

# MDL

MINI DEVELOPMENT LEAGUE

## **MINIMUM STANDARDS & RULES OF PLAY**

SEPTEMBER 20, 2015

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## THE MINI DEVELOPMENT LEAGUE (MDL)

The Mini Development League is dedicated to providing a player-centric approach to soccer development. The aim of the MDL is to create a pathway for like-minded players and like-minded organizations to come together and foster an environment that is conducive to positive development.

At the foundation of the MDL philosophy is a commitment to high standards both on and off the pitch. All MDL Clubs must share that commitment in order to ensure that players achieve the maximum benefit from their experience.

## MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR MDL CLUBS

Clubs must field a minimum of two Development teams per age group in each gender.

Clubs must not form their Development teams through “advertised tryouts”.

Clubs must ensure a 30%/70% ratio between Development players and House players.

Clubs must form balanced teams in both Development and House – e.g. no tiering of teams within streams.

Clubs must strictly adhere to the entire Rules of Play as issued by the MDL.

Failure to meet the Minimum Standards may result in a Club not being allowed to participate in the League.

## TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES

Home clubs/teams are responsible for assigning and paying for match referees.

Home teams must contact their opponent no later than Wednesday evening to confirm the venue and time for the weekend game.

Clubs are responsible for rescheduling any games due to conflicts of any kind. In the event a game must be rescheduled, the requesting team must contact their opponent as soon as possible. Details for the rescheduled game must be sent to the League Administrator.

There are no make up games required for games cancelled due to weather or similar scenarios. However, in order to maximize the experience for the players, it is strongly encouraged that teams make every effort to reschedule such games should the opportunity arise.

## RULES OF PLAY

### GAME FORMATS, DURATION & DIMENSIONS

All MDL games must be played in accordance with the requirements listed in the charts below. All participating clubs must ensure fields are properly prepared and their teams are properly equipped.

#### Game Format

Age	Format*
U-8	6 V 6
U-9	7 V 7
U-10	7 V 7

\*including keepers

#### Match Duration

Age	Duration	Half Time
U-8	2x 25 MIN	5 MIN
U-9	2x 25 MIN	5 MIN
U-10	2x 25 MIN	5 MIN

#### Ball Size

Age	Size
U-8	3
U-9	4
U-10	4

#### Size of Fields

Age	Width Min.	Width Max.	Length Min.	Length Max.
U-8	30 M	35 M	40 M	45 M
U-9	30 M	36 M	40 M	55 M
U-10	30 M	36 M	40 M	55 M

#### Size of Goal

Age	Width	Height	Option
U-8	12 FT / 2.4 M	6 FT / 1.8 M	Smaller
U-9	12 FT / 2.4 M	6 FT / 1.8 M	None
U-10	12 FT / 2.4 M	6 FT / 1.8 M	None

### LAWS OF THE GAME

All games played in the MDL will be played in accordance with the FIFA Laws of the Game, in conjunction with the following age-specific additions and modifications.

#### Under 8 Divisions

Coaches on Field: One coach per team may be allowed on the field during play. This provision is only allowed in games played before the December break.

Goalkeeper Instruction: One designated person may stand behind their team's goal during play in order to assist the goalkeeper. This person shall not coach any other player on the field.

Team Bench Areas: Where possible, both teams shall be located on one side of the field.

Player/Spectator Areas: Where possible, parents and spectators shall be located on the side of the field opposite the team bench areas. All parents/spectators shall remain at least one yard from the sideline.

Coach Technical Areas: Coaches on the sideline must stay on their own side of the half-line, and shall not cross in front of the opposition bench area.

Retreat Line: When the goalkeeper has possession of the ball in his/her hands, or when there is a goal kick, all opposition players must retreat to the halfway line until the ball is put back into play.

Field of Play: In addition to the chart above, the following criteria apply to the field of play.

- (a) Field Markings – Distinctive lines not more than fifteen (15) centimeters wide. The field of play is divided into two halves by a halfway line. The centre mark is indicated at the midpoint of the halfway line. A circle with a radius of five (5) meters is marked around the centre mark.
- (b) Goal Area – A goal area is defined at each of the field as follows: Two lines are drawn at right angles to the goal line, ten (10) Meters from the inside of each goalpost. These lines extend into the field of play for a distance of ten (10) meters 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.
- (c) Penalty Area – None.
- (d) Corner Flags – None.
- (e) Corner Arcs – None.
- (f) Goal Posts – Goals must be placed on the centre of each goal line and must be of the size required for this age group, as specified in the chart above.

The Ball: The ball must conform to FIFA standards and inflation specifications. As per the chart above, a size three (3) ball shall be used.

Substitutions: Substitutions are unlimited, and may be made at any stoppage with the permission of the match official.

Player Equipment: All player equipment must conform to FIFA standards and Laws. Non-uniform clothing is allowed based on weather conditions, but uniforms must still distinguish teams. The goalkeeper should wear a colour that distinguished him/her from both teams. Shin guards are mandatory and must be worn under socks. Jewelry is NOT permitted to be worn.

Match Referee: A certified small-sided game (SSG) referee or nominated person may officiate games. The referee's role is to ensure the safety of players and that the game is played under the code of "Fair Play". A SSG referee may send a team official or spectator from the field if they fail to conduct themselves in a responsible and respectful manner.

Assistant Referees: None required. Each team must nominate a volunteer to serve as "linesperson" whose sole role is to indicate the whole ball out of play. Only the match referee may decide to which team throw-ins are awarded.

