



## **Pella Soccer Club Curriculum**

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### **U8**

This age group is where players will be introduced to the game. The main focus with this age group should be to gain an enjoyment of the game. Most of the practice sessions should be focused on fun and enjoyable games to gather an interest in soccer. The purpose is player development. Through the practice sessions, the basic technical aspects should be taught. The player should be gathering the basic skills with plenty of touches on the ball.

The following are the proper skills the player should be learning:

#### **Passing and Receiving**

- Pass with proper weight, accuracy, and timing
- Use the inside of the foot to pass
- Receives the ball correctly

#### **Shooting**

- Use the laces when striking the ball or locking the foot to strike with the inside of the foot
- Able to strike a moving ball
- Shoot the ball on target
- Shoot while in motion (running/jogging)
- Correct position of non-kicking foot

### Dribbling

- Basic attacking moves and concepts
- Uses all surfaces of the foot
- Develop and understand change of pace and direction
- Basic turns
- Proper shielding technique
- Keeps ball close to body

### Defending

- Applies pressure on the ball when dispossessed
- Use of proper defensive stance
- Uses proper form when tackling a ball

### **Coaches:**

It is vital that at this age you keep it simple and fun. The main purpose is to get the player excited about playing and keeping that player in the game of soccer for a long period of time. Training sessions should be short and quick paced with all the players on a ball at all/most times. You need to be positive, energetic, and encouraging with the players. Remember that it is about the development of the player not the results of the games. All basic fundamental techniques should be taught using both feet!

## **U10**

This age group is still about player development. The players are still learning at this age and some will have gathered a better understanding than some, however, the basic fundamentals should still be taught. The players should still be touching the ball a lot in training. The difference with this group is that the tactical part of the game should be introduced. This should be done with simple possession games (number up games like 4v1 and 5v2). This age group should be encouraged to get touches on the ball outside of training. This is also the age where juggling should be introduced.

The following are the proper skills the player should be learning:

### Passing and Receiving

- Pass with proper weight, accuracy, and timing
- Able to pass under pressure
- Uses inside and outside of the foot to pass
- Proper technique for short and long passes
- Follows the pass with a proper run
- Uses more controlling surfaces to receive the ball (foot, thigh, chest)
- First touch into positive space

### Shooting

- Proper shooting technique
- Shots on target
- Able to shoot from different angles
- Able to shoot under pressure
- Strikes the middle of the ball
- Uses the laces for power and inside of the foot for placement

### Dribbling

- Understands where and when to dribble
- Uses all surfaces of the foot
- Attacks with pace at defender
- Uses a variety of moves
- Ball should be close to body under pressure
- Develops an understanding of dribbling in space (bigger touches)

### Defending

- Pressures the ball after losing possession
- Proper defensive stance
- Proper form for tackling the ball
- Recovers defensively to help out team
- Doesn't dive in to tackles/remains composed

### Heading

- Proper technique to prevent injury

### **Coaches:**

This is a very important age to hit on the proper techniques and fundamentals. Keeping the game fun and simple is still the key. You should make sure that you're teaching good practice habits to your players. Any fitness you choose to do should be with a ball! The coaches should implement the basic tactics of the game. Keep in mind to be encouraging, positive, and energetic!

## U12

At this age level the players should be furthering their tactical knowledge and awareness as well as refining their technical skills. This group should be learning how they'll be transitioning from 8v8 to 11v11. The players should be challenged more physically and mentally. The main focal point should still be player development. This age group should be expected to get touches on the ball outside of practice (work on ball skills).

