

Falcons United

U10 Player Development Curriculum

U10 soccer is the bridge between “just having fun” and learning how to play the game.

If this age is developed correctly, players become confident, creative, and intelligent with the ball while maintaining a strong love for the game.

Program Overview

Age Group: U10

Primary Objective: Develop confident players who can solve problems with the ball

Session Length: 75 Minutes

Game Format: 5v5 progressing toward 7v7

Season Length: 10–12 Weeks

Falcons United Development Principles

- Ball mastery remains the foundation of development
 - Players should make decisions, not perform robotic drills
 - 1v1 confidence is essential at this age
 - Players learn roles, not rigid positions
 - Creativity and bravery are encouraged
 - Mistakes are treated as learning opportunities
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Core Purpose of U10 Soccer

Confidence with Purpose

At U10, players should:

- Still love the game
 - Begin understanding why they do things
 - Feel comfortable on the ball under light pressure
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Top 10 Technical Priorities

1. Ball Mastery (Both Feet)

- Dribbling using inside, outside, and sole
- Comfort using both right and left foot

Ball mastery is still the foundation at U10.

2. First Touch Control

- Cushioning the ball
- First touch into space
- First touch away from pressure

Good first touches create time and confidence.

3. 1v1 Attacking

- Change of speed
- Simple moves (scissors, pull-back, step-over)
- Recognizing when to attack space

U10 is the golden age of 1v1 confidence.

4. 1v1 Defending

- Staying goal-side
- Slowing attackers down
- Not diving in

Defending becomes a skill, not a punishment.

5. Short Passing (Accuracy & Timing)

- Inside-foot passing
- Passing to feet vs passing into space
- Weight of pass

Passing now has intent rather than panic.

6. Receiving Under Light Pressure

- Opening body shape
- Scanning before receiving
- Controlling with purpose

This introduces game awareness naturally.

7. Decision Making

- Dribble vs pass vs shoot
- Recognizing space
- Learning from mistakes

At this age decision-making matters more than execution.

8. Shooting With Purpose

- Accuracy before power
- Shooting on the move
- Using both feet when possible

Encourage shots — just smarter ones.

9. Basic Positioning & Spacing

(Not fixed positions)

- Understanding width and depth
- Knowing when to support teammates
- Attacking vs defending shape

Players should think roles, not spots.

10. Confidence & Mental Resilience

- Trying again after mistakes
- Accepting feedback
- Supporting teammates

This determines who continues long-term in soccer.

What Should NOT Be Priorities at U10

- Long balls
- Complex set pieces
- Specialization by position
- Winning at all costs

Those priorities come later in development.

This age is when players become thinkers, not just movers.

Best U10 Training Activities

These drills build skill, confidence, and decision-making without overwhelming players with tactics.

Rondos (3v1 or 4v1)

Focus: Passing, first touch, awareness

Coaching Cue:

“Move after you pass.”

1v1 to Mini Goals

Focus: Attacking confidence and defensive basics

Coaching Cue:

“Change speed to beat the defender.”

Gate Passing

Focus: Passing accuracy and receiving

Players pass through cone gates to teammates.

Coaching Cue:

“Pass with purpose.”

Shield & Escape

Focus: Dribbling under pressure

Players must use shielding and turns.

Coaching Cue:

“Protect the ball.”

4-Goal Game

Focus: Awareness and attacking space

Teams can score on any of four goals.

Coaching Cue:

“Where is the space?”

Numbers Game

(Coach calls numbers)

Focus: Transition and quick decision-making

Example:

2v2 or 3v3 when numbers are called.

Coaching Cue:

“React fast.”

Receive & Turn

Focus: First touch and body shape

Sequence:

Pass → Receive → Turn → Dribble or Shoot

Coaching Cue:

“Open your body.”

Defend & Counter

Focus: Basic defending and transition

Defenders win the ball and immediately counterattack.

Coaching Cue:

“Slow them down.”

Finishing Circuit

Focus: Shooting on the move

Stations include:

- Dribble and shoot
- Pass and shoot
- Rebound finishing

Coaching Cue:

“Accuracy first.”

