



## U5 & U6 Coaching Guide

Thank you for coming forward to coach this upcoming season! Without you this season would not be possible. This guide is to provide you everything you need to coach your team.

### Getting Started:

Call or email your players **as soon as possible** to let them know your name and phone number/email, their team sponsor and jersey colour, and place and time of the first session. You may want to set up a meet and greet to hand out uniforms prior to the first game.

### Field Map:

The U5 and U6 divisions play at 6:00pm on Main Field which is divided into 4 mini-fields; Field A, Field B, Field C, and Field D.

Kiwanis Soccer Complex Map - <https://www.owensoundminorsoccer.ca/facilities>

### Session Structure:

A 25 minute skills session followed by a 5 minute water break then a 25 minute mini-game.

- **6:00pm** - For the first 25 minutes each team will practice on their own playing different games/activities to assist the children with skills development.
- **6:25pm** - There will be a 5 minute water break.
- **6:30pm** - For the last part of the session, each team will be split into 2 groups and play a mini game against the other team assigned to their field using the pop-up nets. These 2 mini games will be 5 on 5 and encourage the children to participate and get as many touches on the ball as possible.

During these mini games:

- The coaches are allowed on the field and there is no referee
- You should **not** designate a child to be the goalie
- If the ball goes out, stop the game and have a child kick it back into play

**The fields will be set up for the coaches when they arrive however you will need to put the equipment (pop-up nets, pylons) back in the room beside the canteen after each session.**

### **Tips for Running Skills Sessions:**

- Not really soccer – but activities with a soccer ball
- It must be FUN!
- Every child has a ball
- Emphasis on fundamental movement skills; running, hopping, jumping, skipping, tumbling
- Developing physical literacy with basic ball familiarization games; rolling, bouncing, kicking, catching
- Players will respond to a high-energy environment
- These players love praise and enthusiasm

As players start arriving, give them a ball and have them dribble the ball in the playing area and shoot on the nets until most of their team arrives. Once most players have arrived, gather them in a circle and have an initial talk with them:

1. For the 1st few weeks while you are getting to know them , go around the circle and have them say their name and another fun fact. (eg- favourite color, who brought them, what they did at school etc.)
2. Let them know some of the activities you may be doing
3. Ask the players if they remember some of the rules such as:
  - a. Don't use your hands
  - b. The concept of a "field" - they must stay within pylons and 2 nets that mark out the area

There are only 25 minutes that you have for your talk and skills/drills. Typically you can do 3 or 4 different activities during that time. We have prepared a coaching guide for the first 4 weeks that you can choose to follow or mix/match for drills you may wish to have the kids do (if something works really well one week you may want to go back to it the following week). After the 4 weeks you can start again or reach out to get some other suggestions.

We also have links to many other weekly plans on the Coaches -> Coaching Resources page of our website.

<https://www.owensoundminorsoccer.ca/coaching-resources>

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to reach out!

## **Week 1**

**1) Freeze Tag** - Players run around an area of the field with the coach being "it". The coach tags a player and they need to freeze with their hand out in a high five position. If another player high fives them they are unfrozen. Continue on until all players are frozen.

**Variations:** Allow different players to be "it". Players need to dribble around the area with their ball and when they get caught put foot on top of the ball and hand out for a high five.

**Summary:** Gets kids to find space on the field and not bunch up. When using balls, gets the kids dribbling fast and in different directions.

**2) Clear Your Yard / Clean Your Room** - Divide the team into 2 groups. They stay on either side of the pylons and when the coach says "GO", they kick their ball to the other side. They try to retrieve the ball as quickly as possible and kick it to the other side. When the coach yells "STOP", they count the balls on each side and the team with the least amount of balls has the 'cleanest room'.

**YouTube Video:** Cal Youth Soccer - Keep Your Yard Clean Activity

**Link:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x7rVvU-L1HE>

**Summary:** Gets kids trying to strike the ball and retrieve the ball as quickly as possible.

**3) Red Light/Green Light** - Start all of the players on one sideline shoulder-to-shoulder, each with a soccer ball. The end-line is the opposite sideline. The coach should move 15-20 yards away from the closest player. With the coaches back to the players, yell "GREEN LIGHT," and the players try to dribble to the coach. The coach then yells "RED LIGHT" and the players must quickly stop the ball. The coach should wait a moment and then turn to face the players. Try to catch players still moving when you turn around.

**4) Finishing Drills** - Split the team into 2 groups each at the opposite nets. When the coach yells go, all players dribble to the opposite end and score the ball into the net. The players should all have kicked the balls in the net and should celebrate their scoring.

**Variations:** Have all kids line up at one end and have a coach/parent stand in the middle and for them go around before they score. You can have each child go one at a time and cheer them on. After they score they find their parents for a water break and get ready for the game.

**Summary:** You can do this short drill a few as a great way to end off on a high note before the water break then mini game. It gets kids dribbling the ball, striking it into the net, and celebrating their successes.

## **Week 2**

**1) What Time is it Mr. Wolf** - Have players line up at one end of the box. The coach or a parent can be Mr. Wolf. Have the kids call out at the same time "What time is it, Mr. Wolf?" Mr. Wolf calls out a time: 1 o'clock, 2 o'clock, etc. If it's 1 o'clock, the kids take one dribble then stop the ball with their foot...and so on. Once the kids get close to the other side where Mr. Wolf is, Mr. Wolf yells "LUNCH TIME" and turns around and chases the kids back to the starting line. The point is to have them dribble the ball back to where they started without getting caught.

