GRASSROOTS

FIFA®

For the Game. For the World.

Grassroots

KEY

----------►	Path of the player without the ball
∿∿∿►	Path of the player with the ball
——►	Path of the ball (from a pass or shot)
▲	Coach
A, B, C, D	Designation of players
A1, A2	Positions of A players

Male and female

References to the male gender in this manual in respect of coaches, players etc. are for simplification and apply to both men and women.

Table of contents

Welcome message	5
The philosophy of grassroots football	9
The coach-educator	13
The characteristics of children and the educational approach	23
Organising a festival	35
Organising a tournament	45
The grassroots football session	53
Small-sided games	65
Basic techniques of football	71
Examples of exercises and games	77
Futsal and beach soccer	99
Grassroots structure in member associations	115
Establishing links with the government and other bodies	123
Development of a grassroots plan	131
Annexes	143

Welcome message

Fish Market Restaurant
دجاج الكافية
FIFA

Welcome message

Although FIFA is arguably best known for organising the FIFA World Cup™, football development is at the core of our mandate. FIFA dedicates large resources to fulfil this commitment for the future health of football all around the world – from grassroots to elite-level tournaments.

The FIFA Grassroots programme encourages girls and boys to play and enjoy football without restrictions. It focuses on the enjoyment of the game through small-sided matches, teaching basic football skills, exercises and, ultimately, fair play.

Between 2011 and 2016, FIFA invested USD 17.2 million in youth football and grassroots activities, with 83 per cent going to grassroots education worldwide. However, the development of grassroots football does not just mean financial assistance; it also involves a much wider commitment to setting up the necessary infrastructure to enable member associations, coaches and participants to take an active role in football.

We hope that this manual will be a useful tool for all those who would like to become involved in grassroots football and that you will join FIFA as we strive to inspire the younger generation to have fun whilst playing our beautiful game. Thank you for your contribution to the development of football and we wish you every success in all of your activities at grassroots level.

For the Game. For the World.

The philosophy of grassroots football

In implementing its mission statement, one of the three approaches adopted by FIFA is to "develop the game". This is manifested in the main objective of the FIFA Grassroots Programme: to allow football to be discovered by as many people as possible. The best way of attracting new players to the sport is to give them access to football in their own environment whatever their age, sex, physical condition, skin colour, religion or ethnic origin.

Grassroots football is football for all.

FIFA's Grassroots Programme targets boys and girls between the ages of 6 and 12 through school, community and club initiatives.
The key concept of the programme is to bring together as many people as possible through football.

The Grassroots Programme advocates exchanges and sharing human values and, of course, promotes the pleasure of playing our marvellous sport. For some people, grassroots football is a focus for recreational activities, while for others it is the organised practice of the sport, with training and matches, within a school or club framework.
Of course, not all young players will become the stars of the future and they do not all have the skills required to become professional players, so intensive training sessions and complicated tactics are not appropriate.

Play is the best means of learning.
Above all, youngsters should have fun.

The essential elements of grassroots football are relationships, team spirit and fun.

The concept of learning through play while being guided by a coach-educator is a specific approach designed to reach out to the young and create a process to connect to the future. The coach-educator must be dynamic, uncomplicated, passionate and motivational and must always respect the children's physical, physiological and psychological characteristics.

Children are not just miniature adults.

Football is the main recreational activity of countless numbers of children around the world. It is an exceptional tool for social integration and an excellent means of expression. The FIFA Grassroots Programme offers everyone the chance to play football, without discrimination and without the need for major infrastructure.

FIFA's programme can complement the initiatives of confederations and member associations that already have established grassroots programmes.
FIFA's Grassroots Programme has been drawn up in close cooperation with member associations and involves all the stakeholders in education (governments, NGOs (non-governmental organisations), communities, schools, etc.).

Grassroots football is football for everyone, by everyone, everywhere.

The coach-educator

"Youth prefer to be stimulated instead of being instructed."

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

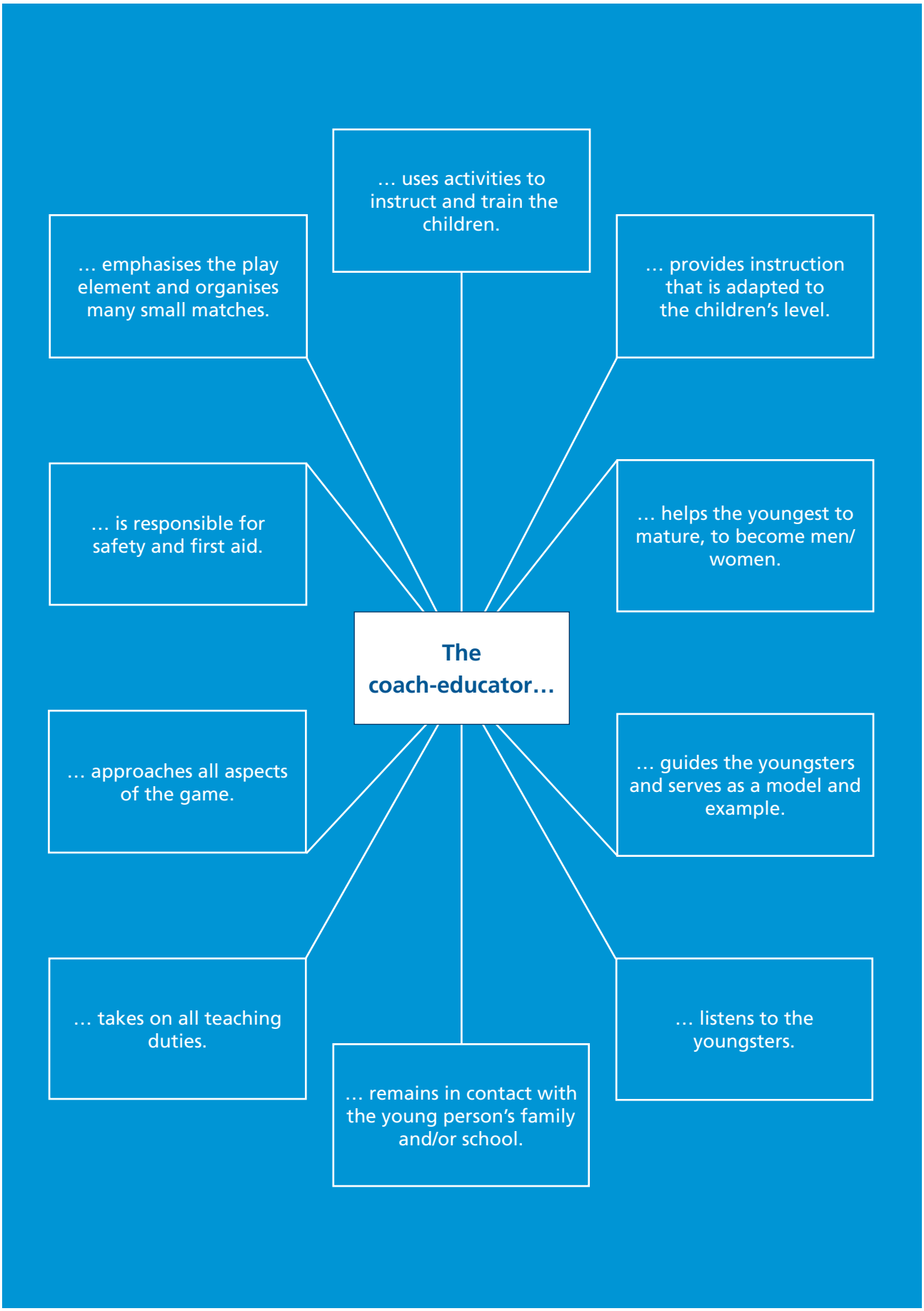
The coach-educator's interest centres on the child. The coach-educator's main, essential mission is to ensure the child's development in sporting, social, psychological and educational terms.
The coach-educator knows the game and knows the players. Of course, a coach-educator will not know everything, even in his/her own subject. However, the coach-educator must have a very good understanding of the messages to be communicated.
Victories and defeats are nothing compared with what football can promote in terms of human and social values. Football is a vital aid in training future citizens and encouraging young people's inclusion in society.
Football can be a marvellous tool in conveying such values as respect, solidarity, mutual support, sharing, etc.

The coach-educator's mission, or indeed vocation, means sharing, giving, communicating and interacting with others and taking enjoyment in this.

A coach-educator's educational mission is essentially to convey knowledge and social skills. To achieve this, the coach-educator must know the child, understand his/her characteristics and take into account age and skills. In short, the coach-educator must teach through encouragement and achievement.
Play is children's main activity. Play is an essential need, innate in all children. Thus, the main objectives of grassroots football are to introduce children to football and initiate them in the practice of football through play.
Football in small-sided games, on small pitches, addresses both of these needs. On small pitches, which are better suited to their physiological capacities, young footballers get more touches of the ball and learn to control and use the ball.
The coach-educator's mission is to promote learning through play. Play is an enjoyable way for children to learn. Play is an excellent way of developing psychomotor skills and allowing children to relax and overcome anxiety. It encourages children to take initiatives and risks and also encourages invention.
Simply enjoying football together and sharing the moment.

"Nature decrees that children should be children before they become adults. If we try to alter this natural order, they will reach adulthood prematurely but with neither substance nor strength."

Jean-Jacques Rousseau


The coach-educator…
… uses activities to instruct and train the children.
… emphasises the play element and organises many small matches.
… provides instruction that is adapted to the children's level.
… is responsible for safety and first aid.
… helps the youngest to mature, to become men/women.
… approaches all aspects of the game.
… guides the youngsters and serves as a model and example.
… takes on all teaching duties.
… listens to the youngsters.
… remains in contact with the young person's family and/or school.

Profile of a coach-educator

The vocation of the coach-educator, in his/her role as a trainer, is to introduce all those boys and girls who want to discover the joys of football to the sport and initiate them in its practice.

In order to achieve the objectives associated with this role as a trainer, the coach-educator's mission in his/her "football school" must be the following:

- to welcome all young players from the age of six without selection;
- to promote a sporting education based on respect and fair play from the youngest age;
- to encourage a spirit based on the enjoyment of playing and the desire to improve.

Without being an expert, the coach-educator must have a certain basic knowledge:

Knowledge of children:

- General developmental features at different ages

Relationships, behaviour, communication and language

Teaching and organisational skills:

- The methods of teaching
- Organising a football session
- Organising a tournament
- Organising a festival

Basic knowledge of football:

- Small-sided games
- Football games/exercises
- Teaching the basic techniques of football

The coach-educator…

Knowledge of children

- General developmental features
- Relationships, behaviour, communication and language

GRASSROOTS

Basic knowledge of football

- Small-sided games
- Training games
- Teaching technical moves

Teaching and organisational skills

- Methods of teaching
- Organising a football session
- Organising a tournament
- Organising a festival

Five foundations for the successful practice of football

A football school is an environment in which children must feel happy and valued:

1. The feeling of safety

Protecting children from physical and emotional harm. A child who does not feel safe will find it difficult to be happy and enjoy the activities.

2. The feeling of being welcome

Feeling welcome whatever the child's age, sex, technical level, physique, culture or language. Football is an environment in which there must be no discrimination of any kind.

3. The feeling of being a "good player"

Every child must feel capable. For this reason, children must always be encouraged, emphasising the good points rather than the bad.

4. The feeling of belonging to a group

Being part of the group and feeling accepted by the team are essential to the children.

5. The feeling of being important

Children need recognition for their successes. They must be encouraged to be creative and expressive.

The partnership with the parents

The coach-educator should also try to establish a respectful partnership with the players' parents. Depending on the family culture of the community where the grassroots programme is taking place, parents can sometimes overreact to their child's performances, and in other situations they can be really useful in assisting the coach-eductaor with transport and kit maintenance, for example. Part of the coach-educator's role is to develop a healthy relationship with families. Below are some useful tips for coach-educators to deal with parents:

- At the beginning of the season or at the start of an event such as a festival or a tournament, make sure you give the parents a quick briefing to explain the participation and educational principles of a grassroots programme.
- Make sure you understand and consider the local family culture of the community where the programme is taking place. A coach-educator should consider all of the particular traditions, beliefs and behaviour of the families.
- Conduct individual conversations with parents to give them some positive feedback about their child's development and behaviour.
- Bear in mind that parents may have good contacts that could help you with fundraising initiatives with local sponsors.

The GOALS of the coach-educator

- Enjoy working with the children.
- Get to know the children very well.
- Be a point of reference for the children.
- Set high standards but be tolerant.
- Listen to the children.
- Keep communicating.
- Instil confidence in the children and reassure them.
- Develop team spirit.
- Encourage initiative and risk-taking in individuals.
- Focus on the "spirit of the game" rather than errors.
- Teach by encouragement.

Behaviour to be avoided

- Constantly shouting or behaving aggressively.
- Training children or asking them to play as if they were adults.
- Forgetting that the main motivation of children is to play football.
- Giving explanations that are too long.
- Presenting technical objectives that are too advanced for the children's ages.
- Organising exercises that become too routine.
- Focusing on one exercise for too long.
- Continuously interrupting play.
- Criticising an individual in front of the group.
- Forgetting to balance the teams.
- Placing too much emphasis on the results.

– Educational lectures and meetings with parents can be organised by the grassroots coach-educator to discuss important topics about their children, such as nutritional habits, injury prevention, personal hygiene, health education and emotional support in sport.

As detailed in the codes of conduct, it is necessary that coach-educators and parents work together to guarantee an environment of enjoyment and welfare in the grassroots programme.

Codes of conduct

The coach-educator has a great influence over young players involved in grassroots football. From the very fact that coach-educators spend a lot of time with the children, their own conduct and behaviour will inevitably affect the attitudes and conduct of the children. For this reason, the coach-educator must always maintain a positive manner and display an exemplary attitude to all participants, both in physical respects as well as in social and emotional relationships.
The coach-educator must not just be perceived as a football expert or organiser, but also as a guide, an educator and an example to be followed.

The children's code

– Play for your own enjoyment and not simply to please your parents or coaches.
– Enjoy football, develop and flourish through football.
– Learn and respect the rules of the game and the rules of the group.
– Fit in to the group and be a good team-mate.
– Respect your opponents.
– Accept the decisions of the referees and your coach-educators.
– Ensure fair play in all circumstances.

The parents' code

– Remember that children play football for their own enjoyment, not for that of their parents.
– Encourage rather than force or oblige.
– Encourage children to always respect the Laws of the Game.
– Never reprimand a child for a technical error or for losing a match.
– Remember that children learn from examples.
– Encourage both teams.
– Congratulate both teams, irrespective of the result of the match.
– Help to eradicate all physical and verbal abuse from football.
– Respect the decisions of the coach-educators and referees and teach the children to do the same thing.
– Support, encourage and help volunteers, coach-educators, organisers and officials in their work. Without them, the children would not have the opportunity to play football.
– Ensure fair play in all circumstances.

The referees' code

– Be aware that refereeing a match for children is completely different from refereeing a match for adults.
– Protect the children.
– Put the emphasis on the spirit of the game rather than on errors.
– Do not intervene excessively in a match.
– Allow the children to play.
– Explain any infringements of the Laws of the Game committed by the children.
– If a player makes a mistake in restarting play, get the same player to repeat the action while explaining his/her error.
– Do not tolerate inappropriate language.
– Remain consistent, objective and polite when indicating infringements of the Laws of the Game.
– Have an explanatory attitude to refereeing; clarify all infringements.
– Maintain a positive and cheerful manner.
– Ensure fair play in all circumstances.
– Ask the children to shake hands before and after the match.

"Good parents help their children to be good players; excellent parents help their children to be excellent people."

Dietmar Samulski

Voluntary work

The volunteers should also be aware of the principles of a grassroots programme. The more they know about the educational and participation aspects of the project, the better they will be able to assist the players, coach-educators and parents.

Voluntary work is a very important aspect in the development of grassroots football, and member associations should strive to recruit volunteers to help with projects. These volunteers can be parents, teachers or community leaders. Even if volunteers do not have a formal role in the member association's structure, their participation can be crucial to the success of grassroots football in the country. Some volunteers are happy to help with the administrative tasks, while others prefer to organise tournaments and festivals or simply help with transport arrangements for the children.

Safety and accident prevention – Ten important tasks for coach-educators

1. Provide a safe environment

The sports installations and equipment must be safe for the children and other participants. Poor weather conditions must be taken into consideration for all grassroots football activities.

2. Safe, appropriate sports equipment and facilities

The existing codes and standards for equipment must be respected. All equipment and facilities must be kept in good condition and must be appropriate for the category of player involved (e.g. size 4 footballs).

3. Planned activities

Poorly planned football sessions can result in injuries. Technical skills must be taught in a progressive manner, in particular techniques that involve an element of risk (e.g. headers or tackling).

4. Monitor players who are injured or temporarily incapacitated

Players who are injured or temporarily incapacitated must be exempted from exercises that may cause them harm.

5. Play within age categories

It is initially necessary to allocate children to different groups, including talented young players, not only according to age, but also taking into account height, weight and maturity. Experience and skill should also be considered.

6. Inform the children and parents of the inherent risks of the sport

The inherent risks of football can only be legally accepted by the children – or their parents/guardians – if they are aware of, understand and accept the risks.

7. Closely monitored activities

The practice environment must be appropriately monitored in order to ensure that it is as safe as possible.

8. Knowledge of first aid

Coach-educators must have a basic knowledge of first aid and must keep this knowledge up to date. Appropriate medical assistance must be available during organised activities and nothing must be done that may aggravate an injury.

9. Set out clear rules for the activities and how they are to be carried out

Clear, written rules must be drawn up and distributed before all activities, describing how they work and the behaviour expected.

10. Gather essential information on the health of the children

Coach-educators must have basic information on the health of the children and the risks involved so that they can take the best decisions possible in the event of any problems during a coaching session.

The coach-educator's essential mission is to ensure the protection of the children, not only for the sake of the participants themselves but also to reassure the parents. Given the large number of children, both boys and girls, who take part in football activities, their protection must be a priority. Nobody must be left unsupervised. If carried out correctly, the procedures to protect the children will still allow them to enjoy playing football.

The characteristics of children and the educational approach

The school of football is also the school of life.

As children grow up, they pass through different stages. Children have different needs and behaviours; they do not all develop in the same way. For this reason, it is important to be aware of the specific characteristics and priorities of each of the stages of childhood and adolescence, taking into account physical, physiological and psychological aspects. The coach-educator must realise that a young person is not a small adult. The stages of a child's growth and development must be taken into account in order to ensure the best possible approach.
It is the coach-educator's responsibility to be aware of these essential points and to apply appropriate responses in individual cases.
It is important to consider the physical development of each young player and to distinguish their actual age from their physical age.

Furthermore, some children start to play football later than age 6-8, which is when the majority of children start. That is why it is important for the coach-educator to respect the child's level and have a positive approach to encourage learning.

A coach-educator supervises children playing football; a coach-educator does not train footballers.

Teaching approach

1. Preparing the session
- Written notes
- General knowledge of football
- Setting the objectives to be achieved
- Choice of exercises, adapted to the children's capabilities

– Preparation in terms of the location and schedule of exercises
– Tailoring instructions depending on the children's level
– Gradual development of exercises, taking the children's level into account
– Repetition of exercises and memorising of situations by the children

Evaluation of exercises and progress made by the children

2. Organising the session

– Setting out the area for play, providing a suitable space
– Teaching equipment, first-aid kit
– Organisation of exercises and games: distribution of bibs, movement and rotation of players, etc.
– Organisation of teams. It is important that teams are balanced when they compete against each other to make sure that the children remain motivated
– Players' level
– Players' physical characteristics
– Diversity, adapting the rules if necessary
– Progressive development of exercises and games
– Duration and repetition of exercises

Rest periods, drinks for the children

3. Motivating the session

– Simple, comprehensive explanations of the objectives of the session
– Presentation of the contents
– Organisation of teams and/or working groups in workshops
– Setting up exercises
– Positioning players
– Demonstrating the exercise
– Carrying out the exercise, monitoring time taken
– Exercises and motivation
– Teaching by encouragement
– Monitoring comprehension of exercises and the quality of implementation
– Collective and/or individual correction of exercises
– Ongoing control of schedule and area
– Pursuit of technical quality
– Games and motivation
– Teaching by encouragement
– Allowing play to continue, infrequent intervention
– Encouraging individual initiative
– Promoting creativity
– Ongoing control of schedule and area

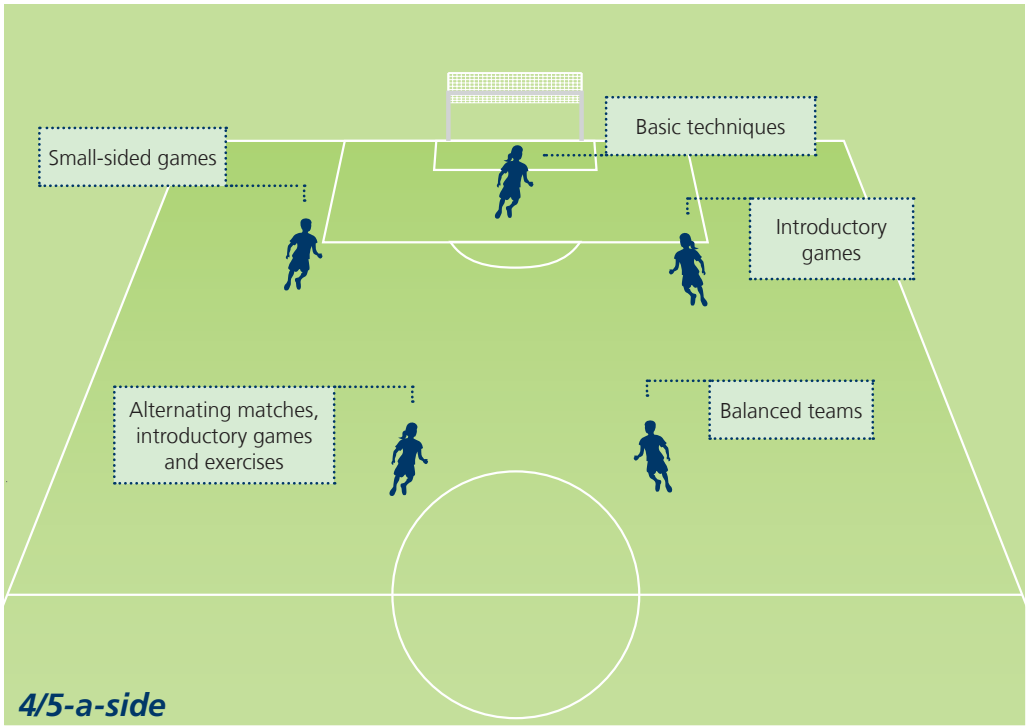
Maintaining the technical balance between teams

4. Concluding the session

– Bringing the children back together and calming down
– Evaluation, discussion, recommendations
– Introduction of the next session
– Putting equipment away
– Overseeing the children's departure

Stages of development and characteristics

Children aged 6-8 – Session



Children's characteristics

Enjoyment of the game

Developing quickly

Limited concentration

Imitation

Plays for him/herself

The coach-educator's role

Demonstration

Supervises, reassures and motivates

Limited intervention

Encouragement

Simple, expressive language

Children's characteristics	Training content
– Fragile, developing quickly, difficulties with coordination – Short attention and concentration spans – Excellent facility for imitation (visual memory) – Likes playing, plays for him/herself, egocentrism – Enjoyment of the game	– Basic football technique, coordination exercises – Introductory games, getting used to the ball – Small-sided games: 4 v 4 and 5 v 5 matches – Alternating matches, introductory games and exercises – Balanced groups or teams
Just a child	**Playing, enjoying**

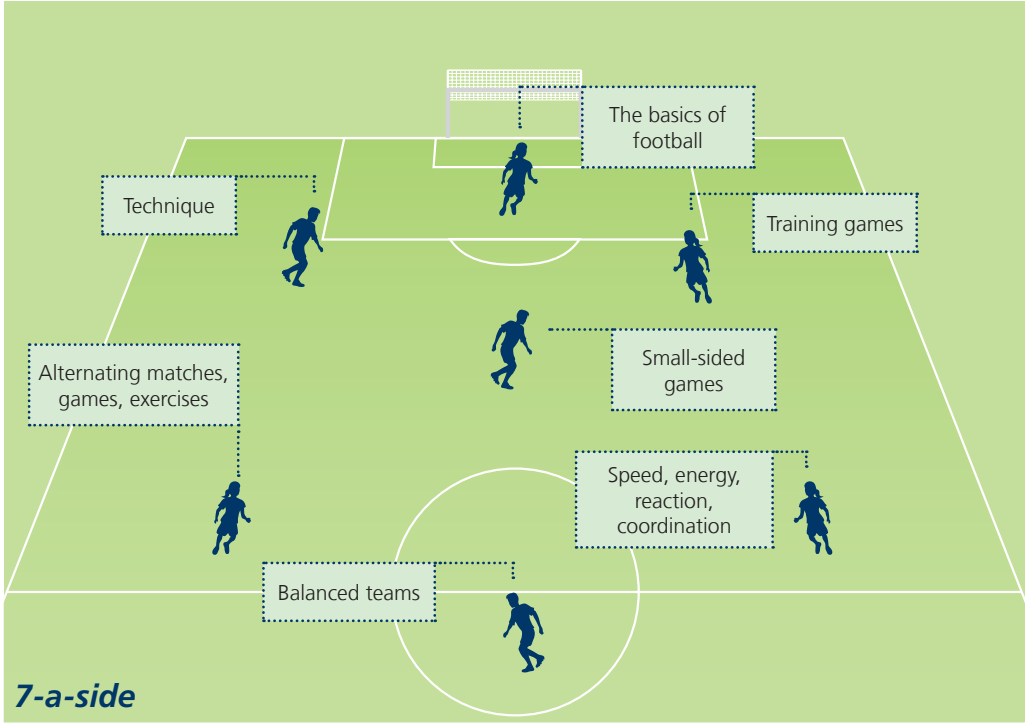
The coach-educator's role

– Supervises games, reassures and motivates
– Demonstrates the exercises
– Simple, expressive language
– Limited intervention / letting the children play
– Teaching by encouragement

Having fun through football

Stages of development and characteristics

Children aged 9-10 – Session



Children's characteristics

- Visual memory
- Improved coordination
- Improved speed and endurance
- A hunger to learn
- Group spirit
- Discussion skills
- Self-confidence

The coach-educator's role

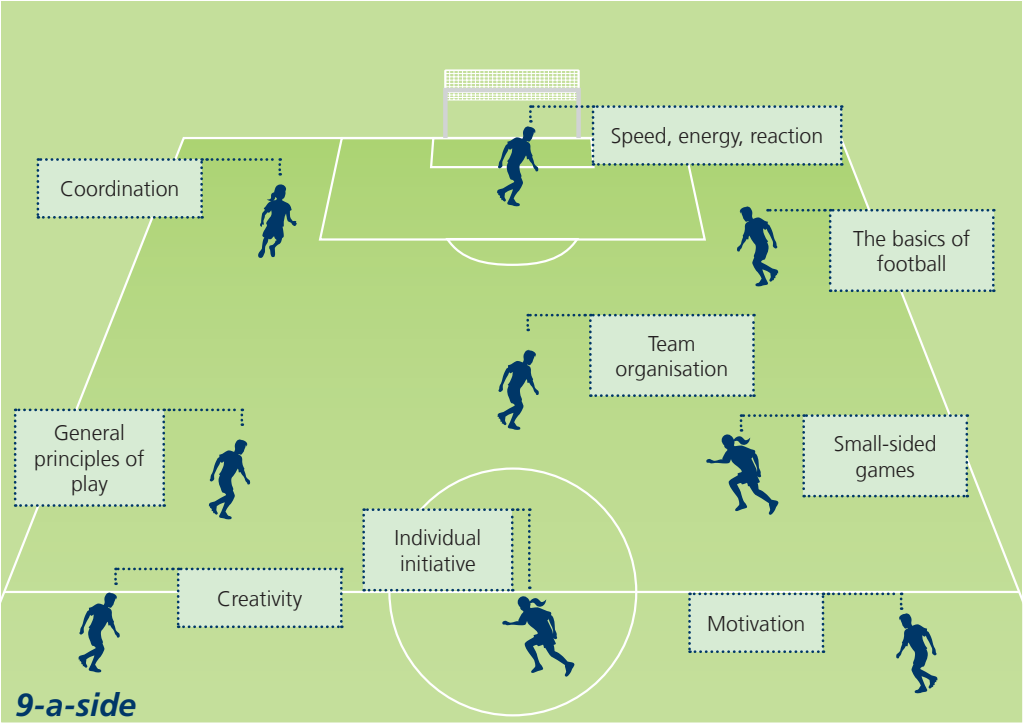
- Methodology, teaching techniques
- Leadership
- Organisation, communication
- Team spirit
- Encouragement
- Demonstration, correction
- Knowledge of football

Children's characteristics	Training content
– Improved speed, endurance and strength – Improved coordination – Good visual memory – Good self-confidence – Discussion skills – A hunger to learn and discover – Collective spirit	– Basic techniques (the basics of football) – Basic team organisation – Speed, energy, reaction, coordination – Training games – Small-sided games: 5 v 5, 7 v 7 (depending on the level of the children) – Alternating matches, training games, exercises – Balanced groups or teams
A child in a team of friends	**Playing, discovering, experimenting**

The coach-educator's role
– The Coach-educator's role – Methodology, teaching techniques – Emotional and technical leadership – Organisational and communication skills – Establishing team spirit – General knowledge of football – Demonstration, implementation, correction – Teaching by encouragement
Learning by playing

Stages of development and characteristics

Children aged 11-12 – Session



Children's characteristics

- A hunger to learn
- Improved coordination
- Physical changes
- Competitive spirit
- Assertiveness
- Visual and aural memory
- Team spirit
- Improved attention
- Discussion skills

The coach-educator's role

- Methodology, teaching techniques
- Team spirit
- Behaviour
- Knowledge of football
- Technical language
- Teaching through play
- Motivation
- Encouragement
- Demonstration, correction

- Significant physical changes
- Better balance, better coordination
- Improved visual and aural memory
- Critical faculties, discussion skills
- Improved attention
- A hunger to learn
- Assertiveness
- Development of the competitive spirit
- Team spirit

A player in the team

- Speed, energy and reaction
- Coordination
- Basic techniques (the basics of football)
- Basic team organisation (3-2-3)
- The general principles of play and motivation
- Control of space and movement
- Small-sided games: 5 v 5, 7 v 7, 9 v 9 (depending on the level of the children)
- Promoting creativity
- Encouraging individuals to take initiative

Playing and taking part

- Methodology and teaching techniques
- Establishing a group spirit
- Quality of behaviour
- Knowledge of football
- Technical language
- Teaching through play
- Motivating the team
- Demonstration, implementation, correction
- Teaching by encouragement

A footballer in a team

Mixed-sex participation in football

For many years, numerous countries did not permit young people to play mixed-sex football for cultural reasons. Young girls would only be allowed to play football with other girls, regardless of the age difference between them.

In the field of education, many countries have now adopted mixed-sex schools, in which children are no longer categorised by their gender, but by age or academic level. Mixed-sex participation in sport, and football, by young people has followed suit.

It is worth noting that certain countries allow mixed-sex participation in football up to the age of 12, while others do not impose any category restrictions at all on mixed-sex football, which explains why football is so well-developed in these countries.

Allowing boys and girls to play together contributes to the emancipation of the two genders, improves tolerance and promotes mutual respect.

By playing alongside boys, girls gain a more positive image of themselves, increase their self-confidence and become more aware of their abilities.

Mixed-sex participation in football encompasses all the forms of competition in which girls and boys play with and against one another. In other words, we can use the term "mixed-sex football" to refer to any of the following cases:

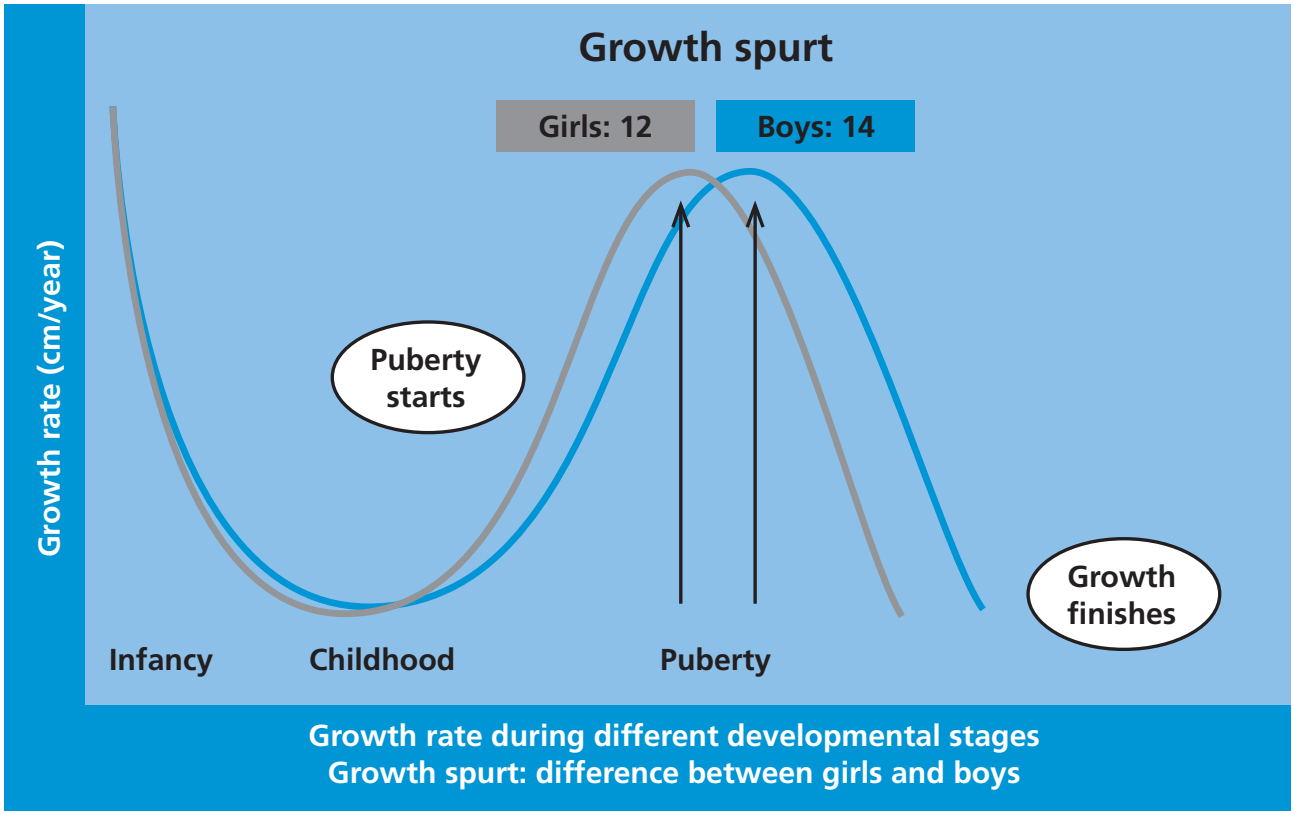
- a team of boys playing against a team of girls;
- a mixed-sex team (boys and girls) playing against a team of boys;
- a mixed-sex team (boys and girls) playing against a team of girls;
- a mixed-sex team (boys and girls) playing against a mixed-sex team (boys and girls).

Allowing mixed-sex football at least up to the age of 12 – wherever possible and bearing in mind the structure of different societies and the cultural and educational opportunities available – will contribute greatly to the development of football in general.

Growth

Children grow at different speeds, depending on the different stages of development they are going through. Sexual characteristics generally start to develop at 11.5 years of age for girls and 12.5 for boys. The first signs are the development of breasts in girls and enlargement of the testicles in boys.

Annual growth in height increases from 5cm before puberty to 7-9cm during the pubertal growth spurt. On average, this growth spurt is experienced by girls at the age of 12 and by boys at 14. However, differences in growth before the age of 12 should not prevent boys and girls from playing together. Coach-educators should nevertheless take account of the difference between their chronological ages and their biological ages as well as any cases of precocious puberty when managing mixed groups to ensure they are well balanced.



Organising a festival

The festival

- A FIFA grassroots festival is a one-day event designed to introduce as many boys and girls as possible to football through different activities. The children will practise exercises and basic skills, and the matches will be small-sided games so that all the participants have the opportunity to get involved in playing football. The festival focuses on girls and boys between the ages of 6 and 12, and involves as many children as possible without distinction of ethnic origin, religion, social background or football skills.
- The number of teams and the facilities available determine the space required for the festival.
- How many teams there are will determine the number and organisation of the pitches and the number of workshops (technical exercises and games with reduced numbers of players).
- Duration of a festival: a maximum of one-and-a-half hours (including breaks). The amount of time played by each participant should not exceed the match time recommended for his/her age category (see page 43), and the length of each station should be between 8 and 12 minutes.

Activities

- The teams move from pitch to pitch (see diagrams).
- The children should not remain on the same pitch at the end of an activity. Instead, they should move from one pitch to another in the appropriate direction. It should also be ensured that there is a rotation of the goalkeepers and substitutes.
- Only the children and the team managers are allowed on the pitches. Parents and supporters are not allowed onto the pitches ("Let the children play!").
- There is no referee. The team managers/coach-educators supervise the games from the edge of the pitches. For this reason, the pitches should be close to one another.
- The festival organiser may appoint a coach-educator to run a station. Otherwise, this role is assumed by the team managers. No special skills are required (see: "Example exercises" chapter).
- The results are not recorded. There is no classification!
- There must be breaks to allow the children to recover and have a drink.
- Make the festival lively, including the workshops if possible (organisation team, team managers if in attendance).

Games and exercises

- The dimensions of the pitches depend on the number of players, their age and their level.
- The pitches and workshop areas must be marked out and numbered.
- The dimensions of the goals and the objectives can vary from pitch to pitch.
- Matches may be played with or without goalkeepers.
- The workshops are located between or next to the pitches (see: organisation of pitches).
- The number of workshops (1-4) depends on the objectives and the space available for the festival.
- The primary focus of the workshops is technique.
- The workshops must be supervised (by qualified coach-educators).
- The organiser must specify the types of workshop.

Equipment

- All types of goal can be used. Maximum dimension: 5 m x 2 m
- Marking out the pitches: tapes, cones, marker discs or lines are all options
- Bibs of various colours; one set of bibs per activity
- Footballs: size 4
- Matches: one ball per match + goals
- Workshops: depends on the exercise (balls, bibs, cones, marker discs, small goals)

Participants

- Each team has a coach-educator/team manager (if possible).
- The teams must not have more than seven players (boys/girls).
- If possible, there should be only one age group per festival.
- Between the ages of 6 and 10, mixed-gender teams are possible.

