

Soccer Activities with Physical Distance

A packet of 25+ activities for coaches
to implement while observing safety
measures that protect against COVID-
19 transmission



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Getting back to play

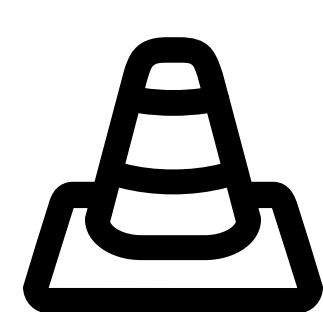
Play is a key avenue for all people to learn, grow, and experience joy. When young people have a space to play, they share laughter and friendship. They get to exercise their minds, bodies and voices. And they get to learn and grow as individuals and within their teams.

One of the multitude of challenges that youth have faced during the covid-19 pandemic is isolation from peers, mentors, teachers, and coaches during stay home orders. Virtual learning, zoom practices, and individual check-ins have sought to address that isolation in many ways; however none of those measures can quite replace in-person play.

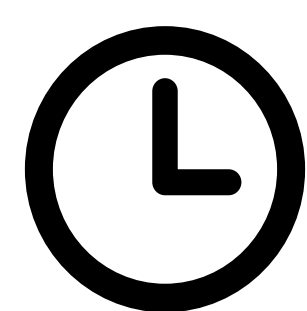
This packet provides 25+ favorite activities of Soccer Without Borders coaches that inspire **play while maintaining physical distance**. It is important to note that any activity in this packet should be implemented only when your program is at a yellow risk level or lower (green) and all safeguarding precautions are in place. While looking through this packet, keep in mind that youth should not use their hands to touch any equipment. This means that no drills have goalies. Any time a person is placed in goal they are considered a sweeper-keeper and cannot use their hands.

The packet provides activities in soccer drills & games, fitness, and team-building. Activities range in length from 5-45 minutes, so many can be combined to form a longer session. All sessions that use these activities should also include an opening and closing circle.

For every activity, coaches have provided:



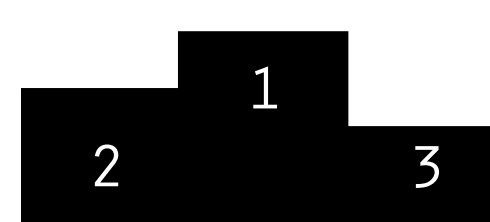
Set up instructions, especially to keep a physical distance



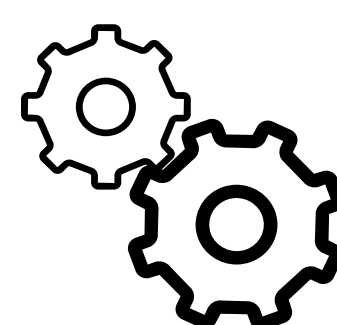
A time estimate of the activity



Materials needed to run the activity



A recommendation of which age group the activity is best for elementary school (ES), middle school (MS) or high school (HS)



Ideas to modify the activities, add competition or practice different skills



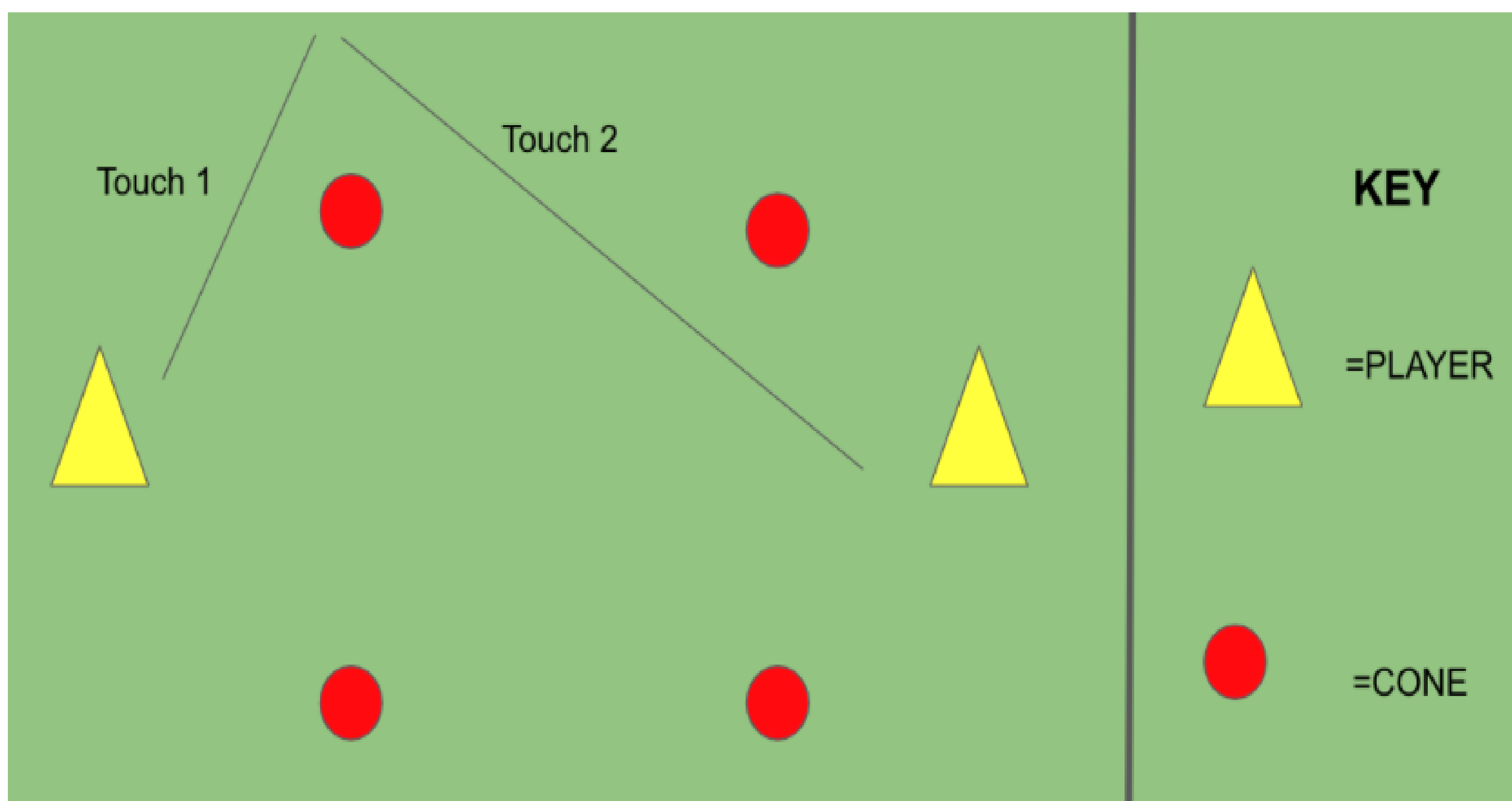
Specific safeguarding considerations to ensure the activity keeps youth and coaches safe



THEME 1: **Soccer Skills & Games**

PASS BATTLE

Set Up



20-30 Minutes



4 cones & 1 soccer ball for every 2 players



MS & HS

Activity Explanation

- **The goal** of the game is to return a pass to the opposing player on the ground and in between the two cones in front of them.
- The player has 2 touches:
 - With their first touch they need to control the ball to the **outside** of the cones on their side of the square.
 - With the second, they pass back **between** the cones in front of the opposing player.
- If a player hits a cone or misses the opponent's "goal", the other player gets a point.
[Watch Van Dijk play this game!](#)

Modifications

- To make success easier, increase the size of the box
- For newer players, allow them to pass back between their own cones, eliminating the need for an outside touch.
- Make it collaborative! Players on the same court are a team and count how many passes they can complete without a mistake. This could be for a warm-up or against other pairs.
- Make it a tournament with multiple courts! Players rise or fall in "levels" based on if they win or not, and play others on their same level.
- Change the shape of the cones through which players pass to keep it interesting.

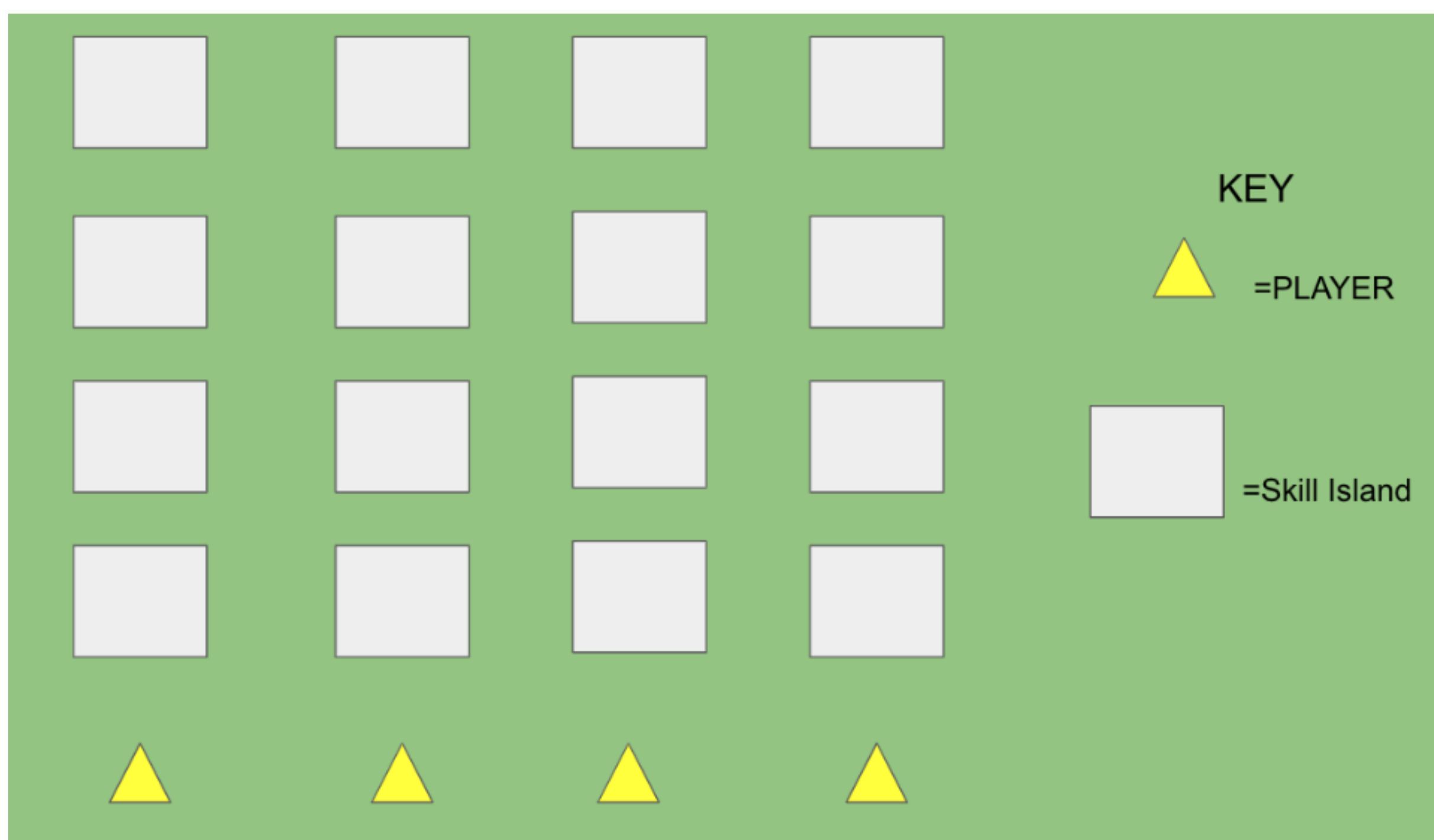


Safeguarding Considerations

- If multiple courts, make sure each has enough space and that boundaries are marked between courts.
- Make sure that players stay on opposite sides of the square.

SKILLS ISLAND

Set Up



 **20-30 Minutes**

 **Cones & soccer balls**

 **All Levels**

Activity Explanation

The goal is to hop from one island to the next by completing a certain skill on each island.

- Each player has their own ball and starts at the beginning of their chain of islands.
- On each island, the player gets 3 chances to complete the skill successfully. After 3 tries, they have to return to the first island and start with the first skill again.
- When using this as a fitness station, players must complete the fitness on one island before moving to the next. Players try to “island hop” across all their squares as many times as possible.

Modifications

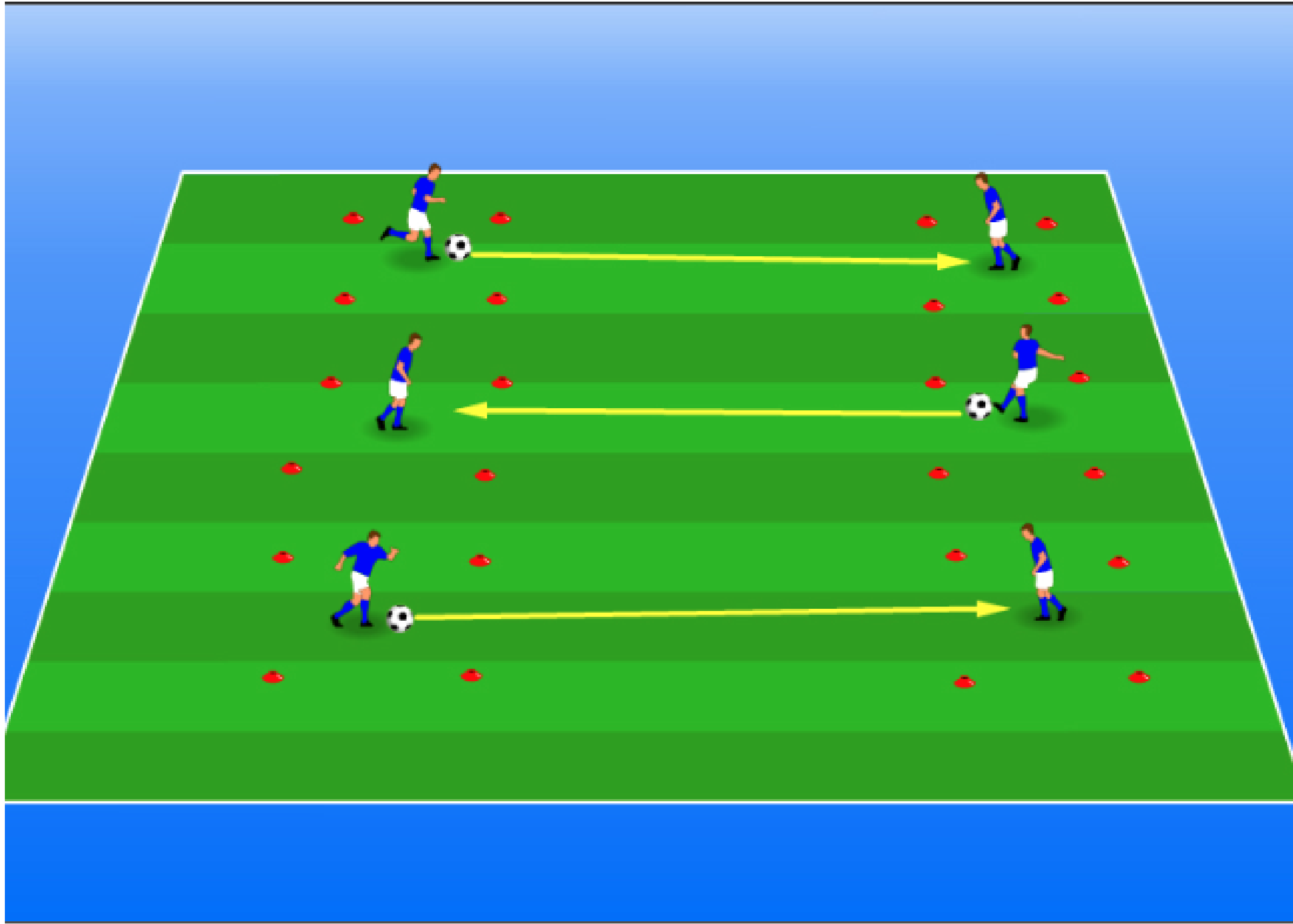
- To make this a team game, consider skills that require passing between players, players can pass to each other while remaining on their own islands in order to maintain distance
- Make it fun by asking players or teams to create their own celebrations to perform when they complete the skill on the last island!
- To make this competitive, award a point every time a player gets to the last island in their chain. This can become a race as players rack up points.
- You can also make this a team competition. Players have their own row of islands, but get points for their team.

