



U8 Coaching Guidelines

Georgia FC Coaching Guidelines are designed to provide a framework or set of guidelines for each coach to develop their *own* coaching style within the guidelines.

U8 Coaching Philosophy

At this age (U8) coaches should:

- Avoiding the 3L's (Lines, Laps & Lectures)
- Learning through Games/Activities (i.e. tag etc.)
- Maximize the number of touches each player's gets with the ball by utilizing drills that require each player to have a ball vs. having 1 ball and a line of players waiting to touch it.
- **Kicking Is Not Soccer (KINS)**
- Only kick the ball when it's a shot on goal
- When we have ball, entire team attacks. When other team has ball, our entire team is on defense.
- Practices are for learning; games are for seeing if we learned.
- Having Fun & Letting 'em Play....
- The Game is the greatest teacher.

Characteristics of U8 Players

- They go at 1 speed (fast) and in 2 directions <->.
- They are willing to give the ball to someone they know.
- Just because they know how to pass, doesn't mean they know when or where to pass.
- They can work successfully in pairs.
- They are sensitive to any kind of criticism
- They need training for agility & coordination
- Their bodies do not benefit from physical fitness training.

What to teach at practice

- **Controlling/Receiving the ball (20%)**
 - This is how the player gets control of a moving ball.
 - We will be focusing on the player controlling the ball with all surfaces of their feet.
- **Dribbling/Ball Control (60%)**
 - This is what happens after the player controls the ball.
 - It is the *MOST* important element in any player's game.

For the Love of the Game...



- Dribbling is the foundation and preparation for all the other fundamental skills of soccer, such as controlling, passing, and shooting.
- **Shooting/Striking (10%)**
 - Most people think that shooting hard is the most important part, but it is really the placement of the shot that is most important, which is controlled by which part of the foot strikes which part of the ball.
 - Becoming comfortable with touching, moving and striking the ball with different parts of the foot will be our focus.
- **Passing (10%)**
 - Passing is how the ball moves between players of the same team.
 - It is usually done with the instep of the foot.
 - It requires that the player have balance and coordination.
 - Placement of the plant foot, body position and ankle strength all contribute to the execution of a pass.

Goal of U8 Program

The goal of the U8 program is to develop confident dribblers and passers so as they move up to U10 they will have the **technical skills** necessary to know "*when*" and "*where*" to pass the ball building on the technical skills learned in U8 of "*how*" to pass the ball. Your practices should be structured so that at the end for the season you will see improvements in your player's ability to:

- Dribble in traffic & looking up while dribbling
- Change directions & speed while dribbling
- Know "*how*" to pass & strike the ball using proper technique
- Use multiple surfaces of the foot to control, dribble, pass and strike the ball.
- Use both feet
- Ball Control
- Agility & Coordination
- Work successfully in pairs
- Creative problem solving

There is **NO** tactical work to be done with this age group, only technical work, so please only work on technical ball skills that **maximize the number of touches** each player gets with ball during every practice.

U8 Games

- Two 20 minute halves with a 5 minute half time.
- Small Sided Games will be played 6v6 (5 field players & 1 goalie per team)
- There is 1 goalie per team and 1 referee.
- No offside's rule.
- All free kicks awarded are **INDIRECT**.
- No Penalty Kicks



- No score is kept (Success at the U8 age is measured by how many times players can dribble past opponents & and the team can string together the occasional pass.)
- After the game parents from both teams form a "tunnel" for the kids to go through.

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