

Important Update



Small-Sided Games and Concussion Initiative

U.S. Soccer and US Youth Soccer have approved a **Small-Sided Game mandate** for full implementation in 2017-2018.

The purpose of this mandate is to concentrate on the long-term development of players instead of the team emphasis of “win at all costs” at younger ages.

Full details of the Small-Sided Games requirements will be provided in the recertification modules and in-service clinics. It can also be located on-line.

The following is what you need to know before you start officiating U12 and under effective immediately.

U9 and U10 -----

- Field size: Length: 55-65 yards Width: 35-45 yards
- Goal Size: Height: 6.5 feet Width: 12 to 18.5 feet
- Ball Size: 4
- Players: 7 v 7
- Game Time: 2x25 min
- No deliberate heading of the ball
- These age groups will use a new feature called a **Build Out Line**
This feature is explained at the end of this document.

U11 and U12 -----

- Field size: Length: 70-80 yards Width: 45-55 yards
- Goal Size: Height: 6.5-7.0 feet Width: 18.5 to 21.0 feet
- Ball Size: 4
- Players: 9 v 9
- Game Time: 2x30 min
- No deliberate heading of the ball (U11 only)
- These age groups will **NOT** use a Build Out Line

Important notes for referees:

- The recommended penalty area dimensions are smaller than standard for U12 and younger (see next page). The referee should use the field as it is marked.
- The penalty spot should be 10 yards from the goal line in U9 through U12.
- 7v7 games require 5 players to start play or continue play; 9v9 games require 6 players
- **Please note that not every town and league will not have proper sized fields and goals. You should always play the game as long as conditions are safe. Include any violations of this mandate in your game report.**
- The referee should check with the assignor of the game to confirm small-sided rules. If the two coaches do not agree on the rules, the referee should inform the coaches of the small-sided rules. However, if the coaches disagree the referee should ask the coaches to come to an agreement before starting the match. Tell the coaches you will play with rules they agree on and then report any deviation from the standard small-sided rules.

Deliberate heading of the ball in U11 and younger results in an indirect free kick for the opponents from the spot of the infraction (or on goal area line if infraction in the goal area)

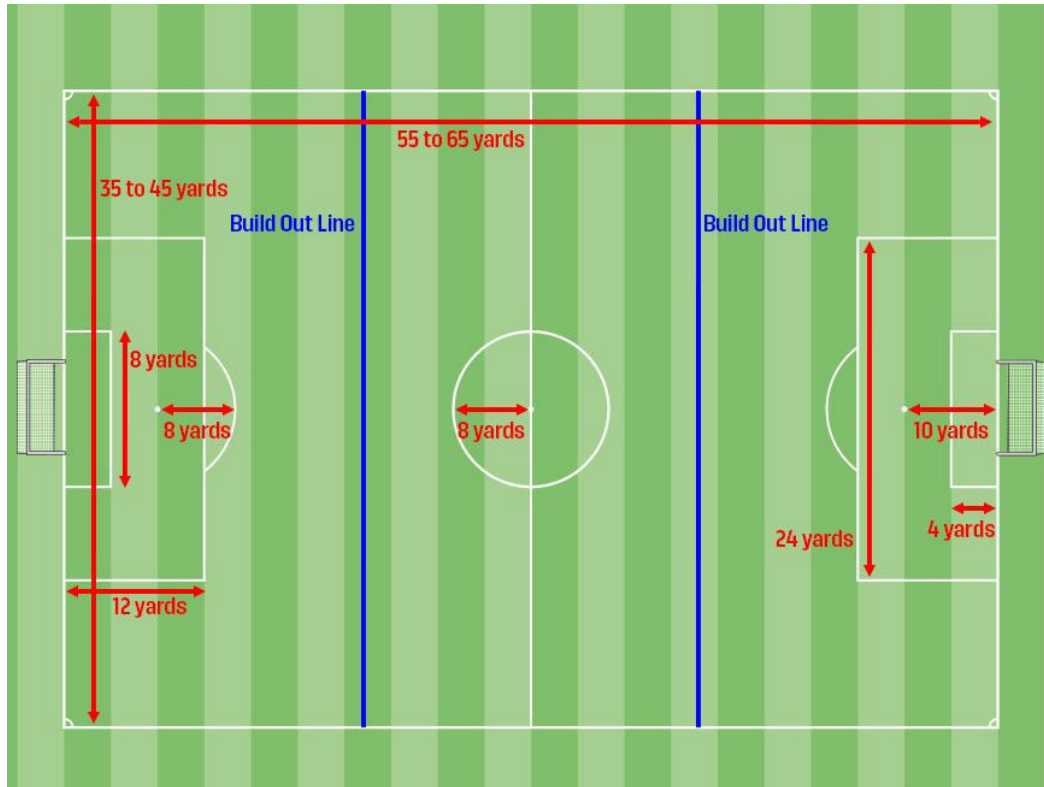
The ***Build Out Line*** is a line across the field half-way between the penalty area line and the halfway line.

