

Junior Touch



Skills and Drills for ages 9 - 12 years



Junior Development Touch Coaching Skill Session

TGFU - Touch Coaching

A lot of touch skills can be incorporated into simple yet fun games. The kids learn the skill and have fun doing it and often at primary school age this is the easiest way for them to pick up certain skills.

Knee Wrestling

Number:	Pairs
Equipment:	N/A
How to play:	To play Knee Wrestling participants partner up into pairs and stand facing each other. The idea is to try to “slap” your partner’s knees as many times as you can in a certain time e.g. 1 minute. Both partners can participate at the same time. 1 point is awarded every time you touch your partners’ knees
Skills learnt:	Participants will learn about evasion and getting low to the ground in a defensive position. It also teaches touching your opposition.
Extension:	As an extension you can include 2 points every time they touch their partners’ feet. This encourages them to get lower to the ground like “evading” a touch on attack. If you can find a soft enough surface you could also encourage diving to make a touch.

Dog and Bone

Number: Four people per group

Equipment: N/A

How to play: In groups of four, 3 people link arms so that they form a circle. The fourth person in the group is the "dog" and one person in the group of three becomes the "bone", while the other two become the "protectors of the bone".

The idea is that the dog will try to touch the bone. The protectors have to try to stop the dog from getting the bone. Do this for a minute at a time or until the bone is touched. Participants swap around positions until they have all had a turn at the different roles.

Skills Learnt: Evasion, Dodging, effecting the Touch on attack

Touch Tiggy

Number: 10 to 20 participants

Equipment: N/A

How to play: Using four cones set up a square grid. Ensure that the square is big enough that all of the participants can fit in comfortably and have space to run around. Choose a participant to be "it" or the "tagger". All the other participants spread themselves out in the square, and at no time can any of the participants leave the square.

Time the game for as long as you think suitable depending on the number of participants e.g. 10 people – 30 seconds or 20 people 1 minute. The idea is that the person who is "it" tries to get as many of the participants out in the time allocated.

Skills learnt: Effecting the touch, running, dodging, communication

Extension: As an extension you can split the participants into 2 groups. Choose one group to be the attacking team and give that team a ball. The attacking team must pass the ball between themselves and try to get the other team out as fast as they can by touching them with the ball. Players must not move their feet when they have the ball.

Snake

Number: 10 – 20 people

Equipment: N/A

How to play: The same as in Touch Tiggy set up a square grid big enough for the participants that you have. Choose one person to be "it". That person runs around trying to tag the others. If they tag someone, that person links arms with the person who is "it". Now both people are able to tag. This continues until every participant is linking arms in a big snake and all participants are out.

Skills learnt: Effecting the touch, communication, evasion

Basic Attacking Skills

Holding the ball

- Hold the ball on the sides with the fingers spread and the thumbs pointing up the length of the ball.

Running with the ball

- Carry the ball in two hands in front of the body when you are likely to need support i.e. most of the time.
- Use the ball to help with balance
- Be aware of support
- Carry the ball tucked under an arm when maximum speed is a priority. E.g. sprinting clear to make a touchdown.

Drill 1

Holding/Running with the ball

- Participants line up in 2 lines facing each other
- Player runs with the ball holding it in the correct way
- Once at the other line pass off and join the back of that line



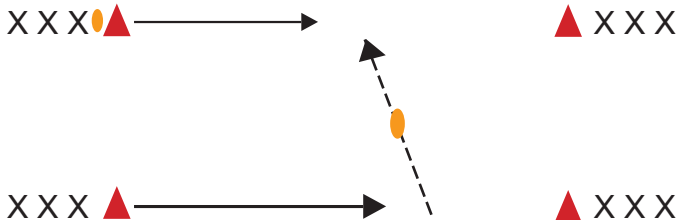
Catch and Pass I

- Watch the ball and guide it into your hands against your body
- Swing the ball across the front of the body
- Aim the ball at the hands of your team-mate who must be behind you.

Drill 2

Catching, Passing and Running

- Set up a grid as shown below.
- One player starts with the ball
- Encourage that player to "take a lead" which means to take a few steps ahead of the person that they are passing to.
- The person with the ball then passes off to the person running onto it.
- Ensure that the pass is not forward.
- Those 2 then join the back of the lines opposite.



