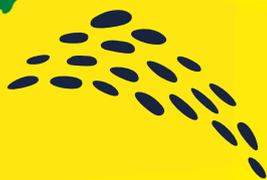




**FOR ALL**



**The FA**

# **FUTSAL**

**A BEGINNER'S  
GUIDE TO  
FUTSAL**



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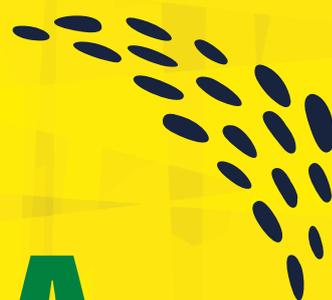
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# **GUIDE TO STARTING UP A YOUTH FUTSAL COMPETITION**



# INTRODUCTION

Providing young players with the opportunity to play futsal will bring about all sorts of benefits.

Futsal is a fast paced, skilful small sided game that most players really enjoy playing. If you are a youth football league, providing a futsal competition will add variety and interest to your season. Players will relish a new technical challenge for the players and managers and spectators may thank you for taking them inside and out of the cold! Securing the facilities to stage a futsal competition may present some challenges but nothing that can't be overcome.

The biggest thing to remember is that you need to provide an experience of futsal and not just of indoor football. The closer you can get to the 'real game' the more the participants will identify its benefits and enjoy the experience.

As a futsal beginner, this guide will provide you with everything that you need to know. It contains information you need on;

- [Getting a competition up and running](#)
- [The FIFA Laws of Futsal](#)
- [Guidance on pitch sizes and markings](#)
- [Guidance on setting up your league using The FA's Full Time Website](#)



## Getting a competition up and running

If you've received a grant from the Football Foundation this will mean that the County Football Association is aware of it and has supported your proposal. Contact your local County FA Football Development Team and they can guide you through setting up your competition. If you are an existing affiliated league this may be as easy as simply creating a new Futsal Division(s) on Full Time. If you are a 'Start Up' league then the competition will need to be affiliated and the CFA will help you do this. Participating teams will then be able to register players using The FA's Whole Game System.

In planning your competition it's crucial that you offer a genuine futsal experience. This will require you to embed five essential criteria;

1. The game is played to lines and futsal pitch markings (either permanently through tape or just by temporarily marking the pitch with flat disc markers).
2. Use of a futsal ball
3. Use of futsal goals
4. Matches played to FIFA Futsal Laws of the game
5. Matches played on a hard playing surface (not on grass or an artificial surface)



## Pitch and equipment

Ideally the game should be played indoors in any appropriately sized school or community sports hall. At an introductory level we would suggest that the minimum pitch size is 25m x 15m with a run-off around the pitch of 2m. The floor surface should be wooden or a suitable synthetic floor that is smooth and flat.

Futsal goals are 3m x 2m in dimension and very similar to hockey or handball goals (these alternatives could be used if you are struggling to access proper futsal goals). As with any forms of football, do make sure that the goals are safe and secure before you start playing. There are a number of retailers of futsal goals online from whom you can purchase these goals.

In order to play a game that truly resembles futsal you will need a proper futsal ball, as these are smaller and denser than a normal football. The Football Foundation will provide you with a starter bag of futsal balls and additional balls can be purchased online. It is recommended that players aged U12 years of age use a size 3 ball and players aged 13 years and above a size 4.



## Futsal referees

For introductory competitions with younger age groups a single futsal referee could officiate. The ideal set up would involve the use of two referees assisted by a table official. Most County FAs will have trained futsal referees but it would be worthwhile running a futsal refereeing course prior to the league starting, to train additional independent referees or ensure that each club has a trained official that could take control of a game if required.

## Coach education

Futsal presents a new challenge to coaches and an understanding of the laws of the game and differing tactics are required. If you can work with the CFA to stage a futsal taster session or a futsal level one award for team coaches this will greatly assist the competition once it gets underway.

## Size of the futsal tournament or league

The number of teams entering the league or competition has a significant impact upon determining other factors related to organising the event, such as the size of the facility, number of pitches required, referees, format of the tournament etc. So initially the organiser needs to consider the desired number of teams that they would wish to take part in the event. This will then help you decide whether you will stage the competition using one, two or multiple venues.

