



2009-2010

WASHINGTON COACH'S HANDBOOK

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Welcome!



Our coaching handbook has been designed and structured to further assist in the development of youth soccer players and coaches here in Washington State.

By following the guidelines and ideas included, we hope that this handbook can act as a useful coaching resource and help players to achieve and express their full potential in our wonderful game.

Our handbook offers ideas on how to implement and create fun, safe and effective training sessions in order to further develop your players' technical understanding of the game. The best developmental coaches not only understand the technical nuances but also the coaching process, enabling them to impart a sense of fun, safety and enjoyment to create an informative educational environment.

We are proud to offer this resource for coaches in order to help increase your knowledge and understanding of how to create a realistic, dynamic, fun soccer experience for your players.

We ask that you put the needs of your players at the forefront of all your sessions and games and encourage you to feature the ball prominently in all coaching exercises.

Washington Youth Soccer wishes you every success and hopes you have a long and fruitful association with our game.

Doug Andreassen
PRESIDENT, WASHINGTON YOUTH SOCCER

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Thank you for supporting youth soccer

Great things happen when kids get together to play... they make friends, have fun, work on sportsmanship, get exercise, practice teamwork, learn leadership and compete. And your support makes it all possible... Thanks!



Fred Meyer

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Coaching Youth Soccer

Things that you as a coach should strive to be

- Concerning your willingness to listen to others
 - You must display an interest in other people and show willingness to listen to the personal and psychological problems of others.
 - You must feel at ease in your position as a mentor.
- Concerning your attitude of open-mindedness
 - You must not be afraid of change or wary of innovations.
 - You must not harbor doubts about yourself after a series of defeats or in conflict situations.
 - You must remain open to all constructive proposals.
- Concerning the reinforcement of your ideas and opinions (external feedback)
 - You must not give too little or no encouragement, or praise too little or not at all (particularly with young players).
 - You must ensure that you give positive feedback as well.
 - You must not show a tendency to generalize too much.

General tasks of the coach or trainer:

- Training and preparation of the team
- Organization
- Communication
 - Internal (within the team)
 - External (outside of the team; e.g., parents)
- Monitoring and supervising
- Match-coaching and coaching of training sessions
- Working with the team

Working with the team:

- Involvement in team meetings, club meetings, meetings with individuals

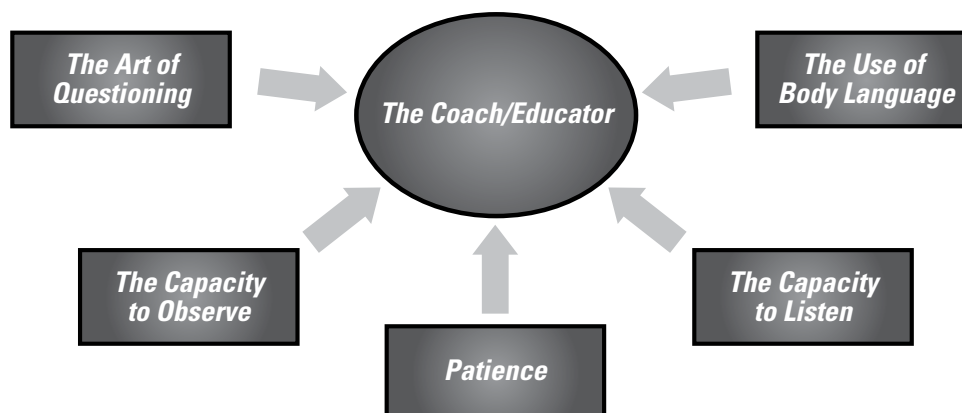
Tasks

- To create a good working atmosphere and be willing to listen and seek solutions.
- To communicate with the team and parents.
- To maintain contact with senior officials of the club, sports bodies, supporters, educational establishments and parents of young players.
- To speak with the players, either individually or collectively, and understand the players' developmental characteristics.
- To conduct the training sessions.
- To plan the match preparations.

Some key points to help with correction:

- How the coach should behave
 - Be attentive
 - Concentrate on the objective(s).
 - Lead the action and motivate the players
 - Observe
 - Stimulate
 - Correct
- Correction
 - Do not highlight too many mistakes at the same time.
 - Focus on the essential (i.e., what can bring about immediate success).
 - Do not be aggressive, especially during exercises where players are working on psychomotor skills (TECHNICAL).
 - Address the whole team or the player(s) concerned.
 - Be convincing, fair and precise.
 - Give positive reinforcement.
 - Inspire confidence by being persuasive.
 - Vary the tone of your voice when giving your feedback.
 - Encourage internal feedback (self-assessment on the part of the player).
 - Take inspiration from the saying, "Small is beautiful."

The running of any training session calls for improvisation and imagination.





Online Resources for Coaching Education

Learning is about increasing the standards and knowledge of all participants at all levels of the game. Whatever your interest in soccer, we want you to become involved and stay involved — whether you're a coach, player, referee, administrator, physiotherapist, medic, psychologist, or all of the above!

Whatever area you're interested in and whatever your level of knowledge and expertise, Washington Youth Soccer, U.S. Soccer and US Youth Soccer have courses and events that can assist with your learning and provide you with greater qualifications to further your enjoyment of the game.

U.S. Soccer Website (www.ussoccer.com)

All the accredited courses detailed on the U.S. Soccer website are run by qualified tutors to guarantee the highest levels of delivery and consistency, wherever your course is held.

Their website currently details all the available features, including a directory of all nationally run courses that are taking place.

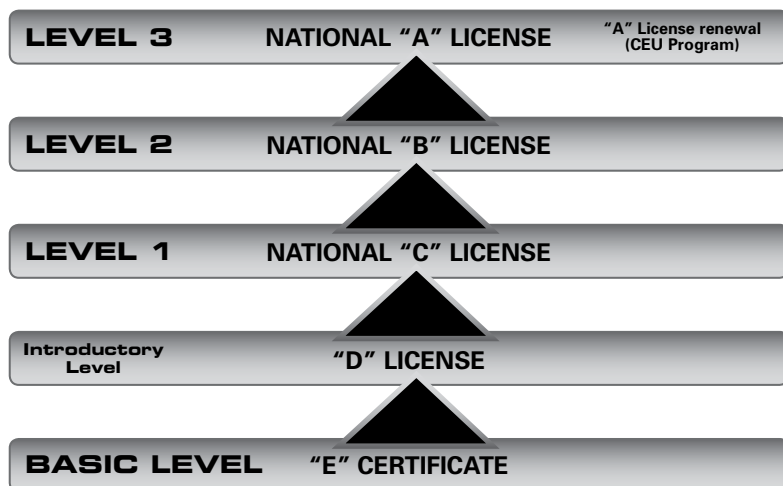
Washington Youth Soccer's aim is to bring our members even more courses, events, conferences and resources, in more subject areas, covering every aspect of the game. Keep visiting our website www.WSYSA.com and look out for future communications.

Frequently Asked Questions

Where do I start my coaching career? What is the structure of the qualifications available? For more information, visit www.ussoccer.com.



U.S. Soccer License Progression



Additional Licenses



The Ten Commandments of the Coach/Educator

- Enjoy working with the youth player.
- Get to know his players well.
- Act as a reference point for them.
- Be demanding and tolerant.
- Be willing to listen to them.
- Encourage real communication with all the players.
- Show them that you are "In League" with them.
- Ensure that they have some free space for themselves.
- Give them confidence and reassure them.
- Consider them as equal partners.

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Washington Youth Soccer Coaching License State-Level Course Descriptions

It is Washington Youth Soccer's aim to encourage all active coaches within Washington to be licensed or certified. Clubs and Associations can help us achieve our goal by providing a license opportunity for their coaches and by requiring their coaches to attend license courses. Below are Washington Youth Soccer's state-level course offerings.

U-6 Certificate Course (For U6 coaches)

The U-6 Coaching Certificate is designed to provide the first-time parent/coach of five-year-olds with information on creating a beneficial soccer environment. The course has been designed to address the specific characteristics of this age group and to present activities and games that are developmentally appropriate. This is a two-and-a-half-hour course.

U-8 Certificate Course (For U8 Coaches)

The U-8 Coaching Certificate is designed to provide the parent/coach of seven-year-olds with information on creating a beneficial soccer environment. The course has been designed to address the specific characteristics of this age group and to present activities and games that are developmentally appropriate. This is a two-and-a-half-hour course.

U-10 Certificate Course (For U10 Coaches)

The U-10 Coaching Certificate is designed to provide the parent/coach of nine-year-olds with information on creating a beneficial soccer environment. The course has been designed to address the specific characteristics of this age group and to present activities and games that are developmentally appropriate. This is a two-and-a-half-hour course.

"E" License Course

All coaches of teams that play 11-a-side soccer should have at least an "E" License (general certificate of all-a-side play.) The "E" License is also preparatory for taking the "D" License.

The emphasis of the "E" course is towards the coaching of players 10-14 years of age. This in itself presents an interesting set of circumstances for the course. The attendees are, at best, partially experienced coaches, yet the coaching of this age group observes the crossover of coaching modified soccer to the 11-a-side game.

Players of this age are developing their technique, and also beginning to understand the basics of small-group play. The "E" course addresses the above, and also provides elementary information on the management and preparation of a team. The "E" License is an 18-hour course. Depending on demand, the "E" License is available in Spanish.

Coaches Roadmap & Resources

*Identify the age group
you coach and look for the
resource area to aid you
during your season*

U6, U8, U10
Youth Certificate Course
"Coaches Corner" wsysa.com
Lesson Plans
Video Lesson activities
Coaches Handbook

U11 to U13
"E" License Course
Coaches Corner
wsysa.com
usyouthsoccer.org

U14 to U19
"D" License Course
Coaches Corner
wsysa.com
usyouthsoccer.org

Section I



"D" License Course

The attendees of a "D" course fall into two distinct categories; those coaches who are using the course to prepare for a National "C" License and those who are using the course to qualify for a particular level of coaching within their state. Many of the latter are not required to upgrade their license.

The "D" course addresses both categories of coach. It is, therefore, both preparatory and terminal. However, the emphasis of the "D" course is towards the coaching of players 14-18 years of age.

Based upon the principle that "small-sided games are the foundation upon which the 11-a-side game is based," the "D" course is built upon the foundation provided in the "E" course. The course emphasizes the coaching of players — observing their mistakes and providing the information to correct the mistakes.

A majority of the course is devoted to the candidate participating in live coaching, and receiving feedback from the course instructor. The candidates will receive written examinations in the areas of Laws of the Game, and Care & Prevention of Soccer Injuries. The coaches will also be tested in methodology and tactics through oral testing, as well as on-field practical examinations.

The candidates attending the course will be issued a National "D" License which will allow them to attend a National "C" Course. A candidate can also be awarded a State "D" License which will be indicated upon completion of the course; however, a coach with a State "D" License will not be allowed to attend a National "C" Course. They will have to retake and earn a National "D" License prior to moving on to the "C." The "D" is a 36-hour course.



Washington Youth Soccer announces new partnership with the Hilton Seattle Airport & Conference Center

The Hilton Seattle Airport & Conference Center is the new "Official Hotel" of Washington Youth Soccer for the 2009-2010 soccer year.

As a partner of Washington Youth Soccer, the Hilton Seattle Airport & Conference Center will be offering special rates to Washington Youth Soccer teams as they compete at local area tournaments and competitions throughout the year.

If your team is playing at Starfire Sports Complex or other South Seattle area soccer complexes, be sure to contact the Hilton Seattle Airport & Conference Center for all your team's travel accommodations.

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Lesson Planning Form

| Warm-Up Activity | Organization | Key Coaching Points |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| Individual/Small Group Activity | | |
| Small Group Activity | | |
| Small Sided Game | | |



Soccer Today, A Global Perspective

The modern game

Soccer is undergoing constant transformation. The game is continuing to spread and conquer the world — traditional non-soccer countries are starting to become more organized, borders are opening up for players, teams are traveling and the level of training and development of young players has reached new heights in both our country and, indeed, here in Washington State.

In short, the game is in a healthy state. Soccer is developing at a rapid pace here in Washington and in the U.S.A. — the game on the pitch is developing, the issues surrounding the game and the competitions are developing and, more recently, we have seen advances with the human-related factors and structures that lead to top-quality performance. To enable us to better understand this development and also the issues facing the game of soccer in the third millennium, we should perhaps take a brief glance at the current state of the game.

How the game has developed

Faster, stronger, higher, more technical — this succinct formula perfectly sums up the development of soccer over the last few years.

