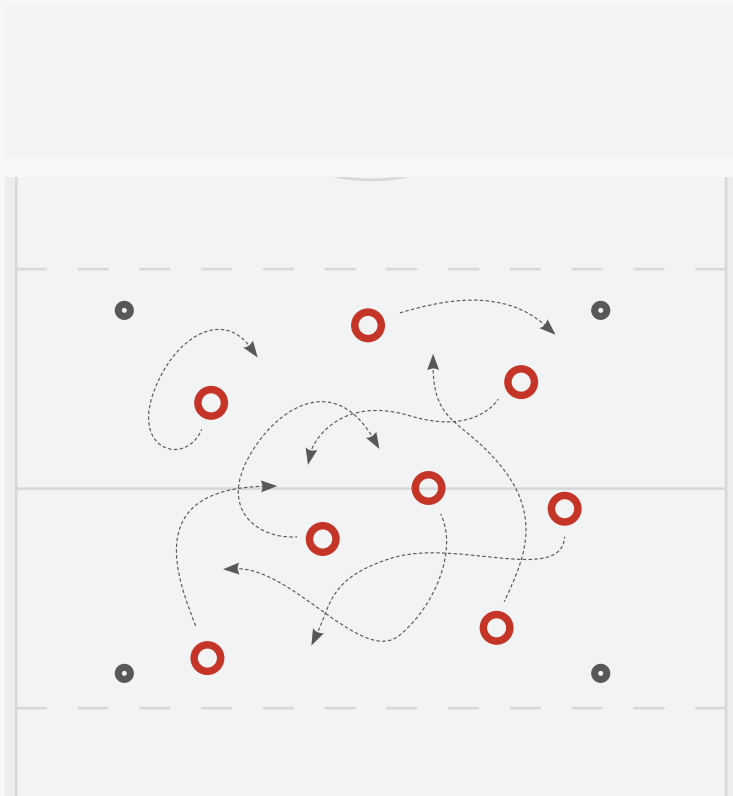


Player run/lead without ball



Ball travel (pass/hit/shot etc)

BIB TAG

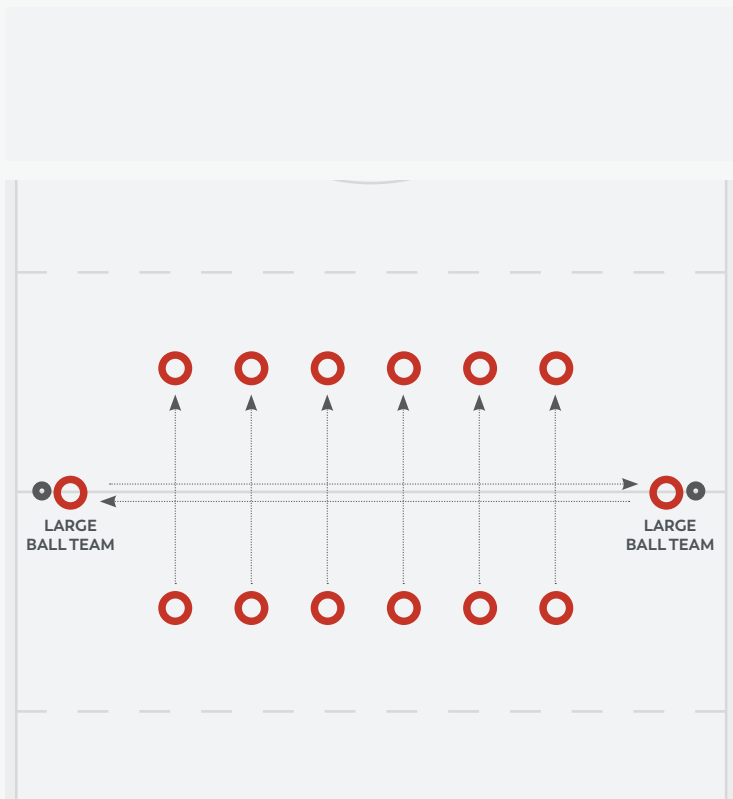


Each player has a bib in the back of their shorts. The aim is to finish with as many bibs as possible after a given time period.

VARIATIONS

- Can start with some players without bibs
- Increase or decrease the space
- Change to walking or skipping etc.

ROLLABALL



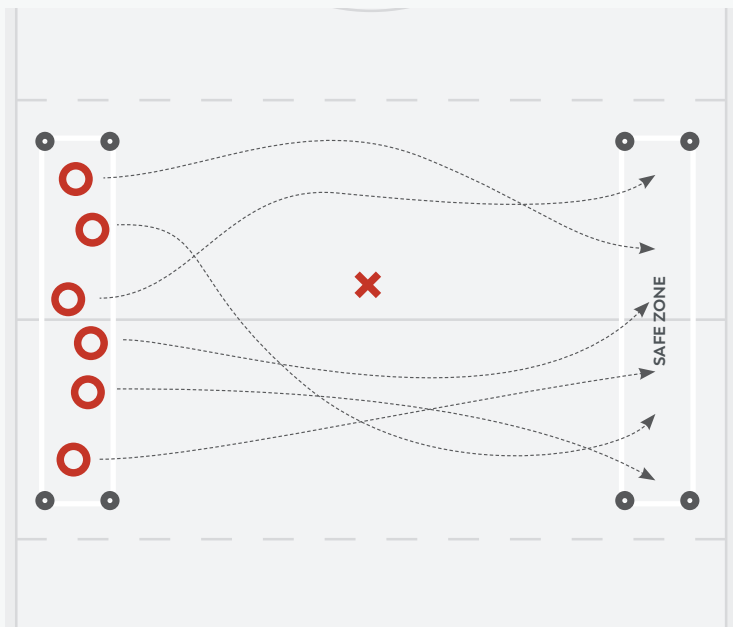
Players get into pairs with a ball between them and stand opposite one another forming a 'tunnel'.

One pair is selected to hit/roll a large ball to one another down the middle of the tunnel while the 'tunnel' pairs pass the ball to one another in an attempt to hit the larger ball as it rolls by.

VARIATIONS

- Look for good passing and trapping technique
- Ensure the players are timing their passes to hit the ball, not solely trying to hit the ball regardless of direction

OCTOPUS



Octopus to tag as many players (attackers) as possible while the attackers are trying to cross to the safe area without being tagged.

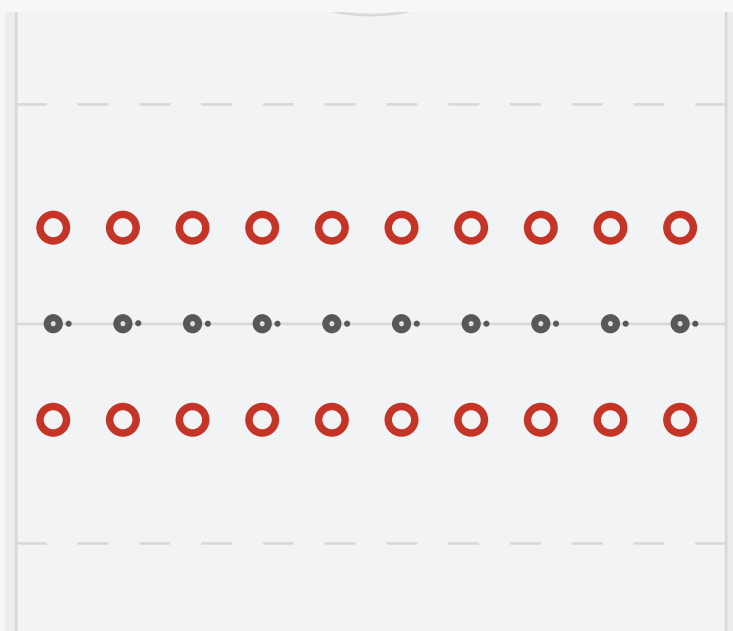
If they are tagged then they become 'seaweed' and are unable to move. The 'seaweed' can tag attackers that run past them.

When 'Octopus' is called then every attacker on the line that is called has to run.

VARIATIONS

- Add more Octopuses to the middle to start

SIMON SAYS



Everyone has a partner and are in two lines (on either side of a main line). There's a ball and cone on the line in front of each pair.

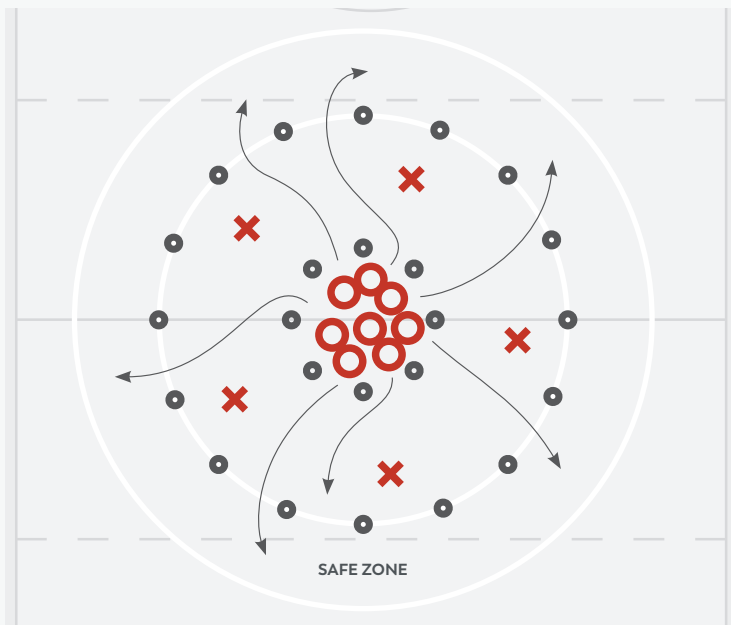
Everyone has to listen to the instructions being called out - 'Heads, shoulders, knees, toes etc.

When either 'cone' or 'ball' is called out, each pair tries to get their item first. Replace the item back on the line and set-up again.

VARIATIONS

- Change the distance between each pair
- Speed up the instructions

JAILBREAK



Prisoners are inside the smaller circle with a ball each. Officers are within the cones for the outer circle.

