



small sided

**Football**  
FFA

**Laws of the Game 2012**

## Laws of Optus Small Sided Football – All Age Groups

(Effective from 1 January 2012)

The following aspects of Optus Small Sided Football are common across all age groups from Under 6 to Under 11.

### Markings

Markers or painted line markings.

### Start of play & Re-start after a goal

Pass forward to a team mate from the middle of the half way line. All players must be in their own half of the field of play. Opponents must be at least 5m away from the ball until it is in play. The ball must touch a team mate before a goal can be scored.

### Ball in and out of play

The ball is out of play when it has wholly crossed the goal line or the touch line on the ground or in the air, or when play has been stopped by the game leader or instructing referee.

### Method of scoring

A goal is scored when the whole of the ball passes over the goal line, between the goalposts and under the crossbar. When goal posts are not available and cones are used for goals, a goal is scored when the ball passes between the cones without touching them, below shoulder height of the player.

### The field of play

Under 6 & 7s	Under 8 & 9s	Under 10 & 11s
30 metres x 20 metres	Maximum: 50m x 40m Minimum: 40m x 30m ¼ full size pitch - when converting a full size pitch into Optus Small Sided Football fields	Maximum: 70m x 50m Minimum: 60m x 40m ½ full size pitch - when converting a full size pitch into Optus Small Sided Football fields

**For Under 11 age group**, the final stage of development in the Optus Small Sided Football formats before players commence 11 v 11 football, it is recommended that clubs where facilities and scheduling allows, set-up the field from penalty box to penalty box and adjust the width of the field with use of markers to meet the maximum specified width.

### Goal size

Under 6 & 7s	Under 8 & 9s	Under 10 & 11s
Minimum: 1.5m wide x .9m high Maximum: 2m wide x 1m high	Minimum: 2.5m wide x 2m high Maximum: 3m wide x 2m high	Minimum: 4.5m wide x 2m high Maximum: 5m wide x 2m high

**For Under 8 & 9 age groups**, it is recommended that clubs that wish to and have the capacity to do so use 3m x 2m goals. Should a club not be able to do this in the first instance, the 5m x 2m goal is most acceptable for use on fields for the Under 8 and 9 age groups as well as the Under 10 and 11 age groups.

### The ball

Under 6 & 7s	Under 8 & 9s	Under 10 & 11s
Size 3	Size 3	Size 4

**Penalty area**

Under 6 & 7s	Under 8 & 9s	Under 10 & 11s
No penalty area	Rectangular – 5m depth x 12m width	Rectangular – 5m depth x 12 m width

For Under 8 to 11 age groups the penalty area can be marked through use of marked lines, flat or soft markers or cones.

**Duration of the game**

Under 6 & 7s	Under 8 & 9s	Under 10 & 11s
2 x 15-20 minutes (plus half time break)	2 x 20 minutes (plus half time break)	2 x 25 minutes (plus half time break)

This may be flexible depending on the implementation format i.e. hub setting, maximum substitutes.

**The number of players**

Under 6 & 7s	Under 8 & 9s	Under 10 & 11s
4 v 4 - no goalkeeper Maximum of three substitutes	7 v 7 - inc. goalkeeper Maximum of four substitutes	9 v 9 - inc. Goalkeeper Maximum of four substitutes

Substitutes may rotate during the entire game. The coach or parent is allowed to make the substitutions while the ball is in play, but must wait until the substituted player has left the field.

**Game Leader – Under 6 & 7s**

The main role of the game leader is to keep the game moving fluently, limit stoppages and assist players with all match re-starts. Most importantly, they must make every effort to create an environment that ensures that all players have fun and have maximum involvement. The game leader can be a club official, parent, older child / player or beginning referee and should always be enthusiastic and approachable. Most Importantly - Remember the children are learning the game - be flexible and patient.

