

Cowichan Valley Soccer Association

Mini soccer training manual 2011-2012

The purpose of this manual is to provide our volunteer coaches a concise and user-friendly resource for coaching U5-U6 CVSA boys and girls.

Club Philosophy: To provide a safe and fun environment for players of all abilities to learn and play the game of soccer.

Coaches, if you have any questions please feel free to contact one of the following CVSA Technical staff.

Monica Savory, Technical Director Girls programs.
Bill Keserich Jr, Technical Director Boys Programs
Nigel Large, CVSA Head Coach.

Introduction to U5/U6s

Typical five and six year-olds have very limited coordination and body awareness and are just learning to appreciate the difficulties associated with manipulating an object as troublesome as a round soccer ball without using their hands. They can dribble in straight lines. They can turn the ball in wide arcs. They can kick with the laces and the toes and they can stop the ball if it is not traveling too fast or coming out of the air. They will pass to teammates if they have time to assess their location and how to coordinate the kick, and they will gladly try to recover the ball when out of possession. Most have no practical concept of space or teamwork and they have very little tolerance for complicated rules. While they are very egocentric, they will share the ball with teammates and, in spite of their limited attention spans and absent pacing skills, players as young as five and six will play small-sided soccer games for up to an hour, if they are provided with, or allowed to take, periodic breaks.

Coaching Theme: Individual Play

At the U5/U6 level, the primary concern of the adults is to provide activities that cater to frequent ball contacts and the development of basic motor skills. One-player-one-ball activities and various “fun games” are excellent complements to small-sided soccer games. All activities should include every player. Keep the focus on having fun and keeping busy.

U5/U6 Developmental Characteristics

Short attention span – keep activities short and simple

High energy level – keep players moving and involved

Extremely self-centered – don’t expect too much passing, have a ball for every child during practices, expect to see the “swarm” during the games

Responds well to positive encouragement – smiles and praise

Learns via imitation – be prepared to “show” rather than “tell”

Loves to play games – use games as a tool to teach

U5/U6 Practice Details

30-45 min duration

4-5 activities that are 5-10 minutes in length

Activities must keep everyone involved and moving all of the time

Activities should be designed to improve balance and coordination, learn basic ball control, and involve every player getting as many touches as possible on the ball

NOTE: Every session ends with a 3v3 or 4v4 game and includes a note to ***allow the players to play without interference***. Give the players the freedom to make mistakes and figure out the game for themselves. Offer lots of encouragement and praise. Avoid yelling instruction from the sidelines as it will only distract them and detract from their enjoyment of the game. Avoid criticizing the children’s performances. Keep in mind that “the game is the best teacher” so give them the freedom to learn by playing.

Your First Practice of the season

First impressions last a long time. Make sure your season starts off on the right foot by considering how you will handle your first practice of the season. The following is a suggested way to handle things.

Prepare

- Before you leave the house, check to make sure you have soccer balls, cones, pinnies, team list, practice plan.
- Other items that are useful include extra water bottle, air pump, whistle, and copies of the schedule.

When you arrive

- Set up a 20x20M grid, it is easiest to space cones every 5M to track the distance easily
- As players show up, greet them, give them a ball, and ask them to dribble around in the grid to get used to their ball while we wait for the other kids to arrive. Note: the first thing the kids will want to do when they arrive is shoot on the net. Don't let them do this until after you have gone over the safety rules.

