

“Fantastic Fours”

Four a-side matches have been around for years. This format allows for players to experience a “pick-up” or “backyard” environment allowing them to have more touches on the ball, taking risks, score more goals, make more decisions and have more fun. Below is an example your club/association can use to improve player development.

Organization:

Create 8 fields on a normal size field. Field sizes may vary but a recommended size is 35 long by 25 wide. There are 6 different four a-side games and 2 fields are devoted to a 4v4 match. So the players will get two 4v4 matches. Approximately 80 players can be involved and 100 if rest areas are in place. Divide players into groups of 5-7 players each. Groups of 5 are strongly encouraged. Games 1 and 7 are the same. Variations of each game may be used.

An adult/coach is on every field but plays more of a facilitator than a “coach”. The purpose is to use the different games to teach. Minimum coaching should take place.

Field Layout



On a normal size field, you can create eight fields. Around 70 players can be involved at the same time and approximately a hundred if rest areas are put in between the fields. Each team participates in each game for five minutes with a one minute rotation period.

Rotation:

Teams on the outside of the field go clockwise, teams on the inside go counter clock wise.

4v4 Games

Game 1 4v4 Match

Two teams of 5-7 players play 4v4. Subs are made on the “fly” and made often. Players are encouraged to “sub” on their own.

The players should simply play the game and make up their own rules with regard to kick-ins, throw-ins, dribble-in, free kicks, corners, no corners, etc.

Objectives:

Attacking:

- Techniques of dribbling, passing, receiving.
- Scoring quickly-go forward when you can
- Good shape in attack (length, depth, width)
- Movement off the ball

Defending

- Techniques of individual defending
- Win the ball back as soon as possible.
- Defend as a group (make space smaller by staying compact).



Game 2 4v4 End zone

Organization:

Two teams of 5-7 players. Four players on the field at a time. Each team places 3 balls in the end zone they are defending. Another ball is used to start the game. The total number of balls used for this game is 7. The objective is to dribble the ball into the other team's end zone and then retrieve a ball from your own end zone and try again. "Make-it-Take-it". The ball must be dribbled into the other team's end zone.

Attacking:

- Techniques of dribbling, passing, receiving.
- When to dribble, when to pass
- Good shape in attack (length, depth, width)
- Movement off the ball

Defending

- Techniques of individual defending
- Win the ball back as soon as possible.
- Transition from defense to attack.
- Defend as a group (make space smaller by staying compact).



Game 3 4v4 Wide Goals

Organization:

Two teams of 5-7 players. Four players on the field at a time. Each team attacks two goals and defends two goals. The attacking team is trying to score against the defending team's two corner goals. A goal is scored when the ball rolls through one of the two corner goals.

Attacking:

- Techniques of dribbling, passing, receiving.
- Playing forward to penetrate vs. playing wide.
- Getting wide quickly and having an "open" body shape to receive.
- Movement off the ball

Defending:

- Techniques of individual defending
- Win the ball back as soon as possible.
- Transition from defense to attack.
- Defend as a group (make space smaller by staying compact).
- Can you make the other team stay on one side?



Game 4 “Bricks”

Organization:

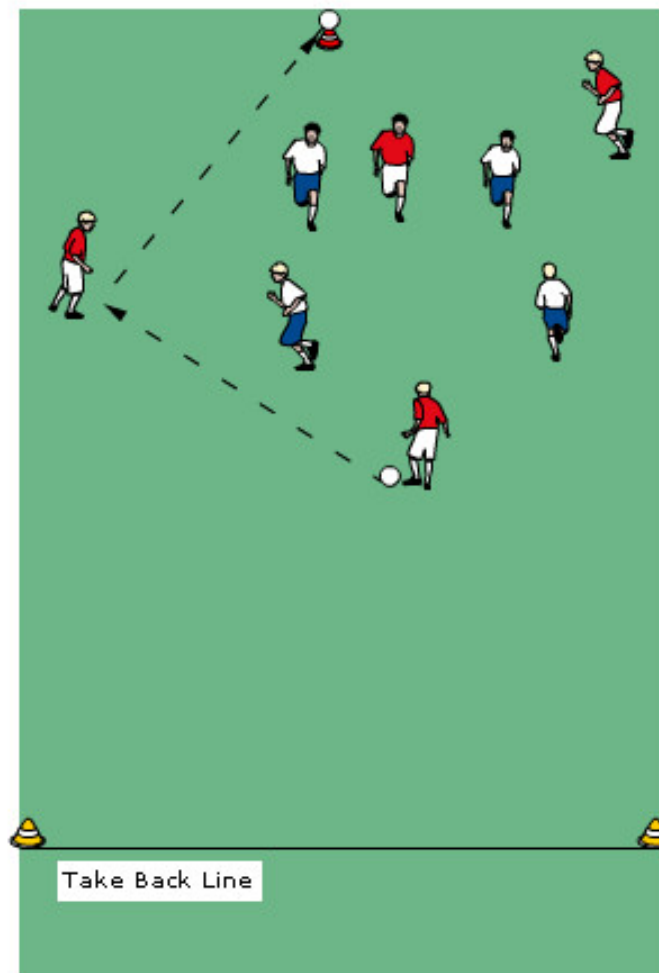
Two teams of 5-7 players. Four players on the field at a time. This is essentially a “half court” soccer game. A “stand up” or put a ball on top of a cone to act as the “brick”. The objective is to knock the “brick” down to score. If the defending team wins the ball, they have to take the ball back to a line before attacking-like half court basketball.

Attacking:

- Techniques of dribbling, passing, receiving, striking.
- Creativity needed to penetrate.
- Movement off the ball

Defending

- Techniques of individual defending
- Win the ball back as soon as possible.
- Transition from defense to attack.
- Defend as a group (make space smaller by staying compact).
- Getting the ball out to the “take back” line.



Game 5 Length Game

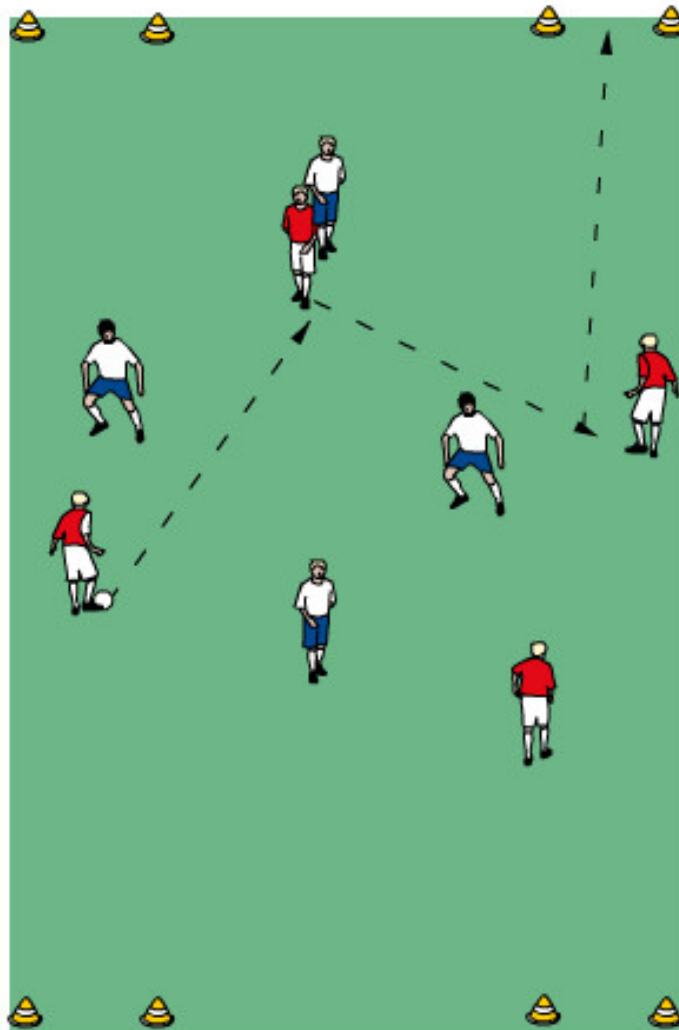
Two teams of 5-7 players. Four players on the field at a time. Each team attacks two goals and defends two goals. The attacking team is trying to score against the defending team's two corner goals. A goal is scored when the ball rolls through one of the two corner goals. The field should be longer than it is wide to promote players getting long.

