



KICKERS PROGRAM COACH GUIDE

A few things to remember when coaching Kickers soccer:

- Make it fun! This should be your number 1 goal as you coach pee wee soccer. We want these kids to have a great experience and want to come back each week. You will see that several of the drills have an opportunity for them to make noises and be silly. Join in and be silly with them.
- Try not to do any drills where kids are standing in lines. We want every player to have a ball at their feet as much as possible. Dribbling is the most important skill to learn at this age, so don't get caught up in passing or shooting right now.
- Keep things simple. Remember, most of these kids have never played soccer before. Therefore, when you coach, try and say things as simple as possible and have them repeat you.
- Make sure and remind kids not to use their hands. It's probably the only soccer rule they need to know right now.

Preparing for each session:

- Visit <https://www.empowernoco.org/soccertraining> and click on Peewee Training.
- Pick out 4 – 5 drills to do each week. Start with the easiest drills first. **DON'T HAVE LINES.**
- You may have some kids who are hesitant to jump in and play the first few weeks. Don't make them come out, just encourage them. If they feel better having a parent on the field with them, let their parent know its ok to join them.
- After 20 minutes of activities, you can transition to a "game" or scrimmage. The game will last around 20 minutes. For some of the youngest kids they may not understand the concept of a scrimmage adapt 'scoring goals' or continue with activities.

Tips for the game or scrimmage:

- Divide up the team as even as possible. You will quickly realize what kids are a little more advanced in their abilities, make sure and split them up. You can change up your teams each week.
- When the ball goes out of bounds, just throw a new ball in. There are no throw ins... just put another ball on the field and play on and let them kick it back onto the field. When one team scores, send them back to their end of the field and begin play again.
- During game play, remind kids not to use their hands.
- You can take a water break as needed.
- Sometimes pee wee kids will run off the field to their parents. Sometimes they may need a drink or just a quick break. It's ok. Just keep playing with those on the field and encourage them to come back after a few minutes.
- If you have an extra pinnie, you can place it on one of the goals to help them remember which goal they are shooting at.
- Don't worry about keeping score and keep it fun!

KICKERS SOCCER ACTIVITIES

GREETING GAME – All the players run around randomly inside a rectangle. The coach calls out various types of greetings, which each player then has to carry out with others: shake hands, high fives (one hand), high fives (other hand), shoulder to shoulder, back-to-back, etc.

WALK THE PUPPY

Hand out (pretend) leashes to each child. Tell them their ball is no longer a ball, but a puppy. They need to take their puppy on a walk. They can't let their puppy get too far away, they need to keep the puppy on their leash. They need to keep it close. Have them dribble (with the inside of their feet, you may need to have them all reach down and touch the part of the foot that is used for dribbling) across the field or across a set area.

RED LIGHT/GREEN LIGHT

This is a variation of red light, green light. Have them dribble around the field listening for you to call out a color. Red light (stop and have them put their foot on the top of the ball), green (go), yellow (slow down). The kids also really liked the disco light which meant stop and dance! You can also yell out "honk your horn" and the kids sit on their ball and make a honking sound. You can also call out red light when you need kids to stop kicking the ball and listen to the instructions for the next drill.

TURTLES AND RABBITS

Start this drill by asking which animal is faster, a rabbit or a turtle. Once they have determined which is faster, instruct them that they are going to dribble like a turtle, slowly, or like a rabbit, as fast as they can. They should keep the ball close to them as a turtle and then push it out in front of them a little farther as they dribble fast like a rabbit. After a few weeks, you can combine RED LIGHT/ GREEN LIGHT with TURTLES AND RABBITS. As they get more comfortable dribbling, you can place cones to have them dribble around, trying to not knock over any cones.

HIT THE COACH

A big favorite. Set up a square, not too big and have all the kids dribble around inside and try to hit the coach with the ball. Whoever hits the coach gets to pick an animal for the coach to imitate.

LITTLE, LITTLE, BIG

This one was helpful for dribbling down the field during the "game" portion each week. Have the kids line up on a line and then dribble forward with two small touches and then a big touch where they push it further. Do this to one side of the field then back.

CLEAN THE YARD

This is one of the few opportunities to work on kids shooting at the goal. Spread out all the balls on the field and have the players line up on the sideline. The goal of this game is to get all of every ball into either goal as quick as they can. Yell go and have them go to a ball (any ball, doesn't have to be their ball) and dribble it to a goal and kick it in. Once they score, they need to run back to the sideline.

THROUGH THE TUNNEL

This is a good way to get some parents involved in a drill. Ask for some parent volunteers (6-8 is best). Have them spread out around the field with their legs open wide. Instruct the kids to dribble around the field and find tunnels to go through. They can go through the tunnels two different ways. One, they can kick the ball through the tunnel and run around, or they can kick the ball through the tunnel and then crawl through.

PROTECT THE SPACESHIP - Place four cones in the middle of the field to make a square that is about 10 yards by 10 yards. Place one player without a ball on each side of the square. Spread the other players out around the square with a ball. The goal for those with a ball is to kick their ball into the square while those who are at the square (SPACESHIP) are trying to keep the balls out of the square. This is a simple drill to teach them a little bit of defense and kicking the ball out of an area. When a player attempts to kick a ball in the square and it's kicked out they must retrieve their ball and do it again. You can switch the defenders of the spaceship every 20 seconds to give others an opportunity to protect the ship.

