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**Soccer Coaches Manual**  
**Pre/K League thru 8th Grade**  
**2025**

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## Program Philosophy

It is the goal of Loveland Parks & Recreation to provide quality Youth Athletics programs that promote skill development, equal participation, sportsmanship, fun, and friendly competition in a positive, safe, and recreational setting.

## Overview

Thank you for volunteering as a soccer coach. Soccer has been a long time popular recreational pastime and with the popularity of the World Cup and the Olympics, the program is only growing. There is a high need for qualified coaches to instruct our youth on the fundamentals of a sport that they will most likely play for many years to come.

This coaching manual will help teach you the basics of soccer and you will learn enough to run a productive practice and manage your team during a game.

Soccer is a game of speed, strength, coordination, and skill. Players must be able to run, kick, pass and play defense as well as have a good sense of what is going on around them.



## Rules:

*This program will be governed by FIFA rules except as modified by the Parks and Recreation Department:*

### 1 – The Field of Play

<u>League</u>	<u>Field Size</u>
Pre/K and 1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	50 x 30 yds
3 <sup>rd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	80 x 50 yds
5 <sup>th</sup> & 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	80 x 50 yds

### 2 – The Ball

<u>League</u>	<u>Ball Size</u>
Pre/K and 1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	#3
3 <sup>rd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	#4
5 <sup>th</sup> & 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	#5

### 3 – The Number of Players

<u>League</u>	<u># of Players</u>	<u>Goal Keeper</u>
Pre/K	4	No
1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	7	Yes
3 <sup>rd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	9	Yes
5 <sup>th</sup> & 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	9	Yes

### 4 – The Duration of the Match

<u>League</u>	<u>Game Duration (running clock)</u>
Pre/K	10-minute quarters
1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	10-minute quarters
3 <sup>rd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	10-minute quarters
5 <sup>th</sup> & 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	25-minute halves

<u>League</u>	<u>Substitutions</u>
Pre/K	At quarter and mid quarter
1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	At quarter and mid quarter
3 <sup>rd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	At each quarter
5 <sup>th</sup> & 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Regular (goalie at halftime)

## 5 – The Player's Equipment

### Basic Equipment

The basic required player equipment:

- ✓ Youth Athletics t-shirt
- ✓ Shorts or sweats
- ✓ Socks
- ✓ Shin guards
- ✓ Footwear – tennis shoes or non-metal cleats (if cleats are baseball style, then front toe must be removed)

### Youth Athletic t-shirt

- ✓ Must be the approved Loveland t-shirt.

### Shinguards

- ✓ Must be covered entirely by socks or pants
- ✓ Are made of a suitable material (rubber, plastic, or similar substances)

### Goalkeepers

- ✓ Each goalkeeper wears colors which distinguish him from the other players, and from the referees
- ✓ Coaches should see that a shirt is provided for the goalkeeper (i.e. a t-shirt or sweatshirt other than red, white or yellow)

**Home team listed on the schedule wears red!**

### SAFETY

A player must not use equipment or wear anything which is dangerous to himself or another player (including any kind of jewelry or casts)

#### **If you think it's not important to conduct pregame equipment checks, think again!**

Stefan Hampl, 27, a German soccer player, needed emergency surgery to reattach the top of a finger after it was severed. A ring that Hampl was wearing got tangled in a goal net. Hampl plays for the German third-division club Burghausen. He was in Cyprus training with about 40 other players in the western resort of Paphos. Hampl was airlifted to a hospital in the capital of Micosia where the severed part of the finger on his left hand was reattached. Law 4 says: "A player must not use equipment or wear anything which is dangerous to himself or another player (including any kind of jewelry)." The reminder to all referees to do pregame checks, required by Law 5-Powers and Duties, fourth bullet, might prevent such unfortunate accidents.

*-from Referee magazine, May 2002*

## 6 – The Referee

Matches will be run by the referees who have full authority to enforce the game rules and whose decisions are final. The referees are also there to help the players learn from their mistakes.

## 7 – The Start and Restart of Play

### Preliminaries

- ✓ A coin is tossed and the team which wins the toss decides which goal it will attack in the first half of the match. The other team takes the kick off to start the match. The team which wins the toss takes the kick off to start the second half of the match. In the second half of the match the teams change ends and attack the opposite goal.