## Communication

The event organiser needs to liaise with the teams prior to the start of the league season ensuring that they are an existing Youth Football and Futsal League, you are well used to communicating with teams about fixtures and results but new leagues need to give consideration to this. The FA's Full Time website provides an excellent way of doing this but there is still a role for the event organiser who needs to liaise with the teams prior to the start of the league season, ensuring that they have all the information that they require and procedures are clear in relation to confirming fixtures, cancellations, tournament rules, player registration, discipline procedure, welfare process and location and access to venues.

## Venue and equipment

Depending on the age of the participants that you are catering for you may need to consider where participants and their parents can wait prior to their fixture. A local authority sports centre may have a café or viewing gallery but a school sports hall may lack both.

The event organiser will need to consider whether the venue has the necessary futsal goals, and if not then how these will be obtained. It would also be advantageous if there was an electronic scoreboard that could be used for the matches, but this is not essential.



## Competition rules

Prior to the league starting it is important to pay some consideration to the rules that you intend to follow.

Where possible, stick to the FIFA Futsal Laws of the Game, but you may need to modify them in order to fit the specific circumstances of your event.

Common rule changes are:

### Match duration

A normal game of futsal is 20 minutes each way but depending on the number of participating teams and access to facilities you may need to shorten this duration and play to a non-stopping clock in order to fit all games into the allotted schedule.

### Timeouts

In order to keep games running to time then frequently timeouts are either reduced (one per team for entire game) or removed entirely.

### Accumulated fouls

If the duration of the game has been reduced then the number of accumulated fouls that can be conceded before a penalty is given is often reduced in order to make this more relevant and appropriate.

The event organiser should also consider other elements that are specific to your league such as disciplinary action taken following a sending off. For a league you should also consider elements such as teams failing to turn-up or cancelling at the last minute.



## Use of league table

Please note that in line with FA standard code of rules for youth football no results or league tables for U7-U11 teams may be published.

## Administering your league on FA full time

The FA's Full Time website provides the ideal way to schedule fixtures and provide league tables and results for U12 age groups.

If you haven't done it before talk to your CFA. You can also make use of the guidance documents that can be found on the site.

[fulltime-league.thefa.com/](http://fulltime-league.thefa.com/)

## Player registration

Existing Youth Football Leagues should set up their futsal competition as a new division or divisions. League operators should then provide the CFA with a list of participating teams. On the Whole Game System, CFAs can then tick 'Also plays futsal' box for the participating football teams. This will then register all of the existing football players as also being futsal players.





**FOR ALL**



# **THE FA FUTSAL LAWS OF THE GAME**



# YOUTH FUTSAL

This is an introduction to the Laws of Futsal so that more and more people can begin to play and enjoy the game. They are the basics that make it quite different from traditional 5v5 football.

Coaches of young players should ensure they have an understanding of the basic laws detailed in this guide before a match, but this is a great way to start children playing and enjoying the game.



## How futsal began

Futsal was first played on basketball courts in Uruguay in the 1930s.

As a fast moving, skilful version of football it soon spread to other South American countries such as Brazil. Futsal became popular in large crowded cities where there was a shortage of football pitches.

The skills and techniques developed by playing futsal were very apparent in the wonderful World Cup winning Brazilian teams.

Now futsal is recognised not only as a development tool for football, but as a brilliant game in its own right. Futsal has been embedded into the England DNA. It is a great way to keep children playing during the winter months. Players of all ages love to play futsal.



## What the great players say about futsal

“As a little boy in Argentina, I played futsal on the streets and for my club. It was tremendous fun, and it really helped me become who I am today.”

Lionel Messi

“During my childhood in Portugal, all we played was futsal, the small playing area helped me improve my close control, and whenever I played futsal I felt free. If it wasn't for futsal, I wouldn't be the player I am today.”

