



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT[®]
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

YMCA SOCCER PRACTICE PLANS U6 & U8



Diagram Key

	Ball		Dribble
	Cone		Pass
	Block		Run
	Marked "spot"		Shoot
X	Defensive player	P	Player or partner
O	Offensive player	S	Supportive player

YMCA Youth Sports Pledge:

I pledge to play the game - the best I can, to be a team player, to respect my opponents, the rules and officials, and improve myself - in spirit, mind and body.

WELCOME!

Thank you for volunteering to be a YMCA coach this season! With your effort and enthusiasm you will find the challenge to be very rewarding. There are 2 objectives for these plans :

- 1) To offer a progressive series of practices that gradually build on previous practices and/or game experiences.
- 2) To maximize the potential for children to have a positive and beneficial experience during their league experience.

Each plan has been laid out to include the following components :

- Warm-Up
- Stations/Drills
- Contest or Game
- League Game Play
- Review of Skills & Wrap-Up

Please contact your YMCA Branch Sports Director with any questions! We look forward to a great season ahead! THANK YOU for volunteering to coach!

Rules for Game Play

League Format

- 4 vs 4 (no goalkeepers)
- Size 3 ball
- 4, 10 minute quarters (sub every 5 minutes if able)
- Rock, paper, scissors to determine who starts with the ball for kick off. Each team alternates at the start of each quarter and half.
- Kick offs, free kicks, throw-ins, goal kicks and corner kicks are used to start or restart play
 - A goal kick is awarded when the ball passes over the goal line (either on the ground or in the air), having last touched a player on the offensive team. A goal kick should be taken within 2-3 yards of the goal line anywhere across the width of the field of play, at the nearest point of where the ball was retrieved.
 - A corner kick is awarded when the ball passes over the goal line (either on the ground or in the air) having last touched a player on the defensive team.
- Goal kicks and corner kicks should be taken in the general vicinity of the respective goal or corner
- If used, all free kicks are indirect
- Kick-ins and/or dribble-ins are also acceptable as restarts when the ball has gone out over the sidelines
- Opponents should be 10 feet away from the ball on all restarts
- No penalty kicks. No offside. No heading.
- Fouls such as handballs, tripping, and pushing will occasionally occur, most times unintentionally. If an obvious foul occurs (at the discretion of the coaches) then an indirect kick will be awarded.
- No score or standings will be kept

PRACTICE PLAN #1

WELCOME: (10 minutes)

- Coach introduction, schedule, and team rules
 - Use this time to recruit parent help, practice names, & create snack schedule

WARM-UP: (10 minutes)

- Begin each practice with 5 to 10 minutes of warm-up activities to get players loosened up and ready to go. Can include running, dynamic stretching (high knees, walking lunges, frankensteins, side shuffles, arm circles, etc.)

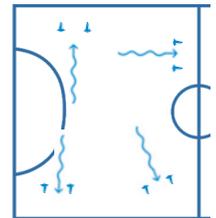
STATIONS: (18 minutes) Learn, Develop, & practice (6 min per station)

- Station 1- Dribbling
 - Ball control and keeping the ball close to our feet
 - Not using our hands to stop or redirect the ball
 - Using inside of foot to dribble and use little kicks
- Station 2- Passing & Trapping
 - Using inside of foot "sweet spot" to pass to partner
 - Trap the ball with the bottom of your foot
- Station 3- Goalie Work
 - Goalie is the only person who can use their hands to stop the ball.
 - Their job is to keep their goal clear and not let any soccer ball pass by them in the net
 - Have kids practice being goalie, and coach kicking goals.

WATER BREAK: (2 minutes)

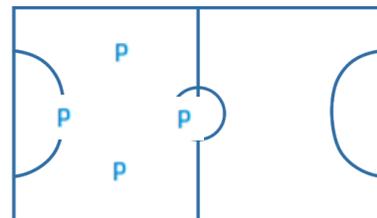
CONTEST (5 minutes) Gates Dribble

- Cones are placed as gates all over the playing area (there should be more gates than children). Children try to dribble through as many gates in a specified period of time, such as 30 seconds. The children keep track of how many gates they dribbled and try to get more next time. Can play with other team if preferred.



