YOUCOACHAPP

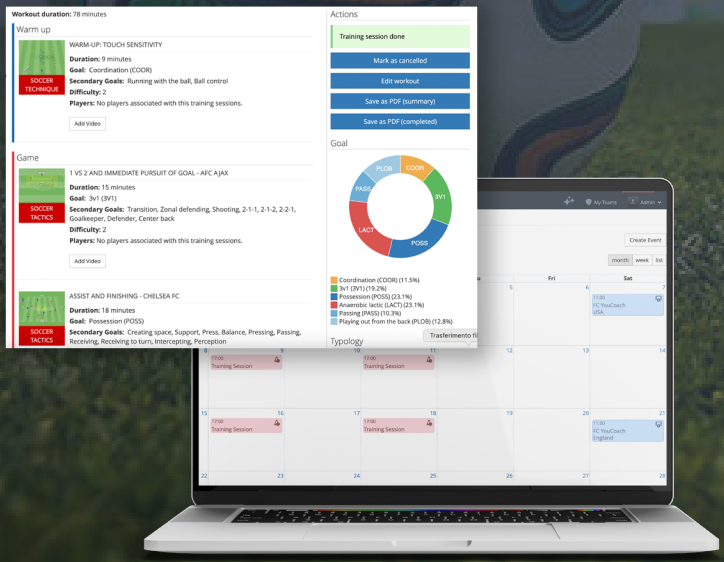
SEASONS

U13-U12 COMPLETE SEASON PLAN

112 TRAINING SESSIONS READY TO BE USED ON **YOUCOACHAPP**

U13 U12

3 TRAINING SESSIONS PER WEEK



© Copyright 2026 YouCoach s.r.l. – All rights reserved
www.youcoach.com

ISBN: 978-88-5499-361-7

Editorial Project: YouCoach
Layout and graphics: Marta Bianchi, Ilaria Canova

No part of this publication, graphic or textual, may be reproduced, alterated or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without prior permission of the owner.

Table of contents

YouCoach.com 4

Introduction 7

Methodology 8

Program structure 10

Complete season plan for U13-U12 14

YOUCOACH®
FOOTBALL DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

Technology as a tool for methodology: this is the mission of YouCoach, a service designed by soccer coaches for soccer coaches. We believe in **research, study and debate** and work to increase the soccer culture of those who approach the coaching profession.

Thanks to our team of experts we make accessible and share quality exercises and content for all soccer levels. Since 2013 we have decided to take on the fascinating challenge of bringing to the web everything that until then was only present in print media: the content and tools that soccer coaches need to do their daily work.

Our wide range of digital products, including eBooks, videos, and collaborations with several leading professional clubs on the international scene, has made **YouCoach.com** a benchmark in more than 40 countries around the world for all enthusiasts who are constantly looking for new ideas and want to keep up to date with new training methodologies.

We also developed **YouCoachApp**, a web-based application accessible from any device and supported by a mobile app that complements the features of the web app. YouCoachApp makes it possible to simplify the work of soccer coaches and clubs, academies and college teams on and off the field, supporting them in the most common activities: collecting drills, scheduling and sharing training sessions, analyzing detailed statistics on games and players. It is the digital assistant that helps coaches save valuable time by allowing them to monitor their work at all times.

Thank you for choosing one of our products, enjoy your reading!

YouCoach Team

Keep following us on **www.youcoach.com**

MAKE MANAGING YOUR SEASON EASIER



YOUCOACH APP

DIGITAL ASSISTANT FOR SOCCER COACHES



CREATE YOUR TRAINING SESSIONS WITHIN A FEW CLICKS

Discover the potential of YouCoachApp on www.youcoach.com

INTRODUCTION

A SEASON PLAN FOR A SPECIFIC CATEGORY: DISCOVER THE ANNUAL TRAINING PROGRAM CREATED BY THE YOUCOACH STAFF

YouCoach introduces the "Complete Season Plans," a specific and versatile annual training program for different categories, designed to guide coaches through a carefully planned path, session after session, covering the full 360° development of players' technical, tactical, physical, coordination, and social-emotional skills.

