



soccer rule book

Fall 2026 · Recreational soccer, Pre-School through 12th Grade

These rules conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game except where noted. Coaches, referees, and parents should read the Pre-Game and Grade Specifications sections before the first game of the season.

pre-game

Teams and coaches from both teams meet at midfield for the Uniform and Equipment Check, a Rules Review, and The Coin Toss.

UNIFORM & EQUIPMENT CHECK

- Each player must have a numbered jersey.
- Players must wear shin guards.
- Socks must be worn up and over the shin guards.
- No metal cleats.
- No jewelry.
- No hats. Winter caps are allowed.

RULES REVIEW

- State the game duration and halftime duration.
- Review offsides.

THE COIN TOSS

- The Away Team Captain chooses heads or tails.
- The winner of the coin toss chooses offense or defense.
- The loser of the coin toss chooses direction.

grade specifications

All measurements in yards unless noted. Goal size is listed as height × width.

TEAM & GAME FORMAT

GRADE	PLAYERS MIN	PLAYERS MAX	ROSTER	BALL SIZE	GOAL SIZE	HALF LENGTH	HALFTIME	OFFSIDES
Pre-S	5	4	10	3	4x6	20	2	No
Pre-K	5	4	10	3	4x6	20	2	No
K	5	4	10	3	4x6	20	2	No
1st	5	4	10	4	6.5x12	25	2	No
2nd	5	4	10	4	6.5x12	25	2	No
3rd	7	5	12	4	6.5x18.5	25	2	Yes
4th	7	5	12	4	6.5x18.5	25	2	Yes
5th	9	6	16	4	7x21	30	2	Yes
6th	9	6	16	4	7x21	30	2	Yes
7th	11	7	18	5	8x24	35	2	Yes
8th	11	7	18	5	8x24	35	2	Yes
9th	11	7	18	5	8x24	35	2	Yes
10th	11	7	18	5	8x24	35	2	Yes
11th	11	7	18	5	8x24	40	2	Yes
12th	11	7	18	5	8x24	40	2	Yes

FIELD DIMENSIONS

GRADE	FIELD LENGTH	FIELD WIDTH	CENTER CIRCLE	GOAL AREA	PENALTY AREA	PENALTY SPOT	PENALTY ARC
Pre-S	30	20	4	6x8	—	—	—
Pre-K	35	25	4	6x10	10x12	8	—
K	35	25	4	6x10	10x12	8	—
1st	50	35	6	6x12	12x18	10	6
2nd	50	35	6	6x12	12x18	10	6
3rd	60	40	8	6x14	14x24	10	8
4th	60	40	8	6x14	14x24	10	8
5th	75	50	8	6x16	16x36	10	8
6th	75	50	8	6x16	16x36	10	8
7th	100	67	10	6x20	18x44	12	10
8th	100	67	10	6x20	18x44	12	10
9th	100	67	10	6x20	18x44	12	10
10th	100	67	10	6x20	18x44	12	10
11th	100	67	10	6x20	18x44	12	10
12th	100	67	10	6x20	18x44	12	10

the game

Field of Play

The field of play must be rectangular. The length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line. Interior markings include a halfway line, a center circle, a goal area, a penalty area, a penalty mark, penalty arc, and corner arcs.

Goals will be placed on the center of each goal line.

Teams, Parents and spectators will be on opposite sidelines from each other. Players, coaches and spectators should not be along the penalty area touchlines or behind the goal line.

The Ball

An age appropriate sized soccer ball will be used for all practices and games.

The Players

The game is played by two teams and each team has a goalkeeper.

Substitutions may be made, with the consent of the referee, during any stoppage of play or for an injury.

Players not on the field of play must remain one yard behind the touchline and not along the goal area or behind the goal line.

Each player shall receive 50% of the total playing time, unless they are not able to play due to illness or injury. The coach is responsible for enforcing this rule.

Player Equipment

A uniform consists of a jersey with a number, black shorts, and black socks.

Shin guards are mandatory for practices and games. Socks must be worn up and over the shin guards.

A player must not use equipment or wear anything which is dangerous to himself or another player. This includes any kind of jewelry, with exception of a medical alert bracelet.

Players may wear extra protective clothing against the cold, including gloves without dangerous, protruding or hard objects provided that: (1) The proper team uniform is worn outermost; and (2) Any hat should be without peak, bill or dangling or protruding object of any kind; and (3) Referee discretion may be used to determine if an item of protective clothing is considered to go beyond the purpose of providing a means of retaining body heat.

coaches & referees

Coaches

- Coaches must adhere to the Coaches Code of Conduct.
- Coaches are responsible for their own behavior as well as that of their players, parents, and fans.

