Teaching Handball at school

Introduction to handball for students aged 5 to 11

CONTENT

Handball at school – fun, passion and health

During the last years, handball has become a modern and attractive high-speed game which has been fascinating more and more spectators and fans. For me it is therefore an important task for the future to benefit from the popularity of our sport in order to get especially children and adolescents at school interested in handball.

As one of the first international sports organizations, the International Handball Federation has launched a worldwide training and education programme for teachers at schools. According to the motto "Fun, passion and health", competent IHF school experts, in a first phase, conduct courses for teachers of 5 to 11-year-old children on all continents.

The present booklet is an accompanying book for these courses, which will offer all teachers practical assistance in giving attractive lessons.

I am convinced that the practical exercises of this booklet will help arousing your children's interest in handball.

Dr Hassan Moustafa
IHF President

Handball – fun, passion and health

The 6 phases of the game

From a technical and tactical perspective the game is played in 6 phases (see Fig. 1):

❶ Changing from defence to offence

This is the moment, where your team intercepts the ball from your opponent and starts moving up the court.

❷ Moving up the court

This is a continuation of the starting phase. You are moving fast, directly towards the opponent`s goal area. Typical for this phase is great speed and a wide area of movement. In this situation you can dribble the ball or make short or long quick passes to your teammates.

❸ Getting within shooting range

When the opponents arrive back in their defence area, it will take them a few moments to organize themselves. This weakness can be exploited if you are very close behind them. This is a small, but very interesting part of the game, where some of the best opportunities for scoring goals can exist. This phase

Handball is one of the fastest game sports. Coordination, athletics, creative techniques, variable and tactical interaction, combined with a good team spirit are the characteristics of this attractive sport.

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Organized defence — 6

Changing to attack: interception and break out — 1

Return phase: defence starts — 5

Movement up the court (including passing ball) — 2

Team attack: against organized defence (including shooting) — 4

Getting within shooting range — 3

also includes the fast throw-off after your opponent has scored a goal.

4 Team attack against organized defence

You are playing against the opponent`s organized defence and trying to force them into a mistake, which will give you a scoring chance. You are forced to use this part of the attack, if you have failed in the previous phase III.

5 Return phase and defence starts

As soon as you have lost control of the ball in offence, you have to go back into your own defence area. On your way back you should always be alert and try to regain the ball putting pressure on the approaching players.

6 Organized defence

In this phase your defence has reformed in front of the goal area. Usually this will look like a "wall" of players between the 6m and 9m lines, with the aim of preventing the opponents from getting a good goal-scoring-chance. From this phase you move back to phase I unless the opponents score a goal.

Basic rules version for Handball at school

Handball – as a very dynamic team sport – is a contact sport, but also based on "fair play" principles. The official "Rules of the Game" are worked out by the International Handball Federation (IHF). For more information and details and the entire "Rules of the Game", please go to www.ihf.info.

When teaching handball at school it is of course necessary to know the most basic principles of the rules. But please be aware that you can easily teach handball to your students, if you simplify and modify the rules of the game at your school. The IHF broschure gives an overview over the simplified rules which can be used in school handball.

Organization of handball games for students

The handball playing field is usually 20 meters wide and 40 meters long (Fig. 2).

Beginners should however start playing handball on smaller playing fields and with a reduced number of players in order to avoid an excessive demand of the students and to increase the number of situations in which they throw at the goal, so that the students have a feeling of success. Fig. 2 to 4 show age-appropriate examples.

Division into smaller areas

The long side of the handball field may be divided into three small playing fields (approx. 20 x 13 m), on which beginners can play 4 against 4 plus goalkeepers (Fig. 3). If no special goals are available, they may be organized by simple means (see page 9).
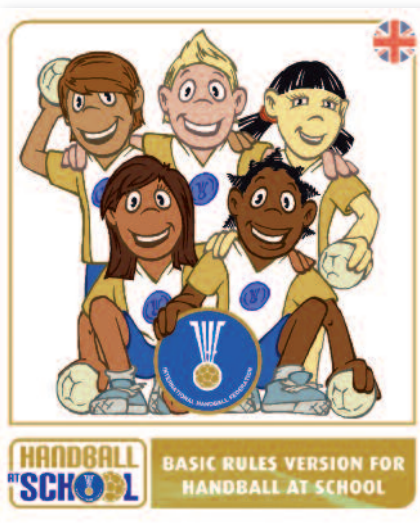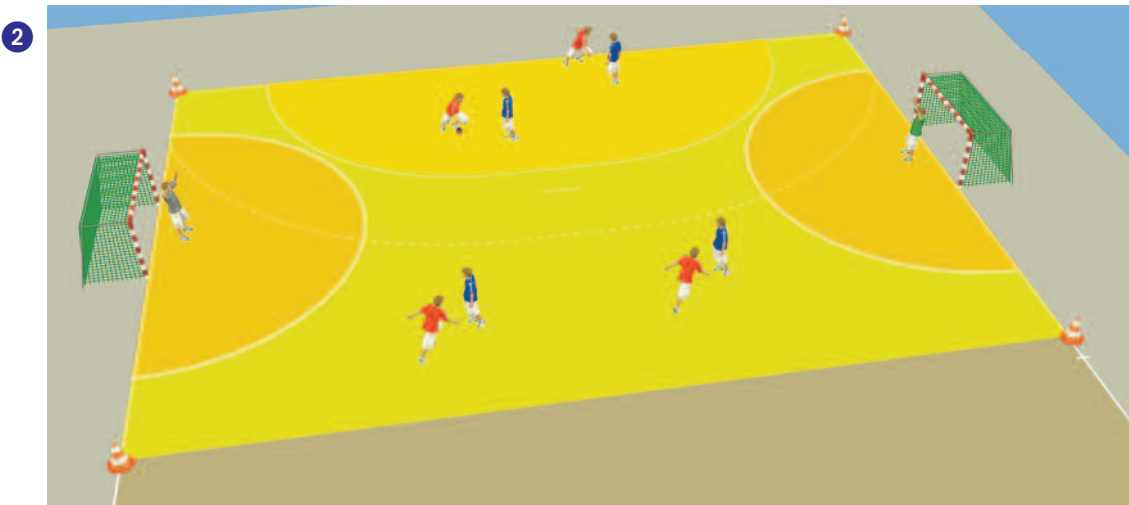
Up to three smaller fields can be built on a handball playing field. Advantage: 30 students have the possibility to play handball at the same time
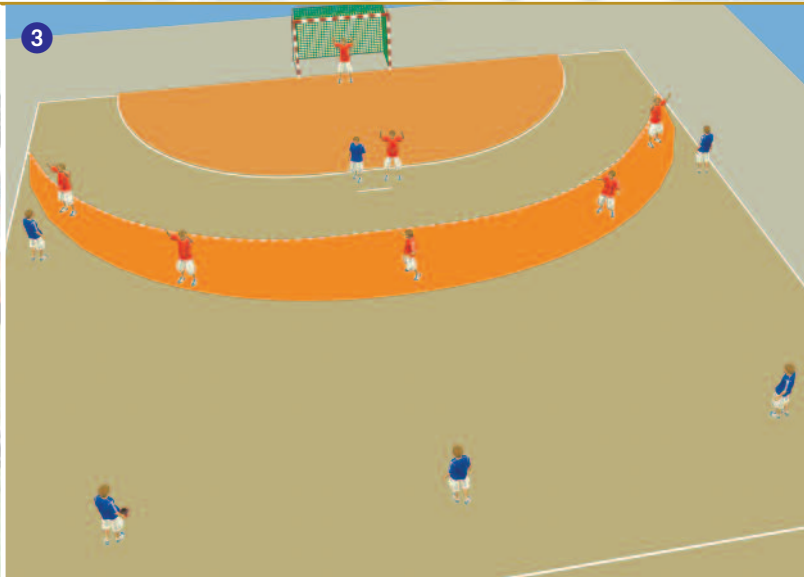
Division into smaller areas
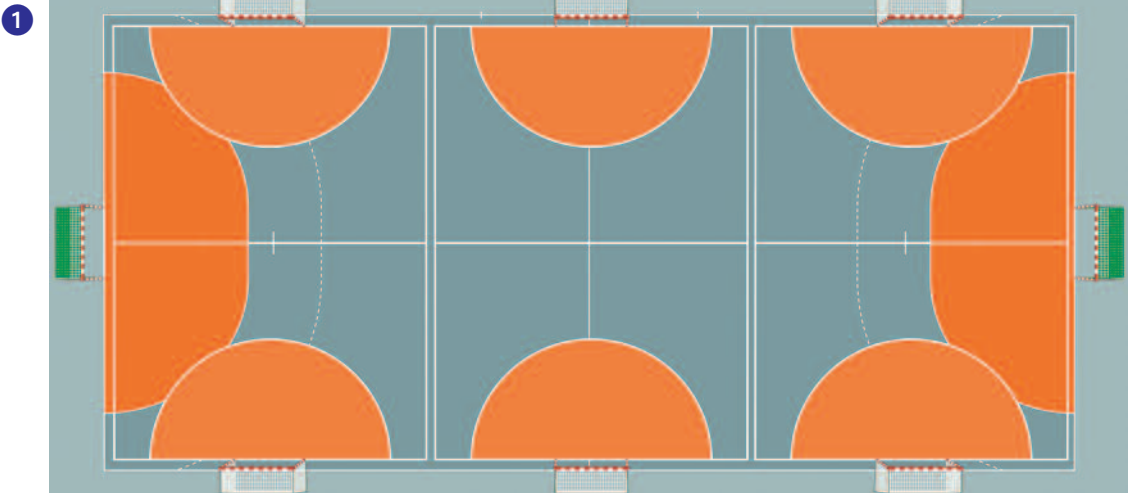
4 against 4 with goalkeepers – an attractive game for students

Handball games for students can easily be organized within a short time: in small halls, in only one third of the hall, outside or even at the beach!

Half court games

Advanced students (10 to 11 years) can play 6 against 6 plus goalkeepers on the whole playing field. In case of large groups, 6 against 6 or 5 against 5 (plus one goal-keeper each) can be play simultaneously on both sides (Fig. 4). In this way, 26 or 22 students are able to play at the same time.

If only one half of the hall is available, several teams are built, which alternately play on one goal.

Of course all mentioned handball games for students can also be played outside (see top left picture), on grass fields or even on sand. Another tip: Let the students act as referees, too, as it encourages the acceptance of students among each other and towards referees.

