The Mini-Soccer and Youth Futsal Handbook

Introduction

MS Mini-Soccer

MS Mini-Soccer Laws Index

YF Youth Futsal

YF Youth Futsal Laws Index

Introduction

Without Laws there would be no football.

But when very young children play there are many other things to consider too.

- *Can we make sure that everyone, children AND adults, has an enjoyable time?*
- *If the pitch is fit to play, is the weather appropriate for small children?*
- *Would playing indoors be better?*
- *Is there any reason why EVERY child should not be able to enjoy at least 50% game time on the day?*

If we can all apply these principles just as much as the Laws themselves, then we should see more and more children enjoying the greatest game in the world.

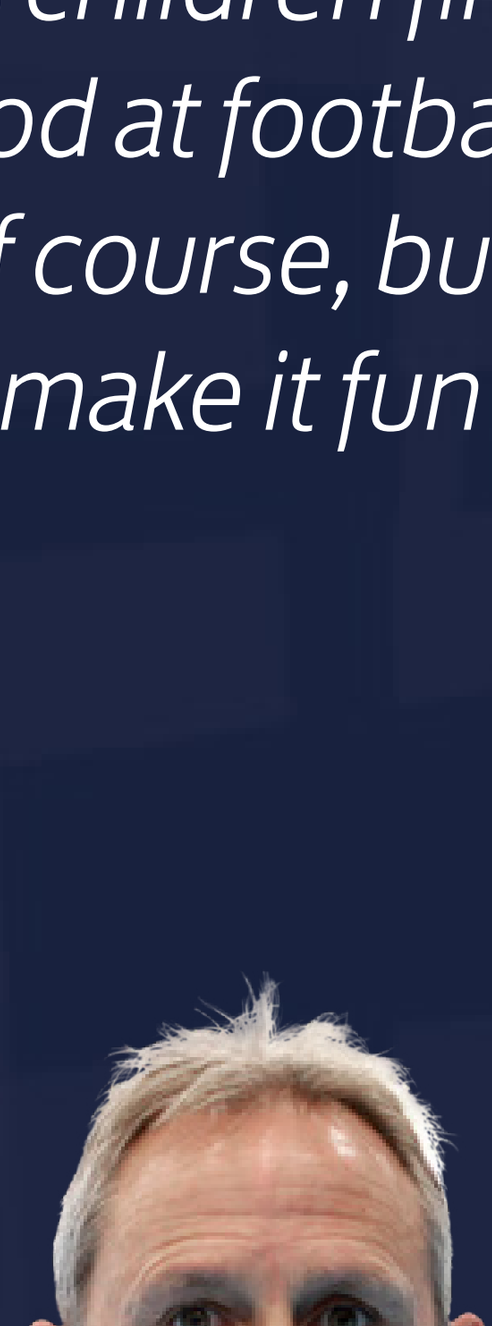
#LetThemPlay

Philosophy

“ We all want children to enjoy playing and fall in love with football from an early age. Mini-Soccer and Futsal are both designed to allow children to do just that. They both have a key role to play in the development of young players in the Foundation Phase. We want to create an environment that is exciting, memorable and one that keeps children coming back.

We ask all coaches to see them as children first, rather than kids who might be good at football. These games have to have laws of course, but the overriding message for us all is to make it fun and enjoyable.”

Peter Sturgess
FA National Lead Coach
& FIFA Futsal Instructor



Philosophy

“ For me Futsal works on so many levels of young players development with a ball. It also works for our climate in England to take them indoors in the winter months but its so much more than just trying to hide from the weather.

The game should be of access to all young players as part of their development and with a variance that some will excel in maybe more than football. Its about choice for our young people of tomorrow!.”

Michael Skubala
England Futsal Head Coach

Philosophy

“ We have more children playing mini soccer now than ever before, we have to ensure that the experience they have means that they want a lifelong relationship with the game. Futsal will help enhance that overall love for the game.”

John Folwell

FA National Participation Manager – Youth Football

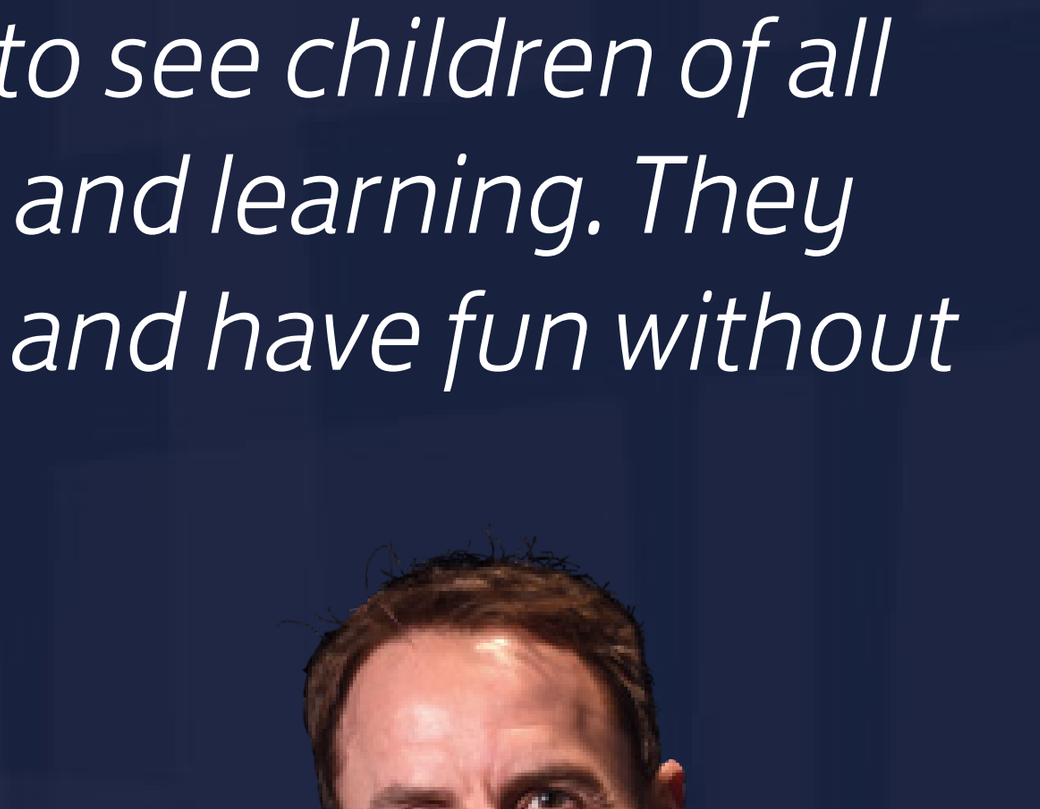
Philosophy

“ Futsal creates better decision-makers in tight areas. It produces quicker and more accurate passers, better in one-v-one situations and adaptable players who can rotate and be fluid tactically. Young kids love Futsal.”

Michael Skubala

“ As a parent myself, I want to see children of all abilities playing the game and learning. They should be able to try skills and have fun without any pressure.”

Gareth Southgate



Respect

Respect is FOR ALL and both games should be enjoyed in a safe, fun and inclusive environment, where anyone can play their part.

If we do not have Respect for the opposition players and coaches, and especially for the referee, then we do not have a game of football.

RESPECT
GOOD BEHAVIOUR MAKES FOR A GREAT GAME

Respect

Here are some of the things you can do to help:

- ✔ Welcome the opposition and treat them how you would like to be treated.
- ✔ Support and encourage players from both sides.
- ✔ Let the coaches coach.
- ✔ Remember that the referee may be learning the game.
- ✔ You are a role model to children at all times during the game.
- ✔ Always make the game fun.
- ✘ Do not go onto the pitch unless a child is injured.
- ✔ Show children how to win or lose in the right way.

RESPECT

GOOD BEHAVIOUR MAKES FOR A GREAT GAME

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*.

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	
5 v 5	3 x 2 weeks in a season	7 v 7	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.

