

**LEAGUE OPERATOR  
HANDBOOK 2023-24**

# **BLUE CUBS**



**AN INITIATIVE OF  
ALL INDIA FOOTBALL FEDERATION**

# BLUE CUBS

## CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION
2. FOOTBALL MATCH FORMAT
3. MODIFIED FOOTBALL LAWS OF THE GAME: 2V2
4. MODIFIED FOOTBALL LAWS OF THE GAME: 3V3
5. MODIFIED FOOTBALL LAWS OF THE GAME: 5V5
6. MODIFIED FOOTBALL LAWS OF THE GAME: 7V7
7. THE NETS
8. IMPORTANT CONTACTS

GRASSROOTS FOR BILLION

# BLUE CUBS

## BLUE CUBS LEAGUE

THE BLUE CUBS LEAGUE, AN INITIATIVE BY THE ALL INDIA FOOTBALL FEDERATION, INTRODUCES AGE-APPROPRIATE GAME FORMATS FOR CHILDREN AGED 4 TO 12. THESE ENGAGING GAME STYLES, RANGE FROM 2V2 TO 7V7 AIM TO MAXIMIZE PARTICIPATION AND ENJOYMENT AMONG KIDS ACROSS INDIA.

UNDERSTANDING THAT CHILDREN DEVELOP AT DIFFERENT RATES PHYSICALLY, MENTALLY, AND EMOTIONALLY, THE BLUE CUBS LEAGUE OFFERS TAILORED PLAYING FORMATS SUITABLE FOR EACH AGE GROUP. WITH A FOCUS ON FUN AND LEARNING, THE LEAGUE ENSURES THAT CHILDREN HAVE AN ENJOYABLE EXPERIENCE WHILE DEVELOPING THEIR FOOTBALL SKILLS.



