

AYSO 12U TRAINING SESSION PLAN

TOPIC: DRIBBLING, FAKES, AND FEINTS

Duration: 60 minutes

Objective: Players will develop dribbling control and learn to effectively use fakes and feints to beat opponents.

Setup: Arrive early and set up activities before training to maximize time on the field.

SESSION OVERVIEW

STAGE	ACTIVITY	MANUAL PAGE	DURATION
Free Play	Free Play	31	5 minutes
Warm-Up	Dynamic Warm-up + Dribbling Drill	32, 35, 36	10 minutes
Small-Sided Activity	Safety Zones	33, 53	15 minutes
Expanded Activity	Blockers	33, 54	15 minutes
Small-Sided Match	Focused on Dribbling	33	10 minutes
Cool Down & Debrief	Static Stretching + Review	33, 95	5 minutes

EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST

- Cones
- Soccer balls
- Pinnies
- Small goals or pop-up goals (optional)

RESOURCE LINKS

- <https://aysou.video/tech1/> - Dribbling
- <https://aysou.video/safety/> - Safety Zones
- <https://aysou.video/blockers/> - Blockers

FREE PLAY (5 MINUTES) – PAGE 31

- **Free Play:** Let players play naturally. Assign a team leader to direct arriving players about free play. This allows you to see the dribbling ability of each player.
- **Maze Dribbling:**
 - **Setup:** Cones or disc markers scattered across a defined area like a 20x20 box (setup multiple boxes, if needed, based on 4 players per box).
 - **Activity:** Players dribble freely through the “maze” of cones without touching any. Encourage creativity—can they dribble using only one foot, add a fake, or a turn?
 - **Challenge:** How many cones can you go around in 30 seconds without stopping?
- **Purpose:** Warm-up, player assessment.

STAGE 1: WARM-UP AND TECHNICAL (10 MINUTES) – PAGES 35-36

- **Dynamic Warm-Up Exercises (5 minutes):**
- **Setup:** Line up players on the sideline left of the goal box and have them do the warmups for each movement as specified.
 - Jogging: Easy pace – across field and back
 - High Knees: Lift knees high, rhythm and posture – across field
 - Butt Kicks: Kick heels toward glutes – across field
 - Open the Gate: Lift knee and rotate outward – halfway across field
 - Close the Gate: Lift leg out, bring knee across – halfway across field
 - Karaoke: Cross right foot in front of left foot and then behind the left foot, opposite on return – across field and back
 - Power Skips: Skips with height – across field and back
 - Side Shuffle: Foot to foot, never crossing feet in front or behind – across field and back
 - Sprint: 50% speed in one direction across field, 100% speed in the opposite direction back
- **Technical Ball Warm-Up (5 minutes):**
 - Teach dribbling, fakes, and feints.

STAGE 2: SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY (15 MINUTES) – PAGE 53

- **Activity: Safety Zones**
 - Focus: Proper dribbling to maintain closeness without the ball going out of the safety zones.

STAGE 3: EXPANDED ACTIVITY (15 MINUTES) – PAGE 54

- **Activity: Blockers**
 - Focus: Develop dribbling control to cross the goal line under pressure, incorporating passing.
 - Variations: Use a goal blocker (behind goal) to mark a goal off limits, or no goal blockers.

STAGE 4: SMALL-SIDED MATCH (10 MINUTES)

- Half team vs half team game.
- Emphasize controlled dribbling never more than a step or two away from the player.

STAGE 5: COOL DOWN & DEBRIEF (5 MINUTES)

- **Static Stretching (Descriptions):**
 - Hamstring Stretch: Reach for toes, hold.
 - Quadriceps Stretch: Pull foot toward glutes, hold.
 - Calf Stretch: Step back, press heel down.
 - Groin Stretch: Soles of feet together, press knees down.
 - Lower Back Stretch: Hug knees to chest or spinal twist.
 - Hip Flexor Stretch: Kneel, push hips forward.
 - Shoulder Stretch: Pull arm across chest.
- **Debrief:**
 - Gather players in a circle.
 - Reflective questions:
 - "What did you learn today?"
 - "When should you use this technique?"
 - "What did you enjoy most?"
 - End the session on a positive note!

