360TFT · FOOTBALLGPT

The Grassroots Coaching Data Report 2026

What FootballGPT users generate and ask for. Evidence from mixed coaching and Football Manager activity.

BUILT FROM REAL PRODUCT ACTIVITY

24,962	17,753	4,043
recorded queries	generated practices	contributing accounts

17 October 2026

footballgpt.co/data

INTRODUCTION

The evidence behind the debate

Grassroots coaching has plenty of opinion and not enough observed data. FootballGPT cannot tell us what every coach does. It can show what people ask the product and what the product generates.

It is built from real, anonymised FootballGPT activity across distinct coaching and Football Manager audiences. We looked at 24,962 recorded queries and 17,753 generated practices from 4,043 contributing accounts. Generation shows product activity and intent; it does not prove a practice was selected, delivered or effective.

Every published figure is aggregate and groups below the anonymity floor are hidden. The qualification section is different from the product-activity findings: it comes from a self-reported, multi-select profile field and appears only when the live source is available.

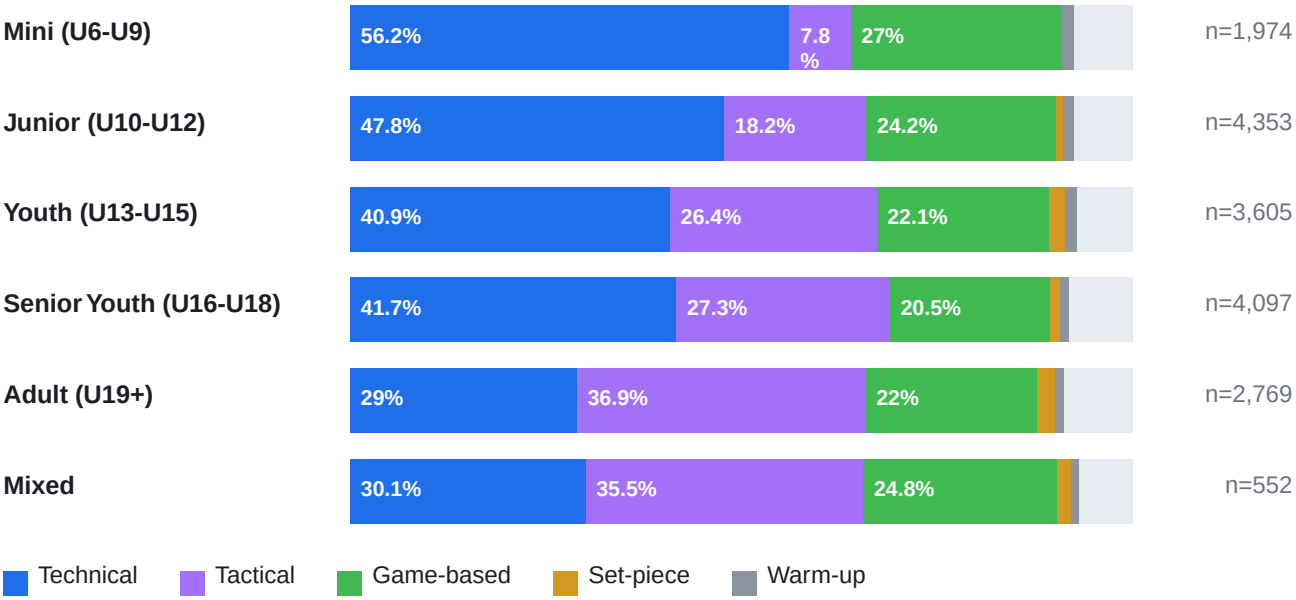
The point is not to turn product logs into universal truths. It is to make the denominator visible, separate coaching from Football Manager activity, and show where the tool itself may be shaping the result.

