

FUTSAL Program



ELITE CLUB SOCCER

Edmonton Interdistrict Youth Soccer Association

FUTSAL Program

The priority in Futsal is to motivate players in an environment that is conducive to learning. The more pleasure kids derive from their participation, the more they wish to play and practice on their own. While their instinct to play is natural, their affection and appreciation for soccer must be cultivated. Futsal is the foundation to such goals because it:

- Allows players to frequently touch the one "toy" on the field, namely, the ball.
- Presents many opportunities to score goals and score goals often.
- Encourages regaining possession of the ball as a productive, fun and rewarding part of the game (defending).
- Maximizes active participation and minimizes inactivity and boredom.
- Provides a well organized playing environment with improvised fields.
- Reflects the philosophy of player development expressed in state and national coaching schools.
- Eliminates complicated rules such as offside's that may hinder youngsters from "playing".
- Reflects the appropriate roll of the coach as a *Facilitator*
- Makes the game more "beginning coach" friendly because the game is simpler, thus making it easier to recruit more volunteer "coaches".
- Allows the game to be the teacher!

What About The Goalkeeper?

Goalkeeping, as it relates to the adult version of soccer, requires a combination of skill, athleticism, and decision making. A Futsal goalkeeper learns all these things in the game of Futsal with the added advantage that he learns to react faster because the ball moves faster, and he gets more involvement in the game since they are more shots on goal. Nevertheless a:

- Goalkeepers **must** be field players **first**. Prior to specializing as goalkeepers, children must learn the broader parameters of "play". This is difficult to do when they hide beneath the crossbar. Goalkeepers must also learn intuition and anticipation from moving in and playing the game of Futsal.
- Goalkeepers must possess field playing skill. This is particularly true since the laws governing the 11 v. 11 game require the goalkeeper to play as a field player, without the use of their hands, at certain times of the game

Why Futsal?

The mode and method for children's play has changed substantially. The sandbox and playgrounds which allowed for free play have been replaced by organized sport associations and leagues which are instead governed by adults. As a result, these leagues reflect what adults believe the game of soccer should be like for youngsters. The by-product of this is often over coaching and the investing of an abundance of money and resources on uniforms, warm-ups, and equipment. There is always the likelihood that parents and coaches become too involved in the game during "the game".

Teaching Futsal to children requires that the information provided to them is appropriate for their maturity level through some means (**THE GAME**) that makes sense to them. The environment for play must, essentially, meet the needs of players.

Reducing the number of players to 5 per team allows for **all** of the components that are present in the 11 v. 11 game: the ball, teammates and opponents, realistic pressure, appropriate space, guidelines (rules), direction of play (attacking and defending), and the combination of length and width in the game (team shape), and shooting on goal.

What Is Developed

Skill that is realistic. Motor ability: balance, agility, and coordination. Perception: insight and awareness. Vision. Problem solving: choices and decisions. Physical fitness. Psychological domain: fun, enjoyment, and competition. Learning by discovery, trial and error, playing!!!

Repetition

This is perhaps the single most important aspect over the long term process of developing soccer playing ability. On the playgrounds and sandboxes, this occurs naturally... No lines, no waiting, participation is maximized.

Youngsters recognize differing situations that are constantly repeated. Repetition influences: **Skill** required to play the game (dribbling, passing, shooting, etc.). **Decisions** and choices that occur during the game.

The Role of the Youth Coach

In Futsal, the role of the coach is that of facilitator. The coach sets up the game and the conditions for learning, provides some supervision and allows the game to teach. The coach becomes a manager of the games with the comprehensive and long range objective being to develop and improve the soccer performance of the players.

The primary objective for youth players under 11 years of age is the development of technical skill. This is due, in part, to the nature of youngsters and their willingness to experiment to find their own way to execute technical skill.

Another contributing factor for an emphasis on skill development is that skill is considered a shortcoming. Remember, technique is not an objective in and of itself but a tool. Technical skill must always have a relationship with the game (application). Problem solving, decision making, intuition, anticipation, and technical skill must be developed in the context of games.

Technical activities, outside of games, should not be considered the "end all and be all". The game, and involvement of playing the game, is most important. Too often, these activities on the individual basis are "drills" and are not realistic as far as the demands of the game are concerned. Technical skills should not be viewed as "tricks" or "gimmicks", but in the end, must be practical to use in the game.

Considerations On How the Youth Futsal Coach Can Influence Players

Coaches need to insure that the playing/practice environment is conducive for development and performance and is favourable for learning to take place. They also need to ensure that the three main areas of the game occur in this environment.

Futsal allows youth coaches to become familiar with the three main areas of the game.

- When the team is in possession of the ball (attacking).
- When the team is trying to regain possession of the ball (defending).
- When the ball changes possession (transition),

Futsal provides a much clearer environment to analyze the match and its individual components and is therefore not as intimidating to beginning coaches. The coach can observe:

- If players are comfortable and confident playing against an opponent individually (dribbling).
- If players are capable of maintaining possession of the ball both as individuals and as a group.
- If players can create opportunities to score goals both individually and as a group.
- If players are successful at scoring goals.
- If players are composed while trying to regain possession of the ball (defending).
- If players can adapt to the unexpected and adjust their behavior and improvise appropriately.

Youth soccer coaches contribute to player development by:

- Observing the game.
- Analyzing the problems.
- Setting simple objectives for practice.
- Planning the practice session.
- Managing the Game and practice environments.

While technique, decision making and physical talent can be distinguished from one another, they are not related.

The Basic Game and Variations

The Basic Futsal Game

Size of Field

Depends on the age of players. Can vary from 25m x 16m up to 42m x25m. The goals are 3m wide and 2m high.

The Team In Possession of the Ball

- Can employ buildup by using the entire playing area in terms of length and width (spread out, possession).
- Can learn and determine team shape, which, in a group of 4 resembles a diamond.
- Can create goal scoring opportunities by taking action either individually or collectively.

When the Other Team Has the Ball

- The aim is to prevent goals from being scored by getting behind the ball and to regain possession of the ball.
- Simple principles of defending are reinforced and amplified since there is no spare defender or goalkeeper.

Players need to evaluate and identify when to dribble and pass. The correct attitude (when to take a risk aggressively) and the technical development and execution of dribbling, vision, changes in the direction and speed of play and decision making skills because the player has a variety of options at his disposal (dribbling, passing, "shooting", changing directions)

The Futsal Passing Game

Since the playing area is longer than it is wide, the emphasis is on creating length (height) in the game. In this game, there is a premium placed on playing the ball forward early. The ball can be played early:

- To a target player who is coming back for the ball with a defender behind them.
- To a player running forward away from the server.

Scoring

Stopping the ball anywhere on the line.

Passing the ball through an open goal.

This Game Emphasizes

- Vision
- Changes in direction and speed of play.
- Appropriate use of firm touch.
- Long and short passing.
- Attitude and confidence that is essential for scoring goals.
- Passing, shooting and dribbling skills required in the other 4 v. 4 games.
- Transition awareness since the team can attack quickly in the other direction.
- Team shape and the roles of each player because when there is a transition, the back becomes the front and vice versa.

The priority of this game is shooting and scoring. Since the field is small, players should be looking to shoot almost whenever they get the ball. .