

Coaching Recommendations for U11 and U12.

Practice Sessions

Players at this age group now need to practice their fundamental skills in opposed situations. The majority of your sessions need to be done in 1v1 and 2v2 situations. We must also start thinking about your players discipline and attitude. Make sure the players arrive on time, get them to clean their cleats and ensure they do their best at all times.

It is also important to check that your players are doing their homework as education is important.

Encourage your players to watch top class soccer games on TV.

Passing.

Players need to be able to pass the ball with the inside and outside of their foot.

Players need to be able to do a chip pass.

Players need to be able to do a volley pass.

The lofted pass needs to be introduced at the U12 age level.

Players should know the importance of the speed of the pass.

Players need to learn when to play forward, sideways and back.

The basic fundamentals still apply:

- Accuracy
- Speed/Pace
- Faking/Disguise
- Timing

Control.

Players need to be able to control the ball with their knee and chest.

Players need to be able to shield the ball from pressure.

Players need to learn to control a ball as a means to an end

Players need to understand the fundamentals of ball control:

- To get their body behind the ball
- To assess the flight of the ball
- To decide which part of their body they are going to use to control the ball
- To relax on contact with the ball
- To control the ball away from pressure
- To get the ball out of their feet so they can get their heads up.

Dribbling.

Players must be encouraged to take risks and not worry about failure.

Players need to be able to dribble in 1v1, 1v2 and 2v2 situations.

Players need to know when and where to dribble in game situations.

Players should know the basic fundamentals of dribbling.

- When to change speed/pace
- How to change direction
- How to fake or improvise
- They must know they attack defenders with speed and pace

Defending.

Players need to know how and when to pressure the ball.

Players need to understand the importance of patience.

Players need to know how to put pressure on the ball, how to be patient and delay in 1v1 and 2v2 situations.

Players must learn how to cover in 2v2 situations.

Players must understand they need to be able to head the ball in defending and attacking situations.

Players must understand the following basic fundamentals of defending:

- To communicate as a team
- To get their body between the ball and the target when they lose possession
- When to pressure the player on the ball
- How to be patience and delay play
- How to cover their team mate
- Players need to know that they mark their player inside and goal side

Shooting.

Players need to be able to do a power shot with either foot.

Players need to be able to know when to use power or finesse.

Players need to learn how to finish from volleys.

Players need to learn to finish in the penalty box in 1v1 and 2v2 situations.

Players must know the importance of hitting the target when shooting.

Players must follow their shots for any rebounds.

Heading.

Players need to continue learning how to head the ball correctly as individuals.

Players need to understand the difference between attacking and defending headers.

Players are to be encouraged to attack the ball when heading.

Flexibility

Stretching and cool downs must still be used at this age level

Games.

There now is the addition of results being recorded during the games and I feel that this puts added pressure on coaches and players.

As a coach you must identify a player's strengths and weakness' to help them choose their correct position.

Do not be afraid to let players play different positions.

I encourage you to ensure players get an equal amount of playing time as it is important for their development. Playing time will however be determined by the player's attitude and attendance to practice and their mentality during games.

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