

WKFC Development Program FAQ

Program Overview

What is the Development program?

- A supplemental program for players who want more training and competition than the recreational league
- Focuses on skill development, teamwork, and long-term progression
- Requires participation in the recreational league

Who is eligible for the Development program?

- The Development program is open to existing recreation/house league players, or any new players to our club.
- Development programs start at the U10 age category. Younger players will not be accepted.
- Players must register during the annual registration period.
- The Age Category is determined by:
 - Registration Year – Year of Birth = Age Category
 - As the upcoming season will mostly be played in 2027, an example of a U10 eligible player born in 2017 would be:

$$\text{Registration year (2027)} - 2017 = \text{U10}$$

Can you join the Development program without joining the recreational league?

- At the current time, this is not an option. The Development program is an extension of the recreational program and players must participate in both.
- Development players learn skills and bring with them the opportunity to mentor and further develop their recreational teammates.

Is the Development program all about winning?

- The program focuses on development first, and foremost.
- At younger levels the program emphasizes fair play and the broad development of all players. The focus is on building fundamental skills, fostering a love of the game, encouraging teamwork, and ensuring every athlete can grow in a positive and supportive environment.

- At older age groups, there is increased focus on competition and results.

Registration and Commitment

What's included in the fees?

- 1.5 to 2 hr weekly practices
- Two travel tournaments – these will be predetermined by the Development Program Committee and defined at registration time
- Spring recreation registration fees
- BC Soccer Insurance (each player is required to be insured annually)
- Additional friendly games with other development teams within the program, and with neighboring clubs are typically arranged throughout the program schedule
- Teams can do additional optional regional tournaments that will be player funded.
- Kits will not be included in the program fee. Official kits must be purchased from the Club but are separate from the registration fees. This will keep costs down for players with existing kits and not require annual replacement.

What is the annual program schedule?

- Exact dates may vary slightly by team/area based on facility availability.
- Winter Indoor – Mid-October until Spring Break
- Spring – End of Spring Break until end of June
- Fall Outdoor – Beginning of September until Mid-October
- Additional breaks – Decided at the team level, based upon its member's needs.

Can a player join part time or for part of a season?

- Full annual program commitment is expected and important to overall team development.
- Attendance at practices and included tournaments is required.
- Joining outside of the annual registration period may be considered where roster spots are still available.

Coaching and Team Structure

Are the coaches qualified and certified?

- The Club has and will continue to develop and rely on some amazing volunteer coaches.
- Each team must provide volunteer parent, or potentially non parent, coaches. Without volunteer coaches, teams will not be formed.

- Most volunteer coaches will have coaching experience from the recreational league and are supported with additional coach training and development.
- Volunteer coaches will be supported by regional contract coaches from the Club who will provide drill planning support and attend practices, typically once a month.
- Some coaches may hold certifications such as C-level and the Club is working to increase certification levels.

Is it possible to have paid/contract coaches?

- The fee structure is based on volunteer coaches supported by Club contractors.
- If enough players express interest, the club can bring in contract coaches for specialty clinics and training sessions.
- If a team is unable to provide a volunteer coach, and all registrants are willing to pay additional fees (\$\$\$), a contract-based coach could be considered.

What does it take to form a team?

- Minimum number of players of the specific age category and gender within chosen region.
- Minimum one volunteer coach with a strong preference for two.
- Volunteer team manager (not required but very beneficial)
- The Club will look for alternative options to support players interested in the program where teams aren't able to form yet.

Are teams' gender specific?

- Females are permitted to play on otherwise all male teams.
- Where a male player is assigned to a team, the team for the purposes of competition shall be considered a male team unless given special designation by BC Soccer.
- A player may be assigned to the gender team with which the player identifies.
- All identifications of gender identity by athletes shall be considered to be made in good faith and shall not require further disclosure or documentation.
- If a player does not identify with one gender specifically, the player may be assigned to the team wherein they feel most comfortable.

Competition and Player Experience

Will teams compete in Provincials?

- Provincials start at the U14 level and above.

- Not currently required or included in fees, but any development team at U14 or above can opt to vie for a spot in provincials by competing in regional playdowns.
- As the program grows and more players join at the U10 level and stick with the program, we expect more teams to be able to compete in Provincials.

Will there be tryouts to join?

- The development program works on an open roster system – meaning anyone can apply to join.
- Roster spots cannot be guaranteed due to requirements to form teams.
- Existing development players will have roster spot preferences over new players.
- At older levels, new players to the program may be assessed before participating in tournaments.

Is the program competitive with other clubs?

- Absolutely! Even though the program is young and teams have only had a few years in the program, excellent coaching and overall strong players have resulted in early successes.
- Multiple WKFC development teams have had successes topping teams from Nelson, Kootenay South and Okanagan teams in tournaments.
- As more players join the development program at the early ages, the likelihood of continued successes and competing with other clubs is highly likely.

Do all players get equal playing time and opportunities to play in different positions?

- Playing time is earned through commitment, attitude, attendance, effort, and performance in both training and games.
- Players are expected to demonstrate a strong work ethic, positive behavior, and commitment to their teammates and the program.
- All players are trained to understand and play all positions on the field. This gives the players the best chance to continue in the sport as they advance/age, and promotes essential non technical skills such as sharing, empathy and awareness.
- At the younger ages, coaches aim to provide approximately equal playing time to support development and ensure players receive meaningful opportunities within games.
- At U14 and above, with higher levels of competition, playing time may vary depending on commitment, training habits, tactical needs, attitude and performance.

- At any level, players who consistently demonstrate commitment, effort, and readiness will place themselves in the strongest position for increased playing opportunities.