



US YOUTH SOCCER COACHING EDUCATION  
ASSISTANT COACH SERIES

U10

# PRACTICE ACTIVITIES

for the Parent Coach

# INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this activity guidebook is to give you the youth coach, an idea of what should be covered throughout the typical season. The activities reflect the philosophy of the original US Youth Soccer Parent/Coach Primer. Sessions focus on development in a low-stress, fun-filled environment giving you an organized structure to apply to the particular needs of your team. You will be able to create your own sessions once you understand the essential ingredients.

Each practice session has four main areas:

1. Warm-up: Emphasis on preparing the player both physically and mentally for the training session. General motor ability (i.e., balance, coordination and flexibility) should also be enhanced. All of the above should be followed by stretching of the various parts of the body. Young players don't need stretching, but it's a good habit for them to begin early.

2. Individual Activities: This portion will cover fun-filled methods that can improve a young player's technique in a playing, non-drill manner.

3. Small Group Activities: These games will challenge the player (without the pressure of high numbers) to improve a variety of the needed skills. It also gives players the opportunity to touch the ball more often.

4. Large Group Activities: This time will be used to familiarize the player with the different aspects of playing in a match situation. Each section should last between 10 to 15 minutes (take rest when needed). All activities should start with a brief demonstration, followed by the players moving quickly into activities.

The successful coach at this level is the one who can imagine these activities through a player's eyes. A coach at this level must create a fun-filled environment that will have players excited to return.

Learn more about Small-Sided Games at  
[www.usyouthsoccer.org/coaches/SmallSidedGames/](http://www.usyouthsoccer.org/coaches/SmallSidedGames/)

# CHARACTERISTICS OF U-10 CHILDREN

There are some basic characteristics of U-10 players that a coach should consider for the training sessions.

- Lengthened attention span compared to the U-8 player.
- Are far more team oriented.
- Still in motion, but not as busy. Will stay in place long enough for a short explanation.
- Psychologically becoming more firm.
- Boys and girls beginning to develop separately, girls at a faster pace.
- Overall and small motor skills becoming much more refined.
- Prefer balls and equipment with team identification.
- Pace factor becoming developed. (They do think ahead.)

## *Implications for Coaching Soccer*

Age	Time for training sessions and number per work week
U-6	45 Minutes or 1 hour each. 1 session, plus 1 game per week.
U-8	1 hour each. 1 or 2 sessions plus 1 game per week.
U-10	1 hour to 1.25 hours each. 2 sessions plus 1 game per week.

## THE PLAYER

The needs and capabilities of players set the philosophy and methods of coaching that are employed. We can look at the desired final product, a high level world class soccer player, and create a progressive developmental program that will, over time, allow some to reach the highest standards. At the same time, the soccer experience must be a positive and rewarding one to all those who participate. Each player that steps on the field has different needs and potential. Each plays for a variety of reasons and will succeed at very different levels. As coach, you can accomplish this by setting individual levels of expectation.

Try as a coach to be open to the needs (physical and psychological) of your players. Understand that soccer is just another vehicle through which we all try to add to the lives of those who participate. Certainly we hope to develop players with a wealth of talent, but at the same time, we hope to promote good character and responsibility in young people.

Don't let the value of winning completely overshadow the value of learning. Don't assume that every training method must directly correlate with the game of soccer. For example, games that involve movement and the use of hands can be of value to the coordination of your players. The two are not meant to be the same. A young player must go through years of preparation before he can begin to imitate top flight soccer. Give players a chance to learn and enjoy the very special years of their growth.

Don't let the notion of demonstration scare you. Use that good old American ingenuity that has gotten us where we are today. Bring in a local high school or college hero to demonstrate, or for that matter, a player at least two (2) years older than your players. They'll love him. After all, he really knows everything; he's two (2) years older. Most importantly - have fun!

## SESSION 1 | Dribbling

### ACTIVITIES

#### Warm-up (10-15 Minutes)

- A. Start by having players dribble in and out of each other with their hands. At your command, have them stop their balls with various parts of the body as identified by colors. Example - red is right hand, blue is left foot, rainbow is forehead, etc
- B. Have players jog with a ball at their feet in the same direction. When you call a number, that many players must come together with balls touching each other. Example: the call is three, the units of three must be formed by the players. Those players unable to form a unit of three do three half-push-ups
- C. On command, have the players throw the ball from behind through their legs, do a forward roll, and retrieve it.
- D. Throw the ball in the air, clap three times, leap in the air and catch it. Change the variables to suit your objectives, e.g., throw ball and touch the ground or throw ball and touch the ground with an elbow, etc.

#### Individual Activities (10-15 Minutes)

- A. Have players dribble their ball in large spaces and try to cover the space. Example: several may choose the penalty area, while others the center circle, etc. Demand that they be creative.

### EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

- A. Getting players organized and functioning as individuals and within a unit
  - B. Encourage players to dribble with their eyes up.
  - C. Watch for coordination and agility with emphasis on ball control.
  - D. Watch for upper body control and vision.
- 
- A. Look for and highlight players making creative moves.

## SESSION 1 (continued)

### ACTIVITIES

#### Small-Sided Games

- B. Bring the above activity to designated places on the field with all of the players dribbling in that particular area.
- C. Once in the designated area, have half the players place their balls outside the area and act as passive defenders. Intensify defensive pressure as you see fit.

#### Small Group Activities (10-15 minutes)

- A. Start a dribble tag game in which several players without the ball are it, and they must tag a dribbler to get his ball. They exchange and the game continues.
- B. Create a human obstacle course where half of the players are stationary in all kinds of weird positions and the rest of the group dribbles around them.

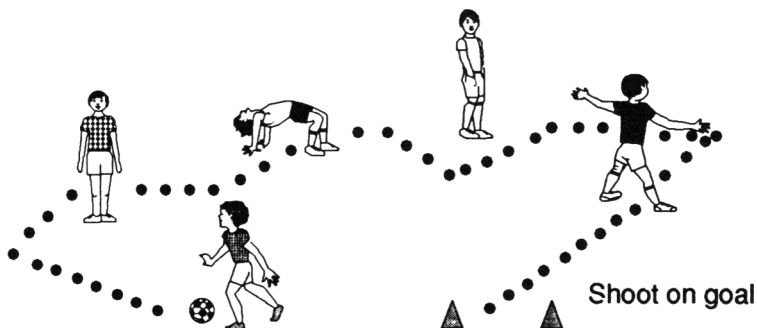
#### Large Group Activity (10-15 minutes)

- A. 5 v. 5 or more playing across the field. Award points for proper or creative dribbling, but always one point for a goal.

### EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

- B. Emphasize body swerves.
- C. Encourage directional change.
- A. Watch and congratulate players that scheme (not cheat).
- B. Sportsmanship opportunities, or lack of, are quite apparent.

- A. Free play with coach stopping play briefly to reiterate points made earlier about dribbling. Be sure to highlight and congratulate good dribbling technique.



## SESSION 2 | Receiving

### ACTIVITIES

#### Warm-up

- A. In pairs, with two balls, ask players to play catch with two balls at the same time. They can bounce the ball, arc it high or throw it to the side of the other ball.
- B. Challenge players to the same task with their feet.
- C. Ask players to dribble in and out of each other, changing speed and direction. On your signal each player should stop his ball and move on to any other ball. Repeat as above except that on your signal players should throw their ball in the air and get any other ball.

#### Individual Activities (10-15 minutes)

- A. In threes, ask one player to stand in the middle of two others who are about 12 yards apart. The player in the middle will receive a pass from an outside player. Their challenge is to accept the ball with either foot and turn with it to pass to the other player. Repeat in the opposite direction.
- B. Put one player in the middle of four. Ask the player in the middle to receive the ball from any outside player and then turn and pass it to any other player. They would then get the ball back from that person and turn and pass to any other. The outside players should create a square about 12 yards on each side. Vary the size as you see fit.

### EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

- A. Activities like this are fun and stress working together. Challenge them to go fast.
  - B. Let them figure out a solution.
  - C. On the exchange, ask players to move to, and control the ball as quickly as possible.
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- A. Show them how to receive the ball with the inside, outside or sole of the foot and then get them going. Let them know that they should receive and turn in a smooth motion. Don't expect miracles.
  - B. Ask players to move to the ball, receive and turn as smoothly as possible. With time it will come.

## ACTIVITIES

- C. Ask player B to receive a ball from player A, turn and beat player C and play the ball to player D. Repeat in the opposite direction..

### Small Group Activities

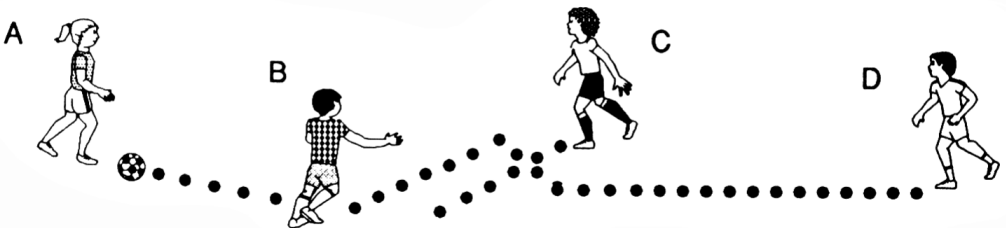
- A. Organize players in groups of three, with one ball. Ask the player with the ball to keep it from the other two as long as he can. If he loses the ball he should immediately try to get it back.
- B. Again with three players, have two players play keep-away from one. Ask players to dribble and to short pass to keep possession.

### Large Group Activity

- A. Set up a six hole golf course and get them excited about playing with whatever rules you choose.

## EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

- C. Balls can be rolled in by hand if accurate passing is difficult for the outside players. Change roles regularly.
- A. Just let them play. Give rest every 30-40 seconds or as needed.
- B. Change the groups of two, to give everyone a chance to play both roles. Alternate as above.
- A. Make it fun!





