

Dear Coaches:

Mike Kobylinski and I have tried to create a user-friendly curriculum to follow during our inaugural LISC Soccer Academy. The following should allow you the flexibility to be creative and innovative within an age-specific framework as you work with these youngsters. In general, however, we would like each session to be organized as follows:

1. The first 15 minutes should be dedicated to general movement training, primarily a warm-up emphasizing coordination. You will see a variety of such exercises to choose from within the two major age categories (Ages 4-6 or 6-8). Feel free to pick and choose these as you like, or create your own as long as it serves the same purpose.
2. The second 15 minutes should emphasize more specifically soccer-related movement. Again a menu of activities from which to choose is provided for each age group.
3. The third 15 minute interval we plan to utilize for specific technical skills. In these age groups, dribbling and ball control is the major emphasis, with passing and shooting not far behind. The activities listed are necessarily repetitive and less interactive, but strive to motivate the kids by making them competitive. Also, make sure they are all challenged to use both feet.
4. For the final 45 minutes, we would like the kids to play the game in a progressive 3v3 format. This is described in detail below, along with questions aimed at introducing the kids to individual and small group tactical choices. We should avoid any 'rush' to complete these progressions, try to follow it faithfully, avoiding moving on until your group has shown by their understanding that they are now ready for the next stage.

Mike and I hope you find this helpful. At any time you have any questions about any aspects of this curriculum please e-mail either of us. We hope you enjoy it,

Michael Wingo

LISC SOCCER ACADEMY

AGES 4-6

I. General Movement Training: 5:15-5:30pm

“Giants and Dwarves” game

Mark central area approx. 15-20x15-20m, surrounded by three separate small areas in different colored cones

Coaches are “giants”, players are the generally quicker & smarter “dwarves”

The central area is used for competitions and skills, the smaller areas to quickly reassemble the players to rest and learn new skill

Possible Activities:

- In central area, arrange low hurdles or lay down rolled up vests
 - run over obstacles
 - 1-footed hops
 - 2-footed hops
 - 2-footed backward hops
- Dwarf tricks with vests that can be done during rest
 - Throw it up, and catch it with one hand
 - Put the vest on head, lean back and try to catch it behind the back
 - Throw it up, then catch it behind back
 - Throw it up behind back, then catch it with other hand
 - Throw it up between legs, then catch it in front of you
 - Put vest on head, let it fall backwards, then try to catch it between your legs
 - While lying down, plant your feet, lift your hips, and pass your vest around them
 - While lying down, pass the vest from your hands to your feet, roll over one time and pass it back
 - While lying down, throw the vest up, catch it with your feet, then pass it back to your hands
- “stealing the giants treasure”
 - place all the vests at the end of the central area
 - all the dwarves assemble in one of the colored ‘countries’
 - an obstacle course (hurdles, slalom cones, narrow bridge, stepping stones, etc) is set up along the free side of the central square
 - dwarves try to steal the treasure (vests) from the guarding giant, but may not use hands to carry the treasure back to their country
 - if tagged by giant, dwarf must complete obstacle course before returning to country
 - variation: enlist a dwarf or two to help the giant
- back and forth vest relay: dwarves or dwarf pairs try to be the fastest to move their treasure to another country or around a cone back to their country
 - hopping while holding the vest between knees
 - balancing the vest on their head

- in pairs with vest tucked in both waistbands
- vest pressed between partners shoulders

II. Soccer-oriented Movement Training: 5:30-5:45pm

Dwarf tricks with the ball

- dribble randomly, on signal stop ball, then flick it up
- ball on head, let it drop behind, then quickly turn and catch it after bounce
- roll the ball in a figure-8 around your legs
- pull ball backward, the forward with the same foot

Tag the giant

- in a 5x5m square, dwarves try to hit giant with ball without entering square
- giant throws balls back out of square
- can enlarge square if necessary

Moving goal game

- two coaches move randomly throughout area holding rope or vest between them
- dwarves must score on this moving goal as many times as they can

Controlled juggling

- drop ball onto thigh and catch
- foot-catch
- thigh-foot-catch
- thigh-thigh-foot

Shooting goal rotation

- make a square of cones approx 5-10m in front of goal
- supply balls continuously to that square
- players continuously negotiate a short obstacle course before entering square and shooting a ball

III. Skill Sessions: 5:45-6:00pm (Note: 3V3 Format for final 45 min. is found on page 7)

1. Dribbling: every player with a ball in front of two cones, 5m apart

- players dribble around both cones as fast as they can 3 times
- same as above, but right foot only
- same as above, but left foot only
- same as above, but outside of foot only
- race

