



**INDIANOLA
SOCCER TRIBE**

Referee Development Program

Learning to be U8 Centers & U9/U10 Assistant Referees

Training Roadmap



U8 Center

Managing 4v4 games, restarts
and rules



U9/10 AR

Mechanics of the touchline,
staying even with play, and flag
signals.



Safety, Fairness, and Fun

- ✓ **Safety First:** Your #1 job is ensuring no one gets hurt.
- ✓ **The Teacher:** You are helping them learn the rules of the game, especially at the U8 level
- ✓ **Confidence:** Looking and acting the part makes your job easier.
- ✓ **Be loud:** When you use your whistle, blow it loudly. When you make a call, shout it out: "White throw in", "Purple goal kick", etc.



Centering U8 Games (4v4)

The majority of your job will be calling the proper restart when the ball goes out of play:

- Kick offs (start of the game, after goals, start of the second half)
- Throw ins
- Goal kicks
- Corner kicks

No Goalies, No Offside

There is no goalie or offside at this age. Focus your attention on the ball and the boundaries of the pitch.



U8 Restarts and Rules

● Kickoffs

- The team kicking off can be anywhere outside or inside the circle on their half of the field
- The opposing team has to be outside the circle on their half of the field
- The ball can be kicked in any direction (forward, sideways, or backwards)
- The player kicking the ball can't kick it twice in a row, someone else must touch it after their first kick.
 - a. If they kick it twice, blow your whistle, tell them what they did wrong, and have them do another kick off.
- For every kickoff (start of game, after goals, and start of second half) blow your whistle loudly one time so the kids know to start playing

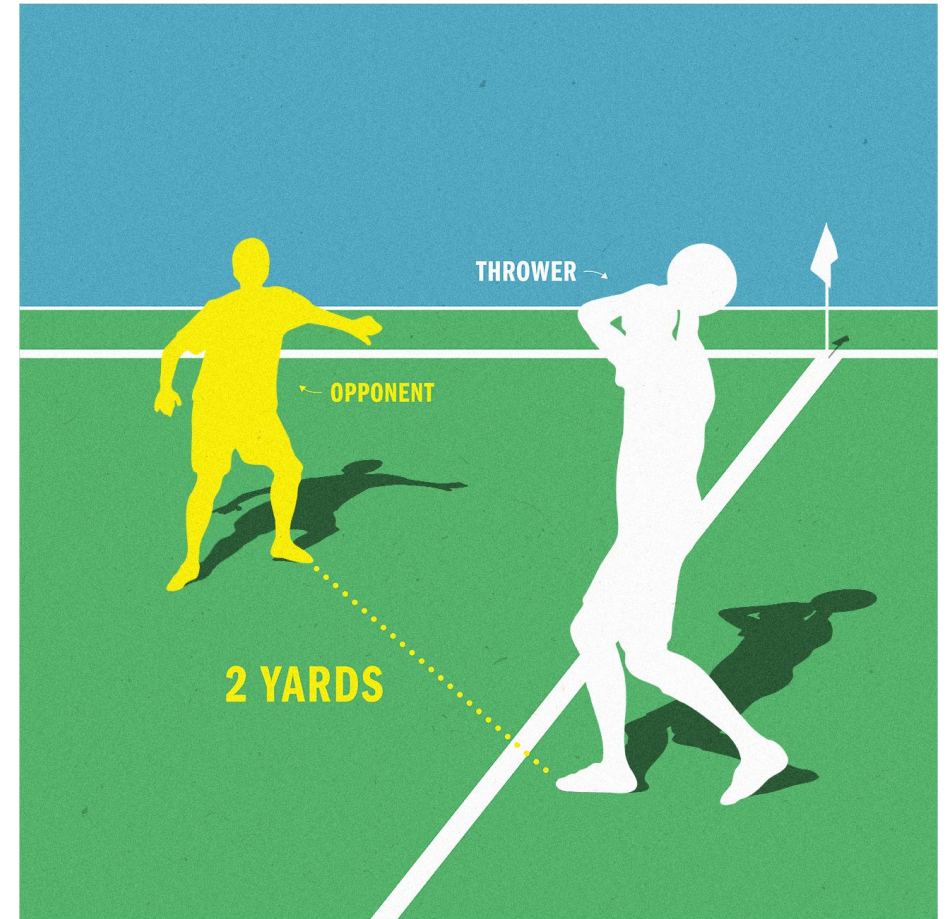


U8 Restarts and Rules

● Throw-ins:

- Keep both feet on the ground (no jumping) and use two hands to pull the ball behind the head and throw it.
- If they mess it up:
 1. Blow your whistle loudly
 2. Once everyone stops, loudly say what was incorrect. "You lifted your foot"
 3. Let them try again
 4. If they mess up a second time, blow your whistle, correct them, and then let the other team throw it in
- Players can't throw the ball in to themselves, someone else must touch it first after they throw it in