VISION 2047

# MATCH FORMAT | FOOTBALL

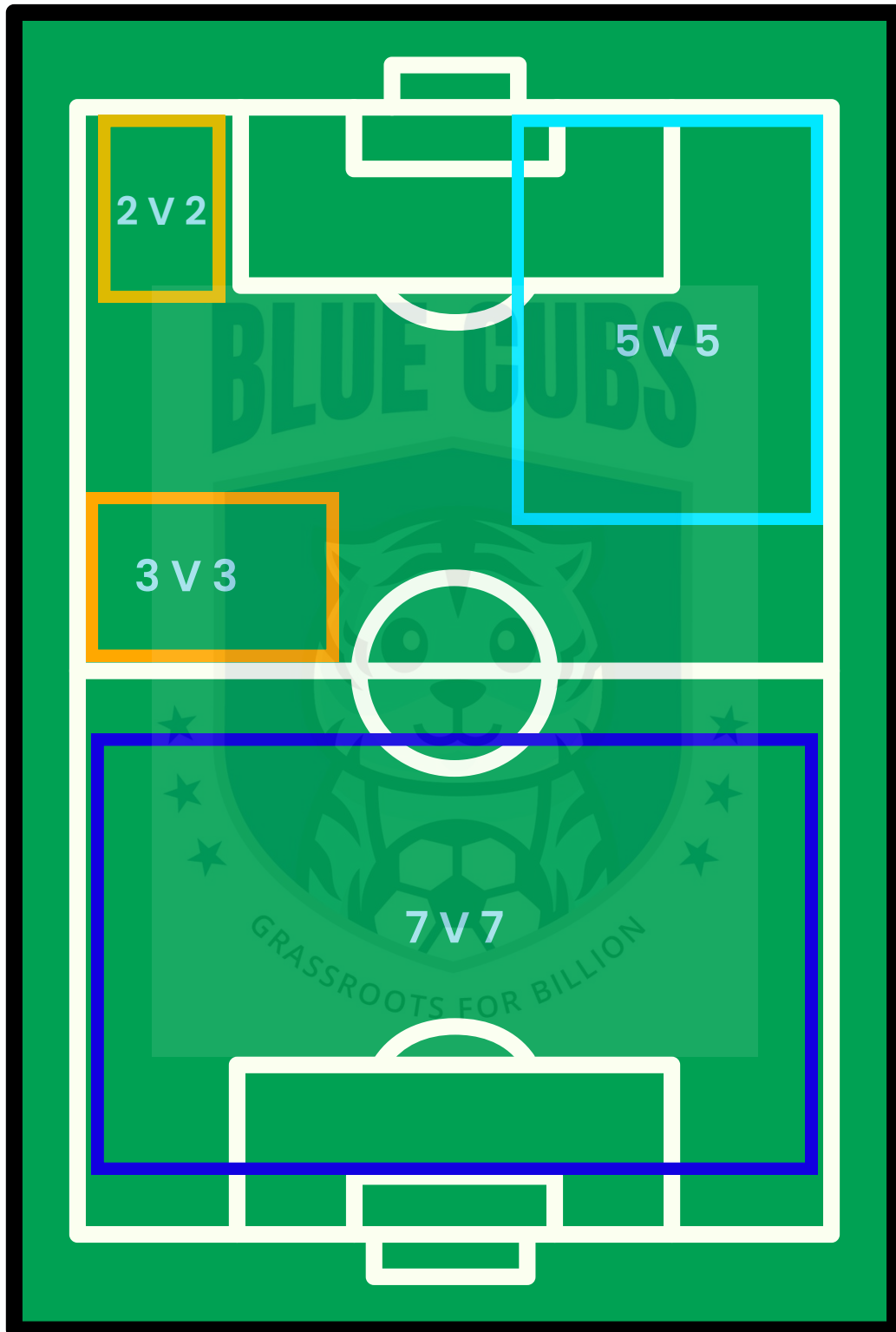
Age Groups	U5	U6	U7	U8	U9	U10	U11	U12
Gender preference	Mixed	Mixed	Mixed	Mixed	Mixed	Mixed	Mixed	Mixed
Age Criteria (born in)	2019-20	2018-19	2017-2018	2016-17	2015-2016	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13
Playing format	2v2	3v3	3v3	5v5	5v5	5v5	7v7 (GK)	7v7 (GK)
Match day Players	2+3	3+3	4+4	5+5	6+6	6+6	7+6	7+6
Max Squad Size	5 players	6 players	10 Players	13 players	15 players	15 players	18 Players	18 Players
Substitution	Rolling	Rolling	Rolling	Rolling	Rolling	Rolling	Rolling	Rolling
Match time	5 min x 3	7 min x 3	12-15 min x 2	12-15 min x 2	15-20 min x 2	15-20 min x 2	20-25 min x 2	20-25 min x 2
Interval time	2 min	3 min	4 min	4 min	4 min	4 min	5 min	5min
Football size	2	3	3	3	4	4	4	4
Maximum matches per day	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Maximum match days per week	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Goalkeeper	No	No	No	Yes, Change in each half	Yes, Change in each half	Yes, Change in each half	Yes	Yes
Outside	Dribble / Kick in	Dribble / Kick in	Dribble / Kick in	Dribble / Kick in	Kick in	Kick in	Kick in	Kick in
Referees	Volunteers	Volunteers	Volunteers	Volunteers	Volunteers	Volunteers	Volunteers	Volunteers
Goal posts dimension	Pug nets	Pug nets	Pug nets	H = 5 to 6 Ft W = 8 to 10 Ft	H = 5 to 6 Ft W = 8 to 10 Ft	H = 6 to 5 Ft W = 8 to 10 Ft	H-6 X W-12 ft	H-6 X W-12 ft

Note: This is a recommendation and a guideline.

Criteria to host the league: Teams - Minimum 8 teams in each age groups. | Age Categories - Minimum 2 age categories.

