



Weymouth Youth

Soccer

Coaching Curriculum

U6-U10 Age Groups

This curriculum is the WYS guideline and goals for all WYS coaches on the most effective method to teach our U6 – U11 players. This document will give the coach the necessary information to ensure our young players attain their individual potential, prepare them for our Senior teams and foster their passion for soccer. This combination will create the best Senior premier players and teams in New England.

Weymouth Youth Soccer was created to provide an environment that would best foster individual player development in a fun, safe, educational atmosphere, while ensuring these players have the necessary skills to play for our Youth and High School teams.

The training of these players will be centered around mastery of the ball. Ensuring our U6 - U11 players are comfortable with the ball at their feet, is paramount and our main priority. Players will then have the ability to effectively make decisions at speed in game situations. To promote this, training sessions will consist largely of game related activities that will challenge each player to constantly make game related decisions while having the ball at their feet.

Coaches will allow players to create and remedy situations with mild guidance from coaches. This is called the “guided discovery” method of coaching, it will maximize each players participation and involvement in the decision making process. This will provide a lifelong ability to solve problems both on and off the soccer field.

The training session will be efficient, encompassing all four components of the game (technical, tactical, psychological and physical) in every session. Players will be encouraged to be creative and think on the field for themselves, an invaluable life skill, beyond soccer.

Training sessions will consist of a warm up, several game related activities, and end with the ‘game’, giving players the opportunity to put into use what was learned during the session. Each session should have a theme, and while coaches should stay as close to this theme as possible, coaches should not allow repetitive mistakes to go unnoticed and uncorrected.

## **AGE - U6 PLAYER:**

### **Skill Priorities:**

Dribble with all sides of both feet  
Dribble out of trouble  
Dribble past someone  
Soft first touch

### **Characteristics of the U6 Age Group:**

The fascination for the ball, the desire to master it and the thrill of scoring goals provides the launching pad into a lifetime of soccer participation. The joy and pleasure of the game are best nurtured by encouraging freedom of expression and organizing children's play in small groups. Fun is a priority!

### **Role of the U6 Coach**

The role of the coach in the U6 age group is as facilitator, friendly helper, organizer, and motivator. The coach should be patient, enthusiastic, and imaginative. The coach should experiment with fun activities that include all players, if possible. The environment and the activities are more important than technical coaching is at this level  
Activities need to be fun, active, employ a ball for each player, and be personally competitive. It is more important for the U6 player to compete to see themselves improve than try to be better than other players.

### **What to Teach U6 Players:**

#### **Technical (skills):**

**Dribbling** -Keep the ball close (inside of foot).

**Kicking** -Kicking the ball at the goal (inside of foot, and laces).

**Catching** - Toss to self and catch.

**Turning** – using the inside, outside, bottom of the foot

#### **Psychology (mental and social):**

- Sharing
- Fair play
- Dealing with parental involvement (confusion)
- “How to play”
- Emotional management

#### **Fitness (movement education):**

- Balance
- Running
- Jumping
- Rolling
- Hopping
- Skipping

### **Tactics (decisions):**

- Where is the field
- Moving in the correct direction (which goal to kick at)
- Dealing with the ball rolling away
- Dealing with the ball rolling toward

## **The Training Session**

- ✓ *The training session should involve fun and imaginative game like activities.*
- ✓ *Facilitate fun activities that draw out the skill in the player.*
- ✓ *Small-sided games such as 1v1, 2v1, 2v2, should be included as well.*
- ✓ *Training should always conclude with a 3v3 game without goalkeepers if possible.*

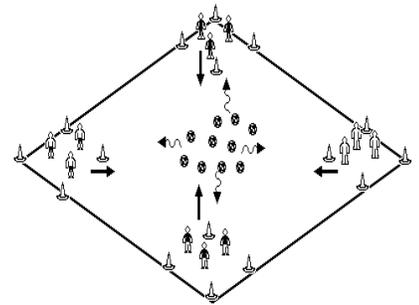
**The duration of the training session should be 45-60 minutes**

