



ELITE SOCCER YOUTH DEVELOPMENT ACADEMY

10169 New Hampshire Avenue • Silver Spring, MD 20903

Elite Soccer youth development Academy Curriculum...

AGES U-8 TO U-19

The success of the Elite Soccer Academy Program is largely dependent on the quality programs that “feed” into it. Significant player development occurs when each player’s coaching, daily training and playing environment is age appropriate and of the highest quality. If this environment is consistent , with a clear vision of what lies ahead for each player, development will be maximized.

It is important to note that each player and each team is different. An accurate assessment of each player’s and team’s abilities are essential so development can be planed. Assessment of each player ability leads to the placement into appropriate competition level, division or league:Division 1, Division 2, Local Leagues, State, Regional, National and International Level). The following curriculum serves as a “guideline” by which each player with different abilities can be DEVELOP.

Individual and team needs can therefore be identified and addressed. Individual strengths can be stabilized while deficiencies or weaknesses can be improved. In this way, assessment of player expectations is more accurate and objective.

The ultimate goal of each coach should be to prepare the players to train and compete at the next level.

What to Teach U-6 Players

The fascination for the ball, desire to play with it and thrill of scoring goals are mayor characteristic of U-6 age group. The joy and pleasure of the game are best nurtured by encouraging freedom of expression and organizing play in small groups.

A. COACH:

The environment and activities are more important than technical coaching at this level. Coach is friendly helper, facilitator, organizer and motivator. The Coach should be patient, enthusiastic, and imaginative. The Coach should experiment with fun activities that include all players.

Recommended License: The U-6/U-8 State Youth Module is required. The National Youth License is recommended.

What to teach U6 Players (Game Components)

B. TECHNIQUES

Dribbling:

Keep the ball close (with toe and inside of foot) Moves ... stops & go and 1/2 turns.

Kicking:

Kicking the ball at the goal (with toe, inside of foot, and laces).

Catching:

Toss to self and catch.

C. TACTICS (decisions):

Where is the field; Moving in correct direction (which goal to kick at); Dealing with ball rolling away and toward.

D. FITNESS (basic movement education)

Balance; Running; Jumping; Rolling; Hopping; Skipping

E. PSYCHOLOGY (mental and social)

Sharing; Fair Play; Dealing with parental involvement(confusion); "How to play"; Emotional management

The Training Session (general information)

The training session should involve fun and imaginative game

like activities.

Facilitate fun activities that draw out the skill in the player.

Small-sided games such as 1 v 1, 2 v 1, 2 v 2, should be included as well.

Training should always conclude with a 3 v 3 game without goalkeepers if possible.

The duration of the training session should be 45-60 minutes.

Game duration: four 8-minutes quarters. / Playing numbers: 3v3

(no goalkeepers)

Possible Formation: 1-2; 2-1

What to Teach U-8 Players

This is age where players can begin to understand the concept of working with a teammate. Willingness to intentionally pass the ball to someone is just beginning to take hold. In this age group, the player begins to think beyond their personal needs and actively begins to cooperate with a teammate. Still, continuous individual ball work is highly important.

A. COACH

The role of the coach in the U-8 age group is to be sensitive and patient teacher with an enthusiastic and imaginative approach. It is helpful to have the ability to demonstrate and understand technique.

Recommended License: The U6/U8 State Youth Module is required. The National Youth License is recommended.

What to teach U-8 Players (Game Components)

B. TECHNIQUES (skills)

Dribbling:

With outside of the foot; Change of speed and direction; Moves..., fakes one way go the other way

Receiving:

Ground balls with inside, outside, and sole of the foot; bouncing balls with various body parts; Ball lifting and juggling

Passing:

With toe, inside of foot and laces

Shooting:

With toe, inside of foot and laces

Tackling:

Toe-poke

Catching:

From self and from partner; Rolling, bouncing, and air balls

C. TACTICS (decisions)

Being exposed to all positions; 1 v1 attacking; 1 v 1 defending; 2 v 1 attacking; introduce the names of positions; shape (triangles, diamonds, box)