- Speed is greater. Not only running speed, but in particular the speed of execution of basic actions, such as taking possession of the ball, passing or shooting.
- Duel situations are more hard-fought, forcing the player to develop far more athletic qualities than were called for in the past.
- Without doubt, the feature in the game that has undergone the most striking development is technical skill. This, of course, is a real must for the development of the game as a whole. All the observers who watch our Sounders FC compete in the MLS will have appreciated the high technical level now being shown by our top players.

There is sometimes a tendency on our part to believe that success and achievement depend solely on the performance of players. This is much too simplistic. In a way, the game is the finished product of the relationship between the players and those who train and look after them.

The coach has an unquestionable role to play. Below are some performance-related factors:

- Leadership: A team needs leaders — the coach and the players. The latter are moral leaders with strong personalities who know how to assert themselves firmly among their team-mates. Such players are not often found, unfortunately. Consequently, they need to be molded from their youth onwards.
- The team: We can identify seven different types of player in a team — the leader, the goal scorer, the energetic livewire (the “lungs” of the team), the creator, the versatile midfielder, the support player and the protector. The team’s performance will be enhanced if the interplay between all these functions can be optimized.



- Tactical strength: It sometimes happens that teams change their playing system in the course of a match. For this reason, players in the future will have to be equipped with an acute sense of tactical awareness. Educating and training players accordingly is obviously a key part of this development.
- Mentality: A lot of work still needs to be done in this area. Education of the future will need to be based around three axes with equal weight: Technique, Tactics and Personality.
- Coaching: There are three basic types of coaching currently being applied: free coaching (where no precise instructions are given), directional coaching (where orders are given) and creative coaching (where suggestions are made, but not enforced). Soccer of tomorrow will demand an increase in creative coaching. The idea behind this creative coaching is to introduce coaching situations and drills that allow for several different solutions; this will then provoke the players into managing the situation on their own. This method is therefore much less “hands-on” as far as the coach is concerned, and the creativity practiced in the training session will inevitably have a knock-on effect on the match situation.
- The artist: Now, more than ever, soccer has to ensure that great emphasis is placed on creative players, those players who are capable of swinging a match in their team’s favor with a simple piece of individual brilliance. Such players therefore have to be encouraged and their talent has to be allowed to blossom to the full. In this case, a number is more eloquent than words to illustrate the supreme value of such players — 30 percent of goals are either scored or made as a result of an individual action. But, beware! The artist also has to fit in with the game played by the rest of the team.



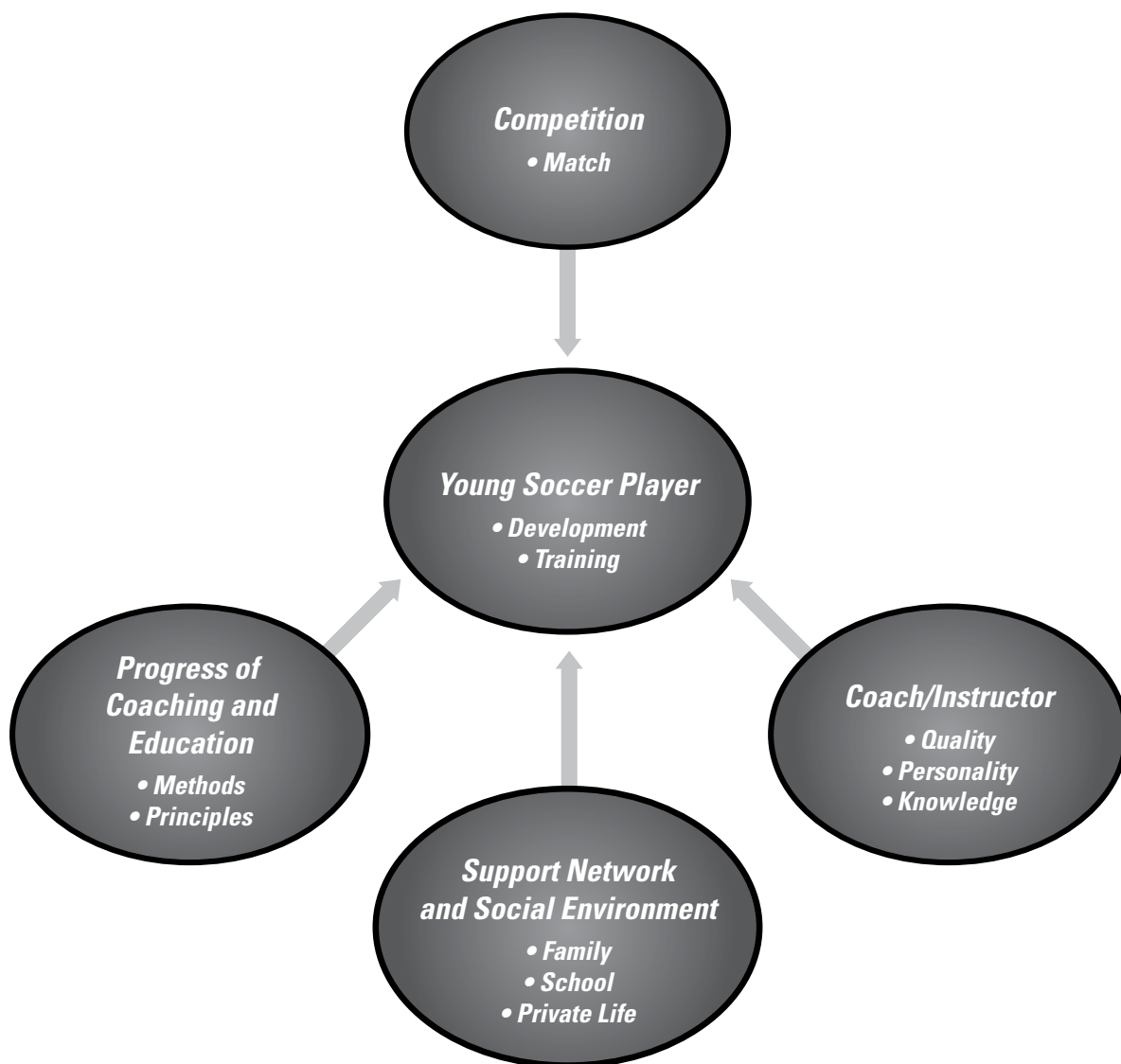
Today's game

The ability to play a defensive game, cope with confined spaces and press opponents all call for increasingly honed skills in players. These might be technical skills (supreme accuracy with passing, for example), physical skills (especially speed, speed of thought and speed of action) and mental strength (decision-making qualities, determination, self-confidence).

The technical qualities seen at the top level are greater than ever, but also at the youth level. Considerable progress has been made over the past few years, especially with passing, controlling the ball, dribbling, feinting and shooting.

When opting for a skilful technical move and speed of execution, it is now common for certain players to use different areas of the body to bring the ball under control (inside and outside of the foot, instep, both feet and the head).

Main need areas for developing players for today's game:





Knowledge of Age Characteristics

To be an effective coach, not only do you need to have knowledge of the game principles, you need the knowledge of the specific characteristics of the age group you are working with. For this segment we will be concentrating on the methodology of how the players of different age groups think and act.

Non-Directive Coaching

Qualities:

- In the non-directive coaching environment, the coach takes on a magical quality.
- He/She can play games at the children's level and on their terms.
- Coaches take on the roles of the facilitator and number-one cheerleader.
- Emphasis is on having fun, free from pressure of competition.

Keys:

- Camouflage and conceal, disguise soccer techniques in a story.
- Use analogies whenever possible.
- Keep instructions to a minimum.

5- AND 6-YEAR OLDS

Off the field

- Five- and six -year -olds are still very random in their thinking.
- There is no logical pattern to their thoughts, and often, their actions.
- They make up their own rules and expect others to know them.
- They are self-centered.
- Sometimes they're unsure of themselves and new surroundings.
- They become easily distracted.
- They become easily frustrated with excessive verbal directions.
- They're imaginative.

On the field:

- They don't see a difference between the player and the ball; it's all one.
- They toe the ball.
- They follow the ball.
- They want the ball for themselves.

7- AND 8-YEAR OLDS

- Seven -and eight-year-olds are beginning to develop a bit of logic to their thinking.
- They can do simple problem-solving if guided by questions and backing up of the process.

- They're more willing to try things.
- They become frustrated with long verbal directions.
- They do better with concrete examples, or demonstrations.
- They're imaginative.
- They're concerned about "fairness," which means that everything is equal.
- They begin to be able to approach opponents.
- They are not so frightened by the ball coming at them.
- They still follow the ball, but at times will pull away from the group.

9- TO 11-YEAR-OLDS

- Concrete in their thinking.
- Realize that there is a logical structure to groups, so positions, roles and team concept can be introduced.
- Begin to be able to see things from others' point of view.
- Plays, if presented concretely, can be introduced.
- Fun, recognition and friendships are important.
- They sometimes think they know it all.
- They want to belong.
- Look for organization in sessions.
- Sense of fun and freedom comes from game situations.
- Team-oriented.
- Embarrassed easily if attention is called on them.
- Aware of adult inconsistency.
- Challenging age group.
- Want to be challenged.
- Begin to see space and switch attention from the ball to space.

12-18-YEAR-OLDS

- This age group could even be split into two or three.
- They are now logical in their thought patterns; while many are still concrete in their thinking, some can think on a more abstract, "what if" type of thinking.
- They can use cause-and-effect relationships and look at multiple solutions, needed for strategizing.
- They can build on prior experience and knowledge.
- Their psychological needs are often filled through developing their skills and functional game.
- They want to begin to use strategies.
- They begin to be serious about their sport.
- They look to the coach for recognition of skills and effort as a player.
- Sport is an integral part of their life.
- They place pressure on themselves and on teammates to do their best to perform.
- They feel responsible to the team, which can lead to emotional responses to errors.
- They need help putting winning and losing into healthy perspective.



Benchmarks for Coaching

The following is a brief guide to help you understand some of the basic benchmarks or objectives for focusing your efforts with your team. Please be aware these are developmentally appropriate elements that your players should be able to understand.

U-6/7 Coaching Objectives (5 & 6-Year-Olds)

1. Develop a general understanding of the basic rules of the game:

- Goal-kick
- Corner-kick
- Kick-off
- Throw-in
- Ball in and out of play — throw-in, "goal" and "no goal," corner kick, etc.

2. Make sure each player has a ball for each practice, which should allow all players to receive many touches of the ball.

3. Make sure games and activities used at practice are developmentally appropriate.

4. Your practice session should be limited to 40 to 45 minutes in length.

- Provide activities and games that encourage players to dribble the ball with both feet, and kick the ball with both right and left foot; show how to stop the ball with the feet. Show the correct method of the throw-in.
- Encourage the players to cooperate through passing (but at this age, don't expect the players to pass), and by helping in defense by going after the ball to regain possession for their team.
- If your association or club plays with a goalkeeper, do not expect the goalkeeper (keeper/sweeper) to grasp the concept of moving out on attack and defense right away.
- Do encourage the goalkeeper (keeper/sweeper) to come off the goal line when play is at the other end of the field to support the attack. The back player can also serve to reduce the amount of space between the goal and an opponent attempting to shoot. This provides a smaller view of the goal for the shooter. Provide activities for the players to practice picking up the ball and catching the ball. Also, show the players how to use their hands to throw the ball back into play. All players should be given an opportunity to play in goal, both in practice and during games.

5. The coach should understand the idea of a team triangle when attacking and defending; however, don't expect the players to understand this concept. If a 2v2 plus a keeper develops in the first year of playing 3v3, don't worry — it's OK! If you find that the players all run to the ball and a little swarm exists — don't worry, this is natural.

Overriding Consideration: "Let the children play and have fun!"

Note: It is not necessary to teach heading to children at this age.

U-8/9 Coaching Objectives (7- & 8-Year-Olds)

1. Further development of the U-7 objectives.

2. Make sure each player has a ball for each practice, which should allow all players to receive lots of touches of the ball. All games and activities used at practice should be developmentally appropriate. Your practice session should be limited to 45 minutes in length.

3. Provide activities and games that continue to encourage players to dribble the ball with both feet, and kick the ball with both right and left foot; show how to receive the ball with the feet. (A majority of your time should be spent in games and activities that encourage the players to become comfortable with the ball at their feet.)

4. Encourage cooperation by the field players — collective attacking and defending. Rotation of all players to play in all roles. Don't expect the players to pass the ball on a regular basis. Towards the end of your season, expect to see the beginning stages of passing to teammates.

5. Basic introduction to the idea of space (one or the other) on the field (encourage using the entire field).

6. Do understand the idea of a team triangle and diamond shape when attacking; however, don't expect the players to understand this concept. If a 3v3 plus a keeper develops in the first year of playing 4v4, don't worry — it's OK! If you find that the players all run to the ball and a little swarm exists — don't worry, this is natural.

