



Small Sided Games

These small sided games are aimed at coaches in youth football/soccer who want to deliver game related practices for their players. The session ideas are not guaranteed to work for you, you may have to adapt and modify them to suit the needs of you and your players.

www.planitcoach.org

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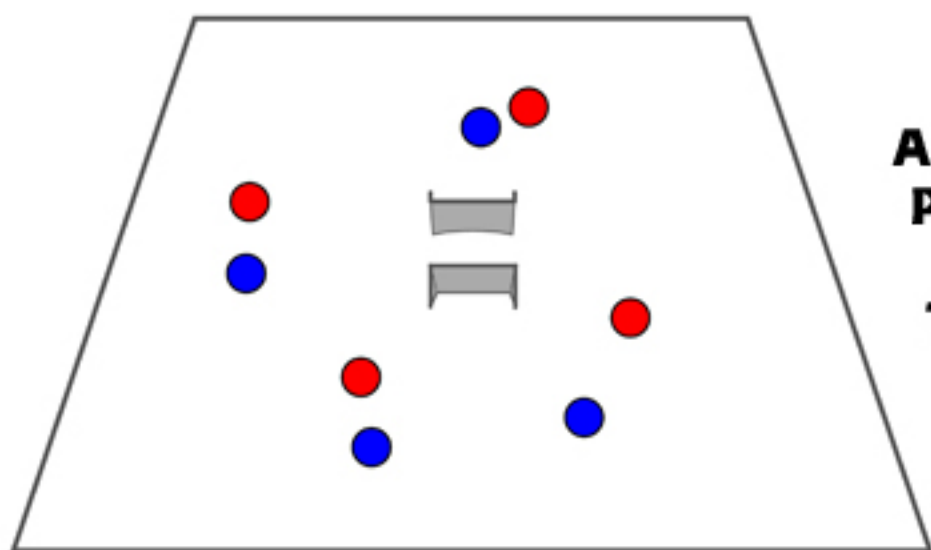
Coach Educator

"I firmly believe that as coaches we should place players in situations that replicate the variability of the game. We spend too much time putting players in queues or passing from cone to cone. SSGs are great way to stimulate them technically, tactically, physically, psychologically and socially. Simple tweaks in the rules or constraints can guide players towards outcomes that are far more beneficial than traditional 'drills'."



@power_ray

Encourage Wide Play



Age group: U9's to adults

Pitch Sizes: 40x20 yards

Number of teams: 2

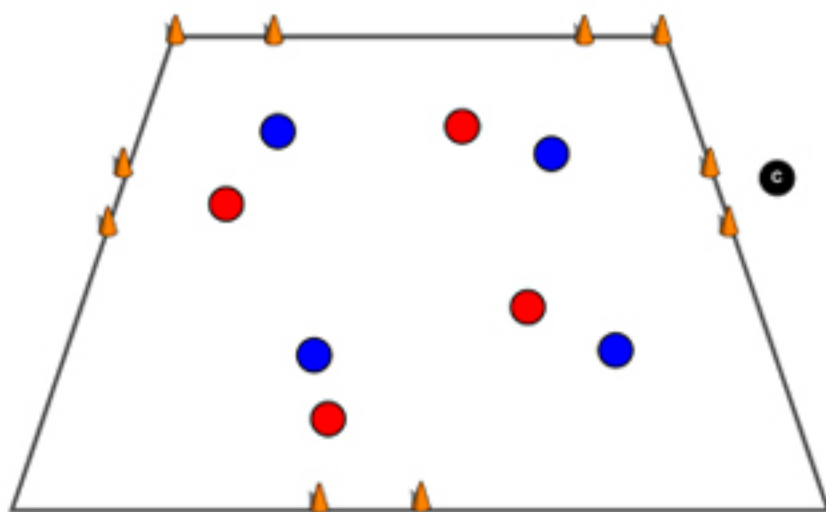
Team Sizes: 4-6 players

Goals: 5-a-side or mini soccer goals

In this game the goals are positioned back-to-back in the centre of the pitch with one team defending each goal. You must have at least one player in each half at all times during the game and you cannot kick the ball over the top of the goals into the other half. The ball must be played around the goals by both teams to encourage wide play.

Players will naturally form into a diamond shape once the game starts (two wide, one attacking and one defending). This game also encourages playing out from the back and I have found with the unusual layout of the pitch and goals this game really makes players think.

