



SOCCER RULES

Last Edit: July 23, 2025

U4, U5, AND U6 RULES (4V4 NO GOALKEEPERS)

GENERAL RULES FOR GAME AND PRACTICES

- Have FUN!!!
- There are no referees. Coaches are responsible for the mayhem that we call Rookie Soccer.
- General Rules for the game should be followed.
 - The play is 4v4 format with a size 3 ball.
 - There will be 4 quarters at 8 minutes each (u4-5)
 - There will be 4 quarters at 10 minutes each (u6)
 - Substitutions can be made at any stoppage of play between quarters.
 - Out-of-Bounds should be called when clearly out. A throw-in will restart the play. Coaches can keep the ball in play when out by only a few feet or when player dribbles momentarily out side the line. Coaches keep extra ball in hand and use when the ball is several yards out of bounds or more.
 - Handballs should be called when a player intentionally handles the ball with their hands or arms. A free-kick will restart play.
 - There are no goalies. This also means that you should not position a player immediately in front of the goal. Teaching players to defend behind the pack is fine, but do not stand stationary player in front of goal at any times.
 - U4-5 should focus on keeping the game flowing by limiting restarts. U6 should focus on boundaries and handball rules provide above.

COACHES AND PARENTS

Remember this is not the World Cup competition. When in doubt, see rule one (Have FUN)!

Any further questions should be referred to samantha@playcsp.com or 985-543-6767.

U7 - U8 RULES (5 V 5) WITH KEEPERS

- This is a Recreational and Developmental league. The goal is to have FUN and teach soccer.
- Players- We play 5 versus 5. Four players are field players and one player is a goalie. The goalie position must be rotated with no player playing more than two quarters in a single game. A team must have a minimum of three players to play a game. If one team is short players for a game, consider lending “guest” players off of the opposing team.
- Goalkeepers- At U-7/8 we introduce the goalie position to the game, in order to encourage players to try the position, players should be coached to avoid all contact with the goalie to avoid injury.
- Build Out Line
 - The build out line promotes playing the ball out of the back in a less pressured setting
 - When the goalkeeper has the ball in his or her hands during play from the opponent, the opposing team must move behind the build out line until the ball is put into play
 - Once the opposing team is behind the build out line, the goalkeeper can pass, throw or roll the ball into play (punts and drop kicks are not allowed)
 - After the ball is put into play by the goalkeeper, the opposing team can cross the build out line and play resumes as normal
 - The opposing team must also move behind the build out line during a goal kick until the ball is put into play
- At 10u and below, players are limited to 50% of the game as a Goalkeeper.
 - Goalkeepers are the only players on the field that are able to use his/her hands to control the ball. The goalie, however, may only use his hands to control the ball while in the large box painted on the field (called the penalty area). Once the ball is in the possession of the goalkeeper, he has six seconds to put the ball back into play. At any time and anywhere on the field, the goalie may use his feet to play the ball, but shall not punt the ball. The goalkeeper must wear a uniform that clearly differentiates him from other players on the field. See other rules below:
- No Heading- There is NO INTENTIONAL HEADING to be allowed. Intentional is a part of the rules. If our players do it they will be called for an indirect free kick. Coaches should not focus on this but please be aware, make players aware, and work twice as hard in the beginning on the following; Moving feet to get body behind balls and bringing the ball down out of the air with chest/thigh/foot.
- Equipment- Uniforms shirts must be tucked in. No jewelry, watches, etc. may be worn by players during the game. Shin-guards are mandatory. Soccer cleats are recommended but are not mandatory. Metal cleats, baseball cleats (with toe cleat) are forbidden for safety reasons. We will use a Size 3 soccer ball.


