

Ball Control Drills



The Control Zone

This is the first step to teaching younger players the proper stance when controlling the ball.

What you need – Each player should have a stick and a ball to do this exercise.

How this drill works – In order to learn to proper distance the ball should be away from the player for optimum control, the ball will be dropped from the person's hand.

The players take a regular stance, with their feet just over shoulder width apart, and hold out their left hand directly in front of them. With a slight lean forward the player should then drop the ball in front of them. At this point, the player should grab the stick in the proper form, and address the ball. This should be the proper point that a player must learn to handle the ball, pass the ball and shoot the ball.

This is called the control zone.

Result – A player is going to understand their control area.



Stealing the Bacon

Racing to the ball and then keeping control of it are an important element of field hockey.

What you need – In groups of six, divide them into teams of three. One team will line up on the 25 yard line, and the other team on the 50 yard line and they are facing each other. The coach puts the ball in the absolute middle between the two teams and then blows the whistle. Two pylons are placed about 10 yards apart on both the 25 and 50-yard lines.

Members of the two sides sprint towards the ball (using the proper footwork to approach the ball), and the first side to get it goes on offense and the other side on defense. The team on offense tries to control the ball long enough to dribble it between the other side's pylons.

Result – This is a good game for control and position when handling the ball.



Cone Weave

This drill will help players control the ball in tighter situations

What you need – See diagram below. Run this with two or more stations.



How this drill works – As you can see from the diagram, this is a straight ahead ball control drill as the player negotiates their way through the course. They must alternate the sides they go to on their way down.

When they turn, the player must control the ball around the final pylon, and then start on their way back. This drill can be run as a relay with four or five players at each station.

Result – Increased ball control skills.



King (or Queen) of the circle

This is a great competitive ball control drill for players.

What you need – Create a circle with pylons that is about 15 yards across. Put all of the players in the circle, each with a ball they must control and protect.

How this drill works – The players have two challenges during this drill – they must protect their ball, but then they must try to put the ball of others players out of play.

When the coach blows his or her whistle, all of the players must move around the circle dribbling the ball. Along with maintaining good control of their own ball, players must try to knock others' ball from the circle. As a player's ball is knocked from the circle, they are eliminated. The last one standing is the king or queen of the circle.

Result – Great offensive and defensive ball control drill.



Controlled, Loose and Indian

This drill teaches a player the three main kinds of dribbling.

What you need – Set up a pylon course where players can learn each of the different dribbling styles. You can set this drill up with three different stations, and at each station the players work on each type of dribbling.

How this drill works – At each station, the players will work on controlling the ball with the three main types of dribbling: controlled, loose (speed dribble), and Indian dribble.

The controlled dribble is used to keep the ball in tight to the body, so the player can maneuver in tight spaces.

The loose, or speed dribble, is used when a player is in the open, and they need to breakout quickly. Players should try to do this dribble with only one hand on the stick and the other used to pump the arms for running.

The Indian dribble is a diagonal dribble that helps you pull and push the ball from front right to close left (or the opposite, depending on the dribble).

Result – Dribbling around the pylons is going to help the players learn to control the ball no matter how they have to dribble.



Dodge Drill

Dodges are quick fakes that help a player in control of the ball, elude the defense.

What you need – Pair up players of similar skill, and give them one ball between the two of them.

How this drill works – The first player will start and control the ball using the various types of dribbles learned in the above drill. Along with that, the controlling player will use dodges – juke techniques to avoid defenders. The goal with each 'dodge' or fake is to get the defender to commit to the direction your player fakes, in order to dribble the ball around them.

Result – Matching ball control with the ability to dodge is going to make your players more effective on offense. It will also give defenders the chance to learn dodge defense.



Change speed, change direction

This is another drill to help players with basic ball control and dodges

What you need – Line up three pylons in a straight line, about 5 to 7 yards apart (see diagram below). Set up more than one station. Groups line up at each pylon station.



How this drill works – The player will start this drill dribbling the ball ahead of them, and upon reach the first pylon they will dodge, change speed and then go the other way. Then go to the next cone.

As players gain confidence and experience, they can start developing their own change of pace to elude defenders.

Once player get a little more experienced, replace the pylons with passive defenders.

Result – More work on ball control and eluding defenders.



Pull Back Drill

The pull back helps a player slow down the play and regain close control of the ball.