There are many alternatives to create goals if the official goals are missing. Just invent some more!
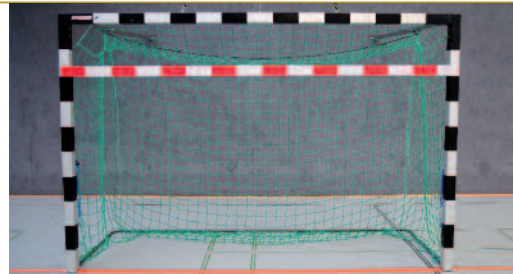

Age-appropriate goal for 6 to 9-year-old students

Different goal sizes for beginners (correct size of a handball goal: 2 m x 3 m)

Marking a goal on the wall

Reducing the goal height by means of a strap (1.60 m)

Using mats or other equipment as goals

Throwing a carton off a box

Handball can be played with many different balls. Those especially suitable for beginners are soft balls.

4 **Three official ball sizes**

IHF Size 1:
– 50-52 cm and 290 to 330 g
– for women's youth (8 to 14 years) and
– men's youth (8 to 12 years)

IHF Size 2
– 54 to 56 cm and 325-375 g
– for women, women's youth (14 years and older) and
– men's youth (12 to 16 years)

IHF Size 3
– 58 to 60 cm and 425 to 475 g
– for men and men's youth (16 years and older)

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Playing with many different balls in school handball

Using different balls

Please note: Students aged from 5 to 11 years can only learn throwing with balls whose sizes correspond to the size of their hands. At the beginning, as a learning aid, they even have to be smaller than the official balls designed for the individual age groups (Fig. 4).

Make use of many different balls (see figure 5), as it improves the coordination skills and especially the feeling for the ball.

Development of children

It is well known that the ability to move is depending on the development of the central nervous system. The development of the central nervous system follows a specific pattern and that the process is influenced by what the senses are exposed to.

There is a close connection between the development of your perception and your motor functions and this development also follows a specific pattern.

The development can happen quickly or slowly. Children develop at different rates even at the same age. Children starting school have only the ability to move in „total movements" = crawl, climb, walk, run, jump and throw. The precondition for development of motor functions is, that children are exposed to as many experiences as possible. The central nervous system that controls the movements is only fully developed at the age of 10 to 12 years.

The following are established facts based on credible research:

- during the development a child goes through periods of fast growth (height) and slow growth (girth)

- growth spurt (height and girth) occurs just before puberty
- girls generally develop and mature earlier than boys
- muscle strength increases around 1 year after the start of a child`s puberty
- by the age of 10 – 12 years a child is capable of learning tactical and technical skills
- training of endurance and coordination can be less effective during puberty
- a child`s development of course is a product of different factors (motor functions, mentality, language, senses and thoughts)

As a consequence of the above mentioned facts/preconditions it is recommended that the teaching of handball in school should take account of the technical and tactical skills in the various age categories (see page 12/13).

Under the age of 8 years

- Ball handling
- Catching
- Throwing
- Playing together
- Shooting

Under the age of 10 years

- Ball handling
- Catching, throwing, dribbling, shooting, passing and feinting
- Playing together
- Making decisions 2 against 1
- Tactically clever positioning
- Taking up 1 against 1 situations
- Defending an area
- Cooperating in defence

Under the age of 12 years

- Ball handling
- Catching, throwing, dribbling, shooting, passing, passing and feinting
- Screening, playing together
- Making decisions 2 against 1 and 3 against 2
- Taking up 1 against 1 situations
- Playing fast break
- Developing good, fast feet, tackling an opponent and intercepting the ball in defence
- Positioning and cooperation in defence

Under the age of 14 years

- Basic technical skills in offence
- Individual technical and tactical skills in different positions in offence
- Crossing and piston movements in the offence
- Fast break
- Improving leg work, tackling an opponent, blocking shots and intercepting the ball in defence
- Positioning and cooperating in defence
- Taking tactical initiatives in defence

Methods and planning

Handball should be taught as a game based on technical skills, tactical knowledge and the ability to improvise. But handball is also a contact sport and we should teach our students to handle these confrontations without becoming afraid and aggressive by using the technical skills and tactical knowledge.

The teacher must plan his/her lessons in a way that demands brain activity from the students. It can be done through:

- Small and tactical games, where the students constantly must ask themselves questions. Who should I pass to? Where do I run? Do I dare to dribble?
- Functional exercises as close as possible to the real game. As an example a counter attack, where 2 players are alone with 1 opponent. Shall I pass to my teammate or try myself? The players must in such situations perceive, evaluate, decide and act within a very short time.
- Giving tasks with several solutions and asking the students to find the best solution based on their experiences.

Organizing games and exercises in such a way that the students have the longest possible movement time, as many ball contacts as possible and of course many throws at the goal during one lesson.

In order to get a good result from your teaching it is important that your students are motivated and understand what they are doing. This task lies on your shoulders! If the exercise is too complicated or too easy the students will automatically lose the motivation and concentration. That requires a sufficient theoretical knowledge of handball and the ability to organize and plan a handball lesson at school.

For many teachers the organizing of an activity will be a central problem. The main aim of the handball lesson at school is to keep a high level of activity based on children`s natural need for movement and enjoyment. The emphasis must be on the development of stamina, strength, agility and at the same time present handball as a fun game with much variety. The main problem for many teachers is too many students in a too small hall. Then it will be advantageous to carry out various tactical games and exercises to familiarize the students with the ball and such exercises that can be related to game situations.

Wrong! Too little activity

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A
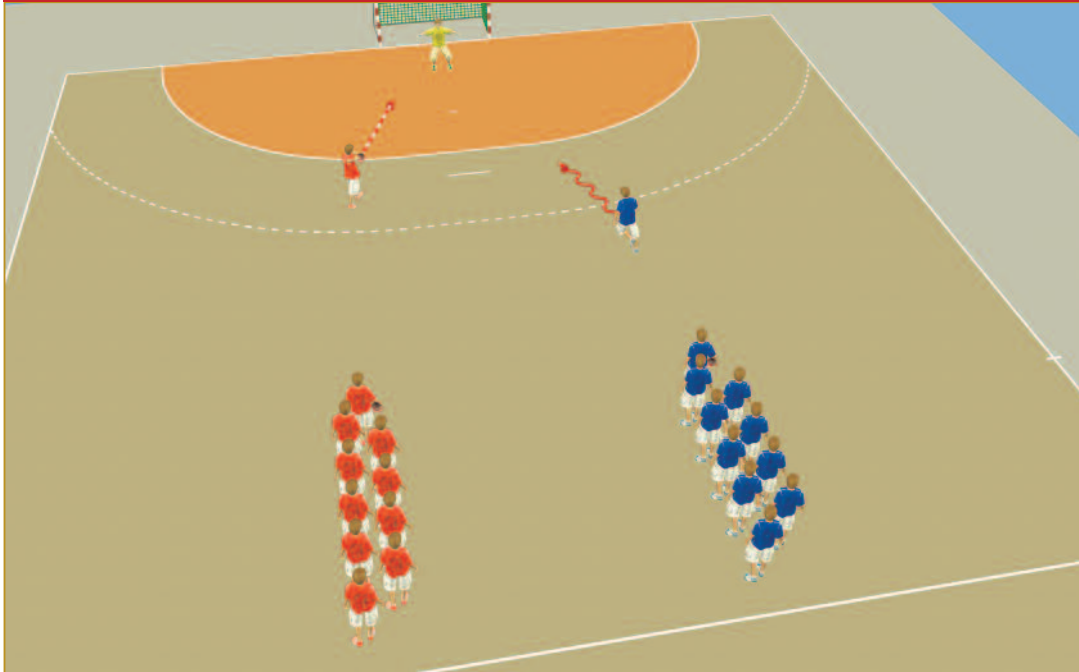
Relay Games

Relay games are a very good form of activity, but all too often they are badly organized with two large groups competing which leads to much inactivity and too much stress on individual competition.

In this way, you will be able to greatly increase the level of activity and reduce the prestige of individual competition. With a little bit of imagination it is possible to vary the exercises by changing the way of running, the way of handling the ball, the number of balls etc. ... (see Fig. 6A and 6B)

Right! Lots of activities

Dividing the hall

Often you will think that the hall is much too small, but in fact you can get much more activity by dividing it up into 2 or 3 parts! This will result in smaller areas but you will nevertheless be able to fit the games and exercises into these spaces. With division into 3 areas you will be able to keep a whole group active for the whole time. The division between the areas can easily be marked by cones, benches, gymnastics equipment or any other items available. You can have the same exercise in all 3 areas and change after a while, or you can have different activities and change around in rotation (see Fig. 7 and 8 on page 18 and 19).
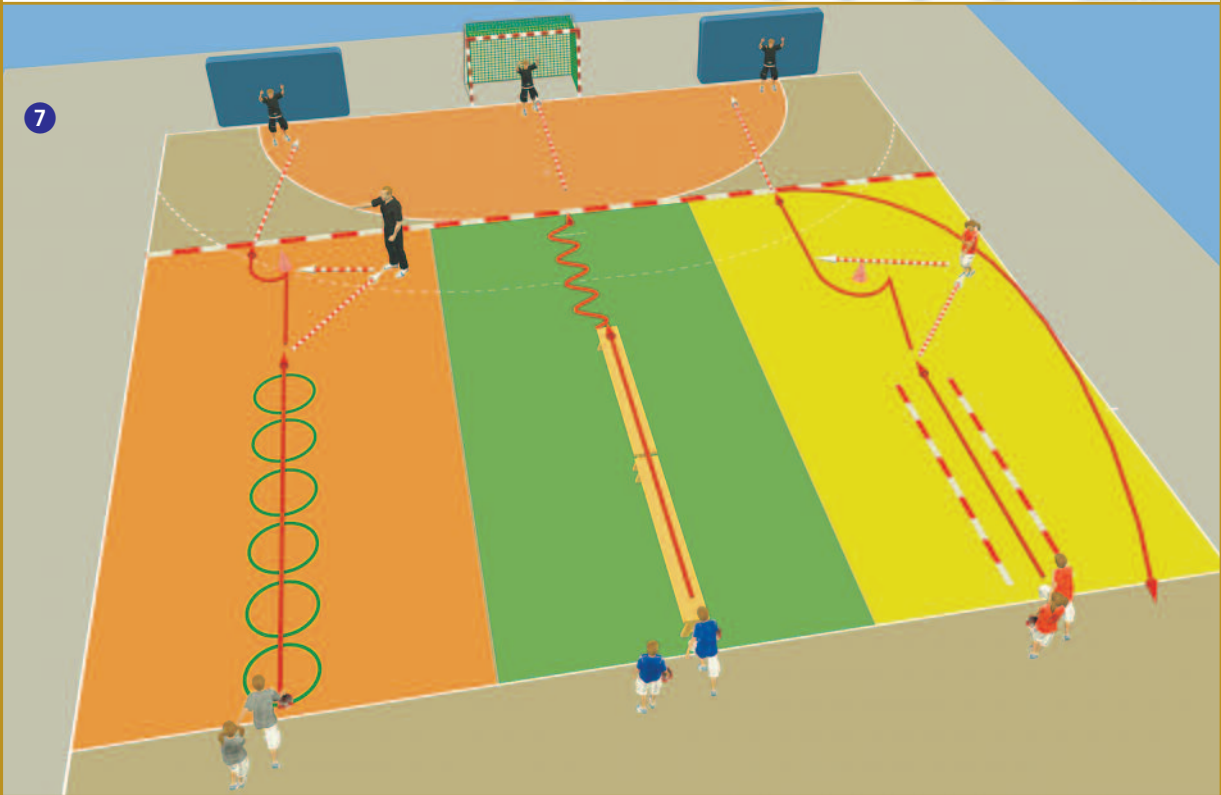
Coordination exercise with throws

The students, divided into three groups on three tracks, complete different tasks with subsequent throwing at the goal.

