



**ERTHEO**

Est. 2001

# The Football MVP Handbook

20 simple and effective soccer drills  
to improve dribbling, passing, shooting,  
ball control, speed and agility





# Introduction

If you're serious about becoming a successful soccer player, you know that competition is fierce. To become the best of the best, you'll not only have to put in 100% effort at practice, but you'll also have to practice on your own to make sure you beat out the competition.

The Football MVP Handbook was designed especially for these players who are dedicated to going above and beyond what's expected of them during practice. It was created for the footballers who want to perfect their craft and discover exactly what they're capable of achieving.

Furthermore, the Football MVP Handbook was designed for optimal flexibility and utility. Each drill requires just one or two players and limited equipment. This means players can practice these drills almost anywhere at any time, and the drills presented can be adjusted to fit the level of all players. The handbook is divided into five sections covering dribbling, passing, shooting, ball control, and speed and agility and presents four of the most effective, classic drills to improve each core skill area.

Whether you're a soccer player looking to [achieve your full potential](#), a coach searching for inspiration or a [parent searching for the best resources](#) to provide your son or daughter, the Football MVP Handbook can help you achieve your goals.



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## Drill Key



Ball



Player



Cone



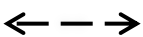
Goal (Only Needed For Shooting Drills)



Stopwatch (Only Needed For 2 Exercises)



Training Ladder (Only Recommended For 1 Exercise)



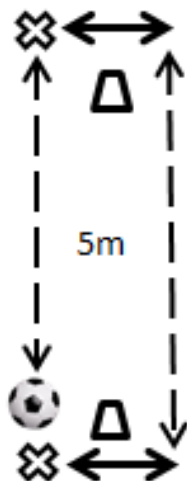
Ball Moves



Player Moves

# Passing drills

## 1. Pass on both sides of the cones



**Recommended equipment:** 2 cones   1 ball 

**Number of players required:** 2 players  

**Set-up:** Place two cones five meters apart.

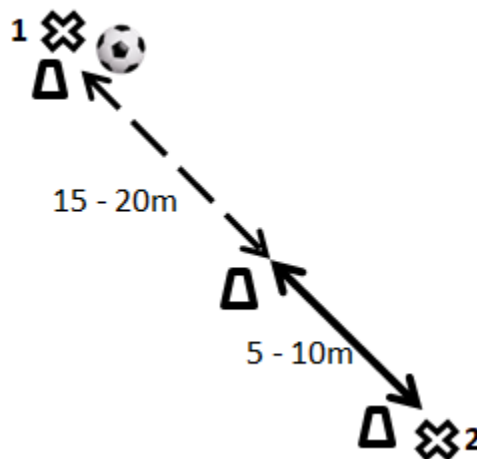
**Exercise:** Players pass the ball to each other on either side of two cones in a counter-clockwise direction or clockwise direction.

**Purpose:** Improve first touch; work on changing direction and creating space.

Source: [http://www.playsportstv.com/soccer/soccer-drills\\_two-touch-passing-drill](http://www.playsportstv.com/soccer/soccer-drills_two-touch-passing-drill)

# Passing drills

## 2. Check in, check out



**Recommended equipment:** 3 cones  1 ball 

**Number of players required:** 2 players 

**Set-up:** Place two cones 15-20 meters apart and a third cone 5-10 meters from the second cone to form a straight line of three cones.

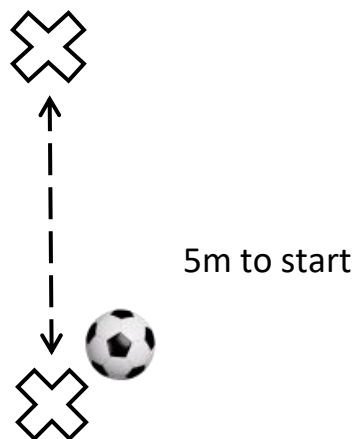
**Exercise:** Player 2 starts at the furthest cone from player 1. Player 2 runs to the center cone and asks for the ball. As player 2 approaches the center cone, player 1 passes them the ball. Player 2 one-touches or two-touches the ball back to player 1 and returns back to their original position to repeat the exercise. After a certain amount of time, switch places.

