

KEY MILESTONES &  
SESSION ALLOCATIONS

# TECHNICAL & TACTICAL CURRICULUM

OVERVIEW SUMMARY  
& KEY MILESTONES IN  
AGE GROUP  
PROGRESSION

# PERIODISED INDOOR SEASON PLAN

# The Learning Continuum

Different skills & concepts are introduced at different ages based on their complexity and according to a sequential plan with milestones, which is also reflected in our assessment templates.

- **Skill INTRODUCTION**

- Players are exposed to situations which require a given skill and coaches ensure they correctly understand the fundamentals to execute the skill

- **Skill DEVELOPMENT**

- Once introduced players will develop through repeated practice so that the execution becomes reliable

- **Skill REFINEMENT**

- Following basic development of each skill, players refine their execution of the skill by combining it with other skills and tactics under conditions of game pressure and pace. Players will also adapt the skill to their own unique physiology.

| TEC                       | U6                              | U8 (# of sessions)   | U9 (# of sessions) | U11 (# of sessions)   | U13+ (# sessions) |  |    |        |    |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|--|--------------------|---|-------------------|--|----|--------|----|
| Passing                   | Introduce fun of passing        | Introduce short passing basics to feet and space or cross (side foot, laces, chip) | 7                  | Introduce Variety & Develop Short Passing eg penetrating passes | 10                | Develop Variety & Refine under pressure                    | 10 | Refine | 10 |
|                           |                                 |  |                    | Introduce Medium Range Passing (20m)                            |                   | Refine under pressure & Introduce Long Range Passing (35m) |    |        |    |
| Ball Mastery              |                                 | Introduce controlling the ball (inside/sole/outside)                               | 5                  | Introduce Variety & Develop Control                             | 7                 | Refine Control   | 7  | Refine | 8  |
| Progression with the Ball | Introduce running with the ball | Introduce Variety running with the ball (to space and change of pace) & Develop    | 15                 | Develop running with the ball                                   | 16                | Refine Running with the Ball                               | 14 | Refine | 11 |
|                           | Introduce dribbling             | Introduce variety of 1v1 dribbling (different moves)                               |                    | Develop dribbling   |                   | Refine dribbling under pressure                            |    |        |    |
|                           | Introduce Turning               | Introduce Variety (different moves/shielding)                                      |                    | Develop turning   |                   | Refine turning under pressure                              |    |        |    |
| Finishing                 | Introduce fun of shooting       | Introduce Close Range Finishing  | 5                  | Introduce Variety & Develop Close Range Finishing               | 7                 | Refine shooting under pressure                             | 7  | Refine | 7  |
|                           |                                 |  |                    | Introduce Long Range Finishing                                  |                   | Introduce Variety & Develop Long Range Finishing           |    |        |    |
| Defending (Individual)    |                                 | Introduce 1v1 defending  | 2                  | Develop 1v1 Defending   | 4                 | Introduce Variety & Develop 1v1 defending                  | 6  | Refine | 8  |

| Attacking                      |       | U8  | 27 | U9  | 33 | U11   | 31 | U13+  | 29 |
|--------------------------------|-------|---|----|---|----|---|----|---|----|
| Attacking On & Around the Ball | Pairs | Introduce Pairs to escape                             | 27 | Develop Pairs to release  | 8  | Develop Pairs to tease  | 5  | Refine pairs to game context area/positions   | 4  |
|                                | Group |   |    | Introduce Triangles to possess  | 8  | Develop Triangles to progress, Develop Combination Play   | 10 | Refine Triangles and Combination play to context of game, area of field, positional partnerships. Introduce and Develop Diamonds. | 10 |
|                                |       |   |    | Introduce Combination Play  |    |   |    |   |    |
| Attacking Away from the Ball   | Team  | Introduce Creating Space as a Team Spread out         |    | Develop Creating Space as a Team and Introduce Using space (switching play) | 17 | Develop Creating and using space  | 16 | Refine create and Use space to context of game, area of field, positional partnerships  | 15 |
| Defending                      |       | U8  | 7  | U9  | 11 | U11   | 13 | U13+  | 15 |
| Defending                      | Pairs | Introduce the first defender                          | 3  | Introduce defending in pairs  | 4  | Develop pairs defending   | 5  | Refine pairs defending  | 5  |
|                                | Group |   |    | Introduce Defensive Depth, Pressuring - Quick regains                       | 2  | Develop Defensive Depth, Pressuring - Quick regains Introduce Group Defending (Covering vs Marking) | 3  | Develop Unit defending, shape and Marking Position  | 5  |
|                                | Team  | Introduce & Develop Compactness<br>Introduce Recovery | 4  | Develop defending Simple Team Principles (Compactness , Delay/Recovery)     | 5  | Develop defending Team Principles (Delay & Recovery, Marking, Compactness front to                  | 5  | Refine Team Defending (Positional Roles and Responsibilities)   | 5  |

