

Rules of the game

Playing Format	Under 6 & 7	Under 8 & 9	Under 10 & 11
NUMBERS	4 v 4	7 v 7	9 v 9
FIELD SIZE	Length: 30m Width: 20m	¼ Full Size Pitch Length: 40m - 50m Width: 30m - 40m	½ Full Size Pitch Length: 60m - 70m Width: 40m - 50m
FIELD MARKINGS	Markers or line markings	Markers or line markings	Markers or line markings
PENALTY AREA	Nil	5m depth x 12m width	5m depth x 12m width
GOAL SIZE	Width: 1.5m - 2.0m Height: 0.9m - 1.0m	Width: 2.5m - 3.0m Height: 1.8m - 2.0m	Width: 4.5m - 5.0m Height: 1.8m - 2.0m
GOAL TYPE	Markers, Poles, Goals	Markers, Poles, Goals	Markers, Poles, Goals
BALL SIZE	Size 3	Size 3	Size 4
GOALKEEPER	No	Yes	Yes
PLAYING TIME	2 x 15 minutes	2 x 20 minutes	2 x 25 minutes
HALF TIME BREAK	5 minutes	5 minutes	7.5 minutes
REFEREE	Game Leader	Instructing Referee	Instructing Referee

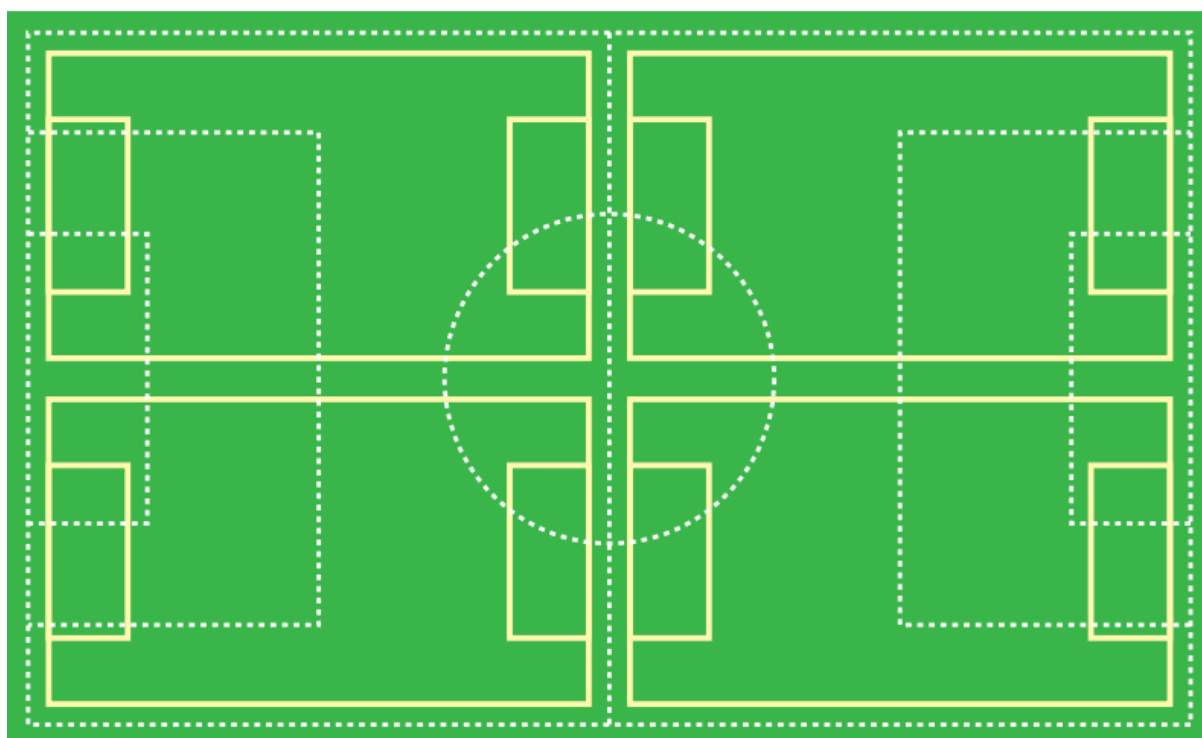
Note: where practical a line 1.5m from the touch line should be marked (using cones) to assist with keeping spectators a safe distance from the pitch

