BUILDING WINNERS FOR LIFE

YOUTH SUPER SPORTS

Soccer Practice Plans for Coaches

Rookies Level 2

PENINSULA METROPOLITAN YMCA
YMCA Youth Sports Pledge:
I pledge to play the game - the best I can, to be a team player, to respect my opponents, the rules and officials, and improve myself - in spirit, mind and body.
Welcome!

Thank you for agreeing to be a YMCA Youth Super Sports coach. With your effort and enthusiasm you will find the challenge to be very rewarding. There are 2 objectives for these plans:

1. To offer a progressive series of practices that gradually build on previous practices and/or game experiences.
2. To maximize the potential for children to have a positive and beneficial experience under your leadership.

Each plan has been laid out to include 5 components:

* Purpose
* Fitness concepts
* Tactics and skills
* Rules and traditions
* Character development concepts

Your YMCA staff person is readily available to assist you to ensure the objectives of Youth Super Sports are successfully accomplished.
**Purpose:** To play the game, focusing on boundaries and rules. Players will be able to play a game of soccer in a predetermined area while adhering to simple start and restart rules.

Warm-Up: (5 minutes) Players get loosened up by either: kicking or dribbling the ball in space (one ball per child) or dribbling or kicking at targets spread out in space.

### Well-Being Circle

#### Discussion

**General Wellness**

(5 minutes)

Gather the players in a group. Explain that running makes our hearts beat faster and kicking makes our legs stronger. Explain how soccer improves our physical fitness and that by the end of the season, players will be able to keep going for a longer period of time without getting tired.

#### Activity

Have the players spread out into their own space and run in place. “I will pass the ball to some of you. If you get the ball, pass it back to me and keep running!” Continue for about 30 seconds.
Practice 1

Games Approach #1 (5 minutes)
Now it is time to play a game. After a while, interrupt the game, ask the players a series of questions about what the goal of the game was and what some of the tactics and skills used were.

Goal: Players learn that they have to attack a goal or cone to score in soccer. Each player attacks a different goal.

Description: (10 minutes) 1v1. Each player tries to hit a cone using his or her feet, not hands.

Games Approach #2 (20 minutes)
Goal: Players learn that they can play with other players on the same team and try to score between the posts (cones or goal).

Description: 2v2. Each pair tries to score by hitting a cone or by kicking into a small goal.

Games Approach #3 (20 minutes)
Goal: Players learn appropriate ways of restarting the game when the ball goes out of play.

Description: Each team tries to score into a small goal. Mark a playing area no larger than 50 by 30 feet.

In games 1 and 2, watch that players don’t stray too far from their cones or goals and into other games. Redirect them if they stray.
Key questions to ask during this game:
Q - How do we start the game? A - With a kickoff at the center.
Q - What happens when the ball goes out of bounds at the side? A - It’s a throw-in.
Q - What happens when the ball goes out of bounds at the end? A - It’s a goal kick or corner kick.
Q - What happens after a goal is scored? A - A kickoff at the center.

Character Huddle (5 minutes)
Key Idea: YMCA character values; caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility.
Gather the children in a circle with one ball. “Everyone hand the ball to the one next to you until it makes it around the whole circle.” After the ball has gone around the circle once, have it passed to you. “We play soccer to be more healthy and fit, but it also teaches us to become good teammates and good people. This season we will talk about 4 qualities of a good person and teammate: Caring, honesty, respect and responsibility. Our team needs to have all of these qualities in our practices and games. We can’t be a team without each of you doing your part. Let’s pass the ball to each other and say one of the core values before you pass. This will help you remember to use all 4 of the qualities so we can work together.”

Wrap-Up: Remind them of next practice or game day and time. Give a sneak preview of next week’s practice; playing as a team.
**Purpose:** To play the game as a team, focusing on positional and support play. Players will be able to effectively support teammates who have the ball in a game of soccer.

**Warm-Up:** (5 minutes). Have pairs of players pass and move in a small area. Tell them to call for the ball from their partners.

