



THE HANDBOOK



The FA Pokémon Youth Futsal Programme
visit [thefa.com/pokemonfutsal](https://www.thefa.com/pokemonfutsal) to find out more.

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1. INTRODUCTION TO FUTSAL



INTRODUCTION

Entering your club or school in the FA Pokémon Futsal Cup will provide many benefits to your players

- **Develop skills**
- **Improve decision making**
- **Learn to innovate on the pitch**
- **Develop different game strategies**
- **Gain more flexible movement**
- **Learn different tactics**

Futsal is a fast paced, skilful, tactical small sided game that is really enjoyable for anyone that plays.

FUTSAL - HOW IT BEGAN

Futsal was first played on basketball courts in Uruguay in the 1930s. As a fast moving, skilful version of football, it soon spread to other South American countries such as Brazil. Futsal became popular in large, crowded cities where there was a shortage of football pitches.

The skills and techniques developed by playing Futsal were very apparent in the wonderful World Cup winning Brazilian teams of the 1970s and still today most Brazilian children will mostly play Futsal until they are 14 before specialising in either Football or Futsal thereafter.

Now Futsal is recognised not only as a development tool for football, but as a brilliant game in its own right. Futsal has been embedded into the England DNA at the highest level. It promotes the key technical, tactical, physical and social attributes and skills that the FA would wish to see in young players.

WHAT THE MANAGERS AND THE PLAYERS SAY ABOUT FUTSAL:

AS A KID
I GREW UP PLAYING
THE INFORMAL
FREE-FLOWING
STYLE OF FUTSAL
FROM 4V4
TO 5V5...
THE FAST PACED
ATTACKING
STYLE OF PLAY
HAS TRULY HELPED SHAPE
ME INTO THE PLAYER I AM TODAY
AND HOW I **PERFORM**
ON THE **PITCH**

JADON SANCHO,
MIDFIELDER - ENGLAND



FUTSAL

REQUIRES PLAYERS
TO THINK AND ACT **FAST**
**THE CONSTRAINTS OF
THE GAME**

REQUIRE ALL PLAYERS
TO MAKE GOOD DECISIONS
UNDER HIGH

» **PRESSURE** «

YOU CAN REALLY SEE WHY MANY
FOOTBALLING

GREATS

HAVE GROWN UP WITH THE **GAME**
**AS A CONSTANT PART OF THEIR
DEVELOPMENT**



MICHAEL SKUBALA,
ENGLAND FUTSAL HEAD COACH



**FUTSAL IS A
GREAT GAME**
IN ITSELF AND FOR
YOUNG PLAYERS
TO TRANSFER THE SKILLS
THEY LEARN TO
FOOTBALL

IT'S **FAST**

END-TO-END
WITH LOTS OF
OPPORTUNITY

TO GET TOUCHES OF
A BALL

WHICH PLAYERS OF ALL AGES LOVE

GARETH SOUTHGATE,
ENGLAND SENIOR MEN'S MANAGER

LET YOUR FUTSAL
ADVENTURE BEGIN...



2. GETTING STARTED

In preparing to take part in the FA Pokémon Futsal Cup it's essential that your team prepares with a genuine Futsal experience and not just play normal five a side. Futsal involves these five essential criteria:

1.

THE GAME IS PLAYED TO LINES AND FUTSAL PITCH MARKINGS

(either permanently through tape or just by temporarily marking the pitch with flat disc markers).



2.

USE OF A FUTSAL BALL



3.

USE OF FUTSAL GOALS



4.

MATCHES PLAYED TO FIFA FUTSAL LAWS OF THE GAME



5.

MATCHES PLAYED ON A HARD-PLAYING SURFACE
(not on grass or an artificial surface)

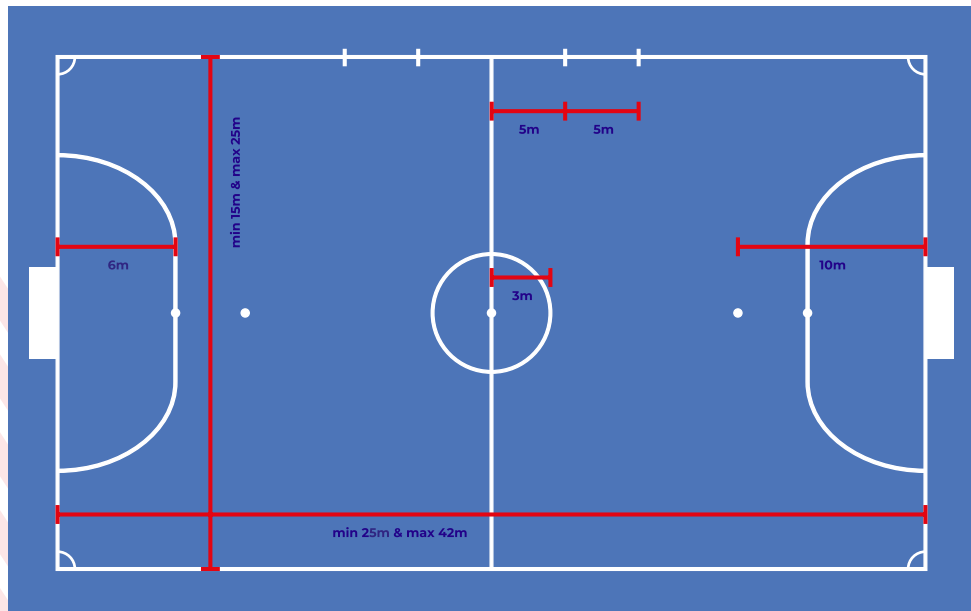


3. THE RULES OF THE GAME



GENERAL RULES

PLAYING AREA:



FUTSAL PLAYING AREA DIMENSIONS ARE ABOVE.

A hard surface is required. Indoors is preferable but outdoors on a hard surface is also fine. The game cannot be played on grass or on artificial grass pitches.

The pitch has marked lines so that the ball can go out of play. Futsal cannot be played with board or wall surrounds.

THE BALL:

Playing with a Futsal ball is essential. The ball is smaller, heavier and bounces less than a normal football. Futsal balls are available in age appropriate sizes.