**Purpose:** Improve first touch; work on creating space and losing a mark; improve communication

Source: <https://www.soccerxpert.com/soccerdrills/check-in-passing-warm-up.aspx>

# Passing drills

## 3. Short passing to longer passing



**Recommended equipment:** 1 ball 

**Number of players required:** 2 players  

**Set-up:** Players begin standing 5 meters apart.

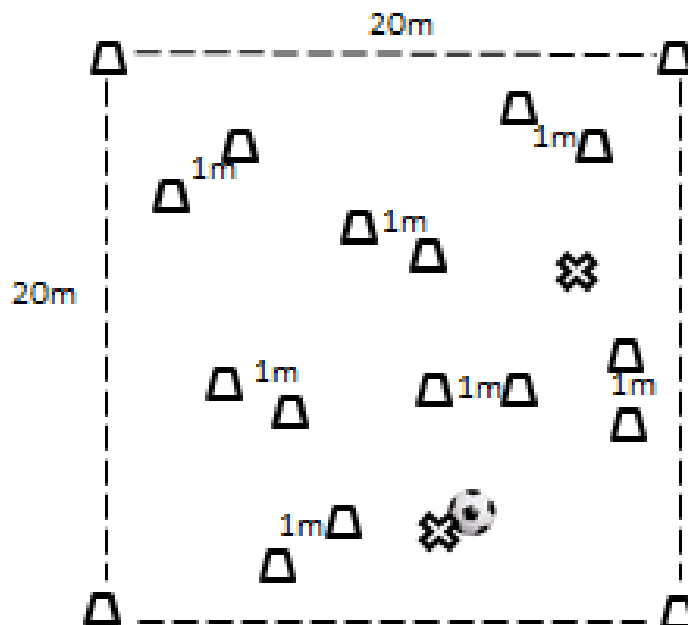
**Exercise:** Players pass back and forth. Players (or coach) decide how they'd like to pass and receive the passes (one touch, two touches, right foot only, left foot only, etc.). Aim for clean passes and touches. Set a goal (10 without a mistake, 20 without a mistake, 100?) Each time you meet the goal, move back 10 meters.



**Purpose:** Improve first touch; improve accuracy and concentration.

Soccer passing tips: <https://www.soccercoachweekly.net/soccer-drills-and-skills/how-to-coach-perfect-passing-technique/>

# Passing drills

## 4. Passing through gates



**Recommended equipment:** 1 ball  14 or more cones 

**Number of players required:** 2 players 

**Set-up:** Set up a 20m x 20m playing space (placing a cone at each corner if desired). Within the playing space, set up 5-8 gates with cones 1m apart evenly scattered throughout the 20m space.

**Exercise:** Players practice dribbling around the 20m space passing through the gates.

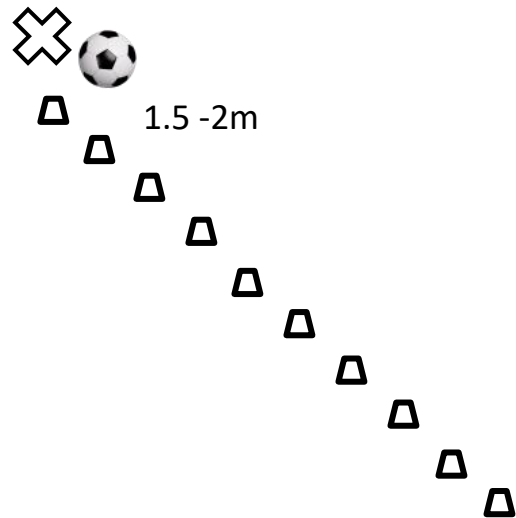
**Purpose:** Practice passing at angles; improve first touch, accuracy and concentration



Source: <https://www.sportsessionplanner.com/s/B51ab/Passing-through-gates.html?interface=en>



# Dribbling drills

## 5. Cone drill



**Recommended equipment:** 1 ball  10 or more cones 

**Number of players required:** 1 player 

**Set-up:** Line up at least 10 cones 1.5 - 2 meters apart

**Exercise:** Players practice dribbling through the cones with the inside of both feet, outside of both feet; inside and outside of the right foot; inside and outside of the left foot; practice roll overs, scissor kicks, etc.

