

On the Field Details

Item	Academy Standard	Rationale
Age Brackets	U-18; U-16 Birthyear – U-18 = August 1, 1989 U-16 = August 1, 1991	There are three core dynamics with this issue: 1) Ensures that 17-year old players have a place to continue their development before college/pros. 2) Ensures the proper physical match-ups to allow players to develop (15 year old players v. 17 year old players). 3) Remains consistent with our National Team programming at the youngest level and not burning out 13 year old players. These specific age groups meet all three objectives. It is also critical that the activity levels of young players be limited to avoid burn-out. Adopting an Academy-like schedule for younger players is an appropriate level of activity at the 12-13 age group.
Age Group Determination	August	August deadline aligns with the rest of the youth system so there is no issue with transition of players into the Academy system.
Roster Size	Minimum of 22 players; up to six "developmental" slots on a game roster; Initial roster submitted 21 days prior to first match	22 allows for the Academy team to train in an 11 v. 11 situation. Clubs may have more than 22 players based on their individual judgment. Developmental players will be allowed to transfer up age groups within the Academy program and will not be subject to minimum start requirements.
Roster Changes	Up to four changes from within the Club; Roster changes made on March 1 of the season; New roster players must be from within the Club.	Allows for Clubs to "promote" players and replace players who may want to leave the Academy system.
Travel Party	18 players	Allows entire travel party to be eligible to participate.
Minimum Playing Time	Each player must start a minimum of 30% of the games	This accomplishes two things: 1) Ensures coaches are looking at the development component for players. 2) Allows each player to gain meaningful experience and playing time.
Substitutions	Maximum of seven; No-re-entry	Allows entire travel party to be eligible to participate; no re-entry ensures that the coach is looking at managing the entire game and not segments of the game through multiple re-entries in a single game.
Game Length	U-18 = 2 x 45 minutes U-16 = 2 x 40 minutes	This is consistent with U.S. Soccer's Best Practices.
Training/Game Ratios	Minimum of three trainings and one day of rest per week.	Ensures proper levels of activity for Academy players.
Participation in outside activity	Permitted in designated windows with certain parameters – International travel or Events with a maximum of one game per day.	Designated windows allow for meaningful competition, especially international events. Designated windows are Nike Friendlies, Christmas/New Years week, Easter and the end of the Season (week) to September 1.