



Football Federation South West

Skills Training Ages 9-12

Role of the Coach

- The role of the coach is to provide the players with the basic skills required to play the game.
- Provide a fun and safe environment
- Be encouraging and player focused
- Be well presented to the players and approachable
- Leave outside issues off the training field
- Challenge the players to improve
- Improve players as footballers and most importantly, as people.

Planning sessions

- Focus on a key aspect and 1 or 2 elements of that aspect.
- Aspects include:
 - **Striking the ball**
 - **Running with the ball**
 - **One v one**
 - **First touch**
- Make your plans simple and expand on them when players get the concept
- Focus on technique of the chosen aspect (don't concentrate too much on passing if the focus is on 1 v 1 skills)
- If it's not working change it
- More touches on the ball (limit time spent without the ball)
- Don't be scared to do the same topic if players didn't get it the first time, simplify it.
- Have a plan before you get to training
- Make sessions engaging, no long lines or long speeches

Key aspects and some elements

- **Striking the ball**
 - Passing short distances
 - Passing long distances
 - Shooting
 - Crossing
 - Through balls
 - Drawing a defender and passing
- **Running with the ball**
 - Running with the ball with pressure from behind
 - Running with the ball to draw defenders
 - Running with the ball into space
 - Running with the ball with pressure from the side
 - Running with the ball (technique, with using laces)
 - Picking the right time to run with the ball



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- **1 v 1**
 - Skill moves to beat a defender
 - When to pass when to take defenders on
 - Isolating a 1 v 1 situation
 - Creating space to shoot
 - Being positive and going at defenders
- **First touch**
 - First touch into space
 - Away from a defender
 - Controlling a ground pass
 - Controlling a ball in the air
 - Facing forward
 - Technique of using different parts of the feet
 - Back foot

These are examples of training session topics you can focus on to improve players skills and techniques needed to play the game. The 4 **key aspects** are the overview and the **elements** are your topics for the session.

Example : *In this session we are focusing on our **first touch** and **how to move that first touch into space**. Players immediately know when we are focusing on first touch (controlling the ball) and what the element of that first touch is – moving the ball into space is identified by the player.*

AS A COACH, YOUR FOCUS IS TO INTRODUCE THE SKILL, PUTTING PLAYERS IN SITUATIONS WHERE THEY NEED TO USE THE SKILL AND FINALLY, SEEING IF THEY CAN USE THE SKILL IN A GAME SITUATION.

Conducting a session

First component – Warm up or Skill Introduction

- Introduce the topic to the players and get them straight into practising the skill.
- Limit time spent with no ball
- Make it fun and enjoyable to set up the rest of the session
- Lots of repetition and success is needed
- Limited defenders or make defenders passive to practice the skill
- Should be high paced and used to warm all the players up
- Limit coaching this component
 - Coaching should be done with demonstrations at the start and on the run.
 - If a player isn't understanding it, maybe pull a player out of the session and show them while the others continue
 - If the whole team isn't understanding maybe another demonstration is required.
- Step it up and challenge the players if this is too easy.

Second Component – Skill training

Here is where your coaching points come in:

- Focus on the aspect and the element
- Put the players in a situation where they need to use the skills in the sessions focus



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- **Have in your head, what you are going to be coaching (First Touch – away from a defender – have in your head if a player takes their first touch toward a defender, stop the play and ask the player what happened, recreate the scene and get the player to make the session focus come to life) These are your coaching points!**
- Don't over coach – let the players play and pull up your coaching points when serious ones occur
- Don't stray from the focus, don't coach 1 v 1 if your focus is first touch
- Step it up if too easy, step it down if it's not successful. There should be success but not too much that's it's not a challenge
- Make it enjoyable
- Make sure everyone is in a situation where they can use the session's focus

Third component – Skill Game

- Game at the end of the session
- Here the coach observes and watches if players learnt anything from the session
- Provide positive feedback to players that do the skill successfully.
- Drive the session and limit stopping the play
- Let them play
- At the end debrief and ask the players what the focus is and how they can do it in a game.

Forth Component – Weekend's Game

This is the most important component and one coaches lose focus on. The game is what we are training players to ultimately do, all training should lead to game day. It is your job as coach to set your team up with objectives in the game; is winning an objective? Yes, but at this stage in their development their skills are more important than winning. Children will naturally try to win, the coach needs to set specific objectives

Example – This week players we have been focusing on getting our first touch away from defenders, so when you're out there this is what I am looking for. Can we position ourselves so we can face forward or position ourselves so we can see the defender and also see where I want to go.

This just brings the weeks training sessions back into focus on game day. Again, players will naturally try to win games, it is your role to develop their skills and techniques in a safe and fun environment without the added pressure from the coach to win at all cost. This is the long game for development and one that starts with you the coach.

GOOD LUCK AND BE A ROLE MODEL WITH YOUR BEHAVIOUR ON THE SIDELINE AND AT TRAINING.



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Resources

There are numerous resources you can look up to gain a better understanding and grasp of coaching this age group.

- Contact your club
- Talk to local coaches
- FFSW is always producing content on our Facebook and YouTube channels
 - FFSW Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ffswa>
 - FFSW YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpRZ-dpfGGx-OCCx3fTyeBQ>
- FFSW regularly hold coach Workshops and Club Development in clubs putting on sessions and opening up to coaches with questions
- Football West is the State body for football in WA
 - Football West Website: <https://footballwest.com.au/>
- FFA is the national body and has a great library of session plans and hints and tips
 - FFA Website: <https://www.playfootball.com.au/coach/resources-home>

The best way to improve is to always be learning. Best way to learn is to attend coaching courses. These courses are regularly run in the South West and will grant you official coaching qualifications.

If you have any questions please let us know. You are not alone in this coaching journey. It is my job to help out the regions coaches and with better coaches we produce better players, have a stronger competition, retain and grow numbers and give the best football experience to the young players wanting to learn this great game.

Link to skills coaching video: <https://youtu.be/rDkeNmNgkZA>

Yours in football,

Peter Dohnt

FFSW Regional Development Manager

M: 0431 010 421

E: peter@ffsw.com.au



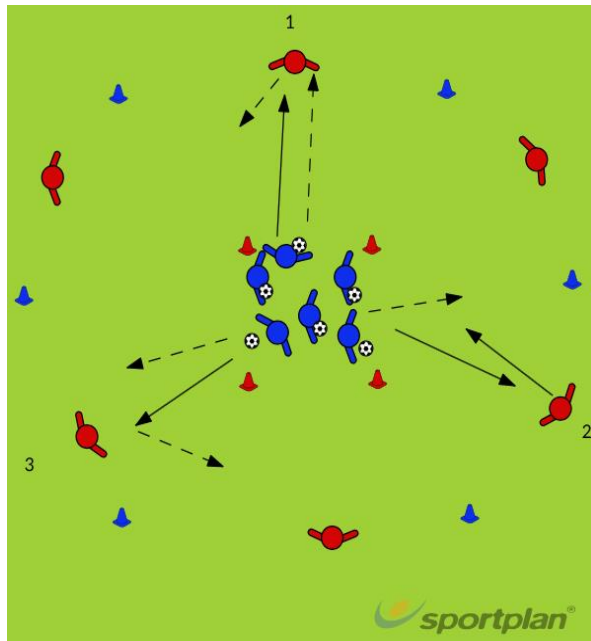
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Sample session

Key Aspect – First Touch

Key elements –

1. Moving the ball into space with first touch
2. Move ball away from defenders



Warm up – Skill Introduction

1st sequence – players in blue pass the ball to the outside players and run directly at the receiving player. It is up to the receiver to take their first touch to either side of the oncoming defender. Dribble back into the middle and find a new player on the outside.

2nd sequence – players in middle pass the ball to the outside players and run as a passive defender to one side of the player receiving. It is up to the player receiving to see where the defender went and move the ball to the other side.

3rd sequence – random directions from the passive defender, straight or side so the player receiving has to adjust and pick the right side to take their first touch.

Technique to introduce: - moving the ball with the inside of their foot. Cushioning the ball and getting the ball moving out of their feet but not too far away.

