




**THE  
COACHING  
MANUAL**



**SPRING COACH  
CURRICULUM  
PACK - U12**

# SPRING 2024 INTRODUCTION

**12 weeks is not much time at all, it will fly by and, with as little as 12 hours of training, you have to be realistic about what you and your players will learn from the season. However, if we're going to keep youngsters on the soccer pathway, it's vital that they gradually make the improvements which will ignite a genuine passion for the game.**

The Coaching Manual is here to support you and ensure that your players and you come out of the season having improved.

This guide for coaches who are working with U12 has been built from a comprehensive technical framework that has been developed with some of the greatest soccer minds in the world game including heads of education from The Football Association, AYSO and a number of Premier League soccer clubs.

The guiding principles for this age group are to challenge your players' technique, game understanding, and patience. You are working with a brilliant age group, because their fundamentals should be well established and their understanding of the game is developing. You have a great opportunity to make good progress on game understanding and style of play. We can keep these players in the game for life if they get what they need - and that's what this curriculum guide will help you do.



# SPRING 2024 OBJECTIVES

**The objectives for the Spring season for U12 fall into two brackets. What you, as the coach, will be confident in at the end of the season, and what outcomes we are aiming for with players at this age.**

Learning soccer is all about gradual improvements over a long period of time, it's why children have to start learning the game young. It's the world's most popular sport, but it's also one of the world's most technically challenging sports. By the end of Spring...

## Coach Objectives

- 1...you'll be confident in teaching and correcting a variety of ball mastery techniques.
- 2...you will feel comfortable about how to coach long and short passing techniques.
- 3...you'll have an understanding of the defensive and attacking principles of play, you'll be able to coach creating space and penetration and some basic defending principles.

## Player Objectives

- 1...your players will perform ball mastery moves competently.
- 2...your players will be able to demonstrate an understanding of long and short passing techniques.
- 3...your players will be have a basic understanding of the attacking principles 'creating space' and 'penetration'. two of the key building blocks of game understanding.



# HOW TO COACH

## 6 important things to remember for every session you deliver:

### **The soccer ball is the world's most popular toy**

It's great fun to play with and it's even more fun with friends. This means fun is implicit, you don't need to manufacture fun. As long as you start and end with a game, they will have a great time.

### **You don't need to over complicate things**

Too many practices in a session means you spend a lot of time setting things up and kids spend more time learning the session than the actual skills. Keep it simple and they'll get more time on the ball.

### **Make sure they get lots of opportunity to play**

It's their game. Whilst you're there to teach them they need space to work things out and express themselves. Stopping things too often can be counter productive, so try to be concise with feedback

### **You are working with young children**

You have to be encouraging and patient. Some of them might not be able to do the skills, don't worry, it's just an age thing. Also, little humans are brilliant at listening, even when you don't think they are.

### **If you can, try to involve the parents**

Involve all the stakeholders, they'll appreciate it. You can even send them the curriculum that you are working from, they will love that you are taking so much care of the development of their kids.

### **If they improve, they will want to keep coming back**

There's a risk in modern coaching that we sit back and observe. If you can help a player get something right (and praise them for it), their learning will accelerate and they'll enjoy it more.

# THE BALL MASTERY SKILLS

**The Ball Mastery Skills for this Spring cover a number of dribbling, control and turning skills, it's a comprehensive ball mastery curriculum this Spring and your players will love it**

These skills are the perfect development tool for U12 players because it challenges them to think about where in the game they can use the skills and they are skills you need to use on the move.

Watch the videos and learn how they work.

TIP: Share these skills with your parents, so the players can learn at home!

