

Quick Reference Guide to Coaching U7/U8

The purpose of soccer at the U7/U8 age group is to further the development of players as individuals while also expanding their ability to play as a team. Skills such as dribbling, passing, and shooting should be taught as individual technical skills as well as passing as a simple team skill. Additional structure on out of bounds are also introduced from the real game. *Parents should cheer for **BOTH** teams and **ALL** players in a supportive environment versus a competitive one.*

For all games, **the scheduled game time is the time the game should start.** Please arrive at the fields early in order to warm up.

General Rules

- Recommended: Practices once per week for 45-60 minutes
- 4v4 format (max roster of 8)
- Field is 30yd x 40yd
- Size 3 soccer ball
- Score kept by referee -- score shouldn't be the focus
- Four 10-minute quarters; 5 minute half plus 2 minutes between quarters
- Halves started with kickoff, quarters resume from last out of bounds.
- Each player must play a minimum of 50% of each half (for which they are present)
- Referees and players on field (no coaches)
- Players for both teams will be on the side of the field adjacent to the other 4v4 field. Parents sit on the outside around the fields
- Out-of-bounds on sidelines results in a kick-in for the opposing team. Defensive players should remain 5 yards from the ball until kicked.
- Out-of-bounds on goal lines result in goal kick (ball off offensive team) or corner kick (ball off defensive team)
- **NO GOALIES**
- **All fouls / infringements are Indirect.** Defending team must be at least 5 yards (15 feet) from the ball when it is kicked
- **NO SLIDE TACKLING. This is dangerous for players at this age.**
- **U8:** *Same as U7 rules with the exception that we would like to transition teams to throw-ins when deemed ready by their coach.* One team may do kicks while the other does throws, etc.

Corner Kicks

- A corner kick is awarded when the ball crosses the (goal line) and was last touched by the defending team
- The ball may be placed anywhere within or on the arc defining the corner area
- Defending team must be at least 5 yards (15 feet) from the ball when it is kicked
- Corner kicks are direct (i.e. can be scored directly from the kick)

Goal Kicks

- A goal kick is awarded when the whole of the ball crosses the goal line and was last touched by the offensive team

- Goal kicks may be taken anywhere on the goal line , typically within a few feet of the goal posts.
- Defensive team must move to half line on goal kicks

Direct versus Indirect Kicks

- Corner kicks are direct kicks, meaning that the ball may score directly off of the kick without touching another player.
- All fouls or infringement are Indirect kicks and **must** be touched by one other player from either team before scoring.
- A goal cannot be scored directly from a throw in another player must touch the ball before scoring).

Substitutions

- Prior permission of the referee is required in order to make any substitution at any time, except at the resumption of play after the halftime break:
 - On a throw-in (by either team)
 - On a goal kick (by either team)
 - After any goal (by either team)
 - After any stoppage of play for an injury (by either team)
 - At half time (by either team)
 - After a caution (the player receiving the caution)

As a reminder, U4-U10 at T&C are recreational leagues. If your team is much stronger than the other team, please find creative ways to make the match more fair and ensure that both teams are having fun. Some suggestions include:

- Players must pass 3 times before shooting
- Players must dribble/shoot using their non-dominant foot
- Play all your weaker players at one time (use above tactics for stronger players)
- Let the other team control the ball all the way to midfield before you contest the ball
- If the other team is short players or has no subs and the other coach would like some help, see if you have a player or two who are willing to play against their teammates to balance the game.