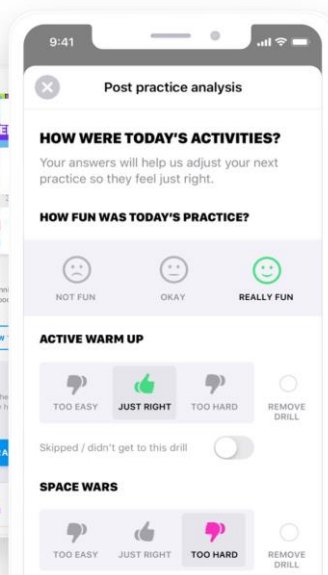
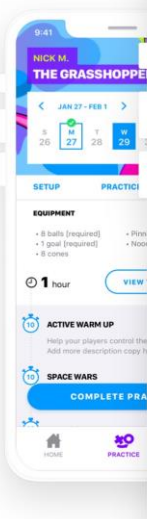
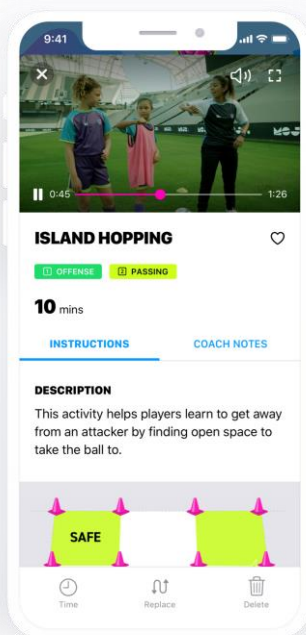




# *Coach* MANUAL

SOCCER ASSOCIATION FOR YOUTH, USA

MOJO IS AN APP SERVING COACHES,  
PLAYERS, PARENTS, AND CLUBS IN  
YOUTH SPORTS



**World-class, expert-backed coaching content  
and resources**

Movie-quality production value resets the bar for quality, and all content is  
overseen by experts in youth coaching and child psychology

**DOWNLOAD MOJO: [bit.ly/download-mojo](https://bit.ly/download-mojo)**

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## Welcome to SAY Soccer

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Soccer Association for Youth, USA would like to thank you for volunteering your time to coach a youth soccer team this season. We welcome you to the coaching world and hope you have a great experience this season.

SAY Soccer strives to educate all our coaches across the country so that players and coaches alike will have a great soccer experience. This manual, along with our online resources ([saysoccer.org](http://saysoccer.org)), is a great starting point for coaches.

SAY prides itself on giving children a safe, social, and FUN soccer experience. We want players to thrive in positive playing environments that emphasize good sportsmanship, encouragement, and fair play.

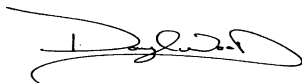
Some of you have played before, some have coached before and some of you are entering this soccer world for the first time. No matter your level of experience, know that SAY Soccer is working hard to make sure you have the most up-to-date, easy to access coaching resources.

While we hope that players develop soccer skills, improve their physical attributes, and increase their knowledge of the game; our ultimate hope is that players have FUN and return to the beautiful game season after season.

We hope that this coaching manual helps prepare you for the season ahead. Wishing you all the best as you embark on your coaching journey this season. We are glad you are part of the SAY family!



Erika True  
SAY Education Manager  
[etrue@saysoccer.org](mailto:etrue@saysoccer.org)



Doug Wood  
SAY Executive Director  
[dwood@saysoccer.org](mailto:dwood@saysoccer.org)

## Coach Code of Ethics

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- ✓ Soccer is the players' game. The paramount concern of coaches is the holistic development, welfare, enjoyment, and safety of their players.
- ✓ Coaches bear responsibility for teaching their players to strive for success while playing fairly, observing the Laws of the Game and uphold the highest levels of sportsmanship.
- ✓ Coaches shall treat officials with respect and dignity and shall teach their players to do the same.
- ✓ Our opponents are worthy of being treated with respect. Coaches will model such respect for opponents and expect their players to do likewise.
- ✓ In both victory and defeat, the behavior of a coach shall model grace, dignity, and composure. Limit coaching from the sidelines and screaming at all costs.
- ✓ Preparation is key to having a successful training environment. Plan for all training sessions so that they are interesting, educational, and fast paced. Be prepared to teach and praise all members of your team accordingly.
- ✓ Coaches shall adhere to the highest standards and the regulations of SAY Soccer. Work hard to be a fun and professional leader that is respected by both players and parents.
- ✓ Coaches shall model inclusive behavior, actively supporting cultural diversity while opposing all types of discrimination, including, but not limited to, racism and sexism, at all levels of soccer.
- ✓ Coaches shall refrain from all manner of personal abuse and harassment of others, whether verbal, physical, emotional, or sexual, and shall oppose such abuse and harassment at all levels of soccer. No profanity or vulgar language.
- ✓ Coaches shall seek to honor those who uphold the highest standards and principles of soccer and shall use appropriate protocol to oppose and eliminate all behavior that brings disrepute to the sport - violence, abuse, dishonesty, disrespect and violations of the Laws of the Game and rules governing competition.

