



## U10 SEASON PLAN

### Practice Format

Practices should follow the **PLAY-PRACTICE-PLAY** format. Play-Practice-Play is the optimal manner to structure a practice session for youth players, as it utilizes best practices for the learning and application of game-like scenarios.

#### **STAGE 1: PLAY (15 Min)**

As children arrive at practice, they immediately start playing small games. In the first Play phase, players engage in small-sided games with the primary focus on having fun. It is important that these pickup-style games are led by the players and facilitated by the coaches. Players can experience the game while the coach observes and guides them towards developing their own solutions rather than being directed what to do.

#### **STAGE 2: PRACTICE (30 Min)**

In the second phase of Play-Practice-Play, children are engaged in different forms of targeted learning activities to further guide their opportunities to develop. Practice activities should be of appropriate challenge (striking a balance between success and failure), resemble the game, involve the players making decisions and allow for creative problem solving. The role of the coach during this phase is to guide players while using teaching actions. While it is during this phase that targeted learning takes place, there should always be an emphasis on keeping the atmosphere fun and enjoyable for the players.

#### **STAGE 3: PLAY AGAIN! (15 Min)**

The final stage of Play-Practice-Play is the game. This phase offers players the opportunity and freedom to play, without interruption, in an environment that mirrors the actual game. The focus here is to encourage players to express themselves and demonstrate what they learned during the Practice phase. A coach should observe and guide using minimal dialogue if possible. By silently observing the application of the Practice phase in the final Play phase, the coach can check each player's understanding and ability to execute the goal of the training session.

For more information, view/download the following document published by U.S. Soccer:  
[U.S. SOCCER COACHING EDUCATION PLAY-PRACTICE-PLAY OVERVIEW](#)



## Player Development Skills

In an effort to help coaches focus on player development, we have developed a plan for coaches based on the National Grassroots Curriculum provided by US Youth Soccer. The following chart shows the skills coaches will focus on each week.

U10 DIVISION	
WEEK	SKILLS
1	Ball Control & Possession in 1v1
2	Passing, Receiving, & Problem Solving
3	Defending Basics & Defending in Pairs
4	Team Possession with Emphasis on Passing
5	Finishing in the Attack & Scoring
6	More Defending
7	Team Possession & Create Openings
8	Finishing
Other	Goalkeeping



# NORTH VERMILION YOUTH ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

## Weekly Plans

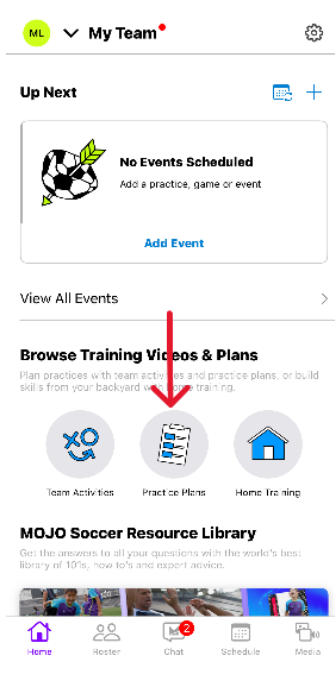
The following weekly plans provide things for you to look for, questions (and answers) to ask players to ensure understanding, and activities that can be used each week for coaches to introduce/teach the focus skill. Coaches are welcome to use other activities as long as they are aligned with the weekly focus skill.

The entire USYS National Grassroots Curriculum can be accessed for free via an app called “MOJO Sports.” Coaches are encouraged to download this app and access the detailed practice plans provided. Weekly practice plans provide detailed activities, short videos, and graphics for each of the focus skills.

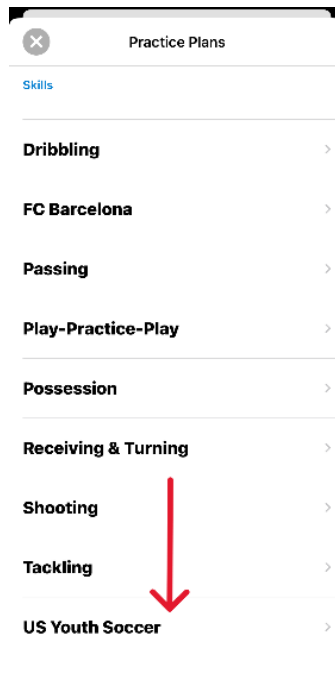
Scan this QR Code to download the app:



