1. Introduction

Thank you for volunteering to coach a recreation soccer team with South Oakland County Soccer (SOCS). Our volunteer coaches are the people who make the soccer season work. As a coach, you are your team’s central point of contact regarding games, practices, and player instruction. But you are not alone. SOCS has many resources to help support you and make your role as a volunteer soccer coach a positive experience. SOCS provides example soccer drills and practices, professional coaches/training to help you and your players, equipment to get you started, and experienced Division Managers who can answer questions and help overcome challenges.

Whether you played soccer at a high level, or never played the game, you can make a lasting impact on your players’ lives. Our volunteer coaches give their time and energy to provide a positive experience for hundreds of children each season and SOCS could not function without you. This Recreation (Rec) Coaches Manual is intended to make your job easier and your contribution of time and energy more beneficial. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to your Division Manager or any member of SOCS leadership and we will get you the support you need to have a great season.

1.1 About SOCS

SOCS is an independent, community-based non-profit youth sports organization. Player-oriented and economical, we promote soccer across age and ability levels within an appropriate and positive environment, promoting good sportsmanship while putting the needs of the children and young adults we serve first.

**The mission of SOCS** is to provide a high-quality youth soccer experience for both recreational and travel players on a very affordable basis.

1.2 Document Objectives

This Rec Coaches Manual consolidates multiple sources of information into a single comprehensive reference for coaches. It is intended to make it easier for coaches to volunteer their time and provide a high-quality, fun and enriching experience for the youth in our program. It aims to create consistency in the Rec soccer experience for players and parents and provide standards and resources to facilitate player enjoyment and team competitiveness. It is intended to be a living document that will be updated and redistributed periodically to account for continuous improvement, growth in the club and new coaches joining the organization.
2. Team Management

Coaching a youth sports team is a combination of player instruction and team management, the latter being at least as important as the former particularly at the younger age groups. This section provides recommendations to organize and effectively manage your team and your time spent leading the team.

2.1 Roles and Responsibilities

One of the best ways to make the coach’s job easier is to get help, and not try to do everything yourself. A lot of parents like to be involved, and you may find a former soccer player or some useful management skills among the parents on your team. Be clear in establishing the roles and what you would like help with and ask for volunteers.

2.1.1 Head Coach

The Head Coach is responsible for all aspects of the team, including but not limited to planning, scheduling and conducting practices, communicating with parents and players, coaching games, interacting with officials and other teams, maintenance of team information, and ensuring a safe and healthy environment where children learn and love to play soccer.

A common mistake by new coaches is to try to do too much themselves. Even at the youngest age groups and smallest roster sizes it is a great benefit to engage the help of others. Many parents want to be involved, and you never know what hidden skills are out there in the parent pool until you ask.

2.1.2 Assistant Coaches

Assistant Coaches share the coaching responsibilities above as agreed to by the coaches. A second coach is particularly useful in situations where the Head Coach is running late or has a conflict and misses a practice or game, the event doesn’t need to be rescheduled and all families affected if another coach is available. It is also helpful to divide practices into smaller groups to maximize the number of player “touches” on the ball that expedite their development and provide a higher coach-to-player ratio for instruction. Finally, in game situations it is helpful to have one coach managing the game while another coach manages the bench (making sure players are engaged, learning, and ready for substitution). There are other benefits of assistant coaches, these are just some examples.
2.1.3 Manager

Although not critical, if there’s a willing and able parent a Team Manager can help with the organization and communication aspects of running the team and ease the administrative burden on the coaches. This person can also be responsible for maintaining team equipment, bringing benches and goals, washing pinnies, etc.

2.2 Snacks

At the time of this revision shared team snacks are not permitted due to ongoing safety measures associated with Covid. Players are encouraged to bring their own pre-packaged snacks if desired.

2.3 Equipment

Players/Parents are responsible for individual player equipment including shin guards, cleats, socks, soccer ball (size per the current Rules Matrix), water bottle and athletic clothing. These items are needed for each practice and game.

SOCS provides each team with game jerseys (see Section 13). Practices will require cones and pop-up goals. Pinnies are also helpful for scrimmages. SOCS provides this equipment to our teams to ease the cost burden on volunteer coaches. If you were assigned this equipment in the past, please maintain it. If you are in need of these items, please contact your Division Manager.

2.4 Parents

Contact parents as soon as possible prior to the season start to provide the team roster, game and practice schedule. They are eager to get the schedule and plan accordingly. As a new coach you should introduce yourself, establish your expectations for parent engagement and conduct and let them know about your approach to coaching consistent with this handbook. Make sure parents understand the player equipment requirements and send athletes ready to participate.

An Example Kickoff Email that can be sent to parents is as follows:

Hello Soccer Parents,

Welcome to another season of [Team Name] soccer. I’m excited to be coaching (again) and happy to see several families returning from last year. Welcome to those of you who are new to SOCS or to our team, I look forward to getting to know you and your athletes. For those who don’t know me yet, [introduce yourself, child on the team, etc.]
The game schedule and team roster are attached.

New families should have completed the heads-up concussion training and provided proof of age. The league will not allow participation without these.

Make sure your child has for each practice and game 1) shin guards/socks, 2) soccer cleats, 3) appropriate attire (weather can be a challenge), 4) size [X] soccer ball, and 5) water bottle to keep hydrated.

Practices will be 1 evening each week throughout the season, and last approximately [45-60] minutes. Practices consist of warmups, individual and team drills, and scrimmage. Practices will be at [practice location, day, time].

Games are Saturday or Sunday at [Game Fields]. Please note attached schedule.

[Email/SportsEngine] will be the primary source of communication for important announcements. You will get messages from me and some directly from the league.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me at [contact info].

GO [TEAM NAME]!
Coach [Name].

Provide updates to parents as necessary throughout the season and be conscientious of the length and number of emails sent. We all get too many!

2.5 Players

Children have a wide range of attention spans, characteristics and personalities throughout the age range of Rec soccer that are too numerous to define here. A few basic guidelines are provided to help get the new coach started.

At the younger age groups (U5-U6) emphasis is on fun, learning the fundamentals of soccer (running, kicking) through playful experimentation. Practices should be short (30-45 minutes) and include soccer-themed games (e.g., Mud Monsters. Sharks and Minnows), maximizing each player’s participation and limiting instruction and down time. Small sided games are played on weekends following clinics by the Youth Development Director and support staff. The emphasis is on fun and participation, not on score or rules.

At older age groups (U7-U8) practices can be extended (60 minutes) and more structured drills can be incorporated, but the practices should still be fun, the players should be participating most of the time, and down-time is again limited. Waiting in line reduces player interest and limits the number of touches. Instruction should be positive and allow players to make decisions and experience the outcome. Officiated games are played on small fields with traditional soccer rules; however, emphasis is still on fun and participation rather than score.
At U9 and older more advanced concepts and formations can be instructed, and fields/formations increase to 7v7, 9v9 and 11v11. Coaches and teams typically have established routines and relationships by this point. Recommendations for practices and games are referenced in Section 10.

3. Communication

The importance of timely and effective communication cannot be overstated. When questions or concerns arise, communication is often at the root of the issue. High quality, accurate and consistent communication from SOCS to coaches to families is a top priority.

3.1 Team Communication

Coaches may use personal email, text message or message apps to communicate with parents. Key is making sure everyone is aware and checking frequently for updates. Parents and coaches may download the Sports Engine App and use that if desired. If you need any assistance getting started on Sports Engine please contact socsregistrar@gmail.com or your Division Manager.

3.2 Club Communications

Most Club announcements and communications will come via email from socsregistrar@gmail.com. Make sure this email is a safe sender in your spam and junkmail settings and watch email for updates. SOCS Board Members may also send emails occasionally via GotSoccer to the entire Club, or to Coaches to push out to their teams. Emails will be sent to the email addresses provided in your registration.

3.3 Social Media

SOCS provides announcements on its programs, registration information, updates on field closures and weather on its website https://www.socsfc.com/, facebook SOCS-South-Oakland-County-Soccer and via direct email. Follow these sources for updates.

4. Contacts

4.1 Recreational Coaches

Contact info for Recreational Coaches can be found in gotsport.com/club/coaches through your assigned Coach Account login. Rec coaches are encouraged to collaborate and reach out to other coaches if needed.
4.2 Professional Coaches

SOCS Professional Coaches are available to assist Rec coaches and will offer various trainings for Rec players and coaches throughout the season. Contact info for SOCS Professional Coaches can be found at SOCS Contact Info. Key resources to support our Rec coaches are:

- Youth Development Director - Kate Rougeau - kmrougeau@gmail.com
- Executive Director - Marcel Schmidt - mschmid.socs@gmail.com
- Director of Goalkeeping - Jim Lemley - mrobster00@yahoo.com

Watch for announcements on player and coach training sessions and reach out to these individuals if you need any assistance with your team.

4.3 Points of Contact

Key points of contact for Rec coaches include:

- U5-U6 Division Manager – Jon Heger – jheger@hotmail.com
- U7-U8 Division Manager – Joe Vitali – jvitali721@gmail.com
- U9-U19 Division Manager – Troy Sclafani – tstack76@gmail.com
- SOCS Administrator – Mike Egnotovich - socsregistrar@gmail.com
- Vice President Recreational Soccer – Troy Sclafani - tstack76@gmail.com

Please contact your Division Manager, Administrator or VP with any questions or to report any concerns.

5. Registration Requirements

Anyone who has any organized contact with players such as a coach, manager, official must complete the following requirements before participating. Failure to do so could result in disciplinary action imposed by the governing bodies of youth soccer and/or SOCS.

5.1 Registration

Create an account in GotSoccer and register at Rec Coach Registration. All coaches must re-register each season (i.e., Spring and Fall) so that teams can be assigned in the scheduling system.
5.2 Risk Management

All individuals over 18 who participate in youth soccer in Michigan must have a valid background check which is called Risk Management (RM). This is an annual process that must be renewed by the expiration date of your previous background check. Log in to your Individual Coach or Manager account in GotSoccer.com/Login, click on the Background Check tab and follow the instructions provided. SOCS provides you with a voucher to cover the $7.50 registration fee. Contact socsregistrar@gmail.com with any questions.

5.3 Heads-Up Concussion

The CDC Heads-Up Concussion in Youth Sports Course is required to be completed by all youth sports participants one time upon first registration. Log in to your Individual Coach or Manager account in GotSoccer.com/Login, click on the CDC Heads-Up Course and follow the instructions. Your completion certificate is retained in GotSoccer but it is suggested you print or save your certificate as backup.

5.4 SafeSport

Beginning in 2019 this is the new requirement for all adults who have any official interaction with youth participating in sports programs that must be completed. The mandatory training covers various topics on misconduct including awareness, recognition and prevention, and reporting requirements aimed at creating safe and respectful sport environments for all participants. While the state has not indicated what punitive action may be taken against clubs not in compliance, they have indicated that ensuring compliance will be a top priority.

The training takes approximately 2-3 hours to complete and includes videos, interactive lessons and tests. It does not need to be completed in one sitting and you can pickup where you left off. Log in to your Individual Coach or Manager account in GotSoccer.com/Login, click on the SafeSport Certification Course and follow the instructions. Your completion certificate is retained in GotSoccer but it is suggested you print or save your certificate as backup.