### Kick-off

A kick-off is a way of starting or restarting play

- ✓ At the start of the match
- ✓ After a goal has been scored
- ✓ At the start of the second half of the match
- ✓ At the start of each period or extra time, where applicable

A goal may be scored directly from the kick-off.

### Procedure

- ✓ All players are in their own half of the field
- ✓ The opponents of the team taking the kick-off are at least 10 yards from the ball until it is in play
- ✓ The ball is stationary on the center mark
- ✓ The referee gives a signal
- ✓ The ball is in play when it is kicked and clearly moves.

- ✓ The kicker does not touch the ball a second time until it has touched another player.
- ✓ After a team scores a goal, the other team takes the kick-off.

**If the kicker touches the ball a second time before it has touched another player:**

- ✓ An indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team to be taken from the place where the infringement occurred

**For any other infringement of the kick-off procedure:**

- ✓ The kick-off is retaken

**Dropped Ball**

- ✓ A dropped ball is a way of restarting the match after a temporary stoppage which becomes necessary, while the ball is in play, for any reason not mentioned elsewhere in the Laws of the Game.

**Procedure**

- ✓ The referee drops the ball at the place where it was located when play was stopped. Play restarts when the ball touches the ground.

**The ball is dropped again:**

- ✓ If it is touched by a player before it makes contact with the ground.

## 8 – The Ball In and Out of Play

**The ball is out of play when:**

- ✓ It has completely crossed the goal line or touch line whether on the ground or in the air
- ✓ Play has been stopped by the referee

**Ball In Play**

- ✓ It rebounds from a goalpost, crossbar or corner flag post and remains in the field of play.

- ✓ It rebounds from either the referee or an assistant referee when they are on the field of play.

## 9 – The Method of Scoring

**Goal Scoring**

- ✓ A goal is scored when the whole of the ball passes over the goal line, between the goalposts and under the crossbar, provided that no infringement of the Laws of the Game has been committed previously by the team scoring the goal. No score is kept. No standings are kept. Emphasis should be placed on fun and skill development rather than winning and losing.



## 10 – Offside

*(3<sup>rd</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grades only)*

### **Offside Position**

It is not an offense in itself to be in an offside position.

#### **A player is in an offside position if:**

- ✓ any part of the head, body or feet is in the opponents' half (excluding the halfway line) and
- ✓ any part of the head, body or feet is nearer to the opponents' goal line than both the ball and the second-last opponent

#### **A player is not in an offside position if:**

- ✓ He is in his own half of the field of play
- ✓ He is level with the second to last opponent
- ✓ He is level with the last two opponents

### **Offense**

A player in an offside position is only penalized if, at the moment the ball touches or is played by one of his team, he is, in the opinion of the referee, involved in active play by:

- ✓ Interfering with play
- ✓ Interfering with an opponent
- ✓ Gaining an advantage by being in that position

### **No Offense**

There is no offside offense if a player receives the ball directly from:

- ✓ A goal kick
- ✓ A throw in
- ✓ A corner kick

### **Penalty**

The referee awards an indirect free kick to the opposing team to be taken from the place where the infringement occurred.

**Visit this link to see diagrams and explanations of FIFA Law 11: Offside**

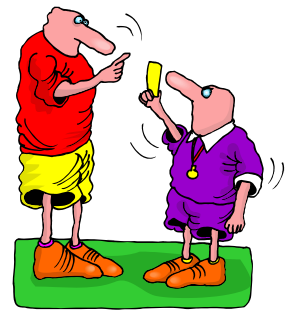
- <https://lexingtonunited.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Understanding-FIFA-Law-11.pdf>

# 11 – Fouls and Misconduct

*For Pre/K, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade all penalties will result in an indirect free kick*

D.K. – Direct Free Kick

I.K. – Indirect Free Kick



<u>Foul</u>	<u>Penalty</u>
1. Kicks or attempts to kick others	D.K.
2. Trips or attempts to trip others	D.K.
3. Jumps at an opponent	D.K.
4. Charges an opponent	D.K.
5. Strikes or attempts to strike an opponent	D.K.
6. Pushes an opponent	D.K.
7. Tackles an opponent making contact before touching the ball	D.K.
8. Holds an opponent	D.K.
9. Handles the ball deliberately	D.K.
10. If defender commits any of the above 9 fouls inside his penalty area	P.K.
11. The goalie takes more than six seconds while controlling the ball with his hands before releasing it from his possession	I.K.
12. The goalie touches the ball again with his hands after it has been released from his possession and has not touched any other player	I.K.
13. The goalie touches the ball with his hands after it has been deliberately kicked to him by a teammate	I.K.
14. The goalie touches the ball with his hands after he has received it directly from a throw-in taken by a teammate	I.K.
15. Dangerous play (i.e. try kicking the ball when held by goalkeeper, high kicking near opponent.)	I.K.
16. Obstructing opponents	I.K.
17. Player prevents the goalkeeper from releasing the ball	I.K.
18. Commits any other offense not previously mentioned	I.K.

