

15 Soccer Coaching Sins

1. Failing to consider the health and safety of the players - not being aware of players' medical conditions, playing on an unsafe pitch, mixing players of widely differing ages and abilities, ignoring children who say they are injured..the list is long. See newsletter 41 for more about soccer health and safety.
2. Not planning a coaching session in advance - if you think you can make it up as you go along, you're wrong.
3. Boring players with long-winded speeches - if you can't explain what you want your players to do in thirty seconds, don't do it.
4. Not having enough footballs - your players need a ball each, not two under inflated, peeling balls between ten.
5. Criticizing individuals - a good coach focuses on the behavior, not the child.
6. Shouting at players - there's no excuse for shouting, it just shows you have no self control.
7. Skills practices turning into tests of endurance - 45 minutes passing a football round a couple of cones will kill any child's enthusiasm for the game.
8. Using drills that involve children standing in lines for more than a few seconds - some line drills are OK but you must keep the lines moving quickly as bored children will start to invent their own, non-soccer, activities.
9. Forgetting to agree rules with your players - and then criticizing them for failing to observe 'the rules'.
10. Sticking rigidly to a session plan that isn't working - if an activity is not working, stop doing it. Play a SSG (small sided game) instead or ask your players what they want to do.

11. The coach acting as ball-boy - you're not there to chase balls. That's what parents are for.
12. Not demonstrating skills or demonstrating them badly - if you can't do it, find someone who can!
13. Not involving parents/carers - ignoring the wishes and feelings of the people who bring your players to practice and matches is simply not sensible.
14. Allowing spectators to shout and 'coach' on match days - you're responsible for the actions of your parents so agree the ground rules and enforce them.
15. Blaming players for 'not trying' when really the session is pitched at the wrong level - don't ask your players to do things they not ready to do, emotionally or physically.