



YMCA of Greater Charlotte

Youth Flag Football Practice Playbook

U-6 Flag Football Division Practice-Play



Welcome to the YMCA of Greater Charlotte,

The YMCA of Greater Charlotte is very excited that you have chosen to be a coach. No single job is more important to the mission and vision of the YMCA than a youth sports coach. YMCA values: of caring, respect, responsibility, honesty, and faith are the foundation to connecting, giving back, nurturing the potential of every child and supporting our neighbors. This foundational impact requires a core of committed youth volunteer coaches who have a desire to see their communities encouraged and players' lives transformed.

The YMCA has put together this resource guide to help you as a coach and to make your job as easy and achievable as possible.

As a coach you have the opportunity to teach, mentor, motivate, encourage, and guide your players as they develop as players and young people with character. Positive role models can help players grow mentally, physically, and emotionally as they promote confidence and positive self-image for athletes. Thank you for your commitment!

The YMCA Sports Philosophy

Everyone Plays.

We do not use tryouts to select the best player, nor do we cut kids from YMCA Youth Sports. Everyone who registers to play is assigned to a team. Remember, we are more interested in developing children's character.



As a coach, you must ensure that all players receive equal playing time and every player plays at least half of every game.

Fair Play.

Fair play is about more than playing by the rules. It's about you, your players and players' parents showing respect for all who are involved in YMCA Youth Sports. It's about you being a role model of good sportsmanship and guiding your players and families to do the same.



As a coach, set the example of good sportsmanship and reward players and parents for showing respect to all involved in YMCA Youth Sports.

Positive Competition.

We believe competition is a positive process when the pursuit of victory is kept in the right perspective. The right perspective means adults make decisions that put the best interests of the children above winning the contest. Learning to compete is important for children and learning to cooperate in a competitive world is an essential lesson in life. Learning to win is just as important as learning to lose.



As a coach, help your players set goals that are not about winning or losing. This way, no matter what the score of the game, your players learn that no matter what the score is, there is value in playing the game.

Family Involvement.

We encourage parents to be involved appropriately along with their child's participation in sports. In addition to parents being helpful as volunteer coaches, officials and timekeepers, we encourage them to be present at practices and games to support their player.



As a coach, give parents responsibilities that will benefit the team –like bringing healthy snacks and water.

Sports for All.

YMCA Youth Sports is an inclusive program, meaning that children who differ in various characteristics, including physical ability, race, gender, religion or ability are included in participation.



As a coach, support and appreciate the diversity of children in your community and encourage your players and parents to do the same



As a coach, emphasize the importance of having fun, reminding parents and players that the benefits of physical activity in childhood are long-lasting.

U-6 Flag Football Program Overview

At the YMCA our goal is to encourage a fun atmosphere of excitement and new experiences. Athletes in our youngest age group will experience a season that will set the foundation for future success by building on skills and confidence

Practice Weeks 1-4 – Focus on Skills Development!

(5 minutes) Fun first!

Teams will spend the first five minutes of practice fostering an environment of cooperation, trust, and fun through interactive games that get the players ready for practice. This playbook will demonstrate one game for each practice.

(30-35 minutes) Learn second!

Teams will transition from a warmup into the practice portion with players. Coaches should take this opportunity to encourage players as they are challenged to develop through different exercises laid out in the curriculum. Players should experience success and challenge as a part of their growth individually. As a coach, keep spirits high while providing instruction.

(5 minutes) Cool down!

Teams will always finish the day with an opportunity for players to play and compete! Be careful to give instruction that teaches the rules of the game and helps them to participate while avoiding any advice related to strategy or tactics. The goal of this time would be that the players enjoy their time while learning the rules of the game. Close up your day with 1-2 short takeaways. These coaching points should teach the game and tie the characterword of the day to a relevant situation each child can remember.

Practice/Play Weeks 5-6 – Put Your Skills to Work!

(5 minutes) Fun first!

Teams will spend the first five minutes of practice fostering an environment of cooperation, trust, and fun through interactive games that get the players ready for practice. This playbook will demonstrate one game for each practice.

(15 minutes) Learn second!

Teams will transition from a warmup into a short practice portion with players. Coaches should take this opportunity to encourage players as they are challenged to develop through different exercises laid out in the curriculum. Players should experience success and challenge as a part of their growth individually. As a coach, keep spirits high while providing instruction.

