

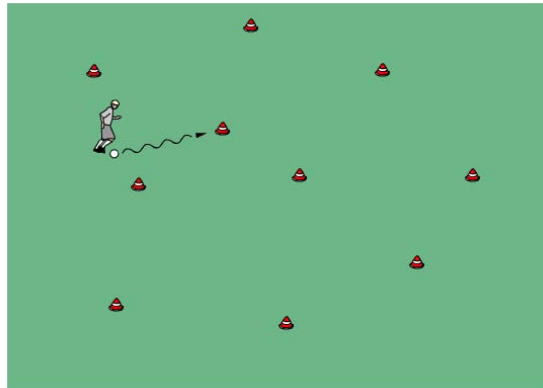


Backyard Games and Activities for all levels

Dribbling

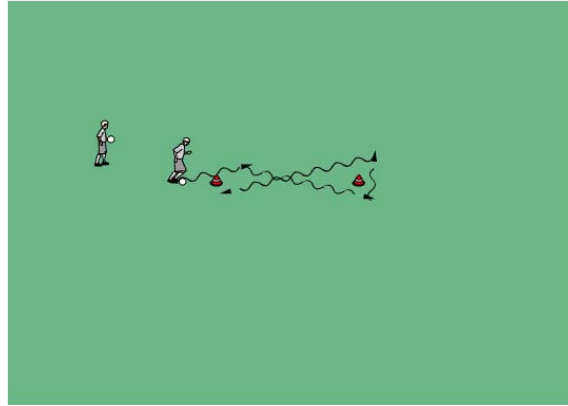
“Yard Dribble”-Around your yard, scatter cones, tin cans, towels, etc throughout the yard. You will then dribble from cone-to-cone. Examples: a) Dribble to one cone with right foot, then to the next one with left. b) Dribble to a cone, then pull back, change direction; c) Dribble to a cone, and perform a turn, d) Dribble to a cone and then perform a move around the cone.

Lots of variations can be used like timing to see how many cones they can dribble to in one minute, drag w/bottom of foot to one cone and then dribble fast to next, etc.



2)**With a friend:** Place two cones about 5-8 yards apart.

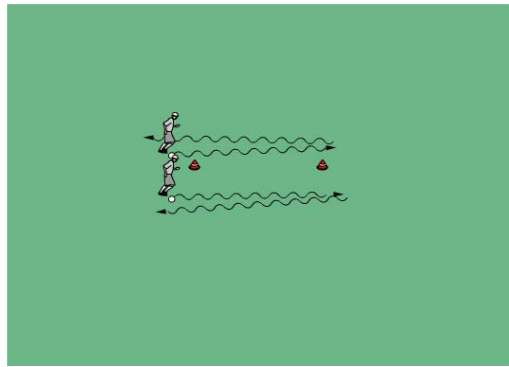
a) Figure 8's. One person goes while the other counts to see how many times they pass between the cones in 30, 45, or 60 seconds. After one person dribbles, the person resting now goes and tries to do as many. Have them make a figure 8 with right foot first, then next time left foot. They can roll the ball between the cones, drag it, etc.



3) “Drag Races”

Still with a friend. They now stand next to the partner and are racing with the ball against their partner. Variations include:

- a) Dribble from the first cone to the second cone and then back.
- b) Dribble to cone, make a turn then race back (like the hook turn)
- c) Dribble to cone forwards then drag ball with bottom of foot backwards.



4) 1v1 to a ball

Play 1v1 and the object is to simply hit the ball with a pass. If you dribble up to the ball and hit it, it is worth “2”.

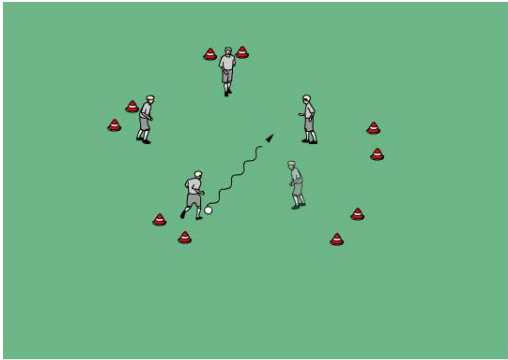
Variation: Play 2v1, 2v2.



“Jumpers”

Any number of players can play. It is everybody for themselves in this one. Each person has a goal, bag, cones, whatever to protect. Make a circle with the goals. One ball is used. Each person is trying to score on each other’s goal. If the ball goes out of the circle, the "goal" closest to where the ball went out gets to take the ball. Goals are scored by hitting the

bag, cones, etc. Play to whoever gets 3 goals. **Variation:** Play to where you get scored on twice then you are out. Make it a knockout competition. Groups of 4-5 players are ideal.

