



# Coaches Handbook Recreation Program

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# Coaches make this work!

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The volunteer coach program is an essential part of why our members have so much fun with the programs that we offer. Every coach and manager is directly contributing to the positive experience that our members will have during the course of the league and for that we are grateful! Your time and energy to put together fun and engaging training sessions is the key to keeping our members happy and enjoying the game!

No matter what your starting point there will always be available resources to help you be successful as a youth soccer coach. It is our mission to motivate the coaches so that each and every Henlopen SC member can feel good about the quality of instruction and the overall service they receive while participating in our programs. This process of development is as much for the coaches as it is for our members.

## How to use this handbook

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This handbook provides a comprehensive guide to what you can expect as a team coach. The handbook includes advice, strategies, training session and resources for you to arm yourself as you begin to organize fun exercises for training your team.

The first section of this handbook provides some very simple but valuable advice on becoming an effective youth sports coach. It offers tips on how you can create a fun and interactive environment for you and your players and maximize player participation.

The remaining sections of the handbook explore the activities and exercises that you will use to build your training sessions based on the age group that you are coaching. It is important to recognize that each team coach has full flexibility on selecting the exercises that will work best for their team. Do not hesitate to adjust an exercise so that it works for the ability level of your group. Many games also include progressions & variations to continue challenging your team as you see them improve.

# The Training Session

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Organizing your training session is important and all of our team coaches are encouraged to use the same format for each week to make things a little more manageable and provide consistency for the players. In order to help maximize your training we have broken down each session to include the following elements:

Warm up

Stretching

Instructional games

Free play scrimmage

Cool down and debrief

Each week every team will follow the same session format shown above, however the warm up activities and instructional games are chosen at the discretion of each team's coaches. It is essential that we incorporate each of these elements, as they are critical to the development of every player.

More specifically we would like all of our team coaches to stay within the suggested time line so that your session will be as effective and economical as possible and we can ensure that every member is receiving the same kind of experience no matter what team or age group they are in.

0-10 minutes – Welcome, warm up activity and stretch

10- 12 minutes- Water Break

12- 20 minutes- Instructional game 1

20-22 minutes- Water Break

22-30 minutes- Instructional game 2

30-32 minutes- Water Break

32- 50 minutes- Free play scrimmage

50-60 minutes- Cool down stretching, session debrief and dismissal

This is only a suggested guide line, there are many things that will interfere with staying on task; however trying to maintain good time management will ultimately benefit each of your players and establish a routine for your sessions.

## Group sizes

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Each team will have approximately 12-15 players with a mix of both girls and boys. Please do not be alarmed if this number changes from week to week due to illness, schedule conflicts or vacations. You may not get any prior notification that a particular player will be missing from your team that week. If the size of the group is big enough to start your session (typically 7) then you should go ahead and get started. Please also account for late arrivals to your session.

## The First Day

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On the very first day of any program there is a lot to get done, players will need to find their fields and teams, uniforms will need to be distributed and questions will need to be answered. This will mean that players assigned to your team will be arriving at your field throughout the session and it is important to stay flexible and include any late arrivals into the group. Once you have all your players it would be a good time to welcome the group and try to get a grip on some names. Do not worry if you cannot remember them immediately, you will have the remainder of the session to polish up.

Prior to the first week the team coach and manager will receive the team roster. This will show you the players that have been assigned to your team and the parent contact information. There is no need for you to take attendance for your team at each session; each player will already be advised on his or her respective team. Every account holder will receive an email each week confirming the field and game time.

# Season Calendar and missed/cancelled sessions

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There are seven weeks in our regular season with a designated “Rain Date” for any session cancellations. There is only one make up week offered for all of the rain delays and cancellations that we may experience throughout the season.

Session cancellations are communicated in a number of ways. The first notification will be through our text notification system then the announcement will be posted on the club website. Team managers will also be involved in communicating the changes.

If a coach is unable to make a training session for his team then he is responsible for notifying the other team coach (if assigned) so that coverage can be arranged for that session.

## Training Philosophy

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It is our primary role as coaches to motivate every one of our players with the enjoyment of playing soccer. The more they can kick, shoot, dribble and chase the better their experience. Limited activity is not a good approach to generating a genuine and long-term interest in the game. This is why our club takes a much more inclusive approach through its game based instruction. We want every one of our members in each age group to be active on the ball and engaged in activity for the entire session. Coaches are provided with numerous exercises that encourage this type of involvement from the players.

**3-4 years old-** ALL of the instructional activities for 3-6 years old should be game based. This means every player with a ball as much as possible, with no more than three players per ball for any single exercise; no player should be standing still for more than 30 seconds. By adopting this

approach, not only does every player feel involved with the session but will also receive lots of repetition of skill and build the fundamental base that is needed to develop further in the game. In short- NO LINE DRILLS and KEEP THEM MOVING!

**5-6 years old-** Instruction in this age group becomes more specific to the broader skills that are necessary to be successful in soccer. Exercises should concentrate on more progressive skills such as passing and understanding supporting roles. Players should be active and engaged whether they have the ball or not.

Not only is it important to keep the players involved, but also it is important to choose appropriate games for each age group. As a general rule you should consider the following:

3 & 4 year old players- basic games, limited conditions.

