

YMCA

of Middle Tennessee

We build strong **kids**, strong **families**,
strong **communities**.

Brentwood Family Center

COACHING

YOUTH SOCCER



Under 7
&
Under 8

Our Mission

*A worldwide charitable fellowship united by a common loyalty to Jesus Christ
for the purpose of helping persons grow in spirit, mind and body.*

Under 7 & 8 Youth Soccer

Dear Coach,

The Soccer Coach Education Committee wishes to thank you for your time and effort this upcoming season. We would like to provide you with the following information that we believe will be helpful.

- 10 ideas appropriate to all age groups
- Specific suggestions and practice outlines for your age group
- A list of valuable books and video tapes appropriate for each age group
- Information on obtaining State Coach Certification
- Schedule of when local High School and College games are played in our area
- Information on available soccer publications

In addition, we hope to provide the opportunity for those interested to attend an introductory parent/coach clinic sponsored by the Tennessee Youth Soccer Association.

Remember:

- Have each player bring a #3 soccer ball to each practice
- Most parents stay at practice with this age group. Ask for help, few will refuse!!

Keep the “FUN” rolling



TEN IDEAS WHICH ARE APPROPRIATE FOR ALL AGE GROUPS

PLEASE:

1. Be Prepared – Arrive at practice before your team and know what you are going to do before you get there. To coach, you must be a teacher, and like a teacher, you will need a plan.
2. If your players aren't able to perform a specific drill, STOP. Start again and if necessary, take a step back. Be adaptable – use balloons to teach ball juggling skills. Have enough activities in your lesson plan to change often, and if something doesn't work that day, change to another activity.
3. Keep your players active – Remember the younger the child, the shorter the attention span. To eliminate waiting in line, divide your team into small groups when performing drills.
4. Every player should spend as much time as possible in contact with the ball during practice. Acquiring a feel for the ball is crucial for developing good soccer skills. Each player should bring a ball to practice and be encouraged to practice at home.
5. Ask you player's parents to help. Just remember to provide them with guidance on how they can assist you.
6. Be Positive – Recognize each child for their achievements and for any improvements that they make. Please don't be critical of children playing soccer. It's a game and it should be FUN!
7. Let your players know what kind of behavior is expected.
8. Be Fair – Regarding playing time. Remember the youth coaches golden rule – “Do unto all children as you would have done unto your own child.”
9. Let them Play – However, instead of always scrimmaging another team or dividing your team into 2 groups, try 3 v 3 in a smaller area. This will allow increased opportunity for each player to touch the ball and increase skill development.
10. Winning and losing – Your success as a coach should not be measured by your record at the end of the season, but by the enjoyment that your players receive and by the amount that they improve as individuals and as a team.

Keep the “FUN” rolling



UNDER 7 & 8 SOCCER IN A NUTSHELL

Please refer to the League Rules for more detailed explanation of specific rules

12 players on a team (2) 4 v 4 games
(4 including the goalie).

The goalie will be identified by a vest.

All free kicks are indirect.

There are no penalty kicks.

Tripping, pushing, handling the ball or kicking an opponent are fouls and are penalized by a free kick.

A goal cannot be scored directly on an indirect kick (i.e. another player has to touch the ball first).

The ball must be touched by another player (on either team) before the player taking the kick/throw-in is allowed to touch the ball again. This applies to:

- Goal Kicks
- Corner Kicks
- Kick-offs
- Indirect Kicks
- Throw-ins

When the ball is kicked past the sideline by your team, the opponent gets the ball to put into play with a throw-in.

When a ball is kicked past your goal line by the other team, a goal kick by your team puts the ball back into play

When your team kicks the ball past your goal line, the opponent gets a corner kick.

A goal can be scored directly on a corner kick.

A goal is scored when the ball goes into the goal (i.e. under the cross bar and between the uprights completely over the goal line).



SKILL DEVELOPMENT

In an effort to establish a consistent knowledge of soccer among the young children, it is recommended that each of the coaches try to use the same basic soccer terms whenever possible. Consistency will not only help the children keep from being confused, but it will also allow the coaches to teach new knowledge instead of re-explaining old knowledge.

Guidelines and Suggestions for this age group:

1. Teach basic soccer skills.
2. Use games/drills to practice skills.
3. Use small sided games to teach and practice soccer skills by dividing your team into small groups.
4. Combine the basic skills with a knowledge of “where and when” to introduce soccer tactics.