Within each program, coaches will find **up to 500 drills** for their category: a wide pool of options that, spanning different training methods, keeps scheduled sessions consistently varied and engaging, aiming for continuous player involvement.

The main goal is to offer staff a complete yet flexible and adaptable tool, helping coaches establish a shared methodological approach to maintain throughout the year, one that every coach can adapt to their own philosophy, habits, skills, and ideas.

At the foundation of this technical project are **precise methodological principles and choices** that guided the YouCoach staff in designing this complex program, then adapted into different goals and content based on the needs of different age groups.

METHODOLOGY

The methodological core shared across all age groups is building a team with the will to dominate play through possession of the ball; applied to the specific needs of each category, this translates into greater attention to individual technical and tactical aspects in the grassroots stages (passing intensity, oriented control, combining technical skills), moving toward greater focus on collaborative play (2-3 player combinations), up to a higher volume of work on collective play for the older categories (among others, build-up play, ball circulation, possession management). In fact, the **possession phase** is always present in every training session and notably stands out in the total annual minutes dedicated to it compared to the minutes dedicated to the non-possession phase. The underlying principle of building a positive, proactive team is further expressed through other sub-principles, such as building from the back to manage and control play, or the ability to play between the lines of pressure. Alongside these methodological pillars are:

- the importance placed on **verticality of play** and **gaining depth**, applied in practice through the choice of tools such as conditioned games and positional games (used to develop the ability to gain depth through effective use of space);
- the **intensity of work**, always prioritized over volume of work: for this very reason, the time dedicated to each training phase never exceeds 15-20 minutes, reflecting greater attention to quality of work rather than execution time.

Another notable methodological choice concerns the **random scheduling of training tools** used throughout the season to put the proposed principles of

play into practice. The program is not driven by technical or tactical objectives as such, but rather by specific principles for each category and the amount of work needed to develop those principles; the choice of tools and individual drills came only afterward, randomly distributing the tools to be used over the course of the season. The methodological choice to train the same principle using multiple different tools is therefore entirely intentional and a cornerstone of the annual programs for all categories.

Regarding the **performance area**, the key points of the chosen methodology can be summarized as **gradual load progression** considering the different moments of the season (pre-season preparation, in-season, winter break, in-season), overall approach (which favors, especially in youth development, ball-based work over work without the ball), adapting content to the specific needs of each age group, and a **game-oriented approach** over work without the ball through the most varied and engaging proposals possible.

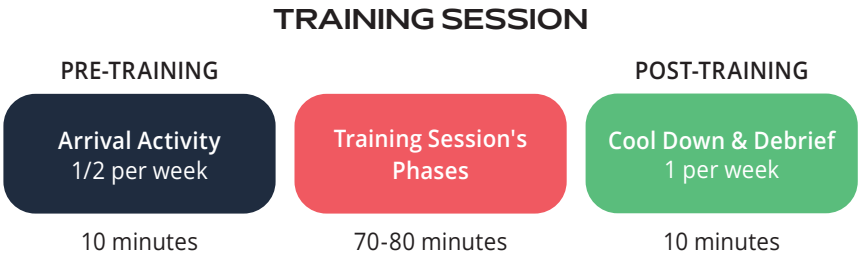
In every season, the YouCoach staff has also paid particular attention to individual injury prevention, reflected not only in the selection of drills but especially in the methodological choice to dedicate two specific phases of each training session to this aspect (resulting in a significant number of annual minutes dedicated to players' movement, coordination, and physical-athletic development).

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

Each Season Plan is a collection of hundreds of training sessions and drills, carefully selected to follow a path covering the entire sports season.
The annual schedule includes **38 weeks** of training with **3 sessions per week** plus a game, from the start of the season through to the end, for a total of **112 training sessions**.

