



The Basics of Periodization For Soccer

Learn about how systematic planning of athletic training can help you reach peak performance levels during the competitive soccer season

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Introduction to Periodization

Periodization is the systematic planning of athletic or physical training. The aim is to reach the best possible performance in the most important competition of the year. It involves progressive cycling of various aspects of a training program during a specific period.

In soccer, there are many games/competitions throughout the competitive season, all of which are important for a team to be successful. Thus, in soccer, periodization should involve both a plan to peak for the start of the competitive season, and a plan to maintain fitness throughout the majority of the season.



Phases of Training

1. Pre-Competitive

This is the pre-season. In youth soccer, pre-season can be long (>10 weeks). The focus is on aerobic endurance and strength development.

2. Competitive

This is the competitive season. In youth soccer, the competitive season ranges from 15-20 weeks (May to September). The focus is on development of anaerobic capacity, muscular power, and maintenance of aerobic fitness.

3. Transition

This is the time off, in between the end of the competitive phase and the beginning of the next year's pre-competitive phase. The focus is on rest and recovery, maintenance of aerobic fitness, increasing muscle size, and addressing functional weaknesses.



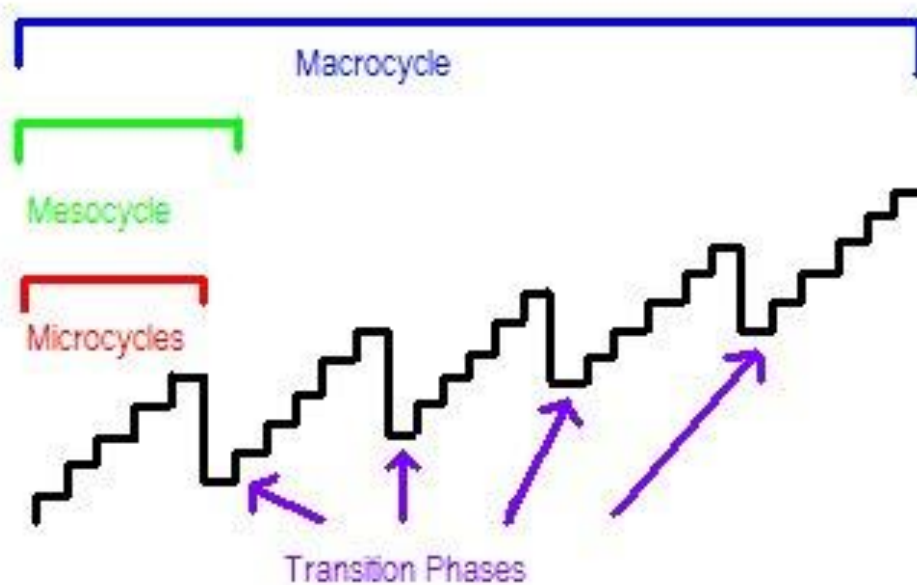
Macro-Cycles & Micro-Cycles

Macro-cycles represent longer periods of time within a particular phase (example: 2-4 weeks). They may focus on particular energy systems and/or muscular strength protocols (example: general aerobic energy system training, muscular strength with 3 sets of 10RM)

Micro-cycles represent shorter periods of time within a particular phase (example: 1 week). They may focus on smaller goals for the particular week, or even for the particular workout, for example:

Aerobic endurance Micro-Cycle in the late pre-competitive phase:

- Day 1: 4 x 4 minutes / 4 minutes active recovery
- Day 2: 8 x 2 minutes / 2 minutes passive recovery
- Day 3: 4 x 4 minutes / 3 minutes active recovery
- Day 4: 8 x 2 minutes / 1 minute passive recovery



Basic Planning Strategies

Pre-Competitive Phase

Break the Pre-Competitive phase into 2 separate Macro-cycles:

1. **General:** energy system and strength training are more general/basic
2. **Specific:** energy system and strength training are more specific to the sport of soccer

Progressions

- Energy system training:

Aerobic training → Anaerobic training

Long work periods (2-5 min) → Short periods (≤ 1 min)

Moderate intensity (RPE ≤ 6) → High intensity (RPE ≥ 7)

- Strength training:

General exercises → specific exercises

Double-leg exercises → single-leg exercises

Low speed exercises → high speed exercises

High number of repetitions → low number of repetitions

Competitive Phase

Break the Competitive phase into 2 separate Macro-cycles:

1. **Intensive:** energy system and strength training are anaerobic, with a high intensity and focus on peak power output
2. **Extensive:** energy system and strength training are aerobic, with a moderate intensity and focus on maintenance

Progressions

- Energy system training:

Anaerobic training → Aerobic training

Very short work periods (≤ 30 seconds) → moderate length work periods (≤ 2 minutes)

Very high intensity (RPE ≥ 8) → moderate intensity (RPE = 6)

- Strength training:

Specific exercises → general exercises

Single-leg exercises → double-leg exercises

High speed exercises → low speed exercises

Moderate/low number of repetitions → high number of repetitions

About Soccer Fitness Inc.

Soccer Fitness Inc. was created to help coaches, players, and parents at all levels of the game improve their knowledge and practical skills related to soccer-specific fitness training. With huge and growing numbers of players registered in Canada at the youth level, it often seems that there are just too many players and not enough qualified coaches. Today, most clubs and academies in Ontario have Club Head Coaches and Technical Staffs, whose primary responsibility is to help train, educate their club's "rep" or competitive coaches, and ensure that they are able to plan and deliver appropriate technical and tactical training to their respective teams. Physical training of soccer players, however, seems to be the missing link in most clubs' overall training programs.

Soccer Fitness Inc. is a company that aims to help coaches, players and parents in understanding and implementing appropriate physical training programs for themselves and their athletes.

If you are a fitness professional and/or soccer coach looking to increase your knowledge and practical skills in the design and implementation of soccer-specific on-field fitness training visit gymnut.co/soccerfitnesstrainer now!

