

# COACH MANUAL

SOCCER ASSOCIATION FOR YOUTH, USA





## 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!

SAY Soccer strives to help educate all our coaches that are part of our programs across the country. The more educational opportunity that we provide our member coaches the better the experience will be for all that are involved.

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

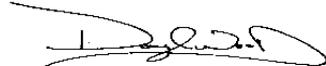
We are aware that some of you have played before, some of you have coached before and some of you are entering this soccer world for the first time. No matter what your level of experience is, please know that the SAY Education department is working hard to make sure that you have the most up-to-date, 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 year after year.

We envision 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 that you are part of the SAY family this season!



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## 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 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: recommended that the adults are not related

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 do not provide transportation for non-family members.

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.

For more information or educational videos:  
[www.positivecoachingaalliance.com](http://www.positivecoachingaalliance.com)



# 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 (i.e. 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 the 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 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.**





## Foundations of Coaching Online Diploma Course

United Soccer Coaches has developed the Foundations of Coaching online course as the perfect introduction to coaching youth soccer for the first time, and as a helpful refresher for those coaches getting into the youth game.

The course curriculum focuses on improving coaching instruction in order to progressively improve player performance by providing insight into targeted training activities.

**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**

The graphic is a rectangular box with a black border. It contains a large circular icon on the left with the United Soccer Coaches logo. To its right is a paragraph of text. Below the text are three smaller circular icons: the first is labeled "FOUNDATIONS OF COACHING" and has a red border; the second is labeled "eLEARNING ONLINE" and has a book icon; the third is labeled "GET aHEAD SAFELY IN SOCCER" and has a soccer ball icon.

Foundations of Coaching serves as the first step in coaching education and is complemented by the additional Coaching Development Courses (4v4, 7v7/9v9, 11v11) and eLearning opportunities (Small-Sided Games, Attacking/Defending Principles of Play, Key Moments in the Game, Get aHEAD Safely in Soccer) offered by United Soccer Coaches.

[www.unitedsoccercoaches.org](http://www.unitedsoccercoaches.org)

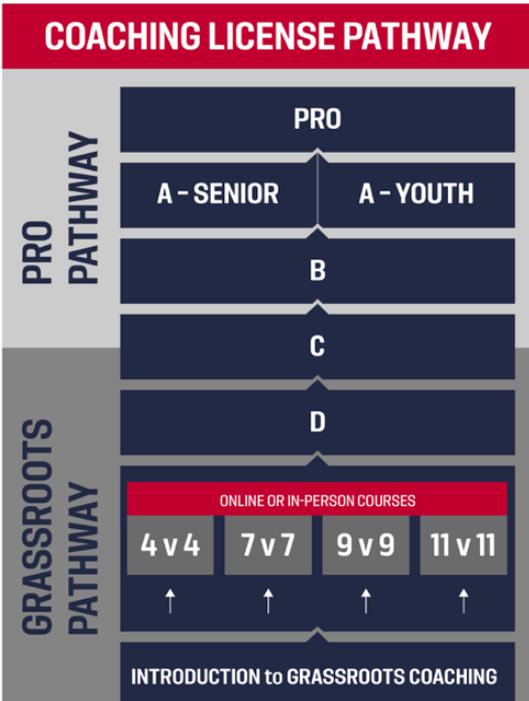


## The Grassroots Pathway

In an effort to further improve the grassroots soccer environment for both players and coaches, U.S. Soccer has restructured the foundation of its coaching license pathway. The new Grassroots Licensing Courses, which replace the F and E License Courses, offer an a-la-carte approach meant to empower coaches with education that is relevant to their specific coaching needs. The Grassroots Licenses will 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 Digital Coaching Center, create an account and take the **FREE Introduction to Grassroots Coaching Module**.

[www.dcc.ussoccer.com](http://www.dcc.ussoccer.com)



The Introduction to Grassroots Coaching Module serves as the first step in obtaining any one of the eight new 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.

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.PCAdDevZone.org](http://www.PCAdDevZone.org), PCA has partnered with roughly 3,500 schools and youth sports organizations nationwide. They 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.

PCA is a new partner with SAY Soccer. Look for more online and in-person sessions to be developed for SAY Coaches in the future. Look for PCA publications to be included in SAY coaching newsletters.

