



Massachusetts Premier Soccer U6 Curriculum

Massachusetts Premier Soccer Youth Development Academy

U6 Coaching Manual 2010



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U6 Coaching Guidelines

Aim:

To allow players to develop in a **SAFE, FUN** and **EDUCATIONAL** environment.

Objectives:

- 1.) Keep things brief and simple! Remember players at this level have a very short attention span. Be careful with the language you use when communicating with young players – always be as positive as possible and include all players.
- 2.) Make things FUN! Your energy and enthusiasm need to come through in every practice. Allow players as much active time with a ball each as possible.
- 3.) Use your imagination! A successful coach with this age range is one who can make his/her session relate to how the young player views the world. Use Harry Potter or Spongebob Squarepants as characters in your games to make them feel more involved.
- 4.) **ALL** players should be given plenty of opportunities to succeed and **ALL** players need to be kept motivated and challenged. Come down to their level and be part of their world.

To succeed in coaching players in this age range, you must have:

- **Patience** – they will not understand things right away. Although young they want and need you to be in charge. Be firm with what your expectations are but remember you are dealing with young children;
- **Flexibility** – recognize when something is not working and change it;
- **A sense of humor** – laugh with your players;
- **A very positive attitude** – give generous praise often;
- **And lots and lots of energy.**



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Training Session Breakdown

1.) WARM-UP

10mins

Begin with a **FUN** activity. This should prepare the players mentally and physically for the rest of the practice. Slight changes to a game will make it different to players at this age.

2.) SKILL GAMES

15mins

These games are designed to be high energy, fun activities that reinforce the basic techniques.

3.) SMALL-SIDED GAMES

30mins

Each practice should conclude with a small-sided game.

The size of the field should be about 30x20yds and the teams should be 3v3 with no goalkeepers.

4.) COOL DOWN

5mins

Spend five minutes at the end of each session making sure that all of your players enjoyed themselves. Do a fun cool down, reinforce basic technical points, have a group huddle and say goodbye.



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Small-sided Games – 3v3 with no GK

Every practice should conclude with a small-sided game. Remember that the game is the best teacher of all. Your main aim is to create a **SAFE, FUN, EDUCATIONAL** environment in which your players can develop. This should be the largest portion of your practice – about thirty minutes in length.

Organization

- 1.) Field Size: 30x20yds
- 2.) Equipment: Use cones to clearly mark out the area of the field.
- 3.) Use upright cones or flags as goals and place them about 6 feet apart.
- 4.) Use pinneys to avoid confusion amongst players.
- 5.) Play with a SIZE 3 ball.
- 6.) Be flexible with your playing time– your main aim is that all players have a positive experience. You can vary the playing periods and make sure to allow time for substitutions and water breaks.
- 7.) Use the parents – have the parents stand around the perimeter of the field and stop the ball and players from disappearing into the wilderness.
 - 3v3 will promote players touching the ball and being involved as much as possible.
 - Keep instructions clear and to a minimum and use your enthusiasm to keep all players motivated.
 - Give the teams names and generate excitement without putting emphasis on outcome.
 - Always stress the importance of fair play and sportsmanship and have the players shake hands/high five at the end of each game.

By the end of your session make sure that all your players have achieved some measure of success. Call the team in for a group huddle and say goodbye.



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COACHING GUIDELINES

There are four main pillars of soccer, which are evident at every level of the game – **TECHNICAL, TACTICAL, PHYSICAL and PSYCHOLOGICAL.**

Clearly there will be different emphasis placed on each one depending on the age and ability of the player.

It is important that a coach has clear goals for himself/herself and for his/her team prior to working with any age group.

1.) Technical:

At this age we should be looking to get players using both feet as much as possible. We want to start the process of getting them to be comfortable with the ball at either foot.

Scheme of work	-	8-week program
Weeks 1-6	-	Dribbling
Weeks 7-8	-	Shooting

2.) Tactical:

- Coaches need not concern themselves with tactical considerations when working with this age group.
- There should be no emphasis on playing set positions at this age range.
- At this stage of their development players are very egocentric and are not ready to make decisions on the field other than knowing when they are thirsty, tired or need to go to the bathroom.
- There should be virtually no instruction on the rules of the game, other than getting them going in the right direction.



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3.) Psychological:

- The main psychological goal for players at this stage of their development is to have **FUN**.
- Coaches need to ensure that their players receive an exciting and positive introduction to the game of soccer to ensure future participation.
- There should be absolutely no emphasis placed on winning games.

