

Handbook for the
Recreational Soccer Coach:
Perspectives, Activities,
Advice



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Director of Recreational Soccer
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Introduction to Eclipse Soccer Club

Welcome to the Recreational Soccer Program at Eclipse Soccer Club! On behalf of the Eclipse Soccer Club Board of Directors, our many volunteers, and our players, I want to thank you for volunteering to manage and coach an Eclipse recreational soccer team.

Eclipse Soccer Club is the largest soccer club in the southwest Houston area, with well over 2,400 youth from the ages of 3 to 19 who are playing soccer in many different leagues and at many different competitive levels. Eclipse has a program that's just right for every youth soccer player, no matter how well he or she plays soccer.

This handbook was developed exclusively for our Recreational Soccer Program coaches. It contains the information that you will need to understand your role and responsibilities, and the roles and responsibilities of others that you will rely on to help you manage the team.

The club realizes that you are choosing to invest your time and energy into the development of the youth in our area. Our club is built on the efforts of volunteers like you. We understand the importance of providing you with clear and practical information so that you may effectively fulfill your duties as a coach.

As a coach, you will have considerable influence over the character and development of the players on your team. I encourage you to understand the considerable influence that you'll wield over the young men or young women under your guidance. Strive to be a positive influence at all times. How you react in good times and bad will speak volumes.

Thank you for again for volunteering. Good luck this season!

Paul Rossetti
President
Eclipse Soccer Club

About James Jordan, Director of Recreational Soccer

Welcome to the Recreational soccer program at Eclipse. Thank you for willingness and commitment to expanding soccer in your community and for being part of the Eclipse family.

My name is James Jordan and I will be serving as your director for the upcoming season. I was born and raised in the north of England and played soccer there for Bradford City AFC before coming to the States on a soccer scholarship to play at Mercer University in Macon, GA. At Mercer, I started all four years and served as team captain for two years on a team that won three ASUN conference titles. Following graduation, I have worked as a teacher, administrator, and soccer coach at the middle and high school (varsity) levels, where my teams (boys and girls) have won numerous state championships. As a club soccer coach, I have worked with various ages of players, coaching both boys' and girls' teams. I hold the USSF National Youth License and NSCAA Premier Diploma (A License equivalent). I also recently earned my doctorate in educational leadership.

In my role at Eclipse, I hope to share my experiences as a player, coach, and educator in order to help you become the best possible coach for your players. As such, I will come to practice sessions, games, and be available as a resource for any soccer-related questions that you may have. For some of you, this is your first time coaching soccer, while others may have coached for years. If I have learned one thing about coaching soccer, it is that there is always more to be learned!

In order to improve the recreational experience for our players, I have put together this handbook. Basically, it is everything I have learned about coaching soccer. Of course, I strongly recommend you read through the sections relevant to the age group you are coaching; however, I hope you read this handbook in its entirety (and return to it often!). I believe that by doing so, you will gain a greater understanding of soccer and how to coach your players. There are many activities included in the younger age groups that are also very appropriate for older age groups (I would not go the other way, though). I regularly utilize 1v1 and 2v2 activities for my varsity team, as well as freeze tag and world cup!

If you ever have any questions about any of the content here in this handbook, please don't hesitate to contact me. Although I do not lay claim to originating all of the activities, I have used them all and look forward to a continuing dialogue about how we can create the best possible recreational soccer environment here at Eclipse.

Sincerely,

James Jordan, Ed.D.
Director of Recreational Soccer
Eclipse Soccer Club

What is Recreational Soccer?

The general goal of recreational soccer is for the players to have **fun**. We are not trying to recreate the select or competitive soccer experience. **Players improve** when they get **touches on the ball**, when they have **fun**, and when they are **appropriately challenged**. Even at the competitive levels, top coaches and governing bodies continue to emphasize that youth soccer should be focused on individual player development rather than creating a team that prioritizes winning over all else. Arsene Wenger (the coach of Arsenal FC in England) puts it more succinctly: “At a young age winning is not the most important thing... the important thing is to develop creative and skilled players with good confidence.”

In recreational soccer, therefore, you should constantly **strive to structure practices that maximize players’ touches on the ball**, contain lots of fun and game-like activities, and always end with a scrimmage. **In games**, you must adhere to the 50% minimum playing time rule; however, you should seek to provide **equal playing time** for your players, **regardless of their ability**.

The purpose of recreational soccer is not to “build a dynasty” and crush the opposition by as many goals as possible - this is why we mix up the teams each year. Once you start focusing on “getting the win,” you view your players differently. You start to structure practices differently - usually, it involves lots of lines and lectures. Resist this impulse at all costs! You should **measure success** not by results on Saturdays, but **by how many players want to continue playing soccer**.

Again, the bottom line in recreational soccer is for the kids to have **fun**. If you are constantly shouting at and berating the players for not being able to do what you have asked them, then you should modify the activity, or move on to something else. The best coaches (at all levels) recognize that soccer is the players’ game, a game that we, the adults, tend to complicate.

Finally, if you have a player(s) whose abilities and desires are clearly better suited for the professional training environment of the Academy/Select side of Eclipse, please let me know. Sometimes parents are not aware that we offer a very strong competitive program in boys and girls’ soccer.

Approaching and Organizing Practice Sessions

According to the United States Soccer Federation, coaches should:

Ensure the session is **developmentally appropriate** (allow them to be successful)

Provide clear, concise, and correct information (if in doubt, ask me!)

Start simple and increase complexity (it is much easier than doing it in the opposite order!)

Ensure that the training area is **safe** and appropriate

As much as possible, **allow players to make decisions** (rather than tell them what/when/and how to do things)

A very simple, but effective rule of thumb for approaching and organizing practices for kids of all ages is to **divide your available time into thirds**: (1) Some kind of technique-focused warm-up; (2) 2-4 activities that are game like; and (3) the **scrimmage** - always leave time for a scrimmage!

As a teacher both on and off the field, I have experienced the best results with “**guided discovery**” (Socratic method – asking questions) when teaching/reviewing an activity. For example, after doing toe taps for 30 seconds, instead of telling the players how to do it quickly, what they should do with their arms, whether they should be on tip toes, or heels, etc., ask them what is the best way to do it. As they answer, ask the player to show you and his/her teammates. Recognize/praise them for doing so, and then ask if anyone can do it like that. The best questions contain the answers and are short! For example, “should we use big touches or little touches?” or “should we keep our eyes on the ball or looking around?” If you get a “wrong” answer, have the players attempt to do it in the way the player said and then follow up to see if someone has a different answer.

Do not be afraid to repeat activities, but try to incorporate new ones when you think things are getting too repetitive. Be prepared for inconsistency! What worked great last week may be a disaster this week! Always have more activities to move on to, if necessary. The ones that you don't use can form the basis of next week's practice.

All activities and games can be modified (e.g. making the grid bigger/smaller, imposing number of touch restrictions, increasing/decreasing the number/size of the goals). If your players are not finding success, don't be afraid to modify!

Always bring a **spare ball** and **never** begin the practice by having the players **run laps** around the field. This is a waste of time and energy. If you need something to occupy your players for a minute or two at the beginning of practice, have them juggle the ball, pass with a partner, or do some other **ball-related activity**.

Principles of the Game

As you may not have had a formal (or any) education in soccer, I have summarized the basic principles of the game below. They appear in various forms at soccer coaching courses, on websites, and in soccer manuals. All coaches should know these principles and use them to inform how they think about practices and games. In short, the principles of attack are countered by the principles of defense. Coaches can work on principles of attack and defense at the same time, but this can be confusing for players (and coaches!) as they hear opposing messages. It is better to focus on one side (attack or defense) for each activity.

	Principle	Description
Principles of Attack	Penetration	Trying to score, move the ball forward as quickly as possible
	Support	Moving to help the player with the ball
	Mobility	Moving with or without ball to unbalance the defense
	Width	Creating space from side to side on the field
	Depth	Creating space from front to back on the field
	Improvisation	Coming up with solutions to problems "on the go"
Principles of Defense	Pressure	Trying to win the ball back, stop forward progress
	Delay	Trying to slow the attacker down
	Support-Cover	Moving to help defend around the ball
	Balance	Defending space and opponents on the weak side
	Compactness	Denying critical space in defensive and middle thirds of field
	Control and Restraint	Not being reckless in attempting to win the ball back

Easy activities to bring out and focus on principles of the game:

- 1v1 games naturally create basic attacking and defending situations and the critical transition moments between attack and defense.
- 2v2 games naturally create opportunities to support when defending and combine when attacking.
- 3v3 games provide for width and depth in attack, and also the beginning of "block" (group) defending.
- 4v4 is the first small-group game that effectively incorporates all of the attacking and defending principles of play.

Practice Management Tips

- There should be **lots of water breaks** (this will keep your players and you hydrated and will allow you to set up the next activity). The U4/U6 age group need a break every 5 minutes.
- **Coach every player every practice session** (don't just focus on the "best" players). Just because one player may be big and fast, it does not mean they should get all of your attention. Also, you don't want that player to neglect his/her skill development at the expense of being "successful" (e.g. scoring lots of goals simply because they physically matured before their peers). Having an assistant coach to help you with managing the players is always helpful. This allows for more individual player attention, too.
- When introducing an activity, **explain and/or demonstrate as quickly as possible (e.g. under 30 seconds)**. In general, you should explain by doing. Remember, the younger the kids are, the more concrete and simple your explanations need to be. Remember, too, that not all children (or adults) learn best by listening, many soccer players learn best experientially. Therefore, after you demonstrate, get them to do it.
- Try to use "**guided discovery**" (Socratic method – asking questions) when reviewing an activity, especially with the younger aged players. For example, after doing toe taps for 30 seconds, instead of telling the players how to do it quickly, what they should do with their arms, whether they should be on tip toes, or heels, etc., ask them what is the best way to do it. As they answer, ask the player to show you and his/her teammates. Recognize/praise them for doing so, and then ask if anyone can do it like that. The best questions contain the answers and are short! For example, "should we use big touches or little touches?" or "should we keep our eyes on the ball or looking around?" If you get a "wrong" answer, have the players attempt to do it in the way the player said and then follow up to see if someone has a different answer.
- **Do not be afraid to modify activities**; simply making a space bigger or smaller, mixing up the teams, putting players on touch restrictions, changing the size/location of the goals **changes** the activity. This approach allows you to evolve an activity rather than having to set up a completely new one.
- **Bring closure to the session** by having players gather up equipment and gather around you. Review the session and ask them what they learned. If they say something like "kicking the ball," then follow up with a question (e.g., what part of the foot did we use? Who can show me? etc.). Remember, what you think you are teaching is not necessarily what they are learning! Wrap up practice by highlighting the positives, looking forward to the next game/practice and end with your team's chant/cheer!

Game Management Tips

- **Be the first person to arrive at field** and welcome each player and his/her parents upon their arrival (especially important at the younger ages). Walk the field to make sure that it is safe. Ensure the goals are appropriately weighted down.
- Remember, kids just want to have fun and play as much as possible. While you **must play players for at least 50%** of each game, **strive to provide equal playing time** for all players (especially in the younger ages).
- At the younger age groups, it is recommended (and possible) to **put in all of your substitutes at the same time** (this will help you keep track of players). Keep track of who starts each game and rotate the starters each week, so that all of your players think of themselves as “starters.” If necessary, you can change the configuration of the team at halftime (e.g. “I want to play with Johnny and Mikey”). Also, as players tire, get hurt, etc., they may ask to come out, which gives you the opportunity to change the configuration of the team. Again, the goal here is **equal playing time**. The more playing time a player gets, the more (s)he will feel valued; therefore, they will try harder and become more valuable to the team! Believe me, this approach works!
- **Great snacks and drinks** can transform a fun game into a great experience! I am not advocating for you to bring sugary drinks and candy as there are plenty of healthy options available; however, snacks and drinks are critical! This is also a great way to utilize a team parent - he or she can make a schedule for different parents to bring drinks/snacks on different days.
- When giving your **halftime team talk**, take a brief moment to **think about what you are going to say!** At the **younger ages**, keep your speech limited to encouragement with perhaps **one coaching point** (e.g. let’s try and spread out when we have the ball, or let’s try and take more shots on goal). Too many coaches talk for talking’s sake during these precious few moments. Trying to remember the multitude of points you are may be inclined to giving them will prove just to confuse them. In fact, **even when coaching the oldest players**, you should **limit yourself to three coaching points**. If you have to talk, maybe ask them what they are seeing out on the field. In short, keep your team talks focused on one or two coaching points, and reserve the rest for praise and asking questions.
- **Win, lose, or tie, ensure that you congratulate your players on a great game and thank them for their effort.** It is always nice to finish with a chant/cheer (e.g. “1-2-3 [team name/nickname]”). Finally, pick up any trash and/or equipment that may have been left. Bring the left-behind shin guards, balls, socks, water bottle, etc. to the next couple of practices and/or include it in your weekly email to the parents.

Communication Best Practices

- **With players:** Remain **positive at all times!** If you are positive and enthusiastic, it will rub off the kids and you will all have a great time; conversely, if you are negative and unenthusiastic, then it will be a long practice session! You are a role model. **Be a positive role model.** **Reinforce positive behavior;** for example, “Did everybody see what a nice thing Johnny just did? Thank you Johnny for picking up those cones for me”; “Thank you, Johnny, for helping Mikey tie his shoe lace.” In short, what gets praised gets repeated. It’s hard to catch all of the “negative” and “selfish” things that kids do at this age, but they will all want your praise. As long as you strive to be consistent in “catching them being good,” you will create a group norm, where they compete for your praise. **Always praise effort.** Praise the outcome when it is desired. Do not highlight a mistake. Again, praise the player for attempting to do something.
- **With referees:** At the youngest age groups (U4-U6s), the coaches are usually the “referees,” so there should be no need for conflict! Recognize why you are there and just try to be fair and consistent. Many of the referees you have in the U8 and up games will be young adolescents who are still playing soccer themselves. While they may get some decisions wrong, they are doing the best they can and should be encouraged (not discouraged) to continue to serve the game. My general advice is to relax, and let the referee do his/her job!
- **With other coaches:** Again, be a **positive role model.** Unless there is an egregious issue (and I can’t think of one), assume the other coach has good intentions and is doing the best they can. If there is an issue, report it to the referee if it something they can handle. If not, wait until after the game and inform the on-site Referee Coordinator. Follow up with an email to Eclipse administrators, and we will investigate.
- **With parents:** At the younger age groups, parents have the biggest influence on whether kids at this age play soccer or not. **Keep the lines of communication open - strive to keep parents “in the loop”** about everything (practice and game times/locations, changes to schedules, updates on how the season is going, requests for snacks, etc.). I recommend a weekly email (can be a few short lines) to tell parents about the upcoming week and any other information that needs to be shared (e.g. somebody left a pair of shin guards on Saturday). Sending this email will not eliminate all issues, but it will provide a regular communication vehicle and will probably prevent the little problems from turning into big ones.
- **With Eclipse:** Remember, this is a **volunteer organization!** Nobody is getting rich or looking to favor certain teams over others. We exist to provide kids with opportunities to play soccer and have fun. That being said, please continue to give us your feedback on how we can improve the experience for our players, coaches, and parents. We may not always be able to honor requests, but, where we can, we will.

