

6U RULES & COACH AS REFEREE

Feedback on Region 728 policies are welcome and appreciated. Please direct email to gjayso@gmail.com



When in doubt, apply common sense, do what's most fair, and move on.

What is this policy?

6U level rules, and the expectations of players and coaches, are much different than those of 8U and above. Because of that, the *6U Rules & Coach as Referee* policy was created to document both expectation and rules.

Who Does the Policy Apply To?

The *6U Rules & Coach as Referee* policy applies to all players, coaches, and spectators participating in, or attending 6U events.

Why This Policy?

Although a general understanding of 6U implementation has always existed, there have been areas lacking clarity. This policy exists to define and document the rules and roles unique to the 6U level.

We Each Have a Role to Play

It is not necessary, or helpful, to emphasize technical applications of the rules at this level of play. The objective is to keep the game playing, and to offer instruction as needed, while avoiding constant stopping or interfering with play.

Spectators

Parents are encouraged to get involved and assist coaches in field setup and tear down. It's a few minutes of your time at a game, and it'd truly be appreciated by the coaches and AYSO.

Coaches & Assistant Coaches

Coaches will serve as referees whose primary goal in these games is to ensure that:

1. The kids have fun
2. The game is played safely.

Recommendation: each team referee one half of the game.

Everyone

The primary goal in these games is to ensure that:

1. The kids have fun
2. The game is played safely.

Just the Facts

Duration of Play

INTERVAL	MINUTES	COMMENT
Match (Game)	24*	Match will be 20 minutes. If it is very hot, it is permissible to shorten the match if both coaches agree
Quarter	6*	Match will be divided into four 6 minute quarters.
¼ Break	2**	Quarter breaks are intended only to be a time for a quick substitution of players. They are not meant to serve as snack time or other purposes that would delay the re-start of the game.
½ Break	5**	Be sure the kids get fluids.

* This is a running six minute clock with no stoppages or added time.

** If it is very hot, it is permissible to lengthen the breaks. The coach has the discretion to determine if additional time can be used to allow players to rehydrate.

HEADING	THROW IN	FREE KICKS	GOAL KEEPER	OFFSIDE	REFEREE	BALL	KEEP SCORE
Not Allowed	Kick ins only	Indirect Only	No	No	Coaches	#3	No

Practice Sessions

Practice sessions at this age should be informal and optional. Make these sessions a fun time for everyone. It's just a game.

Pitch Location

Two, 6U practice areas are located toward the center of the field. *Figure 1.*

Teams will be assigned a practice area. Your coach will inform you which you'll have.

Practice areas are located toward the center of the field.

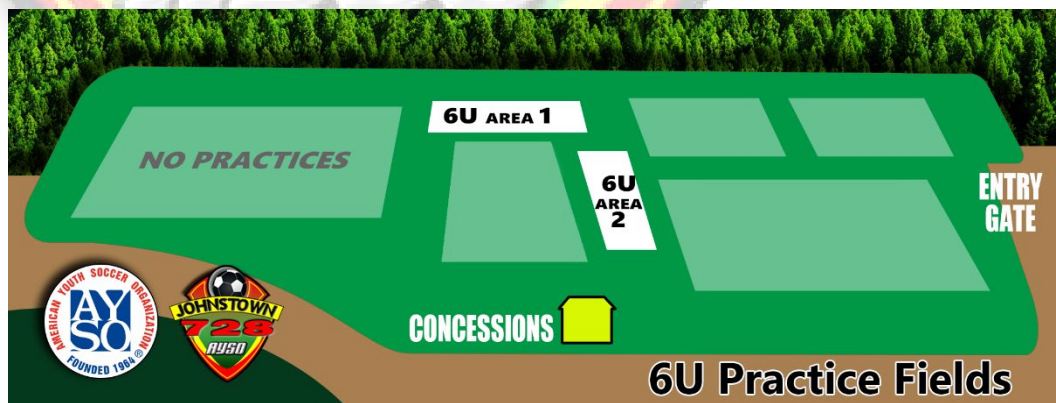


Figure 1: There are two, 6U practice areas

Match Play (Games)

Pitch Location

6U match play takes place at the far west end of the facility.

One 6U pitch will be set up within each corner of the larger 16U pitch. Figure 2.



