

## YMCA Soccer Warm-Up Activities for Ages 12 and Up

<b>Warm Up Description</b>	<b>Page<sup>1</sup></b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Players dribble in space (one ball per player).</li> <li>2. Players dribble and turn on signal.</li> </ol>	182
Players in pairs pass and move.	186
Players in pairs pass the ball hand to hand. Passes should be made so that players' hands must move to catch the ball.	188
Players play a 1 v 1 game, using a full goal; they dive to save shots. Attacking players can try to score by throwing or shooting.	192
Players play a 4 v 2 game (without GKs) in which their goal is to make six passes. Instruct players to move to support positions so that the passer can split (i.e., pass between) two defenders. Any pass that splits the defenders counts double.	198
Players pass and move in pairs. Increase distances and encourage players to get the ball off the ground.	202
Play 2 v 2 games, marking off 20- x 20-yard playing areas.	206
Play 1 v 1 games in an area about 20 yards long in which the defender pressures the opponent, trying to channel him or her toward the weak foot.	210
Players in pairs, 5 to 10 yards apart, practice quick passing, alternating passes with two touches and one touch.	213

<sup>1</sup> This page number refers to pages in the "Plans for 12 and Up" document found on the "Season and Practice Plans" page in the YMCA's **Coaching Soccer** online course.

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Players free dribble, changing pace and direction. They try to beat the coach when he or she gets in the way.	216
GK1 distributes the ball to A1, who dribbles down field and crosses to A2. A2 dribbles and shoots toward cones guarded by GK2. GK2 then distributes to A2, who dribbles and crosses to A1, who shoots on GK1. Then A3 and A4 take A1 and A2's places.	220
1 v 1—Players dribble and shoot into goal under pressure. Place a defender behind the attacker; the defender cannot move until the attacker begins the run to goal. The defender, slightly behind the attacker, chases the attacker to the goal as the attacker dribbles and shoots.	224
Play 1 v 1 in 20- x 10-yard area. Review individual marking.	227

## YMCA Soccer Fitness Activities for Age 12 and Up

Key Idea	Description	Page <sup>1</sup>
General Fitness	Gather the team into a group. "Do we play soccer to get in shape or get in shape to play soccer? Let's talk about both sides. What do you think?" Discuss for two or three minutes. "We should improve our fitness—cardio respiratory, flexibility, and muscular strength and endurance—in order to play better soccer. By playing soccer we get lots of opportunities to improve our fitness. All season we'll be talking more about the different areas of fitness and ways to improve those abilities."	182
General Fitness	Gather the team into a group. "Last practice we talked about different kinds of fitness. Can you tell me what they were?" Listen to responses until they say cardiorespiratory, flexibility, and muscular strength and endurance. "What are some examples of physical activities to improve cardiorespiratory fitness?" Discuss examples (walking, running, swimming, and so on). "Muscular strength and endurance?" Discuss examples (ball-handling skills and drills, kicking for distance, etc.). "Flexibility?" Discuss examples (leg and arm stretches). "By working hard at all the practices and outside of practice you can help attain the overall fitness you need for soccer."	186

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<b>Key Idea</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Page<sup>1</sup></b>
Overload Principle	Gather the team into a group. "Who can tell me what overload means?" Listen to their responses. "If your bodies do a little bit more work than they have done before, they will adapt and be able to do even more. We're talking about small amounts of work or activity—too much harms your body and causes injuries. Your fitness will improve and you'll be able to do more activity in practice before getting too tired. Let's use the acronym F-I-T—what do you think it stands for?" Listen to their responses. "F stands for frequency or how often you practice the activity; I stands for intensity or how hard you practice or play; and T stands for time or how long you practice the activity. FIT is a good way to remember how to use the overload principle to improve our fitness."	188
Overload Principle	Gather team into a group. "What does FIT stand for and when do we use it?" Listen to their responses. Discuss frequency, intensity, and time. "I want you to choose a letter of FIT and demonstrate it." As players give examples and demonstrate, encourage other players to try also. If frequency is chosen, increase repetitions. If intensity, they should try harder or faster. If time, lengthen the amount. Encourage soccer-related activities such as running and kicking. "You need to practice skills and running outside of practice and participate in other physical activities and exercise. This will give your body enough workload to overload and improve your fitness levels or abilities."	192
Overload Principle	Gather the team into a group. "What does FIT stand for, and when do we use it?" Listen to their responses. Have a review discussion. "When we think about the second area of FIT, what is it? Intensity or how hard you practice the activity. raise your hand if you think that the only way to increase the intensity of an activity or make it harder is to go faster." Encourage all players to vote. "You can overload the work your body is doing by going faster as in running, for example. Every time you run faster, your body will adapt and you'll be able to do more next time."	195

