

NORTHSHORE YMCA SOCCER LEAGUES

INSTRUCTIONAL LEAGUE

COACHING MANUAL AND

PRACTICE CURRICULUM



Northshore YMCA Youth Sports

Goals and Objectives:

The YMCA was organized in the mid-1800's to provide a wholesome Christian environment for young men who had left their farms and moved to the city to work in the factories. Over the years, the YMCA has expanded its service to include both male and female participants of all ages. Today, YMCA Youth Sports still provide a wholesome, values-oriented atmosphere consistent with the YMCA's original purpose of a century ago. The goals of YMCA Youth Sports are:

- to have fun
- to build self esteem
- to teach social skills - values, communication, and human relations.
- to teach physical skills, fitness, and health.
- to develop responsibility and decision-making skills.
- to enhance leadership skills in youth and adults.
- to build relationships among peers and between parent and child.
- to support and strength family life .
- create a fun experience for children and their families.

To achieve these goals and operate a mission oriented program, YMCA Youth Sports programs are designed to meet these specific program objective applicable to all YMCA programs.

- **To Grow Personally** - YMCA Youth Sports provide an excellent means of learning personal goal setting to develop a healthy self-image and increase self esteem.
- **To Clarify Values** - Values are basic beliefs about what is good or how people ought to live. They serve as guidelines for decision making and actions. YMCA Youth Sports emphasize the value of learning and growing rather than winning by focusing on being "a winner in life" and putting winning or losing and personal success into proper perspective.
- **To Improve Personal and Family Relationships** - Encouraging family participation in league events and providing resources for at-home activities enable YMCA Youth Sports programs to influence the entire family.
- **To Appreciate Diversity** - YMCA Youth Sports bring together adults and children from a variety of economic levels, ethnic background, religions, neighborhoods, ages, and skill levels in a team oriented environment.
- **To Become Better Leaders and Supporters** - YMCA Youth Sports provide numerous leadership opportunities for adults and youth while encouraging teamwork, key factor in being a good supporter.

- **To Develop specific Skills** - Sport-specific skills contribute to the overall development and coordination of children. Improvement in decision making, communication, cooperation, goal setting, and leadership skills is also part of YMCA Youth Sports.
- **To Have Fun** - One of the most important aspects of YMCA Youth Sports is fun. If games and practices session are fun, children develop a positive attitude towards physical activity and a healthy attitude toward competition.

Philosophy:

The goal and objective of YMCA Youth Sports are based on certain beliefs about your sports, a philosophy summarized in these eight concepts:

- **Participation** - Everyone Plays!!! There are no tryouts or cuts. Everyone who registers is assigned to a team. During the season, everyone plays the same amount of time in every game and has equal practice time. Both the most highly skilled and the least highly skilled players are given equal attention by the coach. There is no MVP's or all-star teams. No personal statistics are kept.
- **Fun** - We play sports to have fun! Players, coaches, officials, and parents are urged to follow YMCA House Rules:
 - Speak for yourself
 - Listen to others
 - Avoid put-downs
 - Take charge of yourself
 - Show respect

The overall environment created by the coach and reinforced by the officials is positive, relaxed, and enjoyable. Winning is kept in perspective, a tie is an acceptable outcome. No league standings are kept, no score is kept for all players. There are no playoffs or championship games.

- **Fitness** - Regular cardiovascular exercise is important for a lifetime. Encouraging fitness and good health developing the whole person; spirit, mind, and body. Warm-up and conditioning exercises are included in practice sessions and prior to games. Healthy lifestyle habits are covered in team discussions and encouraged in family activities. Physical exercises, such as push-ups or running laps are not used as punishment.
- **Skills** - Emphasize the fundamentals!!! Equipment, facilities, and rules of the game are modified according to the age of the players. Coaches help players measure their skills, set goals, and evaluate their progress against their own standards. Coaches prepare a lesson plan for each practice session that includes practice of previously taught skill and introduction of new ones. During the games, officials take the time to explain their calls to players. Team discussions enhance other skills, such as decision-making and communication.

- **Teamwork** - Focus on cooperation, not competition! Balanced teams are formed by attempting to equalize skills, sizes, and abilities, not by recruiting only the best players. Players have the opportunity to play a variety of positions and are encouraged to help one another with skill development. Team discussion often focus on the importance of teamwork. Player skills level is assessed one-on-one between player and coach and is not announced so that players cannot compare themselves to each other.

- **Fair Play** - Fair play involves respect!! Fair play requires a clear understanding of the rules by everyone involved: players, coaches, officials, and parents. This is accomplished through training events and materials. Fair play is based on:
 1. respect for the rules and the officials who uphold them;
 2. respect one self - taking responsibility for one's own behavior and learning;
 3. respect for one's teammates - working to become a team player who unselfishly contributes to the good of the whole team; and
 4. respect for the other team - considering the other team an essential partner in competition.