Kevin Middleton
Founder, 360TFT & FootballGPT

FINDING 01

Generated practice mix, by age group

Across every age group, FootballGPT generates more technical than game-based output. The difference is strongest for Mini-soccer ages (U6-U9): 56.2% of categorised generated practices are technical and 27% are game-based. By the adult game (U19+) the current mix is 29% technical and 36.9% tactical. This measures generated output, not what coaches selected, delivered or found effective.

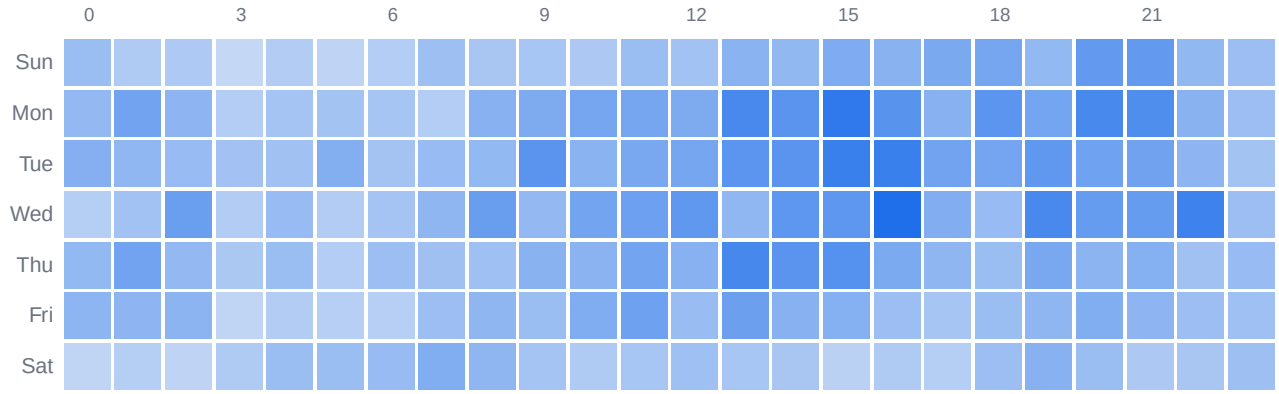


Based on 17,350 categorised generated practices with an age group. Age groups with fewer than 50 practices are not shown.

FINDING 02

When practices are generated

Monday accounts for the largest daily share of generated practices (18%). The busiest single hour is Wednesday at 16:00 UTC. These timestamps show product activity, not when a coach finalised or delivered a session.

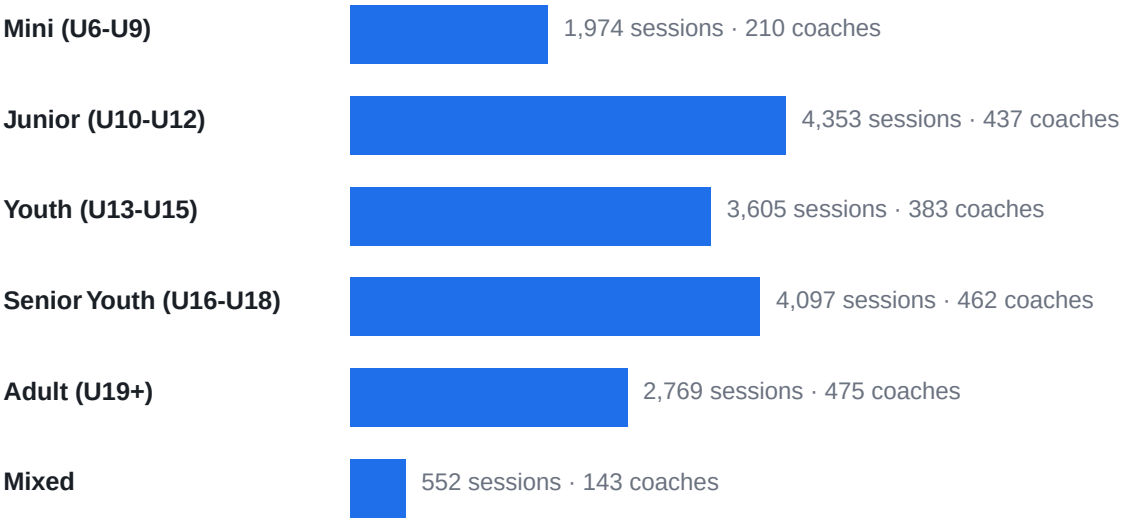


Based on 17,753 generated practices. Times shown in UTC; the deeper the blue, the more practices generated in that hour.