5 & 6 year old players- basic games with progressions and conditions.

This handbook gives a variety of options for exercises and games for each age group; however the coach will always have the ability to make adjustments to each and every exercise so that it is appropriate for the level of his respective team. You may need to introduce or remove certain conditions or you may choose to use a basic set up and adapt it so that your players are engaged and challenged.

# Season Objectives

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Although this is a recreational league we do still want to develop players and encourage them to gain a better understanding of the game. The league is intended so that players can receive quality instruction and game experience while learning soccer specific skills that are appropriate for their age group. The table below should be used as a reference guide so that exercises and games within the team training sessions are selected to meet the tactical and technical objectives for the age group.

Age Group	Technical Objectives	Tactical Objectives	Mental Objectives
3&4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Basic command of the ball (start, stop, dribble, keep the ball close)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Understand purpose of the game.</li><li>* Understand the boundaries of the field.</li><li>* Understand directional play.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Taking the ball from another player is part of the game</li><li>* Having the ball taken away requires a positive reaction (go get it back!)</li></ul>
5&6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Linear passing</li><li>* Smooth change of direction</li><li>* Command of ball with both feet</li><li>* Controlled acceleration</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Awareness of space between players</li><li>* Field positioning based on ball position</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Assisting/Supporting the primary player is equally important</li><li>* Working together you can accomplish more</li></ul>

While working with your group you will notice that there will be a wide variety of skill levels, some players may be more advanced while others may need more time. You may also find that certain players are more aware of the tactical elements based on their previous experience or connection from another sport.

The following pages of the handbook will provide helpful tips that you can use to ensure that you and your players have a safe and enjoyable experience during the season. You may use all or part of the information; however we do encourage you to read all the pages so that you are well equipped to handle your role as the team coach!

And Stop! => Be Firm, Fair and Happy! => Coach What  
Players do correctly => Demonstration => Energy => Fun  
& Flexibility => Games => Have Control => Eyes on the  
Group => Join In => Keep Records and Maintain High  
Standards =>

## The A, B, C's of Coaching & Teaching

Learn Names => Movement => No Talking While I am  
Talking! Organizations => Planning => Questions =>  
Regressive Pull ==> Safety, Safety, Safety! => Time on  
Task => Understanding => Versatility => When I Say  
Go! => Explain Activities Clearly => Why is the Coach  
Always on the Winning Team? => Zzzzzzzzz

***A Guide for Coaching Sports & Teaching Children***

By

**Ashley's Soccer Camp, Inc.**

# The A, B, C's of Coaching

## And Stop!

This is the only stop command that we use at Ashley's Soccer Camp. Every player we work with knows it. It is most applicable when the dynamics of a group require a verbal command, rather than a gesture. So, have one consistent stop command. Be LOUD and forceful: "And STOP!"

## Be Firm, Fair and Happy!

Make the children do what you want them to, but always do it smiling! No group is beyond being able to be controlled, and if your standards at practice and on the field are high, but attainable, and you are consistent and fair, the children will respect you. So be firm, be fair, and enjoy yourself.

## Coach What Players do Correctly

Always coach what is right and do not worry about and highlight what is wrong. Never, ever use exercise as a form of punishment (like running extra laps, or doing push-ups). Humiliation does not create happiness or proficiency. Emphasize the positive, for example, "That was a good pass because you made it quickly." Or, "I liked how you sprinted after that loose ball!" Positive reinforcement works better than negative humiliation. Simply praising behaviors that you want repeated will enhance success.

# Demonstration

One demonstration speaks louder than a thousand words. If you cannot do it, have one of the members of the group do it. Insist on a good demonstration, and show the correct way to do something. Never show the way not to do it!

# Energy

Always be energetic and show plenty of enthusiasm. After a few weeks of training and games this may become a challenge, but dig deep into your reserves. Children will respond well to activities if they know you are putting in as much energy as you can.

# Fun & Flexibility

Have Fun!! Always try to inject an element of fun into your activities. Constantly ask yourself, "Would I have fun doing this?" "Are they having fun doing this?" "Would anybody have fun doing this?" If not, be flexible and try something new.

# Games

ASC uses a "Games Based Approach" to teaching. Children learn better and have more fun through playing games, not by repeating exercises. Many skills are involved in games; the coach has to know how to use them in order to focus on teaching a particular skill. We do not believe in using drills (which are for making holes!) and the word implies a military approach. A package of activities is essential, and when that package is delivered through games, the result is fun!

# Have Control

Without control, teaching cannot take place. Children need boundaries. Clearly communicate your rules and expectations early in the season. A good coach then constantly enforces them. But beware; in most cases, a lack of control is traceable to inappropriate activities. This leads to bored and frustrated children. If this occurs, look to yourself before you blame your players.

# Eyes on the Group

Constantly walk the perimeter and scan the group. Scanning requires constant attention to all your players by frequently looking over the group from different places around the perimeter. This requires enormous discipline, but it really helps in identifying potential problems. Players quickly realize, and respond well, when they are under constant observation.

