

TRAINING RESOURCES



Tips For The New Football Coach

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BBFC
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Football Club

Tips for the new football coach

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HELPFUL HINTS FOR THE NEW COACH



Tips for the New Football Coach

Some new coaches are skeptical when they are asked to coach their child's team. The fear lies in the unknown.

There are some important tips that will make your first time as a coach a pleasant one for players, parents, and most of all you.

- 1. Have FUN!** Have a good time and make it FUN for the players. A coach's interaction with the players should always be positive and the more the coach engages with the kids, the more they will respond.
- 2. Be FAIR.** Being fair is very important too. It's a coach's job to make sure each player has equal playing time, make sure players play each position, and be sure to include everyone.
- 3. Be POSITIVE.** Being positive includes every interaction with players, parents, officials, and other coaches. It's always good to set this standard at the beginning of the year so that your parents and players are all on the same wavelength.
- 4. Ask for Parent Involvement.** At the beginning of the year, ask for parent assistance during practice. This will help get parents involved with their child's play and will help you reduce the player/coach ratio. This is especially helpful in younger players. For young players, try to keep the ratio about 4 kids to each coach. This ratio will depend greatly on your kid's age and skill.
- 5. Focus on TEAMWORK.** As a coach, you often will have one or two star players on your team. It is important to grow these players and make them even stronger players; however, it is important to focus on teamwork to get the work done.

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6. Set GROUND RULES. Before the season starts, meet with the team and parents and establish the ground rules. You will want to cover things such as:

- sideline behavior – make sure they know they are welcome to cheer, but it is up to the coach and the assistant to do the coaching;
- have players arrive to practice and games on time;
- notify the coach if absent or late to game or practice;
- players are to sit with the team while not in the game.

7. Know what to practice. As a new coach, it is hard to come up with games that are appropriate for that level of player. Make sure you are playing small sided games with younger kids, which will focus on game-like situations. Make sure you prepare properly and have everything you need to coach football.

8. Take Coaching Courses. Many associations will offer coaching education. I encourage you to spend the extra time to become educated and seek help from experienced coaches.

In closing, I simply encourage you to accept the coaching position if you are given the opportunity. It might seem scary at first, but there are many resources in which you can learn to become an effective coach. It does take some practice, so don't expect to be perfect your first go-round. Every season will be a learning experience and make sure you learn from your mistakes.

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How to Work With the Parents

In order to have a successful soccer season, it is important to foster good parent behaviors on the sideline.

In order to have a successful soccer season, it is important to foster good parent behaviours on the sideline. Majority of the parents involved in youth sports are supportive and caring people who only want the best for their young soccer players.

Some of us know that even though majority of the parents fall into this category, every once in a while your team has that one problem parent who causes a season of aggravation and irritation.

If you have been on a team like this before, you know that you don't want your team to go down that disappointing path of destruction. Remember that many issues can be headed off in the beginning by laying down expectations and ground rules at the beginning of the season as well as their roles and responsibilities.

The parents must realise that for a team to be successful it is important for teamwork among players, parents and coaches. The most important, but most overlooked is the teamwork between the coach and parents.

If parents and coaches have a good relationship, the benefits for the young players are tremendous.

On the other hand, coaches and parents who clash about playing time or the position that little Jimmy is playing spoil the experience for that child and often affects other players as well.

Often times that negativity boils over to the other parents who now start wondering why little Johnny isn't playing the position he should be playing. One bad apple spoils the bunch. And coming from a coach who has been there and done that, I can tell you that knowing that you are under a microscope during the game affects how effective and confident I coach, and often negatively affects my practices.

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So as a rule of thumb keep this in mind:

1. Be Proactive with them.
2. Involve them.
3. Communicate with them.

Be proactive with them. At the beginning of the season, have a meeting with all of the parents and outline your expectations and coaching methods. Make sure you paint a clear picture of how you plan to handle the season.

Make sure to set clear expectations about playing time, your plan concerning player position rotations, parent's participation, etc.

When parents hear first hand that you are more concerned with skill development over playing time, you leave no room for issues later.

Involve them. Plain and simple, instead of the parent just being a taxi to and from soccer practice, find ways to involve them in practice. Get them involved in drills, scrimmages.

Communicate with them. Besides only having a preseason meeting with the parents, make sure you keep the communication lines open. Talk to the parents about their child's progress, strengths and weaknesses and offer suggestions for the child to improve while not at practice.

This helps involves the parents in their child's development and puts responsibility back on the parent and player to seek additional help in certain areas and check in with the parents from time to time. Communicate with the parents on how to make the child's experience a positive and fun one.

Sometimes despite of your efforts, problems may arise with parents. If this occurs, make sure you remain in control of the situation and I have found that it is better to handle the situation sooner than later. The longer you wait, the more the issue escalates and starts to spiral out of control.

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Remember to Do Your Homework

Whether you have recently volunteered to coach youth soccer to spend time with your kids or because your child's team desperately needs a coach you must understand that you have taken on a large task.

