

COACHES MUST WORK HARD TO KEEP THEIR KNOWLEDGE CURRENT

SOCCER COACH WEEKLY

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< **ARJEN ROBBEN**
BAYERN MUNICH

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FIVE MINUTE WORKSHOP

- > MOVEMENT CHASE
- > THREE-CONE TOUCH

6 WAYS TO IMPROVE STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING

INTELLIGENT MOVEMENT

WINNING RELATIONSHIPS

- > COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT
- > THE KILLER PASS
- > LOVING ARJEN

GOT A COACHING PROBLEM? LET ME SOLVE IT FOR YOU



Hard Work = Better Coach



Soccer Coach Weekly
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Telephone
+44 (0)1483 892894

Head Coach
David Clarke
david.clarke@coach-soccer.com

Illustrations
Mike Ronald

Pictures
Action Images

Production
ATG Media Production

Designer
Andy Shore

Customer Services
customerservices@greenstarmedia.net

Managing Director
Andrew Griffiths

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Touchline Tales

One of the things that I get out of working for two days with coaches on the kind of ways they can help the young players in their care is the amount of effort every one of them is making so the soccer experience is the best it can be for them.

We could just go out there with a ball and get them to play a game for an hour or two. After all it's what they want... isn't it?

The actual answer to that is no it actually isn't what they want. They may think it is but kids want to learn, they want to play the best they can because they know they enjoy it much more when they feel they have progressed.

I know this because a couple of weeks ago I was asked to work with a team that I don't normally coach – they were a team younger than the ones I normally coach at this particular club and were highly excited they were getting a coach from one of the older teams.

In fact their excitement got the better of them to such an extent that I had a bit of trouble



Alf Galustian coaching the coaches at Fulham's training ground

calming them down. I have to admit having coached a couple of sessions already I wasn't at my most tolerant and the players didn't want to set up like I wanted and with my patience getting the better of me I asked them what they did want to do? They told me in unison they were desperate to play a match and show me what they could do.

However without my input they soon got bored with the basic game and wanted more from me – which of course I gladly gave. They had the extra impetus of having a different coach and didn't cause me any more problems for the rest of the training session.

Being able to run different

sessions comes from the hard work of giving coaches training in what sessions to run at what age groups so they get massive amounts of fun as well as chunks of development.

Putting the hard work in with coaching courses and helping others to get better makes me a better coach because I am constantly thinking about the sessions that can get the best out of young players



David Clarke



ASK DAVE

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Six ways to improve the physical development of young players



Bayern Munich's Arjen Robben celebrates with coach Pep Guardiola after scoring against Juventus

Pep – I love Arjen

Player relationships with the coach are vital for building team spirit and for getting the best out of the players you train every week. Arjen Robben has experienced many different styles

Player coach relationships are a huge factor in a successful team – positive relationships hold the team together and give the individual a feeling of belonging which means come match day they are more prepared than they ever were.

Arjen Robben has played for an amazing list of managers – Guus Hiddink, José Mourinho, Louis van Gaal, Jupp Heynckes and Pep Guardiola – all of them have influenced him.

“Every manager has a certain influence,” Robben said in an interview with The Guardian newspaper, “and it depends whether you’re 18, 25 or 30. You need different things. But, in general, one thing matters most.

“You need to be very critical of yourself. There are a few very good managers who can make players better individually. Most managers think about the team process – and so you have to improve things on your own.”

On Guardiola:

“When I started working with Pep 18 months ago I noticed how he goes much deeper into football. His intelligence is obvious. Tactically he’s one of the best in the world and under him I have made more steps in my development. I’ve come quite a long way these 18 months.

“We have a very good relationship. I like the way he thinks about football and his tactical flexibility means we’ve played a few systems. It’s not like we are a 4-4-2 team. We use all kinds of formations with Pep and this means I can play inside or outside, just behind the strikers or even as a striker. That’s fantastic because the way he wants to play, with a very dominant style, suits me perfectly. And you can discuss anything with him. If it’s 3am Pep would be happy to talk to you about football.”

On Mourinho:

“For me it was very good to work with him at that age because I was young and, yeah, with Mourinho, you have to be mentally very strong. You have to jump on the train with him or ... you’re off. So it was great for my development.