OPTIONAL END OF SESSION ACTIVITIES

- **Lightning** (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F3PEp1QtkU>)
 - Variations include:
 - Players who are out can catch a missed shot, if in the air, to get back in.
 - Notes:
 - This is a great opportunity for the coach to observe potential goalkeepers and strikers.
 - It's also a fun activity for players while waiting for pickup.

DRIBBLING

Dribbling is using the feet to maintain possession of the ball, on the ground, under control, while moving to achieve **Penetration**. The two primary reasons to use dribbling skill are:

- Move the ball into a better position on the field.
- Retain possession of the ball.

The most important element of dribbling is developing a “feel” or “touch” for the ball with the feet...**BOTH OF THEM**. The key is then to **keep the ball close** by touching it softly.



General Coaching Points:

- Knees slightly bent and body leaning slightly over the ball for balance.
- Arms relaxed and used for balance and protection.
- Touch the ball softly using all major surfaces of the foot.
- Keep the ball close and under control.
- Touch the ball every step or so (ball should never be more than one step away).
- Head up as much as possible (to see the field as well as ball by utilizing peripheral vision).

To see this in action or visit [aysou.video/tech1](https://www.aysou.com/video/tech1)

Common Errors & Corrections

Error	Correction
Ball is played too far ahead & player loses control of the ball.	Move slower and touch ball slower.
Player dribbles the ball into trouble or out of play.	Move slower, touch ball softer, look up.
Player re-positions entire body behind ball before touching.	Use motion of foot to direct ball instead of re-positioning.

Fakes and Feints

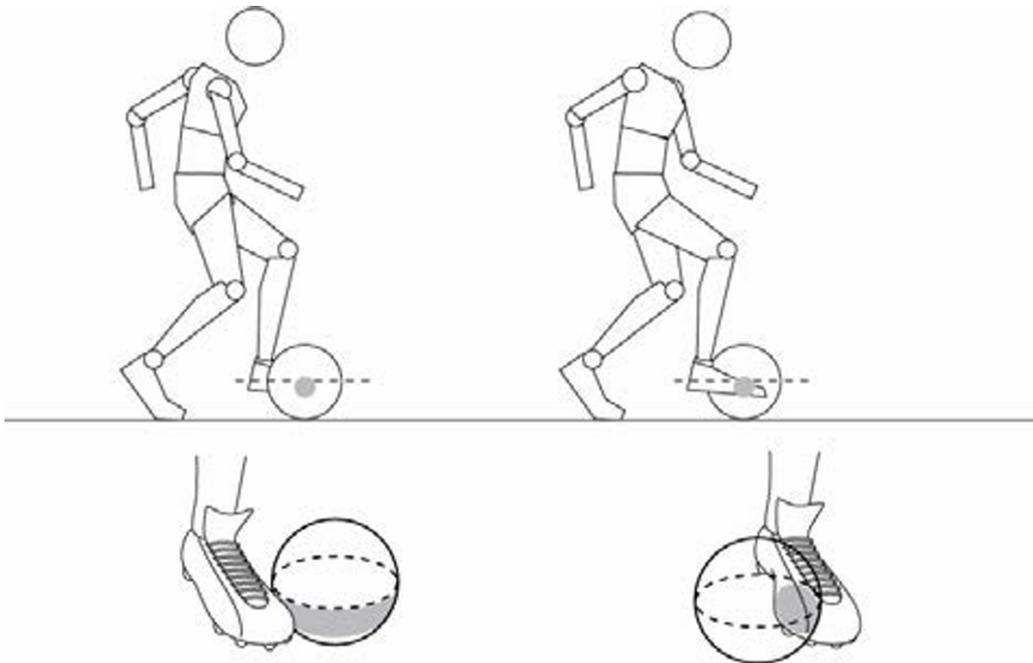
Fakes and feints or “moves” are used by the creative dribbler to unbalance an opponent and create an opportunity to penetrate or maintain possession of the ball.

