

U7 and U8 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 with goalkeepers. Players should rotate the position each game - even half. Allow players some freedom to play as a goalkeeper in practice too.

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:

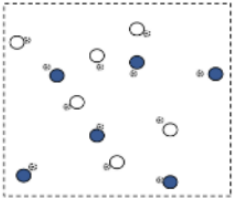
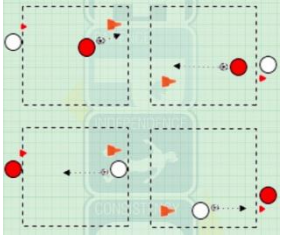
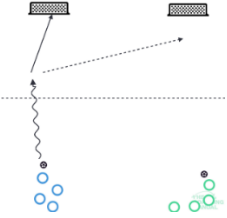
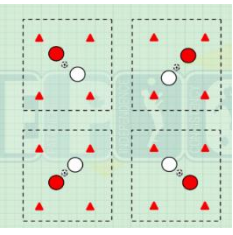
- The players have to play lots of small number games (1v1, 2v2 and 3v3 is great plus any variation of this to meet individual differences within the group).
- The players must have lots of individual ball contacts.
- The players must be encouraged to travel, turn and dribble with the ball as a priority.
- 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're 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.

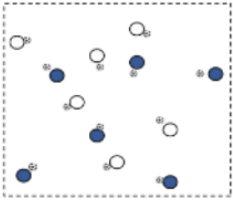
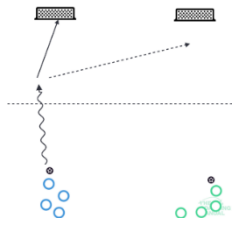
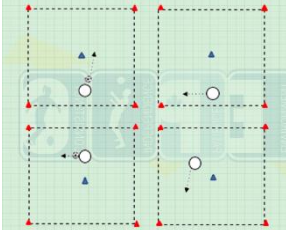
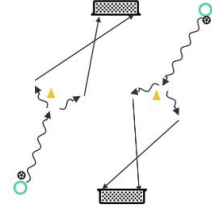
Please stick to the curriculum. Try not to react to something that happened in the previous game and stick to the program! This curriculum is designed with the player's long-term development in mind and we may not see immediate results. Consistently provide the same message and players will start to 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!

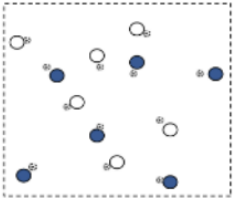
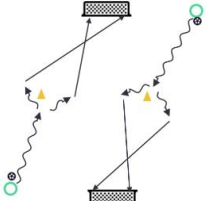

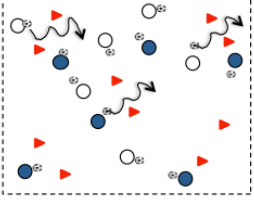
Week 1 – Socially Distanced (U8)

Warm Up – 8 mins	Station 1 – 13 mins	Station 2 – 13 mins	Station 3 – 13 mins
			
<p>Learning To Dribble Game 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>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. 	<p>Blocking</p> <p>Teams take it in turns to attack the goal in front of them.</p> <p>As soon as the other team crosses the line, the next player can go.</p> <p>After shooting, the player must rush across to try and block the other team's shot on goal (no hands).</p> <p>Progression:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Keep score (scoring system of your choice/ask kids for their input too) <p>Allow hands to be used to save shots</p>	<p>In pairs, with a ball each, take it in turns to be the attacker and the defender.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The attacker will dribble around the square and seek to knock down all four cones. The defender will place them back upright if they have been knocked over. - Time limit of one minute, then switch roles. - One point is scored per cone knocked over at the end of the minute. - You can switch partners after every bout or keep with the same partners the whole time. <p>Progressions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - if a defender is standing in front of a cone, the attacker cannot go for that cone and must find a new one until the defender moves. - Attacker gets a head start of 3 seconds.

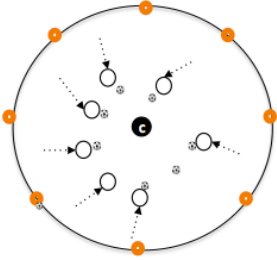
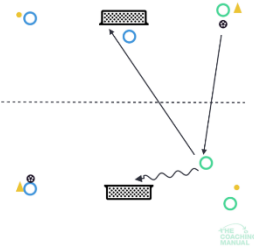
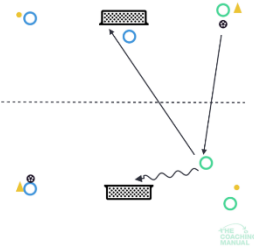
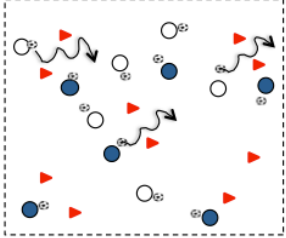
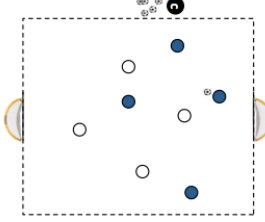
Week 2 – Socially Distanced (U8)