4.) Physical

- Players at this age find it fun to be active. Keep them moving with a ball as much as possible.
- Any fitness that they receive should be as a result of playing the game of soccer. Use soccer games to improve balance and coordination.



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Age Group:	U6 – Smart Soccer
Theme of Session:	Dribbling (Car Crazy) – Week 1

<u>TIME</u>	<u>ORGANIZATION</u>	<u>COACHING POINTS</u>
10 minutes	<p><u>Speedway</u> – Split groups into 2 “speed teams” of different wacky cars. All players have a car (ball) On Coach’s command, A’s dribble to B’s area & B’s dribble to A’s area. 1st group with whole team across, scores a point.</p> <p>Progression: Walking only Jogging only Running only Use only 1 foot Use other foot.</p> <p>Add fun incentives- whole team must rev their engines (step on their balls) when across. Use imagination to vary these regularly.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep the ball close to you • Take lots of little touches with both feet.
15 minutes	<p><u>Soccer City</u> – 20x30 area. Boston City. This time the players are all cars. Gradually introduce some or all of the following; Grannies Car – really slow and makes banging old noises. Family Car – medium pace and has a healthy sound, bbrrrmmmmmm. Red Ferrari – really fast and makes loud roaring noises. All the players keep their ball (steering wheel) close to them and react to whichever car the coach calls out. Start off by ‘sightseeing’ the city – dribbling all over the area. Red light – ‘screech’ to a stop, Green light – Go, Uphill – toe taps on top of the ball, Dead-end – introduce the ‘ooh aah’ turn (STOP TURN). Technical repetition using both feet.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soft touches so they don’t ‘crash’ into anyone • Head Up to avoid crashes • STOP TURN– stop the ball with sole of foot. Hop over ball putting same foot on ground first. Bring other foot through and take away with outside of foot.
30 minutes	<p>Car thief – coach chases the players and if they can put their foot onto the player’s ball then they need to do a star jump and 3 “ooh aah” turns to get their car back.</p> <p>3 v 3 – Play inside an area 30 x 20 yards. Have a supply of balls at the side to keep the game flowing and to try and limit stoppages.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage dribbling Can they do the ‘ooh aah’ turn?
5 minutes	<p><u>Cool Down</u> -Play ‘Blow up the balloon’. All the kids start of by crouching down and when the coach ‘blows air’ into the balloon the kids slowly get bigger and bigger – standing on their toes and stretching to the sky. When the coach ‘pops’ the balloon the kids all relax and fall down.</p> <p>Finish with a team huddle.</p>	

EVALUATION:



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Age Group:	U6 – Smart Soccer
Theme of Session:	Dribbling (Animania) – Week 2.

<u>TIME</u>	<u>ORGANIZATION</u>	<u>COACHING POINTS</u>
10 minutes	<p><u>Heads and Tails -</u> 20x30 area (the Jungle). All players are animals and need to stay inside the forest or trees. Can use different animals to vary speed – Cheetah, monkey and elephant. Progression: On coach’s command, "HEADS" – the players must stop the ball with their foot and then place their head on top of the ball. 'TAILS' indicates that the players must stop the ball with their foot and then sit on the ball. Extra commands can be the animal's 'Belly' and 'Back'. To increase the difficulty and fun play opposites e.g. heads = tails, belly = back etc. .</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep the ball close to you • Take lots of little touches with both feet.
15 minutes	<p><u>Going to the Zoo -</u> 30 x20 yards. Coach names the first side of the area a type of zoo animal (don't tell all four sides at the one time). All the children have a soccer ball (camera). They are walking around the zoo taking pictures. Have the 1st player to each side pick THEIR favorite zoo animal until all four sides have been named. Once all sides have been named kids have to get to that side whenever you say that animal. Once they get there they must perform movements and sounds like the animal i.e....monkey, seal Progressions: make each side a particular move or activity incorporating that animal...</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small touches on the ball • Have players look for the biggest space to control the ball in – heads up! • Revise Stop Turn. Use turns to change direction when going to a side of the Zoo.
30 minutes	<p><u>3 v 3</u> – Play inside an area 30 x 20 yards. Have a supply of balls at the side to keep the game flowing and to try and limit stoppages.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can they dribble and beat a player?
5 minutes	<p><u>Cool Down</u> – Bring in all the players have a chat about what was learnt today and then finish off with 'Blow up the Balloon'. (See week 1). Finish off with a group huddle.</p> <p>Finish with a team huddle.</p>	

EVALUATION:



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Age Group:	U6 – Smart Soccer
Theme of Session:	Dribbling (Harry Potter) – Week 3.

