

Massachusetts Premier Soccer Youth Development Academy

U6 Coaching Manual 2007



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U6 Coaching Guidelines

Aim: To allow players to develop in a **SAFE, FUN** and **EDUCATIONAL** environment.

Objectives:

- 1.) Keep things brief and simple! Remember players at this level have a very short attention span. Be careful with the language you use when communicating with young players – always be as positive as possible and include all players.
- 2.) Make things FUN! Your energy and enthusiasm need to come through in every practice. Allow players as much active time with a ball each as possible.
- 3.) Use your imagination! A successful coach with this age range is one who can make his/her session relate to how the young player views the world. Use Harry Potter or Spongebob Squarepants as characters in your games to make them feel more involved.
- 4.) **ALL** players should be given plenty of opportunities to succeed and **ALL** players need to be kept motivated and challenged. Come down to their level and be part of their world.

To succeed in coaching players in this age range, you must have:

- **Patience** – they will not understand things right away. Although young they want and need you to be in charge. Be firm with what your expectations are but remember you are dealing with young children.
- **Flexibility** – recognize when something is not working and change it.
- **A sense of humor** – laugh with your players.
- **A very positive attitude** – give generous praise often.
- **And lots and lots of energy** – participate in practice.

Training Session Breakdown

1.) WARM-UP

10mins

Begin with a **FUN** activity. This should prepare the players mentally and physically for the rest of the practice. Slight changes to a game will make it different to players at this age.

2.) SKILL GAMES

15mins

These games are designed to be high energy, fun activities that reinforce the basic techniques.

3.) SMALL-SIDED GAMES

30mins

Each practice should conclude with a small-sided game. The size of the field should be about 30x20 and the teams should be 3v3 with no goalkeepers.

4.) COOL DOWN

5mins

Spend five minutes at the end of each session making sure that all of your players enjoyed themselves. Do a fun cool down, reinforce basic technical points, have a group huddle and say goodbye.



MASS PREMIER SOCCER LESSON PLAN

Age Group: U6 – Smart Soccer

Theme of Session: Dribbling (Car Crazy) – Week 1

TIME

ORGANIZATION

COACHING POINTS

10
minutes

Speedway –

Split groups into 2 “speed teams” of different wacky cars. All players have a car (ball) On Coach’s command, A’s dribble to B’s area & B’s dribble to A’s area. 1st group with whole team across, scores a point.

Progression: Walking only
Jogging only
Running only
Use only 1 foot
Use other foot.

Add fun incentives- whole team must rev their engines (step on their balls) when across. Use imagination to vary these regularly.

Soccer City –

20x30 area, Boston City. This time the players are all cars. Gradually introduce some or all of the following;

Grannies Car – really slow and makes banging old noises.

Family Car – medium pace and has a healthy sound, bbrmmmmmm.

Red Ferrari – really fast and makes loud roaring noises.

All the players keep their ball (steering wheel) close to them and react to whichever car the coach calls out. Start off by ‘sightseeing’ the city – dribbling all over the area.

Red light – ‘screech’ to a stop,

Green light – Go,

Uphill – toe taps on top of the ball,

Dead-end – introduce the ‘ooh aah’ turn (STOP TURN). Technical repetition using both feet.

Car thief – coach chases the players and if they can put their foot onto the player’s ball then they need to do a star jump and 3 “ooh aah” turns to get their car back.

3 v 3 – **inside** an area 30 x 20 yards. Have a supply of balls at the side to keep the game flowing and to try and limit stoppages.

Cool Down -Play ‘Blow up the balloon’. All the kids start of by crouching down and when the coach ‘blows air’ into the balloon the kids slowly get bigger and bigger – standing on their toes and stretching to the sky. When the coach ‘pops’ the balloon the kids all relax and fall down.

Finish with a team huddle.

- Keep the ball close to you
- Take lots of little touches with both feet.

- Soft touches so they don’t ‘crash’ into anyone
- Head Up to avoid crashes
- STOP TURN– stop the ball with sole of foot. Hop over ball putting same foot on ground first. Bring other foot through and take away with outside of foot.

- Encourage dribbling Can they do the ‘ooh aah’ turn?

EVALUATION:



MASS PREMIER SOCCER LESSON PLAN

Age Group:	U6 – Smart Soccer
Theme of Session:	Dribbling (Animania) – Week 2.

