

As a coach, you have a major influence on your athletes. Not only will you affect the development of their skills and long-term enjoyment of the sport, you will also play a role in their development as individuals. It is important that you have effective resources to help you.

The Coaching Association of Canada, in partnership with the national sport organizations, compiled the following coaching tips.

#1 The Through Ball Game 1



Use this practice for passing and support, composed build-up play, forward and diagonal runs, forward and diagonal passing, reading the game, timing runs into space, and controlling the speed of the game.

Divide the players into 2 teams of 6 to 8, plus 2 goalkeepers and play across half a soccer pitch between penalty area and halfway line, or use the complete half of a soccer pitch.

- The game begins with the designated goalkeeper rolling the ball to one of the players, who must pass the ball to his/her team-mates so that they successfully complete 5 consecutive passes.
- Once this is achieved, they must try to keep passing until they can send a “through ball” to one of their team-mates in the other half of the field. This player must then try to score past the other goalkeeper. If the opposing players win the ball in the meantime, or they gain possession because the ball goes out of play, then they too must make 5 consecutive passes before sending a through ball into the other half of the field. Once the “through player” touches the ball, all the players can enter the other half. The attacking players can finish any rebounds and the defenders can gain possession and repeat the procedure in the opposite direction.
- If a goal is scored or the goalkeeper saves, then the ball is given to the defending team to begin the process again in order to attack the opposite goal.
- All players must remain inside one half until the through ball is played. Defenders must stay in one half until the “through player” touches the ball. There are no offsides, no corner kicks and throw-ins are replaced by kick-ins.

Progressions can be added by having all players limited to 2 touches with the exception of the through player who is “free” until a shot is taken. In addition allow all players to enter the other half of the field as soon as the through ball is played.

The coach should encourage the attacking players to spread out wide and long; maintain an open body position to see as much of the field as possible; be composed and play with head up; pass the ball and support it; keep the ball moving; listen for the call and look for the run; and lead the through run with the pass.