**Well-Being Circle**

**Equipment:**
- 1 soccer ball per player
- 1 portable goal (or cones)
- Rubber band
- Different colored shirts or vests to differentiate teams

**Discussion**

**Flexibility** (5 minutes)

Bring a rubber band to use as a prop. “This rubber band is like our muscles. When I pull, it stretches; when I let it go, it pulls back to its original shape.” Demonstrate with the rubber band. Explain that our bodies are the same way. Our muscles stretch just like the rubber band.

**Activity**

Have the children reach down and touch their toes three times. “Your leg muscles need to stretch because you use them the most in soccer; Stretching makes your muscles more flexible and keeps them from getting hurt.”
**Games Approach #1** (20 minutes)

**Goal:** Players learn how to spread out down the field so they can receive a pass.

**Description:** Review the rules, including starts and restarts, fouls, no use of hands, throw-ins, corner kicks (direct only) and goal kicks. Encourage players to spread out.

**Coach’s Cue**

“Be in a space where someone can pass to you.”

**Skill Practice 1:** (10 minutes) explain how to move forward and support teammates. Practice moving forward to support teammates by having each pair pass the ball and move up and down the field.

**Coach’s Cue**

“Move down field (toward the goal) to support your teammate.”

**Skill Practice 2:** (10 minutes) Demonstrate and explain how to spread out as a team to move the ball down field. Place players into groups. Each group passes the ball and moves up and down the field. The object is to get the ball down the field as quickly as possible. Each player must receive at least one pass.

**Coach’s Cue**

“Spread out forward and sideways.”
**Practice 2**

**Games Approach #2** (25 minutes)

**Goal:** Players learn to spread out the length and width of the field.

**Description:** Each team leaves one player forward.

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**Coach’s Point**

In game 2, make it a condition that teams leave one player forward. This will ensure some depth to the attack

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**Coach’s Cue**

“Leave one player forward.” “Spread out over the field.”
“Look for teammates to pass to.”

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**Character Huddle** (5 minutes)

**Key Idea: Honesty**

Gather children into a group. “When you come to practice you should do three things: 1. Be ready to play. 2. Learn and improve your skills and work with others. 3. Have fun. I’m going to give you a way to remember these 3 things. It’s called a ‘team motto.’ Our team motto is Play Hard, Play Fair, Have Fun! Let’s say it together loudly. Be sure to remember our team motto and put it into practice.”

**Wrap-Up:** Remind them of next practice or game day and time. Give a sneak preview of next week’s practice: Supporting your teammates.
**Purpose:** To keep possession of the ball, focusing on passing in the game. The object is for players to be able to pass the ball under pressure during a game.

**Warm-Up:** (5 minutes) Pair-up players. Each player has a cone and each pair has a ball. The cones are about 10 yards apart. Each player tries to hit the opponent’s cone with the ball.

**Well-Being Circle**

**Discussion**
Cardiorespiratory Fitness (5 minutes)
Children gather in a group. “Everyone make a fist. Squeeze your fist tightly and then let go. Your heart is a special muscle that tightens and relaxes just like your fist is doing. It is about the size of your fist. Every time it tightens, or beats, it pumps blood all over your body.”

**Activity**
“Run in place and feel your heart beating. Count how many times it beats.” Time for 15 seconds.” Ask players the number they counted. “Running helps you improve your cardiorespiratory fitness. The heart and lungs work to get blood to your whole body.”

**Equipment:**
- 1 soccer ball per pair
- 2 portable goals or cones per team
- 1 cone per player
- Different colored shirts or vests to differentiate teams
Games Approach #1 (10 minutes)

Goal: Players learn to pass in the game.

Description: 2v2 passing to cones or small goals. Place the cones or goals about 20 yards apart.

Skill Practice 1: (10 minutes) Explain and demonstrate how to pass a moving ball under pressure. In groups of 4, practice team passing using one or more of these variations, depending on players’ abilities.
1. Pass the ball in a square, stopping the ball before passing.
2. Keep passing the moving ball in a continuous relay (pass and follow the ball).
3. Mark square areas with cones. Have 3 players in each square try to keep the ball away from one defender. Switch who plays defender every 6 passes or 3 minutes.