<u>TIME</u>	<u>ORGANIZATION</u>	<u>COACHING POINTS</u>
10 minutes	<p>Heads and Tails –20x30 area (the Jungle). All players are animals and need to stay inside the forest or trees. Can use different animals to vary speed – Cheetah, monkey and elephant.</p> <p>Progression: On coaches command of ‘HEADS’ – the players must stop the ball with their foot and then place their head on top of the ball. ‘TAILS’ indicates that the players must stop the ball with their foot and then sit on the ball. Extra commands can be the animal’s ‘Belly’ and ‘Back’.</p> <p>To increase the difficulty and fun play opposites e.g. heads = tails, belly = back etc. .</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep the ball close to you • Take lots of little touches with both feet.
15 minutes	<p>Going to the Zoo –30 x 20 yards. Coach names the first side of the area a type of zoo animal (don’t tell all four sides at the one time). All the children have a soccer ball (camera). They are walking around the zoo taking pictures. Have the 1st player to each side pick THEIR favorite zoo animal until all four sides have been named. Once all sides have been named kids have to get to that side whenever you say that animal. Once they get there they must perform movements and sounds like the animal i.e...monkey, seal</p> <p>Progressions: make each side a particular move or activity incorporating that animal..</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small touches on the ball • Have players look for the biggest space to control the ball in – heads up! • Revise Stop Turn. Use turns to change direction when going to a side of the Zoo.
30 minutes	<p>3 v 3 – Play.</p>	
5 minutes	<p>Cool Down – Bring in all the players have a chat about what was learnt today and then finish off with ‘Blow up the Balloon’. (See week 1). Finish off with a group huddle.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can they dribble and beat a player?

EVALUATION:



MASS PREMIER SOCCER LESSON PLAN

Age Group: U6 – Smart Soccer

Theme of Session: Dribbling (Harry Potter) – Week 3.

<u>TIME</u>	<u>ORGANIZATION</u>	<u>COACHING POINTS</u>
10 minutes	<p>Magic Spells –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area 30 x 20 yds (Hogwarts) - if the ball goes out you lose your powers! (or use parents) All players (magicians) begin w/ a ball (wand) Players dribble around Hogwarts (field) waving wand (dribbling soccer ball) <p>Progressions: Use only 1 foot (dribble only with left foot or only with right) Use other foot (opposite from above last go) Use both feet</p> <p>Spells: <u>Freeze</u> (turn to stone) – stop dead still with foot on ball <u>Lightning</u> dribbles as fast as they can <u>Snail</u> dribbles as slow as they can <u>Secret Passage</u> - Turn in opposite direction to go down secret passage. <u>Frog Steps</u> on the ball <u>Snake</u> Big Toe Little Toe move</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep the ball close to you with small touches Keep your head up Use both feet Simple drag back turn
15 minutes	<p>Quidditch - Make it a game to get players in groups of 2 (close your eyes and tell them you will give them 10 seconds to organize themselves). Make a line of cones about 6-8 yards in front the players which is your invisible force field. First player dribbles (flies on their broomstick) up to the fence and turns right before it – if they go over the force field fence they have to pretend to be shocked (fall of broomstick). They then dribble back and partner goes. Progression: Play first team to score 10 goals (goal is scored when they successfully dribble up and back without crossing the fence) Players must do Stop Turn. Introduce Drag Back Turn.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep head up Keep ball close and under control. Keep body low, turn quickly and accelerate. The Drag back Turn – Place the sole of the foot on the ball, drag the ball back behind you, turn to follow the ball, push the ball away with the opposite foot Encourage the Big Toe Little Toe & Stop Turn moves
30 minutes	<p>3 v 3</p>	
5 minutes	<p>Cool Down – Chat with the kids about the session then finish off with the ‘Blow up the Balloon’ and a group huddle.</p>	

EVALUATION:



MASS PREMIER SOCCER LESSON PLAN

Age Group: U6 – Smart Soccer

Theme of Session: Dribbling (Pirates of Soccer Island) – Week 4.