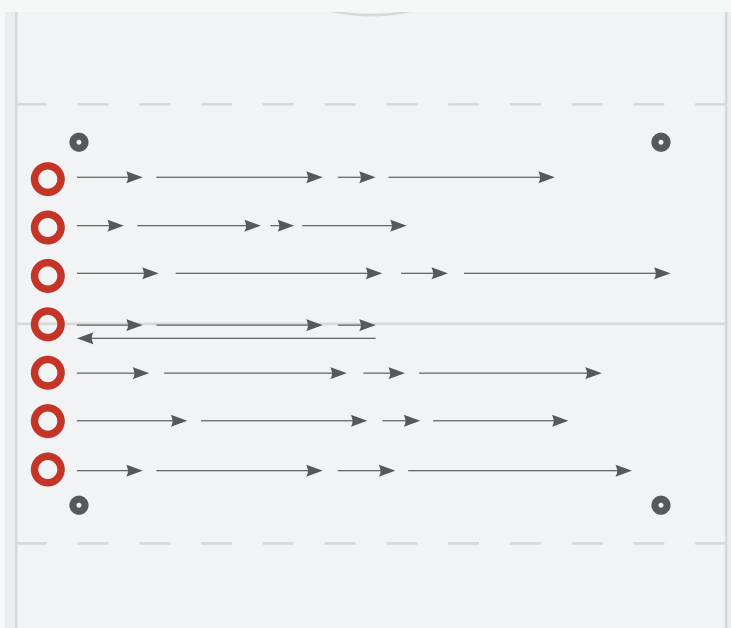
Prisoners are trying to get out of the big circle (into the safe zone). Officers along the outside have to try and hockey tackle the prisoners to stop them escaping.

Once prisoners are tackled they become officers. Last prisoner left is the winner.

VARIATIONS

- Change where the officers start
- Change the size of the circles
- Prisoners have to complete certain skills before they break out of jail
- Prisoners have to touch a cone with their ball before they have to escape
- Only forehand tackling for defenders etc.

TRAFFIC LIGHT



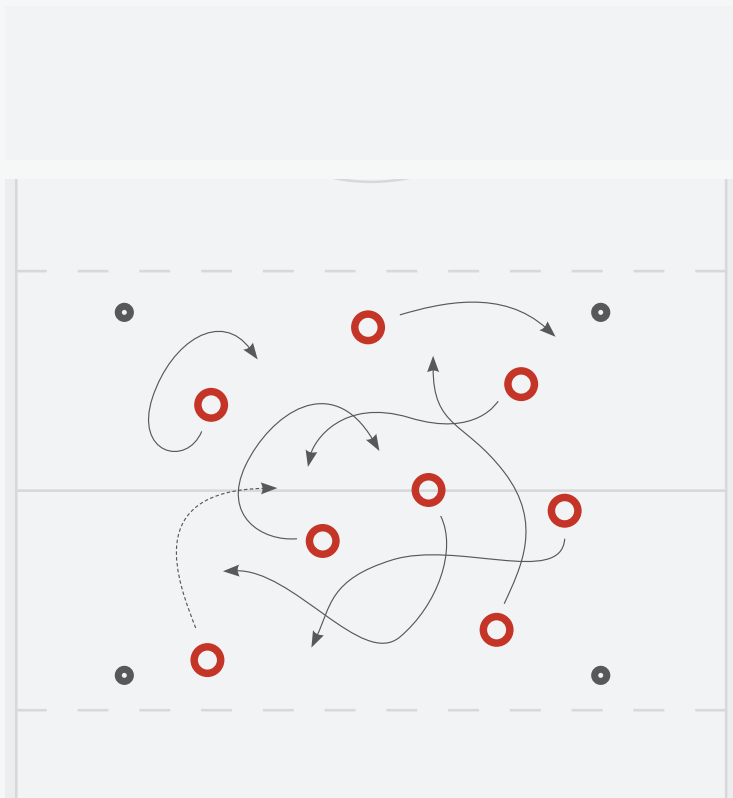
Red means stop.
Orange means slow motion.
Green means run.
Motorway means go super fast!

Students are trying to get to the end while dribbling the ball whilst listening to the instructions. If they make a mistake then they go back to the start.

VARIATIONS

- This can also be done without a stick and ball
- Add in extra instructions (i.e. 360, backwards, sideways, crawling etc.)

LINKING GAME



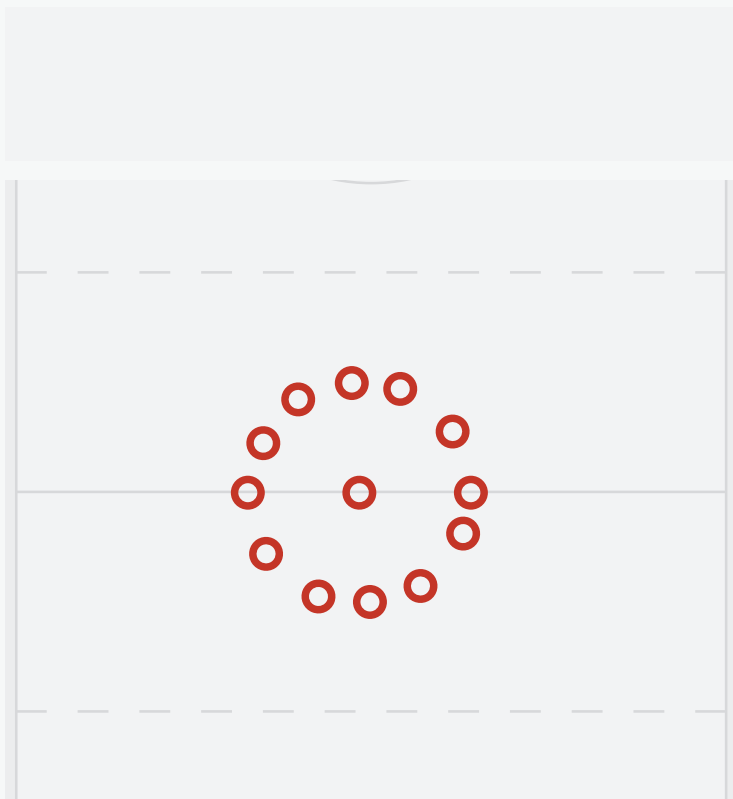
Students are required to move around in a marked area and listen for numbered instructions defining a skill. Come up with 3 or 4 to begin, for example, #1 - drag left to right, #2 do a 180 etc

When a number is called they have to replicate the skill that number represents.

As time goes on, add more numbers to the list. Change the activity they do in between the numbers being called.

VARIATIONS

EXERCISE CIRCLE

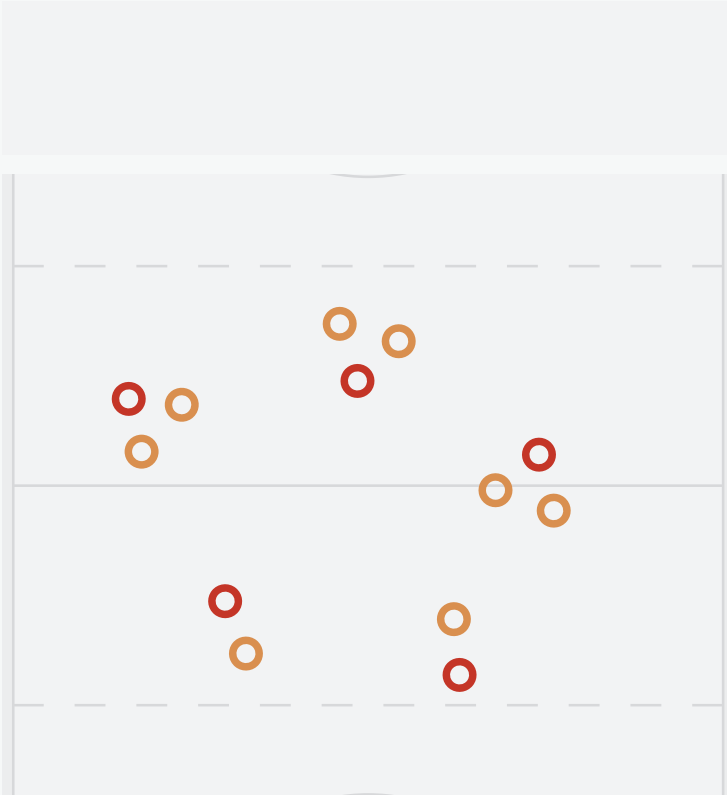


One student in the middle of a circle. The student in the middle gets to choose the exercise for 30 seconds.

They then choose somebody else to go in the middle.

VARIATIONS

MIRRORS



Children are in pairs or threes.

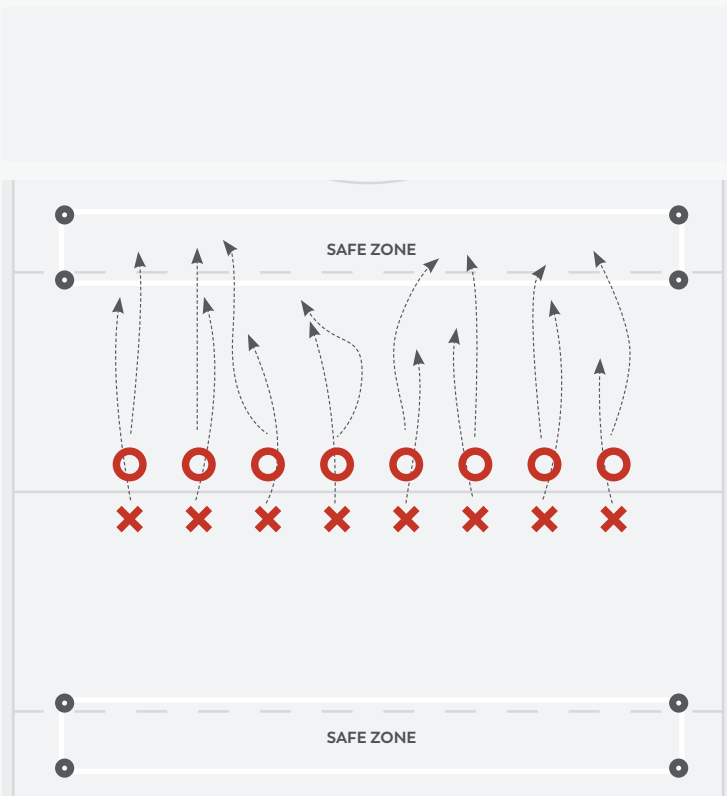
One is the leader and the other students in their group have to copy what they are doing.

Everybody gets a turn at being the leader.

Mirrors can be ball skills or warm-up exercises.

VARIATIONS

LIONS AND TIGERS



Set up two end zones at opposite side of a large playing area.

Have the teams line up against each other at the halfway line, facing a player from the other team.

Class in two teams: one LIONS and one TIGERS.

Call out either LION / TIGER.

The team called has to turn and run to their end-zone without getting tagged by the other team.

