

Major Sports Elite Academy

Parent Pack — U7 & U8 Rules, FAQs & Matchday Guide

A friendly summary of The FA's Youth Football Rules and Tandridge Youth League regulations that apply to our Under 7s and Under 8s teams. The official FA rules always take precedence.

Age group formats at a glance

Age	Format	Squad	Pitch	Goal	Ball	Match	Offside
U7 / U8	5v5	Max 10	40 x 30 yds	12 x 6 ft	Size 3	2 x 20 min	No
U9 / U10	7v7	Max 14	60 x 40 yds	12 x 6 ft	Size 4	2 x 25 min	No
U11 / U12	9v9	Max 16	80 x 50 yds	16 x 7 ft	Size 4	2 x 30 min	Yes
U13 / U14	11v11	Max 16	90 x 55 yds	21 x 7 ft	Size 4	2 x 35 min	Yes

Source: The FA Youth Football Formats. Match length figures are the maximum permitted.

Under 7s & Under 8s — what to expect

- **5v5 format** with rolling, unlimited substitutions.
- **No offside** — the retreat line is used: when the goalkeeper has the ball, the opposition retreats to halfway before play restarts.
- **No deliberate heading** in matches or training (FA rule for U7–U11).
- **Equal playing time** is encouraged — coaches rotate the squad each game.
- **No league tables, cups or trophies** — this is the FA's Youth Development Phase. Results are not ranked.
- **Size 3 ball**, 12 x 6 ft goals, 40 x 30 yd pitch.

Player welfare & safeguarding

All coaches hold an FA-recognised qualification, an in-date DBS check, and FA Safeguarding Children and Emergency First Aid certificates.

We follow “**If in doubt, sit them out**” for any suspected head injury, with a graduated return-to-play before the next session.

Concerns? Speak to our Club Welfare Officer or email info@majorsportselite.co.uk.

Matchday essentials for parents

- Arrive 20 minutes before kick-off for warm-up.
- Full club kit + **shin pads (mandatory)**, water bottle and weather layers.
- Stand behind the designated spectator line — never near the goals.
- Positive encouragement for both teams; no coaching from the sideline.
- Respect the referee — they are often a young volunteer.

Frequently asked questions

What age group is my child in?

Age groups run by school year. The cut-off is 31 August — a child aged 6 on 31 August plays U7 that season; aged 7 plays U8.

How long is a match at U7 and U8?

Two halves of up to 20 minutes (max 40 mins total). Training runs Tuesdays & Thursdays 6–7pm; matches on Saturdays.

Are league tables and trophies published at U7 and U8?

No. The FA's Youth Development Phase does not allow published tables, cup competitions or trophies. Results are recorded but not ranked.

What size ball and goals are used?

Size 3 football and goals 12 ft wide by 6 ft high. Matches are 5-a-side on a 40 x 30 yd pitch.

Is heading the ball allowed?

No. Deliberate heading is removed from training and matches for U7–U11 under FA guidance.

What happens if a match is postponed?

The home club, league or referee makes the call — usually on the morning of the game. We notify parents and update the Fixtures page.

How do substitutions work?

Rolling and unlimited — a subbed-off player can return later, so coaches can manage game time fairly.

What kit does my child need on matchday?

Club shirt, shorts and socks, **shin pads (mandatory)**, suitable boots/trainers, water bottle and weather layers.

What's expected of parents and spectators?

Stand behind the spectator line, encourage both teams positively, respect the referee, and leave coaching to the coaches.

What if my child is injured or has a head knock?

Tell the coach or first-aider immediately. For any suspected head injury we follow 'If in doubt, sit them out' and a graduated return-to-play.

Who do I contact about safeguarding?

Speak to our Club Welfare Officer or email info@majorsportselite.co.uk. In an emergency, contact the police or NSPCC (0808 800 5000).

Useful links

- The FA — Youth Football Rules: thefa.com/football-rules-governance/lawsandrules/youth-football-rules
- The FA — Heading Guidance: englandfootball.com/coaches/heading-guidance
- The FA — Respect Programme: englandfootball.com/run/Safeguarding/Respect
- The FA — Safeguarding: thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding

- England Football — Parents hub: englandfootball.com/play/parents
- Tandridge Youth Football League: fulltime.thefa.com

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