



Players Homework - Foot Skills
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Our young soccer players of today seem to have busier schedules with each passing season. I am sure the older generation reading this article will agree that the 21st century is very different than the one that we grew up in. With game consoles, computers, cable television, educational demands and other sporting activities, seems to take time away from leisure activities and allowing players to develop and focus on one sport. Few can afford to spend three hours a day or five days a week in any single activity. Indeed most children spend only three to six hours a week at a soccer activity.

During the regular soccer season you may only practice or play with your club for 3 to 5 hours a week. If your team participates during an indoor season on average you may only get together once for an hour plus a game. It is already a well known fact that teams and players in the United States have a lower practice to game ratio than any other nations in the world. Yet more and more players are signing up to play organized soccer than any other sport.

If a child is serious about the sport and participate in an elite program such as ODP they need to dedicate a significant amount of time to improving their skills outside all of their regular organized practices.

Children that do this will develop a real love for the game, although as coaches and parents we can constantly encourage and recommend this, the players themselves must have the drive and desire to do it. The best coach is always going to be the player themselves. They will learn from mistakes, they will express themselves more freely without having been told what to do.

Working on such skills will also help a player develop a quality first touch and be more comfortable on the ball when under pressure. Players that are capable of doing such skills allow their coach the opportunity to move them on to the next level Homework can be set by the coach including such things as dribbling feints, ball manipulation moves, juggling challenges and using the wall for improving you passing can all be practiced at home either as an individual or in a small group of friends.

The Home-Work Sheet along with descriptions below are skills you can do on your own time, all you need is a ball and an area as large as 5yd x 5yd grid. So even the excuse of bad weather can not be used, practice in the basement.

You can set this up as a competition amongst your team and monitor which players develop.

HOME-WORK SHEET

Skill

Mon Tues Weds Thur Fri Sat Sun

1. Fast Feet
2. Triangles (Right Foot)
3. Triangles (Left Foot)
4. Drag Push
5. Inside-Outside
6. Toe Taps
7. Double Taps
8. Slaps
9. Squeeze & Push
10. Step over Push Thru
11. Body Triangles
12. Juggle (Feet Only)
13. Juggle (Thighs Only)
14. Juggle (Head Only)
15. Juggle (All Parts)

On the foot skills 1 through to 11 you work for 30 seconds and record your score each day. Have a few practice runs before timing yourself. For Descriptions on the exercise see below. Make sure to do all exercises on the balls of your feet and with speed.

For the juggling exercises (12 through to 15) you work on the skill for 5 minutes each day and record your best score.