



# **National Coaching Program**

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everyone plays<sup>®</sup>





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# Welcome!

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The American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO) welcomes you to the world of coaching youth soccer. The Player Development Department of the National Office and the AYSO National Coaching Advisory Commission are pleased to present this manual to help you get started.

AYSO is a place where every child plays in an atmosphere of good sportsmanship and positive coaching. The emphasis in AYSO is on youth. AYSO is unique because we recognize the social and psychological needs of children and do our best to work toward the fulfillment of those needs in all our programs. This emphasis makes AYSO a model for other youth sports groups and is a key to our astounding growth and popularity.

Developing soccer skills, physical attributes, tactical awareness and knowledge of the game are critical to promoting self-efficacy and increasing self-esteem in players. Thus, they perform at a higher level, avoid injury, see the results of their hard work and achievement and most importantly, have fun. As a volunteer coach, your participation in the program should be fun, as well.

The content of this manual is drawn from the knowledge and experience of AYSO's National Coaching Advisory Commission—people with vast soccer knowledge, yet volunteers of AYSO and the National Office Player Development Department. With these guidelines and recommendations, your coaching experience will be satisfying for both you and your players.

We encourage and recommend you to attend the Annual Coach Orientation Course, held in your local Region, as well as other AYSO coaching courses available in your Area. The Regional Commissioner or Coach Administrator can provide you with information about what's available and how to register.

We are glad that you have joined AYSO. On behalf of the players, we thank you!

**National Coaching Advisory Commission**



# AYSO Philosophy

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## **AYSO Vision**

To provide world class youth soccer programs that enrich children's lives.

## **AYSO Mission**

To develop and deliver quality youth soccer programs in a fun, family environment based on the AYSO philosophies:

**Everyone Plays:** Our goal is for kids to play soccer—so we mandate that every player on every team must play at least half of every game.

**Balanced Teams:** Each year we form new teams as evenly balanced as possible—because it is fair and more fun when teams of equal ability play.

**Open Registration:** Our program is open to all children between 4 and 19 years of age who want to register and play soccer. Interest and enthusiasm are the only criteria for playing.

**Positive Coaching:** Encouragement of player effort provides for greater enjoyment by the players and ultimately leads to better-skilled and better-motivated players.

**Good Sportsmanship:** We strive to create a safe, fair, fun and positive environment based on mutual respect, rather than a win-at-all-costs attitude, and our program is designed to instill good sportsmanship in every facet of AYSO.

**Player Development:** We believe that all players should be able to develop their soccer skills and knowledge to the best of their abilities, both individually and as members of a team, in order to maximize their enjoyment of the game.



# Administration

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## **National Coaching Program Organizational Overview**

### **National Coaching Advisory Commission**

The National Coaching Advisory Commission (NCAC) members are nominated and recommended by the NCAC Chairman and appointed by the AYSO National President. The members of the NCAC provide technical expertise to produce, maintain, and revise as needed the AYSO National Coaching Program in response to the needs of AYSO coaches.

### **National Coaching Advisory Commission Chairman**

The National Coaching Advisory Commission Chairman is appointed by the AYSO National President. The NCAC Chairman is an executive member of AYSO and represents the AYSO National Coaching Program at all National Board of Directors meetings and at the AYSO Annual General Meeting. The NCAC Chairman chairs NCAC meetings and works closely with the AYSO Player Development Dept to assist with the development, revision and implementation of the National Coaching Program.

### **Supporting the National Coaching Advisory Commission**

National Office – Player Development Dept  
National Board of Directors Liaison to NCAC

### **Section Coach Administrators**

The Section Coach Administrator (SCA) is appointed by the Section Director and is responsible for implementing the AYSO National Coaching Program in response to the needs of AYSO coaches within the Section, Areas and Regions. The SCA appoints a Section Coach Trainer. The position of Section Coach Trainer is intended to monitor and maintain the AYSO National Coaching Program, and conduct all training required at the Section level.

### **Area Coach Administrators**

The Area Coach Administrator (ACA) is appointed by the Area Director and is responsible for implementing the AYSO National Coaching Program in response to the needs to AYSO coaches within the Area and Regions. The ACA appoints an Area Coach Trainer. The position of Area Coach Trainer is intended to provide coach training in accordance with the AYSO National Coaching Program at the Area level.



### **Regional Coach Administrators**

The Regional Coach Administrator (RCA) is appointed by the Regional Commissioner and is responsible for implementing the AYSO National Coaching Program in response to the needs of AYSO coaches within the Region. The RCA appoints a Regional Coach Trainer. The position of Regional Coach Trainer is intended to provide coach training in accordance with the AYSO National Coaching Program at the Region level.



# National Council for Accreditation of Coaching Education (NCACE)

The National Council for Accreditation of Coaching Education (NCACE) promotes and facilitates coaching competence within all levels of amateur sport by overseeing and evaluating the quality of coaching education programs. In addition, NCACE endorses comprehensive standards for sport practitioners, including: volunteer, interscholastic, collegiate and elite coaches. Through accreditation, NCACE provides leadership and guidance to coaching education providers, sport administrators and the public, regarding the knowledge, values and skills of effective coaches.

## **AYSO is the FIRST Coaching Education Program to be re-accredited**

The American Youth Soccer Organization is the first coaching education program to be re-accredited by the NCACE. AYSO's coaching program is now accredited through 2016. "Accreditation by NCACE is critically important to AYSO. Our AYSO Vision Statement challenges our coaching program to deliver a 'world class youth soccer program that enriches children's lives'", said AYSO National Coach Instructor John Ouellette. "The NCACE accreditation confirms the program's quality, brings it nationwide recognition and instills a sense of pride in our coaches and program administrators."

To receive this accreditation, AYSO's coaching program had to educate coaches in the following eight national standards:

- Injuries: Prevention, Care and Management
- Risk Management
- Growth, Development and Learning
- Training, Conditioning and Nutrition
- Social/Psychological Aspects of Coaching
- Skills, Tactics and Strategies
- Teaching and Administrative Aspects
- Professional Preparation and Development



To learn more about the accreditation process, please visit NCACE's website.





# Why Short-Sided Soccer?

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AYSO recommends that all children under the age of 12 play short-sided (less than 11 players per team) soccer.

## **Young soccer players need special consideration.**

- They are children playing a child's game.
- They must be regarded as young children, not mini adults.
- They are essentially self-oriented and relate naturally to one or two others, not to large groups.
- Fun and activity factors must be a central part of a child-centered program.
- Educators agree early learning experiences are the most important and produce the most retention.
- Most children cannot sustain prolonged activity.
- They function best in suitable starts and stops (rest periods).
- Concentration span is limited, so frequent changes of pace and activity are essential.

## **Children love to learn.**

- They learn a great deal more when the ratio of teacher (coach) to student (player) is reduced.
- With small numbers and the simple nature of the game, the best teacher is the game itself.
- With fewer players on the field, each player gets more touches of the ball and has greater opportunity to change location in a fast-flowing, fluid game.
- Playing short-sided allows players to make simpler decisions and develop an earlier, better understanding of organization of play.
- Smaller fields mean more players are directly involved in play, creating increased levels of both concentration and interest.
- The reduced field size encourages more shots on goal by all players, therefore more goals scored.

## **Residual benefits.**

- Parents are introduced to the game in smaller, more understandable doses.
- Short-sided soccer is a great place to train new referees.
- The rest of the world is playing short-sided, and we are part of the soccer world.



# The Psychology of Coaching

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## **Working with Young Athletes**

It is important as a coach that you subscribe to a philosophy that acknowledges the role of athletics in developing children as complete individuals. Remember that AYSO's vision is to provide soccer programs that enrich children's lives.

As coaches we need to recognize that each athlete is an individual with unique needs and that we treat them accordingly:

Understand that players want to enjoy attending practices and games. If they are not having fun and learning, they will lose interest and not want to return.

Organize your activities and games so that every athlete on your team has an opportunity to develop and maintain positive feelings of self-worth.

Provide positive encouragement to all players for both accomplishments and mistakes.

Play in this very young age group is meant to give a "taste" of the game, some experience in working together as a team, and, most of all, positive introduction to the sports experience.

One of the appealing things about soccer as a youth sport is that practically no skills at all are required to play the game at its simplest level. If a youngster can run and can kick a ball, he or she can play soccer and enjoy it.

If we understand and support player development as both athletes and individuals, the players will enjoy themselves more and want to continue playing. We must help them understand that the objective of any game is to win, but that the overall goal is to enjoy the game and strive to do their best!



# Required Coach Training

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## **New AYSO Coach Training Policy Debuted in 2010**

AYSO announced important steps to ensure that every AYSO child has the best possible soccer learning experience. August 1, 2010, coaches and assistant coaches in the U-6 division in every AYSO Region were required to have AYSO's age-appropriate training and AYSO Safe Haven® certification when they take the field. The U-8 age division requirements took effect on August 1, 2011.