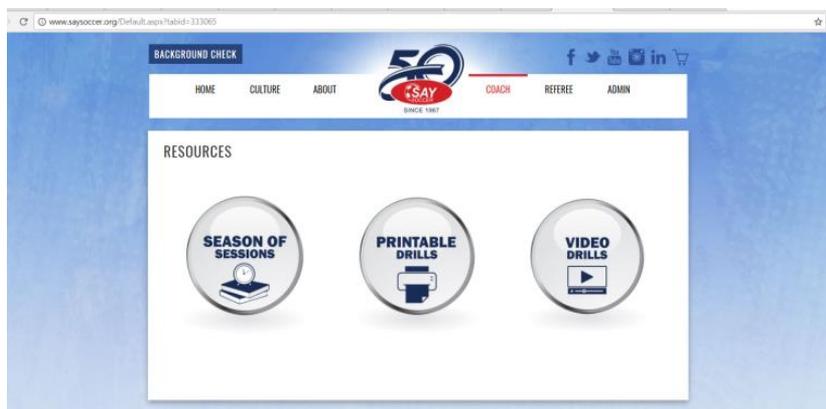


**Sign up for free 'Key-topics':**

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

## Creating Age-Appropriate Training Sessions

SAY Soccer encourages coaches to use all the resources that are found on the SAY Soccer coaching website to develop age-appropriate training sessions. You will find entire season of sessions for all age-groups, videos of drills and printable drills. [www.saysoccer.org/coach/resources](http://www.saysoccer.org/coach/resources)



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.

## United Soccer Coaches – Resource Library

[www.unitedsoccercoaches.com](http://www.unitedsoccercoaches.com)

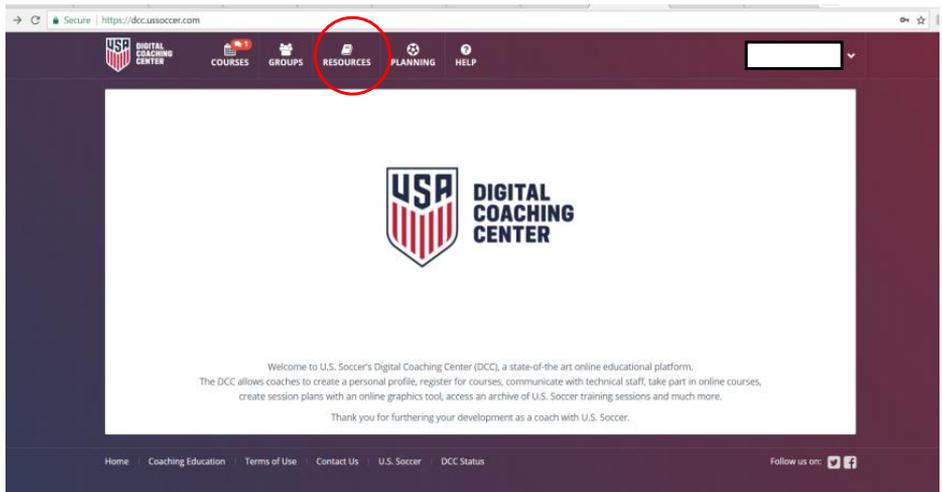
A screenshot of the United Soccer Coaches Resource Library website. The page features a white header with the United Soccer Coaches logo and navigation links for About, Elections, News, Shop, Course Calendar, Podcast, Donate, and LOGIN. Below the header is a 'Resource Library' section with a filter by category dropdown and several red buttons for filtering by category: ALL CATEGORIES, 30 UNDER 30 SESSION PLANS, ACTIVITIES, FITNESS ARTICLES, NSCAA TEMPLATE SESSION PLANS, PRESEASON SOCCER JOURNAL, SAY SOCCER SESSIONS, SOCCER JOURNAL ARTICLES, SOCCER JOURNAL LESSON PLANS, and TACTICAL SITUATIONS TEST. On the right side, there is a 'Coaching Courses' section with a list of courses: Get aHEAD Safely in Soccer, Master Course Schedule, Continuing Education &amp; Scholarship Opportunities, and Host a Course at Your Facility. Below this is a 'Soccer Journal' section and an 'Online Resource Library' section. At the bottom, there is a pagination bar showing 'Page 1 of 41, Items 1 to 30 of 1229' and a 'show all 1229' link. A 'HOST A' banner is visible at the bottom right, along with a 'Help' button.

