

# U6 SOCCER COACHES PRACTICE MANUAL

## **Age Group Philosophy**

Create a positive learning environment with fun activities with a soccer ball which keep players moving and challenge a players' coordination, balance, ball comfort and creativity.

## **Age Group Objective:**

If you ask your players at the end of the season would they like to play soccer again next season and they answer YES, then your season has been a success

## **Key Words:**

**FUN** and **MOVEMENT**

## **Age Group Skill Focus:**

Players at this age group at the end of the season should demonstrate the following

- Comfort dribbling the ball with either foot
- Comfort dribbling the ball with different surfaces of the foot
- Comfort changing direction while dribbling
- Comfort dribbling at speed by taking larger dribbles
- Comfort dribbling under control by taking smaller dribbles
- Comfort turning the ball and dribbling away in the opposite direction
- Improved balance and body control
- Begin to recognize space on the field
- Begin to develop awareness of and interaction with players around them on the field

## **Typical Practice Format:**

6pm to 6:10pm | **INTRO GAME**

6:10 to 6:30pm | **FUN ACTIVITY WITH A BALL**

Phase 1: No Defenders

Phase 2: Add Defenders

6:30 to 6:50pm | **END GAME**

Phase 1: Conditioned (Pick one condition and play 6 minutes)

Phase 2: Free Play (Game Rules Apply)

**LET THE KIDS PLAY!** Minimize the amount of instruction and get the kids on the field playing

# **LYA** U6 SOCCER COACHES PRACTICE MANUAL

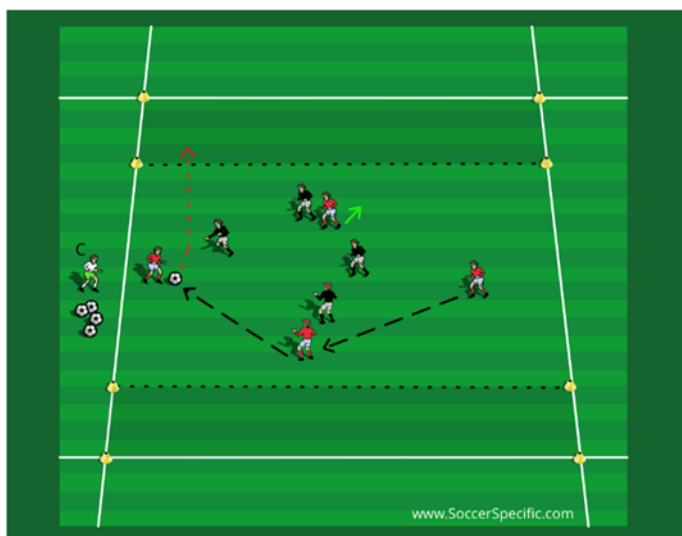
## **INTRO GAME: END ZONES and END LINES**

### **Setup:**

As players arrive give them a ball and allow them to dribble around the field  
Once you have 4 players, split them into teams and begin playing a game

### **End Zones:**

- Create end zone areas at each end of the field or use half the center circle at one end and the goal box at the opposite end
- Teams score a point by dribbling the ball into the end zone or designated area and then stopping the ball in that area for a point
- Once you have 8 or more players you can split the group and play two games of 2 v 2 or 3 v 3



### **End Lines Game**

- Teams play on Half a 3 v 3 or 4 v 4 field and play across the field side line to side line
- Teams score points by dribbling the ball to the end line and stopping the ball on the line
- Once you have 8 or more players you can split the group in 2 and play 2 v 2 up to 3 v 3 each half of the field

### **Coaching Points:**

- Look for players to dribble quickly to the line if there is space in front of them
- BIG DRIBBLES into space
- SMALLER DRIBBLES (closer to the body) as the player gets close to the end line

### **Note:**

If teams are uneven, switch players so the teams are balanced or you may create one team with more players than the other team. For example: play 4 vs 3 with the team of 3 consisting of stronger players

# LYA U6 SOCCER COACHES PRACTICE MANUAL

## INTRO GAME: MULTIPLE GOALS GAME

### Setup:

- As players arrive place them in teams of 2 to 4 players
- Teams play across half of a 3 v 3 or 4 v 4 field
- Use cones to create two goals each 4 yards wide towards the corners of the playing area



### Objective:

Teams score a point by dribbling through one of the two cone goals at the end they are attacking. Players must have control when dribbling through the cone goal for the point to count

**Progression:** play continuous so that after a goal is scored, the player can keep dribbling back into the playing area and try to score in the other goal

