



Non-Tournament Rules

4v4 Format

FOR THE GOOD OF THE GAME, ALWAYS...

PLAY your BEST

PLAY FAIR, with GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP

Observe LAWS of the GAME

RESPECT opposing PLAYERS, SPECTATORS, and COACHES

RESPECT the REFEREES

Accept defeat with DIGNITY

REJECT DRUGS, FOUL PLAY, RACISM, VIOLENCE and other

DANGERS to our SPORT

PROMOTE the interests of SOCCER

REMEMBER THAT THIS GAME IS FOR THE KIDS

**ASSIST others in REMAINING CALM and RESPECTFUL
during the GAME**

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Introduction

This Laws of the Game booklet has been prepared for use during Pre-k Co-ed age divisions. Other league publications address administrative issues such as how teams are selected, bylaws, discipline, appeals, coach qualifications, and so forth. This booklet is not approved for tournament play.

The current Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) Laws of the Game shall apply to NWV Youth Soccer League play except where amended in this booklet to implement recreational soccer rules, to accommodate nonprofessional fields, officials, coaches, and young players, and for better clarity.

Significant portions of this booklet have been copied word-for-word from the FIFA Laws of the Game booklet, which can be downloaded from the FIFA website www.fifa.com. We have been given written permission to do so, for the “good of the game”, provided that this booklet is not sold or otherwise used for commercial purposes. Use of the male terms his, he, etc. is done for expediency, per the FIFA rulebook.

4v4 Rules Summary

- . **1) PLAYER SAFETY IS TO BE CONSIDERED AT ALL TIMES!**
- . 2) Based on FIFA Laws of the Game, but with many variations, some

major.

- . 3) For PRE-K **(4) players per side, no goalkeeper.**
- . 4) **SIZE 3** ball (
- . 5) 4 8 minute quarters with 2 min break in between each quarter
- . 6) Use **(3-4) yards spacing** for free kicks, corner kicks, kick-offs, etc..
- . 7) A coach or parent volunteer (**one** per team) shall referee all PRE-K Games
- . 8) No Offside.
- . 9) Each player shall play at least half of the game minutes, or equal game minutes, depending on roster size.
- . 10) Shots on goal may be taken only from within a team's offensive half of the field.
- . 11) The kick-in is recommended instead of the throw-in for a ball that crosses over the touchline.
- . 12) A goal kick may be taken from any point along the goal line.
- . 13) A team that falls behind by 4 or more goals may add a 4th player to the field for competitive balance.

Recent Updates

The following rules have changed recently:

- . 1) Teams shall refrain from “goal guarding” (LAW 3).
- . 2) At no time shall more than one adult per team be allowed on the field of play during the game (LAW 5).
- . 3) The kick-in is recommended instead of the throw-in when the ball crosses the touchline (LAW 15).
- . 4) A goal kick may be taken from any point along the goal line (LAW 16).

- . 5) A team that falls behind by 4 or more goals **may** add a 5th player to the field for competitive balance (LAW 3).
- . 6) On a throw-in, all opponents must be at least 2 yards from the point at which the throw-in is taken (LAW 15).
- . 7) NO SLIDE-TACKLING (LAW 12).

Practical Notes

- . 1) The players are VERY, VERY young and are just beginning to learn and understand the FIFA rule set. Second chances may be given for rules violations. Emphasize learning and enjoying the game, not “winning”.
- . 2) The players often “clump up” around the ball, and at times the game looks more like rugby than soccer. Unless pushing and tripping is both intentional and dangerous, it should not be penalized (otherwise the game would never progress).
- . 3) Coaches and/or parents that volunteer to referee the game must read this rulebook thoroughly to familiarize themselves with the Rules of the Game. At this age level, the coach/parent referee should take the opportunity to teach players the rules as well as arbitrate the game. When a player commits a rule violation, take the time to explain the rule to the player in a kind manner. Remember that player safety is to be considered at all times.