Once all of the players arrive

- Introduce yourself and go over the team safety rules and basic rules of soccer (no hands, cannot push or kick other players, must wear shin guards, no jewellery allowed, etc)
- Take a walk around the field and ask the kids some questions about the soccer field to see what they already know about the game, ask them about the lines on the outside of the field
- Then get the kids to play a quick game of freeze tag first without soccer balls and then with soccer balls

The game

- That may be all you can accomplish in the first night as it will be time to play a game against the other team or an inters quad game if there is no other team – play 3V3 or 4v4 with no goalies, just give the kids some basic advice (don't fight over the ball with your team mates, try and dribble the ball around the other team, try and look up once in a while so that you don't run into another player, etc) and then just let them play
- At the end of the game, have a team cheer and lead the kids to go and shake hands with the other team
- Always remember that this will be a challenging game for many kids, soccer skills take years to master so do not expect too much too soon
- At the end of the session, offer a bit of praise and remind the kids that if they want to learn how to play soccer then they should practice at school and at home with friends, brothers and sisters, mom and dad, or even by themselves, the best way to improve is to play the game as much as possible

The parents

- You should take a few minutes at the end of the session to meet and talk with the parents
- If you bring a snack and give it to the kids after the game that will buy a bit of time
- Let the parents know that playing mini soccer is all about Having Fun, participating, getting fit, and meeting some new friends.... and that it is not about winning
- Tell them that your goal for the season is to help all of the kids improve their soccer skills and that parents can help you out by: arriving on time, making sure their child is dressed appropriately (including shoes tied up), making sure their child has a bottle of water with their name on it, being a positive influence by cheering and praising their child's effort
- Finally recruit a couple of helpers, you need one or two people to help with set up or refereeing or organizing an after-game snack list

Week 1 and 2

Dribbling in the square (5min)

- Mark out a 20x20 area, children dribble the ball freely inside of the square

- For each of the following the coach stops the kids, quickly demonstrates the skill and then encourages the kids to try it themselves:

- Dribbling with right foot and left foot
- Turn with the ball using inside of right foot
- Turn with the ball using outside of right foot
- Use right foot to stop the ball
- Use left foot to stop the ball

Red Light Green Light (5min)

- Players line up across one end of field with balls
 - One player gets to be the Stop Light
 - When the Stop Light says "Green Light" players dribble, "Red Light" players stop
 - Give each child the chance to be the Stop Light (encourage Loud Voices)

Cross Field Game, 2v2 with Big Goals (15min)

- Divide into 4 teams, mark out two 4m goals one on each side of the pitch
- First two teams play 2v2 (no goalkeepers) until a goal is scored
- Next two teams then come onto the pitch and play 2v2 until next goal is scored
- Keep switching teams every time a goal is scored, or make it a rule that the either the scoring team or non-scoring team stays on after a goal is scored

Game 3v3 or 4v4 with no goalkeepers (20min) - ***allow the players to play without interference.***

Week 3 and 4

Dribbling in the square (5min)

- Mark out a 20x20 area, children dribble the ball freely inside of the square

- For each of the following the coach stops the kids, quickly demonstrates the skill and then encourages the kids to try it themselves:

- Dribbling with left foot only
- Turn with the ball using inside of left foot
- Turn with the ball using outside of left foot
- Use left foot and right foot to stop the ball

Goofy Stop and Go (5min)

- Similar to Red Light Green Light but when coach yells, “stop” the kids must freeze in a goofy stance – change game so that kids only dribble with left foot

Cross Field Game, 2v2 with Big Goals (15min)

- Divide into 4 teams, mark out two 4m goals one on each side of the pitch
- First two teams play 2v2 (no goalkeepers) until a goal is scored
- Next two teams then come onto the pitch and play 2v2 until next goal is scored
- Keep switching teams every time a goal is scored, or make it a rule that the either the scoring team or non-scoring team stays on after a goal is scored

Game 3v3 or 4v4 with no goalkeepers (20min) - ***allow the players to play without interference.***

Week 5 and 6

Dribbling in the square (5min)

- Mark out a 20x20 area, children dribble the ball freely inside of the square
- For each of the following the coach stops the kids, quickly demonstrates the skill and then encourages the kids to try it themselves:
- Dribbling with alternate left foot-right foot-left foot-right foot pattern
- Stopping the ball with the left and right feet
- “Whoosh” move (right foot pull back – turn towards the ball)
- “See ya” (left foot pull back – turn towards the ball)

Freeze Tag (5min)