Mini-Soccer Laws Index

1 Playing Area ›

2 Ball ›

3 Number of Players ›

4 Playing Equipment ›

5 Match Officials ›

6 Duration of the Game ›

7 Start & Restart of Play ›

8 Ball In & Out of Play ›

9 Method of Scoring ›

10 Offside ›

11 Fouls and Misconduct ›

12 Free Kicks ›

13 Penalty Kicks ›

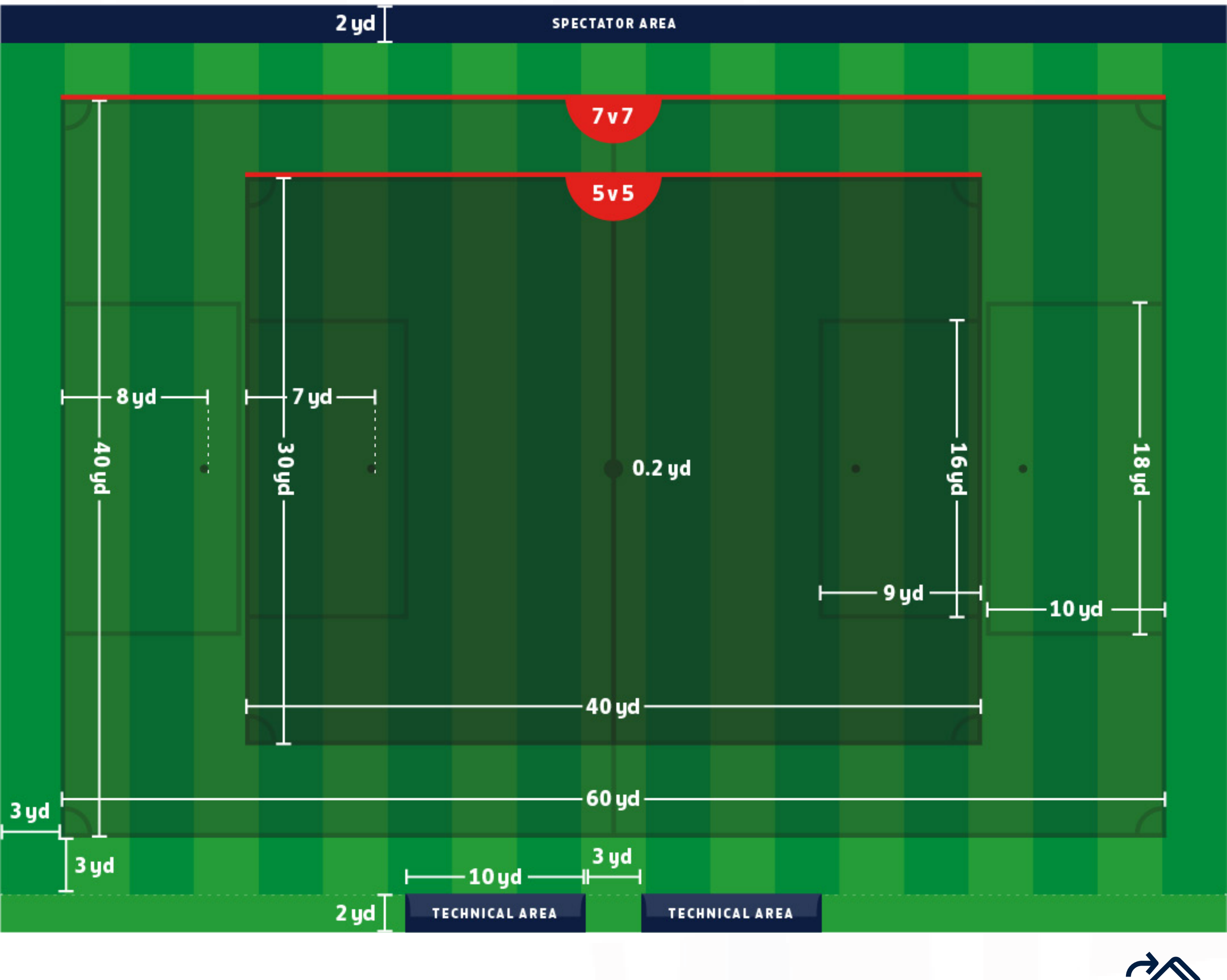
14 Throw-Ins ›

15 Goal Kicks ›

16 Corner Kicks ›

Optional Power Play Law ›

1 Playing Area



- **Kick offs:** these are taken from the centre mark on the half way line.
- **Retreat line:** the team without the ball moves back to the half way line when goal kicks are taken.
- **Goal sizes:** the goal size for Mini-Soccer is 12ft × 6ft.

2 Ball

Ball Size by Age

U7s – U9s	U10s
Size 3	Size 4

- 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
5v5	7v7

- **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.

3 Number of Players

2 of 2

– 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.

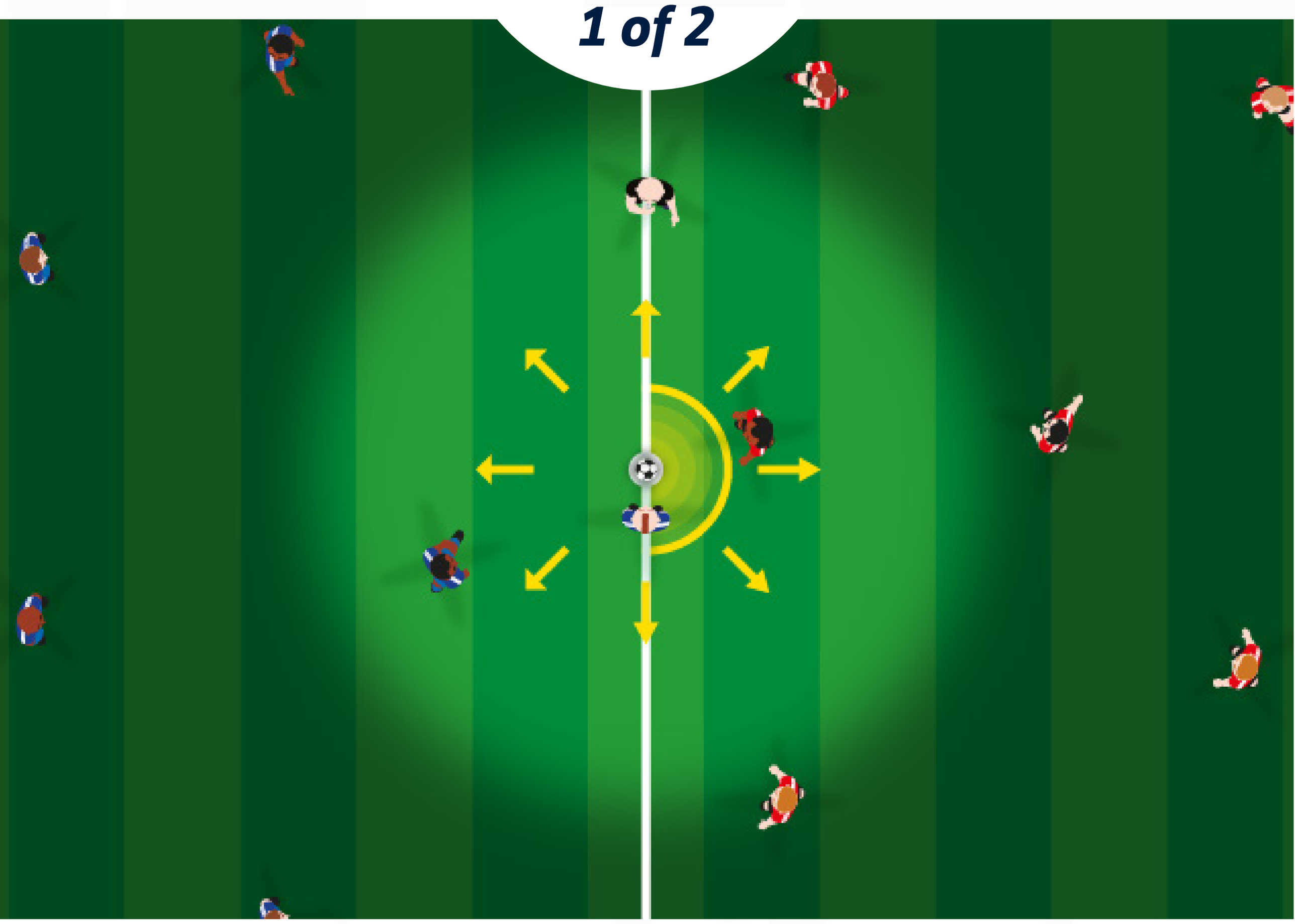
– Half time should not be more than five minutes.

– 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

1 of 2



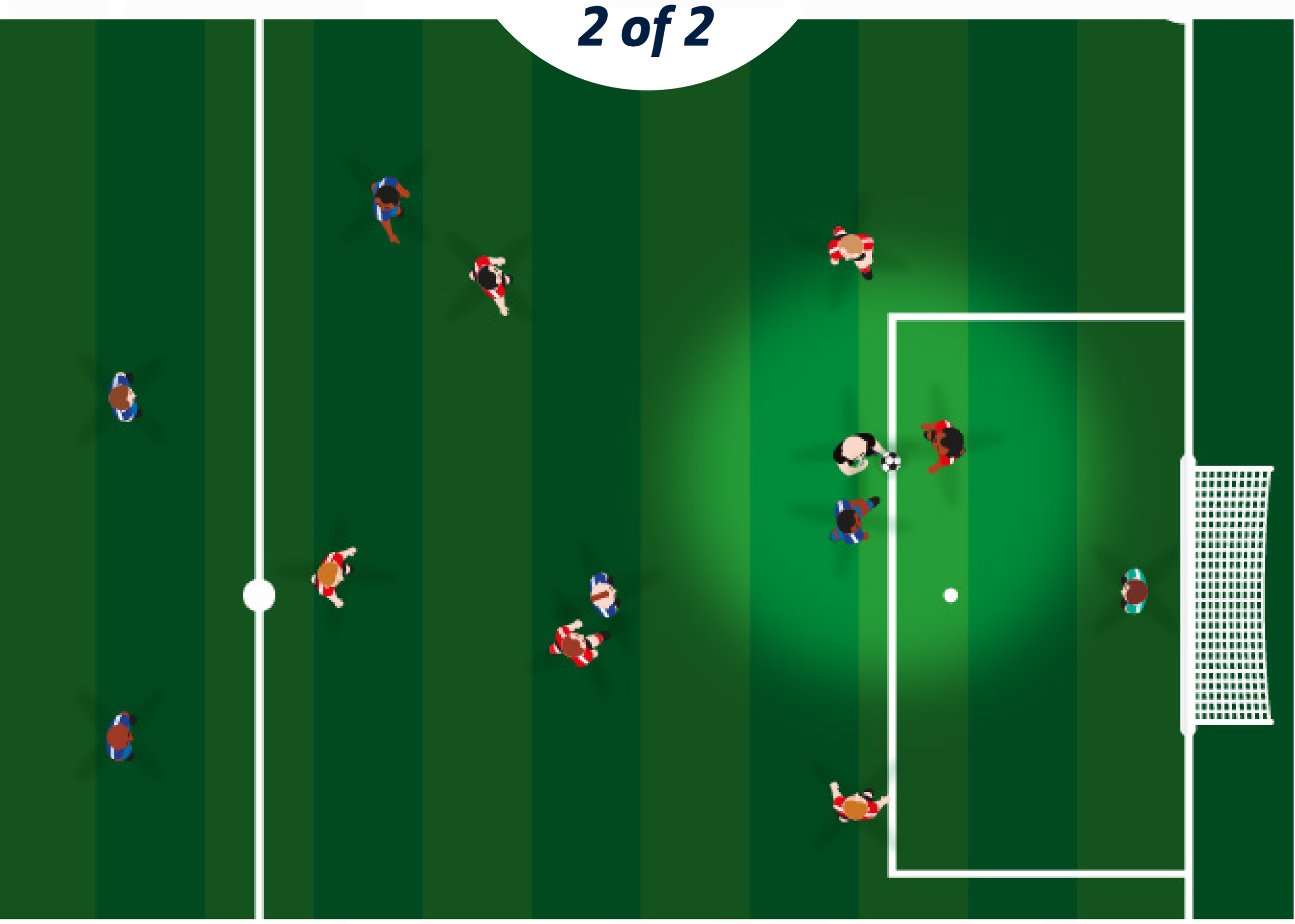
– A kick off from the centre mark starts the game, or restarts it after a goal is scored.

– It can be taken in any direction.

– The opposition must be five yards away and in their own half.

