

# Small-Sided Games

A New Reality



## Small-Sided Games A New Reality

Contact me at

[ssnow@usyouthsoccer.org](mailto:ssnow@usyouthsoccer.org) or

(800) 4SOCCER to assist your club

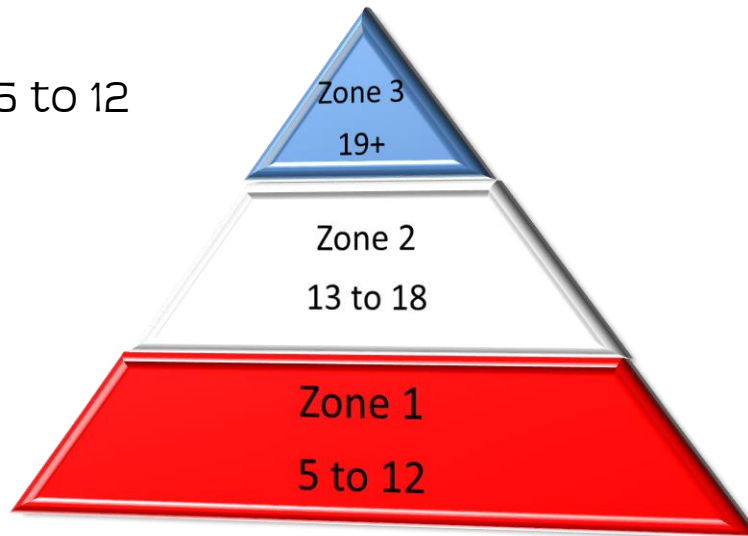
or state association with the

transition to small-sided games for

the Zone 1 age groups.



Zone 1 = players 5 to 12  
years old.



# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality

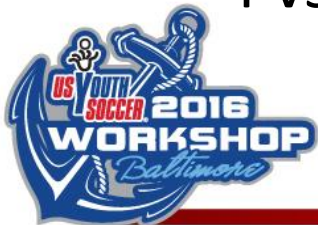
- U. S. Soccer Player Development Initiative
  - Best Practice by August 2016
  - Mandatory by August 2017
- Player Safety Campaign
  - Heading
    - » No headers for 10 or younger – matches and training
      - No introduction to heading until age 11
    - » Limited practice on heading from age 11 to 13
      - No more than 30 minutes of heading in training per week. A maximum of 20 headers per week in training. No restrictions on heading in matches.



# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality

- Zone 1 encompasses all players 12-years-old and younger.
- This U. S. Soccer Player Development Initiative levels the playing field.
  - 9 vs. 9 for 11 and 12 year olds
  - 7 vs. 7 for 9 and 10 year olds
  - 4 vs. 4 for 5 to 8 year olds



# Small-Sided Games A New Reality

- After decades of US Youth Soccer championing the cause for SSG it is now the new norm.

• **YEAH!**



# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality

- End of session.
- Thanks for coming!



# A Bit More Then

**SMALL-SIDED GAMES**

**A NEW REALITY**



# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality

- SSG fits the game to the players
  - Fewer players = fewer lines of interaction = easier decision making
  - Greater mental and emotional engagement since kids are around the action frequently
  - Smaller field provides end-to-end play = more tactical repetition





# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality

- SSG fits the game to the players
  - Full field play, for the age group, improves physical fitness
  - Simple to Complex progression of the Laws of the Game allows players to understand the rules according to their stage of cognitive growth
  - Fewer players + a smaller field = an increase in realistic ball skill repetition



# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality



8 and Under  
4 vs. 4



# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality

- Continuum of the club's curriculum from age group to age group toward adult soccer

Stages for the Ages							
TECHNIQUE	<u>6-U</u>	<u>8-U</u>	<u>10-U</u>	<u>12-U</u>	<u>14-U</u>	<u>16-U</u>	<u>19-U</u>
Dribbling	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Shooting	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Juggling		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Tackling		✓ <sup>1</sup>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Passing		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Receiving		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Catching			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Throwing			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Throw-in			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Heading			2	✓	✓	✓	✓
Crossing			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Diving				✓ <sup>3</sup>	✓	✓	✓
Boxing				✓	✓	✓	✓
Deflecting				✓	✓	✓	✓

<sup>[1]</sup> Controlled contact with the ball *must* be emphasized by the coach.

<sup>[2]</sup> The skill of heading should be introduced to the 11 age group. Please refer to the Guidelines for Coaching Heading in Soccer on the US Youth Soccer website.

<sup>[3]</sup> The correct teaching of how to land from a diving save is vitally important to the safe execution of this skill.



# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality

- Continuum of the club's curriculum from age group to age group toward adult soccer

Stages for the Ages							
TACTICS <sup>4</sup>	6-U	8-U	10-U	12- U	14-U	16-U	19-U
<b>Attack</b>							
Penetration	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Depth - support	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mobility	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Width	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Improvisation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Finishing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Defend</b>							
Pressure	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Delay	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Depth - cover	✗	✗ (✓)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Balance	✗	✗	✗ (✓)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Compactness	✗ (✓)	✗ (✓)	✗ (✓)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Control and Restraint	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

<sup>[4]</sup> All tactics are player decisions. Tactics are the practical execution – via technique, fitness and quick thinking – of the Principles of Play. Tactics evolve within a player in conjunction with cognitive growth and practical soccer experience.



# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality

- New Laws of the Game for Zone 1
  - T. B. A.