FINDING 03

Generated practices skew older than U9

In this generated-practice dataset, Senior Youth and Junior are the largest age bands. Together they account for around half of age-labelled generated practices. This does not measure participation or the number of coaches working at each age.



Based on 17,350 generated practices with an assignable age group.

FINDING 04

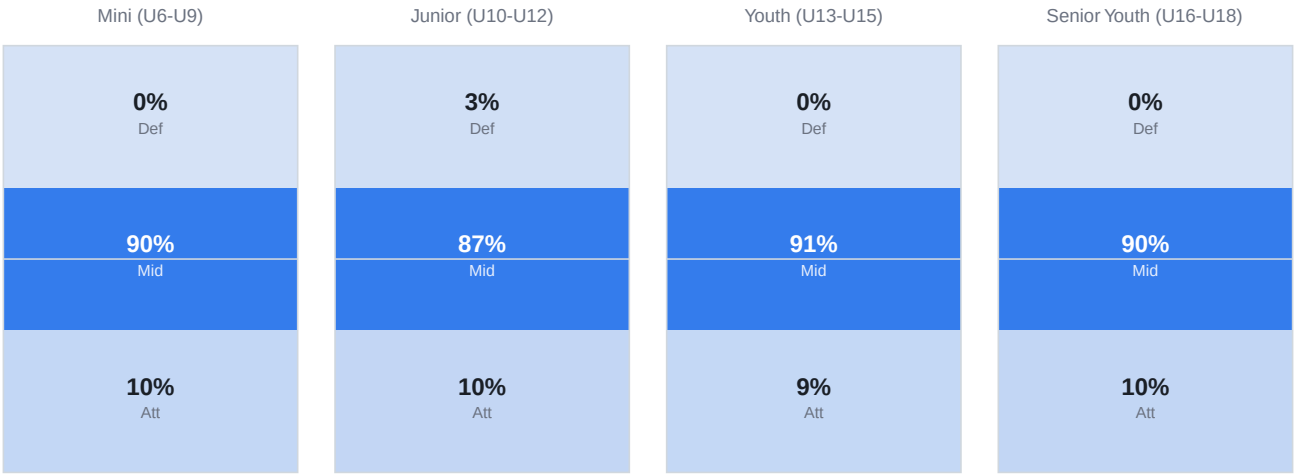
Generated diagrams concentrate in the middle third

KEY FINDING

89% of generated practices place the diagram in the middle third.

Around 89% of generated practices are positioned in the middle third, based on the average position of all players in each diagram.

Read this as a product-output finding, not a coach-preference finding. FootballGPT often centres a diagram when no zone is specified. Historical intent flags span detector revisions, so this edition does not publish one blended request percentage.



Based on 16,942 generated practices with at least one player. Pitch thirds are computed from each practice's average player position, where the middle covers the central third of the pitch.

FINDING 05

Small-sided at the bottom, bigger formats higher up

KEY FINDING

100% of generated Mini-soccer practices use a 5v5-or-smaller format.

FootballGPT generates smaller formats for its youngest age band: around 100% of U6-U9 practices are 5v5 or fewer per side.

Generated formats get larger across the older age bands. This describes the diagrams the product created; it does not measure a coach preference or a learning outcome. Historical player-count intent is not published as one percentage because that detector series is not yet versioned and calibrated.



Based on 16,511 generated practices with both an age group and a detectable player count. Bands run from 1v1 up to 8v8 and larger.

