



## **10 Ways to Improve as a NGS Soccer Player**

Is your daughter looking to improve her game? Here are some tips and resources from our NGS Director of Coaching and our Professional Academy Coaches:

1. Ask your Academy or NGS coach for some specific skills that you could work on to improve; players make progress when they communicate with their coaches. Be inquisitive!
2. Practice skills such as juggling, dribbling, first touch, shooting, 1v1 moves, speed and agility. Perhaps a friend can join you!
  - a. Consider setting goals for yourself, track your progress. Can you complete 30 consecutive juggles?
  - b. If you would like specific advice on how to build your speed, stamina and strength, ask your coaches!
3. Find a safe spot to kick against a wall to get lots of touches. How many touches can you get in 10 minutes? See the link to the specific Soccer *Wall Homework Challenge* in our resources below.
4. Non-Dominant foot! It's really important players not only work on their strong foot, but also keep improving their non-dominant foot. Practice using both feet to dribble, pass and shoot.
5. Keep active! Build and use ALL of your muscles by participating in a variety of sports such as swimming, hiking, biking and activities that increase balance such as skating, yoga and dance. Studies show many benefits to multi-sport athletes.
6. Practice heading the ball (see resources on heading and proper form below). Girls 11 years and older can begin to safely practice heading a soccer ball following Mass Youth Soccer Guidelines.
  - a. Start with a lighter object, such as a balloon and progress to using a soccer ball.
    - Balloon
    - Sponge (NERF-type) Ball
    - Playball\*
    - Volleyball
    - Partially-deflated soccer ball
    - Properly inflated soccer ball
  - b. Game Rule – No one may head the ball in a U12 or younger age group.
  - c. Practice Rule – No one under age 11 may practice heading.
  - d. Practice heading less than 30 minutes a week for ages 11-13.
7. Watch higher level soccer to build your soccer IQ. Attend live matches and watch games and highlights on NBCSN, FS1, FS2, ESPN and TNT for example.

8. Take excellent care of yourself! Eat a well-balanced, nutritious diet to give your body lots of fuel. Make sure that you are hydrating properly. Get plenty of sleep too!
9. Take a break! It's also good to take time off from soccer (for part of the summer, for example). This can benefit you as an athlete and help you recover both physically and mentally!
10. Maintain a positive attitude and excellent effort and you will always improve your performance! Work hard and most importantly, have FUN!

## **RESOURCES**

With your parent's permission or help, you can explore the resources below: (click on links)

[NGS Coaches YouTube Channel](#) - which has a range of skills videos and playlists. Check out *Samba Elite*, if you are looking for a place to start.

[Individual Player Homework](#) - This manual has been designed to provide variety of challenging and realistic practices to help your daughter practice on their own. The program will assist in improving each player's individual technical performance through repetition.

[Soccer Wall Homework Challenge](#) - Improve your ball mastery by taking on the NGS Soccer Wall Homework Challenge. Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced Level Challenges!

[Proper Technique for Heading the Ball. \(For girls 11 and older\)](#)

[Core and Neck Strengthening Fitness Plan](#)

[Mass Youth Soccer Guidelines on Heading](#)

## **Instagram**

There are lots of training tips on Instagram also. Many require just a soccer ball and a set of cones. With your parent's permission, look for *Beast Mode Soccer*.