

MODIFIED RULES, ADDENDA AND DIAGRAMS



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6-U Modified Rules

US Youth Soccer Official 6 and Under Playing Recommendations

US Youth Soccer recommended modifications to the FIFA Laws of the Game.

FIFA Laws of the Game can be found at www.ussoccer.com/referees.

Law 1 – The Field of Play

MINI FIELD

Dimensions: The field of play must be rectangular. The length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line.

Length: minimum 25 yards maximum 35 yards

Width: minimum 15 yards maximum 25 yards

Field Markings: Distinctive lines not more than (5) inches wide. The field of play is divided into two halves by a halfway line. The center mark is indicated at the midpoint of the halfway line.

The Goal Area: None.

The Penalty Area: None.

Flagposts: Corner flags are optional.

The Corner Arc: None.

Goals: Goals must be placed on the center of each goal line. They consist of two upright posts equidistant from the corners and joined at the top by a horizontal crossbar. The recommended distance between the posts is six (6) feet and the distance from the lower edge of the crossbar to the ground is four (4) feet. Goals for this age group may be smaller.

Optional: Use corner flags / bicycle flags in lieu of standard goals.

Safety: Goals must be anchored securely to the ground. Portable goals may only be used if they satisfy this requirement.

Law 2 – The Ball

Size three (3). The ball will need to be FIFA Quality.

Optional: use a lightweight¹ size four (4) ball or a Futsal ball to keep the ball mostly on the ground.

¹ A lightweight version reduces the weight of a size 4 soccer ball while still staying within the standards set by U. S. Soccer. Physical benefits of a lightweight ball include less stress on joints at the moment of impact and young players can make long passes, hard shots and block attempts by opponents.

Law 3 – The Number of Players

A match is played by two teams, each consisting of not more than four (4) players. There are NO goalkeepers.

Substitutions: At any stoppage of play and unlimited.

N. B.: If a player who is suspected to have a head injuryⁱ leaves the field of play for additional evaluation, a substitution can be made in that moment.

Playing time: Each player SHALL play a minimum of 50% of the total playing time. It is the coach's responsibility to enforce this rule. Teams and matches may be coed.

The maximum team roster size is six (6).ⁱⁱ

Law 4 – The Players Equipment

Conform to FIFA Laws of the Game. Non-uniform clothing is allowed based on weather conditions, but uniforms must distinguish teams. Shinguards are MANDATORY for both practices and games, and must be covered entirely by socks. If needed, teams can be distinguished by scrimmage vests.

Safety

A player must not use equipment or wear anything that is dangerous to himself or another player (including any kind of jewelry; with the exception of a medical alert bracelet).

Law 5 – The Referee

There is no need for fully qualified referees to manage 6-U games. One or both of the coaches should officiate / manage the game. The games are intended to be an opportunity for our young players to experience the fun of playing. Minimal rules are needed and should be applied with a generous amount of flexibility. Let the players have the freedom to play with little interruption. All infringements should be briefly explained to the players.

Law 6 – The Other Match Officials

None.

Law 7 – The Duration of the Match

The match shall be divided into four (4) periods of not more than 10 minutes, based on the energy and motivation of the players. There shall be a maximum of a five (5) minute break between each period. The four periods do not have to be of equal duration.

Law 8 – The Start and Restart of Play

Conform to FIFA Laws of the Game, with the exception that the defending team is at least four (4) yards from the ball until it is in play. Remember, let them play and do not interfere for technicalities.

Law 9 – The Ball In and Out of Play

Conform to FIFA Laws of the Game.

Law 10 – The Method of Scoring

Conform to FIFA Laws of the Game.

Law 11 – Offside

None.

Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game with the exception that deliberate heading is not allowed in 4 vs. 4 games. In all instances explain the infraction to the player. All free kicks shall be indirect. No cards will be shown in this age group.

Law 13 – Free Kicks

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game, with the exception that all free kicks are indirect and the opponents are to be at least four (4) yards away from the ball until it is kicked.

Law 14 – The Penalty Kick

None.

Law 15 – The Throw-In

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game.

Optional: the throw-in is replaced with the pass-in²; otherwise conform to FIFA Laws of the Game. Opposing players are to be at least four (4) yards from the ball until it is kicked. *US Youth Soccer strongly recommends this options to its members.*

Optional: Dribble-In.

Law 16 – The Goal Kick

The ball shall be placed on the goal line one (1) yard to the outside of either goal post. Opposing players step four yards away from the ball and once it is kicked then game on.

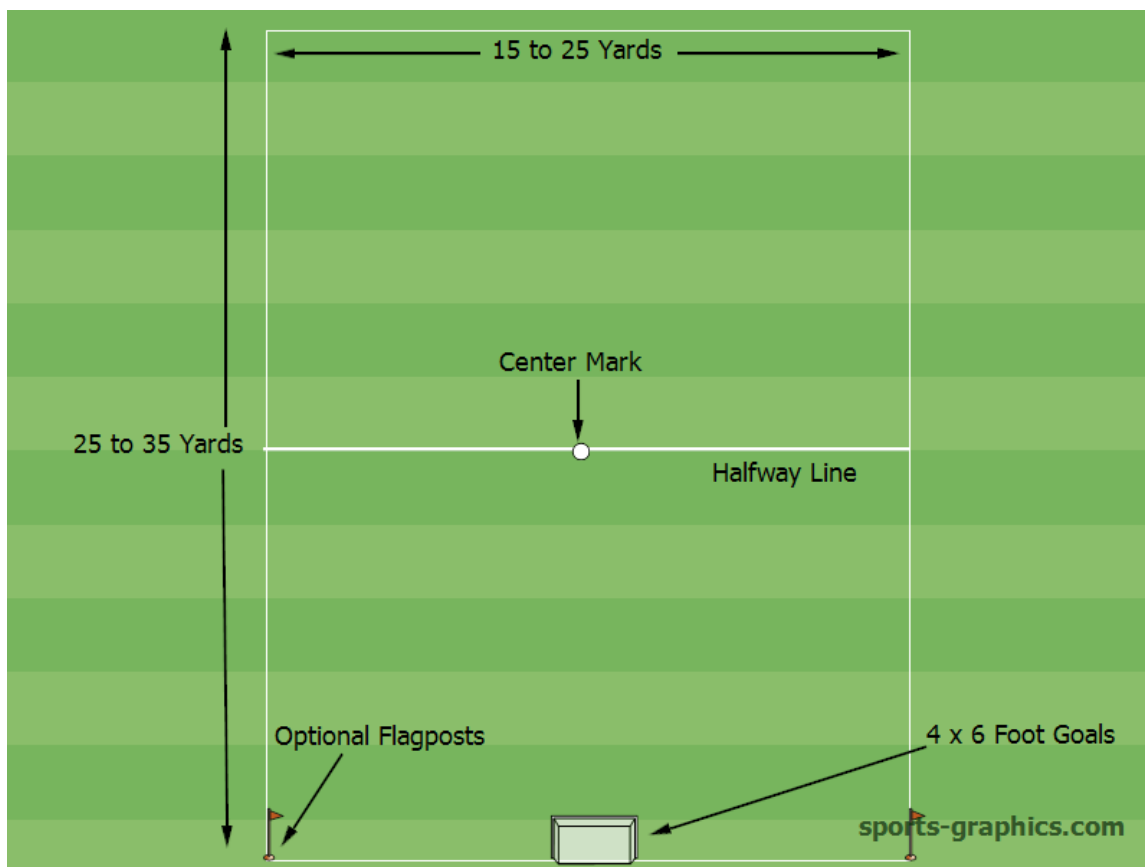
Optional: Dribble-In.