“It was hard at first because I came with an injury. It was very difficult for me and also for him. Of course, he doesn’t like players who get injured. So it wasn’t easy but I always had the feeling I had his confidence. I played some great games for Chelsea but it was unfortunate I had injury problems and I couldn’t do it over a long period – like now.”

Paul Barron, head coach for the Las Vegas Mobsters is an advocate of relationship coaching – he sums it up as:

- They forget what you say to them.
- They forget what you do with them.
- But they never forget how you made them feel!



Intelligent Movement

The art of beating a player or playing a killer pass or getting on the end of one is something Arjen Robben does for fun. Give him a sniff of goal and he'll punish you for it

Individual skills are a big part of team possession – just ask Arjen Robben. His ability to keep the ball tight to his feet makes it almost impossible to get the ball from him. And for a 32-year-old his speed will still make it difficult for a defender to turn and keep up with him.

His ability to pass or receive killer balls is one of his specialities – often whipping balls in at pace or sending through balls to his frontmen Robert Lewandowski and Thomas Muller. And he has had a big hand to play in the hugely impressive campaign of the Bayern Munich frontmen as they took their joint tally to 36 Bundesliga goals, the most by a strike duo after 21 games of a season.

Watching him in the Champions League

this season he has also been spectacular in his ability to beat players and go it alone.

The Dutchman is renowned for cutting in from the flank before unleashing a strike at goal. However, it is interesting to note that a number of his goals this season have come from inside the penalty box, where he's beaten two or three players in his path as he did against Juventus in the Champions League – all set up with a through ball and pass from his teammates.

It's in these situations in particular that Robben's technique really comes into play, moving the ball quickly both on the inside and outside of his left foot or dropping a shoulder to turn his marker.

It makes him almost impossible to stop, and defenders know that if they make the wrong move, then Robben is canny enough to win a penalty.

It's just a pity that Robben will not be able to showcase his talents at the upcoming Euros in the summer as Holland suffered a disastrous qualifying campaign. It all started out as a young teenager aged 19 at Euro 2004, then he had a good World Cup in 2010 coming 2nd after defeat to eventual winners Spain in extra-time. Then it was a 3rd placed finish in the World Cup 2014 sandwiched between a poor showing at Euro 2012.

His skills will be missed so make sure you catch up with him in the Champions League!

Killer Pass

This is all about keeping possession, staying patient and penetrating defences by playing a pass to the attackers

WHY USE IT

The killer pass is the vital move when playing a possession-based game – a penetrating pass to open the opposition defence.

SET-UP

You need balls, bibs and cones. In an area 30 x 30 yards with a smaller square in the centre 2 x 2 yards. We used 9 players in the session.

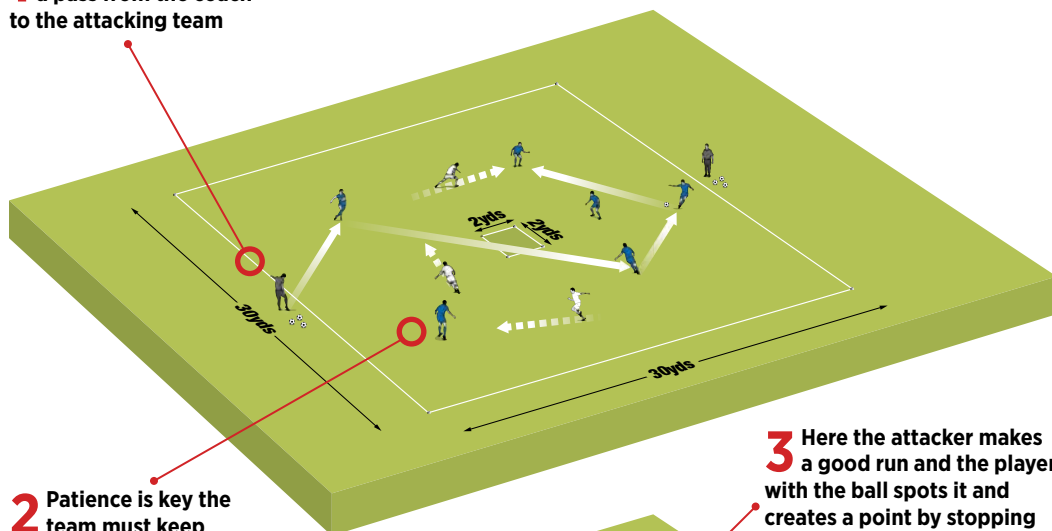
HOW TO DO IT

You need 3 defenders and 6 attackers. The defenders only need to touch the ball to score a point while the attackers must pass a ball and a teammate receive it in the square. No one can be in the square only go there to receive a pass. If the players cannot make the pass make the square bigger. A killer run needs a killer pass.