VARIATIONS

- Make the teams lie down with nose touching the floor
- Balance on one leg or hand over eyes
- Be on all fours
- Tag with 2 hands
- Players all have a bib in the back of their shorts and you have to get their bib to tag them

DRIBBLING & CARRYING

Drills with a dribbling & carrying focus



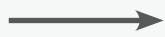
Player/Attacker



Team 2/Defender



Cone (if needed)



Player run with ball



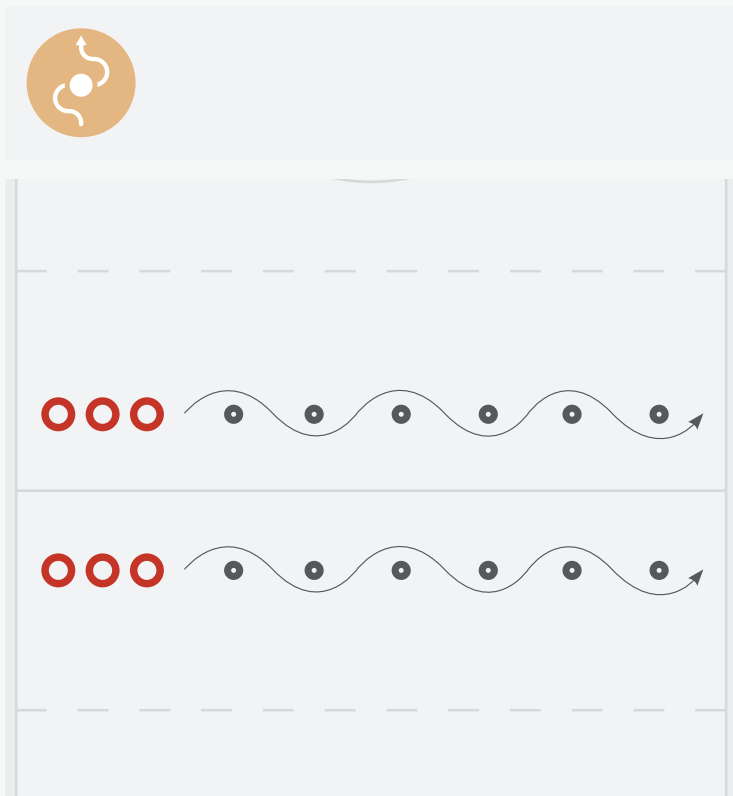
Player run/lead without ball



Ball travel (pass/hit/shot etc)

FOOTWORK WITH STICK & BALL

Drill 1



Player weaves feet through cones as they keep the ball moving in a straight line

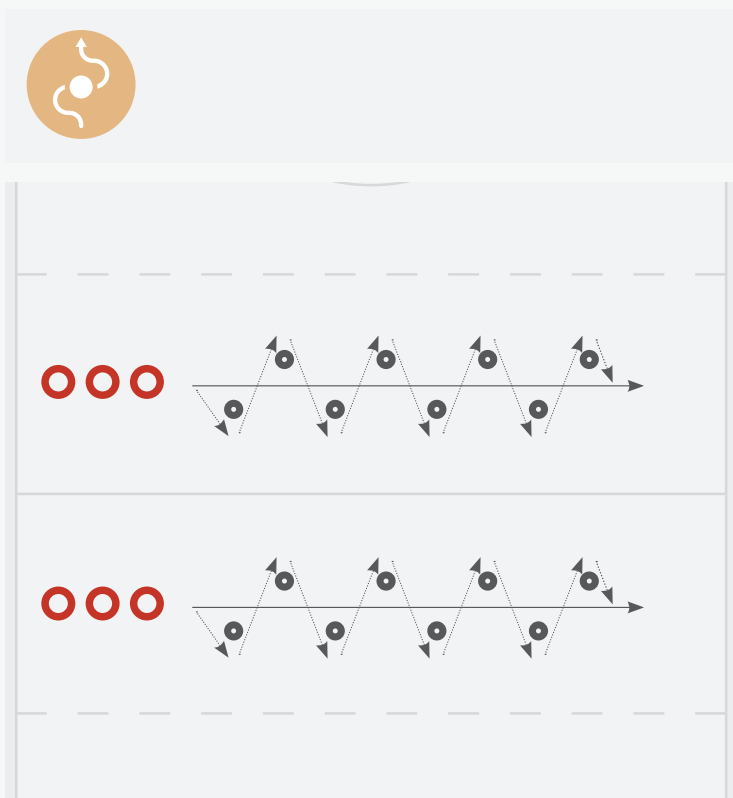
Work on left and right hand, forehand and reverse carries.

COACHING POINTS

- Ability to keep their feet facing forward as they weave through
- Body moving one way and feet moving the other direction
- Keeping a low body position
- Progress to getting your eyes up
- Feet making short sharp movements around the cones

FOOTWORK WITH STICK & BALL

Drill 1.A



Stick and ball weave through the cones

Feet continue in a straight line moving forward as the ball and stick weave

Can do forehand, reverse, two hands, left and right

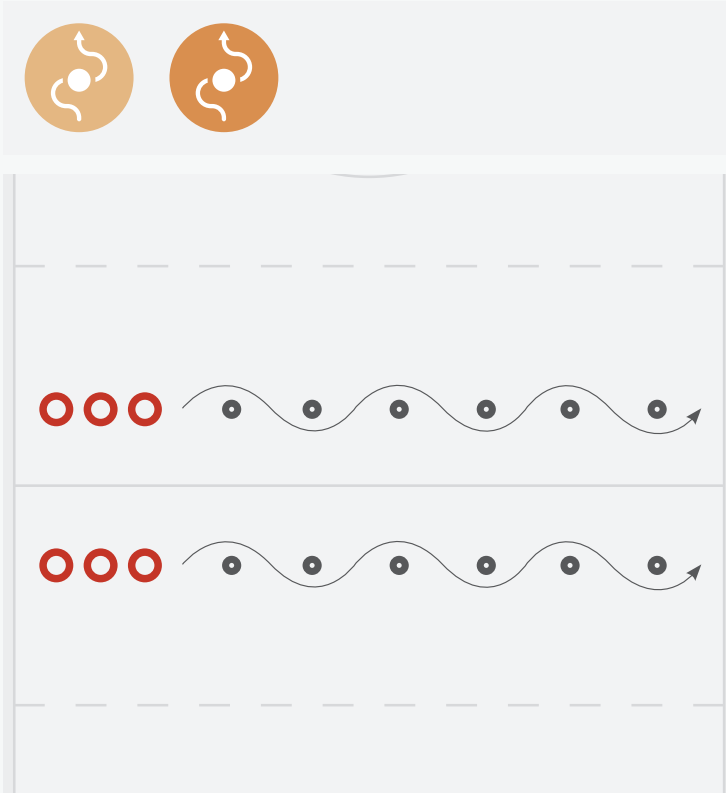
Stick and ball must move around the outside of the cones

COACHING POINTS

- Smooth transition of the body moving in a straight line and stick and ball weaving
- Try and keep the same pace and gradually get faster
- Low body position weaving through

FOOTWORK WITH STICK & BALL

Drill 1. B



Indian dribble sequence

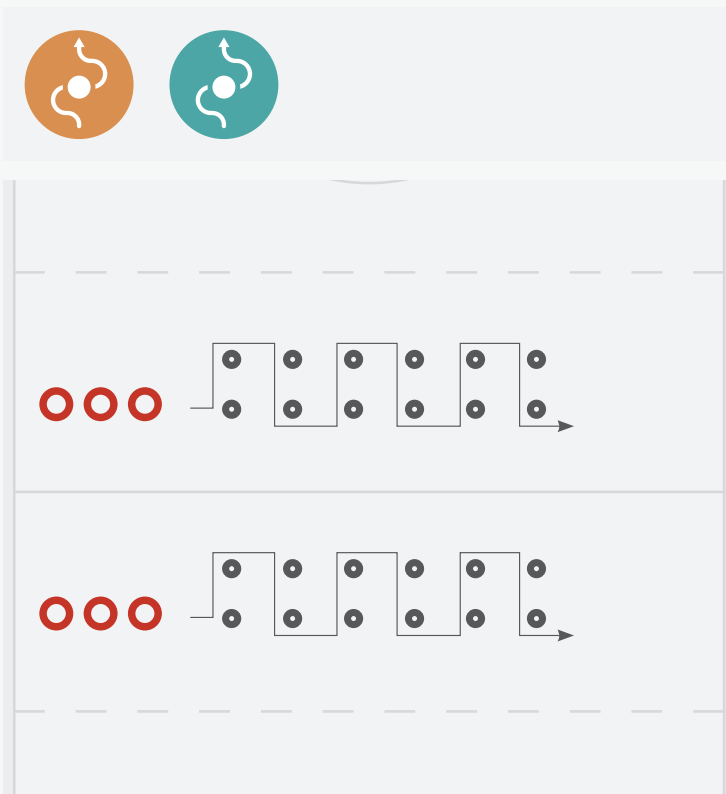
- Feet weaving through following the ball
- Left hand, right hand
- In and out (Michelson)
- Hula (ball opposite side to body at all times)
- Aerial skills
- Jedi (no looking at the ball)

COACHING POINTS

- Focus on quality of execution
- Ball staying as close to the cones as possible
- Feet weaving through fast
- Wrist strength for left and right handed carries
- Low body position and good strength on the ball

FOOTWORK WITH STICK & BALL

Drill 1. C



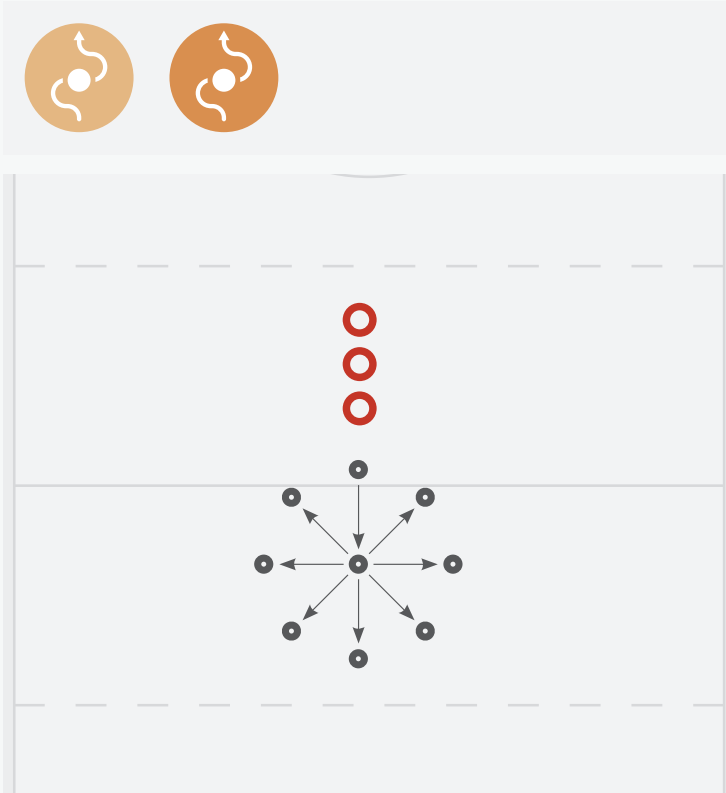
- Left to right drags
- Body faints
- Footwork as you drag
- Hand speed
- In and out drags
- Aerial drags (2 touch and pops)
- Jedi
- Fake drags

COACHING POINTS

- Focus on crispness when dragging the ball
- Feet moving around the cones (not being lazy)
- Bottom hand is loose
- Being able to get your head up as you drag the ball

FOOTWORK WITH STICK & BALL

Drill 2



Dribble into the middle then out to the outside cones one at a time.

