



Wee Kick About

8-Week Playbook

Welcome to Wee Kick About Coaching

Thank you for offering to coach **Wee Kick About**. Without volunteers like you, we would not be able to run this program.

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Notes

- All play is held on Saturdays at 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM.
- Unless otherwise noted, all Wee Kick About teams will play at Temple University, Ambler Campus: 580 Meetinghouse Rd, Ambler, PA 19002.
- Coaches should arrive by 9:45 AM (9:30 AM on Week 1) at the very latest.
- Players will receive their uniforms (black or green t-shirts) at check-in at the start of Week 1. These shirts will help split your team into two when applicable.
- Try to incorporate the new skill set into each game.
- Every week, there is an inter-team scrimmage (see below).

Weekly Scrimmage

Split your team into two based on their jersey colors (or mix and match to whatever is most balanced) and let them play against each other.

- Have one team start with the ball in front of their goal (like a goal kick), while the other team stands back by their goal.
- As soon as the ball is played, the defending team can move forward. (This allows the team kicking off to complete a pass or two and dribble a bit before the defenders start pressuring them.)
- If the ball goes out of play, resume with a kick in from the sideline. (Stay away from throw-ins, while we emphasize using our feet, not our hands.)



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Week-by-Week Curriculum

Week 1 (Dribbling)

10:00 AM: Warm-Up game
"Crossing the River"
10:10 AM: First game
"What Time Is It Mr. Fox?"
10:25 AM: Second game
"Red Light, Green Light"
10:40 AM: Scrimmage

Week 2 (Step Over)

10:00 AM: Warm-Up game
"What Time Is It Mr. Fox?"
10:10 AM: First game
"Red Light, Green Light"
10:20 AM: New skill
Step Over
10:25 AM: Second game
"Coach Says"
10:40 AM: Scrimmage

Week 3 (Passing)

10:00 AM: Warm-Up game
"Red Light, Green Light"
10:10 AM: First game
"Coach Says"
10:20 AM: New skill
Passing
10:25 AM: Second game
"Freeze Tag"
10:40 AM: Scrimmage

Week 4 (Shooting)

10:00 AM: Warm-Up game
"Coach Says"
10:10 AM: First game
"Freeze Tag"
10:20 AM: New skill
Shooting
10:25 AM: Second game
"Pirate Relay"
10:40 AM: Scrimmage

Week 5 (Shielding)

10:00 AM: Warm-Up game
"Freeze Tag"
10:10 AM: First game
"Pirate Relay"
10:20 AM: New skill
Shielding
10:25 AM: Second game
"Keep Away from Coach"
10:40 AM: Scrimmage

Week 6 (J Cut)

10:00 AM: Warm-Up game
"Pirate Relay"
10:10 AM: First game
"Keep Away from Coach"
10:20 AM: New skill
J Cut / Cut Back
10:25 AM: Second game
"Sharks and Minnows"
10:40 AM: Scrimmage

Week 7 (Pull Back)

10:00 AM: Warm-Up game
"Keep Away from Coach"
10:10 AM: First game
Sharks and Minnows"
10:20 AM: New skill
Pull Back
10:25 AM: Second game
"What Time Is It Mr. Fox?"
10:40 AM: Scrimmage

Week 8 (Step Over)

10:00 AM: Scrimmage

In Week 8, if you prefer to not scrimmage for the entire hour, feel free to play some of your team's favorite games. Remember to recap players' newly-learned skills.



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Skills

“J Cut” or “Cut Back”

This might be the one skill of the season that is hard to put into words, especially since no one can even agree on the name (inside cut, outside cut, L cut, cut, etc.). EPYSA calls it the J Cut so that is the term we are using. Simply put, use the inside (or outside) of the foot to make a 90 (or 180) degree turn away from pressure.

“Passing”

Teaching passing is as easy as three steps:

1. **PLANT** your foot (left if you are right footed)
2. **TURN** your other foot (right if you are right footed)
3. **PASS** the ball by kicking it with the inside of the turned foot

***Note:** Receiving a pass and trapping the ball should also be done with the inside of the foot. Trying to stop the ball by putting your foot on top of it will become a bad habit at the higher-age levels.*

“Pull Back”

To perform the Pull Back, place a foot on top of the ball, roll it behind, and then turn and dribble away. Players should not be launching the ball backwards, but instead, be maintaining control while escaping pressure in a game.