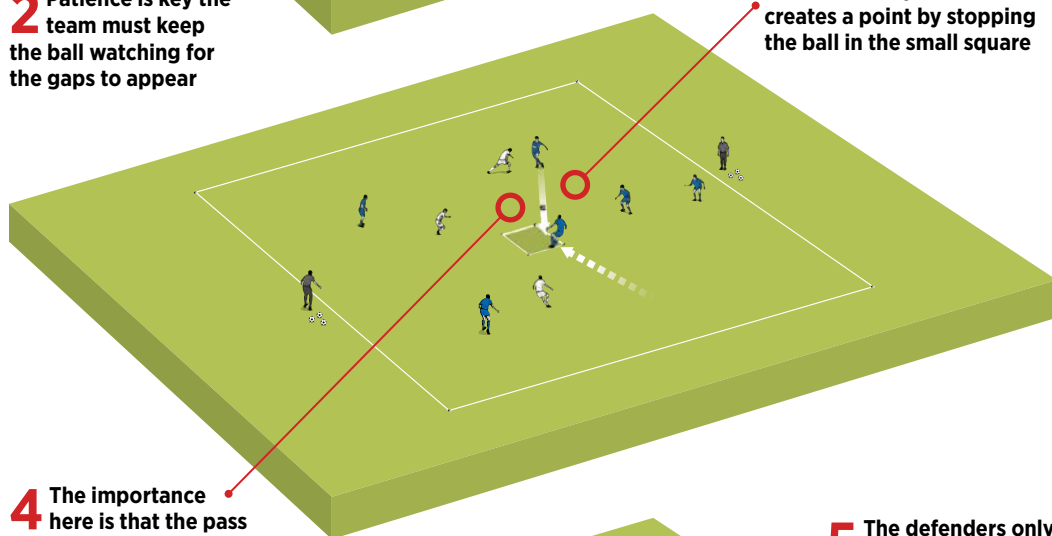
TECHNIQUE

Patience is vital to making the pass – player runs to meet it are also important to the success of the session.

1 The session starts with a pass from the coach to the attacking team

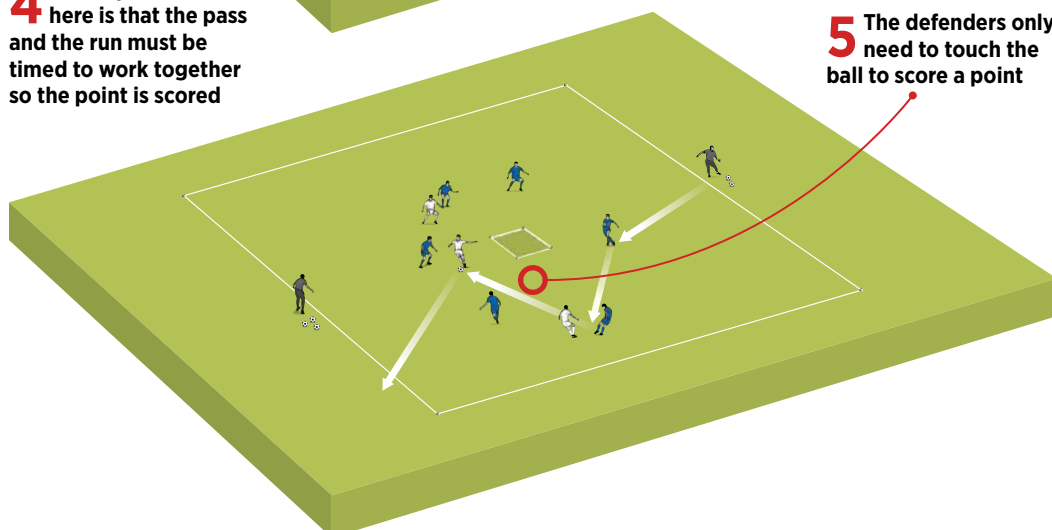


2 Patience is key the team must keep the ball watching for the gaps to appear



3 Here the attacker makes a good run and the player with the ball spots it and creates a point by stopping the ball in the small square

