



Games that make kids strong!

Exercises for full-body strengthening
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Lots of kids — and adults — don't get proper strength training, which puts unnecessary strain on their joints. That's why players should start focused strength training at a young age.



Put the focus on playing, and strength practically takes care of itself!

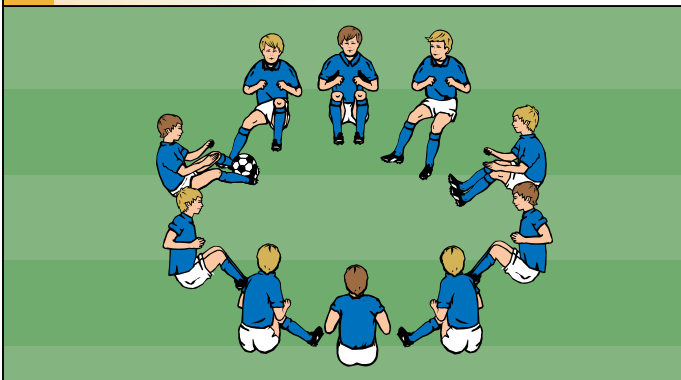
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However, it's important to keep in mind that children's torso muscles should be developed before working on arm and leg strength, as the torso is the anchor for all movements of the extremities. Only properly trained torso muscles provide the necessary stability to make training jumping, running and throwing worthwhile.

One more thing to remember: Kids want training to be fun, and that includes strength training. When the ball is in play, these exercises become fun games. The ball can also be used as an incentive, e.g. for holding a bridge position.

STRENGTHENING EXERCISES

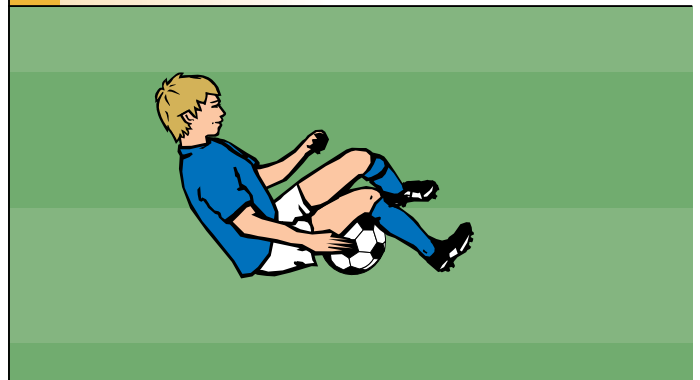
1 Circling around



Setup and sequence

- Players sit in a circle on the ground with knees slightly bent and feet elevated.
- Every third or fourth player (depending on group size and age) holds a ball between his feet.
- These players pass the balls to their neighbors (choose a direction beforehand!), who take them with their feet and pass them on.
- At the coach's signal (verbal or visual), players switch directions.
- Tip: Use different types of balls (no medicine balls, though!).

2 Zeroes and eights



Setup and sequence

- Players lie on their backs, each holding a ball.
- Head and shoulders are slightly elevated and knees are bent.
- Players pass the ball around their knees ("drawing zeroes").

Variation

- "Drawing eights": Players pass the ball around the left knee, then the right, slightly raising each knee as the ball goes around it.



STRENGTHENING EXERCISES

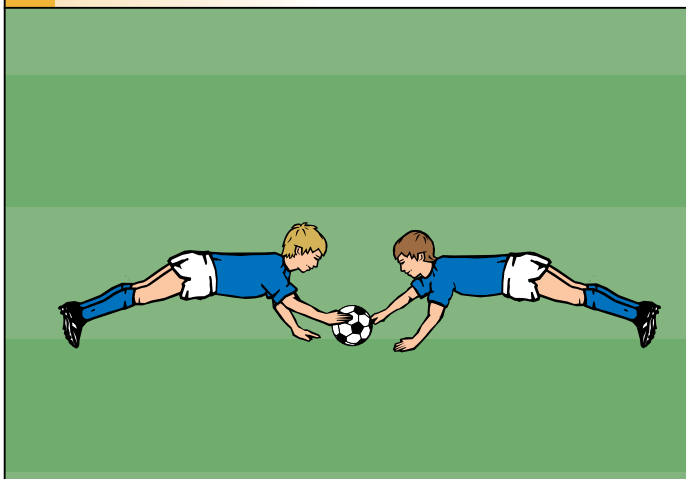
3 Bouncing tricks



Setup and sequence

- Each player bounces a ball on the ground (choose a hard surface).
- While bouncing, they kneel, then sit, then bend their knees and raise their legs off the ground.
- Who can bounce the ball underneath his legs?
- Who can bounce the ball around his body?
- Afterwards they stand up again, still bouncing.
- Who can repeat the whole sequence?

4 Ball thief!



Setup

- Two players face each other in pushup positions.
- One has a ball lying between his hands.

