



## YOUTH SOCCER RULES

### 1. FIELD(S)

- a. 6U & 9U – 45 yards x 35 yards
- b. 12U – 60 yards x 80 yards

### 2. BALL SIZE

- a. 6U/9U – Size 3
- b. 12U – Size 4

### 3. NUMBER OF PLAYERS

#### a. Recreational

- i. 6U – 4v4 (no goalkeeper)
- ii. 9U – 7v7 (6 players plus a goalkeeper)
- iii. 12U – 9v9 (8 players plus a goalkeeper)

*\*Leagues and Age Divisions subject to change based on registration numbers;  
Game format (4v4, 7v7, 9v9, etc.) is subject to changed and may change if both  
teams are in agreement.*

#### Substitutions:

Substitutions shall be unlimited; a player who has been replaced may return to the game.

ALL substituting players must be standing near the center line PRIOR to asking for a substitution and may not enter the field until given permission from the referee.

Substitutions may be made at the following times ONLY with the referee's consent:

- Prior to a throw-in by either team
- Prior to a goal-kick by either team
- After a goal by either team
- After an injury for either team when the referee stops play – the team with the injured player(s) may only substitute the injured player(s); the team without the injured player(s) may only substitute a number of players equal to or less than the team with the injured player(s)
- After a player has received a yellow card when the referee stops play – the team with the carded player(s) may only substitute the carded player(s); the team without the carded player(s) may only substitute a number of players equal to or less than the team with the carded player(s)

Each participant in these age groups shall play in approximately one-half of each match; any coach violating this minimum play rule will be warned and subject to suspension.

Substitutions for injuries: any child injured in such a manner that a stoppage of play is necessary shall be required to leave the field of play if the coach enters the field of play. Substitution for an injured player shall be permitted.

### 4. EQUIPMENT



- a. The basic compulsory equipment of a player shall consist of a jersey or shirt, shorts, socks, shin guards and footwear. A player shall not wear anything which is dangerous to another player; the goalkeeper shall wear colors which distinguish him from the other players and from referees.
- b. Referees will check that all players are wearing proper equipment prior to the start of each game.
- c. The only acceptable footwear for players shall be soccer cleats or sneakers. NO metal cleats will be allowed.
- d. Players on the field of play must wear shin guards. If a player is without shin guards for the game, that player shall use the shin guards of a teammate not on the field at that time.
- e. The home team shall be responsible for ensuring that no uniforms conflict with the visiting team. Each association should have available sufficient jerseys or pennies of an alternate color to insure compliance with this rule.
- f. No audio amplification may be used during the match by coaches or spectators unless allowed by the referee.

## 5. DURATION OF PLAY

- a. Game length:
  - i. 6U – (4) 10 minute quarters (running clock)
    1. 2-minute breaks between quarters
    2. 5-minute break at halftime

\*The team kicking off for the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter shall again kick-off to start the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter; their opponents shall kick-off to start the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarters
  - ii. 9U & 12U – (2) 25 minute halves
    1. (2) 25 minute halves
    2. 5-minute break at halftime
- b. Only the head coach and two assistant coaches (at most) shall be allowed to remain on the bench side of the field while the ball is in play. All coaches must remain on the bench side of the field and are not allowed to pass beyond the half-way line or the top of the penalty box.
- c. NO parents, coaches or spectators shall be allowed behind either goal line during games.

## 6. START OF PLAY

- a. The referee having given a signal, the game shall be started by a player taking a place-kick (i.e. a kick at the ball while it is stationary on the ground in the center of the field of play) into his opponent's half of the field of play, every player shall be in his own half of the field and every player of the team opposing that of the kicker shall remain not less than 10 yards from the ball until it is kicked off.
- b. The ball shall not be deemed in play until it has traveled forward; the kicker shall not pay the ball a second time until it has been touched by another player.
- c. A goal may be scored directly from the kick-off.



