

OFFICIAL MATCH RULES - ALL DIVISIONS

2024 ICC-AYSO Youth Soccer

INTRODUCTION FOR ALL DIVISIONS

PURPOSE:

This league is co-ed RECREATIONAL soccer, adhering to the AYSO's Six Philosophies (Everyone Plays - Balanced Teams - Open Registration - Positive Coaching - Good Sportsmanship - Player Development).

The emotional and physical safety of all players is of the utmost concern.

BEHAVIORAL GUIDELINES:

- **REFEREES:** The referee's decision is to be respected at all times. All decisions of the Referee are final, and no protests are allowed.

- **SPECTATOR EXPECTATIONS:** This league is a recreational soccer league for the benefit of the children in the community. As such, spectators should exhibit positive sideline behavior: encouraging and cheering for the players.

Confronting or arguing with opposing players or spectators or the referee is expressly forbidden. Any dissent (even loud comments!) towards or about the referee may result in being ejected from the field and may also result in a suspension for the next game.

- **RUNNING UP THE SCORE:** This should be a fun experience for the children. Running up the score is discouraged. If a team is ahead by several goals, they move goal scorers to defense or goalkeeper, or swap players with the other team.

- **PLAY NICE:** The league discourages a stronger player making an aggressive challenge on a lesser player.

- **HARD SHOTS:** Hard shots from close in can hurt a goalie and are discouraged.

OFFICIAL MATCH RULES for 10-14 DIVISION

I. Ball

- Size 5

II. Players

- **Numbers:** Nine (9) per team on field; one of which is a goalkeeper. Minimum number of six (6) players to start the game, otherwise it's a forfeit.

If a team has less players than their opposing team, both teams play the same number of players so that each side has equal.

[Example: if Team A has 7 players and Team B has 9 players, then the game will be played 7 v 7.]

- **Substitutions:** Approximately midway through each half, at halftime, and for injuries.
- **Playing Time:** All players, unless injured, are required to play at least half of every game.

III. Players' Equipment

- **Footwear:** Soccer shoes are recommended (or similar type athletic shoes). The type and condition of cleated shoes must be inspected for safety before use. No metal cleats.
- **Shinguards:** MANDATORY for both practices and games, and must be covered entirely by socks.
- **Forbidden Items:** Casts or splints, jewelry, watches, and other articles of adornment are not allowed.

Players may not wear anything that could endanger either themselves or another player. All items of jewelry – removable and welded (necklaces, rings, bracelets, friendship bracelets, watches, earrings, ear gauges, rubber bands, body piercings, decorative hair adornments, etc.) are forbidden and must be removed before a player is allowed to participate. Using tape to cover jewelry is not permitted.

IV. Duration of Game

- A match will consist of two equal halves of 20-minutes each.
- Halftime will be 7 minutes. No added time.

V. The Start of Play

To start the first and second halves and following each goal, play is started or restarted with a kick-off in the center of the field. A coin toss is used to determine which team kicks off to start the game and which team kicks off to start the second half. Following a goal, the team scored upon kicks off.

VI. The Kick-off

The kick-off is taken from the center of the field with each player, except for the player taking the kick-off in their own half. The opponents of the team taking the kick-off must be outside the center circle until the ball is in play.

The ball is in play when it is kicked and clearly moves (any distance, any direction).

- If the kick-off is not properly taken, it must be retaken.
- If the kicker touches the ball again before anyone else, an Indirect Free Kick is awarded to the opponents.

VII. The Ball In and Out of Play

The ball is out of play when it wholly crosses the touchline (side line) or goal line (end line), either on the ground or in the air.

VIII. The Method of Scoring

The ball must completely cross the goal line between the goalposts and under the crossbar for a goal to be scored.

- Only the referee may award or disallow a goal.
- The referee may accept the opinion of a neutral assistant referee regarding a possible goal that the referee did not see.
- The position of the ball is relevant when determining whether a goal has been scored, not the position of the goalkeeper.
- A goal should not be awarded if an outside agent (spectator, dog, etc.) has interfered with play prior to the ball entering the goal.
- A goal should not be awarded if the *Laws of the Game* were violated by the attacking team immediately prior to the ball entering the goal.
- The referee may reverse his decision regarding the scoring of a goal as long as play has not yet been restarted.

IX. Fouls

If any player commits any of the following fouls, an indirect free kick will be taken by the opponent from the spot of the foul.

- Any fouls committed by a defender in the penalty area results in a penalty kick for the opponent.

