



# CURRICULUM: THE BALL (U6-U9)



# CONTENTS

## 1 INTRODUCTION

- Purpose
- Technical Resources

## 2 CURRICULUM

- A. Overview
- B. The Ball
- C. The Player
- B. The Team

## 4 FIELD SETUP

## 5 SESSION STRUCTURE

## 7 SESSION

- Part 1: Warm Up
- Part 2: Introduction Activities
- Part 3: Theme Games
- Part 4: Final Game
- Part 5: Cool Down

# INTRODUCTION

## PURPOSE

BC Soccer's aim is to promote soccer environments that are inclusive, safe, enjoyable and meet the needs of player development for all participants. To achieve this BC Soccer's Technical Resources, provide an example of good practice that BC Organizations can fully integrate into their programming or use as a guideline to assist in the on-going development of their own documentation and program delivery. These documents are composed of (but not limited to) a Curriculum, Coach Profile, Player Profile and a Team Profile.

This document focuses on the Curriculum for The Ball – U6 to U9.

## TECHNICAL RESOURCES

The Technical Resources indicated below detail how they fit together and where they support players and coaches. They highlight that the Curriculum and Coach Profile can be used for all ages, whereas the Player Profile is encouraged to be used at U10 to U18 and the Team Profile encouraged to be used for U14 to U18.



**Curriculum**

U6 to U18



**Coach Profile**

U6 to U18



**Player Profile**

U10 to U18



**Team Profile**

U14 to U18



A brief overview of the BC Soccer Technical Resources is described below.

### Coach Profile

The Coach Profile is composed of the coach as an individual first as well as what coaches should focus on throughout the season to create a safe, positive and fun environment. These two combined provides the Coach Profile and is paired with the session themes of the curriculum which guides coaches in developing players as well as identifying the player's strengths and their areas for improvement.

### Player Profile

The Player Profile refers to the Player as an individual person as well as the Player, which includes the individual player's attacking and defending actions related to the game of soccer. These two combined provides the Player Profile and is paired with the session themes of the curriculum, this guides coaches in developing players as well as identifying the player's strengths and their opportunities of improvement.

### Team Profile

The Team Profile provides an age-appropriate developmental framework for the season-long game environment and is paired with the Curriculum. It identifies the attacking and defending actions for individual players as well as the team. Throughout the season within games, players should be experiencing these actions to aid their overall technical and tactical development.

# CURRICULUM

## A. OVERVIEW

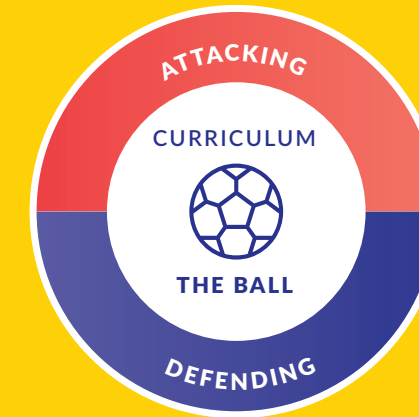
The Curriculum provides an age-appropriate developmental framework for the season-long training environment and can be paired with the Player and Team Profile. It identifies the attacking and defending actions for individual players as well as the team.

Throughout the season within sessions, players should be experiencing these actions to aid their overall technical and tactical development. Included within the curriculum are examples of session topics, plans and detailed explanations to support coaches with implementation.



## B. THE BALL

This part of the curriculum is for younger players aged U6 to U9 and focuses on introducing players to the game through a variety of fun game-like activities.



