

Coaches Safety Checklist



Prior to each practice or game, coaches and their assistants should develop the habit of a safety check with the goal of promoting a safe environment for both participants and spectators.

Goal Post Safety

- Portable goal posts properly secured and anchored and used on level playing fields.
- Inspect goal post for sharp corners to include general integrity.
- Instruct all players and their parents of the potential dangers associated with movable soccer goals.
- Forbid any horseplay by players or members of the general public on or around any goal post.
- Remove nets when goals are not in use.
- Portable goal posts should only be moved by authorized personnel.
- Anchor or chain one portable goal to another or to a nearby fence when not in use.

Field Safety

- Inspect for foreign objects.
- Check for potholes, hills/ruts.
- Make sure sprinkler heads are seated.
- Observe 3' Restraining Line from Touch Line.
- Notify your club and field owners of unsafe field conditions in writing.
- Do not allow participation by your players until noted hazards have been corrected.

Player Safety

- Communicate the laws of the game to all players and parents.
- Provide proper supervision at all scheduled activities. Prohibit behaviors that do not promote a safe and healthy experience.
- Make sure shin guards are covered, jewelry removed and shoes are adequate for field conditions.
- Place players together of similar ability.
- Remove all players from fields upon approaching severe weather.
- Communicate with all parents your expectations as a coach.
- Know location of nearest emergency health care facility.

Injury Claims

- Know how to instruct parents to file an injury claim online.
- Obtain and record relevant information about an injury to a player and/or spectator.
- Don't accept or suggest fault for incident.
- Always give respect and appropriate attention to the injured person.
- Always correct any hazardous situation, as soon as reasonable.

Coaching offers a variety of rewards to those willing to accept the responsibility. That responsibility shouldn't be taken lightly. Coaches and their clubs know the nine legal duties which must be exercised when coaching a team.

Duty 1: Properly Plan the Activity

A coach should plan a training session in advance giving thought to the physical and psychological attributes of the players involved in the session. Providing appropriate activities is the priority.

Duty 2: Provide Proper Instruction

After creating a lesson plan, it's important to properly execute it. That means teaching the proper techniques related to the training plan. If the topic is short passing, then instruction for passing and receiving short passes properly should be the focus of the activities and not how to head the ball.

Duty 3: Warn of Inherent Risks

Soccer is a contact sport. Contact sports can result in a variety of injuries. From minor abrasions to injuries requiring surgery and a prolonged period of rehabilitation are possible. Parents and participants must be warned of the possible risks related to participating.

Duty 4: Provide Safe/Physical Environment

Coaches are responsible for making sure the training and playing area is safe. The area should be free of debris like broken glass, rocks, and garbage. Goals should be properly anchored just as benches and other equipment should be a safe distance from the playing area to avoid contact with objects too close to the field.

Duty 5: Provide Adequate and Proper Equipment

Having clean, well-maintained scrimmage vests, an adequate number of properly inflated balls that are in good condition is essential to providing a positive training experience. Avoiding the use of worn-out or broken equipment is crucial to reducing the possibility of injury.

Duty 6: Match Athletes Appropriately

Children come in all shapes and sizes. During training sessions when players often engage in activities involving small numbers being paired together, it's important to make sure they are similar in size. Pairing the smallest player with the largest, even when the smallest is the most skillful, increases the opportunity for injury.

Duty 7: Evaluate for Injury or Incapacity

If a player is injured, it's important to determine the severity and react appropriately as quickly as possible. Whether it's a sprained ankle or head injury...if there's any doubt, the player should be kept from participation until evaluated by a doctor. The player should only return to participation with a clearance to return by a doctor. Err on the side of caution to avoid further complications of any possible injury.

Duty 8: Supervise Activity Closely

Kids will be kids, so coaches should always be close and paying attention. A distracted coach opens the door to kids finding mischief. Mischief usually leads to either an injury or damage to someone's property.

Duty 9: Provide Appropriate Emergency Assistance

As soon as a coach determines a player has an emergent medical need or the weather is about to become unexpectedly bad, he or she should contact the appropriate authorities or club personnel for the necessary help.