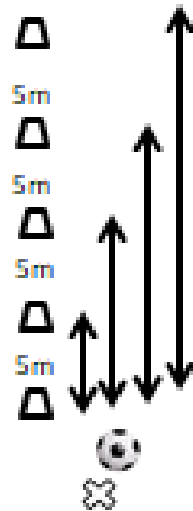
**Purpose:** Practice ball control and touch



\*Optional modification – Add a final cone 20 meters away from the other cones. When finished dribbling through the cones, sprint to the final cone with the ball at your feet for extra practice breaking away from defenders while maintaining control.

Variations: <http://www.soccerdrillsdaily.com/2014/05/01/soccer-drills-to-help-you-develop-your-dribbling-5-slalom-dribbling-drill-variations/>

# Dribbling drills

## 6. Suicide dribbling



**Recommended equipment:** 1 ball  5 or more cones 

**Number of players required:** 1 player 

**Set-up:** Line up at least 5 cones 5 meters apart

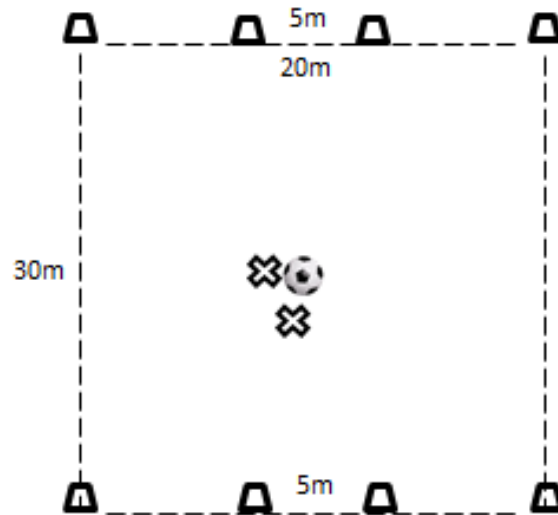
**Exercise:** Starting at Cone 1, sprint with the ball to Cone 2. Turn and sprint back to Cone 1. Turn and sprint to Cone 3, back to Cone 1, and so on. Once you have reached all four cones and are back at Cone 1, take a 30 second rest before starting the next set.

**Purpose:** Practice dribbling with speed and control; improve physical fitness; practice turns and changing direction.

Source: <http://www.soccermaniak.com/soccer-fitness-drills.html>

# Dribbling drills

## 7. 1v1 controlled scoring



**Recommended equipment:** 1 ball  8 cones 

**Number of players required:** 2 players 

**Set-up:** Set up a 30m by 20m pitch using cones to mark the corners. Make two 5m goals at each end line.

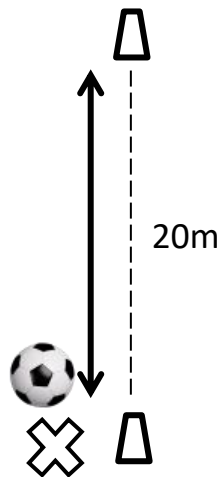
**Exercise:** Players start in the middle of the pitch. (Decide who starts with the ball). Players can only score by stopping the ball on the imaginary line between the goal cones. After a player scores, the other player starts with the ball from their own end line (where the other player scored).





