



# Retreat Line

Coaching Tool for U7-U12 & U13

Version 2.0

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## Introduction

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This document supports the introduction of the retreat line, helping coaches, players, parents, game leaders and officials understand its use and ways to help develop players. Soccer should be played with an efficient, economical, measured, possession based approach, where pass quality combined with intelligent and timely support and movement lead to progress and penetration through the thirds of the field to provide goal scoring opportunities, If counter attacking possibilities are denied. All players on the field should be comfortable in possession of the soccer ball in a game situation.

The world of soccer is evolving and Canadian youth must also evolve with the game. The modern game now evolves around maintaining possession of the ball, with controlled, precise build up play starting with the goalkeeper. Players must understand the right time to play forward and/or backwards.

To enable youth players to play this style of soccer they must learn to play through the thirds of the field and have the ability to maintain possession throughout the whole field, while under pressure. Every player on the field must become comfortable in possession of the ball. Possession based soccer should become their default style of play.

# Four Corner Approach

The Four Corner Model outlines the factors that need to be considered as a young player grows and develops in the game. Each of the corners is connected and relies on support from the other three areas. This model highlights the development of implanting the retreat line.

## Player Focused

The Four Corner LTPD model consists of technical, psychological, physical and social/emotional components. Each corner of the model reflects a wide aspect of a player's development that has to be considered. The gradual progressive development of players is fundamental to the enjoyment, technical competency and retention in the game. The Four Corner approach places the player at the centre of the development process with soccer experiences that meet the four key needs of the player.

**Technical**

- Improved short passing
- Improved receiving the ball on half turn
- Improved penetration passes

**Physical**

- Improved A-B-C's
- Improved speed of play
- Improved hip flexor rotation

**Social/ Emotional**

- Improved team play
- Improved communication
- Improved co-operation
- Players can learn different roles

**Psychological/Mental**

- Improved decision making skills
- Improved self confidence
- Improved risk assessment skills

## Research from the Scottish FA

Format	U9 - Less than three passes	U9 - Sequence of passes	U11 - Less than three passes	U11 - Sequence of passes
Retreat Line Used	68%	32%	58%	42%
Retreat Line Not Used	89%	11%	71%	29%

Format	Less than three passes	Sequence of passes
Outcome if 1st Pass is long from the retreat line	84%	16%
Outcome if 1st Pass is short from the retreat line	56%	44%

## Summary

- Its evident that the retreat line generates a higher success rate for passing sequences when being used.
- The u9 success rate was over 21% higher when the retreat line was used.
- In the u11s games there was a difference of 13% when the retreat line was in use.
- The type of pass made once in the retreating area is also significant. The finding established conclusively that if a player plays a long pass (over 15 meters) it will reduce the chance of generating a passing sequence.

# Retreat Line Procedure



## Outline

The retreat line will come into play when the ball has gone out for a goal kick or when the goalkeeper has the ball in his/her arms.

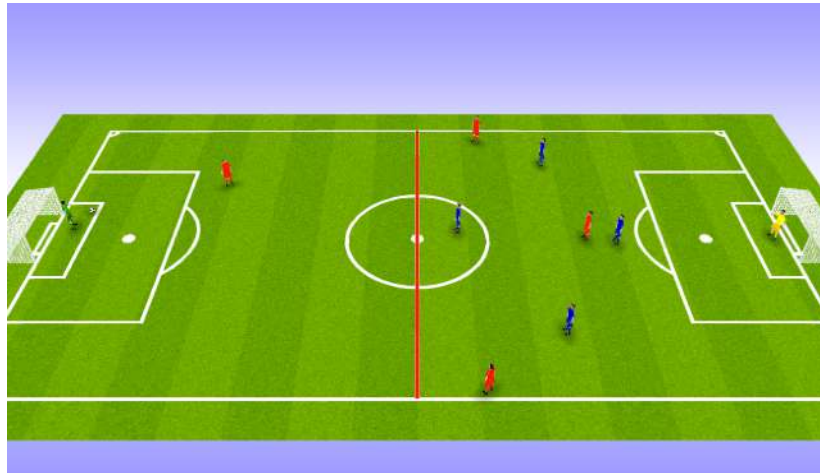
All opponents must be behind the retreat line and cannot cross the retreat line until:

- the moment the keeper has played the ball from a goal kick OR,
- has released the ball from their hands when in possession

## Making the Right Decision

Sometimes the correct pass is a longer one, for example, if the goalkeeper spots a 1v1 between their team's centre forward and an opposition defender; this is still seen as good play. It is permissible for the goalkeeper to play quickly without having to wait for all the players to retreat, to counter attack effectively, and this is the choice of the goalkeeper. This supports the development of decision making skills in young players at U11 & U12 - whether to play shorter or longer and the speed of their distribution. **However, the use of drop kicks is not permitted in 5v5 and players must play short.**

