

U6 Coaching Curriculum

This curriculum is designed, primarily, with a game-based methodology. This gives the kids a lot of chance to play lots of soccer and not just do drills. We will also use game constraints to try and evoke the actions we want to see. **We do not want players to kick the ball away!** Please do not celebrate these actions and, if you can, please get parents onto the same wavelength. Kicking the ball hard and far does not achieve anything in the game of soccer and will limit each child's learning opportunities. These habits can be hard to break as they get older, so the more we can drive it home now, the better.

In our Saturday games, we will be playing 3v3 with no goalkeepers, subs or referees. For example, if you have a team of 6, you will split in half and play two games of 3v3 (3v2, 4v3, 2v2, 2v1 if odd numbers or players missing) instead of both teams having half their players on the sidelines. This gives the kids twice as much time on the field over the course of the season. If both teams have 4 players, play two games of 2v2 rather than one game of 4v4. Depending on the kids and their needs (if they are especially weak or strong) you might play 3v3 and 1v1 to give an appropriate level of challenge for all.

As coaches, you will be 'referees' for these games. This gives you the chance to teach more easily during the game (helping both teams) and help them to understand the rules.

We will start each practice with a physical literacy warm up based on the fundamental movement skills. These are fun ways to get started and get active straight away.

Here are some guidelines that our curriculum is based on:

- The players have to play lots of small number games (1v1, 2v2 and 3v3 is great plus any variation of this to meet individual differences within the group).
- The players must have lots of individual ball contacts.
- The players must be encouraged to travel, turn and dribble with the ball as a priority.
- Avoid making every decision for the players. Allow time for exploration and experimentation. This includes during games - give some guidance but mainly, allow them to play!
- Accept that there will be many mistakes. Develop a kind, caring, calm and patient approach. Provide an environment where kids feel safe to make mistakes.
- Accept that practices and games will look messy, this is part of the kids learning.
- Avoid prioritising passing at this stage. Passing will happen naturally but maximise the gains from the items listed above.
- Include some decisions and opposition as soon as the players can cope with this (even if it is difficult at first).
- The players' physical literacy must be developed. We want children with great movement capacity, and this will help whatever the sport or activity.

If you coach with these things in mind, and use the guidance in this resource, then you will be giving your players a great start. If you are inexperienced, there are practices to help guide you and to give you ideas, but you must also engage with each child so that you develop a deeper understanding and greater knowledge of the young children who keep coming back each week for you to coach them.

Please stick to the curriculum. Try not to react to something that happened in the previous game and stick to the program! This curriculum is designed with the player's long-term development in mind and we may not see immediate results. Consistently provide the same message and players will start to learn exactly what is needed. We must accept that during games, players might forget everything we've told them, but they will never remember something they haven't heard before. Keep the message simple, consistent, and related to what we have been learning in practice. Try to avoid giving too much direction. Coaching points are included with each practice, you should carry these into each game to maintain the consistent message throughout the season.

Above all, have fun and be the best coach you can be! Thank you for volunteering your time to help develop our soccer players!

Animals Warm Up

The idea behind this warm-up is to start off with fun, high energy and engaging the kids but also to get some of our key movement skills in. Coaches should get involved and be part of the fun with the kids as well as providing the example on how to do the movement if the kids don't know.

Important animals:

- Bunny – two footed hopping with bent knees standing up (hands like a bunny)
- Frog – on all fours, leaping and landing with bent knees
- Crab – moving sideways and with chest up on all fours
- Bear – moving controlled on all fours
- Giraffe – walking on tiptoes with arms stretched up high
- Horse – galloping
- Cheetah/Lion – go as fast as you can, don't bump into anyone!
- Flamingo – Finish the warm up with the flamingo by balancing on one leg, wings outstretched and then switch legs. This gets the kids slowed down and listening before you move into the next activity.

Fun animals – Give the kids some allowance to choose an animal (try to avoid doing the same movements over and over):

- Elephant – using an arm like a trunk
- Snake/worm/fish – wriggling along the ground (if it's dry)
- Whatever other animals they come up with!

Do each movement for approximately 30 seconds and have them pause in between movements by shouting 'STOP'. This way you have everyone's attention before starting the next movement.

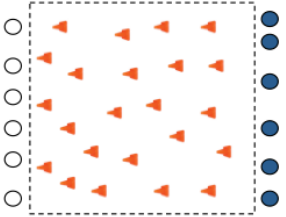
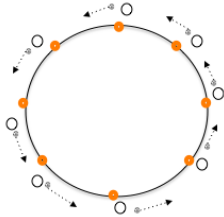
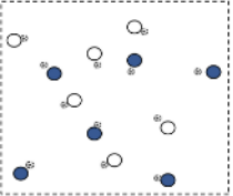
Transitional Activities

In between each station, players will take a water break. To keep them engaged when going for a break, instead of shouting 'STOP, go get some water', we can introduce a mini-game/activity. For this age group, we will use the same mini game every week so that the players understand the meaning and don't get too confused..