### Some Recommended Games for U6 Players:

- 1) Tag---Every child dribbles a soccer ball in the space defined while trying to tag other players with their hand. Players cannot leave their own ball. Have them keep count of how many people they have tagged and, if playing twice in a row, see if players can tag more people than they did in the first game. *Version 2:* Players must tag other players on their knees.
- 2) Hospital tag---Same as tag in that each player dribbles a soccer ball and that they try to tag each other with their hands. In this game, each time a player is tagged he/she must place their hand on the spot on their body at which they were tagged. Obviously, if tagged a third time, players have no more hands to cover those spots, so they must go to the hospital to see the doctor. The coach acts as the doctor and performs a magical task (pretend) to heal all the little soccer players so they can continue playing the game.
- 3) Red light/Green light---All players have a ball and dribble in a limited space, in any direction. When coach says “red light”, players must stop ball and put foot on top of ball. When coach says “yellow light”, players must dribble very slowly. When coach says “green light”, players dribble fast. Coach controls this game with frequency of light changes and variety of changes. Once players catch on to this game, add light of other colors and affix different actions to them. (i.e. purple

light = hop back and forth over ball, orange light = run around the ball, black light = dance, blue light = hide behind the ball etc. etc.)

- 4) Freeze Tag---Break up the group into two teams. Everyone must dribble their soccer ball, but one team tries to tag (freeze) the other team. If they do tag a player on the other team, that player must freeze, place their ball above their head and spread their legs. Another player on their team must kick his/her ball through the frozen player's legs to unfreeze the teammate. If all players are frozen, game ends and the frozen team becomes the taggers. Otherwise, stop game after a few minutes and have team reverse roles. *Version 2:* Coach can be the freeze monster and try to tag all the players with players unfreezing each other in same fashion
- 5) Snake---In an appropriate space for the numbers you have, have all players dribbling soccer balls except for 2-3 players to start. These players hold hands and work together as one snake to tag the other players, The players with balls try to avoid getting tagged by the snake. If they are tagged, they join hands with players making up the snake the snake grows until all players are part of the snake. The snake must stay together as one animal and not break off into little parts. Encourage fun by having the snake hiss. ☺
- 6) Ball Tag---Similar to other tag games except players try to tag others with their soccer ball instead of their hand. Have them keep count of how many times they kick their soccer ball and tag another person. Have the tag count if their ball hits another player below the knee, or that player's ball. Can have the players tag the coach for 10 or 20 points. Then can have players tag other selected players for 50 or 100 points etc. etc. *Version 2:* Rather than having players tag each other, have them tag the coach by kicking their soccer ball. The coach moves around without a ball to avoid being tagged. Have players count up how many they got and can do the same variations as in the other game by affixing a lot of points to players.
- 7) Capture the Balls---Set up three or four "home bases" (squares) with cones roughly 2-3 yards wide. Break up the players into teams and have each team get together in their home base. Place all the balls in the center of the space between the home bases. On the coaches command the teams are free to gather as many soccer balls as they can into their home base. Players cannot use hands and there is no pushing each other or sitting/laying on the balls. Teams try to gather as many balls as possible into their home bases. Teams can steal balls from each others' home bases. Coach calls time and counts up how many balls are in each space to determine a winner. Coach allows team 1 minute to make up a new team strategy before playing again.



Every Session Should End In A Scrimmage

## **US Youth Soccer U6 Recommendations to The Game**

Playing numbers: 3v3 (no goalkeepers)  
Field Dimensions:  
    Length 20-30 yards  
    Width 15-20 yards  
Goal Dimensions:  
    Height 6 feet  
    Width 18 feet  
Duration: Four 8-minute quarters  
Ball: Number 3

### **Rules: to teach during the game**

The kick off  
The goal kick  
Ball in and out of play  
Hand ball  
Physical fouls (pushing, holding, striking, tripping)

## **AGE – U8 PLAYER:**

### **Skill Priorities**

Dribble with all sides of both feet  
Dribble out of trouble  
Dribble past someone  
Shielding (protecting the ball)  
Soft first touch  
Introduce proper shooting technique  
Introduce passing

### **Tactical Priorities**

Basic Attacking Ideas  
Basic Defending Ideas  
Comprehend 1 vs 1 concepts

### **Characteristics of the U8 Player:**

This is the age where players can begin to understand the concept of working with a teammate. The notion, or willingness, to intentionally pass the ball to someone is just beginning to take hold. Coaches and parents will have more success encouraging players to pass the ball in the seven to eight year old age group. In this age group, the player begins to think beyond their personal needs and actively begins to cooperate with a teammate. However, players in this age group must continue individual ball work.

### **Role of U8 Coach**

The role of the coach in the U8 age group is to be a sensitive and patient teacher with an enthusiastic and imaginative approach. It is helpful if they have the ability to demonstrate and very important that they understand technique.