# Join In

Every activity must be structured to achieve maximum participation. Children want to kick the ball and be involved. Activities must include everyone, with everybody doing something!! An abundance of activity is not always a bad thing. Organized chaos can actually be useful. Please remember that children are easily bored and do not enjoy standing on line. (When was the last time you were happy stuck in a traffic jam?) No lines. Join in. Maximum participation.

# Keep Records and Maintain High Standards

Records enable problems and ideas to be effectively logged and dealt with. Maintain high standards for yourself and the children. Accept nothing less than you ask for. If you allow standards to slip, your control of the group slips. Always remember to smile, though!

## Learn Names

Everyone appreciates being called by his or her first name. Children love to be known by their coach. Make a point of learning names as quickly as possible. Use games and a variety of other activities to enliven this process. Stating: "My name is Billy!" is not as exciting as playing tag and shrieking your name when you are caught. We find the use of last names impersonal. The bottom line is: call children what they want to be called, not what you want to call them.

## Movement

This is a fundamental teaching tip for all sessions. You must have activities that entail movement to mentally and physically awaken and engage the players. By warming up prior to stretching, your sessions have a solid beginning. You should end every session with a cool down and stretching.

# No Talking While I am Talking!

It reinforces basic good behavior to keep children quiet while you are demonstrating or explaining. This should be a rule of every coach. Some coaches get carried away and drone on. Children key on your voice. Droning on causes them to phase out. Children also know that while you are talking, they can daydream. Breaking your speech with inflections is crucial. Silence is also an essential teaching tool. Silence, and a look in the right direction, are powerful tools for keeping control.

## Organization

A successful team needs to be well prepared. Ensure your paperwork is always up to date and accurate. To help your team be in the right place at the right time, a phone chain is a great idea. Frequent contact with parents is also recommended to build strong team spirit. This may be in the form of a fun, weekly or bimonthly newsletter. Another idea is to organize a refreshments rotation for game-days. You cannot be too well prepared!

## Planning

A written lesson plan for every training session is essential. Take into account the age and skill level of your players in order to create an appropriate plan. After your practice session make notes on your lesson plan and keep it in a file. Revisit your plans often so as to evaluate your performance as a coach and identify problem areas. Insufficient or poor planning leads to Band- Aid Coaching. This means that a coach does not have a set plan, but rather makes do by fixing the noisiest problem. Organize your session to include a warm-up (always with a ball), stretching, conditioning, individual skills work, group games and activities, and scrimmage time.

# Questions

Questions should be asked to stimulate the children. When you ask your players questions, employ a tactic called wait time. This means always waiting at least five seconds before calling on someone to answer. Children process information at different rates, and by responding to the first child to raise his or her hand to answer, you exclude a large portion of the group. More children will participate if this teaching skill is employed. By waiting, you will see an increase in the participation of the quieter, less impulsive children.

# Regressive Pull

As the season progresses, you may find yourself being constantly tempted to engage in the players' habit of arguing about everything. We call it going back and forth, or regressive pull. One has to be vigilant in guarding against this. Be cool, be adult and be in charge!

# Safety, Safety, Safety!

This is the most important aspect at any time. The emotional and physical safety of the players is of paramount importance. Evaluate every situation with its safety in mind. Consider the safety implications of the following: field, equipment, game organization, and the emotional aspect of the coach/player interaction.

# Time on Task

A coach must evaluate how much time is spent practicing an assigned skill. "Time on Task" is the ratio of a player's time engaged in the activity, versus inactivity (i.e. listening to the coach, taking a break, in transition between activities). Have someone with a stop watch monitor your coaching to help you work out this ratio. We aim for 80% of Time on Task, but don't be surprised to find your figures much lower early on! Remember, the children are there to learn by playing, not by listening to your voice.

# Understanding

Coaches must constantly check for understanding. Ask the children what they have learned from the skills, games and activities. What can they tell you about what has occurred? This means taking a break between activities and asking questions. This should be done at least at the conclusion of a session and at the beginning of the next session.

# Versatility

Be it snow, heat, behavior problems, or the arrival of a moose on the playing area, a coach must be able to handle a changing environment with ease and confidence. The most important aspect of this is modifying an activity from its original form to improve it. Whether this means changing a game or enlarging your field after a few minutes of cramped play, a coach needs to be thinking all the time. You should be willing to admit that an activity is unsuitable, and if it does not work, then move on. It is okay to admit this to the children as well.

# When I Say Go!

This is the opposite command to "AND STOP!" and it is equally important. We use "When I say go...." as a way of starting an activity. A coach needs to be consistent with this instruction. Strong emphasis should be placed on the word "GO!" and children should learn to react only to this word, and not before it is said.

# Explain Activities Clearly

Be simple, clear and concise when asking players to carry out a command. An 8 year old will not understand an MLS tactical game plan. Instead, make all requests appropriate to the age and ability to understand them. Do not spend more than 20 seconds talking; otherwise, players tend to lose concentration.

# Why is the Coach Always on the Winning Team?

Coaches are there to teach and not to dominate the game. A coach's focus can shift from the children to himself or herself. Too often we see a coach showing off while children become bored or unhappy. Do not be tempted to demonstrate to the children that you can dominate in the scrimmage, or do the most juggles. If this happens, a coach is not doing a good job.