Players should develop a repertoire of feints. A player often has two or three that are his “favorite moves” along with others to be called upon depending on the situation. Encourage your players to be creative, to try new moves. This expression and freedom is very positive in a player’s development.

One of the most simple and effective feints to get you and your players started is described below:

Fake Left, Go Right (or vice versa) Coaching Points:

- As dribbler approaches opponent:
- Step hard slightly in front of and to the left of the ball with left foot (speed of ball must be accounted for).
 - Left knee should bend as all weight is placed on left foot.
 - Upper body should move as well to “sell” the fake.
- Right foot is quickly brought up in between the left foot and the ball.
- Push off with left foot back to the right.
- Outside of the right foot pushes ball forward and to the right at approximately 45 degrees. Accelerate (explode) past the opponent and continue dribbling (the rapid change of pace and direction beats the opponent).



12U COACH

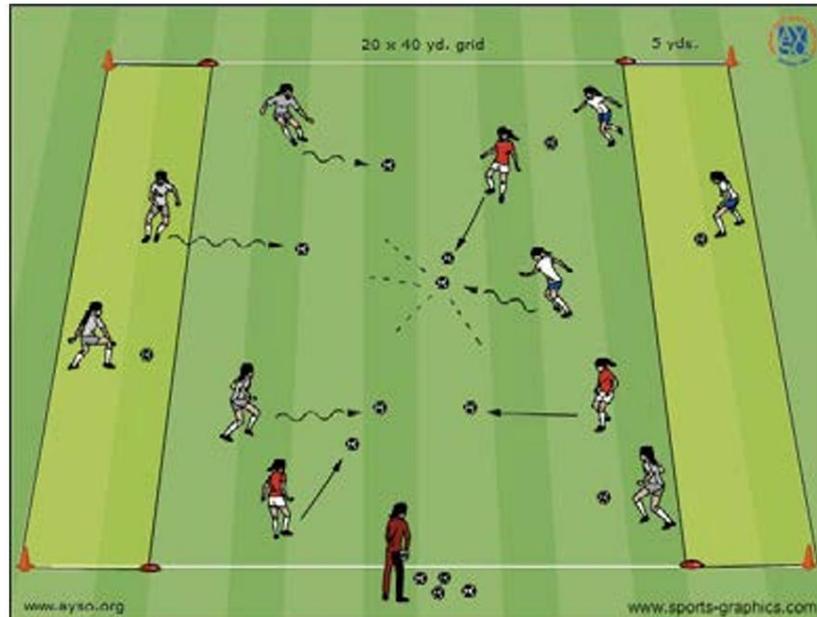
SAFETY ZONES

TECHNIQUE:
Dribbling (Passing)

**Equipment/
Organization:**

Mark 20 x 40 grid with a five yard "Safe Zone" at each end of the grid. Place three players in the center of the grid with a ball at their feet. All remaining players, each with a ball, are located in one of the "Safe Zones".

To see this activity in action visit [aysou.video/safety](https://www.aysou.video/safety)



HOW THE GAME IS PLAYED

- Players in the Safe Zone try to dribble the length of the grid to the other Safe Zone.
- Players in the center try to prevent dribblers from reaching the other Safe Zone by hitting their ball with a passed ball.
- After a player's ball is hit or knocked out of the grid, they now play in the center as shooters.
- Players dribble between Safe Zones until one player remains. The last player remaining wins.

VARIATIONS/PROGRESSIONS

- Players in center use left/right foot to pass.
- Dribbler's have to perform a fake or feint in central area before reaching the Safe Zone.

