

YMCA Youth Sports Philosophy

Over the past few years, the YMCA has noticed some alarming trends in youth sport programs: the pressure for more rigorous competition and higher achievement. These trends come from adult-oriented attitudes and the misconception that youth sport programs are scaled-down versions of professional sports. This is not only false, but also dangerous.

The YMCA stresses child-oriented attitudes by keeping winning in perspective, having fun, improving physical fitness, and working with the whole child. The YMCA wants the quality of play to improve in order to meet the needs of all participants whatever their ability and skills.

The YMCA does not encourage the elimination of competition or winning. Winning is essential to enjoyable competition. However, it is the “striving to win” that yields the joy of sports.

The key for parents and coaches is to keep winning in perspective. It is this key that holds the YMCA Youth Sports program together. Competition will happen in youth sports without any external pressures. **It is important to keep competition at a level appropriate for the athlete.**

The YMCA would not be whole without its commitment to Christian emphasis. The goal of the Youth Sports program is to help the child grow to his or her fullest potential in mind, body, and spirit: activity helps the body grow; thinking advances the mind; and belief makes our spirit grow.

**The Mission of the YMCA of Austin is to put
Christian principles into practice through
programs that build healthy spirit, mind, and body**

Value Coaching

Coaches are the most important people in our organization. They determine the kind of experience our athletes have with sports. We are committed to the principles of positive coaching and expect our coaches to be “Double- Goal Coaches”. First, help players learn life lessons and positive character traits from sports. Second, *strive* to win. The following is what we expect from our coaches during the coming the season.

1. Model and teach your players to honor the game by teaching the elements of ROOTS – Respect for: Rules, Opponents, Officials, Teammates, and one’s Self.

- Hold a parent/guardian meeting to encourage important stakeholders to accept your team’s double goal philosophy. This could be held after the first practice.
- Reinforce positive attitudes during practices.
- Seize teachable moments to talk with players about honoring their sport.

2. Help players redefine what it means to be a “Winner” in terms of mastery, not just the scoreboard:

- Teach players the ELM Tree of Mastery – Effort, Learning, and bouncing back from Mistakes.
- Reward effort, not just good outcomes. Look to recognize players even when their efforts are unsuccessful.
- Encourage players to set effort goals that are related to how hard they try.

3. Fill your players’ Emotional Tanks.

- Use encouragement and positive reinforcement as your primary method of motivating.
- Strive to achieve the 5:1 “Magic Ratio” of 5 positive reinforcements to each criticism/correction.
- Schedule “fun activities” for practices, so players will enjoy their sport.
- Learn to give kid-friendly criticism so players will be able to hear it. Criticize in private, and sandwich criticism in between positive feedback.

4. Converse with your players at every practice and every game.

- Review honoring the game, the ELM Tree and the Emotional Tank throughout the season.
- Remind players about these three concepts before and after every game.
- Ask questions and encourage players to speak and contribute during team meetings.

At the end of the season we will survey your players and their parents to give you feedback on how you did at implementing these positive coaching principles during the season. We will share the results with you. Thank you for all your time and effort!

Positive Reinforcement

(Taken from wecoachkids.com and the Positive Coaching Alliance)

Keeping sports fun for kids should be the goal of all youth coaches. Constantly being criticized will take all the fun out of it. It is important to give children clear and honest feedback, but as youth coaches how we go about that is very important. Created directly from research that looked at how athletes responded to coaching techniques, the Positive Coaching Alliance has created the term Filling the Emotional Tank. A coach who uses these techniques understands that giving clear and specific, positive feedback will fill the player's emotional tank, which will then allow the child to better hear and benefit from the corrective feedback. PCA recommends a 5:1 ratio for feedback. Try to give feedback on things the player is doing well or in which he or she is improving five times for every one piece of critical feedback. Think about how many things a softball player has to do right to hit the ball out of the infield. Instead of just constantly criticizing the one or two things the player is not doing right, make sure you are pointing out all the things the player has mastered.

Reinforcing the positive also has a great effect on creating players who are willing to take risks. It helps them to see that mistakes are a natural part of the game and of mastering the skill. As you reinforce positive behaviors you will be setting a great example for your young athletes to follow. Teammates who can make room for each other to make mistakes will support each other and create an atmosphere that encourages risk and is fun to be a part of.

Reinforcing the positive does not simply mean saying "nice job." That's a good start, but specific comments that describe the behavior you are seeing will have the most impact. The praise should also be earned and deserved. Empty praise can do more harm than good and kids may start to doubt their own self worth. Darrell Burnett, Ph.D., in his book It's Just a Game, Youth Sports and Self Esteem, points out that children will filter out praise that does not fit their own self image. The praise needs to be specific, honest and clear. One way to achieve this is to tell them exactly what you want to see them do and then reinforce that positive behavior when you see it. For example:

"I told you that to learn to catch you really need to watch the ball. I saw you really watching it into your glove that time and you came much closer to catching it. Keep that up and I know you will master this."

"I asked you to not run through the middle of the drill and I like the way that you consistently come around the cones now."

"We talk a lot about being a good teammate on this team. I saw you comfort John after that goal was scored. That showed terrific sportsmanship. He is lucky to have you as a teammate."

The PCA recommends using a chart to write down the positive plays you see during a game. This creates a great wrap-up tool. Quick notes to yourself on Susan making the run to back up third base, or Sam quickly getting back on defense after having the ball stolen, or John not arguing with the referee when he did not like the call, will give you a great tool to use either right after the game or at the beginning of the next practice. Write down things in advance that you worked on in practice and make a quick note when you see it. Have categories for effort, teamwork, and sportsmanship and jot a quick note when you see those skills demonstrated. Specific praise of the efforts you see from your players in the game will help them and you remember that in victory or in defeat the focus is on the process of mastering skills and giving your best effort, not the outcome. By doing these things, you will reach your target of being a double goal coach.

Encouraging Trial and Error

Making mistakes is an important part of learning for everyone, but especially for children. Children have spent their entire lives learning from mistakes and that is not going to stop because they sign up for youth sports. They are, however, going to be more sensitive to making them in front of all the other kids. Your job as a coach is to lessen this sensitivity or you may risk inadvertently teaching your players not to take chances. Mistakes are a natural part of the learning process and are equally as important a part of mastering a skill as getting it right. Being able to learn from the mistake, shake it off and try again will be a skill that will carry that child far in life. As parent/coaches who are coaching children, teaching this skill may be the most important life lesson you teach.

Some of your players will have the confidence and self-esteem to make a mistake and not take it personally. They will keep at it until they get it right. Lucky them. Others, however, will go to any extreme to avoid touching the ball in order to keep from making a mistake. To some coaches this might look like lack of hustle or determination. When kids are afraid to fail, the pressure in sports can become overwhelming. The pressure to perform without mistakes drives away many talented athletes from playing.

