Your practice starts at soccerplans.com

U14 Curriculum Manual
Contents

Introduction
• What soccerplans.com is about
• Disclaimer – modification may be necessary
• Credit and acknowledgements

Characteristics of U10, U12, and U14 Soccer Players
• What is developmentally appropriate training?
• Information about what U10, U12 and U14 soccer players are able to do physically, cognitively, and socially.

Age Group Curriculum
• U6 – U18 curriculum document outlining when players should be introduced to different techniques and tactical ideas. I’ve included the entire curriculum to provide a reference of where the players have been and where they should be going!

Developmental Philosophy
• Suggested guidelines on playing time, starters, and having players play different positions to maximize skill development and FUN!

Player Development Tips
• More information and tips about how to successfully implement the developmental philosophy

Methods of Coaching
• Information about how to coach during a training session

Curriculum Overview
• A few words about the age group curriculum
• Listing of the plans included

Practice Plans
• All the practice plans in PDF format for the age group curriculum
Thanks for checking out this soccerplans.com resource! The mission of soccerplans.com is to provide developmentally appropriate soccer activities and coaching information to youth soccer coaches, for free! Check out the soccerplans.com website for:

- Practice plans
- General soccer coaching information
- A forum to ask and answer questions
- Links to other great resources
- Much more!

Email me with any questions, comments, or suggestions for improvement!

Matt Callahan
matt@soccerplans.com

***Disclaimer***

This document is meant to be a coaching guide. You as a coach may have to make modifications based upon your team's ability level. Several different factors will influence a team's ability including (but not limited to):

- Geographic location
  - Weather: It’s tough for some players to train in snow….
  - Competition: Areas with a lot of teams/clubs can foster a very competitive environment thereby raising the overall level of play in that area.
- Experience level of the players
  - Have they been exposed to the game previously by playing themselves or through a sibling or friend playing?
- Player dedication
  - How hard do the players work in and out of practice to improve their skill level.

Depending upon the maturity and skill level of your players you may need to modify individual practices, add or delete practices, or adjust age groups (use the U12 curriculum if you have a VERY talented U11 team for example). If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact Matt at info@soccerplans.com.

Credit and Acknowledgments!

I learned most of the ideas presented within through my attendance at the US Soccer and US Youth Soccer coaching education courses. Much of the information can be found by reading the "US Youth Soccer Player Development Model: A Player Centered Curriculum for US Youth Soccer Clubs" which was prepared by Sam Snow, the Director of Coaching for US Youth Soccer. I would highly recommend reading the document in its entirety. It can be downloaded at www.usyouthsoccer.org or the soccerplans.com website.
Characteristics of U10, U12, and U14 Soccer Players

Children are not miniature adults! Youth soccer players do not have all the physical, cognitive, and social abilities that adult soccer players have. Developmentally appropriate activities take into consideration what players can actually do and base training around those abilities. These characteristics are from the “US Youth Soccer Player Development Curriculum”. All children differ (+/- up to 3 years), these are merely general characteristics!

U10
Lengthened attention span - they are still in motion, but not as busy, only holding still long enough for a short explanation
• More inclined toward wanting to play rather than being told to play
• Psychologically becoming slightly more firm and confident
• Some are becoming more serious about their play
• Team orientated - prefer team type balls and equipment. Enjoy the uniforms and team association.
• Boys and girls beginning to develop separately
• Developing the pace factor - thinking ahead
• Gross and small motor skills becoming much more refined

U12
• Better able to deal with flighted balls
• Can sequence thoughts and actions to perform more complex tasks
• Can use abstract thought to meet the demands of the game
• Should be able to simultaneously run, strike the ball and think
• Full of eagerness to learn
• Important psychosocial implications for a child entering puberty
• Popularity influences self-esteem
• Improved coordination
• Significant physical differences exist between the genders now
• Strength and power becoming factors in their performance

U14
• The more advanced U14 players are able to execute a range of skills, but most others are still developing previously taught skills are now being exposed to these additional skills
• Important psychosocial implications for a child entering puberty - early or late
• Popularity influences self-esteem
• Tests limits - a know-it-all attitude
• Full of eagerness to learn
• Tend to be quite self-critical and may need regular positive reinforcement
• There will be significant different in physical maturation rates between individuals
• Rapid growth spurts of the skeleton leave ligaments, tendons and muscles catching up, so coordination and balance are astray. Temporary gangly movement may result in a loss of touch on the ball. Players do not always make the connection between their growth spurt and the temporary loss of form; they need help realizing that everything will come back into sync in six to 18 months.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Technical</th>
<th>Tactical</th>
<th>Physical/Psychological</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **U6** 1 practice for every game  
Ball/Player Ratio = 1:1  
Ball size = 3  
Practice length = ≤ 45 mins | Dribbling with various parts of the feet – Striking the ball – Turning while dribbling | What do the out of bounds lines mean – Which goal to attack – No positions, instead reference a shape (triangle) | Movement education taking place within the practice (balance, jumping, twisting, etc.) – Sharing – FUN!! |
| **U7/U8** 1 practice for every game  
Ball/Player Ratio = 1:1 to 1:2  
Ball size = 3  
Practice length = ≤ 60 mins | Reinforce previous skills – Juggling – block tackle – receiving ground balls with the inside of both feet – shooting with the inside of the foot – dribbling and changing directions – intro push pass | Intro to “lines”, a back line and a forward line - 1v1 attacking (dribble vs. pass) | Play games that promote agility, eye-foot and eye-hand coordination, balance, etc. – Players will begin to be able to work in pairs |
| **U9/U10** 2 practices for every game  
Ball/Player Ratio = 1:1 to 1:4  
Ball size = 4  
Practice Length= ≤ 75 mins | Reinforce previous skills – Dribbling for speed – passing with the inside and outside of the feet – instep drive – receiving ground balls with the outside of the foot – receiving bouncing balls with the instep, inside, and outside of the feet – dribbling fakes | Reinforce previous tactics – 1v1 defending – roles of 1st attacker and defender – 2v1 attacking – getting goal side – shape in three players – intro support play – play a variety of positions – principles of attack | Intro the concept of cooling down – Players can now work in groups of 3 and 4. Continue to reinforce sportsmanship – Nutrition |
| **U11/U12** 2/3 practices for every game  
Ball/Player Ratio = 1:1 to 1:6  
Ball size = 4  
Practice length = ≤ 90 mins | Reinforce previous skills – intro heading and crossing – moving throwing in – dribbling feints – receiving air balls with the chest and thigh – 1st touch receiving – outside of foot passing – receiving with either foot – passing with both feet – introduce chipping and volleying (1/2 and full) | Reinforce previous tactics – 2v1 defending, 2v2 attacking and defending, roles of 2nd attacker and defender – man to man defense – combination passing – support play – verbal & visual communication – half-time analysis – wall pass – principles of defense | Players should know how to warm-up and cool-down. Self-motivation – how to learn from each match |
| **U13/U14** 3 practices for every game  
Ball/Player Ratio = 1:1 to 1:7  
Ball size = 5  
Practice Length= ≤ 90 mins | Reinforce previous skills – introduce bending balls – chipping to pass – variety of crosses (placement) – ½ and full volley shooting – heading to pass – outside of the foot shot – intro chipping to shoot | Reinforce previous tactics – delay, depth, and balance in defense – compactness – 3rd defender role – recovery runs – support play – restarts – defending in the different 1/3’s – attacking in the attacking ½ – checking runs – takeovers – switching positions during play – zone defense – post match analysis – intro transition | Static stretching during the cool-down – fitness work with a ball – introduce the need to rest to recover |
| **U15-U18** 3 to 5 practices for every game  
Ball/Player Ratio = 1:1 to 1:10  
Ball size = 5  
Practice Length= ≤ 90 mins | Mastery of previous skills – position specific skills – Chipping to score | Reinforce previous tactics – able to adapt tactics during the run of play – rhythm of play – role of the 3rd attacker – principles of attack and defense – diagonal passing – overlapping runs – switching the point of attack | Time off for rest – soccer specific weight training |