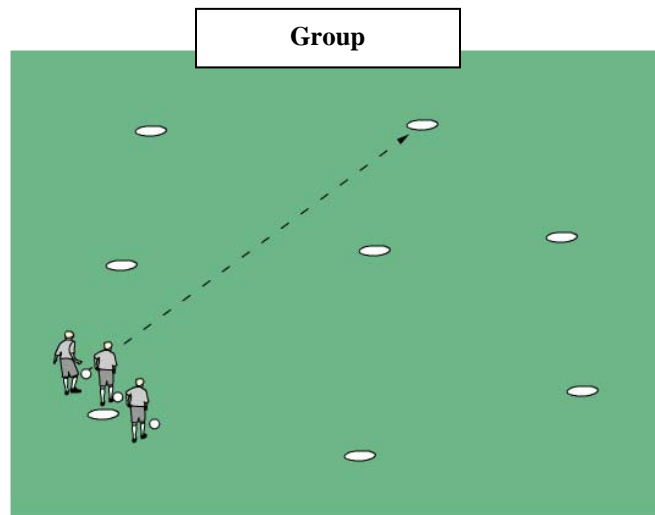
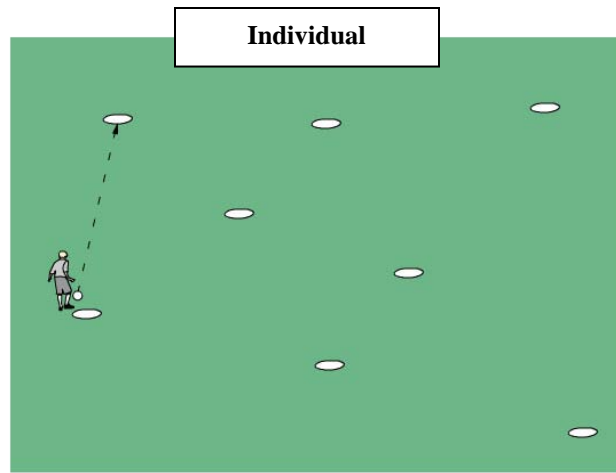


Passing

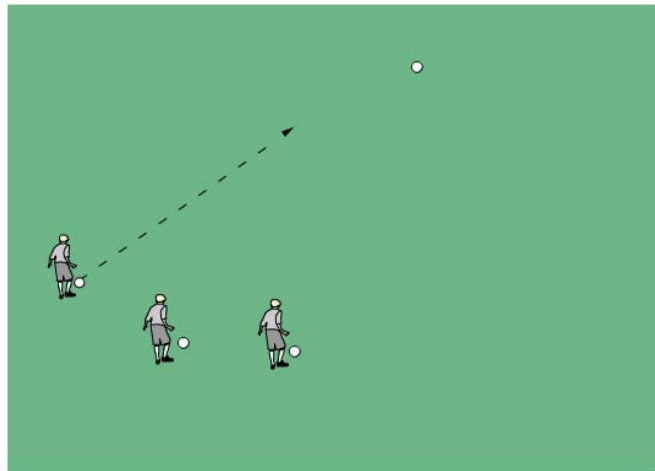
Soccer Golf

Spread out, towels, t-shirts, etc. across a yard or area. Each object is a challenge. If using a towel or a t-shirt the ball must completely stop on top of it in order to count. Players try to pass the ball from a distance and have the ball completely stop on a towel or t-shirt. Like in golf, count how many times it takes for the ball to completely stop on an object. Try and improve each time out.

Variations: Play with a friend or two. As a group, name the target and take turns, just like golf. The player that wins names the next target and also what the par would be.



You can also just use one ball as the target and who ever knocks the ball first gets to decide where to play and hit the ball again.

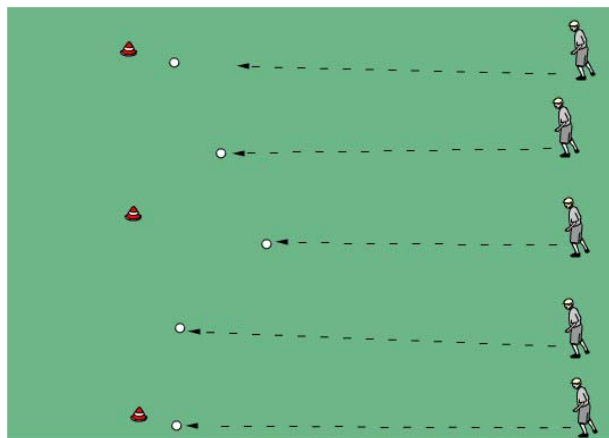


“Bottom of the Sea”

A couple of players (friends) have a ball and lines up on the side of a square/rectangle. Each player will pass their ball and after they stay where they are. The objective is to pass the ball as close to the other line without it going over the line or “into the sea”. The player whose ball is the closest wins. Play until someone gets three. Players could go one at a time or all at once.

Variations:

- 1) Vary the distance every time. Whoever wins the round decides what the new distance will be.
- 2) Alternate feet each time.
- 3) Ball must be chipped off ground but still can't go past the line.

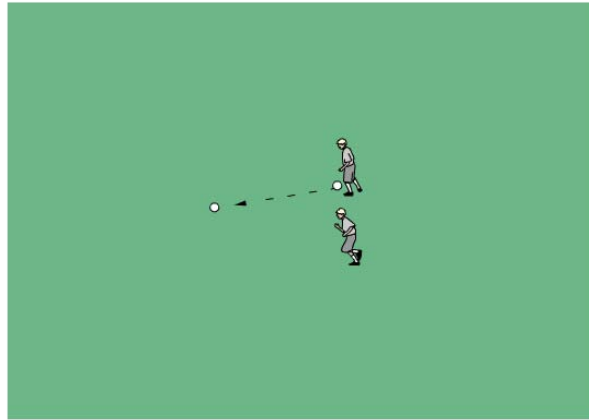


Soccer Marbles

Players (friends) each have a soccer ball. This game is usually done in pairs but can be done with more people. One person starts off by passing their ball out (break). The other player tries to pass the ball and hit the ball that was passed out. If they do, a point is scored. If they miss, then the first player tries to now hit the second player's ball. When a ball is hit the player who hit the ball starts the "break" for the game to resume.