4 The importance here is that the pass and the run must be timed to work together so the point is scored



5 The defenders only need to touch the ball to score a point

Player movement ■■■→

Ball movement →

Run with ball ■■■→

Shot →

Short, Short, Long

This is all about getting players to understand that to be a successful passing team players have to communicate and support each other – the passing sequence is short, short, long

WHY USE IT

Support play in a possession based team is vital to the success of the tactic.

SET-UP

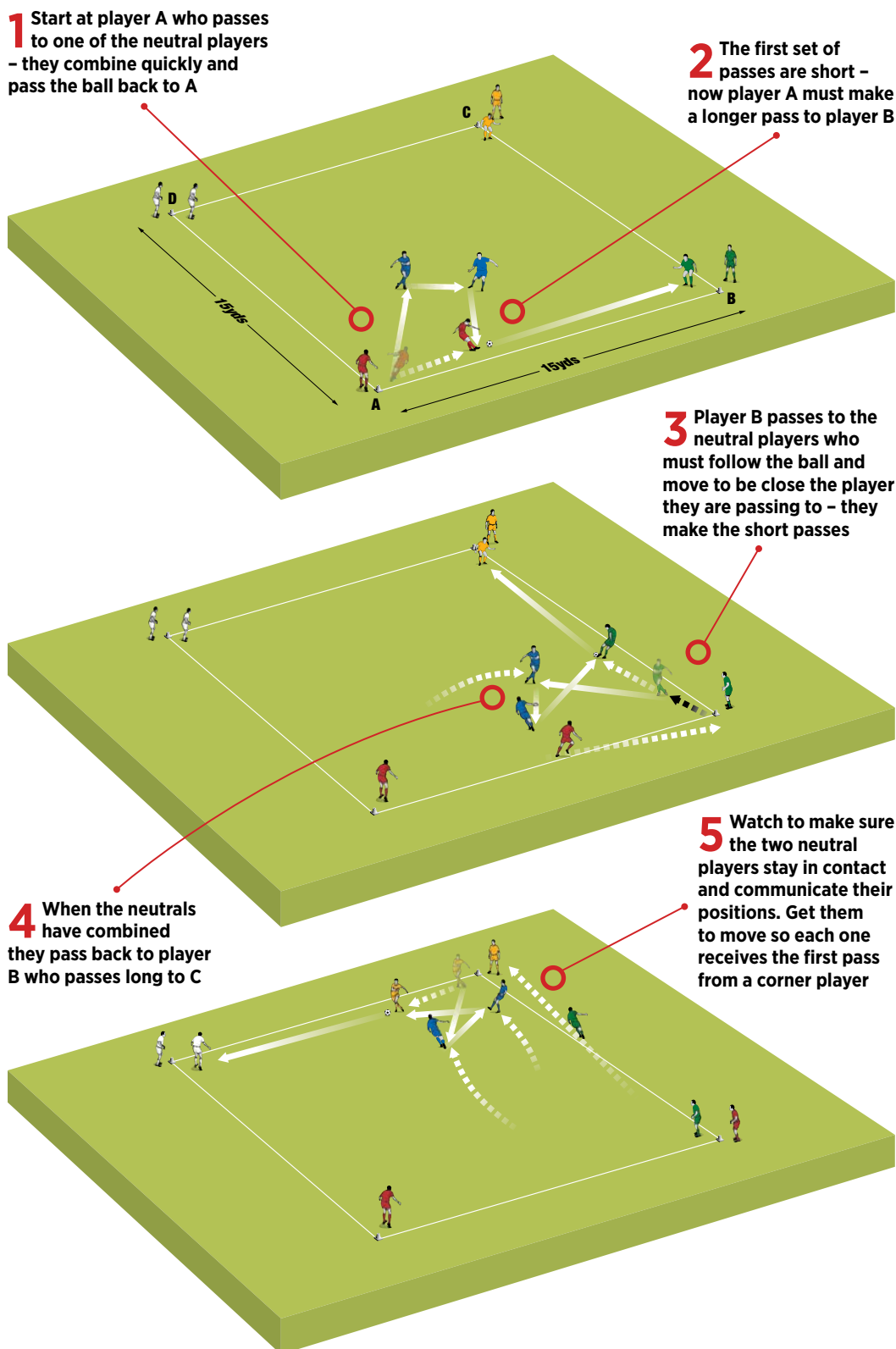
You need balls, bibs and cones. In an area 15 x 15 yards. We used 10 players in the session.