# PITCH ORGANISATION

## GUIDELINES FOR MATCHDAYS



#### 4 YEARS TO 6 YEARS (2V2 AND 3V3)

THE YOUNGEST AGE GROUP OF BLUE CUBS WILL HAVE GAME FORMATS OF 2V2 AND 3V3, WHICH WILL BE SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED TO CATER TO THEIR AGE GROUP'S NEEDS AND ABILITIES. THE SMALL-SIDED GAME SETTING WILL PROMOTE INDIVIDUAL SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND BALL MASTERY, ENABLING THE CHILDREN TO HONE THEIR CREATIVITY. THE GAMES WILL BE PLAYED ON SMALL PITCHES TO ENSURE THAT CHILDREN CAN FOCUS ON THE TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF THE GAME WHILE HAVING FUN. THESE GAME FORMATS WILL ALSO ALLOW CHILDREN TO EXPERIENCE THE JOY OF PLAYING FOOTBALL AND THE IMPORTANCE OF TEAMWORK.

2V2(NO GK)



3V3(NO GK)



# MODIFIED FOOTBALL LAWS OF THE GAME: 2V2

Law 1	The Field of Play	Length: 12-15 metres   Width: 08-12 metres
Law 2	The Ball	The ball size must be 2
Law 3	The Players	5 players (2 outfield players + 3 substitutes) Substitution is unlimited and can occur at any time.
Law 4	The Players' Equipment	Any sports shoes and shin guards are mandatory. The team kit should be like colours. Alternatively, colour bibs can also be used. The opposite team should wear different colours.
Law 5	The Referee	A Game Observer may be used to keep the playing environment fun, safe and focused on the children. Other responsibilities include keeping time, observing rules, start, stop and restart play, keeping scores and noting the Most Valuable Player' from both teams.
Law 6	The Other Match Officials	Not required
Law 7	The Duration of the Match	For Under 5 Match time: 3 Quarters of 5 minutes each. Interval time: 2 minutes
Law 8	The start and restart of play	Opponents must be at least 2 yards away from the center mark.
Law 9	Ball in and out of play	Out: Ball must completely cross the line to be out of play. In: Ball can be kicked inside the pitch.
Law 10	Determining the outcome of the match	A goal is scored when the ball completely passes over the goal outcome of a match line, inside the goalposts.
Law 11	Offside	No offside
Law 12	Fouls and Misconduct	IFAB/FIFA Laws of the Game apply. However, we should be considerate of not stopping the play too many times. As much as possible, let the children play.
Law 13	Free kicks	All free kicks are direct. Opponents must be at least 2 yards away.
Law 14	The Penalty Kick	A penalty kick is awarded if the referee/game official considers that a serious foul has been committed inside the penalty area.
Law 15	The Kick-in	Ball can be kicked inside the pitch to restart play. All kick-ins are indirect i.e. goals cannot be scored from a kick-in.
Law 16	The Goal Kick	If the attacking team last touches the ball before it crosses the goal line, a goal kick is awarded to the defending team. Goal kick can be taken from anywhere within the goal area. In some cases, goal area and penalty area may mean the same.
Law 17	The Corner Kick	If the defending team touches the ball last before it crosses the goal line, a corner kick is awarded to the attacking team.

# MODIFIED FOOTBALL LAWS OF THE GAME: 3V3

Law 1	The Field of Play	Length: 15-20 meters   Width: 10-12 meters
Law 2	The Ball	The ball size must be 3
Law 3	The Players	6 players (3 outfield players + 3 substitutes) Substitution is unlimited and can occur at any time.
Law 4	The Players' Equipment	Any sports shoes and shin guards are mandatory. The team kit should be like colors. Alternatively, color bibs can also be used. The opposite team should wear different colors.
Law 5	The Referee	A Game Observer may be used to keep the playing environment fun, safe and focused on the children. Other responsibilities include keeping time, observing rules, start, stop and restart play, keeping scores and noting the 'Most Valuable Player' from both teams.
Law 6	The Other Match Officials	Not required
Law 7	The Duration of the Match	For Under 6 Match time: 3 Quarters of 7 minutes each. Interval time: 3 minutes  For under 7 Match: 2 halves of 12 - 15 minutes each Interval time: 4 minutes
Law 8	The start and restart of play	Opponents must be at least 2 yards away from the center mark.
Law 9	Ball in and out of play	Out: Ball must completely cross the line to be out of play. In: Ball can be kicked inside the pitch.
Law 10	Determining the outcome of the match	A goal is scored when the ball completely passes over the goal outcome of a match line, inside the goalposts.
Law 11	Offside	No offside
Law 12	Fouls and Misconduct	IFAB/FIFA Laws of the Game apply. However, we should be considerate of not stopping the play too many times. As much as possible, let the children play.
Law 13	Free kicks	All free kicks are direct. Opponents must be at least 2 yards away.
Law 14	The Penalty Kick	A penalty kick is awarded if the referee/game official considers that a serious foul has been committed inside the penalty area.
Law 15	The Kick-in	Ball can be kicked inside the pitch to restart play. All kick-ins are indirect i.e. goals cannot be scored from a kick-in.
Law 16	The Goal Kick	If the attacking team last touches the ball before it crosses the goal line, a goal kick is awarded to the defending team. Goal kick can be taken from anywhere within the goal area. In some cases, goal area and penalty area may mean the same.
Law 17	The Corner Kick	If the defending team touches the ball last before it crosses the goal line, a corner kick is awarded to the attacking team.



