

Hills Football

MiniRoos & MiniTildas Handbook 2026

Under 8/9





MiniRoos and MiniTildas Football

This handbook provides a Comprehensive Guide on Rules and Playing Formats to provide assistance to instructing referees, coaches and managers to implement on MiniRoos and MiniTildas games during the Hills Football Winter Season.

MiniRoos Football is the Football Australia brand given to Junior football in Australia for players 4-13 years old. The nation-wide initiative uses, small-sided football to introduce the sport of football to newcomer in an inclusive and engaging way.

Small-sided games maximise the opportunity to learn new skills, be active, make life-long friends and potentially unearthing the next generation of nation team players; Matildas, Socceroos, Pararoos and ParaMatildas.

This is achieved through modified rules and fields compared to traditional 11-a-side football to better meet the needs of young players and their Football Development Journey. Throughout the progression of a Players Journey, modifications change based on the characteristics and phase of players, creating a journey for players to step into 11-a-side football.

PROVEN BENEFITS

- More Goal Scoring Opportunities
- More Touches on the Ball
- More 1 v 1 Opportunities
- Improved confidence and self-esteem
- More involvement in the Game
- Layering of Rules to fit aged criteria
- Parents introduced to the game in smaller doses
- Introduction to the game for referees



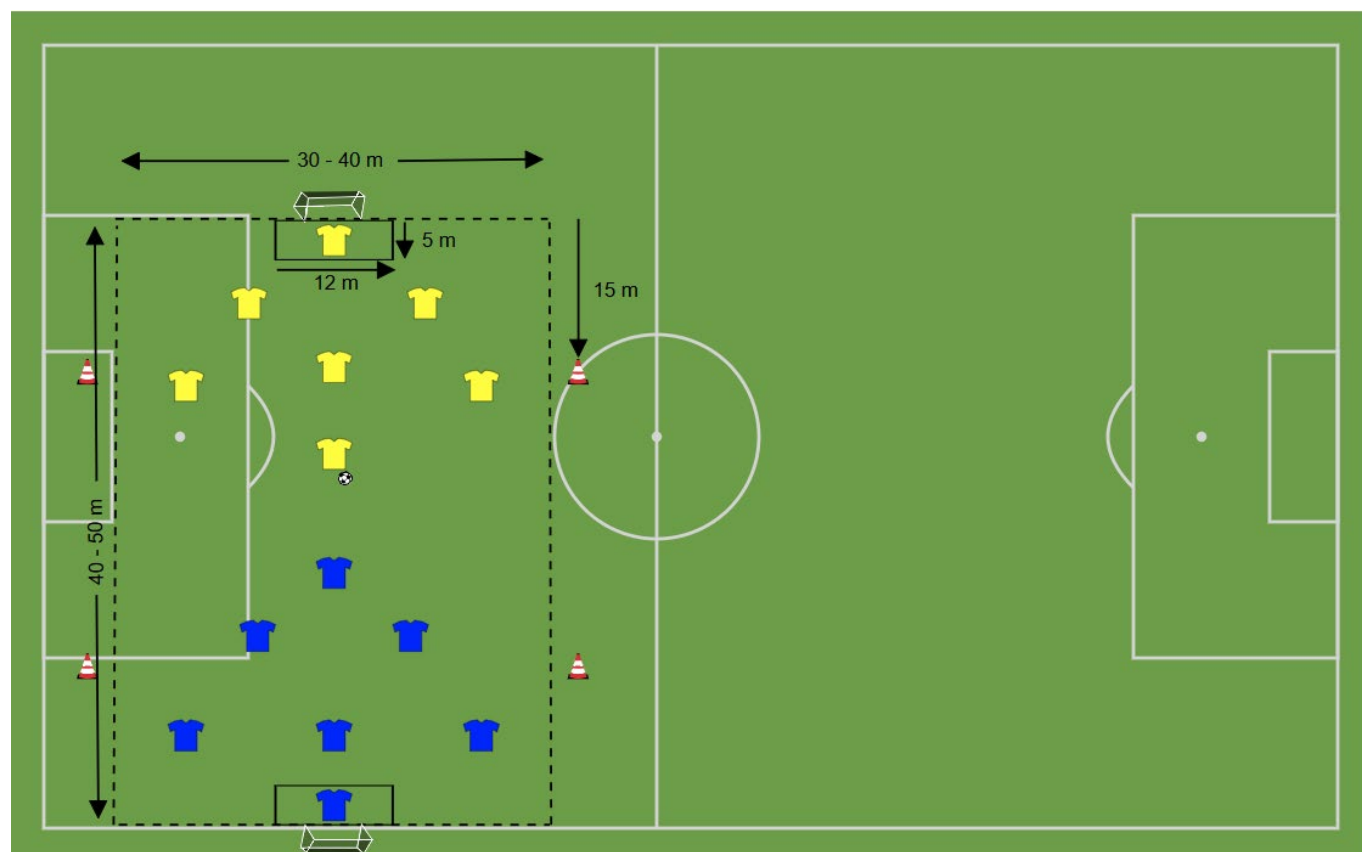
PROGRESSION THROUGH MINIROOS & MINITILDAS FOOTBALL

| Playing Format | Under 6 & 7 | Under 8 & 9 | Under 10 & 11 |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Points table and Finals | No | No | No |
| Number of Players | 4 v 4 | 7 v 7 | 9 v 9 |
| Goalkeeper | No | Yes | Yes |
| Field Size | Length: 30m Width: 20m | Length: 40m-50m Width: 30m -40m | Length: 60m-70m Width: 40m -50m |
| Exclusion zone | 15m from By-line | 15m from By-line | 15m from By-line |
| Penalty Area | No | Depth: 5m Width: 12m | Depth: 5m Width: 12m |
| Offsides | No | No* | No* |
| Goal Size | Width: 1.5m-2m Height: 0.9m-1m | Width: 2.5m-3m Height: 1.8m-2m | Width: 4.5m-5m Height: 1.8m-2m |
| Ball Size | 3 | 3 | 4 |
| Playing Time | 2 x 20 minutes | 2 x 20 minutes | 2 x 25 minutes |
| Half Time Break | 5 minutes | 5 minutes | 5 minutes |
| Referee | Game Leader | Instructing Referee | Instructing Referee |

* Where players are purposely and blatantly playing offside whether directed to or not, the referee will have the authority to award a free kick against the team who's player is purposely and blatantly playing offside, at the sole discretion of the referee.

Playing Formats – Under 8/9

Field Of Play



Dimensions

- The field should be rectangular in shape - Length: 40m – 50m, Width: 30m – 40m.

Markings