*\*Direct and indirect free kicks are taken from where the offense occurred.*

*\*Slide tackling only allowed at 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade levels*

**NOTE: Players are not allowed to head the ball. If a player intentionally heads the ball, the opposing team will be awarded an indirect kick from the spot of the infraction.**

## 12 – Free Kicks

### *Types of Free Kicks*

Free kicks are either direct or indirect

***For Pre/K, 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> grade soccer all free kicks are indirect!***

For both direct and indirect free kicks, the ball must be stationary when the kick is taken and the kicker does not touch the ball a second time until it has touched another player.

### *The Direct Free Kick*

- ✓ If a direct free kick is kicked directly into the opponent's goal, a goal is awarded

### *The Indirect Free Kick*

- ✓ A goal can be scored only if the ball subsequently touches another player before it enters the goal.

## 13 – The Penalty Kick

***For grades 3<sup>rd</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> only!***

A penalty kick is awarded against a team which commits one of the ten offenses for which a direct free kick is awarded, inside its own penalty area and while the ball is in play.

**A goal may be scored directly from a penalty kick.**

### *Position of the Ball and the Players*

#### ***The ball:***

- ✓ Is placed on the penalty mark (10 yards from goal line)

#### ***The defending goalkeeper:***

- ✓ Remains on his goal line, facing the kicker, between the goalposts until the ball has been kicked.

#### ***The players other than the kicker are located:***

- ✓ Inside the field of play
- ✓ Outside the penalty area
- ✓ Behind the penalty mark
- ✓ At least 10 yards from the penalty mark

#### **Procedure**

- ✓ The player taking the penalty kicks the ball forward
- ✓ He does not play the ball a second time until it has touched another player
- ✓ The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves forward

## 14 – The Throw-In

A throw-in is a method of restarting play. A goal cannot be scored directly from a throw-in.

#### **A throw-in is awarded:**

- ✓ When the whole of the ball passes over the touchline, either on the ground or in the air.
- ✓ From the point where it crossed the touch line
- ✓ To the opponents of the player who last touched the ball



**Procedure:**

At the moment of delivering the ball, the thrower:

- ✓ Faces the field of play
- ✓ Has part of each foot either on the touch line or on the ground outside the touch line
- ✓ Uses both hands
- ✓ Delivers the ball from behind and over his head

The thrower may not touch the ball again until it has touched another player.

The ball is in play immediately when it enters the field of play.

## 15 – The Goal Kick

**A goal kick is a method of restarting play.**

**A goal kick is awarded when:**

- ✓ The whole of the ball, having last touched a player of the opposing team, passes over the goal line, either on the ground or in the air, and a goal is not scored.

**Procedure:**

- ✓ The ball is kicked from any point within the goal area by a player of the defending team
- ✓ Opponents remain outside the penalty area until the ball is in play
- ✓ The kicker does not play the ball a second time until it has touched another player

- ✓ The ball is in play when it is kicked directly beyond the penalty area (or 5 yards for PreK and 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> grade)

**If the ball is not kicked directly into play beyond the penalty area:**

- ✓ The kick is retaken

## 16 – The Corner Kick

**A corner kick is a method of restarting play**

A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick.

**A corner kick is awarded when:**

- ✓ The whole of the ball, having last touched a player of the defending team, passes over the goal line, either on the ground or in the air, and a goal is not scored.

**Procedure:**

- ✓ The ball is placed at the nearest corner
- ✓ Opponents remain at least 10 yards from the ball until it is in play
- ✓ The ball is kicked by a player of the opposing team
- ✓ The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves
- ✓ The kicker does not play the ball a second time until it has touched another player



## Practice and Game Information

### Practice Do's and Don'ts

#### DO...

- \* Show up to practice early.
- \* Have a lesson plan prepared.
- \* Introduce yourself to your players' parents and make them aware of your practice rules, facility rules, and make sure they arrange for their children to be picked up on time.
- \* Make your practices fun and challenging while maintaining a level of control.
- \* Remember to keep track of equipment at all times.
- \* Leave the field in as good or better shape than when you entered it.
- \* Always act in a prudent and responsible manner.

