# 2026 EMSA U10/U11
# 9 vs 9 Mini Soccer

A handbook and guide for EMSA Mini Referees

Please Note that there are some Differences between ASA and EMSA Rules. Pay special attention to the Retreat line rules.

U10/U11 Proposed Mini Rules

**Law 1 – Field Markings & Equipment**

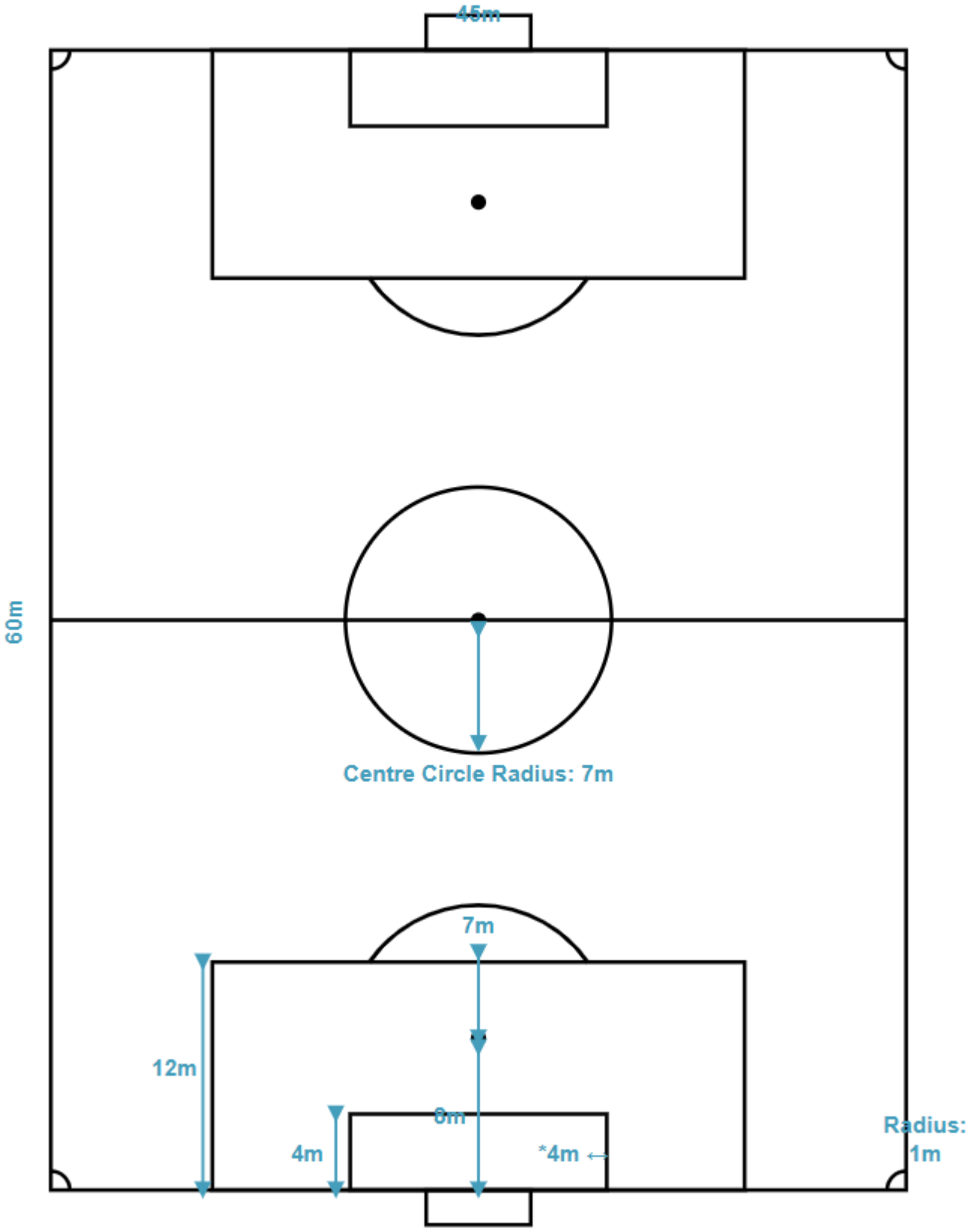
## Field Dimension Data Overview

**Metric Dimensions:**

- Total Width: 45m (Min: 42m, Max: 55m)
- Total Length: 60m (Min: 60m, Max: 75m)
- Goal Size: 1.83m x 5.49m
- Centre Circle Radius: 7m
- Penalty Area Depth: 12m
- Goal Area Depth: 4m
- Goal Area Width Extension: 4m outward from the edge of the post
- Penalty Mark Distance: 8m
- Penalty Arc Radius: 7m
- Corner Arc Radius: 1m

