

## Things to consider before first game:

**Micros:** At this level you should introduce the concept of offense/ defense and teach the object of the game (keep away / move the ball to space and move toward the opponent's goal)

You should have at least 2 players ready to play goal by the first game. Remember to keep it basic: can use hands/ W hand formation to block/ use feet and defend the goal

**Midgets:** At this level players should be versed on the importance of passing the ball to the outside and working inward once on the opposite field. Though there are many strategies in soccer we like to begin by teaching the offense to pass/ play keep away until the goal is in their "line of sight". Then we encourage them to dribble and shoot. Keeping away from encouraging; dribbling as fast as possible until a defender approaches and most always takes the ball away. In defense we teach to clear the ball to the sides or up to an offensive teammate. (utilizing diamond defense)

At this level you should also have 2 players ready to play goal.

**Juniors:** At this level players should be versed on the responsibility of their position. It is sometimes beneficial to practice players in the position they will play in the next game. You may rotate positions throughout the season and It is possible with experienced players to rotate positions during games; just be mindful of the player's ability.

Soccer is a simple game with limitless strategies and situations. The skills we teach will make the game of soccer fun and rewarding. Keep in mind that good coaches steal drills. Talk to other coaches, research web sites such as: I-Soccer.org and most of all ask questions if you are unsure of a rule/ skill / term.

Unknown: "Teaching a complicated skill to a player with little knowledge is like putting an embroidered saddle on a donkey."

Keep it simple and have fun!

# Tri-Town Soccer Micro - Junior Lesson Plan Idea Book



## & Coaches Guide

## Week VIII

**Warm Up Routine:** Same as day one. (10 minutes)

**Review and assess all skills:** Dribbling, Passing, Collections, Shooting, Hedging, Throw Ins, quiz on team work / diamond defense.

**Water Break:** (2-3 minutes maximum)

**On the last practice day be sure to review the progress each player has made. Emphasize the importance of playing soccer on their own in their yard/ basement/ indoor facilities/ open gym etc. off season.**



**Plan an end of season practice party where your team will get together for refreshments, certificates, and awards provided by the recreation dept. (Director will give more information at Week 5)**

**Take advantage of any Poland Regional High School games under the lights this season....make it a practice☺**

## Week ONE:

Parent Meeting / First Practice :

- **Introduce yourself** and give your contact information.
- Ask any parent who has a child with **medical / behavioral issues** to speak with you after the session to get more detailed information.
- Pass out jerseys/ socks and handbooks.

**Play a name game** with the team: Example: pass the soccer ball (or other fun object) around the circle and have each child say their name. (5 minutes)

**Start a Warm Up Routine that you will use all season:** (10 minutes)

Example: Set up cones on in a square with approximately 10 feet between each one. Run around the cones. Stop at each one and do a stretch. You can have them walk like a duck to one cone, skip to the next, spider walk the next and so on....be sure to stretch arms, legs, neck, ankles etc. Be sure to have all count aloud to 12 on each stretch.

Introduce a **progressive skill** series to include at each practice throughout the season.

**Introduce the Skill of the Day: DRIBBLING** (15 minutes total)

Be sure to demonstrate the skill: using the inside of the feet, start slow, walking with the ball close, no hands!!

**Drill:** Dribble the ball through an obstacle course of cones. (get creative with the obstacle make it an object of interest)

**Water Break:** (2-3 minutes maximum)

**Fun Game: Scavenger Hunt** (15 minutes)

Set up an area with hidden items (ie: apples, fruit snacks, acorns, leaves, rocks, cones). Create a box with cones and have all kids stand in the box with a ball. You will shout out an item ; players must dribble and keep possession of the ball go find the item and bring it back to the square. The last player back to the square is out. Eventually you will get down to one player left.....who is the winner☺

**Close each session with a recap and a forecast for what they will do next**

## WEEK VI

You Must Be Pro by now 😊

**Warm Up Routine:** (10 minutes)

### Skill of the Day: TEAM WORK

It's important to teach the concept of team work. Emphasize there is no one team member who could play the game alone. Teach them to call for the ball using their team members names. Good ground passing and good defense. Team talk...encourage each other as team mates.

**Drill:** Tied up (15 minutes)

Bring rope/ jump ropes to practice. Divide into 2 teams or more dependent on number of players. Have 3 players on each team take a spot on the rope....preferably equidistance from one another. Place a ball at the feet of one of the players. Have the players move keeping tension on the rope. Each team must pass the ball amongst each other saying the persons name they are passing to at the time. They shall make their way from one end of the field to the other until they are within shooting distance of the goal. Whoever scores first wins.