AGE SPECIFIC THEMES &  
COACHING POINTS

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# TECHNICAL CURRICULUM

## Key Techniques

Introduce Fundamentals then add Variety, Develop through repetition in game like situations, refine under pressure

- Passing (short, medium & long passing, control)
  - Ball Mastery (control on ground and in air)
  - Progression with the Ball (dribbling, turning, running with the ball)
  - Finishing (Shooting {distance, volley, half volley}, crossing, heading)
  - Defending (Individual)
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- See “Session Catalog” for age appropriate activities.

| TECHNIQUE                                  | U8  | U9   | U11   | U13   |
|--|---|--|---|---|
| <b>INDIVIDUAL DEFENDING</b><br>Pressing    | Hungry for the ball (actively seeking the ball) | Hungry for the ball – getting goal side before pressing) | Hungry for the ball – nearest player pressure         | Hungry - Refine angle of pressure, forcing play     |
| <b>INDIVIDUAL DEFENDING</b><br>Challenging | Stealing the Ball                               | Tackling – Block tackles shots and passes                | Patience – Timing of Tackle, jockeying, forcing       | Refine Tackling various game like situations        |
| <b>INDIVIDUAL DEFENDING</b><br>Battling    |   | Competing for the ball, zero tolerance. STOP TURNS       | Competing and fighting for the ball – use of the body | Competing for the ball various game like situations |



AGE SPECIFIC THEMES &  
COACHING POINTS

# TACTICAL CURRICULUM

| TACTIC  | U8  | U9   | U11  | U13  |
|---|---|--|--|--|
| <p><b>PAIRS ATTACKING</b><br/>ON &amp; AROUND THE BALL<br/>Possession</p> | <p>The ESCAPE– Whether to Pass - dribble vs pass (up against lots of defenders)</p> <p>Alongside Support – the helper</p> | <p>The RELEASE - 2v1 Whether to dribble or pass, recognition or situation and awareness of option alongside.</p> <p>2v1 pass to release player -<br/>When do you pass -<br/>Committing the defender, use of disguise</p> <p>Supporting behind the defenders back</p> | <p>The TEASE - Wall pass possession to progress.</p> <p>1st touch as control away from def towards next pass</p> <p>Keeping the ball moving, generally need 1 or 2 touch on the ball, but also recognize the situation where a def needs to keep the ball to draw a def before passing</p> | <p>Refinement techniques + qualities expected from passer + wall</p> <p>creating and recognising opportunities for a wall pass in game situations, eg wide to create crossing opportunity, in MF to free player to pass or run forward, in attack to create a shooting opportunity, mf combining with F to break offside trap.</p> |

| TACTIC  | U8 | U9   | U11  | U13  |
|---|----|--|--|--|
| <p><b>GROUPS ATTACKING ON &amp; AROUND THE BALL</b><br/>Combination play</p>    |    | <p>awareness of the situation - team mates, opposition</p> <p>Creating an angle, space for pass</p> <p>Quality of pass - accuracy, weight, timing</p> <p>Encourage players to keep ball moving</p> | <p>Combinations in 2s and 3s, Wall Pass - requirements of the two players for success / Where to Pass - to furthest foot /</p> <p>Distance and angle and timing of support.</p> <p>Awareness of options, pass + move, overlaps, 3rd Man runs</p> | <p>Recognizing the need to keep possession, evaluate risk v gain for common situations</p> <p>Ability to retain the ball with composed possession in games with direction</p> <p>Setting up play through the thirds</p> <p>Quick transfer of the ball, keeping it moving, 1 or 2 touch</p> <p>Combinations with forwards in/around the box</p> |
| <p><b>GROUPS ATTACKING ON &amp; AROUND THE BALL</b><br/>TRIANGLES / Support</p> |    | <p>Working in a 3v3 to create a triangle</p> <p>Support + movement - choose when to move to support or when to hold position</p>   | <p>Triangular play 3v3 - Support alongside the ball, angle and distance</p> <p>Support ahead of the ball, forward movement to offer a pass</p>   | <p>Movement of players without the ball, support alongside, behind + ahead of the ball</p> <p>Forwards keeping possession, shielding, to give a platform for support from MF</p> <p>diamond 4v4</p> <p>Patience required, passing back to eventually go forward</p>  |