Skill Practice 2: (10 minutes) Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to use passing and support to move the ball forward. Practice combining passing and support to move the ball forward by using 3v1. Each team of 3 gets the ball from one end of the field to the other without running with the ball (by passing). One player is a defender.
Games Approach #2 (25 minutes)

Goal: Players learn to pass in the game.

Description: Based on the skill proficiency of your players, rotate players accordingly so they all have a chance to play offense and defense. Teams try to pass often.

Character Huddle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Responsibility

Gather children in a group between 2 cones about 10 feet apart. Stand in the middle of the circle with a ball. “I’m going to show you 2 different ways to handle the same situation. Think about which is the best way to handle this.” Choose a player to receive a pass from you. Make a bad pass and then stomp angrily away from the group. Retrieve the ball and make another bad pass. This time, run to get the ball and make a pass that goes directly to the player. “If you think the first response is the way to handle making a bad pass, stand next to this come. If you think the second way is better, stand next to this one.” Ask players to explain their choices. “It’s important to be a good sport in soccer. That’s being responsible to your teammates.”

Wrap-Up: Remind them of next practice or game day and time. Give a sneak preview of next week’s practice: Trapping the ball.
**Practice 4**

**Purpose:** To keep possession of the ball focusing on receiving in the game. The objective is to be able to receive the ball under pressure during a game.

**Warm-Up:** (5 minutes) Partners practice passing, moving down field. Pass and move.

**Well-Being Circle**

**Discussion**
Cardiorespiratory Fitness (5 minutes)

Gather the children into a group. Have the children make a fist like they did last week. Review last week’s lesson. “What did we pretend our fist was last week? (the heart) What does our heart do? (pumps blood).”

**Activity**

Put your hands over your chest and feel what’s happening. Now, let’s run to the goal and back. Will our heart beat faster or slower? (Faster) When you run during soccer your heart beats faster and your lungs breathe faster. They slow down when you slow down. Making your heart beat faster helps to improve your cardiorespiratory fitness.

**Equipment:**
- 1 soccer ball
- 1 portable goal or set of cones
- 1 cone per player
- Different colored shirts or vests to differentiate teams
Games Approach #1 (10 minutes)

Goal: Players learn to pass and support each other in the game.

Description: Each team tries to pass frequently.

Coach’s Cue

“Pass and move.”

Skill Practice 1: (15 minutes) Introduce, demonstrate and explain how to receive the ball quickly and efficiently. Have the players practice by placing partners 5 to 10 yards apart and pass the ball back and forth.

Coach’s Cue

“Get behind the ball.” “Use the inside (or outside) of the foot.” “Push the ball in the direction you want it to go.”

Skill Practice 2: (15 minutes) Introduce, demonstrate and explain how to receive a moving ball and direct it toward the goal. Have 1 partner (or you) feed the ball to the other player, who controls the moving ball, dribbles, and shoots into the goal.
Practice 4

**Games Approach #2 (20 minutes)**

**Goal:** Players learn to receive passes effectively under pressure in the game.

**Description:** Based on the proficiency of your players, rotate players so they all have a chance to play offense and defense. Each team tries to pass frequently and to leave one player forward.

**Coach’s Point**

Continue to emphasize good support of teammates by having teams designate a forward who stays in the attacking half of the field. This ensures that teams play with some depth, as young players have the tendency to keep coming back to the ball. Encourage a forward player by saying “Stay up there because if you come back, there’s no one to pass to up there.”

**Character Huddle (5 minutes)**

**Key Idea: Honesty**

Gather the children into a group near 2 cones about 10 feet apart. “What is a foul? Should you admit to a foul if no official sees it? Those who think yes, stand at this cone. Those who think no, stand at this one.” Wait for the children to choose. “When you know you’ve fouled, you should raise your hand. You should never take unfair advantage of other players. Can you think of other ways honesty is practiced on the field?” Listen to responses and discuss.

