



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 three for U7 and U8. It should be safe and made of leather or other 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 top. 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 the 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 five 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 five 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 six 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 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.





LAW 13 FREE KICKS

For all free kicks opponents must be five yards from the ball.

“I MUCH PREFER A CLOSE GAME AS
THERE IS MORE TO DO THEN”

U8, Yorkshire

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 five 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.

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 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 he/she does, a free kick is awarded against them.

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





GOALPOST SAFETY

The Football Association, along with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, the Health and Safety Executive and the British Standards Institution, would like to draw your attention to the following guidelines for the safe use of goalposts.

Several serious injuries and fatalities have occurred in recent years as a result of unsafe or incorrect use of goalposts. Safety is always of paramount importance and everyone in football must play their part to prevent similar incidents occurring in the future.

1. For safety reasons goalposts of any size (including those which are portable and not installed permanently at a pitch or practice field) must always be anchored securely to the ground or have a weighted back bar.

- Portable goalposts must be secured as per the manufacturer's instructions; this is also a requirement for the Laws of the Game
- Under no circumstances should children or adults be allowed to climb on, swing or play with the structure of the goalposts
- Particular attention is drawn to the fact that if not properly assembled and secured, portable goalposts may overturn
- Regular inspections of goalposts must be carried out to check that they are properly maintained.

2. Portable goalposts should not be left in place after use. They should be either dismantled or removed to a place of secure storage, or placed together and suitable fixings applied to prevent unauthorised use at any time.

3. The use of metal cup hooks on any part of a goal frame was banned from the commencement of season 2007-08 and match officials have been instructed not to commence matches where such net fixings are evident for safety reasons. Nets may be secured by plastic fixings, arrow head shaped plastic hooks or tape and not by metal cup hooks. Any metal cup hooks should be removed and replaced. New goalposts should not be purchased if they include metal cup hooks.

4. Goalposts which are "homemade" or which have been altered from their original size or construction should not be used under any circumstances as they potential pose a serious safety risk.

5. There is no BS/CEN standard for wooden goals and it is unlikely that wooden goals will pass a load or stability test. All wooden goals previously tested by independent consultants have failed strength and stability tests. The FA recommends that wooden goals should be replaced with compliant metal, aluminium or UPVC goalposts (this was updated in March 2012).

For reference, you should note that The FA and BSI, in conjunction with the industry, have developed standards for goalposts – BSEN 748 (2004) and BS8461:2005+A1:2009. BS 8462:2005+A2:2012 was updated in March 2012. It is strongly recommended that you ensure that all goals purchased comply with the relevant standard. A Code of Practice BS 8461 has also been completed and copies of all of these standards are available from the BSI via their website at www.bsigroup.com.

Funding for the replacement of unsafe goals is available via the Football Foundation and eligibility criteria and further details can be obtained from their website at www.footballfoundation.org.uk.

The FA together with representatives from the industry, sports governing bodies and Government have prepared guidance notes for pitch users and pitch providers, which summarise the key priorities of the BSI's Code of Practice and provide further details on the information included above. These details are featured within the facilities section of The FA's website at www.TheFA.com/my-football