Info adapted from the “US Youth Soccer Player Development Model” by Sam Snow and the USYSA Coaching Education Department as well as the Madison Area Youth Soccer Association (MAYSA) Age Groups Curriculum: Developing Players Within the Team Concept which was written by Chris Lay and the WYSA directors of coaching.
## SoccerPlans.com Developmental Philosophy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Playing Time</th>
<th>Starters</th>
<th>Playing Different Positions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Youth</strong> U6/U8</td>
<td>As equal as possible amongst all players</td>
<td>Starters are picked on a rotational basis – all players start an equal number of games throughout season (as equal as possible)</td>
<td>U6/U8 players should be allowed to play freely and not asked to play a position. At restarts players can be asked to form a shape (triangle/diamond) but they shouldn’t be expected to stay in that shape.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Youth</strong> U10</td>
<td>As equal as possible amongst all players</td>
<td>Starters are picked on a rotational basis – all players start an equal number of games throughout season (as equal as possible)</td>
<td>U10 teams that play 5v5+GK’s will typically have a 3-2 (3 defenders, 2 attackers) formation or a 2-3. Players should spend equal time being an attacker and defender. Encourage GK play but don’t force players to be a GK.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U11</td>
<td>As equal as possible amongst all players</td>
<td>Starters are picked on a rotational basis – all players start an equal number of games throughout season (as equal as possible)</td>
<td>Every player will rotate playing an attacking position and a defending position in every game. Players willing to play GK will be rotated throughout the year and may receive more playing time in games they play GK (for ½ the game).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U12</td>
<td>As equal as possible amongst all players</td>
<td>Starters are picked on a rotational basis – all players start an equal number of games throughout season (as equal as possible)</td>
<td>Every player will play an attacking and a defending position in each game but not necessarily equally. If the ability/preference of the players allows, players will play approximately 2/3 of the game in their “best” position (determined by coach) and 1/3 of the time in another position. Players willing to play GK will rotate throughout the season and may receive more playing time in the games they play GK for a half.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U13</td>
<td>Some players will begin to play more than others which may be influenced by the commitment to the team (attendance at practice/games) and skill level</td>
<td>Some players may begin to start more games than others. This will be based upon skill level and commitment to team (will be outlined by coach at pre-season parent meeting).</td>
<td>Players will begin to play a specific position. Players may still play other positions in various game situations (winning by a lot) but not necessarily in every game. Ideally a few players will begin to standout as future GK’s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>U14+</strong> State League Teams</td>
<td>Players will play more than others</td>
<td>The starting line-up for each game will be based upon player commitment and performance. Some players may start every game and others may not or may take turns starting depending upon their weekly performance in training.</td>
<td>Players will play a specific position. In certain situations players may play other positions but they will typically have a specific role they will play on the team. Ideally the team will have two GK’s.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SoccerPlans.com Player Development Tips

Below are some guidelines for the U11-U14 teams in regards to playing time and having players play different positions. I would highly recommend tracking this information somehow. Some coaches in the past have used a notebook to keep track of the games (starting line-up, who subbed for who, and half-time coaching points). I have begun to use a 3 ring binder so if it is raining I can just take my one sheet and not wreck the entire notebook. On a side note, it would not be a bad idea to keep track what you have done in practice. You can make notes about what went well and what didn’t so you know what to do differently in future years and it can also help you in terms of liability (perhaps a player does a header incorrectly and becomes seriously injured...you could provide proof in your practice plans that the correct heading technique was taught on...).

**U11**

Starters: At U11 players should be starting games equally. I would recommend taking a roster and having the first 8 players start the first game. The next game pick up where you left off and have the remaining players start the next game. Once everyone that didn’t start the last game is starting then go back to the beginning of the list and keep adding players until your starting roster is full. If you continue in this manner throughout the season eventually everyone will start the same number of games (or at least as close as mathematically possible).

Playing Different Positions: Youth players should be exposed to playing a wide variety of different positions to improve their overall soccer development. Since most teams play a 3-3-1 (or a 2-3-2 or 2-4-1) I classify the positions as attacking or defending. If a player started a game as a defender and is subbed out then the next time I put them in they are either a forward or midfielder. This gives everyone a chance to play a variety of different positions. Players should continue switching back and forth in this manner throughout the game so they play each position equally.

*****This is not something every club does and can make "winning" more difficult if the other team has their best forward/GK playing that position the entire game. I would highly recommend explaining the importance of long term player development at your parent meeting so parents understand doing this will help the players in the long run to be better.

Goalkeepers: I used to make every kid on the team play GK. Once we had our GK coach start running team GK sessions for the U11/U12 players it became extremely evident to me that some kids lacked the fundamental catching ability or the basic mentality to be a GK. I have begun to ask my team which kids are willing to play GK. I reward them by telling them that in games they play GK they will play for one half and in the other half they will get to play more than the other players and they will get more of a say in which position they play. At the beginning of the year I establish a list of who wants to be GK and I rotate keepers from game to game just like starters (the first game the first two names on the list are the GK's, the second game the next to GK's on the list play...etc.).
**Tips for Competing:** Our main focus as a club is to develop soccer players. This is a long term goal which requires years of appropriate coaching to happen. While our main goal is to develop soccer players, that doesn't mean we aren’t trying to win. When you establish your starting eight players, I would put a strong player at center defense, a strong player at midfield, and then filter in some of the remaining strong players at the other positions. This will give you a strong presence on the field regardless of where the other players end up. You most likely will have some strong players that don’t start. When you substitute just make sure your put a strong player in when you take a strong player out. Players end up playing different positions which is good for their development but the better players typically end of playing centrally which helps the team do well.

**U12**

**Starters:** U12 soccer players should take turns starting games. Throughout the season players should rotate who starts so everyone starts about the same number of games. Refer to the U11 section for information about a good way to manage that.

**Playing Different Positions:** At U12 players should still play different positions but not necessarily equally. To put a specific value on it I would say players should be playing 2/3 of the time at the position they are best at (hopefully the position they are best at is the position they enjoy playing the most) and 1/3 of the time playing other positions. A player could start at their favorite/best position, get subbed in later for a different position, and then end playing their favorite/best position. However, this is reliant upon having a proportionate number of players that enjoy being a defender, midfielder, forward, and GK. If that is not the case this system will have to be modified to fit the needs of your team. *****At this age you may have to start guiding players as to what position they are best at. Typically most young players love to score goals so many of your players may want to be a forward. Realistically, if a U13+ roster has 18 players on it you may want 6 defenders, 6 midfielders, 4 forwards, and 2 GK’s. Mentioning something along those lines so a player that is a great defender but likes playing forward (and is the seventh best forward) will hopefully help them realize they would play/contribute a lot more as a defender.

**Goalkeepers:** U12 teams should still have several different GK’s. I would offer the same policy for U12 as what was offered at U11 (see who is willing to play and reward them with more playing time and a choice of where they want to play in the other half of the game they play GK in). Hopefully a few players are beginning to stand out potential future goalkeepers.

**U13**

**Starters:** At U13 some players may begin to start a few more games than others. This could be based on attendance at practice, player performance, a combination of both, or whatever system you decide. I would stress the importance though of communicating your
system for establishing starters with the parents at the pre-season parent meeting so they are well aware of what to expect as the season progresses. If you know you are playing a weaker opponent you could have some players start that may not normally get to do so (their morale will be much better which never hurts). At U13 though the same group of players should not be starting every game, it should be mixed up occasionally.

**Playing Different Positions:** By U13 players should be developing a preference for a preferred position. Players can and should still play different positions, but not necessarily in every game. If a player is a great defender they could start most games as a defender and play defender for most of the games. Occasionally they should play as a midfielder or forward though to continue to improve their overall soccer development. You could have players play different positions when you are winning/losing by several goals, in tournament games that don’t matter (you’ve lost the first game or two and don’t have a chance to advance), or anytime just to mix it up.

**Goalkeepers:** Ideally a few players will stand out as the top GK candidates. The top GK’s can begin to get some specialized GK training so they develop the skills necessary to be a great GK. I would strongly encourage you to have at least two GK’s if possible so if one misses (or moves or decides they don’t want to play soccer anymore) you still have another option.

