

Mini (U8) Game Rules

Concept: The goal behind these rules is to gradually transition players from the Kicker division to the Cub division. Foot skills shall remain the main focus at the Mini division. We are trying to ensure the game keeps moving without a significant amount of idle time, but introduce more soccer rules and positions to the players. Official scores will not be kept. Competitiveness and sportsmanship shall be encouraged, but player safety must remain the top priority.

1. Field size shall be a rectangle 40yds by 55yds divided in half by a halfway line with a 5yd radius center circle. There will also be a 6yd by 16yd penalty area marked at each goal. (modified while sharing fields with cubs)
2. Goal size shall be 5ft x 10ft.
3. The game will be 7v7 including a goalie. Each team will be made up of 12-13 players.
4. Game time will be four (4) eight (8) minute quarters. There will be a two minute break between each quarter.
5. The game ball shall be a size three (3) ball.
6. Each player shall play at least 50% of the game.
7. Referees: One coach from each team will be permitted on the field of play and take one half of the field. This coach will enforce the rules on that half of the field. All other coaches must remain on the sideline off of the field of play.
8. Each team shall have unlimited substitutions. Substitutions may occur at any stoppage of play (out of bounds, goal scored, injury, etc...)
9. Any ball that is kicked out of the field of play, except if a team kicks the ball across the goal line of the opposing team shall institute the *New Ball Rule*.
 - a. *New Ball Rule*: After a ball is kicked out of bounds, the coach on that half of the field shall get the players reset and award possession to the team that did not kick the ball out of bounds. An attempt should be made to have the more timid players that aren't touching the ball as much to take possession in this case. The idea of this rule is to keep game play moving to increase the number of touches each player gets per game while still teaching the players how to reset after the ball is kicked out of the field of play.
10. If a player kicks the ball out of bounds over the opposing teams goal line, a player from the opposing team shall be awarded a goal kick (ball must be kicked from the ground, NO PUNTING) from anywhere in their penalty area. The defending team shall retreat behind the build out line, but the offensive team does not have to wait for them to retreat. As soon as the ball is received by another player out of the penalty area the defensive team may attack the ball.
11. Any ball stopped by the goalie must be either thrown in or placed on the ground and kicked into play. **NO PUNTING.**
12. Once a goalie maintains possession the opposing team must exit the penalty area until the goalie distributes the ball out of the penalty area. Coaches shall ensure goalies are protected at all times (i.e. if the goalie has the ball pinned on the ground with their hands, play shall be stopped and players instructed to exit the penalty area.)
13. After a goal is scored both teams shall reset at mid field with the team that just had the goal scored against them taking possession in the center circle.
14. Goals may not be scored from the kickoff. In the event a ball is kicked at kickoff and doesn't touch any other player on the field, the goal is not counted and the kickoff must be redone.
15. Off sides shall be coached, but not stop play. Coaches should explain the rule to that player, but not stop play for the whole field. "Cherry Picking" (a player hanging out inside of the opposing penalty area) shall never be ok and that player shall be instructed to get back to a suitable playing position.