- Markers or painted line markings.

Goal Size

- Width: 2.5m – 3.0m, Height: 1.8m – 2.0m

Goal Type

- It is recommended that clubs use portable goals where possible however the use of poles and markers as goals is acceptable.

Penalty Area

- Rectangular – Depth: 5.0m, Width: 12m
- Can be marked through the use of marked lines, flat or some markers or cones.

The Ball

- Ball size is 3



Duration of Game

- 2 x 20 minute halves
- Half-time break of 5 minutes

Number of players

- 7 v 7 – Including Goalkeeper
- A maximum of four (4) substitutes are permitted which may rotate during the entire game.

Substitutions

- Substitutions must be made while there is a stoppage in play, and players must wait until the substituted player has left the field.

Ball Crossing the By-Line – Goal kick

- The play will be re-started with a goal kick. The goal kick is to be placed on the ground anywhere within the marked box.
- Opposition players are all to retreat behind the exclusion zone.
- At the time of a goal kick, the attacking team must retreat back behind the exclusion zone. Opposition players cannot enter the exclusion zone until
 - The ball has been passed to and touched by a second player (must be from the same team as the player taking the goal kick) within the exclusion zone,
 - The ball has left the exclusion zone,
 - The ball has left the field of play,
 - Should the ball not reach a player of the same team, and as stopped still inside the exclusion zone, the Goalkeeper cannot touch it again, and all opponents must remain outside the zone until a player of the same team has gone to collect the ball or if the referee deems appropriate orders a re-take.

The Goalkeeper

- The Goalkeeper is allowed to handle the ball anywhere in the penalty area.
- The Goalkeeper is NOT allowed to kick or drop-kick the ball directly from their hands, a roll or throw is recommended, a pass from the ground is permitted.
- After a save or gather the ball (the ball DID NOT leave the field of play), the attacking team must retreat back behind the exclusion zone. The attacking team shall not be permitted to attack until such time as the defending team takes their second touch of the ball. Note – the Goalkeeper can choose to roll/throw the ball out instead of kicking it.



- An indirect free kick is awarded if the goalkeeper touches the ball with their hands after it has been deliberately kicked to the goalkeeper by a team-mate.

Ball crossing the By-Line after touching the defending team last - Corner Kick

- A player from the attacking team places the ball inside the corner arc nearest to the point where the ball crossed the line.
- Opponents must be at least 5m away from the ball until it is in play.
- The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves.
- A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick.

