

Session 1

Introductions (5–8 Minutes)

Staff coaches will direct players to their team's practice space. Coaches will spend a few minutes getting to know their players and parents before starting the practice. This practice space will remain constant throughout the season. Coaches will also hand out balls at this meeting so that each player has their personal ball ready to go.

Activity One (5–8 Minutes)

Body Parts Soccer – Create a box using cones and have each player stand inside it with their ball at their feet. When you say “go” they will dribble around the box until you yell out a body part at which point they have to put that part on the ball. Examples would be nose, ear, knee, elbow, or hair. This is a fun drill to get the kids warmed up and feeling comfortable with the ball and with the group.

Coaching Point 1: Lots of encouragement, laughing, and high fives with this drill. The coach should participate in the drill too so as to demonstrate and provide an example as the drill goes on.

Activity Two (10 Minutes)

Dribble and Score – Set up two lines of players inside a row of lined up cones. Allow the players to take turns, one per line at a time, to dribble the ball straight down the cone row and kick the ball into the net. Once they kick the ball in, the coach retrieves it and lets them carry the ball back to the line and the next player starts up. Let every child have 3–4 chances to score.

Coaching Point 1: Set the net up 10 feet from the end of the cones so they can strike the ball into the net. Encourage them to kick it hard.

Coaching Point 2: Lots of clapping and encouragement on this drill as they dribble and score!

Water Break (2 Minutes)

Coach will remove cones and set up for next drills.

Activity Three (5–8 Minutes)

Passing Partners – Pair up the kids and line them up facing each other. Give each pair a ball and allow them to pass the ball back and forth between each other. If there is an odd number of kids, the coach can match up with that child. Just work on passing the ball back and forth to the partner. Start close in around 10 feet. After two minutes, expand to 15 or 20 feet.

Coaching Point 1: Use cones to dictate where the kids stand to eliminate creep.

Coaching Point 2: The eventual goal is for the kids to use the inside of their foot, but for the first day, just work more on getting the ball back and forth. Not too hard and not too soft.

Coaching Point 2: During this time, talk about not using hands, just feet.

Activity Four (10 Minutes)

Red Light, Green Light – Line up every player on one end line of the field with their ball at their feet. When you say “green light”, they are allowed to dribble forward. When you say “red light” they must stop with their ball. They are trying to get to the opposite end line. Play several times, making it trickier as the players pick it up. Have them start and stop quicker.

Coaching Point 1: Talk to the kids about using any part of their foot, no need to be specific right now.

Coaching Point 2: Talk about keeping the ball close and not kicking it too far. If a player is kicking the ball too far, take it back to them and talk to them about keeping track of it.

Team Talk (5–8 Minutes)

Have the team “Bring it in” and wrap up the practice. This is a good time to ask some open ended questions and wrap up what they learned today. Start with “Did everyone have fun!?!?” You can follow up with “Do we use our hands in soccer?” or “What was your favorite game we played?” Giving kids a chance to recap, even at a young age, allows them to internalize their experience better. After the brief chat, distribute jerseys and socks to each child's parents and ensure they have their ball with their name on it.

Coaching Point 1: Be excited in this chat. Try to review the kids' names as well so they can start getting to know each other also.

Session 2

Review (5-8 Minutes)

Coaches reintroduce all of the kids on the team to each other. Discuss playing soccer with your feet and having a lot of fun.

Activity One (10 Minutes)

Passing Partners - Pair up the kids and line them up facing each other. Give each pair a ball and allow them to pass the ball back and forth between each other. If there is an odd number of kids, the coach can match up with that child. Just work on passing the ball back and forth to the partner. Start close in around 10 feet. After two minutes, expand to 15 or 20 feet.

Coaching Point 1: Use cones to dictate where the kids stand to eliminate creep.

Coaching Point 2: The eventual goal is for the kids to use the inside of their foot, but for the first day, just work more on getting the ball back and forth. Not too hard and not too soft.

Coaching Point 2: During this time, talk about not using hands, just feet.

Activity Two (10 Minutes)

Dribble and Score - Set up two lines of players with a row of cones in front of each. Allow the players to take turns, one per line at a time, to dribble the ball down the cone row going between the cones and kick the ball into the net. Once they kick the ball in, the coach retrieves it and lets them carry the ball back to the line and the next player starts up. Let every child have 3-4 chances to score.

