

Guideline: Planning a training session

1) Goal-oriented training and structuring of a training session

In this example, the structure of a football training session is presented. The presented content and the different steps can easily be adapted to other sports as well.

Objectives

Participants learn the importance of planning and the basic steps for planning training sessions from preparation and basic structuring to planning the course of the party.

The most important task for a trainer when planning a training session is to adapt the exercises to the ability and (skill) level of the children! You always have to ask yourself the question whether the players are able to perform the intended exercises and games!

Content

Box A shows six systematic planning steps that should be followed while preparing a training session. The following questions about the system are part of the preparation:

- When and where? Depending on the time of year and climate, the size of the training group, the time constraints due to early start in the afternoon: can all be there promptly?
- For which group? The number of players was expected to be 18, but 10 cannot come due to a trip; Is there anything special to do after last week's game? Any mistakes to work on?
- Equipment and necessary equipment? Not only the number of balls and goals, also the cones, the bibs, etc. have to be planned. The best planning with the most motivating exercises is useless if the necessary equipment is not available or is being used by other groups.

BOX A: Preparation of a training session

1. Check the frame conditions
2. Decide on the main points/aspects
3. Design the training lesson
4. Select the exercises and games
5. Decide on training organization
6. Plan training time and breaks

Check the **framing conditions** for the preparation of a training session:

1. Training place / gym

- What space is available? (One complete pitch, one half of a pitch, etc.)

- What is the condition of the soil? Should certain forms of ground training be excluded?
- How many goals are available? (If necessary, plan alternative goals, e.g. matting or portable posts)
- Is there another team training at the same time and on the same pitch? (If necessary, make arrangements with other trainers)
- Where is the best place to organize a shooting practice (e.g. fences)?

2. Training / team group containment fences

- How many players are expected to join the practice?
- Consider alternatives to building playgroups and exercise groups!
- Consider performance differences within the group (e.g. combination of equally strong groups)!

3. Training Material

- Is there a ball for each player?
- In children's football, does the trainer have the appropriate balls available for the different age groups?
- Are there enough marking aids (e.g. cones, posts, and backs) available?
- Especially for the gym, what equipment and what balls are available?

4. Other

- Is an assistant or caretaker available? (If not, this should be considered while training is organized)

Decisions made here are dependent on the particular group. Box B shows different methodical guidelines that are used by the trainer during the training of children's football.

The same applies to basic structure of training sessions (Box C).

In addition, there are specific guidelines for structuring (Box D) and organizing a training session (Box E), using children's football as an example, where the contents and planning time of a training session should be considered.

BOX B: Decide on the main points - Example of children's football

- **Focus on one technical point per training session!**
- **Variation of games and exercises from the same focus!**
- **Change the training of a different technical focus in a certain period of time, not in every training session!**
- **Allow varied movement exercises in each training session!**
- **Children will easily learn the tactical fundamentals during playing small (sided) games! Do not conduct isolated tactical training!**

BOX C: Structure of a training session

1. Initial phase	
- Sensitization	Welcome and warm up Movements to increase agility
- Warming up	Individual work with the ball
2. Main Phase	
Different games and exercises with the same objective	
3. Final Phase	
- Conclusion	Integration of the Main Phase Objective Play football
- Closing and Reflection	Closing Discussion

BOX D: Guidelines for structuring a training session

- **Start the training with a bustle phase which includes games that allow the children to bustle in those phases in which the concentration is low!**
- **Plan breaks to hydrate!**
- **Every form of training should be fun!**
- **Focus on the training of both legs!**
- **Consider space for players (experiment, keep them active with the ball, play creatively)!**
- **Offer short-term training phases!**
- **Football games and especially small-sided games are the clear focus of the training session!**

BOX E: Guidelines for organizing training

- **Make sure there is sufficient contact with the ball!**
- **Ensure there is a ball for each player**
- **Create small groups!**
 - **Frequent repetitions of technical exercises**
 - **Frequent contact with the ball during games**
- **Create possibilities to induce achievements!**
 - **Competitions**
 - **Combine exercises with shots on goal**
 - **Create teams consisting of equal strength!**
- **Avoid long breaks and waiting times!**
- **Only one form of basic training per training session!**
- **Do not forget to always include pauses to cool off in your planning.**

2) Organization of training and behaviour during training

Objectives

Participants learn to organize the basic forms of training themselves according to the given instructions. In this way, they must learn the essential methodical indicators in the organization of the training. Some of these indicators govern the trainer's behaviour.

Content

On a normal training day, specifically for children and youth, organizational problems experienced during training are often caused by:

- Unenforced targets and goals
- Players being often underused
- Especially children and young people quickly losing interest in training

Beginners have difficulty coping with normal problems such as:

- Large groups
- Restricted space (two teams training simultaneously on a pitch)
- Lack of specific goals and training materials
- Handling groups with mixed performance skills with confidence and still being able to organize effective training

The resulting typical organizational problems and typical errors in training are:

1. Playing and exercising:

- Teams that are too large
- Very little contact with the ball per player
- Few goals scored

2. Shots on goal training

- Waiting times too long
- Very few shooting techniques and chances/repetitions
- Very few challenges

The result is often the loss of motivation and concentration.

Another drawback is that with large groups, often all players train together instead of playing and exercising much more efficiently in small groups.

In the working group, participants should develop and organize effective forms of training for three very central areas of children's football:

- Topic 1: Four-on-four game variation
- Topic 2: Effective training of shots on goal
- Topic 3: Training in small groups / small-sided games

3. Organization and procedure

- Exercises through demonstration and imitation. Do not present with long explanations!
- When dealing with children, only correct serious technical defects. Use child-friendly language (terminology)!
- Only give constructive criticism!
- Pay attention to the trainer's position to the group! Make sure to have an overview of all the players!
- Conduct the planned training session flexibly! Change spontaneously depending on the situation!
- Space! Do not regulate everything!