

## Under 9 and Under 10 Youth Player Development

The motivation to learn basic skills is very high at this age level. Children gradually begin to change from being self-centered to being self-critical and develop the need for group and/or team games. The "Six principles" of U9/U10 player development should be the cornerstone of any program.

1. Are activities developmentally appropriate?
2. Provide clear, concise and correct information.
3. Organize activities simple to complex.
4. Provide safe and appropriate training area.
5. Include decision making by the players within activities.
6. Ensure activities have implications for the game.

### Coach

Sensitive teacher; patient; enthusiastic; imaginative; ability to demonstrate; understanding of technique.  
License: State Youth Module, Level 2.

**Technique** is understood as the mechanics of the following basic soccer skills:

- 1. Dribbling:** Moving with the ball at your feet. Player may move the ball to beat an opponent, accelerate away from an opponent or turn away from an opponent.
- 2. Receiving:** Receiving a ball that has been passed along the ground or in the air using any part of the body except the arms or hands.
- 3. Shooting:** Striking the ball with the feet towards an opponent's goal.
- 4. Passing:** Playing the ball with the feet to a teammate.
- 5. Heading:** Intentionally contacting the ball with the forehead (not a priority technique at U9/U10).

### Key Considerations

When working on technique key factors include the position of the player's head, eyes, and non-kicking foot. Of equal importance is which surface of the ball is contacted and by what surface of the foot or body.

### Activities checklist:

- Are the activities FUN?
- Are the activities organized?
- Are the players involved in the activities?
- Is creativity and decision making being used?
- Are the spaces used appropriate?
- Is the coach's feedback appropriate?
- Are there implications for the game?

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### Tactics = Decisions

In soccer there are individual, small group and team tactics. At U9/U10 the key development of tactics occurs in 1v1, 2v2 situations. Play a variety of positions in order to develop into a complete player.

### Attacking Examples

Dribbling to beat an opponent, when and where to shoot at goal, when and where to pass and move, choice of controlling surface.

### Defending Examples

Positioning between opponent and goal, when to challenge for the ball, supporting a teammate challenging for the ball.

### Physical

Key emphasis on coordination, agility (changing direction while in motion), quickness and balance.

### Psychological

Keep it FUN and ENJOYABLE to foster a desire to play (Intrinsic Motivation). Demonstrate increased self-responsibility for preparation, and discipline. Let them initiate play and learn through self-discovery / self-expression. Enjoy competition. All activities should have objectives/method of scoring. Have ability to work in groups, incorporate cooperative game and activities.

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**Minnesota Youth Soccer  
Under 9 & 10  
Small-Sided Games**

**6 vs. 6**

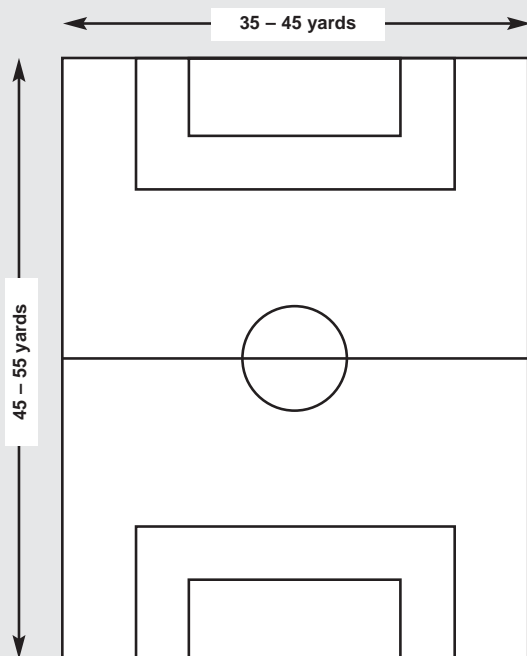
# Minnesota Youth Soccer Association

www.mnyouthsoccer.org

Under 9 & 10: 6 vs. 6 Guidelines



## FIELD DIMENSIONS



### Additional Dimensions

- **Goal Area:** 6 x 16 yards
- **Penalty Area:** 10 x 24 yards
- **Corner Arc:** 2 feet
- **Center Circle Radius:** 6 yards

### Field Size:

Min: 35 x 45 yards / Max: 45 x 55 yards  
The field of play must be rectangle in shape. The length of the touch line must be greater than the length of the goal line.

### Goal Size:

Min. 6 Max. 6.5 feet high x 12 feet wide; must be placed on the center of each goal line.

### Ball Size:

Size 4

### Number of Players:

6 players on the field, one of whom must be the goalkeeper (minimum of 4 players and one must be a goalkeeper).

### Roster Size:

Min. 8 / Max. 12

### Players' Equipment:

Shinguards are required.

### Substitution:

Substitutions are allowed at any stoppage of play with referee's permission.

### Referees:

One referee (Grade 9 or above) and no assistant referees.

### Game Length:

2 x 25 minute halves

### Start/Restart of Play:

All opponents must be 6 yards away.

### Ball Out of Play:

The ball is out of play when it has wholly crossed the goal line or touch line whether on the ground or in the air.

### Scoring:

A goal is scored when the whole of the ball passes over the goal line, between the goal posts and under the crossbar.

### Offside:

Offside **IS NOT** in effect.

### Fouls/Misconduct:

All classified as indirect.

### Free Kicks:

Free kick by the attacker within the Goal Area must be placed on top of the Goal Area Line parallel to the goal line and closest to the point of infraction. All opponents must be 6 yards away unless they are on their own goal line between the goalposts.

### Penalty Kick:

Penalty kicks are not awarded at this age level.

### Throw-In:

The thrower must face the field and with both feet on the ground, delivers the ball from behind and over the head using both hands.

### Goal Kick:

All opponents must be outside of the penalty area.

### Corner Kick:

All opponents must be 6 yards away.

