

AYSO 12U TRAINING SESSION PLAN

TOPIC: INSTEP KICK (LACES KICK)

Duration: 60 minutes

Objective: Players will learn and practice proper technique for the instep kick.

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 + Instep Kick Drill	32, 37, 95	10 minutes
Small-Sided Activity	Chance of Glory	33, 60	15 minutes
Expanded Activity	Finishing Under Pressure	33, 61	15 minutes
Small-Sided Match	Focused on Instep Kick	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/tech2/> - Instep Kick
- <https://aysou.video/chance/> - Chance of Glory
- <https://aysou.video/finishing/> - Finishing Under Pressure

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 instep kick ability of each player.
 - **Distance Builder:** Player sets a start line. Try to kick the ball farther each time using proper instep form. No shots on goal. Focusing solely on strength of kick.
- Purpose: Warm-up, player assessment.

STAGE 1: WARM-UP AND TECHNICAL (10 MINUTES) – PAGE 37

- **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 Warm-Up (5 minutes):**
 - Teach Instep Kick technique.

STAGE 2: SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY (15 MINUTES) – PAGE 60

- **Activity: Chance of Glory**
 - Focus: Shots on goalie with instep kick.

STAGE 3: EXPANDED ACTIVITY (15 MINUTES) – PAGE 61

- **Activity: Finishing Under Pressure**
 - Focus: Finish with instep kick.
 - Variation: If a player scores, they take the goalie position.

STAGE 4: SMALL-SIDED MATCH (10 MINUTES)

- Half team vs half team game.
- Emphasize instep kick for shots.
- Optional: "Bonus points" for goals with correct technique.

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 circle.
 - Reflective questions:
 - "What did you learn today?"
 - "When should you use the instep kick?"
 - "What did you enjoy most?"
 - End the session on a positive note!

OPTIONAL END SESSION ACTIVITIES

- Lightning (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F3PEp1QktkU>)
 - Variations include:
 - Players who are out can catch a missed shot, if in the air, to get back in.
 - Notes:
 - This is a great way as the coach observes both potential goalies and strikers.
 - Also a good activity to have the kids play while waiting for parents to pickup.

INSTEP KICK (LACES)

The instep kick is used to kick the ball and, as players get older, for long passes and shots on goal (as seen on right).

Instructions:

Prepare Plant Leg (Supporting, Non-Kicking Foot)

- Place support foot next to the ball pointed in general direction of target (distance from ball will depend on height of the player).
- Bend knee slightly.
- All weight should be on plant foot.
- Use arms out to sides for balance.

Prepare Striking (Kicking) Leg

- Bend knee (cock lower leg).
- Withdraw leg straight back at hip.
- Lock ankle back and down, toes pointed down.

Striking Movement

- Body should be over the ball, moving forward.
- Keep eyes on ball.
- Set plant knee over ball (eye-knee-ball in line).
- Move thigh of striking leg forward (whip action).
- Strike the center of the ball on the instep ("laces" of the shoes).
- Follow through—move leg straight through toward target:
- Pull leg straight through while maintaining balance.
- Lower body as leg rises.
- Keep ankle locked, follow through and lift knee.
- Step out of the kick.

General Coaching Points:

- Body should be over the ball (forward).
- Eyes on ball.
- Support foot next to ball pointed in general direction of target.
- Lock ankle back and down, toes pointed down.
- Strike the center of the ball on the instep ("laces" of the shoes).
- Follow through—move leg straight through toward target.

Practice:

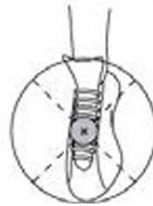
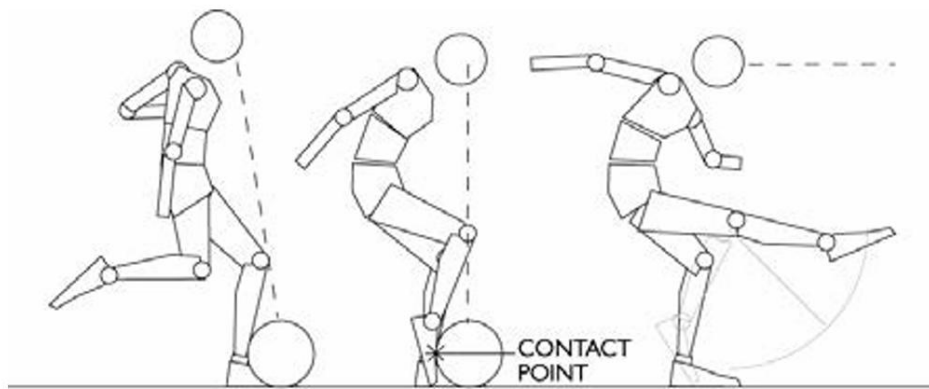
- Planting their foot in the proper place.
- Swinging their leg and foot straight back and forth, ensuring proper body and leg movement.
- Have each player stand with plant foot in proper position and strike lightly until they begin to hit the ball solidly (properly).



To see this in action visit: [aysou.video/tech2](https://www.aysou.com/video/tech2)

Common Errors & Corrections

Error	Correction
Planted foot is too far in front, behind or away from ball and/or not pointed in general direction of target.	Review proper technique with player(s).
Knee(s) are locked, not bent.	Review proper technique with player(s).
Ankle is not locked and toes are not pointed.	Lock ankle, point toes.
Ball is stabbed or jabbed.	Encourage player to follow through.
Leg is swung across the body instead of toward the target.	Encourage player to withdraw leg straight back and follow through straight toward target.



CHANCE OF GLORY

TECHNIQUE:

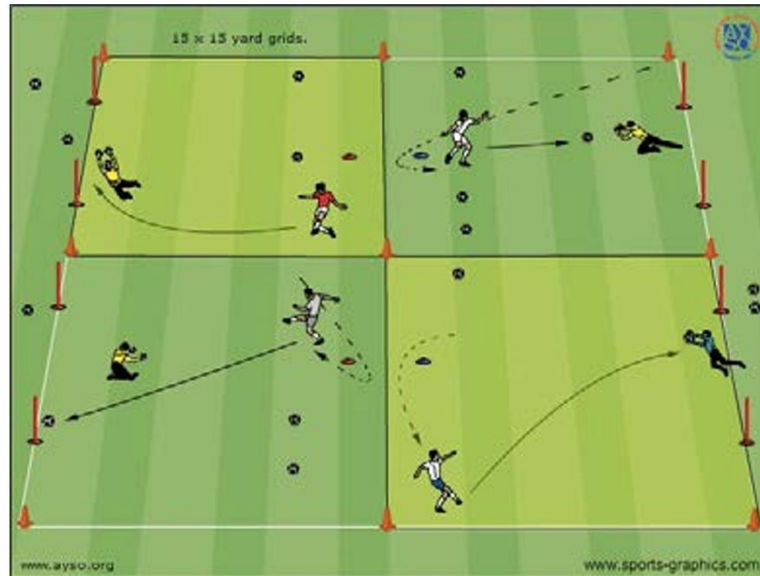
Finishing (Close Range Accuracy)

Equipment/

Organization:

Mark 15 x 15 yard grid (use multiple grids as shown to involve all players) with an eight yard wide goal on one end line. Place 1 disc cone approximately 14 yards from center of goal (set up is to mirror penalty area). Place 4 balls in a line approximately 12 yards from goal (1 wide left, 1 wide right and 1 either side of center). 1 goalkeeper and 1 striker per grid.

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



HOW THE GAME IS PLAYED

- Striker starts on outer corner cone on goal line.
- On coach's call, striker sprints to the 14 yard marker, cuts around the cone and strikes one of the four balls (any order) first time on goal using either instep drive or inside of foot push pass/ strike to "place" the ball passed the goalkeeper into the goal.
- After the shot, the striker cuts sharply and sprints back around the 14 yard cone to approach and strike the next ball. Repeat until all balls have been shot at goal.

VARIATIONS/PROGRESSIONS

- Left foot, right foot shots. Two touch.
- Goalkeeper and striker switch.
- Strikers progress through each grid to face new goalkeeper.
- Keep scores (goal is to score a hat-trick from four shots).
- Balls can start with goalkeeper (or coach) who serves a *rolling* ball (from front or side) for the striker to run onto and strike.
- Add time challenge. Add more balls.