The following are the proper skills the player should be learning:

### Passing and Receiving

- Pass with proper weight, accuracy, and timing
- Player should be trying a variety of passes (driven, chipped, crosses, short, long)
- Player should be able to pass with either foot effectively
- Proper technique while passing
- Pass effectively under pressure and on the run
- Receive with all surfaces (foot, thigh, chest)
- Player's first touch should be in positive space
- Able to receive a moving ball while in motion into space

### Shooting

- Proper striking technique
- Uses laces for power and inside of the foot for placement
- Able to take on a defender and shoot from angles
- Recognize good shooting opportunities
- Be able to hit the target
- Able to shoot under pressure/showing good balance

### Dribbling

- Able to go 1v1 in attacking third of field
- Able to get away from pressure
- Use all parts of the foot effectively
- Understands where and when to dribble
- Uses a variety of moves and feints
- Understands where the ball should be in relation to body (close in pressure; bigger touches in space)
- Change of direction and pace should be evident

## Defending

- Proper defensive stance
- Proper form when tackling the ball
- Composure when being attacked 1v1
- Learn the difference between tackles and where to use them
- Learn the concept of pressure, cover, and balance
- Challenges 50/50 balls
- Communicates effectively in relation to tactical awareness
- Understands where dangerous positions are

## Heading

- Proper form to avoid injury
- High and wide defensive headers
- Low and hard offensive headers

## Game Decisions

- Understands simple combination plays (takeovers, overlaps, wall passes)
- Understands how to open up to the field
- Understands where to move when off the ball
- Ability to provide depth and width
- Ability to play quicker and think quicker

## **Coaches:**

Understand that the main point is still player development. This is usually the age where the player will undergo social and physical change. Concepts should still be simple as the player's attention span is still small. Pace of the practice should be quick and sharp. Remember to be enthusiastic and positive when talking to players. Conditioning should still be both with a ball. Please keep in mind that this is usually the age players determine if they will stick with soccer or not. Lots of players lose interest at this age for different reasons, therefore, it's important to keep it fun for them.

## **U14**

At this age the matches will be 11v11 on a full sized field. Players should be refining their technical abilities/skills. The players should further their tactical awareness and gain an understanding of 11v11 tactics. Players should be learning about different formations. Training sessions should be more competitive and demanding on the players both physically and psychologically.

The following are the proper skills the player should be learning:

### Passing and Receiving

- Pass with proper weight, accuracy, and timing
- Player should be able to pass with either foot effectively
- Proper technique while passing
- Pass effectively under pressure and on the run
- Player should move to support a pass in a positive position
- Player should be able to pass effectively in a variety of ways (chipped, long, short, crossing, driven, etc...)
- Receive with all surfaces (foot, thigh, chest)
- Player's first touch should be in positive space
- Able to receive a moving ball while in motion into space

### Shooting

- Proper striking technique
- Able to take on a defender and shoot from angles
- Recognize good shooting opportunities
- Be able to hit the target
- Able to shoot under pressure/showing good balance
- Can finish in a variety of ways (heading, instep, laces, outside of foot)

### Dribbling

- Able to get away from pressure
- Able to beat opponent 1v1
- Use all parts of the foot effectively
- Understands where and when to dribble
- Uses a variety of moves and feints
- Understands where the ball should be in relation to body (close in pressure; bigger touches in space)
- Player should show a great understanding of change of pace and direction

### Defending

- Proper defensive stance
- Proper form when tackling the ball
- Composure when being attacked 1v1
- Learn the difference between tackles and where to use them
- Understands what role they're playing (pressure, cover, and/or balance)
- Challenges 50/50 balls
- Communicates effectively in relation to tactical awareness
- Understands where dangerous positions are
- Proper movement as a team
- Learning responsibilities in zonal defending and man marking
- Learning roles in defending set pieces

- Understands appropriate fouls (when and where to do them)

### Heading

- Proper form to avoid injury
- High and wide defensive headers
- Low and hard offensive headers
- Attack the ball while in the air
- Work on timing

### Game Decisions

- Movement off the ball should be positive
- Able to utilize combination play effectively
- Provides depth and width both attacking and defending
- Increase overall speed of play (technical, decision-making)
- Understand how to utilize space
- Opens up the game (body shape)

### **Coaches:**

This age group should be challenged more mentally and physically. At this age the players should be serious about the game of soccer so they are to be prepared for High School soccer. The main focus should still be player development, however, the coach should also be looking for what formation and what tactics best suits the team. Players at this age are still developing physically and socially, so a coach should be aware of that and understand how best to educate their players. Coaches must possess a strong personality in the team and be more demanding of the players.