

10 Tips for Coaching Young Soccer Players

A coach should make a plan of action for the whole year at the beginning of the season. The plan should outline what the coach hopes to achieve by the end of the season and how he/she intends to go about it.

A coaches' view of the game must differ from that of a parent or loyal spectator. It is important that the coach takes a long view of the situation and not get caught up in the emotions of a game. The coach should be an observer of the action who keeps the players development above the end result of the game.

A coach needs to set priorities. Don't try to accomplish too many things in one training session. Keep the focus of your practice consistent! If you want to work on maintaining possession of the ball, your warm-up should incorporate passing and moving, not defending.

A coaches' job is never done! Solving one problem in soccer inevitably raises the next. This is a sign the team is progressing.

A coaches' time is limited. Therefore, all activities during a training session should be soccer related. Although you may want to vary your coaching routine, remember that repetition is essential for players' development.

Create an enjoyable atmosphere! Players will learn more if they are participating in activities that they enjoy. Ask yourself, would I enjoy this activity if I were a player? If the answer is yes, the players will probably feel the same way.

Be Consistent! It is very important that you treat the players the same from day to day. The players will feel more comfortable at practice if they know what the coach expects from them. It can't be dictatorial one day and then carefree the next.

Establish a routine! You'll get better with this as you become more experienced. If your practice progresses from:

- 1) a warm-up activity
- 2 a technical/tactical exercise
- 3) a small sided game
- 4 a larger scrimmage

Players will know the routine and won't keep asking, when are we going to scrimmage? They'll keep better concentration knowing that this is the way we train.

Be a leader! If a coach asks eleven players what they want, he will get eleven different answers. A coach must know what he wants from a team and what he expects from each individual.

Be Yourself! Share your personality with the team. You can learn from and mimic other coaches, but don't try to be someone you're not.

