



Tips For the New Soccer Coach

Some coaches are skeptical when they are asked to coach their child's team. The fear lies in the unknown. There are some important tips that will make your first time as a coach a pleasant one for players, parents, and most of all you.

1. **Have FUN!** Have a good time and make it FUN for the players. A coach's interaction with the players should always be positive and the more the coach engages with the kids, the more they will respond.
2. **Be FAIR.** Being fair is very important too. It's a coach's job to make sure each player has equal playing time, make sure players play each position, and be sure to include everyone.
3. **Be POSITIVE.** Being positive includes every interaction with players, parents, officials, and other coaches. It's always good to set this standard at the beginning of the year so that your parents and players are all on the same wave length.
4. **Ask for Parent Involvement.** At the beginning of the year, ask for parent assistance during practice. This will help get parents involved with their child's play and will help you reduce the player/coach ratio. This is especially helpful in younger players. For young players, try to keep the ratio about 4 kids to each coach. As the kids get older, the ratio can grow as much as 8 kids for each coach. This ratio will depend greatly on your kid's age and skill.
5. **Focus on TEAMWORK.** As a coach, you often will have one or two star players on your team. It is important to grow these players and make them even stronger players; however, it is important to focus on teamwork to get the work done.
6. **Set GROUND RULES.** Before the season starts, meet with the team and parents and establish the ground rules. You will want to cover things such as:
 - o sideline behavior – make sure they know they are welcome to cheer, but it is up to the coach and the assistant to do the coaching;
 - o have players arrive to practice and games on time;
 - o notify the coach if absent or late to game or practice;
 - o players are to sit with the team while not in the game and not in mommy's lap;
7. **Know what to practice.** As a new coach, it is hard to come up with games that are appropriate for that level of player. Make sure you check out the section and get fun ideas for your level of player. Make sure you are playing small-sided games with younger kids which will focus on game-like situations. Make sure you prepare properly and have everything you need to coach .

In closing, I simply encourage you to accept the coaching position if you are given the opportunity. It might seem scary at first, but there are many resources in which you can learn to become an effective coach. It does take some practice, so don't expect to be perfect your first go-round. Every season will be a learning experience and make sure you learn from your mistakes.

“CREATING SMILES FOR TODAY, ATHLETES FOR TOMORROW AND KNOWLEDGE OF THE GAME FOR A LIFETIME.”