The new coach training policy will roll forward each year adding one additional level of required age-specific coach training until, by the 2015 membership year, every AYSO coach and assistant coach at every level will be appropriately trained for the team they will coach.

To help coaches satisfy this new requirement, AYSO is increasing its efforts to deliver this important training in more places and more frequently. To add even more flexibility for its busy volunteer coaches, AYSO has produced an online training course for U-6 coaches, to accompany its existing U-8 and U-10 online courses.

The policy was approved and adopted by the National Board of Directors at their July 2009 meeting and is supported by the National Coaching Advisory Commission.

AYSO's National Coaching Program is one of only two sport-specific training programs in the country to be certified by the National Council on the Accreditation of Coaching Education (NCACE).

Coaches will continue to be required to be currently registered AYSO volunteers and have AYSO Safe Haven® certification. Safe Haven certification, which is designed to protect both volunteers and children, is available as an online or in-person class.

"Thousands of volunteer coaches get trained every year to work with AYSO players," said AYSO National Coach Instructor John Ouellette. "We all have to put the kids first. We find that there are still many volunteers who are concerned about the training time commitment. AYSO training is practical, fun and designed for both the soccer-knowledgeable and soccer-novice. It is a few hours that will make the experience of every child - and every coach - a better one."

Following is the training that will be required for each of the age levels in all AYSO games and the schedule for implementation:



<b>Division</b>	<b>Minimum Training Requirement</b>
U-6	U-6 Coach (beginning 8/1/2010)
U-8	U-8 Coach (beginning 8/1/2011)
U-10	U-10 Coach (beginning 8/1/2012)
U-12	U-12 Coach (beginning 8/1/2013)
U-14	Intermediate Coach (Including all prerequisites) (beginning 8/1/2014)
U-16 & U-19	Advanced Coach (Including all prerequisites) (beginning 8/1/2015)

To schedule age-appropriate coach training and AYSO coach certification please contact one of the following:

- Region Coach Administrator (U-6, U-8, U-10 and U-12 Training)
- Area Coach Administrator (Intermediate Coach Training)
- Section Coach Administrator (Advanced Coach Training)

Contact information for any of these administrators is available from your Regional Commissioner or by contacting the Player Development Department at the AYSO National Office (1-800-USA-AYSO).

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

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AYSO has once again taken a leadership role within the youth sports community by requiring that all AYSO coaches be trained at the appropriate level of the team they are coaching. With this requirement in place, beginning August 2010 with the U-6 division, every AYSO child will be ensured of the best possible soccer learning experience. Below are questions we anticipate and the answers to those questions. More will be added as they arise.

### **When did this coach training requirement go into effect?**

Beginning August 1, 2010, coaches and assistant coaches in the Under-6 (U-6) divisions in all AYSO Regions were required to have AYSO's age-appropriate training when they took the field. Each year thereafter, the training requirement will extend to the coaches and assistant coaches in the next age division until, by the 2015 membership year, every AYSO coach and assistant coach at every level will be appropriately trained for the age division of the team they will coach.

### **Will all coaches (head and assistant) be required to be trained?**

Yes, all head-coaches and assistant coaches will be required to have attended AYSO's age-appropriate training.



**If a Coach currently holds a higher coaching level than the age group they will be coaching, will that coach be required to attend age-specific training for the age group he will be coaching?**

The answer is yes. If a coach holds a higher age level of certification they must take the age appropriate training for the level that they are coaching. The coach may take the online courses to complete this training.

**How will AYSO help my Region accomplish this?**

To help coaches satisfy this new requirement, AYSO will increase its efforts to deliver this important training in more locations and more frequently leading up to the start of each membership year. Regions can and should look to their Area and Section Coaching staffs to secure additional support in staging this training.

**Are all courses available online?**

AYSO has developed online training courses for the U-6, U-8 and U-10 age division coaches when a live course is unavailable.

**Will AYSO coaches still be required to be currently registered AYSO volunteers and have AYSO Safe Haven® certification?**

Yes. All AYSO coaches will still be required to be currently registered AYSO volunteers and have completed AYSO Safe Haven® certification.

**What about coaches who have been coaching in a Region for years and have not attended any training? Will they be granted a waiver?**

Coaches with no training certifications will be required to attend the appropriate level of training. Training is a benefit. It makes coaches – even long time coaches – better coaches. And better coaches make a more enjoyable experience for the players.

**If a coach is not trained will the Region have to cancel games?**

The plan is that ample opportunities will be available to secure the needed training, including online courses, enabling even a last-minute volunteer to get the training that will make him/her more effective and will provide a better experience for the players and their families. All our members must know the importance AYSO assigns to properly trained coaches. For that occasional situation where the regular coach is unable to attend the game, another age-appropriately trained coach can serve as a substitute.

**We do not have coach instructors in our Region, what is my next step?**

Call your Section or Area Coaching Staff. They can help arrange for the instructors to provide the needed coach training courses at a place and time convenient for your Region's volunteers.

**Does the AYSO Coach Advisory Commission support this requirement that all AYSO coaches be age-appropriately trained?**

Yes. Enthusiastically! Several years ago, AYSO Former National Coach John Ouellette assembled an advisory group made up of some of the best minds in the game. They studied the way in which players in countries the world over are developed, technically and tactically. From those sessions emerged decisions about the number of players on the field, the specific skills to be taught at each age group and the proper point at which to introduce tactical decision making. Today, the



AYSO National Coaching Program, the only soccer training program in the country to be re-accredited by the National Council for the Accreditation of Coaching Education, is a bottom to top, incremental approach to teaching the game of soccer to kids. In 2005, the United States Soccer Federation published “Best Practices for Coaching Soccer in the United States,” a position paper on teaching the game that is essentially a mirror image of the principles and practices AYSO has advocated for years. The members of today’s AYSO National Coaching Advisory Commission are products of that AYSO National Coaching Program, success stories drawn from Sections all across the country who know personally the benefits AYSO coach training provides. They are excited for this opportunity to further spread the good word and will lend their support to the rollout. Why? It is the right thing to do for our kids and our game.

**How can my Region schedule age-appropriate coach training and AYSO Safe Haven™ certification?**

To schedule age-appropriate coach training and AYSO Safe Haven™ certification contact one of the following:

- Region Coach Administrator (U-6, U-8, U-10 and U-12 Training)
- Area Coach Administrator (Intermediate Coach Training)
- Section Coach Administrator (Advanced Coach Training)

Contact information for any of these administrators can be accessed through your Regional Commissioner or by contacting the Player Development Department at the AYSO National Office (1-800-USA-AYSO).

**My Region already requires our coaches to be age-appropriately trained. Is there anything else we will have to do under this new policy?**

No. Just keep up the good work! We know there are many AYSO Regions that have already adopted this requirement and there is nothing that would stop other Regions from instituting the requirement across all age divisions immediately. There is support at all levels of the organization to help get this done sooner than we have scheduled.



<b>Coach Training Matrix</b>					
<b>Course</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Length</b>	<b>Attendee Prerequisites</b>	<b>Minimum Lead Instructor Requirements</b>	<b>Minimum Authorization Required</b>
AYSO's Safe Haven	This course presents information on child & volunteer protection and the key components necessary to create a safe haven.	2 hours	None	Coach, Referee or Management Instructor AYSO's Safe Haven	Regional Administrator in Coach, Referee or Management discipline
U-6 Coach	This training presents information and skills to be taught relevant to the short-sided game (3v3) of the U-6 age group.	2 hours	None	Coach Instructor	Regional Coach Administrator
U-8 Coach	This training presents information and skills to be taught relevant to the short-sided game (5v5) of the U-8 age group.	2 hours	Completion of U-6 Coaching Course is recommended	Coach Instructor	Regional Coach Administrator
U-10 Coach	This training presents information and skills to be taught relevant to the short-sided game (7v7) of the U-10 age group.	3 hours	Completion of U-8 Coaching Course is recommended	Coach Instructor	Regional Coach Administrator
U-12 Coach	This training presents information and skills to be taught relevant to the short-sided game (9v9) of the U-12 age group.	5 hours	Completion of U-10 Coaching Course is recommended	Coach Instructor	Regional Coach Administrator
Intermediate Coach	This training focuses on tactical situations and set	15 hours	Completion of the U-12 Coaching	Advanced Coach	Area Coach Administrator



<b>Coach Training Matrix</b>					
<b>Course</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Length</b>	<b>Attendee Prerequisites</b>	<b>Minimum Lead Instructor Requirements</b>	<b>Minimum Authorization Required</b>
	pieces. This course builds upon the U-12 Coaching Course.		Course is <b>required.</b>	Instructor	
Advanced Coach	This training focuses on tactical situations, advanced tactics, and observation, evaluation, and implementation techniques. This course builds upon the Intermediate Coaching Course.	18 hours	Completion of the Intermediate Coaching Course is <b>required.</b>	Advanced Coach Instructor	Section Coach Administrator
National Coach	This training provides training in advanced levels of play.	56 hours	Completion of the Advanced Coaching Course is <b>required.</b>	AYSO National Coach Instructor	Director of Player Development
Coach Administrator Training	This training presents the duties and responsibilities of Coach Administrators with tips to enhance performance and enjoyment.	1.25 hours	None	Advanced Coach Instructor	Area Coach Administrator
Annual Coach Update	This training provides continuing education for coaches in the Region. Program updates and program requirements are reviewed in this training session.	1 hour	None	Coach Instructor	Regional Coach Administrator





# Age Specific Guidelines

## U-5 Program Guidelines

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The U-5 program, not a course, but a program) should be separate from U-6, as there are significant social, emotional and physiological differences between U-5 and U-6 players.