Coaching Point 1: Set the net up 10 feet from the end of the cones so they can strike the ball into the net. Encourage them to kick it hard.

Coaching Point 2: Lots of clapping and encouragement on this drill as they dribble and score!

Water Break (2 Minutes)

Coach will remove cones and set up for next drills.

Activity Three (6-8 Minutes)

The Gates - Using cones, set up about 10 or 12 different "gates" (two cones set about 3 feet apart) throughout your practice space in a pretty random fashion. Give each child a ball at their feet, spread them out throughout the area, and give them 1 or 2 minutes to dribble through as many gates as they can. Before beginning, give them a goal that is attainable. Say, "who can get through 8 gates?" When the time is up, ask them how many gates they went through. Do the activity again encouraging them to beat their first score.

Coaching Point 1: Encourage them to lift their heads up when dribbling to move to the next gate.

Coaching Point 2: Encourage the kids to use any part of their feet they want and try to use both feet as well.

Activity Four (10 Minutes)

Knock Out - Set up a circle of cones and put every player inside with a ball at their feet. Then, select one player to be the defender and grab his/her ball. That person tries to kick the other kids' balls out of the ring. Once the game is completed, let a different child attempt to be the defender. As players get knocked out, have them get their ball and come stand with the coach. This game goes quickly.

Coaching Point 1: As the season progresses into scrimmages, kids will start having their ball taken away. Some kids will be fine with this, others will not. This game is a good opportunity to discuss this and keep kids encouraged. Every time a child gets their ball knocked out, words like "great job, you did awesome!" or "hey that was fantastic!" will let them know that you are not disappointed in them and it's just part of the game.

Coaching Point 2: If there are those players who are having a little bit harder time with losing "their" ball, get mom or dad involved by bringing them over to help encourage, comfort, and explain.

Team Talk (5 Minutes)

Have the team "Bring it in" and wrap up the practice. Again, make sure you focus your questions on encouragement and the concept of soccer being fun. Kids will fall in love with something that they find fun, and the skill development will follow. But also ask questions like, "what part of today's games were the hardest?" and encourage the kids to play with their ball at home.

Coaching Point 1: Bringing parents a little closer for this chat is good. They get to hear their kids' responses and get involved in the process of playing at home with their kids.

Session 3

Review (5-8 Minutes)

Coaches reintroduce all of the kids on the team to each other. Discuss playing soccer with your feet and having a lot of fun.

Activity One (10 Minutes)

Run and Shoot - Set up two or three lines of kids facing a gate (two cones set about 5 feet apart to replace the goal). Place a ball about 10 feet in front of the line of kids and about 10 feet from the goal. Have the kids in each line take turns running up to the ball and kicking it into the goal to score.

Coaching Point 1: Use cones to dictate where the kids stand to eliminate creep.

Coaching Point 2: This is where we want to encourage the kids to make big kicks and strike the ball hard. As the kids kick it, admire their leg strength to them and gently push them to kick even harder on the shot next time.

Activity Two (8 Minutes)

Dribble and Score - Set up two lines of players. At the other end of the field, opposite each line, place a gate. Instruct the kids to dribble down to the gate and stop there, controlling the ball in the gate. Once everyone gets through, have them dribble back and stop inside the cone gate at the opposite end of the field.

Coaching Point 1: Set the net up 10 feet from the end of the cones so they can strike the ball into the net. Encourage them to kick it hard.

Coaching Point 2: Lots of clapping and encouragement on this drill as they dribble and score!

Water Break (2 Minutes)

Coach will remove cones and set up for next drills.

Activity Three (10 Minutes)

Duel - Set up two goals, send out two players to a ball and let them "battle" until one scores. Then pull them back over to the side and send out two new kids. Do this until every child has gotten to play about 3 or 4 times.

Coaching Point 1: Remind them which goal to go score on.

Coaching Point 2: Encourage both players throughout the process to keep the intensity and excitement up.

Coaching Point 3: Have another parent or two working near the goals to retrieve balls to keep the game going quickly. You want to get the kids through each duel in rapid succession to maximize touches and minimize waiting.