It is considered a foul to:

- Kick or trip an opponent
- Charge (barge or run into) an opponent
- Grab, push or obstruct an opponent
- Touch the ball *intentionally* with the hand or arm
- Play in a dangerous manner. This includes heading the ball, kicks where the foot is raised above waist height and slide tackling and/or playing on the ground.

The referee may also show a yellow or red card to the player or players who commit fouls based on the severity of the foul committed. Reckless or out of control fouls should result in a yellow card being shown. Fouls committed with violence or excessive force should result in a red card.

Yellow cards: A yellow card (caution) is also shown when a player (or coach) demonstrates unsportsmanlike behavior:

- Fouls in a way that is reckless or out of control
- Dissents - by word or action
- Commits persistent infringement
- Intentionally delays a restart of the game
- Intentionally encroaches on the eight (8) yards required for an indirect kick or corner kick for the purpose of delaying the restart of play
- Engages in “trash talk”, uses foul language, or engages in other unfair play.

Red cards: A player will be sent off (ejected) for:

- Receiving two yellow cards in the same game
- Serious foul play (fighting)
- Violent play/conduct (fouls that use excessive and/or violent force)

- Spitting
- Abusive or excessively foul language

A player who receives a red card will be removed from the remainder of the match with his/her team playing “short” for the remainder of the match.

The sent off player must also sit out the following game.

X. Free Kicks

All free kicks in the 10-14 Division are “Indirect Free Kicks” meaning the ball must be touched or played by another player before a goal can be scored; a goal cannot be scored directly from a free kick.

Opponents must be at least eight yards from the ball.

XI. Penalty Kicks

A penalty kick results from a player committing a free kick foul inside his/her own penalty area. The penalty kick is taken from the penalty mark with all other players outside the penalty area except for the opposing goalkeeper.

A goal may be scored directly from a penalty kick.

- The ball is in play once it has been kicked and moves forward.
- All players must be on the field of play, outside the penalty area, ten yards from the ball, and must stand outside the penalty area, except for the kicker and the opposing goalkeeper.
- The defending goalkeeper remains on the goal line between the goalposts facing the kicker until the ball has been kicked.
- The kicker must wait for the referee’s signal before taking the kick.
- The player taking the penalty kick may not play the ball twice in succession without it first touching another player (penalty is an indirect free kick for the opposing team).

XII. Throw-ins

- The throw-in shall be taken from the point at which the ball left the field.
- The thrower must face the field and part of both feet must remain on or behind the touchline.
- The ball must be thrown with both hands from behind and over the head.
- Opposing players must stand no less than 2 yards from the point at which the throw-in is taken.
- The ball is in play as soon as it is both released and has entered the field of play.

- The thrower may not play the ball a second time in succession (penalty is a free kick for the opposing team from the point of the infraction).
- If the ball is improperly thrown in, it shall be retaken by a player of the opposing team.
- A goal may not be scored directly from a throw-in.

XIII. Goal Kicks

A goal kick is awarded the opposing team when the attacking team is last to touch the ball before it crosses the goal line but not scoring a goal. The goal kick may be taken from any point inside the goal area. The ball is in play when it is kicked and clearly moves.

Opposing players must stand behind the “Build-Out Line” and may only cross the build-out line when the ball is kicked and clearly moves.

XIV. Build-Out Line

- The build-out line promotes playing the ball out of the back in a less pressured setting.
- The build-out line shall be placed across the field equidistant between the top of the penalty area and the halfway line; and must be clearly marked with flags or cones.
- The opposing team must move behind the build-out line for a goal kick or when the goalkeeper has possession.
- At any time, the goalkeeper may pass, throw or roll the ball to a teammate on either side of the build-out line.
- The goalkeeper or the player taking the goal kick does not have to wait for the opposing players to move behind the build-out line before putting the ball into play.
- After the ball is put into play, the opposing team can then cross the build-out line and play may resume as normal. The ball is in play from a goal kick when it is kicked and clearly moves. The ball is in play from goalkeeper possession when it is thrown or released from the hands.

XV. Offsides

Referees will call obvious offside offenses.

- The build-out line shall be used as the line to determine offside.

Players cannot be penalized for an offside offense between the halfway line and the build-out line but may be penalized for offsides if the player is between the build-out line and the opponent’s goal line.

- A player is in an offside position if he is nearer to the opponents' goal line than both the ball and the second to last defender; being in an offside position in itself is not an offence.
- The player in an offside position is only penalized if, at the moment the ball is touched or played by a teammate, the referee considers him to be actively involved in the play by:
 - Interfering with play or
 - Interfering with an opponent or
 - Gaining an advantage from being in that position
- There is no offside offence if a player receives the ball directly from:
 - A goal kick or
 - A throw-in or
 - A corner kick
- The punishment for being offside is an indirect free kick for the opposing team.
- The indirect free kick is taken from the location of the offside player.