**Imperial Dimensions:**

- Total Width: 148 ft (Min: 138 ft, Max: 180 ft)
- Total Length: 197 ft (Min: 197 ft, Max: 246 ft)
- Goal Size: 6 ft x 18 ft
- Centre Circle Radius: 23 ft
- Penalty Area Depth: 39 ft
- Goal Area Depth: 13 ft
- Goal Area Width Extension: 13 ft outward from the edge of the post
- Penalty Mark Distance: 26 ft
- Penalty Arc Radius: 23 ft
- Corner Arc Radius: 3.3 ft


45m
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Centre Circle Radius: 7m
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*4m
Radius:
1m
Goal: 1.83m x 5.49m

## Law 2 – The Ball

- **Size:** Size 4.
- **Pressure:** Inflated to **8 lbs – 9 lbs**.
- **Replacement:** If the ball becomes defective, play is restarted with a **dropped ball** at the location where the original ball became defective.

## Law 3 – Number of Players

- **Format:** Nine (9) players per team, including one goalkeeper.
- **Minimum:** A game requires at least six (6) players to start or continue.
- **Substitutions:** Unlimited substitutions are allowed at any stoppage with the referee's permission.

## Law 4 – Player Equipment

- **Compulsory Items:** Numbered jersey/shirt, shorts, socks, shin guards, and appropriate footwear.
- **Shin Guards:** Must be covered by socks and made of suitable protective material (rubber/plastic).
- **Jewellery:** Not permitted, except for securely fastened Medic Alert items.
- **Colors:** Teams must wear distinguishable colours. If colours clash, the home team changes jerseys. Goalkeepers must wear colors distinct from outfield players and the referee.

## Law 5 & 6 – The Referee

- **Referee Authority:** Each game is facilitated by an ASA-accredited referee whose decisions on facts of play are final.
- **Assistant Referees:** May be used in U10/U11 matches.

## Law 7 – Duration of the Game

- **Periods:** Two (2) equal periods of **35 minutes**.
- **Halftime:** 5-minute interval (can be shortened by the referee to keep games on schedule).
- **Added Time:** There is no allowance for extra or added time.

## Law 8 – Start and Restart of Play

### Definition of a kick off

A kick-off will be taken from the centre of the field for:

- Start of the game
- Start second half (if applicable)
- After a goal has been scored
- Players of the opposing team must be seven (7) meters away.
- A goal may not be scored directly from any kick-off.
- A ball crossing over the touchline may be taken as a pass-in or dribble-in.
- Kick-off may be taken as a pass-in or dribble-in.

**Procedure:**

*Before the kickoff at the start of the game*

- The home team picks side to start and the away team gets ball at the start of the game. Second half the home team takes the kick-off.

**Kickoff:**

- After a team scores a goal, the kick-off is taken by the other team at half
- All players must be in their own half of the field except the player taking the kick-off and 7 meters away.
- The opponents of the team taking the kickoff must be 7 meters away from the ball until it is in play.
- The ball must be stationary on the center mark.
- The referee gives a signal to start.
- The ball is in play when it is touched by a player who can either pass or dribble

**Definition of dropped ball**

- A drop ball is a method of restarting play when, while the ball is in play, the referee is required to stop play temporarily for any reason not mentioned elsewhere in the Rules of Mini Soccer. Some examples of this are an injury or interference by an outside agent or the ball hits the referee and disrupts play.

**Procedure**

- The referee drops the ball at the place where the ball was located when play was stopped in given to the team who had possession at the time. unless play was stopped inside the penalty area, in which case the referee drops the ball to the keeper regardless of who had possession.
- All opponents must be a minimum of 3 metres from the ball until it is in play

## Retreat Line(Retreat line rule is negated if the goalie or player plays quickly)

**The Retreat Line** will come into effect in the following 3 situations:

- A goal kick
- A free kick to the defending team within their own penalty area
- The goalkeeper makes a save and has possession of the ball in their hands

At these 3 restarts the opposing team is required to move beyond the Retreat Line, which is the following:

- The Retreat Line is a line that is **one third** of the way down from the goal line. If there is no line, cones off the field can be used.

