

## Sporting Columbia U5 Rec Coaches Guide

### Our Core Values

- **Respect** – For teammates, coaches, opponents, referees, and the game.
- **Community** – We are stronger together.
- **Growth Mindset** – We learn through effort and persistence.
- **Teamwork** – We support and work hard for one another.
- **Passion** – We love the game and play with joy.

### Our Recreational Philosophy

Our U5 program introduces players to the game in a fun, safe, and developmentally appropriate environment. We emphasize **exploration, movement, and enjoyment** over structure or results. Players will learn through games that build confidence with the ball.

### What to Expect from U5 Players

- Very short attention spans (5–10 minutes)
- Basic balance and coordination still developing
- Tend to follow the ball in groups
- Thrive on **imagination, repetition, and praise**
- Need clear, simple instructions and lots of movement

### What to Work On

- Dribbling with control and confidence
- Using both feet (but don't worry if they don't!)
- Changing direction with the ball
- Introduction to passing and stopping the ball

- Comfort with the ball at their feet

### **Player Expectations**

- Be kind to teammates and opponents
- Try your best and don't give up
- Listen to your coach
- Have fun and play with joy!

### **Parent Expectations**

- Cheer positively for all players
- Let the coaches coach
- Celebrate effort and improvement, not just goals
- Support a fun-first environment
- Be patient — development takes time

## **Practice 1 – Preseason (30 Minutes)**

### **Free Play (5 min)**

Let each player have a ball and explore freely.

### **Red Light, Green Light (7 min)**

Coach calls "green" to go, "red" to stop. Helps with control and listening.

### **Pirate Ship (8 min)**

Call out fun commands like “scrub the deck,” “shark attack,” or “captain on deck!” Players react while dribbling.

### **Dribble Through Gates (5 min)**

Set up cone gates. Players try to dribble through as many as possible in a time limit.

### **Mini Scrimmage (5 min)**

Play 3v3 or 4v4 with no coaching, just encouragement.

## **Practice 2 – Preseason (30 Minutes)**

### **Follow the Leader (5 min)**

One player or coach leads, others follow with a ball. Include turns and silly moves.

### **Treasure Hunt (7 min)**

Place cones or pinnies around the field. Players dribble to collect them and bring them “home.”

### **Sharks and Minnows (8 min)**

Coach is the shark; players dribble from one end to the other without losing the ball.

### **Target Practice (5 min)**

Players try to knock over cones or score into small goals.

### **Mini Scrimmage (5 min)**

Let them play freely — 3v3 or 4v4, no pressure.

## **Gameday Warm-Up (Every Week – 25 Minutes)**

### **Free Play (5 min)**

Let the players get used to the ball and environment.

### **Dribble & Turn Game (5 min)**


Practice stopping, turning, and changing direction on command.

### **Goal Scoring Race (7 min)**

Players dribble to a line and shoot into small goals — fun, fast, and exciting.

### **Mini Scrimmage (8 min)**

Let them play short games to get ready. Keep it light and have fun.

 *Coach Tip: Keep instructions short. Smile often. Let them play. That's the win at this age.*