

Under 8 Hurling Sample Season Plan

	Feb:	Mar:	Apr:	May:	June:	July:	Aug:	Sep:	Oct:	Nov:
Core Skill:	Ground Strike (Left & Right)				Ground Strike on the Move (Left & Right)			Strike From Hands		
Associate Skill 1:	Catch	Jab Lift	S2S Clash	Catch	Jab Lift	S2S Clash	Catch	Jab Lift	Roll Lift	Hook
Associate Skill 2:	S2S Clash	Catch	Jab Lift	S2S Clash	Catch	Jab Lift	S2S Clash	Catch	Hand Pass	Roll Lift
Re-focus Skill:	Dribble	Ground Block	Ball Control	Dribble	Ground Block	Ball Control	Dribble	Ground Block	Ball Control	Catch

Physical

- Continuation of Evasion and Chase games as before.
- Introduction to explosive exercises such as frog jumps, squat jumps using body weight only.
- Stability and balance exercises, jumping and steady landing, landing on one foot, multi-directional jumps etc.

Session Types

- Priority for U8s is FUN.
- Sessions should be mainly Games Based. Children at this stage of their development are like sponges and will learn exercises and skills very quickly.
- Small sided games are the priority where maximum amount of ball contacts can be achieved. At least 1 ball per player.
- Elimination of straight line exercises.

The Session

- **Warm-up:** Fun warm-up games for about 5-10 minutes
- **Striking Exercises/Games:** Should take up to 10-15 minutes.
- **Associate Skills:** Should take at least 5 minutes for each skill. Some drills might incorporate multiple skills.
- **Defensive Skills:** Defensive skills such as Hooking and Blocking need to be developed year on year. Coach input to be the striker during the Hook/Block is crucial for safety. As children get more confident, they may work with each other, but should be able to master technique with the coach first.
- **Matches/Games:** Games should be the main part of the session and should be based on the skills being focused on that month. Whilst straight up matches are great for kids, ensure that you change and adapt the type of match rules/playing numbers etc. to develop the kids every week. Opportunity to play numerous small sided games throughout the session is nice to keep the kids engaged and interested.

Explanations

- **Core Skills:** The core skill should take up the greatest proportion of the skill work. Striking is the most important skill to master.
- **Associate Skill:** These are other skills which are age appropriate to the children and along with Go Games recommended rules. These should be mastered initially before advancing to more technical aspects of the skill, e.g. executing in game like situation.
- **Re-focus Skill:** These are skills from the year or 2 earlier and it is important to refresh these during the year.

Comment

The idea of this matrix is that coaches won't neglect any skills in the year and can ensure each skill gets a chance to be developed over many weeks. If it is possible to incorporate more skills into the session, then brilliant! This is a nice guide to start with and each mentor can develop to suit the needs of his/her ethos and in line with the skill development of the players in the group.