- **Family Involvement** - Youth sports is a family program. Youth sports is not a program for youth only. It involves the family members in a variety of ways, beginning with the first practice to the end of season party. Family members are encouraged to volunteer.

- **Volunteers** - Volunteers are the key! The YMCA staff administrator manages the program through volunteers. A volunteer committee assists in coordinating the program under the direction of the staff administrator. Volunteer coaches and officials are carefully selected on the basis of their knowledge, experience, and support to YMCA Youth Sports philosophy. They receive training and materials on YMCA Youth Sports philosophy and program operation and receive recognition for their work. Other positions, such as team manager, game referees, team parent or snack provider supports family involvement in the program, and allows the participation of volunteers who might not otherwise have a way to be involved.

INTRODUCTION TO YMCA INSTRUCTION SOCCER LEAGUE

PHILOSOPHY

The philosophy of coaching in the YMCA Instructional League is twofold:

1. Never forget for whom the program was designed and who you are coaching; and
2. Never forget the best teacher of the game of soccer is the game of soccer itself.

Children between three and twelve years of age have distinct and varied developmental characteristics. They have extremely short attention spans, they learn more easily by doing than by being taught, some are just learning the concept of group games and activities, their physical coordination is just beginning to develop, and having fun is far more important to them than winning. As a coach and as a parent, your conduct and expectations must be appropriate to the age of the kids you are coaching. Hence, as a Northshore YMCA Instructional League coach, it is far more important that you are magical and entertaining than it is for you to be well versed in the game of soccer.

Unlike most American sports, soccer is a non-stop, fluid game. There are no time outs and plays can not be called in from the sideline. Hence, soccer is a game of instinct. Technique (dribbling, passing, receiving, shooting, etc.) can be taught, but how a player applies the technique under pressure can only be learned instinctively during game related activities. This is where most coaches fail in training. We tend to over analyze, over plan and over coach our players. The YMCA Instructional League is designed to introduce the children to basic soccer technique - nothing more. If a child learns to apply technique under game related pressure, hence to develop "skills", it shall be considered an absolute bonus.

GOALS OF THE YMCA INSTRUCTIONAL LEAGUE

FOR THE CHILDREN

1. **FUN** - Provide the children with an environment that is fun and magical.
2. **GROUPS** - To help the children understand the concept of play in small groups or teams.
3. **PASSION** - To foster a passion for the game in the children.
4. **TECHNIQUE** - To teach basic soccer techniques to the players.

FOR THE COACHES

1. **FUN** - To remind each of us why we want to coach.
2. **WHO** - To remind each of us who it is that we are coaching and for whom the program was designed.
3. **PASSION** - To excite the coaches about the game
4. **COACHING** - To help coaches develop proper coaching technique.

PARENTS

1. **FUN** - To give them the opportunity to see their children grow, learn and have fun in an upbeat, exciting environment, and see that they have the tools to coach.
2. **QUIET** - To teach parents that screaming instructions or directions from the sideline is detrimental to their child and all of the children playing. Be supportive, but **be quiet**.

COACHING TIPS

COACHING PROGRESSION

When a Coach observes a player using incorrect technique, he or she should follow the following steps to assist the player in understanding the correct way to perform that technique.

1. **STOP PLAY.** The Coach must first stop play as quickly as possible. Doing it definitively will insure that the Coach has the player's undivided attention. Remember - most players have a short attention span, therefore your corrections have to be short, concise and exactly to the point.
2. **DEMONSTRATE.** The Coach must only pick out one (1) coaching point. There may be several points to accurately striking a soccer ball, but the Coach must pick out one for the child to work on. The Coach should assume the position of the player and demonstrate the proper technique. Avoid recriminations such as "No...no...no...You're doing it ALL wrong!" Instead, use supportive less threatening language, always pointing out positives in the player's technique (even if there are none). "Nice pass Johnny. You got it right to Melanie. This time why don't you try doing this.... Then you'll almost be ready to play for the Sounders..."
3. **REHEARSAL.** The Coach must have the player rehearse the technique. The Coach must stay and observe the rehearsal to make certain the player understands the correction. Do not expect anything but slight improvement. Coaches must encourage the player despite the level of improvement. There should be no more than one rehearsal as children this age become very self-conscious and a Coach must be careful not to correct the same player more than twice during a single session. They are there to have fun, not to listen to lectures.
4. **RESTART.** The Coach should immediately restart play. The key is that there is no disruption in the flow of the game. Once children this young have attained a certain rhythm in their play, let them go.

CONCLUSION

The Instructional League, like all aspects of YMCA Youth Sports, was designed for our Children to play. It gives all players the opportunity to have fun with a soccer ball, and perhaps develop a love for the game. If our players learn as well as have fun, we have more than done our job. You as Coaches are entertainers first and teachers second. It's a wonderful opportunity to simply play with our children, with a ball. Keep in mind that the sessions incorporate Games, not Drills.