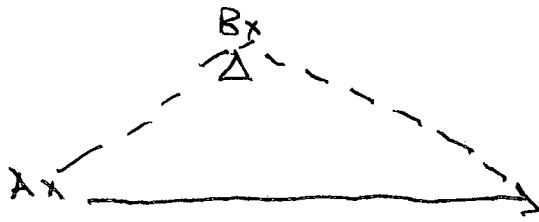
What you need – Create three lines of players and place three cones 10 yards in front of them. Each line has a ball.

How this drill works – When the coach blows the whistle the players from each line will sprint towards the cone with the speed dribble. About 3 yards away from the cone (can be marked off), the player must break down and reach out for the ball and pull it back toward them.

After more experience is gained, change the pylons to real defenders.

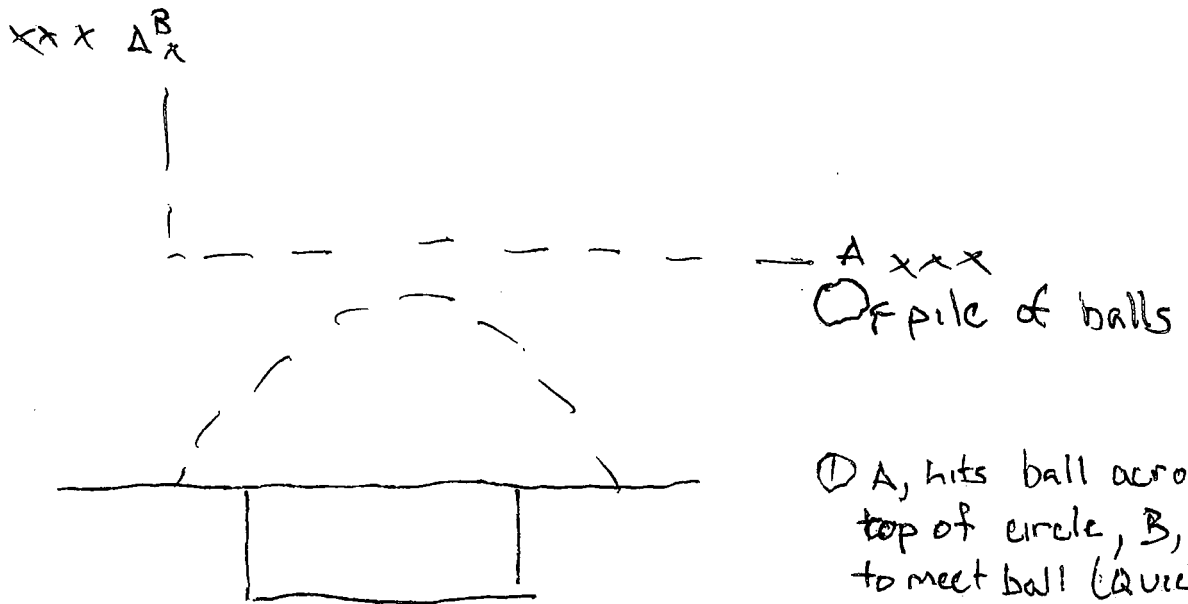
Result – Pull back skill will be practiced and perfected.

Give and go



A-passes to B, Then A runs straight ahead to receive pass from B.

Pass across and shot



① A, hits ball across top of circle, B, runs to meet ball (quick shot into cage, A goes to corner of cage to get rebound, rotate and keep it moving.