Field layouts

Under 8 and 9

Two to four Optus Small Sided Football pitches per full-size pitch if required. Optus Small Sided Football pitches to the correct dimensions are also set up on existing smaller fields or open grass areas.

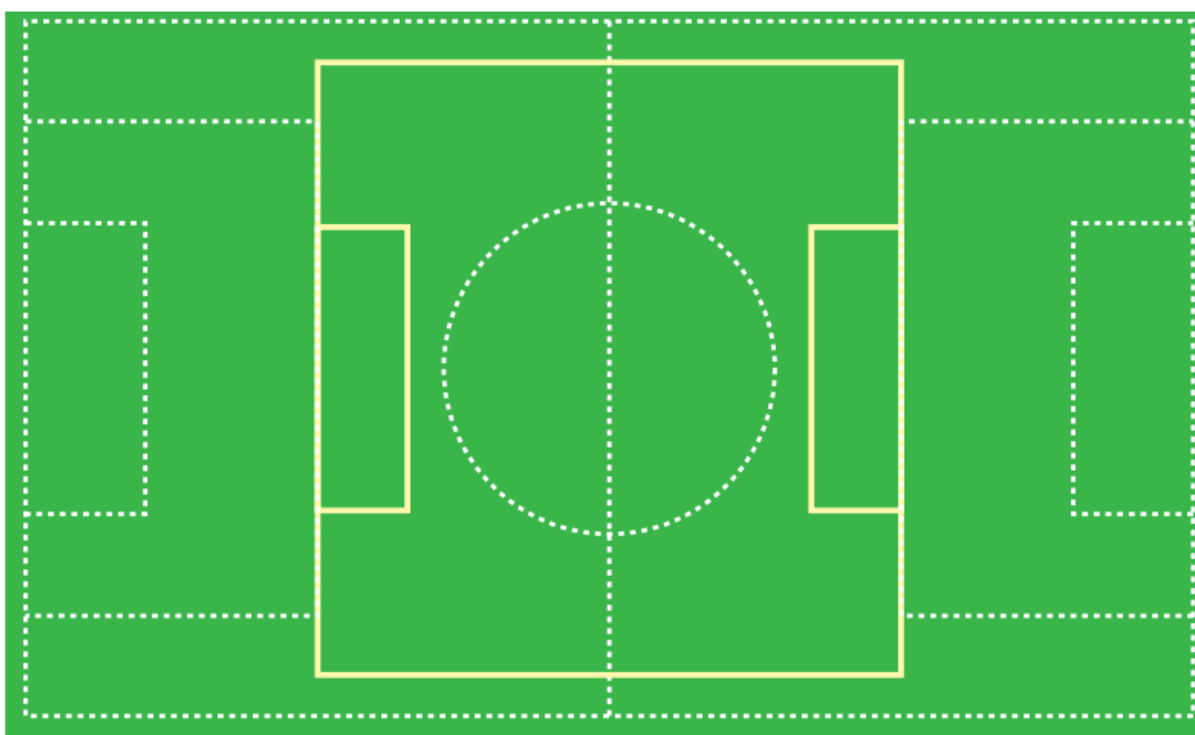
