

## YMCA Soccer Games and Skill Drills for 8-9-Year-Olds

Topic(s)	Type	Min.	Activity <sup>1</sup>	Activity Description	Questions (Games) or Tips (Skill Drills)	Variations	Page <sup>2</sup>
Shooting	Game	5	Players will practice individual attack and defense skills (i.e., dribbling, shooting, marking, tackling, goalkeeping).	1 v 1—Each player tries to score on an opposing player by hitting the opponent’s cone. Cones are about 20 yards apart (i.e., the length of the playing area is 20 yards).			81
Start/ Restart  Throw-In  Corner Kick	Game	20	Through playing a game, players will review (or learn) game rules, including start and restart rules, throw-ins, and corner kicks.	3 v 3 (no GKs)—Each team of three tries to score into a goal; introduce rules one at a time during game play.	<p>Coach: What happens at the start of a game? Players: Kick off.</p> <p>Coach: What happens after a goal? Players: Kick off.</p> <p>Coach: What’s the call when you kick the ball out of bounds beyond your own goal line? Players: A corner kick for the opposing team.</p> <p>Coach: What’s the call when you kick the ball out of bounds along the touchline? Players: A throw-in.</p> <p>Coach: What happens when you kick the ball out of bounds beyond the opponents’ goal line? Players: A goal kick is given to the other team.</p>		81

<sup>1</sup> This document offers activities, telling you what to teach. For guidance on how to teach fundamentals, see the Teaching Skills and Tactics Topics in the in the YMCA’s **Coaching Soccer** online course.

<sup>2</sup> This page number refers to pages in the “Plans for 8- to 9-Year-Olds” document found on the “Season and Practice Plans” page in the YMCA’s **Coaching Soccer** online course.

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Game Play	Game	20	Players will adhere to rules during game play.	Players play 5 v 5. Be sure to rotate the goalkeeper, as this is a new position for them.			82
Game Play Positions	Game	20	Players will learn positional roles and responsibilities.	<p>Play 3 v 3 games. Players learn the following positional duties:</p> <p>Goalkeeper (GK)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Handle the ball</li> <li>• Save shots</li> <li>• Distribute the ball to teammates</li> </ul> <p>Defender</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defend space in own half</li> <li>• Mark players</li> <li>• Support the attack</li> </ul> <p>Midfielder</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Receive the ball from defense</li> <li>• Distribute the ball to forwards</li> <li>• Contribute to attack</li> </ul> <p>Forward</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attack goal</li> <li>• Apply pressure to defense when you lose the ball</li> </ul>	<p>Coach: How far forward can players go in a game if the defenders come up the field?</p> <p>Players: To the last defender—otherwise you're offside.</p>		84
Game Play Offside	Game	25	Players will gain an initial understanding of the offside rule.	Players play 5 v 5. Take the opportunity to explain the offside rule to them as they play.			85

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Goal-keeping Narrowing the angle Gathering the Ball	Game	10	Players will learn to come off the line toward the ball to narrow an opponent's shooting angle and then gather the ball effectively.	1 v 1 using a full goal. Defenders earn a point every time the offensive player doesn't score.	Coach: Where does the GK move to make it harder for the shooter? Players: Toward the ball.  Coach: Then what? Players: Stop the ball.  Coach: How? Players: By gathering it.  • "Move toward the ball!"	Play 3 v 3 games; rotate GKs so every player has a turn.  Add time	86
Goal-keeping Narrowing the angle Gathering the Ball	Skill Drill	10	1.Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to gather the ball. 2.Practice gathering the ball.	Players in pairs practice appropriate gathering techniques, feeding each other at low, medium, and high levels, and at different speeds.	• "Get in line with ball." • "Take the ball into chest." • "Hug it!"		87
Goal-keeping Distributing the ball	Game	10	For goalkeepers to defend the goal by stopping shots and distribute the ball using appropriate techniques.	Players play 4 v 4. Goalkeepers distribute the ball to teammates by one of three methods: rolling it, over-arm throwing it, or punting it.  The defense earns a point every time the goalkeeper successfully distributes the ball.	Coach: What should the GK do when he or she gets the ball? Players: Pass it to a teammate.  Coach: How? Players: Depends on where the open teammate is.		91

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Goal-keeping  Distributing the ball	Skill Drill	15	1.Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to roll the ball. 2.Practice rolling the ball. 3.Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to over-arm throw the ball. 4.Practice throwing the ball. 5.Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to punt the ball. 6.Practice punting the ball.	Players pair up and practice the three skills.	Roll <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Step with the opposite foot and roll.”</li> </ul> Over-arm Throw <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Step with the opposite foot.”</li> <li>• “Use a straight arm over-arm throw.”</li> </ul> Punt <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Take a long step.”</li> <li>• “Drop and kick the ball.”</li> <li>• “Use the laces.” (as the contact surface)</li> <li>• “Follow through to the target.”</li> </ul>		91
Passing  Passing Lanes  Moving to Support	Game	15	To keep possession of the ball by effective passing, ball control, and support play. Players will learn to provide support to their teammates with the ball during full game play.	Play 3 v 3 games without GKs. Give teams an extra point for four consecutive passes.	Coach: Other than good passing and receiving skills, what else does the passer of the ball need? Players: Someone to pass to—supporting teammates.  Coach: Where should supporting teammates be? Players: In open space.  Coach: Any open space? Players: A space in which the passer can get the ball to him or her.	Players play 3 v 1, 4 v 2, or 6 v 3 games, depending on their skill proficiency.	93

