



# ACADEMY OF EXCELLENCE



## Hi, all VHSC Families and Future Members!

We are excited to write you about our **U8-U11 Academy of Excellence (AOE)** for Boys & Girls. This is the next step in the player's advancement and development in soccer.

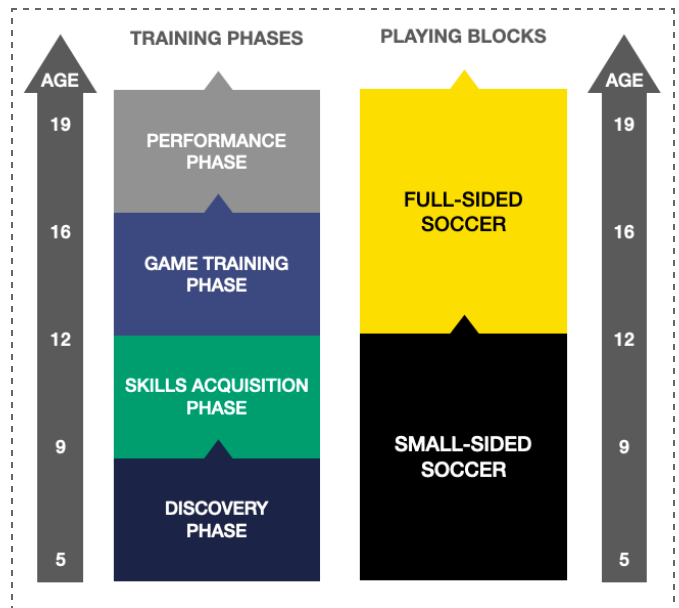
What	Who	When	Where	Why
Academy of Excellence	Boys & Girls Ages 7-11	Aug-Nov, Jan-May	LP, SHAC, Dolly Ridge	Be your best self!

## What is the Academy of Excellence?

The **Academy of Excellence Program** focuses on Skill Acquisition for each player during their **'Golden Age of Learning.'** The **AOE** provides an educational environment for boys and girls to learn through play, with the main emphasis on enjoying the process of technical development and gradual tactical understanding. The main goal of the **AOE** is to promote player development in a child-centered environment.

### U8-U11 Skill Acquisition Phase:

The program provides a solid foundation of game-related technical skills. If the player gains a strong foundation of skill during this phase, it will be easier to make up for it later. No amount of fitness or competitive spirit will ever compensate for deficiencies in functional game skills. Our **Academy of Excellence** aims to develop and improve skills for players in a developmentally appropriate setting.



## What is the Academy of Excellence Vision?

The program strives to keep playing soccer recognizable, demonstrating an attractive style of fast, skilled, creative, offense-minded, fair, and preferably far away from the goal and in the opponent's half. The mission of the AOE/SAP is to develop 'Good People Skills,' inspiring players to do more, learn more, and be more!

- Create a positive, fun, and developmentally appropriate environment for growth.
- Emphasize skill acquisition rather than a 'win at all costs' mentality.

Tenets of the Academy of Excellence and Skills Acquisition Program	Considerations & Readiness for Players and Families	Some Reasons why Players might not be considered for the AOE/SAP
Love the game Be your best self Be positive and respect others Work hard and be brave Be attentive and coachable	Motivation and discipline Mental toughness Resilience and confidence Communication skills Player attentiveness	Lack of focus and poor attitude Disruptive behavior Lack of discipline Bullying Poor attendance



# ACADEMY OF EXCELLENCE



## Calendar Overview

Below is a quick list of important dates for the Academy of Excellence this upcoming season. The Academy of Excellence Training Schedule is set to begin with specific times/locations coming later in the summer.

