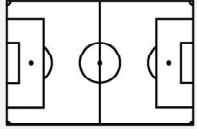


SMALL-SIDED MATCHES

FROM THE **FIELD**



“The need for parents to see their children play in 11-on-11 tournaments from a young age instead of insisting on more small-sided [matches] and practices to develop technical skills produces great athletes but limited soccer players. Parents need to become a little less shortsighted.”

Carli Lloyd, U.S. Women’s National Team referencing the youth soccer culture for her team’s technical shortcomings

U.S. Soccer has mandated, for its member associations, small-sided matches as part of the Player Development Initiatives. Match play shall be governed by the FIFA Laws of the Game as modified by AYSO (with permission), the AYSO National Rules & Regulations and the age appropriate AYSO Coach Manual.

Youth players need to practice in a match-like environment, which provides *numerous* opportunities to practice and **repeat a skill**; not one *possible* chance every few minutes (like full-sided play can often present). Therefore, the concentrated ebb and flow of small-sided matches create the optimal learning environment for young players to develop.

There are unlimited benefits of small-sided matches:

- Children learn more when the ratio of coach to player is reduced.
- Maximize ball contact, involvement, and mistakes (markers for improvement).
- Increase scoring opportunities.
- Maximize attacking and defending play.
- Maximize transitions and decision-making situations.
- Present more coaching opportunities (observation and analysis).
- Excitement and fun!

To cultivate the numerous benefits of small-sided matches and maximize Player Development, AYSO has carefully balanced the number of players on the field and the number of players on the roster by age group.

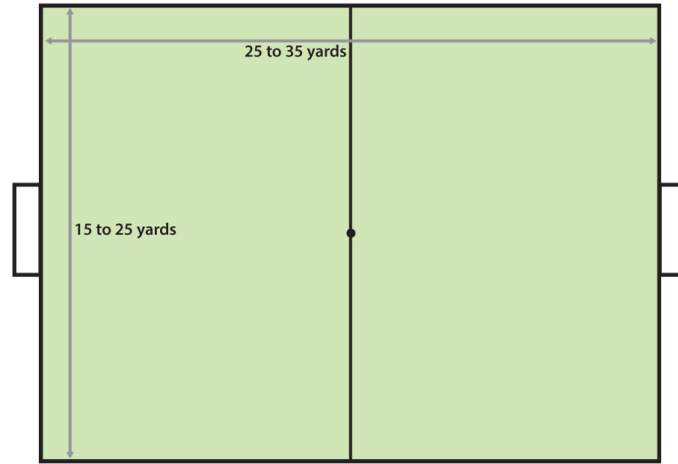
AYSO National Coaching Program In-Season Play Recommendations

Age	Players Per Team	Max on Roster	Goalkeepers
6U	4	6	No
8U	4	6	No
10U	7	10	Yes
12U	9	12	Yes

SMALL-SIDED MATCH CHART

Division	Age	Field Size (yards)	Goal Size (feet)	Ball Size	Players	Length of Match	Offside
6U	6 years old and younger	Length 25-35 Width 15-25	Height 4 Width 6	3	4v4 No GK	2x10	No
7U	7 years old and younger	Length 25-35 Width 15-25	Height 4 Width 6	3	4v4 No GK	2x20	No
8U	8 years old and younger	Length 25-35 Width 15-25	Height 4 Width 6	3	4v4 No GK	2x20	No
9U	9 years old and younger	Length 55-65 Width 35-45	Height 6.5 Width 18	4	7v7	2x25	Yes
10U	10 years old and younger	Length 55-65 Width 35-45	Height 6.5 Width 18	4	7v7	2x25	Yes
11U	11 years old and younger	Length 70-80 Width 45-55	Height 6.5 Width 18	4	9v9	2x30	Yes
12U	12 years old and younger	Length 70-80 Width 45-55	Height 6.5 Width 18	4	9v9	2x30	Yes

4V4 STANDARDS OF PLAY



Field

- 25-35 yards (length)
- 15-25 yards (width)

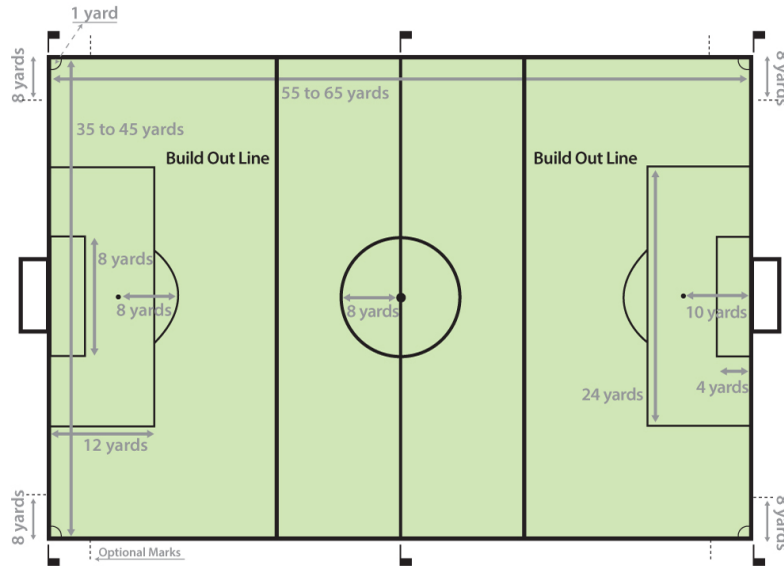
Goals

- The maximum goal size is 4' high x 6' wide.
- Corner flags are not needed.

