



## Soccer Practice Plans



Using a small number of players on a team allows players to have many tactical options without the pressure of large numbers of opponents. This makes it more likely that players will attempt to pass, dribble, or shoot as the need arises rather than simply kicking the ball away as far as possible. Progressing from the 4 and under age group, players can now revisit the tactical components of possession and attack while adding a closer look at defending.

### OVERVIEW

The practice plans that follow provide a guide for the season and incorporate the following key components:

- **Practice Goals:** The goals of the practice are your main focus.
- **Team Circle:** The team circle time that kicks off each practice is an opportunity for you to cover key character development concepts with your players. The four core values—caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility—can all be related to many situations that arise while playing soccer. For example, playing cooperatively with teammates shows that you care about them. We'll suggest some specific ideas for briefly discussing character development values.
- **Tactics and Skills:** Tactics are knowing what to do during the game (and when to do it), and they require an understanding of the problems faced by each team during the game and how those problems can be solved. Ways to maintain possession of the ball would be tactics. Skills are the physical skills traditionally taught, such as passing or shooting the ball or controlling the ball during play.
- **Rules and Traditions:** You will teach the rules of the sport to players gradually, as part of playing games and learning skills. Traditions are those unwritten rules that players follow to be courteous and safe, such as raising their hand when they foul someone or playing cooperatively with the others on their team.
- **Fitness Concepts:** Even young children can understand some simple concepts about health and fitness, such as the idea that exercise strengthens your heart.





# Soccer Session 1



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

 Ages: 5 to 6

**Coach:**

**Team:**

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### Practice Goals

- Positivity and togetherness
  - Explore different aspects of soccer
  - Variety
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Time	Activity	Activity Description	Video Tutorial
3 mins.	Team Circle	<p>Gather players into a circle with one ball.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "Hand the ball to the player next to you until it makes it around the whole circle."</p> <p>After the ball has gone around the circle one time, have it passed back to you.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "We play soccer to be healthier and more fit, but it also teaches us to become good teammates and good people. This season we will talk about four qualities that make a good person and teammate: caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. Our team needs to have all of these qualities in our practices and games. Remember that we can't be a team without each of you doing your part.</p> <p>"Let's pass the ball to each other and say one of the core values before you pass. This will help you remember to use all four of the qualities so we can work together."</p>	N/A

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Time	Activity	Activity Description	Video Tutorial
7 mins.	<b>Warm-Up: Dribbling</b>	Use this dribbling warm-up 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 tutorial, such as dribbling using various parts of the foot but primarily the area on top of the toes and not the front of the toes.	 <a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3xM3xWE">https://sportsedtv.co/3xM3xWE</a>
5 mins.	<b>Fitness: General</b>	<p>Gather the players about 10 to 15 feet away from a goal or cone.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "Jump 10 times. Our muscles help us jump. When you use your muscles for a long time without getting too tired, it improves your endurance, which means you can run longer without getting tired. Now run really fast to the goal and back."</p> <p>Wait for them to return.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "Running strengthens your heart and lungs. Now touch your toes; try to keep your fingers down there while I count to 10. Stretching makes you flexible, like a rubber band. When we play soccer, our bodies run, kick, and move, which makes our bodies stronger and improves our fitness. This means we can run and play longer and faster. Having good physical fitness is important for soccer and for being healthy. At every practice we'll talk about fitness in our fitness circles."</p>	N/A

Time	Activity	Activity Description	Video Tutorial
<b>7</b> mins.	<b>Two-Touch Receiving and Passing</b>	<p>First, demonstrate how to properly receive the ball with one touch and pass with the second. The video tutorial 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 tutorial. Divide the players into groups of three to four; each group will stand in two lines about five to ten yards apart (one to two players per line). One line (with two players) starts with the ball.</p> <p>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, pass it to the opposite line with their second touch, and then jog around to the back of that opposite line. Check the video tutorial for a more detailed and visual explanation.</p>	 <p><a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3suG0Zm">https://sportsedtv.co/3suG0Zm</a></p>
<b>15</b> mins.	<b>Three Versus Three: Passing Focus</b>	<p>Next, create three versus three games (can be three versus two or three versus one to make it easier to keep the ball; if so, make sure to rotate the teams). Make mini-fields for each group using cones. Players must score through the opposition's goal. Each team of three should try to pass often during the game.</p> <p>Emphasize and encourage passing in the game. Freeze the game occasionally when you see passing happen, and point out good passing, receiving, and dribbling under control. 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>This is a separate activity to work on passing technique and moving:</p> <p><a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3k1jQd7">https://sportsedtv.co/3k1jQd7</a></p>
<b>37</b> mins.	<b>Total Time</b>	<p><i>Practice times vary by YMCA. If your Y has a shorter practice time, assign or encourage players to complete activities outside of practice time.</i></p>	