<b>Key Idea</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Page<sup>1</sup></b>
Flexibility	<p>Gather the team into a group. "It's important to stretch our muscles. What area of fitness does that improve? right—flexibility. It's also important to stretch muscles that have been used the most in a sport or activity. In soccer, what do we use the most? Our legs. I am going to show you the proper way to stretch the different muscles in your legs." Choose stretches that include quadriceps (front of thigh), hamstrings (back of thigh), and calves and Achilles tendon (back of the lower leg and ankle). remind players to get in position and hold their stretch, not to bounce, and they shouldn't feel pain.</p>	199
Flexibility	<p>"Your muscles need to be stretched every day to prevent injuries. Lie down on your back with one leg up in the air. Stretch your knee toward your face and hold it there for 10 counts. Now let's try the stretch again. repeat the stretch again, holding the stretch now to 15 counts and stretching your leg a bit further. You should not stretch so far that you hurt yourself, lock your knee, or feel pain. Just stretch until you feel a gentle pull. Stretching helps to prevent injuries and improves your flexibility, an important part of fitness."</p>	202
Muscular Strength and Endurance	<p>Gather the team into a group. Choose two players to demonstrate with one ball. Have the players kick/pass to each other 10 times without telling them how hard or fast to pass. Then have them spread out further. Direct them to kick as hard and as fast as they can 10 times. Have them come back to the group. "Did everyone see how during the second times they kicked the ball harder and faster? When you do that, what area or component of fitness do you improve?" Listen to their responses. "Muscular strength and endurance. When you kick harder you are improving your strength; when you kick faster, you are improving your endurance."</p>	206

Key Idea	Description	Page <sup>1</sup>
Cardio-Respiratory Fitness	<p>Gather the team into a circle. "I want everyone to run to the opposite goal and back. Before you go, describe how your lungs feel and how fast your breathing rate is. How tired is your body?" Listen to their responses. "When you're done running, I'll ask you the same question and see if the answers are faster or slower or more tired than before. ready? Go!" repeat the question. Discuss their responses. "To strengthen your heart and lungs, you need to run and make your heart beat faster and breathe faster. You need to feel a little tired while running to improve your cardiorespiratory fitness. Checking how you feel tells you that you are running fast enough to improve the strength of your lungs and heart."</p>	210
Cardio-Respiratory Fitness	<p>Gather the team into a group. Have players run for two minutes with a partner without stopping. "During our run I want you to be able to run for the whole two minutes. Who remembers what a talk test is?" Listen to their responses. "You can use a talk test to pace yourself so you don't run too fast and get too tired before the two minutes are up. Say the word 'soccer' to your partner. If you can say it without being out of breath, keep the same pace; if you're out of breath slow down a little. Start running." Time for two minutes and gather team as a group. "using a talk test helps you pace yourself. Pacing yourself when you run helps to improve your cardiorespiratory fitness."</p>	213

<b>Key Idea</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Page<sup>1</sup></b>
Healthy Habits	Gather players into two equal groups. "I want the first group to take a ball, then dribble and pass to each other, making sure everyone gets one chance with the ball, then attempt a goal. Choose a person to play goalie." After players finish, ask them to come over to the side lines. Have the second group go out and repeat activity. "Following a play like that, and after every time you come out of the game or during practice, what is one of the most important things you should do?" Listen to their responses. "Drink water during every break and especially when you need it. Drinking regularly prevents dehydration or when your body loses water. It's important to drink water before you feel thirsty. Drinking plenty of water is a healthy habit to do every day."	216
Healthy Habits	Gather the team into a group. "It's important to eat foods that give the most energy for soccer. What are the four main nutrients or parts of food that help you grow and stay healthy?" Listen to responses. Discuss how carbohydrates (breads, cereals, and some fruits) give energy. Discuss how proteins (meats, nuts, and tofu) build muscle and bone. Mention that fats (fat and oils in meat, milk, and nuts) provide stored energy. remind them that water (from the tap or in juice or milk) makes up 60% of their bodies. "One healthy habit you should be practicing every day is eating foods that keep your body healthy—that includes snacks. What are examples of each nutrient? Carbohydrates? Proteins? Fats? Water?" Discuss food choices.	220

