

# YMCA Soccer Ages 8U

## Session 1

Coach:

Team:

**Practice Goals:** For the first practice of the season, look to establish a spirit of positivity and togetherness. The goal of this session is for players to have fun, explore the different aspects of soccer, improve a bit at each, and end looking forward to the next session and the rest of the season. The lesson plan provided here focuses on a bit of everything, so players can begin to develop familiarity with the large variety of skills that soccer involves.

Time	Activity Type	Activity Description	Reference
10 Min	Warm-Up: Dribbling	Use this dribbling warmup for players to warm their bodies and muscles at the start of practice, while getting touches on the ball and improving their dribbling. Emphasize the points detailed in the video, such as dribbling using various parts of the foot but primarily the area on the tops of the toes, and not the front of the toes.	<p><b>Video Tutorial:</b></p>  <p><a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3xM3xWE">https://sportsedtv.co/3xM3xWE</a></p>
5 Min	Fitness: General	Gather players into a group. "In soccer, running makes our hearts beat faster, and kicking helps strengthen our leg muscles so we can kick the ball farther. Spread out into your own space. Everyone run in place and I will pass the ball to some of you. If you get the ball, pass it back to me and keep running!" Continue for about 30 seconds. "Playing soccer improves our physical conditioning or fitness. We get better at running and kicking the ball, and can keep going longer before we get too tired. How can I keep from getting too tired when I'm running?" (Pacing themselves.) "How about kicking?" (Practicing at home.) "It's also important to take a rest when you need one and to drink water during practice and at home. We'll talk more about the different areas of fitness in our fitness circles throughout the season."	<p>YMCA Tutorial: Page 78</p>

15 min	Two-Touch Receiving & Passing	<p>First, demonstrate how to properly receive the ball with one touch, and pass with the second. The reference video breaks down the proper technique of passing, so you know which aspects to focus on in your demonstration.</p> <p>Next, follow the activity shown in the video. Divide the players into groups of 3-4, and each group will stand in 2 lines about 5-10 yards apart (1-2 players per line). One line (with 2 players) starts with the ball. Players will pass to the opposite line, and jog around to the back of that opposite line. The first player in the other line will control the ball with their first touch, and pass it to the opposite line with their second touch, and then jog around to the back of that opposite line. Check the reference video for a more detailed and visual explanation.</p>	<p><b>Video Tutorial:</b></p>  <p><a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3suG0Zm">https://sportsedtv.co/3suG0Zm</a></p>
15 min	4v4 Play: Passing & Moving Focus	<p>Next, create 4v4 games. Make mini-fields for each group using cones. Each team of 4 should try to pass often during the game. Emphasize and encourage passing and moving in the game. Freeze the game occasionally to show them where to move to be in the best position to receive a pass. Focus on using positive reinforcement. Do be aware to not stop the game too frequently. Make sure to let the players play and enjoy!</p>	<p><b>YMCA Tutorial:</b> Page 86</p> <p>A separate video drill to practice passing and moving, in case players struggle with it in the game:</p>  <p><a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3k1jQd7">https://sportsedtv.co/3k1jQd7</a></p>
3 min	Team Circle	<p>Gather players into a circle. "Everyone hold hands. We're going to keep holding hands as a group, trying to keep the ball in our circle. We'll pass slowly and remember to hold hands at all times." Repeat for 10 passes.</p> <p>"Drop hands. If you were just passing, it would have been much easier. But when we think of working together as a team, it takes more effort. We need to put just as</p>	

		much effort into being good teammates, with everyone doing their part. We'll talk about four qualities or values that help us be better players—caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. These qualities are just as important as kicking and passing. Give me an example of each of the four values.” Listen to their responses and discuss.	
	Total Time	48 minutes	

**Notes:**

# YMCA Soccer Ages 8U

## Session 2

Coach:

Team:

<p><b>Practice Goals:</b> This practice introduces shooting technique as part of the warmup, and from there focuses on playing and realistic scenarios to prepare children for the season, including going over the rules of the game and restarts. Towards the end, players have 5 minutes of throw-in practice. Players will be exposed to a variety of skills in this session to get them ready to start the season.</p>			
Time	Activity Type	Activity Description	Reference
10 Min	Warm-Up: Shooting	<p>Players start in a line at the top of the 18-yard box, with a ball each. The coach stands inside the box in front of them. The first player passes the ball to the coach, who will lay it off to the side. The player will run after the ball and shoot into the goal. Make sure players are not kicking with their toe, but with their instep or laces. The reference video explains the correct technique to shoot with either, and how to set up this activity.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Video Tutorial:</b></p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p style="text-align: center;"><a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3ALcUYI">https://sportsedtv.co/3ALcUYI</a></p>
5 Min	Fitness: Flexibility	<p>Bring a rubber band and show it to children. "This rubber band is like our muscles. Can you tell me why?" Listen for children's responses (stretches when pulled, goes back to original shape, etc.). Demonstrate how the rubber band stretches. "Your muscles work the same way as this rubber band. When you reach and stretch, your muscles stretch just like the rubber band. When your body comes back, your muscles go back to their original shape. Everyone reach down to the ground with your arms slowly and then bring your arms back up." Have children repeat three times. "Your leg muscles need to stretch because we use them the most in soccer. It makes them more flexible. When muscles are flexible, it keeps them from getting hurt and makes the muscles feel good."</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">YMCA Tutorial: 83</p>
10 min	2v2 Play:	<p>2 v 2 to cones or small goals. Team</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">YMCA Tutorial: 88</p>

	<p>Team Play &amp; First Touch</p>	<p>size can be adapted if needed. Place the cones or goals about 20 yards apart. "Play as a team."</p> <p>The first touch, when the player first receives the ball, is extremely important when passing and receiving a ball under pressure.</p> <p>Encourage players to use the inside or the outside of the foot with their first touch to set the ball rolling in the direction they want to pass next.</p> <p>Coach: How can you best play as a team?  Players: Pass the ball to each other.</p>	<p>A separate video drill to practice passing and first touch, in case players struggle with it in the game:</p>  <p><a href="https://sportsedtv.co/2VSu2MN">https://sportsedtv.co/2VSu2MN</a></p>
<p>20 min</p>	<p>4v4 Play: Restarts &amp; Throw-Ins</p>	<p>4 v 4—Each team of four tries to score into a small goal. For each pair of teams, mark a playing area no larger than 50 by 30 feet.</p> <p>Remind the players of the restart rules for a game, and follow them in this activity.</p> <p>Coach: How do we start the game?  Players: With a kickoff at the center. The other team must go back into its own half.</p> <p>Coach: What happens when the ball goes out-of-bounds at the side?  Players: It is a throw-in.</p> <p>Coach: What happens when the ball goes out-of-bounds at the end? Players: It is a goal kick or a corner kick.</p> <p>Coach: What happens after a goal is scored?  Players: A kickoff at the center. The team that scored must go back into its own half.</p> <p><b>Stop the game for five minutes so all players can practice taking throw-ins</b> (see reference video). You can do this quickly by having pairs of players do throw-ins to each other (one ball per pair). Make sure to teach the rules of</p>	<p>YMCA Tutorial: 81</p> <p><b>Throw-In Video Tutorial:</b></p>  <p><a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3skpR8y">https://sportsedtv.co/3skpR8y</a></p>

		<p>throw-ins as described in the video.</p> <p>You can set up and practice goal kicks and corner kicks during the game too.</p>	
3 min	Team Circle	<p>Gather children into groups of two partners. "Everyone stand and balance on one foot." Wait while everyone gets his or her balance. "Now one of you offer your shoulder for your teammate to lean on. If you're leaning on your partner's shoulder, try to balance on one foot again . . . Change places.</p> <p>If you were leaning before, let your partner lean on your shoulder and stand on one foot." Wait until everyone has balanced with the help of a partner.</p> <p>"Now come back here. Wasn't it easier to balance when you were leaning on your partner? It works that way in soccer, too. When you help each other during practices and games, we work better as a team; each of you can contribute. Your teammates count on you to contribute to the team. That is being responsible to your team."</p>	
	Total Time	48 minutes	

**Notes:**



# YMCA Soccer Ages 8U

## Session 3

Coach:

Team:

<p><b>Practice Goals:</b> This practice introduces crossing and scoring as part of the warmup, a very practical pattern that can be applied in games. From there, we focus on defending and marking, as well as dribbling while on offense. All of these skills can be applied in matches.</p>			
Time	Activity Type	Activity Description	Reference
10 Min	Warm-Up: Crossing & Scoring	<p>Make sure to watch the video tutorial to get a visual of how to set up and run this exercise.</p> <p>One player dribbles down the side of the field, and crosses the ball to a player running into the box, who will shoot on goal.</p> <p>This activity will help players learn to dribble and cross, as well as make a run into the box and to score off a cross.</p> <p>Goalkeepers are optional.</p>	<p><b>Video Tutorial:</b></p>  <p><a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3xQ8fCH">https://sportsedtv.co/3xQ8fCH</a></p>
5 Min	Fitness: Cardio- Respiratory	<p>Children gather in a group. "Everyone hold one hand up and make a fist. Squeeze your fist tightly, then let go. Keep tightening and letting go." Children continue for 10 counts. "Your heart is a special muscle that tightens and relaxes just like your fist is doing. Your heart is about the size of your fist. Every time it tightens, or beats, it pumps blood all over your body. When you play soccer, your heart beats faster and you breathe faster. Run in place with high knees. Feel your lungs and feel your heart beating by placing your hands over your chest. Count how many times your heart beats." Time for 15 seconds.</p> <p>Ask players the number they counted. "Running helps you improve your cardiorespiratory fitness— the heart and lungs working together to get blood to your whole body."</p>	<p>YMCA Tutorial: Page 87</p>

10 min	1v1: Defending & Dribbling	<p>First, introduce and teach how to defend a dribble. Players should approach the dribbler and stay low to the ground and on their toes, ready to move in either direction. They should not go to kick the ball too soon, but wait for the right moment to try to steal it. Remind players of the aspects mentioned in the video.</p> <p>Then to practice, follow the activity shown in the video.</p> <p>Two players stand across from each other in a small field of cones. One player will be the defender and one will be the attacker to start. The defender starts with the ball, and both have a goal (2 cones) behind them. The defender passes to the attacker, then the attacker will try to dribble by them and through the goal, while the defender will try to stop them. After the pass, the defender should run to get close to the attacker quickly. From there, they should slow down and pressure the dribbler by getting close to them, and waiting for an opening to kick the ball away. If the defender steals the ball, they can try to score on the opposing goal.</p>	<p><b>Video Tutorial:</b></p>  <p><a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3CV5HXw">https://sportsedtv.co/3CV5HXw</a></p>
15 min	4v4: Defending & Marking	<p>4v4 (or 2v2) to small goals – players defend their space by marking an opponent. Players pressure the ball during game play.</p> <p>Coach: How can you stop the other team from getting the ball? (You may need to set this up by saying “How can Katie make it harder for Matthew to get a pass from Michael?”)</p> <p>Players: Stay close to them, mark them. Marking means guarding your opponent.</p> <p>Freeze the game from time to time to show good marking and to check that players are marking appropriately.</p>	<p>YMCA Tutorial: Page 109</p> <p>A separate video on defending 1v1 technique:</p>  <p><a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3iOSs2B">https://sportsedtv.co/3iOSs2B</a></p>
3 min	Team Circle	<p>Gather children into a group near two cones 10 feet apart. Act out two examples of celebrating for good play or a win. One should be exaggerated and obviously inappropriate, the other modeling the kind of celebration you’d like to see from your team.</p>	

		<p>“If you think the first example I showed you is the way to celebrate a good play, stand by this cone. If you think the second is the best way to celebrate, stand by this one.” All children should vote.</p> <p>After all players have voted, ask them why they voted the way they did. “The second example is the kind of celebration that shows respect for your opponents.”</p>	
	Total Time	43 minutes	

**Notes:**

# YMCA Soccer Ages 8U

## Session 4

Coach:

Team:

<p><b>Practice Goals:</b> This session teaches a new dribbling technique as part of the warmup, and then continues into a two-touch passing drill, and finally a game focused on shooting. Players will continue to improve at the fundamental skills. Encourage them to try the new dribble taught in the warmup during the game, as well.</p>			
Time	Activity Type	Activity Description	Reference
10 Min	Warm-Up: The V Turn	<p>Each player with a ball, they practice and learn the V Turn as shown in the video. Make sure to demonstrate the technique first to the players, emphasizing the key points from the video.</p> <p>From there, players will each practice in their own space. This will both get them moving, as well as improve their ball control and dribbling ability.</p>	<p><b>Video Tutorial:</b></p>  <p><a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3iMRBQ5">https://sportsedtv.co/3iMRBQ5</a></p>
5 Min	Fitness: Cardio-Respiratory	<p>Gather children into a group. "Everyone put your hand up in front of you and make a fist. What did we pretend our fist was at the last practice?" Wait for response (the heart).</p> <p>"What does our heart do?" Wait for response (pumps blood). "Everybody open and close your fist. Put your hands over your chest and feel what's happening. Now, let's run to the goal and back. Will our fist beat faster or slower?" Listen to responses (faster). "Put your hands over your chest. Is it faster or slower moving? When you run during soccer, your heart beats faster, just like the fist opening and closing, and your lungs breathe faster. They slow down when you slow down. Making your heart beat faster helps to improve your cardiorespiratory fitness."</p>	<p>YMCA Tutorial: 92</p>
12 min	Passing: Triangle	<p>This triangle passing activity is a great way for players to learn two-touch passing and</p>	<p><b>Video Tutorial:</b></p>

		<p>improve their first touch. Make sure to watch the reference video to have a complete picture and to know what to emphasize.</p> <p>Reinforce accurate passes, and players correctly receive the ball on the back foot across their cone.</p>	 <p><a href="https://sportsedtv.co/2VSu2MN">https://sportsedtv.co/2VSu2MN</a></p>
<p>15 min</p>	<p><b>4v4 Game: Shooting</b></p>	<p>4v4 (or 4v3 or 4v2) – players shoot under pressure using appropriate technique.</p> <p>Watch the reference video to know which aspects of shooting technique to emphasize. Players should shoot with their laces or instep, not their toe.</p> <p>To attack the goal in the game, focusing on shooting with good technique under pressure.</p> <p>Players learn the importance of having a shooting attitude.</p> <p>Coach: What do you have to do if you want to score?          Players: Shoot.</p> <p>Coach: Where should you shoot? Players: At the goal. The whole goal is the target.</p> <p>If you don't shoot, you won't score!          Encourage taking a shot whenever the opportunity is there.</p>	<p>YMCA Tutorial: 104</p> <p>Video tutorial on shooting, which explains the most important aspects for you to highlight and communicate to your players:</p>  <p><a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3ALcUYI">https://sportsedtv.co/3ALcUYI</a></p>
<p>3 min</p>	<p><b>Team Circle</b></p>	<p>Gather children into a group near two cones 10 feet apart. "Let's imagine we're playing in a game and one of your teammates passes to you. The pass is kicked too far away from you, and you can't get to the ball. Pretend you say, "What a terrible pass! Get out of here until you learn how to play soccer!"</p> <p>How would you change your comment to sound more positive and make the person feel better?" Listen to their responses.</p> <p>"It is important to make positive comments and not get upset when your teammates make mistakes. This shows you care about your teammates."</p>	

	Total Time	45 minutes	
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**Notes:**

# YMCA Soccer Ages 8U

## Session 5

Coach:

Team:

<p><b>Practice Goals:</b> This session is designed to help players further improve at shooting, dribbling, and passing, as well as refresh on the rules of the game. As the players get more comfortable with each skill, continue to reinforce the right technique.</p>			
Time	Activity Type	Activity Description	Reference
10 Min	Warm-Up: Shooting	Follow the activity in the video. This will warm players up, and help them improve at shooting. Give positive reinforcement and help them work on their technique. The reference video explains the proper way to shoot.	<p><b>Video Tutorial:</b></p>  <p><a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3ALcUYI">https://sportsedtv.co/3ALcUYI</a></p>
5 Min	Fitness: Cardio-Respiratory	<p>Gather children into a group. "Everyone find your own space. Put your fist up in front of you. We pretend our fist is our . . ." Wait for a response (heart). "The heart does what things?"</p> <p>Wait for responses (pumps blood and beats faster when we run or move faster). "When I say, 'go', everyone run in your own space and make your fist open and close faster at the same time. When I say 'stop', stop as fast as you can." Begin.</p> <p>"When you run, your heart beats faster. Every time your heart beats faster, it gets stronger because it's a muscle. Muscles get stronger when you use them. Soccer is a great way to keep your heart healthy and strong and improve your cardiorespiratory fitness."</p>	<p>YMCA Tutorial: Page 96</p>
12 min	Dribbling:	Shown in the video, this activity helps players improve at dribbling, and introduces the difference between keeping	<b>Video Tutorial:</b>

		<p>the ball close while dribbling slower, and dribbling faster with longer touches.</p> <p>Coach the players to keep the ball close to them during the first 4 cones and under control using many small touches, and use a stronger touch to accelerate towards the final cone.</p> <p>The reference video describes the correct technique.</p>	 <p><a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3xRnjQG">https://sportsedtv.co/3xRnjQG</a></p>
<p>15 min</p>	<p><b>4v4: Passing &amp; Rules</b></p>	<p>4 v 4— Players learn to spread out down the field so they can receive a pass.</p> <p>Review the rules, including starts and restarts, fouls, no use of hands, throw-ins, corner kicks (direct only), and goal kicks.</p> <p>Coach: What is the fastest way to get the ball down the field (pass or dribble)? Players: Pass.</p> <p>Coach: For Katie to pass down the field, where does Matthew need to go so she can pass to him? Players: Down the field.</p> <p>“Be in a space where someone can pass to you.”</p>	<p>YMCA Tutorial: Page 83</p> <p><b>Throw-In Video Tutorial:</b></p>  <p><a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3skpR8y">https://sportsedtv.co/3skpR8y</a></p> <p>A separate activity for players to work on passing technique and moving:</p>  <p><a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3k1jQd7">https://sportsedtv.co/3k1jQd7</a></p>
<p>3 min</p>	<p><b>Team Circle</b></p>	<p>Gather children into a group. “Think about the rules in soccer. I am going to tell you a rule. Raise your hand if you think it’s something you should let the official know happened.” (Examples: handball, tripping, kicking the ball out of bounds, running into the goalie.)</p>	

		<p>“You should let the official know about all of those rules being broken, even if the official does not see it. Raising a hand or telling officials is an honest thing to do when you break a rule, even if it’s an accident. It’s important to be honest when you break a rule in practice and in games. This will make you a better player and a better person.”</p>	
	Total Time	45 minutes	

**Notes:**

# YMCA Soccer Ages 8U

## Session 6

Coach:

Team:

<p><b>Practice Goals:</b> This session plan rehearses dribbling and team play/passing activities, as well as introduces a new defending technique that players can try out in games once they are comfortable.</p>			
Time	Activity Type	Activity Description	Reference
10 Min	Warm-Up: Dribbling	This dribbling activity, shown in the video, will warm players up while giving them more dribbling experience. It also includes turning on the ball.	<p><b>Video Tutorial:</b></p>  <p><a href="https://sportsed.tv.co/3xM3xWE">https://sportsed.tv.co/3xM3xWE</a></p>
5 Min	Fitness: Flexibility	Gather children into a group. Show them a rubber band. "Let's pretend this rubber band is one of your muscles. See how it moves back and forth, stretching and moving. Let's move our bodies just like the rubber band. Reach and stretch up and down. It's important to stretch slowly without bouncing or jerking." Have them continue for one minute. "Our muscles help us to move and stretch. We need to stretch muscles to keep them flexible and able to move easily. When muscles can move easily, they don't get injured."	<p>YMCA Tutorial: Page 100</p>
10 min	Defending: Tackling From Behind	The purpose of this activity, explained in the video, is to get defenders comfortable with making a tackle from behind, when the opportunity is there. Explain to them that when they pressure from behind, if they see an opening in the dribbler's legs they can tap the ball away. They don't	<p><b>Video Tutorial:</b></p>