Safeguarding Considerations

- Make it clear that players must remain on their islands, and return to the beginning by returning back down their own row.
- Have players do warmups on the islands to practice the process.
- If passing between boxes is involved, players should stay in their boxes and coaches and assistants should track down balls when mistakes are made.

SOCCER HORSE SHOES

Set Up



25-30 Minutes



Cones & 1 soccer ball per pair

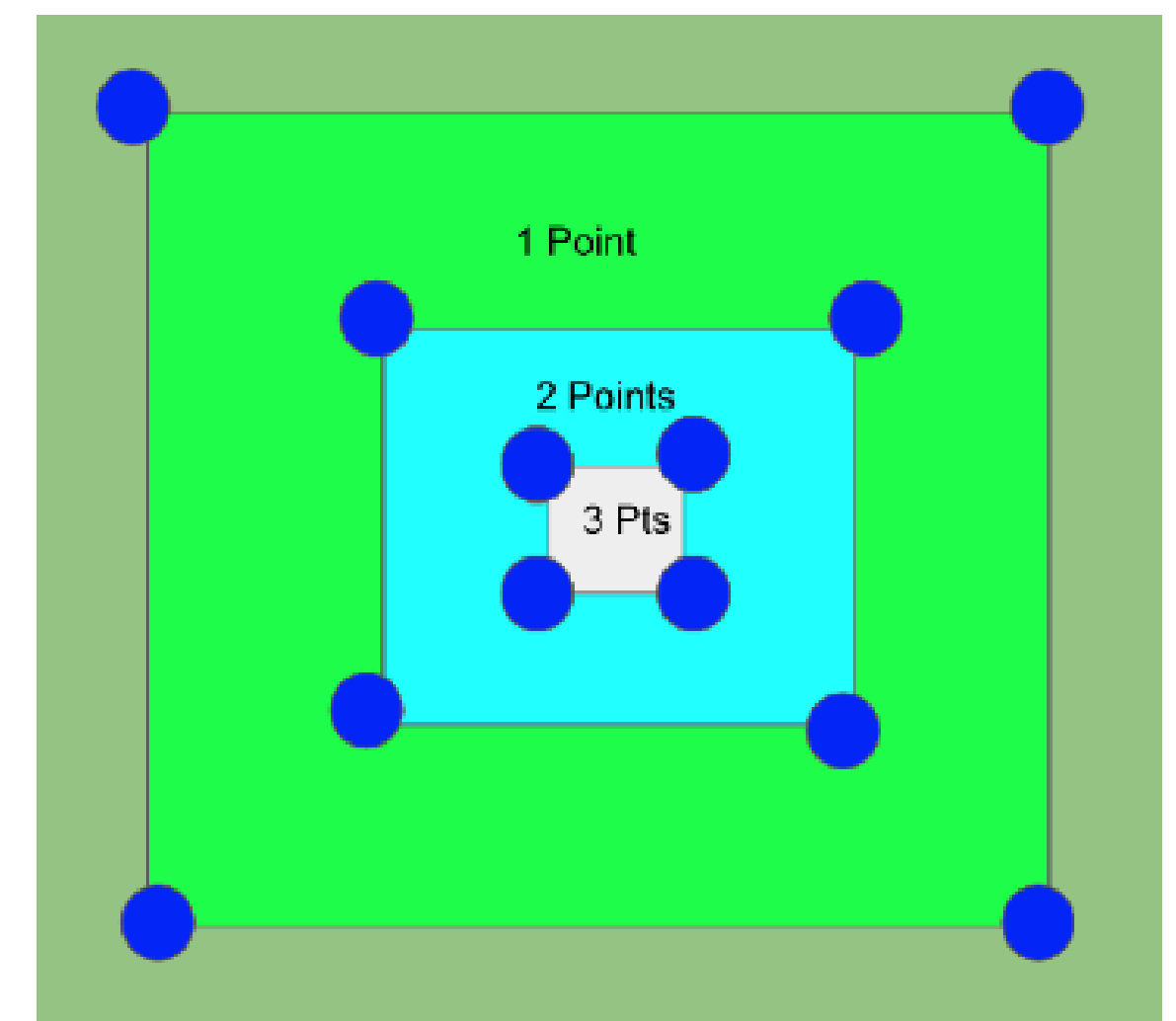


All Levels (works well for HS)

Activity Explanation

The **goal** is for players to pass the ball into their teammates box and the teammate to control the ball in their boxes.

- Start with short passes between two players, for 1-2 minutes
- Increase the distance between boxes as kids improve. You can instruct them to keep the passes either in the air or on the ground or practice both.
- When ready to add competition, play **Horseshoes**:
 - In Horseshoes, Player 1 has to pass accurately into player 2's square and player 2 has one touch to stop the ball in their square.
 - Award points for every turn, and play until one team reaches a set score, traditionally 7, 11, or 21.



Modifications

- This can be made easier or more difficult by changing the distance, size of squares, or by making the passes be in the air.
- A different scoring system that requires more soccer balls:
 - Place a soccer ball on a disc cone inside of each box. Have players chip the ball across the lane to each other and try to trap the aerial ball so it knocks over the ball that was resting on the disc cone.

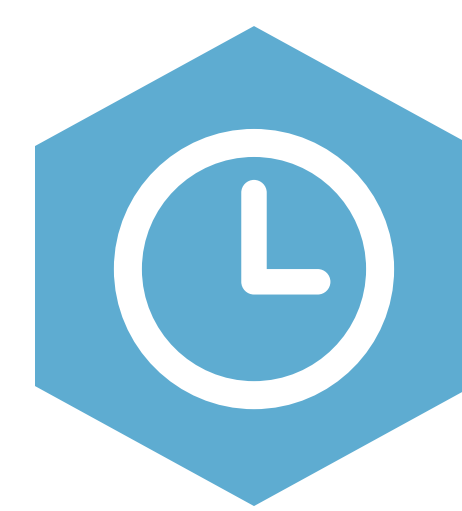
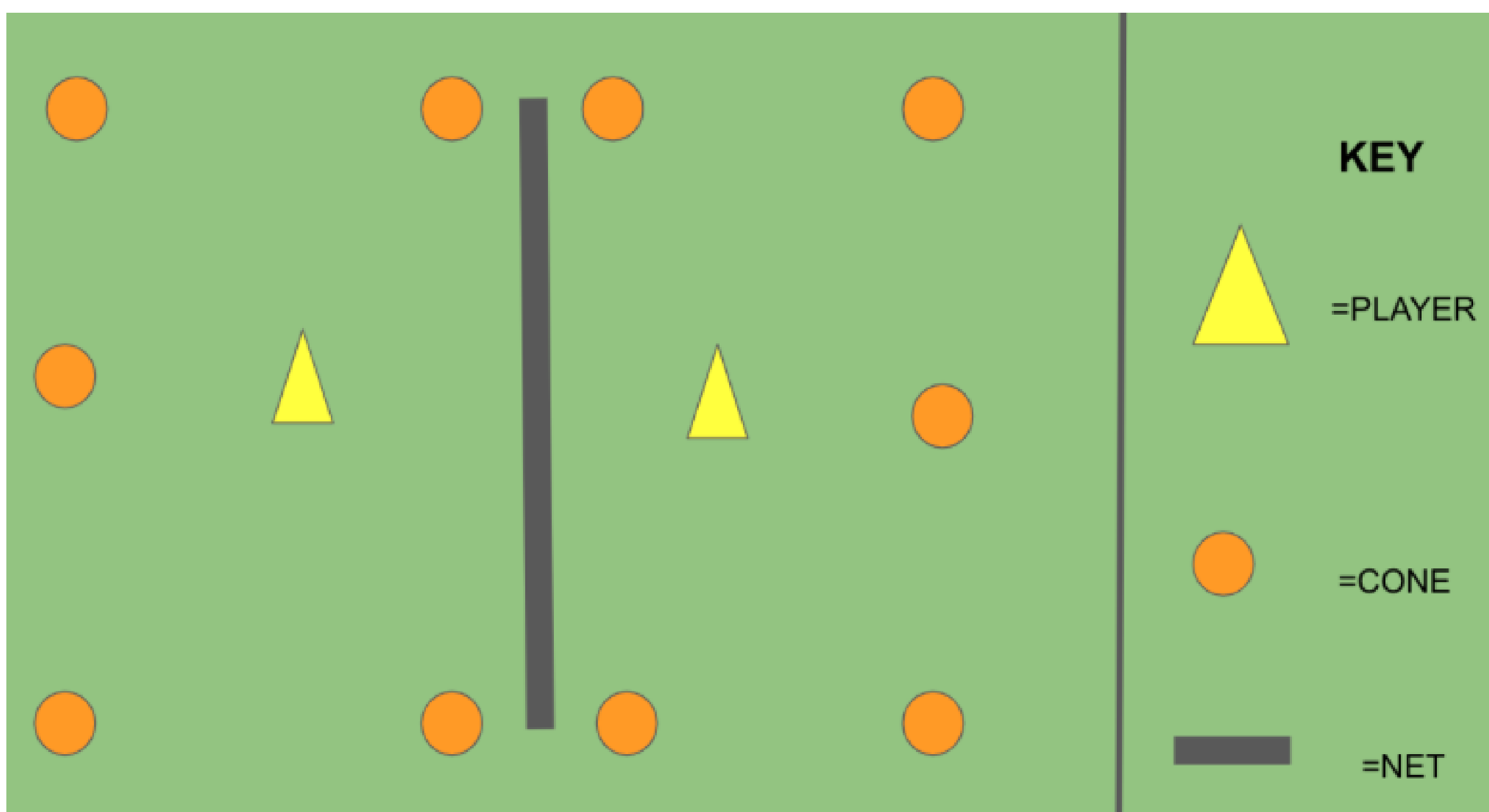


Safeguarding Considerations

- Make sure players do not touch the ball with their hands for any reason.
- Allow enough space between squares so that players do not chase errant balls into other players' space.

SOCCER TENNIS

Set Up



30-45 Minutes



Net or a set of tall cones, small cones, soccer ball



MS & HS

Activity Explanation

The goal of the game is to kick the ball over the net and into the opponent's area.

- A player wins a point when the opponent fails to return the ball to the other side of the net.
- Traditionally, the ball is allowed to bounce on the ground once, and the player is allowed 3 touches in the air before they need to return the ball over the net.
- If they exceed bounces or touches, the opponent wins a point.
- These rules can be modified to increase or decrease difficulty.

Modifications

- Modify the size of the boundary square, making bigger for less skilled groups and smaller for more skilled groups.
- To make the game easier allow more bounces and more touches.

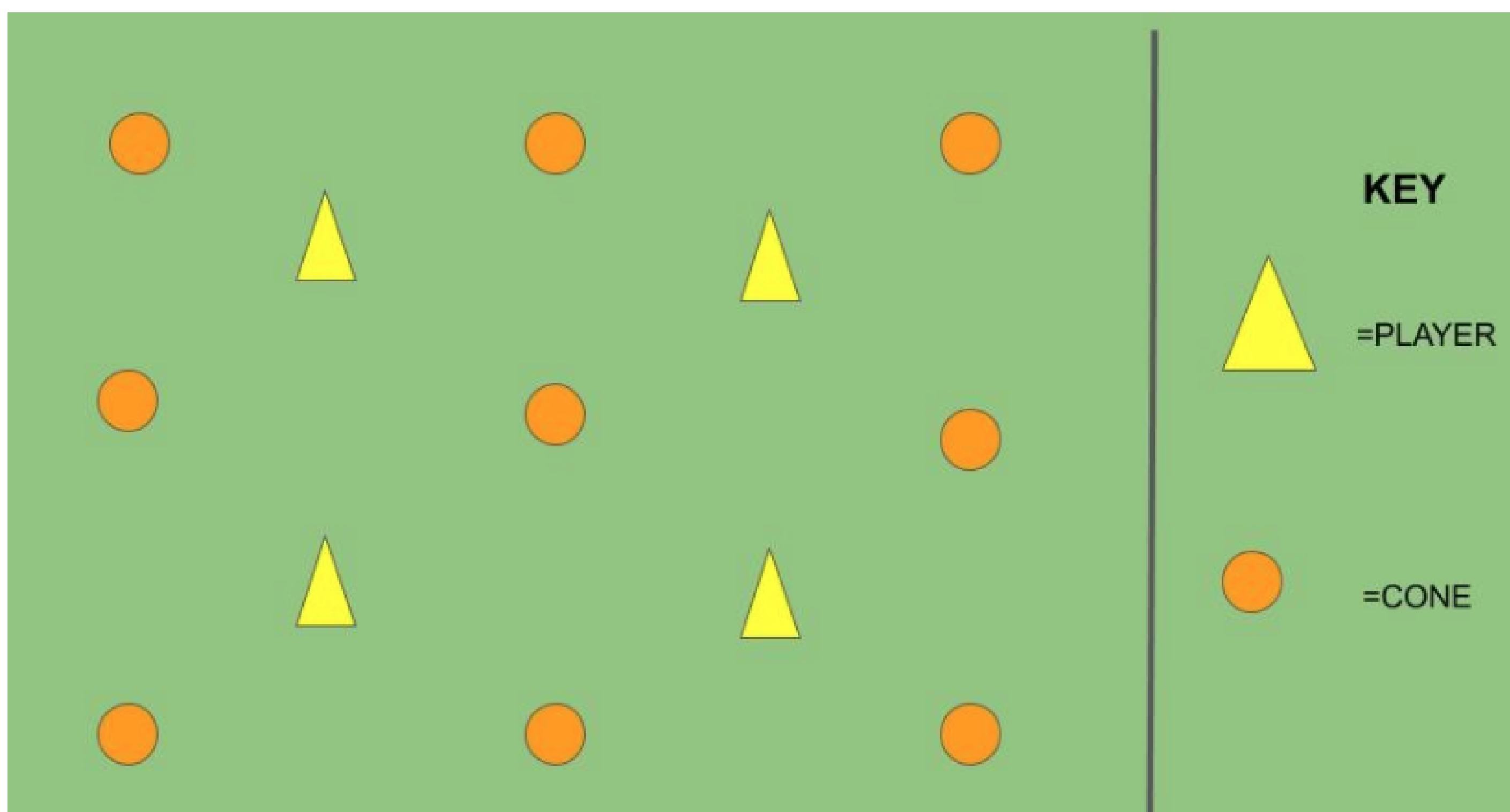


Safeguarding Considerations

- Must serve from a juggle, no hands should be used

SOCCER 4 SQUARE

Set Up



30-45
Minutes



Cones
& soccer ball

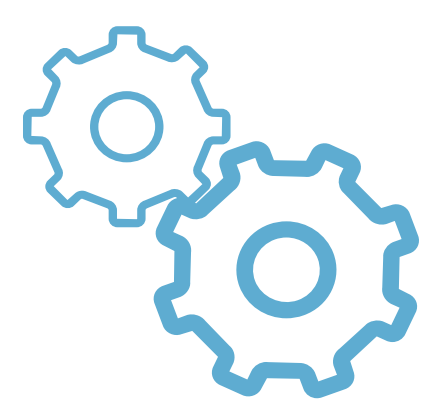


MS & HS

Activity Explanation

This is a game of 1v1v1v1:

- Set 4 squares (6ftx6ft or larger depending on skill level) for each player and number each square from 1-4.
- Player in Square 1 is called the Royal and the goal is to get to Square 1 and stay there for as much time as possible.
- Players volley the ball to other squares, the coach can decide how many bounces and touches participants are allowed when they receive the ball in their square.
- Every time that a player doesn't control the ball correctly, he/she/they has to start in Square 4 and the other players rotate accordingly.
- If you stay in Square 1 for 5 consecutive times you will become the Royal.



