

AYSO Region 55  
Huntington Beach

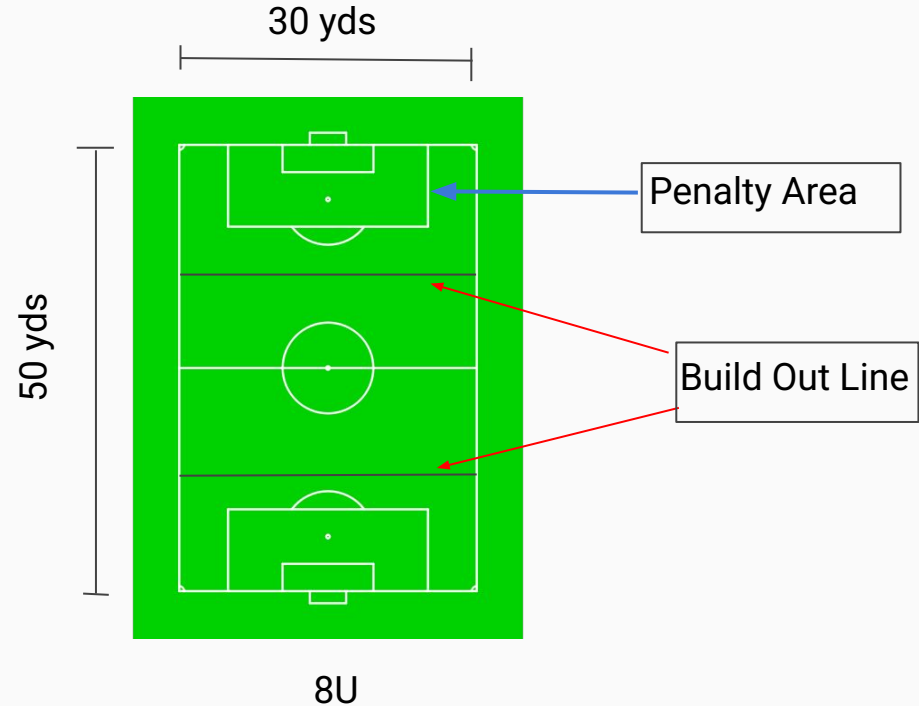
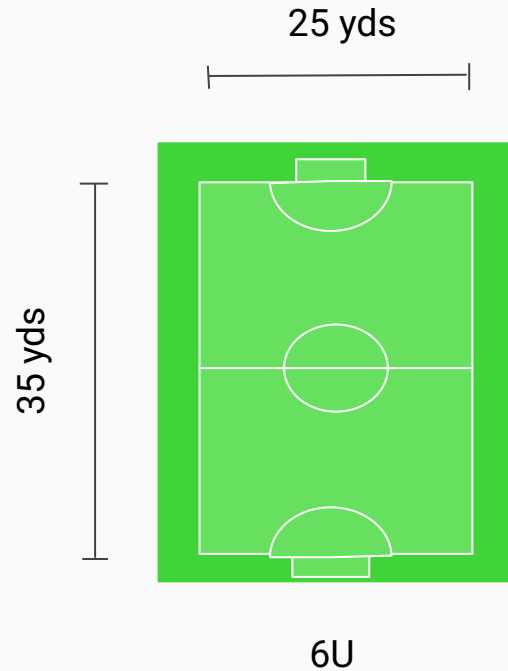
# 8U Program Guidelines

## 8U Program Guidelines

As you know, Region 55's 8U program is different from that of other regions and from what is explained in online 8U training. This presentation is intended to provide information regarding the guidelines for this division and to highlight some of the things that are different from other age groups. But before we get to those, there are some important things to note:

