

Vision Soccer Academy

U5's – U6's Coach and Parent Quick Reference Guide

1. Quick Facts about U6 soccer players

- a. Characteristics of the U6 player
 - i. "Body and Mind" under construction
 1. Short attention span
 2. Individually focused – "It's all about ME"
 3. No understanding of place – they go all out!
 4. Players will chase the ball until they drop
 5. Easily bruised psychologically
 6. Not physically coordinated; lots of falling down
 7. Eye-hand and/or eye-foot coordination is developing
 8. Can balance on good foot
 9. Love to climb, run, jump and roll

2. Training Sessions – Homework

- a. The player's needs
 - i. A ball should be included in most activities
 1. Tag games with and without a ball
 2. Relay races with and without a ball
 3. Ball awareness – what a ball can do: bounce, roll, go up and come down
 4. Ball mastery (activities that promote foot skills)
 5. Fundamentals (dribbling and shooting)
- b. Young players need frequent touches (one ball per player)
- c. Demonstrate (is possible) – paint the picture for the players
- d. Involve all children in activity
 - i. The coach should participate in activities and have fun right along with the kids
- e. Players need continuous, consistent positive encouragement
- f. End with small-sided games: 1 vs. 1, 2 vs. 2 and 3 vs. 3

3. (U5's - U6's) – Sample Practice Session Outline

- 5:00 – 5:06pm Warm-up Activity (6 min)
- 5:06 – 5:07pm Water Break (1 min)
- 5:07 – 5:15pm 1st Activity (8 min)
- 5:15 – 5:23pm 2nd Activity (8 min)
- 5:23 – 5:25pm Water Break (2 min)
- 5:25 – 5:33pm 3rd Activity (8 min)
- 5:33 – 5:41pm 4th Activity (8 min)
- 5:41 – 5:43pm Water Break (2 min)
- 5:43 – 5:58pm Scrimmage 1 (3 v 3 no GK) (15 min)
- 5:58 – 6:00pm (Practice Review) (2 min)

4. What exactly will this "SOCCER" game look like?

- a. It is designed as 3 vs. 3 but, in reality, it will be 1 vs. 5
 - i. Everyone versus the kid with the ball!
- b. It resembles a swarm chasing a ball...somewhere in the middle is a kid with the ball
- c. A child may run off the field to hug a parent or have their parent tie their shoe
- d. A child may stop playing to admire a plane, a butterfly, etc...
- e. The kids will not remember the score or whether they won or lost
 - i. They will remember the treat after the game
- f. It will not look organized nor will it be played as though it is organized

5. General Information

- a. Practice should not exceed one hour
- b. No lines, No lectures and No laps – Games, Games, Games and did we mention Games!
- c. Small-sided games: 1 vs. 1, 2 vs. 2 and 3 vs. 3

6. Injury Prevention

- a. Proper use of equipment (shin guards) with socks pulled over the shin guards
- b. Check field for problem areas (rocks, holes and glass)
- c. Field-appropriate footwear (soccer cleats)
- d. Adequate water supply and breaks
- e. Avoid training during peak heat hours
- f. Follow-up call to parents if a serious injury occurs

7. Game Day

- a. Arrive 15-20 minutes prior to starting time so players can get a feel for the atmosphere
- b. Survey the field
 - i. Are there any safety issues? Look for rocks, holes and glass on the field
- c. Rotate positions of players; do not lock in a player into one spot
- d. Encourage goal scoring
- e. Discourage players from staying back as a sweeper or goalkeeper

8. Review of Game Day Rules

- a. **The Field** – Rectangular in shape, approx. 20 by 30 yards; a center circle with four yard radius, a halfway line, goal line and sidelines.
- b. **The Ball** – size 3
- c. **Number of Players** – the game is played 3 vs. 3. Each team shall have no more than three players on the field. Each roster will not exceed six players.
- d. **Player's Equipment** – Tennis shoe or soft cleat shoes, shin guards, socks that cover the shin guards and team uniform are mandatory
- e. **Referee** – A parent or coach shall act as the referee. Usually, the coaches of the teams will tag-team the match, each refereeing one-half of the game.
- f. **Duration of the match** – The match shall consist of four quarters, each eight minutes long, with a two-minute break between each quarter and a five minute halftime.
- g. **Start of Play** – The ball must be played by the team in possession before it can be touched by an opponent.
- h. **Ball in and out of Play** – The ball must completely cross the end line or touchline
- i. **Free Kicks** – All free kicks will be indirect free kicks; the ball, after being played by the team awarded the kick, must touch another player before a goal may be scored.
- j. **Throw-in / Kick-in** – Do-over's are allowed for an incorrectly taken kickoff, goal kick, corner kick, or throw-in
- k. Substitutions are allowed during goal kick, own throw-in, goal scored and start of each quarter.
- l. A goal cannot be scored off a kickoff
- m. There are no penalty kicks

9. Coaches / Equipment

- a. A basic first aid kit
 - i. You should always carry the players medical information and contact information
- b. Age-appropriate balls (Size 3)
- c. Cones
- d. Well thought-out plan for each practice
 - i. Including a game day player rotation
- e. Plenty of patience
- f. Post-game treats and drink – the most important thing to the young players on game day!

10. Resources

- a. The Club
 - i. Director of Recreational – Ginger Parson-McGill (515)419-9836 or gingermvpm@gmail.com
 - ii. Director of Coaching – Chris McGill (515)419-5112 or chriscbm@yahoo.com
 - iii. Club Website – www.visionsocceracademy.com
- b. Iowa Soccer Association – www.iowasoccer.org
- c. US Youth Soccer – www.usyouthsoccer.org
- d. Two excellent books that can be found at Barnes and Noble
 - i. The Baffled Parent's Guide to Great Soccer Drills by Fleck and Quinn
 - ii. The Baffled Soccer Parent's Guide to Coaching Youth Soccer by Bobby Clark
- e. Some great soccer websites:
 - i. <http://www.strongsoccer.com/Kingdrills/clipspractice.htm>
 - ii. <http://www.eteamz.com/soccer/pills/jpill.htm>
 - iii. <http://www.ucs.mun.ca/~dgraham/manual/>
 - iv. http://www.usyouthsoccer.org/coaches/index_E.html