Variations

1. If a "moving" ball is hit then that is worth double.
2. Instead of passing on the ground, the ball must be "chipped" and the ball must hit the other one in the air.



One Touch

This can be played with a group of friends. This is a passing game that requires good one-touch passing and first touch. Players get in a circle. The rule is that you must play one-touch, the ball must stay on the ground and go directly to the player's feet. If the ball is played off the ground or outside of the receiving player's reach then the player that passed the ball loses a life. Play to whoever loses 3 lives first.

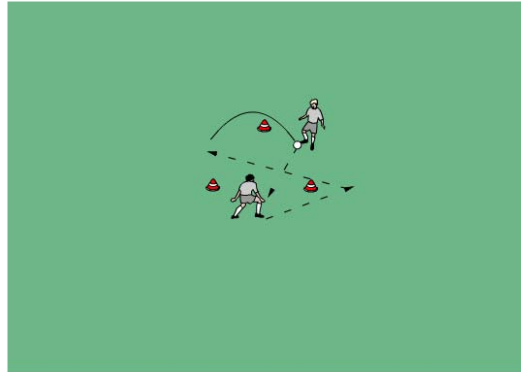


Receiving

Triangle

Two players take 3 cones and spread them about a yard apart into a triangle shape. One player passes the ball through a pair of cones and the other player will then receive the ball and has one touch to take the ball around a cone and then back through for the other player to repeat.

Every time they can do this successfully it is a point. Anytime they hit a cone or the pass isn't completed, it is not a point. Play against each other. This can either be a competitive activity against someone or a cooperative one with someone.



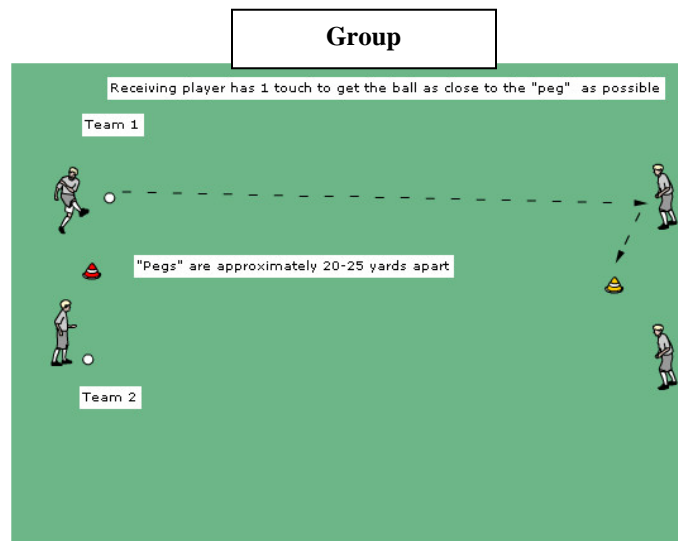
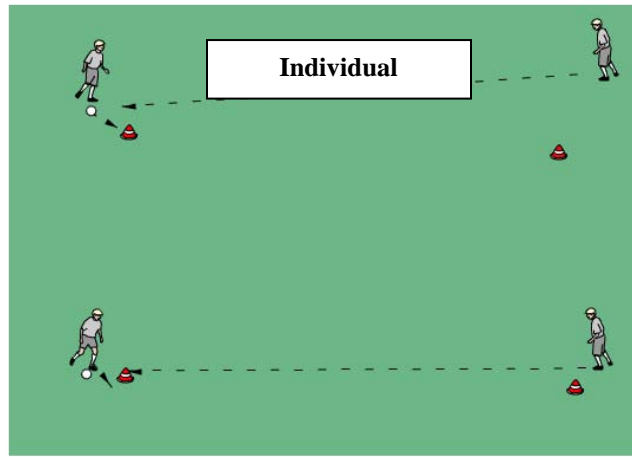
“Horseshoes”

This game can be played against someone or you can play 2 against 2. Place two t-shirts anywhere from 10-20 yards away depending on ability and whether or not balls will be passed on the ground or in the air.

If playing against someone then a player passes the ball to their partner who has one-touch to redirect the ball to stop or come as close to the t-shirt as possible, like horseshoes. If playing with a teammate then the ball is passed to a teammate that is across from you.

After one player/team goes, the other player/team then takes their turn. Whichever player/team has their ball closest to the cone gets a point. The sequence is simply repeated with the players now switching roles between receiver and passer. Play for a certain amount of points or for time.

