



## U7 Academy Session 1

**Main Topic: Dribbling with speed.** In this session we will work with the players on gaining confidence dribbling with each part of the foot but focus a little more on dribbling with speed trying to utilize the instep (laces). Encourage them to push the ball out in front of them when dribbling instead of kicking the ball, running to get it, and then kicking it again.

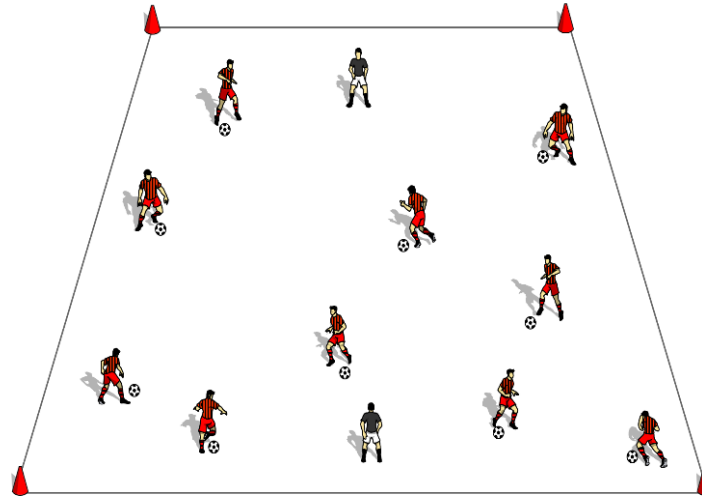
**Lean and Push** –The lean and push is an attacking move where the player makes a fake step “lean” opposite the direction they want to go and then beats the defender with an outside touch (pinky toe) with the opposite foot.

Activity Name/Description	Diagram	Instruction/Coaching Points
<b>Warmup Activities</b>		
<b>Warm Up Game</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- As players arrive, assign them to a team to start playing 1v1 and adding players as more arrive.</li> <li>- The coaches should have a couple of soccer balls in their hand so if a ball goes outside the area they can immediately call “new ball” and provide one to a player. Identify the players who are not getting the ball and try to provide them the “new ball.”</li> </ul>	<p>The diagram shows a rectangular field defined by four red cones at the corners. Inside the field, there are several yellow and red player icons. A soccer ball is shown near the left side. The field is used for a 1v1 game where players dribble the ball and attempt to score by passing it through one of two 'gates' (represented by yellow cones at the bottom corners).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This should be a game without much coaching to get the players warmed up, expend some pent up energy from being in school, and focused on soccer.</li> <li>- Goals are scored by dribbling through one of the two “gates.” This will encourage dribbling to beat the defenders.</li> </ul>

## Individual and small group activities

### 1<sup>st</sup> Activity – Dribbling with the 6 parts of the foot

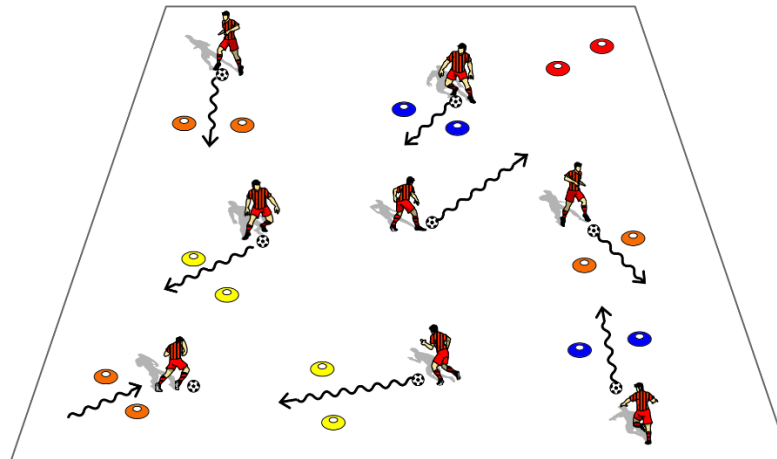
- For this activity we want the players to move around experimenting with each part of the foot they can dribble with.
- The 6 parts of the foot that can be used to dribble a soccer ball are the Inside, Outside, Toe, Heel, Sole (bottom), Instep (Laces).
- Incorporate the pullback by having the players execute a pullback whenever the coach says “change.”



