

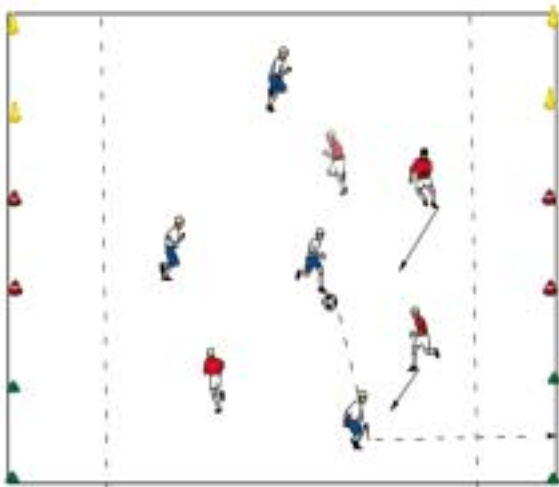
## SMALL-SIDED GAMES – ATTACKING AND DEFENDING

The use of small sided games is valuable in developing soccer players of all ages and is used at every level of soccer from professional to grass roots. Every coach should know how to use small-sided games to develop the specific aspects of a player and a team. While team tactics require the use of a larger playing area and number of player, the small-sided game is essential for developing technique and small group play which is easily transferable to the 11 aside game.

### Advantages of Small-Sided Games

1. Players get more touches on the ball
2. Players have more responsibilities because there are fewer players to do the work
3. The smaller area to play in gives more opportunities to defend and attack quickly
4. The smaller area enables players to learn how to play quickly and to make decisions under pressure
5. Coaches can more easily control the playing conditions
6. The playing conditions (size of field, number of players, size of goals, number of touches permitted) can be more easily manipulated to suit different ages and playing abilities.

### **4 V 4 + No-Go Area**



#### **Set-up**

- 30 x 25 yd area
- 10 yd no go area at each end (may be smaller for 5-7 year olds)
- Set up three goals in each end of the no-go area 2 yds apart
- 2 teams of 4 or 5 players (5v5 will need a 35 x 25 yd area)
- Players cannot enter the NO-Go Areas

#### **Sequence**

Teams play 4v4 or 5v5

Teams use combinations to set up scoring opportunities in either of the three end goals of the opposing team.

#### **Variation**

1. Limit players to 2 touches
2. Make the no-go areas 15 yds deep instead of 10 yds and increase the goal size

### Coaching Focus

- Support
- Using combination play to beat opponents
- All players attack and all players defend
- Accuracy of shooting

### 7 V 7 + No-Go + Goal



### Set-up

- Half Field (age appropriate)
- Regular size goal, appropriate for the age group you are training, at each end
- The penalty area is a “No-Go” area except for volleys
- 2 teams of 7 players (may be less at younger ages)

### Sequence

Teams play 7 V 7

Teams attempt to score into the empty goal inside of the No-Go Area by shooting from outside of the penalty area or by volleying (ball cannot touch the ground before it is shot) inside of the No-Go area

The team shooting at the goal with a goalkeeper may shot and score from anywhere

Teams change ends after a specified amount of time

### Variation

1. Play with a smaller goal inside of the NO-Go area to make scoring more difficult
2. Limit the number of touches

## Coaching Focus

- Create scoring opportunities (both teams)
- Shoot at every opportunity
- Different types of shots (volleys, inside of foot, instep, short & long range)

## 1 v 1 Triangle Game



## Set-up

- 45 x 45 yd grid (smaller for younger players)
- 3 goals using 3 flags (flat cones to prevent injury to diving goalkeepers will suffice if flags are not available)
- Divide the field into 3 equal areas using cones to mark the areas
- Divide teams into 3s with 2 opponents in each area

## Sequence

Play starts by the coach or goalkeeper throwing a ball into one of the area

Players play 1v1 in their area and attempt to score on the roaming keeper or pass to a teammate in another area who tries to score

If the defending team wins the ball then they immediately become the attacking team while the other team defends