Modifications

- Modify the size of the boundary square, making bigger for less skilled groups and smaller for more skilled groups
- To make the game easier allow more bounces and more touches.

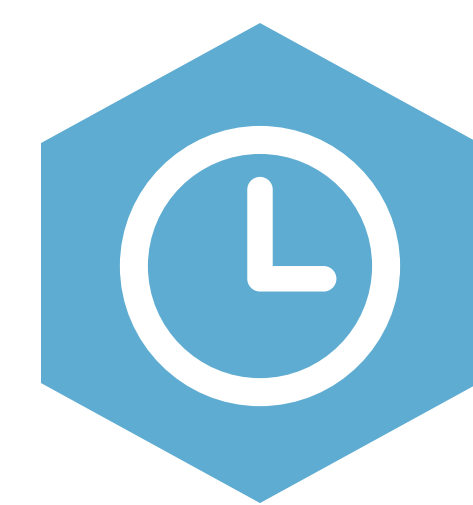
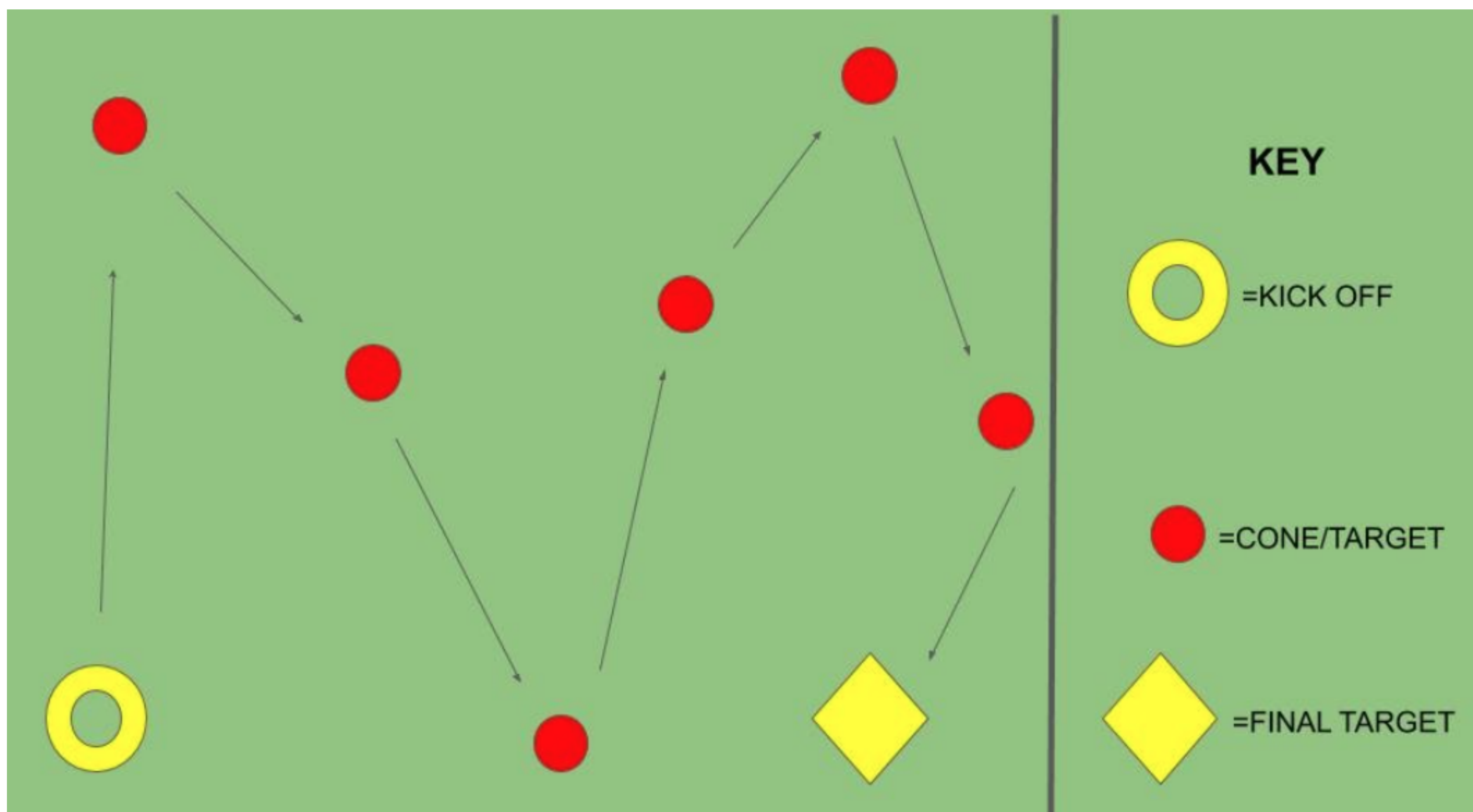


Safeguarding Considerations

- Must serve from a juggle, no hands should be used.

SOCCER GOLF

Set Up



**15-30
Minutes**



**1 ball per
player , cones**

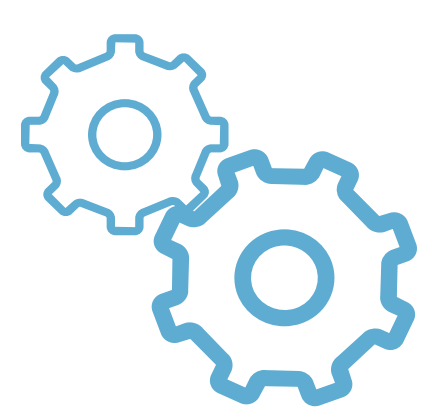


All Levels

Activity Explanation

The **goal** of this game is for players to progress through the golf course, from target to target (or hole to hole) in the least kicks possible.

- Start at the selected kick off location. Announce to the players how many strokes (kicks) it should take to get the ball to that object (for example, “par 2”). If the destination is a Par 2, and the first player takes 4 kicks to get their ball there, they would gain 2 points.
- Players take turns kicking their ball towards the target (tree, cone, object etc). If necessary, each player should use his, her, or their own place marker (cones, sticks, rocks) to hold his/her/their place while the other players take their turn. Once everyone has reached the first target, announce the next target and “par.” Continue until all targets have been reached by each player.



Modifications

- Course can be smaller, with fewer “holes” or larger, depending on the age and ability level.
- Make targets that are easier (kick the ball so it hits the tree at any spot) or harder (kick the ball between two bushes on the ground).
- Simplify and count how many kicks it takes each player to get to the given target, rather than using the par.
- Make this a team-based competition, by putting players on two different teams. Each team adds the points of their teammates together, so that it is a collective effort and players will be motivated to cheer on their teammates.

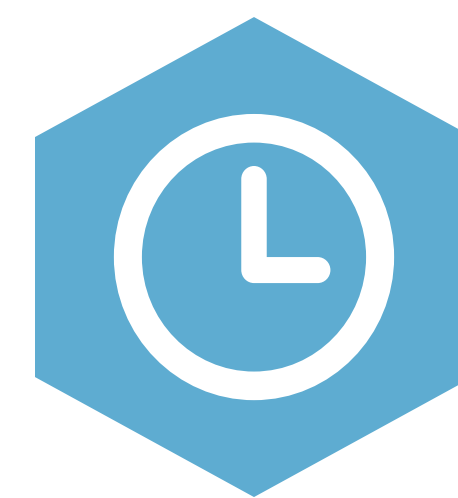
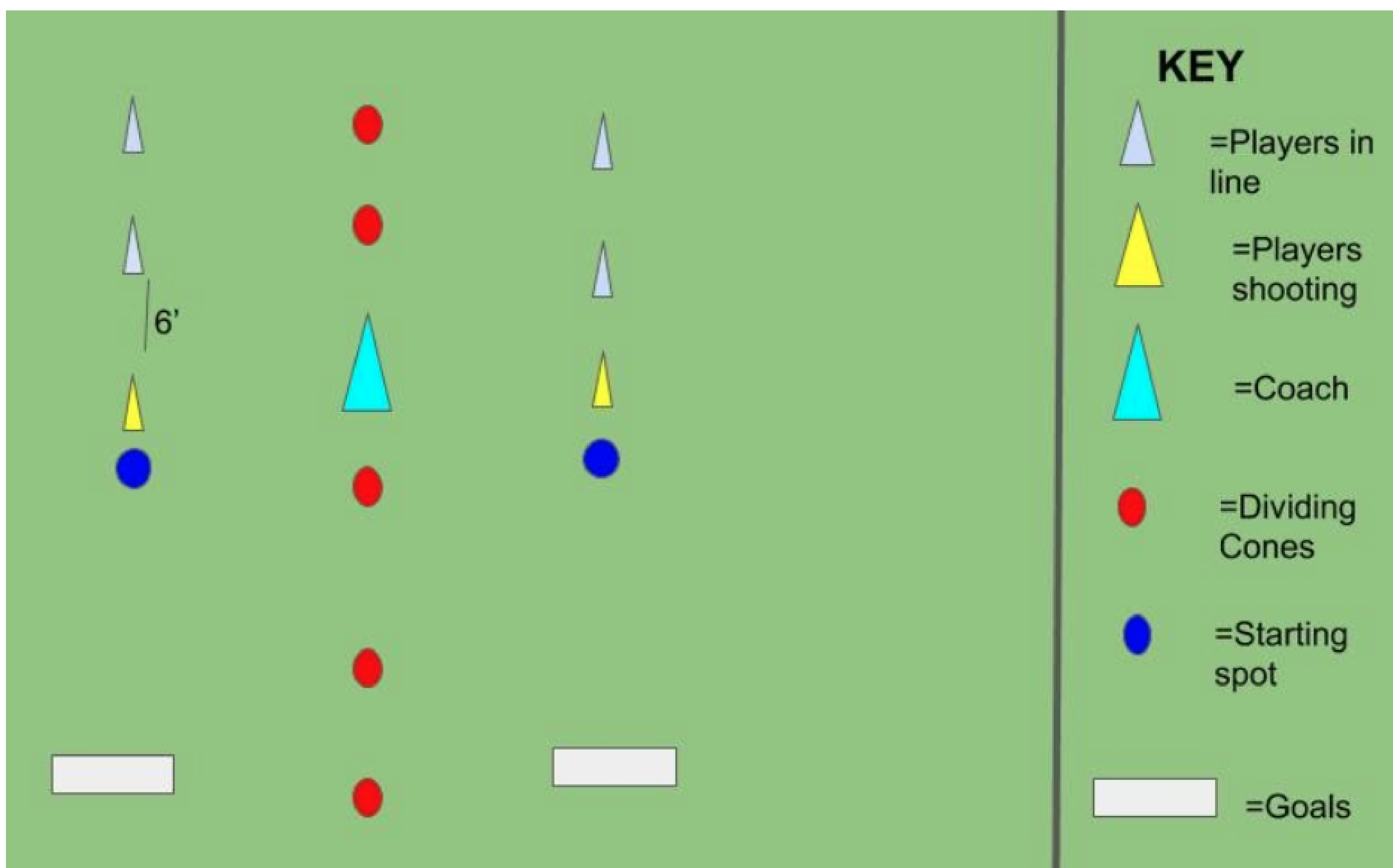


Safeguarding Considerations

- Make sure the course does not bring players too close to other people in the vicinity, or any other potentially unsafe areas.
- Create the course in advance to address those concerns.
- Players must remain 6 feet apart at each hole. If necessary, use a cone, rock or stick to mark your spot in order to make room for other players (each player should have his/her own marker that isn't shared with others).

LIGHTNING

Set Up



**20-30
Minutes**



**Balls, cones,
1 pugg goal**

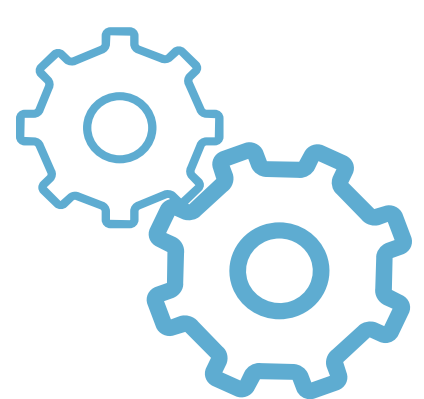


MS & HS

Activity Explanation

In this game, two teams compete against each other to “stay alive” the longest:

- Each team has 5 “lives” to start the game. Each team is playing in their own lane with a pugg goal at the end of each lane. The coach stands in the middle of each lane and signals when to start the activity. Players on each team line up behind a designated cone about 20 yards from goals.
- The first player in each line has the ball, and when the coach signals to start, they try to score as fast as possible (1-2 touches only).
- If the shooter scores, she shags her ball, delivers it to the next player in line, and then the next player shoots. The team maintains all 5 lives.
- If the shooter misses, she has to shag her ball and continue shooting. She has to score before the next player in line on the other team scores. If the next player on the other team scores first, the opposing team loses a life. Last team with lives is the winner.



