



12 Years & Under Football Rules & Guidelines

Section A – Championship Overview

- A - 1.** These Rules and Guidelines should be read in conjunction with School Sport Australia Policies, Championship Protocols and the Sport Championship Organisational Manual.
- A - 2.** The Championships shall be conducted in accordance with the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) unless otherwise stated.
- A - 3.** The Championships shall be conducted in accordance with a current Memorandum of Understanding between School Sport Australia and Football Federation Australia.

A - 4. Championship Length

The Championship is hosted over five (5) days, comprising four (4) playing days and one (1) educational day.

A - 5. Eligibility

All students must be 12 years of age and under on 31 December of the year of competition unless age dispensation has been granted as per rule [A - 6.](#)

Added December 2020

A - 6. Age Dispensation

Refer to the age dispensation map on the School Sport Australia website for the current age dispensation provisions in the SSA 12 Years and Under Boys and Girls Football Championships.

A - 7. Team Size

Squads shall be limited to a maximum of fourteen (14) players for each gender.

A - 8. Attendance at Championships

All students who participate in the School Sport Australia Football Championships must remain at the Championship location throughout the duration of the Championships and be bound by all Championship arrangements, except in exceptional circumstances as per School Sport Australia policy.

Added December 2020

Section B – Competition Structure

B - 1. Program / Schedule

Competition matches should only be scheduled Monday to Friday and not weekends.

B - 2. Draw

B - 2.1 Where there are 5 or 6 competing teams, the Championship shall consist of a single round robin plus pool games.

B - 2.1.1 All teams play each other to determine two (2) pools. Pool games – each team plays each other team within the pool.

B - 2.1.2 The pools are to be arranged at the completion of the Round Robin matches. Pool A to be teams placed 1, 2 and 3. Pool B to be teams placed 4, 5 and 6.

B - 2.1.3 Points are to carry through into the Pool matches.

B - 2.1.4 Championship positions (i.e. 1st, 2nd and 3rd) will come from Pool A. Should teams be equal on points at the end of the Round Robin, Pool rankings will be determined as follows:

B - 2.1.4.1 The winner when the teams met in the Round Robin will be determined to be in Pool A.

B - 2.1.4.2 In the event of the teams finishing equal on points during the Round Robin or where there are more than two teams on equal points, places will be determined in the following manner:

B - 2.1.4.2.1 if one team was the winner during the Round Robin, that team is placed higher.

B - 2.1.4.2.2 if the Round Robin result was a draw, the team with the superior goal difference is placed higher.

B - 2.1.4.2.3 if this is the same, the team scoring the most number of goals is placed higher.

B - 2.1.4.2.4 if this is equal, the Championship Convenor will organise the drawing of lots to determine the higher placing.

In [B - 2.1.4.2.2](#) and [B - 2.1.4.2.3](#) above, for positions 1- 4, only those goals scored in games contested by the top four teams will apply. Points are to carry through into the Pool matches.

School Sport Australia medals are awarded to Pool A teams only.

B - 2.2 Where there are seven (7) or eight (8) competing teams, the Championship shall consist of a single Round Robin.

B - 2.2.1 For seven (7) team Championship:

Round 1 Monday	Round 2 Tuesday	Round 3 Thursday	Round 4 Friday
5 v 7	7 v 3	1 v 7	2 v 3
3 v 4	6 v 4	3 v 6	6 v 1
1 v 2	2 v 5	2 v 4	4 v 5
5 v 6	3 v 1	5 v 1	7 v 2
4 v 7	6 v 2	7 v 6	1 v 4
		3 v 5	

Over a 4 day competition, each team has two (2) 'double headers'.

B - 2.2.2 For eight (8) teams, the draw will require re-distribution for 'double headers' over the scheduled match days:

Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 4	Round 5	Round 6	Round 7
1 v 2	1 v 4	1 v 6	1 v 8	1 v 7	1 v 5	1 v 3
3 v 4	2 v 6	4 v 8	6 v 7	8 v 5	7 v 3	5 v 2
5 v 6	3 v 8	2 v 7	4 v 5	6 v 3	8 v 2	7 v 4
7 v 8	5 v 7	3 v 5	2 v 3	4 v 2	6 v 4	8 v 6

- B - 2.3** No teams to be scheduled to play more than two (2) full games in any one day.
- B - 2.4** There should be at least a period of one (1) hour between consecutive matches.
- B - 2.5** At each year's Post Championship meeting a ballot is to be conducted for the allocation of the following year's draw.

B - 3. Duration of matches

All matches will be played with 25 minutes each half, with stoppage time added on. There will be a five (5) minute half time break.

B - 4. Game Protocols / Specific Rules / Results

- B - 4.1** Matches are conducted with 9 players per team, i.e. 9 v 9 including the goalkeeper with a maximum of 5 substitutes.
- B - 4.2** The 12 Years & Under Championships are played under FIFA Laws of the Game with modified rules to assist players in their development, these are:
 - B - 4.2.1** Goalkeeper: To restart play after a save or gathering the ball with their hands, the ball must be thrown or rolled from the hands or played from the ground with their feet, within 6 seconds. The goalkeeper is not allowed to kick or dropkick the ball from their hands.

B - 4.2.2 Goal kick: Goal kicks can be taken from anywhere within the penalty area.

B - 4.2.3 Corner kick & Free kick: Opponents must be at least 5 metres away from the ball until it is in play. The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves.

B - 4.2.4 Offside: The offside rule is in play at the midpoint in the attacking half.

B - 4.2.5 Discipline: For any fouls that would ordinarily result in a red card, the match official will instruct the player to leave the field of play for the remainder of the match, any player sent from the field of play may be replaced by another player at the time of the offence. In this instance, neither team will be required to play with fewer than 9 players.

