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FC Shakhtar opens Shakhtar Academy school in Tacoma, Washington USA, as its international franchise grows



SCM's football club Shakhtar has opened a new **Shakhtar Academy** school in Tacoma, Washington, for boys and girls aged five to 15. It is the club's fourth school in the United States. In the 2025/26 season the Shakhtar Academy franchise grew from 14 to 35 schools. The franchise earns the club money from fees, royalties and merchandise. This new income is important for a club that has been away from its home stadium for 12 years because of Russia's war.

What has Shakhtar opened in the United States?

Shakhtar has opened a Shakhtar Academy school in Tacoma, in Washington state. Boys and girls aged five to 15 are invited to train there, and the first session is free. Tacoma joins three existing schools in the US, in Horsham, Clifton and Parma. Shakhtar Academy also has a school in Canada and a network in Europe that includes Poland, Spain, the Czech Republic, Austria, Italy, Germany and Estonia. The club has announced plans to open a school in Brazil.

How does the Shakhtar Academy franchise earn money?

The franchise earns money in three ways: franchise fees, royalties and sales of club merchandise. In 2025/26 it earned UAH 11.1 million. Merchandise accounted for 58.8% of this, franchise fees for 25.5% and royalties for 15.7%. Schools outside Ukraine made up 46% of the network. Their average spend is higher, so they generate a larger share of royalties and merchandise sales. To support partners, the club has created guides on design, marketing and social media. Academy coaches also train the partners' coaches, both online and in person.

Why does Shakhtar need new sources of income?

Shakhtar has played away from its home city for 12 years. Russia's invasion forced the club to leave in 2014, and in 2017 it lost control of its stadium, the Donbas Arena. In 2025/26 the team played most of its home league matches at Arena Lviv, where the number of spectators was limited. It played most of its home European matches in Kraków, Poland. Without a home stadium, the club has had to find new

ways to earn money, and the franchise is one of them.

How fast is the network growing?

Between July 2025 and June 2026, the number of schools grew from 14 to 35 and the number of children grew from 1,200 to 2,000. The network went from six countries to 11, and it now has 67 coaches. Serhii Palkin, CEO of FC Shakhtar, said: "35 football schools have already opened in 11 countries, where 2,000 children train. This means that the Shakhtar brand is gaining popularity in different parts of the world – people know us, value our quality highly and trust us." The club plans to add new products, such as camps and tournaments.