- When the goalkeeper has the ball in his or her hands during play from the opponent, the **opposing team must move behind the build out line until the ball is put into play**
- Once the opposing team is behind the build out line, the goalkeeper can pass, throw or roll the ball into play (punts and drop kicks are not allowed)
- After the ball is put into play by the goalkeeper, the opposing team can cross the build out line and play resumes as normal
- The opposing team must also move behind the build out line during a goal kick until the ball is put into play
- If a goalkeeper punts or drop kicks the ball, an indirect free kick should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense (or on the goal area line if offense in the goal area)
- **Players cannot be penalized for an offside offense between the halfway line and the build out line.** Players can be penalized for an offside offense between the build out line and goal line
- Ideally, the goalkeeper will wait to put the ball into play once all opponents are past the build out line. However, the goalkeeper can put the ball into play sooner but he or she does so accepting the positioning of the opponents and the consequences of how play resumes
- Referees should be flexible when enforcing the 6 second rule and counting the time of possession should only begin when all opponents have moved behind the build out line

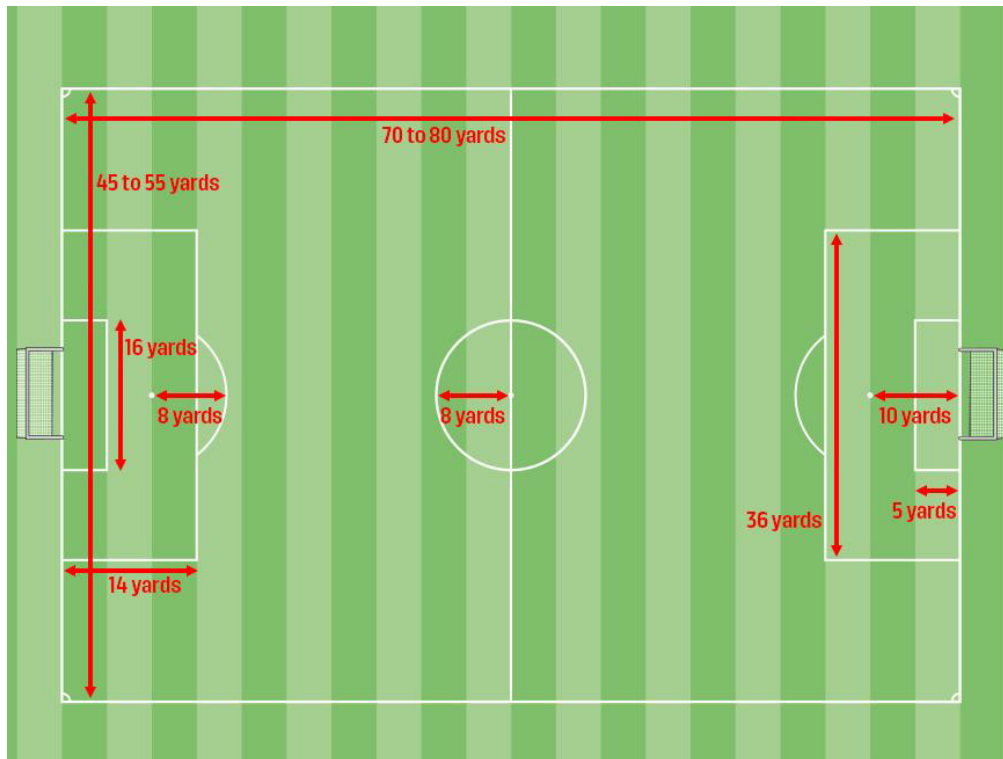
Goals must always be anchored.....always

Recommended field markings

7v7



9v9



Concussion Protocol (applies to ALL age groups)

- Any player who sustains a significant blow to the head or body, who complains about or is exhibiting symptoms consistent with having suffered a concussion or is otherwise suspected of having sustained a concussion, must be removed from play and evaluated by an HCP before the player will be allowed to return to play.
- No coach shall permit a player who has been removed from a game for a concussion assessment to return to play until cleared to do so by an HCP. Coaches, parents/guardians or players may not overrule the HCP.
- If a coach seeks to allow a player to re-enter a game who has been removed from a game for a concussion assessment and who has not been cleared to return to play by the on-site HCP, the referee shall issue a warning to the coach. If a coach persists in seeking to allow such player to re-enter the game after having been issued a warning, the referee may end the match.

Definition of Health Care Professional

Health Care Professionals (HCP) are licensed professionals such as an Athletic Trainer Certified (ATC) or Physician (MD/DO), with skills in emergency care, sports medicine injuries and experience related to concussion evaluation and management.

Instructions to referees:

If a head injury is suspected:

- 1) Call coach/HCP onto field

- 2) Player must leave (as is true for anytime a team official is called onto the field)
- 3) If coach attempts to sub this player back in, the referee should ask the coach if the player has been evaluated by a HCP.

If the answer is yes, **referee must record name and phone number of the HCP and include in game report.**

If the answer is NO, or the name and phone number of the HCP is not given, the referee asks the player to leave the field.

- 4) If the coach persists in trying to substitute this player back in, the referee may end the match.