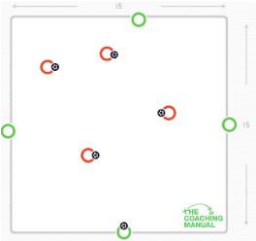
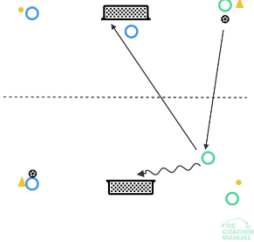
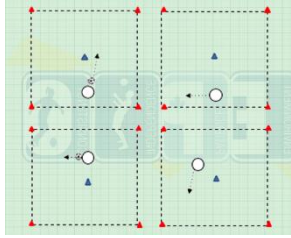
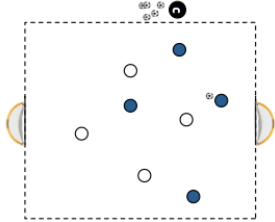
Warm Up – 8 mins	Station 1 – 13 mins	Station 2 – 13 mins	Station 3 – 13 mins
			
<p>Learning To Dribble Game Purpose: To get players smiling, sweating and to introduce dribbling with different parts of the foot.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Everyone is inside half of the field with a ball 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>Blocking</p> <p>Teams take it in turns to attack the goal in front of them.</p> <p>As soon as the other team crosses the line, the next player can go.</p> <p>After shooting, the player must rush across to try and block the other team's shot on goal (no hands).</p> <p>Progression:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Keep score (scoring system of your choice/ask kids for their input too) <p>Allow hands to be used to save shots</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>Add different rules each round to keep it fresh, e.g., right foot only, left foot only. If you see someone break the rules, give them a task to complete before continuing, e.g., 10 toe taps</p>	<p>Dribbling and Shooting</p> <p>Two teams, both go at the same time. Dribble at the defender (cone) and perform a turn/skill to get away from the defender.</p> <p>After getting past the defender, you have one touch to shoot.</p> <p>After shooting, sprint to your goal to become the goalkeeper.</p> <p>Switch corner you start from (from left of goal, to right of goal)</p> <p>Progression:</p> <p>Competition: both teams count their goals. Time limit of 2 minutes. 1 point for normal goal, 2 points for weak foot, 3 points for volley (scoop it up). No goal if too many touches. -1 point if wrong goalkeeper saves it.</p>

Week 3 – Socially Distanced (U8)

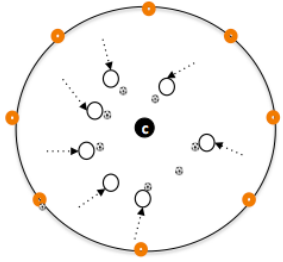
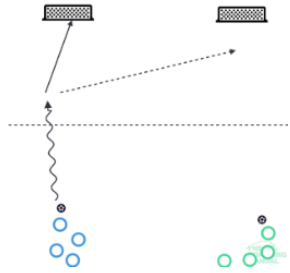
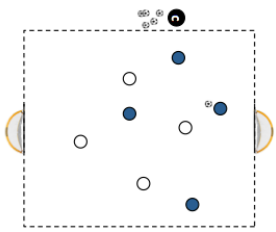
Warm Up – 8 mins	Station 1 – 13 mins	Station 2 – 13 mins	Station 3 – 13 mins
			
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Week 4 (U8)

Warm Up – 5 mins	Station 1 – 10 mins	Station 2 – 10 mins	Station 3 – 10 mins	Station 4 – 20 mins
				