<b>Key Idea</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Page<sup>1</sup></b>
Healthy Habits	Gather the team into a group. "Tell me some healthy habits you practice every day." responses may be brushing teeth, eating foods that help you grow, getting enough sleep. If taking drugs or using alcohol is not one, discuss this. If it was a response, lead discussion from the response. "You have been hearing 'say no to drugs' probably since you have been very young. Let's talk about what it really means and if or where you might have to use that phrase. What are some situations where you think you might have to say no to drugs?" Discuss their responses (in school, from other kids you don't know very well, at parties, etc.). "It's an important healthy habit to stay away from drugs, alcohol, and tobacco. Successful soccer players never use this stuff."	224
Reversibility Principle	Gather the team into a group. "What happens to your body if you do not stay active and keep training and conditioning your body?" Listen to their responses. Discuss losing conditioning when you stop being active. "What is that called? right—the 'reversibility principle.' What should you do to prevent losing your conditioning? Participating in physical activity or another sport after the season will prevent you from reversing your conditioning. How will you stay active after the soccer season is over?" Listen to their responses. "Remember the 'reversibility principle'—you use it or lose it! You worked hard all season to improve your fitness, so keep it up for next year!"	227

## YMCA Soccer Team Circle Activities for Ages 12 and Up

Key Idea	Description	Page <sup>1</sup>
Four Core Values	Gather players into a single-file line. "Everyone turn to your right so the person to the side of you is now in front of you. Put your arms on their shoulders. We are going to walk forward, as a group, using first the right foot and then the left. We will walk slowly so take your time so we all move together. Get ready with your right foot, now step; get ready with your left foot, now step." repeat for four steps. "Let go of your teammates. Did we have to work together to walk as a group? We did. All season we will need to work together, with everyone doing their part. We will talk about four values that all players should have—caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. We need to understand and use these values or qualities every practice and game."	185
Respect	Gather the team into a circle near two cones about 10 feet apart. "What should you do if your opponents are committing fouls, complaining to the officials, and doing things that are not fair?" Listen to their responses. "Stand at this cone if you should continue to play your game and not try to commit fouls. Stand at this cone if you should get back at the other team by playing the same way and complain to the officials." All players should vote. Ask players why they voted the way they did. Have players at the "complaining" cone think of other options instead of complaining. "You should not change the way you play your game or stop showing respect to your opponents or the officials. It's important to show respect even if the other team is not."	187

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<b>Key Idea</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Page<sup>1</sup></b>
Respect	Gather the team into a group. "Remember the scenario I talked about in the last practice? The opponent who wasn't playing fair? If you play against a team that does those types of things, how should you handle the end of the game? Stand at this cone if you think you should still go to every player and the coach to shake hands. Stand at this cone if you think you should just walk away." Ask players why they voted as they did. Then separate the team into two groups. Practice an end of the game line-up for both pleasant/fair opponents and for rude opponents. "You should always show your opponents respect by shaking hands at the end of the game, no matter what happens during the game."	191
Responsibility	Gather the team into a group. "What should be on your 'mental list' before you come to every practice?" Listen to responses and then lead a discussion about bringing proper equipment (a water bottle, shin guards, uniform); being mentally prepared to work hard and learn new ideas; being well rested; and having eaten well and drank water during the day. "Each player is responsible for preparing for each practice. It's your responsibility to the team to come to practice prepared. Good players are prepared for all practices and games."	194
Honesty	Gather the team into a group near two cones about 10 feet apart. Identify three honesty situations that are important for your team to practice. These could be hand balling, tripping, or another rule infraction. First ask players how they would respond, and then discuss how you would prefer them to respond. "Being honest about a play during the game and in practice is an important part of the game. Good players are honest even when an official, coach, or opponent didn't see it happen."	197

<b>Key Idea</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Page<sup>1</sup></b>
Respect	Gather the team into two groups. "Think about professional teams. What ways do they show respect for their opponents?" Discuss with players. Lead the discussion to talking about saying positive comments such as "good game" and "nice play today" along with a hand shake. "Let's say this is the end of a game. Your two groups are professional teams that played against each other. Show me what you do at the end of the game." use one of the discussion examples for players to try. "When you say positive comments to your opponents at the end of a game in addition to shaking or slapping hands, it shows your respect for opponents. Good professional players show they respect opponents."	201
Responsibility	Gather the team into two groups. Give one group a ball. Have them dribble and pass to each other. Have one player try to distract the rest of the group. Continue this for one minute. Bring the team together as a group. "How should you respond to someone who is trying to distract you?" Discuss their responses. "If you're at practice and talk to your teammates or distract other players, you're interrupting the practice. It's your responsibility to the team to pay attention at practices and games so you and your teammates can learn and play your best."	205
Caring	Gather the team and separate into two groups, each with a ball. "Each group should pass the ball to each other. As you pass the ball I want everybody to be saying something good about the pass and the people passing and receiving. I should be hearing constant talk." Encourage excitement about the activity by clapping and providing players with your positive comments. "We will keep the passing going until everyone has had two turns passing and receiving. Let me know when you're done." Wait for players to signal that they are finished. "What are some of the positive comments that you heard? Saying positive comments shows you care."	209