COACHING POINTS (INSTEP KICK)

- Body should be over the ball (forward). Eyes on ball.
- Support foot next to ball pointed in general direction of target.
- Lock ankle back & down, toes pointed down.
- Strike the center of the ball on the instep ("laces" of the shoes).
- Follow through—move leg straight through toward target.

COACHING POINTS (GENERAL)

- Use peripheral vision to consider goalkeeper position
- #9 Tip: The goal never moves!
- Accuracy over power.
- Composure at point of strike. Focus.
- Maintain striker's intensity and speed.

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 straightforward toward target, ankle locked & 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, & perpendicular to ball (form "T" or "L" w/ feet).
- Strike through center of ball and follow through in direction of pass.

FINISHING UNDER PRESSURE

TECHNIQUE:

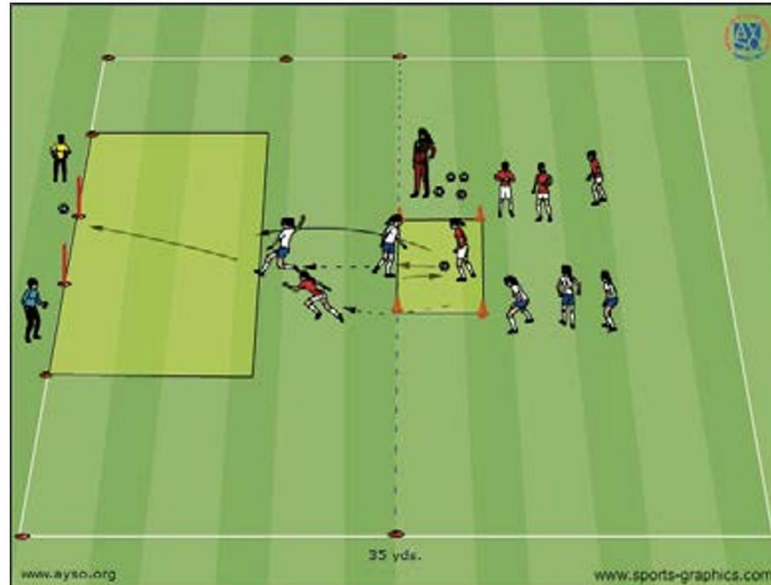
Finishing with Passive or Full Pressure

Equipment/

Organization:

Mark 5 x 5 square approximately 35 yards from goal. Two lines facing goal behind square. Open goal (to start).

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



HOW THE GAME IS PLAYED

- Two players enter square. Player one stands with back to goal (attacker); player two stands facing goal on opposite side of the square (defender).
- Players start inside of foot passing (two touch).
- The defender (player two) will then play a pass either side of the attacker into the space behind.
- The attacker (player one) then turns and sprints to the ball and has a strike on goal using instep kick (either one or two touch).
- Player two, once they have passed the ball into space then becomes an active defender, chasing the attacker, putting pressure on their strike on goal.

VARIATIONS/PROGRESSIONS

- Vary pressure. Passive to full.
- Condition striker's touch and shooting (one touch, two touch, left foot, right foot).
- Section off goal with cones (two yards from posts for low strikes to corners).
- Add goalkeepers (have assistant work with goalkeepers).
- 1 v 1. Add another opponent (player three). Players line up in triangle. Player two becomes server (does not defend). Ball is served and the two attackers will now battle for the ball to get a strike on goal. The challenge is for the strikers to maintain control, create space and get a strike on goal.
- Vary the starting position of strikers (kneeling, lying down, etc).
- Coach becomes server and varies the serves (volleys, bouncing balls, close to the goalkeeper, etc).
- 2 v 1. The player who is at the top of the triangle becomes an additional attacker for player who has possession. (Player plays ball through for two attackers, then joins the group to create 2 v 1.)

COACHING POINTS

- Concentration, awareness and reaction to win the initial ball.
- Awareness (defender, goalkeeper's position).
- Shooting technique (instep drive, inside of foot kick to place shot).
- Competition, determination, confidence, composure.
- Physical conditioning.