- **Duration-** The games will consist of 12 minute quarters, with a 3 minute break between quarters, and a 5 minute break at halftime. No added time. Should a game end in a tie during playoffs, overtime will consist of 2 x 5-minute halves. PKs will then be taken, if still tied.
- **Substitutions-** At the end of any quarter, a coach may substitute his/her players, however, every player must play at least 50% of the game. Substitutions can be made at anytime subject to the following:
 - **Substitution Modification-** To accommodate increased roster sizes, we are modifying the substitution rules. Substitutions can be made at anytime subject to the following:
 - To substitute players, notify the referee of your intent to substitute and have your players ready
 - Substitutions can only be made during a stoppage in play, and **ONLY** once the referee has called your players onto the field. The referee may not allow the substitution in every stoppage. This is especially true if the substitution would stop a fast break advantage.
 - Any team can substitute after a goal is scored (before the kick off), or on a "Goal Kick" by either team.
 - Players must run on and off the field. The clock does not stop and we cannot waste playing time.
 - Avoid substituting your entire team at once. This is somewhat disruptive to the flow of the game.

Regardless of the number of substitutions, every player must play at least 50% of every game.

- **Coaching from the Sideline-** There should be no coaching on the field, or from behind the goal. Unless a coach is refereeing the game, he/she should not be on the field. If a coach is on the field, he/she will naturally make decisions for the players.
- **Sideline-** Coaches and players for both teams are located on the same sideline. Parents should not sit on the players' sideline. Players are easily distracted by their parents.

RULES OF NOTE

- At U-7/8 we play 12- minute quarters (note the clock does not stop when the ball goes out of play).
- The ball must move forward on the kick-off (until touched by another player)
- Kickoffs should be alternated each quarter. Team should change sides (defend the other goal) after the half break (modification). You can score directly on the kickoff.
- A player cannot kick the ball, or throw the ball to himself (it must touch another player before he can touch it again)
- A ball is not out of play until it completely rolls (or flies) past the touch or goal line. Unlike other sports, the ball is in play if it is only partially over the line.
- **Throws-Ins:** The ball must be thrown with two hands. The ball must pass above and past the head. Both feet must be in contact with the ground during the throwing motion (until the ball is released). Also, the player's feet must be either on or behind the touch line, not on the playing field. Note: A goal may not be scored directly from a throw-in (must touch another player before passing the goal line and into the net).
- **Goal Kicks-** When a ball, which is last played by an attacker, passes the defensive goal line, a goal kick is awarded to the defensive team. The goal kick may be taken from anywhere within the goal box (smaller box adjacent to the goal). The opposing team must be outside of the penalty area (large box) and no player on



either team can receive (touch) the goal kick until the ball travels outside of the penalty area. If after the kick, a player should touch the ball before it travels outside of the penalty area, the play is blown dead and the goal kick redone.

- Corner Kick- When a ball, which is last touched by a defender, passes the defensive goal line, a corner kick is awarded to the attacking team. The defending team must give the attacking team five yards (modification). A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick.
- Goalkeepers may use “hands” anywhere in the penalty area (large box), however, he has six seconds to release the ball once he has possession. The exception - the keeper cannot use his hands when a ball is passed directly to him by one of his players. To play the ball in this instance, he must use his feet. There are more FIFA soccer Laws governing the goalkeeper, but this adequate for U-7/8.
- A whistle may be blown when the ball goes out of play. With the exception of the kickoff, no whistle is blown to start play. On throw-ins, goal kicks, the play should begin whenever the kicking team is ready. This can happen very quickly!
- After a goal is scored, the opposite team kicks off the ball from the centerline to restart the game.
- Fouls: When a foul such as tripping, pushing, contact with the goalie or an intentional hand ball occurs, the referee will award an indirect kick at the spot of the foul. An indirect kick means the ball must touch a minimum of two players before it can score a goal. If the player kicks it straight into the goal without touching either team’s player, it does not count. We have no penalty or direct kicks at this age level. All indirect kicks must be allowed to stand 5 yards from the ball. (modifications)
- Injuries- At this age when a player gets hurt, we stop play immediately (modification). Encourage the players on both teams to take a knee while the player is attended to. A “drop ball” is used to restart play (Two opposing players face each other, the referee drops the ball, and the players may kick it once it hits the ground).

NOTE

We are now enforcing proper throw-in rules. If a player incorrectly throws the ball in play (see above), the referee should blow the whistle and award the throw-in to the opposing team. The referee should take time to explain the infraction before play is resumed. This may seem harsh, but the kids learn very quickly once we start enforcing the rule. Keep in mind that many of the players now have a few years of experience.

