



12U Guidelines

The Field:

The Field Size for 12U games is 100 yards long and 50 yards wide.

The Markings:

The Center Circle Radius is 8 yards, the Goal Area is 5 yards x 16 yards, Penalty Area is 14 yards x 36 yards, and Goal Line to Penalty is 10 yards.

The Goals:

Goal Size is 6.5 feet high x 18.5 feet wide. (Max size - 7 feet high x 21 feet wide).

The Ball:

A size 4 ball is used for 12U games.

The Players:

- **Numbers:** Nine per team on field, one of which is a goalkeeper. Twelve maximum on roster.
- **Substitutions:** Between periods, at halftime and for injuries.
- **Playing Time:** Minimum of two periods per game and no player should play four periods until everyone has played three. A goalkeeper may play three quarters as a keeper (and must still abide by the 3/4 Rule). Since 12U is still considered a “developmental” age group, and specialization is discouraged, keepers are required to play another position on the field during games.
- **Teams:** Separate girls and boys teams should be promoted at all levels of play.
- **Coach:** The coach must be a certified 12U coach.

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. For safety, no jewelry is allowed including watches, earrings, barrettes, etc. (Medical bracelets are okay).

Duration of Game:

Four 12.5-minute periods. Halftime break of 5 - 10 minutes as designated by the referee. A minimum of six players per team are required to start a game.

If a player arrives after the start of the first period, they are only required to play two periods. If a player arrives after the start of the second period, they are only required to play one period.

Referee:

The referee must be a AYSO-certified Regional referee or above and must have a current AYSO Volunteer application on file with AYSO in addition to current AYSO Safe Haven and Concussion Awareness Certifications.

No Heading:

Consistent with the US Soccer mandates on heading the ball, heading is banned in both practices and matches for all divisions 12U and below. 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).

Goalkeeper Punts:

The goalkeeper is allowed to punt the ball.

Fouls / Misconduct:

For 10U and older games, all fouls identified in Law 12 apply. Refer to the ***IFAB Laws of the Game*** for more information. Both players and coaches are subject to a warning (by issuance of a Yellow Card) or removal by the referee (by issuance of a Red Card, or upon issuance of a second Yellow Card warning) for their misconduct occurring on or off the field. No other changes from play as specified in FIFA / IFAB Laws of the Game printed for AYSO.

Hand Ball:

A hand ball infraction occurs when a player *deliberately* handles the ball. A hand ball infraction occurs when a player *deliberately* handles the ball. The 'hand' includes the arm up to the bottom of the armpit. Instinctive, self-protective reactions are not penalized at this young age. Accidental contact (ball striking hand or arm with no intent by the player being struck) is not an offense and should not be penalized.

Coaching Area:

Coaches may only give instruction from the area within 2 yards of the team's respective Touch Line and 10 yards in each direction from the Half-way Line of the field. Coaches violating this rule are subject to warning and/or removal for misconduct.