



Baystars FC Travel Soccer Curriculum

Introduction

At Baystars FC, we want to help your player maximize his or her ability by focusing on long-term player development.

Seventy percent of youth quit organized sports by age 13. Too much pressure to achieve “winning” results too soon instead of focusing on individual development. Long-term player development means prioritizing a player’s lifetime soccer experience over short-term accomplishments or challenges.

We focus on delivering the main components of the game (technical, tactical, physical and psycho-social) in a method that is appropriate to the age, ability, and interest of each player. We present these components to players through a soccer curriculum that targets specific development objectives. Overall, these objectives will help advance players for the next phase of the development process.

A critical piece of the player development process is feedback. Each player will have the opportunity to meet with their coach to review a personal evaluation of their growth and development. This helps the player to understand how to precede best along their development pathway. Development does not happen in a straight line; it is a cyclical process of education, application, and evaluation.

Baystars FC also understands and values the family atmosphere that a small club can provide. We do more than teach soccer skills; we mentor our youth so they develop life skills and friendships which will last forever.

Players 4 – 8 years old (U7 to U9)

Philosophy

- Primary development goal of this age: Individual skill development, basic understanding of team formation and basic attacking and defending concepts.
- Focus in on individual technical skill development through volume of touches on the ball and individual defending.
- Possession philosophy: Control the ball and move forward by dribbling, passing or shooting. When it is not possible to go forward, move to wide space and look for an open pass. Spread out and create passing options by supporting the attack without moving to the ball.



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Underlying and Guiding Principles

- Open Academy registration allows players to experience soccer while exploring other sports. It also enables Baystars to identify and retain potentially talented youth players and begin laying the foundation for their transition to travel teams.
- Coaching should focus on player development by providing high volume of touches on the ball, introduction to technical training, participation in soccer-based games and activities, and provide game-like experiences that include basic attacking and defending concepts.
- It is important to balance fun and development to engage the player and begin building a love for the game to promote player retention.

Practice Philosophy

- Length: Maximum of 60 minutes of constant activity around the ball
- Development Focus:
 - Speed: technical speed and speed of thought
 - Technical speed is the ability to possess the ball to dribble, pass or shoot, or try to win back the ball if lost.
 - Speed of thought is the ability to read the game and understand direction of play, how to move forward and when to defend.
 - Technical skills & technique: moving forward by dribbling, passing or shooting as well as defending the goal, stealing the ball and remaining compact.
 - 1000+ touches each training session
 - Dribbling
 - Passing (standing and moving)
 - Receiving (standing and moving)
 - Shooting
 - Throw-ins
 - Beating players 1v1
 - Protecting the goal
 - Stealing the ball
 - Tactical understanding of the game
 - Introduction to basic rules of the game
 - Introduction to a basic team formation
 - Introduction to the basic principles of attacking and defending
 - Understanding what to do when we lose the ball and what to do when we win the ball.
 - Character:
 - The player's respect for the game, their coach, teammates and others



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- The player's willingness to give full effort, try new things, make mistakes and learn from past performance.
- The player's enjoyment of the game and love for the sport

Game Philosophy

U7 (4-6 years old): **Ball size: 3. Game: 4 v 4 with 10 min halves.** Pitch: min 15 x 25, max 25 x 40 yards. Goal: 4 x 6 foot. No goalkeepers

U9 (7-8 years old): **Ball size: 4. Game: 7 v 7 with 20 min halves.** Pitch: min 35 x 55, max 45 x 65 yards with build-out line. Goal: 6.5 x 18 foot. With goalkeepers

- Purpose: More opportunities to have the ball at their feet, to make decisions under pressure and to solve the problems of the game.
- Format: 4 v 4 or 7 v 7
- Competitiveness: Play to showcase progress and creativity. Winning is not the primary objective in all situations at this age.
- League game play time: Equal play time at a variety of positions is the goal at this age for the development of the player.
- Tournament game play time: U7 & U9 players will not engage in tournaments with exception to Baystars hosted events.
- Player development: The game is the best teacher for young players.
- Coaching focus:
 - Getting involved
 - Attacking the goal
 - Taking chances/risks
 - Options to solve the problems of the game: possession, pressure, defending and scoring
 - To experiment and be creative



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Players 9 – 11 years old (U10 to U12)

Philosophy

- Primary development goal of this age: Individual development and introduction to “team play” concepts.
- Focus in on individual technical skill development to move and control the ball through play, and prepare youth players to successfully recognize and solve the challenges of the game on his or her own.
- Possession philosophy: long ball de-emphasized; we will choose long-term vs. short-term development progress. We may initially give up goals but will be comfortable and technically more competent – and in the long run will be better for it.

Underlying and Guiding Principles

- It is important to recognize that players develop at different rates. “Average” U-9s can be “superstars” at U-14. Our goal is to keep all potentially talented youth players training and playing the game to give them time to explore their capabilities and to realize their potential.
- Coaching is most helpful to a young player’s development by providing opportunities for more touches, saying less, and allowing the players to do more.
- Discipline is an important component of Baystars Soccer. Coaches will demand respect, cooperation, a positive attitude and a strong work ethic at every age.
- Building confidence with the ball is a key ingredient in developing U-10s & U-11s. The more confident players become, the more they will look to get involved and the more fun they will have.

Practice Philosophy

- Length: 60-75 minutes of constant activity around the ball
- Development Focus:
 - Speed: technical, speed of execution and speed of thought
 - Technical speed is the ability to trap or settle ball and get a pass or shot away quickly.
 - Pure speed is the natural running of an athlete.
 - Speed of thought is the ability to read the game and be able to be in the right place at the right time.
 - Technical skills & technique: building the first touch and passing skills under pressure of match conditions
 - 1000+ touches each training session



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- Basic rules of the game
- Dribbling
- Passing (standing and moving)
- Receiving (standing and moving)
- Shooting
- Throw-ins
- Beating players 1v1
- Ball movement, ability to control, direct and move with the ball
- A poor first touch will require players to always be fighting the ball to make subsequent decisions
- Tactical understanding of the game
 - Introduction to a system of play and positional roles and responsibilities of each
 - Introduction to the principles of attacking and defending in small groups
 - Understanding what to do when we lose the ball and what to do when we win the ball.
- Character:
 - The player's respect for the game, their coach, teammates and others
 - The player's fighting spirit and their ability to compete
 - The player's work off the ball and when fatigued
 - The player's enjoyment of the game and love for the sport

Game Philosophy

U10 (9 years old): **Ball size: 4. Game: 7 v 7 with 25 min halves.** Pitch: min 40 x 60, max 50 x 70 yards. Goal: 7 x 21 foot

U11 (10 years old): **Ball size: 4. Game: 9 v 9 with 30 min halves.** Pitch: min 50 x 80, max 50 x 90 yards. Goal: 7 x 21 foot

U12 (11 years old): **Ball size: 4. Game: 9 v 9 with 30 min halves.** Pitch: min 50 x 80, max 50 x 90 yards. Goal: 7 x 21 foot

- Purpose: More opportunities to have the ball at their feet, to make decisions under pressure and to solve the problems of the game.
- Format: 7 v 7 or 9 v 9
- Competitiveness: Play to showcase progress and creativity. Winning is not the primary objective in all situations at this age.
- League game play time: Equal play time is the goal at this age for the development of the player – unless there are disciplinary issues being addressed by the coach.



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- Tournament game play time: Tournaments, in most cases, are played to win. While every player will be given an opportunity to play, equal play time may not occur in tight games where the results affect the team's tournament success.
- Player development: The game is the best teacher for young players.
- Coaching focus:
 - Getting involved
 - Attacking the goal
 - Taking chances/risks
 - Options to solve the problems of the game: possession, pressure, defending and scoring
 - To experiment and be creative

Players 12 – 13 years old (U13 to U14)

Philosophy

- Primary development goal of this age is to continue to improve players technical skills and introduce tactical concepts such as positional and systems of play.
- Focus is on providing a tactical understanding of the game and taking each player through 3 - 4 systems of play to help prepare them for higher levels of competition.

Underlying and Guiding Principles

- Players are selected through a tryout process. Each May, teams are selected for a full calendar year (fall and spring seasons). Every year, players must approach the tryouts with an understanding that playing on a team one year does not guarantee a spot on the next.
- Coaching at this age centers around helping players become better decision makers within the demands of the game. Soccer is a game of improvisation. It is important that our players, beginning at the earliest ages, are encouraged and empowered to develop as thoughtful and creative decision makers and are never treated as robotic machines that simply carry out specific coaching instructions.
- Emphasis is placed on developing strong bodies and minds.
- Soccer development is a process that must be approached with age specific skills and concepts. This is the age for players to practice their technical skills in an environment that requires them to develop a vision of the game, an ability to read the game, and the skills to create scoring opportunities on the field.



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- Building confidence with themselves is a key to success at these ages; the more confident players become, the more creative they will play and the more fun they will have. Confidence can be trained as it is a learned attitude.

Practice Philosophy

- Length: 75-90 minutes of high intensity training with and without the ball
- Developmental focus is the same as the measurements we use to evaluate players during tryouts:
- Speed-technical: speed of execution and speed of thought
 - Technical speed is the ability to trap or settle a ball and get a shot or pass away quickly; “one touch” play becomes a measurement of performance.
 - Pure speed is natural running speed of an athlete.
 - Speed of thought is the ability to read the game and be able to be in the right place at the right time.
- Technical skills and technique: building their first touch and passing skills under the pressure of match conditions.
 - 1000+ touches each training session
 - Dribbling, passing, receiving
 - Crossing, shooting, heading
 - Beating players 1v1, 2v1
 - Maintaining possession of the ball
 - Ball movement, ability to control, direct and move with the ball
 - A poor first touch will require players to always be fighting the ball to make subsequent decisions.
- Tactical understanding of the game
 - Player movement, on and off the ball
 - Reading the game
 - Understanding field positions and roles
 - Understanding different systems of play and positional roles and responsibilities of each
 - Understanding the principles of attacking and defending in small groups
 - Understanding the importance of transitioning from attack to defense and vice-versa
 - Anticipating ball movement 2 – 3 touches ahead of actual play
- Physical development
 - Strength
 - Speed
 - Grit/toughness
- Mental / emotional development as a player



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- Respect for the game, their coach, teammates and others
- Fighting spirit and their ability to compete
- Commitment to personal excellence on the field and in the classroom
- The player's ability to be coached
- The player's commitment to the team, enjoyment of the game and love for the sport

Game Philosophy: League and Tournament match play

U13 (12 years old): Ball size: 5. Game: 11 v 11 with 35 min halves. U13's may roster up to 18 players.

U14 (13 years old): Ball size 5. Game: 11 v 11 with 35 min halves. U14's & up may roster up to 22 players, but only 18 on the game roster.

- Purpose: more opportunities to have the ball at their feet, to make decisions under pressure and to solve the problems of the game
- Format: 11 v 11
- Competitiveness: we will seek out the best competition to provide an opportunity to work on decision making and speed of play. We will strive to develop highly competitive players who can perform under pressure.
- Play time: play time is fairly equal though it may be affected by work ethic, attitude and effectiveness during league play; tournaments are played to win.
- Coaching focus:
 - Attacking the goal
 - Taking chances/risks
 - Options to solve the problems of the game: transition, possession, pressure, defending and scoring
 - To experiment and be creative



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Players 14 – 18 years old (U15 to U19)

U15 – 16 (14 – 15 years old) 40 min halves. U17 – U19 (16 – 18 years old) 45 min halves.
Roster up to 22 players, but only 18 on the game roster.

For our U15 – U19 players, the Principles and Philosophies are carried over and built upon from U12 – U14. The athletes are groomed to compete at the highest level. If the athlete intends to play high school or collegiate-level soccer, the child athlete will be taught the skills and techniques he or she will need to succeed. While the emphasis shifts to the next level with training and competition, the players are still held to the highest standards for good sportsmanship and proper sports perspective. The focuses at this level are competing at advanced levels, teaching advanced team tactics and advanced positional tactics/skills. Age appropriate, progressive training and conditioning techniques are employed to develop strength, athleticism, speed, agility, and soccer skills.

Formations

How teams work up from 4 v 4 to 11 v 11.

The diagrams show how soccer formations progress from 4 v 4 through to 11 v 11.

The attack can change to 1, 2 or 3 attackers at 9 v 9 and 11 v 11.



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U4 – U7: 4 v 4 (1-2-1)



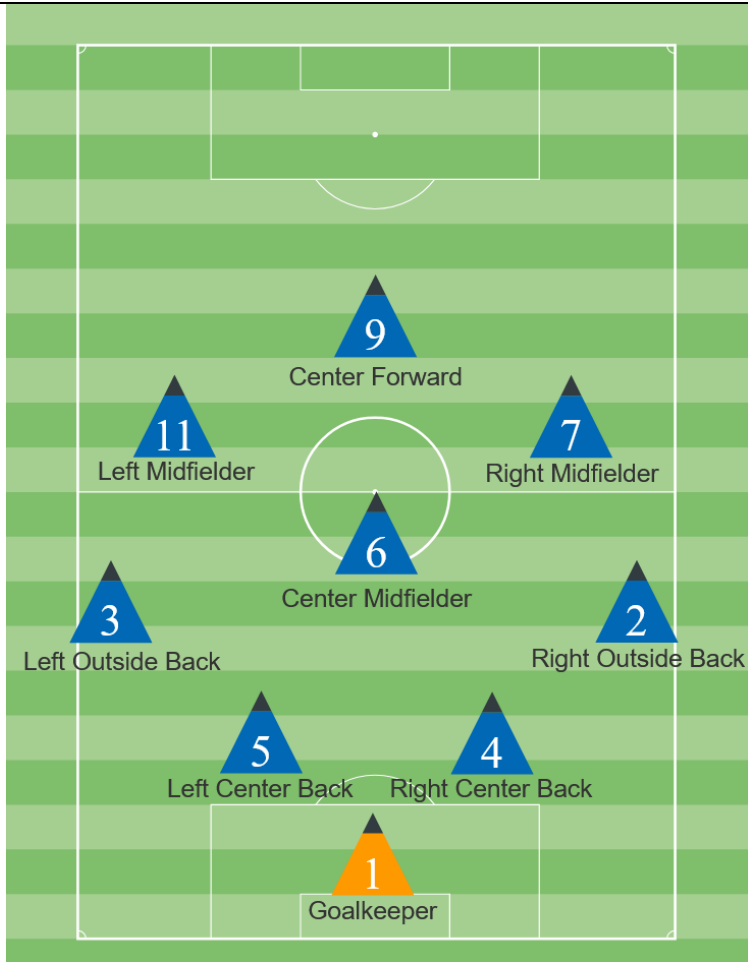
U8 - U10: 7 v 7 (2-3-1)



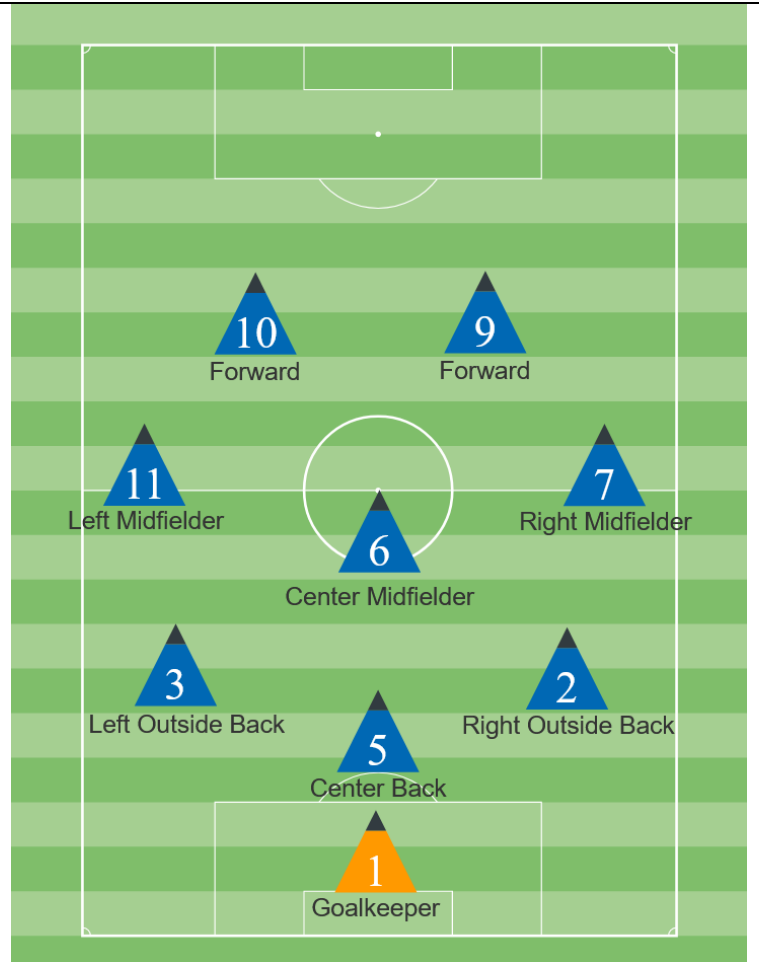


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U11 – U12: 9 v 9 (2-3-2-1)



U11 – U12: 9 v 9 (3-3-2)





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U13 & above: 11 v 11 (4-4-2 Diamond)



U13 & above: 11 v 11 (4-3-3)

