



6U Guidelines

AYSO 6U soccer is about positive development and fun – NOT about winning! The 6U activity day consists of a 60-minute session each Saturday: approximately 30 minutes of technical development and one game of approximately 30 minutes.

The Field: The recommended field size for 6U games is 30 x 15 yards marked with lines or cones.

The Markings: Distinctive lines can be used but are not required. Field can be marked using 20 flat pro-cones to mark all four sides.

The Goals: Maximum four feet high and six feet wide OR four cones, two each set six feet apart.

The Ball: A size 3 ball is used for 6U games.

The Players:

- **Numbers:** 4 per team on field; No goalkeepers. 6 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.
- **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 to manage the game.
- **Coach:** The coach must be a certified 6U 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.

Duration of Game: Four Five-minute quarters. Half time break of 5 minutes. Quarter breaks are for substitution only.

Official: There is no need for fully qualified referees to manage 6U games. One or both of the coaches should "officiate". The games are intended to be an opportunity for our players to 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.

The Kick-off: The kick off is taken from the center of the field with each team in their own half and the team not kicking off at least ten feet from the ball. Do not insist the opponent always be ten feet from the ball, as this is just a guide to give the kicker room to kick the ball without it immediately hitting an opponent. Remember, let them play and do not interfere for technicalities.

Ball In and Out of Play: The ball is out of play in all age group games when it completely crosses the touch line (side line) or goal line (end line), either on the ground or in the air. The coach in the 6U games will determine when one of these restarts is necessary and should then interfere as little as possible in the restart. It's their game, let them play. The coach can work on technique later.

Method of Scoring: A goal, in all age groups, is awarded when the ball completely crosses the goal line into the goal. Goals should be celebrated enthusiastically by everyone in 6U, but goals are not recorded to determine who wins. Everyone wins in 6U games.

Fouls: Deliberate fouls should be rare in 6U games. Kicking, tripping, handling the ball and dangerous play may occur. There should be few, if any, additional reasons to stop play in 6U games. If a player is 'not playing well with others' or if play must be stopped for any reason (injury, substitution, confusion, or to watch a passing train, butterfly or frog), refocus the players and begin again with a free kick or pass in as appropriate. Award the start to whichever team deserves it. Exercise common sense, stand back and let them play.

Misconduct: Misconduct should be 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). Officials should work cooperatively with the coach when a player may need a 'time out'.

Free Kicks: Play may have to be stopped occasionally to 'sort things out' in 6U games. A player may pick up the ball and start running with it, or want to keep it away from the other players, or perhaps there is a pile of kids on the ground kicking at both the ball and each other. Stop play, quickly correct the situation and restart with a kick to a deserving player. 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. Opponents should be ten feet from the ball.

Goal Kick: A goal kick is awarded to the opposing team, in 6U and older, when the attacking team is last to touch the ball before it crosses the goal line but without scoring a goal. The goal kick may be taken from any point inside the goal area. The opposing team must be at least ten feet away from the ball when the goal kick is taken in 6U games.

Corner Kick: A corner kick is awarded to the opposing team, in 6U and older, when the defending team is last to touch the ball before it crosses the goal line but not scoring a goal. The opposing team must be at least ten feet from the ball when the corner kick is taken in 6U games.

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

No Heading: Consistent with the US Soccer mandates on heading the ball, heading is banned for all division 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).