Terminology

Soccer has its own unique terms and usages. Here are a few important examples:

ADVANTAGE: The referee may invoke the “advantage rule” any time he believes that continuing play following a rules violation would be to the advantage of the team that was fouled (play continues).

DIRECT: Proceeding directly from a kicker into the goal, without being required to be touched by anybody else. It's OK if somebody else touches the ball, but there is no requirement that they do so.

INDIRECT: Proceeding from a kicker and touching at least one other player (from either team) before going into the goal.

TOUCHLINE: The line on each long side of the field. The sideline. **GOAL LINE:** The line on each short side (ends) of the field.

HANDLE THE BALL: To deliberately (in the referee's opinion) touch the ball with a hand, lower arm, or upper arm, except when done solely to protect a player's own body from injury (and to no other advantage).

PLAY THE BALL: To intentionally (in the referee's opinion) either touch the ball or be in a position where you could easily touch the ball.

DROPPED BALL: A means of restarting the game when the game is stopped for a serious injury or some other unusual circumstance.

MATCH: Another term for soccer game.

SLIDE TACKLE: To slide into the ball (not a player) while it is being played by another player. This often results in the tackled player tripping over the ball and falling down, **and is prohibited in the 3v3 play format.** Slide tackling is difficult to do safely, can be dangerous to the player being tackled, and can easily result in a yellow card or red card.

WARNED: The referee has verbally informed someone of a rules infraction for which that person could have been yellow carded, but the referee elected to keep the game going.

CAUTIONED: The referee has stopped play (if necessary) to notify someone that they have broken one or more rules of the game. They are shown a "yellow card", and will be ejected if "cautioned" again. This official soccer term is avoided in this booklet because in the U.S.A., to "caution" someone normally means to warn them verbally.

LAW 1 – THE FIELD OF PLAY

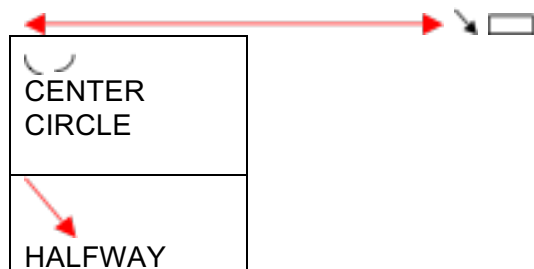
4v4 Field of Play

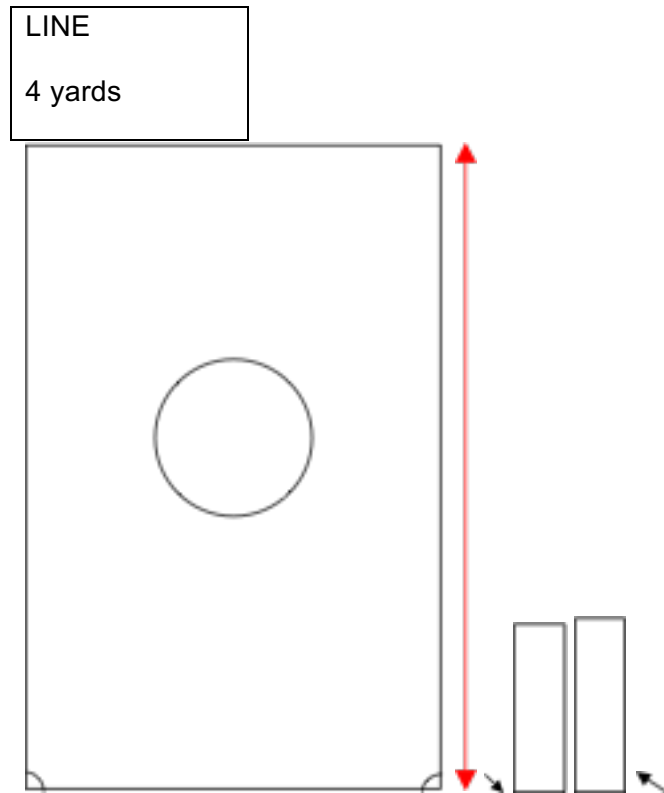
- . 1) **Dimensions:** The field of play shall be rectangular, about (20) yards wide “goal lines” by (30) yards long “touchlines”.
- . 2) **Field Markings:** The field of play shall be marked with distinctive lines which are uniform in width and (2-5) inches wide. All field marking lines are considered to be part of the area which they outline. The field is divided into two halves by a “halfway line”. A “center mark” is placed at the midpoint of the halfway line. A circle having a (4) yard radius is marked around the field’s center point.
- . 3) **The Goal Area:** None.
- . 4) **The Penalty Area:** None.
- . 5) **Flagposts:** A flag post about 5 feet high with non-pointed top and a flag may be placed at each corner.
- . 6) **The Corner Arc:** Four corner arcs with about a (2) foot radius.
- . 7) **Goals:** Centered and placed upon each goal line must be a