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Passing Passing Lanes Moving to Support	Skill Drill	15	1.Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to provide support for teammates with the ball 2.Practice providing support for teammates with the ball.	Play 2 v 1 games in 10- x 10-yard areas marked by cones.  Players focus on providing good angles of support against cold, warm, and hot defenses as necessary.  The goal is to get six passes. Players should learn that the supporting player should move "off the ball" so the passer always has a teammate to pass to.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Support the player with the ball."</li> <li>• "Move to open a passing lane!"</li> </ul>		94
Penetrating the defense Passing Target Player	Game	15	Players will learn to pass the ball forward through a defense. Players use a target player to create shooting opportunities during game play.	Play 3 v 3 games. Play with the target player in the attacking half. The offense scores a point when they successfully get the ball to the target player.	<p>Coach: When the target player has the ball, what should teammates do to continue an attack?</p> <p>Players: Provide support and prepare for a return pass.</p>	<p>To use as a Game 2: Teams are 3 v 1 or 3 v 2 depending on their skill proficiency.</p> <p>Goals from the target player feed count double.</p>	97
Penetrating the defense Passing Target Player	Skill Drill	15	1.Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to shoot from a target player feed. 2.Practice shooting from a target player feed.	Players shoot from the target player feed. They pass to the target player, provide support for the return pass, and receive and shoot the return pass.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Pass to the target player!"</li> <li>• "Provide support for the return pass!"</li> </ul>		98

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Penetrating the defense Passing Target Player	Game	10	Players will successfully make long passes to a target player and create scoring opportunities.	Players play 3 v 3 games without GKs. The target player is in the attacking half. Get the ball forward as quickly as possible and support the target. The offense earns a point for successful passes of 10 yards or longer to the target player.	Coach: What is the quickest way to get the ball forward from defense to your target player? Players: Long pass.	To use as a Game 2: Teams are 3 v 1 or 3 v 2 depending on their skill proficiency.	100
Penetrating the defense Passing Target Player	Skill Drill	10	1.Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to make long passes. 2.Practice long passes.	Players practice long passing in pairs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Long step to the ball!"</li> <li>• "Strike your foot under the ball."</li> <li>• "Use the laces." (as the contact surface)</li> <li>• "Follow through to the target."</li> </ul>		101
Receiving	Skill Drill	20	1.Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to receive the ball with the thigh and the chest. 2.Practice receiving the ball with the thigh and chest.	Partners feed each other long balls, varying the distance and pace of the feeds to simplify or challenge as needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Get in line with the ball!"</li> <li>• "Bring your thigh [or chest] to the ball."</li> <li>• "Withdraw your thigh [or chest] on contact."</li> <li>• "Kill the bounce."</li> </ul>		102
Marking	Game	10	Players learn to mark opponents during game play.	Play 3 v 3 games. The focus is on marking. The defense earns a point when a defender stays between the ball handler and the goal. The offense earns a point when the ball handler slips past the defender.	Coach: Where is the best place for the defender to be to mark an opponent? Players: Between the opponent and the goal.  • "Mark your opponent!"		104

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Marking	Skill Drill	15	1.Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to mark an opponent. 2.Practice marking an opponent.	Players learn the correct goal-side marking position. Play 1 v 1 games with two feeders in a 20- x 10-yard area. A feeder feeds player A, who is marked by player D. Player A has to get the ball to the other feeder.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Stay goal-side— between your opponent and the goal!”</li> </ul>		105
Marking Tackling	Game	10	Players will mark tightly and win the ball in the tackle.	Play 3 v 3 games without GKs. The defense earns a point if it wins the ball.	<p>Coach: What do defenders need to do when their opponent gets the ball? Players: Tackle the opponent.</p>	Make the focus close marking by midfielders and defenders.	108
Marking Tackling	Skill Drill	15	1.Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to tackle. 2.Practice block tackling.	Players practice block tackling in 1 v 1 games.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Get close to the ball.”</li> <li>• “Use the inside of the foot.”</li> <li>• “Keep your knee bent and leg firm.”</li> </ul>		108
First-Touch Pass	Game	10	Players will use the first-touch pass during game play.	<p>Play 3 v 3 games without GKs.</p> <p>Most players must make three touches—two to control and one to shoot or pass.</p> <p>Designate one player per team to make only one touch. Alternate this player who gets only one touch.</p>	<p>Coach: When you are under pressure do you have time to control the ball? Players: No.</p> <p>Coach: What should you do when the ball comes and you have no time? Players: Pass it immediately. (That is, on one touch.)</p>	<p>To use as a Game 2: Teams are 3 v 1 or 3 v 2 depending on their skill proficiency.</p> <p>Give a point for successful first-touch passes when they’re executed when they should be.</p>	110
First-Touch Pass Give and Go	Skill Drill	15	1.Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to use a first-touch pass (give and go) to beat a defender. 2.Practice first-touch passing.	Players in 2 v 1 games pass to a target player. Conditions of this game are the defender must go to the player with the ball, and two attackers must get the ball to the target player.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Give the pass.”</li> <li>• “Go for the return.”</li> <li>• “Return pass behind the defender.”</li> <li>• “Pass to the target player.”</li> </ul>		111

