

U4-U9 Adventure Soccer Program

I have designed an “Adventure Soccer Program” for 4–9yrs old Soccer players.

The Curriculum consists of:

- 1) Adventure Soccer - Taking the players on a journey.
- 2) Fun skilled practices and games - touching the ball 10,000 times.
- 3) Speed & Reaction games - The players think about what they are doing.
- 3) Small, sided games - 3v3 / 4v4 / 5v5.
- 4) Game knowledge and fun and exciting games: Player Education & Development

Remember: The attention span of a young soccer player this age is around 1-3 Minutes. Which in essence is always good to keep changing the games every 5-7 minutes? The players will lose interest and will not get the point of the game if it is too long. Make sure you get the coaching point across. Coaches have to be "well organized." when they are coaching this age group. Try and make sure you have a Session Plan of your topic written out, so the session will flow and have an adequate number of games and skills that the kids can pick up on quickly and effectively. Also always have more than enough skills & games prepared for the players just in case. (**A Cue Card**)

“Fail to Plan is planning to fail.”

Getting the players at a young age **“Turned on”** to the game of soccer is very important. You have the key to help develop them right in your own hands, make sure. It’s a good experience for all. All coaches make sure the players are having fun as well as learning in a good positive environment, with this the players will return to your sessions.

“Remember the coaches set the mood of the day.”

Have fun with the kids, they are so energetic at this age; they like to run around, so let them. Make sure all the players are learning the tasks that are set, and try to help all the players grow as individuals and learn at the same speed. Having fun, **yourself as the coach** is also very important, and it will reflect off on the players. You are their “Hero.” so, make sure you do what you think is best for your players, and they will love you for it.

Setting memories for your player’s lives is very important, so try to make it a positive experience for all players & parents. Have an end of season party or a pool party for all to get to know each other away from the soccer fields.

Coaching for me is all about bringing soccer communities together and enhancing a player and team development. I want you to just spread a slice of passion to your players, so they come back year after year and have fun on the soccer fields.

Warm-Up Games

Freeze tag

Players with soccer balls, players without. Players without soccer balls have to run around and tag players with the balls. When tagged, the players freeze, open their legs? then the other players put the ball through the player's legs to unfreeze them.

Coaching Points: watch for loose soccer balls and competitiveness.

Tail Tag

Players run around in a small coned of area. All players have a pinnie tucked into the back of their shorts. The players chase each other and try to steal the tail from the back of their shorts. Once their own tail has been stolen the players then go and steal all the others.

Coaching points: very good for movement and flexibility to get the kids warm.

Chain ag

Players run around in a coned area 15x15 and try to keep away from the snake.

The snake is formed by two players to start the game. The players have to run around linked together and try to tag other players. Once the snake tags a player, they join the snake. The snake will get bigger and bigger as the game goes on.

The players that are getting tagged are running around with a ball trying to keep the ball away from the snake.

Hospital Tag

Players dribble around in the area and the coach/s go around and touch a player on a body part - leg, arm, back, neck, head etc.

When that body part has been touched the player dribbling the ball has to touch that part and keep dribbling. The more the coach touches that body part the harder it is for the player to dribble. If the players are touching

Pac Man (20x30)

Players are in the middle of the area dribbling around. There are two players been chosen to be **Pac Men / Women** which are in pinnies, they go around and touch the players soccer ball and shout "**Crunch**" as they touch the player's ball with their own foot.

Coaching Points: players head up / Pac-men work as a team / good touches on the ball.

Stuck in the Mud (30x30 area)

Players dribble around in Marshland. Two Mud monsters attempt to freeze the players that are dribbling around with a ball. The players have to try and keep the ball away from the mud monsters with different parts of the shoe under the coaches command.

Once the player has been tagged, they will stand with the ball above their heads, legs open. The players will then shout for help from others in the area. How the players get free is if one of the players in the area kick the ball through the person's legs to unfreeze them.

