



Mini-Soccer

Children are naturally competitive when they play football. They learn better when they are matched by ability and the games are close. This is why it is known as *Development Football*.



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Introduction

Children from U7– U10 do not play in leagues. They can play in a maximum of three trophy events during the season. This allows them to learn about winning and losing in a fun environment. Trophies can be awarded to the winners and the results of the mini-event published.

Age Maximum Format Trophy Events

U7s – U8s	U9s – U10s
 5v5	 7v7
3 x 2 weeks in a season	3 x 4 weeks in a season



When you see this symbol, rotate your device to see the diagram in more detail.

All sizes, times or numbers shown are the maximum allowed unless otherwise stated (FA SCORY 2018/19). All diagrams are shown with 7 versus 7 for illustrative purposes only.

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2 Ball



Ball Size by Age

U7s – U9s	U10s
 <p>Size 3</p>	 <p>Size 3</p>



- The ball should be safe for children to play with and made of leather or another suitable material.

3 Number of Players

1 of 2



Number of Players by Age (max.)

U7s – U8s	U9s – U10s
	

- **U7s – 8s:** the maximum number of players per team is 5v5 with a squad of 10 or less.
- **U9s – 10s:** the maximum number of players per team is 7v7 with a squad of 14 or less.

*A team must have at least four players for a game to begin and continue.



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3 Number of Players

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- Games can be played 5v4 at U7/8s, and 7v6 at U9/10s, but should always put the development of the children first.
- Roll off roll on substitutions can be made at any time during the game with permission from the referee, including players who have already been substituted.

*Coaches can be flexible outside of Trophy Events.

- Development football can also be played using smaller numbers such as 4v4 or 3v3 when squad sizes and facilities on the day are suitable and both coaches agree.

4 Playing Equipment



- Children can not play Development Football without shin pads.
- These should be covered entirely by knee length socks.
- Goalkeepers should wear a different coloured shirt to the rest of the team.
- Footwear should be appropriate for the playing surface – no metal studs on 3 and AGP pitches.
- If the weather is poor then players should wear appropriate clothing, but hoodies are not allowed.



5 Match Officials



- Any person who referees a game of Development Football has the authority to apply the Laws of Mini-Soccer even if they are not a fully qualified referee.
- The referee should always help the players to learn the game by explaining their decisions.
- Assistant referees are not required for Development Football.