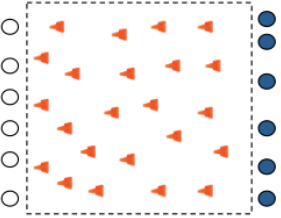

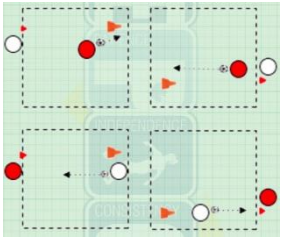
Go Score

- When the time at the station is up (all stations will finish at the same time), shout GO SCORE!
- Players will dribble their ball as fast as they can to a goal close to their station and shoot into the net
- They must put the ball in the net before getting water and moving to the next station
- Players should retrieve a ball and take it with them to the next station.

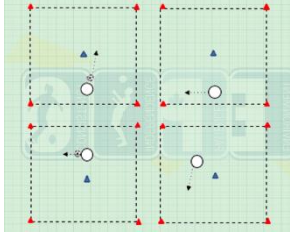
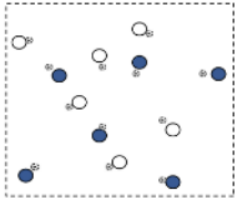
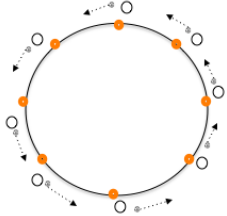
Week 1 – Socially Distanced (U6)

Warm Up – 8 mins	Station 1 – 13 mins	Station 2 – 13 mins	Station 3 – 13 mins
			
<p>Animals Warm Up</p> <p>See attached sheet</p>	<p>Construction Workers and Destroyers</p> <p>Purpose: Soccer-specific ball and body awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Scatter 15-20 pylons or markers on the field throughout a 20 x 20 y area. These pylons should be standing up straight. – Divide the group into two equal teams. One group is designated the Destroyers and the other group the Construction Workers. – On the coach’s “GO”, the Destroyers attempt to tip over the pylons with their hands, while the Construction Workers attempt repair the pylons by standing them back up. – Set a time for this activity and at the end count the number of pylons that the destroyers have knocked down, then allow the teams to switch roles. – After each group has had an opportunity being both a Construction Worker and a Destroyer, reverse their roles again. – The second time that the players must dribble a soccer ball and must have their foot on top of the ball when they tip over a pylon either as a Construction Worker or a Destroyer. 	<p>SPEED RACER-Dribbling for younger players</p> <p>Purpose: To provide a fun game where players can practice dribbling at speed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Create a large circle with cones. – Players find and stand next to a cone. – On coach’s whistle, the player race around the track and try to be the first one back to their cone. <p>Progression</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Tell players they can go in any direction. This will force them to keep their heads up and avoid collisions (Physical Literacy). 	<p>Learning To Dribble Game</p> <p>Purpose: To get players smiling, sweating and to introduce dribbling with different parts of the foot.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Everyone is inside half of the field with a ball in a small area. – Each player should have the ball at their feet. – Have the player tap the ball ahead out of feet and then run to the spot where the ball stops; repeat this process a few times. – Now ask players to try to get to the ball and tap it again before it stops rolling. – Ask them if it is easier to keep the ball rolling with larger taps or small taps (which is less work?). – Using little taps (dribbling), have players dribble their ball around the area using right foot only, left foot only, both feet, inside of feet only, outside of feet only, bottom/sole of feet, heels, etc. – Finally, have players focus on using all the available space to dribble their ball so that collisions are avoided.??? Ask the players to tell you the parts of the foot that can be used to dribble the ball.

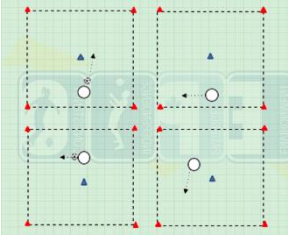

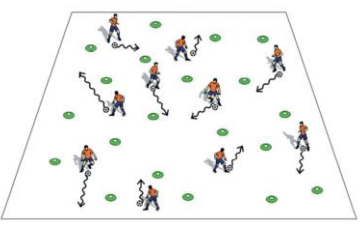
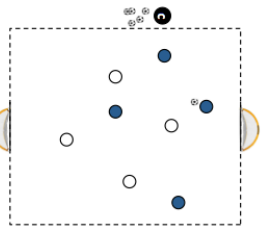
Week 2 – Socially Distanced (U6)