How do you teach kids the concept that mistakes are a learning tool? By the way you behave as you coach. Do you inadvertently drop your head and kick the ground when a player strikes out? Or do you just move on to the next batter and then find time to remind the player that being a hitter means striking out. It is important to tell the kids on day one that you coach a team on which everyone takes chances and learns new skills, and that you expect everyone to

make mistakes if they plan on getting any better or learning anything at all. Then you model that every minute of every practice, of every game.

Tips for Great Practices

(Taken from wecoachkids.com)

Keep in mind that the number one reason kids play sports is to have fun and make friends. Successful practices will emphasize these two elements, fun and friendship. Stop all drills and “working” on skills. Start playing games that the kids will love while developing the skills they need.

Come with a plan: Come to every practice with a plan and be willing to vary from that plan as you see the response from the kids. When coaching the youngest kids (5-8) learn from every elementary school teacher. Most teachers of this age group will tell you that they spend a majority of the time in the first week or two just teaching class routines. The children learn classroom jobs, where things go, where to sit, how to move from one activity to the next and all the other social skills that create community and order. They would also remind you that this age child has a very short attention span. Get their attention quickly, make them stay focused for 15 minutes or less, and then move on to another activity.

Discipline: Just because you are committed to making practices fun does not mean that you should forget discipline. Sports have rules that players need to learn and respect. Start teaching that in practice by expecting the players to respect and follow practice rules. Having rules that all players follow will create a safer practice environment, a sense of community and a sense of control for the players. You don’t need many rules, but a few good rules will go a long way in making it easier for everyone to have a positive experience.

Make everything a game: The kids are playing sports to have fun. They do not come to practice at this age to “work” on anything. They are there to have fun with their friends and your goal is to get everyone wanting to come to practice. To improve your practices, replace many of the drills with skill building practice games instead. Having the kids play skill-based games in practice will improve their skills, build their fitness and increase the energy of practice. Your players will start playing at full speed, they will be playing with a competitive spirit, the situations will be more game like, and they will be having more fun.

Expectations of skill games and drills: When conducting a skill building practice game or a drill for the first time, make sure your expectations are in line. If you are coaching kids who have probably never done the drill before, don’t expect to see them mastering the skill. You have to teach the drill before you can coach the skill. For the first several times the kids do a new drill, just focus on having them understand what they are supposed to be doing. Where do they start, where do they go, where do they kick the ball? And make it easy. Don’t say, “Don’t run back up in the middle of the drill.” Instead, set up cones where you want them to run and say, “Run this way after you shoot.” Until this part is mastered they cannot begin to master the skill. Keep drills simple and don’t constantly teach new ones. Young kids like consistency. Use the

same drill over and over and just build on it to add new challenges.

A couple of other ideas to get the most out of your limited practice times:

- Start practice with a favorite game to increase on-time attendance and get everyone in the right spirit from the start.
- Get the kids out of lines whenever feasible and keep the lines short when it's not.
- Make sure every child is touching the ball as many times as possible, not just the ones who excel.
- Lose the words “drill” and “working” from your vocabulary and start talking about playing games and having fun at practice.
- Make time for team building. At the end of practice, five minutes on the playground or a game of dribble tag with the coach may be the most memorable part of the season for some kids.
- Don't panic that you don't have enough time in practice. You never will. Your job is to keep them coming back and build their love for the game. Achieve that and there will be plenty of time.
- Make sure they see YOU having fun too.

Implementing these practice suggestions will likely help your athletes to have fun and develop friendships. At the same time, they will be developing the necessary skills to be successful.

Skill Development Games for Soccer

(Taken from wecoachkids.com)

Why use games instead of drills?

Skill building games are meant to make sure kids enjoy practice, but there are also many benefits to using game based drills. Because the players will be having more fun they will give more effort and practice at a game-like pace. The games allow them to have fun and appreciate the game while learning and practicing the skills they need to master their sport.

Practice Game Guidelines:

- Have every player touching the ball as much as possible.
- Use games that keep all kids playing until the end. Don't have the weak players get knocked out and watch the stronger players get more touches.
- Avoid rewarding "winners" and punishing "losers" (push ups, laps, etc).
- The games should replicate true game skills to be effective.
- Shorten or ideally eliminate lines.
- Keep it simple. The games should be easy to explain and to set up.
- Don't have too many different games. Find a few games that the kids love and just expand the game as they need more challenges.

Let them play without worrying about proper execution of the skill. After a couple of times through the game ask them what they need to do well to win the game. When you hear answers like "dribble in control" or "make good passes" you can then make suggestions for how to achieve that. With a little creativity you can probably turn many of the drills you are currently using into games. Have fun.

Soccer Games

Soccer is a wonderful game to introduce children to sports. If you can make sure every player has 200-300 touches on the ball at each practice, they will improve their skills. The games below are designed to generate many touches while teaching skills and field awareness. As your players' skills improve, increase your expectations of the practice game's execution and add elements to the games to continue challenging their skills. Following are some suggested games to get you started.

Hit the Coach (dribbling and shooting)

- **Skills taught:** In this game the players will practice stop and go dribbling in a crowd. They will have to keep their head up in order not to run into other players and to find their target. They will also learn how to shoot or pass off the dribble when the opportunity is right.
- **How the game works:** Each player has a ball. Pick an inbounds area and use cones to establish it. The younger the children, the smaller the playing area should be. On the coach's call, the game starts. The players dribble the ball around and try to hit the coach, who is running all around in the inbounds area. After they hit the coach 5 times, the coach has to make an animal noise selected by the last player to hit the coach.

- **Tip:** This game works well as a practice starter since the kids love it and you can begin with as few as 3 players with more joining as they arrive. Make sure they see you having fun and really put some effort into those animal noises. (Copyright, Soccerhelp.com used with permission)

Freeze Tag (great warm up, dribbling, passing, defense)

- **Skills taught:** The players will practice keeping the ball away from a defender and how to take advantage of a defender's decisions.
- **How the game works:** Set up an in bounds area and give each player a ball except for one. The player without the ball is 'it' and tries to freeze you by touching (not kicking away) your ball. When this happens the player is frozen and must lift the ball above their head and spread their legs wide to create a "goal." The player can be 'un-frozen' when another player kicks the ball through the frozen players legs. Play until all players are frozen or the player that is it is exhausted.
- **Tip:** This is another great warm up game. The players will just show up and start playing. If your players are not able to get everyone frozen you can add a second chaser.

Red Light, Green Light (dribbling in control)

- **Skills taught:** Change of speed and dribbling in control.
- **How the game works:** This well known children's game makes a great drill. All players start on one side of the field with a ball. Coach yells "Green Light" and turns their back to the players. Yell "Red Light" and then turn back around. All players should have moved forward and now be standing still with one foot on the ball. Any player still moving or without his or her ball, gets sent back to the starting line.
- **Tip:** If you have players not moving very fast, ask a parent to join in and have the kids try to beat the parent.