## SESSION 3 | Shooting

### ACTIVITIES

#### Warm-up (10-15 minutes)

- A. Coach stands in the center of the field and throws or kicks the ball in any direction. All players must jog, shuffle, hop or whatever to the ball where each player must touch it (without moving the ball), then all players jog back.
- B. Divide the players into four equal groups and do the same as A but designate body parts and make it a competition, e.g., right shoulder touch and first group to return to coach.
- C. All players in a circle holding hands. Coach strikes the ball to anywhere he chooses: All of the players must run and join hands in a circle around the ball. If the players can circle the ball before it stops moving, the coach must run one lap around the penalty area. (Smack that ball coach).
- D. All players in the center circle with balls between their ankles hopping in various directions. At a given signal, all players release their ball and collect, with ankles, somebody else's ball and continue.

#### Individual Activities (10-15 minutes)

- A. Players standing 6-8 yards apart, striking the ball with their laces to one another.

### EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

- A. Running or moving with speed to a designated area then touching the ball without having it move requires body agility and coordination.
  - B. Small group teamwork in a competitive environment. Which players are willing to give a bit more?
  - C. Sheer fun for a bunch of kids that would love to tell their peers in school that their coach had to run four laps.
  - D. Agility, flexibility and coordination are observable in this warm-up. Some can; some can't.
- 
- A. Observe the non-kicking foot to see if it is flat or if the player is up on the ball of the foot.

**ACTIVITIES**

- B. Have players run or jog into the goal area and strike a ball with their laces on the open goal. No keeper - he'll get drilled.
- C. Player stands on the penalty mark and must deal (two touch) with an air ball, a bouncing ball, and a ground ball.

**Small Group Activities (10-15 minutes)**

- A. Coach serves balls into the penalty box where players may shoot them. Players who are shooting the ball may strike a full volley (laces) for 3 points, a bouncing ball for 2 points, or a rolling ball for 1 point.
- B. Four goals with two teams playing in any direction. A goal can be scored if the player shooting on goal uses laces.

**Large Group Activity (10-15 minutes)**

- A. 5 v. 5 plus goalkeepers playing to two goals in the penalty area. The objective is two touches with the second touch being a shot on goal.

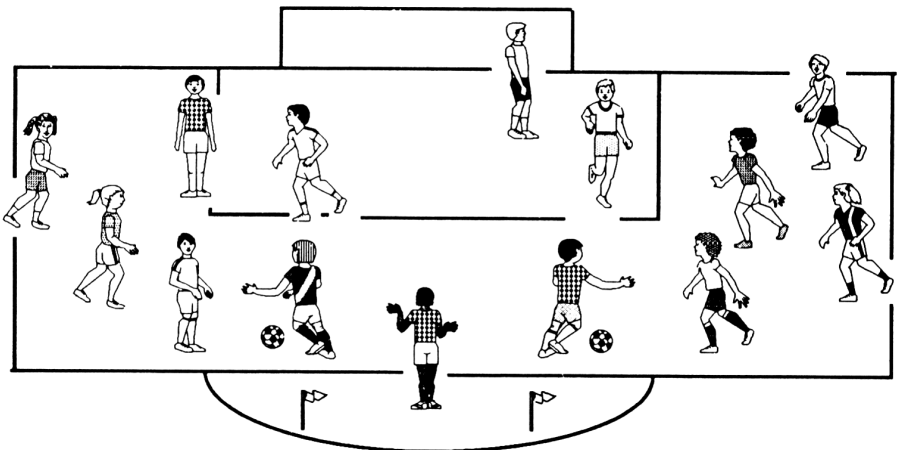
**EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS**

- B. Eye, foot coordination and time of the shot should be observed.
- C. Body preparation is the key to getting a good shot on goal. How well has the shooting player positioned his body?

- A. The further out from the goal a player is standing the more imperative it is that his/her knee be over the ball.

- B. Observe the line of the shoulders. Since shoulders that are held parallel to the ground usually means a high shot, emphasize dropping the shoulders.

- A. Look for speed in the players body adjustments to accommodate the two touch objective. Some can; some can't.



## SESSION 4 | Dribbling

### ACTIVITIES

#### Warm-Up

- A. Ask players to dribble in and out of each other in a restricted area; no collisions.
- B. Ask players to turn with the ball and move in the opposite direction every time another player occupies the space in front of them. Turn and go!
- C. Ask players to burst (with the ball) into any open space around them. As players dribble in and out of each other, spaces always open and close.
- D. Take two balls out of the playing area. The players without a ball must quickly try to get one. If a player doesn't have a ball, he should get one. If they have one, they should try to keep it.

#### Individual Activities

- A. Ask players to dribble towards a cone 10 yards away. Just before they reach the cone they should turn the ball with the bottom, instep (laces), or outside of the foot and burst back to their starting point. A partner will then perform the same activity.

### EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

- A. This will warm them up and get them functioning in a game environment.
  - B. Ask players to avoid moving into closed spaces. Play tag, touch others but don't get touched.
  - C. Players must begin to recognize open space and activate themselves to move into it.
  - D. Players will develop the ability to shield and move with their ball.
- 
- A. Show (slowly) how to dribble forward and make a turn with each of the parts of the foot. The let them go!

## ACTIVITIES

- B. Ask players to circle around you or a cone 10 yards away. Ask them to dribble at you and then turn the ball away just before they reach you. Use the same parts of the foot to turn the ball as above.
- C. Again, ask players to dribble in and out of each other in a defined area. When another dribbler bars their path, they should turn as you've just shown them.

### Small Group Activity

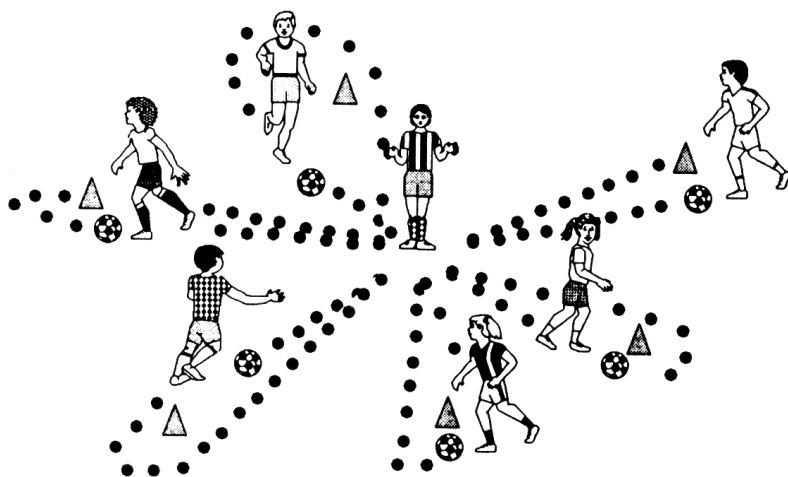
- A. Ask two players to play 1 v. 1 to a cone. Beat your opponent and hit the cone.
- B. Play 1 v. 1 between two cones 12 yds apart. The objective is to hit your opponents goal.

### Large Group Activity

- A. Divide into two teams, (two colors), and play unrestricted soccer, to two goals, with goalkeepers.

## EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

- B. Act like a monster in the middle try to keep them away from you. Have fun!
- C. Watch and see what they've learned.
- A. Encourage goals! Change partners about every minute. Rest as needed.
- B. Each pair should have an area of their own to play on. Change opponents every minute or so.
- A. Let them play!



## SESSION 5 | Passing

### ACTIVITIES

#### Warm-Up (10-15 minutes)

- A. Have players moving about in the penalty area or the center circle hand passing, (one ball per two players).
- B. After establishing movement and motion by the players, transfer the activity to feet, then back again to hands.
- C. With one player in a standing position, feet spread apart), have his partner some 7 or 8 yards away strike the ball to go between the standing player's legs. If successful, the passing player scores a point.
- D. One player strikes the ball with the inside of his foot. His partner must do a forward roll and get to the ball before it stops. Reverse roles.

### EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

- A. Emphasize vision of the player. (If they are running into each other, go to slow motion).
- B. When using hands, check their choices; when using feet, watch their technique.
- C. Look for accuracy of passes.
- D. Observe the technique used to strike the ball; which surface of the foot.

#### Individual Activities (10-15 minutes)

- A. Have two cones set up as goals five yards apart. With two players on each team some 6-8 yards on either side of the cone goals, have players strike the ball through the cones for points. Players must alternate shots and may not strike a dead ball.
- B. Play soccer golf. A player and a partner each with a ball attempt to score points by striking accurate balls. First player strikes the ball (on the ground) as far as he likes. Second player has two shots to hit the first player's ball.

- A. Have players use different surfaces of the foot.
- B. Observe placement of standing foot.

## ACTIVITIES

- C. Arrange players in groups of three. After a practice period of a few minutes for each group, have the teams of three take turns one touch passing for the most completed passes.

### Small Group Activities (10-15 minutes)

- A. Divide the players into groups of three and place them in a line with the first player in each line facing each other. One touch is all that is permitted as players strike the ball to one another and go behind the opposite line.
- B. Play 3 v. 1 keep away in a large enough area for passing success. Have players count the number of connected passes. Set records.

### Large Group Activity (10-15 minutes)

- A. 6 v. 6 or more in an area with lots of width. Put three touch restrictions on one team and no restrictions on the other. Switch restrictions and change them to maintain player interest.

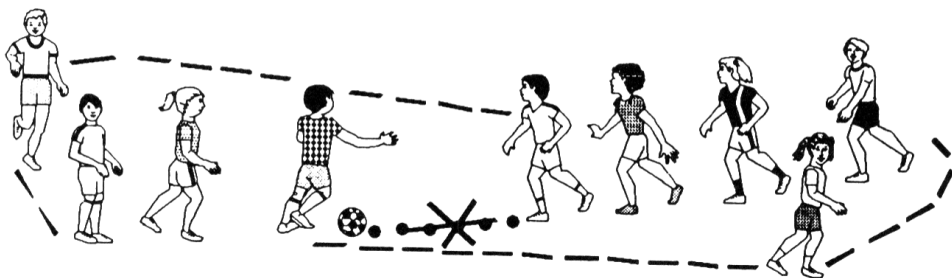
## EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

- C. Air balls occur when the ball has been chipped or the player is leaning back.

- A. Pace of passes is very important.

- B. Some players will force the use of their good foot. Don't get excited. Situations will dictate the use of the weaker foot. Congratulate and highlight the reasons for successful passes.

