

Montclair Soccer Club U8 Program Manual

Welcome to the U8 program at Montclair Soccer Club. Thank you for stepping up to coach this season. We would not have such a great community and such a successful program without each of you. This is the most fun age to coach! You are truly just encouraging a love for the ball and a love for the game. This short manual will give you the tools you need to run structured, successful sessions each week, and enjoy your games on the weekend. Please read it through and don't hesitate to ask questions.

Our U8 program covers 10 weeks in the Fall, and 8 weeks in the Spring. Team practices are held once per week, and teams play one game per weekend through both seasons.

Program Goals

For players to develop a love for soccer. This comes in 2 ways. A love for the ball: dribbling, moving the ball around, protecting it, playing based on the situation, etc. And a love for the game itself: scrimmages and small sided opposed game scenarios.

Equipment and Uniforms

Equipment is provided at each of our venues. Balls, cones, pinnies, goals, first aid, etc. can be found in the storage containers at each location. You can pull the equipment you need for the day, and return it when you're done. Please help us ensure the containers are kept neat and organized for ease of use. We appreciate your efforts. Coach jerseys are available year round at Skyline High School in our storage container. Please arrange pick up as needed. Player uniforms are sold at Soccer Pro in Berkeley. U8 players should have a red jersey, red shorts, and red socks. Players are required to wear shin guards covered by their socks, and cleats or turf shoes. Jersey numbers are not relevant at this age.

Recommended Weekly Practice Structure

recommended session length 60min
Arrival/Ice Breakers - 5 min
(Juggling, balance/coordination games)
Warm up - 15 min
(Fun games with a ball per player)
Small sided games: to goals and/or opposed - 10-15 min
(1v0, 2v0, 1v1s, 2v1s, 2v2s, dribbling/shooting games...)
Scrimmage: 4v4, 5v5, or 6v6 based on team size - 25-30 min
(Goalies optional, new-ball rule)

Game Day Set Up and Clean Up

If you are the first team scheduled to play on your assigned field, you are in charge of setting up your fields. This includes lining two 20x25yd fields with cones and building 4 bow nets. This will be done between you and your opponent. Field Maps are provided. If you are the last team

playing on your assigned fields, you are in charge of cleaning up your fields, packing everything away in the storage container, and locking up. Please ask for families to help! It shouldn't fall only on you.

Game Day Field Rules

Please help us in ensuring that all families remain on the track or in the bleachers. Families should not be on the turf. The turf is reserved for teams only. There is a strict NO DOG policy at ALL MSC venues. Please help us keep families off the high jump pit, and any other school athletics equipment. Our use of these venues relies on the good relationships we've built over the years. Failure to follow these rules could result in a loss of our permits here. Please help us promote good habits by enforcing these rules amongst your teams.

Game Day Structure

U8 teams have a maximum of 12 players per roster. Teams will split in half on game day based on whatever criteria you decide as coaches. Teams can be split randomly and balanced, or you can have one field with an older or more physical group, and one field with a younger or slower paced group. Coaches should agree on how they would like to split their teams. Games should be played in a 4v4 or 5v5 format (if using goal keepers). Coaches should agree on whether or not you'd like to play with goal keepers. Games are 40 minutes in length. You can play two 20 minute halves with a 2 minute half time, or four 10 minute quarters with 1 minute water breaks between each. Coaches should agree on which format you'd like to play. It can change week to week based on what you both prefer. One coach from each team (or parent-assistant) will work with each team to keep the game flowing. Coaches will play a new, neutral, ball in when the ball goes out of play. There are no formal rules at U8. The game should be flowing constantly with a new ball played by coaches quickly to promote lots of touches and lots of play time. Coaches should work together to ensure the game flows fairly. Please encourage all players to be engaged and participating, and please discourage the use of hands- both on the ball and other players, unless of course you are the goal keeper.

24/7 Coaching Support

24/7 UK Soccer Academy offers player and coach support in various ways throughout the year. With direct coaching support through the Fall, additional training opportunities for players in the Spring, staff education meetings throughout the year, as well as online session plans. Be sure to ask about the current supports in place and don't hesitate to utilize them!

Contacts

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