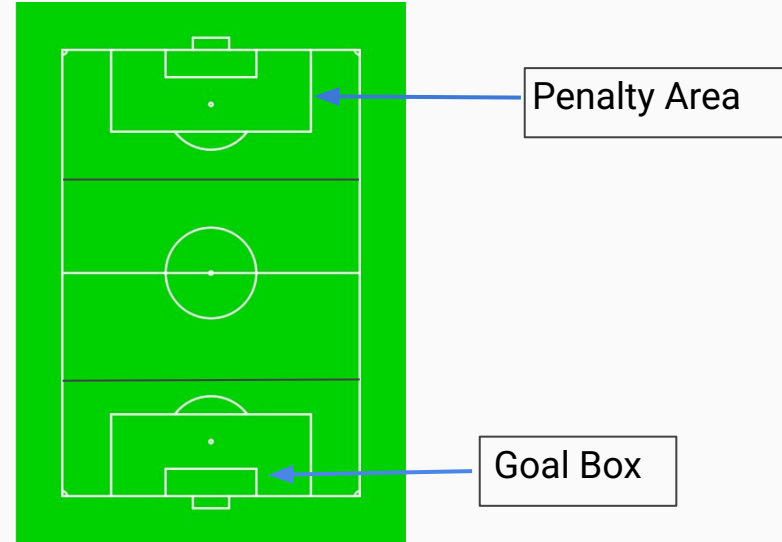
- First and foremost, thank you for coaching! We can't do this without our volunteers and we really appreciate you.
- This slideshow DOES NOT constitute 8U Coach Training for certification purposes. This is solely to give you information that will be useful to you as 8U coaches in this new format.
- If you or your assistant coach need 8U training, you will need to sign up for our in person training course.

### The first big difference to be aware of is Field Size/Layout



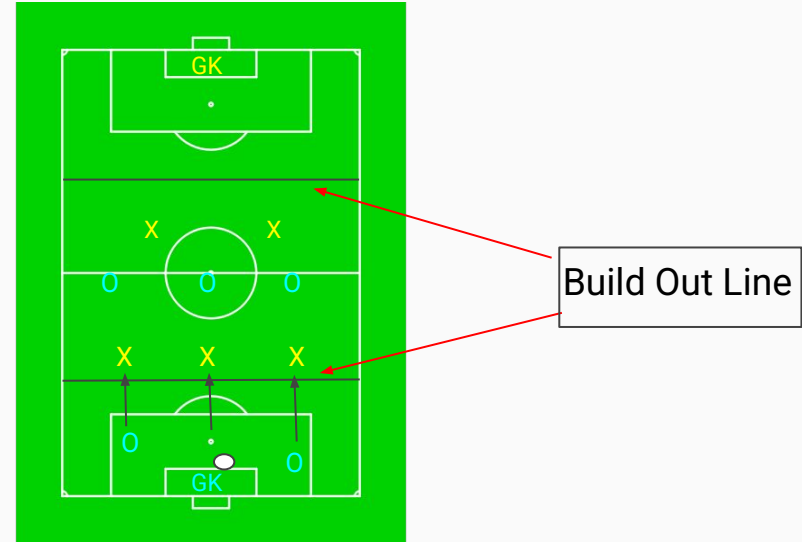
### Penalty Area/Goal Box

- The **Penalty Area** is the area of the field where the Goalkeeper can use their hands.
- If a Goalkeeper touches the ball (handles the ball for you referees) outside of the penalty area, the opposing team will be awarded a free kick.
- The **Goal Box** is where goal kicks are played from. This replaces the “goal arc” from prior years.



## Build Out Lines

- The build out lines are approximately  $\frac{1}{2}$  way between the edge of the penalty area and the midfield line on each half of the field.
- When a team has been awarded a goal kick, or when their Goalkeeper has the ball in their hands (in the picture, the Blue O's), players on the opposing team (Yellow X's) should retreat behind the build out line.
- The team with the ball can, but does not have to, wait until the opposing team is past the build out line to return the ball into play.
- As soon as the ball is put back into play by the Goalkeeper or as soon as it is touched on a goal kick, the opposing team may cross the build out line.