Below is a list of the basic soccer skills and knowledge that should be explained to the ‘U-7 & U-8’ children. This will give future coaches a common base to build on. The knowledge can be checked by a series of “Q and A” during the practices.

BASIC SOCCER SKILLS

These skills are considered to be the basic skills needed to play a soccer game. These skills will be the building blocks for the future years. Remember when teaching skills, demonstrate the skill first and, if possible, break it down into a number of steps. Have your players work in small groups to allow you to correct errors in technique. If your soccer background is limited, or if you need to refresh your memory, go to the following link for some excellent soccer web sites www.brentwoodymcasports.com/soccerlinks

1. **Dribbling** – Show the children how to run with the ball while keeping it close to them. Keep the knees bent and encourage them to use both feet. Use the top of the foot (laces), the inside of the foot or the outside of the foot. Use the inside of the foot to change directions and outside of the foot for speed. They should gain a sense of where the ball is and be able to look up while running.

COACHING POINTS

1. Head up to read the game
2. Ball close enough to the body to keep control
3. Change of speed
4. Change of direction
5. To beat an opponent
 - a. Body feint or dribbling movement to “throw” the defender one way
 - b. Change of direction
 - c. Change of speed
6. Individual Possession (Shielding)
 - a. Body between the ball and opponent
 - b. Keep body “sideways”
 - c. Lower center of gravity
 - d. Use arms to keep space
 - e. “Spin turn” away from opponent to relieve pressure
7. Running with the ball for speed
 - a. Ball is pushed out further in front
 - b. Use the instep (laces) and outside of the foot
 - c. Longer running strides



Suggested Games:

Set up a series of cones as obstacles, not necessarily in a straight line. Have each player run through the course as quickly as they can. This can also be done as a relay race to encourage the players to move quickly.

Mark off a 10 yard square area with the cones. Place each team with a ball inside this area and instruct them to move around with the ball, keeping it close to them and staying inside the area. After a minute or two, step into the area and slowly walk around trying to tag each player. As the player is tagged he is out and leaves the area and juggles.

As your players improve, have them play 1 v 1 games using a single cone as the goal. By using only 6 cones, you can keep 12 players active and in contact with the ball.

2. **Passing** – Show the children how to kick the ball with the inside of the foot for shorter and very accurate passes and on the top of the foot (laces) for longer passes. The non-kicking foot should be pointed where you want the ball to go.

For inside the foot passing, point the plant foot toward the target. Lock the ankle. Keeping the toe up, strike the ball through the center.

For instep passing (laces), point the plant foot toward the target. Lock the ankle. Keeping the toe down and knee over the ball, strike the ball through the center.

COACHING POINTS

1. Standing foot next to the ball pointed in the direction of the target.
2. For different passes the ankle locked with:
 - a. Toe pointed toward the shin for inside the foot pass
 - b. Toe pointed down and inside for outside the foot pass
 - c. Toe down heel up for driven pass
3. Bend at the knee
4. Follow through.
5. Accuracy- pass should be to the intended target (player's feet).
6. Weight or Pace- pass should be played such that the receiver is able to control the ball or play it comfortably with one touch
7. Timing- pass should be played into the path of the receiver
8. Angle- passes that should be played on angles, so that they are not intercepted.
9. Disguise- pass should be made, so that it does not "tell" the opponent where it is being played.

Suggested Game:

Practice "Power" kicks by starting with stationary balls, then move to moving balls as the players progress. The idea is to lift the ball on the kick. Have a game to see who can kick the highest.



3. **Receiving (Stopping) the Ball** – Show the children how to stop the ball. Many different parts of the body can be used. The idea is to control the ball, not just let it bounce off of you. Explain how to use the inside of the foot, thigh and chest.

COACHING POINTS

1. Get in line of the flight of the ball
2. Watch the ball
3. Make an early selection in the body surface to use
4. Relax the controlling surface
5. Control ball into a space or away from pressure
6. Preparation touch (first touch) should allow the player to shoot, pass or dribble with the next touch

Suggested Game:

3 v 1 keep away games in a designated area are excellent, as they introduce trapping, controlling and passing the ball under pressure.

4. **Finishing** – Show the children how to kick the ball with the instep (laces) of their foot or the inside of their foot into the goal. Be sure to let them know that the idea is to kick the ball around the other players, not through them.

