

INTERPLAY GUIDELINES

(Rules of Competition)

Introduction

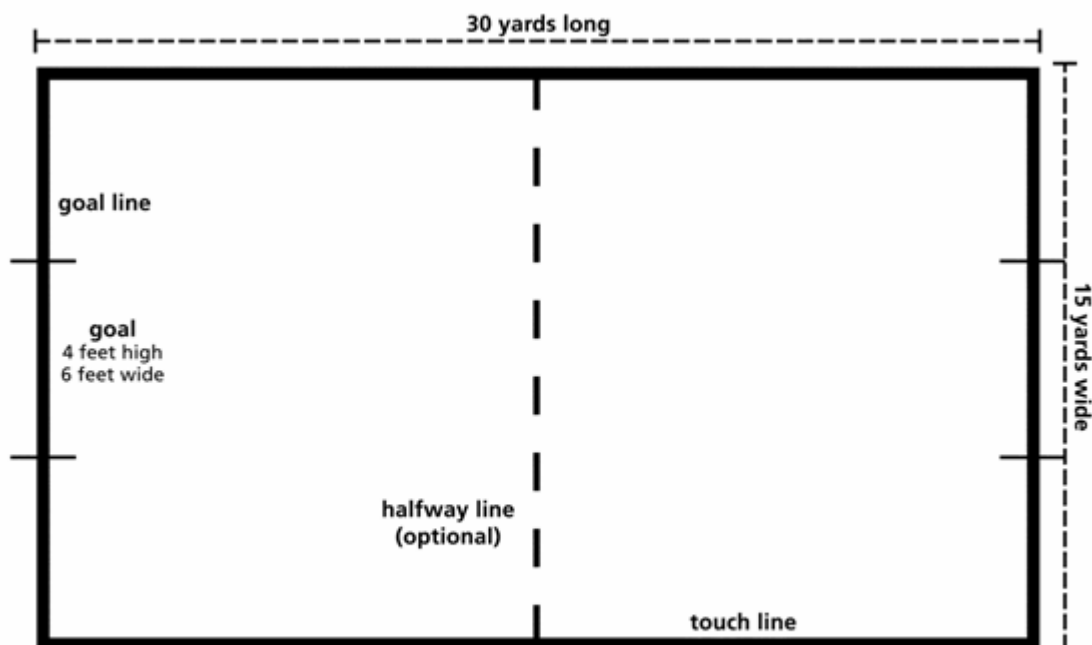
The AYSO National Referee Commission in cooperation with the National Coaching Commission has prepared this information as a guide for referees to conduct short-sided games. The information contained in this guide is intended to support the specific recommendations of the AYSO National Coaching Commission for short-sided play. Thank you for volunteering your time and talents as a referee and for helping young AYSO players learn to love and play the beautiful game of soccer.

UNDER-6 GUIDELINES

The following guidelines include the only elements of the Laws of the Game that apply to the AYSO Short-Sided Games Program for U-6 games:

The Field:

The recommended field size for U-6 games is 30 x 15 yards marked with lines or cones. See diagram.



The Goals:

The goals in U-6 games should be a maximum of 4 feet high and 6 feet wide or just use tall cones set 6 feet apart.

The Ball:

A size 3 ball is used for U-6 games.

The Teams:

Each U-6 team should have a maximum of 5 on the roster. Games are played with 3 players per team on the field (3v3) and no goalkeepers. Substitutions are made at quarters, halftime and for injuries. A minimum of 2 quarters is required for each player and it is recommended that no one play 4 quarters until everyone has played 3 quarters. Separate boys and girls teams are recommended at all levels.

Player Equipment:

Shoes and shinguards covered by the socks are mandatory at all practices and games for all age groups. Soccer shoes, tennis shoes or similar type athletic shoes are recommended. The type and condition of cleated shoes must be inspected for safety before use.