7 Start and Restart of Play

2 of 2

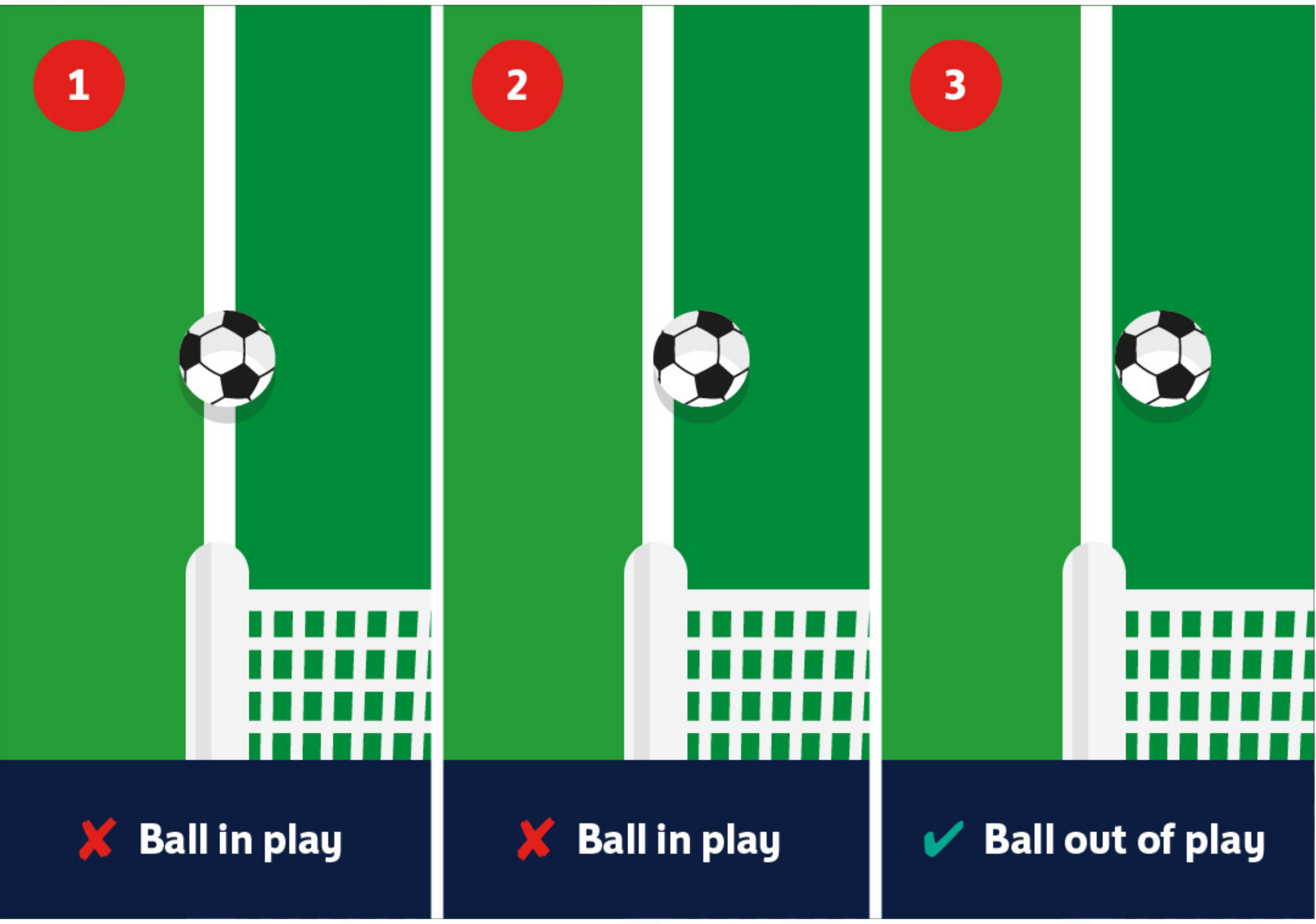


– In Mini-Soccer a goal cannot be scored directly from a kick off or a dropped ball.

– 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).

8 Ball In and Out of Play



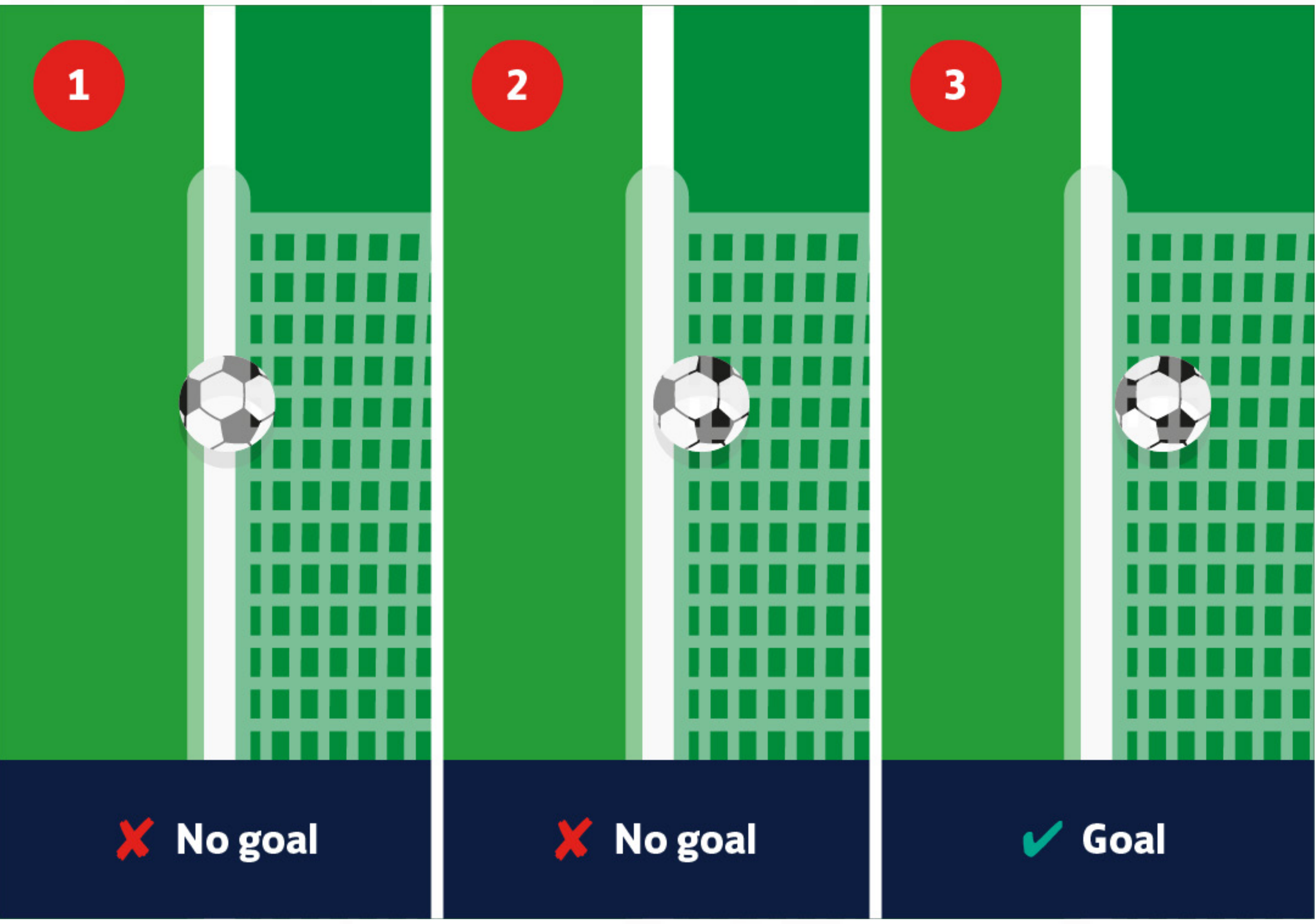
– The goal line and touchlines are part of the field of play. The ball must be entirely over these lines to be out of play (PICTURED).

– 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.