### Coaching Points:

- Players attack the goal if there is space in front of them
- If the other team is blocking a goal, move the ball into space on the other side of the field and attack the other goal
- Defenders work together to block off paths to goal

### Note:

If teams are uneven, switch players so the teams are balanced or you may create one team with more players than the other team. For example: play 4 vs 3 with the team of 3 consisting of stronger players

# **LYA** U6 SOCCER COACHES PRACTICE MANUAL

## **FUN ACTIVITY GAME NO DEFENDERS: DRIBBLE IN A CONFINED PLAYING AREA**

### **Setup:**

- Each player has a soccer ball in a defined space.
- Defined space is approximately 15 x 15 up to 20 x 20



### **Objective:**

Introduce players to the concept of dribbling in a confined area with other players around

### **Instructions:**

- Each player is dribbling a soccer ball inside the playing area constantly moving, changing directions and avoiding other player
- If players collide, two players that collided to dribble their soccer ball out to the edge of the playing area, perform 5 jumping jacks (or ball taps) and return to the playing area

### **Coaching Points:**

- Keep your head up and find space to dribble into
- Bigger dribbles into open space, smaller dribbles (closer to the body) in crowded areas
- Turn the ball and dribble to a different area of the square
- Speed and slow down

# LYA U6 SOCCER COACHES PRACTICE MANUAL

## FUN ACTIVITY GAME NO DEFENDERS: BODY PARTS

### Set-up:

Each player dribbles their ball throughout a 15 x 20 yards grided area.

Structure grid size smaller or larger based on the numbers of players present.

Ideally you want enough space available to run into as the exercise progresses.



### Objective:

To have fun! Players need to be able to change direction and speed. Tight touches are encouraged while maintaining ball control. Players must be able to listen to the coach's instruction as the exercise progresses. Vision is all important as players need to see the open spaces within the grid and move into it or out of it as it fills up.

### Progression:

1. The coach will call out a specific part of the body. As he does, the player will stop their ball with that part of the body.
2. Utilize the heel, sole, laces, toe, outside of the foot, thighs, rear, stomach, elbows, shoulders, forehead and anything else that may be appropriate.

### Coaching Points:

- Keep close control of the ball
- Eyes up seeing ball and space
- Keep arms out for balance
- Avoid running into each other
- Develop a comfort level between the ball and the player

# **LYA** U6 SOCCER COACHES PRACTICE MANUAL

## **FUN ACTIVITY GAME NO DEFENDERS: NAME GAME**

### **Setup:**

Each player has a soccer ball in a defined space.

Defined space is approximately 15 x 15 up to 20 x 20



### **Instructions:**

Each player is dribbling a soccer ball inside the playing area

When the coach calls out SWITCH:

- Players dribble towards another player
- Stop the ball with the sole of the foot
- Announce her or his name to the other player
- Then switch soccer balls and resume dribbling

Repeat several times and players switch with different players each time.

Progression: Players announce their favorite color or food instead of their name

### **Coaching Points:**

- Keep your head up and find space to dribble into
- Scan the field for players with whom you have not switched
- When Coach calls SWITCH, quickly find and dribble towards a player
- Be under control to be able to stop the ball next to a player
- Look your teammate in the eyes and listen to her or his name

# **LYA** U6 SOCCER COACHES PRACTICE MANUAL

## **FUN ACTIVITY GAME NO DEFENDERS: FOOT SURFACES**

### **Setup:**

Each player has a soccer ball in a defined space.

Defined space is approximately 15 x 15 to 20 x 20



### **Instructions:**

- Coach instruct players which surface of the foot or which foot to use
- Players dribble in space using that foot or that surface
- RIGHT Foot only / LEFT foot only
- OUTSIDE of the foot only
- INSIDE of the foot only
- SOLE of the foot only

Switch surface every minute or so

### **Coaching Points:**

- Make sure players are clear on the location of each surface before each round. Have a player point to the surface identified
- Encourage the players to stick to using the surface identified
- Players turn with the appropriate surface

# LYA U6 SOCCER COACHES PRACTICE MANUAL

## FUN ACTIVITY GAME NO DEFENDERS: OPPOSITES ATTRACT

### Setup:

Each player with a soccer ball

Playing area 15 x 15 up to 20 x 20



### Instructions:

- Players dribble around the playing area
- Dribble towards another player
- As you get close to the player, turn the ball and dribble away in the opposite direction
- Continue dribbling and find another player to repeat
- Use different surface to turn

**Progression:** Coach instruct which foot surface to use to turn (outside of foot, inside of foot, sole of foot)

### Coaching Points:

- Smaller dribbles (closer to body) as you approach another player
- Sharp “speedboat” turns as opposed to slow “cruise ship” turns.
- Look over your shoulder before turning so you know there is no one behind you
- After turn take 2 bigger dribbles into space



# LYA U6 SOCCER COACHES PRACTICE MANUAL

## FUN ACTIVITY GAME NO DEFENDERS: FOLLOW THE LEADER

### Set-up:

Players need to be in groups of twos.

