

The Football Association Laws for Mini-Soccer

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

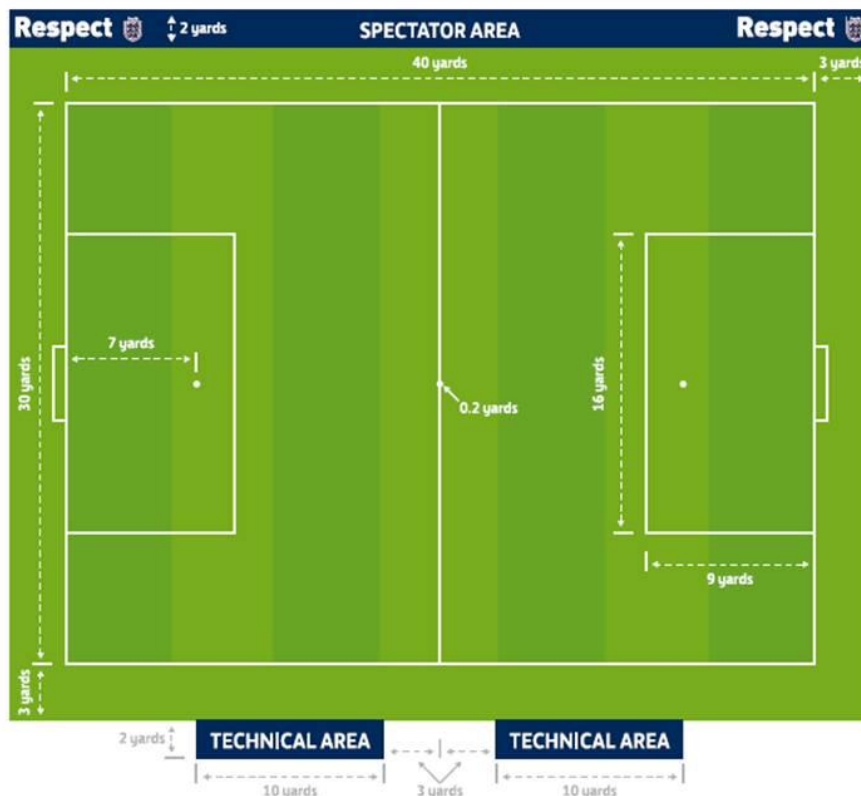
Please remember:

Under 7's or Under 8's are not permitted to play in leagues where results are collected or published or winner trophies are presented, this is deemed to be detrimental to the development of the player and the game and will not be sanctioned.

From season 2014/15, Under 7's and Under 8's can play in a maximum of three trophy events during the season, lasting a maximum of two weeks each. These are short-term experiences helping children learn about winning and losing in a developmentally appropriate environment. The winners of these events can be published and trophies can be presented.

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



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 and U8
- It should be safe and made of leather or another suitable material

Law 3 Number of Players

	Maximum number per team, including goalkeeper
Under 7 and Under 8	5v5

The above table indicates the maximum number of players per team at that age group. If the competition would like to have smaller numbers, e.g. 4v4 at U7 or U8, this is allowed within this framework.

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. Matches can begin with 5v4 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.

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 squad greater than double the size of the team per age.

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

The Authority of the Referee

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 Assistant Referee

Assistant referees are not required.

Law 7 Duration of the Game

In any one day, no player shall play more than 40 minutes. It is the responsibility of the parent/carer or organisation to ensure the child does not exceed this. Each league/competition will determine its own playing time within the maximum time permitted however the maximum duration will be two halves of 20 minutes.

It is permitted during development matches that the periods of play can be split into equal quarters.

The half time interval must not exceed 5 minutes.

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

Law 8 Start and Restart of Play

Procedure

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 5 yards away from the ball and in their own half of the field. The ball must be played forward. In Mini-Soccer a goal cannot be scored directly from a start or restart of play.

Special Circumstances

A dropped ball to restart the match, after play has been temporarily stopped inside the penalty area, takes place on the penalty area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the ball was located when the play stopped. No goal can be scored direct from a dropped ball.

Law 9

Ball In and Out of Play

Normal rules apply, as per Laws of Association Football.

Law 10

Method of Scoring

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.

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

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.

Law 13

Free Kicks

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.

In addition, U7 and U8 children are permitted to roll the ball underarm with one or both hands into the field of play and it is the player's choice whether to do this.

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 directly out the penalty area.

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.

The ball is in play immediately when it enters the field of play.