Change of pace when you hit the middle cone with a quick change of direction

Complete all points of the star

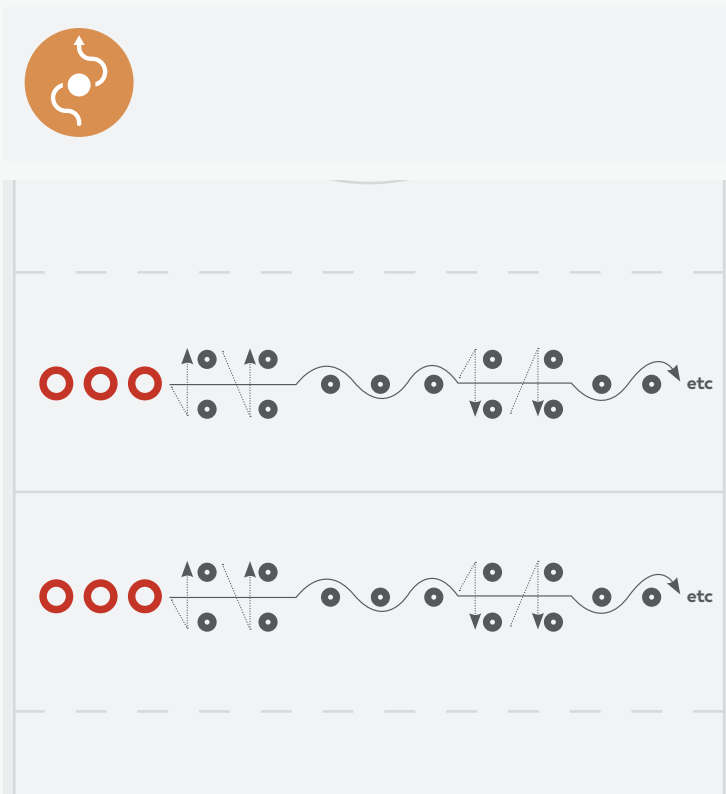
First player goes through and the rest follow (every player has to do the point before the leader moves onto the second point)

COACHING POINTS

- Progress to aerial skills when you hit the middle cone
- Left and right hand only to increase difficulty
- Emphasize the change of pace when you hit the middle cone – explode to the next cone
- In and out dribble to focus on footwork

FOOTWORK WITH STICK & BALL

Drill 3



Transitioning between Indian dribble and left to right drags

Use of single hand, two hands, in and out dribble, Jedi (no looking)

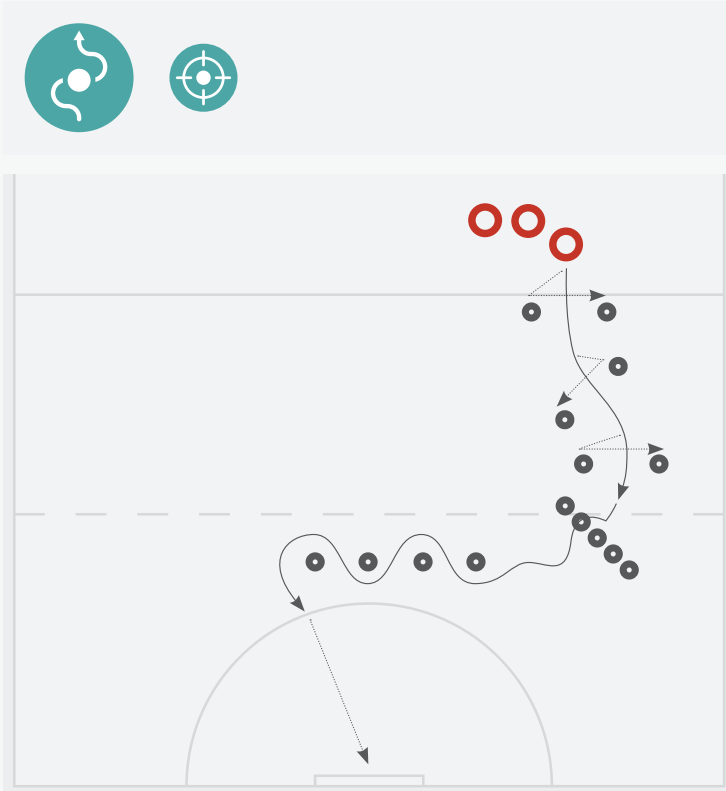
Footwork as they move through the cones and adjust their footwork

COACHING POINTS

- Keeping the ball smooth on the stick (try not tap the ball more times than necessary)
- Big drags with short sharp feet
- Can extend out to making a pass and trying to receive on the move etc.

OBSTACLE COURSE WITH SHOT

Drill 4



Controlling aerials through obstacles or popping the ball over the pipes etc.

Simulate carrying the ball in the air, eliminating passive defenders or receiving the ball in the air.

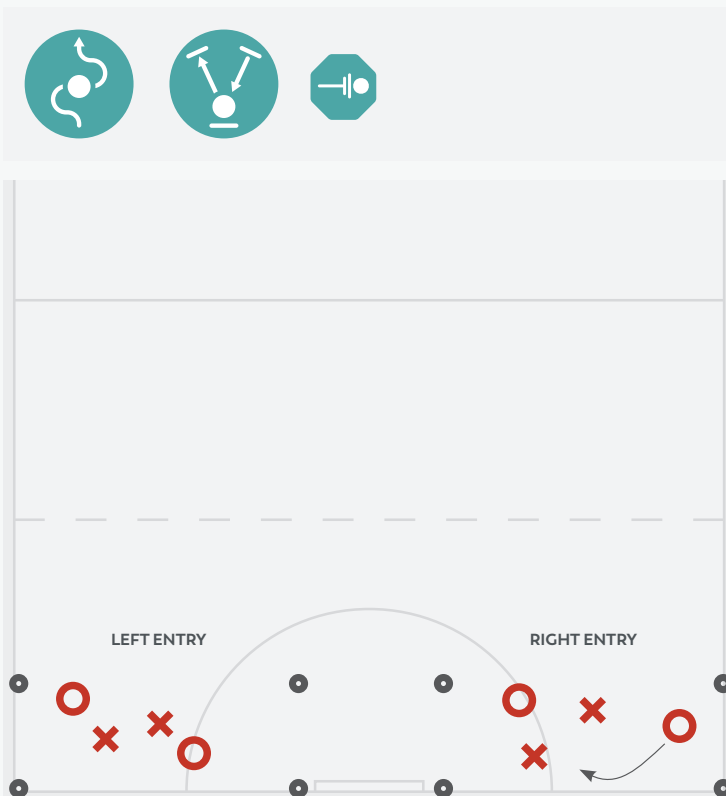
Be creative with setting this up - the diagram is just an idea finishing with shot on goal.

COACHING POINTS

- Getting the ball in the air as you move (not just stationary)
- Eliminate using tyres, blocks, cones, road blocker etc.
- Footwork to help get the ball in the air and keep control
- Always follow the ball with your stick to keep control
- Aerials using in and out dribble for more than one touch in the air
- Keeping the ball below the knee

ELIMINATING DEFENDERS

Drill 5



2v2 / 3v3 or expand out as required.

Using the baseline pockets to eliminate defenders (aerials in tight spaces) or manipulating body positions to create more space.

Try to create 'combos' with your teammate (slip passes, linking, passing into space to run onto) with the end goal of winning free hits/PCs.

Defenders' aim is to force the turnover with patience in the tackles and working with each other to shut down options (step in front).

COACHING POINTS

- Creativity of eliminations
- Speed of execution
- Footwork to trick the defender
- Using the baseline and 'weaving' of your body (try and be deceptive)

PASSING & RECEIVING

Drills with passing & receiving as the focus



Player/Attacker



Team 2/Defender



Cone (if needed)



Player run with ball



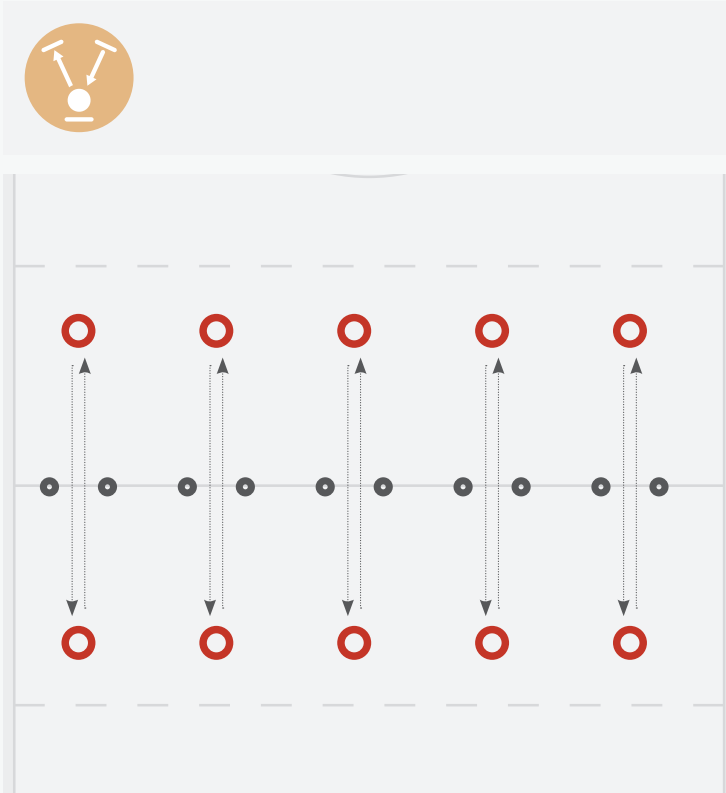
Player run/lead without ball



Ball travel (pass/hit/shot etc)

PASSING BACK & FORTH

Drill 1 - Wristed passing



Have players face one another with a small gate between them.

