

# AGE GROUP TRAINING PLANS

Having a set training plan for each age group ensures all topics are covered at developmentally appropriate times. Click on the links below for recommended training plans for players from ages 4 through 13 and older.

**4 Years Old and Above**

**7 Years Old and Above**

**9 Years Old and Above**

**11 Years Old and Above**

**13 Years Old and Above**

AGE GROUP TRAINING PLAN	
<b>AGE GROUP</b>	4 Years Old and Above
<b>BUILDING BLOCK PHASE</b>	Motor Skill Development
<b>OVERVIEW</b>	<b>What:</b> Fun based soccer activities. <b>Why:</b> Aid the development of basic motor skills and inspire players to love and grow in the game. <b>How:</b> Short, fast-paced games that relate to a player's understanding of the game.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS	PHYSICAL FOCUS
<b>Muscular-Skeletal System:</b> Lack balance and coordination due to underdeveloped core muscles and strength.	<b>Motor movements:</b> Soccer-related running, jumping, twisting, bending, and turning activities.
<b>Cardiovascular System:</b> Easily fatigued; quick recovery; play at two speeds, on and off.	<b>Manipulative movements:</b> Movement of ball using varied parts of the foot.
<b>Gender Differences:</b> No differences.	
<b>Physical Milestones:</b> Steady increase in height and weight.	

COGNITIVE CHARACTERISTICS	COGNITIVE FOCUS
Pre-operational stage (Piaget)	One ball per player.
Play consists of a high degree of imagination and pretend activities.	Single-task-oriented activities.
Beginning the use of symbols to represent objects in their environment.	By using their imagination, it can become real, game-based learning.
Limited understanding of time and space.	Introduce the concept of boundary lines, rules of the game.

TECHNICAL TRAINING TOPICS	TACTICAL TRAINING TOPICS
Agility	Tactics are not an area that should be focused on with this age group as their cognitive development does not allow for them to understand tactical theories and strategies.
Balance	
Coordination	
Physical Awareness	
Movement Patterns and Sequences	
Spatial Awareness	
Social Skills	
Listening Skills	

**TRAINING AND MATCH DAY APPLICATION**

Training Sessions per Week	1	Ball Size	3
Training Length (mins)	45-60	Travel Soccer	No
Playing Seasons	1-2	Tournament Attendance	No

**ANNUAL TRAINING PLAN RECOMMENDATION**

July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Off/Camp Week	8 Week Season				Off - No Training			8 Week Season			

AGE GROUP TRAINING PLAN	
<b>AGE GROUP</b>	7 Years Old and Above
<b>BUILDING BLOCK PHASE</b>	Technique and Skill development
<b>OVERVIEW</b>	<p><b>What:</b> Technique-focused soccer activities</p> <p><b>Why:</b> Introduction of soccer-specific techniques builds upon established foundation to continue development</p> <p><b>How:</b> Activities that maximize soccer ball contact and repetition with decision-making</p>

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS	PHYSICAL FOCUS
<b>Muscular-skeletal system:</b> Small increase in strength, improved balance and coordination, gradual increase in agility.	<b>Agility:</b> Combination of balance and coordination to execute a soccer skill at speed and accurately.
<b>Cardiovascular system:</b> Aerobic and anaerobic energy systems are very inefficient, temperature regulation is also poor.	
<b>Gender differences:</b> Minimal differences, boys tend to see a longer leg growth in relation to body compared to girls	
<b>Physical Milestones:</b> Continued steady growth (2.5 inch/8 lbs. a year), body lengthens and fills out.	

COGNITIVE CHARACTERISTICS	COGNITIVE FOCUS
Concrete operational stage (Piaget)	Keep activities to no more than two players per ball, if possible.
Limited ability to address more than one task at a time leaves little or no capacity for "tactical" decision making.	Activities promote players working together to solve problems.
The concept of time and spatial relationship is just beginning to develop and will be limited by the incapacity to attend to multiple tasks.	Introduce the basic laws of the game and the field.
Limited experience with personal evaluation; effort is synonymous with performance. "I work hard; therefore, I must be good."	