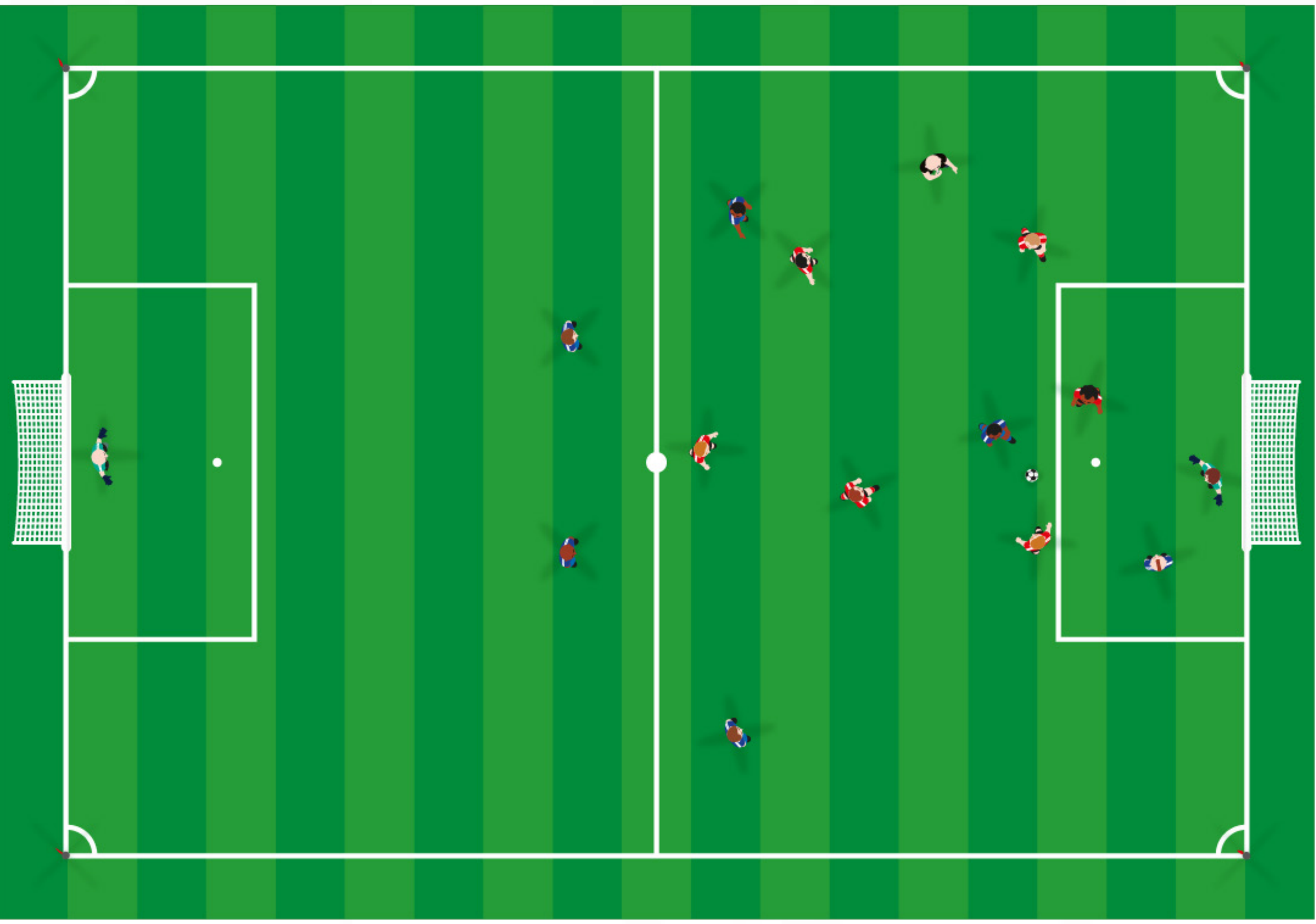
9 Method of Scoring



– 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



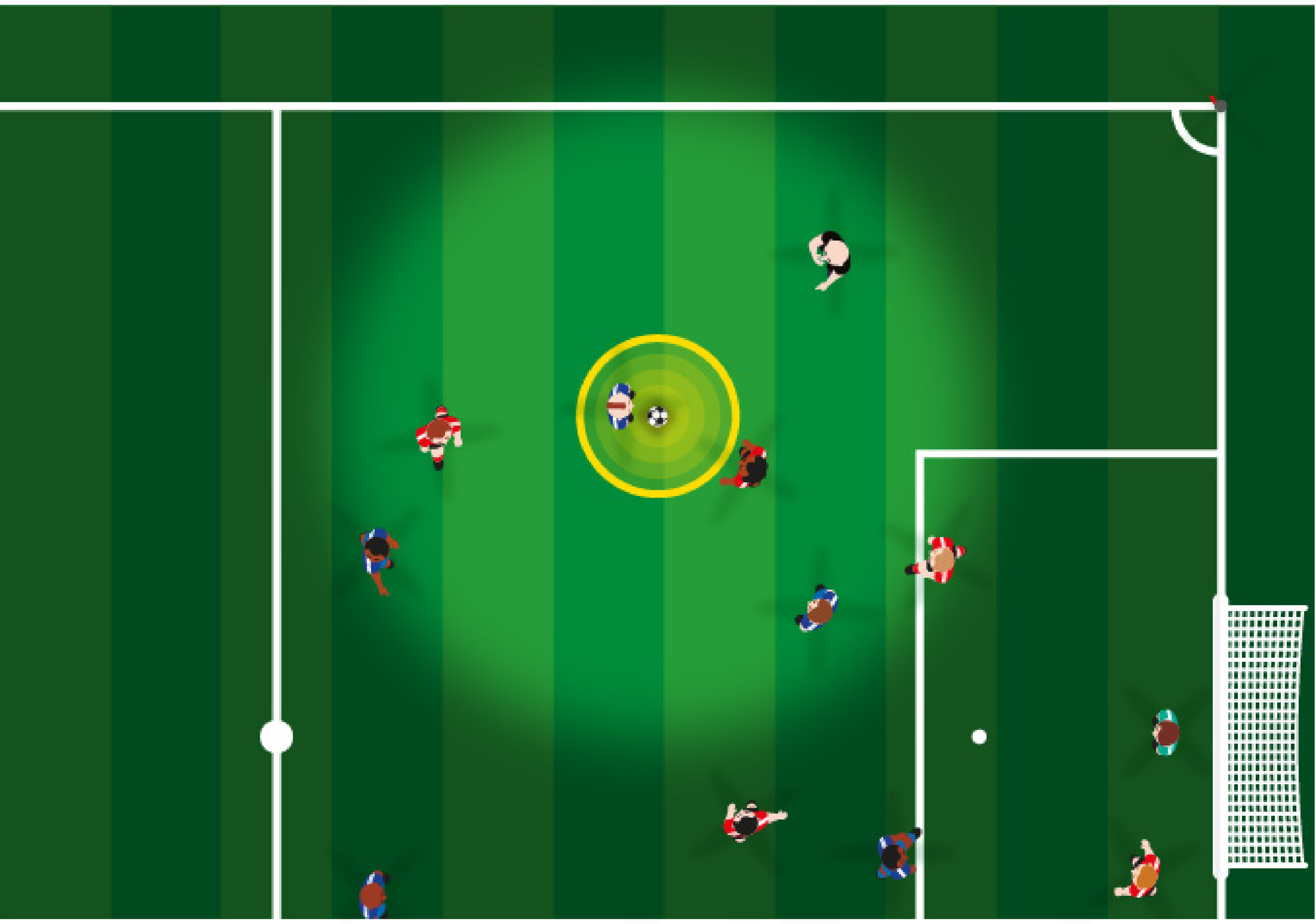
– There is no offside in Development Football.

– The children can be in any area of the pitch at any time (PICTURED) apart from when the Retreat Line is played.

11 Fouls and Misconduct

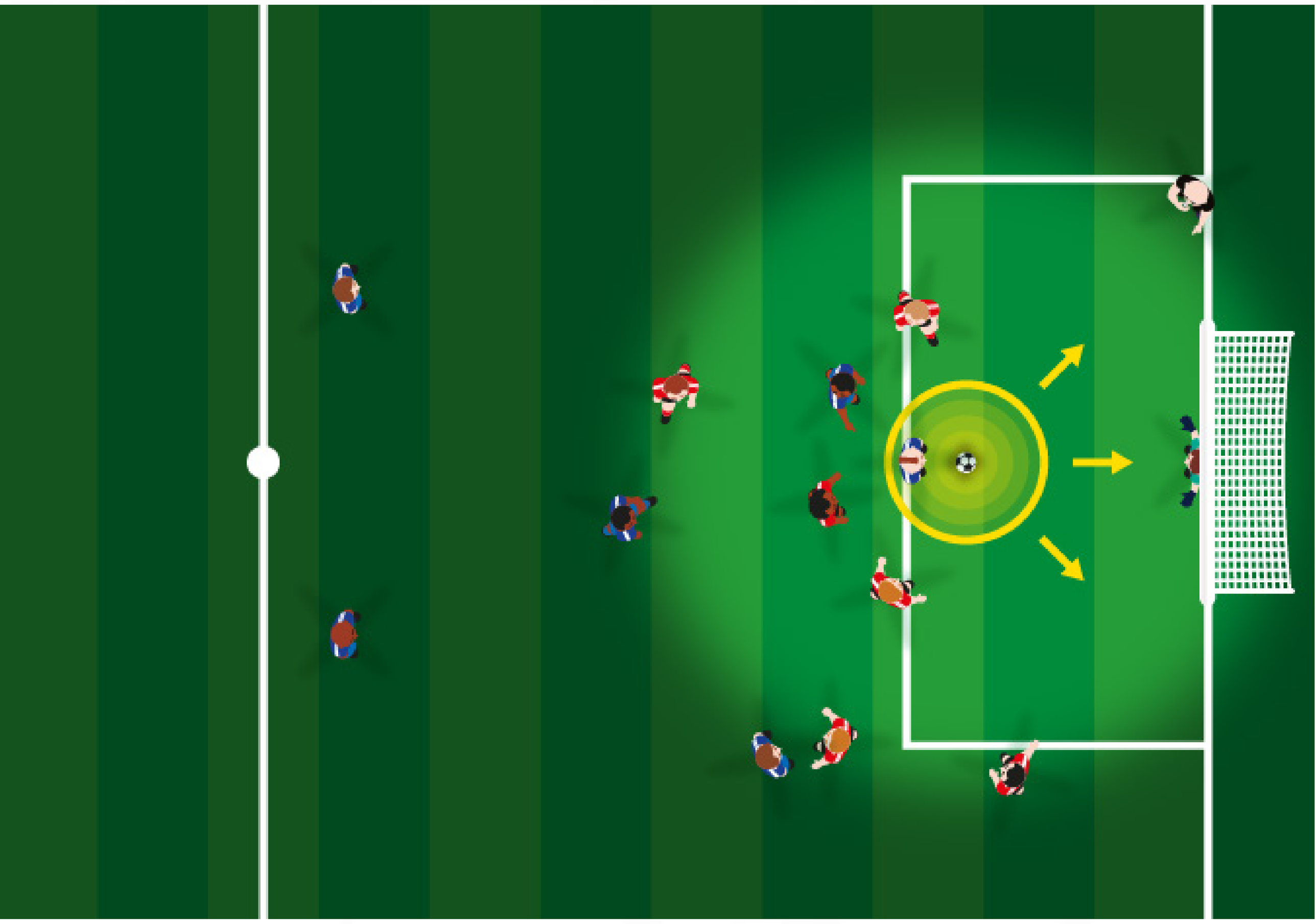
- Free kicks are awarded when a foul is committed as in older age football.
- In Mini-Soccer all free kicks are direct.
- A goalkeeper is not allowed to pick the ball up from a back pass or a throw in.
- If this happens a free kick should be given on the penalty area line closest to where the incident 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).

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.

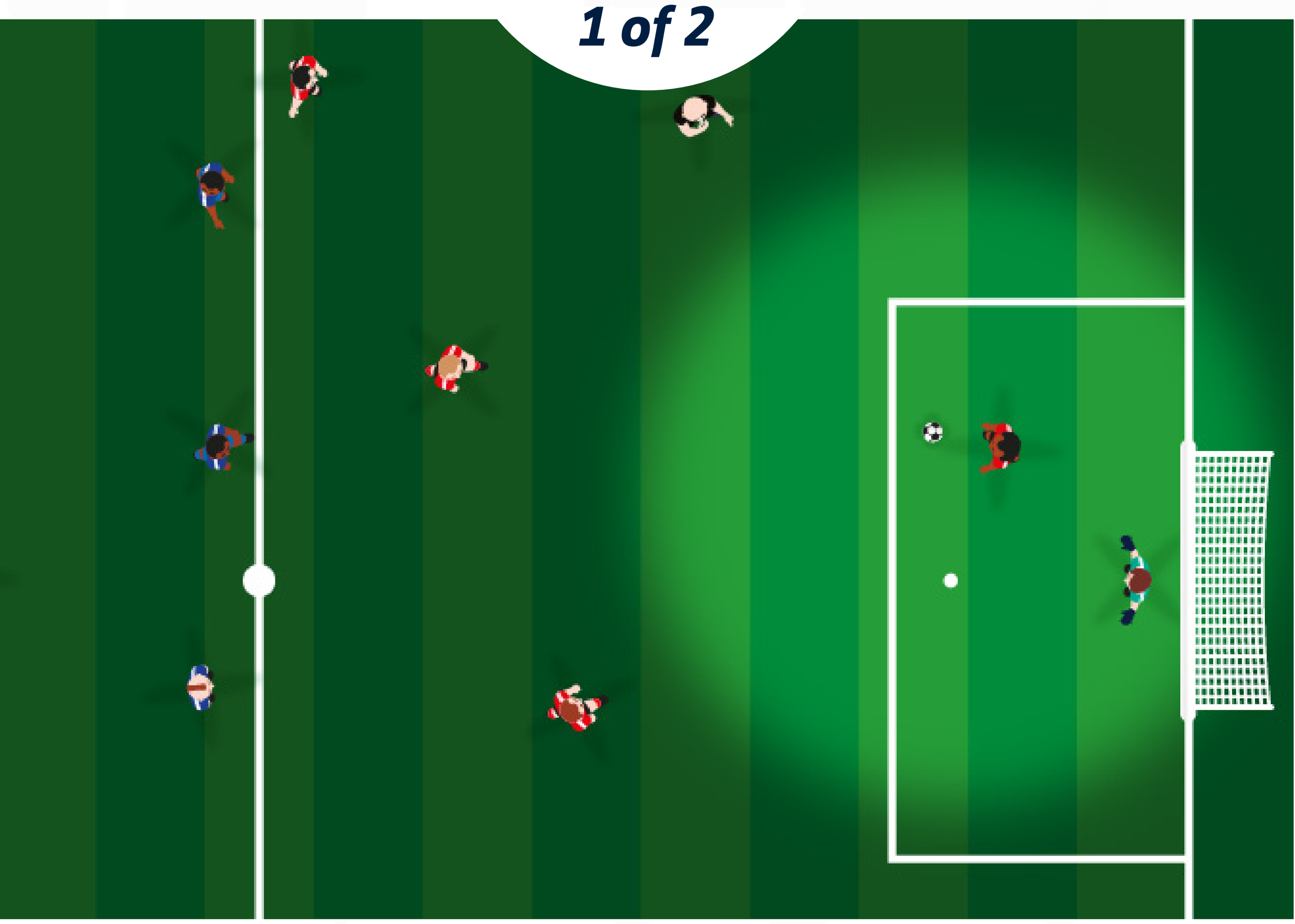
– The ball must be kicked forward.