# Soccer Session 2



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 Ages: 5 to 6

**Coach:**


**Team:**

### Practice Goals

- Shooting
- Passing
- Game scenarios

Time	Activity	Activity Description	Video Tutorial
<b>3</b> mins.	<b>Team Circle</b>	<p>Gather players into a group.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "When you come to practice, you should do three things:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be ready to play.</li> <li>• Learn and improve your skills and work with others.</li> <li>• Have fun.</li> </ul> <p>"I'm going to give you a way to remember these three things. It's called a team motto. Our team motto is: Play hard, play fair, and have fun! Let's say it together loudly. That's great. Be sure to remember our team motto and put it into practice."</p>	N/A
<b>10</b> mins.	<b>Warm-Up: Shooting</b>	<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 video tutorial explains the correct technique to shoot with either and how to set up this activity.</p>	 <a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3gcPRxR">https://sportsedtv.co/3gcPRxR</a>



Time	Activity	Activity Description	Video Tutorial
5 mins.	<b>Fitness: Cardio-respiratory</b>	<p>Players gather into a group.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "Hold up one hand and make a fist. Squeeze your fist tightly, then let go. Keep tightening and letting go."</p> <p>Players continue for 10 counts.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "The heart is a special muscle that tightens and relaxes just like your fist is doing. The heart is about the size of your fist. Let's put our fists over our chests. Every time your heart tightens, or beats, it pumps blood all over your body. When you run during soccer, your heart beats faster. The beat slows down when you slow down. Let's run with high knees for 15 counts while we count together. Stop and feel your heartbeat by putting your hand over your chest."</p> <p>Model the activity for the players.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "Running strengthens your heart and lungs and improves your fitness."</p>	N/A
10 mins.	<b>Two Versus Two: Passing</b>	<p>Players participate in two versus two mini-games. They are awarded a point for every time they score in the opposing goal (two cones or small goal). Make sure to emphasize the importance of passing.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "How can you help each other and work together to score?"</p> <p>Prompt the answer by showing players an example. Put two players on the field, one close to the goal and the other farther back with the ball.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "What is the quickest way for you two to get the ball into the goal?"</p> <p>Players' correct response: "Pass the ball forward toward the goal."</p>	 <p>This is a separate drill to practice passing, in case players struggle with it in the game:</p> <p><a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3suG0Zm">https://sportsedtv.co/3suG0Zm</a></p>

Time	Activity	Activity Description	Video Tutorial
15 mins.	<b>Three Versus Three: Passing and Team Play Focus</b>	<p>Make three versus three games (can be three versus two or three versus one to make it easier to keep the ball; if so, make sure to rotate the teams). Each team tries to have teammates help each other during the game. The objective is for players to be able to move to a good position to receive a pass when a teammate has the ball during a game.</p> <p>Explain that a regulation game has 11 versus 11 and that all players spread over the field so they can help or support each other.</p> <p>Stop the game for five minutes so all players can practice taking throw-ins (see video tutorial). 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 throw-ins as described in the video tutorial.</p> <p>Freeze the game occasionally to show players where good supporting positions are. Watch that players don't get too close to teammates who have the ball. This only makes the game more crowded, so encourage them to stay in space to receive a pass.</p> <p>Use this time to teach players the start/restart rules every time a team scores, or the ball goes out-of-bounds.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "How do we start the game?"</p> <p>Players' correct response: "With a kickoff at the center. The other team must go back into its own half."</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "What happens when the ball goes out-of-bounds?"</p> <p>Players' correct response: "Throw-ins from the side of the field."</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "What happens after you score a goal?"</p> <p>Players' correct response: "A kickoff at the center. The team that scored must go back into its own half."</p>	 <p>This teaches throw-ins:</p> <p><a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3skpR8y">https://sportsedtv.co/3skpR8y</a></p>