Warm Up – 8 mins	Station 1 – 13 mins	Station 2 – 13 mins	Station 3 – 13 mins
			
<p>Animals Warm Up</p> <p>See attached sheet</p>	<p>Construction Workers and Destroyers</p> <p>Purpose: Soccer-specific ball and body awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Scatter 15-20 pylons or markers on the field throughout a 20 x 20 y area. These pylons should be standing up straight. – Divide the group into two equal teams. One group is designated the Destroyers and the other group the Construction Workers. – On the coach’s “GO”, the Destroyers attempt to tip over the pylons with their hands, while the Construction Workers attempt repair the pylons by standing them back up. – Set a time for this activity and at the end count the number of pylons that the destroyers have knocked down, then allow the teams to switch roles. – After each group has had an opportunity being both a Construction Worker and a Destroyer, reverse their roles again. – The second time that the players must dribble a soccer ball and must have their foot on top of the ball when they tip over a pylon either as a Construction Worker or a Destroyer. 	<p>Squirrels and Nuts Game</p> <p>Purpose: Soccer-specific body/ball management including dribbling.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Divide players (the squirrels) into four equal groups (using coloured vests or by the colours of their shorts or socks or hats, no hats). – Each group is to stand in one corner of half a soccer field (the nest) Soccer balls (the nuts) are placed in the middle of the area. – On the coach’s command squirrels scamper around the area. – When coach calls, “Feeding time!” squirrels try to collect all nuts and bring them back to their nest (by dribbling one ball at a time). – Squirrels can also steal nuts from other nests but are not allowed to stop other squirrels from taking the nuts. 	<p>Relay Races</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Set up like similar partner-relay activities. A cone is set at two ends (be aware of physical distancing so little interference from each group). – The partners set up at one end. They go to the other end one at a time then come back, so their partner has the opportunity to complete the relay exercise. <p>Relay Race Possibilities</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Run the ball around the cone and back then give the ball to partner. 2. Hop/Jump/Skip/Gallop the ball around the cone and back then give the ball to partner. 3. Dribble the ball around the cone and back then put the foot on top of the ball in order to give the ball to partner. 4. Dribble the ball to the far cone then pass it back to the partner. After the pass return to the starting cone.

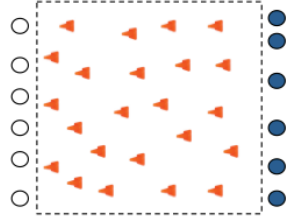
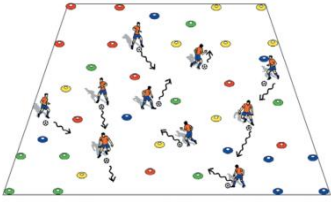
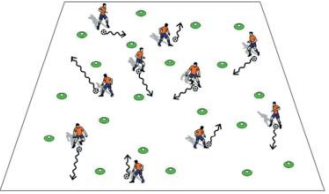
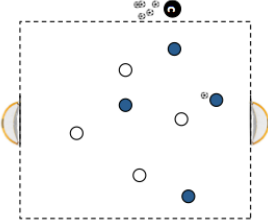
Week 3 – Socially Distanced (U6)

Warm Up – 8 mins	Station 1 – 13 mins	Station 2 – 13 mins	Station 3 – 13 mins
			
<p>Animals Warm Up</p> <p>See attached sheet</p>	<p>Capture the Gold</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Player begins at their home base (blue cone). – On ‘GO’ the player collects one of their corner cones and brings it back to the middle then repeats this until all of the cones (Gold) have been returned to the middle. – Once all four cones are in the middle the coach can acknowledge their efforts and the player return the cones to the corners. – Repeat however the players now play with a ball at their feet. 	<p>Learning To Dribble Game</p> <p>Purpose: To get players smiling, sweating and to introduce dribbling with different parts of the foot.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Everyone is inside half of the field with a ball in a small area. – Each player should have the ball at their feet. – Have the player tap the ball ahead out of feet and then run to the spot where the ball stops; repeat this process a few times. – Now ask players to try to get to the ball and tap it again before it stops rolling. – Ask them if it is easier to keep the ball rolling with larger taps or small taps (which is less work?). – Using little taps (dribbling), have players dribble their ball around the area using right foot only, left foot only, both feet, inside of feet only, outside of feet only, bottom/sole of feet, heels, etc. – Finally, have players focus on using all the available space to dribble their ball so that collisions are avoided.??? Ask the players to tell you the parts of the foot that can be used to dribble the ball. 	<p>SPEED RACER-Dribbling for younger players</p> <p>Purpose: To provide a fun game where players can practice dribbling at speed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Create a large circle with cones. – Players find and stand next to a cone. – On coach’s whistle, the player race around the track and try to be the first one back to their cone. <p>Progression</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Tell players they can go in any direction. This will force them to keep their heads up and avoid collisions (Physical Literacy).

