

Practice Plan

There are so many things you need to teach newcomers that I would refrain from going through all of it.

I have made some suggestions for a plan below, and you can obviously change and update these to your liking.

Warmup/Stretches

Kids under 8 need only very little stretching and warmup, have them run with or without a ball for a few minutes and they are done.

Practice Suggestions

If this is the first time your players ever do any ball handling, dribbling back and forth while keeping the ball close is a good beginning. Ensure they do keep the ball close and don't cross lanes with fellow players.

Game Playing Time

Although everyone says that we shouldn't focus on scoring and playing games, I find it to be important that they know the main object of the game, even if the main goal is for them to have fun.

By the third or fourth practice session they should know enough basics that you can start playing practice games. Three-on-Three or Four-on-Four depending on your team size.

Although passing a ball is crucial in 'real' soccer, you will see very little of that in the games. The main reason for that is that they cannot focus on ball control and player position yet, but even more importantly they do not have positions. But that is perfectly fine. If they can score and be the hero of the moment. Perfect.

Other things that should be taught are that the ball cannot leave the field, throw-ins and corner kicks. All parts of youth league games.

Throw-ins

A throw-in is performed when a player kicks the ball outside the painted lines. Now sometimes the Referee will allow the play to continue for the sake of continuity, but once the ball leaves the SIDE-line of the field the team that did NOT kick it out gets a throw-in.

It is done by standing behind the line (outside the field) with both hands on the ball. The ball should be behind the neck, resting on the neck and thrown into the field preferably to a team-mate or up the field towards the opponents goal.

Corner Kicks

If a player kicks the ball out behind one of the goals and this goal belongs to the player who kicked the ball out, then the other team get a corner kick. It is performed in the corner where the sideline meets the back line and is performed like a regular goal or startup kick.

If the opposite team kicks the ball out behind the goal, a goal kick is performed typically nby the goalie if one is appointed.