

U4 Soccer

Soccer for 2-4 year olds is completely about having fun and getting them used to having a ball at their feet. The following games engage their imaginations and should get most of them participating. Be sure to encourage your parents to be active during practice. Having them participate can help the shy kids get involved. There is nothing serious about soccer at this level. Make it fun and be enthusiastic! That's all you need for them to have a good time!

Your sessions should be about 45 minutes at the most. Usually by the 30 minute mark, some of the kids may start to wander, so save the most fun games for the end.

Setup

Using some cones, mark off a small field about 15 yards long and 10 yards wide. You don't need a lot of room.

Games Compiled from other coaches and online:

Body Parts - Have each child start with a ball at their feet and dribble around inside the box and randomly call out body parts. They have to then touch the ball with that body part. If they refuse to dribble and want to carry the ball, that's fine for the first couple practices. This is a great warm up game!

What Time Is It Mr. Wolf - Have players line up at one end of the box. You or a parent can be Mr. Wolf. Have the kids call out at the same time "What time is it, Mr. Wolf?". Mr. Wolf calls out a time: 1 o'clock, 2 o'clock, etc. If it's 1 o'clock, the kids take one dribble then stop the ball with their foot....and so on. Once the kids get close to the other side where Mr. Wolf is, Mr. Wolf yells "LUNCH TIME" and turns around and chases the kids back to the starting line. The point is to have them dribble the ball back to where they started without getting caught.

Yellow Brick Road - set up a cone path at one end of the box with a couple of turns and put a witch at the end of the path, either a parent or coach. The kids dribble the ball through the Yellow Brick Road cone path without going outside the lines if possible, then once they get near the witch, they kick the ball at him/her. Have the witch act like they're melting or something entertaining!

Kick at Coach - All kids in the box with a ball dribbling around with two coaches or parents inside the box. The point is to have them kick the ball at you and try to hit you. Move slowly to give them a chance of course, but if they hit you, reward them by having them pick out an animal sound for you to make!

Shark Island - Set up two islands using cones within the box. Players have a ball and dribble freely in the box. Have a parent be a sleeping shark somewhere in the box. Yell out "Feeding Time!" or something like that to signal the kids to dribble their ball to the island while the Shark tries to catch them.

Pirates of the Caribbean - To begin you will need to get the kids excited about playing soccer. Tell the young players that this game is "...a fun game called pirates of the Caribbean. What noise do pirates make?" The kids will make an 'arghhh' noise. Then you need to tell them that pirates love treasure and the treasure is down the other end of the island.

The kids will need to go one at a time and pick up **one** piece of treasure (cone/pinney) and bring it back to the pirate ship.

1. To get the young 3 and 4 year olds to understand this game, play the first round without soccer balls.
2. The second time they should kick a soccer ball down with them.

Foxes and Chickens - Depending on the number of kids playing you will need to set-up a grid that the young players will not try and leave. You will need some pinneys, enough soccer balls for one-each and some helpful parents! The aim for this soccer drill is for the young players to get the tail (pinney) from the parents. The parents act as the chickens and the kids are the foxes. The parents will have put a pinney half tucked into the back of their pants/shorts. The kids have to chase after them and remove the pinney (acting as a tail).

Bulldog - Always a hit with kids, I used Bulldog as a reward at the end of practice if they tried hard. I didn't use a ball for the first while, but if they can dribble from one end to the other pretty well, then you can add the ball.

Use your imagination and feel free to improvise or change up the games above. Also, search Google for more game ideas. I found several of the ones above on the internet and used them in practices with great success.

If you're having fun, the kids will as well!