U12 and Under
Size 3
Futsal Ball



U14s - Seniors
Size 4
Futsal Ball

GOALS:

Futsal goals are 3m × 2m (the same as Hockey or Handball goal size). The goalposts and crossbars should be a different colour to the pitch.

Safety is always the first consideration with any goalposts. The goals should be secured so that they do not collapse or overturn.

Portable goals should only be used if they comply with the above.

TIMING OF GAMES:

A Futsal match consists of two 20-minute halves real time. This means that the clock stops whenever the ball goes out of play. However, at a grassroots level, you may need to use a running clock and adjust the duration of games to match the availability of the facility and the number of games to be played.

Each team is allowed a 60-second time out in each half.

MATCH OFFICIALS:

Two referees are normal at games, but one can manage with younger age groups.

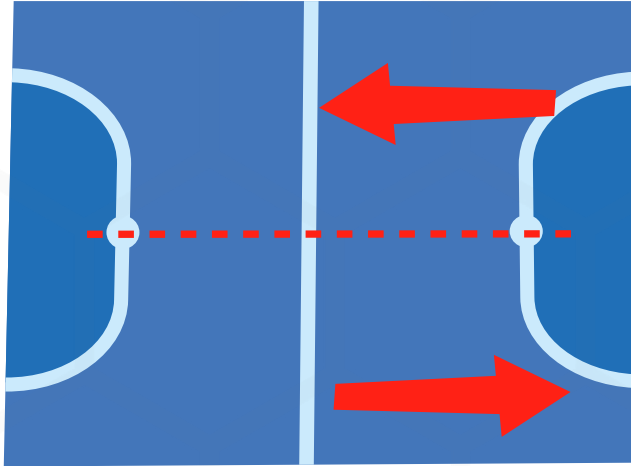
All referees are able to officiate a Futsal game, even if they are not fully qualified. At grassroots level, the aim is to get more children playing the game. The number of officials available should not prevent this.

GOALKEEPERS:

Goalkeepers are allowed to come OUT of the penalty area. Outfield players are allowed IN the penalty area.

A goal clearance must be thrown out by the goalkeeper. The goalkeeper cannot touch the ball again until he or she has crossed into the opponent's half or a member of the opposition has touched the ball.

The four second rule also applies to the goalkeeper in possession.



ROLLING SUBSTITUTIONS:

There is no limit on how long a player must stay on or off the pitch. Players must enter and leave the field of play from the substitution zone.

Roll on or roll off substitutions can be made at any time during the game with permission from the referee, including players who have already been substituted.

SLIDING TACKLES:

Slide tackles are not permitted in Youth Futsal in England (up to age U16). The only time players ARE permitted to slide is to keep the ball in play.

HEAD HEIGHT:

There are no restrictions on the height of the ball in Futsal.

BACK PASSES:

Once the goalkeeper has played the ball, he/she cannot touch the ball again unless an opposition player has touched the ball, or if the goalkeeper receives the ball in the opponent's half.

FOUR SECOND LAW:

When the ball goes out of play, the player in possession of the ball has four seconds to restart play with a kick-in, goal clearance, corner kick or free kick.

Referees count with their fingers in the air to show how many seconds.

If play has not restarted within the four second limit, a free kick will be awarded to the opposing team. Goalkeepers are not allowed to control the ball for more than four seconds in their own half.

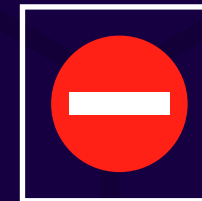
KICK INS AND RESTARTS:

KICK INS:

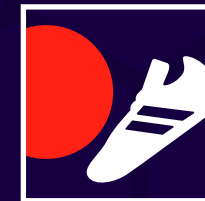
To restart the game after a ball has gone out of play, the ball is kicked back into play from the touch line and from corners.

The ball must be stationary on the touch line.

The feet of the player taking the kick in must not cross the line.

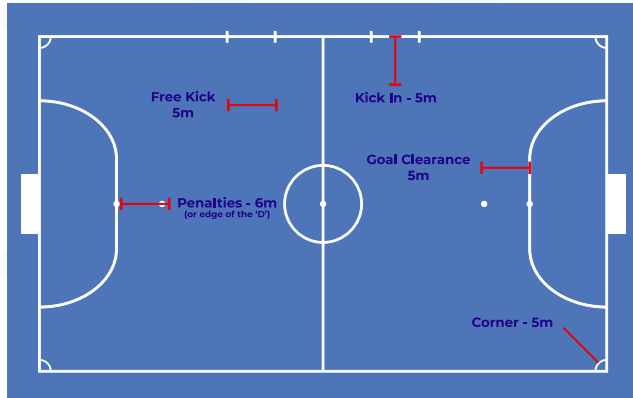


No Throw Ins



Kick The Ball Only

RESTARTS:



OPPOSITION PLAYERS ARE REQUIRED TO REMAIN 5M FROM THE BALL AT RESTARTS.

KICK IN = 5 METRES

GOAL CLEARANCES = 5 METRES

FREEKICKS = 5 METRES

CORNERS = 5 METRES

PENALTIES = 6 METRES OR EDGE OF THE 'D'

ACCUMULATED FOULS AND RED CARDS:

ACCUMULATED FOULS:

Each team will be allowed to give away five direct free kicks in each half. On the sixth foul, a 10m penalty kick is awarded to the opposing team and every foul after that in the same half is also a 10m penalty.

The defending team is not allowed to position any players (other than the goalkeeper) between the ball and the goal. The kick may be taken from the 10m mark or, if the foul was committed closer to the goal than 10m, from the position where the foul took place.

RED CARDS:

If a player is sent off, their team must remain with four players until either two minutes have passed or the opposition has scored a goal.



YOU'VE
MASTERED
THE RULES,
NOW
IT'S TIME
FOR THE
ACTION...



4. ON THE PITCH



BASIC FUTSAL CONCEPTS



CONTROL



HOW TO

It is easiest to control the ball if players use the sole of the foot.

It is also important for the players to be able to shield the ball to keep it away from the defender. This requires the player to keep their body between the defender and the ball and keep the ball at the furthest foot from the defender.