**Diamond Defense:** Teach the concept of a diamond defense. Replacing each other as the team moves together yet keeping space. Stress communication, support, and keeping that diamond shape.

**Water Break: (2-3 minutes maximum)**

**Small sided scrimmage stressing team work, communication, and spacing.**

**Recap & Forecast: Team Huddle**



## Week III

**Greet Players: High Fives**

**Warm Up Routine:** Same as day one. (:

### Skill of the Day: Shooting

**Teach to shoot with inside of toe.** Right and left. Use goals.



You may also teach to shoot with the laces (top of the foot)  
Easier to control the shot with the inside of the foot.

**Drills:** One Timers (15 minutes)

**Blast Off:**

Set up 2 cones approximately 6 feet from each goal post in the middle of the field. Line the players up at right post in single file. Coach will blow the whistle...first player in line will sprint out around the cone. When heading back toward the goal; coach will pass a ball to the player. They should step and shoot. One touch on the ball is all they should have. No dribbling/ trapping. Alternate starting at left/ right posts.

**Water Break: (2-3 minutes maximum)**

**Small sided game:** Focus on shooting (16 minutes)

Set up a game with the opposite team on your field. Focus on placing players in the positions you plan to place each player at in the next game. Give some tips and words of encouragement that will motivate them to play hard and fulfill their responsibilities in that position.

**Recap & Forecast: Team Huddle**

## Week IV

Greet Players: 😊

Warm Up Routine: (10 minutes)

### Skill of the Day: Collections

Explain the importance of collecting the soccer ball before dribbling/ passing. Stress the importance of keeping the ball under control. Demonstrate a wedge/ cushion collection.

#### Drill:

**Go n Get it** (15 minutes)

Line players up on a touch line/ end line. Pairs of 2 one behind the other. The player in front will have a ball. The player behind will run in front of the player with the ball onto the field. The player with the ball will kick the ball with their laces in the air toward the player in the field. The player in the field will wedge/ cushion the ball to collect it. Rotate player positions and start again.

**Wedge or Cushion:** Pair up players. One player tosses the ball gently to their partner while saying either wedge/ cushion. The player needs to collect the ball as instructed and pass it back to their partner. If the player misses the collection their partner continues to toss until they get one. They then switch places.

**Water Break: (2-3 minutes maximum)**

**Collection Connection Game:** (16 minutes)

Divide your team into 2 equal teams. Use the above drill as a competition. Go a pair from each team at a time. The team who has the most collections performed gets to shoot soccer balls and the other team has to run to collect them all before ending practice.

**Recap & Forecast: Team Huddle**



## Week V

Remember to greet all players with a smile and a “ready to play soccer” attitude😊

Warm Up Routine: Same as day one. (10 minutes)

### Skill of the Day: Throw Ins / Goalie Drills

Teach players to keep both feet planted/ glued to the ground. Two hands on the ball, bring the ball all the way behind the head, and throw toward the feet of a team mate. At higher levels (midget/ Junior) once this is mastered you may teach the “drag the toe” version of the throw.

**Drill:** Hit Coach (15 minutes)

Have players line up behind the end line. Coach will stand in front of the line. All players should perform the throw in and try to hit coach with the ball. Be sure to correct them when they are not performing the skill correctly. You can use your imagination to create other drills in variation with this skill. Good Luck!



**Water Break: (2-3 minutes maximum)**

**Goalie Skills:** First show all players the gear in which a goalie wears. Explain the goalie is another player on the team. They can always help the team outside the goalie box with their feet when wanted. Teach the W hand formation for blocking the shot. Teach the angles of defense post to center (shape of a triangle). Teach blocking and using feet to defend at micro level. Teach dropping / rolling/ wrapping the ball up midget and junior levels.

Choose a fun game to close practice.

**Recap & Forecast: Team Huddle**

## Week TWO

**Come onto the field with great energy and high five each player as they come onto the field. It's important for each player to feel acknowledged and remembered.**

**Name Game:** Have players stand in a circle. Pass the ball and say the name of the person they are passing the ball to. Name tags are a good idea for days 1 and 2 😊 (5 minutes)

**Warm Up Routine:** Same as day one. (10 minutes)

### Skill of the Day: PASSING

Pass only with the inside of the foot. Right and left. Be sure to teach the foot lock position to collect the pass.

**Drill:** Zig n Zag (15 minutes)

Set up cones in 2 lines. Each player find a cone and stand by it. Pass and follow your pass to the next cone. Each player should be passing or receiving a pass at all times. Last person on the last cone would go to the first cone in line. Zig Zag formation. (hint sometimes having orange cones on one side and white on the opposite helps with confusion 😊).