On a goal kick or free kick the ball is in play when the first of the following occurs:

- The ball touches another player from the team taking the restart, apart from the player taking the goalkick or free kick
- The ball stops and has left the penalty area from a goal kick or free kick
- The ball crosses the Retreat Line
- The ball goes out of play
- The player (including the goalkeeper) begins to dribble the ball
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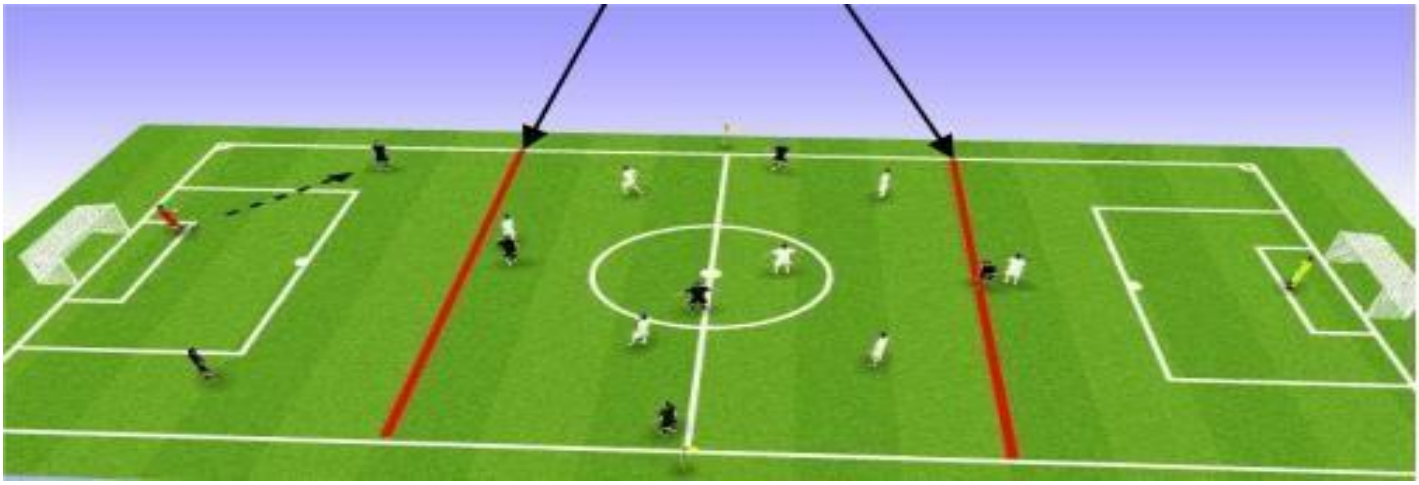
On a goalkeeper save the ball is in play when the first of the following occurs:

- The goalkeeper, after making a save, kicks or throws the ball beyond the Retreat Line
- The goalkeeper, after making a save, releases the ball and it touches another player from the same team
- Begins to dribble the ball

- The goalkeeper, after making a save, puts the ball on the ground
- 8 seconds have passed-(which will be visually indicated by the referee with a visual 5 second countdown) . which will result in a corner kick/dribble in to the non-offending team. The 8 seconds will commence when all of the opposing team is behind the Retreat Line.
- The ball goes out of play

If an opposing player comes in from the Retreat Line AND interferes with play, the game will be stopped, and the restart will be a free kick to the non-offending team from where the player crossed the Retreat Line. For any infraction by the team taking the goal kick, free kick or a goalkeeper save when the Retreat Line Rule is in effect, the restart will be a corner kick/dribble (e.g. waited longer than 8 seconds to move the ball)



**Kick-In or Dribble In**

For any restart the ball can be kicked or dribbled in. F
or a goal to be scored, the ball must touch two players. The procedure is as follows:

- the ball must be stationary
- the ball is positioned as per the procedure under the relevant law number
- the ball is in play when it moves
- the minimum distance of opponents is a per the relevant law number

**Law 9- Ball in and out of play**

**Ball not in play**

The ball is not in-play when:

- It has wholly crossed the goal line or touch line whether on the ground or in the air
- Play has been stopped by the referee
- Ball hits the referee and alters the game. The drop ball will be given to the team who last had possession unless the ball was in the penalty area, in which case it will be given to the goalkeeper.

