



Football Skills Challenge Cards



Football Skills

Through the Gates

Equipment needed: a ball for each player, cones set up as gates

Skills: dribbling, ball control, spatial awareness

You will need to set up your space with a number of gates. Each player needs to dribble through as many gates as they can within a set amount of time. Encourage them to keep the ball close, be aware of those around them and use light touches to keep the ball under control. Make the challenge harder by introducing a 'guard' to protect a gate, meaning players will need to be checking for gates that are unguarded.

Jailbreak

Equipment needed: cones, balls, bibs

Skills: dribbling, ball control, spatial awareness

Set up your space to have two 'jails' in opposite corners and two 'banks' in the other two corners. Use the remaining cones to divide the field in half. Split the players into two teams, giving one team bibs to wear. Both teams are aiming to get all of the balls into their own bank by stealing from the opposition's bank.

Only one player from each team can enter the opposing area at any one time. To steal a ball they must reach the opposition bank while avoiding being tagged. If they are successful in reaching the opposition bank without being tagged, they can dribble a ball back to your bank. If they are tagged, they must go to the opposition team's jail. Their teammates can attempt to rescue them by reaching the jail without being tagged. If players are successful in reaching the jail without being tagged, they and the player they've freed, can jog back to their team's half. The game is over when all the balls are in one bank. At any time, the teacher can shout 'JAILBREAK' to release all the players in jail; this can help make the game more even if one team is struggling.

Robin Hood

Equipment needed: cones set up to make four boxes in the corners of the space, five balls per box

Skills: dribbling, ball control, teamwork

Divide the players evenly into four teams and get them to stand so that one team is in each box.

One at a time, a player from each team can dribble a ball to another team's box, acting as Robin Hood and giving to the other teams. The player must stop the ball in the other team's box for it to count. The player must then get back to their box before the next player can go from their team. The aim is to have the fewest number of balls in your box at the end of the game. Keeping the ball under control with small touches while being quick and aware of the players around them is vital in this game.

Fancy Footwork

Equipment needed: one football for each player

Skills: dribbling, ball control, spatial awareness

Each player dribbles a football around the playing area. Say 'toe taps', 'sole rolls' or 'inside outside'.

If you say 'toe taps', each player will put the sole of one foot on top of the football and the other foot on the ground. Once balanced, they will swap feet and repeat several times.

For 'sole rolls', players push the football gently with the sole of one foot in any direction, then swap to the other foot.

When 'inside outside' is called, players will kick the football with the inside of their right foot, then kick the football with the outside of the same foot. Repeat for 30 seconds using the right foot then switch to the left foot.

Body Parts

Equipment needed: one football for each player

Skills: ball control, dribbling, spatial awareness

Each player dribbles their football around the playing area, keeping it under control. The adult will call out a body part. Players must touch their football with that body part as quickly as possible then continue dribbling the ball. Remind players to be looking around to ensure they don't bump into each other.

Save the Trees

Equipment needed: tall cones, bibs to identify teams, a ball for each player

Skills: dribbling, passing, spatial awareness

Place your tall cones randomly around your space. Half of them should be standing up and the other half should be knocked over.

Divide the class into two teams: lumberjacks and foresters. The lumberjacks are aiming to cut down all the trees by passing their ball to an upright cone to knock it over. The foresters want to plant as many trees by stopping their ball with their foot beside a fallen cone then using their foot to put the tree back upright. All the players should be dribbling their ball to keep it under control while they move through the space. Once the time is up you can find the winning team by seeing how many 'trees' are planted or cut down.

Dribbling and Passing

Equipment needed: one football between four players, cones

Skills: dribbling, passing

Divide players into teams of four and number them one, two, three and four.

Use cones to create a zig-zag course. Place two cones to make a gate around three metres after the zig-zag course.

Players one and four start at the beginning of the zig-zag course. Player two starts at the end of the zig-zag course. Player three starts after the cone gate. Player one dribbles the ball through the zig-zag course then passes the football to player two. Player two then passes the football through the cone gate to player three. Player three dribbles the football back to the start and passes to player four. Player four then dribbles the football through the zig-zag course and passes to player one. Continue until each player has had several turns at each position.