The effective date of age determination shall be the player's age as of July 31 of the year that the season commences. Players who have reached the age of four as of this date are eligible to participate-NO EXCEPTIONS!

Every effort should be made to have separate girls and boys training groups.

The **Jamboree One with One** format is the AYSO U-5 Program and should be followed when offering a U-5 program.

The U-5 program consists of one day per week of the **Jamboree One with One** program for 6 weeks.

### Organization

**Jamboree One with One** is the combination of two different formats that, put together, provides the best possible introduction to soccer for our youngest players. In AYSO soccer, a jamboree means that groups are formed on a weekly basis depending on how many players attend a given session.

**Jamboree One with One** refers to the concept that each player will have a parent (or other adult) working with him or her on the field.

An **AYSO "Master Coach"** will lead each session. The AYSO Master Coach must be a currently registered AYSO volunteer. It is highly recommended that the Master Coach be an AYSO Advanced Coach and Advanced Coach Instructor. However, in the case where a Region is unable to run a Jamboree because of a lack of the Advanced Coach who is also an Advanced Coach Instructor, it is permissible to use:

- An Advanced coach who is also a Coach Instructor
- An Advanced Coach who is not an Instructor
- An Intermediate Coach who is a Coach Instructor
- An Intermediate Coach

The Master Coach will introduce a game/activity that will apply to a certain skill or part of the game. They will explain and demonstrate to help parents and players understand the activity. Each pair (player/parent) will then attempt the activity while the Master Coach circulates between pairs providing specific help or suggestions so that the activities are performed as intended. After a suitable amount of time, the Master Coach will bring the players and parents back together as a group and recap what they have done, introducing the next game/activity.



If the activity is a group activity, each parent will be given the opportunity to play the activity (game) with the group (team).

Each Jamboree session will end with a 20-minute short-sided game (3v3). Details regarding the game are explained later in this document. Most importantly, allow the players to play without coaching or teaching as this experience is designed to expose them to soccer, not to begin developing them. The two objectives of the program are to allow the players to enjoy the activities, and let the game be the teacher.

**3 v 3 Game Set-Up and Guidelines**

Each player in the U-5 division can receive a uniform, since it is part of the fun to get dressed up for “the big game”. Having fun will make the kids want to come back. The uniforms should be identical for all players. Each week before the game portion of the day begins, players will be divided into groups of 4 (3 on the field with 1 substitute/reserve). Based on how many players arrive, pinnies (different colored “vests”) to differentiate the “teams” for games for a particular weekend will be used.

**Session Schedule**

Sessions (with children) should last one hour and fifteen minutes including organizing time and breaks-NO MORE.

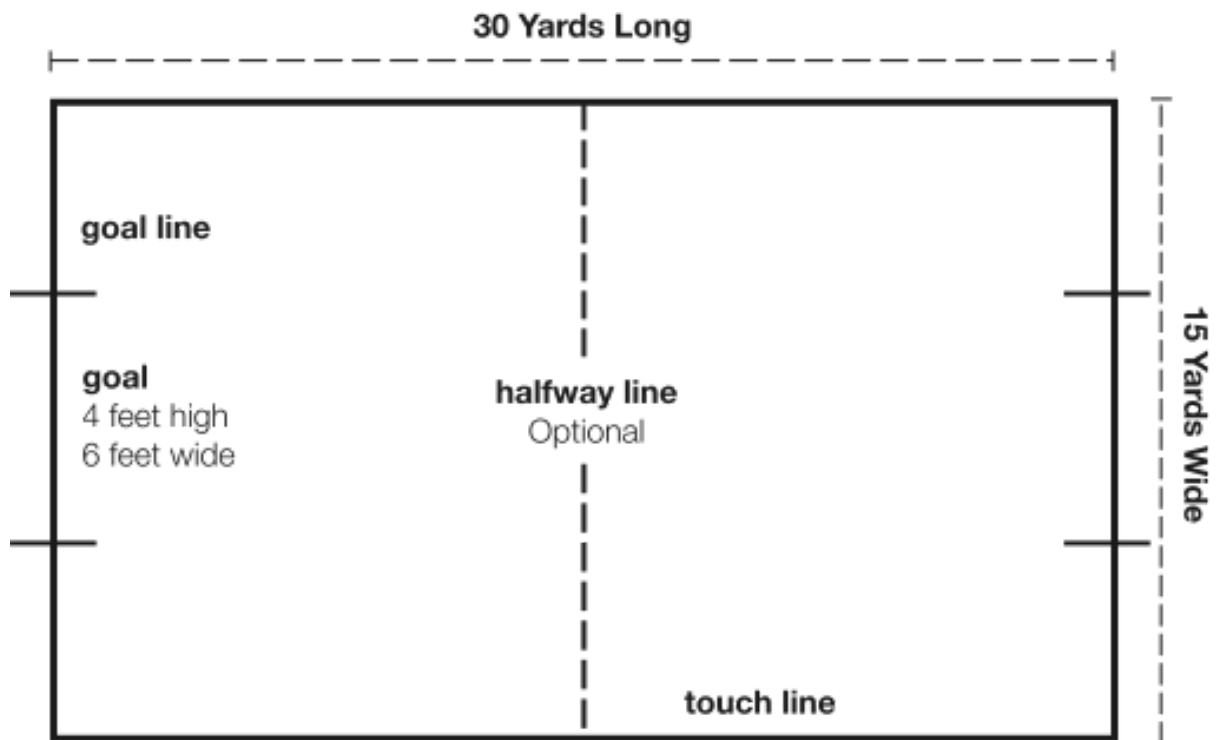
15 minutes	Day’s activity explanation by the Master Coach for all helpers
10 minutes	Training Group formation
	Assigning players to groups
20 minutes	Training Activities (no more than two per session)
10 minutes	Game organizing and water break
20 minutes	3 v 3 game (played in two halves of 10 minutes each with a short break at the quarter to make substitutions and get a quick drink)

During the game, one parent from each group assigned by the Master Coach shall be selected to act as the game supervisors for the week. These parents should be requested to keep the game going. All other parents should be encouraged to cheer positively and refrain from “coaching” (giving directions) from the sideline. This is the time for the kids to play - LET THEM!

The following guidelines include the only elements of the Laws of the Game that apply to the AYSO U-5 Division:

**The Field:**

The recommended field size for U-5 games is 30 x 15 yards marked with lines or cones.



### **The Goals:**

The goals in U-5 games should be a maximum of 4 feet high and 6 feet wide or 2 tall cones set 6 feet apart.

### **The Ball:**

A size 3 ball is used for U-5 games.

### **The Training Group:**

Each U-5 training group should have a maximum of 4 or 5 on the group. Games are played with 3 players per group on the field (3v3) and no goalkeepers. Substitutions are made at quarters, halftime and for injuries. A minimum of 2 quarters is required for each player and it is recommended that no one play 4 quarters until everyone has played 3 quarters. Separate boys and girls teams are recommended at all levels.

### **Player Equipment:**

Shoes and shinguards, covered by socks are mandatory at all practice and game activities. Soccer shoes, tennis shoes, or similar type athletic shoes are recommended. The type and condition of cleated shoes must be inspected for safety before use.

### **The Start of Play:**

To start the first and second halves, and following each goal, play is started or restarted with a kick-off in the center of the field. A coin toss is used to determine which group kicks off to start the game and the other group kicks off to start the second half. Following a goal, the group scored upon kicks off.

**The Kick-off:**

The kick-off is taken from the center of the field with each group in their own half and the group not kicking off at least 5 yards from the ball. Do not insist the opponent be a minimum of precisely 5 yards from the ball as this is just a guide to give the kicker room to kick the ball without it immediately hitting an opponent. Remember, let them play and do not interfere for technicalities.

**Ball In and Out of Play:**

The ball is out of play when it completely crosses the touch line (side line) or goal line (end line) either on the ground or in the air. In U-5 games, the game supervisors for the week will determine when the ball is out of play. When the ball goes out of play in U-5 games across the touch line (side lines) or the goal lines (end lines) without a goal being scored, a throw-in is awarded at the point it crossed the line.