You are encouraged to modify your games to incorporate appropriate names or identities and add new ones to the practice. You are also encouraged at this time to simply act silly and dress outrageously. Have a costume practice close to Halloween, a theme practice (funny hat, crazy shirt) randomly during the season. Children will have fun and appreciate an honest sense of humor.

CURRICULUM

WEEK ONE

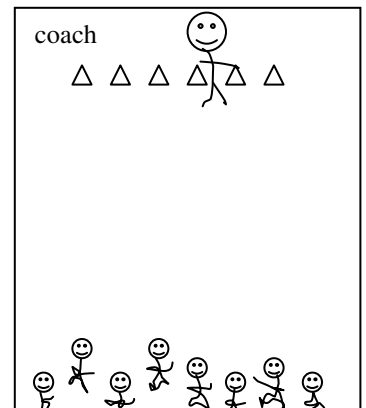
OBJECTIVE: Strike the ball with the inside of the foot. Dribble the soccer ball under control like a dog on a leash. "If you kick a puppy too hard, he will run away to live with another family. You must pet the puppy softly with the inside of your foot."

WARM-UP: SIMON SAYS

Players spread out in area, each with a ball. They dribble slowly around the area while Simon [Coach] calls out various instructions. If "Simon says...", the players are to heed the instruction. If Simon does not give the instruction, the players are to ignore it. Sample instructions are: stop, turn right, turn left, knee on the ball, sit on the ball, hold ball over your head, elbow on ball.

CONTROL: ARTHUR'S ICE CREAM (Red light/Green light)

Arthur [Players] start in his yard [along one end line of the field] while Buster [Coach] stands at the other end line with his back to Arthur and with ice creams [cones] scattered on the ground just behind him. When Buster turns his back, Arthur sneaks up, dribbling a soccer ball, to try to steal an ice cream cone. Once they have retrieved a cone, each Arthur dribbles back to his yard.. Buster randomly turns around and shouts, "WHERE'S ARTHUR?" whereupon each Arthur must stop his soccer ball and "freeze". If an Arthur is caught moving when Buster turns around, he must go back to the beginning.



RUNNING WITH THE BALL: DON'T LOSE YOUR HAT

Relay race. There should be no more than three (3) players in each line so as to avoid down time. Each player wears a hat [cone] and tries to dribble to a cone on the ground ten (10) yards away, around it and back to her line at which the next player in line repeats and so on. The players must keep their hats on and can hold it with one hand if they wish.

LIBRARY SOCCER (Scrimmage)

All players play. Remember the principal of Library Soccer is that limited external directions are given to the players by Coaches, but stop the game every so often to point out the good they are doing, and mention what they can to do improve. Before the game, emphasize the lesson of the day.

WEEK TWO

OBJECTIVE: Strike the ball with the inside of the foot. Dribble the soccer ball under control like a dog on a leash.

WARM-UP: BULL DOGS (Tag)

A bunch of cats [Players] are sitting on a back yard fence [end line]. They want to get across the back yard [area] to get the fish bones [cones]. However, there is a bulldog [Coach] in the back yard who hates cats. The cats run across the back yard to get a fish

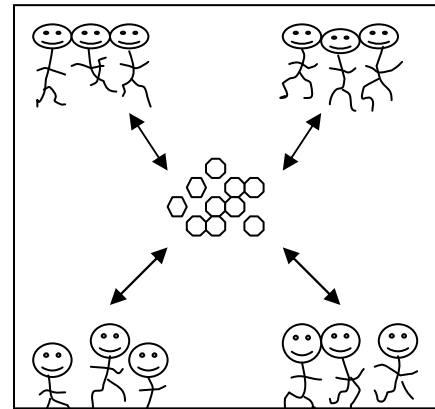
bone and return to the fence without getting bitten [tagged] by the bulldog.

CONTROL: BULL DOGS

Same as above except the cats [Players] dribble soccer balls across the back yard and back.

RUNNING WITH THE BALL: POKEMON

Players are divided in four (4) equal groups, Ashes, Mistys, Brocks, and Surges. Each group is in a corner of a box. Pokemons [Balls] are placed in the center of the area. One at a time, a Player from each group runs to the center, gets control of a Pokemon and dribbles it back to her corner. This is done until all players in the line have each grabbed a Pokemon. Essentially a relay game, Pokemon should be repeated five or six times.



GOAL KEEPING: KEEPER WARS

Using four cones create two goal about 5-10 yards apart (depending on age, ability, etc). The width of the goals should be just beyond the armspan of the keepers. The keepers sit just in front of the cones facing each other. Each attempt to score goals on the other by throwing the ball through the goal. The ball must be kept below their shoulders.