Making a Touch – On offence

- The attacker runs towards the defensive player
- The attacker reaches out to initiate the touch
- The attacker touches (does not hit) the defensive player on the body
- The attacker performs a plant (roll ball) following the contact

The Plant (roll ball)

- Make sure that you are on the mark and face the scoreline with your head up
- Bend your knees and plant the ball on the ground with legs apart
- Step completely over the ball. The ball may not move more than a metre

Drill 3

Planting, effecting the touch on offence and scooping

- Grid is set up as shown below
- Attacker runs forward, scooping the ball up from cone (a) with one or two hands and runs toward cone (b).
- Once at cone (b) the attacker plants the ball, ensuring they put their hand out to initiate the touch
- The attacker then joins the back of the line and the next person repeats the process.



Extension: As an extension you can have a defender come forward from the other line and make a touch as the attacker is planting the ball. The defender then needs to back pedal 5 metres before coming forward again to scoop the ball up.

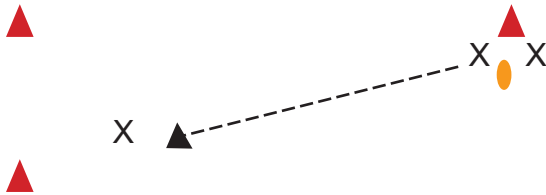
The Dummy Half Pass

- Move in close behind the plant. Listen for the call.
- Get hold of the ball in two hands
- Pass the ball front he ground to the player who has called

Drill 4

The Dummy half Pass

- Grid is set up as below
- Attacker 1 runs forward with the ball and plants the ball on the cone (ensuring they initiate the touch)
- Attacker 2 then runs behind attacker 1 and picks the ball up with 2 hands. Feet position should be one foot pointing straight ahead beside the ball and the other leg pointing the way you would like to pass the ball e.g. If the dummy half is passing left then his/her right leg should be pointing straight ahead beside the ball and left leg should be pointing in the direction of the pass, this is to ensure that the dummy half can see where the runner is coming from.



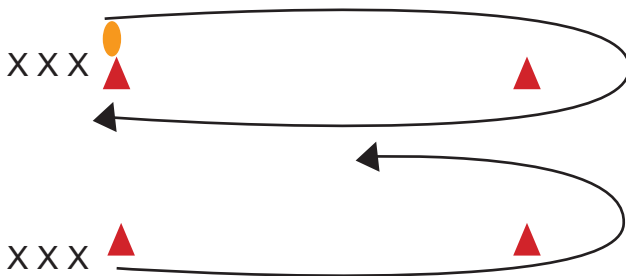
The Tap

- The ball must be placed on the mark.
- Release the ball with both hands
- The ball is touched with either foot. It must not move more than one metre in any direction
- Ensure the ball is picked up cleanly

Drill 5

The tap and Scoring a touchdown

- Drill set up as below.
- Split participants into 2 groups (attackers X and Defenders O)
- Attacker starts with the ball
- Both attacker and defender at the same time must run around the cones opposite them - cones (c) and (d).
- Once around the cones, both attacker and defender head back to the lines, with the attacker trying to score between cones (a) and (b) before being touched by the defender.



Extension: An extension on this drill could be to make the defence cone wider, to make it harder for them to get the attacker – simulating a “chase” situation in a real game. You can also have 2 attackers and 1 defender so that the attackers have to make a decision to pass or run.

Basic Defence

Making the Touch – on defence

- Move to one side of the player with the ball. Focus on the “target” area between the shoulder and the collar bone.
- Touch (do not hit) the player on the body. Yell “Touch”!
- Quickly move backwards to five metres.

General Field Defence

- For junior touch players the most important feature to teach them is to “man up” and identifies which player in the opposition they are marking. Encourage them to “number off” which means to call out which player they are marking as shown in Diagram 1 e.g If Attacker 1 has the ball then defender 1 calls “I’ve got 1” or s/he might say “I have player with yellow shoes” so that the rest of the team can see who they are marking. The rest of the team follows suit. This encourages communication. Ideally you want your defenders to stay in the same position but always marking someone. Keep it as simple as possible. When a touch is being made the whole team move forward and backwards as one. As players get older, encourage a staircase effect or “arrow” as shown in diagram 2.