XVI. Corner Kicks

A corner kick is awarded the opposing team when the defending team is last to touch the ball before it crosses the goal line but not scoring a goal.

- The ball is placed within the corner arc at the nearest corner flag post.
- A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick.
- The ball is in play after it has been kicked and moves.
- Opposing players must remain eight yards from the corner arc until the ball is in play.
- The kicker may not play the ball twice in succession (penalty is an indirect free kick for the opposing team).

XVII. No Heading!

Consistent with the US Soccer mandates on heading the ball, heading is banned for all division players 11U (12U for programs without single age divisions) and below in both practices and matches.

An indirect free kick will be awarded to the opposing team if a player deliberately touches the ball with his/her head during a match. The indirect free kick will be taken from the place where the player touched the ball with his/her head.

The player, parents and coaches are responsible for ensuring the player does not head the ball in practice or in matches consistent with the standards set by US Soccer.

[END of OFFICIAL RULES for 10-14 Division]

OFFICIAL MATCH RULES FOR 7-9 DIVISION

OFFICIAL MATCH RULES FOR 7-9 DIVISION

I. Ball

- Size 4

II. Players

- **Numbers:** Eight (8) per team on field; one of which is a goalkeeper. Minimum number of six (6) players to start the game, otherwise it's a forfeit.

If a team has less players than their opposing team, both teams play the same number of players so that each side has equal.

[Example: if Team A has 7 players and Team B has 8 players, then the game will be played 7 v 7.]

- **Substitutions:** Approximately midway through each half, at halftime, and for injuries.
- **Playing Time:** All players, unless injured, are required to play at least half of every game.

III. Players' Equipment

- **Footwear:** Soccer shoes are recommended (or similar type athletic shoes). The type and condition of cleated shoes must be inspected for safety before use. No metal cleats.
- **Shinguards:** MANDATORY for both practices and games, and must be covered entirely by socks.
- **Forbidden Items:** Casts or splints, jewelry, watches, and other articles of adornment are not allowed.

Players may not wear anything that could endanger either themselves or another player. All items of jewelry – removable and welded (necklaces, rings, bracelets, friendship bracelets, watches, earrings, ear gauges, rubber bands, body piercings, decorative hair adornments, etc.) are forbidden

and must be removed before a player is allowed to participate. Using tape to cover jewelry is not permitted.

IV. Duration of Game

- A match will consist of two equal halves of 18-minutes each.
- Halftime will be 7 minutes. No added time.

V. The Start of Play

To start the first and second halves and following each goal, play is started or restarted with a kick-off in the center of the field. A coin toss is used to determine which team kicks off to start the game and which team kicks off to start the second half. Following a goal, the team scored upon kicks off.

VI. The Kick-off

The kick-off is taken from the center of the field with each player, except for the player taking the kick-off in their own half. The opponents of the team taking the kick-off must be outside the center circle until the ball is in play.

The ball is in play when it is kicked and clearly moves (any distance, any direction).

- If the kick-off is not properly taken, it must be retaken.
- If the kicker touches the ball again before anyone else, an Indirect Free Kick is awarded to the opponents.

VII. The Ball In and Out of Play

The ball is out of play when it wholly crosses the touchline (side line) or goal line (end line), either on the ground or in the air.

VIII. The Method of Scoring

The ball must completely cross the goal line between the goalposts and under the crossbar for a goal to be scored.

- Only the referee may award or disallow a goal.
- The referee may accept the opinion of a neutral assistant referee regarding a possible goal that the referee did not see.
- The position of the ball is relevant when determining whether a goal has been scored, not the position of the goalkeeper.

- A goal should not be awarded if an outside agent (spectator, dog, etc.) has interfered with play prior to the ball entering the goal.
- A goal should not be awarded if the *Laws of the Game* were violated by the attacking team immediately prior to the ball entering the goal.
- The referee may reverse his decision regarding the scoring of a goal as long as play has not yet been restarted.

IX. Fouls

If any player commits any of the following fouls, an indirect free kick will be taken by the opponent from the spot of the foul.

Any fouls committed by a defender in the penalty area results in a penalty kick for the opponent.

- The referee may also show a yellow or red card to the player or players who commit fouls based on the severity of the foul committed. Reckless or out of control fouls should result in a yellow card being shown. Fouls committed with violence or excessive force should result in a red card.