LIBRARY SOCCER

Before the game, emphasize the lesson of the day.

WEEK THREE

OBJECTIVE: Using all parts of the foot to control the ball.

WARM-UP: SODA FOUNTAIN

The four- (4) sides of the area are each given a name of a soda (e.g. Coke, Sprite, Root Beer and Orange). Each Player has a soccer ball. The Coach calls out one of the names

of soda and each player is to dribble to that side of the area. Encourage use of the bottom

and outside of the foot to stop, turn and control the ball in changing directions.

CONTROL: WHAT TIME IS IT MR. WOLF

Similar to Arthur's Ice Cream (see Week One). The Little Pigs [Players] line up at the edge of the forest [one end line] while Mr. Wolf [Coach] is at the other end with his back to the pigs. Just behind Mr. Wolf are cones. The Little Pigs try to sneak up, grab a cone and dribble back to the edge of the forest to safety. As the Little Pigs are dribbling up behind Mr. Wolf they shout, "What time is it Mr. Wolf?" Whereupon Mr. Wolf turns around and shouts menacingly "It's Dinnertime!" The players must stop their soccer ball and freeze.

Any Little Pigs with rolling soccer balls are sent back to the edge of the forest.

DRIBBLING: DEMOLITION DERBY

Drivers [Players] spread out in a circle around the cones. They dribble around the cones while the Coach yells instructions such as "Red Light (stop)", "Green Light (go)" and "Crash (drivers fall to the ground). Drivers must change directions using all parts of their feet to avoid collisions with other drivers.

BEEHIVE

Provide a 20 yd. x 20 yd. grid (or approximately 1 sq. yd. Per player). Each player has a ball. Players dribble inside the grid randomly using correct techniques and practicing avoiding other players. Players should practice inside and outside foot dribbling, stopping, changing direction, and maintaining control while in the beehive.

LIBRARY SOCCER VARIATION: 4 Goal scrimmage

Divide your team into two teams with four goals at each corner. No goalies are used and they can score at any goal. Let them play for a while. Pick a point in the game when everyone is clustered around one goal and freeze them. Ask them to take a look at the open goals and ask them which goal would be easier to score on - the one they are currently trying to blast through or the open ones around the gym. They will usually see the light. Let them play some more.

WEEK FOUR

OBJECTIVE: Dribbling with your head up so you can see your team mates and players on the other team.

WARM-UP: TERMINATOR

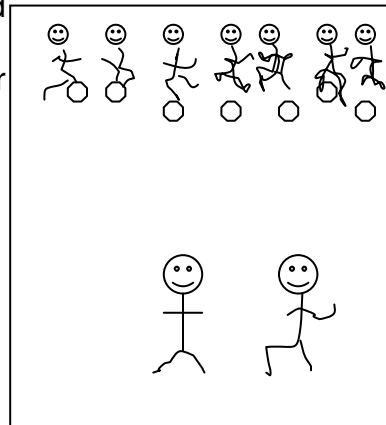
Players dribble around the city [area] trying not to collide with others or lose control of their soccer ball. The Terminator [Coach] jumps into the city and tries to kick Players' soccer balls out of the area. If a Player's soccer ball is kicked out of the area, they must retrieve it, return to the area, hold the ball over their head and spread their legs wide. They are frozen until and unless another Player dribbles his soccer ball through their legs

at which point they may drop their ball back on the ground and resume dribbling.

Coaches should only kick those soccer balls that are not being controlled close to the Player's feet.

CONTROL HUNGRY HIPPOS

Safari Hunters [Players] start at one side of the mud hole [area] where the Hungry Hippos [Coaches] are taking a mud bath. They must try to get to the other side of the mud hole without disturbing the bathing Hippos. The Hippos try to kick the Safari Hunters' soccer ball out of the mud hole. If the Hippo kicks a Hunter's ball out, the Hunter becomes a Hippo. Process should be repeated back and forth several times.



RUNNING WITH THE BALL CHARGE !

This is the opposite of Hungry Hippos. The Light Brigade [Players] line up on one end of the battle field to charge. Two (2) Guards [Coaches] are standing guard in the area, each with a soccer ball. The Players charge past the Guards as they try to hit members of the Light Brigade with passes beneath the knees. Each Player hit with a pass becomes a Guard. Play until the last member of the Light Brigade is left.

STAR WARS – Game much like charge, but ball is coming from the side. This classic game is very exciting for younger players! Have all the players line up at one end prepared to run to the other end. The coach or a player stands just outside the grid at midway with several balls at the ready. On command the players attempt to run to the endline while evading balls kicked at them by the coach. All shots should be kept below waist level. Players hit by the balls become new additional shooters until only one runner is left.

LIBRARY SOCCER

WEEK FIVE

OBJECTIVE: Passing using all surfaces of the feet but primarily the inside of the foot.