Advanced Red Light, Green Light or Student Driving (dribbling in control)

- **Skills taught:** Change of speed, direction and heads up dribbling.
- **How the game works:** Using a similar concept to the above game, add left turns, right turns, U-turns. Have the players play within a square area (the more players the larger the area.) Increase and decrease speed on the whistle. When anyone reaches a boundary instruct them to make either a reverse, or left or right turn. Have all players avoid "crashing" and have them race to return the car to the designated parking area at the end.
- **Tip:** Initially start this drill with all players on one side of the square area. As they improve, have players spread out on all sides of the square to make it more difficult to maneuver.

Traffic (dribbling in a crowd)

- **Skills taught:** This game helps players learn to dribble with attention to the players around them.

- **How the game works:** Create a square playing area roughly 10 ft by 10 ft. Divide the players into two groups. Set one group up on the north side of the square and the other team on the east side. Each player has a ball. On the start all players must cross the square, make the turn when they get to the other side and come back. Make it a race to see which team can be the first to get its players across and back 3 times.
- **Tip:** Increase the square size to give more room to less skilled players.

Kickball (passing, trapping)

- **Skills taught:** In this game the players will practice trapping, one touch passing, working as a team and moving without the ball to receive a pass. It is also a good fitness drill for the runner.
- **How the game works:** Set this up like a kickball game using cones to lay out the bases. All the players are in the field except for the player up to bat. The “pitcher” passes the ball in and the kicker kicks it as far as she can and starts to run the bases. She continues to circle the bases until all the players in the field have touched the ball. The field players must one touch or trap the ball and pass to another field player until everyone has touched it. At this point the runner is out and a new runner takes her place.
- **Tip:** Divide into 2 small games if you have too many players on the field for this to work well with your players’ skill level.

Monkey in the Middle (passing, trapping, spacing)

- **Skills taught:** The players will learn to pass under pressure, receive a ball and get rid of it quickly and how to move around to get open.
- **How the game works:** Another game that many kids will already know makes for fun on the soccer field. Divide the kids into groups of 4. Three players set up in a triangle with one ball leaving one player in the middle. The 3 players in the triangle pass the ball around while the middle player tries to get it. If he gets it, the passing player goes into the center.
- **Tip:** Depending on skill levels, add another player to the middle, designate small areas that triangle players must stay in to pass and receive the ball. For younger players, it's helpful to have a coach join and talk about spacing. This is a good drill to group players by ability in order to keep it fun for everyone.

Team Keep Away (passing, trapping, defense, teamwork)

- **Skills taught:** More skilled players will really enjoy this game. They will be learning teamwork, passing, trapping, and spacing. They will also practice quick transitions from offense to defense.
- **How the game works:** This is a team based variation of *Monkey in the Middle*. Using half the field or less, divide the players up into 2 teams. Start them on opposite sides of the field with 1 ball for every 3 players. Reduce this to 1 ball to every 2.5 players for a more advanced game. (Ex: if you have 5 players on each team you can use either 1 or 2 balls per team; with 7 players 2-3 balls.) Teams play against each other trying to steal and keep

as many balls as possible. Play for a timed period to see which team has the most balls when play is stopped. Play several times.

- **Tip:** Use jerseys to prevent confusion.

Topple Ball (shooting accuracy)

- **Skills taught:** This is a game that gives the coach an opportunity to teach correct kicking technique and the value of really spotting your target before striking the ball.
- **How the game works:** Set up a cone in the middle of a large circle with enough cones spaced around it for all players. Each player gets a ball and stands by a cone. The cone in the middle has a ball balanced on top of it. On the coach's call, everyone shoots and tries to knock the ball off. Have the players run and retrieve a ball and set up to play again.
- **Tip:** Divide the kids into 2 groups and have one team compete against the other.

Ultimate Soccer (passing, spacing, field awareness)

- **Skills taught:** This is a fun way to have the players practice passing, spacing and getting ahead of the ball.
- **How the game works:** It is played like Ultimate Frisbee. Divide the players into 2 equal teams and have them set up on either end of the field. Establish an end zone at each end with cones. The "kick off" team will kick the ball long to the other team. The receiving team traps the ball and the player that does so can make a few dribble moves but then *must* pass to a teammate to advance the ball up the field, they cannot dribble the ball to advance the ball. The goal is to move the ball up the field to a player in the end zone area who "scores" by trapping the ball in the end zone. The team without control of the ball should try to steal passes and mark open players, but the defensive players cannot steal the ball directly from a player who has control.
- **Tip:** For less skilled players, play more offensive players versus fewer defenders.

Relay Passing (passing, trapping)

- **Skills taught:** Use line relays to learn to use every part of both feet to pass.
- **How the game works:** Depending on the number of players, divide them into 2 or 3 equal groups. Line the players up in evenly spaced parallel lines. Vary the distance between players based on skill and type of pass you have them execute. Start with simple instep passes. The first player in line passes to the next who must trap the ball and make the turn to pass to the next player. Begin with the players making their own choice in which foot to use and then increase the complexity. Have them trap left, pass right, or trap right and pass left. There is no end to the different ways to do this game: *Backwards pull passes:* All players face forward. The first player in line pulls the ball backwards to make a pass to the player behind. Next player traps and makes pull pass to the next player. *Heel pass:* Trap and use the heel to kick the ball backwards. *Top poke pass:* Trap and use the toe to poke the ball forward.
- **Tip:** The relay line does not always have to be straight. Set the players up in a square or a zigzag to create a situation where the ball is receive and then passed in multiple directions.

3 to Score (passing, getting open)

- **Skills taught:** Use this game to improve field awareness of teammates and passing skills.
- **How the game works:** Divide the players into 2 equal teams and establish a playing area roughly half the size of the field. Have the players spread out all over the playing area. Toss the ball in to start. The goal is to gain control of the ball and make 3 passes in a row between teammates. If the defense intercepts then that team tries to make 3 passes in a row. After a team completes 3 passes it counts as a score and the coach restarts the game with a thrown in. Play for a certain amount of time or until 10 points are scored.
- **Tip:** For players that are more skilled require 5 passes to score but decrease to just 2 passes for beginning players.

Soccer Croquet (passing, dribbling)

- **Skills taught:** This fast-paced game will help the players learn teamwork, passing and dribbling in a crowd.
- **How the game works:** Have each player get a partner, 1 ball and spread out on the sideline. Set up the field by placing sets of cones about 2-4 feet apart (to create a goal) all over the playing area. When the coach blows the whistle, one player dribbles the ball out and makes a pass through any goal to their teammate. The teammate then dribbles the ball to the next goal to make the pass through. The players can go through the goals in any order they want but they must pass to their teammate through every set of cones before returning to the sideline with their ball.
- **Tip:** For younger players use less goals. To increase difficulty set a time limit for how long the pairs have to complete the course.