(25 minutes) Scrimmage!

Its GAME TIME! Players get to put all their work to the test in a scrimmage against another team. The goal of this time would be that the players enjoy their time while learning the rules of the game. Coaches will use the rules of the scrimmage to host a game like experience while continuously coaching and officiating.

Rules of the Scrimmage

Ball: Firm Foam- Peewee

Players Equipment: Cleats are recommended

Team Size: 5 field players (5 v 5) - Minimum of 4 players of team to play

Game Time: two, 10 minute halves (halftime will be 2 minute)

Officials: Coaches as officials

In the spirit of the YMCA, each player is expected to play an equal amount of time during each game and must play in both halves. Unless a team only has 4 or fewer players, NO player can play the entire game.

1. Coach(s) positioning: Coaches will be allowed on the field to help officiate and run the game as well as coach their players.
2. Substitutions and Rotations: Will be made in between quarters or as needed.
3. Start and Re-Start of play:
 - a. if the ball goes out of play, the coach will play a ball back onto the midfield.
4. Goals: Goals may be scored from anywhere on the field except on kick-offs.
5. Off-sides: Off-sides will NOT be called in this age group.
6. No score or standings will be kept.
7. Teams will NOT switch sides at half-time in this age group.
8. Teams and spectators will sit on opposite sides of the field.
9. For the safety of the players, absolutely no jewelry or gum allowed

Game Management	U6
Ball Size	Firm Foam
Field Size	60 x 30 Yards (field size may vary by location)
End Zones	5 Yards
Belts	Triple Threat
Number of Players	5 v 5
Coaching	In huddle and on field
Team Box	Midfield to the 5 yard line
Playing Time	Players play at least half the game
Number of officials	Coaches as Officials
Home/Away	Home is light color, Away is dark color
Score/Time	
Scoring	yes
PAT	yes
1 PAT	5 yard line (pass only)
2 PAT	12 yard line
Safeties*	Yes
Game Time	10 minute halves
Halftime	2 minutes
Play Clock	45 seconds once the ball is spotted
Clock Time (Clock Stoppages)*	Running clock
Time outs	2 per game
Play	
Start	10 yard line
Downs	4 to 1st down; 4 to score
Turnover on downs	Yes
Turnover at spot*	No
Interception return*	Yes; spotted where flag is pulled
Backwards spot*	Yes
Switch field	Yes
Eligible	Any
Laterals	Unlimited
Where can you lateral?	Anywhere
QB Direct Run*	No
QB Time Limit	15 seconds (leave QB hands)
Blocking*	No
Blitzer	No
No Run Zone*	Yes
Catch	1 foot inbounds
Overtime	No

FIRST PRACTICE WITH ENCOURAGEMENT

COACHING POINTS:

First practice is always a little tough.

- Remember that the players don't know each other so try to make them at ease and have fun
- Learn everyone's names as quickly as possible
- **Encourage players to try their best and make new friends!**

Encouragement is saying or doing things that build others up.

Opening Circle

Take a few minutes to welcome your players to practice. Be sure to do the following:

- Thought for the day
- Goal for today's practice – what skills will we be working on
- Overview of the flow of today's practice

Warm-up and Stretch

Spend at least 5 minutes exercising to raise your players' heart rates and warm their muscles. Warm-up can be anything from a quick game of tag to running a few laps to conditioning exercises. Never skip the warm-up and stretch section of practice!

Individual Skill Drills

This is a time for players to work on a skill and develop it as an individual player. You will find individual skill drills to incorporate into your practices in the next section. Allow your players adequate time in learning any new skill before asking them to apply it as a team.

Team Skill Games

This is the time for your team to come together and develop their skills as a functioning group of players. The team skill drills should build on the individual skill drills, providing natural progression from individually mastering a new skill to applying it as a team. You will find team skill drills to incorporate into your practices in the next section.

Scrimmage

There is no better way to prepare for a game and to apply the skills learned throughout practice than to put them to action in a game-type situation. Always include a scrimmage in every practice – it gives your players a chance to develop their teamwork and will enhance their comfort in game situations.

