

BFSC U11-U12 Training Session #12: Finishing.

<u>Exercise</u>	<u>Environment</u>	<u>Description / Coach</u>
Score on either goal	½ field	Divide the group into two equal teams (no goalkeepers) and play on ½ field. Explain teams may score on either goal. The coach keeps a supply of balls on the perimeter of the field and restarts play by randomly serving balls around the area. Encourage players to shoot as early and often as possible. Play for seven minutes, keeping track of score and assessing players' shooting ability.
Pairs passing and shooting progression	¼ field	<p>Players work in pairs with one soccer ball per pair and along the touch-line. Instruct each pair to start and stay four yards apart. The following progression is designed to both give players numerous striking touches and also provide them with a useful tutorial in learning to select a finishing surface. Play each sequence for two minutes, focusing upon proper technique, accuracy and also assuring that players alternate the striking foot each time they play.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Two-touch passing. Using the inside of the foot, players ping the ball back-and-forth with their partner. Emphasize speed and quality of footwork and striking.2. One-touch. Using the inside of the foot again, players knock the ball back-and-forth with their partner, alternating the striking foot with each touch. Players use one touch where possible and two touches when necessary to sustain the exercise.3. Laces striking: Short distance. Demonstrate with one pair proper use of the laces surface to strike the ball. Explain that this surface allows for the greatest striking power, but also creates more room for error, as the laces surface is more narrow and inherently less stable than the inside surface of the foot. Therefore, players must work very hard to develop consistency in striking with their laces. The technical cues for striking with the laces are:<ol style="list-style-type: none">A. Lock the ankle with the toes pointed at the ground.B. Place the plant foot next to the ball, below the shoulder, assuring that the toes of the plant foot point in the direction of the target.C. Encourage players to put their knee in a firm position as well and consider their hip as the point of rotation. Players should practice this striking motion without a ball to begin, holding their foot on the follow-through to check their form.4. Laces striking: Medium distance. Move the players back so that the pairs are working with ten yards between them. Players continue to strike the ball with their

laces, alternating feet with each strike. Continue to emphasize accuracy and proper technique. The most common technical errors are:

- A. The ball pops up in the air. This indicates that the player is striking the ball at a low point, causing the ball to fly upward off of her foot. This player needs to strike the middle-back of the ball to keep it traveling on the ground.
 - B. The ball consistently travels wide of the target. Here, the player is typically either playing with the plant foot pointed away from the target or failing to strike the ball on the center back, so that the ball spins off of the laces to one side.
 - C. The ball does not travel the distance. Here the player is typically failing to lock her ankle and/or knee or she is not striking the ball with sufficient force.
5. "Shooting dance." Players should begin to learn at age 11 and age 12 how to maximize the power in their strike of the ball. Therefore, have them practice (without the ball to start) the movement of the intended strike and then encourage them to land on kicking foot during their follow-through. This is accomplished by utilizing a scissors movement of the feet on the follow-through. The footwork will feel awkward at first, but it is important for the players to learn this power step early on in their technical development. Practice with the ball for five minutes, developing comfort with both feet and with the footwork of the so-called "shooting dance."

No pressure finishing

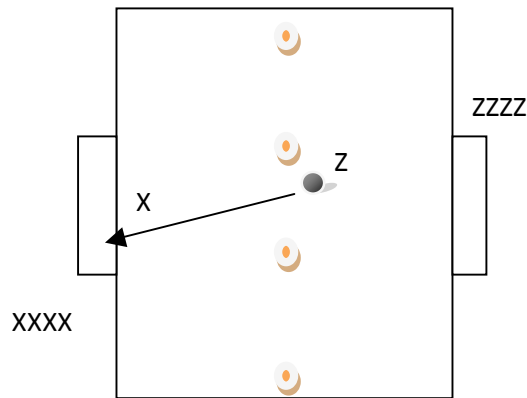
Goal box

In this exercise, players can begin to put the technical lessons learned above to work with movement and without pressure. Use the following progression to allow players to gain comfort in striking the ball properly and also in developing a finishing mentality.

1. Players line up, each with a ball, at the top of the goal box. Place a cone one yard inside of each post. Players dribble to the penalty kick mark and then strike the ball with their laces. For now, all goals must come off of strikes on the ground. For the player to earn a point, the shot must pass between the cone and post on one side of the goal. If the players are doing well, offer an extra point for all goals scored where the shooter lands on the shooting foot after the strike. Play for five minutes and then require players to shoot with their off-foot for five minutes and check scores.
2. Now, start the players ten yards outside the goal box. This is the same exercise as above except that the players must now shoot from the top of the goal box.

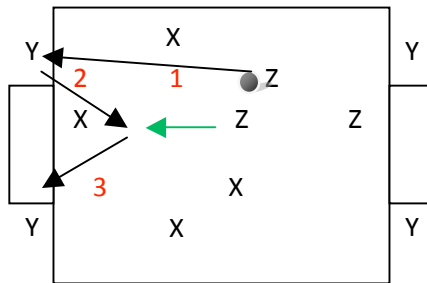
Shoot-keep-retrieve

20x20 yard area



4 vs. 4 with endline bumpers

25x25 yard area



To help players increase their accuracy and consistency, encourage them to look up at the goal after their preparation touch (the last touch before they shoot) and then focus on the ball as they strike it.

This is a very popular, intense and fun shooting exercise. Place two full-sized goals at either end of a 20x20 yard area. Put a cone line across the area at the midpoint between the goals. Divide the group into two teams and place them on opposite posts of their respective goals. Each team needs a large ball supply. The game functions just as name suggests, as players shoot, play goalkeeper for one shot and then retrieve a ball and return to their line. Players may not cross the center line at any time and one player keeps track of the goals scored for each team. This is also a very good way to improve shooting in that even though there are no defenders, players feel some pressure as they shoot because the next player from the other team will be ready to shoot immediately after their opponent has shot, so there is time pressure to release the ball and then play goalkeeper. Note: One team will need to provide a goalkeeper for the first shot of the game. Require all shots to be struck with the laces and if the players are able, also require that they land on the shooting foot after each strike. Play for ten minutes and check scores. If time permits, play again requiring off-foot shots.

Play 4 vs. 4 in the assigned area to full-sized goals. A third team of four function as "bumpers." These players are stationed on the endlines (one on each side of the goals) on each end. They are limited to a single touch each time they receive and they should use their touch to play the ball in front of the goal on their end. In other words, the game is a standard game except that teams may use the bumpers on their opponents' end to set up shots. Note that the bumpers may not be tackled or used by the defending team to build possession. Play for five minutes and then change the bumpers. Keep track of total goals throughout the three games.