6. Personal Conduct

The emphasis in Rec soccer is on fun, learning and skill development, comradery, team play, positivity and equal playing time. The environment should be safe, instructional and enjoyable, never punitive. Coaches are responsible for and empowered to set the tone for the team’s conduct including coaches, players and
parents. Remember that kids play sports for their enjoyment, not ours, and when kids quit sports it is often because it is not fun for them anymore.

The game is the teacher.
The pitch is the classroom.
The coach is the facilitator.
The player is the owner.

There are Four key roles within a game, you can only be ONE of the Four:

- The Player- plays the game.
- The Coach- coaches the game, leads the team and players.
- The Referee- manages and enforces the rules of the game.
- The Parent- supports the team and player with positive feedback.

6.1 Coaches

As the coach of your team you have responsibility to act in a manner that reflects positively on you as an individual, on SOCS as an organization, and on all of us as members of our community. Coaches are role models for young athletes, have a profound impact on a player’s desire to keep playing, and can also influence the behavior of parents. Establish your expectations for good sportsmanship at the start of the season, reinforce positive behaviors, and provide feedback on negative behaviors.

Coaches should be calm in their instruction, offer frequent praise for things done well, and reassurance when mistakes happen. Criticizing, singling-out or punishing players is not acceptable. Coaches must model the behaviors they expect to see from players and parents.

6.2 Players

Players, especially young ones will have a strong desire to fit in with the team and receive praise from the coach. All players should have the expectations communicated to them and receive feedback (positive and corrective) on their behavior. A common response to an undesirable player behavior is “well, children do things like that”. As the coach, if you allow a player to taunt or criticize another player/team then they will continue to do it. But if you instruct the player in the conduct and sportsmanship that is expected the player will learn and improve. Unsafe behavior cannot be tolerated at any time.
Parents/Guardians acknowledged the Player Code of Conduct at registration, which is available on SOCS website. It is helpful to share this with parents when setting expectations, talk about it with the players, and ask the parents to talk about it at home also. This helps to ensure a common understanding of the expectations.

6.3 Parents

Parents also acknowledged the Parent Code of Conduct at registration, posted on SOCS website. Expectations include having their child in attendance and prepared to play at practices and games, and reasonably communicating with the coach in advance when a practice or game will be missed.

During games, parents should be outside the field of play, outside the bench area, and cheering in a positive and constructive manner for the effort and good sportsmanship of the athletes on the field. Parents should not engage or disparage referees, coaches or players. Parents are encouraged to discuss any questions or concerns they may have with the coach after the practice or game, or at another mutually agreeable time. Parents should not impede the coach’s focus on the instruction and safety of the players during practices or games.

7. Fields

7.1 Game Fields

SOCS home game fields include Men’s Club Field in Huntington Woods, 12935 West Eleven Mile Rd, Huntington Woods, MI 48070, Catalpa Oaks County Park 27705 Greenfield Rd, Southfield, MI 48076, Red Oaks Youth Soccer Facility, 29601 John R., Madison Heights, MI 48071, Norup International School 14450 Manhattan St, Oak Park, MI 48237, Tyndall Center 14501 Talbot St, Oak Park, MI 48237 and Hurley Field 2400 Robina Ave, Berkley, MI 48072.

Away game fields are located throughout Clawson, Madison Heights, Royal Oak Birmingham and Southfield. Game field locations will be indicated on the game schedules distributed to coaches each season.

Additional info and updates on fields can be found at SOCSFC.com/Fields

7.2 Practice Fields

Practice fields are available at area parks and greenspaces, including Catalpa Oaks, Tyler Park, Lennon Memorial Park, and Lathrop Village. SOCS will manage a sign-up
sheet to reserve time on some of these fields. The club administrator will share this sign-up with coaches before the start of each season.

Additional greenspace is available throughout Berkley and Huntington Woods that can be used for younger team practices (no goals or markings). To reserve park space in Huntington Woods, Contact the HW Rec Center directly at (248) 541-3030 to reserve fields. You will need to create a household account with the city to do so. You do not need to be a resident to schedule SOCS soccer practices on the HW city fields. There is no formal process to reserve fields in Berkley, however, teams should be mindful of other teams and children using the Berkley parks. During Spring season Baseball teams have the baseball diamonds and outfields reserved.

8. Rules

The Rules Matrix is updated and provided annually to summarize the rules at a glance. It is a best practice for coaches to meet briefly with the officials and opposing coaches before the match to discuss the rules and make sure everyone is on the same page. There have been instances where the rules were not consistently interpreted or applied. When discrepancies occur, remember that the emphasis should be on the enjoyment of the players and not a particular outcome. Be calm and respectful of everyone on the field and know that no single game or result is worth getting upset.

Some parents are also interested in knowing the rules and it is recommended the Rules Matrix be provided to parents each season for awareness. This will also save the coach from answering some questions.

9. Referees

At the U5-U6 age the small sided games are “officiated” by the SOCS professional coaches on hand. In the event a professional coach is not in attendance that day the team’s volunteer coaches should collaborate to oversee the game. This will be largely restarting when the ball goes out of bounds, keeping time, and monitoring for any unsafe behavior. Otherwise let the kids play and have fun.

Starting at U7 and above, paid referees are assigned to each game. These referees are certified by the Michigan Soccer Referee Committee. SOCS itself does not assign referees or control their selection for games. Referees are paid electronically. Coaches are not responsible for any payments. When referees sign up for a game, they are informed of this payment method. If they ask about payment you may direct any questions to the referee assignor.
You may encounter a range of competencies in the referees. In many cases the youngest age groups will have adolescent or teenage referees who are learning to officiate games, just as the players are learning to play and coaches are learning to coach. Remember to conduct yourself at all times with dignity and respect for the other person, whether adult, youth, experienced or inexperienced. Good sportsmanship should always prevail, and the lessons kids learn from adults in dealing with these situations are far more important than the result of any match. Parents should refrain from saying anything to or about the referees, and as the Coach you set the tone and expectations for parent behavior.

Any concerns regarding referees should be reported to SOCS so that we can investigate the incident with the parties involved. Contact your Division Manager or Administrator with any concerns.

10. Player Development

SOCS and our governing bodies US Soccer and MSYSA subscribe to the Player Development Model, where individual skill development through age-appropriate training is the focus rather than the score or outcome of a match. Gone are the days of little kids running long distances across large fields hoping to make contact with the soccer ball, sitting on the bench watching the game, and waiting in line for one or two repetitions in practice. The Player Development Model maximizes “touches” on the ball through age appropriate and fun activities and small sided “games” thereby accelerating each individual player’s skill development to their potential. The Player Development Model provides direction for age-appropriate training within a simple framework for coaches to apply.

10.1 Instructional Guidelines

Attached in Appendix A SOCS has provided instructional guidelines and recommendations for practice planning and gameplay format, including player positions and responsibilities.

10.2 Sample Practice Plans

The above-mentioned guidelines provide a framework to coach within, but as a new coach you might be thinking “that’s great, but what specifically should I be coaching in my practices?” Example practice plans for U6, U8 and U10 are attached in Appendix B to help the new coach with little/no soccer experience get started. If you know nothing about soccer you can follow these weekly plans and survive your first season as a volunteer coach. As your knowledge of the game and the Player Development
Model increases, you can expand and add drills, pull in new resources, customize it and make it your own. Additional age-specific lesson plans from U6-U19 and guidance for first time coaches are available from US Youth Soccer at https://www.usyouthsoccer.org/coaching-resources/.

### 10.3 Additional Resources

Additional coaching resources available to help volunteer coaches grow in their role and effectiveness as a youth soccer coach are referenced as follows. You will find coaching educational materials, guidance on coaching and managing players, example drills you can use in practice, helpful tips, philosophy, and much more.

**USA Soccer Grassroots Coaching** [https://learning.ussoccer.com/coach/](https://learning.ussoccer.com/coach/)


**SOCS Website** [https://www.socsfc.com/page/show/1542761-coaches-information](https://www.socsfc.com/page/show/1542761-coaches-information)

**MOJO App** [https://www.mojo.sport/](https://www.mojo.sport/) Free app that provides approachable exercises for grassroots/rec coaches. Set the parameters (player age, skill level, coach skill level, practice length, etc.) and the app will construct a practice for your team. Free version provides one lesson plan per week (editable if something changes -- 8 players instead of 12 show up, etc.).

### 10.4 Supplemental Training

SOCS provides supplemental training opportunities for players and coaches, some of which are FREE to the participants and all of which comprise the SOCS Recreational Soccer offering. Rec coaches are encouraged to attend one of the Rec Coaches Clinics and recommend SOCS player training opportunities to your players and parents. SOCS has invested time and money in these programs, they are a differentiator for us among other soccer clubs, and we only benefit from this investment if our players and coaches participate in them. We provide more development opportunities than other community soccer clubs so please encourage families to participate and get the full value of SOCS Rec Soccer.

#### 10.4.1 Friday Night Skills Sessions

Friday night soccer training sessions lead by SOCS professional coaching staff are held typically 2-3 times per season in the evenings. The training is led by SOCS Youth
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Development Director and staffed by SOCS professional coaches. Rec players ages 6-14 are welcome. These sessions are FREE to players currently registered with SOCS. They help players advance technically beyond their weekly team practices and are a great addition for players who just want more soccer.

Emails will be sent by socsregistrar@gmail.com announcing the dates, times and locations for each session. Signup via SignUpGenius is highly recommended so that we can determine headcount and secure appropriate staffing. Drop-ins are also welcome.

10.4.2 Goalkeeper Training

Goalkeeper training with SOCS Director of Goalkeeping is offered on select Fridays during the fall and spring seasons. Emphasis is on technical skill development for the goalkeeper position, and sessions are grouped by age (U7-U11, U12-U19). Goalkeeper is a unique position that requires additional fundamentals and practice to be successful, typically beyond what Rec teams can coach in a weekly team practice. This training is a great resource to help equip aspiring goalkeepers with the technical skills and understanding of the position they need, so our Rec coaches can focus on running team practices.

Emails will be sent by socsregistrar@gmail.com announcing the dates, times and locations for each session.

10.4.3 Winter Training

The SOCS professional coaching staff is pleased to offer indoor winter programs designed to help recreational players improve their skills, stay active and prepare for the spring season. They are held at Athletic Sports Complex, located at Mound and 10 Mile, 25100 Mound Rd, Warren, MI 48091. Registration instructions will be sent out via email from socsregistrar@gmail.com. Details for each winter training program will be posted on https://www.socsfc.com/winterindoor.

10.4.4 Summer Camps

SOCS offers week-long training camps in the summer for our Rec players. Camps are run by SOCS Youth Development Director and professional coaches and supported by local high-school and college players. Our summer camps provide a fun environment for players to learn new soccer skills, play games, make friends, and just be kids! Camps are open to a variety of ages and abilities. Campers are placed in age and skill appropriate groups so each player can develop and be successful – no matter their
level of soccer experience. Schedule and fees will be announced annually during the spring season and posted on https://www.socsfc.com/camps.

