



Region 372 Mundelein, IL.

- Short - Sided U - 5 (4 year olds) Guidelines
- Short - Sided U - 6 (4 - 5 year olds) Guidelines
- Short - Sided U - 7 (6 year olds) Guidelines
- Short - Sided U - 8 (7 year olds) Guidelines

WHAT IS SHORT-SIDED SOCCER?

Short-sided soccer is about what is best for young soccer players. It's for AYSO coaches, referees, administrators, spectators, and anyone else concerned with the development of 5 to 12 year old soccer players.

WHY SHORT-SIDED SOCCER?

Because young players need special consideration, little research or attention has been given this critical period in the development of the under-12 year old players, but most educators agree the early learning experiences are the most important and result in the most retention. Traditionally, youth soccer programs are viewed from an adult perspective, using the 11-a-side game as a reference. But we need to remember these important points about young players:

- **Children** must be treated as children, not as mini-adults.
- **Children** are essentially self-oriented and only relate naturally to a friend or two, not to groups of six or more.
- **Children** cannot sustain prolonged activity and function best with frequent rest periods.
- **Children** have a limited span of attention, so frequent activity changes are necessary.
- **Children** focus best when learning activities are fun.

Almost 70 percent of AYSO coaches are first-time coaches-parents with little free time. Short-sided soccer is a way to ease adults into coaching as well as to ease children into playing.

Be creative and remember, children play games to have fun. Short-sided games help ensure children have fun and at the same time, maximize their learning opportunities.

A. THE FIELD

1. **Dimensions:** Smaller or reduced width and length
2. **Markings:** Distinctive lines not required, but may include:
 - Halfway line the width of the field, marked equidistant between the goal lines
 - Center circle with a six (6) - eight (8) yard radius in the center of the field
 - Corner arcs with a one (1) yard radius at each corner of the field
 - Goal area in front of each goal measuring six (6) yards by 15 yards(6 yds x 15yds)
 - Penalty area in front of each goal measuring 14 yards by 36 yards(14 yds x 36yds)
3. **Goals:** Smaller or reduced in height and width

B. THE BALL

- Size three (3)

C. NUMBER OF PLAYERS

1. Maximum number of players on the field at any time:
 - U5 & U6; three (3); no goalkeepers**
 - U7; five (5); no goalkeepers**
 - U8; seven (7); with a goalkeeper**
2. Maximum number of players on roster: **U5 Teams are formed new each week**, five (5), eight (8), twelve (12), respectively
3. Substitutions: Between periods and at half-time
4. Playing time: **Minimum of 1/2 of the total playing time for each player and 3/4 when possible. To be consistent with AYSO's philosophy of Everyone Plays, generally no player should play an entire match, if another player did not play more that one quarter for which they were available.**
5. No co-ed teams. Separate girls teams should be promoted at this level of play

D. PLAYERS' EQUIPMENT:

- *Footwear:* Tennis shoes or soft-cleated soccer shoes
- *Shinguards:* **MANDATORY for both practices and games**

E. REFEREE:

1. The referee could be either a:
 - a. registered referee
 - b. youth referee
 - c. coach
2. Referees should emphasize:
 - a. **fun**
 - b. **fairness**
 - c. **safety**
 - d. **learning**

NOTE: Referees should briefly explain any infringements to the player(s) and help players with instructions. All referees must be

F. DURATION OF GAME:

1. U5 & U6; Two ten minute (10) halves with substitution when the ball goes out of play approx. five-minute (5) periods
U7; Two twenty minute (20) halves with substitution when the ball goes out of play at approx. ten-minutes (10)
U8; Two twenty minute (20) halves with substitution when the ball goes out of play at approx. ten-minutes (10)
2. Halftime break of five to ten minutes

G. THE START OF PLAY:

The game should be started with a free kick in the middle of the field. The coaches or referees should determine which team starts the game and the opposing team should start the second half. The referee will ensure that opponents are outside of the center circle and on their defensive half of the field

H. BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY:

1. THROW - IN

U5. When the whole ball passes over the touch line or the Goal Line, either on the ground or in the air, it should be thrown in by a player of the opposite team from where the ball crossed the line.

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2. GOAL KICK

U6 ;When the whole ball passes over the goal line (not into the goal), it should be kicked into play by a player of the opposing team from where the ball crossed the line. Opponents must be six (6) yards away.

U7 & U8 ; May be taken from any point inside the goal area. Opponents must be six (6) yards away or outside the penalty area.

I. METHOD OF SCORING

No change from regular play. Score kept only for coaches and league use.

Slaughter Rule: (Note 3 goal differential)

This rule **should only rarely have to be used**. Coaches are **expected to move players** who normally score the most goals to positions where they will **not likely score** or take them out of the game at substitution time rather than run up the score. However, if a team scores a goal which places a team in the lead by **three (3)** goals, the **losing team is allowed to add a player** on the field. **If the losing team does not have an additional player, the leading team should consider sharing a player with the team behind if they have a player sitting out that quarter. If a player cannot be added, the winning team is required to remove a player. If the 3 goal lead is reduced, the additional player is removed. The coach and referee should work together to make this event as little noticed as possible**

J. OFFSIDE

There should be no offside called. **At U8 Offside may rarely be called for intentional goal hanging.**

K. FOULS & MISCONDUCT

1. **Direct free kick for all fouls**, with the opponents five to eight yards away
2. Referees will work cooperatively with the coaches and eliminate the need for cautions and send-offs. Do not show yellow or red cards

L. FREE KICKS

1. **All kicks are direct free kicks**
2. Free kicks awarded the attacking team inside the defending team's goal area should be taken from the nearest point on the goal area line in front of the goal.

M. PENALTY KICKS

No penalty kicks

N. THROW-IN

A second throw-in should be allowed if the player commits a foul on the initial attempt. The referee should explain the proper method before allowing the player to re-throw.

O. CORNER KICK

U7 & U8; No change from regular play, except that opponents must be eight (8) yards from the ball

AYSO RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Region standings are not recorded**
2. **Game scores are reported for balancing information**
3. **Parents, coaches, and players from both teams exchange handshakes before and/or after each game**
4. **All players receive participation awards**
5. **No individual should be allowed to run the length of the field except participants of the game**
6. **Parents and coaches should encourage players, but not coach or instruct during game time**
7. **Spectators are not allowed behind either goal or within three (3) yards outside the touchline**

Check the web site www.ayso372.org or the Hot Line 847 949 6320