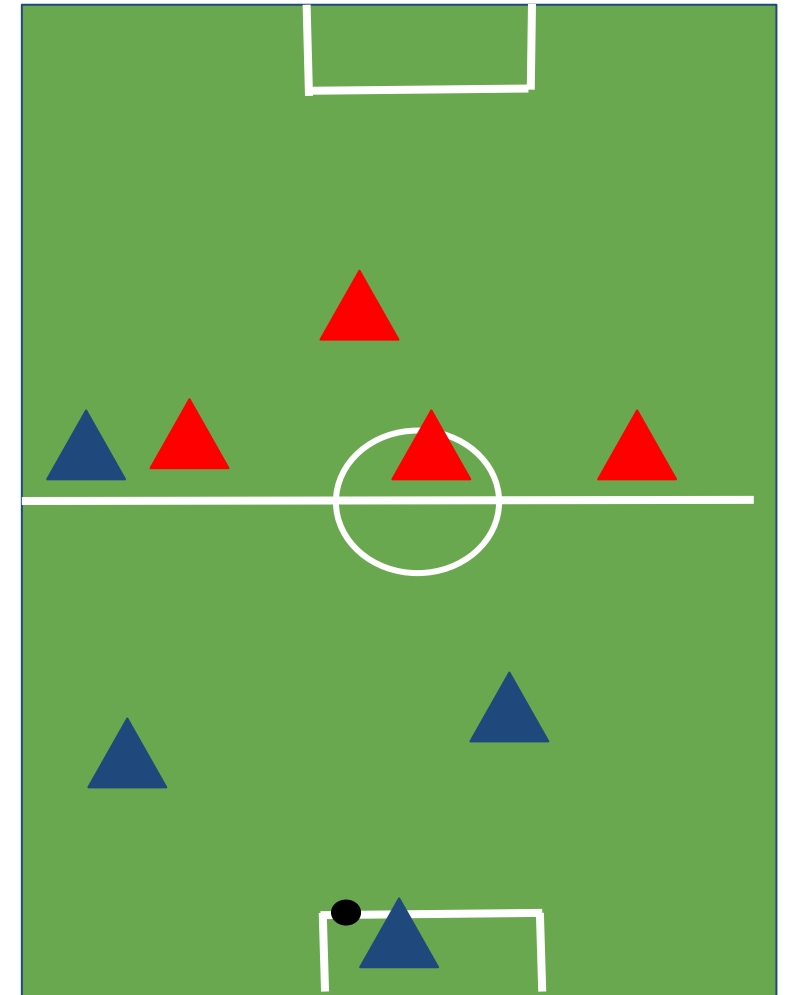
- **6-Foot Rule:** Defenders must back up at least 2 yards (6 feet) to give the thrower some space.



U8 Restarts and Rules

● Goal kicks

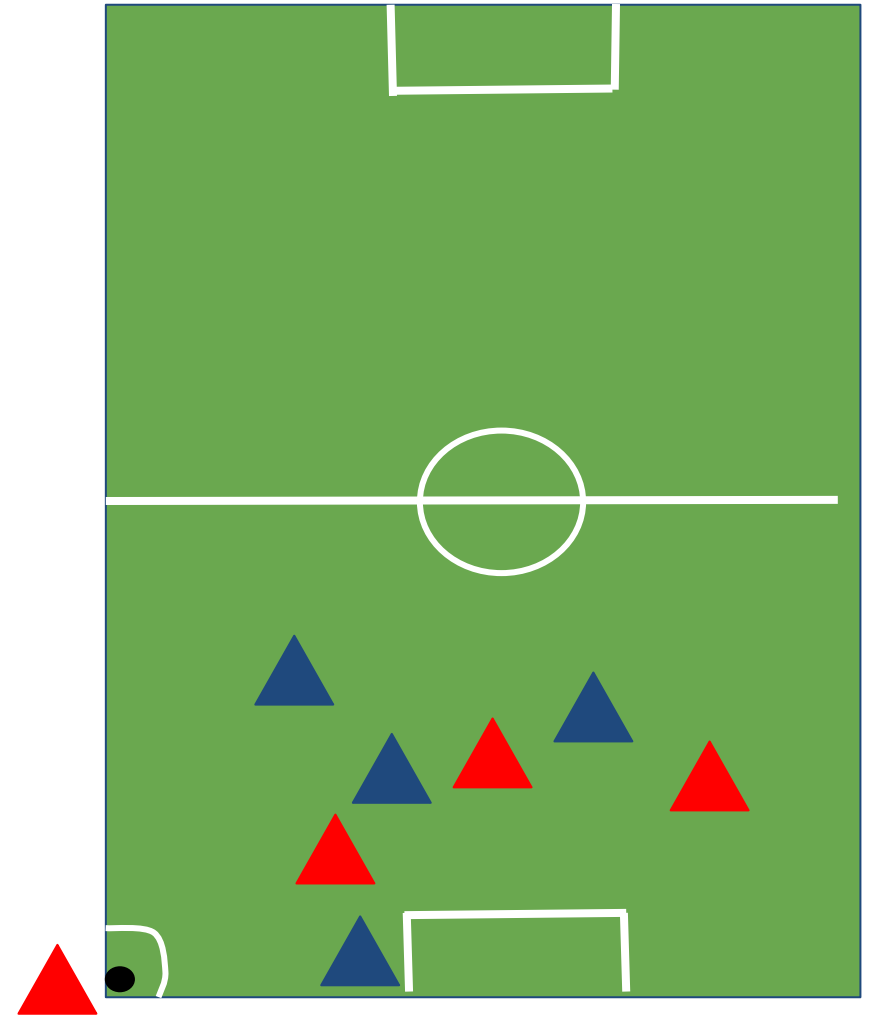
- The defending team has to get back on their half of the field
- The team taking the goal kick can be on either side
- The ball must be placed on the goal box lines. It doesn't have to be on the corner, it can be on any part of the lines that make up the goal box.
- Just like a kickoff, the player taking the goal kick, can't kick the ball twice in a row, someone else must touch it after their first kick.
 - a. If they do that incorrectly, blow your whistle, tell them what they did wrong, and have them do it again.