- Each player with a ball except one Tagger
- Players dribble around the square avoiding the Tagger who is trying to tag the dribblers
- If dribblers are tagged they must stand with their legs apart and holding the ball over their head shouting, “Help me – I’m frozen!” (Encourage Loud Voices)
- Players are unfrozen when a team mate crawls between their legs (can’t be tagged when crawling between a frozen players legs)

Week 5 and 6 -continued

Cross Field Game, 2v2 with Big Goals (15min)

- Divide into 4 teams, mark out two 4m goals one on each side of the pitch
- First two teams play 2v2 (no goalkeepers) until a goal is scored
- Next two teams then come onto the pitch and play 2v2 until next goal is scored
- Keep switching teams every time a goal is scored, or make it a rule that the either the scoring team or non-scoring team stays on after a goal is scored

Game 3v3 or 4v4 with no goalkeepers (20min) - ***allow the players to play without interference.***

Week 7 and 8

Dribbling in the square (8min)

- Mark out a 20x20 area, children dribble the ball freely inside of the square, coach holds up a particular number of fingers and children must call out that number (heads up dribbling)
- Kids dribble freely within the grid and coach calls out moves for kids to perform (“stop”, “go”, “left foot only”, “whoosh”, etc)
- Body part stop: kids dribble in the square, coach calls out a body part (“foot”, “knee”, “bum”) and the kids have to use that part to stop the ball

Mud Monster Game (4x2min)

- Similar to Freeze Tag, each player with a ball except two Taggers (the “mud monsters”)
- Players dribble around the square avoiding the mud monster who is trying to tag the dribblers
- Dribblers can use either the whoosh move or see ya to freeze the mud monster before they are tagged
- If dribblers are tagged by the mud monster they must stand with their legs apart and holding the ball over their head shouting “help me, help me, I’m stuck in the mud”
- Players are freed from the mud when a team mate passes the ball between their legs

Week 7 and 8-continued

Cross Field Game, 2v2 with Big Goals (15min)

- Divide into 4 teams, mark out two 4m goals one on each side of the pitch
- First two teams play 2v2 (no goalkeepers) until a goal is scored
- Next two teams then come onto the pitch and play 2v2 until next goal is scored
- Keep switching teams every time a goal is scored, or make it a rule that the either the scoring team or non-scoring team stays on after a goal is scored

Game 3v3 or 4v4 with no goalkeepers (30min) - ***allow the players to play without interference.***

Week 9 and 10

Chaos (5min)

- Players dribble around the field, experimenting with new moves, coach calls out some suggestions (“whoosh”, “see ya”, “left foot stop... now go!”) and walks around the field acting as an obstacle (coach needs to move slowly at first) to force dribblers to change direction. Transition into a quick game of “mud monster”.

Passing Ships (5min)

- Half of the team on each side of the field with balls
- On coach’s signal each team races to the other side of the field, keeping balls under control, and stopping their balls on the far side of the field
- Team gets 1 point if all of their players arrive before the other team
- First team to 5 points is the winner

Cross Field Game, 2v2 with Big Goals (15min)

- divide into 4 teams, mark out two 4m goals one on each side of the pitch
- first two teams play 2v2 (no goalkeepers) until a goal is scored
- next two teams then come onto the pitch and play 2v2 until next goal is scored
- keep switching teams every time a goal is scored, or make it a rule that the either the scoring team or non-scoring team stays on after a goal is scored

Game 3v3 or 4v4 with no goalkeepers (20min) - ***allow the players to play without interference.***

Week 11 and 12

Chaos (5min)

- Players dribble around the field, experimenting with new moves, coach calls out some suggestions (“whoosh”, “see ya”, “left foot stop... now go!”) and walks around the field acting as an obstacle to force dribblers to change direction, transition into a quick game of “mud monster”

Goalkeeper Basics (5min)

- Demonstrate basics of goalkeeper stance, scooping and catching
- Players practice with a partner