**Wrap-Up:** Remind them of next practice or game day and time. Give a sneak preview of next week’s practice: Attacking as a team.
**Purpose:** To keep possession of the ball and attack as a team, focusing on depth in attack. The objective is to be able to, as a team, keep the ball and attack the goal by passing and receiving and by supporting ahead of the ball during the game.

**Warm-Up:** (5 minutes) Pass and move in teams of 4 over the field. Each team of 4 stays close together and moves anywhere on the field, passing the ball among team members.

**Discussion**
Cardiorespiratory Fitness (5 minutes)
Gather the children in a group. “Everyone find your own space. The heart does what things?” (pumps blood and beats faster when we move faster).

**Equipment:**
- 1 soccer ball
- 2 portable goals or cones
- Different colored shirts or vests to differentiate teams

**Activity**
Have the players run in place and make their fist open and close faster at the same time. “When I say stop, stop as fast as you can. When your heart beats faster it gets stronger because it’s a muscle. Muscles get stronger when you use them. Soccer is a great way to keep your heart healthy and strong.”
**Games Approach #1** (15 minutes)

**Goal:** Players learn to spread out ahead of the ball.

**Description:** Play a game. The players should support ahead of the ball.

**Skill Practice 1:** (15 minutes) Introduce, demonstrate and explain how to support ahead of the ball. Gather players into teams of 4, unopposed. Each team passes and moves to the end of the field. The team must make 4 passes before shooting.

**Coach’s Cue**

“Have a forward.”

**Skill Practice 2:** (15 minutes) Introduce, demonstrate and explain how to move the ball forward under pressure. Place players in teams of 4. Each team passes and moves to the end of the field as you oppose them. The team must make 4 passes before shooting.

**Coach’s Cue**

“Pass and move ahead.”

**Coach’s Point**

In skill practices 1 and 2 you might see 2 players go to the same place to receive a pass. Emphasize forming a diamond shape as a way of best using the available space to bring the ball forward.
Practice 5

Games Approach #2 (25 minutes)

Goal: Players learn to move the ball forward as a team.

Description: Rotate players so they all have a chance to play offense and defense.

Character Huddle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Responsibility

Gather the children into a group near 2 cones about 10 feet apart. Choose 2 players to help role-play. Set up a triangle of you and the 2 players. Let the children know you are role playing with them. All 3 of you take turns passing. When it’s your turn, miss the pass and role-play yourself as a player: “I couldn’t get that pass! It was your fault! You made a bad pass!” Now as coach: “Stand at this cone if you think it’s okay to make excuses when you make mistakes. Stand at this cone if you think you should try to learn and work harder to improve. Not making excuses is taking responsibility for yourself.”

Wrap-Up: Remind them of next practice or game day and time. Give a sneak preview of next week’s practice: Dribbling under pressure.
Purpose: Keep possession of the ball and attack in the game. Focus on passing, receiving, dribbling under pressure, and pushing and running. The objective is for players to be able to pass, receive, and move the ball forward during the game.

Warm-Up: (5 minutes) Repeat the third variation of skill practice 1 from practice 3.

Well-Being Circle

Discussion
Flexibility (5 minutes)
Gather the children in a group. Show them a rubber band. “Let’s pretend this rubber band is one of your muscles. See how it moves back and forth, stretching and moving.”

Activity
“Let’s move our bodies like the rubber band. Reach and stretch up and down. It’s important to stretch slowly without bouncing or jerking.” Continue stretching for 1 minute.

Equipment:

- 1 soccer ball
- 2 portable goals or 2 cones per team
- 1 cone per player
- A rubber band
- Different colored shirts or vests to differentiate teams
Practice 6

**Games Approach #1** (10 minutes)

**Goal:** Players learn to attack the goal with the ball.

**Description:** Players actively attack the goal during game play.

"Run past an opponent with the ball if you can."

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**Skill Practice 1:** (15 minutes) Introduce, demonstrate and explain how to attack a goal under pressure. Practice the skill, 1v1. Place cones about 15 yards apart. Each player attacks the other player’s cone. Player 1 starts by passing the ball to player 2, who then becomes the attacker. Player 1 becomes the defender.