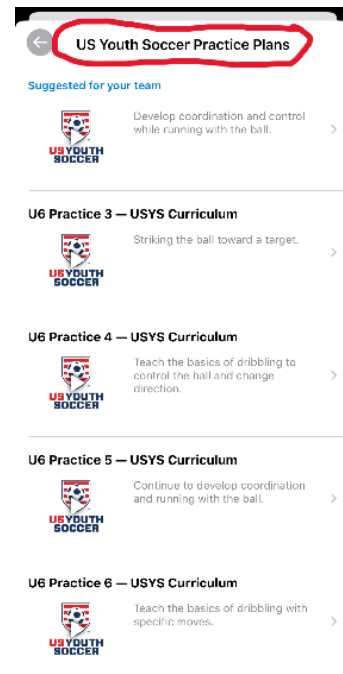
Once you download the app, the free curriculum can be found using the following steps:



From home screen click  
“Practice Plans”



Scroll to bottom and click  
“US Youth Soccer”



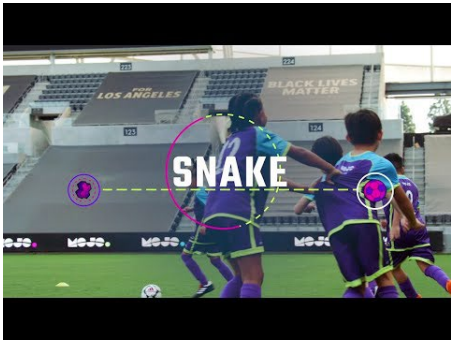



Scroll through to find your  
division/skill. Order of  
skills may vary slightly.



**U10 Week One – Ball Control & Possession in 1v1**

WHAT TO LOOK FOR	WHAT TO SAY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Players are embracing their creativity</li> <li>• Players are communicating with their teammates</li> <li>• Players can manipulate the ball with the inside and outside of the foot</li> <li>• Players are embracing their creativity</li> <li>• Players start slowly to practice a move and go faster as they get comfortable</li> <li>• During 2v1, players engage the defender before looking to pass. If comfortable, they try to take the player on themselves.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What parts of the foot can you dribble with? Inside, outside, bottom and laces</li> <li>• What is a good balanced stance? Knees bent and head over the ball</li> <li>• Why is it important to look up when we dribble? So we can see where we are going and where there is space</li> <li>• Why do we dribble as fast as we can at a defender? Our speed makes it harder for them to defend us</li> <li>• Why do we engage a defender on the dribble? We force them to choose to defend us our teammate. If they come to us our teammate may be open for a pass.</li> <li>• What are some factors that determine if we should take a player on 1v1? Is there space behind them that we can dribble into. Do we feel confident that we can beat them?</li> </ul>

**ACTIVITIES**

	
<p><b>Snake</b></p>	<p><b>1v1 to Small Goals</b></p>
	
<p><b>Team Knockout</b></p>	<p><b>Dinosaur Tag</b></p>



## U10 Week Two – Passing, Receiving & Problem Solving

WHAT TO LOOK FOR	WHAT TO SAY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Players are at a good angle and distance of support from the player with the ball</li> <li>• Technical ability when passing the ball</li> <li>• Players get high and wide (spread the field) when their team has the ball</li> <li>• Passing technique: Plant foot points to the target, strike the middle of the ball, toe up and ankle locked (inside of the foot)</li> <li>• Receiving technique: Toe up, knee over the ball, first touch in front so players can move with it</li> <li>• Communication between players</li> <li>• Players without the ball move to support the ball</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where should players support the person with the ball? In front, to the side and behind</li> <li>• What can we do to create openings? Spread out</li> <li>• If we can't move the ball forward, where can we go? To the side or back</li> <li>• How can we improve our score in gate passing?</li> <li>• Communicate with our teammate where to go. Have our first touch set us up to move where we want to go.</li> <li>• What should we do after we pass a ball? Move to support the person who received the ball</li> <li>• When is the best time to pass? To dribble? Pass when a teammate is in a better position. Dribble when there is space in front of me to attack.</li> </ul>

### ACTIVITIES

<b>Gates Passing</b>	<b>4v4 to 4 Goals(Attacking)</b>
<b>2v1 to Goal</b>	<b>Soccer Tennis</b>



