



Youth Soccer

Rule Book



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United States Soccer Federation (USSF) laws of the game will be used with the following clarifications and modifications:

1 - LEAGUES

Preschool - Must be 4 years old by the first day of games.

K – 9th Grade - Must be the appropriate age by the first day of the season; players may not play up or down in other grades.

Kindergarten – Ages 5-6	3 rd /4 th Grade Boys – Ages 8-10
1 st Grade Boys – Ages 6-7	3 rd /4 th Grade Girls – Ages 8-10
2 nd Grade Boys – Ages 7-8	5 th /6 th Grade Boys – Ages 10-12
1 st /2 nd Grade Girls – Ages 6-8	5 th /6 th Grade Girls – Ages 10-12
	7 th -9 th Grade Boys – Ages 12-15
	7 th -9 th Grade Girls - Ages 12-15

2 - BALL

The following soccer ball sizes will be used:

Pre-K – 2nd:	Size 3
3rd – 6th:	Size 4
7th – 9th:	Size 5

3 - NUMBER OF PLAYERS

Number of players including the goalkeeper:

Preschool-Kindergarten:	Five (no goalkeeper)
1st -2nd:	Six
3rd – 6th:	Eight
7th – 9th:	Eight

Each player shall play a minimum of one-half of each game.

A new player shall be the goalkeeper each half for all grades except 7th-9th grade.

In keeping with the spirit of recreation soccer and fairness to the participants, both coaches should see that an equal number of players are used by both teams at all times.

4 - SUBSTITUTIONS

P - K and 1st – 4th: Substitutions are allowed at any dead ball.

5th – 9th: Substitutions may be made **with the consent of the referee**, at the following times:

- a) Prior to a throw-in by the team with possession
- b) Prior to a goal kick, by either team
- c) After a goal
- d) After an injury, by either team, when the referee stops play
- e) At half time

During an injury, both teams may substitute.

Coaches must make the referee aware of goalkeeper substitution.

Referee approval must be obtained prior to a substitution.

5 - PLAYER EQUIPMENT

No player will be allowed onto the field unless wearing a regulation jersey.

Sports shoes must be worn by all players. Cleated shoes (no metal) may be worn. Toe cleats will be permitted.

Shin guards are mandatory for players in 3rd-9th grades; those without shin guards will not be permitted to play. They are strongly recommended for players in Preschool-2nd grade.

Players shall not wear anything dangerous to themselves or other players such as watches, rings, etc. Earrings must be removed; in the case stud earrings cannot be removed (newly pierced only), they must be covered.

The goalkeeper shall wear colors that distinguish them from the other players and the referee. Coaches should see that a shirt/pinney is worn by the goalkeeper – i.e., a bright shirt, sweatshirt, etc. Penneys are included in equipment bags.

6 - COACHES & SPECTATORS

Nobody shall be allowed on the field except players and referees, except in cases of

injury where the player's coach or parent may be called for.

P – K and 1st - 2nd coaches will act as officials; one coach per team will be allowed on the field during play; coaches are encouraged to explain basic rules during play.

3rd – 9th teams must have coaches and spectators stay behind the sidelines and may not be behind the goal line.

Spectators should sit at least 3 feet beyond the sidelines to give room for players to in-bound the ball as needed; spectators may not sit along the end lines.

Spectators should sit on the opposite side of where both teams will be to help mitigate congestion and allow coaches the proper amount of space for their team.

Spectators are responsible for any/all kids brought with them to the game. Coaches may be asked by recreation staff to move any spectators or participants impacting game play. No outside play should be happening near the field. The game and field is reserved for the scheduled teams and should be respected as so.

Coaches must play all of their players a minimum of half (50%) of the game!

7 - REFEREE

The referee is there to see that the rules of the game are enforced; to see that the game is played according to the spirit and philosophy of the program, and to serve as an instructive resource for coaches and players.

The referee's authority commences upon entering the field of play and covers the time when the game is suspended or stopped for any reason.

The referee's decision on points of play shall be final. Arguing with officials is not permitted.

Referees will not be provided for the PK/K-2nd Grade leagues. Coaches will officiate games and will be allowed on the field during play. A field supervisor will be on-site to address problems or questions and will indicate the start/end times of the game and half.

8 - LINESMEN

We ask that each team provide an attentive linesman at each game, who shall assist the referee by indicating out of bounds **only**. This applies to 3rd - 9th grade teams. Officials will provide them with a line flag and can instruct as necessary.

Linesmen should be old enough to provide the officials with appropriate indicators; please do not allow children to disassemble the line flags.

Linesmen indicate what they saw; **referees will make the final decision.**

A linesman may not coach while the ball is in play.