## C. THE PLAYER

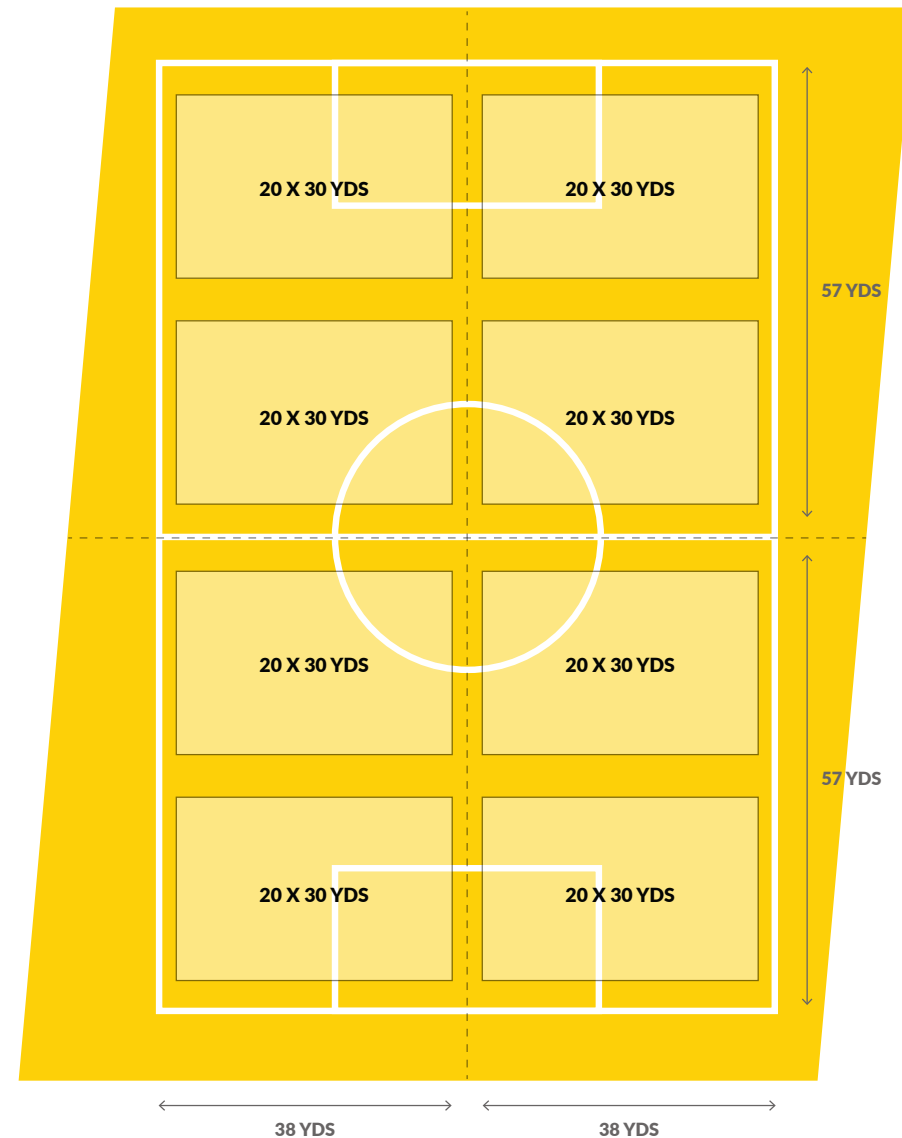
This part of the curriculum is for players aged U10 to U13 and focuses on the player's relationship with the ball when attacking and defending in small sided games.

## D. THE TEAM

This part of the curriculum is for players aged U14 to U18 and focuses on the player's role/ position within the team when attacking and defending in larger game formats, such as 11v11.

## FIELD SETUP

To maximize the available field space as well as to be sized appropriately for the players. The field setups below provide examples of what the session set up could look like for delivery of The Ball U6 to U8 curriculum on a full sized 11 v 11 field.



## SESSION STRUCTURE

The structure of the session consists of 5 parts and always includes a warm-up and cool down as well as a final game. Part 2 is an introduction activity for the players and is followed by Part 3 a theme game which can include 1 of 4 attacking themes listed below. Finally, all sessions are completed with a final game, which is theme focused and followed by a cool down.

Duration	Activity	Example
5 minutes	<b>PART 1: WARM UP</b>	Ball Control
15 minutes	<b>PART 2: INTRODUCTION ACTIVITY</b>	1. Stuck in the Mud 2. Astronauts & Aliens 3. Cops & Robbers 4. Island Hopping
15 minutes	<b>PART 3: THEME GAME</b>	1. Through the Gates (Receiving) 2. Chain Game (Dribbling) 3. Hit the Cone (Passing) 4. Goals, Goals, Goals (Shooting)
20 minutes	<b>PART 4: FINAL GAME</b>	2 x 2 v 2 or 1 x 4 v 4 (Variations)
5 minutes	<b>PART 5: COOL DOWN</b>	Ball Control

Total 60 minutes

Coaches can adapt practices based on the following factors:

### Goalkeepers and Goals

- Use regular size goals if you have Goalkeepers and use smaller goals without Goalkeepers to make it more challenging.
- Use a smaller goal on one side if you only have one Goalkeeper available.
- Use poles or cones as goals if you don't have pug nets, small nets or larger goals available.

### Field size and number of players

- Increase the field size recommendation if you have more players and decrease if you have less.
- Decrease the field size if you want to provide a greater challenge and increase if it's too great a challenge for players.
- Use water breaks for players between the activities to make adjustments to your field dimensions.