10.4.5 Coaches Clinics

SOCS Rec coaches are encouraged to attend one of the Coaches Clinics to gain an understanding of SOCS’ coaching and developmental philosophy and ideas for organizing and conducting team practices. These are scheduled once or twice each season and Rec coaches will have the opportunity to observe SOCS Executive Director or a Professional Coach during a live Travel Team practice. As a follow-up to the Coaches Clinic, SOCS Professional Coaches are available to visit Rec Team practices and offer suggestions for Rec Coaches. Finally, you may reach out to our Youth Development Director or Executive Director if you would like additional coaching support.

11. Weather

Weather is a complicated issue that SOCS and our coaches receive a lot of questions about each season. The following summarizes the weather and game cancellation policy.

Soccer is an all-weather sport. Expect that soccer games will be played, rain or shine. Please encourage players to dress appropriately and be prepared for wet conditions. Game cancellations usually happen when 1) the field owner (Municipality) closes the field due to potential for damage, or 2) Officials call the game due to unsafe conditions (thunder, lightning, excessive slip-fall hazards). Bottom line, if you haven’t yet been notified assume the game is on and will be played until you hear otherwise. Below are guidelines that SOCS and other local soccer clubs follow in the event of bad weather:

1. Until you hear otherwise, assume that the games will be played regardless of weather conditions.

2. If a field is not listed as closed on our website or Facebook page, or you are not notified via email, assume that it is open. SOCS will do it’s best to post updates on away field closures when available.

3. Absent municipal closures of the fields, any weather delays or cancellations are the responsibility of the referee, with decision made at the game field. If your field has not been closed, and your game has a referee, they will make any decisions at game time or during the game to suspend play. For U5 and U6 teams, the SOCS Professional Coaches at Men’s Club Field will be responsible.
for any decisions to suspend play. The referees and the U5/U6 trainers on site at games have the final say regarding weather suspensions.

4. Lightning/Thunder: If lightning or thunder is observed, the referee will call for a delay (game is suspended for 30 minutes after last observation) or cancel the game.

SOCS governing bodies of US Soccer and MSYSA have adopted this formal policy on weather: [http://www.michiganyouthsoccer.org/AssetFactory.aspx?did=2301](http://www.michiganyouthsoccer.org/AssetFactory.aspx?did=2301)

Watch email on game days when weather is questionable. SOCS also has a Facebook ([facebook.com/SOCS-South-Oakland-County-Soccer](http://facebook.com/SOCS-South-Oakland-County-Soccer)) account you can follow for announcements and game day info. On wet days parents (especially those of younger children) will try to determine if a game is cancelled before they leave the house. However, if the field hasn’t been closed, the decision to cancel the game will be made at the field by the Referee. Parents should be instructed to dress their child and report for the game. If a game is played and a player doesn’t report because the parent presumes the game will be cancelled that player is letting their team down.

It is also possible that municipalities may close fields on a day that the weather is not inclement. When this happens it is usually to “rest” a game field due to the amount of previous rain to allow it to properly drain and prevent damage. If alternate fields are available SOCS will attempt to relocate games. If it’s not possible to relocate certain games those games will be rescheduled. We understand this is frustrating when it happens but it’s necessary to preserve our game fields for future play.

For practices, coaches will make the determination to cancel or postpone practice, unless the field is closed by the field owner, based on the above guidelines. Coaches are reminded to be good stewards of our practice fields which are shared by the community. Avoid excessive damage on practice fields/parks and refrain from practicing on green space that is saturated or showing signs of excessive wear.

12. Rescheduled Games

When games need to be rescheduled due to weather or other reasons, promptly notify [socregistrar@gmail.com](mailto:socregistrar@gmail.com) who will work with both teams to reschedule the games. Be aware that there are limited weekends and timeslots available each season, so teams should be as flexible as possible during re-scheduling even if a coach or player has a conflict with a re-scheduled date. If the head-coach is unavailable enlist the help of the assistant coach or another parent to “coach” the team on the re-scheduled date.
Remember that any adult (18+) covering for a coach needs to have completed all of the registration requirements in Section 5.

13. Uniforms

SOCS provides game jerseys once per year at the start of the fall season. Coaches should distribute the jerseys to players at practice before the first game. It is the parents’ responsibility to wash and maintain their player’s jersey between games. At the end of the fall season, coaches collect the jerseys and they are re-used by the team in the spring season. At the conclusion of the spring season players keep their jerseys as souvenirs, and new jerseys are provided the following fall. Other elements of the uniform kit (e.g., socks, shorts) are not provided by SOCS and are the responsibility of parents to provide.

The Rules Matrix includes some uniform requirements parents and coaches need to be aware of. Common uniform infractions include: shin guards worn over socks (velcro style) or without socks, socks that are not long enough to cover the shin guards (socks need to completely cover shin guard), jewelry (no jewelry is allowed except medical bracelets), and hard decorative headbands on girls (soft cloth headbands are OK). These rules are for the player safety to prevent injury, and coaches/officials are instructed to uphold them. The Rec coach may find it helpful to have an extra pair of long socks and a couple fabric headbands in their equipment bag in case a parent does not have these on hand, so the player would not be prohibited from playing.

14. Awards

SOCS provides participation medals to U5-U10 players at the completion of the Spring season. Division Managers will make arrangements to get the medals to each of the coaches, and coaches are responsible for handing out the medals at or before the final season game. For the younger kids this is a special moment so please take the time to plan for and make this a memorable experience.

15. Photographs

Individual and Team photographs are scheduled once per year, typically on a game weekend during the Spring Season and within 1-2 hours of the scheduled game. The Photographer will send schedule and order information to parents in advance. Even if some parents do not plan to order individual photos of their player please remind them to attend the photo session if possible so other families can get a team photo if desired.
16. COVID-19

SOCS adheres to MSYSA Return-to-Play guidelines and local health department requirements, posted at https://www.socsfc.com/covid. Please take time to read these and familiarize yourself before conducting any team activities, if you haven’t already.

Our designated Covid Point-of-Contact is sociosregistrar@gmail.com. Any positive cases need to be reported and necessary quarantine procedures followed to ensure compliance with MSYSA and local regulations.

17. Feedback

SOCS is dependent on our volunteer coaches and board members to make soccer happen for hundreds of kids every season. We value your feedback both positive and constructive, so please communicate your thoughts in whatever format you are comfortable with (email, phone call, etc.). SOCS will periodically solicit parent and coach surveys to request this feedback, but you don’t need to wait for those. The best feedback is timely feedback. If there’s a problem we need to know about it promptly so that we can help. We’re all here for the kids and share a common goal of making it the best possible soccer experience. If you have observations on things that went particularly well and should continue, or things you think could be improved please provide that feedback to your Division Manager or a member of the Executive Board so that we can take appropriate action on it.

18. Conclusion

Thank you again for all that you do. Volunteering to coach is a commitment of time, energy and resources. We sincerely appreciate all that you do for the kids, and the community, and look forward to working with you to provide a great soccer experience for our athletes and families. Do not hesitate to contact any member of the SOCS Board of Directors, professional coaches or your peer Rec coaches if you need anything. Have a great season!
Appendix A
Instructional Guidelines
SOCS Developmental Model

Mini-Kicker Program • Development model: - No positioning - Coordination / balance - Touches with the ball - Social and technical focus in a group setting • Milestones: - Developing a feeling for the ball - Focusing on drills led by instructors - Enjoy the game, want to continue playing

U5/U6 (3v4 or 4 vs 4) - NO KEEPER • Development model: - Developing both footed skills - Exploring open space - No positioning (attack and defense) - Dribbling, passing, shooting • Milestones: - Creating a feeling to play amongst teammates - Both footed dribbling - Finding open space - Passing/shooting - Focus on instructions

U7-U8 (5 vs 5) • Development model: - Both footed skills - Exploring open space / head up - Limited positioning (attack and defense) - Using teammates - both footed passing - Dribbling, passing, shooting • Milestones: - Learning to play as a team - Both footed dribbles/passes - Finding open space - Passing/shooting - Focus on instructions

U9-U10 (7 vs 7) • Development model: - Both footed skills - Exploring open space in a team structure - Implementing positioning (Defense, Midfield, Offense) in different shapes - Learning to play as a collective/TEAM - Dribbling, passing, shooting, positioning, strategy • Milestones: - Positioning - Responsibility of certain position - Creating space for teammates - Passing/shooting - Tactics - Leadership/character building - Focus on instructions

U11-U12 (9 vs 9) • Development model: - Further enhancing both footed skills - Movement off the ball/creating space - Positioning (Defense, Midfield, Offense) in different shapes/styles - Playing as a Team - using all players on the field - Dribbling, passing, shooting, positioning, strategy - Set pieces/ organization • Milestones: - Positioning - Responsibility of certain position - Creating space for teammates - Passing/shooting - Tactics - Leadership/character building – more responsibilities - Focus on instructions

U13-U19 (11 vs 11) • Development model: - Mastering both footed skills - Positioning (Defense, Midfield, Offense) - Identifying best positions for each player - Playing as a Team- using all players on the field plus keeper - Dribbling, passing, shooting, positioning, strategy • Milestones: - Positioning in various formations/styles - Responsibilities of certain positions - Creating space for teammates – overlapping runs - Tactics - Empower leaders to lead - Focus on instructions
Practice environment for the coach:
1. Have fun and let the kids have fun
2. Be organized
3. Make it game like
4. Make it repetitive
5. Make it challenging

Practice set up and practice time suggestions:
U5/U6: 45 min - 1h
Play, Practice, Play model
1. Warm Up,
2. Play Phase 1 - small sided games (2vs2, 3vs3, 4vs4, 5vs5 ....)
3. Practice Phase (passing, dribbling, shooting etc)
4. Play Phase 2 - play the game (full scrimmage)

U7-U19: 1h-1h 15min
1. Dynamic Warm Up
2. Rondo (5 vs 2)
3. Play Phase 1 - small sided games (2vs2, 3vs3, 4vs4, 5vs5 ....)
4. Practice Phase - topic of the weak (improve attacking or improve defending)
5. Play Phase 2 - play the game (full scrimmage)

Leading the player:
People do not care how much you know until they know how much you care. The responsibility of leadership is about people development and individuals tend to become what the most important person in one’s life thinks they will become. Be supportive and encouraging of the player’s needs and goals.

Leading the team:
We want positive but challenging coaching at SOCS REC. Above all comes having FUN!

Formations:
Formations provide a team and players with structure/organization in order to play the game.

Positions:
Positions provide different responsibilities for each players within the team’s structure.

U5-U9: Positional rotation is encouraged as we want to expose our kids to all positions/responsibilities.
Positions and responsibilities based on “positional #”

#1: Goalkeeper Responsibilities:
Against the ball- don’t let the other Team score using hands and feet, organization of backline
With the ball- be an additional passing option to your teammates, distribution.

#2: Right back Responsibilities:
Against the ball- defends the right side in the defensive formation, marking of players, tries to
force turnovers, cuts off passing lines, positional awareness
With the ball- joins the attack on the right wing, distributes balls to center midfielders and
forwards.