Organisation

- Announcement of the event/System of registering teams
- Information to be sent to the participating teams
- Depending on the number of teams, establish the number of pitches and the plan for rotating the teams (copies sent to team managers)
- Prepare the programme and schedule the activities
- Plan and organise facilities and equipment

- Organise personnel
- Set up pitches and workshops (personnel, team managers if in attendance)
- Make sure a first-aid kit is available as well as drinks for the children

The coordinator's role in the festival

Welcome and information

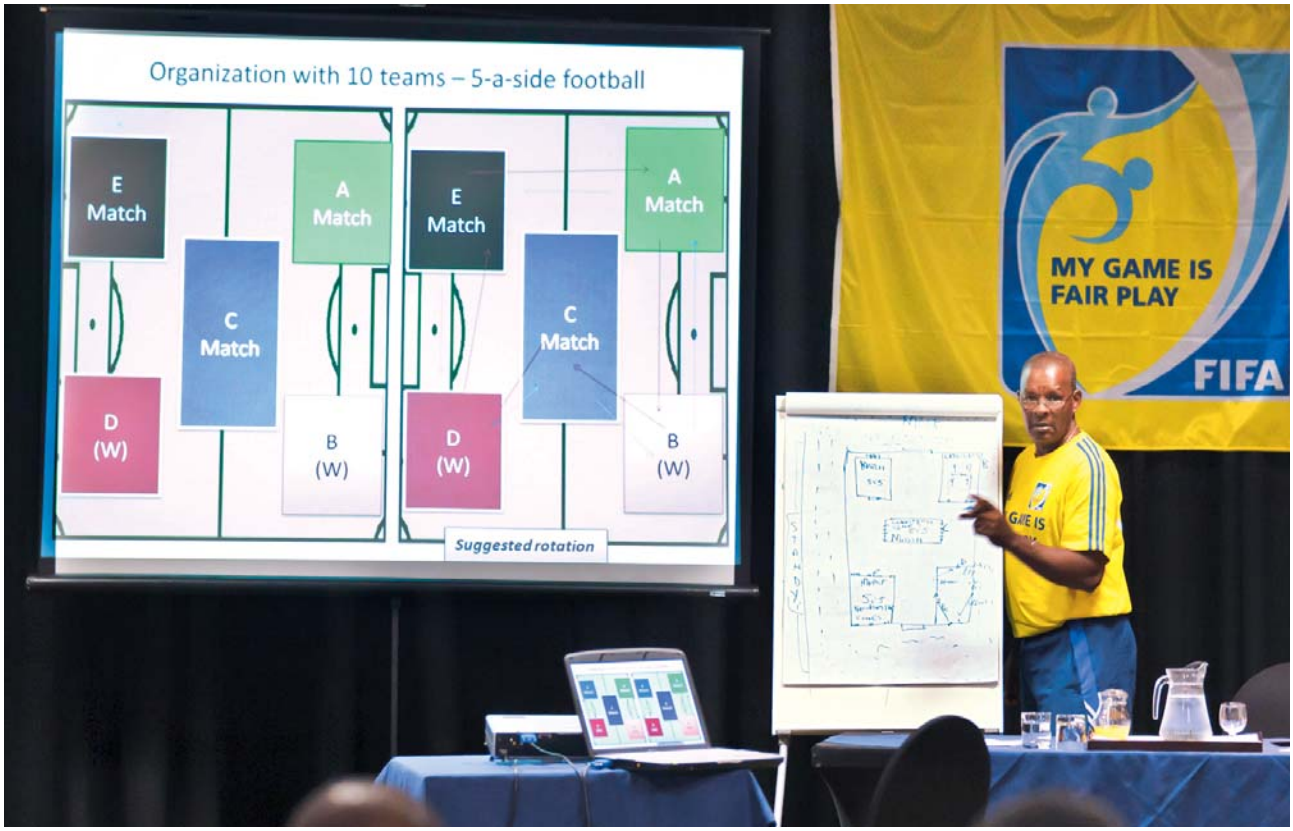
- The coordinator welcomes the team managers and coach-educators.
- Before the activities start, the coordinator informs the teams of the arrangement of the pitches, the rotation of teams and the length of the stations.
- Each team manager must be given a plan showing the organisation of the pitches and the rotation of the teams to make sure that the festival runs smoothly.
- The coordinator should emphasise the rules of fair play on and off the pitches, mainly for the benefit of the parents and other adults rather than the children.
- Organisation of logistical matters (material, water, distribution of the teams, etc.)
- Rehearsal of the festival

During the festival

- The coordinator should take up a position at the centre of the space to be used for the festival.
- This position should be the best location to facilitate contact with all team managers (to answer questions, give instructions, etc.).
- The organiser sets the duration of each rotation and indicates the start and finish of the games and exercises with an audible signal.

End of the festival and review

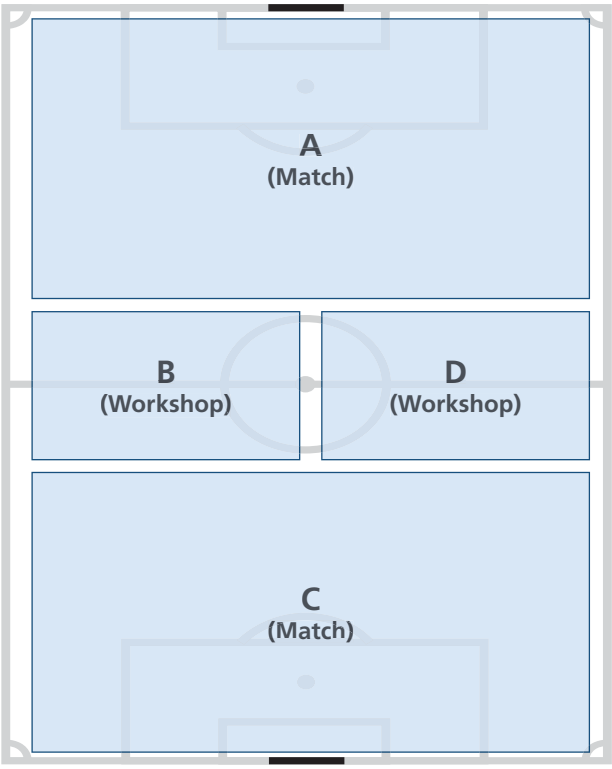
At the end of the festival, the coordinator calls all the teams and managers together in the middle of the area.
The coordinator makes a closing speech (thanking the children for their participation, efforts, exemplary fair play and also thanking the team managers, parents, supporters, etc.).
The team managers are also invited to speak and give a brief analysis of the festival.
Everybody involved should use the experience to make subsequent festivals better by improving the organisation, setting up and quality of the football activities (workshops, technical exercises, matches).



Different configurations

Different configurations and sizes of festivals are possible, depending on the number of children involved, the playing area available, the number of pitches and workshops, and the event (launch). As with organising tournaments, the characteristics of the different age categories will also determine the duration of the whole festival, including the welcoming of children, rest in between activities, rotation from one workshop to another, gathering after the festival and the closing speech. The whole festival should not exceed two-and-a-half hours (2½ hours).

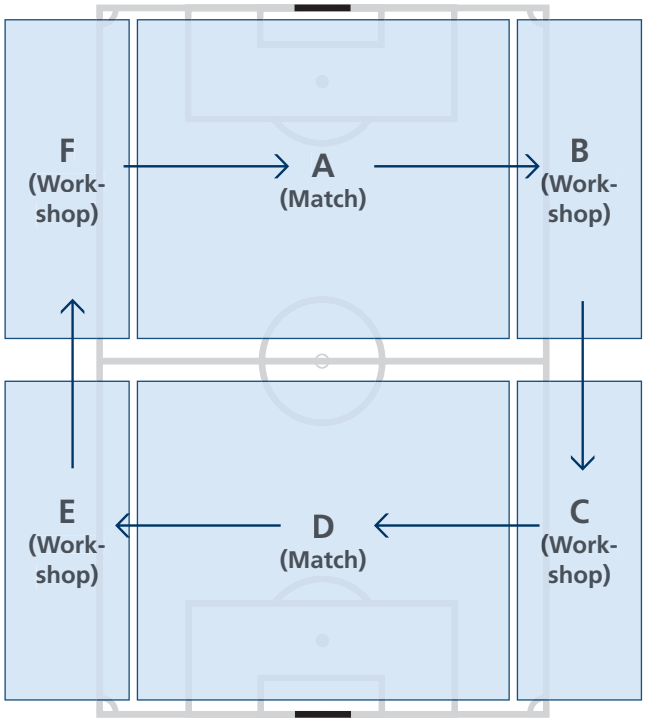
Organisation with 6 teams – 7-a-side football



Round	Pitch A	Pitch B	Pitch C	Pitch D
1	1 v 2	3	4 v 5	6
2	6 v 1	2	3 v 4	5
3	5 v 6	1	2 v 3	4
4	4 v 5	6	1 v 2	3
5	3 v 4	5	6 v 1	2
6	2 v 3	4	5 v 6	1

The matches and workshops take place on pitches A, B, C and D. There are two teams for each pitch and one team per workshop. The workshops may, for example, feature 1 v 1 or 2 v 2 games, or technical exercises (varying from one workshop to the next).

Organisation with 8 teams – 7-a-side football

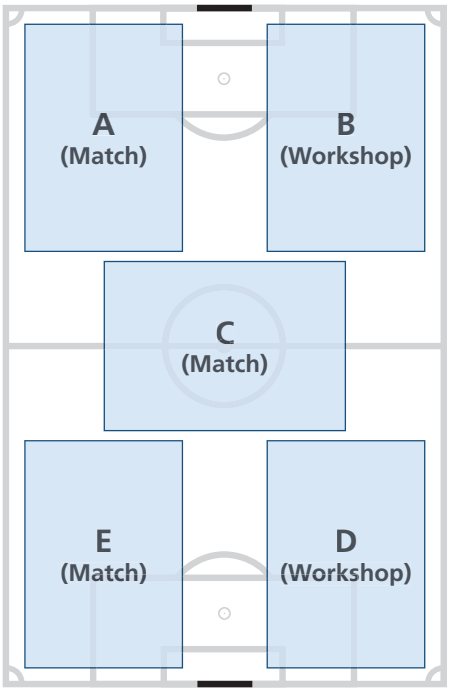


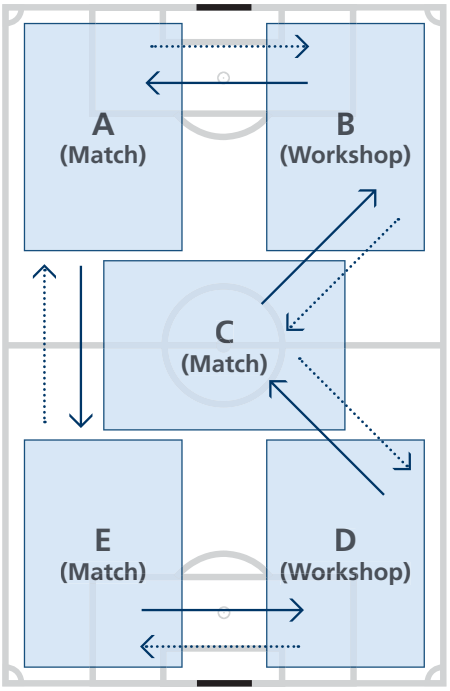
suggested rotation

Matches A and D are held on the main pitch while workshops B, C, E and F take place to the side. There are two teams for each pitch and one team per workshop. The workshops may, for example, feature 1 v 1 or 2 v 2 games or technical exercises (varying from one workshop to the next).

Round	Pitch A	Pitch B	Pitch C	Pitch D	Pitch E	Pitch F
1	1 v 2	3	4	5 v 6	7	8
2	8 v 1	2	3	4 v 5	6	7
3	7 v 8	1	2	3 v 4	5	6
4	6 v 7	8	1	2 v 3	4	5
5	5 v 6	7	8	1 v 2	3	4
6	4 v 5	6	7	8 v 1	2	3
7	3 v 4	5	6	7 v 8	1	2
8	2 v 3	4	5	6 v 7	8	1

Organisation with 10 teams – 5-a-side football



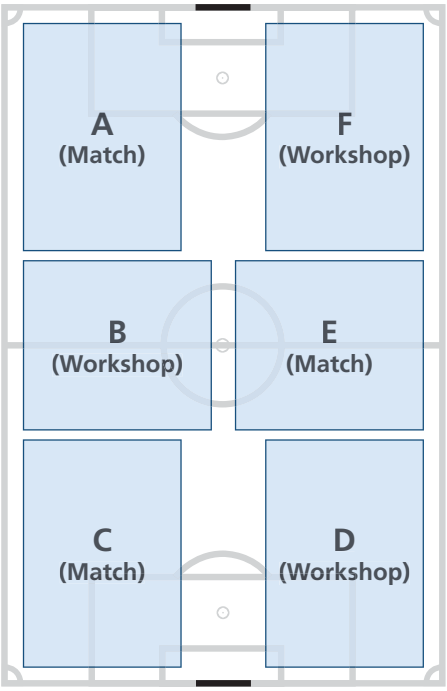


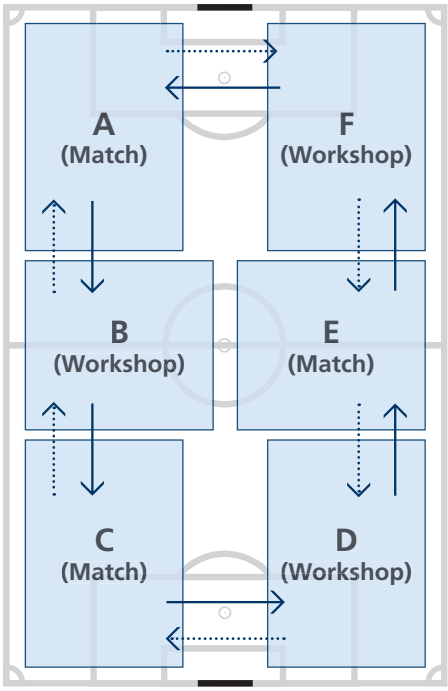
suggested rotation

Teams 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 move from left to right, while teams 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 move from right to left (see diagram). There are two teams for each pitch. The workshops may, for example, feature 1 v 1 or 2 v 2 games or technical exercises (varying from one workshop to the next).
Organisation of pitches and workshops:
A = match / B = technical exercise / C = match / D = technical exercise / E = match.

Round	Pitch A	Pitch B	Pitch C	Pitch D	Pitch E
1	1 v 6	2 + 7	3 v 8	4 + 9	5 v 10
2	7 v 5	8 + 1	9 v 2	10 + 3	6 v 4
3	4 v 8	5 + 9	1 v 10	2 + 6	3 v 7
4	9 v 3	10 + 4	6 v 5	7 + 1	8 v 2
5	10 v 2	6 + 3	7 v 4	5 + 8	9 v 1

Organisation with 12 teams – 5-a-side football



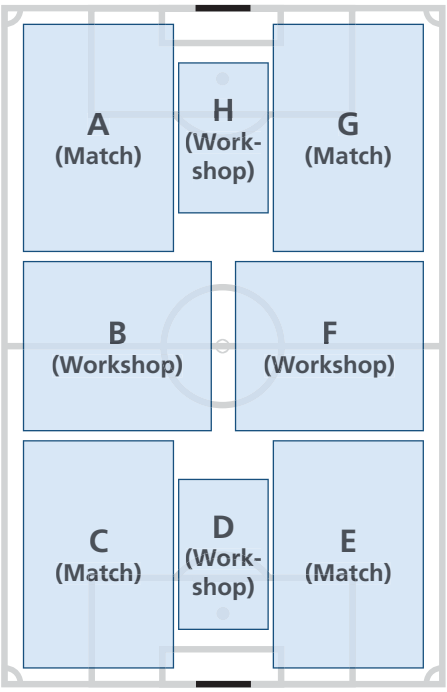


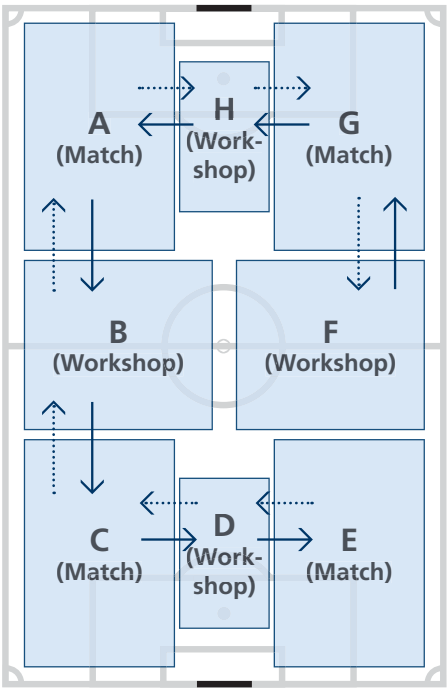
suggested rotation

Teams 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 move from left to right, while teams 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 move from right to left (see diagram). There are two teams for each pitch. The workshops may, for example, feature 1 v 1 or 2 v 2 games or technical exercises (varying from one workshop to the next).
Organisation of pitches and workshops: A = match / B = technical exercise / C = match / D = technical exercise / E = match / F = technical exercise.

Round	Pitch A	Pitch B	Pitch C	Pitch D	Pitch E	Pitch F
1	1 v 7	2 + 8	3 v 9	4 + 10	5 v 11	6 + 12
2	6 v 8	1 + 9	2 v 10	3 + 11	4 v 12	5 + 7
3	5 v 9	6 + 10	1 v 11	2 + 12	3 v 7	4 + 8
4	4 v 11	5 + 12	6 v 7	1 + 8	2 v 9	3 + 10
5	3 v 12	4 + 7	5 v 8	6 + 9	1 v 10	2 + 11
6	2 v 7	3 + 8	4 v 9	5 + 10	6 v 11	1 + 12

Organisation with 16 teams – 5-a-side football





suggested rotation

Teams 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 move from left to right, while teams 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16 move from right to left (see diagram). There are two teams for each pitch. The workshops may, for example, feature 1 v 1 or 2 v 2 games or technical exercises (varying from one workshop to the next).
Organisation of pitches and workshops: A = match / B = technical exercise / C = match / D = technical exercise E = match / F = technical exercise / G = match / H = technical exercise.

Comments/Advice:
It is possible to run two parallel festivals for larger gatherings:
16-team festival = 2 x 8-team festivals
20-team festival = 2 x 10-team festivals
24-team festival = 2 x 12-team festivals

Round	Pitch A	Pitch B	Pitch C	Pitch D	Pitch E	Pitch F	Pitch G	Pitch H
1	1 v 9	2 + 10	3 v 11	4 + 12	5 v 13	6 + 14	7 v 15	8 + 16
2	8 v 10	1 + 11	2 v 12	3 + 13	4 v 14	5 + 15	6 v 16	7 + 9
3	7 v 11	8 + 12	1 v 13	2 + 14	3 v 15	4 + 16	5 v 9	6 + 10
4	6 v 12	7 + 13	8 v 14	1 + 15	2 v 16	3 + 9	4 v 10	5 + 11
In the next round, teams 9 to 16 move two pitches so that they do not meet the same teams again.								
5	5 v 14	6 + 15	7 v 16	8 + 9	1 v 10	2 + 11	3 v 12	4 + 13
6	4 v 15	5 + 16	6 v 9	7 + 10	8 v 11	1 + 12	2 v 13	3 + 14
7	3 v 16	4 + 9	5 v 10	6 + 11	7 v 12	8 + 13	1 v 14	2 + 15
8	2 v 9	3 + 10	4 v 11	5 + 12	6 v 13	7 + 14	8 v 15	1 + 16

Grand grassroots festival

Occasionally, grand festivals are organised and attract a large number of children in some countries where more than 1,000 children are involved in the activities. Even in a school environment, a large number of children participate in the grassroots activities (festivals & tournaments) on grassroots day. The key principles in organising such large festivals can be summarised as follows:

- teamwork
- clearly defined responsibilities amongst all coach-educators
- participation of parents and volunteers
- children organised into balanced teams of the same age group
- variation in the technical workshops
- motivating instructions

Duration of the festival

We should consider the total exertion (effective playing time) per age category by taking into consideration the children's physical, physiological and mental characteristics

- 6-8 years: 45-60 minutes of exertion (1 hour)
- 9-10 years: 60-75 minutes exertion (1 hour 15 minutes)
- 11-12 years: 75-90 minutes (1 hour 30 minutes)

Example:
festival with 2 pitches and 4 workshops for 9/10 years

- Total number of activities = 6
- Maximum exertion = 60-75 minutes
- 60-75 minutes divided by 6 = 10-12 minutes per game and workshop

Here are some indications of the duration of activities during festivals with different configurations in respect to different age groups and the size of the festival.

Configurations	Pitches & workshops	Activities	Total activities per team	Rotation	6-8 years 45-60 minutes	9-10 years 60-75 minutes	11-12 years 75-90 minutes
6 teams	2 pitches 2 workshops	4 small-sided games 2 technical skills	6	→	7-10' per activity	10-12' per activity	12-15' per activity
8 teams	2 pitches 4 workshops	4 small-sided games 4 technical skills	8	→	5-7' per activity	7-10' per activity	10-12' per activity
10 teams	3 pitches 2 workshops	3 small-sided games 2 technical skills	5	→ ←	9-12' per activity	12-15' per activity	15-18' per activity
12 teams	3 pitches 3 workshops	3 small-sided games 3 technical skills	6	→ ←	7-10' per activity	10-12' per activity	12-15' per activity
16 teams	4 pitches 4 workshops	4 small-sided games 4 technical skills	8	→ ←	5-7' per activity	7-10' per activity	10-12' per activity

The grassroots festival takes longer to organis as the procedures are different from the tournament. Rest time is normally given when teams rotate from one workshop or pitch to another, as well as during explanations and demonstrations by the coach-educator. In some cases, due to climatic conditions, a longer period of rest should be given to allow the children to drink water and recuperate.

In such cases, a break can be held halfway through the festival. The duration of the break varies and is decided by the organiser. Coach-educators also need to rest because a whole festival can last for two or three hours, and even longer if there are a lot of children and the festival is organised through various rounds.

Organising

Introduction

When organising tournaments, it should be recognised that the competitive aspect and the results are not the crucial issues and the emphasis should always be put on the concepts of **play** and **enjoyment**.

For this reason, coach-educators involved in organising tournaments should always consider:
the balance of teams in terms of performance levels;
the equitable involvement of all participants in terms of playing time;
the duration of the matches, depending on their number, the age group and the level of the players;
the standard of the opposition from one match to another depending on the previous results;
the rules of fair play both on and off the pitch;
the characteristics of the different age groups.

Here is an indication of the total exertion for each age category, taking into consideration the children's physical, physiological and mental characteristics:
6-8 years: 45-60 minutes of exertion (1 hour)
9-10 years: 60-75 minutes of exertion (1 hour 15 minutes)
11-12 years: 75-90 minutes (1 hour 30 minutes)

Organisation of tournaments: two main formulas

- single league system (each team plays only once against each other team)
- double league system (each team plays twice against each other team) – home & away matches

The calculation of the total number of matches to be organised as well as the number of matches each team will play during the tournament will indicate the duration of each match, taking into consideration the number of teams, the age category, the level of the players as well as the number of mini-pitches available. The climatic conditions should also be taken into consideration.

1. (Total number of teams) x (total number of teams – 1) = total number of matches to be organised in a double league system
   Example: (3 teams) x (3-1) = 6 matches
2. Total number of matches / 2 = number of matches in a single league system
   Example: 6 matches / 2 = 3 matches

When organising a tournament with three teams, the duration of each match will differ depending on whether the single or double league system is used. We should also take into consideration the time available for the tournament as well as the rest period at half-time and in between the different matches.

3. With a greater number of teams in a tournament, the single league system is predominant, and with only a few teams the double league system is most used. The objective is to give reasonable and equitable playing time to each team and to each player depending on their age category as well as their level.

Example: 5 teams (10/11 years) – 2 seven-a-side pitches, playing a single league system

- (5 teams) x (5-1) = 20 matches in a double league system (each team playing eight matches)
- 20 matches / 2 = 10 matches in a single league system (each team playing four matches)
- Total duration of the tournament: 1 hour (60 minutes)
- Duration of a match: 60 minutes / 10 matches = 6 minutes x 2 pitches = 12 minutes
- Playing time for each team and player: 4 matches x 12 minutes = 48 minutes
- Rest time at half-time: 2 minutes per match: 10 matches / 2 pitches x 2 minutes = 10 minutes

Different formats for tournaments

3 teams (1 mini-pitch)

Home and away matches (double league system)

3 teams (2 phases)	
Phase	**Match**
1	A – B
	C – A
	B – C
2	B – A
	A – C
	C – B
4 matches per team	

4 teams (1 mini-pitch)

Each team plays the other three teams once (single league system)

4 teams (1 phase)		
Round	**Match**	
1	1	A – B
	2	C – D
2	3	B – C
	4	D – A
3	5	B – D
	6	A – C
3 matches per team		

5 teams (2 pitches)

Each team plays against the other four (single league system), one team sits out each round (stand-by)

5 teams (1 phase)		
Round	**Match**	
1	1	A – B
	2	C – D
	no match	E
2	3	B – E
	4	C – A
	no match	D
3	5	E – A
	6	D – B
	no match	C
4	7	C – E
	8	A – D
	no match	B
5	9	D – E
	10	B – C
	no match	A
4 matches per team		

6 teams
(divided into 2 pools of 3 teams) / 2 pitches
(single league system)

1) First phase with two pools of three teams:

Two pools of three teams, each team playing the other two teams.

– Pool P1 = A, B and C
– Pool P2 = D, E and F

2) Second phase:

Two groups of three teams, each team playing the other two teams.

– Group W: the winners of pools P1 and P2 + the best second-placed team
– Group L: the three other teams

Solution 1:

Only one match between the teams

6 teams (first phase)		
Pool	**Match**	
P1	1	A – B
P2	2	D – E
P1	3	C – A
P2	4	F – D
P1	5	B – C
P2	6	E – F
2 matches per team		

Final round W		Final round L	
A	1st P1	D	2nd P1/2
B	1st P2	E	3rd P1
C	Best 2nd P1/2	F	3rd P2

Final round – organisation of matches		
Group	**Match**	
W	1	B – C
L	2	D – E
W	3	C – A
L	4	F – D
W	5	A – B
L	6	E – F
2 matches per team		

Solution 2:

Home and away matches (double league system)

6 teams (first phase)		
Pool	**Match**	
P1	1	A – B
P2	2	D – E
P1	3	C – A
P2	4	F – D
P1	5	B – C
P2	6	E – F
P1	7	B – A
P2	8	E – D
P1	9	A – C
P2	10	D – F
P1	11	C – B
P2	12	F – E
4 matches per team		

8 teams (divided into 2 pools of 4 teams) / 2 pitches (single league system)

1) First phase: two pools → each team plays the other three teams

Pool 1 – 4 teams		
Round	**Match**	
1	1	A – B
	2	C – D
2	3	B – C
	4	D – A
3	5	B – D
	6	A – C
3 matches per team		

Pool 2 – 4 teams		
Round	**Match**	
1	1	E – F
	2	G – H
2	3	F – G
	4	H – E
3	5	F – H
	6	E – G
3 matches per teams		

If only one pitch is available, the matches in Pools 1 and 2 are played alternately

2) Second phase:

Two groups of four teams, each team playing the other three teams.

- Group W: comprising the top two teams of each pool
- Group L: comprising the bottom two teams of each pool

Group W		Group L	
A	1st P1	E	3rd P1
B	1st P2	F	3rd P2
C	2nd P1	G	4th P1
D	2nd P2	H	4th P2

Places 1 to 4

Group W – 4 teams		
Round	**Match**	
1	1	A – D
	2	B – C
2	3	A – C
	4	D – B
3	5	C – D
	6	A – B
3 matches per team		

Places 5 to 8

Group L – 4 teams		
Round	**Match**	
1	1	E – H
	2	F – G
2	3	E – G
	4	H – F
3	5	G – H
	6	E – F
3 matches per team		

If only one pitch is available, the matches in Groups W and L are played alternately

16 teams (divided into 4 pools of 4 teams) / 4 pitches (single league system)

First round: four pools → each team plays the other three teams once

Pool 1: Teams A, B, C and D
Pool 2: Teams E, F, G and H
Pool 3: Teams I, J, K and L
Pool 4: Teams M, N, O and P

Pool 1 – 4 teams		
Round	**Match**	
1	1	A – B
	2	C – D
2	3	B – C
	4	D – A
3	5	B – D
	6	A – C
3 matches per team		

Second round

Two W groups, comprising the top two teams from each pool, and two L groups comprising the bottom two teams in each pool.

Second round W1		Second round W2	
A	1st P1	E	1st P3
B	1st P2	F	1st P4
C	2nd P3	G	2nd P1
D	2nd P4	H	2nd P2

Second round L1		Second round L2	
A	3rd P1	E	3rd P3
B	3rd P2	F	3rd P4
C	4th P3	G	4th P1
D	4th P4	H	4th P2

The matches of Groups L1, L2, W1 and W2 are played alternately.

Semi-finals:

1st match: Winner of group W1 against second in group W2
2nd match: Winner of group W2 against second in group W1

Finals:

3rd/4th-place match: losing semi-finalists
1st/2nd-place match: winning semi-finalists

Duration

The competition formulas, the number of pitches, the number of matches, the level of the players and other factors such as climatic conditions will help the coach-educator to assess the proper time factor in organising tournaments. Here are some indications of match duration in respect to different age groups and game formats.

Game formats	6-8 years	9/10 years	11/12 years	12-14 years +
3 v 3 & 4 v 4	2 x 3 minutes 2 x 4 minutes	2 x 5 minutes	2 x 5 minutes 2 x 7 minutes	2 x 5 minutes 2 x 7 minutes
5 v 5	2 x 5 minutes 2 x 7 minutes	2 x 7 minutes	2 x 7 minutes 2 x 10 minutes	2 x 7 minutes 2 x 10 minutes
6 v 6 & 7 v 7	x	2 x 7 minutes 2 x 10 minutes 2 x 12 minutes	2 x 7 minutes 2 x 10 minutes 2 x 12 minutes	2 x 7 minutes 2 x 10 minutes 2 x 12 minutes
8 v 8 & 9 v 9	x	x	2 x 10 minutes 2 x 12 minutes 2 x 15 minutes	2 x 10 minutes 2 x 12 minutes 2 x 15 minutes
Resting time	Half-time: 1-2 minutes Between matches: 5-7 minutes	Half-time: 1-2 minutes Between matches: 5-7 minutes	3 v 3 – 7 v 7 Half-time: 1-2 minutes Between matches: 5-7 minutes 8 v 8 & 9 v 9 Half-time: 5-10 minutes Between matches: 5-10 minutes	3 v 3 – 7 v 7 Half-time: 1-2 minutes Between matches: 5-7 minutes 8 v 8 & 9 v 9 Half-time: 5-10 minutes Between matches: 5-10 minutes

The grassroots football session

Grassroots football is not limited to festivals and tournaments; it is also organised as a training activity as part of the children's facilities offered by clubs as well as school and community associations.
Even within these facilities, where football practice is very structured, the training session must never overlook the children's need to play. Alongside its pedagogical aims of initiating, learning or refining football techniques according to the age group, the training session must also offer children a setting where they can express themselves and develop through play.

Structure of the training session

In order to fulfil its dual objective, the session must be structured in such a way that it alternates between games and exercises based on the global-analytical-global (GAG) method.

Warm-up

At the start of the session, a game related to football is recommended for opening the session. Neuromuscular coordination with and without the ball must always take place immediately after the game of football and make up the second part of the warm-up. The opening stage of the session must not exceed 15 minutes.

First game

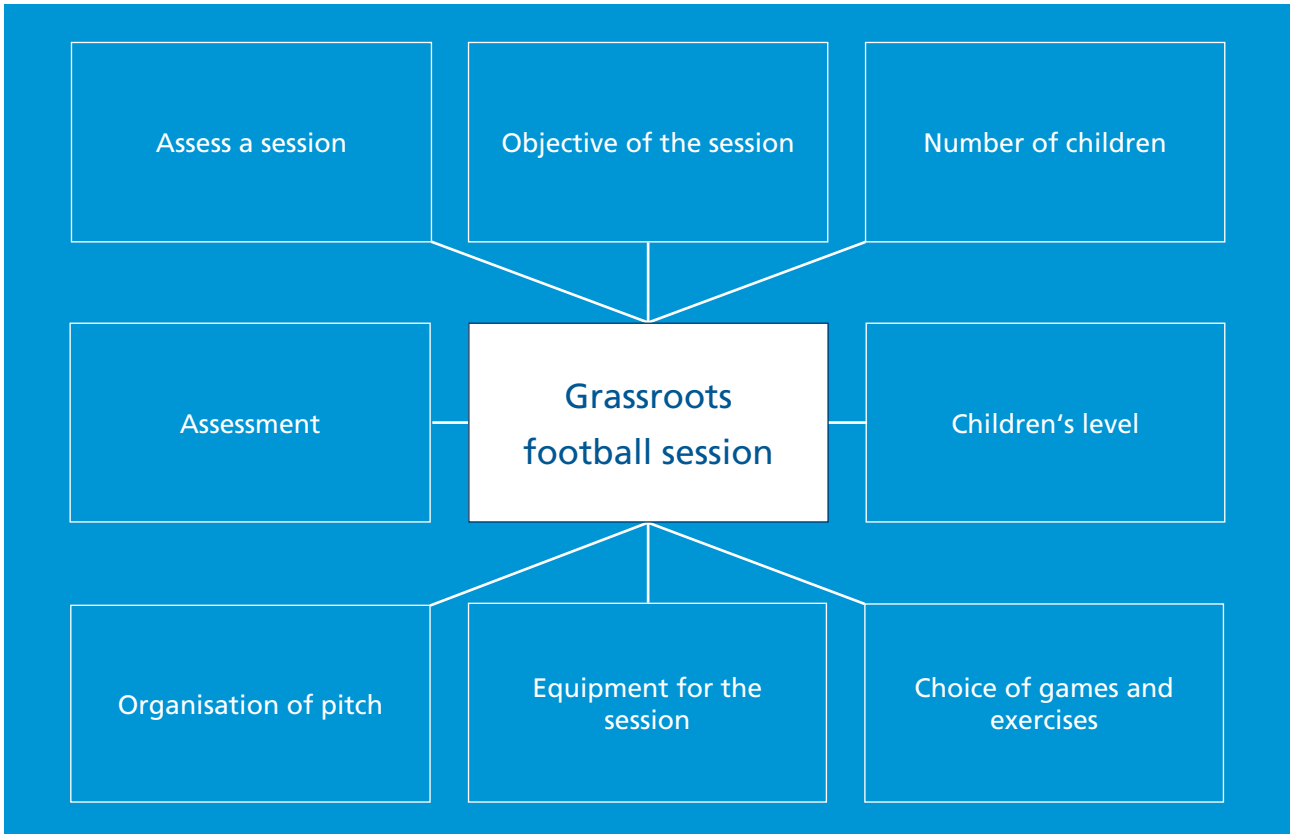
The first stage of the session's key part is made up of one or two themed games which will highlight the main objective of the session. During this part, the coach-educator emphasises the main subject by intervening and giving guidance, thus identifying the session's theme.
The first game lasts 15 minutes.

Exercises and drills

Once the children have identified the objective through the game, analytical exercises will ensure that the technical move is repeated and certain details corrected. The coach-educator's input during this analytical part of the session is very important as he/she must demonstrate, observe, correct and encourage.
The length of the analytical part is 12-15 minutes.

Second game

The second game can be directed and/or free and must offer children the possibility of applying what they have practised in real "match" situations. During this part of the session, the coach-educator gives the children more freedom to express themselves by letting them play without intervening



too much. This game will be the longest game of the session (20-25 minutes).

Cool-down

The "cool-down" part must fulfil its low-intensity objectives while also satisfying the children's need to play. It must therefore be composed of one or two low-intensity games. The length of the cool-down is 5-10 minutes.
The alternation of the global and analytical methods can be repeated once or twice during a session for the same theme.

First impressions are always important for children: for this reason, the coach-educator must be acquainted with all the exercises and should prepare the session in advance with specific objectives. The training sessions must be tailored to the participants' abilities. The coach-educator must get the message across to the children that they are genuinely achieving something. This realisation will make the session all the more pleasant and full of opportunities for play and learning. However, the coach-educator must be prepared to adapt the session and exercises if he/she considers that changes will improve the children's motivation and involvement. Here are a few questions to guide a coach-educator when preparing a training session:

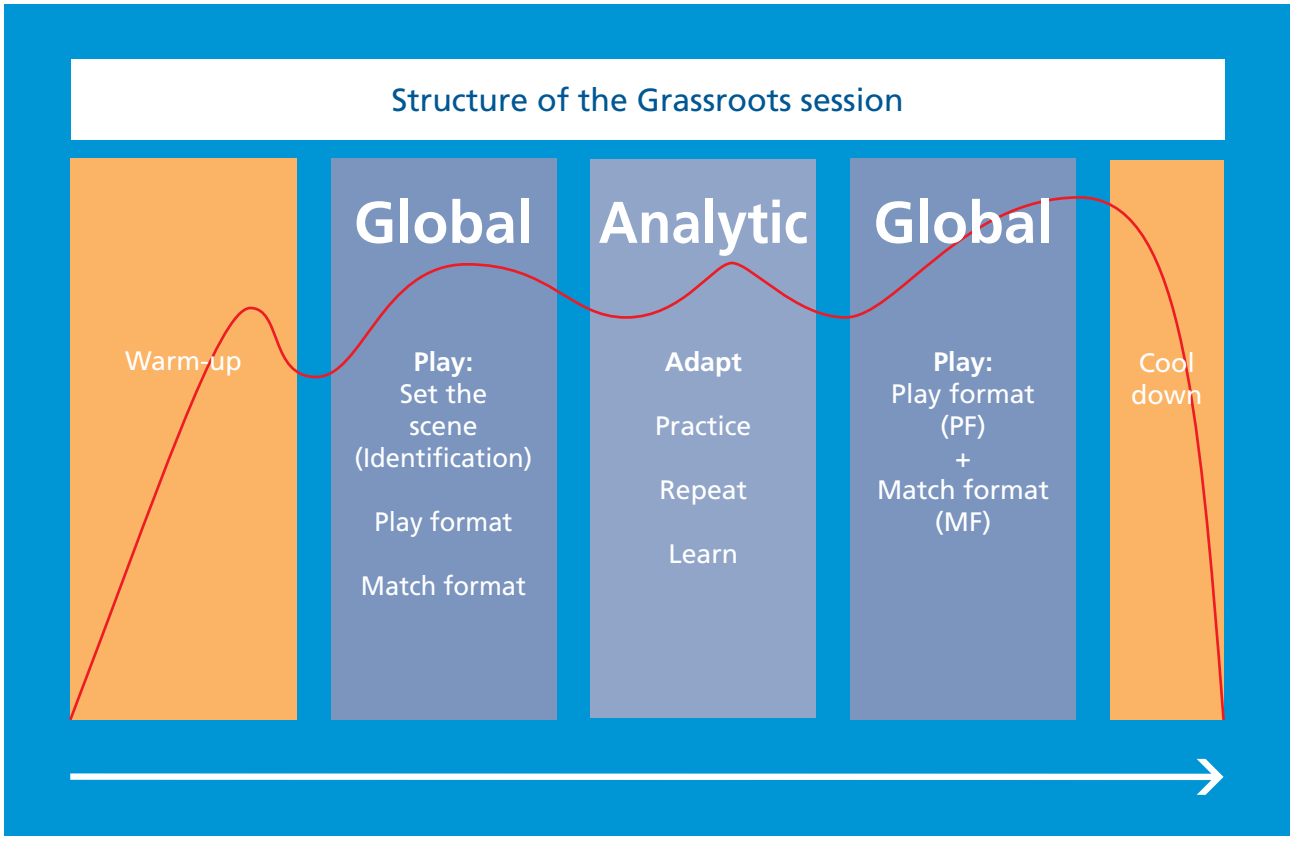
Objectives:

- What do I want to obtain from this session?
- What is the subject of the session?

