

Coach Says

Preparation

You will need a marked out area wide and long enough for the amount of players you have available. Each of your players will need a soccer ball each. You may also need some cones if you wish to progress from the simple version of this game.

Explanation

This game is incredibly straight-forward. The drill is similar to 'simon says' but instead involves soccer related activities. As the coach you will be standing amongst the players.

Every time you say "coach says..." the kids must perform that task given. However, if you do not say "coach says" at the beginning of the sentence the kids must stay still or carry on the previous task. If a child performs the task without you saying 'coach says' then a fun little forfeit must be given.

Get the kids doing a wide variety of tasks from dribbling, to turns, to putting parts of their body on the ball and exchanging soccer balls with other players.

progression

This is a great drill to get soccer coaching tips in for the kids. To make the drill more fun and challenging you could add cones and get the kids to dribble amongst them. You could also add a goal with a volunteer goal-keeper (parent, assistant coach) to take shots from the kids on your command.

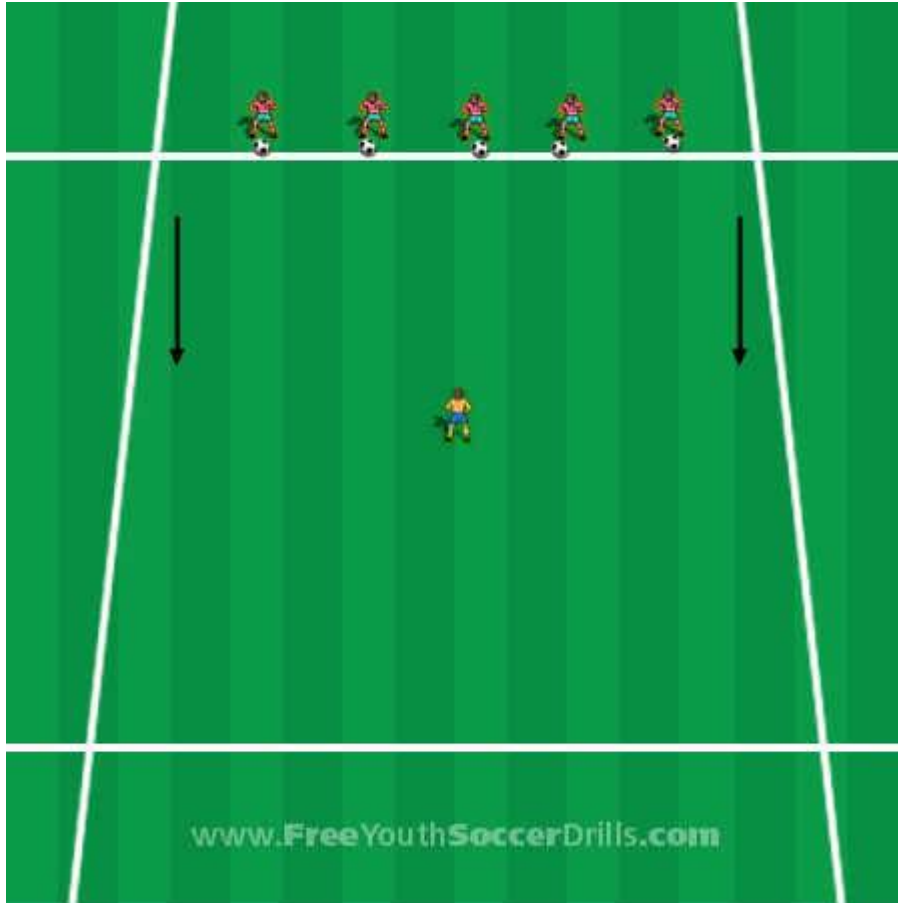
coaching points

- > Make sure the kids use little touches and demonstrate what happens if you kick the ball too far in the drill.
- > See if the kids can change direction by placing the bottom of their foot on the ball and rolling it behind them. This will eventually turn into the drag-back turn. Do this step by step with them!
- > Make sure the kids use the inside and outside of their feet whilst dribbling - not their toes.
- > Make sure the inside of the foot is used when making a pass.

Surfers & Crabs

Preparation

You will need a marked out area wide and long enough for the amount of players you have available. There needs to be enough room for the kids to dribble their soccer ball comfortably between the 'crabs'. The kids will need a soccer ball each and will stand in a line at one end of the square. You will begin in the middle of the area without a ball.