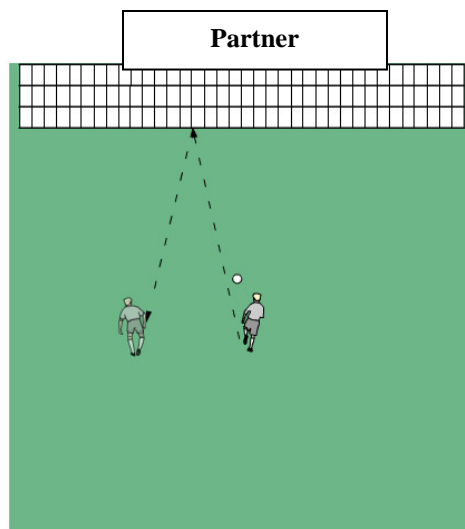
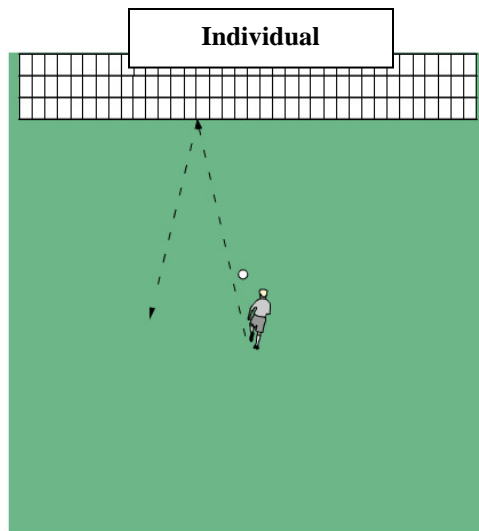
- Variations:
- 1) Ball can be played on the ground. Rule: Can't stop the ball with bottom of foot on the t-shirt.
 - 2) Ball can be thrown in the air to opposite player.
 - 3) Ball can be chipped in the air to opposite player.



“Wall” Ball

This can be played individually or with a friend. A ball and a wall are used. The object is to strike the ball against a wall and then receive it with one touch and strike it back against the wall.

- Variations:
- 1) Individually challenge yourself to receive the ball with a different body part every time.
 - 2) With a partner, have a serving line. Ball must be served from behind the line and then received before by the other player.
 - 3) Play “3 lives”. Players have 3 chances (lives) to get the ball back within two touches. After the “third” life start a new game.



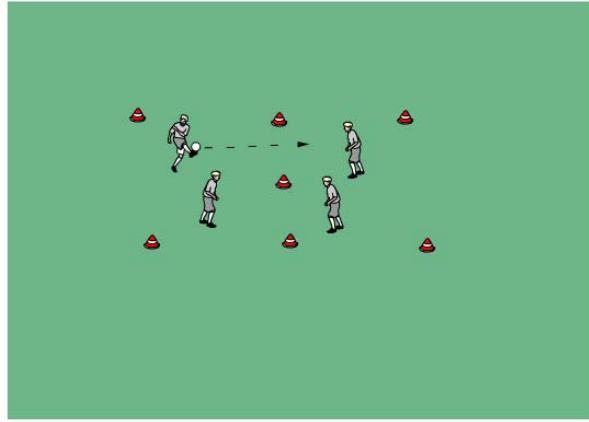
Soccer Tennis

This can be played with one friend or a up to 6 if the space is large enough. Set up a square and then a net in the middle. A broomstick/yardstick can work if there is no “official” net. Cones may also be set up as a net. If the ball lands on the cones then the point is played over.

Play normal tennis rules as far as boundaries are concerned.

Serve must be from behind the line and in a friendly way. A player can only score on the serve. If a player serves a ball and the other player(s) knock the ball back over then they get the serve.

Rules: Ball can bounce once and each player has two touches per side. For more advanced players allow no bounces and one touch per side.



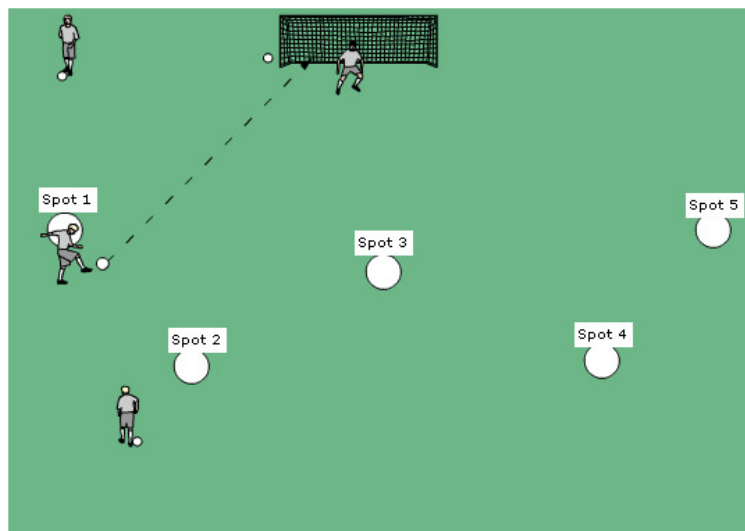
Finishing

“Around The World”

This is similar to the basketball game version. Two-four players can play. Five spots are placed about 12-18 yards from a goal depending on ability. A player not shooting goes in goal. Players determine an order to shoot the ball from 5 different spots and be the first one to go around the world and back. Players go one at a time by order.