#3: Left Back Responsibilities:
Against the ball- defends the left side in the defensive formation, marking of players, tries to
force turnovers, cuts off passing lines, positional awareness
With the ball- joins the attack on the left wing, distributes balls to center midfielders and
forwards

#4: Center Back Responsibilities:
Against the ball- stays connected with his backline, narrow defending, forces turnovers,
intercepts passes, reads the game, cutting off passing lines, marking of players, tackling,
defensive organization of shape, positional awareness
With the ball- ball distribution to center midfielder and wide players, stays connected to team
mates.

#5: Center Back Responsibilities:
Against the ball- stays connected with his backline, narrow defending, forces turnovers,
intercepts passes, reads the game, cutting off passing lines, marking of players, tackling,
defensive organization of shape, positional awareness.
With the ball- ball distribution to center midfielder and wide players, stays connected to team
mates.

#6: Holding Midfielder Responsibilities:
Against the ball- in front of center backs, marking of players, tackling, reading the game,
defensive organization of shape, cutting off passing lines, positional awareness.
With the ball- movement off the ball, connection between defense and offense, ball
distribution, starting point of the attack, switching the field via passing, stays connected to
backline.

#7: Right Midfielder/Forward Responsibilities:
Against the ball- drops back to support the right back, marking of players, tries to force turnovers, cuts off passing lines, positional awareness.
With the ball- makes run on the right side, tries to go behind the opponent’s backline while staying onside, provides crosses in the box, takes shots, passing with center midfielders, outside backs and forwards.

#8: Center Midfielder Responsibilities:
Against the ball- in front of center backs, marking of players, tackling, reading the game, defensive organization of shape, cutting off passing lines, positional awareness.
With the ball- movement off the ball, connection between defense and offense, ball distribution, starting point of the attack, switching the field via passing, joins the attack when in the other half.

#9: Central Forward Responsibilities:
Against the ball- presses the opponent’s backline if needed, tries to force turnovers, supports midfield, intercepts passes, tackling.
With the ball- takes shots, passing with midfielders and outside forwards/midfielders, provides passing option, movement off the ball.

#10: Attacking Midfielder Responsibilities:
Against the ball- drops back to support holding midfielders, marking of players, tackling, reading the game, defensive organization of shape, cutting off passing lines, positional awareness.
With the ball- creative player of the team, feeding balls to outside midfielders and forwards, movement without the ball, picking up balls from the back line and holding central midfielders, plays through balls, takes shots.

#11: Left Midfielder/Forward Responsibilities:
Against the ball- drops back to support the left back, marking of players, tries to force turnovers, cuts off passing lines, positional awareness.
With the ball- makes run on the left side, tries to go behind the opponent’s backline while staying onside, provides crosses in the box, takes shots, passing with center midfielders, outside backs and forwards.

Key Player Qualities by position:
Goalkeeper:
#1: Physically strong, good with catching the ball/ using his hands, communication

Right back:
#2: Physically strong, fast, endurance, willingness to tackle

Left Back:
#3: Physically strong, fast, endurance, willingness to tackle

Center back (s):
#4 and #5: Physically strong, good ball control, good communication skills, willingness to tackle

Holding Midfielder:
#6: Good game awareness, soccer IQ, good technique, ideally both footed, good passing, willingness to tackle

Center Midfielder:
#8: Good game awareness, soccer IQ, good technique, ideally both footed, good ball control, good passing, willingness to tackle, more attacking mindset, good shooting ability

Attacking Midfielder:
#10: creative player, Good game awareness, soccer IQ, good technique, ideally both footed, good passing, attacking mindset, great shooting ability

Left Midfielder/ Forward:
#11: fast, good endurance, good crosses, good passing, great shooting ability

Right Midfielder/Forward:
#7: fast, good endurance, good crosses, good passing, great shooting ability

Central Forward:
#9: good ball securing skills, good ball control, natural finisher, fast or physical strong

**Interpretation of formations and positions:**

It is important to understand that formations don’t score goals. Each coach can interpret a formation differently based on his team’s strength/ weaknesses and most importantly STYLE OF PLAY.

Coaches can decide whether to be playing attacking style soccer with a very offensive mindset player role interpretation OR a very defensive orientation having player moving more conservatively. Key factors are always- what kind of players do you have, what are their strengths, physicality, talent and the opponent. If you play against a team that outplays your team and has more talent you want to choose a more defensive style of play while when you play against a weaker team you can have your players be more attacking oriented.

**Compactness:**

Overall, we want our teams to be compact with and against the ball. When we are in the opponents half we want our keeper to come further out of the goal (top of the gk box ) and our
backline to sit right underneath the midfield line in order to attack as a unit and attack with more players. Against the ball, we want our whole team to help defending and force turnover/steal the ball which means our whole team in in our own half.

See next page.....
See situational example below using 9 vs 9 format:

RED Team: Against the ball, all player in the own half, cutting passing lines, shifting/orientating towards the ball. Compact shifting against the ball - Left back is pinched in as we are not worried about the left side right now since the ball is on the right side.

BLUE TEAM: With the ball - we always want to create an overload of players nearby the ball (see marked in picture), goalkeeper is on top of the gk box, center back pushed up and slides more the left side as the ball is with the left back, right back pinched inside in case of a turnover to have numbers behind the ball. The Center back, attacking midfielder, holding midfielder, left midfielder/forward are passing options in this example. In order for passing options to happen we need movement with and off the ball. If we are outnumbered by the opponent, we can rebuild using the center back and/or right back and/or goalkeeper and swing the play from the left side to the right side. Quick and accurate ball movement creates spaces and wholes.
Objective:
Teaching the fundamentals of the game. Players should understand the structure, basic rules, directional play. Introduction to basic technical play including dribbling, passing and shooting. It is important to teach the game with the core objective of having fun. Results at this age are secondary. Positional rotation is highly recommended. At this young age we want and need to expose our player to all positions of the game.

Suggested formation:

Recommended Formations:
RED TEAM:
2-2: compactness against the ball, spread out with the ball, overall movement without and with the ball, attack and defend as a unit, NO GOALKEEPERS
BLUE TEAM:
1-2-1: compactness against the ball, spread out with the ball, overall movement without and with the ball, attack and defend as a unit, NO GOALKEEPERS
Playing Format: 5 vs 5

Objective:
Enhanced teaching the fundamentals of the game. Players should understand the structure, basic rules, directional play. Introduction to basic technical play including dribbling, passing and shooting. The goalkeeper position is introduced in this playing format. It is important to teach the game with the core objective of having fun. Results at this age are secondary. It is important that all players are engaged in the game → attacking and defending as a unit. Positional rotation is highly recommended. At this young age we want and need to expose our player to all positions of the game.

Recommended Formations:
RED TEAM:
1-2-2-1: One Goalkeeper, two defenders, one central midfielders, one forward
BLUE TEAM:
1-2-2: One Goalkeeper, two defenders, two outside midfielders
Objective:
Learning the basics of attacking and defending including positional play and formational structure. Enhanced teaching of technical learning objective - passing, dribbling, both footed ball control, shooting. Positional rotation is still encouraged but should be limited to similar positions. Example: A number 2 (right back) can also play the 7 (right midfielder) or the 3 (left back).

Recommended Formations:
RED TEAM:
1-3-2-1: One Goalkeeper, three defenders, two central midfielders, one forward
BLUE TEAM:
1-3-1-2: One Goalkeeper, three defenders, one central midfielders, two forward
Playing Format: 9 vs 9

Objectives:
Greater awareness of positional and formational play. Players should slowly find their positions within the team. Further teaching of technical improvement in regards to dribbling, technical moves, passing (short and long, low and high), shooting. Increased empathize on physical play, knowing how to use the body in order to protect the ball (shielding), and how to use physical strength to win the ball.

Recommended Formations:
RED TEAM:
1-3-2-1-2: One Goalkeeper, three defenders, two holding central midfielders, one attacking midfielder, one forward

BLUE TEAM:
1-3-1-3-1: One Goalkeeper, three defenders, one holding midfielders, one attacking midfielder, two outside midfielder/forwards, one central forward
Playing Format: 11 vs 11

Objectives:
Understanding the tasks/ responsibilities that come with each role within the team. Developing tactical awareness in terms of pressing and defending as a unit. Help individuals to find the best role within the team in order to contribute to a successful outcome.

Recommended Formations:
RED TEAM:
1-4-4-2: One Goalkeeper, four defenders, two holding central midfielders, two outside midfielders/forwards, two central forwards.
BLUE TEAM:
1-4-3-3 or 1-4-5-1: One Goalkeeper, four defenders, two holding midfielder, one attacking midfielder, two outside midfielders/forwards, one central forward.
Appendix B
Example Practice Plans
U6 Weekly Lesson Plans
I. Warm-up: Back To Coach

**Activity Intensity:** Low-Medium  
**Activity Time:** 1-2 minutes  
**Duration:** 8 minutes  
**Repetitions:** 4  
**Recovery Time:** 1 minute

**Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players):** Every player has a ball. Coach tosses ball out and players bring ball back in a variety of ways: A) Running, B) Skipping, C) Hopping, D) Dribble ball back.

**Coaching Points / Key Concepts:** Dribbling with the head up. Working on movement ability (w/out ball).

II. Main Part: Body Parts

**Activity Intensity:** Medium  
**Activity Time:** 1 minute  
**Duration:** 12 minutes  
**Repetitions:** 6  
**Recovery Time:** 1 minute

**Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players):** Players stop ball with body part when called by the coach. A) Progress to you touching the body part but no verbal instructions. B) Progress to having a player decide when to stop the ball. Everyone else then uses the same body part.

**Coaching Points / Key Concepts:** Dribbling with the head, Agility, Balance, Coordination

III. Main Part: Expanded Activity (2v2 / 3v3 to an end zone)

**Activity Intensity:** Medium-High  
**Activity Time:** 1 minute  
**Duration:** 12 minutes  
**Repetitions:** 6  
**Recovery Time:** 1 minute

**Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players):** Create two endzones and put a ball in each. There is also one game ball. Play 2v2 or 3v3. The objective is to dribble the ball into the other team’s endzone. When a team is successful, they retrieve another ball from their defending enzone and try again. The first team to get all three balls in the other team’s endzone wins.

**Coaching Points / Key Concepts:** Introducing how to dribble around an opponent. Ask players to show you how they go around someone.

IV. Game: 3v3

**Activity Intensity:** High  
**Activity Time:** 3 minutes  
**Duration:** 10 minutes  
**Repetitions:** 2  
**Recovery Time:** 2 minutes

**Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players):** Play to small goals. At first play “NEW BALL.” Whenever a ball goes out of bounds the players will receive a new ball from the coach. Play until one ball is left. When one ball is left, play like a normal game and rules.

**Coaching Points / Key Concepts:** Play and enjoy!
TRAINING OBJECTIVES: DRIBBLING WITH THE HEAD UP

- To improve dribbling and ball familiarity.
- To work on dribbling with the head up.

I. Warm-up: The Network

ACTIVITY INTENSITY: Low-Medium
ACTIVITY TIME: 1-2 minutes
DURATION: 8 minutes
REPETITIONS: 4
RECOVERY TIME: 1 minute

Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players): Place different colored cones within a playing area. Each player has their own ball. At first, perform the activity without the ball. A) Run and touch cones with hands, B) Run and touch cones with feet, C) Run and hop over cones with two feet, D) Run and hop over cones with one foot. Then add a ball. Have the players dribble from cone to cone. A) Dribble around a cone, B) Dribble to a new color.

