



BC Soccer Policy

Policy Type	Operational Policy
Created	May 2022
Revised	June 2024
Reviewed	Annually
Policy Name	Small Sided Soccer Development Policy

Policy Statement

BC Soccer supports and promotes the principles of Long Term Player Development (LTPD) and the Grassroots Standards developed and produced by Canada Soccer establishing the developmentally appropriate small sided game formats to support individual player and team development for the respective age groups.

Purpose

To provide direction and guidance to BC Soccer’s members and affiliated organizations in creating responsible and beneficial age-appropriate game and training environments for Canada Soccer’s LTPD stages, being:

Stage	Name	Age Group
1	Active Start	Under 6 & younger
2	Fundamentals	Under 7 to Under 9
3	Learn to Train	Under 10 to Under 13
7	Soccer for Life	Under 14 & older

Standards

BC Soccer members and affiliated organizations, and registered referees must comply with the [‘BC Soccer Small-Side Referee Rules’](#) for small sided soccer.

No game results and/or standings are to be recorded or posted for Under 12 and younger.

The following stages of LTPD must be followed by all members and affiliated member organizations:

Stage 1 - Active Start - Adult and children play together informally with no goalkeeper and no competitive games.

Stage 2 - Fundamentals - Game format includes a goalkeeper or reduction of goal size.

Stage 3 - Learn to Train - Maximum Game format for U13 is 9v9.

Stage 1 - Active Start

Game Format	Age Group	Game Duration	Field Dimensions	Max Goal Dimensions	Ball Size
No Competitive Games	Under 6 & younger	N/A	N/A	N/A	3

Stage 2 - Fundamentals

Game Format	Age Group	Max Game Duration	Max Field Dimensions	Max Goal Dimensions	Ball Size
3v3	Under 7 & Under 8	40 mins	22mx30m	1.52m x 2.44m (5' x 8')	3/4
4v4	Under 7 & Under 8	40 mins	25mx36m	1.52m x 2.44m (5' x 8')	3/4
5v5	Under 8 & Under 9	40 mins	30mx36m	1.52m x 2.44m (5' x 8')	3/4
6v6	Under 8 & Under 9	50 mins	36mx55m	1.83m x 5.5m (6' x 18')	3/4
7v7	Under 9	50 mins	36mx55m	1.83m x 5.5m (6' x 18')	3/4

Stage 3 - Learn to Train

Game Format	Age Group	Max Game Duration	Max Field Dimensions	Max Goal Dimensions	Ball Size
6v6	Under 10 & Under 11	50 mins	36mx55m	1.83m x 5.5m (6' x 18')	3/4
7v7	Under 10 & Under 11	50 mins	36mx55m	1.83m x 5.5m (6' x 18')	4
8v8	Under 11 to Under 13	70 mins	55mx75m	1.83m x 5.5m (6' x 18')	4
9v9	Under 12 & Under 13	80 mins	55mx75m	1.83m x 5.5m (6' x 18')	4

Stage 7 - Soccer for Life

Game Format	Age Group	Max Game Duration	Max Field Dimensions	Max Goal Dimensions	Ball Size
5v5	Under 14 & older	70 mins	55mx75m	1.83m x 5.5m (6' x 18')	5
6v6					
7v7					
8v8					
9v9					

The Retreat Line will be implemented as follows:

Stage	Name	Position of Retreat Line
1	Active Start	N/A
2	Fundamentals	2/3 line
3	Learn to Train	2/3 line

Members and affiliated clubs must form teams from all registrants each year in a manner that is player first and respects the participation and developmental needs of all participants. Below provides the recommended team formation process for the respective age group.

Recommended									
Stage & Age Group	Active Start	Fundamentals				Learn To Train			
	Under 6	Under 7	Under 8	Under 9	Under 10	Under 11	Under 12	Under 13	
Process	Random or Balanced				Random, Balanced or Streamed				

Definitions

Retreat line: A tool that assists with the development of players and teams whereby limiting offensive player pressure in game start situations in defensive zones (i.e. goal kicks).

Guidelines

[Canada Soccer Grassroots Standards](#)

Player Evaluation Process

For all members and affiliated clubs it is recommended to support and promote a responsible, ongoing, progressive evaluation and assessment process for player identification, selection, and placement. To remove any reference and promotion of the “*TRY OUT*” mentality within their club and team atmosphere.

All evaluations and assessments should be:

- Conducted under the direction and guidance of the technical lead and supported by experienced and trained coaches.
- Implemented using a universal non numbering system, to avoid subjectively, which identifies player’s competencies over a period of time and in multiple environments.

Applicable Operational Procedures

Retreat Line

The retreat line is initiated when the ball has gone out for a goal kick. All opposing players will ‘retreat’ to the retreat line and cannot pursue the ball until:

- The ball is received by a teammate OR,
- The ball travels over the retreat line OR,
- The ball leaves the field of play

There is an encroachment of the retreat line if:

- The defending team encroaches across the retreat line before an opposition player touches the ball, then the referee blows the play stopped and issues a re-take of the goal kick.
- Players repeatedly infringe the retreat line; an indirect free kick shall be awarded from the place where the offence occurred for not respect the restart.

Player Evaluation Process

Ongoing Evaluation Sessions are the preferred process to support coaching staff in their player assessments. These evaluation sessions should be held throughout the season to support player placement in ongoing programming and for the follow season’s programming and/or teams.

In addition to ongoing evaluation sessions, BC Soccer recommends the following three additional processes to support effective evaluation, selection, and placement of players.

1. Match Play and Team Training Environments: providing coaches the opportunity to evaluate and assess players in environments where the player is comfortable, realistic, and there is appropriate dilemma and problem-solving requirements within the technical, tactical, physical, and emotional categories.
2. Open Evaluations Environments: open to a maximum number of players, to ensure a responsible process, who desire an opportunity to demonstrate their ability to participate within the proposed age group and level.
3. Invitation Only Evaluations Environments: inviting a set number of players to be assessed for the specific age group and level, with a responsible player to coach ratio being a minim of one (1) coach to every sixteen (16) players.

Forming of Small Sided Teams

Team Formation: Random Process

- At the discretion of the Club, players are placed on teams through no formal evaluation process.

Team Formation: Balanced Process

- At the discretion of the Club Technical Director or designated Technical Lead, players are placed on teams with other players of varying ability, dependent upon the club player evaluation process.
- Players can be moved from team to team, as per BC Soccer Transfer Rules, during the season, to match the identified developmental needs of the individual players.

Team Formation: Streamed Process

- At the discretion of the Club Technical Director or designated Technical Lead, players are placed on teams with other players of similar ability, dependent upon the club player evaluation process.
- Players can be moved from team to team, as per BC Soccer Transfer Rules, during the season, to match the identified developmental needs of the individual players.

Compliance to BC Soccer Governing Documents

In accordance with BC Soccer's "*Bylaws 3.4.a.ii*" all member organizations must comply with the applicable Bylaws, Rules and Regulations, Judicial Code and Policies, other Policies, decisions and directives of BC Soccer and the statutes, bylaws, regulations, directives and decisions of Canada Soccer, FIFA at all times

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