Overriding Consideration: The game is for all players — activities should be fun and motivating so that everyone (particularly the "non-assertive" player) is encouraged to participate.

Note: It is not necessary to teach heading to children at this age.

U-10 Coaching Objectives (9-Year-Olds)

1. Further development of U-8/9 objectives.

2. Make sure each player has a ball for each practice, which should allow all players to receive lots of touches of the ball. All games and activities used at practice/training should be developmentally appropriate. Your practice session should be limited to 60 minutes in length.

3. Cooperative attacking — all players involved, but with an awareness of cover (by the goalkeeper and at least one covering field player). Develop an understanding of the roles that players have in supporting the attack: player with ball, players providing immediate support of ball, and other players who create length and width. All this needs to be shown in an environment with greater numbers of teammates and opponents on a larger playing field (4v4 to 6v6).

Section II



4. Cooperative defending — all players participating, even the most advanced players. Getting "goal side" of opposing players. Develop the basic understanding of defending 1v1, so all players gain an understanding of all the roles when defending; i.e., understanding how to delay and put pressure on the ball. (Players should continue to be exposed to the concepts learned from 3v3 and 4v4.)

5. Continue development of the basic techniques — passing, dribbling, shooting, ball control and goalkeeping. This should be done in a fun/competitive environment and under the pressure of time, space and opponents. (Note: Light heading can be introduced.)

6. Continued exposure to all roles without the emphasis on specializing in positions.

Summary

- Introduction/continued emphasis on the concept of supporting the player in possession of the ball
- Continued emphasis on playing 3v3 and 4v4 during practice
- Cooperative attacking (how players are affected by their teammates)
- Cooperative defending (how players are affected by their teammates)
- Continued development of the basic skills

Overriding Consideration: Encourage all players to cooperate whether attacking or defending. Stress the need for development of the individual player versus the development of the team.

U-12 Coaching Objectives (11-Year-Olds)

1. Introduction to 11-a-side play.

2. Make sure each player has a ball for each practice, which should allow all players to receive many touches of the ball. All games and activities used at practice/training should be developmentally appropriate. Your practice session should be limited to 65-75 minutes in length.

3. Reinforce basic understanding of the offside rule. (Coaches should avoid teaching offside trap.)

4. Continued concentration on the important development at this age of:

- Emphasis on individual possession
- Emphasis on individual defending
- Introduction of basic combination play (wall pass and take-overs)
- High concentration on basic skills in cooperative play (passing, control, shooting and heading)
- Individuals start to emerge and will begin to focus on role of goalkeeper (develop foundation of basic techniques), however do not specialize yet — these players should still play as a field player in addition to playing in goal

5. Continued development of the techniques (basic skills), with greater pressure in a challenging, motivating environment, involving transition.

6. Continued emphasis on the principles of play and the roles of players when attacking and defending introduced at U-10 and U-11. Players will need to understand their particular roles on the team in supporting the attack and regaining possession of the ball when defending. The players will need guidance in the performance of these roles because of the greater number of players on the field and the increased size of the field. The players should have a basic understanding of how to interchange roles during the course of play.

7. Continued use of 4v4 during training to focus on individual technical development and simple tactical decisions. This environment will challenge the players both from an attacking and defending standpoint, but also includes the aspect of transition.

Summary

- Introduction to 11v11
- Stress importance of individual possession and defending
- Further development of basic skills
- Awareness of being part of a team (cooperation)
- Encouragement of "two-way play"

Overriding Consideration: Stress the need for development of the individual player versus the success of the team. Avoid overloading this age player with too many tournaments (no more than two tournaments over the course of the summer months).

U-13 and U-14 Coaching Priorities: Development of individual skill and development of individual and small-group tactics

HIGH-PRIORITY ITEMS

1. The importance of possession: DO NOT GIVE THE BALL AWAY!

2. Development of individual skill. All practices to challenge the player in competition.

3. Understanding of combination play:

- Support
- Wall pass
- Takeovers

4. Individual and small-group defense. One session in every three to be devoted to 1v1s, 2v2s, 3v3s. Within the practices, the players to develop an understanding of:

- Delay
- Depth
- Tracking back
- Balance

LOWER-PRIORITY ITEMS

1. Functional play

2. Team play

3. Set plays

4. All activities should be challenging, motivating and involve TRANSITION!

5. Training sessions should be limited to 75 to 85 minutes

Section II



U-15 and U-16 Coaching Priorities: Development of Group Skill/Tactics

HIGH PRIORITY ITEMS

1. The importance of possession: DO NOT GIVE THE BALL AWAY!
2. Combination play:
 - Support
 - Takeovers
 - Wall pass
 - "Third man running"
 - Overlap
3. Defense — one session in every three to be devoted to 3v3s, 4v4s, 5v5s:
 - Depth — role of the strong-side defenders
 - Balance — role of the weak-side defenders
 - Concentration
 - Communication — who, what, when
4. Crossing (development area)
 - Crossing angle
 - Characteristics of a quality cross
 - Near-post and far-post runs

LOWER-PRIORITY ITEMS

1. Introduction to functional play
2. Introduction to team play
3. Set plays
 - Offensive and defensive responsibilities at corner and free kicks
 - Possession from throw-ins

4. All activities should be challenging, motivating and involve TRANSITION!

5. Training sessions should be limited to 90 minutes

U-17 Coaching Priorities: Development of Positional Play

HIGH-PRIORITY ITEMS

1. Functional play:
 - Offense
 - Defense — one session in every three to be devoted to defensive roles.
2. Match-related practice — offense vs defense.
3. Crossing — complete understanding of:
 - Crossing angle
 - Overlaps
 - Near-post and far-post runs
4. Set plays — complete understanding of:
 - Offensive and defensive responsibilities at corners and free kicks
 - Importance of possession from throw-ins in defensive and midfield third of field; possession and creativity in final third
5. All activities should be challenging, motivating and involve TRANSITION!

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Technical Fundamentals

You might not realize it, but you have a huge impact on the eventual success of our state and the shape of the nation's youth soccer culture. As coaches in Washington Youth Soccer's largest and one of our most important programs, you are in a position to impact a generation of players for life. You must fire up the imagination of your players, motivate and guide them in order for them to reach their full potential.

The best coaches are those who understand the basic principles of teaching soccer, but are also not afraid to question norms and to tweak and add their own personal touch.

The majority of practice time spent with youth soccer players should be devoted to improving the technical abilities of your players. As a basic player-development model, we recommend around 70-75 percent of practice time should be devoted to technique. Too much time in general is spent in unopposed technical repetitions, and most of it is done at a speed and in a space that has little relevance to the game. The end result in many cases is insufficient levels of repetitions and a loose connection to the game.

The fun part of coaching is creating a realistic, fun, challenging environment to help your players learn the game. The players will learn best through playing games and activities, versus drills and standing in lines.

Technique (contact with the ball)

The basis of technique revolves, above all, around having good contact between the body and ball. The ball is there to serve the player, not vice versa. In this section dedicated to learning technique, we shall look at the fundamental technical elements used to play soccer.

Passing

Passing is one of the most important techniques in the game. It allows players to move and position the ball accurately to other players, or into spaces for players who are in better positions to keep possession of the ball and to move up the field towards the goal.

INSIDE OF THE FOOT PASS

This is the most accurate method of passing. The surface of the foot used should be from the bottom of the big toe joint area to the bottom half of the arch of the foot. The approach to the ball should be almost in a straight line. The non-kicking foot should be alongside the ball pointing at the target. The kicking foot should strike the ball at the mid-line or slightly above, enabling the ball to stay on the ground. The knee should be bent and the swing action should come from the hip, followed by a proper follow-through with the foot ending up pointing at the intended target. The arms should be used for balance.

Coaching points

- Approach the ball almost in a straight line
- Strike through the middle part of the ball

- Point kicking foot outward
- Leg swing action from the hip

Common faults

Young players often approach the ball from the side and attempt to use the inside of the foot, therefore making it mechanically impossible to pass the ball accurately. They may swing across their own body, again making it impossible to kick the ball in the correct manner.

OUTSIDE OF FOOT PASS

This method can be used to perform one of three things:

1. Bend the ball into the path of a team-mate;
2. Bend the ball into space away from a player to run onto;
3. Bend the ball during a shot on goal.

The kicking foot should be pointed down and towards the inside of the player with the ankle locked. The foot should strike the ball either left or right of the center, which will make the ball bend. The knee should be bent with the kicking action coming from the hip. The follow through should have the kicking leg come across the player's body. The non-kicking foot should be alongside and slightly behind the ball at impact.

Coaching points

- Approach on the angle or straight on
- Point toe of kicking foot down
- Lock ankle
- Strike the ball slightly off-center

Common faults

The approach angle is wrong. The non-kicking foot too far away from the ball and the player is unlocking their ankle.

LOFTED PASS

The approach to the ball is at an angle so that the player has a full range of motion from the hip. The player's body position should be leaning away and back from the ball, which provides lift. The non-kicking foot should be alongside and slightly behind the ball. The position of the toe of the kicking foot should be pointed away from the player, with the ankle locked. The instep of the foot should strike the ball through its bottom half, hitting through the ball. The player should hit through the center of the ball to avoid pulling or slicing.

Coaching points

- Approach at an angle
- Head down
- Ankle locked
- Selection of the foot surface and which part of the ball to contact to achieve the desired result



Common faults

No approach angle. Head comes up too early. The non-kicking foot is too close or too far away. The wrong surface of the foot is used. Ankle unlocked.

CHIP PASS

The approach to the ball is the same as for a lofted pass, but then a stabbing motion with the foot is made.

Coaching points

- Approach at an angle
- Selection of the foot surface and which part of the ball to contact to achieve the desired result
- Stabbing action
- Posture and stance

Common faults

There is no approach angle and the player's head comes up too early. The non-kicking foot is too close or too far away and the wrong foot surface is used.

DO

- Get in line with the ball.
- Select the surface of the foot to make contact on the ball to bring it under control.
- Use the correct surface of the foot on the ball to achieve the desired pass.
- Keep your head still and kick through the ball.

DON'T

- Stand on the ball with your leading foot.
- Approach incorrectly.
- Set body or posture incorrectly.

Heading

Heading is a unique aspect of our sport and can be used to great effect in both defensive and attacking situations. The importance of learning the correct techniques are essential for both heading success and physical health. Heading should not be practiced until players are able to cross the ball properly.

Coaching points

- Keep eyes open, mouth shut and attack the ball with your forehead
- Attack the ball — don't let the ball attack you and use all your entire body to head through the ball
- For height, head under the ball; head the top of ball to send to the ground
- Time your header by reading the flight of the ball and moving your feet

Common faults

Players shut their eyes before heading the ball, or they let the ball hit them on the head.

VARIOUS HEADING TECHNIQUES USED DURING THE COURSE OF A GAME

Standard header

To head the ball with a good amount of power, you'll need to arch back and swing your head forward. Keep your shoulders level and perpendicular to

your aim. Contact should be made with the center of the forehead.

Diving header

In this technique, you must propel your entire body in the path of the ball. Your arms have to be stretched forward for protection on landing.

Glancing header

When executing a glancing header, you must turn your head in direction of your aim. This motion redirects the oncoming ball.

Receiving

The game of soccer is so dynamic and ever-changing. You need to react as best as you can to the various different game situations in which you will need to receive the ball to keep possession. Selecting the correct part of the body early and bringing it to the ball is critical when discussing receiving.

INSIDE / OUTSIDE OF THE FOOT RECEIVING

These are the most-used receiving techniques during a game, when players are controlling ground passes. Players need to be light on their feet and move in line with the ball.

INSTEP RECEIVING

Due to the small surface area available to control the ball, receiving with the instep part of the foot (laces) is a difficult technique to learn, but an effective one that will assist in your speed of play, so players should try to master this technique.

THIGH RECEIVING

When looking to receive balls at mid-height, the thighs can be an effective part of the body to gain control of the ball. The thighs facilitate a large surface area with which to cushion the ball, and are a great way to learn how to successfully receive the ball in the air.

CHEST RECEIVING

Receiving the ball at chest height also gives you a large surface area in which to cushion and control the ball. It's a wonderful technique to use in tight situations when the ball is moving in the air to you and to deflect the ball into space for you or a teammate to move onto.

HEAD RECEIVING

This is the most difficult technique when receiving the ball in the air, as the surface area is not only small, but hard. Even though it is a difficult technique, it is again quite effective, as you can deflect, redirect and set the ball up for yourself and your teammates to move onto.