Each group will have one ball per group of two.

Grid size should be approximately 20 x 20 yards.



### Objective:

For players to get comfortable on the ball while changing direction and speed.

### Progression:

1. The player with the ball will dribble while following the player without the ball.
2. The player dribbling will try and maintain a close distance between him and his partner.
3. The player without the ball leads by walking fast. As coach feels they are technical enough, the leader may start jogging slowly, increasing the difficulty for the playing following dribbling.
4. Allow players to switch.

### Coaching Points:

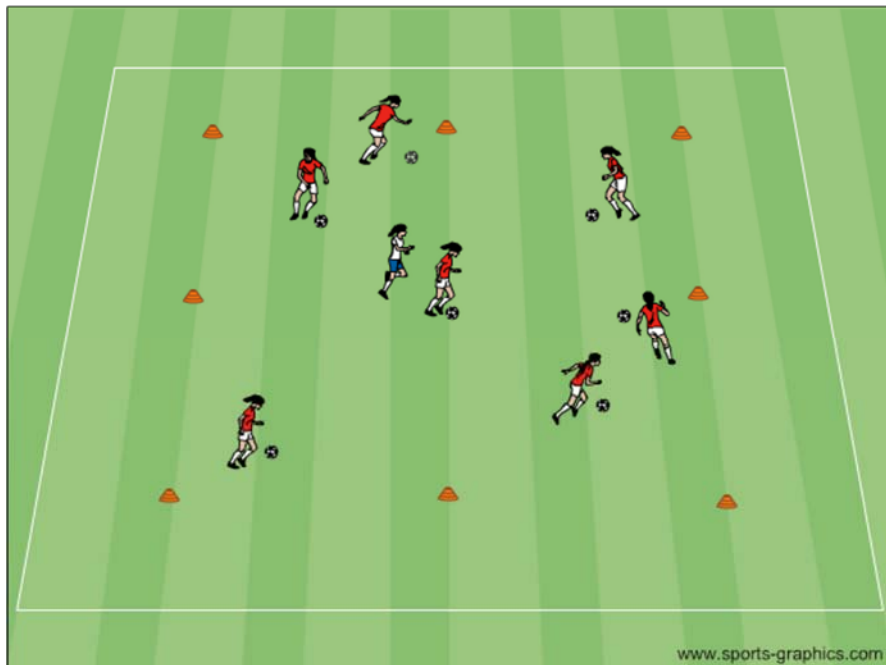
- Keep close control of the ball
- Eyes up seeing ball and man
- Utilize the outside and inside of the foot to cut the ball
- Keep the gap close between the leader and the man with the ball
- Avoid running into each other

# LYA U6 SOCCER COACHES PRACTICE MANUAL

## FUN ACTIVITY GAME WITH DEFENDERS: STUCK IN THE MUD

### Setup:

- One or Two players without a ball designated as CHASERS. All other players with a ball
- Playing area 15 x 15 up to 20 x 20
- Ratios: 1 CHASER to 5 dribblers | add a 2<sup>nd</sup> CHASER at 7 dribblers or more



### Objective:

Players with a ball dribble inside the square and try to avoid their soccer ball getting touched by one of the two CHASERS

### Instructions:

- Players with a ball are dribbling in space while CHASERS try to touch a players' soccer ball
- If a CHASER touches a soccer ball, the player dribbling that ball is STUCK IN THE MUD. Move inside the playing area and hold the soccer ball above your head and open your legs wide
- Other players with a ball can get you UNSTUCK by dribbling or passing their ball through your legs. Then you return to the game dribbling away from the CHASERS
- Make the grid smaller or larger depending on outcomes

Play for one minute and count how many players are STUCK IN THE MUD at the end of the game  
Switch CHASERS. Give every player a chance to be a CHASER

### Coaching Points:

- Find space away from CHASERS and get there
- Be ready to quickly change directions and dribble away
- Find teammates who are STUCK and push the ball between their legs

# LYA U6 SOCCER COACHES PRACTICE MANUAL

## FUN ACTIVITY GAME WITH DEFENDERS: FOXES AND FARMERS

### Setup:

- Players split into 2 teams of 4 to 7 players per team each player with a ball
- One team tucks a pinnie into the back of their shorts giving FOX TAILS
- The team without the pinnies are FARMERS
- Defined space is approximately 15 x 15 to 20 x 20



### Objective:

FARMERS try to pull the FOX TAILS (pinnies) from the FOXES until there is only one FOX left. The last FOX remaining wins the game.

