



**Dauphin Middle Paxton Soccer
2010 Coach's Guide**

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General Coaching

Coach Responsibilities

During the course of the soccer season the coach should provide instruction on the following topics: goal keeping, shooting, passing, dribbling, throw-ins, corner kicks, goal kicks, and kick-offs. In addition to these skills they will also educate players to the basic rules of soccer as well as getting exposure to the various positions on the soccer field. Coaches should do their best to ensure player safety during games and practices. This includes things like players wearing shin guards and having them following the rules with regards to dangerous play. Part of the player safety also includes hydration and dealing with extreme heat. Coaches should ensure that players have several opportunities for water breaks so that the players do not experience heat related issues during a game or practice.

Soccer coaches have numerous responsibilities. Those responsibilities can be broken down into categories.

Administrative

- Insuring that a team parent has been appointed.
- Obtaining the assistance of parents for practices and games and making arrangements for practices and games to go on in his/her absence.
- Availing themselves of training where offered to improve coaching skills.
- Assisting the team parent in distributing announcements concerning various club sponsored activities.
- Accounting for and turning in all soccer equipment at the end of the season.

Pre Season

- Maintaining discipline over the players and advising the President of any players who may need to be sanctioned up to and including dismissal from the team for disciplinary reasons.
- Holding practices so that players can develop and maintain skills.
- Instilling the concepts of fair play in all players.

Game Season

- Insuring that all players get at least 50% playing time in games.
- Setting a good example of fair play and good sportsmanship for the players and parents. (Remember that these persons will take their cues as how to behave from how the coach behaves. Arguing with the referee and heckling the opposing team are not acceptable behaviors.)
- Controlling the behavior of parents at games.

- Providing games schedules and directions to fields to parents and players as necessary (rescheduled games, other leagues' sites).
- Preparing team rosters for games.
- Designating parents to serve as line persons at games.
- Maintaining discipline over the players at games and advising the President of any players who may need to be sanctioned up to and including dismissal from the team for disciplinary reasons.
- Reporting game scores to the President or the Committee Member responsible for maintaining the website after each game. (Not applicable to U6 teams.)
- Evaluating all players at season's end and submitting the evaluation sheet to the President for use in drafting balanced teams the next year. (Not applicable to U6 teams.)

Coaching Tips

- Introduce the game to the players, stating the objective and ask them to do a quick demonstration. If they don't seem to understand, step in and show them. Do not explain the entire theory behind the game up front. Getting them organized and started should not take any more than two minutes.
- To get the maximum benefit out of this game, encourage the players to be in constant motion.
- Do not stand in the practice area, but rather on the side to be able to observe. Let them play without constant interruption or shouting of instructions by you. They need to learn to make decisions on their own. If the game really is slowing down or the players are not catching on, then take a brief time out and show them what they could have done better in a specific situation. Give positive feedback as they improve. You will notice smoother and faster play as time progresses.
- Most of all soccer should be fun for the children. They are the future of our sport and unless they are enjoying their time at games and practices they won't stick with the game. Be creative to ensure practice are both fun and meaningful.

Parent Interaction

Parents are an important part of youth soccer. They transport children, fetch balls during practice sessions and provide financial support through fundraising.

There will, however, be occasions when you have difficulty with one or more parents. Some may want their child to play more while others may question your judgment as a coach. You can minimize the number of times you have to deal with an angry or upset parent by following these guidelines:

1. **Have a pre-season meeting** before the first practice to discuss your plans and expectations for the season. Encourage questions from the parents and let them know that you have given a lot of thought to how you're going to coach their children.
2. **Express appreciation** for their interest and concern. This will make them more open and at ease with you.
3. **Always listen** to their ideas and feelings. Remember, they are interested and concerned because it is their children that are involved. Encourage parental involvement.
4. **Know what your objectives are** and do what you believe to be of value to the team. No coach can please everyone!
5. **Know the club and game rules.** Deviating from the rules will most certainly come back to haunt you. Be prepared to abide by them and to explain them to parents.
6. **Handle any confrontation one-on-one** and not in a crowd situation. Try not to be defensive. Let the parent talk while you listen. Often a parent will vent their frustrations just by talking. Listen to their viewpoint, then thank them for it.
7. **Don't discuss individual players with other parents.** The grapevine will hang you every time. Show the same respect for each player on the team that you want the parents to show toward you.
8. **Be consistent!** If you change a rule or philosophy during the season, you may be in for trouble. At the very least, inform players and parents of any change as soon as possible.
9. **Most importantly, be fair!** If you treat all your players fairly and equally you will gain their trust as well as their parents respect.



Dauphin Middle Paxton Soccer Stretching

Stretching is an important part of any practice or game. Taking time to stretch prior to any activity will help prevent injury and get your players warmed up for whatever you have planned for them

Setup: Using field markings have the players space out in either a circular or square shape.