Exercises:

- How many children will take part in the session?
- Will the children enjoy the games and exercises?
- Will they learn anything?
- What are the best games and exercises to achieve the objectives of the session?
- Are the levels of the games and exercises suited to the children's abilities?
- Can I explain and demonstrate the games and exercises in a clear, precise way so that the children will understand?
- Do I have enough equipment for this session? If not, can I adapt the session to the equipment available?
- Is there enough space to carry out the prepared games and exercises?
- How can the children help me improve the session?

The structure of the grassroots football session should be adapted to meet the children's needs. Warming up and cooling down should be presented to the children as games,



where they can enjoy themselves while doing physical exercises (warm-ups and relaxation).

The main part of the session comprises games and exercises. These should cover a range of activities and be varied. Most importantly, the activities should cover the objectives that the coach-educator has set for the session. The session should include small-sided games as a major component. The main way that children learn is by playing a lot; in this way, the children enjoy themselves and come to love football.
Care must be taken not to consider the children as small adults; sessions that have been prepared for adults should not be copied.

With regard to equipment, the coach-educator must be able to adapt to the different situations encountered and find alternative solutions based on his/her knowledge and experience. The equipment should be checked before the children arrive to make sure it is available and ready for the session. Although FIFA provides an equipment kit for every grassroots football project, it may be the case that there is not enough equipment. There may be a lack of bibs or cones, or some children may not have suitable footwear. However, the success of the session does not depend on the equipment but rather on the coach-educator's attitude and skills in making the most of the situation.
It is important to keep the parents informed of the exercises carried out; they appreciate being told about the activities their children are involved in. In some cases, the parents can help the coach-educator run the session. It is a good idea to talk to the parents about their roles and responsibilities and involve them in the project.

Organisation of a grassroots session

Session for U-10 children – duration: 1 hour

Recommendations:

- Make sure that all the activities are games and that the children have plenty of contact with the ball.
- Allow a lot of freedom in the play.
- Make light of the results of the games and do not draw up a classification.
- Make the teams and groups balanced and change the games if the difference in the scores becomes excessive.
- Provide positive encouragement for all children.
- The children should have fun while playing; encourage them and do not intervene too often.

Phase 1	Phase 2			Phase 3
Warm-up	**Alternation of exercises, introductory games, matches**			**Cooling down**
Starting up	Small-sided games	Basic football technique	Small-sided matches	wRelaxation
10-15 mins	15-20 mins	10-15 mins	15-20 mins	5 mins
Technical exercises Introductory games Small-sided games	Introductory games	Running exercises and movement with the ball	4 v 4 5 v 5	Individual relaxation
Psychomotor skills	2 v 2, 3 v 3, other structured games, sequences of play	Football relays, circuits, control, running with the ball, passes, shots	Free play	Recovery
Coordination	Play aspect	Technical and cogni-tive stimulation	Play aspect	Physical and mental relaxation
EDUCATION – TEACHING METHOD				
Guided discovery	Guided discovery	Imitation	Creativity Spontaneity	Discussion
Free expression	Free expression	Guided discovery	Free expression	Putting equipment away
Organisation	Organisation	Organisation	Organisation	Assessment
	Enlivening Encouraging	Demonstration	Observation	
Enlivening Encouraging	Correction	Enlivening Encouraging	Assessment	
		Correction		

Session for U-12 children – duration: 1 hour 30 minutes

Recommendations:

- Make sure there is a lot of freedom in the play, encourage individual initiative.
- Give priority to technique and play; the children should have lots of contact with the ball.
- Offer progressive exercises and adapted games, with simple, precise instructions.
- Make the teams and groups balanced and change the games if the difference in the scores becomes excessive.
- Make light of the results and emphasise the way in which the football is played.
- Emphasise quality in carrying out the exercises; proper implementation rather than quantity or intensity.
- Provide positive encouragement for all children.

Phase 1	Phase 2			Phase 3
Warm-up	**Coordination/Speed – Basics – Games**			**Cooling down**
Starting up	Coordination/Speed	Basics (football techniques) **or** Small-sided games	Small-sided matches	Relaxation
10-15 mins	10 mins	15-20 mins	20-25 mins	5 mins
Technical exercises, Small-sided games	Football relays, circuits with and without ball, workshops	Running exercises and movement with the ball, workshops	7 v 7 football	Individual relaxation
Psychomotor skills	Psychomotor skills	Technical circuits, control, running with the ball, shots, sequences	Free play	Recovery
		2 v 2, 3 v 3, 4 v 4, 5 v 5, other structured games, sequences of play	Play aspect	Physical and mental relaxation

EDUCATION – TEACHING METHOD				
Guided discovery	Improvement Coordination Balance Stability	Imitation	Creativity Spontaneity	Discussion
Free expression	Development speed / Liveliness / Reaction	Guided discovery Introduction Memorising	Free expression Individual initiative	Putting equipment away
Organisation	Organisation	Organisation	Organisation	Assessment
	Demonstration	Demonstration	Observation	
Enlivening Encouraging	Enlivening Encouraging	Enlivening Encouraging	Assessment	
	Correction	Correction		

Frequency and length

The frequency of the sessions depends on the children's age and their level of experience. It is possible for school associations to programme one or two sessions a week while club associations hold a maximum of three weekly sessions for children under 12.

The duration of the training session can be shortened because of adverse weather conditions (heat, cold, rain, wind, etc.). The coach-educator must therefore adapt the session according to the children's age and technical level as well as to the weather.

Play

PLAY is the great joy of childhood; it is through play that children can be themselves. PLAY activities are a proven means of developing various aspects of physical, emotional and mental behaviour.

The concept of competition is not eliminated, but it is essential that the competitive structures presented are suited to the children's behavioural characteristics.

The approach is to offer simple, basic situations that are accessible by the children and match their motivation.

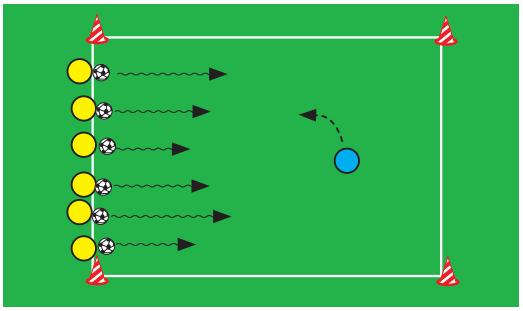
The grassroots football approach can be summarised as follows:

- Above all, it is a GAME presented as a PLAY
- Simplified and adapted to the children's characteristics
- Grassroots football presents the two basic concepts of football: cooperation and opposition
- Grassroots football is an excellent means of physical, motor, psychomotor, mental and social training

FIFA

FIFA

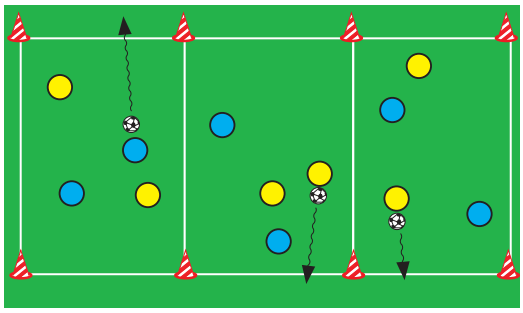
6-8 years old: running with the ball/passing



Warm-up

The hawk game

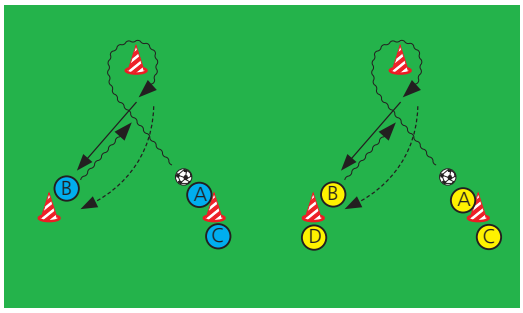
The players stand on a line, each with a ball. Another player, without a ball, faces them. He/she is the "hawk". Upon the signal, the players try to get to the other side of the pitch, controlling the ball with their feet. The hawk tries to catch as many players as possible by tapping them on the shoulder. Points are counted. Each player takes it in turn to be the hawk.



Match 1

2 v 2 / 3 v 3: crossing the line

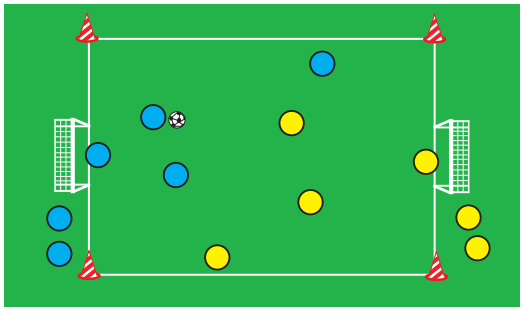
The players are divided into teams of two or three (depending on the number of children). A point is scored by crossing the goal line with the ball at the feet. Duration: 1-2 minutes. Rotation of teams to change opponents.



Exercise

Running with the ball and passing

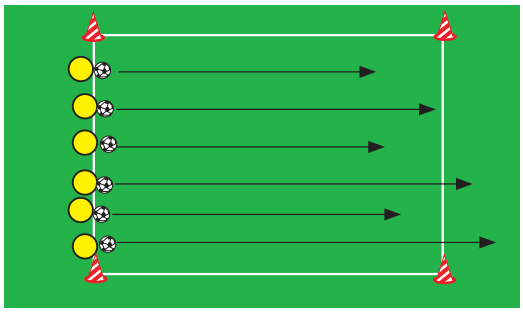
Groups of at least three players are formed. Player A runs with the ball using the inside of the left foot, goes around the cone and passes to player B, still using the inside of the left foot. Player A then runs to take the place of player B. Player B runs with the ball using the right foot, goes around the cone and passes to player C with the inside of the right foot and then runs to take player C's place, and so on.



Match 2

4 v 4 (with goalkeeper)

Two teams of four face each other on a reasonably sized pitch (with goalkeeper and substitutes). If there are enough children, a three-team tournament is also possible. Free play; coach-educator keeps a low profile; dribbling encouraged.



To conclude

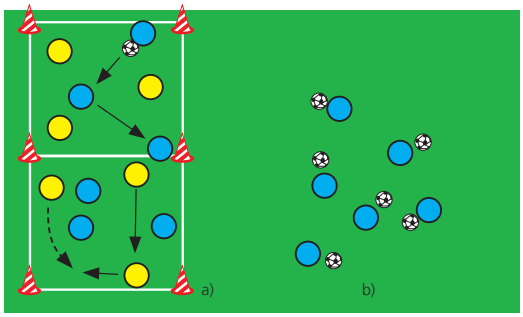
Accuracy game

Each player has a ball. The players face a line drawn on the pitch a certain distance away and then each one strikes the ball to try to get it to stop as close to the line as possible. The closest to the line wins a point. The game consists of several rounds.

Essential points:

– Running with the ball using both left and right feet
– Close control, many touches of the ball
– Passes along the ground with the insides of the left and right feet

9-10 years old: control, running with the ball and passing



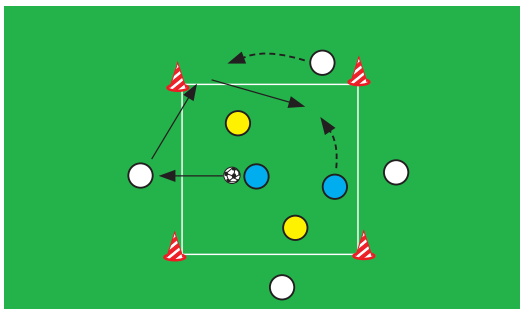
Warm-up

a) Ten passes

Four teams are formed and distributed over pitches of suitable dimensions. The objective is to make as many passes as possible. First the yellow team takes its turn and then the blue team. The passes are counted. Duration: approximately 1 minute each time.

b) Control of the ball

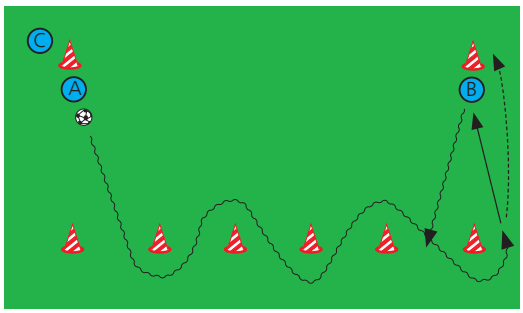
One ball per player: coordination exercises.



Match 1

2 v 2 + 4 external players

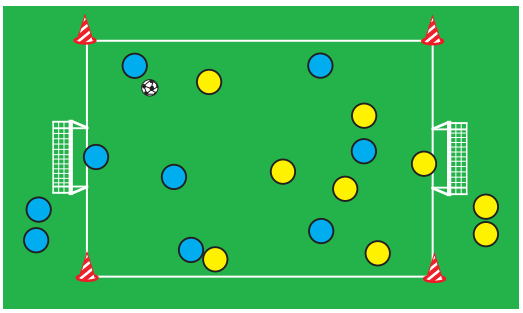
A 2 v 2 game is set up (yellows against blues) with four additional neutral players (in white) at the sides of the pitch. The number of passes is counted. When a team regains possession of the ball, the count starts again from zero. Two pitches can be formed.
A variation is to use two or three neutral players.



Exercise

Control, running with the ball and passing

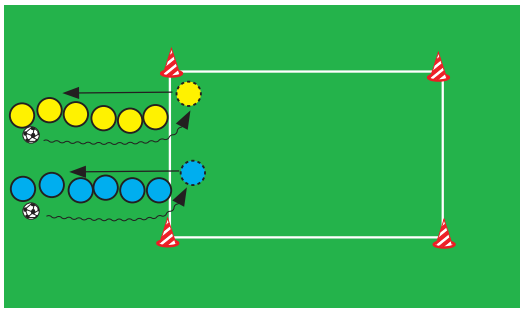
Groups of at least three players are formed. Player A slaloms the ball through the cones using his/her feet and then passes with the inside of the right foot to player B. Player A then runs to take the place of player B. Player B goes through the slalom and passes with the inside of the left foot to player C and runs to take player C's place, and so on.



Match 2

7 v 7 (with goalkeeper)

Two teams of seven face each other on a seven-a-side pitch (with goalkeeper and substitutes). Free play; coach-educator keeps a low profile.
Objective: lots of passes. Moves built up through the centre or on the wings; attacking and defensive aspects.



To conclude

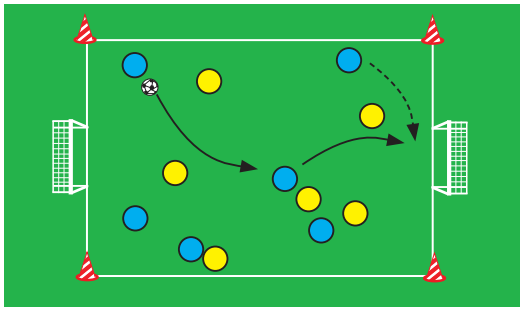
The centipede

The players are arranged in two or three rows. The last player takes the ball to the front of the row using his/her feet (the other players do not move). Once the player has arrived, he/she passes the ball to the last player who then brings the ball to the front of the row, and so on. The "centipede" that crosses the line first, wins. Make the rules of the game clear. Change of direction: change foot to return in the opposite direction.

Essential points:

- Passes along the ground using the inside of the left and right feet
- Observation of partners
- The ball is always kept under control

11-12 years old: work in front of goal



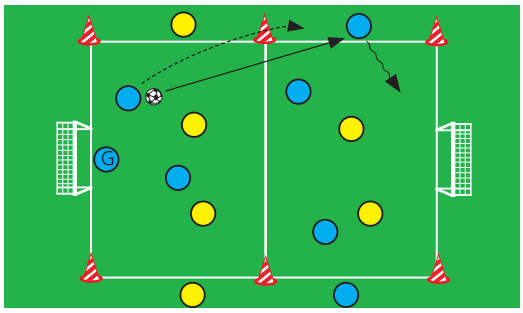
Warm-up

a) Volleys

Two teams are formed. The ball is struck on the volley and caught with the hands. Each player acts as a goalkeeper.

b) Control of the ball

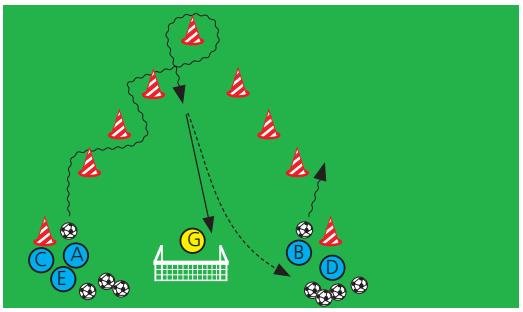
One ball for two players: coordination exercises.



Match 1

5 v 5 + 2 wingers per team

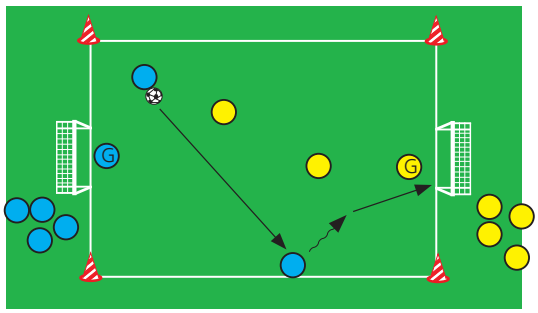
A 5 v 5 match is set up (yellows against blues); each team has wingers positioned on each of the attacking wings. The objective is for the players to use the wingers as much as possible. When a winger receives the ball, he/she enters the pitch at that position, preferably at a point favourable to the attacking team. The player passing the ball to the winger then becomes the next winger. If the winger receives the ball from the goalkeeper, no change takes place; the winger passes the ball back to a team-mate and stays on the wing.



Exercise

Running with the ball and shooting at goal

Two groups of at least six players are formed. Player A negotiates the slalom with the ball at his/her feet, goes around the last cone and shoots at goal with the right foot. Player B then takes the ball through the slalom, goes around the last cone and shoots with the left foot. Players change side after each shot. The goalkeeper is substituted after several series of shots.

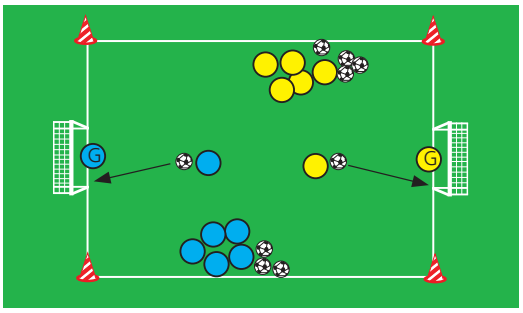


Match 2

3 v 3 (with goalkeeper)

Two teams of three face each other on a pitch of appropriate dimensions (with goalkeeper and substitutes). Free play. Regular substitutions. Game played at a high pace.

Objectives: quick moves, initiative in attack, spirit of attack/defence and involvement of goalkeepers in the play.



To conclude

King of the penalties

Two groups are formed. An elimination series of penalties is organised: if a player scores, he/she goes through to the next round. The two winners are "kings of the penalties". Goalkeepers may be rotated, and waiting lines should be avoided..

Essential points:
- Passes along the ground and shots along the ground at goal (adjusted size), using the inside of the left and right feet
- Awareness of team-mates and goal (vision)
- The ball is always kept under control

Small-sided games

Small-sided games are very beneficial for the participants. Studies have been conducted to show, and observations confirm, that children get more enjoyment and learn more from playing in small-sided games with adapted rules. They get more touches of the ball, learn more quickly and have to make more decisions during the match (greater concentration is required because the ball is never far away). The children are also much more involved in the game (more movement and practice) and enjoy it much more than playing on a large pitch. Fewer players on the pitch and smaller teams ensure that each participant gets more individual attention. There are also more goalscoring opportunities (which is what children want) and the goalkeepers are in action more often (except in 4-a-side matches which usually do not have goalkeepers). Children are also more involved in the attacking and defensive movements, and in this way they are more often exposed to a wide range of football situations. They enjoy themselves and learn more.

Statistics

Statistics back up the benefits of small-sided football compared with 11-a-side football. Some of these statistics show that:

- Players touch the ball five times more often in 4-a-side football and 50% more in 7-a-side.
- Players are three times more often in one-against-one situations in 4-a-side football and twice more often in 7-a-side.
- Goals are scored every two minutes in 4-a-side football on average and every four minutes in 7-a-side.
- Goalkeepers are involved in the action two to four times more often in 7-a-side football than in 11-a-side football.
- The ball is out of play 8% of the time in 4-a-side football, 14% in 7-a-side and 34% in 11-a-side.

Benefits

In small-sided games, each player:

- receives the ball more often;
- is always trying to score a goal;
- has the freedom to play;
- is always encouraged by the coach-educator;
- is supported by his/her parents and coach-educators.

Playing for fun

For children, the most important thing is to play. They play for the pleasure of playing. Contesting matches is an essential part of training and children learn better by playing. It leads to improved skills and independence, facilitates initiative and decision-making (creativity) and also improves relationships with, and consideration of, others. From a more tactical point of view, it is a matter of vision, attack and defence. However, every grassroots football session should include a free-play period. The coach-educator withdraws at this time and keeps a distance. This allows the children to play without restriction and put the skills that they have learnt into practice.

The playing area

The dimensions of the pitch are an important consideration. The pitch must be suited to the age, skill and number of players. A small pitch with a large number of players is difficult to play on and requires great technical skill and vision. In general, we cannot presume that children between the ages of 6 and 12 have these skills. Children have different characteristics depending on their physical and technical development. For these reasons, not all small-sided games are recommended for all ages. It is important to follow a logical development in which children move on from 4-a-side games (without goalkeepers) to eventually play 9-a-side football.

Small-sided games \ Age	6-8 years	9-10 years	11-12 years
4 v 4	X	X	X
5 v 5	X	X	X
7 v 7		X	X
9 v 9			X

Goals/equipment

The size of the goals should correspond to the children's age and level. Small children = small goals; big children = bigger goals. If possible, use goals with nets. Nets make the games much more enjoyable. If only 7-a-side goals are available, these can be reduced in size by using markers. Otherwise, make goals using marker discs, cones or poles. It should also be easy to distinguish the two teams. A sufficient number of bibs in different colours should be provided.

Techniques in play

Technical skills, such as keeping possession of the ball, shooting at goal, passing, controlling, running with the ball, dribbling and heading are all used in play. Pressure from opponents helps in the teaching and improvement of these skills. It is important to ensure that all parts of play are coached. If, for example, the emphasis in a specific session is on dribbling, the format of the activities should be carefully chosen to promote dribbling.

Small-sided game formats

Football basically consists of two ideas: score goals and prevent the opponents scoring. The best manner of emphasising these objectives is to use adapted small-sided game formats applied to different exercises.

- The smallest format of play is 1 v 1.
- In this format, the focus is on the technical aspects of dribbling and protecting the ball.
- The children must also learn to impose their presence and use their body correctly.
- It is simply "me and the ball"!

As soon as another participant is added to the exercise (2 v 1), the situation changes. The child can now pass the ball and must decide (by him/herself) which option to choose: keep the ball or pass it?

The next level, with several team-mates and opponents, necessitates improved vision, a better concept of team play and creativity. The greater the number of participants, the more complex the play becomes. For this reason, it is important to take the children's ages into account and allow them to progress from small-sided games to matches on larger pitches.

Another key point: in small-sided games, children get many touches of the ball and cannot "hide". On the contrary, they have to actively seek the ball. Small-sided games are very intense. They should not be underestimated and a match should not last too long. Substitutes should be available at the side of the pitch and used regularly; this allows the rhythm of play of the game/exercise to continue at a high level.

Depending on the age and skills, formats without goalkeepers can also be used. Initially, it is important to make sure that goals can be easily scored. This encourages the children to shoot at goal and also teaches technique. The most advanced participants need more opposition and must learn to score goals when under pressure. This requires better technique, at a more advanced level, thus requiring

goalkeepers to be introduced. It is also important to teach goalkeepers about tactics. Small-sided games are perfect for teaching goalkeepers about the tactical aspect of play (shots on goal, high-pressure situations, the opportunities to initiate attacks or counter-attacks, etc.).
In summary, players get many more touches of the ball in small-sided games. They make more passes and find themselves in 1 v 1 situations more often. Repetitions of situations in which they must make decisions help the children to learn and gain a positive experience. Their active participation in the game improves their enjoyment of playing. The game is easier for them to understand and, more importantly, the children enjoy themselves and have freedom of expression with the ball at their feet.

Examples of organisation

Principles:
Four to six 5-a-side pitches can be arranged on a full-size football pitch (11-a-side). Matches can take place simultaneously on these pitches as well as relays and school games.
Two or three 5-a-side pitches can be arranged on a half-size football pitch. Matches can take place simultaneously on these pitches as well as relays and school games.

It is recommended that:
- The existing lines are used: touchline, goal line and goal area of the 11-a-side pitch.
- Cones are used to finish marking out the 5-a-side areas (additional lines need not be drawn).

Initiation to playing systems on small-sized pitches

One player coming up against another is at the very heart of the game as the players' individual qualities come into play. In our game philosophy, we have to take team spirit into account and we do recommend playing football as a team, but it is also necessary to adapt and discover different match situations by using certain exercises in which a duel is a specific objective.

Consequently, a 1 v 1 game gives two children the opportunity to develop their basic tactics: attacking and defending. We will talk more about advanced positioning once the players have acquired enough experience to be able to take up a position in open space.

To begin organising a game on a small-sized pitch, we give general information in relation to the age of the young children and the different pitch measurements. It must also be borne in mind that the level of understanding and ability to read the game will often determine the size of the pitch. The suggestion regarding the number of players in relation to the pitch depends on the philosophy developed during the development plan. Depending on the objectives, one could argue that every type will help to improve the quality of the level of play.

The number of players essentially depends on the infrastructure available as well as on the objectives to be reached. Consequently, all types of organisation are seen as positive if there is a direct link between the objective and the type of game played.

A logical development of playing systems will see a 3 v 3 game eventually become 9 v 9, passing through all of the various configurations in between such as 4 v 4, 5 v 5, 6 v 6, 7 v 7, 8 v 8. Having a numerical advantage also requires a great deal of tactical flexibility.

The table on page 66 shows that the pitch on which the players are to develop depends on their age, but also on the number of players available and especially on their different qualities.

Only the coach-educator is able to judge the players' level and therefore the game formats to be used.

Basic techniques of football

Ball control is the foundation for all aspects of the game and a source of motivation for young players because it feels good to be at ease with the ball. The ability to control the ball is the key to many other skills, and juggling is also a very good way to practise ball control, getting familiar with the ball and gaining confidence.
Generally speaking, it is not difficult to master a technical skill, but it does become harder as the game conditions change.
Therefore, a player can only master the technique of controlling the ball if he coordinates the various parts of his/her body.
Furthermore, the learning aspect depends on the number of repetitions, whereas there are various combinations available in terms of the method to be used.
As a young player develops, his/her technical skills will set the foundations for good development and enable him/her to experience all of the joy that football can bring.

In grassroots football, the basic techniques can be divided into four categories:
- **Controlling the ball**
- **Running with the ball**
- **Passing the ball**
- **Shooting**

1. Controlling the ball

a. Controlling
b. Juggling

Controlling

To control the ball is to master it. Properly controlling the ball means that a move will be successful. The control movements to focus on are: directed control and gathering the ball while moving – these introduce speed into the play.

Juggling

If repeated regularly, juggling develops the skills of dexterity, coordination and balance in young footballers. These skills favour the more rapid acquisition of other techniques.

2. Running with the ball

a. Without obstacles
b. With obstacles = dribbling

Running with the ball

This is how an individual moves in free space with the ball. When a player is running well with the ball, he/she is in control of it at all times: this requires good balance and excellent stability. Running with the ball while keeping the head up allows a continuous flow of information to be received and allows movement to be adapted to play.

Dribbling

This is how an individual moves with the ball when faced by opponents/obstacles. Dribbling allows the player in possession of the ball to eliminate one or more opponents by:
- making a manoeuvre and taking individual risks;
- setting up a team move;
- gaining time to allow support from team-mates;
- deceiving an opponent (the concept of the feint).

3. Passing the ball

This is the action of giving the ball to a team-mate. It is an essential part of team play. As the core of the game, passing allows a team to:
- **keep possession of the ball;**
- **set up attacks;**
- **change the direction of play;**
- **counter-attack;**
- **provide a decisive or final pass.**

Crosses are a type of short or long pass, usually leading to a shot. They serve as the last pass.

4. Shooting

This is an action with the objective of dispatching the ball into the opponent's goal. It is the logical conclusion, the culmination of an attack. It is what football is all about.

Shooting requires technical qualities (striking the ball well, accuracy), physical qualities (power, coordination, balance) and mental qualities (determination, audacity, self-confidence).

5. Special techniques

- **Headers**
- **Volleys**
- **Defensive techniques**
- **Feints**
- **Goalkeeping techniques**

Headers

Headers can be associated with mastery of the ball (juggling and control) and passing/shooting the ball.
Heading is an essential skill for defending and marking.

Volleys

This involves directly striking an aerial ball, without any prior control:
- before it touches the ground (volley);
- just as it touches the ground (half-volley).

Defensive techniques

- Dispossessing an individual opponent of the ball
- Winning the ball when it is in the possession of the opposing team (interception)
- Challenging an opponent for the ball within the limits allowed by the Laws of the Game (defensive duel)

It is essential for a player to learn not to throw him/herself into a tackle and to defend standing up.

Feints

A feint can be performed with or without the ball, depending on the situation of play. When a player is facing an opponent during a dribble, a feint is a useful skill to bypass the opponent with the ball. When a player is not in possession of the ball, a feint is useful to gain an advantage in a position, and to lose the mark of an opponent as well.

Goalkeeping techniques

The goalkeeper

The goalkeeper's role is to prevent the ball from entering his/her goal.
The goalkeeper is the only player in the team who is allowed to handle the ball, but only in the area around the goal known as the penalty area.
The goalkeeper's special training is a long-term process which starts in childhood and only ends when the goalkeeper finally retires. This training goes through certain stages:
- first steps in goalkeeping
- learning the goalkeeper's techniques
- developing the goalkeeper's essential physical qualities
- acquiring mental strength

Basic goalkeeping techniques – 6-10 years old

Technical preparation
- first contact with the ball, first experience "in goal"
- gradually learning the goalkeeper's techniques
- introduction to playing the ball with the feet

Physical preparation
- physical qualities (stamina, speed, coordination, suppleness, etc.) are developed through different games

Psychological preparation
- respecting the coach-educator, team-mates, opponents and referee
- learning to be "alone"
- making the goal the "castle" to be defended
- developing the courage (not to be afraid of the ball)

11-12 years old

Technical preparation
- continuing improvement of the acquired techniques
- moving on to the "big pitch" and the "big goal"
- working on high balls
- improving playing the ball with feet
- understanding the goalkeeper's role in the team
- increasing the difficulty of the situations encountered

Physical preparation
- the development of specific physical qualities (stamina, speed, suppleness, relaxation) by means of special exercises
- coordination exercises, both with and without the ball

Psychological preparation
- making the right decisions, taking command
- retaining self-control and staying calm
- maintaining concentration
- making the goal his/her territory

Technical preparation for goalkeepers

Positioning
- initial positioning
- movement
- regaining position

The goalkeeper's interventions
- catching the ball (on the ground, medium height, high, from a rebound, etc.)
- the various dives
- high balls
- one-on-ones
- reflex stops (reaction speed)

Returning the ball to play
- clearances with the feet (along the ground, volley, half-volley)
- throw-outs
- returning the ball to play after a back-pass from a team-mate

Free kicks and corners
- positioning the wall
- knowing the goalkeeper's position
- using communication

Individual tactical principles

Basic tactics begin to take shape as soon as a child is able to understand how to take up a position in open space. In the child's mind, the game is all-important and all of his/her decisions will be based on attacking play to score goals.
At grassroots level, the importance of this part of the game cannot be over-estimated as young children often cannot visualise what happens next in a given situation.
Playing the game helps a child to get used to imaginary situations and develop boundless creativity, which of course includes creating spaces.
The type of game played enables the child to develop his/her capacities of perception, which will enhance his/her psychomotor skills. Consequently, movement with and without the ball creates the idea of tactics.
This culture begins to develop as soon as a child learns how to read a game, which leads him/her to team play solutions.
The movement of players creates fluid, attacking play with the objective of a team demonstrating its superiority by scoring goals.
Therefore, if a player has any shortcomings in his/her perception skills, some of his/her stimulations will be incorrect and this will be the difference between an average player and a very good player.

General principles
- All players must help their team-mates.
- Everyone participates in attack.
- Everyone participates in defence.
- Defence starts as soon as the ball is lost.

The main individual tactics are simple principles that a player learns in order to make the best decisions during a particular passage of play.

How to teach tactics
- Allow the children to play (small-sided games etc.)
- Provide content (tactical culture)
- Set up relevant situations (themed games)
- Set up situations/problems (attack/defence with instructions to opponents)
- Free or directed play with review and dialogue with the players

Behaviour in matches

There are two situations in a match that require different behaviour:

Team in possession of the ball
• Move forward • Lose markers • Support/backup • Passes, dribbling, shots

Team does not have possession of the ball
• Fall back while facing the ball • Covering (slow down the opponents' progress) • Marking • Interceptions • Duels

Main individual tactics for attacking

- Play the ball immediately, don't let your team-mates lose their markers for nothing. Lose your marker immediately after passing the ball.
- Always try to be in an unmarked position.
- Pass and get into position to:
  - help a team-mate;
  - call for the ball;
  - support a team-mate.
- Avoid unnecessary confrontations. It is better to eliminate an opponent quickly than take the longer option of dribbling around the opponent.

When faced by an opponent:

- take the ball to the opposite side of your opponent;
- get away from your opponent by using quick bursts, feints and sudden changes of direction;
- take the ball to the left and then pass to the right and vice versa;
- do not carry the ball too far, progress should be made by short touches with the ball close to the body;
- use cross-pitch balls to a team-mate in a good position;
- avoid playing down the centre in your own half, if the ball is lost it could be dangerous;
- don't pass the ball into crowded areas, play it to a team-mate who is in free space;
- play the ball between two opponents to a team-mate who calls for it;
- always support a team-mate who has the ball;
- run to meet the ball, don't wait for it to come to you;
- don't let the ball go past without controlling it, otherwise an opponent may get there first;
- be encouraged to dribble against an opponent (depending on the situation);
- play in a sensible, simple, useful manner. This is the most difficult thing to achieve. This is how a good player can be recognised

Main individual tactics for defending

- Always keep yourself between your opponent and your own goal.
- Always watch your opponent and the ball.
- Try to counter the opponents' attacking build-up as soon as possible by marking.
- Don't give your opponent space, slow your opponent down when he/she runs with the ball (shutting down).
- Slow an attack down (shutting down).
- Try to get to the ball before your opponent, or otherwise hinder him/her when he/she receives the ball.
- Contest all balls.
- Mark your opponent on the side of the ball, in other words the side where he/she will make the pass.
- When a high ball comes in, jump a moment earlier than your opponent.
- Do not dribble in your own penalty area.
- Avoid cross-pitch passes from the outside to the inside.
- Play on the outside along the touchline.
- Don't hit the ball randomly, build an attack from the back.
- If you lose the ball, strive to recover it.
- Avoid ineffective tackles, don't throw yourself at an opponent who has the ball. Wait until your opponent changes the weight on his/her feet before challenging him/her.
- Never turn your back on an attacker.
- Push your opponents towards the touchline.
- Carefully follow play, even if the ball is far away.
- A good defender never gives up.
- The goalkeeper must command his/her area.

Examples of exercises and games

Teaching methods:

The content of any training session must always be geared towards the game itself.
Anything that is proposed as a teaching method, whether it is for beginners or for players to perfect their technique, must reflect the reality of the game.

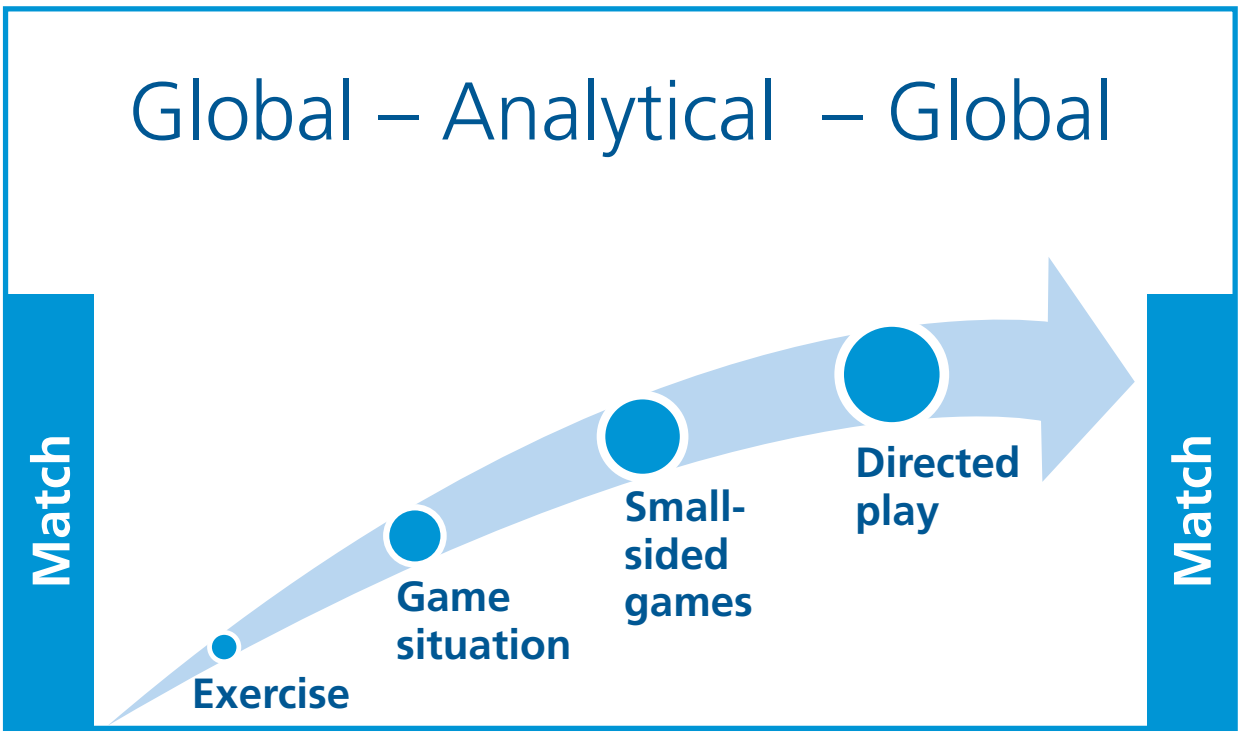
The main methods are:

- **Exercise:** a method that enables players to repeat a technical move or individual/team technical or tactical behaviour. This helps with analysis work as the coach-educator can demonstrate, observe and correct every single detail. Generally, this is performed without opponents or with only passive opponents.
- **Game situation:** this is a teaching method that uses a well-defined game sequence that the coach-educator wishes to correct, improve or perfect. It enables the coach-educator to control the number of repetitions and gives him the opportunity to interrupt play and make the necessary adjustments.
- **Small-sided games:** this is any game between two teams of small, equal numbers played on a small-sized pitch. It is also the type of training that is closest to a match itself.
- **Directed play:** this is a game directed by the coach-educator who imparts his advice and recommendations and steps in to focus on a specific issue.