WARM-UP: SODA FOUNTAIN IN PAIRS

Same as Soda Fountain in Week 3 except the players are teamed in pairs and the pairs must get the ball to the appropriate side together with passes.

CONTROL: CATDOG

Cats and Dogs [Players] are in pairs: CatDogs. They dribble and pass their soccer ball around the area trying to avoid the other CatDogs. They also try to kick the soccer ball belonging to other pairs of CatDogs out of the area.

SPIDERMAN: Provide a 20 yd. x 30 yd. grid. Each player should have a ball. The coach starts as the first spider. The players dribble around the grid while trying to avoid the tag of the spider. When a player is tagged by the coach, they join hands and go after new prey. Each successive tagged player makes the web of the spider grow bigger, but, alas, less organized. Young players will request this game constantly.

WEIGHT OF THE PASS: LION KING

Each of the Players is Simba trying to sneak up behind Zazu. In turn they pass their soccer ball from one rock [a small triangle of cones] to the next. The rocks are arranged randomly across the area. They must not pass the ball too hard or too soft because they won't be able to hide from Zazu behind the rock. Emphasize weight of the pass.

LIBRARY SOCCER

WEEK SIX

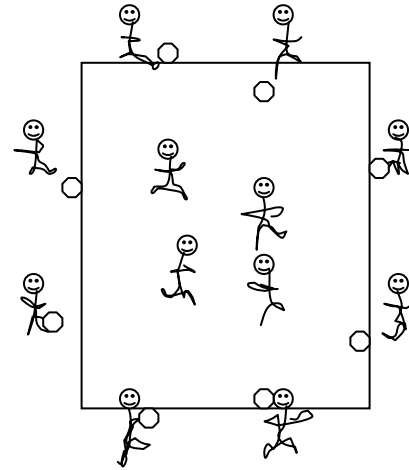
OBJECTIVE: Passing and controlling the ball with heads up.

WARM-UP: BULLDOGS

See Week 2.

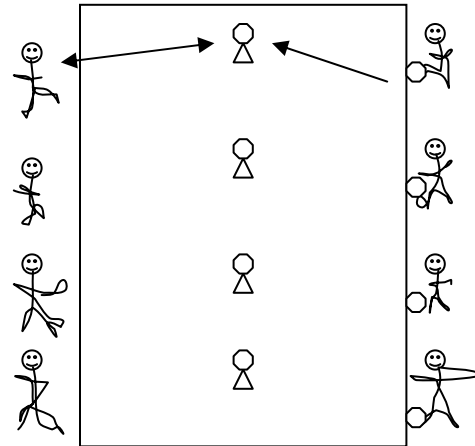
CONTROL: JAWS

Three or four fishermen [Players] are in the middle of a boat [a square approximately eight to ten yards]. On the outside of the boat are sharks [other Players]. The sharks take turns trying to pass their soccer balls into the boat striking a fisherman beneath the knees. After a few rounds, the Fishermen should be switched with the Sharks.



PASSING: STARVING MONKEYS

Two lines of Starving Monkeys [Players] are facing each other approximately six (6) to eight (8) yards apart. Each Monkey should have a partner facing her in the other line. In the middle of the two (2) lines are trees [cones] with a bunch of bananas [a soccer ball] on them. The partners pass a coconut [another soccer ball] between them in an attempt to knock the bananas out of the tree.



LIBRARY SOCCER

WEEK SEVEN

OBJECTIVE: Passing and shooting.

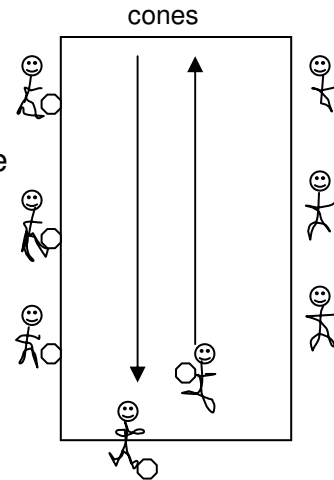
WARM-UP: TERMINATOR

See Week 4.

PASSING: RUG RATS

The Rug Rats [1/3 of the Players] are very hungry. There are lollipops [cones] at one end of the playroom [a corridor of cones approximately eight (8) yards wide]. Unfortunately, the Rug Rats are at the other end of the room and there are Angelicas [the other Players] on each side of the playroom, each with a soccer ball. One at a time the Rug Rats run down the room and the Angelicas attempt to hit them below their knees with passes. Once a Rug Rat reaches the end of the playroom, he waits until the Angelicas reload, then runs back.

First have the Rug Rats simply run down the playroom, then have them dribble a soccer ball down. Alternate groups.



CONTROL AND SHOOTING: CATCH THE PIGEON

Two teams of hungry foxes [Players] line up at each end of the area. Each fox has a number. The Coach calls out a number and tosses a pigeon [soccer ball] into the middle of the area. The Player with the corresponding number from each team runs, tries to gain control of the pigeon, dribble it back toward their side of the field and shoot it into the net.