Coaching points

- Read the flight of the ball
- Select the receiving surface early
- Bring the selected area of the body to the ball to cushion it
- Know what you are going to do with the ball before receiving it, in order to keep possession.

Common faults

Young players often do not select the receiving part of the body, which in turn allows the ball to deflect randomly off of them.

Section III



Running With the Ball

Travel with the ball quickly over an unoccupied area or space of the field. Move at pace in possession of the ball in straight or angled running movements.

The first touch of the ball should be well in front to allow an opportunity to look up. To cover the grounds quickly, take a couple of long touches with the laces of the front foot. Once running with the ball, ensure that players keep touching the ball well in front of them. This will enable them to keep their heads up and travel quickly. Fewer touches equal greater speed. The more they touch the ball, the slower they will run. The player should run straight and, if possible, pass with the high instep without interrupting their normal stride. If they have to pass, they should avoid passing with the side of the foot as this will slow them down.

Coaching points

- First touch
- Use instep (top of foot) to push the ball
- Eyes up
- Keep the ball at a controllable distance and move quickly into open space

Common faults

Head and eyes kept down and use of the inside of the foot to run with the ball, lack of speed to exploit space.

DO

- Take the first touch of the ball well in front to allow time to look up and travel quickly.
- Take fewer touches for greater speed. The more you touch the ball, the slower you will run.
- Keep your head up.

DON'T

- Touch the ball too far in front of you.
- Touch it with the inside of your foot.
- Keep your head down.

Dribbling

Dribbling is an exciting, exhilarating and enjoyable technique used to beat and move past opponents with the ball. Players need to recognize the space between and behind players and try to unbalance the opponent and change direction with pace. Dribbling allows the player to move past an opponent.

A good dribbler uses all surfaces of the foot. The inside of the foot allows the player to push or carry the ball. The outside of the foot is used when the player is running at speed. The sole of the foot can be used to stop the ball or pull it back to change direction. The player should use either foot, keeping the ball within a stride and be able to change direction quickly without losing the ball.

Coaching points for all dribbling

- Head up
- Awareness of other players and space
- Close control
- Bend the knees
- Change direction and pace of both self and ball
- Decide on a technique to use after a dribble, e.g., passing

WHERE?

Dribbling should be encouraged, but it involves risk. Definitely dribble in and around your opponent's half, but don't dribble in and around your own defending half.

WHEN?

As often as possible. Even the best dribblers frequently fail. DON'T be afraid to have a go as it is the best way to beat an opponent and excite people.

WHY?

Good dribblers dribble for a purpose – to beat players, to cross, to shoot. Encourage and develop dribblers.

Turning

Turning is another exciting technique used to change direction of play with the ball. The best players are able to perform dazzling moves in possession of the ball in order to keep composed possession. Turning moves in different directions are also used to escape tight areas and to confuse opponents.

Coaching points

- Head up and body balanced
- Start slowly, get the technique right
- Bent knees
- Accelerate away

DO

- Keep head up and body balanced.
- Start slowly and use proper technique.
- Bend knees.
- Accelerate away after the turn.
- Practice the turn.
- Learn at least three different turns.

Hooking the ball with the inside of the foot

Reach and hook the ball back with the inside of the foot, and move the ball into the opposite direction and push away.



Hooking the ball with the outside of the foot

Reach and hook the ball back with the outside of the foot, and move the ball into the opposite direction and push away.



Step Over, or Figure Eight

Step over the ball in a figure of eight movement, swivel your hips and hook the ball back with the inside of the foot and push away.



The Drag Back

Stop the ball with the bottom part of your boot, half turn your body out and drag the ball in the opposite direction and push away.



The "Cruyff" Turn

Feint to shoot or pass, position the standing leg in front of the ball, turn your foot inward with the toe and touch the ball with the inside of your foot. Push it through your legs, turn and push away.



The Stop and Turn

Stop the ball with the bottom part of your boot, go past the ball, turn and push the ball away.



The Stop and Roll

Roll the bottom part of your foot over the ball, stopping it and pushing it in the opposite direction with the outside of the foot, turn and push away.



Shooting

Shooting is an extension of passing, projecting the ball towards the goal with a variety of techniques. The golden rules of shooting are to "make the goalkeeper save" and "you will not score goals unless you shoot."

Coaching points for all shooting exercises

- Place non-kicking foot alongside and slightly behind the ball
- Point kicking foot downward and inward
- Hit ball with the laces and full instep
- Make contact with the middle of the ball
- Keep the ball low

Accuracy in shooting is more important than power. Therefore if you are going to miss:

- Don't miss over the bar
- Don't miss at the near post.
- If you have to miss – miss just beyond the far post

Low shots

- Low shots are more difficult for the goalkeeper to save.
- Low shots can be deflected into goal by another player. High shots going over the bar cannot be deflected.
- Low shots can also cause problems for the goalkeeper by bumping or skidding on the surface.
- Low shots are best achieved by striking through the middle of the ball with the laces

High shots

- High shots allow the goalkeeper to pick up the flight of the ball and move shorter distances to save them.

Near or far half of the goal

Shots going away from the keeper are harder for the keeper to save and hold than shots towards the near half of the goal. Rebounds are possible when goalkeepers fail to hold. If the attacker shoots for the near half of the goal and the goalkeeper deflects the ball, a corner results. If the attacker shoots for the far half of the goal and the keeper deflects the ball, this can present an opportunity for a teammate to score off a rebound. Shots to the far half of the goal, therefore, have a greater chance of presenting secondary opportunities.

DO

- Place non-kicking foot alongside and slightly behind the ball.
- Point kicking foot down and inward.
- Hit ball with the laces and full instep.
- Make contact with the middle of the ball.
- Keep the ball low.

DON'T

- Stretch to shoot.
- Look up.
- Make contact under the ball.



Goalkeeping

Footwork

Correct footwork allows the goalkeeper to move around the penalty area in a balanced and coordinated way.

Good footwork is essential to get the goalkeeper into the traveling line of the ball, putting him/herself into the “set” position in a controlled, composed, balanced way. Forward, backward, lateral and diagonal movements are required to gain the “set” position. The “set” position requires the goalkeeper to be standing with:

- Head still and slightly forward
- Hands in the “cuffed position”
- Knees slightly bent
- Feet shoulder width apart
- Weight on balls of feet

Coaching Points

Steps need to be balanced, rhythmic and coordinated. Correct technique should be gained before speed. Once the goalkeeper has acquired the correct techniques, the tempo and intensity of practices can be increased.

- Take small steps
- Brush studs over surface

Common Faults

Young goalkeepers often take big steps and cross their legs when trying to get into the “set” position. This makes it impossible to get into the “set” position quickly to receive the ball in a balanced way.

DO

- Take small balanced coordinated steps when moving sideways.
- Use a balanced skipping motion to move down the line of the ball.

DON'T

- Take large jumping-like steps, or cross legs, when moving sideways.
- Run to get down the line of the ball.

Handling

Good handling techniques are vital to the goalkeeper. Sound handling and footwork are the fundamental components of a good goalkeeper. The ability to catch the ball cleanly is the most important aspect of goalkeeping. There are three different techniques used for balls traveling at different heights.

Handling the ball above waist height

- Get down the line of the ball and into the “set” position
- Transfer hands from “cuffed” position towards the flight of the ball
- Hand contact should be made behind the ball with the thumbs and index fingers forming a “W” shape on the ball. Remaining fingers should be spread to cover a greater surface area on the ball
- Hands should be positioned in front of the head and elbows should be relaxed to cushion the ball



Handling the ball into midriff area

- Turn wrists from "cuffed" position so palms face up and are able to scoop the ball into waist area
- Cushion the ball into waist area and lower head to protect the ball

Collecting the ball from the ground

There are two techniques for saving ground shots:

- Keep palms turned up and legs together and slightly bent in a standing position to form a long barrier. Scoop ball into the chest.
- The legs can also form a "K" position with the palms of the hands turned up to scoop the ball into the chest area. The "K" position of the legs forms a barrier which the ball should not pass through. The goalkeeper can also go to ground when making saves using this technique.

Coaching Point

- Get down the line of the ball
- Assess flight of the ball
- Decide on handling technique to be used
- Apply correct technique for varying heights of shots

Common Faults

Young goalkeepers often fail to get into the correct position to receive shots. The combination of good footwork and a good "set" position are the basis of any save. Having the hands too wide apart when catching, or hands and elbows too rigid, allowing the ball to slip through or rebound out of their grasp, are also common faults of the young goalkeeper.

DO

- Get into and down the line of the ball.
- Get into the "set" position and keep head still.



- Select correct technique for the delivery of the ball — i.e. head, midriff or ground serves.
- Relax elbows to cushion ball for shots above waist height.
- Scoop ball into midriff for waist-high shots and lower head to protect the ball.

DON'T

- Try to catch ball without getting into line of ball.
- Use a wide hand position on ball when attempting to catch.
- Keep hands and elbow too rigid, allowing the ball to rebound out of grasp.

Diving

Diving allows the goalkeeper to make saves when they cannot get into the direct line of the ball due to the pace or placement of the shot.

The same basic principles apply to diving as to general handling and catching. The "Set" position and correct angle from shooter to goal need to be adopted. Diving should only be attempted if the goalkeeper cannot get into line and make a clean catch. There are three different techniques that can be used for the diving save.

Collapse Dive

- Used for shots near the body and around the feet
- The nearest knee needs to collapse so the goalkeeper can go to ground fast
- Hands should be out in front to collect ball in front of the body, with the head behind the ball and hands in correct position. One hand behind the ball and one on top of the ball for ground shots and the "W" position for aerial shots
- Land in correct position on side falling on the knee, hip and shoulder.

The Distance Dive

- Used for shots that are wide of the body either on the ground or in the air
- The hands need to extend to collect ball in front of the body and make contact on the ball, as for the collapsing save if catching. Or, use strong wrists and hands if deflecting or parrying.
- The nearest leg should be used to spring off and propel body towards the ball in a forward motion.
- Decision to catch, parry or deflect must be made.
- Land on side. Get back to feet quickly if ball is deflected or parried in case a secondary save is required.

Step and Save

- Used for shots that are curling into wide areas of the goal or where the goalkeeper needs to gain extra spring and reach.
- The same principles apply with the "set" position and forward-diving motion as for the previous two saves.
- The goalkeeper now needs to take a small "power" step to gain the extra spring and reach to make the save.
- Decision to catch or parry must be made.
- Land on side. Get back to feet quickly if ball is deflected or parried in case a secondary save is required.

Section III



DO

- Get into line and down the line of the ball.
- Assess flight of the ball.
- Move forward into the save with hands out in front.
- Make correct decision to catch or parry/deflect.
- Use correct handling technique.
- Land on side.

DON'T

- Dive backwards.
- Avoid using a step to get closer to the ball.
- Land on back or stomach.

- Position hand on ball correctly when throwing.
- Point opposite foot in direction of throw.

DON'T

- Run-up too straight to the ball.
- Throw the ball too high in the air when kicking.
- Position standing foot in wrong direction.
- Fail to follow through.
- Release the ball too early or late when throwing.

Distribution

The goalkeeper is not only the last line of defense but also the first line of attack. Goalkeepers have the means to change direction of play and the pace of play. It is therefore essential that the goalkeeper acquires good distribution techniques and gives their team the attacking advantage. There are two types of distribution — the kicked serve and the thrown serve.

The goalkeeper may use a variety of kicking techniques to gain accuracy and distance:

- The volleyed kick
- The half-volleyed kick
- The lofted pass
- The side foot pass
- The driven pass
- The dribble and drive

Throwing techniques to be used are:

- The over-arm throw
- The under-arm rolled throw
- The javelin throw

Coaching Points

When kicking, the goalkeeper needs to adopt the correct approach to the ball and strike the ball in the right place for the appropriate delivery with the standing foot positioned correctly and pointing in the right direction. Thrown serves need to be accurate and reach the receiving player in front of them, at the correct pace, so the attacking movement is smooth.

Common Faults

Young goalkeepers will often use the wrong approach to address the ball when kicking, throwing the ball too high in the air when volleying and lifting their heads when kicking. This makes it impossible to pass the ball accurately. Arm and leg movements need to be coordinated when throwing the ball and hand position on the ball must be correct to gain power and accuracy.

DO

- Approach the ball at the correct angle.
- Strike the ball in the correct place.
- Follow through.
- Position standing foot in right direction.



Glossary

CORNER KICK - A kick made by the attacking team from the corner arc on the side of the field where the ball went out of play. A corner kick is awarded when the ball is last touched by a defender and goes over the goal line without resulting in a goal. Opponents must be at least 10 yards away from the ball when the kick is taken. A goal may be scored directly (without being touched by another player) from a corner kick.

