

# Coaching Tips

## Coaches' Activities Checklist

- Activities Fun/ Age Appropriate: Whom are you coaching?
  - U6 me/ball/dribbling/shooting/no passing- managing their heads!
  - U8 pairs/ball/dribbling/shooting/passing - a little less managing of their heads!
  - U10 groups of 4 (intro of tactics), air balls, minimizing touches; management is largely technical, much less psych
  - U12/14 groups of 4-6, quality of first touch; management is highly technical (70%+ technical)
- Organized/ Clear Objectives – pick **a** topic and plan the work, work the plan
- Involvement (All Players Active) – all bring a ball, no 'exclusion' games
- Creativity/ Decision Making – have them put out the cones, give them the problem to solve, ask questions
- Spaces Appropriate size for ability and number of players- adjust as necessary
- Coaches Feedback Appropriate (to players) – Be Clear/ Brief/ Concise/ Positive

## A Few Things to Avoid during games:

**Coaching From the Touchline (sideline)** - Simple, even-keeled, encouragement from the sidelines is preferred. Naturally, the assistant coaches are not expected to remain mute during the games, but their information should not contradict the head coach's. It is important to realize that although we as coaches are permitted to instruct from the sideline, this is not a license to take over the game from the players. Coaching is best done during practice time, not during the game. Let the players make their own decisions on the field, so they develop a feel for the game.

Don't continually shout instructions - they often reach the players too late (the action has moved to a new situation), and may be distracting.

Don't send one of your assistants to instruct from the opposite touchline to "cover the field." It is doubly distracting to the players (often the instructions coming from opposite sides of the field differ!). It is irritating and disrespectful to the other team if they are located there. Don't send a parent or assistant to coach from behind the goal line. Coaches and spectators do not belong there! The coach can be "cautioned" for allowing this infraction to occur.

"No goalkeepers" is meant to allow for maximum player development by providing numbers of touches on the ball. We need to create an environment that promotes and encourages creative, attacking play.

The tactical positioning of a 'last man back':

- a) Denies/deprives that player participation in the overall developmental process
- b) Denies/deprives attacking players self-confidence building successes
- c) Reinforces that winning is the primary emphasis and puts individual player development second

**Interaction with Referees:** Coaches teach the game to the players and referees facilitate the spirit of and laws of the game. Please accept their decisions (in *their* opinion), either right or wrong (in *your* opinion) and teach your players to 'play on'. DO NOT question a call during the match. If there's something you're not clear of, or, have concern with, please wait until either half time or full time and have a discreet and respectful discussion. Referees should be addressed as 'Sir/Madam/Referee', not 'ref'. They are recreational level referees in training and adults can easily undermine their credibility and confidence. Referee abuse is the single biggest reason for an annual 30-50% attrition rate in RI. They are expected to act professionally, are assessed, and must pass an annual recertification training course.

**Coaching Education:** <http://www.soccer-ri.com> > *Coaching* has details on formal education. EWGYSA reimburses for successful completion of these courses and strongly encourages you to take advantage of the opportunity to improve your ability to improve your charges.

It is said that on Plato's ring there was a motto written, "It is easier to prevent ill habits than to break them."

Please use the USYSA training materials as supplied by EWGYSA as much as possible for consistency.

Use older players for demonstrations if needed. They make great role models!

The game is all about the players. Children can play the game without coaches, but it is well known a child's experience is greatly enhanced if the volunteers, entrusted with the child's development, learn the game's nuances and more importantly understand what is developmentally and cognitively appropriate for their players.

**Learn more online at:** <http://www.ewgsoccer.org>