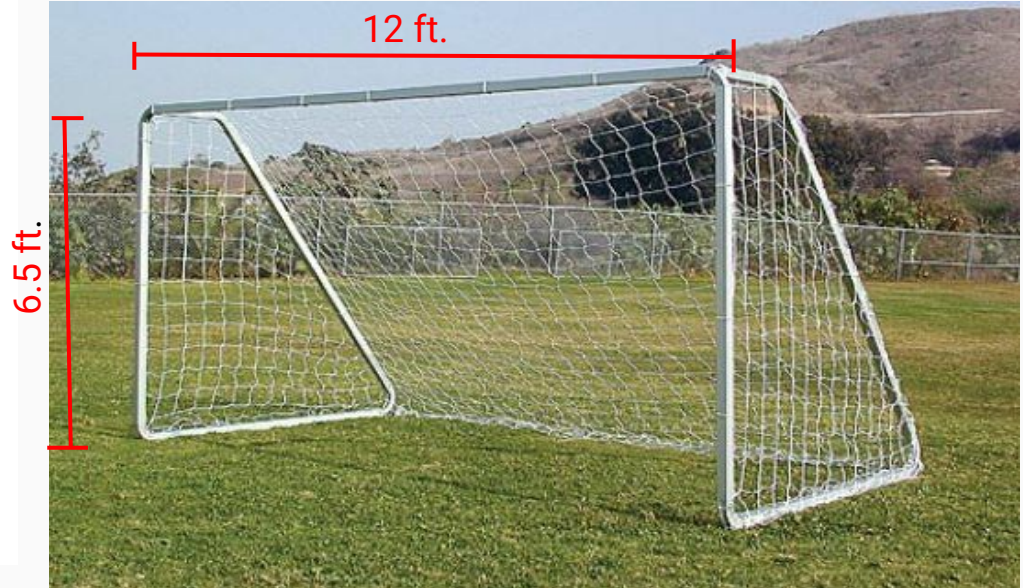
### **Build Out Lines**

What is the point of the Build Out Line?

- Build out lines are used to encourage players to try to possess the ball as a team and build play up out of the defense, rather than simply kicking the ball upfield.
- By requiring the opposing team to retreat past the build out line, it gives the team with the ball some space and time to try and find a teammate without the immediate pressure of opposing players.
- Finally, the build out line is used in 10U for both building out of the back and for offside, so players at 8U can start to get used to it.

**The next big difference is the size of the goal.**

Old 8U Goal Size



## **Number of Players**

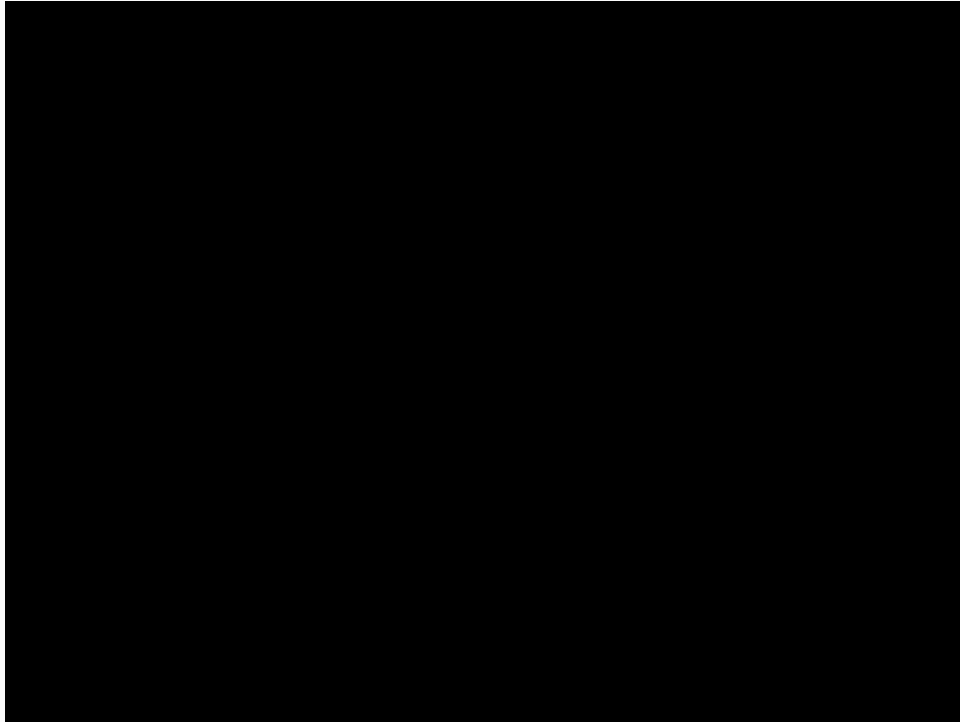
- Ideally, rosters will have 7 or 8 players.
- A total of 6 players will be on the field for each team, which will include 5 field players and 1 Goalkeeper.
- The same rules as always apply for playing time. All players must play at least 3 quarters of the game unless that is made impossible by the size of your roster.