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

## Fall 2024 Important Dates

- May: Register for Tryouts and Pre-Tryout Camp online at [www.vestaviasoccer.com/tryouts](http://www.vestaviasoccer.com/tryouts)
- May 6-8 - [Pre-Tryout Camp 1 for U8-U19 players](#)
- May 13-14 - [Tryouts for U13-U19 Competitive Teams](#)
- May 17-18 - [Pre-Tryout Camp 2 for U8-U12 players](#)
- May 20-21 - [Tryouts for U8-U12 AOE and Competitive Teams](#)
  
- June - Fall practice schedules published and program Zoom meetings
- July 9-25 - Summer Training for U8-U12 players
- July 29 to Aug 1 - Academy U8-U12 Preseason Camp (daily, times TBD, i.e. 8-12 and 5-9)
  
- August 5 - Academy U8-U12 team training begins
- August 16-18 - Liberty Cup Girls Soccer Tournament
- August 23-25 - Liberty Cup Boys Soccer Tournament
  
- September 2 - Labor Day OFF
- September 8 - Tentative League start date
  
- October 12-13 - Alabama 7s Soccer Cup
- October 14 - Columbus Day OFF
- October 31 - Halloween OFF
  
- November 2-3 - Last day of League play
- November 8-10 - Hoover Invitational Tournament
- November 14 - Last day of Academy training
- November 15-17 - Alabama Soccer Showdown Tournament
  
- December/January - Winter Training 2X per week (registration coming soon)
  
- Calendar: A full calendar can be found online ([click here to view the online](#))

## Questions?

Please contact your coach or Academy of Excellence Director Jason Woodall at (205) 948-3838 or [jason@vestaviasoccer.com](mailto:jason@vestaviasoccer.com). Thank you for your time and consideration!



# ACADEMY OF EXCELLENCE



## 2024 Academy of Excellence Program Information:

### What are the age groups for the Academy of Excellence in the upcoming year/season?

US Soccer age groups are based on birth years, not school years. For the seasonal year, U8-U11 Academy of Excellence age group determinations are for players born in the age groups/years:

- U11 = 2014 Birth Years, Format 9v9
- U10 = 2015 Birth Years, Format 7v7
- U9 = 2016 Birth Years, Format 7v7
- U8 = 2017 Birth Years, Format 5v5-7v7

## 2024 Academy of Excellence Program Cost and Training Frequency Table:

Age Group	Training Frequency	Annual	Team Fees
U11 AOE	3X per week	\$1600	\$100-\$150 (Estimated - collected in June/July, April for Spring) Training, D-League, Tournaments, Off-Season Training
U8-U10 AOE	2X per week Aug & Nov 3X per week Sept-Oct	\$1250	\$100 (Estimated - collected in June/July, April for Spring) Training, D-League, Tournaments, Skills Training, Off-Season Training

### TENTATIVE\* Academy of Excellence Practice Schedule

Boys	Gen	Age Group	Birth Years	Days	Tentative Times	Format
Dolly Ridge	Boys	U8-U9	2016-2017	Tue, Thu	T, Th - 5:30-6:45 PM	7v7
		U10	2015	*Wed or Fri Skills in Sept & Oct	Wed or Fri - TBD	
Liberty Park	Boys	U8-U10	2015-2017	Mon, Wed *Tue OR Fri Skills in Sept & Oct	M, W - 5:00-6:30 PM Tue or Fri - TBD	7v7
Liberty Park	Boys	U11	2014	Mon, Wed, Thu	Mon - 6:30-8 PM Tue - 6:30-8 PM Thu - 6:30-8 PM	9v9

Girls	Gen	Age Group	Birth Years	Days	Tentative Times	Format
Dolly Ridge	Girls	U8-U9	2016-2017	Tue, Thu	5:30-6:45 PM, 6:45-8:00 PM	7v7
		U10	2015	*Wed or Fri Skills in Sept & Oct	Wed or Fri - TBD	
Liberty Park	Girls	U8-U10	2015-2017	Mon, Wed *Tue OR Fri Skills in Sept & Oct	5-6:15 PM Tue or Fri - TBD	7v7
Liberty Park	Girls	U11	2014	Mon, Tue, Thu	Mon 630-8 PM Tue 5-6:15 PM Thu 5-6:15 PM	9v9

U11 Groups: All three sessions will be at Liberty Park (no sessions at Central/DR/Pizitz).