COACHING POINTS

1. Approach to the ball at an angle (open the body).
2. Standing foot next to the ball pointed in the direction of the target
3. Ankle locked-toe down and heel up
4. Body over the ball- momentum forward
5. Solid Contact
6. Follow through-toe pointed
7. Land on kicking foot
8. Watch the ball during the whole process
9. Consideration should be given to placement versus power in certain situations in and around the penalty area

Suggested Game:

Make a goal by placing 2 cones, 3 yards apart, and put a goalie in place. Have another player take shots from 10-15 yards away with the designated foot and foot surface. After 10 shots, have them switch positions and after each player has had a turn, change foot or foot surface used to shoot. Encourage the players to sacrifice power for accuracy when shooting. Begin with stationary balls and move quickly to rolling balls. For example: “Play the ball slightly forward with the inside of the left foot and shoot with the instep of the right foot.”

5. **Throw-ins** – Show the children how to throw the ball over their heads with two hands while keeping both feet on the ground. Two hands must be used and the ball must go straight over their head. When the ball is properly thrown, it will not spin.

Suggested Game:

Easily practiced in pairs, small sided games and in scrimmages.



6. **Heading** – Show the children how to head the ball at the “hairline” of the forehead.
(Recent medical research discourages repeated heading of the ball at this age.)

COACHING POINTS

1. Get in line with the flight of the ball
2. Watch the ball
3. Make contact with the forehead
4. Keep eyes open and mouth closed
5. Time the run and jump to head the ball at your highest point
6. For attack:
 - a. Direct the ball down towards the target-goal, teammate, path of teammate
 - b. Glance the ball toward the target
7. For Defense:
 - a. Direct the ball high, wide and for distance.

Suggested Game:

Easily practiced in pairs. Try using a beach ball to introduce this skill.

7. **Tackling** – For the safety of all players it is recommended that slide tackling be discouraged at this age group.

COACHING POINTS

1. Non tackling foot close to the ball-do not reach for the ball
2. When making contact with the ball, ankle should be locked
3. Momentum forward through the ball
4. Watch the ball
5. Time to tackle- after opponent touches the ball and foot goes down
6. Low center of gravity
7. Block tackle- use back foot
8. Poke Tackle- use front foot

Suggested Game:

Easily practiced in pairs, small sided games and in scrimmages.

8. **Goal Keeping** – Show the players the basic goal tending skills, such as:
- Place your body squarely between the ball and the goal when making a save.
 - Catch the ball with two hands and bring it into the chest – HUG THE BALL.
 - Stand at least 1 yard in front of the goal line and move to reduce the angles.
 - Talk to your team – shout “GOALIE BALL” when making a save.
 - Punt or throw the ball towards the sideline, not up the middle of the field.
 - After catching the ball, take no more than 6 seconds to put the ball back into play.



Practice Game Ideas for U-7 & U-8

Knock-Out ALL AGES

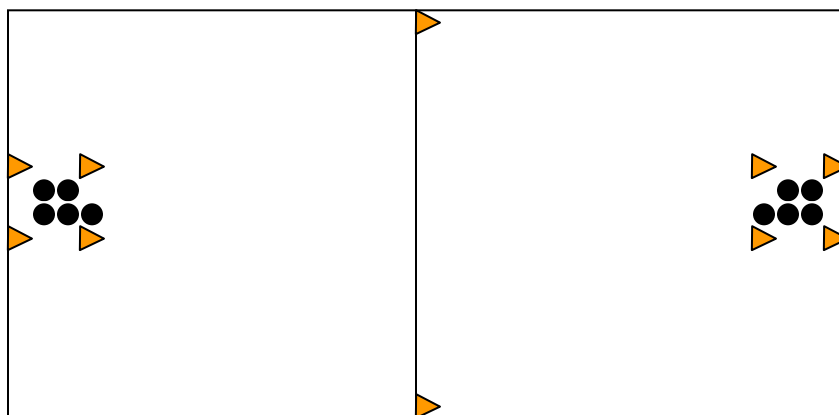
Make a grid just large enough for the players to move around. This game is basically like keep away. The players have to kick out the other players balls with out having their own kicked out. If this is to hard or not working well you can pick someone to help kick out ball, this person would not have a ball, they would be "it." This works on shielding and holding the ball.

