

NORTH RUTHERFORD SOCCER



RECREATIONAL COACHES MANUAL

**Compiled by Nigel Clements
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The purpose of this manual is to standardize exercises for coaching players in our recreational program.

These guidelines are meant to be flexible – all players of the same age are NOT at the same developmental level. Whatever the level of the player the ultimate goal of the league, and of you the coach, is to prepare players to play at the next level if that is what they wish, although many will only desire to play recreational soccer.

Coaches are encouraged to plan training sessions in accordance with the principles and priorities laid out here.

Tips for the New Soccer Coach

1. **Have FUN!** Have a good time and make it FUN for the players. A coach's interaction with the players should ALWAYS be positive and the more the coach engages with the kids, the more they will respond.
2. **Be FAIR.** Being fair is very important too. It's a coaches job to make sure each player has EQUAL playing time, make sure players play each position, and be sure to include EVERYONE!
3. **Be POSITIVE.** Being positive includes every interaction with players, parents, officials and other coaches. It's always good to set this standard at the beginning of the year so that your parents and players are all on the same wavelength.
4. **Ask for Parent Involvement.** At the beginning of the year, ask for parent assistance during practice. This will help get parents involved with their child's play and will help you reduce the player/coach ratio. This is especially helpful in younger players. For young players, try to keep the ration to about 4 kids to each coach. As the kids get older, the ratio can grow as much as 8 kids to each coach. This ratio will depend greatly on your kid's age and skill.
5. **Focus on TEAMWORK.** As a coach, you often will have one or two star players on your team. It is important to grow these players and make them even stronger players; however, it is important to focus on teamwork to get the work done.
6. **Set GROUND RULES.** Before the season starts, meet with the team and parents and establish the ground rules. You will want to cover such things as:
 - Sideline behavior – make sure they know they are welcome to cheer, but it is up to the coach and the assistant to do the coaching;
 - Have players arrive to practice and games on time;
 - Notify the coach if absent or late to games or practice;
 - Players are to sit with the team when not in the game and NOT in mommy's lap.

7. **Know what to practice.** As a new coach, it is hard to come up with games that are appropriate for that level of player. Make sure you check out the soccer drills/lessons section of this booklet to get fun ideas for your level of player. Make sure you are playing small-sided games with younger kids - which will focus on game-like situations. Make sure you prepare properly and have everything you need to coach soccer.

8. **Take Coaching Courses.** Take advantage of the coaching courses on offer both by our organization and also the state soccer association. I also encourage you to spend the extra time to become educated about the game and seek help from other experienced coaches.

Coaching Under 5/6 Age Groups

Characteristics of players –

- Enjoy playing, NOT watching!
- Look for approval of coach – easily bruised psychologically – give praise often – give “hints”, don’t criticize.
- Limited attention span (Listening – 15 seconds, Performing tasks – 10 minutes (at best!!))
- Effort equals Performance - If they have tried hard, they believe that they have done well.
- Physical coordination limited. Eye-hand and eye – foot coordination is not developed. Encourage exploring qualities of a rolling ball.
- Love to run, jump, roll, hop, etc..
- Catching or throwing skills not developed.
- Can balance on their “good” foot.
- Focus is on them, very individually oriented (me, mine, my).
- Teaching tactical and spatial patterns is UNREALISTIC!

PRACTICE POINTS –

Practice should be fun and creative which is essential for learning.

U6s DO NOT understand TEAM play – it is I!!

Do NOT dwell on passing – limited spatial awareness – focus is on immediate vicinity

Motor skills and coordination development is crucial at this age – encourage jumping, skipping, kicking, throwing, stretching, hopping, balancing, etc

MOST IMPORTANT SKILL TO TEACH AT THIS AGE -

DRIBBLING, OR MOVING WITH THE BALL

Encourage use of all parts of the foot, i.e. inside, outside, sole, instep and BOTH FEET - left and right.

Dribbling forward, changing speed and direction, shielding the ball from opponent, dribbling past opponent and away from opponent (i.e. into space or shielding)

Soft first touch – use target games for passing and shooting.

Encourage games that maximize the number of touches on the ball through activity repetition with games where every player has a ball – lots of dribbling games, IGNORE positional play at this stage!

PRACTICES

It is important to understand at the outset that the players coming to any sport prior to the age of 6 years old, in general, do NOT do so by their own choice. As a result, their coaches need to give them something about which to get excited.

- Each session should be geared around touching the ball as many times as possible. Involve the ball in as many activities as possible. Basic movements such as running, skipping, hopping, etc. need to be emphasized. If these can be done while kicking, catching, rolling, or dribbling a ball ... this is even better!
- Have as many different kinds of activities ready as you can get into one hour. Emphasis needs to be placed on what is FUN!
- Team play and passing is an alien concept at this age – they know if they pass the ball they may never get it back! In fact, they will often steal it from their own teammates. DO NOT get uptight if they do not pass, let them dribble to their heart's content.