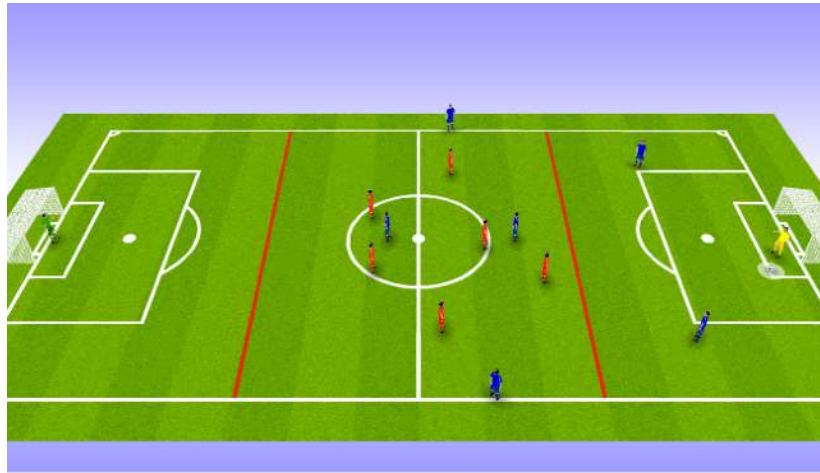




### Retreat Line Location - 5v5 (Halfway)

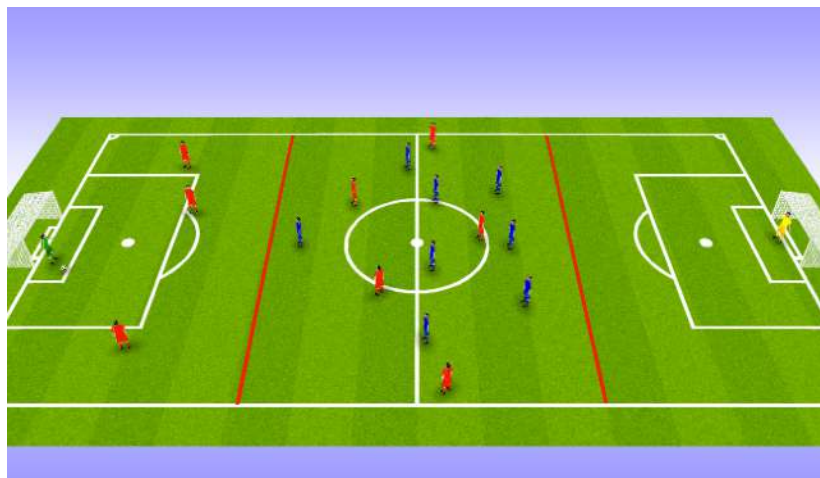
U7-U8 outdoor/indoor & U9-U10 indoors will play 5-aside and the retreat line will be functional at the halfway line. In addition, goalkeepers cannot drop kick and must play short.

**Note - Goalkeepers cannot punt the ball in 5v5.**



### Retreat Line Location - 7v7 (Thirds)

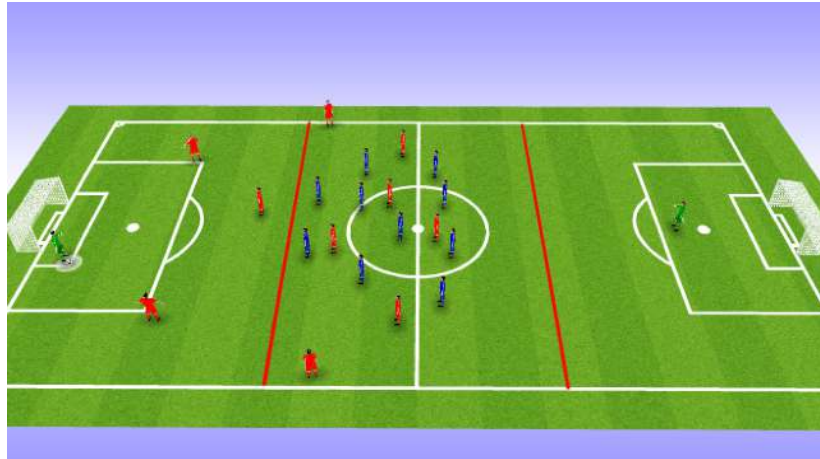
U9-U10 outdoor & U11, U12 & U13AA indoor will play 7-aside and the retreat line will be functional third way down the field. Goalkeepers can play drop kicks if the decision is the right one at U11, U12 & U13AA only.



### Retreat Line Location - 9v9 (Thirds)

U11, U12 & U13 (A/B) outdoor will play 9-aside and the retreat line will be functional third way down the field. Goalkeepers can play drop kicks if the decision is the right one.

# Nova Scotia Soccer League U13AA



## Retreat Line Location - 11v11 (Thirds)

U13AA outdoor will play 11-aside and the retreat line will be functional third way down the field.

Goalkeepers can play drop kicks if the decision is the right one.



# Review

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## Summary

We will begin introducing the retreat line starting in the indoor season of 2015 and understanding it will take a while for children, coaches, Game Leaders/officials and parents to adapt to something new. We will let this embed and settle down as the coaches and players get up to speed before we start to assess the impact this has made on player development.

It's about an appreciation of possession; educating players on its value, enjoying the ball, rather than fearing it. Please help each other along as we get comfortable with a changing time for helping young players become better soccer players in Canada.

Soccer Nova Scotia would like to acknowledge the Ontario Soccer Association for readily making available documents we referenced in creating this document.