When a player scores from the first spot, they move onto the second spot and so on. If a player misses after shooting from a spot, they can either “chance” or “stay”. If they chance and miss again, they go back to the beginning or 1st spot. When they score on the fifth spot they then have to score again and begin the process of going back around the world to the original (first spot). If they miss going back around the world and take a “chance” and miss again they start back at the fifth spot. Play until someone goes around the world and back first. (Note: Spot 3 is from the penalty spot)

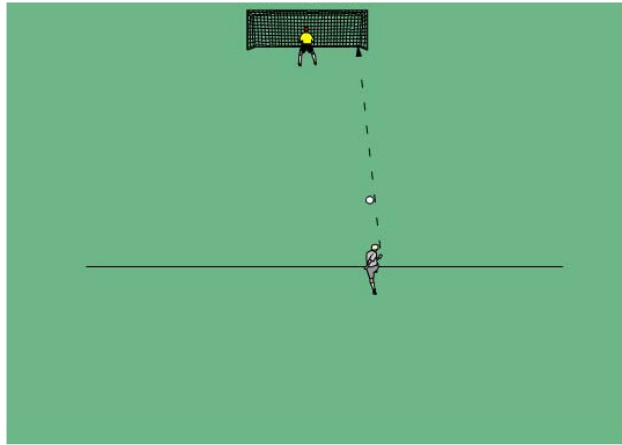
Variation(s): Player must hit a moving ball instead of a stationary one.



“Shooters”

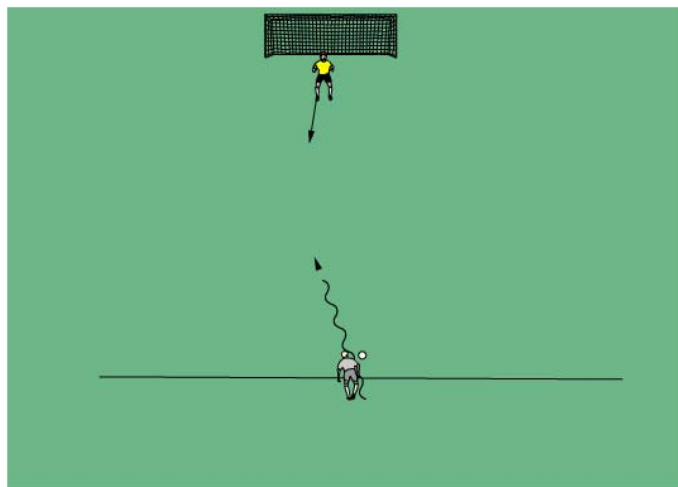
This is a backyard game that is played with two people, a goal, and a ball. The shooter is about 12-18 yards away depending on ability. The goalkeeper starts in goal with his/her back to the shooter. When they hear the sound of the ball being kicked, they turn around and attempt to make the save. When the shooter misses or has their ball saved three times they then switch with the goalkeeper. Each player keeps track of the number of goals.

This game can be very good for goalkeeper training as well. If the shooter is crafty, they will move (dribble) the ball to different angles and as far away from the goalkeeper as possible.



NASL Shootout

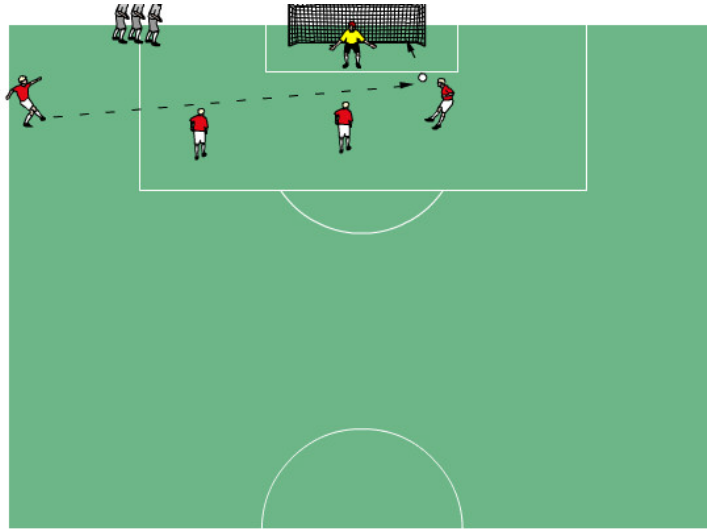
Two players, a goal, and a ball are used. This game is the old shootout that the NASL once used to use to settle a tie. The shooter starts 35 yards from goal, which can be different if space is a problem. The shooter starts by touching the ball and then has 5 seconds to score. The goalkeeper may come off his/her line to save. Players rotate until a winner is declared.