Throw-In Relay (throw ins to the player)

- **Skills taught:** This relay will teach quick thrown in technique.
- **How the game works:** Divide your players into 2 equal teams. Break each team into 2 equal lines facing each other with about a 15-20 feet space. The first player in line using correct thrown in technique, will throw the ball to their teammate in the line 15 feet away. That player traps the ball then passes it back to the line it came from where the second player in line now picks it up. The first players in line that have already thrown and trapped the ball now run and take a place in the back of the opposing line. The throwing and trapping continue until the first player that threw the ball is at the beginning of the thrown in line. The 2 teams play at the same time and whichever team finishes first, wins.
- **Tips:** Increase or decrease the length of the throw depending on the players' skills.

Throw-in Relay 2 (throw ins to the open space)

- **Skills taught:** This game focuses on throwing the ball to the open space for the receiving player to receive.

- **How the game works:** Establish a throwing line on the sideline and a receiving line on the field. Set up 2 cones to create a small goal about 40 feet away. The throwing player should throw the ball towards the goal and the receiving player must run onto the ball and make at least 2 touches before passing it through the cones. The receiving player retrieves the ball and dribble/passes it back to the throw-in line where the next player awaits. Players switch lines and continue to all players have thrown and received. If you have enough players, divide the group into 2 teams to race each other, otherwise time the players the first time through and create a timed goal to beat.
- **Tips:** For more advanced players move the receiving line back so they can get a running start.

8-9 Year-Old Division Practice Plan

Week 1

Dynamic stretch: Cones are placed to make a 20yard by 10yard rectangle. This week's stretch will be **Skipping, High Knees, Knees In & Knees Out**, Each stretch needs to be completed twice across the 20yards of the grid

Area Used: 30 by 30yard.

Items needed: Soccer ball per player, small cones, tall cones and pinnies.

Skill Demonstration: 10 minutes.

Players split into groups of two (*or one group of three, if odd numbers*) and they pass one ball inside the grid between each other, while moving around inside the grid to do so.

1. Time players over a minute and see how many passes they make.
2. Pass right foot only for a minute and see how many passes they make.
3. Pass left foot only for a minute and see how many passes they make.

Skill Progression: 15 minutes.

One of the pairs split up and become defenders inside of the grid, the players do the same thing as in the Skill Demonstration but now they have defenders (*wearing colored pinnies*) trying to win the ball away from them. After every minute rotate the defenders, the defenders score a point for every time a ball is intercepted or if a ball goes out of the grid.

1. Time players for a minute and see how many passes they make.
2. Have groups of three and four passing the ball around, trying to keep the ball away from a defender.

Go over the technique of the **Outside-Hook turn while moving** (*Videos of all the skills can be found on the website*). 5 minutes.

Remaining Time:

Place some goals on the edge of the grid and play 4v4, any remaining players on the outside need to be rotated in every 2-3 minutes (*make sure players wear pinnies when playing*).

Coaching Tips:

Pass with the side of the foot. (If age applicable)

Look at ball when striking it.

Hit the center of the ball.

Face the way you wish the ball to go.

Follow leg through towards cone after striking ball.

Appropriate strength of pass.

Good communication.

Find Space.

Week 2

Dynamic stretch: Cones are placed to make a 20yard by 10yard rectangle. This week's stretch will be **Skipping, High Knees, Knees In & Knees Out**, Each stretch needs to be completed twice across the 20yards of the grid.

Area Used: 30 by 30yard.

Items needed: Soccer ball per player, small cones, tall cones and pinnies.

Go Fetch: 15 minutes.

The coach stands in the center of the grid and pair all the players up (*one group of three if you have odd numbers*) and each with a ball. The players surround you and one player passes the ball to you via the hand, when you receive the ball you throw the ball away and the players in that group have to retrieve the ball (*passing it to one another on way back*) and bring it back to you before you start again. While the first team retrieves their ball you throw the balls from all the pairs away, completing a cycle so all the groups are chasing their balls. Different commands can be given to the teams on how they must return the ball. Examples are below; feel free to make up your own.

1. Player 1 right foot, player 2 left foot.
2. Player 1 left foot, player 2 right foot.
3. Player 1 right hand, player 2 left knee.
4. Player 1 left knee, player 2 right hand.

Mr. Monkey: 10 minutes.

The playing area is a 20 by 20 grid. Each player has a ball apart from two defenders. (the monkeys) The two monkeys run around the grid and try to kick the balls out of it\ . The players must try to shield the ball away from the monkeys for 4 seconds and the monkey must then move onto someone else. Play for 1 minute and see how many players are able to keep possession of their ball. Also count how many points the defenders score.

Coaching points

1. Defender cannot dive in to win the ball they must stay on their feet.
2. Players must shield they ball and count out loudly up to 4 so monkey knows when to go away.
3. Keep the ball close to you when dribble – explain why.

Go over the technique of the **Inside-Hook turn while moving** (*Videos of all the skills can be found on the website*). 5 minutes.

Remaining Time:

Place some goals on the edge of the grid and play 4v4, any remaining players on the outside need to be rotated in every 2-3 minutes. (*make sure players wear pinnies when playing*).

Week 3

Dynamic stretch: Cones are placed to make a 20yard by 10yard rectangle. This week's stretch will be **Ankle Flicks, Heel Flicks, Lunge, and Hamstring Stretch**, Each stretch needs to be completed twice across the 20yards of the grid

Area Used: 30 by 30yard.

Items needed: Soccer ball per player, small cones, tall cones and pinnies.

Skill Demonstration: 10 minutes.

Small cones are placed in pairs inside of the grid two yards apart. Each player dribbles their ball around inside the grid and on your command they try to dribble through as many cones as they can in one minute. They complete this task three times and try to go through more gates each time. They can do this by dribbling the ball faster, avoiding going to cones where other players are, keeping better control of their ball, and keeping their head up while they are dribbling, etc. Also get the players to do the same task the different ways as shown below:

1. Right foot only.
2. Left foot only.

Skill Progression: 15 minutes.

You use the same practice as above, but now you use two players as defenders who can stop the players dribbling the ball through the gates. If a player's pathway is blocked encourage them to change direction and go to another gate. Each game lasts one minute before you change the defenders. Defenders score by kicking an attacker's ball out of the grid.

Go over the technique of the **Stepover while moving** (*Videos of all the skills can be found on the website*). 5 minutes.

Remaining Time:

Place some goals on the edge of the grid and play 4v4, any remaining players on the outside need to be rotated in every 2-3 minutes. (*make sure players wear pinnies when playing*).

Coaching Tips:

Use outside of foot to control ball while moving.

Keep head up when moving the ball around, only look down when making contact with ball.

Try to avoid contact with other players while you stay within the area marked out by the cones.

Keep ball close to feet while moving the ball around.

Week 4

Dynamic stretch: Cones are placed to make a 20yard by 10yard rectangle. This week's stretch will be **Ankle Flicks, Heel Flicks, Lunge, and Hamstring Stretch**, Each stretch needs to be completed twice across the 20yards of the grid.

