

PRACTICE PLANS FOR JUNIOR COACHES

Recommended for U8 – U13 coaches

The following practice plans have been constructed to allow a coach to follow a sequential plan through a season of rugby (15 practice plans). Although these plans are only a guide, they do however have several important features.

1. Skills and drills are repeated because you do not want a new skill and drill every week. Practice makes perfect!
2. Each individual skill has three practice plans. A coach should not start with practice plan 3 for example. The coach should always start at practice plan 1.
3. Coaches can easily move unit skills and team skills around to suit their individual team circumstances.

Note: Every plan is an individual plan, therefore it is difficult to prescribe skills and drills for a team that you are unfamiliar with.

Practice Plan	Time	Activities
Warm-up	15 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Design a warm up that reflects some of your objectives for the session. – Prepare both mind and body for the practice. – Incorporate stretching.
Individual Skills	15 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Review previously learned / poorly performed skills. – Introduce new skills early in the session. – Use drills that require players to perform the skills accurately and make good decisions to be successful. – Skill practice may also develop fitness.
Unit Skills	15 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Practice mini-unit and unit skills such as back attack, back defence, loose forward defence, scrum, lineout, kick-off, etc. – Emphasis should be on team patterns of play and tactics for the next game. – Utilise opposition to make the activities as game-like as possible. – Simulate game situations. – Add pressure relevant to the skill level of the players.
Team Development	20 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Bring the various units together. – Practice phase of the game as a team. – Simulate situations that players are likely to encounter in the game - use reserves as opposition. – Develop team links and continuity. – Involve reserves in training activities/team trainings so they can develop too. – Add pressure, like time restriction, refereeing, etc, to simulate game conditions.
Cool-down	5 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Slow jog and gentle stretching will prepare the players for the next session. – Treat it as part of the practice, not an extra.

Handling

Practice 1

- Primary objectives:
- (1) Ball-handling
 - (2) Back attack
 - (3) Mauling

Activity	Time	Coaching Points (Focus words)	Learning outcomes (Why we are doing this)
Warm-up 1. <u>Ball Familiarisation</u> 2. <u>Follow the coach</u>	15 mins	1. - Ball in two hands - Control 2. - Communicate - Move on balls of feet - Balance	1. Develop awareness of a rugby ball. 2. Improve communication and reactions.
Individual Skills <u>Pass progression</u>	15 mins	- Run straight - Swing arms - Follow through	Develop the fundamental skills of the basic lateral pass.
Unit Skills 1. <u>Backs</u> Back Attack <u>Around the cones</u> 2. <u>Forwards</u> Mauls <u>Continuity Pyramid</u>	15 mins	1. - Alignment - Angles of running - Depth 2. - Approach ball carrier with depth - Bind and drive - Strong leg drive	1. To develop correct alignment, depth, speed and angles. 2. To develop good continuity and movement techniques
Team Development Attacking options from set pieces.	20 mins	- Blindside - Openside - Continuity	Develop team patterns and understand individual roles at set pieces.
Cool-down <u>Passing circle</u> - facing inside and out	5 mins	Review and re-emphasise key coaching points from this session.	
Closure	Team notices and game arrangements.		

Handling

Practice 2

- Primary objectives:
- (1) **Ball-handling**
 - (2) **Back attack**
 - (3) **Mauling**

Activity	Time	Coaching Points (Focus words)	Learning outcomes (Why we are doing this)
Warm-up 1. Ball familiarisation 2. Pass progression	15 mins	1. - Ball in two hands - Control 2. - Run straight - Swing arms - Follow through	1. Develop awareness of a rugby ball. 2. Develop the fundamental skills of the basic lateral pass.
Individual Skills 2 vs 1	15 mins	- Run straight - Run at defender - Pass at chest height - Support	To practice passing in space.
Unit Skills 1. Bucks Back Attack Around the cones 2. Forwards Mauls Continuity Pyramid	15 mins	1. - Alignment - Angles of running - Depth 2. - Approach ball carrier with depth - Bind and drive - Strong leg drive	1. To develop correct alignment, depth, speed and angles. 2. To develop good continuity and movement techniques.
Team Development Attacking options from second phase	20 mins	- Go same way - Look for space - Support	Develop team patterns and understand individual roles during second phase situations.
Cool-down Follow the coach	5 mins	Review and re-emphasise key coaching points from this session.	
Closure	Team notices and game arrangements.		