GOAL LINE

20 yards

GOAL





goal which consists of two vertical posts (“goal posts”), joined at the top by a horizontal “crossbar”. The distance between the goal posts ranges between (6-7) feet, and the distance between the crossbar and the ground is about (4) feet (inside measurements). The goal posts and the crossbar must have a uniform maximum width and depth of (2-5) inches. A net should be attached to each goal and to the ground behind the goal, free of holes or gaps, and should be properly supported. The goal and net shall be reasonably safe. If there are no goals, **flags may be used** and will be placed (6) feet apart in the center of the goal line.

- . 8) **Technical/Spectator Area:** The technical area is the area in which coaches and players reside. If it is not marked, the length of the technical area is equivalent to the diameter of the center circle. The spectator area begins at the end of the technical area on each side and terminates within (5) yards of the goal line.
- . 9) **Goal Markers:** Each team may place a unique marker of some kind behind the goal which their team is attacking, so that players will know which goal to kick the ball towards each half, provided the marker is unlikely to cause player injuries. Each team must supply and move its

own goal marker at the end of each half.

Sides of the Field

Unless otherwise specified by the league, the “home team” and affiliated spectators will gather and warm up on the north and east sides and ends of the field, and the “visiting team” will gather and warm up on the south and west sides and ends of the field. In case of a dispute or other uncertainty, the coaches may determine (possibly by a coin toss) which team will be the “home team”, then assign sides of the field accordingly, so that there is only one team and group of spectators on each side of the field.

Notes: 1) If the field is in use when the coaches arrive, the “home team” coaches should gather near the northeast corner of the field, and the

“visiting team” coaches should gather near the southwest corner of the field. This avoids interfering with the game in progress, and helps the coach’s team and affiliated spectators determine where they should settle and/or warm up when the previous game ends.

LAW 2 – THE BALL

Use an approved soccer ball of the appropriate size and inflated to the recommended pressure, usually about 8-10psi. Appropriate **ball size: SIZE 3 for PRE-K Divisions.**

The ball shall be supplied by the “home team”, and shall not be changed during the game unless authorized by the both coaches. The ball must contain no materials that might prove dangerous to the players.

CORNER ARC

GOAL

GOAL LINE

Technical Area

TOUCHLINE

30 yards Technical Area TOUCHLINE

obtained from any other source. 2) If the ball becomes lost, deflated, or otherwise unusable during the game, the game shall be stopped (if needed) and the ball replaced

with a good one. If the ball was in play at the time the game was stopped, the game shall be restarted by a dropped ball.

LAW 3 – THE NUMBER OF PLAYERS

Players

Each team must have **(3) players** ((2) minimum) on the field. There are **NO goalkeepers**.

Each player must be registered in the league for the current season and listed team are not allowed. A team that cannot supply the minimum number of qualified players within 10 minutes of the scheduled start time forfeits; however coaches encourage our teams to share players and play a game if one team is short.

Add-a-player option: Sometimes games at this level are not competitively balanced. While keeping score in the Pre-K age divisions is discouraged, if it is clear that one team is dominating another team (+4 goal differential or higher), the trailing team may add a 4th player to the field and play 4v3 to help restore competitive balance.