#### Don't...

- \* Leave practice until all the players have been picked up.
- \* Let anyone practice who is not officially on your roster.
- \* Use running laps or exercise as a punishment for misconduct. Time-outs are more appropriate.

**-Only POSITIVE coaching and encouragement should be heard or demonstrated at any time.**

**From the Volunteer Office**

### Youth Athletic Coaches

The City of Loveland Human Resources department will conduct background investigations on coaches each season they agree to coach. Please refer to the Disclosure Form & Statement of Criminal History you completed as part of your application or you may contact the Volunteer Program Coordinator at 970-962-2675 if you have any questions or concerns.

These investigations are needed in order to protect our youth however we also ask that you, as a coach adhere to the following suggestions in order to protect yourself from accusations or inappropriate conduct:

1. Avoid being alone with players in non-public settings.
  - “Never Alone” – The coach (or supervising adult) should never be alone with a player – there should always be 1 or more additional players (or adults) with the coach.
  - “Plain Sight Rule” – If a situation arises where the coach is left alone with a player (parents are late to pick up player after practice or game), the coach (supervising adult) and player are to wait in plain public sight in a designated waiting area. This includes the parking lots of the facilities we utilize and well lit curb/sidewalk areas adjacent to parking areas.
2. Document unusual situations and forward the documentation to the Program Coordinator at 970-962-2445 and/or the Volunteer Program Coordinator at 970-962-2445.
3. Do not buy gifts or give money to team members.
4. Do not take kids home in your personal vehicle unless accompanied by another child or adult

5. Let your language set the tone. Avoid profanity, even in conversations that you think are private – these conversations may actually be in earshot of players.
6. Never verbally demean, negatively label or ridicule a child based on appearance, gender, weight, sexual orientation, race or any other identifying characteristic.

## Organizing Practice Sessions

### Warm-up Time

Begin each practice with some simple warm-up exercises. These can include easy paced skills and drills followed by a short period of stretching.

### Drills for Development of Soccer Fundamentals

To capture the interest of young players, emphasize fun and skill development. Concentrate on developing the basic skills of passing, dribbling, shooting, trapping, and throw-ins at every practice session and plan simple drills to reinforce these skills.

Build on the foundation of skills with more advanced techniques as the season progresses. Give your players something new to practice each session.

Work with your players in small groups - 4's or 5's - so that nobody gets bored or slighted. Use as many soccer balls as possible. If you have the team by yourself, set up two or three "learning stations" and work with two or three small groups one at a time while the other groups drill themselves.

### Scrimmage Time

All athletes love games and competition. Tie these competitive activities (often a modified game) into what you are teaching about skills and teamwork. Set a goal or focus for each scrimmage and help your players see the relationship between the skills and the game as a whole.



### Evaluation

Conclude your practice by reviewing what was learned in practice. Ask yourself, your assistants and your players: Was the practice effective? Use this information in planning your next practice session.

## Exercises for Warm-Up Time

Healthy young players are always ready to play the game and rarely look forward to any preliminary "EXERCISES". It is important to avoid making the warm-up drudgery. The warm-up drills you use, and your attitude about them will strongly influence your player's lifetime attitudes about exercise.

### Circulatory Exercises

1. Run at Half Speed - The coach should set the pace by leading the team in laps around the field or other landmark. This is not a race.
2. Jumping Jacks - Ask players to do 30 jumping jacks at half speed and then 30 at full speed.
3. Follow the Leader - The coach should lead the team in a variety of movements associated with soccer running

forward and backwards, sideways shuffle, jumping head balls.

4. Relays - There are a variety of simple running relays that can be used with or without a ball. Have players run forward, backward, side shuffle, or around obstacles.

#### **Stretching Exercises**

1. Slow Arm Circles - forward, backward.
2. Side Benders.
3. Trunk Twisters
4. Toe touching with feet together
5. Toe touching with feet crossed
6. Thigh stretches.
  - a. Lying on floor, pull knee close to chest by grasping shin.
  - b. Bend knee and bring heel up toward backside. Grasp ankle and pull toward back side.
7. Calf Stretch.