2. Dribbling in 20x20m grid

- heads-up alternate toe touches (coach holds up fingers, players must shout out how many)
- right foot on ball, coach asks the to roll the ball forward, backward, left or right
- same as above, with left foot

- popcorn (between the feet) touches, heads up
 - distribute 2m gates randomly throughout grid: who can dribble through 10 gates (never going through the same one twice in a row) the fastest?
 - Can add 1 or 2 'gatekeepers'
3. Dribbling in a 20x20m grid, with cones spread randomly throughout grid
- players must dribble to a cone, stop the ball before picking up the cone, who can collect the most cones?
 - Same as above, right foot only
 - Same as above, left foot only
 - Same as above, but the player must touch the ball on every step between cones
 - Now put all the balls in the middle, divide the players up equally at the four corners of the grid
 - When coach yells 'go' the first player in each line runs to get a ball, then dribble it back to their corner before their next teammate goes
 - After these first players, a team can take the ball from the middle or any other corner
 - First one to collect a number of balls equal to the size of their team wins
 - Variations: right foot dribble only, left foot dribble only, touch the ball on every step, etc
4. Dribbling: every player with a ball in front of two cones 8m apart
- Dribble to next cone, put right foot on the ball, pull it back and return
 - Same as above with left foot
 - Turn with the inside of both feet
 - Turn with the outside of both feet
 - Move to 20x30m field with small goals at each end and players divided on either sideline
 - Ball is played to middle, and first two players from each group tries to win the ball and score on either goal
5. Passing
- In groups of two, moving down a channel about 2m wide, players pass back and forth
 - One player will be using only the right foot, the other only the left
 - Gradually increase channel to 5m then 10m wide
 - Split into small groups divided between cones 10m apart
 - Pass to other cone, then sprint to the end of that line
 - Start with no restrictions, try to advance to 1-touch
 - Train both feet
6. Passing: in a 20x20m grid with 5x5m square in the middle
- Half of group outside the grid, half inside
 - Inside players must run toward a player with the ball on the outside, receive and pass the ball back to that player, then return to the middle square before finding a new teammate
 - Start with two touch

- Try to advance to one touch, then right and left foot only
 - Remove middle square and instead randomly spread 2m gates throughout the grid
 - Pairs get a point for every gate they pass through without passing through the same gate two times in a row
- 7. Shooting: line of players (no more than 6) in front of row of 8 cones and a goal
 - The first four cones are close together (for quick cuts and turns) the last 4 are 5-10m apart to encourage speed dribbling
 - Players dribble through the cones, then shoot at goal before returning to line
 - Advance to right and left foot only

AGES 6-8

I. General Movement Training: 5:15-5:30pm

Games of Tag:

“Hunters and Rabbits”

Format: 10x10m square; rabbit enters from one corner, hunter from opposite corner

Rabbit tries to cross either of the lines adjacent to hunter’s corner without being tagged

Variation: place a small cone gate near the rabbit’s entry that he is not allowed to run through (this forces greater reliance on change of direction rather than pure speed)

Progress to placing two cone goals along one side of square

- Rabbit now enters from opposite sideline and tries to run through either goal
- Hunter must defend beginning behind goals
- Variation: same as above, but hunter initiates action by touching one of the cones with his hand
- Variation: hunter must start with his back turned to rabbit

Back and forth relays

Vest and ball in pairs

- Partners simultaneously throw and catch ball; who can be first to 10?
- Same as above, but ball must be bounced
- Same as above, but ball must be passed along ground

Development of basic skills such as jumping, running, rolling, hopping, falling, etc

II. Soccer-oriented Movement Training: 5:30-5:45pm

Coordination with ball

- Throw ball up with left hand, let it bounce, kick it up with left foot, then catch it
- Repeat with right foot
- Place ball on head, let it fall forward, kick it up, then catch it
- Bounce the ball once off each thigh, then catch it
- Bounced the ball off your head, then catch it
- Kick the ball up once with each foot, then catch it

Pass & dribble relay

- Two teams line up next to one of the goalposts of a goal
- A cones is placed about 8m away, and another about 8m further and more centrally
- A shooting line is designated by a line of cones 6-10m directly in front of goal
- First player in line passes to player at first cone, who must dribble around next cone, then shoot upon reaching line
- Every player moves up one spot, with an option that the shooter can move up to be goalkeeper against next opposing shooter

Dribbling

In a 'cone jungle', about 20x20m space with a number of cones greater than the number of players randomly distributed