# Zzzzzzzzzz

Zzzzzzzzzz, the children are drifting off. Why? As mentioned under "H" (Have Control), a lack of control can be attributed to inappropriate activities. Look at yourself, your planning, and the activity before you blame the children for being bored. If they lose interest, the game could be too difficult, too easy, or just not fun. All activities can be structured to challenge all players. Suggest to the group, "If you feel comfortable you can try this more difficult skill, but if you're not sure, continue to work at the level on which you're most comfortable". If the majority of children are not interested in an activity, the chances are that it is unsuitable.

## Games & Exercises

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The following pages describe many games and exercises that have been selected based on the appropriateness for the age group. Each game is designed to teach and develop the technical & tactical objectives for the respective age group i.e. lots of dribbling games for the youngest group and more challenging skills games for the older age group.

You will notice that many of the games also include variations and progressions based on how your group responds to the basic game. Each coach has the flexibility to include the variations and progressions based on how well your group initially performs with the exercise. For example you may play "Traffic Lights" with no progressions in week 1 but by week 3 your team may be ready to play the same game with the added conditions. As your group progresses so should the level of games and exercises.

It is also worth noting that the very first exercise of your session should be considered a "warm up" and does not necessarily require a ball. You can play many of the dribbling games without a ball to get the players on your

team running around and loose for the rest of your session. E.g. Playing Sharks and Minnows without a ball as a warm up activity.

## What to Expect

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It is hard to predict what challenges you will face while working with your group since you never know what a child may do or say; however here are a few situations and solutions that may be useful as you go through the season.

Situation 1- Player does not want to participate... - Ask the player if they would like to partner /help you in whatever role you are taking in that particular game.

If you are chasing then have them help chase with you. If you are not actively participating in the exercise then invite the player's parent on to the field to join in with them. If both these approaches fail, then reassure the player that they can join in whenever they are ready.

Situation 2 – Boys do not want to play with girls and vice versa... - Try to arrange your groups with this in mind. Although there will be a mix of girls and boys on your team, you may want to consider how you divide your team up when playing group exercises. More apparent in the oldest age groups.

Remember... Safety and a positive experience are our main priority and concern. It is important that you establish good communication with your group and recognize that you do have the help of parents and qualified coaches to help you with your session.

# 7 Week Game Schedule

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Planning and preparing your session can be daunting so we have provided a season long game schedule that will help you to feel confident about your coaching and ensure that the players on your team are engaged. You may choose to follow it throughout the season or create your own session each week.

## Games for 3-4

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**Traffic Lights** Players face the coach on one side of the area, standing shoulder-to-shoulder, with a ball each. The coach faces the players and calls "Green light," at which point they dribble towards the coach. After a few seconds, the coach calls "Red light," at which point all players must stop their ball with their feet as quickly as possible. Any player not stopping quickly, or losing control of his/her ball, returns to the start. The object is to try and get to the other side of the field without getting sent back to the start.

Variations: Introduce different colored lights representing different fun and creative activities. (E.g. yellow light: do jumping jacks; purple: disco light; black: dribble with your eyes covered, etc.)

**Bumble Bees** Divide your group into smaller groups of four or five and have each group hold hands to form a circle. Scatter all the available soccer balls around the field. The object of the game is for each small group to collect as many soccer balls (Honey pods) inside their circle without breaking their link. Play until all the balls have been collected. Make sure there is at least one adult per circle to help with coordinating which way to go.

*Progression-* After a few rounds allow teams to steal balls from other groups as they move around the field.

**9-Lives** Each player has a ball. Players must pass their balls to the coach who has nine lives. Every time the coach is struck he/she loses a life. The coach needs to remember that success breeds success, and must allow him/herself to be hit often. A coach who is too elusive will merely frustrate the players. This is a great game for the coach to demonstrate high levels of energy, noise and fun. Freeze Tag Players dribble around the field trying to avoid being tagged by the coach "Ice king". If a player is tagged then he/she must freeze like a statue. Play until all the players have been frozen.

*Progression-* Get the help of a parent to be the "Sun king" who is able to unfreeze the players by tapping them on the head. Play a few timed rounds of two minutes each round.

**Going Out To Dinner** All players dribble their soccer balls in a square. The coach asks the players to name their favorite local restaurants. Four restaurants will be selected and each will represent a side of the square. As players dribble their balls around, the coach calls out a restaurant and players must dribble and stop their balls on the correct side.

*Progression-* The coach can call out a restaurant and while players are dribbling to that side the coach can change his mind and decide to go somewhere else. Do this continuously to encourage quick change of direction turns.

**Mud Monsters** All players dribble their ball in the area. The coach plays the role of the Mud Monster and must tag the player to stick them in the mud. Stuck players must hold their ball above their head and call for help to attract unstuck players. Players are released from the mud by having untagged players pass their balls through their legs.

**Visiting The Farm** Scatter a number of parents around the area and have them make a variety of farmyard animal sounds. The kids dribble around and visit as many parents (animals) as possible. After a minute or so the coach yells the name of an animal and the kids must hustle over to that parent as quickly as possible and huddle in close. Repeat for all farmyard animals.

