

PESA

*Revitalizing soccer to
local communities.*



Parent Volunteer Coach Training Recreation Program



www.thepesa.com



Thank you for taking on the rewarding role of volunteer coach! This guide is designed to support you with practical tips and tools to keep practices engaging, games positive, and every player included. Coaching youth soccer goes beyond teaching skills — it's about encouraging growth, fostering teamwork, and inspiring a lifelong love of the game.

1 Coaching Philosophy

Phase 1 = “Keep It Fun!”

- At the recreation level, sessions must always stay light and positive.
- This is the foundation stage: kids are building comfort, confidence, and love for the game.
- Mistakes are part of learning. Negative behavior from adults is unacceptable.
- Think of it like building a house: a sturdy emotional and physical foundation supports the build-up.
- Kids won't fully understand the game yet — development takes time, years, and most importantly - enjoyment.

2 Coach Attitude & Role

- Children look up to you — your frustration becomes their frustration.
- If they sense pressure, they lose interest and stop trying new things.
- Open their imagination:
- Show that the ball isn't just for kicking — introduce skills, tricks, and playful moves.
- Confidence grows from comfort with the ball.

Remember: if you're having fun, they'll have fun.

3 Planning Each Session

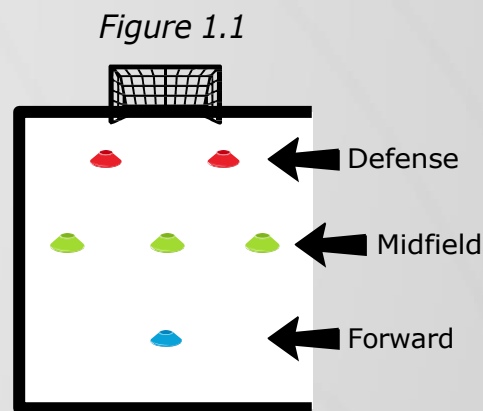
- Have a base plan for every training.

Suggested structure:

A Light ball work to get comfortable.

B Game education in small, digestible pieces.

C Positive ending - a shooting game, stress-free scrimmage, or fun challenge.



Teaching the game can be boring – never make it the whole session. Spread concepts out across the season.

4 Teaching the Game

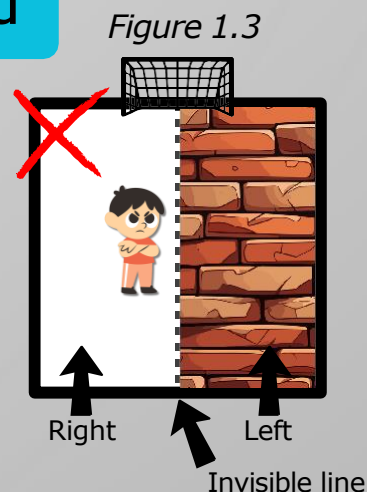
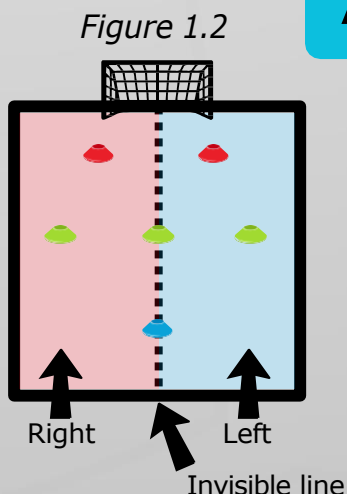
A Positions

- Use cones and colors to mark zones. (**Figure 1.1**)
- Explain invisible lines: e.g., left mid and right mid stay mostly on their side, but crossing when needed is okay. (**Figure 1.2**)
- Stress flexibility — don't turn lines into "walls." (**Figure 1.3**)

B Core Communication

- Teach key phrases and their purpose:
- **"I got ball"** purpose: Player telling their teammates they will get the ball
- **"Drop"** purpose: Player telling teammate to play the back out of pressure
- **"Switch"** purpose: Player telling teammates to bring ball to the other side
- **"Man on"** purpose: Player telling teammate an opponent is approaching

Always explain the "why" beyond each phrase emphasized



C Offsides

- See QR code



Offsides Explained



D Corner Kicks

- **Offense: (Figure 1.4)**
 - Big kick into the box.
 - 1-2 Players at top of the box for rebounds.
 - 2 defenders back to protect against counterattacks.
- **Defense: (Figure 1.5)**
 - 2 defenders on posts.
 - Clear ball, then "Push out!"
 - Mark attackers goal-side.