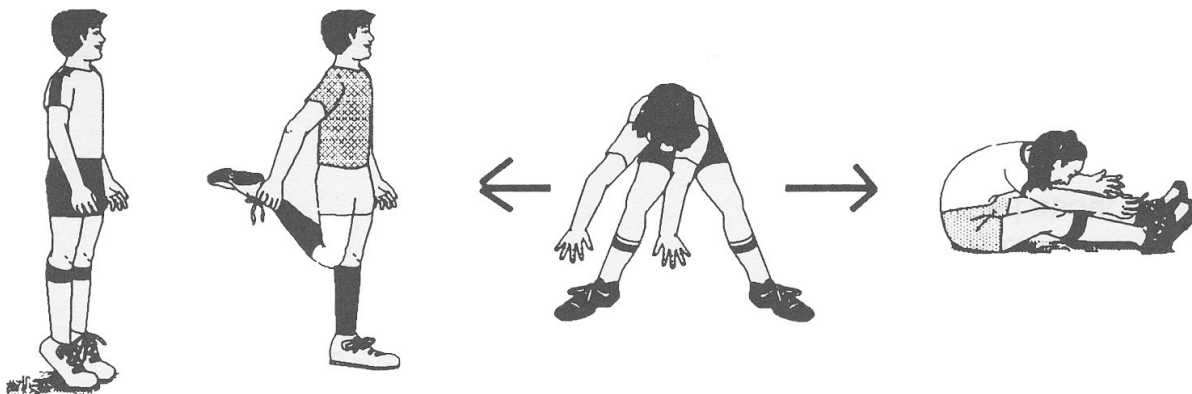
Instructions:

Have one or two players (or coaches depending on the age) lead the players through the following stretches:

- Calve/Back Stretch - up on your toes and reach for the sun
- Thigh Stretch - alternate legs by pulling you heal towards your butt.
- Hamstring Stretch - while standing spread your legs about shoulder width apart. Reach down towards one of your ankles. Alternate ankles and keep your legs straight.
- Groan Stretch - the easiest way to do this by having the player stand with the legs shoulder width apart. Turn one foot toe out and lean towards that foot. Alternate to stretch the other side.
- Hamstring Stretch - sitting on the group with your legs together reach for your toes. Keep your legs bent slightly.

Coaching Points:

- Focus on having the players not bounce or over stretch.
- Make sure the players stretch properly otherwise its like they didn't even do them.



U6 Soccer

Characteristics of U6 Soccer Players

- Short attention span
- Can attend to only one problem at a time
- May understand simple rules that are explained briefly and demonstrated.
- May or may not understand or remember: what lines mean on the field; what team they are on; what goal they are going for. We need to be patient and laugh with them as they get 'lost' on the field.
- Easily bruised psychologically. Shout praise often. Give "hints", don't criticize.
- Need generous praise and to play without pressure. No extrinsic rewards (trophies, medals, etc.) should be given for winning.
- Prefer "parallel play" (will play on a team, but will not really engage with their teammates), thus a 3 against 3 game is, in reality, a 1 against 5 game because they all want the ball at the same time.
- Very individually oriented (me, mine, my)
- Constantly in motion, but, with no sense of pace. They will chase something until they drop. They are easily fatigued but recover rapidly.
- Development for boys and girls are quite similar.
- Physical coordination limited. Eye-hand and eye-foot coordination is not developed. Need to explore qualities of a rolling ball.
- Love to run, jump, roll, hop, etc.
- Prefer large, soft balls.
- Catching or throwing skills not developed
- Probably can't balance on their feet without falling over.

Things to expect.....

Some coaches say that the 6 year-old players are the most difficult to coach because of their attention span. While that may be true it can also be the most rewarding time a coach will experience. These players are the future of soccer and the things they say and do will just make you laugh. Some other things that we can expect when working with this aged player are:

- Expect bathroom breaks.
- Expect them to wonder off if they aren't involved.
- They may be shy and not willing to participate.
- They respond better to laughter and fun than they do yelling and drills.
- Be to the point and use simple terms because they get confused by technical talk.



Dauphin Middle Paxton Soccer

Ouch

This game should be used with younger players (U6 and U8) to introduce dribbling, looking up and properly striking the ball ball at a target.

Setup: Build a grid 20X30 (may adjust if too large or small). Every player must be in the grid with a ball.

Instructions: The coach jogs around in the grid and players try to kick their balls and hit coach. The players get a point each time they hit the coach. The coach should yell OUCH each time they are hit to make the game FUN. Make sure the players are striking the ball with the proper part of the foot.