Modifications

- Create team names to encourage players to cheer on their team!
- Place cone closer or further from goal to change shooting challenge
- Style of shot: On the ground for more foundational players, in the air for medium-advanced skill level
- Add in a target within the pugg goal (hang a pinnie, etc)- for most advanced players. A player could need to hit the pinnie with the ball to count the goal OR could be a way to regain a life

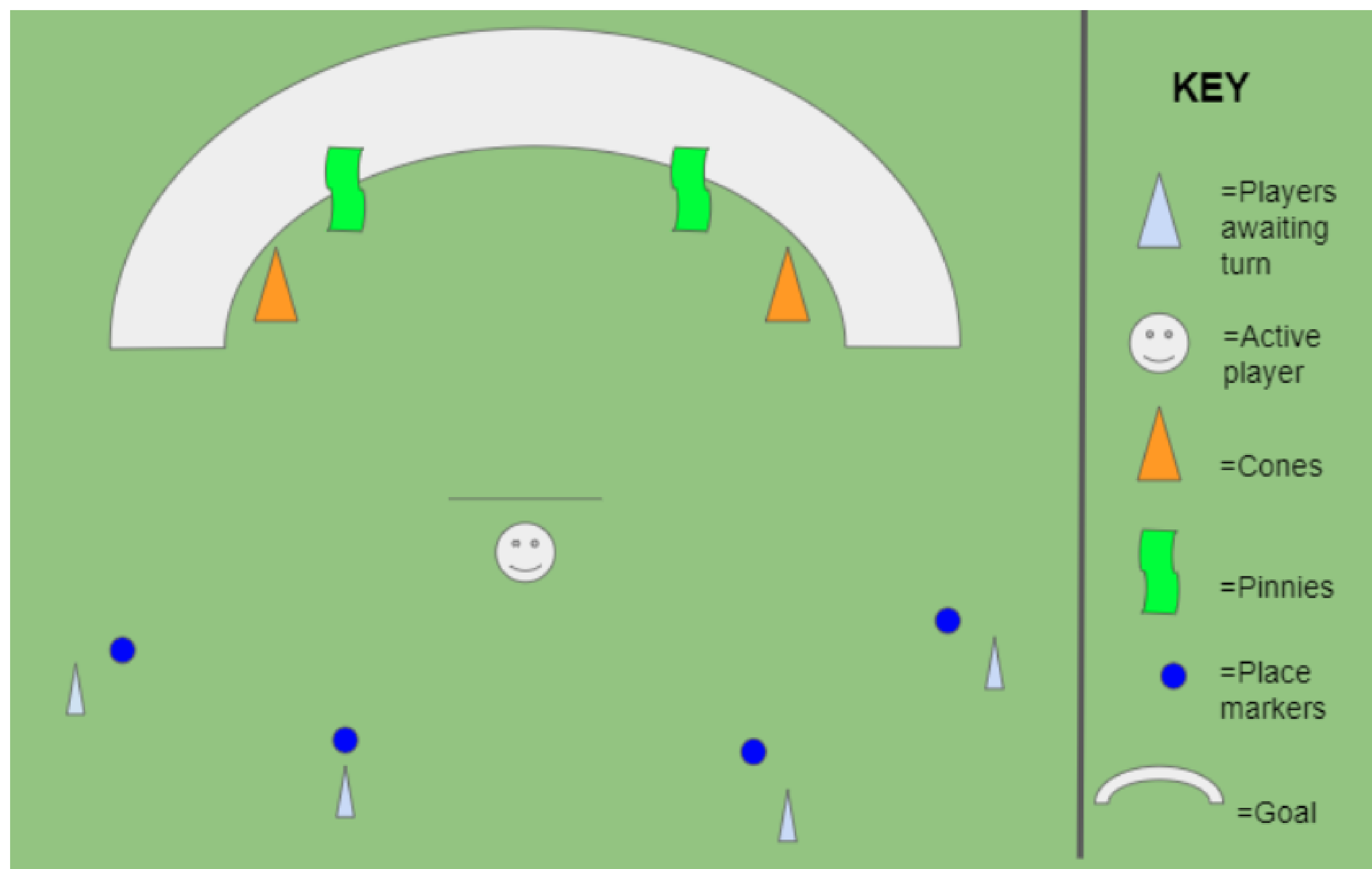


Safeguarding Considerations

- Make sure the players in line maintain a 6ft distance by putting place markers on the ground where the line should form.

SHOOT FOR THE STARS

Set Up



20-30
Minutes



One standard
size goal or
3-4 pugg
goals
Pinnies, tall
cones, flat
cones



All Levels

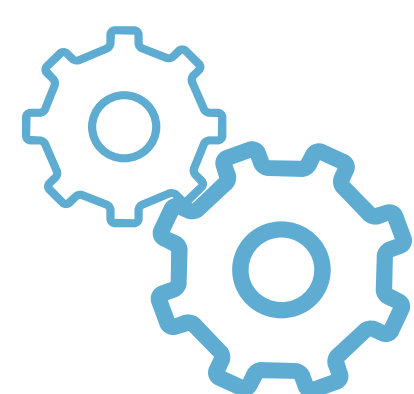
Activity Explanation

With standard sized goal:

- Give each player 4 shots to try to hit each target. One point per cone, 2 points per pinnie.
- After the first round, any player with 0-1 point is eliminated.
- Second round, players try to accumulate more points.
- Only players with top 3 scores move to the final championship round. You can conduct competition in teams or individual versus individual.

With pugg goals:

- Set up pugg goals at varying distances and/or angles from the PK line.
- Determine how many points can be gained by scoring on each goal, with the more difficult shots getting more points.
- Continue through 3 rounds as outlined above.



Modifications

- Add goalie for additional challenge or only for championship round (goalie can only use feet)



Safeguarding Considerations

- Ensure that players maintain 6ft distance while awaiting their turns (perhaps use cones to mark the waiting area for each player) and make sure no one touches the ball or goal with hands.

WORLD CUP: NEXT GENERATION

Set Up



 **20 Minutes**

 **Goals, balls, cones**

 **MS & HS**

Activity Explanation

The **goal** of this game is for partner pairs to score as many goals as possible off of a corner kick:

- Split players into teams of two, have each team select a country to represent.
- One player starts as a distributor, the other as an attacker.
- When the coach blows her whistle, the first team has 1 minute to see how many goals they can make off a corner kick. The other teams can shag the balls while awaiting their turn.
- Then the next team takes a turn. Repeat 3 times so that each team gets three chances to accumulate points.
- Pairs should alternate position each time, so that each player gets a chance to distribute and shoot, at least once.
- The two teams with the most points after 3 rounds will advance to the championship round.
- During the championship round, give each team 90 seconds to see how many goals they can score. The winning team is the team who scores the most points during the championship round.

Modifications

- Alternate corners that kids kick from so they practice multiple angles
- Require distributor to kick with only left or right foot
- Require attacker/shooter to shoot with one touch, or only left or right foot

Safeguarding Considerations

- Players must only shag their balls and set up their corners using their feet, no hands on the ball whatsoever.
- If you choose to put a goalie in the goal, he/she can only make saves using feet.
- In Lightning Variation, use cones to mark space where players should line up, 6ft apart from each other.

WORLD CUP: LIGHTNING

Set Up



 **20 Minutes**

 **Goals, balls, cones**

 **MS & HS**

Activity Explanation

- Have pairs line up at a corner (or in each corner to ensure safe spacing), maintaining 6 foot distance from the other pairs in line.
- When the coach blows her whistle, the first pair takes the corner (one person distributing, the other shooting), then quickly clears the field for the next pair, who steps onto the field and takes their corner as quickly as possible.
- Teams cannot start their corner until the previous team is completely off the field. Teams continue to step up, take their corner, and clear the field, repeating as many as possible for 1 minute.
- The two teams with the most goals during this lightning round advance to the championship round and repeat. Championship rounds could be longer (90 seconds) or shorter (30 seconds), depending on skill level and difficulty desired.

Simultaneous Corners Variation:

Set up multiple goals/corners and have the coach stand in the middle. Have each team start at the same time on their own goal and see how many they can make in one minute. Coaches can announce each team's progress throughout the minute to increase the urgency/sense of competition. Repeat 3 times and then move on to the championship round (using one goal), as described above.

Modifications

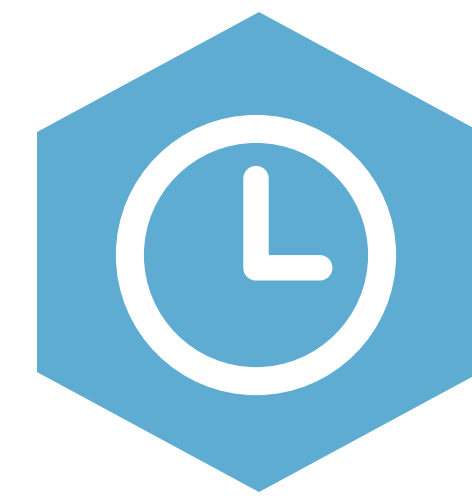
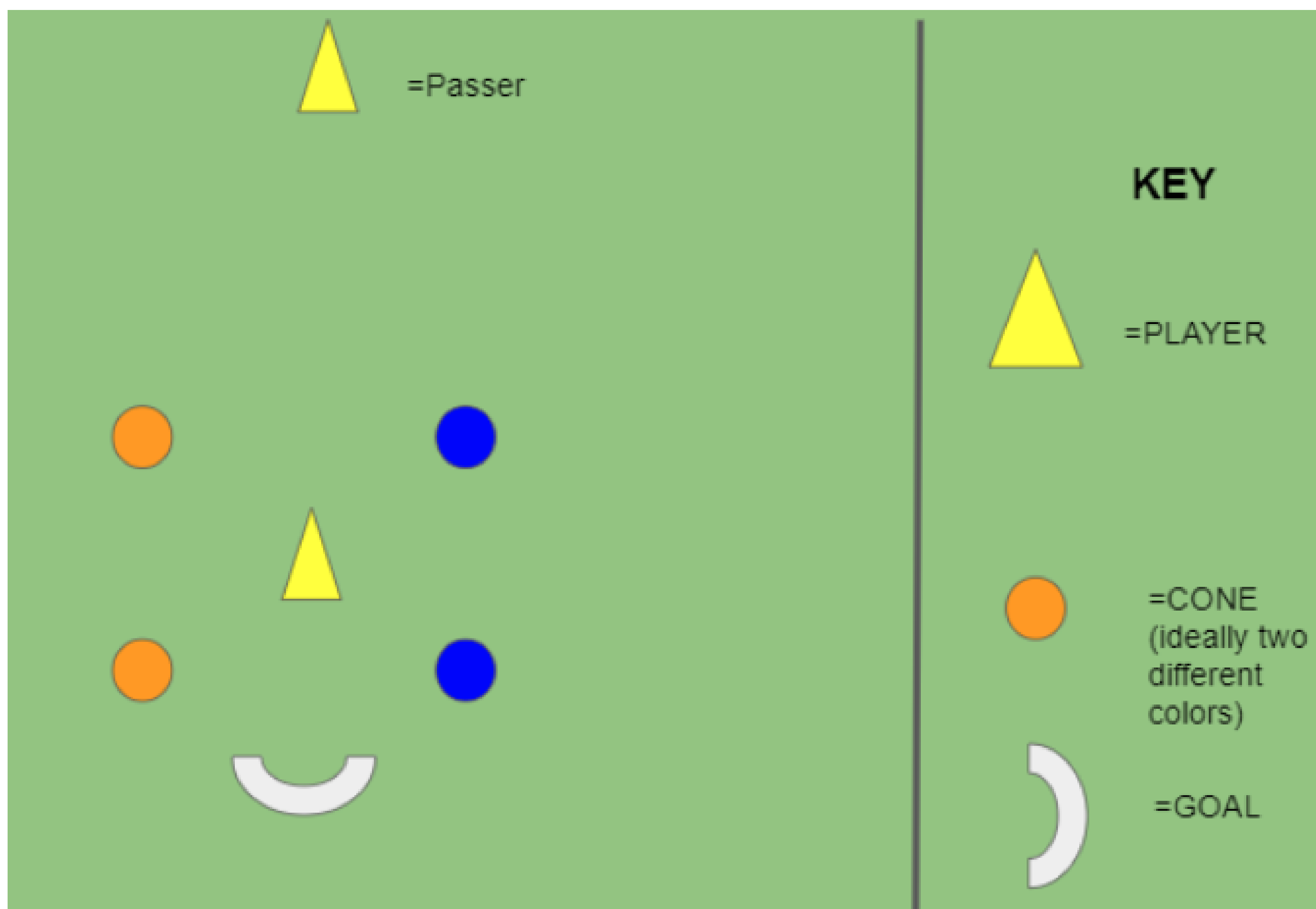
- Alternate corners that kids kick from so they practice multiple angles
- Require distributor to kick with only left or right foot
- Require attacker/shooter to shoot with one touch, or only left or right foot

Safeguarding Considerations

- Players must only shag their balls and set up their corners using their feet, no hands on the ball whatsoever.
- If you choose to put a goalie in the goal, he/she can only make saves using feet.
- In Lightning Variation, use cones to mark space where players should line up, 6ft apart from each other.

ESCAPE THE BOX

Set Up



20 - 30
Minutes



Soccer balls,
different
color cones,
pugg goals



MS & HS

Activity Explanation

One player is in a 4x4 box (hopefully have multiple color cones), they are the one working, their teammate is passing them the ball giving instructions using colors and directions. Each direction from the passer will signal a different play from the person working:

- If the passer shouts “man on” the player working plays a one-touch ball back to the passer
- If the passer says blue, the worker takes a touch through that side of the box and plays it back
- If the passer says orange, the worker takes a touch through that side of the box and plays it back
- If the passer says escape, the worker turns with the ball and shoots it into the pugg goal

To minimize waiting the players will rotate in their duties going from playing to shagging the ball to server and then back to the line.

Modifications

- Keep score! Every time a player correctly follows a command they get a point. Have players keep track of the points they get. Over multiple rounds challenge players to improve their own scores, play head to head against their partner or have partner pairs play head to head.
- Add in two more goals, one on the orange side and one on the blue side. Rather than passing back to the passer, each command will end in a shot (back, orange, blue).



Safeguarding Considerations

- Placing cone markers to show where players will wait for their turn will ensure the 6ft apart rule.

GIVE & GO SHOOTING

Set Up



 **15 - 20 Minutes**

 **Soccer balls, cones, 2 goals**

 **All Levels**

Activity Explanation

This drill teaches players to always be moving:

- Two players run through the course simultaneously.
- The player at the first cone has the ball. She passes the ball to her partner at the next cone and then makes a run to the cone directly in front of her.
- Her partner receives the ball and passes it back to her partner at the next cone, and then makes a run.
- These give and go runs continue through all cones until the player who reaches the cone closest to the goal shoots.
- Switch partners and/or lines each time so that everyone gets the chance to shoot and work with everyone
- Because multiple lanes of this drill can happen at the same time you can challenge the sides to see who can score the most goals in a given time period.

