



The Soccer Association for Youth, USA National Headquarters

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Introducing Fun Ways to Motivate the Young Soccer Player - Learning through Dribbling Games 4-7 yrs -

Children between the ages of 4-7 yrs of age are in the pre-operational stage of their life development. In soccer terms this means they are beginning to explore the game but are at the mercy of immediate perceptions.

Dribbling, dribbling and more dribbling is how we evolve young players into the game of soccer. At such a young age children are spatially unaware, can be afraid of both ball and opponent, have a very short attention span, kick the ball without much direction and tactics are very limited. Dribbling and dribbling games in particular are therefore recommended as every player has his/her own soccer ball, which gives the player belonging and the game aspect makes it fun for kids. Children learn best at this age when they are interested, actively involved and having fun.

As a coach of new players starting out their soccer journey it is very important that player is coached in both in an organized and non organized manner. For example give players instructions but also give the player opportunities to explore how he/she may achieve their goals. When giving feedback ask questions to check understanding.

Finally, it is suggested the coaches that work best with young players are patient, fun to be around, outgoing, take an interest in each player and are knowledgeable about the game.

- Lesson Plan -

Warm Up

- Should include soccer related movements, which are common to the game- agility, speed, coordination, balance and movement activities.
- Should include activities with and without the soccer ball.
- Should be functional, creative and fun.

Activities

- Bridge Tag
- Chain Tag
- Rats and Rabbits
- 5 Steps to the Clouds
- Sponge Bob
- What's the time Mr. Wolf?
- Robin Hood
- Fast Food Game
- Who let the dogs out?
- Free Play 3v3

Coaching Points

- Explore all different parts of the foot you can dribble with
 - Encourage players to be creative and have lots of touches on the ball
 - Big Space, Big touches
 - Small Space, Small touches
 - Keep nose in front of the ball to scan field and see teammates
 - Play at game speed
 - Encourage moves and skills at all times
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