FINDING 06

Generated phase counts vary little by age

KEY FINDING

Mini (U6-U9): 3.21 steps on average. Youth (U13-U15): 3.48. Adult (U19+): 3.80. The gap is tiny.

The number of generated phases changes little by age band. Mini-soccer averages 3.21 phases and the adult band 3.80, a difference of 0.59.

This dataset cannot tell us whether that similarity was desired, appropriate, or carried into delivery. It describes the structure of FootballGPT output only.



"Steps" counts the number of distinct phases in a session, not how hard it is to run or how much a player has to think. A session with fewer steps is not necessarily simpler for a player to perform. Mixed-age sessions sit slightly higher and are shown for completeness; they are not a single age group, so they are not part of the U6-to-adult trend above.

FINDING 07

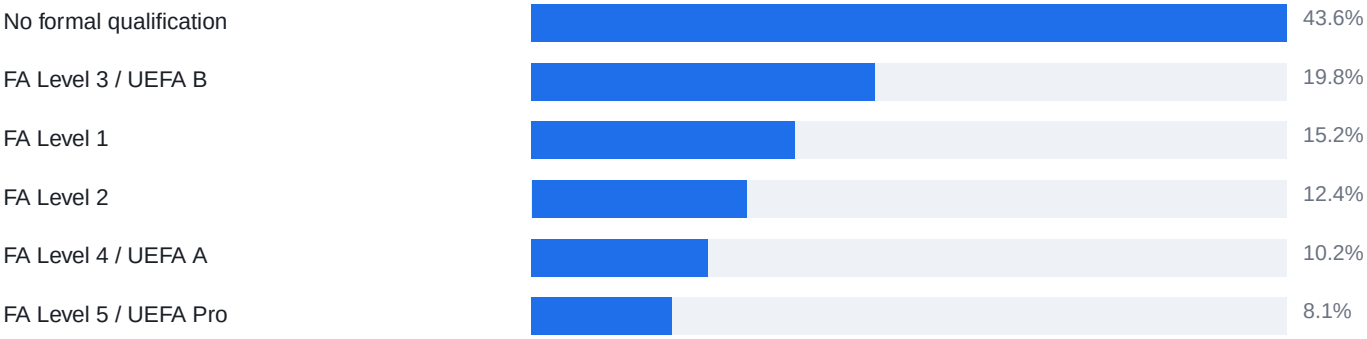
Qualifications reported in FootballGPT profiles

KEY FINDING

43.6% of answering profiles selected “No formal qualification”.

This is self-reported profile data, not behavioural usage. Among profiles that answered the coaching-qualification field, 43.6% selected no formal qualification. Other selections included FA Level 3 / UEFA B (19.8%), FA Level 1 (15.2%) and FA Level 2 (12.4%).

People can select more than one badge. These answers describe people using FootballGPT, not the grassroots workforce as a whole. Answers read on 17 October 2026.

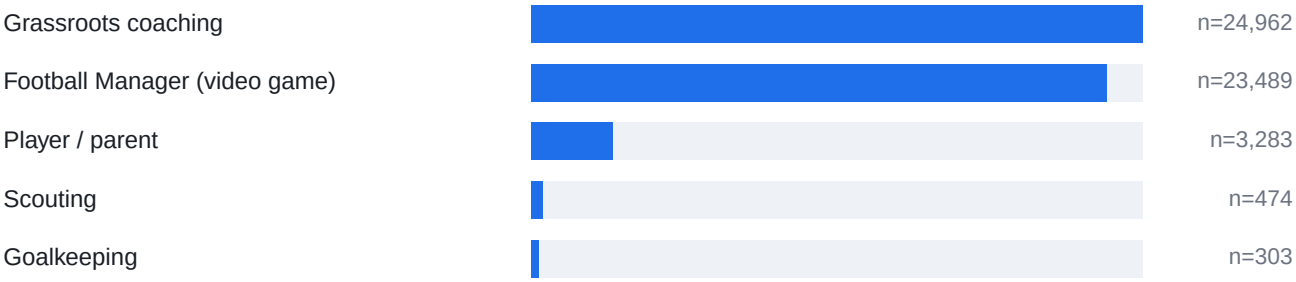


Self-reported in FootballGPT profiles; not every profile answered. People may select more than one badge, so the shares do not sum to 100. This cohort is separate from the weekly behavioural aggregates.

