

FSC North 2019-2020 Tryouts

10 STEPS TO PREPARE FOR A
SUCCESSFUL CLUB SOCCER TRYOUT

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Advantages of Foundation Soccer Club North

- Licensed professional coaches (USSF and NSCAA)
- Age appropriate training
- Weekly training sessions (2-3/week)
- Individual foot skills training
- Cross training—including plyometrics, speed, agility, weight training, pool sessions
- Family atmosphere
- All inclusive fee package



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Tryouts are a tough part of life as an athlete and especially tough for boys and girls in their tweens and early teens that are either ramping up or down their interest in soccer.



In our conversations with coaches, parents and campers throughout the year we hear all the drama of clubs and team. We've found a great resource from the State of Washington's Association of Youth Soccer that suggested these 10 tips for surviving tryout season as a family.

The guidance in the following slides isn't just for those in youth sport, the same tips will serve your family well as the stakes get higher in high school and college.



The Best Club is the Best Club for Your Player

You know what motivates and inspires your child. Look for a club that matches that matches your parenting philosophy and suits her temperament. Be wary of a club that suggests you join them based on their Got Soccer or the colleges that their alumni play for.

Each Club's website or brochures should give an indication of the time commitment, travel requirements and financial investment required by that Club, as well as the expectations they have of each player.

Some players might be ready for the greatest challenge, while others might just want to have fun and play with their friends. Make sure that the goals of the Club you're trying out for align with the goals of your player.



Prepare and Be Confident

Preparing for tryouts involves much more than just practicing skills. In addition to honing your step-over or fine-tuning your shot, it's important to prepare yourself mentally for both failure and success. During the tryout, you may make a mistake (in fact, you almost certainly will, at least once) or coaches may surprise you by asking you to play a position you are unfamiliar with or that you don't consider your best.

Be prepared for these situations, and respond positively. Soccer games are full of unexpected developments and difficult moments for each team and the players who respond the best in these challenging moments in a tryout will be certain to catch a coach's eye.



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Arrive Early and Be Ready to Work

Without fail, each of the coaches we spoke with mentioned players being late, or arriving unprepared, as one of the biggest negatives during a tryout. Arriving late to tryouts shows the coach that you don't value his or her time, or that of the other players, and suggests that you're not completely invested in the tryout process. With dozens of other players on time and eager to make the team, it sets you apart in a bad way.

Instead, arrive at least a half-hour early, to give you plenty of time to put on all your gear, warm up, and pass the ball around with a friend or fellow player. Not only will you feel more relaxed and confident, but a coach who arrives at the field to see players already warming up and passing the ball is sure to take note. And if a coach's first impression of you is that you are a well-prepared self-starter, you'll be starting the day at the top of his or her list.





Introduce Yourself to the Coaches

When the coach arrives, walk over and introduce yourself.

Don't let your parents do it for you; a player who looks their coach in the eye, gives a firm handshake and introduces themselves exudes confidence and maturity, two qualities that every coach desires. Don't interrupt the coach if they are talking to someone else; wait your turn, then say hello.

Thank the coach for the opportunity to tryout, and express your sincere desire to be a part of the team this year. Said one coach: "it's much harder to break the heart of a player whose hand I've shook, and who has looked me in the eye and smiled and said thank you, than it is a player I never talked to at all."



Get Noticed at Tryouts

There are things that you, as a player can control;

- ▶ your amount of rest, your amount of practice,
- ▶ your pre-tryout meal,
- ▶ your clothing (one coach we spoke to recommended, if allowed, wearing a brightly colored shirt or socks to help distinguish yourself from the other players).

There are other things you can't control, the weather, the skill level of the other players at tryouts, and the attention of coaches.

If you accept going in that you can only control certain factors and concentrate on achieving peak performance in those areas you'll be better prepared mentally to succeed in any situation.

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Stay Focused

A tryout can be a long process, and there will be times that you feel you aren't being noticed. But do you know what else is a long process, with periods of activity separated by stretches of inactivity? A soccer game, and a soccer season, and life!

Coaches will be looking for the players who remain focused and attentive at all times throughout the tryout. When the coach is speaking, look him or her in the eye; it's a natural human reaction to return eye contact if you're looking at the coach, it's likely he or she will be looking at you as well, and noticing that you care about what he or she has to say. Likewise, don't mess around with your ball, or talk to friends between drills, or while the coach is talking.

Keep your ball still and your eyes on the coach, and you'll show the coach you're focused and serious about what he or she has to say.





Show Your Ball Skills and Athleticism

You'll notice that we have gone 7 items in, and are just now getting to anything that has to do with actually playing soccer. When hundreds of players attend a tryout, it's inevitable that only a few will stand out (good and bad), while the vast majority will be of a similar skill level. That's why it's important to try to set yourself apart from the pack in ways beyond just your soccer ability. Show up early, make eye contact and introduce yourself, and that's all before the tryout starts.

That said, the two on-field skills that are easiest to judge in a tryout are athleticism, and ball skills. Work on ball control, particularly trapping the ball and dribbling in tight spaces. Practice dribbling at pace around cones, with the inside and outside of your foot, until you can do it quickly without losing control of the ball. Most tryouts will begin with small-sided games, where the limited space make ball skills of superior importance. In addition, work on building your speed and ability to change direction. In the full-field game, the fastest players always stand out.





Keep Moving

A high motor will get noticed. When moving between drills, jog, don't walk. Be the first one back from water breaks (in fact, if you didn't get a chance to introduce yourself before the tryout, a water break is a great time to do so). Should you be tackled or beaten during the tryout, don't stop and pout or cry foul, chase the ball and win it back.

Coaches don't want players who complain or give up, they want players who continue to compete hard no matter what the circumstances are against them.





Speak Up and be Seen

Silent players are easy to ignore; verbal ones are not. Just as when you introduced yourself to the coach before tryouts, keep communicating when you're on the field. Make sure that your being positive and helpful. Call out marks, anticipate passes and runs. You'll show that you're a leader and team player, two qualities all coaches look for.

Be careful to not criticize other players' actions or decisions. Model how to respond when something doesn't go your way. Trust the coach to understand what went wrong and why, without you having to point it out.



BONUS Tip for Parents: Let the coaches coach



It's hard to watch your child be evaluated against others.

You want them to be the best and achieve her goals. Before the tryout, make sure that your child knows you love and support them, an encouraging hug and loving words can be just as inspirational (or even more so) as a fiery motivational speech.

During the tryout, don't coach from the sidelines, and avoid talking with the coaches. Let your child's play on the field speak for itself.

Immediately afterwards, don't add your own analysis to that of the coaches, whether your child made the team or not, a hug from you will be the best thing you can give them.



Thank you for trying out
with FSC North

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