## **Protecting our Players and Coaches: Times Two Policy**

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### Times Two Policy

All SAYAreas/Districts require no less than two adults (suggested as unrelated), per team to be present at all team functions such as games, practices, picnics, etc. No Exceptions!

### NOTES:

1. The adults assigned can be a combination of coaches, parents, board members, etc.
2. While the focus of this policy is the child it also provides protection for the volunteers in case of misunderstandings
3. SAY National also 'recommends' that volunteers not provide transportation for non-family members.
4. We recommend that the adults are not related

As a youth-serving organization, SAY Soccer considers the safety and well-being of the youth in our programs a top priority. We prohibit abuse and strive to proactively address reports of this type of conduct, even if it means that someone will be embarrassed or upset. We want to hear about problems or concerns, and we will strive to act on them in a fair way in accordance with our policies.

We will report suspected abuse to the proper law enforcement agencies. All SAYAreas/Districts and coaches are subject to and must abide by all local and federal background check laws.



## SAY National - Concussion Policy

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The SAY National Concussion Policy consists of two very distinct procedures that are required for ALL coaches and officials regardless of their age and/or status (Head Coach, Assistant Coach, Head Referee, Assistant Referee, etc.). These procedures are designed to comply with legislation concerning concussion in youth sports.

**STEP 1:** Take a FREE online training course. ALL coaches MUST complete this training course prior to participating in any SAY activity whether it be a practice or a game.

There are two approved options for the FREE online training:

The National Federation of State High School Associations  
Concussion in Sports – What You Need to Know

<http://www.nfhslearn.com/electiveDetail.aspx?courseID=38000>

The Center for Disease Control and their Prevention Heads Up  
Concussion in Youth Sports Online training program

[http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/online\\_training.html](http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/online_training.html)

**STEP 2:** Any athlete exhibiting signs and/or symptoms of concussion either during a practice or during a game MUST be immediately removed. This athlete MAY NOT return to play nor participate in any SAY activity on the same day that he or she has been removed (even if a written medical clearance is provided).

In addition, the athlete is not permitted to return to play or participate in any SAY activity until he or she has been assessed and received written clearance by a physician or by another licensed health care provider.

A Return-to-Play form must be submitted to the coach prior to allowing the athlete to participate in any activity with the athlete's team, whether it be a practice or a game.

## **U.S. Center For SAFESPORT**

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The U.S. Center for SafeSport is an independent 501(c)(3) non-profit organization focused on ending all forms of abuse in sport. They endeavor to make athlete well-being the centerpiece of the nation's sports culture through abuse prevention, education, and accountability.

All SAY Soccer coaches new to Safesport need to complete the entire training. Returning coaches must complete the refresher course. Timeline: year 1: Full Safesport Training, Year 2: Refresher 1, year 3: Refresher 2, year 4: refresher 3, Year 5: Full Safesport Training. The website link will be provided by your district or league administrator.

SafeSport training needs to be complete:

- (1) prior to regular contact with the youth participants
- (2) within the first 45 days of the participating adult taking on the role giving the access to youth participants

SAY Soccer's reporting policy is designed to prevent abuse, including emotional, physical, and sexual, of amateur athletes participating in amateur athletic activities.

Familiarize yourself with reporting procedures by visiting SAY Soccer's risk management document located at [www.saysoccer.org](http://www.saysoccer.org).



### **Background Screens**

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Make sure that you check with local administration regarding local requirements for background screens.

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Positive Coaching Alliance (PCA)

develops **BETTER ATHLETES, BETTER PEOPLE** through resources for youth and high school sports coaches, parents, administrators and student-athletes.

