

Shorewood Soccer League

U5

Coaching Guidelines



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The objective of the U5 division is to provide young players a 'pressure free' introduction to the game of soccer. Players will be exposed to soccer by playing simple, fun activities that require little to no practice and allows the players to discover the game for themselves.



Skills to Teach

- Running with the ball
- Stopping the ball
- Shooting the ball
- 'Getting' the ball



Games to Incorporate

- Dribbling Through Gates
- Follow The Leader
- Don't Crash The Car / Simon Says
- Kick The Coach / Soccer Bees
- Farthest Kick



Concepts to Teach

- Don't use your hands or arms
- The field—lines we stay within to play
- Teams and 'our' goal vs 'their' goal
- 'Attacking' and 'Defending'
- Don't take ball from teammates
- Demonstrate and encourage using the sides and top of foot—not the toe— to move ball



Coaching Notes

- Do **NOT** teach the following:
 - Passing, throw-ins, or corner kicks
 - Specific positions or a Goal Keeper
- Coach re-enters ball into play if it leaves the field
- Use a generic starting formation—no keeper
- Encourage scoring
- Encourage aggressive, but fair, play
- Practices should include many water breaks
- It is OK if the players 'swarm' the ball
- Let the players learn the game
- Setup practice area before players arrive
- "Kicking" (or "booting") is **NOT** SOCCER! We must teach players that we always control the ball first and foremost
- Give generous praise and provide a pressure-free environment



Coaching Goals

- Lots of ball touches—no standing in lines
- Learn the basic ball handling skills properly
- Use games, not drills
- Incorporate a short scrimmage at the end of practice
- Keep it fun!
- Keep it safe!

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Example Practice Plan



We highly recommend that coaches utilize a Practice Plan so your practices will run smoothly. Use this example practice plan as a starting point for your own plan. Activity times shown are quite precise. You can make yours as precise as you want. Whatever works for you and your team!



U5 Practice Plan

You scheduled your 45min practice time from 5:30p to 6:15pm

5:15pm—5:30pm	(15 minutes)	Pre-practice—set-up practice area
5:30pm—5:38pm	(8 minutes)	Warm-up session (try to incorporate ball touches if possible)
5:38pm—5:43pm	(5 minutes)	Skill demo/talk (using sides of foot to dribble, etc.)
5:43pm—5:45pm	(2 minutes)	- Water break -
5:45pm—5:53pm	(8 minutes)	Kick the Coach
5:53pm—5:55pm	(2 minutes)	- Water break -
5:55pm—6:03pm	(8 minutes)	Don't Crash The Car
6:03pm—6:05pm	(2 minutes)	- Water break -
6:05pm—6:12pm	(7 minutes)	Scrimmage
6:12pm—6:15pm	(3 minutes)	Wrap-up



Things to remember

- Always incorporate a warm-up session (see examples included in this guide)
- Schedule plenty of water breaks
- Set-up practice area as much as possible prior to player arrivals—you do not want players standing around while you layout a bunch of cones
- Keep talks and demos short
- Keep players engaged in the fun

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U5 Warm-Up Examples



Warm-up activities are important for athletes at any age. Incorporate balls into the warm-ups as much as possible. Keep things simple.



Warm-Up Example 001

Body Parts

1. Each player stands in set area and places their ball nearby
2. On coaches instruction, players move around grid as directed by the coach (walking, jumping, hopping, skipping, reaching for the sky, trunk twists, etc.)
3. When coach shouts out a part of the body (e.g. foot, knee, head etc.), the children put that body part on their ball
4. Progress to children dribbling ball then stopping ball to put body part on it per coach's direction



Warm-Up Example 002

Simon Says

1. Each player stands in set area and places their ball nearby
2. On coaches instruction, "Simon Says...", players do what 'Simon Says' (jump, run, squat, hop on one leg, skip, etc.). *Note: don't try to trick players by not saying "Simon Says"!*

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U5 Don't Crash The Car



1. Have all players position themselves evenly along the imaginary lines between the 4 cones with their ball.
2. Explain that they must “drive” across the square to the opposite side—when they get to the other imaginary line they will turn around and “drive” back to their starting point.
3. While they are “driving” through the space, they must avoid crashing their “car” into others.

