

GIRLS SUPER LEAGUE

LAWS OF THE GAME FOR YOUTH FOOTBALL: 5V5 (MINI SOCCER), 7V7, 9V9

CONTENTS

Introduction

- Law 1 The field of play
- Law 2 The ball
- Law 3 The players
- Law 3b The power play rule
- Law 4 The players' equipment
- Law 5 The referee
- Law 6 The other match officials
- Law 7 The duration of the match
- Law 8 The start and restart of play
- Law 9 The ball in and out of play
- Law 10 Determining the outcome of a match
- Law 11 Offside
- Law 12 Fouls and misconduct
- Law 13 Free-kicks
- Law 14 The penalty kick
- Law 15 The throw-in
- Law 16 The goal kick
- Law 16b The retreat rule
- Law 17 The corner kick

Sin bins

INTRODUCTION

This guide provides the Laws for U9, U10, U11, U12, U13, U14, U15 and U16 versions of the game, with children playing in 5v5, 7v7, or 9v9 formats. The following laws of the game are The Associations' recommended laws for use in Mini Soccer and Small-Sided Football. The Associations' Laws are based on the following principles;

- A revision of The Association's Laws so that they better reflect the game that it is being played in many venues
- Applying the general principle of the 'normal laws of Association Football with exceptions' and as consequence simplifying the game for both players and referees
- Improving the technical quality of play in the small-sided game
- To encourage participation and enjoyment in a safe and controlled environment

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

LAW 1: THE FIELD OF PLAY

The recommended pitch sizes are:

Format	Age groups	Minimum pitch size in yards	Maximum pitch size in yards
5v5	U9, U10	30 x 20	40 x 30
7v7	U11, U12, U13, U14	50 x 30	60 x 40
9v9	U14, U15, U16	70 x 40	80 x 50

Halfway Line

The field of play is divided into two halves by a halfway line. The center mark is indicated at the mid-point of the halfway line.

GIRLS SUPER LEAGUE

Goal size

The recommended goal sizes are:

Format	Age groups	Recommended goal sizes in feet
5v5	U9, U10	12 x 6
7v7	U11, U12, U13, U14	12 x 6
9v9	U14, U15, U16	16 x 7

LAW 2: THE BALL

- The ball should be size 3 for U9 and U10
- The ball should be size 4 for U11, U12, U13 and U14
- The ball should be size 5 for U15 and U16

It should be safe and made of leather or another suitable material

LAW 3: THE PLAYERS

Age groups	Format	Minimum players	Maximum players	Maximum squad
U9, U10	5v5	4	5	10
U11, U12, U13, U14	7v7	5	7	14
U14, U15, U16	9v9	6	9	18

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

Matches can begin with odd numbers (eg. 5v4 for U9 and U10) but the importance and ethos of youth football should be upheld whenever possible and the development of the children should come before the score line.

Players must play with and against players only from their own age range, as per Football Association and Competition rules.

Each team must not have a match day squad greater than double the size of the team per format. However, there is no limit to the number of players registered to a team on Whole Game System.

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 3B: THE POWER PLAY RULE

This rule is aimed at balancing out games and making scorelines more respectable, as football should be about development and enjoyment. This rule applies up to U12s.

During a match when the goal difference reaches 4, the losing team may field an additional player. If the goal difference reaches 5, the losing team may field another additional player (taking the total up to 2 additional players). At the point the goal difference falls to 4, the losing team must withdraw one of their additional players. At the point the goal difference falls to 3 the losing team must withdraw their final additional player (this does not need to be the same player that was put on as the additional player).

LAW 4: PLAYING EQUIPMENT

Players must wear shin guards and shin guards must be covered entirely by the socks.

Players must wear the appropriate clothing dependent on the weather. Base layers are encouraged in cold weather. Hooded tops are not permitted.

A player must not use equipment or wear anything that is dangerous to themselves or another player, including any kind of jewellery. Jewellery must be removed.

Goalkeepers must wear a distinguishing playing top or bib. Goalkeepers must wear goalkeeping gloves from U11 upwards.

Correct footwear must be worn for the surface of the pitch e.g. no metal studs on blades on artificial pitches.

LAW 5: THE REFEREE

The Authority of the Referee

Each match is controlled by a referee who has full authority to enforce the Laws of the Game in connection with the match to which they have been appointed.

GIRLS SUPER LEAGUE

Leagues and Clubs are reminded that they may be appointed a young referee to officiate their matches and must remember that the young referee, like the players, is developing her skills. Please therefore support your referee.

In exceptional circumstances, the league may allow a person who is not a registered Match Official to carry out the duties of a Match Official in a specific Match but only in circumstances where a registered Match Official cannot be appointed to or officiate in that Match. In these circumstances the appointed unregistered and/or unqualified Match Official will carry the same powers and duties of an appointed registered Match Official for the purpose of that match.