## 7 YEARS TO 9 YEARS (5V5)

AS CHILDREN PROGRESS INTO THE MIDDLE AGE GROUP OF BLUE CUBS, AGED 7 TO 9 YEARS, THEY WILL PARTICIPATE IN GAME FORMATS SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED TO ENHANCE THEIR FOOTBALL SKILLS AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE GAME.

THE 5V5 FORMAT PROVIDES AN IDEAL BALANCE BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT AND TEAM DYNAMICS. PLAYING IN THIS FORMAT ON SLIGHTLY LARGER PITCHES ALLOWS THE YOUNG PLAYERS TO SHOWCASE THEIR TECHNICAL ABILITIES WHILE ALSO LEARNING TO WORK COLLABORATIVELY WITH THEIR TEAMMATES. THE 5V5 GAME FORMAT ENCOURAGES PLAYERS TO MAKE QUICK DECISIONS, DEVELOP THEIR POSITIONAL AWARENESS, AND REFINE THEIR PASSING AND SHOOTING SKILLS.

BY ENGAGING IN THESE SMALL-SIDED GAMES, CHILDREN IN THIS AGE GROUP NOT ONLY IMPROVE THEIR FOOTBALL PROWESS BUT ALSO FOSTER A SENSE OF CAMARADERIE AND THE IMPORTANCE OF COOPERATION ON THE FIELD.