Figure 2: There are two, 6U practice areas

Field Markings

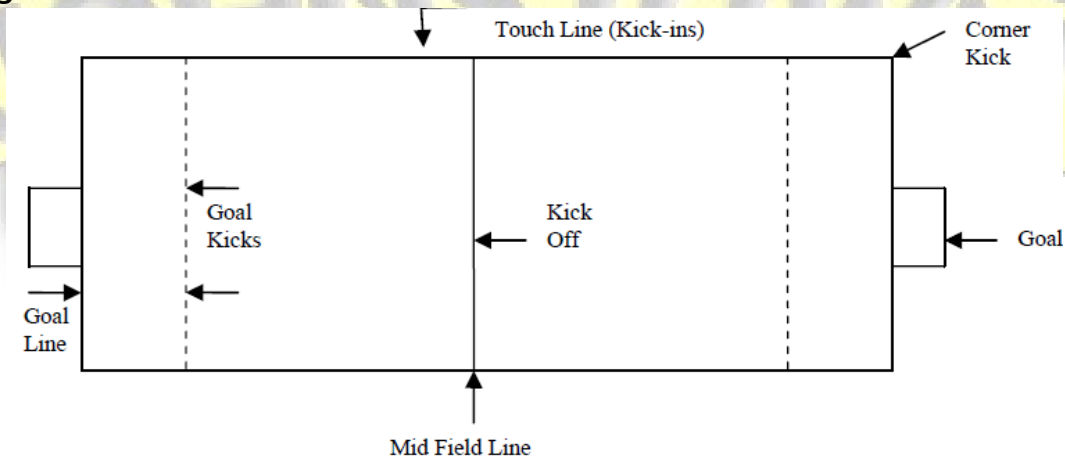


Fig 2: 6U Field Markings

Spectators

Please sit on the outside of the larger, 16U field touchlines. [Figure 2.](#)

Teams

Players set with their coaches on the inside of their respective fields.

Goal Line

No one is permitted behind the goal, or goal line, at any time during the match unless silently taking pictures.

In past, players have been injured because they were not paying attention to what was happening on the pitch. Instead they were listening to the person talking to them, or shouting out instructions, from behind the goal. Figure. 3.

Please ask fellow parents and spectators to follow this guideline. Board members may also ask spectators to back away or go to the sidelines to cheer for their children.

No Heading

Consistent with the US Soccer mandates on heading the ball, and AYSO Region 728 policy, heading is banned for all division 12U and below at both practice and matches.

An indirect free kick will be awarded to the opposing team if a player deliberately touches the ball with his/her head during a match (taken where the player touched the ball with his/her head).

The Players

Player Equipment

Shoes and shin guards covered by the socks are mandatory at all practice and game activities. Soccer shoes, tennis shoes, or similar type athletic shoes are recommended. The type and condition of cleated shoes must be inspected for safety before use.

Jersey Color Conflict

If there is a color conflict with jerseys, the home team is responsible for obtaining and wearing pinnies from the coach's equipment bag.

On the Field

There are four players on the field. In certain circumstances coaches can agree to have three, but both coaches must agree.

There are no goalkeepers.

Periodically count the players on the field to be sure each team has the correct number and adjust as necessary.

Substitutions

6U kids can get tired or bored easily. Coaches may substitute players at will, but ideally at a stoppage in play (kick in, goal kick, kick off, injury, etc.).

Playing Time

1. Minimum of two quarters per game
2. No player should play four periods until everyone has played three.
3. Play time shall be equal for all players.

Coaches & Assistant Coaches

The matches are intended to be an opportunity for our players to experience the fun of playing soccer and making friends. The barest of minimum rules are needed and those should be applied with generous flexibility. Let players have the freedom to play with minimum interruption.

Coaches may briefly enter the field of play to coach in positive manner.

Coaches or assistant coaches are responsible for keeping time.

Coaches or staff engaging in verbal quarrelling, gesturing, or behaviors of that ilk, are acting outside of the AYSO's *Six Philosophies*. Such behavior confuses young players and annoys everyone.

