



**Intramural Coaching
Manual
Grades 4 - 6**

TEYSA

TEYSA Coaches,

I firstly would like to thank all of you for taking the time out of your busy life schedules to coach and help develop our children's love for soccer.

It is a great opportunity you have to help young children grow and become better people. Please understand that these young children are looking up to you not only as a soccer coach but as a possible role model or example of what they may be like when they're older.

Such is the impact you have on a young person as a coach, most players always remember their "*1st coach*".

As coaches we can offer encouragement and confidence to kids through an avenue that still warrants their respect and attention.

We can provide them with certain concepts which they may not get elsewhere, such as fairness, hard work, discipline and respect for authority.

This "*guideline manual*" is written with the hope that you will become a better coach and that you will pass on to your players traits and skills worthy of the position you have in their lives.

It is designed to help you better instruct the kids in soccer and help them to become better players. It also offers sections on parental behavior the expected conduct of a coach.

A young player should never see his/her coach yelling at a referee or berating another coach. Please remember that many "little eyes" are always upon you.

There are no playoffs, no standings, only the game of soccer, instruction and learning are the name of the game. Please help all the kids to develop a love for the game.

Again, TEYSA wants to thank you for coaching our young soccer players,

Finally, please remember that coaches are teachers and one of the greatest gifts a person can give another person is knowledge.

Yours in Soccer,

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INTRODUCTION TO COACHING

As in any sport, confidence and familiarity are very important.

Reinforcement of this is important to each child before each game and practice.

Coaching starts at home with the parents. Encourage the parents to say to their children:

1. I Love You
2. Good Luck
3. Have Fun

And after the game;

4. I Love You
5. It was great to see you play
6. You were awesome

This suggestion strikes at the heart of a serious problem facing all youth sports: parents and coaches who put too much pressure on the kids and take away the fun of the game. As a coach you have 2 primary goals for your team and your players:

1. Strive to ensure that the players are enjoying themselves and having FUN !
2. Work to develop their skills so that they may continue to play and *enjoy* soccer !

If you notice, these two statements lack mention of making winning your priority or the critical need to develop your 7 year old into the next World Cup hero.

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Aspects of Coaching

As in other sports the act of coaching soccer can be broken down into several aspects.

1. **Physical** - it is an obvious statement that soccer is a physically demanding sport. This requires coaches to pay attention to the physical needs of their players. This involves not only proper training, but also proper hydration and care for any injuries that a player may suffer.
 2. **Technique** - this is the aspect of coaching which answers the questions, “How” is something done? For example;
How does a player strike the ball properly in order to make a short pass?
 3. **Tactics** - this aspect addresses the questions of When, Where and Why. For example, When do I make a short pass to a teammate and Why would I do so?
 4. **Psychological** - this aspect addresses the emotional and mental needs of your players: the desire to compete, the will to win, their self esteem, their desire for friendships and camaraderie, etc.
- The tendency in coaching infancy is to jump to #3 and begin to develop a game plan to succeed without properly addressing all aspects in balance. All four aspects must remain in balance for a coach to truly succeed.
 - Player development remains the top priority throughout each players TEYSA soccer playing years.
 - A good coach is a teacher. Please teach in a fun structured environment that the children want to be part of.
 - There are NO secrets to soccer training. FUNdamentals are the key. All good players have solid basic skill techniques. If players skill base is good they can develop quicker.

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General Tips for Coaches

Some very practical and wise tips for coaches can be found in books, videos and websites galore. Some of the more profitable ones follow:

1. Put Safety First! As the coach you are responsible for making sure the field is safe to play on, players do not have jewelry on while playing, players have proper equipment, dangerous play is halted and explained and you have a first aid kit to tend to minor injuries (icepack, band-aids etc.). Make sure you also have each players medical form with you for practices and games. **Make sure than all goals are weighed down.**

Do not use the goals if they are not weighed down or if there are no weights supplied to stabilize the goal.