Keep Away ALL AGES

Split up into two teams, and just play a good ole' game of keep away; either in multiple teams or everyone for themselves.

Stealing the Jewels U-7 and UP

Split up into two teams, have a fairly large grid, usually the length of the 18 will do, you will need to mark a half line in the middle. At each end make a small box out of cones and place anywhere for 5-10 balls in each square. The players have to run and get the other teams balls and bring them back to their own grid (either by dribbling them, or carrying them, coaches discretion) while still protecting their own. Once a player has crossed into the other half they can be tagged. Once tagged the player should have to stay still until another player runs through their legs (for older players you can say they have to juggle 3 times or whatever you think). Whichever team gets all the balls first wins. This works on teamwork, and movement.



Skills Competition ALL AGES

Who can throw, kick, head, and anything else you can come up with, the farthest. You can also make this a race; do relay races with dribbling, just running, and anything else you can come up with. Players love competition. Make sure to stress that everyone is a winner!

Round up ALL AGES

5 or more players are needed. Players form a circle with one person in the middle. The middle person has a ball and passes it to someone in the circle, who passes it back. Once the players grasp the concept, have them jog around in a circle. This is a great way for you to make sure that each player has the correct technique.

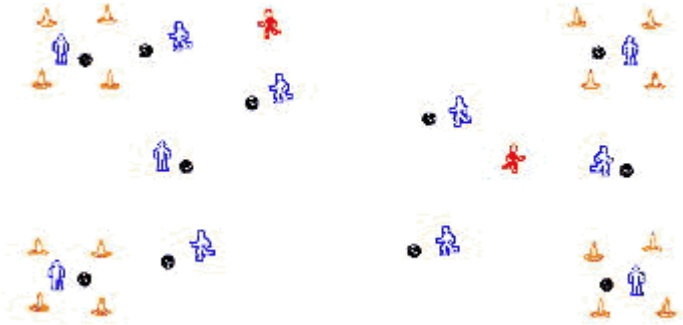


The Name ALL AGES

4 or more players are needed. Players stand in a circle and pass the ball to one another, but they must call out the name of the person they are passing to. This is great at the beginning of the season, so they learn everyone's names. If the players are doing well and you have enough players, and another ball, or add someone trying to get the ball ("it") to make them pass the ball quicker. For later in the season you can try using favorite colors or food to make the game a little more useful later in the season.

Running Bases U-7 and UP

Players try to dribble their ball without being tagged. If they get tagged they exchange places with the "tagger." Have the "taggers" carry something to identify them self. Players are safe in any one of the 4 bases. Only one player is allowed in a base at a time. If a new player enters the base, the old player must leave.



Variations:

Easier:

- Only one tagger
- Fewer bases
- Only one person in a base at a time

Harder:

- More bases and taggers
- 2 players allowed in each base

Play with fewer balls: can only be tagged if you have a ball or if you don't have a ball (coaches decision) If you play with less balls then they should be passed from player to player and the only people who can be tagged are those with the ball.

Triangle U-7 and UP

Set up a triangle with 15-20 foot sides. Mentally label the cones A, B, and C. Players stand in a line at "A." One player is standing at "B." The first player at "A" does a throw-in to player at "B" who traps the ball and dribbles around "C" and back to line "A."



Team Dribbling U-7 and UP

This is a regular even sided scrimmage. However, since the object of the game is to encourage and increase the amount of dribbling going on, six small “cone goals” have been set up around the field. Each time a player dribbles through one of the goals, it counts as a point. Goals scored on the big goals count as well. Play with 2 or 3 balls to increase the amount of repetitions. To make this more difficult you can require a pass from one teammate to the other through the goal for a point.



Shoe Grab ALL AGES

Have the players take off their right shoe and put it in a pile with all the others. Have the players dribble with their left shoe to a set of cones and come back to the pile. The player who puts their shoe back on first wins, this can be modified as you see best fit. This should help with using the weak foot.

Gotcha U-7 and UP

Each player will need a ball. Player “a” is “it” and is the only player to start with a ball. All the other players around the outside of the grided space. Player “a” dribbles and tries to hit the other players below the waist with the ball. When hit, the player gets a ball and joins player “a.” The game is over when all of the players have been caught. The last player caught starts with the ball for the next game. If you think the task will be too difficult for the one player to get another at the start of the game, start with 2 players being “it.”