**Throw-in:**

When the ball goes out of play in U-5 games across the touch line (side line) or the goal lines (end lines) without a goal being scored, a throw-in is awarded at the point it crossed the line. The throw-in is awarded to the team that didn't touch the ball last.

Whether the throw-in is properly taken or not, let it go...teach proper technique later, they will learn to master the throw-in at the U-6 level. Again, let them play with minimum interruption. Keep the game moving and fun.

**Method of Scoring:**

A goal is awarded when the ball completely crosses the goal line into the goal. Goals should be enthusiastically celebrated by everyone. In U-5 games, goals are not recorded to determine who wins as everyone is a winner.

**Fouls and Other Stoppages:**

Deliberate fouling should be rare in U-5 games. Kicking, tripping, handling the ball and dangerous play may occur. There should be few, if any additional reasons to stop play in U-5 games. If a player is "not playing well with others", or if play must be stopped for any other reason (injury, substitution, confusion, or to watch a passing train, butterfly or frog), refocus the players and begin with a free kick or as may be appropriate. Award the restart to whichever team deserves it. Stoppages must not become a lengthy ceremony.

**Free Kick:**

Play may have to be stopped occasionally to "sort things out" in U-5 games. When this is necessary, correct the situation and then restart with a free kick for the deserving team. The opposing group should be at least 5 yards from the ball in U-5 games. All free kicks in U-5 games are direct free kicks, which means, if you're lucky, a goal can be scored directly from the kick without the ball having to be touched or played by another player on the field.

***For a copy of the complete U-5 Master Coach Handbook, contact the AYSO Supply Center @ 1-800-872-2976, ext. 7992.***

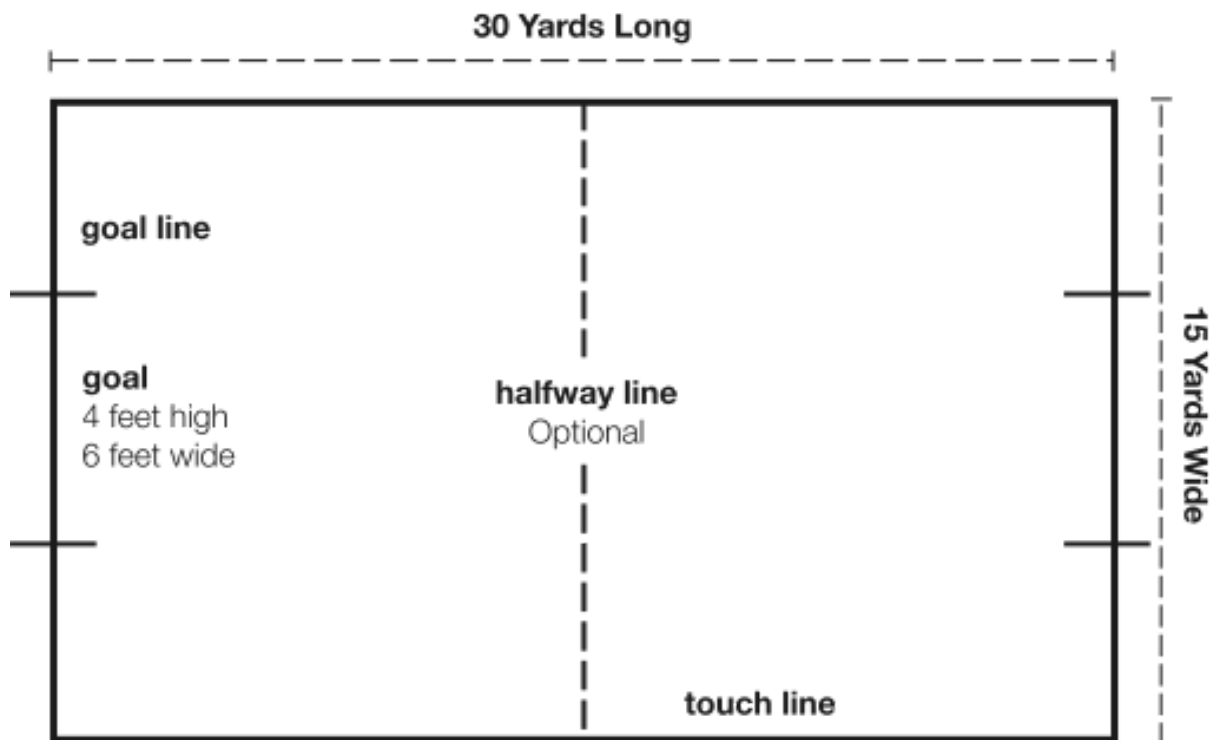
## U-6 Guidelines

### Activity Day at U-6

- The U-6 activity day consists of a 60-minute session:
- 35 minutes of technical development and one 25-minute game.

### Field

- Dimensions: 30 yards long, 15 yards wide (maximum).
- Markings: Distinctive lines can be used but are not required. Field can be marked using 20 flat pro-cones to mark all four sides.



### Goals

Maximum four feet high and six feet wide OR four tall cones, two each set six feet apart.

### Ball

Size 3

### Players

- Number: Three per team on field; no goalkeepers. Five max on roster.
- Substitutions: Between periods, at halftime and for injuries.
- Playing time: Minimum of two periods per game and no player should play four periods until everyone has played three.



### **Players' Equipment**

- Footwear: Soccer shoes, tennis shoes or similar type athletic shoes are recommended. The type and condition of cleated shoes must be inspected for safety before use.
- Shinguards: MANDATORY, must be covered entirely by socks.

### **Duration of Game**

- Four five-minute periods.
- Half time break of 5–10 minutes.

### **Start of Play**

- The game should be started with a kick-off in the middle of the field.
- The coaches determine which team starts the game with a coin flip and the opposing team starts the second half.
- Coaches will ensure that opponents are at least five yards from the spot of the kick.

### **Ball In & Out of Play**

- To be determined by coaches.
- Fouls & Misconduct
- To be assessed by coaches.
- Direct free kick for all fouls, with the opponents five yards away from the ball.

### **Official**

There is no need for fully qualified referees to manage U-6 games. One or both of the coaches should “officiate”. The games are intended to be an opportunity for the very youngest of our players to experience the fun of playing. The barest of minimum rules are needed and should be applied with a generous amount of flexibility. Let the players have the freedom to play with minimum interruption.

### **U-6 Jamboree**

The Jamboree is an alternative method of conducting the standard U-6 short-sided program. Following are guidelines for how to put together and run a Jamboree for your Region.

### **Organization**

Master Coach: To run a jamboree, the first step is to find a “master coach.” The Regional Coach Administrator should work with the Regional Commissioner to determine the most qualified (and willing) instructor.

The master coach is in charge of the field! The purpose of the master coach is to guide new players through skills, activities and training games with the help of the parents, which will, in turn, ease the parents into learning how to coach.

Throughout this process, parents of each team will guide their team through the activities and games with the help and supervision of the master coach. The master coach should introduce and demonstrate each section first, then circulate to help the parents as they help the kids, giving all a positive learning experience.



## **Teams**

Teams of five players on a roster should be formed before the season and have at least two parents per team who are willing to help on the weekend. Each player should receive a uniform, since it is part of the fun to get dressed up for “the big game”—and having fun will make the kids want to come back.

(Alternatively, teams may be formed each week at the beginning of the session based on how many players arrive, dividing them equally and using pinnies instead of uniforms.)

## **Session Schedule**

Sessions should last one hour. Run as many sessions with as many players as is necessary throughout the day to have all players attend one session. (Example: 100 players = five sessions with 20 players [four teams] per session)

- 10 minutes Group Warm-Up and Stretches
- 25 minutes Skills and Training Games

Each week a new technique and/or piece of game knowledge should be introduced, demonstrated, practiced and then reinforced with training games that focus on the particular technique or piece of game knowledge.

