

# 1,000 Touches

(Great Pre-Game Warmup, Practice Exercise & “Homework” for Players)

“**Bells**” - Ball is between legs, legs shoulder-width apart. Player uses “big toes” to pass the ball back and forth and knees move up and down like they are running (not side to side which they will naturally do). The ball should move quickly. **Challenge:** How quickly can they do their bells?

“**Taps**” - Ball is in front of player and player alternates “taps” on the ball with pads of their feet. U5-U6 we call it “marching” on the ball until they get the hang of it. U7+ can really move quickly with this. Every touch should be on the ball (not just moving feet in the air), ball should stay put. **Challenge:** Can players do taps while moving in a circle around the ball? Can they change directions?

“**5 Taps, 5 Bells**” - This is a great progression to have them start combining. You can really combine any of these 1,000 touches but this is one I would start with maybe at the 3rd practice when they have the Bells and Taps down (then you can skip doing them individually).

“**Rollovers**” - The ball starts in front of them and one foot does a rollover using the bottom of their feet (the whole middle pad of the cleat should touch the ball vs. a “flick” of the foot to move it). Important - The rollover happens towards the opposite foot (not to the outside of their body). Try to do 2 rollovers with the same foot in a row and then switch to the other foot, going the opposite way. **Challenge:** How many times can they go back and forth in sets without a mistake? Can they stay in a straight line and not take up so much space?

“**Bell/Bell/Push/Pull**” - Player does 2 Bells and with the same dominant foot, pushes the ball out and pulls it back and starts again (for the “push” - you decide whether to use inside or outside of the foot) . I would have them stay with the same foot repeatedly and then start a new session with the opposite foot. **Challenge:** Have them “push” with the outside one time and the inside one time - which is easier? Which is harder? Which are they better at?

“**Dance**” - (This is a variation of the “Snap Roll” by others) Alternating between the bottom pads of each cleat, move the ball first with the right foot in a inside/outside motion, followed by an inside/outside motion of the left foot. It is like “rolling” the ball along the inside and outside of the footpad of each foot. Once they get the hang of it, I like to use my hands like we’re dancing! :)

**“Outside/Inside”** - Using one foot, push the ball with the outside of your foot and cut it back with the inside of the same foot. Then use the opposite foot and repeat.

**“Outside/Outside/Inside”** - Using one foot at a time, play the ball using the outside of the foot twice and then cut it back with the same foot using the inside of the foot. Then, start again using the opposite foot (outside/outside/inside). If there are lines on the field, have the player try to do this and stay on the line. These are essentially “cuts” with the ball so moving perpendicular is key.

**“The Vee”** - “Draw” a large V in front of you by first using the outside of the right foot, play the ball out in a diagonal. Use the bottom of the same foot to pull it back. Repeat with the opposite foot in the opposite direction. Start slowly and challenge them to work quickly as they get the hang of it .

**“Pull/Trap”** - Using the bottom of the foot, push the ball out and pull it back with the same foot and trap it against the opposite foot (use the toe bed to trap it against the opposite heel). **Challenge:** Can the player accomplish this move and then explode off with the dribble into space? Can they do this in succession, switching feet?

For other great suggestions and to see it live, here are some suggestions:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X4YaLCg-ees>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xs19i1M8gWE>