

# Recreational Curriculum for U8 Ages



#1City1Club

4v4

Developed For Players Ranging Between the Ages of 7 & 8

U8



## Curriculum Developed for Players Ranging Between the Ages of 7 & 8

#1City1Club

### Philosophy:

Players need to have a good understanding that the game is built on controlling the ball. Keeping the ball close and under control should be heavy focus for this age group. Also this next step of development is geared toward lighting a passion for the game and helping them learn how to cooperate in pairs to keep possession together. This is not an overnight process, and will take time before it will become second nature. A big part of this level includes encouraging creativity along with developing good soccer habits.

### Goals

1. Foster a love for the game.
2. Improve comfort with the ball at the players feet. (Control it, don't just kick it!)
3. Develop players' confidence in possessing the ball under pressure.
4. Understand basic restarts (kickoffs, goal kicks, kick-ins)
5. Understanding beginning-level tactics (direction of play, spreading out when their team has the ball and pressure when they do not have it).
6. Learn to cooperate and work together in pairs.

### Team Shape for 4v4

The basic shape is that of a diamond, with a deep player who supports the attack from behind, two wide players near the touch lines, and a forward player who stretches the game forward. Players must be prepared to move to various areas on the field. Don't focus on positions but rather positioning, ie have a player supporting that area during the flow of the game. Players must be instructed to not steal the ball from their teammates but rather "find space" to support them. Spread out when their team has the ball and to stay connected to the player with the ball

When possession is lost, players should be instructed to recover and apply pressure to the ball.

### Standards

**Field Size:** 35 x 25 yards

**Number of Players:** 4 on each side (8 total) 4v4

**Goal Keeper:** No Goal Keepers

**Game Length:** 3 periods of 15 minutes each. 5 minute breaks.

**Ball Size:** 3

**Goal Size:** 4x6 feet

**Restarts:** No throw-ins. All restarts are with the foot (pass-in).





## Lesson 1

### Topic: Dribbling

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#### Warm-Up (5 min): Pick Up Soccer

As players arrive, divide them up and let them play!

#### Activity 1 (10 min): Red Light/Green Light

**Setup:** 1/2 of game field, all players have a ball

**Instructions:** To start, say "Yellow Light"! Players should dribble the ball around the playing area at a slow pace. Then say "Green Light"! Players should continue to dribble the ball but this time at a fast pace. Finally, say "Red Light"! Players should stop the ball and keep their foot on top of the ball in possession. Continue to control the drill with the frequency and variation of light changes!

**Coaching Points:** Instruct players to keep their heads up while dribbling. Players should also try and keep the ball close to their feet and not lose possession when it needs to be stopped.

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### Activity 2 (10 min): Let's Play Tag

**Setup:** 1/2 of game field

**Instructions:** All players start without their ball. Coach assigns 1 player to be the tagger. Other players must stay inside area and avoid being tagged. Play 2-3 rounds for about 45 seconds each.

1. Demonstrate different ways to avoid being tagged. Examples: changing directions, faking, stop and go.  
2. Repeat #1 except all players now play with a soccer ball. They must keep ball close at their feet.

**Coaching points:** Keep soccer ball close. Don't leave ball to avoid being tagged. Players should try different ways to avoid being tagged.

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### Activity 3 (15 min): Numbers Game

**Setup:** 20x25 field, split players into two teams and number them 1-5 (go higher if need be), players start by standing behind their goal. Coach has all the balls on the side.

**Instructions:** Coach passes a ball into the field, and calls out a number. Players with that number on each team then come out and play to goal. After goal or out of bounds they return to their starting point. Coach then passes a new ball onto the field and calls a new number. You can also call more than one number if you would like a 2v2 or 3v3 game.

**Coaching Points:** Just keep it simple and fun, try to keep players on the goal line, Remember, encourage successes and have fun with your players!

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### Activity 4 (15 min): Small Sided Games 4v4

**Setup:** Entire soccer field, divide players up into two teams and play 4v4

**Instructions:** Rotate players in and out every few minutes

**Coaching Points:** Have fun and encourage your players positively!



## Lesson 2

### Topic: Dribbling

### U8 - 4v4

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#### Warm-Up (5 min): Pick Up Soccer

As players arrive, divide them up and let them play!

#### **Activity 1 (10 min): Creative Dribbling**

**Setup:** 1/2 of game field, all players have a ball

**Instructions:** Coach instructs players to “move the ball around anyway you like”. Every 15 - 20 seconds, have them pick a new way....then another....then another. Tell them to “be creative”.

1. Coach then provides instructions on how to move the ball. Ex. right foot only, left foot, laces, inside of foot only, outside of foot only.

2. Coach then instructs players to “stop the ball using different parts of your body”. Every 15-20 seconds, have them pick a new way....then another....then another. Tell them to “be creative”.

3. Coach then provides instructions on how to stop the ball. Ex. knee, left ear, forehead, bottom of foot.

**Coaching Points:** Instruct players to keep ball close so that they can move it and stop it quickly.

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### **Activity 2 (10 min): Fast Food Drive-Thru**

**Setup:** 20x25 field. Setup 5x5 squares/fast food restaurants on each corner of the field and one in the middle. 5 total. Have the kids pick names for the fast food restaurants/zones.