6 Duration of the Game

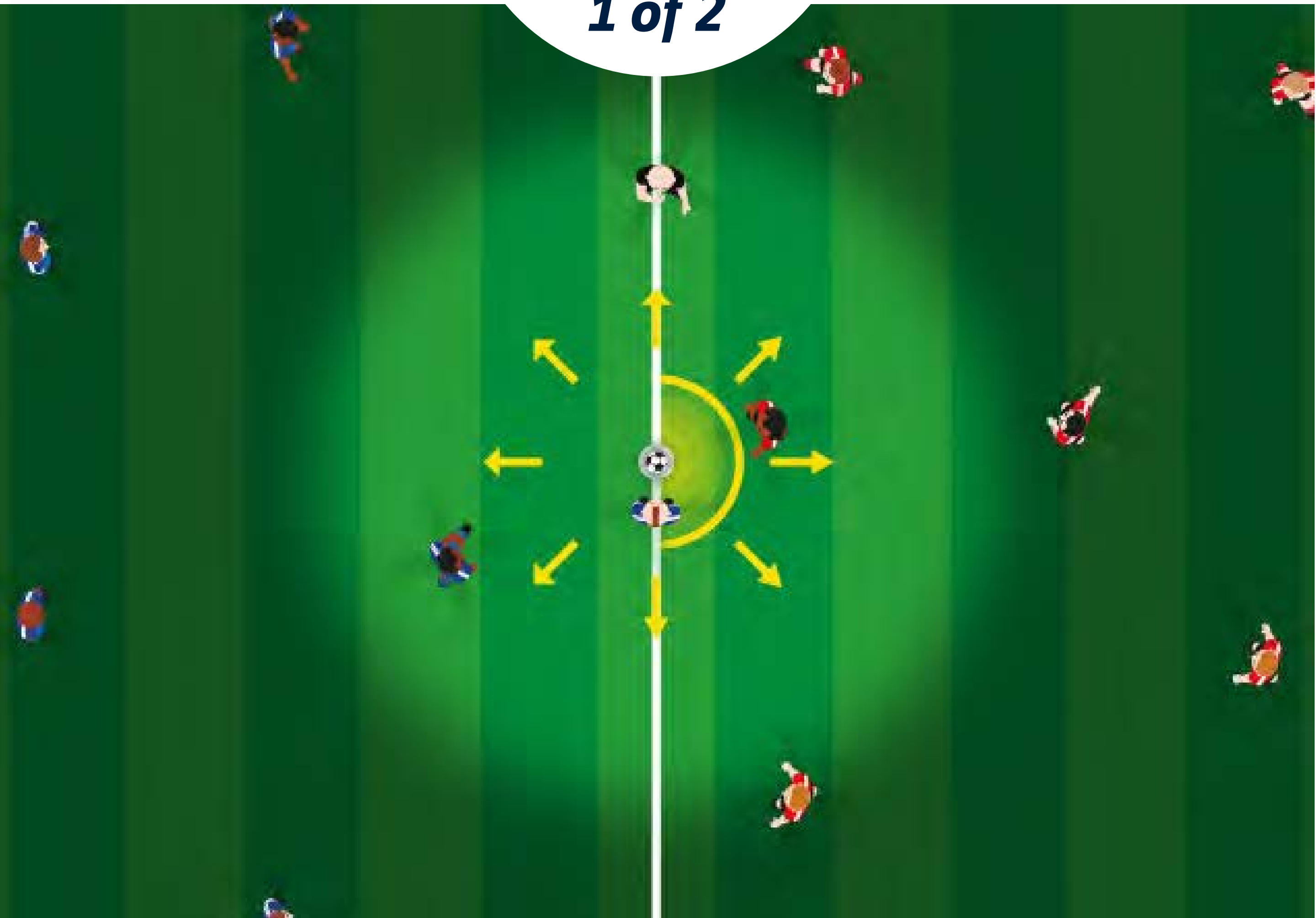
Age maximum playing time in any one day

U7s – U8s	U9s – U10s
 40 minutes	 60 minutes

- Children should not exceed the maximum playing time for their age in any one day. It is the responsibility of the junior club and/or the child's parent or carer to ensure this.
- Each league is allowed to determine its own playing time up to the maximum allowed.
- Half time should not be more than five minutes.
- Development games can be split into quarters within the maximum playing time allowed.
- For tournament football see the Standard Code of Rules for Youth Competitions.

7 Start and Restart of Play

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- A kick off from the centre mark starts the game, or restarts it after a goal is scored.
- It can be taken in any direction.
- The opposition must be five yards away and in their own half.



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7 Start and Restart of Play

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- In Mini-Soccer a goal cannot be scored directly from a kick off or a dropped ball.
- In special circumstances a drop ball is used to restart the game, such as after an injury.
- If the game has stopped with the ball in the penalty area, the drop ball should be taken on the penalty area line (PICTURED).