COACHING POINTS (DRIBBLING)

- Use all major surfaces of both feet.
- Knees slightly bent and body leaning slightly over the ball for balance.
- Players should play with their head up, enabling them to see the field as well as the ball by utilizing peripheral vision as their ability progresses.
- Ball should be kept close using soft touches (never more than a step or two away).
- Players should attempt to touch the ball every other step (or so).

COACHING POINTS (INSIDE OF FOOT PUSH PASS)

- Place support foot next to ball (*toe should not be past ball*) pointed in general direction of target.
- Lock ankle with toe pointed slightly up.
- Inside of foot should face the general direction of target
- Keep eyes on ball.
- Move leg straight forward toward target, ankle locked and toe up.
- Strike at the center of the ball with the inside of the foot.
- Sole of foot should be off the ground with toe pointed slightly up, and perpendicular to ball (form "T" or "L" with feet).
- Strike through center of ball and follow through in direction of pass.

BLOCKERS

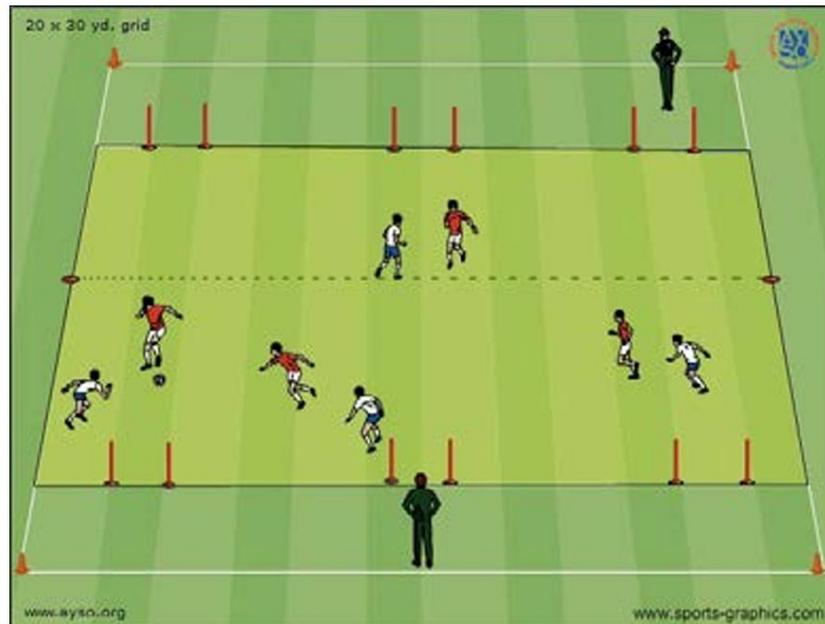
TECHNIQUE:

Dribbling (Passing)

Equipment/ Organization:

Mark 20 x 30 grid with 3 small goals at either end of the grid. Two teams of three or four, one ball. Place an assistant or resting player behind each of the goal areas as "blockers."

To see this activity in action visit [aysou.video/blockers](https://www.aysou.org/video/blockers)



HOW THE GAME IS PLAYED

- Each team attacks three goals.
- Players can score in any of the goals they are attacking as long as there is not a blocker standing behind it (closing it off).
- Blockers walk up and down the end lines positioning themselves behind the goals they think will get attacked.
- Players must dribble the ball through the goal and stop the ball with their foot to score.

VARIATIONS/PROGRESSIONS

- Condition number of passes *before* player can dribble to goal.
- Add halfway line. To score, all the players must be in their opponents half.
- Encourage fakes and feints to beat opponents.
- Rotate players in as needed.

COACHING POINTS

- Use all major surfaces of both feet.
- Knees slightly bent and body leaning slightly over the ball for balance.
- Players should play with their head up, enabling them to see the field as well as the ball by utilizing peripheral vision as their ability progresses.
- Ball should be kept close using soft touches (never more than a step or two away).
- Players should attempt to touch the ball every other step (or so).
- Change of pace and direction to explode past opponent.