Coaching Points: Players keep their heads up / using different parts of the feet.

Planet Soccer (30x30 area)

The players dribble around in an area under the coach's instruction of what parts of the shoe to use. There are stand up cones (clowns hats) spread out in the area as different planets.

When the coach Shouts "**Blast off**" all the players try to knock down as many cones as they can in 1 minute, and the players count. Coach / parents stand cones up when down.

"Goals Galore" 20x20 Area

In the area there are 8-12 Goals set up

Players dribble around in the designated area and try and score as many goals as they can.

When they do score the players shout "goal" to celebrate their own success.

Coaching Points: good movement / Head Up / Space awareness / good control.

Soccer Mind Games

Retrieve Game

Coach throws a ball into space on the field and the players need to bring the ball back by using different parts of the body.

1. Two hands and 3 feet
2. 3 heads two butts
3. 5 shoulders 5 knees etc.

Coaching Points: Coach need to be as creative as possible for this to work, and the players will show you many different ways to do the same thing. Lots of minds are thinking outside the box.

Head - Catch

Players make a 5-foot circle around the coach. The coach passes the ball to the players and shouts head or catch. The players have to react quickly to the shout and do the appropriate action. This is a fun game to break the ice. To challenge them even more play the game by applying the opposite rule, the players have to react even quicker and be ready.

Cone/Ball

Good to get the players to react to the command of the Coach.

Players all in a straight line facing the coach. Balls laid out on the left; Cones laid out on the right. All the players react to the command of the coach and shuffle to the cone or the ball and back to the middle line. Progression - up, down, jump forward & back.

Coaching points: Good for fitness, reactions and also builds competitiveness.

Fun Soccer Stations

1. Soccer Bowling - use stand up cones. Players kick the cones down using all parts of the shoe.
2. Golden Rings - use hoola hoops and players have to kick the ball in different hoops for points.
3. Shooting - players dribble and shoot on net. Use different targets for players to shoot at.
4. Throw inns - Players are shown how to do a throw inn properly to a target.

Fun Games (All the games are set up in a 20 x 20 area)

Body Parts

Players dribble in an area and whatever body part the coach shouts out, the players have to touch the ball with that part. Try and challenge the players by using different body parts. i.e., back of knee.

Coaching points: the ball stays on the ground and players should dribble with their head up.

Candy Store

Players dribble in a designated square. Each side of the square is named after a piece of candy. i.e., m&m's/snickers/gummy bears/bubble gum/Twix/starburst etc.

On the Coaches command the players have to dribble to the appropriate side of the square as quick as they can, and then return to the center of the square and dribble.

Coaching points: dribble with head up, watch for clashing, keep the ball close.

Hand Ball - Two Teams

This is a game for kids to play only using their hands.

It is the same kind of game as soccer but only using the players hands.

Players pass the ball to their team as a possession game to keep away.

Coaching points: Communication / Movement / Creativity / Competitiveness.

Magic Car

Tell the players a story about your "Magic Car" and that you have always wanted one.

You had a birthday and all you wanted was a Magic Car and your dream came true.

Tell the players the Magic Car has 3 Gears:

1st Gear Slow (Sound with your mouth) Vibrate your lips together.

2nd Gear Medium Speed (Sound) Hmm at medium pitch.

3rd Gear Racing Car Speed/ (Sound) Neeaaaaaw.

Coaching Points: players need to keep the ball close and dribble with their head up.

Magic City (Progression from Magic Car)

Following on from the Magic Car Game.

The Coaches now explain to the kids that they are entering the Magic City.

Coaches will paint the Picture of this Magic City for the players to be very creative.

Coaches will shout out commands of different things that would happen within a city.

Commands: Left Turn / Right Turn / Red, Green, Yellow Light / Humpback Bridge,

Wet on the Road / Snowflakes falling / S.U.V.