**Toe Taps and Drag Taps - <https://app.thecoachingmanual.com/Content/178>**

**Inside Outside (and both feet) - <https://app.thecoachingmanual.com/Content/593>**

**Rollover Stop and V-Pushes - <https://app.thecoachingmanual.com/Content/634>**

**Inside/Outside Cut (Hook Turn) - <https://app.thecoachingmanual.com/Content/445>**

**Squeeze Inside/Outside - <https://app.thecoachingmanual.com/Content/542>**

**Cruyff Turn - <https://app.thecoachingmanual.com/Content/527>**

**Stop Turn and Squeeze Turn - <https://app.thecoachingmanual.com/Content/392>**

**Stepover Turn and Spin Turn - <https://app.thecoachingmanual.com/Content/335>**

**Sidestep and Scissors - <https://app.thecoachingmanual.com/Content/308>**

**Rollover Stepover and Shimmy - <https://app.thecoachingmanual.com/Content/222>**

# MAIN COMPONENTS OF DEVELOPMENT



**Learn one new  
thing**



**Sweating**



**Smiling**



# 4 CORNER MODEL



**SOCIAL**



**'BALL'  
TECHNICAL**

**'BODY'  
PHYSICAL**

**'GAME'  
TACTICAL**

**'MIND'  
PSYCHOLOGICAL**



# WHERE CAN WE PRACTICE THESE TECHNIQUES?

## HOME

### Me and my Ball

Practice the techniques on my own, challenging myself to get better and better at specific techniques

“The longer a player actually plays with the ball, the better their ‘feel’ for it.”

- Don Howe

## WITH FRIENDS

### Me, my ball and friend(s)

Uninterrupted play with my friends, playing on different surfaces and areas to refine my technique or challenging each other

Soccer is the most beautiful game. We can play it in the street. We can play it everywhere.

- Johan Cruyff

## TRAINING

### Me, my ball and teammates

Put things into practice and work with the my teammates to focus on not only my technique but the principles of play

The strength of the team is each individual member. The strength of each member is the team.