**Instructions:** All players have one minute to dribble through as many fast food drive-thru/zones as they can. They cannot go through same drive-thru twice in a row. How many can you get?

1. Add a defender to close a drive-thru; all other players now try to find the open drive-thru. Defender can move from drive-thru to drive-thru. Players should always try to spot open restaurants. Play two or three rounds.

**Coaching Points:** Keep head up and ball close while dribbling to find the next restaurant to travel to.

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### **Activity 3 (15 min): Sharks & Minnows**

**Setup:** 1/2 of game field. Two goals on the sides.

**Instructions:** All players have a ball except for 1 shark. Coach is also a shark to start. Minnows start at one end of the grid. Sharks on the opposite line. Minnows try to cross to the other side without losing possession of their ball. The sharks defend their area by trying to steal the minnows' ball. Once a ball is stolen, the sharks must dribble it into one of the goals. If a minnow loses ball, they can try to steal it back from the shark before it gets into the goal. Minnows who successfully dribble across the sharks's line continue to round two. Each minnow who loses their ball will join the sharks. Last minnow with a ball is the winner. Play two or three rounds.

**Coaching points:** Keep soccer ball close and under control. Don't leave ball to avoid being caught by a shark. Players must turn away from pressure into space.

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### **Activity 4 (15 min): Small Sided Games 4v4**

**Setup:** Entire soccer field, divide players up to form 2 or 3 teams of 4

**Instructions:** Rotate players/teams out every few minutes

**Coaching Points:** Have fun and encourage your players to keep the ball close!



### Lesson 3

### Topic: Dribbling

### U8 - 4v4

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#### Warm-Up (5 min): Pick Up Soccer

As players arrive, divide them up and let them play!

#### Activity 1 (10 min): Back to Coach

**Setup:** 1/2 of game field, all players have a ball

**Instructions:** Coach stands in the middle of the playing area. One at a time each player hands their ball to the coach. The coach tosses the ball out and then has the player bring the ball back using a specific way to move the ball...

1. Hold the ball above your head, pick up ball and skip back, hop back, etc
2. Have players dribble ball back using laces only, outside of foot only, inside of foot only, etc. no hands. Coach will begin using his/her feet when playing a ball out.
3. Coach moves around the area...players must find coach in his/her new spot.

**Coaching Points:** Dribble using laces, no toes. Keep head up to find coach. Be creative with ways to return ball to coach.

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### Activity 2 (10min): Stuck in the Mud Tag

**Setup:** 1/2 of game field. Every player has a ball except two players who are the taggers.

**Instructions:** The players dribble their ball around the playing area while the two taggers try to tag them. If a player is tagged, they are frozen in the mud and must pick their ball up and hold it above their head shouting "HELP!" They can only be unstuck from the mud by another player who passes their ball between the frozen players' legs. Play two or three rounds. Change taggers every round.

**Coaching Points:** Keep head up, and keep ball close and under control to avoid the taggers.

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### Activity 3 (15 min): Gates Game

**Setup:** 1/2 of game field. Set up cones in sets of two. Each gate should be 1 yard wide. A gate is simply two cones set up 1 yd apart. Gates are scattered around the area.

**Instructions:** Players try to score points by dribbling through as many gates as they can in one minute. Players cannot go through the same gate two times in a row.

1. Play 2 or 3 one minute games. Players are encouraged to "beat" their last score.
2. Coach can block a gate at random so players must travel to the open gates.

**Coaching points:** Keep soccer ball close and under control. Find the "open gates".

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### Activity 4 (15 min): Small Sided Games 4v4

**Setup:** Entire soccer field, divide players up to form 2 or 3 teams of 4

**Instructions:** Rotate players/teams out every few minutes

**Coaching Points:** Have fun and encourage your players to keep the ball close!



## Lesson 4

### Topic: Ball Control/Turning

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#### Warm-Up (5 min): Pick Up Soccer

As players arrive, divide them up and let them play!

#### Activity 1 (10 min): Let's Play Tag!

**Setup:** 1/2 of game field. All players start game without ball. Give a bright-color vest to the tagger(s) to hold in their hand. Start with 2 taggers. Coaches can play too.

**Instructions:** The tagger must throw the vest at another player. If the player gets hit by the vest, then they become the new tagger. Play 2-3 rounds for 30-45 seconds each. (Between each round, ask players to demonstrate different ways to avoid being tagged.) Be tricky!

1. Repeat opening, except players now play with a soccer ball at their feet at all times. Cannot leave ball to tag or avoid being tagged. Play 2 or 3 rounds. (Between each round, ask players different ways to avoid being tagged.) Offer suggestions to players on how to avoid getting tagged.

**Coaching Points:** Keep ball under control. Turn away from pressure. Be creative. Find the space.

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### Activity 2 (10 min): Sharks & Minnows

**Setup:** 1/2 of game field. Two goals on the sides.

**Instructions:** All players have a ball except for 1 shark. Coach is also a shark to start. Minnows start at one end of the grid. Sharks on the opposite line. Minnows try to cross to the other side without losing possession of their ball. The sharks defend their area by trying to steal the minnows' ball. Once a ball is stolen, the sharks must dribble it into one of the goals. If a minnow loses ball, they can try to steal it back from the shark before it gets into the goal. Minnows who successfully dribble across the sharks's line go back for round two. Each minnow who loses their ball will join the sharks. Last minnow with a ball is the winner. Play two or three rounds.