### **What to Teach U8 Players:**

#### **Techniques (skills):**

##### **Dribbling**

With laces & outside of the foot  
Change of speed and direction

##### **Receiving**

Ground balls with inside, outside, and sole of foot  
Bouncing balls with various body parts

##### **Passing**

With inside, outside of foot and laces  
Throw-ins

**Shooting**

With inside of foot and laces

**Tackling**

Poke-tackle

**Catching**

From self and from partner

Rolling, bouncing, and air balls

**Juggling**

With a bounce and without, using all body parts

**Psychology (mental and social):**

- Working in pairs
- Sportsmanship
- Dealing with parental involvement
- “How to play” (social cooperation)
- Emotional management

**Fitness (movement education):**

- Introduce the idea of warm-up, with a ball
- Agility
- Leaping
- Tumbling
- Eye/foot & eye/hand coordination

**Tactics (decisions):**

- Being exposed to all positions
- 1 v 1 attacking
- 1v1 defending
- 2v1 attacking
- Introduce the names of positions
- Shape (triangles)

## The Training Session

### *General Information*

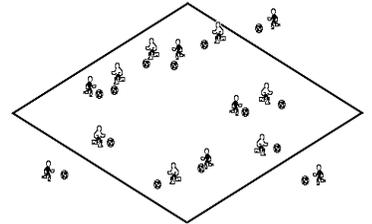
- ✓ *The training session should involve fun and imaginative game like activities.*
- ✓ *Light coaching on simple technique is appropriate (dribbling, passing and receiving)*
- ✓ *Small-sided directional games such as 1v1, 2v1, 2v2, 3v2, and 3v3 should be included as well.*
- ✓ *Training should always conclude with a 4v4 game without goalkeepers.*

The duration of the training session should be 60-75 minutes.

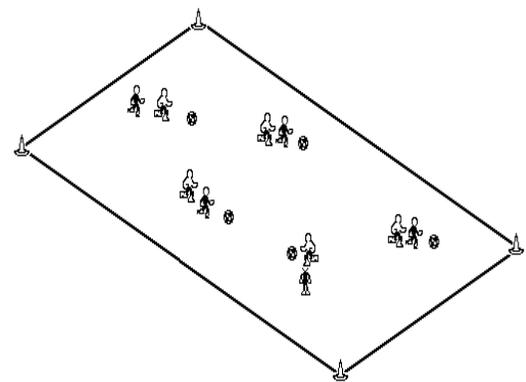
### Some Recommended Games for U8 Players:

- 1) Free Dribble---Everyone with a ball, use inside, outside, and sole of the foot. Have players dribble with speed (outside of foot), change direction, and perform moves. Coach calls out moves or changes in direction and sets the pace as the manipulator of the session, kids carry the ball towards someone and try a move. *Version 2:* As players get comfortable, coach can walk around and put pressure on players as they are performing dribbling tasks. This adds fun and interaction.

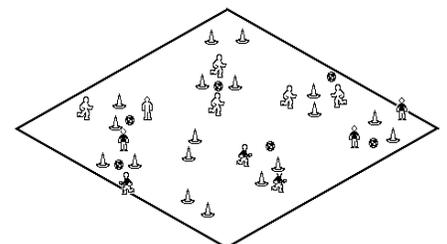
- 2) Knock Out---In a space similar to free dribble, have players dribble balls while trying to knock other player's balls outside of the grid. Players can never leave their own ball. If their ball gets knocked out have them retrieve it quickly and get back into the game. (You may wish to have them perform a skills task before re-entering such as 10 toe touches or juggling 5 times).



- 3) Shield-Steal---Half of players in the group have a ball and half do not. If you do not have a ball you need to steal one from someone who does. If ball goes out of bounds, person who touched it last does not get possession. You can teach players the technical points of shielding as a group at start of activity. Show technique with body sideways, arm providing protection, ball on outside foot, knees bent, turning as defender attacks, using feel to understand where defender is going. Fix technical shielding errors throughout this activity and make sure entire group knows how to properly shield.