SCRIMMAGE: (Remaining Time)

- Before game play begins, explain offense and defense, and what the purpose is of each role. The goal of offense is to score a goal! The goal of defense is to defend their goal and not let the other team score! 4 vs. 4 is best in a diamond shape: one defender, two wide midfielders (offense & defense) and one forward.
- Rotate "positioning" and encourage kids to spread out, so they are able to receive a pass from a teammate.
- 4 vs. 4, no goalies. See above for league rules.
- Explain goal kicks, corner kicks, and throw-ins.



LESSON & SKILLS REVIEW: (2 Minutes)

- Review skills learned today
- Praise the positives!

PRACTICE PLAN #2

TEAM HUDDLE/WARM-UP: (10 minutes)

- Begin each practice with 5 to 10 minutes of warm-up activities to get players loosened up and ready to go. Can include running, dynamic stretching (high knees, walking lunges, side shuffles, arm circles, etc.) Also, talk about the game from last week, and areas of focus for this week.

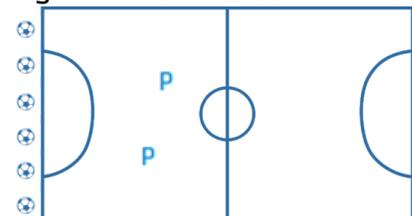
STATIONS: (15 minutes) Learn, Develop, & practice (5 min per station)

- Station 1- Dribbling
 - Retrieve- the coach begins with all of the soccer balls and throws the balls in different directions for each player who must bring the ball back to the coach as quickly as they can. First, the children bring the ball back by using their hands in some fashion, such as rolling the ball with their hands. After that, the children bring the ball back using their feet.
- Station 2- Ball Control & Trapping
 - In a coned area, every player has a ball. Coach asks all players to dribble their ball in the grid. When coach says "STOP!", players must trap their ball and freeze in a goofy position.
- Station 3- Scoring
 - Have kids line up along midfield and assign each of them a number. When you say their number, you will pass them the ball, and they will work to score! Add in a goalie after a few times through.

WATER BREAK: (2 minutes)

CONTEST (5 minutes) Sharks & Minnows

- The minnows, the players with a ball, line up shoulder to shoulder on one end of the grid. Two players are designated as sharks and are positioned inside of the grid without soccer balls. On the coach's command, the minnows must dribble their ball through the grid and get to the other side without getting their ball stolen or kicked away by the sharks. If a player loses their ball while crossing the grid, he/she becomes a shark.



LEAGUE GAME: (Remaining Time)

LESSON & SKILLS REVIEW: (2 Minutes)

- Review skills learned today
- Praise the positives!

PRACTICE PLAN #3

TEAM HUDDLE/WARM-UP: (10 minutes)

- Begin each practice with 5 to 10 minutes of warm-up activities to get players loosened up and ready to go. Can include running, dynamic stretching (high knees, walking lunges, side shuffles, arm circles, etc.) Also, talk about the game from last week, and areas of focus for this week.

STATIONS: (15 minutes) Learn, Develop, & practice (5 min per station)

- Station 1- Quickness & Coordination
 - Find the Coach- the coach has all the children close their eyes and while their eyes are closed, the coach moves. On the command, "find the coach", the children open their eyes and dribble to the coach.
- Station 2- Aiming at Target
 - Soccer Bowling- Create a gate with two cones for players to line up. Set up two "gates" for 3-4 players. Place a ball on top of a cone about 10 feet in front of the players as the "bowling pin". Have players practice hitting the target. Once they get the hang of it, create a competition out of it.
- Station 3- Positions & Passing
 - Alley Cat- Set up cones in 3 "alleys" on the field. Set a player in each zone (one forward, one midfielder, and one defender). Ball starts with the defender, and they must pass the ball to each other down the field and shoot a goal. For added difficulty, the coach can act as a defender, and try to take the ball, or goal keeper can be added.

