



6U Guidelines

The Field:

- **Dimensions:** 25-35 yards long, 15-25 yards wide.
- **Markings:** Distinctive lines can be used but are not required. Field can be marked using 20 disc cones to mark all four sides.
- **Goals:** The maximum size is 4' high x 6' wide.

The Ball:

A Size 3 ball is used for 6U games.

The Players:

- **Numbers:** Five per team on field; no goalkeepers. Seven maximum on roster.
- **Substitutions:** Approximately midway through each half, at halftime and for injuries.
- **Playing Time:** All players, unless injured, are required to play at least half of every game and no player should play four periods until everyone has played three.
- **Teams:** Separate girls and boys teams should be promoted at all levels of play. Only players should be allowed on the field with the exception of a coach from each team who will manage the game.

Players' Equipment:

- **Footwear:** Soccer shoes are recommended (or similar type athletic shoes). The type and condition of cleated shoes must be inspected for safety before use.
- **Shin guards:** Are MANDATORY for both practices and games, and must be covered entirely by socks.
- **Jerseys:** Rolled or tied up sleeves are permitted, provided that the referee approves it is done in a safe manner.

Duration of Game:

- Matches should have two equal halves not to exceed 10-minutes each.
- Halftime shall be a minimum of 5 minutes and a maximum of 10 minutes. No added time.

Officials:

There is no need for referees to manage 6U games. One or both of the coaches should “officiate” with the teams switching officials at halftime, so that each team’s coach officiates one half. The games are intended to be an opportunity for our young players to explore the game and experience the fun of playing. The barest of minimum rules are needed and should be applied with a generous amount of flexibility. Let the players have the freedom to play with minimum interruption.

The Start of Play:

The game should be started with a kick-off in the middle of the field. A coin toss is used to determine which team kicks off to start the game and the other team kicks off to start the second half. Opponents must be outside the center circle at the start of play.

Ball In and Out of Play:

The ball is out of play when it *completely crosses* the touch line (side line) or goal line (end line), either on the ground or in the air. The referee will determine when the ball is out of play and should guide the restart, interfering as little as possible.

Method of Scoring:

A goal, in all age groups, is awarded when the ball completely crosses the goal line into the goal.

Fouls:

The following, if done deliberately, are the fouls most likely to occur in 6U games: kicking, tripping, pushing, holding, handling the ball and dangerous play. Coaches should remember that there is no need to stop play for technical violations that do not interrupt the flow of the game. It's a player's game and not a game of how many infractions can be identified, so keep the fun going and let them play.

Misconduct:

Misconduct should be extremely rare in 6U games. There is no need for the public cautioning and sending off of young players (leave the red and yellow cards at home). Coaches should work cooperatively with each other when a player may need a 'time out'.

Free Kicks:

All free kicks in 6U are indirect kicks. Opponents must be at least ten feet from the ball or on the goal line between the goal posts during free kicks. Free kicks awarded to the attacking team inside the defending teams goal area are to be taken from the nearest point on the goal area line parallel to the goal line.

Offside:

No offside.

Throw-In:

Throw-ins are replaced with kick-ins or dribble-ins at 6U and 8U. Opponents should be ten feet from the ball.

Goal Kick:

A goal kick is not awarded in 6U. Restarts will take place as a kick-in or dribble-in from the point nearest to where the ball left the field of play.

Corner Kick:

A corner kick is not awarded in 6U. Restarts will take place as a kick-in or dribble-in from the point nearest to where the ball left the field of play.

Hand 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 or 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.

No Heading:

Consistent with AYSO and US Soccer mandates, heading is banned for all divisions 12U and Below in both practices 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).

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