LIBRARY SOCCER

WEEK EIGHT

OBJECTIVE: REVIEW OF COURSE

WARM-UP: SODA FOUNTAIN

See Week 3

Parent/Child Soccer Game

FULL SPACE

NUMBERS GAME (wall soccer) - Young players will play this game for hours! Use the full amount of space. Divide two teams into players and parents. Place each team on one of the end lines. Number the players 1 - 6 (or use colors for very young players). The coach stands at the halfline and serves a ball into the grid while calling a number. Players who are called sprint off their end line to win the ball, play 1 v 1, and try to score. The wall behind the remaining players is the goal. Players standing on the end line are all goalies and must work together to keep the ball from hitting the wall. The coach should try 2, 3, 4, *etc.* numbers (colors). Ball must hit the wall below waist of goalies to count.

MOST IMPORTANTLY REMEMBER IT'S THE LAST DAY SO HAVE FUN WITH IT!!!

OTHER SOCCER GAMES TO TRY:

Ball Gymnastics – Balls skills in small area, Roll ball with bottom of foot forwards and backwards with right then left. Repeat from side to side. Tick-Tock. Pass the ball from inside of left to inside of right. Hat Dance. Lightly touch ball with bottom of right foot then with left. Ball should remain still. Increase speed for both. Movement. Tick-Tock but move ball slightly forwards each touch. Take it width of field then turn and return. Same with Hat dance. Sideways stance. Roll right foot over ball and stop with inside of left. On return use other feet.

Around the World – Set out four or five cones in a large area. Have in mind either local cities or countries of the world. Name each cone and then have the players dribbling inside the area. On command they must dribble around the country/city that you name. Also name several countries/cities at one time.

Running Bases - Players try to dribble their ball without being tagged. If they get tagged, they exchange places with the tagger. Have taggers carry a pinnie to distinguish themselves. Hand pinnies over to the player that is tagged and use their ball to dribble. Players are safe in any one of the 4 bases. Only one player allowed in a base at one time. If a new player enters a base, the old player must leave.

Relay Races – Set up 3 or 4 courses so that each team only has 3 or 4 players in it. Initially have the players run the courses without a ball. Then add in a ball and add restrictions. Dribbling with left foot, right foot, rolling the ball.

4v4 dribbling – setup a 4v4 game, allow players to score either by dribbling across endline or by shooting the ball through a single small goal. Give double points for dribbling across the endline.

Retrieve the ball – Get the players in pairs with one ball, each pair brings the coach their ball, the coach throws the ball in some direction giving the players directions about how they must retrieve the ball and bring it back
3 passes, 2 passes each, 3 different body parts, 8 passes, etc.

Golf – Setup gates (two cones close together) around your practice area, see the lowest number of passes a team can make in getting through all of the gates. Have each pair keep track of their scores. You may want to keep track of the score for the entire team and then challenge them to do it again in fewer passes.

Passing with pressure – Now add in one or two defenders, see how many goals the players can score in 2 minutes, defenders go around blocking the goals but not taking the ball away.

Fox & hounds – Tag game, one or two players start with balls and try to hit their team mates below the waist with the ball. If a player gets hit then they must also get a ball and help catch the others.

4 v. 4 The Passing Game – Play a 4v4 game in gym/field. Put two goals on the end line in the corners. Scoring is by stopping the ball anywhere on the line or passing through an open goal. Grid should be setup so it is longer than it is wide.

Link Tag – Create pairs of players and have them link arms, break one of the pairs apart and give one of them a penny, the player with the penny is it and will chase the other player until they link up with one of the pairs, the player on the other side of the link must now leave the link and run

Punt & Catch – Get players in pairs again, one ball per pair, one player punts the ball up in the air and the other tries to catch it after it bounces once. They then trade off. Add restrictions such as player must sit down and get back up before catching the ball. Can they catch it without the bounce?

Keep your yard clean – Split team into two groups setup a dividing line in the middle of the field. Every player has a ball. On signal from coach the players kick their ball into the other half of the field. The players keep kicking balls out of their area until coach stops the game. Count up how many balls are on each side of the grid.

Capture the cone – Now set some boundaries up with a 4 – 6 taller cones on each end line. Play 4v4 game where players can get point for either shooting the ball across the line or get extra point for knocking down a cone.

Soccer - Bow-Tie Drill

Purpose: Teach footwork for receiving and passing the ball.

Procedure: Set up the players in couples. Put out 4 cones in a straight line with a normal passing distance between the middle two, and place the other two on either side of the others about 10 feet away. The players stand on the two inside cones and pass the ball to each other. In receiving a pass, the player uses the outside of one foot to direct the ball behind them and they dribble the ball around the outside cone and back to the inside cone, where they pass the ball.