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



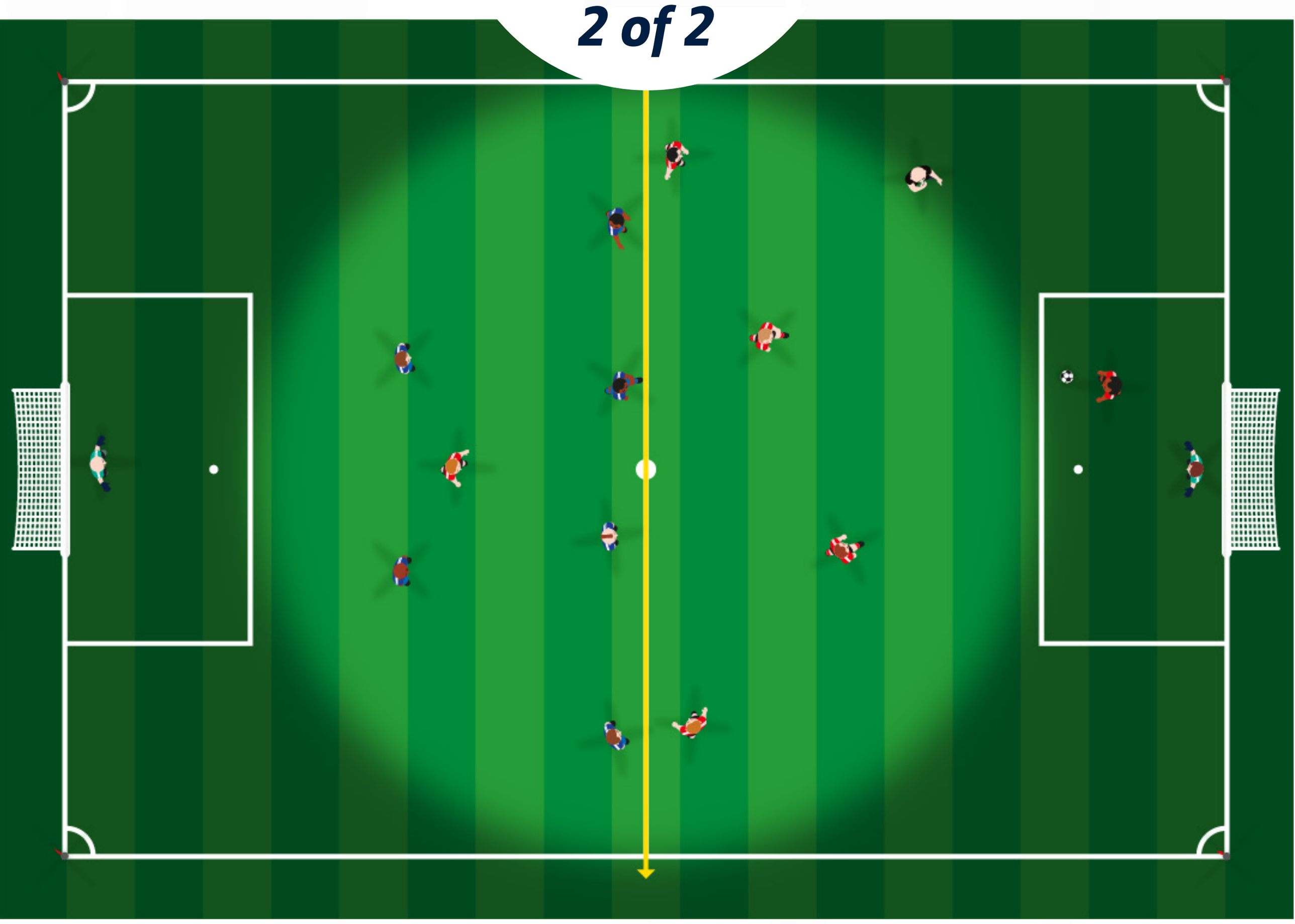
– If an attacking player kicks the ball over the goal line a goal kick is awarded to the defending team.

– 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.

15 Goal Kicks

2 of 2



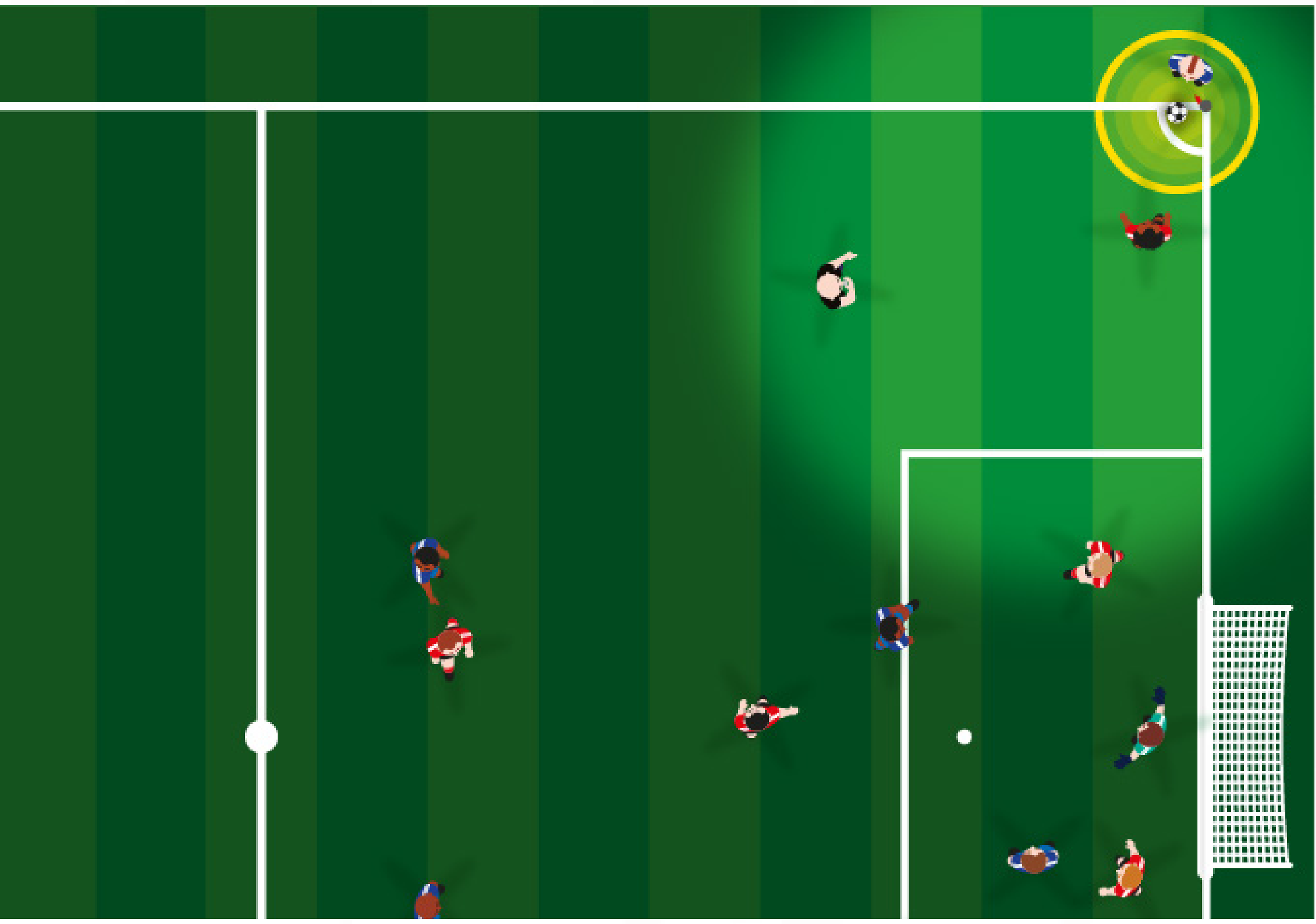
– The team without the ball must retreat to their own half until the ball is in play.

– 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.

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 playing taking the corner may not touch the ball again until it has touched another player.

Optional Power Play Law

1 of 2

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

2 of 2

- 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 and7v7.

Youth Futsal

This is an introduction to the Laws of Futsal so that more and more people can begin to play and enjoy the game. They are the basics that make it quite different from traditional 5v5 football.

Introduction

Coaches of young players should ensure they have **an understanding of the basic laws detailed in this guide** before a match, but this is a great way to start children playing and enjoying the game.

FIFA

The full version of the Laws of Futsal are available on the FIFA website:

FIFA Laws of Futsal (link to www.fifa.com)

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.

How Futsal Began

Futsal was first played on basketball courts in Uruguay in the 1930s. As a fast moving, skilful version of football it soon spread to other South American countries such as Brazil. Futsal became popular in large crowded cities where there was a shortage of pitches for football.

The skills and techniques developed by playing Futsal were very apparent in the wonderful World Cup winning Brazilian teams.

How Futsal Began

Now Futsal is recognised not only as a development tool for football, but as a brilliant game in its own right. Futsal has been embedded into the England DNA. It is a great way to keep children playing during the winter months. Players of all ages love to play Futsal.

FUTSAL.

What the Great Players Say About Futsal

1

"As a little boy in Argentina, I played Futsal on the streets and for my club. It was tremendous fun, and it really helped me become who I am today."

— Lionel Messi

2

"During my childhood in Portugal, all we played was Futsal, the small playing area helped me improve my close control, and whenever I played Futsal I felt free. If it wasn't for Futsal, I wouldn't be the player I am today."

— Christiano Ronaldo

3

"The technique of playing Futsal is different to the eleven-a-side version; there are spectacular things you can attempt that you would not dare trying in football. It adds more fun to the discipline."