Coaching Points:

- If the players are struggling to hit the coach, the coach should stop for a couple seconds to give the players a chance.
- Use different parts of the foot: Inside, Instep, Right and Left foot.

Focus:

Dribbling



Dauphin Middle Paxton Soccer Soccer Tag

This soccer game is good for younger players ages under 5 through under 8. This is a fun soccer game that allows players to gain confidence on the ball while getting a lot of touches.

Setup: Build a grid that is approximately 20X20 (or larger depending on the number of players involved). Each player should have a ball and position them inside the grid.

Instructions: Instruct the players to tag (touch) other players within the grid. Once a player gets tagged they must hold that area of the body that was tagged while still dribbling while avoiding other tags and attempting to tag others. If a player is tagged a 2nd time they must hold both tagged areas while dribbling. If the player is tagged a 3rd time, the player must move to the outside of the grid and perform an exercise such as 10 toe touches, 4 juggles, or 5 push-ups before rejoining the game.



Coaching Points:

- Keeping the ball close to the player.
- Head up where they can see ball and players.
- Use all parts of the foot while dribbling (inside, outside, bottom, heel, top)

Focus:

Dribbling, Vision



Dauphin Middle Paxton Soccer Cat & Mouse

This game focuses on the U6 and U8 player and their ability to dribble out of pressure. The game can also be used to focus on the player using their body to protect the ball by placing their body in between the ball and the defender.

Setup: Build a grid approximately 20X25 yards this field should be adjusted based on the skill level and number of players participating. Each player should have a ball except for 2 cats.

Instructions: The players with balls (the mice) start at one end of the field and dribble to the other end. While dribbling the mice attempt to protect their ball from the two "cats". The cats attempt to gain possession and knock the mouse's ball out of the grid. Once this happens, the mouse becomes a cat and can run around the grid in the next round. Each cat can only get one ball per round. The last mouse remaining is the winner.

Variations:

- Players only use left foot to dribble.
- Players use outside of feet to dribble.
- Players use sole of feet to dribble.

Coaching Points:

- Keep the dribblers under control and encourage them not to panic as the cats get near them.
- Inform players to keep the ball close within playing distance.

Focus:

Dribbling, Defending, Attacking, Possession, Vision



Dauphin Middle Paxton Soccer

Red Light Green Light

For U6 and U8 Players. This game focuses on dribbling with the ball close in order to stop quickly.

Setup: Create a starting line for each of the players, and the coach should move 15-20 yards away.

Instructions:

With the coaches back to the players, he yells GREEN LIGHT and the players try to dribble to the coach. When the coach yells RED LIGHT, he waits a moment and then turns to face the players. Anyone who is not stopped has to go back to the farthest person from the coach.

Variations:

- Have the players dribble with only the right or left foot.
- Have them make goofy poses or faces when they are stopped
- Change into “simon says”

Coaching Points:

- Make sure the players keep the ball close so they can stop quickly.

Focus:

Dribbling



Dauphin Middle Paxton Soccer Shark & Minnow

This game focuses on the U6 and U8 player and their ability to dribble out of pressure. The game can be used to focus on the player using their body to protect the ball by placing their body in between the ball and the defender.

Setup: Build a grid approximately 20X25 yards this field should be adjusted based based on the skill level and number of players participating. Each player should have a ball except for 2 sharks.

Instructions: The players with balls (the minnows) dribble inside the grid and attempt to protect their ball from the two "Sharks". The Sharks attempt to gain possession and knock the minnows (ball) out of the grid. Once this happens, the minnow can run around the grid once and return to the game. Each minnow has two chances, and the last 2 minnows remaining become the sharks in the next round.

Variations:

- Players only use left foot to dribble.
- Players use outside of feet to dribble.
- Players use sole of feet to dribble.

Coaching Points:

- Keep the dribblers under control and encourage them not to panic as the cats get near them.
- Inform players to keep the ball close within playing distance.

Focus:

Dribbling, Defending, Attacking, Possession, Vision

U8 Soccer

Characteristics of U8 Soccer Players

- Attention span is not at a "competitive" stage
- Inclined towards small group activities.
- Easily bruised psychologically. They will remember negative comments for a long time. Shout praise. Give "hints".
- They want everybody to like them.
- Developing physical confidence.
- Starting to imitate older players or sports heroes. Want the same "gear" as them.
- Lack sense of pace. Some go flat out until they drop while others need encouragement to move.
- Skeletal system growing rapidly. Often results in apparent lack of coordination.
- Cardiovascular and temperature regulation system is not developed. Their heart rate peaks quickly and they overheat quickly. Make sure that they get adequate water breaks.
- Limited understanding with personal evaluation. "If they try hard, they performed well" regardless of the actual performance. Thus, they need to be encouraged constantly, and asked "Now, can you do this?"
- Better at recognizing when the ball is out of play, and remembering what goal they are going for... but, in the heat of battle, they will sometimes still forget. They still find it difficult to really be aware of more than one thing at a time.