Here are some example exercises that can be used for a range of grassroots football activities. The difficulty ranges from one to three stars, depending on the complexity of the exercise. The exercises should gradually become more difficult. The players' ages and the equipment, organisation, etc. should be taken into account. The coach-educator should also consider the individual circumstances in order to make best use of the resources and make sure that the children can carry out the exercises.

Classification of exercises

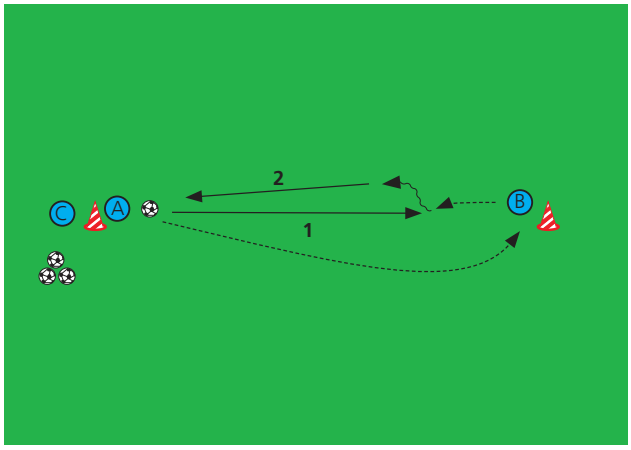
- Introductory games/relays (shuttles)/coordination games (circuits)
- Technical drills
- Training games (1 v 2, 2 v 3, etc.)
- Small-sided games (1 v 1, 2 v 2, 3 v 3, etc.)



Technical drill 1 — Passing and controlling the ball

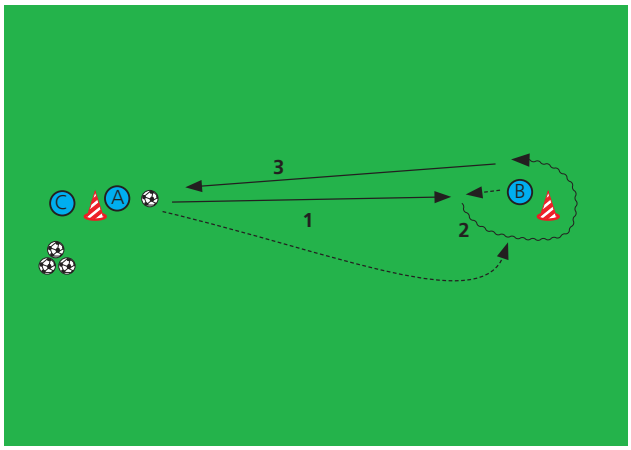
Exercise 1 — Difficulty: ★

- A passes to B, B passes to A (1, 2).
  1. With the right foot only.
  2. With the left foot only.
  3. First with the left foot, then with the right foot, etc.
- Player chases the ball to the other side.
- Meet the ball when receiving and controlling the pass. Variation: move away (from an opponent) before meeting the ball.



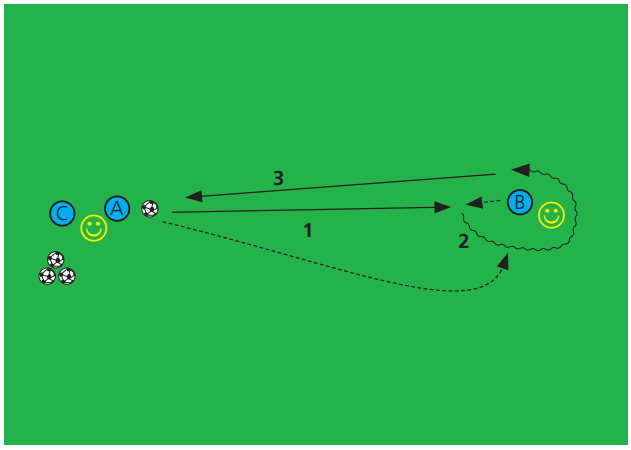
Exercise 2 — Difficulty: ★

- A passes to B, B passes to A, first with the right foot, then with the left, etc. (1).
  1. Control the ball to the left and take the ball around the cone with the right foot (2). Pass with the right foot (3).
  2. Control the ball to the right and take the ball around the cone with the left foot. Pass with the left foot.
  3. First to the left, then to the right, etc.
- Player chases the ball to the other side.
- Meet the ball when receiving and controlling the pass. Variation: move away (from an opponent) before meeting the ball.



Exercise 3 — Difficulty: ★★

- Same as Exercise 2.
- Players take the place of the cones.
- Light pressure when controlling the ball, dribbling and passing.



Organisation/material
3 players (optimum) or more
1 ball (plus a spare)
2 cones
Max. duration of exercise: 6-8 minutes

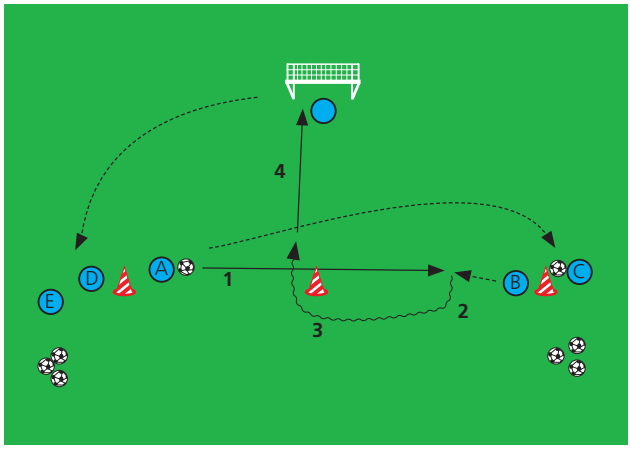
Coaching points
Pass with inside of foot, with left and right foot
Meet the ball when receiving the pass
Ball in front of the body
Players of the same standard do the exercise together
Orientation (head high, look at player)
Differentiation (pass, control and move)

Technical drill 2 — Shooting (increasing difficulty)

Exercise 1 — Difficulty: ★

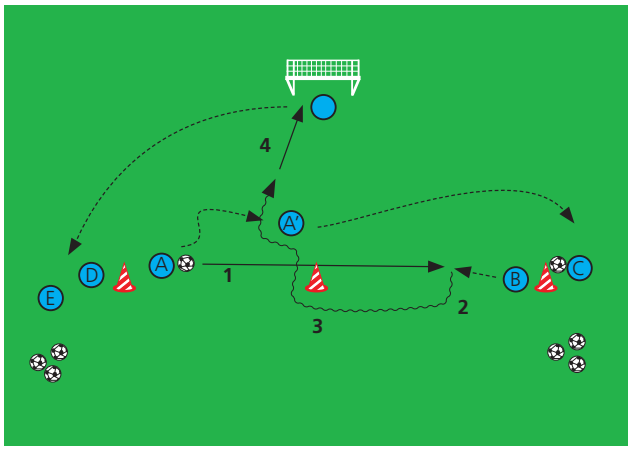
- A passes to B with his left foot (1).
- B controls the ball and runs with it to the left in the direction of A (2).
- B takes the ball around the cone with his left foot (3) and shoots with his left foot (4).

Then from the other side:
- C passes to D.
- D controls the ball and runs with it to the right in the direction of C.
- D takes the ball around the cone with his right foot and shoots with his right foot.



Exercise 2 — Difficulty: ★★

- Same as Exercise 1.
- A becomes a defender (on way to other side), first passive, then active.



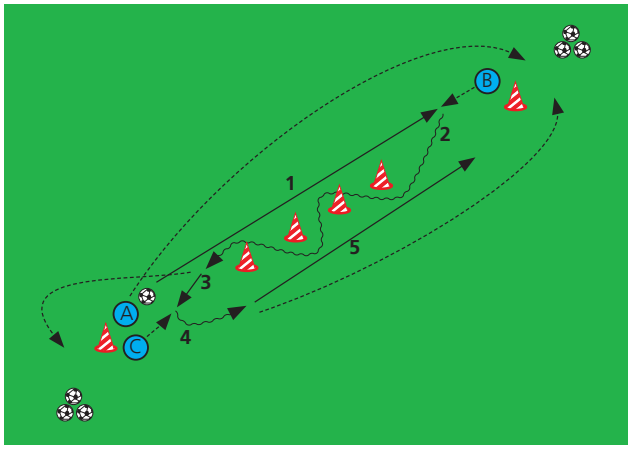
Organisation/material
5 players (optimum) or more
Several balls (2 children, 1 ball)
3 cones
Max. duration of exercise: 8-10 minutes

Coaching points
Pass and shoot with inside of foot, low, with left and right foot
Ball in front of the body
Players of the same standard do the exercise together
Orientation (head high, look at player, go for goal)
Differentiation (pass, shoot, control and move)
Feint when dribbling

Technical drill 3 — Passing, controlling and dribbling

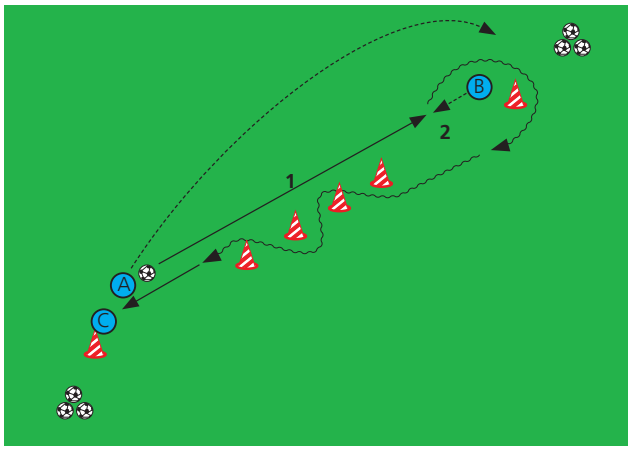
Exercise 1 — Difficulty: ★

- A passes to B with his left foot (1).
- B meets the ball, controls it and takes it to the left (2) before dribbling around the cones.
- B passes with his right foot to C (3).
- C meets the ball, controls it and takes it to the right (4).
- C passes to A with his right foot (5).
- A meets the ball, controls it and takes it to the right before starting dribbling.



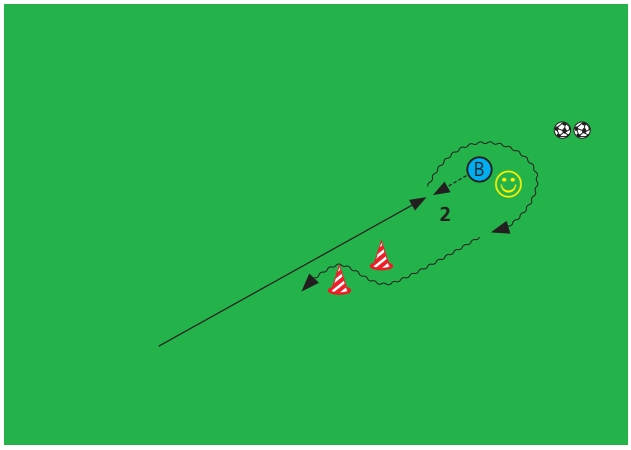
Exercise 2 — Difficulty: ★★

- Same as Exercise 1.
- B controls the ball with his back to the cone and takes it around the cone to the right with his left foot. B then starts dribbling, etc.
- C controls the ball with his back to the cone and takes it around the cone to the left with his right foot.



Exercise 3 — Difficulty: ★★★

- Same as Exercise 2.
- Players take the place of the cones.
- Light pressure when controlling the ball, dribbling and passing.



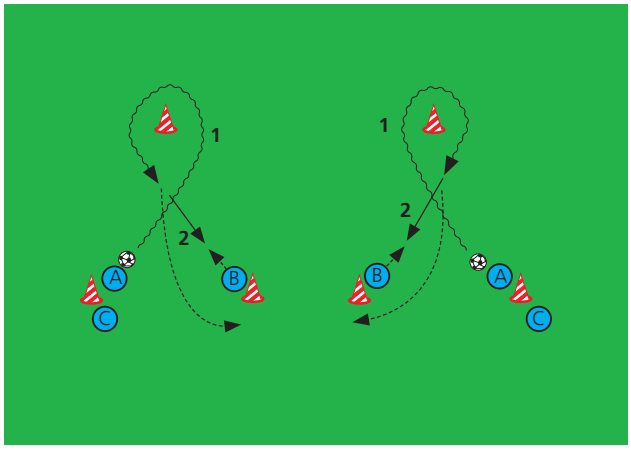
Organisation/material
3 players (optimum) or more
1 ball (plus a spare)
6 cones
Max. duration of exercise: 6-8 minutes

Coaching points
Pass with inside of foot, low, with left and right foot
Meet the ball when controlling the pass
Short steps when dribbling with the ball
Ball in front of the body
Body between ball and opponent
Players of the same standard do the exercise together
Orientation (head high, look at player)
Differentiation (pass, control and move)

Technical drill 4 — Passing, controlling and dribbling

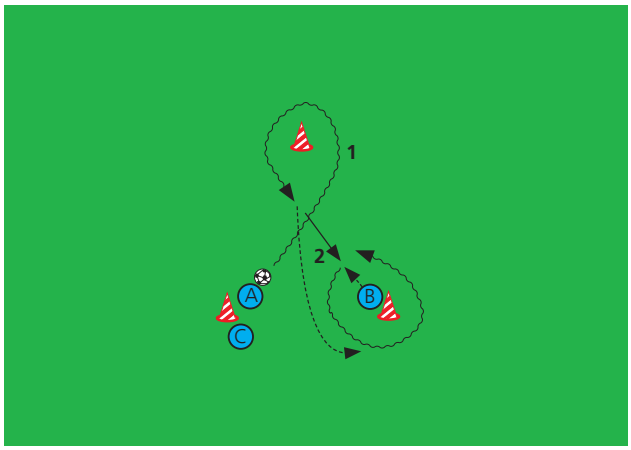
Exercise 1 — Difficulty: ★

- A begins by dribbling round the cone.
- A then passes to B.
- B meets the ball, controls it and then dribbles in the direction of C.
- Dribbling and passing with left foot and right foot.



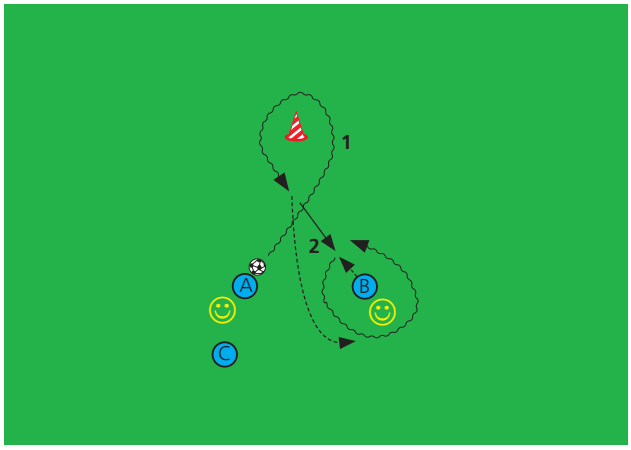
Exercise 2 — Difficulty: ★

- Same as Exercise 1.
- B controls the ball with his back to the cone and takes the ball around the cone on the inside and outside. B then starts dribbling, etc.



Exercise 3 — Difficulty: ★★

- Same as Exercise 2.
- Players take the place of the cones.
- Light pressure when controlling the ball, dribbling around and passing.



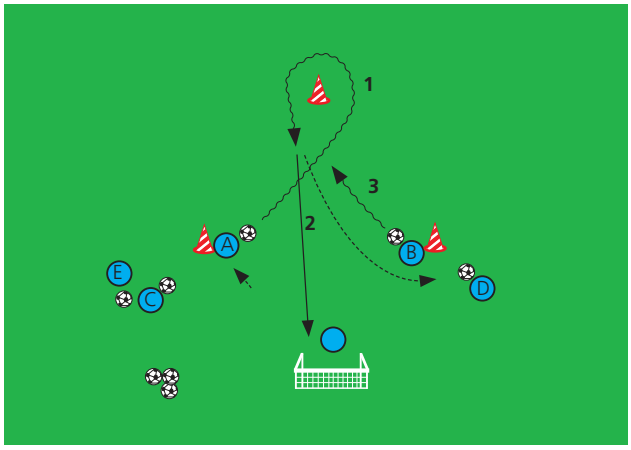
Organisation/material
3 players (optimum) or more
1 ball (plus a spare)
3 cones
Max. duration of exercise: 6-8 minutes

Coaching points
Pass with inside of foot, low, with left and right foot
Meet the ball when controlling the pass
Short steps when dribbling with the ball
Ball in front of the body
Body between ball and opponent
Players of the same standard do the exercise together
Orientation (head high, look at player)
Differentiation (pass, control and move)

Technical drill 5 — Shooting (increasing difficulty)

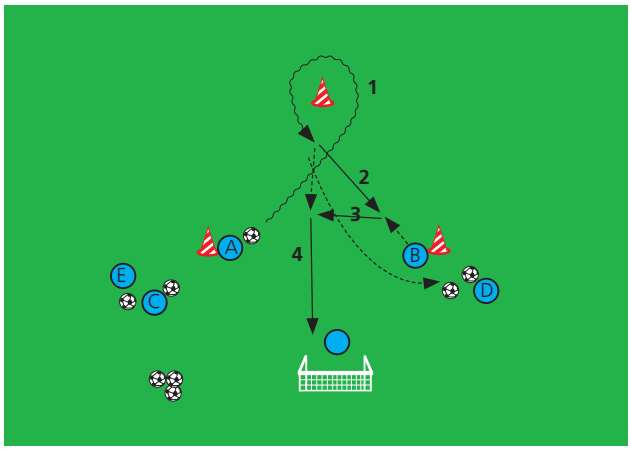
Exercise 1 — Difficulty: ★

- A begins by dribbling around the cone with his right foot (1).
- A then shoots with his right foot (2).
- B dribbles clockwise around the cone with his left foot.
- B then shoots with his left foot.



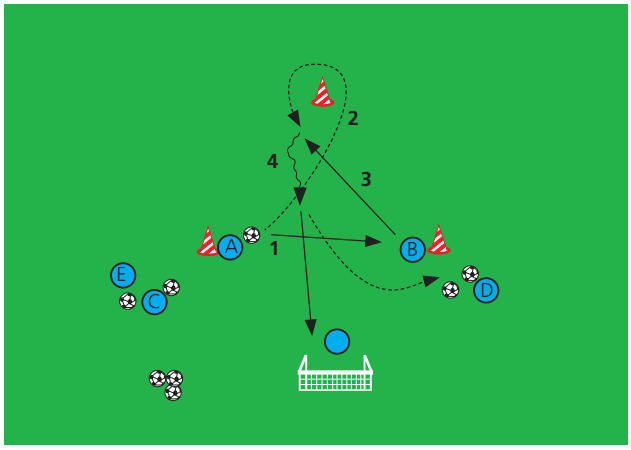
Exercise 2 — Difficulty: ★★

- A begins by dribbling around the cone with his right foot (1).
- A then passes with his right foot to B and moves into space (2).
- B meets the ball and passes to A who is now in space (or plays a one-two) (3).
- A controls the ball and goes on to shoot (4).
- B takes a ball and starts dribbling.
- etc.



Exercise 3 — Difficulty: ★★

- A passes to B (1).
- A runs around the cone into space and shows to B (2).
- B passes to A, either in front of him or to his feet (3).
- A controls the ball and goes on to shoot (4)
- B takes a ball and passes it to C.
- etc.



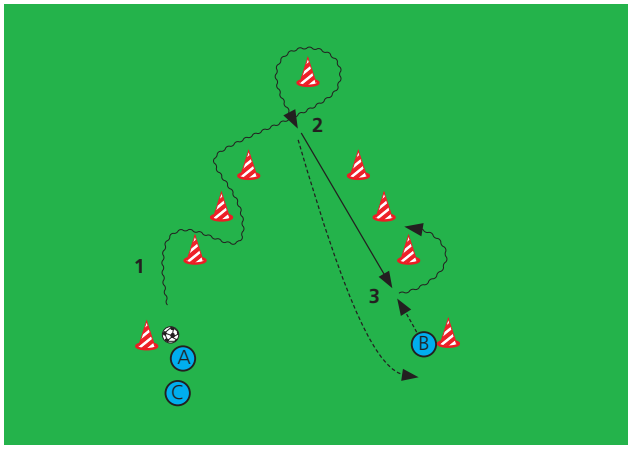
Organisation/material
5 players (optimum) or more
Several balls
3 cones
Max. duration of exercise: 8-10 minutes

Coaching points
Shoot/pass with inside of foot, low, with left and right foot
Short steps with and to the ball
Ball in front of the body
Players of the same standard do the exercise together
Orientation (head high, look at player)
Differentiation (shooting)

Technical drill 6 — Dribbling, passing and controlling

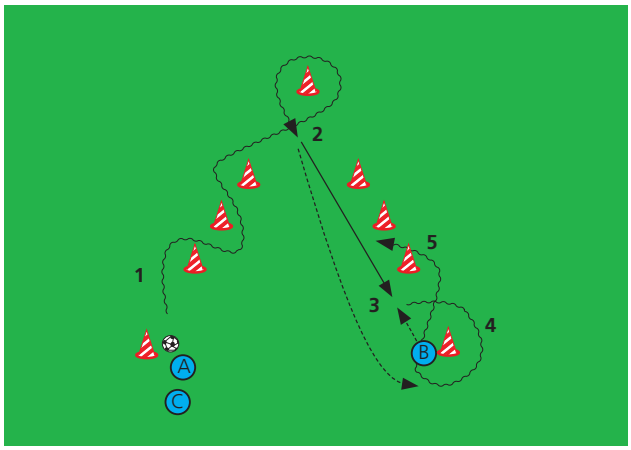
Exercise 1 — Difficulty: ★

- A starts by dribbling around the cone (1).
- A then passes with his right foot to B (2).
- B meets the ball, controls it to the right and then dribbles towards C (3).
- B then passes with his left foot to C.



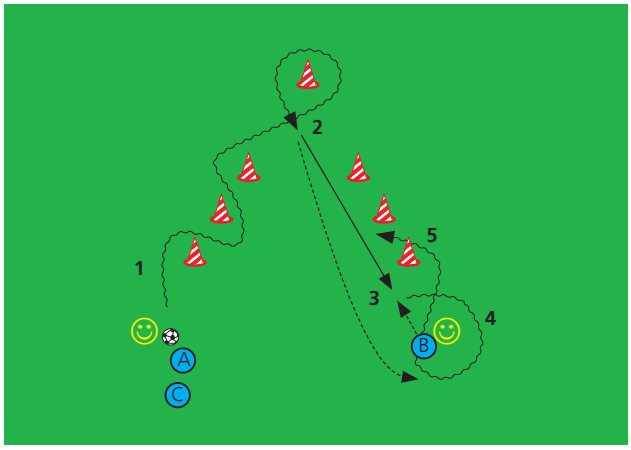
Exercise 2 — Difficulty: ★★

- Same as Exercise 1.
- B receives the ball with his back to the cone (3) and takes it clockwise around the cone with his left foot using short steps (4). B then starts dribbling (5).
- Same procedure on the other side, but anti-clockwise using the right foot.



Exercise 3 — Difficulty: ★★★

- Same as Exercise 2.
- Players take the place of the cones.
- Light pressure when controlling the ball, dribbling around and passing.



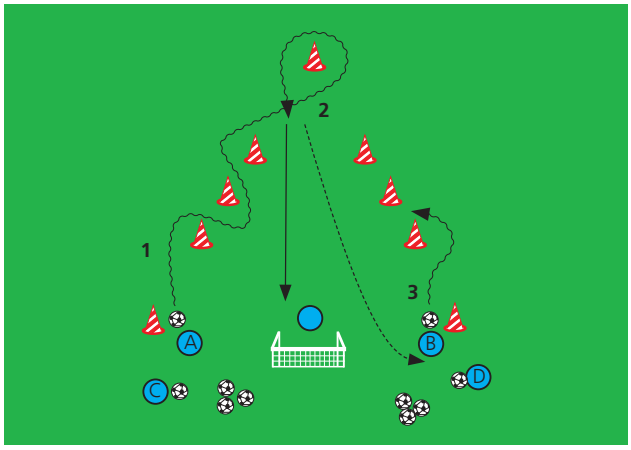
Organisation/material
3 players (optimum) or more
1 ball (plus a spare)
9 cones
Max. duration of exercise: 6-8 minutes

Coaching points
Pass with inside of foot, low, with left and right foot
Meet the ball when controlling the pass
Short steps when dribbling the ball (rhythmisation)
Ball in front of the body
Body between ball and opponent
Players of the same standard do the exercise together
Orientation (head high, look at player)
Differentiation (pass, control and move)

Technical drill 7 — Shooting (increasing difficulty)

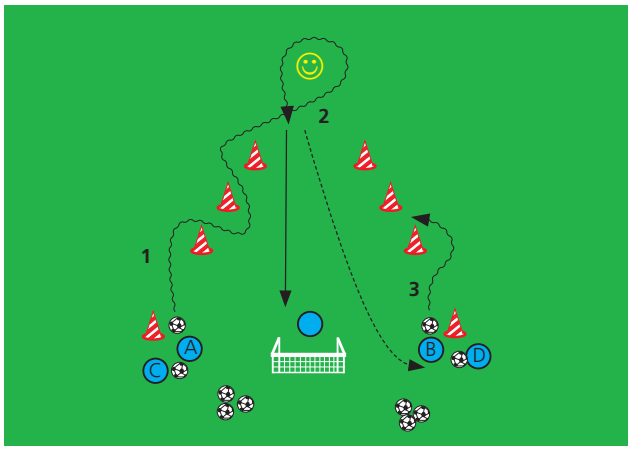
Exercise 1 — Difficulty: ★

- A starts by dribbling around the cones (1).
- A then shoots with his right foot (2).
- B starts dribbling around the cones (3) and then shoots with his left foot.



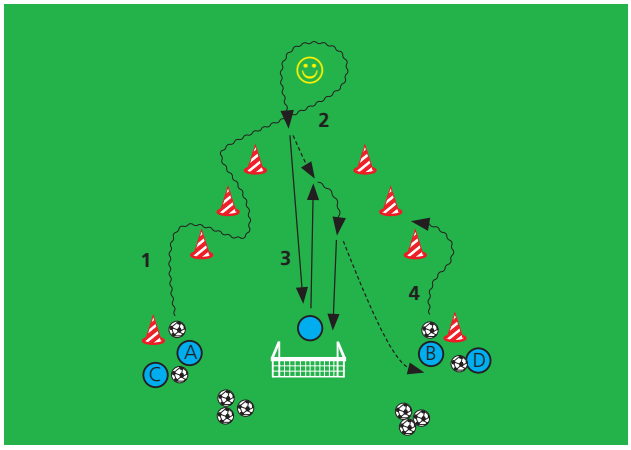
Exercise 2 — Difficulty: ★★

- Same as Exercise 1.
- A dribbles around an opponent instead of a cone (2).



Exercise 3 — Difficulty: ★★★

- Same as Exercise 2.
- The attacker (A) plays a one-two with the goalkeeper: A passes to the goalkeeper, who passes back to the attacker, who controls the ball and shoots (3).
- B starts dribbling (4).



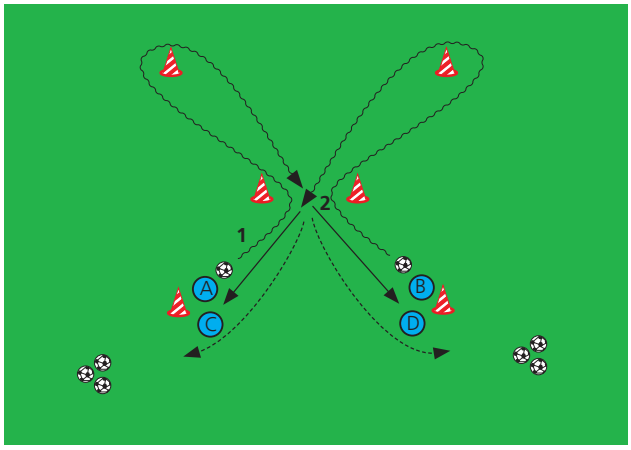
Organisation/material
5 players (optimum) or more
1 ball (plus a spare)
9 cones
Max. duration of exercise: 8-10 minutes

Coaching points
Shoot with inside of foot, low, with left and right foot
Short steps when dribbling the ball (rhythmisation)
Ball in front of the body
Body between ball and opponent
Players of the same standard do the exercise together
Orientation (head high, look at goal)
Differentiation (shooting)

Technical drill 8 — Dribbling, passing and controlling

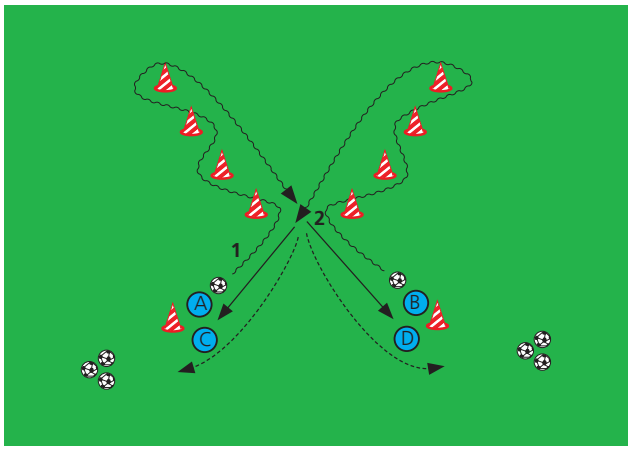
Exercise 1 — Difficulty: ★

- Players A and B start dribbling around the cones at the same time (1).
- They then pass to C and D with their left and right foot respectively (2).
- C and D meet the ball (3) and dribble it around the cones.
- Where possible, the players should start, dribble and pass at the same time.



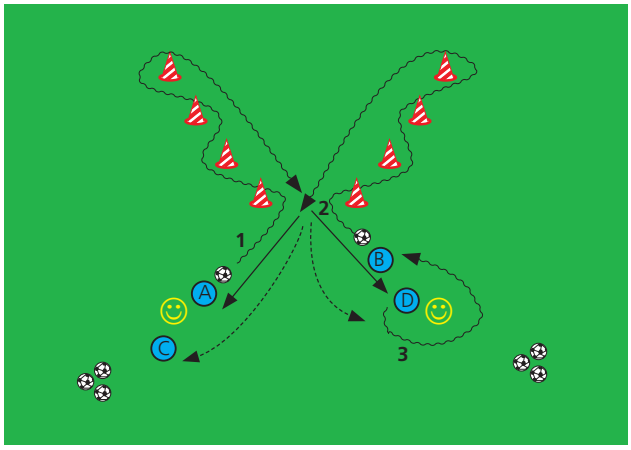
Exercise 2 — Difficulty: ★–★★

- Same as Exercise 1 but with an additional two cones on each side.



Exercise 3 — Difficulty: ★★★

- Same as Exercise 2, except that opponents take the place of the "start cones".
- Control the ball with back to opponent, turn inside and run around (3).



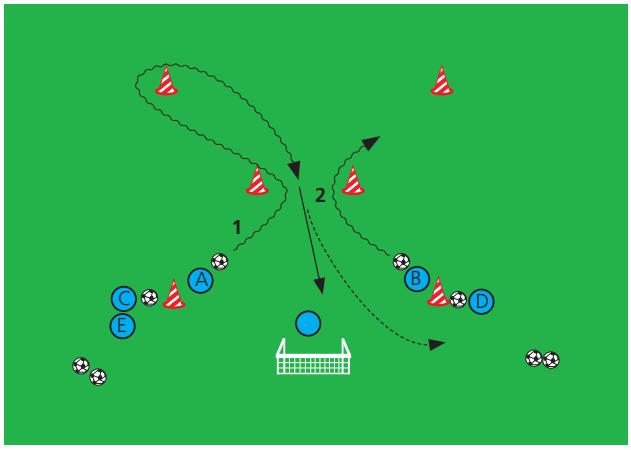
Organisation/material
4 players (optimum) or more
2 balls (plus a spare)
6-10 cones
Max. duration of exercise: 6-8 minutes

Coaching points
Pass with inside of foot, low, with left and right foot
Meet the ball when controlling the pass
Short steps when dribbling the ball (rhythmisation)
Ball in front of the body
Body between ball and opponent
Players of the same standard do the exercise together
Orientation (head high, look at player)
Differentiation (pass, control and move)

Technical drill 9 — Dribbling, passing and controlling

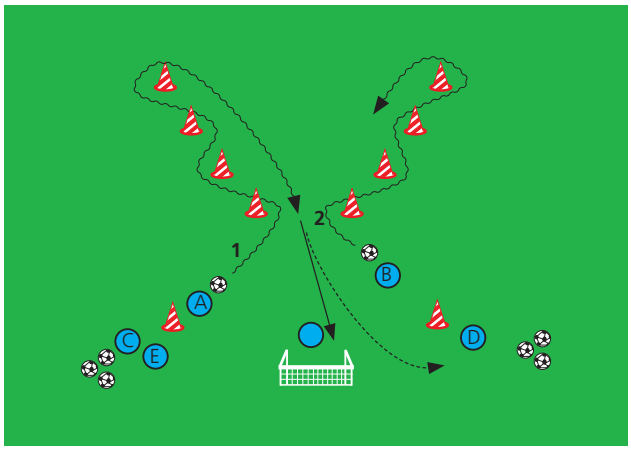
Exercise 1 — Difficulty: ★

- A starts by dribbling around the cones (1).
- A then shoots with his left foot (2).
- B then starts dribbling around the cones (1).
- B then shoots with his right foot (2).
- etc.



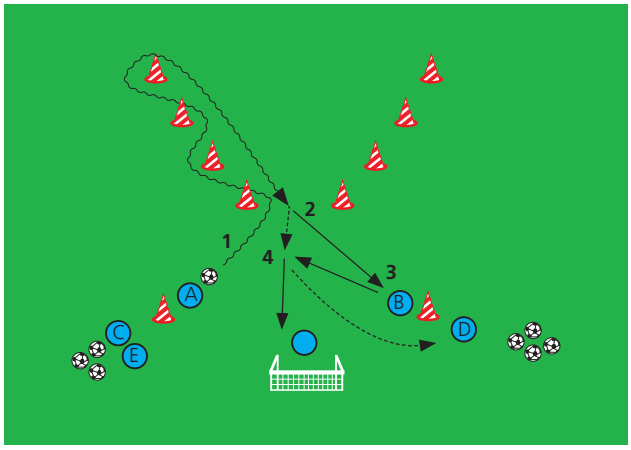
Exercise 2 — Difficulty: ★–★★

- Same as Exercise 1 but with an additional two cones on each side.



Exercise 3 — Difficulty: ★★★

- Same as Exercise 2, but with a one-two before shooting: A passes to B (2), who plays a return pass to A (3), who controls the ball and shoots (4).



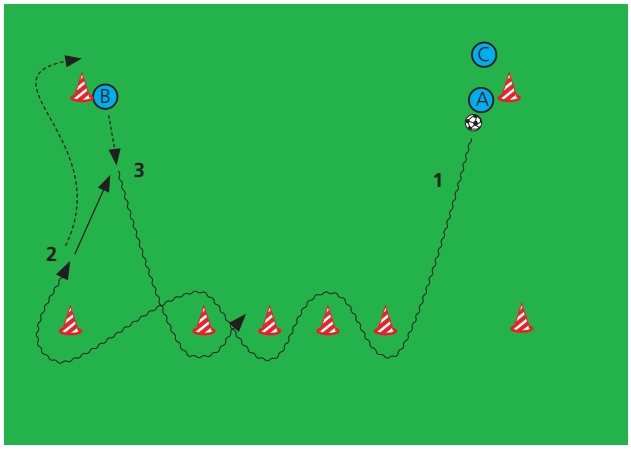
Organisation/material
6 players (optimum) or more
2 balls (plus a spare)
6-10 cones
Max. duration of exercise: 8-10 minutes

Coaching points:
Shoot/pass with inside of foot, low, with left and right foot
Meet the ball when controlling the pass
Short steps when dribbling the ball (rhythmisation)
Ball in front of the body
Players of the same standard do the exercise together
Orientation (head high, look at goal)
Differentiation (shooting)

Technical drill 10 — Dribbling, passing and receiving

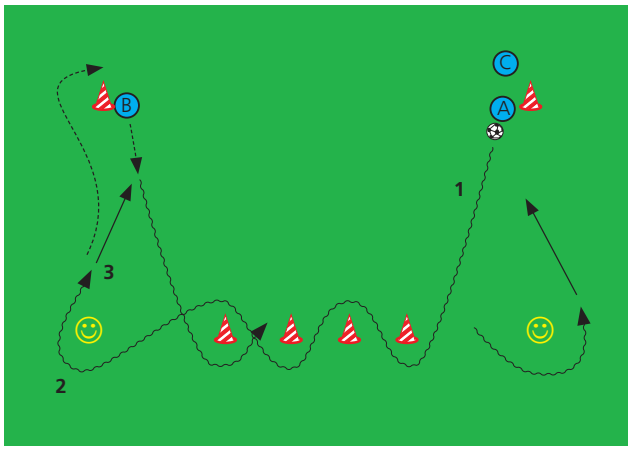
Exercise 1 — Difficulty: ★–★★

- A starts by dribbling around the cones (1).
- A then passes to B with the left foot (2). B meets the ball, controls it (3) and then dribbles in the direction of C.
- B passes to C with his right foot.