**Sharks & Minnows** Players (Minnows) stand on one side of a large area with their balls. They must try to dribble to the opposite side, with the ball under control as they cross the end line, while also attempting to avoid being tagged by the coach (Shark) in the center. Once a player has been tagged he/she becomes a Shark also. Play until all players become Sharks.

Variations: When there are more Sharks than apes, to slow the Sharks they must hold hands in pairs

**Round the Circle Dribble** Make a circle of players, each with a ball. The coach taps a player on the head who then dribbles around the circle back to his/her place. Tap two or three kids at once and have them chase one another around the circle. Challenge players to catch the person in front of them. Have each player paired up with their parent to help them dribble around the circle.

*Progression-* Introduce "Change!" which changes the direction of travel around the circle.

**Fox Tails** You will need enough pinnys for each player in your group. You can borrow pinnys from another group if needed. There are many variations of this game, all based upon yanking the pinny from the waistband (the pinny is tucked either in the back or the side, not at the front) from your opponent. Here are a few variations that you can try:

- 2 teams, steal a pinny from your opponent to score a point. Take the pinny to the coach, then your opponent gives the coach a Hi Five to reclaim the pinny and rejoin the game.
- Two players/coaches do not have pinnys and must chase the rest of the players. Tagged players must sit down until the next round.

**Ice Cream Soccer** Using both hands the players take a disk and balance the ball to make it look like a cup of ice cream. Two players do not have an ice cream but dribble their ball (start with the coaches first) and attempt to tag the players with ice creams. When an ice cream is tagged it must stay still and begin to melt and flop to the ground. If the ice cream falls out of the cup the player must also stop.

**Take it Back** (Without a ball) Divide your group into two teams and separate them into each half of the field and then scatter an equal number of disks in each half. Players must run to the other side of the field and steal a disk to take back to their side. Players can only take one disk at a time. Play this for several minutes and then count how many disks each team has managed to steal to their half of the field.

**Spider's Web** The coach is a giant spider and guards' soccer balls at the top of the Spider's Web. Flies (the kids) must creep up on the giant spider, unseen, retrieve soccer balls, and take them back to the flies' house. All flies start at the opposite side of the field on the end line. The giant spider turns his back, and the players quietly creep up towards the soccer balls. When the giant spider turns round, all flies must freeze. Any flies caught moving are sent back to the start. When the coach looks away again, players resume quietly moving forwards. In the first round, allow players to carry the balls.

*Progression-* In subsequent rounds players must dribble the ball back to the flies' house.

**What's the time Mr. Wolf** Each player has a ball. The coach (wolf) stands with his back to the players on the opposite end of the field. Players must then shout "What time is it Mr. Wolf?" the wolf will respond with a time (1 o'clock, 6 o'clock etc.). The players must then pass their ball forward to match the time ( 6 o'clock means 6 passes forward etc.) This is repeated until the wolf decides that it is "dinner time!" and will turn to chase the players back to the start. Any players caught by the wolf will join him until all players have been caught.

# Henlopen Soccer Club

## Season Game Schedule: 3 - 4

<b>3&amp;4 Recreation</b>	<b>Week 1</b>	<b>Week 2</b>	<b>Week 3</b>
<i>Warm up</i>	Freeze Tag - no ball	Round the Circle- no ball	Take it back- no ball
<i>Stretch</i>	Stretch	Stretch	Stretch
<i>break</i>	break	break	break
<i>Game 1</i>	Going out to dinner	Freeze tag	Mud Monsters
<i>break</i>	break	break	break
<i>Game 2</i>	Traffic Lights	Bumble Bees	Sharks and Minnows
<i>break</i>	break	break	break
<i>Scrimmage</i>	Scrimmage	Scrimmage	Scrimmage

<b>Week 4</b>	<b>Week 5</b>	<b>Week 6</b>	<b>Week 7</b>
Mr. Wolf- no ball	Fox Tails - no ball	Spider's Web- no ball	favorite games
Stretch	Stretch	Stretch	Stretch
break	break	break	break
Visiting the Farm	Round the Circle	Fox Tails	favorite games
break	break	break	break
9 Lives	Mr. Wolf	Ice cream soccer	favorite games
break	break	break	break
Scrimmage	Scrimmage	Scrimmage	Scrimmage

# Games for 5-6

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**Traffic Lights** Players face the coach on one side of the area, standing shoulder-to-shoulder, with a ball each. The coach faces the players and calls "Green light," at which point they dribble towards the coach. After a few seconds, the coach calls "Red light," at which point all players must stop their ball with their feet as quickly as possible. Any player not stopping quickly, or losing control of his/her ball, returns to the start. The object is to try and get to the other side of the field without getting sent back to the start.

Variations: Introduce different colored lights representing different skill activities. (E.g. Yellow light: ten toe taps; purple: ten side to side passes.)

*Progression-* Introduce other instructions such as roundabout (players must perform a 360 degree dribble with the ball) U-turn (players must perform a change of direction move e.g. drag back/hook)

**Knockout** All players have a ball and dribble around the area. They must attempt to kick other players' balls out of the grid while maintaining control of their own ball. If a player's ball is knocked out, they can give the coach a high five and return to the game. After five minutes, introduce the rule that players whose balls are knocked out stay out (these players then attempt juggling). Play until one person remains.