Things to expect.....

Six, seven and eight-year-old players are a bit more compliant than their U-6 counterparts. They will be able to follow 2 or 3 step instructions and are starting to have a good understanding about what it means to play a "game". They are also starting to cooperate more with their teammates. In fact, they now will recognize that they even have teammates by the fact that they occasionally pass the ball to a teammate. Often, they will repeat the phrase "I can't do that!", but, will quickly run to you to show you that they can, even when they only think that they can. Some other things that you can expect to happen during a season with this age group are:

- Players will spend a lot of time on the ground either by bumping into one another or tripping, but, now they will usually pick themselves back up and get back.
- The puddle in front of the goal is still too tempting to resist.
- Some of the girls are a lot tougher than the boys.
- They will still want to wear a training bib, even when the color is identical to their shirt.
- It will be impossible to remember who is whose best friend as you try to make up teams.

Dauphin Middle Paxton Soccer Pirate Game - Curse of the Pugg Net

This game can be used to focus on many aspects of soccer. For younger players ages 8-11, the primary focus should be on good dribbling technique in traffic which requires vision and awareness. The coach can also focus on transition from offense to defense if the ball is lost, or recovering from a tackle and finding safety. Defensively, this allows defenders to steal the ball from attackers and play to a particular goal or target.

Setup: Build a circle approximately the size of the center circle with a Pugg net in the middle of the circle. The actual size of the circle will vary depending on the age and skill level of the players. With all players in the playing area, dedicate 9 players with the ball, and 3 players without a ball will be the "Pirates".

Instructions:

Instruct the "Pirates" without the ball to defend the players with the balls. Once the Pirate wins the ball, they attempt to score on the Pugg net in the middle of the circle. If the Pirate scores the goal, that player too becomes a Pirate. Play continues until the last player with the ball wins. If the pirates have a hard time getting started, the coach can help the pirates at first.



Coaching Points:

Attacking: keep the ball close with head up so the players are aware of defenders and safety areas (space). If the ball is lost, recover quickly and fight to win it back.

Defending: Transition quickly from defense to offensive and stay focused once the ball is won, and find the target.

Focus:

Technical Dribbling, Tactical Defending, Tactical Attacking, Tactical Support, Tactical Possession, Tactical Transition, Tactical Vision



Dauphin Middle Paxton Soccer

Guard the Castle

This game is a great small sided game that focuses on passing in numbers up situations.

Setup: Set up a grid that is 12 X 12 yards. Organize the team into groups of four. One of the four players should wear an alternate jersey and be the designated defender (guarder of the castle). Take a ball and place it on the top of a disc cone in the middle of the grid, this will become the “castle”. If you do not have disc cones, a tall cone will work just as good.

Instructions: It will be up to the 3 attackers to pass the ball around the defender in the grid in attempt to knock down the castle with a pass. The castle is considered knocked down when the ball is knocked off the cone or the tall cone is knocked down with a pass.

Variations:

- Depending on the age level and skill of the players, you can remove the 12 x 12 grid limitations, or make the grid smaller for very skilled players.
- If players are standing next to the cone, you can build a 3x3 grid and not allow players to step into that small grid.
- Require players to complete a certain number of passes before they are allowed to knock down the castle.

Coaching Points:

- Instruct players to get their heads up to find the pass.
- Make sure the players are passing the ball with proper weight on the ball.
- Make sure players are moving about the grid in order to find open space. Make sure players know it is ok to dribble the ball to space or beat the defender before making the pass.
- Make sure players are making the easiest decisions when passing.

Focus:

Passing, Teamwork, Defense



Dauphin Middle Paxton Soccer Hitters and Dodgers

The Hitters and Dodgers game is designed for younger players under 5 through under 9. The game is great for teaching players to dribble and then getting their heads up to make a pass.

Setup: With disk cones, outline a grid that is about 15X15 yards. You might want to make it a bit bigger or smaller depending on the age and number of kids you have. You will need to have a ball for each player; however, only 3 players start off with balls. The remaining balls should be placed outside the grid. The three players with balls are called the "hitters". The remaining players should start off scattered throughout the grid they are the "dodgers"

Instructions: Instruct the "hitters" to dribble inside the grid and attempt to pass the ball to any of the "dodgers" and hit them with the ball. The "dodgers" are attempting to avoid being hit by the "hitters". If a "dodger" is hit, he must collect a ball from the extra balls outside the grid and join the hitters. The last "dodger" standing wins.