It is considered a foul to:

- Kick or trip an opponent
- Charge (barge or run into) an opponent
- Grab, push or obstruct an opponent
- Touch the ball *intentionally* with the hand or arm
- Play in a dangerous manner. This includes heading the ball, kicks where the foot is raised above waist height (high kicks), slide tackling and/or playing on the ground.

Yellow cards: A yellow card (caution) is also shown when a player (or coach) demonstrates unsportsmanlike behavior:

- Fouls in a way that is reckless or out of control
- Dissents - by word or action
- Commits persistent infringement
- Intentionally delays a restart of the game
- Intentionally encroaches on the eight (8) yards required for an indirect kick or corner kick for the purpose of delaying the restart of play
- Engages in “trash talk”, uses foul language, or engages in other unfair play.

Red cards: A player will be sent off (ejected) for:

- Receiving two yellow cards in the same game
- Serious foul play (fighting)
- Violent play/conduct (fouls that use excessive and/or violent force)
- Spitting
- Abusive or excessively foul language

A player who receives a red card will be removed from the remainder of the match with his/her team playing “short” for the remainder of the match.

The sent off player must also sit out the following game.

X. Free Kicks

All free kicks in the 7-9 Division are “Indirect Free Kicks” meaning the ball must be touched or played by another player before a goal can be scored; a goal cannot be scored directly from a free kick.

Opponents must be at least eight yards from the ball.

XI. Penalty Kicks

A penalty kick results from a player committing a free kick foul inside his/her own penalty area. The penalty kick is taken from the penalty mark with all other players outside the penalty area except for the opposing goalkeeper.

A goal may be scored directly from a penalty kick.

- The ball is in play once it has been kicked and moves forward.
- All players must be on the field of play and must stand outside the penalty area, except for the kicker and the opposing goalkeeper.
- The defending goalkeeper remains on the goal line between the goalposts facing the kicker until the ball has been kicked.
- The kicker must wait for the referee’s signal before taking the kick.
- The player taking the penalty kick may not play the ball twice in succession without it first touching another player (penalty is an indirect free kick for the opposing team).

XII. Throw-ins

- The throw-in shall be taken from the point at which the ball left the field.
- The thrower must face the field and part of both feet must remain on or behind the touchline.
- The ball must be thrown with both hands from behind and over the head.
- Opposing players must stand no less than 2 yards from the point at which the throw-in is taken.
- The ball is in play as soon as it is both released and has entered the field of play.
- The thrower may not play the ball a second time in succession (penalty is a free kick for the opposing team from the point of the infraction).
- If the ball is improperly thrown in, it shall be retaken by a player of the opposing team.
- A goal may not be scored directly from a throw-in.

XIII. Goal Kicks

A goal kick is awarded the opposing team when the attacking team is last to touch the ball before it crosses the goal line but not scoring a goal. The goal kick may be taken from any point inside the goal area. The ball is in play when it is kicked and clearly moves.

Opposing players must stand behind the “Build-Out Line” and may only cross the build-out line when the ball is kicked and clearly moves.

XIV. Build-Out Line

- The build-out line promotes playing the ball out of the back in a less pressured setting.
- The build-out line shall be placed across the field equidistant between the top of the penalty area and the halfway line; and must be clearly marked with flags or cones.
- The opposing team must move behind the build-out line for a goal kick or when the goalkeeper has possession.
- At any time, the goalkeeper may pass, throw or roll the ball to a teammate on either side of the build-out line.
- The goalkeeper or the player taking the goal kick does not have to wait for the opposing players to move behind the build-out line before putting the ball into play.
- After the ball is put into play, the opposing team can then cross the build-out line and play may resume as normal. The ball is in play from a goal kick when it is kicked and clearly moves. The ball is in play from goalkeeper possession when it is thrown or released from the hands.

XV. Offsides

Referees will call obvious offside offenses.

- The build-out line shall be used as the line to determine offside.
- A player is in an offside position if he is nearer to the opponents' goal line than both the ball and the second to last defender.
- The player in an offside position is only penalized if, at the moment the ball is touched or played by a teammate, the referee considers him to be actively involved in the play by:
 - Interfering with play or
 - Interfering with an opponent or
 - Gaining an advantage from being in that position
- There is no offside offence if a player receives the ball directly from:
 - A goal kick or 2024
 - A throw-in or
 - A corner kick
- The punishment for being offside is an indirect free kick for the opposing team.
- The indirect free kick is taken from the location of the offside player.

XVI. Corner Kicks

A corner kick is awarded the opposing team when the defending team is last to touch the ball before it crosses the goal line but not scoring a goal.