**Coaching points:** Keep soccer ball close and under control. Don't leave ball to avoid being caught by a shark. Players must turn away from pressure into space. Sharks do not just kick ball away, they control it!

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### Activity 3 (15 min): 1v1, 2 goal game

**Setup:** 10x15 grid with two small goals on each end line. 1/2 players on each sideline. Two playing, others resting. Coach has all soccer balls on the side.

**Instructions:** Coach starts play by distributing ball to attacker on opposite side of grid. Attacker has option to attack either goal and can constantly change direction of play/attack. Play continues until goal is scored by either player or goes out of bounds. Rotate sides.

**Coaching points:** Turning away from pressure. Attack space.

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### Activity 4 (15 min): Small Sided Games 4v4

**Setup:** Entire soccer field, divide players up to form 2 or 3 teams of 4

**Instructions:** Rotate players/teams out every few minutes

**Coaching Points:** Encourage players to turn away from pressure while controlling the ball.



## Lesson 5

### Topic: Dribbling/Partners

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#### Warm-Up (5 min): Pick Up Soccer

As players arrive, divide them up and let them play!

#### Activity 1 (10 min): Red Light/Green Light

**Setup:** 1/2 of game field, all players have a ball

**Instructions:** To start, say "Yellow Light"! Players should dribble the ball around the playing area at a slow pace. Then say "Green Light"! Players should continue to dribble the ball but this time at a fast pace. Finally, say "Red Light"! Players should stop the ball and keep their foot on top of the ball in possession. Continue to control the drill with frequency and variation of stops and starts.

1. Instruct players how to dribble (inside of foot, outside of foot, or top of foot/laces).
2. Have players only use their other (weak) foot to dribble.

**Coaching Points:** Keep the ball close and under control...no toes while changing speed of dribble.

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### Activity 2 (10min): Forming Partners

**Setup:** 1/2 of game field. Every player has a ball.

**Instructions:** Players dribble around field using various types of dribbles...coach can specify inside, outside or top of foot. Coach then says a number from 1 - 4. Players then try to get into groups as quickly as possible. Whatever number the coach says, the players try to form a group of that amount. Players cannot leave their ball to form a group. Coach then has players resume dribbling and then says a different number and then players form a group. Repeat several times. Players should start to get into groups faster and faster.

1. Instead of coach saying a number out loud, the coach should just hold up fingers for numbers.
2. Coach should now move around the field, the players must pay attention to where the coach is so they can get the next number.

**Coaching Points:** Players must keep ball under control. Keep head up and find coach.

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### Activity 3 (15 min): Angry Birds

**Setup:** 1/2 of game field. Use cones to make 4 6x6 ft. squares. Place squares in each corner of the field. All "eggs" (soccer balls) are in the middle of the field. Divide players up into 4 teams. Each team is assigned a "nest" (one of the corner squares).

**Instructions:** Play 3 or 4 one minute games. All players start in their nest. Coach says "play"! All players then try to get the eggs back to their nest as quickly as possible. Players can steal eggs from other nests. No hands, no sitting on eggs, and no pushing. Team with most eggs wins.

1. Ask players how can they get more eggs before the timer runs out. Suggest that they work together.
2. Encourage players win the other teams' eggs.

**Coaching points:** Keep ball under control to dribble to their nest. Keep ball away from angry birds trying to steal their eggs.

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### Activity 4 (15 min): Small Sided Games 4v4

**Setup:** Entire soccer field, divide players up to form 2 or 3 teams of 4

**Instructions:** Rotate players/teams out every few minutes

**Coaching Points:** Encourage players to work together. Do not "joy stick coach".



## Lesson 6

### Topic: Partnerships/Passing

### U8 - 4v4

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#### Warm-Up (5 min): Pick Up Soccer

As players arrive, divide them up and let them play!

#### **Activity 1 (10 min): Back to Coach - with Partners**

**Setup:** 1/2 of game field, players get into sets of two with one ball between them.

**Instructions:** Coach stands in the middle of the playing area. One at a time each pair of players hands their ball to the coach. The coach tosses the ball out and then has the team bring the ball back using a specific way to move the ball...

1. Using their knees, using their shoulders, using their backs, using their foreheads, etc.
2. Players must pass the ball between them before bringing the ball back. They should work together. Coach demonstrates how to make a proper pass. (Pass with the inside of the foot, not the toe, with their heel pointing towards the ground and their toes up. Heels down, toes up!
3. Coach moves around the area...players must find coach in his/her new spot.

**Coaching Points:** Work together, stay connected with your partner. Good technique...Heels down, toes up!

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### **Activity 2 (10 min): Gates Game - with Partners**

**Setup:** 1/2 of game field. Set up cones in sets of two. Each gate should be 1 or 2 yards wide. A gate is simply two cones set up 1 yd. apart. Gates are scattered around the area. Players should be grouped into teams of two with one ball between them.

**Instructions:** Teams try to score points by passing their ball to their partner through as many gates as they can in one minute. Teams cannot go through the same gate two times in a row.

1. Play 2 or 3 one minute games. How many gates can you get?
2. Coach can block a gate at random so players must travel to the open gates.