– Track 1: Jumping/dribbling through hoops; throwing after a give-and-go with teacher/ partner

– Track 2: Jumping/crawling/dribbling over a bench; throwing at the goal after dribbling

– Track 3: Dribbling through a small lane/on different lines; releasing after a give-and-go with partner and throwing at the goal
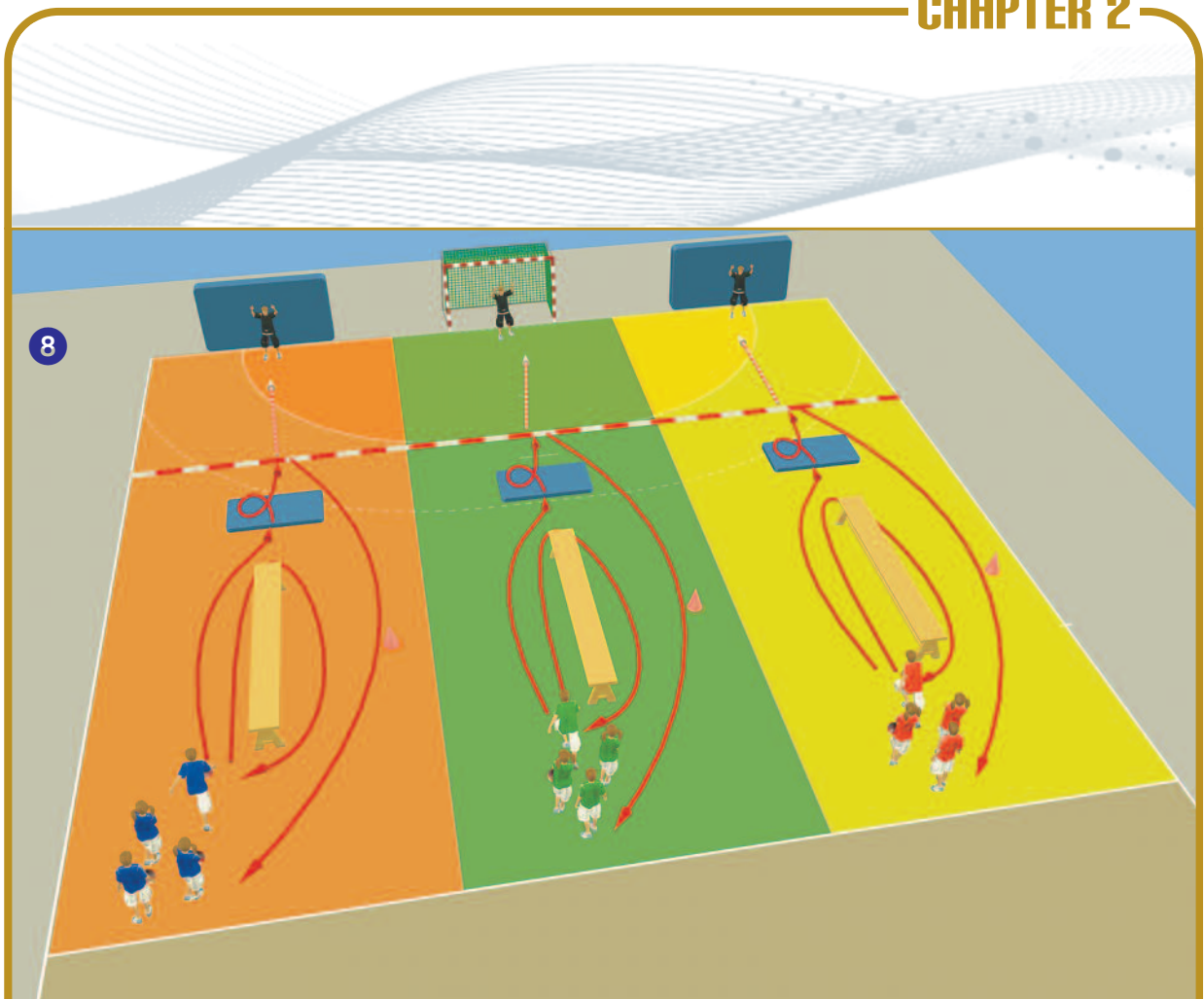
Run-around as group competition

Three groups on three fields carry out the same tasks as a competition between the three groups.
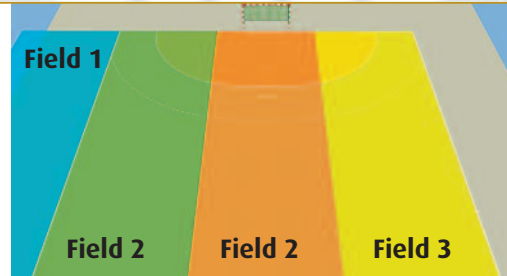
The tasks:

– Dribbling three times around a bench (or another marking)

– A forward roll on a mat

– Throwing at the goal from a marking

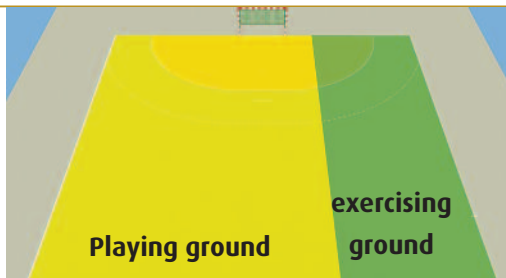– Bouncing back and passing to the next player of the group

The group with the highest number of goals is the winner.
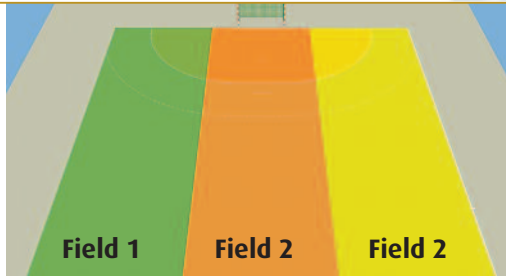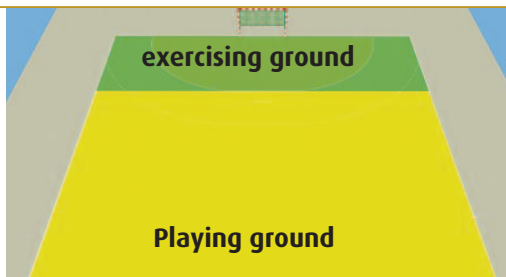
Three fields side by side (lengthwise)

Four fields side by side (incl. marginal strips)

Playing ground and exercising ground in different sizes

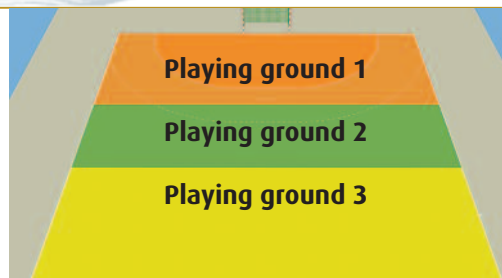One playing and one exercising ground (total width of the playing field!)

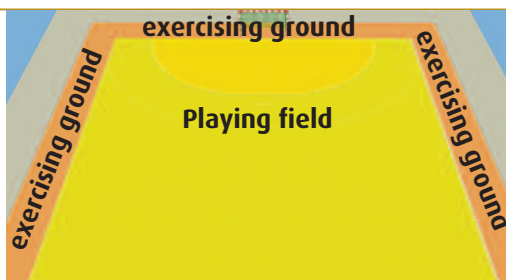One playing ground crosswise, one exercising ground in the goal area
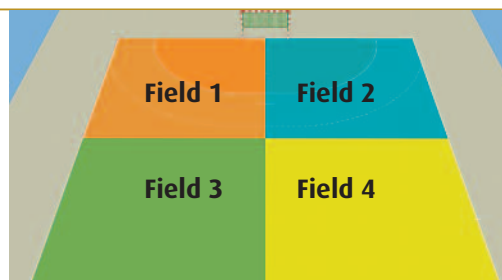
Two playing grounds lengthwise
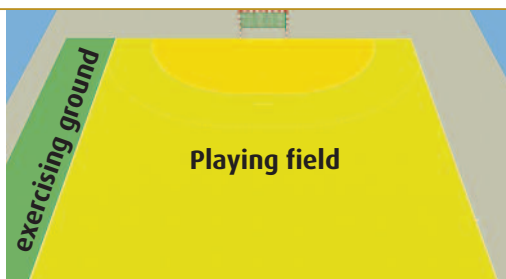
Two playing grounds crosswise

Three playing grounds crosswise

Playing in one half of the hall plus running around the playing field

Four groups in four rectangles

One playing field across the whole width, marginal strip as exercising ground

Practical advice

Please take note of the following safety information when playing and exercising in different fields placed side by side:

- Using ball boxes or the like to prevent balls from rolling into other fields.
- Benches or other equipment, e.g. mats or barrier tape, may be used as room divider; don't use bars.

High activity, high intensity

For high activity and high intensity in training sessions it is necessary to plan well beforehand. The time spent organizing beforehand will be rewarded by an increase in quality of your teaching! Some words and/or a drawing on a small piece of paper can give good results.

The ball is the centre of attention in the handball game and therefore it must always be so in activities. The more contact a student has with a ball during a lesson, the better ball handling he/she will have. We must be aware of this when we are creating the groups - the fewer the participants in a group, the greater the contact with the ball will be. At the same time we know that certain exercises require a minimum number of participants to function. You must always try to find a "happy medium". If you put extra balls into some of the exercises you will further increase activity.

