

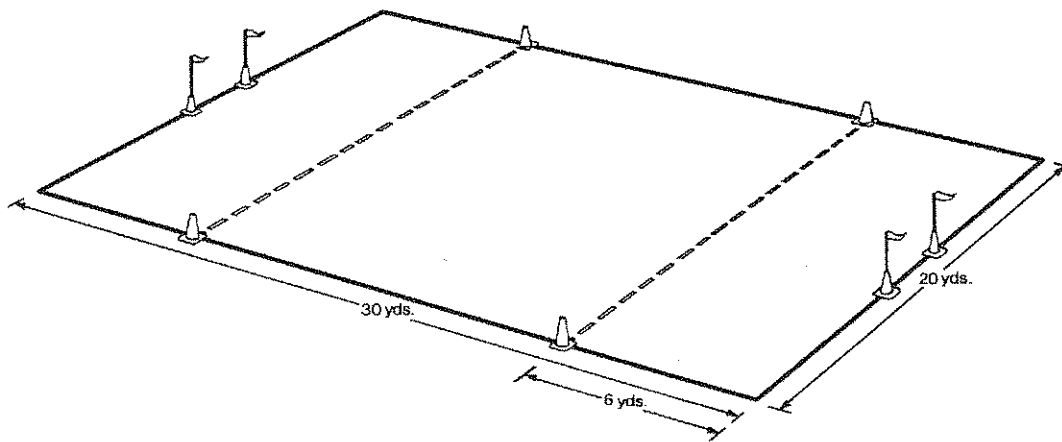
# Micro Soccer® Organization and Rules

Micro Soccer® is used to distinguish the game beyond that of small-sided games, mini-soccer and mod-soccer. Micro Soccer® uses the fundamental team unit — three — as the basis for learning and for having fun.

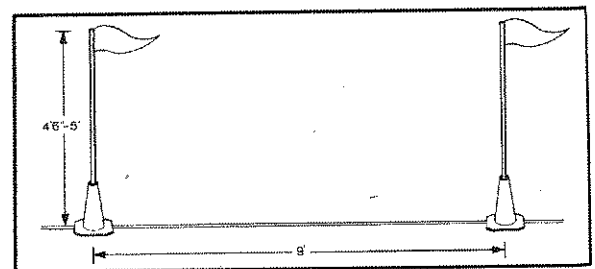
There are variations in the way 3-a-side soccer can be played. Some are presented in this manual. The rules of Micro Soccer® and its organization are covered below.

## The Rules of Micro Soccer®

1. The field is approximately 30 x 20 yards, although the size can be adjusted over a period of time by trial and error. The dimensions should vary according to player age and abilities. If it is not possible to line the fields, use existing field markings, marker discs and cones.



2. If the field is not lined, marker cones are placed on the sidelines, six yards out from goal lines. These mark an imaginary line forming the goalkeeping zone. The goalkeeper can handle the ball inside this zone, but may play (and should be encouraged to do so) beyond the line in a conventional manner, using feet and body, but not the hands.
3. At 6-, 7- and 8-years old, unlike the FIFA rules, the ball can be passed back to the goalkeeper in his/her goalbox and the keeper can pick the ball up.
4. Goals are set up using corner flags (preferably free standing ones), nine feet apart. An ideal method is to use poles or corner flags inserted in large cones.
5. Goals can be scored from anywhere but the ball must pass below the imaginary line across the goal tops.
6. The coach referees, or appoints his assistant or a parent.
7. Time-outs are called every two or three minutes, when substitutions are made.
8. Each team has a goalkeeper, but the goalkeepers are changed at each time-out on a rotating basis so that equal time is established for the goalkeeping function.
9. If there are six players on a team (three on, three off), lines changes can be made periodically so the same three players do not always play together.



10. When the ball goes out of play, the game is re-started by one of the following ways:
  - a. Over the sidelines, with a throw-in (or kick-in, if the coach so desires).
  - b. Over the goal line, with a goal kick if attacking team last touched the ball; or corner kick if defending team last played the ball (goal kick is taken from anywhere in the goalkeeper handling zone; corner from where goal line and sideline meet).
  - c. After a goal is scored, re-start the game with a goal kick. Alternatively, with the youngest players, mark a center spot, and re-start with a kick-off from the center with the opposition retiring to their defending 6-yard line.  
 Note: Goals cannot be scored directly from a goal kick, a throw-in, a kick off or a free kick. There are no penalty kicks in Micro Soccer®.
11. If a foul throw is committed, the coach explains the correct method and lets the offender re-take the throw. Discretionary power is then given to the referee if another foul throw is committed but, most times, it should not be called.
12. Because of the small field size and the end-to-end nature of the game, the ball may go out of play frequently. Coaches should encourage parents to participate as *ball parents* to help the flow and the enjoyment of the game. Any players on the sidelines should be encouraged to help get the ball back in play quickly. In gymnasias, on artificial turf, all-weather and other hard surfaces the ball will run more quickly. If possible, compensate by widening the playing area or by reducing the air pressure of the ball.
13. All infringements — tripping, handling, etc. — are pointed out to the child as incorrect and the game restarted with an indirect free kick (i.e., ball must be passed before a shot can be taken). There are no penalties (players of this age are honest and do not commit deliberate fouls; and the "indirect" free kick encourages passing and co-operation).
14. All opposing players must be at least five yards from the ball on free kicks, corner kicks and goal kicks (and kick-in, if used).

Please note: a more comprehensive and formalized Micro Soccer® rule book for tournament and match play is available from the publishers.

## System for Substitutions and Rotation

A substitution or rotation system will depend on the number of players available:

**With 3 players** — No substitutes. Rotate the goalkeeper every 2- or 3-minutes. Increase the number of time-outs and reduce playing time of game. Because the game's intensity a two-minute system is most effective. Plenty of water breaks. The ideal practice number.

**With 4 players** — One substitute, with the following sequence — substitute becomes the goalkeeper; goalkeeper becomes an outfield player, one outfield player the substitute, and so on, on an equal time basis (in goal, on the field and as the substitute).

**With 5 players** — An awkward number. The two substitutes always come back on the field. One as the goalkeeper, one as an outfield player. Goalkeeper moves out as a field player. Each rotation must bear in mind the equal time and equal goalkeeping time rule — even if that transfers over to another game (because if the game only has four periods, five are needed to ensure equal time).

**With 6 players** — The perfect substitute system. With three on/three off, there is a different goalkeeper each time and when all six have played goal, repeat the procedure. Make line changes periodically. A 6-player system is good for games and tournaments, but is not enough activity for practice situations