- Have the players try using each part of their foot. They may not know their left foot from right so have them make two touches with one foot and then two touches with the other.
- Verify they are using the part of the foot that was directed and give them a high five if they are.
- For those that aren't, show them the part of the foot they are supposed to be using and then give them a high five when they use it correctly.

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Activity – Gate Escape

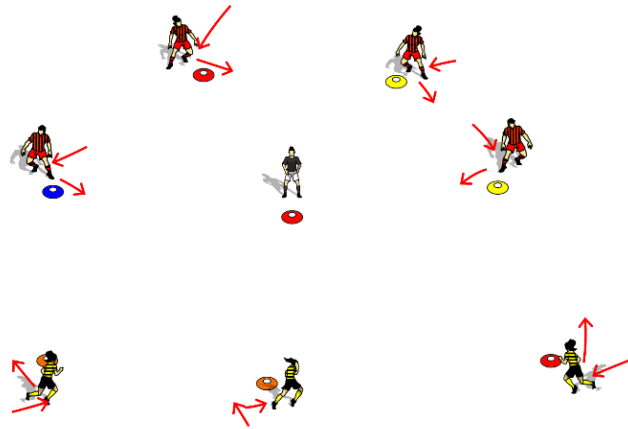
- The purpose of this activity is to introduce the players to dribbling under pressure, change of direction, and moving to a target.
- Two cones are placed approximately 2 ft apart as gates all over the playing area (try to have as many gates as you have players).
- Players dribble through one gate and then proceed to dribble through another gate.
- Once they get the hang of it, encourage them to try to do it a little faster but it is important to ensure once they pick up the speed they are still dribbling under control.



- After doing the activity a couple of times without any pressure so the players understand the activity, add some defenders.
- Coaches/parents are trying to steal the ball. The players can escape by dribbling their ball through one of the gates.
- Once the player dribbles through the gate, the coach/parent must go try to find another ball to steal.
- Try to see how many gates we can dribble through without losing our ball.
- Incorporate the **pullback** by having the players execute one whenever they reach a gate instead of just dribbling through it.

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Activity – Lean and Push

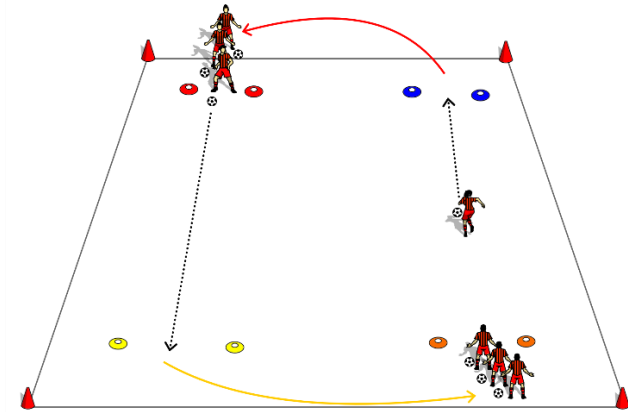
- The lean and push is an attacking move where the player makes a fake step “lean” opposite the direction they want to go and then beats the defender with an outside touch (pinky toe) with the opposite foot.
- Start them practicing with a cone, then move to a stationary ball, and finally have them practice with a ball as they dribble around the grid.



