

# Harvard Soccer Club



**Fall 2012**

**U12 Coaching Curriculum**

## 1. Introduction

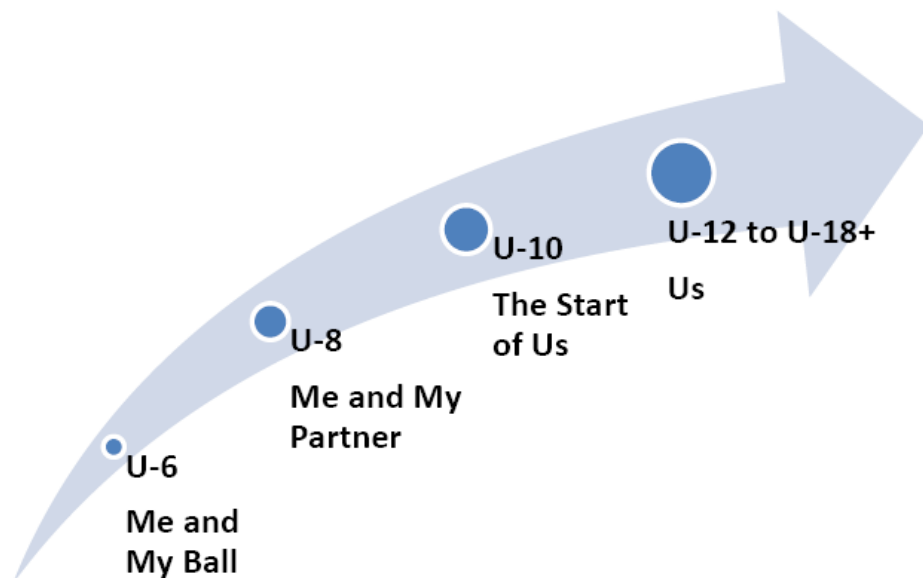
Welcome to the Harvard Soccer Club Player Development Curriculum for the U12 age group. The purpose of this document is to provide a teaching plan for our town U12 soccer players. This curriculum is modeled after the US Youth Soccer Player Development Model and the US Soccer Federation Best Practices for Coaching Soccer in the United States. Practice plans are provided by Massachusetts Youth Soccer and Challenger Sports.

In addition to providing a complete season practice plan, the curriculum introduces a skills assessment component. The assessment and measuring program is modeled after the nationally recognized iSoccer program.

## 2. U12 – For the Love of the Game

The U12 age group is a transitional time. The objective for this age group is to learn all of the fundamental soccer skills and build overall sports skills. Many players at this age are deciding if they want to commit deeply to soccer, stay in the game with a part-time commitment or drop the sport altogether. The effect of the role model is very important at this stage of development. This is a time of transition from self-centered to self-critical. The golden age of learning begins with the U10s and continuing with the U12s is the most important age for skill development. It is very important to establish discipline from the beginning of your sessions.

The coaching focus should be teaching the principles of attack and defense, and providing opportunities for players to experience a variety of positions. Emphasis should be placed on the principles of play and the roles of players when attacking and defending.



When attacking, all players are involved but with an awareness of cover/support by the goalkeeper and at least one covering field player. Develop an understanding of the roles that players have in supporting the attack; i.e.: the player with the ball (1<sup>st</sup> attacker), players providing immediate support (2<sup>nd</sup> attacker(s)) of the ball and other players (3<sup>rd</sup> attacker(s)) who create length (depth) and unbalance (width) the defense. All this needs to be shown in an environment with greater numbers of teammates and opponents on a larger playing field.

When defending, all players participate, even the players furthest up the field, getting goal-side of the opposing players. Continue to develop and show the principles of defending so that all players gain an understanding of defensive roles. Demonstrate the roles of players that delay (put pressure on the ball – (1<sup>st</sup> defender), the players that provide support (cover – 2<sup>nd</sup> defender(s)) and the players that provide balance (depth – 3<sup>rd</sup> defender(s)).

## **Components of the Game for the U10 Age Group**

### **Fitness**

Fitness work continues to be done with the ball. Also focus on agility at speed (sharp turns), acceleration, deceleration, reaction speed, range of motion exercises, proper warm-up and cool-down (include static stretching in the cool-down) are highly recommended now.

### **Technique**

Moving throw-in, master the qualities of a bouncing spinning ball. Experiment with the qualities of a flighted ball, feints\*\* with the ball, receiving bouncing and air balls with the thigh and chest, first touch receiving, heading to score goals and for clearances while standing or jumping, outside of foot passing, receiving with either foot, short passing with both feet, bending shots, crossing to near post space and penalty spot space and heel and flick passing. Introduce half volley and volley shooting, chipping to pass and slide tackle. For goalkeepers: W grip, footwork, underarm bowling, side-arm throwing to targets, taking own goal kicks, side-winder kick, low and forward diving and angle and near post play. Introduce deflecting and boxing.

\*\*\*A feint (body swerve) is done only with the body, no contact with the ball until the player in possession finally plays the ball. A feint could be done with almost any part of the body.

### **Psychology**

Keep it fun and enjoyable to foster a desire to play, self-motivation. Focus on teamwork, confidence, desire, mental skills, handling distress, how to learn from each match, fair play, emotional management (discipline).

### **Tactics**

2v1 defending, 2v2 attacking and defending, roles of 2<sup>nd</sup> attacker and defender, man-to-man defense, combination passing, playing on and around the ball as a group with purpose, verbal and visual communication for all positions, halftime analysis, general work on all restarts, wall pass at a variety of angles, passing combinations on the move and rotation of all players through the team – everyone plays in each position. Reinforce the principles of defense. For goalkeepers: positional play, basic angle play (ebb and flow) – into and down the line of the flight of the ball, commanding the goalmouth for the goalkeeper and positioning during a penalty kick and communication.

