



SYSL U9/U11 Buildout Line Guidance & Instructions

Fall 2023 – Spring 2024

SYSL promotes **player development** and supports the US Youth Soccer Player Development Initiative. The SYSL implementation will be as follows:

The 8v8 game is **geared for player development**. Referee decisions may invoke the “spirit of the game” when the development of the players supersedes trifling infractions.

The **buildout line** promotes playing the ball out of the back, while creating more opportunities and improvement of a player’s understanding of the game in a less pressured setting.

When the goalkeeper has possession of the ball, either during live play or from a goal kick, *opponents must retreat behind* the **build-out line** before they can pressure the ball and the attacking team when the GK puts the ball into play the ball.

The **build-out line** will also serve as the designation for offside at 8v8 play.

Field Marking of the Build-Out Line:

The build-out line should be equidistant between the penalty area line and the halfway line

- The build-out line should be painted on the field, preferably in a different color or as a dashed line
- If a painted line is not available, a marker such as a flag or cones will need to be used on the sideline

Offside

The build-out line will be used to denote where offside offenses will be penalized (instead of the halfway line)

- Players cannot be penalized for an offside offense between the halfway line and the build-out line
- Players can be penalized for an offside offense between the build-out line and the goal line

Goal Kicks or free kicks coming out of the Penalty Area

The ball is considered “in play” once the kick is taken and one of the following three events occurs:

1. The ball is played or touched by a teammate of the goalkeeper. This does not need to be a successful soccer play of the ball. Any physical contact will be considered fulfilling this requirement.
2. Any part of the ball crosses over the buildout line. It is not required for the entire ball to cross the buildout line.
3. The ball comes to a complete stop within the area defined by the buildout line.

Important Notes

- Players must remain behind the build-out line until the ball is considered in play. If a team chooses to take a goal kick or a free kick quickly before their opponents retreat behind the build-out line, they are doing so at their own risk as these opponents can pressure the ball / attacker as soon as the ball is “in play” as defined above. The goalkeeper releasing the ball before all opponents are behind the buildout line does not relieve opponents from continuing to retreat behind the buildout line until the ball is actually in play.
- The goalkeeper may wait until ALL opponents have retreated behind the build-out line before putting the ball into play.

Goalkeeper’s possession after ‘save’ during live play

Goalkeepers cannot punt or drop-kick the ball.

- If the goalkeeper does punt/drop-kick the ball:
the restart is an indirect free kick awarded to the opposing team at the penalty area line parallel with the goal line at the nearest point to where the offense occurred

Goalkeepers must throw, roll or put ball on ground and play the ball with their feet to put the ball in play. The ball is considered “in play” once the goalkeeper has released the ball AND one of the following three events occurs:

1. The ball is played or touched by a teammate of the goalkeeper. This does not need to be a successful soccer play of the ball. Any physical contact will be considered fulfilling this requirement.
2. Any part of the ball crosses over the buildout line. It is not required for the entire ball to cross the buildout line.
3. The ball comes to a complete stop within the area defined by the buildout line.

More Important Notes:

- There is no halfway line restriction for goalkeeper distribution, the goalkeeper is permitted to distribute the ball directly into the opponent’s half of the field
- Per Law 12 - the goalkeeper has 6 seconds to release the ball. That count should not start until ALL opponents retreat behind the build-out line.
- The goalkeeper can choose to release the ball quickly before their opponents retreat behind the build-out line. However, they accept the position of the opponents and the consequences when doing so at their own risk as these opponents can pressure the ball / attacker as soon as the ball is “in play” as defined above. The goalkeeper releasing the ball before all opponents are behind the buildout line does not relieve opponents from continuing to retreat behind the buildout line until the ball is actually in play.

Encroachment

All opponents **must retreat behind** the build-out Line **before they can pressure the ball** or the attacking team.

- *If an opponent pressures the ball or opposing team before they retreat behind the build-out line (encroachment), the restart will be an indirect free kick for the attacking team at the point of the infraction*
- If a goalkeeper chooses to release the ball quickly before their opponents retreat behind the build-out line, they are doing so at their own risk as these opponents can pressure the ball / attacker as soon as the ball is “in play” as described.

