



# U11 Coaching Guide

Thank you for coming forward to coach this upcoming season! Without you this season would not be possible. This guide is to provide you everything you need to coach your team.

## Getting Started:

Call or email your players **as soon as possible** to let them know your name and phone number/email, their team sponsor and jersey colour, and place and time of the first session. You may want to set up a meet and greet to hand out uniforms prior to the first game.

## Field Map:

Games are played on either Field 3A or 3B..

Kiwanis Soccer Complex Map - <https://www.owensoundminorsoccer.ca/facilities>

## Session Structure:

For the first **4** weeks of the season, you will have a 20-minute skills session followed by a 5-minute water break, then a game with two 15-minute halves and a 5-minute halftime break. After the first 4 weeks, switch to a full game of two 25 minute halves.

- 7v7, (6 players plus 1 goalie)
- Kick ins, not throw ins
- Coaches are **NOT** allowed on the field and will coach from the sidelines.
- Will attempt to have referees for every game. Many are young and developing their skills so please support and encourage them. If you have any concerns or if a referee does not show up to your game, report this to our referees coordinator.
- The **retreat line** is used. All opposing players must “**retreat**” behind this line ( $\frac{1}{3}$  up the field), anytime the goalie makes a save or is taking a goal kick. This allows the goalie to throw or pass the ball successfully to their teammate, and allows that player to make a pass or dribble the ball while not under pressure. Once the teammate receives the ball from the goalie, opposition players move forward past the center line and apply pressure.

## **What to Expect When You Run Your Sessions**

As players start arriving, give them a ball and have them dribble the ball in the playing area and/or shoot on the nets until most of the team arrives. Once most players have arrived, gather them in a circle and have an initial talk with them:

1. For the 1st few weeks while you are getting to know them, go around the circle and have them say their name and another fun fact
2. Let them know some of the activities you may be doing that week
3. Ask the players if they remember some of the rules such as:
  - a. Don't use your hands
  - b. Where are the boundaries of the field
  - c. Review the retreat line with them
  - d. Review different positions

There are only 20 minutes that you have for your talk and skills/drills. Generally you can do 2 or 3 different activities during that time. We have prepared a coaching guide for the first 4 weeks that you can choose to follow or mix/match for drills you may wish to have the kids do (if something works really well one week you may want to go back to it the following week).

We also have links to many other weekly plans on the Coaches -> Coaching Resources page of our website.

<https://www.owensoundminorsoccer.ca/coaching-resources>

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to reach out!

### **Helpful Tips:**

If you don't have an assistant coach, try to recruit another parent to assist with the substitutions of players during the game. It could be a different parent each week.

During the game the coaches/players should be on the opposite side of the field of the parents. You should ask your players to bring their water bottles with them to that side of the field so they don't need to run back to their parents during the game.

## **Week 1**

1) **Name Game** - Divide the team into 2 groups (or use one group depending on numbers). They make a circle and have one player in the middle with a ball. The person in the middle passes the ball to each person in the circle and says their name while passing. The player receiving the ball then passes back to the player in the middle saying their name. Do this until each player has had a turn in the middle.

**Summary:** This is a good way to get to know each player's name. Some will be shy when they start but with coach/teammates help should be able to get every player's name. It also gets players in the habit of calling a person's name when making a pass as communication is important in soccer.

2) **Layoffs** - Have one player be goalie (the player who will start the game as goalie). All players have a ball and line up in single file near the halfline facing your goal. The players take turns passing the ball to the coach who passes it back into the space in front of the player who runs up to it and either one time kicks the ball or takes a touch and then kicks the ball trying to score on the goalie.

If the player scores or the goalie makes a save, the ball gets thrown off to the side for the kicking player to retrieve and dribble it to the back of the line. If the player misses the net, they must run after the ball and dribble it to the back of the line.

3) **Finishing Drills** - Split the group into 2 and give each a number. Have players lie on their stomachs at the half way line. Call a number and then throw the ball to a certain part of the field and the players whose number is called both go after the ball and go 1v1 to see who can score first.

Ex: if there are 10 players and a goalie, you would give each group a number 1-5. When you yell "3", the players who are number 3 go after the ball and try to score.

## **Week 2**

**1) Passing** - Players work in pairs with 1 ball between them. Players stand 5 yards apart and begin with passing the ball between them, control it upon receiving it, and pass it back. They should get the ball to the other player.

- Try to get them to do it 10 times in a row.
- Once they have done a few sets of 10 you can add another variation.

