

Earlham / WCV / Van Meter U8 Partnership

U8 Soccer Quick Facts

U8 Coaching Considerations

Six and seven year olds (U8 players) are still little people but are maturing and have better balance and agility. They begin to experience success technically and may share the ball a bit with a teammate or teammates. Numbers on the field must be small so that they can have the ball a lot. This allows them to practice their newly learned skills in an uncluttered environment. Best part, this is the age that they begin to enjoy playing soccer!

U8 Rules Summary

- **Game Form:** 4 players per team on the field
- **Ball Size:** Size #3
- **No Goalies:** A Defensive Player is not to be held back. No defending player should loiter in the back quarter of the field while the ball is in the offensive half.
- **General**
 - The home team is responsible for deciding whether to cancel a game due to weather as well as working with the other coach to reschedule. As a reminder, if you cancel a game, based on your town's direction, please contact your town referee coordinator or the ref directly.
 - Unlimited substitutions during any stop in game
 - Players should participate a minimum of 50% of the time.
 - Switch sides of the field after half-time
 - Do not allow players to slide tackle.
 - Coaches carry their ISA Hard Pass (lanyards) at games
 - Rosters will be provided, but player cards will not be provided
 - The Referee may be certified. Often it is a teenager who just became a ref. If you have feedback for them, please talk with them during a break or half time. Be kind!
- **Field Markings:**
 - Include markings for the goal box and center circle and corner arcs.
 - Goal box markings as follows:
 - 5 feet off/out from each post
 - 10 foot out from end line
 - Overall field dimensions would remain at club level discretion based on available space
Note: Earlham will likely continue to use the same field size for U8/U6
- **Build out line:** The center line will be the build out line during goal kicks. Players will remain behind the build out line during goal kicks. This will allow the team bringing the ball into play an opportunity to add some controlled touches and to safely bring the ball into play.
 - This concept aligns with the U10 level of play and the overall goals of smaller rosters/more touches.

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- **Restart Methods:**
 - Throw-In: Players are expected to execute proper throw ins. Members of the opposing team should be 15 feet away. If a player does not do it right the first time, they will be allowed one attempt to retry.
 - Corner Kicks- Members of the opposing team should be a minimum of 15 feet away
 - Goal kicks- Members of the opposing team should be behind the build out line (half line) until the ball is brought into play.
 - All kicks are Indirect. A team may not score directly from any restart kick.
- **Timing:**
 - Teams should arrive 10-15 minutes prior to game start.
 - The game consists of four, 8-minute or 10-minute quarters. The quarter length is at the discretion of the coaches. The referees will be prepared for either timing.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 8-minute quarter<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ 2-minute break• 8-minute quarter<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ 5-minute half-time• 8-minute quarter<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ 2-minute break• 8-minute quarter	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ 10-minute quarter<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ 2-minute break○ 10-minute quarter<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ 5-minute break○ 10-minute quarter<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ 2-minute break○ 10-minute quarter
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Game Day Responsibilities

- Wear the Iowa Soccer Association Coach Hard Pass during games
- Arrive at the field at least 15 minutes prior to the time you told the players to arrive.
- Check the playing surface and equipment for safety e.g. objects on the field, goals are secured.
- Make sure you have a game ball that is properly inflated.
- Confirm the number of players available.
- Organize a warm up for your players – lots of movement – not just kicking on goal.
- Coordinate your player rotation to make sure all players receive equal playing time.
- Make sure all your comments are very positive.
- Make sure each player drinks water and stays hydrated.
- Players should be aware of the direction they are attacking and team shape can be addressed.
- The players can be set up in a diamond shape to start the game and at other natural breaks (kick offs, goal kicks) however, during the game players must be allowed to run around freely – bunch ball is a natural occurrence in these age groups
- Positions are not necessary and although you may be tempted to leave a player back to defend the goal this is developmentally inappropriate.
- Under no circumstances should players be made to stand in a position, stand on a line or in a certain area.