Figure 1.4

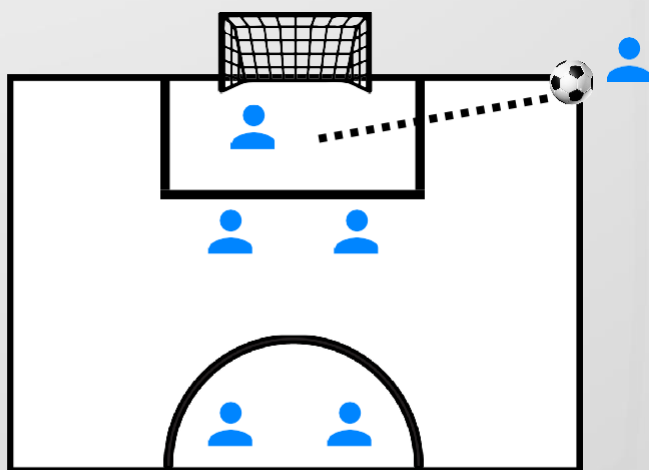
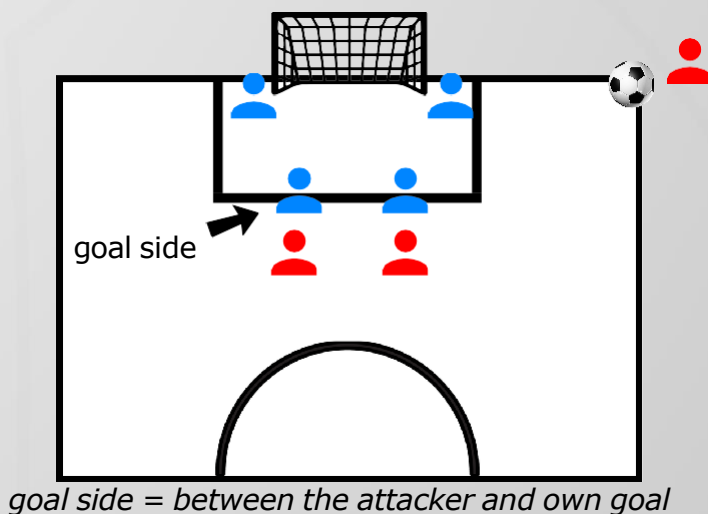


Figure 1.5



5 Practice

- **Warm-Ups (5–10 min):** Jogging, stretching, fun movement games.
- **Skill Development (15–20 min):** Passing, dribbling, teamwork — keep drills short and fun.
- **Game Play (20–30 min):** Small-sided games, rotating positions, education on game play/strategy.
- **Closing Huddle (5 min):** Highlight effort, share one positive takeaway, team cheer.

Numbers game



Rondo



Steal the Bacon



4 line shooting



6 Player Engagement

- Constant positive reinforcement (high-fives, encouragement).
- Keep instructions simple and visual (demonstrate).
- Minimize waiting in lines + maximize touches. **(Figure 1.6)**
- Rotate positions fairly.

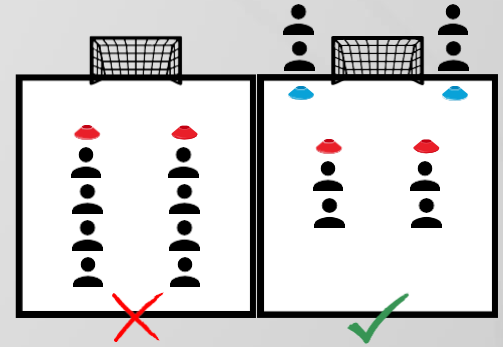


Encourage creativity and risk-taking without fear of mistakes.

Figure 1.6

7 Game Days

- Not the World Cup — games are educational tools.
- Goal: “Do your best to apply what we worked on.”
- Never, never, never dictate play from the sideline.
Players are already processing parent noise, coaches, and the game itself.
- Instead, correct after the play or at stoppages:
 - Example: “Mikey, next time look for the switch.”
- Allow players to try new things — confidence grows through freedom, not fear.
- Establish a clear substitution rotation that allows players to experience different positions. It’s always best to plan this ahead of time rather than during the game.
- Strategy can be incorporated by placing the strongest players on the field at some point during the game.



8 Final Reminders

- Patience is key — improvement takes time.
- Kids should leave practice smiling and excited to return.
- We all want players to get better, but the approach is just as important as the outcome.



Enjoy yourself — if you’re having fun, they will too.

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