"Receive and push the ball into space." "Push and run past the defender."

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**Skill Practice 2:** (10 minutes) Introduce, demonstrate and explain how to attack with the ball. Practice working together as a team to attack with the ball by making teams, 2v2. Reposition the cones from game one, 30 yards by 20 yards. Have the 1v1 pairs from skill practice 1 combine with pairs to make 2v2 groups.
Games Approach #2 (20 minutes)

Goal: Players learn how to attack the goal with the ball under pressure.

Description: Players play 3v1, 3v2, or 3v3 games, depending on their skill proficiency. They play with the target player in the attacking half. Goals from the target player feed count double.

Coach’s Cue

Pass if you need to.” “Look for space behind the defender.” “Push and run.”

Character Huddle (5 minutes)

Key Idea: Caring

Gather the children into a circle. Stand in the middle with a ball. Choose 2 children to pass the ball with you. “We’re going to work on our passing skills.” Pass repeatedly to them and not the others. “Tell me how you felt to have only 2 players get the passes. Sharing the ball and not distracting your teammates shows you care about them. What other things can you do to show you care about your teammates?” Their responses should include encouragement, positive comments for good play, forgiving players that make mistakes and so on.

Wrap-Up: Remind them of next practice or game day and time. Give a sneak preview of next week’s practice: Shooting at the goal.
**Purpose:** To attack the goal in the game, focusing on shooting with good technique under pressure. The objective is for players to be able to shoot under pressure using appropriate technique during the game.

**Warm-Up:** (5 minutes) Repeat skill practice 1 from practice 6.

**Well-Being Circle**

**Discussion**
Muscular Strength and Endurance (5 minutes)

Gather players into a circle. What part of your body do you use the most for soccer. The more you practice soccer, the stronger your leg muscles will get and you can keep going much longer before getting tired. What things can we do to get our legs stronger for soccer? (running and kicking)

**Activity**

Gather children into a group. “Okay everyone get down on the ground and do the crab walk.” Continue for 30 seconds to one minute. “Are your arms and legs getting tired? You used many of your arm and leg muscles to do the crab walk. Next pretend you have a soccer ball in front of you.” Have the children pretend to kick a soccer ball 5 times each. “Practicing kicking helps make your legs stronger.”

**Equipment:**
- 1 soccer ball per pair
- 2 portable goals or cones per team
- Different colored shirts or vests to differentiate teams
Games Approach #1 (10 minutes)

Goal: Players learn the importance of having a shooting attitude. (If you don’t shoot, you won’t score!)

Description: The players shoot to score as often as possible.

Skill Practice 1: (10 minutes) Introduce, demonstrate and explain how to shoot correctly. Practice shooting with correct technique by placing players in groups of 4. Keep the same teams from game 1. Each player shoots in turn and retrieves his or her ball.

Skill Practice 2: (10 minutes) Introduce, demonstrate and explain how to move onto a rolling ball and shoot. Place players in groups of 4 - same as skill practice 1, but a player (or you) rolls the ball forward before each player shoots.

Coach’s Cue

“Attack the ball.”

Skill Practice 3: (10 minutes) Introduce, demonstrate and explain how to receive a pass under control and shoot. Players learn to receive a pass under control and shoot. Get into groups of 4, same as skill practice 1, but a player (or you) passes the ball before each player shoots.
**Games Approach #2** (10 minutes)

**Goal:** Players learn to shoot under pressure in the game.

**Description:** Rotate players so they all have a chance to play offense and defense.

“Control the ball.” “Shoot to score.”

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**Character Huddle** (5 minutes)

**Key Idea: Responsibility**

Gather the children into a circle. “I want everyone to run in a circle, following the person in front of you without bumping into each other. Keep a space about as long as a bicycle between you, and don’t go ahead of the person in front of you.” Encourage the children to run slowly enough to do all the directions. Continue the activity for one minute. “Everyone stop. Did you bump into each other? Did anyone get upset with the person in front of you? You kept your body under control by not going ahead of the person in front of you. You kept your emotions under control by not getting upset with the person ahead of you. He or she couldn’t move any faster since you were all running in a circle as a group. Everyone can stay safe and learn when everyone is responsible for himself or herself.”