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Activity Description</b>	<b>Video Tutorial</b>
<b>43</b> mins.	<b>Total Time</b>	<i>Practice times vary by YMCA. If your Y has a shorter practice time, assign or encourage players to complete activities outside of practice time.</i>	





# Soccer Session 3



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
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 Ages: 5 to 6

**Coach:**

**Team:**


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**Practice Goals**



- Crossing and scoring
  - Defending
  - Dribbling
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Time	Activity	Activity Description	Video Tutorial
3 mins.	Team Circle	<p>Gather players into a group near the goal. Have a ball ready. Ask a player in the group to pass to you. Shoot at the goal and miss completely. Retrieve the ball and make a bad pass.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "That shot wasn't very good, was it? How about that pass? Those were mistakes. What should you say to your teammates when they make mistakes?"</p> <p>Listen to their responses.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "What could you say to make your teammate feel better? What could you say to make them feel worse?"</p> <p>Listen to their responses. Have players change unsupportive, negative comments to positive ones.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "It's very important to forgive mistakes and be understanding of others, just as you would want them to be of you. Making mistakes is part of learning. Saying something that makes your teammates feel better shows you care about them."</p>	N/A

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Time	Activity	Activity Description	Video Tutorial
10 mins.	<b>Warm-Up: Crossing and Scoring</b>	<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><a href="https://sportsedtv.co/2W12qVM">https://sportsedtv.co/2W12qVM</a></p>
5 mins.	<b>Fitness: Muscular Strength and Endurance</b>	<p>Gather players into a circle.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "Find your own space so you don't bump your neighbor. You're going to run in your own spot for 30 seconds, then stop. Ready? Go!"</p> <p>Time players and verbally let them know the time remaining; stop them at the end of the time.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "What part of the body did we just use the most when we ran?"</p> <p>Encourage their responses.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "When we play soccer, which part of your body do you use the most?"</p> <p>Wait for their responses.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "Muscles in our body help us move our legs. Playing soccer will help our leg muscles get stronger and grow bigger."</p>	N/A

Time	Activity	Activity Description	Video Tutorial
<b>10</b> mins.	<b>One Versus One: Defending and Dribbling</b>	<p>First, introduce and teach how to defend a dribble. Players approach the dribbler and stay low to the ground and on their toes, ready to move in either direction. They should not kick the ball too soon, but wait for the right moment to try to steal it. Check the video tutorial for more details on what to coach.</p> <p>Then move on to practice; follow the activity in the video tutorial.</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 (two cones or poles) behind them. The defender passes to the attacker, then the attacker tries to dribble by them and into the goal, while the defender tries to stop them. After the pass, the defender runs 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><a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3CV5HXw">https://sportsedtv.co/3CV5HXw</a></p>
<b>12</b> mins.	<b>Three Versus Three: Defending and Marking</b>	<p>Make three versus three games (can be three versus two or three versus one to make it easier to keep the ball; if so, make sure to rotate the teams), with an emphasis on each player marking one of the opposing players and staying with them.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "If the opponent you are marking gets the ball, where should you move?"</p> <p>Players' correct response: "Closer to them."</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "As the opponent you are marking gets closer to your goal, where should you move?"</p> <p>Players' correct response: "Closer to them."</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "How should you move, quickly or slowly?"</p> <p>Players' correct response: "Quickly."</p> <p>Freeze the game from time to time to show good marking and to check that players are marking appropriately.</p>	 <p>This is a separate video drill on one versus one defending:</p> <p><a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3iOSs2B">https://sportsedtv.co/3iOSs2B</a></p>

Time	Activity	Activity Description	Video Tutorial
<b>40</b> mins.	<b>Total Time</b>	<i>Practice times vary by YMCA. If your Y has a shorter practice time, assign or encourage players to complete activities outside of practice time.</i>	