*Progression-* Divide your group into pairs. Select one pair of players. They do not have balls. Time them while they kick out all other player's balls from the area. Each pair takes a turn. The fastest time wins.

**Soccer Marbles** All players start with a ball, dribbling around the area. Players must attempt to pass their balls to hit other players' balls. They score 1 point every time a ball is hit. If a player's ball is hit then the player can quickly retrieve their ball and carry on dribbling to score points.

*Progression-* Progress further to scoring 1 point each time you strike someone's ball with your own, and 2 points for each ball you knock out of the grid.

**Going to the Movies** Divide the group into pairs with one ball between each pair. In the area, create several gates using two discs placed 2/3 yards apart. The pairs of players must dribble around the area and make a pass through a gate in order to "earn" \$1. The pair with the most dollars wins.

*Progression-* Players must make three passes through the gate to earn \$1.

**Dam-busters** All players, except the "dam-buster," dribble their balls around the area. The Dam-buster carries his/her ball; he/she must throw it at the balls of the dribblers. If a ball is hit, that player picks up his/her ball and becomes a dam-buster also. Play continues until all players have had their balls struck. Rotate dam-busters with each new game. Variation: Play with just one dam-buster at all times. The person first caught then becomes the Dam-buster, and the original dam-buster becomes a dribbler.

**Freeze Tag** Players dribble around the field trying to avoid being tagged by the coach “Ice king”. If a player is tagged then he/she must freeze like a statue. Play until all the players have been frozen.

*Progression-* Get the help of a parent to be the “Sun king” who is able to unfreeze the players by tapping them on the head. Play a few timed rounds of two minutes each round.

**Spider's Web** The coach is a giant spider and guards’ soccer balls at the top of the Spider's Web. Flies (the kids) must creep up on the giant spider, unseen, retrieve soccer balls, and take them back to the flies' house. All flies start at the opposite side of the field on the end line. The giant spider turns his back, and the players quietly creep up towards the soccer balls. When the giant spider turns round, all flies must freeze. Any flies caught moving are sent back to the start. When the coach looks away again, players resume quietly moving forwards. Once a ball has been retrieved it must be dribbled back to the flies’ house.

**Jurassic Park** Organize a square 20x20 yards with four equal teams at each corner. All balls (Dinosaur eggs) are placed in the center of the square. On a signal, one person from each team runs to the center, retrieves a ball, and dribbles with it to his/her corner. Another player is tagged, who then retrieves another ball from the center. Play continues until all the balls have been collected. Only one player at a time chases balls, the rest remain at base and players may only take one ball at a time.

*Progression-* Allow players to steal balls from other teams in an effort to collect as many balls as possible. Players may not prevent their balls being stolen by their opponents.

**Clean your Room** Divide the group into two teams. Each team stays in one half of the field.(room). Players must kick soccer balls out of their room into the other team's room, and win the game by having all of the soccer balls in the other team's room. Coaches must retrieve all balls outside of the playing area and put them back in. Use half the number of balls as you have players. Use an area of 15 by 20 yards to give plenty of room. Coaches must encourage passing with the instep and keeping the ball on ground to avoid injury.

**Musical Discs** All children dribble and keep their balls under control. On the command "Now!" players stop their ball and run to another one, placing a foot on the new ball. Repeat this activity several times. Then progress to a game like musical chairs: scattered around the area are many discs, turned upside down. On the "Now!" signal, all players must find a disc and stop their ball in it.

*Progression-* As the game continues remove a few disks at a time so that there are more players than disks and players who do not find a disk are out until the next round.

**Bobsled** Create two identical "bobsled runs" (winding path) using discs, each with a goal at the end. Divide the group into two teams. Each team sends one player at a time, dribbling a ball, through the run, and then shoots at a coach in goal at the end. Players retrieve their ball, return to the beginning, and go through numerous times each. The winning team is the one that scores most goals.

**Take it Back** every player will need a ball. Divide your group into two teams and separate them into each half of the field. Place an equal number of disks on the end line of each side. Players must try to dribble their ball to the other side of the field and steal a disk to take back to their own end line. Players can only take one disk at a time and must stop the ball at the disk using their feet before they can take it and dribble back to their side. Play this for several minutes and then count how many disks each team has managed to steal to their half of the field.

**What's the time Mr. Wolf** Each player has a ball. The coach (wolf) stands with his back to the players on the opposite end of the field. Players must then shout "What time is it Mr. Wolf?" the wolf will respond with a time (1 o'clock, 6 o'clock etc.). The players must then pass their ball forward to match the time (6 o'clock means 6 passes forward etc.) This is repeated until the wolf decides that the time is "dinner time!" and will turn to chase the players back to the start. Any players caught by the wolf will join him until all players have been caught.

**9-Lives** Each player has a ball. Players must pass their balls at the coach who has nine lives. Every time the coach is struck he/she loses a life. The coach needs to remember that success breeds success, and must allow him/her to be hit often. A coach who is too elusive will merely frustrate the players. This is a great game for the coach to demonstrate high levels of energy, noise and fun.

**Steal the Bacon** Divide the group into two even teams and have them stand opposite one another on the edge of a 15 by 15 yard area. Number each player on each team consecutively 1, 2, ... n (where n is the number of players on a team); the coach calls a number and serves the ball into the center of the field. Those players run into the area and play 1v1, the object being to score over your opponents' end line.

