



# Laws of the Game – Modified

10 and Under

## Law 1 – The Field of Play

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### **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: 55 - 65 yards

Width: 35 - 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 Line<sup>1</sup>:** Equidistant between the top of the penalty area and the halfway line.

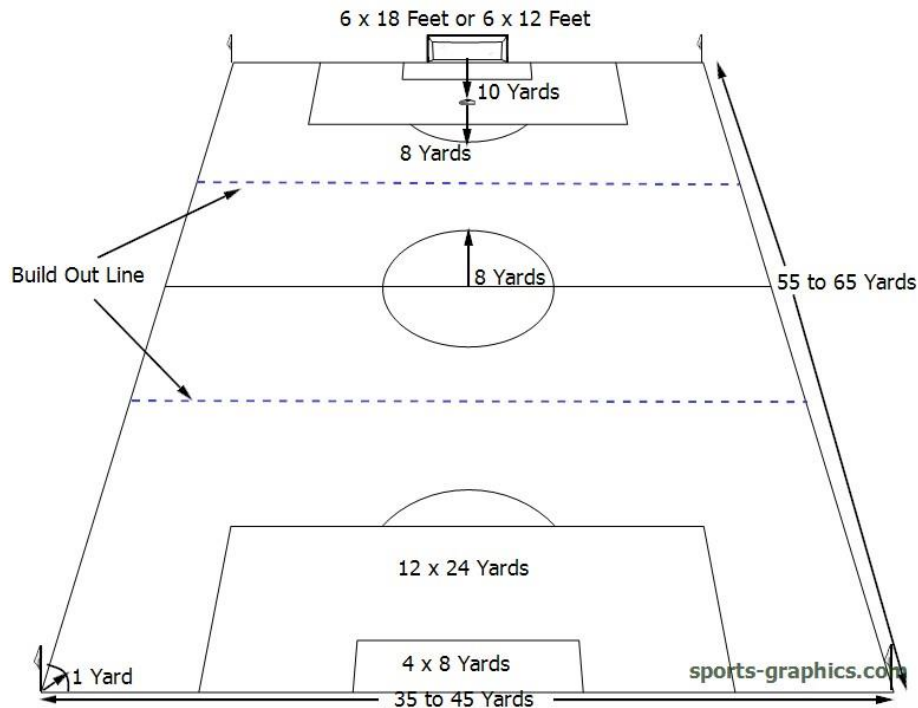
**Goals:** Goals must be placed on the center of each goal line. They consist of two upright posts equidistant from the corners and joined at the top by a horizontal crossbar. The recommended distance between the posts is twelve (12) feet and the distance from the lower edge of the crossbar to the ground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

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

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

**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 lightweight<sup>2</sup> 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 **with referee permission**.

N. B.: A player who is suspected to have a head injury<sup>i</sup> 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).<sup>ii</sup>

<sup>2</sup> 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 4 – The Players Equipment

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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. Shin guards 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

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

## Law 6 – The Other Match Officials

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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.

## Law 7 – The Duration of the Match

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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.<sup>iii</sup>

## Law 8 – The Start and Restart of Play

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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

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Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game.

## Law 10 – The Method of Scoring

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Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game.

## Law 11 – Offside

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Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game, with the exception that the build-out line also serves as an offside line<sup>3</sup>. Attackers cannot be penalized for an offside offense between the halfway line and the build-out line.

## Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct

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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

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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.

## Law 14 – The Penalty Kick

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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

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Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game.

## Law 16 – The Goal Kick

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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.

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<sup>3</sup> 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 17 – The Corner Kick

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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.

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<sup>i</sup> Per U.S. Soccer's Concussion Initiative, if a player is suspected to have a head injury the referee is instructed to stop play allow for treatment/evaluation as needed. If the player leaves field of play for additional evaluation, a substitution can be made in that moment. The player with the suspected head injury may not return to game unless a Health Care Professional (HCP) or Certified Athletic Trainer (ATC) has cleared the player. Any coach or parent insisting on returning the player to game without approved clearance will result in the referee ending the game.

<sup>ii</sup> The Youth Academy philosophy emphasizes player development over team development and focuses on the technical development of each child without the pressures of short-term match outcome. This club based format is in the best interest of both the short-term and long-term development of the children. In most instances, the youth academy format does not have set teams. Instead, the players all register with the club, but not a specific team. US Youth Soccer supports this approach for the 10 and Under age group.

<sup>iii</sup> During weather conditions of extreme heat and humidity a water break halfway through each half is acceptable if both coaches agree or the break is prescribed by the local competition authority.