Working in pairs, have players pass the ball with their body facing forward.

Maintain momentum over the ball with the left arm out making sure the ball is out in front and not under their feet.

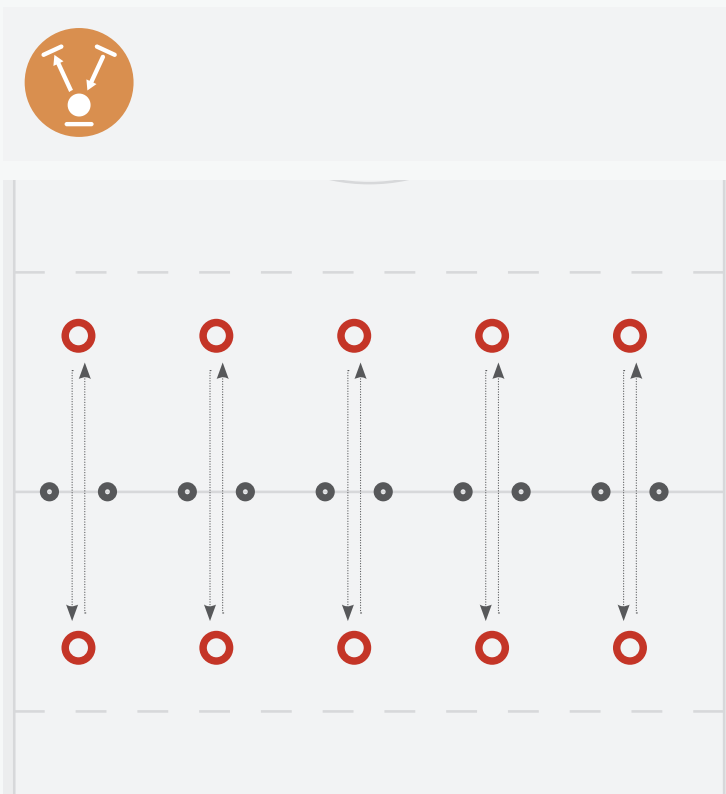
Practise passing off the left and right foot

COACHING POINTS

- Good first touch before they pass
- Eyes up to connect with opposite player
- Getting feet around to pass and move off the forehand
- Increase the distance as they get better
- Make sure they keep the stick on the ground to slap the ball
- How many passes can they do in their pairs in 1 minute etc?

PASSING BACK & FORTH

Drill 1. A - Sweeping



Set up as before.

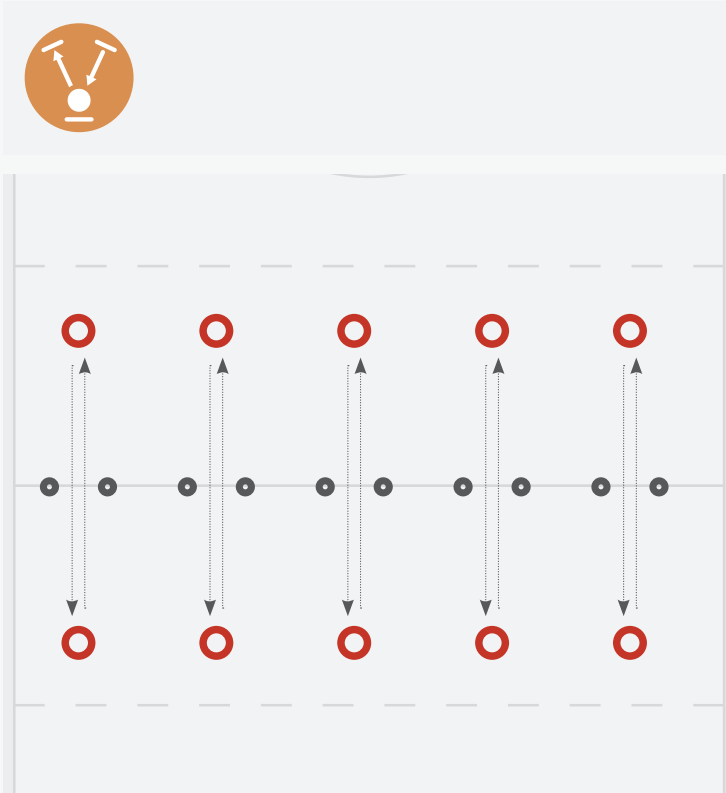
Getting your grip low to the ground (hands together), start practicing the sweep hit with the ball stationary and then progress to hitting it on the move.

Big rotation of the stick with your left leg forward making sure the ball is out in front.

COACHING POINTS

- Make sure the ball isn't close to their feet
- Increase the distance as they get better
- Emphasize the right technique first (make sure they keep their stick on the ground at all times)
- Rotation and follow through are very important

PASSING BACK & FORTH



Drill 1. B - Reverse edge passing

Set up as before.

Passing the ball with your body facing forward, hands apart, knocking the ball with the edge of their stick.

Make sure the ball is out in front and not too far away.

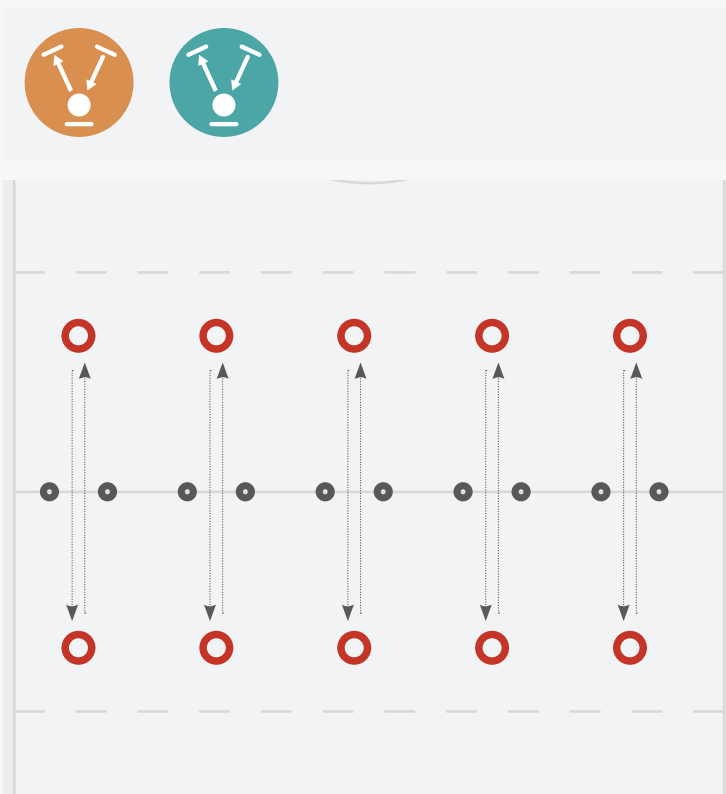
Slight tap of the ball (not a huge back-swing).

Can be made off the left and right foot.

COACHING POINTS

- Good first touch before they edge pass
- Eyes up to connect with opposite player
- Making sure the ball is not too far away
- Increase the distance as they get better
- Keeping their stick on the ground and not using the back of the stick
- Hands must be apart

PASSING BACK & FORTH



Drill 1. C - Hitting

Set up as before.

Hands are together, hitting the ball with their head down.

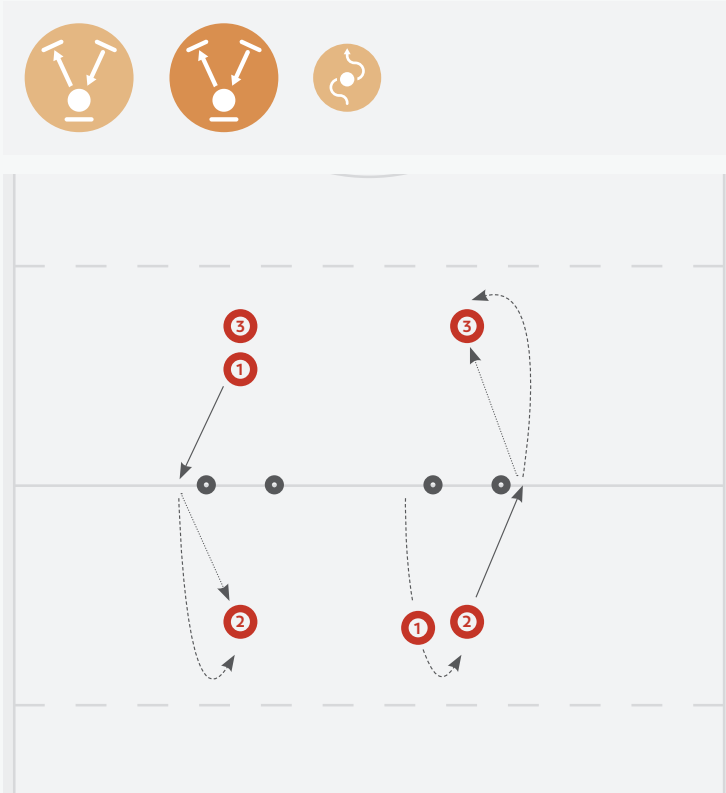
Bending the left knee and keep their momentum moving forward making sure their left shoulder is in-line with where they want the ball to go.

COACHING POINTS

- Make sure the ball isn't close to their feet
- Increase the distance as they get better
- Emphasize the right technique first (leaning forward, head down, follow through of the stick over the shoulder)
- Remain side-on the entire time
- As the kids get more skilful and are exposed to more techniques, add them into this drill

PASSING, RECEIVING & MOVING

Drill 2



Get players into groups of 3.

Player 1 carries the ball on an angle towards the cone and change direction with a wristed pass, following their pass.

Player 2 then does it in reverse, passing to player 3.

