

Session #7

U8 & U9

Total time: ~60 minutes

Warm Up (5 minutes. Get each player to count out 10 seconds per exercise. Perhaps get the players to suggest other exercises?)

- Jumping Jacks
- Squats
- Cross arms (left and right)
- Rotate arms forward
- Rotate arms backward
- Touch toes
- Run on the spot
- Get into pairs. Each player bends knees and gets into ready position. One player leads, moving left, right, forwards and backwards. The other player tries to copy move, as if marking in a game (this aids footwork)
- Another good exercise can be to simply get them to puck the sliotar over and back to each other.

Solo (10 - 15 minutes in total)

Each player tries to balance the ball for a minute on their hurley. They can move or stand still.

Once they've mastered this, mark out a square. Players have to balance the sliotar while moving but also staying within the square. Don't worry if players are close to each other, this mimics the real playing situation.

Apart from learning to move with the sliotar on their hurley, this exercise gets kids used to soloing the sliotar while watching out for others. It also is a lot of fun and should get some laughs.

Shoulder and Strike from the Hand (10 minutes)

This is a slight variation on our usual drill.

Get players to line up at a right angle to the goals. The coach stands facing the line.

The coach throws the sliotar towards the first player - sometimes on the ground, sometimes chest height (this makes the player attentive and ready to react to different situations). Each player chest catches or runs to the sliotar & jab lifts, solos past the coach and hits the sliotar (on the run) over the bar.

It's important that this drill is done from both sides of the goal so that both the weaker and stronger player sides are developed.

This movement (lifting, solo and hitting over the bar from their side) is a common one in match situations. It's really important that both sides are developed. So many kids insist on just using their strong side, it becomes a real disadvantage when they get older.

Frontal Block (5 to 10 minutes)

Do the same drill as above, however, a second line of players is formed near the coach and tries (one at a time), to block down the shot.

Now that the kids are striking more from the hand, they need to be able to block down these strikes too.

Watch out that kids are not turning their back when blocking. Also, you're aiming for the hurley, not the sliotar! And remember, it's a BLOCK, not a chop down!!

Mini Game (15 to 20 minutes)

Mark out a "pitch". Try to keep the game to between 5 and 7 a side. If there are more players than this, then make 2 games out of it. Various rules can apply, depending on what you're trying to teach.

Variations include:

- To practise the jab/roll lift, if a player successfully executes one, they get a free puc
- To practise pucking from the hand, if they score from the hand it counts as 2 scores (for this age group, a point should count as 2 points and a goal as 1 point....therefore if pucked from the hand a point is now 4 points and a goal 2 points)
- To practise hooking or blocking, if one is executed successfully, they get a free
- Etc...

Homework

See who did last week's homework. Get them to demonstrate it to you. (It was a roll lift!) Count how many they can do in 1 minute. 0-15 is Bronze, 16-25 is Silver and 26 + is Gold.

For next week, homework is soloing. Get them to see how long they can keep the sliotar on the hurley without dropping it. Tell them that next week, we'll be having a race to see who can do it best.