² The ball is placed on the ground off of the field of play and is passed into the field of play.

Law 17 – The Corner Kick

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game with the exception that the ball shall be placed in the corner of the field and the opposing players are to be at least four (4) yards away from the ball until it is kicked.

Optional: Dribble-In.



6-U ADDENDUM

MODIFIED RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GAME FOR 6-U

Law 1 The Field of Play: the dimensions are smaller to accommodate the three-versus-three game and are appropriate for the movement capabilities of four- and five-year-old children. These adjusted dimensions provide more practical space allowing players to be successful. Field Markings: the center circle gives the players a concrete marking on where to be for the kick-off. The corner arc gives the young player a concrete place to put the ball to kick it back onto the field of play. While kids this young will not execute corner kick plays taking a kick from the corner is a reasonable way for them to put the ball into play and provides continuity with all other age groups. However, the center circle and the corner arc for U6 Small Sided Games are not mandatory field markings. Cones may be used in lieu of corner flag posts if desired. Neither cones nor corner flag posts to mark the corners of the field are mandatory for this age group.

Goals: the goal, 4 x 6 is the same for the U6 to U8 age groups. By using the same size goal for these age groups clubs will have to buy fewer goals and there will be greater flexibility in the use of fields. However, manufactured goals are not mandatory for 6-U Small Sided Games. Clubs are free to use cones, pop-up goals or other items to designate the goal for this age group. Indeed, even the entire goal line could be considered the 'goal' and a ball kicked over the goal line is considered a goal. Any goal must be properly anchored to the ground.

Law 2 The Ball: must be a size three. The smaller ball is lighter and more easily kicked, received, dribbled and passed.

Law 3 The Number of Players: there are no goalkeepers in the 6-U age group so that all of the players may chase the ball around the field. The kids want to be where the action is and at this age it is around the ball. This will provide the opportunity for the children to further develop their running, jumping and kicking coordination. These are valuable traits for all soccer players to develop. The smaller number of players takes into account the egocentrism of this age group and therefore allows each child more opportunities for shooting and dribbling the ball. With fewer players on the field each child has an increased number of contacts with the ball and has more actual playing time. Additionally the players will be required to make more decisions and experience repeating game situations frequently. The work rate and involvement of players will be more consistent. While learning both offense and defense, players will become well rounded and will understand more readily the roles and importance of teammates.

Law 5 The Referee: a referee is not really needed for this age group. Instead a parent or a coach should supervise the game for safety sake. All rule infringements shall be briefly explained to the offending player. 'Do-overs' should be a regular occurrence allowed by the adult(s) supervising the 6-U game. It is strongly recommended that the adult officiating the 6-U game attend the Grade 9 referee course.

Law 7 The Duration of the Match: the game is divided into four quarters. Clubs may make the quarters shorter in duration if necessary. Quarters are played in the 6-U age group to accommodate the attention span and physical limitations of the children.

Law 12 Fouls and Misconduct: no caution or send off shall be issued to players. If a child is being too rambunctious then the game official will ask the coach to make a substitution of that player to give the child a chance to calm down before returning to play.

Law 15 The Pass-In: most 6-U players do not yet have the eye-hand coordination to execute a throw-in to the letter of the law. This leads to endless retakes from one team to the other. Additionally with a pass-in the ball is on the ground and stationary so the 6-U player has a better chance of striking it correctly. This may lead to some intentional passes. However, this is

still unlikely given that whether it is a throw or a kick all of the kids on the field will be yelling for the ball at the same time and the child putting the ball into play will be confused.

Law 16 The Goal Kick: the kick should be allowed to be taken from anywhere along the goal line over which the ball traveled. This is so the ball can be put back into play quickly. The ball should be placed two or three yards into the field of play to make it easier for the child taking the goal kick to get the ball well into the field of play once it is kicked. The defending players must stand at least four yards away from the ball until it is in play. If the suggestion of using the halfway line is used then the defending players should stand at least at the halfway line until it is in play. The position of the defending players is so that the attacking team has a chance to advance the ball up field.

- ⇒ Roster Size: Under the single field method the recommended minimum roster size is four players and the maximum roster size is six players. Under the dual field method the recommended minimum roster size is eight players and the maximum roster size is ten players. This range of roster sizes allows for a club to use either the single field or dual field set up.
- ⇒ Playing Time: A minimum of at least 50% playing time is required. The goal of the 6-U facilitator is to achieve 100% playing time for each child.
- ⇒ Split-Field Model: See appendix for options.
- ⇒ No score or standings should be kept.

