

Guidelines

1. Preparation phase: Initially perform drills at low-to-moderate intensity to learn movement patterns at 50–60% of maximal effort.
 - Complete 2 sets x 5 repetitions per running drill.
 - Complete 10 repetitions per jumping or throwing drill.
 - Rest 60 seconds between sets.
2. Tempo and technique development: Build intensity to 75–90% of maximal effort.
 - For running drills, complete 3 sets lasting 15–30 seconds. Rest 60 to 90 seconds between sets.
 - For throwing/jumping drills, complete 3 sets consisting of as many reps as possible in 15–30 seconds. Rest 60–90 seconds between sets.



Foundational Drills for Soccer Training

by Fabio Comana



Exercise 1: Multi-directional Ladder Drills - Forward Linear Ladder



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- ✓ The objective of this drill is to improve movement speed with directional changes.
- ✓ Place cones at 5-yard intervals on either side of a 30' agility ladder, spacing them 2 to 3 yards from each side of the ladder.
- ✓ Using various forward stepping patterns (e.g., double foot in each square), change to a lateral shuffle in either direction (to either cone), stepping out of the ladder and touching the cone with the outside hand, then returning to the ladder and continuing forward.
- ✓ Always learn the movement patterns first before increasing drill tempo.



Exercise 2: Multi-directional Ladder Drills - Lateral Ladder



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- ✓ The objective of this drill is to improve movement speed with directional changes.
- ✓ Place cones at 5-yard intervals on either side of a 30' agility ladder, spacing them 2 to 3 yards from each side of the ladder.
- ✓ Using a lateral step pattern, change to a forward-and-backward stepping pattern in either direction (to either cone), stepping out of the ladder and touching the cone with the outside hand, then returning to the ladder and continuing forward.
- ✓ Always learn the movement patterns first before increasing drill tempo.



Exercise 3: T-Drill



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Exercise 3: T-Drill *continued*



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- ✓ The objective of this drill is to improve movement speed with directional changes.
- ✓ Set up your drill, placing cones in a T-formation with the starting cone 10 yards away from the middle of the three cones (placed 5 yards apart).
- ✓ From the starting position, accelerate out of your starting block toward the middle cone, touching it with one hand and shuffling sideways in the opposite direction (e.g., touch with the right hand, shuffle left) toward the outer cone, touching it with the outside hand. Remember to shuffle and not cross your feet during this movement.
- ✓ Shuffle in the opposite direction to the opposite cone, touching it with your outside hand again before shuffling back to the middle cone, touching it and then retreating backward. Keep your center of mass low toward the ground and pump your arms while facing forward as if watching your opponent.

Exercise 4: Close-quarter Agility Drills



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- ✓ The objective of this drill is to improve agility in beating a defender who is marking closely.
- ✓ Using a soccer ball, position the attacker between the defender and the ball, placing the soccer ball near or just outside of the right foot.
- ✓ The attacker fake pumps (shifts) as if moving to the left, then performs a rear rotational move to the right, bringing the ball with him using the left foot to control the ball, while stepping with the right.
- ✓ The idea is to move the ball around the defender, while screening the ball with his body from the defender
- ✓ Repeat with the opposite feet to the other side.

Exercise 5: Overhead Medicine Ball Toss



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- ✓ The objective of this drill is to increase power on a throw-in.
- ✓ Hold a 4- to 6-pound medicine ball around chest height, starting 3 to 4 yards away from the sideline.
- ✓ Using an approach (run-up), move the ball up over and behind the head, plant the leading foot while leaning back from the hips, then explosively flex forward harnessing the elasticity of the anterior muscles fibers, followed by a powerful forward linear throw to a partner or target.



Exercise 6: Partner-resisted Sprints



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- ✓ The objective of this drill is to increase running speed and power.
- ✓ Using a resistance band secured around a partner's upper hips (lower waist), perform a series of resisted sprints over a distance of 15 to 25 yards.
- ✓ Don't hinge forward at the hips, but assume a 5-degree forward lean. Squeeze the arms to the sides and drive from the shoulders while maintaining a near 90-degree elbow bend. Drive the knees upward into triple extension to generate force and power (extending the hips, knees and ankle joint). Aim to turn over your legs as quickly as possible during this drill.



Exercise 7: Contested Vertical Jumps



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- ✓ The objective of this drill is to improve vertical jumping and timing during contested headers.
- ✓ Using a coach or cue to provide the stimulus cue (instruction to jump), stand shoulder to shoulder, reacting to the jump instruction as quickly as possible. While attempting to jump as high as possible, both jumpers need to maintain their space and stability against the opponent, and not allow themselves to be pushed off their assigned spaces.
- ✓ Once the fundamentals of the drill are mastered, a ball can be introduced and tossed up in the air between both athletes.

Exercise 8: Stop-and-starts (Forward Linear)



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Exercise 8: Stop-and-starts (Forward Linear) *continued*



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- ✓ The objective of this drill is to improve acceleration through directional changes (forward linear).
- ✓ Place a set of seven cones in a straight line, each cone 5-yards apart.
- ✓ Start by running forward 10 yards, touching your hands to the ground at this cone marker, retreating backward 5 yards, touching the ground at this cone. Next, accelerate forward 10 more yards, touch the line again, retreat 5 yards again, then accelerate forward another 10 yards. Continue this stop-and-start sequence throughout the drill.



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