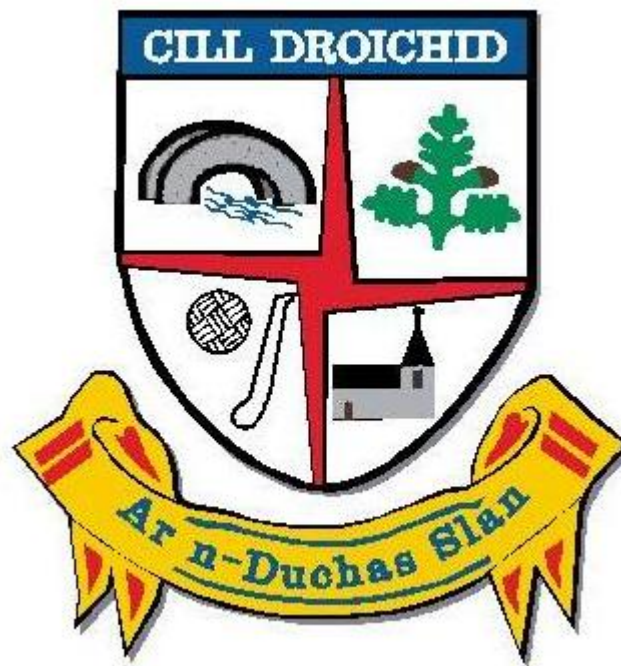


Celbridge GAA



Underage Hurling & Camogie Handbook

Cill Droichid CLG

Underage Hurling & Camogie Handbook

Section	Description
A	Introduction
B	Club Details
C	Contact Details
D	Main Aims of Nursery
E	Discipline/Organisational Tips
F	Examples of Drills and Games

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Underage Hurling & Camogie Handbook

Section A: Introduction

As the number of children interested in underage hurling/camogie increases so must the number of mentors. Celbridge GAA Club is always eager to recruit new mentors into the nursery and other teams throughout the club. This handbook has been prepared to assist these new hurling and camogie mentors as well as the existing mentors who are seeking some fresh ideas to liven up their training sessions.

Parents will also find this handbook useful as it describes the correct technique for all the core skills of the game and therefore allows them to recognize whether their child is executing a skill properly or is picking up a bad habit which needs to be corrected.

It will give coaches/mentors ideas for drills to use with their teams. It also shows the need and benefit to include drills and games that develop the fundamental skills of a child.

The handbook contains examples of nursery hurling and camogie games and drills, organisation and discipline tips, club information and mentor contact details.

While there is a particular focus on developing fundamental skills and devising drills to assist in teaching these, this handbook also caters for more developed underage players with some intermediate and advanced drills detailed herein.

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Underage Hurling & Camogie Handbook

Section B: Club Details

Clubhouse/Pitches: Hazelhatch Road,
Celbridge
Co. Kildare

Phone:
01-6288969

Club Executive 2014

Chairman: Willie Pierce 087-2215032
Vice Chairman: Pat McEvoy 087-2340065
Secretary: Jim O'Shea Secretary.Celbridge.Kildare@gaa.ie
Treasurer: Sean Martyn 087-2853497
Assistant Treasurer: Paddy Moore 087-1324804
Registrar: Claire Devlin 086-8277872
Club PRO: Noel McMahon 087-6756385

Underage Committee

Chairman: Claire Devlin 087-9132134
Vice Chairman: Tim O'Regan 087-2373042
Secretary: Hugh Gallagher 086-8277872

Other

*Child Protection /
Garda Vetting:* Pat McEvoy 087-2340065
Fixtures / Pitches: TBC
Club Shop: Ciaran Geaney 087-2248850
Opening Times
Saturday 11.00 – 12.00
Tuesday 19.00 – 20.00
Thursday 19.00 – 20.00

Bar / Complex Mgr Noel Shaw 086-8566208

Website: <http://www.celbridgegaa.com/>
Email Contact: info@celbridgegaa.com

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Underage Hurling & Camogie Handbook

Section C: Contact Details

Hurling

<i>Role</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Mobile</i>
<i>Nursery: Born Year 2008 or Before</i>		
Mentor	Niall Lanigan	087-7605999
<i>U-7 & 8: Born Year 2006 & 2007</i>		
Mentor	Brendan McGrath	087-6572010
<i>U-9: Born Year 2005</i>		
Mentor	Austin Kiely	087-7639856
<i>U-10: Born Year 2004</i>		
Mentor	Kevin Daly	087-7374150
<i>U-11: Born Year 2003</i>		
Mentor	Paul Dillon	087-6469994
<i>U-12: Born Year 2002</i>		
Mentor	Daragh Mooney	087-7774364
<i>U-13: Born Year 2001</i>		
Mentor	Mick Quigley	086-3808367
<i>U-14: Born Year 2000</i>		
Mentor	Stephen Middleton	087-2356883
<i>U-15: Born Year 1999</i>		
Mentor	Alan Hogan	087-2783583
<i>U-16: Born Year 1998</i>		
Mentor	Tim O'Regan	087-2373042
<i>Dir of Underage Hurling</i> Ciaran O'Donovan		086-3852066

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Underage Hurling & Camogie Handbook

Camogie

<i>Role</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Mobile</i>
<i>Nursery – U-7: Born Years 2007 or Before</i>		
Mentor	Niamh O'Donovan	086-3717559
<i>U-8: Born Years 2006</i>		
Mentor	Conor Kenny	087-2411625
<i>U-9: Born Years 2005</i>		
Mentor	Colm Brennan	086-3889819
<i>U-10: Born Years 2004</i>		
Mentor	Deaglán O'Drioscaill	087-8244511
<i>U-11: Born Years 2003</i>		
Mentor	Mark Mimmagh	086-853 2138
<i>U-12: Born Year 2002</i>		
Mentor	Mark Browne	086-6028722
<i>U-14 Born Years 2000 & 2001</i>		
Mentor	Sean O'Riain	087-9681262
<i>U-16: Born Years 1998 & 1999</i>		
Mentors	Joe Ryan	087-7774364
	Gerry Ryan	087-2559928
<i>Camogie Secretary</i>	Dawn O'Dwyer	087-7843864

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Underage Hurling & Camogie Handbook

Section D: Main Aims of Nursery

The main aims of the nursery are as follows;

1. To ensure that the children have FUN.
2. To coach the fundamental skills and techniques of hurling and camogie including;
 - Holding the hurley: Ready position, lock position and lifting position.
 - Striking the ball on the ground
 - Blocking the ball on the ground
 - Dribbling
 - Catching exercises
 - Roll and jab lift
 - Hand passing
 - Soloing
 - Striking the ball in the air
 - Tackling
 - Batting a ball in the air
 - Blocking and Hooking
3. To develop team skills

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Section E: Discipline/Organisational Tips

The following are a few discipline and organisational tips, which will assist mentors in coaching nursery players.

1. Prepare beforehand
Have a few games/drills in your head that you are going to make the kids play. A little notebook that fits in your pocket is great as you can jot down ideas that will keep the session going.
2. Arrive on time
3. Always bring a whistle
4. Gather children in semi-circle
5. Gather sliothars in middle
6. Don't start talking/start drill until everybody quiet
7. Face players away from sun and other distractions
8. Speak with the wind
9. Control your voice
10. State rules beforehand
11. Separate 'giddy' players
12. Use 'Time-Outs' or a 'Sin Bin' if child misbehaving/breaks rule 3 times (Involve parents if necessary)
13. Always demonstrate skill and the drill
14. Take your time. Don't rush through a demonstration.
15. Try to have appropriate adult/child ratios
16. Put different coloured vests/bibs on each group
17. Implement rules of the game consistently
E.g. do not allow the children to pick the ball up off the ground without using the hurley.

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Underage Hurling & Camogie Handbook

Section F: Examples of Drills

The drills contained in this handbook are mainly designed for the younger, developing hurler, however many drills can be used or adopted for older age groups and the skill concepts are the same. It is up to individual mentors to pick the appropriate drill for each specific age group. This Handbook should be read in conjunction with the accompanying 'Football & Hurling Supplementary Drills' document which outlines additional a) basic, b) intermediate, and c) advanced drills.

There are a lot of drills/examples and mentors should pick a few for each training session.

Every session, regardless of drill setup, should always focus on core fundamentals. The children should be able to walk away from the session having learned something new or having advanced their mastering of a skill.

There are some over-riding principles that should be applied for training sessions; these include:

- Handle the sliotar as many times as possible. A child should 'touch' the sliotar at least 100+ times per session.
- The hurley should never leave their hands through the length of the session. If they are doing exercises, running drills, jumping through ladders, etc, they should always have their hurley with them.
- Concentration. While this is obviously difficult to maintain for younger children the older the child the more focus should be placed on this aspect.
- Eye on the sliotar – always! This needs to be a continuous mantra for the children. To paraphrase Christy Ring – “Always keep your eye on the ball, even when it is in the referees pocket !”
- Speed. Speed of execution and speed of thought. This is what separates the good players from the great ones.
- Practice, practice, practice.
- Respect. Respect for your team-mates and your mentors / coaches, and of course the match officials. There is too much mouthing off to referees in GAA. Setting the tone at an early age will develop better habits.
- Technique. Ensure that skills are being executed correctly. Bad habits, particularly in hurling, can be extremely hard to break.

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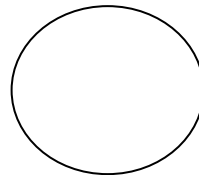
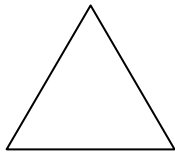
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This section contains examples of games/drills for the following;

- G0; Basics
- G1; Warm Up games
- G2; Catching
- G3; Striking the ball on the ground (including blocking on the ground)
- G4; Dribbling
- G5; Tackling
- G6; Lifting the ball – roll/jab lift
- G7; Soloing
- G8; Striking the ball from the hand
- G9; Hand Passing
- G10; Batting an overhead ball / block down
- G11; Hooking
- G12; Evasion Skills/Agility/Obstacle courses/Movement
- G13; Matches/Conditioned Games

The details provided are just examples. It is common for individual mentors to come up with alternative drills and this practice is very welcome.