## Throw-ins

- At 8U, we will introduce throw-ins as a form of restart.
- When a ball leaves the field over a touch line (i.e. sideline), a throw-in will be given to whichever team did not touch the ball last prior to the ball leaving the field.
- Coaches should be teaching all of their players how to perform a proper/legal throw-in.
  - Hands should be placed on each side of the ball;
  - Ball must be brought over/behind the head;
  - Ball must travel directly over the player's head to be thrown;
  - Both feet must be on the ground at the time the ball is thrown.

### Throw-ins



## Goalkeeper Basics

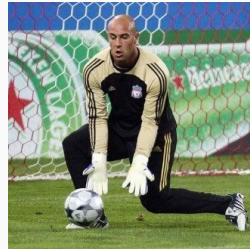
- Goalkeepers will now be introduced at 8U.
- Goalkeepers are the only players on the field who may use their hands to handle the ball while it is in play.
- Goalkeepers should be differentiated from other players by wearing a pinnie/bib that is a different color than the jerseys of either team.
- May only handle the ball within their team's penalty area.
- You may find that everyone on your team begs you to play Goalkeeper, or that no one on your team wants to play Goalkeeper. You should not have a specialized Goalkeeper at this age. Encourage and give all players the opportunity to play Goalkeeper.

## Goalkeeper Basics

- Key Concepts for Goalkeepers:
  - For balls that are above the waist, Goalkeepers should put their hands together so their thumbs and pointer fingers combine to make a “W” shape



- For balls below the waist, Goalkeepers should put their hands close together so their pinkies nearly touch



## Goalkeeper Basics

- Goalkeepers may not drop kick the ball. Goalkeepers should be taught to return the ball into play by:
  - Throwing the ball to a teammate (overhand like a throw-in is pretty common, but the rules of a throw-in do not apply to Goalkeepers);
  - Rolling the ball out to a teammate; or
  - Putting the ball on the ground and playing it out with their feet (but as soon as the ball is out of the Goalkeeper's hands it is a "live" ball and can be played by either team - and once the ball is intentionally placed on the ground, it cannot be picked back up by goalkeeper unless touched by another player.

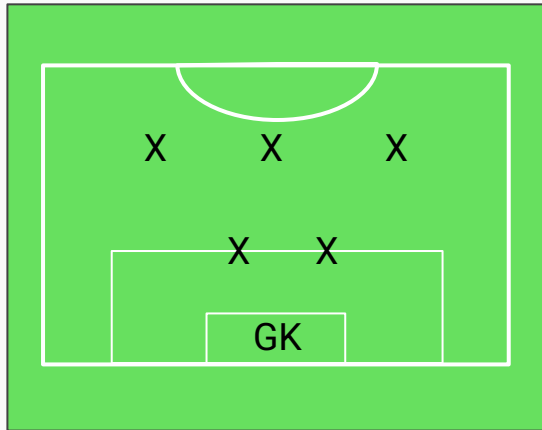
## On Formations Generally

- There are no “right” formations when it comes to soccer. As you progress as a coach from 4 v 4, to 6 v 6, 9 v 9 and then 11 v 11, the formation you play will depend on your personal preferences, the skill sets of the players on your team, and probably a lot of other factors.
- The formations you use at 8U are not really that important. What is important is beginning to try to get your players to understand the very basic concepts of positions and space.
- Your players are going to run all over the field wherever the ball goes, regardless of the “position” you put them in.
- If, by the end of the season, your players have a basic understanding of what it means to be an “attacker” versus as “defender,” you’ve done a pretty good job!