# U.S. Soccer – Digital Coaching Center

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[www.dcc.ussoccer.com](http://www.dcc.ussoccer.com)

Once you have created an account in the DCC, and have taken the introductory grassroots course, you will be able to access U.S. Soccer resources.



## Competency Based Coaching

United Soccer Coaches: (formerly NSCAA) 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 good 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 |
| <b>PHYSICAL LITERACY SKILLS</b>       |         |   |   |         |   |   |         |    |    |         |    |    |         |    |    |    |
| 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                   |         |   |   |         |   |   | -       |    |    |         | +  |    |         |    |    |    |
| <b>DRIBBLING SKILLS</b>               |         |   |   |         |   |   |         |    |    |         |    |    |         |    |    |    |
| 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’ (+).

# 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 |
| <b>DRIBBLING SKILLS CONTINUED</b>  |         |   |   |         |   |   |         |    |    |         |    |    |         |    |    |    |
| Running with the ball              |         |   |   | -       |   |   | +       |    |    |         |    |    |         |    |    |    |
| Feints and dribble                 |         | - |   |         |   |   |         | +  |    |         |    |    |         |    |    |    |
| Beating an opponent                |         |   | - |         |   |   |         | +  |    |         |    |    |         |    |    |    |
| Escaping an opponent               |         |   | - |         |   |   |         | +  |    |         |    |    |         |    |    |    |
| <b>RECEIVING</b>                   |         |   |   |         |   |   |         |    |    |         |    |    |         |    |    |    |
| Control - Foot                     |         |   | - |         |   |   |         |    |    | +       |    |    |         |    |    |    |
| Control - Thigh                    |         |   |   |         | - |   |         |    |    |         | +  |    |         |    |    |    |
| Control - Chest                    |         |   |   |         |   | - |         |    |    |         |    | +  |         |    |    |    |
| Control - Head                     |         |   |   |         |   | - |         |    |    |         |    | +  |         |    |    |    |
| <b>PASSING</b>                     |         |   |   |         |   |   |         |    |    |         |    |    |         |    |    |    |
| 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                           |         |   |   |         |   |   | -       |    |    |         |    |    |         |    |    | +  |
| <b>SHOOTING</b>                    |         |   |   |         |   |   |         |    |    |         |    |    |         |    |    |    |
| 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 |
| <b>SHOOTING CONTINUED</b>            |         |   |   |         |   |   |         |    |    |         |    |    |         |    |    |    |
| One on one with Goal Keeper          |         |   |   |         |   |   |         | -  |    |         |    |    |         |    | +  |    |
| <b>HEADING</b>                       |         |   |   |         |   |   |         |    |    |         |    |    |         |    |    |    |
| Basic technique                      |         |   |   |         |   | - |         |    |    |         |    | +  |         |    |    |    |
| Defensive header                     |         |   |   |         |   |   |         |    | -  |         |    |    |         |    | +  |    |
| Attacking header                     |         |   |   |         |   |   |         |    | -  |         |    |    |         |    | +  |    |
| <b>PHYSICAL CONDITIONING</b>         |         |   |   |         |   |   |         |    |    |         |    |    |         |    |    |    |
| Own body weight strength exercises   |         |   |   |         |   |   |         |    |    | -       |    |    |         |    |    | +  |
| Core body strength                   |         |   |   |         |   |   |         |    |    | -       |    |    |         |    |    | +  |
| Dynamic warmup                       |         |   |   |         |   |   | -       |    |    |         |    |    |         |    |    | +  |
| Flexibility                          |         |   |   |         |   |   |         |    |    | -       |    |    |         |    |    | +  |
| Aerobic endurance training           |         |   |   |         |   |   |         |    |    |         | -  |    |         |    |    | +  |
| Anaerobic endurance training         |         |   |   |         |   |   |         |    |    |         |    | -  |         |    |    | +  |
| Speed training (Anaerobic)           |         |   |   |         |   |   |         |    |    |         |    |    | -       |    |    | +  |
| <b>MENTAL/COGNITIVE CONDITIONING</b> |         |   |   |         |   |   |         |    |    |         |    |    |         |    |    |    |
| Confidence                           |         | - |   |         |   |   |         |    |    |         |    |    |         |    | +  |    |
| Commitment                           |         |   |   |         |   |   |         |    |    | -       |    |    |         |    |    | +  |
| Concentration                        |         |   | - |         |   |   |         |    |    |         |    |    |         |    | +  |    |
| Composure                            |         |   |   |         |   |   |         |    |    | -       |    |    |         |    |    | +  |
| <b>GOAL KEEPING</b>                  |         |   |   |         |   |   |         |    |    |         |    |    |         |    |    |    |
| 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 |
| <b>GOAL KEEPING CONTINUED</b>                         |         |   |   |         |   |   |         |    |    |         |    |    |         |    |    |    |
| Advanced Techniques - crosses, punching etc           |         |   |   |         |   |   |         |    |    | -       |    |    |         |    |    | +  |
| <b>SET PLAYS</b>                                      |         |   |   |         |   |   |         |    |    |         |    |    |         |    |    |    |
| Throw in  |         |   |   | -       |   |   |         | +  |    |         |    |    |         |    |    |    |
| Penalties   |         |   |   | -       |   |   |         |    |    | +       |    |    |         |    |    |    |
| Corners   |         |   |   | -       |   |   |         |    |    |         |    | +  |         |    |    |    |
| Goal kicks  |         |   |   | -       |   |   |         |    |    | +       |    |    |         |    |    |    |
| Free k  |         |   |   | -       |   |   |         |    |    |         |    |    |         |    | +  |    |
| <b>ATTACKING PRINCIPLES AND TECHNIQUES</b>            |         |   |   |         |   |   |         |    |    |         |    |    |         |    |    |    |
| 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                                       |         |   |   |         |   | - |         |    |    |         |    |    |         |    |    | +  |
| <b>DEFENSIVE PRINCIPLES AND TECHNIQUES</b>            |         |   |   |         |   |   |         |    |    |         |    |    |         |    |    |    |
| Defending as an individual 1v1 - pressure             |         |   |   | -       |   |   |         |    |    | +       |    |    |         |    |    |    |
| Defending in pairs (2v1 and 2v2) - pressure and cover |         |   |   |         |   | - |         |    |    |         |    | +  |         |    |    |    |