<u>TIME</u>	<u>ORGANIZATION</u>	<u>COACHING POINTS</u>
10 minutes	<p><u>Magic Spells</u> –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In an area 30 x20 yards, (Hogwarts) - if the ball goes out you lose your powers! (or use parents) • All players (magicians) begin w/ a ball (wand) • Players dribble around Hogwarts (field) waving wand (dribbling soccer ball) <p>Progressions: Use only 1 foot (dribble only with left foot or only with right) Use other foot (opposite from above last go) Use both feet</p> <p>Spells: <u>Freeze</u> (turn to stone) – stop dead still with foot on ball <u>Lightning</u> dribbles as fast as they can <u>Snail dribbles</u> as slow as they can <u>Secret Passage</u> - Turn in opposite direction to go down secret passage. <u>Frog Steps</u> on the ball <u>Snake</u> Big Toe Little Toe move</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep the ball close to you with small touches • Keep your head up • Use both feet • Simple drag back turn
15 minutes	<p><u>Quidditch</u> –</p> <p>Make it a game to get players in groups of 2 (close your eyes and tell them you will give them 10 seconds to organize themselves). Make a line of cones about 6-8 yards in front of the players which is your invisible force field. First player dribbles (flies on their broomstick) up to the fence and turns right before it – if they go over the force field fence they have to pretend to be shocked (fall of broomstick). They then dribble back and partner goes.</p> <p>Progression: Play first team to score 10 goals (goal is scored when they successfully dribble up and back without crossing the fence) Players must do Stop Turn. Introduce Drag Back Turn.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep head up • Keep ball close and under control. • Keep body low, turn quickly and accelerate. • The Drag back Turn – Place the sole of the foot on the ball, drag the ball back behind you, turn to follow the ball, push the ball away with the opposite foot • Encourage the Big Toe Little Toe & Stop Turn moves
30 Minutes	<p><u>3 v 3</u> - Small sided game, 30x20 yards to 3 yard wide goals.</p>	
5 Minutes	<p><u>Cool Down</u> – Chat with the kids about the session then finish off with the ‘Blow up the Balloon’ and a group huddle.</p>	

EVALUATION:



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Age Group: U6 – Smart Soccer

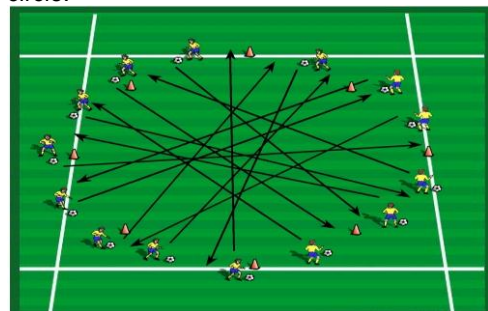
Theme of Session: Dribbling (Pirates of Soccer Island) – Week 4.

TIME

10
minutes

Pirate Mania –

All players start off by dribbling around a circle in the same direction. (Coach will set up a circle with cones) When the coach shouts pirate mania all players dribble their ball directly across the circle to the opposite side before continuing dribbling around in a circle.



Progressions

Coach calls pirate reverse and the pirates turn and go the opposite way. (Counter clockwise)

Coach calls Pirates ooh aah and players will dribble to the middle perform the stop turn and go back to where they started before continuing.

COACHING POINTS

- Small touches on the ball
- Head up
- Use both feet
- Stop turn

15
minutes

Pirate Ship –

Children all dribble around on the ‘Pirate Ship’, 30x20 yard area. The Coach is the Captain of the ship. When the Coach shouts ‘Captain coming’, the players all put their foot on top of the ball, salute to the Captain and shout back ‘Aye, aye Captain’.

When the Captain calls ‘Clean the decks’ the players all perform the STOP TURN (‘Ooh aah’) move.

‘Rats on deck – the players do toe tap on top of the ball to keep their feet off the ground.

‘Windy Day’ – players perform a new move, Big toe Little Toe. They move the ball with the big toe and little toe of the same foot. They then complete the move with the opposite foot.

‘Seagulls’ – the players fall on top of their ball to protect it from the seagulls.