**Coaching points:** Players must stay connected to their partner, don't get too far away. Heels down, toes up! Make a good pass through the gate. Find the "open gates".

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### **Activity 3 (15 min): 2v1 to goal**

**Setup:** 15x20 grid with two goals on each end line. Divide players up into three groups. Two sets of attackers beside goal and one set of defenders near the other goal.

**Instructions:** Coach starts play by distributing ball to attackers on opposite side of grid (first two in each line are playing, others resting). Attackers must work together to score on their goal. If defender gets ball he can score on his goal. Play continues until goal is scored by either team or goes out of bounds. Rotate sides so that everyone has a turn at attacker and defender.

**Coaching points:** Encourage team to work together and stay connected with their partner. Can't pass to your partner if they hide behind defender. Move to space with and without ball.

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### **Activity 4 (15 min): Small Sided Games 4v4**

**Setup:** Entire soccer field, divide players up to form 2 or 3 teams of 4

**Instructions:** Rotate players/teams out every few minutes

**Coaching Points:** Have fun and encourage your players to stay connected with their partners.





## Lesson 7

### Topic: Change of Speed & Direction

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#### Warm-Up (5 min): Pick Up Soccer

As players arrive, divide them up and let them play!

#### Activity 1 (10 min): Stop & Go Turns

**Setup:** 1/2 of game field.

**Instructions:** Players will dribble around area trying to stay as far away as they can from another player by finding space. Keep the ball close and under control.

1. Show players that they can use a stop & go to change speeds. Have players dribble and then stop the ball with the bottom of foot and then go (dribble faster) to space.
2. Ask players "where is the space?" Encourage them to "find space" and "away from pressure".
3. Show players that they can turn the ball with the outside of their foot to change directions. Use the pinky toe to push the ball away to make a right turn or left turn.

**Coaching points:** Keep soccer ball close and under control. Players should use stop & go and turns to dribble into space.

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### Activity 2 (10 min): Bandits

**Setup:** 1/2 of game field.

**Instructions:** Select 2 players to be "bandits". Bandits start without ball. All other players have a ball. The Bandits will try to steal any players' ball. Players who loose ball will then become bandits and must try to steal a ball from another player. Play two or three 1 minute games.

1. Repeat game except that now bandits must try to get ball back to their hideout (small goal). If player loses ball, they should try to win it back before it gets to hideout. Play until there is only one surviving dribbler.
2. Repeat opening game. This time, have players pair up with only one ball between them. If bandit wins ball from the pair, both become bandits. Play two or three 1 minute games.

**Coaching points:** Keep ball under control. Avoid bandits by changing speed and direction. Players need to stay connected with their partner.

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### Activity 3 (15 min): 1v1, 2 goal game

**Setup:** 10x15 grid with two small goals on each end line. 1/2 players on each sideline. Two playing, others resting. Coach has soccer balls on side.

**Instructions:** Coach starts play by distributing ball to attacker on opposite side of grid. Attacker has option to attack either goal and can constantly change direction of play/attack. Play continues until goal is scored by either player or goes out of bounds. Rotate sides.

**Coaching points:** Change directions to turn away from pressure. Use stop & go to create space.

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### Activity 4 (15 min): Small Sided Games 3v3

**Setup:** Entire soccer field, divide players up to form 2 or 3 teams of 3

**Instructions:** Rotate players/teams out every few minutes

**Coaching Points:** Encourage players to turn away from pressure and dribble into space.



## Lesson 8

### Topic: Running with the Ball

#### U8 - 4v4

#1City1Club

#### Warm-Up (5min): Pick Up Soccer

As players arrive, divide them up and let them play!

#### **Activity 1 (10 min): Speed Bumps!**

**Setup:** 15 x 20 yard grid. All players have a ball. Coach places 10-12 cones randomly around grid. These are the speed bumps.

**Instructions:** All players start out on one side. On coaches command, all players try to dribble across grid to the other side without hitting a speed bump. If a player hits a cone, he must return to starting point and try again. Play until all players arrive without hitting a speed bump. Play 3 or 4 rounds.

1. Players are instructed to increase their speed (running with the ball)...faster!
2. Coach adds more cones....stay in control and avoid hitting a cone.
3. Players must now use their weakest foot only to cross.

**Coaching Points:** Instruct players to keep ball close while running with the ball. Avoid speed bumps!

Water Break (2 min)

#### **Activity 2 (10 min): Target Practice**

**Setup:** 1/2 of game field. Place balls on top of cones randomly spaced in grid to act as a target.

**Instructions:** Divide players up, 1/2 with a ball, 1/2 without a ball. On coaches command, players with ball try to knock as many of the targets off as possible by passing their ball into the target. Players without ball try to set them back up as quickly as possible. Play 1 minute games. How many can you knock off?

1. Play 2 or 3 rounds then rotate teams with ball.

**Coaching points:** Keep soccer ball close while running to next target. Pass ball to hit target.

Water Break (2 min)

#### **Activity 3 (15 min): Pacman**

**Setup:** 1/2 of game field. Scatter all cones of different colors around grid.

**Instructions:** Select 2 or 3 players to be ghosts, everyone else is a Pacman. A Pacman is trying to pick up as many cones as possible while trying to avoid being hit by a soccer ball from a ghost. Ghosts dribble their soccer ball and try to hit a Pacman below the knee. If a Pacman is hit, he drops all cones he has and then gets a ball and becomes a ghost. Coaches re-distribute cones as needed during play. Play 2 or 3 rounds, have different players starting out as ghosts.