U9 - 14 RULES WITH KEEPERS

GENERAL RULES

- Players - We play 7v7 at U9-10 & U13-14. Age U11-12 play 9v9.
- Equipment - Uniform shirts must be tucked in. No jewelry watches, etc. may be worn by players during the game. Shin-guards are mandatory. Soccer cleats are recommended but not mandatory. Metal cleats, baseball cleats (with toe cleats) are forbidden for safety reasons. We will use a size 4 soccer ball.
- Duration – Games will consist of 25-minute halves, with a 5 minute break between halves. No added time. Should a game end in a tie during playoffs, overtime will consist of 2 x 5-minute halves. PKs will then be taken, if still tied.
- Sidelines - Coaches and players for both teams are located on the same sideline. Parents should not sit in the players' sideline. Players are easily distracted by their parents.
- No Heading - There is NO INTENTIONAL HEADING to be allowed (U9-U12). It is a part of the new U.S. Soccer Mandate (rules). Please do your best to discourage the players from heading. Heading is allow for U13-U14

GAME RULES

- Substitutions - Recreational soccer permits unlimited substitution of players throughout the game. Players may be substituted in the following manner during any stoppage of play, but only with the referee's permission. The referee will use his/her judgement when determining whether to allow a substitution. If the referee deems that a substitution would alter the advantage (i.e. a quick throw in), he may not allow the substitution until the next available stoppage.
- Stoppage of play includes:
 - ball out-of-bounds (passed the touch-line)
 - goal kick, by either team;
 - immediately after a goal has been scored by either team
 - during an injury stoppage

To properly substitute, the player must report to the halfway (center) line. If the Referee does not see the player at the next stoppage, then you may call out "substitution".

Substitutions can only take place with the referee's permission. The new player(s) enter the field only after the substituted player has reached the touchline, or when waived on by the

center referee.

Injured players who must leave the field may be substituted by the team suffering the injury only, after notice to the referee.

- **Note Injury Modification**

In youth soccer, the referee can call a stoppage at any time when he thinks a player might be injured. As a courtesy every player takes a knee to allow for the coaches to attend the injured player. Play is then resumed with a “drop ball” –which is similar to a hockey face off.

- **Kickoffs** - The game begins with a kickoff from the mid-field line, by the team who was designated in the toss. Play begins upon the sounding of the referee’s whistle. Ball may be played in any direction.

- After a goal is scored, restart play with a kickoff taken by the team surrendering the goal.
- The player, who makes the kickoff, cannot touch the ball a second time before it has been touched by another player; the penalty for this is a direct free kick.
- A goal may be scored directly on a kickoff.
- Kickoffs will be alternated each half. Teams will change sides (defend the other goal) after the half break (modification).

- **No Heading** - Starting this year, there is **NO INTENTIONAL HEADING** to be allowed. It is a part of the rules. If our players do it, they will be called for an indirect free-kick.

- **Goal Kicks** - When a ball, which is last played by an attacker, passes the defensive goal line, a goal kick is awarded to the defensive team. The goal kick may be taken from anywhere within the goal box (smaller box adjacent to the goal).

- **Throw-Ins** - The ball must be thrown with two hands. The ball must pass above and past the player’s head. Both feet must be in contact with the ground during the throwing motion (until the ball is released). Also, the player’s feet must be either on or behind the touch line, not on the playing field. Note that a goal may not be scored directly from a throw-in (must touch another player before passing the goal line and into the net).

- **Fouls** - are called by the referee, and his/her opinion is the only one that counts. Fouls may result in direct or indirect kicks and may include a yellow or red card if repeated or especially aggressive, violent infractions occur.

- Tackling (slide) or tripping from behind is considered a serious foul due to the potential for injury
- **Penalty Kicks** - a called foul in the penalty box, committed by the defending team, will result in a penalty kick being awarded to the opposing team.

- **The concept of “Advantage”** - Just because a foul occurred does not mean it will be immediately called. If a player has been fouled, but he or his team maintains control and has an advantage, a foul may not be called at all. To do so would stop the momentum and could actually be detrimental to the fouled team. This determination is entirely in the opinion of the referee. This is why at times there is a delay



before the foul is called.