- Keep the ball (sword) close to them
- Ensure Stop Turn is performed correctly
- Big Toe Little Toe – soft touch with the Big Toe, harder touch with the Little Toe. Same foot.

30
minutes

3 v 3 - Small sided game, 30x20 yards to 3 yard wide goals.

5
minutes

Cool Down - Chat with the kids about the session then finish off with the ‘Blow up the Balloon’ and a group huddle.

EVALUATION:



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Age Group: U6 – Smart Soccer

Theme of Session: Dribbling (Sponge Bob Squarepants) – Week 5.

TIME

ORGANIZATION

COACHING POINTS

10
minutes

Spongebob Squarepants –

All the players are Spongebob and dribble around in ‘The Pineapple under the Sea’. The Coach is looking for the hardest working Spongebob. The Coach then performs the Step over move, and the players copy. The Coach then becomes Plankton, (bad guy), and chases all the Spongebob’s. If Plankton manages to kick Spongebob’s ball out of ‘The Pineapple under the Sea’ then Spongebob has to go to the ‘Practice Ring’ (small coned off area to the side of the practice) and perform 3 Step Over moves with each foot. Spongebob may then rejoin all the others in ‘The Pineapple under the Sea’. The Coach may then choose the two hardest workers to become Plankton in the next game.

- Use both feet to dribble and perform the Step Over
- Step Over - place both feet at the side of the ball with the strongest foot nearest the ball, take the strongest foot around the ball and place down on the opposite side, the upper body has moved downwards (to throw the defender off balance), and then the weaker foot takes the ball away in the opposite direction.
- If the players use the ‘Step Over’ in the game then they freeze Plankton for 2 seconds.
- Keep their head up to look for Plankton
- Must keep the ball close to them to avoid being caught
- Dribble with their heads up to see the Plankton
- Perform the moves they know to beat the Plankton

15
minutes

Spongebob and Patrick –

All the players are inside a 30x20 yard ‘Under the Sea’. All the players have a ball (a cake) and they start at one side of the ‘Sea’. Their ‘Mission’ is to get from one side (Spongebob’s house) to the other (Patrick’s house) without getting caught by Plankton, (bad guy). Once they reach the other side they must perform toe taps (eating their cake) until the Coach tells them to go again. The toe taps restores their energy for the next ‘Mission’ across the ‘Sea’. The Coach will start off as the Plankton and each time he manages to put a foot on top of a player’s ball then they become a Plankton with them. Progression:

- Have the last player to be caught start off as the Plankton in the next game.
- Players should all start after the Coach yells ‘He lives in a pineapple under the sea.....all kids shout ‘Spongebob Squarepants!’.
- To increase difficulty you can have the Plankton face the opposite way, lie on the ground etc.

30
minutes

3 v 3 - Small sided game, 30x20 yards to 3 yard wide goals.

5
minutes

Cool Down - Follow the leader.

EVALUATION:



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Age Group:

U6 – Smart Soccer

Theme of Session:

Dribbling (Super Heroes) – Week 6.

TIME

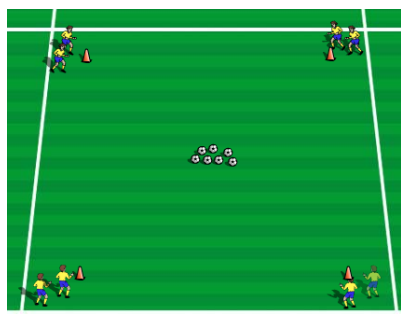
10
minutes

Super Man Tag –

All players dribble around inside the ‘planet Krypton’. The players all have a ball each. The Coach will begin the game by being “The Penguin”. The Penguin is the evil person who wants to rule the world. The Penguin has Kryptonite and if the Penguin manages to place his foot on top of the ball then that player or Superman become ‘frozen’ and needs to hold their ball above their head, open their legs and shout for help. The only way they can be released is if another player dribbles up and passes their ball through the ‘frozen’ players open legs. The two hardest working players will become the Penguin for the next game.

15
minutes

Transformers -



Coach sets players up as shown in diagram. Coach asks each group to choose a transformer. Transformers have to run to the area, dribble a ball back to its corner, pass it to their partner, and tag their partner. The next person then goes. If there are no balls left in the middle transformers are allowed to run to another corner and take their ball. Only one transformer from each group is allowed to be looking for a ball at any given time.

Progression

Coach becomes Megatron and tries to protect the balls in the middle. Megatron also runs and takes balls from the corners to return to the megatron home. Coach then has someone else (or more than one person become Megatron

30
minutes

3v3 – Small sided game, 30x20 yards to 3 yard wide goals.