Coaching Points:

- Coaches should talk to the hitters about keeping their ball close to the while getting their heads up to find the dodgers.
- Coaches should focus on good passing form: using the inside of the foot with good pace on the ball.

Focus:

Dribbling, Passing, Vision



Dauphin Middle Paxton Soccer Traffic Jam

This game is just out right fun! The kids will have a blast playing this game. This game is ideal for kids who know how to dribble but just need to learn to get their heads up and dribble under the pressures of mere congestion.

Setup: Step off a grid approximately 30X30 yards. Randomly place tall cones and training sticks (flags will work as well) in the middle of the grid. Split the group into 4 even teams who start on the corners of the grid with 1 ball per group.

Instructions: On the coach's command, the first player from each line will race through the "Traffic Jam" (training sticks and cones) in attempt to not hit a stick, cone, or another player. Once the player makes it through the traffic jam instruct them to dribble with speed to the line they are facing and pass the ball to the first player in line. That player should immediately head towards the traffic jam with speed in attempt to get through the traffic jam first. At first don't keep score, simply let the players enjoy the close calls before playing the game. After 8-10 minutes, combine the two teams that are facing each other into one team. Next, have the players race through the traffic jam to the cone on the opposite side of the grid, around that cone and back through the traffic jam. As each player finishes the race they must sit down to signify to the group that they have completed the race. The team that has all players sitting down first wins the game.



Coaching Points:

- Since all 4 players should be entering the center area at the same time make sure players are looking ahead of them with their head up.
- Remind players to keep the ball close when entering the traffic area.
- For younger players it might be best to start with one or two players entering the traffic jam at a time.

Focus:

Dribbling, Vision

U10 Soccer

Characteristics of U10 Soccer Players

- Motor skills becoming more refined and reliable. Boys and girls begin to develop separately.
- Ability to stay on task is lengthened. They have the ability to sequence thought and actions.
- Greater diversity in playing ability and physical maturity.
- Skills are emerging. Becoming more predictable and recognizable.
- Able to pace themselves, to plan ahead.
- Increased self-responsibility. They remember to bring their own equipment but still forget to take it home.
- Starting to recognize basic tactical concepts, but not exactly sure why certain decisions are better.
- Repetition of technique is very important, but it must be dynamic, not static.
- Continued positive reinforcement needed.
- Explanations must be brief, concise, and mention "why".
- Becoming more "serious". Openly, intensively competitive, without intention of fouling.
- Adult outside of the family may take on added significance.
- Prefer identification with a team. Like to have good kit, equipment, balls.
- More inclined towards wanting to play instead of being told to play. Will initiate play more.

Things to expect.....

Some coaches say that the 9 and 10 year-old players are beginning to "turn the corner" and starting to look like real soccer players. However, games are still frantically paced and unpredictable for the most part. These players are starting to find out how much fun it is to play the game skillfully, but they will still stop and laugh if the referee gets hit in the backside with the ball during a game. Some other things that we can expect when working with this aged player are:

- They start to understand offside, but still forget themselves when the goal is in front of them.
- They will really beat up on each other during practice... especially boy's teams.
- During a game, the parents will scream out "HAND BALL" or "COME ON REF, CALL IT BOTH WAYS" at least fifteen times.

- They might cry after the game if they loose, but will forget it if you ask them if you want to go out for burgers and fries.
- You might actually catch them practicing on their own without you telling them to do so.
- Their parents are telling them to do one thing during the game, you are telling them another thing, but what they end up doing might be what their friend is telling them to do.
- You will see a pass that is deliberate. You might even see a "back pass"!



Dauphin Middle Paxton Soccer Juggling

This is a great warm-up for a session that allows players to work on touching the ball with all parts of the foot. If you want to improve players footwork and sense of touch this is a good start to each practice.

Setup: Either use the center circle of the field or build you a circle with cones. Each player needs to have a ball and start inside the circle.

Instructions:

1. Have the players juggle for 2 minutes using only their feet.
2. Have the players juggle for 2 minutes using feet only this time trying to alternate from right to left.
3. Have players juggle with their thighs and feet for 2 minutes. Again instruct players to switch feet while juggling.
4. Now instruct the players to juggle again. This time juggle with the feet and pop the ball to the head or shoulders and back down to the feet. Do this for 2 minutes.
5. Now have a free juggle time to have them work on increasing the number of touches they get before the ball hits the ground.

Coaching Points:

- Novice players should be able to get at least five touches without the ball hitting the ground. Experienced players should try to reach 50 touches.
- Make sure the player is constantly lifting their head and checking their surroundings. This will help players find space and avoid other players.
- Make sure players keep the ball close to them while in congested areas. This will help them not run into other players.

Focus:

Control, Touch



Dauphin Middle Paxton Soccer Outta Here

This game is a very fast paced 2v2 session that focuses on aspects of small sided soccer such as dribbling, passing, teamwork and defense.