CROSS - A pass in which the ball is kicked from one side of the field to the other side.

DEFENDER - A player who functions primarily in the defensive third of the field and whose major role is to repel attacks on the goal by the opposing team.

FORWARD - Player who functions primarily in the attacking third of the field and whose major responsibility is to score goals.

FREE KICKS - Infractions result in free kicks awarded to the offended team. They are either direct or indirect kicks. On a direct free kick, the kicker can put the ball directly into the goal for a score. On an indirect free kick, another player on either team must touch the ball before it can score. The referee will indicate an indirect free kick by holding one arm directly overhead. A penalty kick is awarded for a direct free kick infraction committed by the defense in its own penalty area. This call is determined by the position of the defending player; the ball need not have advanced into the penalty area.

GOAL - A one-point score occurring when the whole of the ball passes entirely over the goal line, between the vertical goal posts and under the horizontal crossbar. A goal is not scored if the ball was not touched by another player (of either team) after an indirect free kick, goal kick, kick-off or throw-in.

GOALKEEPER - Player who functions primarily in the penalty area and whose major responsibility is to prevent the opponents' shots from entering the goal for a score. The goalkeeper is the only player allowed to touch or pick up the ball with his/her hands, and may only do so when the ball is in his/her penalty area. The keeper is the team's last line of defense.

GOAL KICK - Taken by any defending player or goalkeeper to restart the game after the ball goes out of play over the end line, having last been touched by an attacking player. It may be taken from any point within the half of the goal area nearest where the ball went out. All opposing players must stand outside the penalty area. To be in play, the ball must leave the penalty area (inbounds); otherwise the kick is taken again.

KICK OFF - Officially begins the game at each half and restarts the game after a goal has been scored.

MIDFIELDER - Player who functions primarily in the center or neutral third of the field and whose principal job is to link the defense and the attack through ball control and passing.

OFFSIDE - Offside is defined as occurring at the moment the ball is played by one of the attacking players to a teammate. To be in an offside position the player must be: in the attacking half of the field, in front of the ball, behind the second to last defender (normally, but not necessarily the goalie and a fullback).

PENALTY KICK - Awarded to the attacking team if the defending team commits a direct free kick violation within the penalty area. Penalty kicks are taken from the penalty mark. All players of both teams except the kicker and opposing goalkeeper must remain on the field of play outside the penalty area and penalty arc.

REFEREE - The official who is in complete charge of the soccer game. The safety of the players is the referee's main concern. He or she is responsible for keeping time, enforcing the Laws of the Game, stopping and restarting the game for penalties or injuries, cautioning or banishing offenders (including coaches or spectators) and ending the game. All decisions by the referee are final! The referee is assisted by at least two assistant referees.

SUBSTITUTIONS - Washington Youth Soccer rules dictate that each player must play at least 50 percent of each game. (Recreational Only)

THROW-IN - Taken to restart the game after the whole of the ball crosses the outside edge of the touchline. The throw-in, taken by any member of the team that did not touch the ball last, is taken at the point where the ball went out of play. The thrower must face the field and throw the ball with equal strength by both hands, in one continuous motion from the back of the head and over the top of the head. When the ball is released, the thrower must have some part of both of his/her feet on the ground on or behind the touchline.





CARE AND PREVENTION OF INJURIES

The first line of defense in the treatment of athletic injuries is to prevent them. This is accomplished via a well-planned program, competition among equal ability groups, proper warm-up and adherence to the Laws of the Game. Other factors that can lead to the prevention of injuries are as follows:

- Proper use of equipment (shin guards, no jewelry, uniforms designed for climate)
- Upkeep and monitoring of playing surfaces
- Proper-fitting shoes, proper type of shoe for playing surface
- Ample water supply and sufficient number of rests and length of rests
- Avoid scheduling training during the hottest periods of the day and when there is intense humidity
- Full rehabilitation (determined by a physician) of an injury prior to returning to play
- Recommendation of a physical exam by qualified personnel prior to participation
- The coach or assistant coach should be responsible for assisting with injuries (after having attended a certified first aid course and knowledge of state and local ordinances, etc)
- It is recommended that a coach follow-up on a player's injury with the player's parent.

Each coach should have and know how to use a First Aid Kit that includes, but is not limited to: Team Safety and Information Cards, plastic bags, ties for ice, ice, tape, band aids, antiseptic, sterile pads, towelettes, gauze pads, elastic wrap, antibiotic cream and rubber gloves (care should be given to avoid contact with blood and body fluids and to properly dispose of items soaked with such fluids).

CARE OF INJURED ATHLETES

The care of the injured athlete should begin the moment an injury occurs. Immediate care will reduce the severity of the injury and possibility of long-term disability. The coach, upon seeing an injured player on the field should:

- Make sure that the airway is clear
- Determine if the player is conscious
- Ask how the injury occurred
- Ask the player where it hurts
- If the player is unable to continue, he/she should be checked to determine the extent of the injury
- After determining that the injury IS NOT life-threatening, the nature of the injury can be further determined.
- Note the position of the injured part
- Look for swelling and deformity
- Compare it with the opposite side

Treatment for minor injuries such as sprains, strains, and contusions is referred to as R.I.C.E. (Rest, Ice, Compression, and Elevation). The R.I.C.E. treatment is the only first-aid treatment that is considered a safe treatment for a sports injury without professional advice. The treatment helps in three different ways. R.I.C.E. treatments, limited to 20 minutes, can do no harm to any type of injury. Almost anything else (including heat applications) can cause harm in some instances.

- Applying ice chills the injured area, causing the blood vessels

to contract and closing circulation to the injured area.

- Applying pressure with an elastic bandage inhibits the accumulation of blood and fluids in the area, thereby minimizing pain and swelling
- Elevating the injured area decreases fluid accumulation to the injured area, puts the area to rest, and helps to reduce painful muscle spasms

SOME FAMILIAR TERMS COACHES SHOULD KNOW:

Sprain – ligaments are bands of tissue that attach bone to bone and stabilize joints. A sprain is an injury to one or more ligaments.

Strain – a tearing injury to a muscle or a tendon (tendons attach muscle to bone). Athletes may hear the muscle tearing, feel muscle fatigue and/or spasm before loss of muscle function.

Contusion – a crushing injury to a muscle or tendon caused by an outside force, which causes hemorrhaging to surrounding tissue.

Abrasion – a loss of surface area skin caused by sliding. Care – the area should be cleaned with an antiseptic to prevent infection. An antibiotic ointment should be applied to keep the wound moist and destroy any bacteria present.

HEAT INJURIES COACHES SHOULD BE AWARE OF:

Heat Cramps – an involuntary contraction of muscle or a muscle group that is repetitive and rapid in nature. Care – rest, water and stretching.

Heat Exhaustion – surface temperature will be approximately normal, skin pale and clammy, profuse perspiration, tired, weak, headaches – perhaps cramping, nausea, dizziness, possible vomiting and possible fainting (the player will most likely regain consciousness as the head is lowered). Immediate Care – move to a cool area (air-conditioned is best), have the player lie down with feet elevated, remove restrictive apparel as appropriate, cool with wet cloths or by fanning. If alert – water may be given (1/2 glass per 15 minutes). If player vomits – take to hospital immediately and always refer to physician for further diagnosis and treatment prior to returning to activity.

Heat Stroke – body temperature is high, skin is hot, red and dry, sweating mechanism is blocked, pulse is rapid and strong, player may lose consciousness. Immediate Care – seek immediate medical care (Call 911). While waiting, treat as above for heat exhaustion keeping in mind that if you reduce the body temperature too rapidly it can cause internal bleeding.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES WHEN TREATING AN INJURED PLAYER

- Avoid panic, use common sense and seek professional help
- Check for breathing, bleeding, consciousness, deformity, discoloration and shock
- Dependent upon the nature of the injury, avoid moving the player
- Inspire confidence and reassure the player, then determine how the injury occurred
- Use certified athletic trainers when available and always err on the side of caution
- It is recommended that if a player has had medical attention, he/she must have written permission from the doctor to return to training.

Zackery Lystedt Law

On May 14, 2009, the Governor of Washington, Christine Gregoire, signed the **Zackery Lystedt Law**. Effective July 26, 2009, the Lystedt Law directly affects youth sports and head injury policies — particularly how you, as a coach, need to respond to player injuries. The new law requires that:

- 1) An informed consent must be signed by parents and youth athletes acknowledging the risk of head injury prior to practice or competition
- 2) A youth athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury must be removed from play — “when in doubt, sit them out”
- 3) A youth athlete who has been removed from play **must receive written clearance from a licensed health care provider prior to returning to play**



SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Observed By Coaching Staff

Appears dazed or stunned
Is confused about assignment or position
Forgets sport being played
Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
Moves clumsily
Answers questions slowly
Loses consciousness (even briefly)
Shows behavior or personality changes
Can't recall events prior to hit or fall
Can't recall events after hit or fall

Symptoms Reported By Athlete

Headache or “pressure” in head
Nausea or vomiting
Balance problems or dizziness
Double or blurry vision
Sensitivity to light
Sensitivity to noise
Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy or groggy
Concentration or memory problems
Confusion
Does not “feel right”

Adapted from Lovell, et al., 2004

Athletes who experience any of these signs or symptoms after a bump or blow to the head should be kept from play until given permission to return to play by a **health care professional** with experience in evaluating for concussions. Signs and symptoms of concussion can last from several minutes to days, weeks, months, or even longer in some cases.

Remember, you can't see a concussion and some athletes may not experience and/or report symptoms until hours or days after the injury. If you have any suspicion that your athlete has a concussion, you should keep the athlete out of the game or practice.

THE FACTS

- A concussion is a **brain injury**.
- All concussions are **serious**.
- Concussions can occur **without** loss of consciousness.
- Concussions can occur **in any sport**.
- Recognition and proper management of concussions when they **first occur** can help prevent further injury or even death.

WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is an injury that changes how the cells in the brain normally work. A concussion is caused by a blow to the head or body that causes the brain to move rapidly inside the skull. Even a “ding,” “getting your bell rung,” or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious. Concussions can also result from a fall or from players colliding with each other or with obstacles, such as a goalpost, even if they do not directly hit their head.

The potential for concussions is greatest in athletic environments where collisions are common. Concussions can occur, however, in **any** organized or unorganized sport or recreational activity. As many as 3.8 million sports and recreation-related concussions occur in the United States each year.

RECOGNIZING A POSSIBLE CONCUSSION

To help recognize a concussion, you should watch for the following two things among your athletes:

A forceful blow to the head or body that results in rapid movement of the head.

-and-

Any change in the athlete's behavior, thinking, or physical functioning. (See the signs and symptoms of concussion.)

Section IV



PREVENTION AND PREPARATION

As a coach, you can play a key role in preventing concussion and responding to them properly when they occur. Here are some steps you can take to ensure the best outcome for your athletes and the team:

Educate athletes and parents about concussion. Talk with athletes and their parents about the dangers and potential long-term consequences of concussion. For more information on long-term effects of concussion, view the following online video clip: http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/tbi/Coaches_Tool_Kit.htm#Video. Explain your concerns about concussion and your expectations of safe play to athletes, parents and assistant coaches. Pass out the concussion fact sheets for athletes and for parents at the beginning of the season and again if a concussion occurs.

Insist that safety comes first

- Teach athletes safe playing techniques and encourage them to follow the rules of play.
- Encourage athletes to practice good sportsmanship at all times.
- Make sure athletes wear the right protective equipment for their activity (such as shin guards). Protective equipment should fit properly, be well maintained, and be worn consistently and correctly.
- Review the athlete fact sheet with your team to help them recognize the signs and symptoms of a concussion.

Teach athletes and parents that it's not smart to play with a concussion. Sometimes players and parents wrongly believe that it shows strength and courage to play injured. Discourage others from pressuring injured athletes to play. Don't let athletes persuade you that they're "just fine" after they have sustained any bump or blow to the head. Ask if players have ever had a concussion.

Prevent long-term problems

A repeat concussion that occurs before the brain recovers from the first — usually within a short period of time (hours, days, or weeks) — can slow recovery or increase the likelihood of having long-term problems. In rare cases, repeat concussions can result in brain swelling,

permanent brain damage, and even death. This more serious condition is called second impact syndrome.^{4,5} Keep athletes with known or suspected concussion from play until they have been evaluated and given permission to return to play by a health care professional with experience in evaluating for concussion. Remind your athletes: "It's better to miss one game than the whole season."

ACTION PLAN: WHAT SHOULD A COACH DO WHEN A CONCUSSION IS SUSPECTED?

