

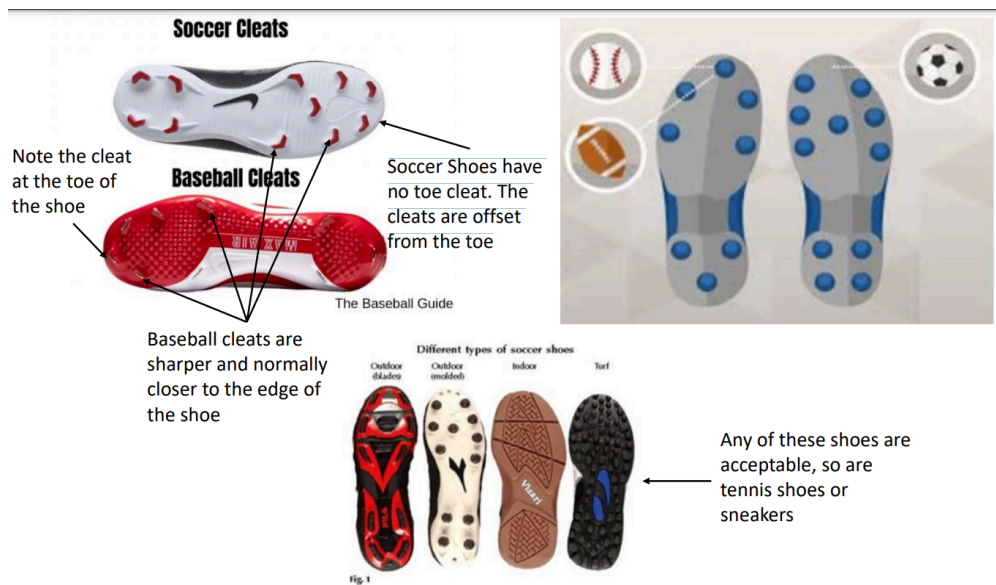
# Coach Equipment Bags Include

**At the beginning of the season, each team will be supplied with the following equipment:**

1. Player Roster
2. Pinnes
3. 3-4 size 3 balls for u8
4. SAY Rule Book
5. Practice cones and markers
6. First Aid Kit
7. Clipboard with short-sided rules
8. Ball Pump

**Each player must have the following equipment to play a game:**

1. Their assigned tee shirt or jersey
2. Shin guards with a pair of socks which cover them
3. Soccer shoes with cleats are not required, but recommended
  - a. Soccer Shoes have no toe cleat. The cleats are offset from the toe.
  - b. No sharp edges on the cleats
  - c. Gym shoes are acceptable



4. Have a ball with their name on it at every practice
5. Water bottles are also recommended

**Items considered dangerous that must be removed include:**

1. Any hard hair beads, hard barrettes, hair clips, hair pins, etc. even if covered.
2. Any necklaces, rings or earrings – using tape to cover earrings is not permitted.
3. Any loose bracelet and any hard or soft wrist band that is not securely wrapped or taped over.

## **Coach's List of Things To Do**

1. Attend the coaches training
2. Pick up equipment at equipment distribution
3. Email the parents of players on your roster and inform the parents:
  - a. When and where you will hold pre-season practices
    - i. It is recommended to have two practices a week and your practices should be on the same nights as games and run no longer than game times for your division.
  - b. Let parents know how you will communicate with them
  - c. Set up a snack schedule
  - d. Remind parents about uniform pickup
  - e. Remind parents about the kid's camp
  - f. Picture information will be communicated through our photographer.
4. During the Season
  - a. Ensure every player plays at least 50% of available minutes
    - i. You do not have to guarantee equal playing time.
  - b. Recruit parents to cover any games you can't make.
5. End of the season (last game)
  - a. Pick up and distribute trophies in u8
  - b. Turn in your equipment bag at the field.

## **Times Two Policy**

All teams that participate in PYSC programs shall ensure that all participants 18 years of age or younger shall have no less than two adults (preferably unrelated), per team, to be present at all team functions such as games, practices, outings, etc. No exceptions! All contact with Minor Athletes must be observable and interruptible. The adults assigned can be a combination of coaches, parents, board members or other persons over the age of 18. While the focus of this policy is on the protection of the child, it also provides a level of protection for volunteers.

