

Session Structures



U7-U16



Purpose

This document provides a structured framework for volunteer coaches to deliver engaging, age-appropriate football sessions for players aged 7-16. It aims to support coaches in creating a positive and development-focused environment, ensuring players build technical skills, game understanding, and a love for the sport.

By following these session structures, coaches can maximise training time, promote player development, and enhance overall team performance while keeping sessions enjoyable and inclusive.

A structured, planned session is often a more fun session. This keeps players engaged, builds confidence, and fosters a lifelong passion for the game.

45 Minute Session Structures U7/8

This 45-minute session structure for U7/ U8 players is designed to keep young athletes engaged while developing key skills. It starts with a 10-minute **arrival game**, allowing players to warm up and settle in while encouraging early attendance. **Two 10-minute skill games** follow, focusing on different technical aspects in an enjoyable, game-based format. The session concludes with a **15-minute final game**, giving players a chance to apply their skills in a match-like setting. This approach ensures a smooth transition between activities, maintains high energy levels, and fosters a fun, development-focused environment for young footballers.



Coach Tip: Arrival games can start before the session begins and continue into your session times. This encourages kids to arrive early and means that kids arriving late can jump straight into the training.

Arrival Games (10 Minutes)



Skill Game 1 (10 Minutes)



Skill Game 2 (10 Minutes)



Final Game (15 Minutes)

60 Minute Session Structures U9/10

This 60-minute session structure for U9/U10 players is designed to balance fun, engagement, and skill development. It starts with a **10-minute arrival game**, allowing players to get involved immediately. A **15-minute "FUNctional" activity** follows, keeping the session enjoyable while focusing on a key skill. Next, a **15-minute skill game** reinforces technical learning in a game-like scenario. The session concludes with a **20-minute final game**, where players apply their skills in a match setting. This structure ensures players stay engaged while progressively developing their abilities in a supportive and enjoyable environment.

Arrival Games (10 Minutes)



FUNctional Activity (15 Minutes)



Skill Game (15 Minutes)



Final Game (20 Minutes)



Coach Tip: FUNctional activities are engaging and fun activities where players are still working on the core skill of the session.

60-75 Minute Session Structures U11/12

This 60-75 minute session structure for U11/U12 players builds on fundamental skills while introducing injury prevention exercises. It begins with a **10-minute arrival game** to engage players, followed by a **5-minute "11+ Kids" activity** to develop key movement patterns beneficial for football. A **15-minute "FUNctional" activity** keeps training enjoyable while focusing on core skills. Next, a **15-20 minute skill game** reinforces technical and tactical elements in a realistic setting. The session concludes with a **20-25 minute final game**, where players apply their learning in a match scenario. This structure ensures progressive development in a fun and structured environment.

Arrival Games (10 Minutes)



11+ Kids Activity (5 Minutes)



FUNctional Activity (15 Minutes)



Skill Game (15-20 Minutes)



Final Game (20-25 Minutes)



Coach Tip: Introducing 11+ kids activities at this age can help develop important movement patterns useful in football. Read more here [11+ Kids](#).

75-90 Minute Session Structures U13-16

This 75-90 minute session structure for U13-16 players builds on fundamental skills while introducing injury prevention exercises. It begins with a **10-minute FIFA 11+** to allow for a complete warm up. Next is a **10-15 minute technical passing practice/rondo** designed to allow players to get practice with key passing and receiving skills. A **15-minute positional game** reinforces key technical or tactical concepts for players. Next, a **15-20 minute skill game** builds on the previous technical and tactical concepts in a match-realistic setting. The session concludes with a **20-25 minute final game**, where players apply their learning in an engaging and competitive match scenario.



Coach Tip: At this age, having correct warm ups is important for injury prevention. See the full 11+ warm up protocol at the end of this document.

Fifa 11+ (10 Minutes)



Rondos/Passing Practice
(10-15 Minutes)



Positional Game (15
Minutes)



Skill Game (15-20
Minutes)



Final Game (25-30
Minutes)

FIFA 11+

PART 1 RUNNING EXERCISES • 8 MINUTES



1 RUNNING STRAIGHT AHEAD

The course is made up of 6 to 10 pairs of parallel cones, approx. 5-6 metres apart. Two players start at the same time from the first pair of cones. **Jog together** all the way to the last pair of cones. On the way back, you can increase your speed progressively as you warm up. **2 sets**



2 RUNNING HIP OUT

Walk or jog easily, stopping at each pair of cones to lift your knee and **rotate your hip outwards**. Alternate between left and right legs at successive cones. **2 sets.**



3 RUNNING HIP IN

Walk or jog easily, stopping at each pair of cones to lift your knee and **rotate your hip inwards**. Alternate between left and right legs at successive cones. **2 sets.**