Officials:

There is no need for fully qualified referees to manage U-6 games. One or both of the coaches should "officiate" using a whistle to stop play. The games are intended to be an opportunity for the very youngest of our players to experience the fun of playing. The barest of minimum rules are needed and should be applied with a generous amount of flexibility. For as much as possible, the coaches should not be on the field while "officiating". Let the players have the freedom to play with a minimum of whistling that interrupts play.

Duration of Game:

U-6 games are twenty minutes and are played in 2 ten minute halves with substitutions allowed 5 minutes into each half. The half-time break is 5-10 minutes.

The Start of Play:

To start the first and second halves and following each goal in all age group games, play is started or restarted with a kick-off in the center of the field. A coin toss is used to determine which team kicks off to start the game and the other team kicks off to start the second half. Following a goal, the team scored upon kicks off.

The Kick-off:

The kick-off is taken from the center of the field with each team in their own half and the team not kicking off at least 5 yards from the ball in U-6 games. Do not insist the opponent be a minimum of precisely 5 yards from the ball as this is just a guide to give the kicker room to kick the ball without it immediately hitting an opponent. Remember, let them play and do not interfere for technicalities.

Ball In and Out of Play:

The ball is out of play in all age group games when it completely crosses the touch line (side line) or goal line (end line) either on the ground or in the air. The coach, in U-6

games, will determine when the ball is out of play and should interfere as little as possible in the restart. It's the player's game, let them play and work on technique later.

Method of Scoring:

A goal, in all age group games, is awarded when the ball completely crosses the goal line into the goal. Goals should be enthusiastically celebrated by everyone but, in U-6 games, they are not recorded to determine who wins. Everyone wins in U-6 games.

Fouls and Other Stoppages:

Deliberate fouling should be rare in U-6 games. Kicking, tripping, handling the ball and dangerous play may occur. There should be few, if any, additional reasons to stop play in U-6 games. If a player is "not playing well with others" or if play must be stopped for any other reason (injury, substitution, confusion, or to watch a passing train, butterfly or frog), refocus the players and begin again with a free kick or throw-in as appropriate. Award the restart to whichever team deserves it or flip a coin to decide but do not make it a lengthy ceremony. Exercise common sense, briefly explain infractions and stand back and let 'em play.

Free Kick:

Play may have to be stopped occasionally to "sort things out" in U-6 games. A player may pick the ball up and start running with it or want to keep it away from the other players or perhaps there is a pile of kids on the ground kicking at both the ball and each other. Stop play and correct the situation, then restart with a free kick for a deserving player. All free kicks in U-6 games are direct free kicks which means, if you're lucky, a goal can be scored directly from the kick.

Throw-in:

When the ball goes out of play, in U-6 games, across the touch lines (side lines), a throw-in is awarded from where it crossed the line to the team that didn't touch it last. In U-6 games, whether the throw-in is properly taken or not, let it go! Proper technique can be taught later. Again, let them play, give quick explanations when necessary and minimize interruptions. Keep the game moving and fun.

Kick-in:

When the ball goes out of play across one of the goal lines (end lines) and a goal is not scored, a kick-in, in U-6 games, is awarded from where it crossed the line to the team that didn't touch it last. As with the throw-in, the coach should let the player take the kick-in with as little ceremony or interference as possible. Keep the game moving and fun.

