



Soccer Coaching Booklet Training 4-9 yrs

The booklet is provided to help in coaching 4-9 year old soccer players and will give you some helpful hints into making a soccer practice session more enjoyable. It will assist in your preparation for the sessions that you have planned and are full of fun skills and games drills. The most important thing is for the soccer players to have fun while learning the great game in a good positive environment.

Remember

The attention span of a young soccer player from 4-8 years old is around 3-5 Minutes, or less, which in essence is always good to keep changing the games every 5-8 minutes. Your players will loose interest and will not get the point of the game if it goes on for along time. As coaches you want all players to achieve the coaching points you make, and be sure the players are getting what you're asking them to do i.e. passing, dribbling Coaching this age is tough if your sessions are not planned out. You have to be organized, if your not you will get instant feedback from the players that they are not enjoying the practice session and loose interest quickly. Try to make sure you have a plan of your session written out (on a cue card), so the session will flow and have an adequate number of games and skills that the kids can pick up quickly & effectively. Always have more than enough games/ skills in case you need them to fall back on.

“Fail to Plan is planning to fail”

Getting your players at a young age **“Turned on”** to the game of soccer is very important, you have the key to their success right in your own hands, make sure it's a good experience for all. Make sure the kids are having fun aswell as learning in a good positive environment, and then they will be more than happy to return to your next practice.

“Remember the coaches set the mood of the day”

The kids are great at this age and they like to run around in an organized environment so let them. Also for the players to learn all the skills/drills at the same time is good for the team as the players all together and learn at the same speed.

The last thing I promote to you all is have fun **yourself as the coach**, it is very important and it will reflect on the players. You are their “Star”/Hero” so make sure you do what you think is best for your players, and they will love you for it.

Warm-Up Games

Freeze tag

Players without the balls have to run around and tag players with the balls below the knees. When the players receive a touch from one of the taggers they freeze, open their legs and to get free again they have to get another player to pass their ball go under their legs to freeze them and be back in the game.

Hospital Tag

Players dribble around in a 20x20 area

Coach will choose 2-3 players that run around and tag the other players that have the ball. Once been tagged the player has to touch the part that has been hit and dribble the ball at the same time. If you get hit 3 times you have to go out of the area and juggle 3 times to get back in the game.

Snake Tag

Cones lay out in a 20x20 area

Start with one player as the tagger, if they tag a player they add on like a snake and then go as a two and tag some other player and so on. Watch out for competitiveness.

Network

Cones laid out anywhere in a 15 x15 area about 3-5 feet apart depending on age.

Players run from cone to cone doing different exercises on coach's command.

Up/ Down/Sideways/Backwards/Karioke/Hop/ Leg raises/Knees up/ Heels up etc.

Great warm up for the players, and please emphasize it is a warm up and they do not run around to fast and clash with anyone.

Coaching points: doing the movements well and keeping the players head up.

Juggling

Players have a ball each. The coach demonstrates different parts of the body to use for juggling. Start the players off by bouncing the ball of the ground then kicking once then bouncing kicking two and so on. Players at the age of 4-8yrs will not really be able to juggle successfully, but it is good to build their coordination, timing & balance which are three good attributes for soccer.

Playstation Game

Mark out a path in cones for the players to take.

This game is like the Video Game on TV.

All players start on level 1 and make there way thru to level 8 or 10 depend what age they are. The 1st level can be as easy as kicking the ball with one foot. The tasks need to be harder as you go from level to level. When the player does not complete the one level they move back to last level to do again. Make it fun and challenging for all kids.

Handball

The players are separated into two teams. The two teams play keep away with their hands instead of their feet. This is a fun variation of the game at their feet. The teams are just using their hands to keep the ball away from each other.

Variations: two steps only, two seconds only.

Traffic Lights

Players dribble in a 20x20 area.

Red light means – Stop / Green light – Go / Yellow light – 4 taps on top of ball then go

Coaching Point: Good fun game that will keep the players on their toes. Keep their heads up and moving with the ball close to them and in control.