4 RUNNING CIRCLING PARTNER

Run forwards as a pair to the first set of cones. Shuffle sideways by 90 degrees to meet in the middle. **Shuffle an entire circle around one other** and then return back to the cones. Repeat for each pair of cones. Remember to stay on your toes and keep your centre of gravity low by bending your hips and knees. **2 sets.**



5 RUNNING SHOULDER CONTACT

Run forwards in pairs to the first pair of cones. Shuffle sideways by 90 degrees to meet in the middle then **jump sideways towards each other to make shoulder-to-shoulder contact**.
Note: Make sure you land on both feet with your hips and knees bent. Do not let your knees buckle inwards. Make it a full jump and synchronize your timing with your team-mate as you jump and land. **2 sets**



6 RUNNING QUICK FORWARDS & BACKWARDS

As a pair, run quickly to the second set of cones then run **backwards quickly to the first pair of cones keeping your hips and knees slightly bent**. Keep repeating the drill, running two cones forwards and one cone backwards. Remember to take small, quick steps. **2 sets.**

PART 2 STRENGTH • PLYOMETRICS • BALANCE • 10 MINUTES

LEVEL 1



7 THE BENCH STATIC

Starting position: Lie on your front, supporting yourself on your forearms and feet. Your elbows should be directly under your shoulders.
Exercise: Lift your body up, supported on your forearms, pull your stomach in, and hold the position for 20-30 sec. Your body should be in a straight line. Try not to sway or arch your back. **3 sets.**



LEVEL 2

7 THE BENCH ALTERNATE LEGS

Starting position: Lie on your front, supporting yourself on your forearms and feet. Your elbows should be directly under your shoulders.
Exercise: Lift your body up, supported on your forearms, and pull your stomach in. Lift each leg in turn, holding for a count of 2 sec. Continue for 40-60 sec. Your body should be in a straight line. Try not to sway or arch your back. **3 sets.**



LEVEL 3

7 THE BENCH ONE LEG LIFT AND HOLD

Starting position: Lie on your front, supporting yourself on your forearms and feet. Your elbows should be directly under your shoulders.
Exercise: Lift your body up, supported on your forearms, and pull your stomach in. Lift one leg about 10-15 centimetres off the ground, and hold the position for 20-30 sec. Your body should be straight. Do not let your opposite hip dip down and do not sway or arch your lower back. Take a short break, change legs and repeat. **3 sets.**



8 SIDEWAYS BENCH STATIC

Starting position: Lie on your side with the knee of your lowermost leg bent to 90 degrees. Support your upper body by resting on your forearm and knee. The elbow of your supporting arm should be directly under your shoulder.
Exercise: Lift your uppermost leg and hips until your shoulder, hip and knee are in a straight line. Hold the position for 20-30 sec. Take a short break, change sides and repeat. **3 sets on each side.**



8 SIDEWAYS BENCH RAISE & LOWER HIP

Starting position: Lie on your side with both legs straight. Lean on your forearm and the side of your foot so that your body is in a straight line from shoulder to foot. The elbow of your supporting arm should be directly beneath your shoulder.
Exercise: Lower your hip to the ground and raise it back up again. Repeat for 20-30 sec. Take a short break, change sides and repeat. **3 sets on each side.**



8 SIDEWAYS BENCH WITH LEG LIFT

Starting position: Lie on your side with both legs straight. Lean on your forearm and the side of your foot so that your body is in a straight line from shoulder to foot. The elbow of your supporting arm should be directly beneath your shoulder.
Exercise: Lift your uppermost leg up and slowly lower it down again. Repeat for 20-30 sec. Take a short break, change sides and repeat. **3 sets on each side.**



9 HAMSTRINGS BEGINNER

Starting position: Kneel on a soft surface. Ask your partner to hold your ankles down firmly.
Exercise: Your body should be completely straight from the shoulder to the knee throughout the exercise. Lean forward as far as you can, controlling the movement with your hamstrings and your gluteal muscles. When you can no longer hold the position, gently take your weight on your hands, falling into a push-up position. Complete a minimum of 3-5 repetitions and/or 60 sec. **1 set.**



9 HAMSTRINGS INTERMEDIATE

Starting position: Kneel on a soft surface. Ask your partner to hold your ankles down firmly.
Exercise: Your body should be completely straight from the shoulder to the knee throughout the exercise. Lean forward as far as you can, controlling the movement with your hamstrings and your gluteal muscles. When you can no longer hold the position, gently take your weight on your hands, falling into a push-up position. Complete a minimum of 7-10 repetitions and/or 60 sec. **1 set.**



9 HAMSTRINGS ADVANCED

Starting position: Kneel on a soft surface. Ask your partner to hold your ankles down firmly.
Exercise: Your body should be completely straight from the shoulder to the knee throughout the exercise. Lean forward as far as you can, controlling the movement with your hamstrings and your gluteal muscles. When you can no longer hold the position, gently take your weight on your hands, falling into a push-up position. Complete a minimum of 12-15 repetitions and/or 60 sec. **1 set.**