### Instructions:

- Players dribbling in space with FARMERS trying to steal FOX TAILS
- If a FOX loses her tail, she becomes a FARMER chasing the other FOX TAILS
- Last player with a FOX TAIL wins the game
- If a player runs away from her ball to avoid losing her FOX TAIL, she loses her
- If a player runs away from her ball to take a FOX TAIL, the TAIL is returned to the FOX
- Switch FOX and FARMERS at the end of each round

### Coaching Points:

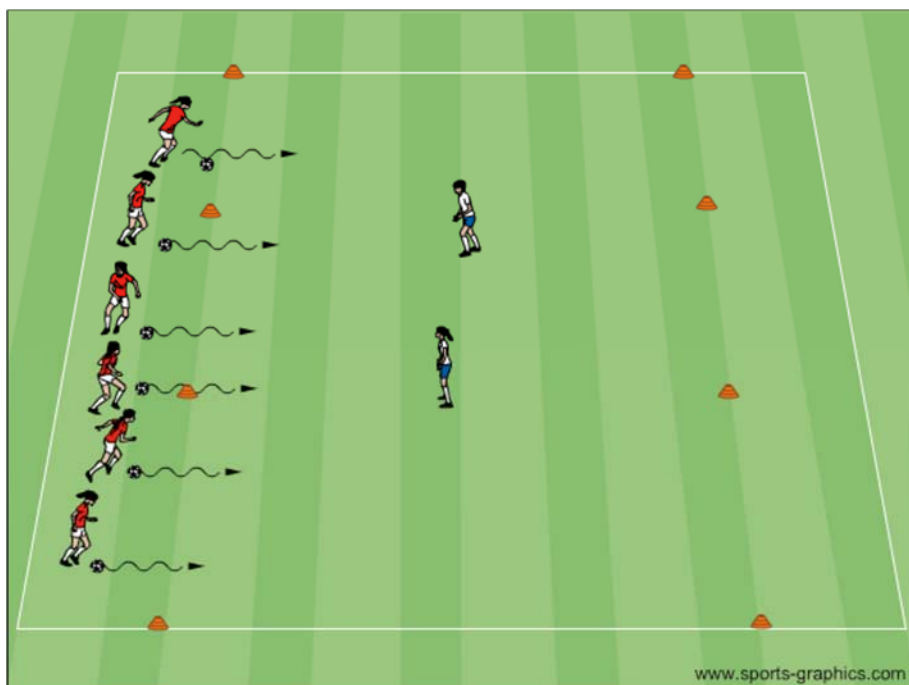
- Head up scanning the field while dribbling
- Be ready to quickly change directions and dribble away
- FARMER can work together to “corner” a FOX

# LYA U6 SOCCER COACHES PRACTICE MANUAL

## FUN ACTIVITY GAME WITH DEFENDERS: SHARKS AND MINNOWS

### Setup:

- Playing area is half of a 3 v 3 or 4 v 4 field
- 2 Players are SHARKS without a ball in the middle of the playing area
- All other players are MINNOWS with a ball on one side of the field



### Objective:

MINNOWS try to dribble across the playing area and stop their ball on the other sideline without having their soccer ball touched by a shark

### Instructions:

- Coach calls GO and MINNOWS try to dribble across the playing area
- SHARKS try to touch as many soccer balls as possible
- If a player's ball is touched, he joins hands with that SHARK and tries touch a MINNOW ball
- A round is completed when all players are either SHARKS or end up as MINNOWS on the other side of the field
- Repeat back to the original sideline and repeat rounds until there are no more MINNOWS

