



THE RULES OF MINI-SOCCER

RULE 1: THE FIELD OF PLAY

1. Whenever possible Mini-Soccer should be played on a field designed for that purpose. In many instances, however, games will be played within or across standard soccer fields.
2. The size of the goals shall be 5 metres wide and 2 metres high.
3. Whenever possible, goal-nets shall be used.

RULE 2: THE BALL

1. The ball shall be spherical and shall be constructed of material which is not dangerous to the players.
2. Ball size for 6- to 8-year-olds: size three.

RULE 3: NUMBER OF PLAYERS

1. The game shall be played by two teams, each consisting of 6 (maximum of 7) players, one of whom shall be the goalkeeper (check with your provincial/territorial association for local requirements). Teams must dress a minimum of 5 players and may dress a maximum of 12 players. (Some jurisdictions allow more players to be dressed, but this should be discouraged.)
2. Unlimited substitution shall be allowed at any stoppage in the game. Please check with the referee as to how he will allow players to leave and enter the field on substitutions. (A coach should know his/her jurisdiction's rules on substitutions.)

RULE 4: PLAYERS' EQUIPMENT

1. Equipment shall consist of shorts, socks, shin-guards, footwear, and a numbered shirt. Goalkeepers must wear colours which are distinguishable from those of other players and those of the referee. Goalkeepers may wear gloves and tracksuit-type pants.

RULE 5: DURATION OF THE GAME

1. The game shall be divided into two equal halves or four equal quarters, the length of which shall be determined by competition organisers. The interval between periods of play shall be determined by competition organisers but shall be not less than 5 minutes.

RULE 6: START OF PLAY

1. The beginning of the game, choice of halves and the kick-off shall be decided by the toss of a coin. The team which wins the toss shall have choice of halves and the opposing team gets the kick-off. The order is reversed for the start of the second half.

2. At a kick-off, all players shall be in their own half of the field of play. All players opposing the team taking the kick-off shall be not less than 6 metres from the ball until it is kicked off. The game shall be started by the referee giving a signal. The ball shall be kicked forward into the opponents' half of the field. The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves. For any infringement of rule, the kick-off shall be retaken.

3. The player taking the kick-off must not play or touch the ball a second time before it has been played or touched by another player.

4. After a goal has been scored, the game shall be restarted by a kick-off, to be taken by a player of the team against which the goal was scored.

5. After the first half of play, the teams shall change halves and the kick-off shall be taken by a player of the team opposing that which started the game.

6. For any stoppage not mentioned elsewhere in these rules, the referee shall restart the game by dropping the ball at the place where it when play was stopped, unless play was stopped in the penalty area. In this case, the ball shall be dropped on that part of the penalty area line that runs parallel to the goal-line, at the point nearest to where the ball was when play was stopped. The ball shall in play as soon as it touches the ground.

7. A goal may be scored directly from a kick-off.

RULE 7: BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY

1. The ball is out of play

- when the whole of the ball has crossed the goal-line, or touch-line, whether on the ground or in the air
- when the game has been stopped by the referee.

2. The ball is in play at all other times.

RULE 8: METHOD OF SCORING

1. A goal is scored when the whole of the ball has crossed over the goal line, between the goalposts and under the crossbar, provided it has not been thrown, carried, or intentionally propelled by hand or arm, by a player of the attacking team, except by a goalkeeper in his/her own penalty area.

RULE 9: FREE-KICK

1. For any infringement of the Rules of the Game when the ball is in play, the referee may award a free kick to the team opposing that of the offending player. The free kick shall be taken from the place where the infringement occurred, unless the free kick is awarded to the attacking team within the opponents' penalty area. In this case, the kick shall be taken from that part of the penalty area line which runs parallel to the goal-line, at the point nearest to where the offence was committed.

2. At the taking of a free kick, the ball shall be stationary and all opponents shall not be not less than 6 metres from the ball until it has been kicked. The ball shall be in play when it is kicked and moves.

3. A player taking a free kick within his/her own penalty area shall kick the ball into play beyond the penalty area. The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves and has passed outside the penalty area. All opponents shall be outside the penalty area and not less than 6 metres from the ball until it has been kicked. For any infringement of this rule, the free kick shall be retaken.

4. A player taking a free kick shall not play or touch the ball a second time until it has been played or touched by another player.

5. A goal may be scored directly from a free kick.

RULE 10: PENALTY KICK

1. A penalty kick shall be taken from the penalty mark. All players, with the exception of the defending goalkeeper and the player taking the kick, shall be outside the penalty area but within the field of play, and not less than 6 metres from the ball until it has been kicked.

