



U8 Rules – 6v6

Revised Fall 2026

U8 players should be building on their past lessons in Scooter Shooters and U6. They should be familiar with not bunching up. They should understand the difference between a pass and a shot. They should have an idea of the positions on the field.

Fouls **will** be called by a State Certified Referee.

As a coach, you should be gearing them up for U10 where the offside rule applies; this means keeping your players on your side of field instead of right up by the goal.

As a parent, you will not be talking to the referee, which includes any banter. Parents should address their player's coach, who will in turn address the referee during half-time, or stop the game at the next whistle for explanations on safety issues.

Law 1: Field of Play (in yards, adjusted to availability)

- 20-30 yards X 25-35 yards

Law 2: The Ball

- Size 3 Soccer Ball

Law 3: Duration of Game

- Games consist of two equal halves of 25 minutes, with a halftime of 5 minutes

Law 4: Number of Players

- 6v6: 5 players plus a goalkeeper per side in play
- **All players should have equal playing time**
 - o Exceptions to the Law:
 1. A player arrives late
 2. A player becomes injured
 3. A player is not wearing proper soccer equipment (see Law 5)
- Substitutions welcome only when a referee blows the whistle and the coach has asked for a chance to substitute players. A simple "Sub Ref?" will get the referee's attention and they will answer accordingly.

- For every four (4) goals a team is ahead, the opposing team may add an extra player; up to 2 players may be added.

Law 5: Player Equipment

Players must wear:

- Soccer cleats
 - o Tennis shoes may be substituted only in extenuating circumstances at the referee's discretion
- Shin guards
- Socks (completely covering shin guards)
- Shirt
- Shorts
- o **NO JEWELRY** (of any kind, unless medical alert taped to body)
- o **NO RIGID CASTS** allowed (soft casts permitted)
- o **NO HATS** (hoods must be tucked into the jerseys)

Law 6: Referee

- One certified official assigned
- Only **ONE** whistle to be used during game play

Law 7: Assistant Referee

- Not assigned; may be a parent or spectator
- May only signal to the certified referee that the ball has gone out of play
- May NOT use a whistle or other instrument that makes noise, See Law 5
- Is only utilized in a situation where the referee decides it is needed

Law 8: Start and restart of Play

- The ball starts at center of the field, players on their own side of the half, and the referee blows whistle to signal start of play.
- The player taking kick-off may only kick the ball once and may not touch the ball again until another player touches the ball.
- NO dropped balls within the penalty area.

Law 9: Ball in and out of Play

- Ball is out of play when it COMPLETELY crosses the touch line or the goal line

Law 10: Method of Scoring

- Ball must completely cross the goal line between the goal posts for a goal to legally count

Law 11: Offsides

- Offsides is not enforced in U8.
- Coaches are encouraged to teach players to avoid “cherry-picking” or standing near the opposing goal when play is on the other side of the field.

Law 12: Fouls and Misconduct

- There are fouls in U8.
- Fouls are called by the referee only.
- **Parents should help their child’s coach direct their players to keep their hands to themselves and to not be too aggressive on the field.**
- **There is no heading the ball allowed. Any ball that comes into contact with a player’s head shall stop the play and be forfeited to the other team for a free kick.**

Law 13: Free Kicks

- All kicks are indirect (cannot score a goal on the kick itself).
- Opposing players must be at least 5 yards from the ball during a free kick.

Law 14: Penalty Kick

- **There are no penalty kicks in U8.**
- A foul committed in the 18-yard box results in an indirect free kick from where the foul occurred.
- Any foul inside the 6-yard box will be moved to the 6-yard box line and play will restart with an indirect kick.

Law 15: Throw-in

- The same player may retake an illegal throw-in 2-3 times or per referee’s discretion to support learning.
- The opposing coach, player’s coach, and referee should help direct players on the correct form of a throw-in.
- Correct form:
 - o Both feet must remain on the ground outside of the touch line during the entirety of a throw-in.
 - o Ball must be between BOTH hands.
 - o With ball in hand, the player may perform the throw-in by starting with the ball extended in front of them, the ball should be brought behind the player’s head between both hands, and released in front of them with both hands.

Law 16: Goal Kick and Goalie Possession

- A goal kick is awarded when the entire ball, having touched a player of the attacking team, passes over the goal line, either in the ground or in the air, outside of the goal.
- The game restarts when the keeper throws, kicks, or dribbles the ball back into play.
- When keeper has possession of the ball in their hands, or during a goal kick, the opposing players must retreat past the build out line/area (approximately 14 yards from the goal line) until keeper releases the ball.
- The “pass-back” rule is not enforced.
- The goalkeeper may **NOT**, at any point in the game, punt the ball.

Law 17: Corner Kick

- A corner kick is awarded when the entire ball, having last touched a defending player, passes over the goal line, either in the air or on the ground, outside of the goal area.

Law 18: Team & Spectator Location

The home team and away team will occupy opposite sides of the field. Home spectators should sit with their team and away spectators should sit with their team. Opposing teams are not permitted to sit on the same side of the field.

The home team will always occupy the east or north side of the field. Away teams should always occupy the west or south end of the field. Teams will always occupy the side of the field that contains the touch lines.

Coaches and parents are not permitted to walk beyond the build out line. A goal coach or parent is **NOT** permitted between goal line and the build out line or near the goalkeeper and goal.