**Instructing Referee – Under 8s to 11s**

The main role of the instructing referee is to control the game to ensure it is played fluently and instruct and correct the players (with minimal blowing of the whistle) on how to behave and what the rules are, e.g. what a foul is, what a free kick is and how to throw in etc... Should these indiscretions happen a second time the referee should stop the game and apply the appropriate action and decisions. This person can be a club official, capable parent, older child or player, beginning or official referee from the Federation or Association.

### Goal type

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It is preferable that pop up style or portable goals are used where possible however, the use of poles and markers as the goals particularly in the Under 6 to 9 age groups is also suitable.

### Goalkeeper

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No Goalkeeper

The game leader, coaches and managers should continually discourage children from permanently standing in front of the goal.

### Ball crossing the touch line

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There is no throw in. A player from the opposing team to the player that touched the ball last before crossing the touch line will place the ball on the touch line and pass or dribble the ball into play. Opponents must be at least 5m away from the ball until it is in play. The ball must touch a team mate before a goal can be scored.

### Ball crossing the goal line

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There is no corner kick. Regardless of which team touched the ball last, a player from the team whose goal line the ball has crossed will place the ball anywhere along the goal line and pass or dribble the ball into play. Opponents must retreat to the half way line and can move once the ball is in play. The ball must touch a team mate before a goal can be scored.

### Offside

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No offside

### Fouls and misconduct

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Indirect free kicks are awarded for all acts of handball or fouls and misconduct. Opponents must be at least 5m away from the ball when the indirect free kick is taken. (An indirect free kick is where a goal can be scored only if the ball subsequently touches another player before it enters the goal).

Most acts of handball or fouls and misconduct at this level are caused by a lack of coordination, with no intent. In this case try and give the advantage to the attacking team and continue play. If you decide a deliberate or serious act of handball, foul or misconduct has occurred, explain to the child they have done the wrong thing and that they should not do this again.

### Point's tables and finals

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To ensure that Optus Small Sided Football is played in the correct spirit and give all players the best possible chance to develop, FFA advises that Member Federations, zones, associations and clubs adopt and promote the following advice and recommendation:

Under 6 & 7 FFA advises that the keeping of point's tables and playing of finals must not be done.

### Goalkeeper

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The goalkeeper is allowed to handle the ball anywhere in the penalty area. To restart play after a save or gathering the ball with their hands, the ball must be thrown or rolled from the hands or played from the ground with their feet, within 6 seconds. The goalkeeper is not allowed to kick or drop kick the ball directly from their hands. Opponents must be at least 5m outside the penalty area and cannot move inside the penalty area until the ball is in play. The ball is in play once it moves out of the penalty area.

An indirect free kick is awarded if the goalkeeper touches the ball with their hands after it has been deliberately kicked to them by a team-mate.

### Ball crossing the touch line

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Throw-in: Player faces the field of play, has part of each foot on the ground either on or behind the touch line, uses both hands and delivers the ball from behind and over his or her head. The thrower must not touch the ball again until it has touched another player. Opponents must be at least 5m away from the ball until it is in play. The ball is in play once it enters the field of play. A goal cannot be scored directly from a throw in.

### Ball crossing the goal line after touching the defending team last

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Corner kick. A player from the attacking team places the ball inside the corner arc nearest to the point where the ball crossed the line. Opponents must be at least 5m away from the ball until it is in play. The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves. A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick.

### Ball crossing the goal line after touching the attacking team last

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Goal kick from anywhere within the penalty area. Opponents remain at least 5m outside the penalty area until the ball is in play. The ball is in play once it is kicked directly out of the penalty area.

### Offside

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No offside

**Note:** In the Under 8 - 11 age groups, team coaches and managers should strongly discourage children from permanently standing in blatant offside positions. Instructing referees should direct players permanently standing in blatant offside positions to move into onside positions.

### **Fouls and misconduct**

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Indirect free kicks are awarded for all acts of handball or fouls and misconduct. Opponents must be at least 5m away from the ball when the indirect free kick is taken. (An indirect free kick is where a goal can be scored only if the ball subsequently touches another player before it enters the goal).