Ball Crossing the Sideline – Throw In

- A player from the opposing team of the player that last touched the ball before it crossed the line takes the throw in.
- The player faces the field of play, has part of each foot on the ground either behind the touch line, uses both hands and delivers the ball from behind and over their head.
- The thrower must **NOT** touch the ball again until it has touched another player.
- Opponents must be **at least 5m away** from the ball until it is in play.
- The ball is in play once it enters the field of play.
- A goal cannot be scored directly from a throw in.
- If a player conducts an incorrect/foul throw the instructional referee should allow play to continue if the attempt was good spirited and resembled a regular throw in. A second attempt is required when the players throw in does not resemble a correct throw in.

For example the player could have;

- kicked it in, rolled the ball in,
- used one hand (like a Goalkeeper throw)
- thrown the ball from the chest like a basketball throw
- If the player still makes a foul throw then the game continues and the instructional referee should make note to the coach at the half time or full time stoppages.

Method of Scoring

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



- When goalposts are not available and cones are used for goals, a goal is scored when the ball passes between the cones without touching them and below shoulder height of the player.

Start of Play / Restart of Play - Kick Off

- The taking team must pass/kick the ball so that it has at least moved away from the stationary position. A retake would be awarded if the taker touches the ball a second time before a different player has touched the ball.
- All players must be in their own half of the field of play.
- Opponents must be **at least 5m** away from the ball until it has touched a teammate (when passed backwards). When the kick off/start of play is passed forwards, or remains on the line the opposition are free to engage.
- The ball must touch a second player before a goal can be scored.

Offside

There is NO offside however, where players are purposely and blatantly playing offside whether directed to or not, the referee will have the authority to award a free kick against the team who's player is purposely and blatantly playing offside, at the sole discretion of the referee.

Best Practice is:

- Coaches should strongly discourage children from permanently standing in blatantly offside positions.
- Instructing Referees should direct players permanently standing in blatant offside position to move into onside positions.

Fouls and Misconduct

Indirect Free Kicks are awarded for all acts of handball or fouls and misconduct.

- Opponents must be at least 5m away from the ball when the indirect free kick is taken.
- An indirect free kick is where a goal can be scored only if the ball touches another player before it enters the goal.

For deliberate or serious acts of handball or fouls and misconduct in the penalty area, a penalty kick is awarded from an 8m penalty mark with only a goalkeeper in position. All other players **MUST** be outside the penalty area and must be at least 5m behind the penalty mark.

Fouls and misconduct are when a player:

- Kicks or attempts to kick an opponent



- Trips or attempts to trip an opponent
- Jumps at an opponent
- Charges an opponent
- Strikes or attempts to strike an opponent
- Pushes an opponent
- Tackles an opponent from behind to gain possession of the ball
- Hold an opponent
- Spits at an opponent
- Handles the ball deliberately
- Plays in a dangerous manner
- Impedes the progress of the player

There are no yellow/red cards issued in these ages. However, the instructing referee can issue a respect card to a player for dissent, offensive insulting abusive language/gestures or violent conduct. Should the Instructional Referee issue a "Respect Card", to a player, the coach or manager of the player shall immediately remove the player from the field for a cooling off period of two (2) minutes.

Instructing Referee

The main role of the Instructing Referee is to control the game and to ensure it is played fluently and instruct and correct the players (with minimal whistle blowing) on how to behave and what the rules are, e.g. what a foul is, what a free kick is and how to throw etc. Should these indiscretions happen a second time, the referee should stop the game and apply the appropriate action and decisions.

The Instructing Referee can be a club official, parent, older child or player, beginning referee or official referee from the Association.

The Instructing Referee should:

- Encourage all children to have fun and different children to take re-starts.
- Ensure the correct numbers of players are on the field.
- Discourage players from permanently standing in blatant offside positions and instruct them to move into onside positions.
- Let the game flow and give instruction to all players on the run where they can.
- Instruct players in the first instance before blowing the whistle where possible.



- Ensure team officials and parents create a safe, enjoyable and positive playing environment for the children and do not emphasize the winning or losing.
- Be enthusiastic, consistent and approachable.
- Remember the children are learning – be flexible and patient.

Points Tables and Finals

To ensure that MiniRoos is played in the correct spirit and gives all players the best possible chance to develop into the best players they can be, FA advises that member Federations, Zones, Associations and Clubs adopt and promote that the keeping of points table and playing of finals should not be done.