Sole Control



Shield the ball



Keep the ball far away

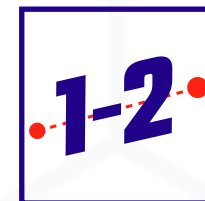


PASSING

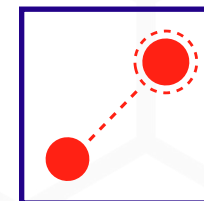


HOW TO

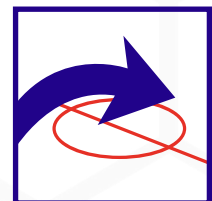
Common passes in Futsal are the 1-2 pass, diagonal passes between players, and little flick passes over the defender's feet for players to run on to.



1-2 Passing



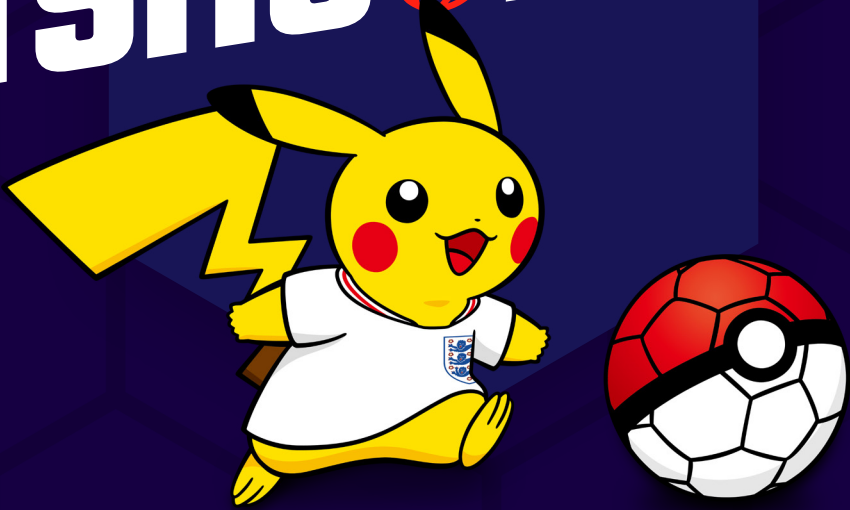
Diagonal Passes



Flick passes



SHOOTING



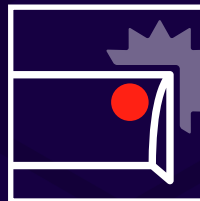
HOW TO

In addition to striking a ball with the laces or instep of the foot in **Futsal players often toe-poke the ball** because it creates lots of power with the very little back-lift of the shooting leg. In such a quick game, this is sometimes the **best way to catch defenders and goalkeepers unaware**.

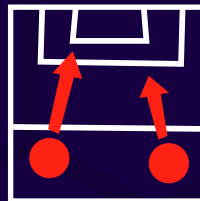
In Futsal because the goals are relatively small it is a characteristic of the game that many of the goals are scored as a 'tap-ins' at the second / far post to evade a goalkeeper who is able to cover much of the goal. As a consequence, **encourage your players to make support runs to fill these positions in attacks**.



Toe Poke



Catch goalkeepers unaware



Make support runs



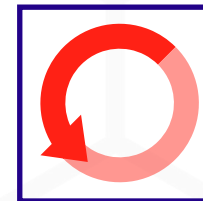
AGILITY



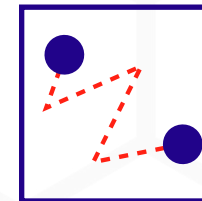
HOW TO

Because players are often marked tightly it is difficult to create space as an individual and as a team. So players often move once they have passed the ball to create space for a team mate to fill. **This is called rotation and as the ball and players are moving constantly eventually gaps in the defence appear**.

Futsal is an 'invasion game' and as such evading your marker is a key skill. A common way for players to find space to receive the ball is to run away so the defender follows them and **then 'check' back in to the original space to receive the ball**.



Rotation



Movement



Cut-back



DEFENCE

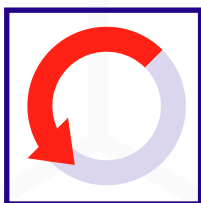


HOW TO

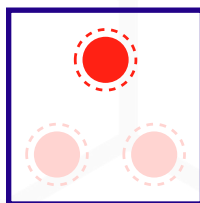
1v1 defending in Futsal is very important, so **players must defend on the half turn** with a low body position in order to change direction and follow the movements of the attacker.

Team defending is very important, so **players should try to cover their teammates.**

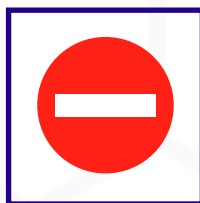
In Futsal, it is also common to have to defend 1v2 or 2v3. In this situation **players should try to position their body so that they block both the ball and a pass to the extra player.**