<u>TIME</u>	<u>ORGANIZATION</u>	<u>COACHING POINTS</u>
10 minutes	<p>Treasure Island – Split players into 4 groups. Each group stands on one corner of a 30x30 coned area (this is their ship). All ball (treasure) is put into a small 5x5 area (island) in the middle of the 30x30. One at a time one player (pirate) from each ship runs to the island and gets a piece of treasure (ball) which they dribble back to their ship. When 1st player gets back, next one can go.</p> <p>Once all the treasure is gone from the island one player at a time can 'steal' treasure from the other ships (on command of coach) Ship with the most treasure at the end is the winner.</p> <p>Progression: One foot only to dribble back Other foot Both feet</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small touches on the ball • Head up • Use both feet
15 minutes	<p>Pirate Ship – Children all dribble around on the 'Pirate Ship', 30x20 yard area. The Coach is the Captain of the ship. When the Coach shouts 'Captain coming' the players all put their foot on top of the ball, salute to the Captain and shout back 'Aye, aye Captain'. When the Captain calls 'Clean the decks' the players all perform the STOP TURN (Ooh aah) move.</p> <p>'Rats on deck' – the players do toe tap on top of the ball to keep their feet off the ground.</p> <p>'Windy Day' – players perform a new move, Big toe Little Toe. They move the ball with the big toe and little toe of the same foot. They then complete the move with the opposite foot.</p> <p>'Seagulls' – the players fall on top of their ball to protect it from the seagulls.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep the ball (sword) close to them • Ensure Stop Turn is performed correctly • Big Toe Little Toe – soft touch with the Big Toe, harder touch with the Little Toe. Same foot.
30 minutes	<p>3 v 3 - Small sided game, 30x20 yards to 3 yard wide goals.</p>	
5 minutes	<p>Cool Down - Chat with the kids about the session then finish off with the 'Blow up the Balloon' and a group huddle.</p>	

EVALUATION:



MASS PREMIER SOCCER LESSON PLAN

Age Group: U6 – Smart Soccer

Theme of Session: Dribbling (Sponge Bob Squarepants)– Week 5.

<u>TIME</u>	<u>ORGANIZATION</u>	<u>COACHING POINTS</u>
10 minutes	<p><u>Spongebob Squarepants –</u> All the players are Spongebob and dribble around in ‘The Pineapple under the Sea’. The Coach is looking for the hardest working Spongebob. The Coach then performs the Step over move, and the players copy. The Coach then becomes Plankton (bad guy) and chases all the Spongebob’s. If Plankton manages to kick Spongebob’s ball out of ‘The Pineapple under the Sea’ then Spongebob has to go to the ‘Practice Ring’ (small coned off area to the side of the practice) and perform 3 Step Over moves with each foot. Spongebob may then rejoin all the others in ‘The Pineapple under the Sea’. The Coach may then choose the two hardest workers to become Plankton in the next game.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use both feet to dribble and perform the Step Over • Step Over - place both feet at the side of the ball with the strongest foot nearest the ball, take the strongest foot around the ball and place down on the opposite side, the upper body has moved downwards (to throw the defender off balance), and then the weaker foot takes the ball away in the opposite direction. • If the players use the Step Over in the game then they freeze Plankton for 2 secs • Keep their head up to look for Plankton • Must keep the ball close to them to avoid being caught • Dribble with their heads up to see the Plankton • Perform the moves they know to beat the
15 minutes	<p><u>Spongebob and Patrick –</u> All the players are inside a 30x20 yard ‘Under the Sea’. All the players have a ball (a cake) and they start at one side of the ‘Sea’. Their ‘mission’ is to get from one side (Spongebob’s house) to the other (Patrick’s house) without getting caught by the Plankton (bad guy). Once they reach the other side they must perform toe taps (eating their cake) until the Coach tells them to go again. The toe taps restores their energy for the next ‘mission’ across the ‘Sea’. The Coach will start off as the Plankton and each time he manages to put a foot on top of a player’s ball then they become a Plankton with them. Progression:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have the last player to be caught start off as the Plankton in the next game. • Players should all start after the Coach yells ‘He lives in a pineapple under the sea.....all kids shout ‘Spongebob Squarepants!’. • To increase difficulty you can have the Plankton face the opposite way, lie on the ground etc. 	
30 minutes	<p><u>3 v 3</u></p>	
5 minutes	<p><u>Cool Down</u> - Follow the leader.</p>	

EVALUATION:



MASS PREMIER SOCCER LESSON PLAN

Age Group: U6 – Smart Soccer

Theme of Session: Passing (Monsters and Ghosts) – Week 6.

<u>TIME</u>	<u>ORGANIZATION</u>	<u>COACHING POINTS</u>
10 minutes	<p><u>Mud Monsters –</u> All players dribble around inside the ‘Mud swamps’. The players all have a ball each . The Coach will begin the game by being the 1st Mud Monster. If the Mud Monster manages to place his foot on top of the ball then that player become ‘stuck in the mud’ and needs to hold their ball above their head, open their legs and shout for help. The only way they can be released is if another player dribbles up and passes their ball through the ‘frozen’ players open legs. The two hardest working players will become the Mud Monsters for the next game.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep the ball close to them with small touches • Head up to avoid the Mud Monsters • Side of the foot pass through the legs
15 minutes	<p><u>Ghostbusters –</u> Set out a 20x10 yd area. Pair up the players on opposite sides of the grid with a ball between 2. Place 6 cones across the middle of the area with a ball on top of each. The players are all ‘Ghostbusters’ with the balls in the middle the ghosts. Players pass their ball (ghost gun) to try and hit the ghost in the middle. They take it in turns until the ball in the middle has been knocked off. Whoever knocks it off gets a point. It’s a competition between each pair. Progression: Pass with only right foot Pass with only left foot Move further away from ball in the middle, longer passes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pass with the inside of your foot • Lock your ankle • Aim for center of ball – call it the magic spot.
30 minutes	<p><u>3v3</u> – inside a 30 x 20 yard area</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have the players who are not playing cheer on their teammates • If not playing they MUST stay inside their ‘dugout’
5 minutes	<p><u>Cool Down</u> –Follow the Leader.</p>	

EVALUATION:



MASS PREMIER SOCCER LESSON PLAN

Age Group: U6 – Smart Soccer

Theme of Session: Passing (Party Time!) – Week 7.

<u>TIME</u>	<u>ORGANIZATION</u>	<u>COACHING POINTS</u>
10 minutes	<p><u>Hungry Jack and the Donuts –</u> Area: 25x15 Two players called Hungry.....(whatever their name is) and have one ball each. The remaining players are Donuts are being chased around field by the hungry players who want to eat the donuts!. Donuts are allowed to jump around and avoid being hit within the area. When hungry player has a bite of the donut (hits player between knee and foot), they get a ball from coach and become a 'hungry' too. The last two donuts become the first two 'hungry players' for next round.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Side of the foot to pass • Strike in the centre of the ball
15 minutes	<p><u>Coconuts –</u> All players have a ball, They dribble around inside the set area. All around the area (fair ground) are cones with balls placed on top (coconut shy) Players are walking around the fair ground dribbling soccer ball until coach shouts 'party time'. At this time players have to stop their ball and pass it to try and knock off the nearest 'coconut'. Players keep score. They can't go back to the same cone twice in a row. Progression: Right foot only Left foot only Can't hit the closet coconut (having to pass it further)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Side of the foot to pass the ball • Strike through the centre of the ball • Watch the foot making contact with the ball
30 minutes	<p><u>3v3</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have the players who are not playing cheer on their teammates • If not playing they MUST stay inside their 'dugout' • Must have one pass to their teammates before they can shoot
5 minutes	<p><u>Cool Down – Follow the leader.</u></p>	

EVALUATION:



MASS PREMIER SOCCER LESSON PLAN

Age Group: U6 – Smart Soccer

Theme of Session: Shooting (Under the Sea) – Week 8.

<u>TIME</u>	<u>ORGANIZATION</u>	<u>COACHING POINTS</u>
10 minutes	<p>Crab Soccer – set out a 20x20 yd area with a goal on one line. Split the players into 2 teams. 1 team starts on the end line (opposite the goal). The other players are positioned as crabs around the area (in crab position). One at a time players dribble through the crabs and shoot at goal. Switch teams once all players have had a shot.</p> <p>Progression: Can only shoot with right foot Can only shoot with left foot Shoot with laces only Shoot with inside only Change the target, smaller area</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shoot as early as possible • Accuracy, away from the line • Speed dribbling, close control
15 minutes	<p>Soccer Fishing – Players get in pairs. Each player stands about 5yds apart from the other, each in-between 2 cones (a goal). Players take it in turns to shoot at each others goal. The players with the ball is the fisherman and the other player is the fish. Every time they score a goal, they catch a fish. Have a competition to see who can catch the most!</p> <p>Progression: One foot only Play a competition, players play someone different every go</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strike the ball with the Laces • Head over the top of the ball.
30 minutes	<p>3v3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have as many shots as you can • Strike the ball with the Laces
5 minutes	<p>Cool Down – Thank the players for all their hard work over the past eight weeks, and re-emphasize the importance of practicing and playing with the ball as much as possible.</p>	

EVALUATION:

ADDENDUM

Small-sided Games – 3v3 with no GK

Every practice should conclude with a small-sided game. Remember that the game is the best teacher of all. Your main aim is to create a **SAFE, FUN, EDUCATIONAL** environment in which your players can develop. This should be the largest portion of your practice – about thirty minutes in length.

Organization

- 1.) Field Size: 30x20yds
- 2.) Equipment: Use cones to clearly mark out the area of the field.
- 3.) Use upright cones or flags as goals and place them about 6 feet apart.
- 4.) Use pinneys to avoid confusion amongst players.
- 5.) Play with a SIZE 3 ball.
- 6.) Be flexible with your playing time– your main aim is that all players have a positive experience. You can vary the playing periods and make sure to allow time for substitutions and water breaks.
- 7.) Use the parents – have the parents stand around the perimeter of the field and stop the ball and players from disappearing into the wilderness.
 - 3v3 will promote players touching the ball and being involved as much as possible.
 - Keep instructions clear and to a minimum and use your enthusiasm to keep all players motivated.
 - Give the teams names and generate excitement without putting emphasis on outcome.
 - Always stress the importance of fair play and sportsmanship and have the players shake hands/high five at the end of each game.

By the end of your session make sure that all your players have achieved some measure of success. Call the team in for a group huddle and say goodbye.

COACHING GUIDELINES

There are four main pillars of soccer, which are evident at every level of the game – **TECHNICAL, TACTICAL, PHYSICAL and PSYCHOLOGICAL**.

Clearly there will be different emphasis placed on each one depending on the age and ability of the player.

It is important that a coach has clear goals for himself/herself and for his/her team prior to working with any age group.

1.) Technical

Scheme of work	-	8 week program
Themes		
Weeks 1-5	-	Dribbling
Weeks 6-7	-	Passing
Week 8	-	Shooting

Week 1 - Small, soft touches on the ball. Keep their head up while dribbling. The Stop Turn – stop the ball with sole of foot. Hop over ball putting same foot on ground first. Bring other foot through and take away with outside of foot.

Week 2 – Keep the ball close to them using small touches on the ball. Dribbling with their head up.

Week 3 – Use both feet, keep the ball close to them and dribble with their head up. Big Toe Little Toe Move - soft touch with the Big Toe (across the body), harder touch with the Little Toe (to the outside of the body). Use the same foot to complete the move.

Week 4 – Using both feet with small touches and dribbling with their head up. Using the two moves – Stop Turn and Big Toe Little Toe, during the games. Introduce Drag Back Turn. Use the moves to change direction and attempting to beat opponents

Week 5 – The Step Over Move – place both feet at the side of the ball with the strongest foot nearest the ball, take the strongest foot around the ball and place down on the opposite side, the upper body has moved downwards (to throw the defender off balance), and then the weaker foot takes the ball

away in the opposite direction. Encourage all three moves to be performed under pressure in the games.

Week 6 – Passing the ball with the side of the foot, locking your ankle and keeping your eye on the ball. Dribbling under pressure from the Mud Monsters.

Week 7 – Pass with the side of the foot, get close to the ball AND watch the foot making contact with the ball and strike the centre of the ball.

Week 8 – Strike the ball with the Laces and have your head over the top of the ball. Practice all the moves taught and all the top tips given over the eight weeks.

2.) Tactical

- Coaches need not concern themselves with tactical considerations when working with this age group.
- There should be no emphasis on playing set positions at this age range.
- At this stage of their development players are very egocentric and are not ready to make decisions on the field other than knowing when they are thirsty, tired or need to go to the bathroom.
- There should be virtually no instruction on the rules of the game, other than getting them going in the right direction.

3.) Psychological

- The main psychological goal for players at this stage of their development is to have **FUN**.
- Coaches need to ensure that their players receive an exciting and positive introduction to the game of soccer to ensure future participation.
- There should be absolutely no emphasis placed on winning games.

4.) Physical

- Players at this age find it fun to be active. Keep them moving with a ball as much as possible.
- Any fitness that they receive should be as a result of playing the game of soccer. Use soccer games to improve balance and coordination.