

Short-Sided Games for U-6 Division

A. THE FIELD

- Dimensions: Maximum 30 yards long and 20 yards wide (30 yds x 20 yds)
- Markings: Distinctive lines not required. Field can be marked using 10 flat pro-cones and four regular cones.
- Penalty Area in front of each goal (this is the "larger box"). For U6, there is no smaller goal area.
- Goals: Maximum 4 feet high and 6 feet wide (4' x 6')

B. THE BALL

- Size three (3)

C. NUMBER OF PLAYERS

- Maximum number of players PER TEAM on the field at any time: **three (3)**
- Maximum number of players PER TEAM on roster: twelve (12) (Two teams are split and play on two side-by-side fields at the same time)
- Substitutions: Usually between quarters and at halftime, but coaches should use their discretion during the game (for injuries, etc).

Notes:

- Split teams should be evenly balanced. Do not make an "A" and a "B" team
- Each week players should play with different teammates
- Playing time: Minimum of 50% of the total playing time for each player and 75% when possible. No one should play four quarters until everyone has played three.
- No Goalkeepers

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:

Although Under-6 coaches and assistant coaches are only required to attend a Safe Haven course and an U-6 coaching clinic, it is strongly recommended that coaches and assistant coaches in the Under-6 division should attend a referee course.

During the game, both Under-6 coaches and both assistant coaches will act as the referees ("game monitors") during the two side-by-side games. In one game, a coaches or assistant coach from each team should co-referee with one of the coaches from the other team. The other two will monitor the 2nd game.

In each game, one of the coaches monitors one side of the field and the other coach monitors the other side of the field.

The referee can be also be a:

- a certified referee
- a certified youth referee

NOTE: Any person acting as a referee must be a registered AYSO volunteer, and have taken the Safe Haven course.

Referees should emphasize:

- safety
- fun
- fairness

Referees should briefly explain any infringements to the player(s) and help players with direction. In the Under-6 age group, the referees can help the players understand the rules of the game if needed, but the primary focus is to keep the players safe and the game flowing. This allows the players to learn from the game.

F. DURATION OF GAME

- Four 8 minute quarters, if necessary for substitutions or water break
- Two minutes between quarters
- One 5 minute half time
- Besides the game, there will be a one-hour practice sometime during the week.

G. THE START OF PLAY

- The game should be started with an 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 five (5) yards from the spot of the free kick.

H. BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY

- In Under-6 THROW-INS are 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.

I. GOAL KICK

- In Under-6, goal kicks are introduced. No matter what team kicks the ball out of bounds behind the goal, there will be a goal kick for the team defending that goal.
- There are NO CORNER-KICKS in Under -6.
- All goal kicks are direct kicks.
- The goal kick may be taken from any point inside their Penalty Area ("large box").
- The ball must go outside the large Penalty Area before another player can kick the ball.
- The referee will ensure that opponents are at least ten (10) yards from the edge of the Penalty Area ("large box").

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.

J. METHOD OF SCOREKEEPING

- **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 five (5) yards from the spot of the kick.

K. FOULS & MISCONDUCT

- Indirect free kick for all fouls, with the opponents five (5) yards away
- There are no penalty kicks in the Under-6 division
- There is no offside in the Under-6 division
- 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.
- Remind players that goaltending is discouraged.

M. PENALTY KICKS

- There are no penalty kicks in the Under-6 division

J. OFFSIDE

- There is no offside in the Under-6 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
- Spectators are not allowed on the field during game play.
- Spectators are not allowed behind either goal or within three (3) yards outside the touchline
- Helping the players feel comfortable with the ball, through dribbling, should be the priority.
- Region standings are **not** recorded
- Game scores are **not** recorded
- Parents, coaches, and players from both teams exchange handshakes before and/or after each game
- All players receive participation awards
- Parents and coaches should encourage players, but not coach or instruct

during game time