



BOULDER VALLEY YOUTH SOCCER

U8 FC Boulder Recreational Guide

Pre-Season Preparations

Set up a team meeting with your families before the first practice. Talk about the following:

- Your goals and expectations for the team and players.
- Practice Day, Time, and Location.
- Go through game rules.
- Go through schedule.

Coach's Meeting

Attend the Coach's meeting prior to each season. Important information will be given to you at this meeting. (Rosters, equipment, game information. Schedules will be online) If you cannot attend, please send an assistant or parent representative to pick up these items.

Once you receive your roster please reach out to your parents ASAP. Families will be very anxious to know the logistics of practices and games.

Coaches Clinics

Taught by FC Boulder Directors of Coaching
Age Appropriate Field Activities and Progressions.
How to run a practice and make it fun and exciting.
Free to all FC Boulder Coaches.

US Soccer Grassroots License Course

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.

First Practice

Please be prepared. The first practice is a great way to set the tone for the team. Having a plan for this first and important encounter with your team is of the utmost importance. They want to have fun, get to know each other, know you, learn soccer, and play.

Below are a few things to keep in mind when running a practice:

- If players aren't having fun – you won't have fun. Make practice interesting.
- Avoid the three L's- Lines, Laps, and Lectures. Lines limit touches, Laps are monotonous and boring, kids attention spans are too short for lectures.
- Play fun games. The more you get the kids moving and engaged the better.
- Always end practice with some sort of scrimmage. The game is typically the best teacher.

Coaching Expectations

Arrive on Time - Arrive at your session at least ten minutes early – smile!

Attire - Dress like a coach! T-shirt, shorts, socks, running shoes.

Training session and equipment - Have a plan, set up your coaching area, and interact with parents and players as they arrive.

Energy and Enthusiasm - Deliver your sessions with passion, be loud, make the activities fun and competitive.

Make Every Child Feel Special - Congratulate kids, high fives, challenge the more developed ones, nurture the more challenged ones.

Coaching Philosophy

Developing your own coaching philosophy and sharing it with your parents before the season starts.

Consider the following when developing your philosophy:

- Why are you coaching? What goals do you have for your team this season?
- Playing positions – will each child play every position during the season?
- Playing time – will it be equal playing time for all players?
- Discipline – how will you handle behavioral issues?
- Sportsmanship and respect
- Player and parent expectations

Player Characteristics

As coaches of these younger players there are things that we know that we can expect during training and games. If we know what to expect, we will be more effective in

dealing with the hundreds of situations that come up. This will help us relax, and, in turn, allow us to enjoy the unpredictable nature of working with these children even more. Here are some of the things that you can expect:

1. Team identification becomes important.
2. Beginning to spend more time with friends and less time with parents.
3. Adults outside of the family may take on added significance.
4. Peer pressure is significant. Popularity influences self-esteem. Continued positive reinforcement still needed.
5. May initiate play on their own and becoming more serious about “their play.”
6. Attention span is longer, ability to sequence thought and actions.
7. Beginning to think in abstract terms and can address hypothetical situations.
8. However, explanations should still be brief, concise and purposeful.
9. Pace factor becoming developed – they are starting to think ahead. Ability to stay physically active is increased.
10. Boys and girls begin to develop separately. The average age for the beginning of puberty in girls is 10 years (7-14), and for boys is age 12 (9-16).

Player Development

- Ball proficiency with both feet (dribbling, passing, receiving, shooting)
- Running, jumping, change of direction, and stopping with and without the ball.
- Defending (Pressure and Cover)
- Transition (Moving up and down the pitch when team has possession of the or when team loses the ball)
- Team shape

4 Pillars of Development

- Technical – Improve confidence on the ball (dribbling, passing, receiving, and shooting)
- Tactical- Improve decision-making, awareness, team shape, and transition within a game.
- Physical- Develop body control with and without a ball
- Psychological- Maintain enjoyment and development of the game.