



RYSC Coach Toolkit-First Team Practice

Task

1 Be prepared and things to think about

- *Equipment ready-cones, flags, pennies, inflated soccer balls*
- *Don't forget your field permit and player emergency forms*
- *If you have younger players, drop down on one knee to talk to them, look them in the eye*
- *When talk to the players on the field, make sure that you are the one looking into the sun, not the players!*
- *Do not be the only adult with the players. Always have at least one other adult with you*
- *Always have a first aid kit available.*

2 Have a practice plan (BE ORGANIZED!!)

- *Determine in advance what drills you will work on that day*
- *You should plan several practices in advance, building from on the drills from the previous practice*
- *Future practices can be driven from your previous weeks game notes*
- *There are numerous websites that offer age appropriate soccer drills. Search through several. Some offer video demonstrations as well.*

3 Arrive early

- *If possible, arrive 15-20 early. Allow yourself time to determine practice area and set up if needed. For the younger ages you might consider being near a restroom if possible...it will come up!*

4 Start and end on time, every time!

- *Set your expectations early*
- *Everyone is busy, so if you start on time, parents and players will know to arrive on time*
- *If there are teams practicing after you, be respectful and exit the on time. If you need to talk to your team, take them away from the field so that next coach can have the field to get ready.*

5 Make sure the players are prepared and properly equipped

- *Proper shorts and t-shirts, shin guards (covered by socks)*
- *While soccer cleats are optional, they can wear tennis/turf type shoes.*
- *No baseball, softball or football style cleats are allowed*
- *Just like in games, jewelry can be a safety issue. If there is a concern it should be removed (exception would be medical ID bracelets etc)*

6 Warm up

- *Start good habits early for the players and for the team*
- *Develop a routine of stretches that the captain(s) can run while you set up*
- *Try and incorporate the soccer ball in warm ups*
- *Colder weather requires a longer warm up... don't forget the cool down after practice*
- *If the players run a warm up lap, have them dribble the ball! More touches the better*

7 Introduce the drill

- *Explain the entire drill and how it might be used in a game*
- *Walk them through it and confirm their understanding*
- *It is best if you have multiple stations to avoid lines and waiting*
- *Build upon simple drills by adding the next steps...dribbling to passing to shooting*
- *Then incorporate multiple steps to eat drill*

8 Keep them moving and busy

- *Divide the team into small groups, keep them all involved and moving*
- *Avoid drills where only one player participates and the remaining players stand around*
- *On water or bathroom breaks, have the player dribble the soccer ball both ways*
- *Never use running laps as a form of punishment, you want the players to embrace the running and not to think of it as a form of punishment.*

9 Play a game!

- *At the end of EVERY practice, play a game!*
- *Divide the players into teams and let them scrimmage*
- *You will be able to see if they can incorporate all that they are learning*
- *This is also a reward for all of their hard work, after all, aren't we our there to play!!*

10 Cool down and review

- *Always finish every practice with a cool down period.*
- *Allow their muscles to cool slowly to avoid cramping*
- *Great time to talk to the players about the practice, the previous weeks game or how proud you are of their progress and effort!*

11 High Fives!

- *Finish every practice on a positive note!*
- *Send the players (and parents) home thinking positive thoughts and have them looking forward to the next practice or game*