PIRATES - To set up you will need to place out enough cones/pinnies for every player to retrieve one. Place them on one side of the field and have the kids stand on the other side. To add a little fun, you can ask the kids if they know what sound a pirate makes, you may need to teach them. To begin this drill, send a player every 3-4 seconds to retrieve treasure (cone/pinnie) from the other side of the field and bring it back to the ship. You will have to remind them to watch out for the other pirates as they dribble to get the treasure and dribble back. It may be helpful to have them first do this drill with no ball and then add the ball and have them dribble to retrieve the treasure. You can have them sound like a pirate as they are doing the drill.

GOAL CHASE – The coach sets up several small goals or gates (two cones a yard apart) inside a larger area. There should be at least one or two more gates than there are players. Have the players start running around; on the coaches signal the players try to run through as many gates as possible, keeping track of how many. Play for 30 seconds at a time.

FROG ATTACK – The game takes place in a rectangle; all the players start off on one side of the rectangle and try to get to the other side. Two players who are frogs must hop and try to tag the other players as they try to get to the other line. When a player is tagged they become a frog as well. Play until only two children are left. Those children become the frogs for the next game.

TIGERS IN THE JUNGLE – Each child chooses to be a type of animal that lives in the jungle and makes the sound of that animal. Only tigers are not allowed. The tiger is going to kick the other animals' balls into the surrounding alligator infested swamp. When an animal gets their ball kicked away they have to dodge the alligators, go get their ball, and stand holding the ball over their head making their animal noise. Another animal can unfreeze them by dribbling the ball through the frozen animals legs.

TUNNEL SOCCER – Each player has a ball. The coach has no ball but moves about the field with the players. From time to time the coach stops and spreads his legs to form a tunnel. The players dribble after him and try to shoot through the tunnel whenever he stops. After three shots or so the coach moves on again. Who can score the most points in one minute?

CROSS THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER – The players go boating (run) from one shore (a line) to another shore. In the river between there are piranhas (start off with two) that try to tag the boaters. If tagged, the boaters either become a piranha as well or the two can switch places.

DISNEY GAME – Two teams of equal numbers stand at either end of a 25 x 18 yard field of play. Give each player a Disney character name (make sure there's a matching character at the other end). Coach sends in a ball and calls out a Disney character and that character from each end goes onto the field and plays 1v1. Progressions: Try calling out different characters (Goofy from one side and Mickey from the other side).

AROUND THE WORLD – Set out four or five cones on the perimeter of a large area. Ask the children for names of towns. Assign each cone a town name. As players dribble in the area the coach calls out a town name and the players must dribble around the town cone and then return to the dribbling area.

I CAN, CAN YOU? – “I can do something without the ball, can you?” At this point the coach does some sort of physical movement without the ball (skip, walk and clap hands through legs, etc). After the coach does several examples he should ask the players if they have any suggestions and allow them to demonstrate. Progressions: Introduce the ball and have them move it with their hands, then have them play with the ball on the ground.

FRUIT SALAD – The coach makes a circle with cones; each player needs to stand by a cone (there should not be any extra cones, just one for each player). The coach assigns a fruit name to each player (apple, orange, banana). The coach calls out a fruit name and any player who has that fruit name must run to a different cone. When the coach yells fruit salad every player must run to a different cone.

BINGO – A number of tall cones are distributed throughout the field. Two coaches are replacers. Each player has a ball. The players dribble around and try to knock down as many cones as they can, yelling “bingo” as they do so. The coaches stand the cones back up immediately. Who can get the most bingos?

BUMPER CARS – All players dribble a ball around in an area. Each player tries to kick his or her ball and have it hit another player’s ball. If they hit someone else’s ball they get a point.

BALL RETRIEVAL – The coach tosses the ball for each player to bring back with his or her hands, elbow, forehead, etc. Have all the players gather closely around you, but not in a line. Each one hands you their ball, which you toss randomly into an open area where they have to go retrieve it and bring it back to you in the manner that you specify as quickly as possible.

MUSICAL BALLS – Everyone has a ball and is dribbling. The coach should sing or play music. When the music stops everyone stops dribbling and goes to find another ball. After a while, the coach can take a ball away each time. Whoever does not get to a ball must go report to the coach. The player should have to do some sort of task (Tick tock, tap dance, something with the ball) before they can get back in.

DRIBBLING MAZE – The coach sets up several small goals or gates (two cones a yard apart) inside a larger area. There should be at least one or two more gates than there are players. Have the players start running around; on the coaches signal the players try to run through as many gates as possible, keeping track of how many. Play for 30 seconds at a time.

TORPEDO – Have the players form two teams and face each other. Everyone on one of the teams needs a ball. Two coaches should pass the ball between the two teams. The players with the balls try to pass their ball (torpedo) to hit the ball the coaches are passing. If the player misses the person standing across from them collects the ball and tries to hit the coaches ball on the next pass.

MOVING TARGETS – Everyone has a ball and is dribbling in an area. Two coaches hold a practice vest between them, forming a goal. The players must try to kick their ball through the goal. However, the coaches should move around into open space so that the players have to dribble around and kick their ball through a moving target.