Play station Game

The game is like got different levels and on the certain levels it has different activity to accomplish. This is a great game and challenges the kids to strive to become better at juggling. Coach lays out a course for the players to complete.

The course will be easy to begin with and then more challenging as they go on.

1st level – 1 Juggle

2nd level – 2 Juggles

3rd level – 2 Thigh juggles

4th level – 2 thigh 2 feet

5th level – 2 thigh 2 feet 2 head

The older the age of players the more competitive you can make it.

Head / Catch

All players are in a circle about 4 feet around from the coach.

Coach will throw the ball up towards the player and shout out either “head or catch” and the player must react to what the coach says and either catch it or head it back to the coach. Now the game is fun the quicker and more energy you use as a coach but can become quite competitive so watch out!!

Progression would be doing opposite to the shout.

Cone /Ball

Players are all in a straight line in behind each other facing the coach at the front.

There is a ball 5 feet away on the player’s right, and there is a cone 5 feet away on the players left. On the coaches demand the players run to the cone/ball and back to the middle line.

Coaching Point: make sure all the players are on their toes and are listening very carefully. This game is all about reaction time, how quick the players can do a certain task without thinking about it too long.

Fun Adventure Games

Pirate Ship

Coach lays out an area about 30x20 that is close in resemblance of a ship.

Coach is the captain of the ship; the players are the pirates on the ship.

The coach gives commands to the pirates and they will shout things back to the captain and go ahead and do the activity. The Soccer Ball becomes a mop.

Front of the ship – Bow

Back of Ship – Stern

The coach will shout out mop my deck and the kids will shout back “aye aye captain”

Then the prates will proceed to dribble around the deck of the ship and clean up all the water on the deck.

The following activities for the pirates to do are as follows:

Seagulls in the sky – pirates pick mop and throw it in the air and scare the birds away.

Sharks in the water – pick up mop and stamp it on the ground to scare away sharks

Dolphins in the water – pirates place the ball on their head and balance it as a trick

Big Wave – pirates go to back of boat, cover mop, wait for wave to go over boat.

Look for Land – pirates go to front of boat put one foot on mop and look out for land

Jellyfish – pirates lie down with mop on belly, throw arms and legs up like a jellyfish

Coaches can be as creative as they want and add things to the pirate ship game.

All the kids love this game and would play it all day but you need to keep the fun up and make sure the game lasts for about 10-15 mins. This is a good game for the players to dribble and learn some coordination skills also.

Planets

Set up cones into multiple squares or triangles that serve as planets (or cities). All players must follow coach’s order and dribble into the planet he calls out. Coach can have all players follow same directions or break up teams so they start at different planet and then have them dribble through the solar system in clockwise or counterclockwise fashion. Coach can have groups dribble in opposite direction through the solar system.

Kangaroo Jack

All players except two or three begin with a ball. Players without balls are kangaroo jacks and must hop like a kangaroo and try to tag players. If a player gets tagged, he/she becomes a kangaroo as well until all players are turned into kangaroos.

Triangle Tag

Set up cones in a triangle formation with each side of the triangle being roughly 1 yard long. Every triangle has a pair of players, each with a ball. Similar to the tag game, one player is being chased and one is “it”. However this time the player who is “it” tags the player by kicking her ball and hitting the other player’s ball or hitting the player below the knee. Players can dribble in either direction around the triangle and must stay close to their own triangle. Neither play can go through the triangle. *Version 2:* Allow the player being chased to go through the triangle. When in the triangle she is safe. However, after going through triangle, player must go completely around triangle before she can go through triangle again. She cannot stop inside the triangle. *Version 3:* Allow pairs to move from triangle to triangle (incorporates speed dribbling and traffic). If two pairs are at the same triangle at the same time that is fine, but players still only compete with their partner. Note: To increase difficulty, do not count hitting a player below the knee as a tag.

Starship

Coach lays out stand up cones (clown hats size) all over 20x20 areas.
Players dribble around and try to knock down as many starships as possible when they do knock one down they shout “blast off”. This is a great game for players to practice dribbling and learning to keep their head up. Coaches can make it as competitive as they want for example: Time the kids to knock down as many starships as they can.
Only knock down with left foot dribble with right foot etc
Dribble only with insides / right foot / left foot / laces etc
This is a good game for kids to g at different speeds with the ball and using different parts of the shoes and will build good ball control.