- A. Passes are made for penetration or possession, identify when each is in order.



## SESSION 6 | Shielding

### ACTIVITIES

#### Warm-Up

- A. Ask players to move in and out of each other by moving the ball with their hands on the ground. They need to avoid collisions and steer the balls in and around each other.
- B. Same as above but now ask players to protect their own ball and at the same time grab for any other ball they come near.
- C. Ask players to dribble in and out of each other in a confined area until you call out a number. This signal tells players that they must quickly touch their ball with that many body parts. For example, if you call 4, they should quickly tap the ball with the right hand, the left knee, the right foot and the left hand. Then start dribbling again.
- D. Ask players to Dribble Sit.

#### Individual Activities Emphasis - Shielding

- A. In pairs, ask one player to protect the ball from his partner. If the partner gains possession, he tries to keep the ball. Don't let this activity go much more than 30 seconds. Have them stop and get a new partner for rest.
- B. In a defined area 10 yds x 10 yds. Play the same game with three players. Whoever has the ball should play against the other two people.
- C. Set down a cone between two players, with one ball. Ask them to try to beat the other player and hit the cone.

### EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

- A. This forces players to change directions in a position that is unbalanced. It helps players develop the ability to move with knees bent!
  - B. Protect your ball; snatch any other ball.
  - C. Ask players to go through the tapping as quickly as possible. Encourage players to use different body parts like the elbow, forehead, knee, hand, etc.
  - D. Have them dribble until you call sit. At that point they should sit down on their ball and quickly pop back up and dribble.
- A. Give a quick demonstration of the proper way to shield a ball with your body sideways between the ball and the defender. Don't expect anything near precision. Just play keep away.
  - B. Let them play and learn!
  - C. Encourage shielding and turning to beat the opponent. Ask them to go to the goal (cone).

## ACTIVITIES

### Small Group Activities

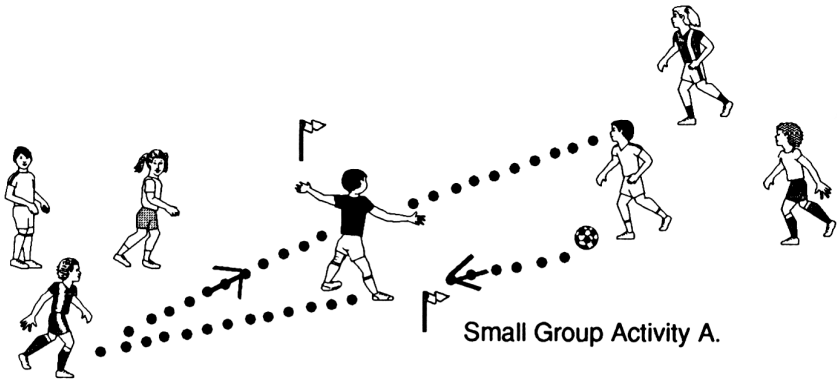
- A. Divide into groups of three. Each group should be on either side of a 5 yard goal with a goalkeeper. Players take turns shooting back and forth through the goal.
- B. Add some competition by saying that whoever can get to the ball first should try to beat the other two players and score a goal.

### Large Group Activity

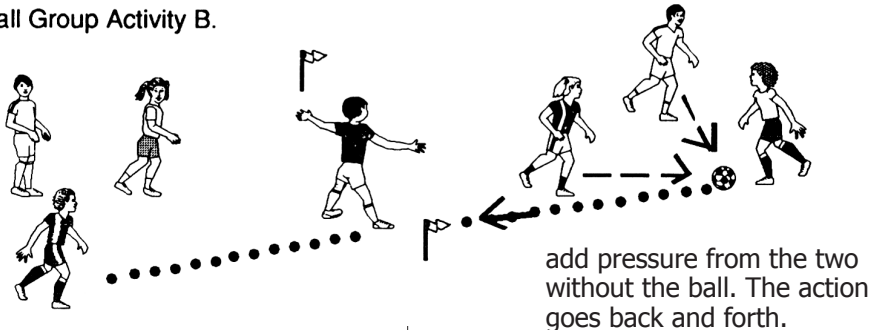
- A. Divide into two teams, (different colors), and have them play regular soccer.

## EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

- A. Encourage good shots and speed in taking the shots. Alternate keepers regularly. If the keeper makes a save, he should turn and throw it to the other side.
  - B. Encourage all players to be active and either attack or defend. If a defender wins the ball, he should then try to score.
- 
- A. Let them play!



### Small Group Activity B.





## SESSION 7 | Heading

### ACTIVITIES

#### Warm-Up (10-15 minutes)

- A. Players move about at a walking pace in a large area throwing and heading the ball back to their own hands. (Increase speed with player success).
- B. At a jog pace, players throw to themselves, head the ball, catch it, sit down, get up and continue.
- C. On hands and knees, players move the ball around on the ground using only their heads.
- D. Have the player toss the ball in the air, head it once to himself, then head it to a partner. Partner repeats the activity.

#### Individual Activities (10-15 minutes)

- A. While in a sitting position, players try to keep the ball up with head only. Proceed to kneeling.
- B. From a one-knee position, throw the ball into the air, let it bounce once then head it as many times as possible.
- C. Place the ball behind the player's head, supported by their shoulder blades; no hands. Have the players move about from this position.

### EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

- A. In control heading, legs act as shock absorbers.
  - B. Some players are frightened at first. Don't force it.
  - C. Observe the way players accomplish this. Compliment those who do well.
  - D. The first head touch is cushioned while the second touch is with force and redirected.
- 
- A. The body must move to accommodate ball motion.
  - B. Eyes must be open.
  - C. A body awareness and coordination activity that requires control of different body parts.

**ACTIVITIES**

**Small Group Activities (10-15 minutes)**

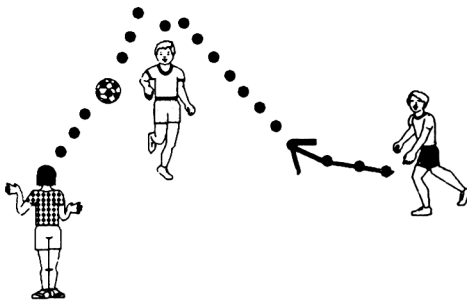
- A. In groups of three, have one player hand serve (under hand) to another player who must head to a third player.
- B. Player one throws the ball to himself and heads it over player two. Ball must be caught by player three. (Success equals points; points kept by individuals).

**Large Group Activity (10-15 minutes)**

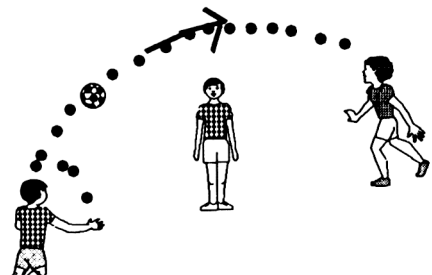
- A. 5 v. 5 or more with two goals playing hand passing and heading. Begin at walking pace, goals must be scored with the head and additional points are awarded for successful heading in any part of field.

**EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS**

- A. Use forehead, not top or side.
  - B. To propel the ball with the head, other body parts must be used, (back, legs, even arms for thrust).
- 
- A. Does this mean they'll hand the ball on Saturday morning? No. Players with glasses can head the ball successfully if they use the proper place on the forehead.



Small Group Activity A.



Small Group Activity B.

## SESSION 8 | Shooting

### ACTIVITIES

#### Warm-Up

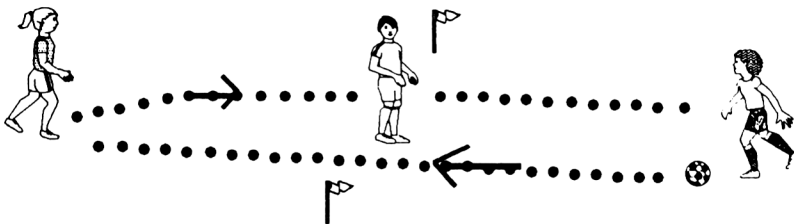
- A. Start by having players run in and out of each other with their ball in hand. On your signal they should switch balls with any other player near them. Run, switch, repeat.
- B. Same as above, except that now the feet should be used. On your signal, each player should stop their ball and move onto any other available ball.
- C. Execute a variety of simple stretches.
- D. Have players dribble around in a defined area, (20 yards x 20 yards). Occasionally you should call a number, e.g. 1, 3, 4, etc. Then they should all rush to form a pile of balls. (The same number as the number you called). They can either dribble or hand carry their ball as you see fit.

#### Individual Activity

- A. Set up goals 4-5 yards apart. Each goal should have a keeper and a shooter on each side. Ask players to alternate shooting back and forth through the goal.

### EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

- A. Let them solve the exchange problem in their own way.
  - B. Hasten the exchange!
  - C. Emphasize the holding of a stretch as opposed to bouncing.
  - D. Try to get them to solve the number problem as fast as possible. Impose a joke penalty on those who don't get into a proper sized group. (e.g., touch our nose and knee and hop five times).
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- A. Give a quick demonstration of an instep drive and then get them shooting. Have the strike stationary balls initially. Rotate keepers.



### ACTIVITIES

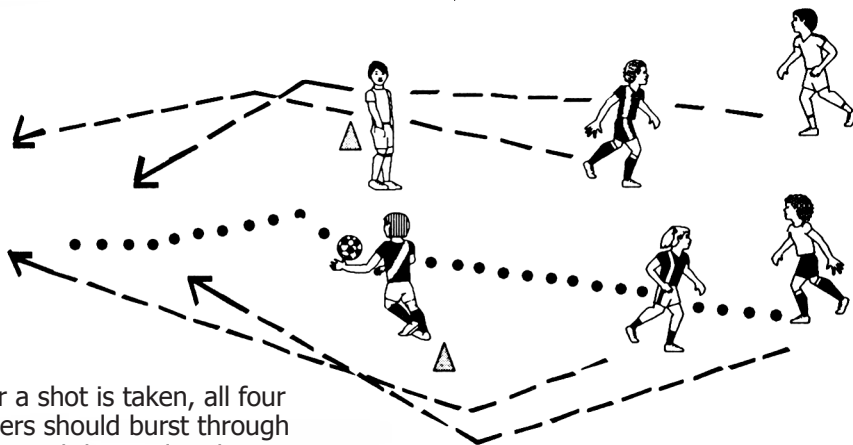
- B. Same set up but now ask players to move a bit further out. When they receive the ball, they should roll the ball ahead of them, chase it and strike it on goal. Shoot, shoot, shoot.
- C. Introduce the concept of faking or feigning before a shot. Each shot should be preceded by a change of direction, change of speed or a quick movement of some sort.