Setup: Setup a 25 x 25 yard grid with a small goal at each end, play 2v2. You can adjust the size of the field based on the skill level and number of the players.

Instructions: The coach stands on the touchline with a supply of ball. Divide the players into two person teams. Have the remaining two person teams line up by touchline. The coach plays a ball into the field and the teams try to win the ball. The team that wins the ball needs to score a goal by dribbling through the cones. Play continues until one team scores or the ball goes out of play. If a team scores they stay on and the other team leaves. A ball is immediately played back into the game for the next teams. If the ball goes out of bounds both teams are “outta here” and two new teams are added.



Variations:

- You can start with a 1v1 before progressing to the 2v2 if there aren't enough players or if it helps demonstrate the rules.
- If you have enough players add two goals and play with 4 two person teams.
- Limit touches to encourage passing.

Coaching Points:

- Promote good small group passing, early support, dribbling under control and good skills to beat defenders and get goals.

Focus:

Dribbling, Defense, Control, Endurance, Teamwork, Vision



Dauphin Middle Paxton Soccer Shooters and Shaggers

Shooters and Shaggers is a great game to help improve shooting on target, leg strength and could be altered to help with more complex shooting techniques.

Setup: Pick one player to be the shooter while the other players will be the shaggers. The shaggers will retrieve balls for the shots that miss the goal. Organize an arc of cones approximately 10 yards from goal with no keeper in the goal. Place a ball at each cone.

Instructions: Each shooter will begin at the start cone while the shaggers begin behind the goal. At the first cone, each shooter will take turns shooting on goal in an attempt to a direct shot into the goal without it hitting the ground (no bounce). If the ball bounces before scoring a goal, or if they miss the goal, the shooter does not receive a point. However, if the player is able to strike the ball into the goal without it bouncing, the player should run to the next cone and shoot the next ball. This continues until the player shoots all the balls. The goal is to score 5 times.



Variations:

- Have the shooter shoot left footed from the left side and right footed from the right.
- Have the coaches lob balls towards towards the cones to practice trapping the ball and even volleying the ball (This is only for the U13 players)

Coaching Points:

- Watch the angle of approach, make sure they come at the ball at a good kicking angle
- Make sure their planting foot is not too close or too far from the ball.
- Make sure the player is locking their ankle

Focus:

Shooting



Dauphin Middle Paxton Soccer Soccer Baseball

This game focuses on making good passes as well as conditioning.

Setup: Start by setting up a 20X20 grid using 4 cones. Divide the players into two teams. One ball will be needed for this game.

Instructions: The defense will pick four of their players to start out as infielders and place one infielder at each base (the cones). The offense will line up their players in their batting order. The first batter will start at home plate. The defender at home plate will start with the ball. When the coach yells “pay ball” the batter runs around the bases counter clockwise as you would in regular baseball. The batter cannot stop, they have to sprint around all the bases and head for home. The infielders will pass the ball (soccer style) clockwise around the infielder. The goal is to have the 1st baseman pass the ball back to the catcher before the batter returns to home. If that happens it is an out. If the batter beats the pass home its a run. Play until you either get three outs or you make it through the entire batting order. Once this occurs switch offense and defense. Repeat the game. For the next inning make sure that the defense picks four new infielders so that everyone gets a turn.

Coaching Points:

- Appropriate use of 1st touch
- Good passes to feet
- Good trapping technique

Focus:

Passing, Receiving

U13 Soccer

Characteristics of U13 Soccer Players

- They begin to develop the abilities to sustain complex, coordinated skill sequences.
- Some of the players have reached puberty. Girls, in general, arrive earlier than boys.
- Most players are able to think abstractly and are thus able to understand some team concepts that are foundational to the game.
- They are beginning to be able to address hypothetical situations, and to solve problems systematically.
- They are spending more time with friends and less time with their parents. They are susceptible to conformity to peer pressure.
- Players tend to be highly self-critical. Instruction needs to be enabling. Show them what can be done instead of telling them what not to do.
- Although they are more serious with their play, they are still mainly involved because it is fun.
- They are openly competitive. A few may foul on purpose.
- They are looking towards their role models and heroes in order to know how to act.
- They have a more complex and developed sense of humor.

Things to expect.....

Some coaches say that the 10 and 12 year-old players have "turned the corner" and are looking like real soccer players. However, games are still frantically paced and a bit unpredictable for the most part. These players know how much fun it is to play the game skillfully. As a result, we begin to see some the players drop out who recognize the importance of skill and become discouraged with their lack of it. Some other things that we can expect when working with this aged player are:

- They will yell at their teammates when they make a mistake.
- They will openly question the referee's decisions.
- Players will encourage each other.
- They will pass the football even when they know that they will not get it back.
- Team cooperation is emerging. They will run to a spot, away from the play, even when they know that they might not get the ball.
- They will point out inconsistencies between what you say and what you do. They are "moral watchdogs".
- The difference in skill levels between the players is very pronounced.
- Some players might be as big as you are, some might be half your size.
- They will get together with their friends and be able to set up and play their own game.



