

# SECTION 06

PRACTICE PLANNING



06



**CANADA**  
BASKETBALL



## 6.0 PRACTICE PLANNING

Planning is one of the most important areas with which beginning coaches must become familiar. By planning practices and games to meet the needs of the players, coaches can take a significant step in developing their athletes through the athlete development pyramid more effectively.

A full age-appropriate lesson plan (12 sessions) for the two stages of LTAD in SNYB (FUNdamental & Learn to Train) has been designed to assist you in running weekly sessions. The plans have been designed as a resource for you, the coach. You can use the plans verbatim, as a rough guide, or even not at all. The extent to which you choose to use the plans will depend on your basketball coaching experience and your level of comfort in teaching children.

Although the full curriculum contains 12 sessions, you may not choose to run all sessions. If so, choose the lessons you wish to use and save the others for another season. Another option is to combine some of the plans, or create your own plan based on the activities that you feel are most effective.

We encourage you to be creative. If you have other activities you enjoy teaching, please incorporate and use them. A successful coach allows their own personality, vitality and leadership to motivate and create a positive and rewarding environment.

The suggested time allotted for each session is as follows;

- FUNdamendals (ages 5-8) 75 min.
- Learn to Train (9-12) 90 min.

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### **6.1 – PRACTICE PLAN MAKE-UP**

Each of the practice plans have been designed and divided into the following sections:

#### **Getting Started**

The initial portion of the lesson plan covers the time before the players arrive at the gym, the first few minutes after the players arrive at the gym and a warm-up activity.

#### **Teaching Progression**

The heart of each practice plan is the teaching progression. During this portion of the plan the head coach will introduce the skill of the day, the players will practice the skill and the group will divide up to take part in activities to practice the day's skill.

#### **Cooperative Play and Games**

This time has been set aside to play games. This time has been designed to allow the player's to have fun, while making use of the skills they have been taught.

#### **Debrief and Cool Down**

This time is used to reflect on the training session while going through a series of stretches and movements designed to increase flexibility and aid in the recovery of the participants. The reflection portion is aimed at reviewing the teaching points and skills of the day's session. It can also be used to gain feedback on what participants liked and disliked about the session.

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## **6.2 – STEPS IN PREPARING TO RUN A SUCCESSFUL SESSION**

If you are a beginning or novice coach, we strongly recommend that you follow the practice plans carefully. Following the practice plans carefully will require some advance preparation. The list will prepare you to run a successful session:

- Review the upcoming **Practice Plan** prior to the session.
- Become comfortable with how to set up and run each activity (visualize).
- Maximize activity time and minimize waiting time - make use of gym space.
- Review the skill and rule of the session.
- Consult the **Skill Description** to review how to teach the skill – be sure to provide simple, clear and precise instructions. Keep them brief.
- Review **Teaching Techniques & Teaching Tips** sections of the handbook.
- Familiarize yourself with the teaching formations and choose one you like.
- Practice the skill and rule at home to be sure you are comfortable teaching both.
- Arrive at the facility 15 minutes early to conduct a safety check (**Facility Safety Checklist**) and discuss the role each coach will play during the session.
- Bring a copy of the **Practice Plan** to the gym.
- Designate a head coach who will introduce the skill and rule.
- Run the session according to the schedule in the **Practice Plan**.

When running a session you should be aware of both the needs of the group and of the individuals.

No time has been allocated for water or bathroom breaks, but children will require them throughout each session. If you sense the children need a short break to drink water or go to the bathroom, allow time at the end of an activity.

### **Skill of the Day**

- A skill of the day should be taught in each practice session.
- This skill should be the emphasis of the practice session.
- Then teaching a skill, allow yourself 4-6 minutes of lecture time. The remainder of the time should be spent breaking down the skill with your athletes and practicing the skill.
- Each skill should be worked on using 3 to 4 drills or variations of loading or modifying a particular drill to increase the challenge for the athletes.
- Be sure to change drills to suit the skill level of your players.