FINDING 08

Mode mix inside FootballGPT

FootballGPT serves distinct audiences. Of current mode-tagged queries, coach mode accounts for 47.5% and Football Manager video-game mode for 44.7%. They share the same tooling but have different intent, so the report keeps the lanes separate.



Based on 52,511 mode-tagged queries. Modes with fewer than 50 are not shown.

FINDING 09

Technical output has the largest share at every age

KEY FINDING

Mini-soccer's profile is the most technical-dominant of any age band, at 56% technical.

Every age band leans technical, but the youngest lean the hardest. Older bands open out a little into tactical and game-based work, yet technical still leads everywhere. The shape changes gradually with age, it does not flip. The bar below shows each band's technical share.



Category share of practices per age band (technical, tactical, game-based, set-piece, warm-up, physical). Tactical and game-based shares: Mini 8% tactical / 27% game-based; Junior 18% tactical / 24% game-based; Youth 26% tactical / 22% game-based; Senior Youth 27% tactical / 20% game-based. Bands shown: Mini, Junior, Youth, Senior Youth, the top four by volume.

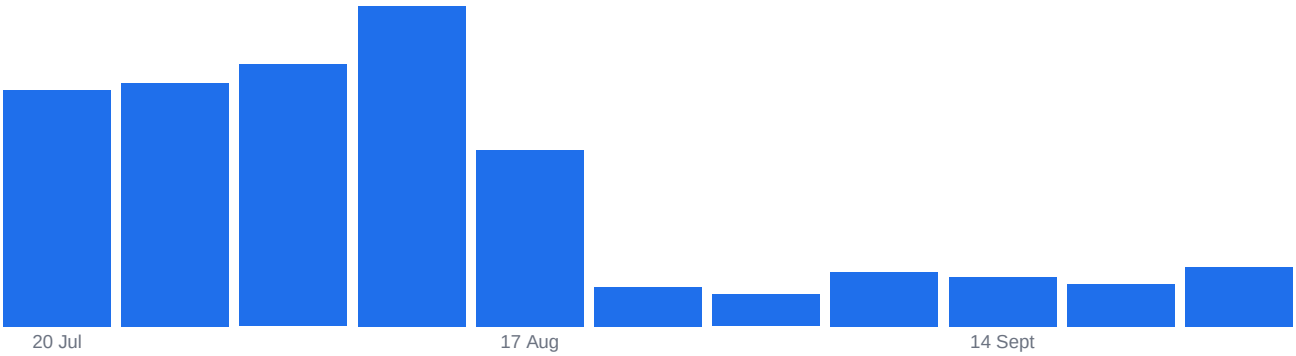
FINDING 10

Generated practice volume, week by week

KEY FINDING

5,936 practices generated in the last 12 weeks. Busiest week: 1,254.

Generated-practice volume varies by week. This dataset shows when activity changed, but it cannot attribute those changes to the football calendar, school terms, product releases, or any other cause.