- d. Each coach is responsible for providing the referee with a typed computer generated roster when the referee is ready to check the team before the start of the match. Each roster must list the team name, the coaches name, along with the name, jersey number and date of birth for each player on the team.
- e. Players that arrive late for the start of the game may enter the game only with permission of the referee.

If any team reports for a match with less than the minimum number of players specified above, the referee shall delay the start of the game for 15 minutes to allow the team an opportunity for its players to arrive. If after the 15-minute delay the team still has fewer than the minimum number of players, the match shall be declared a forfeit with the opposing team being awarded a winning score 3 to 0. **The two head coaches may play the game anyway (merely for the enjoyment of the children), however the match results will still be recorded as a forfeit.**

## 7. BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY

- a. The ball is out of play when it has wholly crossed the goal-line or touch-line, whether on the ground or in the air, (or) when the game has been stopped by the referee. The ball is in play at all other times from the start of the match to the finish.

## 8. METHOD OF SCORING

- a. A goal is scored when the whole of the ball has passed over the goal-line between the goal posts and under the cross-bar, provided it has not been thrown, carried, or intentionally propelled by hand or arm, by a player of the attacking side.
- b. Any regular season games ending in a tie at the end of regulation time shall remain a tie.
- c. Forfeiture of regular season matches shall be recorded as 3 to 0 score with the team causing the forfeiture to receive the 0.

## 9. OFF SIDE

- a. **6U & 9U – no offsides (rule will be waived)**

*\*Positioning an off-sides player to Cherry Pick shall be considered unsportsmanlike conduct by the coach and result in an indirect free kick for the other team.*

- b. 12U –

- i. A player is in an off-side position if he is nearer to his opponent's goal-line than the ball, unless (a) he is in his own half of the field of play, or (b) he is not nearer to his opponent's goal-line than at least two of his opponents.
- ii. A player shall only be penalized for being in an off-side position, if at the moment the ball touches, or is played by one of his teammates, he is in the opinion of the referee, (a) interfering with play or with an opponent, or (b) seeking to gain an advantage.
- iii. A player shall not be declared offside by the referee if he receives the ball direct from a goal-kick, a corner-kick, or a throw-in.

## 10. FOULS AND MISCONDUCT

- a.



- b. A player who intentionally commits any of the following nine offenses shall be penalized by the award of a direct free-kick to be taken by the opposing team from the place where the offense occurred.
  - i. Kicks or attempts to kick opponent
  - ii. Trips an opponent
  - iii. Jumps at an opponent
  - iv. Charges an opponent in a violent or dangerous manner
  - v. Charges an opponent from behind unless the latter is obstructing
  - vi. Strikes or attempts to strike an opponent or spits at him
  - vii. Holds an opponent
  - viii. Pushes an opponent
  - ix. Handles the ball (except the goalkeeper in his own penalty area)
- c. A player committing any of the five following offense shall be penalized by the award of an indirect free-kick to be taken by the opposing team from the place of the offense occurred.
  - i. Playing in a manner considered by the referee to be dangerous
  - ii. Charging when the ball is not within playing distance
  - iii. Intentionally obstructing an opponent
  - iv. Charging the goalkeeper
  - v. When playing as goalkeeper, from the moment he takes control of the ball with his hands, he holds the ball for more than 6 seconds
- d. A player is cautioned (shown a yellow card) if guilty of:
  - i. Delaying the restart of play
  - ii. Dissent by word or action
  - iii. Entering, re-entering or deliberately leaving the field of play without the referee's permission
  - iv. Failing to respect the required distance when play is restarted with a corner kick, free kick or throw-in
  - v. Persistent infringement of the laws of the game (no specific number or pattern of infringements constitutes "persistent")
  - vi. Unsporting behavior
- e. A player, substitute or substituted player who commits any of the following offenses is sent off:
  - i. Denying the opposing team, a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball (except a goalkeeper within their penalty area)
  - ii. Denying an obvious goal-scoring opportunity to an opponent moving towards the opponents' goal by an offense punishable by a free kick (unless as outlined below)
  - iii. Serious foul play
  - iv. Spitting at an opponent or any other person
  - v. Violent conduct
  - vi. Using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures
  - vii. Receiving a second caution in the same match
  - viii.



