

Practice Plans Ages 9-11

Week 4

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 1/2/3 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 – Freeze Tag/Catch the Kid (or Coach)

We still want to piggyback off Week 1/2/3 (Looking Up, dribbling to an Opening, and Passing to a Moving Target). 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 shorter sideline). Then have each player stand behind their ball.

Round 1 should just be Coach vs the Kids. The kids take the role of the Freezers. The Freezers need to “freeze” the Coach (Free-zee) by passing the soccer ball into their feet. Once they successfully do this Coach freezes (sometimes I will do goofy poses to make it more fun, other times I just freeze as-is). If you have an Assistant Coach or Coaches have the kids freeze them too. I only keep them frozen for 3 seconds or so. We used to “tag” each other but under current circumstances now I just announce, “everyone is unfrozen!” or something along those lines.

Round 2 can be any variation of the following.

Kids freeze Coaches again

Coaches freezes Kids

Kids freeze their teammates

Kids freeze their Grown-ups

Grown-ups freeze their kids

Coaching Points Game 2

The kids love this game. It starts off just purely fun. They are working on their awareness (looking for the Coach), and their ability to pass to a moving target. Just as last week we want to coach for them to pass to where the Coach is going, not where they are.

As Freezers:

- 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.
- We want them to work on kicking the ball when moving. Kicking the ball in stride as opposed to stopping and kicking.

As the Free-zees:

- 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 loss easily, others do not. This game is the great equalizer since you don't “lose” you just get frozen for a few minutes.

How to increase the Challenge?

Start with less players as Freezers, when a player gets Frozen they now join the Freezers to freeze any remaining players.

Players can only be Frozen for so many seconds. If you started with 20, decrease it to 10, 5, etc. This will mean the Freezers need to move faster to catch everyone before the clock is up and everyone is back unfrozen.

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 Free-zees. The kids will love it. After that switch it up and let the kids be the Free-zees and their parents the Freezers.

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 to a Moving Target**. Your team should be large enough to scrimmage itself either 4v4 or 5v5. 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.