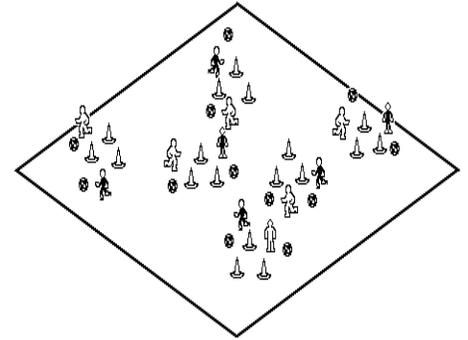


- 4) Gates Passing---Players are paired up and must successfully pass the ball through the cones to their teammate to earn a point. Players try to accumulate as many points as possible in the time allotted. Have players

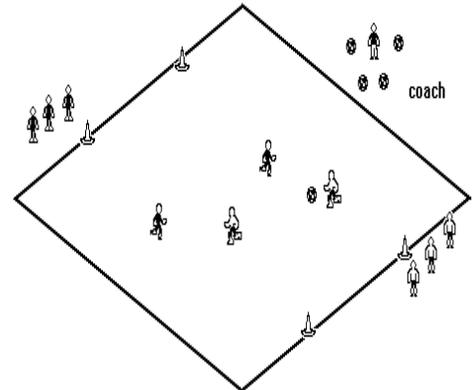


pass only with their left foot or right foot, or the outside of their foot.

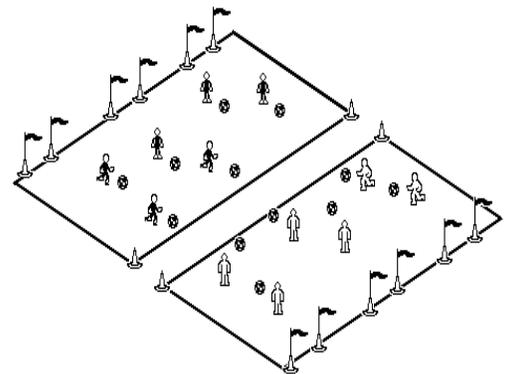
- 5) Triangle Tag---Set up cones in a triangle formation with each side of the triangle being roughly 1 yard long. Every triangle has a pair of players, each with a ball. Similar to the tag game, one player is being chased and one is "it". However this time the player who is "it" tags the player by kicking her ball and hitting the other player's ball or hitting the player below the knee. Players can dribble in either direction around the triangle and must stay close to their own triangle. Neither play can go through the triangle. *Version 2:* Allow the player being chased to go through the triangle. When in the triangle she is safe. However, after going through triangle, player must go completely around triangle before she can go through triangle again. She cannot stop inside the triangle. *Version 3:* Allow pairs to move from triangle to triangle (incorporates speed dribbling and traffic). If two pairs are at the same triangle at the same time that is fine, but players still only compete with their partner. Note: To increase difficulty, do not count hitting a player below the knee as a tag.



- 6) Get Outta Here---Place two small (2 yard) goals at the end of a field 15 x 10 yards. Place half of team behind each goal and coach stands at halfway line with all balls. When coach plays out a ball the first two players run out and try to score on each other's goal. If the ball goes in the goal or out of bounds, the coach yells "get outta here" and plays in a new ball immediately for the next two players. *Version 2:* Coach can stop yelling "get outta here" after a while and see if players recognize when balls go out and are attentive. *Version 3:* Coach can vary service of ball. Sometimes play it to one player, sometimes toss the ball up in the air. *Version 4:* Have the first two or three players from each group come out each time a new ball is played and play 2 vs. 2 or 3 vs. 3.



- 7) Clean Your Backyard--- Break group into two teams and have each team stay only on their half of the field. Place a 6 yard buffer zone between halves that no one can enter or cross. Each player needs a ball. Place three small (2-3yd) goals at the far end of each side of the field. Have both teams shoot balls at other team's goals in an attempt to score through anyone of the small goals (below knee height). Players cannot cross the buffer zone or go into the other half. Balls get recycled naturally in the game. This is a



competition and teams need to keep score. Play 2 or 3 games and have teams re-strategize between each game. Teams can play defense though no hands. Only shots with laces count as goals.

- 8) 2 vs. 1 keepaway---In a grid 10x15 yds, three players play 2 vs. 1 continuous keepaway. Two attackers combine to keep the ball away from one defender. When the defender wins the ball, he or she immediately combines with the attacker he or she did not win the ball from and the attacker who lost the ball becomes the defender. Balls out of play are dribbled in or passed in.
- 9) 1 vs. 1 to Endlines---In a space that is wider than long (15 x 20 yds) each player defends one endline and attacks the other. Players score by dribbling the ball in control over the opposing player's endline. *Version 2:* You can make this 2 vs. 2, 3 vs. 3 or 4 vs. 4.