Defend on the half turn



Cover your team

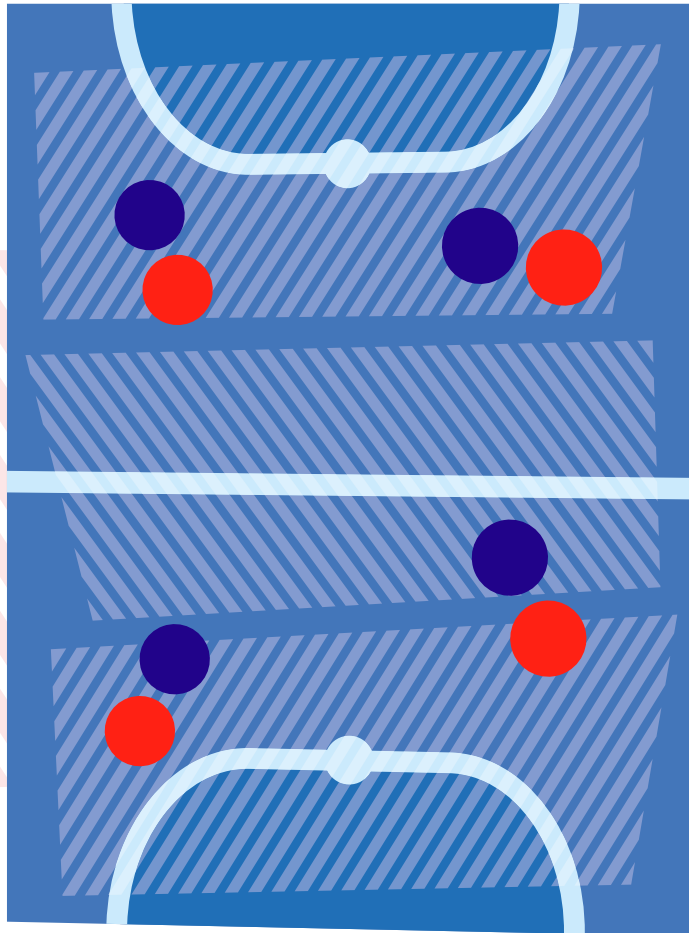


Block the pass



LET'S GET INTO SOME STRATEGY WORK...>

OUT OF POSSESSION STRATEGY



HOW TO

Stripe Zone - Zonal Marking
Red/Blue - Player Marking

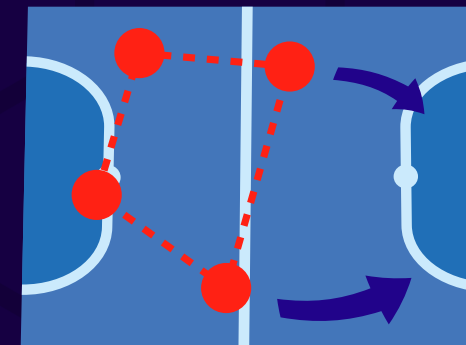
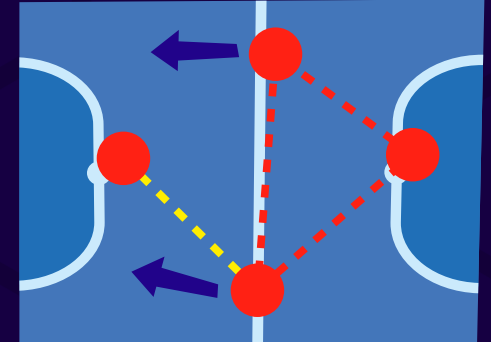
Depending on the players involved and the game situation most Futsal teams will adopt Zonal marking – this is where players have a designated zone to mark and try to press a player when they enter this zone. In some cases, such as defending a set piece or attempting to limit the impact of a particular opponent Player-Player marking may be adopted.



IN POSSESSION STRATEGY

3v1

The target player stands high up the court. The other three outfield players try to keep the ball and rotate until they can play the ball to the target player. Once the ball is played to the target player, the others aim to try and support this player. The target player can then either lay it off to their team mates or turn and shoot themselves.

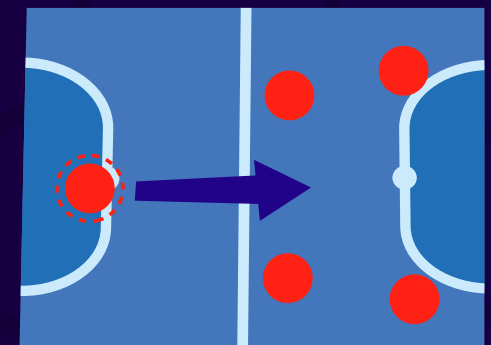


4v0

There is no set forward player. All 4 outfield players try to rotate and keep the ball in their own half to encourage the defenders out towards them. This leaves space behind the defenders to play clever passes for forward runs.

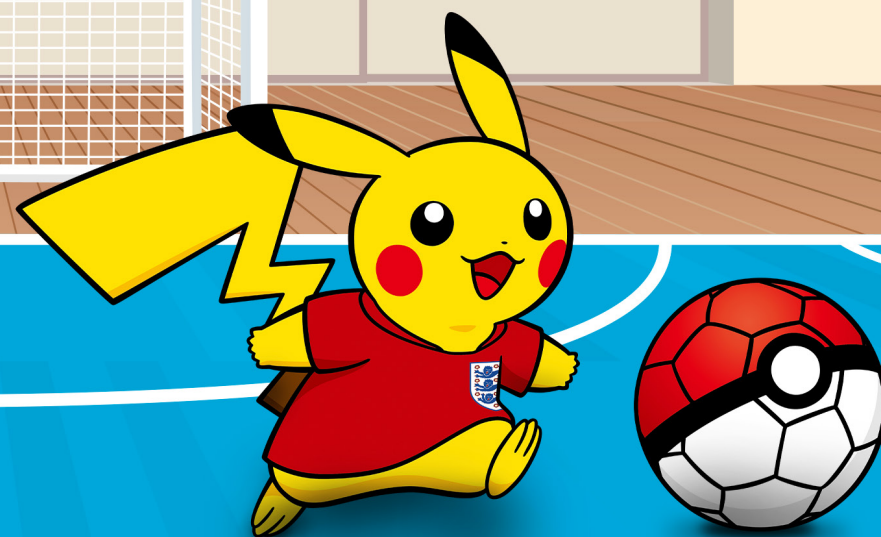
FLYING GOALKEEPER

This can be a high-risk strategy that is frequently adopted by teams that find themselves behind in a game. This tactic involves a designated keeper playing outside their area and seeking to create opportunities from the 5v4 overload. This can be an effective tactic but if possession is lost the goal is empty and the goalkeeper stranded upfield.



KEY WARM-UP ACTIVITIES

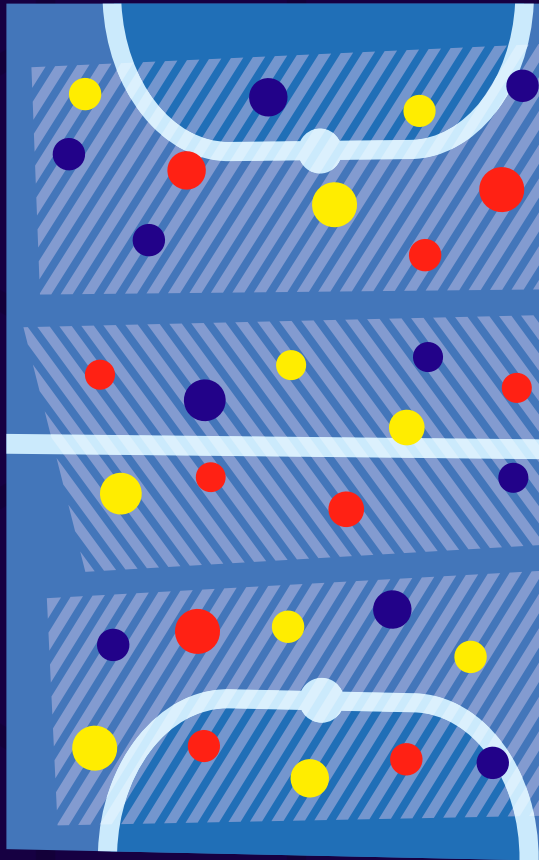
Before starting a match, there are some key warm-up activities your players can do to get into the right mindset and to help develop their skills.



