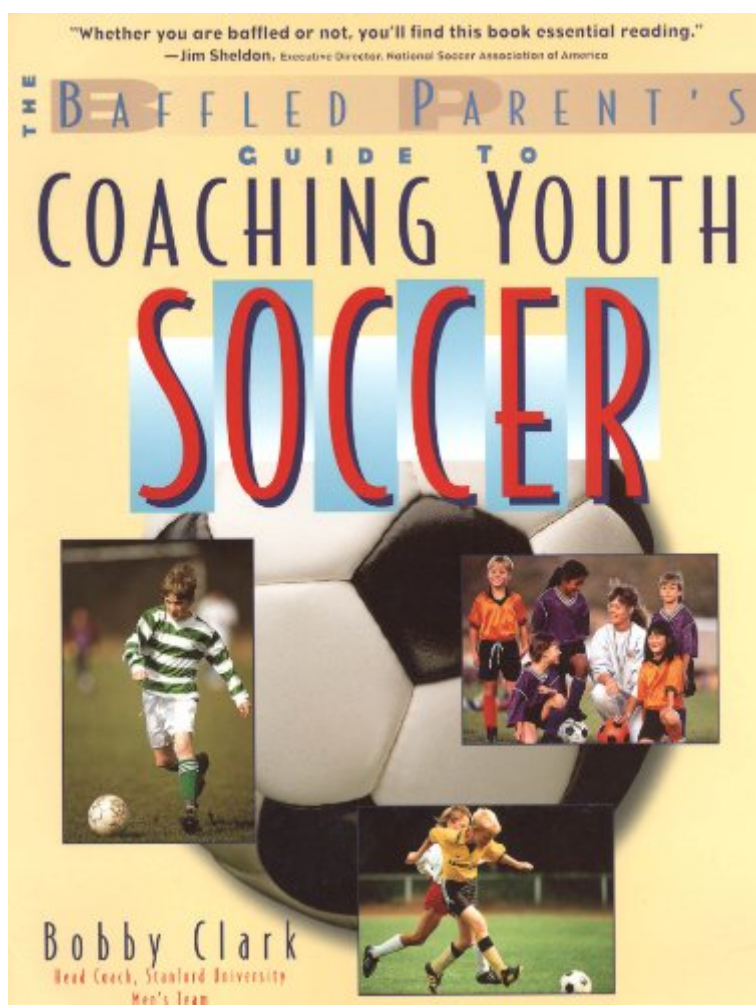




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# The Baffled Parent's Guide To Coaching Youth Soccer (Baffled Parent's Guides)



## Synopsis

Written by soccer great and championship Stanford coach Bobby Clark, COACHING YOUTH SOCCER: THE BAFFLED PARENT'S GUIDE tells you how, starting at point zero, an uninitiated coach can meld kids into a team and help them enjoy one of the most rewarding experiences of their youth. (In the end, you may be the one who reaps the biggest reward, as you watch kids learn and grow in an experience they'll treasure for a lifetime.)

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

My first time coaching soccer and this book has been a life-saver. The boys love the fun, game-type drills. I love the organization and ease of the book. (BTW I've got 4th grade boys, 9-10yo, in a rec league; not your most talented or driven bunch, but a lot of fun.)

Long ago I was asked to be a assistant (based on playing ability). I quickly learned that knowing how to play is a small part of coaching. When my kids started playing, I did not volunteer

because I realized that I was not particularly good at it, based on one year's experience as an assistant. However, after observing my oldest son's coach, I decided that I could do a better job. I had a couple of soccer books that were useful, but I really liked "The Baffled Parent's Guide to Coaching Youth" when it came out, which was a few years after I started coaching. It covers not only basic activities, but includes other coaching aspects. (See the Table of Contents for examples.) I recommended that our soccer association give a copy to every new volunteer. Our state required new coaches to attend a 2-3 hour introductory coaching course, but many did not attend and it was not really an option to disband a team because the coach did not attend. Hopefully having this book helped.

This book took me from being a total non-athlete, knowing nearly nothing about soccer and never having coached anything before, to being a coach with a plan. I am coaching my son's U8 soccer team, and even with this book it has been a challenge, but without the book, I would have been completely lost. Here's what the book did for me: (1) it taught me the rules of soccer. I did have a bit of trouble understanding the offside rule as stated in the book, so I had to ask a friend to clarify for me. (2) it taught me the most fundamental soccer skills: dribbling, passing, shooting. (3) it gave me sample practices and a general structure to use as templates for my own practices, and it gave me plenty of games and drills to choose from to fill them. (4) it told me what to do on game day. (5) it prepared me for the psychology of my wild and crazy boys. This is key. I am a female "intellectual type" who has never really played or enjoyed watching sports (and has never worked with this age group), so the whole mindset was completely foreign to me. It prepared me for the facts that they would listen to only the briefest of instructions, that they needed to be moving at almost all times, that for them no drill or game would be as exciting as JUST SOCCER, in its pure form. So why four stars? There's one thing that could really improve this book, and that is some kind of guide, for all the games and drills in the book, that would rate the maturity level and skill level needed for each one. Maybe also a minimum child-to-adult ratio required to run it successfully. (Unfortunately ours is 10 to 1.) As a U8 coach in a relatively casual city recreation league, I am at the very bottom end of the intended audience for this book. And because of my inexperience, it is very difficult for me to tell which of the drills are appropriate for my team, until I get onto the field with them to try it. By then it's too late, and the failed drill can make it hard to re-engage the kids for the next activity. For this reason I plan to order the guide for 6-and-under soccer even though my kids are over six. I need some tried-and-true tricks for engaging the youngest players when things aren't going the way I planned. Overall I am very grateful for this book and what it has done for our team.

The book contains a great overview of youth soccer and how to coach it. The book contains a lot of information about the administration of coaching - planning, calling, communication, control of practices, etc., - as well as the techniques. The book contains a nice summary of the rules, different coaching styles, dealing with gender issues, and more. The table of contents is an accurate over-view as to the contents of the book. I had heard about this book while taking my "E" certificate course. The instructor and one of the other students recommended it because - and this is the real benefit of the book - the drills, games, and activities, listed at the back of the book. The book gives some nice practice plans and skills and drills to work on with the kids and because of the drills at the back of the book, the book continues to be a valuable reference tool. One thing that I thought was missing is what to expect from soccer players at each age. I know that everyone is different, but I thought a nice overall guide as to what to expect from U11 Girls, for example, would be nice.

I am not myself a soccer player, and am now coaching U8, having coached since U5. As the kids get more proficient and the game rules get more stringent, I have struggled a bit to keep ahead of the kids. This book is extremely useful in clarifying basic skills and rules and providing a wealth of practice activities that challenge kids at a range of skill levels. I often modify the practice routines to match my particular players, but this book has been a great resource. I've even discovered a few things that I have been teaching inaccurately (like how to dribble!), and I have been able to retool. I got it used at a great price, and it was well worth the \$4 I paid.

It has plenty of drills and explanations. It is well written and has some sample plans for practices. It is geared towards the first time coach without much experience. I got it for spring coaching AYSO after coaching in the fall. I used several of the games but most of it were things I'd already learned. It is missing general strategy for games and how to put things all together (team strategy, progressing from basic skills to intermediate skills). Overall, it's a good (though somewhat sparse) reference for inexperienced coaches.

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