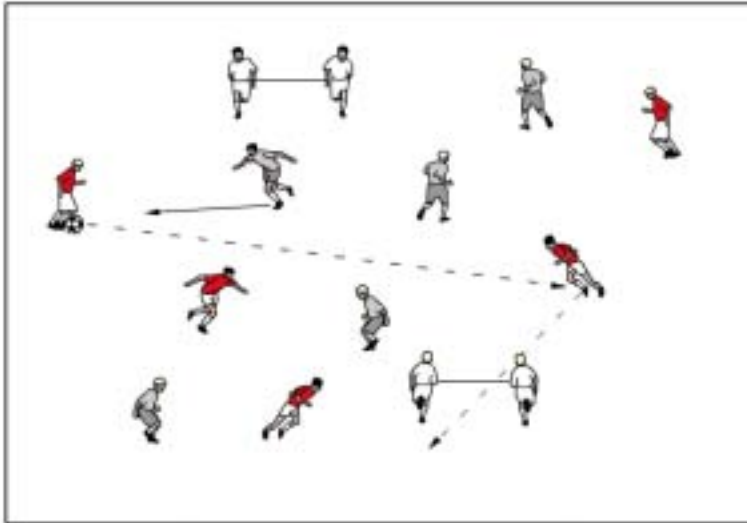
## Variation

1. Play 2 v 2 in each area (can play 3 v3 with older players)
2. Work on defending technique by the defending team
3. Remove the designated playing areas and play 3v3, 4v4, 5v5 or 6v6

## Coaching Focus

- Create scoring opportunities
- Look to shoot first and pass second
- Goalkeepers must be quick to adjust to different triangles and the defending team winning the ball and quickly attacking
- Accurate passing
- Good defending
- Transition quickly (defence to offence and offence to defence)

## 6 V 6 ON TWO MOBILE GOALS



### **Set-up**

- 40 x 50 yd grid (smaller for younger players)
- 2 Teams
- 4 players holding sticks or pennies and act as mobile goals

### **Sequence**

Teams play 6v6 (coaches choice) on the mobile goals  
Players must score under the bar which must be kept at waist height

Most goals scored in a specific time limit (10 minutes)

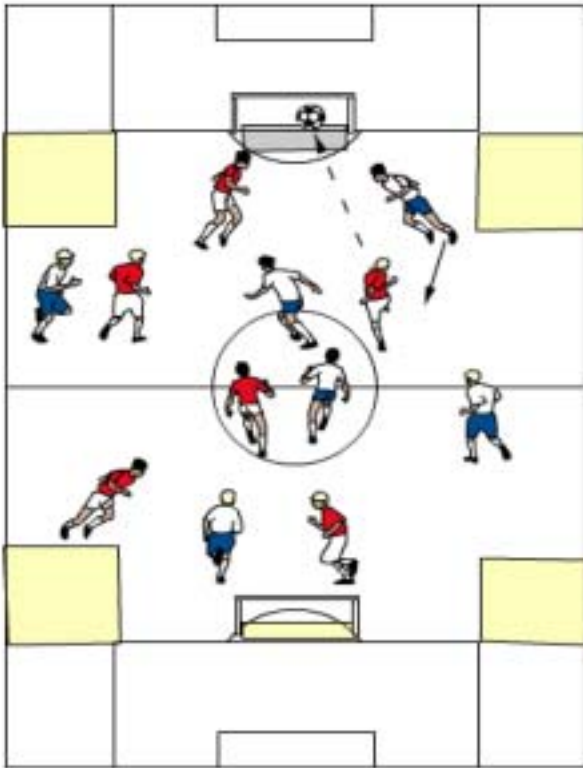
### **Variation**

1. A goal can only be scored when the ball is played and received by a team mate
2. Limit the number of touches (2 touches etc.)
3. Use goalkeepers as mobile goals and a goal is scored when a ball is shot to a goalkeeper who makes a save.

### **Coaching Focus**

- Accurate passing
- Accurate shooting

## **8V8 CROSSING & HIGH SHOTS**



### Set-Up

- Standard goals in an area between the two 18 yard boxes (a smaller area for younger players)
- A 12 yd crossing zone in each corner of the field
- Put tape or large cones in the front of the goals to prevent goals scored on low shots

### Sequence

Teams play 8V8 (smaller size teams may be used for younger players)

Teams can only score in the upper part of the goal

Only attackers are permitted in the corner crossing zones and cannot be interfered with by the defending team

**Goals scored “directly” from a cross count double**

### Variation

1. Players are limited to 2 touches
2. If the ball goes out the opposing team gets a corner kick (set play practice)

### Coaching Focus

- Quick attacks in transition after winning the ball
- Flank players (wingers) should touch the ball inside before crossing
- Cross to players who are coming into the goal area rather than to players who are standing waiting for the ball
- Attackers making runs to near post, far post and center goal areas