Explain to the players to keep their heads up and look around so they won't crash into others.

Tell players they can say “beep beep” and make car noises while they drive across. Keep it fun!

Reinforce that they are dribbling the ball so keep it in control and close to them. You should demo this skill.

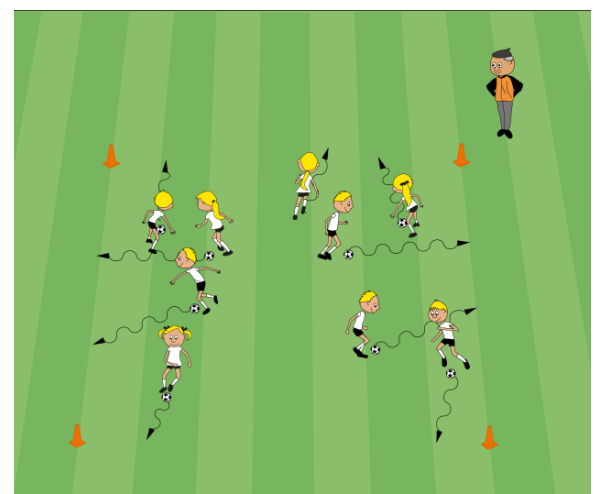
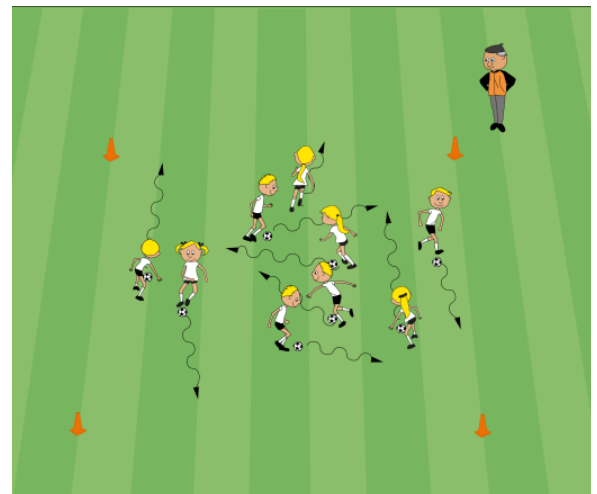
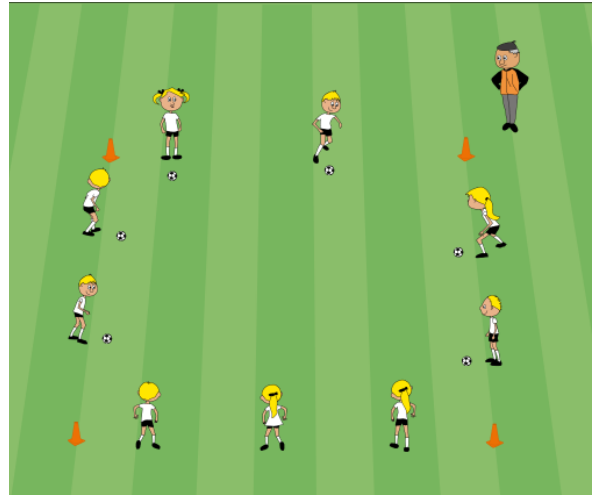
Reinforce that they use the sides and top of their foot, not their toe. You should demo this skill.

Have them use the bottom of their foot to stop the ball after they cross the box so they can turn around and go back. You should demo this skill.

Optional: They can hold a flat cone in their hands as a steering wheel to reinforce keeping their heads up and looking around.

Variant: Simon Says

Have players dribble within the 4 cones, trying not to bump into other players. Coach says “Simon Says Stop!”, then “Simon Says Go!”, “Simon Says Change Direction!”, etc. Don't try to fool them with not saying “Simon Says”. Remember that they may not know left from right, so say to turn, or turn around, or change direction.