TECHNICAL TRAINING TOPICS	TACTICAL TRAINING TOPICS
Dribbling - Individual Possession	Attacking - Role of the 1st attacker
Dribbling - Hiding and Shielding the ball	Defending - Role of the 1st defender
Dribbling - Scissors	Restarts - Corners
Dribbling - Double scissors	Restarts - Throw-ins
Dribbling - Shoulder drop	Restarts - Goal kicks
Dribbling - Step over	Restarts - Kick off
Running with the ball	Restarts - Free kicks
Receiving - On the ground	
Receiving - Inside of foot	
Receiving - Outside of foot	
Turning - Inside cut	
Turning - Outside cut	
Turning - Stop turn	
Turning - Drag back	
Passing - Push pass inside	
Passing - Push pass outside	
Shooting - Driven shot	
Shooting - Inside of foot	
Defending - Poke tackle	
Defending - Block tackle	

TRAINING AND MATCH DAY APPLICATION												
Training Sessions per Week		1-2			Ball Size			3				
Training Length (mins)		60-90			Travel Soccer			Locally				
Playing Seasons		2			Tournament Attendance			Festivals				
ANNUAL TRAINING PLAN RECOMMENDATION												
July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	
Off/Camp Week		8-10 Week Season			Off			Technical Training		8-10 Week Season		

AGE GROUP TRAINING PLAN	
<b>AGE GROUP</b>	9 Years Old and Above
<b>BUILDING BLOCK PHASE</b>	Individual Tactics
<b>OVERVIEW</b>	<p><b>What:</b> Activities that focus on 1v1 attacking and defending situations</p> <p><b>Why:</b> Introduction of individual skills and tactics forms the foundation to develop group and team tactics</p> <p><b>How:</b> Introduction of activities against an opponent develop decision-making skills</p>

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS	PHYSICAL FOCUS
<b>Muscular-skeletal system:</b> Improved strength, power, and ABCs (agility, balance, coordination), players able to perform more complex skills.	Motor-skills continue to be developed in game context.
<b>Cardiovascular system:</b> Continual improvement in general fitness. Aerobic & anaerobic systems are still under-developed.	<b>Stretching:</b> Introduction of dynamic movements.
<b>Gender differences:</b> Girls can enter puberty as early as 9 years old, while boys are typically much later, impacting height and weight gain.	
<b>Physical Milestones:</b> Moving into the early stages of adolescence, start to see increase in height and weight.	

COGNITIVE CHARACTERISTICS	COGNITIVE FOCUS
Some children begin moving from concrete operational to formal operational stage. (Piaget)	Starting to recognize fundamental tactical concepts such as changing the direction of the ball.
Lengthened attention span, ability to sequence thoughts and actions.	Repetitive techniques continue to be important and should be applied in game-like context.
Pace factor becoming developed, starting to think ahead.	Develop a team culture including responsibility for belongings.
Intrinsically motivated to play.	



TECHNICAL TRAINING TOPICS	TACTICAL TRAINING TOPICS
Dribbling - Inside-Outside	Combinations - Overlap runs
Dribbling - Roll	Combinations - Takeover
Dribbling - Swivel hips	Attacking - Role of 2nd attacker
Receiving - Aerial (foot, thigh, chest, head)	Attacking - Crossing
Turning - Cruyff	Attacking - Finishing
Turning - Step over	Defending - Role of 2nd defender
Turning - Drag push	
Passing - Low driven pass	
Passing - Lofted pass	
Passing - Chip pass	
Shooting - Chip shot	
Crossing - Lofted	

TRAINING AND MATCH DAY APPLICATION											
Training Sessions per Week	2	Ball Size	4								
Training Length (mins)	60-90	Travel Soccer	Yes								
Playing Seasons	2-3	Tournament Attendance	1 per season								
ANNUAL TRAINING PLAN RECOMMENDATION											
July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Off/Camp Week		8-10 Week Season			Off		Technical Training		8-10 Week Season		

AGE GROUP TRAINING PLAN	
AGE GROUP	11 Years Old and Above
BUILDING BLOCK PHASE	Group Tactics
OVERVIEW	<p><b>What:</b> Focuses on groups of players working together in attacking and defending situations.</p> <p><b>Why:</b> Introduced so that players are comfortable in dealing with "outnumbered" game situations.</p> <p><b>How:</b> A range of numbers up (i.e. 2v1), numbers down (i.e. 2v3), and balanced numbers activities are used to teach group concepts.</p>

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS	PHYSICAL FOCUS
<p><b>Muscular-skeletal system:</b> Coordination affected by growth resulting in a temporary setback in complex motor skills. Rapid bone growth can lead to painful joints which are more common in boys</p>	<p>Flexibility for injury prevention.</p>
<p><b>Cardiovascular system:</b> Players who enter PHV early may be able to sustain higher levels of physical activity due to improved energy systems.</p>	<p>Technical speed training through structured soccer activities.</p>
<p><b>Gender differences:</b> Females enter PHV at a mean of 11.5 years while Boys enter PHV at approximately 13.5 years. With this in mind, females can be up to 2 years ahead in their physical development.</p>	<p>Where possible, training should be separated by gender.</p>

<b>COGNITIVE CHARACTERISTICS</b>	<b>COGNITIVE FOCUS</b>
Formal operational stage of cognitive development (Piaget).	Tactical issues may be presented.
Beginning to think in abstract terms and can address hypothetical situations.	Groups of 4-5 are optimal for learning.
Changes in thought processes are the result of an increased ability to acquire and apply knowledge.	Roles and responsibilities of the players may be introduced.
A systematic approach to problem solving appears at this stage; the game of soccer requires the ability to think creatively and solve problems while moving.	