Games at both ends of the court

A common way of organizing your lesson is to have one game at each end of the court. In this way 4 teams or 26 players have the opportunity of playing. This can be controlled from the centre of the court. The drawback however is that this only practices certain parts of the game (Phase 4 and 6). This exercise can be improved in the following ways:

- When the attacking team loses the ball everybody must race to the centre line and back. During this run the two teams change roles.
- When a player from the defending team intercepts the ball, he/she dribbles it up to the centre line and back. During this time the attacking players who lost the ball become the defending team and must assume a man to man defence that will prevent the returning player from passing the ball and thus trying to regain it (Phase 5).
- Changing defence and attack teams around after a certain amount of time.
- Changing defence and attack teams around after a certain number of faults etc. (Fig. 9)

Changing defence and attack teams
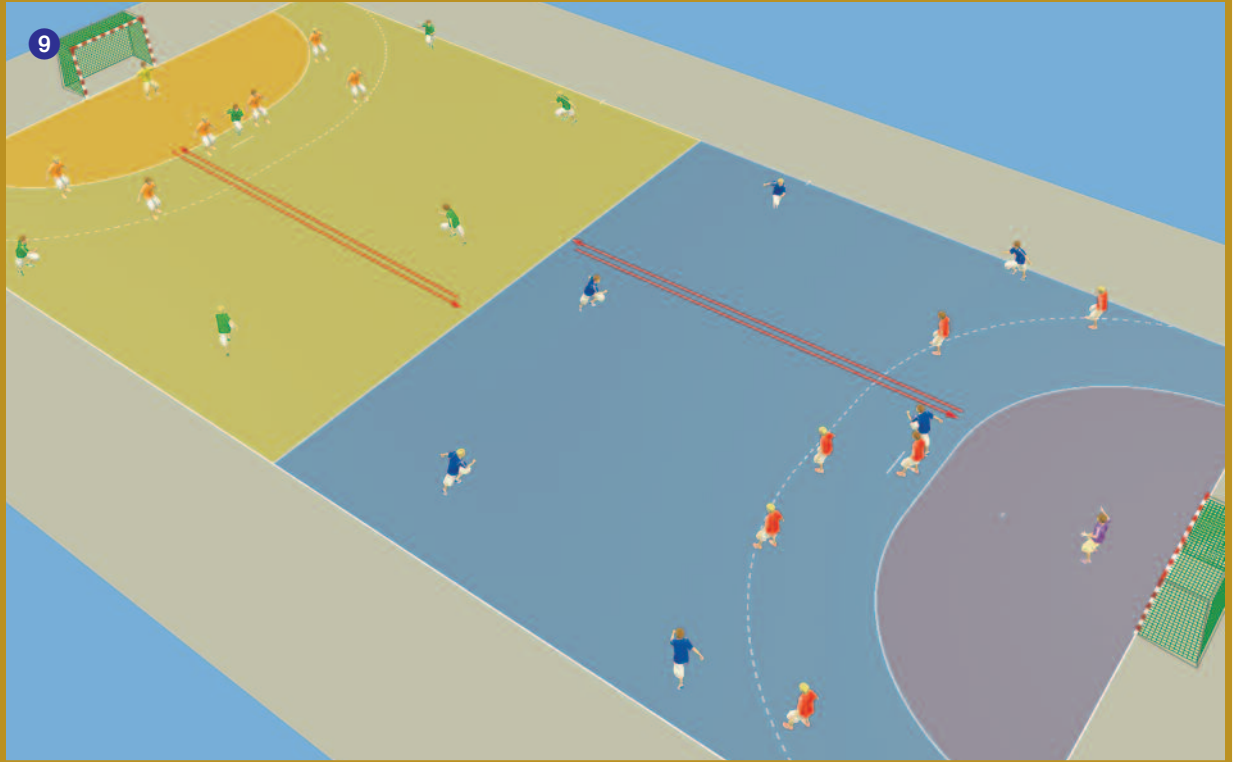
If the number of players is not enough for 4 teams you can use a rotation system with 3 teams. It means 2 teams play while the 3rd waits by the substitution area. If a team scores a goal, it goes out and changes with the waiting team. If the play goes on too long between 2 teams, the teacher must intervene and change the teams around (Fig. 10). Suggestions for organization of activities in the hall (Fig.11)

Rotation system with 3 teams

Three different activities

Mat-Ball

Bench-Ball

Running and passing
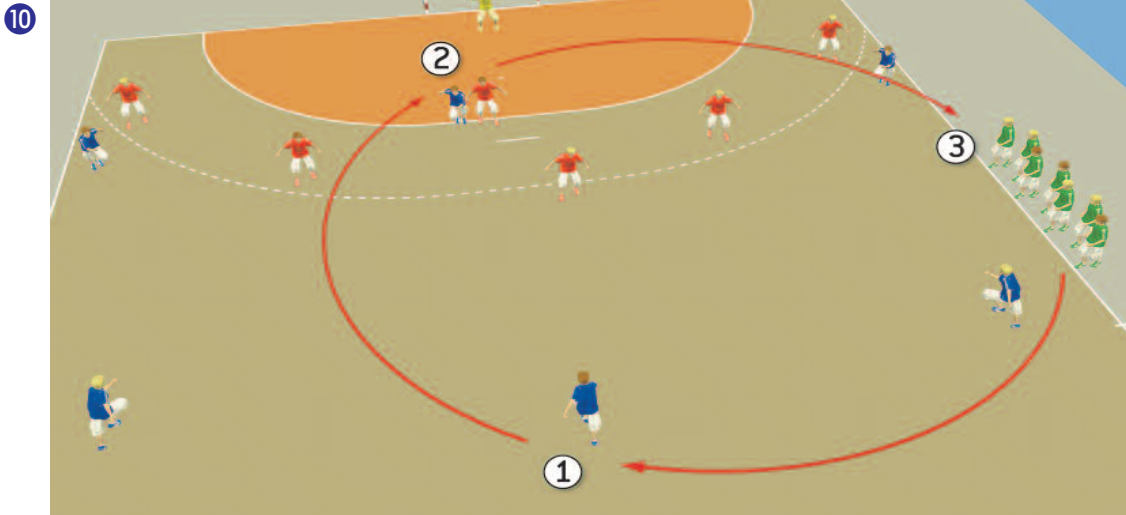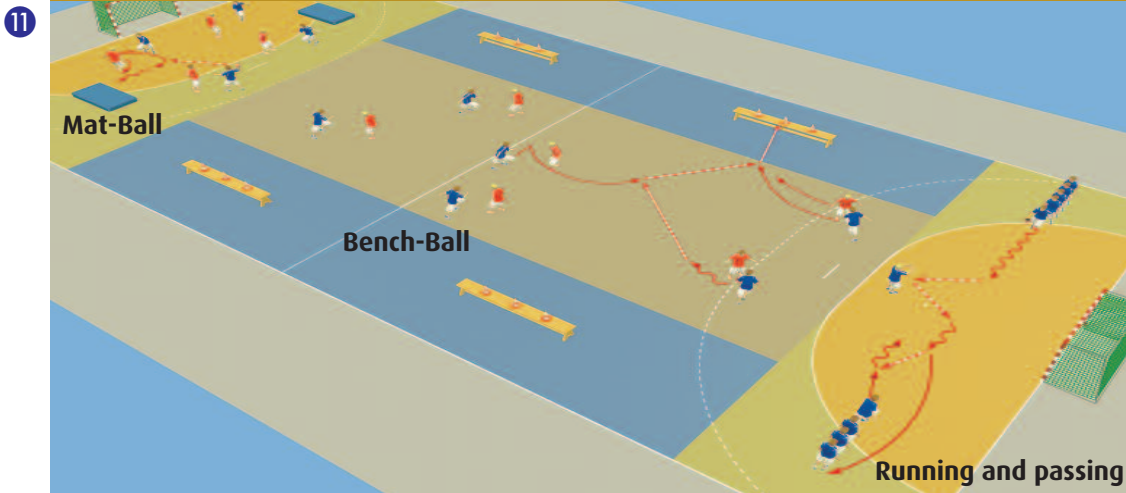
Handball in one half of the hall

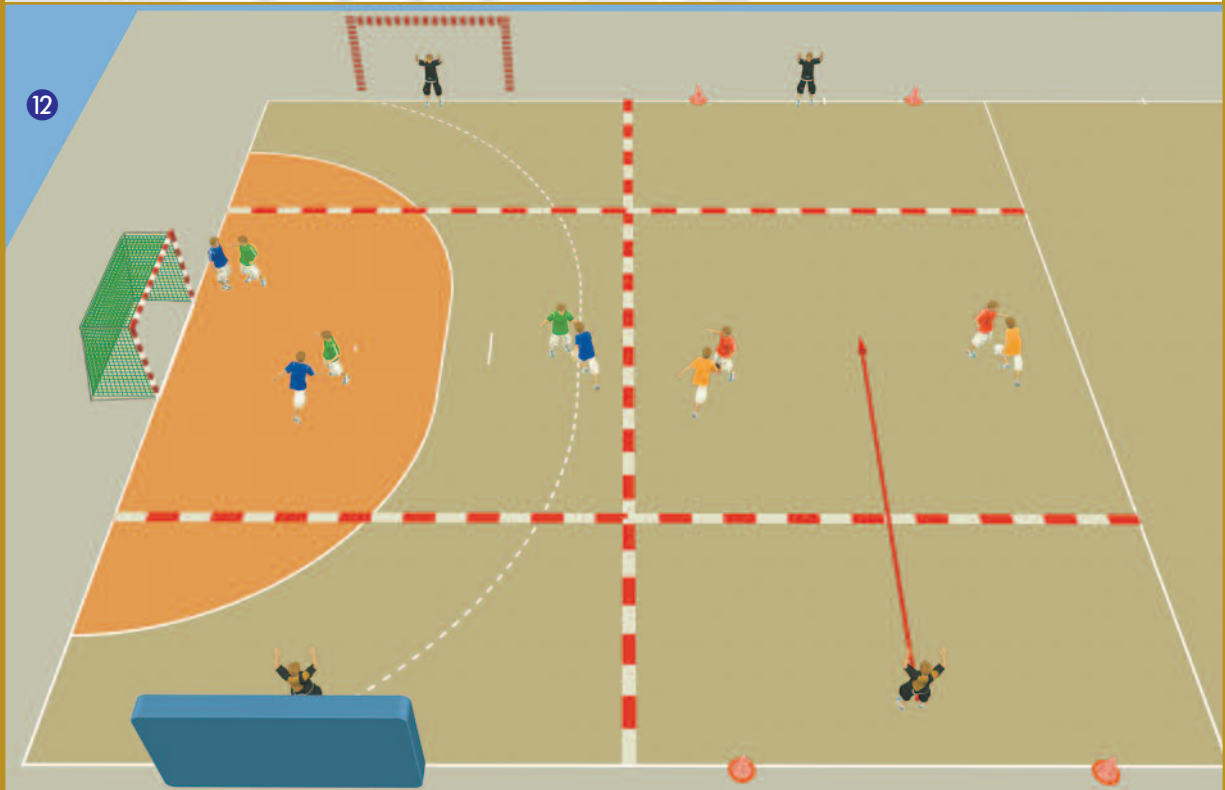In one half of the playing field, two playing fields are marked crosswise. The goal area lines are straight!