YouTube Video: Ontario Soccer - Grassroots Practices - What's the Time Mrs Wolf

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=46OVhFaWuLU>

**Summary:** Gets kids to take small steps with the ball. When running back with the ball they get practice running with speed.

**2) Hit the Coach** - Definitely a favorite for young players. The objective is for players to dribble around a defined area trying to hit the coach with their ball as the coach moves around. Teaches "small touches" when dribbling and keeping their heads up to follow the coach, then kick the ball. It encourages switching directions/making turns. You can have another parent/older sibling act as the "coach" to give yourself a break.

**Summary:** Great dribbling drill as they are focused on getting the coach and the coach can control how often they have to switch directions or run by how often they move locations .

**3) Passing** - Players work in pairs with 1 ball between them. Players stand 5 yards apart and begin with passing the ball between them, control/stop it upon receiving it and pass it back. They should get the ball to the other player when passing. Try to get them to do this 10 times in a row. Once they have done a few sets of 10 you can add another variation.

**Variations:** Transition into a 1v1 - players continue to pass the ball back and forth, but when the coach yells "Play", the child with the ball dribbles away and towards the goal while the other child tries to catch them.

**Summary:** At this young age we are just introducing the concept of passing.

**4) Finishing Drills** - Split the team into 2 groups each at the opposite nets. When the coach yells go, all players dribble to the opposite end and score the ball into the net. The players should all have kicked the balls in the net and should celebrate their scoring.

**Variations:** Have all kids line up at one end and have a coach/parent stand in the middle and for them go around before they score. You can have each child go one at a time and cheer them on. After they score they find their parents for a water break and get ready for the game.

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## **Week 3**

1) **Don't Crash The Car** - Each kid has a ball and this game is similar to Red Light/Green Light, but without the "caught" aspect to it. The coach should use a ball to demonstrate what each of the instructions means.

- I. "Green Light" – start dribbling, keep head up and ball close to feet
- II. "Red Light" – use bottom of foot to stop the ball and remain still
- III. "Honk the Horn" – just for fun but the kids love it. Players stop the ball, sit on it and honk their imaginary car horns!

**Summary:** A simple, fun game that teaches many basic skills such as control dribbling, using the inside and outside of the foot while dribbling, keeping head up while dribbling, using the bottom of the foot to stop the ball.

2) **Treasure Island** - Place all the balls in the center. Divide the kids into 4 groups, 1 group in each corner of the field. When you say "GO" the players have to run to the center and collect the balls to take back to their corner until all the balls are gone.

YouTube Video: Ontario Soccer - Grassroots Practices - Treasure Island

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LQxJC6HK-iQ>

**Variations:** You can have the kids perform different movements when bringing the balls back such as hoping on 1 leg, dribbling, etc.

**Summary:** Gets kids running to retrieve the ball and turn/move in different directions.

3) **1V1** - Split players into even teams and give all the players a number. When you call the number the players must run around a designated cone and into the pitch to then go 1v1 against their opposing number.

**Summary:** This gives kids the opportunity for competition against fellow athletes. A good opportunity to match kids of similar skill level together.

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## **Week 4**

**1) Duck, Duck, Goose** - The fox dribbles around the outside of the circle tapping each child on the shoulder or head saying “duck” for each player. Once the fox says “goose” and taps the next child, he dribbles as quickly as he can around the circle. The “goose” then chases the fox in the same direction the fox is dribbling. If the fox reaches the gap left by the goose in the circle and traps his ball before he is tagged, he is “safe” and the goose becomes the new fox. If the goose tags the fox, the fox must start dribbling around the circle again.

**Summary:** A fun game that most kids have already played that practices dribbling and agility.

**2) Body Parts** - Set up a defined dribbling area with cones. Each player has their own ball. The game begins with all players dribbling around within the defined area. The coach then yells out a part of the body, such as “Elbow”, and all players must stop dribbling and gain control of the ball with that body part. It sounds silly, but younger kids especially think it's a ton of fun. Don't hold back with the parts you call. The crazier the better. Some include: Foot, Knee, Elbow, Forehead, Ear, Bottom, Stomach, Back of the Head (“Don't Fall Asleep!”), etc.

**Summary:** Gets kids moving and working on coordination.

**3) Sharks & Minnows** - Players (minnows) dribble soccer balls from one end-line to another while 1–2 defenders (sharks) in the middle try to steal the balls or kick them out of bounds. When players get caught they get added to the middle as sharks.

**Variations:** rather than dribbling the soccer ball from one end-line to the other, players (minnows) dribble within a defined area while the sharks try to steal or kick the balls out of bounds.

**Youtube Video:** Cal South Soccer - U6 Sharks and Minnows Activity

**Link:** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d\\_4T1DMBy1A](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d_4T1DMBy1A)

**Summary:** gets the kids used to controlling the ball while trying to move quickly.

**4) Finishing Drills** - Split the team into 2 groups each at the opposite nets. When the coach yells go, all players dribble to the opposite end and score the ball into the net. The players should all have kicked the balls in the net and should celebrate their scoring.

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