

# Practice Plans for your First Three Practices (U4/U6)

To prepare for your first match, you need to work on the following skill sets during your initial practices.

- Use of the feet only.
- Dribbling the ball into a goal.
- Listening to “turn around”, if they are going the wrong direction.
- Stealing the ball from the other team. (defense)
- Shoelace kicks and [monster kicks](#).

Keep in mind that they do not need to be good at any of the above, but they should at least be introduced to all the above. Here are sample practice plans for an idea of the activities you can do to work on these five things during your first three practices.

Make sure you have told everyone that we ONLY use the feet and NEVER the hands.

Don't practice passing at all. Focus on dribbling, kicking, scoring and defense.

## First Practice

- [Hickory Dickory Dock](#)
- [Go Score!](#). (Or [the Big Pile](#), if you have extra balls)
- [Carrot Soccer](#) (If hands are a problem, repeat Go Score as Carrots)
- [Follow the Leader](#) (can be played as [Animal Soccer](#) too)
- [Race!](#)
- Demonstrate a shoelace kick
- [1, 2 kick](#) (if you can get parent helpers)
- [Monster Kick](#) game
- [Driving School](#)
- [Treasure Island](#)
- [Hit the Coach!](#)
- [Balls in the Bag](#)
- Hand out Patches. See [How Use to Patches to Motivate Players](#) for more information about how to effectively use patches.

## Second Practice

- [Hickory Dickory Dock](#)
- [Go Score](#), [Race](#) or [Big Pile](#)
- [Monster Kicks](#)
- [Soccer Bees](#)
- Demonstrate how to turn the ball around
- [Turn Around Game](#)
- [Ring around a parent and stop](#) (as [Animal Soccer](#))
- [Follow the Leader](#) (and freeze!)
- Explain that defense is a normal part of soccer

- [Everyone Against the Coach](#)
- [Hit the Coach](#)
- [Balls in the Bag](#)
- [Hand out Patches](#)

### **Third Practice**

- [Hickory Dickory Dock](#)
- [Go Score, Race](#) or [Big Pile](#) ([Animals](#) or [Carrots](#) as needed)
- [Chase the Kid](#)
- [Turn around game](#)
- [Snowball Fight](#)
- [Hickory Dickory Dock](#)
- [Driving School](#)
- [Monster Invasion](#)
- [Treasure Hunt \(And again with pirates\)](#)
- [Everyone against the coach](#)
- [Hit the Coach](#)
- [Balls in the Bag](#)
- [Hand out Patches](#)

Watch you players for signs of boredom, call for water breaks, or switch to a different activity. When you sense that the interest has dropped or the fatigue level is too high, stop practice. For practice length, normally 45- 50 minutes is plenty for this age group. Sometimes they can play longer, sometimes shorter, depends on the day. The exact length of practice in terms of minutes doesn't really matter.

If they are playing and interested, keep going. If they have lost interest, then stop. Base the length of your practice by observing your kids, not by observing your watch.

You can usually tell when they are done, and they've lost interest. They've stopped listening; they start to wander off, etc. When you see their attention is just not there, and switching to a new game won't help, or you've just plain run out of ideas, then stop.

Remember, focus on dribbling, scoring, turning around and playing defense. These basic skill sets will have your team well prepared for their first match.

One thing also that I recommend is when your very first one or two players show up a little bit early, take some time to coach 1-on-1 while you have the chance. Teach them a good shoelace kick or some other skill. Once you have your whole team there, it's a lot harder to give personalized attention. It's also a reward for players that show up early, they get the coach 1-on-1 for a few minutes.

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