- ix. 6U & 9U – all fouls shall result in the award of an indirect free-kick. Direct free-kicks and penalty kicks shall not be employed. All rule infractions should be explained by the referee to the offending player.
- x. For a foul occurring inside the box, the ball will be placed at the nearest location outside of the box in the field of play and an indirect free-kick will be employed.

#### 11. POLICY ON HEADING

- a. **NO HEADING** is allowed in any small sided match (12U and younger)
- b. If a player **deliberately** heads a ball in a game (12U and younger only), an indirect free kick should be award to the opposing team from the spot of the offense. If the deliberate header 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.

#### 12. POLICY ON SLIDE TACKLING

- a. 6U & 9U – slide tackling is **not** permitted; any infractions will result in an indirect free-kick
- b. 12U – slide tackling deemed legal will result in a warning by the referee to the individual player and instructions that they should stay on their feet going forward; a second slide tackle by the same player will result in an indirect free kick

#### 13. FREE KICKS

- a. Free-kicks shall be classified under two headings: "direct" (from which a goal can be scored direct against the offending side) and "indirect" (from which a goal cannot be scored unless the ball has been played or touched by a player other than the kicker before passing through the goal)
  - i. 6U & 9U – All free-kicks shall be indirect free-kicks

#### 14. PENATLY KICKS

- a. A penalty-kick shall be taken from the penalty mark and, when it is taken, all players with the exception of the player taking the kick, and the opposing goalkeeper, shall be within the field of play but outside the penalty area.
- b. 6U & 9U
  - i. Penalty kicks shall not be employed. Instead, an indirect kick shall be awarded (see rule 10. Fouls and Misconduct for placement of the ball if a foul occurs within the goal area).

#### 15. THROW-IN

- a. The player must:
  - i. Face the field of play
  - ii. Have part of each foot either on the touch line or on the ground outside the touch line
  - iii. Hold the ball with both hands
  - iv. Deliver the ball from behind and over his head



v. Deliver the ball from the point where it left the field of play

**16. GOAL KICK**

- a. When the whole of the ball passes over the goal-line, excluding that portion between the goal-posts, either in the air or on the ground, having been last played by one of the attacking team, it shall be kicked direct into play beyond the penalty area (from any point within the goal area) by a player of the defending team.

**17. CORNER KICK**

- a. When the whole of a ball passes the goal-line, excluding that portion between the goal-posts, either in the air or on the ground, having been last played by one of the defending team, a member of the attacking team shall take a corner kick.

**18. ADDITIONAL RULES**

- a. **Games suspended at halftime or later due to weather conditions shall be considered as complete with the score at the moment of suspension being recorded as the final score.**
- b. Any player showing blood of any kind must leave the field immediately to receive first aid treatment. The player may not return to the field until the blood is completely cleaned up and no longer visible. Any player with a jersey showing blood must remove it and put on a different jersey to continue player. Under these circumstances, players are allowed to share jerseys during the game.
- c. Players receiving a red card (as an immediate red or a second yellow) will be immediately suspended. Suspended players may not be replaced in the game from which they are suspended.
- d. At no time during the season should a coach run up the score on the other team. The goal differential rule will be as follows:
  - i. At the time of a 6 goal differential, the winning team must remove the goalkeeper
  - ii. The winning team will remove an additional player after each successive goal until 5 players remain on the field, and re-insert those players as goals are allowed
  - iii. If the differential drops back to 4 goals, the goalkeeper will be reinserted into the game.
- e. All players, coaches, parents, and spectators shall be required to conduct themselves properly at all times. Parents and spectators shall refrain from interfering with referees, officials, coaches or players. The use of alcohol on the fields is strictly prohibited. Failure of a coach, player or parent to abide by this Code of Conduct shall be grounds for removal of the coach, player or parent.
- f. Coaches will ensure their bench area is completely cleaned before leaving the field after a match and teach their players to respect the field by not littering.