

# HFC Fall IM U8 Skills Sheet:

Training: 30 Minutes

Game: 45 Minutes (2 20-minute halves; 5-minute half-time)

Game Format: 4 v 4 or 5 v 5 (*See When to Play 4 v 4 and When to Play 5 v 5 on Important U8 Coaching Resources Document*).

*Players at this level continue to develop individual ball skills and movement/coordination with the ball. Activities at this age-group should also provide opportunities for players to use different parts of the foot -inside, outside, laces. Sessions should focus on dribbling and shooting. Introductions to the concept of working with a teammate, passing, and being part of a team are important in this age-group. Practice activities should be FUN & ENGAGING.*

<b>Technical:</b> Player's ability to manage the ball individually (Ball Skills)	<b>Tactical:</b> Understanding of transition play on both sides of the ball (Strategy)	<b>Physical:</b> player's size and strength, to coordination and speed. (Fitness)	<b>Psychosocial:</b> Mental aspects of the game including mental toughness, drive, passion, motivation, dedication, & work ethic. (Attitude)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to focus on <b>DRIBBLING</b></li> <li>Work on changing Directions when dribbling (pull-backs/cuts)</li> <li>Introduce basic <b>throw-in</b> (two-footed, arms behind head throw)</li> <li>Receiving ground balls with inside, outside, and sole of the feet</li> <li><b>Shooting</b> (ground balls, with inside of the foot and with the instep/LACES (no kicking with toes)</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Limited Tactics in U8 Soccer</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Attack/Defend</b></li> <li><b>1v1 Attacking:</b> dribble toward the goal &amp; past defenders</li> <li><b>1v1 Defending:</b> try to win the ball back when stolen</li> <li><b>2 v 1's INTRODUCE Passing</b> pass to an open teammate when being challenged by opponent. – <b>May happen later in the season!</b></li> <li>No Emphasis on "Field Positions" Moving up and back as a team/unit</li> <li><b>NO GOALIES:</b> Discourage Players from Defensively standing in front of the net</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep the players active/engaged.</li> <li>Increasing agility, coordination, speed, movement WITH A BALL.</li> <li>Soccer-related activities during practice incorporating some elements of competition in order to improve balance &amp; agility.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FUN for ALL!</li> <li>No Emphasis on Winning</li> <li>Good Sportsmanship</li> <li>Positive Reinforcement for All players</li> <li>Begin to focus on the aspect of teamwork</li> <li>Drills can start to include "pairs" of players working together</li> </ul>

<b>Throughout the season, Coaches should encourage the following:</b>	<b>4 v 4 or 5 v 5 Format:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding of <b>Attacking</b> (going to goal, trying to score) and <b>Defending</b> (stealing from the opponent, preventing them from scoring)</li> <li>Reducing use of hands in soccer – Avoid using Hands in the Game (except for throw-ins)</li> <li>Dribbling – Eyes up, use both feet, different surfaces of foot, increase speed, change directions,</li> <li>Move to the ball, not to the net (No Goalies) – Don't run away from the play!</li> <li>Introduction to Passing as Appropriate (some players may be ready to "pass," while others may not).</li> <li>Teaching the Throw-In Basics (especially during the first three weeks).</li> </ul>	<p>The 4v4 or 5 v 5 format is used in U8 Soccer to increase the number of touches each player gets on the bal.</p> <p>The fewer players on the field equals more touches for each player. Players at this age should be encouraged to dribble and take players on 1v1, not just kick or pass.</p> <p>High Scoring Games should not be uncommon in U8 Soccer! Coaches are asked to try to balance the games and make game adjustments if one team is clearly dominating the other team.</p>