

Falcons United

U6 Player Development Curriculum

At U6, soccer should be about joy, movement, and developing a love for the game.

Development at this age is NOT about tactics, positions, or winning.

It is about creating confident players who enjoy soccer and want to return next season.

If we get U6 right:

- Players build confidence with the ball
- Kids develop coordination and movement
- Players begin learning teamwork
- Families trust the program
- Players fall in love with soccer

The goal is simple:

Fun + Confidence + Lots of Ball Touches

Program Overview

Age Group: U6

Primary Objective: Joy + confidence + ball comfort

Session Length: 45–60 Minutes

Game Format: 2v2 or 3v3 (recommended)

Season Length: 6 Weeks (or repeat/extend as needed)

Purpose of U6 Soccer

U6 soccer should help players:

- Build a love for soccer
- Develop basic coordination and movement
- Gain confidence with the ball
- Improve social interaction and teamwork
- Stay active and engaged

At this age, fun and confidence matter more than performance.

Soccer Priorities at U6

Focus on:

- Lots of touches on the ball
 - Fun and imaginative games
 - Simple coaching instructions
 - Encouragement instead of criticism
 - Players experimenting and learning through play
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What U6 Soccer Should NOT Be

Avoid:

- Tactical formations
- Long coaching lectures
- Fitness drills
- Yelling at players
- Pressure to win games

U6 players learn best through movement + games + repetition.

Coaching Mindset

Great U6 coaches:

- Celebrate effort
- Show patience
- Make practices fun
- Allow kids to experiment
- Keep instructions simple

Your job is to create confident kids who love soccer.

Falcons United U6 Mantra

More touches.
More smiles.
More confidence.

Top 10 Skills to Teach U6 Players

1. Ball Mastery & Comfort

Players should spend as much time as possible touching the ball.

Skills include:

- Rolling the ball
- Tapping the ball
- Stopping the ball
- Moving the ball with control

Goal: The ball feels natural at their feet.

2. Dribbling With Both Feet

Encourage right and left foot use.

Teach:

- Inside touches
- Outside touches

Repetition is everything at this age.

3. First Touch Awareness

Help players control the ball instead of chasing it.

Focus on:

- Soft touches
 - Keeping the ball close
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4. Changing Direction

Introduce simple turns:

- Pull-back turn
- Inside turn
- Outside turn

These movements help players escape pressure naturally.

5. Running With the Ball

Teach the difference between:

- Small touches for control
- Big touches when running into space

Kids love running fast — use that energy.

6. Shielding the Ball

Teach protection using the body.

Simple cue: “Big body, little ball.”

Encourage:

- Turn sideways
 - Keep ball on the far foot
 - Use arms for balance
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7. Spatial Awareness

Introduce very simple ideas:

- Spread out
- Avoid crowding teammates
- Move toward the goal

Space matters more than formations.

8. Basic Passing & Receiving (Light)

Passing should be introduced but not forced.

Teach:

- Inside of the foot
- Passing to a teammate's feet
- Very short passes only

Reminder: At U6, dribbling is still more important than passing.

9. Confidence & Decision-Making

Allow players to:

- Try new moves
- Make mistakes
- Experiment

Confidence matters more than perfection.

10. Love for the Game

The most important goal:

Players should:

- Smile
- Laugh
- Want to return next week

If players enjoy soccer now, they'll keep playing for years.

Best U6 Training Games

These games keep players active, engaged, and constantly touching the ball.

1. Sharks & Minnows

Players dribble from one side to the other while “sharks” try to steal the ball.

Skills Developed:

- Dribbling
- Shielding
- Awareness

Kids love chase-style games.

2. Red Light, Green Light

Players dribble toward the coach.

Commands:

- Green Light — dribble
- Red Light — stop ball
- Yellow Light — slow dribble

Skills Developed:

- Ball control
 - Listening
 - Start/stop movement
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3. Treasure Hunt

Cones represent treasure scattered around the field.

Players dribble to collect treasure and bring it back.

Skills Developed:

- Dribbling
- Turning
- Exploration

Make it fun by calling cones:

- Gold
 - Diamonds
 - Pizza slices
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4. Freeze Tag (With a Ball)

Taggers chase dribblers. If tagged, player freezes until freed by a teammate.

Option to free: teammate passes the ball through their legs.

Skills Developed:

- Dribbling
 - Awareness
 - Teamwork
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5. Hungry Hippos

Balls start in the middle. Players sprint in, grab one, and dribble back.