- Phil Jackson



## PLAY



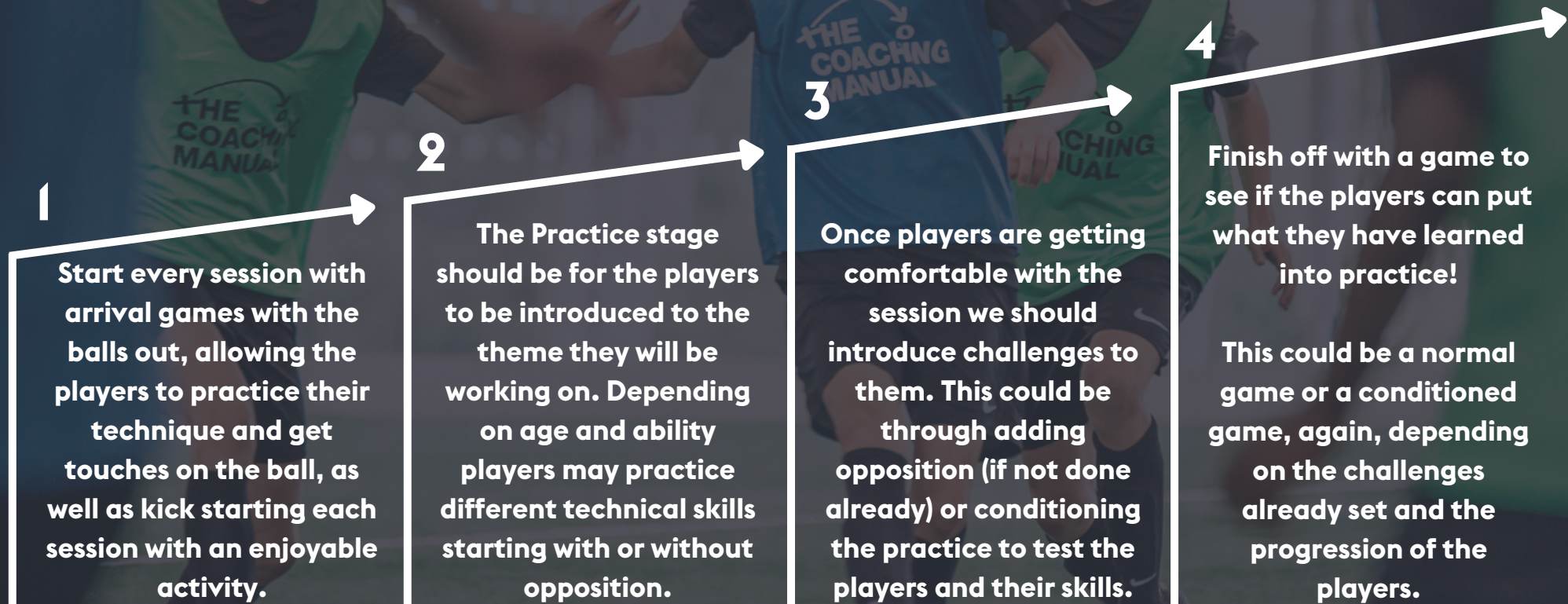
## PRACTICE



## PROGRESS



## PLAY



**1**  
Start every session with arrival games with the balls out, allowing the players to practice their technique and get touches on the ball, as well as kick starting each session with an enjoyable activity.

**2**  
The Practice stage should be for the players to be introduced to the theme they will be working on. Depending on age and ability players may practice different technical skills starting with or without opposition.

**3**  
Once players are getting comfortable with the session we should introduce challenges to them. This could be through adding opposition (if not done already) or conditioning the practice to test the players and their skills.

**4**  
Finish off with a game to see if the players can put what they have learned into practice!

This could be a normal game or a conditioned game, again, depending on the challenges already set and the progression of the players.