Handling

Practice 3

- Primary objectives:
- (1) **Ball-handling**
 - (2) **Back attack**
 - (3) **Rucking**

Activity	Time	Coaching Points (Focus words)	Learning outcomes (Why we are doing this)
Warm-up 1. Passing circle 2. Pass progression	15 mins	1. - Have hands out to receive passes - Pass the ball in front of the receiver 2. - Run straight - Swing arms - Follow through	1. Improve players' passing and catching skills. 2. Develop the fundamental skills of the basic lateral pass.
Individual Skills 2 vs 1	15 mins	- Run straight - Run at defender - Pass at chest height - Support	To practice passing in space.
Unit Skills 1. Backs Back Attack Feed in the tackle 2. Forwards Rucks Ruck same way	15 mins	1. - Alignment - Angles of running - Depth 2. - Approach ruck from depth - Use feet to ruck ball clear of congestion	1. To develop correct alignment, depth, speed and angles. 2. To engage and group opposition. To move forward.
Team Development Attacking options from turn-overs	20 mins	- Counter attack - Look for space - Speed	Develop team patterns and understand individual roles during turnover situations.
Cool-down Ball Familiarisation	5 mins	Review and re-emphasise key coaching points from this session.	
Closure		Team notices and game arrangements.	

Tackling

Practice 1

- Primary objectives:
- (1) Communication
 - (2) Defence
 - (3) Lineout

Activity	Time	Coaching Points (Focus words)	Learning outcomes (Why we are doing this)
Warm-up 1. How many passes 2. Passing circle	15 mins	1. - Communicate - Accuracy - Run into space 2. - Have hands out to receive passes - Pass the ball in front of the receiver	1. To improve players' passing and reaction skills. 2. Develop the fundamental skills of the basic lateral pass.
Individual Skills Basic Tackle	15 mins	- Sight target - Pre-tackle stance - Lock on with arms - Drive	To develop techniques with side/front on and falling in the tackle.
Unit Skills 1. Backs Walking through defensive options from set pieces 2. Forwards Lineouts - Set roles and responsibilities	15 mins	1. - Move forward - Arms up 2. - Understand options - Eyes on the ball - Controlled delivery	1. Develop team patterns and understand individual roles during defensive situations. 2. Develop a better understanding of lineout responsibilities and roles.
Team Development Defence decision	20 mins	- Communicate - Identify - Move forward	To prevent the opposition from scoring.
Cool-down Follow the coach	5 mins	Review and re-emphasise key coaching points from this session.	
Closure		Team notices and game arrangements.	

Tackling

Practice 2

- Primary objectives:
- (1) Communication
 - (2) Defence
 - (3) Lineout

Activity	Time	Coaching Points (Focus words)	Learning outcomes (Why we are doing this)
Warm-up 1. Follow the coach 2. How many passes	15 mins	1. - Communicate - Move on balls of feet - Balance 2. - Communicate - Accuracy - Run into space	1. Improve communication and reaction. 2. To improve players' passing and reaction skills.
Individual Skills Grid tackling	15 mins	- Sight target - Pre-tackle stance - Lock on with arms - Drive	To develop tackling from a side-on approach.
Unit Skills 1. <u>Backs</u> Walking through defensive options from set pieces 2. <u>Forwards</u> Lineouts - Set roles and responsibilities	15 mins	1. - Tackler identifies player they are responsible for and communicates 2. - Understand options - Eyes on the ball - Controlled delivery	1. Develop team patterns and understand individual roles during defensive situations. 2. Develop forward understand and individual roles during lineout situations.
Team Development Defence decision	20 mins	- Move forward - Communicate	To prevent the opposition from scoring.
Cool-down Basic tackle	5 mins	Review and re-emphasise key coaching points from this session.	
Closure		Team notices and game arrangements.	

Tackling

Practice 3

- Primary objectives:
- (1) Side-on tackle
 - (2) 2nd phase defence
 - (3) Lineout

Activity	Time	Coaching Points (Focus words)	Learning outcomes (Why we are doing this)
Warm-up 1. How many passes 2. Basic Tackle	15 mins	1. - Communicate - Accuracy - Run into space 2. - Sight target - Pre-tackle stance - Lock on with arms - Drive	1. To improve players' passing and reaction skills. 2. To develop techniques with side/front on and falling in the tackle.
Individual Skills Stop a try	15 mins	- Chin up, eyes open, back straight - Cheek to cheek - Regain feet	To stop forward momentum of the ball carrier and regain possession of the ball.
Unit Skills 1. Bucks Defensive options from 2nd phase 2. Forwards Lineouts - Set roles and responsibilities	15 mins	1. - Tackler identifies player they are responsible for and communicates 2. - Understand options - Eyes on the ball - Controlled delivery	1. Develop team patterns and understand individual roles during defensive 2nd phase situations. 2. Develop forward understand and individual roles during lineout situations.
Team Development 2nd Fizz	20 mins	- Inside shoulder - Straight line	Prevent the opposition team from scoring from 2nd phase possession.
Cool-down Ball familiarisation	5 mins	Review and re-emphasise key coaching points from this session.	
Closure		Team notices and game arrangements.	