“Shielding”

Having the kids pretend to be surfers can make your explanation of these steps easier:

1. Turn sideways
2. Bend at the knees
3. Stay between the ball and the defender (Coach)

***Note:** Older players might be able to do this while having a foot on the ball and pivoting, but the younger ones are better off just focusing on the form and staying between the defender and the ball.*



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Skills (Continued)

“Shooting”

Very similar to passing, here are three simple steps:

4. **PLANT** your foot (left if you are right footed)
5. **POINT** your other foot at the ground (right if you are right footed)
6. **SHOOT** the ball by kicking it with your laces

***Note:** Receiving a pass and trapping the ball should also be done with the inside of the foot. Trying to stop the ball by putting your foot on top of it will become a bad habit at the higher-age levels.*

“Step Over”

This is a simplified version of your classic scissors technique. The older players can attempt to do actual scissors, but for the younger children, just getting them to step over the ball and to start using all the surfaces of their feet is a good foundation. Here are three quick steps for this move:

7. If you are right footed, demonstrate this move by starting with the ball to the outside of your right foot so that you are standing beside the ball.
8. Next, **STEP OVER** the ball so that it is now between your feet.
9. Finally, lift your left foot over the ball and use the outside of the left foot to push the ball away and start to dribble.



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Rules of the Games

“Coach Says”

Similar to “Simon Says,” but since we are playing soccer, Simon is getting benched, and it will be “Coach says...” instead!

- Players follow the instructions of Coach *only* when it is preceded by "Coach says" and are *not* supposed to follow instructions when Coach does not start the command with "Coach Says." (Example: "Coach says dribble fast... Now, do a step over!" Players should be dribbling fast but ignore the instruction to do a step over.)
- Have some fun with your instructions. Be creative! We are all for Coach to say, "Wave to your parents!" or "Make a silly face!"

The purpose of this game is to practice both our soccer skills and our listening skills.

“Crossing the River”

- All players stand at one end line with their soccer balls.
- When Coach says go, players have two minutes to dribble back and forth from end line to end line as many times as possible.
- Points are awarded only if a player stops his or her soccer ball without it crossing the end line.
- For round 2, have players say their names each time they cross the river.

“Freeze Tag”

- Select one player to be the tagger and have the rest of the children dribble around the field.
- When players get tagged, have them pick up their ball and hold it above their heads while making a wide tunnel between their legs.
- To get unfrozen, another player (not the tagger) must pass his or her ball between the frozen player's legs.
- Be sure to rotate turns being the tagger as much as possible.



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Rules of the Games (Continued)

“Keep Away from Coach”

Players dribble their soccer balls around the field and have to shield it if Coach comes near; otherwise the coach will take it away!

Coach should also use the game to remind the children not to kick the ball way out in front of them if they run away from pressure. Doing that makes it easier for the defender to take the ball away since the player cannot shield it, so keep the ball close!

“Pirate Relay”

This is a relay race. Split your team into two groups based on their jersey colors or mix and match to whatever is most balanced. During the race itself, have the players line up next to the goal behind the end line. The rules are as follows:

- Put all of the balls in the middle of the field.
- Each team will have an empty treasure chest (goal) that they have to fill with doubloons (soccer balls).
- One player from each team runs out to the middle of the field, gets a ball, and dribbles it back to their goal before shooting it into the net.
- Once the ball goes into the net, the next player goes.
- The team that fills the treasure chest first, wins.

“Red Light, Green Light”

Slightly different from the playground version, players will start the game by dribbling their soccer balls around the field. The coach will give instructions in the form of traffic light colors:

- Green light: Players should dribble fast around the soccer field.
- Yellow light: Players should dribble slowly around the soccer field.
- Red light: Players should stop their soccer balls and freeze in place.

This game teaches our players to control the ball while changing speeds. Players should not be kicking the ball way out in front of them and then chasing it. Instead, they should be keeping it close regardless of the pace at which they are moving.



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Rules of the Games (Continued)

"Sharks and Minnows"

The goal of this game is to have the players work on shielding the ball and using the J Cut / Cut Back to dribble around a defender (shark).

- One player starts as the shark, and the rest are minnows.
- When Coach says "Go!," the minnows try to dribble their soccer balls from one end of the field to the other while the shark tries to steal their ball and kick it out of bounds.
- If a player loses their soccer ball, he or she becomes a shark in the next round.
- Play continues until there is only one minnow left. The last minnow is the shark in the next game. The key is making sure that everyone stops at the far endline and waits for Coach to say "Go!" to restart the game.

"What Time Is It, Mr(s). Fox?"

Coach can opt to either be Mr(s). Fox or pick a player from the group. Note that if you pick one of your players, every child will want to have a turn as the fox.

Emphasize taking little kicks while dribbling. Players should not be kicking the ball way out in front of them and then walking/running to catch up. The idea of this game is to get the children used to controlling the ball.

- Fox stands at the opposite end of the field from the other players who should be lined up on the end line.
- Players yell across the field to ask, "What time is it, Mr(s). Fox?" To which Fox replies, "It is (2, 4, 11, etc.) o'clock."
- Players then take that many dribbles toward Fox.
- The call and response repeats until the players get close to Fox, at which point Fox will say: "Midnight!"
- All players must dribble back to the end line without being tagged by Fox.