# Soccer Session 4



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 Ages: 5 to 6

**Coach:**


**Team:**


### Practice Goals


- Two versus one
- Passing
- Shooting

Time	Activity	Activity Description	Video Tutorial
3 mins.	Team Circle	<p>Gather players into a group near two cones about 10 feet apart.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "What is a foul?"</p> <p>Listen to their responses. Choose a player to help demonstrate responses (include hand balls, bumping players, and kicking or tripping).</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "Should you admit to a foul if no official sees it? Those who think Yes, stand at this cone. Those who think No, stand at this one."</p> <p>Wait for players to choose.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "When you know you've fouled, you should raise your hand. You should never take unfair advantage of other players. Can you think of other ways honesty is practiced on the field?"</p> <p>Listen to responses and discuss.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "All of those show honesty."</p>	N/A



Time	Activity	Activity Description	Video Tutorial
10 mins.	Warm-Up: Two Versus One	<p>Divide players into groups of three. Players participate as two versus one in an area 20 feet by 10 feet with a small goal. They must pass three times, then shoot into the goal.</p> <p>The defender will look to block the passing lane between the attackers (as shown in the video tutorial). Don't over-teach the technique or freeze the drill too often, but do positively reinforce correct technique.</p> <p>The attackers must make three passes and then shoot. They will focus on keeping passing lanes open between them and, after three passes, going to goal.</p> <p>Make sure to rotate who the one defender is.</p>	 <p>This focuses on how to defend a two versus one:</p> <p><a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3m926iY">https://sportsedtv.co/3m926iY</a></p>
5 mins.	Fitness: Safety Equipment and Rules	<p>Bring a small piece of cardboard or a clipboard that can be used as a shield. Ask one player to demonstrate. Provide a ball and have the player kick the ball at you at a medium effort.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "Watch where the ball goes when it's kicked."</p> <p>Allow the ball to hit your legs. Then put the board in front of you, between you and the player kicking. Have the player kick again.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "Now watch where the ball goes. This board is just like a shin guard that we wear on our legs. Wearing shin guards protects our legs just like the board protected my legs from the ball."</p> <p>Give each player a turn kicking the ball.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "Can you think of other ways to be safe that you should remember to do when you play soccer?"</p>	N/A

Time	Activity	Activity Description	Video Tutorial
7 mins.	<b>Passing: Triangle</b>	<p>This activity, as shown in the video tutorial, will help players improve at passing and get more comfortable with the skill.</p> <p>The video tutorial shows the ideal technique: using the back foot to receive with the first touch, and then passing along with their next touch. Encourage players to use the right technique, and make sure they pass using their instep rather than their toe. If they need to use more than two touches to control the ball and take it across the back of the cone, that is fine.</p> <p>Focus on using positive reinforcement, and make the cones as close as needed. The farther back players stand from their cone, the easier it will be.</p> <p>If players struggle, remove the cones and just have them pass to each other in a triangle.</p> <p>Halfway through the drill, have them switch directions, so instead of passing to their right, they now all pass to their left.</p>	 <p><a href="https://sportsedtv.com/2VSu2MN">https://sportsedtv.com/2VSu2MN</a></p>

Time	Activity	Activity Description	Video Tutorial
<b>15</b> mins.	<b>Three Versus Three: Shooting</b>	<p>Players participate as three versus three (can be three versus two or three versus one to make it easier to keep the ball and score; if so, make sure to rotate the teams).The emphasis is shooting on goal.</p> <p>Encourage players to not be afraid to shoot and to try to score as much as possible. Applaud missed shots and any attempts at scoring. When you feed the ball in, sometimes give it right to a player in a scoring position (but give the same amount to both teams). If players aren't shooting enough, make it three versus two or three versus one so it is easier for the larger team to score. Make sure to rotate continuously who is on the larger team.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "What do you have to do to score?"</p> <p>Players' correct response: "Shoot."</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "When you shoot, where should you aim the ball?"</p> <p>Players' correct response: "At the goal."</p> <p>Have teams count the number of goals they score in game one and see if they can score more in game two. This way they see the value of practice.</p>	 <p>This explains the most important aspects of shooting: <a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3gcPRxR">https://sportsedtv.co/3gcPRxR</a></p>
<b>40</b> mins.	<b>Total Time</b>	<p><i>Practice times vary by YMCA. If your Y has a shorter practice time, assign or encourage players to complete activities outside of practice time.</i></p>	





