

SOCCER PRACTICE GAMES

"Monster Invasion" (Dribbling & concept of a field, U-6)

Summary: Tell the players that a Monster is coming to try to steal their pet ball and that they must keep it away from the Monster by dribbling it around the field (tell them they must stay inside the field). The Coach or a parent is the monster. Ideas: drag your leg like Frankenstein, make monster noises, make a face, and say things like "Don't let me get your ball!!" But don't actually scare them. The idea is just to have them try to get away. Don't catch the players, just have fun.

Set-up:

1. A ball for every player.
2. Use disk cones or markers to make a square field about 10 steps by 10 steps (or smaller if you have only a few players).

Teaches:

1. "Control Dribbling"
2. The concept of a "field" and staying inside the lines ("in bounds") and that it's bad to go "out of bounds"
3. Controlling the ball while under pressure
4. Using peripheral vision
5. Looking up while dribbling
6. Dribbling in "traffic" with a lot of other players nearby

Comments: Whether children continue to play soccer will have a lot to do with whether it is fun at early ages. Soccer Help Practice Games are designed to be fun, to teach important skills and concepts, and to keep players active. We don't use "knock-out" or elimination games which leave kids standing on the sideline and we don't use games such as "Crab Soccer" which are fun but have many kids crawling on the ground instead of learning to play soccer. There are thousands of drills on the Internet, but most are not well thought out, efficient, effective or fun. Most drills and games do not provide enough touches on the ball or the activity level is too low (i.e., there is too much standing around) to meet Soccer Help standards. Soccer Help Practice Games are selected from hundreds we have tried and less than 5% of the games we evaluate are selected for Soccer Help Premium. We believe in positive motivation and don't believe in punishing a child who has tried their best but lost a Practice Game. Thus, we do not recommend punishing the losers or making the losers leave the game.

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