# A New Reality

- Logistics
  - Fields
  - Goals
  - Referees
  - Coaches
  - Rosters





## Small-Sided Games

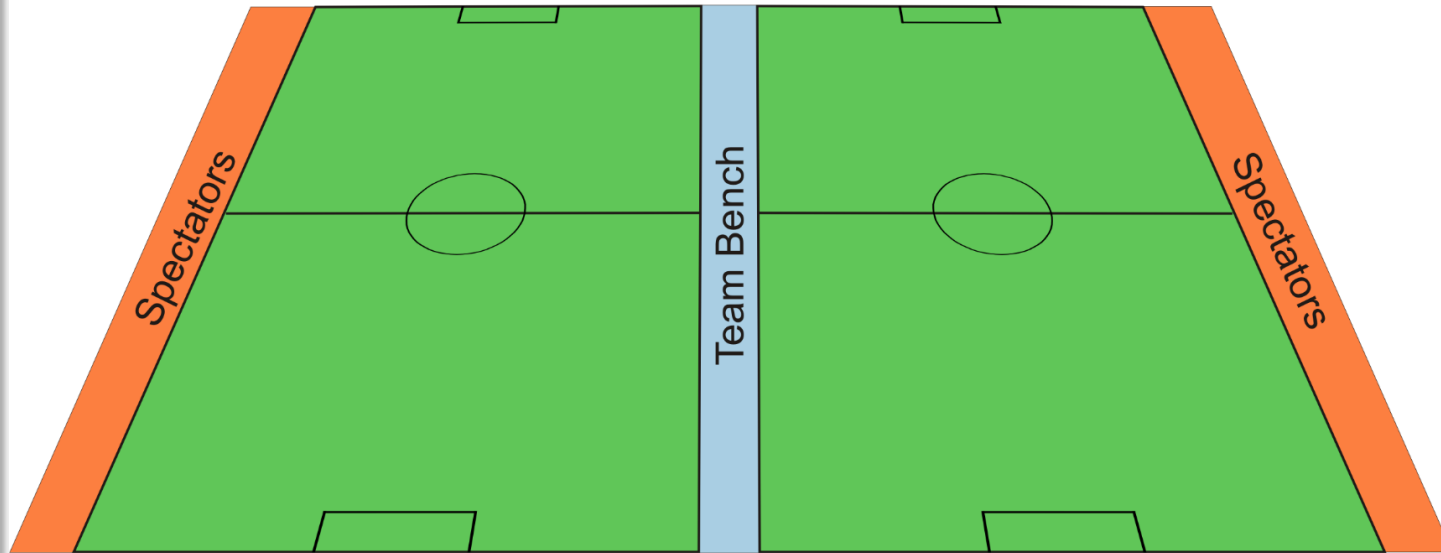
# A New Reality

New Laws of the Game for Zone 1

Mini Field for 4 vs. 4 – 5 to 8 year olds.