### Using the Curriculum

- Follow the session structure for your practices.
- Decide each practice if you want to focus on an Attacking or Defending theme but preferably not both.
- Rotate the themes each practice so the players can experience something new.



## SESSION

### PART 1: WARM UP

#### BALL CONTROL

##### SET UP

- Area of the field is approx 20 x 30 yards
- Mark the perimeter with cones
- Keep this perimeter for the entire session duration
- Every player should have one ball each preferably

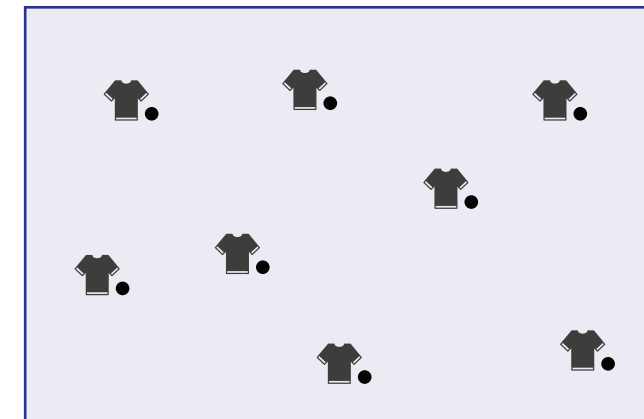
##### TIPS

###### Objective

This phase of the practice is very important to ensure that the players are being prepared for the demands of the session.

###### Coaching Points

- Slow jogging and ball manipulation (Dribbling & Juggling)
- Have players touch the ball with a variety of surfaces
- Increase intensity gradually and ball work challenges



# SESSION

## PART 2: INTRODUCTION ACTIVITIES

### STUCK IN THE MUD

#### SET UP

- Mark a 20x20 zone in the middle of the field
- 6 Attackers have 1 ball each and start in the safe zone
- 2 Defenders must stay in the middle zone the 'mud'

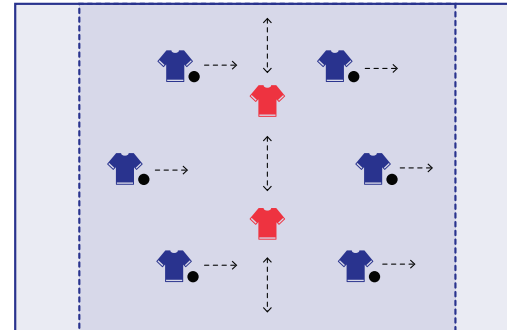
#### TIPS

##### Objective

Players with the ball must dribble from 1 safe zone to the other. Players in the middle zone that are 'stuck in the mud' must try and stop the players. If a player loses their ball, they then become a defender.

##### Coaching Points

1. Use all surfaces of both feet to dribble the ball
2. Small touches to keep the ball close
3. Look up often to be able to see where the space is



### COPS & ROBBERS

#### SET UP

- Mark a 15x25 zone in the middle of the field
- Place 1 goal/target on each side of the zone
- Place players in pairs (1 attacker 'robber' and 1 defender 'cop')

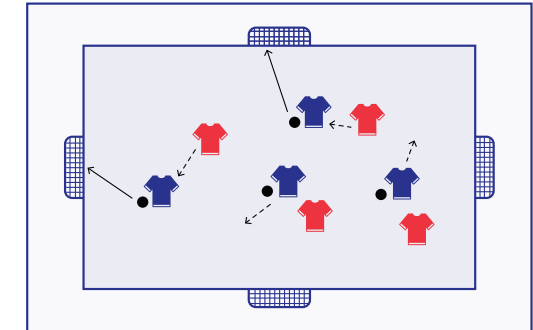
#### TIPS

##### Objective

The player with the ball must dribble around or away from their defender towards an open goal to score and escape the cops. If the defender 'cop' wins the ball, they then swap roles.

##### Coaching Points

1. Use all surfaces of both feet to dribble the ball
2. Small touches to keep the ball close
3. Look up often to be able to see where the space is



### ASTRONAUTS & ALIENS

#### SET UP

- Mark 4 gates in various parts of the field
- Place 1 defender 'Alien' in between each line
- 4 Attackers 'Astronauts' have a ball each

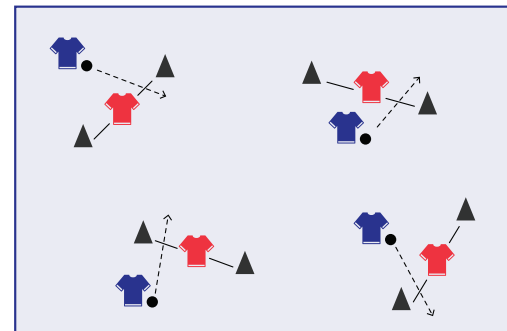
#### TIPS

##### Objective

Players with the ball must dribble through the gates by evading the defender, who can only move along the line of their gate.