Matches

- Size 3 ball
- 4v4
- Shin guards are required.
- Substitutions take place approximately midway through each half – See Rules & Regulations I. C. 1 & 2.
- Matches shall have 2 equal halves not to exceed 10 minutes each (6U) or 20 minutes each (8U).
- Halftime shall be a minimum of 5 minutes and a maximum of 10 minutes. No added time.
- Playing times can be less than 10 minutes when managed by the coaches and parents.
- Kick offs, free kicks, goal kicks and corner kicks are used to start or restart play.
- Kick-ins and/or dribble-ins are also acceptable. Throw-ins may be an approved exception for 8U.
- Goal kicks and corner kicks should be taken in the general vicinity of the respective goal or corner.
- If used, all free kicks are indirect.
- Opponents should be 5 yards away from the ball on all restarts.
- No penalty kicks.
- No offside.
- Registered and certified referees are not required at this level.
- Since there is no referee, coaches are expected to manage the game environment from the touchline using these standards of play and their best judgement
- Together, coaches and parents are expected to create and promote a fun and safe environment for the players.

7V7 STANDARDS OF PLAY



Field

- 55-65 yards (length)
- 35-45 yards (width)

Goals

- The maximum goal size is 6.5' high x 18.5' wide.
- The recommended goal size is 6.5' high x 12' wide.

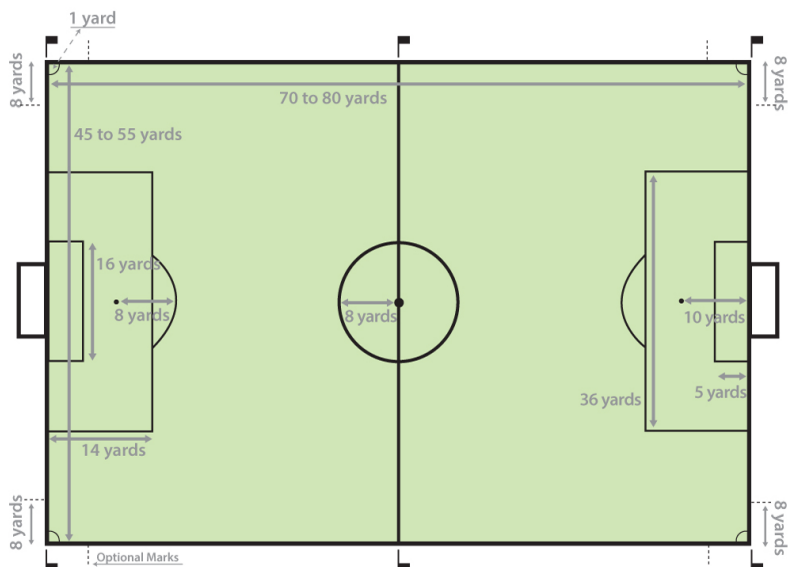
Build Out Line

- Build-out lines should be equidistant between the goal lines and halfway line.
- The build-out line promotes playing the ball out of the back in a less pressured setting.
- On a goal kick, or when the goalkeeper has possession of the ball, the opposing team must move behind the build-out line until the ball is put into play.
- Once the opposing team is behind the build-out line, the goalkeeper can pass, throw or roll the ball into play (punting is not allowed). The ball may be played to either side of the build-out line.
- After the ball is put into play by the goalkeeper, the opposing team can cross the build-out line and play resumes as normal.
- If a goalkeeper punts the ball, an indirect free kick should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense.
- If the punt occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the nearest point to where the infringement occurred.

Matches

- Size 4
- 7v7
- Game may not start or continue if there are fewer than 5 players on a team.
- Substitutions take place approximately midway through each half – See Rules & Regulations I. C. 1 & 2.
- Matches shall have 2 equal halves not to exceed 25 minutes each.
- Halftime shall be a minimum of 5 minutes and a maximum of 10 minutes. No added time.

9V9 STANDARDS OF PLAY



Field

- 70-80 yards (length)
- 45-55 yards (width)

Goals

- The maximum goal size is 7' high x 21' wide.
- The recommended goal size is 6.5' high x 18.5' wide.

Matches

- Size 4
- 9v9
- Game may not start or continue if there are fewer than 6 players on a team
- Substitutions take place approximately midway through each half – See Rules & Regulations I. C. 1 & 2.
- Matches shall have 2 equal halves not to exceed 30 minutes each.
- Halftime shall be a minimum of 5 minutes and a maximum of 20 minutes. No added time.