



Guideline (GUI)

U13+ Coaching Program Curriculum

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Errors or Omissions

Big Country Soccer Association has provided this manual to the membership as a guide for the operation of the organization and all sports. Any errors or omissions contained herein shall not supersede the by-laws, policies, procedures, or guidelines of the Association. All changes must be passed by majority vote at a duly constituted meeting of the Association. Any changes to the manual shall be included in the next edition. The by-laws of the association supersede any guideline or policy should a conflict occur.

Document Revision History

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Current Revision Description

Section	Description



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1 Vision

The Big Country Soccer Association aspires to be an outstanding educational-athletic organization that provides a high-quality experience for every athlete. A high-quality experience is one in which every athlete:

1. Is coached using the principles of Positive Coaching,
2. Has fun playing the game,
3. Feels like an important part of the team regardless of performance,
4. Learns “life lessons” that have value beyond the playing field; and
5. Learns the skills, tactics and strategies of the game and improves as a player.

2 Mission

The Big Country Soccer Association is committed to providing well-organized soccer recreation appropriately structured to accommodate any level of play commensurate with our players’ individual abilities, potential, and interest and to promoting a positive youth sports culture that teaches life lessons and “honors the game” for all players in the Big Country, Alberta area. Our sporting philosophy is based on the following objectives:

1. To provide and support programs for the involvement and enjoyment of members of the Big Country Soccer Association in support of a long-term development of the sport of soccer.
2. To encourage and welcome parental support in youth soccer development.
3. To encourage good sportsmanship through development and competition in the sport.
4. To ensure all participants in all programs have fun and equal opportunity to actively participate in the sport.
5. To develop each athlete's basic skills and conditioning that they can apply to the sport.
6. To develop good coaching and officiating capabilities in the sport.
7. To create and maintain a spirit of friendly competition without fear of bullying.

3 Scope

This coaching curriculum is for the U13+ (from 11 years of age to under 18, regardless of gender) group and includes the priorities for coaches to develop players in this age group. This document is in support of Long-Term Development practices for youth soccer by Alberta Soccer Association (ASA), and Canada Soccer Association (CSA).



4 Coaching Guidelines for U13+ Age Groups

4.1 Aim:

To allow players of all ages and abilities to develop to their full potential, in an ENJOYABLE, CHALLENGING and POSITIVE environment.

4.2 Objectives:

- a) Create a clear and simple pathway for player development.
- b) Keep the player at the center of the development process. Ensure that the player has as much time on the ball as possible in every session.
- c) The basic principles of the game are to be coached with focus on the player's development with skills and technique. The extension of positions and playing formation will be provided to this age group along with more tactical coaching to simulate game conditions and play.
- d) Acknowledge that players will develop differently. A coach needs to be flexible in how instructions are provided.

4.3 To be successful at this age group the coach needs to have these traits:

- Flexibility – Children all progress at different rates so be aware of players understanding instructions. Recognize when something is not working and change it.
- A sense of humor – laugh with your players and make it FUN. They will enjoy the experience more and want to come back next time.
- A very positive attitude, give generous praise often; remember they are learning the game, and often this may be their first experience of soccer coaching. Positive reinforcement will keep their confidence high and again, make them want to return.
- And lots and lots of energy – If you're energetic and dynamic in your coaching style the kids will feed off this and remain more focused in the session.

5 References

The following referenced documents are to be considered the latest edition and indispensable for the application of this document.

Table 1 – References

Document Number	Title
	Canada Soccer Quality Soccer Provider Standards



Document Number	Title
	Canada Soccer Guide to Management Operations
	Alberta Soccer Standards for Quality Soccer Guidebook
BCSA-POL-023	Big Country Soccer Association Long Term player Development Policy
BCSA-GOV-007	Big Country Soccer Association General Rules and Regulations
BCSA-GUI-005	Big Country Soccer Association Parents Guide
BCSA-GUI-006	Big Country Soccer Association Coaching Guideline

6 Acronyms and Defined Terms

For this document, the following acronyms and terms apply.

6.1 Acronyms

Table 2 – Acronyms

Acronym	Definition
ASA	Alberta Soccer Association
BCSA	Big Country Soccer Association
CSA	Canada Soccer Association
FIFA	Federation International Football Association
LTPD	Long Term Player Development
PHV	Peak Height Velocity

6.2 Definitions

Table 3 – Definitions

Term	Definition
Registered Member	This is the community that is registered with BCSA to register their players to compete in the Association with other registered teams. These communities will have their players registered with Alberta Soccer Association.