1. All players must dribble soccer ball (pacmen and ghosts).

**Coaching Points:** Players must keep ball close while running and chasing a pacman. Only hits below the knee will count.

Water Break (2 min)

#### **Activity 4 (15 min): 4v4 Game**

**Setup:** Divide players up to form 2 teams.

**Instructions:** Play 4v4 on full field. Rotate players out every few minutes as needed.

**Coaching Points:** Have fun and encourage your players to keep the ball close while running.



## Lesson 9

### Topic: Finding Space

U8 - 4v4

#1City1Club

#### Warm-Up (5min): Pick Up Soccer

As players arrive, divide them up and let them play!

#### **Activity 1 (10 min): Caterpillar Game**

**Setup:** 1/2 of game field.

**Instructions:** Coach selects 2 players to be the caterpillar. The caterpillar players will join hands and attempt to tag dribbling players. The caterpillar does not have a soccer ball. All other players must try to avoid being tagged by the caterpillar. If tagged then they discard ball and join the caterpillar. Play until only caterpillar is left. Play 2 or 3 rounds. Rotate players to start out as caterpillar.

1. Have two caterpillars at the same time.

**Coaching points:** Keep soccer ball close and under control. Don't leave ball to avoid being caught by the caterpillar. Players should turn away from pressure into space.

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### **Activity 2 (10 min): Hospital Tag**

**Setup:** 1/2 of game field. Coach select two players to become taggers. Taggers do not have a ball, everyone else has a soccer ball.

**Instructions:** Players dribble around area trying to avoid being tagged. If tagged, players hold body part touched with other hand. If tagged again, they hold both parts touched. If tagged a 3rd time, they then have to go to the doctor (coach) to get well. Play 3 or 4 one minute games. Rotate taggers every game.

1. Taggers now must dribble soccer ball to tag other players.

2. To get out of hospital, players must complete 10 toe taps before they can return to game.

**Coaching points:** All player must keep soccer ball close, do not leave your ball to tag or to avoid a tag.

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### **Activity 3 (15 min): Cops & Robbers**

**Setup:** 1/2 game field. Coach select 2 or 3 players to become cops. Cops have a soccer ball. Everyone else is a robber without a ball.

**Instructions:** Cops are trying to capture robbers by striking robbers below the knee with their soccer ball. If a robber is hit, he then gets a soccer ball and becomes a cop. Play until all robbers are captured. Play 2 or 3 games.

1. All players now have a soccer ball. Robbers must control ball and keep it close.

**Coaching Points:** Players cannot leave their soccer ball to avoid a passed ball. Cops must try to pass soccer ball into robbers legs (below the knee only). Avoid the cops!

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### **Activity 4 (15 min): Small Sided Games 4v4**

**Setup:** Entire soccer field, divide players up to form 2 or 3 teams of 4. No keepers!

**Instructions:** Rotate players/teams out every few minutes

**Coaching Points:** Encourage players to turn away from pressure and dribble into space.



## Lesson 10

### Topic: Games & Activities

#### U8 - 4v4

#1City1Club

#### Warm-Up (5 min): Pick Up Soccer

As players arrive, divide them up and let them play!

#### Activity 1 (10 min): Sharks & Minnows

**Setup:** 1/2 of game field. Two goals on the sides.

**Instructions:** All players have a ball except for 1 shark. Coach is also a shark to start. Minnows start at one end of the grid. Sharks on the opposite line. Minnows try to cross to the other side without losing possession of their ball. The sharks defend their area by trying to steal the minnows' ball. Once a ball is stolen, the sharks must dribble it into one of the goals. If a minnow loses ball, they can try to steal it back from the shark before it gets into the goal. Minnows who successfully dribble across the sharks's line go back for round two. Each minnow who loses their ball will join the sharks. Last minnow with a ball is the winner. Play two or three rounds.

**Coaching points:** Keep soccer ball close and under control. Don't leave ball to avoid being caught by a shark. Players must turn away from pressure into space.

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### Activity 2 (10 min): Angry Birds

**Setup:** 1/2 of game field. Use cones to make 4 6x6 ft. squares. Place squares in each corner of the field. All "eggs" (soccer balls) are in the middle of the field. Divide players up into 4 teams. Each team is assigned a "nest" (one of the corner squares).

**Instructions:** Play 3 or 4 one minute games. All players start in their nest. Coach says "play"! All players then try to get the eggs back to their nest as quickly as possible. Players can steal eggs from other nests. No hands, no sitting on eggs, and no pushing. Team with most eggs wins.

1. Ask players how can they get more eggs before the timer runs out. Suggest that they work together.
2. Encourage players win the other teams' eggs.

**Coaching points:** Keep ball under control to dribble to their nest. Keep ball away from angry birds trying to steal their eggs.

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### Activity 3 (15 min): Numbers Game - Get Outta There!

**Setup:** Full field, split players into two teams and assign direction to goal. All balls and players on half line on the side. Use 1, 2, 3, or 4 as numbers.

