

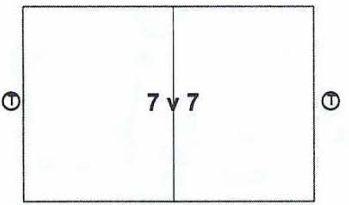
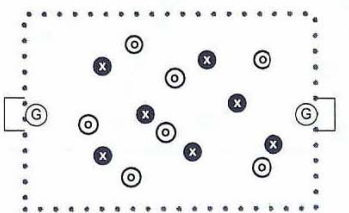


Hitting Long Balls (U-18)

<i>WARM-UP</i>	<i>ACTIVITY & ORGANIZATION</i>	<i>KEY COACHING POINTS</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Groups of 3 or 4 ➤ Pass and follow in a short-short-long rhythm ➤ Start about 10 yards apart from your partners ➤ At first, complete short passes with inside of foot ➤ Incorporate stretching ➤ Progress to hitting longer passes, in the air 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Make sure players are warmed up and have stretched before increasing distance of passes ➤ Have players pass with different surfaces – this is a good time to get some technical work in ➤ Depending on the level of the group, vary the type of long ball that they must hit: driven ball, “floater”, or bending ball
<p><i>PHASE 1</i></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Hitting long ball with partner ➤ Make sure ball is moving ➤ Again, type of long ball is up to you ➤ Can progress to chipping game: hit ball to partner ➤ She must “pop it up” with 1st touch (foot, thigh, chest, head), and then catch it ➤ Each successful catch is a point for the pair 	<p>TEACH PLAYERS TO COACH THEMSELVES ON:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Check angle of approach to ball ➤ Check distance of planting foot from ball ➤ Check which part of the ball you strike ➤ Again, challenge players depending on the level, make them use weaker foot, hit bending balls, etc.
<p><i>PHASE 2</i></p> 	<p>DIRECTIONAL KEEP AWAY TO TARGETS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Size of field depends on numbers (Example: 7 v 7 with neutral targets on end lines, field is 50x40, divided into two halves) ➤ Teams score 1 point for passing to their target; 2 points for hitting their target, on the fly, from their defensive half of the field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Coach the technical points of hitting long balls ➤ Coach players to help teammates hit good long balls: good 1st touch, user-friendly passes, move the ball from side-to-side, play forward, then back ➤ If players have trouble creating long balls to targets, add some neutral players to the game
<p><i>PHASE 3: THE GAME</i></p> 	<p>7 v 7 WITH GOALKEEPERS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Size of field varies depending on numbers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Continue to coach and evaluate how the players are hitting long balls ➤ Keep an eye on shots, direct passes, switching the field, and crosses