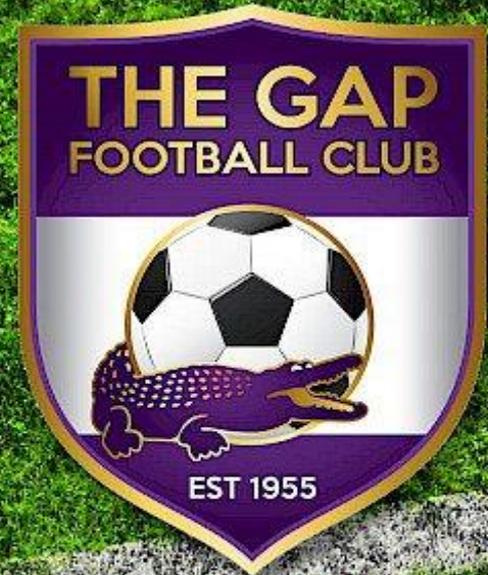


# The Gap Football Club

U6 and U7 Coaching Manual





# FFA Philosophy

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## **Just let them play a lot of varied fun football related games!**

In the 'good old days' as a kid you learned to play football in the street or the park. There were no coaches involved who made you run laps or do stretches and push-ups. When you were with just one mate you played a 1 v 1 game, when there were 8 of you, you played 4 v 4. There were no referees either, you made your own rules and every problem got solved. You just played, every free minute of the day.

This was (and still is) the best possible way to develop a basic skill level, understanding and passion for football. In third World countries the old saying "the game is the teacher" still applies and is one of the reasons why we find so many creative and technically good players from Africa and South America in the European top leagues. But in our developed society children do not play sports in the streets and parks that much anymore. They watch television, surf the internet, play computer games, chat on Twitter and Facebook as well as having to study. As parents we now send our children to a club or academy to learn to play football and, despite all good intentions, here we make the mistake of 'coaching' children this age.

The first and most important step when 'coaching' the youngest kids is to take the word 'coach' out of your mind. Your most important job is to recreate that street football environment, be an organiser of fun football-related practices and..... let them play! This approach, where they can 'discover' how the game works in a natural way, is the right one for the Discovery Phase.



# The Discovery Phase

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The U6 and U7 age groups are under the Discovery Phase of the FFA Curriculum. It is characterised as follows:

## Discovery Phase

- Discovering one's (im)possibilities through trial & error
- Natural development: 'learn FOOTBALL by playing football'
- No 'coaching' but organising fun football exercises
- Replicating the 'street/park football' environment of the past
- Emphasis on building a love of the game

## Player Characteristics

What are the characteristics of children in this age bracket?

- They are still 'clumsy' (lack fine motor skills), because they are still developing their coordination
- They have a short span of attention and are quickly and easily distracted
- They are 'self-centred' and not yet able to really work together (so do not ask them to perform team play, it is impossible for them!)
- They play or participate for fun with short bursts of energy and enthusiasm
- They are unable to handle a lot of information (instructions; feedback) What does this mean for training sessions with children this age?



# Miniroos Session Guides

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This ALDI MiniRoos Kick-Off Program Leader session guide consists of fifteen (15) game-based activities suitable for children aged 4-6 and 7- 9, of all abilities. It is based on Football Federation Australia's ALDI MiniRoos program, where the focus is on enjoyment and participation. The activities are designed to help people with minimal experience in football to deliver fun, inclusive games, in line with the Game Sense philosophy of coaching.

The activities promote a facilitated approach to coaching. The games can be replicated on a smaller scale, with the children in groups, setting up their game and managing it themselves. This provides the coach with the opportunity to observe and ensure that all players are having fun, while being actively involved in a safe environment, and to provide discrete coaching where necessary.

The Miniroos session guides can be found in the Aldi Miniroos Coaches Information section on the The Gap FC website here:

<http://www.gapfootball.org.au/juniors/coaching-resources/>



# Training Session Structure

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Each session consists for three sections:

## **Beginning**

Games to warm up the players and introduce a skill or

## **Middle**

Minor games to focus on skill development, usually followed by a Small-sided game.

## **End**

Low-intensity, concluding activities followed by a quick review to allow the coach and players to provide feedback about the skills and games that were played.



# Coaching Tips

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## Skills in focus

- Dribbling
- Running with the ball
- Controlling the ball
- Basic passing skills
- **Always** take two touches (control and then dribble or shoot)
- **Don't** just kick it or boot it first time
- Encourage the use of both feet at all times

## Session Tips

- **Keep feedback positive and constructive**
- Make sure activities are fun and engaging. If the players aren't engaged then change the drill
- If you can make it into a race then you can ensure 100% effort and engagement
- Keep talking to a minimum and focus on ensuring each player gets the maximum number of touches possible during a session
- Do not have players standing in long queues – break them into groups of 2 or 3 for activities
- Transition quickly between activities, the players lose focus very quickly at this age
- Include a fun game in each session – see some suggestions on a later slide
- Have a practice game of at least 15 minutes at the end of each session
- For bad behaviour use brief timeouts in the first instance and engage the parents to manage their children's behaviour if it is persistent. If there is an ongoing issue please contact the JDO for your age group for assistance.