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**Wrap-Up:** Remind them of next practice and game day and time. Give a sneak preview of next week’s practice: Guarding or marking your opponents.
**Practice 8**

**Purpose:** To defend space in the game, focusing on marking and pressure. The objective is for players to be able to defend space by marking an opponent during the game.

**Warm-Up:** (5 minutes) Players dribble and follow the leader in groups of 2 or 4.

**Well-Being Circle**

**Equipment:**
- 1 soccer ball per pair
- 1 goal or cones per team
- 1 cone per pair of players
- Different colored shirts or vests to differentiate teams

**Discussion**

General Fitness (5 minutes)

Gather the children into a circle. “What do our bodies need every day to keep going?” Discuss sleeping, resting, eating, and doing regular activities. “There’s one more thing that’s really important; being active and exercising.”

**Activity**

“What kinds of things can you do on days when you don’t have soccer to keep your body active?” Listen to their responses and act out three activities. “It’s important to be active even when you don’t have soccer practice. Your body needs to move everyday.”
Games Approach #1 (10 minutes)

Goal: Players think about defending space and their goal.

Description: 2v2 to small goal.

Skill Practice 1: (15 minutes) Introduce, demonstrate and explain how to defend behind an opponent. Practice by pairing up players with two feeders - one player is the attacker and one is the defender. The feeders are at 2 cones about 20 yards apart. Feeder 1 passes to the attacker, who must turn and pass to feeder 2. The defender has to stop this.

Coach’s Cue: Defender - “Stay behind the attacker.” “Stay Close.”

Skill Practice 2: (15 minutes) Introduce, demonstrate and explain how to mark an opponent during game play. Practice with 2v2 to a small goal.

Coach’s Cue: “Pick a player to mark.” “Stay with him or her.”
Games Approach #2 (20 minutes)

**Goal:** Players learn to mark an opponent and pressure the ball during game play.

Character Huddle (5 minutes)

**Key Idea: Responsibility**

Gather children into a circle. Stand in the center with a ball. Ask children to call you and raise their hands if they are in a good position for a pass. Dribble the ball within the circle but do not pass to anyone. Continue for about 1 minute. “Did I share the ball with anyone? Do you think that is good teamwork? What is good teamwork?” Listen to their responses. Repeat the activity but this time pass to players who call and raise their hands. “Teamwork is when all players are working together, not just keeping the ball to themselves. Responsible team members get in position to receive a good pass. They don’t always pass to the same person and they always work hard.”

**Wrap-Up:** Remind them of next practice or game day and time. Give a sneak preview of next week’s practice—tackling.
**Purpose:** To defend your space and win the ball in the game focusing on pressure and tackling. The objective is for the players to be able to challenge the one with the ball and win the tackle during the game.

**Warm-Up:** (15 minutes) Players play 1v1 to a small goal or cones.

**Well-Being Circle**

**Equipment:**
- 1 soccer ball per pair
- 1 goal or cones per team
- 1 cone per player
- Different colored shirts or vests to differentiate teams

**Discussion**
Healthy Habits (5 minutes)

Explain to the players that when they take care of their bodies by eating right and getting enough sleep, it gives them more energy. When playing soccer our bodies need a lot of energy to keep playing throughout the game.

**Activity**

Mark boundary areas. Have the children run as fast as they can when you say “go!” (make sure they stay within the boundaries) for about a minute or until they get tired. “You had enough energy to run but when you don’t take care of your body, you can get tired much faster. What are some healthy ways we can take care of our bodies?”
Practice 9

**Games Approach #1** (10 minutes)

**Goal:** Players learn how to mark an opponent and how to apply pressure when that opponent gets the ball.

**Description:** 2v2.

**Coach’s Cue**

“Use one-on-one marking.”

**Skill Practice 1:** (5 minutes) Introduce, demonstrate and explain how to tackle correctly. Practice by placing players in pairs. Place a ball between 2 players. On the count of 3, the players trap the ball between them with the insides of their feet. This is a cooperative tackling practice; both players use the same side of the foot to trap the ball.