### **3. U7/U8 Training Session**

A typical training session should match the following plan.

- Should not exceed one hour and 30 mins
- Warm-up, small group activities, range of motion stretching (15mins)
- Introduce large group/team activities (six to eight players).
- Continue with directional games. Play to targets and/or zones. ( 30 minutes)
- Conclude with Small-Sided Games, 8v8 with goalkeepers. (35 minutes)
- Finish with cool down activities including static stretching (10 mins)

### **3.1. General Description of What Should be happening during Practice**

Each practice should address individual ball skill as well as individual and small group decisions, in the attack and when defending. As they mature and are capable of keeping track of more things that are occurring on the field, we can increase the number of players that compete against each other.

The most dramatic change from the U-10 age group is the players increased ability to stay focused and to begin taking responsibility for their decisions on the field. At the same time, this is still an eleven- or twelve- year old. While his or her concentration is better than a ten-year-old, it is still in no way that of an adult. Make sure that the game problems that are created for him or her to solve are still relatively simple (up to 6 v 6 or 7 v 7). Continue to encourage risk taking and experimenting with the ball, but begin to get them thinking about themes such as working together with his or her teammates to solve problems, as well as getting him or her used to keeping track of the other players on the field.

### **3.2. Information that is communicated to the Players by the Coach**

The coach of 12 year olds is responsible for encouraging and directing the enthusiasm of these ages towards attacking, technical and thoughtful soccer. All players should be encouraged to see their own role in the attack and the defense. Specifically, getting players to understand and recognize numbers up, even numbers and numbers down situations and the appropriate decisions based on each scenario. Keep in mind, where one player will view a 1 v 1 attacking situation as no advantage or a disadvantage; another may see this same scenario as a big advantage. Encourage each player based on his or her abilities, while at the same time, encourage all your players to work toward seeing 1 v 1, as both attacker and defender, as an advantage.

Care must be taken at the younger levels to select players based on their soccer abilities and not on their ability to achieve an immediate result. At the U-12 level, it is easy to win games by just using physically big players who have matured earlier than their peers. As a result, the smaller, skillful players are at times not chosen, as they are not able to “win” the game. Special care and attention must be given to these “smaller” players. At the same time, special care must also be given to the physically more mature players in developing their technical skill, and their ability to maneuver with the ball in tight spaces. As coaches, we always need to keep an idea on the long-term development of all the players

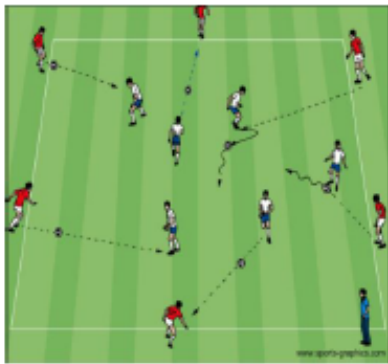
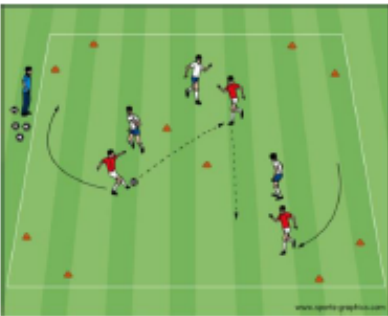

## **4. Practice Plans**

The following practice plans make up an 8-week season. The coach is encouraged to modify the activities to vary the pace, level of difficulty, and opportunity to maximize the number of ball touches.

# U12 Practice Plan - Week 1

## Topic: Passing and Receiving for Possession

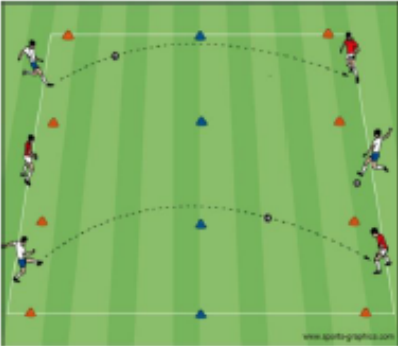
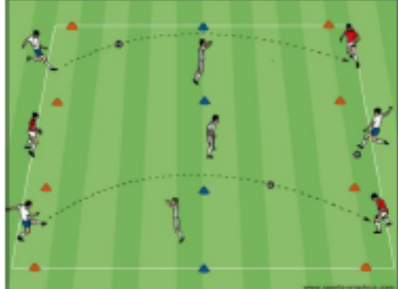