D. FITNESS (basic movement education)

Introduce the idea of warm-up; Agility; Leaping; Tumbling; Eye/foot & Eye/hand coordination

E. PSYCHOLOGY (mental and social)

Working in pairs; Sportsmanship; Dealing with parental involvement: "How to play" (social cooperation); Emotional management

The Training Session (general information)

Light coaching on simple technique is appropriate
(dribbling,

passing, and receiving)

Small-sided directional games such as 1 v 1, 2 v 1, 2 v 2, 3 v 2,

and 3 v 3 should be included as well. Simple explanations regarding shape and position.

Training should always conclude with a 4 v 4 game without goalkeepers.

The duration of the training session should be 60-75 minutes.

Game duration: four 12- minutes' quarters. / Playing numbers:

4 v 4 (No goalkeepers)

Possible Formation: 2-2 (square); 1-2-1 (diamond)

What to Teach U-10 Players

The motivation to learn basic skills is very high at this age level. Children gradually begin to change from being self-centered to being self-critical and develop need for group and/or team games. The game itself should be central to all skills training. Small-sided games continue to be method of choice for this age group. This is appropriate time to introduce some of the basic PRINCIPLES of play which are shown in bold below:

ATTACKING PRINCIPLES PRINCIPLES

Penetration
(Immediate Chase)
Support
Mobility
Width
Depth (Length)
Improvisation (deception, creativity)

DEFENSIVE

Recovery
Pressure
Cover
Balance
Compactness
Counter Attack

A. COACH

The role of the coach in the U10 age group is to be patient and motivating teacher. At this level, in addition to understanding technique, coaches should be providing environments conducive to problem solving (decision-making) by the players utilizing guided discovery methods.

Recommended License: The U10/U12 State Youth Module is required. The National Youth License is recommended.

What to Teach U-10 Players (game Components)

B. TECHNUQUES (skills)

Running with the Ball: At speed; Under Pressure

Passing: With outside of the foot; Heading

Instep Drive: Shooting; Crossing

Receiving Ground Balls with Inside and Outside of the Foot:

Away from the pressure; Past opponent

Receiving Air Balls: With the Instep (cushion) and sole;
inside
and outside of the foot (wedge)
Throw-In: Short and long distances
Moves in Dribbling: Rolls; scissors-push; double scissors;
step over chop
feet
Introduce Heading: Juggling (alone and in small groups);
in contact with the ground; introduction to jumping
Tackling: Balance foot and contact foot (block tackle)

C. GOALKEEPING (skills)

Ready Stance for Goalkeepers: Foot positioning; body posture
“W” Grip: Positioning of thumbs; fingers spread
How to Hold a Ball After a Save: Ball to chest; forearm protection
Catching Shots at the Keeper: Body alignment path of the ball
Punting: Distance and accuracy
Throwing: Bowling; over-arm
Goal Kicks: Distance and accuracy

D. TACTICS (decisions)

Roles of 1st attacker and defender
Roles of 2nd attackers and defenders
2 v 1 attacking (simple combination) Men-to-man defending
Throw-ins to teammate’s feet
Introduction to the tactics of set plays/restarts (goal kicks,
corner kicks, other free kicks)
Introduction to setting up walls

E. FITNESS (conditioning)

Endurance; Range of motion-flexibility; Proper warm-up is now
mandatory;
Introduce cool-down

F. PSYCHOLOGY (mental and social)

Working in groups of 3-6
Staying focused for one entire half
Sensitivity; learning how to win, lose or draw gracefully

Sportsmanship

How to handle parental involvement

Communication; emotional management

The Training Session (general information)

The training session should involve fun and imaginative game like activities, as well as technical and tactical activities

Coaching technical skills is very important at this age as well as light tactical concepts

The training session has a technical and/or tactical theme (topic). For example: dribbling technique, or passing and receiving, or combination play

Small-sided directional games such as 3 v 3, 4 v 3, 4 v 4, 5 v 4 and 5 v 5 should be included as well. More detailed explanation regarding shape and positions.

