



“Making friends with the ball”

A set of 18 basic skills and exercises which will assist young players to better enjoy the game.

ENQUIRES : KEVIN BEST 0243 284806

6. DRIBBLING [INSIDE OF FOOT]

THE CHALLENGE : The average of 3 attempts in succession (using the inside of the foot)
Recommended time: Level 1 - Beginners, Level 2 - 12 secs, Level 3 - 11 secs, Level 4 - 10 secs, Level 5 - 9 secs.

A COACH'S PERSPECTIVE

“The whole concept of coaching revolves around not what players do when you're with them, but what they do when they're away from supervision.”

Reasons for learning this skill

Dribbling is one of the finer parts of the game and will be a valuable asset to any player, particularly in tight situations. It will develop opportunities for better field positioning. A player must be able to run with the ball whilst evading defenders by cutting the ball back across his/her body whilst keeping control of the ball. A player when he/she receives the ball will have to decide whether to pass to a team mate, shoot for goal or dribble. This skill will give the player confidence to dribble at defenders and enhance the player's balance (weight distribution) whilst on the ball. A player should be coached “split vision” (have your eyes half on the ball and half looking ahead and around the field whilst dribbling). A coach will generally advise players not to dribble in tight situations in the back third of the field but rather to pass the ball out quickly or clear long. Also, some coaches advise players to think to pass in the first instance then to dribble as a last resource. Which ever is the situation, if a player cannot dribble under pressure it will limit his/her ability to maintain possession for the team.

Organisation by coach or parent

N.B To avoid injury, players should warm up and stretch properly, before starting any exercises. Two players, one size 3 ball, 9 cones, one tape measure, one stop watch. If available, use approved safety poles in place of cones to enhance the realism of an opposition player.

Task to practice - the challenge

Dribble the ball, using the inside of the foot (left and right alternatively) through 9 cones placed in a straight line two metres apart - to be done in two successive attempts by bettering the target time (seconds).

Coaching hints - things to look for

When dribbling:

- shorter running strides to ensure easy contact with the ball;
- keep the ball close to the feet;
- slow jogging to three-quarter pace movement;
- push the ball softly ahead;
- keep the ball about one pace away to allow for a quick change of direction;
- to provide doubt in the opposition go through the motions to strike the ball hard then at the last second softly cut the ball back using the inside of the foot;
- have your eyes half on the ball and half

looking ahead and around the field whilst dribbling i.e. “split vision”;

- head up to remain aware of the changing circumstances in the game;
- protect the ball when under pressure by placing the body between the player and the ball and controlling with the furthest foot.

Important Progressive training practice

Familiarisation of moving the ball around using the sole of the foot.

Start with foot on ball as per below diagram.



1. Roll the ball across your body to the other foot using the sole of the foot and control it using the sole of the foot of the other foot. Repeat 20 times side to side.
2. Take the foot off the ball and place it beside the ball whilst at the same time placing the other foot (the standing foot) on to the ball. Repeat 20 times.

3. Roll the ball backwards and spin your body 90 degrees facing the ball and control the ball with the sole of the same foot. Repeat 20 times each leg.
4. Roll the ball forward and control with the same foot. Repeat 20 times each leg.



The inside of your foot is from your big toe back to your ankle.