Left playing field: Playing 3 against 3/4 against 4 (in case of beginners also numerically superior 3 against 2/4 against 3).

Right playing field: Playing 2 against 2/3 against 3; the goalkeeper may take part, so that the attacking team is always numerically superior.

Aim: Throwing the ball into the goal marked by cones (bars).

Ball handling

Rolling the ball through the legs forming an eight

Fast ball handling through the spread legs, moving the hands accordingly

Tossing a ball with the feet while sitting and catching it while standing up

The aim of "ball handling exercises" is to teach the students basic throwing, catching and dribbling. The exercises described are also used for warming up, ball-eye-hand coordination and developing basic technical/tactical knowledge.

Tossing the ball backwards through the legs, turning around and catching the ball

Tossing the ball while lying on the back, turning around and catching the ball

Carrying a ball with a second one

Keeping the ball in play with a second one

Dribbling the ball with a second one

Ball handling

Dribbling around the body

Dribbling while sitting

Dribbling while jumping up and down

Dribbling around/over obstacles

Running after a partner while dribbling and imitating all his moves

Dribbling in one row on fixed lines

Dribbling through rods in slalom

Ball handling exercises improve the confidence and creativity when handling the ball. Here are some dribbling examples.

Dribbling in a limited area without colliding

Changing the position in a circle while dribbling according to visual signs

Dribbling forward, backward and sideward according to visual signs

A catcher without a ball tries to intercept the ball from a dribbling player

Ball handling

Bounce passes through a hoop to the partner

Throwing the ball at the wall and catching it

A passes to B; B throws the ball into the air; A and B change positions, and A catches the ball

Group of 3: The student in the middle alternately carries out passes with the outer players

These exercises improve throwing and catching while standing and moving as well as the ball-hand-eye coordination.

Passing and catching in a circle: First, one ball is passed, and then two balls are passed at the same time

Bounce passes of two balls at the same time

Direct passes of two balls at the same time

Group of 3: Two attackers are passing a ball to each other. The student in the middle must try to intercept it

Ball handling

Two teams try to hit a medicine ball over the ground line of the opponent

Throwing competition between the players: How often do the players hit the targets from different distances?

Throwing competitions between groups: Moving benches or parts of a box by throwing

These small competitions and exercises improve the throwing power in a playful way.

Moving a carton for example into the goal/ into a target.

Variation: The carton is placed on a wheel board and contains a medicine ball.

Throwing competition between teams throwing at different objects

Variation: each team is trying to push a ball towards another team (larger throw distance)

Ball handling

Every student has got one ball

- Dribble the ball slowly/quickly and follow a classmate. Try to dribble on the lines at the same time.
- Try to push away the ball from a classmate without touching him, while you are all dribbling.
- Try to bounce pass the ball to your classmate and catch the pass from him/her at the same time.
- Try to pass the ball in the air to your classmate and catch the ball from him/her at the same time.

Two students have one ball between them

- Try to throw the ball at the floor in turn (easy, hard, close, some distance).
- Try to throw the ball at a wall. Your classmate must catch it (easy, hard, close, some distance, hit the same spot on the wall every time etc....).
- Try to pass the ball to your classmate, so that he can catch it.
- Try to move around between your other classmates, while you are passing to each other in different ways.

Ball handling exercises in different organizational ways

Three students have got one ball

- Dribble relay with 3 throws and 3 catches. All teams have 3 students. The first one dribbles to the wall and throws towards the wall and catches the ball 3 times before dribbling back to the second one etc.
- Play against a wall. One of the 3 students throws the ball as hard as possible against the wall. The one who catches the ball gets 2 points, if he/she catches the ball before it touches the floor. If the ball has touched the floor you only get 1 point. The student who caught the ball, must then throw. Who will get 10 points first?

- Play 2 against 1 in a limited area. Student A and student B are together against student C. How many passes to each other are possible before student C intercepts the ball? Remember to change after a certain time.
- Triangle passes at the same spot in the hall. When a student catches the ball he/she runs towards the centre of the triangle and passes the ball to the next student.
- Triangle passes while running around in the hall. Remember to change positions.
- Try to move in the figure of eight, while you are passing to each other.

Small games and tactical games

Full control

All the students take a ball and run around bouncing it within a restricted area. While you are running around you must keep control of your own ball and at the same time try to knock the other student`s balls out of their control. If you lose the ball get it back as quickly as possible and continue to play.

The students run around with a ball as above, however, at the teacher`s signal, all students put their ball down, but carry on running around. The teacher then removes one ball and at his/her signal all the students must try to get a ball. The student who doesn`t get a ball must run to the other end of the hall and come back, before he/she gets his/her ball back.

Small games and tactical games are ideal approaches for the development of the best possible playing skills
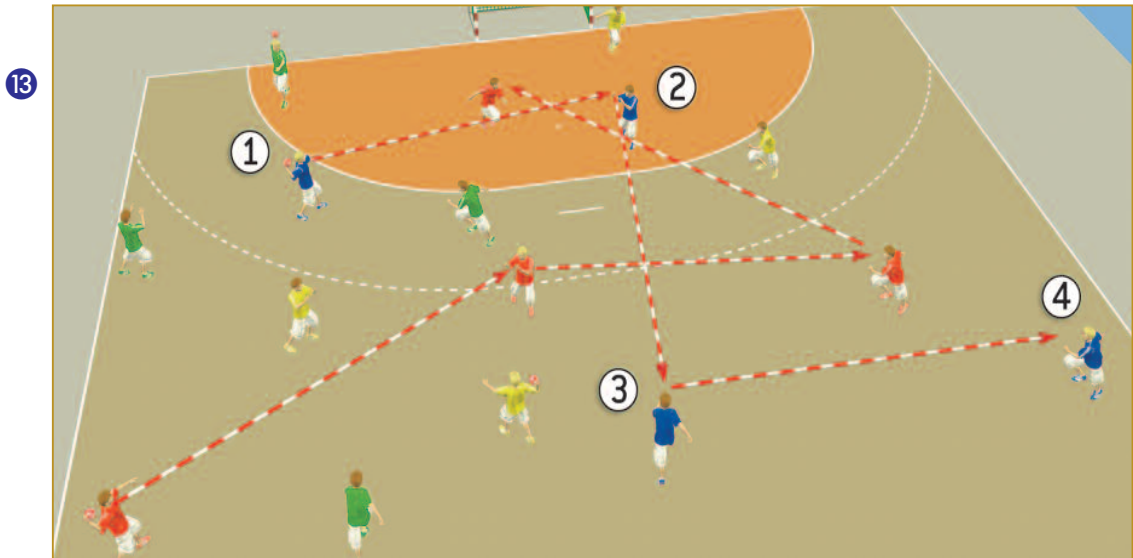
Find the right student

Divide the students into groups of 4. Put one ball into each group. The students in each group are numbered one to four. The ball is always passed from 1 to 2 to 3 to 4, and back to 1. It is important that the students circulate as much as possible around the hall while passing the ball (Fig. 13).

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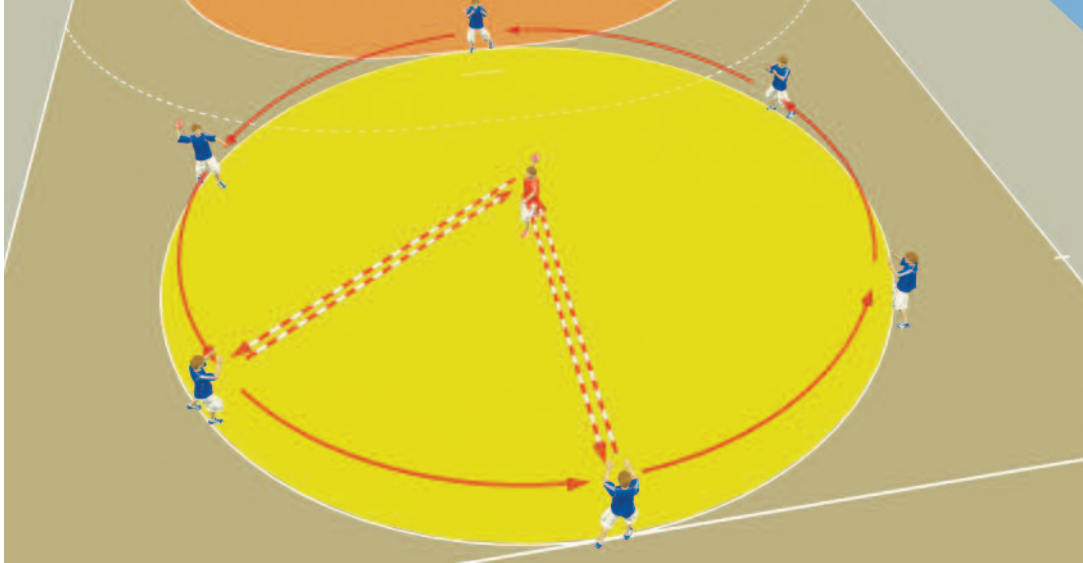
Star ball passing

Place the students (6-8) according to the figure. Use 2 balls. The student in the middle receives the first ball from one of the outside students and passes it back to the next student in the circle and then turns to receive the second ball in the same way, before turning again to the first ball and so on (Fig. 14).

Possibilities:
- Both balls are played in the same direction
- The balls go in opposite directions
- The student in the middle can choose which way he wants to pass the 2nd ball
- Make sure that all students have a turn in the middle

Move the ball and compete

Objectives:
Passing and catching under time pressure as part of a competition.

12 to 16 players stand in a circle. Every second player belongs to team A, the other players are team B. Each team has a ball and tries to pass the balls 3 rounds long clockwise if possible without dropping the ball. The team which finishes first wins.