In addition to 1,500+ free audio-video and printable tips and tools at [www.PCDevZone.org](http://www.PCDevZone.org), PCA has partnered with roughly 3,500 schools and youth sports organizations nationwide to deliver live group workshops, online courses and books by PCA Founder Jim Thompson that help those involved in youth and high school sports create a positive, character-building youth sports culture.

PCA resources, which have reached more than 8.6 million youth, strive to transform high school and youth sports into a Development Zone® culture, where the goal is to develop Better Athletes, Better People.

PCA gains support from a National Advisory Board, including National Spokesperson and 11-time NBA Champion Coach Phil Jackson, and many other top coaches, athletes, organization leaders and academics who share PCA's mission.

Sign up for free 'Key-topics':

<https://www.positivecoach.org/forms/talking-points-sign-up/>

We encourage you to use other highly accredited resources to find training topics, coaching ideas, and lesson plans. Using multiple resources can help you to become a better coach.

Positive Coaching Alliance is a key contributor for our SAY Soccer newsletters and within our social media presence. Follow SAY Soccer social media for the most up to date Positive Coaching Alliance content relative to our members.

Follow SAY on social media  
@saysoccerusa



#SAYSoccer

#KidsHavingFun



United Soccer Coaches provides programs and services that enhance, encourage and contribute to the development and recognition of soccer coaches, their players and the game we love.


United Soccer Coaches is a great resource for coach education including E-Learning opportunities that allow coaches to learn from the comfort of home and on a time schedule that fits their schedule.

SAY Soccer recommends becoming a member of United Soccer Coaches to gain access to their resource library and to be up to date on the most current educational opportunities for coaches.

The Foundations of Coaching and the small side-sided games online course is a good introduction to coaching youth soccer for the first time and is a helpful refresher for those coaches coming back to the youth game.

**The Foundations of Coaching course is available at a discounted rate of \$25.00 for all SAY Soccer members.**


[www.saysoccer.org](http://www.saysoccer.org) > COACH tab > United Soccer Coaches




**United Soccer Coaches**

Coaching curriculum helping youth organizations and their coaches access vital resources so that they can continue to mold the next generation of players. With these resources, youth coaches can build a stronger program for their SAYArea/district and give their athletes the best possible experience. United Soccer Coaches offers many ways for coaches to achieve these goals through coaching education both online and on the field. Check out these SAY recommended resources and see how you can stay ahead of the game as a SAY Soccer coach.


**FOUNDATIONS  
OF COACHING**



**eLEARNING  
ONLINE**



**GET aHEAD  
SAFELY IN SOCCER**



Visit [www.unitedsoccercoaches.org](http://www.unitedsoccercoaches.org) for more information regarding United Soccer Coaches.

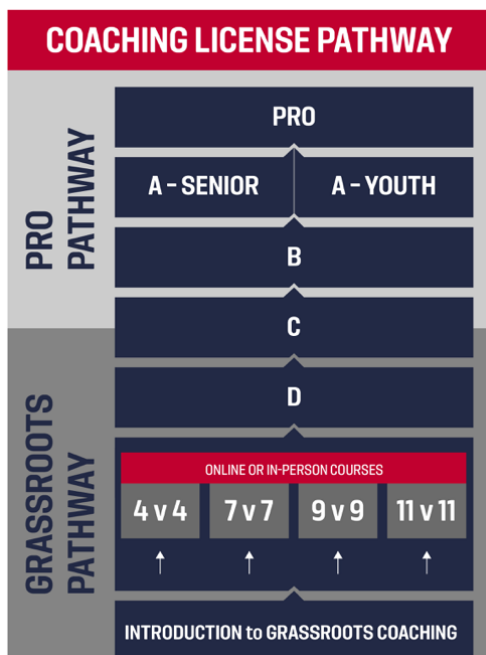


To further improve the grassroots soccer environment for both players and coaches, U.S. Soccer restructured the foundation of its coaching license pathway. The Grassroots Licensing Courses offer an a-la-carte approach meant to empower coaches with education that is relevant to their specific coaching needs.

The Grassroots Licenses help coaches ensure fun, enjoyable, and developmentally appropriate environments for their players. Prospective coaches will have the option to partake in any of these new courses – in any sequence – after completing a cost-free, Introduction to Grassroots Coaching Module provided by U.S. Soccer.