		<p>always have to wait for the dribbler to turn around. If the attacker's legs are closed, they should wait for the opportunity to tackle.</p>	 <p><a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3g85x5C">https://sportsedtv.co/3g85x5C</a></p>
<p>17 min</p>	<p>2v2: Team play and passing</p>	<p>Players play small 2v2 games. Encourage them to work together, and get open for their teammate. Pass as often as they can, and focus on moving forward towards the opposing goal.</p> <p>Coach: Who is on your team? Players: (Name of teammate)</p> <p>Coach: Which goal are you trying to score in? Players: That one. (Have them point.)</p> <p>Coach: Where do you kick the ball to score? Players: In the goal. (If they say "in there," have them show you.)</p>	<p>YMCA Tutorial: Page 80</p> <p>A separate video for a different passing drill, describing the technique:</p>  <p><a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3suG0Zm">https://sportsedtv.co/3suG0Zm</a></p>
<p>3 min</p>	<p>Team Circle</p>	<p>Gather children into two groups; one group will spread out and dribble and pass to each other. The other group will be to one side, as if on the sidelines during a game; they should be silent for the first 30 seconds of the activity.</p> <p>After 30 seconds, have them cheer and encourage on-field players; continue this activity for 30 more seconds.</p> <p>"When players are on the sidelines during a game, they should be encouraging their teammates, no matter what's happening in the game. This is being responsible to your team. It helps players keep trying hard even if they are losing or have made some mistakes. How did it feel when you were playing and the sideline players didn't encourage you? How about when they did encourage you?"</p>	

		Listen to both responses and have players compare feelings.	
	Total Time	45 minutes	

**Notes:**

# YMCA Soccer Ages 8U

## Session 7

Coach:

Team:

<p><b>Practice Goals:</b> This session focuses on passing and defending, to help players further solidify their learnings around two of the most fundamental skills. As players have now played more games, their understanding of how these activities and skills apply in real match scenarios should improve. Continue to reinforce the right technique, and how these activities relate to the matches they have already played.</p>			
Time	Activity Type	Activity Description	Reference
12 Min	Warm-Up: Passing	<p>First, demonstrate how to properly receive the ball with one touch, and pass with the second. The reference video breaks down the proper technique of passing, so you know which aspects to focus on in your demonstration.</p> <p>Next, follow the activity in the video. This gives players more practice on the fundamental skills of passing and receiving.</p>	<p><b>Video Tutorial:</b></p>  <p><a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3suG0Zm">https://sportsedtv.co/3suG0Zm</a></p>
5 Min	Fitness: Muscular Strength & Endurance	<p>Gather children into a group. "Okay, everyone get down on the ground and do the crab walk." Continue for 30 seconds to one minute. "Are your arms and legs getting tired? You used many of your arm and leg muscles to do the crab walk. What part of the body do you use the most for soccer? That's right—your legs. The more you practice soccer, the stronger your leg muscles will get. Then your legs can keep going much longer before they get too tired. What things can we do to get our legs stronger for soccer?" Let them answer running and kicking. "Right. Now pretend you have a soccer ball in front of you. Pretend to kick the ball in your spot." Have children kick for five counts. "Practicing kicking helps make your legs stronger."</p>	<p>YMCA Tutorial: Page 104</p>
12 min	Group of 3: Passing	<p>Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to use passing and support to move the</p>	<p>YMCA Tutorial 90</p>

