



## Teaching Games That Focus on Dribbling Technique U8 Players

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This session will be centered on small-sided teaching games that will put the young players in an environment conducive to learning and at the same time having FUN playing the world's greatest game. The presentation will focus on the proper technique required for dribbling using all the surfaces of the feet. This will be geared towards U8 and U9 players.

**Warm-up: Set the mentality to combine, penetrate and maintain possession.**

- A. Dribble around space, change direction/use different surfaces.
- B. Dribble around space on command stop the ball and do five step-ups, continue to dribble.
- C. Same as number #2 except this time stop the ball and take five touches inside of the feet.
- D. Same as number #2 except take five touches inside/outside of right foot. Then the same with the left foot.
- E. Dribble in space on command stop the ball and find a different ball, continue to dribble.
- F. On command the color called out by the coach freezes then the other team dribbles around the frozen players. Players should make moves when going around each player.



### Activity #1, Many Gates Dribbling Game:

Set-up several gates (goals) through out the grid. You should have at least one more gate than players. On command players should dribble through as many gates as possible. Usually the game should go for 60-90 seconds. Players should keep track of how many times they go through the gates.

#### Progression:

1. **Players must make a move on each gate prior to going through the gate.**
2. **Have three players stand inside gates as if they were defenders. These players can move to different gates. They are not trying to win the ball, but if a player sees a player in the gate they must quickly change direction and find an open gate to attack.**



### Activity #2, Team Knockout:

Half the players with a ball. Each team should be wearing different colored vest. On command the players with the ball must maintain possession of the ball inside the grid. The players with out the ball are trying to dispossess the players and knock their ball out of the grid. If a player losses his/her ball they join the rest of their team in trying to keep possession of the last ball in the grid as long as possible. When there is only one ball left the game becomes a possession game. The coach keeps the time of how long a team maintains at least one ball in play. After all balls are out of play, the other team gets to posses the ball. The team that keeps the ball in the longest is the winner.

#### Progression:

1. **This time teams that win possession must dribble through one of the six gates to eliminate a ball. If a ball goes out of play, but not through a gate. The team with possession puts it back into the grid and continues to play.**
2. **Same as one except players shoot the ball through any of the six gates to eliminate the ball.**



### **Activity#3, 1v1 through Goals:**

Start 1v1 with coach serving the ball. Players can also be used to serve the balls. Players can attack either one of the goals on the end line. Player has to dribble through the goal for a goal to count. Players switch role after each turn.

#### **Progression:**

1. Players can now also score on the two goals that are on the sides of the grid.
2. Players can only score on the two side goals, which now are balls on cones.

#### **Play the Game:**

Play 4v4 or 5v5 with goals. First make players man mark on each team. This will create 1v1 situations through out the field. If a play beats his defender he/she can get to goal and score. This will encourage dribbling and give the players confidence on the ball.

#### **Progression:**

1. Play unrestricted game and do minimal coaching. Let the players play and let the game be the teacher.



Below you will find the principles of technique for dribbling. Utilizing these principles in conjunction with creating a perfect picture for them to see will help in getting the players on the road to creating good habits. I hope this will help the less experience coach that might have not played the game in teaching proper technique to our younger players.

#### **Principles of teaching Dribbling:**

1. Lean forward and over the ball
2. Knees bent, on the balls of feet
3. Relax body
4. Balance is a must
5. Keep ball close
6. Use inside/outside and instep of both feet
7. Be creative, use imagination -- develop own style
8. Use body feints
9. Change speed and direction: tight control vs. open field
10. Look up as much as possible (Keep Head up)
11. Use body to shield/protect ball
12. Don't be afraid to fail, take risks in the attacking 1/3

***Good Luck in All Your Coaching Endeavors!!!!***