Exercise 2 — Difficulty: ★★–★★★

- Same as Exercise 1.
- A dribbles around an opponent at the end of the slalom (2). His body is between the ball and the opponent, and he keeps the ball on outside with his left foot. He then passes to B (3) etc.
- Same procedure on the other side, but using the right foot.



Organisation/material
3 players (optimum) or more (Exercise 2)
1 ball (plus a spare)
8 cones
Max. duration of exercise: 6-8 minutes

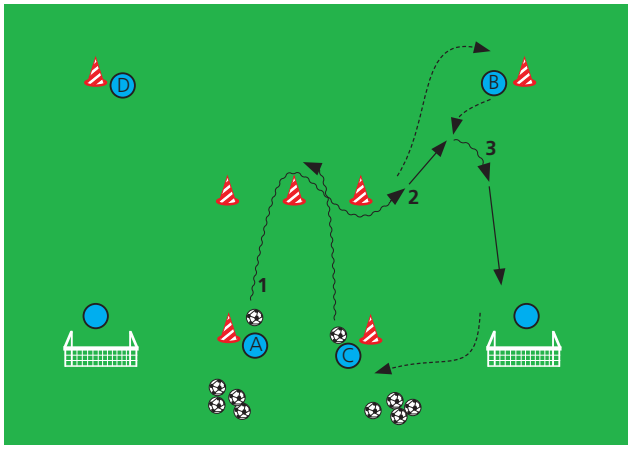
Coaching points
Pass with inside of foot, low, with left and right foot
Meet the ball when controlling the pass
Short steps when dribbling the ball (rhythmisation)
Ball in front of the body
Body between ball and opponent
Players of the same standard do the exercise together
Orientation (head high, look at player)
Differentiation (pass, control and move)

Technical drill 11 — Shooting (increasing difficulty)

Exercise 1 — Difficulty: ★★

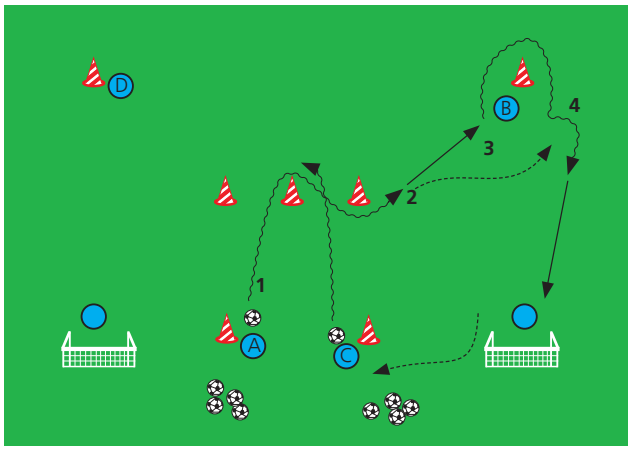
- A starts by dribbling around the cones (1).
- A then passes with his right foot to B (2).
- B controls the ball and goes on to shoot (3).

Runs: A to B, B to C, C to D, D to A ...



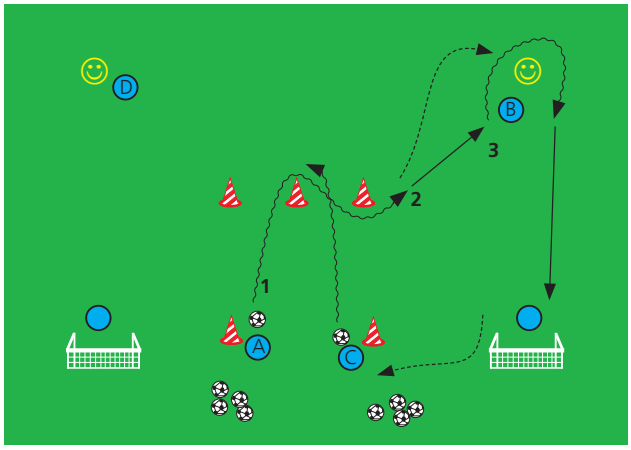
Exercise 2 — Difficulty: ★★★

- Same as Exercise 1.
- B controls the ball and dribbles it around the cone behind him (3). The ball is to be controlled and dribbled with the left foot.
- A stands in the path of B, passively or actively (4).



Exercise 3 — Difficulty: ★★★

- Same as Exercise 2.
- B controls the ball and dribbles it around an opponent behind him (3). The ball is to be controlled and dribbled with the left foot.



Organisation/material
6 players (optimum) or more
Several balls
7 cones
Max. duration of exercise: 8-10 minutes

Coaching points
Shoot with inside of foot, low, with left and right foot
Short steps when dribbling the ball (rhythmisation)
Ball in front of the body
Body between ball and opponent
Players of the same standard do the exercise together
Orientation (head high, look at goal)
Differentiation (shooting)

Game formats

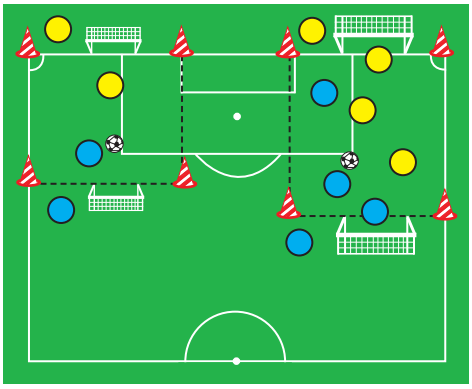
1 v 1 / 2 v 2

- Small goals (all types)
- No goalkeepers/substitutes optional

3 v 3 / 4 v 4 (+ goalkeeper)

- Children's goals
- Goalkeepers optional/with substitutes

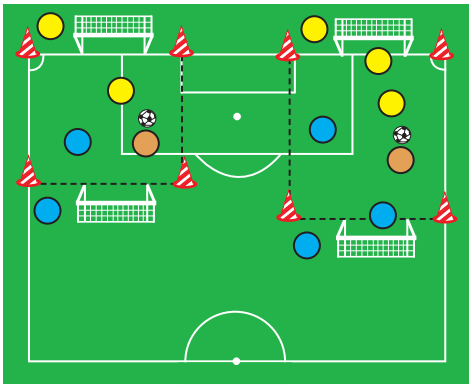
Objectives
- 1 v 1 dribbles
- Quick transition from defence to attack (and vice versa)



2 v 1 / 3 v 2 / 4 v 3 (+ goalkeeper)

- Children's goals
- Goalkeepers/substitutes optional
- Extra player is neutral (always in possession)

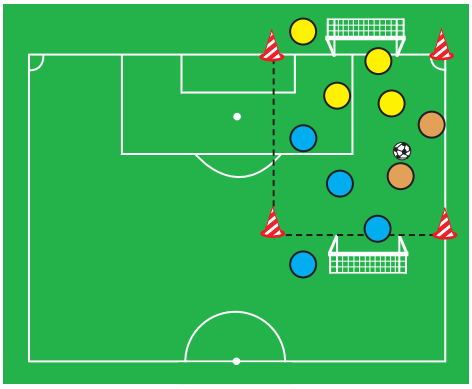
Objectives
- Quick transition from defence to attack (and vice versa)
- Teamwork



4 v 2 / 5 v 3 (+ goalkeeper)

- Size of pitch to suit number of players
- Children's goals
- Goalkeepers/substitutes optional
- Extra player is neutral (always in possession)

Objectives
- Quick transition from defence to attack (and vice versa)
- Teamwork
- Retain possession



Organisation/material
Size of pitch to suit number of players
Small goals (all types) or children's goals
Cones
Bibs in 2-3 colours
Duration of game: 10-20 minutes
The fewer the players, the shorter the game

Coaching points
Players of the same standard exercise together
Look for solutions, make quick decisions
Look for space, show for team-mates, run free of opponent
Open gaps, close gaps
Quick transition from defence to attack (and vice versa)
Prevent goals, regain possession quickly
Score goals
Teamwork, retain possession (numerical superiority)

Game formats

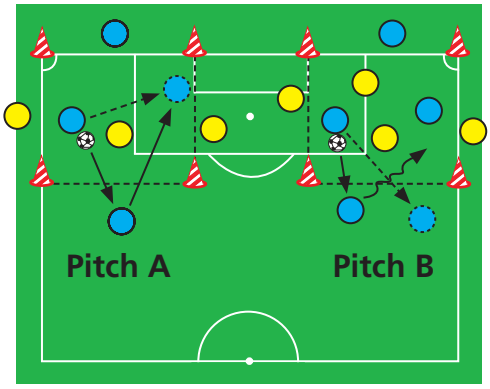
1 v 1 + 2 (6 players) / 2 v 2 + 2 (8 players)
3 v 3 + 2 (10 players)

– No goals

Pitch A: Pass to off-pitch player, return pass to on-pitch player

Pitch B (variation): Pass to off-pitch player, on-pitch player and off-pitch player swap places (off-pitch player moves the ball onto the pitch)

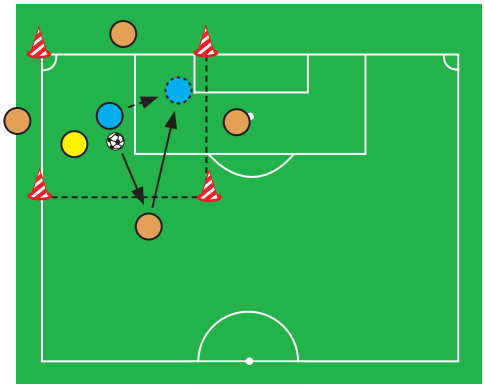
Objective
– Be aware of space and the depth of the pitch



1 v 1 + 4 / 2 v 2 + 4

– No goals
– Pass to neutral off-pitch player, return pass to on-pitch player

Objectives
– Orientation on all sides
– Switch from 1 v 1 to 5 v 1 or from 2 v 2 to 6 v 2



Organisation/material
Size of pitch to suit number of players
Cones
Bibs in 2-3 colours
Duration of game: 10-20 minutes
The fewer the players, the shorter the game

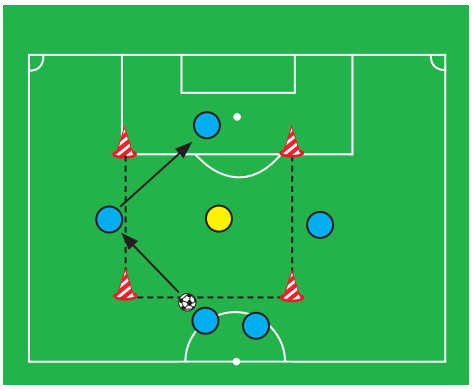
Coaching points
Players of the same standard exercise together
Look for solutions, make quick decisions
Correct use of technique
Teamwork, retain possession (numerical superiority)
Orientation on all sides

Game formats

5 v 1 (stand still)

- No goals
- 5 players around the outside, 1 player in the middle
- The players around the outside play the ball around among each other; they stay on their own side

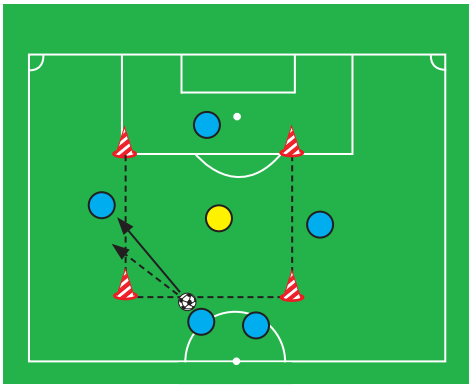
Objectives
- Orientation on all sides
- Retain possession
- Open gaps



5 v 1 (leave position, run after ball)

- No goals
- 5 players around the outside, 1 player in the middle
- The players around the outside play the ball around among each other and run after the ball (leaving their position)

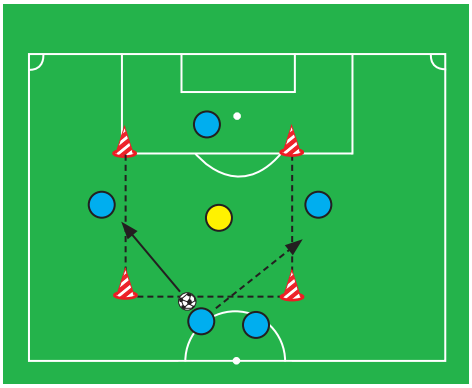
Objectives
- Orientation on all sides
- Retain possession
- Open gaps
- Swap positions



5 v 1 (leave position, do NOT run after ball)

- No goals
- 5 players around the outside, 1 player in the middle
- The players around the outside play the ball around among each other; they leave their position but are not allowed to run after the ball

Objectives
- Orientation on all sides
- Retain possession
- Open gaps
- Swap positions, run free
- All positions must be occupied



Organisation/material
Size of pitch to suit number of players
Cones
Bibs in 2 colours
Duration of game: 10-20 minutes
The fewer the players, the shorter the game

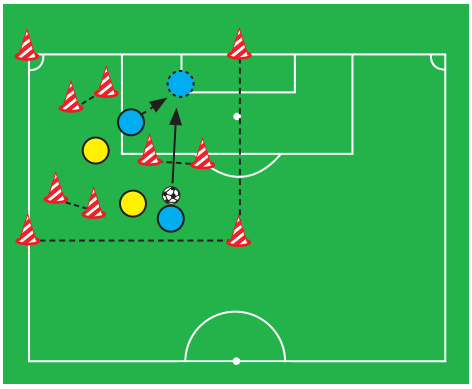
Coaching points
Players of the same standard exercise together
Look for solutions, make quick decisions
Look for space, show for team-mate, run free
Maintain an overview of the game
Open gaps
Teamwork, retain possession (numerical superiority)

Game formats

2 v 2 / 3 v 3 (through the gates)

- Random number of gates (cones/poles)
- Pass through the gate

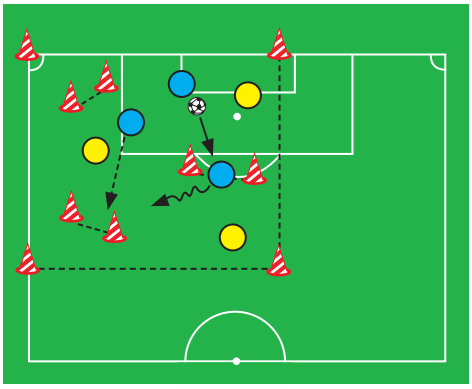
Objective
- Recognise space and run free



3 v 3 / 4 v 4 (through the gates)

- Random number of gates (cones/poles)
- Players have to show in the gates
- Control and run with the ball before passing to the next player in a gate

Objective
- Recognise space and free positions, run free



Organisation/material
Size of pitch to suit number of players
Cones, poles as gates
Bibs in 2 colours
Duration of game: 10-20 minutes
The fewer the players, the shorter the game

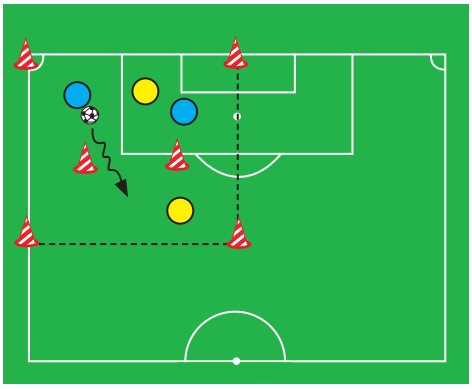
Coaching points
Players of the same standard exercise together
Look for solutions, make quick decisions
Look for space (orientation)
Show for team-mates, run free
Correct use of technique

Game formats

2 v 2 / 3 v 3 / 4 v 4 (with one gate)

– Dribble through the gate (at least 5m wide), from either side

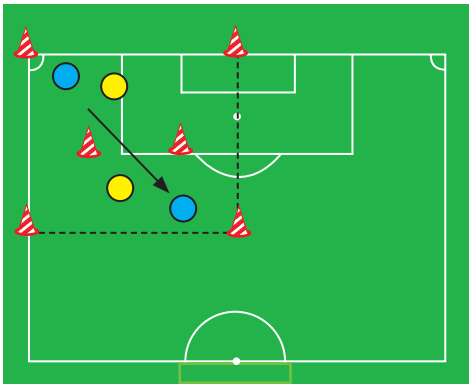
Objectives
– Dribble in limited space
– Look for solutions



2 v 2 / 3 v 3 / 4 v 4 (with one gate)

– Pass through the gate, from either side

Objectives
– Pass in limited space
– Look for solutions
– Run free

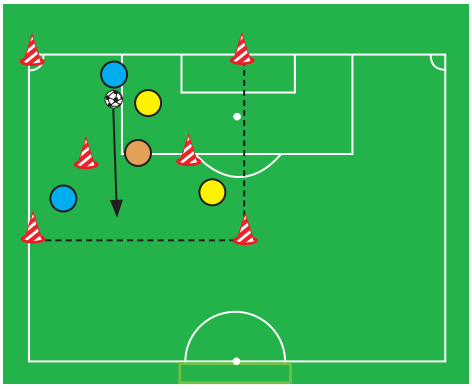


2 v 2 / 3 v 3 / 4 v 4 (with one gate)

– With a neutral goalkeeper
– Shoot through the gate

– For advanced players:
  Pass through the gate to a team-mate

Objectives
– Shoot (or pass) through limited space
– Look for solutions

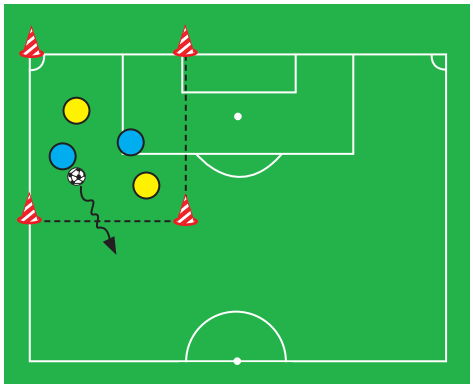


Organisation/material
Size of pitch to suit number of players
Cones, poles as gates
Bibs in 2-3 colours
Duration of game: 10-20 minutes
The fewer the players, the shorter the game

Coaching points
Players of the same standard exercise together
Look for solutions, make quick decisions
Look for space (orientation)
Show for team-mates, run free
Quick transition from defence to attack (and vice versa)
Prevent goals, regain possession quickly
Score goals
Correct use of technique

Game formats

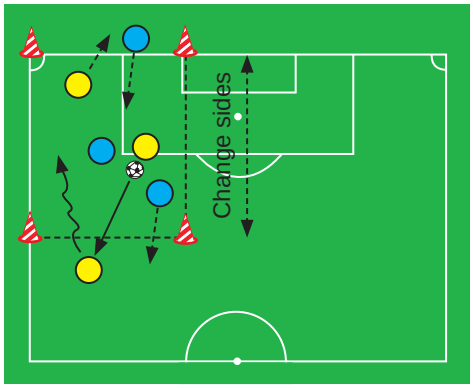
1 v 1 / 2 v 2 / 3 v 3 / 4 v 4 (with touchline gates)



- Dribble over the touchlines (touchline gates)
- If the ball is successfully taken through a touchline gate, the game automatically continues in the other direction (successful team stays in possession)

Objectives
- Dribble in open space
- Recognise depth and space on the pitch (orientation)

3 v 3 / 4 v 4 (with touchline gates)



- Both colours have one off-pitch player
- Pass to the off-pitch player through the touchline gate
- The off-pitch player becomes an on-pitch player and dribbles onto the pitch
- Both colours now swap sides and change the off-pitch player

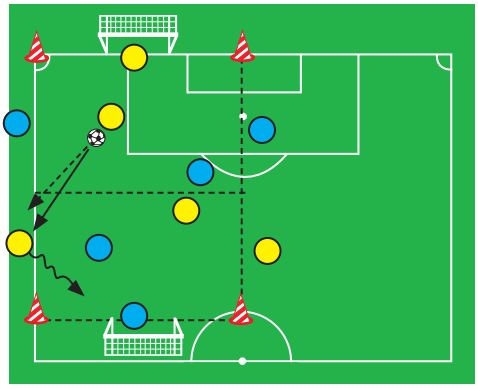
Objectives
- Open gaps, close gaps
- Recognise depth and space on the pitch (orientation)
- Run free
- Quick transition

Organisation/material
Size of pitch to suit number of players
Cones
Bibs in 2 colours
Duration of game: 10-20 minutes
The fewer the players, the shorter the game

Coaching points
Players of the same standard exercise together
Look for solutions, make quick decisions
Look for space
Show for team-mates, run free
Quick transition from defence to attack (and vice versa)
Correct use of technique

Game formats

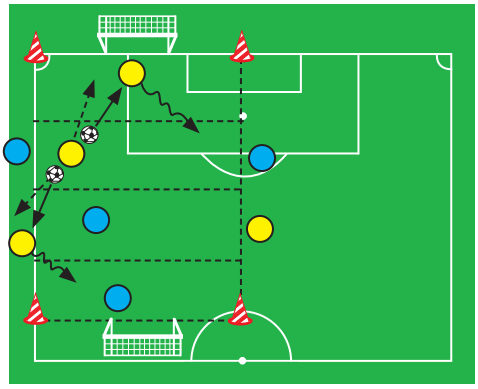
1 v 1 + 2 / 2 v 2 + 2 / 3 v 3 + 2 / 4 v 4 + 2 (with zones)



- 2 goals with goalkeepers
- Two off-pitch players from each team in the attacking zone
- Variation: the off-pitch players are in the defensive zone
- Players swap positions following a pass to an off-pitch player, the off-pitch player becomes an on-pitch player
- The players do not swap positions when the goalkeeper plays the ball to an off-pitch player

Objectives
- Play down the wings
- Recognise space

2 v 2 + 2 / 3 v 3 + 2 / 4 v 4 + 2 (with zones)



- 2 goals with goalkeepers
- Two off-pitch players from each team in the attacking zone or the defensive zone
- Goalkeeper can be switched too
- Attacker dribbles into the attacking zone and may not be challenged by a defender (1 v 1 with the goalkeeper)
- Players swap positions following a pass to an off-pitch player. The off-pitch player becomes an on-pitch player
- The players do not swap positions when the goalkeeper plays the ball to an off-pitch player

Objectives
- Play down the wings
- When swapping goalkeeper: reoccupy defensive zone that is vacated
- Recognise space
- Give time for successful shot at goal (1 v 1 with the goalkeeper)

Organisation/material
Size of pitch to suit number of players
Small goals
Cones
Bibs in 2 colours
Duration of game: 15-20 minutes
The fewer the players, the shorter the game

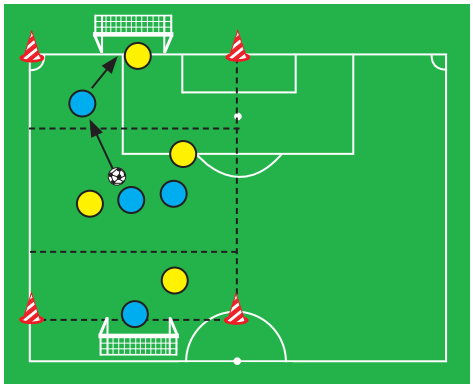
Coaching points
Players of the same standard exercise together
Look for solutions, make quick decisions
Quick transition from defence to attack
Orientation on both sides
Try to attack down the wings
Score goals

Game formats

2 v 2 / 3 v 3 / 4 v 4 (with zones) – shooting area

- 2 goals with goalkeepers
- One player from each team provides an outlet in the attacking zone
- The player in the attacking zone receives a pass from the midfield
- The attacker then shoots at goal
- The player who played the pass to the attacker from the midfield becomes the attacker

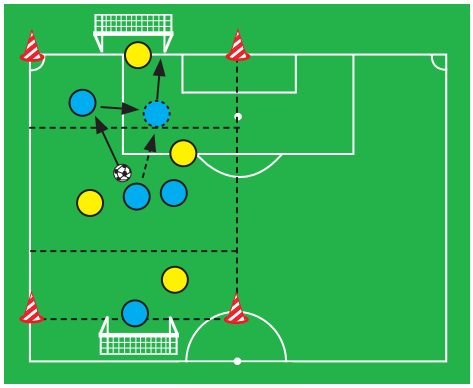
Objectives
- Recognise and create gaps
- Give time for successful shot at goal (1 v 1 with the goalkeeper)



2 v 2 / 3 v 3 / 4 v 4 (with zones) – shooting area

- 2 goals with goalkeepers
- One player from each team provides an outlet in the attacking zone
- A midfield player plays a one-two with the player in the attacking zone He then shoots at goal

Objectives
- Recognise and create gaps
- Create numerical superiority in shooting area
- Give time for successful shot at goal (2 v 1; 2 attackers against goalkeeper)



Organisation/material
Size of pitch to suit number of players
Small goals
Cones
Bibs in 2 colours
Duration of game: 15-20 minutes
The fewer the players, the shorter the game
Rotation of positions

Coaching points
Players of the same standard exercise together
Look for solutions, make quick decisions
Quick transition from defence to attack (and vice versa)
Look for attacker
Recognise and create gaps
Score goals

Futsal and beach soccer

Basic concept

Introduction

The enormous popularity of football translates into children playing the game all around the world on whatever surface and regardless of the number of players available. Over the course of time, countless variations of football have been developed.
Futsal and beach soccer are the other two football modalities that have been endorsed by FIFA, acknowledging their rapid growth and worldwide popularity, in particular amongst children.

Futsal

Futsal can be played both indoor and outdoor on flat, smooth and non-abrasive surfaces. For national competitions, even artificial turf can be permitted. The main difference to other small-sided football games is the ball. It is smaller and has less bounce than a regular football.

As outlined earlier, small-sided football has a beneficial impact on the number of ball contacts for every child compared to 11-a-side football. When playing futsal, this impact is further intensified. Studies have shown that the low-bounce futsal ball – when used on a proper futsal surface – facilitates ball control and accurate passing. Kids can keep the ball in play more easily, which results in a higher number of ball contacts, quicker transitions between defence and attack and more attempts on goal. Simplified ball control makes the kids feel more confident and enhances their creativity on the pitch. At the same time, kids tend to be less afraid of the futsal ball due to the lower bounce.

If children are thinking of a potential future in football, futsal offers an excellent preparation for youngsters. As a futsal ball is heavier than a normal football, certain proportionality can be kept with the game on a large field when it comes to the efforts required for passing and shooting.

For children under the age of 12, a futsal ball of size 3 is recommended, however the availability of this type of ball is still very limited.

But even without this particular futsal ball, the game remains accessible as it can be practised in a variety of pre-existing facilities in communities, schools, universities and sports centres, which are otherwise used for basketball or handball.

Given its indoor nature, futsal is particularly suited to geographical regions where heavy rain, strong wind or snowfall frequently hamper the outdoor game. Installing and maintaining natural or artificial turf pitches might be difficult and expensive in these parts of the world. The safe indoor environment might also offer substantially more opportunities for boys and girls to join in and increase accessibility for various religious groups.

Beach soccer

As the name itself insinuates, beach soccer is played on sandy surfaces. However, its practice is not limited to natural beaches. In numerous countries, beach soccer is played on artificially built pitches, even indoors.

Similar to other forms of small-sided football, beach soccer offers more possibilities for players to touch and play the ball as a result of the reduced size of the pitch and the smaller number of players. Moreover, beach soccer can offer an exciting alternative to vary the ordinary football activities of children. The soft and uneven playing surface makes it much more challenging to dribble, pass or shoot on goal, and players require good balance and coordination to perform any technical action, no matter whether with or without the ball. Hence, beach soccer has proven to be very beneficial for players' coordination skills as well as the reaction speed of the growing youngsters, as the trajectory of the ball is less predictable on sand. These abilities facilitate the future acquisition of technical skills, in whatever form of football.

At the same time, kids appreciate the fact that it is less painful to fall on sand than on harder surfaces, and even if they are not used to it, they start to feel confident very quickly.

In addition, very little equipment is needed to play beach soccer as, in accordance with the Laws of the Game, it is played barefoot. Furthermore, especially in countries with long coastlines or on small and sandy islands where football facilities are limited, beach soccer offers an attractive alternative as infrastructure requirements are minimal.

Conclusion

Both futsal and beach soccer can be considered to be complementary to football as they simply widen the range of choice. In circumstances where space or infrastructure is limited, weather conditions are not favourable or long summer and winter breaks interrupt the football activity, the two modalities offer new opportunities for kids to play the game.

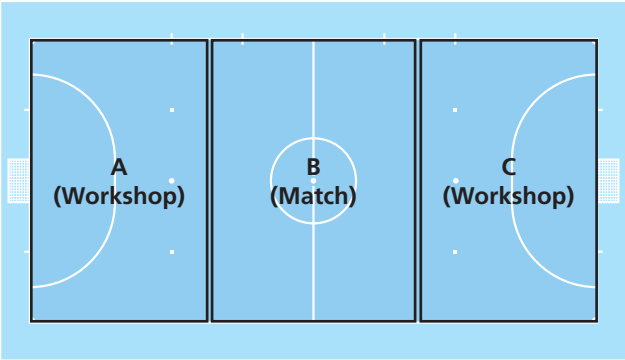
Organising a festival

As outlined in the relevant chapter, the main factors influencing in the organisation of a festival are the number of children, their age as well as the time and the facilities available. The smaller size of either a futsal or beach soccer pitch will therefore have an impact on the configuration of a festival.

Below you will find two possible solutions for how to split up a pitch for workshops and games when organising a futsal or beach soccer festival.

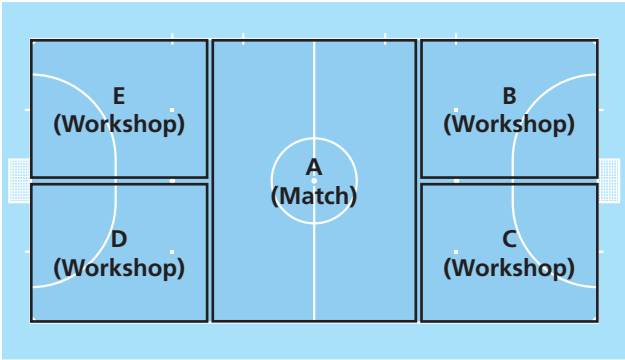
Solution 1

Round	Pitch A	Pitch B	Pitch C
1	1	2 v 3	4
2	4	1 v 2	3
3	3	4 v 1	2
4	2	3 v 4	1



Solution 2

	A	B	C	D	E
1	1 v 2	3	4	5	6
2	6 v 1	2	3	4	5
3	5 v 6	1	2	3	4
4	4 v 5	6	1	2	3
5	3 v 4	5	6	1	2
6	2 v 3	4	5	6	1



Example exercises

The philosophy of the grassroots football session which is described in the corresponding chapter in this manual will remain the same, no matter whether it is about football, futsal or beach soccer. Numerous exercises which are used in football can also be implemented in a grassroots session of futsal or beach soccer. However, the characteristics of the two disciplines require the coach-educators to keep a special focus on certain elements and will influence his/her choice of exercises for the session.

Futsal

As mentioned above, futsal is played with a ball that is heavier than a normal football. Thus, when designing a grassroots futsal session, coach-educators are advised to take into consideration the increased efforts required for passing or shooting the futsal ball and adjust the space as well as duration of the exercise accordingly.

Beach soccer

Evidently, the uneven and soft playing surface is the most distinctive element of beach soccer when compared to regular football. On sand, every movement with or without the ball involves a significant physical and coordinative effort for the kids. Consequently, coach-educators are advised to choose rather simple exercises and let them discover the particularity of the surface in an enjoyable way.

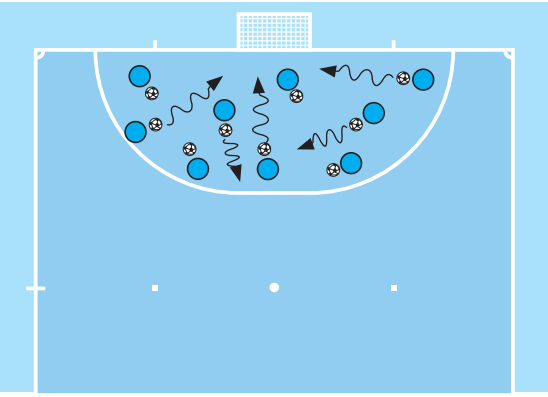
Hereunder you will find some exercises that are especially suited for the training of futsal and beach soccer.

Futsal exercises for children — Running with the ball

Exercise 1 — Age: 6-8 — Difficulty: ★

- Use the penalty area and goal; start with one ball for each child.
- Run with the ball using the sole of the foot; avoid running into other players and their balls.

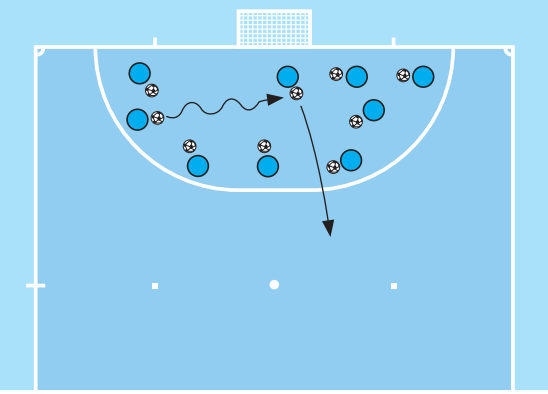
1. With the right foot.
2. With the left foot.
3. Using both feet.



Exercise 2 — Age: 6-8 — Difficulty: ★★

- Same as Exercise 1.
- Run with the ball; prevent others from stealing the ball while trying to steal a ball from others.

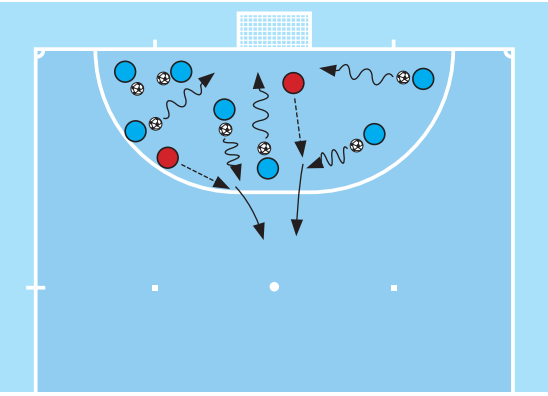
1. Try to steal a ball and kick it out of the penalty area at any point.
2. Try to steal a ball and kick it into the goal.



Exercise 3 — Age: 6-8 — Difficulty: ★★

- Same as Exercise 1.
- Running with the ball, shielding the ball.

1. Two players without a ball try to get a ball off the other players (players then swapping roles between attacker/defender) and so on.
2. Two players without a ball try to get the balls of the other players, who are shielding and moving, out of the area as quickly as possible.



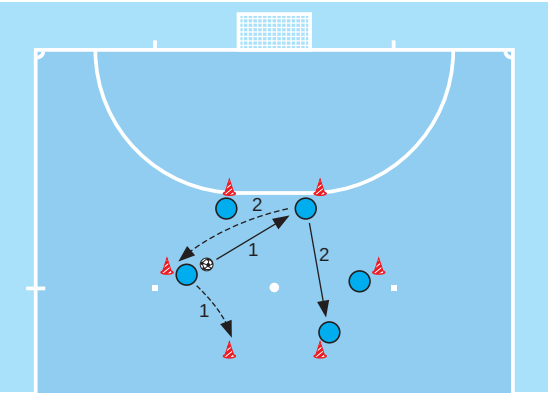
Organisation/material
Several balls (one for each player)

Coaching points
Run with the ball close to the feet
Keep head up when running with the ball
Observe the entire playing area in the exercise
Shield the ball

Futsal exercises for children — Passing and occupying space

Exercise 1 — Age: 6-10 — Difficulty: ★

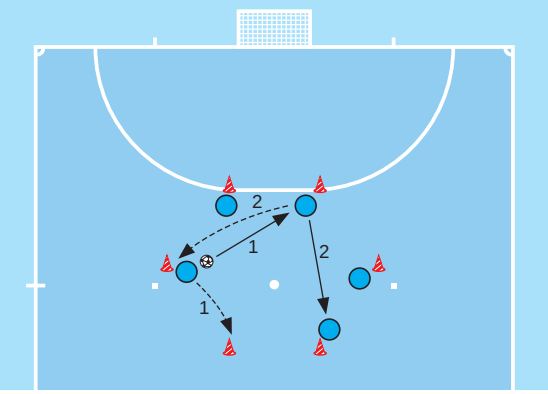
- Place cones in a circle (one cone more than the total number of players), and vary the distance between the cones in accordance with the level of the children.
- Give-and-go without opposition: play a pass to another player and then run to the spare cone.
  1. Pass the ball with the inside of the right foot and control the ball with the sole of the foot.
  2. Pass the ball with the inside of the left foot and control the ball with the sole of the foot.
  3. Free passes and control with the sole of the foot.



Exercise 2 — Age: 6-10 — Difficulty: ★★

- Same as Exercise 1.
- Give-and-go with two touches.

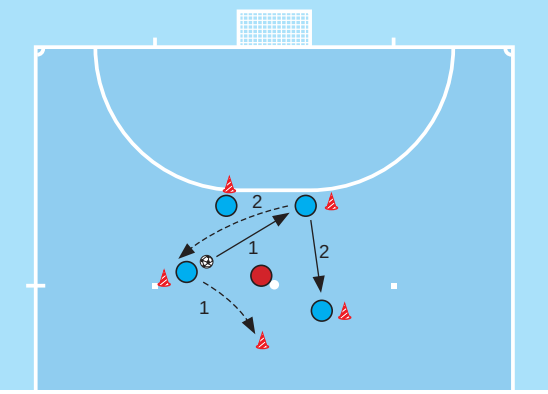
  1. Pass the ball with the inside of the right foot and control the ball with the sole of the foot.
  2. Pass the ball with the inside of the left foot and control the ball with the sole of the foot.
  3. Free passes and control with the sole of the foot.



Exercise 3 — Age: 6-10 — Difficulty: ★★★

- Same as Exercise 1.
- Give-and-go with opposition. One player acts as a defender; take one cone out of the circle. This player tries to intercept a pass; he then swaps positions with the player whose pass he intercepts.

