

Age Eligibility and Other Player Limits

Until recently, this was a minefield of inconsistency and varied according to region and league rules. Now, The FA have issued a ruling to ensure consistency of application across the whole country. Essentially, the age group a player joins is determined by his or her date of birth – this also mirrors the school year. The critical date is 31st August every year, and the chart below shows which age group applies.

Specific Conditions:

- To play affiliated football, the player must be six years old on or before 31st August.
- To play Adult football, the player must be at least 16 years old.
- To play Under 18's football, the player must be 15 years old on or before 31st August.
- A player can play in an older age group by one year, but no older player is allowed to play down a lower age group.
- The offside rule and linespeople are introduced in u11 9v9 format and applied from then onwards.
- Official (qualified) referees are expected to be assigned to matches from u11 and above.
- Official referees and linespeople must be assigned for Cup Matches and other non-regular League Competitions.
- There are set limits for the maximum game time allowed per day per age group, which corresponds to the duration of matches per age group.

Boys and Mixed Football										
Age Group (School Year)	Team Format	Ball Size	Pitch Size	Goal Size	Scores Count	Match Length	Max Playing Time per Day	Offside Rule	Linesman Needed	Team Size Guide
U7 (School Y2)	5v5	3	40x30 yds	12x6 ft	No	2x20 mins	40 mins/day	No	No	10
U8 (School Y3)	5v5	3	40x30 yds	12x6 ft	No	2x20 mins	40 mins/day	No	No	10
U9 (School Y4)	7v7	3	60x40 yds	12x6 ft	No	2x30 mins	60 mins/day	No	No	12
U10 (School Y5)	7v7	4	60x40 yds	12x6 ft	No	2x30 mins	60 mins/day	No	No	12
U11 (School Y6)	9v9	4	80x50 yds	16x7 ft	No	2x30 mins	80 mins/day	Yes	Yes	14
U12 (School Y7)	9v9	4	80x50 yds	16x7 ft	Yes	2x30 mins	80 mins/day	Yes	Yes	14
U13 (School Y8)	11v11	4	90x55 yds	21x7 ft	Yes	2x35 mins	100 mins/day	Yes	Yes	16
U14 (School Y9)	11v11	4	90x55 yds	21x7 ft	Yes	2x35 mins	100 mins/day	Yes	Yes	16

U15 (School Y10)	11v11	5	100x60 yds	24x8 ft	Yes	2x40 mins	100 mins/day	Yes	Yes	16
U16 (School Y11)	11v11	5	100x60 yds	24x8 ft	Yes	2x40 mins	100 mins/day	Yes	Yes	16
U17 (School Y12)	11v11	5	110x70 yds	24x8 ft	Yes	2x45 mins	120 mins/day	Yes	Yes	16
U18 (School 13)	11v11	5	110x70 yds	24x8 ft	Yes	2x45 mins	120 mins/day	Yes	Yes	16
Open	11v11	5	110x70 yds	24x8 ft	Yes	2x45 mins	N/A	Yes	Yes	N//A

Girls Football										
Age Group (School Year)	Team Format	Ball Size	Pitch Size	Goal Size	Scores Count	Match Length	Max Playing Time per Day	Offside Rule	Linesman Needed	Team Size Guide
U7 (School Y2)	5v5	3	40x30 yds	12x6 ft	No	2x20 mins	40 mins/day	No	No	10
U8 (School Y3)	5v5	3	40x30 yds	12x6 ft	No	2x20 mins	40 mins/day	No	No	10
U9 (School Y4)	5v5	3	60x40 yds	12x6 ft	No	2x30 mins	60 mins/day	No	No	12
U10 (School Y5)	7v7	4	60x40 yds	12x6 ft	No	2x30 mins	60 mins/day	No	No	12
U11 (School Y6)	7v7	4	80x50 yds	16x7 ft	No	2x30 mins	80 mins/day	Yes	Yes	14
U12 (School Y7)	9v9	4	80x50 yds	16x7 ft	Yes	2x30 mins	80 mins/day	Yes	Yes	14
U13 (School Y8)	9v9	4	90x55 yds	21x7 ft	Yes	2x35 mins	100 mins/day	Yes	Yes	16
U14 (School Y9)	11v11	4	90x55 yds	21x7 ft	Yes	2x35 mins	100 mins/day	Yes	Yes	16
U15 (School Y10)	11v11	5	100x60 yds	24x8 ft	Yes	2x40 mins	100 mins/day	Yes	Yes	16
U16 (School Y11)	11v11	5	100x60 yds	24x8 ft	Yes	2x40 mins	100 mins/day	Yes	Yes	16
U17 (School Y12)	11v11	5	110x70 yds	24x8 ft	Yes	2x45 mins	120 mins/day	Yes	Yes	16
U18 (School 13)	11v11	5	110x70 yds	24x8 ft	Yes	2x45 mins	120 mins/day	Yes	Yes	16
Open	11v11	5	110x70 yds	24x8 ft	Yes	2x45 mins	N/A	Yes	Yes	N//A