

Preschool Practice Ideas

Alexander Soccer Club

Practice Ideas

General

1. Take water breaks as needed. Best break times are transitions between activities.
2. Every player has a ball that they are responsible for throughout practice.
3. Try to minimize standing in lines and having kids waiting to do things.
4. It works well to have the coach(es) and/or players demonstrate and participate in activities.
5. Try to build practice around a general focus – dribbling, passing, shooting, etc.
6. Build practice off of A,B,C,D method – note lots of B and D activities apply to both
 - a. Warm-up and some skills building (dribbling in a box, freeze tag)
 - b. Skill building (dribbling to goals, cones, hit the coach with the ball, etc.)
 - c. Game scenarios/scrimmage (1v1, scrimmage, gate dribbling as a competition)
 - d. Kids choice game, end on a high note (sharks and minnows, Simon Says, etc.)

Dribbling (A, B)

1. Setup a box with cones every several feet (20-25ft square, adjust size based on number of players).
2. Everyone dribbles (little kicks) around the box avoiding each other staying in the cones.
3. You can do follow the leader, use only the right foot, left foot, pull the ball back with one foot, push the ball with the outside of the foot, have them freeze (stop the ball with one foot), etc. Change it up on the fly.
4. You can have the kids dribble around trying to hit the coach with the ball.
5. The kids learn to dribble while looking around, avoid other players and going to targets.

Kicking/ passing (A, B)

1. Put the kids in pairs to pass to each other. This is similar to how they will do kick-ins during the game.
2. It works well if you setup cones for each kid to stand by. Start with cones 5 feet apart, progress to 10 and 15.
3. Separate pairs of players by at least 15 feet.
4. Emphasize passing and receiving with the inside of the foot and lock the ankle when you kick and receive.

Sharks and Minnows (B, D)

1. Setup a box with cones every several feet (adjust size as needed). This is the same setup as the dribbling at the top of the page.
2. Two kids "sharks" (can progress to one kid) try to take the ball away from the others "minnows" as they dribble around the box.
3. The minnows are "out" when they dribble out of the box or a shark kicks the ball out of the box.
4. You can also have the minnows swim from one side of the box to the other while the sharks take the ball.
5. When a player loses the ball he/ she becomes a shark.
6. Minnows learn to protect the ball with their body position, how to change direction to avoid sharks, how to change speeds to avoid sharks. Sharks learn to take the ball away from the minnows, how to use the box to their advantage and how to defend as a team.

Dribbling/ shooting (B, C)

1. To setup place two cones about 5 feet apart (you can also use Pugg goals). The kids seem to find it easier to see the goal with only two cones as goals vs. have cones as goals and boundaries.
2. Throw one ball out and have a kid run to it, dribble back, shoot into goal, and go to the back of the line. Do not wait for kids to return before starting the next ball. Keep the players going in all directions. The kids will dribble around each other and come back at different paces. Challenge them with left foot only, right foot, complete certain number of passes as a team, lots of variations can be used.
3. 1 v 1 – Toss out a ball and designate an offensive player. Send a defender shortly after. Offense's goal is to score, defense is to stop the offense. Adjust how much time between when the offensive player goes and the defensive player depending on the kids playing. This progresses more towards game situations.

Gate dribbling (A, B, C)

1. Setup a box with a boundary (20-25 ft. square). Place many gates (two cones a few feet apart) inside the box.
2. Each kid has a ball and dribbles through the gates. The kids all go in different directions dribbling through as many gates as possible. Use the same types of dribbling. You could end this with a game of Sharks and Minnow

Scrimmage (C)

1. Set up two goals with two sets of cones about 5 feet apart (you can also use Pugg goals).
2. You can define boundaries with cones or just let them play. If you do not, when the kids get too far out of bounds call it out and do a kick-in. Coaches can also restart with a new ball at a random place and have the kids react.
3. Players can take kick-in or the coach can restart with a new ball.

Soccer golf (B, D)

1. Have a player kick (or coach) a ball out in open space (or place cones) or setup gates as “holes”
2. The other players take turns kicking his/ her ball as close to the other ball as possible.
3. Using multiple “holes” will reduce congestion and amount of time kids are in line/waiting their turn.

Some books to consider. These were Kindle books, but may be available in paperback.

“U6-U8 Soccer Coaching Guide” by Wesley Langdon

“20 Youth Soccer Practices” by Scott Carlson

“The Soccer Academy: 140 Overload Games and Finishing Practices” by Michael Beale

“Youth Soccer Drills & Practices: 20 pre-planned training sessions plus drill bible”

US Youth Soccer website also has a free online resource called the US Soccer Player Development Guidelines. You can find countless ideas through Google and Youtube. You can also contact the soccer club for additional ideas.