Soccer - First Touch Drill

Purpose: Develop passing accuracy from a moving passer to a moving target without defensive pressure.

Procedure: One soccer ball for every two players and four cones.

1. Scatter players in pairs in a 20 x 20 yard grid.
2. Each set of partners has a ball.
3. On coaches signal, the players begin to move through the grid.
4. The player with the ball passes to their partner, who must pass back on the first touch.
5. Partners continue moving using only one-touch passing.

Soccer - Horse in the Middle

Purpose: Teaches players how to read the defense when making a pass. Great drill for conditioning and getting a defender to see the field better.

Procedure: Put together groups of three. Set-up a rectangle with cones, 10-20 feet long and 5-10 feet wide, depending on age group. Position two players at each end of the rectangle giving each one a ball. Position a player in the middle and try to have the two end players pass the ball back and forth to each other with out the defender getting the ball.

Soccer - Three Play

Purpose: Teach teamwork and passing the ball while moving.

Procedure: Line-up players in groups of three. Set-up a rectangle 10-20 feet long and 5-10 feet wide. Place a player with a ball at each end of the rectangle. Station on player in the middle. Begin by have player on end A pass the ball to the player in the center. The player in the center must return the ball immediately and then turn to receive a pass from the player on end B. Continue until the group has completed 5-10 passes to each side. You can set-up a competition where the group to that completes five passes from each end to the middle wins.

Soccer - Herky Jerkey Drill

Purpose: Demonstrate how changing speed can be used to create space.

Procedure: Set up a 10 x 10 grid with cones. Place 3 or 4 players in a single file line. Have the first player start and tell each follower to stay as close to the person in front of them as they can. Have the lead player jog at a constant speed the first time around the grid. The second time around tell the front runner to change speeds fast, slow, fast. After they finish talk to the group about how much harder it was to stay close to the person in front of them when the speed was changing.

Soccer - Shooting Gallery

Purpose: Develop instep shooting technique, practice attacking and defending with small groups.

Procedure: Two teams of four players. Evenly distribute 12 cones in a 10 x 10 circle. Goals are scored by knocking down cones, players are not allowed into the circle but must shoot from anywhere outside of the circle. Start off with two balls (one for each team), Each team can score points by knocking down a cone. Balls that stop in the circle are dead and cannot be retrieved. If a ball goes completely through the circle it can be played by the team retrieving. The player that doesn't have a ball can either defend or try to get open for a chance to shoot at a cone.

Soccer - Red Light Green Light

Purpose: Develop fundamental foot skills for dribbling, helps teach young children to keep the ball close and under control.

Procedure: Just like the game we played in our youth, the coach or one of the players is "IT". He or she stands at one end of the field with his or her back to the others and calls out red light, green light one two three and then turns around. The players meanwhile have been dribbling toward him or her and must stop, with their foot on top of the ball, when the player turns around anyone moving must go back to the beginning and try again. If a player reaches the person who is "IT" they are the winner.

Soccer - Positional Game

Purpose: Teach possession and passing skills. Moving without the ball, looking for open areas, etc.

Procedure: Set-up a small field (30 x 30) with cones. Play 7 versus 4, where the team of seven tries to keep possession of the ball under pressure of the team of 4. The team of seven can score by passing the ball ten times to each other. The team of 4 can score by dribbling the ball outside of the cones.

Dealing With Parents

Coaching Youth Sports is exciting and rewarding. But from time to time, you may experience difficulty with parents. Some may want their children to play more or they might question some of your judgements as a coach. This is normal, so don't feel that you are alone if this happens:

The following are a few tips to remember when dealing with parents:

1. Always Listen to their ideas and feelings. Remember, they are interested and concerned because it is their children that are involved. Encourage parental involvement.
2. Express appreciation for their interest and concern. This will make them more open and at ease with you.
3. No coach can please everyone. Don't try.
4. Know what your objectives are and do what you believe to be of value to the team, not the parents.
5. Make certain all parents know *your* ground rules. Have rules, regulations, your philosophy, practice dates and times, etc., printed on a sheet of paper you can pass out to *all* parents. Have a parent meeting before the season begins to discuss your operating procedures if necessary.
6. Resist unfair pressure. You are the coach and it's your responsibility to make the final decision.
7. Most important, be fair. If you treat all players equally you will gain respect.
8. Be consistent! If you change a rule or philosophy during the season, you may be in for trouble. If you do change something, make sure the parents are informed as soon as possible.
9. Handle any confrontation one-on-one and not in a crowd situation. Don't be defensive. Don't argue with a parent. Listen to their viewpoint, and thank them for it.
10. Don't discuss individual players with other parents. The grapevine will hang you every time.
11. Ask parents not to criticize their children during a practice or game. Don't let your players be humiliated, even by their own parents. Explain that you must be under *complete* control of your team when they are on your "turf".
12. Don't blame the players for their parents actions, if negative. Try to maintain a fair attitude.
13. Parents must accept the fact that umpires, coaches, and other league officials are *volunteers* and should not be subjected to criticism during practices and games.