- The ball is placed within the corner arc at the nearest corner flag post.
- A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick.
- The ball is in play after it has been kicked and moves.
- Opposing players must remain eight yards from the corner arc until the ball is in play.
- The kicker may not play the ball twice in succession (penalty is an indirect free kick for the opposing team).

XVII. No Heading!

Consistent with the US Soccer mandates on heading the ball, heading is banned for all division players 11U (12U for programs without single age divisions) and below in both practices and matches.

An indirect free kick will be awarded to the opposing team if a player deliberately touches the ball with his/her head during a match. The indirect free kick will be taken from the place where the player touched the ball with his/her head.

The player, parents and coaches are responsible for ensuring the player does not head the ball in practice or in matches consistent with the standards set by US Soccer.

[END of OFFICIAL MATCH RULES for 7-9 Division]

GAME GUIDELINES FOR 6U (4-6 DIVISION)

Ball

- Size 3

Players

- **Numbers:** Four per team on field; no goalkeepers.
- **Substitutions:** Approximately midway through each half, at halftime and for injuries.
- **Playing Time:** All players, unless injured, are required to play at least half of every game.

Players Equipment

- **Footwear:** Soccer shoes are recommended (or similar type athletic shoes). The type and condition of cleated shoes must

be inspected for safety before use.

- **Shinguards:** MANDATORY for both practices and games, and must be covered entirely by socks.

Duration of Game

- Matches should have two equal halves of 10-minutes each.
- Halftime will be 7 minutes. No added time.

Officials

The games are intended to be an opportunity for our young players to experience the fun of playing. The barest of minimum rules are needed and should be applied with a generous amount of flexibility. Let the players have the freedom to play with minimum interruption.

The Start of Play

To start the first and second halves and following each goal in all age-group games, play is started or restarted with a kick-off in the middle of the field. A coin toss is used to determine which team kicks off to start the game and the other team kicks off to start the second half. Following a goal the team scored upon kicks off.

The Kick-off

The kick-off is taken from the center of the field with each team in their own half and the team not kicking off at least 5 yards from the ball. Do not insist the opponent always be 5 yards from the ball, as this is just a guide to give the kicker room to kick the ball without it immediately hitting an opponent. Remember, let them play and do not interfere for technicalities.

The Ball In and Out of Play

The ball is out of play in all age group games when it completely crosses the touchline (side line) or goal line (end line), either on the ground or in the air.

The team that didn't touch it last gets a pass-in or dribble-in. The coach in 6U games will determine when one of these restarts is necessary and should then interfere as little as possible in the restart.

It's their game, let them play. The coach can work on technique later.

Method of Scoring

A goal, in all age group games, is awarded when the ball completely crosses the goal line into the goal. Goals should be enthusiastically celebrated by everyone but, in 6U games, they are not recorded to determine who wins.

Everyone wins in 6U games.

Fouls and Other Stoppages

Deliberate fouling should be rare in 6U games. Kicking, tripping, handling the ball and dangerous play may occur. There should be few, if any, additional reasons to stop play in 6U games.

If a player is "not playing well with others" or if play must be stopped for any other reason (injury, substitution, confusion, or to watch a passing train, butterfly or frog), refocus the players and begin

again with a free kick or pass-in as appropriate. Award the restart to whichever team deserves it, but do not make it a lengthy ceremony.

Exercise common sense, stand back and let them play.

Free Kicks

Play may have to be stopped occasionally to “sort things out” in 6U games. A player may pick the ball up and start running with it or want to keep it away from the other players, or perhaps there is a pile of kids on the ground kicking at both the ball and each other. Stop play, and correct the situation then restart with a free kick for a deserving player.

All free kicks in 6U games are indirect free kicks. Opponents must be at least 5 yards from the ball or on the goal line between the goal posts during free kicks.

No Heading!

Consistent with the US Soccer mandates on heading the ball, heading is banned for all division players 11U (12U for programs without single age divisions) and below in both practices and matches. An indirect free kick will be awarded to the opposing team if a player age 10 or younger deliberately touches the ball with his/her head during a match.

The indirect free kick will be taken from the place where the player touched the ball with his/her head.

The player, parents and coaches are responsible for ensuring the player does not head the ball in practice or in matches consistent with the standards set by U.S. Soccer.

The Throw-in

Throw-ins may be replaced with pass-ins or dribble-ins at 6U. Opponents should be 5 yards from the ball.

Hand Ball

A hand ball infraction occurs when a player handles the ball. The “hand” includes the entire arm up to the top of the shoulder.

Instinctive, self-protective reactions are not penalized at this young age. Accidental contact (ball striking hand or arm with no intent by the player) is not an offense and should not be penalized.

[END OF 4-6 DIVISION GAME GUIDELINES]