**Instructions:** Coach passes a ball into the field, and calls out a number. Ex. "TWO", then only the first two players from each line will play. Play until goal is scored or ball goes out of bounds. Coach then yells "Get Outta There"! Coach then passes a new ball onto the field and calls a new number for the next set of players. Change it up by calling different numbers. Players must know where they are in line and listen.

**Coaching Points:** Just keep it simple and fun, try to keep players on the touch line and ready. Encourage players to think and be ready for the number called.

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### Activity 4 (15 min): Small Sided Games 3v3

**Setup:** Entire soccer field, divide players up to form 2 or 3 teams of 3

**Instructions:** Rotate players/teams out every few minutes

**Coaching Points:** Encourage players to turn away from pressure and dribble into space.



## Lesson 11

### Topic: Ball Control

### U8 - 4v4

#1City1Club

#### Warm-Up (5 min): Juggling

#### **Activity 1 (10 min): Creative Dribbling**

**Setup:** 1/2 of game field, all players have a ball

**Instructions:** 1. Coach instructs players to “move the ball around anyway you like”. Every 15 - 20 seconds, have them pick a new way....then another.....then another. Tell them to “be creative”.

2. Coach then provides instructions on how to move the ball. Ex. right foot only, left foot, laces, inside of foot only, outside of foot only.

3. Coach then instructs players to “stop the ball using different parts of your body”. Every 15-20 seconds, have them pick a new way....then another....then another. Tell them to “be creative”.

4. Coach then provides instructions on how to stop the ball. Ex. knee, left ear, forehead, bottom of foot.

**Coaching Points:** Instruct players to keep ball close so that they can move it and stop it quickly.

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### **Activity 2 (10 min): Gates Game**

**Setup:** 1/2 of game field. Set up cones in sets of two. Each gate should be 1 yard wide. A gate is simply two cones set up 1 yd apart. Gates are scattered around the area.

**Instructions:** Players try to score points by dribbling through as many gates as they can in one minute. Players cannot go through the same gate two times in a row.

1. Play 2 or 3 one minute games. Players are encouraged to “beat” their last score.

2. Coach can block a gate at random so players must travel to the open gates.

**Coaching points:** Keep soccer ball close and under control. Find the “open gates”.

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### **Activity 3 (15 min): Balls Galore**

**Setup:** 1/2 of game field. Use small goals. 1 on each end. Divide players up into two groups. All players are playing at the same time. Coach assigns direction for team. Coach has all the balls at the half line.

**Instructions:** Coach starts play by distributing ball. Players will then try to score goal. If player loses ball out of bounds, he must return it to coach before he can join back in. Coach can play more than one ball at a time. Players must be ready for new ball. Keep score.

**Coaching points:** Encourage team to control the ball. Be creative!

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### **Activity 4 (15 min): Small Sided Games 4v4**

**Setup:** Entire soccer field, divide players up to form 2 or 3 teams of 4

**Instructions:** Rotate players/teams out every few minutes

**Coaching Points:** Encourage players to control the ball, do not just kick it.



## Lesson 12

### Topic: Forming Partners

U8 - 4v4

#1City1Club

#### Warm-Up (5 min): Juggling

#### **Activity 1 (10 min): Back to Coach - with Partners**

**Setup:** 1/2 of game field, players get into sets of two with one ball between them.

**Instructions:** Coach stands in the middle of the playing area. One at a time each pair of players hands their ball to the coach. The coach tosses the ball out and then has the team bring the ball back using a specific way to move the ball...

1. Using their knees, using their shoulders, using their backs, using their foreheads, etc.
2. Players must pass the ball between them before bringing the ball back. They should work together. Coach demonstrates how to make a proper pass. (Pass with the inside of the foot, not the toe, with their heel pointing towards the ground and their toes up. Heels down, toes up!
3. Coach moves around the area...players must find coach in his/her new spot.

**Coaching Points:** Work together, stay connected with your partner. Good technique...Heels down, toes up!

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### **Activity 2 (10 min): Bandits in Pairs**

**Setup:** 1/2 of game field. All players are in pairs. Play 2 or 3 rounds.

**Instructions:** Select 1 pair to be the bandits. Their mission is to get the passing pairs balls and bring it to one of the two hideouts. The passing pairs can take the ball back from the bandits before they get it all the way to the hideout. If the bandits succeed in getting the ball into the hideout, the passing pair become an additional bandit group. Use goals for hideouts.

1. Coaches start out as bandits.
2. Select 2 players to be bandits.
3. Select 4 players to be bandits.

**Coaching points:** Keep ball under control to dribble to space. Keep ball away from bandits trying to steal their soccer ball. Work together with your partner.

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### **Activity 3 (15 min): 2v1 to goal**

**Setup:** 15x20 grid with two goals on each end line. Divide players up into three groups. Two sets of attackers beside goal and one set of defenders near the other goal.

**Instructions:** Coach starts play by distributing ball to attackers on opposite side of grid (first two in each line are playing, others resting). Attackers must work together to score on their goal. If defender gets ball he can score on his goal. Play continues until goal is scored by either team or goes out of bounds. Rotate sides so that everyone has a turn at attacker and defender.