Wembley

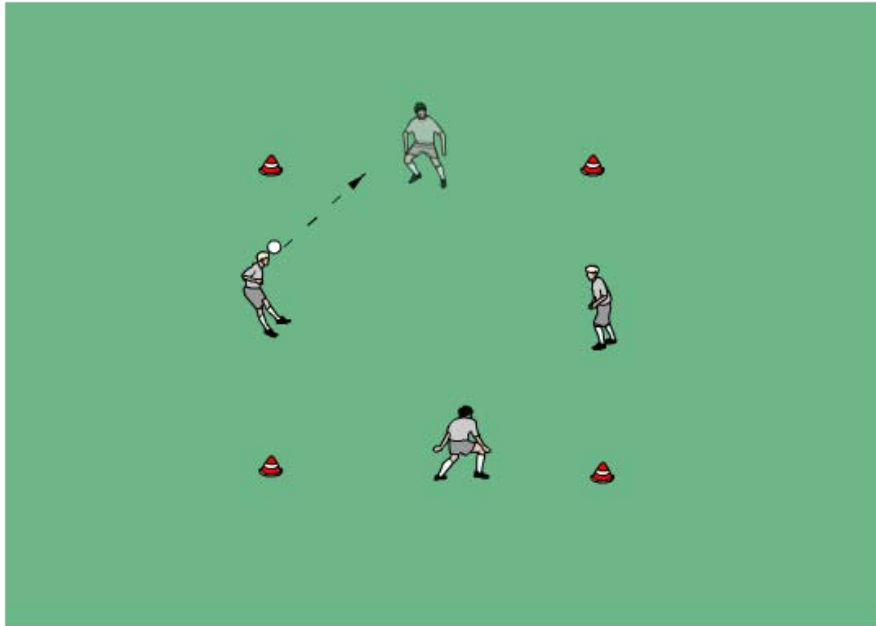
This can be done with a group of friends. Teams are made up from small groups. Each group takes turns crossing balls into the middle. The only way to score is off a volley or with headers. The ball can not touch the ground. When a team misses three times or has their attempt saved three times, the other team goes.

- Variation(s):
- 1) The team waiting can have one defender.
 - 2) The team attempting to score has to rotate who tries to finish.



“Headers”

This needs to be done with a minimum of 3-4 players. An 8x8 square is made with cones, towels, etc. Each player guards a line. The game is one against three. One player starts the game by throwing the ball in the air to himself/herself and tries to head the ball by one of the other three players. A variation is to have the players toss the ball to another (teammate) and now the game is two against two.



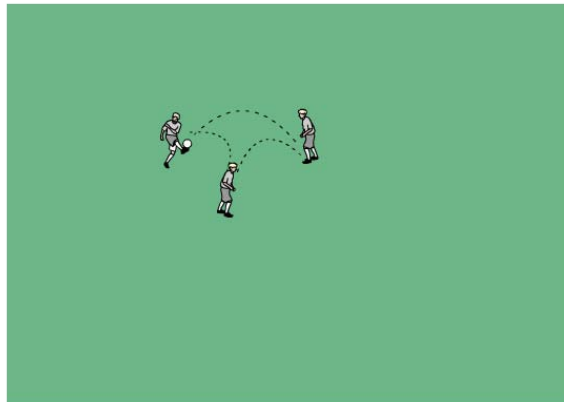
Juggling Games

Individual challenges



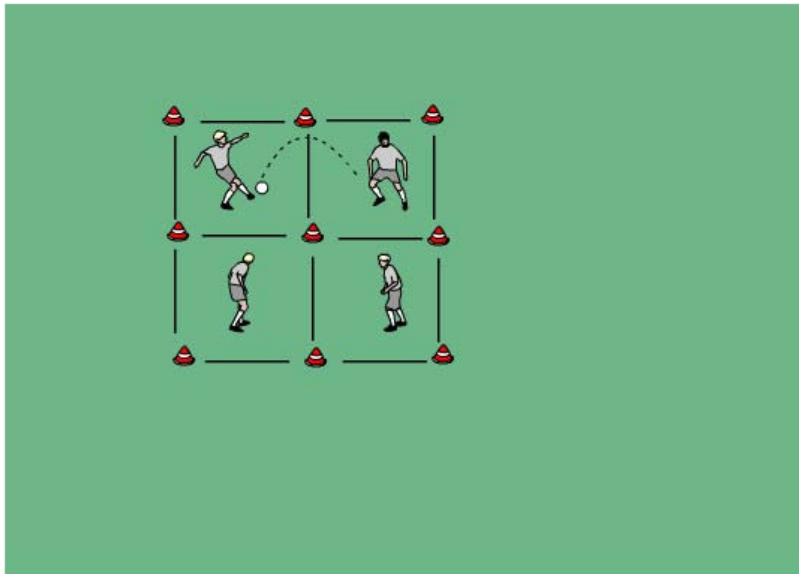
1. **“Kick-Bounce”**- This is good for those learning how to juggle. Knock the ball up with the foot and then let the ball bounce once then knock it back up with the foot again. Once a player is comfortable then they should try two with the feet, let the ball bounce once and repeat. The challenge is to add more juggles each time and count up. Start with one juggle with the foot let it bounce, then do two juggles let it bounce and so on.
2. **The Ladder**- Player juggles the ball with the feet only. Player juggles the ball once on the right foot then once on the left foot, then two on the right-two on the left-three on the right-three on the left, etc. Go up to 5-10 and then go back “down” the ladder. Try to get one more every time you try.
3. **“Head Shoulders Knees and Toes”**-Player juggles the ball with the head first, then the shoulder, then down to the knee (thigh) and toes (laces). Once a player is comfortable with that then they should try and go Head, shoulders, knees and toes, knees and toes. Go down one side and then the other side.
4. **Around the world**-Player juggles the ball from one side to the other in this order: right foot, right thigh, right shoulder then over to left shoulder, down to left thigh and down to left foot. Once a player is comfortable with that, then try going around the world and back.
5. **End to End**-Try to juggle the ball from one end of the yard to the other. See how far you can make it each day. Variation: You could do this with a friend and see who can go the farthest.