Pass and Move

Equipment needed: one football and four cones for each group of three players

Skills: ball control, passing, moving

Divide players into teams of three and number them one, two and three. Create a square using the cones. Player one will start at the top left cone, player two will start at the top right cone and player three will start at the bottom left cone. Begin with player one passing the football to player two. As soon as player one passes the football, they sprint to the cone where player three started and player three sprints to the spare cone. Player two receives the football and passes it to player three. Player two then sprints to the cone vacated by player one. Continue this pattern, with player three receiving the football and passing it to player one, who then passes it to player two.

Football Rounders

Equipment needed: one football and six cones

Skills: kicking, passing

Mark out the rounders field using four cones in a large square shape for the bases, one cone in the centre for the bowling area and one cone in the middle of one side of the square for the kicking area.

Divide players into two teams. One team will be the kickers and one team will be the fielders. Choose one player from the fielders to bowl. They will roll the football towards the first player in the kickers team, who will kick the football as hard as they can. The kicker must then run around the whole square. If a fielder catches the football before it touches the ground, the kicker is out. If a fielder stumps the cone the kicker is running towards, they are out. The kicker can stop at any cone if they feel unable to safely make it back to the base cone at the start. Once the next kicker takes their turn to kick the ball, the other kickers still out on the playing area can start running again. A rounder is scored for every player who makes it back to the base cone without being put out. Once each player in the kickers team has had a turn, the teams will swap over. The team with the most rounders at the end of the game wins.

Dribble and Shoot

Equipment needed: cones, a ball for each player

Skills: dribbling, ball control, shooting

Set up your space to have two zig-zagging lines of cones for your players to dribble through and a goal at the end of each line. Split your class into two teams.

One at a time, players will dribble through the cones and take a shot at the goals.

Encourage them to keep the ball under control and to kick the ball using the laces of their shoes when shooting to make the shot powerful. Once they've taken their shot, the player must collect the ball and dribble back to their team. Once they are back, the next player can have their turn. The first team to score ten goals is the winner.

Once the players are comfortable shooting accurately, you can introduce a goalkeeper to make it more challenging.

King of the Castle

Equipment needed: tall cones, five balls

Skills: shooting

Set up your space with two long rows of cones at opposite sides of your space to represent each team's castle and ensure there is a clear line halfway between your rows that the teams cannot cross. Split your class into small equal teams; you will have two teams participating at once.

Each team is aiming to shoot the ball at the opposing team's cones and knock them down. When they are not shooting, players should be defending their cones and ready to stop a ball so they can shoot it at their opponent's castle. The winning team is the first to knock down the other's castle or the team that knocks down the most cones in the given time.

Traffic Lights

Equipment needed: green, amber and red traffic light cards, a football for each player

Skills: dribbling, stopping the ball, passing, spatial awareness

Each player begins by dribbling their ball around the area. The teacher will hold up the traffic light signs to give the players commands silently and encourage the players to look up and around. When you hold up the green light, the players will dribble around the space with their ball. When you hold up the amber light, the players must pass their ball to another player. When you hold up the red light, the players must stop and put their foot on the ball.

Once your players are confident, you could change the rules to include things like toe taps, turns or keepy-uppys.

Keep Ups

Equipment needed: a ball for each player

Skill: ball control

Each player will need a ball. They start by dropping the ball and kicking it up using the top of their stronger foot to around waist height, then they should catch the ball. Repeat this until confident. To make it more challenging, the player could try to kick the ball up twice before catching it or try to use their weaker foot. This could be made into a class challenge to see who can kick the ball the most times while keeping it under control.

Turn and Shoot

Equipment needed: at least ten footballs and one goal for each team of four players

Skills: passing, turning, shooting

Divide players into groups of four. One player, the shooter, stands a few metres out from the goal, facing away from it. The other three players, the passers, spread out facing the goal. Each passer has a supply of several footballs. The shooter will call out one of the passer's names and that passer will pass them a football. The shooter will control the football, turn and shoot towards the goal. Then the shooter turns back to the passers and calls for a pass from a different passer. Repeat this ten times, then swap around to let a passer try being a shooter. Continue until every player gets a turn of being the shooter.

Ticking Bomb

Equipment needed: a football

Skills: ball control, passing

Players should spread out in a circle. One player, the 'spy', stands with their back to the circle. The football (or 'bomb') is kicked carefully between players around the circle. If the football rolls out of the circle, the last player to have kicked it must retrieve it and keep it for three seconds. The spy can shout 'stop' at any point during the game. When 'stop' is shouted, the player who has possession of the football is out. The winner is the last person remaining in the circle.