



# Balls, cones and kids

the footy4kids soccer  
coaching newsletter



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The best  
time to  
plant a  
tree is  
ten years  
ago - the  
second  
best time  
is now.  
*Confucius*



## soccer coaching's cardinal sins

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I recently came a list of 'common coaching faults' in the soccer coaching compilations provided by [Soccer-Coach-L](#). I have reproduced it below along with some of my own observations.

When I first read the list I realised that most of the coaches I know (including me!) are sometimes guilty of a couple of these 'cardinal sins'.

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Certainly, this list has made me reflect on my [coaching style](#) and try to be a better coach the next time I step onto the coaching field.

Hopefully, it will do the same job for you!

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1. The coach boring the group with long-winded speeches.
  2. The coach complicating the exercise by offering too much information and by elaborating on the chosen theme by involving too many phases of play.
  3. Skills practices becoming endurance work.
  4. Forgetting to agree [ground rules](#) with the players.
  5. Not planning a coaching session in advance.
  6. Sticking too rigidly to a session plan!
  7. The coach following the ball around instead of observing from a detached position.
  8. The coach acting as ball-boy.
  9. The coach failing to demonstrate.
  10. Ball-boys taking part in the exercise.
  11. Poor organization of the

footballs.

12. Not having a football per player at training sessions.
13. The coach offering instructions while running.
14. Criticizing a child (rather than the behaviour).
15. Not discussing or involving parents/carers.
16. Lack of awareness of space required for a particular exercise - forgetting that lines and bodies limit the area.
17. The coach failing to communicate the purpose of the exercise to each player.
18. The coach speaking in generalizations.
19. Failing to consider [the health and safety](#) of the players.
20. The coach offering a running commentary.
21. Spectators and additional players encroaching on the field.
22. The coach trying to demonstrate something which he cannot do (*Steve: I do this a lot!!*)
23. Using drills that involve children standing in lines for more than a few seconds.
24. The coach failing to spot flaws in the practice and subsequently neglecting to make appropriate corrections.

25. Forgetting that the teaching process involves:

- a. [communicating](#) the instructions;
- b. [organizing the practice](#);
- c. offering [the key teaching points](#). \* \*

Some coaches never get to part 'c' of this process!

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