

U6 Game Rules

- Size 3 Soccer Ball.
- All players MUST have shin guards and a water bottle.
- Four 6 minute quarters.
- 3 v. 3, no goalies (e.g. standing in the goal) or sweepers, all players should move with the ball.
- Keep the ball moving!
- No game tactics, no such thing as competitive advantage.
- Play stops when the ball goes out of bounds or a player scores. Coaches quickly reset play and keep the game moving.
- No one plays a 3rd quarter until everyone has played two.

- No throw ins or kick ins-play the “new ball” method. A new ball should be rolled in by a parent or coach on or around the area that the original ball exited play. A good tactic to use is having parents from both teams “lining” the field of play to help keep the game moving and creating a physical/visual boundary for the players.

U6 Skill Priorities

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

Understanding U6 Players

U6 players have many years of childhood and development to enjoy before they are able to look at life in a similar fashion to adults. They need time to intellectually, emotionally, and physically develop. In order to fully understand these young soccer players and to make practices run as smoothly and happily as possible, it is extremely important for coaches and parents to understand the following characteristics about these new soccer players.

- **Focused on themselves** – reality to them is solely based on what they see and feel unable to see the world from another’s perspective – it is “the world according to me” time. Asking them to understand how someone else is seeing something or feels is unrealistic.
- **Everything is in the here and now** – forget about the past and future, they live in the moment.
- **Heating and cooling systems are less efficient than adults** – we need to give frequent water breaks (every 8-10 minutes) or they may just run until they cannot run anymore.
- **Enjoying playing, not watching** – they feel no enjoyment from watching others play when they could be playing too. Make sure every player has a ball in practice so every player is always playing.
- **Limited attention span** (on average 15 seconds for listening, 10-15 minutes when engaged in a task) – keep your directions concise and to the point. When in an open environment, such as a park, their attention span will dwindle towards 10 seconds.
- **Effort is synonymous with performance** – if they have tried hard, they believe they have done well. This is a wonderful quality and we should be supportive of their enthusiasm.
- **Active imaginations** – if we utilize their imaginations in practice activities, they will love practice!
- **Look for adult approval** – watch how often players look to you for approval or to see if you are looking. Also be encouraging when they say “Coach, look what I can do!”
- **Unable to think abstractly** – asking them to think about spatial relations or runs off the ball is unrealistic.
- **Typically have 2 speeds** – extremely fast and stopped.
- **Usually unaware of game scores** – we should keep it that way.
- **Often like to fall down just because it is fun** – they are just children having fun.
- **Often cannot identify left foot vs. right foot** – they know which foot they use most and if they point to their feet you can help teach them left and right.