Cross Field Game, 4v4 with Big Goals and Goalkeepers (15min)

- divide into 2 teams, mark out two 4m goals one on each side of the pitch
- teams each get a goalkeeper, change out the goalkeeper every few minutes to give them all a chance to try it

Game 3v3 or 4v4 with no goalkeepers (20min) - ***allow the players to play without interference.***

End of season skills checklist

Dribbling with left and right foot

Stops and starts with the ball

Changes of direction with the ball

Shooting with dominant foot

Improvement in balance and coordination

Goalkeeper Basics: using hands to pick up ball, rolling the ball, throwing the ball, punting

Ask yourself (if the answers are YES then the season was a success)

Did the kids have fun during practice and games?

Did the kids learn the basic skills?

Was it enjoyable helping the kids learn some new skills and get some exercise?

Was the experience positive for everyone involved?

A few extra things to consider

Were there any safety issues that occurred during the season?

What will I change for next season?

Would I benefit from additional training?

Thank you for volunteering your time and for being a positive influence in the lives of some young children.

Below are some additional training sessions.

Practice #1: Dribbling

1. Simon Sez- (5) minutes

a) Coach has a ball and acts like Simon.

b) Players must follow whatever coach does.

c) Let a player become Simon once.

2. Red light-Green light- (5) minutes

- a) Coach stands off to the side.
- b) Coach yells green light and players dribble fast.
- c) Coach yells red light and players stop the ball.
- d) Coach can later yell yellow light and see what the players do.

3. Goals "R" Good- (15) minutes

- a) Coach will have players and balls on the side of the field at midfield.
- b) 2 goals should already be set up 30-40 yards apart.
- c) Coach will yell 2 player's names and throw out a ball.
- d) One player will win the ball and dribble through one of the 2 goals.
- e) Coach will then yell 2 new names.
- f) Make sure everyone gets at least 2 turns to dribble and score.
- g) Make sure every one gets a chance to score.

4. Play the Game- (15) minutes

- a) Coach will split up the players into 2 teams.
- b) Coach needs to make the teams as even as possible.
- c) Do not put your best players on the same team.
- d) Coach will act as the Referee so the players will learn the game.
- e) Coach must make sure these are practiced during the game: 1)
Goal kicks
2) Corner kicks
3) Kick-ins

Practice #2: Dribbling

1. Kopy Kat- (5) minutes

- a) Players must copy the skills the coach demonstrates.
- b) Coach will correct player's technique during the session.
- c) Give positive praise the entire time.

2. Animal Soccer- (5) minutes

- a) Coach will act out an animal as he/she dribbles with the ball. 1) Cheetah (go fast)
 - 2) Turtle (go slowly)
 - 3) Deer (bounce with the ball)
 - 4) Snake (slither on the ground with the ball)
- a) Coach may make-up any other characters.
 - b) Have players come up with their own animal characters.
 - c) Make sure players keep their ball close to them.

3. Goals "R" Good- (15) minutes

- a) Coach will have players and balls on the side of the field at midfield.
- b) 2 goals should already be set up 30-40 yards apart.
- c) Coach will yell 2 players' names and throw out a ball.
- d) Those players will challenge for the ball.
- e) One player will win the ball and dribble through one of the 2 goals.
- f) Coach will then yell 2 new names.
- g) Make sure everyone gets at least 2 turns to dribble and score.

4. Play the Game- (15) minutes

- a) Coach will split up the players into 2 teams.
- b) Coach needs to make the teams as even as possible.
- c) Do not put your best players on the same team.
- d) Coach will act as the Referee so the players will learn the game.
- e) Coach must make sure these are practiced during the game:

1. Goal kicks, 2. Corner kicks, 3. Kick-ins 8

Practice #3 Passing

1. Pass with the Coach- (10) minutes

- a) Coach will demonstrate inside of the foot pass.
- b) Have players dribble inside the practice area.
- c) Coach will pass with each player and correct technique.
- d) Coach will call players name and player will pass to the coach.
- e) Coach will give positive praise and pass the ball back to the player.