— Zinadine Zidane

Youth Futsal Laws Index

1 Playing Area ›

2 Ball ›

3 Goals ›

4 Match Officials ›

5 Timing of Games ›

6 Four Second Rule ›

7 Kick Ins ›

8 Restarts ›

9 Goalkeepers ›

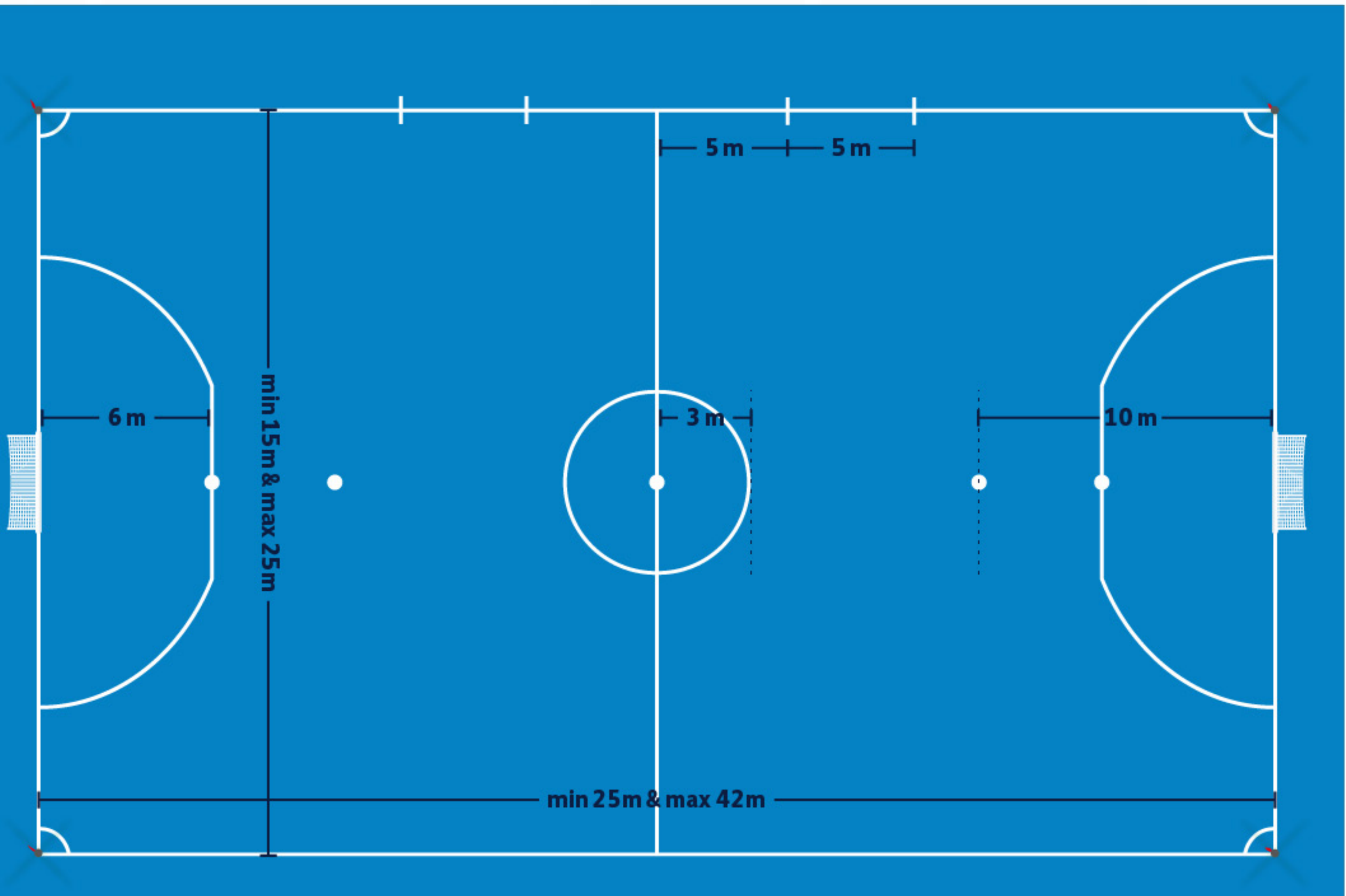
10 Rolling Substitutions ›

11 Sliding Tackles ›

12 Accumulated Fouls ›

13 Red Cards ›

1 Playing Area



– Futsal playing area dimensions are above.

– A hard surface is required. Indoors is preferable but outdoors on a hard surface is ok. The game can not be played on grass or on AGP pitches.

– The pitch has marked lines so that the ball can go out of play. Futsal can not be played with board or wall surrounds.

The FA Futsal facilities guide

2 Ball

Ball Size by Age

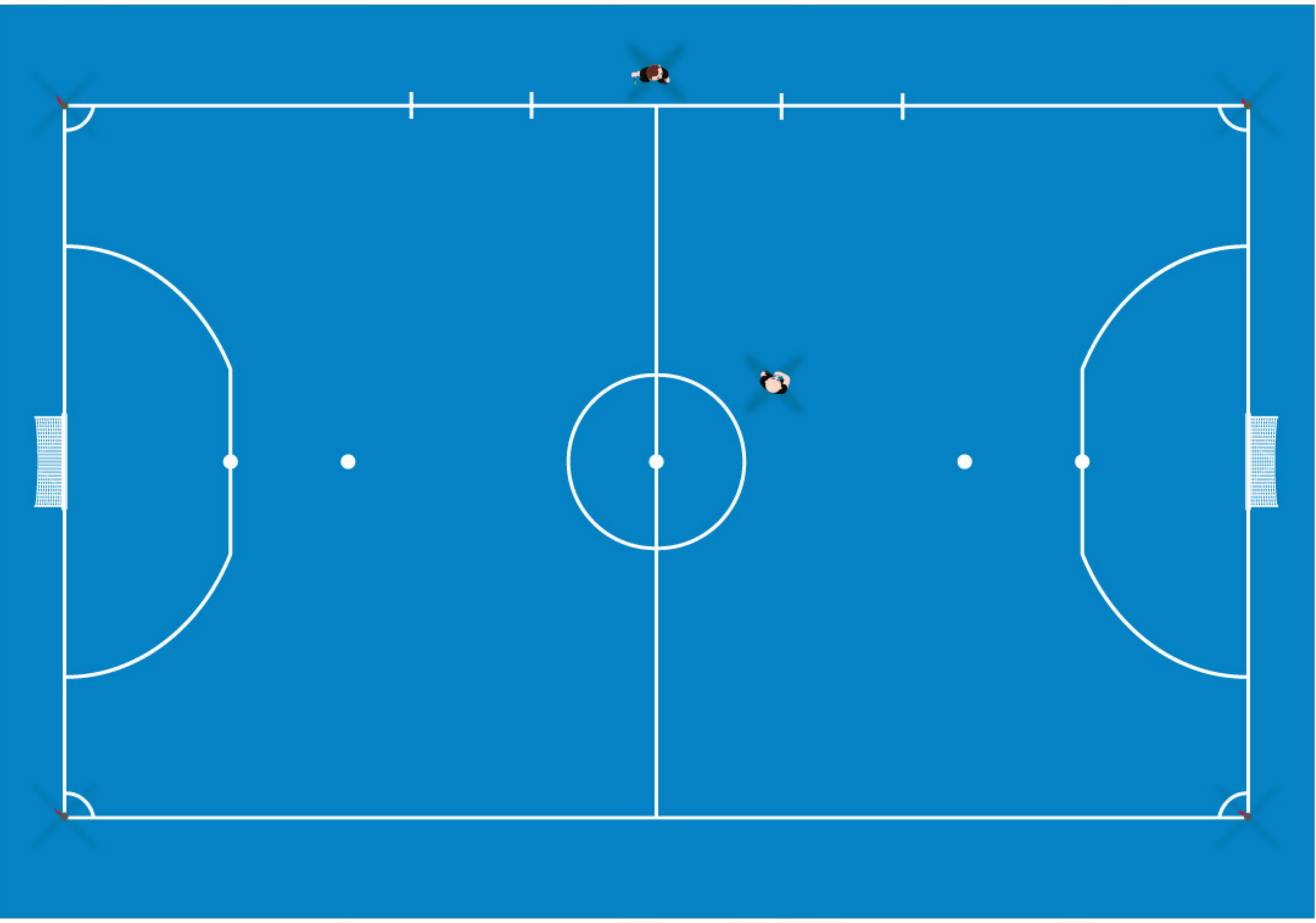
U12 and under	U13s – seniors
Size 3 Futsal ball	**Size 4** Futsal ball

- Playing with a Futsal ball is essential.
- The ball is smaller, heavier and bounces less than a normal football.
- Futsal balls are available in age appropriate sizes.

3 Goals

- Futsal goals are 3m × 2m (the same as Hockey or Handball goal size).
- The goalposts and crossbars should be a different colour to the pitch.
- Safety is always the first consideration with any goalposts. The goals should be secured so that they do not collapse or overturn.
- Portable goals should only be used if they comply with the above.