# Soccer Session 5



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 Ages: 5 to 6

**Coach:**



**Team:**


### Practice Goals

- Shooting
- Dribbling
- Passing

Time	Activity	Activity Description	Video Tutorial
3 mins.	Team Circle	<p>Gather players into a circle. Stand in the center of the circle with a ball. Ask players to call to you and raise their hands if they are in a good position for a pass. Dribble the ball inside the circle, but do not pass to anyone. Continue for about one minute.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "Did I share the ball with anyone?"</p> <p>Wait for their responses.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "Do you think that is good teamwork? What is good teamwork?"</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> Listen to their responses. Repeat the activity, but this time pass to players who call and raise their hands.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "Teamwork is when all players are working together, not just keeping the ball to themselves. Responsible team members get in position to receive a good pass. They don't always pass to the same person. And they always work hard."</p>	N/A



Time	Activity	Activity Description	Video Tutorial
7 mins.	<b>Warm-Up: Shooting</b>	Players shoot into a stationary goal. They shoot with either their instep or laces. Give positive reinforcement, and help them work on their technique. The video tutorial explains the proper way to shoot.	 <a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3gcPRxR">https://sportsedtv.co/3gcPRxR</a>
5 mins.	<b>Fitness: Healthy Habits</b>	<p><b>SAY:</b> "When your body doesn't eat healthy food and get enough sleep, it moves slowly. Let's pretend we have no energy to move because we didn't eat enough healthy food or get enough sleep."</p> <p>Begin to move slowly, and encourage players to follow. Move extremely slowly.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "Now, stop. I am going to fill your bodies up with healthy foods."</p> <p>Act out handing them food.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "Pretend we're sleeping. When I say 'Wake up!' you can move faster because you have enough energy and enough rest. Wake up and move faster. Now, stop! What are some other healthy habits you have learned?"</p> <p>Examples: exercising daily, brushing teeth, drinking water.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "It's important for everyone to practice healthy habits."</p>	N/A
10 mins.	<b>Dribbling: In Space &amp; Turning</b>	The video tutorial demonstrates a dribbling activity to help players learn to keep the ball close and to turn while dribbling.	 <a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3xM3xWE">https://sportsedtv.co/3xM3xWE</a>

Time	Activity	Activity Description	Video Tutorial
<b>15</b> mins.	<b>Three Versus Three: Passing</b>	<p>Play a three versus three game (can be adapted to three versus two or three versus one if players are struggling to keep control of the ball). Players get one point for scoring, but if they pass three times before scoring, they get two points. Encourage them to try to complete three passes before scoring.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "How can you keep the ball as a team?"</p> <p>Players' correct response: "Pass."</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "What do you need to do as well as passing?"</p> <p>Players' correct response: "Receive and control."</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "If a player with the ball wants to pass, what does he or she need?" Again, you may need to set this up in a demonstration.</p> <p>Players' correct response: "Someone to pass to."</p> <p>Another variation: Players play two versus one in an area 20 feet by 10 feet with a small goal.</p>	 <p>This is a separate activity on passing technique and moving:</p> <p><a href="https://sportsedtv.com/3k1jQd7">https://sportsedtv.com/3k1jQd7</a></p>
<b>40</b> mins.	<b>Total Time</b>	<p><i>Practice times vary by YMCA. If your Y has a shorter practice time, assign or encourage players to complete activities outside of practice time.</i></p>	



# Soccer Session 6



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
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 Ages: 5 to 6

