Dribbling feet 2.2: Numbers game
5 - 8 year olds

Introduction (1 - 2 minutes)
Call the children into a circle or into designated lines and greet them.

Explain any special safety rules and remind the children to stop, look, and listen whenever you signal.

Explain in 20-30 seconds what you will be doing today.

*Today we will practice dribbling and shooting a moving soccer ball.*
Warm-up: Dribbling in tight space (5 minutes)

- Leader counts the number of children, then marks an area that size.
- For example, if there are 15 children, mark an area 15x15 metres.
- Leader distributes same-number-plus-five of mini-cones or bean bags randomly around the area.
- Each child has a ball and dribbles around the area using both feet.
- Children try to avoid bumping into other or losing their ball.
- When leader says “Dribble a cone!” each child must dribble one tight circle around the nearest cone (or bean bag).
- Leader adds a different condition each time the children dribble a cone:
  » With the inside of your foot
  » With the outside of your foot
  » With the bottom of your foot
  » With the bottom of your foot backwards
- When leader says “Change!” each child must leave their ball and dribble another player’s ball.
Demonstration: Instep kick (2 minutes)
• Leader demonstrates how to kick a stationary ball with the instep (laces).
• Start with body 2-3 steps behind the ball and to one side.
• If you kick right-footed, approach from the left.
• If you kick left-footed, approach from the right.
• Step forward and plant your non-kicking foot 10-15 cm to one side of the ball.
• Kick the ball with your toe pointed down, so you hit the middle of the ball with your laces (i.e. instep), not your toe.
• You can’t control your aim when you kick with your toe.

Practice: Dribble and shoot (8-10 minutes)
• Leader divides children into lines of 3-4 children each.
• Leader sets up a straight line of 5-6 cones (or bean bags) spaced at one-metre intervals in front of each line of children.
• Leader uses cones (or bean bags) to mark a small goal against the wall 10-15 metres past the end of each line of cones.
• Children dribble zigzag through the cones (or bean bags) and shoot at the goal.
• Children collect their ball and dribble to the back of the line for their next turn.

TIPS FOR INSTRUCTION
• Don’t over-correct technique at this age.
• Allow children to explore and “make mistakes”.
• Dribbling and shooting improve through practice.
• For safety, leave 6-8 metres of space between lines.

CUES
• Baby touches
• Step forward and plant
• No toes
• Use your laces
**Game: Numbers game with one goal (10 - 15 minutes)**

- Leader divides children into two teams and numbers the children 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, etc. on each team.
- Teams spread out along opposite sides of the activity area.
- Between the two sides, one end of the area has a small goal 3 metres wide.
- The goal can be marked with cones or bean bags.
- Leader stands beside the goal with a supply of balls.
- Leader shouts a number and throws a ball into the middle of the area.
- Players on both teams with that number compete for the ball and try to dribble and shoot on goal.
- Play stops after a shot is taken, or after the ball travels out of bounds.
- Leader starts by calling one number at a time, then progresses to calling two or three numbers to compete for one ball.

**Game: Small-sided soccer (no time limit)**

- If you have extra time, set up 3-4 mini game fields and create small 2-metre goals using cones, bean bags, or floor hockey nets.
- Divide children into games where they play 2-versus-2 or 3-versus-3 without goalkeepers.
- Goals are not counted unless the shots enter the goal on the ground.

**Wrap-up (2 minutes)**

Call the children back into a circle and review what they learned today.

*When we shoot, why don’t we use our toes?*