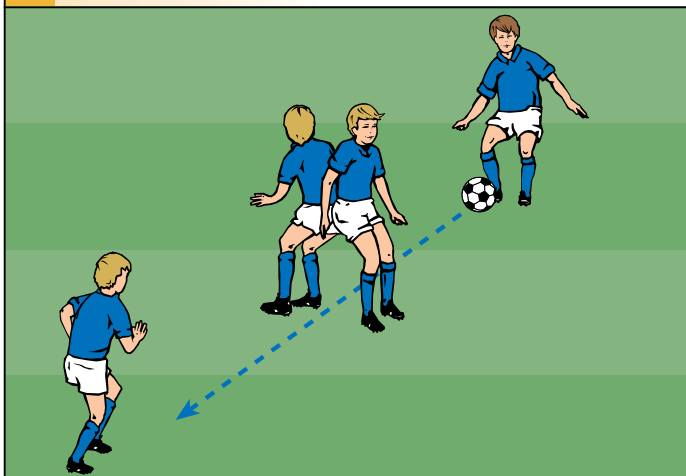
Sequence

- On command, the player without the ball tries to knock it away, while the other player tries to prevent him.
- How long can the player with the ball hang on to it?
- Afterwards, players switch roles.

Tip

- Play fair! Players should avoid knocking their heads together and hitting each other!

5 Under the bridge



Setup and sequence

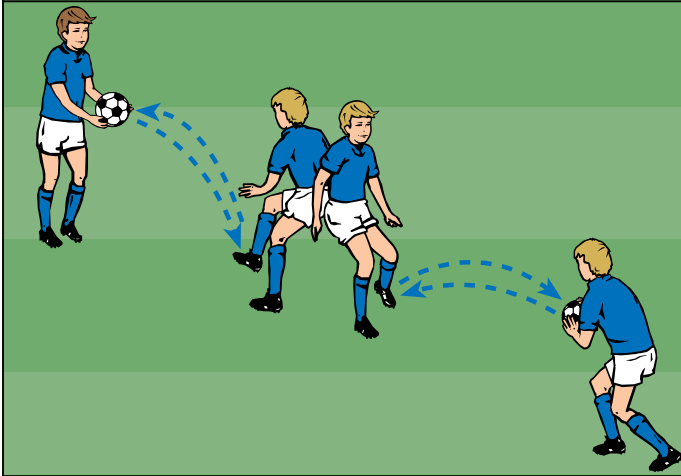
- Divide players into groups of four.
- Two players lean against each other back to back and then gradually bend their knees until they reach a 90-degree angle. Feet are parallel, heels on the ground.
- Between their legs is the "bridge."
- The other two players play passes under the bridge from close by.
- Afterwards, players switch roles.

Competition

- Whose bridge stays up the longest?



6 Throwing to the bridge



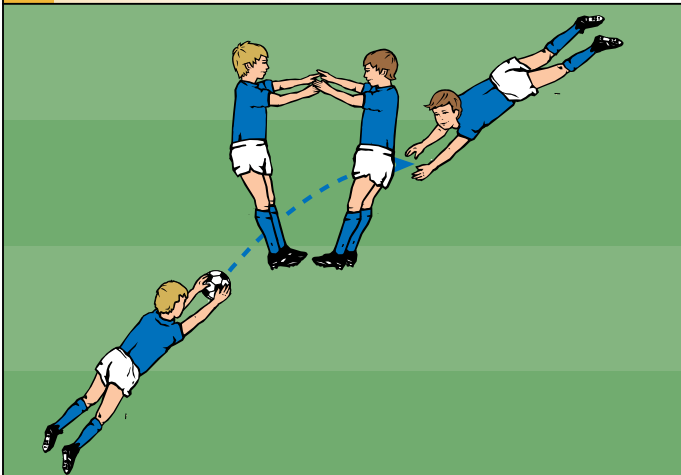
Setup and sequence

- Divide players into groups of four.
- Two players lean against each other back to back and then gradually bend their knees until they reach a 90-degree angle. Feet are parallel, heels on the ground.
- The other two players stand facing the bridge players and throw balls to them at chest level.
- The bridge players start out catching the ball and throwing it back, later volleying back instead.
- Players switch roles after six repetitions.

Variation

- Easier version: One player leans against a wall and his partner throws him the ball.

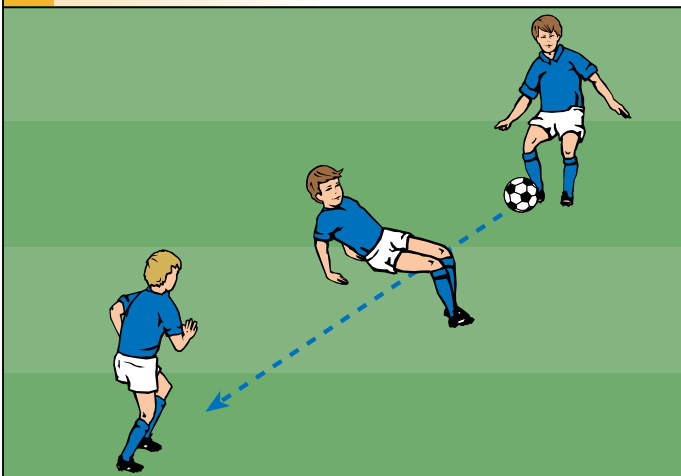
7 Propeller



Setup and sequence

- Divide players into groups of four.
- Two players stand facing each other (toes almost touching), grasp each other's hands and then lean back (torso muscles flexed!) until their arms are fully extended.
- The other two players lie on their stomachs and throw a ball back and forth through the gap.
- Players switch roles after a few repetitions.

8 Under the table



Setup and sequence

- Divide players into groups of three.
- One player forms a bridge by getting down on all fours, raising his buttocks and stretching his abdomen upward.
- The other two players stand facing each other and passing a ball under the bridge.
- Who can keep the bridge up longest?

Tip

- Try using lightweight plastic balls as well.