

COACH GUIDE FOR PEEWEE AND KINDERGARDEN SOCCER



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Thank you!

Our children and community greatly benefit from the time and effort donated by volunteers like you. In an effort to make coaching as easy as possible, we've created this manual to guide you. Any questions or concerns, please contact us. We're here to help you!

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To share and share alike? Not always. These kiddos are raring to go but need lots of direction to get there.

3–5-year-olds have a hard time sharing, but we help get them there. After all, soccer (and life!) is all about give-and-take. The goal of these classes is to create teammates who are coachable and eager to learn. Sharing is a big part of that. Creative games and fun coaches keep kids engaged and having fun. They won't even know they're working hard and learning. They'll come away with important skills for soccer and beyond.

Program Goals

- ⚽ Create an environment in which children have fun and feel physically and emotionally safe
- ⚽ Have fun while teaching the basic skills of soccer
- ⚽ Empower participants to do their best
- ⚽ Model and teach good sportsmanship and healthy competitiveness
- ⚽ Encourage participating and physical fitness
- ⚽ Place the needs of the participants before adults
- ⚽ Provide positive and rewarding volunteer opportunities for teenagers and adults

Player Goals

- ⚽ Have fun
- ⚽ Practice basic ball skills
- ⚽ Practice good sportsmanship
- ⚽ Experience thrill of sport participation

Coach's Checklist

Before your first practice:

1. Read this manual. 😊
2. Establish your practice rules and standards for kids and parents.
3. Gather equipment, which is provided by the recreation department.
4. Read over the roster; familiarize yourself with any medical, social and special needs.
5. Familiarize yourself with the practice location, get any lock codes.
6. Plan brief parent meeting. (This usually takes place at the beginning or end of the first practice session.) This is a good time to ask parents for occasional helpers for skills/drills and games.
7. Plan your practice session(s) - (if you're not using the session plans from this manual.)

At the end of the season:

1. Plan a small end of season party. "Kids versus the parents" games are popular. Families and/or coaches can bring a snack or order pizzas, up to you!
2. Give out end of the season certificates.
3. Turn in equipment.

There are tons of online resources! For further information beyond this handout check out:

Youtube for videos

www.pecentral.com for more lesson ideas

[9 Fun \(and Effective\) Youth Soccer Drills For Kids – Your Soccer Home](#)

www.usyouthsoccer.org

[Free Soccer Drills, Games, And Practice Exercises - QuickStartSoccer.com](#)

⚽ Working with 3-5 year olds: What to expect

Children in this age group are acquiring a sense of identity and building their sense of independence. Some may have separation anxiety. Coaches should encourage involvement and stress inclusivity of all team members. If a child is hesitant to leave a parent, THAT'S OK! Try **getting down at their level** to introduce yourself. If they seem comfortable with you, try asking to hold their hand and walking over to your team together. If not, feel free to encourage the parent to come out with the child as a partner. Parents can help their children as needed! We want this to be a positive experience so the child will want to come back! Check in with the child periodically during practice to see how they're doing and ask them if they're having fun. 3–5-year-olds are just learning to socialize and play with peers, to share and take turns and routines. They're developing more refined and coordinated fine and gross motor skills. Be flexible. If kids don't get something at first or it's evident they are confused, try teaching or practicing another way.

A few more age-appropriate coaching tips:

- ⚽ **Teaching through play. Make learning fun.** Play games that teach a needed skill or turn drills into fun games.
- ⚽ **Expect short attention spans.** Breaking practice into 8–10-minute segments may be useful. Use redirection to focus kids who are off task and be prepared to move on if you sense a lot of frustration or boredom. Saying the names and praising those who are on-task will inspire those who are off-task to copy the good behavior of their peers so they can hear their names too. (Use nametags as needed.)
- ⚽ **Maintain interest by minimizing down time.** Demonstrate and explain things in the simplest and briefest terms. Teach in small groups if possible. Assistants/parents can set up next drill/game to save time. Having a practice plan with planned drills and rotations keeps things moving.
- ⚽ **Don't be afraid to have everyone be silly.** Help your players have fun and overcome any fears by playing silly games.
- ⚽ **Repetition, repetition, repetition.** Teach and reteach skills as needed (through games if possible). Players will need to do skills over and over to build muscle memory. Practice makes PERMANENT.
- ⚽ **Demonstrate what you want them to do and explain with specifics.** Coaches can be a model of being active.
- ⚽ **Make sure all kids get to play various positions.** Also make sure they at least touch the ball (safety considerations trump this).
- ⚽ **Help them to enjoy and take pride in what their body can do.**
- ⚽ **Focus on improvement.** Kids will compare themselves to their peers, refocus them on how they've gotten better.
- ⚽ **Give praise and approval through specific verbal expressions and nonverbal gestures (high fives).** Use "Great hustle!" rather than "Good Job!" Give praise to all players for their effort as well as their successes. Make sure that the ratio of positive comments to corrective feedback is at least 5:1 or better during practice, after practices and games.
- ⚽ **Work with parents of kids with special physical or cognitive needs to include them and make accommodations as needed.** Pair up or triple up all players with buddies for each practice to work together and help each other learn. Rotate and mix combinations each week.

Activity Skill Cues:

Skill development is a main goal in this soccer program. In order to maximize and support developing skills, we break down each skill into its critical components and then create cues to help players remember the steps! We have included the basic skill cues for youth soccer.

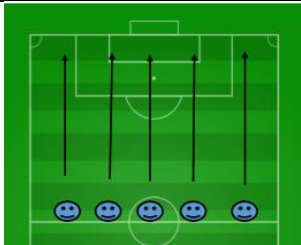
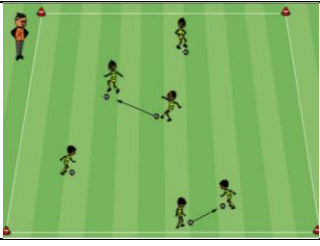
How do you perform the push pass? Can't find the words to describe how to trap? See Below!

Push pass or instep pass: 1. "Plant" – plant non-kicking foot beside ball 2. "Putter" – make a golf putter (lock ankle) with kicking foot → 3. "Push" – ball towards target 	Dribbling: 1. "Baby Touches" – using the inside or outside of the foot, push ball forward gently. Alternate feet. 2. "Keep it close" – ball should be within arm's length away. 3. "Eyes up" – look around the field as you move!
Throw ins: 1. "Hold" – hold the ball with both hands above your head 2. "Feet Down" – keep both feet down on the ground 3. "Throw" – using both hands equally, throw the ball to your target	Trapping: 1. "Get in front" – get in front of the ball 2. "Cushion" – cushion the ball as it comes into contact with desired part of body. 3. "Control" – make the ball go where you want it to go!
Kicking (for distance): 1. "Plant" – plant non-kicking foot beside ball 2. "Shoelace kick" – using your shoelaces, kick the lower part of the ball hard! 3. "Follow through" – follow through with your kick towards the target.	

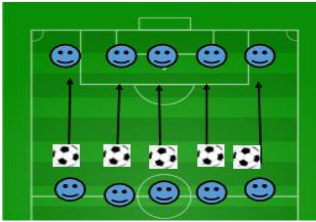
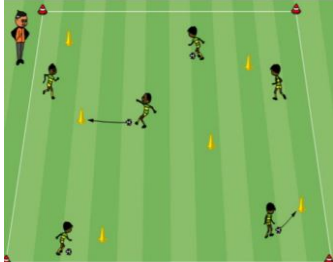
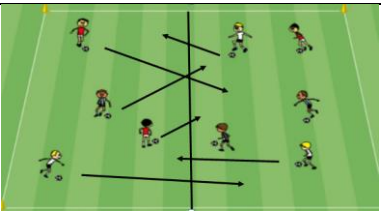
Sample practice plan: What do these sections mean? How can I plan my practice to run smoothly?