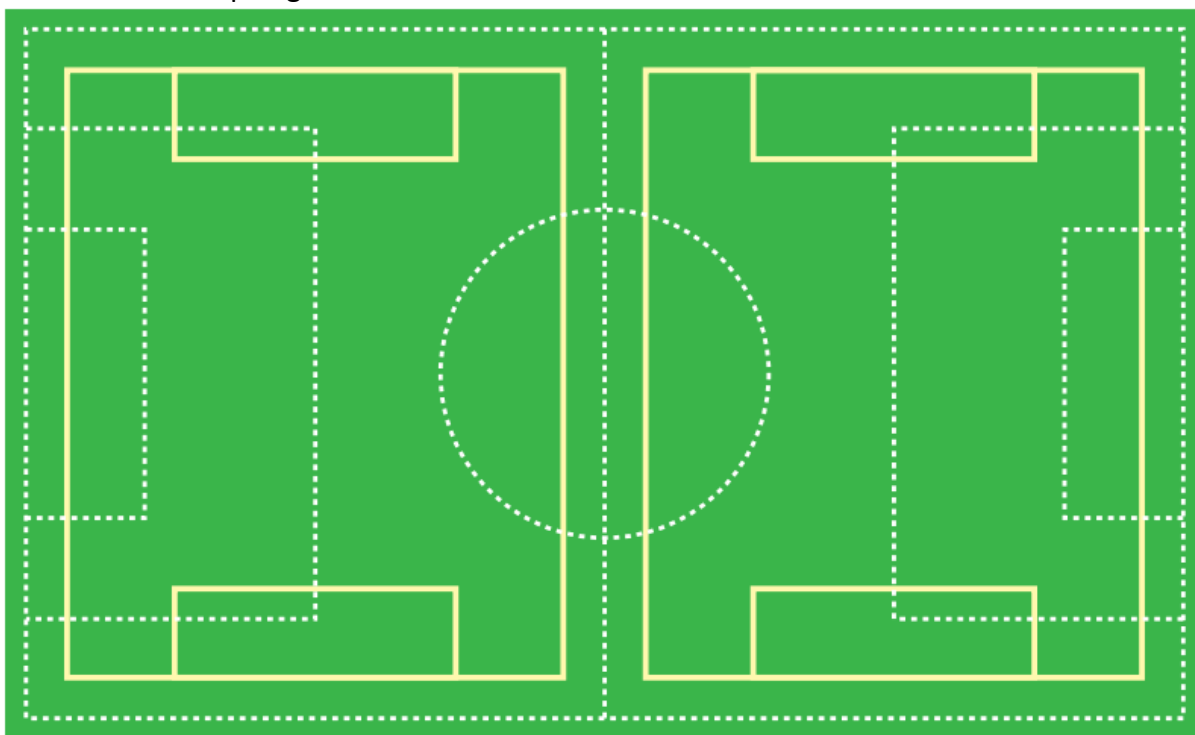
When setting up the field please keep the safety of players in mind by allowing a reasonable distance between the playing field and any permanent goals set on the full size pitch. If necessary reduce the length of the field by a few metres.



