



# U8 Soccer Rules & Guidelines

**Players on Field** - 6 on 6

**Ball Size** - 3

**Time** - 12 Minute Quarters

**Referees** - 1 coach per team on the field (Running from goal line to goal line, one on each sideline)

**Assistant Coach** - Will handle coaching at the sideline. An additional coach may stand at their end line to help judge out of bounds and call a goal as well as coach the goalie.

**Substitutions** - Unlimited amount of player substitutions

**Stoppage Time** - None (Except for injured player)

**Offsides** - No offsides in U8

## Throw-In

For a throw-in to be legal: (a) the ball must be thrown from behind & over the head (b) it must be thrown using both hands (c) the thrower must face the field (d) at the instant the ball leaves the thrower's hands, some part of both feet must be on the ground, either on or outside the side line. If the thrown ball does not enter the field, the throw-in is retaken by the same team. The thrower may not touch the ball again until it has touched another player. The penalty for an illegal throw-in is that your team loses the ball & the other team gets to take a throw-in from the same spot. A goal may not be scored on a direct throw-in (i.e., it doesn't count if it is thrown into the goal without another player touching it first). An opponent must stay at least 3 yards from the thrower.

Players will be allowed **only one** retry throw-in after the initial improper throw-in. Before the retry throw-in the child should be instructed immediately what corrective actions are required to make a proper throw-in. If that same player has an improper throw-in later in the game that player would again have a second opportunity to have a proper throw-in. A second player can not take the retry second throw-in after the first player makes an improper throw-in.

(After the 2nd improper throw-in, the ball will be turned over to the other team.)

## Penalty Kicks

A "penalty kick" or "PK", is a special type of direct free kick. When a player commits a foul within his own Penalty Box, the other team is given a Penalty Kick. On a PK, a player from the fouled team (the coach can choose who, but it is nice to choose the player who was fouled) gets a free shot at goal from the "Penalty Mark".

All other players must stay outside the Penalty Box & the Penalty Box Arc until it is kicked. The kick must go forward & once "in play" (i.e., once the ball moves) any player other than the kicker may then touch the ball. The goalkeeper must stay on the goal line until the ball is kicked, but he can move laterally along the line. The goalkeeper cannot take actions (such as waving his arms or yelling) to try to intentionally distract the kicker because that would be "unsporting", nor can the kicker start his run & then stop for the purpose of faking the Goalkeeper, for the same reason. The player taking the penalty kick may not play the ball a second time until it has touched another player. (Interpretation: he MAY play the ball and attempt to score if the goalkeeper or another player has touched it, but not if just bounces back off the post or cross-bar; the kicker must not touch it unless another player has touched it). If, after the penalty kick has been taken the kicker touches the ball a second time (except with his hands, which is a direct free kick penalty) before it has touched another player, an indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team, the kick to be taken from the place where the infringement occurred. However, if the kicker deliberately handles the ball before it has touched another player, a direct free kick is awarded to the opposing team, the kick to be taken from the place where the infringement occurred. (Go to [www.fifa.com](http://www.fifa.com) <<http://www.fifa.com>>, "Regulations", for more details).

## Corner Kick

A corner kick is awarded when the entire ball, having last touched a player of the defending team, passes over the end line, either on the ground or in the air. - The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves.

- A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick.
- The kicker does not play the ball a second time until it has touched another player.
- Opponents must remain at least 10 yds from the corner arc until the ball is in play.

## **Goal Kick**

When the ball goes out of bounds over the end line & was last touched by the attacking team, it is put back into play by the defending team, who may place it anywhere within their Goal Box (including on the line) & then kick it. The kicked ball may not be touched again by anyone on either team until it clears the Penalty Box and the other team must stay outside the Penalty Box until the ball clears the Penalty Box.

- \* If your goalkeeper has a strong leg, have him take your goal kicks. Otherwise, you may want to have another player take the kick while the goalkeeper stays in front of the goal.

## **Goal**

A “goal” is scored when the ball totally crosses the end line inside the goal.

## **Goalies**

The goalie is the only player on the field who can legally use his hands inside the Penalty Box. (Note that the Goalie cannot pick up the ball if it was deliberately kicked to him by a teammate. He can only pick it up if it was last touched by an opponent or if it was accidentally kicked to him by a teammate, or was passed from a teammate using the head, chest, knee, etc. instead of the feet.) Once he picks up the ball he has six seconds to kick it or release it. He is allowed to pick up the ball, run with it and then punt it, throw it, or drop it and dribble or kick it within the penalty box.

- The goalie must wear a shirt or jersey that is recognizably different from all other players.
- It is a foul to harass, interfere with, or obstruct the Goalkeeper by trying to keep him from putting the ball into play (e.g., if an opponent stands directly in front of the Goalkeeper when he is trying to punt the ball).
- If the goalie drops or places the ball on the ground, he cannot pickup the ball again until the ball is touched by another player. The goalie is allowed to kick the ball if it is dropped or placed.
- Each goalie will be allowed only one retry (during the whole game - same goalie) to play the ball after placing the ball on the ground and then picking the ball up a second time without anyone else touching the ball.

## **Kick Off**

The referee will toss a coin to decide which team kicks off first and which goal each team will attack during the first half of the game. The winner of the toss gets to choose which goal it will attack and the other team takes the kick-off. To start the second half, the team that won the toss takes the kick-off and the teams attack the opposite goal (so they switch sides of the field). Each time a goal is scored, the team that didn't score gets to kick off. At each kick off, the ball is placed in the center of the “Center Mark” (on the half-way line) & both teams must be on their own half of the field & the receiving team must stay outside the Center Circle until the ball is “kicked”. Moving the ball any constitutes a “kick off”, even if it only goes an inch. However, the ball must move forward on the “kick off”. The “kicker” may not touch the ball again until someone else (on either team) has touched it. However, the “kicker” may put his foot on top of the ball & barely move it forward so a teammate standing nearby can dribble it or pass it backward or forward.

## **Communication**

Communication prior to the game start by the opposing coaches is critical in order to avoid any confusion about “flexible” rules in the eight year old grouping since it is an instructional experience.