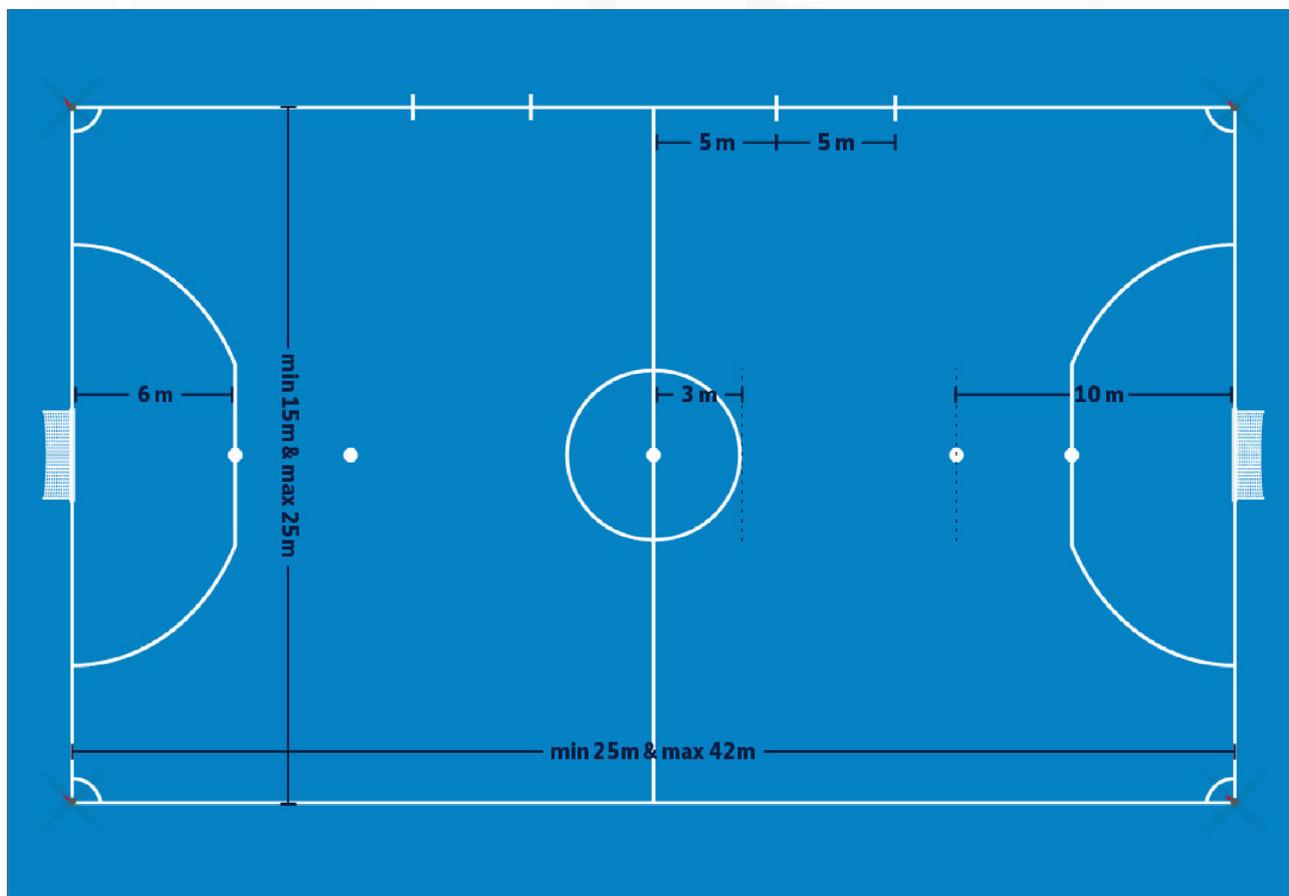
Cristiano Ronaldo

“The technique of playing futsal is different to the eleven-a-side version; there are spectacular things you can attempt that you would not dare trying in football. It adds more fun to the discipline.”

Zinédine Zidane



# 1 PLAYING AREA

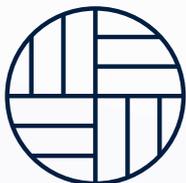


Futsal playing area dimensions are above.

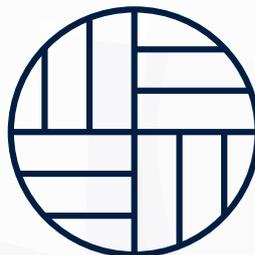
A hard surface is required. Indoors is preferable but outdoors on a hard surface is ok. The game can not be played on grass or on AGP pitches.

The pitch has marked lines so that the ball can go out of play. Futsal can not be played with board or wall surrounds.

