

SOCCER AGE LEVELS

LEVEL ONE – FOUNDATION PHASE

Within level 1 players are in the early years of soccer, or they have been playing in environments without developing the required fundamental skills. During Level 1 the primary emphasis is on dribbling skills and dribbling skills in order to develop ball mastery to enable efficiency in securing the ball as an individual. The development environment should be one of creativity and enjoyment. Players must feel that it is a safe place to make mistakes, as player learning comes through making those mistakes.

Once a player gets beyond the age of 13, it becomes increasingly difficult to acquire these fundamental skills. The earlier they develop these skills the greater the chance that they have of playing at a higher level when they get older.



LEVEL TWO – DISCOVERY



As players enter Level 2 they have now developed a much greater comfort on the ball. There is still a heavy concentration on dribbling and ball mastery, but now more emphasis is placed on the ability to secure the ball as a group. This comes in the form of passing and receiving, understanding angles of support, movement off the ball and refining first touch. Players are also asked to have a greater understanding of individual and group defending, as well as the finishing phase of scoring goals. The player development environment continues to be one in which creativity and exploration are encouraged.

“If young players can be more skillful they will enjoy the game far more” Phil Avison

LEVEL THREE – COMPETITIVE



At Level 3, players have a stronger foundation of ability, and as such can be exposed to a wider range of technical and tactical game components. The training approach is more balanced with a greater emphasis on passing and receiving - and less concentration on dribbling. Players are given more responsibilities around the defensive organization, and greater demands are placed on them with respect to work ethic and competitive performance.

LEVEL FOUR – ELITE

Level 4 is when players are pushed to perform at a higher competitive level. The technical tools are in place to allow a greater emphasis on different tactical strategies both in and out of possession. Passing and receiving, along with a finishing phase take up the majority of focus. Position-specific instruction is also taking place at at this level. The coach places high demands on on the players in terms of fitness, competitive levels, and consistency of performance.