Coaching Points / Key Concepts: Dribbling with the head up. Working on movement ability (w/out ball).

II. Main Part: Small-Sided Activity (Freeze Tag)

ACTIVITY INTENSITY: Medium
ACTIVITY TIME: 1 minute
DURATION: 12 minutes
REPETITIONS: 6
RECOVERY TIME: 1 minute

Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players): To start, have players run with balls in their hands. If player gets tagged then 5 toe taps to get unfrozen. Then progress to dribbling a ball. If player gets tagged by the coach then a teammate has to unfreeze them by passing ball under the legs or dribbling around them. Play for a period then make the boundaries smaller.

Coaching Points / Key Concepts: Dribbling with the head up. Introduce how to turn the ball with the inside of the foot. Ask them to show how they get away from being tagged.

III. Main Part: Expanded Activity (2v2 / 3v3 to an end zone)

ACTIVITY INTENSITY: Medium-High
ACTIVITY TIME: 1 minute
DURATION: 12 minutes
REPETITIONS: 6
RECOVERY TIME: 1 minute

Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players): Create two endzones and put a ball in each. There is also one game ball. Play 2v2 or 3v3. The objective is to dribble the ball into the other team's endzone. When a team is successful, they retrieve another ball from their defending endzone and try again. The first team to get all three balls in the other team's endzone wins.

Coaching Points / Key Concepts: Introducing how to dribble around an opponent. Ask players to show you how they go around someone.

IV. Game: 3v3

ACTIVITY INTENSITY: Medium-High
ACTIVITY TIME: 2 minutes
DURATION: 12 minutes
REPETITIONS: 3
RECOVERY TIME: 2 minutes

Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players): Play 3v3 to small goals. At first play “NEW BALL.” Whenever a ball goes out of bounds the players will receive a new ball from the coach. Play until one ball is left. When one ball is left, play like a normal game and rules.

Coaching Points / Key Concepts: Play and enjoy!
TRAINING OBJECTIVES: Dribbling (Turning the Ball)

- To improve dribbling and turning the ball with the inside of the foot.
- To continue to work on dribbling with the head up.

I. Warm-up: The Octopus

ACTIVITY INTENSITY: Low-Medium
ACTIVITY TIME: 1-2 minutes
DURATION: 8 minutes
REPETITIONS: 4
RECOVERY TIME: 1 minute

Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players): Each player has their own ball. A coach holds two vests or two pool noodles. At first, perform the activity without the ball. A) Try to tag the players. B) Every player now has their ball and now you attempt to touch their ball. C) If a player’s ball gets touched, they are frozen. They can be unfrozen if a teammate comes and passes a ball between their legs.

Coaching Points / Key Concepts: Dribbling with the head up. Working on movement ability (without ball).

II. Main Part: “Chase”

ACTIVITY INTENSITY: Medium
ACTIVITY TIME: 1 minute
DURATION: 12 minutes
REPETITIONS: 6
RECOVERY TIME: 1 minute

Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players): To start, players run without a ball. Players start on opposite ends. When coach says “Go” one player is “it,” the other tries to get back to starting cone. Switch roles. Then add a ball to it. Switch groups around. Variation: Put three players in a grid and have them race back to their starting cone.

Coaching Points / Key Concepts: Introduce how to turn the ball with the inside of the foot. Ask them to show how they get away from being tagged?

III. Main Part: Expanded Activity (2v2 / 3v3 to a line)

ACTIVITY INTENSITY: Medium-High
ACTIVITY TIME: 1 minute
DURATION: 12 minutes
REPETITIONS: 6
RECOVERY TIME: 1 minute

Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players): Play 2v2 or 3v3. The objective is to dribble the ball into the other team’s endzone. A point is scored when the ball is dribbled into and controlled in the other team’s endzone. Switch teams around.

Coaching Points / Key Concepts: Ask players to show you how they go around someone? How do they protect their ball?

IV. Game: 3v3

ACTIVITY INTENSITY: High
ACTIVITY TIME: 2 minutes
DURATION: 16 minutes
REPETITIONS: 4
RECOVERY TIME: 2 minutes

Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players): At first, play “NEW BALL.” Whenever a ball goes out of bounds the players will receive a new ball from the coach. Play until one ball is left. When one ball is left, play like a normal game and rules.

Coaching Points / Key Concepts: Play and enjoy!
TRAINING OBJECTIVES: STRIKING THE BALL
• To improve striking the ball with the inside or instep (laces) of the foot.
• To introduce how to work with a teammate.

I. Warm-up: “Minions”
ACTIVITY INTENSITY: Low-Medium
ACTIVITY TIME: 1-2 minutes
DURATION: 8 minutes
REPETITIONS: 4
RECOVERY TIME: 1 minute
Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players): Small area is created. One player has ball and is “it.” They try to pass the ball and hit someone below the knee. If a player gets hit, they then get a ball and join the “it” player. Play for 1 minute and then start a new game.

Coaching Points / Key Concepts: Dribbling with the head up. Striking the ball with the biggest part of the foot, which is the inside.

II. Main Part: Junkyard Soccer
ACTIVITY INTENSITY: Medium
ACTIVITY TIME: 1 minute
DURATION: 12 minutes
REPETITIONS: 6
RECOVERY TIME: 1 minute
Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players): Players pair-up. Create two teams. Put each team on a half of the playing area. The objective of the game is to have the fewest number of balls on your side when time is called. Note: Have an odd number of balls. Example: If you have 6 players then use 5 balls.

Coaching Points / Key Concepts: How can they strike the ball back to the other side? What part of the foot should they use? (Instep or shoe laces)
Note: At first they may not be comfortable using their instep.

III. Main Part: Expanded Activity (2v2 Get out of here!)
ACTIVITY INTENSITY: Medium-High
ACTIVITY TIME: 1-2 minutes
DURATION: 12 minutes
REPETITIONS: 6
RECOVERY TIME: 1 minute
Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players): Bring two teams together. Play 2v2 to goals. When the ball goes out of bounds, the coach yells “Get outta here” and the players on the field run off. A new pair from each team then runs on and plays. Note: Make the field smaller so the ball goes out of bounds and the players aren’t waiting too long in line.

Coaching Points / Key Concepts:
What part of the foot do you use to score? What if you can’t shoot? Then what? (pass the ball to a teammate)

IV. Game: 3v3
ACTIVITY INTENSITY: Medium-High
ACTIVITY TIME: 3 minutes
DURATION: 10 minutes
REPETITIONS: 2
RECOVERY TIME: 2 minutes
Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players): Play small-sided game to goals.

Coaching Points / Key Concepts:
Play and enjoy!
**F LICENSE (5-6 YEAR OLDS) - WEEK 5**

**TRAINING OBJECTIVES:** STRIKING THE BALL TO SCORE

- To improve striking the ball.
- To continue to work on dribbling with the head up and striking the ball.

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**I. Warm-up: “Ouch”**

- **ACTIVITY INTENSITY:** Low-Medium
- **ACTIVITY TIME:** 1-2 minutes
- **DURATION:** 8 minutes
- **REPETITIONS:** 4
- **RECOVERY TIME:** 1 minute

**Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players):** Players dribble their own soccer ball and try to hit the coach below the knee. When coach gets hit, they yell “ouch.” Include parents or assistant coaches for other rounds.

**Coaching Points / Key Concepts:** Dribbling with the head up. Striking the ball with the biggest part of the foot, which is the inside.

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**II. Main Part: Moving Goal**

- **ACTIVITY INTENSITY:** Medium
- **ACTIVITY TIME:** 1 minute
- **DURATION:** 12 minutes
- **REPETITIONS:** 6
- **RECOVERY TIME:** 1 minute

**Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players):** Coach and Assistant (Parent) hold a pool noodle or tie bibs together. Players are instructed to dribble their soccer ball and try to score on the “Moving Goal.” Coaches lower the goal to encourage shooting lower.

**Coaching Points / Key Concepts:** Dribbling with the head up. What part of the foot can they use to score a goal?

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**III. Main Part: Expanded Activity (2v2 / 3v3 Get out of here!)**

- **ACTIVITY INTENSITY:** Medium-High
- **ACTIVITY TIME:** 2 minutes
- **DURATION:** 12 minutes
- **REPETITIONS:** 4
- **RECOVERY TIME:** 1 minute

**Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players):** Bring two teams together. Play 2v2 to goals. When the ball goes out of bounds, the coach yells “Get outta here” and the players on the field run off. A new pair runs on and plays against another. Note: Make the field smaller so the ball goes out of bounds and the players aren’t waiting too long in line.

**Coaching Points / Key Concepts:**

- What part of the foot do you use to score? What if you can’t shoot? Then what? (pass the ball to a teammate)

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**IV. Game: 3v3**

- **ACTIVITY INTENSITY:** Medium-High
- **ACTIVITY TIME:** 3 minutes
- **DURATION:** 10 minutes
- **REPETITIONS:** 2
- **RECOVERY TIME:** 2 minutes

**Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players):** Play small-sided game to goals. Make a goal worth a million points!

**Coaching Points / Key Concepts:**

- Play and enjoy!
F LICENSE (5-6 YEAR OLDS) – WEEK 6

TRAINING OBJECTIVES: PUSH PASS

- To improve passing the ball. Specifically the push pass with the inside, instep or outside of the foot.
- To introduce how to work with a teammate.

I. Warm-up: “Back to Coach - Pairs”

ACTIVITY INTENSITY: Low-Medium
ACTIVITY TIME: 1-2 minutes
DURATION: 8 minutes
REPETITIONS: 4
RECOVERY TIME: 1 minute

Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players): Players are in pairs. Coach tosses ball and each pair brings the ball back to the coach by passing it back to each other. A) Get it back to coach B) make a specific amount of passes, C) Coach walks away. Now can they find the coach?

Coaching Points / Key Concepts: Dribbling with the head up. Striking the ball with the biggest part of the foot, which is the inside.

II. Main Part: Gates

ACTIVITY INTENSITY: Medium
ACTIVITY TIME: 2 minutes
DURATION: 12 minutes
REPETITIONS: 4
RECOVERY TIME: 1 minute

Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players): Each pair has a ball. Make small gates. Progression: A) Players pass ball back and forth through gate. See how many they can get in 20 seconds, B) Pass through gate and go to a new one. C) Pass through gate two times then go to a new one. D) Coach and assistants walk around and block a gate.

Coaching Points / Key Concepts: Push pass. What part of the foot do you use to pass the ball? (Inside, instep, or outside). Note: For this age, using the outside of the foot is very challenging. Challenge players based on their abilities.

III. Main Part: Expanded Activity (2v2 Get out of here!)

ACTIVITY INTENSITY: Medium-High
ACTIVITY TIME: 2 minutes
DURATION: 12 minutes
REPETITIONS: 4
RECOVERY TIME: 1 minute

Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players): Bring two teams together. Play 2v2 to goals. When the ball goes out of bounds, the coach yells “Get outta here” and the players on the field run off. A new pair runs on and plays against another. Note: Make the field smaller so the ball goes out of bounds and the players aren’t waiting too long in line.