Area Used: 30 by 30yard.

Items needed: Soccer ball per player, small cones, tall cones and pinnies.

Skill Demonstration: 10 minutes.

Small cones are placed in pairs inside of the grid two yards apart (*gates*). Players are split into pairs (*one group of three if you have odd numbers*) and they must pass the ball back and forth between the cones inside of the grid. Once they have passed the ball through one gate they must move onto another gate before they pass the ball again, the player without the ball dictates which gate they go to next. They complete this task three times and try to go through more gates each time (*get them to answer the question, how can they pass the ball through more gates*). Also get the players to do the same task the different ways as shown below:

3. Right foot only.
4. Left foot only.

Star Wars Challenge: 15minutes.

The playing area is a 20 by 20yard grid. Place 8 tall cones around inside the area (Empire battle cruisers). You have 4 defenders (Jedi pilots) who try and stop the rest of the players (X-Wing pilots) from knocking the tall cones down with their soccer ball. Get players to add in sound effects for more fun. If a cone is knocked down a defender picks it up, and once all the cones are down the game is over. Also set a time limit of 2 minutes just incase the cones do not get knocked down.

Coaching points

1. Look around for open tall cone to knock down.
2. Use the inside of your foot to pass ball onto cone.
3. Strike the ball firmly to knock cone down.

Go over the technique of the **Cradle turn while moving** (strong foot) (*Videos of all the skills can be found on the website*). 5 minutes.

Remaining Time:

Place some goals on the edge of the grid and play 4v4, any remaining players on the outside need to be rotated in every 2-3 minutes. (*make sure players wear pinnies when playing*).

Coaching Tips:

See coaching points in Week 1 of U8 practices.

Week 5

Dynamic stretch: Cones are placed to make a 20yard by 10yard rectangle. This week's stretch will be **Skipping, High Knees, Lunge, Hamstring Stretch**; Each stretch needs to be completed twice across the 20yards of the grid.

Area Used: 30 by 30yard.

Items needed: Soccer ball per player, small cones, tall cones and pinnies.

Skill Demonstration: 10 minutes.

Place 10 tall cones inside the area and get the players to pass the ball around (*in pairs*) without knocking the cones over. Do this exercise for 5 minutes then on your whistle or command the players must try and pass to one another while knocking the cones down. The pairs get a point for every cone they knock down. The players must be at least 5yards away when they try and knock the cones down.

Skill Progression: 15 minutes.

One of the pairs now put on pinnies and become defenders and work for 2 minutes, they try and stop the pairs from knocking down the cones. Pairs score a point for every cone they knock down and the defenders score a point for every ball they kick away from a cone.

Go over the technique of the **Double Step-Over** (*Videos of all the skills can be found on the website*). 5 minutes.

Remaining Time:

Place some goals on the edge of the grid and play 4v4, any remaining players on the outside need to be rotated in every 2-3 minutes. (*make sure players wear pinnies when playing*).

Coaching Tips:

See coaching points in Week 1 of U8 practices.

Week 6

Dynamic stretch: Cones are placed to make a 20yard by 10yard rectangle. This week's stretch will be **Skipping, High Knees, Lunge, Hamstring Stretch**; Each stretch needs to be completed twice across the 20yards of the grid.

Area Used: 30 by 30yard.

Items needed: Soccer ball per player, small cones, tall cones and pinnies.

Skill Demonstration: 10 minutes.

Inside the grid every player except two will have soccer balls that they dribble around inside of the grid. In each one minute game the player without a ball must try to take a ball away from a player with a ball. Once a player takes a ball away from a player, that player must try to get a ball from someone else (*not the player who just took the ball off them*). This continues for one minute; once the minute ends on your whistle, the players inside of the grid with a soccer ball score a point, then ones without do not. Play six-seven games and the player with the most points wins (*don't have to mention this if you don't wish*).

British Bulldog: 15 minutes.

The playing area is 20 by 15yards. All the players stand along one of the 15yard lines facing the other end. One player is then chosen to be the Dog Catcher; he goes and stands at the other end of the grid facing all the other players (*this player does not have a ball*). The Dog Catcher then shouts Bulldogs are you ready, when they shout "Yes". The Dog Catcher then shouts go and they run at him and try to get to the other end of the grid past the Dog Catcher. If the Dog Catcher kicks any of the Bulldogs balls out of the grid they become a Dog Catcher, and they chase down the Bulldogs on the next pass. The game ends when there is only one Bulldog left. Players swap ends on every turn.

Go over the technique of the **Side foot pass while moving** (*Videos of all the skills can be found on the website*). 5 minutes.

Remaining Time:

Place some goals on the edge of the grid and play 4v4, any remaining players on the outside need to be rotated in every 2-3 minutes. (*make sure players wear pinnies when playing*).

Coaching Tips:

Use outside of foot to control ball while moving.

Keep head up when moving the ball around, only look down when making contact with ball.

Try to avoid contact with other players while you stay within the area marked out by the cones.

Keep ball close to feet while moving the ball around.

Week 7

Dynamic stretch: Cones are placed to make a 20yard by 10yard rectangle. This week's stretch will be **Knees In, Knees Out, Ankle Flicks, Heel Flicks**, Each stretch needs to be completed twice across the 20yards of the grid.

Area Used: 20 by 20yard then 30 by 30yard.

Items needed: Soccer ball per player, small cones, tall cones and pinnies.

Skill Demonstration: 10 minutes.

Every player inside the grid (*smaller grid*) has their soccer ball and two of the players wear pinnies (*they are the taggers*). Within one minute the taggers have to try to tag as many players as they can while controlling the soccer ball. After the one minute period swap the pair so another two players become the taggers. When a player is tagged he must run to the outside of the grid and then come back to his ball, he can then join the game once more.

Skill Progression: 15 minutes.

Within the bigger grid, now place three more cones in each corner to make four 5yard square corners in each corner of the larger grid and we number them one to four. All but one player dribbles the ball within the remainder of the grid while the player without the ball jogs around inside of the grid. On your command, you call out a number between one and four and the players with the balls try to dribble them into the safety zone of the corner that you called out, if the defender kicks the ball away from a player, that player then becomes a defender when the players start again to dribble the balls within the zone. The game ends when we only have one player attacking with the ball.

Go over the technique of the **Cradle turn while moving** (weak foot) (*Videos of all the skills can be found on the website*). 5 minutes.

Remaining Time:

Place some goals on the edge of the grid and play 4v4, any remaining players on the outside need to be rotated in every 2-3 minutes. (*Make sure players wear pinnies when playing*).

Dribbling

Use outside of foot to control ball while moving.

Keep head up when moving the ball around, only look down when making contact with ball.

Try to avoid contact with other players while you stay within the area marked out by the cones.

Keep ball close to feet while moving the ball around.