**Objective: To improve the players' ability to pass, receive, and possess the soccer ball when in the attack**

Technical Warm up	Organization	Coaching Pts.
	<p><b>Dutch Square:</b> Half of the players on the inside of the square (with soccer balls), half on the outside. The insiders will pass the soccer ball to the outsiders. The outsiders will pass the ball back with one or two touches to the insiders. The insiders will receive the soccer ball and look for another outsider to pass to. After a few minutes, switch insiders with outsiders. <b>Coach:</b> have players pass and receive with the right and left foot.</p>	<p><b>Passing:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Toe up (inside) or down &amp; turned in (outside)</li> <li>• Placement of non-kicking foot and good balance</li> </ul> <p><b>Receiving:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep feet moving before ball arrives and go to it</li> <li>• Keep ankle of receiving foot locked and body behind ball</li> <li>• Eye on ball at instant of reception</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Time: 15 minutes</i></p>
<b>Small Sided Game</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Coaching Pts.</b>
	<p><b>3v3 5 Goal Game:</b> In a 20x30 yard grid, five 2 yard goals are spread out throughout the grid. The teams score by passing and receiving through any of the goals to a teammate. <b>Coach:</b> Emphasize the importance of being in good supporting positions and good attacking shape. 3 Players need to be in a triangle.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tech of passing and receiving</li> <li>• Players in good supporting positions</li> <li>• Pace and accuracy of the pass</li> <li>• Finding the open gate or goal</li> <li>• First Touch – Directional</li> <li>• Clear communication (demand the ball)</li> <li>• Good team shape</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Time: 15 minutes</i></p>
<b>Exp. Small Sided Game</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Coaching Pts.</b>
	<p><b>4v4 or 5v5 to Four Small Goals:</b> In a 30x35 yd. grid with two small 3 feet cone goals on each of the 35 yard lines, near each corner. Each team defends and attacks two goals. If playing with 4 players, the attacking shape should be a diamond. If attacking with five players, the attacking shape should be a 3-2 or 2-1-2.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possess the ball to look for an opportunity to score</li> <li>• Players in good supporting positions</li> <li>• Decision making: safety versus risk</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Good team shape</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Time: 20 minutes</i></p>
<b>Game</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Coaching Pts.</b>
<p><b>6v6 to 8v8 Scrimmage</b></p>	<p>If 6v6, play in a 45x60 yd. field. If 8v8, play in a 55x80 yd. field. Play with Goalkeepers and encourage them to communicate with teammates.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All of the above</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Time: 30 minutes</i></p>
<b>COOL DOWN</b>	Activities to reduce heart rate, static stretching & review session. <b>Time: 5-10 Minutes</b>	

## U12 Practice Plan - Week 2

### Topic: Striking Lofted and Driven Balls (Long Balls)

**Objective: To introduce the players to the technique of striking lofted and driven long balls**

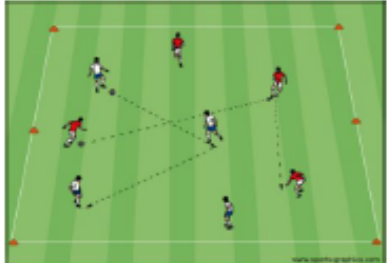
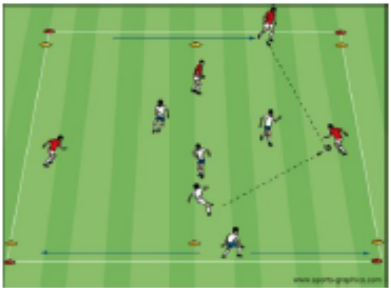

Technical Warm up	Organization	Coaching Pts.
	<p><b>High &amp; Long:</b> 2 players are at opposite ends behind a goal in a 10x20 yard grid, and try to score points by striking the soccer ball through the two goals without the soccer ball bouncing and/or rolling before crossing the goals. A player scores 3 points for every lofted/driven ball he/she strikes successfully. Receiving players can catch the ball. <b>Version 2:</b> The player taps the ball forward to strike it long <b>Version 3:</b> Use the other foot</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Body position and balance</li> <li>• Eye on the ball at moment of contact</li> <li>• Strike ball with ankle locked and hard bone on top of foot</li> <li>• Non-kicking foot directed at target</li> <li>• Lean the body back when striking the ball</li> <li>• Strike the lower part of the ball and follow through towards target landing on shooting foot</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Time: 15 minutes</b></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Small Sided Game</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Organization</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Coaching Pts.</b></p>
	<p><b>Over the Middle:</b> 2 players at the ends of a 15x30 yard grid are trying to hit soccer balls over the player in the middle. When the player in the middle intercepts or catches the soccer ball, he/she will change positions with the last player who struck the ball. <b>Version 2:</b> The middle player serves the ball to the kicking player</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technique of striking a ball served to you</li> <li>• Hitting the ball with the inside of the foot to curve it</li> <li>• Hitting the ball straight</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Time: 15 minutes</b></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Exp. Small Sided Game</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Organization</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Coaching Pts.</b></p>
	<p><b>3v3 + Targets - Go Long:</b> In a 20x40 yard grid with targets, two teams are trying to score by striking long balls to the target. If the target catches the ball without bouncing before entering his/her zone, the attacking team scores a point.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technique of striking a long ball</li> <li>• When             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ When you have no pressure</li> <li>○ On the run</li> <li>○ To get behind defenders</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Time: 20 minutes</b></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Game</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Organization</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Coaching Pts.</b></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>6v6 to 8v8 Scrimmage</b></p>	<p>If 6v6, play in a 45x60 yd. field. If 8v8, play in a 55x80 yd. field. Play with Goalkeepers and encourage them to communicate with teammates.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All of the above</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Time: 30 minutes</b></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>COOL DOWN</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Activities to reduce heart rate, static stretching &amp; review session – <b>Time 10 min.</b></p>	