PRACTICES SHOULD LAST 60 MINUTES WITH BREAKS AS REQUIRED – plan at least 4 90 second drink breaks, especially in warmer weather. Their “cooling system” is not as efficient as older players.

See **U6 SAMPLE LESSON PLANS** for help with your practices.

Involving the Parents

It is imperative that coaches get the parents involved. Not only are they a major resource for your team, but the U5/6 player still views their parents as the most significant people in their lives. A pre-season meeting should be held with the parents so that objectives and team policies can be addressed. Some topics that you may want to address at this meeting are:

- A means of contacting everyone without one person doing all of the calling (phone chains).
- Choosing a team manager to handle all of the details.
- Discuss the laws of the game.
- Carpool needs.
- Training and game schedules. How you feel about starting and ending on time, what you think is a good excuse to miss training.
- What each player should bring to practice – inflated ball, filled water bottle, soccer attire, shin guards.
- Most important, your philosophy about coaching U5/6 players. Let them know that everyone plays; that the game does not look like the older players' games; that you are there to ensure that their player is safe and has a good time, as well as learn about soccer.
- What your expectations for them is during game time. How do you want them to cheer? Do they know that they should NOT coach from the sidelines/?

LESSON PLAN: U6-U8 MOVEMENT

1 Goofy Says Activities

30x20 yard area
 Players move freely in the area w/o the ball
 Coach is named Goofy. Players do what Goofy says.

ADD VARIATIONS:
 CHANGE DIRECTIONS, BACKWARDS, ETC.



Coach demos log roll to players. On Command Players perform log roll and back up and jog-on command players jump up high off two feet then jog-on command players jump up high off one foot—then jog-on, command players run fast for 3 seconds (coach counts out) then jog-on command they perform all tasks in a row

MOVEMENT EDUCATION:
 JUMPING, ROLLING, CHANGE OF PACE

2 Strawberry Farms

Set up 6 to 8 one-yard gates within a 20x30 yard area

All players with a ball

MORE MOVEMENT EDUCATION:
 FAMILIARITY WITH THE BALL
 EYE-FOOT COORDINATION
 AWARENESS



Coach asks players to collect as many Strawberries they can by dribbling their ball through a gate, bending down to scoop the strawberries. Next, the players must step on the ball, and pull it back because the road is closed on other side. Next step on ball, do a front roll turn and run back through with ball. Use your imagination. U8 can take a few balls away now must get ball to get strawberries.

3 Fisherman Game (Sharks and Minnows)

20 yards wide x 30 yards long
 Players w/o a ball
 Coach is the fisherman; Players are the fish

DIRECTIONAL PLAY, CHANGE OF SPEED AND DIRECTION.
 LEARNING TO RUN WITH THE BALL, KEEP THE BALL, TAKE THE BALL...



Players line up on end line (there pond which has no more food). The coach (fisherman) is in the middle. The players attempt to run across the lake to the other pond that has more fish food. Fisherman attempts to tag players (fish) they become fisherman if tagged. Progress to players dribbling across. Fisherman must clear ball over any line (so fish could win it back if lose ball)

4 1 vs 1 to Goals

20 yards wide x 30 yards long
 (Beginning in the middle of the side-line.) Players line up on both sides of the coach
 Balls are at Coach's feet

EMPHASIS ON ABILITY SKILLS:
 STOPPING, STARTING, AND CHANGING DIRECTIONS.



LEARNING TO COMPETE:
 DRIBBLING VS. AN OPPONENT
 Coach explains to teams which direction they are going. Also explains if the other player has the ball try to take it away and score on their goal. First player in each line goes after ball and tries to score when coach sends ball into play. Can have many of them at the same time. If they score both come back to coach and get ready to go again. Progress to 2vs2

5 3 vs 3 OR 4 vs 4: Boss of the Balls

LET THEM PLAY!

3(4) players enter field and play against 3(4) others to goals. If ball goes out of play the coach simply serves another ball into play. When all the balls are gone make subs and have the players collect the balls for you to have by your side to serve into next game.



All facets of the game come into play
 Many chances to touch the ball in fun, fast-paced game
 Makes children think fast, as a new ball



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U8 YOUTH SOCCER

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LESSON PLAN: US DRIBBLING CHANGE OF DIRECTION

All players in the middle without a ball. Four people (coaches and/or parents) each go on a side of the square.



"SCHOOL OF FISH"

The parents/coaches raise their arms (on cue from coach) and when the players get close, put their arm down. Another parent/coach then may raise their arm up. The players must run towards the arm that is up. Progress to all players dribbling to the arm that is "up".