**U14+**

**Starters:** At the U14 level you can develop starters that will start most of the games. Be cognizant of starting players that are struggling and/or bench players that are improving and make adjustments as necessary. Sometimes it is good to just switch up a few players anyway (if they are equal in skill) to keep everyone working hard in practice to earn more playing time. Also, if you are playing an opponent you know is weaker it may not be a bad idea to mix the starting line-up a bit to keep the morale high of the players that typically don’t start.

**Playing Different Positions:** Most soccer players should have a position they play best at and enjoy playing by U14. If you are winning by a lot of goals it would probably be nice to switch the players up a bit. As players progress tactically they should begin to receive functional training (teaching players how to play in certain areas of the field, how to play a certain position, or how play as a team) which will require them to have a specific position they play.

**Goalkeepers:** Basically the same as U13. Hopefully you have two strong players that are comfortable and competent playing GK.
Methods of Coaching – A Coach’s Toolkit

A soccer coach can "teach" in many different ways. The coach must decide which method is best to use at any particular time. Below are some common examples of when coaching takes place during a soccer practice as well as a discussion on each method.

***Coaches also need to keep in mind it is important for players to have some flow within a soccer practice as well as to have time to figure out soccer problems on their own. If the coach interjects too much in a practice the amount of learning can actually decrease. The methods are organized in the manner of the least disruptive to the training session on top to the most disruptive to the training session towards the bottom.

1. **The Game is the Best Teacher:** This is a popular saying of the US Soccer Federation. Players do learn just by playing soccer with no formal coaching. The players gets touches on the ball which will help improve their technical ability and over time players will begin to figure out different ways to solve some of the soccer problems (tactics). A coach can manipulate different variables of a soccer practice though to emphasize a certain aspect of the game to improve learning. For example, requiring players to play 2-touch will force them to support earlier, get their body into a better position so they can play quicker, increase the speed of play, etc. Conditions and restrictions, even with no coaching, can encourage players to play a certain way!

2. **Coaching Within the Flow:** For this method the coach doesn’t stop play but rather gives instructions to individual players, groups of players, or the team as the activity continues. This is an excellent way for coaches to convey information to the players without disrupting the flow of the practice. Coaches do need to make sure they are not giving instructions constantly or players will eventually tune them out.

3. **Pull a player to the side:** If a specific player could benefit from additional instruction the coach can stop that player and coach them while the rest of the players continue to play. The coach needs to be able to make the coaching points brief though so the player can join his or her team.

4. **Coach at Natural Stoppages:** Another time to give instruction without disrupting the flow of the practice too much is to coach at natural stoppages of the practice such as during water breaks, when the ball goes out of bounds, or if a player is injured.

5. **"Freeze" Method:** If a large number of players are having an issue with a technique/tactic the coach can use this method. The coach yells “freeze” and all the players stop moving. The coach can then address a technical issue or guide players to solve a tactical problem that presented itself. Because the players are frozen it can be easier for the players to see what their options are and to make a better decision. The freeze method used to be the most common and encouraged method of coaching but that has changed because when overused it can become very frustrating for the players as it disrupts the flow of the practice.

---

Below is the listing of practices included in this curriculum packet. These practices were selected based upon the techniques and tactics that are listed in the ‘Age Group Curriculum’. The plans are listed as a resource only, feel free to modify the season plan as needed (a lot more plans are available at www.soccerplans.com). Also, I have listed the plans in this order as a sample way of spreading out practices on different topics throughout the season. As the coach, you may need to modify the order of the practices to fit your teams’ needs. And last, I have selected these practices in terms of what I feel is appropriate for the U14 soccer players in my area (northeastern Wisconsin). Our soccer season will typically involve 21 practices starting in late April and concluding in late June. You may need to add or delete practices based upon the length of your season. If your team practices more visit soccerplans.com to find additional practice plans. I hope this resource is useful to you! If you have any questions or comments please don’t hesitate to email me at: matt@soccerplans.com.

1. Possession - #13

2. Receiving and turning - #1

3. Defending - #8 PCB

4. Shooting - #1

5. Dribbling (possession vs. to beat a defender) - dribbling to beat a defender #8

6. Passing (combination play) - #7

7. Switching the point of attack - #3

8. Crossing - #3

9. Defending - the back 4

10. Receiving and turning - #4
11. Passing (support play) - passing12
   • http://www.soccerplans.com/uploads/Passing12_support_.pdf

12. Receiving balls out of the air - receiving balls out of the air

13. Shooting - #3

14. Transition - #2 by Ian Barker)
   • http://www.soccerplans.com/uploads/Transition_Ian_Barker_.pdf

15. Defending - #9 immediate chase

16. Dribbling to beat a defender - #6

17. Switching the point of attack - #5

18. Shooting - #6

19. Possession - #12

20. Defending - functional training for modern holding mid

21. Receiving – Receiving 2 – 1st touch
   • http://www.soccerplans.com/uploads/Receiving2_1st_touch_QR.pdf

22. Shooting - #5

In addition to the topics addressed in the practices above, players should practice various restarts such as how to attack and defend corner kicks, throw-ins, direct and indirect kicks. A great time to do this is during the scrimmage portion of each practice. Occasionally, stop play during a scrimmage and simulate a foul (or if an actual foul occurred) to let the players practice getting organized.
**DIAGRAM** | **ORGANIZATION** | **KEY COACHING POINTS**
--- | --- | ---
Players get into groups of 4 and practice passing and moving.  
Progress to playing 3v1 in a 12x12 yard grid. The attackers try to keep possession. Once the defender has touched the ball 3 times (or forced play out of bounds 3 times) they switch with one of the attackers.  
Passing technique  
Use of various surfaces to pass the ball  
Angle and distance of support  
1st touch away from pressure  
Deception – use of body feints and ball fakes before (and after) receiving the ball to get more time

Continue playing 3v1, but now add a square goal (2 steps) in the middle. The attacking team gets a point for playing the ball through the small square goal. If the defender wins the ball they switch… however, each time the attacking team plays it through the goal the defender must stay in an extra turn.  
Previous coaching points  
Vision – head up to see = better decisions  
Patience – don’t try to force the ball through the triangle to a teammate, wait until it is “on”.

Play 3v3 to targets. Teams score a point by possessing the ball until they can play it to their target. Once the ball is played to a target, the other team starts with the ball on the endline. Switch targets occasionally.  
Previous coaching points  
Good shape  
Support behind the ball to allow for a drop to relieve pressure and also to switch the point of attack (the support behind the ball is also the first line of defense if the ball is lost).

Similar to above, but now add 3 goals on each endline. The team in possession scores by passing the ball through a gate goal to their team’s target player. After a goal, the other team starts with the ball on the endline.  
Previous coaching points  
Vision  
Timing of the run of the target is important…if they get to a goal too early the other team may be able to block it

**SCRIMMAGE:** Play an age appropriate scrimmage. Minimize coaching and let the players play and have fun!!

© Fox Valley Soccer Training LLC (FVST) and soccerplans.com. Distribution prohibited without the consent of FVST and soccerplans.com.
**PRACTICE THEME:** Receiving and turning #1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIAGRAM</th>
<th>ORGANIZATION</th>
<th>KEY COACHING POINTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| ![Diagram](image1.png) | - Set up a 25-x-15 yard area  
- Players stand on one end line with balls, other players are in middle or on other end line  
- Players in middle jog around, show for a ball, receive a ball, and then turn and play the ball to the other side  
- Stretch and switch roles  
- **Progressions:** Demonstrate different ways of turning the ball; have them do the different methods. | - Get in line of the flight of the ball  
- Come to meet the ball  
- Watch the ball  
- Make an early selection in the body surface to use  
- Accelerate after turning |
| ![Diagram](image2.png) | - Play 1v1 in a 20-x-10 yard area, with a neutral player on each end line  
- Players can score by receiving ball from a neutral, turning with the ball, and completing a pass to the other neutral  
- Switch roles after loss of possession  
- Play for one minute, then active players switch with neutrals | - Good receiving technique  
- Look for pressure  
- Turn away from pressure  
- Accelerate after turning  
- What foot to use to receive ball and how to turn determined by location of pass being received and location of the defender  
- Check back diagonally |
| ![Diagram](image3.png) | - Play 2v2 in a 20-x-15 yard area, with a neutral player on each end line  
- Players can score by receiving ball from a neutral, turning with the ball, and completing a pass to the other neutral  
- Switch roles after loss of possession  
- Play for one minute, then losing team switches with the neutrals | - Good receiving technique  
- Look for pressure  
- Turn away from pressure  
- Accelerate after turning  
- What foot to use to receive ball determined by location of pass being received and location of the defender  
- Create space for each other by making runs  
- Recycle your runs |
| ![Diagram](image4.png) | - Play 4v4  
- No restrictions on the players | - Observe to see if practice session has helped with receiving and turning |