X - Attackers

O - Defense

Diagram 1

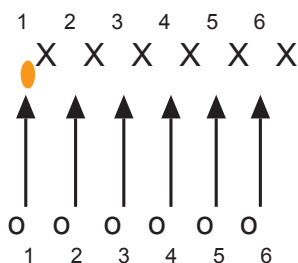
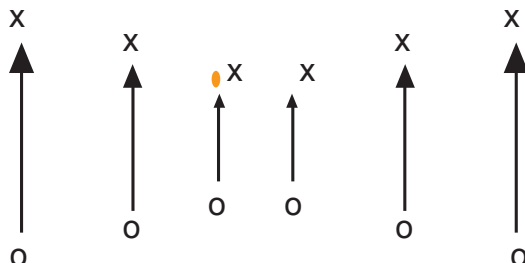
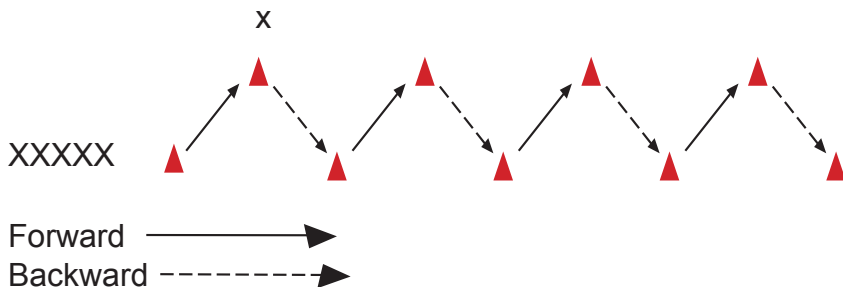


Diagram 2



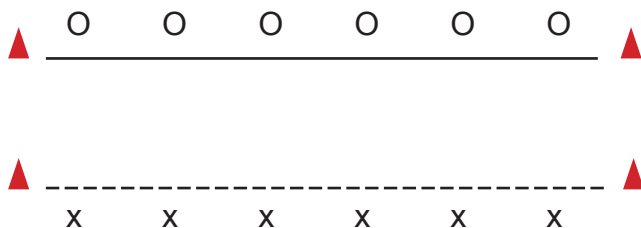
Defense Drill 1

- Set drill up as shown below
- All players Set up at one end of the drill
- One player moves at a time
- 1st player starts at 1st cone and runs forward to the next cone
- Once at that cone they back pedal to the third cone
- This process is completed once at the end of the cones
- The 2nd player progresses as the first player starts the first back pedal and so on
- Therefore there should be a player running forward at each cone and backward to each cone at the same time
- Get the players to call "touch" as they reach each cone before back pedaling



Defence Drill 2

- Set up on the 5m line of a touch field.
- Have 6 defenders on the try line and 6 attackers on the 5m line
- The attackers must try to score over the try line as many times as possible in 1 minute.
- The defence may move sideways, but they are not allowed to come off the line.
- At the end of 1 minute ask players to tell you how many times they scored in that 1 minute.
- Each time they cross the line they have to return back behind the 5m line before starting again
- Add all tries together and then get defence and attack to swap over.
- Repeat the exercise and see if the other team can beat their score.
- There is no ball and all attackers can run at once
- This drill encourages communication, team work and good defence skills.



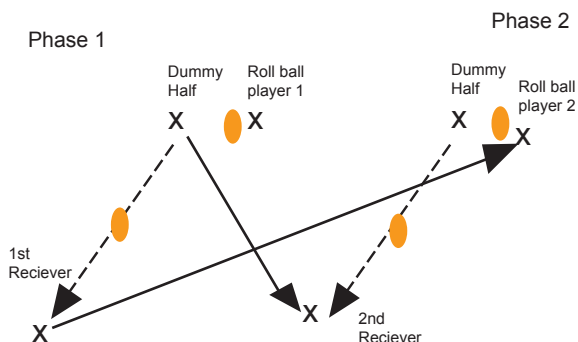
Basic Attack

Attack Drill 1

3 Man Drives

A three man drive is the easiest driving pattern to get your team from A – B. The reason behind a driving pattern is to get up the field in as little time as possible in a straight line.

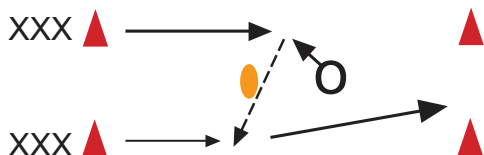
A 3-man drive incorporates a simple rotation as shown in the diagram below.