Closing Huddle

Take just a few minutes at the end of practice to review the skills you worked on and evaluate the goals set at the beginning of practice. Encourage your players to continue to practice throughout the week with their friends and parents. Review all the necessary information for the upcoming game including:

- Location/ What time to arrive/ Who is bringing the snack

Practice #1 Individual Skill Drills

COACHING POINTS:

Running with the ball.

- Keep ball tucked
- Keep your head up
- Encourage kids when they excel and when they struggle!

Determination is the inner drive we use to reach our goals.

APPLICATION: APPLYING "Running" WITH DETERMINATION" TO LIFE

What to look for:

Look for players in your drill who are having trouble getting the concepts. You can also observe how kids handle losing in the scrimmage; notice the way they respond to this adversity. Are they showing determination?

What to say:

"Everyone messes up. Everyone falls short. The determined person is different because they get back up and try again! Remember this as you dribble today. Be determined to be the best you can be!"

What to take away:

Help your team understand that challenging situations are everywhere. At home, at school and on the field there are opportunities to show determination all around you. Ex. "Determination helps you reach your goals. Use this week to be determined on and off the field!"

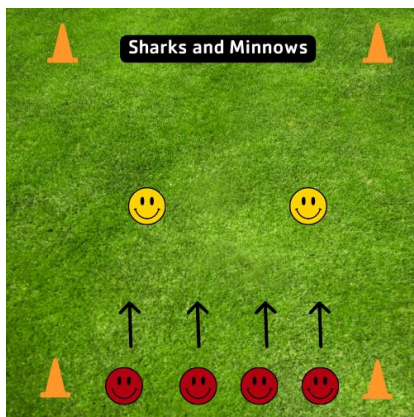
WARM UPS

Tails

- Field large enough for the players to run Around
- Players try to grab each other's flags
- Once flag is pulled, the puller sets the flag on the ground and the flagless player kneels or sits on the ground
- Players who are sitting can't move around but can still grab flags
- Play continues until only one player is standing or coach decides to start over

Sharks and Minnows

- Choose two players to be sharks and the rest will be minnows
- All the minnows start on one side of the field and the sharks start in the middle. On the coach's signal, the minnows attempt to run past the sharks and to the other side of the field while sharks try and steal their flags.
- When a minnow's flag has been grabbed,
- Last minnow with flags wins



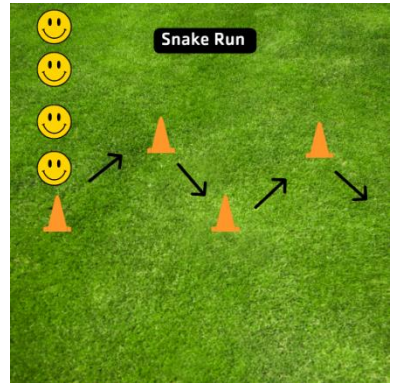
Running

Introduce Running – Key Points

- Tuck the ball in
- Keep your hips low
- Stay on your toes

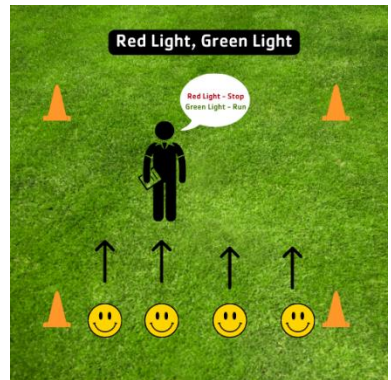
Snake Run

- Footballs and Cones
 - Set up cones that zig-zag
 - Player receives a hand-off from a coach and then runs to each cone.
 - Runner proceeds to run to the next cones
- Until done
- Everyone rotates closer to the first cone



Red Light, Green Light

- Footballs and Cones
- Each player lines up on one end of the field while the coach stands on the opposite end
- Players run from one end of the field to the other
- When coach calls green light, players run. When coach calls red light, players must freeze.