# U12 Practice Plan - Week 3

## Topic: Passing for Penetration

**Objective: To improve decision making in possession and the ability of the players to beat defenders with a pass**

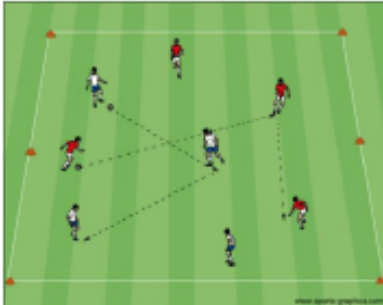
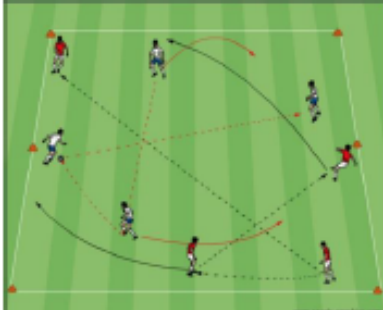
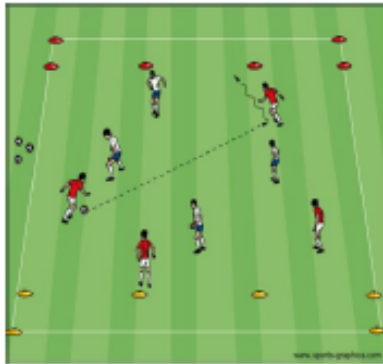
<p><b>Technical Warm up</b></p> 	<p><b>Organization</b></p> <p><b>Pass and Move:</b> Split players into groups of 3 or 4 (color-coded). Each group has a ball, inter-passing within their group. All groups are in the same grid playing through each other. (30x40 yard grid)</p>	<p><b>Coaching Pts.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> touch - Directional</li> <li>• Technique and type of pass</li> <li>• Technique of receiving</li> <li>• Communication: Verbal and Non Verbal</li> <li>• Supportive body position</li> <li>• Visual cues</li> </ul> <p><i>Time: 15 Minutes</i></p>
<p><b>Small Sided Game</b></p> 	<p><b>Organization</b></p> <p><b>3v3+1 to Targets:</b> Two teams of 3 players each with a neutral player in a 30x35 yard grid will try to connect passes and score by connecting with the target player. <b>Coach:</b> Stress when and how to split defenders with passes.</p>	<p><b>Coaching Pts.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proper weight, accuracy and timing of passes</li> <li>• Vision to split defenders with a pass</li> <li>• Possession vs. penetration</li> <li>• Proper angle and distance of support off the ball</li> </ul> <p><i>Time: 15 minutes</i></p>
<p><b>Exp. Small Sided Game</b></p> 	<p><b>Organization</b></p> <p><b>4v4 or 5v5 to End Zones:</b> Set up a 35 x 40 yard grid with end-zones behind the 40 yd. lines. Teams comprised of 4 players, depending on numbers and space. The attacking team needs to pass into the end zone and a player must time his/her run to receive the ball inside the end zone and score. <b>Coach:</b> Help the players to time their runs into the end zone to receive the ball.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start with passing and receiving in the end zone.</li> <li>• Players can dribble into the end zone for 1 point.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Coaching Pts.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Starting position of players</li> <li>• Shape, width, and depth</li> <li>• Body position open to field</li> <li>• Possession vs. penetration</li> <li>• Dribbling vs. passing</li> </ul> <p><i>Time: 20 minutes</i></p>
<p><b>Game</b></p> <p><b>6v6 to 8v8 Scrimmage</b></p>	<p><b>Organization</b></p> <p>If 6v6, play in a 45x60 yd. field. If 8v8, play in a 55x80 yd. field. Play with Goalkeepers and encourage them to communicate with teammates.</p>	<p><b>Coaching Pts.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All of the above</li> </ul> <p><i>Time: 30 minutes</i></p>
<p><b>COOL DOWN</b></p>	<p>Activities to reduce heart rate, static stretching &amp; review session. <b>Time: 5-10 Minutes</b></p>	



# U12 Practice Plan - Week 4

## Topic: Attacking Shape


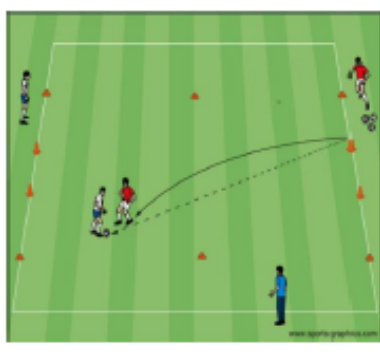
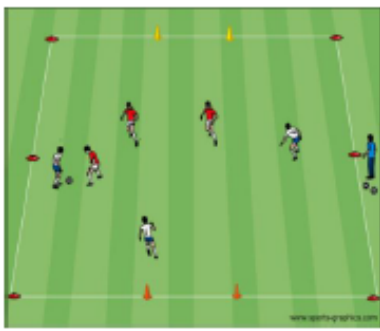
**Objective: To help the players understand the importance of individual, group, and team shape when in possession of the ball**

Technical Warm up	Organization	Coaching Pts.
	<p><b>Inter Passing in 3's or 4's:</b>            Players are in teams with different colors. Each team has one ball and passes and moves freely in the 30x 40 yard grid.  <b>Coach:</b> Concentrate on polishing the mechanics of passing and receiving as well as player's technical speed and individual/group shape.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strike the ball with the proper weight and surface</li> <li>• Take 1<sup>st</sup> touch toward a passing option</li> <li>• Keep body position open to the field</li> <li>• Develop rhythm of play in traffic</li> <li>• Communication</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Time: 15 minutes</i></p>
Small Sided Game	Organization	Coaching Pts.
	<p><b>4v0 + 4v0:</b>            Two groups of 4 players each with one ball per group. Play through each other in the same 30x40 yard grid. Each group focuses on their ball, individual/group shape, and speed of play.  <b>Coach:</b> Encourage players to keep a diamond/kite shape with players always being in good supportive positions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey the area at all times. This way players can anticipate what to do next with and without the ball</li> <li>• Keep body position open to the field</li> <li>• Increase speed of play in traffic</li> <li>• Keep the width and the depth</li> <li>• Communication</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Time: 20 minutes</i></p>
Exp. Small Sided Game	Organization	Coaching Pts.
	<p><b>4v4 or 5v5 to End Zones:</b>            Two teams of 4 or 5 players each play in a 30x40 area with a 2-3 yard end zone on the 30 yard lines. Each team defends one end zone and attacks the other. If a team successfully plays the soccer ball into the opposite end zone, they receive a goal. In order to score, the player receiving the soccer ball must arrive into the end zone when the ball is arriving. Waiting for the soccer ball in the end zone will be off-sides. The defenders cannot enter the end zone.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognize visual cues such as:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Teammates body shape</li> <li>○ Supporting positions</li> <li>○ Defending pressure</li> <li>○ Runs</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Rhythm of play based on what the game gives you by increasing speed of play at the right time</li> <li>• Adjust team shape as other players move</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Time: 20 minutes</i></p>
Game	Organization	Coaching Pts.
6v6 to 8v8 Scrimmage	<p>If 6v6, play in a 45x60 yd. field. If 8v8, play in a 55x80 yd. field. Play with Goalkeepers and encourage them to communicate with teammates.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All of the above</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Time: 30 minutes</i></p>
COOL DOWN	Activities to reduce heart rate, static stretching & review session. <i>Time: 5 Minutes</i>	

