



## **Coaching Topics U12**

**Introduce the topic, demonstrate (or have one of your players demonstrate) the proper technique, and then let your players demonstrate individually the technique to you and make corrections when needed. Use Guided Discovery whenever possible. A coach benefits his team far more effectively by raising good questions that players find solutions to verse providing all the answers.**

### **Focuses:**

U12 – Defending and Positions, along with Passing, Receiving, Shooting and Dribbling

1. Defending – The five basic principles of defending are pressure, containment, cover, marking, and goal-side. Players should close down space quickly, contain the attacker with patience (not diving in), keep moving, focus on the ball and win the ball confidently when the attacker makes a mistake.
2. Positions – Players should be introduced to the different positions on the field and given the opportunity to play all of the positions at least once during the season. At this level, most players have a position that they prefer to play. The four basic positions are forward (offender), mid-fielder, defender and goalkeeper.
3. Passing – Choose game activities that limit lines and have players pass the ball using the inside of the foot technique. Have players switch feet so they use both left and right. You can lengthen or tighten space as needed based on accuracy.
4. Receiving (or Trapping) the Ball – Choose activities that limit lines and emphasize the players technique when receiving the ball. Players should use the inside of the foot and attempt to “absorb” the ball as it hits their foot with their first touch and then set up their next touch. Use both feet.
5. Shooting – The easiest way to remember this technique is “toe down” and “hit with the laces”. The opposite foot (than the one you are kicking with) is the plant foot and determines where the ball will go. Players should focus on where (accuracy) and how they kick it, not how hard. The power will come as they get older and stronger. Use both feet. NO Toe Pokes!
6. Dribbling – Players should practice dribbling with the inside and outside of both feet. Encourage little kicks, small touches and control of the ball. Use fun games with competition to practice the technique where players have a ball at their feet at all times when working on dribbling.

### **Tactics**

**Tactics make up an important part of U12 soccer. Tactics are decisions made by players. Players at this level can perform a higher level of tactics in a game, including switching the field, crossing, and splitting defenders. Here are 2 basic things to coach:**

1. Kick the ball wide (towards the sideline) when on defense
2. Kick the ball across the front of the goal (center) when attacking