Kicking

Practice 1

- Primary objectives:
- (1) Basic punt
 - (2) Kick start
 - (3) Scrums and attack

Activity	Time	Coaching Points (Focus words)	Learning outcomes (Why we are doing this)
Warm-up Rotational kicking	15 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eyes on ball - Place ball onto the foot with dominant hand - Swing leg straight through 	Improve accuracy of kicking.
Individual Skills Forceback	15 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintain balance on non-kicking foot - Follow through with kicking foot, opposite arm extended 	Put into practice a range of kicking skills.
Unit Skills <u>Backs</u> Attack - Have backline run in game situation and observe execution <u>Forwards</u> Scrums - Setting up a scrum - Start with front row and build up from there	15 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alignment - Angle - Maintain depth - Vision - Feet hips and shoulders are all square - Bend at the knees and hips - Shoulders above hips at all times - Head straight, eyes up, chin off chest - Back straight - spine in line - Eyes focused on the target area 	Penetrate opponents defence. - To ensure correct technique for building a scrum.
Team Development Kicking options from around the field (i.e. from a scrum, lineout, box kick, etc.) Starter	20 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accurate kick - Apply pressure - Contest possession - Regain possession 	Develop team patterns and understand individual roles during kicking options from around the field.
Cool-down Pair kicking	5 mins	Review and re-emphasise key coaching points from this session.	
Closure		Team notices and game arrangements.	

Kicking

Practice 2

- Primary objectives:
- (1) Opposed kicking
 - (2) Kick start
 - (3) Scrums and attack

Activity	Time	Coaching Points (Focus words)	Learning outcomes (Why we are doing this)
Warm-up Pair kicking	15 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eyes on ball - Place ball onto the foot with dominant hand - Swing leg straight through 	To improve players' ability to kick accurately.
Individual Skills Opposed kicking	15 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Put ball between defenders if a grubber and over players if a chip kick 	To improve a player's ability to grubber and chip kick accurately.
Unit Skills <u>Backs</u> - Running in support - Have backline back up after the ball has been passed <u>Forwards</u> Setting up a scrum	15 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Anticipate point of attack - Stay inside of ball carrier - Maintain depth - Communicate - Feet hips and shoulders are all square - Bend at the knees and hips - Shoulders above hips at all times - Head straight, eyes up, chin off chest - Back straight - spine in line - Eyes focused on the target area 	Enforce responsibility of backline continuity. - To ensure correct technique for building a scrum.
Team Development Kicking restarts from halfway and 22m line Starter	20 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communicate intentions of kick - Accurate kick - Apply pressure - Contest possession - Regain possession 	Develop team patterns and understand individual roles during kicking restarts from halfway and 22m line.
Cool-down Softball	5 mins	Encourage a variety of kicking methods i.e. punts, grubbers, to be used by players. Review and re-emphasise key coaching points from this session.	
Closure		Team notices and game arrangements.	

Contact

Practice 1

Primary objectives: (1) Continuity
(2) Rucking

Activity	Time	Coaching Points (Focus words)	Learning outcomes (Why we are doing this)
Warm-up 2 vs 1	15 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Run straight - Run at defender - Pass at chest height - Support 	To practice passing in space.
Individual Skills Hit and support	15 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Low body position - Body before ball - Small steps on approach - Wide "power" step into contact 	To develop correct technique, timing and ball presentation at contact.
Unit Skills Ruck same way	15 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Body position - Communication - Decision-making - Support play 	Players consider options at ruck time.
Team Development Continuity in second phase situations (i.e. rucks and mauls) Game situation	20 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify role - Communicate - Delivery 	Develop team patterns and understand individual roles during rucks and mauls.
Cool-down Touch the ground and pass	5 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage players to communicate. - Players should use all the area. - Review and re-emphasise key coaching points from this session. 	
Closure		Team notices and game arrangements.	

Contact

Practice 2

- Primary objectives:
- (1) Continuity
 - (2) Mauling
 - (3) Moves

Activity	Time	Coaching Points (Focus words)	Learning outcomes (Why we are doing this)
Warm-up Touch the ground and pass	15 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Look for space - Communicate 	To develop communication, movement into space and ball familiarisation.
Individual Skills Tackle, contact and fitness	15 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Plant front foot close to defender's feet - Body before ball - Contact side-on with hard parts of body, "jack up on contact" - Maintain low stable base, chin up, eyes open 	To practice contact situations and work on intensity training.
Unit Skills Continuity Pyramid	15 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify role, sight target area - Approach ruck/maul from depth - Bind with teammates onto opposition - Drive forward 	To develop all areas of ruck/maul situations.
Team Development Moves from penalties and free kicks	20 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Choose 2 or 3 - Communicate clearly - Practice 	Develop team patterns and understand individual roles during moves from penalties and free kicks.
Cool-down How many passes	5 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review and re-emphasise key coaching points from this session. 	
Closure		Team notices and game arrangements.	

