

SWM Rec Coach's Guide



Age Group Expectations

By the end of...	U4	U6	U8	U10	U12	U14
Positions	The child should understand they are on a team, playing against an opposing team.	The child should understand the concepts of offense and defense.	The child should know where on the field offense and defense positions play, and they should start to learn the difference in roles	The child understands the terms forward, midfielder, and fullback and knows where those positions are and the role of each position.	The child is now capable of playing their position -- staying in the relative area of the field where assigned. They aggressively go after the ball during a game.	Striker, sweeper, and stopper are added to the list of positions they know. The child is capable of adjusting their position on the field based on circumstances. They aggressively go after the ball during a game.
Passing	The child is getting more comfortable with the concept of passing the ball / playing a team sport.	The child is able to separate kicking and passing as different skills.	The child is trying to pass to teammates and is no longer just kicking the ball to random places.	The child is able to pass the ball to stationary teammates.	The child is able to lead their running teammates with the ball when passing.	The child is able to pass the ball with greater accuracy to stationary and moving teammates.

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Dribbling	The child is getting more comfortable with dribbling the ball.	The child is able to separate kicking and dribbling as different skills.	The child is able to dribble with the ball no further than 10' out in front of them.	The child is able to dribble with the ball no further than 5' out in front of them.	The child is able to dribble with the ball keeping the ball close to them.	The child is able to dribble with the ball keeping the ball close to them at higher speeds.
Kicking	The child is getting more comfortable with kicking the ball.	The child is able to separate kicking, passing, and dribbling as different skills.	The child understands why they are kicking the ball (goal kicks, corner kicks). They are able to kick the ball more than 15 feet away.	The child understands the importance of never kicking the ball across their team's goal during goal kicks. They are able to kick the ball more than 25 feet away.	The child is able to lift the ball off of the ground for longer kicks -while also never crossing it in front of the goal and actively trying to keep it out of the middle of the field.	The child is able to place the ball during corner kicks. They are passing to a teammate on goal kicks. They know the difference between direct and indirect kicks and what to do with those.
Throw-ins	The child should understand the basics of why they are throwing the ball in. (out of bounds)	The child should understand they need to be behind the line for a throw-in, with their feet on the ground	The child should also know the right form (no twisting, start with ball behind head), while still keeping their feet on the ground.	The child should start improving their distance and ability to throw to a teammate.	The child should be able to start dragging their foot for a more powerful throw if the other skills have been reached	The child should be able to do a running throw-in with proper form to a teammate.

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Goalie	The child understands they are not to hang on the net.	The child understands they are not the goalie and that they are not allowed to hang on the net.	The child understands they are not the goalie and they understand where a defensive person vs. the goalie should be on the field	The child is able to understand basic goalie skills: throwing the ball to open teammates, keeping hands up to protect their face, what the boxes on the ground mean.	The child is able to punt the ball. They are willing to come off the goal line to get the ball. They are starting to understand angles, and the need to be aggressive.	The child aggressively goes after protecting the goal, using angles and distance to improve their odds.
Start / Direction of play	The child understands which goal they are trying to score on.	The child understands that the goal they are shooting on changes half-way thru the game.	The child understands when the ball is kicked off at midfield (start of game, start of 2nd half, after every goal).	The child understands which team gets to kick off after a goal. They understand the importance of passing to a teammate at kickoff.	The child is able to reset to their positions after a goal without prompting. They always pass to a teammate at kickoff.	The child makes good choices on where to best pass the ball at kickoff.
Conditioning	--	The child should be capable of playing 5+ consecutive minutes / game without needing to sub.	The child should be capable of playing 10+ consecutive minutes / game without needing to sub.	The child should be capable of playing 15+ consecutive minutes / game without needing a sub.	The child should be capable of playing 20+ consecutive minutes / game without needing a sub.	The child should be capable of playing 25+ consecutive minutes / game without needing a sub.

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Offsides	--	--	--	At a minimum, the child understands the concept of offsides as either a forward or a fullback.	The child understands offsides as a whole.	The child as a fullback is able to start using offsides to the team's advantage. As a forward, they are able to recognize and adjust to the other team's defensive maneuvers.
Practices - Guidance for Coaches	As part of scheduled game / scrimmage time		1 hour practice, 1-2 times / week	1.5 hour practices, 2 times / week.	1.5 - 2 hour practices, 2+ times / week.	2 hour practices, 2+ times / week
High Level Summary of SWM REC Rules to Know	No Goalie			Goalie is not allowed to punt the ball. Unlimited steps for a goalie while carrying the ball. Throw-ins cannot go to a goalie.	Goalie may punt the ball. Unlimited steps for a goalie while carrying the ball. Throw-ins cannot go to a goalie.	
	No Offsides			Offsides measured against special break-out line.	Offsides measured against midfield	
	During goal kicks, the other team must wait behind the midfield line until the ball is kicked.			During goal kicks, the other team must wait behind the break-out line until the ball is kicked.	No restrictions	
	No Heading the Ball - concussion risk			No Heading the Ball - concussion risk		
	Slide tackles are not allowed - high risk of injury			Slide tackles are not allowed - high risk of injury		
	Sub times as agreed with other coach. Unlimited subs allowed.			Subs allowed on your throw-ins, all goal kicks, at halftime, and on any goals scored. Subs only allowed on other team's throw-ins and corner kicks if they are subbing. Unlimited subs allowed.		