

FREESTYLE JUGGLING DRILLS



Juggling gives kids freedom to control their future

GETTING AIRBORNE

Kids need short term achievable goals to develop their confidence

Most kids expect too much too soon. They try to be Neymar or Messi. Even the most talented superstars had to start with the basics. Players like Pele, Maradona and George Best were juggling whatever they got their feet on when they were toddlers. Later, when they were famous, these players still stayed behind after training to practice their skills.

The first five minutes of anything we do is full of mistakes. That's human nature and that's how we learn. Too many kids give up juggling in the first five because they lack self confidence. If kids write down their juggling figures, they will soon discover that their numbers increase after the first five minutes. Little kids need to use their hands to start off and they also need to let the ball bounce. Juggling in pairs using One Bounce is the easiest way to get started.



FREESTYLE JUGGLING

Kids don't need juggling skills to play Soccer but they need Soccer skills to be able to juggle. Juggling improves Soccer skills.

The top players aren't necessarily the fastest, strongest or most accurate. They're different and that's what makes them unpredictable. All creative players juggle with a ball from the earliest age so they can react quickly and instinctively to every move in a game. Any kid can learn to juggle a ball but the motivation has to come from them. It won't last long if they're forced to do it by parents or coaches.

Juggling is a passion that drives kids to practice every day, measure their performance and strive to beat their personal best. Freestyle juggling is totally intuitive. Kids learn to move with the ball. They become comfortable with a difficult bouncing, spinning ball so that nothing will worry or surprise them when they play in a game.



GO FIGURE

A lot of freestyle kids know what they're up to and where they're up to because they keep a record of their progress so they can always aim to beat their personal best. When they juggle a ball every day, these kids write down their juggling figures and know exactly how well they're going and how long it takes them to reach an intuitive level.

Freestyle kids know from experience that the first five minutes is full of mistakes and that their juggling figures begin to improve after 200 touches of the ball. Their confidence comes from facts not sports psychology. They can see the results of their efforts in black and white and they realise that they get out of it whatever they put into it. Kids don't know how good they are till they test their skills. Freestyle kids are constantly discovering talents that they didn't know they had. The more kids juggle the more they develop balance and rhythm.



JUGGLING ON THE MOVE

One principle of freestyle training is to establish a basic drill and then add variations to make it more challenging. The secret to juggling is to alternate feet so experienced jugglers practice controlling the ball while moving forwards, backwards or sideways. With practice, these kids can keep the ball under control while running down the pitch.

Soccer is, above all, a team game. Freestyle kids don't learn tricks to show off their ability. They only use them in games to get out of trouble. If they train harder than they play, the game becomes easier in comparison and they relax under pressure. Kids who like to juggle never hesitate to attack a difficult bouncing, spinning ball in a game.



JUGGLING IN PAIRS

In a game, each player only has the ball for 5% of the time. A lot of kids pass the ball and then they stand still. They don't know where to move, what to do or how to call. Juggling in Pairs is a series of five difficult close repetition drills that teach kids the fundamentals of possession: control and support. Once kids can develop from the cognitive level to the intuitive level, their communication and mobility improve and they become a lot more creative and assertive.

Kids begin by Heading in Pairs so they become conditioned to 'give and go'. The next phase is One Bounce juggling and then One Bounce One Touch. It takes a while for kids to reach the final two phases: No Bounce and No Bounce One Touch.



JUGGLING CIRCLE

The Juggling Circle is the quickest way to assess how individual players behave in a group situation. 8 players is an ideal number so that they all get more opportunity to control the ball. At the same time, the other half of the squad can practice individual juggling.

Within one minute, it becomes clear that some kids don't know how to move or what to call. They stand still and wait to see what happens. This provides an insight into how they play in games. Some kids look great when we tell them what to do but, if we do it too much, they become lost without a coach and can no longer think for themselves.

Most groups who practice in a Juggling Circle can achieve 100 passes using One Bounce. They can achieve higher levels of skill and communication by using One Bounce One Touch, No Bounce and No Bounce One Touch. The Juggling Circle teaches kids to connect with each other so that they learn the importance of teamwork.



BALANCING THE BALL

For motivated kids, their greatest strength can become their biggest weakness. Parents, coaches and teachers keep telling kids to do their best and try their hardest so they try too hard and tense up. When learning to control a ball, kids need to relax and not expect too much or try so hard. Control will come when they stop looking for it.

Balancing a Soccer ball is one of the most effective ways to get kids to relax. It's an intuitive skill that only works when kids stop thinking about it. They can use their head, neck, thighs, instep or behind the knee. To balance a ball, kids learn to use their whole body especially their arms. They can increase their skills by balancing on the move or while sitting down. There should be a reason for everything players do in Soccer. Balancing a ball is all about developing self confidence.

