

U10- Nine and Ten Year-Olds

Technical Guidelines:

- Turning with the ball through 180 degrees, continued, with soles of feet, insides, and outsides - now, "More speed, bend your knees more, get your head up, don't get the ball stuck under you!"
- Practice changes of speed and direction with the ball. Guiding the ball at a 45 degree angle off a straight line: the technical rudiments of beating an opponent with a dribble.
- Perhaps some "Coerver training": dribbling and feinting moves, and these moves practiced under pressure.
- Stronger and more accurate instep kicks over 15 to 20 yards.
- The essentials of heading are introduced, but very little time spent on heading.
- Continuing to master receiving ground balls with the insides and outsides of the feet. With an accurate "first touch" getting into a running stride to dribble, or setting up a pass or a shot. Should be comfortable with the insides and outsides of both feet.
- "Driving" or "cruising" with the ball: running fast with the ball, generally in straight lines.
- Shielding the ball effectively, "sideways on" to the defender.
- Continuing to coordinate the nervous system and the muscles.
- Shooting accurately - keeping the ball in the frame of the goal - with the insides of the feet and the insteps.
- Front block tackle.

Fitness Guidelines:

- Nothing without the ball.
- No strength or endurance training.

Tactical Guidelines:

- Positioning goal side of attackers when you lose the ball: cutting off the path to the goal. Marking opponents tightly.
- Elemental idea of support: helping the player with the ball. "Form a pair" with the player on the ball; other players should stay away and make the field big.
- Don't wait for the ball - go to it!
- Playing away from pressure when you receive a ball - and move it at a new angle.
- Getting free of markers: "checking off" and creating space for yourself. "Make an area of green grass around you!"
- Wall pass, the give-and-go, the 1 - 2. Beginning to build up options for the two attackers in a two versus one situation.
- Lots of 1 v 1 confrontations to perfect timing in attack and defense. Continued emphasis on the "three main moments of soccer".
- Building up an aggressive attitude about shooting.
- Recognizing when you're under pressure and when you're not under pressure when you receive a pass.
- Beginning to establish a vocabulary of communication.
- Players should be looking up and around and away from the ball, on both attack and defense. No "ball watching".

The Practice Environment:

- Practice is a combination of "play time" and a learning environment.
- Some pressured play in confined spaces.
- No specializing by positions.
- #4 ball, small goals.
- The week's practice is 75 minutes long.

Games:

- Equal playing time.
- 4 v 4 or 5 v 5 or 6 v 6.
- Friendship tournaments; not more than three halves for any player in a weekend.
- Players play all the "positions".
- No stress at all on winning and losing. Total focus is on enjoyment and the future; virtually no mention of results.