## **Skills and Drills for Development of Soccer Fundamentals.**

Here are a few drills to get you started. They are designed to emphasize the skills and basics. Use your imagination to alter these drills to fit your players. Also, utilize other resources as needed.

### **Coaching Hints**

1. Players will play and act in the game in direct relationship to the way they have been practicing.
2. Repetition is the key to learning "IF" the skill being repeated is executed properly.
3. The closer the game conditions you provide in practice the better athletes will play the game.

4. Flexibility in planning practice is important. You should provide drills to meet the particular needs of each individual and the team.

5. Try to utilize as many balls as possible. The more time touching a ball the more skill development.

6. Listen to how you are communicating to your players. Use vocabulary that you know your players understand.

7. Permit the players to make mistakes and learn from their mistakes. Provide only ONE tip/suggestion on improvement at a time.

8. Players will continue to participate and improve if they are having FUN.

### **Skills for Dribbling**

#### **Basics:**

1. Upper body tilted slightly forward to further screen the ball.
2. Ball touched with side of the toe using either the inside or outside of the foot.
3. Eyes fixed partially on the ball in addition to peripherally encompassing "the action around the player."
4. Keep the ball close enough to maintain possession of the ball.

### **Drills for Dribbling:**

#### **Red light...Green light**

If possible, give each player a soccer ball. Start players at one end of the field with the coach at the other end. The object is for players to dribble the ball when the coach says green light and stop the ball with their foot when the coach says red light. Have the players dribble and stop the ball until they reach the

coach. If you don't have enough soccer balls for each player, divide the team in half and have the half that are not participating at the end with the coach (you can give each kid a chance to yell red light/green light), when one group reaches the coach they rotate.



### **Crab Dribble:**

Establish two safe lines about 30 yards apart (The penalty box works great). Choose three or four players to be crabs. These players assume a crab walk position in the middle between the lines. The remainder of the players dribble past the crabs who are trying to kick the ball away from the dribbler's feet. Once a dribbler gets to the other line he/she is safe. Rotate crabs and dribblers.

### **Numbers (Steal the Bacon)**

Start with players lined up on both sides of the field. Assign each player a number (the same numbers should be assigned on each side). Toss one ball out and call out a number. The players with that number or numbers (2 on 2 to incorporate passing) then run to get possession of the ball and dribble the ball back to the goal to score. Two goals may be set up to simulate more game like conditions.

### **Ladders**

Set up cones in a ladder formation up the field. If you have enough players, station one player between each set of cones. Another good idea is to utilize parents to be set up between the cones. The object is for the players to one at a

time dribble the balls to the first set of cones and attempt to "score" on the defender there. Once successful they move on to the next set of cones until they are through the ladder. This can also be used as a passing drill by having two players passing the ball back and forth and trying to "score" on the defenders.

### **Skills for Passing:**

#### **Basics:**

1. Instep pass - same as instep drive with the exception that the inside of the toe box or the outside of the toe box can also be used as points of contact.
2. Push pass - Used for accuracy, running at a slow pace and short distances. The cup of the shoe (the inside arch area) is used to push the ball.

### **Drills for Passing:**

#### **Bridge Passing**

Form groups of three. Each group gets a ball. Players in a group line up an equal distance apart with the two end players within passing range. One end player passes the ball through the middle player's out spread legs to the other end player. The passer then becomes the bridge and the bridge moves to the passers spot. This continues the other direction with each player rotating from spot to spot as the ball is passed.

#### **Bowtie**

Set up an area with cones, or use a goal for this drill. You will need four players and a goalie. Set up player number 1 to the left

of the goal. Set up player number 2 to the right of the goal. Set up players number 3 and 4 about 10 yards up field from players 1 and 2. Player 1 starts with the ball and passes it to player 3 (up field and opposite from player 2), player 3 passes it to player 2 (to the right of the goal), player 2 passes it to player 4 (up field and opposite from player 2). This pattern should create a bowtie. You can make this a passing/shooting drill by having player 4 follow through and shoot the ball from their position.