7 Responsibilities

- 7.1** The following list of responsibilities are not all encompassing. Additional responsibilities may be assigned out, as required, when there are tasks and/ or actions required to represent Big Country Soccer Association, its players, parents, coaches, and the governing soccer associations that Big Country Soccer Association is required to adhere to.
- 7.2** President of Big Country Soccer Association is responsible for the following:
- a) Ensure that the most up to date information on player development is available to coaches assigned teams for Big Country Soccer Association.
 - b) Respond to concerns, as necessary, raised by those involved with Big Country Soccer Association.
 - c) Participate with the disciplinary process, as required.
- 7.3** Vice- President of Big Country Soccer Association is responsible for the following:
- a) Develop the coaching curriculums for the various age groups for Big Country Soccer Association.
 - b) Provide support to the coaches for the development and support of Big Country Soccer Association coaches.
 - c) Provide support in the development of coaching practice plans used by coaches in support of the four-corner model for youth player development.
 - d) Respond to concerns, as necessary, raised by those involved with Big Country Soccer Association.
 - e) Participate with the disciplinary process, as required.
- 7.4** Coaches for Big Country Soccer Association are responsible for the following:
- a) Following the age group curriculum for the age group they are assigned to coach on behalf of Big Country Soccer Association.
 - b) Only use drills and practice plans that are age appropriate for the specific curriculum and priorities according to the four-corned model for youth player development.
 - c) Ensure the practice is organized before players arrive to their practice sessions.
 - d) Request support from the President and/ or Vice-President for Big Country Soccer Association on practices plans and drills that support the age group, as necessary.



8 U13+ Four Corner Development Curriculum

- 8.1 The Four Corner LTPD model consists of technical, psychological, physical, and social/ emotional components. Each corner of the model reflects a wide aspect of a player’s development that has to be considered. The gradual progressive development of players is fundamental to the enjoyment, technical competency, and retention in the game.



Figure 1 – Four Corner Development Model

8.2 U13-U18 Players

This is a transitional development time that is moving from the “Learn to Train” to now “Training to Train” stage in player development. During the early years, U13- U16 age ranges, the optimal window of trainability for stamina begins with the onset of Peak Height Velocity (PHV), more commonly known as the adolescent growth spurt. The demands for reinforcement and mastering of essential skills should increase during this time to ensure the players’ skill with the ball is not reduced during PHV. Further tactical training and coaching are essential during this develop stage.

- 8.3 For this age range, note the following basic details as it relates to the “Four Corner Development Model” as illustrated in Figure 1:

- a) **Physical-** Flexibility, disciplined warm-ups and cool-down routines, agility, aerobic endurance, strength, core strength and stability, balance, nutrition and proper diets (pre-game, post-game, tournaments), prevention and care of injuries, importance of rest/ recovery. Personalized programs needed to respect the growth spurt of players.
- b) **Technical-** Introduction of more advanced techniques to those who are capable; technical acquisition in a more complex environment i.e., academy program, and position-specific skills.



- c) **Tactical-** Teamwork: development of tasks per unit (defensive, midfield, or forward units) and positional awareness through more small-sided games and competitive matches.
- d) **Psychological-** Pre-competition routines, introduction to mental preparation, goal setting, coming with winning and losing.

8.4 Development grid for this age group is as follows:

PRIORITY KEY	1= HIGH	2= MID	3= LOW	4= NOT APPLICABLE
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Table 4 – U13+ Development Grid

DEVELOPMENT STAGE	TRAIN TO TRAIN START	
PHYSICAL	U13	U15+
Agility	1	1
Balance	1	1
Coordination	1	1
Stamina	2	1
Strength	2	1
Speed	1	1
Suppleness	2	1
Acceleration	1	1
Reaction	1	1
Basic Motor Skills	1	1
Perception	1	1
Awareness	1	1
Other Sports (games)	1	1

DEVELOPMENT STAGE	TRAIN TO TRAIN START	
TECHNICAL	U13	U15+
Dribbling	1	1
Shooting	1	1
Running with the Ball	1	1
Ball Control	1	1
Passing	1	1
Receiving	1	1
Shielding the Ball	1	1
Finishing	1	1
1v1 Defending	2	1
1v1 Attacking	2	1
Heading	2	1
Crossing the Ball	2	1

DEVELOPMENT STAGE	TRAIN TO TRAIN START	
SOCIAL/ EMOTIONAL	U13	U15+
Listening	1	1
Cooperation	1	1
Communication	1	1
Sharing	1	1
Problem-Solving	1	1
Decision-Making	1	1
Empathy	1	1
Patience	1	1
Respect/ Discipline	1	1
Fair Play/ Honesty	1	1