Training should always conclude with a 6 v 6 game with goalkeepers is possible (5 field players and 1 goalkeeper on each team)

The duration of the training session should be 75-90 minutes

Game duration: two half's of 25 minutes

Playing numbers: 6 v 6 (with goalkeepers)

Possible Formations: 1-2-3; 1-3-2

What to Teach U-12 Players

The effect of the role-model is very important at this stage of development. Hero worship, identification with successful teams/players and hunger for imaginative skills typify the mentality of this age. This is time of transition from self-centered to self-critical. Players of this age have a high arousal level in relation to the training of basic skills. This is “golden age of learning” and most important age for skill development. Demonstration is very important and players learn best by “doing”. This is also an important time to introduce and teach basic principles of play. It is important to establish discipline from the beginning.

ATTACKING PRINCIPLES

Penetration
Chase)
Support
Mobility
Width
Depth
Improvisation (deception, creativity)

DEFENSIVE PRINCIPLES

Recovery (Immediate
Pressure
Cover
Balance
Compactness
Counter Attack

A. COACH

Sensitive teacher; Enthusiastic; Posses soccer awareness; Ability to demonstrate or utilize someone who can paint a good picture (older player, assistant coach); Knowledge of the key factors of basic skills; Specifically, individual and small group tactics should be the focus of the training sessions. Give encouragement.
Recommended License: USSF “D” or higher

What to Teach U-12 Players

B. TECHNIQUE (skills)

Important to establish a good strong solid base.
Development of individual skills under the pressure of time, space, and an opponent.

Dribbling: Encourage risk taking! Moves to beat an opponent;
Keeping possession
Feints with the ball: Subtle body movements to unbalance the opponent
Receiving: Ground and Air balls; to beat an opponent; all surfaces, from a partner and on the move.
Heading: Self serve; partner serve-jumping to head, turning the ball;
Partner juggling
Passing: Proper technique-Laces, inside, Outside-Short and long;
Crossing.
Finishing: Chipping; Bending; Toe; Introduce Half Volley and Volley
Shooting.

C. GOALKEEPING (skills)

Footwork for Goalkeepers: Post to post (lateral); Forward
Throwing: Side arm; Round-house; Baseball
Kicking: Drop- kick
Diving: Step and Collapse (low); Step and slide onto forearms and thighs; ANGLE PLAY; Fast footwork; Body shape
Introduce Parrying and Boxing: One and two hands

D. TACTICS (decisions) “Dawn of tactical awareness”

Individual Tactics: 1 v 1 situations in attack and defense. Play 1 v 1 frequently

Small Group Tactics: 2 v 1, 2 v 2, 3 v 1, 3 v 2, 3 v 3, 4 v 2, 4 v 3, 4 v 4.

Play a variety of position; Develop awareness / complete player Basic principles of play.

Attacking: Keep possession; Encourage risk taking; Take players on 1 v 1 in proper areas of the field. Support. Basic combination play (wall pass, takeover); Promote attacking soccer.

Defending: Proper pressure (in front and behind); Channel player; immediate chase; Cover; Marking

Team Tactics: Team tactics do not take priority at this age. Focus is placed on maintaining balance and playing skillful soccer. Players play a variety of positions and emphasis is placed on player development instead of getting results as a team

Recommended System: putting the players out on the field for the love of the game, without spending much time coaching the system. FOCUS on teaching principles of play as opposed to systems. If playing 8 v 8, recommending a 2-3-2. If playing 9 v 9, recommended 3-3-2. Most importantly, players should enjoy the great game!

“A great deal of coaching/teaching within 4 v 4 small-sided games”

E. PHYSICAL

All fitness work done with the ball, in partners, and in fun engaging activities. Proper warm-up and cool-down mandatory

Flexibility; Agility- with and without the ball; Speed; Strength; Endurance; Balance

E. PSYCHOLOGICAL

Keep it fun and enjoyable to foster a desire to play (Intrinsic motivation).