**SCRIMMAGE:** Play an age appropriate scrimmage. Minimize coaching and let the players play and have fun!!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIAGRAM</th>
<th>ORGANIZATION</th>
<th>KEY COACHING POINTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| ![Diagram](image1.png) | • Place a ball in the middle of a square and have a line by each corner. The first person sprints to the ball, performs a task, and then goes to the end of their line. Next person repeats. Tasks: Jockey backwards, jockey backwards while changing lead foot (been cut), jockey 3 or 4 steps then turn and run. | • Diagonal/sideways on stance  
• Jockey backwards by shuffling feet  
• “Been cut” – drop the lead foot (don’t cross legs)  
• “Ball played past” – step in front, turn the quickest way to turn and run. |
| ![Diagram](image2.png) | • Play 2v2 to targets in a 20x20 yard grid. The middle players try to play from target to target to get a point. The targets get to move laterally on half of their line (other team’s target gets to move on the other half). Play for 90 seconds and then switch the inside/outside players. | • Pressure and cover, pressuring the 1st attacker towards the covering defender  
• Communication  
• Primary focus is to prevent the pass to the target = keep the play in front of you and don’t get beat! |
| ![Diagram](image3.png) | • Play with 3 teams of 5, one team starts in each zone (middle zone is smaller). Coach plays a ball to an end zone and 2 players form the middle group step in to defend. The other 3 provide balance while staying in the middle grid. The attacking team plays 6 passes and then they can try to switch it over to the other group 5. If they do, then 2 of the middle “balancing” defenders goes to pressure and the game is still 5v2. | • The two defenders need to try to make play predictable.  
• The three remains defenders can provide balance to try to prevent balls played through (add restriction that balls to the other side have to be played on the ground).  
• Adjustment of shape as the ball is passed.  
• ***When the defending team wins the ball they take the place of the team that lost it. |
| ![Diagram](image4.png) | • Play 7v7. Goals only count for points when scored on the full sized goal. When a team scores on the counter (small) goals they get the ball and then get to attack the big goal. | • Pressure to make play predictable – the rest of the team shifts to cover space/attackers in the part of the field the defender is pressuring to. Cover- help the 1st defender and prevent balls being played through.  
Balance – protect remaining field space. |

**SCRIMMAGE:** Play an age appropriate scrimmage. Minimize coaching and let the players play and have fun!!

© Fox Valley Soccer Training LLC (FVST) and soccerplans.com. Distribution prohibited without the consent of FVST and soccerplans.com.
## DIAGRAM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ORGANIZATION</th>
<th>KEY COACHING POINTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Everyone needs a ball</td>
<td>Ankle locked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Players must toss ball to themselves and kick ball straight up in the air using their instep</td>
<td>Solid contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progress to partnering up and kicking ball back and forth using instep</td>
<td>Follow through</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Watch the ball</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Key Coaching Points:
- Ankle locked
- Solid contact
- Follow through
- Watch the ball

### Organization:
- Set up cones as shown, flags could be used for the middle cones as they are a goal (8 yards apart)
- Circle shoots on the square GK, then goes to be the GK, after being shot on, he/she runs to the end of the square line
- The circle and square line take turns shooting on the GK

### Key Coaching Points:
- Game realistic – roll the ball before shooting it
- Accuracy over power → find a low corner
- Follow through – at target and land on kicking foot (if shot hard)
- Watch the ball when striking it

### Organization:
- Set up two full-sized goals 36 yards apart, each goal has a GK and a server next to the goal
- 3 players are in the middle of the area
- The 3 players rotate in a circle taking turns receiving balls from the servers, they must shoot one or two touch (one touch goal = 2 pts., 2 touch goal =1)
- Switch players and which side the ball is coming from (left vs. right)

### Key Coaching Points:
- Accuracy over power → find a low corner
- Follow through – at target and land on kicking foot (if shot hard)
- Watch ball when striking it

### Organization:
- Play 4v4 in a 40-x-25 yard area
- A line of cones should be made approximately 16 yards from each goal
- Teams get two points for scoring when a shot is taken from the middle zone, and only one point for a goal made from anywhere else

### Key Coaching Points:
- Accuracy over power → find a low corner
- Follow through – at target and land on kicking foot (if shot hard)
- Watch ball when striking it

## SCRAMMAGE:
Play an age appropriate scrimmage. Minimize coaching and let the players play and have fun!!
### PRACTICE THEME: Dribbling to beat a defender #8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIAGRAM</th>
<th>ORGANIZATION</th>
<th>KEY COACHING POINTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Diagram" /></td>
<td>• Make a grid and have each player with a ball dribbling in the grid. Time players and see how many triangles they can dribble through in 45 seconds. Repeat again to try to beat their own record. Introduce different dribbling moves (lunge, V, stepover, scissors). Players dribble into a triangle, change direction, and accelerate out.</td>
<td>• Head up when dribbling as much as possible (glance at the ball when taking a touch then glance up to see what is happening) • Change of speed after doing a move • Change of direction after doing a move • Sell the doubles!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Diagram" /></td>
<td>• Play 1v1 to the triangle goals. Play a round of 60 seconds and then switch who is playing who. For the first few rounds, after a player scores they should give the ball to their opponent (gets both players equal dribbling practice). In later rounds, when a player scores they just keep going!</td>
<td>• Dribble at the defender so you can take them on the left or right • Do a move and then go! • Use of moves to unbalance the defender for just long enough to get behind them • Be dynamic (deceptive, unpredictable) • When doing most moves, if done correctly the dribbler’s body should be between the defender and the ball.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image3" alt="Diagram" /></td>
<td>• Play 3v3 or 4v4. Each team has 3 cone goals to defend and 3 goals to attack. The field should be wider than it is long. Players get 3 points for dribbling through a goal and 1 point for passing through a goal. • Variations: Make it – take it. When you score you turn around and attack the other side. Make the central goal worth more points.</td>
<td>• Good team shape (spreading out wide and high) will create space to dribble • When to pass vs. when to dribble (dribbling will pull in defenders, the dribbler should then look to play a longer ball to a teammate who will have more space/time to score then) • Look for 1v1 situations (dribbler has to see what is in the space behind the defender).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SCRIMMAGE:** Play an age appropriate scrimmage. Minimize coaching and let the players play and have fun!!
### PRACTICE THEME: Combination Play #7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIAGRAM</th>
<th>ORGANIZATION</th>
<th>KEY COACHING POINTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Diagram" /></td>
<td>• Split the team into groups of 3. Each group of 3 has one player on the outside of the grid and two players on the inside of the grid. Each inside pair shares a ball. When one player plays to an outside target (any target) then the ball must be passed back to the other partner (1-3). Work in different combinations with the outside players. Have the inside players combine before playing the ball outside. Switch targets.</td>
<td>• Rhythm…if the pass into the target is long then the next pass should probably be short…if the pass into the target is short then the next pass should be long.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Diagram" /></td>
<td>• Players play 3v3, the neutrals on the outside can help out either team (they have a pinnie on though just like the inside players to make switching neutrals quicker). Teams score by passing to an outside neutral player and then getting the ball back to a 3rd attacker. Play for time to see which team can score the most points.</td>
<td>• The timing of the runs is important – as the ball is being played into the target the 3rd player should be checking to.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Diagram" /></td>
<td>• Play 4v4+GK’s. Limit the number of touches players can take to reduce dribbling and promote creative passing. Restrictions could include: 2 touch, 3 touch, 1 touch, or whenever a player takes more than 1 touch the next player only has one touch</td>
<td>• Introduce 3 player combinations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Progress to allowing the neutral to play back to the player that passed to them, but no points are scored (keeping possession is better than forcing a pass and giving the ball up).</td>
<td>• Communication: both verbal and non-verbal (runs, change of pace, gestures)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Progress to a full-sided game.</td>
<td>• Ball circulation – keep the ball moving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• All previous coaching points.</td>
<td>• Timing of runs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Encourage creative passing…any sequence of passes involving more than one player can be a combination.</td>
<td>• Risk/safety decision making of targets…can the ball be safely played to a 3rd person or is it better to play it back to the person that played it and keep possession (if possible)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Reading the cues of what your teammates are doing, can players recognize when a ball is going to be played to a target and then show/check early so they are an immediate option for the outside neutral. Getting into position early also lets them open up to the field.</td>
<td>• A full-side game.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SCRAMMAGE:** Play an age appropriate scrimmage. Minimize coaching and let the players play and have fun!!