## U12 Practice Plan - Week 5

**Topic: Defending – Pressing Defender (Role of the 1<sup>st</sup> Defender)**



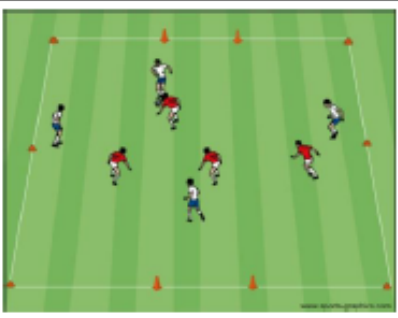
**Objective: To improve the players' ability to press the ball and to understand the role of the 1<sup>st</sup> defender**

Technical Warm up	Organization	Coaching Pts.
	<p><b>Pass and Press:</b> In a defined area, one team of players (rec pennies) all with a ball will pass to a member of the other team. Passes should not be more than 10 yds. long. After the pass, the player will press the receiver. Coach: In this activity, encourage the player to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ press sideways on &amp; send opponent in the opposite direction of his first touch</li> <li>➤ try to gain possession of ball with block tackle, poke tackle</li> <li>➤ close down, slow down, get down &amp; stay down</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speed of approach</li> <li>• Angle of approach</li> <li>• Good defensive stance                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Body weight on front of feet</li> <li>○ Eyes on the ball</li> <li>○ Slightly angled – one foot closer to attacker</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Close enough to make attacker look at ball</li> <li>• When and how to tackle</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Time: 15 minutes</i></p>
<b>Small Sided Game</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Coaching Pts.</b>
	<p><b>1v1 to Small Goals:</b> In a 10x15 yard grid, two groups of players will play 1v1 bouts. One group of players will serve to the other and defend the player with the ball, applying the principles of 1<sup>st</sup> defender. The play is over when one player scores or goes out of bounds. The next 1v1 will commence with a service from the defender. Players will switch sides after their turn is over.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approach quickly but not too fast with an angle that limits options</li> <li>• Good defensive stance</li> <li>• Apply pressure to take away space/time</li> <li>• Priorities are:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ deny penetration</li> <li>○ limit the attacker's vision options</li> <li>○ win ball back</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Time: 15 minutes</i></p>
<b>Exp. Small Sided Game</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Coaching Pts.</b>
	<p><b>3v3 to Small Goals</b> In a grid of 30x35 yards, two teams will play to score in the goals. Player will defend by pressing the player with the ball (applying the principles and role of 1<sup>st</sup> defender).</p>	<p>All of the above plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognizing when to be the 1<sup>st</sup></li> <li>• Funnel first attacker:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Towards a tight space (touchline)</li> <li>○ Into a covering defender</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Make the attacker play the ball with the weaker foot</li> <li>• When and how to switch</li> <li>• When and how to tackle</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Time: 20 Minutes</i></p>
<b>6v6 to 8v8 Scrimmage</b>	<p>If 6v6, play in a 45x60 yd. field. If 8v8, play in a 55x80 yd. field. Play with Goalkeepers and encourage them to communicate with teammates.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All of the above</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Time: 30 minutes</i></p>
<b>COOL DOWN</b>	Activities to reduce heart rate, static stretching & review session. <i>Time: 5-10 Minutes</i>	