HOW TO DO IT

There should be two short and one long pass in each move. Player A at the first corner passes to one of the two neutrals in the centre of the square. He then combines with the other neutral who passes back to player A who has moved off his corner cone. Player A then makes a third longer pass to player B who passes to one of the neutral players – they combine and pass back to player B. He passes on to C who combines with the neutrals and then passes to D. It continues in this way until it gets back to A.

TECHNIQUE

The players in the centre must stay close together so they can combine quickly moving play around the area. Control, passing and receiving are all vital techniques.



Player movement ---->

Ball movement ———>

Run with ball ---->

Shot ———>

Five Minute Warm-up: Movement Chase

Speed and reaction

This is a great warm-up to get your players challenging for the ball so they are ready to play in matches.

SET UP

You need balls, bibs, cones and poles in an area 20 x 20 yards with players working from cones at each side of the area using training poles and cones to mark out the dribbling areas.

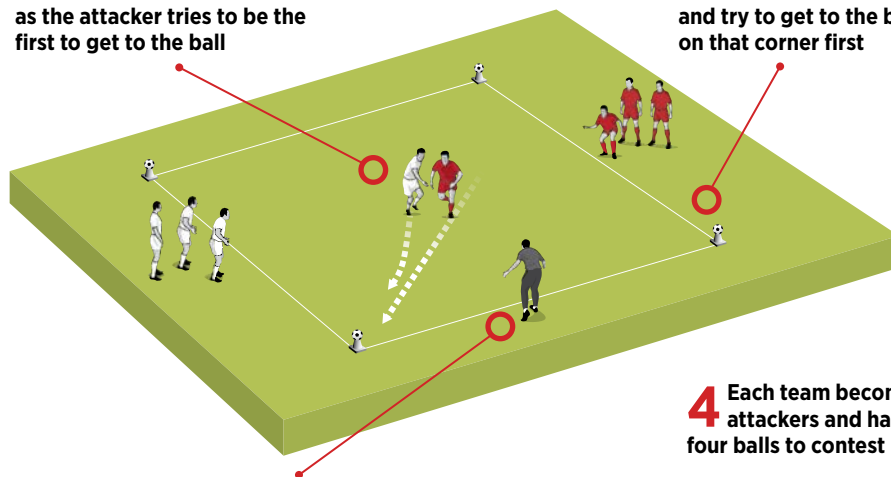
HOW TO PLAY IT

One player is an attacker and one a defender. The defender must mirror the attacker's movements.

- > The attacker tries to lose the defender and race to knock a ball off one of the cones.
- > Can the defender react and beat the attacker to the cone?
- > The defender is allowed to go shoulder to shoulder or use their arms to hold off the attacker but he must not commit a foul.
- > Switch roles for the next attack.

1 One player is an attacker and one a defender. Players mirror each others movements as the attacker tries to be the first to get to the ball

2 The defender must react to the direction the attacker moves in and try to get to the ball on that corner first



3 The game is played with the coach being the 'referee' the players can hold each other off but not foul each other

4 Each team becomes attackers and has four balls to contest

Five Minute Fitness: Three-cone Touch Balancing act

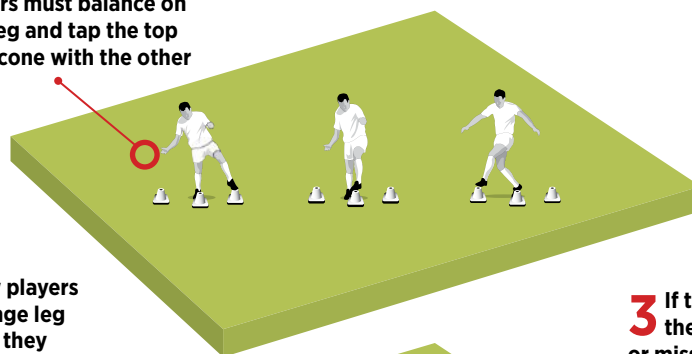
This five minute fitness drill can be used during your training sessions for a quick break to help coaching points sink in, or as an incentive for a drinks break.