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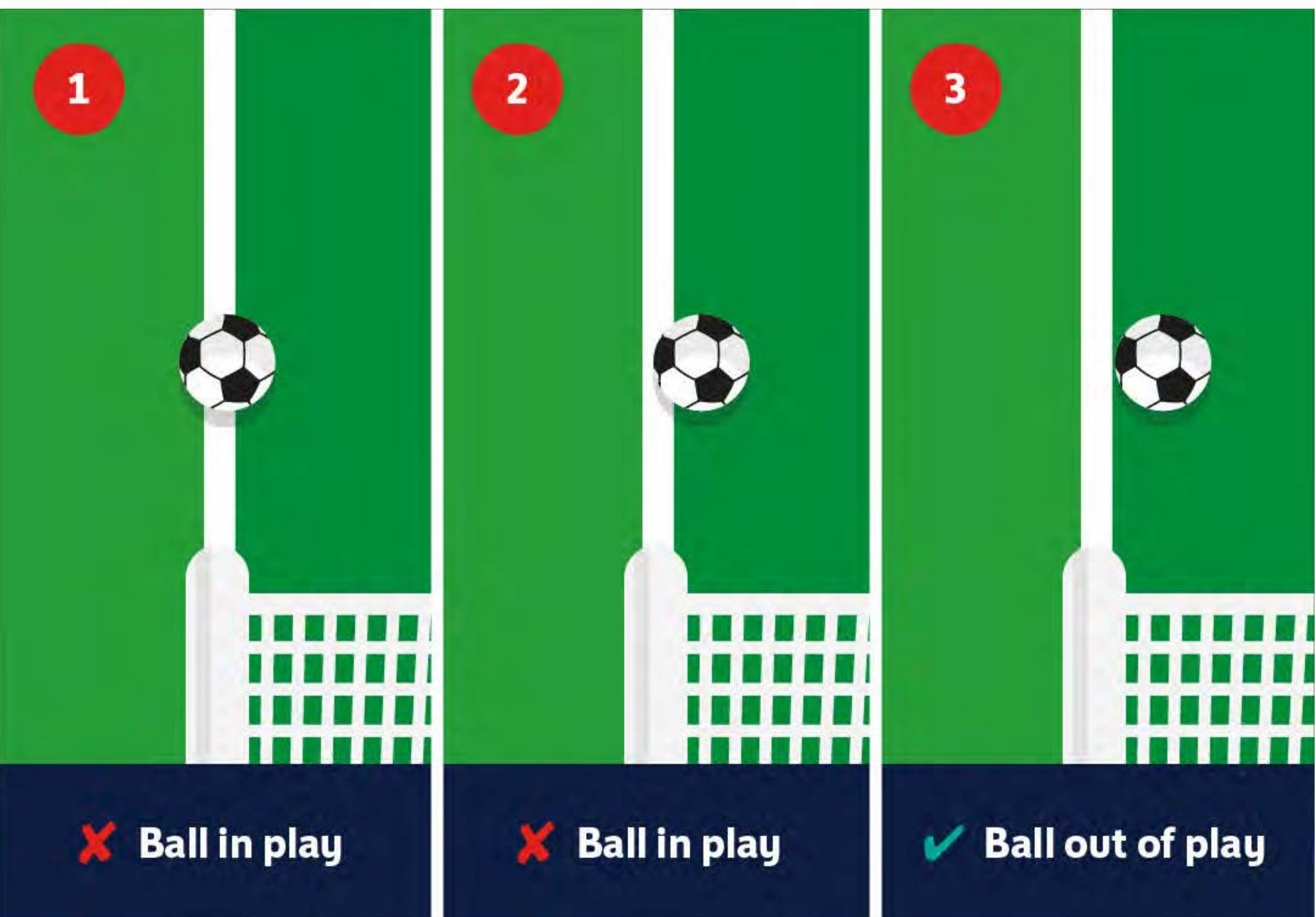


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8 Ball In and Out of Play



- The goal line and touchlines are part of the field of play. The ball must be entirely over these lines to be out of play (PICTURED).
- If an attacker is the last player to touch the ball over the goal line, a goal kick is given.
- If a defender is the last player to touch the ball over the goal line, a corner kick is given.
- If a player touches the ball over the touchline, a throw in is given to the opposing team.