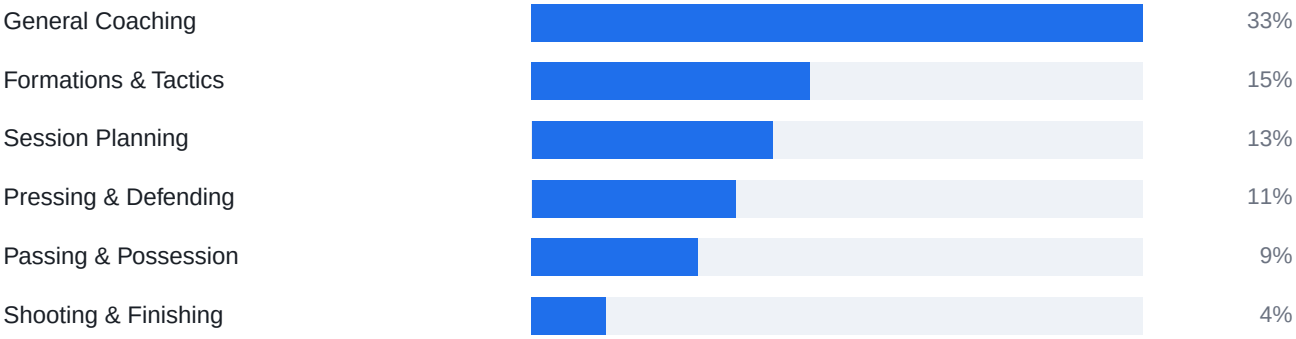


Animated practices per week. The most recent 11 weeks shown; bar height is practices generated in that week.

What FootballGPT users ask about

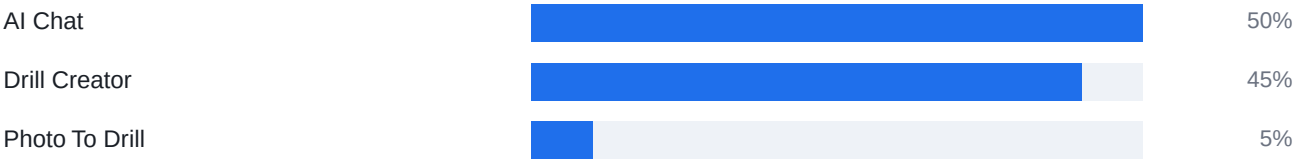
Top topics

Across recorded queries, these are the most frequently detected topics.



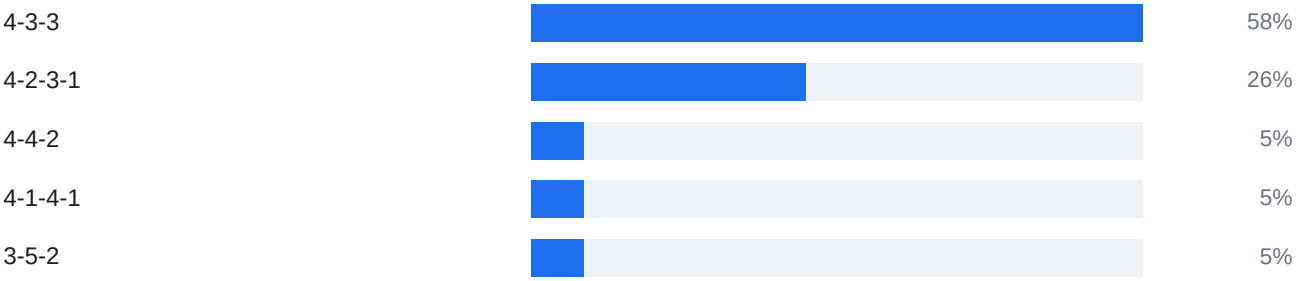
A single question can match more than one topic.

Tool-event mix



Formations named in FootballGPT data

Profile and match-preparation records naming a shape for the 11v11 format.



Separate profile, reflection, and community cohorts

This section uses CoachReflect, where coaches log a short structured reflection after a session. The cohorts are separate and should not be treated as a joined sample.

What coaches think about after a session

From CoachReflect, the most common tags coaches attach to their reflections.

Player development	n=27
Session planning	n=26
Tactical	n=22
Technique	n=20
Communication	n=19
Game management	n=17

Free-text reflections are never published, only structured tags.