ADVANTAGES OF PLAYING SMALL SIDED GAMES

- ☐ More time with the coach/facilitator
- ☐ Energetic workouts due to playing both offense and defense
- ☐ More efficient use of field space
- ☐ Matches can be played simultaneously across a full size field
- ☐ Children are physically more efficient in smaller space
- ☐ Children are actively involved for a longer period of time
- ☐ It takes less time to score a goal or advance to goal
- ☐ Greater success rate for the players

US Youth Soccer Recommendations

- Opposing coaches, players and parents should shake hands after each match.
- Parent/coaches, non-participating players and spectators should be there to enjoy and encourage the activity of the youngsters.
- Spectator and team benches should be on opposite sides of the field.
- No alcoholic beverages or tobacco products will be consumed or allowed near the playing area.
- No slide tackles to be allowed in this age group.
- Coaches of 6-U teams should attend the U6/U8 Youth Module coaching course, the “F” license and the Grade 9 referee course.

8-U Modified Rules

US Youth Soccer Official 8 and Under Playing Recommendations

US Youth Soccer recommended modifications to the FIFA Laws of the Game.

FIFA Laws of the Game can be found at www.ussoccer.com/referees.

Law 1 – The Field of Play

MINI FIELD

Dimensions: The field of play must be rectangular. The length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line.

Length: minimum 25 yards maximum 35 yards

Width: minimum 15 yards maximum 25 yards

Field Markings: Distinctive lines not more than (5) inches wide. The field of play is divided into two halves by a halfway line. The center mark is indicated at the midpoint of the halfway line.

Optional: A circle with a radius of five (5) yards should be marked around the center mark.

The Goal Area: None.

Optional: Two lines are drawn at right angles to the goal line four (4) yards from the inside of each goalpost. These lines extend into the field of play for a distance of five (5) yards and are joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line.

The Penalty Area: None.

Flagposts: Corner flags are optional.

The Corner Arc: None.

Goals: Goals must be placed on the center of each goal line. They consist of two upright posts equidistant from the corners and joined at the top by a horizontal crossbar. The recommended distance between the posts is six (6) feet and the distance from the lower edge of the crossbar to the ground is four (4) feet. Goals for this age group may be smaller.

Safety: Goals must be anchored securely to the ground. Portable goals may only be used if they satisfy this requirement.

Law 2 – The Ball

Size three (3). The ball will need to be FIFA Quality.

Optional: use a lightweight³ size four (4) ball or a Futsal ball to keep the ball mostly on the ground.

³ A lightweight version reduces the weight of a size 4 soccer ball while still staying within the standards set by U. S. Soccer. Physical benefits of a lightweight ball include less stress on joints at the moment of impact and young players can make long passes, hard shots and block attempts by opponents.

Law 3 – The Number of Players

A match is played by two teams, each consisting of not more than four (4) players. There are NO goalkeepers.

Substitutions: At any stoppage of play and unlimited.

N. B.: A player who is suspected to have a head injury ⁱ leaves the field of play for additional evaluation, a substitution can be made in that moment.

Playing time: Each player SHALL play a minimum of 50% of the total playing time. It is the coach's responsibility to enforce this rule. Teams and matches may be coed.

The maximum team roster size is six (6).ⁱⁱ

Law 4 – The Players Equipment

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game. Non-uniform clothing is allowed based on weather conditions, but uniforms must distinguish teams. Shinguards are MANDATORY for both practices and games, and must be covered entirely by socks. If needed, teams can be distinguished by scrimmage vests.

Safety

A player must not use equipment or wear anything that is dangerous to himself or another player (including any kind of jewelry; with the exception of a medical alert bracelet).

Law 5 – The Referee

There is no need for fully qualified referees to manage 8 and Under games. One or both of the coaches should officiate / manage the game. Basic fouls and boundaries should be respected. All infringements should be briefly explained to the players.

Law 6 – The Other Match Officials

None.

Law 7 – The Duration of the Match

The match shall be divided into four (4) periods of not more than 10 minutes, based on the energy and motivation of the players. The length of the match should be determined before the match starts by both coaches. There shall be a maximum of a five (5) minute break between each period. The four periods do not have to be of equal duration.

Law 8 – The Start and Restart of Play

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game, with the exception that the defending team is at least five (5) yards from the ball until it is in play. Remember, let them play and do not interfere for technicalities.

Law 9 – The Ball In and Out of Play

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game.

Law 10 – The Method of Scoring

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game.

Law 11 – Offside

None.

Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game with the exception that all fouls shall result in an indirect free kick.

When a player deliberately heads the ball in a game, an indirect free kick should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense. If the deliberate header occurs within the goal area [if one is being used], the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the infringement occurred.

The game official must explain ALL infringements to the offending player. No cards shown for misconduct.

N.B.: A hand ball infraction occurs when a player handles the ball deliberately. The “hand” includes the entire arm up to the top of the shoulder. Instinctive, self-protective reactions are not penalized at this young age. Accidental contact (ball striking hand or arm) is not an offense and should not be penalized.

Law 13 – Free Kicks

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game with the exception that all free kicks are indirect and all opponents are to be at least five (5) yards from the ball until it is kicked. Deliberate heading is not allowed in 4 vs. 4 games.

Law 14 – The Penalty Kick

None.

Law 15 – The Throw-In

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game.

Optional: the throw-in may be replaced with the pass-in⁴; otherwise conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game. Opposing players are to be at least two (2) yards from the ball until it is kicked. *This option is strongly recommended by US Youth Soccer.*

⁴ The ball is placed on the ground off of the field of play and is kicked into the field of play.