## Common 6 v 6 Formations

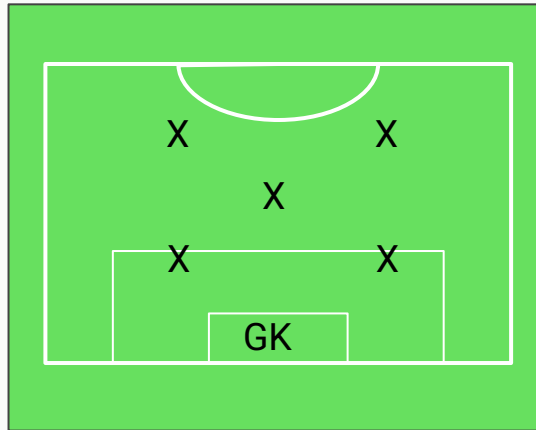
**2-3\***

2 defenders and 3 attackers



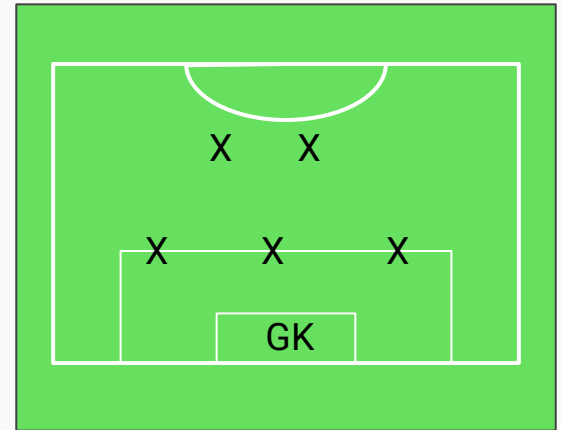
**2-1-2**

2 defenders, 1 midfielder and 2 attackers



**3-2**

3 defenders and 2 attackers



\*Formations are typically described by excluding the goalkeeper then starting with the number of players in the defense and moving your way up.

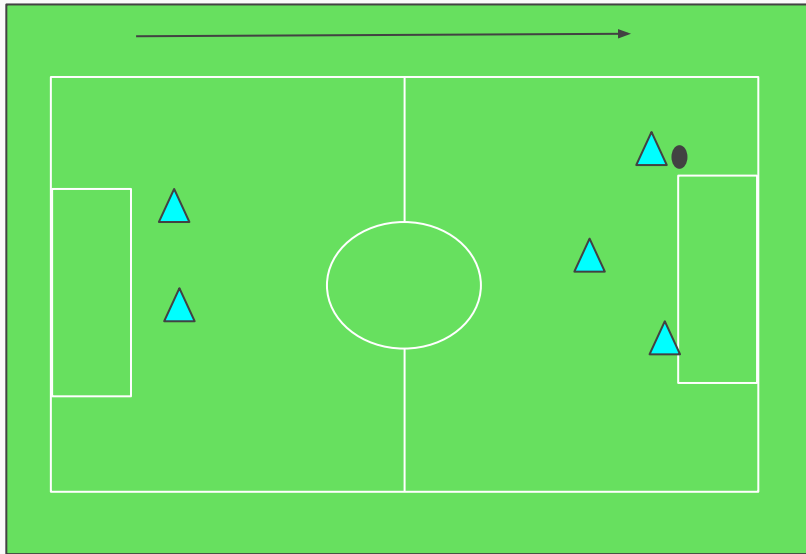
## Other Important Things

- No Offside - There is no offside at the 8U level.
- But Don't Cherry Pick - While there is no offside, please do not *teach* your players to cherry pick. 8U is not about winning and you are not teaching your players the right way to play the game by having them camp out by the goal and wait for other players to boot it up to them.
- But . . . kids are going to figure out cherry picking on their own. If they do it, there's no need to yell across the field to tell the opposing coach it's not allowed. Hopefully the coach will work with that player at a quarter or halftime. Remember, it's just a kids' game.
- Just because a player is a "defender" or an "attacker" does not mean they should be relegated to one half of the field or the other. This is a HUGE pet peeve of mine and I see it all the way up to the 12U level (see next slide for an example)

