

BUILD OUT LINE INFORMATION FOR 7V7 PLAY

As part of US Soccer's Player Development Initiatives (PDI), all 7v7 matches -- 9U-10U in Travel and Grades 3-4 in Rec -- will include build out lines, which promotes playing the ball out of the back in a less pressured setting.

A build out line on each half of the field should be equidistant between the top of the penalty area and the midfield line (refer to field diagram on page 4). It may be designated as a painted (solid or dashed line) on the field, or by use of a cone or other marker near the touchline but off the field of play.

Coaches may be asked to use cones to designate these build out lines for their matches in the event their field of play is lacking a painted line.

Build out lines affect several changes within the Laws of the Game, most notably Offside, the Goal Kick, and the Goalkeeper's possession with their hands within the run of play.

OFFSIDE:

An offside offense can only occur in each attacking team's final third of the field (between the build out line and the goal line in the team's attacking half of the field). In other words, the build out line serves the same purpose as the midfield line in larger sided formats. It is similar to the blue line in hockey.

Players may not be offside between the midfield line and the build out line.

GOAL KICK:

When a team is awarded a goal kick, the defending team must retreat past the build out line in a timely fashion. Once the ball is put into play, the defending team may pressure the ball.

The attacking team may choose to restart play before the defending team retreats to the build out line; when this occurs, the defending team may pressure the ball.

GOALKEEPER POSSESSION WITH HANDS:

The same process that occurs with goal kicks (defending team retreats past the build out line) must also occur when the goalkeeper has possession of the ball in their hands. Once this occurs, the goalkeeper may distribute the ball by roll, throw, or kick. The defending team may pressure the ball once it's put back into play.

The goalkeeper is prohibited from punting or drop-kicking the ball. Violations result in an indirect free kick awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the infraction; if this occurs in the goal area, the restart should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the nearest point to where the infringement occurred.

The goalkeeper may choose to distribute the ball before the defending team retreats to the build out line; when this occurs, the defending team may pressure immediately.

The build out line provisions do not apply to other restarts between the build out line and the goal line (e.g. throw ins, free kicks, etc.).

Additional explanation:

7v7 Standards of Play - Build Out Line

The build out line promotes playing the ball out of the back in a less pressured setting. When the goalkeeper has the ball in his or her hands during play from the opponent, the opposing team must move behind the build out line until the ball is put into play. Once the opposing team is behind the build out line, the goalkeeper can pass, throw or roll the ball into play (punts and drop kicks are not allowed).

After the ball is put into play by the goalkeeper, the opposing team can cross the build out line and play resumes as normal.

The opposing team must also move behind the build out line during a goal kick until the ball is put into play.

If a goalkeeper punts or drop kicks the ball, an indirect free kick should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense.

If the punt or drop kick occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the nearest point to where the infringement occurred.

The build out line will also be used to denote where offside offenses can be called.

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 goal line.

7v7 Build Out Line Practical Applications

Ideally, the goalkeeper will wait to put the ball into play once all opponents are past the build out line. However, the goalkeeper can put the ball into play sooner but he or she does so accepting the positioning of the opponents and the consequences of how play resumes.

To support the intent of the development rule, coaches and referees should be mindful of any intentional delays being caused by opponents not retreating in a timely manner or encroaching over the build out line prior to the ball being put into play.

Coaches are responsible for addressing these types of issues with their players.

Referees can manage the situation with misconduct if deemed appropriate.

Referees should be flexible when enforcing the 6 second rule and counting the time of possession should only begin when all opponents have moved behind the build out line.