

Purpose

Big events such as the World Cup provide an excellent opportunity for churches to organise fun events in their community in order to connect with local families. The purpose of this template session is to give you and your church a basis for organising a one-off community football outreach session that lasts around 2 hours.

What will you need?

There are a few things you will need in place in order to run a successful session, including:

- A space to run the session. This could be a local park, a church hall, a school or leisure centre with an all weather pitch.
- Equipment: footballs, cones/markers, bibs, goals, a whistle(s)
- People from the church with a heart to reach out into their community. If you have anyone with experience of coaching and/or coaching qualifications, even better! Try to maintain a ratio of around 1 leader to every 8-10 children. Make sure you have recruited your leaders & helpers in line with your church's safeguarding policy. Also, get as many people as possible from the church to pray for the event.
- Insurance: does your church's insurance policy cover an activity like this? If not, what additional cover do you need to organise?
- Age-related groups. The FA recommends that children play against other children within a 2 year age-band. Eg a 9 year old could play against a 7 year old or an 11 year old, but a 7 year should not play against an 11 year old. Try to organise age-groups based on school years (eg Group 1:Years 3&4, Group 2:years 5&6 etc)
- Some small prizes to give out to winning teams,

Session Format:

A format that tends to work well for this type of session would be:

- Welcome/intro (5 mins)
- Warm Up (10 mins)
- Skill practices/ Fun games (40 mins)
- Talk (10 mins)
- Tournament (50 mins)
- Wrap-up & give out prizes (5 mins)

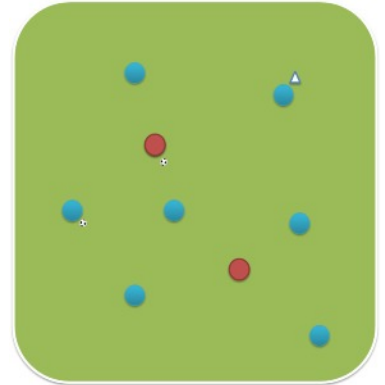
The following pages contain examples of fun games and skill practices that can be used in a session like this, together with some tools to help organise a tournament.

Ball Tag

- Choose 3 or 4 players to be 'taggers' (choose more or less depending on the size of your group)
- Taggers must throw the ball between them and, holding the ball in two hands, tag other players with the ball
- Once tagged a player must do 5 star jumps before continuing
- Change taggers every couple of minutes

Variation:

- Give each tagger a ball. When they tag a player, that player then becomes the tagger. Stop the game every 30 seconds or so. Players with a football get a forfeit, eg 5 star jumps; a lap of the marked area etc.

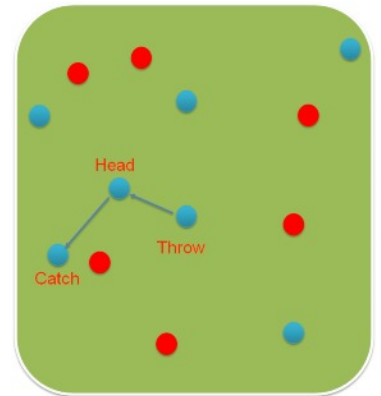


Nutmeg Tag

- Choose 3 or 4 players to be 'taggers' (choose more or less depending on the size of your group)
- All players apart from the taggers have a ball and must dribble the ball around the playing area.
- Once tagged a player must pick up their ball, then freeze, holding their ball above their head whilst standing with their legs apart.
- Players can be released and re-join the game if another player 'nutmegs' them.

Throw, Head, Catch

- Split the group into 2 teams (even 3 if numbers allow)
- Players move the ball around the field using a "throw - head - catch" combination that involved 3 separate players. A point is awarded for each completed sequence.
- If the ball touches the ground, possession switches to the other team.
- To keep the game flowing quicker...
 - The opposing team can only intercept the ball after it has been headed (ie not after the throw - so there's no need for an opponent to block/ closely defend a thrower)
 - No player can hold the ball longer than 5 seconds



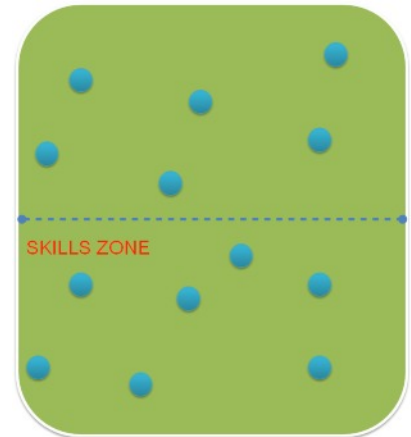
Dynamic Stretches

Finish the warm up with a series of dynamic stretches - essentially a series of controlled movements that prepare the body for the activity ahead. Some examples are:

- **Open/ close the gate (hips/adductor muscles):** every few steps lift leg forwards until thigh is horizontal with knee bent at right-angle; move thigh out to the side as if controlling the ball in the air with the inside of the foot and lower leg again. To close the gate lift leg out to the side and bring it to the middle as if doing a side-foot volley.
- **Leg swings (hips/quads/hamstrings/glutes):** Stand on one leg whilst swinging the other in a kicking motion as if striking the ball. Start slow with small range of motion, gradually increase speed and kick further.
- **Forward/Backwards Arm Circles (shoulders/chest & back muscles):** Rotate the arms forwards/backwards in a circular motion. Vary the size of the circles made with the arms from small to large. As a fun twist, try one arm forwards whilst simultaneously moving the other backwards!
- **Ankle rotations (ankles/calves):** Standing on one leg, slightly raise the other keeping the raised leg straight. Rotate the ankle both clockwise and anti-clockwise.

King of the Ring

- Create 2 grids next to each other, every player has a ball
- The aim is to for players kick everyone else's ball out of area while protecting their own
- Once a player's ball is kicked out of the area, they collect their ball (without kicking anyone else's ball) and move into the skills zone to complete a challenge (eg 10 toe-taps) then return to main area
- Alternatively, players return to skills zone & play against one another until the initial game is over



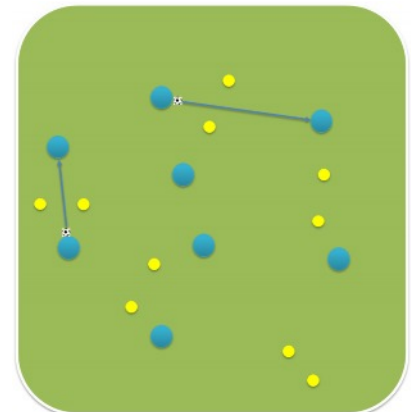
King of the Ring Variation

- Add a third grid. This time each grid represents a different league...
- All players start in the Premier League
- When their ball is kicked out, they get relegated to the next league
- If a ball is kicked out of the 'Championship' grid, the 'loser' gets relegated to the bottom league; the 'winner' gets promoted back to the Premier League
- If a player is relegated from the bottom league, they do toe taps & re-enter that league again.



Through the Gate

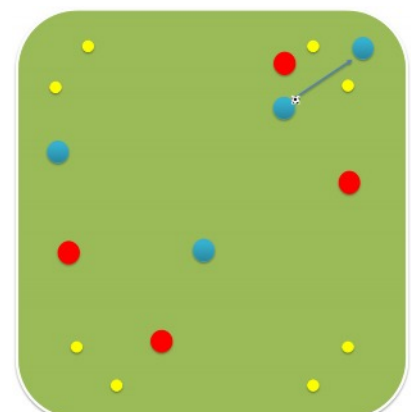
- Place pairs of cones around the playing area a yard or two apart to form mini goals/gates
- Divide the group into pairs, one ball for each pair
- Players must pass and dribble in their pairs around the playing area scoring points by playing a pass through a gate to their partner
- Once a pair have scored a point at a particular gate, they must then go and find another gate



Four-Goal Football

- Using cones make four small goals set in from the sidelines. Divide the group into two teams
- The aim of the game is for teams to create an opportunity to play a pass through a goal to a team mate on the other side. A point is given only if the player on the other side can control the ball and keep possession.
- A team cannot score on the same goal twice in succession without first attempting to score on a different goal

Variation: Set up a goal on each side of the playing area. Divide the group into four teams and play the numbers game, with players able to score in any goal but their own.



For this talk you will need a white football shirt (eg an England 'home' shirt) and a volunteer to stand at the front wearing the shirt.

Putting on the Shirt

Has anyone ever had the dream of becoming a professional footballer? Imagine what it would feel like to put on the shirt for your favourite team, to have the opportunity to give your all for them week-in, week-out? Well, I may never have had the opportunity to do that in football, but I've brought a shirt with me today and I'm wondering if anyone would like to stand at the front and put the shirt on...*(choose a volunteer and have them put the shirt on)*.

Believe it or not, when I see this football shirt, it reminds me a little bit of what life could be like...

