



## Developing A Practice

The development of a practice can contain several key components, all of which should be geared towards achieving the goals and objectives of your practice. It is noted that the session format below can/ and should be altered and changed based on the theme and the ability of the players. The guidelines are a framework and any deviation from it can be justified if learning is taking place:

### Warm-Up

A series of activities, linked to the theme, to prepare the body (players) mentally and physically for the rest of practice. Coaches should utilize the use of soccer balls during the warm-up phase wherever possible. The warm-up is a good way to introduce the technical points related to the theme.

### Fundamental

The fundamental section of the practice will continue to build upon the technical points that were introduced in the warm –up which are related to the theme of the practice. The coach should present these concepts using simple, logical coaching points. As progress is made, pressure can be added to allow techniques to be progressed into skills. All players need to experience success at this stage, however it is understood that the extent to that success will be different for each player.

### Game Related

A technique becomes a skill when it is performed regularly under pressure. Pressure can be added by increasing/reducing both players involved and the playing area. An > or a < in time or space will result in a change in the intensity and pressure of the activity.

### Game Condition

Conditioning a game allows a situation to occur while still encouraging concentration on a particular theme. Ask yourself what do you want your players to do? What are you trying to achieve? Placing restrictions on players is artificial but can *encourage* the desired behavior.

### Match Condition

**NO RESTRICTIONS;** The final stage of a practice is unconditioned play, which allows the coach and the players to see how much has been learned. Players need this time to make as many decisions for themselves as possible. Allow at least 15-20 minutes free play in a 1.5 hour session.

### Evaluation Process

This is a vital, but so often a neglected part of coaching. It involves such questions as:

- What went well and why?
- What did not go so well and why?
- What was achieved; and
- What is needed in the future

The answers to these questions form the foundation of your planning for future coaching sessions and also a valuable resource as to feedback on your own coaching delivery techniques.