Time	Activity:	Description:	Diagrams/Organization	Coaching Points
5 mins	Warm up:	*Have kids run laps, jumping jacks or repeat fun, simple drills from previous practices in order to loosen muscles, get heart rate up, and get rid of little kid wiggles. This is a good time to redo drills/games from previous practices that the kids really enjoyed.	*Make a list of equipment needed to make transitions between activities quick. Kids left without direction tend to act out and get off task. They'll love to help set-up games and activities!	*Praise kids who are not only performing skills well, but those who are following directions or trying really hard!
15-20 mins	Skills & Drills	Introduce the soccer 'skill of the week' with a demonstration by coach and teammate when possible. *Players should sit and watch the coach's demonstration.	*Drawing out the drill on paper and planning the athlete's rotation from line to line will help make transitions quick and will increase activity time!	*Find specific compliments to give the kids as they practice. "I liked how you followed through on that pass!"
5 mins	Water Break	Water for kids, Coach can break down skill drills and set up for Game Play.		
15-20 mins	Game Play	Game like activity or activities where kids will be able practice new skill of the week in a game-like environment. After session 3, kids can play mock soccer game during this time. Feel free to stop play and teach as needed.	*Split teams up ahead of time. *Will there be stations? Do you need a parent volunteer? *Have the kids grab equipment at the end and bring it to you, many hands make light work!	*Reflect on what worked well? What didn't you like? What do the kids need more work on next session? Did they like this game? Was it challenging yet fun?
5-10	Team Circle	Wrap and up review what they've learned today. Have each kid say something; (if they're comfortable) contributing to the discussion empowers them to speak up in the future!		*Did you see a kid that excelled at the skills you taught today? Pull them into the circle to demonstrate the skill correctly. A great confidence builder!

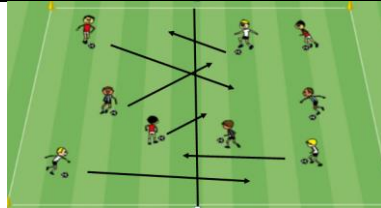
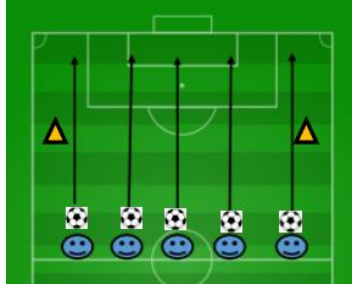
Session 1:

Time:	Activity	Description	Diagram/Organization	Coaching Points:
5 mins	Warm up: Going to the Zoo! *this is a good time to introduce your rules to team	Kids will travel from the goal line to midfield acting as animals! You choose the first one, then ask them what animal they'd like to move as! (frogs, chickens, horses, cheetahs)		*repeat several times until kids are visibly winded *several players should be able to choose one animal for the group to imitate. *encourage safe traveling; everyone stays in their own "bubble"
5 mins	Skills & Drills Dribbling: *When they hear the whistle blow, what do they do? (stop dribbling, put the ball between their feet and look at coach)	Dribbling: 1. "Baby Touches" – using the inside or outside of the foot, push ball forward gently. Alternate feet. 2. "Keep it close" – ball should be within arm's length away. 3. "Eyes up" – look around the field as you move!	* allow kids to practice free dribbling within the field. 	Q: "How do you stop while dribbling?" *Challenge kids to change directions. Q: "What part of your foot can you use to change directions?" *Compliment players who keep the ball close to them.
10-15 min	Game Play: Red Light/Green Light	All players dribble soccer balls in a grid. When the coach yells out green light players dribble fast, yellow—slow, red light-- stop and put foot on top of ball.		*Compliment players who stop when they hear 'red'. Many kids will try to kick the ball far ahead to be the first to finish. Dribbling the ball is about controlling the ball; they should keep the ball close so they can control it.
2-3 min	Water break			
5-10 min	Game Play: Bumper Ball	Kids will dribble within the field, trying to 'bump' their ball gently with a friend's ball. Do a 1 minute practice round. In the next round, challenge the kids to keep track of how many 'bumps' they get. (Each player counts a bump when their soccer balls bump). In round 3, have them beat their previous score.		*Remind the kids that their ball should just gently bump into their teammates' ball.
5 min	Team Circle	Review dribbling. What are the cues? How do we stay safe while dribbling? Go around the circle, allowing kids to share their favorite parts.		*Give parents any reminders they may need for the next session.

