

Rules of the Game

U11-12 8v8

- Law 1** The Field of Play dimensions are smaller to accommodate the eight-versus-eight game and are appropriate for the movement capabilities of ten- and eleven-year-old children. These adjusted dimensions provide more practical space allowing players to be successful.
-Field Markings: per FIFA with the exception of the center circle, penalty area, penalty mark and penalty arc.
-Goals: the goal, 6 x 18 feet, is the same for the U10 and U12 age groups. By using the same size goal for both age groups clubs will have to buy fewer goals.
- Law 2** The Ball: must be a size four. The smaller ball is lighter and more easily kicked, received, headed, dribbled, caught, thrown and passed.
- Law 3** The Number of Players: The eight-a-side game includes the goalkeeper. The smaller number of field players will provide the opportunity for the children to further develop their physical and technical abilities. These are valuable traits for all soccer players to develop. With fewer players on the field each child has an increased number of contacts with the ball and has more actual playing time. Additionally the players will be required to make more decisions and experience repeating game situations frequently. The work rate and involvement of players will be more consistent. While learning both offense and defense, players will become well rounded and will understand more readily the roles and importance of teammates. The smaller field dimensions and number of players on the field of play will require more concentration on transition, which is a vitally important tactical concept for the players to learn.

The minimum number of players to begin a match for preteen players in SSG should be one (1) less than the number required on the field. That is for U12 the minimum will be seven (7).

- Law 6** The Assistant Referees: per FIFA. Use registered referees.
- Law 7** The Duration of the Match: per FIFA with the exception of the halves being 30 minutes each.
- Law 8** The Start and Restart of Play: per FIFA. The distance the defending players must be away from the ball until it is kicked is the same as the radius of the center circle.
- Law 10** Goal Scored: shall conform to FIFA and the sections concerning Winning Team and Competition Rules shall conform to US Youth Soccer guidelines.
- Law 12** The rule on the goalkeeper's distribution still allows for the ball to be punted the entire length of the field, it just can not go directly into the opponents' penalty area
- Law 13** Free Kicks: per FIFA. The distance the defending players must be away from the ball until it is kicked is the same as the radius of the center circle.
- Law 14** Conform to FIFA with the exceptions that the penalty mark is ten yards from the center of the goal line and those players other than the kicker and defending goalkeeper are at least eight yards from the penalty mark. The distance of eight yards conforms to the radius of the center circle. The distance of ten yards from the center of the goalmouth for the penalty mark fits within the reduced dimensions of the penalty area and is a reasonable distance for the kick.
- Law 17** The Corner Kick: per FIFA. The distance the defending players must be away from the ball until it is kicked is the same as the radius of the center circle.