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Dribbling	Game	10	Players learn to run at opponents with the ball and beat those opponents while dribbling the ball under control	Play 3 v 3 games. Players attempt to beat their opponents with the dribble. The offense earns a point when a dribbler beats an opponent. Instruct the players not to bunch up; there should be space behind the defenders. Rotate GKs every few minutes.	<p>Coach: When should you try to beat a defender with the ball? (You might need to set this up: "Should you try it in this situation or that situation?")                      Players: When there is space behind the defender.</p> <p>Coach: In what part of the field are you likely to find the most space?                      Players: Wide. (Along the sides of the field.)</p> <p>Coach: How can you beat the defender most easily?                      Players: Push the ball past the defender and run.</p>		113
Dribbling	Skill Drill	15	<p>1.Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to dribble by a defender under control.</p> <p>2.Practice dribbling.</p>	<p>Play 1 v 2 games in 10 x 30 areas. Player A must beat two defenders in succession and get to the 30-yard line with the ball.</p> <p>Defenders may only move sideways. If a defender wins the ball from player A, he or she gives it back and player A continues, finishing by passing to the target player (T).</p> <p>Player T then becomes the attacker and player A becomes one of the defenders.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Push and run!"</li> </ul>		114



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Scoring from a Cross	Game	10	Players use the width of the field to cross the ball and score.	Play 3 v 3 games without GKs. Use a short and wide field. Play begins with the offense attempting to score from a cross. They earn a point only if they score from a cross.	<p>Coach: When players have the ball out wide, how can they create a scoring chance?                      Players: Cross the ball.</p> <p>Coach: Then where do other players need to be to score?                      Players: In the center.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Pass the ball wide!"</li> <li>• "Cross the ball."</li> <li>• "Score from the cross!"</li> </ul>	To use as a Game 2: Teams are 3 v 1 or 3 v 2 depending on their skill proficiency.	117
Scoring from a Cross	Skill Drill	10	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to score from a cross.</li> <li>2.Practice scoring from a cross.</li> </ol>	Pair up players. The striker passes to the winger, the winger crosses, and the striker meets the cross to score.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Pass to the winger!"</li> <li>• "Move forward and meet the ball on the run!"</li> <li>• "Score!"</li> </ul>		118
Scoring off a Corner Kick	Game	10	To work as a team to turn corner kicks into goal-scoring chances.	<p>Play 5 v 5 games. Begin each play with a corner kick. The offense earns two points for goals scored off a corner kick.</p> <p>Review corner kick rules.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Score from the corner kicks!"</li> </ul>	To use as a Game 2: Teams are 3 v 1, 4 v 2, or 6 v 3, depending on their skill proficiency.	121
Scoring off a Corner Kick	Skill Drill	10	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to set up corner kicks to create the best scoring chance.</li> <li>2.Practice corner kicks.</li> </ol>	Players practice corner kicks near the post corner, unopposed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "One player [A2] on the near-post."</li> <li>• "Others [A3, A4, A5, A6] ready to run in."</li> <li>• "Aim for [A2], who flicks the ball back for other players moving in."</li> </ul>	<p>To simplify, cross the ball on the ground.</p> <p>To challenge, cross the ball in the air and add two defenders.</p>	121

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Marking during Corner Kicks	Game	10	Players learn to mark opponents to prevent scoring chances from corner kicks.	Play 5 v 5. Use half the field, and begin each play with a corner kick. The defense scores a point each time the offense fails to score on the play.	Coach: How can you prevent opposition from scoring at corner kicks? Players: Mark them tightly.	To use as a Game 2: Teams are 3 v 1, 4 v 2, or 6 v 3, depending on their skill proficiency.	125
Marking during Corner Kicks	Skill Drill	10	1.Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to mark during corner kicks. 2.Practice marking during corner kicks.	Players practice marking during corner kicks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Mark tightly 1-on-1.”</li> <li>• “Move with your opponent!”</li> <li>• “Win the ball if possible.”</li> </ul>		125