Movement & Vision



Age group: U10's to adults

Pitch Sizes: 40x20 yards

Number of teams: 2

Team Sizes: 4-6 players

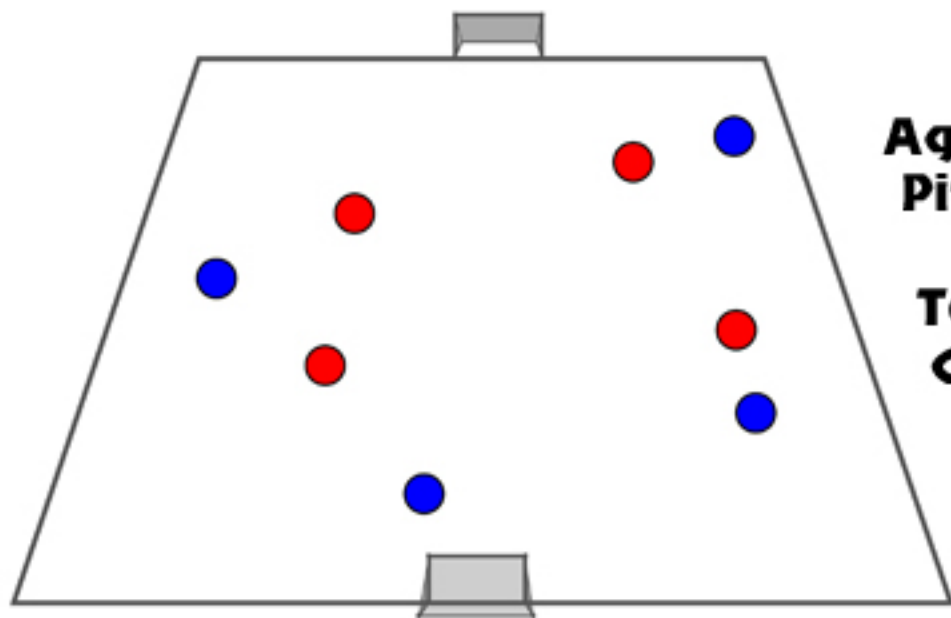
Goals: Two small traffic cones, you need one more goal than there are players for one team. For a 4v4 game you have 5 goals (10 cones). You can add extra

goals for younger age groups. Goals should be about 2-3 feet apart.

In this game to score a goal a player has to pass the ball through a goal, where a player from his team controls the ball on the other side without the opposition touching it first (you can score in either side of the goal). You then have to score through a different goal before you can return to that one, unless the opposition get the ball.

I have found with older players they can pass the ball through the goals at a distance, occasionally the better players can pass through two goals at the same time. A variation for younger age groups is to just have one traffic cone as a goal and they need to knock it over with the ball to score.

Order the Goal



Age group: U9's to adults

Pitch Sizes: 40x20 yards

Number of teams: 2

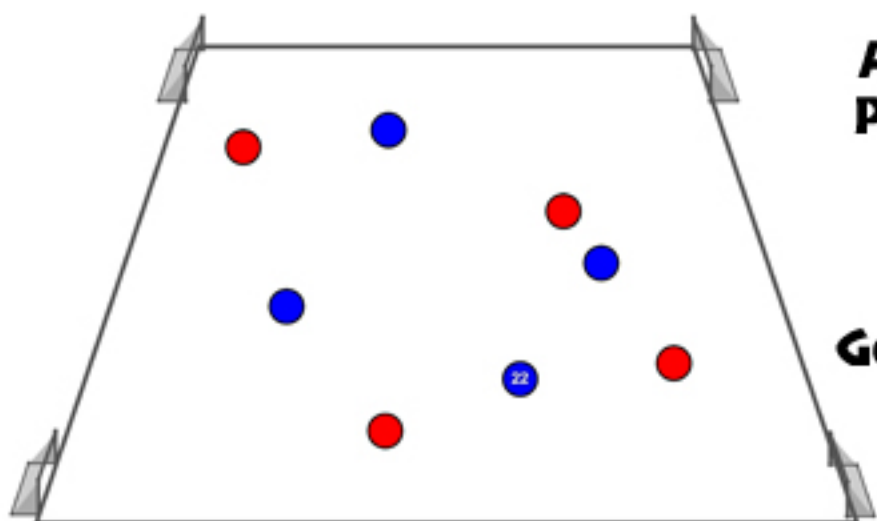
Team Sizes: 4-6 players

Goals: 5-a-side or mini soccer goals

This game is played as a normal game but players have a maximum of four touches. To win the game one team must score three goals. However, both teams must choose which player or players will score the goals and also which order they will be scored in. They keep this a secret, only telling the coach who they have chosen.