UNDER-6 JAMBOREE GUIDELINES

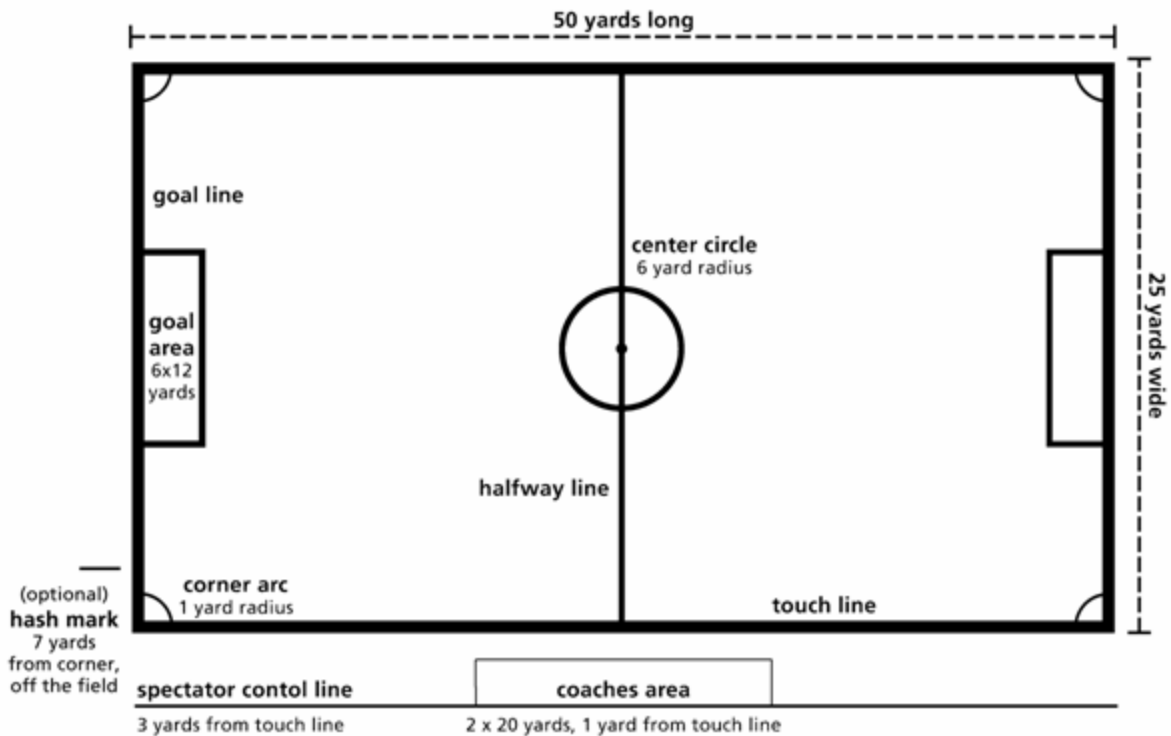
During the U-6 Jamboree 3 v 3 scrimmages, the same rules apply as described above. The "Master Coach" will instruct the volunteer coaches or parents how to keep the games going with as little interference as possible.

UNDER-8 GUIDELINES

The guidelines for U-8 games in the AYSO Short-Sided Games Program are the same as for U-6 games and no other elements of the Laws of the Game apply, with the following modifications or additions:

The Field:

The recommended field size for U-8 games is 50 x 25 yards with the following field markings: Halfway line, 6 yard radius center circle, 1 yard radius corner arcs and 6 x 12 yard goal areas. See diagram.



The Goals:

The goals in U-8 games should be a maximum of 6 feet high and 6 yards wide.

The Ball:

A size 3 ball is used for U-8 games.

The Teams:

Each U-8 team should have a maximum of 7 on the roster. Games are played with 5 players per team on the field (5v5) and no goalkeepers.

Officials:

AYSO certified U-8 Officials or higher are required for U-8 games. The U-8 Official should briefly explain any infringements to the player(s) and encourage proper play and sporting behavior. As with all games, every effort should be made to keep the game moving and free from stoppages for doubtful infractions. Let them play and enjoy.

Duration of Game:

U-8 games are forty minutes and are played in 2 twenty minute halves with substitutions allowed 10 minutes into each half. The half-time break is 5-10 minutes.

Kick-off:

Opponents must be at least 6 yards from the ball during the kick-off in U-8 games.

Fouls:

The following, if deliberately done, are the fouls most likely to occur in U-8 games: kicking, tripping, pushing, holding, handling the ball and dangerous play. Do not stop play for trifling violations. It's a player's game so keep the fun going and let them play.

Misconduct:

Misconduct should be rare in U-8 games. There is no need for the public cautioning and sending off of young players (leave your red and yellow cards home). Officials should work cooperatively with the coach when a U-8 player may need a "time out".