10 SINGLE-LEG STANCE HOLD THE BALL

Starting position: Stand on one leg.
Exercise: Balance on one leg whilst holding the ball with both hands. Keep your body weight on the ball of your foot. Remember: try not to let your knees buckle inwards. Hold for 30 sec. Change legs and repeat. The exercise can be made more difficult by passing the ball around your waist and/or under your other knee. **2 sets.**



10 SINGLE-LEG STANCE THROWING BALL WITH PARTNER

Starting position: Stand 2-3 m apart from your partner, with each of you standing on one leg.
Exercise: Keeping your balance, and with your stomach held in, throw the ball to one another. Keep your weight on the ball of your foot. Remember: keep your knee just slightly flexed and try not to let it buckle inwards. Keep going for 30 sec. Change legs and repeat. **2 sets.**



10 SINGLE-LEG STANCE TEST YOUR PARTNER

Starting position: Stand on one leg opposite your partner and at arm's' length apart.
Exercise: Whilst you both try to keep your balance, each of you in turn tries to push the other off balance in different directions. Try to keep your weight on the ball of your foot and prevent your knee from buckling inwards. Continue for 30 sec. Change legs. **2 sets.**



11 SQUATS WITH TOE RAISE

Starting position: Stand with your feet hip-width apart. Place your hands on your hips if you like.
Exercise: Imagine that you are about to sit down on a chair. Perform squats by bending your hips and knees to 90 degrees. Do not let your knees buckle inwards. Descend slowly then straighten up more quickly. When your legs are completely straight, stand up on your toes then slowly lower down again. Repeat the exercise for 30 sec. **2 sets.**



11 SQUATS WALKING LUNGES

Starting position: Stand with your feet hip-width apart. Place your hands on your hips if you like.
Exercise: Lunge forward slowly at an even pace. As you lunge, bend your leading leg until your hip and knee are flexed to 90 degrees. Do not let your knee buckle inwards. Try to keep your upper body and hips steady. Lunge your way across the pitch (approx. 10 times on each leg) and then jog back. **2 sets.**



11 SQUATS ONE-LEG SQUATS

Starting position: Stand on one leg, loosely holding onto your partner.
Exercise: Slowly bend your knee as far as you can manage. Concentrate on preventing the knee from buckling inwards. Bend your knee slowly then straighten it slightly more quickly, keeping your hips and upper body in line. Repeat the exercise 10 times on each leg. **2 sets.**



12 JUMPING VERTICAL JUMPS

Starting position: Stand with your feet hip-width apart. Place your hands on your hips if you like.
Exercise: Imagine that you are about to sit down on a chair. Bend your legs slowly until your knees are flexed to approx 90 degrees, and hold for 2 sec. Do not let your knees buckle inwards. From the squat position, jump up as high as you can. Land softly on the balls of your feet with your hips and knees slightly bent. Repeat the exercise for 30 sec. **2 sets.**



12 JUMPING LATERAL JUMPS

Starting position: Stand on one leg with your upper body bent slightly forwards from the waist, with knees and hips slightly bent.
Exercise: Jump approx. 1 m sideways from the supporting leg on to the free leg. Land gently on the ball of your foot. Bend your hips and knees slightly as you land and do not let your knee buckle inward. Maintain your balance with each jump. Repeat the exercise for 30 sec. **2 sets.**



12 JUMPING BOX JUMPS

Starting position: Stand with your feet hip-width apart. Imagine that there is a cross marked on the ground and you are standing in the middle of it.
Exercise: Alternate between jumping forwards and backwards, from side to side, and diagonally across the cross. Jump as quickly and explosively as possible. Your knees and hips should be slightly bent. Land softly on the balls of your feet. Do not let your knees buckle inwards. Repeat the exercise for 30 sec. **2 sets.**

PART 3 RUNNING EXERCISES • 2 MINUTES



13 RUNNING ACROSS THE PITCH

Run across the pitch, from one side to the other, at 75-80% maximum pace. **2 sets.**



14 RUNNING BOUNDING

Run with high bounding steps with a high knee lift, landing gently on the ball of your foot. Use an exaggerated arm swing for each step (opposite arm and leg). Try not to let your leading leg cross the midline of your body or let your knees buckle inwards. Repeat the exercise until you reach the other side of the pitch, then jog back to recover. **2 sets.**



15 RUNNING PLANT & CUT

Jog 4-5 steps, then plant on the outside leg and cut to change direction. Accelerate and sprint 5-7 steps at high speed (80-90% maximum pace) before you decelerate and do a new plant & cut. Do not let your knee buckle inwards. Repeat the exercise until you reach the other side, then jog back. **2 sets.**