- No more than 2 coaches are permitted on the sideline in the Team Area.
- Coaches must remain in their Team Area and are not allowed on the field of play during the game, unless permission is given by the referee.
- In Kindergarten and younger leagues, one Coach for each team is permitted on the field to help their players.
- Coaching from the sidelines is permitted but not recommended.
- Coaching must be done in a civil manner and the tone of voice will be informational and encouraging, not demanding or critical.
- The coach or designated adult should attend every practice and every game.
- All coaches, team managers, and assistants must comply with all Risk Management requirements.

The Referee

In the event that a referee is not present, both coaches will mutually agree upon a referee. If the coaches cannot agree, a parent or coach from the home team will referee the first half and a parent or coach from the away team will referee the second half. The parent or coach must refrain from coaching while refereeing.

The referee will have the responsibility of ensuring that any player bleeding from a wound leaves the field of play. The player may only return on receiving a signal from the referee who is satisfied that the bleeding has stopped.

play

Start and Restart of Play

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game, with the exception that the defending team is at least 10 yards from the ball until it is in play.

Restarting play after a temporary delay, there will be a drop ball for the team that last touched the ball at the spot where the ball was declared dead. The opponents shall be at least 4 yards away. The ball shall be deemed in play when the ball has touched the ground.

Goalkeepers may kick, punt, roll, throw or place the ball down and pass the ball.

Ball in and out of play

The ball is out of play when it has wholly crossed the goal line or wholly crossed a touchline, whether it is on the ground or in the air. The ball is out of play, when the referee has stopped the game.

Scoring

A goal is scored when the whole of the ball has crossed the whole of the goal line on the ground or in the air between the goal posts and under the crossbar.

- After one team is winning by 5 goals, the game is technically over and the score at that time stands. However, the game will continue as a scrimmage to full time.
- Forfeits are scored 5-0 for the winning team.

Offside

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the game. An indirect free kick will be awarded to the defending team.

The offside rule will not apply to 1st Grade and younger games, however the intent of the rule will be followed. Positioning a player in front of the opponent's goal irrespective of the location of the ball on the field is contrary to the aims of the program. The referee shall take appropriate action to prevent this kind of play. An indirect kick to the offended team and instructional statements to the violating players and coach.

Fouls and Misconducts

Play should be stopped when a player acts in a careless, reckless or dangerous manner.

NO HEADING · 6TH GRADE & YOUNGER

No heading is allowed in 6th Grade and younger games or practice. An indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense.

NO SLIDE TACKLING · 4TH GRADE & YOUNGER

Slide tackling the ball is not allowed in 4th Grade and younger games or practice.

No contact will be made with the goalkeeper who has possession of the ball. A goalkeeper with one finger on the ball is considered to have possession.

A player or coach who receives an ejection shall not participate in the team's next game.

A spectator who has been asked to leave the field of play shall not attend the team's next game.

restarts

Free Kicks

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game with the exception that all opponents are to be at least 10 yards away from the ball until it is kicked.

Direct and Indirect kicks will be awarded.

A goal cannot be scored from an Indirect free kick unless the ball has been played or touched by a player other than the kicker before passing through the goal.

The kicker shall not play the ball a second time until it has been touched or played by another player.

Penalty Kicks

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game.

Throw In

The ball is out of play when it wholly crosses the whole touchline, whether it is on the ground or in the air. A goal shall not be scored directly from the throw-in.

If an incorrect throw occurs, a throw in shall be awarded to the opposing team.

Kindergarten and younger games do not do Throw Ins. Instead, players Pass In.

Goal Kick

When the whole of the ball passes over the whole of the goal line, excluding the portion between the goal posts and under the crossbar, either in the air or on the ground, having last been played by one of the players on the attacking team, a goal kick will be awarded.

A goal kick may be taken from anywhere inside the goal area by any member of the defending team.

The kicker shall not play the ball a second time until it has been touched or played by another player.

Corner Kick

When the whole of the ball passes over the whole of the goal line, excluding the portion between the goal posts and under the crossbar, either in the air or on the ground, having last been played by one of the players on the defending team, a corner kick will be awarded.

Opposing players are to be at least 10 yards from the ball until it is kicked.

A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick.

The kicker shall not play the ball a second time until it has been touched or played by another player.

playoffs

Overtime / Tied Playoff Game

If your Playoff Game is tied at the end of regulation time, go straight to Penalty Kicks. There are no overtime periods.

Penalty Kicks Format

Five kickers from each team alternate Penalty Kicks until one team scores more goals than the other team could score.

If the scores remain tied after each team has taken five kicks, teams continue alternating Penalty Kickers until one team has scored more than the other team after the same number of Penalty Kicks.

If after all players have taken a Penalty Kick and the teams are still tied, teams continue taking turns attempting Penalty kicks until there is a winner.

Players cannot take another kick until all their team-mates have taken one, or two in the second round, etc.

miscellaneous rules

Parents and Spectators should enjoy and encourage the activity of the players and refrain from coaching during the game. Please cheer and acknowledge players that exhibit good sportsmanship.

All teams are responsible for the cleanup of the fields after each game. Please do not leave garbage on the sidelines.



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