This is all about player agility, balance and coordination.

HOW TO DO IT

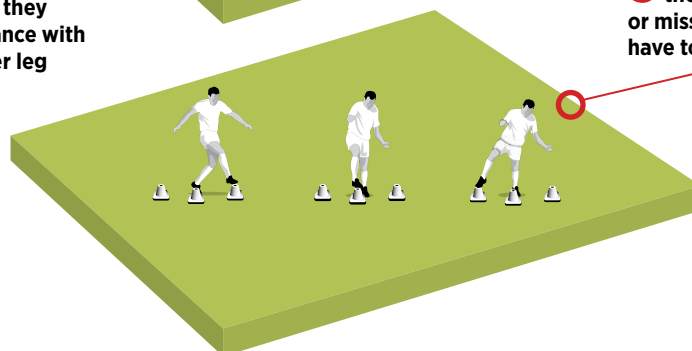
- > This exercise is done by a player and three cones.
- > It helps young players with balance, and is great fun to do as well with players trying to keep balance on one leg.
- > The player balances on one leg then touches the top of each of the three cones with the foot of their other leg without it touching the ground.
- > Touches should be light and quick.
- > After three touches change the standing leg so the other foot is touching the cones.
- > Players should do the it three times with each foot.

1 Players must balance on one leg and tap the top of each cone with the other



2 Now players change leg to see if they can balance with the other leg

3 If they knock the cones over or miss one out they have to start again



Player movement ■■■➔

Ball movement ➡

Run with ball ■■■➔

Shot ➡



Mike Clegg
at work with
Sunderland

6 WAYS TO

Improve Strength And Conditioning

Strength and conditioning coach Mike Clegg outlines a few coaching exercises that can help improve the physical development of young players

01 MASTER THE BASICS

When coaches introduce strength and conditioning training to young players, say under 12s to under 14s, they will be looking to help them master the basics. This could include showing them how to do a squat, a lunge, a small number of press-ups or how to balance on one leg for example. There should also be education on the importance of warm ups and warm downs.

02 IMPROVE POSTURE

A lot of kids play computer games, so their posture will quite often be hunched. Not only will this restrict a player's movement but it could also cause an injury in the long term if it's not addressed. Good fun exercises to elevate slouching for children are those that involve climbing, such as pull-ups, chin-ups and even better, climbing monkey bars, ropes and walls at specific activity centres.

03 DEVELOP BALANCE

At a young age, body awareness and balance are probably far more important to a player than strength. Introduce training exercises that will hone these aspects, such as unilateral squats, where your players stand on one foot with the other raised, gently lowering and raising their body by bending their knee. They should put their arms out in front for balance.

04 JUMP TO IT

Plyometrics, also known as 'jump training', are exercises based around having muscles exert the maximum force in as short a time as possible. Simple exercises for children include box jumps, bounds, skips, hurdles, side-to-side jumps and hop scotch. Your players should work on their 'triple extension phase' (extension of ankle, knee and hip) being as dynamic as possible.

05 WORK ON SPEED

Agility and reaction are areas that can be worked on in training by your players, as these are two vital components needed for success in football. Basic exercises that can be used to help improve these factors in your young players include sprint training with varying intensities, such as sprint to jog and walk to sprint, and sudden changes of direction.

06 USE LIFT TECHNIQUES

When you are dealing with players under 16, they will be pre-pubescent or pubescent and will be going through massive changes in bodily functions. Now is the time to use technique-based lifts rather than weight-shifting: players can use a broomstick, a dowel, or at maximum a 5kg bar. Overhead squats and snatch balances will create mobility, stability and improve posture.

You can find out more info about conditioning, and about former Manchester United defender Mike Clegg at his website, [Seed Of Speed](#)