**Purpose:** Practice dribbling with speed and control; practice 1v1 offense and defense; improve physical fitness.

1v1 tips: <https://www.renegadesoccertraining.com/2-things-you-need-to-know-to-improve-your-1v1-ability/>

# Dribbling drills

## 8. Test your dribble speed



**Recommended equipment:** 1 ball  2 cones   a stopwatch   
(or some way to keep track of the time)

**Number of players required:** 1 player 

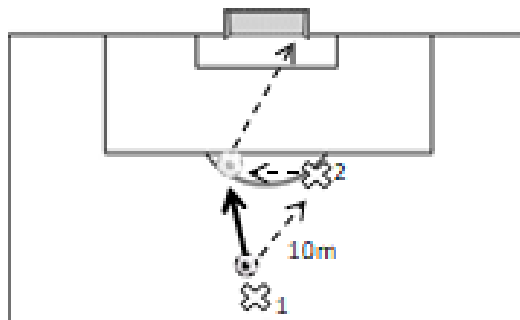
**Set-up:** Set up 2 cones 20m apart.

**Exercise:** Dribble from one cone to the other stopping the ball within 5 inches of each cone. Test yourself for time. See how many times you can go back and forth in one minute or see how long it takes you to go back and forth x times. Track your progress.

**Purpose:** Practice dribbling with speed and control; practice turning and changing direction; improve physical fitness.

# Shooting drills

## 9. Pass and shoot



**Recommended equipment:** 1 ball  (a bag of balls is preferable)   
1 goal 

**Number of players required:** 2 players  

**Set-up:** Player 2 stands just outside the penalty box. Player 1 stands 10m away from player one with the ball.

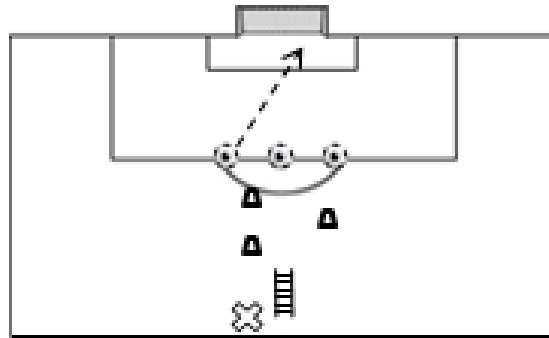
**Exercise:** Player 1 starts with the ball. Player 1 passes the ball to player 2. Player two lays the ball off to player one with a light tap with the inside of the foot. Player two runs to the ball and strikes it into the net (can be one touch or two touches).






**Purpose:** Practice shooting in stride.

Source: <https://www.soccerplayingguide.com/pass-and-shoot-drill.html>

# Shooting drills

## 10. Agility and shooting



**Recommended equipment:** 1 ball  (a bag of balls is preferable)   
1 goal  cones (no set number)  1 training ladder   
(optional)

**Number of players required:** 1 player 

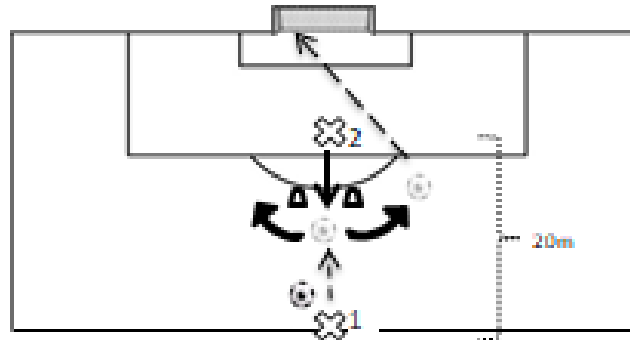
**Set-up:** Set up your own agility course using cones and a training ladder (if available).




**Exercise:** Create your own rules. Here are some ideas: high knees, butt kicks, hopping on one foot, frog jumps, etc. through the ladder. Lunge to touch each cone with your hand. Then, shoot one ball into the net and repeat the agility course.