Always remember that you will be dealing with all types of children and parents with different backgrounds and ideals. One of your main challenges as a coach is to deal with these differences in a positive manner so the team's season will be an exciting and enjoyable experience for all.

CONDUCT AND SPORTSMANSHIP

All coaches, parents, and spectators shall remain outside the playing area. Fans should remember only positive comments are appropriate in a youth sports setting. Spectators should also remember that vocal instructions during a game are confusing to the young athletes, so please let the coach handle this. Many times you may see calls that officials make differently than what you would, but they are in charge of the game, and we ask that the decisions be left up to their judgement. Coaches are responsible for their fans behavior. Any complaints or concerns about officiating or the program should be written down on paper including description of events and sent into the YMCA office.

The official's course of action for a disruptive player, coach, or spectator:

STEP 1: The disruptive person will be warned about their behavior.

STEP 2: If the behavior continues, the individual will be asked to leave the facility.

STEP 3: If the individual refuses to leave, the game will be stopped.

RESCHEDULING PRACTICES/GAMES

1. Games and practices that need to be rescheduled due to school closure, snow and ice, school functions, etc. will be rescheduled through the YMCA office. Coaches will be notified at the earliest moment (sometimes it is the same day). It will be the coaches responsibility to call all team members.
2. Rescheduling of games due to coaches personal reasons will be between the two coaches. The YMCA must be notified ASAP to find out the availability gym spaces.

CONTACTING PARENTS:

Coaches need to contact players/parents ASAP concerning team placement, team meetings, practice times, and other information. Please do not hesitate to contact players/parents, they are anxious to find out team information. If there is a mistake on a players phone number, please contact the YMCA.

PRACTICES:

The YMCA will schedule all practices. If a coach will not be using their scheduled practice time, please notify the YMCA office ASAP. Teams will be scheduled one practice per week. Practice locations could change in the middle of the season depending on facility needs.

EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORMS:

1. The YMCA will furnish teams with practice and game balls.
2. Team uniforms will be provided by the YMCA. This will be the official uniform and should be worn, during all games. Families who order wrong shirt sizes will pay the cost of a new shirt if they want a different size. If the shirt order is an error of the part of the YMCA, a new shirt will be ordered free of charge.
3. Players must not wear anything on their person that is dangerous to another play or themselves (rings, watches, earrings, etc).

TEAM PICTURE DAY/GAME DATES:

- ☑ Team pictures are scheduled for Saturday, October 1st in the Family Gym. Team times will be handed out to teams at the first practice. Please make a point of reminding parents about the pictures and encourage them to participate.
- ☑ Games will be scheduled either Friday evenings or Saturdays. The 1st weekend of games is October 7th/8th. Each team will play 7 games throughout the season. Game schedules will be out picture day.

LEAGUE INFORMATION/GAME RULES:

1. Players must have registered and paid fees to be eligible.
2. Coaches are required to play every player equal time.
3. Teams will be permitted to enter the facility fifteen (15) minutes prior to their scheduled practice or game.
4. All participants and family must show valid membership card, program card or drivers license to enter the facility for practices and games.
5. Teams will be allowed one time out per game.
6. First team listed on schedule is the home team.
7. "Home" team will wear the NAVY side of uniform.
8. "Away" team will wear the GOLD side of uniform.
9. 6 on 6 including goalie. (Unless teams have less show up)
10. The goalie cannot touch the ball outside the basketball key.
11. No player can enter the basketball key when the goalie has the ball.
12. If a player uses his or her hands, a free kick is given to the other team from the spot, or a safe spot determined by the referee.
13. 7 minute running clock quarters. (Rookies)
14. 8 minute running clock quarters. (Juniors and Seniors)
15. 1-minute break between quarters. 5 minute break at half.
16. Rookie Coaches may be on the court to help instruct to the kids, but need to stay away from the flow of the game.
17. Juniors and Seniors coaches need to stay off the court during the game.
18. BALANCE RULE- If one team is ahead by more 3 goals (even though we don't keep score), an extra player is added to the game (7 on 6). If the team that is behind gets under a 3-goal deficit, that player must be removed.
19. One player may not score more than 2 goals in a row for their team.
20. No Sliding Tackling at ANY TIME!!!
21. Goalie must throw the ball back onto the court and it must touch either a player or the court before crossing mid-court line.
22. All mats must be put back after every game. This is the responsibility of each coach.
23. There is NO DRINKS/SNACKS ALLOWED IN THE GYMS. PLEASE HAND OUT SNACKS IN THE LOBBY AFTER THE GAMES.

