



MT. DIABLO REGION YMCA

We build strong kids, strong families, strong communities.



San Ramon Valley YMCA Basketball League Coaches' Guide

Why the Y?

We believe all children should be able to participate in sports.

*We believe that playing and learning the skills of the game are more important than winning.
With maturity, children will learn the importance of competition, and as they grow and develop,
they will have the opportunity to expand their competitive skills.*

Every player in our league is a WINNER!

YOUTH SUPER SPORTS™

YMCA Youth Super Sports is the YMCA's new progressive youth sports program that combines the marvelous philosophy of past YMCA youth sports programs with new program concepts.

Each practice session contains a team circle related to character and asset development that focuses on one of the four values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. Through the games approach, the kids learn the sport by participating in a number of mini-games at each of their practice sessions. This helps them to develop their skills quicker and have a lot more fun.

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YMCA Basketball General Game Rules

1. Game time will consist of four running quarters, 6-8 minutes long, depending on grade. There will be one two-minute halftime and one minute breaks between quarters.
2. Each team is allowed one time out per quarter (running clock still applies).
3. Violations such as traveling and double dribbling will be explained to the players by the referee as well by the coaches. Such violations will not result in a turnover (Exception: Turnovers may begin to be called in the Winners division as the season progresses, to the referee's discretion)
4. Players may substitute in at quarter breaks, during time outs, or as needed.
5. No full-court press will be allowed; players will be allowed to advance the ball to mid-court.
6. When the ball is being in-bounded, the defensive player must be three feet back from the player putting the ball in play.
7. The game will start with one team taking the ball in bounds. Possession will alternate for the other three quarters. (Jump balls may be introduced at the coaches' discretion)
8. Zone defense will be played; double-teaming is not allowed. (Man-to-man may be introduced in the Winners divisions to the coaches' discretion. Coaches should discuss this with the coach from the other team before the game, so it is agreed upon.)
9. Any time the whistle blows, the play will be dead. The referee (instructor) should be handed the ball at that time.
10. On defense all players should have their hands up and a whistle can be blown if a player disrupts forward motion from the other team.
11. The referee can stop play at any time to give instructions to all players.

Try these youth drills for both shooting and skills development:

Form Shooting - Good shooting habits are the most important thing for young players to learn because so many kids have bad shooting form and it's the most difficult thing to fix when they get older.

Jump Stops - This is a critical drill for all youth players. It improves balance, footwork, reduces travels, and improves confidence.

Basic lay up drill (with left and right hand) - For the standard lay up drill, simply form two lines on each side of the basket about 20 feet back. One line rebounds, the other drives in with the ball and shoots. The rebounder passes to the next person in the shooting line and goes to the end of the shooting line. The shooter goes to the end of the rebounding line. After a few minutes, stop the drill and put the ball on the other side for left hand lay ups. Left hand lay ups will be nearly impossible for youngsters who have not tried them. But this is a critical skill to learn. It will take time and is a must by middle school. Be sure to show your players the correct form -- they should jump off the left leg when shooting a right hand lay up. And shoot off their right leg when shooting a left hand lay up. It will be difficult but work on it. They should also dribble with their left hand when shooting left hand lay ups.

Cone or Chair Dribbling - Simply set up some cones or chairs about 10 feet apart. Instruct your players to weave in and out of the cones, changing directions each time they reach a cone. They can start with a basic cross over, switching hands when they reach each cone. Then you can progress to spin moves and behind the back. This is a really simple yet fun drill that helps young players improve their dribbling skills.

Basic partner passing - Have your players partner up, each group should have a ball. Have them pass back and forth, starting with chest passes, progressing to bounce and over head passes. Make sure they are making accurate passes and using proper form. As a variation, you can have them run up and down the court passing back and forth.