<p>Juggling with the ball See if you can set a new record</p>	<p>Explode</p> <p>Purpose : To practice listening, dribbling and working together with other players</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Every player begins with a ball and they dribble as close as possible around the coach(es) ✓ They should attempt to be 'skipping' with the ball (touching every step) ✓ When the coach yells "BOOM" then all of the players turn and run away as fast as possible dribbling their soccer balls until they get to the boundary of the area <p>✓ VARIATION: You may want to try this with them jogging around you to start before introducing the ball</p>	<p>Shooting/Goalkeeping</p> <p>Green passes to green to shoot – ball must make it past the half way markers. Players must take no more than 3 touches before they shoot.</p> <p>After shooting, they become goalkeeper in their own net and the other team takes their shot following the same pattern.</p> <p>After being GK, the player should become the passer for the next shot. Passer moves to shooter.</p> <p>Players should stay within their teams and count the number of goals. Let them play a couple of times through before keeping score. Set a time limit based on how long it takes for each player to shoot at least once. Encourage speed of play!</p> <p>Switch sides you pass from to give a variety of positions</p> <p>Progression:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Left foot goals worth 3 points 2. First time goal worth 5 points 	<p>Break The Line Dribblers</p> <p>Purpose: To introduce the phrase 'break the line'.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Coach has the players dribbling within an area. – When the coach says 'Break the Line Dribblers' the players attempt to dribble through as many gates as possible breaking the imaginary line between the two cones. At the end of 30 seconds the coach says 'Slow Down' and the players as they dribble shout out how imaginary lines they were able to break. <p>Progression:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use one foot only (x2) - Using different coloured gates, players have to alternate the colour they dribble through. - Must do a skill to go through a gate 	<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 (U8)				
Warm Up – 5 mins	Station 1 – 10 mins	Station 2 – 10 mins	Station 3 – 10 mins	Station 4 – 20 mins
				
Juggling with the ball See if you can set a new record	<p>One team has a ball each and are dribbling around the area. The other has one ball as a team and must pass the ball around the area.</p> <p>The dribblers cause interference by blocking passing lines and angles to pass. Passers have to be aware, adapt and change angles to pass and receive.</p> <p>Players need to recognise and be aware of the space available and either move to receive or unbalance the opposition.</p> <p>In order to be aware of what is around them players need to scan the area and look around the pitch constantly.</p> <p>Players should look to perform intelligent movements to create passing lines to receive the ball and recognise triggers to move. As opposition check and look away, players move positions and create a new angle to receive. Switch player's roles every few minutes.</p>	<p>Shooting/Goalkeeping</p> <p>Green passes to green to shoot – ball must make it past the half way markers. Players must take no more than 3 touches before they shoot.</p> <p>After shooting, they become goalkeeper in their own net and the other team takes their shot following the same pattern.</p> <p>After being GK, the player should become the passer for the next shot. Passer moves to shooter.</p> <p>Players should stay within their teams and count the number of goals. Let them play a couple of times through before keeping score. Set a time limit based on how long it takes for each player to shoot at least once. Encourage speed of play!</p> <p>Switch sides you pass from to give a variety of positions</p> <p>Progression:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Left foot goals worth 3 points 2. First time goal worth 5 points 	<p>Capture the Gold</p> <p>– Player begins at their home base (blue cone).</p> <p>– 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.</p> <p>– Once all four cones are in the middle the coach can acknowledge their efforts and the player return the cones to the corners.</p> <p>– Repeat however the players now play with a ball at their feet.</p> <p>Add different rules each round to keep it fresh, e.g., right foot only, left foot only. If you see someone break the rules, give them a task to complete before continuing, e.g., 10 toe taps</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 6 (U8)

Warm Up – 5 mins	Station 1 – 10 mins	Station 2 – 10 mins	Station 3 – 10 mins	Station 4 – 20 mins
		<p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yEvATi1uVtI</p>		
<p>Juggling with the ball See if you can set a new record</p>	<p>Explode</p> <p>Purpose : To practice listening, dribbling and working together with other players</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Every player begins with a ball and they dribble as close as possible around the coach(es) ✓ They should attempt to be 'skipping' with the ball (touching every step) ✓ When the coach yells "BOOM" then all of the players turn and run away as fast as possible dribbling their soccer balls until they get to the boundary of the area <p>✓ VARIATION: You may want to try this with them jogging around you to start before introducing the ball</p>	<p>Passing & Balance</p> <p>In groups of three or 4 – one/two players in a press-up position. The other two players must pass the ball underneath the plank. Race to 10 passes!</p> <p>Switch roles and repeat as many times as necessary.</p> <p>Round 2 – player 1 passes under the planks, player 2 dribbles to the other side and passes under the planks to player 1 etc. Race to 5 passes.</p> <p>Round 3 – player 1 passes under the planks, player 2 flicks the ball over the top of the planks. Race to 10 passes. Switch roles next time (allow players to be both player 1 and player 2)</p> <p>Any other creative progressions!</p>	<p>Blocking</p> <p>Teams take it in turns to attack the goal in front of them.</p> <p>As soon as the other team crosses the line, the next player can go.</p> <p>After shooting, the player must rush across to try and block the other team's shot on goal (no hands).</p> <p>Progression:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Keep score (scoring system of your choice/ask kids for their input too) <p>Allow hands to be used to save shots</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>