Most drills are done in shape. This way, players can then strike/handpass/solo/dribble the ball around the shape. See examples below:

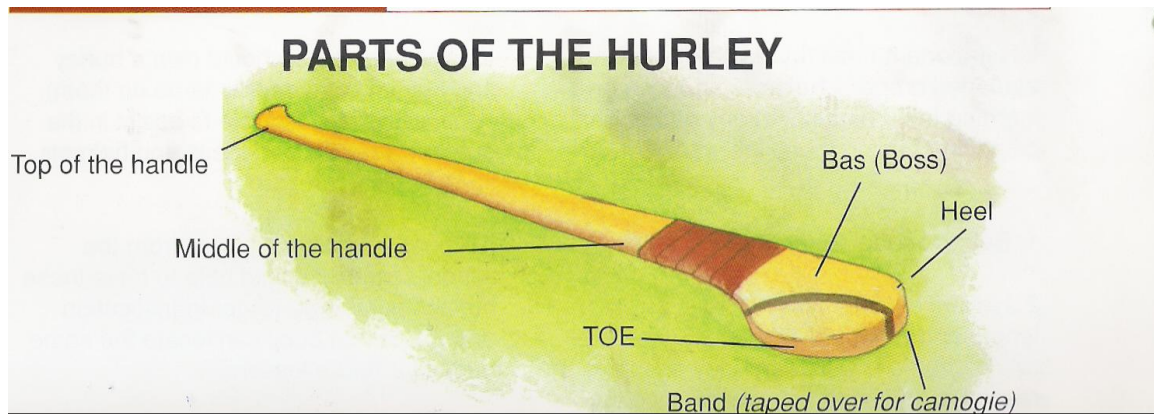


Then of course you also have straight lines.

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G0 Basics



How to Hold the Hurley

Many children start off holding the hurley incorrectly and then it's almost impossible to change their grip. If they pick up a hurley and are able to hit the ball then that's the way they are always going to hold the hurley. We need to be able to teach them the good habits from the start.

Strong hand on top

Always make sure that whatever hand a child writes with then this is the hand that always goes at the top of the hurley. If you are not sure then ask to write their name in the air; 9 times out of 10 they will use their usual writing hand to do this.

Another way of explaining this to a young child is to ask them to 'shake hands with the hurley; they will invariably use their strong hand to do this. Holding the hurley is this way at the top of the handle with the toe of the hurley pointing upwards is the correct position.

Ready position

Players should revert back to this position after every strike of the ball. Important points to note;

- Strong hand at the top of the handle.
- Toe of the hurley always points to the sky or slightly back towards the body.
- Weaker hand holds the hurley near the bas, where the tape is.
- Feet shoulder width apart.
- Shoulder pointing in the direction where you want to hit the ball.

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Lock Position

- From the ready position players slide their weaker hand up the handle of the hurley and lock it with the stronger hand at the top of the handle.
- When swinging at the ball players should be in the lock position.

Lifting Position

- Adopt the ready position
- Open up the weaker hand and flip the hurley on its side
- Toe should be pointing away from the body
- Both thumbs should be seen on the hurley and pointing towards the bas.


THE READY POSITION

The stronger hand holds the hurley firmly at the top of the handle.

Feet are comfortably apart.

This is the Ready Position for a * right handed pupil.

The hurley is usually held in the Ready Position when the ball is not being played.



The weaker (guiding) hand is free to move up and down the handle.

Toe of hurley is turned in towards the body.

Skilful pupils can demonstrate the skills when necessary.

A *left handed pupil (ciotóg) will hold the hurley with the left hand at the top of the handle

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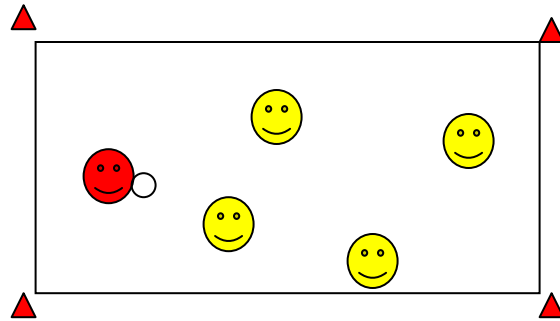
G1 Warm-up Games

1. Tip/tag

Nominate 1 or 2 players to be 'it' depending on size of group. They must run and try and tip the other players with the sliotar. Not allowed to throw the ball. Try and give as many players as possible a chance at being 'it'.

Alternatives;

- (i) Player 'freezes' for 5 seconds when caught.
- (ii) If caught player is stuck in the mud. Someone must crawl under their legs to free them.



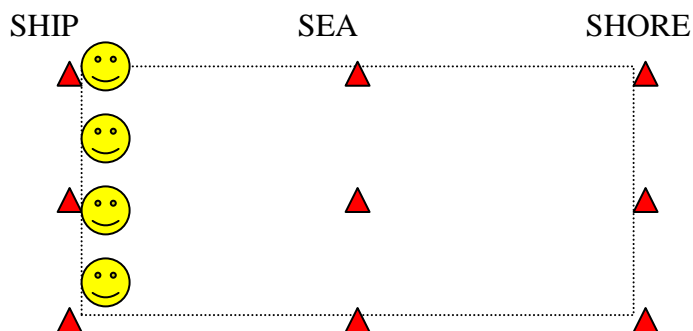
2. Ship/Sea/Shore

Set up 3 lines 15m apart using cones – ship/sea/shore

Children line up at the ship. On the mentor's call children have to go to the ship, sea or shore.

Alternatives;

- (i) Mentor should try and fool the players by pointing to shore and calling out sea
- (ii) Change it so that the last person is out, can you get an eventual winner.



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3. Simon says

Players jog around inside square until mentor calls out.

E.g. Simon says kneel on the ground, pretend to strike a ball on the ground, pretend to roll lift a ball, etc.

Alternatives;

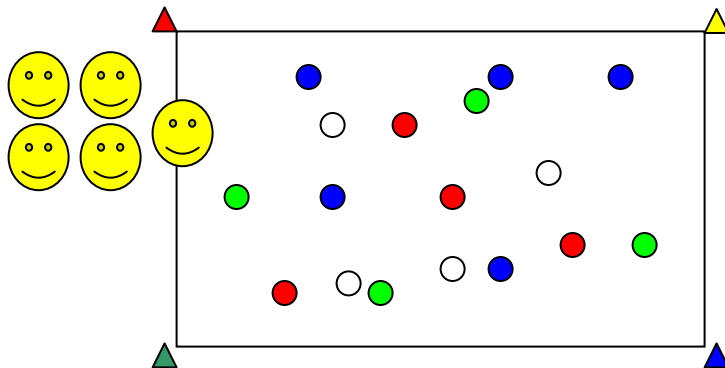
- (i) Try to catch players by not saying 'Simon says'
- (ii) Other calls might be; marching, hop on right/left leg, run backwards/sideways, last person outside the square, lay on your back/tummy, sit on the ground, do a front tumble.

4. Running to cones

On Mentor's call children run to different coloured cones. Mark out a square, inside the square scatter all the cones you have. When mentor shouts a colour the children run and touch a cone of this colour.

Alternatives;

- (i) Shout two or three colours. Children must now get their head up and move faster. Who can touch 4 different coloured cones the fastest?
Put your hands in the air when finished.
- (ii) Run Forward, Run Backward, Run Side to side
- (iii) Start sitting down then run forward/backward/side-to-side
- (iv) Start lying down then run forward/backward/side-to-side
- (v) Start on knees then run forward/backward/side-to-side



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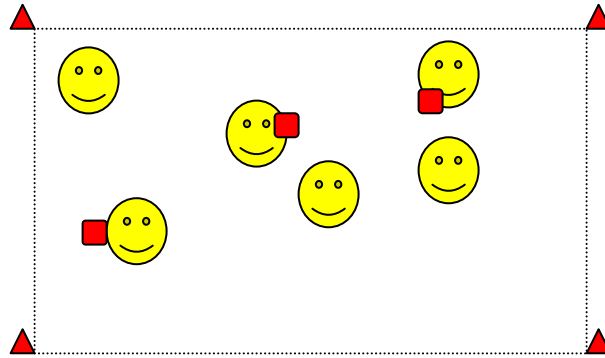
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5. Monkeys Tails

Players have bibs hanging from back of shorts. Other players run after them with cones and try to remove them.

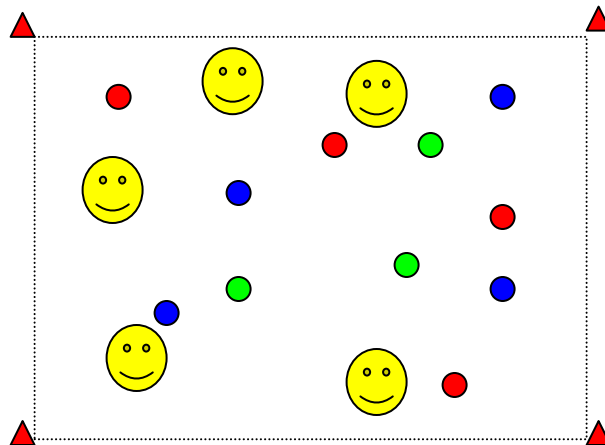
Alternatives;

- (i) Can divide into two teams, catchers and bibs
- (ii) Can have everyone chasing everyone
- (iii) Can have only two people on to try and catch everyone.



6. Flip Cones

Scatter different coloured cones within square. Divide players into two groups. One group has to turn cones upside down while the other group has to turn them the right way. Game lasts for a minute. Team with highest number wins.



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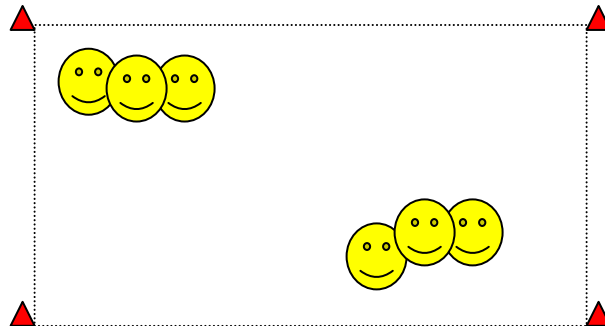
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7. Call the number

Children run in the square. Mentor calls out a number and they must get into groups of that number. E.g. call out 3 and they have to get into groups of 3.