You have plenty of work to do behind the scenes to ensure the perfect season. You have just taken on the job of teaching young kids the most popular sport in the world.

Whether you have recently volunteered to coach youth football to spend time with your kids or because your child's team desperately needs a coach you must understand that you have taken on a large task and you have plenty of work to do behind the scenes to ensure the perfect season.

Since many youth soccer coaches have never coached or played football you have some homework ahead of you to fulfill your responsibilities of this task. As a new soccer coach, you must get a handle on the basics such as rules, terminology and the strategies of youth football.

Your homework as a coach starts by finding out the specific special rules that your league operates under. These rules typically vary depending on the experience level and age of the players.

Things such as ball size, field size, goal size, number of players, and whether you play with a goalkeeper or not will need to be established before getting started. Contact your youth age coordinator to find the specifics on how your league operates.

Next, get a rulebook and learn the rules of the game. If your age level plays with the offside's rule, make sure to pay close attention to this rule. Offside's is the most controversial rule of soccer and knowing the rule is very important. In addition, you should focus on rules such as indirect or direct kick, throw-ins, corner kicks and goal kicks.

Lastly make sure you read articles, tips, books and watch instructional videos and pick up on strategies for your age group. Often associations put on coaching clinics for all skill level of coaches which can give you a big jump start on the season.

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Things Every Coach Needs for Successful Football Practices

Hey Coaches! Football season is around the corner and it's time to get prepared and make sure you have the tools to make your practices more successful. There are certain items that every coach needs to run a smooth successful football practice. We've made the list; you need to check it twice.

1. First on the list is a football for every player. I encourage players to each bring a ball, but I also have a supply of 5-8 balls that I always bring to my training sessions just incase.
2. Second item on the list is a ball pump as it is impossible to play football with flat balls.
3. A supply of disk cones. You should keep a supply of 30-40 at all times. You never know when you need to build a large grid or sidelines to a game. Use disk cones at almost every training session at least once.
4. Next, a small supply of tall cones. You should keep 6-8 tall cones handy when you need a small goal or window to stand out from the disk cones.
5. Practice vests are a must. Small sided games and drills are important to the development of youth players and players must know who's who. Coloured practice vests are crucial to successful small-sided games.
6. Practice Sticks or corner flags. Both of these items are great for visual boundaries, goals, and fitness training. These are very versatile and are an important part of some of training.
7. A Small foldaway goal or Pugg goal is great for small-sided games. It takes the guessing out of whether or not the goal was scored and reduces player confrontation. With small foldaway goals it's either in or it's out. This is a must have for all age groups.
8. For older kids (U-12 and above) you should have access to a full size goal or own a portable full size goal. These are not cheap, so find a sponsor or have the team pitch in to buy this item.

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9. Another "item" necessary for a successful practice is for the coach to be EARLY to set up the practice. The coach should plan on arriving 15-20 minutes before the team arrives in order to set up the practice field. Being organized is very important for a successful practice and this helps by setting the field early.
10. Probably the most important "item" is A GOOD PLAN. Have a written plan of your practice and write down coaching points and highlights to talk to the players about. Don't be scared to refer to your plan if you forget a drill or talking point. This help you stay organized and the players get the full benefit of your coaching abilities.
11. Last but definitely not least, you need players. Make sure your team arrives to practices early ready to go when practice starts.

As you can see there are many important items necessary for a successful training practice, but now that you know the secret, you're on your way to making every practice a successful football practice.

List of the training items below:

- 1) Ball for Every Player
- 2) Ball pump
- 3) Disk Cones
- 4) Tall Cones
- 5) Practice vests
- 6) Practice sticks or corner flags
- 7) Small fold away goal or Pugg goal
- 8) Portable full-size goal, younger kids pugg goal will do
- 9) Coach to show up early to set practice
- 10) A good practice plan!
- 11) Players to arrive on time

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How to Evaluate and Teach the Game

Team and player evaluation is a large part of being a **successful football coach**. From evaluating team and players' abilities, we are able to focus in on our team's strengths and weaknesses and structure our training sessions around these findings. Evaluating a team should be done at all events, and is easiest done in match situations, or even better when done during training sessions.

One of the most constructive ways to evaluate a team or team of players is to use "Free Play". Free Play allows coaches to quickly and easily evaluate the level of competency, creativity and commitment of each player. With that being said, Free play is one of the easiest and most effective ways to evaluate players' capabilities.

Basically "Free Play" is where players play without restrictions or very limited restrictions on time and space. Players are simply given a general direction on what they should accomplish, and are then left to play on their own while the coach evaluates the play.

During Free Play, players should be encouraged to work hard and players will develop their natural abilities and allows players to become more creative. This time will be very productive for both player and coach and will avoid wasteful time spent organising lines, keeping players attention, and time spent setting up drills. During this time, the coach should be looking for particular breakdowns in play and coach's observational powers will increase as they are forced to isolate individual action in a group.