  1. Free passes.
  2. Two touches.



Organisation/material
1 ball (plus spares)
Number of cones: number of players + 1

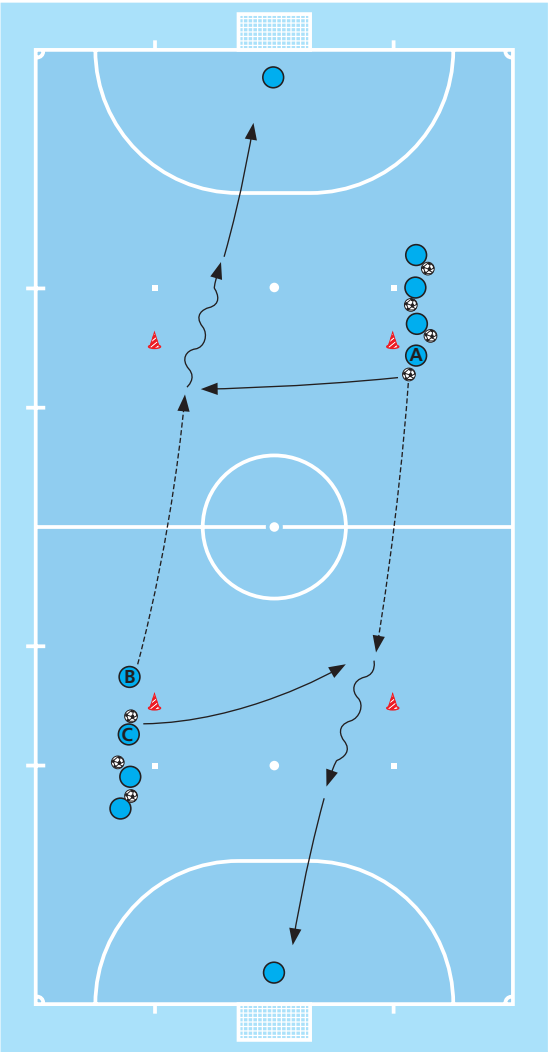
Coaching points
Passes with the inside of the foot
Control with the sole of the foot
Keep head up
Move quickly

Futsal exercises for children — Passing and shooting

Exercise 1 **Age: 11-12** **Difficulty: ★**

- Two identical lines in the same position in different halves of the pitch, each child with a ball. The first child plays a pass, moves, and finishes by shooting at goal before joining the other line after collecting his ball.
- Short, low pass: Player A plays a short pass into space so that player B moves from the other line, controls the ball, shoots and joins the other line. Now, player A moves towards the goal, receives a pass from player C and finishes.

1. Without a goalkeeper.
2. With a goalkeeper (all children to take their turn as the goalkeeper).



Organisation/material
Several balls (one for each player)

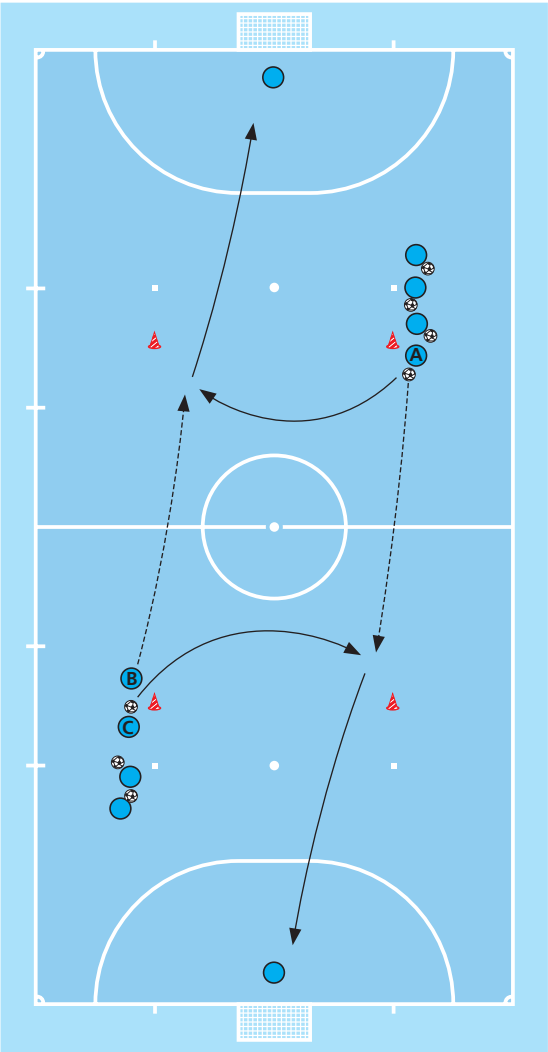
Coaching points
Spatio-temporal coordination
Move quickly
Accurate passes

Futsal exercises for children — Passing and shooting

Exercise 2 **Age: 11-12** **Difficulty: ★★**

- Same as Exercise 1.
- Short, high pass: as in the previous exercise, but with a high pass so that the child shoots without controlling the ball first.

1. Without a goalkeeper.
2. With a goalkeeper (all children to take their turn as the goalkeeper).



Organisation/material
Several balls (one for each player)

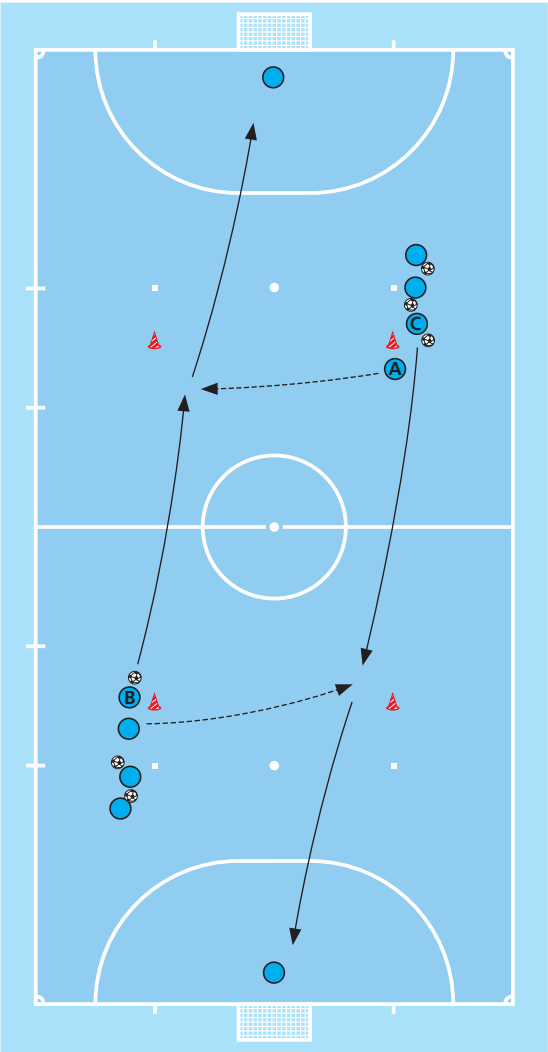
Coaching points
Spatio-temporal coordination
Move quickly
Accurate passes

Futsal exercises for children — Passing and shooting

Exercise 3 **Age: 11-12** **Difficulty: ★★★**

– Same as Exercise 1.
– Long, low pass. Player A moves to the other side in order to receive a long pass by player B and shoot at goal.

1. Control and shoot without a goalkeeper.
2. Control and shoot with a goalkeeper.
3. Shoot without a goalkeeper.
4. Shoot with a goalkeeper.



Organisation/material
Several balls (one for each player)

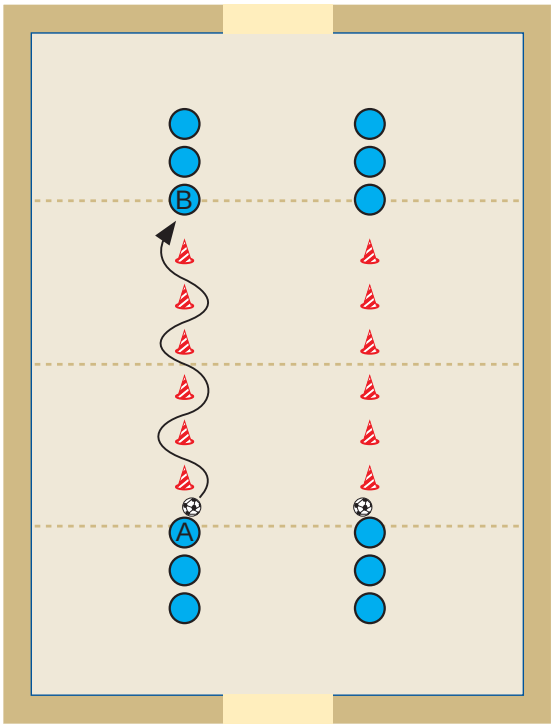
Coaching points
Spatio-temporal coordination
Move quickly
Accurate passes

Beach soccer exercises for children

Running with the ball

Exercise 1 **Age: 6-12** **Difficulty: ★**

- The children split up into equal-sized groups, and two groups face each other on each side as shown in the diagram.
- Player A dribbles the ball through the cones. Once arrived at the other side, he takes his place at the back of the queue and Player B then takes the ball and dribbles it back through the cones.



Organisation/material
1 ball per group
Cones

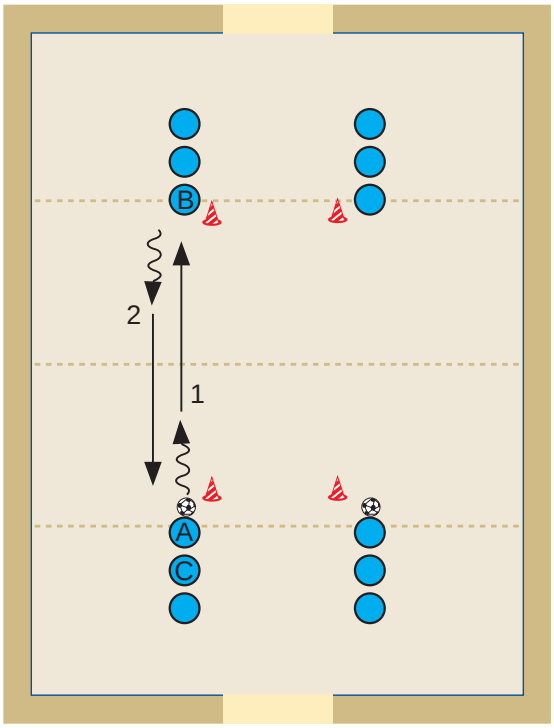
Coaching points
Run with the ball using both feet and touching the ball as often as possible.
Body upright and looking straight ahead.

Beach soccer exercises for children

Running with the ball and passing

Exercise 2 **Age: 6-12** **Difficulty: ★★**

- The children split up into equal-sized groups, and two groups face each other on each side as shown in the diagram.
- Passes: Player A dribbles the ball to the middle and then passes it to Player B. Player A then continues his run to the opposite side. Player B controls the pass, dribbles the ball to the middle and then passes it to Player C.



Organisation/material
1 ball per group
Cones

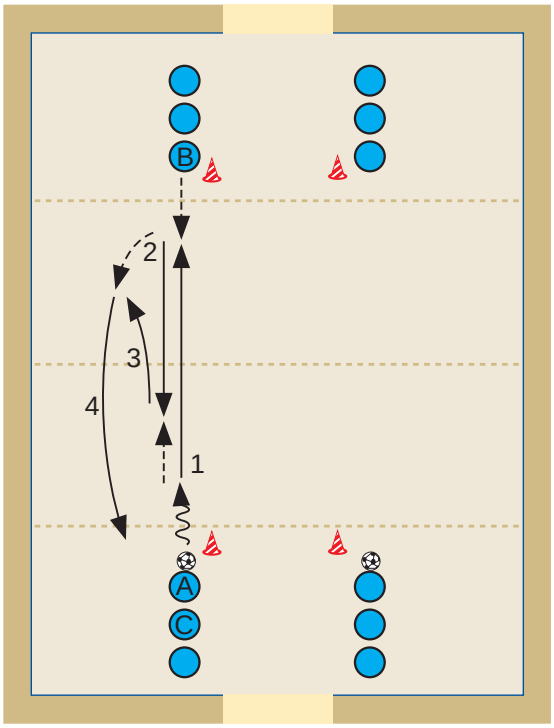
Coaching points
Passes on sand only when the ball is on a mound of sand (to avoid toe injuries).
Play the ball with both feet as much as possible.
Ball may be chipped up in the middle of a run and then passed.

Beach soccer exercises for children

Running with the ball and passing

Exercise 3 **Age: 10-12** **Difficulty: ★★★**

- Same as Exercise 1.
- Passes: Player A dribbles the ball to the middle and passes it to Player B. Player B passes the ball straight back to Player A and runs in the direction of the group on the opposite side. Before Player A joins the back of the queue on the opposite side, he passes the ball back into the path of Player B. Player B then continues the exercise in the same way.



Organisation/material
1 ball per group
Cones

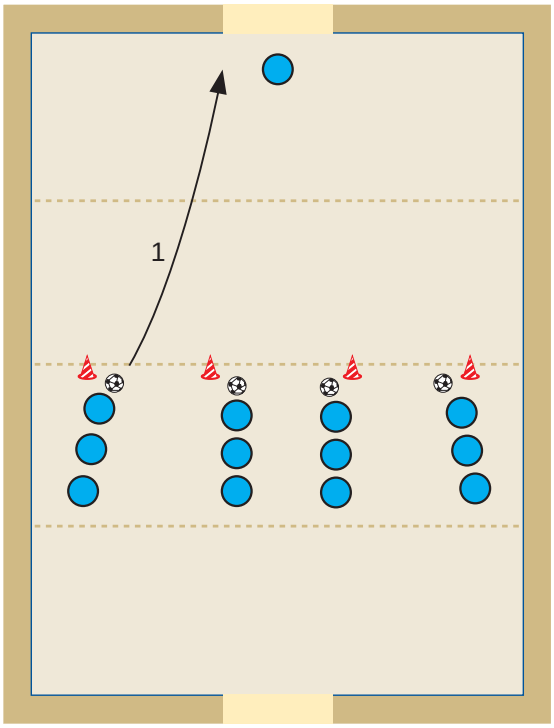
Coaching points
Passes on sand only when the ball is on a mound of sand (to avoid toe injuries).
Play the ball with both feet as much as possible.
Ball may be chipped up in the middle of a run and then passed.

Beach soccer exercises for children

Practising free-kicks

Exercise 4 **Age: 6-12** **Difficulty: ★**

- The children split up into four groups, and each group takes a ball.
- This exercise is about practising taking free-kicks on sand. Make a sand mound, place the ball on top of it, shoot.



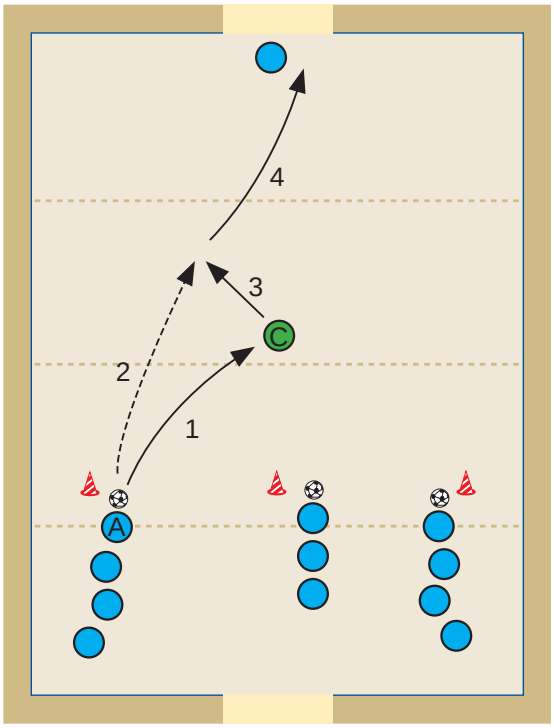
Organisation/material
1 ball per group
Cones

Coaching points
Exercise can also be conducted as a group competition. The goalkeeper should be changed often. All children should play in this position once.

Beach soccer exercises for children — Passing and shooting

Exercise 5 **Age: 6-12** **Difficulty: ★★**

- The children split up into three groups, one player goes in goal. Each group has one ball. The coach-educator plays the passes.
- Player A passes the ball to the coach-educator (C) and continues his run to get ready to shoot. The coach-educator throws the ball exactly into the path of the player. He shoots with his first touch and then joins the next group.



Organisation/material
1 ball per group
Cones

Coaching points
Change the goalkeeper after 3-4 minutes.
Only shots with the first touch, do not shoot after the ball has touched the ground (risk of injury).

Grassroots structure in member associations

The objective of organising grassroots football structures within member associations is to offer as many boys and girls as possible the opportunity to play football without restrictions.
Each member association should have a national technical director (TD) who is responsible for all technical matters within the association.
A grassroots football manager works under the TD and is responsible for the grassroots football department. This department has two main missions:

- the organisation of tournaments and festivals
- the training of football coaches responsible for children's football

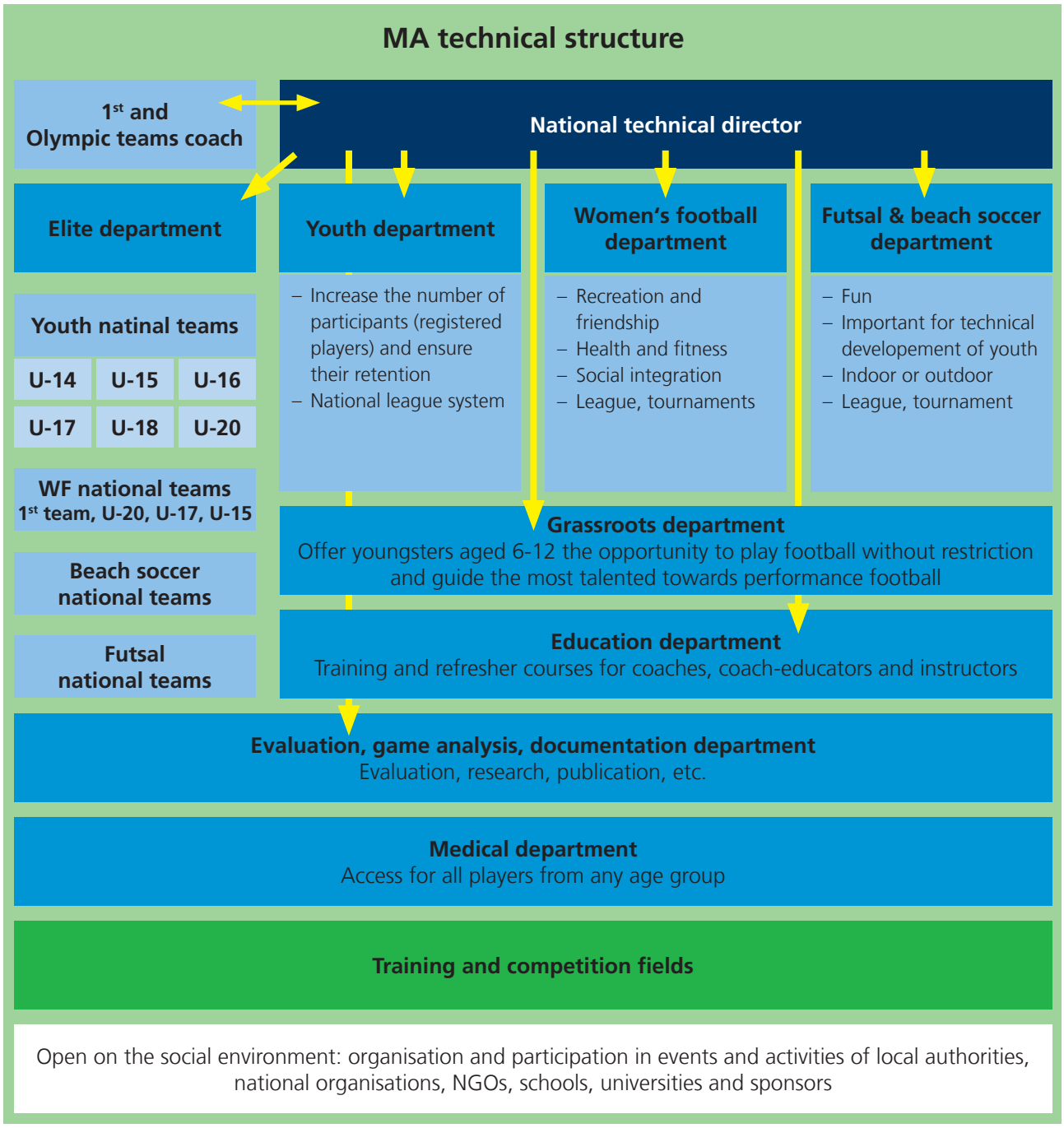
Some member associations that are well advanced in their development plans may implement decentralised structures at regional and local level, with regional and local managers responsible for running the structure.

The base of the structure is formed by schools and clubs. Coach-educators are essential; they are indispensable to the success of a national grassroots football programme: the coaches must learn how to organise a festival, prepare a tournament and work with the children to ensure the success of the programme.

Example of an organisational structure

The grassroots football department is thus part of the member association's technical department, together with other programmes such as women's football and futsal. The member association should incorporate regional and local football organisations when this is possible, as these have closer links with schools, clubs and communities. Decentralised structures, supported by their own technical departments, can take over from, or assist, the member association's technical department for any regional or local activities that are implemented.

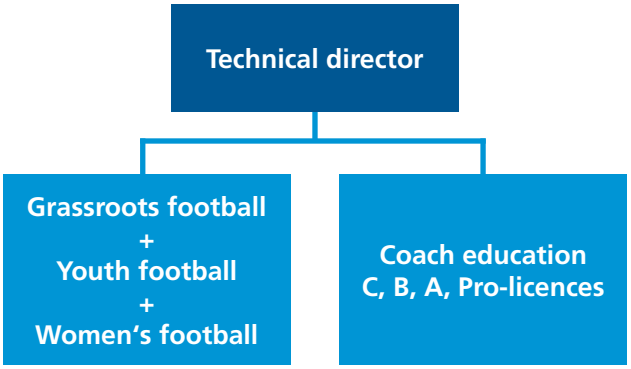
Technical structure of a member association (example)



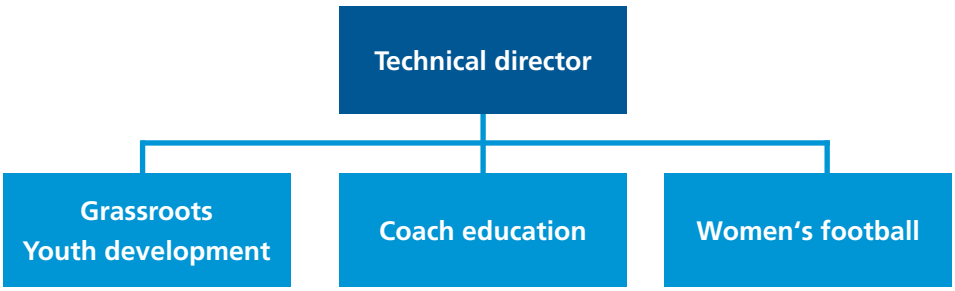
Structure of a grassroots football department

- Head of department + grassroots football manager
- Members of the association
- Representatives of the public authorities (ministries of sports and education)
- Coach-educators
- Parents
- Representatives of women's football

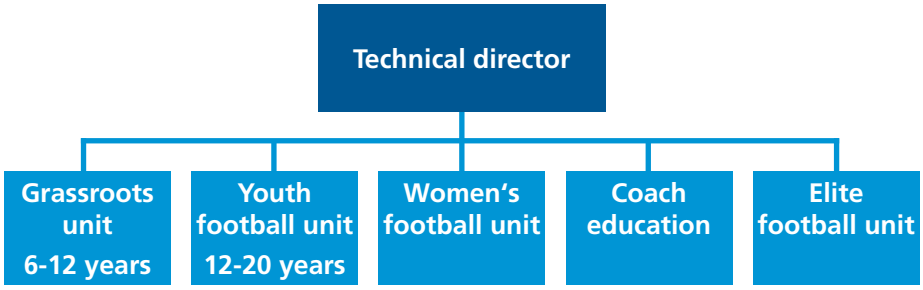
Simplest organisation of a grassroots unit within the technical department



Technical department with three specific units



Technical department with more units



Links between the member association, clubs and schools

Setting up a schools' football programme is only possible with the total support of the teaching world and educational organisations. Schools are the sole responsible bodies and are exclusively authorised to organise sport in primary schools.

It is thus necessary for member associations to collaborate in a common programme, for example by setting up a joint association/schools committee in charge of sport and signing an agreement specifying the roles and competences of each party.

The various partners involved are:

- teachers
- parents
- club officials
- coach-educators

Grassroots football manager

The role of grassroots football manager is essential to the success of the programme. The manager is responsible for all aspects of the various activities of grassroots football:

- organising festivals, tournaments and festivals
- developing grassroots football structures in schools, clubs and communities
- the general coordination of activities
- drawing up a calendar of activities
- setting up meetings with local and regional representatives
- maintaining regular contact with schools and clubs
- training and updating grassroots coach-educators

Ideally, this person should have a sound background in grassroots football and sufficient technical knowledge to encourage development. Above all this person must be an EDUCATOR.

FIFA
FIFA

Establishing links with the government and other bodies

What link with the government?

No government can neglect sport and the benefits that it can bring to the population. Football is a vehicle for the promotion of health, education, team spirit and fair play. These concepts are also central to national government objectives and are values upheld by modern societies. The objectives of a grassroots programme are similar to values promoted by many countries:

- Offering the means to practise sport everywhere, in the street, at schools, in clubs, etc. Football should be accessible to all without reference to gender, race or location.
- Allowing children to play together, with football facilitating communication and exchanges.
- Sport is good for health, promoting as it does strong messages such as well-being, a balanced life and feeling good physically.
- Sport can be a tool for education by teaching observance of the Laws of the Game, the practice of exercises and codified play, respect for opponents and partners, the desire to be the best, pushing oneself beyond one's limits, the joy of winning and coping with the distress of losing, etc.
- Sport is part of life, associated with fun, pleasure and emotion.

Why is the relationship with governments important?

Football is usually practised in clubs. The degree of structure offered by these clubs depends on the economic situation of the country and the development of football (popularity, funding, human resources, volunteers, goodwill and the association's structures).

Football is not only practised within clubs, however, as football is universal and is played everywhere. The recent media coverage of street football and the development of futsal, sometimes associated with the neighbourhoods of major cities, remind us that football is played everywhere that young people have the freedom to express themselves and the means to buy or make a ball. Schools are an important breeding ground for footballers. The sport is a taught subject in the majority of educational systems.

For these reasons, it can be seen that sport, and particularly football, forms a natural part of governmental programmes, for example:

- The Ministry of Education may promote football programmes in school curricula. This is reinforced by exchanges and matches between classes and different educational establishments. The ministry may even organise national football days, for example.
- The Ministry of Youth and Sport facilitates access to national sports structures and promotes programmes for youngsters (children's day, sports festivals, etc.).
- The Ministry of Health associates the practice of football with greater well-being, a balanced life, education on nutrition and strong messages against using drugs and other harmful substances, etc.
- Urban policy and the opening up of rural areas is encouraged by organising or adapting sports festivals, employing coach-educators, providing opportunities for youngsters to meet, organising recreational days, etc.
- The situation of women: encouraging the practice of football by both sexes and mixed football for young children.

Who are the favoured partners?

The ministries in charge of education, health, youth and sport must be involved in the programme as a priority. It should be noted that the portfolios of ministries and other government departments are allocated in different ways in different countries: the ministries to be contacted are thus given by way of example only.

Ministry of Education

This ministry manages the majority of educational establishments in the country, drawing up educational programmes and delivering educational resources.
The advantages of acting through this network of schools can be identified as follows:

- Access to all schools in the country, including those located in the least accessible regions, rural areas or on remote islands.
- The benefit of the existing educational network, in particular for communication with schools: the organisation of matches and training, the distribution of equipment, activity reports, etc.
- The potential involvement of teachers – whether qualified in sports or not – for the delivery of sports content. High-quality cooperation can be established, including training school teachers and involving them in competitions between schools and in regional football leagues.
- Relations with clubs, guiding those school children interested in more regular practice towards local clubs, and having club coach-educators participate in school activities.

It is important to establish a relationship with this ministry, particularly in countries in development where the practice of the sport is not always consistent or properly framed. The economic situation sometimes hinders access to structures (even at the most basic level) and especially the purchase of sports equipment, most notably footballs.

NB: In some countries, not all the schools are managed by the ministry. This is particularly the case for religious communities and international schools financed from abroad. It is important that grassroots football programmes avoid segregation and integrate these schools.

Ministry of Youth and Sport

The relationship with this ministry is equally important, in particular with regard to:

- Sports structures: access to, and the maintenance of, these structures is essential, for matches between schools or for establishments that do not have their own practice facilities.
- Making coach-educators available to teach youth workers and schoolteachers, and for the supervision of football programmes: training, matches, etc.

Ministry of Health

It is important to instil healthy attitudes in children, and grassroots football programmes are an excellent way of getting the message across on health and sports, for example:

- Refraining from taking illegal or harmful substances
- Good nutrition and hygienic, healthy behaviour

The ministry may also provide more direct assistance, for example:

- Medical support provided by nurses, trainers or doctors during sports gatherings
- Making doctors available to provide medical check-ups for the children

– Supplying medicine or first-aid kits to certain schools or for matches between educational establishments

Other governmental bodies

Other governmental bodies may be involved in implementing the programme. For example:

– Regions and towns: integrating the programme into regional and community activities, etc.
– Environmental agencies: associating football programmes with a respect for nature, the protection of sources of drinking water, the management of waste, etc.
– Women's organisations: participation and the fight against sexual discrimination through mixed teams, encouraging girls to play football, etc.

Other non-governmental partners

Towns and communities

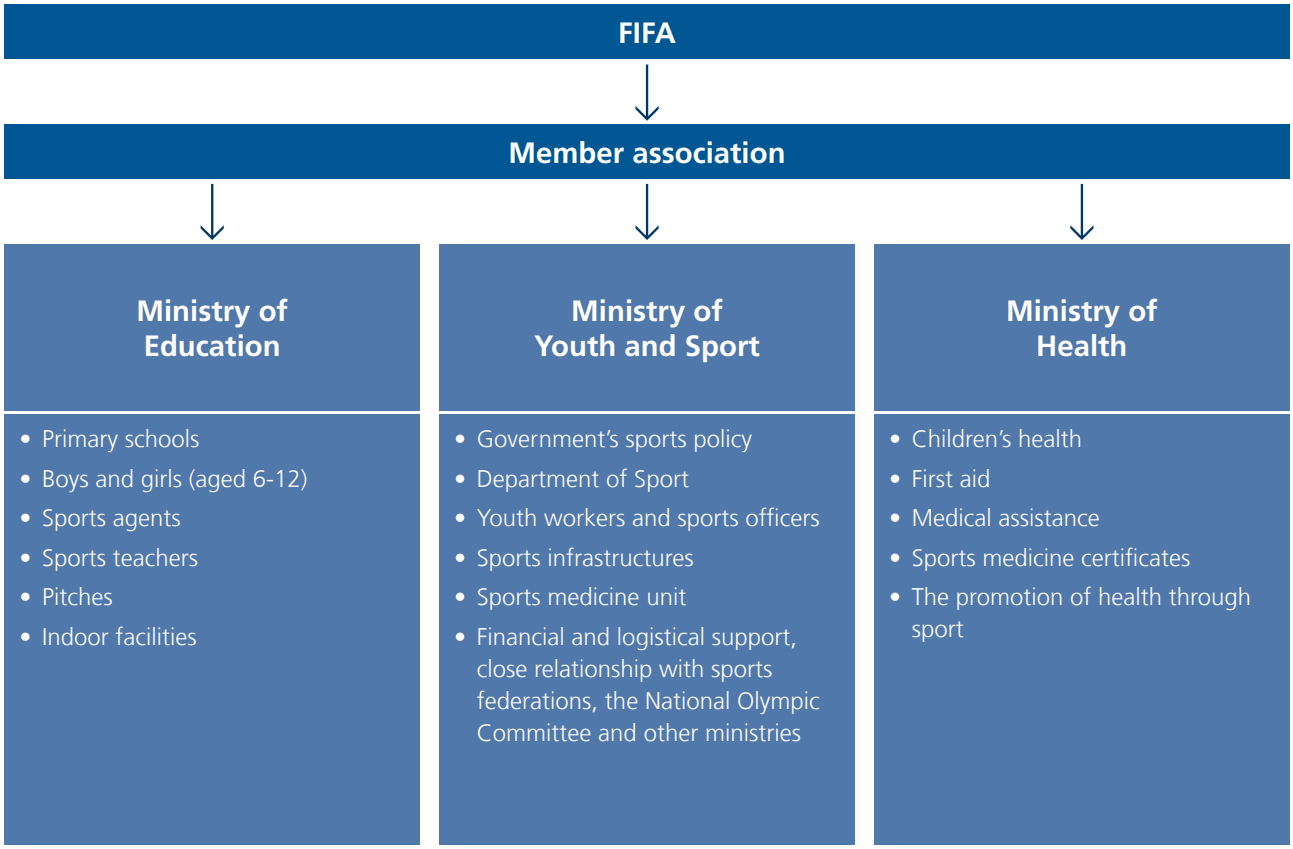
Regional and local communities are the basis of social life in many countries. A relationship may be established directly with regions or some towns, depending on their importance. In this case, all the issues previously described for governments apply:

– The use of land belonging to the communities or regions
– The assistance of the departments of sport of the communities and regions
– The network of schools managed by the regions and communities, and indeed by the ministry

NGOs

Non-governmental organisations often benefit from assistance from the state or external organisations (UNICEF, the Red Cross, the European Union, etc.) and act on behalf of the government in well-targeted sectors, in particular development and assistance projects. These organisations have objectives that can be associated with football development activities, for example:

– First-aid instruction by the Red Cross during training sessions for coach-educators and schoolteachers
– UNICEF health campaigns (education about malaria etc.) linked to matches between school establishments
– Financial partnership with the European Union for sporting and educational development programmes



Sponsors

There is the potential for many sponsors to link their image to a grassroots football programme. The association with sport, health, education, the youth, a national programme, etc. are all attractive elements for marketing an enterprise. Sponsorship may take many different forms. Most frequently it is the provision of sports equipment (bearing a logo or commercial slogan), the supply of prizes or a financial contribution (in return for media coverage).

The steps to be taken

It is essential, before undertaking any contact with a ministerial body, to draw up an agreement in order to ensure that the programme will be realisable and viable.

The grassroots football programme

The following stages should be observed:

- The draft version of the programme must receive the support of the executive committee of the member association.
- The programme must form part of the association's long-term vision, for a minimum of four years, and must be incorporated in the long-term development plan drawn up with FIFA's development officers.
- The programme must, in particular, provide: details of the objectives, criteria for success, sports content, calendar of action, budget and finance plan.
- The programme should draw on the resources of the member association's technical department and must involve the regional football leagues.
- The final dossier must receive the approval of the national association's executive committee.

NB: The participation of partners from the private sector, and indeed NGOs, is positive for the dossier.

The relationship with the government

The following points should be respected for meetings with a ministry:

- Draw up a concise, effective presentation file, or prepare a video presentation if appropriate.
- Present the programme in an objective manner, in a "win-win" format, in other words expressing that the ministry and football in the broadest sense will both benefit from the implementation of the programme (as well, of course, as the actual beneficiaries as presented in the programme's objectives).
- Present the interest in collaborating in a successful programme, demonstrating the commitment of all the parties.
- Present the other partners in the programme, both private or public, without forgetting FIFA and the relevant confederation, if involved.
- Draw up a calendar of meetings and actions, in particular for the start-up phase of the programme.
- If a steering committee is set up to manage the programme, propose that the ministry receives a place as a member (NB: Always make sure that the football members are in the majority on the steering committee. Control of the programme must not be lost to other parties).
- Propose that an agreement be drawn up and the content approved.

NB: If the laws of the country allow it, and if it is necessary, the ministry's support in obtaining import exemptions for sports equipment should be requested.

Communities	NGOs	Sponsors
• Local associations • Municipalities • District / provinces / regions • Villages • Parents • Local facilities • etc.	• Youth programmes • Assistance programmes • Vulnerable groups in society • Social integration • Educational programmes • Anti-drugs campaigns • The fight against poverty • etc.	• Hotels, banks, enterprises • Event organisers and personalities • Sports infrastructures • Financial and logistical support • Grassroots football projects • etc.

The agreement

The agreement should be uncomplicated in order to avoid any problems of interpretation. The involvement of a third party, for example a football league or ministry department, should be avoided. The member association and the ministry must be directly involved.

Proposed content:

- Names of the two parties
- Concisely present either, 1) each of the parties and their interest in setting up the programme, or, 2) the common interest of both parties
- The subject of the agreement with a list of the commitments of each party
- The duration of the agreement and the conditions for cancellation
- The date of commencement of the agreement
- Any monitoring activities: a report on the previous year and the plan of action for the coming year
- The option for renewing the agreement
- Methods to resolve disputes
- The signatures of both parties

Development of a grassroots plan

The grassroots development plan is the strategic framework for launching, following up and rolling out grassroots activities throughout the country. It is the outcome of study, evaluation and consultation. It sets out the goals and actions which will drive towards achieving the defined objectives. It is implemented by the technical department with continuous evaluation of progress and adaptation against outlined objectives.

Effective planning, however, needs to be a shared process that involves all the stakeholders. In the case of a grassroots programme, it is essential that links and partnerships be created with the government as well as other bodies to ensure continuity in the medium- and long-term.
The first stage of development planning is to understand exactly what you hope to achieve and what you would like your programme/plan to do. An effective monitoring and evaluation system should also be designed to ensure that the programmes meet the expected outcomes.

Your objectives should be SMART:

→ Specific
→ Measurable
→ Achievable
→ Realistic
→ Timed

The planning process

1. OBJECTIVE: what needs to be done?
2. TACTIC: how do you intend to achieve your objective?
3. TARGET: what will be achieved?
4. RESPONSIBILITY: who will make sure this is achieved?
5. TIMESCALE: when will you complete your objective?
6. FINANCE: how much it is going to cost?

It is very important to analyse the existing situation of grassroots football in a country before starting a programme. The context can vary considerably between different member associations; the personnel involved in the development of the programme should adapt to the existing situation. Specific issues must be considered before the programme is launched so that the vision and objectives of FIFA's Grassroots Programme can be fulfilled.

Guidelines

Analysis of the situation in a country

- Population
- Administrative and technical organisation at national, regional and local levels
- The educational system
- Sports policies
- The existence of a grassroots football structure
- Sports infrastructure and facilities
- Links between the member association and government ministries

The practice of football

- A study of football throughout the country, in all provinces and regions, will show the extent to which the sport is practised in all sectors.
- Determining the facilities available in all sectors, in particular in rural areas, offers vital information, such as the number of children who have access to football equipment and under what conditions.
- The availability of coach-educators and equipment, as well as the different types of tournament organised throughout the country, will give an indication of the needs of each sector.
- Can a programme be launched in the various sectors, or a seminar organised to study the feasibility of the programme?
- Are there official links between member association staff, leagues, clubs, communities and schools?
- Guarantees for the continuity of the grassroots programme in rural areas and other regions must be based on the stability of those involved, including the communities and ministries of health, youth, sport and education. These bodies must not only be present, but also active in working towards a common objective.

