

Short-Sided Games for U-8 Division

Note: U8 Coaches/Referees: Please be aware of the Goal-kick guidelines.

A. THE FIELD

- Dimensions: Maximum 50 yards long and 30 yards wide (50 yds x 30 yds)
- Halfway line the width of the field, marked equidistant between the goal lines
- Center circle with a six yard radius in the center of the field
- Corner arcs with a one yard radius at each corner of the field
- Goal "Penalty" area in front of each goal measuring six yards by 12 yards (6 yds x 12 yds)
 - Only the goalkeeper is allowed to use his/her hands in this "penalty" area.
- Goals: Maximum 6 feet high by 6 yards wide (6 ft x 6yds)

B. THE BALL

- Size four (4)

C. NUMBER OF PLAYERS

- Maximum number of players PER TEAM on the field at any time: **seven (7)**; one of whom may be a goalkeeper
- Maximum number of players PER TEAM on roster: thirteen (13)
- Substitutions: Between quarters and at halftime

Notes:

- Goalies should rotate each quarter
- Playing time: Minimum of 50% of the total playing time for each player, if possible. No one should play four periods until everyone has played three periods

D. PLAYERS' EQUIPMENT:

- Shinguards: **MANDATORY** for practices and games
- Footwear: Soccer shoes or tennis shoes
- Each player will be given their own jersey, shorts, and socks

E. REFEREE:

The referee can be either a:

- registered referee
- youth referee
- coach

Referees should emphasize:

- fun
- fairness
- safety
- learning

NOTE: Referees should briefly explain any infringements to the player(s) and help players with instructions.

- All referees must be registered AYSO volunteers.

- Referee decisions are final and must not be questioned by coaches

F. DURATION OF GAME

- Four 10-minute periods, if necessary for substitutions or water break
- Two minutes between quarters
- One 5 to 10 minute half time

G. THE START OF PLAY

- The game should be started with a indirect free kick ("kickoff") in the middle of the field.
- The coaches should determine which team starts the game and the opposing team should start the second half.
- The referee will ensure that opponents are at least six (6) yards from the spot of the free kick.

H. BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY

- No change from regular play. See Throw-in, Goal kick and Corner Kick for special circumstances

N. THROW-IN

- In the Under-8 division, throw-ins are re- introduced. A second throw-in should be allowed if the player commits a foul on the initial attempt. The referee should explain the proper method before allowing the player to re-throw

O. GOAL KICK

- All goal kicks are direct kicks.
- The goal kick may be taken from any point inside their Penalty Area ("large box").
- The referee will ensure that opponents are at least ten (10) yards from the edge of the Penalty Area ("large box"). **Important: The goal kick should not be taken until the referee enforces this.**
- The ball must go outside the large Penalty Area before a player on either team can kick the ball.

Coaching/Referee Tips for a goal kick:

- First, on a goal kick, guide the opposing team back towards the center of the field near the center circle (about 10 yards back from the Penalty Area). The kicking team can position themselves where ever they want.
- Have the kicking player place the ball anywhere on the ground within the Penalty Area (preferably "near" one of the corners of the penalty area furthest from their goal) .
- Have the kicking player attempt to pass the ball to one of the open teammates who has moved toward a sideline to receive the pass.
- Remind the kicker to pass to his/her open teammates, not to the opposing teams.
- If needed, remind the opposing players that they can only try for the ball after the goalkick is taken. It's almost like a "free" kick.
- For each goal-kick, have a different player (including the goalkeeper) take it, so everybody gets a chance.

P. CORNER KICK

- In the Under-8 division, corner-kicks are introduced.
- All corner kicks are indirect kicks,
- Opponents must be eight (8) yards from the ball.

I. METHOD OF SCORING

- No change from regular play.
- **Scores are not kept.**
- If a goal is scored, players should be brought back to their half, and the ball shall be placed at the center spot. The game shall continue with a free kick from the

team that was scored upon. The referee will ensure that opponents are at least six (6) yards from the spot of the kick

K. FOULS & MISCONDUCT

- Indirect free kick for all fouls, with the opponents six (6) yards away
- Referees will work cooperatively with the coaches and eliminate the need for cautions and send-offs. Do not show yellow or red cards.
- Referee should briefly explain infractions.
- If necessary, the referee should stop the game when any player has fallen on or near the ball and is in danger of being kicked. The quick restart will be a dropped ball.
- All fouls are indirect free kicks, with the opponents six (6) yards away
- Indirect free kicks awarded the attacking team inside the defending team's goal area should be taken from the nearest point on the goal area line in front of the goal.

M. PENALTY KICKS

- There are no penalty kicks in the Under-8 division

J. OFFSIDE

- There is no offside in the Under-8 division

AYSO RECOMMENDATIONS

- Both coaches should work together, not as opponents, to keep the game flowing freely and to help teach the children (and parents) the basics of the game
- Parents should encourage players, but not coach or instruct during game time
- Parents, coaches, and players from both teams exchange handshakes before and/or after each game
- Region standings are **not** recorded
- Game scores are **not** recorded
- All players receive participation awards
- No individual should be allowed to run the length of the field except participants of the game
- Parents and coaches should encourage players from both teams, but not coach or instruct during game time
- Spectators are not allowed behind either goal or within three (3) yards outside the touchline
- Spectators are not allowed on the field during game play.