



Retreat Line for U11 and U13

This document supports the introduction of the retreat line, helping coaches, players, parents, game leaders and officials understand its use and ways to help develop players. Soccer should be played with an efficient, economical, measured, possession based approach, where pass quality combined with intelligent and timely support and movement lead to progress and penetration through the thirds of the field to provide goal scoring opportunities. If counter attacking possibilities are denied. All players on the field should be comfortable in possession of the soccer ball in a game situation.

The world of soccer is evolving and Canadian youth must also evolve with the game. The modern game now evolves around maintaining possession of the ball, with controlled, precise build up play starting with the goalkeeper. Players must understand the right time to play forward and/or backwards.

To enable youth players to play this style of soccer they must learn to play through the thirds of the field and have the ability to maintain possession throughout the whole field, while under pressure. Every player on the field must become comfortable in possession of the ball. Possession based soccer should become their default style of play.

Procedure

The retreat line will come into play when the ball has gone out for a goal kick, a free kick in the box or when the goalkeeper has the ball in his/her hands.

All opponents must be behind the retreat line and cannot cross the retreat line until:

- the moment the keeper has played the ball from a goal kick OR,
- has released the ball from their hands when in possession

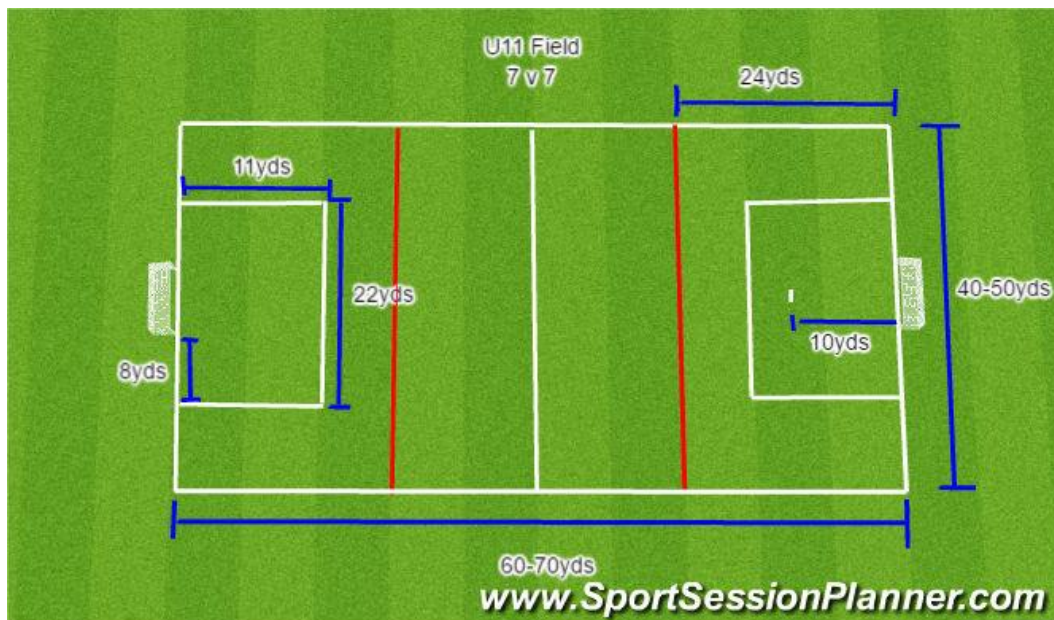
Making the Right Decision

The retreat line will now give our players the option to build up the attacking play. Sometimes the correct pass is a longer one, for example, if the goalkeeper spots a 1v1 between their team's center forward and an opposition defender; this is still seen as good play. It is permissible for the goalkeeper to play quickly without having to wait for all the players to retreat, to counter attack effectively, and this is the choice of the goalkeeper. This supports the development of decision making skills in young players at U11 & U13 - whether to play shorter or longer and the speed of their distribution.



Thanks to Soccer Nova Scotia for providing materials for this document

U11 Field Dimensions - Retreat line 24 yards from end line



U13 Field Dimensions - Retreat line 28 yards from end line