Variation: The same concept but face each other to form an alley.

Note: The first player of every team wears a ribbon.

10 Passes

Divide the students into two groups and put them into a restricted area. The teacher throws the ball in the air to start the game. It is then up to the two groups to try to pass the ball between themselves 10 times. The students and the teacher count the passes out loud. When one group loses the ball or takes it out of the restricted area then the counting starts for the other group. Every time a group gets to 10 passes, they score one point. Try to use the handball rules as much as possible.

Variations:
- 5 against 4
- 5 against 5 with a neutral player (see picture)

Tiger ball

Objectives:

Steal balls; intercept passes; reaction, cleverness, perception, anticipation.

7 players stand in a circle with 2 'tigers' inside the circle. Those two are trying to intercept the passes. (credit time or award one point for every ball stolen)

Rules:
- Pass to the player standing next to oneself is not allowed.
- Passing at head height, direct, indirect, left or right-handed passes are allowed.

Variation:
- 7 against 3

Sting Ball with defence

Mark out 2 circles as seen on the figure. Place one student in the inner circle, 2 in the outer ring as defenders and the rest of the students outside. One ball is used.

The students on the outside must try to hit the middle student with the ball. The two outer ring students must try to block these shots, not catch the ball! The student who hits the middle student then has to change places with him. However, if the middle student manages to catch the ball, he is not out.

The teacher must ensure that the passes are fast and that the students change places (Fig. 15).

Hit the box (4 against 3 or 4 against 4)

Objectives: Steal the ball, spoil and intercept passes, spoil goal shots, break free to take up a position suitable for a goal shot; target shot; introduce the 'goal-area rule'.

A middle section of a vaulting box is placed in the middle of a circle measuring 8 to 10m in diameter. 2 teams compete outside the circle. In case of numerical inferiority the team concerned remains in possession of the ball within a set time frame (up to 3 min) and tries to score as many goals as possible (shots passing through the box). When the time has expired, take turns. With a balanced number of players per team (4–4) change position of attack and defence every time the attackers have lost the ball (ball crossed the sideline, too many steps, illegal entering of the goal area, missed shot). If the team in possession of the ball scores a goal, they will remain in possession of the ball. In difficult situations (nobody is in a position to receive a pass) you are entitled to bounce the ball once.

Hit the trophy (5 against 4)

Objectives: Steal the ball, intercept passes, spoil passes; spoil shots at the 'guarded trophy'; endeavour to obtain a shooting opportunity; target shot; extend playing rules. A medicine ball is placed on a vault box standing in the middle of a circle with a 8 to 10 m diameter (line marking). One team in attack (5 players) faces another team in defence, trying to hit the medicine ball in order to make it fall down. Playing time: 3 min, take turns.

Variation:
The defending team has an equal number of players (5). When they succeed in playing the ball away from the opponent, they will become the team to attack, trying to hit the ball. Extend the rules: introduce a free-throw if a foul has been committed. Technical faults (too many steps or passive play) result in a free-throw and possession of the ball for the opponent.
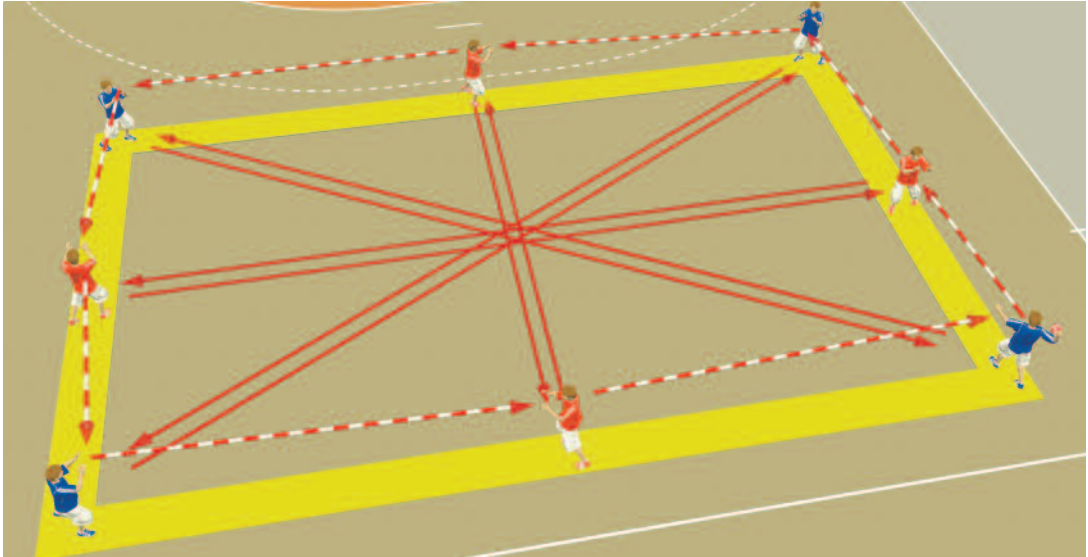
Labyrinth

Put 8 students in a square, one student in each corner and another one in between each. 2 students in opposite corners should have a ball. The ball must always be passed to the nearest student to your right. The ball can also be passed in the other direction. As soon as you pass the ball, you run forward and change places with the student directly opposite you in the square.

Start slowly! With more practice the students will be able to keep it going longer and so this will become a good endurance training exercise (Fig. 16)

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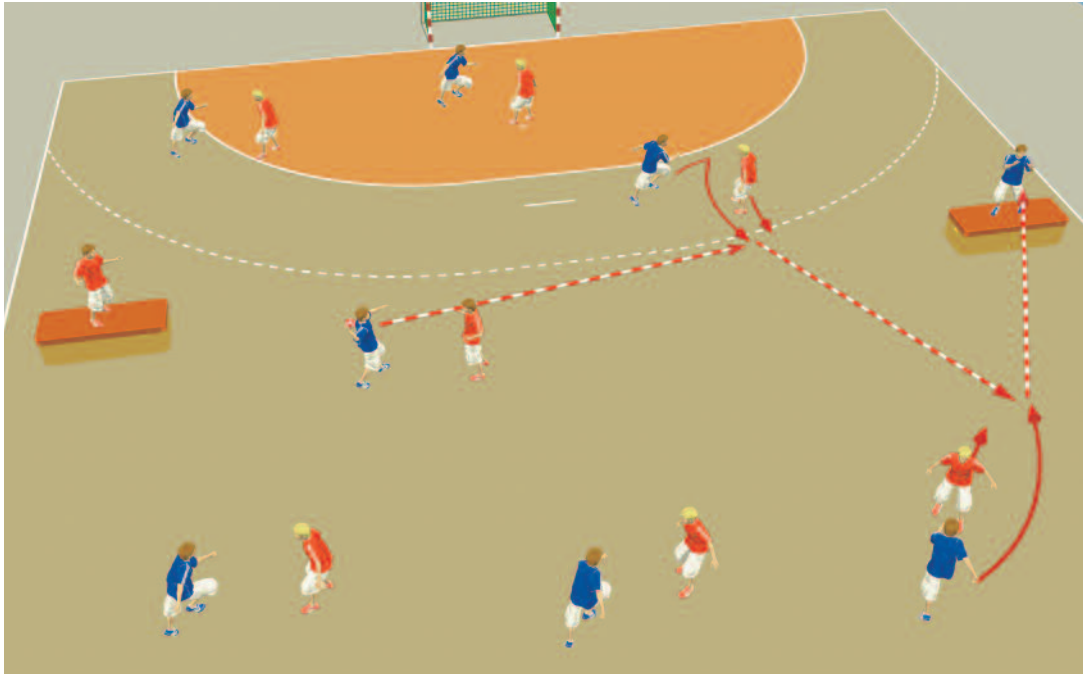
King ball

Divide the students into two teams. One student is placed on a small box or bench at the other end of the court.
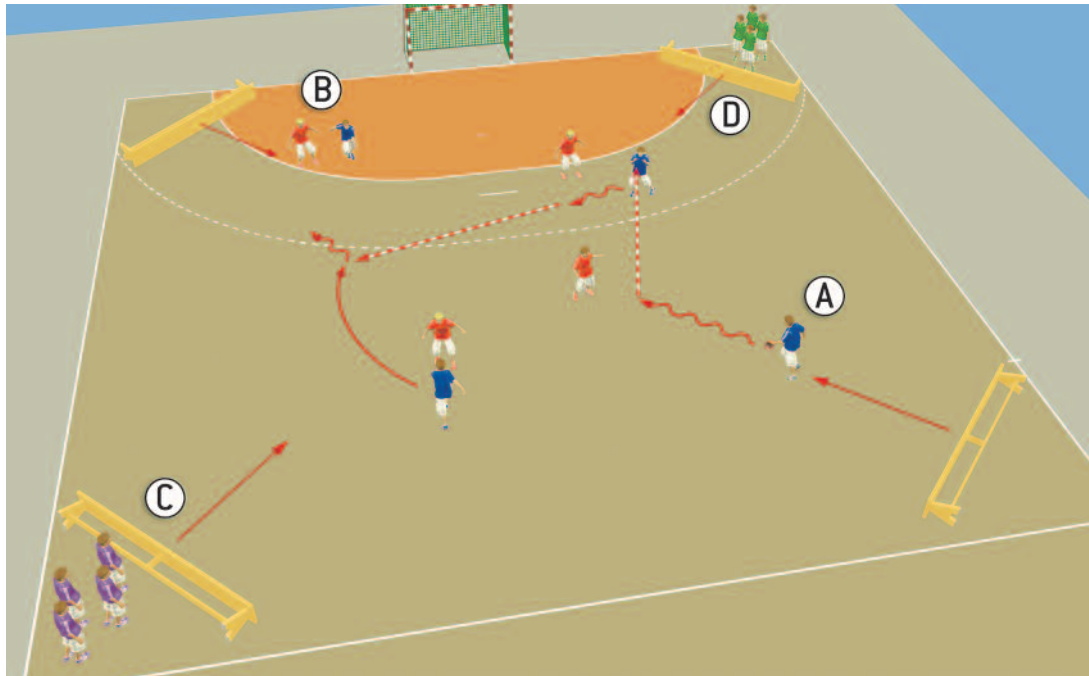
Your team scores a goal, when you can pass the ball to your teammate standing on the box or bench. Your opponents try to intercept the ball and block the passes to the students on the box/bench (Fig. 17).

Variation:

Only score if it is a jump pass or an underhand pass.