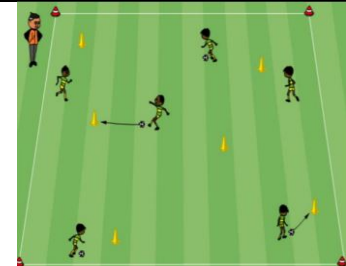
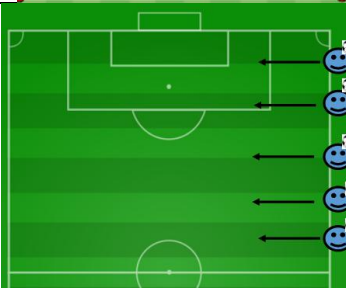
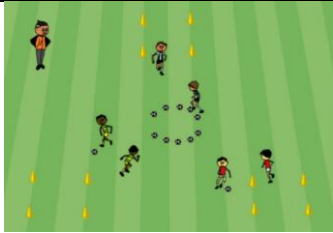
Session 2:

Time:	Activity	Description	Diagram/Organization	Coaching Points:
5 mins	Warm up: Red Light/Green Light	All players dribble soccer balls in a grid. When the coach yells out green light players dribble fast, yellow—slow, red light-- stop and put foot on top of ball.		*Add more colors slowly: blue- dribble backwards, black—dance, purple—run around your ball. Add more to your liking!
5-10 mins	Skills & Drills Introducing the Push Pass	Push pass or instep pass: 1. “Plant” – plant non-kicking foot beside ball 2. “Putter” – make a golf putter (lock ankle) with kicking foot → 3. “Push” – ball towards target 	Have kids partner up and pass. 	Players who receive passes should trap the ball: Trapping: 1. “Get in front” – get in front of the ball 2. “Cushion” – cushion the ball 3. “Control” – make the ball go where you want it to go
10-15 min	Game Play Cops and Robbers	Have 2 cops, everyone else is a robber (only robbers have balls). Robbers dribble around and try to knock over the cones (banks) by kicking a ball at a cone and knocking it over. Cops run around and try to stand cones back up (before money falls out).		Q: “How can you work together to knock down all the banks (cones) super-fast? Cops, do you have a plan to keep cones up?” *Adjust the numbers of cops as needed for game flow.
2-3 min	Water break			
5-10 min	Game Play Clean out my backyard!	Each player gets a ball. Divide players into 2 equal teams; 1 team on each half of the field. Each side of the field is the team’s ‘backyard’, which they must ‘keep clean’ of soccer balls. Each player push passes their ball into the opposing team’s backyard. Players run around collecting the soccer balls, dribbling them close to midfield, and kicking them to other team’s backyard.		*Add a couple of extra balls, coach can participate also! Players love to see their coaches have fun with them. *Encourage players to trap any balls that come their way.
5 min	Team Circle	Quickly review the push pass. How did your team keep your backyard clean? During the cops and robbers game, what was the best way to work together? What makes a good teammate? Go around the circle, allowing kids to share.		*Give parents any reminders they may need for the next session.