Infringements/Sanctions:

1) If a team is found to be using an ineligible player, the game is forfeited and a report will be filed with the Disciplinary Committee to consider further sanctions.

Notes: 1) League officials may conduct a roster check at any time. 2) A coach may request a roster check for the opposing team, but must also submit his team to a roster check.

Goalkeepers

NO goalkeepers are used in 4v4 Non-Tournament play. If a player defending their goal should handle the ball (hand-ball), an indirect kick will be awarded to the attacking team at the spot of the violation. If the spot of the violation is within four (4) yards of the goal, the indirect kick shall be taken from a spot four (4) yards from the goal.

Infringements/Sanctions:

. 1) If the handling was intentional and **clearly prevented an obvious goal**, the attacking team should be awarded the goal and play will resume with a kickoff by the team that

was scored upon.

- . 2) **Teams shall refrain from “goal guarding”**, i.e., placing a player in front of the goal with the intent of defending the goal irrespective of the position of the ball and/or the attacking players.

Injuries and Substitutions

Substitutions are permitted for a team when:

- . 1) Play has stopped for a kick-off (this is the best time).
- . 2) Play has stopped for a goal kick, kick-in or throw-in.
- . 3) Play has stopped for a corner kick.
- . 4) Play has stopped for a serious injury (see below) or a moderately injured player needs to be replaced.

Players must enter and exit the field near the halfway line. In case of serious injury, play should be stopped, but the ball remains in play until one of the acting referees blows the whistle. If a coach or parent is called out to attend to an injured player, the player must be removed from the field. A bleeding player must be removed from the game, and may not return until the bleeding is stopped. An injured player who is removed from the game may be replaced; the other team may not make a substitution at the same time for that reason alone. The injured player may re-enter the game at the next substitution opportunity. **A player who has been ejected from the game may be replaced.**

Each player shall play at least half of the game minutes. The enforcement of the minimum playing time rule is based on the honor system. Violations of the playing time rule should be reported to the field marshal or other league official, and the league may assign an official to observe the game.

Infringements/Sanctions:

1) Many teams will have 7 players on the roster, so it is not possible to give all of the players half of the game minutes. In this case, coaches should do their best to see that playing time is divided as equally among the players as possible.

2) Violations of the minimum playing time rule will be reported to the Disciplinary Committee and may result in disciplinary action against the head coach.

Notes:

- . 1) Sudden illnesses (heat stroke, fainting, vomiting, etc.) are treated the same as an injury.
- . 2) What constitutes a serious injury is left solely to the referee's discretion. However, because the players are not fully matured, the acting referee should consider erring on the side of getting the injured player(s) treated as soon as possible.
- . 3) It is recommended that each player start at least one half of each game, because sometimes there are no substitution opportunities for a very long time, and each player must be guaranteed that he will play at least half of the minutes in each game.
- . 4) Coaches may reduce playing time as a disciplinary action with prior written notification to the league.
- . 5) For this age group, to save playing time, a player may enter the field for the purpose of removing the player he is replacing.

Coaches and Spectators

Each team must have at least one coach designated as the “head coach”, and may have one or more assistant coaches. Each coach must have in his possession, available for presentation to the field marshal, a valid coaching card from the league. In the event that the head coach is removed from the game by the field marshal, one of the assistant coaches will be designated the head coach. A player not currently authorized to be on the field is considered to be a spectator. Coaches must stay off the field, on their respective sides of the field, at least (1) yard away from the touchline (unless acting as a referee). Spectators must stay off the field, on their respective sides of the field, at least (3) yards away from the touchline. Coaches and spectators must behave responsibly, and may not yell at the acting referees or otherwise interfere with the game. Voice amplification devices are not allowed.

Alcohol, tobacco and illegal drugs are not permitted. Head coaches are responsible for their own conduct, as well as the conduct of all coaches, players, and spectators affiliated with their team.