Driving School ALL AGES

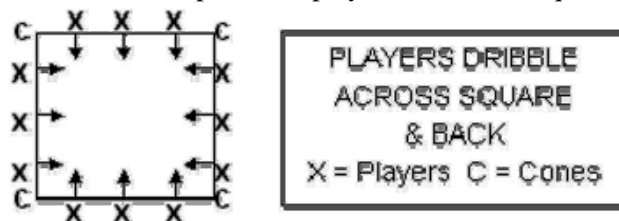
Use cones to outline a 20 X 20 grid, smaller or larger depending on age and numbers. Start the game by introducing yourself as “ This is driving school and I’m your instructor. I am going to teach you how to drive but you must listen carefully and do exactly as I say.” Coach should demonstrate each direction prior to starting the game.

- a.GO- start dribbling, keep the ball near your feet and look up while you “drive” so you don’t run into anyone else.
- b.Stop- put foot on top of ball
- c.Slow- dribble slow
- d.Speed Up- Dribble faster but keep looking up and don’t “wreck”
- e.Turn Right- Use the outside of the right foot to push the ball to the right and then dribble in that direction
- f.Turn Left-Use the outside of the left foot to push the ball to the left and then dribble in that direction
- g.Reverse- go the opposite direction

Tell them to be careful and not to “wreck” As they dribble they must look up to see what and who is around them. Make a jail and if they have a wreck or go outside the grid make them go to jail for an amount of time or till they do a certain task such as touch the top of the ball 20 time or anything you can come up with.

Dribble Across a Square U-7 and UP

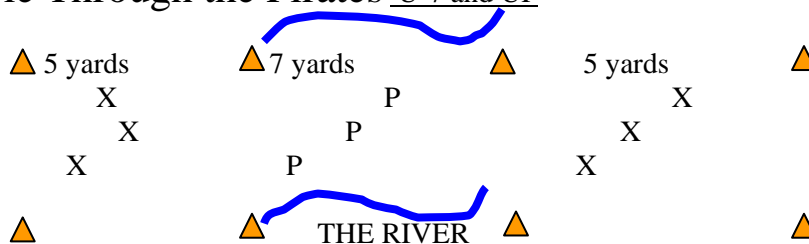
Use 4 cones to make a square about 10 or 12 yards wide (larger or smaller to fit the teams needs) Every player should have a ball. Spread the players around the square, all facing inward (like below):



All players start on “go” and each player dribble across and back. Tell players to look up while dribbling so they don’t run into other players. Once the players get the hang of the game then make it the first one to go back and forth a set number of times wins. To make it more difficult make the player do a certain move when they turn.

For the younger players this may be too difficult so just use two sides and have them run at each other and just try not to collide with one another.

Dribble Through the Pirates U-7 and UP



The X’s should try to dribble through the river to the other shore. The Pirates (P) try to steal the ball from the X’s. The pirate winning the ball kicks it to the shore and the X must get it. X’s should count the number of times they can get across in a set time.



KNOWLEDGE

The list below is the basic soccer knowledge the players should have prior to advancing to the next level. Consistent basic knowledge will help the players, and coaches, as they change teams.

1. Don't touch the ball with hands. (exception... goalkeeper within the penalty box)
2. When the ball goes out-of-bounds on side, the game restarts with a throw-in.
3. When the ball goes out-of-bounds on end, the game restarts with a corner kick or goal kick.
4. Identify the two main places on foot to kick the ball (instep & inside foot).
5. For a throw-in, the feet stay on ground and the ball is thrown straight over head with two hands.
6. When the whistle blows during a game, everyone stops.
7. Be able to identify your position and basic boundaries.
8. Move to an open space instead of bunching up on the ball.

UNDER 7 & 8 POSITIONS

The Under-7 & 8 team consists of 4 players on the field at one time (including the goalie). This age group uses a rotating goalie. Once the ball moves, each player should move in relation to the ball. Please do not require that your defensive players stand in front of your goal during play. Let them run around and get a feel for the game.

NOTE: Please don't "plant" a player in position and tell him/her to stay and wait for the ball. Soccer positions have some unusual names such as sweeper and stopper, but no one should be asked to play a "statue." Remember, everyone moves. Sometimes they run, sometimes they jog, sometimes they walk – but everybody MOVES all the time.

Finally, knowing the benefit of being in position will be useless without some of the basic skills previously mentioned. So please teach proper technique to your young players and give them the opportunity to practice their skills in drill and in small sided games.