## U12 Practice Plan - Week 6

### Topic: Defending – Pressure and Cover (Roles of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Defenders)

**Objective: To improve the players' ability to defend and recognize when and how to pressure and cover**


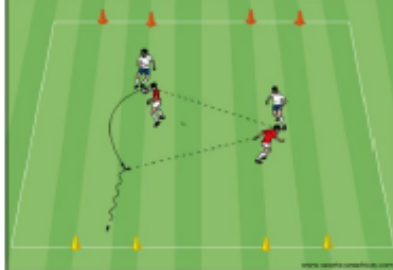

Technical Warm up	Organization	Coaching Pts.
	<p><b>Pressure Cover Warm-Up:</b> 3 players with one soccer ball. Two players about 10 yards apart pass and move with each other. The third player moves with the group staying about 10 yards away. One of the players passes a ball to the third while his teammate immediately applies pressure (1<sup>st</sup> defender). The passer becomes the cover player (2<sup>nd</sup> defender). Player three tries to split defender with a one touch pass or a dribble.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> defender should bend his/her run to press attacker and force the opponent in the direction he/she wants him/her to go</li> <li>• Approach fast, arrive slow</li> <li>• Defensive stance-on their toes, knees bent, one foot forward, one foot back</li> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> Defender "Ball"</li> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> Defender "Force him left/right"</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Time: 10 Minutes</i></p>
	<p><b>2v2 to Two Small Goals:</b> In a 15x20 yd. grid with small goals on each end line, play 2v2 matches. Rotate teams to different fields. You could play matches with off sides.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speed and angle of approach</li> <li>• Pressing defender forces head down of attacker</li> <li>• Covering defender is positioned about 30 degrees behind pressure</li> <li>• Patience; do not over- commit</li> <li>• Good communication to facilitate role switching while defending</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Time: 20 Minutes</i></p>
	<p><b>4v4 to Small Goals:</b> In a grid, two teams will play to score in the goals. Players will defend, applying the principles and roles of 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and start introducing the 3<sup>rd</sup> defending roles.</p>	<p>All of the above plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognizing when to be the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> defender</li> <li>• Shape and communication</li> <li>• Visual and verbal cues                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ When and how to switch</li> <li>○ Angle of coverage</li> <li>○ When and how to tackle</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Time: 25 Minutes</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Game</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>6v6 or 8v8 Scrimmage</b></p>	<p>Play with goalkeepers in an appropriate size field for the number of players. As the game is going on, praise successful defending and connection by the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> defenders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All of the above</li> <li>• Goalkeeper communication with defenders</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Time: 30 Minutes</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>COOL DOWN</b></p>	<p>Activities to reduce heart rate, static stretching &amp; review session. <b>Time: 5 Minutes</b></p>	



# U12 Practice Plan - Week 7

## Topic: Combination Play




**Objective:** To assist players to recognize when to combine with teammates and what combination is appropriate to use

Technical Warm up	Organization	Coaching Pts.
	<p><b>Dutch Square:</b> Half the players create a square in a defined space with a ball. Players without balls are in the middle and check to receive a pass from outside players. Once they are inside, players have the ball and they look to connect a pass with another outside player. Review technique of passing &amp; receiving</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Introduce Take Overs</li> <li>➤ Introduce Wall Passes</li> <li>➤ Introduce Overlaps</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Time: 15 minutes</i></p>	<p><b>General</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality technique while passing and receiving</li> <li>• Be patient &amp; let opportunities develop</li> <li>• Positive environment to encourage creative and instinctive play</li> <li>• Communication</li> </ul> <p><b>Takeover</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> attacker runs directly at the 1<sup>st</sup> attacker from the opposite direction</li> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> attacker protects the ball from the 1<sup>st</sup> defender by keeping body between ball and defender</li> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> attacker leaves the ball and 2<sup>nd</sup> attacker takes the ball using same foot (right to right or left to left)</li> <li>• Simple communication: “take” or “leave”</li> </ul> <p><b>Wall Pass</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> attacker dribbles at 1<sup>st</sup> defender</li> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> attacker is slightly ahead of defender in good supporting angle turned sideways on</li> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> attacker reads defenders and supporting cues; decide to dribble or play a wall pass</li> <li>• Disguise, deception of pass, and runs</li> <li>• Accuracy and quality of pass</li> <li>• Look for opportunities to create numbers up situations (2v1, 3v1 etc)</li> </ul> <p><b>Overlap</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> attacker dribbles at 1<sup>st</sup> defender creating space for 2<sup>nd</sup> attacker to overlap into; ball gets played into live space</li> </ul>
<b>Small Sided Game</b>	<b>Organization</b>	
	<p><b>2v2 to 4 Goals:</b> Two teams trying to score through the cone goals by passing or dribbling, looking for the appropriate chance to execute a combination. Stress the opportunities to combine (wall passing, overlaps, and takeovers).</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Time: 15 minutes</i></p>	
<b>Exp. Small Sided Game</b>	<b>Organization</b>	
	<p><b>3v3 or 4v4 +1:</b> In a 25x30 yd. grid, two teams of 3 or 4 players, each with a neutral player who plays for the team in possession of the soccer ball, will play to score by passing through the cones. A goal scored after a combination play is worth 5 points.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Time: 20 minutes</i></p>	
<b>Game</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Coaching Pts.</b>
<b>6v6 to 8v8 Scrimmage</b>	<p>If 6v6, play in a 45x60 yd. field. If 8v8, play in a 55x80 yd. field. Play with Goalkeepers and encourage them to communicate with teammates.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All of the above</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Time: 30 minutes</i></p>
<b>COOL DOWN</b>	<p>Activities to reduce heart rate, static stretching &amp; review session. <b>Time: 5-10 Minutes</b></p>	

# U12 Practice Plan - Week 8

## Topic: Striking Long Ball II

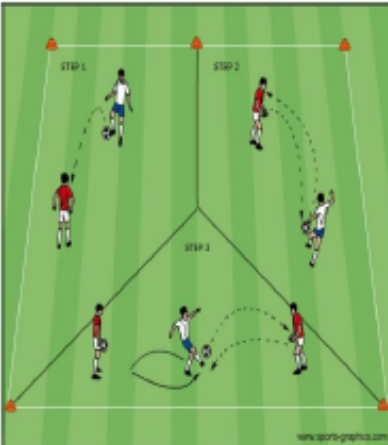
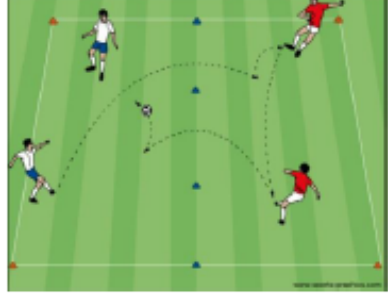
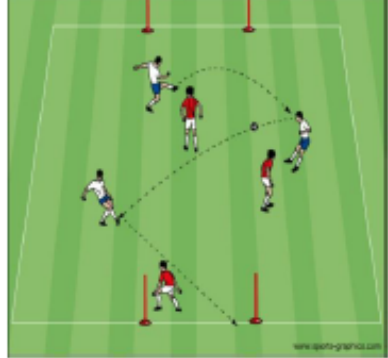
**Objective: To introduce the players to the technique of striking lofted and driven long balls**

