

Big Themes:¹

U-10: Technique, Individual Speed of Play, Support around the ball, Small-group Tactics

U-12: Individual Play, Speed of play- individual and small-group, Principles of Play

U-14: Individual Technique, Speed of Play, Group Tactics, Principles of Play

U-15+: Team Building, Functional Training, and Learning to Win

4 Components of Soccer: Relevant points and specifics²

1) Technical

- a. **Passing and Receiving** – Passing the ball on the ground with pace from receiving the ball under control, while keeping the ball moving
- b. **Shooting** – The ability to shoot from different distances with laces, instep, and inside of the foot
- c. **Ball Control and Turning** – Keep close control of the ball and use different techniques to turn, and feints to keep the ball

2) Tactical

- a. **Playing Out from the Back** – Comfortable playing the ball from the back through the midfield and on to the final third
- b. **Possession and Transition** – Keep possession by encouraging players to support and create passing lanes by movement. Once possession is maintained try to transition from one side of the field to the other in order to break down defenses

¹ US Youth Soccer

²US Soccer Curriculum

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- c. **Offense-Defense Transition** – When possession is lost players must react quickly and apply pressure to regain the ball

3) Psychological

- a. **Respect and Discipline** – Players will adapt to a role on the team and respect teammates, coaches, officials, and opponents
- b. **Cooperation** – Players are part of a unit and will cooperate with teammates to achieve objectives for any given task, session, or game
- c. **Competitiveness** – Desire to learn more and always seeking to improve

4) Fitness

- a. **Speed and Agility**
- b. **Endurance** – Train to be resilient to high-intensity action
- c. **Strength and Power** – Strong players develop their speed more quickly, prevent injuries, and are more competitive in games

Curriculum

This curriculum has been developed by the EC United Coaching Director and Assistant Coaching Director with input from highly experienced coaches in the area. Information has been collected from US Youth Soccer, MYSA, WYSA, US Soccer Curriculum, USSF “Best Practices for Coaching Soccer in the United States”, MAYSA, and the ASSA. The intent of this curriculum is to create a path which connects Eau Claire United’s U-8 teams to the High School teams formed.

The curriculum is designed as a progressive plan. Thus, the abilities acquired by players at younger ages must be refined at the next level in order for players to be successful against better competition. If an older player is lacking in an element introduced in a previous age group, that deficiency must be addressed by the coach and the player, before the player advances along the curriculum.

***Note: Older players are expected to assume personal responsibility for improving and maintaining physical fitness along with improving any technical deficiencies.**

As players mature, the curriculum is adjusted in order to match the appropriate physical, social and cognitive levels. In younger ages there is an emphasis placed on technical work. Older players are expected to maintain and improve their technique in practice; however as a player matures, training sessions will place a greater emphasis on tactical and psychological aspects of the game.

Symmetry of ability will be emphasized in all training sessions. A player must be able to succeed with a given topic on both the right and left sides of the body. Players will also be expected to perform technical and tactical elements on both the offensive and defensive sides of the ball, regardless of positional placement on the field.

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U-8 Boys and Girls

<u>Technical</u>	<u>Tactical</u>	<u>Psychological</u>	<u>Fitness</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dribble with all sides of feet• Dribble out of trouble and to take on a defender• Change of Direction (pull backs and cuts)• Passing and Receiving with inside and outside of foot• Shooting (introduce inside and instep of foot)• Defending Basics (Fast, Slow, Side-on, Low)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1v1 attacking• 1v1 defending (seek to win ball)• 2v1 combination play (wall pass)• Control with first touch (don't just kick!)• No emphasis on positions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acknowledgement and respect for coaches, teammates and officials• Creativity• Working in pairs• HAVE FUN!	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduce warm-up and cool-down• Soccer-related activities to improve balance and agility• Stay Active!

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U-10 Boys and Girls

<u>Technique</u>	<u>Tactical</u>	<u>Psychological</u>	<u>Fitness</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Running with the ball• Shielding the ball• Receiving, and controlling balls out of the air• Passing with the inside and outside of feet• Juggling: Goal is 10-20 touches consistently with feet and thighs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understands 1v1, 2v1, and 2v2 concepts• Understands roles of 1st and 2nd attacker• Understands roles of 1st and 2nd defender• Basic set plays• Introduce names of positions and systems of play• All players experience all positions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Courage – do not be afraid of the ball• Balance competition and cooperation• Working in small groups of 3-4• Ability to focus for an entire half of play	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Coordination and Balance while running• Short sprints with and without the ball• Consistent warm-up and cool-down routines

U-12 Boys and Girls: “Golden Age of Development”

<u>Technique</u>	<u>Tactical</u>	<u>Psychological</u>	<u>Fitness</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Turn with first-touch (feet, thighs, chest)• Long-range passing• Crossing to near-post, far-post, and slot• Volleys and Headers to score or clear• Juggling: Goal is 30-50 touches consistently with feet, thigh and head	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Defending with a man down (delay and deny)• Attacking with a man up (combinations, reading defense)• Vision (body shape, head up)• Communication• Attacking and Defending set plays	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quality of performance is more important than the result!• Encourage players to watch high-level soccer• Desire and intrinsic motivation• Instill a sense of discipline and commitment to the game	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strength• Speed• Endurance• Encourage stretching before and after games

U-14 Boys and Girls: “Transition to the Adult Game”

<u>Technical</u>	<u>Tactical</u>	<u>Psychological</u>	<u>Fitness</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ball Mastery at a higher speed• Execution of skills in a dynamic manner• Headers and chest traps to win 50/50 balls• Heading to pass (including flicks)• First touch controlled and away from defenders• FINISH! (Power v. Finesse)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Speed of Play• Transition and Counter-attack• Functional specialization in 11 a side systems of play (playing 2-3 positions on the field)• Switching the point of attack• Playing out of the back	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Individual and team discipline• Emotional management and self-control• Overcoming adversity• Healthy lifestyle choices	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agility and balance under pressure• Fluid running style• Power• Acceleration• Cardio training

U-16 Boys and Girls: “Thinking and Feeling the Game”

<u>Technical</u>	<u>Tactical</u>	<u>Psychological</u>	<u>Fitness</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overall Ball Mastery (fine tuning of skills)• Receiving balls under pressure (technical execution under pressure)• Strikers playing with back to the goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Speed of Play and Game Management (build up v. counter-attack)• Attacking runs (withdrawing, penetrating, cross-over)• Breaking down the field into thirds (Collective attacking in final 1/3. Collective defending in defensive 1/3)• Attacking down the wings• Diagonal passing• Thinking 1 pass ahead (know where to go with the ball before it arrives)• Post-match analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Personal and collective accountability• Sacrifice to achieve players highest potential• Self-reliance• Goal oriented (process and outcome)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plyometrics• Weight training• Core, back and abdominal training• S.A.Q. training (Speed, Agility, Quickness)