

Pre-game routine:

Here is a look at a [suggested pre-game routine](#). Of course you can make up your own routine and come up with your own components but I just want to highlight what should be included in a pre-game routine:

- A dynamic warm-up like [FIFA 11+](#). Use parts 1 and 3. This routine ramps up heart rate and stretches and engages all major muscle groups. Proven to reduce injuries.
- Pre-game talk: Set out goals and expectations for the game. Prepare players for the opponent. Explain your system of play and each player's role in it.
- Possession game or rondo version like 4v4+2 neutrals. Intensity increases, game situation, lots of touches, vision, passing etc. Players get in game mode. GK to warm up with assistant coach or a sub.
- Shooting on goal for attacking players and midfielders, long balls between defenders and defensive midfielders. This should come as the last part of warm-up to prevent injuries.

Pre-practice warm-up and maximizing turf time:

Most of our teams have only 75 minutes of turf time allotted per practice. To make the most of this time have your players arrive 20 minutes early and run through a dynamic warm-up like FIFA 11+ on the gravel field or on turf behind the goals if the coaches who are on turf consent to that.

If you are warming up on gravel, ask your players to arrive in running shoes.

That way everyone is ready to work with the ball and play more intense games when your turf time starts. Please let's not waste turf time for running laps or other warm-ups without balls.

Coaching challenge: Figure out the opponent quickly

In the first minutes of the game observe the opponent and let your own team play. Try to answer these questions to help your team effectively:

- What formation is the opposing team playing and how does that affect our line-up?
- Which players on the opposing team are going to be their main threats?
- How can I adjust my team to contain their main threats?

The next observations could be:

- Where are the opponents weaker players in defence? Where is their slowest defender?
- How can we best take advantage of that? For example if their left back is slow can we move our fastest player to that side and instruct the team to play balls in behind that defender?