**Coaching points:** Encourage team to work together and stay connected with their partner. Can't pass to your partner if they hide behind defender. Move to space with and without ball.

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### **Activity 4 (15 min): Small Sided Games 4v4**

**Setup:** Entire soccer field, divide players up to form 2 or 3 teams of 4

**Instructions:** Rotate players/teams out every few minutes

**Coaching Points:** Encourage players to control the ball, do not just kick it.



## Lesson 13

### Topic: Passing & Receiving

### U8 - 4v4

#1City1Club

#### Warm-Up (5 min): Juggling

#### Activity 1 (10 min): Paint The Field

**Setup:** 1/2 of game field. Players pair up into partners with 1 ball between them.

**Instructions:** Players will pass the soccer ball back and forth in the area. Explain to the players that their soccer ball is a paint brush and wherever it rolls it will paint a line in their favorite color. Their task is to pass the soccer ball to paint as much of the area as possible.

1. Players should pass with the inside of foot. Use the logo on the shoe as a target for ball.
2. Players should receive the ball from their partner with the inside of foot, not the bottom of shoe.

**Coaching Points:** Instruct players to keep the ball on the ground and not in the air. Players should use the side of their feet when passing & receiving. Heels down...toes up! Don't let the ball get away!

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### Activity 2 (10 min): Numbers Game - Get Outta There!

**Setup:** Full field, split players into two teams and assign direction to goal. All balls and players on half line on the side. Use 1, 2, 3, or 4 as numbers.

**Instructions:** Coach passes a ball into the field, and calls out a number. Ex. "TWO", then only the first two players from each line will play. Play until goal is scored or ball goes out of bounds. Coach then yells "Get Outta There"! Coach then passes a new ball onto the field and calls a new number for the next set of players. Change it up by calling different numbers. Players must know where they are in line and listen.

**Coaching Points:** Encourage players to work together. Players without ball should find space to help their partner.

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### Activity 3 (15 min): 2v1 to goal

**Setup:** 15x20 grid with two goals on each end line. Divide players up into three groups. Two sets of attackers beside goal and one set of defenders near the other goal.

**Instructions:** Coach starts play by distributing ball to attackers on opposite side of grid (first two in each line are playing, others resting). Attackers must work together to score on their goal. If defender gets ball he can score on his goal. Play continues until goal is scored by either team or goes out of bounds. Rotate sides so that everyone has a turn at attacker and defender.

**Coaching points:** Encourage team to work together and stay connected with their partner. Can't pass to your partner if they hide behind defender. Move to space with and without ball.

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### Activity 4 (15 min): Small Sided Games 4v4

**Setup:** Entire soccer field, divide players up to form 2 or 3 teams of 4

**Instructions:** Rotate players/teams out every few minutes

**Coaching Points:** Encourage players to control the ball, do not just kick it.



## Lesson 14

### Topic: Keep Away

### U8 - 4v4

#1City1Club

**Warm-Up (5 min): Juggling**

#### **Activity 1 (10 min): Bulldogs & Cats**

**Setup:** 15 x 15 area. Coach selects 2 players to be the bulldogs. All other players are cats and have a ball.

**Instructions:** Players with ball (cats) will dribble around the area trying to avoid the bulldogs from stealing their ball. If a bulldog steals their ball, they can either try to get it back or take a ball away from another cat. If a bulldog steals a ball, they bring it to the coach. All other players try to keep the ball. Play until only one cat is left with a ball. They are the winner. Play 2 or 3 rounds and change bulldogs each time.

1. Only bulldogs can bring a ball to the coach on the side.
2. Cats can steal ball from other cats.

**Coaching Points:** Don't just kick the ball away, you must steal it and control it. Avoid the bulldogs and other cats.

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### **Activity 2 (10 min): Bandits in Pairs**

**Setup:** 1/2 of game field. All players are in pairs with one ball between them. Coach selects two players to be bandits. Bandits do not have a ball. Play 2 or 3 rounds.

**Instructions:** The bandits mission is to get the passing pairs balls and bring it to one of the two hideouts. The passing pairs can take the ball back from the bandits before they get it all the way to the hideout. If the bandits succeed in getting the ball into the hideout, the passing pair become an additional bandit group. Use goals for hideouts. Once ball is in hideout, it has to stay.

1. Coaches start out as bandits.
- 2.
3. Select 4 players to be bandits.

**Coaching points:** Keep ball under control to dribble to space. Keep ball away from bandits trying to steal their soccer ball. Work together with your partner because only the person with the ball can have it stolen.

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### **Activity 3 (15 min): 2v2 to Goal at Either End**

**Setup:** 1/2 of game field with a goal on each end line. Divide players up into two groups.

**Instructions:** Coach has all the soccer balls on the sideline. Players start on the sideline on either side of the coach. When the coach plays the ball into the playing area, the first 2 players from each team will enter play. Both teams can score on either goal.

**Coaching points:** Encourage team to work together and stay connected with their partner. Can't pass to your partner if they hide behind defender. Move to space with and without ball. Find the open goal.