	<p style="text-align: center;">&amp; Moving</p>	<p>ball forward. Practice combining passing and support to move the ball forward.</p> <p>3 v 1—Each team of three gets the ball from one end of the field to the other without running with the ball (by passing). One player is a defender.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● “Move to a good place to support.”</li> <li>● “Pass and move.”</li> <li>● “Defender, try to get the ball.”</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">A different exercise to practice passing and moving, and get into the habit of getting open:</p>  <p style="text-align: center;"><a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3k1jQd7">https://sportsedtv.co/3k1jQd7</a></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">17 min</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">4v4: Defending &amp; Marking</p>	<p>4v4 games (can be 3v3 or 2v2), with an emphasis on each player marking one of the opposing players and staying with them.</p> <p>Players execute good one-on-one defense close to their own goal by marking, pressuring, and tackling.</p> <p>Watch the reference video for the aspects of defensive technique to emphasize.</p> <p>Coach: What should you do when your opponent gets close to your goal? Players: Get close to the opponent so you can challenge for the ball.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● “Mark.”</li> <li>● “Pressure.”</li> <li>● “Tackle.”</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">YMCA Tutorial: Page 116</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A separate video drill on 1v1 defending:</p>  <p style="text-align: center;"><a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3iOSs2B">https://sportsedtv.co/3iOSs2B</a></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">3 min</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Team Circle</p>	<p>Gather children into a group. Choose one child to demonstrate with you. Let the player know you’ll be passing the ball and that he or she should pretend to be in position to score a goal. Make a bad pass to the player. Identify that the bad pass was your mistake.</p> <p>“Raise your hand if you think it’s a part of learning when you make a bad pass.” Give them time to raise their hands. “Now raise</p>	

		<p>your hand if you think a bad pass means you are not a good player." Give them time to raise their hands.</p> <p>"Everyone makes mistakes, and when you make one it does not mean you're not a good player. It does mean you might want to practice more."</p>	
	Total Time	49 minutes	

**Notes:**

# YMCA Soccer Ages 8U

## Session 8

Coach:

Team:

<p><b>Practice Goals:</b> This session begins with crossing and scoring for players to recall the technique of both, and then focuses on dribbling. These activities will help players improve their ball control, and help them to become comfortable holding onto the ball and keeping it close in game scenarios.</p>			
Time	Activity Type	Activity Description	Reference
10 Min	Warm-Up: Crossing & Scoring	<p>Make sure to watch the video tutorial to get a visual of how to set up and run this exercise.</p> <p>One player dribbles down the side of the field, and crosses the ball to a player running into the box, who will shoot on goal.</p> <p>This activity will help players learn to dribble and cross, as well as make a run into the box and to score off a cross.</p> <p>Goalkeepers are not needed.</p>	<p><b>Video Tutorial:</b></p>  <p><a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3xQ8fCH">https://sportsedtv.co/3xQ8fCH</a></p>
5 Min	Fitness: General	<p>Gather children into a circle. "What do our bodies need to do every day to keep going?" Wait for their responses. Discuss sleeping and resting, eating, and doing regular activities.</p> <p>"There's one more thing that's really important—being active and exercising. Let's pretend it's a day that you do not have soccer practice. Your body needs to move every day. With no soccer today, what should we do to move our bodies?" Wait for their responses. If a child suggests biking or swimming, have everyone act out that activity. Act out three activities. "It's important to be active when you don't have soccer practice. Your body needs to move every day."</p>	<p>YMCA Tutorial: Page 109</p>

<p>7 min</p>	<p><b>Dribbling:</b> Inside &amp; Outside</p>	<p>This activity, shown in the video, will help players improve their ball control, and reinforces the habits of using the inside and outside of both feet. Count how many they can do in a row without a mistake, encourage them to try for 5 or 10 in a row.</p>	<p><b>Video Tutorial:</b></p>  <p><a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3xMuJy4">https://sportsedtv.co/3xMuJy4</a></p>
<p>20 min</p>	<p><b>4v4:</b> Dribbling</p>	<p>4 v 4 – The objective is for players to be able to pass, receive, and use the “push and run” to move the ball forward under pressure during the game.</p> <p>To push and run, the player with the ball kicks it past the defender — pushes — and runs after it. The defender will have to turn around, which slows him or her down.</p> <p>Focus on getting players to make a good decision about whether to pass or dribble. Encourage them to pass if a teammate is open but to dribble if they get into a one-on- one situation.</p> <p>Novices have difficulty making these decisions, so be patient in your explanations and be prepared for poor decision making by some players.</p> <p>Coach: What are some ways to get past a defender with the ball? Players: Dribble. Kick it past and run after it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● “Run past an opponent with the ball if you can.”</li> <li>● “Pass if you need to.”</li> <li>● “Look for space behind the defender.”</li> <li>● “Push and run.”</li> </ul> <p>Encourage better players to use alternative ways, other than push and run, to beat the defender. These could include faking a shot or passing the ball to one side of the defender and running around the other</p>	<p><b>YMCA Tutorial:</b> 100</p> <p>Separate video tutorial for an activity teaching how to dribble with inside and outside of foot:</p>  <p><a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3CUHq4b">https://sportsedtv.co/3CUHq4b</a></p>

