

U8 & U9 Small Sided Football – Rules of the Game

The complete rules for SSF can be found in the Football Federation Australia Small Sided Football Handbook. Every coach should have copy of these rules. If you do not have a copy, please ask your club/school or go to www.smallsidedfootball.com.au.

Ball Size	Goal Size	Pitch Size	Pen. Area	Player Numbers
Size 3	Min: 2.5m x 1.8m Max: 5.0m x 2.0m Pref. size is 3.0m x2.0m	Min: 40m x 30m Max: 50m x 40m	Rectangle 5m depth x 12m width	7 players, (6 field + goalkeeper)

Substitutes:

Recommended maximum of three substitutes who may rotate during the entire game.

Substitutions are to take place at the half-way line and may happen while the ball is in play. The substituted player must leave the pitch before the new player enters.

Goal Keeper:

Each team will have a goalkeeper. The goalkeeper is permitted to handle the ball anywhere in the penalty area. To restart play after a save or gathering the ball with their hands, the goalkeeper is not permitted to kick the ball directly from their hands. The ball must be thrown or rolled from the hands or played from the ground with their feet. If a keeper kicks the ball from their hands play should be stopped and the ball given back to the keeper to restart play in a legal manner. **All attacking players should move out of the last third of the field to allow the keeper to bring the ball back into play.**

Game Duration:

2 x 20 minute halves with no additional time added.

All games should have a 5 minute half-time break. If a game starts late then the playing time must be reduced to ensure that the next game is able to start on time.

Start of play and re-start after 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 Crossing the Touch Line:

Throw in: Player faces the field of play; part of each foot either on or behind the touch line, uses both hands and delivers the ball from behind and over his or her head. The thrower may not touch the ball again until it has touched another player; a free kick is awarded if this happens. **Opponents must be 5m away from the ball.** A goal cannot be scored directly from a throw in. **Two attempts at a throw-in should be permitted and play should only be called back for an obviously incorrect attempt.**

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 in the penalty area. **Attacking team is to retreat from the final third of the pitch.** A goal can be scored direct from a goal kick.

Fouls and Misconduct:

- Indirect free kicks are awarded for all acts of deliberate handball or fouls and misconduct with exception of a penalty kick (outlined below). 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 include the act or attempt to kick, trip, strike, push, hold, tackle from behind, contact before touching the ball, abusive language, deliberately handle ball or play dangerously towards an opponent or official.
- Instructing referees should instruct the players and attempt to give advantage to the attacking team, be fair to both teams and continue play limiting stoppages if the foul or misconduct is not deliberate and serious.

Method of scoring

A goal is scored when the whole ball crosses the line. Where cones are used as goals, a goal is scored when the ball passes through the cones without touching or knocking them over, below shoulder height of the player.

Additional CRJSA Guidelines

Tackling:

Slide tackling and tackling from behind is not permitted. A slide tackle is one in which a player attempts to take the ball away from an opposing player by deliberately leaving their feet and sliding along the ground. An indirect free kick should be awarded, and the reason explained to the offending player. A repeat after a warning will result in that player being removed from the field.

Coaches on field of play:

Only the instructing referee is allowed to enter the field of play while the game is in progress. Coaches should remain off the pitch, on the sidelines.

Injured Players:

Play should be halted when any player is, or appears to be, injured. Injured players should only be moved by their parents/guardian, or by qualified officials.

Drop Ball:

When play has been stopped because of injury, the game is restarted with a drop ball. The best way is to position a player from each team facing the direction they are kicking, about 1.0m apart, and drop the ball between them from their knee height.

Offside:

There is no offside; however, attacking players should be discouraged from constantly standing near the goals as this is contrary to the spirit of the game. The player should be warned and asked to move, and their coach advised. If the player persists, an indirect free kick should be awarded, and the reason explained to the offending player.

Protection for Goal Keepers:

If the goalkeeper has the ball in their hands or is just about to pick up the ball in the penalty area, opposing players should be strongly discouraged from attempting to kick the ball. If this happens an indirect free kick should be awarded, and the reason explained to the offending player.