2. Soccer Marbles- (15) minutes

- a) Coach will demonstrate game.
- b) Coach will kick his/her ball into another player's ball.
- c) Players must stay inside the practice area.
- d) Whoever hits the most balls with their ball wins.
- e) After 2 or 3 minutes ask players how many balls they hit?
- f) Continue playing.

3. Play the Game- (15) minutes

- a) Coach will split up the players into 2 teams.
- b) Coach needs to make the teams as even as possible.
- c) Do not put your best players on the same team.
- d) Coach will act as the Referee so the players will learn the game.
- e) Coach must make sure these are practiced during the game: 1)
Goal kicks
2) Corner kicks
3) Kick-ins

Practice #4: Passing

1. Kick the Coach- (5) minutes

- a) Coach will demonstrate how to pass the ball.
- b) Players will try and hit the Coach with their ball.
- c) Coach will try and avoid balls.
- d) Coach will let the players hit him/her with the balls
- e) Coach can freeze practice and correct technique.

2. Kick the Disc Cones- (10) minutes

- a) Coach will randomly set out 10 to 15 disc cones.
- b) Coach will demonstrate how to kick the disc cones.
- c) Coach will kick them with the inside of foot.
- d) Coach will kick them with the laces or instep.
- e) Coach will monitor and correct technique.

3. Hunting- (10) minutes

- a) Coach will keep out the disc cones from kick the cones.
- b) Players will try to kick their ball at the disc cones.
- c) Coach will correct technique.
- d) Coach will ask players, "how many cones did you hit?"

4. Play the Game- (15) minutes

- a) Coach will split up the players into 2 teams.
- b) Coach needs to make the teams as even as possible.
- c) Do not put your best players on the same team.
- d) Coach will act as the Referee so the players will learn the game.
- e) Coach must make sure these are practiced during the game: 1)
Goal kicks
2) Corner kicks
3) Kick-ins

Practice #5: Dribbling

1. Soccer Champ- (10) minutes

- a) Each player will have a ball.
- b) One player is "It" and has no ball.
- c) If the player that is "It" tags everyone he/she is the Champion!
- d) Players must keep the ball with them or they are tagged!
- e) Make sure everyone has a turn to be "It"

2. Goals "R" Good- (15) minutes

- a) Coach will have players and balls on the side of the field at midfield.
- b) 2 goals should already be set up 30-40 yards apart.
- c) Coach will yell 2 players' names and throw a ball out.
- d) Those players will challenge for the ball.
- e) One player will win the ball and dribble through one of the 2 goals.
- f) Coach will then yell 2 new names.
- g) Make sure everyone gets at least 2 turns to dribble and score.

3. Play the Game- (15) minutes

- a) Coach will split up the players into 2 teams.
- b) Coach needs to make the teams as even as possible.
- c) Do not put your best players on the same team.
- d) Coach will act as the Referee so the players will learn the game.
- e) Coach must make sure these are practiced during the game:1)
Goal kicks
2) Corner kicks
3) Kick-ins

Practice #6: Kicking

1. Popcorn- (10) minutes
 - a) Each player will have a ball.
 - b) Coach will demonstrate how to kick ball with the laces or instep.
 - c) Coach will kick ball and catch the ball.
 - d) Coach will then kick the ball up high and catch it.
 - e) If you catch the ball you get to yell "POPCORN!"

2. Shoot the Parents- (15) minutes
 - a) Players will kick balls at the parents.
 - b) Coach will watch and correct kicking technique.
 - c) Parents get their chance to shoot at the players.

