



Developmental Needs for U6 and U7 Players



Key Ingredient: Having Fun!! All players should be involved in every aspect of each activity you play. Give each player a ball to perform their tasks in your practice and enjoy the game! Quantity is more important than the quality.

The most important rule when coaching players at such a young age is to see whether all players are included in each activity you are doing and that they all seem to be enjoying themselves while performing it. Players at this age are just beginning to be introduced to the game of soccer, so we want them to continue coming back to play and wanting to play more, which will in turn make them better soccer players. Don't focus on trying to get the players to perfect a skill, but allow them to touch the ball and play with the ball as much as you can.

For better development of the player, limit the games and activities to be all-inclusive with the entire team or 1 v 1. Players can only conceptualize things in one range, so don't have all sorts of other distractions involved in the games - that is why you see the bunch ball or bumble-bee soccer. Players at this age only think about themselves and not sharing - if they are not involved in the activity, then they will not participate in it. Try to allow each player an opportunity to succeed, whether it is to score a goal, dribble the ball to a certain area, etc. You should only be practicing once a week for a maximum time of 60 minutes.

Here are some objectives to try and obtain in your trainings:

1. Let the Children have fun and play!!
2. Introduce the basic laws of the game - i.e. corner kicks, Kick-off, Throw-ins, out of bounds, hand-balls, etc.
3. Encourage the players to use both feet and different surfaces of their bodies
4. Demonstrate to players how to stop the ball
5. Keep players active in games you play and always try to include a soccer ball in all the games you play
6. Encourage all players to go forwards to attack the goal and back to defend it - don't worry about positions as much as asking the players if they have touched the ball yet?

Remember that you are teaching young players how to play the game. Always try to end your practices with the game - let the players play the game freely (3 v 3 for this age group). If they see you having fun, they will have fun too. The most important qualities of a coach at this age are to keep the players active, having fun with the games and not trying to over-coach the players. Let the players learn by doing many different things with the soccer ball and they will want to continue to play again!