

Practice Plans Ages 9-11

Week 3

Leave all available soccer balls out on a line. 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 1/2 worked the Best. Repetition is crucial at this age.

It never hurts to start a rotation here. We do not want to play King of the Ring exclusively. Start alternating between the original 3 games. These are the most valuable and we want to revisit them often.

Water

Game 2 – The Gauntlet

We still want to piggyback off Week 1/2 (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 place their ball along an end line (ideally the longer sideline). Then have each player (without their ball) move to the shorter sideline.

Round 1 should just be Coach vs the Kids. Coach takes the role of the Gauntlet Master. The kids take the role of the Runners. The Mice need to get across the “Gauntlet”, Soccer Field, without getting caught by a “Fireball”, Soccer Ball. The Coach passes the soccer ball at the Runners as they run across the field. They should run from one end to the other and stop. They should only cross the field once per round. If they get hit by the ball than they become a Gauntlet Master and need to start passing the ball to catch the other Runners. Continue until you have caught most players.

Coaching Points Game 2

The kids love this game. It starts off just purely fun. They are working on their agility (dodging the ball), their awareness (looking for the ball), and their stamina. Once they take the role of the Gauntlet Master, they are working on passing to a moving target. We want to coach for them to pass to where the Runners are going, not where they are.

As Runners:

- We want them to use any means necessary to not get hit. Jumping, stopping, diving, etc. We want them to start realizing they can run in more than just a straight line.
- We want them to deal with defeat. Some kids take losses easily, others do not. This game is the great equalizer since you don't “lose” you just change teams.

As Gauntlet Master:

- We want them to learn to pass to a moving target. To do so they need to use our previous Coaching Point of Looking Up.

How to increase the Challenge?

Start with more players as Gauntlet Masters.

My personal favorite is to get the parents involved. Ask if any parents are willing to play a round? First round or two have the parents be the Gauntlet Masters. The kids will love it. After that switch it up and let the kids be the Gauntlet Masters and their parents the Runners. The kids will love having to catch their grown-up.

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, Spacing** and now **Passing.** 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!

Should I pass to where you are? Or where you are going? Where we are going!

Break it down with a team cheer.

Good job Coach.