WATER BREAK: (2 minutes)

CONTEST (5 minutes) Steal the Bacon

- Divide team in half and position each team on opposite sides of the field. Give each player on both teams a number (each team will have a player #1, 2, 3, etc.). Coach rolls the ball into the middle of the area and calls out a number. Player from each team with the called number runs out to the ball and tries to score a goal. Play continues until a goal is scored or ball goes out of play. Coach may call more than one number at a time.

LEAGUE GAME: (Remaining Time)

LESSON & SKILLS REVIEW: (2 Minutes)

- Review skills learned today
- Praise the positives!

PRACTICE PLAN #4

TEAM HUDDLE/WARM-UP: (10 minutes)

- Begin each practice with 5 to 10 minutes of warm-up activities to get players loosened up and ready to go. Can include running, dynamic stretching (high knees, walking lunges, side shuffles, arm circles, etc.) Also, talk about the game from last week, and areas of focus for this week.

STATIONS: (15 minutes) Learn, Develop, & practice (5 min per station)

- Station 1- Defense
 - All players in a line 5 yards behind the coach. Coach starts dribbling toward the goal. Player must hustle around the coach and stop his/her path to the goal and clear the ball to the outside of the field.
- Station 2- Passing
 - Circle Passing- players form a circle and pass to each other. They can pass to any team member except to the ones immediately next to them. Move to other variations such as pressure passing (one person in middle trying to intercept pass), and pass around (one player in the middle passes around the circle to each player)
- Station 3- Dribbling
 - Driving School- Players go to driving school and must listen to the coach instructions. Go- start dribbling, keep the ball close and look up. Stop- trap ball to stop it. Slow- dribble slow. Turn- point to a direction they should turn to. Be careful to not have a “wreck”, eyes on the road!

WATER BREAK: (2 minutes)

CONTEST (5 minutes) Relay Race

- Divide team in half and have cones spread out vertically towards the goal. Each team must have a player at each cone. The player at the midfield cone starts with the ball and passes it to the next player. The last player to receive a pass shoots the goal. First team to score gets a point. Play up to 5 points.



LEAGUE GAME: (Remaining Time)

LESSON & SKILLS REVIEW: (2 Minutes)

- Review skills learned today
- Praise the positives!

PRACTICE PLAN #5

TEAM HUDDLE/WARM-UP: (10 minutes)

- Begin each practice with 5 to 10 minutes of warm-up activities to get players loosened up and ready to go. Can include running, dynamic stretching (high knees, walking lunges, side shuffles, arm circles, etc.) Also, talk about the game from last week, and areas of focus for this week.

STATIONS: (15 minutes) Learn, Develop, & practice (5 min per station)

- Station 1- Kicking
 - Each player has a ball and the ball is their puppy. Puppies sometimes get a little crazy, and we have to keep them close to us on a leash. Other times, we can let them run and go a little further from us. Have players practice big kicks and little kicks, as the walk their “puppy.” Yell out the commands, and have them go retrieve their ball and start again.
- Station 2- Quickness & Running
 - Treasure Hunt- Coach drops about 20 “treasures”- AKA cones around the field. Each player has their own treasure chest (designated by a poly spot). On go, players must collect treasures and bring it back to their chest, but can only grab one at a time.
- Station 3 – Dribbling & Shooting
 - Set up cones in a zig zag leading up to the goal. Players will practice dribbling and changing direction and then score a goal to end.

WATER BREAK: (2 minutes)

CONTEST (5 minutes) What time is it Mr. Wolf?