# u8 Soccer Coaching Guide

Coaching u8 (Under-8) soccer players involves continuing to develop their basic skills, building teamwork, and beginning to introduce more advanced concepts, such as positioning and simple game tactics. At this age, players are still very much in the learning phase, but they are becoming more capable of handling the ball and understanding the flow of the game. The focus should still be on fun, but it's also a critical age for laying the foundation for future skill development.

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## Key Principles for u8 Coaching:

1. **Fun and Learning:** While u8 players are more capable, the main goal remains creating a positive and enjoyable environment. Keep it fun while gradually increasing their understanding of the game.
  2. **Skill Development:** Continue to build basic skills (dribbling, passing, shooting, and defending), but also introduce new concepts such as positioning, spacing, and understanding roles in the game.
  3. **Teamwork:** Reinforce the importance of working together as a team, with an emphasis on passing and communication.
  4. **Encouragement and Positive Feedback:** Focus on effort and improvement, not just success. Praise kids for trying new things and for working together as a team.
  5. **Game Awareness:** Begin introducing the idea of different positions and the flow of the game, but avoid making the session too tactical at this stage.
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## Practice Structure:

A typical u8 practice session lasts 45 minutes to an hour. Sessions should be well-paced and structured, with plenty of time for active involvement and skill-building. Here's a sample session breakdown:

1. **Warm-Up (5-10 minutes):**
  - **Objective:** Get players moving, and introduce a fun activity to start the session.
  - **Activities:**
    - **Follow the Leader:** Players follow the coach (or a leader) through various movements, such as dribbling, running, jumping, or skipping.
    - **Animal Movements:** Have players move like animals (e.g., hopping like frogs, running like cheetahs) while dribbling a soccer ball to increase coordination and comfort with the ball.
    - **Cone Weaving:** Set up cones and have players dribble the ball through them to improve control and agility.

2. **Skill Development (15-20 minutes):** Focus on 2-3 skills each session to continue building a strong foundation for play.
  - **Dribbling:**
    - **Activity:** Dribble in and out of cones or around markers while maintaining close control of the ball.
    - **Objective:** Improve ball control, balance, and awareness of space.
    - **Tip:** Emphasize using both feet and staying low to the ground for better control.
  - **Passing:**
    - **Activity:** Pair up players and have them pass the ball back and forth. Challenge them to use both the inside and outside of their foot.
    - **Objective:** Introduce the concept of passing to teammates and not just kicking the ball aimlessly.
    - **Tip:** Start with short passes, then gradually increase the distance as the players improve.
  - **Shooting:**
    - **Activity:** Set up small goals and let players take turns shooting the ball from different distances. Begin with basic shooting, focusing on accuracy and technique.
    - **Objective:** Teach players to aim for the corners of the goal and to strike with the inside of the foot.
    - **Tip:** Encourage players to focus on their technique rather than power.
3. **Game-Based Learning (15-20 minutes):** Use small-sided games to reinforce skills and introduce more team-oriented concepts.
  - **Activity 1: 3v3 or 4v4 Mini-Games**
    - Set up small fields and organize 3v3 or 4v4 games, without goalkeepers.
    - **Objective:** Players get more touches on the ball, work on passing and movement off the ball, and develop teamwork.
    - **Tip:** Keep the focus on passing, communication, and teamwork rather than individual performance.
  - **Activity 2: Small-Sided Scrimmage with Positions**
    - Introduce basic positional play. For example, teach players about forwards, midfielders, and defenders.
    - **Objective:** Begin helping players understand their roles on the field and how to work together as a team.
    - **Tip:** Keep it simple—ask players to focus on spreading out and finding space, not just chasing the ball.
4. **Cool Down (5-10 minutes):**
  - **Objective:** Relax the players after the session and give them time to reflect on the day's activities.
  - **Activity:** Gentle stretching, or a fun “Simon Says” or “Freeze Dance” game to finish on a light note.
  - **Tip:** Always end on a positive note, making sure players leave the field

feeling good about their effort.