DEVELOPMENT STAGE	TRAIN TO TRAIN START	
PSYCHOLOGICAL	U13	U15+
Motivation	1	1
Self-Confidence	1	1
Competitiveness	1	1
Concentration	1	1
Commitment	1	1
Self-Control	1	1
Determination	1	1



8.4 U13+ Four-Corner Focus:

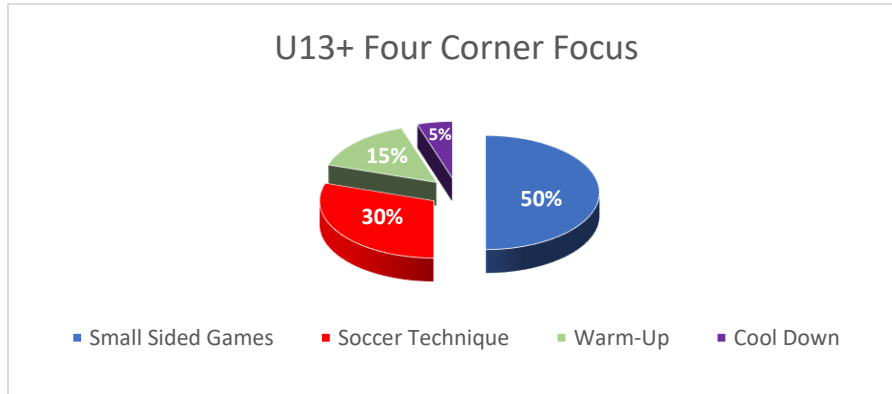


Figure 2 – U13+ Four Corner Focus

8.5 U13+ Practice Focus:

Table 5 – U13+ Practice Focus

TRAIN TO TRAIN PRACTICE OBJECTIVES		PRACTICE CONTENT DISTRIBUTION
TECHNICAL	Continue with ball mastery to support players going through PHV	60%
PHYSICAL	Improve speed, agility, balance, and coordination with and without the ball	15%
TACTICAL	More complex tactical training is introduced in the older age group based on understanding, comprehension, and ability to execute instructions	15%
SOCIAL	More work and utilization of teammates during play with set-plays, combination skills, and tactical togetherness in approach to the game	10%
PSYCHOLOGICAL	Increase the level of competitiveness; more awareness of the impact of winning and losing	Included in all practices.

9 Practice Coaching Points

9.1 Note the following coaching points for organizing and coaching this age group:

- a) Create a stimulating learning environment. Players will better understand tactical instructions and be more critical of their efforts if the skill does not come off as instructed.
- b) A clear practice plan is needed. Players need to understand how the practice will influence the game. This helps with their mental preparation for the session.
- c) Continue with ball mastery skills. Players will be going through a growth period at this age and their touch will be affected by this growth.



- d) Players need to be more aware of their teammates and how they are to play within the team especially for tactical training on how the coach wants the time to play the game.
- e) Playing situations work best for teaching understanding. Continuation of combination plays with 2 or more players.
- f) Working on finishing skills especially at speeds to improve agility and reaction qualities within players.
- g) Small-sided games to reinforce the skills and tactical instructions.
- h) During small-sided games, the play is more suited for transferring the skill directly to how the game is to be played.
- i) Let your players make decisions, expose them to working out problems and coming up with solutions. In small-sided games, the coach should only stop play if there is a coaching moment where players are not able to self-correct what is occurring during play.
- j) Stronger communication between players during small-sided games. During this developmental period, players should be finding and using their voices more directly to give teammates instructions during play.

9.2 Note the following coaching methodology with this age group:

- a) Keep information brief and positive.
- b) Guiding players in the right direction and avoiding telling them how to get there.
- c) Player Centred Coaching – let them make decisions, solve problems based on what they see and experience. Encourage the player to work through failures.
- d) Keep the environment positive but the training to be more intensive and closer to game situations and speed.
- e) Developing an independent creative player to learn the skills of decision making. Too much direction creates players dependant on the coach for direction.
- f) Keep the practices flowing, with limited stops. This will be based on how well organized the coach is with the practice plans and drills. Practices **MUST** be planned out to a specific theme that is progressive and repetitive in order for players to establish a connection to the skill and technique.
- g) Positive reinforcement for good behaviour or skill execution will allow other players to strive for same reward. Be flexible, allow the players to deviate and be creative.
- h) Continuation of the tactics of the game i.e., the positioning and movement of the positions during aspects of the game.
- i) Monitor the competitiveness during practices to ensure that its in the spirit of the game and is not approaching the line where its negative and could impact player psychology.



