

# U.S. SOCCER GRASSROOTS PLAYER DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK



GAME MODEL: 11v11

AGES: 13+

(Framework- a basic structure underlying a system)

## U.S. SOCCER GRASSROOTS PLAYER DEVELOPMENT PHILOSOPHY

At the grassroots level, children learn and develop to their full potential through game-like experiences in an enjoyable environment that supports individual growth.

## U.S. SOCCER COACHING EDUCATION PHILOSOPHY

**Reality Based:** The game is what drives changes in behavior, reflection and decision making for the player/the team and the coach

**Holistic Approach:** Input and consideration for all interconnected aspects of the game, the athlete and the desired outcome

**Experiential Learning:** The evaluation, analysis and reflection of experiences to develop competencies and improve behavior

## KEY QUALITIES OF A U.S. SOCCER PLAYER

1. Read and understand the game and make decisions
2. Take initiative, be pro-active
3. Demonstrate focus
4. Execute with optimal technical abilities
5. Execute with optimal physical abilities
6. Take responsibility and accountability for their own development and performance

The U.S. Soccer Grassroots Player Development Framework is a simplified overview of the development pathway of U-6 to U-13+ grassroots players related to the four game models and player ages, based on goals, needs, key qualities, and player/coach behavior.

We define player development as a series of progressive changes leading to a higher level of differentiation and functioning. Two characteristics of development are change and progress. Differentiation is the developmental process when the qualities of a player are getting more advanced and refined. The combination of growth, maturation and learning lead to a higher level of functioning. When maturing, it is about physical growth. Learning is the process by which experience results in a change in behavior. Children of different ages will process and reason information in different ways.

The stages of player development see development as a regular succession of stages, in a process of continuous progress. This development is a combination of cognitive, psychosocial and motor development.

- Cognitive development is the development of intelligence, conscious thought, and problem-solving ability.
- Motor development refers to the development of a child's bones, muscles and ability to move around and manipulate his or her environment.
- Psychosocial development is the development of the personality, including the acquisition of social attitudes and skills.

There will be a holistic approach when looking at these different aspects of development. This means, input and consideration for all interconnected aspects of the game, the player and the desired outcome.

# U.S. SOCCER GRASSROOTS PLAYER DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK



## 11v11

	DEVELOPMENTAL GOALS	DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS	KEY QUALITIES	ATTACKING PLAYER ACTIONS	DEFENDING PLAYER ACTIONS	PLAYER BEHAVIORS	COACH BEHAVIORS
AGES 11-12	<p><b>“Being the best player that I can be for my role and position in the team.”</b></p> <p>Learning the alignment of the roles, positions, and designated tasks in the 11v11 team.</p>	<p>Gaining understanding of the meaning of role, position and designated task in a team</p> <p>Experiences of the alignment of position specific task execution during defending and attacking</p>	<p><b>All key qualities at U13+</b></p> <p>See below</p>	<p><b>All Player Actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shoot</li> <li>• Pass or dribble forward</li> <li>• Spread out</li> <li>• Create passing options</li> <li>• Support the attack</li> <li>• Create a 2v1 or 1v1</li> <li>• Change the point of attack</li> <li>• Change the pace/ rhythm</li> <li>• Switch positions</li> </ul>	<p><b>All Player Actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect the goal</li> <li>• Steal the ball</li> <li>• Make it compact</li> <li>• Keep it compact</li> <li>• Pressure, cover, balance</li> <li>• Outnumber the opponent</li> <li>• Stay involved</li> <li>• Mark the player/ mark the area</li> </ul>	Engage in problem solving activities	Use guided questions to support their thinking/decision making
						Challenge ideas	Listen first and consider their perspective
						Demonstrate mood shifts	Be patient and consistent in your treatment
						Differences between genders	Give each player individual attention and care
Do not always play fairly	Encourage self-regulation, e.g. refereeing own games at training						

**A>D** Defend as quickly as possible (transition is always a part of attacking and defending but is not a focus for the Grassroots Coach)

**D>A** Attack as quickly as possible (transition is always a part of attacking and defending but is not a focus for the Grassroots Coach).

### Key Qualities By Age Group

#### U-6

- Reads and analyzes situations regarding the structure of soccer attacking/defending/transition
- Takes initiative-creates opportunities instead of reacting
- Wants to score
- Shows comfort with the ball
- Is involved and engaged throughout every game/ training session

#### U-7/U-8

- Applies (basic) knowledge of the cues
- Understands where and when to move themselves and the ball
- Confronts situations
- Demonstrates bravery
- Delivers on agreements and promises
- Evaluates and reflects on their own performance

#### U-9/U-10

- Aligns own actions with the other players, positions
- Challenges opponents
- Deals with adversity
- Is proficient in 1v1 situations to create or to steal/regain the ball
- Plus all key qualities of a 4v4 player

#### U-11/U-12

- Remains calm and composed
- Is technically proficient to be effective
- Is coordinated in their movement
- Is adaptable and flexible in dealing with (unexpected) challenges and problems
- Articulates their own learning needs
- Plus all key qualities of a 4v4 and 7v7 player