**SAY Soccer highly recommends that you log into U.S. Soccer Learning Center, create an account, and take the FREE Introduction to Grassroots Coaching Module.**

<https://learning.ussoccer.com>



The Introduction to Grassroots Coaching Module serves as the first step in obtaining any one of the eight Grassroots Licenses: four in-person courses and four online courses across the four grassroots levels: 4v4, 7v7, 9v9, 11v11.

The eight course options relate directly to small-sided games and the respective age-groups outlined in the U.S.

Soccer Player Development Initiatives.



**Official Grassroots Coaching Partner of SAY Soccer**

## **THE ONE-STOP COACH-IN-A-BOX (IN THIS CASE, APP)**

**Trusted by more than 15,000 teams from more than 500 clubs**

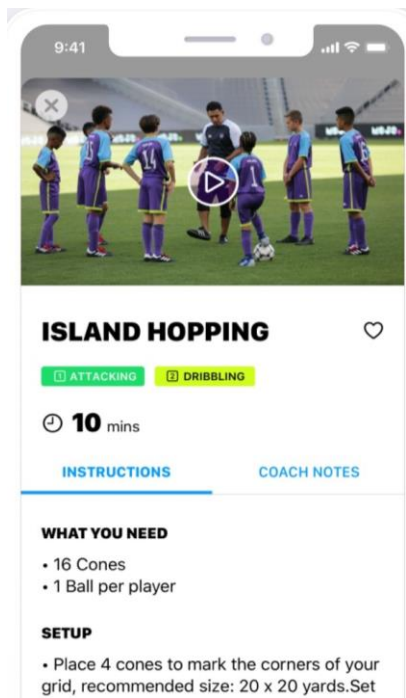
### **What can MOJO do for your coaches?**

Personalized practice plans in seconds

Expert-backed activities and resources

Hundreds of easy-to-follow activity videos

Free app on your phone



**80%+ of coaches say that MOJO:**

**Saves them time - Reduces stress -Improves their coaching skills**

## Creating Age-Appropriate Training Sessions

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SAY Soccer encourages coaches to use all the resources that can be found on the SAY Soccer coaching webpages to develop age-appropriate training sessions. You will find entire season(s) of sessions for all age-groups, videos of drills and printable drills.

[www.saysoccer.org/coach/resources](http://www.saysoccer.org/coach/resources)



## Competency Based Coaching

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### *United Soccer Coaches: Competency Matrix*

Competency based coaching suggests performance improvements are acquired progressively – meaning, competency in basic skills and knowledge must be achieved before progressing to more complex skills and concepts. The Competency Matrix helps coaches to know when players should be ‘introduced’ (-) to a skill/concept and when players should be expected to demonstrate ‘competency’ (+)

This is a great tool to help coaches recognize the skill sets that should be introduced, practiced and mastered at each age. It also is a guideline to know what activities are age appropriate.

# COMPETENCY MATRIX

United Soccer Coaches Player Development Curriculum Diploma



The competency matrix underpins the Player Development Curriculum and Coaching Manuals. To learn more, search "eLearning" at [UnitedSoccerCoaches.org/Store](http://UnitedSoccerCoaches.org/Store).

Stage of Development	Stage 1			Stage 2			Stage 3			Stage 4			Stage 5			
Age In years	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
PHYSICAL LITERACY SKILLS																
Run with stops and starts	-			+												
Run and change directions	-			+												
Gallop	-			+												
Skip	-			+												
Lateral movements - side-step	-			+												
Rolling, bending low, arching	-			+												
Balance - on a line	-			+												
Balance - on one foot	-			+												
Throw - strong hand	-				+											
Throw - weak hand	-				+											
Jump - make shapes in air	-		+													
Jump - one foot to another	-		+													
Jump - stride and bound patterns	-						+									
Jump - hurdles	-						+									
Quick feet and crossovers		-			+											
Speed - Coordination of arms and legs					-					+						
Speed - explosive first step						-				+						
Running technique		-								+						
Sprinting technique						-				+						
DRIBBLING SKILLS																
Turns - basic	-				+											
Turns - advanced				-			+									
Dribbling basics	-				+											

Competency based coaching: this approach suggests performance improvements are acquired progressively – meaning, competency in basic skills/knowledge must be achieved before progressing to more complex skills and concepts. With this in mind, the Competency Matrix helps coaches to know when players should be 'Introduced' (-) to a skill/concept and when players should be expected to demonstrate 'Competency' (+).

