

Player Development Initiatives



A resource for parents, coaches and referees supporting the growth and improvement of grassroots soccer

August 2016

Small-Sided Games Chart

	U6 6 years old and younger	U7 7 years old and younger	U8 8 years old and younger	U9 9 years old and younger	U10 10 years old and younger	U11 11 years old and younger	U12 12 years old and younger
Field Size (yards)	Length 25-35 Width 15-25	Length 25-35 Width 15-25	Length 25-35 Width 15-25	Length 55-65 Width 35-45	Length 55-65 Width 35-45	Length 70-80 Width 45-55	Length 70-80 Width 45-55
Maximum Goal Size (feet)	Height 4 Width 6	Height 4 Width 6	Height 4 Width 6	Height 6.5 Width 18.5	Height 6.5 Width 18.5	Height 7 Width 21	Height 7 Width 21
Ball Size	3	3	3	4	4	4	4
Players	4v4 No GK	4v4 No GK	4v4 No GK	7v7	7v7	9v9	9v9
Game Time (minutes)	4x10	4x10	4x10	2x25	2x25	2x30	2x30
Offside	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes



4v4 Standards



4v4

Player Development Philosophy

Coaches should have the age appropriate license issued by U.S. Soccer

Formal games are not needed so playing with and against teammates at the end of each training session (1-2 per week) should be sufficient

Formal rosters and teams are not needed so having a flexible and fluid approach to training and playing is recommended

- While playing, everyone should participate a minimum of 50% of the time
- With 4 players on the field, having 6 players on each “team” when the “game” is played helps maximize participation and engagement



4v4

Player Development Philosophy

Here are some examples of having a flexible and fluid approach to training and playing

- Utilize “in-house” programs that have everyone train and play as a pool of players rather than as distinct teams
- This approach allows players to train and play with a variety of other kids based on numbers, ability, age, height, weight, etc.
- If using teams with a set roster of players, players can be mixed up during the game at the end of the training session to provide variety



4v4

Player Development Philosophy

Results and standings should not be recorded

Travel should be limited as much as possible

Players should not be participating in events (tournaments, showcases, festivals, etc.)

Remember that safety and fun are the top priorities so make adjustments as needed to ensure both are being promoted



4v4

Concussion Initiative

Per U.S. Soccer's Concussion Initiative, if a player is suspected to have a head injury the referee* is instructed to stop play to allow for treatment/evaluation as needed

If the player leaves the field of play for additional evaluation, a substitution can be made in that moment

The player with the suspected head injury may not return to the game unless a Health Care Professional (HCP) or Certified Athletic Trainer (ATC) has cleared the player

Any coach or parent insisting on returning the player to the game without approved clearance will result in the referee* ending the game

*Since there is no referee in 4v4, this responsibility falls to the coaches and parents involved



4v4

Concussion Initiative

Deliberate heading is not allowed in 4v4 games

If a player deliberately heads the ball in a game, an indirect free kick should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense



4v4

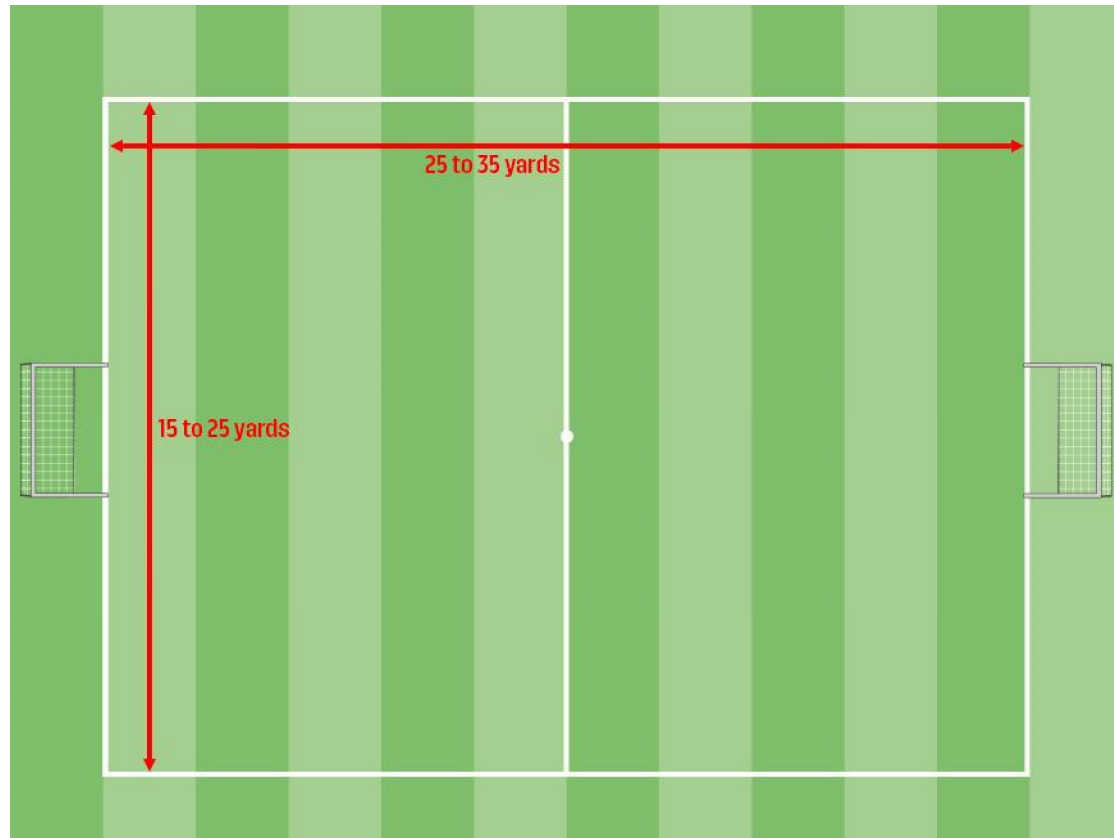
Standards of Play

Field

- 25-35 yards (length)
- 15-25 yards (width)
- Goals should be no larger than 4 feet (height) x 6 feet (width)
- Corner flags are not needed



4v4



4v4

Standards of Play

Games

- Size 3 ball
- 4v4
- Shin guards are required
- Substitutions are unlimited and can occur at any time
- 4 quarters
- No more than 10 minute quarters
- 5 minute breaks between quarters
- Playing times can be less than 10 minutes when managed by the coaches and parents



4v4

Standards of Play

Games

- Kick offs, free kicks, throw-ins, goal kicks and corner kicks are used to start or restart play
- Kick-ins and/or dribble-ins are also acceptable
- Goal kicks and corner kicks should be taken in the general vicinity of the respective goal or corner
- If used, all free kicks are indirect
- Opponents should be 10 feet away from the ball on all restarts
- No penalty kicks
- No offside



4v4

Standards of Play

Games

- Registered and certified referees are not needed at this level
- Since there is no referee, coaches are expected to manage the game environment from the touchline using these standards of play and their best judgement
- Together, coaches and parents are expected to create and promote a fun and safe environment for the players