Interval handball

Divide the students into 4 teams, one behind each bench. 2 teams play each other diagonally across the hall. You score when you hit the bench.
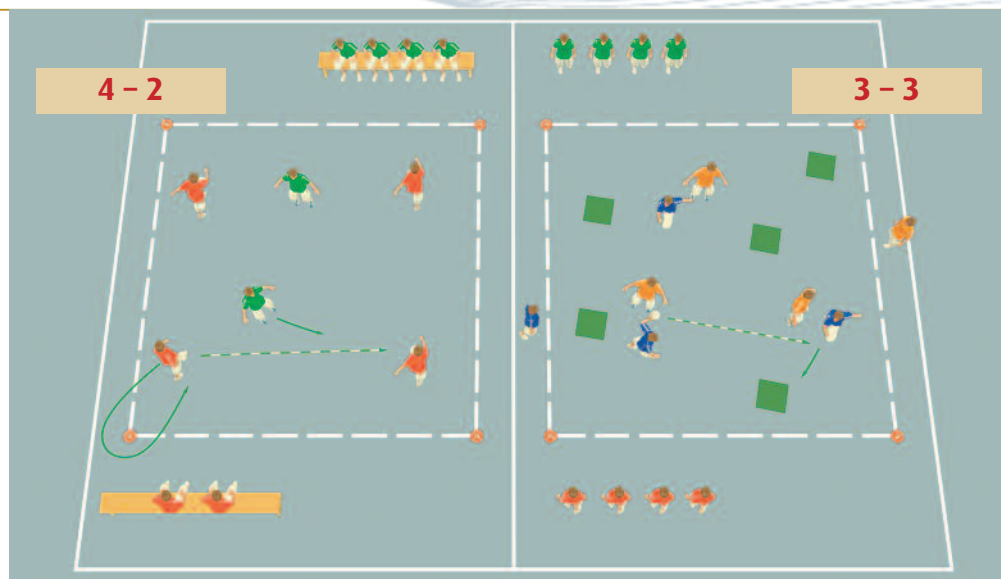
When one team hits the bench, both teams must rush back to their bases leaving the ball. The other teams then run out to pick up the ball and start to play.

Time limit = 1 minute, if no score – change.

By changing the bench for a chair, the target can be made harder to hit (Fig. 18)

Small team games

4 against 2/3 against 3 with 'neutral' players

Organization: Two fields à 9 x 9 m, in which games are carried out at the same time. The playing fields can be marked for example by cones. The figure shows two different games.

1st game: 4 against 2 with additional task (left)

4 attackers against 2 defenders. Players not involved may be substituted at any time.
Aim: Passing as long as possible within their own team. Ball possession changes after 3 turnovers. Additional task: Each attacker must run around a cone after his pass. Who passes the longest?

2nd game: 3 against 3 with one 'neutral' player (right)

4 teams à 4 (3) players. 5-6 carpet tiles are placed on the fields. 2 teams play 3 against 3. The players in possession of the ball may pass to both neutral players outside the field. Aim: Passing to a teammate on a tile. If the defending team intercepts the ball, they immediately continue playing.

This methodical game series is always played in numerical superiority as a learning aid.
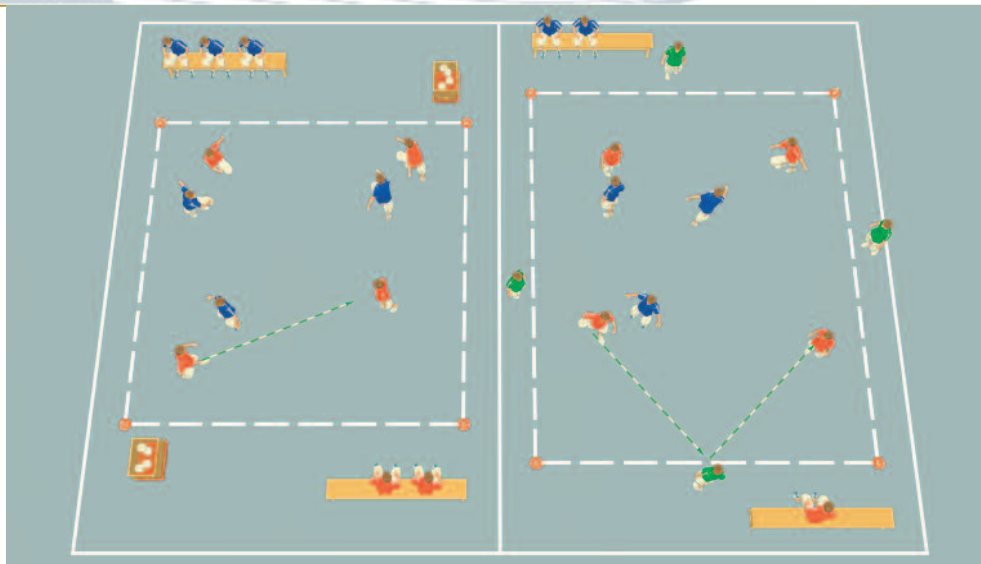

1st game: 4 against 3 with many balls (left)
Organization: 2 fields à 9 x 9 m (small hall). 2 teams à 6 players per field (=24 players). The team in possession of the ball is always numerically superior (4 against 3). Any substitutions are possible. A small box with 10 balls is placed on either of the long sides. Task: Passing the ball for example 1 min within their own team, then placing the ball into their own ball box; the playing right is transferred to the other team. If they lose the ball, they are allowed to get a new ball out of their box, whereas the other team places the captured ball into their box. Who has the most balls after 10 playing actions?

2nd game: 4 against 3 with 4 neutral receiving players (right)
Organization: 2 fields à 10 x 9 m. 3 teams à 4 players. The team in possession of the ball plays. 4 against 3. Any substitutions are possible. The ball may be passed to the 4 receiving players. Aim: Playing 8 (10, 12) passes in a row = 1 point. If the defending players intercept the ball, the playing right is transferred, one substitute/receiving player enters the field.

3 against 2
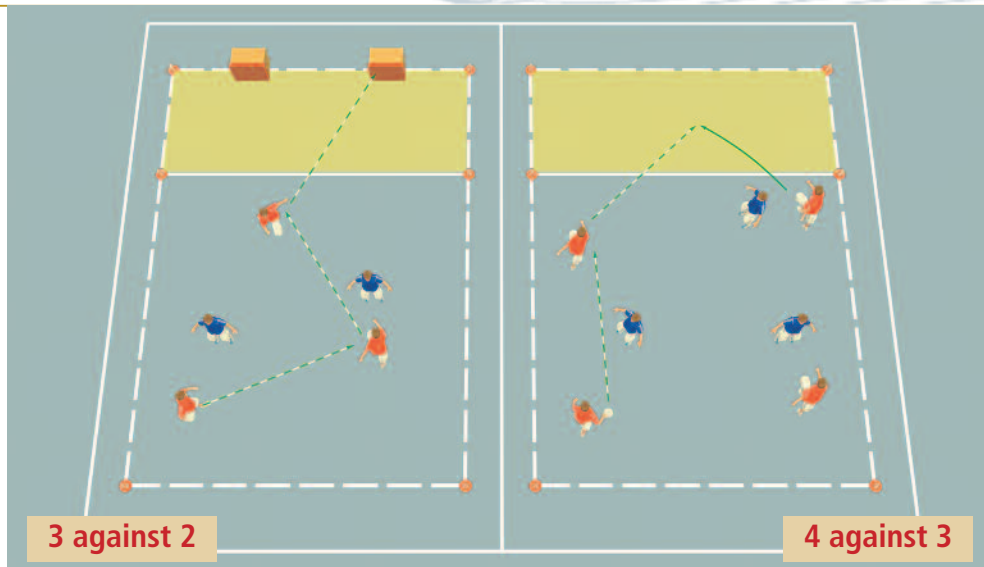
4 against 3

3 against 2 / 4 against 3

1st game: 3 against 2 with throwing targets (left)

Organization: 2 fields à 10 x 6-8 m. 1 throwing line 4-6 m in front of the target. 3 attackers against 2 defending players each (forming teams according to the number).

Procedure: After 8 to 10 passes the attackers may try to hit a target (2 small boxes) from the throwing line without being interfered by opposing players. If the defenders intercept the ball, they may try to hit the throwing target without interference of the opponent, too. Difficulty: Dribbling is not allowed.

2nd game: 4 against 3 with joker (right)

Organization: Playing fields like in Game 1. Scoring: A score is made if an attacker passes the throwing line and receives the ball in the marked field (catching the ball!). The joker field may only be entered by one player of each team at all times. Change after for example 1 min. Variation: Receiving the ball for example while sitting and passing back
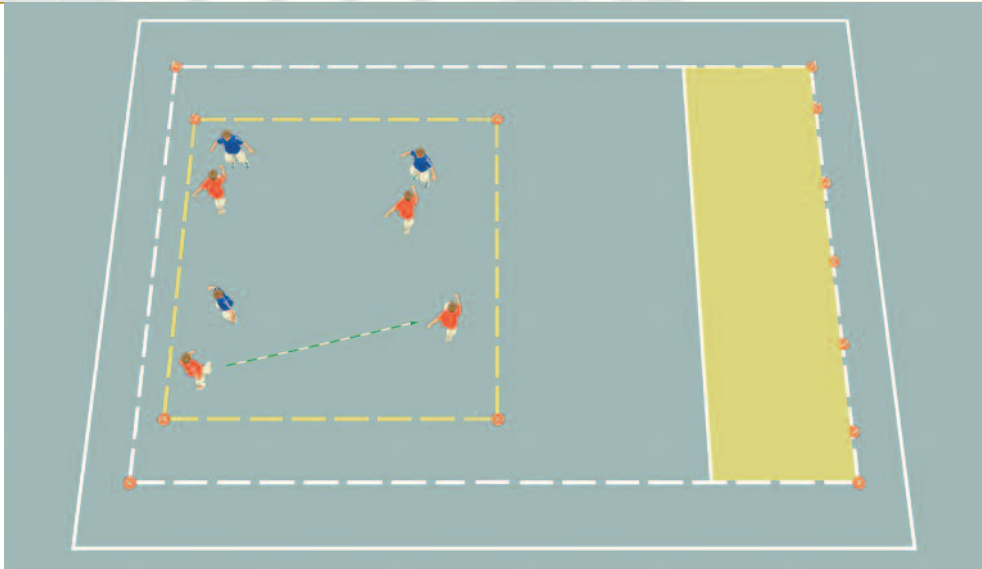
4 against 3 with throwing target

Organization: 1 field of 12 x 17-20 m (according to the hall). 1 throwing line 4-6 m in front of the targets (for example cones). Within this field, another field of approx. 9 x 9 m is marked.