## 2 BALL



**U12 and under**  
Size 3  
Futsal ball



**U14s- seniors**  
Size 4  
Futsal ball

Playing with a futsal ball is essential.

The ball is smaller, heavier and bounces less than a normal football.

Futsal balls are available in age appropriate sizes.

## 3 GOALS

Futsal goals are 3m × 2m (the same as Hockey or Handball goal size).

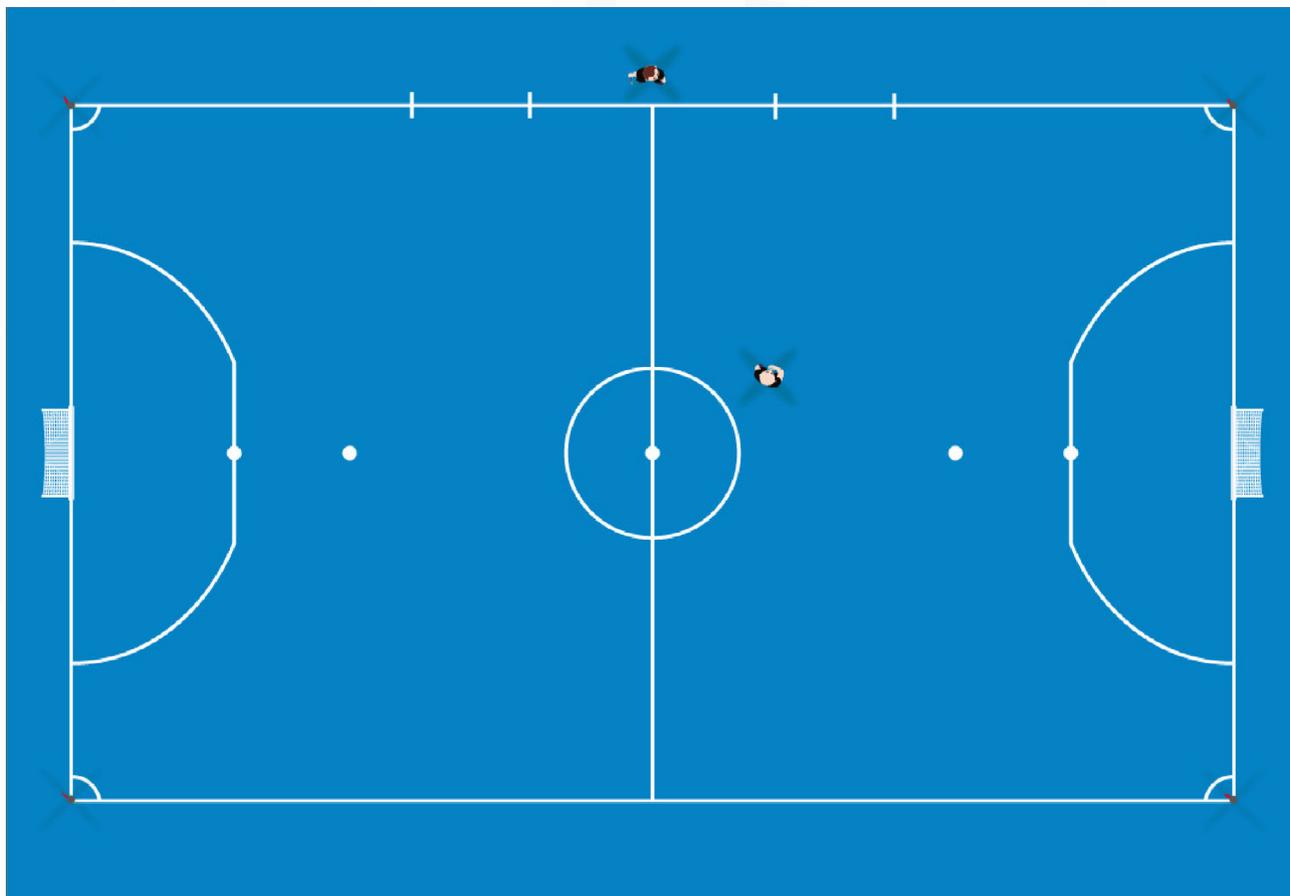
The goalposts and crossbars should be a different colour to the pitch.