## U10 Week Three – Defending Basics & Defending in Pairs

WHAT TO LOOK FOR	WHAT TO SAY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication between players</li> <li>• Closest player recognizes to pressure the player with the ball</li> <li>• Players sprint to the ball and then take smaller steps and get low when they get closer to the person with the ball</li> <li>• Staggered stance (to force the person with the ball to one side)</li> <li>• Covering player adjusts position to support at a good angle and distance of support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How should we approach the person with the ball? Players sprint to the ball and then take smaller steps and get low when they get closer to the person with the ball</li> <li>• Why is it so important to have someone pressure the person with the ball? Limits where they can go and how fast they can move the ball forward</li> <li>• Why is communication so important? Helps the team to know who is going to the ball</li> </ul>

### ACTIVITIES





<p><b>Sharks &amp; Minnows</b></p>	<p><b>1v1 to Endlines</b></p>
<p><b>2v2 to Small Goals (Defending)</b></p>	<p><b>Liverpool</b></p>



## U10 Week Four – Team Possession with Emphasis on Passing

WHAT TO LOOK FOR	WHAT TO SAY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Players without the ball move to support the person with the ball</li> <li>• Players can adjust their position to make the field bigger and create passing openings</li> <li>• Communication between players</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can we create space in the attack to make it harder to defend us? Look to spread out and stretch the field high and wide</li> <li>• What can we do to support a teammate in trouble during Team Knockout? Move to support the person with the ball</li> <li>• What can we do to keep our passes on the ground? Strike through the middle of the ball and get our knee over the ball</li> </ul>

### ACTIVITIES

	
<p><b>Team Knockout</b></p>	<p><b>Team Handball</b></p>
	
<p><b>Gates Passing</b></p>	<p><b>4v2 Keep Away</b></p>



**U10 Week Five – Finishing in the Attack & Scoring**

WHAT TO LOOK FOR	WHAT TO SAY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Players recognize when to shoot versus pass</li> <li>• Proper technique for finishing with the inside of the foot</li> <li>• Proper technique for shooting with the laces</li> <li>• Players movement to create openings near the goal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What can you do if you see an opening? First thought: shoot</li> <li>• What surface should you use close to the goal? Inside of the foot (toe up, ankle locked, use the middle of the foot)</li> <li>• When do we pass instead of shoot? When there is not an opening</li> </ul>

**ACTIVITIES**

<p><b>Flying Numbers</b></p>	<p><b>3v2 to Goal</b></p>
<p><b>Hawaii</b></p>	<p><b>Capture the Balls</b></p>









## U10 Week Six – More Defending

WHAT TO LOOK FOR	WHAT TO SAY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Players recognize when to pressure the ball</li> <li>• Players are controlled in their approach to the ball and keep their feet moving as they get close</li> <li>• Staggered stance (to force the person with the ball to one side)</li> <li>• Players are in supporting positions that are a good angle and distance from the pressuring defender</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who should pressure the ball? The person closest to the ball</li> <li>• What can we do if we can't win the ball? Keep the person in front of us and use our body position to force them out of bounds</li> <li>• Where do we position ourselves as the covering defender? We are close enough that if the person in front of us gets beat we can step to pressure the ball, but not so close that one player can eliminate us both with a move</li> </ul>

## ACTIVITIES

	
<p><b>Team Knockout</b></p>	<p><b>2v2 to 4 Small Goals (Defending)</b></p>
	
<p><b>1v1 to Endline</b></p>	<p><b>4v4 to Endlines (Defending)</b></p>



**U10 Week Seven – Team Possession & Create Openings**

WHAT TO LOOK FOR	WHAT TO SAY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Passing technique: Plant foot points to their target, strike the middle of the ball, toe up and ankle locked (inside of the foot)</li> <li>• Receiving technique: Toe up, knee over the ball, first touch in front so players can move with it</li> <li>• Players recognize when there is too much pressure and that they should pass back or change the point of attack</li> <li>• Players are spreading out and using the entire space of the field</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why is it important for us to spread out when we have the ball? If we make the field bigger it can create openings to move the ball and it makes it harder on the defense</li> <li>• What should we do if we can't play forward to a goal? Play backward to keep possession and look to find openings on the other side of the field</li> <li>• How do we know if we are in a good position to receive the ball? Our teammate can see us, our body is open to receive the ball, and there is not a defender blocking the path of the ball</li> </ul>