Coaching Points: players to be very creative and the coach to demonstrate well for the players to understand and have Fun.

Cops & Robbers

Robbers stand with balls on one end of the square and their object is to get to the other side.

passed the cops who are situated in the middle. The cops try and kick your balls out of

the square. Robbers do a cheer; they jump forward and shout "**show me the money.**"

Cops stand in a line in the middle of the square facing the robbers and shout out.

"I love Coffee and doughnuts".

Coaching Point: Great game, watch for competitive players and keep players heads up.

Shrimps & Crabs

Players are set up as cops and robbers game above.

Half the players (Shrimps) are in the end line and the other half (Crabs) in the middle.

The crabs hands and feet on the ground (all fours). On Coaches command the shrimps try to make it to other side without getting eaten by Crabs. Like before there is a cheer.

Shrimps shout "**I don't like crabs wiggle wiggle**" players shake bum then Repeat. Crabs

shout "**Snap it to the left, snap it to the right, snap it in the middle, eat shrimp tonight!**".

Coaching points: Great game, watch for competitiveness and keep heads up.

Target Soccer

Players stand at opposite ends of the square where there is a stand-up cone behind them. One player with the ball, one without. The player with the ball has to try and knock the other. players come down at the opposite end of the area. If the player without the ball gains control of the ball then they go and attack the other players cone on the other side.

Coaching Points: good for 1v1 situations in a game / Keep players heads up.

Off the Cone Instruction into kicking the ball with different parts of the shoe.

Instruct the players to place their ball on a cone facing a goal or target.

Coaches need to demonstrate the proper way to kick the ball.

Inside of the shoe / Laces / Heel for fun.

- place the non-kicking foot to the side of the ball facing the target then swing with opposite leg to kick and follow through so the ball comes off the cone at speed.

“Laces are aces” is a good way to get the point across to kids to kick with the appropriate parts of the shoe. Demonstrate to the players what parts of the soccer shoe you can use to kick or control the ball. Laces / Inside / Outside / Sole / Heel.

Coaching points: demonstrate well so all players can see the visual instruction. Have Fun

Dribbling Skills

Show players different moves with the ball.

Turns- Inside/ Outside/ Back heel/ Drag back/ Stop Push/ Step over/ Scissors.

Touches on the ball - Hat Dance/ Milkshake/ Double Tap.

Moves - Throw and trap/ Heel toe/ Juggle.

Get the players to touch the ball in a session as much as possible, because the ball is the game. The better players they are with the ball the better soccer players are.

Coaching point: make sure all the players are touching the ball at all times.

Tractor -Trailer 20x20 area

Player 1 dribbles around in the area and player 2 tries to keep up with player 1.

Player 1's objective is to lose player 2 with some fast dribbling.

Like a tractor trying to lose the trailer.

Coaching Points: Keeping players head up / Good fast movement / Ball control.

Knockout / Kick of the Ring

Players dribble in the designated 20 x 20 area.

On coaches command players have to kick each other's ball out of the square.

When the ball has been kicked out by another player they are allowed back in and play, if they catch the ball before it stops rolling.

Coaching points: This game will enhance creativity and also build competitiveness.

Quick Feet - Passing

Players Pair up.

Players 5 feet apart are facing each other.

Demonstrate how to pass and control correctly with different parts of your feet.

Left & Right feet using, inside, outside, laces and sole of the shoe.

Progression - control with left foot pass back with right.

Coaching points: players face their target and try to build good vision and awareness.

Juggling

Players from a very young age can learn how to juggle. Juggling can help the players in co-ordination, timing and balance. Start the players off by bouncing then kicking once. then bounce again kicking two and so on. Progression - Juggling in pairs.

Coaching points: players keep eyes on the ball, stay close to the ball and under control.

Games

Numbers Game

Small Sided Field with 8 players on each or how many players available.

Both sets of players sit in a line next to their own goal numbered.