*Progression-* The coach can call out several numbers at the same time to create 2v2, 3v3 situations to encourage passing and group defending.

**Mud Monsters** All players dribble their ball in the area. The coach plays the role of the Mud Monster and must tag the player to stick them in the mud. Stuck players must hold their ball above their head and call for help to attract unstuck players. Players are released from the mud by having untagged players pass their balls through their legs.

**Mosquito's Revenge** Players dribble around the field. They have all turned into giant mosquitoes, and on the magic word "Mozzies!" they have to try and bite (tag) each other. Once bitten, players have to hold the part of their body where they were bitten. When both hands are used, on the next bite players leave the marshland and do a juggle to get back in. Players must have control of their balls at all times. Progression: Designated mosquitoes have to try and bite everybody else in the square; designate bites only above or below the waist.

# Henlopen Soccer Club

## Season Game Schedule: 5 - 6

<b>5&amp;6 Recreation</b>	<b>Week 1</b>	<b>Week 2</b>	<b>Week 3</b>
<i>Warm up</i>	Freeze Tag	Fox Tails	Mr. Wolf
<i>Stretch</i>	Stretch	Stretch	Stretch
<i>break</i>	break	break	break
<i>Game 1</i>	Traffic Lights	Soccer Marbles	Knockout
<i>break</i>	break	break	break
<i>Game 2</i>	Going to the Movies	Take it Back	9 Lives
<i>break</i>	break	break	break
<i>Scrimmage</i>	Scrimmage	Scrimmage	Scrimmage

<b>Week 4</b>	<b>Week 5</b>	<b>Week 6</b>	<b>Week 7</b>
Musical Disks	Jurrasic park	Spiders web	favorite games
Stretch	Stretch	Stretch	Stretch
break	break	break	break
Bobsled	Clean your Room	Dam-busters	favorite games
break	break	break	break
Mosquitos Revenge	Steal the Bacon	Mud Monsters	favorite games
break	break	break	break
Scrimmage	Scrimmage	Scrimmage	Scrimmage

# Additional Games & Variations

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**Jurassic Park** Organize a square 20x20 yards with four equal teams at each corner. All balls (Dinosaur eggs) are placed in the center of the square. On a signal, one person from each team runs to the center, retrieves a ball, and dribbles with it to his/her corner. Another player is tagged, who then retrieves another ball from the center. Play continues until all the balls have been collected. Only one player at a time chases balls, the rest remain at base and players may only take one ball at a time.

Variation- Players can only take a ball from the center if they perform a change of direction skill ( drag back/hook). Also introduce passing to the next person in line once a ball has been taken.

**Knockout** All players have a ball and dribble around the area. They must attempt to kick other players' balls out while maintaining control of their own ball. If a player's ball is knocked out, they give the coach high five and return to the game. After five minutes, introduce the rule that players whose balls are knocked out stay out (these players then attempt juggling). Play until one person remains.

*Progression-* Team Knockout. Divide your group into pairs. Select one pair of players. They do not have balls. Time them while they kick out all other player's balls from the area. Each pair takes a turn. The fastest time wins.

**Target Practice** Divide the group into two teams and separate them to the sides of the field. Place as many cones down the center of the field in a straight line so that the field is split in half. Player's from each team must stay to the edge of the field and attempt to knock down the cones with a strong pass. Players can keep an individual score of how many they knock down in total. Once a player has made an attempt they can retrieve a ball that was played from the opposite side to keep the game going. The coach should stand up any cones that are knocked down to keep the game going.

**Three Little Pigs** Set up 3 small squares (houses) using discs inside a large area. Place one defender (pig), without a soccer ball, in each house. All other players (Big Bad Wolves) have soccer balls and must dribble into a house and remain there for 3 seconds to score a point. They then dribble to another house. The pigs try and kick soccer balls out of their houses before the Big Bad Wolf has counted to 3. Players keep their own score and count "One Wolf, Two Wolf, Three Wolf!!" Regularly rotate pigs.

**Passing Races** Players work in pairs. The object of the game is to start at one end of the field and reach the other side of the field and back while passing a ball between the pair of players. The first team back wins. There should be limited dribbling and lots of passing.

**Hares and Rabbits** Play without balls. Divide the players into pairs and designate one player as a hare and one as a rabbit. Have the hares stand next to rabbits an arm length apart and in two straight lines. Each line, be it hares or rabbits, has a side to race towards (the nearest boundary). On the command of "Hares" or "Rabbits," that group of players' races toward their

own line and are pursued by their partners who attempt to tag them. A player scores a point by making it to the line without being tagged, but loses 2 points if caught by his/her pursuer. Repeat several times. Use numbers, names, objects, and any other crazy labels you can think of to drive your game.

Variations: Players start shoulder-to-shoulder, sitting facing each other, sitting Indian style, lying on their tummies, etc.

**Steal the Bacon** Divide the group into two even teams and have them stand opposite one another on the edge of a 15 by 15 yard area. Number each player on each team consecutively 1, 2, ... n (where n is the number of players on a team); the coach calls a number and serves the ball into the center of the field. Those players run into the area and play 1v1, the object being to score over your opponents' end-line. Progression- The coach can call out several numbers at the same time to create 2v2, 3v3 situations to encourage passing and group defending.