### **Skills for Shooting:**

#### **Basics:**

1. Approach slightly from the side.
2. Plant the foot:
  - ✓ Placement of the foot determines height and direction of the kicked ball
  - ✓ Foot even with the ball = low flight and about 120 degrees available kicking angle.
  - ✓ Foot behind the ball = high flight and 210 degrees available kicking angle.
3. Kicking leg:
  - ✓ On back swing, bring the heel as close to buttocks as possible.
  - ✓ On forward swing keep the toes rigid and the ankle locked.
  - ✓ Snap kneed at contact with the ball.
  - ✓ Contact ball with the laces of the shoe.
  - ✓ Toes move across the body toward the open palm of the opposite hand (the follow through).

### **Drills for Shooting**

#### **Tunnels**

Players work in pairs. Each pair has a ball. One player runs a short distance from

his/her partner and stands with legs spread (the tunnel). The other player gets one or two kicks to get the ball through the tunnel before running to make a tunnel himself/herself. This should be a fast paced game.

#### **Bowtie (same as the bowtie under passing drills)**

Set up an area with cones, or use a goal for this drill. You will need for players and a goalie. Set up player number 1 to the left of the goal. Set up player number 2 to the right of the goal. Set up players number 3 and 4 about 10 yards up field from players 1 and 2. Player 1 starts with the ball and passes it to player 3 (up field and opposite from player 2), player 3 passes it to player 2 (to the right of the goal), player 2 passes it to player 4 (up field and opposite from player 2). This pattern should create a bowtie. Player 4 follows through and shoots the ball from their position.

#### **Shooting**

Shooting a stationary ball is only realistic if you are practicing penalty kicks. Try these shooting variations:

- a. Roll the ball between the shooter's spread legs. The shooter "explodes" to take a shot on goal.
- b. Shooter sprints from goal post toward server and then turns onto the served ball for a shot on goal.
- c. Dribble from the corner of the penalty area around cone. Pass ball to a receiver. Receiver returns ball immediately (wall pass) just in front of shooter. Take immediate shot on goal.
- d. Add a defensive player to any drill.

## Trapping Skills

### Basics

#### Ground Balls

- ✓ Bring inside or outside of the shoe into the path of the ball.
- ✓ Use relaxed stance with knees slightly bent.
- ✓ Non-receiving foot is aimed toward the oncoming ball.
- ✓ Receiving foot is slightly raised off the ground
- ✓ Watch the ball and cushion the ball as it hits inside of the foot.

#### Flighted Balls

- ✓ Use the top of toes, thigh or chest
- ✓ Watch the path of the ball.
- ✓ Cushion the ball as it makes contact with the body.
- ✓ Try to let the ball drop near the feet.

## Throw-in Skills

### Basics

- ✓ Feet must be behind or on the sideline with no part crossing the line.
- ✓ Part of each foot must touch the ground prior to release of the ball.
- ✓ The ball delivery must originate from behind the head and be thrown over it.
- ✓ The ball must be thrown, not dropped.
- ✓ Both hands must be used simultaneously or with equal force.
- ✓ Players must face the direction of the throw.

## Scrimmage Time

Your scrimmages should be designed to further develop the skills you worked on during the skill-training portion of your practice session. A scrimmage is a controlled, competitive, activity involving more than one player utilizing more than one skill. A scrimmage should always be utilized in the last 15 minutes or 30 minutes of practice. It should be fun!

## Scrimmage Drills

### 3-way soccer

Using cones make 3 different goals in a circle playing field. Divide your teams into 3 equal teams and assign a goal for each to defend. The goal is to play a scrimmage game with all three teams trying to score on opponents goals. Once a score is made the coach can stop play, send each team back to their own goal, throw the ball in the air in the middle of the field and when it touches the ground the teams can run out and begin play again.

### Small Sided Games:

Small-sided scrimmage formats, 3 on 3 or 4 on 4, on small fields give everyone the chance to handle the ball and take an active part in play. This is especially valuable for the less skilled players who might otherwise tend to be ignored by the better players. Increased contact with the ball will produce a faster rate of improvement.

### Coach Play:

One of the problems of working with younger players is their lack of skills and strength. A good scrimmage is one where the coach plays but with the following restrictions:

1. The coach is on whichever team has the ball. If there is a turnover, he or she

switches teams and always remains on offense.

2. The coach cannot dribble or shoot, only pass.

3. The coach throws in all in-bound passes.



This allows players more room to roam and receive longer passes. It makes the defensive players guard more carefully and adds to the joy and excitement of practice. It makes the coach move and get involved too.