1. Remove the athlete from play. Look for the signs and symptoms of a concussion if your athlete has experienced a bump or blow to the head. Athletes who experience signs or symptoms of concussion should not be allowed to return to play. When in doubt, keep the athlete out of play.

2. Ensure that the athlete is evaluated right away by an appropriate health care professional. Do not try to judge the severity of the injury yourself. Health care professionals have a number of methods that they can use to assess the severity of concussions. As a coach, recording the following information can help health care professionals in assessing the athlete after the injury:

- Cause of the injury and force of the hit or blow to the head
- Any loss of consciousness (passed out/knocked out) and if so, for how long
- Any memory loss immediately following the injury
- Any seizures immediately following the injury
- Number of previous concussions (if any)

3. Inform the athlete's parents or guardians about the possible concussion and give them the fact sheet on concussion. Make sure they know that the athlete should be seen by a health care professional experienced in evaluating for concussion without delay.

4. Allow the athlete to return to play only with permission from a health care professional with experience in evaluating for concussion. A repeat concussion that occurs before the brain recovers from the first can slow recovery or increase the likelihood of having long-term problems. Prevent common long-term problems and the rare second impact syndrome by delaying the athlete's return to the activity until the player receives appropriate medical evaluation and approval for return to play.

LICENSED HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

What licensed health care providers are trained in the evaluation and treatment of concussions/brain injuries and authorized to allow the athlete to return to play?

- Medical Doctors (MD)
- Doctor of Osteopathy (DO)
- Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner (ARNP)
- Physicians Assistant (PA)
- Licensed Certified Athletic Trainers (ATC)

Research is currently being done to determine which other licensed health care providers may have sufficient training to qualify to authorize return to play. Washington Youth Soccer will update clubs/associations and the wsysa.com website as this information becomes available.

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REMEMBER

IF YOU THINK YOUR ATHLETE HAS SUSTAINED A CONCUSSION... TAKE HIM/HER OUT OF PLAY, AND SEEK THE ADVICE OF A HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCED IN EVALUATING FOR CONCUSSION.

For more detailed information on concussion, visit: www.wsysa.com

Referees

The referees in Washington have various degrees of experience and ability. There may be times when your game is in the hands of a novice referee, possibly handling a game for the first time. Go easy on the referee!

He or she has a hard job and they are usually teenagers. Just remember, it could be your child out there someday — how would you want them to be treated? Set the example by treating all referees with respect, and insist that your players and parents do the same. Accept their decisions as part of the game. Don't make calls for them, shout at or argue with them. Teach your

players to focus on improving their own play and that of the team, not on criticizing the officials.

If the referee's conduct of the game is, in your opinion, endangering your players, then find the appropriate administrator (if one is available) and ask him or her to observe play. He will then make a determination whether the play warrants intervention and may then approach the referee and discuss the handling of the game. If no club administrator is in attendance, you may have to act in the best interests of your players. Any discussion with the referee should occur between quarters or at half-time. Coaches need to be careful not to overreact to some of the inevitable bumping and incidental contact that occurs in a soccer game. Contrary to some misconceptions, soccer is a contact sport. Legal contact is clearly defined in the rules of the game. Before questioning the referee's handling of the game, be certain that he or she is consistently failing to control illegal contact. There will inevitably be calls with which you disagree.

Don't let it become a distraction for you or your team. Over the course of the game, the "bad" calls will probably even out. If the referee does a good job, be sure to let him/her know and thank them after the game. If you find that one of your referees is consistently missing calls, contact your club/Association's Referee Coordinator who will monitor and work with any referees needing help. Referee Coordinators should welcome any input from coaches regarding referee performance.

The rules and officiating of soccer are rooted in the philosophy and spirit of the game. Soccer is played by gentlemen (and gentlewomen). The referee is always right. Dissent is not allowed or tolerated. Unfair or unsportsmanlike advantage is not sought nor taken.





Washington Youth Soccer Programs and Services

For Coaches and Administrators

- Soccer Coaching Education—Designed to provide instruction on soccer coaching for any individual regardless of coaching experience. Consistent with USSF National format, the Washington Youth Soccer Coaching Education offers Youth Certificates: U-6, U-8, U-10, “E” level (intermediate), “D” level (advanced), and “C” level (National) courses.
- Subscription to *Play On!*—The Washington Youth Soccer newspaper, *Play On!*, is mailed twice a year free to registered players, coaches, administrators and referees.
- Washington Youth Soccer, US Youth Soccer and USSF Publications—Includes the Washington Youth Soccer Coaches Handbook, Administrative Handbook, US Youth Soccer Association Bylaws, USSF Policies and Procedures Manual, and many more!
- Washington Youth Soccer Website and Online Community—Coaching tips, game schedules, official scores, breaking news, administrative materials and more at www.wsysa.com. Community calendars and streamlined registration are a few more of the many benefits Washington Youth Soccer members will receive.
- Film and Tape Library—Available at the Washington Youth Soccer office to all members.
- Risk Management—the protection of our players, every volunteer in our organization must pass a background check administered by the Washington State Patrol.
- Soccer Insurance Program—Washington Youth Soccer insurance plans apply to all players, coaches and administrators of Washington Youth Soccer, and are reviewed annually to provide the best possible plan and rates to our membership. Plans include general liability, Director and Officers, and Crime insurances.
- Facility Insurance—Through our insurance carrier, Washington Youth Soccer can provide a Certificate of Insurance for soccer fields in a variety of locations, including those owned by schools, parks, or private entities.
- Liaison to senior amateur, professional, collegiate and high school organizations.
- Liaison to Washington State Referees Committee (SRC).
- Registration Database—Washington Youth Soccer holds all registration information in a central database so all players and coaches will receive insurance coverage. In addition, the data allows more efficient communication between all levels of the organization.
- Washington Youth Soccer Promotional Items—Pins, flipping coins and decals, to name a few.

For Players

- Foreign and Domestic Travel—International, intrastate and interstate travel opportunities.
- Premier League—Statewide “competitive” league administered by a Washington Youth Soccer committee for both boys and girls ages U-13 through U-19.
- Subscription to *Play On!*—The Washington Youth Soccer newspaper, *Play On!*, is mailed twice a year free to all registered players.
- Washington Youth Soccer Website—Playing tips, resources, game schedules, official scores and more at www.wsysa.com.
- Tournaments—Established for every level of skill and competition; US Youth Soccer Washington State Championships, Challenge Cup, Fred Meyer Commissioners’ Cup and the Dairy Farmers of Washington President’s Cup. US Youth Soccer-sanctioned and administered tournaments, etc.
- Invitational Tournaments—Open only to Washington Youth Soccer registered teams/US Youth Soccer affiliates. Out-of-state and international tournament information available through the Washington Youth Soccer office.
- US Youth Soccer Competitions—Regional and national competitions for specified gender and age groups.
- TOPSoccer—The outreach soccer program for children with disabilities.

US YOUTH SOCCER REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Girls and Boys: U-12, U-13, U-14, U-15, U-16, U-17, U-18, U-19

US NATIONAL YOUTH TEAM

Player selection camps and tryout competition in international competition with the national youth teams. Socio-cultural/education exchanges.

CONCACAF (YOUTH WORLD CUP)

WASHINGTON YOUTH SOCCER STATE ODP TEAMS

Implemented for ultimate exposure to US Youth Soccer National Youth Teams. ODP teams participate in a regional tournament and various exhibition games. Considered good preparation for collegiate and professional soccer as well as providing overall incentive for youth players. Girls and Boys: Birth year 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, and 1997.



Soccer Organizations

FIFA - Federation Internationale de Football Association Soccer's worldwide ruling body; www.fifa.com

USSF - US Soccer (United States Soccer Federation). Soccer's ruling body in the U.S.; includes youth, amateur and professional soccer; www.ussoccer.com

US Youth Soccer - The main body of youth soccer in the United States; www.usyouthsoccer.org

Region IV - One of US Youth Soccer's four regions encompassing these state associations: Alaska, Arizona, California-North, California-South, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming; www.regioniv.com

Washington Youth Soccer - The state administrative body for youth soccer (ages 5–19) and a member of US Youth Soccer and USSF; www.wsysa.com

District - One of the seven administrative areas of Washington Youth Soccer

Association - An organization within a District that governs leagues and player registration in a specific geographic area as a member of Washington Youth Soccer

Club - An area within an Association that registers and rosters players for small-sided and league play

WSSA - Washington State Soccer Association. The administrative body for adult amateur soccer in Washington state; www.wssa.org

WASRC - Washington State Referee Committee. The official USSF affiliated soccer referee organization for the state of Washington, responsible for the administration of the USSF National Program for Referee development, including Registration, Instruction, Mentoring and Assessment within the State of Washington; www.wasrc.org

Olympic Development Program

US Youth Soccer's Olympic Development Program (ODP) is a national program used to identify and develop youth players to represent their state, region and country in soccer competitions. Olympic Development Programs aim to identify and advance the most talented and passionate youth players through the state, regional and national team selection and competitions. The pinnacle for every player is being selected to participate on the US National Teams (16 year olds and older) that represent all of us on the international stage.

Purpose

The Olympic Development Program was formed to identify a pool of players in each age group from which a National Team will ultimately be selected for international competition. It will also provide high-level training to benefit and enhance the development of players at all levels; and through the use of carefully selected and licensed coaches whom have developed a mechanism for the exchange of ideas and curriculum to improve all levels of coaching.

Program Description History

In 1977, the program expanded, the organization became more efficient and multi-year plans were developed. State Associations were encouraged to develop programs which supported and worked in tandem with National and Regional programs. At the beginning of 1982, a formalized program for girls was created, with the addition of a full committee (one member from each Region).

Current Organization

From 1982 until the present, international events for youth national teams have increased substantially and the US Youth Soccer Olympic Development Program has kept pace by instituting trials and player pools for five age groups in the boys' program, and five age groups in the girls' program.

How are Players Selected?

Players are selected on the basis of open tryouts and a scouting system. Open tryouts will be announced on an ongoing basis; please check www.wsysa.com for current information. The ODP scouting system is comprised of scouts from the state coaching staff. These scouts will travel the state and watch games to evaluate players and recommend them to the state ODP player pool. Players are evaluated on the four components that make up a soccer player:

- Technique
- Tactics
- Fitness and Athletic Ability
- Psychological Component (attitude)

For more information, please contact the State Office or check on our website at www.wsysa.com

TOPSoccer

Washington Youth Soccer's TOPSoccer (The Outreach Program for Soccer) is a community-based training and team placement program for young athletes with disabilities of any age, organized by local volunteers. The program is designed to bring the opportunity of learning and playing soccer to any boy or girl, who has a mental or physical disability.

Our goal is to enable the thousands of young athletes with disabilities to become valued and successful members of the Washington Youth Soccer and US Youth Soccer families.

TOPSoccer is supported with training materials, assessment tools, and a statewide support network to help local programs get off the ground.



TOPSoccer also works hand-in-hand with existing sports organizations for people with disabilities to expand soccer training and competition opportunities within their programs, as well as within the mainstream soccer community. This program is a great way for competitive and recreational teams to give back to their communities by providing skilled buddies and coaches.

To get involved in this special program or for additional information, visit www.wsysa.com or contact the Washington Youth Soccer office at 877-424-4318.



State Tournaments

Washington Youth Soccer sponsors four major tournaments each year for the players in the state of Washington:

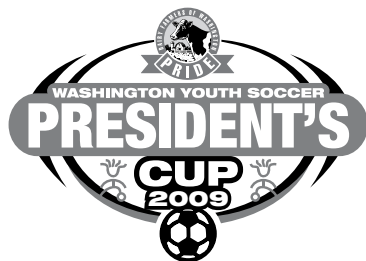
- Dairy Farmers of Washington President's Cup (Recreational)
- Fred Meyer Commissioners' Cup (Competitive)
- Challenge Cup (Competitive)
- US Youth Soccer Washington State Championships (Open)

For additional information on the state-sponsored tournaments, you can access the latest information at the Washington Youth Soccer website: www.wsysa.com

Each year, various member associations also host tournaments with the permission and sanctioning of Washington Youth Soccer all around the state. Information on these are always posted on the website. These tournaments are recreational, developmental and competitive. Most are open to every team that wishes to apply and who can meet the tournament's entry requirements. For further information on these tournaments, contact the tournament director listed on the Washington Youth Soccer website, www.wsysa.com

The President's Cup

Washington Youth Soccer's fall Recreational Tournament was initiated and organized to enhance the accomplishments recreational players achieve by participating in a state championship tournament. The development of all players within Washington Youth Soccer is advanced when the player meets personal challenges.



The President's Cup is designed to encourage and honor the recreational player by allowing the player to compete for both team and personal goals.