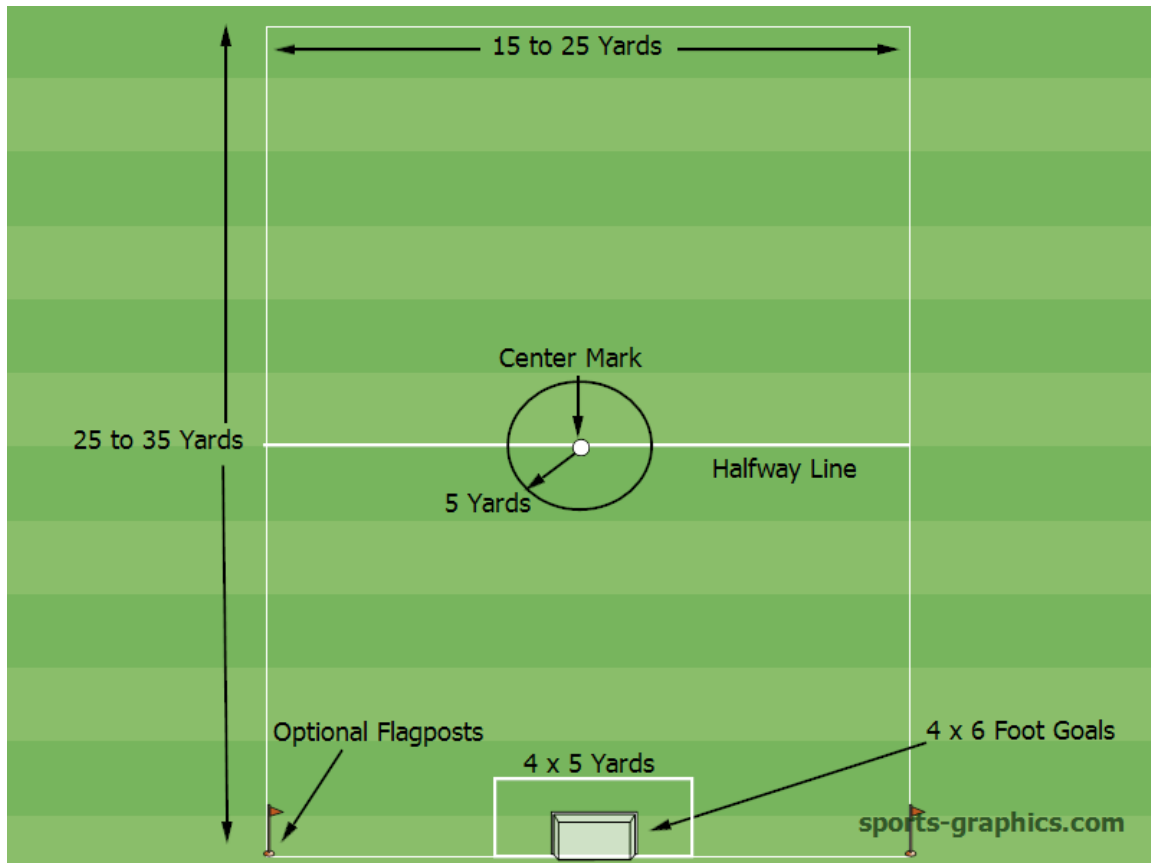
Law 16 – The Goal Kick

The goal kick shall be taken anywhere along the goal line within five (5) yards of the goal. Opposing players must drop off five (5) yards from the ball until the ball is kicked.

Optional: If the goal area is marked on the field of play then the goal kick shall be taken there. The ball must leave the goal area before being touched by another player.

Law 17 – The Corner Kick

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game with the exception that opponents remain at least five (5) yards from the ball until it is kicked.



8-U ADDENDUM

MODIFIED RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GAME FOR 8-U

Law 1 The Field of Play: dimensions are smaller to accommodate the four-versus-four game and are appropriate for the movement capabilities of six- and seven-year-old children. These adjusted dimensions provide more practical space allowing players to be successful.

Field Markings: the center circle gives the players a concrete marking on where to be for the kick-off. The corner arc gives the young player a concrete place to put the ball to kick it back onto the field of play. While kids this young will execute corner kick plays to a modest degree taking a kick from the corner is a reasonable way for them to put the ball into play and provides continuity with all other age groups. However, the center circle and the corner arc for U8 Small Sided Games are not mandatory field markings.

Goals: the goal, 4 x 6 is the same for the U6 to U8 age groups. By using the same size goal for these age groups clubs will have to buy fewer goals and there will be greater flexibility in the use of fields. However, manufactured goals are not mandatory for 8-U Small Sided Games. Clubs are free to use cones, Pug goals or other items to designate the goal for this age group. Any goal must be properly anchored to the ground.

Law 2 The Ball: must be a size three. The smaller ball is lighter and more easily kicked, received, dribbled and passed.

Law 3 The Number of Players: there are no goalkeepers in the 8-U age group so that all of the players may chase the ball around the field. The kids want to be where the action is and at this age it is around the ball. This will provide the opportunity for the children to further develop their running, jumping and kicking coordination. These are valuable traits for all soccer players to develop. The smaller number of players takes into account the egocentrism of this age group and therefore allows each child more opportunities for shooting, passing and dribbling the ball. With fewer players on the field each child has an increased number of contacts with the ball and has more actual playing time. Additionally the players will be required to make more decisions and experience repeated game situations frequently. The involvement of players will be more consistent. While learning both offense and defense, players will become well rounded and will understand more readily the roles and importance of teammates. Children in the 8-U age group will intentionally play in pairs. The smaller number of players on the field will make it easier and more likely that passing and receiving will occur.

Law 5 The Referee: a referee is not really needed for this age group. Instead a parent or a coach should officiate the game. All rule infringements shall be briefly explained to the offending player. It is strongly recommended that the adult officiating the 8-U game attend the Grade 9 referee course.

Law 7 The Duration of the Match: the game is divided into four quarters. Clubs may make the quarters shorter in duration if necessary. Quarters are played in the 8-U age group to accommodate the attention span and physical limitations of the children.

Law 12 Fouls and Misconduct: no caution or send off shall be issued to players. If a child is being too rambunctious then the game official will ask the coach to make a substitution of that player to give the child a chance to calm down before returning to play.

Law 13 Free Kicks: all free kicks shall be indirect. This will keep the game flowing and keep the attention of the kids.

Law 15 The Throw-In: Pass-In option - some 8-U players do not yet have the eye-hand coordination to execute a throw-in to the letter of the law. This leads to endless retakes from one team to the other. Additionally with a pass-in the ball is on the ground and stationary so the 8-U player has a better chance of striking it correctly. This may lead to some intentional passes, thus encouraging teamwork.

Law 16 The Goal Kick: the kick should be allowed to be taken from anywhere along the goal line over which the ball traveled. This is so the ball can be put back into play quickly. The ball should be placed two or three yards into the field of play to make it easier for the child taking the goal kick to get the ball well into the field of play once it is kicked. The defending players must stand at least five yards away from the ball until it is in play. It is suggested that the defending players stand at least at the halfway line until it is in play. The position of the defending players is so that the attacking team has a chance to advance the ball up field.

Law 17 The Corner Kick: per FIFA. The defending players must stand at least five yards away from the ball until it is in play.