METHODOLOGY

How we built this report

SOURCE	Aggregate FootballGPT activity across distinct coaching, Football Manager, player, scouting and goalkeeper modes. Generated practices are product output. Qualification fields are self-reported and clearly flagged.
REFRESH	The six behavioural findings are recomputed weekly, so the report stays current as more coaches use the tool. The self-reported qualification snapshot is drawn from coach profiles and is not part of that weekly behavioural recompute.
ANONYMISATION	Every figure is an aggregate. No coach, club, team, or individual session can be identified. No names, emails, club names, or session text are ever published. Free-text requests are sorted into broad themes automatically; the raw text is never released.
SMALL NUMBERS	Any group with fewer than 50 underlying records is hidden or merged into a broader bucket, so no figure can ever point back to a small, identifiable set of people.
HONEST READING	This describes activity inside FootballGPT and the structure of its generated output. It is not a census of coaches and does not show which practices were delivered or effective.
REUSE	Findings may be quoted with attribution to "The Grassroots Coaching Data Report 2026" by 360TFT and a link to footballgpt.co/data.

The live dashboard behind this report is at footballgpt.co/data. For interviews, a deeper cut of the data, or to talk about what it means for coach education, get in touch at hello@footballgpt.co.

FAQ

Common questions, answered from the data

What do FootballGPT users ask about most?

Across 24,962 recorded queries, the most common detected topic is General Coaching at 33%. Technical practices also dominate the generated mix, 56.2% for U6-U9 and 29% for adult football.

What mix of practices does FootballGPT generate for U6-U9?

In the current categorised output, 56.2% of generated U6-U9 practices are technical and 27% are game-based. This does not prove which practices coaches selected, delivered or found effective.

When are training practices generated during the week?

Monday accounts for the largest daily share (18%). The busiest single hour is Wednesday at 16:00 UTC. These are generation timestamps, not proof of when a coach finalised or delivered a session.

Which age band has the most generated practices in this dataset?

Junior (U10-U12) has the largest generated-practice count in this snapshot (4,353). This is product activity, not a measure of grassroots participation or coach numbers.

Are grassroots coaches the same audience as Football Manager players?

No. Of 52,511 mode-tagged queries, 47.5% come from coach and 44.7% from Football Manager video-game mode. They share the same AI tooling but have different intent.

What questions do FootballGPT users ask AI most?

Topic detection across every query: General Coaching (33%), Formations & Tactics (15%), Session Planning (13%), Pressing & Defending (11%), Passing & Possession (9%). A single query can match more than one topic.

What qualifications do answering FootballGPT profiles report?

43.6% selected no formal qualification. Other selections include FA Level 3 / UEFA B (19.8%), FA Level 1 (15.2%) and FA Level 2 (12.4%). This is self-reported, people may select more than one badge, and the figures do not sum to 100.

What do football coaches reflect on after sessions?

From CoachReflect: top tags coaches attach to their post-session reflections include Player development, Session planning, Tactical, Communication, Technique. Free-text reflection content is never published, only structured tags and ratings.

What do grassroots coaches publicly discuss in coaching communities?

The FCA Skool community is where 360TFT coaches discuss session design, player management, tools and resources. Live theme rankings, refreshed weekly, are on the dashboard at footballgpt.co/data.

How many accounts contributed to this dataset?

4,043 distinct contributing accounts generated 17,753 practices in this dataset, alongside 24,962 recorded queries. The dataset refreshes weekly.

Practice examples

These editorial summaries show the kind of practice behind each chart without republishing a user prompt.

A U9-U10 practice for teaching through passes.

`technical · U9-U10 · "Split the Gate: Through Passing"`

A U14-U15 practice combining possession, counter-pressing and finishing.

`technical · U14-U15 · "5v2 + 2 Target Players: Possession & Breakout"`

A defensive practice built around recognising pressing triggers.

`tactical · U16 · "Defensive Trigger & React 7v7"`

A U15+ practice for defending wide overloads from a mid-block.

`tactical · U15+ · "Mid-Block: Handling Wide Overloads"`

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