SMALL SIDED GAMES

The use of small sided games during a practice is strongly recommended. The young player learns by doing more than by telling. Some of the benefits of small sided games are:

- Increase skills through increased touches on the ball
- Fun activity, allowing each player to touch the ball frequently
- Allow easy observation and correction in errors in techniques or tactics

Divide your half of the field in two, to make two 20x30 yard fields with goals 5-7 yards wide. When playing 3 v 3, use two forwards and one combination goalie/fullback. When playing 4 v 4, use two forwards, one fullback and one goalie. Whenever possible, play 3 v 3 games, for it requires total involvement by all players and introduces the concept of playing in a triangle, one of the basic tenets of soccer. Rotate your players to different positions halfway through the games. Allow water breaks as such games are physically demanding. Play like regular game with throw-ins, corner kicks, etc.



INTRODUCE SOCCER TACTICS

The best way to introduce your player to soccer tactics is by playing uneven small sided games such as 3 v 2. Let them discover some of the basic concepts themselves.

ENCOURAGE THEM TO

“Stay spread out”

“Go Help”

LEARN

To maintain width and depth

Support player with the ball

GAME DAY

Please become familiar with the rules, since you will also be acting as referee. Cooperate with the other coach to teach and encourage both teams, not just “coach” your team.

Players in this age group will always try to do one of two things when they find themselves with the ball during the game. One, kick the ball as hard as they can in the direction of the other team’s goal; or two, try to dribble down the field attempting to beat each player they encounter. It’s probably unrealistic to expect this age group to do otherwise, as they are not physically or mentally ready to make a decision with the ball under pressure. Additionally, once they finally get the ball, they are not inclined to share it with anyone else. However, the concept of “sharing the toy” or passing the ball should be introduced during the small sided games and the skill necessary to receive, control, and maintain possession of the ball should be taught to this age group. And who knows, once in a while they may surprise you. Finally, it is recommended that during the game, you not continuously yell specific instructions to your players. The coach’s role is to teach, encourage and provide a fun environment in which learning can take place. Once play begins, let the game belong to the players.

SPORTSMANSHIP

Jeff and the Soccer Committee do their best to balance the teams as equally as possible and generally are very successful in doing so. However, when one team is vastly superior to another, we would like you to help us prevent extremely one-sided games from occurring. These games serve no one’s interest, especially the children on the losing team, and invariably lead to hard feelings on the part of parents and coaches. We know that we cannot ask your team to stop trying, but simply taking your best players out, or placing them in the goal or in a defensive position, will reduce or prevent additional scoring and the negative feelings that might result. Your cooperation in this regard is greatly appreciated.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

Please let us know, through the YMCA Sports Department or any one of the Coach Education Committee members, if this information in this booklet is helpful to you. If you have any suggestions or ideas that you believe would be beneficial to our program, we look forward to hearing from you. Thank you coach, and have a fun season!

Thank you coach, and have a fun season!

Keep the “FUN” rolling



COACHING CERTIFICATES

USSF and NSCAA coaching courses are held through out the year in Middle Tennessee. If you are interested in obtaining more information on these courses as well as dates, times and locations go to www.tnsoccer.org

LOCAL GAMES

Our young players have little exposure to soccer through the media and much can be learned through observation. We would encourage you and your players to attend local high school and college games.

Brentwood Soccer Club - Select Teams

The Select teams play many local tournaments during the fall and spring season.
Contact Jane Olinger (300-6552)

Brentwood, Brentwood Academy, BGA, Centennial, Franklin, & Ravenwood High Schools

Game dates and times are listed in August on the TSSAA web site. www.tssaa.org

Boys – Play in the Spring (March – May)

Girls – Play in the Fall (August – November)

Belmont

Both Men's & Women's teams play in the Fall. The schedule comes out in July or August.

Lipscomb

Both Men's & Women's teams play in the Fall. The schedule comes out in July or August.

Trevecca

Both Men's & Women's teams play in the Fall. The schedule comes out in July or August.

MTSU

Women's team plays in the Fall. The schedule comes out in July or August.

Vanderbilt

Women's team plays in the Fall. The schedule comes out in July or August.

Nashville Metros

Games are played in the Summer at the Ezell Park Complex at Harding Place and I-24.

Adult League

The adult leagues play in the fall and spring.