U8 Restarts and Rules

● Corner kicks

- The ball must be kicked from inside the arc in the corner of the field
- The defenders have to be 2 yards (6 feet) away, just like on a throw in
- Just like a kickoff and a goal kick, the player taking the corner kick, can't kick the ball twice in a row, someone else must touch it after their first kick
 - a. If they do that incorrectly, blow your whistle, tell them what they did wrong, and have them do it again.



Referee positioning

Stay outside the "Swarm".

Young players tend to cluster around the ball. Do not get caught in the middle of them. Move in a wide path that follows the play but keeps you on the outside.

This gives you the best perspective on boundaries and fouls while keeping you out of the players' way.

A center ref should run a "left diagonal" on the field. At this age, focus on being in the same half as the ball, but don't be so close that you are in the way



Centering U8 Games (4v4) Keys to Success

1. 5 minutes before game start, go introduce yourself to each coach and check the teams in.
 - a. Ask the players to tap their shin guards and show you their cleats
2. To begin the game, start your watch and then blow your whistle so the kids know to start the kickoff
3. Position yourself near, but not in the way, of the players during play
4. Everytime the ball goes out of bounds, loudly call the correct restart "Purple throw in", "White goal kick" etc. and point in the proper direction as you call it out
 - a. For throw ins: Arm slightly elevated and point in the direction of throw
 - b. For goal kicks: Arm straight and point at the goal
 - c. For corner kicks: Arm slightly elevated and point to the corner
5. You do not need to use your whistle every time the ball goes out of bounds, but use it if the kids are still playing after it has gone out of bounds or any other time you need to stop play to get their attention.
6. If a player fouls another player (most likely trips or runs into another player at this age): Blow your whistle, loudly say what the foul was, and then award a free kick to the other team
7. If a player hits the ball with their hand, blow your whistle loudly, call a handball, and then award a free kick to the other team
8. Coaches can call for subs anytime the ball is out of bounds (do not stop your watch, time keeps going during subs)
9. Keep track of the time (20 min halves) and blow your whistle loudly twice for halftime and three times for the end of the game

U9/U10: The Role of the AR



Sideline Mechanics

As an Assistant Referee (AR) for U9/U10, you are responsible for the touchline. You must stay perfectly even with the **second-to-last defender** (the keeper counts, so normally it's even with the last field defender) or the ball—whichever is closer to the goal line.

- ➡ Don't be out of position, run if you need to
- ↔ Side-step to face the field when play is slow, but turn and run when needed to keep up. Your flag should always be in your hand that is facing the field as you run
- 🎯 Don't get caught "ball watching." You must keep an eye on the ball, but also the second to last defender so you can stay in position

Restart Signals



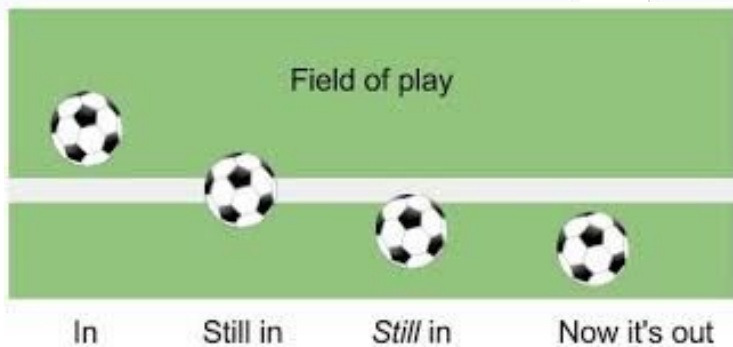
45-degree angle up in the direction of the throw.



