

Ages of Soccer Growth

| Ages 4 to 9 Childhood | Ages 10-14 Puberty | Ages 15 to 23 Adolescence | Ages 24 to ? Adulthood |
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| <p>Mostly technical repetitions, psychologically friendly and positive, simple combinations, decision making activities. Individual basic skills with an emphasis on keeping ball possession. Lots of balance and coordination exercises. Free play - Trial & Error - Discovery - Experimentation!</p> | <p>More combinations on offense and defense. Many decision making environments. Psychologically positive with correction. Advanced competitive skills against match opponents. Tactically work on the roles of attack and defense and the basic principles of play. Exercises should focus on endurance, rhythmic movement, flexibility and running mechanics. Application of where it all fits into the game - the part of the field.</p> | <p>Tactical application of ball skills. Intense fitness training now becomes a part of the training routine. Much of the focus of training is now on group and team tactics. Fitness training with an emphasis on speed, range of motion, strength and stamina. Emphasize now the mastery of ball skills and the match application of them.</p> | <p>Soccer is now either a recreational activity or a job. Consequently training will reflect this reality. Specialization in preparation!</p> |
| MATCHES | MATCHES | MATCHES | MATCHES |

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| <p>Matches of 3- to 6-a-side. No leagues or standings! No tournaments - festivals instead. Many fun and competitive games. Gain technical skills and game insight by playing in simplified soccer situations.</p> | <p>Matches of 8- to 11-a-side. Selection (try-outs) should not begin until the U13 age group. Less emphasis on the match results and more emphasis on players' performances.</p> | <p>11-a-side matches with a strong emphasis on combination play. Matches should be used as a learning opportunity to execute new tactical concepts and team formations. There must be a balance between competitive matches and training games.</p> | <p>Play to win! Ability is measured by the result of the game and overall performance.</p> |
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Table 1 Biological age groupings for player development.