

Fun Games to End Practice

I always like to have at least 10 minutes available at the end of practice available for a fun game, often of the players choosing. My only rule is that it must involve touches on the ball and be physically active

6u

- Alien Tag
- Clean Your Room
- Pirate Treasure
- Target Practice – Players line up on both sides of an 20x4y lane or corridor. Players take turns dribbling at speed down the lane controlling the ball. The other players kick their ball at the dribbling player to knock their ball away. Points are earned by hitting the dribbler (or ball) or by dribbling through to the end untouched
- Sharks and Minnows – One option, second option

8u

- Freeze tag
- Snowball fight – Similar to above but the players that are “it” have knotted up pinnies they use as snowballs to freeze the players
- Lord of the Ring or Queen of the Ring – Players start in a big ring of cones with a ball. All players try to kick every other ball out of the ring. Last player with a ball is the Lord or Queen and game starts again
- Hit the Skunk – There is a large ring of cones with multiple skunks (tall cones) randomly distributed in the middle. Players are broken up into 2 teams. The object is for the players to pass to each other across the circle attempting to knock over the cone which counts as a point. Players can only enter the center circle to

retrieve a ball

- Tic-tac-toe – Have them start with pinnies until they get the hang of the game then have them place x's and o's with their ball. Then add a ball control movement they have to perform before they place a ball etc.

10u and up

- Jail break – Players are in a single file line (run multiple instances for larger teams, never more than 6 in line), player has to perform an objective, usually involving a shot at the end. If the player misses they go to “jail” a coned off grid near the line. If a player makes it, they go back to end of line and they release one player from jail. Play continues until there is only one winner. The objectives can be endless (taking ball in air, performing a certain move, beating a defender or keeper etc) but I like to use something I was working on during practice.
- Lightning
- World Cup
- Endzone
- Dodgeball – Separate into 2 teams. One team goes into the middle of a ring of cones. The other team starts outside. Play 1 or more balls to the team outside the ring, they must PASS the ball through the middle trying to hit the players inside. When a player is hit they must come out of the ring and they participate in knocking the other players out. Round continues until all players are knocked out, then a new round with the teams switched commences.

These games, while somewhat soccer developing in their nature, are definitely not maximizing player development. Because of that keep the players aware that these are “desserts” and not the main course of practice. They only get dessert if they finish their dinner so to speak (being focused during practice, being good listeners, etc).