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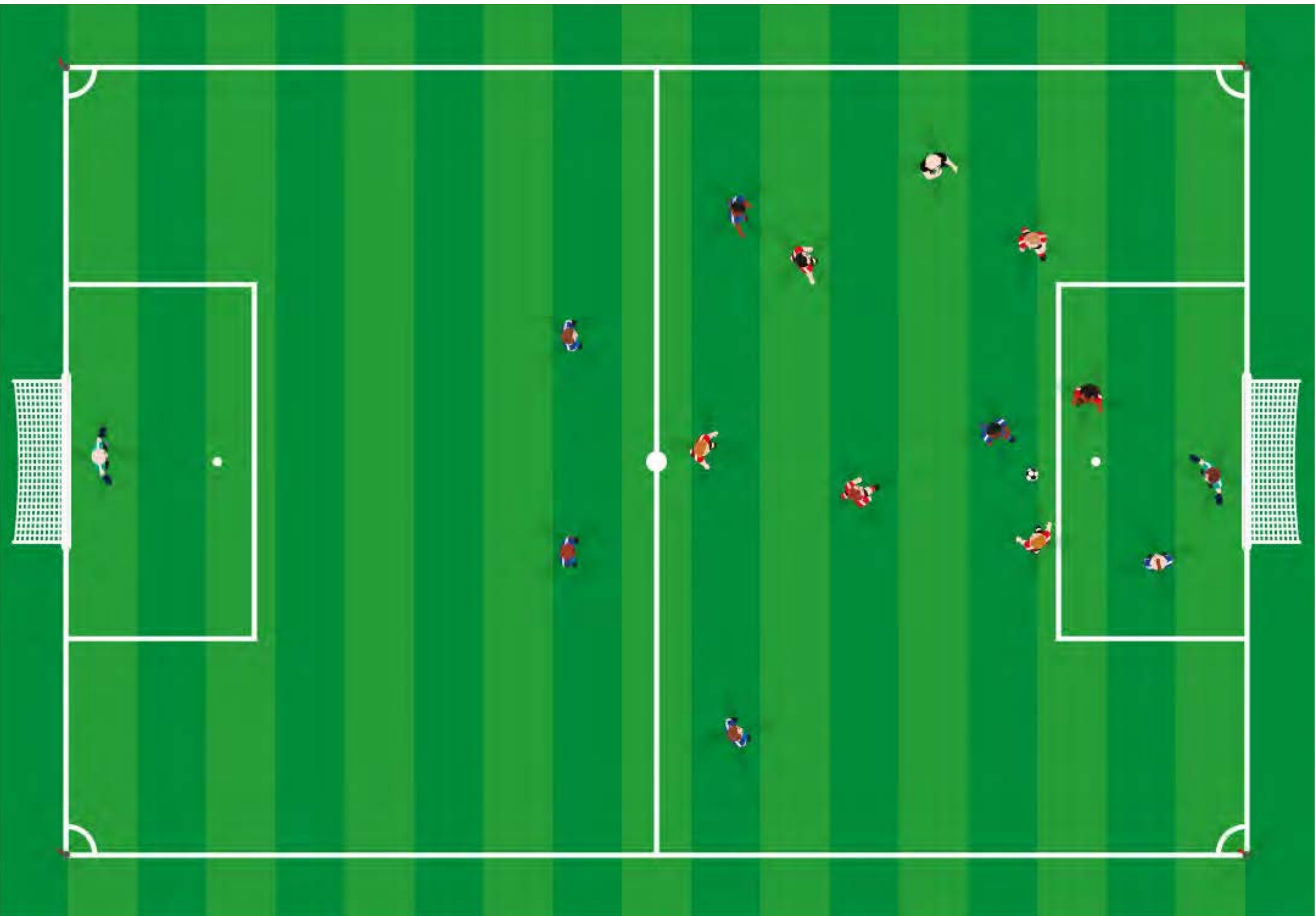
9 Method of Scoring



- A goal is scored when the ball completely crosses the goal line between the posts and under the crossbar of the goal (PICTURED).
- If a foul or hand ball occurs the goal shall be disallowed.



10 Offside



- There is no offside in Development Football.
- The children can be in any area of the pitch at any time (PICTURED) apart from when the Retreat Line is played.



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11 Fouls and Misconduct



- Free kicks are awarded when a foul is committed as in older age football.
- In Mini-Soccer all free kicks are direct.
- A goalkeeper is not allowed to pick the ball up from a back pass or a throw in.
- If this happens a free kick should be given on the penalty area line closest to where the incident occurs.
- As with all other aspects of Development Football the children should be learning the game. Coaches in training, and referees on the day, should try to make sure the children understand all of the above.

12 Free Kicks



- For all free kicks defending players must be 5 yards from the ball (PICTURED).



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13 Penalty Kicks



- If a foul is committed in the penalty area by a defender a penalty kick will be awarded.
- All players except the defending goalkeeper and kicker must be outside the penalty area and at least 5 yards from the penalty mark.
- The ball must be kicked forward.

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14 Throw Ins



- If a player touches the ball out of play over the touchline a throw in is awarded to the opposition.
- Throw ins can be a difficult technique to learn for younger players so retakes are allowed. Referees should offer guidance to help children learn the game.

15 Goal Kicks

1 of 2



- If an attacking player kicks the ball over the goal line a goal kick is awarded to the defending team.
- A goal kick can be taken from any point within the penalty area and by any player from the team with the ball (PICTURED).
- The ball must leave the penalty area to be in play. If this does not happen the kick can be retaken.