Free Kicks:

All free kicks in U-8 games are direct free kicks. Opponents must be at least 6 yards from the ball or on the goal line between the goal posts during free kicks. Free kicks awarded the attacking team inside the defending team's goal area are to be taken from the nearest point on the goal area line parallel to the goal line.

Throw-in:

A second throw-in should be allowed in U-8 games if the first attempt was improperly done. Following brief corrective instructions, a second attempt should be permitted. If the second attempt is still done improperly, let it go. Proper technique can be reinforced later by the coach. Keep the game moving and minimize interruptions.

Goal Kick:

A goal kick is awarded the opposing team, in U-8 age groups and older, when the attacking team is last to touch the ball before it crosses the goal line but not scoring a goal. The goal kick may be taken from any point inside the goal area. The opposing team must be at least 6 yards from the ball when the goal kick is taken in U-8 games.

Corner Kick:

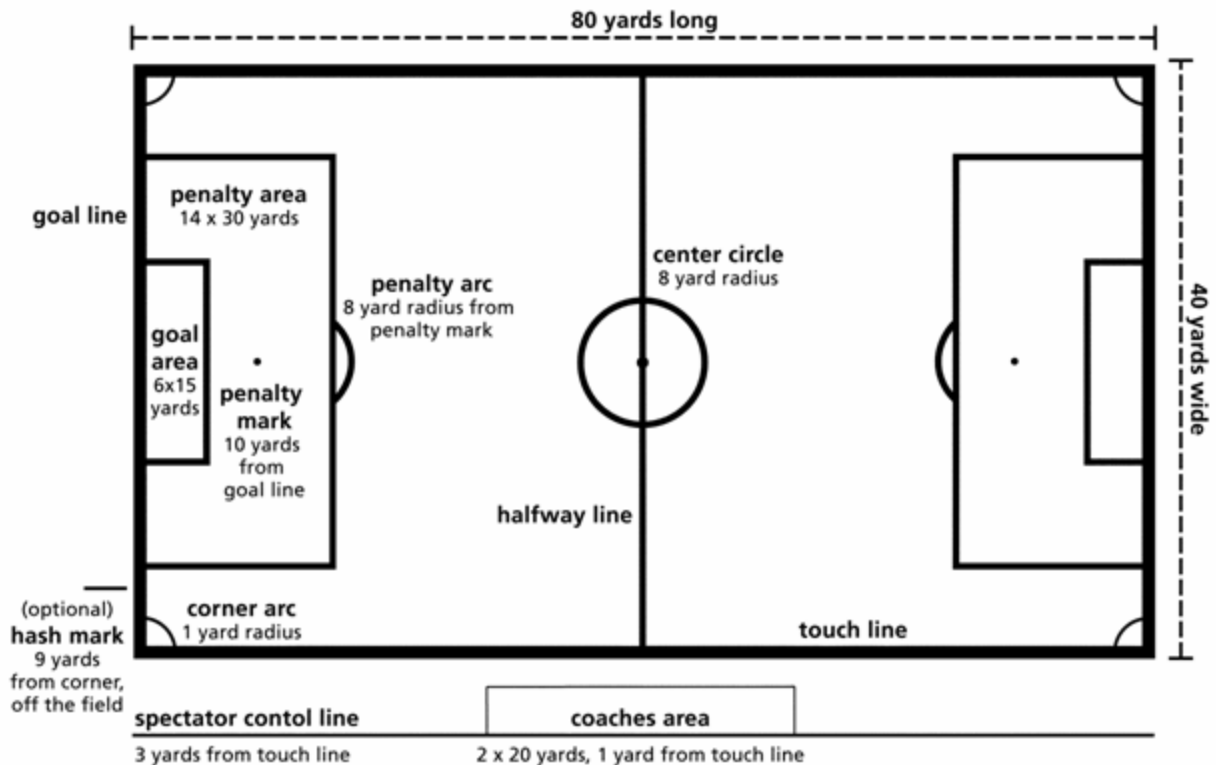
A corner kick is awarded the opposing team, in U-8 age groups and older, when the defending team is last to touch the ball before it crosses the goal line but not scoring a goal. The opposing team must be at least 6 yards from the ball when the corner kick is taken in U-8 games.