Modifications

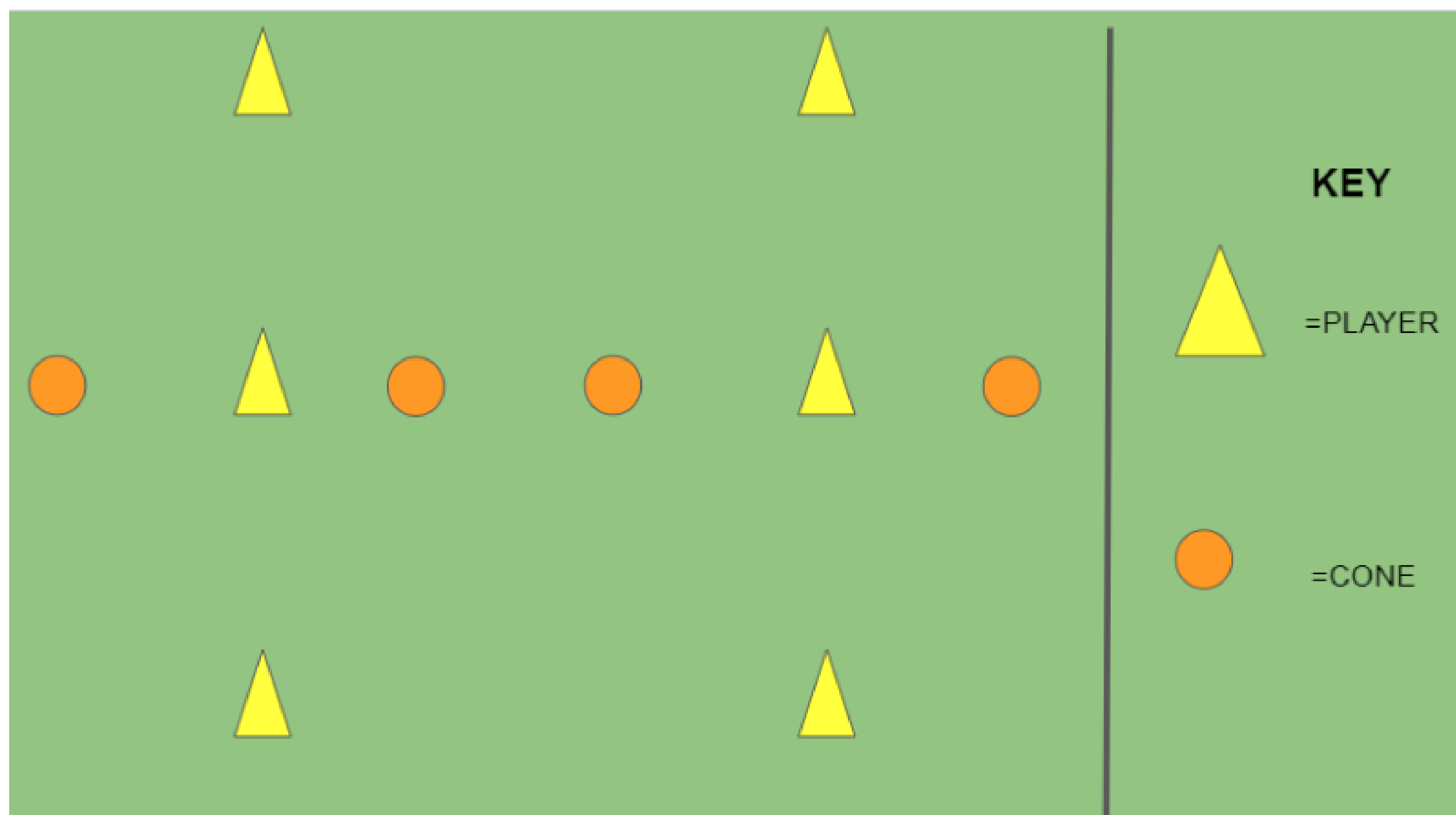
- Limit to 1 touch passes or shots to increase challenge
- With advanced students, the cones can be moved further apart and when the players get to the last cone they can cross it in for their partner. Working on both high and low crosses.

Safeguarding Considerations

- Make sure players in line stay 6ft apart at all times by using place markers (cones or flat objects on the ground)

GATEKEEPER

Set Up



 20-30 Minutes

 Balls & Cones

 MS & HS

Activity Explanation

The **goal** of this game is for partners to work together to shoot the ball through a gate and gatekeeper:

- Split kids into groups of three: one gatekeeper who stands between the two cones and two passers who are standing at least 6 feet from the gate on either side.
- The passers are working together, trying to pass, shoot or chip the soccer ball through the gate and past the gatekeeper to their teammate on the other side. If the passers do this, they get a point.
- The gatekeeper is trying to intercept the ball and stop it from going through the gate (cannot use hands). If they do so, they win a point.
- After the ball is intercepted, the gatekeeper turns and distributes it to the other passer who then tries to get the ball past the gatekeeper again.
- Play for 2-3 minutes and then rotate roles.

Modifications

- Passers with more leg power can back up to get more challenge
- Wider goal for lower skill level, more narrow goal for higher skill level
- Play rounds with only chip or shot
- Have players keep track of their individual points through game(s) and crown overall champion
- Play rounds with all gatekeepers playing against all passers for a different team challenge

Safeguarding Considerations

- Make sure to set up gates, so they are 6 feet apart from each other.
- Make sure gatekeepers do not use their hands.

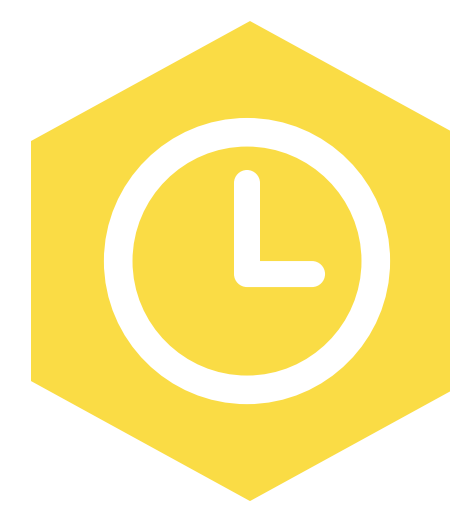
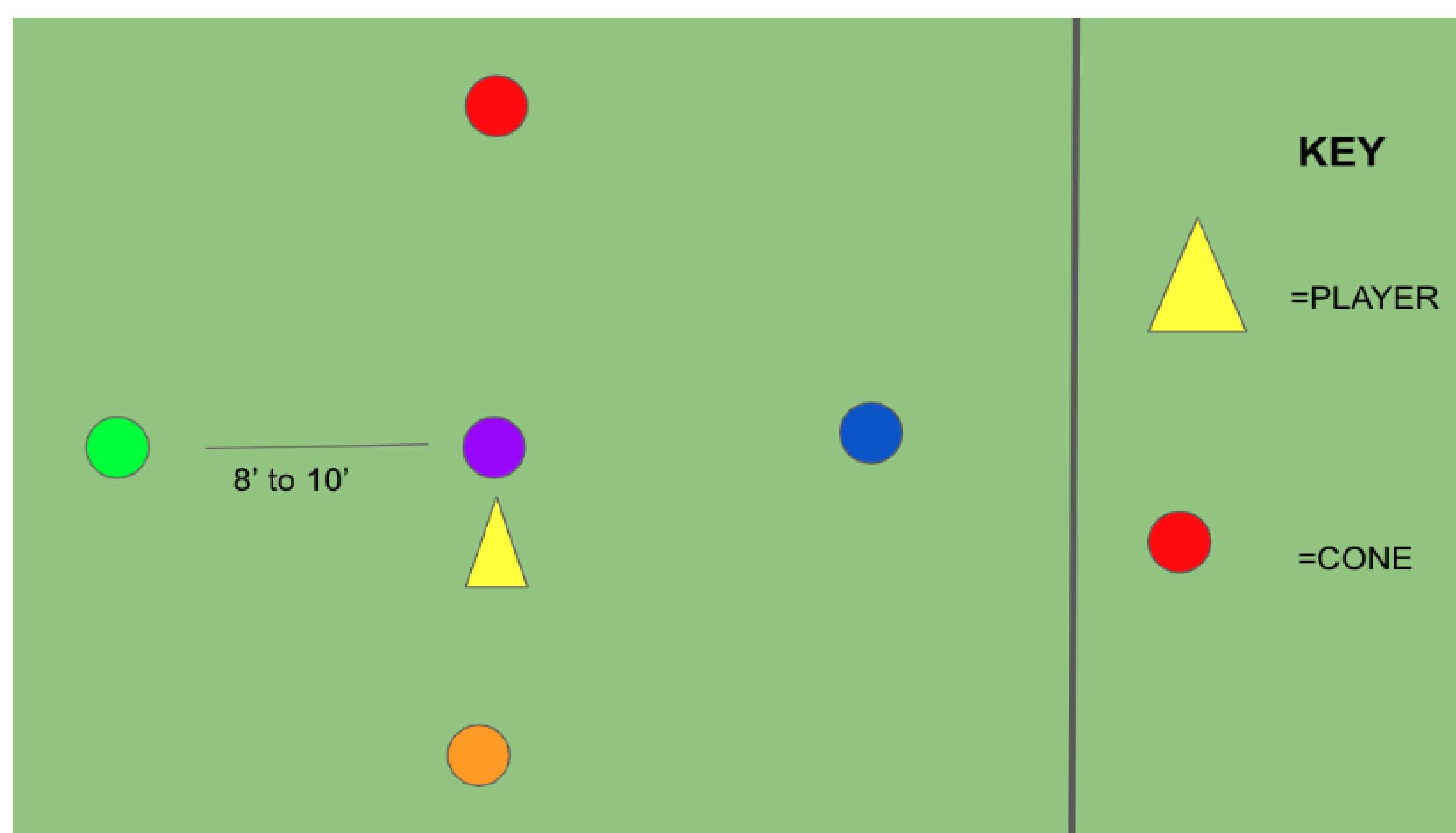


THEME 2:

Fitness

COLOR CODE

Set Up



15-30 Minutes



Cones of different colors, soccer ball



All Levels

Activity Explanation

The **goal** of this game is to test quick reactions of players:

- Players start by standing over the center cone of their individual diamonds.
- The coach yells out a color, and players run around the cone of that color and back to the center cone.
- Coach can call out multiple cones in a row, and players must run around each cone the coach yells out in order (ex. “Ready...RED, GREEN, ORANGE, RED, BLUE, ORANGE..GO!”).
- First player back to the center gets a point.
- Introduce a soccer ball for a dribbling component.

Modifications

- Increase the size of the diamond to add more fitness
- Change the type of movement that you ask the participants to use (For example, ask players to shuffle to side cones, sprint to cone in front, and backpedal to the cone behind them)
- Add a ball: Have kids at the center cone do toe taps or juggle the ball as they wait for the coach to name a cone and then dribble the ball to the named cone. You can also challenge kids to do specific turns around the cones to work on new moves.
- Make it a race! This can be in teams or individually.
- To add an ESL component, shout out words that begin with the same letter as the color to which the players should run.

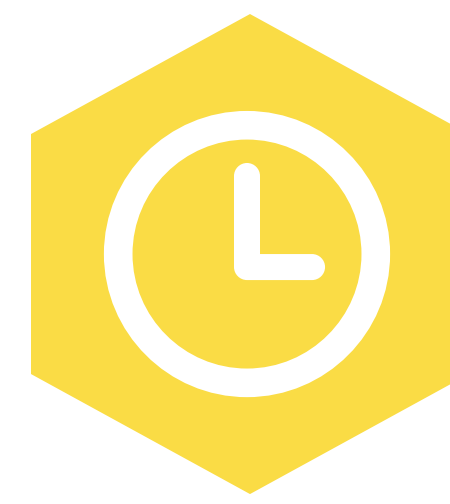
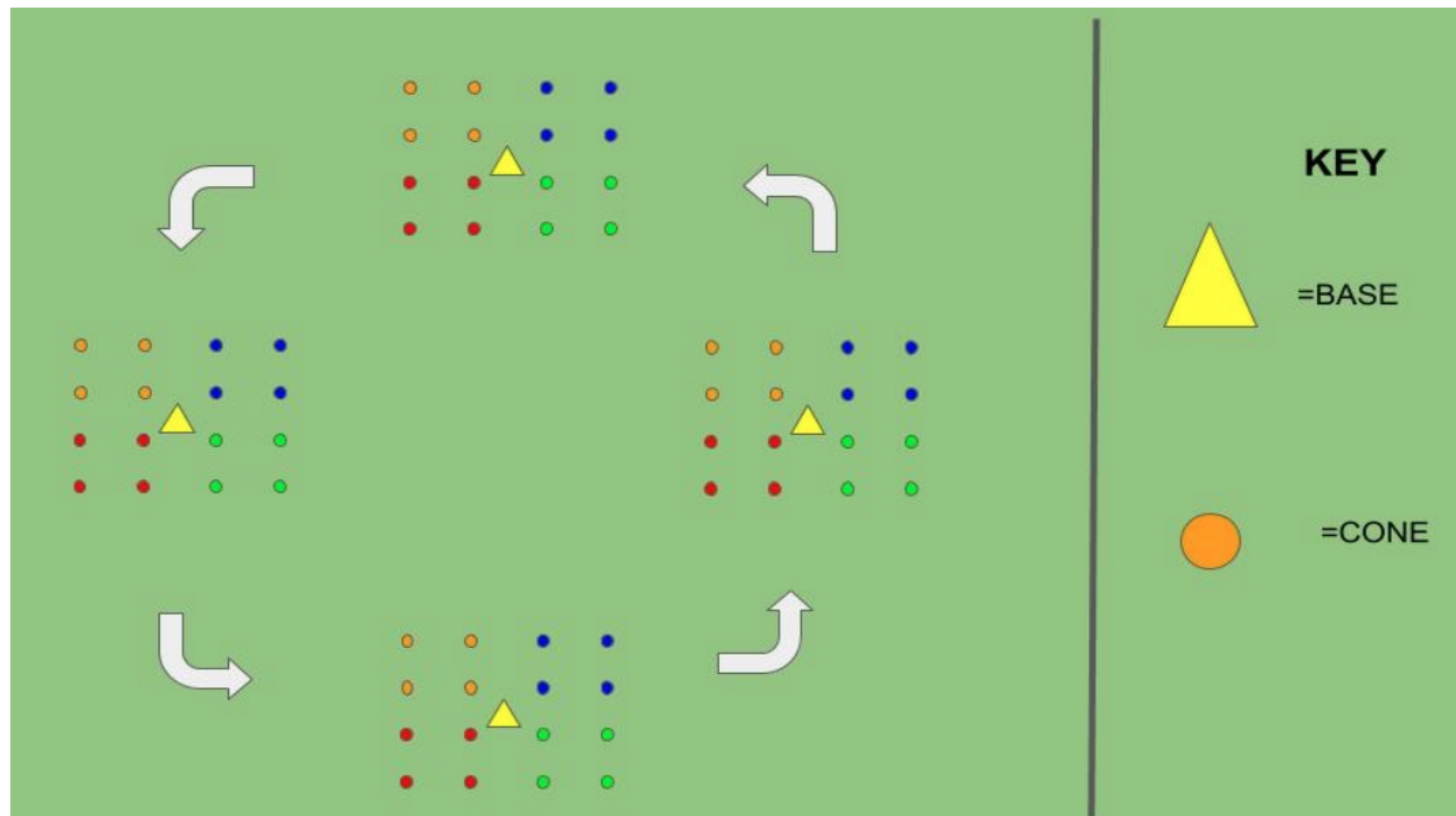


Safeguarding Considerations

- Ensure diamonds are far enough apart so that players chasing errant soccer balls don't run into each other.
- Ensure players are not catching the balls when they juggle, but letting the ball hit the ground. Discourage picking the ball up.