# 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 |
| <b>DEFENSIVE PRINCIPLES AND TECHNIQUES CONTINUED</b>               |         |   |   |         |   |   |         |    |    |         |    |    |         |    |    |    |
| 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  |         |   |   |         |   |   |         |    | -  |         |    |    |         |    |    | +  |
| <b>LAWS OF THE GAME</b>  |         |   |   |         |   |   |         |    |    |         |    |    |         |    |    |    |
| 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’ (+).

## Structuring Your Training Session

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As you begin to select the topics that you want to train with your team, you will need to make sure that you take the time to design, layout and organize your training session.

Your session should include a warm-up phase, main training phase and play phase. Each of these should tie together the **ONE** training topic for the day.

**WARM-UP:** (See notes on coaching outline) This phase should be fun and engaging. No running laps. No static stretching. Get the kids moving or playing immediately.

**MAIN:** During this phase of play you should have 2-3 different activities related to your topic. Ultimately these activities should progress (in size, numbers, etc.) so they lead into play at the end of training.

**GAME:** Allow the players to play at the end of every training. Focus your coaching only on your training topic and do not over-coach. 1-2 coaching points is all that is needed.

# COACHING OUTLINE

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TEAM NAME:

TOPIC:

EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

OBJECTIVES:

| PHASE | ACTIVITY | DIAGRAM | COACHING POINTS |
|-------|----------|---------|-----------------|
|-------|----------|---------|-----------------|

WARM UP:

\*\* It is suggested that small-sided fields are set up prior to kid's arrival. Allow kids to play immediately when they arrive. It avoids players sitting around and allows players to warm-up, mentally prepare for training and gives coaches a chance to let the players play without 'over-coaching.' This is a great time for coaches to observe kids in a natural playing environment. \*\*

MAIN THEME:

GAME:

COOL DOWN: \*\*Use this time for players to help pick up equipment, high-five team-mates, team cheer and share after training snack\*\*