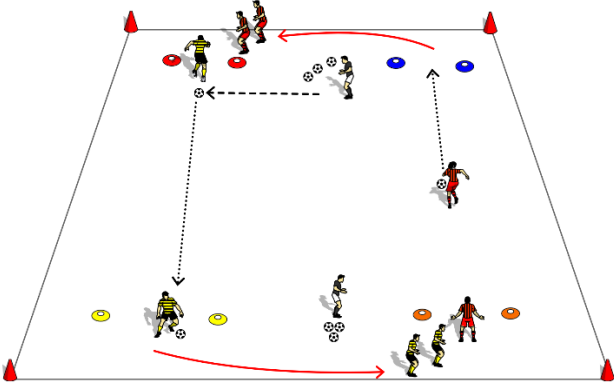
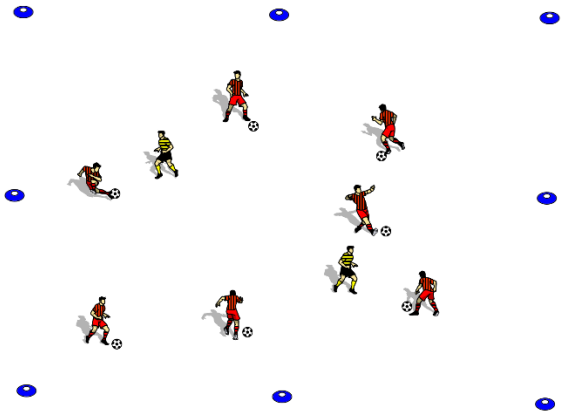
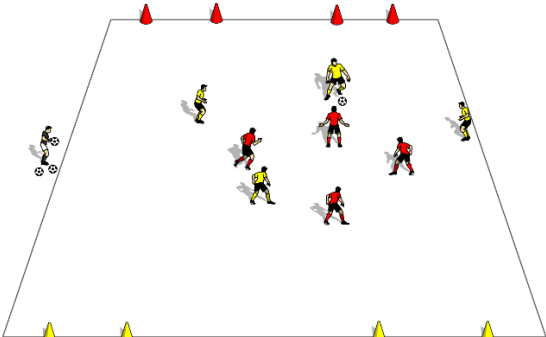
- To instruct young players on moves, it is easier to start them using a cone and break the move into individual steps.
- Initially have them work on just taking the fake step in one direction.
- Then add in where they next take a step in the direction they want to go.
- Finally, have them work in the entire move before moving to do the same thing with the ball.

### 4<sup>th</sup> Activity – Dribbling w/ Speed

- Dribbling with speed is an important skill to develop in young soccer players.
- Players must learn to recognize when they have space in front of them so they can make a big first touch to allow them to go faster quicker.
- **Variation:** After they have gotten familiar with the activity, add a cone the players can do a lean and push around.



- For this activity, the first player will make a big touch and then dribble with speed to the end gate.
- Once they cross the gate the player at the opposite ends makes a big touch and dribbles down to their end gate.
- Be sure the players are trying to dribble using their laces and not just kicking and chasing the ball.

<p><b>5<sup>th</sup> Activity – Across and Go</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For the next variation we will work with the players to receive the ball across their body.</li> <li>- Coaches will roll a ball in front of the player who will then make their first touch with the inside of their outside foot.</li> <li>- For this activity we want them to make a big first touch using the inside of their foot.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It is important for players to allow the ball to cross their body to make a first touch with the inside of their outside foot.</li> <li>- To start we will roll the ball from the left side and the players will make their first touch with the inside of their right foot. Be sure to switch directions so they must use the inside of their left foot.</li> </ul>
<b>Final Game</b>		
<p><b>Bandit</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All but 2 players dribble their ball.</li> <li>- The 2 without soccer balls are bandits.</li> <li>- When the coach say, “Watch Out for Bandits”, the bandits try to steal the other player’s soccer ball.</li> <li>- Once they steal a soccer ball, they try to keep it and are no longer a bandit.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- If a player loses their soccer ball, they become the bandit and attempt to steal any soccer ball (it doesn’t have to be their soccer ball).</li> <li>- If a soccer ball is kicked out of the grid, it cannot be brought back in.</li> <li>- At the end of each round, each player with a ball wins.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Final Game</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The purpose of this activity is to start to introduce the players to playing a game.</li> <li>- A 4v4 with goals scored when a player dribbles through the cone goal.</li> <li>- This provides appropriate targets to attack and numerous 1v1 opportunities.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Set up two cone goals at each end of the grid.</li> <li>- Players score only by dribbling through one of the cone goals.</li> <li>- This will encourage dribbling.</li> <li>- Additionally, having two goals at each end will encourage players not to just stand in front of a goal.</li> </ul>