Attacking:

- Techniques of dribbling, passing, receiving.
- Playing to penetrate or possess.
- Receiving with your back to goal.
- Movement off the ball

Defending

- Techniques of individual defending.
- Win the ball back as soon as possible.
- Transition from defense to attack.
- Defend as a group (make space smaller by staying compact).



Game 6 “Last Player Back”

Organization:

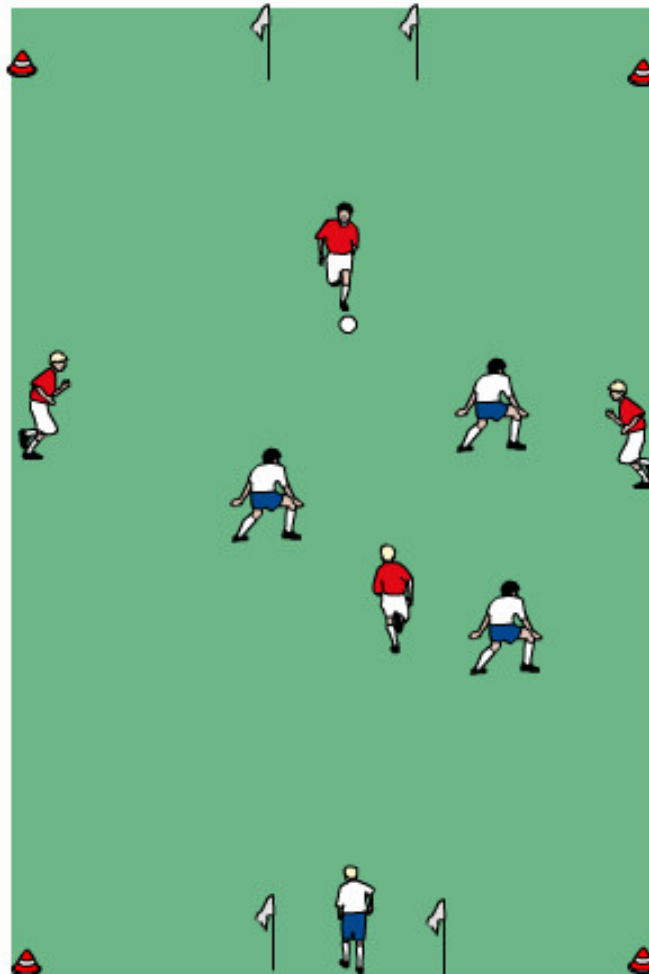
Two teams of 5-7 players. Four players on the field at a time. Each team attacks a goal that is approximately 6 feet wide. When a team attacks, they attack in with all four players. When a team defends, one person (usually last player back) hops in goal while the other three try to win the ball back. If the defending team is successful in winning the ball back, then the team that lost the ball has their “last player back” hop in goal. It is always a 4v3 numbers up situation.

Attacking:

- Techniques of dribbling, passing, receiving.
- Transition from attack to defense
- Combination play due to being a player up.
- Movement off the ball

Defending:

- Techniques of individual defending.
- When to win the ball back right away vs. delaying.
- Transition from defense to attack.
- Defend as a group (make space smaller by staying compact).



Game 7 4v4 Match

Two teams of 5-7 players play 4v4. Subs are made on the “fly” and made often. Players are encouraged to “sub” on their own.

The players should simply play the game and make up their own rules with regard to kick-ins, throw-ins, dribble-in, free kicks, corners, no corners, etc.

Objectives:

Attacking:

- Techniques of dribbling, passing, receiving.
- Scoring quickly-go forward when you can
- Good shape in attack (length, depth, width)
- Movement off the ball

Defending

- Techniques of individual defending
- Win the ball back as soon as possible.
- Defend as a group (make space smaller by staying compact).



Game 8 4v4 Possession

Two teams of 5-7 players' play 4v4 keep away with a mandatory 3 touch rule. The purpose of having a 3 touch rule is to make players receive the ball and then use some creativity to get out of it and complete a pass. A point is scored when a team makes 5 consecutive passes.

Attacking:

- Techniques of dribbling, passing, receiving.
- First touch away from pressure to get you space.
- Good shape in attack (length, depth, width)
- Movement off the ball

Defending

- Techniques of individual defending
- Win the ball back as soon as possible.
- Defend as a group (make space smaller by staying compact).