## Suggested Set-up for 4v4 Fields Dual Mode

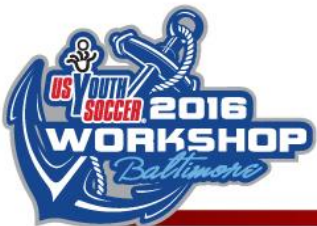


Small-Sided Games

# A New Reality

Logistics

Fields – the dual field set up is a good option





# Small-Sided Games

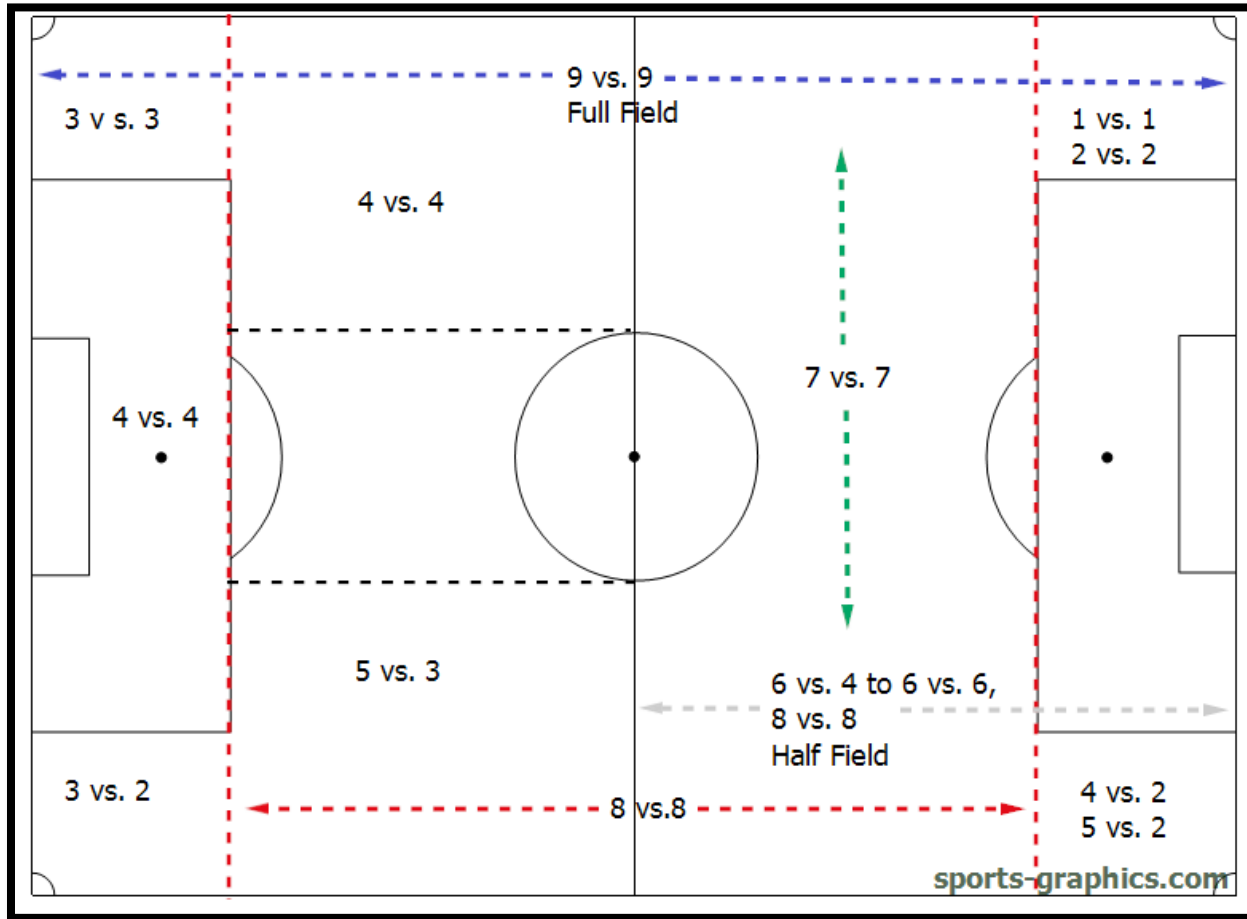
## A New Reality



- New Laws of the Game for Zone 1
  - Development Field – 7 vs. 7 – 9 and 10 year olds with a build out line in each half.

# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality



Possible division of a 9-a-side field for training session purposes.

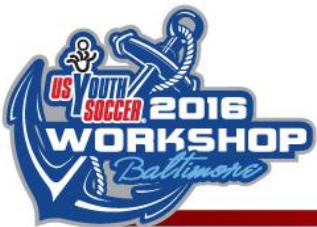


# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality



Possible side-by-side set up. The fields on the right could be 4-a-side mini fields or 7-a-side development fields. The large field could be for 9-a-side teams or a 11-a-side large field for teenagers.



# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality

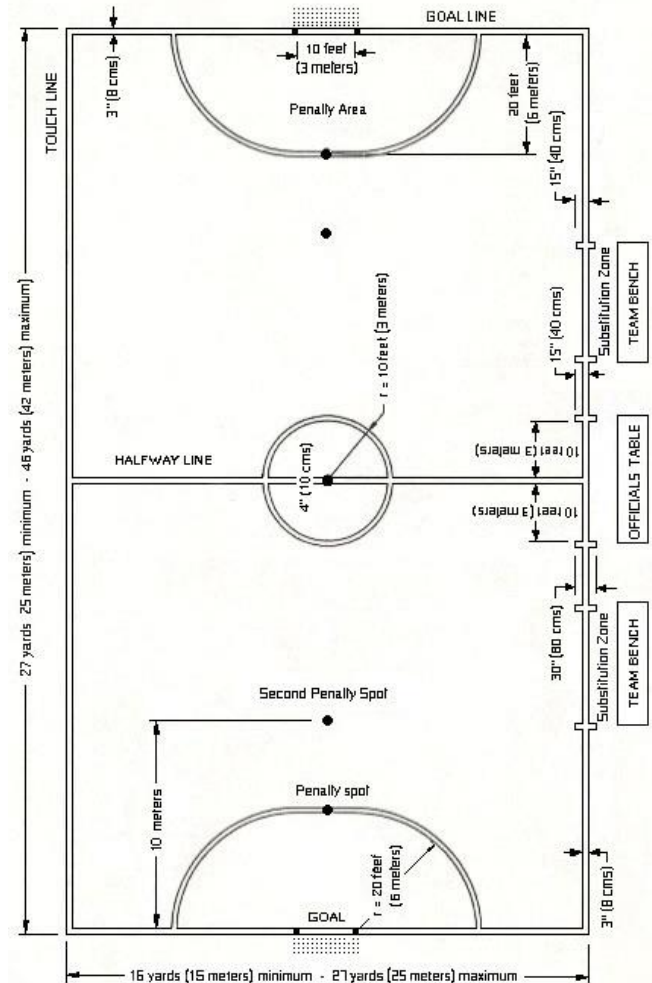
Playing in the snow – Lansing, MI.



Futsal – indoors or outside –  
is always a good option.



If official dimensions are required, you are advised to use metric measurements.



# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality



Futsal, for players 10 and older, is always a good small-sided game option for development and pure enjoyment.



# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality

- Logistics
  - Goals
    - Manufactured goals
    - Cones, corner flags, bicycle flags



# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality

- Logistics
  - Referees
    - Parents as the refs for 6 and Under
    - Coaches as the refs for 8 and Under
    - Novice referee program for 10 and Under
    - Young referee program for 12 and Under



# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality

- Logistics
  - Coaches
    - Volunteers
    - Head coach + assistants for the dual field option
    - Master coach for an age group – oversees and advises all coaches working in the age group





# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality

- Logistics
  - Rosters
    - A range is provided to accommodate various club sizes, facilities accessibility, scheduling demands, player availability and single field to dual field set up



Formations

# SMALL-SIDED GAMES

## A NEW REALITY



# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality

- Tactics
  - Formations
    - 6 and Under: 4
    - 8 and Under: 2-2 or 1-2-1
    - 10 and Under: 1-3-3 [players are still learning the midfield line] or 1-3-2-1
      - Advanced: 1-2-3-1
    - 12 and Under: 1-3-3-2 or 1-3-4-1 or 1-4-3-1
      - Advanced: 1-2-4-2



# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality



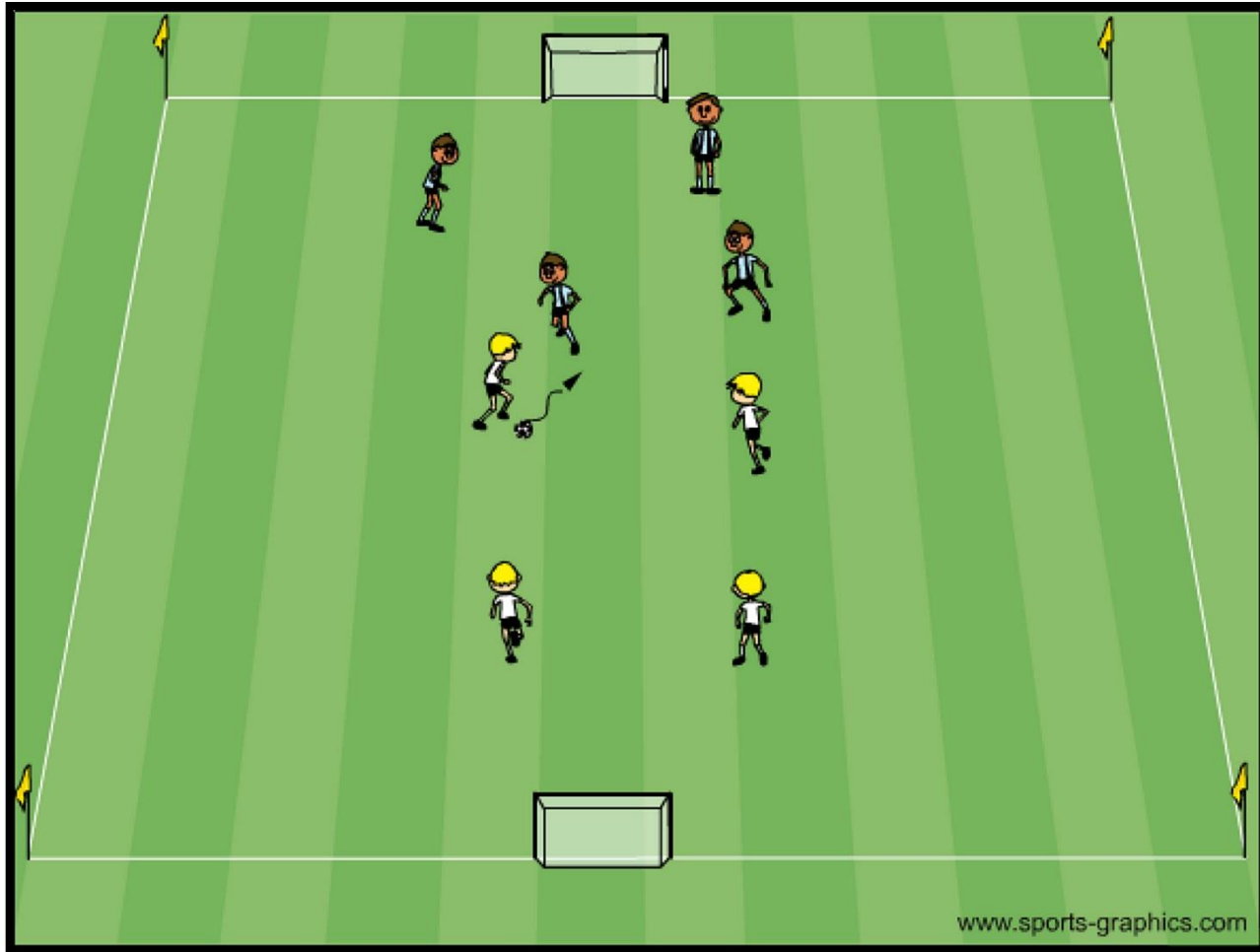
If you wish to play with smaller numbers of players for children 5-years-old and younger then please do so.



# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality

6 and Under  
4 vs. 4



Beehive

Mini Field



# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality

### Developmental Targets

- 6 and Under-
  - Fitness: Introduce the idea of how to warm-up and movement education. Begin education about nutrition with players and parents. Balance, walking, running, how to start and stop, jumping, hopping, rolling, skipping, changing direction, bending, twisting and reaching.
  - Technique: Dribbling (stop and start) and shooting. Experiment with the qualities of a rolling ball.



# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality

### Developmental Targets

- 6 and Under-
  - Psychology: Sharing, fair play, parental involvement, “how to play” and emotional management.
  - Tactics: Where is the field? The concept of boundary lines, at which goal to shoot and playing with the ball wherever it may go.



# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality

8 and Under  
4 vs. 4



2-2



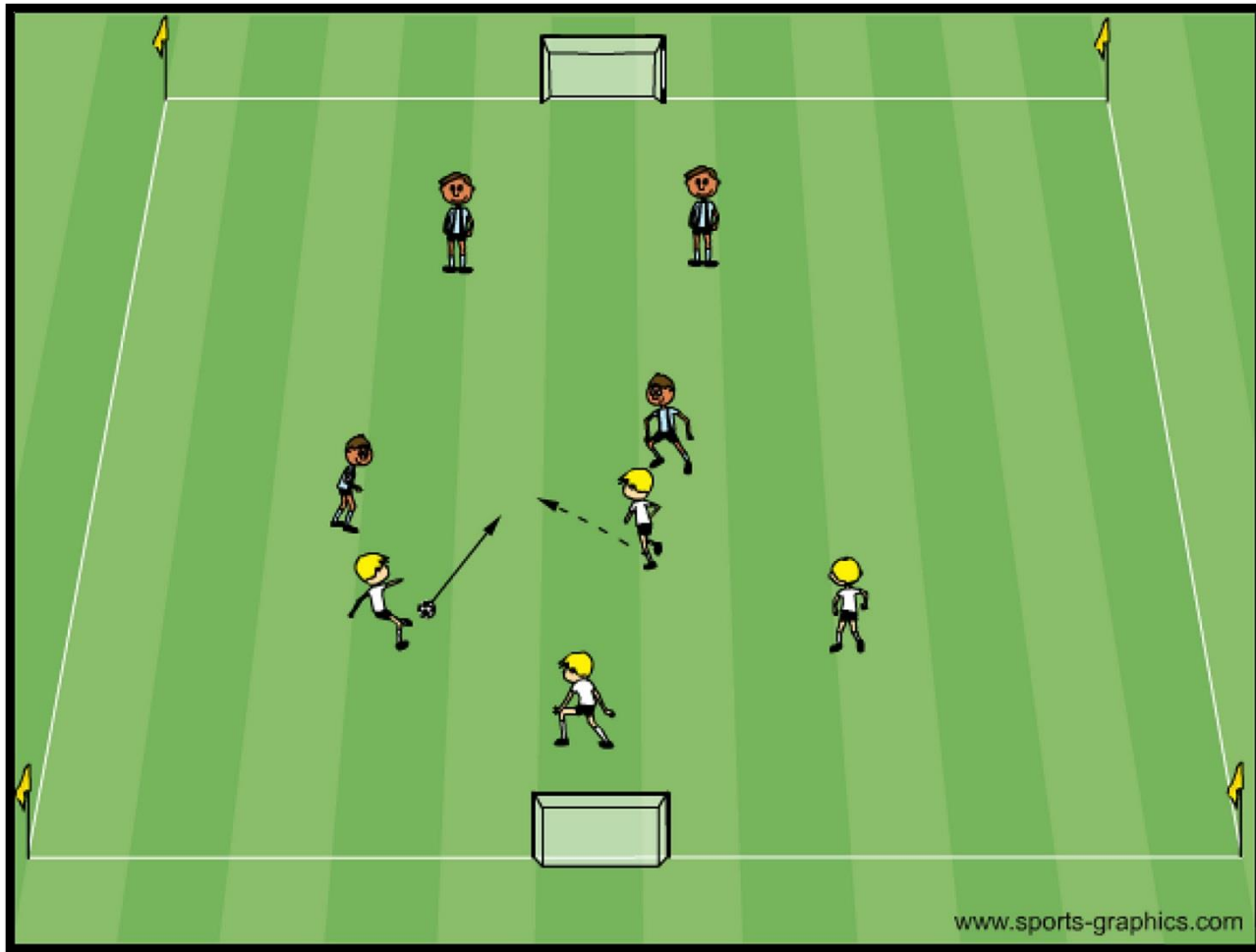
Mini Field



# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality

8 and Under  
4 vs. 4



1-2-1



Mini Field

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# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality

### Developmental Targets

- 8 and Under-
  - Technique: Experiment with the qualities of a rolling or spinning ball. Introduce ball lifting, juggling, block tackle, receiving ground balls with the inside and sole of the foot, shooting with the inside of the foot, toe passing and shooting and dribbling while changing direction. Introduce the push pass.
  - Fitness: Agility, eye-foot and eye-hand coordination, balance, leaping, bounding, tumbling, catching, throwing, pulling, pushing, warm-up activities and movement education. Continue education on sports nutrition with players and parents.



# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality

### Developmental Targets

- 8 and Under-

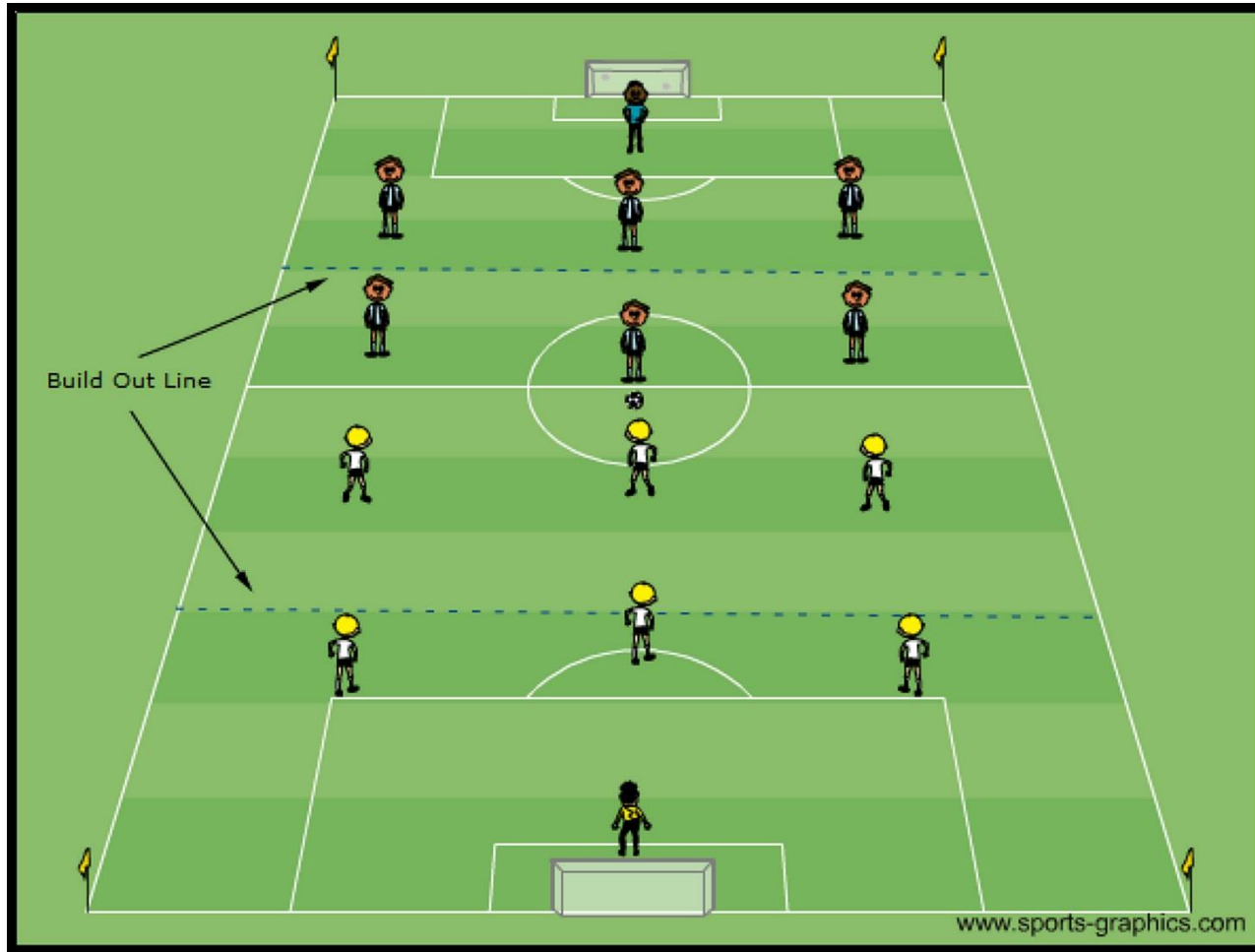
- Psychology: Encourage working in pairs, sportsmanship, parental involvement, how to play, emotional management, creativity, dynamic activities, participation of all players in a safe and fun environment. There is still a short attention span unless the player has peaked (keep interest high). Like to show what they can do - encourage trying new things. Developing self-esteem - activities should foster positive feedback and attainable positive success.
- Tactics: Back line and forward line, 1v1 attack and choosing to dribble or pass. Introduce the names of positions (fullbacks and forwards). Institute games of 2v1, 1v2 and 2v2, playing with the ball with a purpose and promote problem solving.



# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality

10 and  
Under  
7 vs. 7



1-3-3



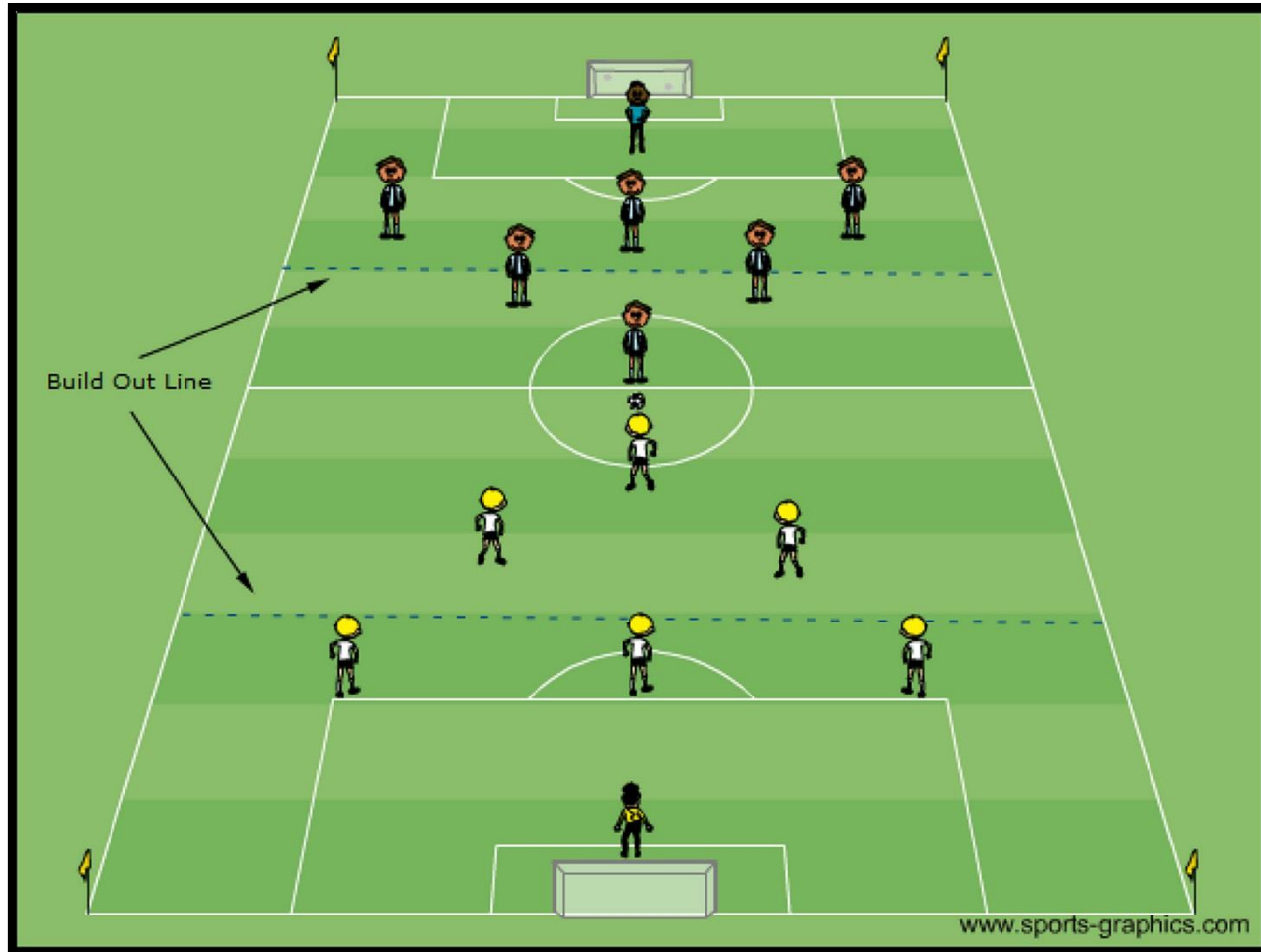
Development Field

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# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality

10 and  
Under  
7 vs. 7



1-3-2-1



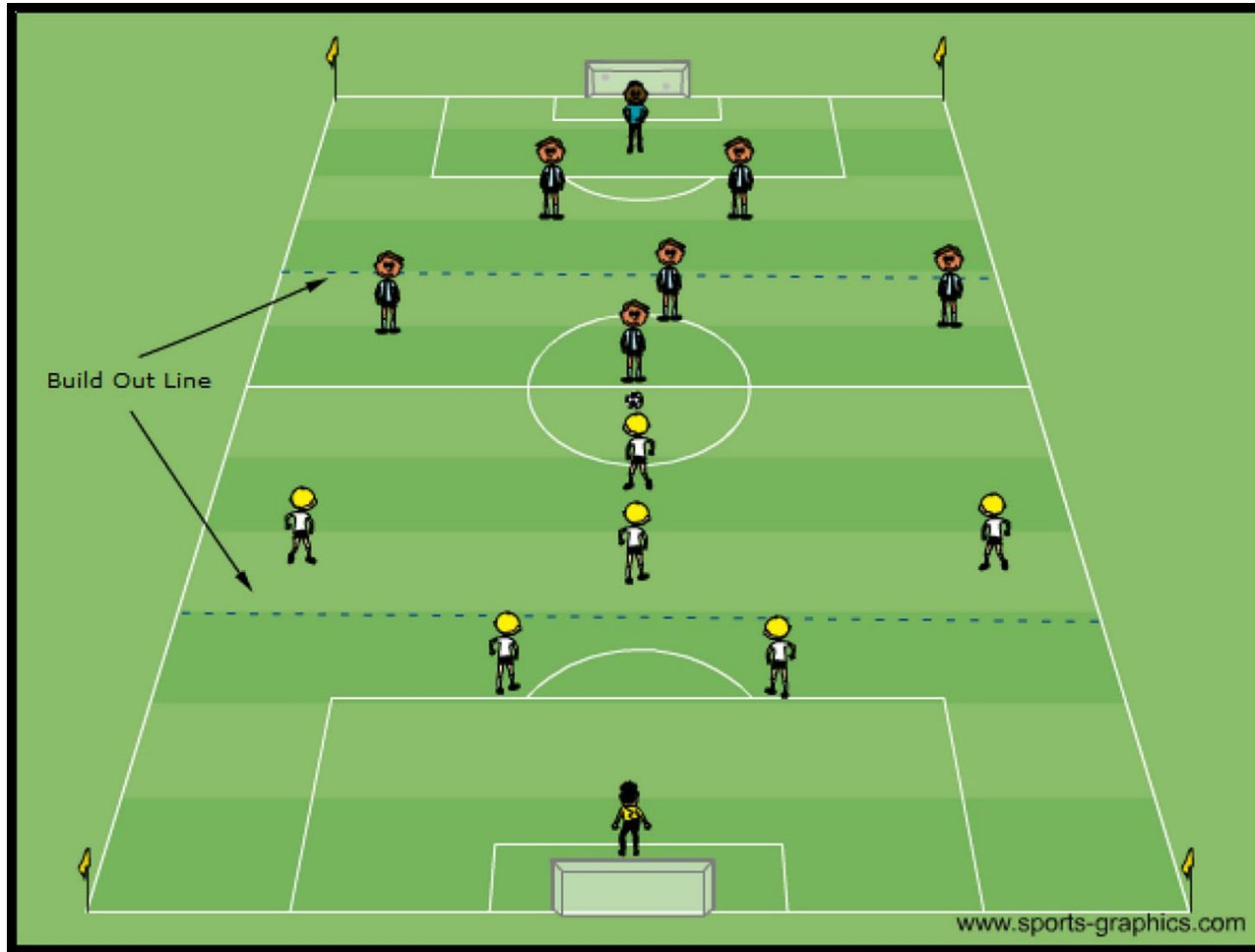
Development Field

[USYOUTHSOCCER.ORG](http://USYOUTHSOCCER.ORG)

# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality

10 and  
Under  
7 vs. 7



1-2-3-1

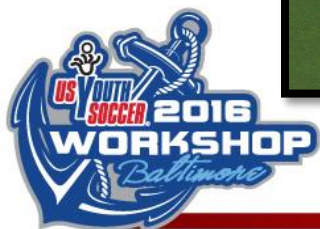
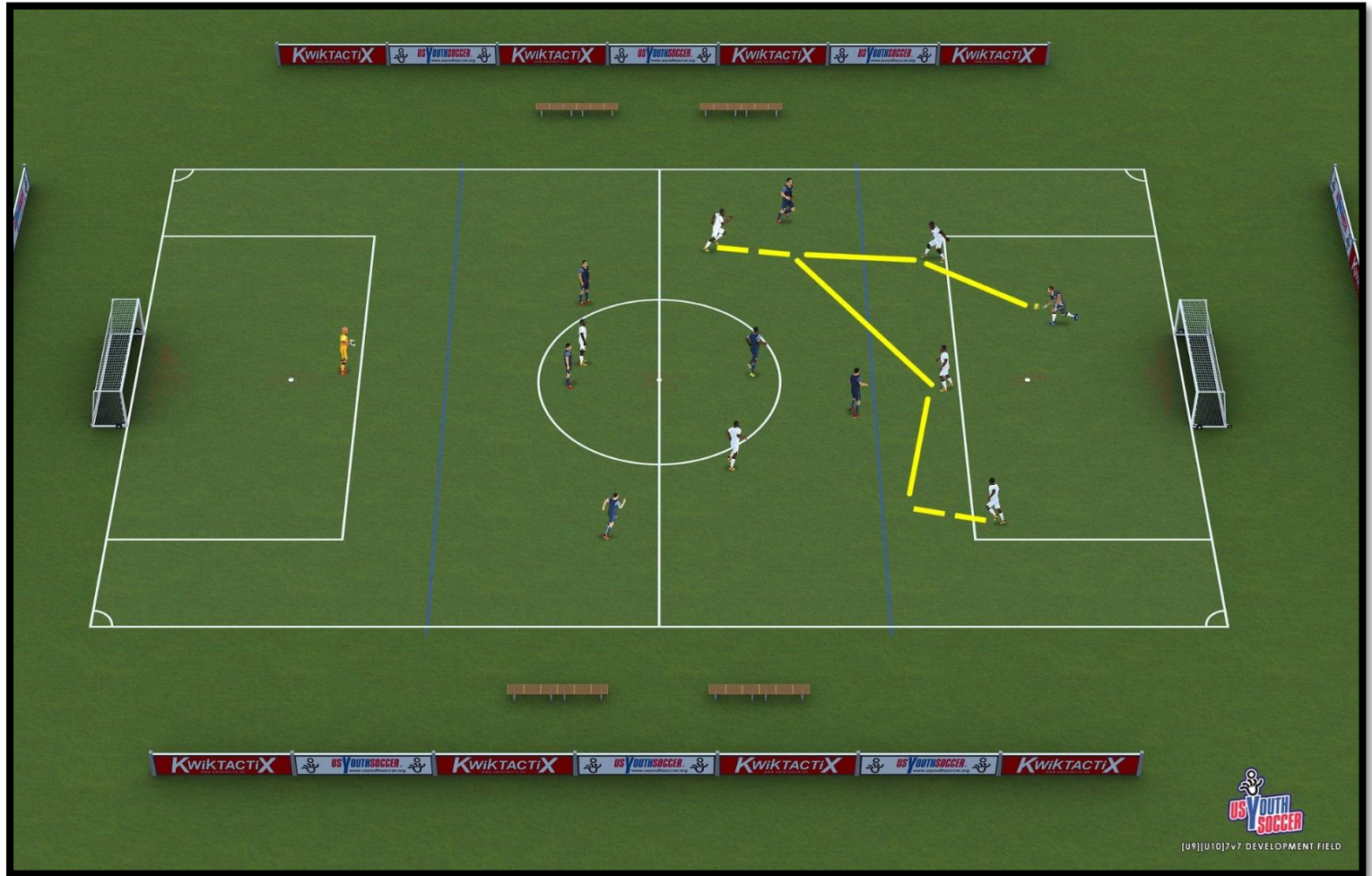