Coaching the U4 and U6 Age Groups

For children aged 6 and under, they are more than likely playing soccer because a parent signed them up without their knowledge and/or because friends are playing. This doesn't mean that your players won't learn to love soccer; however, as the coach, you have a huge responsibility to keep them interested in a game that they may not have chosen for themselves. As such, it is important to understand some basic developmental information about your group. Please note that all kids develop at different rates and they will not develop evenly across all of the domains listed below. **Practices should not last longer than 45 minutes** and should include a technique-based warm-up, 2-4 activities, followed by a scrimmage. When you include water breaks every 5 or so minutes, the time goes by fast! Leave them wanting to play more soccer! There are **no assigned positions in these age groups!**

Developmental Information:

Psychomotor (physical)

At this age, kids are in the fundamental movement stage of life. Locomotive exercises, such as running and jumping are possible, as are stabilization exercises, such as hopping on one foot, balancing on tip toes, and stopping. Players will likely display high energy levels, but only for short periods of time - this means that activities shouldn't last for more than 30-45 seconds, as they will give full effort and then stop. Water breaks every few minutes (e.g. 5 minutes between breaks) at this age are a must. Always allow players to get a drink of water if they ask. Keep water breaks short; for example, 60 seconds. You can also do a countdown to make sure the players are hustling to get back for the next activity.

Cognitive (learning)

Abstract concepts like "space," "offside," "pass and move," etc., are completely foreign to these kids! They are in Piaget's "preoperational" stage of cognitive development, which means that they explore and understand the world through direct sensory and motor contact. They will focus on themselves and on concrete objects; for example, I often hear, "that's my ball." At this age, players have no concern for team concepts, they will best learn experientially (by doing) and they need constant positive reinforcement and praise. Again, they have very short attention spans. If you talk for longer than 30 seconds, they lose focus. In fact, if you have to take longer than 30 seconds to explain something to them, what you are saying is likely too complex for them to recall and implement (working memory at this age is still at its infancy stage, too). As the coach, you should make your instructions as clear and concise as possible. A good rule of thumb is that for every activity you do, every player should have a ball and has the opportunity to be successful (see section on model activities for some examples).

Psychosocial (emotional)

At this age, kids are "ME" oriented. This means that they have difficulty understanding team concepts, they likely do not want to share their ball, and will want lots of attention from the

coach (“Am I doing it right, coach?”, “Look at me, coach!”, “Watch this!”, and so on). Again, give as much positive reinforcement as possible. If they are struggling with something, help them out by modifying the activity for them and/or by going over and modeling what to do. Keep the kids moving and having fun! If they really enjoy a game; for example, “freeze tag,” allow every player the opportunity to be the “tagger.” This means that the activity will likely take longer (as you will need to give them a water break during the activity), but each player will get his/her “turn.” They may not understand complex concepts like “justice” or “equity,” but they know when the kid next to them got to do something they didn’t!

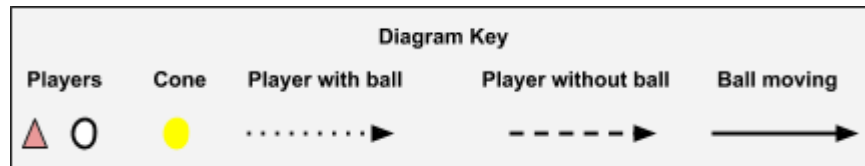
Age-appropriate technical aspects to focus on during the course of the season:

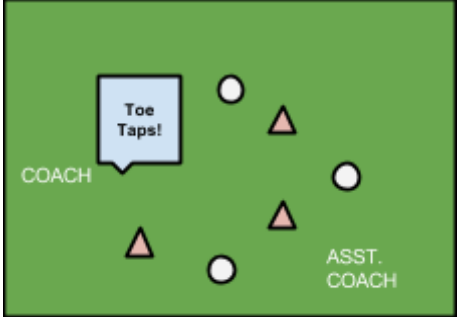
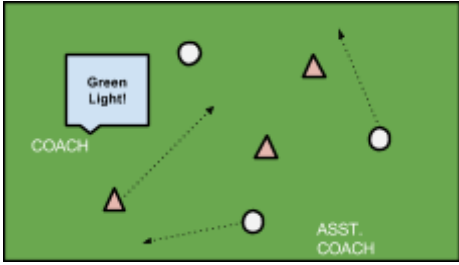
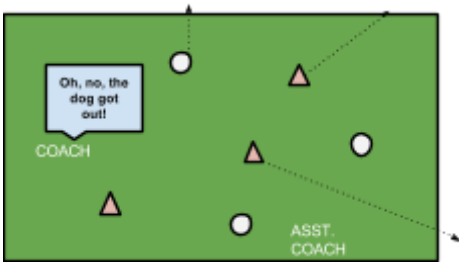
- **Coordination**; for example, running without falling over, moving feet and arms together (marching in place), “toe taps” and “insides” with the ball. Lots of repetition and fun games are key here (e.g. freeze tag is always a favorite).
- **Balance**; for example, standing on one leg, hopping. Competence comes with repetition and progress is not necessarily linear!
- **Dribbling technique**; for example, utilizing both feet and as many different surfaces of the foot as possible (toe, laces, instep, side foot, outside of foot, sole, heel). Also, focus on players’ ability to keep the ball as close as possible without losing control of it and when it is appropriate to take big (heavy) touches versus little (soft) touches.
- **Ball mastery**; for example, being able to manipulate the ball with all of the various surfaces mentioned above. Ball manipulation is fundamental, as it is the foundation for everything in soccer! The more comfortable they get in being able to manipulate the ball, the more confident they will get to do other things.
- **Stopping and turning**; for example, utilize both feet and their various surfaces to stop the ball and move in a different direction with it.
- With all of the research that is coming out on concussions, **do not spend time on headers (heading the ball) and do not berate a child at this age for not heading a ball during practice or a game.**

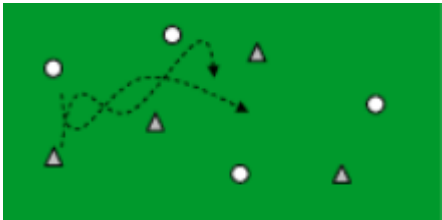


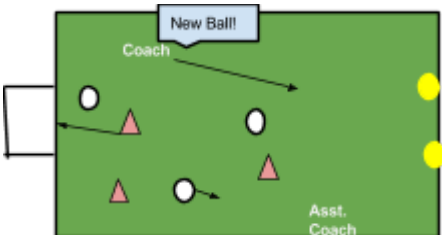
Age-appropriate tactical aspects to focus on during the course of the season:

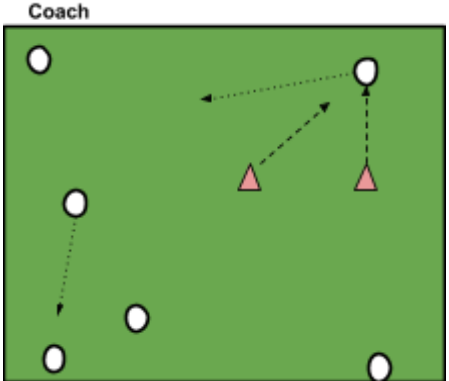
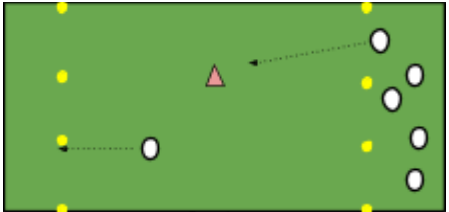
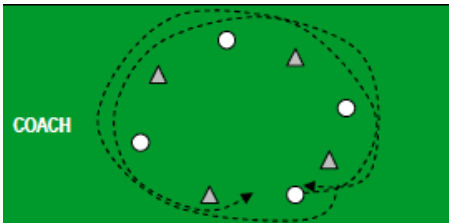
- Scoring in the correct goal!
- Do not worry about tactical concepts at this age level.
- You should not be expecting your players to understand and execute “team concepts,” and/or things that involve anything more complex than the player and the ball. Introducing more variables, such as passing to teammates, combining with teammates, etc. will result in breakdown (and a very frustrated coach!).

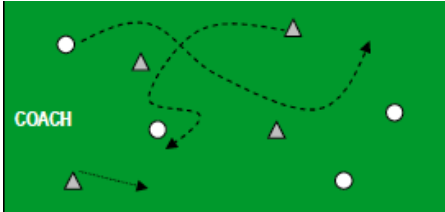
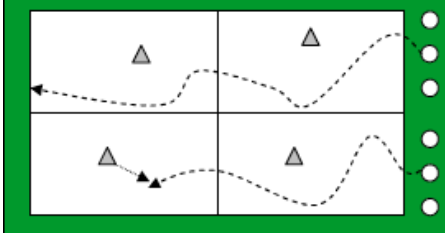
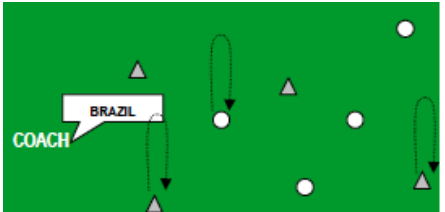
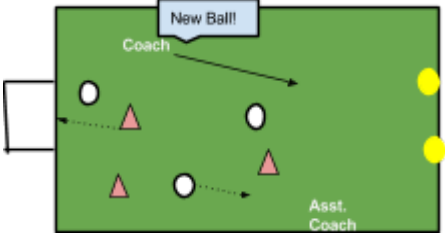
Age-appropriate Sample Activities for U4-U6 Players



Activity	Diagram
<p>#1 Can you do what I can do?</p> <p>Area: 15 x 15 yards (W x L).</p> <p>Activity: Coach shows players how to do “toe taps,” for example. Other ones include “tic toc” - tapping the ball back and forth with the inside of the feet, moving the ball around the grid with a certain foot/surface of the foot.</p> <p>Coaching points: For “toe taps,” highlight players’ being on their “tip toes” (no heels touching the ground), high knees, pumping arms, soft touches on the ball. Can modify to only touch the ball with one foot (hopping). Extend by toe tapping around the ball (going around the world). Can they keep their head up?</p> <p>Additional Notes: Start off by showing them how to do “toe taps,” then see if they can do it (have them do it for no more than 30 seconds). Highlight the player(s) doing it the best, and have them show the rest of the team (nice if it’s followed by a round of applause). Then ask the team if they can do what “Johnny” just did. Repeat this 4 or 5 times and add a coaching point each time. Finish with a competition to see who can get the most toe taps in 30 seconds. Repeat it, but have players see if they can beat their previous score rather than declaring an overall “champion.”</p>	 <p>*Coaches should circulate and look to interact with players at every opportunity.</p>
<p>#2 Red light, green light</p> <p>Area: 20 x 20 yards (W x L).</p> <p>Activity: Each Player has a ball and finds a space inside the grid. When you shout “Green Light,” players begin to dribble around the area. When the coach shouts “Red Light,” players stop the ball using the sole of the foot, then keep this foot on the ball and put their arms out to the side for balance. Continue.</p> <p>Fun Progressions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Yellow Light”: players do another command, be creative! For instance, players must put both knees on the ball. - “Blue Light”: players pick the ball up, hold it on their heads and run around making as much noise as possible. Like a police siren! - “Monster Truck”: when the coach shouts, “Here comes the monster truck,” he/she tries to steal the players’ balls before they can safely get outside the grid (or designate a safety zone (e.g. behind the goal). 	 <p>Coaching points: Highlight the players who keep the ball under control (little, soft touches versus big, heavy touches) and those who keep their head up (so they stay inside the grid and don’t run into others).</p>
<p>#3 Oh, no, the dog got out!</p> <p>Area: 20 x 20 yards (W x L).</p> <p>Activity: Have the players dribble the ball around the area (you can designate a certain foot or surface of the foot to mix things up) - you can call this “walking the dog if you like. When you shout, “Oh, no, the dog got out,” they have to dribble their ball out as fast as possible until you say it’s safe to return. You can also designate certain safe zones (e.g. put down a couple of pinnies/bibs outside the grid that they players have to get to; change the location of the pinnies between turns, too).</p> <p>Coaching points: Highlight the players who keep the ball under control (little, soft touches versus big, heavy touches) and those who keep their head up (so they stay inside the grid and don’t run into others).</p>	 <p>*When the “dog gets out,” coaching points change to taking bigger, heavier touches (to get out of the grid as fast as possible).</p>

Activity	Diagram
<p>#4 Freeze tag Area: 15 x 15 yards (W x L). Activity: Begin with each player inside the grid (no ball) inside the grid. Your job as the coach is to “tag” each player (they are not allowed to step out of the grid - good luck with this - best to get assistant coach/parents to help!). Once a player is tagged, (s)he is “frozen, and they may only be unfrozen by another player crawling through their legs. The tagger’s goal is to freeze all of the players. After the first game, ask who wants to be the tagger (you can have two taggers at a time), and play the game as many times as is necessary to allow all players the opportunity to be taggers. If the game goes longer than 45 seconds, end it or join in to help the tagger(s). Coaching points: Highlight change of pace, change of direction. Most kids this age won’t know how to go from slow to fast, but some might. All know how to get away from the tagger! Ask if they should go to a small space or a big space, towards the tagger or away from the tagger....</p>	 <p>Progression: Each player now dribbles a ball. The tagger does not have a ball. When a player gets tagged he/she picks up the ball and holds it over their head. To unfreeze a player, a player passes the ball through the frozen player’s legs.</p>
<p>#5 Follow the leader Area: 20 x 20 yards (W x L) with a few cones spread randomly around the grid. Activity: Each player has a ball. Players form a long line behind you and copy what you do with the ball. You should start with basics, then progress to more difficult skills and also through in some fun aspects. For example, you walk with the ball around the cones; you suddenly stop and put your right foot on the ball; you pick up the ball and hold it on your head; you dribble in a circle around different cones; you pick up the ball, throws it in the air and catches it; you shoot at a goal; you do a forward role with the ball; etc. Basically, anything crazy and fun! Progression: Put each player with a partner and designate one the leader. After 30 seconds or so, have them swap roles. Have the players swap partners and repeat.</p>	 <p>Coaching points: Focus on players’ ball mastery and keeping their eyes on both the ball and the person in front of them.</p>
<p>#6 Busy bees Area: 20 x 20 yards (W x L). Activity: Have the players “BUZZ” around like a bunch of bees (get them to make the noise!). Make sure you pretend to hear the bees and begin saying that you don’t like bees. Have one of the Assistant coaches kick you with the ball and you fall down and yell “Ouch the bee stung me!” Be very dramatic and the kids will begin stinging you with their ball make sure you move around and stop frequently. They really love this game. Ask if anyone wants to be the beekeeper (your role) and continue the game (go for 30-45 seconds max) and allow all players to have their turn as the beekeeper. Coaching points: Head up, and when it is appropriate for them to take big touches versus little touches in order to sting the beekeeper!</p>	
<p>2 ball “New Ball” scrimmage Area: Full field (if you have it), or half field (put a cone goal on the halfway line). Activity: Put players into 2 teams. Whenever a ball goes out of play or a goal is scored, a coach announces “New Ball!” and rolls another ball into play. The ‘new ball’ should be rolled to neutral space or toward the disadvantaged team. After a goal, roll the new ball in near the center of the field toward the team that was scored against. Do not bounce the “new ball” as it is difficult for these players to judge a bouncing ball at this age. Favor the team on the wrong end of a one sided game. Favor individual players who are not becoming involved in the game. Have parents retrieve lost balls and return them to the coach who just rolled the new ball in so he/she now has 2 balls once more! Play 3-4 minute periods with break. This is a fast paced game and they will tire! Remember to put the players in different color pinnies/bibs. Modify as necessary!</p>	 <p>Change ends at half time. Above all, let them play and have fun. The idea behind having 2 balls in play is that they have more opportunities to kick the ball and score goals!</p>