- Player 1 is the first roll ball
- Player 2 is Dummy half
- Player 3 is the first receiver
- Player 1 plants the ball for player 2 and then remains in the same place
- Player 2 passes to player 3 (1st receiver)
- Player 3 then runs in front of where player 1 planted the ball and plants the ball in front
- Player 2 (after passing to player 3) then runs to be the next receiver
- Player 1 is now the dummy half
- Player 2 is now the 2nd receiver
- Player 3 is the roll ball
- The process is then repeated and the rotation continues

Attack Drill 2

- Set up grid as shown below. Have one defender in the middle
- Attacker with the ball runs forward trying to draw the defender
- If the defender come then they pass to the other attacker
- If the defender does not come then they hold the ball and run
- This is about decision making and timing of the pass.



Simplified Rules of Touch

Scoring:

A touchdown will be awarded when a player places the ball on or over the score line prior to being touched. A touchdown will be worth one point. If a Dummy half scores it will result in a change of possession.

Sub Box:

Teams may interchange players at anytime. Players coming onto the field may not do so until the player being replaced has come off. Substitutions must occur at or in the teams' sub box.

Possession:

- Change of possession starts with a roll ball and shall occur:
- After the sixth touch
- When the dummy half is touched while in possession
- After an incorrect plant
- When the ball goes to ground
- When a player in possession steps out of the field of play
- Whenever the referee indicates
- Play is started with a roll ball at the change of possession.

Passing

A player in possession of the ball may pass, knock, throw or otherwise deliver the ball to any on side player in the attacking team. Passing forward is not permitted.

The Tap

The tap is taken by placing the ball on the ground next to the mark, releasing the ball from both hands, tapping the ball with the inside of either foot a distance no more than a metre and retrieving it cleanly. Any player from the attacking team may take the tap. A tap is also a way of restarting play after a try is scored.

The Penalty

A player/team will be penalised when they have made an infringement. When a player/team is penalised, the opposing team shall restart play with a tap. The defending team must retire ten metres from the mark until the ball is tapped.

Plant (Roll Ball)

A means of restarting play. Players must perform the plant (roll ball) on the mark while facing their opponent's defending score line, by rolling the ball backwards between their legs a distance of no more than one metre. Players must not delay in performing the plant (roll ball).

The Touch

Players from both the attacking and defending team are permitted to effect the touch. A touch constitutes the contact with any part of the body, ball, clothing or hair. A minimum force is to be used at all times. The team in possession is entitled to 6 touches unless another infringement has taken place.

Touch and Pass

A player is not to pass the ball after a touch has been made.

The Dummy Half

The dummy half is the person who picks up the ball after a team mate has performed a roll ball.

Offside/onside

If a touch has been made all defending players must retire five metres from the mark. Defenders cannot move until the dummy half has touched the ball.

Sideline

If a player with the ball crosses the sideline s/he is deemed to be out of play and a change of possession will occur. Play starts with a plant (roll ball) five metres from where the player went out. If a touch is made before the player goes out, then the touch counts.

Obstruction

Players of the attacking team are not to obstruct defending players from attempting to affect a touch. Defending players are not to obstruct/interfere with attacking players supporting the ball carrier.

The field of Play

The field is 70m x 50m (scoreline to scoreline) substitution boxes measuring 20m x 5m shall be situated on both sides of the field. The touch down zone is the area beyond the scoreline.

Team Composition

A team may consist of up to 14 players. A max of 6 players is allowed on the field at any one time. A minimum of 4 is required to start the game.

The Toss

The captain winning the toss shall receive the possession of the ball and a choice of direction and substitution box. The referee will supervise the toss.

Duration

The match shall be 20 minutes each way with a 3 minute half time. Associations may alter the duration of matches to suit their particular requirements.

Extra Time for Draws

To commence extra time each team drop off one (1) player and the match shall recommence without delay at the centre of the halfway. The team that won the toss at the start of the match, shall take the tap to recommence play. Teams shall continue to play in the same direction.

Players will drop off one at a time every 2 minutes until there are 3 players remaining on the field. Players may continue to sub. Play continues until a try is scored. Before a result can be declared, both teams must have had possession of the ball.

Player Attire

All team members must be correctly attired in team uniforms. Footwear with molded soles is permitted. Bare feet, spikes and footwear with screw in studs are not permitted. Players are not to wear any item of jewelry.