| TACTIC   | U8  | U9  | U11  | U13   |
|--|---|---|--|---|
| <p><b>TEAM ATT WIDTH</b><br/>AWAY FROM THE BALL<br/>Creating Space - Width</p> | <p>Supporting alongside as a helper but not too close</p> <p>When ball carrier is wide, one support alongside, and other spread out like butter</p> | <p>spreading out as a team - side to side - create space + passing opportunities, including the need for width immediately when possession is regained.</p> | <p>Moving wide to receive a pass, stretching the play wide</p> <p>Moving wide to passes played down the line from full back position</p> <p>Understand the need for width once possession regained</p> | <p>Use of width to provide passing opportunity to wide player and to stretch a def to create gaps for penetration</p> <p>Width provided by different roles: winger, FB, Mf, F</p> <p>Overlapping, underlapping, movement of wide players in field to provide space for other players to exploit</p> |
| <p><b>TEAM ATT WIDTH</b><br/>AWAY FROM THE BALL<br/>Using space - Around</p>   | <p>Escape with a pass to a player alongside</p>   | <p>Passes to feet and passes to space</p> <p>Intro to Changing the direction of play, Make players aware of space and the movement of players</p>           | <p>Patterns of linking play across the pitch</p> <p>Individual technique, opening out, receiving on the front foot to turn and pass wide</p> <p>Turns out of congested areas</p>                       | <p>Recognising the need to switch play quickly away from a compact def, 'ferrying' the ball across the field, wide receiver prepared to maximise forward play</p> <p>Back players moving through into MF</p>  |

| TACTIC   | U8  | U9  | U11  | U13   |
|--|---|---|--|---|
| <p><b>TEAM ATT DEPTH</b><br/>AWAY FROM THE BALL<br/>Creating Space - Depth</p>   | <p>Spread out – one player go ahead of the ball carrier to receive a pass (if the ball carrier is going backwards then player can still drop back and technically be ahead of the player)</p> | <p>Intro to dropping deep to stretch the play and to receive a pass away from def</p>   | <p>Forward runs and dropping deep to stretch the play and to receive a pass away from def</p> <p>Understand the need for depth once possession is regained eg central def dropping off deep to offer for a pass from FB</p> <p>passing back to eventually go forward</p> | <p>Use of depth to draw out a compact def</p> <p>Patience required, passing back to eventually go forward</p> <p>Roles within the team, back players prepared to drop deep to provide link to then penetrate or switch</p>  |
| <p><b>TEAM ATT DEPTH</b><br/>AWAY FROM THE BALL<br/>Using space Through</p> <p>Using space Over / Through<br/><i>Breaking the last line of defence</i></p> | <p>Team – Spread Out Like Butter away from defenders Pair helping each other and another spreading opposite side and another spreading forwards (ahead of the player)</p>                     | <p>Encourage to pass forward when possible, patience in build up</p> <p>Forward runs to receive a through pass</p> <p>Receive and turn (in front of defensive line) 3rd man run</p> | <p>Can the player pass forward, or combine to pass to a player who can pass forward &amp; SUPPORT THE FORWARD PASS</p> <p>MF players making runs past F</p> <p>F dropping deep into MF or going wide</p>   | <p>Set + play, 3<sup>rd</sup> man running, other forward options using gaps between def</p> <p>Playing in the stretch (in between space)</p> <p>Movement ahead of the ball, forward runs, flat + timing to stay onside</p> <p>Runs to create space for others, moving def out of good marking positions</p> |

| TACTIC   | U8  | U9   | U11  | U13   |
|--|---|--|--|---|
| <p><b>PAIRS DEFENDING</b><br/>1st Defender Clearances</p>                              |   | <p>Work on playing your way out of def situations, with allowance for a safer clearance if risk dictates.</p>  | <p>Develop technique of long kicking. Encourage players to seek solutions where possession is preserved before opting for clearance</p> <p>Challenging in the air, 1v1, accepting physical contact</p> <p>Aim to clear high wide and long, contact on the lower half of the ball for height</p>          | <p>Volleyed clearances, movement of body in preparation, Variety of feeds</p> <p>Decision to clear, risk v gain</p> <p>Defensive heading from goal kicks, free kicks, crosses</p>   |
| <p><b>PAIRS DEFENDING</b><br/>1st Defender Closing Down</p>                            | <p>Hungry for the Ball<br/>'Stealing' the ball, no contact, taking the ball off the attacker</p> <p>Always one player pressuring the player with the ball</p> | <p>Getting goal side in line between ball and goal</p> <p>Can you intercept</p> <p>Making up ground, closing down to attack the ball and stop it being played forward</p> <p>Slowing down near to the attacker, not selling</p> <p>Showing the attacker towards the least dangerous area</p> | <p>1v1, getting in line, closing down, make up ground quickly, slow down near to the ball</p> <p>Jockeying, not 'selling', getting in a balanced position</p> <p>Limiting forward passes, making play predictable</p>  | <p>Make up the ground while the ball is travelling, can you intercept?</p> <p>Is there a need for delay?</p> <p>Slow down in the last few yards, don't sell</p> <p>Get in balanced jockeying position, threaten to tackle</p> <p>Be patient, time challenge, tackle</p> |
| <p><b>PAIRS DEFENDING</b><br/>2nd Defender vs dribbler (1v2) &amp; vs passer (2v2)</p> | <p>Doubling Up - two players can work together to steal the ball</p>  | <p>1st Def – nearest pressures</p> <p>2nd def Be ready to support team mate</p> <p>Be ready to collect second ball, after 1<sup>st</sup> defs challenge</p> <p>Communication</p>   | <p>Nearest def closes down as the 1<sup>st</sup> def</p> <p>Dual role of 2<sup>nd</sup> def to give cover and have responsibility for a player. 2<sup>nd</sup> def gives good communication and cover- angle + distance</p> <p>Care not to fall for a ½, danger of 1<sup>st</sup> def following ball</p> | <p>Revision of earlier 1v2 and 2v2 work</p> <p>Communication and decision making as a pair</p> <p>Importance of distance of cover as play gets near to goal</p>   |

