



Welcome New Coaches!

Welcome to AYSO Region 33 Encino! Thank you for volunteering. Your primary role is to create a fun, safe environment, teach basic skills, build confidence and teamwork, and represent AYSO values.

You are not expected to be a soccer expert. Attitude, effort, and connection with kids matter most.

What players need: encouragement, patience, organization, and positivity.

This handbook is designed to give you a quick and basic overview of what to expect in your first season(s) as an AYSO Region 33 coach. Please reach out to our coaching administrators if you have any questions or concerns, we are all here to help each other succeed.

AYSO's 6 Core Philosophies

- Everyone Plays (¾ playing time rule)
- Balanced Teams
- Open Registration
- Positive Coaching
- Good Sportsmanship
- Player Development (improvement > winning)
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AYSO Region 33 Encino Coach Handbook – Competitive Divisions (U10–U14)

Competitive Divisions – This means, the points start to matter and so do the rules of the game. Development still matters more than winning, but we add team shape and basic strategy.

What to Expect Your First Season as a New Coach Players are more skilled, but still kids. Manage playing time carefully (¾ rule). Parents may be more vocal—set expectations early with your team parent.

Age-Specific Guidance

- **U10:** Introduce spacing and passing over solo runs.
- **U12:** Add awareness and teamwork.
- **U14:** Introduce transitions and set pieces.

Basic Rules Offside applies. Buildout line for U10, Direct/indirect free kicks.

Formations & Player Placement

- U10 (7v7): 2-3-1
- U12 (9v9): 3-3-2
- U14 (11v11): 4-3-3 or 4-4-2

Rotate positions regularly. Defense (patient/stoppers), Midfield (stamina/passers), Forward (attackers/shooters), Goalkeeper (rotate—no one all game).

Sample 60–90 Minute Practice Plan 10 min warm-up → 15–20 min skill (passing/shooting/1v1) → 20–25 min small-sided games with conditions → 15 min scrimmage (focus on shape) → 5 min wrap-up.

Scrimmage other teams when possible, schedule ahead of time to develop game play outside of when it counts on paper.

Positive Coaching “Smart pass!” “Great shape!” Praise effort and improvement.

Volunteers, Referees & Conduct Everyone is a volunteer. Respect referees. Zero tolerance for arguing or abuse. If you do not fulfill your team volunteer and referee obligations, your team will NOT be able to compete in playoffs or finals.

Blind spot many new coaches miss: Weeks can go by quickly and so can opportunities for volunteer points. Recruit a team parent early to help track them and avoid last-minute stress.

Sign up for our referee course as a supplemental enhancement to help with your understanding of the game.

IF YOU DON'T ACQUIRE THE REQUIRED AMOUNT OF VOLUNTEER AND REFEREE POINTS, YOUR TEAM WILL NOT MOVE ON TO PLAYOFFS.

Parents' & Spectators' Code of Conduct Your behavior on the sidelines shapes the experience.

- Cheer positively for both teams (“Great try!”).
- **No sideline coaching or refereeing** — Let coaches coach and referees referee. Yelling instructions confuses players. Remember: “Players play, coaches coach, parents cheer.”
- Stay behind the sideline (at least one yard back).
- No arguing with anyone. Zero tolerance for negative or abusive behavior.
- Support fair playing time.

If you see an issue, speak privately and respectfully to the coach or commissioner after the game. Thank you for modeling the sportsmanship we want our kids to learn.

Safety & Inclusion: Protecting Every Player Safety and belonging come first.

Heat Safety (Encino can get warm) Hydrate 24 hours ahead. Frequent water breaks. Shorten activities or add shade when it's hot. Watch for dizziness, nausea, or cramps—move the player to shade and seek help if needed.

Concussion Awareness Remove any player with a head impact or symptoms (headache, dizziness, confusion, nausea). No same-day return. Parents must provide doctor's clearance. All coaches complete CDC Concussion training.

Allergy Awareness Know players' allergies. No sharing snacks/water. Team parent can help with safe snacks. Carry basic first aid.

Welcoming All Players – Neurodiverse & Less-Skilled Kids Every child belongs. For neurodiverse players or those building confidence:

- Use short, clear instructions and demonstrations.
- Offer movement breaks or smaller groups when needed.
- Praise effort and specific strengths.
- Ask parents privately what helps their child.

- Rotate positions and use small-sided games so everyone touches the ball and feels successful.

Blind spot: Less-confident kids disengage when stronger players dominate. Small groups and positive focus keep everyone involved and smiling.

Safety & Inclusion: Protecting Every Player (Same full section as in U5–U8 handbook above, with one addition for older groups: “In competitive divisions, safety and inclusion still come before results—never pressure a player to play through symptoms or discomfort.”)

Team Parents & Family Volunteering Recruit early. Team parent tracks referee/volunteer points for playoff eligibility. Consider scheduling one “volunteer weekend” so families can plan. Some families prefer financial contributions in lieu of hours—discuss with the board.

Game Day Checklist Arrive early. Pre-set lineup and subs. Thank referees and opponents. Update volunteer points promptly.

Resources AYSO U10–U14 manuals, additional clinics, other coaches (mentors), Outside coaching resources.

Final Note: Continue rotating players and focusing on development. Balanced, positive teams create the best experiences.