Sometimes it takes a few tries to get this drill running. If it's too confusing you may just have them stay at their cones and pass. Try to get them to pass with both right and left feet.

### Water Break: (2-3 minutes maximum)

**Small sided game:** Offense and Defense (10 minutes)

Scrimmage your team or with another that may practice opposite you. Teach positions and the meaning of offense and defense. Try to get them to pass as soon as they see their opponent approaching them. It's ok if they lose the ball. It may take many attempts to create timing of passes but encourage they have executed the correct move.

### Recap & Forecast: Team Huddle



## Week VII

Almost there.....

**Warm Up Routine:** Same as day one. (10 minutes)

### Skill of the Day: Sheilding

Teach players to use their body when protecting the ball from an opponent. Demonstrate how to use their body as a shield between the ball and their opponent.



**Drill:** Hedgers & Groundhogs (15 minutes)

Pair up the players. Have one player be the hedger. Time them for 1 minute. See if the hedgers can keep the ball away from the "groundhogs" for the entire minute. If they lose the ball they become the groundhog 😊

Use whatever analogies come to mind.

Upper levels try different game situations / back tackling to enhance this skill. Be sure to teach no elbows/ pushing.

### Water Break: (2-3 minutes maximum)

**Small sided game:** Scrimmage for the last part of practice today. Either schedule another team to play or split your team up into equal teams. Try to incorporate points for the teams who perform skills learned this season.

### Recap & Forecast: Team Huddle

## Introduction:

The game of soccer has many fundamental skills. Within this model lesson plan there are 10 skills incorporated to help players develop through the youth program from Micro-Junior level. Most drills/ games are set forth to be modified in order to fit the level of instruction.

There are too many soccer skills to list them all. I have tried to choose a good variety to help develop a well rounded player. We only have 8 weeks and for most teams this equals approximately 14 or so practices without considering rain outs/ cancellations due to school functions etc. If you feel the need to skip around and vary from this lesson plan to meet the needs of your team please do that. If ever you are in a slump and need some ideas feel free to call the soccer director or share amongst coaches.

We should all have the "goal" to do our best to ensure each player leaves our program having learned a good set of soccer fundamentals. Take your time with each drill/ game and give the players ample time to adjust and perform skills.

Keeping things fun yet structured will help you succeed as a coach. It's hard work but someone has to do it.



If there are questions regarding this information please call:

Poland Recreation Office: 998-4650

Julie Mocchiola, Poland Soccer Director: 577-3776

## Other fun game ideas:

**Clean out the Closet:** Split your team into 2. Put 10 cones in a straight line across the middle of a play area. Teams should be on either side of the line of cones. Put a soccer ball on top of each cone. At the whistle both teams rush to take a ball off a cone and shoot it to the other side of the line. Whichever team clears all balls out of their side of the field first to the opposite teams "closet" wins.

Upper levels can use the above and turn into dodge ball. If a player on the opposite side is hit by a ball they are out and cannot help clear their side. Once one team is completely out the other wins the match

**World Cup:** Teams of 2 each battle each other for the world cup 😊 Pair up players; each has a team name. 2 teams run out into the play area with a goal set up within shooting distance. The coach starts play by throwing a ball out into the middle of the 2 teams. Teams play each other until one scores. The winner plays the next team in line. Losing team does a lap or other exercise while watching the other matches. Last team standing wins.

Another version: Split the team in 2. One half line up at the left and the other at the right goal post. At the whistle the first person from each side runs out; coach throws a ball in. Players try to possess and score. The person who scores goes back into line. The person who doesn't sits down. Team with players left standing wins.

**NEW IDEA: Smurfs turf:** make small circles with cones throughout the field. (these are the smurf houses) Each player gets a ball (a smurf) to dribble/ guide to a smurf house. Coaches are Gargamel. Gargamel tries to steal the smurfs from the players as they are trying to get the smurfs to the houses. If all smurfs are safe gargamel loses.

This game more for Micro/ Midget level.



# Soccer Terms

Youth players learn from repetitiveness and consistent terms. Always use the same terms. (ie: if you call mid-field a position use that term continuously do not use mid-field one day and half back the next day.) Soccer has many terms and we should all try to keep consistent with the terms used. 1-3 word commands not sentences should be used when instructing in games/ practices. Players will be easily instructed if they understand your brief commands.

## Below is a list of terms to keep consistent when coaching:

**Touch lines:** field boundary lines on the sides

**End Line:** field boundary lines on the ends of the field

**Offense:** Use as a term to describe the position one is playing  
(ie: forwards & half backs)

**Defense:** Use to describe mode of play; all players should be in defensive mode during a play over the center field line.