Alternative;

- (i) Last group may do a task-make a silly face/ 3 high jumps, etc.



8. Traffic lights

The players must respond to the colours:

Green = Run/Skip

Orange = Jump

Red = Stop

e.g. The Mentor calls out a specific colour and the players must either run/Jump/stop.

9. Copy Cat

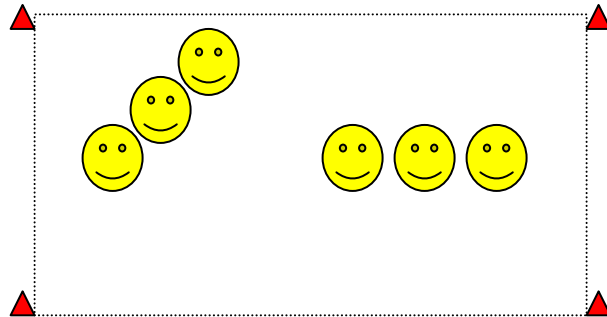
Players must copy what the leader is doing. Mentor can be the leader to start then nominate a player to be the leader. Idea here is to encourage lots of different kinds of movement. See who can come up with the best movement.

For example:

- | | | | |
|---------------|-----------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| - high knees | - walk on toes | - marching | - sideways |
| - heel flicks | - walk on heels | - step over a gate | - backwards |
| - hopping | - crab walk | - monkey walk | - shake whole body |

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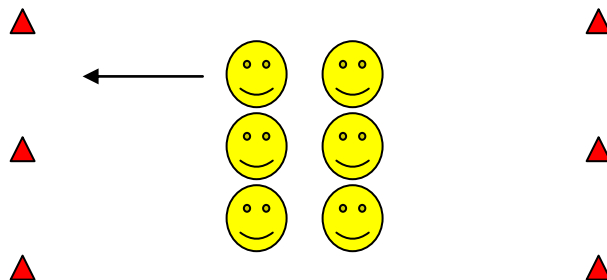


10. Crusts vs Crumbs

Divide the group into two. Groups stand 1m apart. Mark out a line 15m behind each group. Name one group 'crusts' and the other group 'crumbs'. When you shout crusts, this group turns and tries to run to the line behind them without the crumbs catching them. Vice versa when you shout crumbs. If a player is caught they must join the other line.

Alternative

- (i) Try and trick the players by running in a different direction to the call.
- (ii) Give the lines funny names instead e.g. smelling crusts and lumpy crumbs!



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G2 Catching

General

Catching in hurling is all done with the weaker hand as the strong hand is holding the hurley. At nursery level however many children will find it hard to catch a sliotar with two hands never mind one. You must start off at their level.

Two handed catch

- eyes on the ball
- keep the hands close together as you catch the ball/bean bag.
- Close the fingers tight around the ball
- Throws should all be underarm throws.

Look for:

- players not keeping their eye on the ball
- Players who are afraid of the ball hitting them and so shy away when about to catch. To fix this, you the mentor need to throw the ball really lightly to the player from a very close distance i.e. 1ft/2ft.
- Players not closing their fingers around the ball when they catch it and then they drop it. Keep reminding them to wrap their fingers around the ball.

Drills

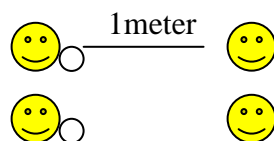
(The following are done without the hurley)

1. Bean Bag throw and catch to yourself

- Using a sliotar or a bean bag the player throws the ball up and catches it.
- Start off with two handed catch then move on to throwing with one hand and catching with the other.
- How high can they throw the ball and catch?
- Throw bean bag up and clap hands (clap hands twice, can they clap hands behind their back, can they clap hands under their leg then catch the bean bag? Use lots of variations)

2. Throw and catch in pairs

- in pairs 1m apart
- throw and catch the bean bag with two hands



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Progression;

- a. Same as above but catch the ball with one hand.
- b. Catch the ball with the weaker hand only.
- c. Give a high throw for your partner to catch.
- d. Stand on one leg and throw and catch
- e. Partners have a bean bag each and throw at the same time to one another.
- f. For each of these drills you move on to setting them a target:
 - a. Can they do 5 catches without dropping the ball? 10 catches, etc.
 - b. How many can they do in 15 seconds? Beat this score by 3 the next time.

3. Ball throw and catch

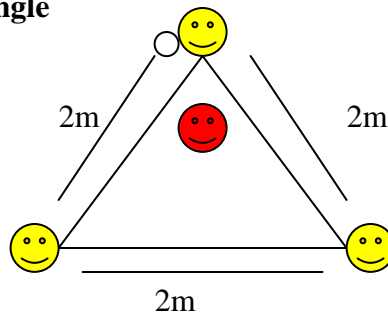
All the drills above for the bean bags should be done using a sliotar. Bare in mind that if you use a large First touch sliotar this is very hard for a child to catch with one hand!

4. Piggy in the Middle



- The two on the outside are throwing the ball/bean bag to one another and the person in the middle is trying to intercept.
- Change it so that if an outside player drops the ball/bean bag then they have to go in the middle.
- Can the outside players keep the ball for 1 minute? How many throws can they get in 1 minute?

5. 3 V 1 in the triangle



- Mark out a triangle as above
- The outside players are trying to keep the ball/bean bag by throwing to one another. The inside player is trying to intercept the throws.
- Change after 30 seconds or change when the inside player wins the ball.

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G3 Striking the ball on the ground

Technique

- Adopt the ready position.
- Feet comfortably apart.
- Shoulder pointing where you want the ball to go.
- Slide the weaker hand into the lock position.
- Bend the elbows to raise the hurley.
- Bend the knees slightly.
- Eyes on the ball.
- Swing the hurley downward with a wristy action.
- If right handed you are striking the ball to your left.
- Body weight is transferred from the right to the left leg as the swing is completed.
- Strike the ball 'flat on' with the bas of the hurley.

Look for;

- Kids swapping their hands as they swing from either side of their body i.e. they switch their weaker hand to the top of the handle when swinging from the weaker side of the body.
- Shoulder not pointing in the direction they want the ball to go.
- Not bending their elbows or knees so they keep missing the ball.
- Swinging round in circles after they try and strike the ball. This indicates that they aren't concentrating.
- They haven't locked their hands together, i.e. their hands are spread apart on the hurley.

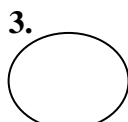
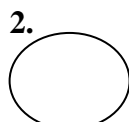
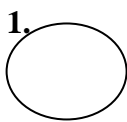
Drills

1. Striking an imaginary ball

- Players standing still practice moving from the ready position to striking a ball.
- Tell them to pick a spot on the ground and aim for it. (get them to hit the heads off the daisies).
- Don't forget to practice swinging the other direction.

2. Striking old tyres

- These are great for practicing striking the ball and for getting more power in a players swing.
- Line up tyres so that you can change the formation/order of hitting them



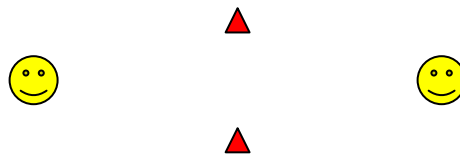
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- a. In pairs, either side of a tyre, take alternate turns to strike it. Players should practice striking the tyre with their dominant and non-dominant side.
- b. In pairs, line up behind the tyres. On the signal players walk out shoulder to shoulder to the first tyre and strike it. They then move on to the second tyre and strike it, etc, till they get to the end.
- c. Change it so that players must run as they hit the tyres. This is now moving them on to striking a ball on the run, very important for matches.
- d. Change the order in which they must hit the tyres. E.g. 3-2-3-4 so now they must hit the 3rd tyre first then back to the 2nd then hit the 3rd and 4th before finishing. By doing this they are now swinging from both their dominant and non-dominant sides.
- e. Set the tyres in a zigzag formation so now the players must strike using their strong and weak hands.
- f. Move two of the tyres closer together so that the players must change adjust their feet in order to swing correctly. E.g. move the 2nd and 3rd tyre closer together.

3. Goal to Goal

- In pairs, players strike the ball on the ground and attempt to score.
- Encourage players to alternate between their dominant and non-dominant sides.
- As skills level improves make the goals smaller or increase the distance between the goals and the players.
- Give points for a goal, double points for a goal using the non-dominant side or a point for a really good block/save.



Variation:

- Give each player a goal. Now they must defend their own goal but try and score on their partner.
- To make it easier on players shorten the distance between the pairs or make the goals wider so now it's easier to score.
- To make it harder, increase the distance or make the goals smaller. Alternatively, tell players they can only strike with their weaker side.



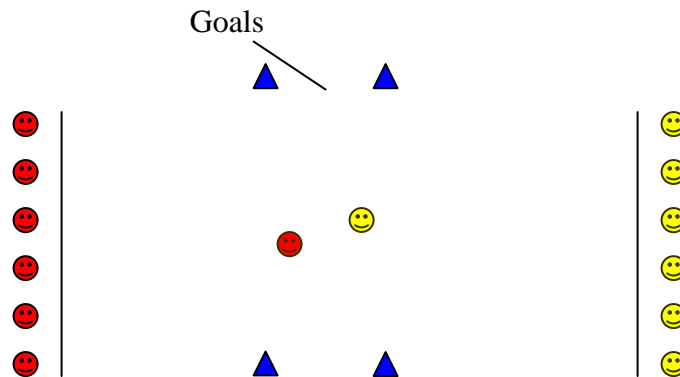
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4. Snatch the bacon

There are many different varieties of this that you can play. Here are two;

- a. Half the group and number them so that each half has a number 1, number 2, etc... Each group stands behind their line. The coach calls out a number and throws in a sliotar. Whoever's number is called out those players must run out and try and win the ball and strike it back over their line. The team who has the most balls at the end wins or first to 10, etc.



- b. Same as above but instead of hitting the ball back over their line set up two goals. The players must now try and score a goal to get a point for their team.