Activity Four (10 Minutes)

Red Light, Green Light - Line up every player on one end line of the field with their ball at their feet. When you say "green light", they are allowed to dribble forward. When you say "red light" they must stop with their ball. They are trying to get to the opposite end line. Play several times, making it trickier as the players pick it up. Have them start and stop quicker.

Coaching Point 1: Talk to the kids about using any part of their foot, no need to be specific right now.

Coaching Point 2: Talk about keeping the ball close and not kicking it too far. If a player is kicking the ball too far, take it back to them and talk to them about keeping track of it.

Team Talk (5 Minutes)

Have the team "Bring it in" and wrap up the practice. Again, make sure you focus your questions on encouragement and the concept of soccer being fun. Kids will fall in love with something that they find fun, and the skill development will follow. But also ask questions like, "what part of today's games were the hardest?" and encourage the kids to play with their ball at home.

Coaching Point 1: Bringing parents a little closer for this chat is good. They get to hear their kids' responses and get involved in the process of playing at home with their kids.

Session 4

Warm Up (5-8 Minutes)

Play Sharks and Minnows to get the kids warmed up for the practice session.

Activity One (10 Minutes)

Player v Coach - Set up two lines of players each facing a gate (two cones set about 5 feet apart to replace the goal) but about 20 feet away from it. The first kid in the line will attempt to dribble the ball and get past the coach (acting as a defender) to score on the gate. Continue until each child has had 3-4 turns.

Coaching Point 1: Get another parent involved to get two lines going and keep it moving, Once the player's turn is over in one line, they take their ball and get in the other line..

Coaching Point 2: Make this slightly more challenging as each kid progresses through their turns to try to score.

Activity Two (8 Minutes)

Passing Partners - Pair up the kids and line them up facing each other. Give each pair a ball and allow them to pass the ball back and forth between each other. If there is an odd number of kids, the coach can match up with that child. Just work on passing the ball back and forth to the partner. Start close in around 10 feet. After two minutes, expand to 15 or 20 feet.

Coaching Point 1: Use cones to dictate where the kids stand to eliminate creep.

Coaching Point 2: The eventual goal is for the kids to use the inside of their foot, but for the first day, just work more on getting the ball back and forth. Not too hard and not too soft.

Coaching Point 2: During this time, talk about not using hands, just feet.

Water Break (2 Minutes)

Coach will remove cones and set up for next drills.

Scrimmage (25 Minutes)

Field 1: Team 1 v Team 2

Field 2: Team 3 v Team 4

Staff will "officiate" the games that will be played in four 4-minute quarters with a couple of minutes of halftime for water. Games will be played with three players on each team on the field at a time. Sub as needed. Goals will reset with a kick off.

Coaching Point 1: Work to rotate players in and out of game fairly to ensure everyone gets a lot of touches on the ball.

Coaching Point 2: Positive reinforcement is key here. Encourage parents to be loud and supportive. Keep everything positive!

Session 5

Warm Up (5-8 Minutes)

Play Body Parts Soccer to get the kids warmed up for the practice session.

Activity One (10 Minutes)

Speed - Set up two lines of players each facing a gate (two cones set about 5 feet apart to replace the goal) but about 20 feet away from it. Set up a path of cones for them to travel down. Have them dribble quickly down the path and shoot on the goal, retrieving their ball and getting back in the line. Coach the kids to stay inside the path on their way to score. This encourages faster dribbling on the attack.

Coaching Point 1: Get another parent involved to help with retrieving the balls that go astray.

Activity Two (8 Minutes)

The Gates - Using cones, set up about 10 or 12 different "gates" (two cones set about 3 feet apart) throughout your practice space in a pretty random fashion. Give each child a ball at their feet, spread them out throughout the area, and give them 1 or 2 minutes to dribble through as many gates as they can. Before beginning, give them a goal that is attainable. Say, "who can get through 8 gates?" When the time is up, ask them how many gates they went through. Do the activity again encouraging them to beat their first score.

Coaching Point 1: Encourage them to lift their heads up when dribbling to move to the next gate.

Coaching Point 2: Encourage the kids to use any part of their feet they want and try to use both feet as well.

Water Break (2 Minutes)

Coach will remove cones and set up for next drills.