**Coach’s Cue**

“Get close to the ball.” “Point the toe out.” “Keep the knee bent and the leg firm.”

**Skill Practice 1:** (5 minutes) Introduce, demonstrate and explain how to tackle and to keep the ball. Practice tackling and keeping the ball by placing players in 1v1. Set up 2 cones 10 yards apart. Place the ball between two players, each of whom is at a cone. On the whistle, the players attack the ball to see who can win the tackle and take the ball to the opponent’s cone.
Games Approach #2 (20 minutes)

**Goal:** Players mark tightly and win the ball in the tackle.

**Description:** Play a game and observe players marking tightly and winning the ball in the tackle.

**Coach’s Point**

Skill Practice 1 is a cooperative activity aimed at getting players used to timing a tackle. They work together to trap the ball. Skill Practice 2 is more competitive.

Character Huddle (5 minutes)

**Key Idea: Caring**

Gather the children into a group near the goal. Have a ball ready. Ask a child in the group to pass to you. Shoot at the goal and miss completely. Retrieve the ball and make a bad pass. “That shot wasn’t very good was it? How about that pass? Those were mistakes. What should you say to your teammates when they make mistakes? What could you say to make them feel better? What could you do to make them feel worse?” Have children change non-supportive negative comments into positive ones. “Making mistakes is part of learning. Saying something that makes your teammates feel better shows you care about them.”

**Wrap-Up:** Remind them of next practice and game day and time. Give a sneak preview of next week’s practice: defense in a game.
**Practice 10**

**Purpose:** To defend your space and win the ball in the game reviewing individual defense. The objective is for players to be able to defend space by marking an opponent and winning the ball during the game.

**Warm-Up:** (5 minutes) Players play 1v1 to a small goal or cones.

**Well-Being Circle**

**Equipment:**
- 1 soccer ball per pair
- 2 goals per team
- 1 cones per player
- Different colored shirts or vests to differentiate teams

**Discussion**

General Fitness
(5 minutes)

Gather the children in a group near 2 cones about 10 feet apart. Tell them that each cone represents a different food group. “This cone is healthy foods, such as fruits, vegetables, meats, milk and breads. This other cone is special treat foods, like chips, soda, candy, and sweet snacks.”

**Activity**

What foods can you eat to keep your body healthy, with enough energy for soccer?” As they respond, have them stand by the cone they choose. “It’s important to eat more healthy foods, they give you more energy for soccer and help you grow. Special treat foods should be eaten in small amounts.”
Games Approach #1 (10 minutes)

Goal: Players learn to execute good one-on-one defense close to their own goal.

Description: 2v2 to a small goal or cones

Skill Practice 1: (15 minutes) Introduce, demonstrate, and explain how to pressure the ball and tackle when defending. Practice this by placing players 1v1 (plus feeder and collector) – Use 1 player per team to retrieve balls and 1 player to feed balls. The defender starts on the goal line with an attacker about 20 yards away. The feeder passes to the attacker, who must try to control the ball before dribbling to the goal. The defender comes quickly off the line to pressure and tackle.

Coach’s Point: Have the feeding done from the side so the feeder is not in the way of the other players. Emphasize that players should stay on their feet while trying to tackle. Some players may lose their footing if they are moving too fast.
Games Approach #2 (20 minutes)

**Goal:** Players learn to mark, pressure, and tackle in the game.

**Description:** Players play a game and use marking, pressuring, and tackling.

**Character Huddle** (5 minutes)

**Key Idea: Responsibility**

Gather the children into a group. “What have you learned about soccer this season?” Listen for responses. “What does respect have to do with playing soccer or any sport? It takes many years to master the game of soccer, so soccer deserves your respect. Every year there are new skills to learn and improve on; every year you play, you’ll get better. That’s why you need to come back next year! What examples of players showing respect have you seen this soccer season?” Listen to their responses and discuss.

**Wrap-Up:** Make summary comments about what everyone learned over the season. Encourage players to come back next year!