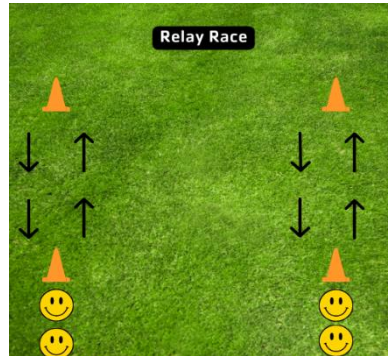
In A Mirror

- Have kids line up in rows
- As the coach, have the players copy you as you do different skills
- Example, running on toes, side to side, star jumps



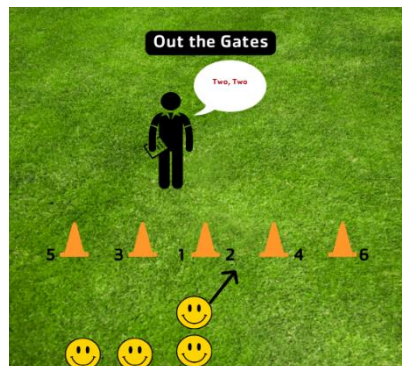
Relay Race

- Cones and football
- Set up rows with a start cone and another cone 10 yards away
- On the coach's signal, first person in each line runs to the cone and back, handing the ball off to the next person as they go.
- First team to have everyone finish wins



Out the Gates

- Set up running lanes by setting cones in a grid
- Tell the kids the name of gaps you created
- Drill is designed for them to switch how they are running quickly and the mental aspect of remembering a play call.



Practice #2 Passing WITH TEAMWORK

COACHING POINTS:

Passing Key Points

- Hold the ball toward the back
- Step towards your target
- Follow through when you throw

Teamwork is the ability to work together towards a

APPLICATION: APPLYING "PASSING WITH TEAMWORK" TO LIFE

What to look for:

Try to find a player who chooses to use teamwork instead of doing it on their own.

What to say:

"It can be tempting to do everything by yourself in football. Sometimes you may think you can score 1, 2, or even 3 touchdowns just by running and not thinking of teammates. However, if you make a habit of working with your teammates, everyone is a part of helping the ball move faster and greater things are accomplished. The best football teams in the world are the ones that have the best teamwork!"

What to take away:

Teamwork is coming alongside teammates to accomplish something greater than you could do as individuals. Using teamwork divides the task and multiplies your success. Ex. "We cannot do everything ourselves. We need each other. Even at home, we can contribute our gifts and talents to our families to do chores or help with our brothers and sisters. When we all are included, everyone benefits!"

TEAMWORK DIVIDES THE TASK AND MULTIPLIES THE SUCCESS.

Passing

Partner Passing

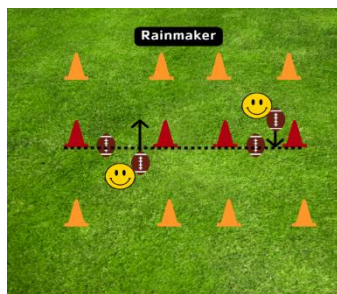
- Have kids pair up and stand 5 yards apart
- Throw the ball back and forth
- Try to make it so their partner doesn't move
- Encourage them to keep track of how many

Passes they make



Rainmaker

- Make a line out of cones for the middle
- Set up two squares on each side as goals
- Have two players go at a time. They will
Run to the pile on their side and start
aiming
for the goals across the line



Clean Up the Yard

- Make a line down the middle and a throwing line on either side
- Approximately five yards from the middle.
- Divide the group into two or have teams compete against each other
- Point of the game is to end up with more footballs on the opposite side.
- When the whistle blows, players can pick up balls and drop back to their throwing line. Idea is to keep picking up balls, dropping back and getting rid of the balls quickly.

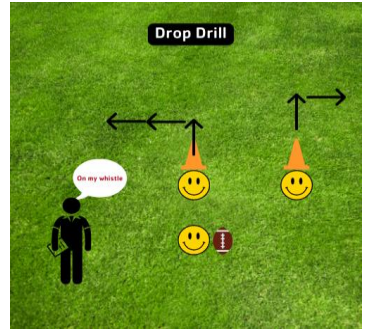
Throwing For Distance

- Set up a line of cones. Have each player stand on the line with a football
- On the coach's command, each player will throw the ball as far as they can
- As they throw, coach can stand on the farthest throw



Drop Drill

- Split into groups of three players each and assign each player a position: Center, qb and receiver.
- Give them each a football
- On the coach's signal, the center hikes the ball to the QB. QB will drop back 3 steps and throws to the receiver.
- Players rotate positions after each rep



Practice #3 Catching WITH CONFIDENCE

COACHING POINTS:

Catching

- Make a diamond for high throws
- Make rakes for low throws
- Squeeze, then tuck

Confidence is believing you can do something.