Small-Sided Game (4v4 or 5v5)

Focus: Everything

Rules:

- No fixed positions
- Minimal coaching interruption

Coaching Cue:
“Play your game.”

Falcons United U10 Coaching Rule

If players are:

- Touching the ball often
- Making decisions
- Smiling

Then the session is successful.

Standard U10 Practice Format (75 Minutes)

10 Minutes — Ball mastery warm-up
15 Minutes — Technical skill focus
20 Minutes — Decision-making activity
25 Minutes — Small-sided game
5 Minutes — Cool down and reflection

Week-by-Week U10 Curriculum

Week 1 — Ball Mastery & Confidence

Theme: Comfort with the ball

Skills

- Dribbling with both feet
- Ball control while moving

Activities

- Ball mastery circuit
- Sharks & Minnows
- Small-sided game

Coaching Focus

“Be confident on the ball.”

Week 2 — First Touch & Control

Theme: Control before action

Skills

- First touch into space
- Receiving with inside foot

Activities

- Receive & turn
- Gate receiving
- 4v4 play

Coaching Focus

“First touch creates time.”

Week 3 — 1v1 Attacking

Theme: Be brave

Skills

- Change of speed
- Simple attacking moves

Activities

- 1v1 to mini goals
- King of the Ring
- Free play

Coaching Focus

“Attack the defender.”

Players should also learn basic field terminology:

- Touchline
- End line

- Center line
 - Center circle
 - 6-yard box
 - 18-yard box
 - Penalty spot
 - Attacking half
 - Defending half
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Week 4 — 1v1 Defending

Theme: Defending as a skill

Skills

- Stay goal-side
- Delay and recover

Activities

- Channel defending
- Defend & counter
- Small-sided game

Coaching Focus

“Slow them down.”

Week 5 — Passing & Support

Theme: Playing with teammates

Skills

- Inside-foot passing
- Supporting angles

Activities

- Gate passing
- Give-and-go combinations
- 4v4 possession game

Coaching Focus

“Move after you pass.”

Week 6 — Receiving Under Pressure

Theme: Awareness

Skills

- Opening body
- Scanning the field

Activities

- Receive & escape
- Rondo (3v1 or 4v1)
- Directional game

Coaching Focus

“Check your shoulder.”

Week 7 — Shooting With Purpose

Theme: Smart finishing

Skills

- Accuracy over power
- Shooting while moving

Activities

- Finishing circuit
- Rebound finishing
- Scoring incentive games

Coaching Focus

“Hit the corners.”

Week 8 — Decision Making

Theme: Dribble, pass, or shoot?

Skills

- Reading space
- Choosing the best option

Activities

- Numbers game
- 4-goal game
- Conditioned scrimmage

Coaching Focus

“What is the best option?”

Week 9 — Shape & Spacing

Theme: Understanding the field

Skills

- Width and depth
- Attacking vs defending shape

Activities

- Positional rondos
- Wide goal game
- 5v5 or 7v7 play

Coaching Focus

“Make the field big.”

Defensive concepts introduced:

- Pressure
 - Cover
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Week 10 — Transitions

Theme: React fast

Skills

- Winning the ball
- Attacking immediately

Activities

- Defend & counter
- Transition games
- Scrimmage

Coaching Focus

“Think fast.”

Week 11 — Review & Player Choice

Theme: Confidence

Activities

- Player-chosen drills
- Skill challenges
- Free play

Coaching Focus

“Play your game.”

Week 12 — Festival & Celebration

Theme: Enjoy the game

Activities

- Small-sided tournament
- Fun competitions

Coaching Focus

“You have all improved.”

Goalkeeper Development (Weekly Focus)

Goalkeeper training should be included in every session.

Key Focus Areas

- Goalkeeper stance
- Understanding angles
- Diving technique
- Communication

Example Activities

- Hand dribbles
 - High catches
 - Calling “KEEP”
 - Knee dives (left and right)
 - Squat dives (left and right)
 - Ball distribution with hands and feet
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Falcons United U10 Mantra

Be Confident.
Make Decisions.
Play Together.