**Coach:**



**Team:**


### Practice Goals

- Dribbling
- Team play and passing
- New defending technique

Time	Activity	Activity Description	Video Tutorial
3 mins.	Team Circle	<p>Gather players into a circle.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "I want everyone to run in a circle, following the person in front of you, without bumping into each other. Keep a space about as long as a bicycle between you, and don't go ahead of the person in front of you."</p> <p>Encourage players to run slowly enough to do all the directions. Continue the activity for one minute.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "Now stop. Did you bump into each other? Did anyone get upset with the person in front of you? You kept your body under control by not going ahead of the person in front of you. You kept your emotions under control by not getting upset with the person ahead of you. They couldn't move any faster since you were all running in a circle as a group. Everyone can stay safe and learn when everyone is responsible for himself or herself."</p>	N/A



Time	Activity	Activity Description	Video Tutorial
10 mins.	Warm-Up: Dribbling	This dribbling activity, shown in the video tutorial, will warm up players while giving them more dribbling experience. It also includes turning on the ball.	 <a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3xM3xWE">https://sportsedtv.co/3xM3xWE</a>
5 mins.	Fitness: Flexibility	<p>Bring a rubber band to use as a prop.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "This rubber band is like our muscles. When I pull it, it stretches; when I let go, it goes back to its original shape."</p> <p>Demonstrate with the rubber band, stretching it out and back, using a gentle, slow action.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "Your muscles work the same way. When you reach and stretch, your muscles are stretching just like the rubber band. When your body comes back, your muscles go back to their original shape. Reach down to the ground with your arms slowly, and then bring your arms back up."</p> <p>Have players repeat three times.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "Your leg muscles need to stretch because you use them the most in soccer; stretching makes your leg muscles more flexible. When muscles are flexible, it keeps them from getting hurt and makes the muscles feel good."</p>	N/A
7 mins.	Defending: Tackling from Behind	The purpose of this activity is to get defenders comfortable with making a tackle from behind when the opportunity is there. Explain 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 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.	 <a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3g85x5C">https://sportsedtv.co/3g85x5C</a>

Time	Activity	Activity Description	Video Tutorial
<b>15</b> mins.	<b>Two Versus Two: Team Play and Passing</b>	<p>Players play small two versus two games (can be two versus one if they struggle with two versus two). Encourage them to work together, get open for their teammate, pass as often as they can, and focus on moving forward toward the opposing goal.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "Who is on your team?"</p> <p>Players' correct response: Name of teammate</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "Which goal are you trying to score in?"</p> <p>Players' correct response: "That one." (Have them point.)</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "Where do you kick the ball to score?"</p> <p>Players' correct response: "In the goal." (If they say "In there," have them show you.)</p>	 <p>This is a separate video for a different passing drill:  <a href="https://sportsedtv.com/3suG0Zm">https://sportsedtv.com/3suG0Zm</a></p>
<b>40</b> mins.	<b>Total Time</b>	<p><i>Practice times vary by YMCA. If your Y has a shorter practice time, assign or encourage players to complete activities outside of practice time.</i></p>	



# Soccer Session 7



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

 Ages: 5 to 6

**Coach:**



**Team:**

### Practice Goals


- Passing
- Defending
- Marking in game scenarios

Time	Activity	Activity Description	Video Tutorial
3 mins.	Team Circle	<p>Gather players into a circle. Stand in the middle of the circle with a ball. Choose two players to pass the ball with you.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "We're going to work on our passing skills."</p> <p>Pass repeatedly to them and not the others.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "Tell me how you felt to have only two players get the passes."</p> <p>Listen to their responses.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "Sharing the ball and not distracting your teammates shows you care about them. What else can you do to show you care about your teammates?"</p> <p>Their responses should include encouragement, positive comments for good play, forgiving players who make mistakes, and more.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "Good. Those are all ways you can show you care."</p>	N/A