5V5



PREFERRED FORMATION

1-2-1-1

# MODIFIED FOOTBALL LAWS OF THE GAME: 5V5

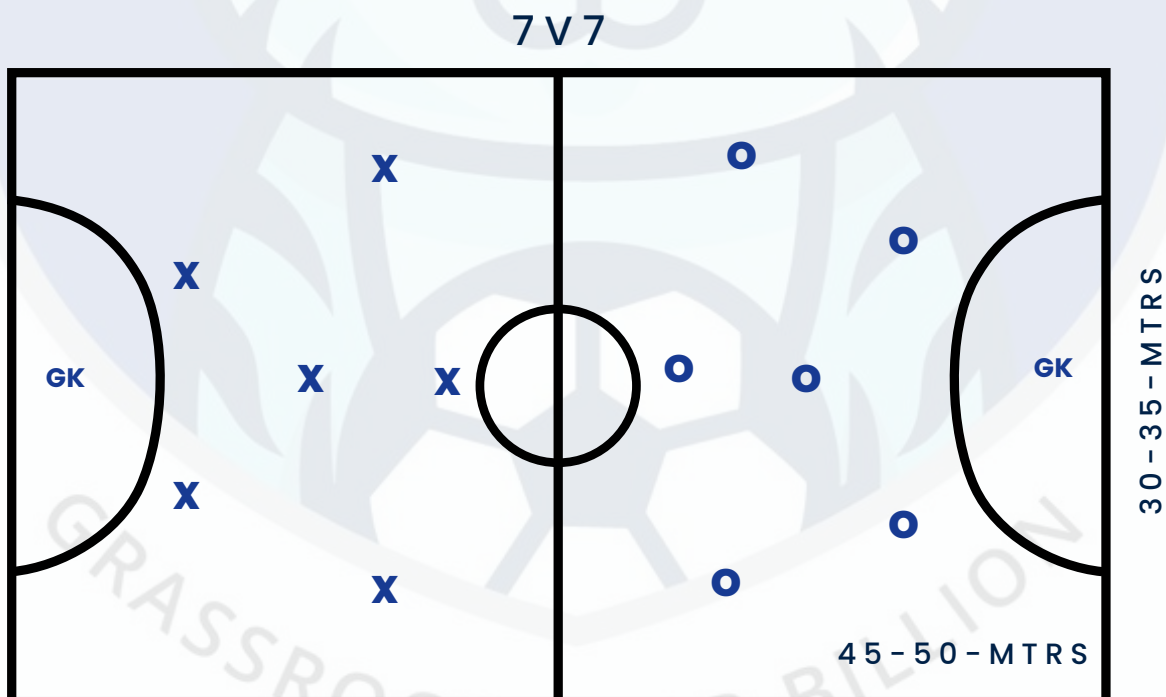
Law 1	The Field of Play	Length: 30-35 meters   Width: 20-25 meters
Law 2	The Ball	For under 8, it must be 3 and for Under 9 & 10 it can be 4.
Law 3	The Players	13-15 players (4 outfield players + goalkeeper + 4-5 substitutes) Substitution is unlimited and can occur at any time.
Law 4	The Players' Equipment	Any sports shoes and shin guards are mandatory. The team kit should be like colors. Alternatively, color bibs can also be used. The opposite team should wear different colors.
Law 5	The Referee	A Game Observer may be used to keep the playing environment fun, safe and focused on the children. Other responsibilities include keeping time, observing rules, starting, stopping and restarting play, keeping scores and noting the 'Most Valuable Player' from both teams.
Law 6	The Other Match Officials	Not required
Law 7	The Duration of the Match	For Under 8 Match time: 2 halves of 12 - 15 minutes each. Interval time: 4 minutes  For under 9 & 10 Match: 2 halves of 15 - 20 minutes each Interval time: 4 minutes
Law 8	The start and restart of play	The opponent must be at least 4 yards away from the center mark
Law 9	Ball in and out of play	Out: Ball must completely cross the line to be out of play. In: Ball can be kicked inside the pitch.
Law 10	Determining the outcome of the match	A goal is scored when the ball completely passes over the goal outcome of a match line, inside the goalposts.
Law 11	Offside	No offside
Law 12	Fouls and Misconduct	Under 7 and 8: IFAB/FIFA Laws of the Game apply. However, we should be considerate of not stopping the play too many times. As much as possible, let the children play.  Under 9 and 10: IFAB/FIFA Laws of the Game apply. Yellow and red cards are introduced. Yellow card for caution. If a player gets two yellow cards or a red card, they will be out of the game for 2 minutes.
Law 13	Free kicks	All free kicks are direct.
Law 14	The Penalty Kick	A penalty kick is awarded if the referee/game official considers that a serious foul has been committed inside the penalty area.
Law 15	The Kick-in	The ball can be kicked inside the pitch to restart play. All kick-ins are indirect i.e. goals cannot be scored from a kick-in.
Law 16	The Goal Kick	If the attacking team last touches the ball before it crosses the goal line, a goal kick is awarded to the defending team. Goal kicks can be taken from anywhere within the goal area. In some cases, goal area and penalty area may mean the same.
Law 17	The Corner Kick	If the defending team touches the ball last before it crosses the goal line, a corner kick is awarded to the attacking team.

## 10 YEARS TO 12 YEARS (7V7)

IN THE BLUE CUBS PROGRAM, THE OLDEST AGE GROUP, CONSISTING OF CHILDREN AGED 10 TO 12 YEARS, WILL TRANSITION TO THE 7V7 GAME FORMAT. THIS FORMAT INTRODUCES THEM TO THE NUANCES OF PLAYING ON A SLIGHTLY LARGER PITCH AND FURTHER DEVELOPS THEIR TACTICAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE GAME.