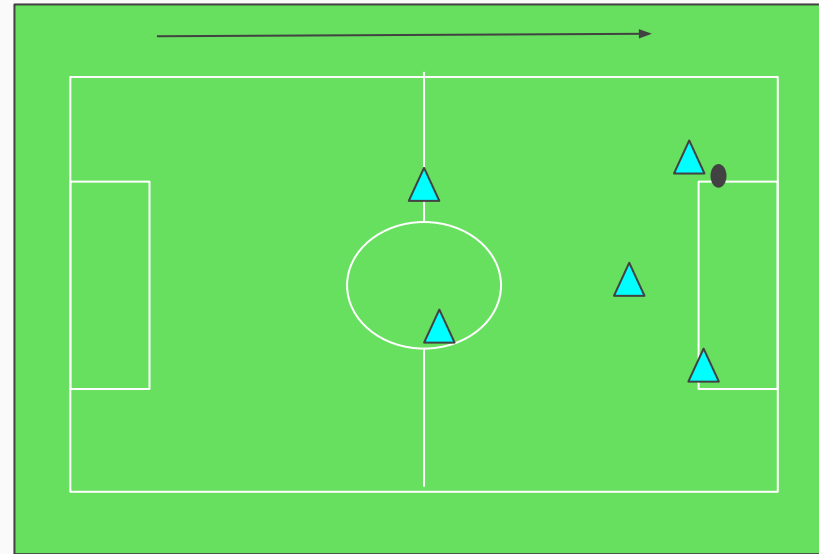


## Moving as a Unit

In the illustrations below, we only have the blue field players shown. They are attacking to the right. The black circle ( ● ) is the ball.



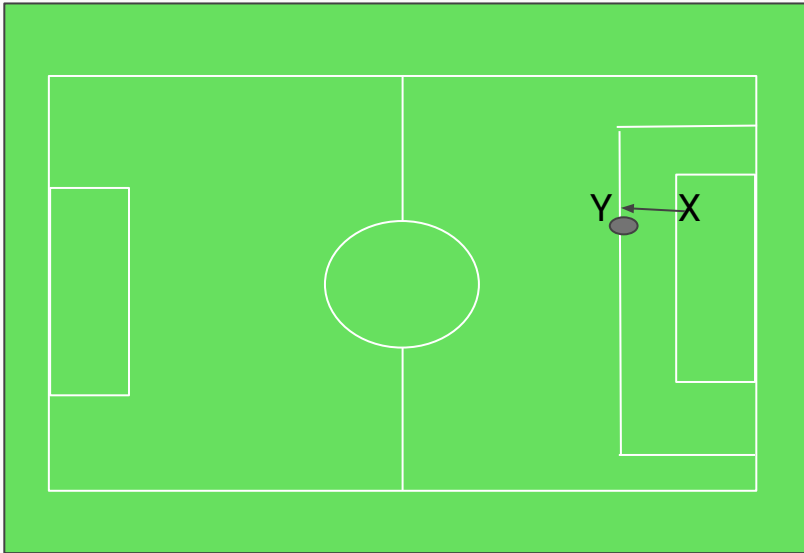
**NO!!** – The defenders are too far away from the play. They can't help their attacking teammates from here.



**YES!!** – The whole team moves as an attacking **unit** while staying in their appropriate shape (positions).

## No Penalty Kicks

There will be no penalty kicks for 8U. Any free kicks (direct or indirect) for offenses committed within the penalty area will be taken from the nearest position on the line of the penalty area.



If the penalty occurs at the "X," the free kick would be from the location at "Y." Teams may form a "wall" if they choose to do so.

## 8U Program Guidelines

Hopefully, this has helped provide an understanding of the changes you'll see this Spring with our new 8U format. We truly believe that this is a perfect step between the 6U and 10U divisions which will allow players to gradually learn the building blocks of this amazing game.

THANK YOU again for coaching, and please feel free to pass this along to your assistant coaches, referees, and parents on your team.

As always, if you have any questions, please feel free to email at [asstcoach@ayso55.org](mailto:asstcoach@ayso55.org).