Activity	Diagram
<p>#7 Sharks and minnows Area: 15 x 15 yards (W x L). Activity: The minnows each have a ball and their task is to stay inside the grid and not have the shark(s) kick their ball out. You can start as the shark. Once a minnow has his/her ball kicked out, (s)he must retrieve it and perform a certain number of toe taps (or tic tocs) before they can return to the grid (usually I say 10 toe taps, but you can change it based on the skill level of your group). The objective is for the shark to clear the grid of minnows. Once you have demonstrated the role of shark, the kids will all want their turn. Play the game as many times as is necessary to allow all kids their turn at being a shark (stop games that go on for longer than 45 seconds - or join in and help!). Give the shark a pinnie/bib! Coaching points: Highlight change of pace, change of direction. Most kids this age won't know how to go from slow to fast, but some might. All know how to get away from the shark! Ask if they should go to a small space or a big space, towards the tagger or away from the shark. Ask how they were able to stop the ball from going out of the grid (get them to show you).</p>	 <p>(Sharks represented by triangles in above diagram)</p>
<p>#8 Gladiator Area: 15 x 15 yards (W x L) with a 2 yard end zone at each end (actually, 19 x 15 yards). Activity: This is another popular game. This time, players line up at one end of the grid with their ball. Their objective is to get the ball to the other end as quickly as possible and stop the ball in the end zone. They are to repeat this (going back and forth as many times as possible in 30 seconds) and keep count of how many times they stop the ball in an end zone. Have players show you how they are dribbling/stopping the ball. Once they have become proficient at this, add the gladiator. Your job is to kick the players' balls out of the grid. Once a player loses his/her ball, (s)he joins you as a gladiator. Gladiators are not allowed in the end zone. Players can only stay in the end zone for a maximum of 3 seconds. The game ends when all balls have been kicked out. Allow everyone their turn to start out being the gladiator.</p>	 <p>Coaching Points: Same as for Sharks and Minnows; however, instead of being multidirectional, players must go in one of two directions to score (like in soccer!).</p>
<p>#9 Circle of doom! Area: Circle whose radius is approx. 3-5 yards (you can always adjust the size of your circle based on the number of players you have). Activity: Make a circle in the middle of your designated practice space. Have all players and coaches hold hands (balls at feet). Stretch the circle as big as it will go while everyone is still holding hands. Have everyone sit on their own ball (chicken eggs). One player is chosen to be the dribbler. The dribbler walks around the outside of the circle dribbling the ball, when (s)he tags one of the players it starts the race. The players then race around the circle in the same direction. The first one back sits in the empty spot. The player without a spot continues the game. Start without the ball, so they get the idea of the game. You can progress this activity by allowing the players to use their balls and having them run in different directions (to prevent congestion). Allow all players a turn at being the "dribbler." Coaching points: Again, highlight little steps versus big steps, staying as close to the outside of the circle as possible, little touches versus big touches, etc.</p>	

Activity	Diagram
<p>#10 Cops and robbers Area: 15 x 15 yards (W x L). Activity: Each player needs a bib and a soccer ball. Players should tuck their bib in the side of their shorts. Players with a bib are called 'Robbers' and the coach is the 'Cop'. Players begin by dribbling around the area. The Cop is then released, start the Cop without a soccer ball. The Cops job is to grab the Robbers' bibs. Once this happens the Robber becomes a Cop and helps the coach steal bibs. After all the Robbers have been caught the coach chooses one of the players to start of as the Cop. Continue until all players have had the opportunity to be the Cop. Additional notes: Play the game initially without soccer balls, so the players get used to the game. Once players are used to the game add soccer balls.</p>	 <p>Coaching points: Highlight changes of pace, changes of direction, little touches versus big touches, stopping and turning with the ball, shielding (turning body to make it harder to grab the bib), etc.</p>
<p>#11 Gauntlet! Area: 20 x 20 yards (W x L) in 10-yard grids (modify as necessary). Activity: Place a player, without a ball into each grid. These players should be on their hands and feet, like a crab! Place the other players, at least two, with soccer balls on the end line. The players with the soccer balls are trying to dribble through the crab players to the opposite end line. When a crab player touches their soccer ball, they become a crab. Continue until no players remain. Continue with another game but make sure to use new crab players. Additional notes: Depending on your numbers, you may need to be a crab yourself and/or recruit parents to be crabs. Not all of the grids need a crab (e.g. you can have 3 crabs: 2 players and you to cover the space).</p>	 <p>Coaching points: Again, highlight little touches versus big touches, evading pressure (the crabs), etc.</p>
<p>#12 Countries of the world Area: 20 x 20-yards (W x L). Activity: Each player needs a soccer ball. Players should start the game by dribbling around the area. When the coach shouts the name of a country the players should react as quickly as possible and do the movement designated to that country. Commands could include Argentina – players continue to dribble, Brazil – players should throw the ball in the air and catch it, USA – players should pretend they know a trick move and complete it, England – players should bounce the ball off their forehead, Spain – players should do toe taps on the ball, etc. Additional notes: Be creative. Choose your own countries and corresponding actions!</p>	 <p>Progressions: Have the players come up with a country and move. Combine countries (e.g. Brazil, England), so players have to do two things at once.</p>
<p>"New ball" scrimmage for end of practice Area: Full field (if you have it), or half field (put a cone goal on the halfway line). Activity: Whenever a ball goes out of play or a goal is scored, a coach announces "New Ball!" and rolls another ball into play. The 'new ball' should be rolled to neutral space or toward the disadvantaged team. After a goal, roll the new ball in near the center of the field toward the team that was scored against. Do not bounce the "new ball" as it is difficult for these players to judge a bouncing ball at this age. Favor the team on the wrong end of a one sided game. Favor individual players who are not becoming involved in the game. Have parents retrieve lost balls and return them to the coach who just rolled the new ball in so he/she now has 2 balls once more! Play 3-4 minute halves with a halftime break. This is a fast paced game and they will tire! Remember to put the players in different color pinnies/bibs. Modify as necessary!</p>	 <p>Change ends at half time. Let them play! "New ball" allows you to give every player an opportunity to kick the ball.</p>

Coaching the U8 Age Group

All practices should still be based primarily on fun games. In games, **rotate all players in all positions**. At this age, a **typical session** should follow this basic structure (**not to exceed 60 minutes**):

- **Technique-based warm-up** where each player has a ball (majority) each player works with a partner (occasionally) (10-15 minutes)
- **Mixture of individual (majority) and partner activities (occasionally)** where players play maze-type games and they are introduced to multiple target/goal games (15-25 minutes)
- **Small-sided game** where you form 2 teams with no goalkeepers and let them play (15-20 minutes)
- **Cool down** (5 minutes)

Developmental Information:

Psychomotor (physical)

Still in motion – they will likely be twitching, jerking, scratching and blinking most of the time. Do not be insulted by this behavior; they are not necessarily being “disrespectful.” It is second nature to them at this age, as they cannot sit or stand still for more than a few seconds.

Improvement in pace and coordination from U6. For example. They can now learn to kick a ball on the run, jump, skip, hop, chase, and dodge (with varying degrees of success!); however, the immaturity and physical limitations of the U8 player will be obvious. For example, do not expect them to be able to juggle the ball, but this is a good age group to introduce modified juggling (more on this later). They still lack a sense of “pace” and will go “flat out” until they need to stop completely and rest.

Cognitive (learning)

Jean Piaget (1896-1980) was a psychologist and developmental theorist. His theories focus on how children perceive the world differently than adults and their development proceeds in determined stages which always follow the same sequence (play is a fundamental part of this process). At this age, children are now in Piaget’s concrete operational stage. This means that they will have limited ability to do more than one task at a time. For example, the simple task of “controlling the ball” demands most of their attention capacity, leaving little to no capacity for “tactical” decision making. They are only just starting to understand time and space relationships (it is not fair to expect them to play a ball into the space for someone to “run onto”). Kids believe that effort is synonymous with performance, i.e. if they tried hard, they performed well.

Psychosocial (emotional)

At this age, kids are still very self-centered and cooperation will be difficult; nevertheless, they are starting to become inclined toward partner activities (but not really with groups of players).

Self-concept and body image are beginning to develop and are extremely fragile. They do not understand sarcasm or “dry humor,” so coaches should avoid pointing out physical characteristics. They have a great need for approval from adults, so be positive at all times. They play on “Coach Ian’s team,” or on the “Sharks team.” On the flip side, they are very easily bruised by any negative comments. There is a desire for social acceptance – they want everyone to like them. They like to play soccer because it is “fun.” Remember, soccer is a game, so most (if not all) of your activities should take the form of games!

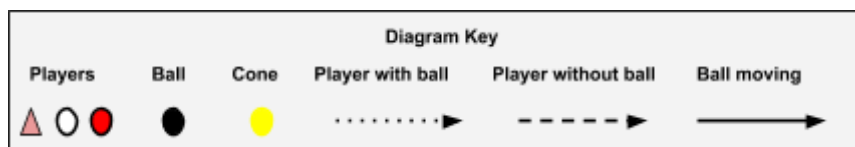
Age-appropriate technical aspects to focus on during the course of the season:

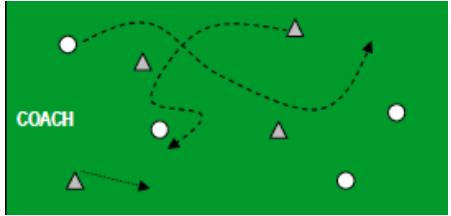
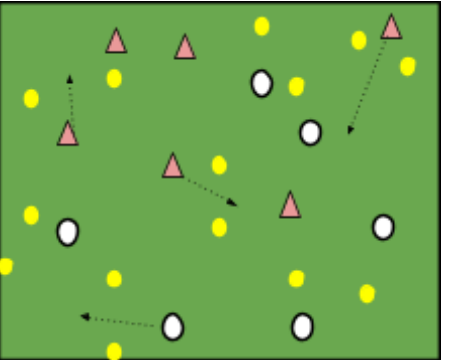
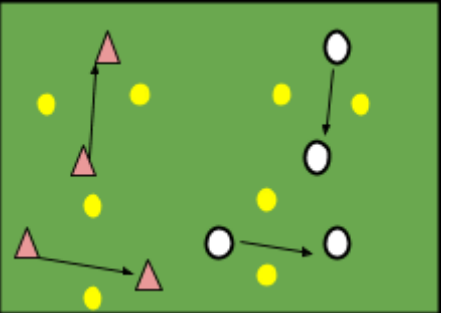
- Still focus lots of time on **dribbling** technique and **ball mastery**.
- Encourage **shooting** as much as possible (even if it’s not on the “big goal”) - accuracy and repetition in lots of different contexts is most important here.
- They should be honing their **ball control** skills as much as possible.
- Introduce players to **passing** and **receiving**.
- **1v1 attacking** (every single practice should have some kind of activity based on this)
- Introduce them to **shielding** the ball with their body when they are dribbling away from pressure.
- Introduce players to **juggling** - this is a good thing to work on before/after practice, whenever the return from water breaks, or when you need a couple of minutes to set up the next activity.
- With all of the research that is coming out on concussions, **do not spend time on headers (heading the ball)** and **do not berate a child at this age for not heading a ball during practice or a game**.

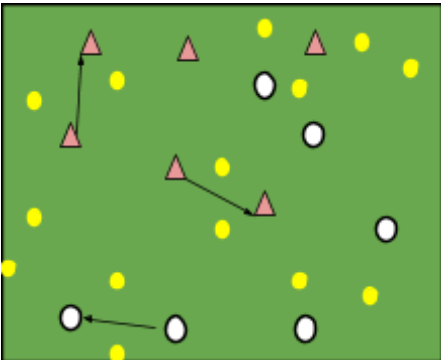
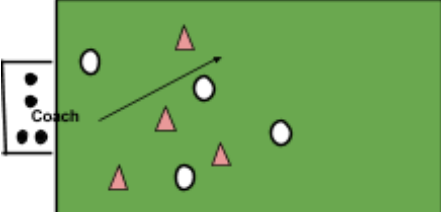
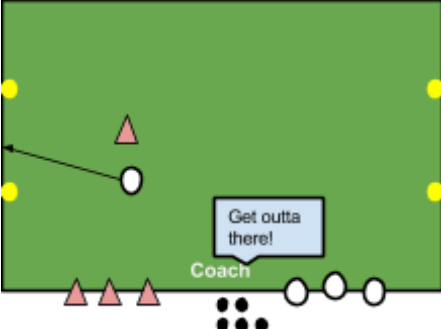
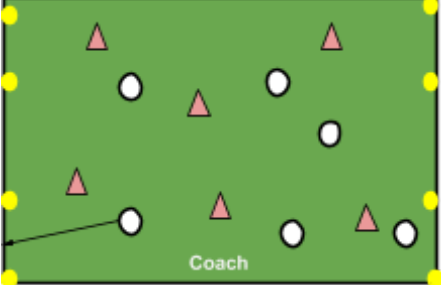
Age-appropriate tactical aspects to focus on during the course of the season:

- Beyond “spreading out on offense” and “helping out on defense,” do not worry about tactical concepts at this age level. You should not be expecting your players to understand and execute “team concepts,” and/or things that involve anything more complex than the player and the ball. Introducing more variables, such as passing to multiple teammates, combining with teammates, etc. will result in breakdown (and a very frustrated coach!).