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Age In years	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
DRIBBLING SKILLS CONTINUED																
Running with the ball				-			+									
Feints and dribble		-						+								
Beating an opponent			-					+								
Escaping an opponent			-					+								
RECEIVING																
Control - Foot			-							+						
Control - Thigh					-						+					
Control - Chest						-						+				
Control - Head						-						+				
PASSING																
Ground - Inside of foot - 5 yards				-				+								
Ground - Inside of foot - 10 yards					-				+							
Ground - Inside of foot - 20 yards						-					+					
Ground - Instep						-				+						
Long pass						-						+				
Chip/lofted pass								-				+				
Swerve pass - inside of foot								-				+				
Swerve pass - outside of foot								-				+				
Crossing								-				+				
SHOOTING																
Instep			-						+							
Half-volley						-					+					
Volley						-					+					

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Age In years	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
SHOOTING CONTINUED																
One on one with Goal Keeper								-					+			
HEADING																
Basic technique					-						+					
Defensive header								-					+			
Attacking header								-					+			
PHYSICAL CONDITIONING																
Own body weight strength exercises								-								+
Core body strength								-								+
Dynamic warmup						-										+
Flexibility								-								+
Aerobic endurance training									-							+
Anaerobic endurance training									-							+
Speed training (Anaerobic)									-							+
MENTAL/COGNITIVE CONDITIONING																
Confidence	-												+			
Commitment								-								+
Concentration	-												+			
Composure								-								+
GOAL KEEPING																
Basic catching techniques						-				+						
Positioning								-			+					
Diving									-				+			
Distribution									-				+			



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Age in years	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
GOAL KEEPING CONTINUED																
Advanced Techniques - crosses, punching etc										-						+
SET PLAYS																
Throw in				-				+								
Penalties				-						+						
Corners				-								+				
Goal kicks				-						+						
Free k				-										+		
ATTACKING PRINCIPLES AND TECHNIQUES																
Attacking as an individual 1v1		-										+				
Attacking in pairs (2v1 and 2v2)				-								+				
Attacking in small groups (3's and 4's)								-						+		
Attacking as a unit and team								-								+
Support with and without the ball						-							+			
Attacking from wide positions								-						+		
Crossing balls into the penalty box								-						+		
Transition and counter attacks								-								+
Finishing						-										+
Attacking set plays									-							+
Communication								-								+
Positional play						-										+
DEFENSIVE PRINCIPLES AND TECHNIQUES																
Defending as an individual 1v1 - pressure				-						+						
Defending in pairs (2v1 and 2v2) - pressure and cover						-						+				

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Age In years	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
DEFENSIVE PRINCIPLES AND TECHNIQUES CONTINUED																
Defending in small groups (3's and 4's) - pressure, cover, balance									-					+		
Defending as a unit and team										-						+
Marking								-					+			
Recovery								-				+				
Communication								-						+		
Transition from defense to attack								-								+
Defensive set plays									-				+			
Positional play								-								+
LAWS OF THE GAME																
Individual and team behavior	-									+						
Field and equipment		-								+						
Restarts				-			+									
Fair and foul play	-									+						
Basic rules	-					+										
Free kicks (offside, direct and indirect, etc.)				-						+						
Misc laws (advantage, etc.)					-					+						

Competency based coaching: this approach suggests performance improvements are acquired progressively – meaning, competency in basic skills/knowledge must be achieved before progressing to more complex skills and concepts. With this in mind, the Competency Matrix helps coaches to know when players should be ‘introduced’ (-) to a skill/concept and when players should be expected to demonstrate ‘Competency’ (+).

***“If you have grown up on the soccer fields or this is the first time that you have ever been around the game - THANK YOU! Thank you for taking the time to educate yourself to be a great coach this season. Without parent volunteers, thousands of kids would not have the opportunity to play this season. Enjoy the experience. Use this manual to guide you through the season. Most importantly have fun!” – Erika True***

## **Erika True – SAY National Education Manager**

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Erika True comes to the SAY office with extensive soccer knowledge within a large array of playing age groups. She has coached women's collegiate soccer for nearly 20 years, within youth soccer clubs across the country, in elite camps and leadership trainings and currently you can find her on the SAY soccer fields coaching 2-8 year-olds.

Erika currently holds a multitude of coaching licenses through US Soccer, NSCAA / United Soccer Coaches and Women's Coaches Academy. She is continuing her soccer education currently through US Soccer.

We encourage our membership to reach out to Erika with questions, thoughts, ideas, and educational needs.

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