Safety is always the first consideration with any goalposts. The goals should be secured so that they do not collapse or overturn.

Portable goals should only be used if they comply with the above.



## 4 MATCH OFFICIALS



Two referees are normal at games in order to apply The Laws of Futsal but one can manage with younger age groups.

At international level there are two referees, a third official and a timekeeper.

A referee has the power to apply The Laws of Futsal on the day even if they are not fully qualified. At grassroots level, the aim is to get more children playing the game. The number of officials available should not prevent this.

## 5 TIMING OF GAMES

A futsal match consists of two 20 minute halves real time. This means that the clock stops whenever the ball goes out of play. However at a grassroots level organisers may need to use a running clock and adjust the duration of games to match the availability of the facility and the number of games to be played.

Each team is allowed a 60 second time out in each half.

## 6 FOUR SECOND LAW

When the ball goes out of play, the player in possession of the ball has four seconds to restart play with a kick-in, goal clearance, corner kick or free kick.

Referees count with their fingers in the air to show how many seconds.

If play has not restarted within the four second limit a free kick will be awarded to the opposing team.

Goalkeepers are not allowed to control the ball for more than four seconds in their own half.



## 7 KICK INS

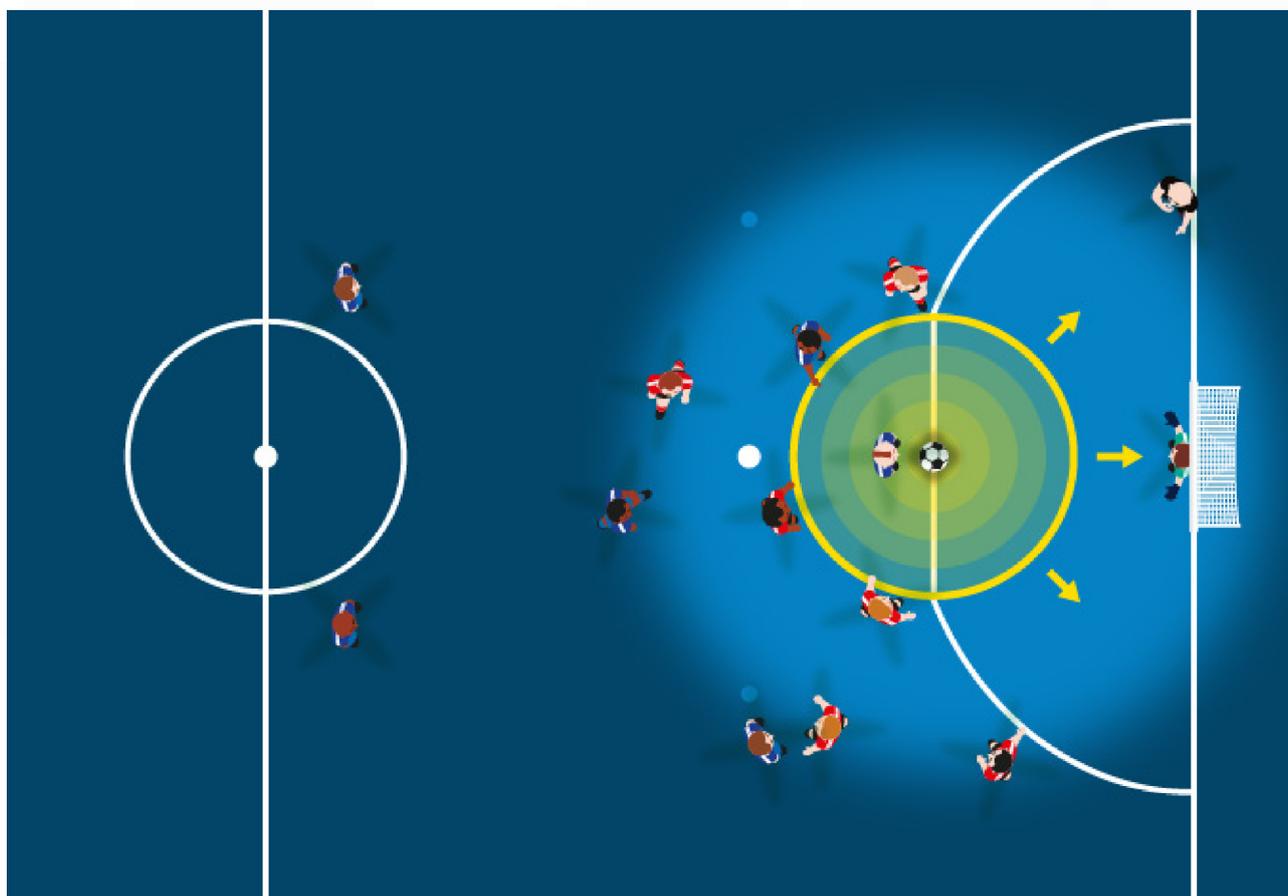


To restart the game after a ball has gone out of play, the ball is kicked back into play from the touch line and from corners .