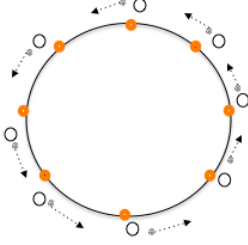
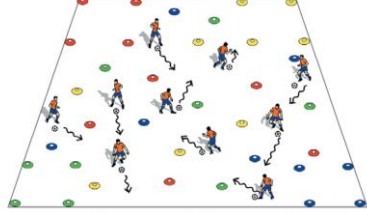

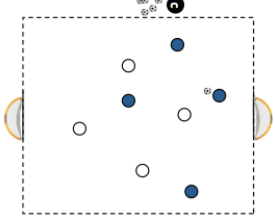
Week 4 U6)

Warm Up – 5 mins	Station 1 – 10 mins	Station 2 – 10 mins	Station 3 – 10 mins	Station 4 – 20 mins
				
<p>Animals Warm Up</p> <p>See attached sheet</p>	<p>Capture the Gold</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Player begins at their home base (blue cone). – On ‘GO’ the player collects one of their corner cones and brings it back to the middle then repeats this until all of the cones (Gold) have been returned to the middle. – Once all four cones are in the middle the coach can acknowledge their efforts and the player return the cones to the corners. – Repeat however the players now play with a ball at their feet. 	<p>Squirrels and Nuts Game</p> <p>Purpose: Soccer-specific body/ball management including dribbling.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Divide players (the squirrels) into four equal groups (using coloured vests or by the colours of their shorts or socks or hats, no hats). – Each group is to stand in one corner of half a soccer field (the nest) Soccer balls (the nuts) are placed in the middle of the area. – On the coach’s command squirrels scamper around the area. – When coach calls, “Feeding time!” squirrels try to collect all nuts and bring them back to their nest (by dribbling one ball at a time). – Squirrels can also steal nuts from other nests but are not allowed to stop other squirrels from taking the nuts. 	<p>Under the Sea</p> <p>The coach places sea rocks (cones) around the Seabed (playing area).</p> <p>Each player has a ball and dribbles around avoiding sea rocks.</p> <p>If the players hit a sea rock, they must shake it off – shake the ball side to side in between their feet.</p> <p>Encourage players to: listen & follow direction, use both feet and keep their head up and look around.</p> <p>Progression: Coach is a shark and tries to catch fish by touching the top of a player’s ball with the sole of their foot. Player freezes for 5 seconds before moving again.</p>	<p>Scrimmage – 1v1 and 2v2</p> <p>Use the same space so there are additional obstructions. Each game doesn’t need its own field.</p>

Week 5 (U6)

Warm Up – 5 mins	Station 1 – 10 mins	Station 2 – 10 mins	Station 3 – 10 mins	Station 4 – 20 mins
				
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Week 6 (U6)

Warm Up – 5 mins	Station 1 – 10 mins	Station 2 – 10 mins	Station 3 – 10 mins	Station 4 – 20 mins
				
<p>Animals Warm Up</p> <p>See attached sheet</p>	<p>SPEED RACER-Dribbling for younger players</p> <p>Purpose: To provide a fun game where players can practice dribbling at speed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Create a large circle with cones. – Players find and stand next to a cone. – On coach’s whistle, the player race around the track and try to be the first one back to their cone. <p>Progression</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Tell players they can go in any direction. This will force them to keep their heads up and avoid collisions (Physical Literacy). 	<p>Planets and Aliens</p> <p>The coach makes 4 planets – 1 in each corner (different colours if possible), e.g. Mars = red, Earth is green etc. Use sun and moon as well as easy ‘planets’.</p> <p>The players are spaceships and fly around outer space avoiding other spaceships and stars (cones on the ground).</p> <p>When the coach shouts out a planet, all the spaceships must fly there and land on the planet.</p> <p>Once the players know the planets, give them a countdown to put a little bit of pressure on.</p> <p>Players should keep the ball close, use both feet and keep their head up and listen for instructions.</p>	<p>Squirrels and Nuts Game</p> <p>Purpose: Soccer-specific body/ball management including dribbling.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Divide players (the squirrels) into four equal groups (using coloured vests or by the colours of their shorts or socks or hats, no hats). – Each group is to stand in one corner of half a soccer field (the nest) Soccer balls (the nuts) are placed in the middle of the area. – On the coach’s command squirrels scamper around the area. – When coach calls, “Feeding time!” squirrels try to collect all nuts and bring them back to their nest (by dribbling one ball at a time). – Squirrels can also steal nuts from other nests but are not allowed to stop other squirrels from taking the nuts. 	<p>Scrimmage – 1v1 and 2v2</p> <p>Use the same space so there are additional obstructions. Each game doesn’t need its own field.</p>