

1 - Short Passing

This is the most basic and essential skill for all ages and playing positions. Don't apologise for including practice time on short passing repeatedly. Some unopposed passing work should be a part of most training sessions; use brief and regular practices and include a variety of drills to keep it interesting. Short passing may usefully form part of the warm-up or cool-down.

Encourage players to use both feet to pass over short distances from a young age. Develop one touch passing as players get more confident. Passing with the outside of the foot combined with disguise should be included with older players.

Do not ignore or excuse careless short passing, encourage players to take responsibility to do it well. When short passing is weak use the check list below to identify specifically what is going on and try to sort it out. Good basic technique in this area is the foundation of many other football skills.

Coaching Points - Observe the following details:

- ✓ Look at the body language: Does the player look balanced and alert?
- ✓ Knees should be bent and arms slightly away from body. Are they playing on their toes?
- ✓ The ball should not be stuck under their feet, make sure they get it out into a comfortable playing distance
- ✓ Do they have a clear mental image of where they are passing to?
- ✓ Failure to look up and observe the target player is a very common cause of inaccurate passing
- ✓ Encourage them to make eye contact with the intended target if possible
- ✓ Communication is often lacking with young players, insist players make a habit of calling for the pass
- ✓ As they step up to the ball is the standing foot beside the ball and pointing towards the target?
- ✓ Does their head stay steady throughout the pass?
- ✓ Contact should be with the large inside area of the foot, not with the inside or end of the big toe
- ✓ The point of contact with the ball : horizontal mid-line and vertical centre line so it goes straight and low
- ✓ Do they follow through? The kicking leg should continue in the direction of pass and not across the body
- ✓ They should keep the foot low on the follow through to keep the ball on the ground, not up-swinging
- ✓ Look at the pace of the pass, it should be firm without being impossible to control

Useful Drills

1	Criss-Cross	9	Two Steps Forward...	20	Escalator
2	Diamond Drill	10	Up, Back and Through	21	My Space
3	Zig-Zag	11	Lay-Off	47	Double Dutch
4	Empty Corner	12	Big Touch		
5	Figure of Eight	13	Back Foot		
6	Square Dance	14	Man On		
7	Pass 'n' Move	15	Let it Run		
8	One Touch	19	Invasion		