



Coaching Crash Course for U5 / U6

Thank you for volunteering to coach with Bentonville Parks and Recreation Soccer! The coach is the single most important influence in creating a great soccer experience and developing a player's love for the game.

Your time and energy are an invaluable part of this program and we could not do this without you. We hope that your season will not only be fun but also very rewarding!

Our goal at Bentonville Parks and Recreation Soccer is to develop a love of the game by bringing the best soccer experiences to players through participation, skill development, sportsmanship, and fun!

Whether you are a first year coach or a 20-year veteran, each season provides new and exciting experiences for you. Making a difference in the life of a child is one of the most gratifying things anyone can do. We want all of our coaches and players to walk away from our program better than when they walked in.

We will be here every step of the way to make sure that your team receives as much support as possible. The below curriculum guide will help you run practices and understand game play. Please be sure to read the entire curriculum and let the league director know if you have any questions.

5 Rules to Live By for U5 / U6 Soccer

1. You do not need to know much about soccer. Pick games that kids love and incorporate a soccer ball like freeze tag, coach "Simon" says, cats and dogs, red light green light, etc. It's good to play these games without a ball first and then let these games become soccer games when you add a soccer ball.
2. Do not worry about passing, positioning, or proper technique. Demonstrate the correct way to perform a skill and then praise players highly when they actually do it, but do not waste time with repetitive technique drills. Pick "coaching moments" when you can make a point that helps the whole team.
3. Players want their own ball and do not want to share it. Tell parents to have their child bring a ball (size 3). Players should have a ball at their feet constantly. Avoid drills that use lines and always keep the players busy, their attention spans are short!
4. Emphasize players spreading out and not taking the ball from their own teammate. This is the one coaching point you should make 100 times a game

and constantly when you scrimmage during practice. Be patient and keep highlighting these two points and you will be amazed at the results.

5. Always play with the kids. If you are having fun, so are they!

The bottom line is if you get to know the kids and pretend to be a kid, you will have a great time and so will they! One important thing to remember is to have good sportsmanship. If your team is crushing the other team, then please make adjustments to help level the playing field. Remember the shoe could always be on the other foot!

Rules of the Game U5 / U6

Ball Size: 3

Players: 6 (sometimes 7) per team- 3v3 on field. No goalkeepers. Each player on the team will receive an equal amount of playing time during each game. A player should not play the entire game unless there are only 3 players present.

Fouls: Coaches will officiate all games. All fouls result in an indirect free kick with the opponent at least five yards away. All free kicks are indirect (meaning another player must touch the ball after it is kicked before a goal can be scored). If a player is consistently fouling or being dangerous, the coach needs to remove the player from the game and explain why their behavior is not acceptable.

Duration of Games: Games consist for four 8-minute quarters with two-minute breaks between quarters and a five-minute break at half time. Clock runs continuously during each quarter without stopping. Designate a parent to be the timekeeper. They can let you know the four-minute mark for substitutions at each quarter as well.

Substitutions: Substitutions can be made on any dead ball, but it is highly recommended that subs be made at the four-minute mark of each quarter. If all six team members attend, simply switch squads. If you have seven kids, assign a kid to be a "rover" each game, meaning that player plays from the 2-minute until the 6-minute mark of each quarter. Make sure they are subbing for a different player each time they enter the game.

Throw-ins: The ball is placed on the sideline nearest the point where it went out of bounds. The opposing team should be at least five yards away from the thrower. Encourage throwers to keep both feet on the ground and use two hands to bring the ball directly over their head. There is no penalty for incorrect throw, simply offer positive reinforcement for a correct one.

Goal Kicks: A goal kick is awarded when the ball is last touched by an offensive player and goes over the end line by the goal. The kick is taken from the goal line and the opposing team must be on the other side of the centerline when the kick is taken.

Corner Kicks: A corner kick is awarded when the defending team last touches the ball before it goes out of bounds over the goal line. The ball is placed in the closest corner and opposing players should be at least five yards away when the corner kick is taken.

Kick-offs: A kick-off will be taken from the center of the circle at the start of the game and after a goal is scored. The opposing team should be at least ten yards away from the centerline or outside of the circle.

Practice Breakdown U5 / U6

Each practice should have a focus. Pick one focus and concentrate your practice on it. Then use the scrimmage at the end to evaluate if the focus was learned.

Making your practice activities a competition is a great way to motivate, challenge and encourage your players to do their best and have fun!

Focus:

U5/U6 – Dribbling and Shooting

Each practice should consist of the Play-Practice-Play Model (PPP).

“PPP” Coaching Technique – Play-Practice-Play is to allow players to experience the game and game-like situations as much as possible. This approach differs from a traditional practice that has players standing in lines, running laps and participating in drills that do not resemble the game of soccer. When players arrive to practice, players engage in small-sided games (2v2, 3v3, 4v4) with the primary focus on having fun! To learn more, please visit:

<https://www.ussoccer.com/stories/2018/02/five-things-to-know-about-playpracticeplay>

#1 – Play - Warm Up - 10 Minutes

Each practice should begin with a warm up. A warm up should consist of players playing 2v2, 3v3, 4v4 etc. No need to have the team run laps or sprints; let the game activities you choose provide players physical fitness conditioning. Divide your field into small grids with goals made with cones and get players playing soccer as soon as they arrive to practice. Get their feet on a ball and playing right away!

#2 – Practice - Focused Skill Games - 20 Minutes

Practices should have a clear focus. Pick one skill at a time as the focus. Pick fun game activities that allow players to focus on the technique of your choosing and help develop the basic skill but also let the kids have a lot of fun. Add competition to your activities when you can to add fun!

#3 – Play – Scrimmage - 20 Minutes

Each practice should end with a scrimmage. Most teams are scheduled on a field with another team. Those two teams should scrimmage each other at the end of the practice. If your team is scheduled on a field alone, scrimmage your team against each other. Treat these scrimmages like a real game (subs, breaks, etc.) but do take the time to address rules or technique with your players. Stop the game and go over a rule if, for example, players keep playing the ball after it goes out of bounds. During the scrimmage, evaluate your coaching to see if the technique you practiced is being used in the scrimmage.