Contact

Practice 3

- Primary objectives:
- (1) Continuity
 - (2) Penalties/Free-kicks

Activity	Time	Coaching Points (Focus words)	Learning outcomes (Why we are doing this)
Warm-up How many passes	15 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communicate - Accuracy - Run into space 	To improve players' passing and reaction skills.
Individual Skills Ruck same way	15 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Body position - Communication - Decision-making - Support play 	Players consider options at ruck time.
Unit Skills Multi-man skills	15 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify role, sight target area - Approach ball carrier and first support player with depth, parallel to touchline. 	Utilise a number of players in contact situations to retain possession.
Team Development Moves from penalties and free kicks	20 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Choose 2 or 3 - Communicate clearly - Practice 	Develop team patterns and understand individual roles during moves from penalties and free kicks.
Cool-down Hit and support	5 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review and re-emphasise key coaching points from this session. 	
Closure		Team notices and game arrangements.	

Running

Practice 1

- Primary objectives:
- (1) Counter attack
 - (2) Evasive running
 - (3) Lineouts

Activity	Time	Coaching Points (Focus words)	Learning outcomes (Why we are doing this)
Warm-up Shadow run	15 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Players carry the ball in two hands - Runners keep their heads up and eyes open to avoid running into other players 	To practice quick and evasive movement.
Individual Skills Handling relay	15 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ball in two hands - Run toward defender - Change pace and/or direction of movement - Position ball away from defender - Accelerate into the space 	To improve ball-handling and evasive techniques.
Unit Skills 1. <u>Backs</u> - Developing moves from a lineout 2. <u>Forwards</u> Forward Jumping	15 mins	3. - Communicate - Accurate execution 2. - Drive upward - Eyes on ball - Soft hands	1. To penetrate the opposition's defence from a lineout. 2. Throwing the ball accurately and taking a ball above the head.
Team Development Counter attack Supporting the catcher	20 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communicate with support - Hold defenders - Pass ball to space - Run to support ball carrier 	Use the counter attack options from a kicked ball.
Cool-down Multi-action relay	5 mins	- Review and re-emphasise key coaching points from this session.	
Closure		Team notices and game arrangements.	

Running

Practice 2

Primary objectives: (1) Ball-handling
(2) Lineouts

Activity	Time	Coaching Points (Focus words)	Learning outcomes (Why we are doing this)
Warm-up Multi-action relay	15 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Control - Balance 	To practice a variety of ball skills.
Individual Skills Pick up place	15 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bend knees and present hard parts of body to opposition - Wide, balanced base 	To practice handling the ball on the ground.
Unit Skills 1. <u>Backs</u> - Developing moves from a lineout 2. <u>Forwards</u> Forward Jumping	15 mins	3. - Communicate - Accurate execution 2. - Drive upward - Eyes on ball - Soft hands	1. To penetrate the opposition's defence from a lineout. 2. Throwing the ball accurately and taking a ball above the head.
Team Development Options from lineouts around the field	20 mins	E.G. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Close to opposition line - drive - On own line - to front and drive - Go wide from the rest 	Develop team patterns and understand individual roles during options from lineouts around the field.
Cool-down Shadow run	5 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review and re-emphasise key coaching points from this session. 	
Closure		Team notices and game arrangements.	

Running

Practice 3

Primary objectives: (1) Ball-handling
(2) Scrums

Activity	Time	Coaching Points (Focus words)	Learning outcomes (Why we are doing this)
Warm-up Pick up place	15 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bend knees and present hard parts of body to opposition - Wide, balanced base 	To practice handling the ball on the ground.
Individual Skills Handling relay	15 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ball in two hands. - Run toward defender - Change pace and/or direction of movement - Position ball away from defender - Accelerate into the space 	To improve ball handling and evasive techniques.
Unit Skills 1. <u>Backs</u> Developing moves from a scrum 2. <u>Forwards</u> Scrums <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One on one - Three on three 	15 mins	1. - Communicate - Accurate execution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Feet hips and shoulders are all square - Bend at the knees and hips - Shoulders above hips at all times - Head straight, eyes up, chin off chest - Back straight - spine in line - Eyes focused on the target area 	1. To penetrate the opposition's defence from a scrum. 2. To ensure correct technique for building a scrum.
Team Development Options from scrums around the field	20 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Blindside - Close to line - Midfield 	Develop team patterns and understand individual roles during options from scrums around the field.
Cool-down Shadow run	5 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review and re-emphasise key coaching points from this session. 	
Closure		Team notices and game arrangements.	