- ⇒ Roster Size: Under the single field method the recommended the maximum roster size is six players. Under the dual field method the recommended the maximum roster size is ten players. This range of roster sizes allows for a club to use either the single field or dual field set up.
- ⇒ Playing Time: A minimum of at least 50% playing time is required.
- ⇒ Split-Field Model: See appendix for options.
- ⇒ No score or standings should be kept.

ADVANTAGES OF PLAYING SMALL SIDED GAMES

- ☐ More time with the coach
- ☐ Energetic workouts due to playing both offense and defense
- ☐ More efficient use of field space
- ☐ Matches can be played simultaneously across a full size field
- ☐ Children are physically more efficient in smaller space
- ☐ Children are actively involved for a longer period of time
- ☐ It takes less time to score a goal or advance to goal
- ☐ Greater success rate for the players

US Youth Soccer Recommendations

- Opposing coaches, players and parents should shake hands after each match.
- Parent/coaches, non-participating players and spectators should be there to enjoy and encourage the activity of the youngsters.
- Spectator and team benches should be on opposite sides of the field.
- No alcoholic beverages or tobacco products will be consumed or allowed near the playing area.
- No slide tackles to be allowed in this age group.
- Coaches of 8-U teams should attend the U6/U8 Youth Module coaching course, the “F” license and the Grade 9 referee course.

10-U Modified Rules

US Youth Soccer Official 10 and Under Playing Recommendations

US Youth Soccer recommended modifications to the FIFA Laws of the Game.

FIFA Laws of the Game can be found at www.ussoccer.com/referees.

Law 1 – The Field of Play

DEVELOPMENT FIELD

Dimensions: The field of play must be rectangular. The length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line.

Length: minimum 55 yards maximum 65 yards

Width: minimum 35 yards maximum 45 yards

Field Markings: Distinctive lines not more than (5) inches wide. The field of play is divided into two halves by a halfway line. The center mark is indicated at the midpoint of the halfway line. A circle with a radius of eight (8) yards is marked around it.

The Goal Area: 4 yards out from the goal line x 8 yards wide.

The Penalty Area: 12 yards out from the goal line x 24 yards wide. A penalty arc with a radius of eight (8) yards from each penalty mark is drawn outside the penalty area.

Penalty Mark: 10 yards

Flagposts: Conform to FIFA Laws of the Game

The Corner Arc: Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game.

Build Out Line⁵: Equidistant between the top of the penalty area and the halfway line.

Goals: Goals must be placed on the center of each goal line. They consist of two upright posts equidistant from the corners and joined at the top by a horizontal crossbar. The recommended distance between the posts is twelve (12) feet and the distance from the lower edge of the crossbar to the ground is six (6) feet.

Optional: For the developmental field the goal may be a maximum of 6 feet high by 18 feet wide.

Safety: Goals must be anchored securely to the ground. Portable goals may only be used if they satisfy this requirement.

⁵ The build out line is used to promote playing the ball out of the back in an unpressured setting. When the goalkeeper has the ball, either during play or from a goal kick, the opposing team must move behind the build out line. At any time the goalkeeper may pass, throw or roll the ball to a teammate, but the goalkeeper does so accepting the positioning of the opponents and the consequences of how play resumes. Punts or drop-kicks are not allowed as this would defeat the purpose of the build out line and reduces the opportunity to play out of the defending third in an unpressured setting. After the ball is put into play, the opposing team can then cross the build out line and play resumes as normal.

Law 2 – The Ball

Size four (4). The ball will need to be FIFA Quality.

Optional: use a lightweight⁶ size four (4) ball.

Law 3 – The Number of Players

A match is played by two teams, each consisting of not more than seven (7) players, one of whom is the designated goalkeeper. A match may not start or continue if either team consists of fewer than five players.

Substitutions: At any stoppage of play and unlimited.

N. B.: A player who is suspected to have a head injuryⁱ leaves the field of play for additional evaluation, a substitution can be made in that moment.

Playing time: Each player SHALL play a minimum of 50% of the total playing time, which is controlled by the coach. Teams and matches may be coed.

The maximum team roster size is twelve (12).ⁱⁱ

Law 4 – The Players Equipment

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game. Non-uniform clothing, matching the uniform color, is allowed based on weather conditions. Uniforms must distinguish teams. Shinguards are MANDATORY for both practices and games, and must be covered entirely by socks. If needed, teams can be distinguished by scrimmage vests.

Safety

A player must not use equipment or wear anything that is dangerous to himself or another player (including any kind of jewelry; with the exception of a medical alert bracelet).

Law 5 – The Referee

Registered referee with a minimum U. S. Soccer certification of Grade 9 or parent/coach or assistant coach.

Law 6 – The Other Match Officials

None.

Optional: use registered Assistant Referees, if available. If registered Assistant Referees are not assigned, it is permissible to use club linesmen/women (preferably parents) to signal ball out of play only.

⁶ A lightweight version reduces the weight of a size 4 soccer ball while still staying within the standards set by U. S. Soccer. Physical benefits of a lightweight ball include less stress on joints at the moment of impact and young players can make long passes, hard shots and block attempts by opponents.

Law 7 – The Duration of the Match

Conform to the FIFA with the exception of the match being divided into two (2) equal halves of twenty-five (25) minutes. There shall be a half-time interval of up to ten (10) minutes. No added time at the end of either half.ⁱⁱⁱ

Law 8 – The Start and Restart of Play

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game, with the exception that the defending team is at least eight (8) yards from the ball until it is in play.

Law 9 – The Ball In and Out of Play

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game.

Law 10 – The Method of Scoring

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game.

Law 11 – Offside

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game, with the exception that the build-out line also serves as an offside line⁷. Attackers cannot be penalized for an offside offense between the halfway line and the build-out line.

Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game with the exception that an indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team at the spot of the offense if a goalkeeper punts or drop-kicks the ball. If the punt occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the nearest point to where the infringement occurred.

When a player deliberately heads the ball in a game, an indirect free kick should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense. If the deliberate header occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the infringement occurred.

Law 13 – Free Kicks

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game with the exception that all opponents are at least eight (8) yards from the ball until it is kicked.