Infringements/Sanctions:

- . 1) If a coach is unable to produce a valid coach registration card, the field marshal shall consult the league registration book to verify that the coach is registered. If a team has no registered coaches present, a parent may complete paperwork to register to coach

the team. A coach that fails to produce a valid coach registration card may, at the field marshal's discretion, be penalized for delay of game. The scheduled start time of the game shall not be delayed due to coach registration verification; the clock will run and players may take the field once the coach registration has been verified.

- . 2) A coach or spectator shall be warned or penalized, at the field marshal's discretion, for interfering verbally or physically with the game, or other misconduct (LAW 12). A coach who leaves the "spectator area" or enters the field without permission is interfering with the game. Additionally, a head coach shall be disciplined if, when brought to his attention, in the field marshal's opinion, he does not immediately attempt to assist the referee in calming or removing a specific coach or spectator affiliated with his team.

Notes:

- . 1) Coaches and spectators are not allowed on the field while the game is in progress (unless acting as a referee). Part of learning the game is for the players to work with and communicate with each other, with minimal verbal instructions from their coaches and spectators.
- . 2) Coaches and spectators are not allowed anywhere near either goal or penalty area during the game. Some parents and/or coaches, with good intentions, attempt to help out their team's offense, or defense in this manner, but it is unfair to the other team to do so.
- . 3) During the game, coaches should keep themselves, spectators, and equipment at least 1-3 yards away from the touchline.
- . 4) Field marshals should be aware that head coaches are often concentrating on what is happening on the field, and may truly not be aware that another coach or a spectator affiliated with his team is behaving inappropriately. Spectator misconduct must be brought to the attention of the respective head coach, so that the head coach has the opportunity to resolve the situation to the satisfaction of the field marshal. In all fairness, a head coach should not be disciplined if he has no knowledge of the misconduct. However, the field marshal's decision in this matter is final, and he may immediately red card and eject the head coach for the misconduct of others if he feels that it is warranted under the circumstances.

LAW 4 – THE PLAYER'S EQUIPMENT

Each player **must** wear a jersey or shirt, shorts (short pants), stockings, **shin guards**, and approved shoes (no toe cleats, long cleats, sharp cleats, or hard soled street shoes allowed). Shirts must be tucked into the shorts. Shoelaces must be securely tied. If tape or similar material is applied externally to the stocking, it must be the same color as the part of the stocking to which it is applied.

Shin guards are **MANDATORY** and shall be worn **underneath** the stockings, shall be made of a suitable material, and shall afford a reasonable degree of protection from physical injury. Additional clothing outside the uniform is not permitted, except for warm-up pants that are the same color as the shorts, which may be worn in cold weather. The jersey must be visible at all times, so any cold-weather clothing must be worn underneath the jersey.

A player **shall not wear anything which could be dangerous to himself or to another player, including** rings, watches, jewelry, hair clips, and eyeglasses with metal frames (eyeglasses with plastic or rubber frames that are secured to the head with a strap or band are allowed). Post earrings, may **not** be covered with tape or band-aids; they must be removed. A player may **not** participate with an orthopedic cast, even if wrapped.

On the back of each player's shirt shall be a unique (for that team) 1-digit or 2-digit number, clearly visible, and no less than 6 inches tall. **Player names and nicknames are not permitted on the outside of their uniforms.**

The acting referees shall have the final decision in these matters.

Infringements/Sanctions: 1) A player **shall not be permitted on the field without the proper equipment.** If the acting referee notices an equipment problem

while the ball is in play, he shall wait until the next stoppage in play (except in extreme cases) before ordering the offending player off the field (unless the problem has already been corrected). That player may then not re-enter the field until a substitution for his team is permitted, and the acting referee shall satisfy himself that the player's equipment is in order.