3. Play the Game- (15) minutes
 - a) Coach will split up the players into 2 teams.
 - b) Coach needs to make the teams as even as possible.
 - c) Do not put your best players on the same team.
 - d) Coach will act as the Referee so the players will learn the game.
 - e) Coach must make sure these are practiced during the game: 1)
Goal kicks
2) Corner kicks
3) Kick-ins

Practice #7: Running and Agility

1. Relay Races without the ball- (10) minutes
 - a) Coach will set up 2 tall cones about 30 yds apart.
 - b) Players will go to the cone and back to the starting cone.
 - 1) Just run normal
 - 2) Run backwards
 - 3) Skip fast
 - 4) Crab walk

2. Relay Races with the ball- (15) minutes
 - a) Coach will set up 2 tall cones about 30 yds apart.
 - b) Players will go to the cone and back to the starting cone.
 - 1) Dribble fast with the ball.
 - 2) Dribble with the left foot only.
 - 3) Dribble with the right foot only.
 - 4) Kick it to the cone and run.

3. Play the Game- (15) minutes
 - a) Coach will split up the players into 2 teams.
 - b) Coach needs to make the teams as even as possible.
 - c) Do not put your best players on the same team.
 - d) Coach will act as the Referee so the players will learn the game.
 - e) Coach must make sure these are practiced during the game:
 - 1) Goal kicks
 - 2) Corner kicks
 - 3) Kick-ins

Practice #8: Parent/Players Practice

1. Team Tag- (15) minutes

- a) Parents and their players team up together.
- b) One team will be "It."
- c) The other teams of parents and players must keep from being tagged.
- d) Each team must hold hands and escape together.
- e) If a team let's go of each other's hand, then they are tagged.
- f) Add a ball for each team once you have played for a few minutes.
- g) Each team must control their ball or they are tagged.

2. Goals "R" Good- (15) minutes

- a) Coach will have players, parents, and balls on the side of the field at midfield.
- b) 2 goals should already be set up 30-40 yards apart.
- c) Coach will yell player's names and throw out a ball.
- d) Those players will challenge their parents for the ball.
- e) Players or parents will win the ball and dribble through one of the 2 goals.
- f) Coach will then yell new names.

3. Parents verses the Players- (15) minutes

- a) Players will play against their parents.

Practice #9: Dribbling

1. Cross the "River Crocs"-

- a) Coach will set up a river of cones across the middle of the field.
- b) Coach will select one of the players to be a crocodile.
- c) Players must cross the river without being touched.
- d) Players will dribble their ball across the river.
- e) If players are caught they will become additional crocodiles.
- f) Make sure every player gets to be the croc.

2. One against One "World Cup"-

- a) Coach will set up one small field; 20 yds long and 10 yds wide.
- b) Coach will set up two goals, 10yds apart.
- c) Players will play against each other for one minute rounds.
- d) Players must dribble through the goals to score.
- e) Each player should play against everyone on the team.
- f) At the end of the matches the Coach will proclaim that they are all "World Cup Champions."

3. Play the Game- (15) minutes

- a) Coach will split up the players into 2 teams.
- b) Coach needs to make the teams as even as possible.
- c) Do not put your best players on the same team.
- d) Coach will act as the Referee so the players will learn the game.
- e) Coach must make sure these are practiced during the game: 1)
Goal kicks
2) Corner kicks
3) Kick-ins

Practice #10: Passing

1. Soccer Golf- (15) minutes

- a) Coach will set up a soccer golf course.
- b) Do not make more than 9 holes.
- c) Use disc cones for the holes.
- d) Have players kick or pass their ball to each hole.
- e) Coach will ask players how many passes or kicks did it take to get to a particular hole?
- f) Coach will compete against his players.

2. NASCAR- (10) minutes

- a) Coach will set up oval course with tall cones and disc cones.
- b) Have players kick or pass the ball through the course as fast as they can.
- c) The second or third time around; have players choose a partner to finish the course.
- d) Coach will ask, "How fast can you go?"
- e) Then make the course more difficult.

3. Coaches verses the Players- (15) minutes

- a) Coach or Coaches will play against the players.
- b) Coach will act as the Referee so the players will learn the game.
- c) Coach must make sure these are practiced during the game: 1)
Goal kicks
2) Corner kicks
3) Kick-ins