- 5 minutes Water Break
- 25 minutes 3 vs. 3 Game (four five-minute periods)

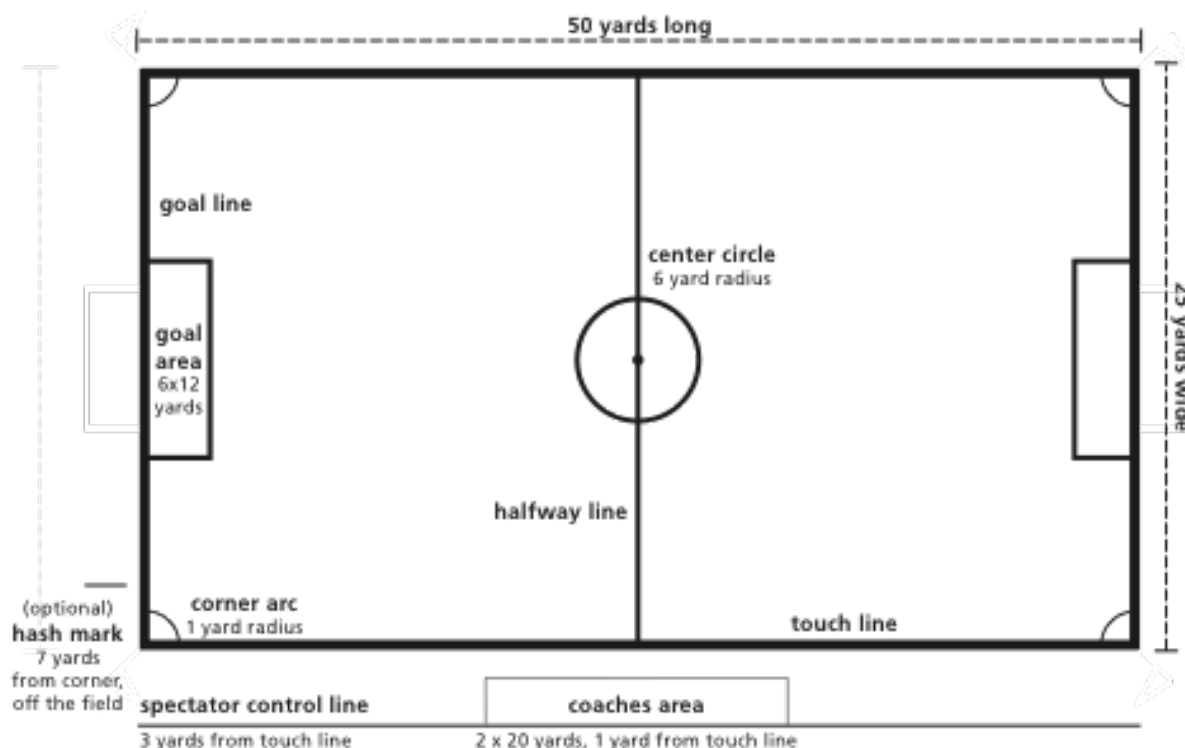
During the game, one parent from each team should be selected to keep the game going. All other parents should be encouraged to cheer positively but refrain from “coaching” (giving directions) from the sideline. This is the time for the kids to PLAY.

***For a copy of the complete U-6 Coach Manual, contact the AYSO Supply Center @ 1-800-872-2976, ext. 7992.***

## U-8 Guidelines

### Field

- Dimensions: 50 yards long, 25 yards wide (maximum).
- Markings: Distinctive lines recommended.
- Halfway line the width of the field, marked equidistant between the goal lines.
- Center circle with an six-yard radius in the center of the field.
- Corner arcs with a one-yard radius at each corner of the field.
- Goal area in front of each goal measuring 6 x 12 yards.



### Goals

Maximum six feet high and six yards wide.

### Ball

Size 3

### Players

- Number: Five per team on field; no goalkeepers. Seven maximum on roster.
- Substitutions: Between periods, at halftime and for injuries.
- Playing time: Minimum of two periods per game and no player should play four periods until everyone has played three.
- Teams: Separate girls and boys teams should be promoted at all levels of play.



**Duration of Game**

- Four 10-minute periods.
- Halftime break of 5–10 minutes.

**Players' Equipment**

- Footwear: Soccer shoes, tennis shoes or similar type athletic shoes are recommended. The type and condition of cleated shoes must be inspected for safety before use.
- Shinguards: MANDATORY for both practices and games, and must be covered entirely by socks.

**Start of Play**

- The game should be started with a kick-off in the middle of the field.
- The coaches determine which team starts the game with a coin flip and the opposing team starts the second half.
- Opponents must be six yards from the center mark while kick-off is in progress.

**Method of Scoring**

See U-8 Coaching Manual.

**Fouls & Misconduct**

- No offside is called.
- Direct free kicks for all fouls, with the opponents six yards away from the ball.
- Free kicks awarded the attacking team inside the defending team's goal area should be taken from the nearest point on the goal area line in front of the goal.
- No penalty kicks.
- Referees will work cooperatively with the coaches and eliminate the need for cautions and send-offs. Do not show yellow or red cards.

**U-8 Officials**

AYSO certified U-8 Officials or higher are required for U-8 games. The U-8 Official should briefly explain any infringements to the player(s) and encourage proper play and sporting behavior. As with all games, every effort should be made to keep the game moving and free from stoppages for doubtful infractions. Let them play and enjoy.

**Assistant Referees/Club Linesmen:**

If available, qualified assistant referees who have completed Assistant Referee Certification may be used to assist the referee. This is an opportunity for new assistant referees to begin getting experience. If qualified assistant referees are not available, Club Linesmen (untrained volunteers who may be affiliated with one of the teams/clubs) may be recruited from the spectators to assist the referee with calling the ball in and out of play only. This is an opportunity for parents to get involved.

***For a copy of the complete U-8 Coach Manual, contact the AYSO Supply Center @ 1-800-872-2976, ext. 7992.***

## U-10 Guidelines

### Field

- Dimensions: 80 yards long, 40 yards wide (maximum).
- Markings: Distinctive lines recommended.
- Halfway line the width of the field, marked equidistant between the goal lines.
- Center circle with an eight-yard radius in the center of the field.
- Corner arcs with a one-yard radius at each corner of the field.
- Goal area in front of each goal measuring 6 x 15 yards.
- Penalty area in front of each goal measuring 14 x 30 yards.
- Penalty mark ten yards from the goal line.
- Penalty arc extending in a eight-yard radius from the penalty mark.



### Goals:

Maximum seven feet high and seven yards wide.

### Ball

Size 4

### Players

- Number: Seven per team on field; one of which is a goalkeeper. Ten maximum on roster.
- Substitutions: Between periods, at halftime and for injuries.
- Playing time: Minimum of two periods per game and no player should play four periods until everyone has played three.



- Teams: Separate girls and boys teams should be promoted at all levels of play.

### **Players' Equipment**

- Footwear: Soccer shoes, tennis shoes or similar type athletic shoes are recommended. The type and condition of cleated shoes must be inspected for safety before use.
- Shinguards: MANDATORY for both practices and games, and must be covered entirely by socks.

### **Duration of Game**

- Four 12.5-minute periods.
- Halftime break of 5–10 minutes.

### **Start of Play**

- The game should be started with a kick-off in the middle of the field.
- The coaches determine which team starts the game with a coin flip and the opposing team starts the second half.
- Opponents must be eight yards from the center mark while kick-off is in progress.

### **Fouls & Misconduct**

Opponents must be eight yards from the ball on restart kicks.

Referees will work cooperatively with the coaches and eliminate the need for cautions and send-offs.

### **Referee**

AYSO certified Regional Referees or higher are required for U-10 and older games. The referee should briefly explain any infringements to the player(s) and encourage proper play and sporting behavior.

As with all games, every effort should be made to keep the game moving and free from stoppages for doubtful infractions. Let them play and enjoy.

### **Assistant Referees/Club Linesmen:**

If available, qualified assistant referees who have completed Assistant Referee Certification may be used to assist the referee. This is an opportunity for new assistant referees to begin getting experience.

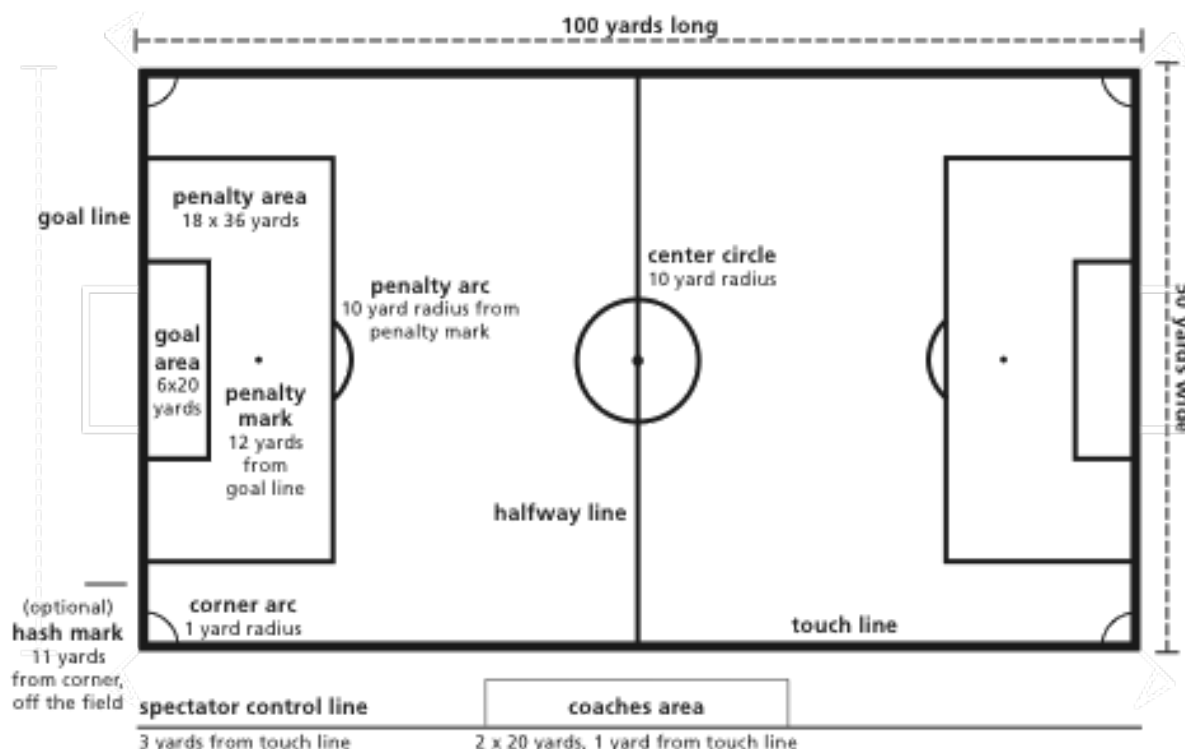
If qualified assistant referees are not available, Club Linesmen (untrained volunteers who may be affiliated with one of the teams/clubs) may be recruited from the spectators to assist the referee with calling the ball in and out of play only. This is an opportunity for parents to get involved.