On the coach's command the number that has been shouted out comes to the middle and tries to get the ball and score from their opposite number.

Progression: 2, 3,4,5,6 numbers then a full small-sided game.

Coaching points: watch for competitiveness and throw the ball at an angle avoids clashes.

Micro Soccer (3 v 3)

Players play in a 20x20 area.

3 on each side which is all what you need for a small game.

It gives players maximum of touches on the ball and makes them a full part of the team.

Coaching points: Communication, passing & moving.

Four Goal Game

Play a regular game of soccer with 4-8 players on each side.

There are a total of four goals, two for each side. The players have to score and defend both goals. The point of the game is to focus on the switch of play, and the decision making of the individual. Play to the open goal every time.

Coaching Points: Players should be creative and make space and do not bunch up.

Reaction Sprints

Players stand in front of the coach facing the goal. The coach plays ball over players head, player then reacts to the ball and scores in the goal in front of them.

Variations: use different parts of the shoe / Lying down / Sitting.

Coaching Points: React quickly / good placement / build competitive edge.

Soccer Marbles (20x30)

All players have a ball. The players numbered one and two. Number one plays the ball into space and number two have to hit the ball with their own ball when it stops.

If a hit is recorded, then they get a point. It is the first of 5 points.

Coaching Points: ball never comes off the ground / accuracy / use different parts of shoe.

Crocodile Alley (20x20)

Players are lined up on both sides of the area. One ball for two players.

There is a cone in between the two players, and they have to try and knock the cone down. which is in **Crocodile Alley** as many times as they can? It is the first of 5 hits.

Coaching Points: placement of non-kicking foot towards target / accuracy / weight of the pass / foot contacts middle of the ball / use weaker foot also.

Fun Penalty Shootout

6/8/12 Feet from goal place the ball down and have a shot at goal.

Coaching points: players should take their time and aim low for the bottom corners.

1 v 1 Challenge

Players challenge each other to a one-on-one.

Good to get the players to challenge each other and change players every two minutes.

Coaching points: competitiveness lets them play and lets them learn from trial and error.

Soccer 2v2 (Ladder)

Coach sets up 3-4 10-ft squares all in a line.

The players play 2 v 2 in the small area. The Games are timed for 2 minutes.

If you win you move up, if you lose you move down.

Make this a World Cup Tournament and the players get prizes.

When the team is at the top of the grid on final round, they are in the final.

Make sure the players choose what team in the World Cup they want to be.

Coaching points: Nobody is a loser in this game and watch for competitiveness.

Game - 4v4 / 5v5 / 6v6

Regular game with no limits. Lay out the boundaries and let the kids play.

Sit back and analyze the game. "The kids want to play, so let them."

Coaching points: Do not stop play too many times as the kids will learn the rules and learn to play amongst themselves. Stops play 3-5 Minutes; help the players out with positioning and space.

Last things to do in the sessions are to challenge the players and see if they have improved or can. improve more over the season with some certain skills.

The coaches' challenge is all about seeing if the players can do something the coach asks to do.

Trick of the day is something for the players to challenge themselves and each other. It is good for the coach to give out simple but challenging homework for the players to try and then.

possibly demonstrate next time in front of the group.

Keep it fun and realistic to the game!

Coaches Challenge

The players get together at the end of your session and choose how to challenge the Coach/s. i.e., Juggle/ Turn & Shoot/ 1v1/ Nutmeg game- try and get the ball between the coach's legs. Make it Fun and make sure the players achieve or win the competition.

Give out little fun prizes.

Keep the mood high and very positive.

Trick of the day

Trick of the day is a trick that they can accomplish, as a fun way to end practice.

It's for the players to think about and take home as "Soccer Homework".

Juggle/ Balance Ball on Head, Foot/ Flick balls off ground/ Juggle ball in pairs.

This is good for players to challenge themselves away from practice, which will make. the players achieve something to show all the players in the next session.

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