

Fun Games for Skill Development

Best for younger age groups

can be modified for older age groups

Set-up: These games can all be played in a simple grid. Vary the size of the grid to suit the ability and ages of your players. If players are struggling decrease the size of the playing area.

Games for the very young –

- **Bingo -**
Use tall cones or balls on cones – players dribble with ball and try and knock cones over (or balls off cones using their ball) when they are successful they shout BINGO!! Coach tries to stand up cones or replace balls faster than players can knock them over. Note: Coach should eventually allow players to win.
- **Tunnel -**
Coach plays the role of tunnel moving about the field allowing players to chase him and then pass ball through his legs. Coach can vary speed and difficulty according to skill level.
- **Ouch -**
Same as tunnel except this time players are trying to tag coach by hitting them with the ball. If coach is tagged they shout OUCH!! The more melodramatic the better.
- **Red Light, Green Light**
Players start on one side of grid and dribble forward when coach shouts “Green light!!” When coach shouts “Red Light!!” players attempt to stop the ball as quickly as possible. If player fails to control their ball then go back to start line.
- **Simon Says -**
Players respond to commands of coach. E.g. “Simons says put your head on the ball.” But if coach does not say Simon Says and players do action then they are “caught”.
- **Follow the Leader -**
In groups of two players play follow the leader. The leader attempts to lose his follower by making quick changes of direction. When the coach shouts change – the other player becomes the leader.
- **Shark -**
All players dribbling with a ball. Coach plays the role of shark and tries to kick players ball out of grid. Players can scare shark away by doing a change of direction with their ball and running away. If coach does put ball out player does 6 toe taps and then comes back in.
- **Co-ordination Dribble**
All players dribbling with ball in grid. When coach shouts “Knee!!” players stop ball using their knee and then carry on dribbling. Coach can then specify left or right knee. Other options include “Turn!!” – player stops ball with knee and then using same leg, uses outside of foot to change direction. “Cut!!” – player stops ball with knee and then using same leg, uses inside of foot to cut ball behind standing leg. For younger players coach can shout out a body part and players use specified body part to stop ball. Knee, head, foot etc.

Tag Games

Set-up: These games can all be played in a simple grid. Vary the size of the grid to suit the ability and ages of your players. In tag games it is best to designate the it player by having them hold a pinnie in their hands. If players are struggling decrease the size of the playing area.

- **Tag -**
Basic tag can be played with or without the ball. "It" player (s) attempt to tag player with hand to make other players it. Players who are it should carry bib in hand so they are easily identifiable. Player who is it can also play without or with ball depending on ability.
- **Spider Tag -**
Spider plays without ball and tries to tag other players who are dribbling with a ball. Once tagged players put ball out of grid and then hold hands with "spider" and they work to catch other players. If you want you can allow spider to split once it reaches a certain size, e.g. six players split into two spiders of three.
- **Cone Tag -**
Within the grid coach lays out a few extra cones. If a player is touching a cone they cannot be tagged. Only one player can be on a cone at a time and if a new player dribbles to a cone then the previous player must leave and cannot return to the same cone.
- **Zone Tag -**
Set up zones in each corner of the grid. If a player is inside a zone they cannot be tagged. Only one player can be in a zone at a time and if a new player dribbles into a zone then the previous player must leave and cannot return to the same zone.
- **Phone Booth Tag -**
Set up three or four zones (phone booth) throughout the grid. If a player is inside a "phone booth" they cannot be tagged. Only one player can be in a phone booth at a time and if a new player dribbles into a phone booth then the previous player must leave and cannot return to the same phone booth. Coach can put phone booth under repair and move it.
- **Pokemon Tag (Bee Tag) -**
The player or players that are it are "Team Rocket" (the bad guys in Pokemon). Team Rocket attempts to catch the Pokemon (running in grid without ball) by hitting them with their ball below the knees. Once tagged Pokemon become Team Rocket players.

1 v 1 Games

Set-up: These games can all be played in a simple grid. Vary the size of the grid to suit the ability and ages of your players. 1 v 1 games are extremely taxing physically so make sure players get adequate rest.

