



A Guide to The Football Association Laws for Mini-Soccer



This guide provides the Laws for the Under 7 and Under 8 versions of the game, with children playing a maximum of 5v5 and the Under 9 and Under 10 versions of the game, with children playing a maximum of 7v7.

Except where other provision, in these Laws are made, the Laws of Association Football apply. Each Law is numbered to correspond with the appropriate Law of the Game. These Laws are mandatory unless special permission is granted by The Football Association.

Law 1 Playing Area

The recommended pitch sizes are;

Mini-Soccer U7/U8 (5 v 5)	40 x 30 yards
Mini-Soccer U9/U10 (7 v7)	60 x 40 yards

Halfway Line

The field of play is divided into two halves by a halfway line. The centre mark is indicated at the mid-point of the halfway line. This is also used as the retreat line when restarting play with a goal kick.

Goal Size

The distance between the posts is 12ft and the distance between the lower edge of the cross bar and the ground is 6ft.

Law 2 The Ball

- The ball should be size 3 for U7, U8 & U9
- The ball should be size 4 for U10
- It should be safe and made of leather or another suitable material

Law 3 The Players

Under 7 and Under 8's – Maximum amount of players, including Goalkeeper – 5v5.

The above indicates the maximum number of players per team at that age group. A match may not START if either team consists of fewer than four players. The minimum number of players in a team required for a match to CONTINUE is also four.

Under 9 and Under 10's – Maximum amount of players, including Goalkeeper – 7v7.

The above indicates the maximum number of players per team at that age group. A match may not START if either team consists of fewer than five players. The minimum number of players in a team required for a match to CONTINUE is also five.

Matches can begin with odd numbers but the importance and ethos of Mini-Soccer should be upheld wherever possible and the development of the children should come before the score line.

All mini soccer age groups

Any number of substitutes, without being named, may be used at any time with the permission of the referee. A player who has been replaced may return to the playing area as a substitute for another player.

All team members should receive equal playing time where possible, with a best practice recommendation of at least 50% per player for each game.

Law 4 Playing Equipment

Players must wear shin guards and goalkeepers must wear a distinguishing playing strip. Shin guards must be covered entirely by the socks. Players must wear the appropriate clothing dependant on the weather. Correct footwear must be worn for the surface of the pitch e.g. no metal studs on artificial grass pitches.

Law 5 Referees

Each match is controlled by a referee who has full authority to enforce the Laws for Mini-Soccer in connection with the match to which they have been appointed. Furthermore, referees should also recognise their role is to facilitate learning of the players, for example, allow young children to take a second attempt at a throw-in if the first is not within the Laws.

Law 6 Other Match Officials - Assistant referees are not required.

Law 7 Duration of the Game - (Check Competition Rules)

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer or organisation to ensure the child does not exceed maximum playing times Each league/competition will determine its own playing time within the maximum.

The half time interval must not exceed 5 minutes.

Law 8 Start and Restart of Play

Procedure to start the game is a coin toss to choose, winner chooses end or kick off

A kick-off is taken at the centre of the playing area to start the game and after a goal has been scored. The ball can travel in any direction. Opponents must be 5 yards away from the ball and in their own half of the field.

In Mini-Soccer a goal cannot be scored directly from a start or restart of play.

A dropped ball is the restart when the referee stops play and the Law does not require another restart.

No goal can be scored direct from a dropped ball. (must touch two players first (including the person taking it))

Dropped ball Procedure

- The ball is dropped for the defending team goalkeeper in their penalty area if, when play was stopped, the ball was in the penalty area or the last touch of the ball was in the penalty area
- In all other cases, the referee drops the ball for one player of the team that last touched the ball at the position where it last touched a player, an outside agent or a match official
- All other players (of both teams) must remain at least 4 m (4.5 yds) from the ball until it is in play

The ball is in play when it touches the ground. (if not, it is dropped again)

Law 9 Ball In and Out of Play - Normal rules apply, as per Laws of Association Football.

Law 10 Determining the outcome of a game - Normal rules apply, as per Laws of Association Football.

Law 11 Offside - There is no offside.

Law 12 Fouls and Misconduct

Normal rules apply, as per Laws of Association Football, the following are fouls and direct free kicks are given (or penalties in the penalty area.)

- **Kicks or attempts to kick**
- **Trips or attempts to trip**
- **Strikes or attempts to strike**
- **Jumps at an opponent**
- **Charges an opponent**
- **Pushes an opponent**
- **Tackles and makes contact with opponent before the ball**
- **Holds an opponent**
- **Spits at an opponent**
- **Handles the ball deliberately (not goalkeeper)**

However, in Mini-Soccer all free kicks are direct.

A free kick is awarded to the opposing team if the goalkeeper:

- Takes more than 6 seconds to release the ball from his/her hands
- Touches the ball again with his/her hands after it has been released from his/her possession and has not touched any other player

- Touches the ball with his/her hands after it has been deliberately kicked to him/her by a team mate
- Touches the ball with his/her hands after he/she has received it directly from a throw in taken by a team mate

It is also a free kick for the following offences:

- Dangerous Play (e.g. high foot)
- Touches the ball again after a dead ball incident (free kick, corner etc) and after it has been released from his/her possession and has not touched any other player

For all these offences, the free kick should be taken from the penalty area line, parallel with the goal line, at the nearest point to the offence. ***(it is NOT a penalty for these 6 offences!)***

Law 13 Free Kicks - Normal rules apply, as per Laws of Association Football, except for all free kicks opponents must be 5 yards from the ball.

Law 14 Penalty Kicks

Normal rules apply, as per Laws of Association Football.

Position of the Ball and the Players

All players except the defending goalkeeper and kicker must be outside the penalty area and at least 5 yards from the penalty mark.

The ball must be kicked forward.

Law 15 Throw-in

Normal rules apply, as per Laws of Association Football.

The role of the referee is to also allow young players to learn the game. This may involve letting players take throw-ins again, if incorrect technique is used. The referee should ensure the same player attempts a second time, with guidance and help from the match official.

Law 16 Goal Kick

Procedure

A player of the defending team kicks the ball from any point within the penalty area.

Opponents must retreat to their own half until the ball is in play. The defending team does not have to wait for the opposition to retreat and has the option to restart the game before should they choose to.

The ball is in play when it is kicked

Law 17 Corner Kicks

The opposing players must remain at least 5yards from the ball until it is in play.

The kicker may not touch the ball again until it has touched another player. If he/she does, a free kick is awarded against them.