How can you change direction with or without the ball? (point your feet and turn your body)

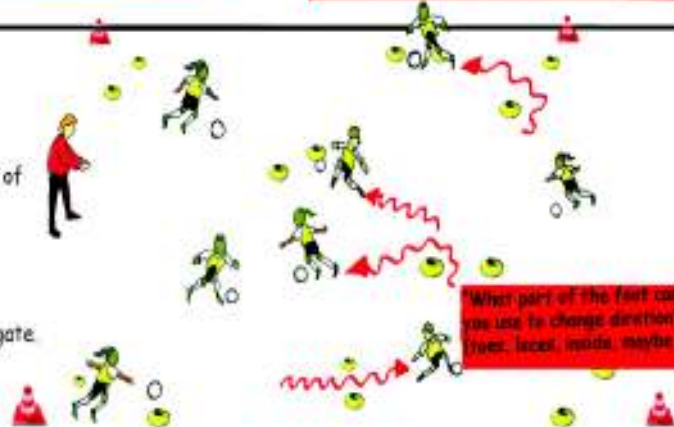
"GATES"

Make gates inside the grid 3 yards apart. You can even let the players do it for you. Make at least one more gate than the amount of players.

Players are instructed to dribble through as many gates as possible.

After several rounds-add gate blockers in which players/coaches run and simply block a gate.

The player arriving at that gate has to go to a new one.



What part of the foot can you use to change direction? (toes, laces, inside, maybe)

"FROGGER"

All players have a ball and line up on a line facing a direction.

The players are the Frogs.

The coach and several parents are in the middle. The coach is the alligator and parents are the "logs".

The "logs" walk back and forth and the "alligator" tries to tag the "frogs".

The "frogs" try and cross without the "alligator" tagging them.

The "frogs" can use the "logs" to help them get across. If the "frogs" get next to a "log" they are safe. If a "frog" gets tagged they are then next to the "alligator" and help him/her.



How can you avoid being tagged by the alligator? (change direction and go fast)

What can you do if the alligator is coming at you? (change direction)

Where should your head be? (up!)

Play 3v3 game with no goalkeepers



LET THEM PLAY!

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LESSON PLAN; US BALANCE

1st Activity "Goofy Stop"

All players have a ball. They all dribble around and when the coach says stop, they have to stop the ball with the bottom of their foot and make a funny/goofy pose.

Warm-Up



2nd Activity "Body Parts"

Each player has a ball and dribble the ball in an area. As a coach, you call out a "body part" for the players to stop the ball with.

3rd Activity (Direction Game) "Sharks and Minnows"



4th Activity 3v3 Game-no goalkeepers



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Warm-Up
"I Can Do-Can U?"

Players are all inside a little area. Coach starts off by saying "I can do something without a ball-can u?". Then the coach performs a simple motion like hopping on one foot, walking and clapping hands in front and behind, walking and clamping hands between legs.

Then the coach says "I can do something with a ball can you?"

The coach then asks the group "Who can show us something we can all try with a ball?"

LESSON PLAN: US COORDINATION



Lighten
Coordinated
Balance
Creativity

1st Activity
"Shapes"

All players are in a grid. They dribble the ball around inside the grid. A coach will yell a shape. When a shape is called, dribble the ball and "paint" the shape.

So, if circle is called they have to dribble the ball around in a circle. Call triangles, diamonds, McDonald's arch, etc. Let them come up with their own shapes while dribbling a ball.

"What parts of the feet can we use to move the ball?" (outside, inside)



Control of Ball
Control of Feet
Coordination
Agility
Balance
Creativity

2nd Activity

3v3 endline soccer
Set up a 15 yd x 20 yd grid. Divide the players into two teams. Play 3v3 with no goalkeepers on the field. A team scores by dribbling the ball or kicking the ball over their designated end line. Balls are served in one at a time by the coach who is positioned outside the field at midfield. Coaches can serve more than two balls to spread out the groups and abilities.



Coaches can serve more than two balls to spread out the groups and abilities.

Control of Ball
Coordination with ball
Agility with ball
Balance with ball
Creativity

Game
3v3 Game

Set up a 15 yd x 20 yd grid. Divide the players into two teams. Play 3v3 with no goalkeepers on the field. A team scores by dribbling the ball or kicking the ball over their designated goal. Balls are served in one at a time by the coach who is positioned outside the field at midfield. After a bit, tell them that "The boss is taking a break" and have them do their own kick-ins.



Let them play
tell them to be
"smart" with the
ball.



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LESSON PLAN: U6 DRIBBLING (HEAD UP!)

WARM UP: Retrieval Activity
Each player gives their ball to the coach. The coach tosses the ball out for each player to collect and bring back...

PURPOSE/ COACHING POINTS:
*INTRO TO DRIBBLING
*COORDINATION/BALANCE



2ND ACTIVITY: Maze Game

All players are in a grid. When the coach says, "Green," all players dribble their ball...

When the coach says, "Red," all players stop the ball with the bottom of the foot...