Age-appropriate Sample Activities for U8 Players



Activity	Diagram
<p>#1 Dribble tag Area: 20 x 20 yards (W x L). Activity: All players dribbling a soccer ball within the grid will try to tag each other with their hands. Players cannot abandon their own ball to tag. Play for 30-45 seconds and have players count the number of times they tag/get tagged. Progressions: Put a restriction on; for example, players can only dribble with their left foot (or right foot), people can only be tagged on their back (this will encourage players to constantly change their body position). Play Coaching Points: Highlight successful players - they should be the ones who are keeping the ball under control (small touches, ball mastery), keeping their head up, changing pace and direction, finding space. Advanced players will start to “think ahead” by controlling their ball and tagging players at the same time.</p>	
<p>#2 Gate dribbling Area: 25 x 25 yards (W x L). Activity: Set up a number of 1.5 yard gates randomly arranged in your grid (the size and number of gates can vary depending on the number of players you have and their skill level. I would start with at least 3 more gates than players). Players score a point for each gate they dribble the ball through. Go for 30-45 seconds and have each player keep count of how many points (s)he got so many. See how many they get and ask how the top player how (s)he got so many. Get him/her to do a quick demonstration. Repeat and see if players beat their original score. Repeat. Progressions: Add a restriction; for example, players can only dribble with their left foot (or right foot), or can only go through a gate using a certain surface (e.g. toe, laces, sole, etc.). Reduce the number of gates. Make the gates smaller. Replace some of the gates with pinnies and say that players must go through a cone gate followed by a pinne gate. Introduce a pair of “bandits” whose job is to stop players from dribbling through the gates. Change the bandits. Coaching points: Speed of play, weight and type of touch (heavy, soft, which surface of the foot is best suited for different situations?), thinking ahead, finding space, evading pressure, keeping head up whilst maintaining control of the ball, changing pace and direction.</p>	 <p>Additional Notes: This is a good activity to repeat on different days, as you can have players remember their “best scores” and can compare progress over the course of the season.</p>
<p>#3 Pong Area: Big open space Activity: Two players play against each other and share a ball. They place two cones anywhere from 2-8 yards apart. They choose! Players pass back and forth to each other. The rules are that the ball must never stop, must always stay on the ground and must go through the two cones without touching them. Whenever this is violated the other person receives a point. Because of the rule that the ball must never stop, players have to play 1-2 touch. The closer the two cones are the closer the pairs are probably going to be. The farther apart they are, the more they will have to move laterally and look more like the old arcade “pong” game. Play for time and see who can become the PONG Champ! Coaching points: Ball mastery, appropriate foot surface, weight of pass, movement of feet, thinking ahead (to get into position for the next pass).</p>	

Activity	Diagram
<p>#4 Gate passing Area: 25 x 25 yards (W x L). Activity: Put players in pairs with a ball. Set up a number of 1.5 yard gates randomly arranged in your grid (the size and number of gates can vary depending on the number of pairs of players you have and their skill level. I would start with at least 3 more gates than pairs). Players score a point for each completed pass they make through a gate to their partner. Go for 30-45 seconds and have pairs keep count of how many points they get. See how many they get and ask how the top pair got so many. Get them to demonstrate. Repeat. Switch partners. Repeat. Progressions: Put the players on restrictions; for example, they must use a certain foot or surface of the foot to score a point. Reduce the number of gates. Make the gates smaller. Replace some of the gates with pinnies and say that pairs must go through a cone gate followed by a pinne/bib gate. Introduce a bandit (or pair of "bandits") whose job is to stop pairs from scoring in gates. Change the bandit(s). Coaching Points: Speed of play, weight and type of pass, thinking ahead, finding space, evading pressure, communicating with partner.</p>	
<p>#5 World cup Area: In front of the big goal. Activity: The coach (or someone he/she designates) goes in goal and it is "every man for himself" trying to score as many goals as possible. As more people arrive, make teams of 2 or even 3. Give team names (e.g. England, USA, Brazil, etc.). Progressions: Put players on touch restrictions (e.g. no more than 3 touches before they have to pass it to a teammate or shoot), when playing in teams, make a "first time finish rule," or mandate that all players on the team must touch it before a goal can be scored. Coaching Points: 1v1 dribbling skills, shooting, awareness, speed of play, change of pace and direction, passing skills, thinking ahead, communication.</p>	 <p>This is a great activity that you can set up while players are arriving to practice.</p>
<p>#6 "Get outta there" Area: 15 x 20 yards (W x L) with a cone goal (5-7 yards wide) at each end. Activity: Players are divided into 2 teams. Players are positioned either side of the coach, who has multiple soccer balls by his/her feet. Players from each team are given a number (e.g. 1, 2, 3, 4...) and when the coach calls out a number, after rolling a ball out, (e.g. "1") both the 1's from each team run out and try to score on each other's goal. If a goal is scored or it goes out of bounds, the coach calls out "Get Outta There," the players clear the field and the coach serves a ball for the next group. Play to a certain number of goals (e.g. 5), mix the teams up and play again. Progressions: Call out 2 numbers at a time, vary the service, make the goals bigger/smaller, have players start by sitting on their hands. Coaching Points: Speed of play, get shot off quickly, change of pace and direction.</p>	
<p>4 goal game Area: 30 x 40 yards (W x L). Depending on your numbers and available space, make the field as big as you can (use existing field lines to help). Activity: Make 4 cone goals (one in each corner of the field). Goals should be approximately 6-7 yards wide (bigger goals = greater opportunities for success). Let teams play against each other - even numbers. No goalkeepers. This game encourages players to start thinking about the "weak side" and to switch the ball out of pressure. Progressions: Put in a halfway line and mandate that all attacking players must be in the attacking half for a goal to count (this discourages goaltending/hanging back). Add a neutral(s) to ensure the attacking team is always numbers up. Put touch restrictions on the players (do not restrict them to fewer than 3 touches) whereby if someone takes too many touches, it results in a free kick to the other team.</p>	 <p>Coaching Points: spread out on offense, switch the point of attack, keep your head up, find space.</p>

Coaching the U10 Age Group

Players are not starting to become capable of understanding and implementing some more complex team-oriented as well as individual tasks. **Continue to rotate all players in all positions.** At this age, a **typical session** should follow this basic structure (**not to exceed 75 minutes**):

- **Technique-based warm-up** where each player has a ball or each player works with a partner (5-15 minutes)
- **Directional games** where players play to targets and/or zones (20-25 minutes)
- **Small-sided game** where you form 2 teams with goalkeepers and let them play (25-30 minutes)
- **Cool down** (5 minutes)

Developmental Information:

Psychomotor (physical)

At this age, boys and girls begin to develop separately (with girls often developmentally ahead of boys). Their ability to stay physically active is increased from U8. Gross and small motor skills are becoming more refined. [Gross motor skills are bigger movements—such as rolling over and sitting—that use the large muscles in the arms, legs, torso, and feet. Fine motor skills are smaller movements—such as picking up small object—that use the small muscles of the fingers, toes, etc.] There is a greater diversity in playing ability. The “bigger, faster” kids start to dominate because of their physical maturity.

Cognitive (learning)

Some children will begin moving from the concrete operational stage to formal operational stage (which means that they are starting to develop the ability to understand abstract concepts). However, the majority of your players will not be developmentally ready to implement “possession” soccer or playing an “offside trap.” Most of your players will still be thinking about things very concretely (literally); for example, there’s the ball, I should go over and get it. Nevertheless, some players will start to understand some fundamental tactical concepts, such as changing the direction of the ball (e.g. to the “weak side”). They are starting to demonstrate increased responsibility (e.g. carrying “own stuff,” tucking in jersey, tying own shoelaces).

Psychosocial (emotional)

Continued positive reinforcement needed. They are becoming more serious about “their play” and they may initiate play on their own (e.g. set up their own game, practice moves they learned during practice on their own). Peer pressure is still very significant – they still want to be liked by their teammates. Team identification is important and they are starting to become more team-oriented. An adult outside of the family (e.g. you, the coach) may take on added significance.

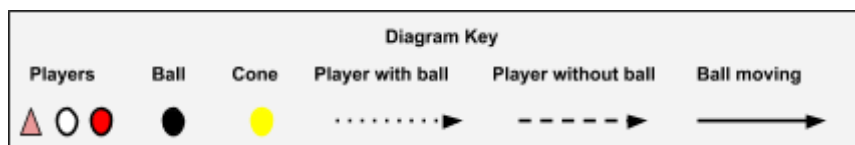
Age-appropriate technical aspects to focus on during the course of the season:

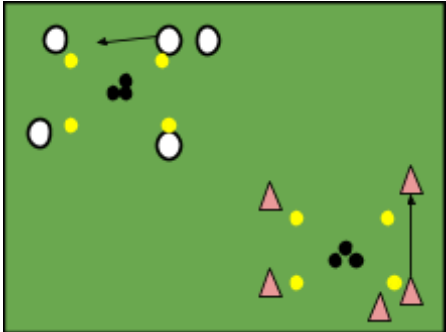
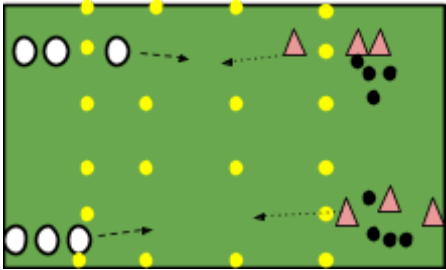
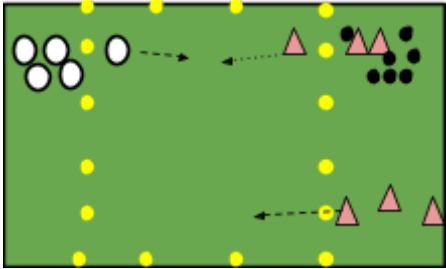
- The majority of sessions should be focused on activities that encourage development of players' **passing and receiving** skills, **dribbling and ball mastery**, as well as **turning and shooting**.
- **1v1 attacking** should continue to be heavily emphasized, while **1v1 defending** can be introduced (try not to confuse the two, though; e.g. do an activity for 1v1 attacking, then do an activity for 1v1 defending. It can be the same activity, but make it clear the focus has changed).
- Continue to have the players **juggle** at every available opportunity (before/after practice and during breaks in the session).
- Introduce players to **shielding the ball**, as well as some **crossing and finishing** (in the flow of games).
- Many sources advocate for teaching “**headers**” (**heading the ball**) at this age; however, outside of some very basic “throw the ball up to myself and head it,” I would wait until the players are a bit older. With all of the research that is coming out on concussions, I would **advise against spending time on headers** and **do not berate a child at this age for not heading a ball during practice or a game**.

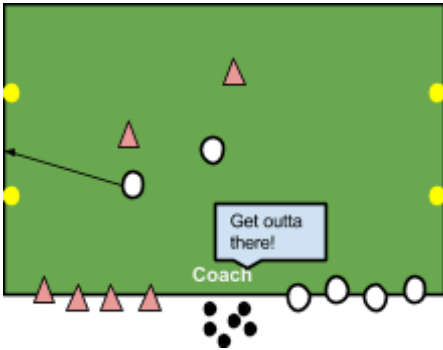
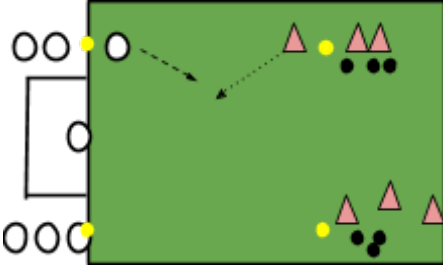
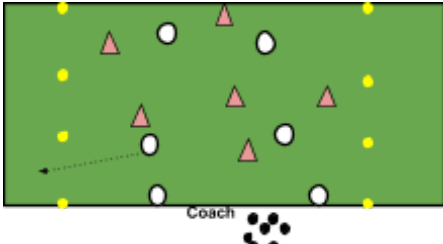
Age-appropriate tactical aspects to focus on during the course of the season:

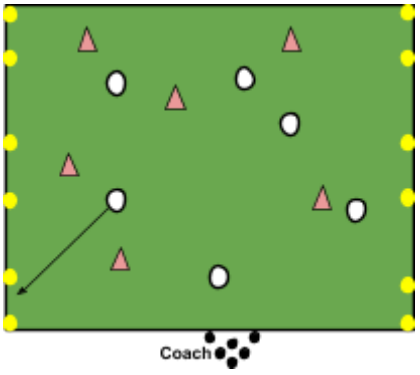
- It is now appropriate to **introduce** (do not expect competence or mastery!) **limited attacking principles** (e.g. add **support, width, and creativity to penetration**)
- **Introduce** the idea of **possession** (do not expect more than 3-5 passes at most) and remember that the majority of your players are still very concrete in their thinking - is the goal to get passes or score goals? Try not to confuse them.
- **Introduce combination play** (at this age, **wall passes** are appropriate and achievable for some players)
- **Introduce** some **limited defending principles** (e.g. pressure and delay). You will have a hard time telling a player not to try win the ball if (s)he is that way inclined; similarly, it will be difficult to tell a player not inclined to “tackling” to change his/her mind. This will come in time (hopefully!).