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### **Coaching Tips:**

- **Encourage Communication:** u8 players can begin to communicate more with teammates, so encourage them to call for passes, talk during scrimmages, and stay vocal on the field.
  - **Positive Reinforcement:** Praise good decisions (such as good passing or spacing), and provide constructive feedback in a positive manner.
  - **Keep Drills Fun and Engaging:** Use games and activities that require kids to use their soccer skills without realizing they are practicing.
  - **Emphasize Teamwork:** Teach players that it's more important to work together as a team than to focus on individual performance.
  - **Keep it Simple:** Avoid overwhelming players with too many instructions or complex tactics. Focus on one or two key concepts per session.
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### **Key Skills for u8 Soccer:**

1. **Dribbling:** Players should be comfortable dribbling with both feet and using their body to shield the ball.
  2. **Passing:** Introduce the concept of passing to teammates, and emphasize using the inside of the foot for accuracy.
  3. **Shooting:** Players should learn to strike the ball with their laces and aim for the corners of the goal.
  4. **Basic Positioning:** Begin introducing the concept of positions (forward, midfield, defender) and teach players to spread out and use space effectively.
  5. **Teamwork:** Reinforce the idea of working as a team and communicating on the field.
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### **Common Challenges and Solutions:**

1. **Chasing the Ball:** At this age, it's common for kids to chase the ball around the field. Reinforce the importance of staying in position and creating space.
  - **Solution:** Use small-sided games to encourage spacing and passing. Remind players to spread out and find open spaces.
2. **Limited Focus on Passing:** Players may prefer to dribble or shoot rather than pass.
  - **Solution:** Praise and reward good passing during training. Incorporate fun passing games and emphasize teamwork over individual glory.
3. **Difficulty with Positions:** u8 players may struggle to understand their roles on the field.

- **Solution:** Keep explanations simple, use visuals (like colored bibs for different positions), and encourage players to focus on staying in their designated area and supporting their teammates.
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### **Parent Communication:**

- **Encourage Positive Behavior:** Remind parents to focus on positive reinforcement and creating a fun environment.
  - **Emphasize the Process:** Help parents understand that this age is about developing a love for the game and basic skills, not about winning or being the best.
  - **Share Progress:** Keep parents updated on their child's progress, and let them know the importance of practice and effort.
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### **Conclusion:**

Coaching u8 soccer is about finding the balance between fun and skill development. At this stage, children are developing their understanding of soccer while still enjoying the game. By creating a positive, supportive environment and focusing on core skills like dribbling, passing, shooting, and teamwork, you are setting them up for continued success in the sport. Keep practices fun, simple, and engaging, and the players will develop a love for the game that will carry them forward.

# Essential List of Soccer Terms

**Pitch:** Official name for a soccer field.

**Goal:** Rectangular frame located at each end of the pitch. It is formed with a pair of posts standing vertically and one crossbar joining the posts. A net covered the back portion of each goal. When the ball crosses the goal line between the posts and under the crossbar, scoring teams earn a point.

**Sideline;** Runs the longer sides of the field and represents the pitch vs. out-of-bounds.

**Goal/End Line:** Two goal lines connect the two sidelines to form a rectangle. Goals sit in the middle of each goal line.

**Corners:** The four corners of the field, this is the intersection of the goal line and the sidelines.

**Pass:** Using your feet, a move from one player to another player on your team.

**Dribble:** Controlling the ball while running on the field.

**Offside:** A rule preventing offensive players from positioning themselves behind all defenders before the ball is passed to them.

**Yellow Card:** One of two disciplinary actions available for the referee. This is for a player being “cautioned” by the referee for illegal actions on the field.

**Red Card:** The more severe disciplinary action available to the referee. Players shown a red card are not allowed to play the remainder of the game and the team is not allowed to substitute a player for them.

**Advantage:** Although a penalty has occurred, referees are allowed to let the team that has just been fouled continue their offensive motion if stopping play would be non-beneficial to this specific momentum.

**Slide Tackle:** A defensive action where a player slides on the ground and knocks the ball free from the opposing team, while in control. This play is not allowed and can often turn into penalties if the defensive player makes physical contact with the player before hitting the ball.

**Hand Ball:** Soccer players cannot use their hands. Refers to a player touching the ball with their hands and results in the other team being awarded the ball.

**Free Kick:** Officials award free kicks to a team when they are penalized (an illegal action) by the opposing team. Used as a method for restarting play.

**Corner Kick:** Awarded to a team when the opposing team knocks the ball out-of-bounds on their own goal line (without scoring a goal). A player takes a kick from the corner of the field to restart play.

**Penalty Kick:** Awarded to a player when the opposing team commits an illegal action in the penalty area in front of their own goal, a rectangular box surrounding the goals. Officials award the offensive team a kick towards the goal, in a 1-on-1 situation against the goalie from the penalty spot (a circle in the center of the penalty area in front of the goal).