



Traffic Lights.

PURPOSE

To encourage players to dribble whilst keeping their head up and to improve a change of pace, turning and changing the angle of the dribble and stopping quickly with the ball. This is a fun warm up drill and can also be used as a functional practice to improve dribbling skills and techniques.

SETUP

Cone off an area that is suitable for the age, ability and size of the group of players. Put the same number of cones as the number of players outside of the area. Ensure there is at least 5 meters between the cones. The distance the cones are placed outside of the area, will depend on what your focus is for the session. The longer the distance, the more the players have to run to go round them, which will help improve fitness. The closer, the shorter they will have to run and this can improve sharpness and fitness. Each player has a ball and must stay inside the area, until they are instructed to do otherwise.

STRUCTURE

The players are instructed to dribble the ball inside the area, avoiding each other and keeping their head up.

The coach walks round the perimeter of the area, holding a Green Yellow and Red disc in their hands. It is important that they keep on the move and they do not instruct or call to the players. The reason for this is that you want the players to dribble in the area with their head up. By walking around the perimeter and not making a noise you are forcing them to constantly look to see where you are, rather than at the ball. The reason for no calling or talking is that players will key into your voice, rather than keeping their head up to see what coloured cone you hold up.

It is important that the players are given the information that relates to the particular practice that you want them to undertake. It is useful to demonstrate exactly what you want them to do for each particular practice.

For example, the first practice involves the green disc. The players need to understand, that when they see you hold the green disc above your head, they must quickly change the pace of the dribble, sprinting with the ball for 5 - 10 meters. A demonstration from the coach really helps them understand what they need to do.



The coach can use a lot of imagination with this practice. They could condition the players to dribble with one foot only or to dribble using their big and little toe alternatively. When turning, they can condition the players to turn with the ball using a drag back sole of the foot technique, or a big or little or big toe hook turn.

First Practice - Green Disc - Run with ball

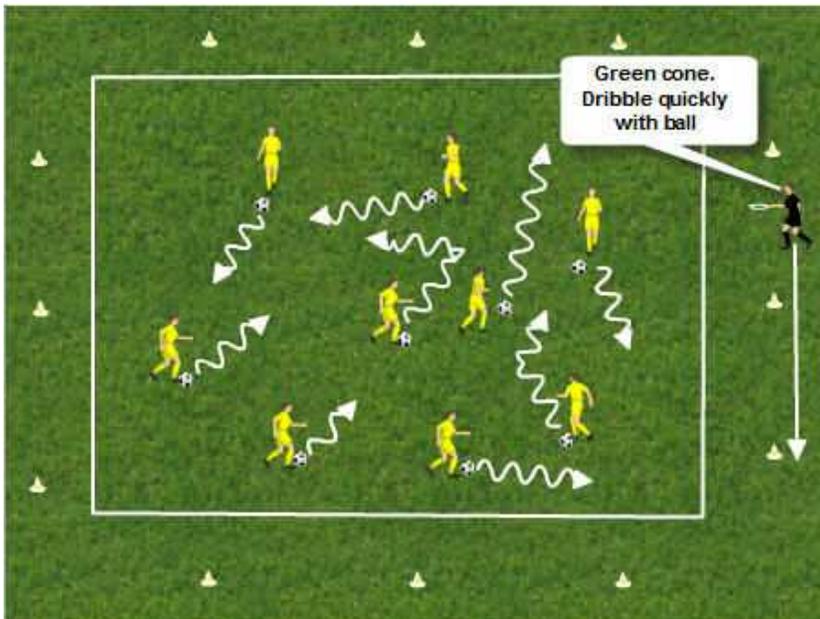
Coach walks round the perimeter of area, no talking or shouting. When the coach holds up the "Green Disc" in the air, players must demonstrate a burst of pace for 5 - 10 meters. Once the coach puts the green disc back down, players carry on dribbling at previous pace.

Things to encourage:

- Head up look at the coach so they can see when the coach puts the green cone up in the air
- Use big and little toes when dribbling
- Avoid other players
- Dribble quickly and change pace
- Real change of pace when green cone goes up in the air

Player skills developed:

- Head up
- Dribbling skills
- Changing pace





Second Practice - Yellow Disc - Change the angle of the dribble

Coach walks round the perimeter of area, no talking or shouting. When the coach holds up the "Yellow Disc" in the air, players must change direction followed by a burst of pace for 5 - 10 meters. Once the coach puts the yellow disc back down, players carry on dribbling at previous pace. The coach can condition the turns so that the players have to turn 180 degrees, turn with the sole of the foot, do a hook turn with the big or little toe.