**Variations:** Transition into a 1v1 - players continue to pass the ball back and forth, but when the coach yells "Play", the child with the ball dribbles away and towards the goal while the other child tries to catch them.

**2) Layoffs** - Have one player be goalie (the player who will start the game as goalie). All players have a ball and line up in single file near the halfline facing your goal. The players take turns passing the ball to the coach who passes it back into the space in front of the player who runs up to it and either one time kicks the ball or takes a touch and then kicks the ball trying to score on the goalie.

If the player scores or the goalie makes a save, the ball gets thrown off to the side for the kicking player to retrieve and dribble it to the back of the line. If the player misses the net, they must run after the ball and dribble it to the back of the line.

**3) Offense/Defense Drill** - Split the team into 2 groups; offense and defense

- The defense should have at least 2 defenders and your goalie.
- The offense should have at least 3 players.

The offense players try to score on the 2 defenders and the goalie. They play until the offense team scores, the goalie makes a save, or the defenders kick the ball out.

**Variations:** You can move up to 3 defenders and 4 offense players. You should encourage players to find space on the field not bunch up.

## **Week 3**

**1) Freeze Tag** - Players run around an area of the field with another player being "it". The "it" player tags a player and they need to freeze with their hand out in a high five position. If another player high fives them they are unfrozen. Continue on until all players are frozen.

**Variations:** Allow different players to be "it". Players need to dribble around the area with their ball and when they get caught put foot on top of the ball and hand out for a high five.

**Summary:** Gets kids to find space on the field and not bunch up. You can use this as an example that during games they should be finding space on the field. When using balls, this gets players dribbling fast and in different directions while being chased.

**2) Passing** - Make a square with pylons. There are players at each pylon (corners) and they have to pass the ball to the person at the next pylon and follow their pass. They should see how fast they can go without the ball getting too far away from the square. Depending on how many players there are (multiple of 4 or 3), you can form squares or triangles, or have players rotate through positions (see video below).

**YouTube Video:** Swedcoach1 - Passing Drills for Kids

**Link:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cun5X-4qZdY>

**3) Layoffs** - Have one player be goalie (the player who will start the game as goalie). All players have a ball and line up in single file near the halflines facing your goal. The players take turns passing the ball to the coach who passes it back into the space in front of the player who runs up to it and either one time kicks the ball or takes a touch and then kicks the ball trying to score on the goalie.

If the player scores or the goalie makes a save, the ball gets thrown off to the side for the kicking player to retrieve and dribble it to the back of the line. If the player misses the net, they must run after the ball and dribble it to the back of the line.

## **Week 4**

**1) Name Game** - Divide the team into 2 groups (or use one group depending on numbers). They make a circle and have one player in the middle with a ball. The person in the middle passes the ball to each person in the circle and says their name while passing. The player receiving the ball then passes back to the player in the middle saying their name. Do this until each player has had a turn in the middle.

**Summary:** Now that you are 4 weeks in the season this should go very fast and everyone should know each other's name. You can then transition into a game of "Rondo" which is a soccer technical term but basically a game of keep away.

**YouTube Video:** Paul Spacey - 4v1 Soccer Rondo (Keppaway)

**Link:** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c\\_nq0Ka\\_RWs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c_nq0Ka_RWs)

**3) Finishing Drills** - Split the group into 2 and give each a number. Have players lie on their stomachs at the half way line. Call a number and then throw the ball to a certain part of the field and the players whose number is called both go after the ball and go 1v1 to see who can score first.

**Summary:** Great way to have competition and match players of similar ability. You can do this drill varying ways:

- Start at the net and run around a pylon
- Start laying flat on stomach
- Call multiple numbers to add more people and turn into a 2v2 or 3v3

**3) Offense/Defense Drill** - Split the team into 2 groups; offense and defense

- The defense should have at least 2 defenders and your goalie.
- The offense should have at least 3 players.

The offense players try to score on the 2 defenders and the goalie. They play until the offense team scores, the goalie makes a save, or the defenders kick the ball out.

**Variations:** You can move up to 3 defenders and 4 offense players. You should encourage players to find space on the field not bunch up.

## Formation:

U11 is 7v7. There are many different types of formations that you can use. A formation of 2 defenders, 3 midfielders, and 1 striker is usually used at this level. This gives you the most number of players who are expected to help out the defense and support the attack.



At this level, the defenders are likely wanting to stay back when the play is in the other end, but you should encourage that the team plays as a unit and defenders move up with the team to the half line when the ball is in the opposite end.