**YOU'VE LEARNED THE BASICS.
LET'S EVOLVE INTO SOMETHING
MORE ADVANCED...**

COLOURS TAG:

SKILL-SET TO DEVELOP:
EXCITE WITH THE BALL AND
SEEK CREATIVE SOLUTIONS.



SET UP

- Split into 3 groups of 10.
- Play a normal game of tag but there will be 3 taggers (one from each group) instead of 1 tagger. Taggers will carry a Futsal ball and can only tag those of the same colour.
- Players tag each other by touching the opponent with a Futsal ball on the upper body and then passing them the ball so they become a tagger.

ADAPTATIONS AND PROGRESSIONS

- Give the attackers a Futsal ball and the defenders a bib. The defenders have to tackle them and dribble the ball and stop it on a boundary line. The attackers can tackle them back to keep their ball, but if the defender is successful, they keep the ball. The attacker takes their bib and becomes a defender.

DIFFERENTIATION

Easier:

- Setting coloured groups based on confidence.
- Allowing use of orange spots and loading zones as safe areas.

Harder:

- Use the safe spots as an inner square that some have to stay within so they are easier to catch.
- Add more taggers or tagging balls for certain groups.
- Create 1v1 tagging battles where players only chase each other.

CROSS THE COURT:

SKILL-SET TO DEVELOP:
EXCITE WITH THE BALL AND
SEEK CREATIVE SOLUTIONS.

SET UP

- Split into 3 groups – 8v2 in thirds of the court.
- The aim of the game is to cross the court without being tagged.
- If a player is tagged, they join the defenders in the middle.
- The winner is the last player to be caught.

ADAPTATIONS AND PROGRESSIONS

- Give the attackers a Futsal ball and the defenders have to tackle them and dribble the ball back over the start line. The attackers can tackle them back to keep their ball, but if they lose the ball, they put it in the bag and join the defenders.
- A nutmeg (putting the ball through an opponent's legs and collecting it on the other side) gives a player an extra life.
- Play the same game with one ball between 2 so the attackers have to pass the ball to each other to get across. The defender has to tackle or intercept and dribble the ball back over the start line. Two attackers would then put their ball away and join the defenders.

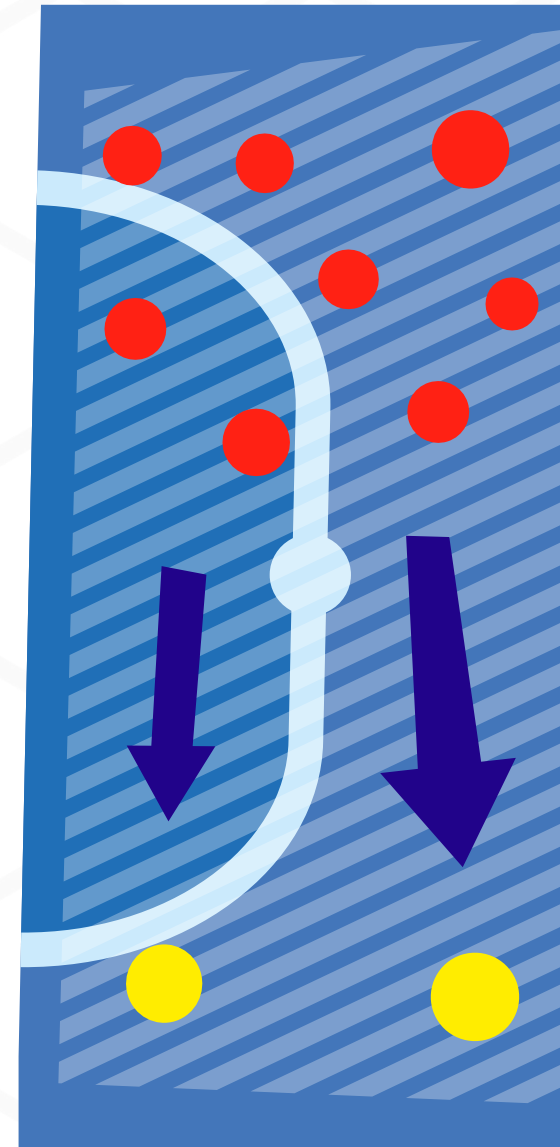
DIFFERENTIATION

Easier:

- Allow players to use safe spots dotted across the area. If a player puts their foot on a cone, they are safe. One person per cone at a time.

Harder:

- Funnel off a tight area which certain players have to stay within.
- Create 1v1 tagging battles.



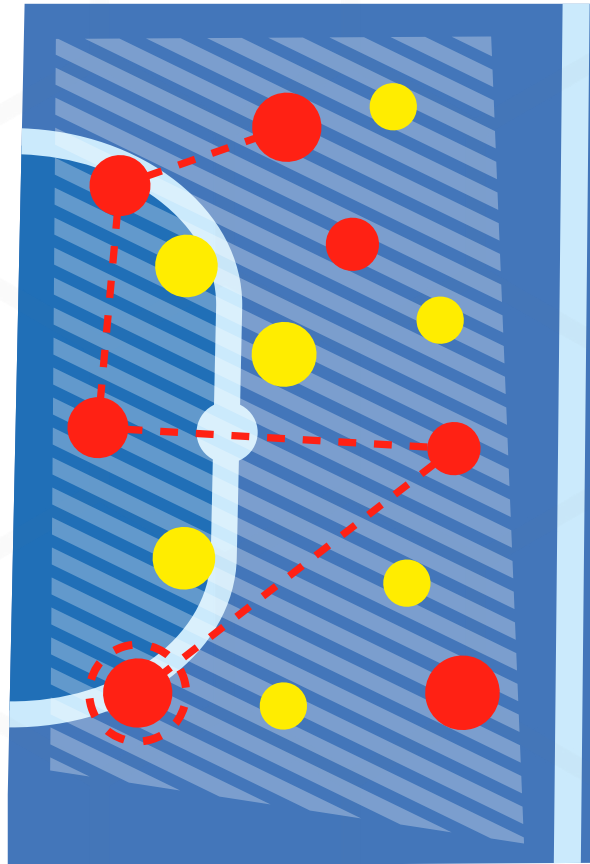
HANDBALL

KEEPBALL:

SKILL-SET TO DEVELOP:
CONNECT AND COMBINE
CREATIVELY WITH OTHERS.