##### Coaching Points

1. Use all surfaces of both feet to dribble the ball
2. Small touches to keep the ball close
3. Look up often to be able to see where the space is



### ISLAND HOPPING

#### SET UP

- Mark 5 3x3 zones 'islands' around the field
- 5 Attackers have 1 ball each
- 3 Defenders must stay in the open zone 'the sea'

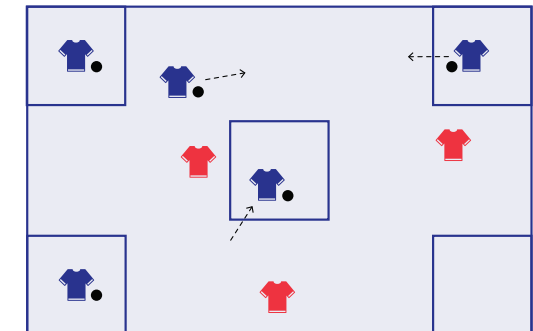
#### TIPS

##### Objective

The players with the ball must dribble around or away from the defenders towards a zone 'island' where they are safe from the defenders 'pirates'. If a player loses their ball, they become a defender 'pirate'.

##### Coaching Points

1. Use all surfaces of both feet to dribble the ball
2. Small touches to keep the ball close
3. Look up often to be able to see where the space is



# SESSION

## PART 3: THEME GAMES

### THROUGH THE GATES (RECEIVING)

#### SET UP

- Mark 4 gates in various parts of the field
- Place 8 players in 4 groups of 2
- Designate 2 players as defenders

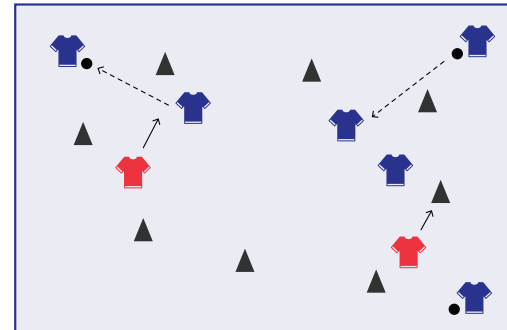
#### TIPS

##### Objective

Players in the pairs, dribble and pass the ball to their teammate while evading the defenders. They score a point when they pass and receive the ball through the designated gates.

##### Coaching Points

1. Position the body in alignment with the ball and pass
2. Use all surfaces of both feet to control/stop the ball
3. Protect the ball by using the body as a barrier from the defender



### CHAIN GAME (DRIBBLING)

#### SET UP

- Split the field in ½ and place 2 to 4 goals on either end
- Split the group into 2 teams of 4 and give them a number from 1 to 4
- Have players link their arms like a 'chain'
- Balls with the coach

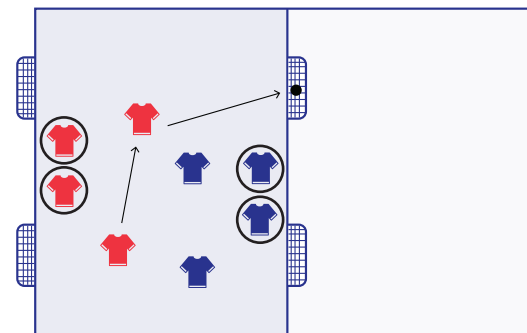
#### TIPS

##### Objective

The Coach will call a number out, for example '1' and roll a ball into play. The number 1 player from each team will try and keep the ball to dribble and score a goal past the opponents 'chain'.

