



RULES OF PLAY

UNDER 7

Updated: January 2020

5-A-SIDE MINI SOCCER

1. The Field (required field markings)

- Field length – 105' or 35 yards
- Field width – 72' or 24 yards
- The goal area - 24' wide by 15' long (this is the area where a goalie is permitted to use their hands)
- Centre line and circle -The radius will be 15' or 5 yards
- When possible all fields shall have the length of the field running north to south
- No penalty area required as all fouls are indirect and players retreat to half on all goal kicks

2. The Goals & Scoring

- **Must be rectangular in shape** (Length–8' and Height -5')
- Goals should be firmly secured to the ground to ensure they do not to topple on players
- Goals can be: portables, cones, or flags but must always be the appropriate size indicated
- A goal can be scored from anywhere on the field as long as it completely crosses the goal line and under the crossbar/flags but cannot be scored directly from a kick off.
- There are no off-sides in mini soccer
- There is no official score keeping. Game sheets are not required.

3. Corner/Halfway Markers

- Corner flags are required
- Halfway Markers are optional
- They should be safe regardless of what they are

4. Ball

- Size 3 ball
- Please ensure that the ball is pumped up to 8.5-15.6psi and not under inflated

5. Corner, Goal, Throw-Ins

After the ball goes out of play, which means the entire ball goes over the line; the game is restarted by one of the following methods:

1.1. **Sidelines** - Throw-in with the following stipulations:

- 1.1.1. Two hands on the ball
- 1.1.2. Ball is thrown from behind the head
- 1.1.3. Both feet must remain in contact with the ground at all times during the throw
- 1.1.4. The player must be square to the direction of the throw

NOTE: At this age players might find this skill difficult to execute. If the ball is not thrown in correctly then allow for a re-throw. If the ball is not thrown properly again play on. Remember why we are here, let them play, explain the above items to him/her and move on.

1.2. **Goal-line or End-line**

- 1.2.1. With a goal kick if the attacking team touched the ball last.
- 1.2.2. With a corner kick if the defending team touched the ball last.
- 1.2.3. With a kick-off from centre when a goal is scored.

1.2.4. Opposing team must retreat to the half way line on all goal kicks

- 1.3. At the kick-off to start the game and after a goal is scored the opposing team will retreat to their own half. Opposing players must be outside the centre circle until the ball is moved. All kick-offs at the start, at halftime and after a goal is scored must be taken at center field.

NOTE: Opponents must be at least 15' or 5 yards away from the ball on all the above

6. Number of Players and Substitution System

- The game is played with 5 players (4 out players + 1 keeper) on the field at a time
- It is recommended that teams carry no more than 9-12 players per team to allow for ample playing time throughout the season
- The designated keeper is the only player allowed to use their hands in the goal area. Keepers will be distinguished by a bib or different colored shirt/pinnie as their teammates and opponents. Keeper is not required to wear gloves.
- Substitutions are to be made about every 5 minutes (no limit of substitutions). The number of substitutes will depend on the team size. All players on the roster must be included in a substitution rotation. Substitutions occur at centre field when the referee stops play and invites players into the field.
- Players that are changed every 2-3 minutes very seldom touch the ball during that time. With a longer consistent time on the field the players will have more of an opportunity to touch the ball and learn to play the game, enjoying their soccer experience.

NOTE: At no time are keepers to play full halves or full games. Everyone should be allowed the opportunity to play goalie. Additional keeper bibs should be used to ensure that a substitute is fully ready to replace a keeper on substitutions. Please do not share jerseys/bibs as this slows substitutions down.

7. Equipment

Players should wear equipment that is safe to both themselves and others. Each team should try to wear colors that differentiate from each other. In a situation where both teams have the same color jerseys the home team will be required to change jerseys or wear pinnies of a different color. An official "soccer kit" includes a jersey, shorts, socks and shin-guards. **Socks are required to be pulled up over the shin-guards.** This is done in case the shin-guards have edges to them that may hurt their fellow players.

- **Jewelry** – All items of jewelry (necklaces, rings, bracelets, earrings, leather bands, rubber bands, etc) are strictly forbidden and must be removed. **Using tape to cover jewelry is NOT acceptable.**
- **Headscarves** – Headscarves are permitted as long as the referee, as per FIFA Law 4 of the Laws of the Game, ensure that the headscarf is safe and does not pose a danger to the wearer or other participants.

8. Game Time

There are two 20-minute halves (40 minute total game time), with a 5-minute half time. Teams will switch sides at half-time.

NOTE: In extreme weather conditions please remember that the safety and well-being of the players is the most important thing. In extreme heat ensure lots of water, allow head wear, find shade, and make sure to communicate with your **referee** if you feel that conditions are too bad to continue. Remember there must be a balance between wanting to play, as the kids will want to do, and being safe. Please see VSA's weather policy with regards to weather conditions and cancelation of games.

9. Game Rules, Fouls & Off-sides

- The referee has the final say in all situations.
- No player, coach, or parent at any time is permitted to approach a referee to question a call or rule. If necessary a grievance form will be completed and submitted to your town association and VSA.
- Team benches shall be on one side of the field with players and coaches only and spectators on the opposite side of the field. No spectators shall be behind a goal or goal line.
- Coaches **shall not** be on the field coaching but will coach their players from the bench.
- There are no off-sides in mini soccer and no slide tackles.
- Even though fouls in the game occur, they are almost always unintentional. Remember the age of these children in front of you. So when fouls occur such as tripping, kicking, pushing, handling the ball intentionally, etc the opposing team is awarded an **INDIRECT FREE KICK**. This means that the

ball must first be passed to another player before a goal can be scored. Also, an explanation of why the free kick was given should be made to everyone including the player who committed the foul. This will assist in not alienating the player and gives everyone an explanation of what is not correct behavior on the soccer field.

- If the foul occurs in the goal area it shall be placed on the line at the top of the goal area closest to where the foul occurred. It is an indirect free kick.
- Switch sides at half time.
- At this age, heading techniques may be taught utilizing a softer ball (such as a beach ball or volleyball) and limited to no more than 5 touches per session to avoid repetitive contact that can cause injury.

10. Field Diagram

U7 Field

105'x72'

Goal Area - 24'x15'

No Penalty Area