Under 10 and 11

One to two Optus Small Sided Football pitches per full-size pitch if required. In the Under 11 age group, the final stage of development in the Optus Small Sided Football formats before players commence 11 v 11 football, it is recommended that clubs where facilities and scheduling allows, set-up the field from penalty box to penalty box and adjust the width of the field with use of markers to meet the maximum specified width.

Optus Small Sided Football pitches to the correct dimensions can also be set up on existing smaller fields or open grass areas.



Instructing Referee

The main role of the instructing referee is to control the game to ensure it is played fluently and instruct and correct the players (with minimal blowing of the whistle) on how to behave and what the rules are, e.g. what a foul is, what a free kick is and how to throw in etc... Should these indiscretions happen a second time the referee should stop the game and apply the appropriate actions and decisions. This person can be a club official, capable parent, older child or player, beginning or official referee from the federation or association.

The Instructing Referee should;

- Encourage all children to have fun and different children to take re-starts.
- Ensure the correct numbers of players are on the field
- Discourage players from permanently standing in blatant offside positions and instruct them to move into onside positions.
In the Under 10 & 11 age groups children should be made aware of the offside rule during training and be encouraged to adopt this philosophy during the game at all times.
- Let the game flow and give instruction to all players on the run where you can
- Instruct players in the first instance before blowing the whistle where possible
- Ensure team officials and parents create a safe, enjoyable and positive playing environment for the children and do not emphasise winning or losing
- Be enthusiastic, consistent and approachable

The start of play and restart after a goal

Pass forward to a team mate from the middle of the half way line. All players must be in their own half of the field of play. Opponents must be at least 5m away from the ball until it is in play. The ball must touch a team mate before a goal can be scored.

Ball in and out of play

The ball is out of play when it has wholly crossed the goal line or the touch line on the ground or in the air, or when play has been stopped by the game leader or instructing referee.

Ball crossing the touch line

Throw-in: Player faces the field of play, has part of each foot on the ground either on or behind the touch line, uses both hands and delivers the ball from behind and over their head. The thrower must not touch the ball again until it has touched another player. Opponents must be at least 5m away from the ball until it is in play. The ball is in play once it enters the field of play. A goal cannot be scored directly from a throw in.

Ball Crossing the Goal Line after touching the defending team last:

Corner kick. A player from the attacking team places the ball inside the corner arc nearest to the point where the ball crossed the line. Opponents should be 5m away from the ball until the ball is in play. The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves. A goal may be scored direct from a corner kick.

Ball Crossing the Goal Line after touching the attacking team last:

Goal kick from anywhere within the penalty area. **Opponents must remain at least 5m outside the penalty area until the ball is in play.** The ball is in play once it is kicked directly out of the penalty area.

Goal Keeper:

The goalkeeper is allowed to handle the ball anywhere in the penalty area. To restart play after a save or gathering the ball with their hands, the ball must be thrown or rolled from the hands or played from the ground with their feet, within 6 seconds. The goalkeeper is not allowed to kick or drop kick the ball directly from their hands. Opponents must be at least 5m outside the penalty area and cannot move inside the penalty area until the ball is in play. The ball is in play once it moves out of the penalty area. An indirect free kick is awarded if the goalkeeper touches the ball with their hands after it has been deliberately kicked to them by a team-mate.

Even though the ball is not in play until it leaves the penalty areas, coaches at the U10-U11 level should encourage goalkeepers to treat the balls as “live” when the goalkeeper places the ball on the ground. This developmental progression of the game provides the necessary learning phase for players transitioning to the 11 v 11 format of football.

Method of scoring

A goal is scored when the whole of the ball passes over the goal line, between the goalposts and under the crossbar. When goal posts are not available and cones are used for goals, a goal is scored when the ball passes between the cones without touching them, below shoulder height of the player.

Offside:

There is no offside.

Note: Team coaches and managers should strongly discourage children from permanently and/ or persistently standing in blatant offside positions.

In the Under 10 & 11 age groups children should be made aware of the offside rule during training and be encouraged to adopt this philosophy during the game at all times.

Instructing referees should direct players permanently and/or persistently standing in blatant offside positions to move into onside positions.

Fouls and Misconduct:

Indirect free kicks are awarded for all acts of handball or fouls and misconduct. Opponents must be at least 5m away from the ball when the indirect free kick is taken. (An indirect free kick is where a goal can be scored only if the ball subsequently touches another player before it enters the goal).

For deliberate or serious acts of handball or fouls and misconduct in the penalty area, a penalty kick is awarded from an 8m penalty mark with only a goalkeeper in position. All other players must be outside the penalty area and be at least 5m behind the penalty mark.

Fouls and misconduct are:

- kicks or attempts to kick an opponent • trips or attempts to trip an opponent
- jumps at an opponent
- charges an opponent
- strikes or attempts to strike an opponent
- pushes an opponent
- tackles an opponent from behind to gain possession of the ball
- making contact with the opponent before touching the ball
- holds an opponent
- spits at an opponent
- handles the ball deliberately
- plays in a dangerous manner
- impedes the progress of a player