THE 7V7 GAME FORMAT PROVIDES AMPLE SPACE FOR PLAYERS TO SHOWCASE THEIR TECHNICAL SKILLS, ENGAGE IN STRATEGIC PLAY, AND MAKE WELL-INFORMED DECISIONS. AS CHILDREN IN THIS AGE GROUP PROGRESS THROUGH THE PROGRAM, THEY HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPLORE DIFFERENT POSITIONS, DEVELOP THEIR LEADERSHIP SKILLS, AND FURTHER REFINE THEIR TEAMWORK ABILITIES.

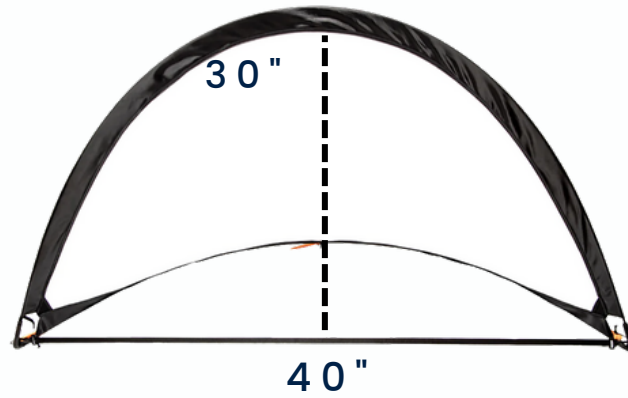
PLAYING IN 7V7 GAMES NOT ONLY CHALLENGES THEIR ABILITIES BUT ALSO FOSTERS A COMPETITIVE SPIRIT AND A DEEPER APPRECIATION FOR THE STRATEGIC ELEMENTS OF THE GAME. IT PREPARES THEM FOR THE NEXT LEVEL OF THEIR FOOTBALL JOURNEY, EQUIPPING THEM WITH THE SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE NECESSARY FOR MORE ADVANCED PLAY.



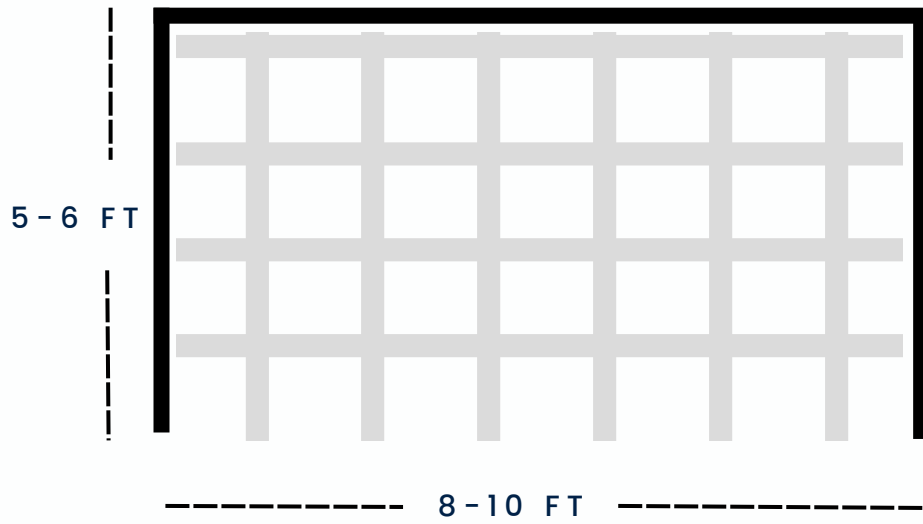
# MODIFIED FOOTBALL LAWS OF THE GAME: 7V7