### Small Group Activities

- A. Set up a couple of full-sized goals with cones or flags. Each shooting area needs 6 players. Two should be in the goal. The remaining four should play 2 v. 2 back and forth through the goal. The object is to score goals, goals, goals. If the goalkeepers catch the ball, they should throw it to the vacant side of the shooting area. This will spread players out and add to the movement

### EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

- B. No lines; more shots! Ask players to roll the ball ahead at various angles.
  - C. Show a fake--a false change of direction-- to get them going then let them come up with their own.
- 
- A. This is very taxing physically. Play for a minute or so and then rotate one team into the goal. Repeat. Take additional rest as needed.



after a shot is taken, all four players should burst through or around the goal and repeat play in the opposite direction.

## ACTIVITIES

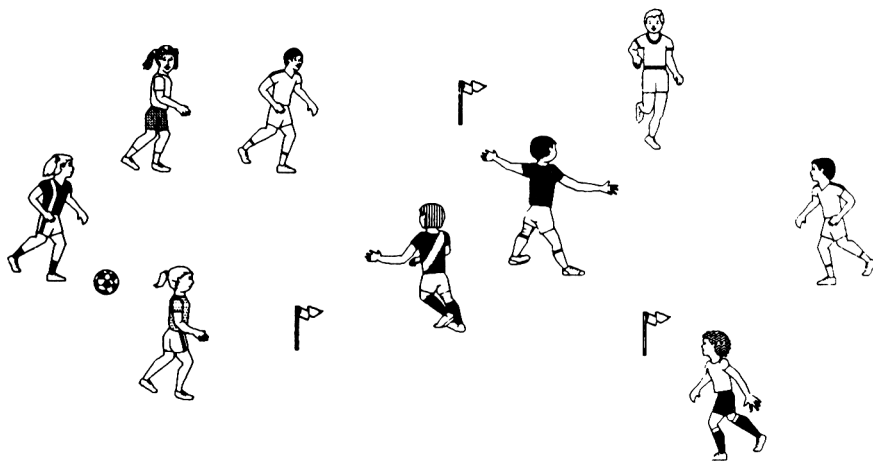
- B. Combine groups and use a larger goal (12 yards) with four goalkeepers. Play the same game with 4 v. 4 in a larger area. Rotate as before.

### Large Group Activity

- A. Create a triangular goal 6 yds x 6 yds. Use 1, 2, or 3 goalkeepers. Divide into two teams and play around the goal. Players can attack any side of the three-sided goal. When goalkeepers get the ball, they should throw or kick the ball well away. Keep track of the score.

## EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

- B. Attack one side of the goal then go through and attack from the other. Emphasize shooting. Let them play!
- A. Use colors to separate the teams. Let them play! They'll shoot, learn and have fun!



## SESSION 9 | Juggling

### ACTIVITIES

#### Warm-Up

- A. Players run about in the center circle playing body tag. When one player tags another player's body part, the tagged player must hold that body part and try to tag somebody else.
- B. Same activity as in A, but introduce the ball. Have players move the balls about with either their feet or hands.
- C. Body parts control is played by having players dribble in an area until the coach calls a color. Let different colors represent different body parts e.g., red is right foot, blue is left foot, and so on until rainbow is forehead.
- D. Various objects (bags, jackets, cones) are placed about in half the field. Players dribble at a slow pace within the half field. On command players must leave their ball and sprint to the object called out by the coach.

#### Individual Activities (10-15 minutes)

- A. With plenty of space between them, players throw their ball into the air and catch it with their elbows, knees, or sit and catch it with ankles.
- B. Players roll the ball with their hands, then must run past it and lift it in the air with their foot.
- C. Have players moving about while playing the ball from hands, to head, to thigh and back to hands.

### EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

- A. Which players are constantly getting caught standing straight up?
  - B. Player agility and flexibility plus ball technique can be observed.
  - C. Here the coach can observe the mechanical speed of players reacting to a verbal command.
  - D. Coach can observe the natural speed of players since the ball is left behind.
- 
- A. Watch the eye/body part coordination and timing.
  - B. If they roll it too far, they can't catch the ball, too slowly and they can't lift it: understanding pace.
  - C. Success from the thigh is only achieved if the thigh is parallel to the ground.

## ACTIVITIES

### Small Group Activities (10-15 minutes)

- A. In teams of 3 or 4 players, set up juggling competition and count numbers of successful touches. No one player may touch the ball more than twice before he must play the ball.
- B. With one player on his knees, the other two players play head or juggle tennis over him. The player on his knees acts as the net and keeps the score of successful touches. The moment a drop occurs, players switch their positions.

### Large Group Activity (10-15 minutes)

- A. Two teams of 5 v. 5 or more play to four goals, each team defends two of the goals. Only goals scored from a juggle count. The ball is hand passed about and any player running off a number of juggles gets points (or goals) for each ball touched. Transition is made intercepting by hand or tagging a player on the opposite team.

## EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

- A. Players vision and timing are imperative for team success
- B. This activity is done on a 30 second basis and total touches account for the scoring. It requires cooperation by all three players and switching positions lends itself to transition speed.
- A. Coach can observe how effectively the players can juggle under pressure of an opponent in short time periods.

## SESSION 10 | Dribbling

### ACTIVITIES

#### Warm-Up

- A. Ask players to dribble in and out of each other in a defined area. Change directions and pace.
- B. Same activity but add these movements:
  - 1. Ask players to stand over the ball and alternate touching it with the left and right knee.
  - 2. Players lie on their backs and roll their ball under their back and over their stomach, round and round.
  - 3. Players jog in place as they hand a ball back and forth between their scissoring legs.
- C. Players stand back-to-back with a partner. Alternate passing the ball between legs and then over head. Move the ball in a circular manner between the legs then overhead.
- D. Same as above except players will now pass the ball side-to-side. Each player turns back and forth in conjunction with is partner.

#### Individual Activities (10-15 minutes) Emphasis - Dribbling

- A. Stand in the middle of a circle of your players (10 yds). Each player has a partner; one ball per group. The first group dribbles to the middle and returns to the outside. On signal the second group repeats.
- B. Ask one player to serve the ball (7-10 yds) to his partner. The server should rush toward his partner and continue to move in a straight line to the ball. The partner with the ball must evade the server.

### EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

- A. Ask players to look for and dribble into spaces that have just opened.
  - B. All these movements and others stress the systems related to balance, and strengthen growing bones and muscles. Have fun with it. Put your players in positions that will make them laugh.
  - C. Cooperation with a partner is the goal of this activity.
  - D. Ask players to pass the ball smoothly (hand the ball off, then turn).
- 
- A. Ask them to move quickly and emphasize the proper ways to turn the ball (i.e. instep, outside, bottom, heel and inside of the foot). Same but players in pairs.
  - B. At this point the server should not defend, he should just run straight at the dribbler. This will improve a dribblers sense of timing without worrying about losing the ball.



### ACTIVITIES

- C. Set up a defined area (5-10 yds.). Have two groups of 3 or 4 players on both sides of the grid. A will pass to B at the far side of the grid. A and B will play 1 v. 1. B's objective is to get across the area with the ball under control while A must defend. Switch lines.

#### Small Group Activities

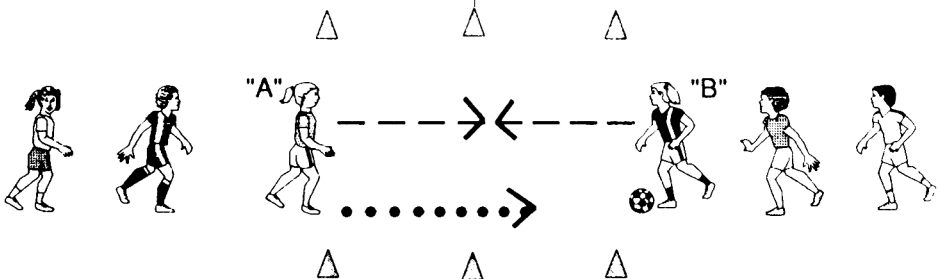
- A. Keep away Ask players to get in groups of 3 with one ball per group. On your signal they should play for possession. (Whoever has the ball, keep it. Whoever doesn't, try to get it and keep it).
- B. Ask the various groups of three to keep the ball away from each other (3 v. 3). Use two separate colors for identification. Play for about a minute, then rest.

#### Large Group Activities

- A. Set up an area (40 by 30 yds) with two goals and a few cones across the center line. Divide into two teams and play soccer with one restriction: any player who crosses the center line with the ball cannot pass. They must dribble at goal and shoot or lose the ball trying.
- B. Remove the restriction.

### EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

- C. Set up the proper number of grids to avoid long lines. You can deal with defensive problems but emphasize dribbling.
- A. Let this go for about 30 seconds and then give them a rest. Repeat several times.
- B. You won't see a lot of passing but that's okay. Dribbling is the area to be improved.
- A. This will improve those who are good dribblers and also force those who normally won't dribble to goal to give it a shot.
- B. Let them play!



## SESSION 11 | Passing and Receiving

### ACTIVITIES

#### Warm-Up (10-15 minutes)

- A. On half of the field, players are jogging about with a ball in their hands. When the coach calls out a number, all players must throw the ball into the air and clap the number called.
- B. In the center circle, players are moving the ball about with their hands. When coach gives the command each player must strike his ball to go outside the circle then retrieve it before it stops rolling.
- C. Standing with feet wide apart and a ball in hand, the player throws the ball between his own legs then turns and chases it down. After stopping his ball, he does the same exercise to return to his starting point.

#### Individual Activities (10-15 minutes) Emphasis - Passing/Receiving

- A. Two players facing each other must play the ball back and forth with one touch. More advanced players can do this while moving close together, then going farther apart.
- B. Use a wall at the field or put benches on their sides to create a rebound surface. Players stand one yard from the wall and must play the ball as many times as they can in a given time period.

### EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

- A. Have players leap to catch the ball at its highest point.
  - B. Players must move about with eyes up or they collide with one another. This is another lesson in proper pace when they must chase the ball too often too far.
  - C. Body flexibility and agility are most noticeable in this activity. Stiff players struggle here and must chase a lot.
- 
- A. Touch and pace are emphasized here. Accuracy occurs when the proper technique is employed.
  - B. Agility and non-striking foot balance are two things to observe in this activity. Pace is the key to success.

**ACTIVITIES**

- C. All of the players are in pairs with one ball per pair in the center circle. One of the partners dribbles about while the other (without the ball) moves freely among all of the others. When eye contact is made between partners, the pass is delivered. This only happens if the player with the ball wishes to execute.

**Small Group Activities (10-15 minutes)**

- A. Inside the penalty box with 3 v. 3, have players play keep away with successful passes being counted as points. Have them play in short 90-second sets, then bring in a new 3 v. 3 group. Other players line the outside of the box to keep the game moving.
- B. In this activity the means of scoring is based on receiving the ball. Played on half the field in a 5 v. 5 situation, each player that receives and redirects the ball in one motion scores a team point.

**Large Group Activity (10-15 minutes)**

- A. In an area 40 x 30 yds play keep away with points scored for good passes or balls being properly received and redirected. Further, passes of 20 yards placed accurately deserve bonus points.

**EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS**

- C. Passes should be made crisply and played to the feet of the oncoming partner. Vision must be stressed.
- A. True passes are those made accurately to feet or timed to a space where a player is running.
- B. Properly receiving a ball requires body preparation prior to touching the ball. If a player's body is in a balanced position upon receiving the ball, his chances for success are heightened.
- A. In order to encourage more passes, have a 3 or 4 touch requirement.

## SESSION 12 | Heading

### ACTIVITIES

#### Warm-Up

- A. Start by dribbling in and out of each other in a defined area.
- B. Dribble as above. Give the signal - Sit and Switch. At this point all players should quickly sit down on their ball, pop up, run to any other ball, and continue dribbling until the signal is given again.
- C. Give a number to each side of your defined area. Ask all players to dribble randomly until they hear a number called. At this point they should sprint to that side and stop their ball on the line. Continue dribbling. Repeat.
- D. Create two teams within the area. Use three balls. The challenge is for either team to possess all three balls at the same time. They must work to gain and keep position.

#### Individual Activities

- A. Create several small goals with cones. Have a keeper in goal and a player on each side. Have players try to head the ball from their own hands through the goal. Score, score, score. Change keepers regularly.

### EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

- A. Ask players to explore (dribble to all areas within the defined space).
  - B. The sit-down, stand-up movement is one that will develop explosive power in the legs and add variety to the movements.
  - C. Ask them to move freely and then burst to the appropriate side. Emphasize making a decision and then acting quickly.
  - D. Keep the action going. If you see that one team possess all three balls, yell freeze. Award that team one point. Keep score. (Use two colors for two teams).
- 
- A. Give a quick demonstration or have a player show the proper form. Emphasize the points of contact to be used and a good motion (arch the back and snap forward).

## **ACTIVITIES**

- B. With the same field set up, ask pairs to be on the same side. One player serves the ball by hand to his partner who tries to head through the goal. Both players should then rush through and change roles. Change keepers regularly.
- C. Create a defined area 20 x 20 yds. for about 12 players. Ask the players to move randomly heading the ball to each other, from their own hands. Start with four balls. Add or subtract points based on success rate.

### **Small Group Activities**

- A. Create teams of two. Have them play back and forth between two cones (goals). The objective is to score goals by knocking over the opponents cones. As soon as a goal is scored, reset the cones and continue.
- B. Devise a Mini World Cup Competition. Ask the teams of 2 to pick a name for their team (a country, a pro team, a goofy name) Have them play the same as above. First goal wins, winners advance to championship.

### **Large Group Activity**

- A. Divide into two teams (two colors) and set up a field 30 x 40 yds. The object of this game is to simply dribble over the opponents goal line (under control).

## **EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS**

- B. The hand-serve may prove difficult but it needs to be developed. Emphasize moving to the ball and avoid heading from a stationary position. The serve should be tossed just short of the header.
  - C. Emphasize quick movement and using the entire area. Head for power and accuracy.
- 
- A. Play a series of short games. Take a rest between each game and change opponents regular.
  - B. It's imperative that those who didn't win are kept active. Don't let them feel like losers. Get them excited about next time.
- 
- A. Emphasize free spirited dribbling. Add another ball if you want more involvement. Keep score.

## SESSION 13 | Receiving

### ACTIVITIES

#### Warm-Up (10-15 minutes)

- A. Players move about a large area, tossing the ball in the air and playing from their thigh to hand.
- B. Players continue to toss the ball, but head the ball to play to thigh and back to hands.
- C. A kneeling player bounces the ball on the ground. He must then get up and control it (no hands). Repeat.
- D. Players sitting on the ground must keep the ball live by using only their feet.

#### Individual Activities (10-15 minutes)

- A. A player strikes the ball firmly against a wall or another player. With the first receiving touch he must re-direct the ball with control.
- B. A player bounces the ball behind him between his own spread legs. He must turn to retrieve it before the second or third bounce and return with the ball to the starting position.
- C. One player tosses an underhand pass to another and calls a body part (include hands). The receiving player may not use the body part called.

### EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

- A. Cushion is the key word in this session.
  - B. This creates an awareness of various body parts used to receive the ball.
  - C. The body must be supple to accommodate the ball.
  - D. Players must develop a sense for the ball, otherwise they'll chase the ball a great deal.
- 
- A. A player's first touch is one of the most important.
  - B. Total body coordination should be emphasized.
  - C. Players must function with mental and physical speed.



**ACTIVITIES**

**Small Group Activities (10-15 minutes)**

- A. Half of your players are standing around the lines of the penalty box with the other half inside the box. Inside players move about at random, then, per their own decision, run at one of the line players who must serve a ground ball to the running player. The running player must receive the ball with one touch and shoot on goal with the second touch.
- B. With the same field arrangement, this time those on the line use a throw into the upper body of the moving players.

**Large Group Activity (10-15 minutes)**

- A. Four goals are set in a random matter, so that players can score in any one they choose. You determine when a team may go to goal based on a particular ball that you feel was well received. Points (or goals) can be awarded for very well received and redirected balls.

**EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS**

**Small-Sided Games**

- A. Players receiving the ball must make body adjustments to receive, turn and shoot the ball.
  - B. Timing is very important here, with players turning their shoulders to redirect the ball toward goal.
- 
- A. Players must receive and, where possible, redirect balls with emphasis on cushion.

## SESSION 14 | Dribbling

### ACTIVITIES

#### Warm-Up

- A. Ask two players to tap dance gently on the same ball. If they have some success, ask them to move around the ball right or left.
- B. Ask each player to pass the ball back and forth between their own feet. Right to left to right, etc. If they can accomplish this activity ask them to move in and out of each other at the same time.
- C. Use a variety of static (non-bouncing) stretches, to increase flexibility. This is mostly for education in proper stretching techniques.
- D. Ask players to dribble in and out of each other until you signal. At this point they should pick up their ball, kick it out of their hands, do a forward roll, and control and dribble the first ball they get to.

#### Individual Activities

- A. In groups of 3 or 4, ask players to follow a leader (dribbler) around the field. Each player has a ball.
- B. Assign numbers to four or five objects near your training area (garbage cans, fence, goalpost, etc.). When you call a number, every player should sprint dribble to that object and wait for the next number to be called.

### EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

- A. This will improve coordination and the ability to work with a partner.
  - B. Good touch on the ball will be enhanced. Ask players to increase speed as they master this technique.
  - C. Stretch ankles, lower legs, hamstrings, thighs, lower back, and neck. (see illustrations on page 46.)
  - D. This activity will increase a variety of motor skills. Let them do it at their own pace.
- 
- A. Don't allow the leaders to move in straight lines. Change leaders every once in a while.
  - B. Allow adequate rest before you send the players to the next object.



## **ACTIVITIES**

- C. Put the players in an area, like the penalty area, that has quite a number of marked lines. Instruct players to dribble until they come to any line. They must touch the line (with hand or foot) and then move on to any other line.

### **Small Group Activities**

- A. Create several 10 x 10 yd areas. Have one chaser and three dribblers in each box (shark and fish). The shark (with no ball) should try to catch the fish for about 30 seconds. The fish should dribble away and protect their ball without going outside their box.
- B. Have half of your team line up on either side of a 15 x 15 yd area. Assign each player a number. Each team should have a player with the same number on the opposite side. Call a number and kick out a ball. The object is for each player to win the ball and dribble it back to their side.

### **Large Group Activity**

- A. Divide into two teams (different colors) and play full field soccer.

## **EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS**

- C. Crossing lines is not permitted. Administer a gag penalty to those who goof up! Example: 1/2 sit-up, chase a ball that you kick out, etc.
- A. Change chasers (sharks) regularly. Ask them to count the number of tags they achieve in a 30 second period. If a dribbler goes out of the defined area, they must stay out for the remainder of that 30 seconds only.
- B. Try to keep the score even or close. Call out more than one number and kick out more than one ball.
- A. Let them play!

## SESSION 15 | Shooting

### ACTIVITIES

#### Warm-Up (10-15 minutes)

- A. Played in the penalty box, 4 players join hands to become the it players in chain tag. Their hands must be together when they catch another player. The caught player becomes an addition to the chain.
- B. Two players lie on their backs with their knees bent and toes touching: one player has the ball in his hands. When both players sit up, the ball is exchanged.
- C. Do activity B using 4 players positioned at the main points of a compass. Begin with two players in the ball exchange position with the other two lying on their backs. At the sound of go, players should perform as quickly as possible to catch the other pair in the ball exchange position.
- D. Standing back-to-back about one yard apart, two players execute a ball exchange by twisting their bodies. Do not let them move their feet, it defeats the purpose. Progress from side to side to an over and under exchange.