© Fox Valley Soccer Training LLC (FVST) and soccerplans.com. Distribution prohibited without the consent of FVST and soccerplans.com.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIAGRAM</th>
<th>ORGANIZATION</th>
<th>KEY COACHING POINTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| [Diagram] | • Players are in groups of 4, passing and moving. Have the players play a few short passes and then try to find a longer pass. | • Accurate passing  
• Driven long pass  
• Pass before the long pass should be a softer pass played to allow for a one touch driven long pass if possible |
| [Diagram] | • Play 3v3+2 in a 35x25 yard grid (could add a neutral in the inside too). The inside players can move anywhere, the target players laterally on their line. Teams get points for playing to a target and then having the ball played back to their team. Round 2: target can play back to the person that passed to them for 0 points (but possession is kept – don’t force it!) or to a 3rd person for 1 point. End by playing target to target to get a point. | • Inside players need to see the pass going to the target and support early so they can be facing the field when the ball is passed to them.  
• As the ball goes to the target, someone should support wide on each side and the third person can be moving to try to find a pocket of space in-between defenders  
• Patience!!! |
| [Diagram] | • Play 4v4+1 to endlines (dotted lines are the “goals”). The field should be wider than it is long (45 wide by 35 long). Teams possess the ball and switch the point of attack until they can dribble across the other teams endline. | • A player should be supporting behind the ball so it can be dropped and switched  
• Players should have good width, a penetrating player that stays high, and a player “working the middle” trying to find a passing lane. |
| [Diagram] | • If playing 4v4+1 then have one player be GK and play 4v4 to a big goal and counter goals. Otherwise, play 8v8 (7+GK vs. 8). Field should be penalty box to penalty box and full width.  
• Variation: You only score by scoring in the big goal. When the team attacks and scores on a counter goal they “turn around” and then get to attack the big goal. | • Team attacking counters goals should be patient and switch the point of attack until they can score.  
• Good shape  
• Use of the GK to maintain possession |

**SCRIMMAGE:** Play an age appropriate scrimmage. Minimize coaching and let the players play and have fun!!

© Fox Valley Soccer Training LLC (FVST) and soccerplans.com. Distribution prohibited without the consent of FVST and soccerplans.com.
**DIAGRAM**

- Square passes to circle who takes a few touches (last touch toward the goal) and then crosses the ball in to the GK (cross). The GK is positioned 6-12 yds from goal. After circle goes to the end of the line and the square now becomes the crosser (next person in line plays them a ball). Have line going from both sides of the field.

**ORGANIZATION**

- Make a 50 x 50 yard field with channels on the outside and a half line. Play with 2 teams. Each half has 2 defenders and 3 attackers plus a GK. Each channel has a player from each team. When a defender wins the ball they can play it to their channel player or to a forward (who could also then play it out to the channel).
  - Progressions: Allow the weakside channel player to join the attack. Allow all players to move anywhere and allow the channel players to defend each other and try to deny the cross.

**KEY COACHING POINTS**

- Last touch before crossing should be towards the goal to help the crosser get their hips around so the cross stays in the field of play
- Vary the type of balls played in (driven, lofted, near post, far post, PK spot, etc.)
- Attackers in the box should be coming towards the ball rather than running towards the goal. This allows them to see both the ball/field/defenders/goal and also allows for them to bend their run to get to the ball easier.
- Finish with accuracy by re-directing the ball (don’t have to swing and try to put a lot of power on it, the ball already has a lot of force from the cross itself).

**SCRIMMAGE:** Play an age appropriate scrimmage. Minimize coaching and let the players play and have fun!!

---

© Fox Valley Soccer Training LLC (FVST) and soccerplans.com. Distribution prohibited without the consent of FVST and soccerplans.com.
### PRACTICE THEME: Defending #4 – The back four

**DIAGRAM**

- Play 4v4+4 in a large grid
- Two teams of four combine to play 8v4, when a team loses the ball the group of 4 responsible for the loss of possession now plays defense
- Award a point to the defending team each time they are able to win possession of the ball
- **Key Coaching Points**
  - Stay compact, if you do not move as a group you will not win the ball
  - 1st defender needs to funnel the attack
  - 2nd and 3rd defenders need to read what the 1st attacker is doing and adjust accordingly
  - Angles and distances of support to cut off passing lanes – don’t get split
  - 1st defender needs to funnel the attack
  - 2nd and 3rd defenders need to read what the 1st attacker is doing and adjust accordingly
  - Angles and distances of support to cut off passing lanes – don’t get split

**ORGANIZATION**

- Set up grids as shown (each lane is 10 long by 30 wide)
- Place the back four in one of the middle grids and any reserve defenders in the other middle grid
- Play with one ball, teams get a point for playing a ball through the other team to their teammates
- If the ball is intercepted then that team tries to play a ball through to their teammates
- **Key Coaching Points**
  - Recover diagonal when the ball is passed laterally to cut off through ball passing angles
  - Good shape – stay compact and staggered (pressure, cover, balance)
  - Communication (verbal and non-verbal)
  - Don’t chase, each time the ball is passed someone else should step

**SCRIMMAGE**

- Play 8v8 with GK’s in a PK box to PK box field
- To score, a team must pass the ball to the other team’s GK (defense needs to pressure quickly to avoid a long lofted ball and have good shape to stop balls from going through)
- Play for a set time period and see who scores the most points
- Progress to playing a full game to goals
- Stress defense shape (when attacking, don’t be flat or one intercepted pass will beat all the defenders)
- Back line needs to read the cues → If the 1st attacker is pressured and has their head down (i.e. can’t play a long ball) then compress/compact space and step up, if the 1st attacker has a lot of time and space step back
- Stay connected, if the ball is dropped 10 yards and we pressure for those 10 yards then the back line needs to step up to keep our shape and stay connected

© Fox Valley Soccer Training LLC (FVST) and soccerplans.com. Distribution prohibited without the consent of FVST and soccerplans.com.
## Practice Theme: Receiving and Turning #4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diagram</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Key Coaching Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Diagram" /></td>
<td><strong>• Split the team into two groups, ½ on the outside (most with a soccer ball) of a grid and the other ½ on the inside. Players check to an outside player with a ball, receive it, and then play it to an outside player without a ball. Play for 90 seconds and then switch inside/outside players.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>• Progression: The last round is a race. Which player can receive and pass back 7 times first? The winner now has to do 8 while everyone else still does 7 (challenge)</strong></td>
<td><strong>• Check out the ‘Video’ page of <a href="http://www.soccerplans.com">www.soccerplans.com</a> for a video demonstrating the different ways to receive and turn.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>• Diagonal starting stance for all to hide which technique will be used</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>• Check to the ball until you receive it</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>• Get in line with the flight of the ball</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>• Communication of passer – man on vs. turn</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>• The receiving player should “check their shoulder” (glance behind them) before the ball is passed and then again after it is passed</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Diagram" /></td>
<td><strong>• Play 1v1 to targets in a 20 yard long by 10 yard wide grid. Play for 1 minute and then switch inside/outside players. When the ball is played to a target it is a point and then the target plays it to the other player. Progress to “make it, take it” – if a player scores they get it back to go the other way.</strong></td>
<td><strong>• Same points as above</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>• Check away and then check back to create space</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>• It may be necessary to take the 1st touch backwards when under pressure to create enough space to turn and face the defender</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image3.png" alt="Diagram" /></td>
<td><strong>• Play 4v4+Gk’s. Split the field into two halves and require that 2 players stay in each half. Players must pass the ball across the half-line (promotes passing and receiving then). The ball can be dropped back to the defending half if needed.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>• Progress to a larger age appropriate scrimmage with no restrictions.</strong></td>
<td><strong>• Same points as above</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>• Attacking players should check back at an angle. This helps them get into a passing lane and also helps them turn and see the field easier upon receiving the ball.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Scrimmage:** Play an age appropriate scrimmage. Minimize coaching and let the players play and have fun!!

