

Walking the dog

Walking the Dog is a great way to introduce ball control and dribbling to very young football players.

It also encourages the development of spatial awareness and soccer vision.

Even children as young as two or three will learn how to keep the ball close to them while running and I've used this game with children as "old" as 10!

Set up: Scatter lots of flat cones in two different colours in a large playing area. In this example, I've used green and white cones.

Every player has a ball.

How to play: Tell your players their ball is a dog.

Now ask them to give their dog a name. Have some fun with this! Who can think of the silliest name for a dog?

Now it's time to take the "dogs" for a walk.

Tell your players the white cones are lamp posts and the green cones are trees.

To begin with, the dogs want to sniff every lamp post. This means players have to run with the ball and pause beside every white cone.

Then: "It's raining! Get your dog under the 'trees'!"

Now the players run with their ball to the green cones.

Variations:

- Dribble with both feet (or just their weaker foot).
- Who can get under a tree the quickest? You don't want to get wet!
- Who can let their dogs sniff the most lamp posts in 20 seconds?

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