

GOALPOST AND PITCH SIZES

The FA receives many enquiries around pitch and goal sizes suitable for all age groups and therefore recommends the following should be applied where possible:-

| Age grouping | Type | Recommended size of Goal Posts | | Maximum Recommendation without runoff | | Recommended size including runoff (Safety area around pitch) | |
|---------------------|---------|--------------------------------|-----|---------------------------------------|----|--|----|
| | | (Height x width) ft | | (Length x width) yds | | (Length x width) yds | |
| Mini-Soccer U7/U8 | 5 v 5 | 6 | 12 | 40 | 30 | 46 | 36 |
| Mini Soccer U9/U10 | 7 v 7 | 6 | 12 | 60 | 40 | 66 | 46 |
| Youth U11/U12 | 9 v 9 | 7 | 16 | 80 | 50 | 86 | 56 |
| Youth U13/U14 | 11 v 11 | 7* | 21* | 90 | 55 | 96 | 61 |
| Youth U15/U16 | 11 v 11 | 8 | 24 | 100 | 60 | 106 | 66 |
| Youth U17/U18 | 11 v 11 | 8 | 24 | 110 | 70 | 116 | 76 |
| Over 18 Senior Ages | 11 v 11 | 8 | 24 | 110 | 70 | 116 | 76 |

Note: County FAs and Leagues may have defined rules for their own competitions and reference should always be made to their handbooks for additional guidance and compliance.

The FA recommends that run-off's for natural grass pitches should be a minimum of 3 yards (or 3 metres) all around the pitch. For those clubs playing in the football pyramid the minimum safety run off is 1.83 metres (6 feet) but ideally at least 2 metres.

The run-off must be of natural grass and must not be of tarmac or concrete construction, with no barriers or obstructions evident within the run-off area. If Football Turf (3G) is to be used as a run-off, this should be constructed to meet the performance standards of full size pitches and be green in colour.

Where pitches neighbour others within a confined area, the minimum run-off between both pitches should ideally be 6 yards to allow for spectators watching either match.

The Laws of the Game may be modified in their application for matches for players of under 16 years of age, for women footballers, for veteran footballers (over 35 years) and for players with disabilities.

Any or all of the following modifications are permissible:-

- (a) the size of the field of play
- (b) the size, weight and material of the ball
- (c) the width between the goalposts and the height of the crossbar from the ground
- (d) the duration of the periods of play
- (e) substitutions

* If a pitch is to be provided for U13/14 it is recommended that 7 x 21 goalposts are provided. However, it should be noted that 8 x 24 would also be acceptable as not all sites will be able to provide specifically for this age group

THIRD GENERATION (3G) FOOTBALL TURF PITCHES

There continues to be significant interest in the use of Third Generation Football Turf Pitches (3G) for clubs in the National League System and below.

Much of this interest, both from leagues and clubs within the non-League pyramid, seeks to understand The FA's position regarding the sanction of these pitches, particularly in FA Competitions.

The FA Board and Council have now approved the use of such pitches in all FA competitions.

- FA CUP
- FA Trophy
- FA Vase
- FA Youth Cup
- FA Women's Super League, FA Women's Premier League, FA Women's Cup and FA WSL Continental Cup
- FA Sunday Cup
- FA County Youth Cup

The use of such pitches is however dependent on compliance with conditions of use – a copy of these is available for download and should be read in association with these notes.

It has been agreed that matches for steps 3 - 7 of the National League System, Womens Super League 1 and FA competitions may be played on 3G Football Turf Pitches that conform to the FIFA 1 star/Quality performance standard, or the equivalent International Artificial Turf Standard (IATS)/ International match standard (IMS). (see specific notes in the league rules relating to steps 1 and 2 and the FA Cup competition rules relating to first round 'proper' fixtures involving professional clubs)

To qualify for use, the pitch must be certified annually as meeting the FIFA 1 Star/Quality or IATS/IMS Standard and listed on the FA's Register of 3G Football Turf pitches. The relevant certificate or report must be supplied to The FA and relevant competition before play is allowed.

3G Football Turf pitches are also allowed to be used for matches below Step 7 (including youth competitions) subject to the pitch meeting the correct performance criteria (relaxed from the FIFA 1 star /Quality standard) and appearing on the FA 3G register. A pitch must be tested (by an accredited test institute) every three years and the certificate or report passed to the FA. The FA will give a decision on the suitability for use and add the pitch to the Register.

Clubs should make their own risk assessment of whether such an installation is plausible or not given their individual circumstances and depending on the volume of use. There is a risk that pitches may deteriorate over time and may not achieve the required standards at each period of retesting especially if the pitch has significant use.

It is suggested that clubs negotiate suitable longevity warranties from the pitch manufacturers to ensure that the pitch will last in line with the club's business plan and intended usage levels. A sinking fund should be established to ensure sufficient funds are available when the surface needs replacing.

Clubs are encouraged to understand the full maintenance required, which may be necessary to validate any warranty. The FA have found that most pitches that fail the performance test have insufficient maintenance. These pitches are not maintenance free and it is recommended that 1 hour maintenance is provided for every 10 hours use. This should increase for high activity use such as youth competitions or school use.

The FA together with representatives from the industry have prepared information regarding the design, installation, construction, maintenance and testing of Football Turf Pitches and The FA Facilities and Investment team can also offer advice to clubs considering installation. This information can be accessed within the facilities section of The FA's website www.TheFA.com.

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