Things to encourage:

Head up look at the coach so they can see when the coach puts the yellow cone up in the air

Use big and little toes when dribbling

Avoid other players

Dribble quickly and change pace

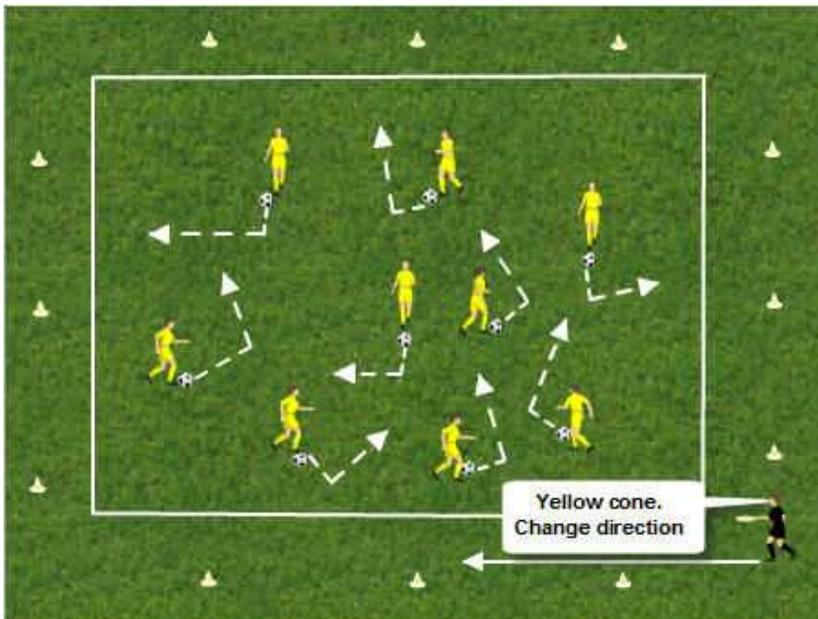
Exaggerate the change of direction and pace

Player skills developed:

Head up

Dribbling skills

Different turning skills





Third Practice - Red Disc - Stop quickly with the ball

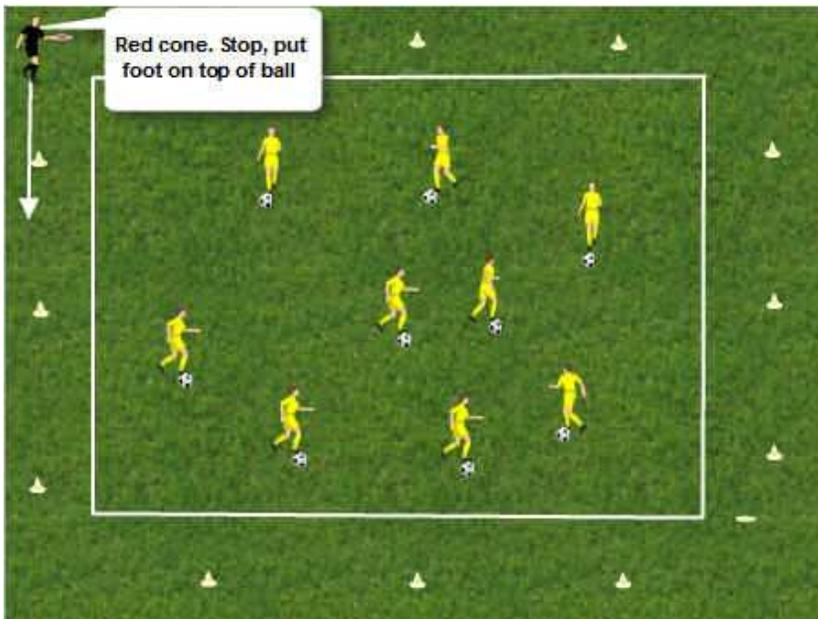
Coach walks round the perimeter of area, no talking or shouting. When the coach holds up the "Red Disc" in the air, players have to stop the ball with the sole of their foot. Once the coach puts the red disc down they should carry on dribbling.

Things to encourage:

Head up look at the coach so they can see when the coach puts the red cone up in the air
Use big and little toes when dribbling
Avoid other players
Stop the ball with the sole of the foot

Player skills developed:

Head up
Dribbling skills
Stopping the ball skill



Fourth practice - vary the colour of the cone - players need to be bright and watch the coach

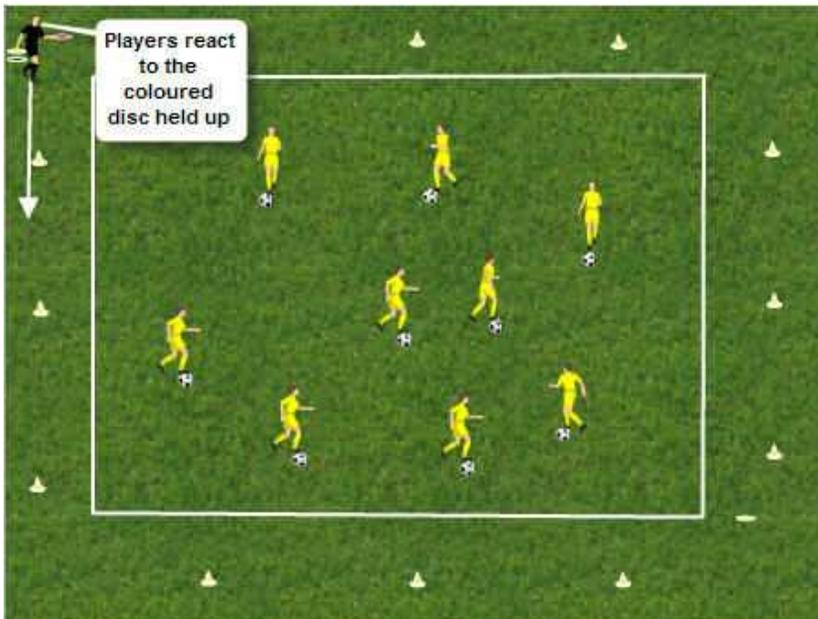
Coach walks round the perimeter of area, no talking or shouting. The coach decides which coloured disc they hold up. The players now know that green means change pace, yellow, change direction and red, stop with the ball. They now must really keep their head up and watch the coach to see what coloured disc is held up and perform the related skill associated with the coloured disc held up. The coach should constantly change which coloured disc they hold up.

Things to encourage:

Head up to watch the coach
React to the disc held up
Do the skill quickly

Player skills developed:

Head up
Developing different dribbling skills - change pace, change direction and stop quickly with the ball





Green Disc Progression

Coach walks round the perimeter of area, no talking or shouting. When the coach holds up the "Green Disc" in the air, players must quickly dribble the ball around one of cones on the outside of the pitch and back into the area, then carry on dribbling in the area.

Things to encourage:

Head up look at the coach so they can see when the coach puts the green cone up in the air

Use big and little toes when dribbling

Avoid other players

Encourage dribbling the ball, using both feet, rather than running with the ball. Good control when dribbling round the cone.

Player skills developed:

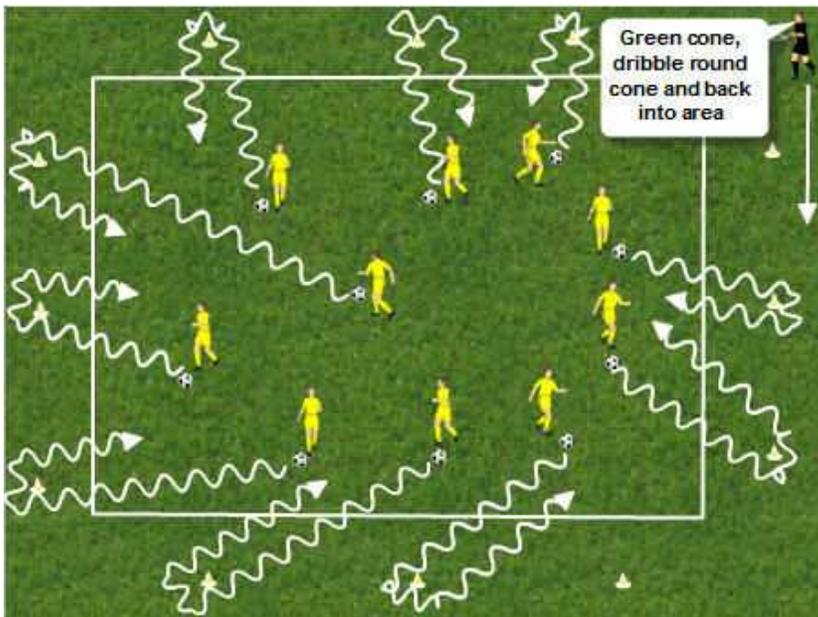
Head up

Dribbling skills

Control when dribbling

Fitness

Dribbling at pace



Yellow disc progression

Coach walks round the perimeter of area, no talking or shouting. When the coach holds up the "Yellow Disc" in the air, players must turn 180 degrees and run as quickly as they can around one of cones on the outside of the pitch and back into the area, then carry on dribbling in the area.

Things to encourage:

Head up look at the coach so they can see when the coach puts the yellow cone up in the air

Use big and little toes when dribbling

Avoid other players

Encourage a quick turn and quick running with the ball. Good control when dribbling round the cone.

Player skills developed:

Head up

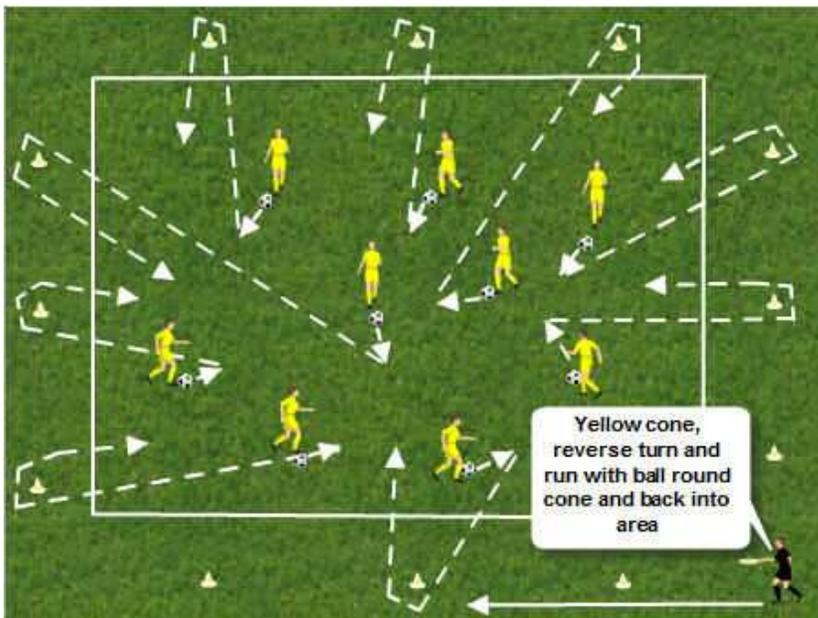
Dribbling skills

Control when dribbling

Fitness

Running at pace with the ball

Change of pace when running with the ball





Red disc progression

Coach walks round the perimeter of area, no talking or shouting. When the coach holds up the "Red Disc" in the air, players have to stop the ball with the sole of their foot. The players then have to tap the sole of both their feet on the ball for 5 or 10 times, or quickly alternate the ball between the side of their feet 5 - 10 times, then carry on dribbling

Things to encourage:

Head up look at the coach so they can see when the coach puts the red cone up in the air

Use big and little toes when dribbling

Avoid other players

Quick feet when tapping the top of the ball or shuffling between feet

Player skills developed:

Head up

Dribbling skills

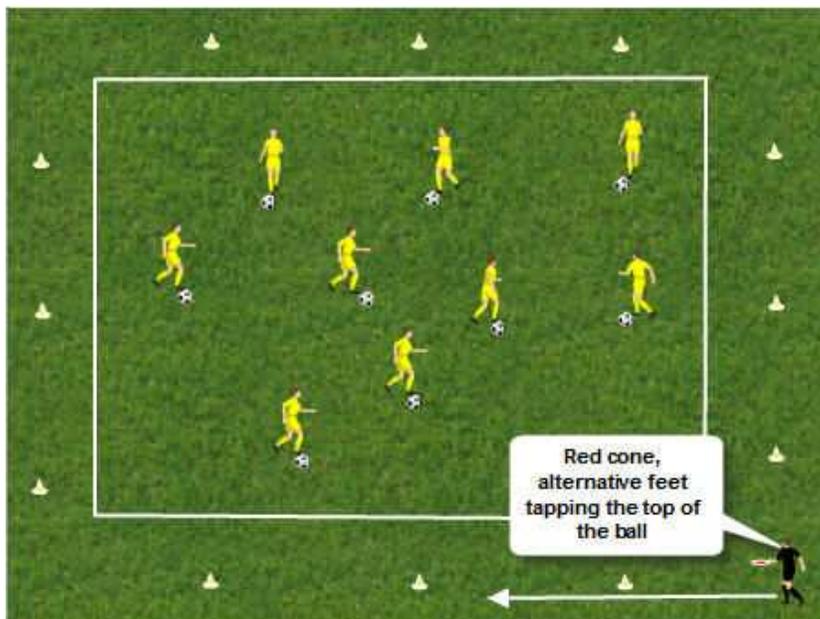
Stopping skill

Quick feet

Agility

Close ball control

Fitness



Invaders

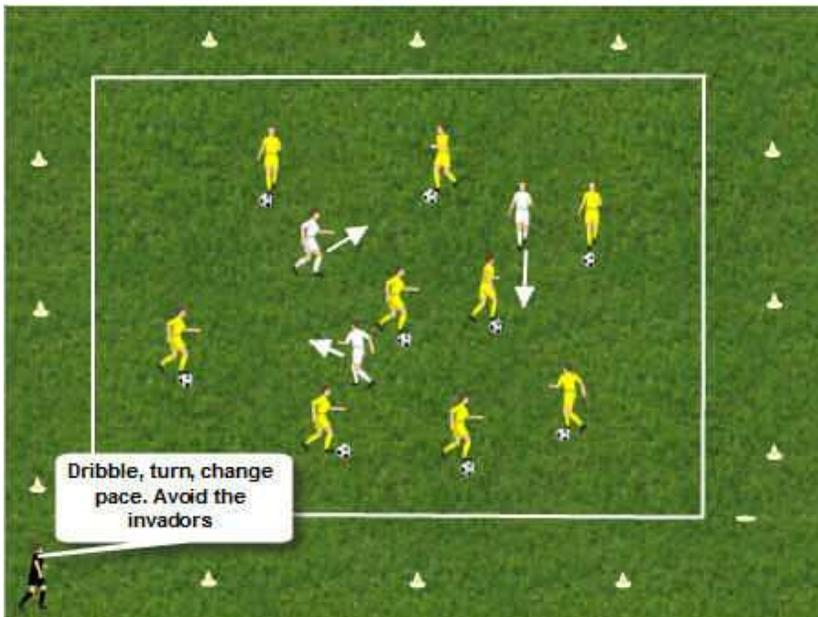
Coach introduces a number of invaders - (defenders). Depending upon age and ability, the number of invaders can be increased or decreased, but there should be 1 invader for every 2 or 3 dribblers. The invaders can be conditioned to initially walk or jog and have to try and tackle the dribblers. The dribblers must use changes of pace, turning, changing direction and stopping the ball techniques to avoid being tackled. Rotate dribblers and invaders on a regular basis.

Things to encourage:

- Head up to avoid the "invaders"
- Use big and little toes when dribbling
- Avoid other players
- Use different dribbling skills

Player skills developed:

- Head up
- Dribbling skills
- Stopping skill
- Quick feet
- Agility
- Close ball control





Fetch

Players dribble in the area. When coach calls "Fetch" the players have to stop the ball they are dribbling with the sole of their foot and quickly sprint out of the area, round a cone and collect a different ball upon their return. To improve fitness, don't allow the players to have a lot of rest between shouts of "fetch" as this will help develop the players speed and fitness.

Things to encourage:

- Head up
- Use big and little toes when dribbling
- Avoid other players
- Use different dribbling skills
- Run quickly round the cones

Player skills developed:

- Head up
- Dribbling skills
- Stopping skill
- Fitness
- Speed
- Quick feet