COACHING POINT:
KEEP THE BALL CLOSE



"Red Light-Green Light"

Progress to the coach holding either a Green or Red cone, towel, t-shirt, etc...

The coach now doesn't say anything, simply holds up a color and the players must look up and react...

GUIDED DISCOVERY QUESTIONS:

WHAT PART OF YOUR FOOT CAN YOU USE TO DRIBBLE?
WHEN NO ONE IS TRYING TO TAKE THE BALL FROM YOU, WHERE SHOULD YOUR HEAD BE?

USE THE TOE LACES INSIDE OR OUTSIDE!

3RD ACTIVITY: Direction Game "Traffic"

All players on the goal line. They must dribble from one line to the other.

The coach calls: **RED!!!** or **GREEN!!!**
Players dribble on Green, and stop on Red!
If a ball is not stopped, then the player goes back even with the last player...



Variation: Drop disc cones down as potholes!

Again, progress to the coach raising a colored t-shirt, cone, towel, etc. The players must look up and react to the coach's instruction **AND** avoid potholes!

4TH ACTIVITY: 3v3 Game (No Gk's)

Encourage them to be brave with the ball!

Let them play!

3v3 is really 1 against 5 at U6

GUIDED DISCOVERY QUESTIONS:

HOW FAR AWAY SHOULD THE BALL BE FROM YOU? (Close enough so that you can control it!)
WHY DO YOU WANT TO AVOID THE POTHOLE? (So that you don't get a flat!)

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US LESSON PLAN

1st Activity (warm-up)

Players run around area at random, coach calls out of a group of players, or a player, who then become hunters. Who can tag the most players in a minute? Identifiers can be: hair color, t-shirt color, sock colors, letter of name, etc.

Progressions: Everyone has a ball; players dribble and "hunt" while keeping the ball close.



2nd Activity **DOG AND MASTER**

Each player (master) dribbles their ball (dog). The coach calls out various commands: keep him on a short leash, dog runs away - then catch it, master strokes dog, master jogs with dog, masters swap dogs, etc.

Introduce: tall cones as trees (stay away from trees); an evil dog catcher who kicks the ball out of the park (players have to see the park ranger (coach) to get back into the park)

"TIGERS IN THE JUNGLE"



3rd Activity

Each child chooses to be a type of animal that lives in the jungle and makes the sound of that animal, only tigers are not allowed. The tiger is most feared and kicks the ball out of the jungle into the swamp. If a ball is kicked into the swamp, the animals must bring it back, but must stand with legs apart and ball in air. When another animal dribbles through their legs, they are free to play again.

Progressions: Animals dribble only using left foot, outside of feet, etc.

4th Activity

"DISNEY GAME"



TWO TEAMS OF EQUAL NUMBER STAND AT EACH END OF A 25 X 10 AREA. GIVE EACH PLAYER A DISNEY CHARACTER NAME (MAKE SURE THERE IS A MATCHING CHARACTER AT EACH END). COACH SENDS IN A BALL AND CALLS OUT WHICH PLAYERS ARE TO PLAY.

Phase Two: After players play for a number goals, minutes or until the balls goes out, the players return to their starting spots.

Progressions: Two names for 2 v 2. With older players try calling out two different names. (First name from one end, second name from other)

Don't be afraid to play more than one 1 v 1 at a time!

5th Activity (the game)

"LET THE PLAYERS PLAY!"



US YOUTH SOCCER



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LESSON PLAN: TAG GAMES TO TEACH DRIBBLING

WARM UP ACTIVITY

PULL OUT THE TAIL AND RUN!!!



EACH PLAYER HAS A BIB FOR A "TAIL"

HOW CAN YOU TELL WHERE IT'S SAFE TO RUN? EYES UP!

QUESTIONS FOR PLAYERS

HOW CAN YOU KEEP YOUR TAIL? ALWAYS MOVING! FACE THE CHASE!

FIRST ACTIVITY

THE PLAYERS WILL USE THE INSIDE AND OUTSIDE OF THE FOOT TO MANUEVER THE BALL



...ADD A BALL

SECOND ACTIVITY

PLAYERS PAIR UP BETWEEN 2 CONES (8-10 YARDS APART)
ONE PLAYER HOLDS A BIB AND ATTEMPTS TO DROP IT ON ONE OF THE CONES...THE OTHER PLAYER TRIES TO SHADOW THE PLAYER WITH THE BIB