**Purpose:** Practice shooting with weak legs. Improve agility and foot speed. Improve physical fitness.

# Shooting drills

## 11. Turn and shoot



**Recommended equipment:** 1 ball  (a bag of balls is preferable)   
1 goal  2 cones  

**Number of players required:** 2 players  

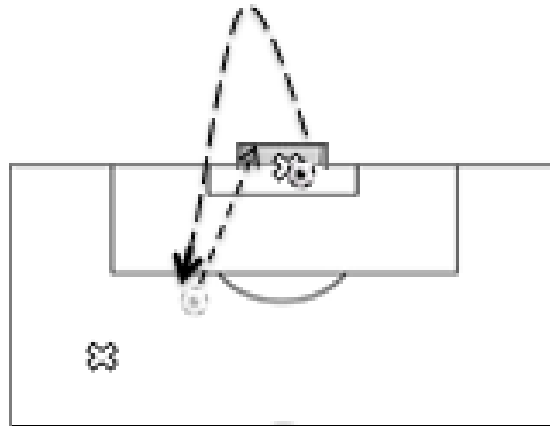
**Set-up:** Player 2 stands at the top of the penalty box. Player 1 stands 20m away from player one with the ball. Set up 2 cones 1m apart, mid-distance between player 1 and 2 (10m from each player)

**Exercise:** Player 1 starts with the ball. Player 2 sprints between the cones and asks for the ball. Only after player 2 passes through the cones, player 1 passes him/her the ball. Player 1 tells player 2 to turn left or right. Player 2 takes one touch in the direction indicated by player 1, turns (avoiding the cones), and shoots.

**Purpose:** Practice checking to the ball and create space in front of the goal; practice directional and effective communication; practice turning around a defender; practice shooting in stride.

# Shooting drills

## 12. Goalkeeper lob



**Recommended equipment:** 1 ball  1 goal 

**Number of players required:** 2 players 

**Set-up:** Player 2 stands in goal with the ball. Player one stands somewhere in the box.

**Exercise:** Player 2 (the goalkeeper) starts with the ball and throws it high into the air. Player 1 must either shoot with a single touch, or control the ball (with one or two touches) and then shoot.

**Purpose:** Practice shooting high and bouncing balls; improve one touch and two-touch shooting; improve timing.



Variation: [World cup soccer drill](#)



# Ball control drills

## 13. Keep it in the cones



**Recommended equipment:** 1 ball  8 cones 

**Number of players required:** 2 players 

**Set-up:** Use the 8 cones to set up two boxes (2m x 2m) at a far distance. \*Distance will depend on skill and strength of players. Players should be able to pass the ball to each other using about 60-70% of their strength.

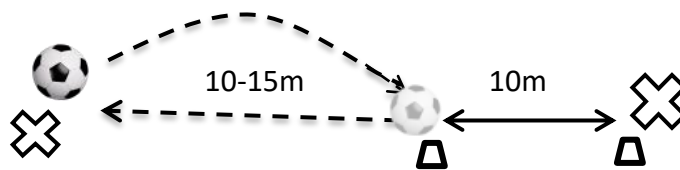
**Exercise:** Players pass back and forth keeping the ball within their own square space. Practice with both feet.

**Purpose:** Improve accuracy, improve ball control, slight strength training, practice concentration.

Controlling air-balls tips: <https://www.somuchmorethanagame.com/trap-soccer-ball-5-steps-kill-ball-stone-dead/>

## Ball control drills

### 14. Receiving throw-ins



**Recommended equipment:** 1 ball  2 cones 

**Number of players required:** 2 players  

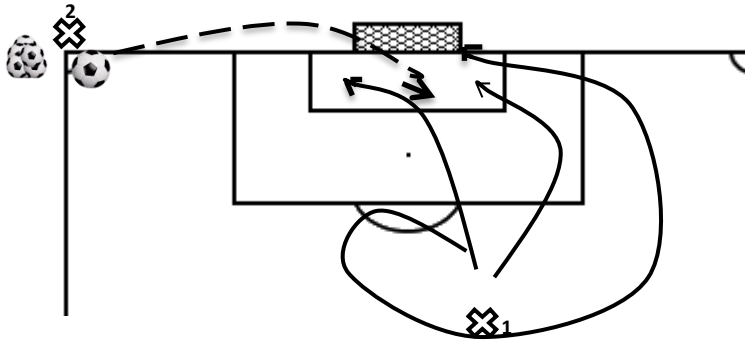
**Set-up:** set up two cones 10m apart. Receiving player starts at the cone farthest from the thrower.