#### Individual Activities (10-15 minutes)

- A. Have players standing on the perimeter of the penalty box facing away from the goal. On signal, players must throw the ball over their head and shoot on goal before the second bounce of the ball.

### EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

- A. Observe which of your players are clever enough to get positioned behind the chain. These are schemer types who can usually score goals for you.
  - B. Simply a sit-up with a little variation--the ball. Abdominal strength is important to soccer players. Since the emphasis is on exchanging the ball, the drudgery of doing sit-ups is reduced.
  - C. Observe those who can successfully shift their center of gravity and those struggling with their balance.
  - D. Individual coordination and pairs timing make this activity happen smoothly. Switch partners after 30 seconds, it keeps the interest higher.
- 
- A. The ball should be struck with laces on the full or half volley. Knee over the ball will help keep the ball under the bar.

**ACTIVITIES**

- B. Try activity A with this variation: Same set up only the player throws the ball to the coach who begins back peddling with the player chasing him. Coach must release the ball before being tagged. The player must turn and shoot the released ball before three bounces.
- C. Each player gets a turn at being on the hot spot. The hot spot is the penalty mark where 3 or 5 balls are served to a player from various directions. He must try to score using only two touches or less.

**Small Group Activities (10-15 minutes)**

- A. With an arbitrary number of players (3 to 6) in the penalty box, coach sends all kinds of weird balls in to be shot on any one of 4 goals placed around the box. The last player to touch the ball going into the goal gets credit. A real every man for himself activity.
- B. Have two players on their knees facing the goal. Coach does not give them a verbal signal but rather serves the ball into the box. The moment either player hears or sees the served ball, both race to shoot. Real cut throat or 1 v. 1 in the box.

**Large Group Activity (10-15 minutes)**

- A. In the same situation as Small Group Activities B, send as many as 8 players after the same ball in 5 v. 3 mode.

**EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS**

- B. Here the player is not controlling the flight or pace of the ball and must react quickly. Emphasis on technique of shooting.
- C. The positioning of the body prior to receiving the ball is very important.

- A. Described as a small group activity, this is really an individual matter but then so is goal scoring.
- B. Active players will use their ears as the first sense to detect the start of the activity. You'll see tenacity on the part of your goal getters.

- A. This is a match-related situation where players must play off one another to score.

## SESSION 16 | Shooting

### ACTIVITIES

#### Warm-Up

- A. Ask players to start by lightly tapping their ball with the bottom of the left and right foot. Ask players to move clockwise around their ball as they tap. Reverse direction.
- B. Guide players through a variety of stretches.
- C. Call out one body part after another. Players must figure out three different ways to touch their ball with that body part. They can use different surfaces of the body part. They can touch different parts of the ball. They can touch the ball from different balancing positions, etc.
- D. Ask them to dribble in and out of each other until you call out the name of an object, an animal, or a plant. At this point the players should freeze and imitate whatever you called out.

#### Individual Activities Emphasis - Shooting

- A. In pairs, ask players to shoot back and forth through a 4 yd. goal. Shoot, Shoot, Shoot.
- B. Ask players to head the ball back and forth through the same goal. Players should head the ball out of their own hands. If they can handle it, let one player be a goalkeeper who serves the ball by hand to the header, who tries to beat the keeper. Alternate roles.

### EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

- A. Emphasize a light tap. Don't let players put too much weight on the ball because they will surely fall.
  - B. Try to educate players in the areas that they are stretching.
  - C. Test their imagination. Give them examples of how to touch the ball with the knee or elbow or nose, three different ways. Now activate them.
  - D. Make it fun. Point out particular good and bad impressions.
- 
- A. Show how to shoot with the instep (shoe laces) and then get them going quickly.
  - B. Give a quick demonstration of the correct body motion and the proper striking surface of the forehead.

**ACTIVITIES**

- C. Ask two players to play back and forth between two cones approximately 12 yds. apart. The object is to protect your cone and knock over that of your opponent.

**Small Group Activities**

- A. Play keep away with teams of 3 v. 3. They can dribble or run with the ball.
- B. Add two goals and allow players to throw the ball through the goal for a goal. Use goalkeepers if you like.

**Large Group Activity**

- A. Set up a playing area 30 X 30 yds with two teams in different colors. You (coach) should be outside the area with a pile of balls at your feet. Serve a ball into the area and ask the players to attempt to win the ball and dribble over any boundary line (under control). If they succeed, they get one point. Play until all balls are used. Collect the balls and repeat!

**EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS**

- C. Play a series of 30-40 second games. Change opponents often.
  
- A. Don't enforce too many rules except those to prevent dangerous play!
- B. Encourage passing and scoring but let them play!
  
- A. Keep score. Encourage winning the ball and aggressive dribbling in a logical direction. Tell players to re-enter the area quickly after they've scored!

## SESSION 17 | Goalkeeping

### ACTIVITIES

#### Warm-Up (10-15 minutes)

- A. With feet wide apart and stationary, players move the ball with their hands in a figure-eight fashion around their feet. Coach calls right ankle and the ball is moved around it, then left ankle and back to figure eight.
- B. One player rolls the ball between his partner's feet then goes between his partner's legs to retrieve it. After four such moves, the roles are reversed.
- C. While one player is on his hands and knees, the other must dribble up to him, strike the ball under him then run around the kneeling player to retrieve the ball. Four successions then switch.
- D. Same as C only now the kneeling player must get up and retrieve the ball that was sent under his body. Put this one to the clock for most times accomplished.

#### Individual Activities (10-15 minutes)

- A. In pairs, players on their knees about 5 yards apart throw balls back and forth to each other with a push-pass.
- B. Still in pairs but lying on their stomachs, have players practice the same push-pass. They will need to raise their bodies from the ground to execute.

### EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

- A. Be sure the body sways from side to side during the figure eight, otherwise it's a basketball warm-up.
  - B. Stress agility and speed. Put them on the clock for quicker responses.
  - C. Emphasis here is on controlled dribbling, accurate striking of the ball and acceleration without the ball.
  - D. As a matter of body mechanics, how fast can players get from a kneeling to a running position?
- 
- A. Note: the ball may not spin. After success is realized, have players get farther apart. Look for upper body strength and control.
  - B. This requires upper body coordination to keep the ball off the ground.

## ACTIVITIES

- C. Each player with a ball in a sitting position throws the ball into the air then jumps to his feet to catch it before it hits the ground. Do this from a kneeling position too.

### Small Group Activities (10-15 minutes)

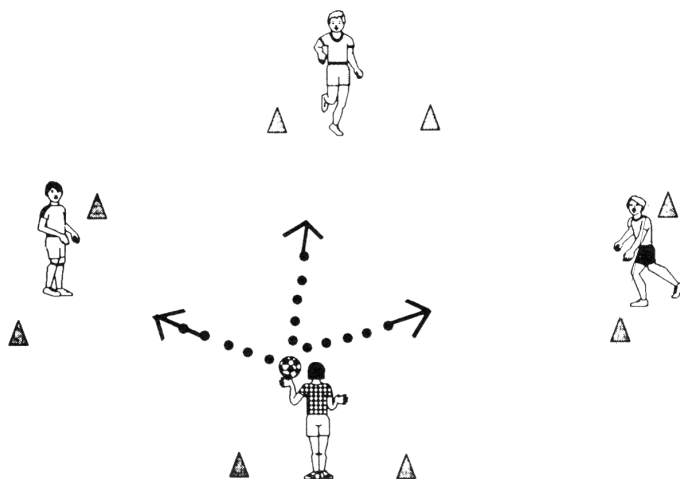
- A. Using four goals about 20 yards apart, have a goalkeeper in each try to score a goal by throwing the ball into one of the other 3 goals.
- B. With two goals 20 yards apart and each with two goalkeepers, now the objective is to score a goal off a full or half volley foot shot.

### Large Group Activity (10-15 minutes)

- A. With 6 to 8 players in the penalty box, coach serves balls in to be touched on goal. Lots of shots results in lots of goalkeeping action.

## EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

- C. Stress accurate throwing and speed of body reaction.
- A. Emphasize the need for a transition from defending the goal and attacking quickly.
- B. Here we are attempting to establish accuracy from the ball struck with the foot.
- A. How well has the goalkeeper positioned himself and how well has he caught rather than slapped balls played at his goal.



## SESSION 18 | Passing

### ACTIVITIES

#### Warm-Up

- A. Ask players to run in and out of each other with their ball in hand.
- B. Same activity but on your signal each player should throw their ball high in the air, close their eyes, duck and count to two out loud. At this point players should sprint to the nearest ball and continue dribbling.
- C. Ask players to bend and stretch in a variety of ways. Stretch legs, lower back, neck, etc.
- D. Ask players to continue moving in a confined area, (15 x 15 yds.) with ball in hand. As they move in and out they should occasionally make solid eye contact, then these players should exchange balls simultaneously and continue running.

#### Individual Activities

- A. Players should be paired up with one ball per pair. Challenge them to move about in an area 20 x 20 yds. passing at the proper time. Ask them not to run around next to each other but instead to get apart and explore all of the playing area.

### EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

- A. Ask them to dodge and dart in and out of each other. Stress balance and directional change as well as variance in pace.
  - B. This should prove fun and exciting. Be sure to ask players to duck and cover their head! Let this go until the excitement wears down.
  - C. Stretch and hold. Don't bounce and twist.
  - D. Emphasize looking at another player and then making the ball exchange. This is the beginning of non-verbal communication.
- 
- A. Demonstrate quickly how to pass with the inside, and the outside of the foot, then get the players started. Occasionally, when rest is needed, ask players to pass back and forth (5 yds.) as quickly as possible.



**ACTIVITIES**

- B. Players should be in pairs with one ball. Set up 6 or 7 goals (4 yds) in all parts of a 30 yd. square. Instruct players to rush to any goal and set up with a player on each side of the goal. They should execute 5 accurate passes back and forth through the goal and then move on to any other goal.
- C. Set up an area 25 x 20 yds. All players should be in the area, each with a ball. Instruct players to move around in the area and try to pass their ball at any other ball. Keep track of the number of balls they each hit.