Body Parts

Players dribble in area and whatever the coach shouts out, on the body the players have to touch that part with the ball. The ball stays on the ground.
Try and challenge the players by using parts of body in different areas. i.e. back of knee.

Candy Store

Players dribble in a designated square. Each side of the square is named after a piece of candy. M&M’s/ Snickers/ Gummy Bears/ Bubble Gum/ Twix etc.
On coaches command the players have to dribble to the appropriate side of the square as quick as they can, and then return to the middle of the square and resume dribbling.

Soccer Bowling

Coach sets up cones like in a bowling alley.
Players then one at a time take turns to knock down as many cones as they can with one kick. Players can use right and left foot. Coaches can set up 2-4 alleys for bowling.
Coaching point: Players can be different distances away from the cones to challenge themselves.

10 Steps to Heaven

This is a fun game; enhance it as much as possible
The players are all dribbling around. In a 20x20 area.
The coach shouts a number then players shout back with the movement they have to do.
One- On your Bum/ Sit on ball
Two- On your Shoe/ tap the top of the ball with bottom of feet
Three- On your Knee/ Knee taps of the ball
Four- Of the floor/ Try and get the ball of the floor
Five- staying alive/ Stand and imitate John Travolta, put one hand in the air
Six- do a trick/ Do any trick, turn, flick.
Seven- Knocking on Heaven/ Put ball in hands and knock ball of your forehead
Eight- Swap with a mate/ Stop the ball and go find another ball
Nine- Dribble in a line/ dribble ball in a straight line back and fore between legs.
Ten- Big Fat Hen/ put ball between legs and walk around imitate a hen, lay and egg.
Coaching Point: The game gets players to interact with each other and have fun. The younger they are more fun it will be. Make sure the kids are up to speed with the game
Story Book (Magic Car)

Tell the players a story about your “Magic Car” and that you have always wanted one. You just had a birthday lately and all you wanted was a Magic Car and your dream came true. Tell the players the Magic Car has 3 Gears:

1st Gear Slow- Sound with your mouth) Vibrate your lips together.

2nd Gear Medium Speed - Sound Hum at medium pitch.

3rd Gear Racing Car Speed - Sound Neeaaaaaw.

Golden Cleats

Set up in a 20x20 area. The players start with 10 points each given from the coach. The players have to complete certain moves and tasks that the coach sets and if the players do not complete them or do it to a standard set by the coach or bumping into another player they lose a point. The players can gain a point by doing a move well and having good ball skills.

Tractor Trailer - 30x30 area

Players are in two's.

Player 1 is in front as the tractor and player 2 is in behind as the trailer.

The tractor leads the trailer by moving and changing direction quickly to try and lose the trailer or (unhitch it). When the coach shout change the tractor turn faces the trailer and puts the ball thru the trailers legs and then the trailer begins to dribble.

Coaching Points: Keep the head up and keep close control of the ball.

Clean you're Backyard

Break groups into two teams and have each team stay only on their half of the field. Place a 6 yard buffer zone between halves that no one can enter or cross. Each player needs a ball. Place three small (2-3yd) goals at the far end of each side of the field. Have both teams shoot balls at other team's goals in an attempt to score through anyone of the small goals (below knee height). Players cannot cross the buffer zone or go into the other half. Balls get recycled naturally in the game. This is a competition and teams need to keep score. Play 2 or 3 games and have teams re-strategize between each game. Teams can play defense though no hands. Variations: Only shots with laces count as goals / left or right foot only / use inside shoe only.

Cops & Robbers 20x20 area

Robbers stand with balls on one end of the square their object is to get to the otherside passed the cops who are situated in the middle.

The cops try and kick the robber's soccer balls out the side of the square.