Point flag straight toward the goal area.



Point flag down at the corner flag arc.



If any part of the ball is still touching the line, the ball is still in play.
the ball must completely cross the line before it is out of bounds.

Judging Offside

Watch this video to learn about the offside rule:

<https://youtu.be/kjnrRj6yv0>

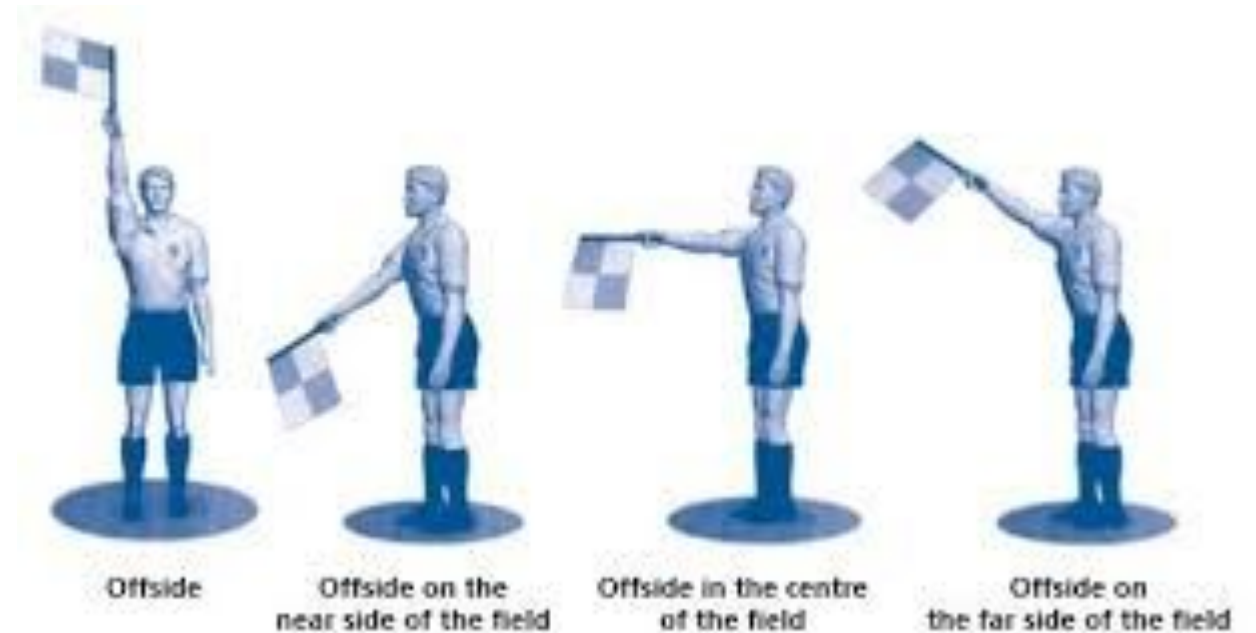
You can't make good offside calls if you're not in proper position.

Stay in line with the second to last defender!

The Three Signals

When you see an offside offense, raise your flag straight up to get the Center Ref's attention. Once they blow the whistle, point the flag:

- ↑ **High:** Far side of the field.
- **Middle:** Center of the field.
- ↓ **Low:** Near side of the field.



Assistant Referee Keys to Success

1. Arrive 20 minutes prior to the game and check in with the center ref
2. Help the center ref check the teams in
3. You are responsible for the half of the field you are assigned, don't cross the halfline. You can still help call ball in/out of bounds all the way down the sideline you are on, but you stop going forward when you reach the halfline
4. Line up with the second to last defender on your sideline before the first kickoff
5. When the center ref blows the whistle to start the game, start your watch
6. Keep track of the ball, focusing on which team touched it last, and stay in position with the second to last defender as players move up and down the field
7. If the ball goes well out of bounds for a throw in on your sideline, point in the direction of the restart
8. If the ball quickly crosses the line, but comes back in play, snap your flag straight up to signal to the center ref that it went out of bounds and then point in the direction of the restart
9. For throw ins, focus on the feet (the center will watch the hands). If a foot (or both) come up on the throw in, raise and wave your flag to signal an improper throw in

Your primary roles are to be in position to call offside, and to help with restarts and fouls that happen in your half of the field

Questions?



Next Step: Field drills and flag practice