Week 8

Dynamic stretch: Cones are placed to make a 20yard by 10yard rectangle. This week's stretch will be **Knees In, Knees Out, Ankle Flicks, Heel Flicks**, Each stretch needs to be completed twice across the 20yards of the grid.

Area Used: 30 by 30yard.

Items needed: Soccer ball per player, small cones, tall cones and pinnies.

Skill Demonstration: 10 minutes.

Place ten tall cones within the area, and then split the two teams into pairs, (*make sure each team wear pinnies*) one player from each team with a ball each and the other without a ball. Play each game for a minute, the players with the ball must try to pass the ball into a cone and knock it over, while the defender team try and stop the balls knocking the cones over, and stand them back up again once they fall. Play it three times each as attackers with balls and three has defenders. Count all the points for each round, (*this is the number of cones the players knock down, even if they are stood back up*) and the winner is the team with the most points after their three rounds.

Soccer Marbles

The playing area is half of the field. Players split into pairs and each have a ball. The first player kicks his ball away, and when it comes to a stop, his teammate must try to hit it. If he does he scores one point, and kicks his ball away for the other player try to hit his. If a player doesn't hit the ball, the player who kicked first gets to shot at his ball wherever it finished on the field. Play for 3 minutes and then change pairs.

Coaching points

1. Use the inside of the foot for passing.
2. Use the correct pace on the ball when shooting.
3. Focus on the ball when you are striking it – explain why.

Go over the technique of the **Double Step-Over while moving** (strong foot) (*Videos of all the skills can be found on the website*). 5 minutes.

Remaining Time:

Place some goals on the edge of the grid and play 4v4, any remaining players on the outside need to be rotated in every 2-3 minutes. (*Make sure players wear pinnies when playing*).

Coaching Tips:

See coaching points in Week 1 of U8 practices.

Alternative Practice Plan 1

Dynamic stretch: Cones are placed to make a 20yard by 10yard rectangle. This week's stretch will be **Knees In, Skipping, Ankle Flicks, and Hamstrings**, Each stretch needs to be completed twice across the 20yards of the grid.

Area Used: 30 by 30yard.

Items needed: Soccer ball per player, small cones, tall cones and pinnies.

Skill Demonstration: 10 minutes.

Players split into pairs, one with a soccer ball and one with out. Play 30-second games where the person with the ball must try to keep possession for the allotted time. If they do they score a point. If the defender takes the ball away from them the defender scores the point. Encourage the player to dribble away from their partner (*they have the need to dribble the ball at them*) and keep their body between the defender and the ball. Rotate the players starting position every 30 seconds.

Skill Progression: 15 minutes.

Now all but three players have soccer balls, we play one minute games and the players without the soccer balls try to take a ball away from an attacker (*they dribble balls around inside of grid*). If a defender kicks it out of the grid (*they score a point*). When an attacker's ball is kicked away they must retrieve it from outside of the grid and bring it back in and start dribbling around again. At the end of the minute whichever players have a ball in their possession inside of the grid score a point. Rotate the defenders every one minute game.

Go over the technique of the **Matthews Turn** (*Videos of all the skills can be found on the website*). 5 minutes.

Remaining Time:

Place some goals on the edge of the grid and play 4v4, any remaining players on the outside need to be rotated in every 2-3 minutes. (*Make sure players wear pinnies when playing*).

Coaching Tips:

See coaching points in Week 3 of U8 practices.

Alternative Practice Plan 2

Dynamic stretch: Cones are placed to make a 20yard by 10yard rectangle. This week's stretch will be **Knees In, Skipping, Ankle Flicks, and Hamstrings**, Each stretch needs to be completed twice across the 20yards of the grid

Area Used: 30 by 30yard.

Items needed: Soccer ball per player, small cones, tall cones and pinnies.

Skill Demonstration: 10 minutes.

Each player will need a soccer ball, leave them for about seven minutes and allow them juggle the soccer ball. Some players will succeed and other will not at first, but success eventually will come. Allow players to pick the ball up to start their rotation of juggling, by dropping the ball onto their foot.

Fast Food Game

The playing area is a 30 by 30yard grid, with 5 by 5yard grids in each of the four corners. Let the players choose the name of four fast food chains. Get the players to dribble their ball around inside of the grid call out a name of a fast food chain and the players have to dribble their ball into the corresponding corner, the first one there wins a point, the first player to 5 points wins. You can for variation change your mind after shouting one name out so players get to learn to turn quickly.

Coaching points

1. Keep ball close to your feet.
2. Use different turns to help change direction quickly.
3. Move at speed when trying to get to corner.

Go over the technique of the **Cryff Turn** (*Videos of all the skills can be found on the website*). 5 minutes.

Remaining Time:

Place some goals on the edge of the grid and play 4v4, any remaining players on the outside need to be rotated in every 2-3 minutes. (*Make sure players wear pinnies when playing*).

Coaching Tips:

See coaching points in Week 1 of U8 practices.

Alternative Practice Plan 3

Dynamic stretch: Cones are placed to make a 20yard by 10yard rectangle. This week's stretch will be **High Knees, Knees Out, Lunge, Heel Flicks**, Each stretch needs to be completed twice across the 20yards of the grid.

Area Used: 30 by 30yard.

Items needed: Soccer ball per player, small cones, tall cones and pinnies.

Skill Demonstration: 10 minutes.

Place ten tall cones at random inside of the area; then get all the players with a soccer ball to dribble around inside of the grid. When a player gets to a cone they must use one of the skills they have learned over the previous weeks to turn away from the cone or go past it. Let them practice these without much coaching, just use encouragement.

Skill Progression: 15 minutes.

Take soccer balls away from three players and put them in pinnies, they now become passive defenders (*they only close players down, they do not try and take ball away*). Players with soccer balls can run towards them and execute one of the turns/skills they have learned in previous weeks to try and turn away or go past the defenders. Rotate defenders every minute or so. The defenders have no restrictions for the last five minutes of the skill progression.

Go over the technique of the **Maradona Turn** (*Videos of all the skills can be found on the website*). 5 minutes.

Remaining Time:

Place some goals on the edge of the grid and play 4v4, any remaining players on the outside need to be rotated in every 2-3 minutes. (*Make sure players wear pinnies when playing*).

Coaching Tips:

See coaching points in Week 1 of U8 practices.

Alternative Practice Plan 4

Dynamic stretch: Cones are placed to make a 20yard by 10yard rectangle. This week's stretch will be **High Knees, Knees Out, Lunge, Heel Flicks**, Each stretch needs to be completed twice across the 20yards of the grid.

Area Used: 20 by 25yard & 30 by 30yard.

Items needed: Soccer ball per player, small cones, tall cones and pinnies.

Skill Demonstration: 10 minutes.

Split the players into pairs, each pair with a soccer ball. The players stand about 4 yards apart, the first player with the ball holds the ball in front of his face and heads the ball out of his hands to his teammate (*see website for correct technique*). The teammate then retrieves the ball and returns the ball by the same technique to his partner. Every minute rest the players for one minute.

