
1.3 COACHING 10-12 YEAR-OLDS

At this age the players' training and development of motor abilities continues, with more emphasis on basketball fundamentals. Feedback should now be more analytical in nature, refining the foundation skills taught previously.

It remains important at this stage, to give athletes the opportunity to do contested activities as they develop their skills but to return to non-contested (but still fun!) activities.

However, specialist roles must not be established, gestures and movements must not be extremely technical yet, the game must be in a free form, the playing ideas (in offence and defence) presented by the coach should be simple at the beginning.

The final aim should be that of bringing children to play 5 on 5 in a slightly more organised way, however the next chapter sets out a range of rule variations that can be utilized to maximize the involvement and enjoyment of the players.

Often "small sided" games such as 3 on 3 and 4 on 4 are better for children at this age as it gives players more opportunity to be involved in the play and more space to play in.

1.4 COACH TO THE SKILL LEVEL OF EACH PLAYER

The age groups noted earlier are a guideline and it is quite likely that when coaching 10-12 year olds there may be a player that has no experience with basketball and accordingly is at the stage of a much younger player.

Similarly, there may be an 8 year old player that has been involved in basketball for 3 or 4 years and has skills that are more advanced than older players.

Accordingly, it is important that the coach make an evaluation of the skills of each player and be prepared to make variations to include all players in activities to their level of skill and experience.

This may require different players to participate in activities differently - for example, some players may use their preferred hand when dribbling and others may be challenged to use their non-preferred hand.