RUNNING BASES

Set Up



15-30 Minutes



Cones and soccer balls



ES & MS

Activity Explanation

This is a relay race with 4 “bases”:

- Split players into 2-4 equal teams, have each team line up at “home base,” use markers on the ground to make sure teammates and teams stand 6 ft apart. Teams compete to be the first team to have every player on their team complete all 4 bases.
- Teams decide the order of their “runners” and line up in single file accordingly. When the coach yells “begin!” the first player on each team runs to 1st base, completes the designated activity, then to 2nd, then 3rd, then home (so all teams will have 1 player from their team running the bases simultaneously).
- Second player cannot start until the first player returns to home base and gives him/her/them an air high five. Kids waiting at home base can cheer teammates on.

Modifications

- Add a soccer ball at the bases to do footwork challenges.
- For a group that adheres to physical distancing well, allow for more kids to be active on the bases at a single time. As soon as the first player proceeds to 2nd base, the next player on their team can run from home to 1st and begin the challenge.
- Play a baseball game: every time a player runs all four bases they score a homerun for their team. Play for 5 minutes and have teams compete for how many homeruns they can score.

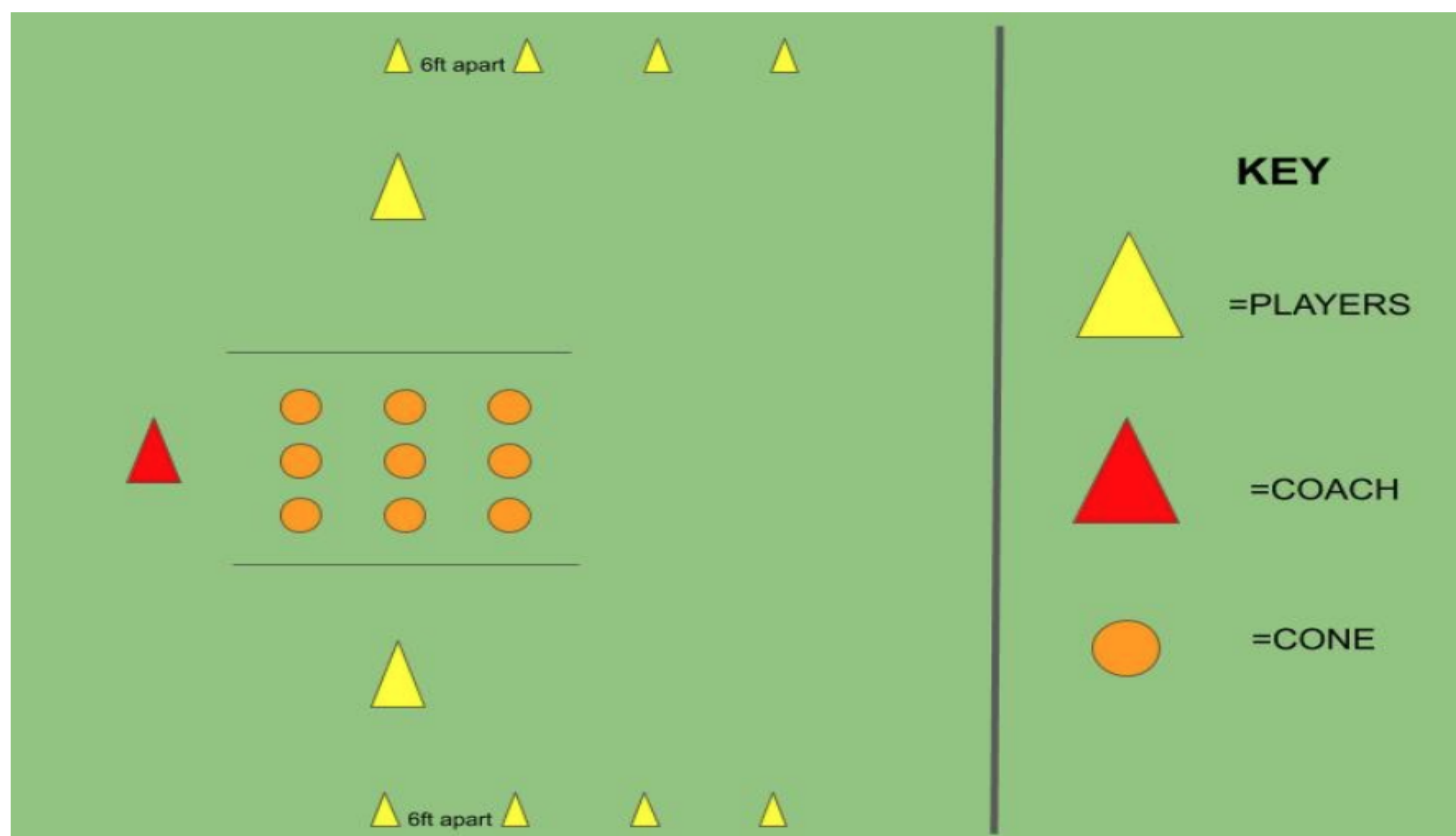


Safeguarding Considerations

- Make large bases with enough space for 2- 4 competitors to compete on the same base while maintaining 6 feet of distance.

TIC TAC QUICK TOES

Set Up



 **15-20 Minutes**

 **9 Cones & Objects for X's and O's**

 **All Levels**

Activity Explanation

This is a game that combines tic tac toe and fitness:

- Players start on opposite ends of the grid, give each player a number (1-5).
- When the coach yells out a number, the corresponding player must sprint to approach the grid.
- Once they get to the grid the coach yells out a fitness task eg: 10 squats, 10 pushups, etc.
- The first player to finish their task gets to place their X or O on the grid before the other. (Coach places the markers for them).
- The players then run back to their teams and send the next person over. First team to get 3 in a row wins.

Modifications

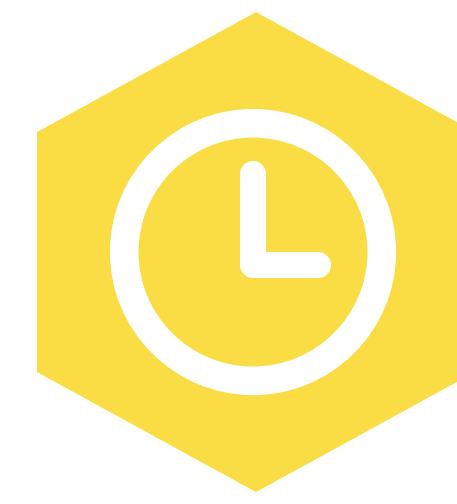
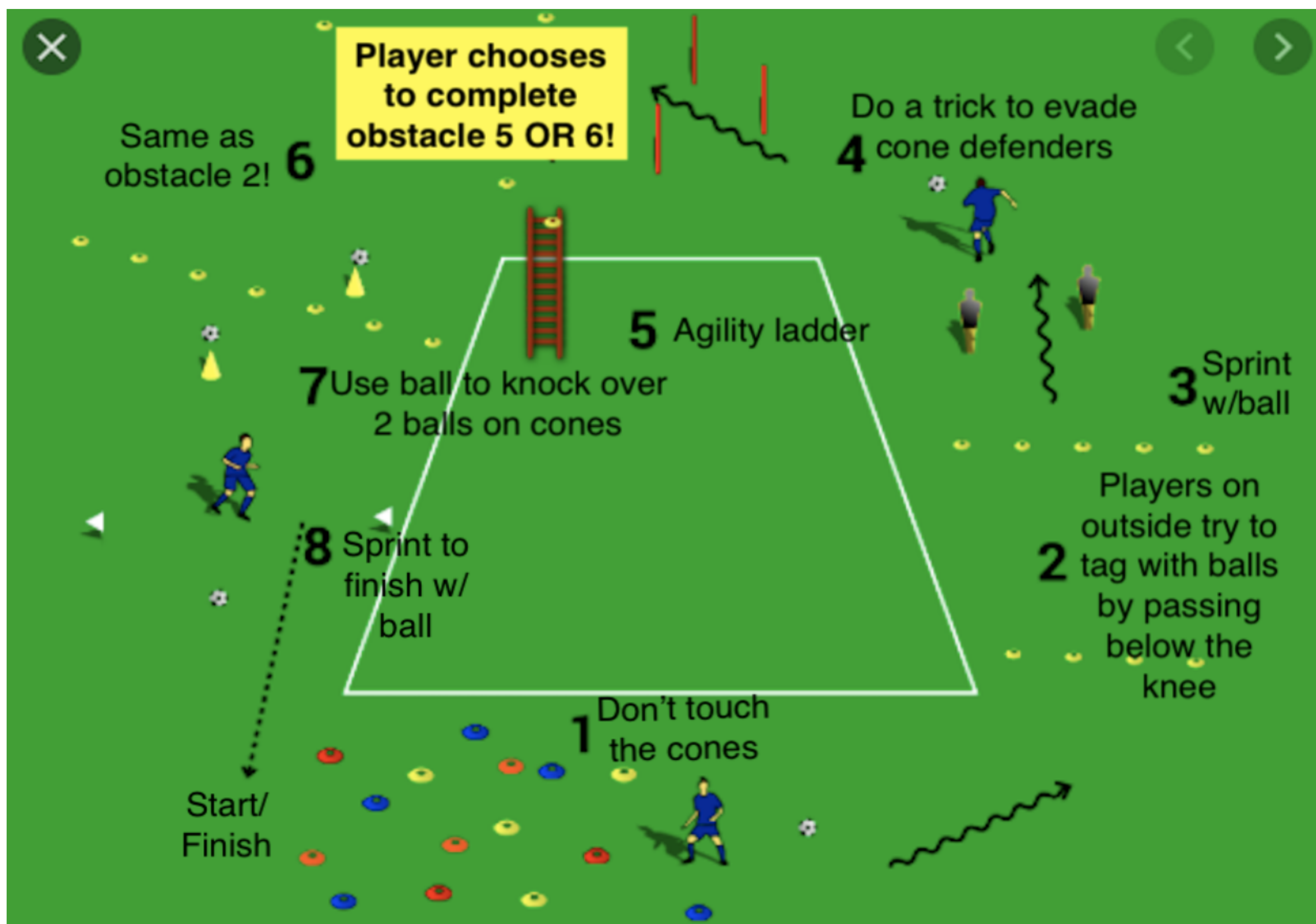
- To increase activity level have all players do the fitness challenge for each round
- Do math problems to identify the number of the kid that should run out, ie “The answer to six minus three”

Safeguarding Considerations

- The grid must be large enough so that the players when they get to it are still 6ft apart.
- Coach should be the only person entering the grid to place the markers.

OBSTACLE COURSE

Set Up



20 Minutes



Cones & soccer balls

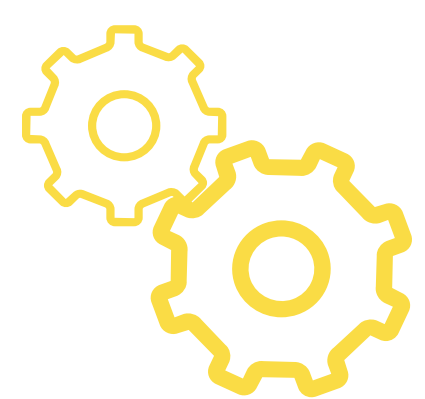


All Levels

Activity Explanation

Arrange a course of obstacles using the provided example or creating one of your own.

- With some planning, obstacle courses can be a competitive way to practice soccer skills and work out!
- The possibilities are endless for the types of courses you can come up with and the way they are run: They can be individual workouts or team relays. You can require each individual to do the entire course or allow teams to divide the course and assign each individual to specific obstacles.
- Other potential materials: Rope or string, Hula hoops, Pool noodles, Agility equipment, Soccer goals, Rings, Chairs, Balloons



Modifications

- Set up identical courses and divide into teams to make it a relay.
- Assign each person 1 or 2 obstacles at a time, then have player rotate on coach's whistle to make a circuit.
- Make it a team course and have teams do it blindfolded with a partner as a guide.
- Make it more competitive by timing how long it takes to complete the course.



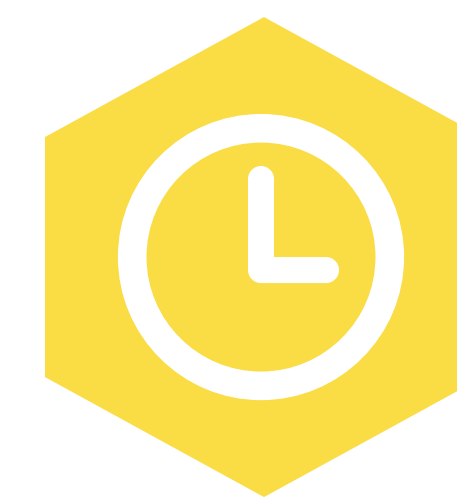
Safeguarding Considerations

- Obstacles should avoid any hand to object contact.
- Obstacles should allow for only one person to be working on each at a time.

On the BinGO

Set Up

Pass 3 benches 	See leftover holiday decorations	Store sale sign 	Walk 1,000 steps	Take a selfie 
Walk through a food court or by a restaurant	Pass a tree (real/artificial) 	Take a quick break to stretch	Walk by or through a parking lot	Smile at a passerby 
Stop for a quick water break	See someone carrying shopping bags	BINGO!	Hear music playing 	Trying swinging your arms or taking slightly bigger steps
Pass a pharmacy 	Walk past a directory or map	Pass a coffee shop 	Check your heart rate	Pass a water fountain
Pass a bookstore 	Take a quick break to stretch	See a clerk helping a customer	Pass by 10 storefronts	Walk 2,000 steps 



30 Minutes



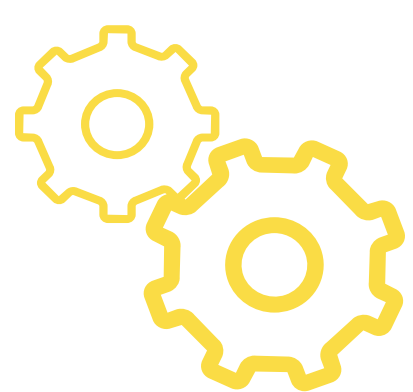
Bingo boards



All Levels

Activity Explanation

- Take a walk, hike, or run with your team while playing bingo and see how many bingos each person or team can complete.



Modifications

- Make it competitive by dividing into teams.
- Play additional games as you walk like “I Spy” or “20 questions”.
- Make setup easier by making a list of items as in a scavenger hunt instead of a bingo board.