Dauphin Middle Paxton Soccer MultiGoal

This game is great for focusing on teaching players attacking skills such as taking on their opponent or learning to attack space. Defensively it will teach players the responsibility of man marking.

Setup: Make a 40X40 grid. Split your team into pairs with one ball per pair. Randomly set up small goals (approximately 2-3 yards wide) with flags within the grid; one goal per pair. Each pair should begin at their window.

Instructions:

Each team will play 1v1 using their goal only. Goals are scored by dribbling across the goal line. Goals can be scored from either side of their own goal. Players play 1 to 2 minute games and rotate players.

Variations:

Open it up where each pair can score on any of the other goals. They are still paired up with only their partner and should not interfere with any other pairs going on. Goals can still be scored from either side of the goals by dribbling through the goal.

Coaching Points:

Attacking: Head up and aware of other players, change of direction, close control, and change of pace

Defending: Bent Knees, aware of attacker, tracking attackers movement and protecting the goal

Focus:

Attacking, Control, Defense, Dribbling, Shooting



Dauphin Middle Paxton Soccer World Cup

This is a lot of fun for the older kids. The game focuses on teamwork and is very fast passed.

Setup: Using the penalty box as the field divide all the players into two person teams. Each team will need one ball. You will need one goal for this game.

Instructions: First each team needs to quickly pick their favorite national team. All the teams start inside the penalty box. The object is to score a goal to advance to the next round. The teams can pass and dribble around inside the box until they get an opportunity to shoot. While doing so the teams are trying to steal another teams ball and kick it out of the penalty box. If a team's ball is kicked outside the box or team misses their shot they are eliminated from the tournament. Continue rounds of the tournament until one team is left. This is the team that wins the cup.

Coaching Points:

- There are no goal keepers for this game so keep the players off the goal line and encourage them to go play defense.
- Have the players keep their heads up so they don't run into each other
- Good passes to feet
- Good trapping technique
- Accurate shooting

Focus:

Passing, Receiving, Teamwork, Attacking, Defense, Dribbling



Dauphin Middle Paxton Soccer

Split the Defender

This game is great for a little more advanced player from 11 years old to 14 years and focuses on passing to split two defenders.

Setup: Make a grid approximately 18x18 yards. Split team into three teams of two players per grid. Build multiple grids for additional games.

Instructions: 2 teams work together on the outside of the grid while the 2 defenders work on the inside of the grid. The four players on the outside keep possession and keep the ball from the defending team in the grid. The outside team scores a point when the ball is passed between two defenders (SPLIT) and is received by their teammate across the grid.

If a player on the attacking team makes a mistake, he and his partner become the defenders and the team winning the ball comes outside the cones and joins the other attackers.

When the defensive team gets split, they have to win the ball 1 extra time. So for example, say the 2 defenders get split 2 times before winning the ball, they must win the ball 3 times before switching with the attackers.

Variations:

- Limit the number of touches per possession
- Play the same game, but expand the grid 3-5 yards on all sides and have the players play inside the grid instead of outside the grid.

Coaching Points:

- Make sure the attacking players are moving for their partners and opening up in space.
- Make sure balls are passed with good pace and on target
- Encourage players to communicate verbally and with their body and hands.

Focus:

Passing, Communication, Vision



Appendix A: General Age Specific Information

U6

- Ball Size - 3
- Field Size - 20 x 25 (yards)
- Goal Size - 4 x 6 (feet)
- Number of Players - 4v4 (minimum of 3 field players)
- Quarter Length: 8 (minutes)
- Other important information - No goalies and one coach is allowed on the field to assist during the games

U8

- Ball Size - 4
- Field Size - 30 x 45 (yards)
- Goal Size - 6 x 12 (feet)
- Number of Players - 7v7 (minimum of 6 field players)
- Quarter Length: 12 (minutes)

U10

- Ball Size - 4
- Field Size - 40 x 55 (yards)
- Goal Size - 6 x 18 (feet)
- Number of Players - 8v8 (minimum of 7 field players)
- Quarter Length: 15 (minutes)

U13

- Ball Size - 5
- Field Size - 50 x 75 (yards)
- Goal Size - 8 x 24 (yards)
- Number of Players - 8v8 (minimum of 7 field players)
- Quarter Length: 15 (minutes)