Furthermore, referees should also recognise their role is to facilitate the learning of the players, for example by allowing young children (U9, U10) to take a second attempt at a throw-in if the first attempt is not compliant with the Laws of the Game.

LAW 6: THE OTHER MATCH OFFICIALS

Assistant Referees are not required.

LAW 7: THE DURATION OF THE MATCH

Age groups	Format	Duration of match (minutes)	Duration of half (minutes)	Maximum playing time in one day in all organised fixtures (minutes)
U9, U10	5v5	40	20	90
U11, U12, U13, U14	7v7	50	25	120
U14, U15, U16	9v9	50	25	150

The above indicates the duration of play determined by the competition for each age group and playing format.

In any one day, no player shall play more than the maximum playing time indicated above. It is the responsibility of the parent/carer or organisation/club to ensure that the child does not exceed this.

The half time interval must not exceed five minutes.

Please refer to the Standard Code of Rules for Youth Competitions.

LAW 8: THE START AND RESTART OF PLAY

Procedure

Procedure to start the game is a coin toss or rock-paper-scissors 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. Opponents must be five yards away from the ball and in their own half of the field of play. The ball can be kicked in any direction. In Mini Soccer a goal cannot be scored directly from a start or restart of play.

Special Circumstances

A dropped ball is a way of re-starting the match when the referee stops play and the Law does not require a Direct/Indirect Free Kick to take place.

The referee drops the ball at the position where it was when play was stopped, unless play was stopped inside the goal area in which case the ball is dropped on the goal area line which is parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the ball was located when the play was stopped. A goal cannot be scored direct from a dropped ball.

Any number of players may contest a dropped ball (including goalkeepers); the referee cannot decide who may contest a dropped ball or its outcome.

LAW 9: THE BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY

Normal rules apply, as per Laws of Association Football.

LAW 10: DETERMINING THE OUTCOME OF A MATCH

Normal rules apply, as per Laws of Association Football.

LAW 11: OFFSIDE

There is no offside for 5v5 and 7v7.

For 9v9 (U14, U15, U16), normal rules apply, as per Laws of Association Football.

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

GIRLS SUPER LEAGUE

- 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
- Hand ball

LAW 13: FREE KICKS

Normal rules apply, as per Laws of Association Football.

For all Free Kicks, opponents must be five yards from the ball.

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

- Takes more than six seconds to release the ball from her hands
- Touches the ball again with her hands after it has been released from her possession and has not touched another player
- Touches the ball with her hands after it has been deliberately kicked to her by a teammate
- Touches the ball with her hands after she has received it directly from a throw in taken by a teammate

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.

Mini Soccer (5v5)

In Mini Soccer all free kicks are direct.

Ban on deliberate headers for U12 and below

If a player deliberately heads the ball, the referee will award an indirect free kick to the opposition. This will also mean the introduction of indirect free-kicks within Mini Soccer for this circumstance.

The indirect free kick is taken at the point where the ball was deliberately headed, except where a player deliberately heads the ball within their own penalty area, in which case the referee will stop the game and restart with an indirect free-kick to the opposition from the nearest side line of the penalty area where the offence took place.

LAW 14: THE PENALTY KICK

Normal rules apply, as per Laws of Association Football.

Position of the Ball and Players

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

LAW 15: THE 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 at U9 and U10 to 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: THE GOAL KICK

Procedure

A player of the defending team kicks the ball from any point within the penalty area. The ball is in play when it is kicked directly out of the penalty area. Should the goal kick not leave the penalty area then the kick is re-taken.

LAW 16B: THE RETREAT RULE

For goal kicks in 5v5 and 7v7, 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 do so.

LAW 17: THE CORNER KICK

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

The kicker may not touch the ball again until it has touched another player. If she does, a free kick is awarded to the opposing team.

The ball is in play immediately when it is kicked and moves.

GIRLS SUPER LEAGUE

SIN BINS

Temporary sin bin dismissals are issued at the discretion of referees as punishment for dissent. For U9 and U10 (5v5) the temporary dismissal is 5 minutes. For U11 and above (7v7 and 9v9), the temporary dismissal is 8 minutes.

Only players on the pitch will go to the sin bin for dissent cautions.

Dissent is the use of words or gestures questioning or undermining the ref's decisions. Examples of dissent include shouting at the ref, questioning the ref's ability, slamming the ball in to the ground, sarcastically clapping a decision.

How it works

- The referee will issue a yellow card and direct the player to the touchline for temporary dismissal
- The player cannot rejoin play or be substituted until the period expires
- If the period has not expired at the end of the first half, it continues into the second half
- The ref will indicate when the player is allowed to return to play
- If the player is issued a second dissent caution, they will receive a second sin bin and cannot take any further part in the game, but can be substituted once the period expires

Remember, foul and abusive language is still a red card offence!