

## Practice Plans Ages 9-11

### Week 2

Leave all available soccer balls out on a line. As players arrive re-introduce yourself and ask them to go pick a ball. Allow for 5-10 minutes of “goofing off”. Give them a few minutes to get comfortable. Encourage them to only use their feet, but don’t stress. Practice hasn’t officially started.

Once all players have arrived or you feel they’ve had enough time for playing call them all in for a basic stretch. Use this opportunity to chat with them. Ask them a combination of soccer and fun questions to get them comfortable speaking with you.

Every practice should start this way. Repetition helps at this age. It allows them to learn, by the time we are done stretching, practice has started.

### Stretch Suggestions

Spread your feet and lean to one side.

Go down like a dog.

Batman or butterfly. Ask are you a batman or a butterfly?

Chicken wing – this is the best opportunity to chat loosely. Both legs.

1 leg for 10 seconds

Other leg for 10 seconds

Tip toes for 10 seconds

### Water

There should be roughly 40 minutes left. You do not want to toss too much at them. They can only comprehend so much. Focus on 2 drills that focus on the same skills.

**Game 1 – Whichever Game from Week 1 worked the Best. Repetition is crucial at this age.**

### Water

## **Game 2 – Speed Dribbling/Sneaky Pants**

We still want to piggyback off Week 1 (Looking Up and Dribbling to an Opening). We are only playing 1 new game this week and we want it to be related yet different.

Have each player get 1 ball and start on 1 side of the field with their ball on the line AND their foot on top of the ball. Challenge them to a Time Trial run from one side of the Field to the other. Start high, like 10 seconds and then slowly cut down in increments of 1-2 based on their speed/skill. When “returning” to the original side of the field we play Sneaky Pants. Rather than going fast, we are going slow. The players need to dribble slowly with small, controlled kicks and sneak up on Coach when their back is turned. Coach should take a few steps and turn around and say “Stop”, “Freeze” or something along those lines. Continue until they reach the original side. Game example listed below in **Coaching Points Game 2**.

### **Examples.**

10 Seconds on the Clock, Countdown as they race to the other side. Sneaky Pants on the way back. Now 8 seconds on the Clock. Sneaky Pants. 6 Seconds. Sneaky Pants. 4 Seconds. etc.

### **Coaching Points Game 2**

The game might appear to be nonsense at first glance. It is actually very valuable when we focus on the right things. You want to coach the kids on their spacing. They shouldn't be bumping into each other or having their soccer balls cross into each other. We are trying to develop our spacing from the players around us. In order to do that the kids will have to use BOTH POINTS from last week. Look Up, and Dribble to the Openings. We want to maintain a straight line and control. It will take time, but we will play this game again.

We want to emphasize the “type of kicks” we are using. When we are Speed Dribbling we are going fast with “big” kicks. When we are playing Sneaky Pants we are going slow with “little” kicks. We want to encourage development in both categories. Sneaky Pants the ball should always be near the player so when you say, “Stop” they can maintain control. It should not be so far “away” that they cannot stop it. It teaches awareness of the ball and maintaining appropriate distance from their bodies.

### **How to increase the Challenge?**

Speed Dribbling. Time them. 10 seconds, 8 seconds, 6 seconds. Anything less than 5 seconds is “Grown-Up speed”. Watch them rise to the occasion when you tell them that. You can also act as a Speed Bump. If a player's soccer ball gets too far away, you stop it. This teaches them that even though they are doing “big” kicks, if they kick it too far, they will lose control.

Sneaky Pants. Mix up your “Stops”. If you normally stop after 5 steps, stop after 3, then 4, then 6. Keep them guessing as to when they will stop. If you see a player moving after you have said “Stop” have them back up 2 spaces. This will help keep them listening and prepare them to stop at a moments notice.

### **Water.**

**Scrimmage.** You can't beat an old-fashioned scrimmage. A 30-minute game to end practice is a coach's favorite and a player's favorite. Nothing can simulate the game like the game. Throughout the scrimmage coach for the points of focus. **Looking Up** and **Moving to the Opening** and now **Spacing**. Your team should be large enough to scrimmage itself either 5v5 or 6v6. If not, ask the team next to you. They should be the same age group and division.

### **End Practice**

Re-enforce names at the end for both yourself and your teammates. Ask them questions about your coaching points from practice.

When I'm looking down, where do I look next? UP!

When I have the ball, do I dribble towards the other players, or around them? AROUND!

Should we be running into each other while playing? NO! Should we keep our Space? YES!

Break it down with a team cheer.

Good job Coach.