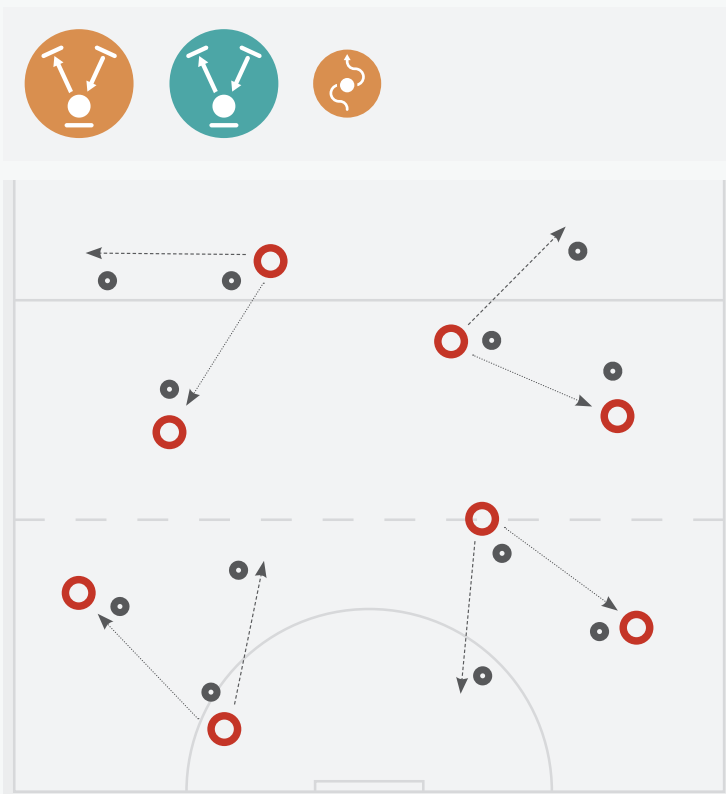
Add in drags before you pass

COACHING POINTS

- Carrying the ball out in front
- Receiving on the move
- Eyes up to connect with opposite player
- Getting feet around to pass and move off the forehand
- Increase the distance as they get better
- Incorporate with hitting and sweeping

PASSING, RECEIVING & MOVING

Drill 3



Setting up in pairs, a player carries the ball on an angle towards the cone and changes direction with a wristed pass to their partner.

Always pass the ball on the outside of the cone with the ball moving across the advantage line.

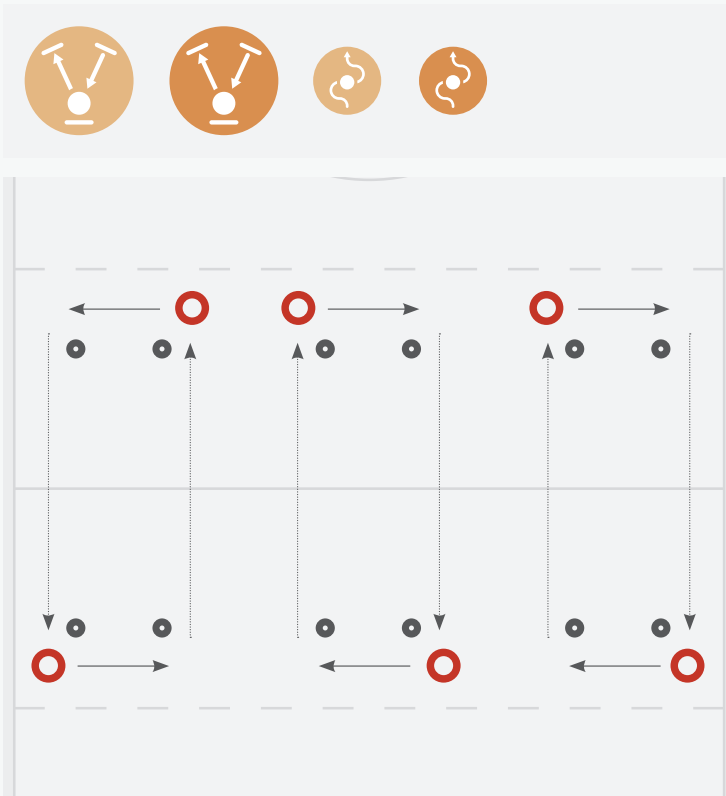
Move to the free cone once you have passed the ball, ready to receive a pass from your partner.

COACHING POINTS

- Keeping your body position low, ready to receive
- The ball should remain moving at all times
- Pass on the advantage line to the cone your partner is on
- Hard wristed passes and quick change of direction to the free cone

PASSING, RECEIVING & MOVING

Drill 4



Receive the ball on the move to get around the cones in one touch, then make a wristed pass straight to your partner.

As they receive the ball on the move across both cones they will then pass it straight back to their partner (never on a diagonal).

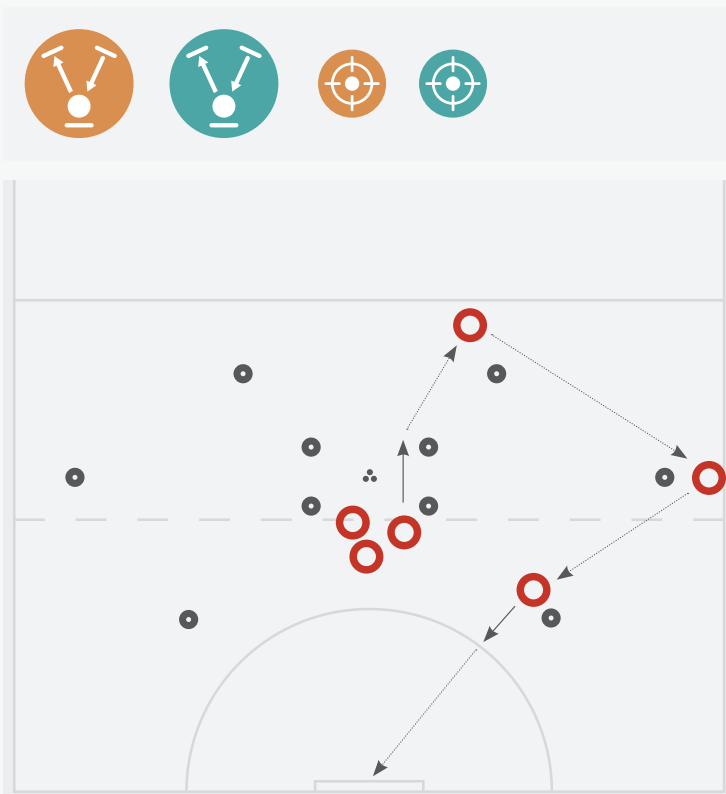
Always move to the free cone on your side after you pass the ball.

COACHING POINTS

- First touch on the ball is clean and in the direction you want to move
- Feet around quickly to fire a wristed pass back to your partner
- Quick movement back to the cone after the pass has been made
- Ability to execute well in both direction

PASSING, RECEIVING & SHOOTING

Drill 5



Balls and extra players start in the middle.

Alternating sides carry the ball to your side, pass the ball when you get to second cone using a wristed pass.

Quick open receive and pass for the next 2 players.

Players at the edge of the circle can post up or receive moving forward then make the circle for a shot.

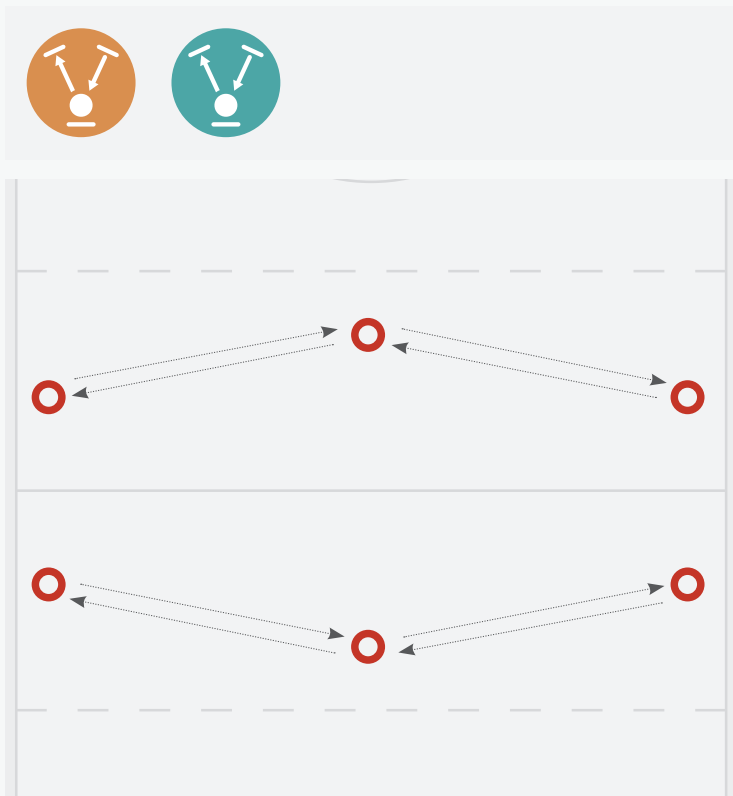
Repeat on the reverse side.

COACHING POINTS

- Carrying at pace with the ball tight on the stick before you pass
- Timing of the passes to your team mates and the post-up lead
- Receive and roll (forehand and reverse) on the post-up

PASSING & RECEIVING

Drill 6



Players work in 3s.

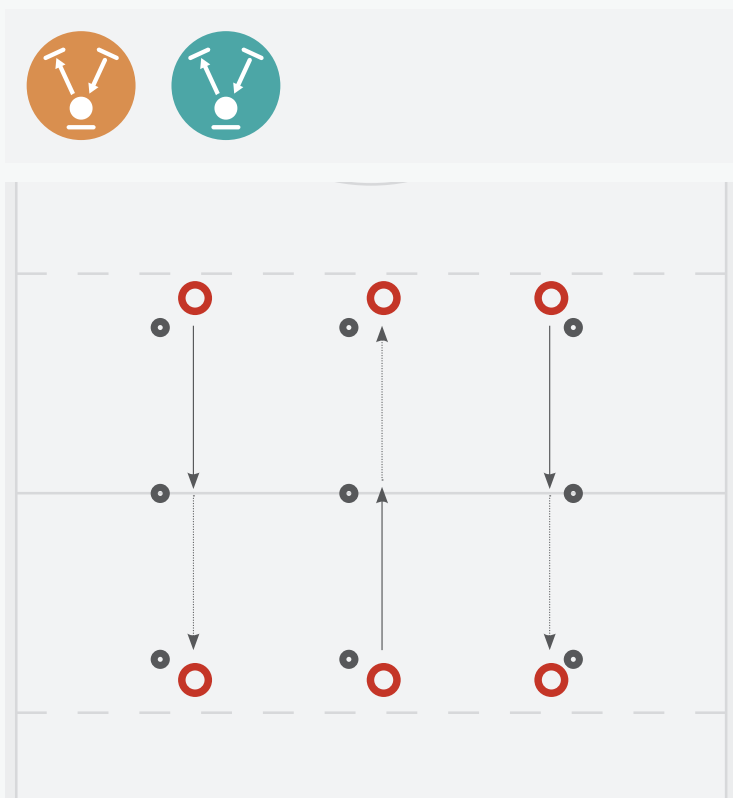
Wristed, slap or sweep passing over distance.