Task: The attacking team in numerical superiority tries to remain in possession of the ball for 1 min. In case of a turnover, they immediately get a new ball out of the ball box and continue to play. If the defending team captures the ball, they may try to hit a cone from the throwing line (=1 point) without interference of the opponent. Afterwards the defending players run back and try to capture the next ball. Change of tasks after for example 1 minute.

Advice: Interchanging the teams according to the number of players in a tournament (round robin). If it is not possible to play on two fields at the same time (e.g. in small halls), the players not involved perform for example coordination tasks.

Basic defence skills

The individual tactical intentions of a player in defence are:

- Constantly striving to regain ball possession (intercepting the ball)
- Constantly suppressing of possible scoring chances of the opponents

The individual tactical means to do so are:

- Intercepting passes and preventing shots at the goal
- Constant visual guarding of the player with the ball
- Constantly monitoring the actions and the positions of the opponents
- Tackling the opponents

You can say that in handball you are "defending with your feet" – meaning that if you are not fast on your feet and do not move appropriately, it will be hard to be a good defence player. The work you are doing with your arms is of course also important. In many defence actions you are using your arms (blocking the ball, tackling your opponent etc.) and by waving with your arms you can reduce the field of vision of your opponent, so that he doesn`t see teammates in free positions.

The basic stance for a defence player is:
- Both feet on the ground
- The feet are slightly apart
- Legs slightly bent legs with raised and waving arms
- You MUST be well balanced

When a defender moves it is important to:
- Have slightly bent legs
- Use small and fast steps
- Have both feet on the ground – avoid jumping
- Move with legs parallel – do not cross over
- Lift and wave arms
- Look up – don`t look at your feet

Handball is a dynamic sport with body contact in 1-on-1 situations. The players must learn what is allowed and not allowed in these situations and which techniques are appropriate to use.

Tackling is used, when a defence player wants to prevent an attacking player from shooting at goal or making a break through.
- Be in basic defence position
- Meet the opponent with good balance and controlled power
- With a right handed attacker, meet the opponent with left arm on the opponent`s underarm and the right arm on the hip of the opponent. Opposite way for a left handed attacker.
- Meet the opponent with bent arms
- If the opponent is shooting with the right hand, place your left foot in front. And the right foot forward, if he is shooting with left arm.
- Move your feet if the opponent moves forward or to one side after you have tackled him.
- When you have contact with your opponent try at once to get hold of the ball immediately.

Basic stance – blocking a pass

Blocking with the arms is used to stop an attacker`s shot at goal or to support the goalkeeper by covering a part of the goal. For some students it is scary to place themselves in front of the shooting opponent and block with the arms. Therefore it is very important to teach them the right technique, but also to talk to them about courage.

- Meet the opponent well balanced and in basic defence stance
- Try to be close to the shooting arm
- Use both arms when you block
- The arms should be so close together that the ball cannot pass through
- Bend slightly in the elbows and keep arms tense
- Keep your hands and fingers up and slightly bent backwards
- Try to block the ball with your palm or underarm
- Really focus on the ball

Blocking with the arms

Intercepting the ball while the attacker is dribbling

Basic attacking skills

The individual tactical intentions of a player in attack are: being playable, becoming playable, making teammate playable, overcoming the opponent, looking for a scoring chance, creating space.

And the individual tactical means to do so are: drawing attention to your teammates, moving into free space, catching, passing and timing, faking and shooting.

It is obvious that the main skills for playing handball are the ability to catch and pass the ball. The players must be able to catch and pass in many different situations – standing, running, jumping, under pressure from a defence player and many times when not well balanced.

Catching: In principal the ball is caught by two hands forming a bowl, where the two thumbs are pointing towards each other and forming the bottom of the bowl. The hands are meeting the ball in front of the body and drawn back at the moment, where you catch the ball. By catching low balls you turn the bowl, so the little fingers are forming the bottom of the bowl.

Passing, shooting

It is very important to teach your students the basic skills of passing/shooting from the beginning. Otherwise they will find it difficult when it comes to more complicated shooting forms.

The normal handball throw used for both passing and shooting:

- Hold the ball high with the over arm at shoulder height and the elbow at 90 degrees angle.
- Draw the throwing arm backwards.
- Have left foot in front if you are passing/shooting with the right arm. Right foot forward if you are passing/shooting with the left arm.
- Move the passing/shooting arm forward and finish the movement with a stretched arm.
- A final movement in the wrist/fingers gives the ball extra speed and the chosen direction.
- You can obtain extra power in the pass/shot by rotating in the body and following through.

Correct catching
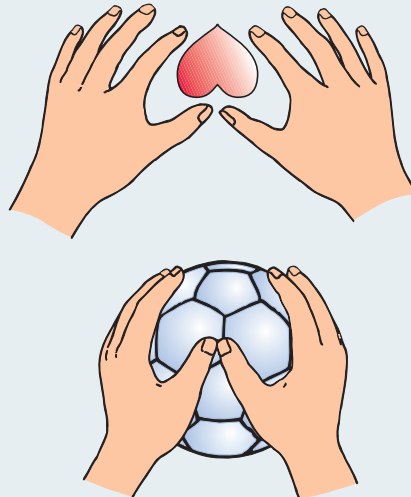
Catching high balls (between breast and head)

· The arms are slightly bent and move towards the ball.

· Hands and fingers form a tunnel, a heart standing on its head.

· The fingers and the thumbs are spread.

· The thumbs are directed towards each other.

· Catching the ball elastically in front of the body and "absorbing" it by moving the hands to the body.

· The thumbs are behind the ball and prevent it from passing to the breast.

A lot of students pass/shoot with the wrong foot forward. And the reason for that is that their "cross coordination" is not yet fully developed. But they must – as fast as possible – learn the right techniques since it is essential for other more complicated shooting techniques. Another often observed technical mistake by students is that they pass/shoot with the elbow too low and hanging too close to the body. This should be corrected as soon as possible.

When it comes to passing to a team mate timing is essential:

- Find the right moment to pass
- Choose the best receiver
- Decide the speed of the pass
- Choose the type of pass

And when it comes to shooting the following tactical aspects are important for a player:

- Analyse the indicators – is there a possibility to score a goal?
- If yes, then decide to shoot
- Then choose the type of shot, the target zone in the goal and the trajectory of the ball.

Basic goalkeeping

At the age 5 to 9 the students should in principal try to play all positions in the team, including the goalkeeper position. In this way they gain experience and understanding of the different tasks in all the positions, and are therefore capable of choosing the right position for themselves in a team at a later stage. A lot of students would like to try to be a goalkeeper. A good save or a goal is easy for them to relate to and to be goalkeeper is attractive, because you are the only one! But being a goalkeeper can be rather scary for some students, so do not force a child to be a goalkeeper, if he doesn`t want to.

At the age of 10 to 11 you can start finding 2 or 3 students, who have the right abilities to become talented goalkeepers. And you can start training the more specific skills for goalkeepers:

- Movements in the goal
- Positioning in the goal when the opponents are shooting from different positions
- Saves with one arm, both arms, with the legs and with arms and legs
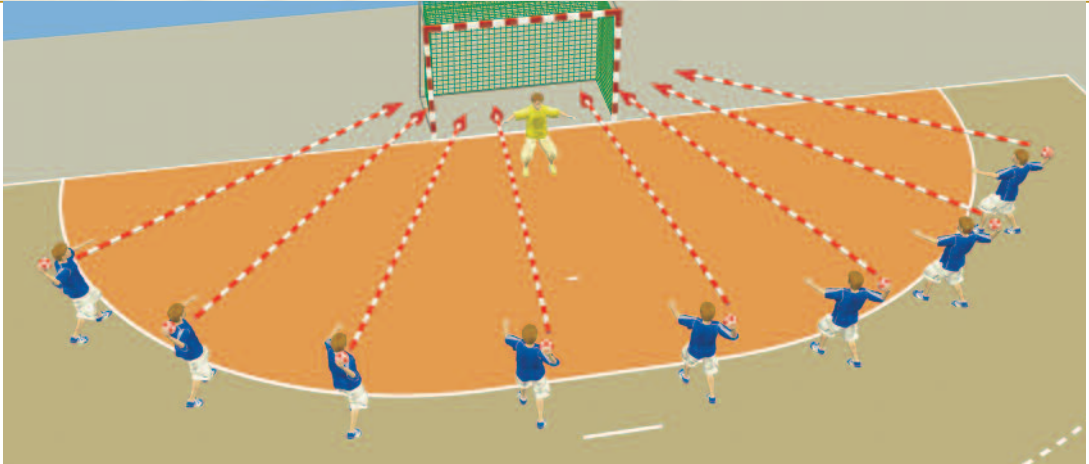
Each player shoots from the 6 m line. The players take the ball and make a jump shot from the same position.
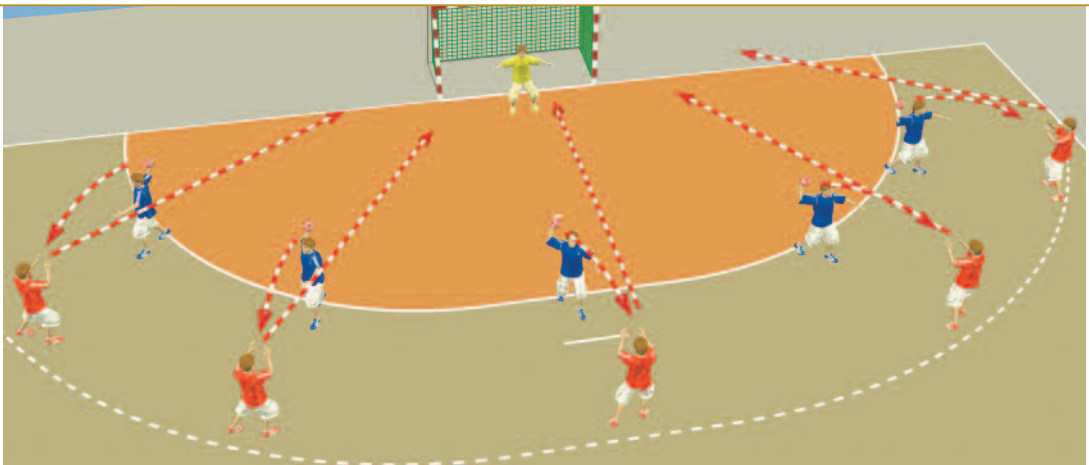
The players work in pairs. One player is trying to shoot and the other player is trying to block the shot. Do not let more than one pair shoot at the same time.