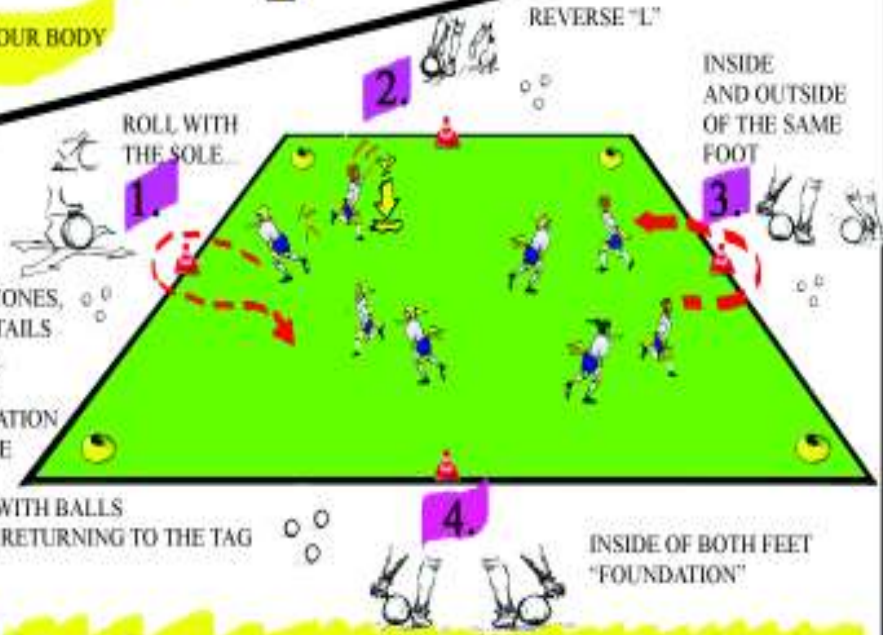
ONE PLAYER SCORES BY SETTING THE BALL ON A CONE WITH THE OTHER MIRRORING THOSE MOVEMENTS

QUESTIONS FOR PLAYERS: WHAT SURFACES ALLOW YOU TO MOVE THE BALL QUICKLY? HOW CAN YOU SEND YOUR OPPONENT THE WRONG WAY?

QUESTIONS FOR PLAYERS: WHAT'S THE BEST POSITION FOR YOUR BODY TO BE IN TO BE QUICK? HOW CAN YOU SEND YOUR OPPONENT THE OTHER WAY???

THIRD ACTIVITY

IN A 20X20 AREA, MARKED WITH CONES, PLAYERS WILL TRY TO PULL OUT TAILS OF OPPONENTS AND DROP THEM. PLAYERS WHO LOSE THEIR TAILS SPRINT AROUND ANY OF THE 4 STATION CONES AROUND THE AREA BEFORE RETURNING TO PUT THEIR TAIL BACK IN. SUPPLY EACH STATION WITH BALLS FOR SETS OF FOOTWORK BEFORE RETURNING TO THE TAG GAME.



*TAKE BIBS AWAY, ADD 4 BALLS, PLAYERS DRIBBLE TO KEEP THEIR BALL, WHEN A PLAYER LOSES THE BALL, THEY MUST RUN TO A STATION CONE BEFORE CHALLENGING FOR ANOTHER BALL.

FINAL ACTIVITY: 3V3

LET THEM PLAY!



CAN PLAYERS USE SIMILAR MOVEMENTS IN THE GAME???

WHY WE JUGGLE...

COACH, WHY DO YOU HAVE US JUGGLE SO MUCH?

TO IMPROVE YOUR FIRST TOUCH...



YOU'LL USE IT ALOT AS YOU DEVELOP, THE BALL'S OFTEN IN THE AIR OR BOUNCING. LOOK AT THIS EXAMPLE:

TAKING A BALL OUT OF THE AIR...



FLIPPING IT OVER YOUR HEAD ON THE TURN

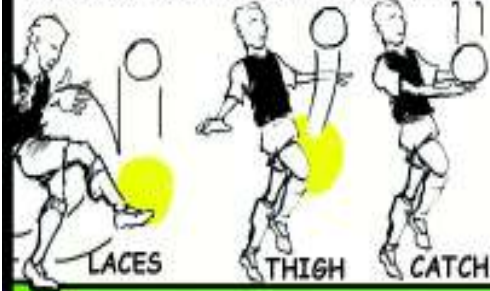


USING THE BOUNCE TO SCORE A GOAL... THEY'RE PART OF THE GAME!

BUT SERIOUSLY, WHEN WILL I EVER DO THIS IN A GAME????

HOMework

DROP THE BALL-PLAY IT-CATCH IT...



LACES

THIGH

CATCH!



HEAD IT, CATCH IT...

TOSS, CHEST...



SOLE OF THE FOOT.



CREATE YOUR OWN COMBINATIONS!!!

ADD A BURST OF SPEED AFTERWARDS

JUGGLING IN SMALL SIDED GAMES:

5V5



PLAYERS PLAY WITH SPECIAL ATTENTION TO RECEIVING THE BALL AFTER A THROW-IN. COACHES PICK A COMBINATION: HEAD-LACES, CHEST-SOLE, THIGH-HEAD, ETC. THE BALL IS IN PLAY ONCE IT'S UNDER CONTROL..