Coaches as Referees

There is no need for fully certified referees to manage 6U games. Coaches and/or assistant coaches, will serve as referees whose primary goal in these games is to ensure that:

1. The kids have fun
2. The game is played safely.

The focus is on helping players when they are confused, teaching the most basic of laws, and ensuring that everyone is playing safely.

Assistant Coaches

Players should only be paying attention to their coaches and what is happening in the game. For some children, too much going on can be overwhelming. When both the coach and assistant coach are shouting instructions, confusion on the pitch often results. The assistant coach should help players with kick ins, offer extra encouragement, and instruct players when they are close to the sideline where they are standing.

Pre Match Checklist

Please encourage parents to get involved in field setup and tear down.

Field

Inspect the field to be sure there are no holes, exposed sprinkler heads, broken glass or anything that might pose a danger. Fix anything you can. Request help when needed.

Goals

If you are the day's first match, upon arriving at the field the coach is responsible to setup two goals on the field you are assigned to. If sandbags are available, please place one sandbag on each goal. The goals and sandbags are located next to the shed by the field of play.

Ball

6U play uses a number 3 sized ball which is supplied by the home team (the first team listed in the schedule). It should say size 3 on it somewhere. Pick one that is neither too soft nor too hard. Push on it with your thumbs. You should be able to deflect the ball about ¼ inch. Play with the best ball you can find.

Post Match Checklist

Please encourage parents to get involved in field setup and tear down.

Goals

If you are the last match of the day, please take the goals and sandbags off the field and put them back next to the shed.

Trash

There should be no debris left behind by teams. Water bottles, snack wrappers etc., must all be disposed of properly. Please encourage the same of spectators.

Stopping Play

Play is stopped when:

- A goal has been scored — Restart with kickoff
- A foul has been committed — Restart with indirect freekick.
- A player is injured — Call the coach onto the field to care for the player — Restart with dropped ball.
- Players are bunched together — Wildly kicking at the ball. Remind the players to be careful about kicking each other — Restart with dropped ball.
- Referee stops play for any reason. Restart with dropped ball.

EVENT	INFORMATION	RESTART
Goal scored		Kickoff
Foul committed		Indirect freekick
Injured Player	Call the coach onto the field to care for the player	Dropped ball
Players Bunched	Wildly kicking at the ball. Remind players to be careful about kicking each other	Dropped ball

Kickoff

Remember, let them play and do not interfere for technicalities.

The kick-off is taken from the center of the field with each team in their own half, and the team not kicking off at least ten feet from the ball. Do not insist the opponent always be ten feet from the ball, as this is just a guide to give the kicker room to kick the ball without it immediately hitting an opponent.

The home team will kick off to begin the game. The second half also begins with a kickoff, taken by the visiting team.

A kick-off starts both halves of a match and restarts play after a goal has been scored. After a team scores a goal, the kick-off is taken by their opponents.

After the referee whistles to begin play, the defending team must wait until the ball is kicked before playing.

Ball In and Out of Play

The ball is out of play, in all age divisions, when it completely crosses the touchline, or goal line, either on the ground or in the air.

The coach in the 6U games will determine when one of these restarts is necessary and should then interfere as little as possible in the restart. It's their game, let them play. The coach can work on technique later.

Throw-In

Throw-ins are replaced with kick-ins. Be reasonable. Coordination, understanding the rules, and knowing your expectations, are lacking at this age.

Procedure

- Place the ball on the touchline at the location it left the field
- Opponents should be ten feet from the ball
- The player's teammates may be any distance from the kicker
- Once kicked in, the ball must be kicked by another player, from either team. The kicker may not kick the ball two times in a row.

Goal Kick

A goal kick is awarded to the opposing team, in all age divisions, when the attacking team is last to touch the ball before it crosses the goal line (Figure 2) but without scoring a goal. The attacking team loses possession, and the opposing team puts the ball back into play with a goal kick.

The goal kick may be taken from any point inside the goal area. The opposing team must be at least ten feet away from the ball when the goal kick is taken in 6U games.

Procedure

- Place the ball on the ground about 5 yards in front of the goal
- Instruct all the opposing players that they must move back across the halfway line
- Teammates of the kicker can be anywhere, but it is best if at least some of them are across the halfway line as well
- Instruct the kicker to kick the ball as hard as they can and restart the match.