**Exercise:** players practice receiving light, controlled throw-ins from their partners. Receiving player passes back to the thrower with one touch or two touches. Receiving player must check to the closer cone in order to receive the ball. Thrower begins with ground balls to the right foot and then the left, then, throws so the receiver can volley back with the inside of each foot. The thrower continues to throw to his or her partner's thighs, then chest, then head. Thrower should throw to each body part 5-10 times before switching.

**Purpose:** improve ball control using various body parts.

# Ball control drills

## 15. Receiving corner kicks



**Recommended equipment:** 1 ball  (a bag of balls is preferable)   
1 goal 

**Number of players required:** 2 players 

**Set-up:** Player 2 stands at a corner with a ball (bag of balls). Player 1 stands at the top of the box.

**Exercise:** Player 2 takes corner kicks. Player 1 runs various routes toward the net and attempts one-touch or two-touch shots.

**Purpose:** Practice controlling balls in the air; practice shooting in stride; corner kick practice.

Extra drills and tips: [https://youtu.be/ckD\\_4oDxIYE](https://youtu.be/ckD_4oDxIYE)

## ***Ball control drills***

### 16. Juggle



**Recommended equipment:** 1 ball 

**Number of players required:** 1 player 

**Set-up:** none required

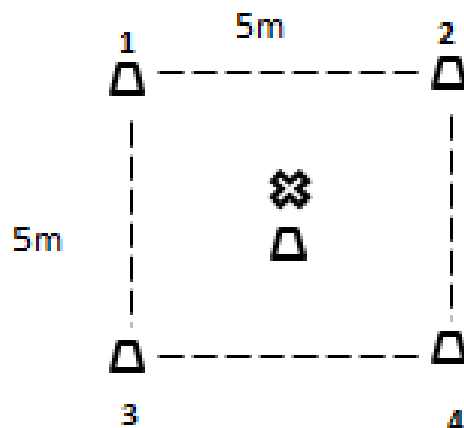
**Exercise:** Player attempts to keep the ball in the air using feet, legs, chest, and head.

**Purpose:** Improve general ball control. Beginner jugglers should first try with their thighs.

Extra tips: <https://theathleticbuild.com/how-to-juggle-a-soccer-ball/>

# Speed and agility drills

## 17. Corner sprint drill



**Recommended equipment:** 5 cones 

**Number of players required:** 2 players 

**Set-up:** Set up a 5m x 5m square using cones to mark the corners. Put a 5<sup>th</sup> cone in the center of the square. Assign a number (1-4) to the 4 corner cones.

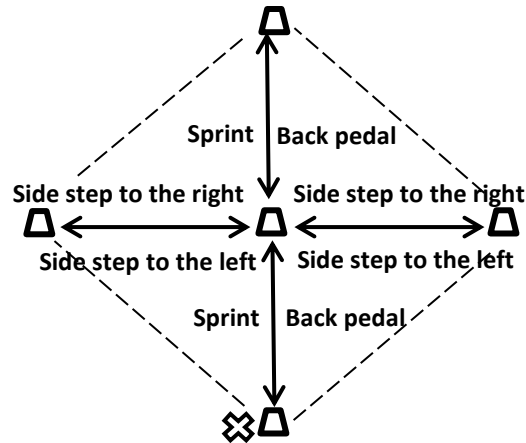
**Exercise:** Player 1 starts at the center cone. Player 1 calls out a number (or a sequence of numbers for daring participants), and player 1 must touch the corresponding cone or cones and return back to the center cone. Continue for a minute and then switch.