##### Coaching Points

1. Use all surfaces of both feet to dribble the ball
2. Small touches to keep the ball close
3. Look up often to be able to see where the space is



### HIT THE CONE (PASSING)

#### SET UP

- Mark a 20x20 zone in the middle of the field
- Split the group into 2 teams of 4 and place them in their designated zone
- Set up several cones in the end zones and balance balls on top of them
- Multiple balls can be used at one time

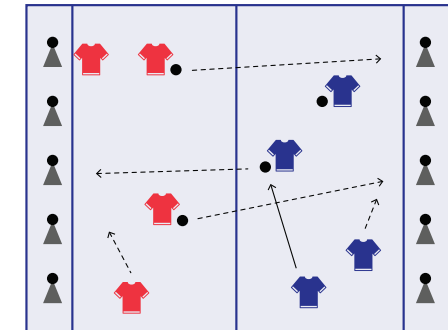
#### TIPS

##### Objective

By using the passing technique, players must aim to hit and knock a ball off their opponents cones. Players can pass to a teammate to create space and or dribble within their designated zone. Players must also defend and stop their opponent from hitting their ball and cones.

##### Coaching Points

1. Plant the standing foot next to the ball and pointing to where you want it to go
2. Keep the head down and knee over the ball
3. Strike through the ball with the inside of the foot



### GOALS, GOALS, GOALS (SHOOTING)

#### SET UP

- Place 1 goal/target on each side of the zone
- Mark a 5x5 zone in the middle of the field
- Place all the balls within the 5x5 zone
- Designate 5 attackers and 3 defenders

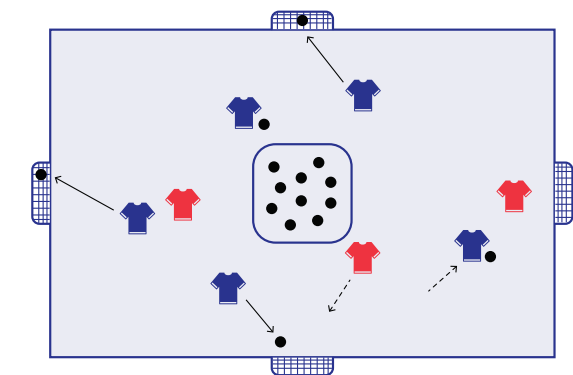
#### TIPS

##### Objective

Attacking players must take a ball from the middle zone, evade a defender (if needed) and shoot into 1 of the 4 goals. Game ends when all the balls have been used.

##### Coaching Points

1. Plant the standing foot next to the ball and pointing towards the goal
2. Keep the head down and knee over the ball
3. Strike through the ball with the front part of the foot



## SESSION

### PART 4: FINAL GAME

2 X 2V2 OR 1 X 4V4

#### SET UP

- Remove any markers you may have used previously
- Add goals on either end of the playing area
- The area of the playing field is approx 14 x 20 yards
- The field should have a good supply of balls

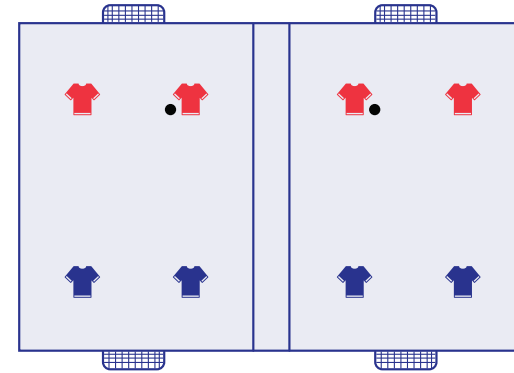
#### TIPS

##### Objective

To score on the opponent by collective and individual efforts while preventing the opposition from scoring.

##### Coaching Points

- Spread out to make more room to play in possession
- Support the ball carrier for passing options if needed
- Through individual or combination play try to finish on net



### PART 5: COOL DOWN

#### BALL CONTROL

##### SET UP

- Area of the field is approx 20x30 yards
- Mark the perimeter with cones
- Every player should have one ball each preferably

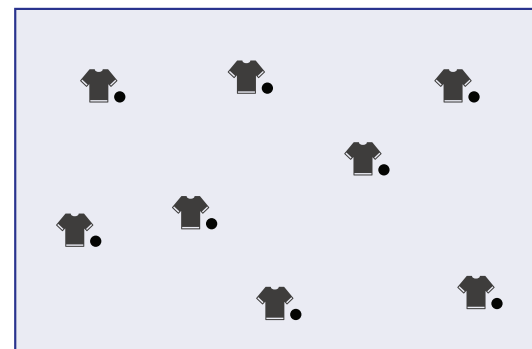
#### TIPS

##### Objective

This phase of the practice is very important to ensure that the players are bringing their core temperature down from the physical demands of the session.

##### Coaching Points

- Slow jogging and ball manipulation with the ball
- Have players touch the ball with a variety of surfaces
- Decrease intensity gradually and ball work challenges







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