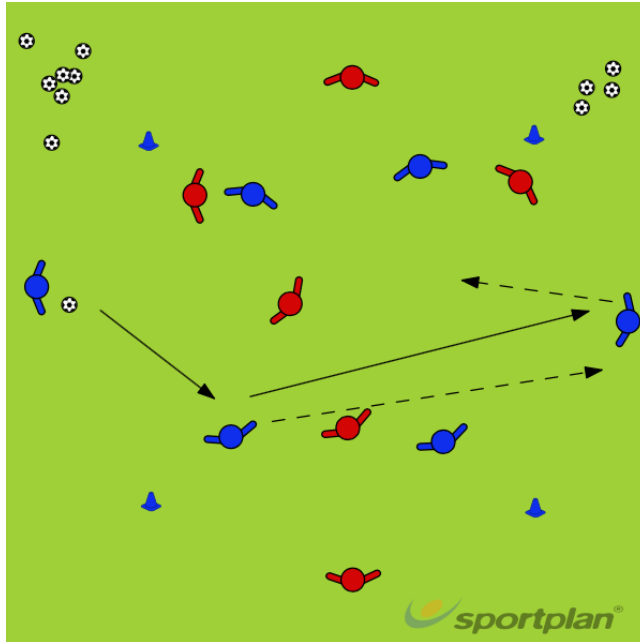
Key things to look out for:

- Are the players correctly moving the ball into space with their first touch?
- Are they using the inside of their foot to move the ball to the desired side?
- Are they able to move the ball a desired distance away with control?

Tips

- A demo would be the best option to show them how to correctly move the ball with their first touch to the desired location.
- Lots of repetition and limit the stopping to coach in this area of training.
- Demo at each time you are changing the sequence.
- Encourage the player when you see the correct technique.

Middle Game – Skill Training



- Blue players looking to pass to blue players on the end, with red players trying to win the ball and do the same going the other way.
- As soon as you play the player on the end you swap out with them and they take their first touch into the game.
- Possession game and points can be scored if teams can get from one end to the other and back without losing the ball.
- Double points in the end player can take their first touch and drive forward and lay the other end player?

(COACHING POINTS) these are the things you are looking for and ready to step on and coach if you see them occur.

- Is the player on the end receiving the ball and taking their first touch into space?
- Can players off the ball move away from the end players to allow more room for them to attack empty space with their first touch.
- Are players taking their first touch forward if it's on?

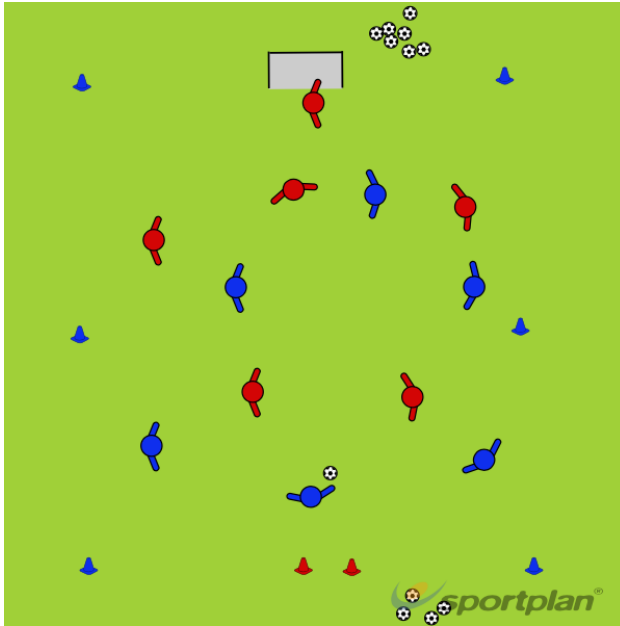
(only have a couple of coaching points to look out for, don't overload)

(Don't only look for bad things, you can pause play and praise when players do good touches and demonstrate how and why they did that)



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End game – Skill Game



6v6 game with simple instructions

This is your time to sit back and watch to see if the players are doing their first touch correctly in a game situation.

As a coach you are just driving this part of training (meaning you are encouraging the players to use their first touch like they have done all training)

Praise the good first touches and coach on the run if you see players miss an opportunity to use their first touch correctly.

LET THEM PLAY!

End of training – debrief with your players, they should have heard a common message all throughout training. In this case the message would be “first touch into space”, “first touch away from the defenders”, “can we take our first touch forward”.

Always debrief your players to ensure they take something away from training and hopefully what they take away is your messages and why they should do that in games.

Example, (player) I took away from training that we should move the ball with our first touch. **(coach)** Why? So, we can maintain momentum and keep the ball moving away from defenders. Where should that first touch go? Forward. Where else if we can't go forward? Into space. Perfect!

You are not alone in this journey, contact your local club or FFSW for support

Peter Dohnt

FFSW Development Manager

M: 0431 010 421

E: peter@ffsw.com.au

Link to Video: <https://youtu.be/rDkeNmNqKzA>