<b>TECHNICAL TRAINING TOPICS</b>	<b>TACTICAL TRAINING TOPICS</b>
Passing - Swerve pass inside	Combinations - Blindside run
Passing - Swerve pass outside	Combinations - Crossovers
Passing - Cushion volley	Combinations - Double wall pass
Shooting - Swerve inside	Combinations - Fake wall pass
Shooting - Swerve outside	Attacking - Switching play
Shooting - Side volley	Attacking - Role of 3rd attacker
Shooting - Half volley	Defending - Role of 3rd defender
Defending - Slide tackle	
Crossing - Low driven	
Crossing - High driven	

TRAINING AND MATCH DAY APPLICATION												
Training Sessions per Week		2-3			Ball Size			4				
Training Length (mins)		90			Travel Soccer			Yes				
Playing Seasons		2-3			Tournament Attendance			1 per season				
ANNUAL TRAINING PLAN RECOMMENDATION												
July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	
Off/Camp Week		10-12 Week Season			Off		Technical Training			10-12 Week Season		

AGE GROUP TRAINING PLAN	
<b>AGE GROUP</b>	13 Years Old and Above
<b>BUILDING BLOCK PHASE</b>	Team Tactics
<b>OVERVIEW</b>	<p><b>What:</b> Situations where multiple groups of players are working together to develop full team concepts.</p> <p><b>Why:</b> Players transition to the 11v11 game, functioning within an adult framework and standards.</p> <p><b>How:</b> Team tactics are typically taught using 7v7 to 11v11 scenarios that connect the three lines of team shape (defense, midfield, and attack)</p>

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS	PHYSICAL FOCUS
<b>Muscular-skeletal system:</b> Muscular and skeletal system at least 75% developed in players who are post PHV	Introduction to pure speed training within structured soccer activities.
<b>Cardiovascular system:</b> Aerobic and anaerobic systems can be effectively trained for players who have progressed through PHV, as they will experience increased lung and heart capacity. Caution should be used for <u>late-developers</u> .	Aerobic and anaerobic-specific training for players post PHV.
<b>Gender differences:</b> Females develop widening of the hips while males develop widening of the shoulders and thickening of the quads.	Fitness periodization for players post PHV.
<b>Physical Milestones:</b> Females have typically passed through PHV and are in a slower growth period while males are likely to still be in PHV until approximately 14-15 years old.	

COGNITIVE CHARACTERISTICS	COGNITIVE FOCUS
Fully into the formal operational phase. (Piaget)	Problem solving; encourage them to have creative solutions.
Have a sense of belonging, status, and recognition.	Personal accountability should be encouraged.
Ability to stay focused over a longer period of time.	Team-building exercises may be incorporated.
More responsive to group activities and their role in being an individual.	

TECHNICAL TRAINING TOPICS	TACTICAL TRAINING TOPICS
<p>At this age, players should and will be well along on their technical training and capabilities. At this stage in their development, techniques should be reinforced and refined throughout training, however nothing specific should be focused on, unless required.</p>	Speed of play
	Attacking - Final 3rd
	Attacking - Playing out of the back
	Attacking - Midfield combining with forwards
	Attacking - From wide areas
	Attacking - Counter attacks
	Attacking - Offside tactics
	Defending - Attacking 3rd
	Defending - Midfield
	Defending - Final 3rd
	Defending - Wide areas
	Defending - Counter attacks
	Defending - Man-to-man marking
	Defending - Zonal
	Defending - High and low pressure
	Defending - Offside tactics
	Formations - 4-4-2
	Formations - 4-3-3
	Formations - 3-5-2
	Formations - 4-5-1
Formations - 3-4-3	

**TRAINING AND MATCH DAY APPLICATION**

Training Sessions per Week	2-3	Ball Size	5
Training Length (Mins)	90	Travel Soccer	Yes
Playing Seasons	2-3	Tournament Attendance	1 per season

**ANNUAL TRAINING PLAN RECOMMENDATION**

July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Off		12-14 Week Season			Off		Tournaments		12-14 Week Season		