



NVFC RULES AND GUIDELINES FOR SMALL SIDED GAMES

(Ages U6 thru U10)

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A) General Goals and Guidelines of Small Sided Soccer

NVFC strongly encourages that all games are played in a competitive atmosphere whereby the result is not a factor. Coaches, club officials, parents, and players should all contribute to fostering a playing environment where the players' individual needs and development are more important than the result of the games. In all Small Sided Games programming the emphasis shall be placed on development, fun, sportsmanship, education, and respect for teammates, the opponents and officials. Scores or game results may be tracked by the coordinators for future scheduling purposes and to avoid future unfavorable game match ups. Scores are not to be compiled for the sake of standings or league tables.

Goals

- To promote soccer as an enjoyable sport and fitness activity
- To develop age appropriate skills and techniques applicable to soccer
- To foster a spirit of good sportsmanship, fair play and respect for others

Coaching Guidelines

- Equal playing time for all players regardless of skill levels
- Rotation of positions for skill development and maximum touches on the ball
- Emphasis Skill development and understanding the rules of the game
- Encourage Team cooperation and support
- Teach and Display Good sportsmanship
- Exercise Positive reinforcement
- Focus on fun, activity and improvement
- Recognize and respect injury, exhaustion and self-esteem issues
- Positive parents/volunteers on the sidelines and supportive of coach
- Winning games should be an outcome, not a priority.

B) Small Sided Formats

House League Formats

Age Group	Format: # of fields and # of players on field at once in brackets	Approximate Field Sizes	League/ Scheduling	Refs
U6	2 x 4 aside (total 8)	2 fields of 36 x 22 yards	In house only	coaches
U7 Boys	2 x 4 aside (total 8)	2 fields of 36 x 22 yards	In house only	coaches
U8 Boys	2 x 4 aside (total 8)	2 fields of 36-38 x 22-24yards	Interlock	coaches
U9 Boys	6 aside	48 X 28-30 yards	Interlock	refs
U10Boys	7 aside	50-55 X 38 yards	Interlock	refs

**All numbers above include goalkeeper. No goalkeepers used at U6/U7
U8 use rush Goalkeeper**

C) Length of Games/Substitution Guidelines

The duration of the games are as set out below:

Under 6/7: 2 x 20 Minute Games on game weekends, 2 Minute Half Time

Under 8: 2 x 25 Minutes Halves, Half Time 5 minutes

Under 9/10: 2 x 25 Minutes, Half Time 5 minutes

Number of players:

Under 6: 4 v 4, No Goalkeeper

Under 7: 4 v 4 No Goalkeeper

Under 8: 4 v 4 including rush Goalkeeper (sweeper keeper)

Under 9: 6 v 6 including Goalkeeper

Under 10: 7 v 7 including Goalkeeper

Substitution Guidelines:

Substitutions for U6 thru U10 shall be unlimited with equal playing time per player.

All players on each team must learn and play all positions.

Age Specific Rules--Under U6 to Under 8 Small Sided Games Rules

Organization and Rules

- 4 players on field for U8 (3 plus a rush goal keeper who can use hands around the goal area, identified with pinnie over top team jersey)
- 4 players on field for U6/U7, no goalies
- When ball goes out of play, game is restarted by:
Sideline: U6/U7 Kick Ins, U8 Throw Ins
Endline: goal kicks or corner kicks depending on who kicked it out
- Defending team must be 7 yards away from ball on corner kicks, free kicks, & kickoffs
- Retreat Line: When a team has a goal kick or the goalkeeper has ball in his hands, opposing team must retreat to half until the ball is played by the goalkeeper
- There are no offsides called at U6 to U8

Refereeing

- Teams (ideally coaches) should split ref duties. At U6 to U8 one coach from each team may ref on one field. Common sense application of calling fouls. (i.e. let all unintentional hand balls go, call only obvious deliberate hand balls). If a foul occurs, offending team must be seven yards from the ball during the free kick. At U7/U8, “pass back rule” will not be in effect. Goal keepers may handle ball passed back to them by teammate while around their goal. Coaches are not to encourage abuse of this rule.

Time/Length U6/U7

- All teams arrive at scheduled time. All games or training sessions should end within the 1 hour timeslot. **No exceptions.**
- On game days teams should do one warm up exercise for 10-12 minutes, water break, followed by 2 X 20 minute halves with 2 minute half time, unless game starts late
- If a game starts late all games should end within the allotted time. **No exceptions.**

Time/Length U8

- Games scheduled to Kick-Off at scheduled time. Please arrive 20-30 minutes early to organize team and warm up.
- All games will end within the time allotted on the schedule. **No exceptions.**
- 25 minute halves with 5 minute half time, unless game starts late (see below)
- If a game starts late, then that game will play a shorter second half as all games will end within the allotted time so later games do not start late. **No exceptions.**

Coaching Points

- **encourage** at least one player to go fully wide on goal kicks & when goalkeeper in possession
- **encourage** rush goal keeper (U8) to move off goal line to support attacks or intercept through- balls; one player should not stay in an un-attacked net for large portions of the game; the idea of a rush GK who moves out to attack and rushes back because he/she is the only one allowed to handle the ball is a simple introduction to the idea of transition (the switch from attack to defense).
- **encourage** players to pass, dribble, and communicate with each other
- On throw-ins or kick-ins, **encourage** non-throwing players to look for open space and not to go too close to thrower
- **encourage** lots of movement and maintaining proper passing distance (5-10 yards for this age) as opposed to standing and clumping