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U5 Dribble Through gates

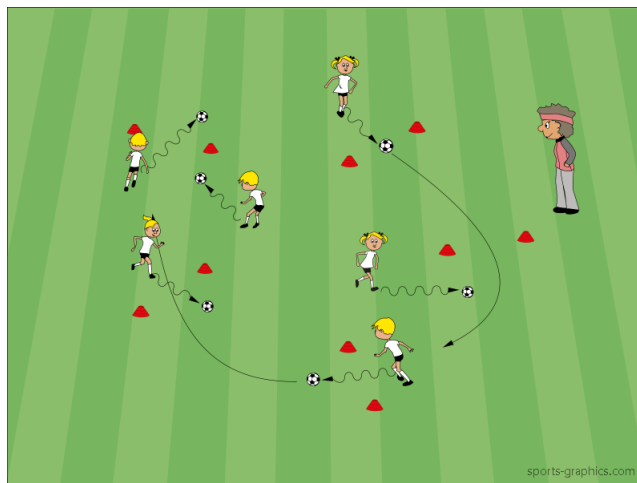


1. Set up a number of gates in a large area.
2. Players dribble through whatever gates they feel like dribbling through, without bumping into other players.

Explain to the players to keep their heads up and look around so they won't bump into others all the while dribbling through the gates.

Reinforce that they are dribbling the ball so keep it in control and close to them. You should demo this skill.

Reinforce that they use the sides and top of their foot, not their toe. You should demo this skill.



Variant: Follow The Leader

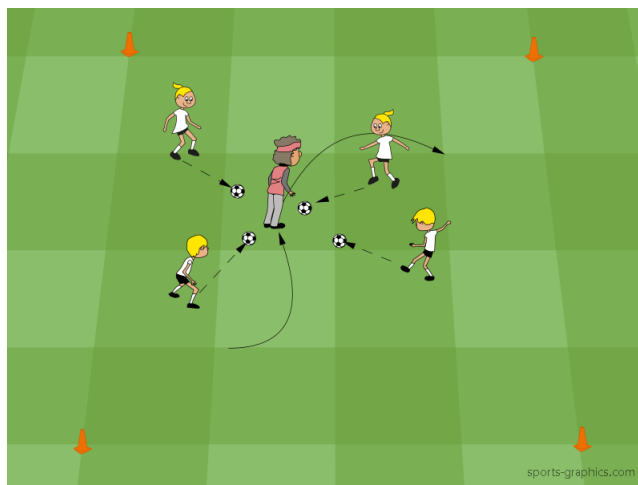
1. Choose one player to be "the leader". That player starts to dribble through the gates, and all the other players follow behind them, keeping a good interval.
2. Maybe this train of players crosses itself at some point. Players must not bump into others.

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U5 Kick The Coach



1. Have all players position themselves evenly along the imaginary lines between the 4 cones with their ball.
2. Explain that they must dribble around the area, not bumping to other players.
3. Tell them that when the coach enters the area, they have to shoot the ball at the coaches feet and try to hit the coach.
4. The coach moves around all over the area trying not to get hit (don't try too hard!).
5. If they hit the coach 5 times, the last player to hit the coach gets to choose an animal and the coach has to make that animal sound. Coach should try to be as funny as possible!



Explain to the players to keep their heads up and look around so they won't bump into others.

Reinforce that they are dribbling the ball so keep it in control and close to them. You should demo this skill.

Reinforce that they use the sides and top of their foot, not their toe. You should demo this skill.

Try to say 'shoot' the ball, not 'kick' the ball. Every 'kick' has a name and they should get used to them.

Variant: Soccer Bees

Have players dribble within the 4 cones, trying not to bump into other players. Players are bees, so they say "buzz" "buzz". One coach shoots a ball at another coach and the coach falls down and says "OUCH! A bee stung me!" Be very dramatic and the players will begin to sting you. Move around the area and let them sting you.

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U5 Helpful Links



Links to Videos

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Links to webpages

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