

West Des Moines Soccer Club Coaches Quick-reference Guide U9 & U10



1) Quick facts for the U9 and U10 soccer player

- a) Characteristics of the player
 - i) "Body & Mind" developing rapidly
 - (1) Attention span is lengthening
 - (2) Boys and girls are beginning to develop at a different pace
 - (3) Body temperature increases quickly and cool down takes longer
 - (a) Be sure to take many water breaks!
 - (4) Pace factor becoming developed; ability to think ahead is improving
 - (a) Less running until they drop; more pacing their movements
 - (5) Becoming serious and excited about their play
 - (6) Thinking about the "team" more; less "I" focused

2) Training sessions

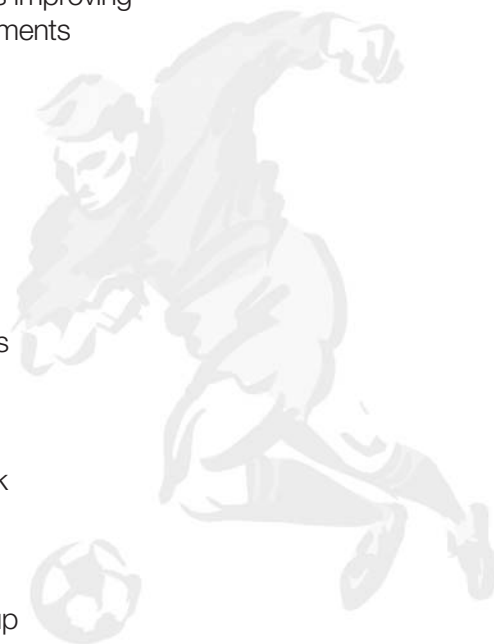
- a) The player's needs
 - i) A ball should be included in all warm-up activities
 - (1) Ball mastery (activities that promote foot skills)
 - (2) Fundamentals (dribbling, passing and shooting)
- b) Demonstrate if possible; still very visual at this age
- c) Warm-up should include both partner and small-group activities
 - i) This is the primary structure for U9 and U10 practice
 - ii) Small-group activities should include four or more players
- d) Involve all children in activity
 - i) Using uneven numbers are o.k.; modify to make activity work
- e) Players need continuous, consistent positive encouragement
- f) End with small-sided game using 6 vs. 6, with goalkeepers

3) Game day

- a) Arrive 15-20 minutes prior to starting time for adequate warm up
- b) Survey the field
 - i) Are there any safety issues? Look for holes or rocks on the field
- c) Clarify rules with referee prior to game
- d) Rotate positions of players; do not lock in a player to one spot and use variety of goalies
- e) Encourage group movement on field
- f) Consistently reinforce practice topics ("we worked on this at our last practice")

4) Review of game rules

- a) Number of players; 6 vs. 6
- b) The use of goalkeepers begin at this age
- c) No off sides called
- d) Penalty areas are marked
- e) No penalty kicks; do as indirect free kick
- f) Restart for fouls; indirect free kick
- g) Opponent must be eight yards from ball for goal kicks, corner kicks, direct and indirect free kicks
- h) No slide tackling allowed
 - i) Goal cannot be scored on kickoff or from opposite end of field
 - j) Parents are utilized as assistant referees; referee and coach should take time to clearly explain expectations
- k) Use size-4 ball
 - l) Each game includes two, 25-minute halves; five-minute halftime
- m) Substitutions are allowed during goal kick, own throw in, goal scored and start of each period
- n) Do-overs are not allowed at this age



5) Coaches equipment

- a) Age-appropriate soccer balls (size 4)
- b) First aid kit is a critical necessity
 - i) Access to a cell phone in case of emergency
- c) Cones
- d) Stop watch (be sure to monitor playing time)
- e) Well thought-out plan for each practice

6) General information

- a) Practice should not exceed one hour and 15 minutes
- b) Finish with cool-down activities to lower heart rate
- c) During starting phase, briefly discuss game performance with players (two minutes, keep it positive)

7) Principles of Youth Coaching

- a) Developmentally appropriate
 - i) Will your topic be received
- b) Clear, concise, correct information
 - i) Make it clear and brief
- c) Simple to complex
 - i) Coach by starting small and progressing
- d) Safe and appropriate training area
 - i) Survey the practice and game area before play
- e) Decision making
 - i) Does the activity allow for decision making by the players?
- f) Implications for the game
 - i) Is the activity game-related?

8) Bill of Rights

- a) Right of opportunity to participate in soccer regardless of ability level
- b) Right to participate at a level that is commensurate with each player's development level
- c) Right to have qualified coaches
- d) Right to participate in safe and healthy environments
- e) Right of each child to share in the leadership and decision making of their soccer participation
- f) Right to play as a child and not as an adult
- g) Right to proper preparation for participation in soccer
- h) Right to an equal opportunity to strive for success
 - i) Right to be treated with dignity by all involved
 - j) Right to have FUN through soccer

9) Injury prevention

- a) Proper use of equipment (shin guards)
- b) Check field for problem areas (rocks or holes)
- c) Field-appropriate foot wear (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