*Every Session Should End In A Scrimmage!*

## **US Youth Soccer U8 Recommendations to The Game**

Playing numbers:	4v4 (no goalkeepers)
Field Dimensions:	
Length	25-35 yards
Width	20-30 yards
Goal Dimensions:	
Height	6 feet
Width	18 feet
Duration:	four 12-minute quarters
Ball:	number 3

### **Rules to teach during the game:**

Review the kick off  
Review the goal kick  
Review hand ball  
Review physical fouls (pushing, holding, striking, tripping)  
Corner kick  
Direct kicks  
Throw-ins

# **AGE – U10 PLAYER:**

## **Skill Priorities**

Expand on dribbling foci from U8  
Passing with inside and outside of both feet  
Speed Dribbling in Traffic  
Shooting with both feet---using laces  
Receiving the ball with all parts of body  
Offensive/Defensive Heading  
Moves to create space through traffic  
Moves to deceive/beat an opponent

## **Tactical Priorities**

Communication  
Basic Support Positions  
Receiving the Ball Away from Pressure  
Combination Play  
How and when to switch the point of attack  
Pressure vs Containing  
Comprehend 2 vs 1 concepts  
Introduction to 2 vs 2 concepts  
Comprehend roles of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> defenders  
Comprehend roles of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> attackers

## **Characteristics of the U10 Age Group:**

The motivation to learn basic skills is very high at this age level. Children gradually begin to change from being self-centered to being self-critical and develop the need for group and/or team games. The game itself should be central to all skills training. Small-sided games continue to be the method of choice for this age group. This is an appropriate time to introduce some of the basic **Principles** of play:

### **Attacking Principles**

***Penetration***  
***Support***  
***Mobility***  
***Width***  
***Depth (length)***  
***Improvisation (deception, creativity)***

### **Defensive Principles**

***Recovery (Immediate Chase)***  
***Pressure***  
***Cover***  
***Balance***  
***Compactness***  
***Counter Attack***

## Role of a U10 Coach:

The role of the coach in the U10 age group is to be a patient and motivating teacher. At this level, in addition to understanding technique, coaches should be able to provide environments conducive to problem solving (decision-making) by the players utilizing guided discovery methods.

### **What to Teach U10 Players:**

#### ***Techniques (skills):***

##### **Running with the Ball**

- At speed
- Under Pressure

##### **Passing**

- With all parts of the foot
- Heading

##### **Instep Drive**

- Shooting
- Crossing

##### **Receiving Ground Balls with the Inside and Outside of Foot**

- Away from pressure
- Past opponent

##### **Receiving Air Balls**

- With the Instep (cushion) and sole, inside and outside of the foot (wedge)

##### **Throw-In**

- Short and long distances

##### **Moves in Dribbling**

- Half-turns
- Step-overs, Scissors

##### **Introduce Heading**

- Juggling (alone and in small groups)
- Feet in contact with the ground
- Introduction to jumping

##### **Tackling**

- Balance foot and contact foot (block tackle)

#### ***Goalkeeping (skills)***

##### **Ready Stance for Goalkeepers**

- Foot positioning
- Body posture

##### **“W” Grip**

- Positioning of thumbs
- Fingers spread

##### **How to Hold a Ball After a Save**

- Ball to chest

Forearm protection

**Catching Shots at the Keeper**

Body alignment path of ball

**Punting**

Distance and accuracy

**Throwing**

Bowling

Over-arm

**Goal Kicks**

Distance and accuracy

**Psychology (mental and social):**

- Working in groups of 3-6
- Staying focused for one entire half
- Sensitivity; learning how to win, lose or draw gracefully
- Sportsmanship
- How to handle parental involvement
- Communication; emotional management

**Fitness (conditioning):**

- Endurance
- Range of motion-flexibility
- Proper warm-up is now mandatory
- Introduce cool-down

**Tactics (decisions):**

- Roles of 1<sup>st</sup> attacker and defender
- Roles of 2<sup>nd</sup> attackers and defenders
- 2v1 attacking (simple combinations)
- Man-to-man defending
- Throw-ins to teammate's feet
- Introduction to the tactics of set plays/restarts (goal kicks, corner kicks, other free kicks)
- Introduction to setting up walls