Group Juggling Games and challenges



1. **“Stall”**-This is an advanced juggling game. Two players or a group can play this game. One player starts juggling and then knocks the ball to another. When they knock the ball to the other player they say a number and then “stall”. Whatever number they call that player must do that many juggles and then “stall”. A “stall” is stopping the ball in the air without letting it drop. An example would be to balance the ball with your neck or wedge the ball between your foot and shin.

2. **“3-2-1”-This is an advanced juggling game.** This is a group juggling game. Players form a circle. Each player starts with “3 Lives”. One player starts juggling the ball with any part of the body and then knocks it to another player. While the ball is in the air, the player that knocked it calls a number for the receiving player to do. Example: Player calls “3” so the receiving player must do three juggles and then knock it to another player. If a player loses control then they lose a “life”. When a player loses all “3 Lives” they are out. A “life” can also be lost if the player knocking the ball to a receiving player doesn’t call out a number or plays the ball inaccurately. When the group goes down to two players they can only use their head to juggle back and forth. They still call a number and the receiver must use their head only to juggle.
3. **Four Square-**This can also be used to work on receiving. This game is like the school yard game of four square. One person starts in the “king/queen” square. The “king/queen” starts the game by serving the ball to someone in the other three squares. The receiving player then gets one bounce and then knocks it with no more than two touches to another square. Players rotate clockwise with the purpose of being the “king/queen” the longest.



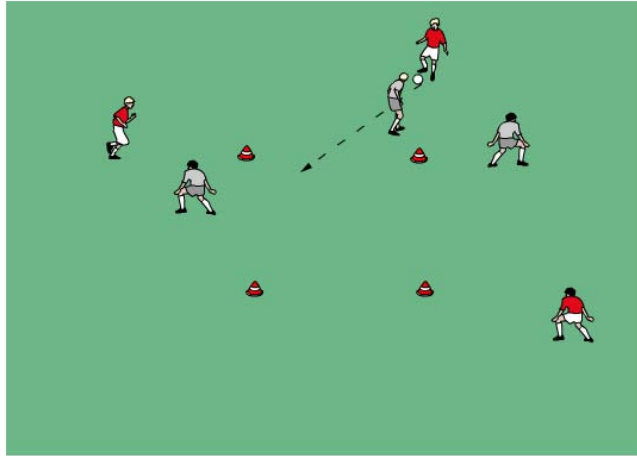
Small Sided Backyard Games

The games below are alternative ways of playing a small sided match.

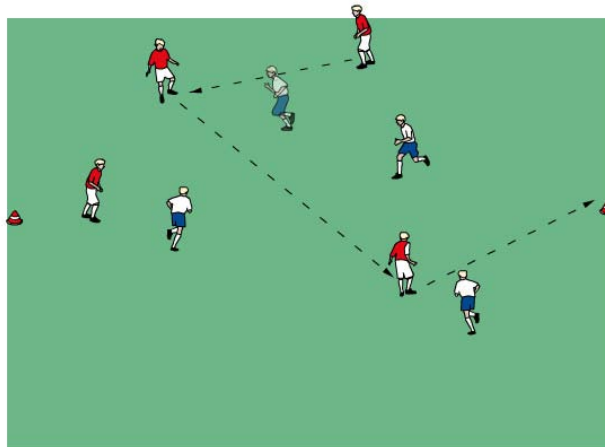
#1 **“Four Sides”**- Make a box with cones, vests, towels, etc. The object is for a group of players (team) to score through all four sides first. Any number of players can be used. The game is played around the box. Goalkeepers may be used if desired or a player from the defending team can jump in between one of the four sides of the box. When a goal is scored, the team that was scored on gets the ball.

Variations:

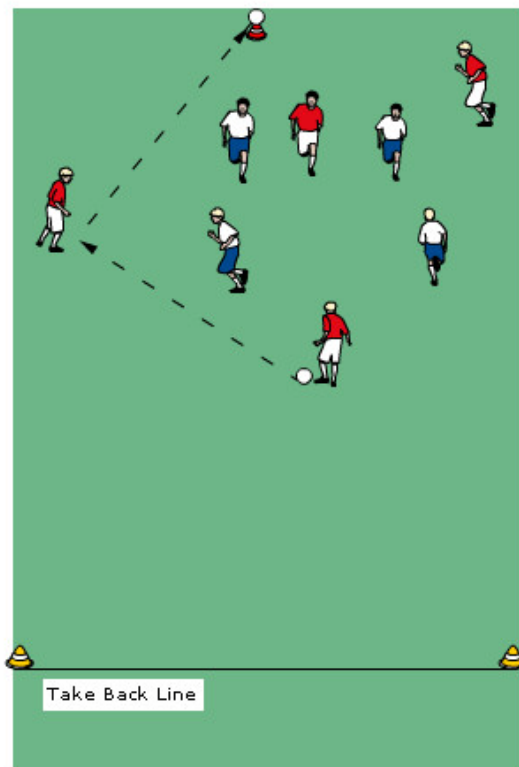
- 1) Instead of a box, make a triangle goal.
- 2) Play to five and the fifth goal has to land inside the box in the air or be chipped.