Coaching Points / Key Concepts: What part of the foot do you use to score? What if you can’t shoot? Then what? (pass the ball to a teammate)

IV. Game: 3v3

ACTIVITY INTENSITY: Medium-High
ACTIVITY TIME: 3 minutes
DURATION: 10 minutes
REPETITIONS: 2
RECOVERY TIME: 2 minutes

Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players): Play small-sided game to goals.

Coaching Points / Key Concepts: Play and enjoy!
U8 Weekly Lesson Plans
I. Warm-up: The Network

**ACTIVITY INTENSITY:** Low-Medium
**ACTIVITY TIME:** 12 minutes
**DURATION:** 8 minutes
**REPETITIONS:** 4
**RECOVERY TIME:** 1 minute

**Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players):** Place different colored cones within a playing area. Each player has their own ball. At first, perform the activity without the ball. A) Run and touch cones with hands; B) Run and touch cones with feet; C) Run and hop over cones with one foot. Then add a ball. Have the players dribble from cone to cone. A) Dribble around a cone; B) Dribble to a new color.

**Coaching Points / Key Concepts:** Dribbling with the head up. Working on movement ability (w/out ball).

II. Main Part: Small-Sided Activity (Freeze Tag)

**ACTIVITY INTENSITY:** Medium
**ACTIVITY TIME:** 12 minutes
**DURATION:** 2 minutes
**REPETITIONS:** 4
**RECOVERY TIME:** 1 minute

**Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players):** To start, have players run with balls in their hands. If player gets tagged then 5 touch-ups to get unfrozen. Then progress to dribbling a ball. If player gets tagged by the coach then a teammate has to unfreeze them by passing ball under the legs or dribbling around them. Play for a period then make the boundaries smaller.

**Coaching Points / Key Concepts:** Dribbling with the head up. Introduce how to turn the ball with the inside of the foot. Ask them to show how they get away from being tagged.

III. Main Part: Expanded Activity (2v2 / 3v3 / 4v4 to an end zone)

**ACTIVITY INTENSITY:** Medium-High
**ACTIVITY TIME:** 12 minutes
**DURATION:** 2 minutes
**REPETITIONS:** 4
**RECOVERY TIME:** 1 minute

**Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players):** Create two endzones and put a ball in each. There is also one game ball. Play 2v2, 3v3 or 4v4. The objective is to dribble the ball into the other team’s endzone. When a team is successful, they retrieve another ball from their defending endzone and try again. The first team to get all three balls in the other team’s endzone wins.

**Coaching Points / Key Concepts:** Introducing how to dribble around an opponent. Ask players to show you how they go around someone.

IV. Game: 4v4

**ACTIVITY INTENSITY:** High
**ACTIVITY TIME:** 1 minute
**DURATION:** 10 minutes
**REPETITIONS:** 2
**RECOVERY TIME:** 2 minutes

**Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players):** Play 3v3 to small goals. At first play “NEW BALL.” Whenever a ball goes out of bounds the players will receive a new ball from the coach. Play until one ball is left. After that show what occurs after the ball goes out of bounds (kick-in, goal kick, corner kick, etc.) End with “Super High Fives.” Make them jump in the air to slap the coach “five.”

**Coaching Points / Key Concepts:** Play and enjoy!
TRAINING OBJECTIVES: PUSH PASS
- To improve passing the ball. Specifically the push pass.
- To develop working with a teammate.

I. Warm-up: “Back to Coach - Pairs”
ACTIVITY INTENSITY: Low-Medium
ACTIVITY TIME: 1-2 minutes
DURATION: 8 minutes
REPETITIONS: 4
RECOVERY TIME: 1 minute
Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players): Players are in pairs. Coach tosses ball and each pair brings the ball back to the coach by passing it back to each other. A) Get it back to coach B) make a specific amount of passes, C) Coach walks away. Now can they find the coach?
Coaching Points / Key Concepts: Dribbling with the head up. Striking the ball with the biggest part of the foot which is the inside.

II. Main Part: Gates
ACTIVITY INTENSITY: Medium
ACTIVITY TIME: 2 minutes
DURATION: 12 minutes
REPETITIONS: 4
RECOVERY TIME: 1 minute
Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players): Each pair has a ball. Make small gates. Progression: A) Players pass ball back and forth through gate. See how many they can get in 20 seconds. B) Pass through gate and go to a new one. C) Pass through gate two times then go to a new one. D) Coach and assistants walk around and block a gate. E) Challenge them to make a longer pass. Can they pass the ball through two gates?
Coaching Points / Key Concepts: Push pass. What part of the foot do you use to pass the ball? (Inside, instep, or outside).

III. Main Part: Expanded Activity (2v2, 3v3 to a target)
ACTIVITY INTENSITY: Medium-High
ACTIVITY TIME: 2 minutes
DURATION: 12 minutes
REPETITIONS: 4
RECOVERY TIME: 1 minute
Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players): Play 2v2, 3v3 with a parent or assistant coach inside each endzone. The object is to try and pass the ball to one of the coaches in the endzone.
Coaching Points / Key Concepts: Play small-sided game to goals.

IV. Game: 4v4
ACTIVITY INTENSITY: Medium-High
ACTIVITY TIME: 3 minutes
DURATION: 10 minutes
REPETITIONS: 2
RECOVERY TIME: 2 minutes
Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players): Play small-sided game to goals.
Coaching Points / Key Concepts: Play and enjoy!
TRAINING OBJECTIVES: REDIRECTING THE BALL

- To improve how to redirect or receive the ball. “Take it somewhere new.”
- To develop how to work with a teammate.

I. Warm-up: The Triangle

**ACTIVITY INTENSITY:** Low-Medium
**ACTIVITY TIME:** 1-2 minutes
**DURATION:** 8 minutes
**REPETITIONS:** 4
**RECOVERY TIME:** 1 minute

Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players): Players are in pairs and form a triangle with cones. Triangles should be around 2 yards apart. The player with the ball passes the ball through the triangle. The player receiving the ball tries to redirect the ball around the cone and then pass the ball back through the triangle without hitting the cones. A) See how many times they can pass the ball back through the triangle without hitting the cones. B) See which pair can make the most passes back through the triangle without touching the cones.

Coaching Points / Key Concepts: Redirect the ball with the inside of the foot. Can they do it with the outside of the foot? First touch sets up their next touch.

II. Main Part: 2v1 4 goal game

**ACTIVITY INTENSITY:** Medium-High
**ACTIVITY TIME:** 2 minutes
**DURATION:** 12 minutes
**REPETITIONS:** 4
**RECOVERY TIME:** 1 minute

Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players): Divide the field in half. Two players from the attacking team each go to a half. They stay in that half. The objective is to receive the ball from a teammate in one of the two sides and score in one of the two sides. One player from the defending team also goes into a half. They stay in their half. If they win the ball they try to score in one of the two sides. If they win the ball they can go into either half. Rotate the players around each round.

Coaching Points / Key Concepts: Focus on how they redirect the ball. What part of the foot do you use to redirect the ball? Can they take it somewhere new?

III. Main Part: Expanded Activity (3v3 / 4v4 Game to 4 goals)

**ACTIVITY INTENSITY:** Medium-High
**ACTIVITY TIME:** 2 minutes
**DURATION:** 12 minutes
**REPETITIONS:** 4
**RECOVERY TIME:** 1 minute

Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players): Play 3v3 / 4v4 to 4 goals. Each team attacks two goals and defends two. Rotate the players to a new role and let them experience redirecting the ball in different parts of the field.

Coaching Points / Key Concepts: Play and enjoy!

IV. Game: 4v4

**ACTIVITY INTENSITY:** Medium-High
**ACTIVITY TIME:** 3 minutes
**DURATION:** 10 minutes
**REPETITIONS:** 2
**RECOVERY TIME:** 2 minutes

Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players): Play small-sided game to goals.

Coaching Points / Key Concepts: What part of the foot do you use to redirect the ball? Where should you redirect the ball if the opponent is coming at you? (away from pressure)
TRAINING OBJECTIVES: STRIKING THE BALL

• To improve striking the ball.
• To continue to work on dribbling with the head up and striking the ball.

I. Warm-up: “Goal to Goal”

ACTIVITY INTENSITY: Low-Medium
ACTIVITY TIME: 1.2 minutes
DURATION: 8 minutes
REPETITIONS: 4
RECOVERY TIME: 1 minute

Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players): Players pair up with one ball. The ball is held in their hands. The object is to score a goal. Rules: 1. No running with the ball. 2. If a player has the ball, they cannot use their hands. 3. Progress to they can only hit the ball once. 4. Progress to they can only hit the ball twice.

Coaching Points / Key Concepts: Dribbling with the head up. What part of the foot can they use to score a goal. Playing with a teammate.

II. Main Part: Moving Goal

ACTIVITY INTENSITY: Medium
ACTIVITY TIME: 2 minutes
DURATION: 12 minutes
REPETITIONS: 4
RECOVERY TIME: 1 minute

Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players): Coach and Assistant (Parent) hold a pool noodle or tie the links together. Players pair up and are instructed to dribble the ball and try to score on the “Moving Goal.” Coaches lower the goal to encourage shooting lower.

Coaching Points / Key Concepts: Dribbling with the head up. What part of the foot can they use to score a goal. Playing with a teammate.

III. Main Part: Expanded Activity (2v2 / 3v3 Get out of here!)

ACTIVITY INTENSITY: Medium-High
ACTIVITY TIME: 2 minutes
DURATION: 12 minutes
REPETITIONS: 4
RECOVERY TIME: 1 minute

Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players): Bring two teams together. Play 2v2 to goals. When the ball goes out of bounds, the coach yells “Get outta here!” and the players on the field run off. A new pair runs on. Note: Make the field smaller so the ball goes out of bounds and the players aren’t waiting too long in line.

Coaching Points / Key Concepts: What part of the foot do you use to score? What if you can’t shoot? Then what? (pass the ball to someone who can)

IV. Game: 4v4

ACTIVITY INTENSITY: Medium-High
ACTIVITY TIME: 3 minutes
DURATION: 10 minutes
REPETITIONS: 2
RECOVERY TIME: 2 minutes

Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players): Play small-sided game to goals.

Coaching Points / Key Concepts: Play and enjoy!
**F LICENSE (7-8 YEAR OLDS) - WEEK 5**

**TRAINING OBJECTIVES:** IMPROVING INTERMEDIATE-LONG PASSES
- To improve **intermediate** range passes (8-12 yards).
- To improve **long** range passes for the U8 player (15-20 yards).

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**I. Warm-up: Clean The Yard**

**ACTIVITY INTENSITY:** Low-Medium  
**ACTIVITY TIME:** 1-2 minutes  
**DURATION:** 8 minutes  
**REPETITIONS:** 4  
**RECOVERY TIME:** 1 minute

**Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players):** Divide into two teams. Each team goes to a half. Use an odd number of balls. The objective of the game is to strike the ball into the other team's yard. Each team wants to have a clear yard when time is called by the coach. The team that has the fewest balls on their side when time is called gets a point. Play to a certain amount of points or for time. Progress: Require a pass to be made to a teammate before the ball can be struck back to the other half.

