



Rules of Play Under 8 (4v4) Outdoor 2007

- ◆ Learn the game of soccer by playing soccer!
- ◆ 4 vs. 4 gives players an opportunity to compete against opposition, lots of contact on the ball, and lots of goals are scored!

4-A-Side Soccer

1. The Field

The field is approximately:

Length 25 yds, Max 35 yds

Width 15 yds, Max 25 yds

Must be rectangular in shape, and may be adjusted when lines are not already painted on the grass.

If no lines exist, use cones to mark off the appropriate area.

A line is made parallel to the goal-line 6 yards out from the goal adjoining both sidelines. This is the goal area, and one designated player (bib) on each team is the keeper and allowed to use his/her hands within their own goal area.

NOTE: At Under 6, 8, and 10 there should be no specialization of goalkeeper placed on any one player. Each athlete will have the opportunity to play in goal (see substitutes).

2. The Goals

Goals are approximately:

Width- 8ft-9ft

Height- 4.5ft-5-ft

Must be rectangular in shape

Goals can be: portables, cones, or flags but must always be the appropriate size indicated.

Remember safety first; don't improvise crossbars with rope etc.

Goals can be scored from anywhere on the field but must pass under the height of the crossbar or flag and between the posts or flags cones. Where only cones are available judgement is best! Remember this is not meant to look like adults playing.

3. Corner/Halfway Markers

Corner flags, halfway markers and 6 yard markers are recommended but not mandatory. They should be safe regardless of what they are.

4. Ball

The ball must be appropriate for the age of the player.

U8=Size 3 or 4

Please ensure that the ball is pumped up, but with a small amount of "give" to assist players with ball control

Remember safety first.

5. Kick-offs

At the kick-off to start the game and after a goal is scored the opposing team will retreat to their own half and cannot move forward until the kick has been taken. Opposing players must be at least 3 meters away from the ball at the kick off after a goal and/or the start of the game and/or half time. The ball must move forward. The Kick - off is taken at the center spot of the playing area.

6. Scoring and Offside

There is no offside in mini soccer. Goals can be scored from anywhere on the field, but cannot be scored directly from a kick off. In Under 8 Mini Soccer the Keeper must be outside of his/her own 3-yard area in order for a goal to count by his/her own team. This is done to ensure that the keepers (designated keeper at that time) are involved with the attacking game (angles, passing, support etc) as well as stopping the ball at the other end (cutting down angles moving the feet, etc) After a goal is scored the kick-off will be at the center spot of the field for the team that was scored on.

7. Corner, Goal, Throw/Kick-In Kicks

After the ball goes out of play, which means the entire ball goes over the line, the game is restarted by one of the following methods:

- a) Sidelines-with a kick in.
- b) Goal-line or End-line with a goal kick if the attacking team touched the ball last, taken from the 6 yard line mark; or a corner kick if the defending team touched the ball last.
- c) Goal-re-start from the center with a kick-off

Opponents must be at least 5 yards away from the ball on all of the above.

8. Number of Players and Substitution System

The game is played with 4 players (3 out players + 1 Keeper) on the floor at a time. Substitutions can be used with a maximum of 10 players on a team. The designated keeper is the only player allowed to use their hands in the goal crease. Keepers will be distinguished by a bib or different colored shirt as their teammates.

In Under 8 Mini Soccer, we will play a game lasting 60 minutes.

- 2 x 25 Minute Halves with a 5 minute half time break
- Player substitutions will be made roughly every 4 x 10 minutes
- Keeper will be rotated as per the regular player substitution rule! Keepers are not to play full halves or full matches.
 - Rational with this change is that players that change every 2 – 3 minutes very seldom touch the ball during that time (sometimes never touching the ball). With a longer consistent time on the floor the players will have more of an opportunity to touch the ball and learn to play the game, enjoying their soccer experience.

9. Fouls

Even though fouls in the game occur, they are almost always unintentional. Remember the age of these children in front of you. So when fouls occur such as tripping, kicking, pushing, handling the ball intentionally, etc the opposing teams is awarded an **INDIRECT FREE KICK**. This means that the ball must first be passed to another player before a goal can be scored.

Also, an explanation of why the Free Kick was given should be made to everyone including the player who committed the foul. This will assist in not alienating the player and gives everyone an explanation of what is not correct behavior on the soccer field.

10. Equipment

Players should wear equipment that is safe to both themselves and others. Each team should try to wear colors that differentiate from each other. An official "soccer kit" includes a jersey, shorts, socks and shin-guards. Shirts should be tucked in and socks should be pulled up over the shin-guards. This is done in case the shin-guards have edges to them that may hurt their fellow players. Shoes should not be wet!! Don't let players on the gum floor with wet shoes as it creates a danger for everyone!

Note: In a recent study of soccer drop out rates it was noted that a fair number of players quit soccer because of a lack of proper equipment. An example is poorly fitting shoes (footwear too big or small), holes in socks, or no sock at all, which all cause foot pain and since children are on their feet during a soccer game (most of the time), you can see where they would not want to participate in the game.

Please remember safety first.

11. Referees

Coaches only facilitate the game! Let the players move the ball to center for kick-offs, kick INS and goal kicks. This will allow a learning process for the players!

Coaches/Assistant coaches are the referees in Under 8 Mini Soccer. Coaches are encouraged before each game to talk with their counterpart concerning rules of play. Make sure that the rules are followed and that the Fair Play nature of the game is followed. Each coach should stand outside the field of play in his or her own half of the field. Since the field is small and with the end-to-end nature of the game the ball may leave the playing area quite a bit. Have parents or the substitutes help get the balls back into play quickly, this will assist in game management.

We are here to make the game enjoyable for the children, parents and fans watching the game come second!

12. Game Time

In Under 8 Mini Soccer, we will play a game lasting 60 minutes.

Game Time: 2 x 25 – Minute Halves

Estimated 4 x 10 Minute Substitution Changes

NOTE: In extreme weather conditions please remember that the safety and well being of the players is the most important thing. In extreme heat off lots of water, allow head wear, find shade, and make sure to communicate with your fellow coaches on the other play team if you fell that conditions are too bad to continue. Remember there must be a balance between wanting to play, as the kids will want to do, and being safe.