Super Strikers

The playing area is a 20 by 25yard grid with goals in their normal position. Split the players into two groups and give them numbers ranging from the lowest to the highest in their group. The two teams stand on their respective goal-line and wait for the coach to call a number and play a ball into the grid. Once he does so the two players with the number that was called try to score in each others goal. The ball goes dead when a goal is scored or if the ball goes out of play. First team to 10 wins; you can also play this 2v2, 3v3, etc.

Coaching points

1. Attack the ball at speed.
2. Shoot as soon as possible.
3. Help your partner by spreading out.

Go over the technique of a **Throw-In** (*Videos of all the skills can be found on the website*). 5 minutes.

Remaining Time:

Place some goals on the edge of the grid and play 4v4, any remaining players on the outside need to be rotated in every 2-3 minutes. (*Make sure players wear pinnies when playing*).

Advanced Team Structure Building

Working with Recreational players can be an exciting and rewarding experience, but we have all frustration when players don't always end up where they are supposed to be when the game is running. Players running into one another, trying to take the ball away from their teammate or just standing still in one spot because you told them in practice that they must stay back and defend, etc, etc.

Even though soccer is a game where players have the opportunity to use their initiative during the game, the players should play within a formation that will allow their team to perform at its best. Over the next few pages, I will try to help you understand what you can do during practice to try and have your players moving and playing in the areas you wish them to use during game time.

1: Zonal Practices

Most teams at HYSA have half of a field to use during practice time (*some are lucky enough to have a whole field*), but whatever size you have you need to cone off the field so your players can work in their areas. A couple of suggestions are below, but use your imagination, and use the cones for the element you are trying to coach.



Fig 1.

Figure 1 allows you to work with your wingers, forwards and midfields (*Attacking*). By starting one player in each zone (A, B, C, and D), you can get the players moving around in their areas, and getting use to the boundaries.

You can then give the players inside the zones basic instructions, such as:

- 1a: Player in zone A must pass to zones C or D.
- 2a: Player in zones C or D must pass the ball to player in zone B.
- 3a: Player in zone B must shoot.

Once you go through the first option the player will know who to pass to.

(Make sure the players stay inside their zones when they are making the passes, and also let them know they can dribble the ball inside their zone until they are ready to pass.)

After the players have got that passing down correctly, then add one defender who can run freely throughout the zones and try and win the ball from the attackers. You will see then that the options you gave the players in the first place will not always be open and they will lose the ball. This is when you give the players in the zone another option.

1b: Player in zone A can pass into zone B, if pass to zones C and D are cut off.

2b: Players in zones C or D can pass the ball back to zone A if they can't pass to player in zone B.

3b: Player in zone B can pass the ball into any off the other grids if he can shoot at goal.

(Remind the players to use their first option if possible, but if it is not available, then look for their second option.)

Again let your players compete against the one defender until they have a good success rate, then you can add another defender, and so on and so on until you get into a 6 v 6 situation.

(Have two players in zones A and , and one each in zone C and D = 6).

(Remember to rotate players in each position)

(Remember let the attackers get their success before you start adding more and more defenders, be patient.)

Now that you have six players in attacking positions you may need to have one of the two players in the two center grids to go out and support one of the wingers. This is where TRIGGERS come in.

Note: TRIGGERS are instructions in games for a player to work in a certain way, when a certain situation arises.



Figure 1b.

In Figure 1b, the player in zone C starts moving forward with the ball, but is closed down by the red defender in the same zone. In this situation the nearest forward in zone B has taken this as his/her TRIGGER to run in behind the defender to receive a pass down the line from his/her teammate.

The number of triggers you set for any situations is up to you, and the way you wish your players to react in different areas of the field. For me, in the above situation, once the trigger is pulled (*defender closing down winger*) the forward pulls from zone B to zone C, and the nearest midfielder to the ball from zone A should push forward into zone B, while the other winger in zone D should push forward in their zone near the goals. Again this is the way I would have my team work in that situation, but you can coach your players to move in the zones that you wish.

TRIGGERS are extremely important for your players to start understanding teamwork and their positions correctly, and what is expected of them when certain situations arises. Also a situation can TRIGGER more than one player to move their position, TYPICALLY IT SHOULD BE MORE THAN ONE PLAYER REACTING TO IT. A list of example triggers are shown below, but remember you set your triggers for the way your team works.

1. When the goalkeeper picks up the soccer ball, his wingers pull wide so he can pass it to one of them.
2. When one of the wingers has the ball in an area where he should cross it from, his two forwards make a cross-over run. (A cross-over run is when two player change position while moving, usually in a forward direction. The track of their movement will look like the letter **X**).
3. When the stopper receives the ball, he plays it long behind the opposing team for his forwards to run onto, so his forwards start to make that run even before the ball is kicked.
4. When a forward takes a shot, the other forward is triggered to always follow it in, just in case the goal keeper drops it.
5. The list is endless, use your imagination.

It maybe frustrating for you at times when you go over and over your triggers and what you expect of your players and still they do not get it. But after working with professional players, and listening to some of the most respected coaches in the UK, I know that it can take a professional team who get paid millions of dollars a couple of months before they learn a new system.

So be patient with your players, and if you have to repeat them over and over, do it with a smile, and let the kids learn with fun.

You can also use the Figure 1 in defensive drills, place three players to start with in Zone B, one in Zone A, and also a goalkeeper. Then place attacking players each with a ball along the half way line. On your command a player will set off from the half way line and try and score, depending which zone they run into will depend on which defender goes after him/her.

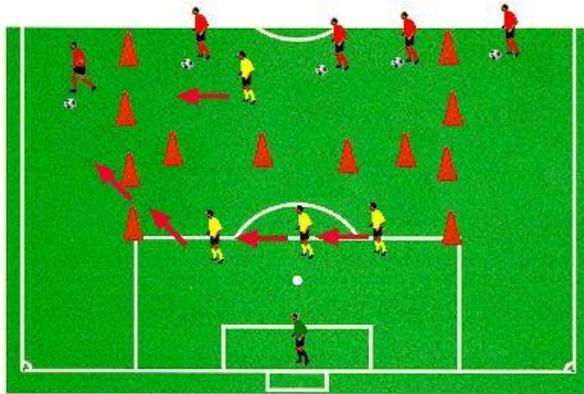


Fig 3.

In Figure 3, a player in zone C moves forward with the ball, (ZONE A IS NORTH, B IS SOUTH, C IS WEST, AND D IS EAST). A defender in zone B is then allowed to move out of his/her grid to try and defend, while the other two defenders, and the one midfielder move across towards zone C but must not enter it unless the first defender is beaten. Then one defender may enter zone C while the first defender runs back into zone B and defends the goal. (Zone A is North, B is South, C is West, and D is East).