**Ball in play**

The ball is in play at other times, including when:

- it rebounds off the goal post, crossbar, corner flag post and remains in the field of play
- It touches a match official but does not change direction or possession.
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**Law 10- Method of scoring**

- A goal is scored when the whole of the ball has crossed the goal line between the goal posts and under the crossbar, provided that no infringement of the 9 vs 9 modified laws of the game has been previously committed by the team scoring the goal.

**Law 11**

- **Offside:** There is **no offside** in this format.

**Law 12 – Offside, Fouls, and Misconduct**

An indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team if a player commits any of the following offences:

- kicks or attempts to kick an opponent
- trips or attempts to trip an opponent
- strikes or attempts to strike an opponent
- tackles an opponent from behind to gain possession of the ball
- makes contact with an opponent before touching the ball
- handles the ball deliberately (except for a goalkeeper, within their own goal area)
- jumps at an opponent
- charges an opponent
- pushes an opponent
- holds an opponent
- spits at an opponent
- playing in a dangerous manner
- prevents the goalkeeper from releasing the ball from their hands or free kick in the penalty area
- touching the ball more than once from a restart except for dribble-in restarts

For any of the above offences an indirect free kick is awarded unless the offence is committed by the defending team in their own penalty area, in which case a penalty kick is awarded (see Law 14). The indirect free kick is taken from where the offence occurred (see Law 13)

If a player is playing roughly, the referee should request that the coach substitute the player and advise the player to play in a fair manner. Any player who spits at or strikes an opponent should take no further part in the game.

**Goalkeepers:**

- Have 8 seconds to release the ball from their hands, after making a save

- The referee will visually countdown the last 5 seconds with a raised hand

- They cannot handle the ball with their hands if it is deliberately kicked to them by a teammate or they have released the ball from their hands and it has not touched an opponent

- For any of the above offences a corner kick is awarded to the opposing team

**Law 13- Free Kick**

- All Free kicks are indirect for this age group. A goal may not be scored directly from an indirect free kick or dribble in. The ball is in play once it is kicked or dribbling has begun and the ball clearly moves
- If an indirect free kick is kicked or dribbled directly into the opponents goal, a goal kick will be awarded to the opposing team.
- A player may dribble or pass the ball to another player before scoring
- All opponents must remain at least 6m from the free kick unless the Retreat Line is in effect
- The ball is in play when it moves. except when the Retreat Line Rule is in effect

**Law 14- Penalty Kicks (the only direct kick in U10/U11 soccer) No dribbling in.**

A penalty kick is awarded if a player commits an offence inside their penalty area. If no penalty spot is present, the penalty kick is to be taken from the middle of the parallel line at the top of the penalty area. Penalty kicks are direct. The players other than the kicker and goalkeeper must be:

- must be at least of six (6) metres from the penalty mark
- behind the penalty mark,
- inside the field of play,
- outside the penalty area.

**Law 15 – Ball Out or Play: Touch Line**

A kick-in as described in Law 8 is awarded to the opponents of the player who last touched the ball, when the whole of the ball crosses the touchline in the air or on the ground

The kick in or dribble-in

- is taken at the point where the ball crossed the touchline
- can be taken quickly provided the requirements of law 8 are met
- opponents must be a minimum of 4.5 metres from the ball

**Law 16- Goal Kick**

A goal kick is awarded when the ball fully crosses the goal line and was last touched by a member of the attacking team.

- Goal kicks can be taken as a dribble-in or pass-in.
- A goal may not be scored directly from a goal kick or Dribble-in.
- Players of the opposing team must be behind the Retreat Line.

- A goal may not be scored directly from a goal kick.

**Law 17-Corner Kick**

A corner kick will be awarded to the attacking team, when the whole of the ball crosses the goal line, in the air or on the ground, when last touched by a player on the defending team.

- A corner kick will also be awarded if the goalkeeper does not release the ball from their hands after 8 seconds.

- A dribble in or a kick in can be used for a corner kick.

A goal cannot be scored directly from a Kick in or Dribble in. The ball must touch another player.

Opponents must be a minimum of 7 metres from the corner arc until the ball is in play