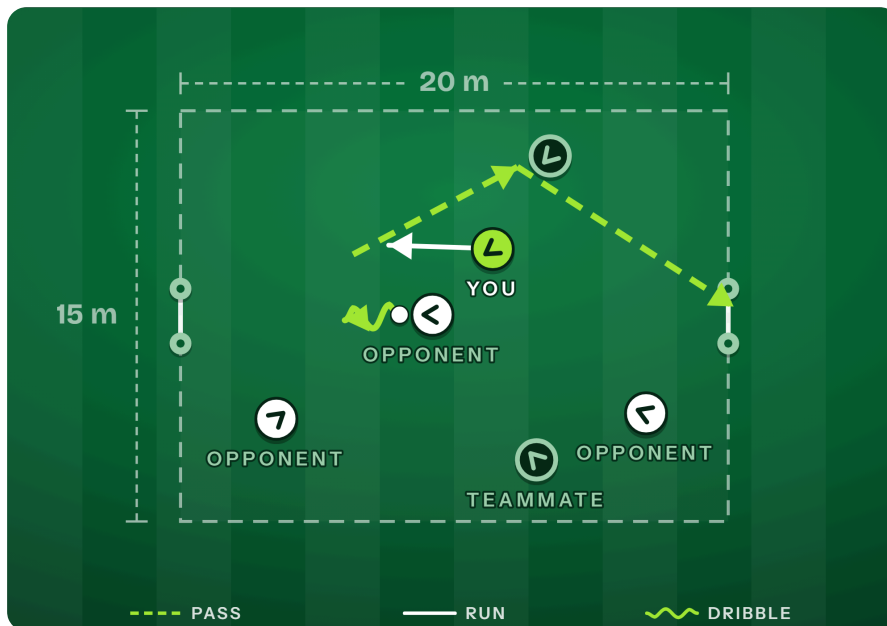




# Intervals that feel like football

PHYSICAL · CONDITIONING · 4 TO 8 PLAYERS (3 v 3 SHOWN), OR 1 PLAYER AGED 16+ · AGE 8+ (GAMES), 16+ (SOLO TRACK)



## Set up

6 players, 3 v 3

A ball

2 small goals

20 x 15 m pitch

## Dose

4 blocks of 4 min

3 min easy jog between

One game-based or interval session a week (the Football Reach plan target, not an FA rule; studies used 2 a week for 8-12 weeks).

## What it trains

Conditioning with the ball: 4 x 4-minute intervals as small-sided games. In one study of 40 junior players, the games improved fitness and match performance as much as running intervals. At 16+, go solo on a dribbling track, as studied in players about 16-18.

## How it works

- 1 Warm up first, every time: the FIFA 11+ Kids warm-up if you are 7-13, FIFA 11+ from 14 (about 15-20 minutes), or your club warm-up (episode 2 shows FIFA's warm-up).
- 2 Games: mark a pitch about 20 x 15 m with a small goal at each end (two cones make a goal) and play 2 v 2, 3 v 3 or 4 v 4.
- 3 Play each game hard for 4 minutes: keep moving, and press the moment your team loses the ball.
- 4 Between games, 3 minutes of easy jogging or walking. Play 4 games in total.
- 5 Solo, 16+: dribble round a cone track (ours is 20 x 10 m) for 4 blocks of 4 minutes, hard enough that you can only say a few words, 3 minutes easy jogging between.

## Coaching points

- 1 **Win it back in 5s**  
The moment your team loses the ball, press straight away and aim to win it back within 5 seconds, then play forward again.
  - 2 **Keep it on the track**  
On the solo track, run with the ball just outside the cones and take it round every corner, so you never slow down to chase it.
- × **Not this:** Standing and watching when your team loses the ball, instead of pressing straight away to win it back.

### ➤ HARDER

Add a scoring twist that raises the pressure, such as goals counting double in the last minute.

### ➤ EASIER

Start with 3 games or blocks, or 3-minute ones. U8 to U11: 4 x 2-minute games, same rest (our suggestions).

## 🛡️ Safety

- Chest pain, or feeling faint or dizzy: stop straight away, see a GP or call NHS 111 the same day, and call 999 if someone collapses. Stop too if unusually out of breath. Under 16: tell an adult.
- If in doubt, sit them out: anyone with a suspected concussion stops straight away, does no training for at least 24 hours and plays no matches for at least 21 days (UK concussion guidelines).
- Under 16: if your knees or heels hurt when you run or jump, stop and tell an adult; it is common while growing and a GP or physio can help. 16 and over: don't train through pain; get it checked.
- Solo 4 x 4 intervals are for 16+: the running and dribbling-track studies with a stated age were in players about 16-18; none was found in 8-12 year olds. Under 16, play the games (our recommendation).
- Flat grass or a track with space all round, never a road. No slide tackles.
- Warm up first. Stop if anything hurts and tell an adult.

## 📅 Track 12 weeks (tick each session)

| W1                       | W2                       | W3                       | W4                       | W5                       | W6                       | W7                       | W8                       | W9                       | W10                      | W11                      | W12                      |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



### Watch Archie show it

[footballreach.com/drills/intervals-that-feel-like-football](https://footballreach.com/drills/intervals-that-feel-like-football)

Then take the free test at [footballreach.com](https://footballreach.com)