<p><b>Technical Warm up</b></p> 	<p><b>Organization</b></p> <p><b>Long Passing – Up, Back, and Long:</b> One player at each end of a 15x40 yard grid with a player in the central zone (the setter) to receive and pass the soccer ball back to the long passer. <b>The procedure is as follows:</b> The <b>kicker</b> passes to the <b>setter</b> in the middle zone and he returns the soccer ball back to the <b>kicker</b> for him/her to strike a long ball to the other side.</p>	<p><b>Coaching Pts.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Body position and balance</li> <li>• Eye on the ball at moment of contact</li> <li>• Strike ball with ankle locked and hard bone on top of foot</li> <li>• Non-kicking foot directed at target</li> <li>• Lean the body back when striking the ball</li> <li>• Strike the lower part of the ball and follow through towards target, landing on shooting foot</li> </ul> <p><b>Setter</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pass to the Kicker – proper angle</li> <li>• Quality of the pass</li> </ul> <p><b>Time: 15 minutes</b></p>
<p><b>Small Sided Game</b></p> 	<p><b>Organization</b></p> <p><b>3v1+3v1 Over the Top:</b> In a 30x40 grid, a team will play 3v1 and will try to strike a long pass over the two defenders in the central area. If the player failed and gets the pass intercepted, then the group will change with the defending group. If the pass is successful, another defender enters and tries to intercept the pass.</p>	<p><b>Coaching Pts.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technique of striking a long ball</li> <li>• Visual cues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ No opponents in front</li> <li>○ No pressure in front</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Type of long ball <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Hitting the ball with the inside of the foot to curve it</li> <li>○ Hitting the ball straight</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Quick rotation of the ball to find the open man to strike the long pass</li> </ul> <p><b>Time: 15 minutes</b></p>
<p><b>Exp. Small Sided Game</b></p> 	<p><b>Organization</b></p> <p><b>3v3/4v4/5v5 +Targets - Go Long:</b> In a 30x40 yard grid with targets, two teams are trying to score by striking long balls to the target. If the target catches the ball without bouncing before entering his/her zone, the attacking team scores a point.</p>	<p><b>Coaching Pts.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technique of striking a long ball</li> <li>• When <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ When you have no pressure</li> <li>○ On the run</li> <li>○ To get behind defenders</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Time: 25 minutes</b></p>
<p><b>Game</b></p>	<p><b>Organization</b></p>	<p><b>Coaching Pts.</b></p>
<p><b>6v6 to 8v8 Scrimmage</b></p>	<p>If 6v6, play in a 45x60 yd. field. If 8v8, play in a 55x80 yd. field. Play with Goalkeepers and encourage them to communicate with teammates.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All of the above</li> </ul> <p><b>Time: 30 minutes</b></p>
<p><b>COOL DOWN</b></p>	<p>Activities to reduce heart rate, static stretching &amp; review session. <b>Time: 5-10 Minutes</b></p>	

# U12 Practice Plan - Week 9

## Topic: Striking Volleys

Objective: To improve the players technique of striking volleys

Technical Warm up	Organization	Coaching Pts.
	<p><b>Introduction to Striking Volleys:</b> Groups of two players with a ball</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Step 1:</b> Players will self-serve the soccer ball and strike the ball to his/her partner who will catch the soccer ball and repeat the action</li> <li>• <b>Step 2:</b> One partner serves to the other. The serve is knee high and underhanded</li> <li>• <b>Step 3:</b> In 3's. One player moves and volleys and the other two serve the ball. Switch players after a few services.</li> </ul> <p>All technical exercises will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Let ball bounce and volley</li> <li>○ Not let the ball bounce and volley</li> </ul> <p><i>Players will try to volley the ball with the right and the left foot.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep eyes open and focused on the ball</li> <li>• Use arms for balance</li> </ul> <p><b>Inside of the foot</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bring the knee up to the side and get the toe up, heel down and ankle locked</li> <li>• The foot should make contact through the middle of the ball</li> <li>• The plant foot will help the player aim for the target, keeping the head and shoulders straight.</li> </ul> <p><b>Instep</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knee higher than the ball</li> <li>• Lock ankle and point toe down for instep (laces) volley</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Time: 15 minutes</b></p>
<b>Small Sided Game</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Coaching Pts.</b>
	<p><b>2v2 Soccer Tennis:</b> Play 2v2 in a 10x15 yard grid. A player starts off with a ball and serves it with a volley over a line or net in the middle of the area. The ball can bounce once, to return the ball to the other side both players must have a touch and the ball can bounce again then must be returned. A point is won on a bad serve or when one team fails to return the ball. <b>Coach:</b> Play 5 minute games. Players can use inside or instep volleys.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not let the ball strike you</li> <li>• Strike the ball on the upper half of the ball to drive it down; the middle of the ball to drive it level; the lower half of the ball to drive it up</li> <li>• Lock ankle and turn toe up for inside of the foot volley; players should lock ankle and point toe down for instep (laces) volley</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Time: 15 minutes</b></p>
<b>Exp. Small Sided Game</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Coaching Pts.</b>
	<p><b>3v3/4v4 Headers and Volleys:</b> Organize players into teams of 3 or 4 players. Set up a 25 yard x 30 yard rectangular field with goals centrally located at each end. The team in possession passes the ball by volleying to his/her teammate and catching it. The only way to score is by volleying the ball to goal. Players can only take a maximum of 3 steps with the ball; then they must pass the ball to a teammate. Goals can only be scored by one touch volley into the goal for 5 points or heading the soccer ball for 3 points. If the soccer ball bounces more than twice, possession goes to the other team</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use inside of the foot volley to pass to a teammate</li> <li>• Use Instep volley for power to score and for a distance pass, clearance away from goal or cross to goal</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Time: 20 minutes</b></p>
<b>Game</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Coaching Pts.</b>
<b>6v6 Scrimmage</b>	Play with Goalkeepers in a 45-60 yard long by 35-45 yard wide field.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All of the above</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Time: 30 minutes</b></p>
<b>COOL DOWN</b>	Activities to reduce heart rate, static stretching & review session – <b>Time 10 min.</b>	