APPLICATION:

What to look for:

Look for a player who is not afraid to try something new.

What to say:

"When we believe we can do something and give our best effort, we are able to accomplish great things. Even when we fail, we can learn and try again. Don't give up or be afraid to try something new. Be confident that your best is good enough. You never know what you are capable of!"

What to take away:

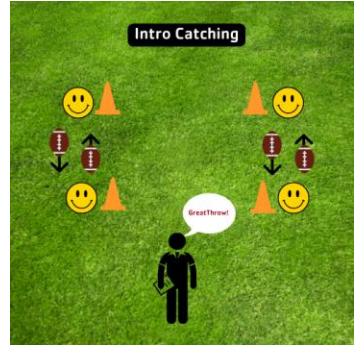
Confidence comes from the successes you experience from doing your best. Ex. "When you are confident, you believe you can do something. When you have this positive attitude, great things can happen. Don't doubt your natural abilities. Always try your best and don't be afraid to try something new."

"Confidence comes not from always being right,
but not fearing to be wrong."

Catching

Intro Catching

- Have kids pair up and stand 5 yards apart
- Throw the ball back and forth
- Try to make it so their partner doesn't have to move
- Encourage them to keep track of how many passes they make
-



Rapid Catch

- Create a semi-circle around a single player about five yards away
- On the coach's signal, have the first player throw it to the player in the middle. When they catch the ball, they should secure it, drop it and get ready for the next throw
- Throwers wait for the coach to throw

Yards after Catch

- Have players stand five yards apart while they pass the ball back and forth
- When the signal is given, player has to catch the ball and take off running
- Player who does not have the ball has to chase down and pull flags of the player who caught it



Ladder Relay

- Set up 12 cones in a zig zag style 5 yards apart
- The Player on the right starts with the ball. On the coach's signal the player on the left side runs to the first cone and catches a pass from the player on the right
- After they throw the ball, the player on the right they runs towards the next cone on their side and asks for the pass back



Touchdown City

- Divide players into teams of three. Set up routes you want them to run on either side of the QB
- One player will be the QB and the other two will be the WR's. One WR goes at a time.
- Team that scores five touchdowns first wins
- To score a TD, the player must run and hand their football to a coach



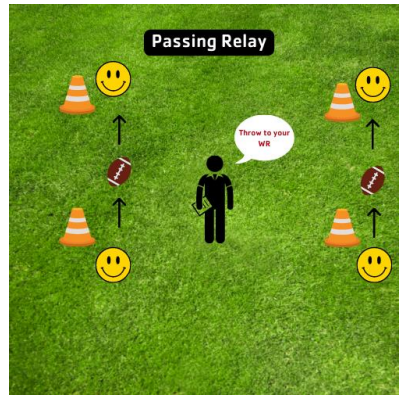
Clap Catch

- The coach stands in the middle with the players in a semi-circle around him
- Coach starts making a pass to random players. The player must clap their hands before catching the ball
- If there is no clap or if the player drops the pass, the player sits down.
- If the coach fakes a pass and the player claps, they must also sit down



Passing Relay

- Make two lines of cones 10 – 20 yards apart
- Split players into multiple teams
- Put half of each team behind the QB line and the other half behind the WR line. Give one ball to each QB group
- On the coach's signal, the first QB's throw to their receivers. If the receiver catches the ball behind the WR line, they throw it back to the QB line.
- If the WR does not catch the ball, his QB needs to keep passing to the player until a catch is made.



Practice #4 Defense WITH SELF-DISCIPLINE

COACHING POINTS:

Defense

- Don't cross your legs
- Watch the hips of your opponent
- Stay on your toes

Self-Discipline is the ability to practice and train to

Sidewinder

- Place cones five yards apart and have a player stand between the cones
 - Have the players move laterally between the cones and the coach's signal
 - Players will quickly move back and forth to tag either cone
-

Do the Opposite

- Have kids form a semi-circle around a coach
- Have the coach throw the ball to the kids. As the ball is in the air, have the coach call out "Catch or Bat".
- If they do the wrong thing, they are out
- 3rd progression, 1 ball for group, B turns and passes ball to opposite player



