



U11/12 Community Soccer

As we move up the age ladder from the U9-U10 level to the U11-U12 level there are many differences we must realize in order to provide an optimal experience for young players of this age. However, there are also many similarities. Just as in parenting, it is important to be consistent in coaching and we must make sure that we follow a progressive trend of development for young players. To this end, we need to continue to focus on technique during our practices, as we did at the younger ages. Creating environments in which players get maximum repetitions of technical skills and are encouraged to express themselves as individuals is very important. Players at this age should still work on ball mastery and demonstrate growing familiarity and comfortable with a ball at their feet.

Typical Characteristics of U11-U12 Players

Attention span lengthens from U10 - they start to show the ability to sequence thought and actions. Able to ask thoughtful questions.

Start to think ahead - "If this, then that"

More inclined towards wanting to play soccer rather than being told to play

Demonstrate increased self-responsibility – bringing a ball, water and all gear should now be their complete responsibility, not their parents!

Beginning to recognize fundamental tactical concepts

Children at this age begin to become aware of peer pressure

Players greatly affiliate with their team or their coach - "I play for the Tigers" or "coach Amy's team"

Players at this age are extremely rule bound

There is a wide continuum of maturity evident on most teams –
CRUCIAL age for technical skill development

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Skill Coaching Priorities

- Dribble with all sides & surfaces of both feet (inside, outside, etc.)
- Dribble using moves to beat a player or to quickly change directions
- Dribble out of trouble rather than just kick – Institute a two touch minimum rule to discourage kicking the ball out of panic
- Short range passing with the inside and outside of both feet
- Long range passing – driven aerial balls
- Movement to open spaces after passing the ball to receive it again
- Shooting with both feet using the laces for power and the inside/outside for accuracy
- Receiving and 1st Touch to control and keep possession of the ball – on the ground or out of the air (Using the inside, outside, top of the foot, chest, thigh, head)
- Heading – Attacking and defensive techniques
- Juggling using different parts of the body - HOMEWORK
- Defending techniques

Skill Coaching Priorities

- EMPHASIZE - Dribble with all sides & surfaces of both feet
- Dribble out of trouble rather than just kick
- Dribble past someone to penetrate
- Dribble using a move to beat a player or quickly change directions
- Shielding to keep the ball away from opponent
- Soft first touch for control
- Introduce shooting technique using the laces
- Introduce passing using the inside and outside of the foot
- Introduce Juggling - HOMEWORK
- Keep it active and FUN! – No laps, lines, lectures