2. Keep your assistant coaches aware of plans and goals for games and practices.
3. You can never offer enough encouragement and praise to your players
4. Teach your players to play a couple of positions.
5. Encourage teamwork and respect for teammates. Create an encouraging atmosphere for your players.
6. Make sure you know the rules of play for your conference.
7. The official is “Never Wrong”, but you can certainly ask for clarification in a polite manner. This gives you an opportunity to teach your players sportsmanship.
8. Don’t emphasize the score, but rather the progress your team is making!
9. Be organized for games and practices.
10. Treat your coaching role as the gift and privilege that it is.
You can have a tremendous positive influence on many young lives.

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Coaching Tips for practices

1. Always make your practices competitive (in a fun way), but help them to keep the competitiveness in its proper perspective.
2. Touches on the ball are the most important training tool at the early ages.
3. If you are having trouble getting your players enthusiastic about practice, offer incentives such as the losing group must sing to the winning group or the winning player gets a water ice certificate, etc.

Giving Your players Confidence

As the Coach it is important that sharing and showing confidence is the single most important factor in player motivation. To be successful in confidence building requires a sincere love and respect for the players and a commitment to catch them doing things well and then to praise them for it. Sincere friendly laughter rather than criticism of a mistake, cures much. The coach sets the tone for practices and games with either words of encouragement or criticism. Minimize the number of corrections that you throw their way and help them to build on their successes.

Parental Support

Parental support is key to any team's effectiveness. The following tips should help you to maintain a good relationship with your team parents.

1. Keep your parents informed about games, practices and your overall goals
2. Enlist parental help for certain team functions: email / phone chain, snacks after games, assistant coaches for practices, etc.
3. Make sure parents understand the team ground rules: for example, "players must be at practice on time and at the games 20 minutes before the start, otherwise parents must call the coach to let them know", "parents are encouraged to offer verbal support for their player during the game, but asked to avoid giving them coaching direction, that's the coaches role", etc.
4. It's a good idea to start your season with a parent letter or parent meeting.
5. Invite parents to always call you if they have any questions or concerns about the team.
6. If you have a loud, unruly parent talk to them privately and encourage their support for what you are attempting to do with the players and team. If they continue to be uncooperative please contact the Conference manager who will either take action or redirect it to a higher club representative.
7. Encourage the parents to be their child's best fan and encourage the parents to keep soccer in proper perspective.

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Players Responsibilities

The players are part of a team and as such they have a responsibility to the team in order to help things go well. The responsibilities of players include:

1. Come to games and practices with a good attitude, ready to learn and have fun.
2. Come to practices and games with a properly inflated ball, the proper equipment (socks, shorts, shinguards, team jersey) and a full water bottle.
3. Learn to show respect for the coaches and your teammates. This includes listening when the coaches are speaking.

Additional Information on Coaching

Attend as many of the coaches clinics that are offered by TEYSA to help improve you as a coach and give you new ideas for training.

There are many additional sources of information available to help in your continued coaching development. Some of these include books and videos available at the T/E library or your nearby Soccer Supply Store as well as the following websites:

www.eteamz.com, www.usysa.org, www.us-soccer.com, www.epysa.org, www.gotsoccer.com and www.tesoccer.org

Additionally for those coaches who want to go further with their formal coaching education, information on certification is available at www.us-soccer.com, www.epysa.org or from your TEYSA Director of Intramural Programs.

Club Support

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need help planning practice sessions, have parental problems, or need any assistance with your teams and players.

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INTRODUCTION TO PRACTICES

General Tips for Practices

Practices are the time when the coach is most involved. Game time should really be viewed as the players time, with minimal adjustments made by the coach to what the players have already learned at practice.

If you have to continually shout during a game you have not prepared the team and players correctly in practice.

However, during the games coaches should continue to emphasize the things that the players have already learned in practice with constructive informative instruction.

With such an important emphasis on practice time and with most teams having much less time to practice than they would want to, it is important to use your practice time wisely and follow a well thought through plan so that your team may progress.