**Small Group Activities**

- A. Create teams of 3. Set up 3 cones on each team's endline (no goals). The object is to knock over all 3 cones on the opponent's endline. When all 3 cones have been toppled by the ball, start a new game with different opponents.
- B. In the same area, let the players try a little 3 v. 3 keep away. The object is to dribble and pass to keep possession of the ball.

**Large Group Activity**

- A. Divide into 2 even teams (different colors). Set up a suitably sized playing field with 2 goals and goalkeepers. Play!

**EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS**

- B. Introduce competition by asking players how many goals they got to in 45 seconds.
- C. Emphasize passing for accuracy. The inside or outside of the foot is the preferred surface.
- A. Set up as many playing areas as are needed to keep everyone active and busy. Change opponents regularly.
- B. Don't worry if a lot of wonderful passing doesn't occur. This is just the beginning.
- A. Let them play and enjoy!

## SESSION 19 | Dribbling

### ACTIVITIES

#### Warm-Up (10-15 minutes)

- A. Have players in the center circle moving the ball with their left hand (or right hand if left handed) while holding their ankle with the other hand. On command players try to knock other player's balls out of the circle using their left hand while protecting their own ball.
- B. With their ball, players get on one of the straight lines on the field. Players begin dribbling. If two players meet on the same line, the one nearest an intersection must turn, with ball, and get to the intersection for a safe base. If caught or tagged, he must get off the line and execute four juggles to get back in the game.
- C. Have players stand inside the penalty area or smaller area, each with a ball at his feet. On command the players toe tap (Mexican Hat Dance Style) a stationary ball five times, then run to another ball and touch it with their knee, then stop at the third ball. Build this up by using various body parts.
- D. Play hand behind the back tag by having 2 players chasing the others who are running about with one hand behind the back. An it player catches another when he tags a hand behind the back.

#### Individual Activities (10-15 minutes) Emphasis - Dribbling

- A. Play hand behind the back. Now those being chased must also dribble a ball.

### EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

- A. By going immediately to a competitive type activity you may get more enthusiastic participation.
  - B. Players can't play this game with their eyes down. Stress vision, vision, vision.
  - C. Stress agility of motion as they move through one another. Discourage straight up running in favor of short step shuffling.
  - D. This activity calls for body swerves and deception on the part of those players being chased.
- 
- A. Now players must accommodate the ball while avoiding the it player.

## ACTIVITIES

- B. Two players stand about one yard from the ball. When coach calls right, each player must try to get his right foot on the ball first. The same is so for left and left foot.
- C. Have players dribble with every step being a touch of the ball. On command players must step very lightly on the ball and change the direction of their dribble.

### Small Group Activities (10-15 minutes)

- A. Place teams of 5 or 6 players in an area with 6 to 8 goals set up in various places (use cones). In order to score a goal a player must dribble through one of the goals.
- B. In dribble to take on, goals are scored by beating an opponent rather shooting. 4 to 6 players on a team play. When a defender is attacked, he may only retreat 3 steps then he must tackle.

### Large Group Activity (10-15 minutes)

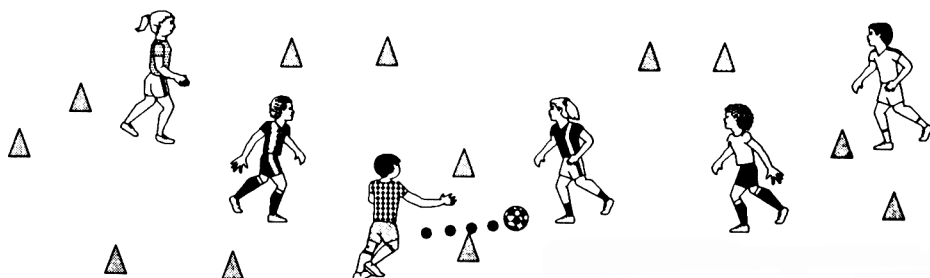
- A. Set up goals across the field for a 5 v. 5 or more game. Additional goals can be awarded for excellence in dribbling.

## EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

- B. This activity encourages foot speed and quick mental responses.
- C. Balance and correct ball touch is necessary for success in this activity.

- A. No shooting in this game. With so many goals, players must be encouraged to change direction continually on the dribble.
- B. This match related activity promotes dribblers taking people on, which is imperative in soccer.

- A. Emphasize creative and daring dribbling. Also praise players for dribbling at the appropriate times.



## SESSION 20 | Shooting

### ACTIVITIES

#### Warm-Up

- A. Ask players to dribble in and out of each other until you call out the name of an animal. At that point they should begin to imitate that animal until you signal. They should then grab the closest ball and continue dribbling.
- B. Ask players to play the old game of Hot Potatoes. Pass the ball back and forth by hand until you call freeze. The player with the ball in hand has the hot potato.
- C. Try the same activity as B with the feet.
- D. In pairs, ask players to stand back-to-back and alternate passing the ball between their legs and over their heads.
  - 1. Same as above except players should pass the ball by twisting side to side.
  - 2. All players have a ball and exchange balls at the same time. One should pass over while another passes under.

### EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

- A. Initial warm-up and fun are involved in this type of activity.
- B. This is just fun!
- C. Don't get caught but pass accurately.
- D. These activities involve coordination and cooperation with a teammate.

## ACTIVITIES

### Individual Activities

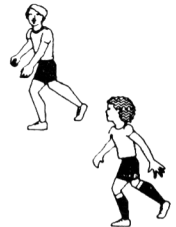
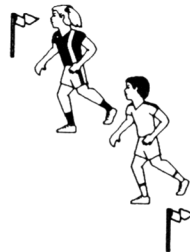
#### Emphasis - Shooting

- A. Set up 2 or 3 goals (cones) with 20 yds. of free space on either side. Each goal has a goalkeeper and two shooters on either side. The activity will involve shooting back and forth between the two groups of shooters. You will define the types of shots to be taken, i.e.:
1. Whoever gets the ball should pick it up and run behind his partner (the shooter), who has his legs spread. The ball is rolled between his legs toward the goal. He then chases the ball and shoots on goal. The ball then goes to the other side.
  2. Ask the player who gets to the ball first to pick it up, run to one side of the goal, turn and roll it back to the shooter who must now strike a ball that is rolling towards him.
  3. Whoever gets to the ball first should run wide and half-way to the goal. The ball should be rolled across the goal to provide a square pass.
  4. The player who gets the ball should now run behind his partner and toss the ball just over his head. The shooter must now chase and strike a bouncing ball.

## EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

### Group Activity

- A. In this environment you can show all the players the type of shot to be taken and then let them go at it. Change keepers often.
1. Ask shooters to be far enough away so that shots aren't taken too close to the goal.
  2. Emphasize a good, slow roll that isn't bouncing all over.
  3. Make sure players alternate shooting and rolling.
  4. You can invent and work on a variety of shots. The key is to get cooperation between the partners.



## ACTIVITIES

### Small Group Activities

- A. With the same field set up as Individual Activity A, 3 players will be on each side of the goal. Have players play 1 v. 2 on one side of the goal. When the ball goes to the other side, they should play 1 v. 2 to goal. The player who gets the ball first or wins the ball must try to beat the other two and score.
- B. Now play with both teams on one side of the goal, 3 v. 3. The object is to shoot through the goal. If the goalkeeper makes a save, the ball will be thrown to the other side. At this point all 6 players will rush through and play 3 v. 3 back through the goal.

### Large Group Activity

- A. Set up a square 25 x 25 yds. with a 4 to 5 yd. goal in the middle of each side of your square. Have one player in each goal as a goalkeeper. Divide the remaining players into two teams (different colors) and tell them to play regular soccer except that they can score at any of the four goals.

## EMPHASIS/COACHING POINTS

- A. Each group of three should be of a different color than the three on the opposite side of the goal. Change goalkeepers regularly. Shoot, shoot, shoot.
- B. The movement will take a while to understand but they'll pick it up. Be sure to give ample rest periods because this activity involves a lot of hard work.

- A. Let them play! Keep balls ready to be played in. Change the goalkeepers regularly. For a change let one team attack two goals and the other team attack the other two goals.



# US Youth Soccer Official Under 10 Playing Recommendations

US Youth Soccer recommended modifications to the FIFA Laws of the Game. FIFA Laws of the Game can be found at [www.ussoccer.com/referees](http://www.ussoccer.com/referees). Please note the U8 addendum and appendix.

## **Law 1) Field of Play**

**Dimensions:** The field of play must be rectangular. The length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line.

Length: minimum 45 yards            maximum 60 yards  
Width: minimum 35 yards            maximum 45 yards

**Field Markings:** Distinctive lines not more than five inches wide. The field of play is divided into two halves by a halfway line. The center mark is indicated at the midpoint of the halfway line. A circle with a radius of eight yards is marked around it.

**Goal Area:** A goal area is defined at each end of the field as follows: Two lines are drawn at right angles to the goal line, six yards from the inside of each goalpost. These lines extend into the field of play for a distance of six yards and are joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line. The area bounded by these lines and the goal line is the goal area.

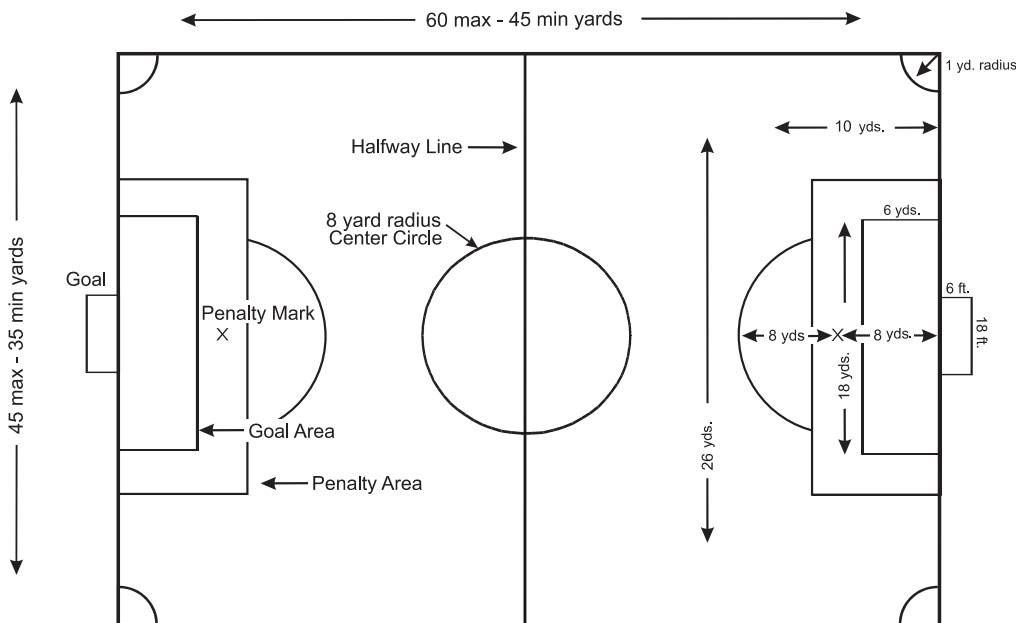
**Penalty Area:** A penalty area is defined at each end of the field as follows: Two lines are drawn at right angles to the goal line, 10 yards from the inside of each goalpost. These lines extend into the field of play for a distance of 10 yards and are joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line. The area bounded by these lines and the goal line is the penalty area. Within each penalty area a penalty mark is made eight yards from the midpoint between the goalposts and equidistant to them. An arc of a circle with a radius of eight yards from each penalty mark is drawn outside the penalty area.