UNDER-10 GUIDELINES

The guidelines for U-10 games in the AYSO Short-Sided Games Program are the same as for U-8 games and no other elements of the Laws of the Game apply, with the following modifications or additions:

The Field:

The recommended field size for U-10 games is 80 x 40 yards with the following field markings: Halfway line, 8 yard radius center circle, 1 yard radius corner arcs, 6 x 15 yard goal areas, 14 x 30 yard penalty areas, a penalty mark 10 yards from each goal and penalty arcs extending 8 yards from the penalty mark. See diagram.



The Goals:

The goals in U-10 games should be a maximum of 7 feet high and 7 yards wide.

The Ball:

A size 4 ball is used for U-10 games.

The Teams:

Each U-10 team should have a maximum of 10 on the roster. Games are played with 7 players per team on the field (7v7) one of which may be a goalkeeper.

Referee:

AYSO certified Regional Referees or higher are required for U-10 and older games. Be a thinking referee who only interferes with play when necessary for the safety of the players and the good of the game. The game belongs to the players.

Assistant Referees/Club Linesmen:

If available, qualified assistant referees who have completed Assistant Referee Certification may be used to assist the referee. This is an opportunity for new assistant referees to begin getting experience. If qualified assistant referees are not available, Club Linesmen (untrained volunteers who may be affiliated with one of the teams/clubs) may be recruited from the spectators to assist the referee with calling the ball in and out of play only. This is an opportunity for parents to get involved.

Duration of Game:

U-10 games are fifty minutes and are played in 2 twenty-five minute halves with substitutions allowed 12 ½ minutes into each half. The half-time break is 5-10 minutes.

Kick-off:

Opponents must be at least 8 yards from the ball during the kick-off in U-10 games.

Offside:

The Offside Law applies in U-10 and older games. Offside is a simple Law easily misunderstood by those new to the game. Refer to the Laws of the Game for more information regarding the Offside Law.

Fouls:

For U-10 and older games, all fouls identified in Law 12 apply. Refer to the Laws of the Game for more information. Although there is now the potential for more fouls, referees must still remember that only deliberate breaches of the Law merit stopping the game and that constant whistling for trifling or doubtful breaches produces bad feeling and loss of temper on the part of the players and spoils the pleasure of the spectators. Maximize playing time - minimize stoppages.

Misconduct:

Misconduct should still be relatively rare in U-10 games. Coaches at all levels of play have the option of calling players to the touchline to receive a few words of "positive instruction" concerning the player's behavior. A coach also has the option of telling a player to ask the referee for permission to leave the field and then, after getting the player under control, having the player request permission to reenter the game. The referee should permit these requests. However, substitution is not allowed for the player leaving the field in this situation.

Free Kicks:

Opponents must be at least 8 yards from the ball or on the goal line between the goal posts during free kicks in U-10 games. Free kicks, in U-10 and older games, may be either direct (may score directly) or indirect (must be touched or played by another player before a goal can be scored). Refer to the Laws of the Game for further details.

Penalty Kicks:

Penalty kicks may be awarded in U-10 and older games. A penalty kick results from a player committing one of the ten direct free kick fouls inside his or her own (defending) penalty area. The penalty kick is taken from the penalty mark with all other players outside the penalty area except for the opposing goalkeeper. Refer to the Laws of the Game for further details.

Throw-in:

Second chances are not given for improper throw-ins for U10 and older players. An improper throw-in results in a throw-in for the opposing team. The referee must judge if indeed the throw-in violated the spirit of the Throw-in Law or if the violation was trifling and not worthy of stopping play. Keep the game moving and minimize unnecessary interruptions.

Goal Kick:

The ball is not in play and cannot be touched or played by either team until it has been kicked beyond the penalty area in U-10 and older games. The goal kick is retaken if the ball is touched or played by either team before leaving the penalty area.