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## **6.3 – STEPS IN RUNNING AN ACTIVITY**

Within each Practice Plan are a number of activities that are designed to help teach basketball skills and help the players have fun. The following list of steps will prepare you to run a successful activity:

- Have a thorough understanding of the skill you will teach and the activity you will use.
- Decide how you will teach the skill/activity (teaching formation, teaching points, cue words, length of time).
- Call the players into a small area and put them in a teaching formation.
- Talk slowly and clearly project your voice so that everyone can hear and understand.
- Keep instructions short and concise.
- Repeat instructions and key words.
- Briefly explain the skill using language the players can understand (keep it simple).
- Use a player to demonstrate the skill.
- Answer any questions about the skill the players might have.
- Briefly explain how the activity works and the player rotation.
- Divide the players into small groups to perform the activity.
- Assign a coach to each group.
- Begin the activity.
- Walk through the activity and give positive and corrective feedback to the players.
- Be enthusiastic and reward great efforts.
- Evaluate the activity for future reference.



## **6.4 – ORDER OF ACTIVITIES IN THE TEACHING PROGRESSION**

Practices often feature several activities aimed at developing a variety of abilities. Paying attention to the order in which activities take place in the teaching progression part of the practice may increase the probability of achieving the desired goal. Here are a few general guidelines about the optimal order of activities.

### **Early in the Teaching Progression . . .**

Participants are not tired, so try to plan for:

- Activities to acquire **new** techniques, skills, or motor patterns.
- Activities that develop or require coordination or balance.
- Activities that develop or require speed.

### **Then consider . . .**

- Activities to develop or require speed-endurance.
- Activities that develop or require strength.
- Activities that develop or require strength-endurance.

### **Later in the Teaching Progression . . .**

Athletes may be tired, so try to plan for:

- Activities to consolidate skills already acquired.
  - Activities that develop or require aerobic endurance.
  - Activities to develop flexibility.
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## 6.5 – PRACTICE PLAN TEMPLATE

The following is a sample lesson plan that contains all of the recommended components with appropriate time allocation.

PRACTICE SECTION	TIME	KEY ELEMENTS
<p><b><u>GETTING STARTED</u></b></p> <p><b>INTRODUCTION</b> – Greet participants and let them know what will be taking place.</p> <p><b>WARM-UP</b> – Prepare the body for the efforts of the training session.</p>	<p>VARIABLE</p> <p>2-3 MIN</p> <p>5-12 MIN</p>	<p><b>Before Practice Begins:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inspect facilities/ Organize equipment/ Greet athletes</li> </ul> <p><b>At beginning of practice:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review goals of practice and activities planned</li> </ul> <p><b>Warm-up:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exercises or games to loosen muscles and raise body temp</li> <li>Progressive dynamic stretching</li> <li>Gradual increase in intensity that will not tire participants</li> <li>Quick transition between end of warm-up, the explanations / instructions given for the first activities and the activities themselves.</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>TEACHING PROGRESSION</u></b></p> <p>Prepare activities that will help participants improve sport-specific abilities and fitness.</p>	<p>VARIABLE</p> <p>30-60 MIN</p>	<p><b>Three or more activities linked in the proper order:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Activities that challenge participants so that they can learn and improve while enjoying themselves</li> <li>Participants involved in an activity most of the time (i.e. not standing around and waiting in line)</li> <li>Participants allowed lots of practice for each activity</li> <li>Activities that are appropriate for the age, fitness, and ability levels of the participants and are relevant to the sport.</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>GAMES</u></b></p> <p>Allow players to have fun, while making use of the skills they have been taught.</p>	<p>VARIABLE</p> <p>20-40 MIN</p>	<p><b>Cooperative Play and Games</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Modified games that promote and encourage skill development through fun, mini, modified games.</li> <li>See Rules for age-appropriate games.</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>DEBRIEF &amp; COOLDOWN</u></b></p> <p>Begin recovery, debrief participants and tell them about the next session.</p>	<p>VARIABLE</p> <p>5-12 MIN</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gradual decrease in intensity</li> <li>Stretching, especially of muscles most used</li> <li>Provide and ask for feedback on what went well and what can be improved.</li> <li>Inform participants about next session (i.e. logistics, goals etc.)</li> <li>Team cheer</li> <li>Speak with participants before they leave.</li> </ul>