60m

15 minutes

15 minutes

15 minutes

15 minutes

90m

25 minutes

20 minutes

20 minutes

25 minutes

Organisation

Management

Coaching



PLAY

PRACTICE

PROGRESS

PLAY

High

S  
U  
C  
C  
E  
S  
S

Achievement Line

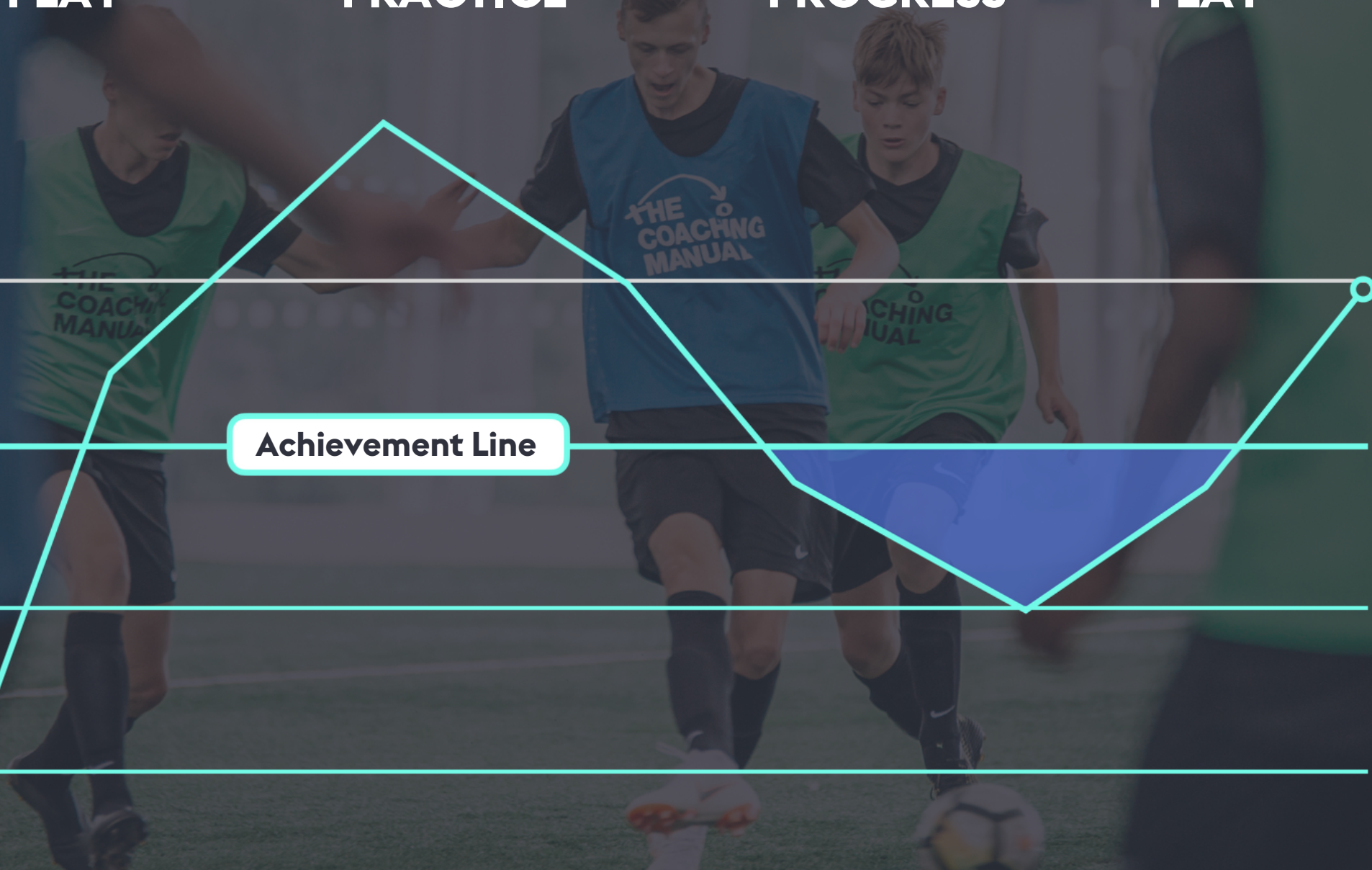
Low

INTRO

PRACTICE

CHALLENGE

ADAPT





# THE SEASON PLAN

**There's no need to spend any time planning this Spring, we've taken care of it for you and have crafted an age specific curriculum which will help you and your players meet your objectives. At the end of the season, you'll be more confident and your players will be better players.**

**The plan is built around a play-practice-play model, which gives the players lots of repetition.**

**The plan also repeats sessions to give your players a chance to show how much they've improved from the first time they did it.**

## WEEK 1 - DRIBBLING

**Week 1 is about helping your players re-acquaint themselves with the ball. Lots of touches, lots of chances to move**

**<https://app.thecoachingmanual.com/Session/18755>**

## WEEK 2 - TURNING

Lots of touches of the ball, close control and changes of direction are all skills your players will need in later weeks of the plan, so this is a great week to work on these skills

<https://app.thecoachingmanual.com/Session/18756>

## WEEK 3 - SHORT PASSING

Short passing techniques and the combinations that players can create between themselves are crucial to player development and team development

<https://app.thecoachingmanual.com/Session/18757>

## WEEK 4 - RECEIVING AND CONTROL GROUND

Good receiving skills and good control can create valuable time for players so that they can make good decisions

<https://app.thecoachingmanual.com/Session/18758>



## WEEK 5 - LONG PASSING

Switching play and advancing quickly!

<https://app.thecoachingmanual.com/Session/18759>

## WEEK 6 - RECEIVING AND CONTROL AIR

An often under-practiced skill in modern training

<https://app.thecoachingmanual.com/Session/18761>

## WEEK 7 - 1V1 ATTACKING

Beat the player and create opportunities for goals!

<https://app.thecoachingmanual.com/Session/18762>

## WEEK 8 - IVI DEFENDING

Now the defenders can show their mettle!

<https://app.thecoachingmanual.com/Session/18763>

## WEEK 9 - FINISHING

Goals, goals, goals!!

<https://app.thecoachingmanual.com/Session/18764>

## WEEK 10 - CREATING SPACE

One of the most important principles of soccer!

<https://app.thecoachingmanual.com/Session/18765>



## WEEK 11 - PLAYING OUT FROM THE BACK

This is when we start to introduce tactical play to players

<https://app.thecoachingmanual.com/Session/18766>

## WEEK 12 - PENETRATION

The principle of penetration will help you break down even the most stubborn defences

<https://app.thecoachingmanual.com/Session/18767>

## Well Done, you made it!

Now it's time to reflect and give yourself (and your players) a huge pat on the back!