10 Training to Train Coaching Measures

10.1 Before players move up to the next age group bracket, coaches should have exposed the players to and taught them the following measures which will aid in their development at the next level:

Table 6 – U13+ Coaching Measures

TECHNICAL		
Dribbling the Ball	Right Foot and Left Foot	Maintain close control at pace and in tight situations.
Shooting the Ball	Right Foot and Left Foot	Accurate more powerful shots from longer distances, bent, chips, and volleys. The agility and reaction movement to the ball should increase for quicker shooting opportunities.
Running with the Ball	Right Foot and Left Foot	Running at various speeds with the ball under control with head up/ eyes up. More use of dribbling skills and tricks are to be encouraged based on the personality and confidence of the players.
Ball Control	Ball Mastery	Continue improvement of ball mastery in reduced spaces, more teammates, and opponents.
Passing the Ball	Right and Left Foot	Players should be able to pass at various ranges with more accuracy and consistency.
Receiving the Ball	Right Foot and Left Foot, Chest and Thighs	Receiving the ball from ground and air whilst under some pressure. Is able to set-up the next touch of the ball quickly, i.e., thigh to foot to pass/ dribble.
Heading	Using Forehead and Eyes on Ball	Heading will be more properly introduced at this level. Proper watching of the ball, where to strike the ball with the part of the head, and how to direct the ball. More introduction to safe jumping approaches towards the ball.
Shielding the Ball	Using the Body to Protect the Ball	Increased strength to shielding the ball including understanding how to use the body to protect the ball with head up/ eyes up without causing a foul.
Crossing	Right Foot and Left Foot	Crossing the ball into the penalty area, using various types of crosses (low, near post, far post, etc.)
Finishing	Scoring from Close Range	First touch finishing, volleys, passes, shots from close distances. Picking a target and working on being able to place the ball.
1v1 Defending	Defending as an Individual	Pressing, preventing forward play, preventing crosses. Adding a cover player to the pressing defending player. Introduction to the pressure and cover positioning to defending.



TACTICAL		
Possession	Individual and Team's Ability to Retain Ball	Players learning about angles and distances of support and that player mobility will allow team possession to take place. This includes players movement to space in support of the player in possession of the ball.
Transition	Recognizing when the Ball is Lost or Retained	Changing from attacking to defending and visa-versa. Team shape to compress when defending and expand/ open when attacking.
Combination Play	Player Awareness of Combination Opportunities and Executing Plays	More execution of combination plays when in possession that will include wall passes, take over, over-lapping, under-lapping, set-up, etc. are available to play.
Switching Play	Taking up Correct Position to Allow Switch to Take Place	The ability to pass the ball from one side the other quickly. How players are to be positioned in relation to the player in possession of the ball for a quick switch of the play; especially with the defensive players.
Playing out from the Back	Confident and Comfortable Playing Close to Own Net	Continuation with the ability to be confident with the ball and to build the play from the defensive positions transitioning to the attack. This will also include the keeper's role in being able to play from the back.
Attacking Principles	Players Understanding and Executing Attacking Tactics	Including more attacking players and movement to get into a position to take shots. This will include understanding the best angles on goal for best possible chance to score. Including more set-plays on direct and indirect free kicks.
Pressing	Understanding and Demonstrating when to Press	Individual pressing, closing down the ball carrier and taking a posture and position to slow down the ball carrier and limit forward options. This will also include the position of the supporting players to the press.
Retreat	Understanding and Demonstrating when to Retreat and to where	Individually and as a group to get in-between the ball and the goal.
Recovery	Understanding and Demonstrating when and where to Recover	After getting beat, making correct recovery runs to get into a good defensive position. This also includes how the team will also recover as a unit to account for the opposing team's transition into attack.



PHYSICAL		
Agility	Moving in quick controlled movements	Developed in small-sided games. The use of FIFA 11+ is required for player injury prevention.
Balance	Right and Left Foot	Developed in small-sided games. The use of FIFA 11+ is required for player injury prevention.
Coordination	Using Small-Sided Games	Multiple movements are smoother and more controlled. Developed in small-sided games. The use of FIFA 11+ is required for player injury prevention.
Stamina	Using Small-Sided Games	Developed in small-sided games. The use of FIFA 11+ is required for player injury prevention.
Strength	No weights are to be used	Developed in small-sided games. The use of FIFA 11+ is required for player injury prevention.
Speed	Multi-Directional	Improvements in fast cadence of movements, developing further linear, lateral, and multi-directional speed using games and activities.
Suppleness/ Flexibility	Dynamic Stretching	Developed in small-sided games. The use of FIFA 11+ is required for player injury prevention.
Acceleration	Activities and Exercises	Developed in small-sided games.
Reaction	For a variety of starting positions	Continue to work on reaction speeds from laying down, sitting, crouching, standing, jogging positions. Can be developed during opening warm-up activities.
Basic Motor Skills	Moving in Quick, Controlled, Smooth Movements	Developed in small-sided games. The use of FIFA 11+ is required for player injury prevention.
Perception	Right Foot and Left Foot	Developed in small-sided games.
Awareness	Using Small-Sided Games	Developed in small-sided games.