| TACTIC  | U8 | U9  | U11  | U13  |
|---|----|---|--|--|
| <p><b>GROUP DEFENDING</b><br/>Depth / Shape</p>                     |    | <p>Creation of triangle in 3v3 games. One pressuring 1<sup>st</sup> defender with two second defenders either side creates a defensive triangle</p> | <p>Angle/Distance of def support in 3v3 game and other SSG - 3 or more working together</p> <p>Pressuring, Covering, and Marking</p> <p>Thinking defensively, asking 'What if...?' STOP THE TURN, STOP THE SPLIT</p> | <p>Unit Defending and defensive shape</p> <p>Marking position and tracking runs</p> <p>Nearest def closing down, 2<sup>nd</sup> def giving cover (angle + dist) others giving balance (depth + shape) - ball, man, goal</p>  |
| <p><b>GROUP DEFENDING</b><br/>Pressuring / Regaining Possession</p> |    | <p>Simple ideas like 'how quickly can the team win it back'</p> <p>Can we read the likely pass and intercept</p>                                    | <p>Pressurizing as a group, forcing play, prepare to intercept FRONT FOOT DEFENDING</p> <p>Identifying opponents best option, working together to stop it</p>  | <p>Aim to stop shots + forward play, nearest player to pressure the ball (don't sell)</p> <p>Stop attackers best option</p> <p>Work together as a group to keep the play in front, support from others</p> <p>Force attackers toward poor options, sideways/backwards passes</p> |

| TACTIC  | U8   | U9  | U11  | U13   |
|---|--|---|--|---|
| <p><b>TEAM DEFENDING</b><br/>Marking</p>              |  | <p>Getting goal side when defending</p> <p>Keeping parity of numbers, man for man</p> <p>Simple rules like not all attacking at the same time</p> | <p>Marking goal side, body shape, positioning, keeping a check on player and ball</p> <p>Identifying dangerous spaces, be ready to be 1<sup>st</sup> to the ball</p> <p>Marking to allow an interception</p> <p>Tracking players, keeping goal side</p>  | <p>TEAM – THE WORKER BEES</p> <p>Understanding positions roles and responsibilities</p> <p>Develop marking concept within POP, att v def or SSG</p> <p>Communication between def for tracking or passing players on</p> <p>When not to track runners</p> <p>Not ball watching</p>   |
| <p><b>TEAM DEFENDING</b><br/>Compactness</p>          | <p>Squeeze like cheese when we don't have the ball</p> | <p>The SWARM - Getting goal side</p> <p>Getting together not leaving big gaps between our players</p> <p>Team shape up to 6 a side</p>            | <p>The Honey Comb -</p> <p>The structure of a team, logical spacing on the field (front to back and side to side) Recovering to a basic team shape</p> <p>Team shape up to 8 a side</p> <p>Pressurizing as a team, forcing play</p> <p>Back up from MF and back players to pressure as a team and prepare to intercept</p> | <p>Develop defensive ideas on compactness in POP</p> <p>Reducing the space between front, middle, back achieved by front players dropping back and/or back players pushing up</p> <p>Squeezing in to reduce space between adjacent players.</p> <p>Full backs tucking in, leaving space wide to be covered by WMF players</p> |
| <p><b>TEAM DEFENDING</b><br/>Delay &amp; Recovery</p> | <p>Getting back to get in the way of the attack</p>    | <p>Getting in the way, in the line of attack to stop fast counter attack</p> <p>Recovering to a better position</p>                               | <p>Jockeying to time tackle and jockeying to delay to allow recovery runs</p>  | <p>Recognizing the need for delay</p> <p>Confronting the direct line of attack, encouraging sideways running and passing</p> <p>Recovering down the line towards goal</p>   |