© Fox Valley Soccer Training LLC (FVST) and soccerplans.com. Distribution prohibited without the consent of FVST and soccerplans.com.
### PRACTICE THEME: Passing #12 (Support)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIAGRAM</th>
<th>ORGANIZATION</th>
<th>KEY COACHING POINTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| ![Diagram](image1.png) | - Depending upon team size, have 2 or 3 players that are “it” and hold a pinnie. Also have several soccer players with a soccer ball. Players that are “it” try to tag a player without a ball. When tagged, the player has to take the pinnie and be “it”. The players with the ball can’t be tagged and can pass the ball to someone being chased to save them from being tagged. | - Lots of movement  
- Players with the soccer balls need to have their head up and be actively scanning the field to see who is being chased and then pass them the ball  
- Communication  
- Passing technique (toes up so ankle is locked, follow through at target, etc.) |
| ![Diagram](image2.png) | - Use a 50x50 or 60x60 yard grid and put a 5 yard cone goal near each corner. Split the players into two teams. Players get one point for dribbling through a goal and 2 points for passing through a goal to a teammate. | - Passing technique  
- Players should be moving into support positions as the ball is being passed so the player receiving it has immediate options.  
- Angle and distance of support – reliant upon the amount of pressure on the ball (more pressure = closer and wider angle)  
- Vision  
- Support open to the field – play quickly  
- Switching the point of attack |
| ![Diagram](image3.png) | - Same space, now add the goals to the end so teams are playing with direction. Each endline should have two goals, a full sized goal with a GK and a 5 yard cone goal (diagonally across from each other). Teams can score on either goal. Normal soccer rules apply. | - Passing technique  
- Players should be moving into support positions as the ball is being passed so the player receiving it has immediate options.  
- Angle and distance of support – reliant upon the amount of pressure on the ball (more pressure = closer and wider angle)  
- Vision  
- Support open to the field – play quickly  
- Switching the point of attack |

**SCRIMMAGE:** Play an age appropriate scrimmage. Minimize coaching and let the players play and have fun!!
**PRACTICE THEME:** Receiving balls out of the air #1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>DIAGRAM</strong></th>
<th><strong>ORGANIZATION</strong></th>
<th><strong>KEY COACHING POINTS</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| ![Diagram](image) | - Set up a 25-x-35 yard grid  
  - Half of team on outside of grid (those players need a ball), and the other half moving on the inside  
  - Players on the inside show for a ball, receive a lofted pass, and then pass the ball back to the outside player  
  - Switch inside/outside players  
  - **Progressions:** Specify what surface must be used to control the ball (top of foot, wedge ball with inside/outside, thigh, chest). | - Get in line of the flight of the ball  
  - Come to meet the ball  
  - Watch the ball  
  - Make an early selection in the body surface to use  
  - Controlling surface goes out to meet ball  
  - Relax the controlling surface and withdraw just before impact  
  - Challenge advanced players to take their first touch in a direction (out of the air or by popping ball to feet and then wedging in a direction) |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>ORGANIZATION</strong></th>
<th><strong>DIAGRAM</strong></th>
<th><strong>ORGANIZATION</strong></th>
<th><strong>KEY COACHING POINTS</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| The triangles are cones, players are positioned in between cones (windows)  
  - Place four attackers and two defenders (holding pinnies) on the inside  
  - An outside player who has a ball (not all of them will) tosses a ball to an inside player who must control it and get the ball to another player on the outside who does not have a ball (they can use their other teammates)  
  - If a pinnie player intercepts a ball the inside player that messed up switches  
  - Rotate | ![Diagram](image) | Play 4v4+ four neutrals and GK’s  
  - The crosses are GK, the neutrals can move from cone to cone (cones are triangles) on the sidelines  
  - Neutrals are holding balls, if a ball is passed to them they can toss the ball they are holding to anyone on the team that passed the ball to them  
  - **Progressions:** Progress from make it, take it to having the GK defend cone goals | - Get in line of the flight of the ball  
  - Come to meet the ball  
  - Watch the ball  
  - Make an early selection in the body surface to use  
  - Controlling surface goes out to meet ball  
  - Relax the controlling surface and withdraw just before impact  
  - Encourage throws across the field |

**SCRIMMAGE:** Play an age appropriate scrimmage. Minimize coaching and let the players play and have fun!!
### PRACTICE THEME: Shooting #3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIAGRAM</th>
<th>ORGANIZATION</th>
<th>KEY COACHING POINTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Diagram 1" /></td>
<td><strong>Players warm up by juggling with their instep. They should try to juggle so the ball does not spin (they can let it bounce if they have to).</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Set up two goals 20 yards apart and form two teams, it team stands 3-5 yards off post. The first player rolls the ball out and takes a shot. After doing so, he or she becomes the GK. The other side does the same thing. Play for two minutes – who can get the most goals?</strong></td>
<td><strong>Ankle locked – toe pointing down</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Solid contact</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Follow through – low and at target</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Watch the ball!!!!!!!</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Landing on kicking foot</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Diagram 2" /></td>
<td><strong>Play 4v4 in a 45Wx35L field</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>The players on the sidelines have a supply of balls. Anytime the ball goes past their teams endline, they take a touch towards their goal and play a ball into to their team (for example, if the circles kick it and miss the square player would take a touch and play it towards the circles goal).</strong></td>
<td><strong>Play quickly – as soon as the ball goes past the endline (goal or missed shot) the player on the side needs to take a touch and play it in.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Take 1/2 chances</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Correct technique</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image3.png" alt="Diagram 3" /></td>
<td><strong>Play 4v4 with teams of 4 waiting behind each goal. When a team is scored on a new team comes on from the goal that was scored in. The team that scored MUST have two players run forward and touch one of the goal posts before recovering back to defend.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Progress to when a team scores the two players have to run and touch the goal behind them before scoring.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Play quickly – organize and get a shot off before the defenders can recover.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Correct technique</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Shoot</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Shoot</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Shoot</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SCRIMMAGE:** Play an age appropriate scrimmage. Minimize coaching and let the players play and have fun!!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIAGRAM</th>
<th>ORGANIZATION</th>
<th>KEY COACHING POINTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| ![Diagram](image) | - Warm-up with players in groups of 5 passing and moving…have them follow the passing pattern - short, short, long.  
- Mix in dynamic stretching | - Head up, aware of players around you  
- Accurate passing  
- Good set-up pass to allow for a one touch long ball – player could yell “set it” and let the player know where they want the softer pass played to so a longer pass can follow. |
| ![Diagram](image) | - Play 5 vs. 2/3. The team of 5 is in the middle of the grid. The other team of 5 has 2 players defending in the middle and the rest spread out on the outside.  
- Team of 5 tries to maintain possession. If the defenders win the ball they pass it to a teammate on the outside and then the teams switch (or if the team of 5 plays it out of bounds they switch).  
- Play with transition – if the team of 5 loses possession and can win it back before the ball is played to an outside target they get to keep possessing.  
- Attacking groups needs good shape and needs to utilize the space available to them.  
- Team of 5 should try to split the defenders.  
- When the defenders win the ball they need to play out quickly to break the pressure.  
- Attackers must immediately pressure the ball when they lose it to deny the defenders the opportunity to play out.  
- When attacking team loses it they should immediately pressure the ball to keep it in the attacking 1/3. If they can’t keep it in the attacking 1/3 they should drop and recover to defend the counter goals.  
- Maintain team shape when attacking and defending  
- Can the defending team win the ball and then get forward quickly! | |
| ![Diagram](image) | - Play 7v7, one team has a GK while the other defends 3 counter attack goals. The attacking team (squares) plays to the full sized goal (ball starts with the midfielder in the channel). Defending team tries to win the ball and then play to their target who should be immediately supported. When the defending team wins possession they attack the counter goals. **channel starts 40 yds from goal, counter goals are 30 yds from half…full width** | |

**SCRIMMAGE:** Play an age appropriate scrimmage. Minimize coaching and let the players play and have fun!!

© Fox Valley Soccer Training LLC (FVST) and soccerplans.com. Distribution prohibited without the consent of FVST and soccerplans.com.
### DIAGRAM

- Make 3 adjacent grids and put 3 players in each grid. The ball is played into one of the end grids and a player from the middle grid moves into that grid and tries to win the ball. The attacking team tries to play the ball to the other side. If the defending team wins it they switch spots with the team that lost it.