Development Field

[USYOUTHSOCCER.ORG](http://USYOUTHSOCCER.ORG)

# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality



# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality

### Developmental Targets

- 10 and Under-

- Technique: Experiment with the qualities of a bouncing ball and running with the ball, passing with the inside and outside of the foot (emphasis on quality push pass), instep drive, receiving ground balls with the instep and outside of foot (body behind the ball), receiving bouncing balls with the instep (cushion) and the sole, inside and outside of foot (wedge), fakes in dribbling and turning with the ball. Introduce heading and crossing. Practice throw-ins. For goalkeepers: ready stance, getting the feet set, how to hold a ball after a save, diamond grip, catching shots at the keeper, punting, recovery from down to the ground and up to set position and footwork exercises. Also introduce goal kicks and throwing.
- Psychology: Keep soccer enjoyable to foster a desire to play using self-motivation. Working in groups of three, four or five, stay focused for one entire half. There is an increase in responsibility, sensitivity, awareness of how to win or lose gracefully, fair play, parental involvement, how to play, communication and emotional management.





# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality

### Developmental Targets

- 10 and Under-
  - Fitness: Factors are endurance, range of motion flexibility, rhythm exercises and running mechanics. Any fitness activities must be done with the ball. Introduce body resistance exercises and the idea of cool down.
  - Tactics: 1v1 defending, roles of 1st attacker and defender, 2v1 attacking, what it means to get goal-side, small group shape in pairs and threes (emphasize support on both attack and defense), playing on and around the ball as a group with purpose, playing a variety of positions to develop the complete player, introduce the principles of attack and set plays.



# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality

12 and  
Under  
9 vs. 9

1-3-3-2



Small Sided Field



# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality

12 and  
Under  
9 vs. 9



1-3-4-1



Small Sided Field

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# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality

12 and  
Under  
9 vs. 9

1-4-3-1



Small Sided Field



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# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality

12 and  
Under  
9 vs. 9

1-2-4-2



Small Sided Field



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# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality

### Developmental Targets

- 12 and Under -
  - Technique: moving throw-in, master the qualities of a bouncing spinning ball. Experiment with the qualities of a flighted ball, feints on the ball, receiving bouncing and air balls with the thigh and chest, first touch receiving, heading to score goals and for clearances while standing or jumping, outside of foot passing, receiving with either foot, short passing with both feet, bending shots, crossing to near post space and penalty spot space and heel and flick passing. Introduce half volley and volley shooting, chipping to pass and slide tackle. For goalkeepers: W grip, footwork, underarm bowling, side-arm throwing to targets, taking own goal kicks, side-winder kick, low and forward diving and angle and near post play. Introduce deflecting and boxing.



# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality

### Developmental Targets

- 12 and Under -
  - Tactics: 2v1 defending, 2v2 attacking and defending, roles of 2nd attacker and defender, man-to-man defense, combination passing, playing on and around the ball as a group with purpose, verbal and visual communication for all positions, halftime analysis, general work on all restarts, wall pass at a variety of angles, passing combinations on the move and rotation of all players through the team – everyone plays in each position. Reinforce the principles of defense. For goalkeepers: positional play, basic angle play (ebb and flow) – into and down the line of the flight of the ball, commanding the goalmouth for the goalkeeper and positioning during a penalty kick and communication.



# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality

### Developmental Targets

- 12 and Under -
  - Psychology: Keep it fun and enjoyable to foster a desire to play, self-motivation. Focus on teamwork, confidence, desire, mental skills, handling distress, how to learn from each match, fair play, parental involvement and emotional management (discipline).





# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality

### Developmental Targets

- 12 and Under -
  - Fitness: Fitness work continues to be done with the ball. Strength can be improved with body resistance and aerobic exercises. Also focus on agility at speed (sharp turns), acceleration, deceleration, reaction speed, range of motion exercises, proper warm-up and cool-down (include static stretching in the cool-down) are highly recommended now.



# Small-Sided Games

## A New Reality

2016

The year we begin giving the game back to the players!