Raise the line flag straight up when the entire ball crosses over the sideline.

9 - SPORTSMANSHIP

Officials will rate teams subjectively on their sportsmanship. Officials can give up to 3 points for the following areas:

- a. Players and coaches shake opposing teams' hands.
- b. Coaches keep players, parents, and self under control.
- c. Parents and spectators are positive during the game.
- d. Teams go out of their way to show good sportsmanship.

Coaches that fail to use good sportsmanship are also subjected to cautions and warnings. Those coaches who receive multiple cautions and warnings during the season will be required to meet with the coordinator before resuming coaching duties. Coaches receiving additional cautions and warnings during the season will be replaced and their team will not receive any coaches incentives for the season.

Good sportsmanship is important to create a good, positive atmosphere for all involved. We expect good sportsmanship to be exhibited at all times by officials, coaches, and spectators. Officials and Site supervisors have the right to remove any players, coaches, or spectators that are conducting themselves in a manner that is inappropriate to a youth sport context.

At the referee's discretion, a player may be asked to sit out for a brief time if sportsmanship issues arise during the game. This is in place of yellow and red cards.

10 - RAINOUT INFORMATION

Soccer is a game that can be played in somewhat inclement weather. Players should expect to play if the weather is merely drizzly/light rain unless there are unsafe field conditions. Considerations are made to the player's age when making weather-related decisions.

After each goal, the game shall be restarted in the like manner by a player of the team scored upon.

At half-time, ends shall be exchanged for all ages. The opponent of the team initially kicking off the 1st half will kick off the 2nd half for all ages.

DROPPED BALL - After temporary suspension (ex. restart after injuries), the game shall be restarted by the referee dropping the ball where it was when play was suspended. The ball is in play when it touches the ground. If a player kicks the ball before it touches the ground, the referee shall re-drop.

14 - BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY

The ball is in play at all times unless:

- a) The entire ball crosses the goal line or sideline, whether on the ground or in the air.
- b) The game is stopped by the referee

The ball is in play when it rebounds from goals, flags, or the official. The goal lines and the sidelines belong to the field of play.

15 - METHOD OF SCORING

The goal is scored when the entire ball has passed over the goal line between the goalposts and under the cross-bar.

Goals cannot be scored on the following:

- Indirect free kick
- Throw-in

The official score will only be kept for 7th-9th grades. Younger age groups are encouraged to focus more on skill development successes rather than the official game score.

16 - OFFSIDE (3RD-9TH only)

The player is in an offside position if he is closer to his opponent's goal line than the ball unless:

- a) they are in their half of the field
- b) there are at least two opponents closer to the goal line than the player

A player shall be declared offside and penalized if at the moment the ball is played by one of his teammates he is:

- a) interfering with play or influencing an opponent
- b) seeking to gain an advantage by being in that position

A player shall not be declared offside (passive offside):

- a) merely because of being in an offside position, or
- b) he receives the ball from:
 - Goal-kick
 - Corner-kick
 - Throw-in
 - Drop-ball

The opposing team shall be awarded an indirect free-kick from the place where the infringement occurred.

17 - HEADERS

In an effort to streamline rules with national standards, headers will only be permitted in gameplay for 5th-9th Grade.

- a) 5th-6th grader players should limit header practice to a max of 25 repetitions a week.
- b) Preschool-4th graders who deliberately head the ball during the game will be penalized with an indirect free kick to the opposing team at the spot of the infraction. If the heading occurs within the penalty area, the referee shall move the ball outside the penalty area and award an indirect free kick to the opposing team.

18 - FREE KICK

There are two types of free-kicks: Direct and Indirect.

- a) Direct: Can result in a goal scored
- b) Indirect: Cannot score directly, someone else must touch the ball

How it is executed:

- a) Opponents must be ten yards away
- b) In all cases, the ball is played only once by the kicker.

19 - PENALTY KICK (3RD-9TH only)

Taken from the penalty spot - twelve yards from goal, or where marked on the field. All players except kicker and goalie remain outside the penalty area.

The goalie's feet are lateral on the goal line.

The kicker cannot play rebound from goal post or crossbar; plays ball only once unless touched by another player.

Punishment:

Defense Fouls: Re-kick if no goal Offense Fouls:

- a) Kicker: Indirect free-kick
- b) Others: Re-kick (if goal)

20 - THROW-IN

Taken at the spot where the ball crossed the sideline by the opposing team of the player who last touched the ball. Players must watch and be aware of the sideline when throwing the ball in—no re-do's will be given for 3rd-9th grade.