- Play 3v3, each team has two small goals to attack and two small goals to defend.
- Exchange of defending roles after a pass (typically after a pass a new player should always be pressuring to avoid one player “chasing” the ball and then losing a great deal of energy.

- Play 5v5 + GK’s. Each team has a GK that is a target player that can move laterally on the endline in-between two cones. Teams score 3 points for playing the ball to their target GK on the ground and one point for playing it to the target GK in the air.

- 6v6 + Gk’s. Split the field into thirds. When a team loses the ball and can win it back and score they get:
  - 3 pts if done in the attacking 3rd
  - 2 pts if done in the middle 3rd
  - 1 pt if done in the defensive 3rd

### ORGANIZATION

- Defender needs to immediately pressure the ball
- Force the play towards the balancing defenders in the middle grid
- Communication between the defending team
- Specify balls must be played on the ground

- Immediate chase to cut off an early shot
- If pressure on the ball, the other defenders can step forward to compress the space
- If no pressure, they may need to drop off until pressure can be established
- Team defensive shape

- Defensive shape
- IMMEDIATE pressure to take away the option of a driven or lofted pass to the GK
- If lack of pressure, holding player can drop back to try to cut off the pass to the target GK

- Emphasis on winning the ball back immediately after losing it.
- Step up or drop off depending upon pressure on the ball
- Team shape!

### KEY COACHING POINTS

- Immediate chase to cut off an early shot
- If pressure on the ball, the other defenders can step forward to compress the space
- If no pressure, they may need to drop off until pressure can be established
- Team defensive shape

- Defensive shape
- IMMEDIATE pressure to take away the option of a driven or lofted pass to the GK
- If lack of pressure, holding player can drop back to try to cut off the pass to the target GK

### SCRIMMAGE:

Play an age appropriate scrimmage. Minimize coaching and let the players play and have fun!!
# PRACTICE THEME: Dribbling to beat a defender #6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIAGRAM</th>
<th>ORGANIZATION</th>
<th>KEY COACHING POINTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Diagram" /></td>
<td>• Make a grid and have each player with a ball dribbling in the grid. Introduce different dribbling moves (lunge, V, stepover, scissors). Players dribble into a triangle, change direction, and accelerate out.</td>
<td>• Head up when dribbling as much as possible (glance at the ball when taking a touch then glance up to see what is happening) • Change of speed after doing a move • Change of direction after doing a move • Sell the fakes!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Diagram" /></td>
<td>• Create a 18 yard long by 12 yard wide field with a double goal (2 flags or coaching sticks 5 yards apart with a disc cone 1 yard from each flag) for each pair. If the ball is dribbled through the flag goals it is worth 5 points. If the ball is passed through the small gate goal (between the flag and disc cone) the goal is worth 1 point.</td>
<td>• Dribble at the defender so you can take them on the left or right • Do a move and then go! • Use of moves to unbalance the defender for just long enough to get behind them and score in the 5 pt goal. • Be dynamic (deceptive, unpredictable) • When doing most moves, if done correctly the dribbler’s body should be between the defender and the ball.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image3" alt="Diagram" /></td>
<td>• Play 3v3 or 4v4. Each team has 3 cone goals to defend and 3 goals to attack. The field should be wider than it is long. Players get 3 points for dribbling through a goal and 1 point for passing through a goal.</td>
<td>• Good team shape (spreading out wide and high) will create space to dribble • When to pass vs. when to dribble (dribbling will pull in defenders, the dribbler should then look to play a longer ball to a teammate who will have more space/time to score then) • Look for 1v1 situations (dribbler has to see what is in the space behind the defender).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SCRIMMAGE:** Play an age appropriate scrimmage. Minimize coaching and let the players play and have fun!!
### PRACTICE THEME: Switching the Point of Attack #5

#### DIAGRAM

- Players get into groups of 3. Two players are spread out and one player is in the middle. The ball starts with an outside player who plays it to the inside player (checking to). The inside player plays it back and the ball is switched to the other outside player. The inside player checks to that player, repeat. Short, short, long.

#### ORGANIZATION

- Play 3v3+2 neutral players in a 30x30 yard grid. Use disc cones to split the grid into 4 squares. Teams get a point of connecting a certain number of passes in a grid. Once they have done so, they need to play into another grid (switching the point of attack) so they can continue to score.

#### KEY COACHING POINTS

- Pacing of passes is important – not every pass should be hard. The entry pass to the middle player should be hard, the “layoff” pass should be softer and angle such that the outside player can then drive it (hard) to the other side.

- Short, short, long…play the ball a few times (to score) which will draw in the defense and then switch it.

- Recognition that the ball is going to be switched so players start to move into position to receive a longer ball. Once the ball is switched players need to support.

- A player should be supporting behind the ball so it can be dropped and switched.

- Players should have good width, a penetrating player that stays high, and a player “working the middle” trying to find a passing lane.

#### SCRIMMAGE:

- Play an age appropriate scrimmage. Minimize coaching and let the players play and have fun!!

© Fox Valley Soccer Training LLC (FVST) and soccerplans.com. Distribution prohibited without the consent of FVST and soccerplans.com.
# PRACTICE THEME: Shooting #6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIAGRAM</th>
<th>ORGANIZATION</th>
<th>KEY COACHING POINTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Diagram" /></td>
<td>• Players should do a juggling or dynamic warm-up to ensure they ready to shoot. Progress to 1v1 in the 18. Players are spread out around the 18 yard box with a ball. One player starts off attacking and is played a ball. He/she has to try to beat the defender and score. If the defender wins it then they try to score. Progress to 2v2 in the box. Play until all the balls have been shot and then switch the inside players.</td>
<td>• Visit soccerplans.com and click on ‘Video’ to see a demonstration video on how to shoot the ball. • Ankle locked (toes down) • Land on kicking foot when shooting for power (swing through the ball) • Glance at GK before shooting to know where to place the shot • Plant foot next to the ball • Strike the middle of the ball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Diagram" /></td>
<td>• Split the team into 3 teams (should be 3-6 players per team). Set up a square field and make a goal (either portable goal or made with large cones or corner flags) on 3 of the 4 sides. Each team designates a player to be a goalkeeper (take turns). Play with one ball, when a team gets it they can score on any goal other than their own. If enough shots aren’t being taken play with more soccer balls.</td>
<td>• Same coaching points listed above • Use of fakes and feints to unbalance the defender long enough to get around them and shoot. • Shoot early, shoot often, take ½ chances…perhaps the ball will deflect off the defender, change paths, and then go in • If one goal is heavily defended then switch the point of attack and try to score on a different goal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image3.png" alt="Diagram" /></td>
<td>• Use the same teams as above and play “GABOO”. Each letter stands for a different type of shot (ground, air, backpass, outside the box, one-touch). Two teams play while one team rests. Teams must score goals in GABOO order (first goal must be on ground, second must be in air,…). When a team scores they are off and the resting team comes on. Which team can score GABOO first?</td>
<td>• Previous coaching points • Requiring the players to score in different ways will bring up a variety of coaching points regarding how to “make” a scoring opportunity happen.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SCRIMMAGE:** Play an age appropriate scrimmage. Minimize coaching and let the players play and have fun!!
### DIAGRAM

- Players warm up by passing and moving.
- Progress to playing 2v2+1 neutral player in a 12 x 18 yard grid. Players get a point for splitting the defenders or getting x number of consecutive passes.