This tournament is structured so that, regardless of ability, all players can realistically strive for the goal of becoming a state champion.

Every recreational player shall have an equal opportunity to participate in every game.

The formation of recreational teams follows a controlled registration policy where every player is accepted and assigned to a roster regardless of ability.

A philosophy of player participation in a low-stress, fun-filled environment is promoted. Only recreational players registered with Washington Youth Soccer, through an affiliate member recreational league are eligible to participate in The President's Cup.

No all-star teams or guest players are allowed. Any league, club or association found to have substituted ineligible players on a roster will forfeit their games at this tournament and may be subject to further sanctions.



Commissioners' and Challenge Cup

The Washington Youth Soccer Commissioners' Cup and Challenge Cup were initiated and organized to enhance the accomplishments of competitive and developmental U-11 and older players achieve by participating in a state championship. The development of all players within Washington Youth Soccer is advanced when the player meets personal challenges.

US Youth Soccer National Championship Series



The US Youth Soccer National Championship Series is designed to encourage and honor the most skillful player by allowing U-12 through U-19 players to compete for both team and personal goals. This tournament is structured so that the best boys & girls team in each age group from each state is determined to advance to regional play. At the US Youth Soccer Region IV (Far West Regional) Championships, one team in each age group from Under-14 and older who wins the Regional Championship advances to the US Youth Soccer National Championships. This is the largest soccer tournament for youth in the world and involves all 55 US Youth Soccer member states.

Philosophy

It is the National Championship philosophy that all players should receive equal opportunities and benefits within their level of play. Further, all players have the right to participate in competitions where they can be honored as winners.

Basic Guidelines

The entire National Championship Series program is played under the same basic rules regarding team formation. Guidelines are contained in the Administrative Handbook and within the Cup Rules available from the Washington Youth Soccer Office. The rules are also available online at www.wsysa.com. Only teams registered within Washington Youth Soccer through a member Association that played in a sanctioned league are eligible to participate in the US Youth Soccer National Championship Series. Teams may be recreational, developmental or competitive. Any league, club or association found to have substituted ineligible players on a roster will forfeit their games at this tournament and may be subject to further sanctions.

Under-11 teams participate in the Commissioners' Cup and Challenge Cup, companion tournaments for the US Youth Soccer Washington State Championships.



SoccerPalooza

Now as we all know, Washington Youth Soccer is what it is today thanks to the members, volunteers, players, referees and families throughout the state. In tribute, our association honors our amazing base of loyal coaches, referees, players and administrators with an Academy Awards-style SoccerPalooza Annual Awards Dinner. This appreciation dinner provides the opportunity for Washington Youth Soccer to present the highest awards the organization has to offer, including a Boys and Girls Coach of the Year award. Who knows, next year it could be you!

Keep your eyes out and start planning ahead for SoccerPalooza 2010. As we get closer to the event, make sure to watch *Play On!* and the Washington Youth Soccer website for details!



WASHINGTON YOUTH SOCCER SOCCER ACROSS WASHINGTON

CULTURA

Fútbol soccer es cultura



DIVERSIDAD

Nuestro enfoque



OPORTUNIDAD

Nuestro compromiso



UNION

La unidad

Washington Youth Soccer is launching a new diversity program to bring soccer to all kids. Affiliated with US Youth Soccer's Soccer Across America program, Soccer Across Washington is designed to provide the opportunity for all players regardless of geography, economics, gender, language barriers, or ethnicity to be introduced to Washington Youth Soccer. Soccer Across

Washington is grounded in culture, diversity, opportunity and unity and will provide a network that offers soccer training, administrative guidance, equipment assistance, and technical support to our communities. For more information on upcoming programs or how to get involved, visit Soccer Across Washington under the programs tab on wsya.com.

CULTURE

Soccer is our culture



DIVERSITY

Diversity is our focus



OPPORTUNITY

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Play On!

A Resource For Everyone! Coaches, administrators, referees and players eagerly read *Play On!*, Washington Youth Soccer's official resource for —

- What's going on in Washington's youth soccer community?
- "How to" instructions, ranging from coaching tips to working with our administrators.
- Cheers for our successes—on and off the pitch.
- Games for kids of all ages

Play On! is mailed to every Washington Youth Soccer registered household free of charge twice a year in April and August. To benefit the entire Washington Youth Soccer family, we encourage you to submit important news, exciting program updates and on-going soccer achievements taking place in your community.

Please send in your articles and pictures by e-mail to the Editor at playon@wsysa.com by the 1st of the month preceding publication. Make sure to look for games, contests and prizes in each and every edition!

We want to hear from you so we can share your experiences and expertise with other volunteers working to make our youth soccer program "The Game for All Kids!"

E-PlayOn!

To better serve the needs of today's computer-savvy coaches, parents, publishers and administrators, Washington Youth Soccer also began publishing an electronic version of its popular newspaper in 2009.

"E-PlayOn!" is published 10 times per year, in the months in which the printed version is not published, and delivers the latest news, events, special offers and opportunities from the world of Washington Youth Soccer right into the e-mail inboxes of all subscribers.

In addition, E-PlayOn! serves as a unique communications tool, integrating aspects of wsysa.com and other online resources to help deliver the most timely, useful and exciting information to the Washington Youth Soccer community.



Small-Sided Games

INTRODUCTION

The Washington Youth Soccer Small-Sided Program is a modification of the adult game for age-appropriate play. These rules establish team, field, goal and ball sizes for U-6 play, and increase these each year for U-6 through U-11 players. This is done for a number of reasons:

1. The number of players on the field should be developmentally appropriate for children to experience and develop the motor skills necessary in soccer. These rules allow players to experience appropriate tactical decisions for their age. It also meets the needs of the players' social development.
2. These rules create a comfortable environment for the new youth coach. By increasing the number of players incrementally each year, the new coach is able to focus on creating developmentally appropriate practice sessions without the fear and need to focus on teaching specific field positions. With the emphasis on teaching the individual player, the concern for team results is minimized.
3. By increasing the number of players on the field and rosters incrementally, it is easier for the coach to deal with the challenge of new players being added to the team. Often times, the new players added to the team are playing soccer for the first time. The use of small-sided games maximizes player contact time with the ball, which aids in the improvement of these new players and their integration into the team.
4. The use of smaller field sizes reduces the strain on field space. Several age groups are able to share the same space, or, in most cases, more teams can play in the existing field space.





Field of Play

The following specifications are applicable to all small-sided competitions within the Washington Youth Soccer:

U-11: The field of play must be rectangular. The length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line. The maximum length is 80 yards and the minimum length is 50 yards. The maximum width is 50 yards and the minimum width is 35 yards. Interior markings shall conform to FIFA.

U-10: The field of play must be rectangular. The length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line. The maximum length is 55 yards and the minimum length is 35 yards. The maximum width is 35 yards and the minimum width is 30 yards. Interior markings shall conform to FIFA, except the goal area shall be six yards; the penalty area shall be 14 yards. No penalty mark shall be used. The center circle shall be 10 yards.

U-9: The field of play must be rectangular. The length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line. The maximum length is 45 yards and the minimum length is 35 yards. The maximum width is 30 yards and the minimum width is 25 yards. Interior markings shall conform to FIFA, except the goal area shall be 4 yards; the penalty area shall be 10 yards. No penalty mark shall be used. The center circle shall be 10 yards.

U-8: The field of play must be rectangular. The length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line. The maximum length is 40 yards and the minimum length is 35 yards. The maximum width is 25 yards and the minimum width is 20 yards. Interior markings shall conform to FIFA, except the goal area shall be two yards; the penalty area shall be six yards. No penalty mark shall be used. The center circle shall be six yards.

U-7: The field of play must be rectangular. The length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line. The maximum length is 35 yards and the minimum length is 30 yards. The maximum width is 25 yards and the minimum width is 20 yards. Interior markings shall conform to FIFA,



except the goal area shall be two yards; the penalty area shall be six yards. No penalty mark shall be used. The center circle shall be six yards.

U-6 and below: The field of play must be rectangular. The length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line. The maximum length is 30 yards and the maximum width is 20 yards. No interior markings shall be used except center circle, halfway line and corner kick arcs. The center circle shall be six yards.

The following goal and field marking specifications are applicable to all small-sided competitions administered within the WSYSA:

Goals: In case permanent goals are not available, portable goals are acceptable but must be staked down to ensure player safety at all times. For U-7 and below, in the event that there are no permanent or portable goals, traffic cones may be set up or any other safe object may be used to mark the goals. In this case, the referee will set the "imaginary" height of the crossbar.

Field markings: The outside edge of the field may be indicated by chalked or painted lines not more than four inches in width. When painted lines are not feasible or permitted, other means may be used.

| Age Group | Max Goal Size | Min Goal Size | Recommended Goal Size |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| U-11 | 8' x 24' | 7' x 21' | 7' x 21' |
| U-10 | 6' x 18' | 6' x 12' | 6' x 18' |
| U-9 | 6' x 18' | 6' x 8' | 6' x 12' |
| U-8 | 6' x 12' | 6' x 6' | 6' x 8' |
| U-7 and Below | 6' x 6' | Cones | 6' x 6' |



Field Chart

| Field Size | U-6 | U-7 | U-8 | U-9 | U-10 | U-11 |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| W x L in Yards | 20 x 30 | 20/25 x 30/35 | 20/25 x 35/40 | 25/30 x 35/45 | 30/35 x 35/55 | 35/50 x 50/80 |
| Center Circle Yards | 6 Yards | 6 Yards | 6 Yards | 10 Yards | 10 Yards | 10 Yards |
| Penalty Mark | NO | NO | NO | NO | NO | Yes |
| Goal Sizes in Feet | U-6 | U-7 | U-8 | U-9 | U-10 | U-11 |
| Recommended | 6' x 6' | 6' x 6' | 6' x 8' | 6' x 12' | 6' x 18' | 7' x 21' |
| Minimum | Cones | Cones | 6' x 6' | 6' x 8' | 6' x 12' | 7' x 21' |
| Maximum | 6' x 6' | 6' x 6' | 6' x 12' | 6' x 18' | 6' x 18' | 8' x 24' |
| Ball Size | U-6 | U-7 | U-8 | U-9 | U-10 | U-11 |
| Recommended | #3 | #3 | #3 | #4 | #4 | #4 |
| Roster Size | U-6 | U-7 | U-8 | U-9 | U-10 | U-11 |
| Recommended | 6 Players | 6 Players | 8 Players | 9 Players | 10 Players | 14 Players |
| Field Players | U-6 | U-7 | U-8 | U-9 | U-10 | U-11 |
| | 3 Players | 3 Players | 4 Players | 5 Players | 6 Players | 9 Players |
| Goal Keepers | U-6 | U-7 | U-8 | U-9 | U-10 | U-11 |
| | NO | NO | YES | YES | YES | YES |
| Game Lengths | U-6 | U-7 | U-8 | U-9 | U-10 | U-11 |
| Maximum | 32 Minutes | 40 Minutes | 50 Minutes | 50 Minutes | 50 Minutes | 60 Minutes |
| Recommended | (4) 8 Minute Periods | (4) 10 Minute Periods | (2) 25 Minute Halves | (2) 25 Minute Halves | (2) 25 Minute Halves | (2) 30 Minute Halves |
| Permitted | (2) 15 Minutes Halves | (2) 20 Minute Halves | (4) 12 Minute Periods | (4) 12 Minute Periods | Must Use Above | Must Use Above |
| Referee | U-6 | U-7 | U-8 | U-9 | U-10 | U-11 |
| | Coach/Parent | Level 8-11 | Level 8-11 | Level 8 or 9 | Level 8 or 9 | Level 8 or Above |
| Coaching License | U-6 | U-7 | U-8 | U-9 | U-10 | U-11 |
| | U-6 | U-8 | U-8 | U-10 | U-10 | U-12 |



Game Duration and Ball Size:

| Age Group | Maximum Game Duration (Recommended) | Ball Size |
|----------------|--|-----------|
| Under-11 | 60 Min./Two 30-minute halves..... | #4 |
| Under-10 | 50 Min./Two 25-minute halves..... | #4 |
| Under-9 | 50 Min./Two 25-minute halves (Periods permitted)..... | #4 |
| Under-8 | 50 Min./Two 25-minute halves (Periods permitted)..... | #3 |
| Under-7 | 40 Min./Four 10-minute periods (Halves permitted)..... | #3 |
| Under-6 | 32 Min./Four 8-minute periods (Halves permitted)..... | #3 |

There shall be a five (5) minute break between halves or a two (2) minute break between periods.