SET UP

- Split into 3 groups across 3 thirds of the pitch.
- Split the group into 2 teams.
- The aim of the game is to make a set number of consecutive passes to gain a point by throwing and catching the ball within a team, without the opposition team intercepting the ball.
- The game is non-contact so the only way to gain possession is by intercepting.
- Players cannot move when they have the ball.
- The ball must be passed below head height.



ADAPTATIONS AND PROGRESSIONS

- Play using the feet.
- A nutmeg (putting the ball through an opponent's legs and collecting it in on the other side) counts as a point.
- A first time 1-2 pass around a defender or a flicked pass over an opponent's legs.
- Make it directional so teams have to pass to a teammate over the end line to score a point.

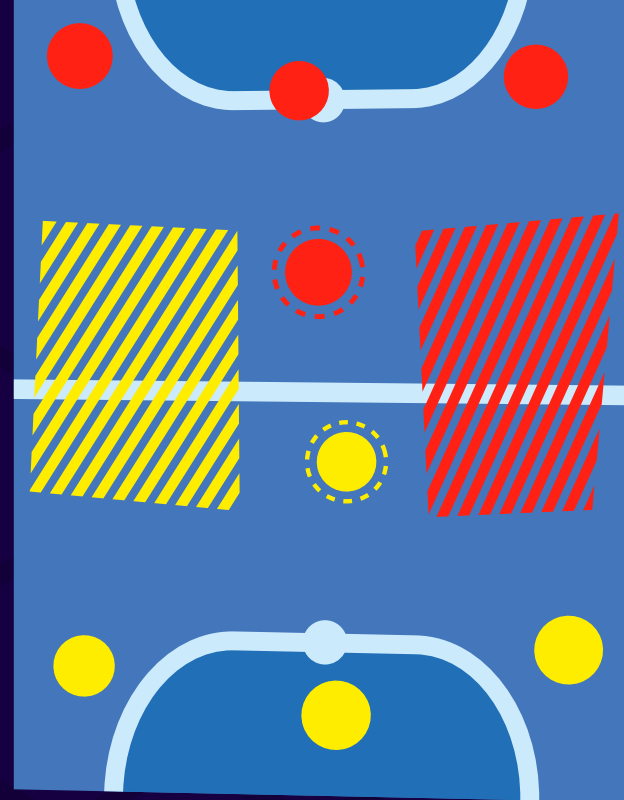
DIFFERENTIATION

Easier:

- Use some players from each team as 'floaters' (players who play for whichever team has the ball – they will never defend or tackle) to make it 3v3 +2 (5v3) or 2v2 + 4 (6v2).

Harder:

- Make passes through a certain sequence of players.
- Play with certain touch restrictions.



1v1 IN THEIR BOX:

SKILL-SET TO DEVELOP:
STAY ON THE BALL,
MASTER THE BALL.

SET UP

- With flat disks mark out x 2 adjacent 5m squares. Designate 1 yellow and 1 red.
- In groups of 3, with 1v1 in the service zone, and 1 referee who times the game.
- Players are tackling each other, trying to keep the ball for themselves.
- The aim of the game is for the red player to have possession of the ball in the red box when the one-minute time limit is up. The yellow player is trying to have possession of the ball in the yellow box.
- A player gains a point every time they win.
- Play for one minute, then switch around roles.

ADAPTATIONS AND PROGRESSIONS

- Switch around the players so they play against different opponents.
- A nutmeg (putting the ball through an opponent's legs and collecting it on the other side) counts as a point.
- If a player knocks the ball out of the playing area, the opponent gains a point.
- Play the same game 2v2.

DIFFERENTIATION

Easier:

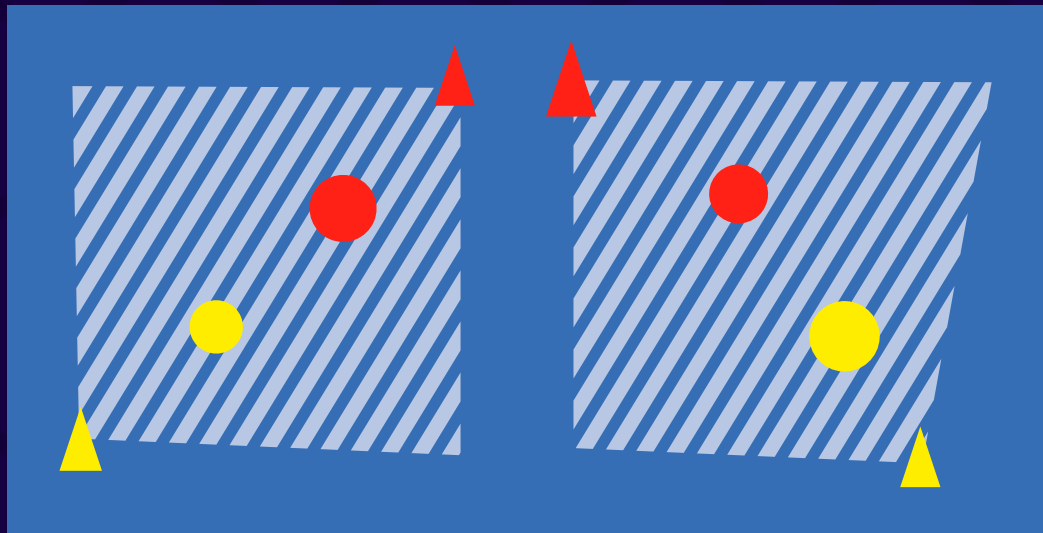
- Use the referee as a supporting player to make it 2v1.

Harder:

- Use the referee as a defending player to make it 1v2.