⁷ An attacking player would have to be between the build-out line and the opponent's goal line to possibly be in an offside position. By using the build-out line as the offside line, it's far less likely that passes over the top will be made and more space is created for movement off the ball for the second and third attackers.

Law 14 – The Penalty Kick

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game, with the exception that the penalty mark is ten (10) yards from the goal line.

Law 15 – The Throw-In

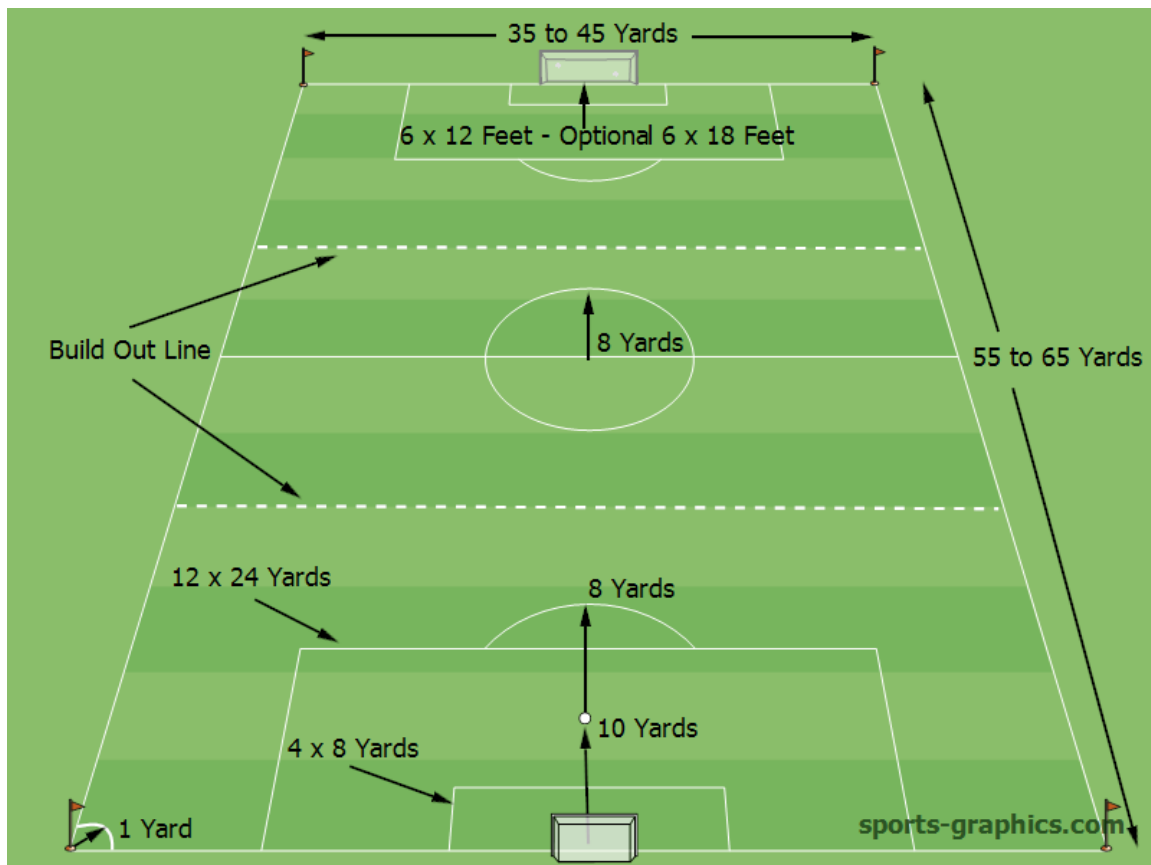
Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game.

Law 16 – The Goal Kick

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game with the exception that opposing players must retreat behind the build out line until the ball is in play. The team taking the goal kick may choose to restart play before the opponents have retreated behind the build out line. The ball is in play when it is kicked directly out of the penalty area.

Law 17 – The Corner Kick

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game with the exception that opponents remain at least eight (8) yards from the ball until it is kicked.



10-U ADDENDUM

MODIFIED RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GAME FOR 10-U

Law 1 The Field of Play: dimensions are smaller to accommodate the seven-versus-seven game and are appropriate for the movement capabilities of nine- and ten-year-old children. These adjusted dimensions provide more practical space allowing players to be successful.

Field Markings: the goal area is smaller than the adult size goal area and is proportional to the 10-U field of play. The penalty area is marked, but is smaller than the adult field size penalty area and within the penalty area is the penalty mark which is two yards shorter than the adult size field marking. The center circle is two yards smaller in radius than the adult size field marking. All other markings are per FIFA.

Goals: the goal, 6 x 18 feet, is the same for the 10-U and 12-U age groups. By using the same size goal for both age groups clubs will have to buy fewer goals. Any goal must be properly anchored to the ground.

Law 2 The Ball: must be a size four. The smaller ball is lighter and more easily kicked, received, dribbled and passed.

Law 3 The Number of Players: the seven-a-side game now includes the goalkeeper. The smaller number of field players will provide the opportunity for the children to further develop their physical and technical abilities. These are valuable traits for all soccer players to develop. With fewer players on the field each child has an increased number of contacts with the ball and has more actual playing time. Additionally, the players will be required to make more tactical decisions. They will experience repeating game situations frequently. The work rate and involvement of players will be more consistent. While learning both offense and defense, players will become well rounded and will understand more readily the roles and importance of teammates. The need for the players to make the mental and physical transition from offense to defense and vice-versa will be enhanced in this playing environment.

Law 5 The Referee: per FIFA. Clubs are urged to use this age group as a field training opportunity for Grade 9 Recreational Referees. All rule infringements shall be briefly explained to the offending player.

Law 6 The Assistant Referees: Implement here the referee-in-training program.

Law 7 The Duration of the Match: per FIFA with the exception of the halves being 25 minutes each.

Law 8 The Start and Restart of Play: per FIFA. The distance the defending players must be away from the ball until it is kicked is the same as the radius of the center circle.

Law 11 Offside: per FIFA with the exception that the build-out line serves as the offside line. This modification allows more space for the attacking team to learn buildup tactics to create quality scoring opportunities.

Law 12 Heading of the ball is not allowed.

Law 13 Free Kicks: per FIFA. The distance the defending players must be away from the ball until it is kicked is the same as the radius of the center circle.