Analysis of needs

- Coach-educators: number and qualifications
- Development of grassroots football
- Activities: competitions, tournaments and festivals
- Equipment, material
- Infrastructure
- Grassroots football committee

Medium- to long-term plan

Aims

- To introduce grassroots football to boys and girls (aged 6-12)
- To promote the philosophy of grassroots football
- To develop the activities of grassroots football
- To increase participation in grassroots football programmes
- To improve training and match equipment
- To instruct teachers (including women) to become coach-educators
- To encourage parents and volunteers to get involved
- To establish links and build relationships between all partners,
- To put a legitimate structure for the development of grassroots football in place
- To appeal to an audience and increase recognition
- To seek out sponsors and partners

The stages of implementation

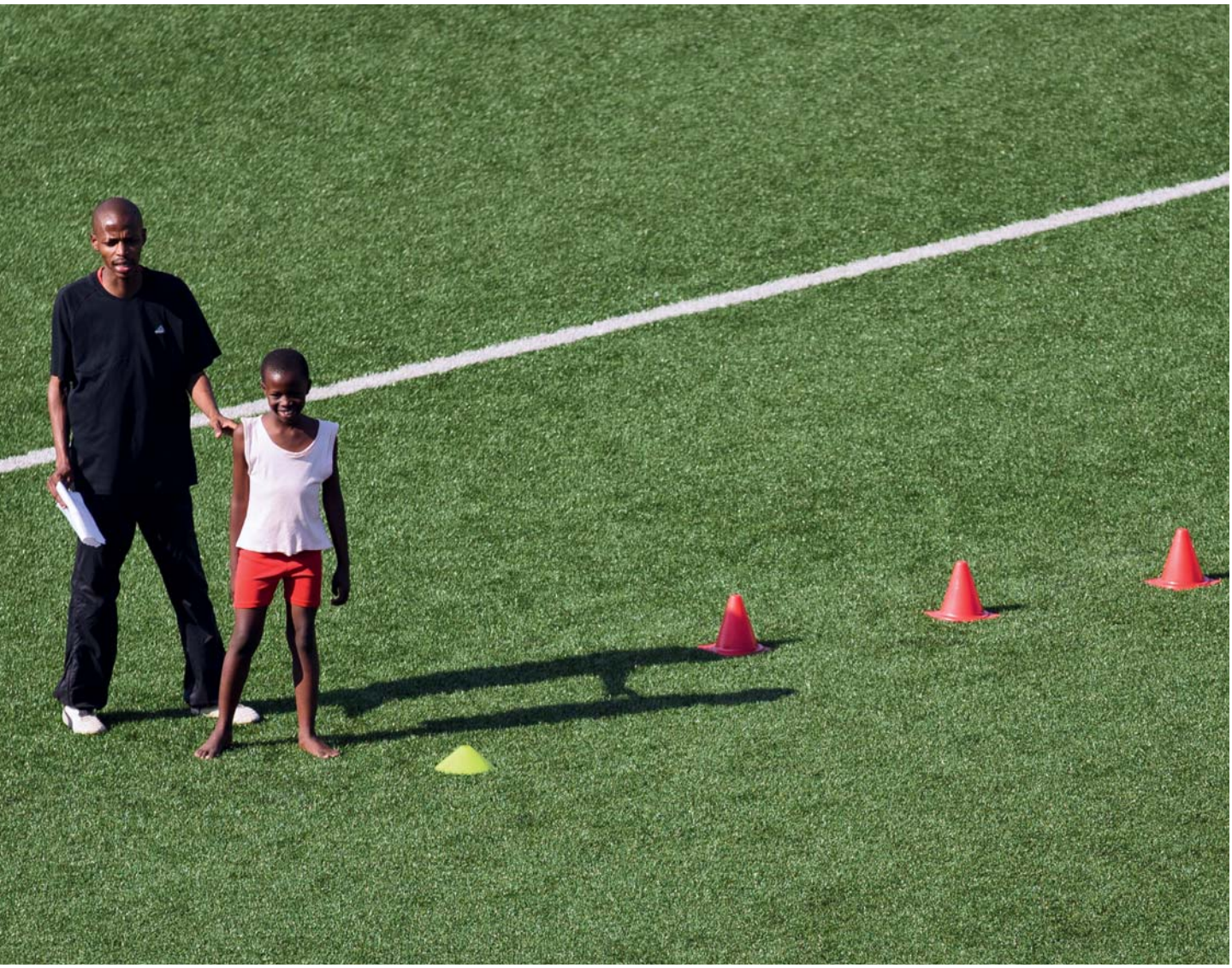
- Initial consultations: coach-educators, teachers, parents, etc.
- Bringing together the essential people: an executive committee, key individuals, etc.
- Preparation and presentation of a development plan
- Consultation seminars and meetings: member association, ministries, sponsors, etc.
- Submission of a final plan: association's technical department
- Approval: member association/FIFA
- Launching the plan: grassroots programme
- Plan for implementation: short-/medium-/long-term development plan

Principles for a successful grassroots football programme at national level

- **CONSULTATION:** the need for consultation with all stakeholders in order to ensure that all points of view are taken into account and, if possible, represented in the plan
- **PARTICIPATION:** to increase the number of people involved in the sport
- **QUALITY:** the desire to improve and develop the game at all levels; the provision of high-quality technical support
- **SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY:** offering an alternative to the everyday lives of children from disadvantaged areas
- **EQUALITY:** making sure that the underdeveloped areas of the sport (football for girls, players with disabilities, football in schools) receive support and appropriate services
- **PARTNERSHIP:** recognition that the development of football requires a partnership approach involving all sectors of the sport and society.

Goals

- To establish a grassroots football unit within the technical department of the member association
- To set specific objectives on the following subjects:
  - Grassroots football
  - Schools football
  - Football in communities
  - Training coach-educators
  - Organising matches, competitions and festivals
- To prepare a detailed plan for development at local, regional and national levels



Objectives to be achieved (3 years)

- Increase participation (6-12 year-olds/boys and girls)
- Improve the standards of coach-educators and increase the number of training courses
- Organise more festivals and tournaments (various formats adapted to the circumstances)
- Improve communication and develop relations with partners, improve sports facilities
- Encourage the teachers, volunteers and parents who become involved
- Establish a professional unit for the development of grassroots football within the technical department
- Sign agreements with ministries, primarily the Ministry of Education

AIMS

To set specific objectives on the following subjects:

- Grassroots football
- Football in communities
- Training coach-educators
- Organising matches, competitions and festivals
- To prepare a detailed plan for development at local, regional and national levels

Setting up a three-year development plan

Objectives	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 3 (Ii)
Impact	Local	Regional	National	National
Structure	Set up: – a grassroots football development unit – a management committee	Establish: – a grassroots football department in each region – links with communities	Establish a well-organised grassroots football department within the technical department of the member association.	Employ qualified personnel (e.g. local coordinators, grassroots football manager, etc.)
Participation	Launch pilot programme in primary schools	Develop grassroots football activities in primary schools	Introduce 4-, 5-, 7- and 9-a-side football competitions	Introduce futsal and beach soccer Promote community football
Coach-educators	FIFA grassroots football training courses for teachers and young coach-educators	Develop more training courses for different groups	Increase access to coach-educator training (parents, teachers, etc.)	Increase the number of training courses for coach-educators
Activities	Launch the grassroots programme Tournaments and festivals	Develop joint tournaments and festivals for primary schools in the region	Establish a national tournament for primary schools for different age groups as well as national festivals.	Introduce other tournaments and festivals (futsal, beach soccer)
Equipment	Use existing material and equipment	Improve existing material and equipment Establish links with the government	Broaden the range of existing equipment and provide new equipment	Improve existing material and equipment

If grassroots football is not encouraged, football at the highest level will suffer.

Examples of grassroots development plans

OBJECTIVE: To increase participation and educate school teachers

Action	Tactics	Strategic Partner/Responsibility	Target	Outcome/Output
In-school session AIM: create playing opportunities for school children from 6-12 years old	Football coaches and P.E. teachers to attend school and deliver grassroots activities (tournaments & festivals)	– Ministry of Youth & Sport/Transport – Ministry of Education/ playing facilities – Member association/ technical expertise	2 schools per month per region	OUTCOME: creates relationship with schools OUTPUT: promotion of grassroots activities
Inter-schools activities	5-a-side & 7-a-side football tournament	– Ministry of Youth & Sport/Transport – Ministry of Education/ availability of P.E. teachers – Member association/ supervision and monitoring	All schools 2 teams per school	OUTCOME: establishes regular grassroots activities OUTPUT: 10-15 children from each school participating in the tournament
Education of teachers	Grassroots coaching courses	– FIFA Development Department/ Confederation/ teaching and training materials – Member association's technical department/ coach education	25-30 school teachers per course	OUTCOME: develops new coach-educators OUTPUT: sustainability of the programme

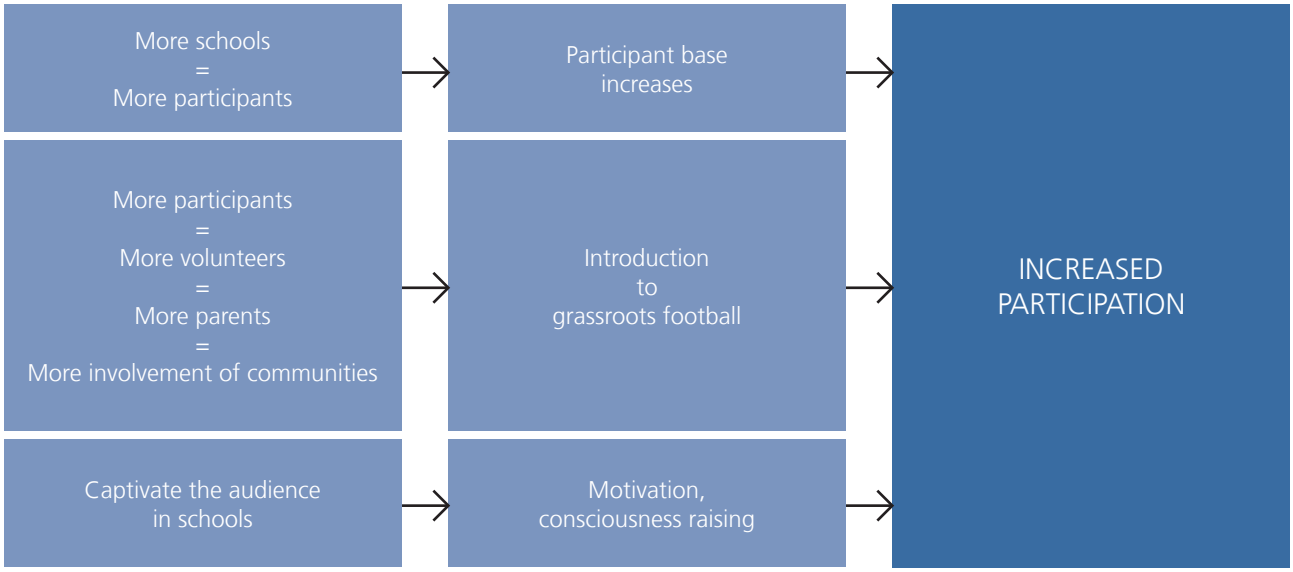
KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS: the number of children participating during the year/the number of teachers following the coaching programme

OBJECTIVE: To ensure that all primary schools pupils, boys and girls, have the opportunity to enjoy quality grassroots sessions during school hours. To provide a healthy lifestyle and physical activity through mini-football/small-sided games/futsal

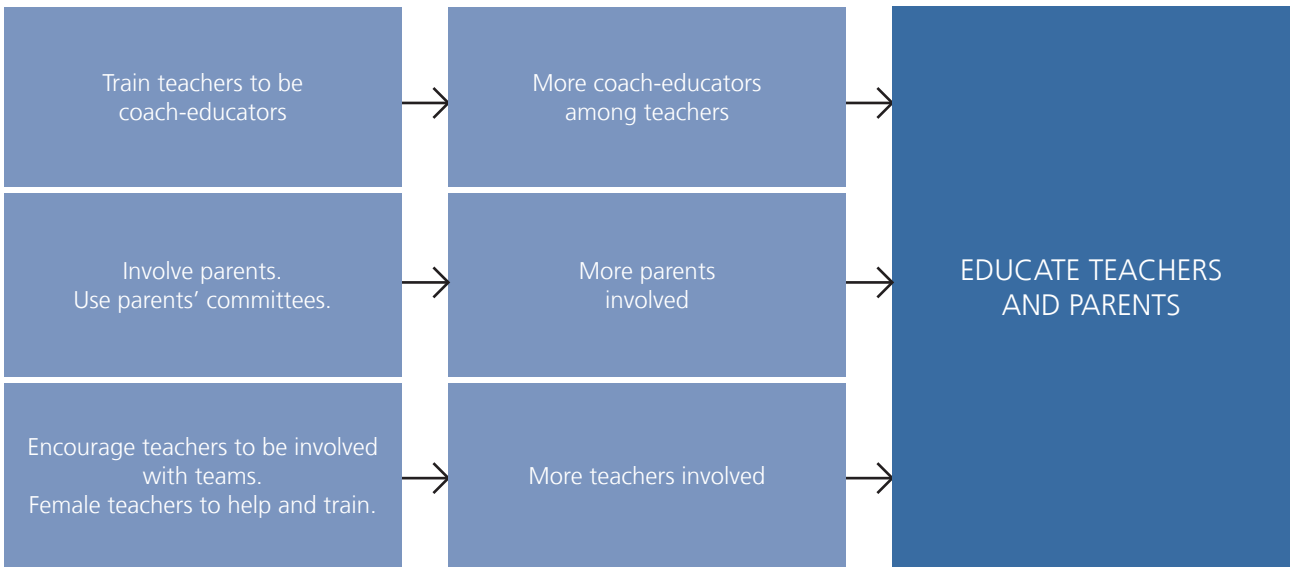
Action	Tactics	Strategic partner/responsibility	Target	Outcome/output
Increase communication with primary schools through an MOU between the association and the Ministry of Education	The technical department to link and raise the profile of schools' football Provide information about the social, educational as well as the healthy benefits of sports and in particular football	– Ministry of Education/ head of PE – PE staff – Football association/ technical department – Youth coaches	All primary schools	OUTCOME: creates links with schools and teachers as well as parents OUTPUT: promotion of grassroots and football in general as a social, educational and healthy activity
Increase the number of mini pitches and other outdoor and indoor facilities for mini-soccer games and futsal	Lunchtime: mini-soccer Futsal Grassroots tournaments Grassroots festivals	– Ministry of Youth & Sport/ sports policy – Ministry of Education/ Sport curriculum – Local government/ development and maintenance of sports facilities	All primary schools	OUTCOME: establishes regular grassroots activities OUTPUT: maximise participation and adequate activities for both boys and girls
Increase health awareness among students Support reduction of childhood obesity	To work with health officers To run health promotion session	– Ministry of Health/ health awareness campaign – Health officers/healthy lifestyles	Football to be included in the curriculum for both boys and girls	OUTCOME: increases health awareness for both children and parents OUTPUT: fight against obesity and related diseases like diabetes

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS: the number of children participating during the year/the number of schools involved in the programme

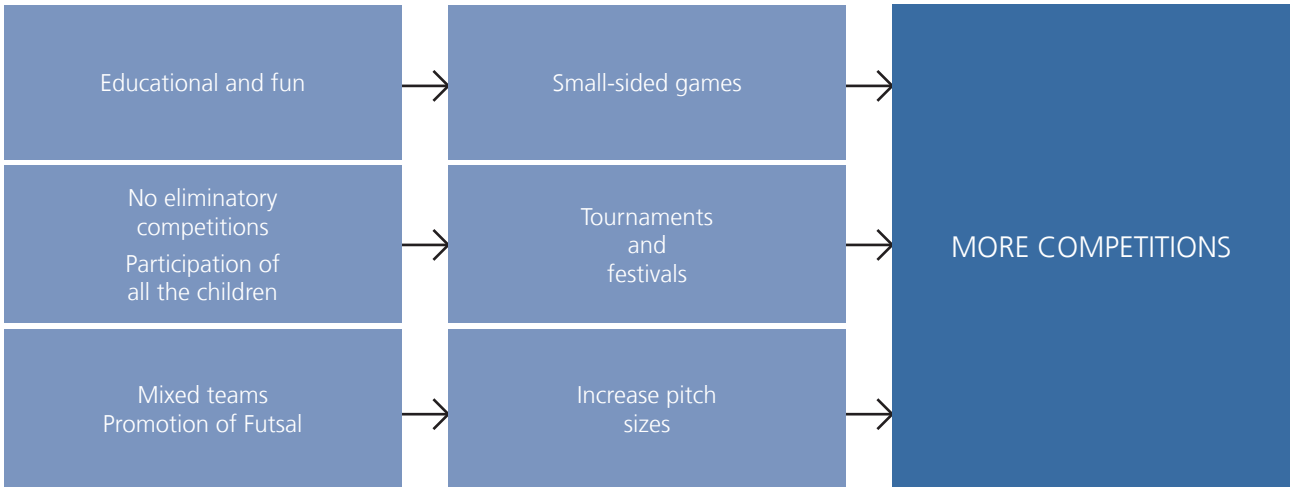
School football



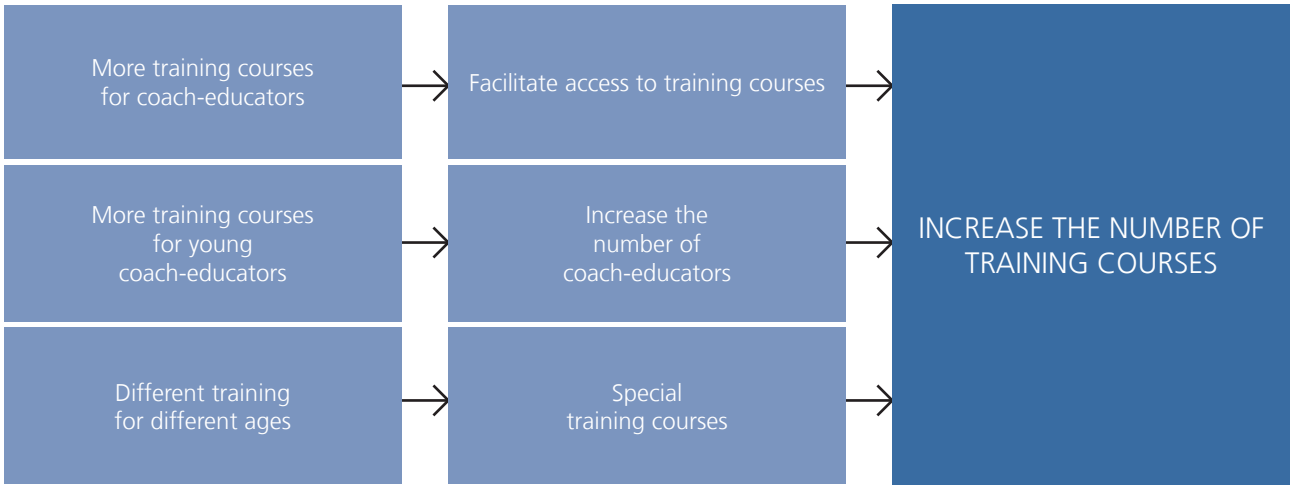
Create partnerships



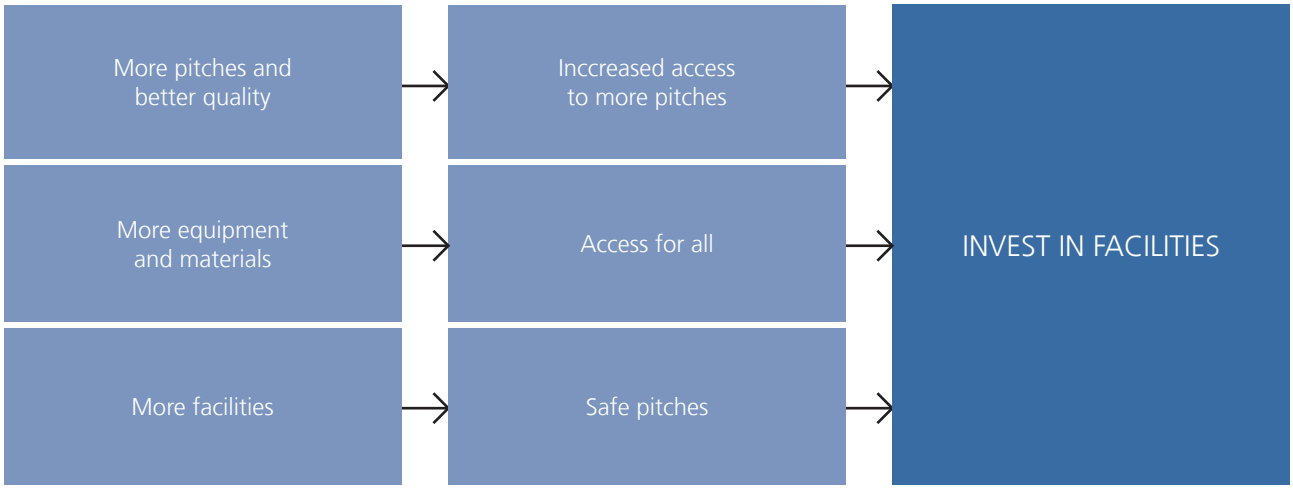
Competition formats



Coach-educators



Training and match facilities



Recommendations

The main recommendations for the successful promotion of a grassroots football programme are as follows:

- Football must be accessible to all, without discrimination on the basis of gender, race or social status. Anyone who wants to play football must know that it is possible to do so through their school or community, using the facilities available in the country.
- Trained coach-educators must ensure that the required standards of discipline and behaviour are observed by all. An appropriate psychological approach is needed for the successful development of young people, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- All children are entitled to education and health services, irrespective of their family's background and educational history. These are essential considerations that must be taken into account. Young players must be asked about their progress at school, their healthcare arrangements and the involvement of their parents in their everyday life.
- The development of relationships between children from different cultural, religious and geographical backgrounds must be encouraged in order to reduce the differences between them and increase respect on and off the pitch. The attitude must always be to emphasise fair play when faced with difficult situations on the pitch, when assessing victories and defeats and in order to give a positive slant on, and draw lessons from, all circumstances.

Marketing and sponsorships

As a grassroots coach-educator, you usually have to perform various roles, not just coaching. Sometimes you have to develop functions as drivers, water boys and equipment monitor. In the same way, a coach-educator must have management skills in order raise funds for the grassroots programme. Therefore, some basic knowledge of marketing and sponsorship could be useful to guarantee the sustainability of a programme.

There are some interesting opportunities to make your grassroots programme self-maintainable. Some are simple strategies, such as asking local shop owners to donate football balls, but there are more complex actions such as proposing corporate sponsorship as the primary source of financing. Generally speaking, sports events and programmes offer companies endless opportunities to introduce, showcase, differentiate and move products, to reward staff, to entertain current and/or potential clients, to increase media and public exposure, to enhance or change an image, to improve employee morale, and to reach new market segments and distribution channels.

The first step in securing a sponsor is deciding what your grassroots programme has to offer to a company. What benefits can you bring to the table to make your programme look attractive? An example of potential benefits are: name and/or logo included in press releases, registration packets, promotional fliers, web sites, banners, volunteer and staff uniforms, booth space for product displays, market research opportunities, access to mailing lists, etc. Be sure that you can deliver on all proposed benefits.

The next step is to make contact with or identify the correct person at each potential company. You must then efficiently show the company how your opportunity will deliver a performance boost in the sponsorship proposal. It is always a good idea to consider offering the company a discounted fee for signing a long-term agreement and to consider a VIK (value-in-kind) arrangement in which goods or services (e.g. drinks, T-shirts, equipment, marketing) are provided in exchange for sponsorship benefits.

Finally, the most important consideration to remember is that the easiest way to recruit a sponsor is to re-sign an existing one. This will mean that you need to service your sponsors and treat them like your most precious asset. To produce a good programme portfolio, make sure you take photos of the steps taken and keep press releases and documents related to the programme. A good report can guarantee the renovation of the sponsorship. The more they feel as if they have a stake in your grassroots programme, and the more benefits they receive, the more likely they will continue to support your programme.

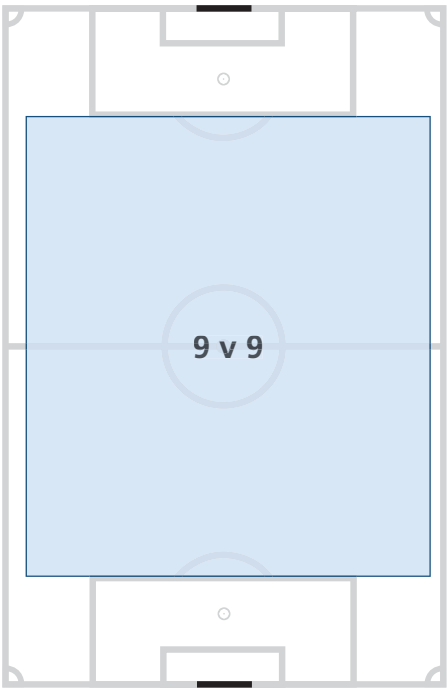
FIFA
For the Game. For the World.
MY GAME IS FAIR PLAY

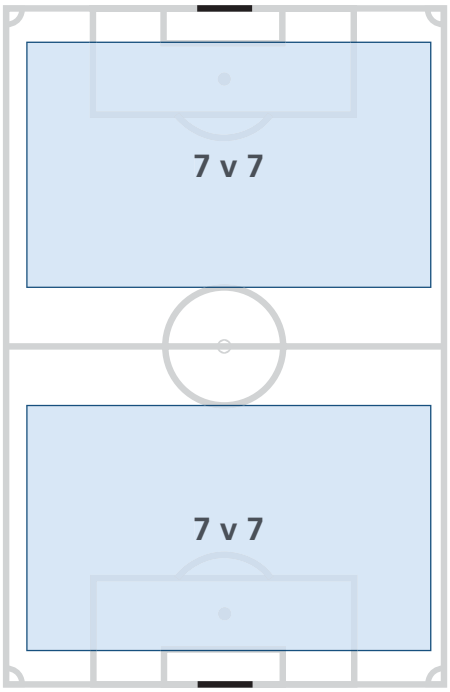
Annexes

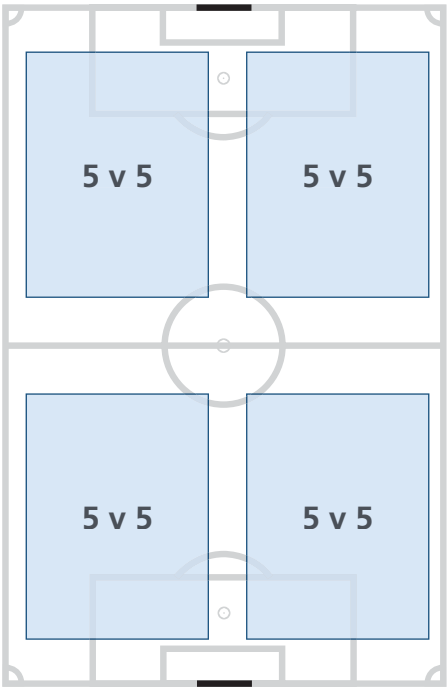
Annexe A.
Laws of the Game and regulations for small-sided games

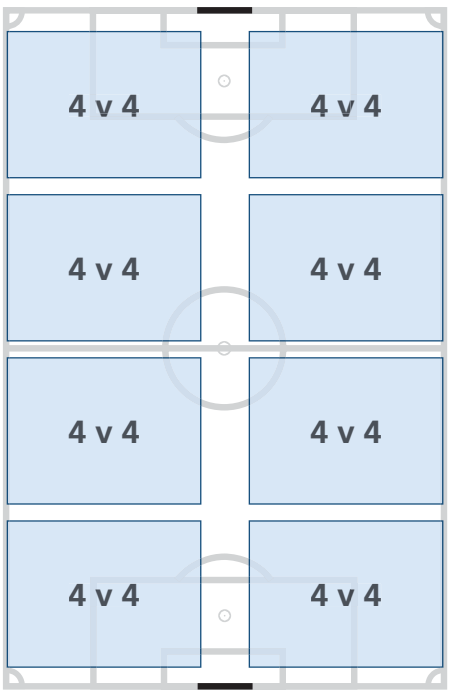
Dimensions of the pitch – football matches

4 v 4	Minimum: 12 m x 20 m	Maximum: 15 m x 25 m
5 v 5	Minimum: 20 m x 30 m	Maximum: 25 m x 35 m
7 v 7	Minimum: 30 m x 45 m	Maximum: 35 m x 50 m
9 v 9	Minimum: 45 m x 60 m	Maximum: 50 m x 67 m









Match formats

Match format depending on age	*Pitch size*
6-8 years old	
4 v 4 without goalkeeper (4 v 4)	From 12 m x 20 m to 15 m x 25 m
4 v 4 with goalkeeper (3+1 v 3+1)	From 12 m x 20 m to 15 m x 25 m
5 v 5	From 20 m x 30 m to 25 m x 35 m
9-10 years old	
4 v 4 without goalkeeper (4 v 4)	From 12 m x 20 m to 15 m x 25 m
4 v 4 with goalkeeper (3+1 v 3+1)	From 12 m x 20 m to 15 m x 25 m
5 v 5	From 20 m x 30 m to 25 m x 35 m
7 v 7	From 30 m x 45 m to 35 m x 50 m
11-12 years old	
4 v 4 without goalkeeper (4 v 4)	From 12 m x 20 m to 15 m x 25 m
4 v 4 with goalkeeper (3+1 v 3+1)	From 12 m x 20 m to 15 m x 25 m
5 v 5	From 20 m x 30 m to 25 m x 35 m
7 v 7	From 30 m x 45 m to 35 m x 50 m
9 v 9	From 45 m x 60 m to 50 m x 67 m

Duration of matches in a tournament

This depends on the format of the activity and the time available. The total time of play (in other words of all the matches played by a team) must be roughly equal to a full match.

6-8 years old	**9-10 years old**	**11-12 years old**
2 x 15 / 20 min.	2 x 20 / 25 min.	2 x 25 / 30 min.

Equipment

Goals: Maximum dimension: 5 m x 2 m. Cones and poles can be used if no proper goals are available. Futsal goals can also be used (3 m x 2 m).
Goals (large, heavy goals) must be properly secured so that they are safe and cannot be moved by players or supporters.

Footballs: Size 4

The lines are marked out depending on the equipment available (5 v 5, 7 v 7, 9 v 9). A halfway line is required for 4 v 4 but there is no penalty area.

4- and 5-a-side football

There are different options depending on whether a goalkeeper is used or not:

4 v 4 without goalkeeper or goal (keeping the ball, passing game, stop line)

4 v 4 without goalkeeper, small goals (2 or 4)

3 v 3 with goalkeeper

4 v 4 with goalkeeper

The five benefits of 4- and 5-a-side football

- The children discover football through the variety of games offered.
- Opportunity for both boys and girls to play in considerable numbers.
- Festival atmosphere (festivals, training sessions, activities, parties).
- Helps with the development of the children's intellectual, emotional and motor skills.
- The priority is on play rather than winning.

Five principles to emphasise during practice

- Make sure all activities are games.
- Do not allow any form of competition or classification.
- Make sure all the children play and enjoy themselves without restriction.
- Organise and prepare sessions and festivals.
- Offer high-quality supervision (the importance of the human touch).

4-a-side football

The pitch

4 v 4 without goalkeeper from 12 m x 20 m to 15 m x 25 m

4 v 4 with goalkeeper from 12 m x 20 m to 15 m x 25 m

- Four cones or poles, each placed 3 m from the corner along the touchline, can be used to indicate the two penalty areas without marking any lines. The goalkeeper can handle the ball inside this area.
- Penalty spot: 4 metres from the goal.
- If proper goals are not available, use two cones or poles placed 3 m apart.

The teams

- A team is made up of four players (boys and girls) without a goalkeeper. If a team does play with a goalkeeper, there are three outfield players.
- Substitutions can be made at any time during the match.
- Substituted players continue to participate in the match and can return to the pitch as substitutes themselves.
- In festivals, all players must participate on an equal basis.

The Laws of the Game

The following rules of football are used:

- All free kicks are direct.
- No offside.
- A penalty is awarded if the referee considers that a serious foul has been committed inside the penalty area.
- Kick-off, free kicks, corner kicks, goal kicks: opponents must stand back 3 m.
- Football: Size 4.
- Refereeing: informative refereeing (no whistle) from off the pitch.

5-a-side football

The pitch

5 v 5 from 20 m x 30 m to 25 m x 35 m

- Four cones or poles, each placed 4 m from the corner along the touchline, can be used to indicate the two penalty areas without marking any lines. The goalkeeper can handle the ball inside this area.
- Penalty spot: 5 metres from the goal.
- If proper goals are not available, use two cones or poles placed 4 m apart.

The teams

- A team is made up of five players (boys and girls), of which one is the goalkeeper.
- Substitutions can be made at any time during the match.
- Substituted players continue to participate in the match and can return to the pitch as substitutes themselves.
- In festivals, all players must participate on an equal basis.

The Laws of the Game

The following rules of football are used:

- All free kicks are direct.
- No offside.
- A penalty is awarded if the referee considers that a serious foul has been committed inside the penalty area.
- Kick-off, free kicks, corner kicks, goal kicks: opponents must stand back 4 m.

- Corner kicks, goal kicks: opponents must be at least 4 m away when the kick is taken.
- Football: Size 4.
- Refereeing: informative refereeing (no whistle) from off the pitch.

7-a-side football

Seven reasons to play 7-a-side

- Can be adapted to the existing facilities
- Allows a significant number of boys and girls to play
- Facilitates a smooth transition between 5-a-side and 9-a-side football
- It introduces the zones of play and player positions
- Develops team play
- Introduces the rules
- Encourages progress and development

Seven rules to observe during practice

- Make sure all the children play and enjoy themselves.
- Allow a lot of freedom in the play.
- Make light of the results and emphasise the way in which football is played.
- Use relationships (friendships) to create a team spirit.
- Do not allow purely physical training (always use a ball).
- Emphasise techniques and the play aspect.
- Present progressive exercises and adapted games.

The pitch

7 v 7 from 30 m x 45 m to 35 m x 50 m

- Four cones or poles, each placed 10 m from the corner along the touchline, can be used to indicate the two penalty areas without marking any lines. The goalkeeper can handle the ball inside this area.
- Penalty spot: 8 metres from the goal.
- If proper goals are not available, use two cones or poles placed 6 m apart.

The teams

- A team is made up of seven players (boys and girls), of which one is the goalkeeper.
- Substitutions can be made at any time in the match during a stoppage of play, with the approval of the coach-educator.
- Substituted players continue to participate in the match and can return to the pitch as substitutes themselves.
- In festivals, all players must participate on an equal basis.

The Laws of the Game

The following rules of football are used:

- All free kicks are direct.
- A penalty is awarded if the referee considers that a serious foul has been committed inside the penalty area.
- Kick-off, free kicks, corner kicks: opponents must stand back 6 m.
- Offside: determined by an imaginary line passing through the penalty spot.
- Football: Size 4.
- Maximum duration of play: 50 minutes. No extra time.
- Refereeing: informative refereeing (no whistle) from off the pitch.

9-a-side football

Nine reasons to play 9-a-side

- Can be adapted to the existing facilities
- Allows a significant number of boys and girls to play
- Facilitates a smooth transition between 7-a-side and 11-a-side football
- Encourages more rational positioning on the pitch
- Ensures a better balance between the lines of defence, midfield and attack
- Develops the use of the channels
- Emphasises attacking play
- Develops adapted individual and team responses
- Encourages progress and development

The teaching methods bring together training procedures, learning the basic formations and how to behave in matches.

9-a-side football assists learning because of the reduced playing space:

- It increases the opposition and the number of duels compared to 7-a-side.
- It also requires technical manoeuvres to be quicker and more accurate.
- The coach-educator should thus emphasise the acquisition of techniques (control, running with the ball, striking the ball). Controlling the ball with different parts of the body during play is the dominant feature of the training sessions.

The coach-educator can also develop the bases of an organised game through the different formats played.
- Selection of formation and a coherent style of play.
- Players' positions.
- Organisation of a formation (coordinated movements of players, movement of the ball, covering, etc.).

The pitch

9 v 9 from 45 m x 60 m to 50 m x 67 m

- These dimensions (approximately) correspond to half an 11-a-side pitch.
- The goals are 6 x 2 m (approximately).
- The penalty spot is 9 m from the goal.
- The centre circle has a 6 m radius.

The teams

- A team is made up of nine players (boys and girls), of which one is the goalkeeper.
- Substitutions can be made at any time in the match during a stoppage of play, with the approval of the coach-educator.
- Substituted players continue to participate in the match and can return to the pitch as substitutes themselves.
- In festivals, all players must participate on an equal basis.

The Laws of the Game

The following rules of football are used:
- All free kicks are direct.
- A penalty is awarded if the referee considers that a serious foul has been committed inside the penalty area.
- Kick-off, free kicks, corner kicks: opponents must stand back 6 m.
- Offside: identical to 11-a-side, although the offside area is marked out by the goal line, the touchlines and an internal line drawn
- 13 m from the goal line.
- Football: Size 4.
- Maximum duration of play: 60 minutes. No extra time.
- Refereeing: informative refereeing (no whistle) from off the pitch.

Refereeing

- A good conversation with both teams' players and coaches before the match is always welcome. A grassroots referee is also an educator.
- Avoid showing yellow cards in a grassroots match. If there is an act of indiscipline, try first to have a talk to the player or to the coach-educator.
- A red card should never be used. If necessary, ask the coach-educator to substitute the player instead of sending him/her off.

6-8 years old

- No referee (coach-educators at side of pitch – let the children play!)

9-10 years old

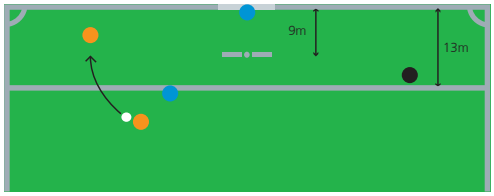
- Refereeing optional (with and without referees)

11-12 years old

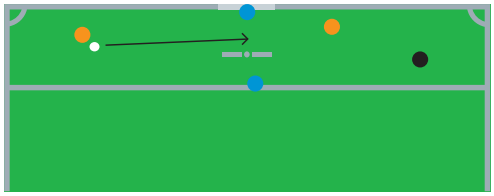
- With referees

7-a-side and 9-a-side football

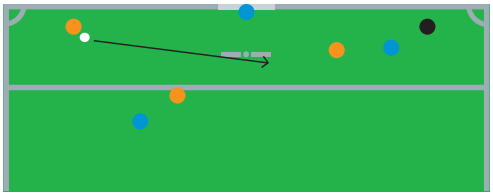
- Offside rule: identical to 11-a-side, although the offside area is marked out by the goal line, the touchlines and an internal line drawn 13 m from the goal line (see diagram).



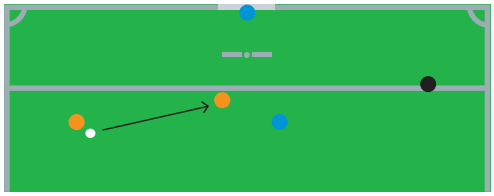
Offside: player in front of the ball in the offside area.