**ACTIVITIES**

	
<p><b>3v3+1 Keep Away</b></p>	<p><b>Numbers Passing</b></p>
	
<p><b>2v2 to End Lines Attacking</b></p>	<p><b>Criss Cross</b></p>



## U10 Week Eight – Finishing

WHAT TO LOOK FOR	WHAT TO SAY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Movement off the ball to get into a position to shoot (body is shaped to the goal)</li> <li>• Players look to shoot early if they have an opening</li> <li>• Players pass to create chances for others if there is no opening for themselves</li> <li>• Players keep their heads up and keep trying even if they miss the goal or lose the ball</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What should we look to do first if we are near the goal? Shoot if there is an opening</li> <li>• What can we do to help create an opening for a teammate dribbling at us? Make a run to the side first to create space and then forward so we are a passing option</li> <li>• What are some things you can do to keep the soccer ball low when you strike it? Keep your toe down and your ankle locked, plant your foot next to the ball and not too far behind it, keep your head over the ball</li> </ul>

## ACTIVITIES

	
<p><b>Team Tag</b></p>	<p><b>Flying Numbers</b></p>
	
<p><b>2v2 to Small Goals (Attacking)</b></p>	<p><b>Hawaii</b></p>



## U10 Other – Goalkeeping

### OVERVIEW

Some players love playing in goal; some players are afraid. This session is a great introduction to basic goalkeeping concepts. Check out the videos before the session so you have the general coaching points—then let the kids have fun. *At this age, it's still important to rotate different players into goal.* This session will give everyone a chance to test out their skills. Try to use bigger goals with a goalkeeper, during 4v4 to Small Goals.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR	WHAT TO SAY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Players are getting the body behind the ball when catching</li><li>• Players recognize when to use the diamond catch versus the basket catch</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What shape should your hands make when you catch the ball chest high or above? A diamond</li><li>• What catch do you use when the ball is waist high or below? Basket catch</li><li>• How are our arms positioned with basket catch? They are parallel (next to each other) like a railroad track</li></ul>

### ACTIVITIES

<b>Hands Warm-Up</b>	<b>Pairs Passing &amp; Catching</b>
<b>Basket Catch</b>	<b>Diamond Catch</b>

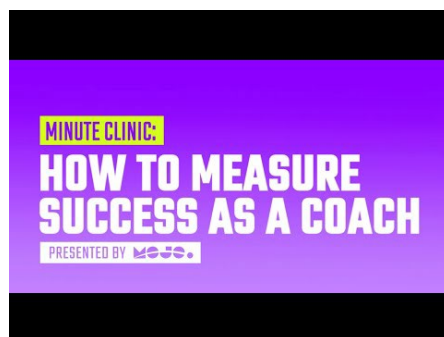


## FAQs

- **When do players learn the rules (throw-ins, corner kicks, etc)?**
  - Within the holistic “PPP” approach, players learn the rules of the game through playing and experiencing the moments when/where the rule occurs. The 2<sup>nd</sup> play phase of practice provides many moments within a context that most closely resembles the game.
- **When do players warm up and stretch?**
  - For players in U6-U12, there is no need to do any static stretching. *Playing soccer* is actually a great warm-up for playing soccer, therefore the first “play” phase of practice is the perfect time for players to warm up muscles. For players in the U14/U15 division, static stretching can be incorporated into practice and should be done after the first “play” phase once muscles are warmed up.
- **How do I “coach” during the game?**
  - Effective coaches don’t actually do a lot of coaching from the sideline during games. Instead of giving constant direction from the sideline, coaches should be observing to figure out which lessons stuck and what may need to be revisited. Players should be allowed to problem solve and make decisions during games. Noise from sidelines (both fans and coaches) can be overwhelming for players trying to manipulate the ball.



- **How do I measure success as a coach?**
  - Success ***IS NOT*** measured by wins and losses, we must balance winning and developing players.





## Other Helpful Videos

- *Soccer 101 Series by MOJO*
  - For coaches who are new to soccer (or even those considered veterans), this collection of 50+ one-minute videos is an amazing resource! It is filled with “How to” and “What is” videos that quickly explain and demonstrate various soccer skills.
  - Access the entire playlist [HERE](#)
- *Minute Clinic/How to Coach Kids by MOJO*
  - A collection of one to two-minute videos on various topics pertaining to coaching soccer at the youth level
  - Access the entire playlist [HERE](#)