Appendix B: Pre-season Meeting

A pre-season meeting should be held with the parents so that objectives and team policies can be addressed. Some topics that you may want to address at this meeting are:

- A means of contacting everyone that is simple and can be accomplished in a quick fashion. Email chains work the best but remember that not everyone has email.
- Choosing a team administrator, someone to handle all of the details. This is a huge time savings and will allow you to focus on coaching rather than the administrative side of the league.
- Complete all paperwork required by your league or club. Discuss the laws of the game.
- Determine if there are any carpool needs.
- Training and game schedules. How you feel about starting and ending on time, what your attendance expectations are, what you think is a good excuse to miss training.
- What each player should bring to training: inflated ball, filled water bottle, soccer attire, shin guards cleats or sneakers.
- Most importantly, your philosophy about coaching players. Let them know that everyone plays; that the game does not look like the older player's games; that you are there to ensure that their player is safe and has a good time, as well as learn about soccer. Stating these objectives clearly sets the stage for a successful season.
- What your expectations for them is during game time. This is not only for the players but the parents as well.
- Last take this opportunity to have each parent fill out the emergency contact form that is included in appendix c. This will keep you informed as to any medical conditions you should be aware of as the head coach. For example bee sting allergies are important things to know about. This form can also help as the season goes on so that you know who is allowed to pick up the players from games and practices.

Appendix C: Emergency Contact Form

Player's Name		
Parent's Name		
Phone Numbers		
Emergency Contact		
Email		
Notes		

Player's Name		
Parent's Name		
Phone Numbers		
Emergency Contact		
Email		
Notes		

Appendix D: Typical Training Session

Here are some items that should be included in a training session:

Warm-up

A brief warm-up is appropriate in order to get the players thinking about soccer and to prepare them physically for the time ahead. This should involve individual or small group activities that involve the ball. Since there can be one theme to the session, hopefully, the warm-up will lead into the theme of the day. Static stretching is also appropriate at this time, after the players have broken a sweat, again, hopefully done with the ball. The warm-up should get the players ready to play. It should be lively, fun, and engaging as well as instructional. There is nothing like a good, fast-paced activity to grab the player's attention and make them glad that they came to practice.

Individual or Small Group Activities

Follow the warm-up with some kind of individual activity, not necessarily a real 1v.1 game, but some kind of activity where players act as individuals or cooperate in small groups in a game environment. An example would be a kind of keep-away game, or small sided games that bring out or emphasize a specific skill or topic. Keep players in motion at all times. Avoid having them wait on lines. Play games of "inclusion" instead of games where the "looser sits". Be creative. These players like "crazy" games with a lot of action.

Play the Game

Small sided soccer can be used to heighten intensity and create some good competition. Play 4v.4 up to 8v.8. Be creative. Play with 4 goals, or 2 balls. Play with or without boundaries. Perhaps play to emphasize a particular skill (can only dribble the ball over a goal line in order to get a point). Use cones if you don't have real goals. Keep players involved. Have more than one game going on at a time if necessary. Switch teams often, give everyone a chance to win. Also, it is important that every player has a chance to shoot on goal as often as possible. Finish this stage with a real game with regular rules. Players need to apply their newly learned abilities to the real game.

Cool Down & Homework

Finish the session with a cool down. Give them some more stretches to do with the ball. You may want to review what they learned during the session. Also, give them some homework so that they practice on their own or learn something about the game. Homework only works for the older kids and remember keep it simple and fun because they probably already have homework from school.

Appendix E: Support

Website Links

- [Dauphin Middle Paxton Soccer](http://www.middlepaxtonsoccer.com/) - <http://www.middlepaxtonsoccer.com/>
- [SASY](http://www.sasysoccer.com/) - <http://www.sasysoccer.com/>
- [CPYSL](http://www.cpysl.org) - <http://www.cpysl.org>
- [EPYSA](http://www.epysa.org/) - <http://www.epysa.org/>
- [U.S. Youth Soccer](http://www.usyouthsoccer.org/) - <http://www.usyouthsoccer.org/>
- [FIFA](http://www.fifa.com) - <http://www.fifa.com>
- [SoccerXpert](http://www.soccerxpert.com/) - <http://www.soccerxpert.com/>
- [Soccer Practice Books](http://www.soccerpracticebooks.com/) - <http://www.soccerpracticebooks.com/>
- [Success in Soccer](http://www.successinsoccer.com/) - <http://www.successinsoccer.com/>

Library Resources

- The Novice Coach DVD - Volume 1 (U6-U8)
- The Novice Coach DVD - Volume 2 (U10-U12)
- Practice Activities Flip Book (U6-U8)
- Practice Activities Flip Book (U10)
- Practice Activities Flip Book (U12)
- Back Issues of “Success in Soccer” Magazine

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