<b>Key Idea</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Page<sup>1</sup></b>
Respect	Gather the team into groups of three. Play a 1 v 1 game with the other player being the "ref." Play for one minute and rotate players so everyone gets a chance to referee. "How did it feel to be the ref?" Discuss responses and importance of showing respect. "It can be difficult to be an official. It involves quite a few skills. Remember that it's a tough job, and always show respect for officials."	212
Caring	Choose two players to demonstrate. Tell them they will role play a situation in which one player is dribbling the ball and passes to the other. The pass goes out of bounds and the player receiving the pass gets upset and yells at his teammate. Have them act out the situation with your assistance. "How would you feel if someone yelled at you for a bad pass?" Listen to their responses. "How about if you made a bad pass, but heard some encouraging words like 'it's OK, maybe next time?'" Listen to responses, discuss comparisons. "You show you respect your teammates by not yelling at them for a mistake and encouraging them to make a better play the next time they have a chance."	215
Respect	Gather the team into a group near three cones about 10 feet apart. "What are three things you can do or not do that show you respect your body?" Listen to their responses. Main ideas might be not taking drugs, keeping emotional outbursts under control (swearing, kicking the ball away), and not doing dangerous plays in practices and games. As players give responses, have them and others with the same idea stand next to a cone. "Those are all great ideas. When you practice those ideas, you show yourself and others that you respect your body."	219

<b>Key Idea</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Page<sup>1</sup></b>
Responsibility	<p>Gather the team into a circle. "I want everyone to count how many players we have in the circle." Wait while they count. "How many do you get, total?" Listen to their responses. "Well, that's good counting, but you know, the real total is one. That's right. We're one team with many contributions from each player. remember there is no 'I' in team. If we don't play together as one, we will not play our best. To play together we all have individual responsibilities to the team like working hard on defense and offense, following rules, and getting in good position on the field. Making sure each one of you takes that responsibility seriously is an important attitude to practice."</p>	223
Caring	<p>Gather the team into a group and choose three players to demonstrate. Have the three stand in a line. The two outside players should carefully lift the middle player. Have them problem-solve to find a way to hold the player up. Continue for about 30 seconds and then have them set the player down. "Did you see how Jared was supported by his teammates? Ben and Tyrone showed you how to give physical support, but it's also important to support your teammates emotionally. What are some examples?" Listen to responses (positive comments, identifying good plays, encouraging comments during losses) and discuss them. "When you support your teammates throughout the season, you show you care about them. You'll play better as a team when you show you care about each other."</p>	226

<b>Key Idea</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Page<sup>1</sup></b>
Respect	<p>Gather the team into a group near two cones about 10 feet apart. Choose two players to demonstrate. "Let's say you just scored a goal. Jack, show everyone a way to celebrate or congratulate your teammates that won't make the other team upset. Now, Kyle, show the team how you would celebrate if you wanted everyone to know how happy you were and that you thought you played much better than your opponents. If you think the best way to celebrate is like Jack, stand at this cone. If you think Kyle's is the better way, stand at this cone. It's important to respect your opponents during games. You can do that by saying 'good play' or slapping hands calmly with your team. Now think about respected athletes—what do they do before, during, and after games?" Discuss.</p>	229

# Season Plan for 12 Year-Olds and Up

The focus now is on playing the full game of 11 v 11 on a 70-yard by 110-yard field. The players build upon the tactics and skills they learned in the previous two years.

## Overview of the Season Plan

The Season Plan on the next page provides a weekly guide and addresses tactical and skill components, and other activities that are fully detailed in the Practice Plans document. The Season Plan has five components:

- **Purpose:** The purpose of the practice is your main focus.
- **Tactics and Skills:** Tactics are knowing what to do during the game (and when to do it), and they require an understanding of the problems faced by each team during the game and how those problems can be solved. Ways to maintain possession of the ball would be tactics. Skills are the physical skills traditionally taught, such as passing or shooting the ball or controlling the ball during play.
- **Rules and Traditions:** You will teach the rules of the sport to young children gradually, as part of playing games and learning skills. Traditions are those unwritten rules that players follow to be courteous and safe, such as raising your hand when you foul someone or playing cooperatively with the others on your team.
- **Fitness Concepts:** Even young children can understand some simple concepts about health and fitness, such as the idea that exercise strengthens your heart, so some of these are suggested as the focus for brief discussions during practice.
- **Character Development Concepts:** The four core values—caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility—can all be related to many situations that arise while playing basketball. For example, playing cooperatively with teammates shows that you care about them. Again, we'll suggest some specific ideas for briefly discussing character development values.