- Off-side - A player is in an off-side position if:
 - he or she is in the opponent's half of the field, and
 - nearer to the opponent's goal-line than the ball (i.e. ahead of the ball) and
 - there are not 2 defending players (counting the goal-keeper) level with, or closer to the goal line than, the attacking player.

However, merely being in an off-side position does not make a player "off-side". The player must be involved in the active play to be penalized.

- Off-side is judged when the ball is last played by the player's teammate, not when it is received. A player may look off-side when the ball arrives, but may not have been off-side when it was played (kicked) by his/her teammate.
- Total Number of Players - Game may not start or continue if there are less than 5 players on a team for 7v7 and 7 players for 9v9.
- Goalkeeper - We discourage any physical contact with the goalkeeper at 10U and below. "Fingertip" control of the ball is considered in the possession of the goalie. Players should be coached to avoid all contact with the goalie to avoid injury.
 - Goalkeepers are the only players on the field that are able to use his/her hands to control the ball. The goalie, however, may only use his hands to control the ball while in the large box painted on the field (called the penalty area). Keepers may not use their hands to handle a ball that was passed back to them, in this instance they must use their feet to handle the ball. All opposing players must move behind the "Build Out Line" when the goalkeeper is in possession of the ball at U9-10. At anytime and anywhere on the field, the goalie may use his feet to play the ball. The goalkeeper must wear a uniform that clearly differentiates him/her from other players on the field.
 - At U-10 and below, players are limited to 50% of the game as a Goalkeeper
- Corner Kick - When a ball, which is last touched by a defender, passes the defensive goal line, a corner kick is awarded to the attacking team. The defending team must give the attacking team five yards (modification). A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick.
- A whistle is blown when the ball goes out of play. With the exception of the kickoff, no whistles is blown to start play. On throw-ins, goal kicks, and corner kicks, the play should begin whenever the kicking team is ready.



This can happen very quickly!

- Build Out Line (U9-U10 only)


- The build out line promotes playing the ball out of the back in a less pressured setting
- When the goalkeeper has the ball in his or her hands during play from the opponent, the opposing team must move behind the build out line until the ball is put into play
- Once the opposing team is behind the build out line, the goalkeeper can pass, throw or roll the ball into play (punts and drop kicks are not allowed)
- After the ball is put into play by the goalkeeper, the opposing team can cross the build out line and play resumes as normal
- The opposing team must also move behind the build out line during a goal kick until the ball is put into play
- If a goalkeeper punts or drop kicks the ball, an indirect free kick should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense
- If the punt or drop kick occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the nearest point to where the infringement occurred (U9-10 only)
- The build out line will also be used to denote where offside offenses can be called
- Players cannot be penalized for an offside offense between the halfway line and the build out line
- Players can be penalized for an offside offense between the build out line and goal line

- Build Out Line Practical Applications

- 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
- 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 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.

GAME CONDUCT

Players and coaches are expected to abide by the principles of good sportsmanship and fair play at all times. However, players and coaches are specifically prohibited from:

- 
- being behind either goal line during the game
 - being closer than 18 yards from the corner of the field
 - entering the field without the permission of the referee
 - consuming alcohol or tobacco at games
 - making derogatory gestures or statements to referees or opposing players and/or spectators, including particularly dissenting from referees' rulings during the game.
- A player who is cautioned (shown a yellow card) for foul play should be removed from the game via substitution. The player should be counseled and should not return that half. If the player receives a second yellow card, he or she will be sent off (shown a red card). This is because two yellow cards are equivalent to a red card. Note it is not necessary to receive the caution. Deliberate fouls, etc. may result in an immediate red card.
- Sending Off - The consequences of being shown a red card by the referee shall be that the player is immediately suspended from further play during the game in progress, and is suspended from the next sanctioned game in which his team competes. The player or coach must immediately and without dissent leave the playing field and sidelines to a position out of hearing and sight of the referee for the duration of the game. No further contact with the game referees are permitted by the player or coach shown a red card on the day of the infraction.