



## Ball Mastery Guide – Foundation Drags

When working with your child you want to ensure that you have the correct ball size (3-5 years of age is a size 3, 6-11 years of age is a size 4, and 12 – adult is a size 5).

### Things to look for:

- Coordination & Balance
- Mastery of sole taps
- Close control of the ball
- Controlling & Dragging the ball with the sole part of their foot

The goal is to sway the ball side to side while maintaining control of the ball between both feet. What you want to look for is proper technique.

### Teaching the technique

Advice: *It is better to do it slow and right rather than fast and wrong!*

1. Place the ball by either foot, not in the middle.
2. Without bounce - Make sure your child's starting position is with their starting foot over the ball and their opposite foot ready to receive and drag the ball back to the starting foot dragging the ball from right to left or left to right depending on starting position.
3. With bounce - Make sure your child's starting position is with their starting foot over the ball and their opposite foot ready to apply a bounce so that it may alternate in between the bounce switching over to the opposite starting dragging the ball from left to right and right to left (Or vice versa depending on starting foot position).
4. Foundation drags are dribbles with the sole part of the foot dragging the ball side to side from left foot to right or right foot to left foot.
5. When ready teach them Spatial awareness by having them look up. Set markers by having them either looking at you, an object (Like a distant cone), or a spot on the wall.

*Advise 1: Do not let your child randomly drag the ball side to side, there is no real ball mastery growth when the child does this, children that are younger tend to do this so it is imperative you always demonstrate and help them start slow. Be patient and teach them to be patient as all things are better done slow and right rather than fast and wrong when beginning. Teach them that Foundation drags are like doing repetitive side drag dribbling with themselves swaying the ball side to side. If your child is between 2 and 3 you may need to demonstrate and then show them with your hands by moving their legs and feet side to side and repeat. At ages 2-3 the child should focus on dynamic movement while gradually increasing speed and applying momentum.*

*Advise 2: Imagine a pendulum swaying side to side. Once the child has rhythm without bounce, have them implement a slight bounce moving their hips and legs side to side allowing for a faster paced Foundation Drag exercise. View video for full demonstration!*

*Advise 3: Make sure the child is also focusing on their balance while doing Foundation Drags. This exercise will help increase their overall coordination and bodily motor skills with the ball.*

# UNITED STATES SOCCER PROSPECTS



We want to ensure all workouts are done correctly, so before leaving your child alone to do the workouts by themselves make sure they are doing it slow and right rather than fast and wrong before increasing speed. As others teach that practices makes perfect our technical director teaches that practice makes permanent.

Not all kids learn at the same pace and it is important that you as a parent coach understand this when you go through these exercises with them. It may take a few training days before your child begins to master the ball on their own so, it is imperative that through the duration of your parent coaching you encourage your child while letting them know when it is being done wrong as well. You never want to tell your child he or she is doing it correctly when you know they are not. Since these practices are more personal, you should take advantage of the situation to correct as much as possible without overdoing it and burning out your child. Let them know soccer is like any subject, you could misspell one word and you lose a point on your essay, you rushed through a math problem and missed the answer by a couple digits and you lost a point... You rushed through the exercise and did not execute the correct technique and now your passes to a teammate is not as good. Therefore, going through the learning process and taking your time with it is better than rushing through it because practice does make permanent. Technical Director, Jarsi Ibanez says - 'If you are used to rushing then mistakes are your forte, but if you train the brain to slowly go through things diligently, the brain will be taught to catch mistakes and master it.'