As a coach it is your job to provide an environment for teaching players how to solve match problems. In many situations there are many options to solve the problem, and it's up to the coach to recognize these options and express them to the players. To teach players how to solve match problems the coach will need to set up training sessions that are close to match conditions. The training sessions should be set up as the players can repeatedly execute a specific skill, tactic or combination of each to solve the match problems. As a coach, you should start simple and progress to a more complex situation (static to dynamic).

When setting up the practice sessions, make sure you take into consideration the player's age and skill level. When talking to kids the coach should always remember to communicate in a language that is appropriate to the age of the players and the coach should not use complex terminology that is not understood by the players. Make sure each player is aware of the drill objective (reason for drill), which will allow the players to internalize the skill or tactic being taught.

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The coach should make sure he has prepared a session that allows each group to be easily manageable with restrictions and consequences appropriate for the players.

As much as possible the coach should try to achieve match-like situations and the coach should step in at times for correcting players and giving coaching points.

The coach should always reevaluate the players and training session to make sure the players are getting the appropriate skill or tactic and are able to transfer the training session to the game.

So when it comes to teaching players the game, there are some steps to take to become a more effective coach.

These steps are:

1. State the tactical or technical objective you are trying to accomplish
2. Demonstrate the skill or drill
3. Involve all players and let all players try it
4. Analyze the level of play and skills being used by players.
4. Evaluate effort, commitment and continue evaluating play.

Please remember that as a coach it is up to you to communicate individual instructions clearly and to use ethical psychological motivation. These are our kids, and a little word of encouragement impacts a player much more than a degrading or embarrassing words.

In summary, a **great football coach** always attempts to simulate a match in the learning environment and should always strive to build match conditions. Each piece of the training session should be communicated in a clear and positive manner and feedback should be provided to players on an individual basis. If a coach can follow these simple rules outline above they will drastically see improvements in their team and players.

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Coaching Football: Boys vs. Girls

This coaching tip explains some of the social and psychological differences between coaching girls' football versus boys' football.

Coaching Boys Football

1. Intense Motivational Techniques work well
2. Coach should focus on the individuals rather than the team.
3. Encouragement is not always expected.
4. More distance relationship between the coach and players
5. Can handle longer more intense training sessions

Coaching Girls Football

1. People oriented, democratic approach works best
2. Coach should focus on the relationships among players
3. Encouragement from the coach is a necessity
4. More interaction between coach and players
5. Shorter training sessions

From these points, you can say the main difference between coaching boys' football versus coaching girls' football is not the training sessions, but the different social and psychological factors.

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How youth football players learn the game

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Observation –

When young football players watch elite players such as players in the English Premier League, Champions League or Major League Soccer (MLS), this gives them a role model to mimic their play and helps young players set goals. These players who watch older elite football players play in practice and in games often develop a much higher level of understanding of the tactics behind the game.

Imitation –

Often times the above mentioned “observation” turns into young football players trying to mimic or re-enact the techniques learned from the older elite football player.

Practice –

This stage is the area where the player works on and improves their technique. This can be juggling by one's self, playing football with a friend at the local school, or practicing in a group or team setting.

The Game (Testing) –

This is the area where the player attempts to perform the practiced techniques during a game. This can be 1v1 with a friend, 2v2, 4v4, 8v8 or a full-sided 11v11.

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Making a Football Lesson Plan

Making a Lesson Plan - Design, Diagram and Make Sense: Get the know how on designing your football practice sessions, know how to make your own diagrams, and make sure the drill makes sense and focuses on the skill you are wanting to teach.

Design, Diagram and Make Sense

When making a lesson plan remember the following points:

- Design your session for no the number of players on the team.
- Make sure your drills and activities are age specific.
- Design activities to flow from simple to complex – add elements of the game as you progress.
- Design session to include:
 - i. Warm-up.
 - ii. Small-sided activity (e.g. 4v2 keep away).
 - iii. Expanded small-sided activity, with discretion.
 - iv. 6v6 (5v5 plus keepers) to two large goals.
- Use progression for teaching techniques or tactics as a guide for planning session.
- Use the appropriate space on the lesson plan to diagram your activity, describe the organization and list the key coaching points.
- Include the objectives of the game or exercise and the method of scoring.
- If using restrictions, make sure they are applicable to your objective and topic.
- Include the general dimensions for the playing area – you should be prepared to adjust the size during your session if needed.
- Use the area of the field that is most applicable to your topic if possible to provide a clearer reference for your players.
- Make sure your activities are realistic to the game.

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When diagramming, remember the following points:

- Keep diagrams simple.
- Use a straight line for a pass – a dotted line for a run – a scribbled line for a dribble.
- Indicate size of the area on lesson plan next to diagram.
- Indicate neutral players with an N.

Make sure your practice makes sense:

- Does it look like football?
- Will your players understand where the practice fits in the game?
- Are the objectives you set for the players to achieve realistic?
- Are your instructions clear and to the point?
- Does the activity or practice bring out the actual elements of the game?

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