Age Specific Rules--Under 9 Small Sided Games Rules

Organization and Rules

- Field size is: 28-30 yards X 48 yards
- 10 yd “boxes” marked, within which designated goalkeeper may handle the ball
- 6 players on field for U9 (5 plus a goalkeeper)
- When ball goes out of play, game is restarted by:
Sideline: Throw ins
Endline: Goal kicks or corner kicks depending on who kicked it out
- After a goal, restart with a centre kick, defending team to start 8 yards away.
- Defending team must stand 8 yards away from ball for all kick offs, goal kicks, corner kicks, and free kicks
- Retreat Line: When a team has a goal kick or the goalkeeper has ball in his hands, opposing team must retreat to half until the ball is played by the goalkeeper
- There are no offsides called at U9 and U10, however, coaches should not abuse this rule and are discouraged to have their player(s) “goal suck” or just stand in front of the opposing net when the play is in their defensive end.

Refereeing

- At U9 and U10 young refs with limited experience are used. Please respect that these young refs are in training and will make mistakes. Fair play and sportsmanship should be displayed by coaches, parents, players at all times. If a foul occurs, offending team must be 8 yards from the ball during the free kick. At U9/10, “pass back rule” is in effect. Goal keepers **may not** handle ball passed back to them by teammate while in their goal area.

Time/Length

- Games scheduled to start on the hour. Please arrive 20-30 minutes early to organize team and warm up.
- All games will end on the hour at the latest. **No exceptions.**
- 25 minute halves with 5 minute half time, unless game starts late (see below)
- If a game starts late, then that game will play a shorter second half as all games will end on the hour at the latest. **No exceptions.**
- Unlimited substitutions allowed, equal playing time for all players, and players must learn and play all positions

Coaching Points

- unlike U6/U7/U8, coaches should be on the sidelines and should not be stepping onto the field to give instructions or ref.
- **encourage** players to pass, dribble, and communicate with each other
- at practice, teach how a throw in is done, so that there are no foul throws called by the refs at the games as this slows play down and wastes time.
- **encourage** lots of movement and maintaining proper passing distance (5-20 yards for this age) as opposed to standing and clumping
- ideally, all teams should be playing in a formation consisting of the following 3 elements: defenders, midfielders, forwards. To that end, it is recommended to play a 1-3-1 formation. One defender, three midfielders that play the whole field, and one forward, plus a goalkeeper. This will give your give your team depth and width in their play.

Age Specific Rules--Under 10 Small Sided Games Rules

Organization and Rules

- Field size is: 38yards X 55yards
- 10 yd “boxes” marked, within which designated goalkeeper may handle the ball
- 7 players on field for U10 (6 plus a goalkeeper)
- When ball goes out of play, game is restarted by:
Sideline: Throw ins
Endline: Goal kicks or corner kicks depending on who kicked it out
- After a goal, restart with a centre kick, defending team to start 8 yards away.
- Defending team must stand 8 yards away from ball for all kick offs, goal kicks, corner kicks, and free kicks
- Retreat Line: When a team has a goal kick or the goalkeeper has ball in his hands, opposing team must retreat to half until the ball is played by the goalkeeper
- There are no offsides called at U9 and U10, however, coaches should not abuse this rule and are discouraged to have their player(s) “goal suck” or just stand in front of the opposing net when the play is in their defensive end.

Refereeing

- At U9 and U10 young refs with limited experience are used. Please respect that these young refs are in training and will make mistakes. Fair play and sportsmanship should be displayed by coaches, parents, players at all times. If a foul occurs, offending team must be 8 yards from the ball during the free kick. At U9/10, “pass back rule” is in effect. Goal keepers **may not** handle ball passed back to them by teammate while in their goal area.

Time/Length

- Games scheduled to start on the hour. Please arrive 20-30 minutes early to organize team and warm up.
- All games will end on the hour at the latest. **No exceptions.**
- 25 minute halves with 5 minute half time, unless game starts late (see below)
- If a game starts late, then that game will play a shorter second half as all games will end on the hour at the latest. **No exceptions.**
- Unlimited substitutions allowed, equal playing time for all players, and players must learn and play all positions

Coaching Points

- unlike U6/U7/U8, coaches should be on the sidelines and should not be stepping onto the field to give instructions or ref.
- **encourage** players to pass, dribble, and communicate with each other
- at practice, teach how a throw in is done, so that there are no foul throws called by the refs at the games as this slows play down and wastes time.
- **encourage** lots of movement and maintaining proper passing distance (5-20 yards for this age) as opposed to standing and clumping
- ideally, all teams should be playing in a formation consisting of the following 3 elements: defenders, midfielders, forwards. To that end, it is recommended to play a 2 – 3 – 1 formation. Two defenders, three midfielders, and one forward, plus a goalkeeper. This will give your give your team depth and width in their play. 3-2-1 is another option.