Age-appropriate Sample Activities for U10 Players



Activity	Diagram
<p>#1 Square pass drill</p> <p>Area: Depending on how many players you have, make 7 x 7 yard (W x L) boxes.</p> <p>Activity: 5 players per box. Start players on the outside of each corner (one corner will have 2 players (one of those players should have the ball). Start by having the player with the ball dribble to the next cone, at which point the player already takes ball from him/her and dribbles to the next cone (and so on). Have players stay on the outside of the cones and make them go counter clockwise to begin with (keeping the ball on their right foot). Change directions (and make them use their left foot). Once they are competently dribbling from one cone to the next, have them pass the ball with their side foot instead of dribble (and then have them follow their pass).</p> <p>Progressions: Limit the number of touches they have (e.g. 3, then 2). Have them count the number of passes they make. Have them come off the cone (defender) at a 45-degree angle to receive the ball. Add a second ball (need to add another person to the grid).</p> <p>Additional Notes: If you have an odd number, you can take away one of the cones to make a triangles (this way, you only need 4 per grid).</p>	 <p>Coaching Points: Open body to receive the ball and take touch towards intended destination. Use outside foot. Lock ankle, point toe when using side foot.</p>
<p>#2 1v1 tunnels</p> <p>Area: Make a couple of 12 x 15 yard (W x L) "tunnels."</p> <p>Activity: For each tunnel, have the attackers at one end with the balls. Both the attackers and defender should start centrally (on their lines). The aim for the attacker is to dribble the ball past the defender and stop the ball on the far line. The defender becomes active when the attacker touches the ball forward. If the defender tackles the forward, (s)he becomes the attacker and tries to "score" at the opposite end. Players return to their line after a point is scored/ball goes out of bounds. Go for 75-90 seconds, review coaching points, and then have the 2 teams swap positions. Make it a competition!</p> <p>Progressions: Change where the defenders and attackers start from on their line (e.g. defenders on the left, forwards central, diagonally across, etc.). Add gate goals (a couple of yards wide) in each corner - have players dribble through/pass through to score. Replace the corner gates with a central goal (4 yards) at each end.</p>	 <p>Coaching Points: Offense: penetration, change of speed/direction. Defense: pressure, move feet, patience/delay, poke tackles.</p>
<p>#3 2v1 tunnels</p> <p>Area: 20 x 15 yard (W x L) "tunnel" (this width heavily favors the offense).</p> <p>Activity: Similar set up to the 1v1 tunnels, but start defenders on one side only (to allow maximum success initially for attackers). Have one group of forwards at the opposite end with the balls; the other group of attackers should line up on the other side. The aim is for the attacking pair to get the ball past the defender and stop it on the end line. If the defender tackles the forward, (s)he becomes the attacker and tries to "score" at the opposite end. Players return to their line after a point is scored/ball goes out of bounds. Go for 75-90 seconds, review coaching points, then have the 2 teams swap positions. Make it a competition by keeping track of goals!</p> <p>Progressions: Change where the defenders and attackers start from on their line (e.g. defenders on the left, forwards central, diagonally across, etc.). Add gate goals (a couple of yards wide) in each corner - have players dribble through/pass through to score. Replace the corner gates with a central goal (4 yards) at each end. Add a second defender and have them enter the play when the attacker makes a pass.</p>	 <p>Coaching points: Offense: penetration; change of speed/direction; support (getting wide); communication. Defense: pressure; move feet; patience; cover; communication.</p>

Activity	Diagram
<p>#4 Get outta there (pairs) Area: 15 x 20 yards (W x L) with a cone goal (5-7 yards wide) at each end. Activity: Players are divided into 2 teams. Players are positioned either side of the coach, who has multiple soccer balls by his/her feet. Players from each team get into pairs and are given a number (e.g. 1, 2, 3, 4...) and when the coach calls out a number, after rolling a ball out, (e.g. "1") both the "1" pairs from each team run out and try to score on each other's goal. If a goal is scored or it goes out of bounds, the coach calls out "Get Outta There," the players clear the field and the coach serves a ball for the next group. Play to a certain number of goals (e.g. 5) and then mix the teams up and play again. Progressions: Vary the service, make the goals bigger/smaller, have players start by sitting on their hands, mandate that to score a goal, it must be a "first time finish." Coaching Points: Speed of play, get shot off quickly, change of pace and direction, communication between teammates; penetration, support, creativity; pressure and cover.</p>	
<p>#5 1v1 to big goal Area: If you have a marked 18-yard box, use it and put a cone 5 yards to the side of each post. If not, make your own and put a cone facing it 18 yards away. Activity: Divide the players into 2 even teams. Have the defenders line up behind the 2 cones level with the posts. Have the attackers line up in 2 lines on the edge of the box (far cones) facing them. The balls should be with the attackers. To begin, have one of the attackers dribble towards the goal and try to score. As soon as the attacker takes his/her first touch forwards, the defender can come out to pressure him/her (but not before). By setting up 2 lines, as soon as one side finishes (goal, tackle, takes too long), you can have the opposite forward begin immediately. Players go to the other line once they have had their turn (e.g. attacker goes to the other attacker line and defender goes to other defender line). Give them a time limit (e.g. 75 seconds) to score as many goals as possible (keep count) and then have the two teams switch roles. Progressions: Move the starting positions of the defenders/attackers (e.g. more centrally/more to the side, start the attackers closer/further away). Have the coach play the ball to the attacker. Add counterattack gates for the defenders to score in.</p>	 <p>Coaching Points: Offense: penetration, change of speed/direction, finishing. Defense: pressure, move feet, patience, show away from the goal. When counterattack gates (4-5 yards) have been added, defenders should stay composed and look to "score," instead of just kick the ball away.</p>
<p>#6 End zone game Area: 40 x 50 yards (W x L) inclusive of a 5-yard deep end zone at each end. Depending on your numbers and available space, make the field as big as you can (use existing field lines to help). Activity: Divide up the players into two even teams. You keep the balls off to one side (around midfield). Teams score a point when they dribble the ball into one of the end zones (they can score in either at any time). Defenders are not allowed in the end zones. Play first team to score 3-5 goals, then review coaching points as appropriate. Repeat as necessary. Progressions: Add a neutral(s), so the attacking team is always numbers up (producing more scoring opportunities). Allow defenders into the end zone. Make the game directional (e.g. team can only score in one end zone). Play transition (whereby when Team A scores in one end zone, they are now trying to score in the opposite end zone - Team B also switches).</p>	 <p>Coaching Points: Attacking principles: penetration, switching the point of the attack (width, mobility, creativity). Defending principles: pressure, cover, and balance.</p>

Activity	Diagram
<p>6 goal game</p> <p>Area: 40 x 50 yards (W x L). Depending on your numbers and available space, make the field as big as you can (use existing field lines to help).</p> <p>Activity: Make 6 cone goals (one in each corner of the field and one in the center at each end). Goals should be approximately 4-6 yards wide (bigger goals = greater opportunities for success). Let teams play against each other - even numbers. No goalkeepers. This game encourages players to start thinking about the “weak side” and to switch the ball out of pressure.</p> <p>Progressions: Put in a halfway line and mandate that all attacking players must be in the attacking half for a goal to count (this discourages goaltending/hanging back). Add a neutral(s) to ensure the attacking team is always numbers up. Put touch restrictions on the players (no fewer than 3 touches) whereby if someone takes too many touches, it results in a free kick to the other team.</p> <p>Coaching Points: Encourage players to be aware of space, keep head up, move the ball quickly, penetrate the space/to goal when appropriate.</p>	 <p>The diagram shows a rectangular green field representing a soccer field. Six yellow cones are placed at the corners and the center of each long side, serving as goals. There are several white circles representing balls scattered across the field. A black arrow points from the bottom left towards the center. At the bottom center, there is a cluster of black dots labeled 'Coach'.</p>

Coaching the U12 Age Group

At this age, players are starting to think and look like soccer players, which means you will be tempted to start assigning regular positions in order to win games. Resist this temptation!

Rotate all of your players regularly - they will learn much more in this way. Also, you will learn more about their capabilities and skills. I continue to be amazed by players who I had thought of as a “defender” suddenly turning into a great midfield or even a goalkeeper. Soccer is not a specialist sport. It’s more fun for everyone if they get to play in different positions.

A **typical session** should follow this basic structure (**not to exceed 75 minutes**):

- **Technique-based warm-up** where each player has a ball or each player works with a partner (5-15 minutes)
- **Directional games/activities** where players play to targets and/or zones (20-25 minutes)
- **Small-sided game** where you form 2 teams with goalkeepers and let them play (25-30 minutes)
- **Cool down** (5 minutes)

Developmental Information:

Psychomotor (physical)

The average age for the beginning of pubescence in girls is 10 years with a range from 7-14; for boys, age 12 with a range from 9-16. Increases in the amount of exercise and intensity do not necessarily increase aerobic fitness levels (you should never have your players run laps or “do fitness” without a ball). Players at this age are beginning to develop abilities to sustain complex coordinated skill sequences.

Cognitive (learning)

Now at the formal operational stage of cognitive development, children are beginning to think in abstract terms and can address hypothetical situations. Changes in thought processes are the result of an increased ability to acquire and apply knowledge. A systematic approach to problem solving appears at this stage; the game of soccer must present the ability to think creatively and solve problems while moving.

Psychosocial (emotional)

Whether a child enters puberty early or late has important psychosocial implications. Don’t let the early developers rely on their size and/or speed – keep them focused on skill development. Don’t just play this player in one position. Conversely, if you have a player who is a late developer (physically), you need to keep him/her interested in the game. They are also developing a conscience, morality, and scale of values. They are beginning to spend more time with friends and less time with parents. Popularity influences self-esteem, which is still very fragile. Continue to offer praise for effort and present coaching points constructively.

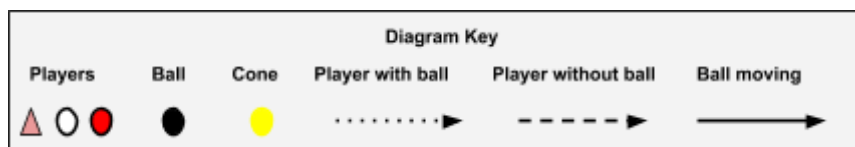
Age-appropriate technical aspects to focus on during the course of the season:

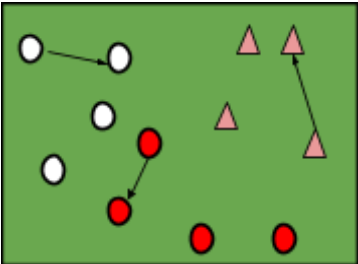
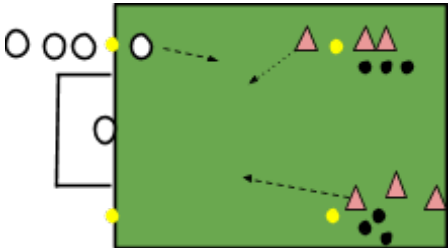
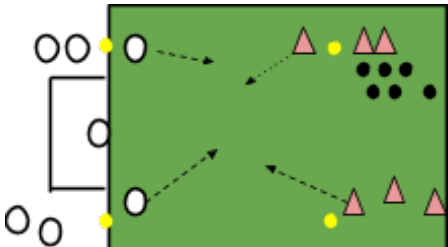
- While continuing to emphasize **dribbling** and **ball mastery** skills, you should place increasing importance on **passing and receiving** (use lots of the partner activities and team-oriented games in sample activities section).
- Players love to score goals! Now they are finding themselves able to get some power behind their kicks, help them with their **shooting** technique (laces, instep). At the same time, continue to work on **1v1 attacking** (this never changes!) and **introduce/reinforce shielding the ball, heading, crossing and finishing, and 1v1 defending**.
- Continue to have the players **juggle** at every available opportunity (before/after practice and during breaks in the session).

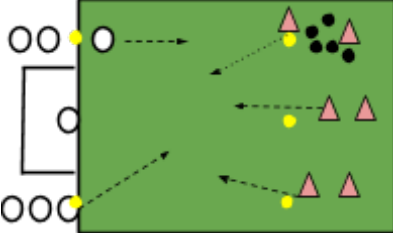
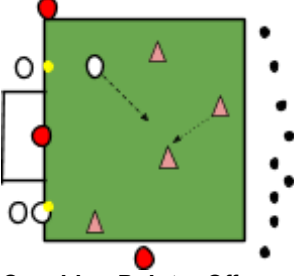
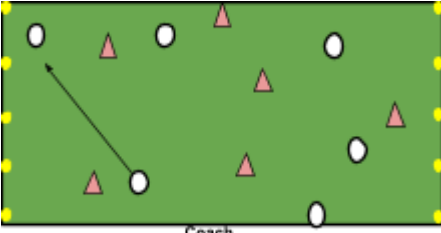
Age-appropriate tactical aspects to focus on during the course of the season:

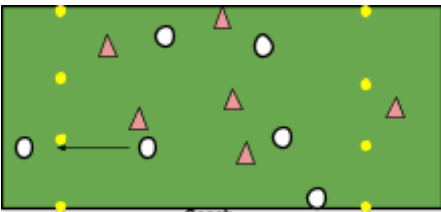
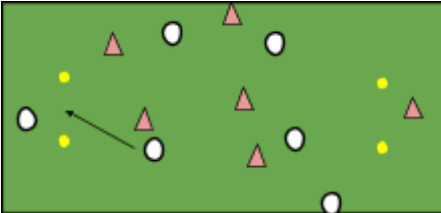
- Continue to **introduce/reinforce** (do not expect competence or mastery!) **limited attacking principles** (e.g. add **support, width, and creativity to penetration**)
- **Reinforce** the idea of **possession** (do not expect more than 3-5 passes at most) and remember that the majority of your players are still very concrete in their thinking - is the goal to get passes or score goals? Try not to confuse them.
- **Introduce combination play** (at this age, **wall passes** and **overlapping runs** are appropriate and achievable for some players)
- **Introduce** some more **defending principles** (e.g. pressure and cover together, perhaps balance in the spring). You will still have a hard time telling a player not to try win the ball if (s)he is that way inclined; similarly, it will be difficult to tell a player not inclined to “tackling” to change his/her mind. This will come in time. Try to get defenders to think of themselves as part of pair (e.g. the second defender covers the first defender—the one who pressures the ball—rather than both rushing to the ball).

Age-appropriate Sample Activities for U12 Players



Activity	Diagram
<p>#1 Sequence passing Area: 30 x 30 yards (W x L). Activity: Put players in small groups (e.g. 4 players to a group) and have them number off (e.g. 1 through 4 in each group). The aim is to have 1 pass to 2 then 2 to 3, etc. whilst on the move. Progressions: Reverse the order. Split the grid into 4 and mandate that each pass must cross a line in order to count (still sequential). Put players on touch limitations (e.g. 3 touch max, or even numbers only have 1 touch). Have the 1 in each group switch to another group. Coaching Points: Thinking ahead to make/receive the next pass, moving into space, communication.</p>	
<p>#2 2v1 to goal Area: If you have a marked 18-yard box, use it; otherwise, put a cone 5 yards to the side of each post. After that, put a cone facing it 18 yards away (see diagram). Activity: Divide the players into 2 even teams. Have the defenders line up behind the 2 cones level with the posts. Have the attackers line up in 2 lines on the edge of the box (far cones) facing them. The balls should be with the attackers. To begin, have one of the attackers dribble towards the goal and try to score. As soon as the attacker takes his/her first touch, the defender can come out to pressure him/her (but not before). Players go to the other line once they have had their turn (e.g. attacker goes to the other attacker line). Give them a time limit (e.g. 75 seconds) to score as many goals as possible and then have the two teams switch roles. Review coaching points, and repeat. Progressions: Move the balls to the other side. Move the starting positions of the defenders/attackers (e.g. more centrally/more to the side, start the attackers closer/further away). Have the coach play the ball to the attacker. Add counterattack gates for the defenders to score through. Keep score and make it a competition!</p>	 <p>Coaching Points: Offense: penetration, change of speed/direction, support, finishing. Defense: pressure, move feet, patience, show away from the goal. When counterattack gates (4-5 yards) have been added, defenders should stay composed and look to “score,” instead of just kick the ball away.</p>
<p>#3 2v2 to goal Area: If you have a marked 18-yard box, use it; otherwise, put a cone 5 yards to the side of each post. After that, put a cone facing it approx. 18 yards away. Activity: Divide the players into 2 even teams. Have the defenders line up behind the 2 cones level with the posts. Have the attackers line up in 2 lines on the edge of the box (far cones) facing them. The balls should be with the attackers. To begin, have one of the attackers dribble towards the goal and try to score. As soon as the attacker takes his/her first touch, the defenders can come out to pressure him/her (but not before). Players go to the other line once they have had their turn (e.g. attacker goes to the other attacker line and defender goes to other defender line). Give them a time limit (e.g. 75 seconds) to score as many goals as possible (keep count) and then have the two teams switch roles. Review coaching points, repeat. Progressions: Move the balls to the other side. Move the starting positions of the defenders/attackers (e.g. more centrally/more to the side, start the attackers closer/further away). Have the coach play the ball to the attacker. Add counterattack gates for the defenders to score through. Keep score and make it a competition!</p>	 <p>Coaching Points: Offense: penetration, change of speed/direction, support, finishing. Defense: pressure, cover, move feet, patience, show away from the goal. When counterattack gates (4-5 yards) have been added, defenders should stay composed and look to “score,” instead of just kick the ball away.</p>

Activity	Diagram
<p>#4 3v2 to goal</p> <p>Area: If you have a marked 18-yard box, use it; otherwise, put a cone 5 yards to the side of each post. After that, put a cone facing it approx. 18 yards away.</p> <p>Activity: Divide the players into 2 even teams. Have the defenders line up behind the 2 cones level with the posts. Have the attackers line up in 3 lines on the edge of the box (far cones) facing them. The balls should be with the attackers. To begin, have one of the attackers dribble towards the goal and try to score. As soon as the attacker takes his/her first touch, the defenders can come out to pressure him/her (but not before). Players go to the other line once they have had their turn (e.g. attacker goes to the other attacker line and defender goes to other defender line). Give them a time limit (e.g. 75 seconds) to score as many goals as possible (keep count) and then have the two teams switch roles. Review coaching points, repeat.</p> <p>Progressions: Move the balls to the other side (or centrally). Move the starting positions of the defenders/attackers (e.g. more centrally/more to the side, start the attackers closer/further away). Have the coach play the ball to the attacker. Add counterattack gates for the defenders to score through. Keep score and make it a competition!</p>	 <p>Coaching Points: Offense: penetration, change of speed/direction, support, finishing. Defense: pressure, cover, balance, move feet, patience, show away from the goal. When counterattack gates (4-5 yards) have been added, defenders should stay composed and look to “score,” instead of just kick the ball away.</p>
<p>#5 Penalty box game</p> <p>Area: Utilize 18 yard (penalty) box (18 x 44) (W x L).</p> <p>Activity: Put a cone on each side of the goal line (about 5-6 yards off of each post). Divide players into 2 or 3 teams (if you have more than 8 players it is usually better to go with 3 teams). Assuming 3 teams, 1 team defends (they will start behind the two goal line cones), 1 team will retrieve and replace balls, and the other team will be shooting. All of the balls need to be put outside of the 18 yard box about a yard or 2 off of the line. The rules are simple: All attackers must start inside the box. Only 1 attacker may leave to get a ball. As soon as (s)he touches the ball, 1 defender may enter the box to try stop the attacking team from scoring. Only 1 ball and 1 defender are allowed in the box at a time. Allow a couple of minutes for players to figure out the rules and rhythms of the game, then give each attacking team 75 second to score as many goals as possible. Rotate attacking team to defense, defense to ball retrieval, and ball retrieval to attacking.</p> <p>Progressions: Mandate that the ball must be passed into the box before someone can shoot. Mandate that all shots must be “first time.” Allow 2 defenders in at a time. Add counterattack gates for the defenders to score through (at the top and corner of each end of the box).</p>	 <p>Coaching Points: Offense: penetration, change of speed/direction, support, finishing. Defense: pressure, move feet, patience, show away from the goal. When counterattack gates (4-5 yards) have been added, defenders should stay composed and look to “score,” instead of just kicking the ball away.</p>
<p>#6 Target ball</p> <p>Area: 40 x 50 yards (W x L) - make as big as possible!</p> <p>Activity: Put a cone in each corner of the field, then 2 or 3 others (equally distributed) along each end line (see diagram). Balance a ball on top of each cone on the end line. Divide players into 2 teams. The objective is to successfully knock a ball off the cone (with the game ball). Team A defends their side and attempts to score on the other end (vice versa for Team B). If a player shoots and misses, (s)he must run to retrieve the ball, while the defending team can take the ball off the cone that the attacker missed (meaning that they will be temporarily “numbers up”). Play first team to 3 goals, then review coaching points, go through progressions.</p> <p>Progressions: Add a neutral(s), so that the attacking team is always at an advantage. If defenders are just standing by cones, say that 5 consecutive passes equals a goal. Put all players on a touch restriction (e.g. 3 touch max). Add a halfway line and mandate that to score, all of the attacking team’s players must be in the attacking half. Play transition (whereby once a team scores at one end, they then go and try and score at the other end). Finally, mandate that “goals” must be first time (e.g. players must knock the ball off the cone with their first touch!).</p>	 <p>Coaching Points: Attacking principles: penetration, switching the point of the attack (width, mobility, creativity). Defending principles: pressure, cover, and balance. When you add transition, now players must be thinking ahead and not switch off when a goal is scored. It is possible to score 2 goals in quick succession this way.</p>

Activity	Diagram
<p>#7 End zone game with target</p> <p>Area: 40 x 50 yards (W x L) inclusive of a 5-yard deep end zone at each end. Depending on your numbers and available space, make the field as big as you can (use existing field lines to help).</p> <p>Activity: Divide up the players into two even teams. The coach should keep the balls off to one side (around midfield). Teams score a point when they pass the ball into their end zone player and (s)he successfully passes the ball out to another teammate. The player that passed the ball into the target replaces him/her and the former target player follows his/her pass and is now in the middle (this keeps all players as active as possible). Defenders are not allowed in the end zones. Play first team to score 3-5 point, then review coaching points as appropriate. Repeat as necessary.</p> <p>Progressions: Add a neutral(s), so the attacking team is always numbers up (producing more scoring opportunities). Put players on touch restrictions (e.g. 3 touch max, and/or target players have to play 1 touch). Allow defenders into the end zone. Make the game multidirectional by adding 2 more targets (e.g. one player from each team in each end zone). Play transition (whereby when Team A scores in one end zone, they are now trying to score in the opposite end zone - Team B also switches).</p>	 <p>Coaching Points: Attacking principles: penetration, switching the point of the attack (width, mobility, creativity). Defending principles: pressure, cover, and balance. When you add transition, now players must be thinking ahead and not switch off when a goal is scored. It is possible to score 2 or more goals in quick succession this way.</p>
<p>Soccer hockey</p> <p>Area: 50 x 60 (W x L) or as big as you can make the field..</p> <p>Activity: Make 2 cone goals (one at each end, each goal 5-7 yards wide), but instead of putting them on each end line, bring them infield 5-7 yards. No goalkeepers. Allow goals to be scored going through the gate/goal from the front or behind. This will get players thinking about different types of angles.</p> <p>Progressions: Add a neutral(s), so the attacking team is always numbers up (producing more scoring opportunities). Put players on touch restrictions (e.g. 3 touch max and/or 1 touch finish). Play transition (whereby when Team A scores in one end zone, they are now trying to score in the opposite end zone - Team B also switches).</p> <p>Coaching Points: Attacking principles: penetration, switching the point of the attack (width, mobility, creativity). When you add transition, now players must be thinking ahead and not switch off when a goal is scored. It is possible to score 2 goals in quick succession this way.</p>	

Coaching the U14-U19 Age Group

Now you are playing on the big field! Practices should still be made as fun and game-like as possible, though. Try to keep as high ball-to-player ratio for as long as possible in your sessions. Players may want to gravitate towards certain positions on the field. Continue to rotate as much as possible, while recognizing the strengths and weaknesses of each player. For example, the famed Dutch side Ajax does not put players in set positions through U18! Remember, if you only put a player where (s)he is strong, (s)he will not have to adapt to being put in an uncomfortable position (this is where the most improvement occurs!)

A typical session should follow this basic structure (not to exceed 90 minutes):

- **Technical warm up** where each player has a ball or each player works with a partner (10-20 minutes). This should include some dynamic (moving) stretching exercises, too.
- **Directional games** where players play to targets and/or zones (25-35 minutes)
- **Scrimmage** where you form 2 teams with goalkeepers and let them play (20-30 minutes)
- **Cool down** (5 minutes)

Developmental Information:

Psychomotor (physical)

Most people do not understand that, biologically, adolescence ranges from 15-23 years of age. This means that soccer players may not peak athletically until they are in their twenties. As a coach, you must remember that just because your team plays on the big field, your players will probably not be able to do what teams do in televised adult games! Also, remember that different adolescents develop at different rates. After a growth spurt, a player who was previously coordinated, may take weeks or even months to grow into their new body. Similarly, a short, slow player may suddenly blossom into a tall fast player. Be very mindful of growth-related pains and injuries in this age group. Stretching should be an important part of every practice and game routine.

Cognitive (learning)

Soccer is a thinking person's game. As the players will now be in (or about to enter high school), many will be prepared to understand some of the more complex aspects of the game (some will push you to understand the "whys"). As is the case with many parent volunteer coaches who have limited playing experiences, it is best to continue to keep practices fun and have the players solve the problems. Encourage creativity and problem-solving rather than obedience strict. Set up the games/activities and don't be afraid to ask questions. This will empower the players and build trust. According to US Soccer, "few youth coaches today intentionally provide training environments for players that cause them to problem solve. Yet, when it comes to game day, the players must make all of the game decisions, many of them in the blink of an eye, given

the pace of the game. Teach players not just to play hard, but to play smart. Encourage them to think for themselves on the field” (US Youth Soccer Player Development Model).

Psychosocial (emotional)

Especially if players are early developers (physically speaking), do not be fooled that they are adults. You still need to be the coach and a consistent, fair, “constant” in their lives. High-school-aged players will have much more than soccer on their minds; there will be many pressures, fears, and hopes that your players will face on a daily basis. For various reasons, most soccer players have already dropped out of organized teams by this age (71%!). Do not treat your players as you would little children; however, be organized, keep practices fun, allow your players to problem-solve, and treat them with respect. Sometimes they will get mad at you and challenge your authority; most of the time, it has nothing to do with you and everything to do with them! Strive to be consistent at all times and they will remember you as a significant person in their lives forever.

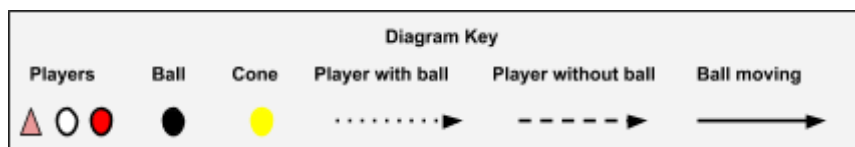
Age-appropriate technical aspects to focus on during the course of the season:

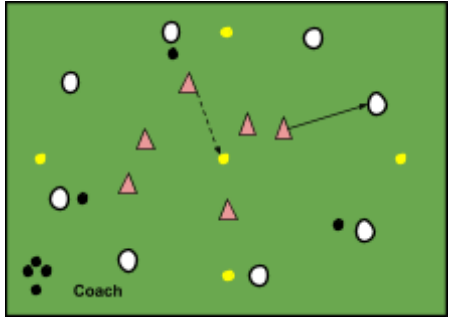
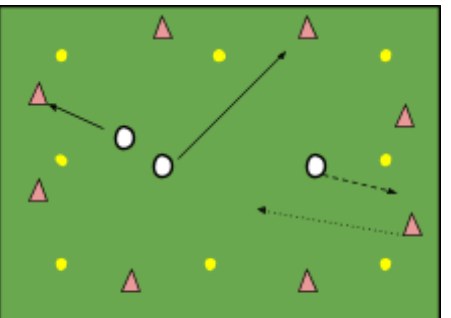

- All technical aspects of the game are open at this age; however, in recreational soccer you will always have a wide disparity in players’ ability and experience levels. It is therefore essential to continue to focus on the basics:
- Passing and receiving, dribbling and ball mastery, turning, shooting, 1v1 attacking, shielding the ball, 1v1 defending, crossing and finishing, and, of course, juggling.
- See the summaries for the U12 section to get more information about technical aspects on which to focus and how to implement them.

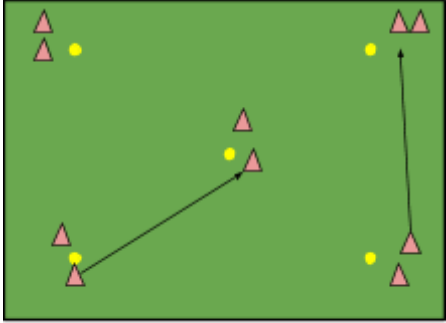
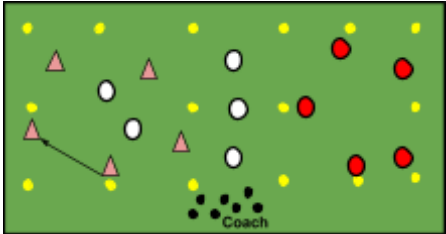
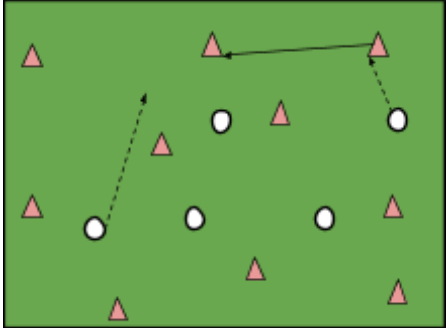
Age-appropriate tactical aspects to focus on during the course of the season:

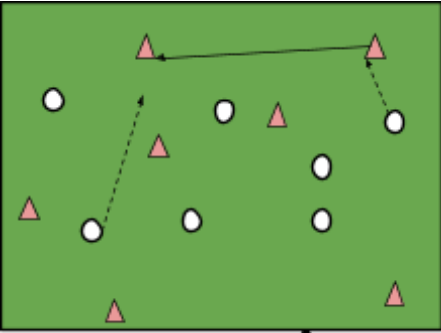
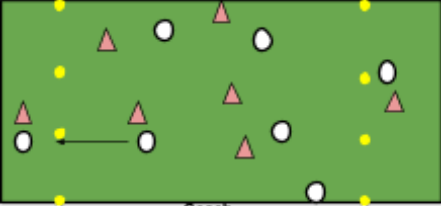
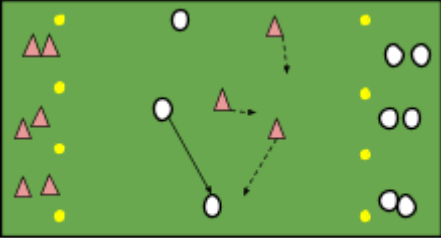
- All attacking (penetration, support, mobility, width, depth, improvisation) and defending principles (pressure, delay, cover, balance, compactness, control and restraint); however, again, remember, that you will likely have a broad range of abilities and experience. Keep your games fun and coaching points simple and focused.
- It is likely that some of your players will want to explore advanced concepts, such as possession, combination plays, playing out from the back, and counter attacking. You must judge whether you think your team has the ability and whether you have the experience necessary to implement some of these concepts. You can always contact me for advice and help. This stuff is the pinnacle of the game! Your team does not need to master or even become competent in these areas to have a successful season at the recreational level. Again, please feel free to contact me for any advice

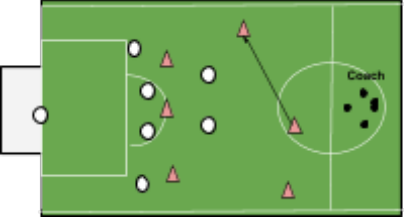


Age-appropriate Sample Activities for U14-U19 Players



Activity	Diagram
<p>#1 Circle drill</p> <p>Area: Put players in a circle whose radius is 10-12 yards. An easy way to do this is to put down a cone and then walk out 10-12 yards at 4 points and tell the players to make a circle around the 4 “point” cones.</p> <p>Activity: Number each player either a 1 or 2. Have the 1s come to the middle of the circle; the 2s should have a ball at their feet. Working in intervals of 30-45 seconds, have the outside players pass the ball to players in the middle whose job is to pass it back to the same person in different ways. Have the players keep count.</p> <p>Progressions: Put the players in the middle on a touch restriction; e.g., take 2 touches, play it back first time. Mandate that a certain foot or surface of the foot is used. Have players receive the ball and then find someone else on the outside to pass it to. This leads to players having to turn (explore different types of turns, and angles to receive the ball. Add a “bandit,” whose job is to tackle the players in the middle - this makes it more difficult and creates more game-like situations.</p> <p>Coaching Points: Players in the middle should always check back to the center cone before sprinting to receive a pass, angle should be 45 degrees or greater (especially when looking to turn). Focus on change of pace and direction. Communication (e.g. pass, keep it).</p>	 <p>Coaching Points: Players on the outside should focus on the visual cues of when somebody is ready to receive a pass. Also, they should be constantly on their toes, keeping their eyes open, and not be afraid to communicate (e.g. turn, man on).</p>
<p>#2 Dutch box</p> <p>Area: 25 x 25 yards (W x L)</p> <p>Activity: Have all but 2-3 of your players on the outside of the box (equally spaced). The players in the middle start with a ball. They dribble it to someone on the outside, who then takes it off them and dribbles across the grid to someone else (and so on).</p> <p>Progressions: Mandate that when a player takes the ball, (s)he must take a big touch into space and then do a turn. Increase the number of balls. Have players pass the ball across the grid and then execute a wall pass with that same player. Put players on a touch restriction (e.g. max of 3) when doing progression.</p> <p>Coaching points: Players need to recognize when it is on to make a pass, communicate with each other, use correct technique for passing and dribbling (e.g. when to take a big versus little touch), choose the appropriate surface of the foot (e.g. inside, toe, laces, outside, etc.).</p>	 <p>Coaching points: Players need to recognize when it is on to make a pass, communicate with each other, use correct technique for passing and dribbling (e.g. when to take a big versus little touch), choose the appropriate surface of the foot (e.g. inside, toe, laces, outside, etc.).</p>
<p>#3 5v2</p> <p>Area: Set up grids of approximately 10 x 10 yards (make bigger if you have weaker players).</p> <p>Activity: While staying in the grid at all times, 5 players attempt to keep the ball away from 2. If you only have enough for 4v2, 4v1, or 3v1, these numbers work, too. Play rounds of 30-45 seconds. When the time is up change the pair in the middle. Have each group keep count of the highest number of consecutive passes they managed. The first pass is always “free” (e.g. the defenders must allow it).</p> <p>Progressions: Put touch restrictions on the players (e.g. 3 touch max, 2 touch max, 1 touch). Also, you can mandate that players must follow their pass (moving).</p> <p>Coaching points: First touch away from pressure, using correct technique and thinking ahead are crucial in this game. Communication is important, too.</p>	 <p>Coaching points: Defenders must work together to cover the ground, make tackles, and anticipate where the ball is going/cut off passing channels.</p>

Activity	Diagram
<p>#4 Box drill</p> <p>Area: Mark out a grid of approx. 12x12 yards (W x L) with a cone in each corner and one in the middle.</p> <p>Activity: Works best with 10 players per box. Start with one ball per box with players following their pass (go one direction to keep things simple). The passing sequence should go “from the outside to the middle, then diagonal to the outside (to form a triangle), at which point the pass should go square (up the line) and then the pattern repeats on the other side (outside-middle-outside-square). Once players get the hang of it, have them pass the ball in the opposite direction. Add a second ball (start at diagonally opposite end). Add a third ball. Add a fifth ball. Make sure players follow their pass!</p> <p>Coaching points: Focus on using correct foot, when to take a touch, when to play first time. Speed of play (can’t take too long). Communication. Being aware of what’s going on around you. This is a tough game initially, but there is lots of passing and moving and it keeps everybody engaged. If you have spare players, have them play 4v2 in a small grid and substitute players back and forth as necessary.</p>	 <p>The diagram shows a green rectangular field with a grid. There are four pink triangles at the corners and one in the center. A yellow ball is positioned in the top-left quadrant. A black arrow points from the ball to a pink triangle in the middle-left area. Another black arrow points from that triangle to a pink triangle in the top-right area. A third black arrow points from that triangle to a pink triangle in the middle-right area. A fourth black arrow points from that triangle to a yellow ball in the top-right quadrant. Below the field, a coach icon is labeled "Coach".</p>
<p>#5 Over the river</p> <p>Area: 15x40 yards divided into a 15 x 15 box, a 15 x 10 box, then another 15 x 15 box (W x L).</p> <p>Activity: Split your players up into 3 teams of 5 (works with teams of 4, too). Put 2 teams in each of the 15x15 boxes and the remaining team in the middle zone. The coach stands off to one side with the balls. He serves a ball into one of the end zones. As soon as he does the team in the middle zone can send 2 defenders into that zone (essentially 5v2). If the team in possession makes 4 consecutive passes, they can attempt to send the ball “over the river” to the other end zone, at which point if they are successful, 2 new players from the middle zone will go to play 5v2. If the defending team wins the ball (or intercepts it in the middle zone), they swap with the other team. Play first team to score 3 points. Mix up the teams as necessary.</p> <p>Progressions: Increase the number of passes, limit the number of touches, mandate that the ball must go over the river first time. This is another game that take a while for the players to understand, but it’s a lot of fun once it gets going. Make it as easy as possible for them initially (e.g. make grids wider, only allow 1 defender).</p>	 <p>The diagram shows a green rectangular field divided into three horizontal zones. The top and bottom zones are 15x15 yards, and the middle zone is 15x10 yards. There are yellow triangles representing players in the top and bottom zones. There are white circles representing players in the middle zone. There are red circles representing players in the middle zone. A coach icon is labeled "Coach" at the bottom center.</p> <p>Coaching points: First touch away from pressure, using correct technique and thinking ahead are crucial in this game. Communication is important, too. Picking the right moment to send the ball over. Defenders must work together and communicate.</p>
<p>#6 10v5 possession</p> <p>Area: 50 x 60 yards (W x L), or as close to half a game field as you can get.</p> <p>Activity: Have 10 players play against 5. The objective is for the 10 players to get as many consecutive passes as possible (a coach can keep count). Give them a certain amount of time (e.g. 3 minutes) and then take the highest number (e.g. 9 consecutive passes, which will then be the defending team’s score). Change out the defenders and repeat. Repeat again, so that all players have been on the defending team. See which “defense” was best. Which offense was best. Why?</p> <p>Progressions: Put the 10 players on a touch restriction (e.g. 3 touch max, 2 touch max). Make the field smaller. Change the balance of the teams to make it more even. Add goals.</p> <p>Coaching Points: For the attacking team, it is important to emphasize support and appropriate width/depth (make the field as big as possible), as well as when to play quickly and when to slow it down. For the defending team, they must work as a unit and try to keep play to a certain part of the field. Communication is key.</p>	 <p>The diagram shows a green rectangular field with a grid. There are 10 white circles representing attacking players and 5 pink triangles representing defending players. A coach icon is labeled "Coach" at the bottom center.</p>

Activity	Diagram
<p>#7 Possession</p> <p>Area: 50 x 60 yards (W x L), or as close to half a game field as you can get.</p> <p>Activity: Similar to the above, but have 2 teams of even numbers, with the objective being to get as many consecutive passes as possible (a coach can keep count). Give them a certain amount of time (e.g. 5 minutes) and then take the highest number from each team to declare a winner.</p> <p>Progressions: Add a neutral(s), so they team in possession always has a slight advantage. Put the players on a touch restriction (e.g. 3 touch max, 2 touch max). Run through the progressions as separate games. Review coaching points between each game.</p> <p>Coaching Points: Again, it is important to emphasize support and appropriate width/depth (make the field as big as possible), as well as when to play quickly and when to slow it down. For the defending team, they must work as a unit and try to keep play to a certain part of the field. Communication is key for when to press.</p>	
<p>#8 End zone game with targets</p> <p>Area: 50 x 60 yards (W x L), or as close to half a game field as you can get.</p> <p>Activity: Divide up the players into two even teams. The coach should keep the balls off to one side (around midfield). Teams score a point when they pass the ball into their end zone player (both teams have a target player at each end and (s)he successfully passes the ball out to another teammate. The player that passed the ball into the target replaces him/her and the former target player follows his/her pass and is now in the middle (this keeps all players as active as possible). Defenders are not allowed in the end zones. Play first team to score 3-5 point, then review coaching points as appropriate. Repeat as necessary.</p> <p>Progressions: Add a neutral(s), so the attacking team is always numbers up (producing more scoring opportunities). Put players on touch restrictions (e.g. 3 touch max, and/or target players have to play 1 touch). Allow defenders into the end zone. Make the game multidirectional by adding 2 more targets (e.g. one player from each team in each end zone). Play transition (whereby when Team A scores in one end zone, they are now trying to score in the opposite end zone - Team B also switches).</p>	 <p>Coaching Points: Attacking principles: penetration, switching the point of the attack (width, mobility, creativity). Defending principles: pressure, cover, and balance. When you add transition, now players must be thinking ahead and not switch off when a goal is scored. It is possible to score 2 goals in quick succession this way.</p>
<p>#9 3v3</p> <p>Area: 20 x 30 yards (W x L).</p> <p>Activity: Divide up the players into 2 teams. Each team should then subdivide into 3 even-numbered groups (one at each corner and one in the middle). The coach has the balls on the sideline. He then plays a ball to one of the players; it is then 3v3 in the middle. The aim is to get the ball under control past the opposing team's end line. The coach should serve a certain number of balls to one team (e.g. 6-10) before serving them to the other team. Have players go to a different line after they have taken their turn.</p> <p>Progressions: Change who you serve to (pass most along the ground, but occasionally put a ball in the air). Add gate goals (a couple of yards wide) in each corner - have players dribble through/pass through to score. Replace the corner gates with a central goal (6-8 yards). *If the players are struggling, make it 3v2, so the attacking team can experience success.</p> <p>Another progression is to then play a 3v3 game to small cone goals. You will probably need to make 2-3 fields (depending on numbers), but this is a nice bridge to the scrimmage at the end of practice while maintaining maximum touches on the ball for as many players as possible.</p> <p>Coaching points: Offense: penetration; change of speed/direction; support (getting wide); switching the point of the attack; communication (e.g. switch, man on).</p>	 <p>Coaching Points: Defense: pressure; move feet; patience; cover; balance; and communication (e.g. I got ball, shift left, drop, etc.).</p>

Activity	Diagram
<p>#10 Offense vs. defense in one half Area: One half of the field (playing to one big goal). Activity: Have 6 defenders plus a goalkeeper play against 9 attackers. Start 4 defenders on the edge of the 18 yard box, with 2 defensive midfielders a few yards ahead of them. The attackers can take the shape of your offensive formation (e.g. 3 defenders, 3 midfielders, 3 attackers, or 3 defenders, 4 midfielders, 2 attackers). The coach serves the ball to a defender and then it is free play. This is a good way of imprinting a passage of play (be careful about this, though) e.g. when the ball is at right back, the center midfielder moves here, the center forward makes this run, etc. Progressions: Add counter attack goals for the defenders on the halfway line (start with one in each corner - make them 6-8 yards wide) and then add another one in the center of the half way line. Put the attacking team on touch restrictions (e.g. 3 max, 2 max, 1 max).</p>	 <p>Coaching Points: All defending and attacking principles are at work here. Ensure that you let the game flow and only make points to either the offense or defense (not both at the same time, as this confuses the message for the players and takes your focus away from what you are intending to work on).</p>
<p>2/3 field scrimmage Area: Full field (if you have it), or half field (put a cone goal on the halfway line). Activity: Play even numbers (e.g. 8v8) and arrange teams in a 3-3-1 formation (this gives you central players as well as wide players on both defense and offense). Alternately, you can set up one (or both) of the teams in a 2-3-2 formation to change things up. This is a good game to play if you have the space and the numbers. If you don't, not to worry, just divide up the players into two even teams and let them play in the space you do have available. Progressions: Add a neutral(s) to give the team in possession an advantage. Put your team on touch restrictions, or give them specific instructions (e.g. your team can only score after you have completed 5 passes, off a header, etc.).</p>	 <p>Coaching Points: Treat it like a real game and allow them to play! Keep your coaching points limited and focused for maximum effect.</p>
<p>Full field scrimmage Area: Full field (if you have it), or half field (put a cone goal on the halfway line). Activity: Usually it will only be possible to do a full field 11v11 scrimmage if you arrange it with another team. Nevertheless, you cannot get more game-like than this! Playing three equal time periods allows the players more rest and the coach another opportunity to speak with the team between periods. Progressions: Put your team on touch restrictions, or give them specific instructions (e.g. your team can only score after you have completed 5 passes, off a header, etc.).</p>	 <p>Coaching Points: Treat it like a real game and allow them to play! Keep your coaching points limited and focused for maximum effect.</p>

Appendix A: Code of Ethics for Coaches

I coach because I want to help young people mature into well adjusted, productive adults with strong character and because I want these young people to get a proper exposure to the fun and exciting game of soccer. In short, I want them to enjoy soccer and sport and to grow up well.

1. My actions and personal manner will be a good example for young people to follow.
 - a. I will treat all players, coaches, administrators, parents and referees with the respect and courtesy I desire for myself.
 - b. Any dissatisfaction I want to express will be stated in a private forum and in a restrained and civil manner.
 - c. I will respect and honor the beliefs and sensitivities of all players, coaches, parents, administrators, and referees.
2. No matter how selected, I recognize that all players on my team have value, both as players and as a person.
 - a. If I select players for a competitive or select team, I will do so recognizing that players are on the team to play, not to watch.
 - b. If I am assigned players for a recreational team, I recognize that all signed up to play and have fun and, except for health or disciplinary reasons, I am committed to playing each player more than fifty percent of the game and in a manner that seems fair to all players and parents.
 - c. As a coach it is not appropriate for me to teach the players that "life is not fair"; they will learn enough of that on their own. My job is to make the soccer part of their life as fair as possible, no matter what the level of competition.
3. I will be prepared for each game and practice.
 - a. For practices I will have a practice plan that efficiently uses the time available and teaches the players important skills and strategies for the game of soccer.
 - b. For games I will have a game plan that will utilize the talents of all my players to the utmost while insuring that each player feels needed and respected.
4. I will be an encourager, not a discourager.
5. I will follow all the Laws of the Game and will abide by all the administrative procedures of my club, local association, South Texas Youth Soccer Association, United States Youth Soccer, and the United States Soccer Federation.
6. I will do my best to make soccer the fun game for all.

Appendix B: Practice & Games: General Guidelines

1. Practice fields and times will be scheduled by the Recreational Commissioners. DO NOT arbitrarily show up at the field to practice. DO NOT contact school principals for practice fields.
2. Practice games ("friendlies") should be scheduled only with other Eclipse and HYSA/EDDOA teams, and the HYSA or EDDOA Administrator needs to be informed for insurance reasons. Contact the Recreational Commissioner for assistance in scheduling a practice game.
3. Teams should participate only in games and tournaments sanctioned by USYSA.
4. Eclipse guidelines recommend no more than two practices per week for recreational teams.
5. Report any unsafe field conditions to the Field Coordinator or any other Eclipse official.
6. Field damage usually occurs when practices or games are held on wet grounds. Please use good judgment on wet surfaces.
7. If a field is closed for games for the day, it is also closed for practices or other soccer activities for the day. However, if a game is canceled on a field because of playing conditions, the remainder of the games scheduled for that field may still be played depending upon the field condition at game time. The referee of each game will determine whether the game can be played.
8. Coaches or parents should not drive a vehicle onto any field or school grounds.
9. ABSOLUTELY no alcoholic beverages are allowed on the grounds used by Eclipse. Use of tobacco products is prohibited on Eclipse fields and in the designated spectator and coaching areas.
10. DO NOT leave the practice field or match area until players' parents or guardians have picked up all of your team players. Encourage your parents to pick up the players on time by ending your practice on time.
11. Shin guards must be worn at all practices and games. Players shouldn't chew gum at practice or games. Jewelry must not be worn during practice or games; this includes earrings, regardless of how they may be covered. No hard casts are allowed, regardless of the level of padding.
12. Coaches should carry a general first-aid kit with them to practice and games. They should also have medical release forms and emergency contact information for each of the players.
13. Frequent water breaks are required every 15 minutes, particularly early in the fall season or during hot and humid conditions.

Appendix C: The Game

Play Time

All players, regardless of skill level or age, must play at least 50% of every game. A player is not allowed to play the goalie position for more than 50% of the game.

Player Uniforms and Equipment

Uniforms are usually distributed at the coaches meetings before the first game. Players will not be allowed to play unless they are in full Eclipse uniform. The team must play in the Eclipse uniform or risk forfeiture unless there is a color conflict. Shin guards are mandatory. A player without shin guards will not be allowed to play. The home team must change shirts when there is a color conflict. Goalkeepers must wear colors that clearly distinguish them from players on their own or opposing team. (Rec/HYSA only: each player on a team must have a number on the back of his/her shirt that is different from the numbers of the other players of his/her team.) Footwear may be tennis shoes or soft cleated soccer shoes; hard cleats are not allowed.

Coach/Player Credentials

In-house games: Only registered head coaches and assistant coaches with valid APPs may be on the team/player sideline, and a maximum of 2 coaches per team are allowed on the team/player sideline during games. APPs must be displayed during all games.

Rec/HYSA games: Prior to the game, each coach will hand the referee an official game report form on which the team roster (with registration and jersey number), name of the field, game number, division of play, name of club, and coach(es) are filled out. The referee will also check player cards and coach APPs, which will be provided by each team's coach.

Rec/HYSA ID cards: Players and coaches must have a laminated identification card (for coaches, an APP - please see Requirements to Coach section, above). These ID cards must have the person's signature and picture on them prior to lamination. The coach should keep the player cards during the season. Fall season APPs are valid for one full year (9/1 through 8/31); spring APPs are valid until 8/31 of the current year. New player cards are issued at the beginning of each season and are valid only during the season in which they are issued. However, please do not throw your players' cards away at the end of the season. If you should lose an ID card, please contact the Club Registrar.

Game Duration

U17-U19:	45-minute halves
U16:	40-minute halves
U14:	35-minute halves
U12:	30-minute halves
U8-U10:	25-minute halves
U4-U6:	8-minute quarters (2-minute breaks between quarters 1 & 2, 3 & 4)

All age groups have a 5-10-minute halftime break, at the referee's discretion (Exception: U4/5/6 games are not assigned referees).

Game Format & Player Limitations

U14-U19:	11 v 11 Minimum to start the game is 7
U10-U12:	8 v 8 Minimum to start the game is 6
U8:	7 v 7 Minimum to start the game is 5
U4-U6:	3 v 3 Minimum to start the game is 3

The Ball

The home team provides the game ball.

U4-U8:	Size 3
U10-U12:	Size 4
U14 and up:	Size 5

Rescheduling

Rec/HYSA Teams (U15+): Generally, HYSA games are rescheduled by the HYSA Administrator only for weather related cancellations. Coaches do not reschedule games. Please refer to the HYSA website regarding rainout and rescheduling procedures.

In-House Recreational Teams: Cancelled games are not rescheduled by the Club. If a U4/5/6 team is unable to play a scheduled game, that coach must contact the opposing team's coach during the week prior and, if desired, reschedule at a mutually agreeable time (possibly during either team's normally scheduled practice).

Referees

EDDOA, EDS2, HYSA, and Eclipse assign certified referees to all games (except U4/5/6). Club policy authorizes referees to apply the same disciplinary measures to coaches as may be applied to players. That is, coaches may be warned (same as a yellow card) or expelled (same as a red card) for misconduct under Law XII. Additionally, STYSA, EDDOA, EDS2 and HYSA follow a progressive penalty point system that may result in suspension of players or coaches for accumulated violations.

Appendix D: Rules of Play for In-House Teams

(Rec/HYSA teams: refer to Rules of Play posted at www.hysa.us)

For general Rules of Play, see the HYSA website (www.hysa.us)

All games must start within 15 minutes of the scheduled time. After 15 minutes delay, a team that is tardy or fails to appear will forfeit the game.

An eligible player is one properly registered with Eclipse and formally assigned to the team. A player shall be considered "suited-up" for a game when, in the opinion of the official referee, he/she:

1. Satisfies all eligibility requirements,
2. Wears the official team uniform,
3. Is wearing shin guards, and
4. Otherwise wears appropriate soccer clothing.

The home team has the choice of the side of field. U8-and-older teams and their associated spectators must be on opposite sides of the field: both teams (coaches and players) will sit on one side of the field, with each taking a half. A team's spectators shall sit on the opposite side of the field on the half that is directly opposite their team. Either coach may ask the referee to enforce the rule. The referee may decide conditions prohibit this. In this case, spectators (and teams) should try to separate, with each team staying to one side of the mid-field line.

Only coaches displaying a current KidSafe/Adult Participation pass are allowed in the team's technical area. Team spectators will remain behind the restraining line on their respective side of the field and shall come no closer to any portion of the playing field unless expressly directed to do so by the referee.

Spectators or coaches cannot stand at the end of the field behind the goal line or beside the touchline from the top of the penalty area to the goal line.

Coaches may give tactical instructions from the sideline to players on the field; however, comments to opposing team members are strictly prohibited.

U10 and younger: A coach may briefly leave the team technical area (but not beyond the top of the penalty area) to convey appropriate tactical advice to players from the touchline and must return to the technical area, behind the restraining line, as soon as they have done so.

Spectators must remain inside the technical area at all times, and coaching by spectators is prohibited.*

U12 and older: A coach may briefly leave the team technical area (but not beyond the halfway line or the top of the penalty area) to convey appropriate tactical advice to players from the touchline and must return to the technical area, behind the restraining line, as soon as they have done so.

Coaching from the spectator side of the field is prohibited. For any age group, if coaching occurs by spectators, the coach will be requested by the referee to control the situation. If the coach is unable or unwilling to control the situation, the referee may caution the coach. If the infringement continues after a caution from the referee, the coach may be sent off by the referee. If the coach refuses to leave or if coaching by spectators continues after the coach leaves, the referee may abandon the game.

The official referee shall be the sole judge on the field of play, and his decision shall be final. Any complaints about an in-house referee should be directed to the Eclipse Referee Assignor. In case the officially appointed referee fails to appear at a game, the coaches may agree to a substitute referee who shall assume the duties of the official referee, or by mutual agreement act themselves in that capacity.

In all games, substitutes will be allowed as follows:

1. The number of substitutions shall be unlimited.
2. Substitutions may be made, with the consent of the referee at the following times:
 - a. Prior to a throw-in by the team in possession
 - b. Prior to a goal kick, by either team
 - c. After a goal, by either team
 - d. After an injury, by either team, when the referee stops the play
 - e. At half time
3. A player for whom a substitution has been made can return to the same game.

Offside Rule

For U8 to U14, the Offside Rule will be applied liberally (no camping by the goal).

Additional Rules for U4-U6

Goalkeepers shall not be used in games.

Referees are not assigned to games.

There shall be no offsides called.

No penalty kicks are to be taken during these games.

Corner kicks and throw-ins will be taken; however, coaches should not slow down the game by positioning their players.

One coach from each team is permitted to be on the field during the game.

A player should play 50% of each quarter (coaches should rotate players every 4 minutes).

When one team is leading by five or more goals, the opposing team should add a fourth player to the field to balance the competition.

Substitutions are allowed at any stoppage of play.

The Start of Play: The home team will take the kick-off to begin the game. In the second half of the match, the teams change ends and attack the opposite goals.

Kick-Off: A kick-off is a way of starting and restarting play at the start of each match, after a goal has been scored, and at the start of each quarter.

Kick-Off Procedure:

- All players are in their own half of the field.
- The opponents of the team taking the kick-off are at least four yards from the ball until it is in play.
- The ball is stationary on the center mark.
- The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves forward.

Appendix E: Levels of Play: An Overview

Eclipse Soccer Club forms teams that play at various levels of competition:

- Division I and Premier – leagues administered by Eastern District Division One Association (EDDOA)
- Super II – leagues administered by Eastern District Super Two League (EDS2)
- Division II, III and IV – leagues administered by Houston Youth Soccer Association (HYSA)
- In-House Recreational – leagues administered by Eclipse consisting of teams solely from within Eclipse Soccer Club.

Within the Eclipse Recreational program:

- U15+ boys and girls teams (“Rec/HYSA” teams) compete against other Houston area teams.
- Depending on the strength of these recreational teams, they may be placed into either Division III or Division II HYSA league play.
- U4, U5 & U6 coed, U7/8 to U13/14 boys and girls in-house teams compete against other in-house Eclipse Recreational teams.

Appendix F: Weather Considerations - Rainouts and Lightning

In the event of inclement weather for in-house teams or for Rec/HYSA teams (home games only on Eclipse fields), coaches should check our field status at the Eclipse rainout number: 281-265-0569. (Additional rainout procedures are outlined in the coach's material issued by HYSA for use by Rec/HYSA teams.) Field status will also be posted on the club website. General soccer policy is that games are played rain or shine. A game will not be canceled because of rain if the field is still in playable condition and, of course, there is no lightning. Consideration will be given to field damage from play when it is muddy.

We regularly update our field status both on the club website and rainout number. If the field line and website indicate that the fields are open, the team should be at the field at the scheduled time. The decision to postpone or cancel a game is made by the referee or the Field Manager.

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD A GAME OR PRACTICE CONTINUE WHEN THERE IS LIGHTNING IN THE AREA. The game must be suspended immediately, and may be: 1) restarted 30 minutes after the lightning threat passes, or 2) abandoned altogether. In-house games cancelled due to weather will not be rescheduled. Rec/HYSA games will be rescheduled as per the HYSA rainout procedure for each division.

Appendix G: Contact Us

If you have any questions about the Eclipse Recreational Soccer Program, please contact:

Recreational Commissioner
Scott Thompson
Scott.Thompson99@gmail.com
979-248-6923

Director of Recreational Soccer
James Jordan
JamesEdwardJordan@gmail.com

Field Coordinator
Poly Isis
Poly.Isis@yahoo.com
281-798-0285

Registrar
Alice Javier
Registrar@EclipseSoccerClub.com
281-261-5644

For questions about the philosophy of the Eclipse Select/Academy/U8 HYSA training programs, contact the Director for each program:

David "Eddie" Edwards
Academy Director
davidedwards@entouch.net
281-798-8756

Boys' Director of Coaching
Luis Labastida
Luis@EclipseSoccerClub.com
281-865-6031

Girls' Director of Coaching
Rafa Brazo
Rafa@EclipseSoccerClub.com
281-703-0956

Appendix H: Helpful Coaching Resources

General Soccer and Soccer Coaching Websites:

National Soccer Coaches Association of America	www.nscaa.com
Soccer Association for Youth	www.saysoccer.org
South Texas Youth Soccer Association	http://www.stxsoccer.org
United States Soccer Federation	www.ussoccer.com
United States Youth Soccer Association	www.usyouthsoccer.org
World of Soccer	www.worldofsoccer.com

Recreational Soccer Resources:

From US Youth Soccer, the following resources each contain 20 practice plans specifically designed for the volunteer parent coach to implement. Included are guidelines for U6-U12 age groups. I would highly recommend reading the relevant age group to compliment the information contained in this handbook:

http://www.usyouthsoccer.org/us_youth_soccer_introduces_practice_guides_for_the_u6-u8_u-10_and_u-12_age_groups/

Again, from US Youth Soccer, the following resources contain information on how to plan coaching sessions as well as how to approach coaching recreational soccer:

How to Write a Training Session Plan:

http://www.usyouthsoccer.org/us_youth_soccer_releases_how_to_write_a_training_session_plan/

Help! I Volunteered to Coach!:

http://www.usyouthsoccer.org/coaches/Help_Volunteered/