1. Have Keep two primary coaching goals in mind for each practice:
 - a. Ensure the players are having Fun, receive a good work out and learn.
2. At this age, a practice of no more than 60-75 minutes in duration should be sufficient.
3. Arrive approximately 15-20 minutes early to get yourself set up and ready.
4. Set up 2-3 drills so the practice flows.
5. Goals for your first practice should include: establish team rules, learn names and build a bond with the team.
6. Start and end on time. Late comers will quickly get the message if you do!
7. Make sure your assistant coaches know what is planned for practice, and make use of them.
8. Make it a team rule that when you have the players gathered to speak to them, they give you or the other coaches their undivided attention. Let them know that the coaches voice is the only voice.
9. Two important ratios to keep is balance:
 - a. Player to Ball Ratio - ask each player to bring a ball to practice and bring a couple of extra ones yourself. This will allow your drills to keep moving.
 - b. Work to Rest Ratio - make sure that you give the players sufficient water breaks. 20-25 mins in cool weather and 10-15 minutes in hot, humid weather. Use more breaks for more strenuous drills.

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10. In addition to bringing extra balls to practice you should also bring: cones, a small first aid kit and a sheet with players emergency numbers and medical release forms.
11. Minimize the amount of time players are just standing around:
 - a. Explain your drills quickly & keep any coach talks short and pointed;
 - b. Choose drills that can involve lots of players
 - c. Choose drills that will always involve the use of a soccer ball
 - d. Avoid drills which create long lines.
12. Always have a couple of extra drills “in your pocket” that you can quickly switch to if you see one drill that you’ve chosen isn’t working. Have a couple of fire drills handy in case you sense the team needs to kick back and just have fun.
13. Be quick to praise someone who is doing something well.
14. Correction should be given carefully. It may be better to correct the entire group, especially if more than one player is struggling with a drill. You may need to correct an individual player if they are totally lost in a drill, but do so with care.
15. Once you have a plan for the season stick to it, unless you see something during a game that must be addressed. Remember this is a developmental league and you can not be correcting everything that you see wrong during a game. You must follow a blueprint to see your team grow.
16. Change a drill that is not working by:
 - a. Adding or subtracting a player from one team;
 - b. Changing the size of your field;
 - c. Adding restrictions to one team (ie, must make 2 good passes before shooting).
17. Avoid using drills which simply penalize your weak players
18. If you have a player with ADD you may need to give especially clear instruction and attention to them.
19. Don’t try to do too much during practice and be flexible with your schedule. It’s better to focus on 1 or 2 things well.
20. Don’t be hesitant to give your players reasonable homework, such as dribble for 10 minutes every day or practice shooting against a wall etc.
21. Never leave a child by themselves after practice. Wait for the parent to arrive to pick them up.

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Small Sided Games

The use of small sided games during your practice time can help to accomplish many of the goals mentioned above. Small sided games occur when you use smaller numbers of players within a drill and duplicate that drill in several places on the field. An example would be having a 2 v. 2 or 3 v. 3 game in a 15x15 area where the team needs to dribble the ball over an end line to get a point. The use of small sided games are good for several reasons:

1. It maximizes the number of times that players get to touch the ball.
2. It keeps more players involved.
3. It makes it easy to allow players to succeed in a drill.
4. With Small Sided Games you allow the game to teach the players naturally.

There are several types of small sided games which can be played: games to possess the ball (ie, keep away), games to move the ball in a given direction and games to move the ball at a goal.

Boom Ball

Don't allow your players to simply boot the ball down the field and chase it. Encourage them to possess the ball, pass the ball and shoot the ball.

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Practice Formats

There is no one right way to run a practice, but it is a good idea to follow some basic guidelines. Your practice should progress from simple to complex and from individual to group. The simple to complex refers to the simplicity or complexity of a drill and the individual to group refers to the number of players involved in the drills. Two sample formats are presented below.