Law 14 The Penalty Kick: conform to FIFA with the exceptions that the penalty mark is ten yards from the center of the goal line and that players other than the kicker and defending goalkeeper are at least eight yards from the penalty mark. The distance of eight yards conforms to the radius of the center circle. The distance of ten yards from the center of the goalmouth for

the penalty mark fits within the reduced dimensions of the penalty area and is a reasonable distance for the kick.

Law 16 The Goal Kick: The defending players must stand at least at the build-out line until the ball is in play. The position of the defending players is so that the attacking team has a chance to play the ball out of their penalty area. Teams are encouraged to inter-pass the ball in order to advance up field.

Law 17 The Corner Kick: per FIFA. The distance the defending players must be away from the ball until it is kicked is the same as the radius of the center circle.

- ⇒ Roster Size: Under the single field method the maximum roster size is twelve players. Under the dual field method the recommended maximum roster size is fourteen players. This range of roster sizes allows for a club to use either the single field or dual field set up.
- ⇒ Split-Field Model: See appendix for options.
- ⇒ Playing Time: A minimum of at least 50% playing time is required.
- ⇒ No score or standings should be kept.

ADVANTAGES OF PLAYING SMALL SIDED GAMES

- ❑ More time with the coach
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- ❑ More efficient use of field space
- ❑ Matches can be played simultaneously across a full size field
- ❑ Children are physically more efficient in smaller space
- ❑ Children are actively involved for a longer period of time
- ❑ It takes less time to score a goal or advance to goal
- ❑ Greater success rate for the players

US Youth Soccer Recommendations

- ❖ Opposing coaches, players and parents should shake hands after each match.
- ❖ Parent/coaches, non-participating players and spectators should be there to enjoy and encourage the activity of the youngsters.
- ❖ Spectator and team benches should be on opposite sides of the field.
- ❖ No alcoholic beverages or tobacco products will be consumed or allowed near the playing area. Opposing parent/coaches and players should shake hands after each match.
- ❖ No slide tackles to be allowed in this age group.
- ❖ Coaches of 10-U teams should attend the U10/U12 Youth Module coaching course, the “E” license and the Grade 9 referee course.

12-U Modified Rules

US Youth Soccer Official 12 and Under Playing Recommendations

US Youth Soccer recommended modifications to the FIFA Laws of the Game.

FIFA Laws of the Game can be found at www.ussoccer.com/referees.

Law 1 – The Field of Play

SMALL-SIDED FIELD

Dimensions: The field of play must be rectangular. The length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line.

Length: minimum 70 yards maximum 80 yards

Width: minimum 45 yards maximum 55 yards

Field Markings: Distinctive lines not more than (5) inches wide. The field of play is divided into two halves by a halfway line. The center mark is indicated at the midpoint of the halfway line. A circle with a radius of eight (8) yards is marked around it.

The Goal Area: 5 yards out from the goal line x 16 yards wide.

The Penalty Area: 14 yards out from the goal line x 36 yards wide. Within each penalty area a penalty mark is made ten (10) yards from the midpoint between the goalposts and equidistant to them. An arc of a circle with a radius of eight (8) yards from each penalty mark is drawn outside the penalty area.

Flagposts: Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game.

The Corner Arc: Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game.

Goals: Goals must be placed on the center of each goal line. They consist of two upright posts equidistant from the corners and joined at the top by a horizontal crossbar. The recommended distance between the posts is eighteen (18) feet and the distance from the lower edge of the crossbar to the ground is six (6) feet.

Optional: A 7' x 21' goal is allowed.

Safety: Goals must be anchored securely to the ground. Portable goals may only be used if they satisfy this requirement.

Law 2 – The Ball

Size four (4). The ball will need to be FIFA Quality.

Optional: use a lightweight⁸ size four (4) ball.

⁸ A lightweight version reduces the weight of a size 4 soccer ball while staying within the standards set by U. S. Soccer. Physical benefits of a lightweight ball include less stress on joints at the moment of impact, less impact from heading and young players can make long passes, hard shots and block attempts by opponents.

Law 3 – The Number of Players

A match is played by two teams, each consisting of not more than nine (9) players, one of whom is the designated goalkeeper. A match may not start or continue if either team consists of fewer than six players.

Substitutions: At any stoppage of play and unlimited.

N. B.: A player who is suspected to have a head injury ⁱ leaves the field of play for additional evaluation, a substitution can be made in that moment.

Playing time: To develop players need to play, so it is recommended that each player plays a minimum of 50% of the total playing time, which is controlled by the coach.

Teams and matches may be coed.

The maximum team roster size is sixteen (16).

Law 4 – The Players Equipment

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game. Non-uniform clothing, matching the uniform color, is allowed based on weather conditions. Uniforms must distinguish teams. Shinguards are MANDATORY for both practices and games, and must be covered entirely by socks.

Safety

A player must not use equipment or wear anything that is dangerous to himself or another player (including any kind of jewelry; with the exception of a medical alert bracelet).

Law 5 – The Referee

Registered referee with a minimum of a U. S. Soccer Grade 9 certification.

Law 6 – The Other Match Officials

Use registered assistant referees at the discretion of the competition authority. If such personnel are unavailable then use club linesmen/women, who are only to determine when the ball goes in and out of play.

Law 7 – The Duration of the Match

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game with the exception of the match being divided into two (2) equal halves of thirty (30) minutes. There shall be a half-time interval of ten (10) minutes. No added time at the end of either half. ⁱⁱⁱ

Law 8 – The Start and Restart of Play

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game, with the exception that the defending team is at least eight (8) yards from the ball until it is in play.

Law 9 – The Ball In and Out of Play

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game.

Law 10 – The Method of Scoring

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game.

Law 11 – Offside

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game

Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game.

Deliberate heading of the ball is not allowed in U11 games. If a player deliberately heads the ball in a game, an indirect free kick should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense. If the deliberate header occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the nearest point to where the infringement occurred.

Heading is allowed in 12-U games without limitations.

Law 13 – Free Kicks

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game with the exception that all opponents are at least eight (8) yards from the ball until it is in play.

Law 14 – The Penalty Kick

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game, with the exception that the penalty mark is ten (10) yards from the goal line.