For deliberate or serious acts of handball or fouls and misconduct in the penalty area, a penalty kick is awarded from an 8m penalty mark with only a goalkeeper in position. All other players must be outside the penalty area and be at least 5m behind the penalty mark.

Fouls and misconduct are:

- kicks or attempts to kick an opponent
- trips or attempts to trip an opponent
- jumps at an opponent
- charges an opponent
- strikes or attempts to strike an opponent
- pushes an opponent
- tackles an opponent from behind to gain possession of the ball
- making contact with the opponent before touching the ball
- holds an opponent
- spits at an opponent
- handles the ball deliberately
- plays in a dangerous manner
- impedes the progress of a player.

### **Point's tables and finals**

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To ensure that Optus Small Sided Football is played in the correct spirit and give all players the best possible chance to develop, FFA advises that Member Federations, zones, associations and clubs adopt and promote the following advice and recommendation:

Under 8 & 9 FFA advises that the keeping of point's tables and playing of finals must not be done.

### Goalkeeper

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The goalkeeper is allowed to handle the ball anywhere in the penalty area. To restart play after a save or gathering the ball with their hands, the ball must be thrown or rolled from the hands or played from the ground with their feet, within 6 seconds. The goalkeeper is not allowed to kick or drop kick the ball directly from their hands. Opponents must be at least 5m outside the penalty area and cannot move inside the penalty area until the ball is in play. The ball is in play once it moves out of the penalty area or when the goalkeeper places the ball on the ground \*.

An indirect free kick is awarded if the goalkeeper touches the ball with their hands after it has been deliberately kicked to them by a team-mate.

#### **\* Goalkeeper Progression**

*The developmental progression of the game becoming "live" when the goalkeeper places the ball on the ground provides the necessary learning phase for players transitioning to the 11 v 11 format of football.*

### Ball crossing the touch line

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Throw-in: Player faces the field of play, has part of each foot on the ground either on or behind the touch line, uses both hands and delivers the ball from behind and over their head. The thrower must not touch the ball again until it has touched another player. Opponents must be at least 5m away from the ball until it is in play. The ball is in play once it enters the field of play. A goal cannot be scored directly from a throw in.

### Ball crossing the goal line after touching the defending team last

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Corner kick. A player from the attacking team places the ball inside the corner arc nearest to the point where the ball crossed the line. Opponents must be at least 5m away from the ball until it is in play. The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves. A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick.

### Ball crossing the goal line after touching the attacking team last

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Goal kick from anywhere within the penalty area. Opponents remain at least 5m outside the penalty area until the ball is in play. The ball is in play once it is kicked directly out of the penalty area.

### Offside

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No offside

**Note:** In the Under 8 - 11 age groups, team coaches and managers should strongly discourage children from permanently standing in blatant offside positions. In the Under 10 & 11 age groups children should be made aware of the offside rule during training and be encouraged to adopt this philosophy during the game at all times. Instructing referees should direct players permanently standing in blatant offside positions to move into onside positions.

### Fouls and misconduct

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Indirect free kicks are awarded for all acts of handball or fouls and misconduct. Opponents must be at least 5m away from the ball when the indirect free kick is taken. (An indirect free kick is where a goal can be scored only if the ball subsequently touches another player before it enters the goal).

For deliberate or serious acts of handball or fouls and misconduct in the penalty area, a penalty kick is awarded from an 8m penalty mark with only a goalkeeper in position. All other players must be outside the penalty area and be at least 5m behind the penalty mark.

Fouls and misconduct are:

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### Point's tables and finals

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To ensure that Optus Small Sided Football is played in the correct spirit and give all players the best possible chance to develop, FFA advises that Member Federations, zones, associations and clubs adopt and promote the following advice and recommendation:

Under 10 & 11 FFA advises that the keeping of point's tables and playing of finals must not be done. It is also advised, the keeping of point's tables and playing of finals will only commence when children are playing 11 v 11 football on a full size pitch in the Under 12 age group.