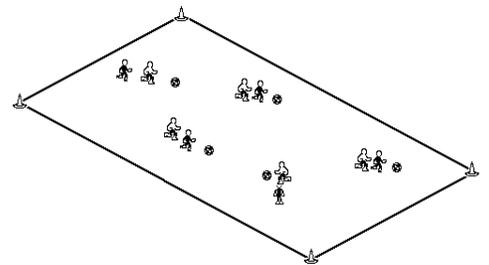
## The Training Session

- ✓ The training session should involve fun and imaginative game like activities, as well as technical and tactical repetitive activities.
- ✓ Coaching technical skills is very important at this age as well as light tactical concepts.
- ✓ The training session has a technical and/or tactical theme (focus). For example: dribbling technique, or passing and receiving, or combination play.
- ✓ Small-sided directional games such as 3v3, 4v3, 4v4, 5v4 and 5v5 should be included as well.
- ✓ Training should always conclude with a 6v6 game with goalkeepers if possible (5 field players and 1 goalkeeper on each team).
- ✓ The duration of the training session should be 75-90 minutes.

### Some Recommended Games for U10 Players:

- 1) Free Dribble---Everyone with a ball, use inside, outside, and sole of the foot. Have players dribble with speed (outside of foot), change direction, and perform moves. Coach calls out moves or changes in direction and sets the pace as the manipulator of the session, kids carry the ball towards someone and try a move.  
*Version 2:* As players get comfortable, coach can walk around and put pressure on players as they are performing dribbling tasks. This adds fun and interaction.  
*Version 3:* Make the game a knockout game in which players try to knock each other's balls out of the grid while maintaining possession of their own. *Note: Have them perform a skills task before re-entering such as 10 toe touches or juggling 5 times. You do not want players sitting out.*

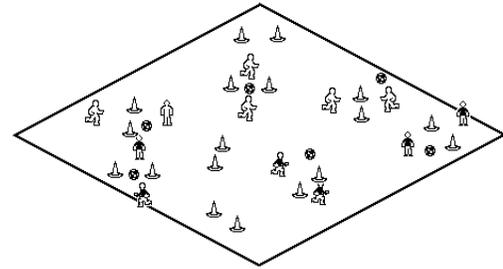
- 2) Colors-Warm Up---Half of the players in red pennies, half in blue. Teams playing together in the same space combine in the passing sequence blue-blue-red-red-blue-blue-red-red etc. etc. Ball can never stop, players can never stop moving, and ball cannot leave area of play. Coach can limit touch-count, mandate which foot to pass with or which side of foot to pass with as sees fit. When players can do first sequence adequately and without frequent errors change the sequence to blue-blue-blue-red-red-red-blue-blue-blue etc. etc. Stress communication and technical passing points throughout. Make this activity competitive by counting errors and setting goals by lowering allowed errors.



- 3) Shield-Steal---Half of players in the group have a ball and half do not. If you do not have a ball you need to steal one from someone who does. If ball goes out of bounds, person who touched it last does not get possession. You can teach players the technical points of shielding as a group at start of activity. Show technique with body sideways, arm providing protection, ball on outside foot, knees bent,

turning as defender attacks, using feel to understand where defender is going. Fix technical shielding errors throughout this activity and make sure entire group knows how to properly shield.

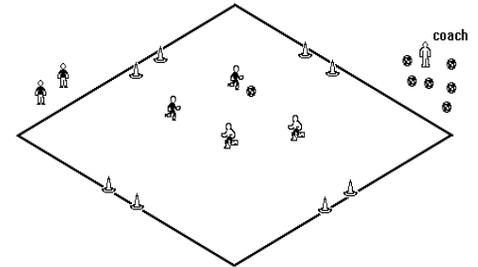
- 4) Gates Passing---Same set up as previous game. However players are now paired up and must successfully pass the ball through the cones to their teammate to earn a point. Again, players try to accumulate as many points as possible in the time allotted. Similar to previous game, have them pass only with their left foot or right foot, or the outside of their foot.