### **Offense vs. Defense:**

Set up an offense of forwards and midfielders to play on half a field against a goalie, defenders and a couple of midfielders. Offense score a point for each goal and defense scores a point for clearing the ball past mid-line or a designated spot.

### **Evaluation**

Record information that will help you plan your next practice session. Are your players ready to move on to a more advanced technique than just the basics? Did some mistake repeatedly occur during scrimmage time that should be addressed? Do you need to devise a new way to teach a skill that players did not easily pick up on?



## **Practice Session Worksheet**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Warm-up

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Skill Training** (specific skill, teaching plan, drills to be used)

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Scrimmage Time** (specific game and goals/focus)

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Evaluation**



## Coach/Parent Email Example

Hi Everyone,

I just wanted to take a minute to introduce myself and to let you know how excited I am to be coaching the [insert team] this fall. The main focus with this team will be to have a ton of fun while we are working hard to learn the fundamentals, position discipline, and structure of the game while emphasizing teamwork and safety. Our practices will be on [insert days, times and location]. Please make sure that the boys/girls show up with water, shin guards and cleats or tennis shoes as well as having used the bathroom as the bathroom may or may not be open during practice times. The cleats may be all sport type of cleats as long as the front toe cleat is removed if baseball style. I will provide the dates for release of the game schedule and any other relevant communication... so you can add them to your calendars as soon as I have them. I have also listed the uniform requirements below. Please let me know if your player will be absent from practice or a game as I try to plan my practices and game rosters at least a week in advance.

**Also, please let us know if your kiddo has any medical issues or allergies that we should be aware and so we can communicate that info out for snack purposes. Lastly, would one you be willing to take charge of organizing the snacks for the games? If so, just let me know and I will provide your information to other parents so you can set up a schedule.**

### **Mark your calendars:**

1. [Date]- First Practice (we will have a quick parent meeting after practice)
2. [Date]- Game Schedule released ( I will email out to everyone)
3. [Date]- Games Begin
4. [Date]-- Final Game (unless we have any make up games)

### **Uniform Requirements:**

Loveland Youth Athletic Shirts (available at Mountain rentals)

Shin Guards (must be fully covered by socks or pants)

Tennis shoes or cleats

**No jewelry or casts**

### **Weather Cancellation:**

[www.teamsideline.com/loveland](http://www.teamsideline.com/loveland)

I will try to communicate cancellations out as soon as I get word also.

Please let me know if any of you have any questions or concerns.

## Practice Plan Example

Time	Drill	Comments
4:00-4:05	Warm up	Start with static stretching, then a quick sprint, and follow the leader
4:05-4:20	Passing Drills	<p>*5 minute drills....</p> <p>Partner passing back and forth, focusing on using inside of foot. 40 passes total.</p> <p>Box Passing: set out cones in a box shape, each player will be at a cone, with one player waiting behind a teammate. Start by passing the ball around the square accurately and at pace. Then get your players to follow their pass to the next cone.</p> <p>Bridge Passing: Form groups of three. Each group gets a ball. Players in a group line up an equal distance apart with the two end players within passing range. One end player passes the ball through the middle player's out spread legs to the other end player. The passer then becomes the bridge and the bridge moves to the passers spot. This continues the other direction with each player rotating from spot to spot as the ball is passed.</p> <p>Passing game: Monkey in the middle Separate into two teams. One kid from each team in the middle while the others form a circle.</p> <p>Object: The kid in the middle must stop a pass in order to get out of the middle. The kids passing may not pass to someone next to them, only across.</p>
4:20-4:22	Water Break	
4:22-4:40	Cone Drills	<p>Work on different dribbling drills, maybe add some shooting drill into the mix.</p> <p>Circular cone drill: Set up at least 10 cones in radius 5-10m. The distance of one cone to the other must be short. The players must move the ball round and round the circle.</p> <p>One against two dribble drill: One goalkeeper at the post, set up two different gates at a few meters distance in front of the goal. Two players should stand each gate and prevent the offensive players from passing. The offensive players must try to get past the two defenders and score.</p>
4:40-4:42	Water Break	Start setting up for mini games
4:42-4:55	Scrimmage	4v4 mini games. Rotate teams after a few minutes.

4:55-5:00	Cool Down	Stretch. Talk about what players learned. Maybe what you might work on next week. Any important information they may need to know (i.e. – upcoming games)
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