# C.H.A.N.G.E.I.T

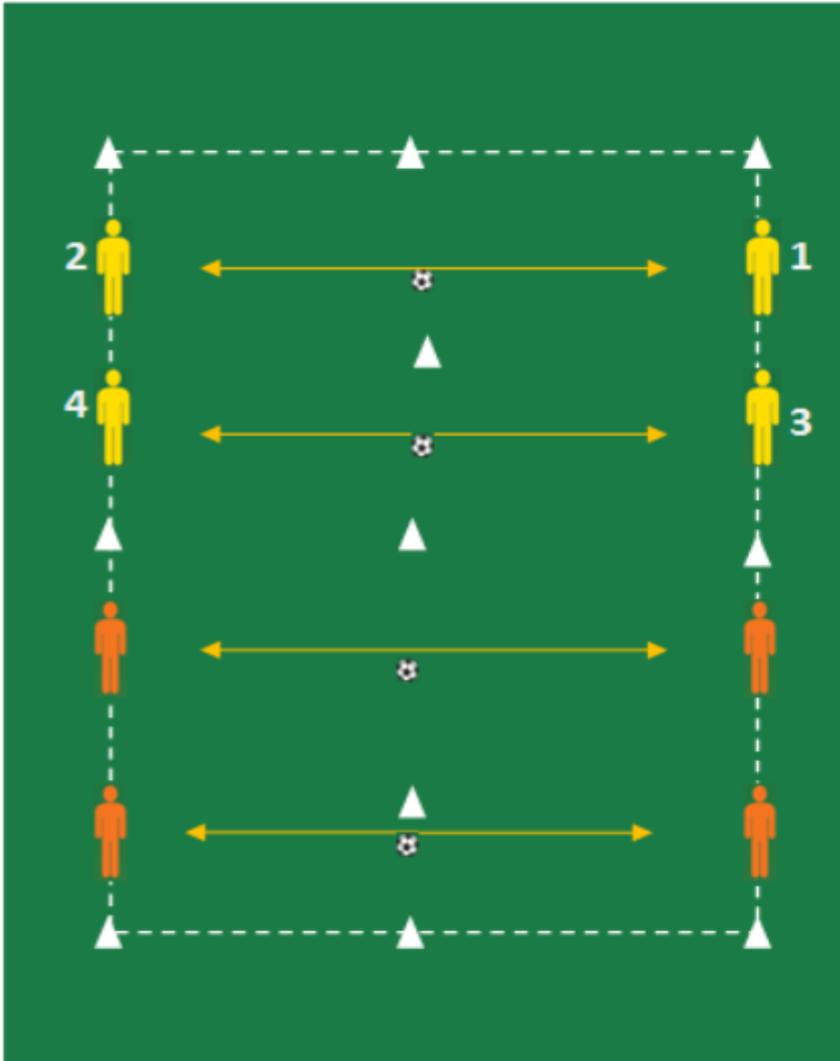
There are a number of ways for the coach to tailor the session ensure that players are engaged and that activities are of the right complexity and intensity to suit their players' skill level.

<b>C</b>	<b>COACHING STYLE</b> Provide feedback in the drink break or change of activities without interrupting the game. Use player role models.
<b>H</b>	<b>HOW YOU SCORE/WIN</b> Increase opportunities to score.
<b>A</b>	<b>AREA</b> Increase or decrease the game challenges by changing the size/shape of the playing area, i.e. long and narrow, short and wide, smaller/larger.
<b>N</b>	<b>NUMBERS</b> Use different team numbers of players to overload the advantage of one team or vary the number of turns at goal, etc.
<b>G</b>	<b>GAME RULES</b> Change the rules slightly, i.e. no tackling, minimum number of passes, etc.
<b>E</b>	<b>EQUIPMENT</b> Vary the equipment used, i.e. a bigger goal, smaller goals, more goals.
<b>I</b>	<b>INCLUSION</b> Engage the players in modifying the practices; provide options they could choose from to encourage ownership. Consider what can a player do as opposed to what they can't or your perception of what they can or can't do.
<b>T</b>	<b>TIME</b> Reduce or extend the time to perform actions, i.e. how many passes in 20 seconds, get a shot at goal within 30 seconds.



# Introducing Passing

## Passing and receiving



This drill is a good one to start introducing passing technique and it may be a good idea to do it a few times before undertaking the drills in the FFA curriculum to build passing skills and confidence.

Players should both pass and control the ball with the inside of their foot.

1. Pairs of players start facing each other about 2m apart. Each time they complete a pass they take one step backward until they reach the boundary. If a pass goes astray they start again from where they are standing. Once they have moved back the full distance go again with the other foot.

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# Fun activities and games

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## 1. Red Rover

- Can be done with or without the ball

## 2. What's the time Mister Wolf

- The coach is at one end of the training area and at dinner time the players have to dribble and score a goal before the wolf gets them

## 3. Pirate's Cave

- Place the goals back to back in the training area and the players have to try and throw rocks into the pirates caves ensuring an angry and noisy pirate. Place a cone 5m away from each goal mouth so that after they land a rock they need to dribble around the cone before shooting again. Let the players have a turn as a pirate as well. Teaches dribbling/shooting past a defender and defending against an attacker.