NOW DO YOU SEE WHY WE JUGGLE???

ABSOLUTELY...NOW CAN WE SCRIMMAGE?



Coaching Under 7/8 Age Groups

Characteristics of players –

- Slightly longer attention span than U6 players but still not at a “competitive” stage.
- Inclined towards small group activities.
- Always in motion: scratching; blinking; jerking; rocking ...
- Still easily bruised psychologically – will remember negative comments for a long time. Give “hints” and shout praise!
- Want/need everybody to like them.
- Better at recognizing when ball is out of play, and remembering what goal they are going for. But, in the heat of battle, they will sometimes still forget. They still find it difficult to really be aware of more than one thing at a time.
- Developing physical confidence (most are able to ride a two-wheeler).
- Skeletal system growing rapidly. Often results in apparent lack of coordination.
- Cardiovascular and temperature regulation system is not developed. Their heart rate peaks quickly and they overheat quickly, make sure they get adequate water breaks!!

PRACTICES

Some U7/U8 players have had two years of soccer experience and have already touched the ball a few thousand times in their lives. This, however, does not mean that these players are ready for the mental demands of tactical team soccer. True, they do have some idea of the game, but the emphasis still needs to be placed on the individual’s ability to control the ball with his/her body. They are still there to have fun, and because some of the players may be brand new to the sport, it is imperative that activities are geared towards individual success and participation. Following are some items that a coach of U7/U8 should consider.

- Be patient. Because of rapid growth spurts during this age, players will go through times when they seem to have lost control of their body. What they could do easily 2 weeks ago no longer seems unattainable.
- Continue technical skill development and development of coordination.
- Passing and shooting is not as important as individual control of the ball. (i.e. Dribbling and starting/stopping with the ball under control, using all parts of the foot).
- Passing and receiving, however, should begin to be introduced. Focus on controlling and stopping a moving ball (i.e. Stress importance of a good first touch)

- Running with ball at speed, changes of direction and pace and shielding a ball from opponents.
- Introduce basic control of balls in air (receiving using feet, thigh and chest).
- NO positional play.
- Introduce the following scenarios –
 1. Our team has the ball
 2. Our team does not have the ball
 3. Transition between having and losing possession.

PRACTICES SHOULD LAST 60 MINUTES WITH BREAKS AS REQUIRED – plan at least 4 90 second drink breaks, especially in warmer weather. Their “cooling system” is not as efficient as older players.

See **U8 SAMPLE LESSON PLANS** for help with your practices.

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- What each player should bring to practice – inflated ball, filled water bottle, soccer attire, shin guards.
- Most important, your philosophy about coaching U5/6 players. Let them know that everyone plays; that the game does not look like the older players’ games; that you are there to ensure that their player is safe and has a good time, as well as learn about soccer.
- What your expectations for them is during game time. How do you want them to cheer? Do they know that they should NOT coach from the sidelines/?

Warm-Up "Buddy Up"

LESSON PLAN U8
"STRIKING THE BALL"

Players are in pairs, each pair has one ball. One partner kneels/sits and rolls ball to their partner. The partner standing then passes ball back to the kneeling partner and then goes to a new person.

"BUDDY UP"

- a) Inside of foot
- b) Laces (just introduce)
- c) Go to kneeling partner who rolls ball between legs. Standing partner then chases, turns and passes ball back.



Introduction to mechanics of striking the ball
Note: Don't get too caught up with them using their laces.
Can they get it back to the kneeling partner without making them move?

1st Game Junkyard Soccer

Divide team into two teams. Each team goes to a half. Use an odd number of balls, like 5. The objective of the game is to strike the ball into the other team's yard. Each team wants to have a clean yard when time is called by the coach.

The team that has the fewest balls on their side when time is called gets a point. Play to a certain amount of points or for time.



Variation: Require a pass to be made to a teammate before the ball can be struck back to the other half.

Introduce mechanics of striking the ball
Strike the ball for a purpose.
They should be trying to strike the ball where the other team can't get it back quickly.

2nd Game "Shootout"
No Goalkeepers

Two goals are placed on the ends. Two teams of 4-6. Each team is attacking a goal and defending a goal. Two teams each take a place behind the goals. The coach will yell out a number of players and a direction like "2 Right".

"SHOOTOUT!"



Two players from each team run by the right side of the goal and then come in. The coach can call any number and direction. After the coach yells out a number and a direction, they roll in a ball for the players. Play for time or a certain amount of points.