Triple threat drills - Simply form two lines around the 3 point arc. One line is for passing line and the other is for catching, pivoting, and driving to the basket. Once the receiver catches the pass, they should pivot with their knees bent facing the basket. Require them to pause in a triple threat position. They should be ready to pass, shoot, or drive. Knees should be bent and feet square to the basket. Once you say go, they should drive to the basket.

Basic defensive slides - This is the first defensive concept youngsters should learn. They are a variety of sliding drills you can use. You can try the zig zag drill or some of the sliding drills listed below. Just be sure to focus on proper form (wide base, butt down, knees bent, arms extended to the side, etc).

TEACHING TECHNIQUES

Dribbling: “Eyes up, head up, use the fingertips, ONE hand, waist high bounce, slow pace.”

Sample drills:

- a. Dribble around the court, stay on the line.
- b. Dribble around cones.
- c. Stop and Go – players line up on end line and on command start dribbling, and on command, stop. (good for keeping the ball close to them)

“Once you stop dribbling, you must STOP your feet. NO RUNNING with the ball. Once you stop, you must pass or shoot.”

For 2nd Grade and up: “King of the Key” A fun drill is to put 5-6 players into the key, each with a ball. Using the key lines as boundaries, the object is for everyone to have a ball and keep it dribbling, while also trying to slap away/steal the ball of the opposing players. When a ball goes across the line, the player is eliminated. Last one with possession of their ball in the key is the winner.

Passing: “Step with the foot, with power and control”

- a. Bounce Pass
- b. Chest Pass

Have players pair up and line up across from each other, practicing these passes. Combine skills by setting two lines at each end of court. Dribble across and pass to the player in the front of the line at the other end and repeat.

Shooting: “Bend the knees, elbow in, hand in basket.*”

“**Hand in the basket**” is a great technique for the Pee Wee and Rookie level players. Using a marker, draw an arrow on the top of their shooting hand, pointing to their fingers. The point is for players to visualize their hand dipping into the basket and to use this motion when they shoot.

Defensive Stance: “Bend down, butt out, stay low, hands up and out in front, feet shoulder length apart.”

The Shuffle: With players in the above position, have the players face you and you use your hand to guide them left, right, forward and backwards, shuffling their feet in the proper direction while maintaining the defensive stance.

TEAM HUDDLES

These brief values-based, character-development activities are for all ages, and are designed to help teach the YMCA's four core values of Caring, Honesty, Respect and Responsibility.

Coaches: We encourage you to try one of these activities, or a variation there-of, each week for about 5 minutes during your practice time. These will not only help the children learn more about themselves and but will allow you and the other team mates to know more about each other.

Please take a moment to read through all of these before the season, since many incorporate good ideas that can be emphasized in some way at each and every practice.

Activity 1: Introduction to the Four Values

Description:

1. Ask the players to sit in a circle. Ask the players to describe a good athlete. They can use words, like "fast", or a phrase, "like know the rules." Try to get every player and every coach to give at least one response. After many responses say, "That would certainly describe a good athlete. You could call those things "qualities" of a good athlete. We could also think of qualities of a good person. This season, we want to emphasize four of those qualities: caring, honesty, respect and responsibility. I think those four are also qualities of a good athlete and somebody I would like to have on my team, don't you?"

2. Say, "You should notice most of the things we said about a good athlete are the things everyone can improve on. We can all get faster with practice and learn more about the rules. We'll work on these during practice. The same is true of the four qualities of a good person. We can all be more caring, honest, respectful and responsible. Each week we will spend some time talking about these qualities and how they can help us be better athletes, team members, and people."

Activity 2: Our Goals and Expectations (Do on first or second practice)

Description: Have the players sit in a circle. Tell them you would like to talk about some of the things they have thought about before the start of the season. Tell them you will read several incomplete sentences and give each of them a chance to complete each one. After each child has had a chance to complete the first sentence, move on to the second sentence.