Time	Activity	Activity Description	Video Tutorial
10 mins.	Warm-Up: Passing	<p>Begin by demonstrating how to properly receive the ball with one touch and pass with the second. The video tutorial 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 tutorial. This gives players more practice on the fundamental skills of passing and receiving.</p>	 <p><a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3suG0Zm">https://sportsedtv.co/3suG0Zm</a></p>
5 mins.	Fitness: Muscular Strength and Endurance	<p>Gather players into a group. Show them the differences between a kick with minimal effort and one with close to maximum effort.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "Watch how far the ball goes when I kick it two different times."</p> <p>Show both kicks to players.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "Let's make a circle, and you show me how you would kick the ball. Pretend you're kicking a ball, and show me a short kick. Now step back two big steps, and show me a long kick that will make the ball go across the circle."</p> <p>Highlight the ball going farther in the second kick.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "You can kick the ball farther when the muscles in your legs are strong. Your muscles in your legs get stronger when you practice kicking."</p>	N/A
10 mins.	Group of Three: Passing	<p>Divide players into groups of three, one ball per group, in a mini-field. Have them pass to each other to move the ball down the field from one side to the other. Then they turn and pass as they move down to the other side.</p> <p>Meanwhile, you join one group at a time as a defender (so it's three versus one). Defend them for a few passes, encouraging them to move and get open for their teammates. After they pass, move to the teammate with the ball, but remind the passer to move and get open if they don't.</p>	 <p>This is a different exercise for passing and moving, and getting into the habit of getting open:</p> <p><a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3k1jQd7">https://sportsedtv.co/3k1jQd7</a></p>



Time	Activity	Activity Description	Video Tutorial
12 mins.	<b>Three Versus Three: Defending and Marking</b>	<p>Make three versus three games (can be three versus two or three versus one to make it easier to keep the ball; if so, make sure to rotate the teams) with an emphasis on each player marking one of the opposing players and staying with them.</p> <p>Watch the video tutorial for the aspects of defensive technique to emphasize.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "If the opponent you are marking gets the ball, where should you move?"</p> <p>Players' correct response: "Closer to them."</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "As the opponent you are marking gets closer to your goal, where should you move?"</p> <p>Players' correct response: "Closer to them."</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "How should you move, quickly or slowly?"</p> <p>Players' correct response: "Quickly."</p> <p>Freeze the game from time to time to show good marking and to check that players are marking appropriately.</p>	 <p>This is a separate drill on one versus one defending:  <a href="https://sportsedtv.com/3iOSs2B">https://sportsedtv.com/3iOSs2B</a></p>
40 mins.	<b>Total Time</b>	<p><i>Practice times vary by YMCA. If your Y has a shorter practice time, assign or encourage players to complete activities outside of practice time.</i></p>	



# Soccer Session 8



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

 Ages: 5 to 6

**Coach:**



**Team:**


### Practice Goals

- Crossing and scoring
- Dribbling
- Ball control

Time	Activity	Activity Description	Video Tutorial
3 mins.	Team Circle	<p>Gather players into a group between two cones about 10 feet apart. Stand in the middle of the circle with a ball.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "I'm going to show you two different ways to handle the same situation. Think about which is the best way to handle this."</p> <p>Choose a player to receive a pass from you. Make a bad pass and then stomp angrily away from the group. Retrieve the ball and make another bad pass. This time, run to get the ball and make a pass that goes directly to the player.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "If you think the first response is the way to handle making a bad pass, stand next to this cone. If you think the second way is better, stand next to this one."</p> <p>Ask players to explain their choices.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "It's important to be a good sport in soccer."</p> <p>Highlight how and why.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "That's being responsible to your teammates."</p>	N/A



Time	Activity	Activity Description	Video Tutorial
10 mins.	<b>Warm-Up: Crossing and Scoring</b>	<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 score off a cross.</p> <p>Goalkeepers are not needed.</p>	 <p><a href="https://sportsedtv.co/2W12qVM">https://sportsedtv.co/2W12qVM</a></p>
5 mins.	<b>Fitness: Training and Conditioning</b>	<p>Gather players into a circle.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "What will you do tonight after you eat dinner?"</p> <p>Wait for their responses.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "At the end of the day, what do you do?"</p> <p>Encourage players to discuss sleep.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "Let's pretend you are at your homes, and you climb into bed to go to sleep. Everyone, lie down. Now let's pretend it's morning and a new day. You don't have soccer practice today. Your body needs to move every day to stay in good physical condition for soccer. What should we do to move our bodies?"</p> <p>Wait for their responses. If a player suggests an activity (e.g., biking, walking, swimming), have everyone pretend to do that activity. Then have them pretend to sleep again, wake up, and choose another physical activity idea.</p>	N/A
10 mins.	<b>Dribbling: Inside and Outside</b>	<p>This activity helps 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 five or ten in a row.</p>	 <p><a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3xMujy4">https://sportsedtv.co/3xMujy4</a></p>