Corner Kick

When the ball passes all the way across one of the goal lines (but not into the goal) and was last touched by a player from the defending team the game must stop. The attacking team puts the ball back into play with a corner kick.

Procedure

- Place the ball on the ground inside or on the lines that mark the corner on the left or right side of the goal depending upon where the ball went out
- Opposing players must be a minimum of 5 yards away from the kicker
- Instruct the kicker to kick the ball and restart the match.

Fouls and Misconduct

Fouls

Deliberate fouls should be rare in 6U games. Kicking, tripping, and dangerous play may occur. There should be few, if any, additional reasons to stop play in 6U games.

If a player is 'not getting along well with others' or if play must be stopped for any reason (injury, substitution, confusion, or to watch a passing train, butterfly or frog), refocus the players and begin again with a free kick or pass in as appropriate.

Award the restart to whichever team deserves it. Exercise common sense, stand back and let them play.

Misconduct

Misconduct should be rare in 6U games. There is no need for the public cautioning. Sending off of young players (yellow or red cards) is not allowed. All should work cooperatively with the coach when a player may need a 'time out'.

Free Kicks:

Play may have to be stopped occasionally to 'sort things out' in 6U games. Its not uncommon for a player to pick up the ball and start running with it or want to keep it away from the other players, or perhaps there is a pile of kids on the ground kicking at both the ball and each other. Stop play, quickly correct the situation and restart with a kick to a deserving player.

Indirect Free Kick

All free kicks in 6U are indirect kicks.

A goal cannot be scored from an indirect free kick unless it is touched by another player prior to going into the goal.

The ball shall be placed at the spot of the foul. Regardless of where the foul occurred the ball will be placed no closer than the goal area line of the opposing team.

The players on the opposing team must be a minimum of 10 feet away from the ball.

Free kicks awarded to the attacking team inside the defending teams goal area are taken from the nearest point on the goal area line, parallel to the goal line.

Direct Free Kick

Not used in 6U.

Offside

Not used in 6U.

Handball

At this age, in this country, it is natural for players of this age to reach for the ball. The 'hand' includes the entire arm up to the top of the shoulder. Expect it to happen, but there is no need to halt play for every infraction. Applying handball rules from older age divisions may well result in continual starts and stops which add nothing to the game and slow down the game.

Instinctive, self-protective reactions are not penalized at this young age.

If play is stopped for handling, briefly explain to the player what he/she needs to do differently. Then give the opposing team an indirect free kick at the ball.

Goal Scoring

A goal, in all age groups, occurs when the ball completely crosses the goal line into the goal. Goals for either team should be celebrated enthusiastically by everyone from both teams.

We do not keep score in 6U. Because the 6U emphasis is on fun, and familiarization with the game, there is no value added by keeping score.

A team may score upon itself

After a goal is scored, bring the ball back up to the center line and restart play with a kickoff by the team that was scored upon

Generally, the only fouls players of this age commit are dangerous play and handling the ball. Some young players are overly aggressive and push, hold or crash into others while trying to play the ball or try to kick at the ball while another child is lying on the ground nearby.

Play should be stopped in these types of situations. Restart play with an indirect freekick.

Dangerous & Unsporting Behavior

Dangerous play and unsporting behavior are any kind of play or behavior that gives a referee or coach cause for concern. Restart play with an indirect freekick.

Kick In

When the ball passes completely across one of the touchlines (the long sidelines) the game must stop.

The team that last touched the ball loses possession and the opposing team puts the ball back in play.

- The ball is placed on the touchline in the approximate area where the ball went out
- The player kicking in must face the field standing outside the line
- Allow the player enough room by asking players on the field to step back at least 2 yards
- Player will kick the ball back into play but cannot touch the ball again until it has been touched by another player on the field
- Throw ins or dribble ins are not allowed

DROPPED BALL

A dropped ball is the restart when the referee stops play for any reason other than those mentioned in this document. For example, the referee may spot untied shoelaces and stop play to allow the player to tend to them.

The team that last touched the ball prior to the referee stopping the game is granted a drop ball to restart play. A single player takes the drop the ball. As soon as the ball hits the ground it is back in play.

DATE	REV	DESCRIPTION
29 Mar 20	1.0	Initial File