Practice Format #1

5:30-5:40 **Warm Up Game / Drill** (make it fun / stretching is not critical at this young age).

5:40-5:45 **Coach's Time** (go over anything from the last game / tell them what they'll do this practice). [during this time players should give their undivided attention to the coach]

5:45-6:05 **Skill Drills** - run 2-3 drills for individuals or pairs which introduce your skill for the practice.

6:05-6:10 **Water Break.**

6:10-6:25 **Small Group Drills** - build on the skill you introduced previously by using it in the context of a small sided game with groups of players.

6:25-6:35 **Scrimmage** - players love to scrimmage and allow them this time to play. You could do 5-10 minutes of controlled scrimmage where you stop the play when you want to make a point and then do 5-10 minutes of free scrimmage where you are only officiating.

6:35-6:45 End your practice with a fun drill or a competition (ie, "Challenge") - this allows the players to go home remembering how enjoyable practice was.

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Practice Format #2

5:30-5:50 **Fundamental Stage** - during this stage you introduce your skill to the players through several drills which allow them to focus individually on the skill.

5:50-5:55 **Water Break.**

5:55-6:00 **Coach's Time**

6:00-6:15 **Match Related Stage** - during this stage you introduce opponents into the drills and continue to build on the skill(s) you have previously introduced.

6:15-6:20 **Water Break.**

6:20-6:35 **Match Conditioned Stage** - during this stage you try to make the situation as game like as possible. Use of controlled or free scrimmages are appropriate for this stage.

6:35-6:45 End your practice with a fun drill or a competition (ie, "Challenge") - this allows the players to go home remembering how enjoyable practice was.

Whichever format you choose or if you create one yourself, keep it a fun experience for your players.

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GRADE 4-6 DEVELOPMENTAL GOALS AND SAMPLE PRACTICES

Developmental Goals

Development at this stage should be focused on 60% individual skills and 40% tactics. Old skills should still be reinforced at the same time that new skills are being taught

5. **Dribbling** – Being comfortable with the ball at their feet and the ability to move in different directions:
 - a. Have the players continue to work on developing lvl moves.
6. **Passing** - each player should now be comfortable in passing the ball various distances to a team mate. Use a varied passing structure that also uses lofted passes.
 - a. **1st Touch** - introduce the concept to them of how their first touch on the ball is very important. Use several of the passing drills to give them a chance to work on developing a good first touch.
 - b. **Low-Driven Pass** - this pass is for greater distances than the push pass.
7. **Shooting** - shooting at this stage should continue to work on the competencies that were taught in previous years.
8. **Tactics** - Able to do the tactics as instructed by the coach:
 - a. Apply greater emphasis to defensive / offensive roles instructing them in the proper way to defend an attacker (close down space / angle to the side / don't over commit) and to attack a defender (lvl moves / give 'n go / put numbers in their penalty box area).
 - b. General Rule for the flow of the Game - teach them the simple rule that when you are in the defensive zone your goal is to get it outside to your left or right middies, who should move the ball up the side and then look to cross it into the middle after going across mid-field.
 - *The best way to teach these tactics is probably to do so during your scrimmage time. Continue to remind them of the prior year tactics of Corner Kicks, Goal Kicks and Throw-Ins. Stop the play when you see an opportunity to reinforce any of these things.*
9. **Goalies** - time should be spent with those players who have shown an interest in playing the position.
10. **Juggling** - continue to work on their juggling skills during warm-up.

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Grade 4-6 Sample Practices

Sample Practice #1 - emphasis on lvl Moves

Arrive early to make sure the field is in good shape and to set up your first couple of drills. As players arrive have them dribble around the goal box and warm themselves up.

5:30-5:40 **Circle Passing** - Have them warm up by getting in a large circle and call a players name and pass to a team mate. They then take that players place. Start with 1 ball and increase the number of balls to generate more activity.

5:40-5:45 **Coach's Time** - ask them how their week is going / go over anything from the last game / tell them what they will be doing this practice. This is a time when players give undivided attention.