- **Hungry, Hungry, Hippo -**
Players start with a ball on one side of grid and attempt to dribble past Hippos to other side of grid. If Hippo wins ball and dribbles to finish line they switch positions with player whose ball they took.
- **Pirate -**
All players start with a ball except the "Pirate" who tries and takes other players ball. Once a player loses their ball they become the pirate.
- **Tigerball -**
All players start with a ball except the "Tiger" who tries and takes other players ball and take it back to his cave. Once a player loses their ball then become tigers as well.
- **Steal the Bacon -**
Two equal teams on opposite sides of grid. A number of balls in a line in the middle of grid (an odd number and less balls than players works best). On go command players rush and try and take balls back to their start line. Team with most balls wins.
- **Kick Out -**
All players with a ball dribbling in grid. Players try and kick other players balls out of grid if kicked out player does a specified number of a ball mastery exercise (e.g. 10 toe taps) and then returns to grid. A variation the player returns to the grid when the player they kicked their ball out gets kicked out. The second variation sees players eliminated when their ball is kicked out. Coaches must continuously adjust the size of the grid (smaller) to keep the game moving.
- **Sharks and Fishes -**
Players who are fishes are dribbling within the grid. Player who is shark circles outside the grid (the pool) until coach shouts "Shark Attack!!" Shark then enters pool and attempts to kick other players ball out – after ten seconds or so coach shouts "Sharks Out!!" and sharks must go back outside pool. If a player lost their ball they become a shark.
- **Many Goals –**
Using cones coach sets up a number of 1-meter wide goals throughout the grid. Playing pairs the player with the ball attempts to score as many goals as possible by dribbling through as many of the goals as possible in a set time limit. The defender takes a position of blocking a goal but does not try to win the ball.
- **Cone War -**
Two players, two balls, one cone. Set one ball on cone (if wosmarker cone not available set target ball on ground). Attacker attempts to knock ball off cone to score points, if defender wins ball they immediately become the attacker. Player with most points at end of time period is the winner.
- **Keep Ball –**
In small 5 by 5 meter grid. Two players, one ball. One player attempts to keep possession of ball for set time. Other player attempts to touch or win ball. Each time player touches or wins ball they get a point. Switch roles player with most points wins.

- **Numbers Game –**
Two teams on opposite ends of grid, each player with a number. One or two goals on end lines of grid. Coach plays ball into grid from sideline and shouts a number, player from each team whose number the coach called enter the grid and play 1 v 1 trying to score on goal at opposite end from their starting line. First team to ten wins.

Passing Games

Set-up: These games can all be played in a simple grid. Vary the size of the grid to suit the ability and ages of your players. Passing can be very demanding technically so make sure players get plenty of encouragement.

- **Tunnels -**
Half the team forms tunnels by standing with feet apart other half of team dribbles around and tries to score as many “goals” as they can by passing ball through the tunnels. Switch roles after set amount of time.
- **Ice Monster -**
Tag game with “it” players playing role of Ice Monsters. When a player is tagged they become frozen, standing with arms crossed, legs apart with one foot on top of their ball – “the cool soccer player position.” Players can become “unfrozen” by having a teammate pass their ball through their legs.
- **Marbles -**
All players with a ball players attempt to knock other players ball out of grid by hitting it with their own ball. Once knocked out player does ball mastery task before re-entering.
- **Small Group Marbles -**
Groups of three players in a small grid. One player is designated the target ball other two players are the shooters – every time his ball is hit that target player gets a point. After set time players switch roles. Player with lowest score wins.
- **Handball Tag -**
One or two players are designated as it. Other players have three or four balls to share as a group. Player cannot be tagged if they are holding a ball, players help each other by passing a ball, with their hands, to the player who is threatened by the it player.
- **Passing Tag I -**
Same as handball tag this time players use their feet to pass the ball to avoid being tagged.
- **Passing Tag II -**
Two players are designated as it, other players all wearing pinnies. It players have a ball and attempt to tag other players below the knee with the ball. If tagged the player switches teams by taking off their pinnie. A difficult game make sure grid is an appropriate size or players will become frustrated. Another option is to add a second ball.