



Compiled by  
*Terry Eguaaje, Ed.D.*  
*Technical Director of Coaching and Player Development*

**10-Under Build-Out Line**  
**Practical Application for Coaches and Referees**  
**Version 1.3 (10/16/2020)**

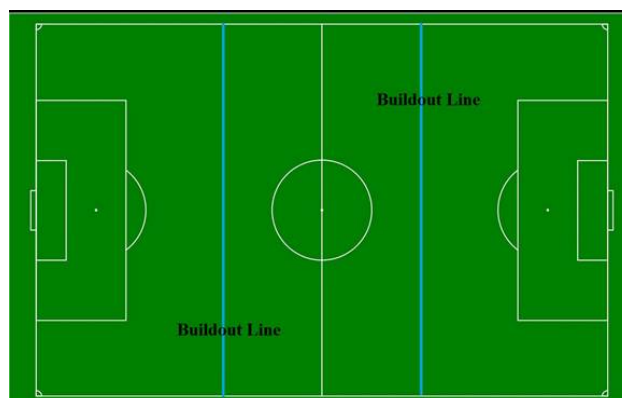
**General Overview:** The purpose of the build-out line is to allow goalkeepers and defenders more time to control the ball before being pressured from opposing players; to play the ball without pressure and confidently play out of the back. After the 2019-2020 Law changes, defenders can receive the ball *inside* the Penalty Area. Only once the kicking team's player receives the ball (inside or outside the Penalty Area) may the opposing players advance beyond the build-out line.

The build-out line is used at U10 games ONLY. These build-out line rules lead to another rule update in an effort to encourage 'building play out of the back' – **goalkeepers are no longer permitted to punt the ball.**

**Coaches (NOT OFFICIALS) should address players who are slow to retreat, or the referee can issue misconduct (failure to respect the distance) if necessary.**

**Markings:** The build-out line is drawn on the field parallel to the goal line approximately half-way between top of the penalty area and midfield line. See diagram below.

**Diagram**



## **Build-out Line Rule 1 = Goal Kicks:**

At all goal kicks, opposing players must move out of the build-out area. Opposing players must remain on the other side of the build-out line until the ball has been touched by a second player on the kicking team. The sanction is to retake the goal kick. The ball is not required to clear the build-out area to be in play. The build-out line is not relevant for any restart other than goal kicks.

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.

*The build-out line also indicates where offside can be called, as teams cannot be called for offside between the midfield line and build-out line.*

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 (failure to respect the distance) 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.

## **Frequently Asked Questions - FAQs:**

### **Can the goalkeeper throw or roll a goal kick?**

*No. At a goal kick the ball must be stationary inside the Goal Area. The ball must be kicked and it is in play once it has been kicked and moved. The kicking team can receive and play the ball inside the Penalty Area. The opposing team can advance into the buildout area only once a second player on the kicking team touches the ball.*

### **Does the ball have to leave the Penalty Area to be in play?**

*No. The ball is in play when it has been kicked and moved. The kicking team can receive and play the ball inside the Penalty Area and the opposing team can move beyond the build-out line and into the Penalty Area once the ball has been touched by a second player on the kicking team.*

### **For indirect free kicks or direct free kicks that occur inside a team's own build out line area does the opposing team have to be outside of the build out line area or just 10 yards away?**

*For all restarts, other than goal kicks, the build-out area is not relevant and the normal minimum required distance would apply (opposing players must retreat 10 yds and be outside the Penalty Area). The ball is back in play when it has been kicked and moved.*

**For throw-ins that occur inside a team's own build out line area does the opposing team have to be outside of the build out line area or just 6 feet (2yds) away?**

For all restarts, other than goal kicks, the build-out area is not relevant and the normal minimum required distance would apply.

## **Build-Out Line Rule 2 = Goalkeeper Possession:**

At all goalkeeper possessions, opposing players must move behind the build-out line. Opposing players must remain outside of the build-out area until the goalkeeper releases ball from their hands and the ball is touched by another player on the goalkeeper's team. The sanction is an IFK to the goalkeeper's team where the build-out line infringement occurred. The six-second goalkeeper possession rule is not enforced until all opposing players are outside of the build out area. Goalkeeper possession includes the goalkeeper contacting the ball with any part of their hand or arm including bouncing and tossing/catching the ball.