***For a copy of the complete U-10 Coach Manual, contact the AYSO Supply Center @ 1-800-872-2976, ext. 7992.***

## U-12 Guidelines

### Field

- Dimensions: 100 yards long and 50 yards wide (maximum).
- Markings: The field of play must be rectangular and marked with lines shown below on the diagram.



### Goals

The distance between the posts is 8 yards and the distance from the lower edge of the crossbar to the ground is 8 feet.

### Ball

Size 4

### Players:

- **NUMBER:** Nine per team on field; one of which is a goalkeeper. 12 maximum on roster.
- **SUBSTITUTIONS:** Between periods, at halftime and for injuries.
- **PLAYING TIME:** Minimum of two periods per game and no player should play four periods until everyone has played three.
- **TEAMS:** Separate girls and boys teams should be promoted at all levels of play.



### **Players' Equipment**

- Footwear: Soft-cleated soccer shoes or tennis shoes.
- Shinguards: MANDATORY for both practices and games, and must be covered entirely by socks.

### **Duration of Game**

- Four 15 minute periods.
- Half time break of 5–10 minutes.

### **Referee**

- The referee must be a certified regional referee or above.
- No other changes from play as specified in FIFA Laws of the Game Printed for the American Youth Soccer Organization.

***For a copy of the complete U-12 Coach Manual, contact the AYSO Supply Center @ 1-800-872-2976, ext. 7992.***



# Intermediate, Advanced & National Coaching Courses

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## **AYSO Intermediate Coaching Course**

The Intermediate Coaching course is a fifteen hour course designed to link the technical aspects of the game with the ability of players to read the game.

This course also links short sided 9 v 9 play to the full 11 a side game. Players (U-14) must be used as demonstrators for this course.

This course teaches coaches to incorporate the four elements of Skills, Tactics, Conditioning and Psychological motivation into their training sessions. This course is also about a coach developing a good working relationship with their players.

This course ensures that each coach understands:

- The importance of players having positive attitudes
- How to make each player feel important
- How to make training enjoyable and rewarding for players
- Why it is important to understand each player's strengths and weaknesses
- The importance of a coach providing proper role modeling
- The prerequisite for taking the Intermediate Coaching Course is that you have taken the AYSO U-12 Coach Course.

## **AYSO Advanced Coaching Course**

The Advanced Coaching Course is an 18 hour course with an emphasis on player, team and match analysis. While the emphasis in previous AYSO Coaching Courses is largely about technical material, the Advanced Course is about discussion and evaluation among the participants after viewing technical, tactical and game related training activities. *The prerequisite for taking the Advanced Coaching Course is that you have taken the AYSO Intermediate Coaching Course.*

## **AYSO National Coaching Course**

The National Coaching Course is designed to further develop the skills and knowledge of AYSO Advanced Coaches. The emphasis is on greater understanding of Player Evaluations, Laws of the Game, Tactical Development, Match Analysis, Anatomy/Physiology and Practical Coaching. The National Coaching Course is a week-long residential camp concentrating on helping coaches develop a higher level of understanding but finding a new sense of appreciation, enthusiasm, and self confidence as a soccer coach. *The prerequisite for taking the National Coaching Course is that you have taken the AYSO Advanced Coach course.*



# Frequency & Length of Training (Practice) Sessions

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As Recommended by the AYSO National Player Development Program & National Coaching Advisory Commission

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Training Session</b>
U-5	None
U-6	None
U-8	1 hour session – once a week plus the game
U-10	1 hour session – twice a week plus the game
U-12	1 hour session – twice a week plus the game
U-14	1-1/2 hour session – twice a week plus the game



# Instructor Program

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## **The AYSO Coach Instructor Program**

Coach instructors play a crucial role in the development of coaches and the overall success of AYSO. This is particularly true for instructors who teach entry level coaching courses, since it is in these courses that new volunteers first develop an understanding of the most important and fundamental aspects of coaching AYSO soccer. Instructors must ensure that AYSO philosophy, policies, programs, and child and volunteer protection issues are explained. AYSO instructors must instill in the minds of the coaches they instruct the importance of understanding the significant role they each play to ensure that. Having qualified local instructors is important because they give the Region the flexibility to train new volunteers at a time and place most convenient for the local coaches. The AYSO Coach Instructor Program offers opportunities for volunteers to become trained and certified as instructors at three levels: Coach Instructor, Advanced Coach Instructor and National Coach Instructor. The AYSO Coach Instructor Program also provides standardized curriculum and teaching plans for all training courses to encourage consistency of coach training across AYSO.

The AYSO Coach Instructor Program consists of the following:

- **Introduction to Instruction Course:** This course emphasizes common instructional skills and strategies applicable to all disciplines. No prerequisites necessary to take this class.
- **Coach Instructor training courses:** The Coach Instructor Course and the Advanced Coach Instructor Course cover the coach-specific knowledge needed to instruct at each of these levels. National Coach Instructors are developed through a mentoring process.

The criteria and requirements for certification as an AYSO Coach Instructor are listed at the end of this section.

## **Planning a Coach Training Course**

Are you ready to give a clinic? Whether this is your first or your twenty-first coach clinic, the steps you take are the same. You must plan: plan for every detail, every contingency. The major difference between the experienced instructor and the new instructor is that this year the new instructors will make the mistakes the experienced instructor made last year or the year before. Information in this document will help you to prevent making the mistakes made in the past. Perhaps the best advice you can get is, "If you fail to plan, then plan to fail."

Okay, you are now an instructor. You want to put on a class, but where do you start? Start with a need. Do you need more coaches? When do you need them? With just this information you can make several decisions: whether or not outdoor classes





may be held; the number of days that will be required. Some recruiting methods are time-dependent and training aids could be affected by the time available. The amount of time available to work with co-instructors could be hampered. As you can see, the need for planning becomes very evident. If you wait until the last minute to plan a clinic, you reduce the number of options and invite the possibility and perhaps even the likelihood of failure.

The following are steps to take when planning your classes:

- Determine the planning time required prior to the first class. Include time for notification of students, instructors, obtaining suitable class space, preparing lesson plans and developing training aids.
- Determine the number of hours per class and the number of classes per week and select which days the classes will be taught.
- Determine the locations and get commitments for use of the facility.
- Contact potential instructors; determine availability, assign classes.
- Begin the recruitment process. Let potential students know when and where the clinic will be. If possible, get commitments for attendance.
- Review lesson plans, develop training aids, practice lessons and review classes with co-instructors.

### **Choosing a Location**

Facilities for coach instruction should include the following:

- Whiteboard, blackboard or some type of marker board
- Laptop computer with LCD projector
- Electrical outlet (always bring your own extension cord)
- Tables or desks for students
- Enough space in the room for demonstrations
- Soccer field (gym, if necessary, when fields aren't available)

Possible locations:

- School classroom: middle school, high school, college (elementary schools should be avoided due to small size of desks)
- Church hall
- Youth or senior citizen center
- Library conference room
- Town hall meeting room

### **Class Scheduling**

Classes may be scheduled in a variety of ways to accommodate the varying conditions and needs of local programs. Self-contained lesson plans are available for teaching the complete courses. The type of class schedule used depends upon a variety of factors such as availability of facilities, instructors and students. The most important consideration to remember is to reach the information that is needed for the experience level of the students. For example, when teaching U-6 or U-8 coaches it is neither advisable nor productive to teach aspects of the game that are rarely present at this level of play, such as combining U-6 through U-12 coaching



courses and expecting everyone to stay through them all. U-6 coaches do not need to know the same information as the U-12 coach.