2. The goalkeeper remains on his/her goal line, facing the kicker, between the goalposts until the ball has been kicked.

3. The player taking the penalty kick must not play or touch the ball a second time until it has been played or touched by another player.

4. The time of play shall be extended at quarter-time, half-time, or at full-time to allow a penalty kick to be taken. In the event that time is extended, play shall end when a goal is not scored.

**** Note: In some jurisdictions there are no penalty kicks at all in mini-soccer, just an indirect free kick. In others, there are no penalty shots at the U-8 and below levels. Please check the pertinent rule for your area.**

RULE 11: FOULS AND MISCONDUCT

1. A player who, in the opinion of the referee, intentionally commits any of the following offences shall be penalised by the awarding a free kick to the opposing team:

- kicks or attempts to kick an opponent
- trips an opponent
- jumps at an opponent
- charges an opponent in any manner
- strikes, attempts to strike, or spits at an opponent
- holds an opponent
- pushes an opponent
- handles the ball, i.e. strikes, carries or propels the ball with hand or arm, excepting a goalkeeper within his/her own penalty area.

Should a player commit one of the above offences within his/her own penalty area while the ball is in play, irrespective of the position of the ball, a penalty kick shall be awarded to the opposing team.

RULE 12: THROW-IN

1. When the whole of the ball has crossed the touch-line, either on the ground or in the air, the ball shall be thrown in, from the point where it left the field of play, by a member of the team opposing that of the player who last played or touched it.
2. The player taking the throw-in shall face the field of play and part of both feet shall be on the ground, and on or behind the touch-line. The thrower shall use both hands to deliver the ball from behind and over his head. The ball shall be in play immediately after it enters the field of play.
3. The player taking the throw-in must not play or touch the ball a second time before it has been played or touched by another player.

Please note, that in mini-soccer, repeatedly stopping the flow of the game to re-take incorrectly taken throw-ins, should be avoided.

RULE 13: GOAL KICK

1. When the whole of the ball has crossed the goal-line, either on the ground or in the air, excluding that portion between the goalposts having last been played or touched by a member of the attacking team, a goal kick shall be awarded to the defending team. The ball shall be kicked into play from a point within that half of the penalty area nearest to where the ball crossed the goal line.
2. At the taking of a goal kick, all opponents shall be outside the penalty area and not less than 6 metres from the ball until it has been kicked into play. The ball shall be in play when it has travelled the distance of its own circumference and has left the penalty area.
3. The player taking the goal kick must not play or touch the ball a second time before it has been played or touched by another player.
4. A goal may be scored directly from a goal kick, but only against the opposing team.

RULE 14: CORNER-KICK

1. When the whole of the ball has crossed the goal-line, either on the ground or in the air, excluding that portion between the goal-posts, having last been played or touched by a member of the defending team, a corner-kick shall be awarded to the attacking team.

2. The corner-kick shall be taken from within the corner-arc nearest to where the ball crossed the goal-line. All opponents shall be less than 6 metres from the ball until it has been kicked. The ball must travel the distance of its own circumference to be in play.

3. The player taking the corner-kick must not play or touch the ball a second time before it has been played or touched by another player.

4. A goal may be scored directly from a corner-kick.

****OffSide**

A Special Note on the OffSide Law:

In some jurisdictions there is no offside at all in mini-soccer. In others, it is enforced after a certain age. For example, in Ontario, it begins at U-9. Each coach should ascertain the rule for his/her league. If offside is a rule for you to follow, please note the following:

Offside Position

It is not an offence in itself to be in an offside position.

A player is in an offside position if:

- He is nearer to his opponents' goal line than both the ball and the second last opponent.

A player is not in an offside position if:

- He is in his own half of the field of play, or
- He is level with the second last opponent, or
- He is level with the last two opponents

Offence

A player in an offside position is only penalized if, at the moment the ball touches or is played by one of his team, he is, in the opinion of the referee, involved in active play by:

- Interfering with play, or

- Interfering with an opponent, or
- Gaining an advantage by being in that position

No Offence

There is no offside offence if a player receives the ball directly from:

- A goal kick, or
- A throw-in, or
- A corner kick

Infringements/Sanctions

For any offside offence, the referee awards an indirect free kick to the opposing team to be taken from the place where the infringement occurred.



If you have any questions, comments or feedback about this document, or anything involving the Coaching Centre, please send an email to: info@soccercan.ca