**Coaching Points / Key Concepts:** Striking the ball with their instep. The non-striking foot should be next to and slightly away from the ball.

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**II. Main Part: 2v2 / 3v3 to a target**

**ACTIVITY INTENSITY:** Medium  
**ACTIVITY TIME:** 1 minute  
**DURATION:** 12 minutes  
**REPETITIONS:** 6  
**RECOVERY TIME:** 1 minute

**Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players):** Play 2v2, 3v3 with a parent or assistant coach inside each endzone. The object is to try and pass the ball to one of the coaches in the endzone.

**Coaching Points / Key Concepts:** What part of the foot do you use to make a longer pass? What if you can't pass? Then what? (Pass the ball to a teammate)

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**III. Main Part: Expanded Activity (Outside Goals)**

**ACTIVITY INTENSITY:** Medium-High  
**ACTIVITY TIME:** 2 minutes  
**DURATION:** 12 minutes  
**REPETITIONS:** 4  
**RECOVERY TIME:** 1 minute

**Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players):** Play 4v4 game. Each team has two goals they can score on and two goals to defend. The goals are placed 10-15 yards outside of the playing area. Play a normal game except in order to score in one of the two goals, the ball must be passed from inside the playing area.

**Coaching Points / Key Concepts:** What part of the foot do you use to make a longer pass? What if you can't pass? Then what? (Pass to a teammate)

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**IV. Game: 4v4**

**ACTIVITY INTENSITY:** Medium-High  
**ACTIVITY TIME:** 3 minutes  
**DURATION:** 10 minutes  
**REPETITIONS:** 2  
**RECOVERY TIME:** 2 minutes

**Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players):** Play small-sided game to goals.

**Coaching Points / Key Concepts:** Play and enjoy!
TRAINING OBJECTIVES: TEACHING WITH SMALL-SIDED GAMES

- To work on teaching technique within a small-sided game.
- To work on teaching simple principles of play (Attacking: penetration and depth / Defending: pressure and cover).

I. Warm-up: Paint The Grass

**ACTIVITY INTENSITY:** Low-Medium  
**ACTIVITY TIME:** 1.2 minutes  
**DURATION:** 8 minutes  
**REPETITIONS:** 4  
**RECOVERY TIME:** 1 minute

**Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players):** Players are in pairs. Each pair shares one ball. Pairs try to pass the ball in an area. Instruct players that they should try to paint the field with the ball by passing. Try to paint the whole playing area.

**Coaching Points / Key Concepts:** Push pass  
Redirecting the ball - Can they take it somewhere new?  
Working with a teammate (spatial awareness). They may run next to each other. Can they find a space away from their partner?

II. Main Part: Last Player Back

**ACTIVITY INTENSITY:** Medium-High  
**ACTIVITY TIME:** 1 minute  
**DURATION:** 12 minutes  
**REPETITIONS:** 6  
**RECOVERY TIME:** 1 minute

**Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players):** Players are in pairs or groups of 3. Play a game to goals. The team that has the ball must always attack with everyone. The team that is defending, sends someone back to stand on the goal line. They become a goalkeeper. When the team that is defending wins the ball that player who was in goal now comes out and the team that was attacking sends someone (usually the last player) back to stand on the goal line.

**Coaching Points / Key Concepts:** What part of the foot do you use to make a longer pass? What if you can’t pass? Then what? (pass the ball to a teammate) How do you win the ball back?

III. Main Part: Expanded Activity (More to Score)

**ACTIVITY INTENSITY:** Medium-High  
**ACTIVITY TIME:** 2 minutes  
**DURATION:** 12 minutes  
**REPETITIONS:** 4  
**RECOVERY TIME:** 1 minute

**Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players):** Play 4v4 game. The game is a normal game except each team attempts to get more of their teammates to score. The team that has more teammates score after 4 repetitions wins the game.

**Coaching Points / Key Concepts:** Technical objectives: dribbling, passing, redirecting the ball. This activity also promotes teamwork as they have to attempt to include more players in the scoring process.

IV. Game: 4v4

**ACTIVITY INTENSITY:** Medium-High  
**ACTIVITY TIME:** 3 minutes  
**DURATION:** 10 minutes  
**REPETITIONS:** 2  
**RECOVERY TIME:** 2 minutes

**Organization (Physical Environment / Equipment / Players):** Play small-sided game to goals.

**Coaching Points / Key Concepts:** Play and enjoy!
U10 Week 1  By G Stephenson, Assistant Technical Director

Improving players ability to beat players in 1v1 situations through individual dribbling moves

**TECHNICAL WARM-UP**

**TRAINING AREA** = 30W x 40L. All players in the space have a ball at their feet. Freely dribble throughout the space, performing individual moves. On coaches command players can perform: *Inside-Outside, Step-over & go, pull-push-go, outside cut, inside cut, etc.*

**Coaching Points**

Dribble with the outside of your foot to accelerate into open space with the ball away from your body (toe down, heel up). Dribble with the inside of your foot to change directions, or maintain possession closer to your body to keep it away from your opponents (heel down, toe up)

*Where - Into open space by changing direction and speed
*When - The moment space becomes available & I recognize that I can enter it

**FREE DRIBBLE & 1v1 MOVES**

**TRAINING AREA** = 30W x 40L. All players in the space have a ball at their feet. Freely dribble throughout the space, performing individual moves. On coaches command players can perform:

*Inside-Outside, Step-over & go, pull-push-go, outside cut, inside cut, etc.*

**Coaching Points**

Dribble with the outside of your foot to accelerate into open space with the ball away from your body (toe down, heel up). Dribble with the inside of your foot to change directions, or maintain possession closer to your body to keep it away from your opponents (heel down, toe up)

*Where - Into open space by changing direction and speed
*When - The moment space becomes available & I recognize that I can enter it

**SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY**

4v4 Endzone Soccer –

**TRAINING AREA** = 30W x 40L. Build a small "endzone" at each end of the field = 30W x 5L. Score by dribbling into th endzone. Players can only enter the endzone if they are dribbling the ball, or recovering defensively after the person dribbling the ball. 1pt. = dribble into endzone under control; 2pts = beat (1) opponent, and dribble into the endzone under control; 5pts = beat more than (1) opponent, and dribble into endzone under control; **Play to 10pts.

**Coaching Points**

Keep your head up when receiving the ball, or in possession to identify areas of the field to penetrate with the dribble. If there is space behind a defender, look dribble and change direction to unbalance the defender

*What - Recognizing 1v1 situations to try and beat your opponent
*Where - Open space in front, and behind the defender

**EXPANDED SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY**

5v5 - 2 goals

**TRAINING AREA**= 50W x 60L. Place (1) large goal at one end of the field and (3) small goals made from cones at the other end of the field, approximately 3 yards wide. Position balls at each of the field for easy access. Play for set period of time, or number of goals (determined by coach). Players scoring on the small goals, score by passing the ball through the cones. 1pt. = score a goal; 2pt = beat (1) opponent, and score a goal; 5pts = beat more than (1) opponent, and score a goal

**Coaching Points**

Dribble with speed & change directions when attacking open space, or an alone defender

Look to pass, and keep possession if there are several defenders around/near the ball

*Who - The player with the ball*Why - Taking players off the dribble will open up space for teammates throughout the rest of the field

**GAME**

Play 7v7 with specific formations for each team.

Reinforce all points above
Improve player's ability to use the dribble to help set up the pass

**TECHNICAL WARM-UP**

2v0 - Combination Play

**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Place a "defender" (wall man, cone, pole, etc.) in the center of the space. Form (4) lines in each corner of the field with ball. The player with the ball dribbles towards the defender to "commit" them. Then plays pass to teammate. Both players run off the field, and stand in the next line. The next group begins a similar movement.

**Coaching Points:**
- Point your standing leg/plant foot towards the player or space you wish to pass the ball;
- Follow through with your foot after you pass the ball to increase speed and accuracy when passing

What - The laces of the foot should be used when dribbling at speed; Where - Pass to the open space in front of me

**SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY**

3v2 - Dribble Goals (2)

**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Play (2) goals on each end-line using (4) cones. The goals should be 3 yards wide. Designate a group of attackers (3), and a group of defenders (2). Play 3v2, scoring by dribbling through the gate. Rotate attack & defense.

**Coaching Points:**
- Dribble with the laces of the foot when dribbling at speed; Pass with the inside of the foot to be more accurate & strike the middle of the ball when passing

What - Recognizing the moment to attack & engage the defender with the dribble; Why - To enable commit the defender, which will open more space for my teammates to enter without the ball

**EXPANDED SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY**

5v5 to Goal

**TRAINING AREA** = 40W x 60L. Place (2) goals at opposite ends of the field. Play 5v5, shooting/passing the ball into the goal to score. *Variations: -Scoring a goal = 1pt.; -Committing a defender & scoring a goal = 5pts

**Coaching Points:**
- Where - In front of them into space after I have committed a defender;
- When - Just before the defender steps in to tackle the ball

**GAME**

Play 7v7 with specific formations for each team.

Reinforce all points above
U10 Week 3  By G Stephenson, Assistant Technical Director

Passing & Receiving

**TECHNICAL WARM-UP**

**TRAINING AREA** = 30W x 40L. Place (1) goal on each end line for the teams to attack. Score by passing the ball in the goal.

**Coaching points**
- First touch should be across the body – in space away body without pressure; First touch should be across the body – close to the body away from pressure; Move feet underneath the body, and behind the ball to control the ball.
- Strike the middle of the ball, position the non-kicking/plant foot towards your teammate or target; Use the inside part of the foot when striking the ball – lock the ankle & knee when striking the ball; Head down, and watch foot strike the ball – follow through the ball/pass.

**SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY**

**3v3 +1 to 1 goal**

**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Break the players up into even divided groups (3,4,5) as numbers allow. (1) ball between each group. Number each player #1-3,4,5 as numbers allow. Players should pass & receive throughout the space in a sequential manner #1-2-3-4-1. (example). Move into new space after completing the pass. Variations: -Reverse the number order; -Touch restrictions; -Add another ball (for groups of 5+)

**Coaching Points**
- First touch should be across the body – in space away body without pressure; First touch should be across the body – close to the body away from pressure; Move feet underneath the body, and behind the ball to control the ball.
- What - Turning to change the point of attack; Why - To keep the ball, and move it to open space to have a better chance to score.

**EXPANDED SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY**

**GAME**

4v4 to 1 goal & 2 counter goals - Dribble/Pass to Score

**TRAINING AREA** = 30W x 40L. Place (2) cones on one end-line, in each corner. Making (2) goals. The goals should be 3 yards wide. Place (1) goal on the opposite end line. Red scores by passing into the goal, white scores by passing through the cones goals.

**Coaching Points**
- First touch should be across the body – in space away body without pressure; First touch should be across the body – close to the body away from pressure; Move feet underneath the body, and behind the ball to control the ball.
- What - Turning to change the point of attack; Why - To keep the ball, and move it to open space to have a better chance to score.