U13-U12 COMPLETE SEASON PLAN	
START DATE - END DATE	August - May
TOTAL No. OF TRAINING SESSIONS	112
WEEKS OF TRAINING	38
FREQUENCY OF TRAINING	3 per week
PHASES CHOSEN FOR TRAINING	11

The **structure of each session**, shared across the different categories, consists of a 10-minute pre-training phase, a 70-80-minute main training phase, and a 10-minute post-training phase. Both the phases making up the core of



the session and the blocks before and after it were designed to specifically address the needs of Grassroots Activity.
The pre-training activity in grassroots activity (called Arrival Activity) is scheduled once or twice a week and includes fun/recreational activities or self-directed cooperative activities, through which children can experience self-management and responsible handling of their own space, time, and equipment. In the competitive sector, the Prevention phase includes dry-land activities for the whole team, present every week, covering neuromuscular work, joint mobility, and core stability.
The central phases were chosen to put the previously mentioned principles into daily training practice: they are summarized below for grassroots activity and competitive activity respectively. From session to session, they are used in whole or in part, and vary throughout the season depending on the day of the week, the specific session, and the period.

Training Session's Phases of the Season:

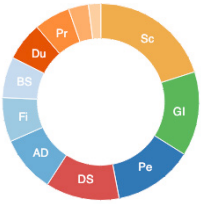
- **Pre-Practice**
- **Performance**
- **Game Intelligence**
- **Body Shape & Scanning**
- **Duels**
- **Defensive Skills**
- **Attacking Depth**
- **Finishing**
- **Scrimmage**
- **Set Pieces**
- **Cool down & Debrief**

The game intelligence phase focuses on technical/tactical/cognitive activation, primarily with the ball, expressing the importance of building the foundations needed to master ball possession with the right technical and coordination skills. Not surprisingly, this phase uses a wider variety of tools in



Phases overview

Phase	Minutes	%
Scrimmage	1956	20.1%
Game Intelligence	1352	13.9%
Performance	1274	13.1%
Defensive Skills	1180	12.1%
Attacking Depth	907	9.3%
Finishing	709	7.3%
Body Shape & Scanning	655	6.7%
Duels	619	6.4%
Pre-Practice	577	5.9%
Cool-down & Debrief	320	3.3%
Set Pieces	197	2.0%



grassroots activity compared to adult categories, reflecting the greater need to multiply stimuli and broaden children's technical and motor experiences compared to adults.

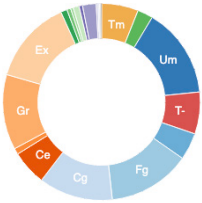
The collective and unit tactical principles proposed starting from the U13 age group are based on the 4-3-3 system: this is not a random choice, but is justified by the fact that, given the principles outlined above, this system appears to be the most compatible, versatile, and adaptable. Each coach is therefore free to choose, modify, and adapt drills according to their preferred system of play.

As for the game phase, in all age groups both thematic/conditioned games and free play alternate over the course of the week; however, in grassroots activity, the minutes dedicated to free play are nearly double those dedicated to conditioned games, while this ratio is reversed in the competitive categories.

The drills chosen for each session are designed for good **numerical adaptability** based on squad size, allowing collective work to be paired with simultaneous small-group drills.

Exercise Types

Exercise Type	Minutes	%
Uneven modified practice	1443	14.8%
Exercise	1344	13.8%
Free game	1319	13.5%
Game related practice	1205	12.4%
Conditioned game	1184	12.1%
Technical - gross motor circuit	671	6.9%
Thematic match	589	6.0%
Cognitive exercise	559	5.7%
Technical Circuit	433	4.4%
Overload game	247	2.5%
Small sided game	218	2.2%
Coordination circuit	100	1.0%
Relay race	97	1.0%
Positional Game	96	1.0%
Fun game	61	0.6%
Physical Circuit	55	0.6%
	42	0.4%
Free kick	30	0.3%
Rondos	22	0.2%
Coordination Elastic	16	0.2%
Build up patterns	15	0.2%



From the U13 category through the First Team, the post-training activity is called **Cool Down**: in the final 10 minutes, players can do dry-land activities, active recovery exercises, or specific physical work, either individually or in small groups, once a week at the end of the first or second session (this phase is intensified only during the summer preparation period).