B - 4.3 Coaching

Coaches are permitted to coach during the game from the technical area and must abide by the School Sport Australia Codes of Conduct.

B - 4.4 Interchange

B - 4.4.1 Each team may make unlimited interchange.

B - 4.4.2 Interchange shall take place on the sideline, at the halfway line when the ball is out of play and as directed by the referee and/or the assistant referee.

B - 5. Points Allocation

Win - 4 points

Draw - 2 points

Loss - 1 point

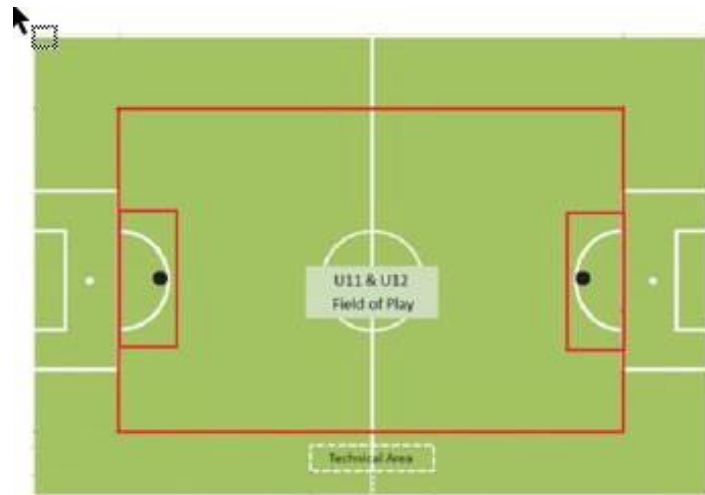
B - 6. Method of Determining a Winner

B - 6.1 At the end of the competition, where two (2) or more teams finish on equal points, joint places will be declared.

B - 6.2 Should weather prevent the completion of the Championship then the team leading the Championship shall be declared the winner.

Section C – Facilities / Equipment

C - 1. The pitch size should be 70 metres (length) x 50 metres (width). The playing area should be set-up in an orientation of penalty box to penalty box, if within an existing pitch. **see illustration below*



- C - 2.** Field markings are required and painted lines for pitch markings must be a different colour to any existing line markings used for other pitches.
- C - 3.** Goal size dimensions are 5 metres in width and 2 metres in height. Permanent or portable goals must be compliant with the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission's Consumer Notice No.28 of 2010.
- C - 4.** The goalmouth dimensions have a depth of 10 metres and width of 20 metres. The Penalty Spot is positioned 8 metres from goal line. The "goalmouth" is the area defined and marked for the goalkeeper in which they can handle the ball.
- C - 5.** It is strongly recommended that the host state submits a ground report which includes pitch orientation & dimensions, surface and quality of ground. This should be included in the first information bulletin.
- C - 6.** A FIFA & FFA approved size 4 match ball shall be used.
- C - 7.** Where possible, water and ice containers should be provided in central locations for easy access.

Section D – Uniform

- D - 1.** Players shall compete in state/territory team uniforms.

Section E – Injury Management

- E - 1.** Refer to School Sport Australia General Policy for the management of injuries. This policy will override any sport specific injury management Protocols.

[School-Sport-Australia-Injury-Management-Policy.pdf \(schoolsportaustralia.edu.au\)](https://schoolsportaustralia.edu.au/School-Sport-Australia-Injury-Management-Policy.pdf)

Section F – Officials

F - 1. Championship Officials

- F - 1.1** Championship Convener – To manage all aspects of the Championship
- F - 1.2** Referee Coordinator – To oversee the conduct of the referees during the Championship.

F - 2. Match Officials

F - 2.1 Student Referees

- F - 2.1.1** Competing States / Territories are invited to nominate one student referee with each competing team.
- F - 2.1.2** The host member body will appoint three accredited referees for each match. Each match will have a referee and two assistant referees. A fourth official may also be appointed for each fixture if personnel are available.
- F - 2.1.3** Appointed referees must have a current FFA registration and a minimum of one season of practical experience at FFA sanctioned games.
- F - 2.1.4** Member bodies are required to advise student referee nominations to the host state no later than eight weeks prior to the competition. Under no circumstance are parents of participating players allowed to be referee or be an assistant referee.

- F - 2.2** Appointed referees, presently officiating an appropriate standard for representative football must have a current FFA registration and a minimum of one season of practical experience at SSO/FFA sanctioned games.

Section G – Protests

- G - 1.** Protests in regard to results are not considered in Football. All other matters can be dealt with by the Disciplinary Committee.

Section H – Tribunal / Judiciary

- H - 1.** The Championship Judiciary Committee will comprise of the Championship Convener, National Football Advisor and one state delegate. Each state will nominate a delegate to form a judiciary of three members when a meeting is convened.
- H - 2.** Any Player cautioned three times during the Championship, or sent off, shall be dealt with by the Judiciary as soon as possible with the tabled referees report.
- H - 3.** The nominated delegate from the state of an offending player will be required to attend a scheduled judiciary meeting as the third judiciary member and also advise the respective player and team management of the outcome from the Championship Judiciary Committee.

H - 4. Written appeals pertaining to a suspension must be lodged with the Championship Convener and shall be dealt with by a Championship Judiciary Committee chaired by the Championship Convener, the National Football Advisor and comprised of the nominated team official from each participating state. If required, each state shall be allowed one (1) vote for matters before the committee.

Section I – Trophies / Awards / Medals

I - 1. The Boys and Girls play for the Championship Trophy.

I - 2. Gold, Silver and Bronze School Sport Australia medals are awarded.