		side.	
3 min	Team Circle	<p>Gather children into groups of two and give each group one ball. Players should dribble and pass the ball to each other, making sure to distribute the ball to their partners.</p> <p>“Each of you should say two good things about your partner’s skills. Then come back to me in a group. Begin.”</p> <p>Wait for them to regroup.</p> <p>“What were some of the comments your teammates told you?” Listen to their responses.</p> <p>“What kind of value or quality is it when you go out of your way to say something good about a teammate’s playing?” Listen to responses and encourage discussion as needed.</p> <p>“Caring is one of our core values. You show you care about your teammates when you encourage them.”</p>	
	Total Time	45 minutes	

**Notes:**

# YMCA Soccer Ages 8U

## Session 9

Coach:

Team:

<p><b>Practice Goals:</b> For the last practice of the season, we are primarily focused on game activities. A dribbling warm up is followed by some conditioning, and then two games to finish off and let the players continue to apply everything they've learned over the course of the season.</p>			
Time	Activity Type	Activity Description	Reference
7 Min	Warm-Up: Dribbling	<p>This activity, explained in the video, helps players get in the habit of using different parts of their feet to dribble, as well as how to switch back and forth from one foot to the other. This will get the players warm, while improving their ball control.</p>	<p><b>Video Tutorial:</b></p>  <p><a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3CUHq4b">https://sportsedtv.co/3CUHq4b</a></p>
5 Min	Fitness: Healthy Habits	<p>Gather children into a circle. "Everyone is going to run in place. Let's start. Pretend that your body is going to run out of energy because you ate too many chips and drank a soda before practice. Start running slower and slower, and now stop! Now let's pretend that you ate a peanut butter sandwich and drank a glass of milk and a glass of water before practice. Let's run in place." Continue for 30 seconds. "See how you're able to run much longer and keep your energy? Eating healthy foods and drinking plenty of water are healthy habits for every day. You should drink water several times a day and drink even more when you're exercising. Also make sure to get enough sleep, exercise, brush your teeth, and say no to alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. Keep your body healthy!"</p>	<p><b>YMCA Tutorial:</b> Page 112</p>

<p>10 min</p>	<p>4v4 Play: Passing Focus</p>	<p>4 v 4—Each team tries to pass frequently.</p> <p>Pass and move!</p> <p>To keep possession of the ball in the game, focusing on receiving in the game. The objective is to be able to receive the ball under pressure during the game.</p> <p>Coach: When the ball comes to you, what should you do? Players: Stop it.</p> <p>Coach: Then what? Players: Dribble or get ready to pass or shoot.</p> <p>Coach: If you want to pass to the right, where should your first touch move the ball? Players: To the right.</p> <p>Coach: What about if you want to pass or dribble to the left? Players: The first touch should go left.</p>	<p>YMCA Tutorial: Page 92</p> <p>A separate video drill to practice passing and moving, in case players struggle with it in the game:</p>  <p><a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3k1jQd7">https://sportsedtv.co/3k1jQd7</a></p>
<p>20 min</p>	<p>4v4: Fun!</p>	<p>After a short break, the players again play 4v4. This time, tone down the coaching. Comment on any notable moments, give some positive reinforcement, but most importantly let the players relax and enjoy their last practice of the season.</p>	
<p>3 min</p>	<p>Team Circle</p>	<p>Gather children into groups of two. "Each of you tell your partner two or three ways you saw other players show respect this season. I'll give you two minutes."</p> <p>After two minutes, group all children together again.</p> <p>"Tell us what some of the examples were." Listen to examples and discuss.</p> <p>"It's important to notice respect being practiced and to talk about what we saw. This season we have been working on both soccer skills and being good teammates. Improving both of those areas tells me you have respect for</p>	

		yourselves and your teammates."	
	Total Time	45 minutes	

**Notes:**