

Sporting Columbia U9 Rec Coaches Guide

Our Core Values

- **Respect** – Treat others how you want to be treated
- **Community** – Everyone belongs and contributes
- **Growth Mindset** – Learn from mistakes and keep going
- **Teamwork** – Play for each other, not just yourself
- **Passion** – Love the game, and let that energy shine

Our Recreational Philosophy

At U9, players become more aware of team structure and begin developing **game intelligence**. Sessions should be structured with clear objectives, while maintaining the joy and creativity that makes soccer fun. **Let the game teach whenever possible.**

What to Expect from U9 Players

- Beginning to understand positioning and roles
- Capable of short sequences of tactical instruction
- Learning to work with teammates during games
- Emotionally developing — need encouragement through mistakes
- Enjoy being challenged in fun and competitive ways

What to Work On

- Quality first touches (receiving the ball under control)
- Ball mastery and confident dribbling in tight spaces
- Short passing and support movement (give-and-go, angles)
- 1v1 attacking/defending with intention
- Decision-making: dribble vs pass vs shoot

- Goalkeeper supports and builds from the back.

Player Expectations

- Give full effort in training and games
- Work with teammates and communicate positively
- Ask questions and try new things
- Show good sportsmanship win or lose
- Be coachable — listen and apply feedback

Parent Expectations

- Focus on effort, not just outcomes
- Let the coach lead and avoid giving directions during play
- Applaud good play from all players
- Encourage responsibility and independence
- Trust the process — development over results

Practice 1 (60–75 Minutes)

Warm-Up: 4 Cone Dribble Grid (10 min)

Players in a grid dribble between four cones, using different feet and turns. Add “skill of the day” (e.g., inside hook).

1v1 Zones (15 min)

Set up two 1v1 stations where players attack a small goal. Winners rotate up, challengers rotate in. Emphasize creativity and defending effort.

Passing in Pairs + Movement (10 min)

Players pass and follow their pass, moving around a square or triangle. Focus on accuracy and supporting angle.

Finishing from a Pass (10 min)

Players receive a pass from a teammate and finish on goal. Encourage quick setup and locked ankle on strike.

Scrimmage (15–20 min)

7v7 or small-sided game. Coaching focus: spacing, support, decision-making.

Practice 2 (60–75 Minutes)

Warm-Up: Numbers Game (10 min)

Divide players into two teams, each with numbers. Call out a number (or combo), and those players play 1v1, 2v2, etc. Fun way to work into game play.

Dribble to Pass + Turn (10 min)

Players dribble to a cone, turn, then pass to the next in line. Focus on body shape and communication.

2v1 Attack (15 min)

Coach plays ball to two attackers vs one defender. Teach spacing, passing under pressure, and defending shape.

Shooting Ladder (10 min)

Two lines compete to complete challenges (score from distance, score after a move, score with non-dominant foot). Build confidence in front of goal.

Scrimmage (15–20 min)

Encourage team shape, communication, and game insight. Freeze and ask questions only when needed.

Practice 3 (60–75 Minutes)

Warm-Up: Dribble Freeze & Tricks (10 min)

Players dribble freely; coach calls commands like “freeze,” “turn,” “trick,” “change direction.” Great for ball control.

Triangle Passing with Movement (10 min)

Three players in a triangle — pass, move to next cone. Add a fourth to rotate in. Teaches angles and movements off the ball.

Small-Sided Possession (15 min)


3v1 or 4v2 keep-away games. Stress moving to space, quick decisions, and supporting teammates.

1v1 to Target Goals (10 min)

Two goals spaced apart; players try to score by getting past defender. Good for attacking vision and defending footwork.

Scrimmage (15–20 min)

Encourage building from the back, spacing, and playing with purpose. Celebrate problem-solving and creativity.

 *Coach Tip: Ask questions like “What did you see there?” or “Where could you have passed?” to build decision-making. Less instruction, more guided discovery.*