**Freeze teams** Divide the group into two teams. One team keeps a ball each, and the other half runs free around the field. Players with a ball can freeze the others by playing the ball against their ankles. When players are "frozen" they must stand with their feet wide open. The team without balls can set each other free by crawling through each other's legs. Safety- You cannot freeze a player on the ground and players are not allowed to jump over the ball.

**Hole in 1** Players will be working in pairs. Each pair will stand 10 ft apart and attempt to pass the ball through their partner's wide legs. Each time the ball passes between the legs will earn one point. Play for several minutes to see which teams have scored the most points. Players will take turns trying to pass the ball.

**Bobsled** Create two identical "bobsled runs" (winding path) using discs, each with a goal at the end. Divide the group into two teams. Each team sends one player at a time, dribbling a ball, through the run, and then shoots at a coach in goal at the end. Players retrieve their ball, return to the beginning, and go through numerous times each. The winning team is the one that scores most goals.

**Traffic Jam** Players are divided into two teams and then separated into opposite ends of the field (diagonally). The coach lays out a 10 by 10 yard area in the middle of the field and randomly scatters disks inside the area. Each team will work with one ball and try to dribble from one corner to their teams opposite corner. They must dribble through the cluster of disks in the center of the field. Players should try to avoid hitting any disks as they go through. Once at the opposite side they pass the ball to the next person in line until all players have completed the exercise.

*Progression-* create a challenge between the two teams to see which team can complete the exercise first. Coach should give penalties if a player hits any of e disks in the middle.

**Going to the Movies** Divide the group into pairs with one ball between each pair. In the area, create several gates using two discs placed 2/3 yards apart. The pairs of players must dribble around the area and make a pass through a gate in order to "earn" \$1. The pair with the most dollars wins.

*Progression-* Players must make three passes through the gate to earn \$1.

**Target Ball** Two teams line up on either side of the area with each player having a ball. In the middle of the grid on the center-line are three or four Target Balls (use your most identifiable or, better still, bring beach balls from home). The players pass their balls at the Target Balls, attempting to strike them and force them across to the other side. Players are only allowed into the middle to retrieve balls.

*Progression-* Assign different points values to the Target Balls; increase the size of the area to practice more powerful kicks.

**Clean your Room** Divide the group into two teams. Each team stays in one half of the field.(room). Players must kick soccer balls out of their room into the other team's room, and win the game by having all of the soccer balls in the other team's room. Coaches must retrieve all balls outside of the playing area and put them back in. Use half the number of balls as you have players. Use an area of 15 by 20 yards to give plenty of room. Coaches must encourage passing with the instep and keeping the ball on ground to avoid injury.

**Windows** The grid size should be 20 by 20 yards. Have an equal number of players inside and outside the grid, but no more than 14 players total. Players inside the grid each have a ball. They dribble inside the grid to find a player on the outside that is available to receive a pass. Players on the outside should return the pass to the inside player with three touches or less. The inside player can now practice various ways of receiving the return pass. This game should be played in timed rounds of 1 minute and then players should switch places. (Inside players go outside)

**Soccer Marbles** All players' start with a ball, dribbling around the area. Players must attempt to pass their balls to hit other players' balls. They score 1 point every time a ball is hit. If a player's ball is hit then the player can quickly retrieve their ball and carry on dribbling to score points.

*Progression-* Progress further to scoring 1 point each time you strike someone's ball with your own, and 2 points for each ball you knock out of the grid.

# Scrimmages

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Every team will end the training session with a two team scrimmage. The format for the scrimmage will change depending on the age group that you are working with. Each age group uses the scrimmage to teach different aspects of the game that have been discussed in the season objectives. Please follow the descriptions below for your respective age group.

## 3&4 Multiball Scrimmage

Always focus on trying to split up your group away from swarm-ball soccer and progressing towards spreading out. The best method is to use more than one ball in your scrimmage. Use a ratio of one ball to two/three players as a guide. Ensure that all of the balls are active at once. Coaches or parents should stand in the goals to act as a slight obstacle and also recycle balls back into the team that they are helping. This is a continuous game with no out of bounds.

### Coaching Points

- Don't cry if someone from the other team takes the ball from you, go and get it back!!
- In soccer it is okay to take the ball away from a player on the other team.
- If you do not have a ball then get one from your coach/parent or take one from the other team.

## 5&6 4v4 Scrimmage (one ball)

The objective of the 4v4 format is the same as multiball however we want to introduce more game like elements. Having only 8 players on the field will allow the coach to manage the game and stop the players from bunching up. There are no “throw ins” in the 5/6 age group. If the ball goes out of bounds the coaches can simply roll the ball back onto the field.

Team Formation – the most suitable formation to play is 4 players set up in a diamond shape. This offers the best opportunity to introduce tactical concepts such as positioning, exploiting space, offense and defense. Neither team will play with a GK.

### Coaching Points

If you do not have a ball then:

- Help one of your team mates by supporting them as a passing option
- Work to try and win the ball from the other team by playing defense