

CFSC U10 Player Development Curriculum suggested practice: 2 days, 60-90min.

What follows is a curriculum of what should be taught to players at this age based on U.S. Soccer's "Best Practices for Coaching Soccer" Guide, the USSF "D" license course manual and other local soccer clubs.

Technical Training – the teaching of the techniques of soccer (ball mastery). These physical skills should always be taught with one ball per player or one per pair. They should be taught with little pressure at first (pressure refers to time and space dictated by defense) and then a gradual building of pressure as mastery improves. The idea is if they cannot perform the skill without pressure they certainly will not be able to perform when pressure exists in the games. So take it slow and make sure there is great repetition and most important that it is fun! Demonstrations for all of the following can be found on the websites listed on the back.

Dribbling – running with the ball into open space

- Players at this age should move beyond the "duck walk" dribble learned in micro and u6 and begin using the outside of their foot to advance the ball with greater speed
- Coaching points:
 - Changing speed and direction (rapid and abrupt)
 - Using all parts of the foot (inside, outside, sole, heel and toe)
 - Encourage risk taking
 - Encourage creativity
 - Get head up when on the dribble
- Moves to be taught: (teach yourself these moves by going to youtube.com and typing in the move)
 - The drag or roll; The pull back; Simple feints or fakes (the "matthews"); The step over and scissors – these should all have been taught at the u8 level and you should continue to work on mastery of these moves
 - The "cruyff"

Passing – playing the ball to a teammate

- Players at this age should pass with both feet using 3 proper techniques
- 1. Inside of foot "push pass" – plant foot is close and pointed in the direction kicking; passing foot should make contact on the top half of the ball w/ankle locked to ensure it does not become elevated
- 2. Outside of foot – used to finesse the ball, disguise a pass or bend the ball
- 3. Shoe lace pass – used for longer distances; be sure to approach from a 45 degree angle

Receiving – the ability to control a ball that is played to you

- Receiving ground balls away from pressure w/ both inside and outside of foot (a player's first touch should be away from the defenders not into them)
- Take a flighted ball out of air from a partner; on the foot, thigh and chest
- Get head up before receiving the ball in order to find the space or someone to pass to

Shooting – the act of striking the ball into the goal

- Proper striking techniques using the inside of foot and laces (see passing above)
- The art of "lifting" the ball – that is getting the ball off the ground by hitting low on the ball

Defending – the act of slowing down the opponent's attack and *perhaps* stealing the ball

- Proper pressure – 2 to 3 feet from the ball
- Proper stance – stand sideways on while also to the left or right of the ball with your feet close together and the knees slightly bent
- Proper tackling – using the strength of your body to tackle instead of using your foot or leg

Throw Ins – when the ball crosses the touch lines of the field players need to throw the ball back into play

- Player needs to keep both feet on the ground and bring the ball behind their head before throwing the ball to a teammate ensuring that the player follows through with one motion and without turning

Tactical Training – the teaching of the tactics (decision making) within the game. There are three types of tactics to be taught: Individual, Small group and Team. At this age practice should be 70% technical and only 30% tactical training.

Individual Tactics – the decision making when playing 1v1

- Attacking – transition quickly, take chances and keep possession (in that order); risk vs. reward idea
- Defending – transition quickly and apply the *proper* pressure, the *proper* stance and with *proper* tackling GOAL SIDE (between the opponent and your goal)

Small Group Tactics – the decision making when playing 2v1 or 1v2; 3v2 or 2v3; etc. You can start thinking about these groups as “lines” in your team formation (i.e. your 3 defenders or 3 midfielders as small groups)

- Attacking – transition quickly, take chances and keep possession (in that order)
 - When/where do you take players on 1v1; risk vs. reward idea
 - Where and how do you “support” when you are the player without the ball (concepts of “width” and “depth” are introduced with the crossing and dropping of the ball)
 - Defending - transition quickly and apply the *proper* pressure, the *proper* stance and with *proper* tackling or make the “recovery run” – a run by a defender back toward the goal after they have been beat by the opponent in order to provide cover

Team Tactics – the decision making when playing 8v8 games should not be a priority; instead focus on the individual and small group tactics

- Positions should be introduced and understood in terms of how they fit into the small group tactical decisions like being in position for a cross or a recovery run; creating width or depth or support
- Players should be playing all the positions except for goal keeper
- How will your team organize itself on goal kicks, corner kicks and throw-ins offensively and defensively (goal kicks are of great importance at this age as the goal box is quite large!)
- Teach players how to take direct and indirect kicks and how to defend them with a wall and marking up

Best Practices for a U10 Coach:

- Players should have plenty of opportunity to experience the ball at their own pace
- Training sessions should be built accordingly: drills with unrestricted space; drills with restricted space; drills that simulate game situations with small goals, target players or lines to cross; and then end with an actual game where players can try to apply what they have learned *without* input from the coach
- Modify drills to fit the lesson being taught by: changing the size or shape of the field, the numbers involved, the number of touches, how score is kept, or by keeping players in zones
- Players should be encouraged not to fear the ball by dealing with balls on the ground and bouncing
- Come prepared with what you want to teach at practice, be able to model it, and have players summarize it at the end of practice

Best Qualities for a U10 Coach:

- Understand the capabilities and limitation of this age
- Learn by watching the players play
- Be able to demonstrate proper technique or bring someone who can
- Emphasize fun at all times and foster a sense of love for the sport – you want them playing soccer when

they are NOT at practice!

Best places for designing and planning your practices or training sessions:

<http://www.youtube.com> just type in soccer drills or be as specific as you want “matthews move”

<http://www.expertvillage.com>

<http://www.soccerxpert.com/>

<http://www.soccerclub.com/training/drills/default.asp>

http://www.finesoccer.com/finesoccer_drills_archive.htm

http://www.insidesoccer.com/learn_it/coaches/drills_practices

<http://www.strongsoccer.com/Kingdrills/clipspractice.htm>