The Robbers have a little cheer; (they jump forward and shout “show me the money”)

The Cops stand in a line in the middle of the square facing the robbers and shout out (I love Coffee and doughnuts). This is a good game but watch out for competitive players and make sure players have their head up at all times.

Shrimps & Crabs

The players as like cops and robbers.

Half the players (Shrimps) on the end line and the other half (Crabs) in the middle.

The crabs are on the ground like crabs with their hands out at their sides for balance.

On coaches command the shrimps try to make it to the other side without getting eaten by the Crabs. Like the Cops & Robbers game there is also a soccer song.

Shrimps shout - I don't like crabs wiggle wiggle wiggle (shake their butt side to side)

Crabs shout - Snap it to the left, snap it to the right, snap it in the middle, and eat shrimp tonight. Great game and watch for competitiveness.

Dribbling

Show all the players different moves with the ball.

Turns- Inside/ Outside/ Back heel/ Dragback/ Stop Push/ Step over/ Scissors.

Touches on the ball - Hat Dance/ Milkshake/ Double Tap.

Moves - Throw and trap/ Heel toe/ Juggle.

Get the players to touch the ball in a session as much as possible, because the ball is the game and they will develop quicker by touching the ball more. The better they are with the ball the better the players they are going to become.

Speed Dribbling

Players in 3's.

Players about 20-25 ft apart facing each other.

Players dribble at speed dribble back and fore to each other across the space.

Coaching points: Keep players head up and use both feet.

Circle passing

All players are around in a circle with 2-3 balls facing inwards.

The players will go to the center of the circle do a move, then pass the ball off to another person in the circle and then they do the same. The players have to be creative to do a turn on the move, which can be hard but they should have good ball control, their head up and good communication with the person they are passing too.

Kick of the Cone Instruction

Cones are laid out on the ground 3 feet apart side by side.

Players stand behind one of the cones and place their ball on top of the cone.

The coach will have commands of how many steps back the players should take and also what part of the show to kick the ball. This is a great skill session to do for your players as it teaches them the right way to kick the ball while it is elevated.

You show them the wrong way to kick the ball they will do it that way for the rest of their soccer career.

Teach them the proper way, running up to the ball and placing their non kicking foot next to the ball with the toe facing their target and coming thru and kicking with the other foot. The players can kick with their laces, inside and heel, be creative and assist them the best you can. Players will pick up on this quick so make it fun for them and use different targets for the players to kick and aim for.

Variations: Coaches as targets 10yards in front of them.

Soccer Golf

Coach lays out a few targets for the players to kick the ball towards.

The game is just like gold but you use the ball and your kick to get to the next hole.

Players will be given a certain number of kicks to get it to the next hole like a par.

If the players do it one before a par they get a birdie and one after a par that is a bogey just like the game of golf. A lot of fun and set boundaries and limits for the players, and you can play as many holes as you like aiming for things like trash cans and goalposts and benches etc. Have fun!!

Knockout / King, Queen of the Ring

Players dribble in designated area.

On coaches command the players have to try and kick each other's ball out of the square.

This can be a great game and it builds creativity, but also can be competitive.

Pro Knockout

This is just like the game above but the players have to kick their ball onto someone else's ball to knock it out of the area.

Coaching Point: Good for accuracy, make sure the players are always dribbling.

Boss the balls

20x20 area.

Coach puts players into four teams and they will stand as a team at one of the coned stations on the corner of the square facing inwards. The players go one at a time to the middle of the square and bring back one ball each, with a part of their foot the coach commands to use. The players dribble it back to the station to tag the next person so on.

The game can be more challenging when the coach tells the players to use certain parts of the shoe when dribbling. The coach can also make balls in the middle of the square certain amount of points which is fun and challenging.

Once the players have all the balls from the inside of the square, they can go steal one at a time from another station. The players at that station cannot protect the balls. This game is a lot of fun and gets the players to think about where they are going and keeping their head up while dribbling at speed.

Passing

Players Pair up

Players 5 feet apart are facing each other.

Demonstrate how to pass and how to control correctly with different parts of your feet.

Left foot / Right foot / Inside of foot / Laces/ Outside of foot.