Badge

The first thing that every football shirt needs is the badge of the team. This shows that the players belong to that team. Not only that but the badge is always on the left side of the chest on the shirt. This is because people say our heart is slightly to the left in our chest (its actually dead centre but the left side of the heart is bigger), so the badge lays over the heart. So every time the player pulls on the shirt, not only do they belong to that team, but their heart is for that team and they need to give their all.

As a Christian, I know that I belong to God - that every day when I wake up that my heart's desire is to follow Him, to try to live His way and give my all for Him.

Kit manufacturer

On the other side of the chest is another logo...what does it represent? It shows the logo of the company that made the shirt. This always reminds me that we were made by God, and not by accident...we were made for a reason. Just like this football shirt was made to be worn by a player or a supporter, I was made for a purpose. I believe you were created by God for a reason.

Number

If we have a look at the back of the shirt, we usually see two things nowadays: the first is the number. Every season, professional players are given a squad number which is theirs for the season. No-one else at the club wears that number. This reminds me that I have a place on God's team - a place that he has made just for me, and you know what? He has a place just for you too!

Now, a number of years ago before squad numbers were introduced, a player's number would often represent their position on the field. Who do you think wore the number 1 shirt? What about the number 9? Number 3? Well, just like God has a place just for me on his team, he also has a role for me to play - that's why He made me! I believe you have huge potential, but we need God's help to reach it.

Name

Also on the back of the shirt is the name. This always reminds me that God knows each and every one of us by name. Not only that - he knows us so well that he even knows the number of hairs on our head!?

Colour

The last thing I want to mention about the shirt is the colour. When I first bought this shirt it was as white as white can be. But what happens to a shirt when we wear it to play football? That's right, it gets dirty. It gets covered in sweat, mud and grass stains. So what do we do? We put it in the washing machine with the best washing powder money can buy (or so the adverts tell us!?), But however hard we try, it's quite the same - it never gets back to that original whiter than white look.

I believe life is a lot like that. Have you ever heard anyone say, "nobody's perfect"? It's true isn't it, nobody is perfect, but the trouble is, that's what the bible calls a sinner...someone who isn't perfect. When we get things wrong, when we tell that little lie or get into a fight or disobey our parents, it's like we end up like the football shirt at the end of a game...it's like we're dirty and covered in stains. However, because God loves us so much; because God created us and has a place for us on His team, He came into the world in Jesus, lived a perfect life, was killed on a cross and raised to life again three days later. Through Jesus, we can come to God and if we are genuinely sorry for the wrong things we've done and will do and if we want to take a place on His team, then it's like we become the brand-new, whiter than white shirt. Through Jesus, our sin can be forgiven and the bible teaches that by accepting that forgiveness and choosing to live our lives for God, that we become a new creation! We get to pull on the shirt of God's team every day, giving our all for the greatest manager there was, is and will ever be. The question is, do you want to??

For the remainder of the session, split the group into teams and run a little tournament. Try to keep teams of similar ages playing against each other - this may mean running two tournaments at the same time (eg a Y3&4 tournament and a Y5&6 tournament). Make sure to have someone designated as a referee for each match and provide them with a whistle!

Below are a some examples of possible formats that could be used for your tournament...

3 team tournament:

- Teams play each other twice (6 x 5 min matches = 30mins)
- 3 points for a win, 1 point for a draw
- After all group games, the second and third placed teams play each other in a semi-final (5min match)
- Winner of semi-final plays the group winner in the final (5 min match)
- Total match time = 40mins leaving 10mins spare for change-overs between matches

4 team tournament:

- Each team plays every other team once (6 x 5min matches = 30mins)
- 3 points for a win, 1 point for a draw
- After the group matches, the third and fourth placed teams play a third/fourth play-off (5mins) and the top two teams play in a final (5mins)
- Total match time = 40mins leaving 10mins spare for change-overs between matches

3 Team Round Robin Fixtures:

- Team 1 v Team 2
- Team 2 v Team 3
- Team 1 v Team 3

4 Team Round Robin Fixtures:

- Team 1 v Team 2
- Team 3 v Team 4
- Team 2 v Team 3
- Team 1 v Team 4
- Team 1 v Team 3
- Team 2 v Team 4

Pitch Dimensions:

Team size	Pitch Dimensions
5 v 5	At least 40 x 30 yards
6 v 6	At least 50 x 30 yards
7 v 7	At least 60 x 40 yards
8 v 8	At least 80 x 50 yards