Offside: player in front of the ball in the offside area.



Not offside: player in the offside area, but behind the ball.



Not offside: player in front of the ball, but not in the offside area.

Fair play

- Organise welcome and farewell sessions for all the teams before and after the tournament.
- Players and coach-educators should shake hands before and after each match.

Spectators

- Distance from the edge of the pitch (for safety): 2-3 m.
- No spectators (or parents) in the area reserved for children and coach-educators.

Medical care and treatment

- A first-aid kit should be kept near the pitch if possible.
- Make sure that emergency telephone numbers are to hand: ambulance/doctor/hospital.
- Organise drinks breaks (encourage drinking water often in small quantities). Ideal quantity of water: 200 ml every 15-20 min.
- Players should warm up before a match. All the children should do this together if possible.
- Cooling down after the match (all together as a fair play activity).
- Goals must be properly secured so that they are safe and cannot be moved.

Annexe B.
Basic organisation of 7 v 7 and 9 v 9

Each playing system draws upon the different strengths of the players on the pitch to produce an efficient way of playing. In children's football, the idea of playing systems is not essential, especially at an early age, and we often talk about **game formats** as many other factors come into play, such as the pitch surface, the number of players and the abilities of those players.

In fact, these children do not possess concentration skills, and this age group is characterised by selfishness.

Therefore, the main rule in grassroots football is about using a good method that will give children a sense of freedom to encourage their creativity and their discovery of different positions in the game.

At this age level, the idea of playing systems is not important at all, and the players' activity can be summed up as avoiding chasing the ball in swarms.

It is possible to improve the organisation of a game by increasing the number of players, using only players who are capable of managing the spaces available and understanding both attacking and defensive play, tactical situations in a match.

Basic formations (7-a-side)

The success of 7-a-side football depends, in addition to technical abilities, on establishing a simple formation understood by all the players.

The coach-educator develops the bases of an organised game through the different formats played:

- Selection of formation and a coherent style of play
- Players' positions
- Organisation of the formation

1-3-3

1-3-1-2

Behaviour in matches

There are two situations in a match that require different behaviour.

Team in possession of the ball	Team does not have possession of the ball
• Move forward • Lose markers • Support/backup • Passes, dribbling, shots	• Fall back while facing the ball • Covering (slow down the opponents' progress) • Marking • Interceptions • Duels

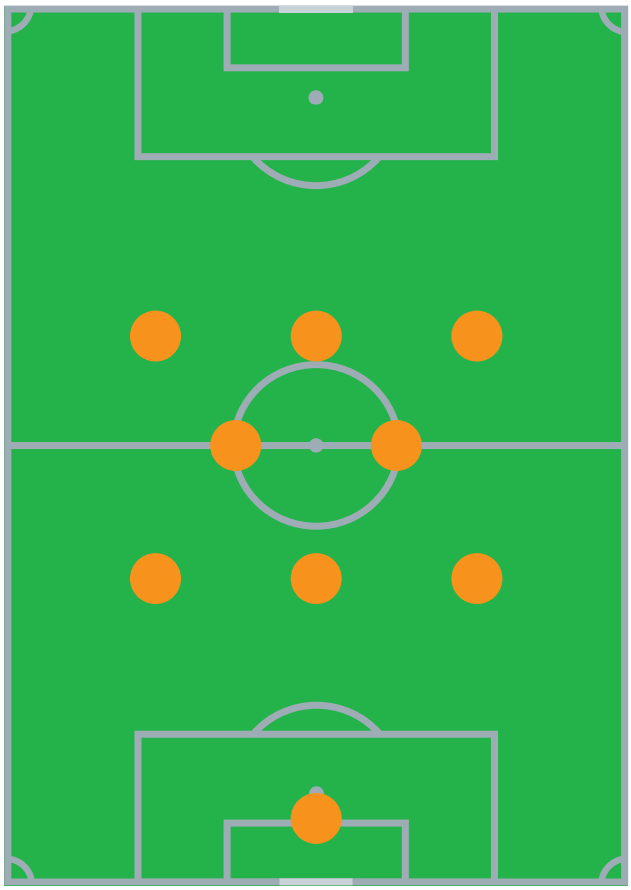
Basic formations (9-a-side)

The success of 9-a-side football depends on establishing a simple formation understood by all the players (see example below).

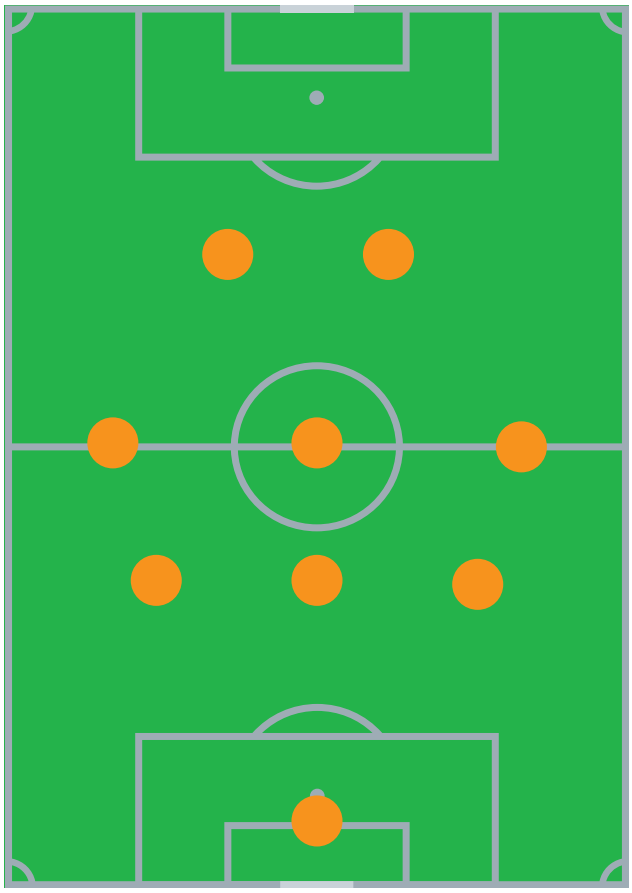
Features:

– Formation in three lines: balance, better occupation of the pitch
– Play through the channels (wingers and defenders for 1-3-2-3/midfielders and defenders for 1-3-3-2)
– Development of attacking play (more shots)

1-3-2-3



1-3-3-2



Annexe C. FIFA Fair Play Code

Fair Play Code

The FIFA Fair Play Code for football encapsulates all of the sporting, moral and ethical principles for which FIFA has always stood and for which it will continue to fight in the future, regardless of the influences and pressures that may be brought to bear.

The ten golden rules not only serve as a credo for FIFA as world football's governing body, but they also reinforce the sense of fraternity and cooperation among the members of the worldwide football family.

1. Play fair

Winning is without value if victory has been achieved unfairly or dishonestly. Cheating is easy, but brings no pleasure. Playing fair requires courage and character. It is also more satisfying. Fair play always has its reward, even when the game is lost. Playing fair earns respect, while cheating only brings shame. Remember: it is only a game. And games are pointless unless played fairly.

2. Play to win but accept defeat with dignity

Winning is the object of playing any game. Never set out to lose. If you do not play to win, you are cheating your opponents, deceiving those who are watching, and also fooling yourself. Never give up against stronger opponents but never relent against weaker ones. It is an insult to any opponent to play at less than full strength. Play to win, until the final whistle. But remember nobody wins all the time. You win some, you lose some. Learn to lose graciously. Do not seek excuses for defeat. Genuine reasons will always be self-evident. Congratulate the winners with good grace. Do not blame the referee or anyone else. Be determined to do better next time. Good losers earn more respect than bad winners.

3. Observe the Laws of the Game

All games need rules to guide them. Without rules, there would be chaos. The rules of football are simple and easy to learn. Make sure you learn them; it will help you to understand the game better. Understanding the game better will make you a better player. It is equally important to understand the spirit of the rules. They are designed to make the game fun to play and fun to watch. By sticking to the rules, the game will be more enjoyable.

4. Respect opponents, team-mates, referees, officials and spectators

Fair Play means respect. Respect is part of our game. Without opponents there can be no game. Everyone has the same rights, including the right to be respected. Team-mates are colleagues. Form a team in which all members are equal. Referees are there to maintain discipline and Fair Play. Always accept their decisions without arguing, and help them to enable all participants to have a more enjoyable game. Officials are also part of the game and must be respected accordingly. Spectators give the game atmosphere. They want to see the game played fairly, but must also behave fairly and with respect themselves.

5. Promote the interests of football

Football is the world's greatest game. But it always needs everybody's help to maintain its greatness. Think of football's interests before your own. Think how your actions may affect the image of the game. Talk about the positive things in the game. Encourage other people to watch and play fairly. Help others to have as much fun from football as you do. Be an ambassador for the game.

6. Honour those who defend football's good reputation

The good name of football has survived because the vast majority of people who love the game are honest and fair. Sometimes somebody does something exceptional that deserves our special recognition. They should be honoured and their fine example publicised. This encourages others to act in the same way. Help to promote football's image by publicising its good deeds.

7. Reject corruption, drugs, racism, violence, gambling and other dangers to our sport

Football's huge popularity sometimes makes it vulnerable to negative outside interests. Watch out for attempts to tempt you into cheating or using drugs. Drugs have no place in football, in any other sport or in society as a whole. Say no to drugs. Help to kick racism and bigotry out of football. Treat all players and everyone else equally, regardless of their religion, race, sex or national origin. Show zero tolerance for gambling on games in which you participate. It negatively affects your ability to perform and creates the appearance of a conflict of interests. Show that football does not want

violence, even from your own fans. Football is sport, and sport is peace.

8. Help others to resist corrupting pressures
You may hear that team-mates or other people you know are being tempted to cheat in some way or otherwise engage in behaviour deemed unacceptable. They need your help. Do not hesitate to stand by them. Give them the strength to resist. Remind them of their commitment to their team-mates and to the game itself. Form a block of solidarity, like a solid defence on the field of play.

9. Denounce those who attempt to discredit our sport
Do not be ashamed to stand up to anybody who you are sure is trying to make others cheat or engage in other unacceptable behaviour. It is better to expose them and have them removed before they can do any damage. It is equally dishonest to go along with a dishonest act. Do not just say no. Denounce those misguided persons who are trying to spoil our sport before they can persuade somebody else to say yes.

10. Use football to make a better world
Football has an incredible power, which can be used to make this world a better place in which everyone can live. Use this powerful platform to promote peace, equality, health and education for everyone. Make the game better, take it to the world, and you will be fostering a better world.

Handshake before and after the match

In 2003, the FIFA Executive Committee approved an addition to FIFA's fair play strategy and pledged to encourage greater efforts to boost fair play within the game.
A crucial part of this pledge was the decision to introduce handshakes not only before kick-off but also at the end of each match. The executive resolved to incorporate this gesture at all FIFA final tournaments with immediate effect.

The objectives of the post-match handshake are:
- to provide an appropriate and dignified end to the match, thus bringing the match full circle – opening procedure/ closing procedure;
- to guarantee an "official" end to the proceedings through a gesture that shows mutual respect and one that is in the true spirit of the game;
- to have the possibility of teams and match officials leaving the pitch more or less "together";
- to ensure players send a correct signal to the fans: "Despite a hard battle, emotions, disappointment or frustration, look, we are still friends, We are thanking our opponents and the match officials for a good game and have accepted the result. So, stay calm, and remember that no matter what is at stake in a match, it is ultimately only a game to be contested in accordance with the Laws of the Game and not to be dwelled upon once it reaches its conclusion and we leave the pitch";
- to ensure that this two-minute procedure has the side effect of "cooling" heated tempers prior to television interviews, which take place immediately after the end of the match.

The procedure for the post-match handshake:
- The referee blows the final whistle.
- The match officials meet in the centre circle.
- They signal for the teams to join them in the centre circle.
- The captains of the two teams are responsible for ensuring that each player comes and lines up behind their team captain.
- The two captains begin the handshake procedure, with the teams following as in the procedure before the match. The players do not have to be in a set position in the line-up. Each player should also shake hands with the match officials.
- After the handshakes, the players wave to the fans and leave the pitch together with the match officials.

This procedure is being implemented at all FIFA final tournaments and, at the same time, all member associations and confederations have been encouraged to introduce this gesture at national and confederation level.

The protection of children
As before, a policy to ensure the protection of children must form the basis of all grassroots football initiatives promoted by member associations. This policy must clearly define child protection, what is acceptable to the member association and what is not, the procedure for complaints and claims and the role of the association. It should also be noted that the child protection programme can be a useful tool for developing relations with other partners, such as the government and certain sponsors.
As the circumstances are different in every country, these guidelines should be adapted to the particular situation of the member ANNEXE C. FIFA Fair Play Code

Annexe D. Case study

MAURITIUS

Grassroots pilot programme in Mauritius 2009-2011/2012-2015

Introduction to the case study

On 4 May 2009, a FIFA Grassroots pilot programme was launched in Mauritius. The programme, which aimed to increase the participation of both young boys and girls in grassroots football, undoubtedly represented an ideal solution to implement football activities in the existing 303 primary schools around the island, including the 15 schools in Rodrigues.

Sports activities in general were almost non-existent in the curriculum of primary schools, and much emphasis was placed on academic improvement. Mauritius also has one of the highest rate of diabetes and non-communicable diseases. As such, a lack of sports activities and sports culture from childhood is one of the main causes cited by the health authorities.

The strategic approach during the 2009-2011 period was to implement an attractive inter-primary schools football tournament and use different steps to disseminate the health as well as the educational, social and cultural values of sports in general and football, in particular to all kids joining the programme.

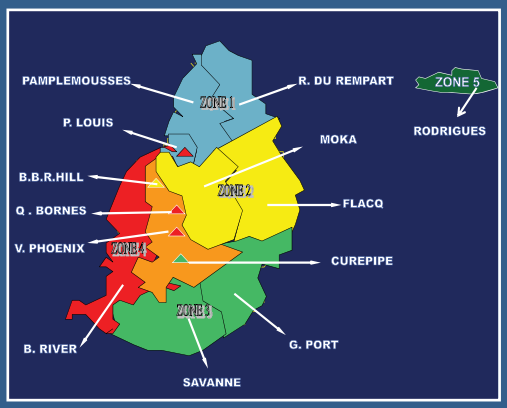
In 2012, the programme evolved into an agreed and recognised sports activity for all primary schools. As from 2012 onwards, grassroots festivals will be organised in primary schools around the island and the number of children who will take part in this complementary activity is estimated to be around 50,000 in the four years to come. This has been made possible through a partnership approach between the Mauritius Football Association, the Ministry of Youth and Sport, the Ministry of Education and Human Resources and the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life. The two main sponsors, Coca-Cola and Allsports Limited, are also fully involved in the process.

The study highlights the main steps towards full implementation of the programme (2009-2011) as well as the long-term grassroots development plan 2012-2015.

Country profile

- Location: Southeast Africa (500 miles east of Madagascar)
- Official name: Republic of Mauritius
- Capital: Port Louis
- Area: 2,000 sq km (770 sq miles)
- Population: 1,240,827
- Female: 629,114 / Male: 611,713
- Age structure: 0-14: 24.4%
  15-64: 69.1%
- Primary education completion rate: 97%

5 education zones & 13 sports regions



The educational system

The Mauritian education system is largely based on the British model and has evolved from a private one to a publicly funded one. Children enter primary schools at the age of 5, where they study for six years. The education system bears the influence of a long tradition of being an elitist system with a culture of fierce competition and high expectation, both at primary and secondary levels.

Among the 303 primary schools, there are 49 grant-aided Roman Catholic schools (RCA) and also 26 private primary schools. The remaining 228 schools are all government or public schools.

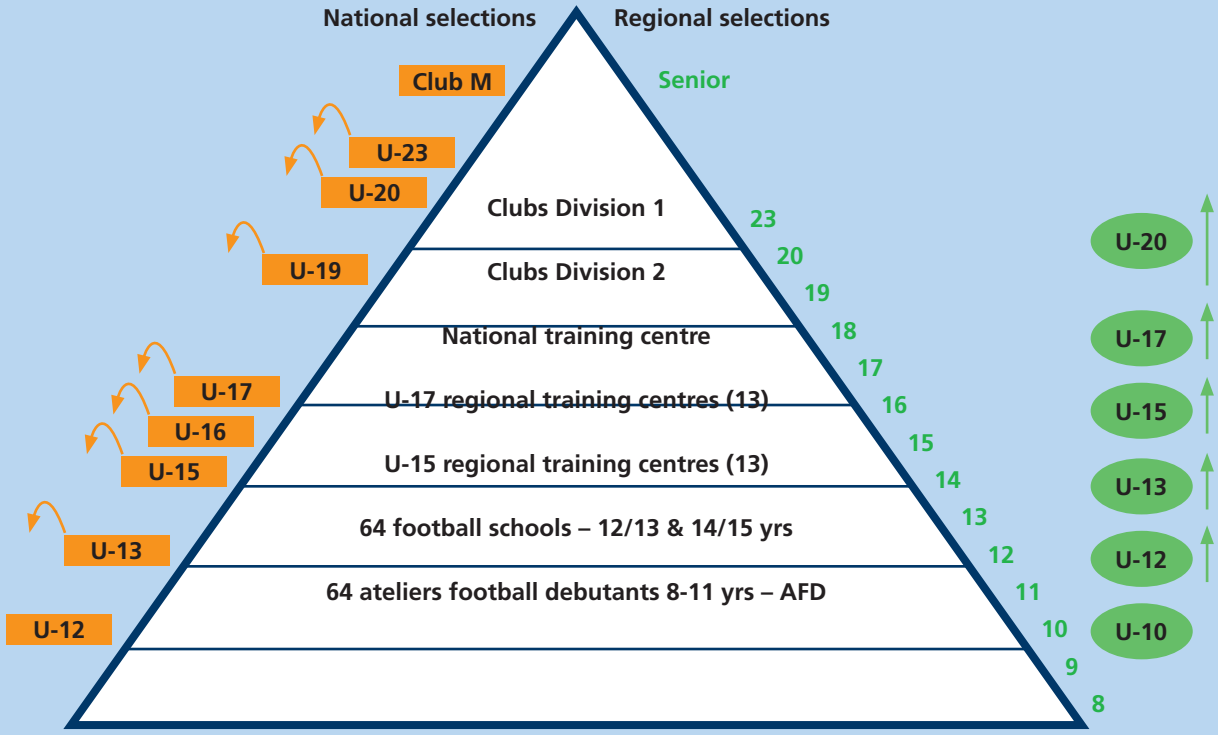
Liste of primary schools per educational zones & sports regions

Educational zones	Sports regions	Govt. schools (GS)	R. Catholic schools (RCA)	Private schools (PS)	Total
Zone 1	1. Port Louis 2. Pamplemousse 3. Riv. Rempart	28 23 22	7 NIL 3	NIL 5 3	**35** **28** **28**
		73	*10*	*8*	***91***
Zone 2	4. Flacq 5. Moka 6. B.B / R. Hill	29 18 12	8 4 4	NIL 3 2	**37** **25** **18**
		59	*16*	*5*	***80***
Zone 3	7. Savanne 8. Grand Port 9. Curepipe	14 24 12	3 5 4	NIL NIL 4	**17** **29** **20**
		50	*12*	*4*	***66***
Zone 4	10. Q. Bornes 11. Vac. Phoenix 12. Riv. Noire	11 14 11	1 2 3	5 3 1	**17** **19** **15**
		36	*6*	*9*	***51***
Zone 5		*10*	*5*	*NIL*	***15***
Total		**228**	**49**	**26**	**303**

The practice of football

Since 1990, football technical development plans have been implemented and regional youth training structures for U-13, U-15 and U-17 have been laid down progressively. From the age of 16, selected players join the National Training Centre, where they undergo training five times a week. The other, younger national squads are gathered during weekends and school holidays.

Youth football is organised through the 13 sports regions, and training facilities exist all around the island. Coach education has also been an ongoing process since 1990.



At the base of the pyramid: "64 Football schools for football debutants – AFD" for approximately 1,500 children between the ages of 8 and 11.

Football structure in Mauritius 1990-2008
Situational analysis

"If grassroots football is not encouraged, football at the highest level will suffer."

Although youth training structures have been laid down since 1990, it was difficult to scout young talented players at an early age as no organised football existed in primary schools. On the other hand, the 1st Division clubs do not have a youth training policy and could not afford to set up training centres at club level. The creation of 64 AFDs by the Ministry of Youth & Sport could only accommodate around 1,500 players out of a potential 30,000 (100 per primary school). As the football foundation is limited, future success is almost impossible.

Analysis of needs

- Development of grassroots football and increase participation for both boys and girls
- Organisation of football activities (tournaments, festivals) for primary schools pupils
- Training material and football equipment (balls, mini-goals, bibs, cones and markers, etc.)
- Coach-educators specialised in grassroots football
- Involvement of teachers, parents and volunteers in grassroots activities
- Sponsorships
- Grassroots structure in the technical department
- Decentralised grassroots structure in the sports regions

Stages of implementation

- Consultation, seminars, meetings with all stakeholders
- Set up a steering committee and prepare a draft programme
- Preparation and presentation of a development plan by the technical department
- Submission of a final plan by the member association to FIFA
- Approval by FIFA Education and Technical Development Department
- Launch a grassroots programme
- Implement the medium-term development plan
- Monitoring and adaptation

The medium-term grassroots development plan 2009-2011

	2009	2010	2011	Objectives
Programme	Launch of FIFA Grassroots pilot programme	FIFA Grassroots phase 2	FIFA Grassroots phase 3	Introducing Grassroots for primary schools
Categories of football tournament	10/11yrs	8/9 yrs-boys 10/11 yrs-boys	8/9 yrs-boys 10/11 yrs-boys 12 yrs-boys 7/12 yrs-girls	Increasing participation of boys and girls
Participation of primary schools	276/298	287/300	262/302	From 1 to 4 age groups per school
MCB football academy	50 girls	Pilot programme for girls in schools	100 girls of MCB FA	Giving opportunity to kids from poverty to participate
Number of participants	3,312	6,060	8,564	Expected: 9,600 kids

Objectives:

- Development through three phases of an inter-primary schools football tournament
- Promotion of the grassroots philosophy
- Promotion of small-sided games: 5 v 5 & 7 v 7 competition format
- Increase participation progressively by the involvement of different age groups for both boys & girls
- Educate health & PE teachers and youth coaches
- Encourage parents and volunteers to get involved
- Set up a legitimate grassroots structure within the technical department
- Scouting of young talented players, both boys and girls

The FIFA Grassroots pilot programme came at the right moment and its outcome has been quite positive. From nearly 1,500 boys in the 64 AFDs, the number of children participating in the grassroots football tournament has increased to 8,564 in only three years, resulting in a wider football foundation. In all, 17,986 primary pupils have taken part in the three editions of the football tournament.

Participation per age group: 2009-2011

Age group	2009	2010	2011	Total
Boys – 8/9 yrs	NIL	2,556	2,390	4,946
Boys – 10/11 yrs	3,312	3,444	3,144	9,900
Boys – 12 yrs	NIL	NIL	1,490	1,490
Girls – 9/12 yrs	50	60	1,540	1,650
Total	**3,362**	**6,060**	**8,564**	**17,986**

The inter-primary schools football tournament

The inter-primary schools (5-a-side & 7-a-side) football tournament is organised from the end of April to the end of June each year and each school can be represented by 44 pupils (four teams in four different age categories).

The outcome of the medium-term plan (2009-2011)

FIFA Grassroots pilot programme	2009	2010	2011
Participating schools	276	287	292
Categories	10/11 yrs-boys	8/9 & 10/11 yrs-boys	8/9 & 10/11 yrs-boys 9/12 yrs-girls
Teams	276	574	804
Matches	838	1,696	2,241
Participants	3,312 (50 girls) Rodrigues: 12	6,060 (60 girls) Rodrigues: 12	8,564 (1,540 girls) Rodrigues: 38
Coach-educators	NIL	61 H & PE Rodrigues: 25	32 H & PE & coaches

The long-term grassroots development plan 2012-2015

The inter-primary schools football tournament has been successfully implemented for the four age groups and there is still room for increasing participation to up to 12,080 if all schools are represented in the four categories. Girls' participation can also rise up if schools are represented by two teams: 8/9 & 10/12 years, boosting the total to 15,100 boys and girls by 2013. As only 44 pupils per school can take part in the tournament, there is a need to find other ways to reach the larger school population.

Organising a "grassroots festival" in schools is a complementary activity that needs to be carried out on a long-term basis. The objective is to offer equal playing opportunities for the school population between the ages of 8 and 12, for both boys and girls. The target is to boost participation to an average of 200 children per school.

Pilot programme "in schools grassroots festivals"

To study the feasibility of this programme, four grassroots festivals have been organised in four different schools. The objective is:

1. To promote grassroots football as a social, educational and healthy activity
2. To create links with schools, teachers and parents
3. To maximise participation for both boys and girls

The outcome of the pilot phase (2010-2011) is that it captivated the audience in schools, encouraged teachers and parents to get involved, increased motivation and raised awareness about the benefits of the programme. The Ministry of Education and Human Resources agreed to the implementation of grassroots festivals in schools as from 2012 with 64 selected primary schools:

- 36 public schools
- 20 Roman Catholic schools
- 8 private schools

The **"long-term grassroots development plan 2012-2015"** is targeting 256 schools by 2015 with an average participation of around 200 pupils per school. The expected number of children participating in this programme will be around 50,000.

	2012	2013	2014	2015
Programme	FIFA Grassroots phase 4	FIFA Grassroots phase 5	FIFA Grassroots phase 6	FIFA Grassroots phase 7
Categories	Boys 8/9 yrs 10/11 & 12 yrs Girls 10/12 yrs	Boys 8/9 yrs 10/11 & 12 yrs Girls 8/9 & 10/12 yrs	Boys 8/9 yrs 10/11 & 12 yrs Girls 8/9 & 10/12 yrs	Boys 8/9 yrs 10/11 & 12 yrs Girls 8/9 & 10/12 yrs
Tournaments (maximum)	12,080	15,100	15,100	15,100
Primary schools	302	302	302	302
Competition format – 5-a-side – 7-a-side	8/9 yrs boys and girls 10/11 & 12 yrs	8/9 yrs boys and girls 10/11 & 12 yrs	8/9 yrs boys and girls 10/11 & 12 yrs	8/9 yrs boys and girls 10/11 & 12 yrs
– In schools festivals	64 schools (6,400-12,800)	128 schools (12,800-25,600)	192 schools (19,200-38,400)	256 schools (25,600-51,200)

Sustainability of the programme

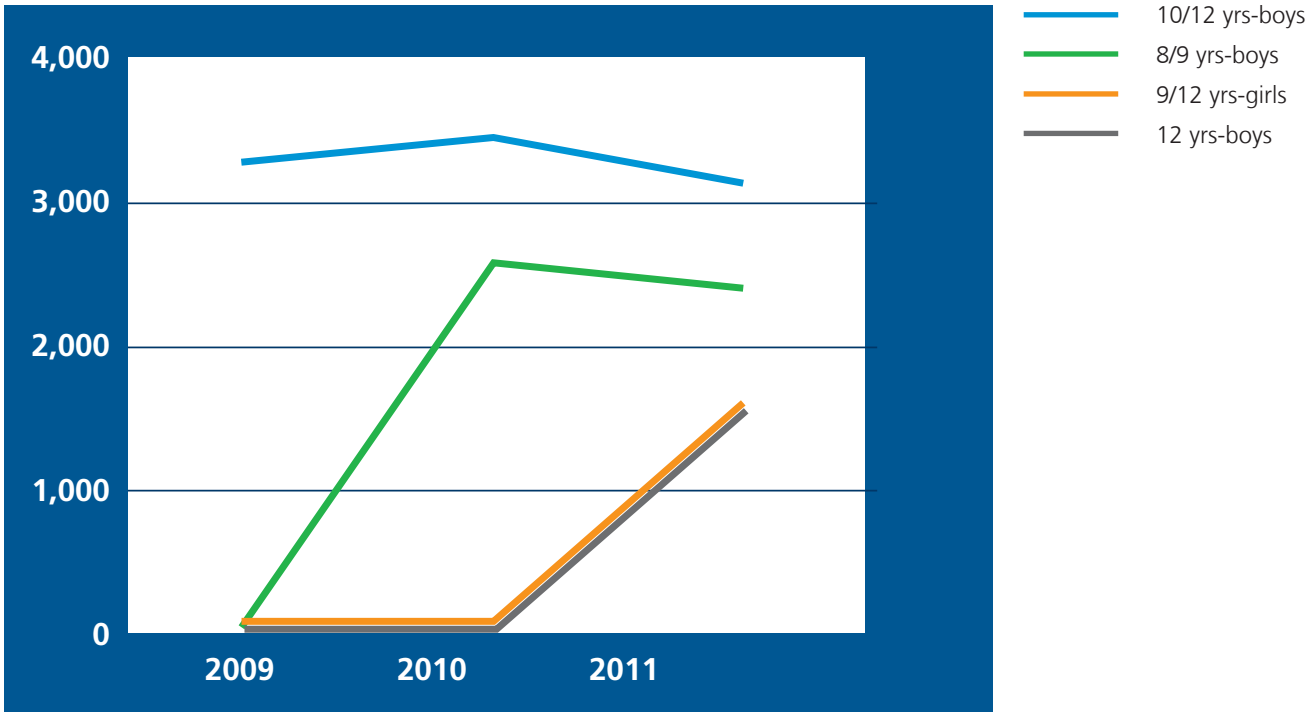
The sustainability of the programme depends on many factors:

- Legitimate grassroots structure within the technical department
- MoU between the strategic partners
- Continuous support from FIFA, the government, the MA and the sponsors
- Stability of the MA
- Proper monitoring and adaptation in the long-term
- Adequate follow-up of emerging talents as a by-product of grassroots

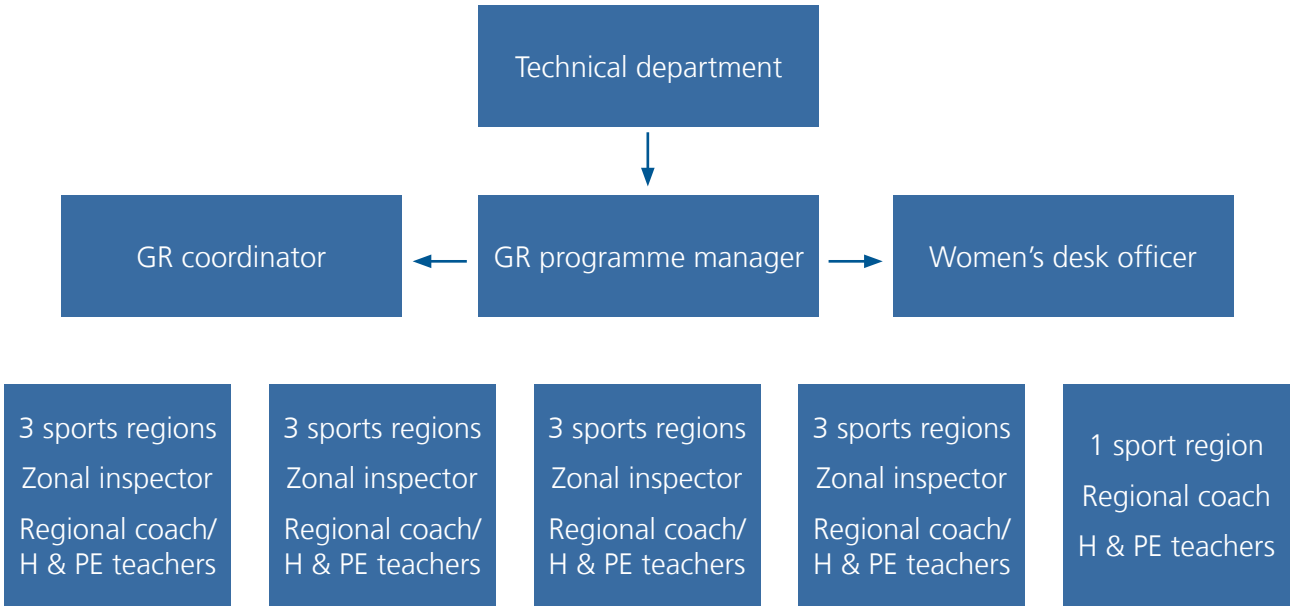
Evaluation of the pilot programme

The outcomes of the pilot programme can be summarised through the following key performance indicators:

1. **Increased participation of both boys and girls:**
   17,986 primary school pupils have joined the programme since the launch



2. **Grassroots structure within the technical department:** a specific structure has been set up in order to prepare, coordinate and monitor the overall process.

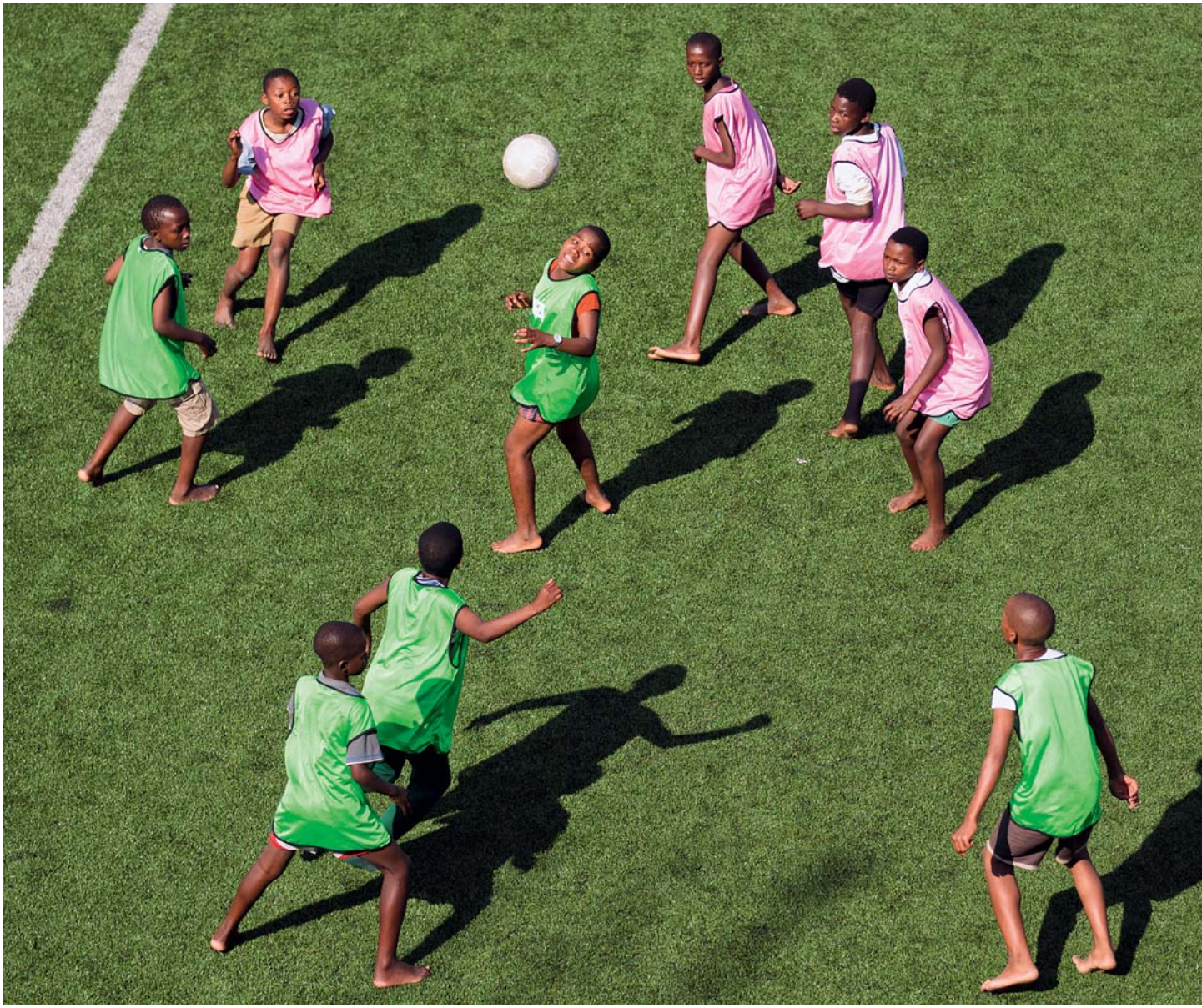


3. **Trained coach-educators**
   – 93 coach-educators, most of them H & PE teachers
   – annual coaching seminars and refresher course

4. **Introduction of girls' football in schools:** 1,540 girls (ages 9-12 years) participated in the 2011 edition, and 200 in grassroots festivals in schools

5. **The impact of the pilot programme on football development**
   – establish links with schools
   – create a partnership with all stakeholders
   – promote the game in general
   – set wider football foundations
   – scout talented players, both boys and girls
   – boost girls' football development as from grassroots level
   – involve parents and volunteers
   – improve training and playing facilities

To conclude, the pilot programme has resulted in a positive evolution of football, and has greatly contributed towards creating an appealing environment for all those attracted to the game, whether children, coach-educators, teachers, or parents.



Annexe E. Street football

Many top football players have already stated that they developed their initial skills by playing street football. The creativity and free play spirit of street football should also be part of a grassroots programme. Actually, street football, futsal and beach football can be part of the activities of a grassroots festival.

There have been scientific studies affirming that expert players usually spent a huge amount of hours in their childhood playing street football or participating in unsupervised practices. More time spent in contact with the ball results in more chances of incidental skill learning. This sort of environment also gives players the opportunity to learn by coeducation, which is when they learn by copying or challenging their colleagues. In a grassroots programme, street football mini-games can be used as an activity or workshop in a festival. Coaches can also suggest street football as "homework" where children can be stimulated to play at home with their parents, brothers and sisters. Obviously, urbanisation is reducing the opportunities for children to play street football in a safe environment, but the enjoyment and autonomy provided by those practices can keep children active and socialising with their local friends in the neighbourhood instead of being locked up in an apartment just playing electronic games.

Grassroots

President: Joseph S. Blatter
Secretary General: Jérôme Valcke
Address: Fédération Internationale de Football Association
FIFA-Strasse 20
P.O. Box
8044 Zurich
Switzerland
Tel.: +41-(0)43-222 7777
Fax: +41-(0)43-222 7878
Internet: www.FIFA.com

Grassroots
Concept: FIFA Education and Technical Development Department
Authors: FIFA Education and Technical Development Department
Typography: FIFA Production / mbDesign, Zurich
Translations: FIFA Translations / Hurst & Freelancers
Photos: FIFA Archive / The Football Association Ltd.
Printing: RVA Druck und Medien, Altstätten, Switzerland

7.12 RVA 6'000 JNE/JDI/MBE

Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA)
FIFA-Strasse 20 P.O. Box 8044 Zurich Switzerland
T: +41 (0)43 222 7777 F: +41 (0)43 222 7878 FIFA.com