Execution

Both feet on the ground during delivery outside of the field, or part of one or both feet on the sideline:

- a) Delivery from behind/over the head
- b) Both hands on the ball (equally) – no spin upon release
- c) Preschool/Kindergarten: Liberally interpreted
- d) The defense must be at least 2 yds away and must not distract

Penalty:

- a) Improper throw-in, other team throws-in.(Preschool-2nd; one retry).
- b) If the thrower plays the ball before another player – Indirect free-kick.

21 - CORNER KICK

Taken by the attacker after the entire ball passes over the goal line when last touched by a defender.

Taken from the nearest corner arc.

The opposition must be ten yards away from the corner. The kicker plays ball only once.

22 - GOAL KICK

Taken by the defender after the entire ball passes over the goal line, (outside the goal) when last played by the attacker.

Taken from anywhere in the goal area (6 yard box).

Must clear penalty area (re-kick if not). In the Preschool – 2nd leagues, the ball must travel 6 yards before being played by another player (re-kick if not).

Goalie cannot receive inside the penalty area. Opponents must be outside the penalty area. The kicker plays ball only once.

23 - GOALKEEPER

Cannot receive a pass from a teammate with their hands (must use feet).

Cannot receive a throw-in from a teammate with their hands (must use feet).

Must notify the referee for substitution.

Must not handle the ball longer than six seconds when controlled with hands.

Must not use hands outside of penalty area when the ball is in play.

24 - FOULS AND MISCONDUCT

The penalty for Preschool – 2nd is in each case an indirect free kick.

* All cases and penalties below are for 3rd-9th only.

FOUL PENALTIES (3rd-9th Grade only)

- | | |
|---|--------|
| 1. Kicks or attempt to kick others | D.F.K. |
| 2. Trips or attempts to trip | D.F.K. |
| 3. Jumps at an opponent | D.F.K. |
| 4. Charges in violent or dangerous manner | D.F.K. |
| 5. Charges from behind unless impeded | D.F.K. |
| 6. Strikes or attempts to strike | D.F.K. |
| 7. Holds opponent with hand or arm | D.F.K. |
| 8. Pushes opponent with hand or arm | D.F.K. |
| 9. Handles the ball | D.F.K. |
| 10. Spitting on opponent | D.F.K. |
| 11. Slide tackles or attempts to slide tackle | D.F.K. |
| 12. If the defender commits any of the above 11 fouls inside his penalty area. | P.K. |
| 13. Dangerous play (e.g. try kicking the ball when it's held by goalkeeper, high kicking near opponent) | I.F.K. |
| 14. Not playing the ball (e.g. shadowing goalkeeper or throw-in) | I.F.K. |
| 15. Impeding an opponent | I.F.K. |
| 16. Deliberate heading of the ball (3 rd -4 th Only) | I.F.K. |
| 17. Charging or unduly contacting the goalkeeper when he has possession of the ball (having a hand on the ball and under control) | I.F.K. |
| 18. Goalkeeper handling the ball for more than six seconds after the moment he takes control of the ball. (Goalkeeper must not roll or bounce the ball on the ground until another player touches the ball). Defensemen must be outside the penalty box before touching the ball. | I.F.K. |
| 19. Holds up game by wasting time | I.F.K. |
| 20. If after making a throw-in or a free-kick, a player plays the ball again before the ball is touched by another player. | I.F.K. |

D.F.K. = Direct Free Kick

I.F.K. = Indirect Free Kick

P.K. = Penalty Kick

25 - PRESCHOOL & KINDERGARTEN RULES

The P – K (4 yrs old – Kindergarten) league will be an “instructional” league which will include 20 minutes of practice time before the game begins.

Game Format:

- a. First 20 minutes will be devoted to practice time
- b. Game will start at 20 minutes after the scheduled game time
- c. Game will consist of two (2), 15-minute halves

Equipment:

- a. Size three (3) ball will be used, equipment will be provided for the practice

Number of Players:

- a. The number of players on the field at any one time is five (5)
- b. Goalkeepers will not be used
- c. Maximum number of players on the roster will be eight (8)
- d. Minimum number of players on the field should be three (3)
- e. Substitutions are allowed at any time and may be done at any dead ball

Referees:

- a. Coaches will act as officials and are encouraged to explain basic rules during the game
- b. Parents should not be involved in officiating the game from the sidelines

Duration of Game:

- a. Two (2) equal halves of fifteen (15) minutes each
- b. The half-time break should be no longer than five (5) minutes
- c. A site supervisor will indicate game starting time, 2nd half start time, and game end time by sounding a whistle; it is up to the coaches to start the game when indicated by the site supervisor. All games will end when the site supervisor indicates by the sound of a whistle (this will be strictly enforced, regardless of late starts by teams).

Fouls & Misconducts:

All fouls or misconduct will be penalized with an indirect free kick.