Skills Developed:

- Acceleration
 - Dribbling under pressure
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6. Animal Dribbling

Coach calls animals and players dribble accordingly.

Examples:



Turtle — slow dribble



Cheetah — fast dribble



Crab — sideways movement

Skills Developed:

- Changing speed
 - Movement creativity
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7. Follow the Leader

Players copy the coach's dribbling moves.

Skills Developed:

- Ball control
- Turns
- Confidence

Let players lead sometimes.

8. Cone Knockdown

Players strike the ball to knock over cones.

Skills Developed:

- Passing/striking
 - Accuracy
 - Confidence with contact
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9. Tunnel Tag

Tagged players freeze with legs apart. Teammates pass the ball through to free them.

Skills Developed:

- Passing accuracy
 - Awareness
 - Team interaction
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10. Mini World Cup (2v2 / 3v3)

Small-sided games.

Rules for U6:

- No goalkeepers
- Short games
- Minimal coaching during play

Small-sided games develop all soccer skills naturally.

Bonus Training Activities

Pirate Ship

Coach calls commands:

-  Captain on Deck — stop ball and salute
-  Abandon Ship — dribble fast
-  Turn the Ship — perform a turn

Skills Developed:

- Reaction
 - Agility
 - Ball control
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Clean the Yard

Two teams. Balls start in the middle. Players pass/kick balls to clear them from their half.

Skills Developed:

- Striking/passing
 - Directional awareness
 - Fun competition
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How to Run U6 Sessions Correctly

Session Guidelines:

- 5–7 minutes per activity
- Every player should have a ball as much as possible
- No lines, no long lectures, no yelling
- Celebrate effort loudly
- Short coaching cues (5 words or less)

U6 Practice Formula:

Game → Skill → Game → Skill → Game

If practice feels like recess with soccer balls, you are doing it right.

Standard 60-Minute U6 Practice Format

10 minutes — Fun movement game
15 minutes — Skill-based game
15 minutes — Skill progression
15 minutes — Small-sided game (2v2 or 3v3)
5 minutes — Celebrate + water

6-Week U6 Practice Plan

Week 1 — Learning the Ball

Theme: Meet the Ball

Focus Skills:

- Dribbling
- Moving with the ball
- Comfort

Practice Activities:

- Fun movement warm-ups
- Free dribbling play
- Red Light / Green Light
- Treasure Hunt
- 2v2 or 3v3 Free Play

Coaching Tips:

- No pressure
 - Praise effort
 - Encourage both feet
 - Avoid long lines
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Week 2 — Dribbling & Turns

Theme: Little Rockets

Focus Skills:

- Dribbling in traffic
- Changing direction

Practice Activities:

- Traffic Jam dribbling game
 - Freeze & Go
 - Sharks & Minnows
 - Introduce pull-back turn
 - 2v2 or 3v3 Free Play
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Week 3 — Ball Control

Theme: Sticky Feet

Focus Skills:

- Soft touches
- Stopping the ball

Practice Activities:

- Simon Says (with a ball)
 - Toe taps and touch exercises
 - Traffic Light game (add Yellow slow-down)
 - Animal Dribbling
 - 2v2 or 3v3 Free Play
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Week 4 — Awareness

Theme: Heads Up Soccer

Focus Skills:

- Looking up while dribbling
- Spacing

Practice Activities:

- Follow the Leader
 - Gate Dribbling
 - Clean the Yard
 - 2v2 or 3v3 Free Play
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Week 5 — Introduction to Passing

Theme: Teamwork Time

Focus Skills:

- Simple passing
- Sharing the ball

Practice Activities:

- Dribble & Stop warm-up
- Partner passing (short distance)
- Tunnel Pass
- Cone Knockdown
- 2v2 or 3v3 Free Play

Important Reminder:

Do not force passing at this age.

Week 6 — Mini Soccer Stars

Theme: Confident Players

Focus Skills:

- Review all skills
- Confidence and effort

Practice Activities:

- Favorite game from the season
- Skill stations:
 - Dribbling station
 - Turning station
 - Passing/striking station

End With:

- Multiple 2v2 or 3v3 games
- Rotating teams
- Stickers / high fives

Celebrate players for growth, effort, and joy.

Coaching Reminder

Success at U6 is NOT measured by wins or losses.

Success means:

- Players smiling
- Players touching the ball often
- Players wanting to come back next season

If players leave practice excited, you are doing it right.