### ORGANIZATION

- Play 4v2 keepway. The attackers score by connecting x number of passes. The defenders score by winning the ball and dribbling out of the grid (the defender that wins it can pass the ball to their teammate to dribble out). Play until one team scores 3 points and then switch defenders.

### KEY COACHING POINTS

- Passing technique
- Angles and distances of support players
- Patience – look to split when the defenders are flat (straight across from each other). If they are staggered (pressure and cover) then the covering defender can intercept the pass much easier.

### DIAGRAM

- “21” Play 6v6 (combine two grids from the game above). Teams possess the ball and earn a point each time they complete a pass. The first team to get 21 passes wins (not in a row, 21 total).

### KEY COACHING POINTS

- Shape! The player with the ball should have two wide options on each side and the remaining player should be stretching the field (get as far away as possible). Each time the ball is passed these roles are changed.
- Appropriate angle and distance of support

### DIAGRAM

- Play 6v6 to 3 goals (each team has 3 goals to attack and 3 goals to defend). Teams can score by passing through any of the 3 goals that the opponent is defending. Variation: Add a GK for each team that must cover all 3 goals. Rather than a GK, a target player could be used, ball has to be played through a gate to the target to score. The field should be wide!

### KEY COACHING POINTS

- Possess until you can score!
- If the GK is added, it may be necessary to possess the ball on one side of the field to draw the GK to the closest goal and then switch the point of attack to score.
- Deception (outside of foot pass, look one way and attack another, switching the point of attack)

### SCRAMMAGE:

Play an age appropriate scrimmage. Minimize coaching and let the players play and have fun!!
### PRACTICE THEME: Functional Training: Holding Mid

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIAGRAM</th>
<th>ORGANIZATION</th>
<th>KEY COACHING POINTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| ![Diagram](image) | - Warm-up in groups of 4 passing and moving. Work in some patterns. Have 2 groups combine to play the next game.  
- Make a grid 40 yds long x 20 yds wide and make 5 yard endzones at the end of each side. Players play 2v2 in the middle and each team has a player in each endzone. Players try to play to an endzone target and then they switch spots with whoever they passed it to. | - Don’t support in the same channel or it gives you a bad angle  
- Covering/holding defenders...stay sideways on so you can see the ball and where people are behind you as well  
- Targets can’t defend...but they can communicate  
- If forward passes are taken recover at an angle  
- Squeeze space – cut off options |
| ![Diagram](image) | - Play 4v4 to targets in endzones. When a ball is played to a target in the endzone they switch places (Same as above but now on a larger scale). | - Holding mid – check your shoulder = glance behind you and see what is behind you so you know how to organize  
- Press the attacking team away from the target  
- Holding mid: behind the other mids and in front of the backs (don’t get caught forward) |
| ![Diagram](image) | - Make 3 teams of 4-6 players. Team A attacks team B while team C rests in counter attack goals (one in the regulation goal, and one player each in a small cone goal near each touchline). If the defending team wins it they try to find a target in one of the counter attack goals. If they find a target, they move to be the targets (resting) and the team that was the targets is now attacking (and the team that lost possession is now defending). If a goal is scored play out from the Gk’s hands.  
- Progress to having the extra 2 target players start on the side so they can make better runs. | - Holding mid should stay between the ball and the goal…only exceptions are: 1. If the ball is wide and in the corner they drop and form a triangle with the two center backs 2. If a ball is passed behind them they apply pressure from behind AND make sure the ball isn’t dropped. 3. When their GK has the ball they find pockets of space to help play the ball out.  
- If pressure is on the ball = squeeze up…if no pressure then you have to drop off  
- “Set it” = holding mid asking for a lighter pass so they can shoot it first touch |

**SCRIMMAGE:** Play an age appropriate scrimmage. Minimize coaching and let the players play and have fun!!

© Fox Valley Soccer Training LLC (FVST) and soccerplans.com. Distribution prohibited without the consent of FVST and soccerplans.com.
## DIAGRAM

- Set up several triangles with three cones throughout a large area
- Two players with a ball at each triangle
- One player has to serve the ball through the triangle to the other player, who must with one touch play it around either of the cones and back to the other person with the next touch
- Ball can’t go back through the same gate that it came from
- **Progressions:** Add points for mistakes and play a mini tournament

## ORGANIZATION

- Get in line of the flight of the ball
- Watch the ball
- Relax the controlling surface
- Tactical application of technique: inside of foot receiving vs. outside of foot
- Can a ball be played around the cone with the inside and then through the cones with the outside??
- Stay low and balanced when receiving

## KEY COACHING POINTS

- Keep your body open to the field/teammates
- Let the ball go across your body as much as possible when receiving – open up!
- Fake lunge as your receive it to freeze the defender to buy yourself more time

---

### Diagram 2

- **ORGANIZATION**
  - Play 3v1 in a 10x10 yard grid. The 3 attackers try to get a point by completing 7 consecutive passes. The defender tries to score by winning the ball and dribbling out of the grid. Whichever group gets two points first wins and then players switch defenders

### Diagram 3

- **ORGANIZATION**
  - Play 4v4 in a 45-x-60 yard area
  - Teams try to pass and get seven consecutive passes
  - Place four players from each team on the outside of the grid – when the ball is played to them they must play the ball into the grid with their 1st touch or the ball goes to the other team
  - Progress to 3 touch and/or any ball that is played to the outside must go to a 3rd person

### KEY COACHING POINTS

- 1st touch away from pressure
- Who can play a long ball to “break the pressure”
- Receive the ball, take on that first defender, and then play a longer ball

### SCRIMMAGE:

- Play an age appropriate scrimmage. Minimize coaching and let the players play and have fun!!

---

© Fox Valley Soccer Training LLC (FVST) and soccerplans.com. Distribution prohibited without the consent of FVST and soccerplans.com.
# PRACTICE THEME: Shooting #5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIAGRAM</th>
<th>ORGANIZATION</th>
<th>KEY COACHING POINTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image.png" alt="Diagram" /></td>
<td>• Juggling warm-up to ensure legs are loosened up and ready to shoot. Progress to players breaking into groups of 8 and set up as shown to the left. The first person in the square line shoots at the circle GK. After shooting, the square player goes to become the GK and the other line (circle) gets a shot. The pattern is always shoot, GK, end of the line they came from. Set up multiple games if necessary to ensure maximum repetition.</td>
<td>• Visit soccerplans.com and click on ‘Video’ to see a demonstration video on how to shoot the ball. • Ankle locked (toes down) • Land on kicking foot when shooting for power (swing through the ball) • Glance at GK before shooting to know where to place the shot • Plant foot next to the ball • Strike the middle of the ball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image.png" alt="Diagram" /></td>
<td>• Set up several fields so the players can play 1v1 + GK’s on a 20 yard long by 15 yard wide field. When the ball goes out of bounds the opposing player get to dribble in. Switch who is playing who and who the GK’s are if they aren’t full time keepers. Use large cones or coaching sticks/corner flags to make the goals. • Same as above but now play 2v2 (will probably have to make the field a little bigger)</td>
<td>• Same coaching points listed above • Use of fakes and feints to unbalance the defender long enough to get around the and shoot. • Shoot early, shoot often, take ½ chances…perhaps the ball will deflect off the defender, change paths, and then go in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image.png" alt="Diagram" /></td>
<td>• Play 4v4 on a 35 yard long by 25 yard wide field (small to maximize shots taken). Have two teams playing and one resting. After 2 minutes the losing team (or winning, depending upon your team) is out and the resting team is on. Which team can win the most games?</td>
<td>• Shot selection (power vs. accuracy). Location on the field the shot is taken from (closer to goal typically calls for a more accurate shot). Also, how has the GK performed (very well = need to get a better shot off, poorly = shoot away)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SCRIMMAGE:** Play an age appropriate scrimmage. Minimize coaching and let the players play and have fun!!

© Fox Valley Soccer Training LLC (FVST) and soccerplans.com. Distribution prohibited without the consent of FVST and soccerplans.com.