*\*All times and locations are tentative and subject to change.*



# ACADEMY OF EXCELLENCE



## Academy of Excellence Vision:

Our vision is to showcase an attractive style of soccer focused on fast, skilled, creative, offense-minded play, primarily in the opponent's half.

## Academy of Excellence Mission:

To inspire players to excel on and off the field, foster their personal growth, and provide the best training environment for skill development in a positive, innovative atmosphere.

## Academy of Excellence Tenets:

- Love the game
- Be your best self
- Be positive
- Respect others
- Work hard
- Be attentive
- Be coachable
- Be brave

## Academy of Excellence Curriculum:

The curriculum prioritizes skill acquisition and tactical understanding. Each practice emphasizes individual ball mastery and encourages player decision-making in small-sided game scenarios. Physical and psychosocial aspects are nurtured within a supportive environment.

## Program Logistics:

Sessions are held at Liberty Park and Central Field. Game times typically fall on Saturdays between 8:30 AM and 2:30 PM in Birmingham. Activities include league matches, friendlies, jamborees, and local tournaments, running annually from August to November and February to May.

## Focus on Skill Acquisition:

The program emphasizes purposeful skill acquisition with activities tailored to player needs and context, promoting adaptability and player-centered approaches.

## Program Entry:

Entry into the U8-U11 AOE program requires staff identification through tryouts/evaluations and demonstrating physical, technical, and psychological readiness. Psychological and emotional readiness are key factors assessed for program suitability.

## Factors Considered for Entry:

Motivation, mental toughness, resilience, confidence, discipline, and communication skills are essential attributes evaluated for program entry. Players must contribute positively and demonstrate commitment to growth.

## Addressing Distractions:

Players displaying a lack of focus, poor attitude, disruptive behavior, or discipline may hinder team development and may not be suited for the structured AOE environment. Players may need additional seasons in the Recreational Program to enhance technical, physical, or psychological aspects before transitioning to the AOE's structured environment.



## FAQ

### Season Dates:

- Fall: July 29, 2024 - November 14, 2024
- Winter Training: December-January (TBD)
- Spring: February 3, 2025 - May 1, 2025

### Practice Frequency:

- 7v7 teams: 2 practices per week with an added skills session in September-October
- 9v9 teams: 3 practices per week within their pools/groups

### Team Formation:

Teams are crafted through evaluations, including yearly assessments, tryouts in May, and a week-long Preseason Camp in late July/August. Existing players receive retention notifications in April, with discussions for improvement if needed. New and current players attend May tryouts for team placement.

### Team Size:

Team rosters typically range from 8 to 12 players, with 8-10 for 7v7 teams and 10-13 for 9v9 teams, ensuring inclusivity.

### Selection Process:

While we strive to include all tryout participants, disruptive behavior, lack of focus, or coachability may impact selection. With ongoing communication and end-of-season meetings for current players to address concerns, psychological readiness is prioritized.

### League Participation:

All VHSC Academy teams compete in the Alabama Soccer D League, typically playing 6-8 league matches and 1-2 tournaments per season.

### Tournament Selection:

Each team aims for 1-3 local tournaments per season, chosen based on developmental stage and season timing. U8-U9 teams will NOT participate in August tournaments, but they may attend mid- or late-season tournaments to acclimate.

### Training Location for U11s:

Currently, all U11 players train at Liberty Park and SHAC.

## Resources and Links

- Academy: <https://vestaviasoccer.com/academy/>
- Academy tryout registration: <https://vestaviasc.byga.net/tryouts/h5scg5f7ox/signup>
- Academy online training: <https://vestaviasoccer.com/online-training-academy/>
- Academy skills: <https://vimeo.com/showcase/vhsc-online-training-academy>
- Academy skills acquisition activities: <https://vestaviasoccer.com/skill-acquisition-program-training-exercises/>

## Questions?

Please contact your coach or Academy of Excellence Director Jason Woodall at (205) 948-3838 or [jason@vestaviasoccer.com](mailto:jason@vestaviasoccer.com).