

WCSA Rules of Play for Small-Sided Games

2025-26 Soccer Year

Changes and clarifications are in *italics* and **highlighted** – **REVISED FALL 2023**

FIFA Law	U5 and U6	U7 and U8	U9 and U10	U11 and U12
1-Field of Play	Up to 30 x 25 yard field	Up to 35 x 30 yard field	Up to 60 x 45 yard field	Up to 80 x 55 yard field
	No penalty area		10 x 26 yd penalty area	14 x 35 yd penalty area
	No penalty mark		Penalty mark 8 yards from the end line	Penalty mark 10 yards from the end line
	No goal area	No goal area	6 x 18 yard goal area	6 x 19 yard goal area
	4 x 6 foot goals	6 x 12 foot goals	6 x 18 foot goals	7 x 21 foot goals
2-Ball	Size 3		Size 4	
3-Number of Players	3v3 play, Minimum of 2v2 to begin play. Opposing teams play equal numbers.	4v4 play, Minimum of 3v3 to begin play. Opposing teams play equal numbers.	7v7 including GKs, Minimum of 5v5 to begin play. Opposing team plays equal numbers.	9v9 including GKs, Minimum of 6v6 to begin play. Opposing team plays equal numbers.
	No goalkeeper		Goalkeeper cannot punt, bounce kick or drop kick to distribute the ball. No restrictions on goalkeeper playing time.	
	Roster of 10 with 2 squads of 5.	Roster of 12 with 2 squads of 6.	Roster of 12 with one squad.	Roster of 14 with one squad.
	Both squads play at the same time. Opposing coaches work together and make every effort to field balanced squads by quarter.			
	Substitution at throw-ins for team with possession, at goal kicks, at quarter-end, at halftime, after a score and due to injury ALL with referee permission. Each player plays at least 50% of the game.		Substitution at throw-ins for team with possession, at goal kicks, at halftime, after a score and due to injury ALL with referee permission. Each player plays at least 50% of the game.	
4-Equipment	FIFA rules			
5-Referee	None Required	Yes	Yes	
6-Assistant Referee	None Required	N/A, ARs for training purposes and dependent on referee availability.	Yes (2), but ARs are dependent on referee availability.	Yes (2)
7-Duration of the Match	Four 8-minute quarters. 2-minute breaks at the quarter. 5-minute halftime.	20-minute halves and a 2-minute halftime. No quarters.	25-minute halves and a 5-minute halftime. No quarters.	30-minute halves and a 5-minute halftime. No quarters.
8-Start & Re-start of Play	FIFA rules. Opponent gives up 4 yards.		FIFA rules. Opponent gives up 8 yards.	
9-Ball In & Out of Play	FIFA rules			
10-Scoring	FIFA rules	FIFA rules plus no goals may be scored from the defensive half.	FIFA rules	
11-Offside	None		Yes – FIFA rules	
12-Fouls & Misconduct	All fouls result in a direct free kick. No cards for misconduct. Coach/assistant briefly explains infractions to the offending player.		FIFA rules	
13-Free Kicks	All free kicks are direct. Opponent gives up 4 yds.		FIFA rules. Opponent gives up 8 yards.	
14-Penalty Kick	None		FIFA rules. Penalty mark 8 yards from goal.	FIFA rules. Penalty mark 10 yards from the goal.
15-Throw In	FIFA rules. 2nd try given for incorrect first try.		FIFA rules	
16-Goal Kick	Taken from the end line at the nearest point from where the ball was retrieved. Opponents are on other side of the mid-line until the ball is kicked.	Taken from the end line at the nearest point from where the ball was retrieved. Opponents are on other side of the mid-line until the ball is kicked.	FIFA rules. Opponent gives up 8 yards.	
17-Corner Kick	None – goal kicks for ALL balls crossing the end line.	FIFA rules. Opponent gives up 4 yards.	FIFA rules. Opponent gives up 8 yards.	
Miscellaneous	No scorekeeping for U5, U6, U7. Scorekeeping in U8 ONLY. Participation awards for all.		Scorekeeping and standings. Awards for 1st and 2nd place.	Scorekeeping and standings. Awards for 1st and 2nd place.

- (1) **ALL TEAMS MUST PLAY AT EVEN STRENGTH UNLESS A TEAM HAS HAD A PLAYER SENT OFF/EJECTED (RED CARD).**
- (2) **A TEAM NOT FIELDING THE REQUIRED MINIMUM NUMBER OF PLAYERS WITHIN 10 MINUTES AFTER THE SCHEDULED START TIME OF THE GAME WILL HAVE FORFEITED THE GAME.**
- (3) **U12 AND UNDER:** No deliberate heading, when a player deliberately heads the ball, an indirect free kick (IFK) shall be awarded to the opposing team at the spot of the offense. If offense occurs within the goal area, the IFK shall be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the offense occurred. If a player does not deliberately head the ball, play should continue. ***GK may NOT punt, bounce kick, nor drop kick the ball in U12 and under.*** If the GK punts/bounce or drop kicks the ball, an indirect free kick (IFK) shall be awarded to the opposing team at the spot of the offense. If offense occurs within the goal area, the IFK shall be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the offense occurred.
- (4) **U09-U10: Build Out Line – Opposing team must be behind Build Out Line (BOL) on Goal Kick and GK possession and distribution. Opponents crossing Build Out Line prior to taking of Goal Kick or GK distribution results in an IFK at spot of encroachment.**

*Any violation of these rules by a coach may result in sanctions, up to and including that coach's dismissal. For U9 and above age groups, violations may also result in forfeiture of the game.