Start & Restart of Play: All starts and restarts shall conform to FIFA Laws, with the exception of the following.

- (a) Kick Offs - Opponents of the team taking a kick-off must remain at least five (5) meters from the ball until it is in play.
- (b) Drop Balls – Not Used. An indirect free kick will be awarded to the team that had possession when play was stopped.

Offside: None.

Fouls & Misconduct: Conform to FIFA Laws, with the exception of the following.

- (a) All fouls shall result in an INDIRECT free kick.
- (b) The match referee or nominated person must explain ALL infringements to the offending player(s).
- (c) There shall be no cards shown for misconduct.
- (d) If the goalkeeper punts or dropkicks the ball in the air from his/her own goal area to the opponent's goal area, an indirect free kick shall be awarded to the opponent.
- (e) Any player who intentionally strikes, deliberately kicks or spats at an opponent must be substituted from the game and shall not be permitted to participate further in that game. The coach should inform the player of what has happened, and provide corrective action.

Free Kicks: Conform to FIFA, except that all kicks are indirect and all opponents must be at least five (5) meters from the ball until it is put back into play.

Penalty Kicks: None.

Thrown Ins: Conform to FIFA.

Goal Kicks: Goal kicks are taken from the goal area, and the opposing team must retreat to the halfway line until the kick is taken. A goal CANNOT be scored directly from a goal kick.

Corner Kicks: Conform to FIFA, except that all opponents must remain five (5) meters from the ball until it is put back into play. A goal CANNOT be scored directly from a corner kick.

### **Under 9 & 10 Divisions**

Coaches on Field: Coaches are not permitted on the field during play.

Goalkeeper Instruction: One designated person may stand behind their team's goal during play in order to assist the goalkeeper. This person shall not coach any other player on the field.

Team Bench Areas: Where possible, both teams shall be located on one side of the field.

Player/Spectator Areas: Where possible, parents and spectators shall be located on the side of the field opposite the team bench areas. All parents/spectators shall remain at least one yard from the sideline.

Coach Technical Areas: Coaches on the sideline must stay on their own side of the half-line, and shall not cross in front of the opposition bench area.

Retreat Line: When the goalkeeper has possession of the ball in his/her hands, or when there is a goal kick, all opposition players must retreat to the halfway line until the ball is put back into play.

Field of Play: In addition to the chart above, the following criteria apply to the field of play.

- (a) Field Markings – Distinctive lines not more than fifteen (15) centimeters wide. The field of play is divided into two halves by a halfway line. The centre mark is indicated at the midpoint of the halfway line. A circle with a radius of eight (8) meters is marked around the centre mark.
- (b) Goal Area – A goal area is defined at each of the field as follows: Two lines are drawn at right angles to the goal line, ten (10) Meters from the inside of each goalpost. These lines extend into the field of play for a distance of ten (10) meters 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.
- (c) Penalty Area – None.
- (d) Corner Flags – None.
- (e) Corner Arcs – None.
- (f) Goal Posts – Goals must be placed on the centre of each goal line and must be of the size required for this age group, as specified in the chart above.

The Ball: The ball must conform to FIFA standards and inflation specifications. As per the chart above, a size four (4) ball shall be used.

Substitutions: Substitutions are unlimited, and may be made at any stoppage with the permission of the match official.

Player Equipment: All player equipment must conform to FIFA standards and Laws. Non-uniform clothing is allowed based on weather conditions, but uniforms must still distinguish teams. The goalkeeper should wear a colour that distinguished him/her from both teams. Shin guards are mandatory and must be worn under socks. Jewelry is NOT permitted to be worn.

Match Referee: A certified small-sided game (SSG) referee or nominated person may officiate games. The referee's role is to ensure the safety of players and that the game is played under the code of "Fair Play". A SSG referee may send a team official or spectator from the field if they fail to conduct themselves in a responsible and respectful manner.

Assistant Referees: None required. Each team must nominate a volunteer to serve as "linesperson" whose sole role is to indicate the whole ball out of play. Only the match referee may decide to which team throw-ins are awarded.

Start & Restart of Play: All starts and restarts shall conform to FIFA Laws, with the exception of the following.

- (a) Kick Offs - Opponents of the team taking a kick-off must remain at least eight (8) meters from the ball until it is in play.
- (b) Drop Balls – Not Used. An indirect free kick will be awarded to the team that had possession when play was stopped.

Offside: None.

Fouls & Misconduct: Conform to FIFA Laws, with the exception of the following.

- (a) All fouls shall result in an INDIRECT free kick.
- (b) The match referee or nominated person must explain ALL infringements to the offending player(s).
- (c) There shall be no cards shown for misconduct.
- (d) If the goalkeeper punts or dropkicks the ball in the air from his/her own goal area to the opponent's goal area, an indirect free kick shall be awarded to the opponent.
- (e) Any player who intentionally strikes, deliberately kicks or spats at an opponent must be substituted from the game and shall not be permitted to participate further in that game. The coach should inform the player of what has happened, and provide corrective action.

Free Kicks: Conform to FIFA, except that all kicks are indirect and all opponents must be at least eight (8) meters from the ball until it is put back into play.

Penalty Kicks: None.

Thrown Ins: Conform to FIFA.

Goal Kicks: Goal kicks are taken from the goal area, and the opposing team must retreat to the halfway line until the kick is taken. A goal CANNOT be scored directly from a goal kick.

Corner Kicks: Conform to FIFA, except that all opponents must remain eight (8) meters from the ball until it is put back into play. A goal CANNOT be scored directly from a corner kick.