FUTSAL DUEL:

**SKILL-SET TO DEVELOP:
ONE ON ONE ATTACKING AND DEFENDING SKILLS.**



SET UP

- Organise the players into pairs. Each player gets two cones. The players make their own pitch by each making a 4m goal with the cones (i.e the distance between the cones is 4m). The distance between the goals should be 10m.
- The objective of the game is to dribble past your opponent and score by dribbling the ball through the cones of their goal. The ball has to be under control for the goal to count.
- Players play 1v1 as independent games and play best of 1,3 or 5 goals depending on the ability levels of the players.
- The winners stay on their pitches. The losing players seek a new opponent to play.

ADAPTATIONS AND PROGRESSIONS

- Add a further goal so that a player can now score in two goals.
- Play 2v2.

DIFFERENTIATION

Easier:

- Have a separate competition in each half set based on confidence.
- Start with the ball in the middle and enable players to score in any goal.

Harder:

- Play 1v2.

CAPTURE THE CONES:

**SKILL-SET TO DEVELOP:
CONNECT AND COMBINE CREATIVELY WITH OTHERS.**

SET UP

- Split into 3 groups across 3 thirds of the pitch.
- Play 5v5. The aim of the game is to collect all the opponent's cones and take them back to your side.
- As soon as a player crosses the half way line they can be tagged. Player cannot be tagged in their own half or if they are behind the opponent's back line.
- If a player is tagged, they must return to their half before they are 'active' again. If they carry a cone when they are tagged, they must return it first.

ADAPTATIONS AND PROGRESSIONS

- Give each team 2 Futsal balls and players can only collect a cone if they have a ball with them.
- Play the original game but change the cones to Futsal balls.
- Teams have to make one pass in the opponent's half before they can return.

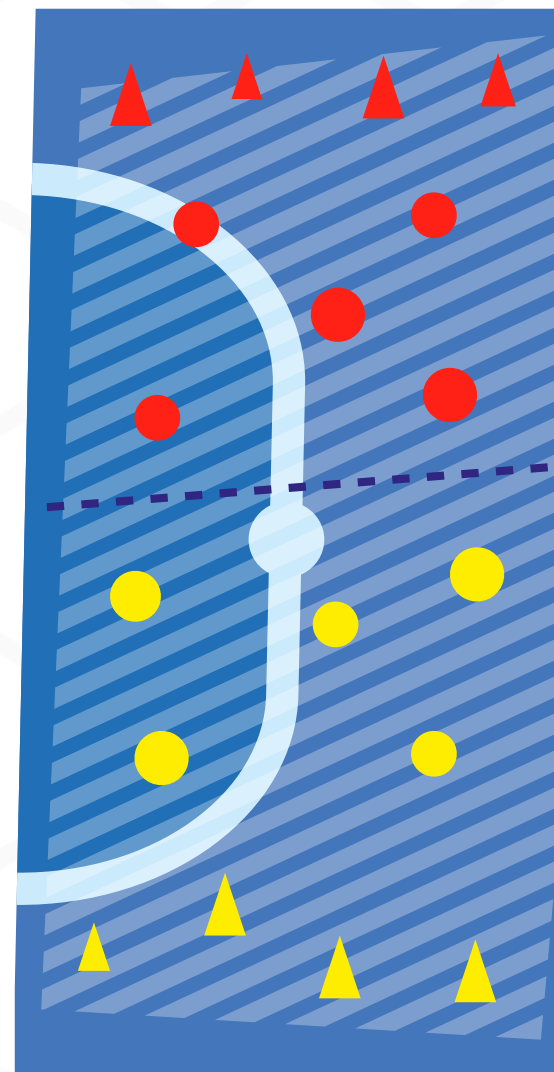
DIFFERENTIATION

Easier:

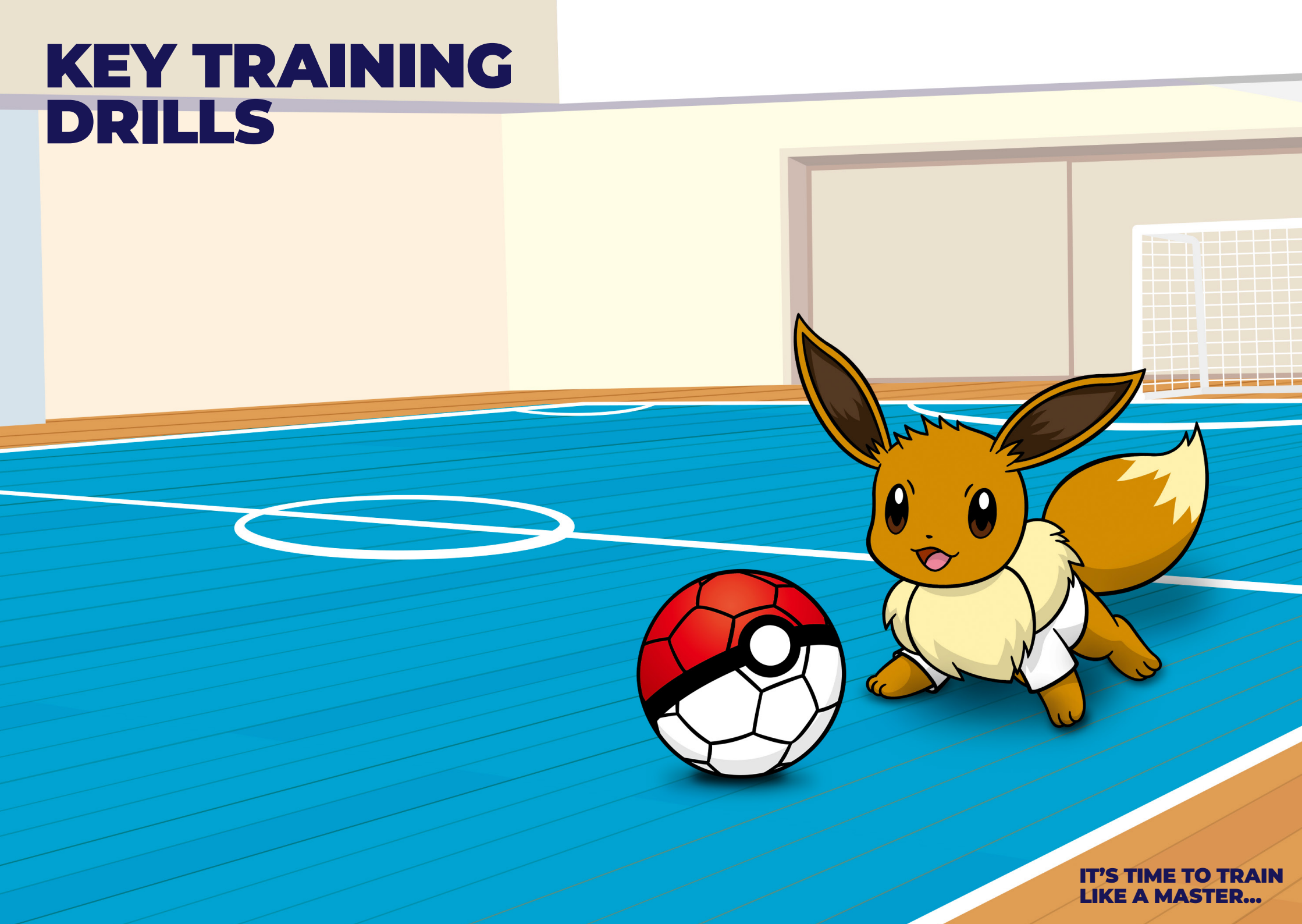
- Players can only be tagged on route to collect a cone. They cannot be tagged if they are on their way back with a cone.
- Play 5v4 or 6v4 so they have more players.