Explanation

The kids will be the surfers and you are the lone crab in the middle of the area. To make this game fun the kids will have to act like surfers before dribbling their soccer ball toward the other end. You will shout out "surfers are you ready?" The kids will jump sideways onto an imaginary surf-board and shout "surfs-up dude!"

You will then in reply have to do a fun crab dance (the kids love this). Use your hands as crab claws and sing the following verse.

"A snappy to the left, a snappy to the right, a snappy in the middle because we're having surfers tonight!"

USA soccer has taught me that if you make games fun the kids will learn more. As a crab you need to be on all fours with your feet in front and your stomach facing upward moving around using your hands and feet.

Shout out 3,2,1 GO! and the kids have to dribble their soccer ball toward the other end of the area. If you catch a surfer they will become a crab with you for the next round. Make sure you do the surfer's chant and crab dance every round.

progression

This fun USA soccer game comes to life if you can get parents involved as the crabs. The kids will love trying to dribble the ball past their parents and often try harder too.

coaching points

-> Make sure the kids use little touches and demonstrate what happens if you kick the ball too far in a game.

-> See if the kids can change direction by placing the bottom of their foot on the ball and rolling it behind them. This will eventually turn into the drag-back turn. Do this step by step with them!

-> Make sure the kids use the inside and outside of their feet whilst dribbling- not their toes.

Pirates of the Caribbean

Preparation

Take a look at the simple layout of the drill below. To set-up you will need a cone for the kids to stand behind to begin. You will then need colored pinneys (or cones) down the other end to act as the treasure!



Explanation

To begin you will need to get the kids excited about playing soccer. Tell the young players that this game is "...a fun game called pirates of the Caribbean. What noise do pirates make?" The kids will make an 'arghhh' noise. Then you need to tell them that pirates love treasure and the treasure is down the other end of the island.

The kids will need to go one at a time and pick up **one** piece of treasure (cone/pinney) and bring it back to the pirate ship.

1. To get the young 3 and 4 year olds to understand this game, play the first round without soccer balls.

2. The second time they should kick a soccer ball down with them.

Progression

A nice little progression to this and other kids soccer drills is adding cones leading up to the treasure so the kids have to weave in and out of them before getting to the end. By placing the cones down the young players have to dribble the soccer ball in different directions - not just straight.

You could also encourage a race parallel with each other to see who can get the most treasure in the quickest time!

Coaching Points

-> Don't let the kids put their hands on the soccer ball

-> See if the kids can change direction by placing the bottom of their foot on the ball and rolling it behind them. This will eventually turn into the drag-back turn.

Throw In Drills

Throw-in Challenge

Drill Description

Make a sideline using cones or use an existing sideline on your practice field. Set up one cone in the field about one yard away. Set up a second cone two yards out (one yard behind the first) and then another one three yards out. Players line up on the sideline in a single file line facing the cones and each player has a ball. Each player takes a turn taking a throw-in and tries to hit the first cone. Players go to the end of the line after each try. After hitting the first cone a player then tries for the second cone when it is his turn again. Challenge players to be the first one to hit the third cone. There can be several lines of this going on at once, with only two or three players in each line.

Variations

Make this a relay race. Each time a player on one team hits a cone, he can grab that cone and place it on top of the next cone and this becomes the target for the whole team until a player hits it. The first team to hit all of the cones wins.

For an additional challenge, add more cones or space the cones further apart.

Coaching Tips

This is a great drill to have set up when players arrive to practice and can join in. Only count cones as a hit when one is hit by a properly taken throw-in. Players can get good exercise running after each throw-in taken, before getting back in line, which is another good reason to have this set up as a warm up drill when practice begins.

Moving Coach Target

Skills

Throwing in to a moving target

Drill Description

Each player lines up on the sideline with a ball. The coach runs down the field and everyone throws in to try and hit the coach in the feet while she is running. After throwing in, the kids should run to get their ball and run to the other sideline for another round of throw-ins. Go back and forth a few times to keep them moving.

Variation

Have them throw-in one at a time and run onto the field toward the goal for a pass from the coach and then take a shot on goal.

Coaching Tips

Younger players think it is fun to do anything where they get to go after the coach. The more dramatic you are about being hit the more fun the players have with this drill. Emphasize proper throw-ins with both feet on the ground and keeping both hands on the ball when throwing.