SOCIAL/ EMOTIONAL		
Listening	Listen Quietly	Players will want information briefly provided so that they can work with the ball and execute the instructions. More task orientated and able to critique their application of the instruction more.
Cooperation	With Coach and Teammates	Players will understand more the importance of using the team to execute tactical movement in games. This also requires players to understand their relationship in their position to the other positions of their teammates in order to properly execute the game.
Communication	Verbal Communication	Communication with teammates is improving, giving helpful performance information and encouragement. Communication with coach is improving. This is especially the case with tactical awareness where players are communicating instructions.



SOCIAL/ EMOTIONAL		
Sharing	Sharing the Ball and Ideas	More advanced knowledge of understanding that passing can help them be successful as an individual and as a team. Players are encouraged to be expressive and work out ideas during the game based on what they are experiencing in the play.
Problem-Solving	Working out Mistakes	Players will display more consistent efforts of working through their mistakes to correct them. Players are more aware and understand that mistakes are part of the game and are helpful to their growth and development. Often players are more critical of their performance as they get older and more experienced.
Decision-Making	Activity/ Game Decisions	Players are now working out simple game-related decisions. Some players may still need assistance based on individual confidence levels. Leaders tend to emerge more out of the development group that players will listen to and take instruction from.
Empathy	Assisting Others in Game	The team becomes stronger in focus. Players will work out situations and come up with solutions to where there is a struggle in their game.
Patience	Patience with Themselves and Others	Patience is more tested during this stage because of the competitiveness levels increasing. Being able to recognize tension and work on communication strategies will be helpful.
Respect/ Discipline	Respecting Others and Displaying Good Behaviour	Players can respect other players' equipment and space. Behavior is more social. Players are finding their voices more at this level and may challenge coaches and Match Officials. Being able to challenge in a respectful manner rather than personal will help in this development period.
Fair Play/ Honesty	Playing within the Laws of the Game	Intermediate level of understanding the FIFA Laws of the Game.

PSYCHOLOGICAL/ MENTAL		
Motivation	Fun, rewarding activities	Player's success is now encouraging them to attempt more difficult tasks.
Self-Confidence	Safe and positive environment	Players are now willing to express themselves more. Not afraid to make mistakes. Creativity and expression are now starting to show itself more. Involve players in leading activities at practices. Continue to use positive reinforcement with players.
Competitiveness	Displaying Desire to be Successful	Players are displaying the desire to be successful in practice activities and small-sided games. As players get older and more experience, the coach may need to manage the competitiveness to ensure it is not harmful to any individual and/ or the team.



PSYCHOLOGICAL/ MENTAL		
Concentration	An Ability to Stay on Task	Improved attention span, improved ability to stay on task for slightly longer periods. Involve players in lading tasks and making decisions at practice.
Commitment	Apply Themselves at Practice Completing Activities	Players are happy attending majority of practices and games. Will complete activities and exercises during practices. Be patient but make basic standards that players are to meet. Players are likely to do soccer activities outside the team environment i.e., working on skills at home, watching a game on TV, etc.
Self-Control	In Control of Emotions	While in stressful situations, players are starting to show an improvement in controlling their emotions.
Determination	Displays a Determination to Complete Tasks	Starting to not give up easily, starting to display a determination to continue to work on the skill/ technique. Players are starting to want to be better at each activity/ game. Often players will have individual goals for themselves.

10.2 At this stage of development, the coach is required to have a practice plan established. Players will want to know how the practice will help them in their development and be successful in games. This is mainly due to their improved awareness of how the game is played as well as their ability to assess other teams and the things that make them successful.

Let the players play at this develop level to learn more to work out situations on the field. The coach should pick opportunities where there is a coaching moment. Examples of when the coach may have such a moment includes but may not be limited to:

- Repetitive error that needs to be corrected to avoid it becoming a habit in the way the players play the game or execute a task.
- Missed opportunity that would be an advantage for players to look out for to help in their play.
- Players selecting the same option during the play when there are other options available that should also be explored so opposing teams don't see the team as predictable in their play.

At the end of the practice, the coach should ideally reinforce points that players are to take away and remember for their next game. This will help players in their mental preparation to games by being connected to the important points that were covered to help in their play.