4 Match Officials



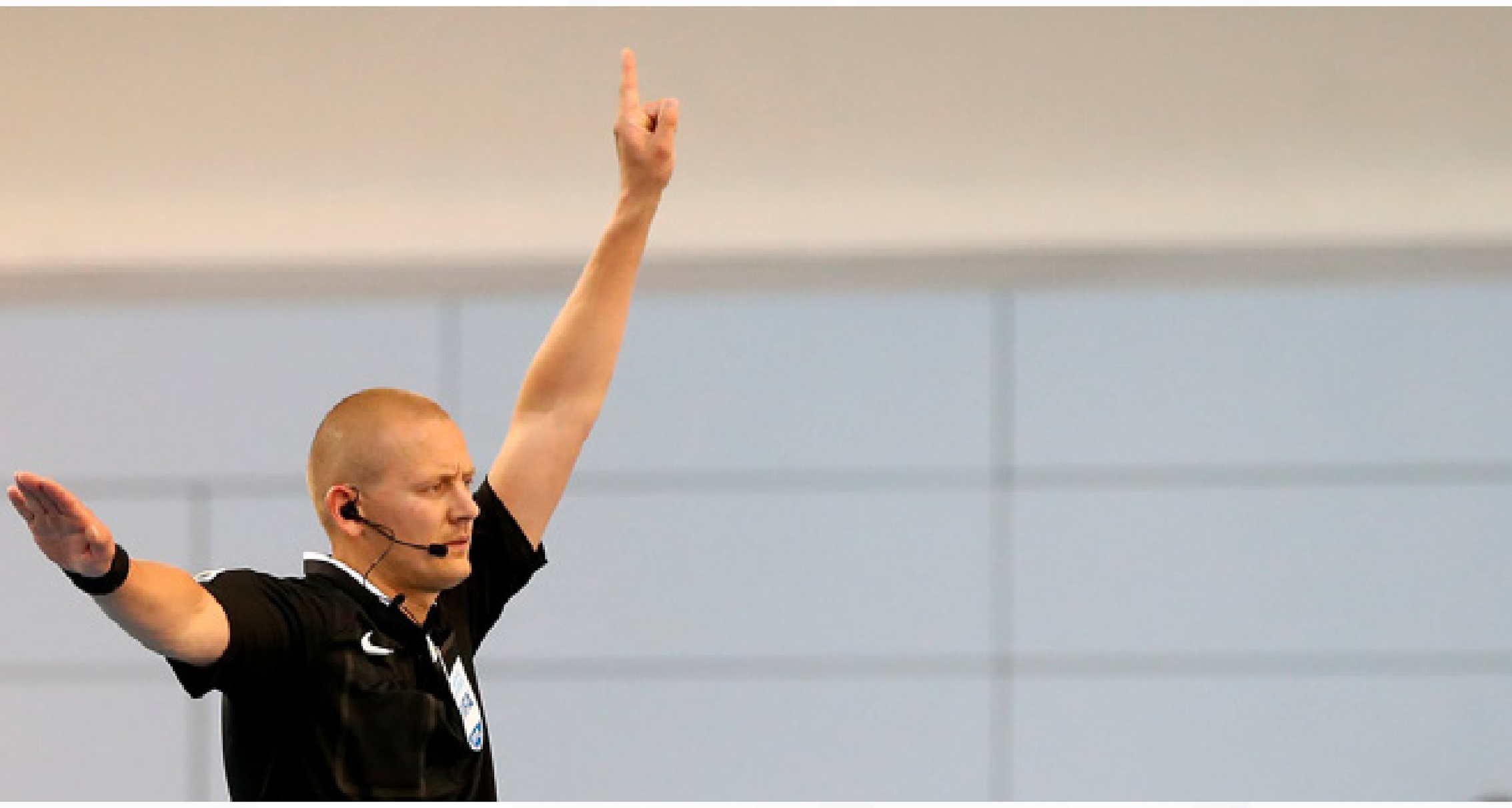
– Two referees are normal at games in order to apply the Laws of Futsal but one can manage with younger age groups (U10 and below). At international level there are two referees, a third official and a timekeeper.

– A referee has the power to apply the Laws of Futsal on the day even if they are not fully qualified. At grassroots level, the aim is to get more children playing the game. The number of officials available should not prevent this.

5 Timing of Games

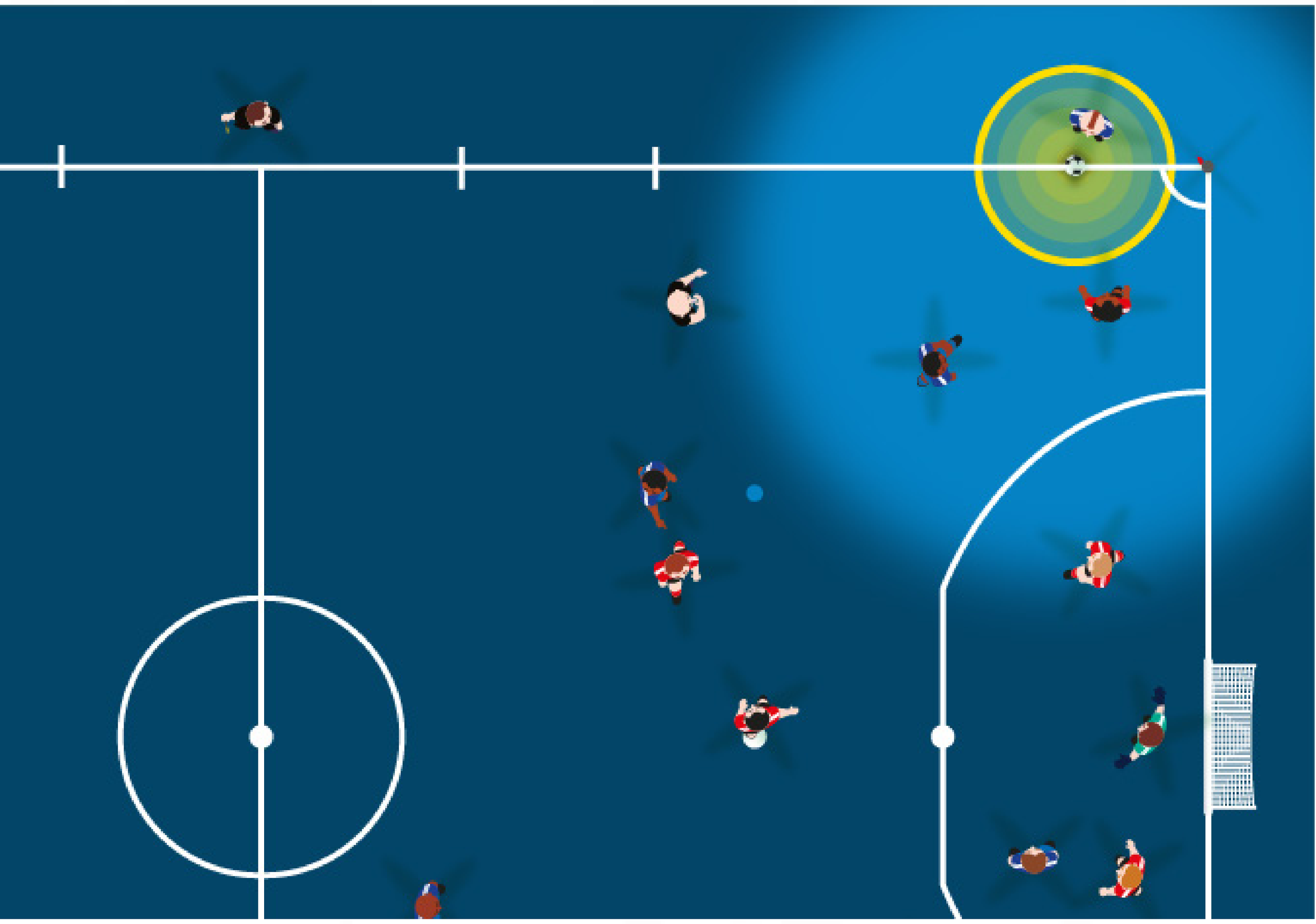
- A Futsal match consists of two 20 minute halves real time but this is not necessary.
- The game is played in real time. This means that the clock stops whenever the ball goes out of play.
- Each team is allowed a 60 second time out in each half.

6 Four Second Law



- When the ball goes out of play, the player in possession of the ball has four seconds to restart play with a kick-in, goal clearance, corner kick or free kick.
- Referees count with their fingers in the air to show how many seconds.
- If play has not restarted within the four second limit a free kick will be awarded to the opposing team.
- Goalkeepers are not allowed to control the ball for more than four seconds in their own half.

7 Kick Ins

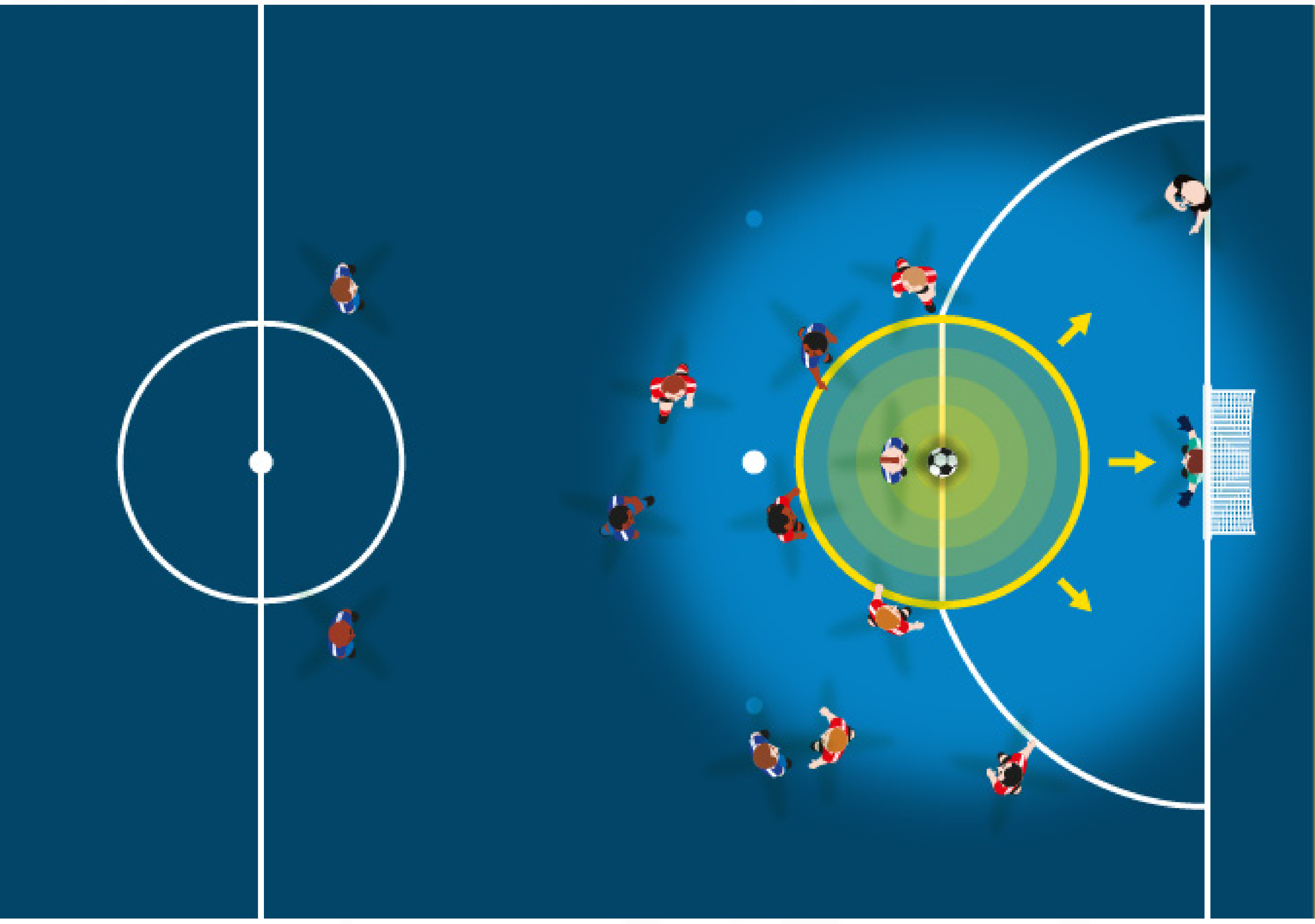


– To restart the game after a ball has gone out of play, the ball is kicked back into play from the touch line and from corners .