### **Use of Co-Instructors**

It is a good idea to make use of additional AYSO certified instructors in your Region or Area. Classes are always made more interesting when taught by a variety of instructors. Whenever possible, try to assign at least one woman coach instructor, whose presence may make the training process more comfortable for female candidates. At the same time, having women instructors demonstrates the knowledge and competence of women coaches, a positive message for both women and men coach candidates. If you have not worked with a particular instructor before, it is a good idea to go over the particular part he or she will be assigned to teach. You may want to practice together, especially if you are using a newly qualified instructor. If you are using an instructor whose teaching is unfamiliar to you, ensure approved teaching or lesson plans are being used. Be sure to ask your guest instructor what teaching aids he/she will be using so you are aware of what items need to be provided.

### **Roster Return Policy**

The AYSO National Board of Directors has established the following policy regarding course rosters:

In order to ensure attendees receive credit for completed training, it is vital that training rosters are either processed electronically by the local volunteers or returned to the National Office to be entered into the AYSO database in a timely manner. Therefore, the disposition of any training course authorized by the National Office must be resolved within 60 days following the scheduled date of the course. Any Lead Instructor who has failed to account for a roster within the 60 days period following the scheduled training date will not be authorized to conduct additional training until the past due roster is returned or its status satisfactorily resolved.

### **A Final Word to Instructors**

As AYSO Instructors you are a window through which our volunteer coaches see the AYSO experience as it is intended to be for all who participate or watch AYSO games. Keep that vision clear and unobstructed and remember to instill the AYSO Philosophies, which AYSO is built on.



<b>Instructor Training Matrix</b>					
<b>Course</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Length</b>	<b>Prerequisites</b>	<b>Minimum Lead Instructor Requirements</b>	<b>Minimum Authorization Required</b>
Introduction to Instruction	This training is designed to teach potential instructors their role as instructors and general aspects of presenting AYSO courses using AYSO directed teaching plans	3 hours	None	Advanced Instructor in any discipline	Area or Section staff in any discipline
Coach Instructor	This training is designed to teach Instructor candidates how to conduct introductory coach training courses at the U-6, U-8, U-10 & U-12 levels using AYSO directed teaching plans	8 hours	Introduction to AYSO Instruction AYSO's Safe Haven U-12 Coach Course	Advanced Coach Instructor	Area or Section Coach Administrator
Advanced Coach Instructor	This training is designed to prepare Coach Instructors to teach the Intermediate Coach Course using AYSO directed teaching plans, and to meet the educational requirements for becoming a Coach Instructor	8 hours	Coach Instructor Advanced Coach	Advanced Coach Instructor	Section Coach Administrator
National Coach Instructor	This training (not a course) is accomplished through mentoring	Variable	National Coach Advanced Coach Instructor Assist as instructor at National Coaching Course  Have contributed to National Coaching Program  Approved by the National Coach Instructor	AYSO National Coach Instructor	Director of Player Development



# Coach Certification Policy for Secondary Play

The following National Policy 2.2 (b) was approved and adopted by the National Board of Directors at their October 2006 meeting in Hawthorne California:

**Effective August 1, 2009, all AYSO coaches and assistant coaches who wish to coach in the AYSO National Games, concurrent secondary play competitions or nationally sanctioned AYSO Tournaments must, at a minimum:**

1. Be a registered volunteer in eAYSO for the current year.
2. Have AYSO Safe Haven certification.
3. Be trained per the National Coaching Program Guidelines at the age/skill level of the team they wish to enter/coach.

**Following are the required certifications for each of the age levels:**

<b>Division</b>	<b>Minimum Required Certification</b>
U-10	U-10 Coach
U-12	U-12 Coach
U-14	Intermediate Coach
U-16 & U-19	Advanced Coach

Many Sections and Areas have already adopted this requirement for those coaching in Area and/or Section sponsored competitions. This policy is also supported and backed by the National Tournament Commission and is to be included in the Tournament Handbook.

To schedule 'age appropriate' coach training and AYSO certification please contact one of the following:

- Regional Coach Administrator (U-10 and U-12 Training)
- Area Coach Administrator (Intermediate Training)
- Section Coach Administrator (Advanced Training)

Contact information for any of these administrators can be accessed through your Regional Commissioner or by contacting the Player Development Department at the AYSO National Office (1-800-USA-AYSO).

Although only the age-specific course is required to meet the new requirement at the U-10 and U-12 levels, it is best for the players if each coach at U-10 and U-12 has the full range of AYSO coach training (U-6, U-8, U-10 and U-12). Please note, however, before taking the Intermediate, Advanced or National Coaching courses, there are prerequisites that must be met. If you plan to coach at the U-14 level or above in one or more of the identified competitions, please go to [www.ayso.org](http://www.ayso.org) and refer to the "AYSO Course Catalog" section for the prerequisites for Intermediate, Advanced or National Coach Training.



# Frequently Asked Questions

Answers provided by the AYSO National Coaching Advisory Commission and the AYSO National Player Development Dept.

## **Why do we play short-sided games and is it mandatory?**

AYSO highly recommends that all children under the age of 12 play short-sided (less than 11 players per team) soccer for the following reasons:

Young soccer players need special consideration:

- They are children playing a child's game
- They must be regarded as young children, not mini adults
- They are essentially self-oriented and relate naturally to one or two others, not to large groups
- Fun and activity factors must be a central part of a child-centered program

Educators agree early learning experiences are the most important and produce the most retention:

- Most children cannot sustain prolonged activity
- They function best in suitable starts and stops (rest periods)
- Concentration span is limited, so frequent changes of pace and activity are essential

Children love to learn:

- They learn a great deal more when the ratio of teacher (coach) to student (player) is reduced
- With small numbers and the simple nature of the game, the best teacher is the game itself
- With fewer players on the field, each player gets more touches on the ball and has greater opportunity to change location in a fast-flowing, fluid game
- Playing short-sided allows players to make simpler decisions and develop an earlier, better understanding of organization of play
- Smaller fields mean more players are directly involved in play, creating increased levels of both concentration and interest
- The reduced field size encourages more shots on goal by all players, therefore more goals scored



Residual benefits:

- Parents are introduced to the game in smaller, more understandable doses
- Short-sided soccer is a great place to train new referees
- The rest of the world is playing short-sided and we are part of the soccer world

### **Can we have paid trainers?**

The AYSO National Policy Statements, Article 2.5: No payment may be made to **any AYSO volunteer** for the purpose of compensating such volunteer for services unless otherwise approved in exceptional circumstances by the National Board of Directors. AYSO has maintained throughout its existence a total volunteer concept of operation (except for its National Staff) including without limitation, all aspects of coaching, officiating and local administration. Paid professional trainers, medical personnel and security officers employed by a Region, Area or Section, in their capacity as fulltime service providers in their professional fields do not necessarily fall within the scope of these employer-employee laws. ***Any Region which wishes to utilize such services for clinics, tournaments or other Regional events should contact the National Office for guidance and approved standards when hiring such professionals.***

- ***AYSO Coach:*** A person who has been assigned a team by the Regional Commissioner and who will train the athletes on the team that he or she is assigned to them. The AYSO Coach will conduct him/herself in a manner becoming a member of AYSO. Encourage clean competition and good sportsmanship. Prohibit negative comments and complaints about officiating. Present a healthy, athletic environment for team members by neither consuming alcoholic beverages nor using tobacco products during practices or games or in the immediate vicinity of the soccer fields. Train and coach his/her team to the best of his/her ability. Limit his/her sideline participation during AYSO games to comments that are positive, instructional and/or encouraging. Upon team formation and during all subsequent team gatherings, practices, scrimmages, and games (Regional, inter-Regional, Area, Sectional, National and Tournaments) and have in his/her possession a signed Player Registration Form for each team member.
- ***Paid Trainer:*** A paid trainer is a coach who is paid to make players more proficient with specialized instruction and practice. Individuals who have been hired as paid trainers are not assigned a team by the Regional Commissioner but will train athletes who may wish additional specialized training and practice time. Such training will be open to all athletes in the Region.

