

10/11U

The purpose of this simple coaching manual is to help you understand your players and your role as a recreational youth soccer coach. This guide will provide some information about your players' physical and mental ability, your role as a coach, and how your practices and games should be structured.

Remember: Practice makes PERMANENT, if the players practice a skill the wrong way then they will be really good at doing that skill incorrectly. It is easier to make corrections at the younger ages than at older ages.

Your players:

- Your players have longer attention spans but you'll need to keep instruction short.
- Your players are more open to drills than activities.
- Your players will need to work on flexibility and will require a basic pre-activity stretch.
- Your players are more peer oriented now than when they were younger. There is more importance placed on peers' opinions.
- Your players are more inclined to want to play rather than being told to play.
- Your players should have better developed motor skills but may need help with balance and agility.

Your role:

Your role as a 10/11U coach is to develop soccer skills to keep players improving while also teaching them about the importance of flexibility and stretching.

You should ALWAYS be positive and keep things fun and engaging. If the players do not have fun, they will not want to come back. Do not get bogged down in trying to teach professional tactics or a dozen skills a day. KEEP IT SIMPLE.

The main topics you may cover: passing (in motion), team shape and positioning, trapping and first touch, and individual attacking and defending.

Emphasize and encourage creativity with the ball.

Keep up communication with the parents/guardians of players on your team.

Your practice:

Your practice will be an hour long, with roughly 30-40 minutes dedicated to soccer drills/activities and 20-30 minutes for the players to play a small-sided game. Small-sided games should not be more than 5v5. You may need to have two small-sided games going at once. There should be no subs for the "play" portion of practice, EVERYONE is playing. You do not need goalies for small-sided games.

Your practices should include elements of two topics, i.e., dribbling and passing, passing and attacking, defending and transitions, etc.

Make sure to progress your session from simple to complex. This will allow players to understand basic components of the skill(s) you are training and then develop them further in more complicated scenarios.

***Drills vs Activities**

- Activities are fluid and all players are moving. They are typically more fun than drills.
- Drills are repetitive and commonly use lines. Make sure to keep lines short – 2 or 3 players tops.

Your drills should be functional. This means they transition easily into the game environment.

Your games:

Your games should focus on two objectives. All objectives should be realistic for your players and differ in difficulty. They may be both attacking, both defending, or one of each.

Players should play more than one position – ideally each position at least once. They are still learning the game and may flourish in a position you had not previously thought.

At this age, you should be able to take a more passive role during games. You should not need to direct the players the entire game. You should only have to make corrections on the sidelines to the players sitting out. Allow them to make mistakes and see if they can fix them on their own from what they learned in practice.

****All players should play roughly 50% of the game.****