Time	Activity	Activity Description	Video Tutorial
15 mins.	Three Versus Three: Dribbling	<p>This is a three versus three game focused on dribbling and keeping the ball close rather than kicking it anywhere. It can be changed to three versus one or three versus two.</p> <p>Encourage players to stay in control and dribble with the ball and pass to teammates. Remind them to stay spread out so their teammates have space. Remind them to use the inside and the outside of their foot to dribble.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "How can you get the ball up the field?"</p> <p>Players' correct response: "Run with it."</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "What do we call this in soccer?"</p> <p>Players' correct response: "Dribbling."</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "When you dribble the ball, should it be close to you or far away?"</p> <p>Players' correct response: "Close to you."</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "What part of the foot should you use to dribble—the inside, the outside, or the toe?"</p> <p>Players' correct response: "The inside or the outside."</p>	 <p>This is a separate activity on how to dribble with the inside and the outside of the foot:  <a href="https://sportsedtv.com/3CUHq4b">https://sportsedtv.com/3CUHq4b</a></p>
43 mins.	Total Time	<p><i>Practice times vary by YMCA. If your Y has a shorter practice time, assign or encourage players to complete activities outside of practice time.</i></p>	



# Soccer Session 9



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

 Ages: 5 to 6

**Coach:**

**Team:**

### Practice Goals

- Dribbling
- Passing
- Game scenarios

Time	Activity	Activity Description	Video Tutorial
3 mins.	Team Circle	<p>Gather players into a group.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "What have you learned about soccer this season?"</p> <p>Listen to their responses.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "What does respect have to do with playing soccer or any sport? It takes many years to master the game of soccer, so soccer deserves your respect. Every year there are new skills to learn and improve on; every year you play, you'll get better. That's why you need to come back next year. What examples of players showing respect have you seen this soccer season?"</p> <p>Listen to their responses and discuss.</p>	N/A
7 mins.	Warm-Up: Dribbling	<p>The video tutorial helps players get in the habit of using different parts of their feet to dribble and shows 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><a href="https://sportsedtv.com/3xMujy4">https://sportsedtv.com/3xMujy4</a></p>



Time	Activity	Activity Description	Video Tutorial
5 mins.	<b>Fitness: Muscular Strength and Conditioning</b>	<p>Have players spread out in a group.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "Put your hand on the front of your thigh, then lift the leg up and set it down. Did you feel the muscle get tight when you lifted it up and then relax when you set it down? Try it again five times."</p> <p>Assist players if needed.</p> <p><b>SAY:</b> "Muscles tighten, or contract, when you move. You use the thigh muscles, or quadriceps, when you kick the ball in soccer. The more you practice kicking, the stronger your thigh, or quadriceps muscles, will get; that's called improving your muscular strength."</p>	N/A
10 mins.	<b>Three Versus Three: Passing Focus</b>	<p>Next, create three versus three games (can be three versus two or three versus one to make it easier to keep the ball; if so, make sure to rotate the teams). Make mini-fields for each group using cones. Players must score through the opposition's goal. Each team of three should try to pass often during the game.</p> <p>Emphasize and encourage passing in the game. Freeze the game occasionally when you see passing happen, and point out good passing, receiving, and dribbling under control. Focus on using positive reinforcement. Do not stop the game too frequently. Make sure to let the players play and enjoy!</p>	 <p>This is a separate video drill to practice passing and moving, in case players struggle with it in the game in game: <a href="https://sportsedtv.co/3k1jQd7">https://sportsedtv.co/3k1jQd7</a></p>
17 mins.	<b>Three Versus Three: Fun!</b>	<p>After a short break, the players again play three versus three. This time, moderate the coaching. Comment on any notable moments and give some positive reinforcement, but let the players relax and enjoy their last practice of the season.</p>	N/A
42 mins.	<b>Total Time</b>	<p><i>Practice times vary by YMCA. If your Y has a shorter practice time, assign or encourage players to complete activities outside of practice time.</i></p>	