

USSF Player Development Initiative - The Build Out Line 2019 Update

This document should serve as an introduction to the USSF's Player Development Initiative, implementation of a build out line, used in 7v7 competitions (U9/U10). The concept of a build out line is to encourage playing the ball out of the back, in a less pressured setting. Knowing and understanding key facts should enable coaches and game officials to implement the build out line with certainty. It is important to note that coaches are responsible for instructing their players on how use the build out line for player development. This includes teaching their players to respect the build out line when defending. Game officials should be consistent in their application of the Laws of the Game, taking into consideration the modifications spelled out in the "Key Facts."

The build out line specifically impacts three key parts of the game, offside, goal kicks, and the goalkeeper putting the ball back into play once they have possession of the ball with their hands.

Key Facts: Build Out Line

Build out lines are to be equal distance between the penalty area and the halfway line.

OFFSIDE

The build out line denotes where an offside offense may begin to be penalized, replacing the halfway line for 7v7 competition. Players are not penalized for offside between the halfway line and the build out line.

GOAL KICK

Opposing players must move behind the build out line during the taking of a goal kick. They must remain behind the build out line until the ball is in play. Meaning the ball **must be kicked and clearly move** before it is in play, per the updated Laws of the Game for 2019.

GOALKEEPER POSSESSION - BALL IN HAND

Goalkeepers **may NOT punt or drop kick the ball.** They must release the ball back into play with their hands. If a goalkeeper punts or drop kicks the ball, the opposing team is awarded an **indirect free kick, at the spot of the offense. If the offense takes place in the goal area, the ball is placed at the closest spot on the goal area line, parallel to the goal line. Goalkeepers can NOT throw the ball in the air, let it bounce and then kick it. That is a drop kick, and considered a violation.**

When the goalkeeper has possession of the ball in hand, opposing players must move out of their offensive third, **to a position behind the build out line.**

Once the goalkeeper releases possession with their hands, the opposing team may cross the build out line and resume normal play. Game officials should use common sense when applying the 6 second rule of goalkeeper possession, and not count time needed to allow for teams to retreat behind the build out line.

If players fail to respect the build out line, by failing to leave their offensive third, or by encroaching before the ball is released into play by the goalkeeper, the referee can manage situations with misconduct if deemed appropriate. This may require the stoppage of play, the restart will be an indirect free kick from where the offense took place. Game officials should be mindful of intentional delays by players failing to retreat in a timely manner or encroaching over the build out line prior to a goal keeper putting the ball back into play. These types of infringements may require the issuing of a caution (yellow card). If a team persistently infringes or fails to retreat in a timely manner, it may be appropriate to issue a caution (yellow card).

Goalkeepers are permitted to put the ball into play while opponents are within their offensive third, but by doing so, the goalkeeper accepts the consequences of resuming normal play before the opponents move beyond the build out line.