COACHING POINTS

- Working on the pace of the ball over distance
- Feet around to pass on the forehand
- Middle player open receiving to release the ball quicker
- Quick release of the pass

PASSING, RECEIVING & REVERSE CARRYING

Drill 7

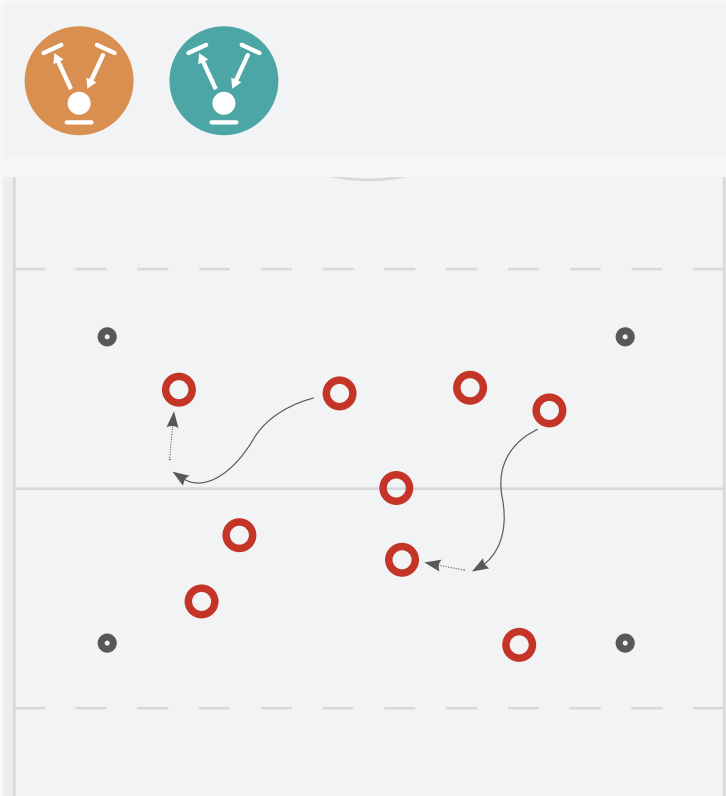


Carry the ball on their reverse until they get to the middle cone.

Once they get to the middle cone they have to get their feet around and make a wristed pass.

COACHING POINTS

- Keeping the ball out in front on the reverse
- Ability to get their feet around without stopping the ball first
- Accurate pass to the player on the opposite cone



Two balls are in play within an area in which everyone is on the same team (no attackers or defenders).

Move a little with the ball, then once you pass the ball (wristed passing) you have to sprint 5m before you can receive another pass.

COACHING POINTS

- Moving and recognizing where the space is
- Calling for the ball
- Not following the ball
- Wristed passes
- Looking up before you pass and connecting with someone to pass to

SHOOTING & SCORING

Drills with a focus on shoots on goal



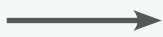
Player/Attacker



Team 2/Defender



Cone (if needed)



Player run with ball



Player run/lead without ball



Ball travel (pass/hit/shot etc)

TACKLING & INTERCEPTIONS

Drills with defending as the focus



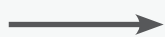
Player/Attacker



Team 2/Defender



Cone (if needed)



Player run with ball



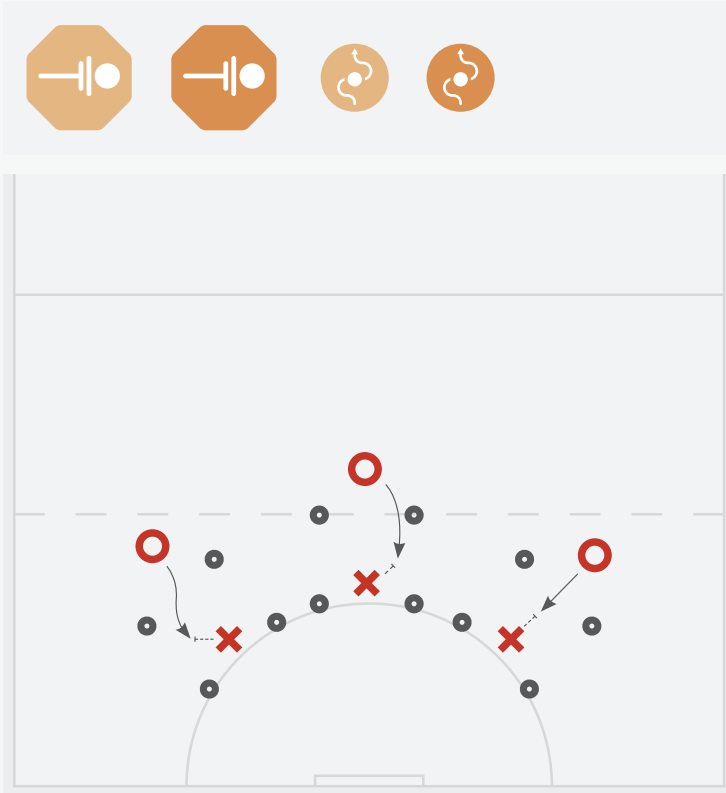
Player run/lead without ball



Ball travel (pass/hit/shot etc)

TACKLING & ELIMINATIONS

Drill 1



Set up tackle boxes at the major channels into the attacking area.

This sets up 1v1s with players given the opportunity to defend each channel.

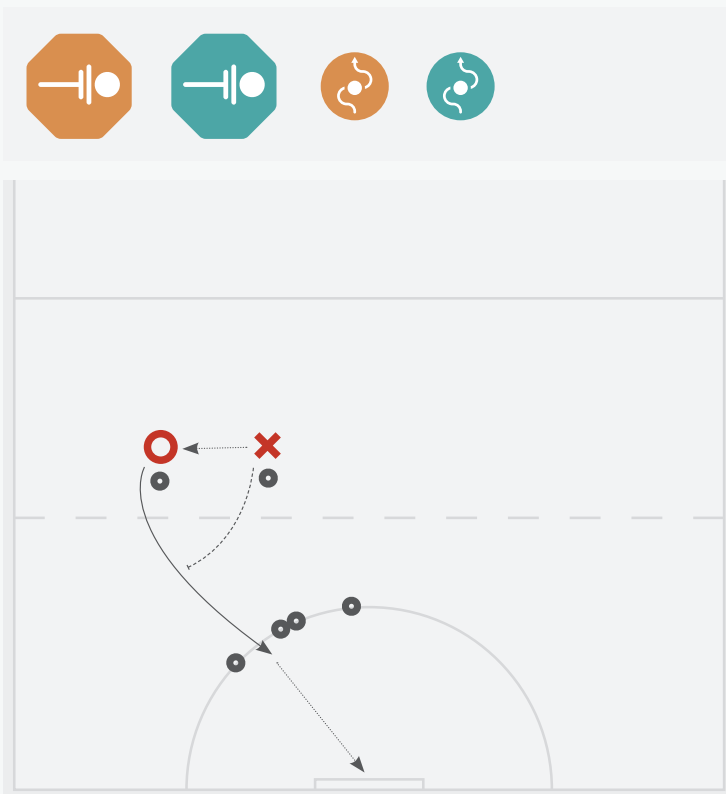
Attackers rotate around until they become the defender.

COACHING POINTS

- Footwork of the defender to protect inside channels
- Encourage the attacker to carry wide
- Timing of the defender to make the tackle
- Ability to stay in the contest before they get a shot away

TACKLING, CHANNELLING & ELIMINATIONS

Drill 2



Set up two gates at the entrance to the attacking area.

This drill can be done as 1v1s or can extend to 2v1s etc.

Defender (X) passes the ball to the attacker (O). The attacker then tries to work the ball through either gate and can finish with a shot at goal.

COACHING POINTS

- Decision making under pressure
- Defender is trying to tackle the ball cleanly (two hands on the stick)
- Ability to finish on a shot at goal

TACKLING & SPACE MANIPULATION

Drill 1



Set up simple boxes for opportunities to practise shove tackling technique, blocks, jab & 3D tackling.

2v2 zones progressing to 3v3 zones.

COACHING POINTS

- Stick position before making a tackle
- Decision making when attempting to tackle
- Working with your teammate in the 2v2/3v3 games to hold possession or create a turnover

MINI-GAMES

Small games that incorporate many of the previous skills



Player/Attacker



Team 2/Defender



Cone (if needed)



Player run with ball



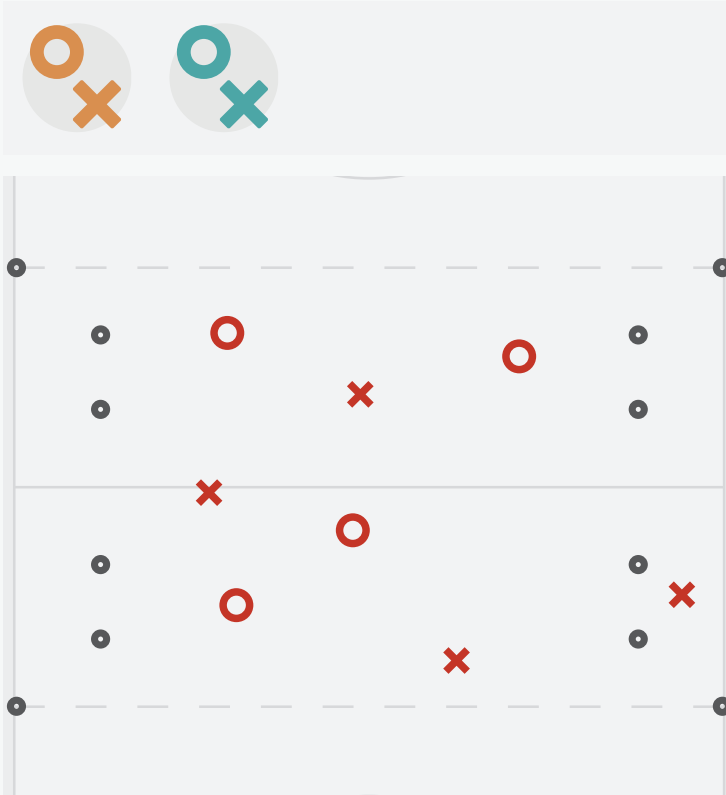
Player run/lead without ball



Ball travel (pass/hit/shot etc)

ROLLOVER WITH GOALS

Drill 1



Set up a large space with four goals – two on either end. Players score by receiving a pass through or carrying the ball through the goals. Players can play behind the goals.