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### **Activity 4 (15 min): Small Sided Games 4v4**

**Setup:** Entire soccer field, divide players up to form 2 or 3 teams of 4

**Instructions:** Rotate players/teams out every few minutes

**Coaching Points:** Encourage players to control the ball, do not just kick it.





## Lesson 15

### Topic: Inside - Outside Dribbling

U8 - 4v4

#1City1Club

#### Warm-Up (5 min): Juggling

#### **Activity 1 (10 min): Dribbling with Inside & Outside**

**Setup:** 15 x20 area. All players with a ball dribbling around area.

**Instructions:** Coach calls out how players should dribble ball. Start using your best foot only.

1. Touch ball with the outside, then inside. "Outside, inside, outside, inside, etc." Repeat
2. "Outside, outside, inside". Repeat
3. "inside, inside, outside". Repeat
4. "laces, laces, outside, inside. Repeat
5. Repeat above now using weak foot only.

**Coaching Points:** Slow down, this is not a speed drill. Only increase speed after correct touches. Touches need to be close and should have a quick step with other foot after each touch. Don't let the ball get too far away.

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### **Activity 2 (10 min): Speed Bumps!**

**Setup:** 15 x 20 yard grid. All players have a ball. Coach places 15-20 cones randomly around grid. These are the speed bumps.

**Instructions:** All players start out on one side. On coaches command, all players try to dribble across grid to the other side without hitting a speed bump. If a player hits a cone, he must return to starting point and try again. Play until all players arrive without hitting a speed bump. Use best foot only to start.

1. Instruct players to dribble up to a cone and use an outside touch to get around the cone.
1. Use a inside touch to go around the cones.
2. Use an outside - inside two touch combination to go around the cones.
3. Repeat using weaker foot only.

**Coaching Points:** Instruct players to only use the outside and inside touches to avoid the cones. Don't just kick the ball away, use inside and outside of foot only.

Water Break (2 min)

#### **Activity 3 (15 min): 1v1, 2 goal game**

**Setup:** 10x15 grid with small goals on each end line. 1/2 players at center on one side, 1/2 on the other side. Two playing, others resting. Coach has all soccer balls on the side.

**Instructions:** Coach starts play by distributing ball to attacker on opposite side of grid. Attacker has option to attack either goal and can constantly change direction of play/attack. Play continues until goal is scored by either player or goes out of bounds. Rotate sides.

**Coaching points:** Use inside or outside touch to turn away from pressure and dribble into space.

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### **Activity 4 (15 min): Small Sided Games 4v4**

**Setup:** Entire soccer field, divide players up to form 2 or 3 teams of 4

**Instructions:** Rotate players/teams out every few minutes

**Coaching Points:** Encourage players to control the ball, do not just kick it.



## Lesson 16

### Topic: Games & Activities

#### U8 - 4v4

#1City1Club

#### Warm-Up (5min): Pick-Up Soccer

As players arrive, divide them up and let them play!

#### Activity 1 (10 min): Doctor Doctor

**Setup:** 1/2 game field. Divide players into 2 teams. Coach picks 1 player from each team to be a Doctor. All players except the Doctors has a ball. Create (2) 2x2yd boxes on each end of area. This is the Doctor safe area.

**Instructions:** The objective is for each team to freeze their opponents by passing the soccer ball into their lower legs/feet. Below the knee only! Frozen players should call out to the Doctor to unfreeze them. The only way for a frozen player to be un-frozen is for the Doctor to leave their safe area and tag the frozen player, but if the Doctor is hit with a ball he is frozen. Game over then. Pick two new Doctors and play again. Play 4 or 5 rounds.

1. If players loose their ball, they are frozen. Keep ball close at all times.

**Coaching Points:** Ball control. Do not leave ball to avoid being hit. Be tricky and creative to avoid the other team.

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### Activity 2 (10 min): 1v1, 2 goal game

**Setup:** 10x15 grid with small goals on each end line. 1/2 players at center on one side, 1/2 on the other side. Two playing, others resting. Coach has all soccer balls on the side.

**Instructions:** Coach starts play by distributing ball to attacker on opposite side of grid. Attacker has option to attack either goal and can constantly change direction of play/attack. Play continues until goal is scored by either player or goes out of bounds. Rotate sides.

**Coaching points:** Use inside or outside touch to turn away from pressure and dribble into space.

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### Activity 3 (15 min): Sharks & Minnows

**Setup:** 1/2 of game field. Two goals on the sides.

**Instructions:** All players have a ball except for 1 shark. Coach is also a shark to start. Minnows start at one end of the grid. Sharks on the opposite line. Minnows try to cross to the other side without losing possession of their ball. The sharks defend their area by trying to steal the minnows' ball. Once a ball is stolen, the sharks must dribble it into one of the goals. If a minnow looses ball, they can try to steal it back from the shark before it gets into the goal. Minnows who successfully dribble across the sharks's line go back for round two. Each minnow who loses their ball will join the sharks. Last minnow with a ball is the winner. Play two or three rounds.

**Coaching points:** Keep soccer ball close and under control. Don't leave ball to avoid being caught by a shark. Players must turn away from pressure into space. Sharks do not just kick ball away, they control it!

Water Break (2-3 min)

#### Activity 4 (15 min): Small Sided Games 4v4

**Setup:** Entire soccer field, divide players up to form 2 or 3 teams of 4

**Instructions:** Rotate players/teams out every few minutes

**Coaching Points:** Encourage players to control the ball, do not just kick it.