5
minutes

Cool Down – Follow the Leader.

COACHING POINTS

- Keep the ball close to them with small touches
- Head up to avoid the Penguin
- Side of the foot pass through the legs

- Keep the ball close to them with small touches
- Head up to avoid the Penguin
- Side of the foot pass through the legs
- Have the players who are not playing cheer on their teammates
- If not playing they **MUST** stay in their corner.

EVALUATION:



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Age Group:

U6 – Smart Soccer

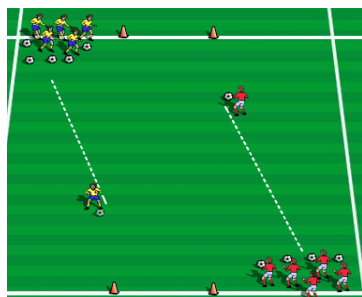
Theme of Session:

Shooting (Ski Races in the mountains) – Week 7.

TIME

10
minutes

Downhill Racing -



ORGANIZATION

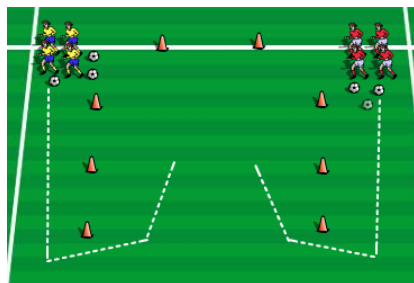
Players are set up as shown in diagram. When coach shouts go it is a race between the yellow and the red player to see who can dribble and score first. After player shoots, then returns to their own line with the ball.

Progressions

Add coach's as GK's 2. Set time limits i.e.10 seconds to score.

15
minutes

Slalom Ski Racing -



Players are placed in two groups as shown. Coach says go and players have to dribble as fast as they can around the cones making train noises. Once they get around the cones the first person to score gets their team a point.

Progression

1. Add a coach or parent as a GK.
2. Players have to dribble through the cones.
3. Players can only shoot with certain feet

30
minutes
5
minutes

3v3 – Small sided game, 30x20 yards to 3 yard wide goals.

Cool Down – Follow the Leader.

COACHING POINTS

- Side of the foot to pass
- Strike in the centre of the ball
- Watch the foot making contact with the ball
- Have the players who are not playing cheer on their teammates
- If not playing they **MUST** stay in their corner

- Side of the foot to pass
- Strike in the centre of the ball
- Watch the foot making contact with the ball
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EVALUATION:



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Age Group:

U6 – Smart Soccer

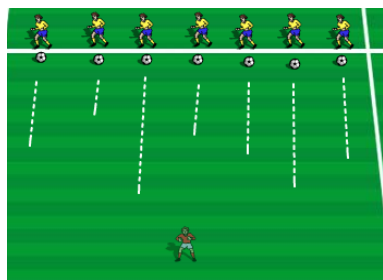
Theme of Session:

Shooting (Going Fishing) – Week 8.

TIME

10
minutes

Finding Nemo



ORGANIZATION

Players all stand in a line. Coach stands with his back to them. Coach calls out a number i.e. 8. Players must dribble that amount of steps. As players get close to coach they try and shoot and get a point if they can hit the coach. At any given time the coach can shout Nemo. When coach shouts Nemo the players must turn quickly and dribble back to the starting line before the coach catches them

Progression

1. Coach starts calls numbers faster.
2. Coach faces players instead of turning their back.
3. Coach gets another person to help him chase the players.

15
minutes

Soccer Fishing –

Players get in pairs. Each player stands about 5yds apart from the other, each in-between 2 cones (a goal). Players take it in turns to shoot at each others goal. The player with the ball is the fisherman and the other player is the fish. Every time they score a goal, they catch a fish. Have a competition to see who can catch the most!

Progression:

One foot only
Play a competition; players play someone different every go

30
minutes

3v3 - Small sided game, 30x20 yards to 3 yard wide goals.

5
minutes

Cool Down – Thank the players for all their hard work over the past eight weeks, and re-emphasize the importance of practicing and playing with the ball as much as possible.

COACHING POINTS

- Shoot as early as possible
- Accuracy, away from the line
- Speed dribbling, close control
- Quick turn

- Strike the ball with the Laces
- Head over the top of the ball.
- Have as many shots as you can
- Strike the ball with the Laces

EVALUATION: