

Latham Saints Recreational Soccer Training

Video of all 16 activities: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cSluAGmm3HU>

Next to each activity the time is given where that activity begins

The most important thing to remember when coaching youth soccer is that the more fun kids have the better! The key to any good training is to have almost no lines and have the kids have as much time on the ball as possible. We have a dribbling activity every week because it is the best way to develop future soccer stars and the kids have a lot of fun with dribbling! Feel free to modify the game based on the age of the player. For instance, U12 might just play possession where U8 plays the same game, but instead the astronauts try to keep the ball away from the aliens. If you have a soccer background, that is amazing and use those skills to help instruct the kids! If you know nothing about soccer, that is completely OK! For younger kids there is a lot to be said about letting them figure out how to dribble and how to pass on their own. If one week all of your kids want to play the activity from the previous week, go ahead and let them! Want to do one activity for 15 minutes and the other for 5, or 10 minutes each? You are the coach and you know what is best for your team. On behalf of all the kids playing rec this year, thank you for coaching!

Week 1: Dribbling & Shooting

Activity 1) Dribbling: Fill & Empty the Bucket (1:08)

Have players divided into 3 teams. First, all the players dribble their soccer ball down to fill the bucket on the other side of the field and then they run back. Feel free to have them crab walk or crawl or something fun on the way back. Then the coach calls out to empty the bucket and everyone runs down, finds their soccer ball, and dribbles it back to the start.

Activity 2) Shooting: Clean Your Room (2:26)

The players spread out over their “rooms,” probably a good idea to split the team up into 2 or 3 rooms. All the balls are in the rooms to start. The players then start kicking them out to clean their room, but the coaches roll the balls back into the rooms. The players must kick the balls out of their rooms to clean up the room. Can the players get all of the balls out of their room? Feel free to have it be players rolling the balls into the rooms for the older groups.

Week 2: Dribbling & Passing

Activity 3) Dribbling: Sharks & Minnows (3:43)

A playground classic redesigned to improve soccer dribbling skills. All the minnows start at one side of the field without a soccer ball and they try to run across the field without being tagged by a shark. A few sharks start in the middle with a soccer ball and have to dribble the ball while trying to tag the minnows. When a minnow gets tagged, they get a soccer ball and become a shark. Who will be the last minnow left?

Activity 4) Passing: Friendly Goals (4:43)

Everyone works with a friend to see who can get the most passes in a minute. Players stand 5 - 25 yards apart depending on skill and ability level. They must pass through a cone gate to their partner and they count how many passes they can connect through the gate in a minute. Make it right foot only, left foot only, or make the distance further back to challenge the kids as you go.

Week 3: Dribbling & Defending

Activity 5) Dribbling: Freeze Tag (6:16)

Every player starts with a ball except for 2 or 3 people who are it. The players who are it, do not have a ball and they try to tag everyone. If a player dribbling the ball gets tagged, they pick the ball up with their hands and stand with their feet apart. Another player can dribble the ball through their legs and that unfreezes the player. For younger kids, you can have them high five players to unfreeze them.

Activity 6) Defending: Random Numbers (7:17)

Every player is assigned a number and half the team is in one color pinnie and the other half is in another color pinnie. The coach randomly calls out numbers and rolls a ball out. It could be 1v1, 2v1, 3v3, witch it up each time! Just be sure not to roll the ball exactly in the middle to avoid a collision between 2 players, just alternate which team starts with the ball. Each team defends 1 goal and tries to score on another.

Week 4: Dribbling & Shooting

Activity 7) Dribbling: Pirates & Gold (8:28)

Every player has a ball except for 2-3 pirates. The pirates do not have a ball, but they try to collect and bury their treasure. The soccer balls are the treasure, and pirates bury them by passing them into the goal. So pirates try to steal the soccer balls from players and then dribble and kick them into the goal. If a player's ball is kicked into the goal, they must do 10 toe taps or ball rolls or juggles to come back into the game.

Activity 8) Shooting: Sink the Pirate Ship (9:40)

The coach or net, depending on the age of the players, is the pirate ship and the players are trying to sink them. For younger players, it is more fun to try to hit the coach with the ball. For older players, you can have them kick it into the net. The coach is the pirate ship and runs around, telling all the players to freeze and load the cannons, then they fire the cannons at the coach. Tell them it only counts as a hit if it is below the knees and a low shot.

Week 5: Dribbling & Passing

Activity 9) Dribbling: Volcanoes (10:40)

Every player has a ball, and they must navigate through the field and avoid the volcanoes (cones). Randomly put cones over an area appropriate for the age of the players and have the players dribble through the area and avoid the cones. Right foot only, left foot only, inside of the foot, outside of the foot, just the sole of the foot, time then on how long it takes to get through! If you hit a volcano, you have to go back to the beginning.

Activity 10) Passing: Alligators in the River (11:44)

Make a river with cones that the players cannot go in. Everyone has a partner across the river from them, and 1 ball between the 2 players. There are 2-4 alligators in the river who are running back and forth trying to intercept the pass. If an alligator eats a ball, then the passer goes into the river to be the alligator and the alligator becomes the passer.

Week 6: Dribbling & Defending

Activity 11) Dribbling: Capture the Flag (13:00)

Play the playground classic capture the flag, but with everyone dribbling a soccer ball. Use pinnies as the flags, and see if one team can get all the pinnies on their side. If you are on the opponent's half of the field, and you get tagged, you must drop the pinnie and return to your half of the field. Can also adapt it where the players are against coaches/parents.

Activity 12) Defending: Crazy Start 1v1 (14:27)

1v1 to 2 small goals. One team defends one, the other team defends the other. The coach makes the 1v1 start from a variety of funny ways. Players lay on their stomachs, on their backs, have to walk like a crab, have to spin in a circle (not too many times), have to frog jump over another player, have to close their eyes, have to answer a math question or a riddle, etc. Then the coach rolls the ball out randomly around the grid and the kids play 1v1,

Week 7: Dribbling & Passing

Activity 13) Dribbling: Bees & Flowers (15:39)

You put all the soccer balls on top of cones that are spread out around the field. The players run to the cones and take the soccer balls (bees) and dribble them to another flower (cone) and place them on top. Keep rotating soccer balls and cones. After a few minutes, the coaches can start kicking the soccer balls off the cones, and challenge the players to get all the bees to a flower.

Activity 14) Passing: Pass the Dessert (17:22)

Make a big square with cones, and that is your table. Then the players spread out around the table and have to pass the desserts to each other. As the players pass the ball, have them call out their favorite desserts and food and pretend the ball is that item. After a few minutes, have a few players be hungry defenders in the middle of the box who try to intercept the desserts.

Week 8: Dribbling & Shooting

Activity 15) Dribbling: Zombies (19:28)

A few players start as zombies and have a soccer ball, everyone else has no soccer ball. When they tag a player, they become a zombie and have to go get a soccer ball. Who will be the last person not a zombie? Make the grid larger to be harder, and smaller to be easier for the zombies.

Activity 16) Shooting: Duck Duck Goose (20:29)

Players sit in a circle with a soccer ball. A player runs around the circle playing duck duck goose while dribbling their soccer ball. When the goose is called, both players dribble towards the goal and shoot together. See who can score first!