## 4. Kick the coach

- The coach stands inside a small square of cones while the players kick the ball at them. Loud yells of "ouch" go down well.

## 5. Ironmen and Supermen

- 3 players line up in a straight line facing you and the other 3 players in a line parallel to the first line also facing you, so that you are standing at the end of both lines which are spaced a couple of meters apart. Mark about 10 meters to the side of each line with cones. One line are the Ironmen and the other are Supermen. When you yell the name of one line, they have to run away from the other line to reach the markers 10 m away. The other line has to try to follow and tag them before they make it to safety. If you tag them, you get a point. Can be done with ball as well eventually.

## 6. Red Light Green Light

- Create a starting line for each of the players, and the coach should move 15-20 yards away. With the coaches back to the players, he yells GREEN LIGHT and the players try to dribble to the coach. When the coach yells RED LIGHT, he waits a moment and then turns to face the players. Anyone who is not stopped has to go back to the farthest person from the coach.

## 7. Stuck in the mud (with ball)

- All players have a ball and one player is "it". The "it" players dribbles around trying to tag other players who freeze with their legs apart and ball held above their head; players also freeze if they leave the marked out playing area. They are freed when another player dribbles the ball through their legs.

## 8. Control, dribble, shoot

- The players line up in two lines of 3 about 10m from the goal and a cone is placed 2.5m from the each goal mouth. The two goals are placed next to each other and the coach stands between the goals with 6 balls. The coach passes the ball to each team at the same time and the first player in line has to control the ball, dribble to the cone in front of the goal and shoot when they get there. Once the ball is in the net the coach passed to the next player in line. First team to get all 3 balls in the net wins.



# Small Sided Football Matches

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Small –sided football matches are designed to create a street football environment and as such the coaches are there to facilitate an environment for the players to have fun, not to try and impose a structure or tactical approach to the game.

Information related to Miniros games and rules can be found here:

[https://www.playfootball.com.au/sites/play/files/2018-01/14701\\_football\\_aldi-miniroos-collateral\\_playing-formats-rules.pdf](https://www.playfootball.com.au/sites/play/files/2018-01/14701_football_aldi-miniroos-collateral_playing-formats-rules.pdf)

## Key things to keep in mind

- All 8 players on the pitch will tend to swarm around the ball
- Some players may forget there is a game going on at all
- Going in the wrong direction is not uncommon
- Passing or spreading out is very unlikely to happen at this age so don't attempt to force it. This will come naturally over time as passing activities are introduced
- Please ensure no players hang out by either of the goals, we want all players to be engaged at all times

## Coaches and parents

- Coaches please don't coach from the sidelines unless someone is going the wrong way or is confused about taking a goal kick or kick in
- Please keep to positive feedback and offer instructions before the game and at half-time only
- Please ensure that parents do not coach or instruct players from the sidelines under any circumstances
- Ensure that the coach and players shake hands with the referee and say thank you after the game



# Coaching Resources

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Club coaching resources can be found on the website here:

<http://www.gapfootball.org.au/juniors/coaching-resources/>

Club forms and policies, including those on the player disciplinary process and the complaints structure can be found here:

<http://www.gapfootball.org.au/about-us/forms-policies/>



# Code of Conduct

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At The Gap FC we maintain the highest standards as a coaching community. Please ensure that the following rules are adhered to at all times.

- Under no circumstances is criticism or negative commentary towards players tolerated at this club. Without exception provide positive feedback and then focus on areas for improvement; if players are not improving it is a coaching issue and not a player issue so please seek support if required.
- Do not enter the field of play for any reason unless specifically invited to do so by the referee.
- All substitutions must be made at the halfway line; please ensure that the substituted player leaves the field of play before the substitute enters.
- Please minimise intensive or loud coaching from the sidelines. Where possible use training, half-time and post-match meetings to provide coaching instructions.
- Please do not allow parents or managers to coach or instruct players from the sidelines under any circumstances. All club members will be informed of this requirement and Ground Marshals have been asked to ensure that this is adhered to.
- Please do not speak to the referee about running the game, rules or decisions made during the game. Please speak to the Ground Marshal or a club official should you have any concerns and feedback will be provided to the referees coordinator.
- Please ensure that all comments to players, coaches and parents are positive and constructive. Be respectful to your players, the opposition players, the opposition coach, match officials and parents at all times.
- Please ensure that only coaches and substitutes are within 1.5m of the edge of the pitch to create a safety zone for our players.

Please take the time to review sections 5.1 and 7.1 of the Club Handbook which contains The Gap FC and FFA Codes of Conduct for coaches. It can be found here:

[http://www.gapfootball.org.au/site/assets/files/1056/gap\\_fc\\_club\\_handbook\\_v\\_aug\\_2014.pdf](http://www.gapfootball.org.au/site/assets/files/1056/gap_fc_club_handbook_v_aug_2014.pdf)

The club asks you to support and actively promote these policies and values which will ensure that our players have a challenging, positive and enjoyable experience at our club.