## 5. Skills Development and Assessment

Based on the National Assessment program developed by iSoccer, the following is a smaller skills program that introduces players to the concept of a skills assessment program. Called the iSoccer Six, the following skills are included: Toe Taps, Foundations, Juggling (preferred and non-preferred foot), change of pace (preferred and non-preferred foot). Each assessment exercise represents a core topic of technical proficiency and should be introduced and taught before any assessment results are recorded.

It is recommended that you take one skill each week and assess your layers at successive practices.

An iSoccer Assessment should consist of the following:

- Step 1: Measure – Assess your Players
- Step 2: Improve – Work on improving their scores
- Step 3: Reward – Recognize their achievement

### Key Coaching Points

- One timer coordinates all groups and one recorder collects scores
- Players are partnered and the resting player counts for their partner
- Bring all players around one grid to demonstrate and have players count out loud
- Prior to starting the clock, allow a 10 to 20 second practice period
- Keep the environment competitive and fun
- Remind players to try their best and if they mess up, to not worry and keep going

The following video provides a guide to performing the skills.

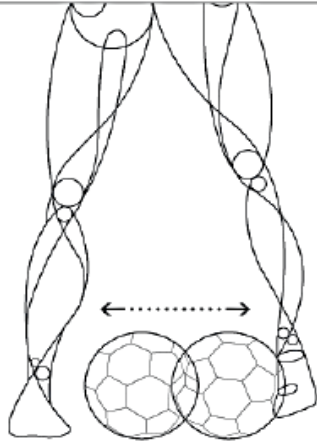
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u9SUZ712Gao>

**Reference:** [www.isoccer.org](http://www.isoccer.org)

**1** Toe Taps

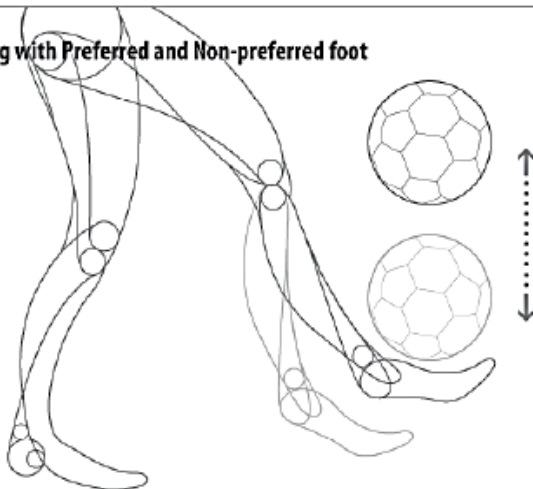
Duration: 20 seconds

**Instruction:** Using alternating feet, touch the ball with the sole of your foot. Each touch counts as one point. Count the total number of touches to determine your score.

**2** Foundations

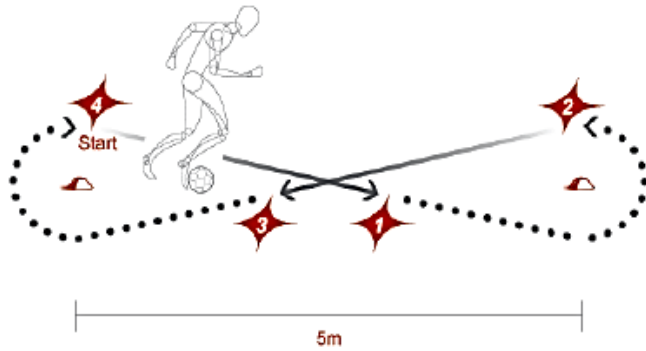
Duration: 20 seconds

**Instruction:** Using alternating feet, knock the ball back and forth with the inside of your foot. Each touch counts as one point. Count the total number of touches to determine your score.

**3** **4** Juggling with Preferred and Non-preferred foot

Duration: 20 seconds

**Instruction:** Juggle the ball with your preferred foot and stay within the grid. Each touch counts as one point. Do not count touches with your other foot or other body parts. If the ball touches the ground, pick it up and restart counting at one. Record your highest score. Repeat this exercise juggling with your non-preferred foot only.

**6 7 Change of Pace with Preferred and Non-preferred Foot**

Duration: 20 seconds

**Instruction:** Arrange cones as shown. Start to the left of the cone. Dribble the ball with your preferred foot in a Figure 8. Each completed Figure 8 counts as four points. Partially completed sections are counted as one point each. Restart if you touch the ball with the opposite foot or if the ball does not go around the cone. Repeat this exercise dribbling with your non-preferred foot only.

# TEAM OR GROUP RECORDING SHEET

	PLAYERS	Toe Taps	Foundation	Juggling / PF	Juggling / NPF	Change of Pace / PF	Change of Pace / NPF	Change of Direction
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								
8								
9								
10								
11								
12								
13								
14								