**Right Wing, Left Wing, and Striker/Center Forward position:**

**Right, Left, and Center Half Back/ Mid-Field position:**

**Left, Right and Center Full Back/ Stopper or Sweeper Defense position:**

**Sweeper:** Last member of defensive line

**Goalie:** only member of the team allowed to touch the ball with their hands; position is to protect the goal when the ball is kicked beyond the full backs/ sweeper.

**Indirect Kick:** awarded when a player touches the ball illegally (ie: hand ball) / player who was violated will have the opportunity to kick the ball from the area of infraction without being defended. \*the ball must be played by another team member or opponent before entering the goal.

**Corner Kick:** Kick awarded to the team when the ball is kicked beyond the end line by the defending team.

**Goal Kick:** Kick awarded to the defending team when the ball is kicked beyond the end line by the opposing team

**Off Sides:** No member of either team may pass the last defensive player on the opposing team without possession of the ball. If a player is in an off sides position, but not part of a play the off side penalty will not be called.

**Throw In:** When the ball is kicked beyond the sideline by one team the opposing team is awarded a throw in: Proper form is both feet on the ground, hands holding ball, hands must reach behind player's head and ball must be thrown in fair play boundaries.

**Foot Lock position:** Toe up/ heel down ankle in 45% angle to collect a pass also used in hedging to keep possession

**Shielding:** Keeping possession by using your body to shield your opponent from the ball

**Wedge:** Type of collection used to trap / collect the ball out of the air. Wedging the ball toward the ground using foot or knee

**Cushion:** Another type of collection used to collect and settle the ball to drop to the feet

**Possession:** Keeping the ball within safe distance of your body. Not kicking it ahead and running after it but keeping the ball within close range.

**Move to Space:** collect the ball and move to open space

**Lines of Support:** instructing next line of defense to step up toward the play as a safety net together but spaced in diagonal line

**Change Fields:** team should try to get the ball to the other side of the field/ involves strong passing/ in the air / clearing the ball to the other side

**Line of sight:** Players should be able to see their teammate clearly before passing. Do not pass if someone is interrupting that line of sight.

**Time:** telling your players to take time & handle the ball instead of clearing

**Shoot:** Obviously.....:)

## Skill Progression Ideas

At each practice in the beginning/ end choose a couple of the following skills for players to try to improve throughout the eight weeks:

**Toe Taps:** Place the ball in front of the player within foot reach. Time players for 1-2 minutes as they tap the ball alternately with the right and left toes.

**Juggling:** Have players try to juggle the ball with thighs/ tops of feet etc. Once the ball touches the ground they have to start over. See how many juggles they can get each week.

Older groups can use the head as well.

**Aerial Control:** Partner up approximately 2.5 feet from each other. Have partner toss the ball. Player should head/ collect by wedge or cushion and serve back to partner. Each time the player successfully serves it back to his partner counts as a completed point.

**Dribbling in place:** Players place the ball between the insides of their feet. Coach blows the whistle, players use the insides of their feet to pass the ball back and forth as quickly as possible. Each touch is counted by the player in their head. Time for 1-2 minutes. Try to improve number of touches each week.

**Scissors:** Complicated to explain in words but here it goes: place the ball in front of the player. Player will circle right foot around the front of the ball and push the ball with the outside part of his/ her right foot. Alternate with the left foot. For a timed set; simply tap the ball lightly so it does not travel. And continue in succession as quickly as possible. Each touch counts as 1.

**Minute to win it games** can be made out of the above as well. Utilize your creativity and be consistent each week if you are striving to see improvement be sure this is part of your practice plan.

## Coaching Tips:

**Communicate well and often:** check emails often, if you don't hear from a player and they are not showing at practices/ games please call to check in.

**Keep things simple and clear.** Try not to use many words when instructing. Focus on the plan of the day. It's impossible to cover all areas before your first game.

Remember this is an instructional league and we are working toward **accomplishing skills and keeping it fun** so players will return season after season to keep improving their skills.

Games should be another opportunity to coach. Use familiar practice terms.

**Keep an open mind and listen to your players concerns.** (ie: if someone is uncomfortable playing in goal do not force them to play there )

Try not to make examples out of mistakes rather teach what you want them to do. Kids will remember the mistake more than they will the correction you have made.

Start practices on time. End practices accordingly. This gains respect for parents/ coaches.

Be sure to ENCOURAGE when your players are listening and following directions.

Follow up each practice/ game with a huddle and positive feedback from the practice/ game.

Smile and work through the season the best you can. If you have an issue with player behavior/ difficulty with a parent please advise your director as soon as you sense any resistance.

Don't hesitate to ask your director or a fellow coach for guidance or new ideas.