



“Making friends with the ball”

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

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12. BALL CONTROL - JUGGLING

THE CHALLENGE :

The recommended number of attempts in succession (alternately using the right foot and with left foot)
 Recommended repetitions: Level 1 - Beginners, Level 2 - 2 times, Level 3 - 5 times, Level 4 - 10 times, Level 5 - 20 times.

Reasons for learning this skill

This skill will be used every time the player touches the ball. The skill will enhance the players first touch on the ball so critical in the game. There is a misconception that juggling has little to do with the game of soccer. Rather something that belongs in a circus. There is little doubt that this skill is not factually seen in the game but rather in minute segments with the player using his/her individual ball technique skills. It can be stressed also that good soccer players can juggle at least 1000 times when they get older (age 16). If this is accepted then it is plain that players need to practice and become proficient at this skill. Conquering this skill is no guarantee of success. However, it is only a stepping stone in becoming a complete player. Becoming friends with the ball is the main theme of this exercise whilst at the same time developing an intimate touch essential for success in the game. Like most skills, mastering it will not be achieved overnight.

Organisation by coach or parent

N.B. To avoid injury, players should warm up and stretch properly, before starting any exercises.

One player, one size 3 ball.

Task to practice - the challenge Juggle a ball in the air - no bounces - using feet only (left and right alternately), for a set number of times in succession.

Coaching hints - things to look for

When juggling:

- position in the line with the movement of the ball as quickly as possible;
- decide which part of the body should

be used i.e. left foot/ right foot alternately;

- let the weight of the body rest entirely on the non kicking leg;
- adopt a balanced position before the receiving surface is exposed to the ball;
- relax be well balanced and composed,
- apply adequate power to ball;
- angle receiving surface so as to play an advantage for the next action i.e. the other foot;
- the eyes are focused on the ball throughout.

A COACH'S PERSPECTIVE

"It's players who win games. If it was the coach, he/she would never lose."

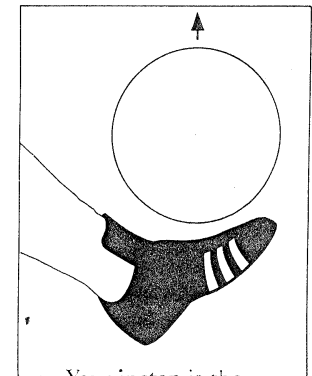
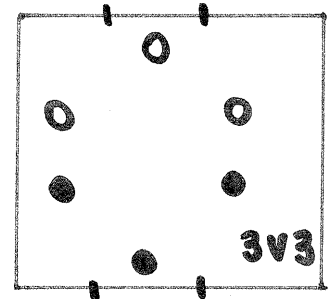
Additional skills practice

- Hopping.
- Tapping the top of stationary ball with the sole of the boot left foot then right foot alternately.
- Kicking the ball at the end of a string or rope.

Progressive training practice

Set up a small sided game and watch one particular player at a time and notice his/her first touch. Coach better first touch to set up better position for the second touch, First touch is for the player's benefit, the second touch is for the team's benefit.

Use different coloured bibs for the teams.



Your instep is the area over your laces. It doesn't include your toes.