Session 3

Time:	Activity	Description	Diagram/Organization	Coaching Points:
5-10 mins	Warm up: Clean out my backyard!	Each player gets a ball. Divide players into 2 equal teams; 1 team on each half of the field. Each side of the field is the team's 'backyard', which they must 'keep clean' of soccer balls. Each player push passes their ball into the opposing team's backyard. Players run around collecting the soccer balls, dribbling them close to midfield, and kicking them to other team's backyard.		*Encourage players to trap any balls that come their way. *Add a couple of extra balls, coach can participate also! Players love to see their coaches have fun with them.
5-10 mins	Skills & Drills Kicking for Distance	Kicking (for distance): 1. "Plant" – plant non-kicking foot beside ball 2. "Shoelace kick" – using your shoelaces, kick the lower part of the ball hard! 3. "Follow through" – follow through with your kick towards the target. *Have kids practice kicking far, place cones out in field, have them try to kick beyond the cones; after a bit of practice, have them kick and try to make it into the goal.		*Start the player, from a standing position, then kick. Next kick, have them take a step, then couple more steps. Does the ball go farther with you start a couple steps back? *All players should wait to retrieve their ball until the coach blows the whistle!
2-3 min	Water break			
10-20 min	Game Play Sharks and Minnows	The minnows, the players with a ball, line up shoulder to shoulder on one end of the grid. Two players are designated as sharks and are positioned inside of the grid without soccer balls. On the coach's command, the minnows must dribble their ball through the grid and get to the other side without getting their ball stolen or kicked away by the sharks. If a player loses their ball while crossing the grid, he/she becomes a shark.		*After a couple of trips across the field, ask the minnows how they're keeping their ball from the sharks? Look for answers like, "I'm changing directions" "shielding it from the sharks" *No one should be sitting in this game. Players are either dribbling a ball or trying to get one back. *Some younger players might be sensitive to having the ball stolen. Encourage them to get one back!
5 min	Team Circle	Quickly review throw ins. What did you do during 'Sharks and Minnows' to keep your ball away from the sharks?		*Give parents any reminders they may need for the next session.

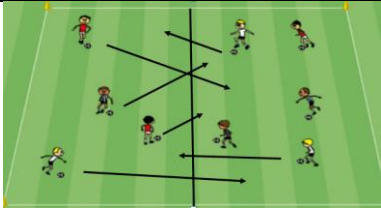
Session 4

Time	Activity	Description	Diagram/Organization	Coaching Points
5 mins	Warm Up Cops and Robbers	Have 2 cops, everyone else is a robber (only robbers have balls). Robbers dribble around and try to knock over the cones (banks) by kicking a ball at a cone and knocking it over. Cops run around and try to stand cones back up (before money falls out).		How can you work together to knock down all the balls super-fast? Cops, do you have a plan to keep balls up? *Adjust the numbers of cops as needed for game flow.
5-10 mins	Skills and Drills Introducing the Throw In	Throw ins: 1. "Hold" – hold the ball with both hands above your head 2. "Feet Down" – keep both feet down on the ground 3. "Throw" – using both hands equally, throw the ball to your target Have each player stand on the sideline and throw the ball onto the field, repeat until it looks like they're getting the hang of it. Then use a plastic tote or laundry basket for the kids to try to 'throw in' to!		
10-15 mins	Game Play Capture the balls	Break players up into four teams. Players gather as many balls as they can in their home base (use cones or hula hoops). Players run to other team's home bases and steal their balls and dribble back to their own home base. All while trying protect your own base. Count up who has the most at the end.		Change of direction; repetition of ball touches; change of direction and speed; eye-foot coordination; passing—timing and accuracy; shielding; teamwork--strategizing. Between each trial have each team take 30 seconds to make up a new strategy. Talk to each group asking their plans.
2-3 min	Water Break			
10-20 min	Game Play A 'REAL' soccer game!	Break players up into 3 teams of 4. One team will sit and rotate in after 4 mins. Players will play a practice game of soccer. No goalkeepers. Keep the rules simple. Have players take turns throwing in, goal kicks, and corner kicks. Don't keep score. *Coach should feel free to be on the field during the games. Closer to the action to see and compliment players.		This is a great chance for players to finally show the skills they've learned so far! Really encourage and compliment kids on their spacing and passing. Team skills are harder for younger minds to understand and demonstrate. Stop game play as needed for teachable moments!
5 min	Team Circle	Review game play. What did they like? What do they think we should work on next week?		