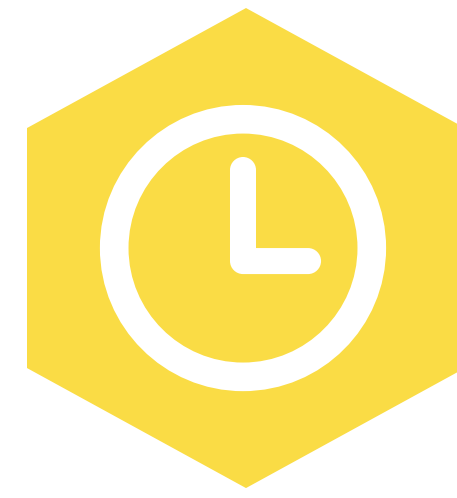
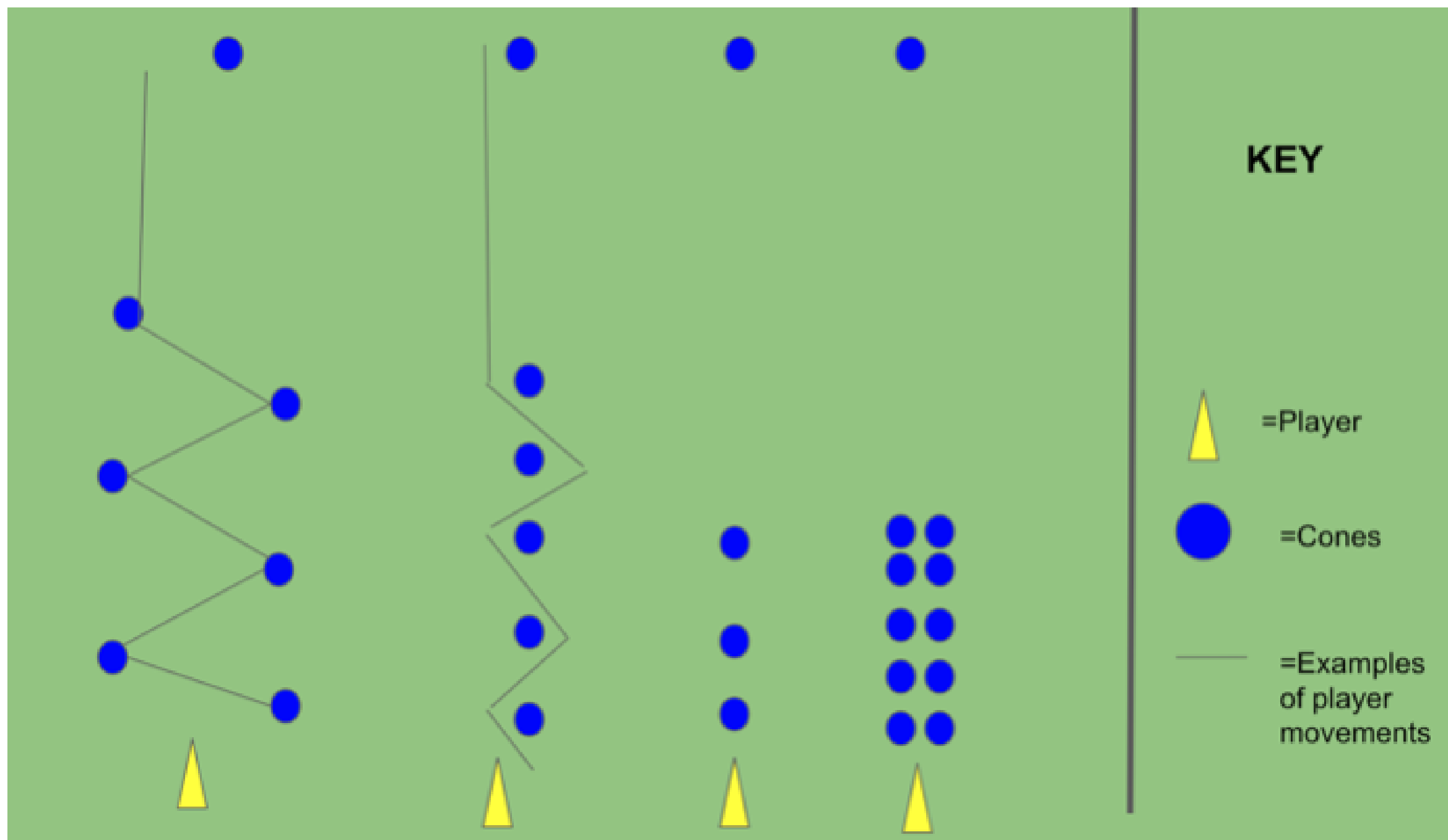


Safeguarding Considerations

- You may need to divide into 2 groups to maintain 6 feet of distance.

SAQ (Speed, Agility, Quickness)

Set Up



20-30 Minutes



Cones, hurdles, speed ladder, any equipment you might use to make a short agility circuit

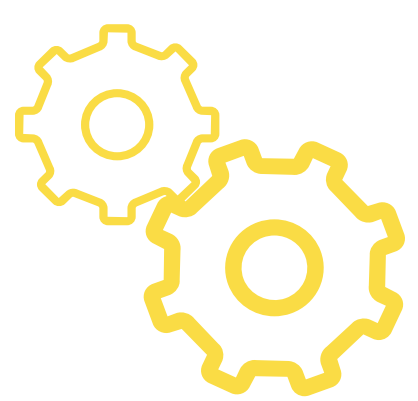


All Levels

Activity Explanation

This can be used as a warm-up or as a longer drill:

- Build various speed, agility, and quickness stations at least 6 feet apart from one another. Some examples are:
 - Slaloming through cones and into a sprint
 - Bilateral one leg jump lunges into a sprint
 - Figure eight through cones and into a sprint
 - Various speed ladder techniques and into a sprint
 - Zig zag shuffle and into a sprint
- Players should be at each station for a set amount of time or a set amount of repetitions and then rotate to the next station simultaneously.



Modifications

- This is not restricted to the above 5 SAQ examples, other variations are welcome
- You can make fewer stations and add a partner with a soccer ball. The partner stands 15 feet beyond the cone to which the player will sprint, and passes the player the ball each time the player gets there. The player controls and returns the ball. This keeps the partner engaged, adds a ball component, and gives the player a cheerleader.
- Use the same cone set up and add a soccer ball to the movements!

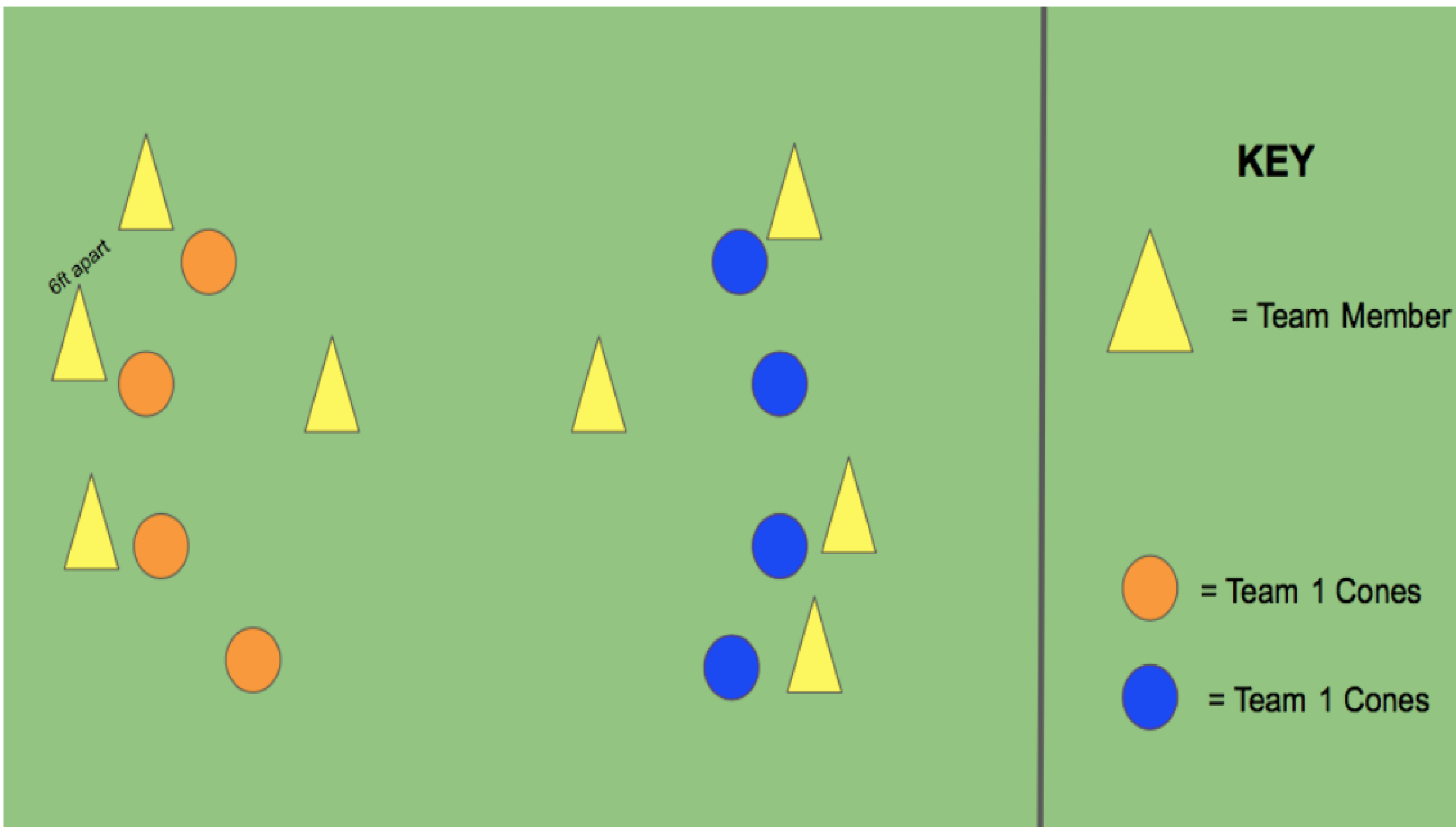


Safeguarding Considerations

- Make sure each line is spaced at least 6 feet apart
- Avoid lines by having as many SAQ Stations as players.

THE BEST GAME

Set Up



 20 Minutes

 Cones & maybe soccer balls

 All Levels

Activity Explanation

In this game, teams compete to see who is the best at a variety of different challenges:

- Divide into 2 or 3 teams (groups of 3-5 work well).
- Announce a specific contest or just the category (ie soccer, fitness, random) and have each group select one person who they think can do the “best” against the other team(s).
- Have the selected team members participate in the contest with their teams cheering them on.
- Whichever team member completes the contest “the best” earns a point for the team.
- Be sure to set clear rules ahead of time so all team members participate. For example, you may set the rule that groups must pick a different team member for every contest or that each team member must complete a total of 3 contests by the end of the game.

Modifications

Here's some competition ideas:

- **Soccer:** Most toe touches, bell taps, juggles in one minute; longest ball hold on top of foot
- **Fitness:** Highest jumper, fastest crab walker, longest plank, most pushups
- **Random:** Longest stare in staring contest, best live Tik Tok routine, most cartwheels, loudest whistle



Safeguarding Considerations

- You may need to divide into 2 groups to maintain 6 feet of distance.



THEME 3: **Team-Building**

Short Games & Attention Getters



5 Minutes Per Activity



None



All Levels



Set Up

All team builders can be done sitting in a circle.



Activity Explanation

Check out these quick team-builders to use during a circle. They are also great options for one coach to lead while a second coach is setting up a drill.

Animal Alphabet: A leader starts by saying the name of an animal that starts with the letter A, the next person says the name of an animal that starts with B and so on. See how far down the alphabet (or how many rounds around the alphabet you can do). Can choose other categories (country names, types of food, names of movies) if this becomes a favorite game for your team.

369 Clap Game: In this game, the team stands in a circle and is trying to count as high as possible together. However, in this game you can't say 3, 6, or 9 or any number containing those numbers (16, 19, 23, etc). Instead of saying those numbers you clap when it's your turn. For example, "one, two, clap, four, five, clap, seven, etc." If someone says a number instead of clapping, they're out and the circle starts over.

Zen Counting: The team is trying to count from 1 to a predetermined number, or from 1 to as high of a number as possible. If two people speak at the same time, the group starts over. Anyone can start the group back at number one. For more challenge, you can have people close their eyes, or count by odds/evens

Category Rhythm: Choose a leader to make a rhythm that others can follow. Have another person name a category (books, food, cities). While everyone is clapping on rhythm, have people say a word from the category. If they miss the rhythm they're out or could play horse style and they get an H.

Do as I say, not as I do: Go around in a circle. Each person will say one thing they like and act out something different (they could say "I like running" and then could act out jumping). The second person acts out what the first person said (running) and then acts out what they like to do. This continues until everyone in the circle has gone. At the end, see if one person or the group can remember the words of each person.

FIELD DAY OLYMPICS



45 Minutes



Cones, soccer balls, small goals



All, best for younger players



Activity Explanation

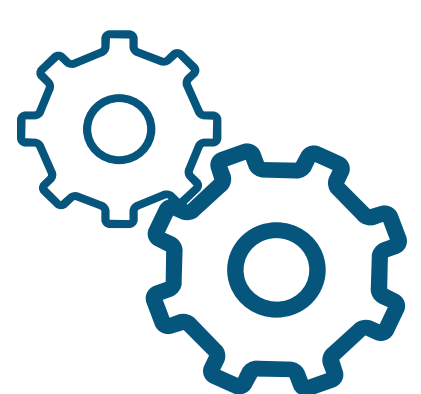
A fun, multi-game team competition in which points accumulate between games. Games can include:

- Long Jump: Players get points for their teams by jumping over the space between 2 lines of cones. Increase the width between the cone lines gradually, and assign more points for a longer jump
- Juggling Competition: Players get points for their team based on the number of juggles they can get in a row. Can be done by time (ie, you have one minute to get as many consecutive juggles as you can, or by tries, ie 'you have 3 chances to get as many juggles as you can)
- Soccer Bowling: Set up a triangle of tall cones for each team. Make a line 20 feet away that players have to stand behind. Teams get points based on how many cones they can knock over.
- Target Practice: Place cones, soccer balls, small goals, etc at varying distances from a line of cones. Players try to hit the object with the soccer ball from behind the line, then pass the ball to the next player on their team. Each team has a set amount of time to get as many points as possible. Give each target a point value based on the difficulty level of the shot.
- Dance Competition: Co-Coach is the judge, awarding 1 - 5 points to players based on enthusiasm

Have players rotate with their teams (at a safe distance!) and have a coach with each group to facilitate.

At the end, tally up the points to announce the winning team.

To increase the fun, create team names, cheers, etc



Modifications

These challenges can range from silly to difficult based on your team.



Safeguarding Considerations

Avoid having players wait in line. Players not “up” should help retrieve balls or stand far back.

HEALTH CHARADES

Set Up

Find an area with enough space for two teams to sit on the ground spaciously, and designate one area as the “stage.”



15-20 Minutes



Create different actions for participants to act out and write them out on cards ahead of time



All Levels

Activity Explanation

Split participants into two teams. Have one participant at a time (alternating teams) be the actor. The coach shows them an action card and they act it out silently. Whichever team guesses first wins the point for that action. Actions should be health related and could include: drinking water/staying hydrated, getting a good night's sleep, maintaining 6ft distance from friends, exercising, washing hands, sneezing/coughing into elbow, laughing.