Team #3

PASS/DRIBBLE

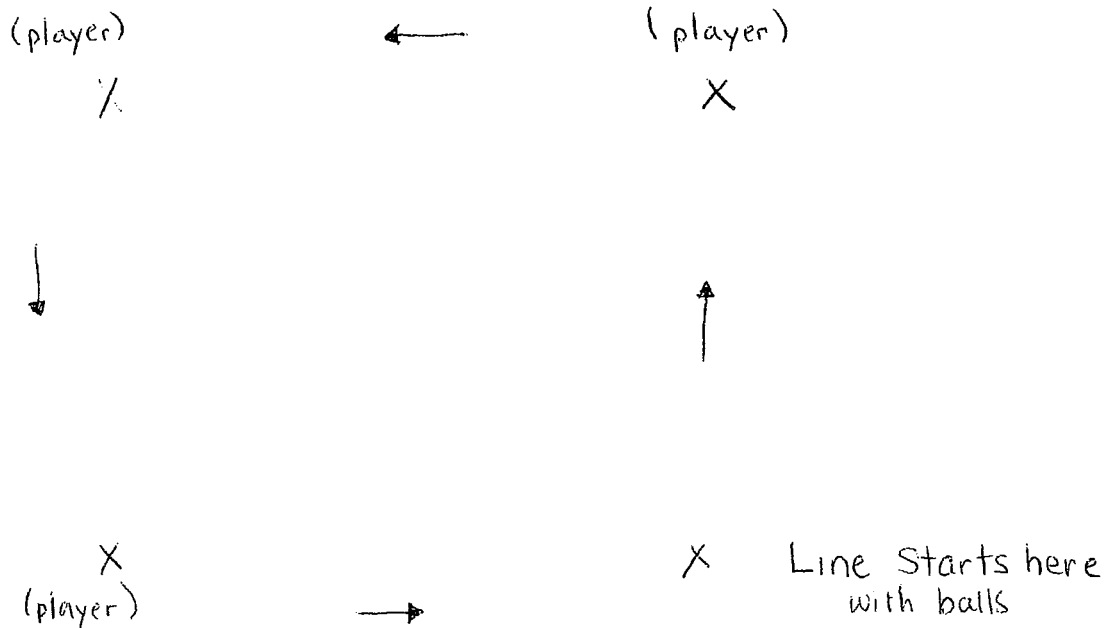
player 2
X



X
player 1

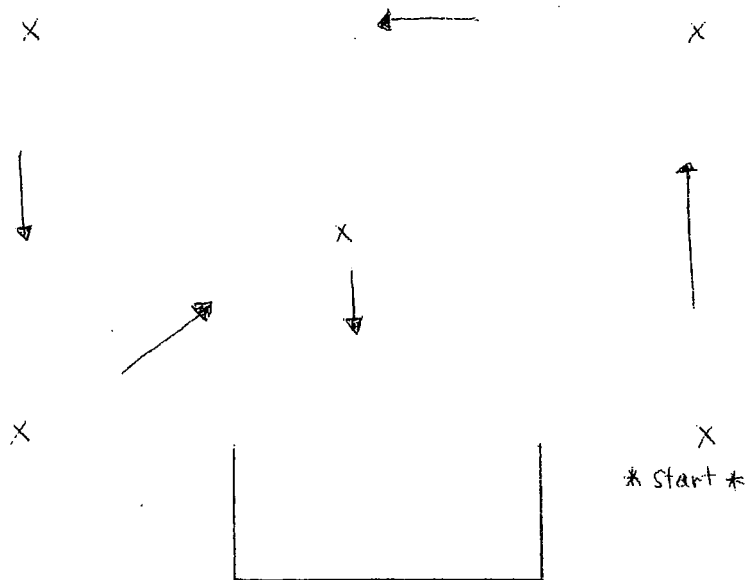
- start with lines behind each cone.
(approx. 15 feet apart)
- player 1 dribbles to player 2.
- player 2 receives the ball, then hits it back to the line where player 1 started.
- Players should follow their passes!
- A defender may be added to encourage vision/increase difficulty.

Team #3



- cones should be 10-15 feet apart.
- players should use different types of dribbles based on their skill level, to get to the next cone.
- keep the ball to the outside of the cones.
- Encourage staying low and having vision!!

STAR DRILL



- Balls start on the endline, with players at each cone.
- Player on endline starts the drill with a slap-pass, then must follow their pass.
- The last player, who is located at the stroke mark will take a shot on the goalkeeper.

Ship to Shore



Players spread out and run in any of the following directions depending on your expertise. Port/Starboard Bow/Stern North/South/East/West

Players are eliminated if they are the last one/s to do the command. Example: if command needs 3 players and 2 are left or someone does it with 4 players they are eliminated. This game goes VERY quickly and they love it.

1. Man overboard - one on hands & knees other with one foot on her back scanning horizon with hand held over brow,
2. Abandon ship - 2 sit on ground, facing each other holding hands and pretend to row back and forth.
3. Sharks - 4 back to back sitting on ground, joined at elbows kicking feet and screaming SHARK!
4. Roll call - line up in front of leader (you calling out commands) stand motionless at parade rest (hands down at side) looking at back of head of sailors in front.
5. Chow time - get 3 people, sit and join hands to form table
6. Drop anchor - 2 back to back (do not lock arms) squat slightly and slowly rotate
7. Crabs on deck - 3 back to back, bend over, reach back between legs and grab hands of the other 3 sailors, begin to walk around.
8. Fish net - all lie down and touch each other. Must be hands to hands, feet to feet or hands to feet of all sailors.
9. Land Ho - jump on back of partner with hand at brow and yell "Land Ho"!
10. Bunk Beds - one player laying on ground on back; partner lays opposite on top of her supported by PU position. Player on ground holds her feet.
11. Iceberg - all remain motionless no matter what position
12. Hit the deck - belly flop with hands covering head

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