

Reduce head, neck & shoulder injuries



Winning contested ground balls will improve team performance.

Coaches have a duty of care to dedicate training time to educate players on how to perform the skill safely.

Coaching Tip →

"Putting your head over the ball" is an expression coaches may use. However, it's important coaches clearly interpret this for players & discourage them from leading with their head towards oncoming contact.



ACTIVE FEET & AWARENESS
Prepare for ball/opposition movement



GET LOW BEHIND BALL
Get nails dirty



OVERSTRIDE/FLAT-FOOTED
Reaching/squatting for ball



Coaching Tip →

Remind players its okay to make mistakes or fumble, especially when they are trying new skills.



PROTECTION
Front foot, round shoulders



STAY LOW
Drive legs towards target



STANDING UPRIGHT TOO EARLY
Easily tackled or fumble



KEEP EYES ON THE BALL
Until it is secured



LEADING WITH THE HEAD
High risk position for serious head/neck injury

Reinforce 2-3 teaching points prior to any drill.

Practice all directions and timing of contact.

Equipment required: Football, cones, 2 bump bags, and bibs for half your squad.



Football



Cones



Bibs



Bump bags

PREP TO PLAY GROUND BALL DRILLS

TECHNIQUE: Uncontested ground balls

ACTIVITY 1

3-6 players
10 mins

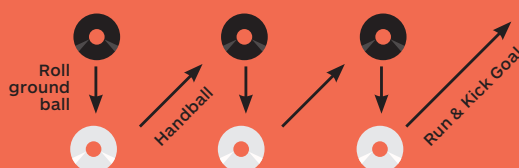
Soccer Ball / Medicine Ball

- Round balls – more predictable
- Medicine ball – forces players to focus on picking the ball up and engaging their core and leg muscles to drive through the ball



ACTIVITY 2

8-10 players
10 mins
10 x 10m area



Coaching Tip

Practice ground balls followed by execution of another skill (i.e. handball or kick) E.g. one-up, one-down in lanes. Increase intensity by making it a competition.

PROGRESSIVE DRILLS: Contested ground balls

ACTIVITY 3

8-10 players
10 mins
10 x 10m area
Drill Variations
Rolling ball,
vary direction of
approach/contact



→ Feeder rolls ball in



→ Front inside foot protection



→ Handball to receiver

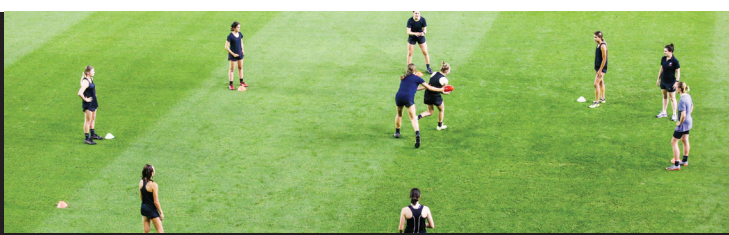


Progression
Replace bump bag with opponent and make it competitive

Small groups: At least 4 players in line, 1 feeder, 1 with bump bag, 1-2 receivers

ACTIVITY 4

8-15 players
5-10 mins
10-15m circle area
Drill Variations
Add a third number.
Smaller area favours
tackler, more inside
tackles



→ Number players '1', '2'... etc.

→ '1' and '6' compete



Progression
Circle of death 30 second repeat efforts:
2 players get ground balls off outside
players whilst getting bumped by 2 players

SMALL-SIDED GAMES

ACTIVITY 5

14-30+ players
10min
5-8 x 5-8m area
Drill Variations
Larger area, less
defenders favours ball
carrier & opportunity
for clean possession



→ One up, one down grids



Coaching Tip

Get players to take turns feeding the balls.
Coaches - coach!