Harder:

- Reduce the size of the opponent's area.
- Play 4v5 or 4v6 so they have less players.



KEY TRAINING DRILLS



**IT'S TIME TO TRAIN
LIKE A MASTER...**

DRILL #1

CONTROL



MASTER THE BALL

Players must start on the 6m line (the D) and travel with the ball over the goal line, turn back and over the 6m line again using the sole to turn any way they like. The ball must go over the line each time. How many can they do in 30 seconds?

Levels:

- International – 13 times
- Excellent – 10 times
- Promising – 8 times
- Solid – 6 times
- Room to improve – 4 times

Tips for improvement:

- Stay in control of the ball when you are turning.
- Take smaller touches.
- Use the sole of your foot to pull the ball around the turn and into your path.

DRILL #2

PASSING



PINBALL PASSING

Standing 10m apart, a player must have two touches (the first with the sole, second being a touch pass) with a partner. How many times can they control and pass the ball in 30 seconds?

Levels:

- International – 25 times
- Excellent – 22 times
- Promising – 20 times
- Solid – 17 times
- Room for improvement – 14 times

Tips for improvement:

- Use directional control – control the ball with the sole of your foot so that it can be played instantly with your second touch.

DRILL #3

SHOOTING



THE FINISHER

Place 4 balls on a half-way line. Players start on the 10m line. They run and collect a ball and must finish in an open net as quickly as possible between the 10m and 6m box. They must score all 4 balls for the score to count. If they miss, 10 seconds is added to their time. How long does it take them to score all 4 balls?

Levels:

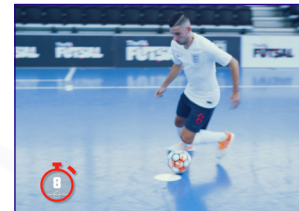
- International – 26 seconds
- Excellent – 30 seconds
- Promising – 33 seconds
- Solid – 35 seconds
- Room for improvement – 40 seconds

Tips for improvement:

- Use a variety of turning techniques when retrieving balls.
- Aim for the corners when shooting to add realism.

DRILL #4

AGILITY



THE T TEST

4 cones set up the T (10m across and 10m up). Players must travel with the ball around the middle cone, then around the left cone, and then around the right cone, back around the middle cone to the start point. How long does it take?

Levels:

- International – 10 seconds
- Excellent – 13 seconds
- Promising – 16 seconds
- Solid – 18 seconds
- Room for improvement – 20 seconds

Tips for improvement:

- Adopt a lower body position in the turns, and then accelerate out.

DRILL #5

DEFENCE



ROAD BLOCK

In an 8m by 8m box, with a 2v1 setup, the attackers stand on both end lines and the defender stands on a line half way. The attackers must pass as many times to each other, only on the floor, moving along the goal line, and the defender must try and intercept as many as they can in 30 seconds.

Levels:

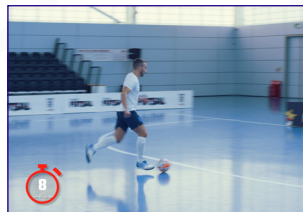
- International – 6 interceptions
- Excellent – 4 interceptions
- Promising – 3 interceptions
- Solid – 2 interceptions
- Room for improvement – 1 interception

Tips for improvement:

- Try to rapidly scan behind and in front of you to identify where the passing line will be.
- Adopt a half turn position when you are doing this.
- Move the body into the passing line with the ball.
- Try to influence the attacker to pass the ball in a predictable way by your line of approach, and then try to intercept.

DRILL #6

FITNESS



ENDURANCE TEST

How long does it take a player to stand on the goal line and run with the ball to the edge of the D and back, penalty spot and back, half way line and back continually. How long does it take?

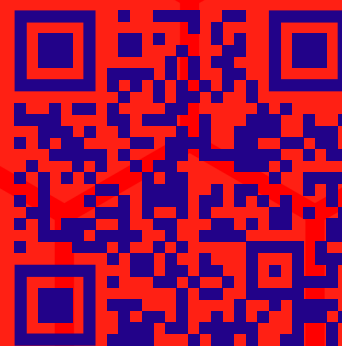
Levels:

- International – 17 seconds
- Excellent – 20 seconds
- Promising – 22 seconds
- Solid – 25 seconds
- Room for improvement – 28 seconds

Tips for improvement:

- Really focus on controlling your turns, and then accelerate into running with the ball.

SCAN THE QR CODE TO VIEW ALL THE TRAINING DRILLS. LEARN TO MASTER THE BALL WITH THE ENGLAND FUTSAL TEAM



Find out how to master these skills by scanning the **QR code!** or visit [mastertheball.com](https://www.mastertheball.com)



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MASTER
THE
BALL

5. FURTHER INFORMATION

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to visit the Pokémon Futsal website at thefa.com/pokemonfutsal for information surrounding all things Futsal!

We encourage you to post and share photos online of your team's Pokémon Futsal experience, using the below relevant handles and hashtags:

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