(That is just an example on how your players should move, and what how many players you should have in each zone. I leave the formation up to you.)

Again, the defenders need to have a good success rate at what you are trying to get them to do, before you add a forward into zone B, then try for more success.

After that add a player into zone A, this gives the player starting with the ball more passing options.

(Remember you must get the success before adding more attackers, a good success is a ratio of 5:1 in favor of the defenders. Keep doing this until you get 6 v 6.)

(Have two players in zones A = 6)

(Remember to rotate players in each position)

(Remember let the defenders get their success before you start adding more and more attackers, be patient.)

(YOU CAN USE TRIGGERS IN DEFENSIVE AREA ALSO, AN EXAMPLE IS SHOWN BELOW)



Fig 4.

In the example above, the player in red with the ball moves forward into the wide zone (Zone C), and a player in yellow approaches to try to hold him up. The players in the neighboring zones move across to the edge of their defending zone but without going into the wide zone. They should finish in the positions shown in Figure 4a.



Fig 4a.

So the Trigger in the defensive area is when the wide player in yellow starts to close down the attacking player in red. When the trigger is fired the surrounding players move into their positions.

(Remember this is just one example, how you have your defenders move is up to you and the formation you use.)

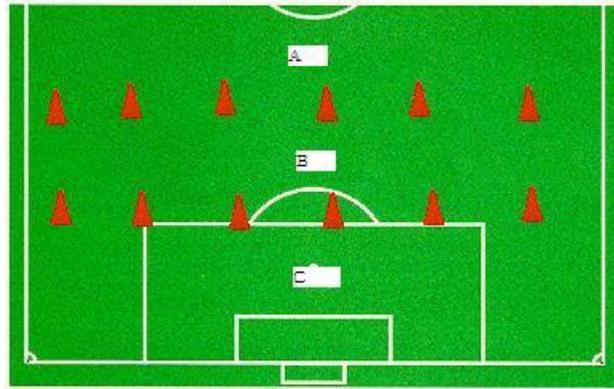


Fig 2.

The set-up in Fig 2 allows you to work with all your plays at a given time; you can play your goalkeeper, defenders, midfielders, and forwards in one of the three areas on the field.

(You can use this layout in conjunction with the layout in Figure 1 if you want, so you can still have the tram lines on the outside for your wingers to move in. The formation and movement of players is up to you.)

Place your team in to the three zones then add one opposing player in zone A, start the ball with your goal keeper and get him to roll a ball out to one of his players in zone C. The opposing player in zone A can now try and retrieve the ball from the team; the team has to try and pass the ball through the zones and get to half way line. When the team has success at this on a regular basis then add another opposing player to zone B, then zone C, then another to zone A, etc, etc.

(Remember, where you wish the players to move inside the zones is your responsibility, but at this time do not let you players move into another zone.)

As in the earlier example in Figure 1, when you start adding defenders, your players won't always be able to be where you wish them to be. This is when you have to give them a little bit of freedom to move into a neighboring grid to find space, or to run into the grid next to them to support a teammate who has the ball, or run into someone else's zone because they are out of position and help the team defend.

(So you have to give them the freedom to think for themselves but they should try to stay within the team structure whenever possible. Players do need guidance when it comes to the team structure, but they still need to make decisions on what they think at the time is the best for the team, even if sometimes they are wrong. That's when a good coach steps in and corrects them.)

There are many formations you can have your team play in, and even more PATTERNS OF PLAY you can have your team play within.

(A PATTERN PLAY IS INSTRUCTION TO YOUR PLAYERS TO WHOM THEY SHOULD PASS THE BALL ONCE THEY HAVE RECEIVED THE BALL, AND FROM WHOM THEY SHOULD BE LOOKING TO RECEIVE IT FROM.) (A PATTERN OF PLAY IS SHOWN BELOW.)

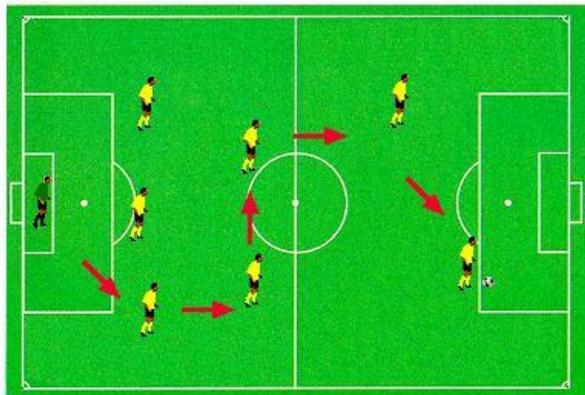


Fig 5.

In the example above, the pattern of play starts with the goalkeeper, who passes the ball onto the right defender, onto one of midfielder, then onto the other midfielder. This progresses on to one forward who passes to his striking partner, who then would shoot, if all things were perfect.

(This is just one pattern of play; there are many others to choose from.)

Figure 5 shows the team's first passing options for most of the team (*the two players from whom we have not shown passing options are the stopper and the left defender and that is fine because you tell them they have the freedom to pass to who ever they wish to*). So for instance, if the stopper passes long to the first forward we are back in the team's pattern of play, and in the pattern of play the first forward should pass to the second forward, who should then shot. So this is telling the second forward that when the first forward gets the ball that he needs to be in position where he can receive the pass and also be able to shoot.

Giving the players just one passing option at first is fine but they do need a second and third passing option. A second passing option list for the same team is shown below.

Goalkeeper 1st Passing option: Right Defender, 2nd Passing option: Stopper.

Right Defender 1st Passing option: Right Center Midfielder, 2nd Passing option: Other Center Midfielder.

Right Center Midfielder 1st Passing option: Left Center Midfielder, 2nd Passing option: Nearest Forward.

Left Center Midfielder 1st Passing options: Nearest Forward, 2nd Passing option: Left Defender.
Left Forward 1st Passing option: Other Forward, 2nd Passing option: Shoot.

The third passing option for all players would be to pass to any one on your team as long as you keep possession. **BUT REMEMBER WHENEVER POSSIBLE, THE PLAYER WITH THE BALL SHOULD MAKE THEIR FIRST PASSING OPTION.** This allows teammates to know who the player should be passing to next and where in the field they should try to receive the ball in. The first passing option will not always be open, but the player needs to fall back to that whenever possible.

(REMEMBER WHATEVER PASSING OPTION, FORMATION, 1ST AND 2ND OPTIONS YOU GIVE YOUR PLAYERS IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY. JUST MAKE SURE THE PLAYERS FULLY UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU EXPECT FROM THEM. THIS IS A STRUCTURE WITHIN WHICH YOU CAN BUILD AND ORGANIZE YOUR TEAM FORMATION AND MOVEMENT. PLENTY OF REPETITION AND PATIENCE IS NEEDED TO MAKE A SUCCESSFUL TEAM.)

'Soccer is a game for leaders, with strength, knowledge, and imagination,