Station Training Sessions

All coaches set up about 3-4 stations from the above skills and then have a group of players rotate through to cover more skills in one night.

The advantage is that the players do not get bored and keep the stations fun with some exciting skills.

Coaching Point: Keep the players moving after every station quick water break.

Challenging the players will be more beneficial to them.

Games

Numbers Game

Small Sided Field about 30x30 with 4, 5, 6 players on each.

Both sets of players sit in a line next to their own goal numbered one to six.

On the coach's command the number that has been shouted out comes to the middle and tries to get the ball and score on their opposite number.

Progression: 2, 3,4,5,6 numbers then a full small-sided game.

Micro Soccer (3 v 3)

Players play in a small square set out from the Coach.

3 on each side are all you need for a small game. It gives players plenty of touches on the ball and makes them a full part of the team.

4 Goal Game

Play the regular game of soccer with 4, 5 or 6 players on each team.

The coach gives both teams the goals they are going to score in and also the goals they are going to defend. The players play a normal game of keep-away then score in a goal that is the other teams.

Coaching Point: players need to focus on both goals and switch play, and decision making.

Penalty Shootout

12 Yards out and shoot on goal.

Coaching point: Have the players take their time and aim for the corners.

1 v 1 Challenge

Players challenge each other to a one-on-one.

Variation #1 - two players compete, two small cones with ball on the cone and play with third to knock of opponent's ball.

Variation #2 – Players go back to back and have ball held up in between on coaches command, the players turn, the ball falls and they compete for the ball for about 5-15 seconds and see who can keep it the longest to get a point.

Good to get the players to challenge each other and change players every two minutes.

2v2 Soccer Ladder

Coach sets up 3-4 10-ft squares all in a line.

Players are divided into equal two's from the team and they name themselves a country of the world.

The players play 2 v 2 in the area.

To score the ball must land on the opponent's end line. The Games are timed 2 minutes

If you win you move up if you lose you move down.

Make this a World Cup Tournament and the players get prizes.
When the team that is at the top of the grid on your final round they are in the final going for the World Cup.
Watch for Competitiveness.

2v1/ 3v2 / 4v2 Keep-away

In a grid 10x10, three players play 2 vs. 1 continuous keep away. The attackers combine to keep the ball away from the defender/s. When the defender/s win the ball, that players immediately combines with the attacking player that he or she did not win the ball from and the attacker who lost the ball becomes the defender. Balls out of play are dribbled in or passed in.

1 vs. 1 to end lines

In a space that is wider than long (15 x 20 yds) each player defends one end line and attacks the other. Players score by dribbling the ball in control over the opposing player's end line. *Version 2:* You can make this 2 vs. 2, 3 vs. 3 or 4 vs. 4.

Regular Game

Regular scrimmage with not a lot of limitations. Lay out the boundaries and let the kids play. Sit back and analyze the game, stop play once every 3-5 Minutes and help the players out with positioning, passing and dribbling etc. **They want to play so let them.**

Coaches Challenge

The players get together at the end of your session and choose what they want to do to challenge the Coach.

i.e. Juggle/ Turn & Shoot/ 1v1/ Nutmeg game- try and get the ball between the coach's legs. Make it Fun and make sure the players win or achieve.

Give out little prizes if the coaches decide.

Keep the mood positive.

Trick of the day

Any trick that you as the coach can do without making a fool of yourself.

This is for the players to think about and take home as homework.

Juggle/ Balance Ball on Head, Foot/ Flick balls up off ground/ Juggle ball in pairs.

This is good for the players to think about to try at home and try and attempt at the next practice when they return.

“The Game is the Teacher”

Make sure the players leave your session with a good attitude towards the game, and then you know they will return for the next session.

Be very positive with every player and have Fun with what you are doing.

If you need anymore information on anything at all please do not hesitate to get in touch I have a library full of different sessions i.e. player positioning, attacking, defending, controlling, fun games, subbing, formations, team building games, defensive role drill, midfield role, forward role, nutrition, fitness & conditioning.

I wish all the teams the best of success I will see you on the field!!

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