- a. When I found out that I was going to be on this team, I felt...
- b. My family told me playing this sport was going to be...
- c. Before I came today, I was feeling...
- d. One way I think I can help this team is...
- e. Something I like about this sport is...
- f. One thing I think we should do as a team is...
- g. Two things I will do to be sure I am ready for the game is...
- h. You can count on me to...

Activity 3: Talking Ball

Description: Ask the team to sit in a circle. Toss the ball to one of the players. Only the player holding the ball may speak. If it is the first practice session, ask the players to give their names, number of people in their families, number of pets, etc. to help players get acquainted with each other. At future practices and games, ask players how they felt about the game, or something they did during the week to demonstrate caring, honesty, respect and responsibility. Point out that the other players can show respect by keeping quiet while the person with the ball is speaking.

Activity 4: Practice makes Perfect

Description:

1. Give each player a chart to log the number of times they practice their skills at home. At each practice, check the charts to see how often the players practiced the various skills on their own.

2. Discuss the importance of being honest in completing their charts because they will only get better by practicing and repeating the skills. Talk about how it will affect the team if the players are not honest about what they record on their sheets.

Activity 5: Respect for Teammates

Description:

1. Point out that on a team, it is important that all players respect their teammates, because they are not a team without every one of them. Divide the team into two equal groups. If one group has one more member than the other, you should participate.

2. Tell the groups you want them to line up in a single file line as fast possible in the order you tell them. They can race to see which group can line up the fastest.

3. Say, "I want you to line up from shortest to tallest." After both groups have done that, check the winner and congratulate BOTH groups. Say, "Now line up by Birthday month, with January in the front and December in the back. Next by biggest foot to smallest. Now think about what letter you name starts with and line up alphabetically from A to Z. Ok, now everybody have a seat back in the circle."

4. Ask, "Now in that game, who were the most important players: the short ones or the tall ones?" (They were all equally important on the team) "The same is true for when you were born, how big your foot is, or what your name is. The fact is that every person is important on a team and worthy of respect."

5. Say, "Some players on this team may be faster, some taller and some better at scoring, but we need every one of you to be a team! I want all of you to respect all of your teammates and what they have to offer. That is what will make us successful as a team."

Activity 6: Cheer for the Other Team

Description:

1. Discuss with your players the idea of "cooperation" versus "competition". Point out that the other team makes the game possible. Ask the players to brainstorm ways in which they might show respect to the other team. (Examples: saying positive comments to other players, like 'good play' or 'nice shot', congratulating them for outstanding plays, and shaking hands at the conclusion of the game.)

2. Encourage the players to implement these ideas during the game, and to show the other team the same respect that they show their own teammates.

Activity 7: Random Acts of Kindness

Description:

1. Tell the players that one way to demonstrate caring is to do kind things for other people. Ask the players to brainstorm ideas of things they can do to be kind to other members of their families. (Example: mow the lawn, cook dinner or wash dishes, help sister or brothers with their homework, clean their rooms, etc.)
2. Encourage each player to do one kind act for each member of their family during the next week and bring a note verifying these things were done. At next week's practice or game, ask the players to tell about their acts of kindness.

Activity 8: Thanks Officials! Thanks Mom and Dad! Thanks Coach!

Description:

1. Say, "Today, we are going to discuss respect. To respect someone means that you think that he or she is a good person and does important things. You look up to the people you respect and one way to show respect is to thank them and show that you are grateful for what they do..
2. Talk about the importance of respecting the officials and their parents. Ask them to think of ways they could show appreciation to them. Following each game, have each of the players shake the official's hands and thank them for officiating the game. Ask the players to thank their parents for bringing them to the game, and for supporting them and cheering for them during the game!
3. Make sure the player's appreciate you too Coach! This is usually best done by another parent who may step in and acknowledge your commitment. Whether this happens or not by the end of the season, the YMCA is grateful for your time, your commitment, and your involvement with the YMCA! The players you coach are being taught much more than the rules of the sport. Thanks to you, they are learning and developing the qualities that make them great people!