Play this with rollover rules – you change direction once you score. So a team scoring in the right side goals would then stay in possession and immediately attack the left goals.

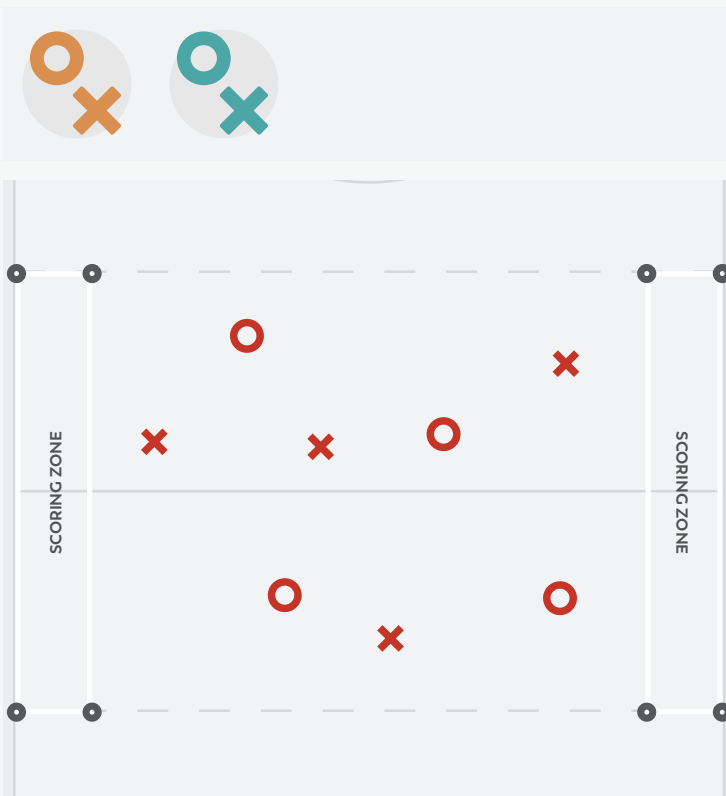
This drill does not need to be limited to 4v4.

COACHING POINTS

- Communicating with your team mates
- Short sharp leads into space
- Quick 1-2 passes
- Connecting with the players around you
- Counter attack and creating space – avoid bunching and crowding other people's space
- Pass first mentality, don't feel like you have to dribble to eliminate a player
- Defensive positioning in their tackles and communication

ROLLOVER WITH END-ZONES

Drill 2



Set up a large space with two end-zones. Players score by receiving a pass within the opposition's end-zone.

As per the previous drill, play this with rollover rules – you change direction once you score.

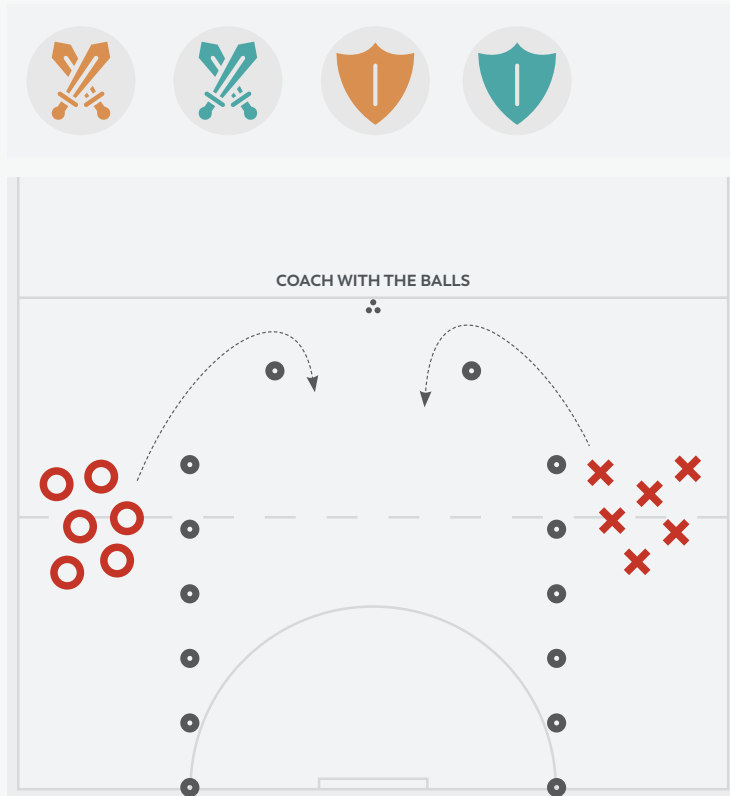
This drill does not need to be limited to 4v4.

COACHING POINTS

- Counter attacking opportunities
- Creating space and setting up early
- Communication
- Linking with your team
- Moving into space once you have passed the ball
- Defending against a counter-attack and shutting down the passing options

HOCKEY CHESS

Drill 3



Each team has a set amount of 'moves' linked to the total number of players in each team (6 each team = 6 'moves').

The players choose how many people are going to play in the game for that turn (turn is over when the ball goes out, a goal is scored or time is up).

The coach rolls a ball into the field of play, says 'go' and the chosen players run around the high cone before joining the game.

Team 1 could put in 4 players and team 2 could put in 6 players. After that team 1 and 2 can no longer use players who've already 'moved'. In this example, team 1 would have two players left, team 2 would have none.

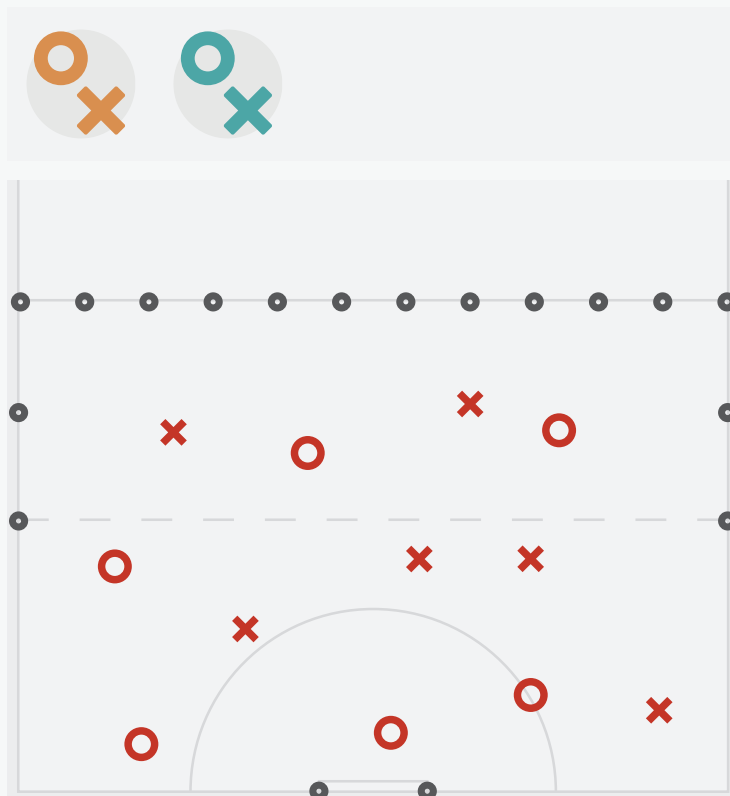
Once all the moves have been used by both teams (e.g. 6) then you can start again.

COACHING POINTS

- Spreading out
- Trying to make passes to your team mates
- Game play decision making

3 GOAL GAME

Drill 4



Set up three goals around your play space and nominate one of those goals as 'closed' for the start of the drill.

Players can score in either of the two 'open' goals for a point.

Once a goal is scored, that goal becomes 'closed' and the previously closed goal become 'open' again meaning there are always two goals available to score into.

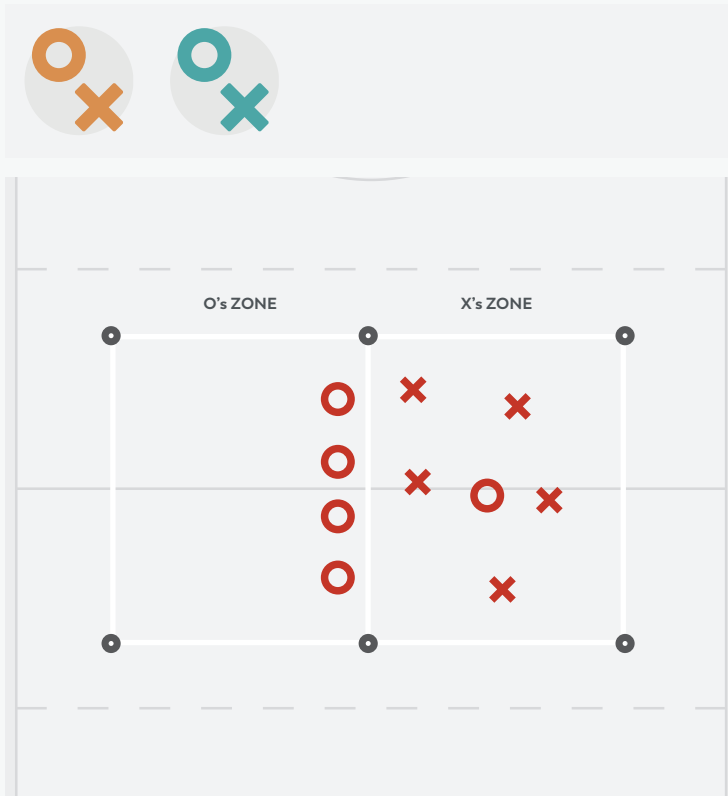
Focusing on chaos coaching and dealing with counter attacks as well as quick passes and recognizing space.

COACHING POINTS

- Avoid getting caught being focused on attacking one way
- Using the entire space to build your attack
- Players working hard to attack and defend
- Engaging players in the middle of the field
- Leading – scissor, in and out, post ups etc and connecting with your team mates
- Communication
- Can have two teams or three

INVASION

Drill 5



Set up two zones adjacent to one another with a team each owning a zone.

One team starts with the ball and a single player from the opposite team (an invader) enters their zone with the intention of winning the ball.

The team in their zone need to hold the ball for as long as possible before the invaders turn over the ball.

Every 10 seconds, a new invader can come into the defender's zone to help turn over the ball. Once the turnover occurs, the invaders need to pass or carry the ball back to their zone and the game repeats in reverse.

Teams score points based on how many invaders they had in their zone when the ball is turned over.

COACHING POINTS

- Ensure players are creating and using the space available
- Tacklers can work in pairs to channel and win the ball
- Additional attackers can be added via number of passes if you prefer