



# Middle East Youth Soccer Organisation (MEYSO)

## MODIFIED LAWS OF THE GAME FOR U9

### Law 1

**The Field of Play: Dimensions:** The field of play must be rectangular. The length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line.

Length: minimum 25 yards (22.86 meters) maximum 35 yards (32 meters)

Width: minimum 20 yards (18.28 meters) maximum 30 yards (27.43 meters)

**Field Markings:** Distinctive lines not more than (5) inches wide. The field of play is divided into two halves by a halfway line. The center mark is indicated at the midpoint of the halfway line. The center mark is indicated at the midpoint of the halfway line. A circle with a radius of four (4) yards is marked around it.

**The Goal Area:** A goal area is defined at each end of the field as follows: Two lines are drawn at right angles to the goal line three (3) yards from the inside each goalpost.

These lines extend into the field of play for a distance of three (3) yards and are joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line. The area bounded by these lines and the goal line is the goal area.

**The Penalty Area:** none.

**Flagposts:** none.

**The Corner Arc:** Conform to FIFA.

**Goals:** Goals must be placed on the center of each goal line. They consist of two upright posts equidistant from the corners and joined at the top by a horizontal crossbar.

Manufactured goals are not mandatory for U9 Small Sided Games. Clubs are free to use cones, corner flag posts, Pug goals or other items to designate the goal for this age group. Any goal must be properly anchored to the ground.

The distance between the posts is eighteen (18) feet and the distance from the lower edge of the crossbar to the ground is six (6) feet.

Goals may be smaller in dimension 4ft X 6 ft (1.21 x 1.82 meters) are acceptable smaller goals.

**The Field of Play:** dimensions are smaller to accommodate the four-versus-four game and are appropriate for the movement capabilities of six to nine year-old children. These adjusted dimensions provide more practical space allowing players to be successful.

Field Markings: the center circle gives the players a concrete marking on where to be for the kick-off. The corner arc gives the young player a concrete place to put the ball to kick it back onto the field of play. While kids this young will execute corner kick plays to a modest degree taking a kick from the corner is a reasonable way for them to put the ball into play and provides continuity with all other age groups. However, the center circle and the corner arc for U8 Small Sided Games are not mandatory field markings.

Law 2 The Ball: must be a size three. The smaller ball is lighter and more easily kicked, received, dribbled and passed.

Law 3 The Number of Players: A match is played by two teams, each consisting of not more than four players. There is one goal keeper.

Substitutions: At any stoppage of play. Each player SHALL play a minimum of 50% of the total playing time. Teams and games may be coed.

Law 4 The Players' Equipment: per FIFA. Non-uniform clothing is allowed based on weather conditions, but uniforms must still distinguish teams.

Law 5 The Referee: an officially qualified referee is not needed for this age group. Instead a youth referee, parent or coach should officiate the game. All rule infractions shall be briefly explained to the offending player.

Law 6 The Assistant Referees: none are needed.

Law 7 The Duration of the Match: The match shall be divided into four (4) equal, six (6) minute quarters. There shall be a two (2) minute break between quarters one and two and another two (2) minute break between quarters three and four. There shall be a half-time interval of five (5) minutes.

Clubs may make the quarters shorter in duration if necessary. Quarters are played in the U9 age group to accommodate the attention span and physical limitations of the children.

Law 8 The Start and Restart of Play: Conform to FIFA, with the exception of the opponents of the team taking the kick-off are at least four (4) yards from the ball until it is in play.

Law 9 The Ball In and Out of Play: Conform to FIFA.

Law 10 The Method of Scoring: Conform to FIFA.

Law 11 Offside: there shall be no offside called during these games.

Law 12 Fouls and Misconduct: no caution or send off shall be issued to players.

If a child is being too rambunctious then the game official will ask the coach to make a substitution of that player to give the child a chance to calm down before returning to play.

Law 13 Free Kicks: Conform to FIFA with the exceptions that all kicks are direct and all opponents are at least four (4) yards from the ball until it is in play. This will keep the game flowing and keep the attention of the kids.

Law 14 The Penalty Kick: there will not be any penalty kicks called.

Law 15 The Throw-In: Conform to FIFA with the exception that an improperly performed throw-in can be retaken once.

Some U9 players do not yet have the eye-hand coordination to execute a throw-in to the letter of the law. However, some U9 players have sufficient eye-hand coordination to attempt the throw-in. One 're-throw' per thrower should be

the normal response if the throw-in is incorrect. The adult officiating the match should explain to the child how to execute the throw-in correctly.

Law 16 The Goal Kick: per FIFA. The defending players must stand at least four yards away from the ball until it is in play. The ball is in play once it has left the goal area.

Law 17 The Corner Kick: per FIFA. The defending players must stand at least four yards away from the ball until it is in play.

- Squad Size: Under the single field method the recommended minimum squad size is five players and the maximum roster size is seven players.
- Playing Time: A minimum of at least 50% playing time is required.
- Score and standings should be kept but not absolutely necessary

#### *Middle East Youth Soccer Organisation Recommendations*

- Opposing coaches, players and parents should shake hands after each match.
- Parent/coaches, non-participating players and spectators should be there to enjoy and encourage the activity of the youngsters.
- Spectator and team benches should be on opposite sides of the field.
- No alcoholic beverages or tobacco products will be consumed or allowed near the playing area.
- No slide tackles to be allowed in this age group.
- Coaches of U9 teams should attend the U7/U9 coaches clinic and the referee course.