Encouraging decision-making

Imagination/Creativity

Increased demands

Discipline

Encourage players/teams to watch professional and national team games on TV.

The Training Session (General information)

The training session should involve fun and imaginative game like activities, as well technical and tactical repetitive activities.

The training session has a technical and/or tactical topic; For example: dribbling technique and/or 1 v 1 decision making.

Introduction to functional training (position specific) is appropriate.

Small-sided directional such as: 4 v 4, 5 v 4, 5 v 5, 6 v 5, 6 v 6, 7 v 6,

should be included as well.

Training should always conclude with an 8 v 8 games with goalkeepers if possible.

The duration of the training session should be 90 minutes.

Game duration: two half's of 30 minutes

Playing numbers: 8 v 8 (with goalkeepers)

Possible Formations: 1-2-3-2; 1-3-2-2; 1-3-3-1

What to Teach U-16 Players

The Dedication, this is a critical time in the player's development. Many stop playing due to other interest, lack of success, shortage of playing opportunities, poor leadership, or other reasons. Player's tend to lack mental toughness and self confidence. They tend to be self-critical and struggle with their desire to be competitive or need to be more competitive. There is a need for attention and security. A great focus on team spirit, leadership and discipline within the team.

A. COACH

Charismatic; Experienced; Knowledgeable; Articulate; Disciplinarian; managerial know how; Thoughtful persuader.

Recommended License: "B" License or higher.

B. TECHNIQUE

Skills should be mastered leading to artistry and improvisation: All under match condition.

Individual skills covered during the warm-up, and/or in competitive situations.

Increase technical speed. It is important that technique is still highly emphasized at this age.

Strike balls cleanly over distance with accuracy under pressure.

C. TACTICS:

Increase tactical speed (decision making)

Individual Tactics:

Decisions based on thirds of the field.

Attacking:

Application of varied technical abilities in order to increase tactical options.

Aggressive attacking mentality in final third. Emphasis placed on predicting what the game will need next. Knowing what each player's specific roles and responsibilities are, leads to greater understanding of the big picture.

Defending:

Clear understanding of how the quality of pressure effects team defendin success.

Being able to take options away from attacker.

Small Group Tactics:

4 v 4, 7 v 7, 9 v 9

Attacking:

Balance of needing possession and penetration

Combination play: wall pass, take over, overlap, double pass, third man running

Penetration

Creativity in solving problems

Mobility- movement without the ball

Crossing- picking out a runner rather than putting it in the box

Box Organization- penetration, width and support for every ball played in the box

Attacking as group of 3 (forwards, midfielders, defenders)

Set plays (80% success rate: where we get: 1. Goal, 2. Shoot on goal, or 3. Corner kick)

Defending:

Compactness

Cover, Delay, Dictate and Recover

Communication (who, what, when, where)

Defending as a group of 3 (forwards, midfielders and defenders)

Enjoy winning possession of the ball and dictating the play

Set plays

Team tactics:

Clearly defined team tactics...how the team decides to play as a group

Attacking:

Comfort with direct and indirect styles

Sustained possession as a means to break down the opponent's defense

Understanding how to counter attack

Decisions based on thirds of the field

Defending:

Comfort with "high pressure" and "delayed high pressure" styles

Understanding of zonal and man-to-man marking play

Goalkeeper as the last defender

Keeping good team compactness

Stopping the counter attack

Decisions based on thirds of the field and different systems of play

- A great deal of coaching/teaching within 7 v 7 and 9 v 9 games*

D. PHYSICAL:

Fitness work with and without the ball.

Flexibility-Static stretching after training/matches

Dynamic Flexibility-partner stretching

Importance of discipline for warm-up and cool-down

Agility-with and without the ball

Footwork-keeping the feet active when moving/playing

Endurance-Aerobic and Anaerobic

Strength-Upper and lower body. Core strength and stability

Balance

Nutrition- Proper diet: pre-game, post-game, tournaments, etc.

Prevention and care of injuries.