Law 15 – The Throw-In

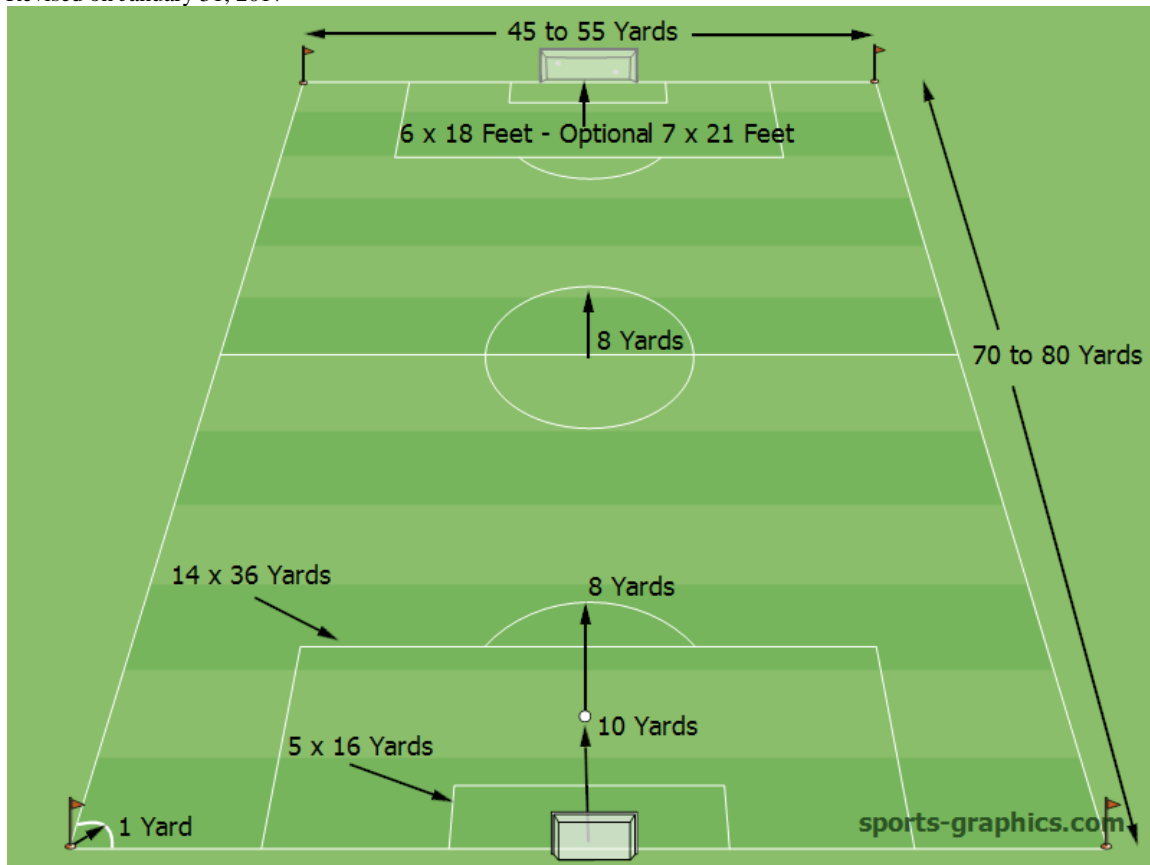
Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game.

Law 16 – The Goal Kick

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game.

Law 17 – The Corner Kick

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game with the exception that opponents remain at least eight (8) yards from the ball until it is in play.



12-U ADDENDUM

MODIFIED RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GAME FOR 12-U

Law 1 The Field of Play dimensions are smaller to accommodate the nine-versus-nine game and are appropriate for the movement capabilities of eleven- and twelve-year old children. These adjusted dimensions provide more practical space allowing players to be successful.

Field Markings: per FIFA with the exception of the center circle, penalty area, penalty mark and penalty arc.

Goals: the goal, 6 x 18 feet, is the same for the 10-U and 12-U age groups. By using the same size goal for both age groups clubs will have to buy fewer goals. Any goal must be properly anchored to the ground.

Law 2 The Ball: must be a size four. The smaller ball is lighter and more easily kicked, received, headed, dribbled, caught, thrown and passed.

Law 3 The Number of Players: The nine-a-side game includes the goalkeeper. The smaller number of field players will provide the opportunity for the children to further develop their physical and technical abilities. These are valuable traits for all soccer players to develop. With fewer players on the field each child has an increased number of contacts with the ball and has more actual playing time. Additionally the players will be required to make more tactical decisions. They will experience repeating game situations frequently. The work rate and involvement of players will be more consistent. While learning both offense and defense, players will become well rounded and will understand more readily the roles and importance of teammates. The smaller field dimensions and number of players on the field of play will require more concentration on transition, which is a vitally important tactical concept for the players to learn.

Law 6 The Other Match Officials: if this option is used then use registered assistant referees or club linesmen/women.

Law 7 The Duration of the Match: per FIFA with the exception of the halves being 30 minutes each.

Law 8 The Start and Restart of Play: per FIFA. The distance the defending players must be away from the ball until it is kicked is the same as the radius of the center circle.

Law 13 Free Kicks: per FIFA. The distance the defending players must be away from the ball until it is kicked is the same as the radius of the center circle.

Law 14 Conform to FIFA with the exceptions that the penalty mark is ten yards from the center of the goal line and that players other than the kicker and defending goalkeeper are at least eight yards from the penalty mark. The distance of eight yards conforms to the radius of the center circle. The distance of ten yards from the center of the goalmouth for the penalty mark fits within the reduced dimensions of the penalty area and is a reasonable distance for the kick.

Law 17 The Corner Kick: per FIFA. The distance the defending players must be away from the ball until it is kicked is the same as the radius of the center circle.

- ⇒ Roster Size: The maximum recommended roster size is sixteen.
- ⇒ Playing Time: refer to the Effective Playing Time chart.

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- ❖ Parent/coaches, non-participating players and spectators should be there to enjoy and encourage the activity of the youngsters.
- ❖ Spectator and team benches should be on opposite sides of the field.
- ❖ No alcoholic beverages or tobacco products will be consumed or allowed near the playing area.
- ❖ Coaches of 12-U teams should attend the U10/U12 Youth Module coaching course, the “E” license and the Grade 9 referee course.