COMPLETE SEASON PLAN FOR U13-U12

In the training format designed for the Grassroots Activity categories, the pre-training phase, called Arrival Activity, was created by the YouCoach technical staff to primarily address the social-relational component. Especially in this phase, the proposed activities (from classic games to other challenges initiated freely by the coach or the children themselves, such as German ball circulation, target shooting games, technical circuits, etc.) are used not so much to improve individual and team skills, but as a moment of fun, cooperation, and self-management practice.

In the core block of the session, the time dedicated to the possession phase clearly stands out (roughly double that of the non-possession phase), developed along four main lines:

- **Orientation**, to help players find their bearings in space and read it effectively. The tools mainly used for this purpose were small-sided games, thematic games, rondos, conditioned games, and possession games;
- **Duels**, both in numerical superiority (1v1, 2v2, etc.) and numerical inferiority, to get players used to managing superiority, controlling and protecting the ball, controlling the ball under pressure, and recognizing the right timing and distance for challenges. Emphasis was also placed on the distinctive qualities of duels, such as unpredictability, creativity, the ability to beat an opponent, and creating numerical superiority. In all these activities, play itself was used as the primary training tool, over analytical drills and loosely contextualized situations;
- **Depth**, understood as the ability to gain depth, get open beyond the opponent, get open diagonally (both in width and depth) to move play for-

ward and get closer to the opponent's goal. This aspect was mainly developed through situational games;
- **Finishing**, developed through duels, technical shooting circuits, specific individual movements, and game situations for attacking the goal and finishing from different angles.

The variety of drills used was a deliberate choice to offer different opportunities to work on the same objectives, but with different tools.
Regarding defensive skills, the guiding concept behind the choice of drills was positioning and goal protection: through game situations, duels in equal and inferior numbers, and possession games, the aim was to work on both individual pressure and small-group collective pressing, focusing on teaching **correct positioning relative to the opponent, the ball, and the goal, how to cut passing lanes, and how to manage the distance in a duel**.
Also included were drills to get young players used to properly managing the transition phase and counter-pressing; rather than analytical drills, the most suitable tools were used, such as mini-possession games, small-sided games, and conditioned games that include a transition phase.
A distinctive phase in the program for this age group is set pieces, aimed not so much at reinforcing tactical understanding but rather at refining technique. That's why it was decided to include and develop it through games, challenges, and technical drills (such as penalty or free-kick competitions).
The final phase of the session was dedicated to the game: thematic games were chosen to introduce concepts related to the offensive and defensive situational phases described above, without making them too restrictive. More training time, however, was dedicated to free play, the go-to tool for wrapping up the session with enthusiasm and enjoyment.
A notable common thread in the choice of activities proposed for the grassroots categories is the emphasis on cognitive skills and problem solving through the wide variety of tools used.
The final Cool Down phase, offered once a week at the end of the session, includes coordination or technical work, used as a tool to refine technical/

motor skills, done individually or in small groups.
As for the performance component, the annual goals were chosen based on what this age group requires: the need to work on fundamental movement patterns, coordination skills, speed and quickness (and its various forms, such as cognitive skills, movement ability, and reaction ability), always favoring the use of the ball and a playful-competitive approach. Specifically, coordination activities were used as an injury-prevention tool, helping improve movement quality and, as a result, reduce the risk of injuries caused by improper movement or poor coordination skills.
While the variety of motor stimuli provided through the drills is considered important, needed to keep activities engaging and stimulating, the practical drills are still repeated throughout the season with the intent of building repetition aimed at automating movements and, as a result, mastering the targeted skill. Their duration never exceeds 10-15 minutes, following the general principle of quality of work over quantity.
In conclusion, we believe that what's provided here can be an excellent guide for any coach working in youth academies.

YOUCOACH APP

VIDEO ANALYSIS



Video Analysis made simple. For every coach or analyst.

An innovative video analysis tool with AI, advanced animated graphics and automatic tracking, designed for easy and intuitive use.

FIND OUT MORE

Published in August of 2026 by YouCoach S.r.l.
via Roma 44 - 35043 Monselice (PD) - Italy