**Flag posts:** A flagpost, not less than five feet high, with a non-pointed top and a flag is placed at each corner.

**Corner Arc:** A quarter circle with a radius of one yard from each corner flagpost is drawn inside the field of play.

**Goals:** Goals must be placed on the center of each goal line. They consist of two upright posts equidistant from the corner flag posts and joined at the top by a horizontal crossbar. The maximum distance between the posts is 18 feet and the maximum distance from the lower edge of the crossbar to the ground is six feet.

**Safety:** Goals must be anchored securely to the ground. Portable goals may only be used if they satisfy this requirement.



**Law 2.) The Ball** - Size four.

**Law 3.) The Number of Players** - A match is played by two teams, each consisting of not more than six players, one of whom is the goalkeeper. A match may not start if either team consists of fewer than five players.

Substitutions: At any stoppage and unlimited.

Playing time: Each player SHALL play a minimum to 50% of the total playing time. Teams and matches may be coed.

**Law 4.) Player's Equipment** - A player must not use equipment or wear anything that is dangerous to himself or another player, including any kind of jewelry. The basic compulsory equipment of a player is:

- A jersey or shirt
- Shorts
- Stockings
- Footwear
- Shinguards are covered entirely by the stockings, are made of a suitable material and provide a reasonable degree of protection.

Each goalkeeper wears colors that distinguish him/her from other players, the referee and the assistant referees or linesmen/women. Non-uniform clothing is allowed based on weather conditions, but uniforms must still distinguish teams.

**Law 5.) Referee** - Registered referee, especially Grade nine or parent/coach or assistant coach. All rule infringements shall be briefly explained to the offending player.



**Law 6.) Assistant Referees** - Not required. May use club linesmen/women if desired.

**Law 7.) Duration of the Match** - The match lasts two equal periods of 25 minutes. There shall be a half-time interval of five minutes.

**Law 8.) Start and Restart of Play** - A coin is tossed and the team that wins the toss decides which goal it will attack in the first half of the match. The other team takes the kick-off to start the match. The team that wins the toss takes the kick-off to start the second half of the match. In the second half of the match, the teams change ends and attack the opposite goals. A goal may be scored directly from the kick-off. After a team scores a goal, the other team takes the kick-off. A kick-off is a way of starting or restarting play:

- At the start of the match
- After a goal has been scored
- At the start of the second half of the match
- All players are in their own half of the field
- The opponents of the team taking the kick-off are at least eight yards from the ball until it is in play
- The ball is stationary on the center mark
- The referee gives the signal
- The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves forward
- The kicker does not touch the ball a second time until it has touched another player

**Law 9.) Ball In and Out of Play** - The ball is out of play when:

- It has wholly crossed the goal line or touch line whether on the ground or in the air
- Play has been stopped by the referee

The ball is in play at all other times, including when:

- It rebounds from a goalpost, crossbar or corner flagpost and remains in the field of play
- It rebounds from either the referee or an assistant referee when they are on the field of play

**Law 10.) Method of Scoring** - A goal is scored when the whole of the ball passes over the goal line, between the goalposts and under the crossbar, provided that no infringement of the Laws of the Game has been committed previously by the team scoring the goal.

**Law 11.) Offside** - None.

**Law 12.) Fouls and Misconduct** - A direct free kick is awarded to the opposing team if a player commits any of the following six offenses in a manner considered by the referee to be careless, reckless or using excessive force:

- Kicks or attempts to kick an opponent
- Trips or attempts to trip an opponent
- Jumps at an opponent
- Charges an opponent
- Strikes or attempts to strike an opponent
- Pushes an opponent

A direct free kick is also awarded to the opposing team if a player commits any of the following four offenses:

- Holds an opponent
- Spits at an opponent
- Handles the ball deliberately (except for the goalkeeper within his/her own penalty area)
- Tackles an opponent to gain possession of the ball, making contact with the opponent before touching the ball

An indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team if a goalkeeper, inside his/her own penalty area, commits any of the following four offenses:

- Takes more than six seconds while controlling the ball with his/her hands before releasing it from his/her possession
- Touches the ball again with his/her hands after it has been released from his/her possession and has not been touched by another player
- Touches the ball with his/her hands after it has been deliberately kicked to him/her by a teammate
- Touches the ball with his/her hands after he/she has received it directly from a throw-in taken by a teammate

An indirect free kick is also awarded to the opposing team if a player, in the opinion of the referee:

- Plays in a dangerous manner
- Impedes the progress of an opponent
- Prevents the goalkeeper from releasing the ball from his/her hands

The indirect free kick is taken from where the offense occurred.

- No ball may be directly punted or drop kicked in the air by the goalkeeper from one penalty area into the opponents' penalty area. The infraction is punished by giving the ball to the opponents for an indirect free kick taken at the center spot on the halfway line.

**Law 13.) Free Kicks** - All free kicks are direct and opponents are at least eight yards from the ball until it is in play. The ball must be stationary when the kick is taken and the kicker does not touch the ball a second time until it has touched another player. If the free kick is kicked directly into the opponents' goal a goal is awarded. If a free kick is kicked directly into the team's own goal a corner kick is awarded to the opposing team.

**Law 14.) Penalty Kick** - A penalty kick is awarded against a team that commits one of these offenses inside the penalty area:

- Kicks or attempts to kick an opponent
- Trips or attempts to trip an opponent
- Jumps at an opponent
- Charges an opponent
- Strikes or attempts to strike an opponent
- Pushes an opponent
- Holds an opponent
- Spits at an opponent
- Handles the ball deliberately

Tackles an opponent to gain possession of the ball, making contact with the opponent before touching the ball.

A goal may be scored directly from a penalty kick. Additional time is allowed for a penalty kick to be taken at the end of each half. When a penalty kick is taken during the normal course of play, or time has been extended at half-time or full-time to allow a penalty kick to be taken or retaken, a goal is awarded if, before passing between the goalposts and under the crossbar, and/or the goalkeeper. The ball is placed on the penalty mark (the penalty mark is eight yards from the center of the goal line.) The player taking the penalty kick is properly identified. The defending goalkeeper remains on his/her goal line, facing the kicker, between the goalposts until the ball has been kicked. The players other than the kicker are located inside the field of play, outside the penalty area, behind the penalty mark and at least eight yards from the penalty mark. The referee does not signal for penalty kick to be taken until the players have taken up position in accordance with the Law. The referee decides when a penalty kick has been completed. The player taking the penalty kicks the ball forward. He does not play the ball a second time until it has touched another player. The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves forward.

**Law 15.) Throw-In** - A throw-in is a method of restarting play. A goal cannot be scored directly from a throw-in. A throw-in is awarded:

- When the whole of the ball passes over the touch line, either on the ground or in the air
- From the point where it crossed the touch line
- To the opponents of the player who last touched the ball

At the moment of delivering the ball, the thrower:

- Faces the field of play
- Has part of each foot either on the touch line or on the ground outside the touch line
- Uses both hands
- Delivers the ball from behind and over his head

The thrower may not touch the ball again until it has touched another player. The ball is in play immediately as it enters the field of play.

**Law 16.) Goal Kick** - A goal kick is a method of restarting play. A goal may be scored directly from a goal kick, but only against the opposing team. A goal kick is awarded when:

- The whole of the ball, having last touched a player of the attacking team, passes over the goal line, either on the ground or in the air, and a goal is not scored.

Procedure:

- The ball is kicked from any point within the goal area by a player of the defending team
- Opponents must remain outside the goal area and at least four yards from the ball until it is in play
- The kicker does not play the ball a second time until it has touched a second player
- The ball is in play when it is kicked directly beyond the goal area.

**Law 17.) Corner Kick** - A corner kick is a method of restarting play. A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick, but only against the opposing team. A corner kick is awarded when the whole of the ball, having last touched a player of the defending team, passes over the goal line, either on the ground or in the air.

Procedure:

- The ball is placed inside the corner arc at the nearest corner flagpost
- The corner flagpost is not moved

## Coaching Education Programs

US Youth Soccer offers coaching courses and training for all coaches. For a course schedule contact your local State Association or US Youth Soccer.

### **Youth Coaching Modules**

There are a number of Youth Coaching Modules offered to improve your age-appropriate coaching from US Youth Soccer. Each module offers classroom and field sessions designed for the parent/coach or novice coach with an emphasis on the age group of your players. Techniques, psychology and FUN are introduced with an emphasis on player development. Check out your State Association website or USYouthSoccer.org for more courses on coaching education. Some states offer the course online as well!

Available Modules include: U6/U8, U8/U10 and the U12 Youth Module

### **Also available from US Youth Soccer:**

The Novice Coach DVD

Official US Youth Soccer Coaching Manual

The Youth Soccer Parent/Coach Primer

Assistant Coach Series: U10 Practice Activities for the Parent/Coach

Assistant Coach Series: U12 Practice Activities for the Parent/Coach

For additional information contact US Youth Soccer or your State Association.

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