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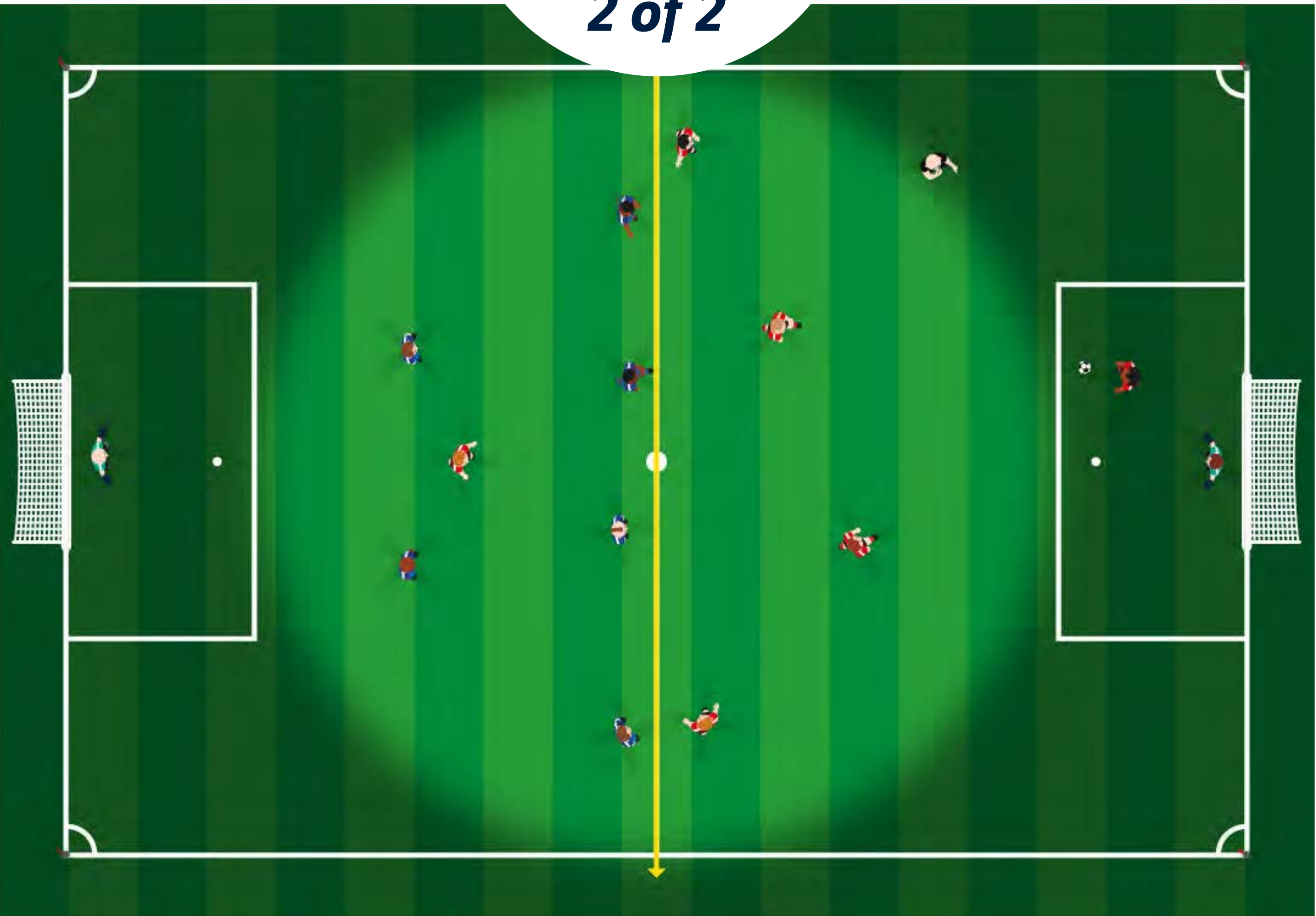
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15 Goal Kicks

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- The team without the ball must retreat to their own half until the ball is in play.
- This is known as the Retreat Line (PICTURED).
- Once the ball is in play, the team without the ball can try and win it back.
- As with all the Laws of Development Football, the referee should help the players learn the game.



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16 Corner Kicks



- If a defending player kicks the ball over the goal line a corner is awarded to the attacking team.
- The defending players must remain at least 5 yards from the ball until it is in play (PICTURED).
- The player taking the corner may not touch the ball again until it has touched another player.

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Optional Power Play Law

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Development football is designed to create the best learning and fun experience for young players. To ensure an imbalance in ability does not spoil this, the FA has approved 'Power Play' as an option that mini-soccer and youth leagues can adopt.

- If a team is losing by a four goal difference they can put an additional player on – so 5v5 becomes 6v5.
- If the score returns to less than a four goal difference the team takes off a player. It does not have to be the last player to come on.

Optional Power Play Law

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- If a team goes on to be losing by a six goal difference a further additional player can be added – so 6v5 becomes 7v5.
- The main aim of the Power Play option is that all players are being challenged and enjoying the game.
- Power Play is available through all mini-soccer football formats 5v5 and 7v7.