### Coaching Points:

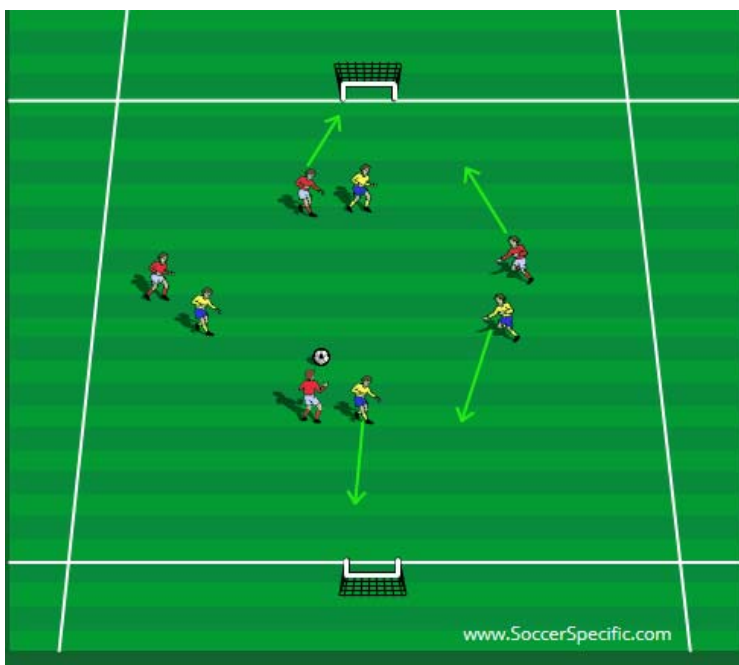
- MINNOWS find space and dribble into space quickly
- MINNOWS push the ball further ahead into open space (**BIG DRIBBLES into open space**)
- MINNOWS dribble closer to the body as you get closer to the opposite line so that you can stop the ball on the line (**SMALL DRIBBLES when less open space**)
- SHARKS work together to "corner" MINNOWS

# LYA U6 SOCCER COACHES PRACTICE MANUAL

## END GAME: CONDITIONED

### Setup:

- Split players into two teams
- Play 4 v 4 with a PUGG goal at each end



### Objective:

Teams score goals by passing the ball into the PUGG goal

### Instructions

- Game day rules apply

### Conditioned Games:

Coach may apply ONE condition for a portion of the END GAME

- Goals count double when everyone on your team is past midfield when the goal is scored
- Play with Two goals at each end (2 PUGGS one end and 2 cone goals other end) similar to the INTRO game. Switch Directions after 3 minutes.
- Opposite Directions: One team attack PUGG goals on the ends, the other team attack cone goals on the sides. Switch directions after 3 minutes.

### Alternate End Game:

You can split into two games and play 3 v 3 to cone or PUGG goals in half a field

### Note:

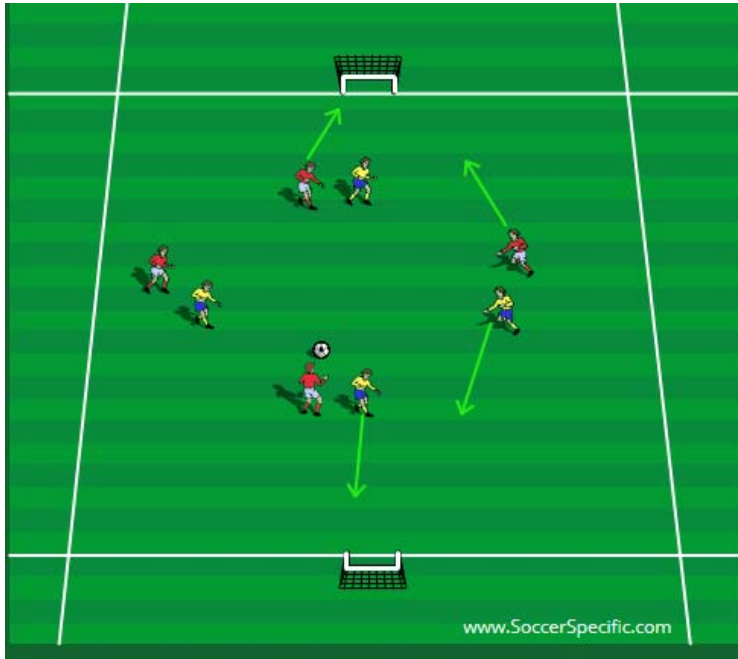
*If teams are uneven, switch players so the teams are balanced or you may create one team with more players than the other team. For example: play 5 v 4 with the team of 4 consisting of stronger players*

# LYA U6 SOCCER COACHES PRACTICE MANUAL

## END GAME: FREE PLAY

### Setup:

- Split players into two teams
- Play 4 v 4 with a PUGG goal at each end



### Objective:

Teams score goals by passing the ball into the PUGG goal

### Instructions

- Game day rules apply

### Note:

*If teams are uneven, switch players so the teams are balanced or you may create one team with more players than the other team. For example: play 5 v 4 with the team of 4 consisting of stronger players*