5:45-5:55 **Demonstration** - demonstrate 1-2 lvl moves and have the players dribble around practicing the moves. Use either stand up cones as defenders or have half the group be non tackling defenders.

5:55-6:05 **lvl down the line** - Players come down a line at one of the coaches and make one of the lvl moves around them. The coach offers no resistance to give them a chance to get it down. Players must come straight at the coach, make a move around and then “explode” past the coach to get back on the line they were taking. Do this in several places around your field.

6:05-6:10 **Water Break**

6:10-6:20 **lvl with a Partner** - Have the players pair up and spread out around the field. They need one ball between them. Partners stand about 10yd. apart. The defender starts with the ball. The defender passes to the Attacker who controls it and goes at the defender to make a lvl move around them. Defenders offer little resistance at first then more aggressive resistance. Switch roles often – 3-5 turns each.

6:20-6:30 **3v3 Small Sided Game** - Set up a 15 x 15 grid and have them play to a goal. Emphasize use of the lvl moves / maintaining proper spacing / using proper defensive technique and communicating with teammates.

6:30-6:40 **Full Sided Scrimmage** - Use this time to teach some of your tactics.

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Sample Practice #2 - emphasis on positional play

Arrive early to make sure the field is in good shape and to set up your first couple of drills. As players arrive have them dribble around the goal box and warm themselves up.

5:30-5:40 **Diamond Passing** – Set a diamond of 15x15 using 4 discs. Have 1 player on each cone and a line of players at the start cone.

Each player in the line passes the ball around the diamond and follows their pass. When they get to point B they call for the next pass. Use different passing patterns.

5:40-5:45 **Coach's Time** - ask them how their week is going / go over anything from the last game / tell them what they will be doing thus practice. This is a time when players give undivided attention.

5:45-5:55 **Keep Away** - set up a 20 X 20 yd. grid and have the players play a game of keep away with 4v2 or 5v2 (whichever works better for your group). Players on offense need to move into a good support position to receive a pass, while defensive players must quickly close down the space between them and the attackers. Defenders should apply light pressure at first and then be aggressive. Switch defenders every minute or so.

5:55-6:10 **3v2 from Mid-Field** - Use both ends of the field and goalies. Set up your forwards and middies at the midfield line and have them enter the offensive zone and go 3on2 against 2 defenders. Attackers are working on proper spacing and good passing, while defenders are working on closing down the space, communicating with each other and trying to keep things to the outside. When they get the hang of this add 2 mid-fielders to the attackers and one midfielder to the defenders. Keep going until the ball is cleared or a goal is scored.

6:10-6:15 **Water Break**

6:15-6:25 **Shadow Play** - Using a full team of 8 players start the ball in one end and move it successfully down field for a shot on goal. There is no resistance and the movement should be to the outside middies in the defensive zone who bring it over the mid-field line and then cut in to the forwards and center middle.

6:25-6:35 **Full Sided Scrimmage** - Use this time to teach some of your tactics

6:35-6:45 **Fun Game** - No matter what the age they still like to play games, so end with one of their favorites.

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Individual Skills and Moves

1 v 1 Moves

One versus One moves should be kept very simple at this stage.

If a player can develop only one solid move at **this age it will take them a long way.**

Here are a couple of the easier moves:

1. **Inside / Outside Cut (ZigZag)** - the player is moving forward with the ball when they use the inside or outside face of their foot to make a nearly 90 degree cut and then proceed to move the ball upfield. If they want to go to their right they would use the inside of their left foot or the outside of their right foot.
2. **Pull Backs** - one of the most useful foot skills a player will learn is the pull back. While moving forward the player puts the sole of their foot on the ball to stop it and then pulls it behind them in order to switch directions 180 degrees.
3. **Hook Turn** - This is another means of changing direction 180 degrees. It is similar to the Inside / Outside Cut move described below, but you are changing directions to a greater degree. To do this properly the player usually must be in a good knees bent position.
4. **Step over** – This is a fake out move. Have the player fake to change direction by stepping over the ball with one foot and going the different direction using the same foot. It will send the defender the wrong direction and allow your player to move in the opposite direction into space.
5. **V**– This is a change of direction move that helps players create space. Drag the ball backwards towards your other foot and push the ball forwards with that foot (A V shape)
6. **Shoulder drop** – A the player travels with the ball have them drop a shoulder as if to go in a certain direction and get them to explode in the opposite direction. It is another fake out move that will enable players to get past opponents.
7. **Make up a Move** - players love to make up their own moves, so let your players introduce a new move and name it after them. This is especially fun for older players.

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ADDITIONAL DRILLS

Stationary Passing with a Partner

Players get with a partner and standing approximately 10yd. away from each other they work on the proper form for the push pass. For more advanced players this can become a one touch pass.

Moving Pass with a Partner

Players move 2v0 against a goalie from the mid field area. They try to get as many passes in as possible before shooting.

Give 'n Go to a Goal

Players start at the midfield and make a pass to a coach who is 7yd. ahead. The player then makes a run for the goal and receives a pass back from the coach and takes a shot. When the players have progressed far enough, have the players take the coach's position.

Give 'n Go in a Grid

Set up a 15x15 yd. grid (or larger for older players) with 4 players with balls inside. 4 players without balls are on each corner. Players with the ball move around the grid and make a Give 'n Go pass to a player on the corners. After they make the pass to the corner they need to call for the ball. Switch players after a couple of minutes.

Keep Away

Set up a 15X15yd. grid and play a game of keep away with 4v1 or 4v2 or 5v2. Teach players to move for the ball and to make good strong passes. Also teach players to keep proper spacing from each other. Have defenders give light pressure at first and then aggressive pressure.

Gates

In a 20 x 20 grid set up pairs of cones, called gates, which are about 5-7 feet away from each other. There should be anywhere from 4-8 gates in this grid. Have pairs of players move through the grid and pass to each other through the gates. Players receiving the pass should call for it and player making the pass then runs to the next gate. Several pairs can go at the same time.

Passing Through a Maze

Set players up in a zigzag fashion on either side of a straight line. The players forming the zigzag try to pass the ball up all the way to the end and back before another player can run in a straight line to the end and back. When done properly this helps to teach the older players that the ball moves faster than they do.

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3 Player Passing

3 Players are lined up in a row about 10-15yd. away from each other. The players on the end have a ball. One end player passes to the middle player who returns the pass and then turns to receive a pass from the other player and continues for 1-2 minutes. Switch players so each gets a chance to be in the middle. This is a good drill to practice one touch passing

Small Sided Games

Play games of 2v2 or 3v3 in a grided area to give players a chance to practice their passing skills. Have them play across and end line or towards a goal. The goal can also be a single cone that they must touch with the ball

Shoot off a Give 'n Go

Players begin 25 yards from goal and passes to a coach who is about 10-15yd. away. The player then makes a run at the goal, receives a pass back and shoots.

Shoot from a Cross

Player begins at the left end of the penalty box, near the 18yd. line. A coach is positioned near the corner on the opposite side. The coach makes a pass to the middle of the box and the player controls and then shoots the ball. When the players have mastered this they can try to one time it. Switch sides and do the same drill.

Shoot off of a Cut

Player dribbles down the L. or R. side of the field 25 yards from goal and makes a sharp cut at about the 18yd. line towards the goal and take a shot.

Rapid Fire through a Gate

Set up an 8ft. wide gate tended by a goalie. Sets of players are on either side of the gate about 10yd. from the goalie. Each side takes turns shooting on the goalie who must quickly turn to stop each ball. Prior to second grade use a coach in goal.

Balls in Motion

Have players line up 12yd. out from the goal and 5yd. off of one side goal post. The coach rolls a ball to the goal mouth and the player one times it to the net. Use both sides.