Number of Players

Teams shall have no more than the following number of players and roster sizes:

| Age Group | # Players on the Field | Roster Size |
|---------------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| U-11 | 9 | 14 |
| U-10 | 6 | 10 |
| U-9 | 5 | 9 |
| U-8 | 4 | 8 |
| U-7 | 3 (no goalkeeper) | 6 |
| U-6 and below | 3 (no goalkeeper) | 6 |

Substitutions

1. Substitutions may be made, with consent of the referee during any stoppage of play.
2. The number of substitutes shall be unlimited unless a competition superseding the jurisdiction of the Washington Youth Soccer determines otherwise. Each player will play a minimum of 50 percent of the total playing

time. Substitutions will be allowed in order to give an opportunity for all players to receive equal playing time and to balance, rather than to run up, the score.

3. Players, coaches and spectators not on the field of play must remain two (2) yards behind the touchline and not within the distance of the goal area for the particular age from the corner of the field.





Players' Equipment

1. ALL PLAYERS SHALL WEAR SHINGUARDS. Socks must be worn up and over the shin guards.
2. All players shall be in uniform to play. A minimum "official" uniform is the standard league shirt (with a number). Goalkeepers shall wear shirt colors that distinguish them from other players.
3. All players shall wear footwear. A player may not play in their bare feet.
4. A player shall not wear anything that may be dangerous to other players or to themselves.
5. Any or all member(s) of a team may wear extra protective clothing against the cold, including gloves without dangerous, protruding or hard objects, provided that:
 - The proper team uniform is worn outermost; and
 - Any hat should be without peak, bill or dangling or protruding object of any kind; however, the goalkeeper may wear a soft-billed hat; and
 - Referee discretion may be used to determine if an item of protective clothing is considered to go beyond the purpose of providing a means of retaining body heat.

Officiating

1. The home team will be responsible for providing referees. In the event that a referee is not present, both coaches will mutually agree upon one. If one cannot be agreed upon, each coach will referee one half.

2. Assistant referees will be used whenever possible to assist the referee. Young players or willing adults may also be used. Volunteer linesmen may be used at the discretion of the referee only for the purpose of calling the ball in or out of play.

Charging the Goalkeeper

1. In all Under-11 age groups and below: no player shall make physical contact with the goalkeeper, harass the goalkeeper or attempt to play the ball once the goalkeeper has control of the ball in any manner and to any degree whatsoever. Note: Also included in "having control of the ball" is, if the goalkeeper holds the ball on the ground with one or both hands.

Coaching

Soccer presents an excellent opportunity to learn, develop and establish group behavior, friendly relationships, fair competition, enjoyment, organization and many other items. Above and beyond anything else, it must be fun!

1. The coach or designated adult (18 years or older, unless approved by the Association) should attend every practice and every game. All coaches, team managers and assistants must fill out the required Washington State Patrol forms and comply with all Risk Management requirements. There must be an approved adult at all functions.
2. The coach is responsible for his own behavior, as well as that of his players and spectators. Remember, this is just for fun.
3. Every player must play in each game at least 50 percent of the playing time, unless they are not able to play due to illness or injury.
4. All coaches should attend an appropriate-level coaching clinic prior to the start of the regular season.
5. Coaching from the sidelines is permitted, but not recommended. Coaching must be done in a civil manner and the tone of voice will be informational and encouraging, not demanding or critical.
6. At home games, you are responsible for field preparation (check with your club) and for referees. Contact the visiting coach at least three days before the scheduled game to reaffirm the time, directions to the field and to share team colors (home team changes jersey color if visiting team is the same color). If the visiting coach is not contacted he/she should contact the home team coach.
7. It is every coach's obligation and duty to attend coaching and referee clinics in order to acquire information that, in turn, may be passed on to the players. Below are recommended clinics for the indicated age groups:

Age Group

Coaching Clinic

Referee Instruction

| | | |
|-----------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| U-6..... | U-6 Certificate | Coaches/parents |
| U-7 & U-8..... | U-8 Certificate | Level-11 through Level-8 |
| U-9 & U-10..... | U-10 Certificate | Level-9 or Level-8 |
| U-11 | "E" License | Level-8 or higher |

Section VI



The Rules of Play

A coin is tossed; the team that wins the toss then decides which goal it will attack in the first half or period of the match. The other team takes kick-off to start the match. The teams will alternate the kick-off prior to the start of the second half or new period. Teams will only switch ends at half time of a game.

1. Start of Play

The ball will be placed at the center of the field by the referee and the game will start with one player taking a kick into the opponent's half of the field, after a given signal by the referee. At the time of the kickoff, every player will be in his/her half of the field. Every player of the opposing team, to that of the kicker, shall be:

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|
| U-11, U-10, U-9 | 10 yards from the center mark |
| U-8 and below | Six yards from the center mark |

The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves forward. The kicker shall not play the ball a second time until it has been touched or played by another player. For any infraction of these laws for U-9 and below, the referee will explain the proper procedure and the kickoff shall be retaken. Kick-offs for U-10 and above shall be played per FIFA rules.

At U-7 and below, a goal shall not be scored directly from a kickoff without the ball being touched by at least one other player on either team. At U-8 and above the limitation shall be per FIFA rules.

2. Restart of Play

After a goal has been scored, the game shall be restarted in like manner by a player of the team that gave up the goal.

To start the second half, the game will be restarted with the kickoff by a player of the opposite team to that of the player who started the game.

In the case of a temporary suspension due to an injury or any unusual situation, if one team is clearly in possession of the ball, the game shall be restarted by an indirect free kick by the team in possession of the ball at the point where the ball was when play was suspended. Should there not be clear possession at the time play is suspended due to an injury or any unusual situation, there will be a drop ball at the spot where the ball was declared dead. The ball shall be deemed "in play" when the ball has touched the ground.

3. Ball In and Out of Play

The ball is out of play when it has wholly crossed the goal line or whole touchline, whether it is on the ground or in the air.

The ball is out of play when the referee has stopped the game.

4. Method of Scoring

A goal is scored when the whole of the ball has crossed the whole of the goal line on the ground or in the air.

In the case the goal marker (cone) is knocked over or moved as a result of a direct hit by the ball as it crosses the goal line, the goal will not be allowed. In this case, the ball shall be put into play by either a goal kick or a corner kick, depending on who touched the ball last. The ball striking the inside of the goal marker and deflecting into the goal shall constitute a good goal. As in all judgment calls, the referee's decision will be final.

5. Offside Rule

The offside rule will not apply to any team U-9 and below — however, the intent of the rule will be followed. Positioning a player in front of the opponent's goal irrespective of the location of the ball on the field is contrary to the aims of the program. The referee shall take appropriate action to prevent this kind of play (an indirect kick to the offended team and instructional statements to the violating players and coach).

Teams U-10 and above will play with the offside rule. The referees will call the rules and the proper penalties will be assessed.

6. Fouls and Misconduct

Free kicks shall be classified under two headings:

- "Direct": from which a goal can be scored by a direct kick against the offending side, and
- "Indirect": from which a goal cannot be scored unless the ball has been played or touched by a player other than the kicker before passing through the goal.



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Section VI



NO DIRECT KICKS SHALL BE AWARDED AT U-9 AND BELOW. ONLY INDIRECT KICKS WILL BE USED.

Penalty Kicks will be granted only at U-11 and above. They will be taken at 10 yards from the goal.

A DIRECT KICK shall be awarded for the following nine (9) intentionally committed offenses:

- Kicking an opponent
- Tripping an opponent
- Jumping at an opponent
- Charging an opponent in a violent or dangerous manner
- Charging an opponent from behind
- Striking an opponent
- Holding an opponent
- Pushing an opponent
- Handling the ball, with the exception of the goalie, in the designated area

An INDIRECT KICK shall be awarded for the following offenses:

- Dangerous play, (high kicking)
- Charging fairly (shoulder to shoulder) when the ball is not within the playing distance of the players involved
- Impeding the progress of an opponent
- Obstructing the goalkeeper (there will be no intentional physical contact with the goalkeeper in the penalty area)
- Preventing the goalkeeper from releasing the ball from his hands
- Lying on the ball and not allowing others to play it
- Unsporting behavior

SLIDE TACKLING WILL NOT BE ALLOWED AT U-10 AND BELOW! If a slide tackle occurs it shall be considered dangerous play. The referee will stop play and instruct the player of his infraction and then award the opposing team an indirect free kick at the spot of the foul.

Consistent with the educational intent of the Small-Sided Program, the referee should inform the offending player of the infraction that was committed.

For all free kicks, the required distance for a defending player will equal that of the age-appropriate center circle (diameter).

7. Throw-ins

When the whole of the ball passes over the whole touch line, either on the ground or in the air, it shall be put back into play by a throw-in. The throw shall be taken by a player from the opposing team, from the point where the ball crossed the line.

The thrower must face the field of play and must keep both feet on the ground while releasing the ball. He/she shall use both hands on both sides of the ball to deliver the ball from behind and over his/her head.

For U-9 and below, in the event of any infraction of these laws, the throw-in shall be retaken. Instruction shall be given by the referee. U-10 and above shall abide per FIFA rules.

A goal shall not be scored directly from the throw-in.

8. Goal Kicks

When the whole of the ball passes over the whole of the goal line, excluding the portion between the goal posts and under the crossbar (either in the air or on the ground), having last been played by one of the players on

the attacking team, it shall be kicked directly into play by a goal kick.

- A goal kick may be taken from any point inside the goal area.
- Any defending player, including the goalkeeper, may take the goal kick.
- The kicker shall not play the ball a second time until it has been touched or played by another player.
- At U-7 and below, a goal shall not be scored directly from a goal kick.
- The ball is in play when it crosses outside the penalty area.

9. Corner Kicks

When the whole of the ball passes over the whole of the goal line excluding that portion between the goal posts and under the crossbar (either in the air or on the ground), having last been played by one of the defending team, a player of the attacking team shall have a corner kick.

The ball shall be placed within a three-foot arc from the corner flag or cone and shall be kicked into play from that position by an attacking player.

A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick.

Players from the opposing team shall not approach within the distance of the center circle measurement of the ball until it is in play.

If the player who takes the kick plays the ball a second time before it has been touched by another player, the referee shall explain to the kicker the proper procedure of a corner kick. Then the referee shall award an indirect kick to the opposite team from a spot where the infringement occurred.

For any other infringement, the kick shall be retaken.

10. Miscellaneous Rules

Unless otherwise modified by these rules, the standard laws of the game will govern.

Good judgment, sportsmanship and fair play should govern the decisions and actions of all coaches, referees and spectators.

For all U-10 and below age groups, a selection process will not be used for teams rostered for league play, there will be no published team standings and game scores will not be recorded.





Field Form

Match: _____ vs. _____

DATE: _____

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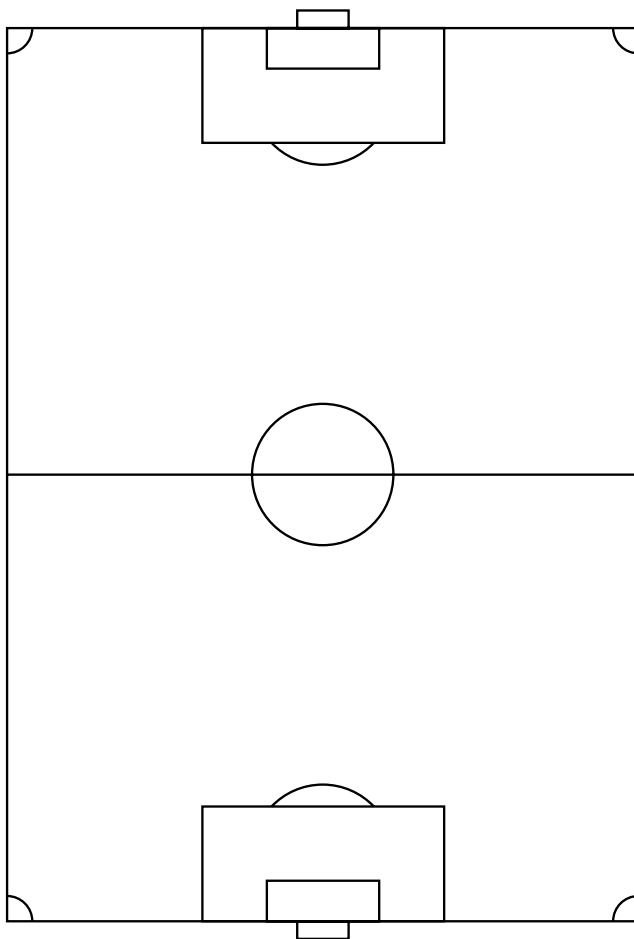
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Notes



Notes

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