Scoring goals
Concept of parallel play

Game 4v4
No goalkeepers



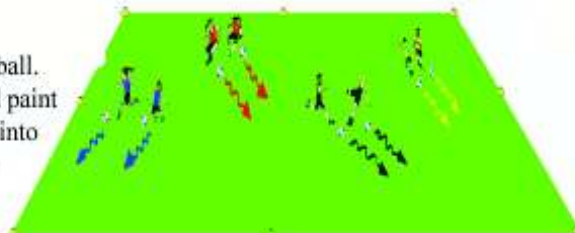
PLAY A 4V4 GAME WHERE 1 GOAL EQUALS "ONE MILLION" POINTS!



U-8 LESSON PLAN: COOPERATIVELY COMPETING

Warm-Up "Paint The Square"

Players pair up with a teammate. They each share have a soccer ball. Tell them to pretend the ball is a paint brush and as a pair try and paint the entire square by passing the ball around the square. Progress into having them create or "paint" a picture with the ball by passing. A good "paint stroke" only counts when the ball is on the ground.



Guided Discovery Question: "How can you make sure your pass stays on the ground?"
Answer: By hitting the middle of the ball.

1st Activity -Triangles

Two players take 3 cones and spread them about a yard apart into a triangle shape. One player passes the ball through a pair of cones and the other player will then receive the ball and to take the ball around a cone and then back through for the other player to repeat. Every time they can do this successfully it is a point. Anytime they hit a cone or the pass isn't completed, it is not a point. See which pair can get the most.



Guided Discovery Question: How can you and your partner score more points?
Answer: By always being ready to receive a pass. By always making a good pass to our teammate.

2nd Activity

"Matthews" Line Game

This is a 4v4 game but it is always played with 2 balls going at the same time. The object is to dribble the ball over a line. When a team scores by dribbling over a line, they look for a new ball that is delivered by the coach. An extra point is scored if the player that dribbled over the line can tell the coach who passed them the ball. This will encourage them to pass a little bit more.

Guided Discovery Question: How do you know when to dribble and when to pass? Answer: We can dribble when we have space. We need to pass when someone comes to try and get the ball from us.



3rd Activity

"Outside" Goals

Divide into two teams of 3-4 players each. Make 2 goals on each end with flags, cones outside the normal playing field. Coach has a supply of balls in order to keep the game flowing. A goal can only be scored from inside the field so the ball must be passed through the goals that are outside. Players can not go outside the field to score.

Guided Discovery Question: Is it better to try and score far away from the outside goals or closer? Answer: Closer. Follow up with "how does this happen"? Answer: By finding a teammate who is closer to an outside goal.



Final Activity-The Match

Play 4v4 to goals

Coach has a supply of balls to keep match flowing.

"CELEBRATE"



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ACTIVITY #1

Set up: Follow the Leader

Instructions:

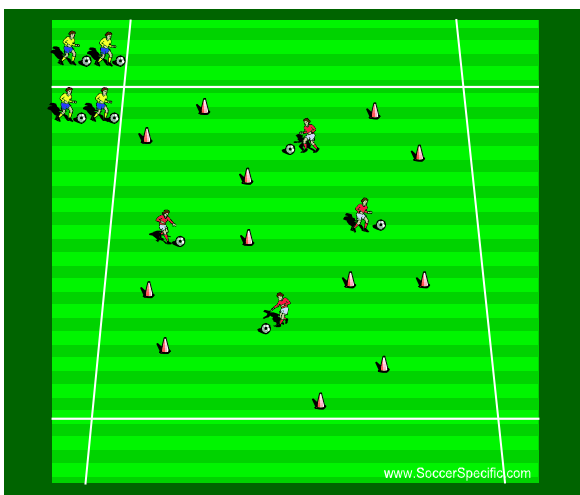
Have players work in pairs. Each player follows the 'leader' in the direction he/she goes, without a ball, and mirrors everything they do...jogging, skipping, rolling, tumbling...Let them 'ham it up' and have some fun...Anything goes! Switch roles, so everyone has an opportunity to be the 'leader'. Who can act the goofiest?

Progression: Add a ball, and experiment with different surfaces of the foot:

1. Inside and outside of the foot - changing directions
2. Laces - longer 'touch' - dribbling for speed
3. Sole - pulling, rolling

Coaching Points:

1. General coordination and balance
2. Ball Control
3. Vision



ACTIVITY #2

Set up: The 'Gate' Game

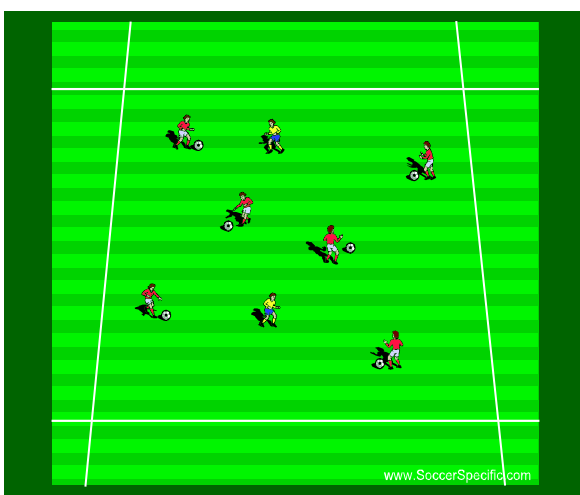
Instructions:

2 teams of 4; Randomly place gates (3 yards wide) around field. There should be two more gates than players. First group is up - Players must dribble through as many gates as possible in 45 seconds. After 45 seconds, second team steps onto the field and first group rests. Play a second round. Can you beat your first score?