Law 1	<b>The Field of Play</b>	Length: 45–50 meters   Width: 30–35 meters
Law 2	<b>The Ball</b>	The ball size must be 4
Law 3	<b>The Players</b>	16–18 players (6 outfield players + goalkeeper + 4–6 substitutes) Substitution is unlimited and can occur at any stoppage.
Law 4	<b>The Players' Equipment</b>	Any sports shoes and shin guards are mandatory. The team kit should be like colors. Alternatively, colour bibs can also be used. The opposite team should wear different colours.
Law 5	<b>The Referee</b>	A Game Observer may be used to keep the playing environment fun, safe and focused on the children. Other responsibilities include keeping time, observing rules, starting, stopping and restarting play, keeping scores and noting the 'Most Valuable Player' from both teams.
Law 6	<b>The Other Match Officials</b>	Other match officials are optional.
Law 7	<b>The Duration of the Match</b>	Match time: 2 halves of 20 - 25 minutes each. Break time: 5 minutes
Law 8	<b>The start and restart of play</b>	Opponents must be at least 6 yards away from the center mark.
Law 9	<b>Ball in and out of play</b>	Out: The ball must completely cross the line to be out of play. In: The ball must be thrown inside the pitch.
Law 10	<b>Determining the outcome of the match</b>	A goal is scored when the ball completely passes over the goal outcome of a match line, inside the goalposts.
Law 11	<b>Offside</b>	Offside rule is optional.
Law 12	<b>Fouls and Misconduct</b>	IFAB/FIFA Laws of the Game apply. Yellow and red cards are introduced. Yellow card for caution. If a player gets two yellow or a red card, they will be out of the game for 2 minutes.
Law 13	<b>Free kicks</b>	All free kicks are direct Under 11 and 12. Indirect free kicks are to be introduced.
Law 14	<b>The Penalty Kick</b>	A penalty kick is awarded if the referee/game official considers that a serious foul has been committed inside the penalty area.
Law 15	<b>The Throw-in</b>	The ball must be thrown inside the pitch to restart play. Goals cannot be scored by a direct throw-in.
Law 16	<b>The Goal Kick</b>	If the attacking team last touches the ball before it crosses the goal line, a goal kick is awarded to the defending team. Goal kick can be taken from anywhere within the goal area. In some cases, goal area and penalty area may mean the same.
Law 17	<b>The Corner Kick</b>	If the defending team touches the ball last before it crosses the goal line, a corner kick is awarded to the attacking team.

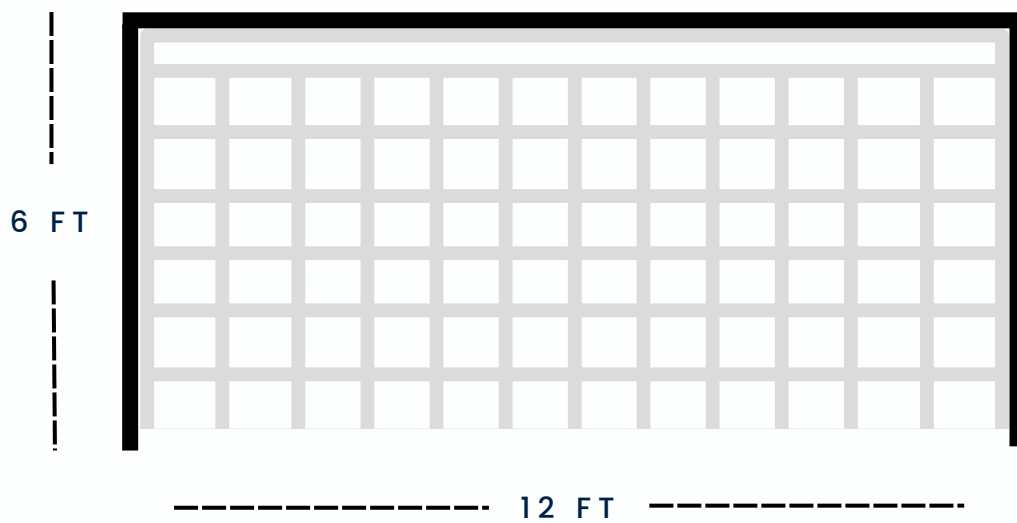
GOALS 2V2 / 3V3



GOALPOST 5V5



GOALPOST 7V7



# BLUE CUBS

## IMPORTANT CONTACTS

ALL INDIA FOOTBALL FEDERATION  
GRASSROOTS@THE-AIFF.COM

MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS  
[WWW.THE-AIFF.COM/STATE-ASSOCIATIONS](http://WWW.THE-AIFF.COM/STATE-ASSOCIATIONS)

GRASSROOTS FOR BILLION



VISION 2047