Modifications

Make the actions easier or harder depending on age group/ESL level and/or add drawings to cards

Safeguarding Considerations

Only the coach should handle the action cards. They can hold it up for the participant to see but not hand it to the participant.

WALK-STOP-CONCENTRATE

Set Up

Mark space large enough for participants to walk around comfortably without getting too close.



10 Minutes



No gear needed!

Activity Explanation



All Levels

This game is to practice **focus**:

- Start by introducing two commands:
 - If the coach says “walk,” players walk.
 - If the coach says “stop,” players stop.
- After 30 seconds practicing this, tell players that they must do the opposite of the coach’s commands (walk=stop, stop=walk).
- After another 30 seconds of practicing this, introduce two new commands: walk=stop, stop=walk, clap=clap, jump=jump.
- Continue for another 30 seconds or so. Then make all 4 commands opposites: walk=stop, stop=walk, clap=jump, jump=clap.
- Let players practice a bit before introducing elimination. During the elimination round, if players mess up by doing the wrong command, they sit out. The last player standing wins!

Modifications

- Add more commands to make it more challenging, or more complex commands for more advanced English-speakers (such as spin around, hop on one leg, rub your belly, etc)
- Have a task that players who are out can complete to get back in the game eg: 5 burpees.



Safeguarding Considerations

Make sure the playing area is large enough so that players don’t walk too close to each other and are able to maintain 6ft distance at all times.

TREASURE HUNT

Set Up

Make a list of clues. Here's an example:

#1: I grow up big and tall and lose my clothes in the fall

Answer: Tree

#2: Where can you get rest, but cannot sleep!

Answer: Bench

#3: For the next clue, think one, think two

Answer: Bathroom

#4 drivers run me all the time if they are caught they get a fine

Answer: Stop sign

#5 I wave all day but never tire, at the end of the day I retire.

Answer: Flag



30 Minutes



Treasure (surprise or reward) and clues (5+)

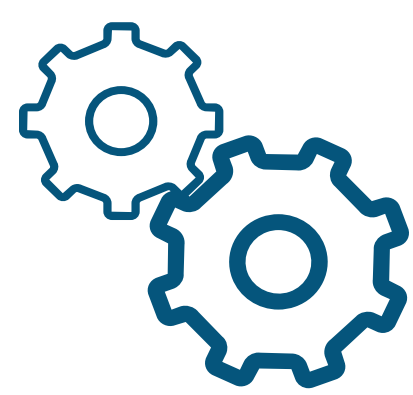


All Levels

Activity Explanation

Teams must work together to solve clues and reach treasure:

- Each clue leads to another location where the next clue is hidden.
- **The goal** is to get through all the clues to reach a final destination.
- At the final destination coaches can provide a surprise or reward such as a snack/treat, team game, swag, etc.



Modifications

- To make it more competitive, divide into 2 teams. Use the same clues for each team, but provide a different order with the final destination still being the same.
- If different teams are doing the same treasure hunt at different times, time teams to see who can complete all clues in the fastest time.
- For younger teams, use a more confined space and make clues easier & more visible.
- Check out other pre-made riddles here.

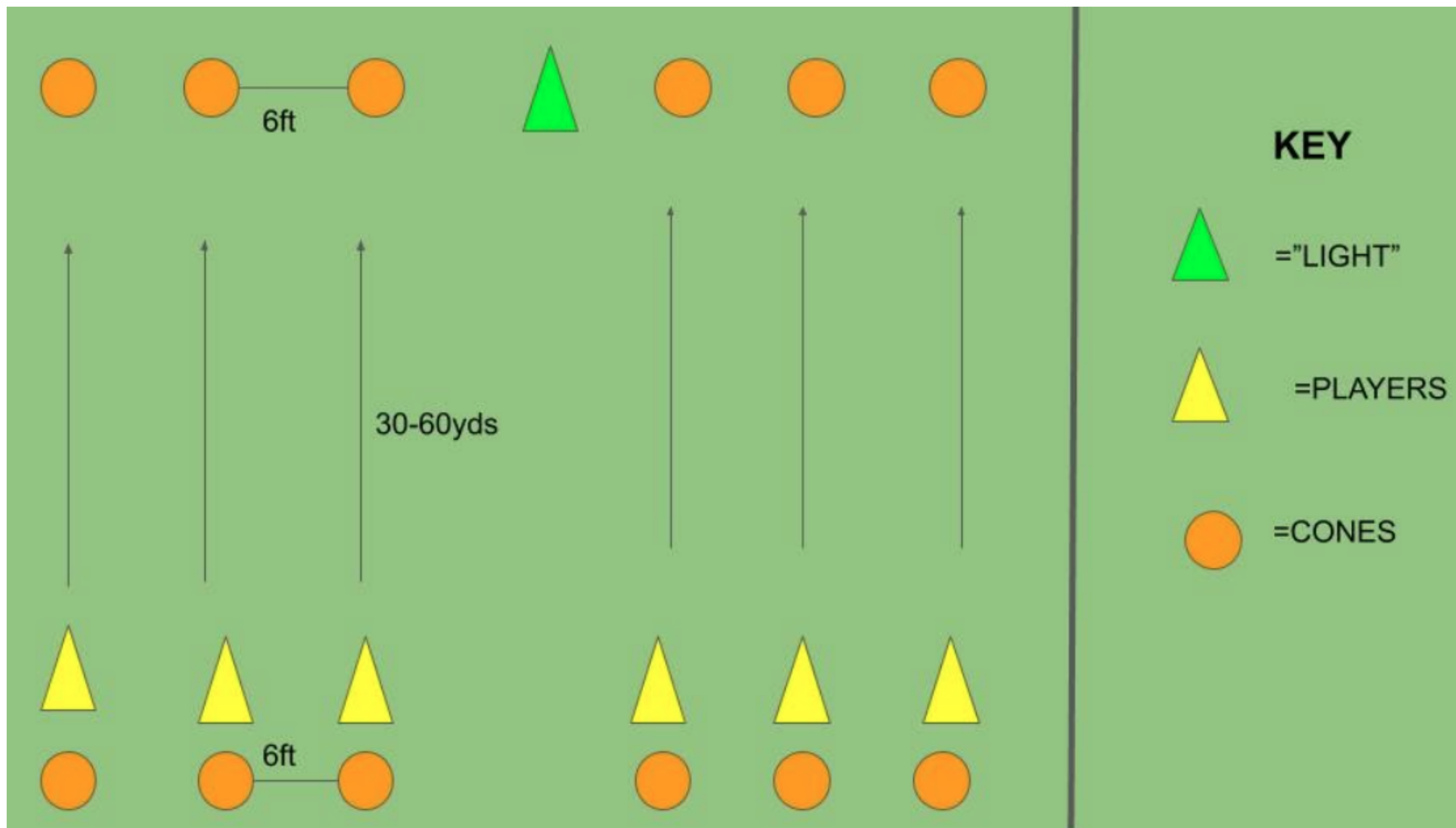


Safeguarding Considerations

- One adult must walk around with each team at all times. Allow only an adult to touch the clues as the team finds them OR place clues where they can be easily read without needing to pick up.

RED LIGHT GREEN LIGHT

Set Up



15-20
Minutes



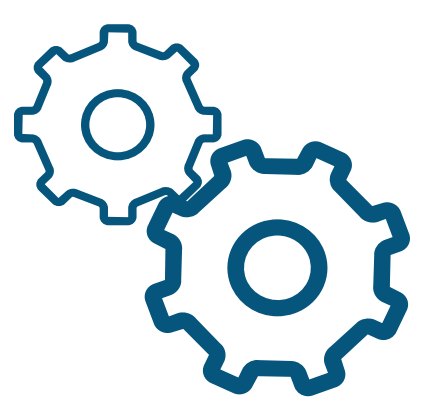
Cones



ES & MS

Activity Explanation

- One person is the “light” and stands at the half field line of cones with their back to the other players. The rest of the players line up at the endline, 1 person at each cone, 6ft apart.
- The “light” shouts out red (stop), yellow (walk) or green (run) and the players move forwards towards the light accordingly. At any point, the light can turn to face the players. When they do, the players must stop.
- If someone is caught moving when they are supposed to be stopped, they have to start over at the endline.
- The first person to reach the line of cones that the “light” is on from the opposite side of the field wins and becomes the light.



Modifications

Make a smaller field by putting two lines closer together (i.e. 20-30 yards) for younger players. If there are enough soccer balls, each player can dribble to add a soccer element to the activity.



Safeguarding Considerations

- Make lanes for each player so they don't get too close, or space them out from the beginning and instruct them that they can only move forward in a straight line. Send someone back to start if they run/walk into someone else's lane.

SLEEPING BEARS

Set Up

- Have a start and end point marked out.
- Between the start and finish point spread out the cones in a random manner but not too close together.



20-30 Minutes



- **Cones to signify bears**
- **Ropes or markers to indicate start and finish point**



ES & MS

Activity Explanation

In this game, the **goal** is for a person to guide their partner across a grid without waking up a sleeping bear:

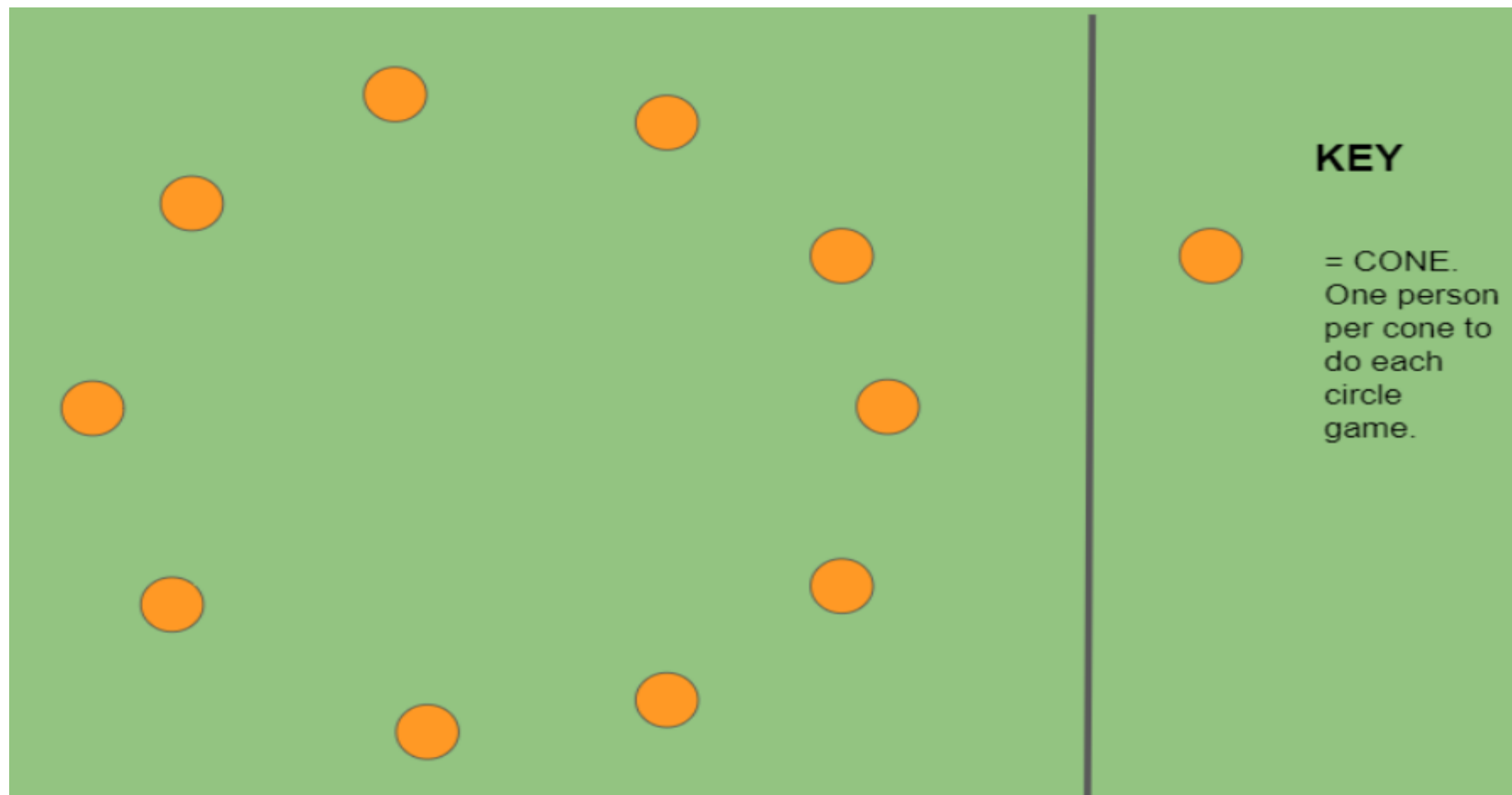
- Players partner up and decide who will be “blind” first.
- The “blind” player closes their eyes and covers them with their hands. They then have to make it to the other side of the “field of bears” without stepping on a bear (cone) and waking them up. They do this by listening to the instructions that their partner yells out to them.
- If needed, review key directional words for partners to use with each other
- The team that gets to the other side without stepping on any of the bears wins.

Safeguarding Considerations

- If the space being used is large enough it is possible to have multiple pairs doing the field of bears at the same time.
- If space is an issue and players won't be able to stay 6ft apart you can have only one pair attempt the field at a time and use a stopwatch to see what pair did it fastest.

SOLVING IN CIRCLES

Set Up



5-30 Minutes



None



All Levels

Activity Explanation

There are many games that can be done in circles to connect a team, have fun, experience play while at a social distance and have fun together. Here are a few ideas:

Doctor: Have one person volunteer to be the doctor. They leave the circle. The others decide one characteristic they will all assume when the doctor returns (or the coach can come with a list of characteristics to play with). This could be that they all have superpowers, they all think they are the person to their right, everyone thinks they are a soccer star. When the doctor returns to the circle, they ask questions to try to “diagnose” the characteristic that the rest of the team has. The group gives clues based on the characteristic decided while the doctor was out.

Rhythm Master: Have one person volunteer to be the rhythm detective. They leave the circle while the rest of the group determines a rhythm master. The rhythm master is the leader, who everyone else in the circle is following. They create a rhythm by clapping, patting, swinging their arms, etc. The rhythm master should change their actions often--but without it being obvious who the rhythm master is. After the rhythm master is decided, have the detective return to the circle. The entire group begins their rhythm, led by the rhythm master. The detective has three tries to guess who the rhythm master is.

Pen Game: The coach says, “Okay, I can play the pen game, can you play the pen game?” as he/she points the pen at different people in the circle. Whoever he/she is pointing to last has to try and repeat what the coach has done and will most likely do so without the word “okay” first. Each person must figure out that they must say the word “okay” in order to be successful. Once someone figures it out, they should not reveal it and allow everyone to try to figure it out on their own.

Safeguarding Considerations

Ensure that all participants remain 6ft apart by setting place markers/cones where they should each sit.