- Let players dribble freely avoiding the cones
- Players can dribble with stronger foot, but must touch cone with hand as they go around it and cannot go around same cone twice
- Progress to weaker foot
- Now try to pull ball back away from cone with the sole of the foot as they approach cone: who can do 8 pull backs at 8 different cones the fastest?
- Find-a-friend: players dribble randomly, when coach calls out a number, the players try to form groups of that numbers as quickly as possible touching their balls together while holding them in their hands
- Dribble around cones with the inside, then outside of foot
- Run and touch 10 different cones while dribbling with designated foot
- At each cone, sweep ball from one side to the other using the sole of the foot
- Slalom dribbling relay competition: using all sides of both feet

Faking

Teach simple moves and their complements

- Lunge step behind the ball
- Wave over the ball
- Rivelhino (step-over fake)
- Scissors

Passing and shooting

- Shooting at partners 'leg goals' from various distances, can compete 1v1 or pair v pair up to 5
- Same as above, but with weaker foot
- Same as above, but players trade places after each pass
- Pass to a shooter 6-10m from goal, who must shoot first-time; double points for shots into corners
- As above, but with weaker foot
- Team competition: as above, one team tries to score as many goals as possible while their opponent completes a dribbling/coordination slalom 5 times

III. Skill Sessions: 5:45-6:00pm

1. Dribbling
 - a. 8 players in 15x15m grid, each player starts at one side, with one cone 5m away and another 10 m away
 - b. 1st player dribbles to 1st cone, pulls ball back with sole of right foot and returns to start; their partner goes next
 - c. same as above with left foot
 - d. same as above, but to the far cone
 - e. same as above, but with inside or outside of the foot chops/cuts
 - f. same as above, but with Cruyff turn
 - g. now working on move at 1st cone, before dribbling to 2nd
 - i. “v” move (Puskas)
 - ii. scissors
 - iii. double scissors
 - iv. Matthew’s
2. Speed dribbling
 - a. Groups of 2’s with 5 cones per group, placed 5,6,7, and 12 m from 1st cone
 - i. Players sprint to first cone, then slalom around middle two before sprinting around far cone before returning to start in same manner, then partner goes
 - ii. Right foot dribble only
 - iii. Left foot dribble only
 - b. Two team relay: speed dribble around cone 25m away
 - i. Right foot only, then left foot only
3. Passing: 2m gates distributed randomly in 40x30m area
 - a. Teams of four with one ball per team
 - b. Goal is scored by passing ball through a gate to teammate
 - c. Cannot go through the same gate twice in a row
 - d. All four players must touch the ball before the same player can touch the ball a second time
 - e. Variation
 - i. A goal is counted only when the ball is passed through a gate to a second player, then back through the same gate to a third player
4. One-touch passing
 - a. As above, but now in pairs
 - b. Goal is scored when ball is passed through a gate to partner, then back through same gate with 1-touch to original passer
 - c. Progress to right or left foot only
5. Passing
 - a. In three’s toward a goal, pass the overlap receiver continuously until shot
 - b. 3 defenders, each in their own 10x10m grid
 - i. 2 attackers try to progress through each grid with accurate passing to beat the one defender
 - ii. defenders are restricted to their own grid

IV. 3V3 FORMAT: 6:00-6:45pm (adjust accordingly based on ability/age)

Field:

- 32m long (with 6m shooting zones at both ends) and 20-25m wide
- on each endline, place two small goals (@ 2m wide & 1m high) 12m apart
- goal can only be scored from inside the shooting zone

Teams

- each team plays with 3 players, with 1 sub waiting
- after each goal, both teams bring on their sub in a fixed sequence
- subs should come on at centerline

Rules

- no offsides, corners or penalty kicks
- when ball goes out of play, it can be passed in or dribbled in with opponents having to stand at least 3m away from ball
- after fouls, play is similarly resumed with a pass or dribble from spot of foul, opponents having to stand at least 3m away from ball

Preparatory games: Getting them started

- 3v0
 - teams of 3 practice separately without opposition
 - one player starts from behind each goal, the third from the endline
 - each player must touch the ball at least once before shooting at other end
- 3v0 in opposite directions
 - two teams of 3 start from opposite ends at the same time
 - without pausing after each attack, see which team can score 5 goals first
- 3v0 in a triangular formation
 - a goal does not count if the 3 players are ever all in a line
 - ask “why should you play in a triangle”
 - it offers more passing options
 - a player receiving a pass can more easily play that ball to the next player
 - it is easier to control and run with the ball if it comes to you at an angle
- 3v0 with interchange of positions
 - a goal does not count unless the three players are all in a different position than when they started
 - ask “where should you play the ball in order to go forward as fast as possible?”
 - into the path of your teammate
 - ask “why would we trade places while going forward?”
 - it can confuse defenders and make it more difficult for them to cover all our attackers
 - moving after you pass the ball leaves a space that your teammates can run or pass into