Importance of rest/recovery-schedule issues relative to the physical demands.

E. PSYCHOLOGICAL:

Increased concentration

Leadership/player responsibilities

Discipline

Respect for the game

Goal setting

Vary program-Satisfy player's urge for competition

Establish pre practice and pre game routine (as individuals and team)

Encourage players/teams to watch professional and national team soccer on TV.

Playing numbers: 11 v 11 (with goalkeepers)

The U-19 Age Group

Development of Functional and Team Play.

Fulfillment of a player's potential depends on his/her own efforts, the support of his/her teammates and the unselfish guidance of player's coach. Each player must be exposed to a playing and training environment, which extends technical, tactical, physical and psychological capabilities to the limit. A sound understanding of the game's principles and concepts are a must have. Players should show emotional stability when confronted with pressure situations.

Demanding and challenging training sessions and games are a must.

A. COACH

Charismatic, well informed, up to date, experienced, knowledgeable, articulate, disciplinarian, No doubts about coach authority; Managerial know-how.

Recommended License: "B" License or higher

B. TECHNIQUE:

Mastered skills leading to artistry: All at the speed under match conditions- Demanding excellence. Individual skill covered during warm –up and competitive situations.

C. TACTICS:

Increase tactical speed (decision making). Increased pressure and competition. Having the ability to change and adapt to game dynamics, up or down a goal, management of the clock and flow of the game.

Individual Tactics:

Attacking:

A good deal of time spent in functional training environments

Decisions based on thirds of the field

Comfort in playing in the different areas of the field/team (back, middle, front, center, and wide).

Confidence to hold possession as an individual and solve problems at the individual level.

Defending:

Clear understanding of how the quality of pressure affects the ability of the team to defend

Decisions based on thirds of the field.

Comfort at playing two different positions

Small Group Tactics:

Attacking:

Improvisation/deception encouraged

Advanced understanding of combination play and how to combine to break down a defense

Balance of possession and penetration with a purpose to score goals

Recognize opportunities to penetrate with by a variety of means

Attacking in groups of 3 (forwards, midfielders and defenders)

Defending:

Pressure, cover, balance

Control of the game's speed and direction due defending decisions

Recognition of double team opportunities

Defending in groups of 3 (forwards, midfielders, and defenders)

Team Tactics:

Understanding of lines and linkage. Positional and Team needs.

Attacking:

Comfort with direct and indirect styles of play

Combinational with tactical implications

Sustained possession as a means to break down the opponent's defense

Speed of play: the game is faster and more physical

Creativity, quality of final ball to beat backs

Understanding how and when to counter attack

Serving runners in the box

Organizing the box with runners (penetration, width and support)

Decisions based on thirds of the fields

Set plays (80% success rate: where we get: 1. Goal, 2. Shot on Goal, 3.

Corner Kick

Defending:

Comfort with "high pressure" and "delayed high pressure" styles

Understanding of zonal and man-to-man marking play

Goalkeeper as the last defender
Keeping good team compactness
Stopping the counter attack
Decisions based on thirds of the field and different systems of play
Pressing (when and where to pressure, channel, and dictate defensively)

D. PHYSICAL:

Fitness work with and without the ball
Flexibility-Static stretching after training/ matches
Dynamic Flexibility-partner stretching
Importance of discipline for warm-up and cool-down
Endurance-aerobic and anaerobic
Strength-upper and lower body. Core strength and stability
Balance
Nutrition-proper diet-pre-game, post-game, tournaments, etc...
Prevention and care of injuries
Importance of rest/recovery-schedule issues relative to the physical demands

E. PSYCHOLOGICAL:

Increased concentration
Leadership/increased player responsibilities
Discipline
Accountability
Goal setting
Respect for the game
Self confidence, self motivation-goal setting
Vary program-satisfy player's urge for competition
Will to win. Mental Toughness/competitive Mentality
Establish pre practice and pre game routine (as individuals and teams)
Encourage players/teams to watch professional and national team games on TV.
Playing numbers: 11 v 11 (with goalkeepers)

