



# First Touch Academy

## Teaching the Basics First

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## First Touch Academy News

### First Touch

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Today at First Touch Academy, the kids learned about **progressive dribbling**.

The most basic of all soccer skills is dribbling, the ability to carry the ball past an opponent while maintaining control, whether by using a simple change of direction or a great move. Young players need to develop good dribbling techniques and ball-control instincts. Every player on the field, including the goalkeeper, must be able to dribble the ball. Dribbling serves to possess the ball, advance the ball down field, and create scoring opportunities. As players develop, they can always improve their ball control, practicing new tricks and increasing the speed and intricacy of their moves.

Here are drills the kids can do at home:

#### Step 1

Start with these 3 specific dribbling techniques that all players should begin with and work to perfect, even the younger players. First, use the preferred foot only and when all of the techniques are mastered with that foot, then the player can move on to using the non-

preferred foot only and then finally using both feet. Have all players lined up on the goal line facing you the coach with a ball at their feet. They should be at least 5 feet apart and will dribble to the half line and then back to the goal line. For the younger players mark a smaller field line with some cones.

#### Step 2

Begin training with the first dribbling drill called "Step, Step, Touch". The player will dribble with the preferred foot and take 2 full steps with the opposite foot and then touch the ball for the dribble. The idea is to develop a rhythm and it will be slow at first but with practice soon it will be very easy and hopefully mastered very soon. As soon as this is easy with the preferred foot, the player may move on to using the non-preferred foot. Players in the beginning will be head down concentrating on their feet and that is fine in the beginning. As they begin to get a rhythm start reminding them to pull their head up and look up. They must

learn to dribble with the head up looking around to be aware of the game around them and the options available to them.

#### Step 3

Move on to the "Step, Touch". Same drill but instead of 2 full steps the player will only take 1 and then a touch for the dribble. Again, first the player must master this skill with the preferred foot only, then the non-preferred foot only and then finally using both feet. Remember to remind them to look up.

#### Step 4

Finish up with the most difficult the "Touch, Touch". In this drill, players are touching the ball with every step. Again, begin with progressive sequence beginning with the preferred foot, ending with both feet. When player can develop a rhythm, ask them to look up and tell you how many fingers you are holding up and that will encourage them to look up.

## Green Bay Lightning Club Notes

The Coaching Director of the Green Bay Lightning soccer club is Bob Rickards. Bob has been involved with soccer for over 30 years, including high school, some college and amateur leagues. Bob has 19 years of coaching experience which includes: recreation, competitive and adult men and women. His overall high school record is (235-142-37). He was selected Bay Conference Coach of the year (2002), Fox River Valley Coach of the Year (2005-09,2007) and Press Gazette All Area Coach of the Year (2005,07-09). He is currently the Head Coach of Notre Dame Academy where he has compiled an overall (154-56-27) record and a (37-14) record in post season play for both the girls and boys programs.

Bob currently holds a NSCAA regional diploma and a USSF "D" license. Bob was a licensed official who was certified in USSF, WIAA and NISOA until 2006. When he is not playing, coaching or officiating soccer, Bob can be found spending time with his family.



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