### **Frequently Asked Questions - FAQs:**

Can the goalie place the ball on the ground and kick it to anywhere in the field?

Yes. The other team may advance into the build-out area once another player from the Gk's team touches the ball.

**What's the call on defenders crossing the build out line too soon?**

The ref can delay the goalkeeper to back up the defenders to the correct side of the line. If persistent, the referee can call an infraction and award an IFK at the spot where the opposing team entered the build-out area. Repeated infractions may also be punished with misconduct.

**Does the ball have to leave the Penalty Area to "be in play"?**

No. The ball does not need to leave the Penalty Area to be in play. The ball remains in play while possessed by the goalkeeper. The goalkeeper may put the ball on the ground and dribble or pass or kick the ball at any time. The opposing team may enter the build-out area once a second player from the GK's team touches the ball.

**They are not holding the ball in their hands anymore, so does the 6 second rule apply?**

The six-second rule only applies to the goalkeeper controlling the ball in their hands; however, the six-second rule does not begin until all opposing players have moved outside of the build-out area.

**Can the keeper play the ball early, or must they wait for the other team to retreat behind the dash line?**

Yes, the keeper can play the ball early, but there can be no penalty to the opposing team for not allowing them time to retreat behind the dash line.

**If goalie kicks the ball past the buildout line before it is played by his/her team is that a foul, and what is the restart?**

That scenario is not an infraction. The ball does not need to be 'played' or 'touched' by a teammate inside the build-out area. The goalkeeper kicking the ball is fine although punting is not permitted. The build-out line has nothing to do with when the ball is in play, it is only used temporarily to allow defenders (including the goalkeeper) a bit more time to play the ball without pressure to learn to 'build play from the back.'

**What happens if the team without the ball fails to get behind the Build-out line?**

All opposing players (team without the ball) must fully clear and remain outside the build-out area until the goalkeeper releases the ball and another player on the goalkeeper's team has touched the ball. Any opposing player(s) (team without the ball) inside the build-out area cannot interfere with play until leaving the build-out area and the goalkeeper releases the ball from their hands and another player on the goalkeeper's team has touched the ball. This includes a scenario where player from the team without the ball, outside the build-out area, wins the ball and plays the ball to a teammate inside the build-out area but, who did not clear the build-out area... (Indirect free kick to the goalkeeper's team.)

**Are there any restrictions on where the goalkeeper's teammates can be?**

There are no restrictions regarding the goalkeeper's teammates. They may stand on either side of the buildout line and inside or outside of the Penalty Area. They may receive and play the ball inside or outside of the Penalty Area.

**The goalkeeper cannot punt off a save?**

Correct. Punting includes dropkicks, bouncing the ball off of the ground and/or tossing the ball into the air to kick it. The sanction is an Indirect Free Kick to the opposing team where the goalkeeper punted the ball subject to special circumstances for free kicks within the Goal Area.

**Once GK possesses the ball, the opposing team must move beyond the build out line and the GK can then distribute the ball to his/her players behind or in front of the build out line -does the opposing team have to wait for a teammate of the GK to receive the ball before the opposing team may challenge for the ball? Does the opposing team have to wait for the GK's team to move outside of the build out line?**

Neither. In this situation the ball has always been in play. Opposing players are only restricted because of the goalkeeper possession. Opposing players may enter the build-out area once a teammate of the GK touches the ball. Opposing player do not need to wait for the ball to exit the build out area or the Penalty Area.

**If the GK distributes the ball in front of the build out line (without punting it), may the opposing team immediately challenge for the ball?**

The goalkeeper may distribute the ball by dribbling, throwing, rolling or kicking the ball. Opposing players may pressure the ball once a teammate of the GK touches the ball OR the ball crosses the build-out line.

**Note for U10:** However, if an opposing player, outside the build-out area, wins the ball and then plays the ball to a teammate inside the build-out area, who did not clear the build-out area, the sanction is an indirect free kick to the defending team. BUT, no sanction if the GK played quickly before the other team had a chance to get out of the build-out area.

Credit:

- *US Soccer Federation PDI*
- *Darth Newman – State Youth Referee Administrator – Western Pennsylvania Referees*
- *Eastern PA Youth Soccer Association (2017).*