The ball must be stationary on the touch line.

The feet of the player taking the kick in must not cross the line.

## 8 RESTARTS



The five metre law applies to all kick ins, goal clearances, free kicks, and corners.

Penalties distance is 6m or edge of the 'D'.

|                 |                             |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| Kick in         | 5 metres                    |
| Goal clearances | 5 metres                    |
| Freekick        | 5 metres                    |
| Corners         | 5 metres                    |
| Penalties       | 6 metres or edge of the 'D' |

Players are required to be this distance away from the player in possession of the ball.

## 9 GOALKEEPERS



Goalkeepers are allowed to come OUT of the penalty area. Outfield players are allowed IN the penalty area.

A goal clearance must be thrown out by the goalkeeper. The goalkeeper cannot touch the ball again until he or she has crossed into the opponent's half or a member of the opposition has touched the ball.

The four second rule also applies to the goalkeeper in possession.

## 10 ROLLING SUBSTITUTIONS

At international level 14 players would be used in one match. At lower levels it is recommended to be 10/12.

There is no limit on how long a player must stay on or off the pitch.

Players must enter and leave the field of play from the substitution zone.

Roll on roll off substitutions can be made at any time during the game with permission from the referee, including players who have already been substituted.

For young players in the Foundation Phase 50% game time is recommended.