Teams must disguise who they have chosen to be the next goal scorer. This is a fun game which all children seem to love to play and it helps players communicate.

Switch the Play



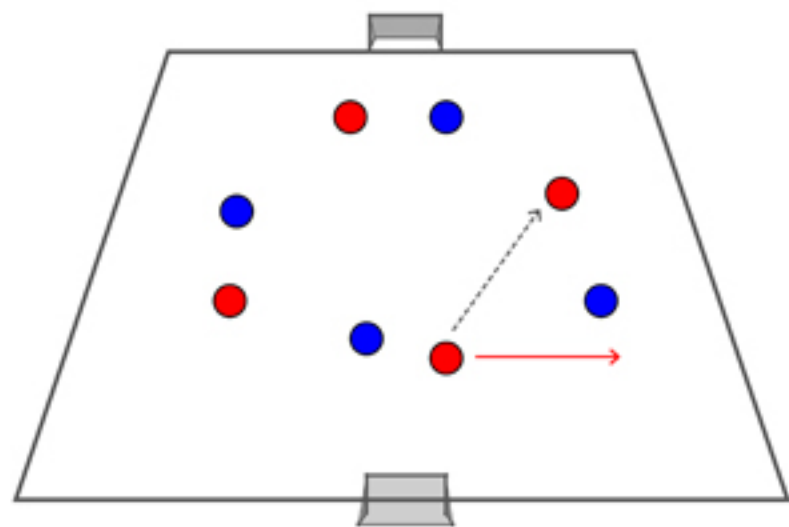
Age group: U8's to adults
Pitch Sizes: 20x40 yards -
Wider than long
Number of teams: 2
Team Sizes: 4-6 players
Goals: Four 5-a-side or mini
soccer goals

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In this small sided game I use two wide positioned goals for each team to attack, each team has two goals to shoot at. This is designed to encourage players to spread out across the field when they attack and also to switch the play when one route is blocked, to find an alternative option.

We are looking for a quick transition in this game players should have lots of movement off the ball and be creating space for their team mates. I would want my player's first instinct to be "can I move forward" to be able to attack one of the two goals. The only condition I sometimes use is players have to score in the opponents half as they normally have a tendency to just shoot at goal.

The Liverpool Game – Pass & Move



Age group: U12's to adults

Pitch Sizes: 40x20 yards

Number of teams: 2

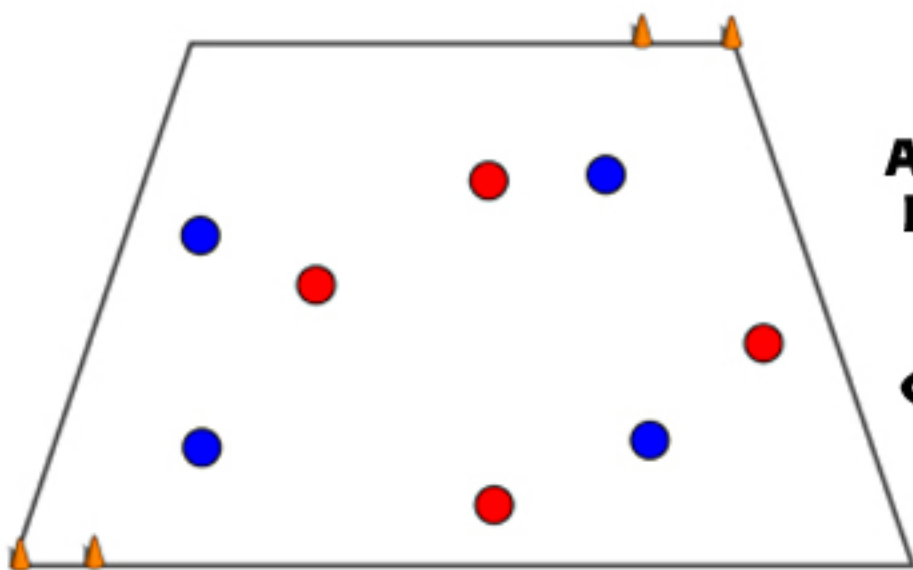
Team Sizes: 4-6 players

**Goals: 5-a-side or mini
soccer goals**

In this game as soon as the player in possession passes the ball they must move either backwards, sideways or forward to support the player in possession. If they fail to do so, possession is immediately given to the opposition.

This game is not really suitable for young age groups and in my opinion should not be tried with ages less than 11 years old. The game is very tiring and should only be used in small bursts as perhaps part of a normal small sided game.

The Netball Game



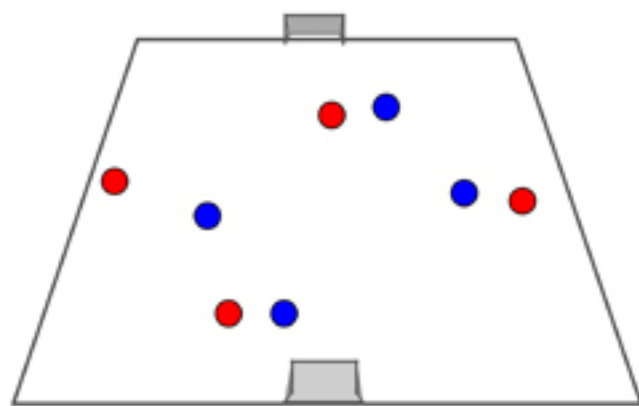
Age group: U8's to adults
Pitch Sizes: 40x20 yards
Number of teams: 2
Team Sizes: 4-6 players
Goals: Traffic cones (1-2 metres apart)

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In this game we adopt a few rules from the game of netball. Players are unable to move once in possession, they must rely on their team mates to find space and receive the ball. Teams score by receiving a pass in either of the two goals (between the cones) and putting their foot on top of the ball.

This game allows players to focus solely on movement off the ball and being able to receive passes. You will also see which players have an eye to spot movement off the ball.

The One-Nil Game



Age group: U11's to adults

Pitch Sizes: 30x20 yards

Number of teams: 2

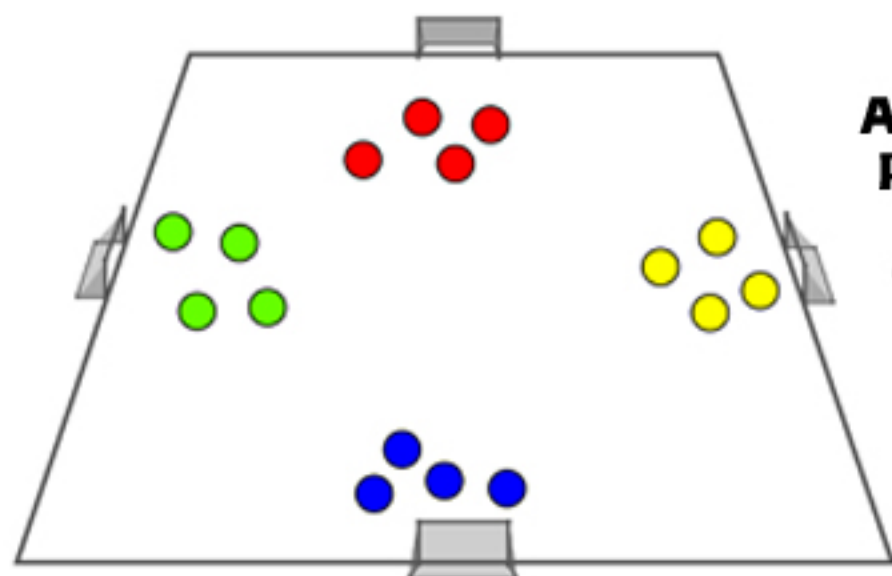
Team Sizes: 4-6 players

Goals: 5-a-side or mini soccer goals

In this game you can only lead by one goal. The game starts as an ordinary 4v4 game with all of the normal rules, when a goal is scored the team that score must try to retain possession and cannot score again. If they do score, the goal is disallowed and play starts from the opposition's goal keeper. If the other team equalise and make it 1-1 either team can score again to make it 2-1. The leading team then have to retain possession. Another variation of the game is that the team who score then have to put a sequence of passes together before they can score again.

This is a possession game played as an ordinary 4v4 but with a twist. I tend to limit every game to around five minutes but may play two or three games one after another.

The Playground Game



Age group: U8's to adults

Pitch Sizes: 40x40 yards

Number of teams: 4

Team Sizes: 4-6 players

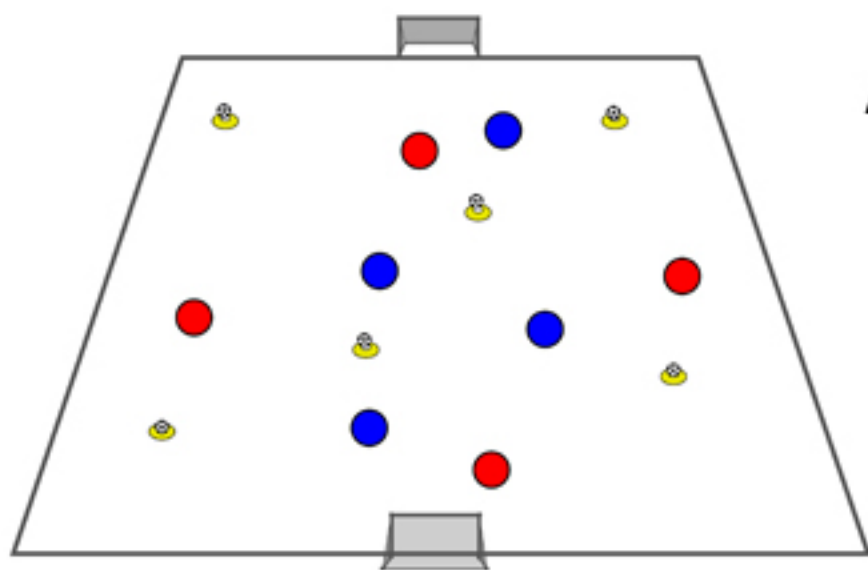
Goals: 5-a-side or mini soccer goals

Number of footballs: 2

In this game we allow two matches to run at the same time, on the same pitch. This is a very chaotic game but also a problem solving game. It can be made more difficult by players not wearing bibs.

See how players react to such a chaotic situation and how they solve problems. Players have to get their heads up to identify who is on their team, who the opposition is, which ball is theirs and who is playing the other game. This SSG requires very little coaching, I tend to just step back and observe, the children's problem solving skills are probably better than you think!

Recovery Game



Age group: U8's to adults

Pitch Sizes: 40x20 yards

Number of teams: 2

Team Sizes: 4-6 players

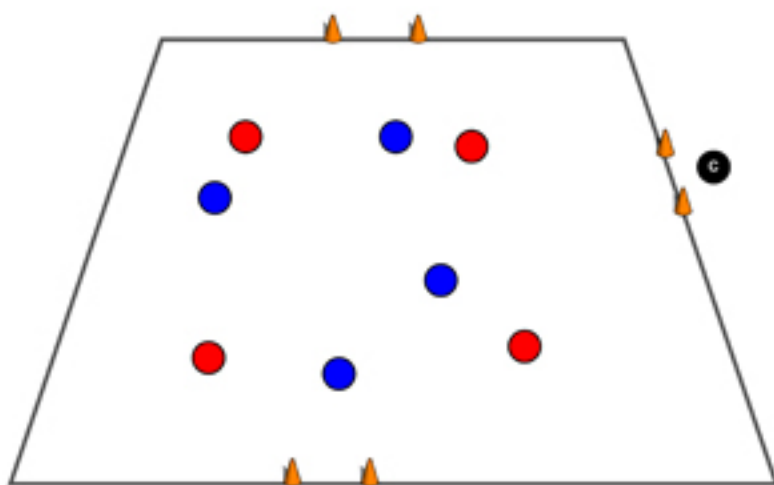
Goals: 5-a-side or mini soccer goals

Cones and footballs required

In this game we place a number of cones around the pitch with footballs on top of them. We continue to play a normal game with normal rules, until the coach shouts the name of a player on the team out of possession. The player whose name has been called then takes a ball off the nearest cone and this becomes the new match ball and the one previously being played with is now 'dead'. The player who was in possession has to place the old ball on the empty cone before they can join the game.

We are looking to see if the attacking team can take advantage of the overload and a dis-organised defence. Also, can the defending team react to the quick turnover and recover.

The Vision Game



Age group: U9's to Adults

Pitch Sizes: 20x40 yards -

Wider than long

Number of teams: 2

Team Sizes: 4-6 players

Goals: 3 made from traffic cones (1-2 metres apart)

In this game the idea is for the teams to score in any of the three goals, however behind the goals there is one extra person (coach). They do not touch the ball but run behind the line of the three goals. If they are standing behind a specific goal, the teams cannot score into that goal. The better the game is played the more the coach has to run (much to the amusement of the children).

More than any other small sided game you get to see who the players with vision are by the way they look up, switch play and sell dummies to the opposition. The only condition which I occasionally use is that the players can only score by dribbling through the cones as sometimes there is a tendency