**Purpose:** Improve speed, footwork, and explosiveness; improve concentration.

Source: <https://athletesacceleration.com/soccer-agility-drills/>

# Speed and agility drills

## 18. Super shuffle



**Recommended equipment:** 5 cones 

**Number of players required:** 1 player 

**Set-up:** Set up a 30m x 30m square using cones to mark the corners. Put a 5<sup>th</sup> cone in the center of the square.

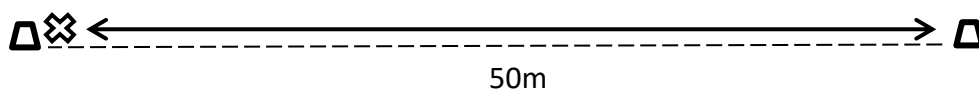
**Exercise:** Player starts at one of the outside cones. Player moves around the square touching the corner cones. Player must always face the same direction and must return to the middle cone after touching each outer cone. Player sprints forward to touch the middle cone, then sidesteps to the left to touch the outer cone, then sidesteps back to the center to touch the center cone, then sprints forward again, etc. Refer to the image for clear instructions.



**Purpose:** Improve speed, footwork, and explosiveness; improve cardiovascular fitness.

Source: <https://www.jenreviews.com/soccer-agility-drills/>

# Speed and agility drills

## 19. Sprinting pacers



**Recommended equipment:** 2 cones (optional)  a stopwatch   
(or some way to keep track of the time)

**Number of players required:** 1 player 

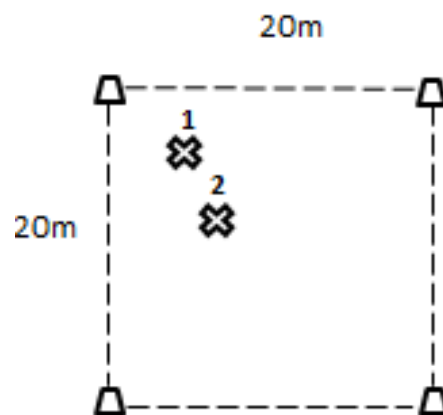
**Set-up:** Place two cones 50 meters apart. To determine the time interval that the player will use to complete this exercise, he or she must first complete one 50m sprint for time. The time it took to complete the 50m sprint + 30 seconds = sprinting time interval.

**Exercise:** Player sprints 50 yards, and then rests until the time interval runs out. At the end of the time interval, player sprints another 50 yards. As players get tired, sprints get slower and breaks get shorter. Do this exercise for x time or x repetitions.

**Purpose:** This is interval training designed to mimic the intensity of a real match. Improve strength, speed, and general physical fitness.

## Speed and agility drills

### 20. Confined tag



**Recommended equipment:** 4 cones (optional) 

**Number of players required:** 2 players 

**Set-up:** Set up a 20m x 20m square using cones to mark the corners.

**Exercise:** Players play tag in a confined space. If a player steps outside of the 20 x 20 space, he or she is it.

**Purpose:** Improve cardio-vascular fitness; improve footwork and dodging.



## A note from [Ertheo](#)



Becoming a successful soccer player is a challenge for even the most talented players. The first step to reaching your full potential is getting informed.

Not only do you need to [study the game](#) to learn the technical skills and tactical skills that you'll need to beat the competition. But also, you should know about [all your options for playing professionally](#).

Once you know about what it takes to reach your full potential and have a plan to get to the top, you can join [summer camps](#) to improve your tactical and technical skills with certified coaches from all over the world.

And, of course, as you develop your skills, you can always make time to practice on your own, using your Football MVP Handbook to improve your dribbling, passing, shooting, ball control, speed and agility.

Becoming a successful soccer player is a challenge, but remember...

*"The more difficult the victory, the greater the happiness in winning."*

Pelé