– The ball must be stationary on the touch line.

– The feet of the player taking the kick-in must not cross the line.

8 Restarts



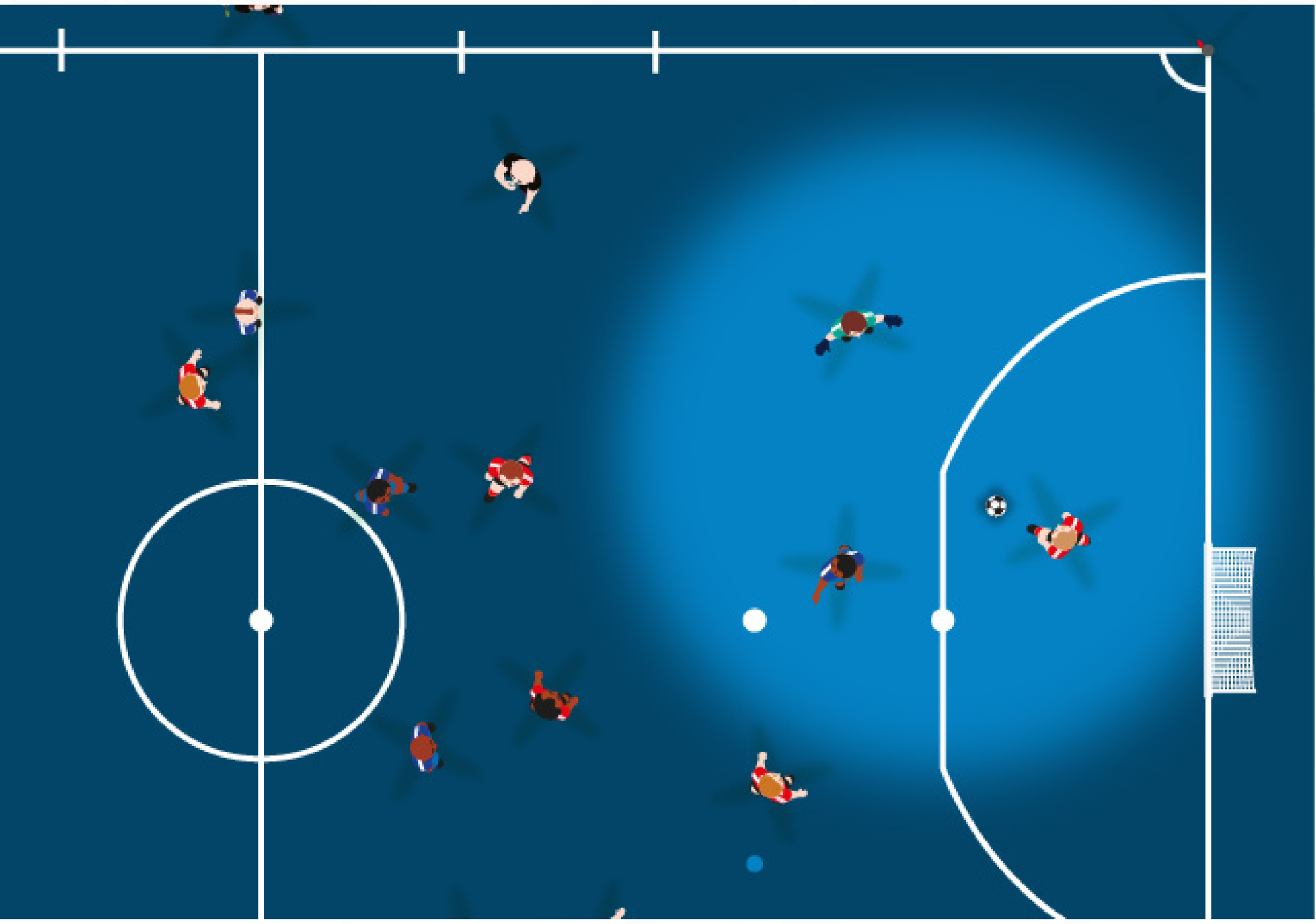
– The five metre law applies to all kick-ins, goal clearances, free kicks, and corners.

– Penalties distance is 6m or edge of the 'D'.

Kick in	5 metres
Goal clearances	5 metres
Freekick	5 metres
Corners	5 metres
Penalties	6 metres or edge of the 'D'

– Players are required to be this distance away from the player in possession of the ball.

9 Goalkeepers



– Goalkeepers are allowed to come OUT of the penalty area. Outfield players are allowed IN the penalty area (PICTURED).

– A goal clearance must be thrown out by the goalkeeper. The goalkeeper cannot touch the ball again until he or she has crossed into the opponents half or a member of the opposition has touched the ball.

– Backpasses to the goalkeeper are not allowed in Futsal. The four second rule applies to the GK in possession also.

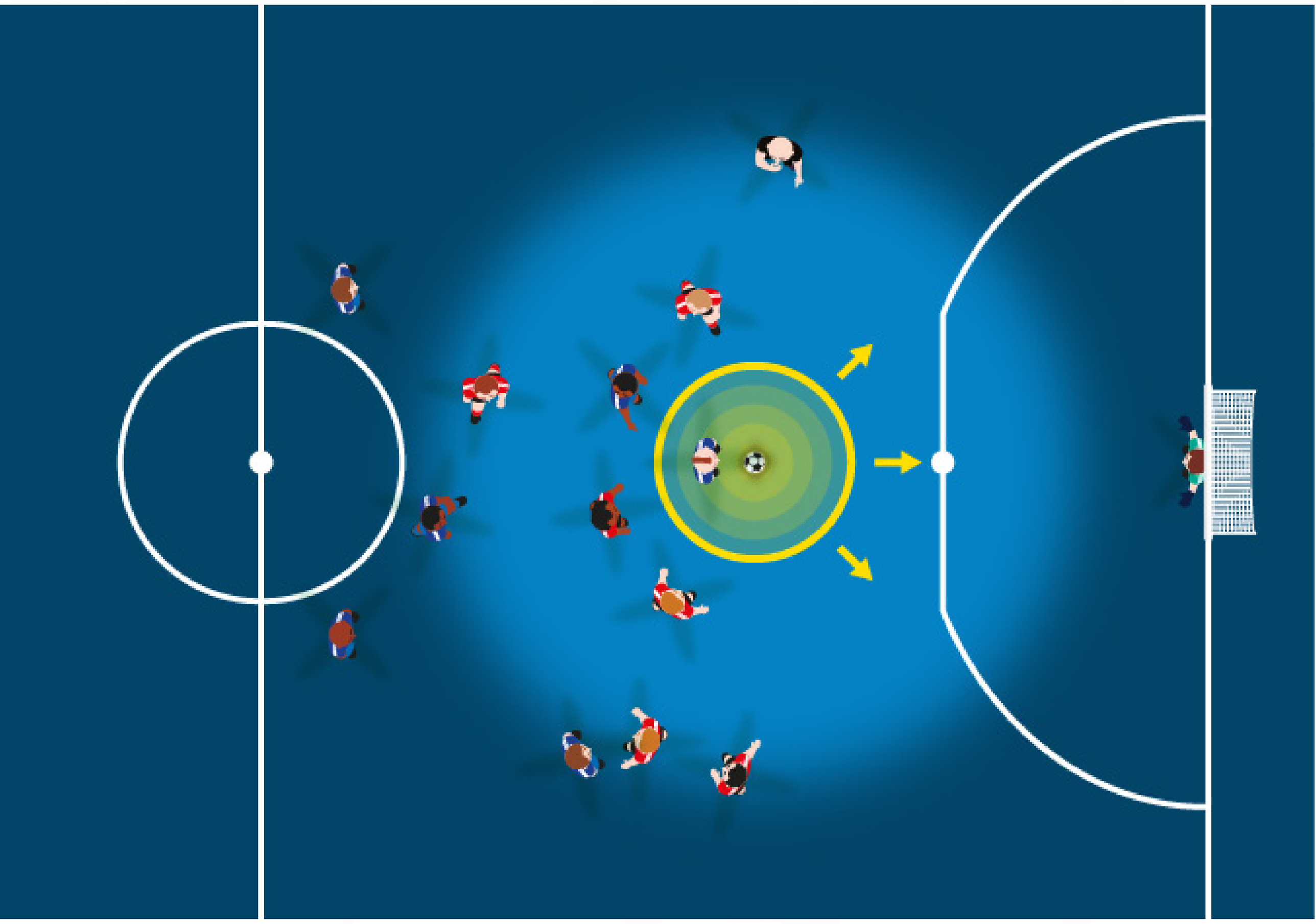
10 Rolling Substitutions

- At international level 14 players would be used in one match. At lower levels it is recommended to be 10/12.
- There is no limit on how long a player must stay on or off the pitch.
- Players must enter and leave the field of play from the substitution zone.
- Roll on roll off substitutions can be made at any time during the game with permission from the referee, including players who have already been substituted.
- For young players in the Foundation Phase 50% game time is recommended.

11 Sliding Tackles

- Slide tackles are not permitted in Youth Futsal in ENGLAND (up to age U16).
- The only time players ARE permitted to slide is to keep the ball in play.

12 Accumulated Fouls



– Each team will be allowed to give away five direct free kicks in each half. On the sixth foul, a 10m penalty kick is awarded to the opposing team and every foul after that in the same half is also a 10m penalty (PICTURED).

– The defending team is not allowed to position any players (other than the goalkeeper) between the ball and the goal. The kick may be taken from the 10m mark or, if the foul was committed closer to the goal than 10m, from the position where the foul took place.

13 Red Cards

– If a player is sent off, their team must remain with four players until either two minutes have passed or the opposition has scored a goal.

What Makes Futsal the Game that it is?

Futsal facilities in England are improving all the time. But there are now many more people wanting to play and especially wanting to introduce young players to the game.

How many netball courts do we have in England? Futsal fits well on a netball court – inside or out!

Tap the link below for all the information you need to find a Futsal facility

The FA Futsal facility guide DOC

What Makes Futsal the Game that it is?

With this in mind these are the five basics. Without them, it is not a game of Futsal:

The surface must be a hard court.

The ball must be a heavier Futsal ball – size 3 or size 4.

The format must be 5v5 on court – up to 14 in total team.

The pitch must have touchlines not played off walls.

Must use 3m × 2m Futsal Goals – handball goal size.

The Benefits of Futsal

Futsal has now been embedded into the England Coaching DNA. It is a fantastic game in its own right, but it brings so many other benefits to young players:

- ✔ **Develop Skills**
- ✔ **Improve Decision Making**
- ✔ **Learn to Innovate on the Pitch**
- ✔ **Develop Different Game Strategies**
- ✔ **Gain More Flexible Movement**
- ✔ **Learn Different Tactics**
- ✔ **Play with the Emphasis on Freedom and Enjoyment**

#LetThemPlay