Bat It Down

- Have kids form a semi-circle around a coach
- Have the coach throw the ball above the players heads or to the side of them.
- Have them work on batting the ball down instead of catching the ball



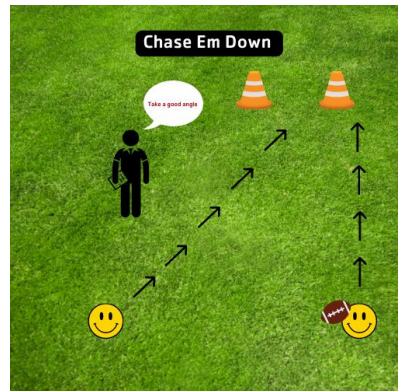
Box Drill

- Set up a few stations of four sets of cones in a square with each cone five yards apart.
 - Have players partner up
 - One player starts with the football on offense while their partner is on defense
 - The defender has 15 seconds to pull the offensive player's flag. Offensive player must stay in bounds
- Have the players switch roles when flag is pulled



Chase Em Down

- Create a sideline 15-20 yards long
- Place two cones at the end for a goal line
- On the coach's signal, the offensive player runs with the ball while the defender attempts to pull his flag shortly before the runner reaches the goal line.
- Offense should run straight and not attempt to avoid the defender.
- The point is to teach the defender to take good angles and to pull the flag on the run



APPLICATION: APPLYING "RECEIVING WITH SELF-DISCIPLINE" TO LIFE

What to look for:

Try to find the player on your team who chooses to do the right thing, instead of the easy thing. An example of this could be a player who consistently uses their laces instead of their toe to shoot or uses the inside of the foot to pass instead of just poking at it with the outside of their foot.

What to say:

"Let's try to do things in the drills and games today with good technique. Even if it is easier to use bad technique let's be self-disciplined and do the right things, the right way!"

What to take away:

Self-discipline is choosing to do the right thing instead of taking the easy way out. The easy thing may take less effort in the short term but it usually results in having to do more work in the long term. Ex. "Should you choose to study or cheat? Clean your room or just shove everything under your bed? These are examples of having to choose between doing things the right way, or the easy way."

"Discipline is the bridge between goals and accomplishment."

BRIDGE THE GAP



Practice #5 Game Time Practice & Scrimmage

COACHING POINTS:

- Put your team's practice to the test
- Use all of your work to engage in competition with another team
- Challenge players to try different positions

Self-Discipline is the ability to practice and train to reach our goals.

- Run some of your favorite team drills from the season to warm up for the game!
- Divide the teams up evenly and have them play against each other while you referee/coach
- Remember, the emphasis of this practice is to be determined in dribbling and to never give up even if the ball is taken away

SCRIMMAGE



Practice #6 Game Time Practice & Scrimmage

COACHING POINTS:

- Put your team's practice to the test
- Use all of your work to engage in competition with another team
- Challenge players to try different positions

Self-Discipline is the ability to practice and train to reach our goals.

- Run some of your favorite team drills from the season to warm up for the game!
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SCRIMMAGE



Create Your Own WITH CHARACTER TRAITS

PRACTICE SCHEDULE

COACHING POINTS:

Session: _____

Definition: _____

Character Trait: _____

Definition: _____

_____ min

_____ min

_____ min

_____ min

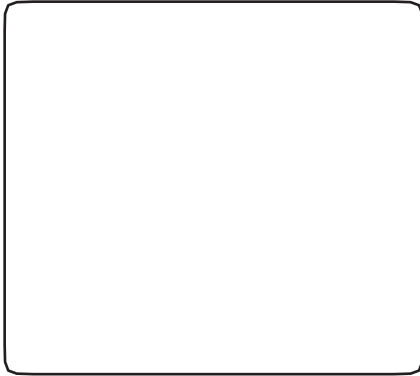
WARM UP



MAIN SKILL



IF TIME...



APPLICATION: APPLYING MAIN SKILL TO LIFE AND FULL-SIDED GAME

Situations in games to use this skill:

Situations in life to use this skill:



OUR MISSION IS TO PUT CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLES INTO PRACTICE THROUGH
PROGRAMS THAT BUILD HEALTHY SPIRIT, MIND AND BODY FOR ALL.