**Play 7v7 with specific formations for each team.**

Reinforce all points above.
**U10 Week 4**  
**By G Stephenson, Assistant Technical Director**

**Passing & Receiving in Groups**

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**TECHNICAL WARM-UP**

*Stay & Play - "If you play the ball down, you stay put"*

**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Players should be in groups of (4-5) with (1) ball between them. Horizontal players (A,B) provide off ball support, while penetrating players (C,D) make penetrating passes. A-B-C-D (A,B move off ball in support of D)
- Repeat pattern & combinations for 90 seconds. Rotate position, roles, and combination pairs.

**Coaching Points:**
Keep head up to direct first touch with the inside of your foot into open space; Move towards the player with the ball with “open” body shape to play in multiple directions; Run without the ball with a curve path to provide a large window for teammate to pass into

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**SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY**

**3v3 Knock over the cone**

**TRAINING AREA** = 30W x 40L. Set up (2) tall cones on each end-line, representing (2) targets/goals. Score by passing the ball into the cone. Knock both cones over to win the game.

**Coaching Points:**
Time the run to support the ball as it travels towards your teammate; Position yourself at an angle so the player with the ball can see you & the defender; Move feet, and up on your toes as your prepare to receive the ball

**Who** - The player(s) without the ball; **How** - Move towards my teammate with the ball so that my body is open to the field

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**EXPANDED SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY**

**4v4 to 1 goal**

**TRAINING AREA** = 30W x 40L. Place (1) goal on each end-line for the group to attack. Play 4v4. Score by passing the ball into the goal. The goal is equal to the number of successful consecutive passes before the goal is scored.

**Coaching Points:**
Pass into space in front of teammates so they can run onto the ball – non-kicking foot/plant foot should point to the space the ball will travel; Toes down, heel up to drive the ball across the space – to move the ball quickly

**What** - Knowing when to move to support the ball; **When** - If there is a defender near the ball and I am closest to the ball.

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**GAME**

Play 7v7 with specific formations for each team.

Reinforce all points above
Improving Shooting Technique

**TECHNICAL WARM-UP**

**2v2 Continuous**

**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Place 1 large goal at each end of the field. Position players in each corner of the field. Ball starts from the GK. Play until there is a goal, or ball out of bounds. Then switch groups. Ball always with the GK of the team in possession. Variations: Play for time; Play for total score; Play series of games (2 of 3)

**Coaching Points:**
- Application of technique (shooting); What - The decision to shoot on goal, and the technique used; Who - The player in the best shooting position, with the ball; Where - The part of the goal that the shooter aims for with their shot

**EXPANDED SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY**

**Numbered Shooting Technique**

**TRAINING AREA** = 30W x 40L. Place (4) goals on each side of the space. All players should have a ball at their feet. Number each color/group evenly (1-4). Players will dribble around the space, and when the coach calls their "#Number" they then look to shoot on goal (closest, or farthest). Variations - Shooting Technique (at coach's discretion): Driven; Curled; In-step Drive; Lofted

**Coaching Points:**
- First touch when receiving should be away from the body into space; Place plant foot/non-kicking foot behind ball (elevate ball); Place plant foot/non-kicking foot next to the ball (keep ball lower); Strike the middle of the ball to keep the ball lower; Strike the bottom of the ball to elevate the ball

**5v5 to Goal**

**TRAINING AREA** = 40W x 50L. Place (1) large goal on each endline. Play 5v5 with GKs. Variations: Play for time; Play for total score; Play series of games (2 of 3)

**Coaching Points:**
- Application of technique (shooting); What - The decision to shoot on goal, and the technique used; Who - The player in the best shooting position, with the ball; Where - The part of the goal that the shooter aims for with their shot

**GAME**

Play 7v7 with specific formations for each team.

Reinforce all points above
**Individual Defending**

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### TECHNICAL WARM-UP

**Individual Partner Defending Technique**

**TRAINING AREA** - 40W x 30L. Players in a groups 2-3 with (1) ball. Each group works on “defensive technique.”

*1v1 Defensive Technique - dribbling
*1v1 Defensive Technique - no turn
*1v2 Defensive Technique - intercept pass

Players should go through each type of defending situation and rotate. Player in possession (dribbling/passing) tries to beat the defender. Rotate offense-defense each turn. Rest after 45 sec, stretch 90 sec, repeat.

**Coaching Points:**

- Approach quickly to the ball – long strides;
- Slow down as you approach the ball – short, choppy strides;
- Bend knees, weight on toes when pressuring the ball;
- Move feet, hips, and head as the offensive player moves the ball.

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### SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

2v2 score on two goals

**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Place (2) cones 3 yards apart in each corner forming a “goal” for a total of (4) goals. Coach starts with the balls. Coach plays ball to one team. While the ball travels, the team who did not receive the ball runs on to defend against the team in possession. Both teams score by passing/shooting the ball through the “goals.”

**Coaching Points:**

- Defensive technique = cover the ground, get down, & stay down!;
- Tackle the ball: when the ball is AWAY from offensive player.

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### EXPANDED SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

4v4 score on one large goal & two goals

**TRAINING AREA** = 30W x 40L. Place (2) cones 3 yards apart in each two corners forming a “goal” for a total of (2) goals. Place one large goal at the opposite end.

Play for pre-determined amount of time. Red team defends large goal, and white defends two goals. After each period change the goals defended.

**Coaching Points:**

- Defensive technique = cover the ground, get down, & stay down!;
- Tackle the ball: when the ball is AWAY from offensive player;
- What - The direction to apply pressure, or force the ball;
- Why - This is to encourage the opposition to go away from the goal, and towards your supporting teammates.

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### GAME

Play 7v7 with specific formations for each team.

Reinforce all points above.
**TECHNICAL WARM-UP**

**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Place (2) tall cones on each end-line 5 yards apart making (1) goal on each endline. Red v White. Score by passing the ball on the ground through the goal.

Variations: Play for set period of time; Play to a specific number (#) of goals; Double points if goal comes after a steal; -Double points if a goal comes after an interception

**Coaching Points:**
Defensive pressure on the ball (speed, body stance, angle, distance); Approach quickly to the ball – long strides; Slow down as you approach the ball – short, choppy strides; Bend knees, weight on toes when pressuring the ball; Move feet, hips, and head as the offensive player moves the ball

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**SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY**

3v3 to 1 goal

**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Place (2) tall cones on each end-line 5 yards apart making (1) goal on each endline. Red v White. Score by passing the ball on the ground through the goal.

Variations: Play for set period of time; Play to a specific number (#) of goals; Double points if goal comes after a steal; -Double points if a goal comes after an interception

**Coaching Points:**
Defensive pressure on the ball (speed, body stance, angle, distance); Who - The 2nd defender, or place who is closest to their teammate defending the ball; Why - The 2nd defender can help to cover any mistakes made by the 1st defender

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**EXPANDED SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY**

5v5 to 1 goal

**TRAINING AREA** = 30W x 40L. Place (1) goal on each end-line for teams to attack.

Variations: Play for set period of time; Play to a specific number (#) of goals; Double points if goal comes after a steal; -Double points if a goal comes after an interception

**Coaching Points:**
Defensive pressure on the ball (speed, body stance, angle, distance); Who - The 2nd defender, or place who is closest to their teammate defending the ball; Why - The 2nd defender can help to cover any mistakes made by the 1st defender

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**GAME**

Play 7v7 with specific formations for each team.

Reinforce all points above
TECHNICAL WARM-UP

TRAINING AREA = 20W x 30L. The number of balls should equal the number of GKS involved in the warmup. Field players should pass the ball around the space. When the GK makes eye contact with the player; the field player in possession should take a touch and "shoot" on the GK. The objective of the shot is to go towards the GK (no around them, not over them, and not past them). Shots should be taken from 12-15 yards away. *Only shoot on GK’s command.

Coaching Points:
Hands should make early contact and let their hands make contact on the ball. Do not wait for the ball to make contact with the body; Players should move their feet quickly, with short strides, and step towards the ball.

SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

4v4 - 4 goal game

TRAINING AREA = 30W x 40L. Place (2) goals on each end-line in the corner making a total of (4) goals in the space. Red (4) v White (4). Each team's GK defends (2) goals. Score by shooting into the goal.

Coaching Points:
As the player with the ball looks up then down, the GK should take small steps to get in position; Place my weight on my toes, and point my body towards the ball.

EXPANDED SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

4v4 to 1 large goal

TRAINING AREA = 30W x 40L. Place (1) on each end-line for each team to attack. Red (4) v White (4). Score by shooting into the goal.

Coaching Points:
Hands should make early contact and let their hands make contact on the ball. Do not wait for the ball to make contact with the body; When - The player looks up, then down - should be ready for a shot.

GAME

Play 7v7 with specific formations for each team.

Reinforce all points above
U10 Week 9  By G Stephenson, Assistant Technical Director

Dribbling & Turning

TECHNICAL WARM-UP

**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Each player has a ball at their feet dribbling in the space. When the coach yells, "GO!" the players make eye contact with one another and begin to dribble towards one another. They should dribble at normal speed, and try to get their balls as close to each other as they can, before turning away at the last minute. After they turn away they should accelerate into open space and wait for the next "GO!"

**Turns:** Inside foot, Outside foot, Drag back, Pull back

**Coaching Points:**
- Push the ball away from body, plant foot/standing foot should be away from the ball, and under the body;
- Reach for the ball with 1 foot (inside, outside, or bottom of foot);
- Take a touch to change direction of the ball, second touch should be into space to accelerate into a new direction.

SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

3v3 to 4 goals - Dribble to Score

**TRAINING AREA** = 20W x 30L. Place (2) cones on each end-line, in each corner. Making (4) goals. The goals should be 3 yards wide. Play 3v3. Dribble through the gates to score.

**Coaching Points:**
- Application of technique (dribbling, receiving);
- What - Turning away from pressure; Who - The player with the ball.

EXPANDED SMALL-SIDED ACTIVITY

4v4 to 1 goal & 2 counter goals - Dribble/Pass to Score

**TRAINING AREA** = 30W x 40L. Place (2) cones on one end-line, in each corner. Making (2) goals. The goals should be 3 yards wide. Place (1) goal on the opposite end line. Play 4v4. Score by passing the ball in the goal, or by dribbling through cone goals.

**Coaching Points:**
- While in possession head up and look for pressuring defender;
- Check all around the area for open space;
- 2nd touch when turning, needs to be pushed into space 3-5 yards away from body to allow for multiple steps to accelerate away from pressure;
- How - Checking over my shoulder while dribbling, taking a touch away from my body, and quickly accelerating into open space away from pressure.

GAME

Play 7v7 with specific formations for each team.

Reinforce all points above
**Set up as many fields as possible 30W x 40L – no GKs – (1) goal on each end line. Play for 8 minutes, 2 minutes for water. change opponents each match**

**Activity 1**

Pass lead to points
The number of consecutive passes made before a goal is scored = number of points awarded for goal. Encourage players to move without the ball, and the look up to find an open teammate.

**Activity 2**

Join the play
Everyone must be in the attacking half (across the half line) for goals to count. This will help the players/team stay together and avoid gaps or space in between the players on the field.

**Activity 3**

1 touch finish
In order to score, the shot must be a “one-touch” shot/finish. Players need to continuously pass the ball until, they are able to get off a shot quickly with 1 touch.

**Activity 4**

Free Play
Play 4v4 with specific formations for each team.
Reinforce all coaching points above.