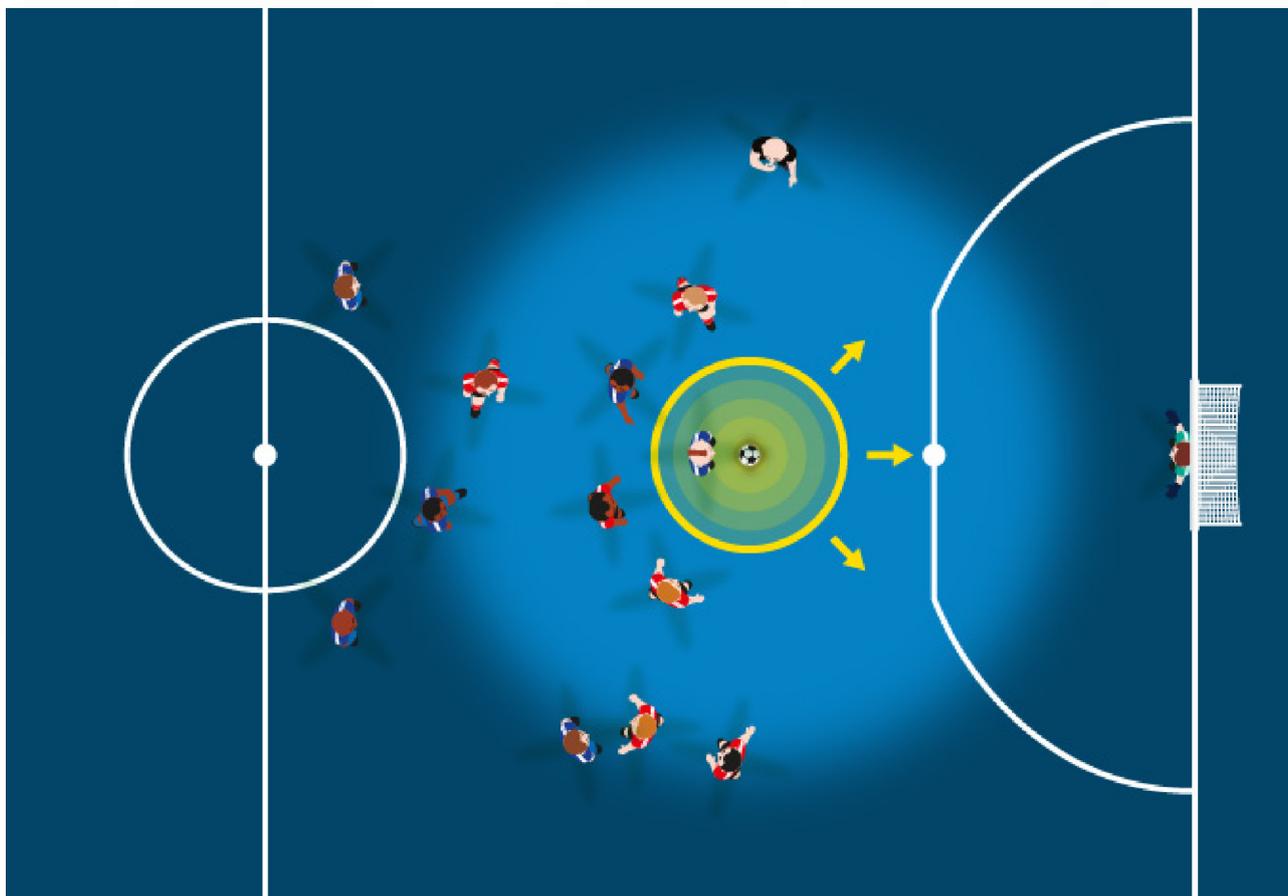
## 11 SLIDING TACKLES

Slide tackles are not permitted in Youth Futsal in ENGLAND (up to age U16).

The only time players ARE permitted to slide is to keep the ball in play.



## 12 ACCUMULATED FOULS



Each team will be allowed to give away five direct free kicks in each half. On the sixth foul, a 10m penalty kick is awarded to the opposing team and every foul after that in the same half is also a 10m penalty (pictured).

The defending team is not allowed to position any players (other than the goalkeeper) between the ball and the goal. The kick may be taken from the 10m mark or, if the foul was committed closer to the goal than 10m, from the position where the foul took place.

## 13 RED CARDS

If a player is sent off, their team must remain with four players until either two minutes have passed or the opposition has scored a goal.

## How do I organise futsal without access to a dedicated pitch?

Ideally futsal matches would be played on a marked indoor court of the right dimensions and markings. In reality you're likely to be required to adapt an existing facility that has been designed to accommodate badminton, basketball or netball. The good news is that this can easily be done.

### What makes futsal the game that it is?

With this in mind these are the five basics. Without them, it is not a game of futsal:



The surface must be a hard court.



The ball must be a heavier futsal ball  
– Size 3 or size 4.



The format must be 5v5 on court  
– Up to 14 in total team.



The pitch must have touchlines not played off walls.



Must use 3m x 2m futsal goals  
– Handball goal size.

### The benefits of futsal

Futsal has now been embedded into the England Coaching DNA. It is a fantastic game in its own right, but it brings so many other benefits to young players:

- Develop skills
- Improve decision making
- Learn to innovate on the pitch
- Develop different game strategies
- Gain more flexible movement
- Learn different tactics





# FUTSAL PITCH SIZE



# OVERVIEW

England boasts over 4,000 sports halls and many more that are smaller in size. These exist in schools, local leisure centres, other education sites or private provision.

Player safety must be at the heart of any futsal offering and The FA, facility providers, club officers and officials have an important role to play in ensuring a safe environment for play.

## Age appropriate futsal pitches

When considering the appropriate size futsal pitch for young players we must consider, but not be limited by;

- Availability of, and access to facilities
- Safe run off space
- Adapted FIFA Futsal Laws of the Game - for grassroots and youth futsal only
- Age specific benefits offered by the format
- Safety of players
- The ball
- Number of referees
- Table officials

Therefore when considering the size of the pitch for the age, maturation and level of the player, reducing the pitch size has several impacts as a game constraint that will have a huge impact upon play and development outcomes.