- 3v0 taking a pass on the run
 - a goal only counts if all passes are taken on the run without stopping
- 3v0 first-time passing
 - a goal only counts if all the passes and the shot are made with the first touch
 - ask “when can a pass be helped on its way with only one touch?”
 - when it is played to you at a speed that makes it easy to deal with
 - when there is a teammate available right away to receive your pass
 - ask “when should you hold on to the ball before passing it, instead of playing a pass with your first touch?”
 - if the ball is played to you inaccurately or too fast, or if no teammate is nearby to pass to
 - ask “why should you pass the ball into the path of your teammate if there is no defender in front of him?”
 - because your teammate can get forward faster if he runs onto the ball instead of having to run with it
- 3v0 using the weaker foot
 - a goal only counts if each player passed with his weaker foot at least once
- 3v0 fast attack
 - using a stopwatch, see which team can score in the shortest time
 - see if the players can figure out who should start the play, and how to minimize the number of passes
 - simplest sequence: winger to central forward to opposite winger in the shooting zone

Mini-soccer 3v1

- Rules
 - 3 players of one team start their attack from an endline, defended by one player from the opposing team
 - if defender wins the ball, he should try to score at either of the opponent’s goals
 - after 6 turns, teams change roles
- questions to ask to improve attacking efficiency
 - “which attacker should have the ball when the defender challenges for it”
 - the center forward (he is the only attacker who has passing options in two directions)
 - “where should the center forward position himself when the winger has the ball?”
 - either behind (offering back pass) or ahead (offering through ball) of the defender: triangle formation
 - “when should you pass the ball?”

- neither too early nor too late; don't let the defender tackle the ball, but also don't pass while the defender is far away enough to challenge the receiver
 - “what should the teammates without the ball pay attention to?”
 - stay far enough away from the defender that they can run onto a pass without the defender being able to reach them easily
 - “what should you do after you pass?”
 - take up a new position so that you can receive another pass
 - “what should you do if the path to either goal suddenly opens up?”
 - run with the ball and try to score
 - “what should you do to make sure that you can receive a pass?”
 - never position yourself so that the defender is between you and the ball
- 3v1 continuous and alternate attacks toward both ends
 - at each end, the two goals are defended by only 1 player starting from the 6m line
 - an attack ends if the defender touches the ball
 - a defender who gives up a goal is substituted
 - only 1-touch passing or shooting is allowed in the shooting zones
 - after 10 turns, teams change roles
- 3v1+1 additional defenders supporting from behind
 - on the attackers first touch, a second defender starting 4-8m behind the attackers, joins in
 - ask “what is the best way to score in this game”
 - pass the ball at the right moment, before the 2nd defender can help
 - avoid passes that don't go forward
 - ask “which player should start the attack?”
 - the center forward
 - ask “should the winger first control the ball in the shooting zone, or should he shoot first time?”
 - first time, to give the 2nd defender as little chance to help as possible
- 3v1+2 additional defenders supporting from 8m behind
 - ask “how do the 2 defenders help you decide what to do?”
 - The attacker should observe which teammate is farthest from a defender and try to pass into that teammate's path
 - Ask “should the defenders coming from behind challenge the ball or should they try to close off the passing lines?”
 - Let the first defender hold up the ball while the other 2 defenders close off the passing lines
- 3v1+2 additional defenders, 1 supporting from the flank and 1 from behind

Mini-soccer 3v2

- Rules

- The goals at each end are defended by one player in the shooting zone and one player in the center of the field
 - How many goals can the attackers score without losing possession or without the ball going out of play
 - An attack ends when a goal is scored, the ball goes out of play, or when a defender is able to win the ball and pass to his teammate
- 3v2 and 3v1 alternately
 - after 10 attacks, the teams change roles

3v3 and its variations

- 1 player in shooting zone
 - one player from each team must stay in their penalty area and cannot advance to midfield
 - after each goal, this player should swap with a midfielder, and the sub should take his place
- dribbling games: instead of shooting into goals, the attacker must dribble the ball through one of two 6m wide cone goals
 - variation 1: the player dribbling through the goal must demonstrate a specified trick
 - variation 2: a goal can only be scored if each of the three players has touched the ball at least once
 - variation 3: make it, take it: after scoring, the attackers can attack in the opposite direction and cannot be opposed until they leave the last shooting zone
- through pass to front runner
 - each team positions a front runner in the shooting zone
 - his two teammates are not allowed to leave the midfield
 - the coach then requires different passing or finishing techniques before a goal will count
 - variations
 - the midfielders can only enter the shooting zone after the ball has been passed into it
 - the ball can only be played to the forward in the air
 - the forward is not allowed to score
- attacking diagonally opposite goals