- Players line up on the goal line with a ball (food). Coach starts as Mr. Wolf, and the players shout “What time is it Mr. Wolf?” and the wolf shouts back a time (2 o’clock, 5 o’clock, etc.). Each player kicks the ball the number the wolf shouts out. Players ask again and repeat. When the wolf shouts out “dinnertime”, the players have to dribble their soccer balls back to the goal line as the wolf chases and tries to kick their ball away. If the player gets their ball kicked away, they join Mr. Wolf and help say times.

LEAGUE GAME: (Remaining Time)

LESSON & SKILLS REVIEW: (2 Minutes)

- Review skills learned today
- Praise the positives!

PRACTICE PLAN #6

TEAM HUDDLE/WARM-UP: (10 minutes)

- Begin each practice with 5 to 10 minutes of warm-up activities to get players loosened up and ready to go. Can include running, dynamic stretching (high knees, walking lunges, side shuffles, arm circles, etc.) Also, talk about the game from last week, and areas of focus for this week.

STATIONS: (15 minutes) Learn, Develop, & practice (5 min per station)

- Station 1- Dribbling, Throw-Ins
 - Have players practice throw-ins, and set up a cone target for practice. Each time through the line, set it further and further away from the players.
- Station 2- Passing
 - Divide the group into pairs and have them pass back and forth with their partners until you yell, "All (your team name)..” and give a command that everyone must do. You might have them hop to a tree, run to a goal post, skip around the coach, etc. After completing the task, each person must get back together with their partner and continue passing back and forth until the next command.
- Station 3- Defense
 - Protect the King- form an outline of a circle with one player in the middle and a cone directly behind them. Players on the outside of the circle try to knock down the cone (king) and the defender must protect the cone by kicking it out of the circle. Players must go one at a time.

WATER BREAK: (2 minutes)

CONTEST (5 minutes) Obstacle Course

- In a large area, set up the following obstacles- 1) Dribbling- zig-zag through cones, 2) Throw-In- designate area to throw the ball into play, 3) Kicking- Running along with big kicks towards final obstacle, 4) Shooting Goal- have either cones set up as a goal or utilize actual goal on field. Time each player, and see who can complete the course the fastest!

LEAGUE GAME: (Remaining Time)

LESSON & SKILLS REVIEW: (2 Minutes)

- Review skills learned today
- Praise the positives!

PRACTICE PLAN #7

TEAM HUDDLE/WARM-UP: (10 minutes)

- Begin each practice with 5 to 10 minutes of warm-up activities to get players loosened up and ready to go. Can include running, dynamic stretching (high knees, walking lunges, side shuffles, arm circles, etc.) Also, talk about the game from last week, and areas of focus for this week.

STATIONS: (15 minutes) Learn, Develop, & practice (5 min per station)

- Station 1- Dribbling & Passing
 - Coach Give and Go- Players start with a soccer ball in a line, and pass to the coach. While the player is running, the coach passes it back, and the players try to score.
- Station 2- Passing
 - Tunnel Passing- two players face each other and have a set of cones between them. The goal is to go through the tunnel as many times as possible in a set amount of time. Works on aiming at a target and passing accurately.
- Station 3- Shooting & Dribbling
 - Simon Says- Using oral commands, have players follow the coach and complete the following tasks (dribble to ____, score a goal, trap the ball, do 10 jumping jacks, etc.)

CONTEST (5 minutes) Clean out the Backyard

- In a large area, spread out soccer balls (leaves in our backyard!) and have the kids dribble to the goal and score a goal. See how fast the group can complete the task! Can split the team into smaller groups to compete.

LEAGUE GAME: (Remaining Time)

LESSON & SKILLS REVIEW: (2 Minutes)

- Review skills learned today
- Praise the positives!
- Season Re-Cap; skills to work on in the “off-season”!
 - Passing with a sibling or against the garage or wall
 - Setting up cones or objects in backyard and work on scoring goals.
 - Working on footwork or quick taps with soccer ball.