# FUTSAL PITCH GUIDANCE

## Community usage

|         | Length<br>(max) m | Width<br>(max) m | Run off<br>(min) m | Centre Circle<br>(min rad) m | 2nd (10m)<br>Penalty (min) m |
|---------|-------------------|------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| U9      | 18.00             | 11.00            | 1.00               | 1.50                         | 4.50                         |
| U11     | 20.00             | 12.50            | 1.00               | 1.50                         | 4.50                         |
| 12 - 16 | 30.00             | 15.00            | 1.00               | 2.25                         | 10.00                        |

Note: applies to all Local Qualifying Competition (LQC) rounds of The FA Youth Futsal Cup

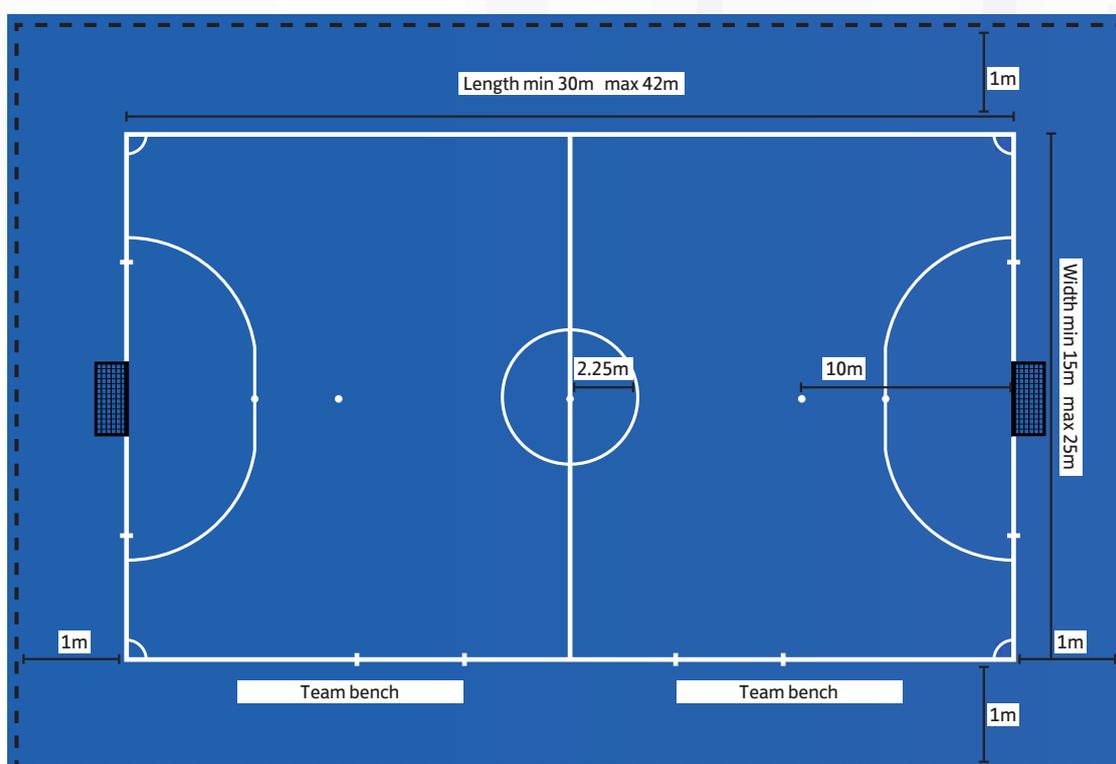


# FUTSAL PITCH GUIDANCE

## Club usage

|     | Length<br>(min-max) m | Width<br>(min-max) m | Run off<br>(min) m | Centre Circle<br>(min rad) m | 2nd (10m)<br>Penalty (min) m |
|-----|-----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 16+ | 30 - 42               | 15 - 25              | 1.00               | 2.25                         | 10.00                        |

Note: applies to all Local Qualifying Competition (LQC) rounds of The FA Futsal Cup



1. Side and end walls or rebound boards are not used in futsal and a run off is a requirement. Run off dimensions stated in the table are absolute minimums. Where the run offs are stated as 1.0m it should be noted that whilst this is permissible, 2.0m is preferred and should be accommodated where feasible at the facility.
2. Additional space is required for benching/tables/officials/team bench.
3. It is imperative that facility providers, event organisers and participating teams conduct a safety risk assessment of the pitch dimension applied and its run offs which should be recorded within the competition log and operational management plan.