Progression: May pass ball through gate and run around gate to collect ball on other side.

Coaching Points:

1. Dribbling for speed, changing direction
2. Response
3. Pressures of the 'game'



ACTIVITY #3

Set up: Bulldog; 10 yards x 15 yards (or as needed)

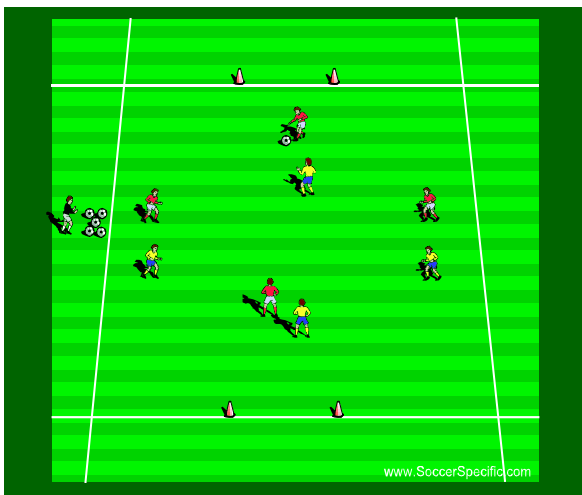
Instructions:

All players are dribbling freely inside the grid. The two players who do not have balls (the bulldogs) enter the grid on the coaches command and try to steal someone's ball. If you are successful, you are no longer the 'bulldog'. If you lose your ball, you become the 'bulldog' and try to win a ball back.

Play 30 second games. You score a point if you have possession of a ball at end of the round.

Coaching Points:

1. 'Keeping the Ball'
2. Problem solving
3. Introduction of shielding: body between ball and defender



ACTIVITY #4

Set up: 4 v 4 - Boss of the Balls; Grid Size 25 yards x 35 yards; Goals 5 yards wide

Instructions:

Coach starts play by knocking a ball into the field. When the ball goes out of play or a goal is scored, coach will send another ball in immediately. When all of the balls are exhausted, coach will ask the players to get a soccer ball and bring back to him by dribbling.

Coaching Points:

1. Decision Making - Dribbling, passing, shooting?
2. Anticipation
3. FUN!



ACTIVITY #5

Set up: The Game; 4 v 4; Grid Size - 25 yards x 35 yards (or as needed)

Instructions:

Free Play; No Restrictions

Coaching Points:

1. All of the above points mentioned
2. Let them play and have FUN!

Making a Soccer Lesson Plan

Design, Diagram and Make Sense

When making a lesson plan remember the following points:

- Design your session for the number of players on the team.
- Make sure your drills and activities are age specific.
- Design activities to flow from simple to complex – add elements of the game as you progress.
- Design session to include:
 1. Warm Up.
 2. Small-sided activity (e.g. 4 v 2 keep away).
 3. Expanded small-sided activity, with discretion.
 4. 6 v 6 (5 v 5 plus keepers) to two large goals.
- Use progression for teaching techniques or tactics as a guide for planning session.
- Use the appropriate space on the lesson plan to diagram your activity, describe the organization and list the key coaching points.
- Include the objectives of the game or exercise and the method of scoring.
- If using restrictions, make sure they are applicable to your objective and topic.
- Include the general dimensions for the playing areas – you should be prepared to adjust the size during your session if needed.
- Use the area of the field that is most applicable to your topic if possible to provide a clearer reference for your players.
- Make sure your activities are realistic to the game.

When diagramming, remember the following points:

- Keep the diagrams simple.
- Use a straight line for a pass – a dotted line for a run – and a scribbled line for a dribble.
- Include the size of the area on lesson plan next to diagram.
- Indicate neutral players with an N.

Make sure your practice makes sense:

- Does it look like soccer?
- Will your players understand where the practice fits in the game?
- Are the objectives you set for the players to achieve realistic?
- Are your instructions clear and to the point?
- Does the activity or practice bring out the actual elements of the game?

After all that DURING THE PRACTICE –

**DON'T FORGET IF IT ISN'T WORKING
THEN CHANGE IT!!!**

And last but not least –

MAKE SURE IT'S FUN!!!

NAME _____

DATE _____

TOPIC _____

Coaching Points

Warm Up

Match Related (1st Activity)

Match Related (2nd Activity)

Match Condition (3rd Activity)

Small Sided Game