Session 5

Time	Activity	Description	Diagram/Organization	Coaching Points
5 mins	Warm Up Goofy Stop and Go!	Every player has a ball. Coach asks that the players dribble around freely inside the field. When the coach says "STOP!" players must stop their ball and then freeze in a goofy position.		<i>Q: How do you avoid bumping into other players? A: By keeping my eyes up and changing direction when I need to.</i> *Encourage players to change direction and speed quickly.
5-10 mins	Skills and Drills Pass and Score!	Player should make a push pass to a teammate, who traps and shoots to score! Players should then switch lines!		*Suggest to passer to aim the pass out in front of the receiver.
10-15 mins	Game Play Sharks and Minnows	The minnows, the players with a ball, line up shoulder to shoulder on one end of the grid. Two players are designated as sharks and are positioned inside of the grid without soccer balls. On the coach's command, the minnows must dribble their ball through the grid and get to the other side without getting their ball stolen or kicked away by the sharks. If a player loses their ball while crossing the grid, he/she becomes a shark.		*After a couple of trips across the field, ask the minnows how they're keeping their ball from the sharks? Look for answers like, "I'm changing directions" "shielding it from the sharks" *No one should be sitting in this game. Players are either dribbling a ball or trying to get one back. *Some younger players might be sensitive to having the ball stolen. Encourage them to get one back!
2-3 min	Water Break			
10-20 min	Game Play A 'REAL' soccer game!	Break players up into 3 teams of 4. One team will sit and rotate in after 4 mins. Players will play a practice game of soccer. No goalkeepers. Keep the rules simple. Have players take turns throwing in, goal kicks, and corner kicks. Don't keep score. *Coach should feel free to be on the field during the games. Closer to the action to see and compliment players		This is a great chance for players to finally show the skills they've learned so far! Really encourage and compliment kids on their spacing and passing. Team skills are harder for younger minds to understand and demonstrate. Stop game play as needed for teachable moments.
5 min	Team Circle			

Session 6

Time	Activity	Description	Diagram/Organization	Coaching Points
5 mins	Warm Up Clean out my backyard!	Each player gets a ball. Divide players into 2 equal teams; 1 team on each half of the field. Each side of the field is the team's 'backyard', which they must 'keep clean' of soccer balls. Each player push passes their ball into the opposing team's backyard. Players run around collecting the soccer balls, dribbling them close to midfield, and kicking them to other team's backyard.		*Encourage players to trap any balls that come their way. *add a couple of extra balls, coach can participate also! Players love to see their coaches have fun with them.
10-15 mins	Game Play A 'REAL' soccer game!	Break players up into 3 teams of 4. One team will sit and rotate in after 4 mins. Players will play a practice game of soccer. No goalkeepers. Keep the rules simple. Have players take turns throwing in, goal kicks, and corner kicks. Don't keep score. *Coach should feel free to be on the field during the games. Closer to the action to see and compliment players		This is a great chance for players to finally show the skills they've learned so far! Really encourage and compliment kids on their spacing and passing. Team skills are harder for younger minds to understand and demonstrate.
2-3 min	Water Break	Half time! 😊		
10-15 min	Game Play	Continue the soccer game!		Stop game play as needed for teachable moments.
10 min	Team Circle	Final team circle. Hand out awards, tell each player what you enjoyed about them personally. Have the players shout out a thank you to their parents!		

Congrats coach! You made it!

Session:

Time	Activity	Description	Diagram/Organization	Coaching Points
5 mins	Warm Up			
5-10 mins	Skills and Drills			
10-15 mins	Game Play			
2-3 min	Water Break			
10-20 min	Game Play			
5 min	Team Circle			