



SOCCER BALL HANDLING DRILLS PROGRAM

BALL CONTROL, AERIAL RECEPTION, CUSHIONING & FUN SKILL GAMES

This comprehensive soccer ball handling program is structured into fundamental, intermediate, and advanced levels. It focuses on aerial control, thigh and chest cushioning, wedge control, foot mechanics, and dynamic small-group games.

1. ADVANCED BALL CONTROL DRILLS

DRILL NAME	SETUP, OBJECTIVES & COACHING POINTERS
Ball Exchange Juggle One Bounce	Setup: Pairs, 10x10 yard area, 2 balls. Execution: Players juggle and synchronously exchange balls while moving around the grid. Take 3-4 touches before playing the ball into the air, allowing "one bounce" before partner controls. Focus on quick feet, light toes, and active communication.
Head - Chest - Return	Setup: Pairs, 10x10 yard area, 2 balls. Execution: One player throws an underhanded serve to partner's chest. Receiving player redirects the ball up into the air, headers it back to partner, and roles switch. Maintain eye contact and communication.
Chest Control and Volley	Setup: Pairs, 10x10 yard area, 2 balls. Execution: Partner throws an underhanded serve to chest. Receiving player cushions off chest back to receiver, who then volleys a return pass. Move constantly into new positions. Switch roles every 10 attempts.
Chelsea Aerial Control Drill	Setup: 4 players, 10x10 yard area, 1 ball. Execution: First player serves ball with two hands to another player. Receiving player controls using head, chest, thighs, or feet and volleys for another player to catch. Focus on good first touch and soft cushion.
Control Zig Zag Drill	Setup: 7-9 players, full length of field. Execution: Players staggered 15 yards apart with a ball each. Player #1 runs to first server, plays a quick one-two pass, zig-zagging up the field. Sequences include ground passes, one-two give-and-go's, chest control volleys, and headers.

2. INTERMEDIATE BALL CONTROL DRILLS

DRILL NAME	SETUP, OBJECTIVES & COACHING POINTERS
Volley Control Drill	Setup: Pairs, 20x20 yard area. Execution: 2-minute sets swapping roles. Server uses two hands: (1) Volley back using top of foot (laces) working both feet; (2) Volley back using inside of foot with two quick side-steps; (3) Catch ball using top of foot and flick back up to server's hands.
Soccer Tennis	Setup: Two teams, 10x20 yard area, volleyball/tennis net. Execution: Teams on opposite sides of net. Must have serve to win a point. Use head, chest, thighs, and feet. Ball allowed only ONE bounce per side. Unlimited touches. First team to 11 points wins.
Wedge Control and Turn	Setup: Pairs, 10x10 yard grid, 1 ball. Execution: First player throws a high looped serve into center. Partner runs in, executes wedge control (inside or outside of foot) with a firm ankle to redirect the ball away from the body into space, turns, and returns.
Rotary Thigh Drill	Setup: 8 players (4 servers in corners, 4 working center cone), 20x20 yard grid. Execution: Center players receive high looped throws, cushion control with the thigh, pass back, check back to center, and rotate to the next server on the right. 3-minute rounds keeping individual and team scores.
Rotary Chest Drill	Setup: 8 players (4 servers in corners, 4 working center cone), 20x20 yard grid. Execution: Identical rotation to Rotary Thigh Drill, but center players use Cushion Control with the Chest to receive high looped serves before passing back and rotating right.
Cushion Control using the Thigh (Static & On the Run)	Setup: Pairs, 10x10 yard grid, 1 ball. Execution: Server throws high looped pass above head height (~5 yards out). Receiver comes to meet ball, withdraws thigh immediately upon contact to kill pace and cushion it to the ground. Includes static, on-the-run, and relay variations.
Cushion Control using the Chest (Static & Relay)	Setup: Pairs or small groups, 10x10 yard grid, 1 ball. Execution: Server throws high looped pass. Receiving player constantly moves to get chest under flight, withdrawing chest on impact to absorb pace and cushion the ball down.
Control, Turn and Pass	Setup: Small groups, 10x20 yard grid, 1 ball. Execution: Player passes to server, receives return pass, controls as economically as possible in two touches, turns, and passes to next player in line.
Wedge Control (Standard & Under Pressure)	Setup: 3 players (2 receivers, 1 server/defender), 10x20 yard grid, 1 ball. Execution: Receiver runs to meet pass from server, redirecting ball out of feet on first touch and passing back on second touch. Pressure variation adds a trailing defender.
Ball Control Gates	Setup: Pairs, 20x20 yard area, slalom cones. Execution: Passing back and forth using outside/inside of foot down a slalom, progressing to half-volleys, full volleys, chest-to-volleys, and headers.

3. FUNDAMENTAL BALL CONTROL & FUN GAMES

DRILL NAME	SETUP, OBJECTIVES & COACHING POINTERS
Getting Behind the Ball	Setup: Pairs, 10x10 yard grid, 1 ball. Execution: Server rolls ball to the side and between cones. Receiving player must quickly get behind flight of ball early into a balanced position to control with feet and pass back.
Cushion Control Inside Foot & Laces (Top of Foot)	Setup: Pairs or relays, 10x10 yard grid, 1 ball. Execution: Rolling ground balls or waist-height served balls. Player gets controlling foot behind flight, withdrawing foot instantly on contact to cushion ball. Includes static, on-the-run, and relay formats.
Cushion Control Pressure Training	Setup: Small groups, 10x20 yard grid, 2 servers with balls. Execution: Player in center receives high looped pass from one server, cushions, returns, and immediately turns to receive a pass from the opposite server at full speed.
Control and Turn & Control Relay Game	Setup: Pairs/Groups, 10x10 or 20x20 grids. Execution: Firm passes or rolls into grid center; players race to control, turn quickly, and return. Relay games score points for successful foot/thigh cushion controls.
Catch the Egg	Setup: Entire group, 10x10 yard grid, supply of balls. Execution: Coach calls a player's name and serves a soft throw above head height. Player must prevent ball ("egg") from hitting ground by trapping/controlling with thigh or foot.
Crabby Patties	Setup: Entire group, 20x20 yard grid. Execution: Coach ("SpongeBob") throws ball ("Crabby Patty") out in different directions. Players chase, control, and return. Two players ("Planktons") try to steal balls; if successful, roles reverse.
Power Rangers	Setup: Two teams (Red vs. Blue Rangers) at opposite cones, 20x20 yard grid. Execution: Coach serves ball into center grid. First player from each team sprints out to win ball, maintain control, turn under pressure, and return to start line. Avoid 50/50 collisions.
Catch the Bus	Setup: Entire group, 20x20 yard grid, supply of balls. Execution: Coach rolls ball ("bus") out in front; first player sprints out to catch and dribble it back home before it stops.
Collect the Coconuts	Setup: Entire group, 20x20 yard grid. Execution: Coach ("monkey") throws coconuts (balls). Players alternate collecting and returning them. Only moving controls count; stopped balls do not count.

PROGRAM GUIDELINES & COACHING POINTS

- **Soft Cushioning:** Emphasize withdrawing the controlling surface (foot, thigh, or chest) at the exact moment of impact to absorb ball momentum.
- **Early Positioning:** Train players to anticipate ball flight and get behind the trajectory early for optimal balance and composure [cite: 42].
- **Quality Over Speed:** Build up tempo gradually, prioritizing clean first touches and accurate redirection over hurried execution [cite: 42].

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This program is for educational purposes. Consult a physician before beginning any new exercise routine. Stop if you experience pain. Results vary based on individual effort and consistency.