Scrimmage (25 Minutes)

Field 1: Team 2 v Team 3

Field 2: Team 1 v Team 4

Staff will "officiate" the games that will be played in four 4-minute quarters with a couple of minutes of halftime for water. Games will be played with three players on each team on the field at a time. Sub as needed. Goals will reset with a kick off.

Coaching Point 1: Work to rotate players in and out of game fairly to ensure everyone gets a lot of touches on the ball.

Coaching Point 2: Positive reinforcement is key here. Encourage parents to be loud and supportive. Keep everything positive!

Session 6

Warm Up (5-8 Minutes)

Play Red Light, Green Light to get the kids warmed up for the practice session.

Activity One (10 Minutes)

Run and Shoot - Set up two or three lines of kids facing a gate (two cones set about 5 feet apart to replace the goal). Place a ball about 10 feet in front of the line of kids and about 10 feet from the goal. Have the kids in each line take turns running up to the ball and kicking it into the goal to score.

Coaching Point 1: Use cones to dictate where the kids stand to eliminate creep.

Coaching Point 2: This is where we want to encourage the kids to make big kicks and strike the ball hard. As the kids kick it, admire their leg strength to them and gently push them to kick even harder on the shot next time.

Activity Two (8 Minutes)

Duel - Set up two goals, send out two players to a ball and let them "battle" until one scores. Then pull them back over to the side and send out two new kids. Do this until every child has gotten to play about 3 or 4 times.

Coaching Point 1: Remind them which goal to go score on.

Coaching Point 2: Encourage both players throughout the process to keep the intensity and excitement up.

Coaching Point 3: Have another parent or two working near the goals to retrieve balls to keep the game going quickly. You want to get the kids through each duel in rapid succession to maximize touches and minimize waiting.

Water Break (2 Minutes)

Coach will remove cones and set up for next drills.

Scrimmage (25 Minutes)

Field 1: Team 1 v Team 3

Field 2: Team 2 v Team 4

Staff will "officiate" the games that will be played in four 4-minute quarters with a couple of minutes of halftime for water. Games will be played with three players on each team on the field at a time. Sub as needed. Goals will reset with a kick off.

Coaching Point 1: Work to rotate players in and out of game fairly to ensure everyone gets a lot of touches on the ball.

Coaching Point 2: Positive reinforcement is key here. Encourage parents to be loud and supportive. Keep everything positive!

Session 7

Warm Up (5-8 Minutes)

Play Knock Out to get the kids warmed up for the practice session.

Activity One (10 Minutes)

Run and Shoot - Set up two or three lines of kids facing a gate (two cones set about 5 feet apart to replace the goal). Place a ball about 10 feet in front of the line of kids and about 10 feet from the goal. Have the kids in each line take turns running up to the ball and kicking it into the goal to score.

Coaching Point 1: Use cones to dictate where the kids stand to eliminate creep.

Coaching Point 2: This is where we want to encourage the kids to make big kicks and strike the ball hard. As the kids kick it, admire their leg strength to them and gently push them to kick even harder on the shot next time.

Activity Two (8 Minutes)

Duel - Set up two goals, send out two players to a ball and let them "battle" until one scores. Then pull them back over to the side and send out two new kids. Do this until every child has gotten to play about 3 or 4 times.

Coaching Point 1: Remind them which goal to go score on.

Coaching Point 2: Encourage both players throughout the process to keep the intensity and excitement up.

Coaching Point 3: Have another parent or two working near the goals to retrieve balls to keep the game going quickly. You want to get the kids through each duel in rapid succession to maximize touches and minimize waiting.

Water Break (2 Minutes)

Coach will remove cones and set up for next drills.

Scrimmage (25 Minutes)

Field 1: Team 2 v Team 1

Field 2: Team 4 v Team 3

Staff will "officiate" the games that will be played in four 4-minute quarters with a couple of minutes of halftime for water. Games will be played with three players on each team on the field at a time. Sub as needed. Goals will reset with a kick off.

Coaching Point 1: Work to rotate players in and out of game fairly to ensure everyone gets a lot of touches on the ball.

Coaching Point 2: Positive reinforcement is key here. Encourage parents to be loud and supportive. Keep everything positive!