Additionally, if a Region chooses to use Paid Professional Trainers, the Region must:

- In writing, seek approval from the AYSO National Board of Directors
- Ensure that all paid trainers are Safe Haven certified and are at a minimum AYSO trained Advanced Coaches (National Coach level highly

- recommended) or have met all the requirements required for an AYSO reciprocity waiver
- Ensure that all paid trainers model the AYSO National Coaching Program
  - Ensure that all paid trainers provide leadership and model the AYSO culture and philosophies during all AYSO activities
  - Make certain that all paid trainers attend a yearly AYSO Coach Update on the most current course guidelines, lesson plans and coaching manuals that are used to support the AYSO National Coaching Program
  - Make certain that all paid trainers demonstrate an unswerving commitment to AYSO and its philosophies
  - Ensure that paid trainers are a professional resource for the regional volunteer coach base
  - The Region will submit a status report to the National Board of Directors on a yearly basis

If used, a Paid Trainer must:

- Raise the standards of education for parents and players in the Region by providing professional quality instruction on a regular, consistent basis
- Become a total education resource for the Region
- Establish a “Coach Contact/Reporting Program” within the Region
- Establish contact with Region and Area coaching staffs and maintain communication
- Submit a bi-yearly report to the Regional Commissioner and Regional Coach Administrator
- Provide leadership and model the AYSO culture and philosophies during all AYSO activities
- Create, develop and maintain a Player Progress form for each player involved in the program
- Attend a yearly AYSO Coach Update on the most current course guidelines, lesson plans and coaching manuals that are used to support the AYSO National Coaching Program
- Demonstrate an unswerving commitment to AYSO and its philosophies

**Does each player have to play ½ of every game, or can it be averaged out across the season?**

True to one of AYSO’s founding philosophies, Everyone Plays, every player must play at least ½ of EVERY game. Additionally, it is strongly recommended that no player play four (4) quarters before all players have played three (3) quarters. The only exception to this rule would be a serious injury that truly prevents the player from participating or if the player arrives to the game after it has commenced, in which case the following National Rules and Regulations apply: if the player arrives in the first quarter, the player must play a minimum of two (2) of the remaining three (3) quarters...if the player arrives during the second or third quarter, the player must play a minimum of one (1) quarter.



**What are the correct field dimensions/markings, goal sizes, ball sizes, number of players on the field and on a roster, and game durations for each age group?**

All these items are part of AYSO's National Coaching Program guidelines. These guidelines are available on [ayso.org](http://ayso.org) with answers to these questions. You can find them at [www.ayso.org](http://www.ayso.org) by clicking on Coaches/Resources. You may also obtain a manual through the AYSO Supply Center– AYSO National Coaching Program Manual.

**When and where is the next coaching course?**

All coaching courses that are registered with the National Office are entered into eAYSO. As a registered volunteer you have access to [www.eayso.org](http://www.eayso.org) to see courses that have been set up. Go to "Lookup"/"Courses"/List the criteria you are interested in and click "submit". When you find the course you are looking for, click the round "radial" button on the left side and sign up. If you have questions, contact the Player Development Dept at (800) 872-2976.

**What are the various levels of coach certification?**

AYSO offers age-specific coach training for every level of play. The various "levels" are as follows and each one has its own course:

- U-6, U-8, U-10, U-12, Intermediate (U-14), Advanced (U-16, U-19) and National Coach.

**What are the requirements and time involved with the various coach certification?**

AYSO's U-6, U-8, U-10, and U-12 courses are all considered "stand-alone" courses, meaning that you may take any one of them without having taken any prior courses. The U-12 course then becomes the prerequisite for taking the Intermediate course, which is the prerequisite for taking the Advanced course, which is the prerequisite for taking the National course. Course lengths are as follows:

- U-6 Coach – 2 hours
- U-8 Coach – 2 hours
- U-10 Coach – 3 hours
- U-12 Coach – 5 hours
- Intermediate Coach – 15 hours
- Advanced Coach – 18 hours
- National Coach – 56+ hours

**Do you offer any on-line coaching courses?**

Yes, we offer on-line training for AYSO Safe Haven, U-6 Coach, U-8 Coach & U-10 Coach courses. Once you have been accepted by your Region as a registered volunteer with a permanent AYSO ID number, you can access the online training from the AYSO website: [www.ayso.org](http://www.ayso.org). Select the link to Online Training. U-6 and U-8 online courses are fully completed online but the U-10 Coach course is classroom only and a field session MUST accompany the course for certification.





### **What and/or where is my certification?**

Record of all coach training is stored in AYSO's on-line database, [www.eayso.org](http://www.eayso.org). Every individual fills out a Volunteer Registration Form and, when the form is processed by the Region, is entered into the database and record of all training is attached to the individual's file. Anyone is allowed access to eAYSO by going through a short, one-time registration on the home page. Once in the database you may view your own records by going to Look-Up/Volunteer and looking up your record. Once there, click View Certifications. Alternatively, you may call the AYSO Player Development Department at (800) 872-2976 and someone there will assist you. If your records do not reflect the coach training you have taken, please call (800) 872-2976.

### **Can an individual under 18 years of age be a coach?**

An individual under 18 years of age may not be listed as the Team Coach or Assistant Coach and be in the position of supervising children. The reason is that volunteers under the age of 18 cannot be legally responsible for children. AYSO's liability insurance carriers have indicated they will not cover AYSO for any incident arising from a minor coach.

### **How do I become an AYSO coach?**

AYSO is a volunteer organization and the smallest local groups run by volunteers are referred to as Regions. To become a coach in your local Region, you can attend the registration and sign up there to coach. Alternatively, you can contact the Regional Coach Administrator who is in charge of all the coaches for the Region and discuss the process with them. You may also register online [www.eayso.org](http://www.eayso.org), print two copies and turn them in to your local Region. If you need contact information, you can contact the Registration Department of the AYSO National Office at (800) 872-2976, ext 7962.

### **Does an AYSO coach have to have a child on the team?**

No. Anyone over the age of 18 can volunteer to be a coach in AYSO. Generally speaking, most coaches are the parents of a child on the team, however, AYSO welcomes and encourages anyone who wants to volunteer to come out and coach!

### **Does AYSO allow coaches to cross-certify?**

At the present time the American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO) does not have a reciprocity equivalency agreement with any other soccer organization including the United States Soccer Federation (USSF), the National Soccer Coaches Association of America (NSCAA) or the English Football Association (FA). However, AYSO believes it is an important issue that must be explored and have opened an avenue of discussion regarding same. Therefore, a coach training equivalency policy has been created for all coaches who hold a valid coaching license issued by US Soccer and AYSO will explore options regarding other soccer organizations.

AYSO and US Soccer both conduct coaching courses and issue coaching licenses to candidates who successfully complete a coaching course. The United States Youth Soccer Association (USYSA) also issues coaching licenses; however, the licenses issued by them are only sanctioned by US Soccer since the courses are conducted by individual state associations such as Cal South or Utah Youth Soccer



Association. AYSO has reviewed the entire US Soccer coaching program curriculum and has established the following procedure for coach training equivalency.

In order to be eligible all coaches must:

- Be a currently registered AYSO volunteer
- Have AYSO's Safe Haven and the AYSO U-6, U-8 and U-10 certification or online coaching courses on their training record in eAYSO
- Produce a copy of their US Soccer license
- Produce an up-to-date coaching resume that will be reviewed by the AYSO National Coaching Advisory Commission
- Be recommended directly by the Regional Coach Administrator or Regional Commissioner of the Region in which they will be coaching – email recommendations are accepted
- Notification of requests will be sent to the Area Coach Administrator and Section Coach Administrator for review. Reasonable objections to the request may be made to the National Coaching Advisory Commission, and a notification of a “hold” on an application for review will be sent to the applicant, the Section, Area and Region. Objections will be reviewed by the National Coaching Advisory Commission with input from the Region, Area or Section and the applicant.
- Not be on any suspended coaching list of any youth organization for any reason
- Understand that if they desire to become an AYSO Coach Instructor, they **MUST** fulfill all instructor requirements (see AYSO instructor matrix) by taking the Introduction to Instruction and the Coach Instructor Course. Request for special consideration due to extensive coaching/training degrees etc., must be submitted to the National Coaching Advisory Commission
- Note: Section Coach Administrators or Trainers, Area Coach Administrators or Trainers or Regional Coach Administrators or Trainers, are not eligible for coach training equivalency consideration

All applicants for coach training equivalency consideration that hold a USSF license and have met the above eight requirements, will transfer at the following AYSO coach level:

- “A”, “B”, “C”, or “D” licensed coaches will be documented as an AYSO Advanced Coach – eligible to participate in the AYSO National Coaching Course
- “E” licensed coaches will be documented as an AYSO Intermediate Coach – eligible to participate in the AYSO Advanced Coaching Course



- “F” (YM1 or YM2) licensed coaches will be documented as an AYSO U-12, U-10, U-8 and U-6 coach – eligible to participate in an AYSO Intermediate Coaching Course

All documentation must first be submitted to Crissie Hull, National Coaching Program Coordinator @ [crissiehull@ayso.org](mailto:crissiehull@ayso.org) or call (800) 872-2976, ext.7974 for more information.

**There is NO reciprocity equivalency at the AYSO National Coach level.** Any coach, regardless of what level license they hold, shall be required to attend and pass the AYSO National Coaching Course in order to attain an AYSO National Coach Certificate.