Alternatives

- Players must take two touches before they can knock it back over their line or score a goal.
- Call out two/three numbers at a time so that it becomes a 2v2 or 3v3 therefore making it harder.

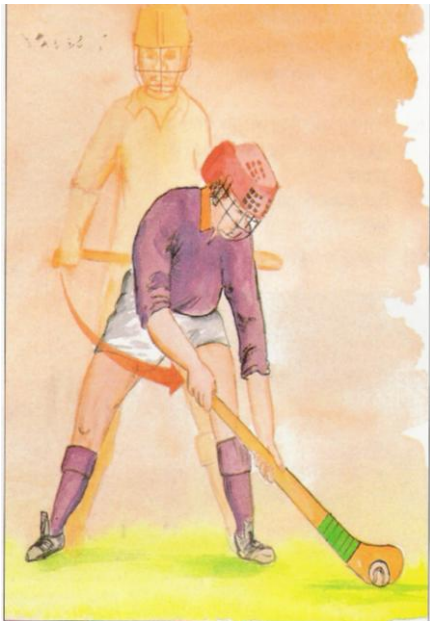
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Blocking a ball on the ground

Technique

- Adopt the ready position.
- Bend the knees and lower the weaker hand so that the heel of the hurley rests on the ground. This is the blocking position on the strong side.
- Eyes on the ball.
- When blocking a ball between the legs encourage skillful players to hold the hurley at a slant so that the ball, when blocked will roll up the hurley and into the players hand in the same movement.



Blocking a ball to the side



Blocking a ball between the legs

Drills

1. In pairs 3m apart. Players roll the ball to their partner's strong side or between their legs for them to block and hit back.
2. Roll to partner's weak side.
3. If there is a wall available players strike the ball off the wall and attempt to block the rebound. Tell players that this is what they should be practicing at home if they want to be good players.
4. Goal to goal - same as the drill for practicing striking the ball on the ground above.
5. Encourage skillful players to let the ball run up their hurley for them to catch it when blocking a ball between the legs.

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G4 Dribbling

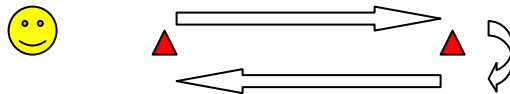
Technique

- From the ready position adopt the blocking position. This is the starting position for dribbling.
- The hurley should be kept near the ground at all times.
- Use both sides of the bas.
- Use gentle taps/touches when dribbling the sliotar.

Drills

1. Dribble around the marker and back

- Set up a marker 3m away.
- Players dribble out and around the marker making as many touches as possible on the ball.
- Emphasize keeping the ball under control by having it close to the body and using gentle touches.



2. Dribble in and out of cones

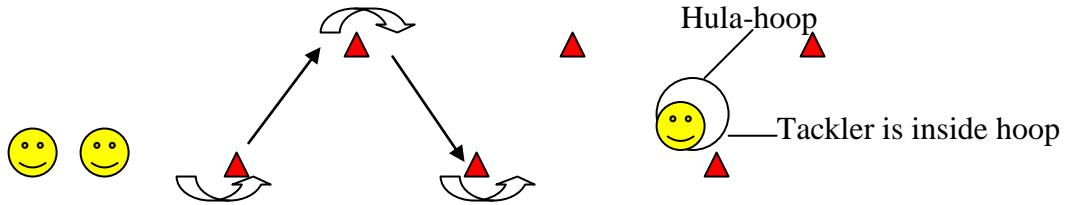
- Set up cones in a line with 1m between each cone.
- Players take it in turns to dribble through the cones and back, then the next person goes.
- You could change it so that when the player dribbles to the end he/she strikes the ball back to the next person who repeats.
- Develop it into a relay race. When each person has gone the whole team must be kneeling on the ground in a straight line and shout 'finished'.



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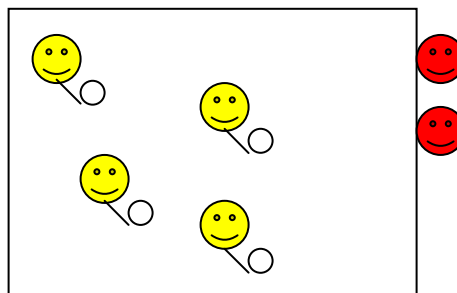
- You can change the above drill by making the distance between the cones smaller. This will increase the difficulty as skill levels improve.
- Spread the cones out more to make it more of a zigzag shape.



- Put a player in between each cone to add token opposition. Now the person must also dribble around the tackler.
- To stop the tackler moving put down a hula-hoop which they must stand inside while trying to tackle.

3. Foxes and Chickens

- Nominate two players as foxes who stand outside the area.
- Everyone else is a chicken and has an 'egg' (sliotar), which they must protect from the foxes.
- The chickens dribble the 'egg' around the square and on the signal the foxes run in and try and steal the eggs and knock them out off the square.
- If a chicken loses their egg then they are out.
- Last person with their egg is the winner.



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G5 Tackling

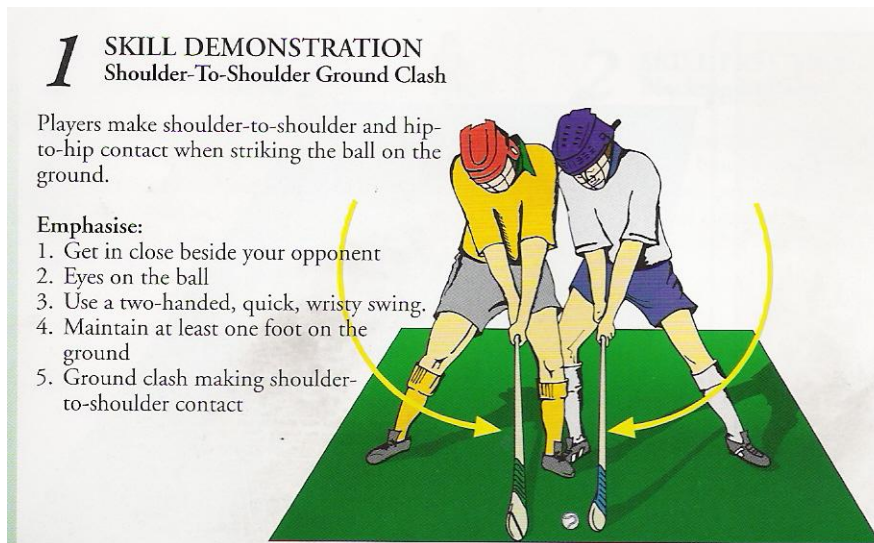
The most important point to teach children about tackling is to **get in close**. How many times do kids go down after getting a whack in the shin or knuckles? The reason for this is probably because they were standing too far back, afraid of getting hit, and then the opposition catches them with their hurley as they are striking the ball.

There are many different ways of tackling, some of these include;

- (1) Shoulder to shoulder tackle/ “Clash of the Ash”
- (2) Blocking a player striking the ball on the ground
- (3) Checking

(1) *Shoulder to Shoulder Tackle*

Learning this skill is important in order to not get pushed off the ball when running for it with the opposition. It improves upper body strength, which is important in girls and boys, not just for sport but everyday life e.g. posture. When tackling the opposition your players should be right up next to that player. This also ensures that players won't get hit by the oppositions hurley.



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Drills

1. Striking old tyres in pairs

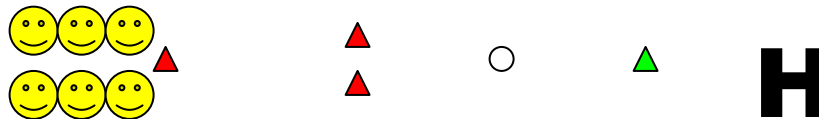
- In pairs, either side of the tyre, take alternate turns to strike it.
- Players can alternate between striking the tyre with their dominant and non-dominant hand.

2. Ground clash in Pairs

- Players pair off in two lines facing the mentor
- The mentor holds a hurley on the ground between each player as they approach (a) walking (b) jogging.
- Both players swing and strike the teachers hurley at the same time.

3. Beat your partner

- Set up two cones about 0.5m apart. This is your gate.
- Players in pairs and stand about 3m away from the gate.
- On the signal the pair race to get through the gate first.
- The idea here is that the pairs shoulder each other out of the way to try and get through the gate first.
- No rough play. Tell players when they are giving away a foul.



Alternatives;

- Put a sliotar at the other side of the gate that the players must try and touch after they get through.
- Instead of only touching the ball the players must now try and strike it.
- Put down another marker (green cone) past the gate. Now players must try and dribble the sliotar on the ground past the marker.
- Make players try and do a jab/roll lift once through the gate.
- For advanced players: Instead of dribbling the ball on the ground the players must now roll/jab lift the ball and solo it past the marker.
- Set up goals past the marker. Now players must try and take a shot (point & goals).

NB: Look how this drill progressed from basic shouldering to getting the ball into the hand, to dribbling, soloing and shooting under pressure i.e. MATCH LIKE SITUATION

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(2) Blocking a player striking the ball on the ground

Technique

- Hold the hurley with the dominant hand at the top of the handle.
- As the opposition is about to strike the ball, step towards the player and place your hurley in front of the ball.
- Lean forward so that the hurley is at a slant away from your body. This way the opposing player's hurley won't slide up and hit your hand.
- If you want, you can place your foot behind your hurley so that the force of the opposite players swing won't knock your hurley away.
- As soon as you have made the block get ready to win the ball or kick it away from your opponent.

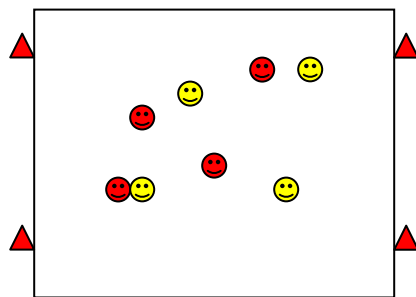
Drills

1. Blocking in pairs

- Take it in turns to step in and block your partner, who pretends to strike a ball.
- Add in a sliotar. Now block your partner as they try to strike the ball.