Corner Kick:

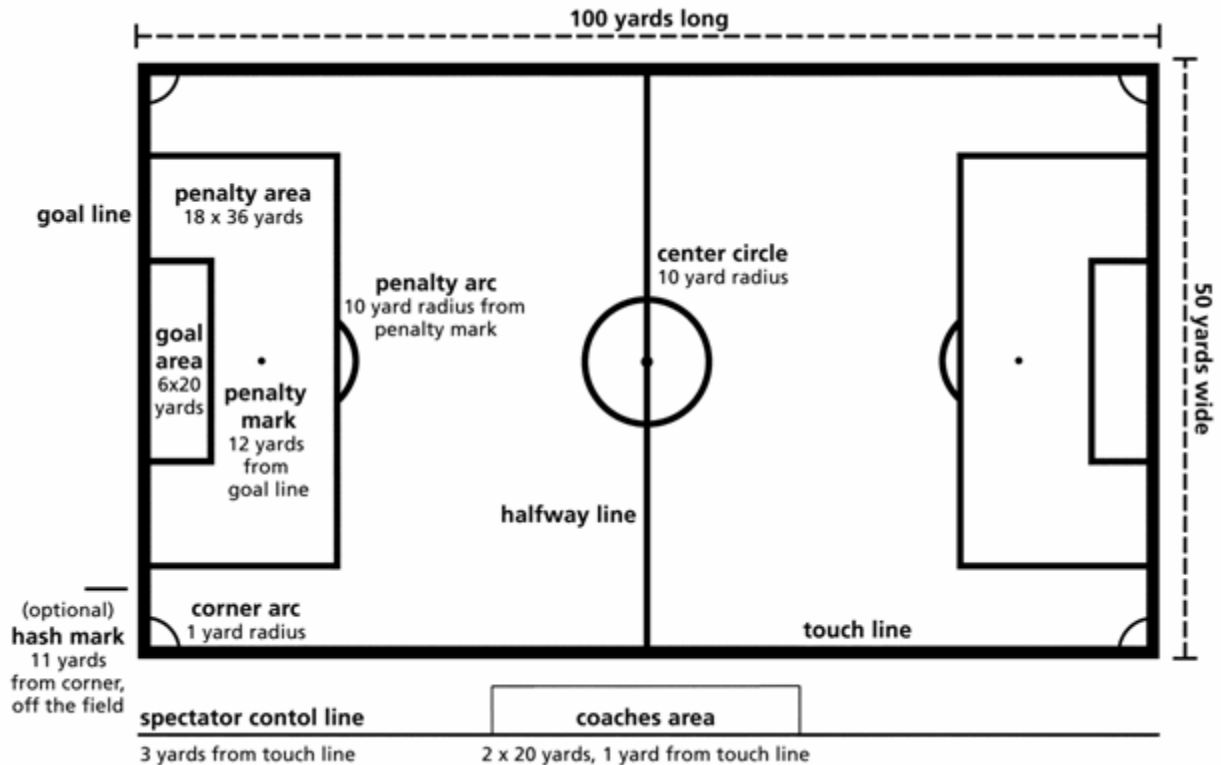
The opposing team must be at least 8 yards from the ball when the corner kick is taken in U-10 games.

UNDER-12 GUIDELINES

The guidelines for the AYSO Short-Sided Games Program for U-12 games are as specified in the FIFA Laws of the Game and the AYSO National Rules and Regulations with the following modifications or additions:

The Field:

The recommended field size is 100 x 50 yards for U-12 games with field markings as specified in the Laws of the Game. See diagram.



The Goals:

Official size goals (8 feet high and 8 yards wide) are used in U-12 games.

The Ball:

A size 4 ball is used for U-12 games.

The Teams:

Each U-12 team should have a maximum of 12 on the roster. Games are played with 9 players per team on the field (9v9) one of which is the goalkeeper.

Duration of Game:

U-12 games are sixty minutes and are played in 2 thirty minute halves with substitutions allowed 15 minutes into each half. The half-time break is 5-10 minutes. With the exceptions noted above, all other elements of the Laws of the Game apply to U-12 games.