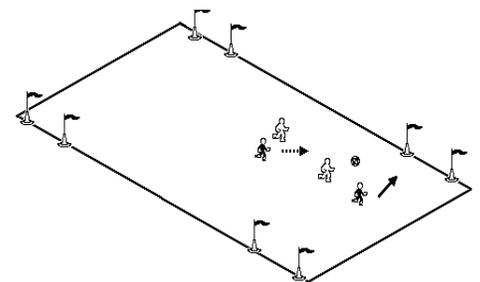
- 5) 1 vs. 1 To lines---In a grid 10x10 yards, players line up on opposite sides. The first player in each line alternates attacking the player opposite them. When the attacker dribbles over the line they score a goal. If the defender wins the ball he or she can counter attack to the opposite line to also score a goal. The players switch to the opposite line if a goal is scored or the ball goes out of bounds. The coach rotates the lines so all players get to compete against each other. *Version 2:* Make the grid larger and make this a 2 vs. 2 or a 3 vs. 3 game.

- 6) 1 vs. 1 To Two Small Goals---Same grids as above except now there is a three foot goal in the middle of each line. Attackers try to score by passing the ball through the goal. Defenders can counter attack to the opposite goal if they win the ball. Players switch sides after a goal or the ball goes out of bounds. The coach rotates the lines so all players get to compete against each other.

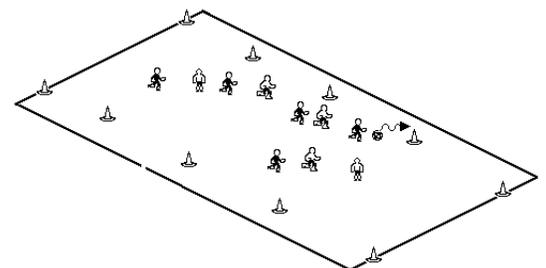
- 7) 2 vs. 2 to Four Cross Goals---Teams defend one goal and have the opportunity to score on the other three, you must dribble through a goal to score a point. The goals are on the ends of a large cross in a square grid roughly 10yd x 10yd. Have one team of 2 on deck, they come on when a team gets scored on twice. Game is continuous, they must run on immediately.



- 8) 2 vs. 2 To Four Small Goals---In a 15 X 15 yard grid with a small goal in each corner teams of two attack the two opposite goals and defend their two goals. The coach will set up as many grids as needed to accommodate the players. When the ball goes out of bounds it can be passed or dribbled in to play. The teams should be rotated every three minutes until all groups have played against each other. *Version 2:* 3 vs. 3 in a 20 X 25 yard grid. Teams should show a triangle shape in attack.



- 9) 4 vs. 4 Endzone Game---Teams comprised of 4-6 players depending on numbers and space. To score



you must pass the ball to a teammate into the opponent's end zone (created with discs). The player cannot go into the endzone until after the ball has been passed. Stress recognizing opportunities and timing of passes.

- 10) 5 Goal Game---4v4+2 in 35x40 yard grid. Five 2-yard goals are spread out throughout the grid. The plus 2 players are always on the attacking team. The teams score by passing through any of the goals to a teammate. Must receive with inside of foot, then outside, weak foot inside/outside are different expectations that can be put on the players. First team to 10 points wins. Players need to be able to see where the open goals are, and receive with a "picture" of what is around them. With this in mind, if the players are advanced enough, the player receiving through the goal must play 1 touch. Coach could require receiving player to perform a feint before touching ball
- 11) Triangle Goal Game---Make a triangle with three cones in the center if the field. The sides of the triangle each serve as a goal mouth so teams can shoot at three different goals. Place 2 goalies in the triangle and the 2 goalies must protect the three goal mouths. Two even teams play a normal soccer game, except they both can score on any of the three faces of the triangle for a point. The game is continuous and if a goalie catches the ball he just throws it out so the game continues. *Version 2:* Use two balls at the same time.
- 12) 4 vs. 4 To Four Small Goals---In a 30 X 35 yard grid, the same rules as 3 vs. 3 but now players must show a diamond shape in attack.

*Every Session Should End In A Scrimmage!*

## **US Youth Soccer U10 Recommendations to The Game**

Playing numbers:	6v6 (with goalkeepers)
Field Dimensions:	
Length	45-60 yards
Width	35-45 yards
Goal Dimensions:	
Height	6 feet
Width	18 feet
Duration:	two periods of 25 minutes
Ball:	number 4

### **Rules:**

Review Fouls and Misconduct

Dear Weymouth Soccer Coach,

As you take the information put together in this document and use it to create the best environment for our players to play, understand that we are a club that is based on teamwork and excellence. Through this process along with the support of the WYS Directors, Board, & Staff Coaches we have an extensive net of resources and experience for you to call on at any time. Have fun and we will see you on the field sometime soon

Best in Soccer,  
Mike Rugnetta  
WYS Director of Coaching