2. Small sided match

- Mark out an area about 8m X 8m
- Teams of 4 only have a certain length of time to try and get as many goals as possible.
- No dribbling allowed. Players must strike the ball straight away.
- Award one point for a goal but two points for a block.
- Encourage teams to make as many blocks as possible.
- Use a big first touch sliotar so players aren't afraid of getting hit by the ball.

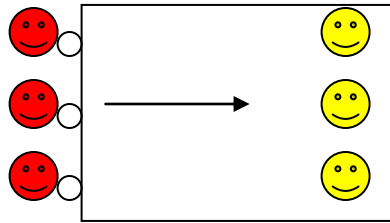


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3. Attackers v Defenders

- Team A: each with a ball tries to dribble/solo through the defender zone without losing their ball.
- Team B: Stay in their designated zone but tries to flick the ball away from the oncoming players with their hurley.
- Award points to each team e.g. 2 points if a defender dispossesses or 1 point if an attacker holds onto their ball.
- Rotate the roles after 1 minute.



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G6 Lifting the ball – Roll/Jab lift

It is hard for mentors/coaches to teach this skill if they have never played before. The main reason for this is because it involves a lot of teaching points and requires a great deal of co-ordination. However, kids love to master this skill and must learn it if they are to hit the ball out of their hands. Below shows where our hands should be positioned on the hurley when going to lift a ball.

LIFTING POSITION



Once skill training has commenced the children should be encouraged to revise and practise these positions as often as possible. The following is an effective way of doing this. **Request pupils to move from:**

- (i) **Ready Position - Lock Position.**
- (ii) **Ready Position - Lifting Position.**

- (i) Adopt the Ready Position.
- (ii) Open the weaker hand, fingers splayed apart.
- (iii) Use the thumb of the stronger hand to turn the hurley so that the toe is facing away from the body.
- (iv) Close the thumb of the weaker hand on the hurley so that both thumbs are pointing towards the bas. This is the Lifting Position.

positions for

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Roll Lift

Teaching Content:

- (i) Adopt Ready Position.
- (ii) Change to Lifting Position. Place the left* foot alongside the ball and bend the knees and back to bring the head down over the ball.
- (iii) Place hurley firmly on the ball, roll quickly towards body and slide toe of hurley under the ball to rise it. As it rises, release the weaker hand from the hurley in cupped position, allowing the ball to fall into it.
- (iv) Pupils practise this with:
 - (a) An imaginary ball. (b) Real ball.

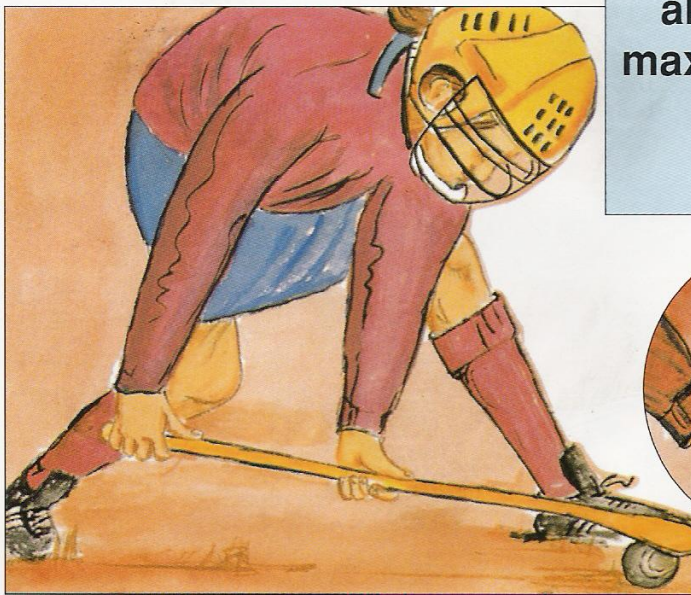
Advanced Skill:

Encourage pupils to catch the ball as low as possible, i.e., below knee level.

Skill Drill:

Pair off. One partner counts while other partner roll-lifts the ball into hand. How many times can you do this in 30 seconds? Pupils reverse roles and repeat.

Place left* foot alongside the ball to maximise control over it when lifting and catching.



- For left handed players everything is done opposite. The right foot is placed alongside the ball. The left hand will be at the top of the hurley and the right is down near the tape. After roll lifting the ball the player should release their right hand and catch the ball with it.
- The Jab lift is very similar except we don't roll the sliotar back. Instead, get into the same position but slide the hurley straight under the ball and scoop it up off the ground. Again, release the weaker hand and catch the ball with it.

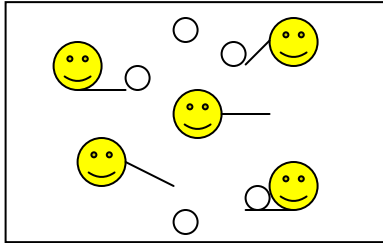
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More Drills:

1. Jab/Roll lift and move

- Mark out an area about 10x15m. Make it bigger/smaller depending on numbers.
- Scatter sliotars in the area.
- Players must jab/roll lift a sliotar then drop it and move onto another sliotar.



Alternatives

- How many can they lift in 30 secs?
- When they lift the ball they must bounce it on their hurley twice then drop it again.
- When they lift the ball they must handpass it to the mentor/coach.

2. Musical Sliotars

- Using the same area, scatter the sliotars inside again.
- Start off with a sliotar for each player inside the area.
- Players must jog around the area.
- On the signal they run and try and roll/jab lift a sliotar.
- For the next round the coach takes one sliotar away. This means that players need to react fast as there isn't a ball for everyone.
- Whoever fails to lift the ball into their hand is out.
- Continue taking balls away until you have a final winner.

If there is a shortage of sliotars split the group up. Let one half play a match while you play the lifting game with the other half.

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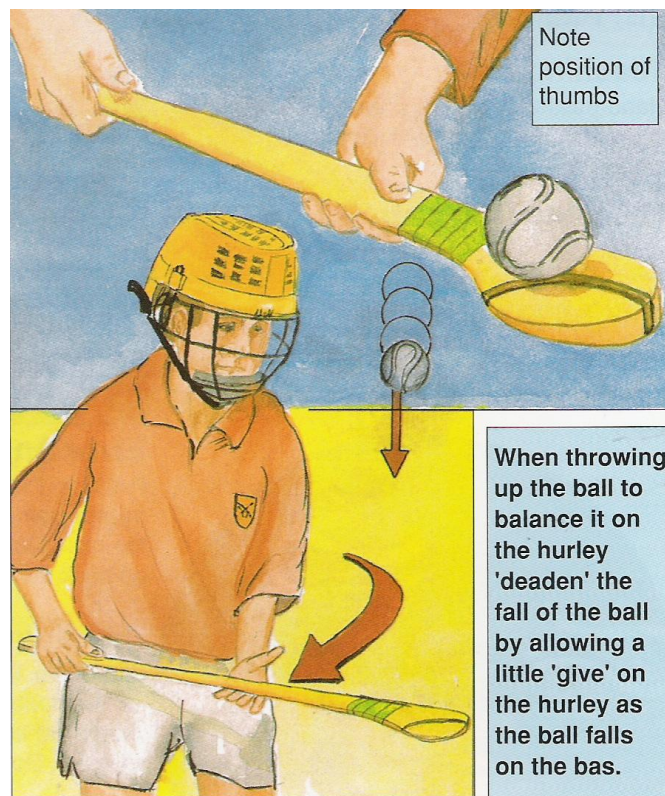
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G7 Soloing

When children are learning to solo, bean bags come in very handy to help them practice balancing an object on their hurley. Give each child a chance to use both the bean bag and the sliotar. Let weaker players use the bean bags more often especially when doing relay races so they don't feel like they are letting the team down.

Technique

- Hold the hurley in the lifting position as previously shown.
- Eyes on the ball .
- The hurley should be held at waist/stomach level. When children get nervous they tend to lift the hurley closer to their eyes. This just makes it harder for them.
- Try and get the players to relax and not grip the hurley too hard.



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Drills

For any of the drills below that involves balancing on the hurley, start off with a bean bag first. This is easier for the younger players and improves their co-ordination and balancing skills better than if you handed them a ball straight away. It also boosts their confidence.

1. Counting solos

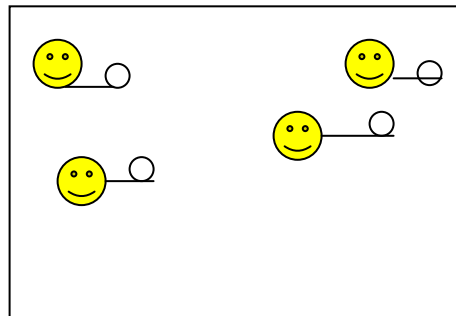
- Count how many times the player hop the ball on the hurley.
- If the ball is dropped start counting again.
- If the ball goes above head height start counting again.
- Set a target for each player depending on their ability, e.g. can they hop the ball 5 times?
- Can they bounce the ball using both sides of the hurley, i.e. they flip the hurley after every bounce.

2. Balance the ball/bean bag on the hurley.

- Can the player balance the ball/bean bag on the hurley for a certain length of time e.g. 5/10 seconds?
- Stand back to back with a partner. Each player tries to balance the ball on their hurley but at the same time they use their bum to nudge their partner so that they'll drop their ball. Last to drop the ball is the winner or best out of 5, etc.

3 Solo on the move

- Mark out a square for the players to move about in.
- Start off walking in the square while trying to balance the ball on the hurley.
- Can they increase the speed i.e. fast walk/jog/run?
- Must dodge the other players.
- Give players a bean bag first then move them onto having a ball.



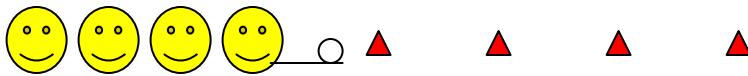
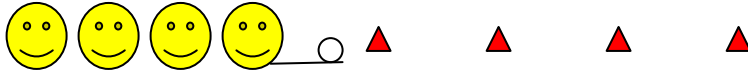
4. Solo Relay

- Equal teams of 4/5 players with one ball per team.
- Line up 4/5 cones/poles in front of each group starting about 3m apart.

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- Each player in turn solos the ball in and out of the cones and back and places it on the hurley of the next player.
- When finished the team should hold the sliotar over their head or sit down and shout 'finished'.
- If players can't solo, give them a bean bag to do the drill with. This way they don't feel like they are letting their team down.



Alternative

Change it so that instead of soloing back down, players must throw or handpass to the next person.

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G8 Striking the ball from the hand

This is an essential skill for a young player to learn as early as possible. It is very important for a player to be taught this correctly as otherwise bad habits can develop which would prove difficult to break in later years.

The skill can be decomposed into a few simple steps which if followed properly will instil confidence into the player once by enabling him/her to hit the sliotar.

Being able to strike a sliotar cleanly and consistently from the hand is a big step which, as with all other hurling skills, can only be developed upon and perfected with constant practice.

Technique

- Adopt the ready position.
- Hold the ball in the non-dominant hand with the elbow slightly bent.
- The shoulders and feet should be in line with the target.
- Toss the ball from the cupped hand to shoulder height.
- Keep eyes on the ball.
- Slide the non-dominant hand into the Lock Position, bending the elbows to raise the hurley.
- The hurley should be upright in front of the dominant shoulder with the bas above head height.
- Step forward with the lead foot and with eyes on the ball, swing the hurley downward with a wristy action.
- Strike the ball between knee and hip level.
- Transfer the body weight from the dominant leg to the non-dominant leg as the swing is completed.
- The hurley follows through in the direction that the ball is travelling.

Drills

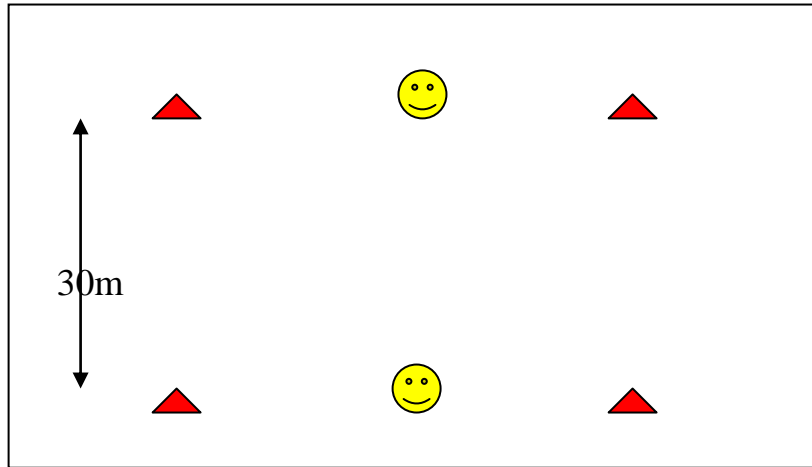
1. Goal to Goal

- This is a basic drill to practice Striking From the Hand
- Divide the players into pairs, one ball per pair.
- Mark out a goal area for each player approximately 30 meters apart using cones.
- The players practice striking the ball to one another.
- There are many variations to this drill that can be used to practice any striking technique.
- The players can strike the ball for their partner to catch, they can strike low along the ground, or they can strike for goal.
- Reduce the distance and get the players to shorten their grip and strike the ball to their partner's chest, or increase the distance and get the players to hit high lobbing shots to their partner.

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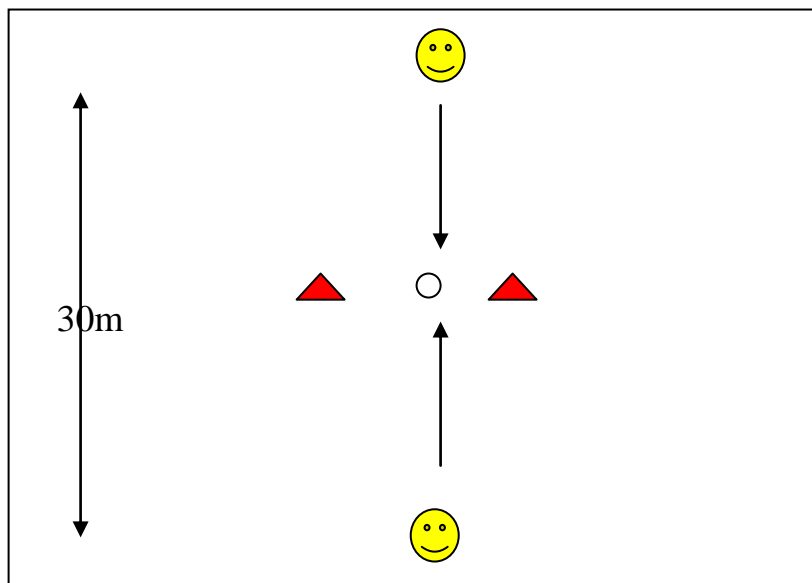
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- When playing goal to goal, count how many shots each player scores on their partner.



2. Through The Gap

- This is a basic drill to practice Striking From the Hand.
- Mark out a distance approximately 30m wide.
- Divide the players into pairs, one ball per pair.
- Mark out a goal area halfway between each pair.
- The players must strike the ball through the goal to their partner.
- Increase the difficulty of the drill by reducing the width of the goal or increasing the distance between the players.



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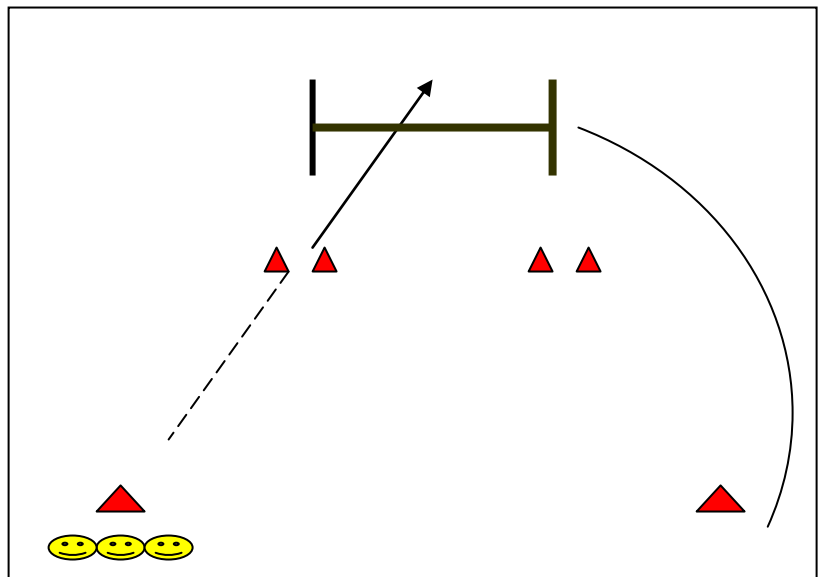
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3. On The Run

- This is an intermediate drill to practice Striking From the Hand.
- Mark out a distance of approximately 30m wide using cones.
- In pairs, the players strike the ball over and back across the distance as they move up the field.
- When all the pairs have reached the far end of the drill, they turn and repeat the drill in the opposite direction so that they strike the ball from the other hand.

4. Strike for a Score

- This is an intermediate drill to practice striking from the hand for a point.
- Place a cone on the 20m line approximately 20m to each side of the goal.
- Place 2 more cones approximately 1m apart at an angle between each of the outer cones and the goal.
- The players line up behind one of the outer cones, one ball per player.
- Each player in turn solos with the ball to pass through the inner cones before striking for a point on the 13m line.
- The players continue around the back of the goal to line up behind the outer cone on the far side and repeat the drill.
- The players should run directly for goal once they pass through the inner cones.
- Players should strike from their right side when approaching from the left and from their left side when approaching from the right.
- Repeat the drill a set number of times.
- Encourage the players to record how many times they score.



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Developing the Skill

Grid Game 1 – Hit The Cones

- This is a target game to develop the Striking From the Hand technique.
- Mark out a grid 40m long by 20m wide.
- Place a number of cones across the middle of the grid.
- Divide the group into teams of 3-5 players.
- Give 1 or 2 balls to each team.
- The player in possession attempts to strike one of the cones in the middle of the grid.
- For each successful strike, award one point.
- Extra points may be awarded for knocking a cone.
- Alternatively, points may be awarded for striking the ball through gaps in the cones.

Fun Game

- This is a modified game to improve the players' ability to strike the ball from the hand.
- Set up a grid 60m x 40m.
- Divide the group into teams of 5 players each.
- Team A attempts to keep possession from Team B.
- Possession is lost if Team B intercepts the ball or if the ball hits the ground.
- No soloing is allowed.
- The person in possession cannot be tackled.
- Opponents are only allowed to block the ball.

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G9 Hand Passing

Hand passing is an essential element of modern hurling. It is an effective way to release the sliotar when under pressure from an opponent and to pass to a team mate who is in a better position to either deliver the ball or attempt a score

Technique

- Hold the sliotar in the weaker hand.
- Face the target.
- Swing back and extend the striking hand.
- Keep eyes on the sliotar.
- Lean forward and strike through the middle of the ball, with the open hand using mostly the fingertips.
- The supporting hand must remain steady.
- Follow the strike through in the direction of the pass.
- While striking the ball, step forward with the foot on the opposite side.
- Note an openhanded hand pass may be struck underhand, with the hand to the side or overhand.
- Ensure there is 'daylight' between the initial throw and the hand pass. If a referee can not obviously see a passing motion they will blow it as a throw.

Drills

1. Corner Spray Hand Pass

- Divide the players into groups of 6.
- Five of the players stand in a line 2 metres apart.
- The sixth player stands 3 to 4 metres in front of the line.
- This sixth player hand passes to each player in turn.
- Rotate the front player after each set.
- Continue the drill until each player has been to the front of the line.

2. Hand Pass While Moving

- Divide the players into groups of 8, one ball per group
- Mark out a distance of approximately 8 to 10 metres using cones.
- Place a marker half way between the outer cones.
- Four players line up at either cone
- The player in possession jogs forward, hand passing the ball from the marker to the first player on the far side, who repeats the drill.
- Each player follows on to line up at the back of the opposite line.
- To make this drill more difficult, increase the distance of the pass.

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Developing the Skill

Fun Game 1 – Catching Game Captain Ball

- Mark out a grid 25m by 25m.
- Mark out a goal area at the centre of each line of the grid.
- Divide the players into equal teams.
- Two players from either team act as goalkeepers on opposite sides of the grid.
- The objective of the game is for the team in possession to hand pass the ball to their goalkeepers.
- Award one point each time the ball is successfully passed to a goalkeeper.
- After each point, the goalkeeper must pass the ball to the opposition to restart the game.

Fun Game 2 – Possession Hand Pass

- Mark out a grid 20m by 20m.
- Divide the players into equal teams
- The objective of the game is for the team with the ball to retain possession by hand passing the ball to one another.
- If the ball hits the ground or a pass is intercepted the other team take possession
- The team with the greatest number of consecutive hand passes wins.

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G10 Batting an Overhead Ball and Block Downs

Block Downs / Frontal Block

For players between ages 5 & 8 blocking is mainly done on the ground as the ball isn't usually played in the air.

As players progress and become braver you should move them onto 'block downs' or frontal blocks. This is when you block down an opponent who is striking a ball from the hand.

Technique

- Adopt the ready position.
- The player should be positioned a hurley plus an arms length in front of the striking player.
- As the opponent throws the ball from the hand to strike, step into the tackle with the dominant foot as if genuflecting.
- Reach forward holding the hurley up with both hands, sliding the non-dominant hand back towards the dominant hand.
- Both thumbs should be facing towards the bas of the hurley.
- The bas of the hurley should extend above the head.
- As the opponent is about to strike the ball, block down firmly on both the ball and their hurley.

Drills

1. Basic Frontal Block

- This is a basic drill to practice the Frontal Block technique.
- Position the players along a line allowing with approximately two meters between each player.
- On the whistle, the players move from the ready position to the Frontal Block position and back to the ready position.
- The coach may count or talk the players through the stages of the technique to help them with the sequence and the timing.
- Repeat the drill several times.
- When the players become more proficient at performing the technique in a stationary position, repeat the drill, first while walking, and eventually while jogging across the field.

2. Contact Block 1

- This is a basic drill to practice the Frontal Block technique.
- Players line up in single file behind one cone.
- The coach stands approximately 2 meters away directly in front of the first player in the line.

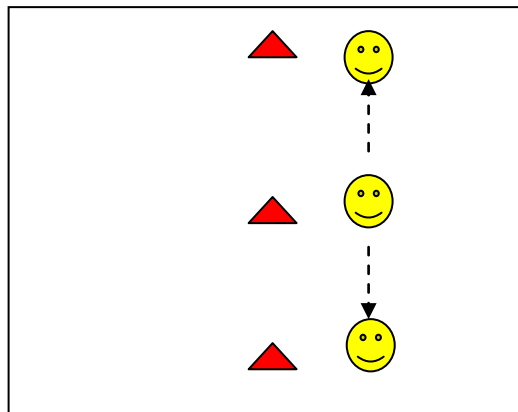
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- Players in turn advance to perform a block down on the coach striking an imaginary ball.
- The coach should adjust the strength of their swing to suit each player's confidence and ability.
- When the players become confident at blocking the coach's hurley, introduce a ball, preferably a big ball like the First Touch hurling ball.
- As the players become more proficient move on to use a smaller ball like the Quick Touch hurling ball.

3. Directional Block

- This is a basic drill to practice the Frontal Block technique.
- Divide the Players into groups of 3.
- Place 3 cones in a line approximately 2 meters apart, one player at each cone.
- Player A and Player B in turn strike an imaginary ball from their hand.
- The centre player moves to block Player A and Player B in turn.
- The coach may count or talk the players through the stages of the technique to help them with the sequence and the timing.
- Change the centre player after a set time.



4. Contact Block

- This intermediate drill to practice the Frontal Block technique requires the tackling player to perform the block on an opponent striking for a point.
- Place a cone approximately 13m from the end line either side of the goal area.
- The players line up in pairs on the endline on one side of the goals.
- Player A in each pair runs forward with the ball to the cone followed by Player B.
- Player A turns around the cone to strike the ball on the inside for a point.
- Player B attempts to block.
- If the ball goes over the bar or if there is a successful block, a point is awarded.
- The players then line up on the end line on the other side of the goal area and repeat the drill.
- Reverse the roles of the players after every second go.

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Overhead Batting

Overhead batting is a skill that should be practiced and mastered by children of all ages. It is all about technique and timing.

Technique

- Adopt the ready position.
- The player should hold the hurley downwards and flat. For a right handed player the toe of the hurley should be pointing to the left, for a left handed player it should point to the right.
- Both thumbs should be facing towards the base of the hurley.
- Vertically raise the hurley above the head, arms extended, in line with the player's nose – i.e. dead centre.
- Always keep your eye on the sliotar!
- Just before the sliotar arrives the hurley should be tilted at an angle behind the head. This should be done using the forearms – i.e. by bending the elbows only; the shoulders should not move. It is the forearms that generate the majority of the power in the batting action.
- Meet the sliotar with the centre of the base and follow through the batting action by bringing the shoulders and arms forward.

Drills

1. Basic Overhead Bat

- Line the children up in a straight line with the mentor standing 3m in front.
- Mentor throws sliotar to each player in turn and the player simply bats the ball directly back.
- The essential element to ensure in this drill is that the technique as described in the previous section is being practised by each player. If the technique is correct then all that is left to perfect is the timing aspect.

2. 'Step Forward and Jump' Overhead Bat

- Line the children up in a straight line with the mentor standing 5m in front.
- Mentor throws the sliotar high and short to the player thus requiring the player to take a step forward and jump before batting.
- The player should never take his / her eye off the sliotar.
- This drill can be varied to cater for 'directional' batting – i.e. the player attempts to bat to a team-mate who is at varying distances of angles away from them.
- Once players become more competent at mastering this skill they should be paired off to throw the sliotar alternatively to each other employing the above guidelines.

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G11 Hooking

This is very important for a young player to learn. It is also sometimes very hard to coach. If you are working with very young children don't spend long at this. Just outline to them how they execute the skill. This knowledge will then stand to them as they get older.

Technique

- Player who is hooking stands an arm and hurley length behind his/her opponent.
- Use a one-handed grip, this way you can reach further with the hurley.
- As your opponent is striking the ball reach in with your hurley and deflect your opponent's stroke by flicking your hurley upwards against theirs.
- The hurley may be held with the toe facing upwards or flat with the toe to the side – note : there may be less chance of hurley damage if the hurley is kept flat during the hook.
- Move in quickly to gain possession or prepare to hook a second time.

Drills

1. Imaginary Hook

- This is a basic drill to practice the Hook technique.
- Position the players facing forward along a line.
- Allow approximately two meters between each player.
- On the whistle, the players move from the ready position to the hook position and back to the ready position.
- The coach may count or talk the players through the stages of the technique to help them with the sequence and the timing.
- Repeat the drill several times.
- When the players become more proficient at performing the technique in a stationary position, repeat the drill, first while walking, and eventually while jogging across the field.

2. Moving and Hooking

- Player is 1m behind partner who walks in a straight line and swings, as if striking a ball.
- Player behind maintains their distance and tries to hook partner.
- Do this for an agreed distance or 1 minute then reverse roles.
- It's important to agree which way the player will swing so that the partner knows which side they should hook from.
- Increase the difficulty by making the players jog while trying to hook.
- For safety, ensure that all players are swinging in the same direction

3. Hook on a player striking a tyre

- In pairs, player tries to hook their partner as he/she strikes a tyre.

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- Tyres are good because it gives the player something to physically hit so therefore making it more realistic. If you use sliothars they only get scattered everywhere if a players fails to hook properly.

4. Chase and Hook

- This is an intermediate drill to practice the Hook technique
- Divide the players into pairs, one ball per pair.
- Player A is positioned approximately 2 meters behind Player B.
- Both Players begin in the ready position.
- Player B throws the ball out in front, runs and attempts to strike it on the ground, while Player A attempts to hook.
- Encourage Player A to follow up the tackle and gain possession by jab-lifting the ball.
- Switch roles after each successful hook and lift.

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G12 Evasion Skills/Agility/Obstacle Courses/Movement

A big part of this is getting the children quick on their feet. Tag games are great at improving this skill as they are dodging, side stepping and moving in lots of different directions and they don't even know it.

* NB : the hurley should **always** be carried by the player regardless of whether the drill involves the use of the hurley or not – jumping through ladders, etc. Holding the hurley should become 'second nature' for a hurler – it should **never** be out of their hands during a session.

Drills

1. Tag Ball

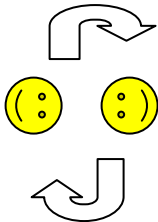
- Mark out an area 10m x 10m.
- Have about 10 per team
- Nominate one player as 'it'.
- The ball is passed around by players who are trying to touch 'it' with the ball.
- The successful player now becomes 'it'.

Alternatives;

- Players are not allowed to move in the square so must pass the ball if they want to touch 'it'
- Players are allowed to take 3 steps only
- Ball may be handpassed or thrown depending on ability

2. Back to Back

- Two players stand back to back.
- 1 sliota per two players
- Pass ball around from side to side



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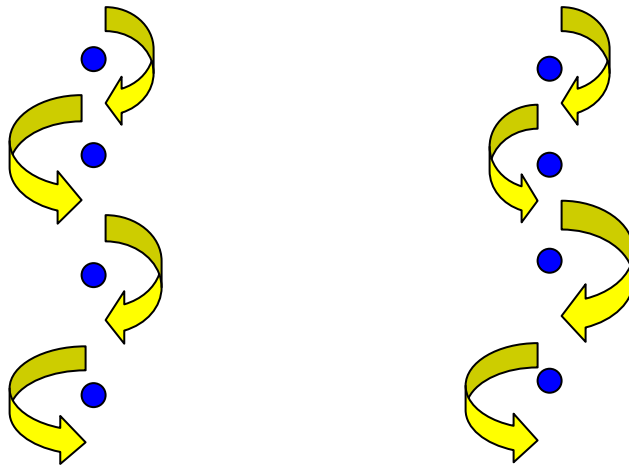
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3. Weaving through Poles

- Place 3 or 4 poles in a straight line
- Player has to side step/weave in and out of poles as fast as possible
- This drill teaches children to 'side step'

Alternatives;

- If there is sufficient equipment divide group and do races
- Narrow gap between poles to make more difficult
- Set the poles out in a zigzag formation so now the children must turn quickly around the pole



4. Obstacle Course

Obstacle courses are great fun and are excellent for developing agility. Obstacle courses should be done in duplicate so that 2 teams can race against each other. When setting up an obstacle course you should remember to include fundamental movements.

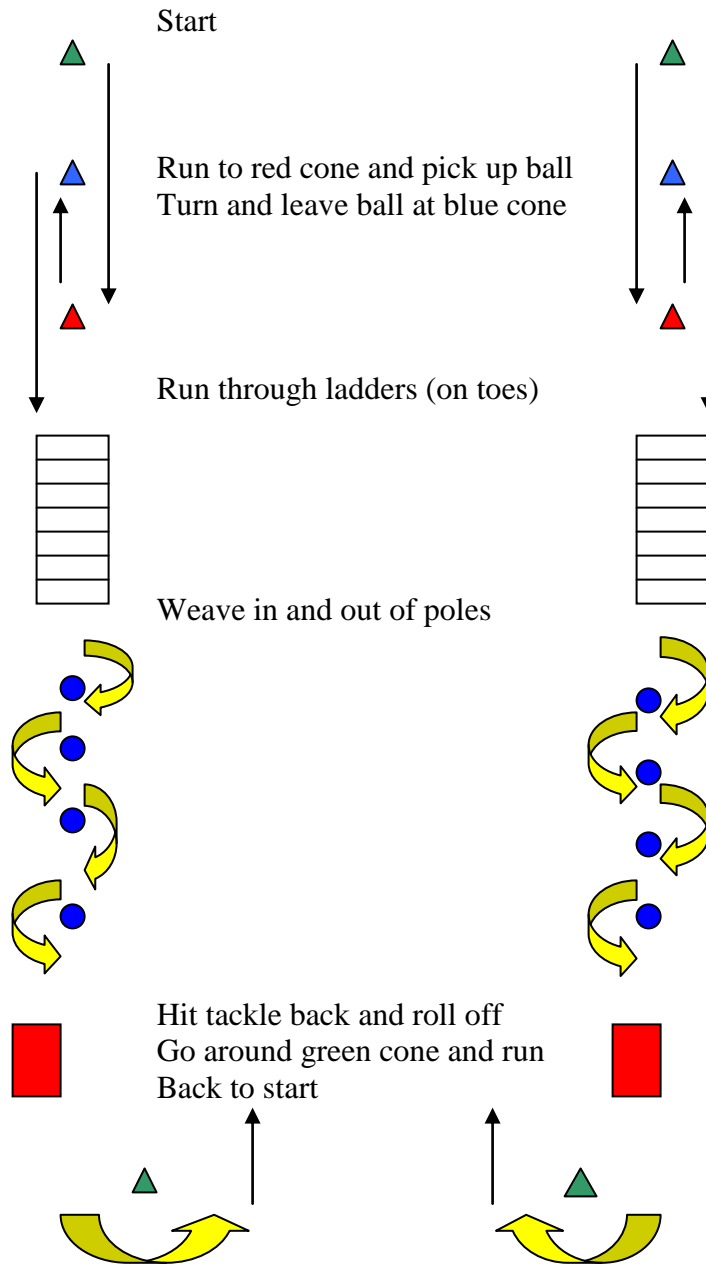
These include;

- agility
- balance
- coordination
- running
- jumping
- throwing
- catching

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- kicking
- Add in these by
- Having a player throw the sliotar up to themselves and catching it, or jab picking, before leaving it at the next cone.
 - Jumping over a cone 3 times at the start of the obstacle course.
 - Give them zigzag runs through the cones.



Alternatives; If there is sufficient equipment divide group and do races
Narrow gap between poles to make more difficult

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5. Ladders

Ladders are excellent for developing rapid footwork, speed and agility. Remember – the player should always be holding their hurley!



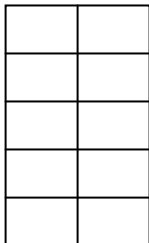
Run through ladder putting both feet in every hole.

Run through ladder putting just one foot in every hole.

Starting on the left of the ladder, step the right foot into the hole then the left foot. Then step out of the hole at the right of the ladder, right foot first then the left foot. Repeat with the next hole but coming from the opposite direction.



Side steps- Put right foot in ladder then left foot



Two ladders

Bunny hops. Put two feet together and jump through

Alternative holes keeping feet together

Miss a hole. Run through putting right foot in every alternate hole

If you don't have ladders use cones! Set up the cones so that there is only a small gap between them. Now you can go through your drills in the same way.

N.B. if doing the above use the soft cones that give way if someone stands on them, otherwise players may end up twisting their ankles.

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G13 Matches/Conditioned Games

General

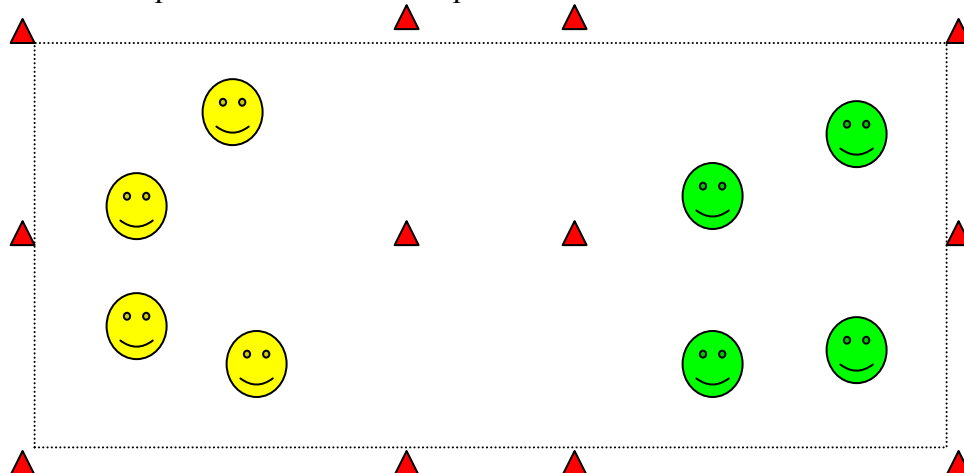
The following rules could be used to make Conditioned games

- No solo. This game is designed to develop team play. It stops strong players from always having the ball and gives weaker players a chance to improve.
- 3 sec rule. Same as above. It encourages players to move and pass the ball faster. It stops them from holding onto it for very long and trying to dribble/solo the ball the whole way up the pitch.
- 10 sec rule. When players win possession give them a count down in which they must try and score. Make the time longer if it's too hard for them.
- Zones. Make players stay in their particular zones. This way you won't end up with 5 players all swinging their hurleys trying to hit the same ball.
- Lift and strike only. Players may roll/jab lift the ball into their hands and strike it. This way they are getting to strike the ball in the air but they aren't allowed to solo. If some players are able to do this then it means that other players are practicing batting the ball in the air and hooking.
- 1 hand-pass rule. A score will not be allowed unless the move leading to it involved at least 1 cleanly executed hand-pass.

Drills

1. Tennis Hurley

- Set up cones with a section in middle. This acts as your net.
- Each team stays on their side of the net.
- Players have to strike the ball into the other team's area. The other team must strike the ball back before it stops otherwise it's a point against them.
- Start off with 2 sliotars then use 3 or 4 at a time.
- If a ball stops in the net then it's a point for the other team.



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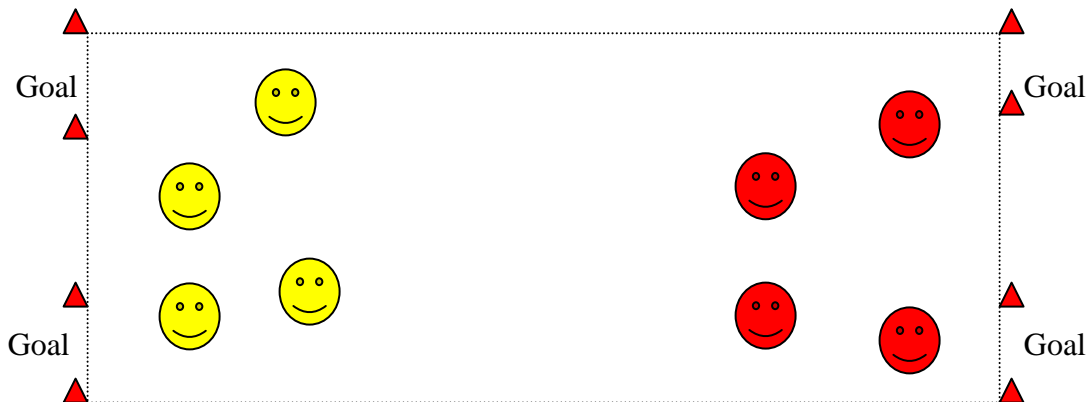
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Alternatives

- Players have to pass to teammate before striking it back.
- Using weak side when striking the ball.
- Players can let the ball roll up their hurley and into their hand and then strike it back from their hand.

2. Two goals each end game

- Set out an area about 30m x 40m with two goals on either side.
- Each team now has to defend two goals but can also shoot into two goals.
- Encourages teams to switch the play so that they can score in the other goal which probably isn't being covered.



3. Calling

In this game a player can only receive the ball by calling for it. Some young player's may be very shy and this game helps them. If they do not call for the ball and they receive a pass they must give the ball to the other team.

4. Silent Match

This is the opposite to the game above. Players are not allowed to call or make any noise if they want the ball passed to them. The idea here is that the player on the ball will get their head up and look for someone to pass to.

A lot of players call for a pass who are not in a position to receive or are being marked. This 'Silent Match' game forces the player in possession to pick out the best placed teammate to receive the pass.

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5. Positional Game

This game helps players learn about positions and also links defenders and attackers, No player may cross the line of markers set along the halfway.