#2 **“Bricks”**- This is a game that Dutch kids used to play on the streets of Amsterdam. They used to place a brick on top of a curb. A goal is scored when the brick is knocked over. Stand up cones can be used instead of bricks.

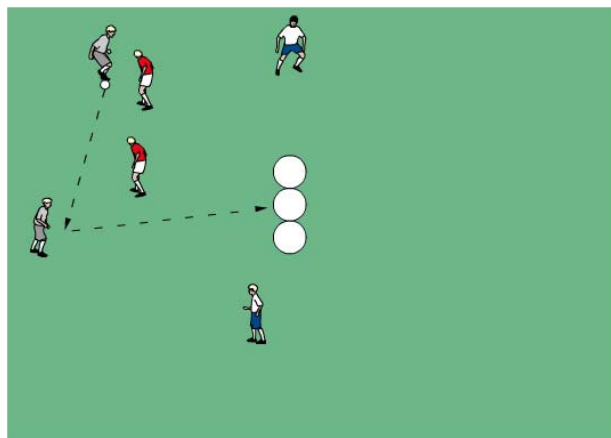


Variation: You can play this game like half court basketball. When the defending team wins the ball, they have to take the ball back to the “take-back” line before going on attack.



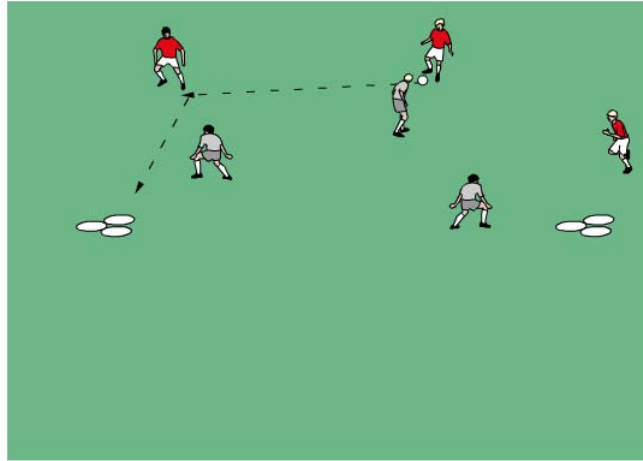
#3 **“Barrel Ball”**-Place a tin trash can in the middle. You can play this with two or three teams. The object is to hit the trash can with the ball. If the ball is chipped into the trash can, that is then worth two points and the team that got scored on has to retrieve the ball out of the trash can!

If playing with three teams, the team that loses the ball goes to defense while the other two teams work together to try and score. When a team gets three goals scored against them, they are then a neutral team that can help either of the two remaining teams out.



#4 **“Bags”**-This game is similar to “Barrel Ball” but instead of a trash can, school/book bags are used for the goals.

Variation: Use two bags and whenever a team hits a bag, they then have to score at the other bag before allowed to go back to the first bag.

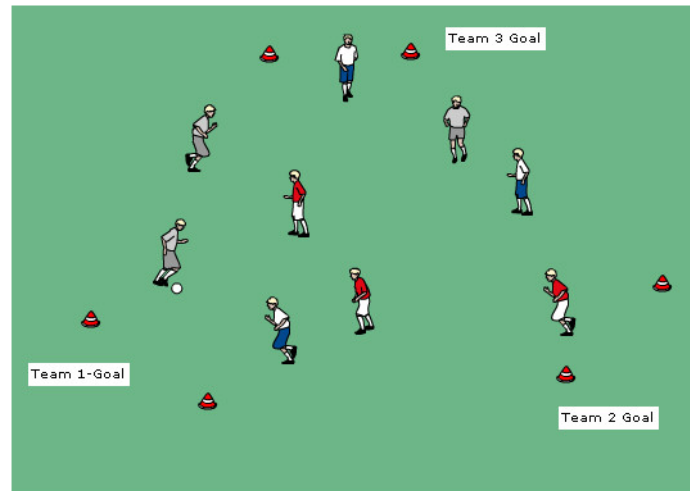


#5 **“Three Way”**-This is a regular small sided game with no goalkeepers. The first team to score in three different ways wins. Both teams agree on how each goal will be scored but the goals must be scored in order. Example: Goal #1 must be scored on the ground, Goal #2 must be scored off a volley, Goal #3 must be scored from a ball that is passed backwards first.



#6 “Three Team Cutthroat”

Create three teams of 2-3 players. Each team guards one goal. It is every team against each other. The three teams play against each other and try to score goals. Use bags, cones, balls, etc. for goals. The team that gives up 3 goals loses the match. When that is achieved the game starts over. As the game goes, teams pledge allegiances to each other only to be traitors. A team can pass to another team, but they don't have to pass the ball back. Be careful because the team that you may trust, just may turn on you!



#7 “**Half Court**”-This is a game to one goal similar to half court basketball. Whenever the defending team wins the ball they must take the ball to a “take-back” line before then can shoot on the one goal. This game is really fun playing on a normal field with the penalty box being the “take-back” line. Rules can be created with regard to scoring (i.e. scoring from beyond the take-back line is worth 2 points).