Notes:

- . 1) The acting referee must inspect the equipment of all players before the game begins. A player who arrives late may not play until after he has passed the acting referee's inspection. For Mini Kickers and U5-U6, it is assumed that each coach will inspect the equipment of all players on his own team **before** the game begins.
- . 2) Tennis and running shoes are permitted, but soccer cleats or turf shoes are recommended.
- . 3) Player names and nicknames are not permitted on the outside of their uniforms, to help prevent strangers from befriending them **(this is a player safety issue)**.
- . 4) If a player does not have his or her official jersey, an alternate shirt or jersey of the same color may be worn.

LAW 5 – THE REFEREE

Each match is controlled by one **volunteer referee** (parent or coach) from each team who **has full authority** to enforce the Laws of the Game in connection with the match to which he has been appointed. At no time shall more than one adult per team be allowed on the field of play during the game. The volunteer referee shall:

- . 1) Fairly enforce the Laws of the Game, and control the game and the immediate area.
- . 2) Inspect the field, goals, ball, players, and coaches before the game.
- . 3) Act as official timekeeper for the game.
- . 4) Stop, suspend, or terminate the game, as he feels is warranted, because of rules violations, dangerous playing conditions, a bleeding player, a serious injury, outside interference, or some other unusual condition.
- . 5) Allow play to continue (“**advantage rule**”) for a few moments following a foul if he believes that doing so would be to the advantage of the fouled team. If the advantage doesn’t quickly occur, stop and penalize the foul.
- . 6) Punish the more serious offense when an individual player, coach, or spectator commits more than one offense at the same time.
- . 7) At his option delay taking disciplinary action until the next stoppage in play, if a rules infraction is not materially affecting the game’s progress.
- . 8) Restart the game after each stoppage in play.
- . 9) Educate the players about the laws of the game.
- . 10) Work with the other team’s volunteer referee and the parents to create a positive atmosphere for the players.

11) Have the final say regarding all matters related to the game. 12) Be immune from legal liability for any decisions made or not made.

Notes:

- . 1) If play slows or stops in anticipation of a penalty or other call, the acting referee should shout “play” (or something similar) if needed to get the game quickly moving again.
- . 2) “Dangerous conditions” may include darkness, lightning, sprinklers, blowing lawn chairs, small children on the field, animals on the field, deep holes in the field, and so forth.
- . 3) The acting referee should endeavor to keep the game moving with as few disruptions as possible. At the acting referee’s sole discretion, truly unintentional and trivial rules violations can be ignored, or mentioned verbally to the offending person while the game is in progress, provided that player safety wasn’t significantly threatened, and provided that both teams receive approximately equal treatment.
- . 4) The acting referee should stay in control of the game at all times, and consider acting to minimize player injuries. Establish what is and what is not allowed early in the game (every referee is different). Failure to issue warnings and penalties early in the game (as things happen) usually leads to escalating levels of poor sportsmanship or dangerous play. Take control of the game early, be consistent, and be reasonably fair to both teams.
- . 5) The acting referee should briefly explain to the offending party the reason for each foul or misconduct penalty, so that the offending party can learn from his misdeeds, whether intentional or not. The referee is not obliged to explain any decisions to the coaches either during or after the game, but may at his discretion do so if the game will not be delayed as a result, particularly if it might help the coaches better understand particular aspects of the game.
- . 6) Coaches may act as parent-referees, although they should not unfairly assist their own team while doing so.
- . 7) A volunteer referee who blatantly disrupts games for his or her own team’s benefit should be reported to the field marshal.

LAW 6 – THE ASSISTANT REFEREES

Assistant referees or linesmen are not required for 4v4 Non-Tournament play.

LAW 7 – THE DURATION OF THE MATCH

Timekeeping

The game shall consist of two halves of **8 minutes** for 4 quarters for Pre-K, with a rest break between the that is not to exceed (2) minutes. The acting referee is the official timekeeper, and his decisions in this regard, even if they appear to be wrong, are final.

Timekeeping Devices:

- . 1) A common wristwatch, accurately set, is needed for getting the game started on time.
- . 2) There are several types of timers for determining the length of each half, which may either be a separate unit or part of a wristwatch. The best choice is a countdown timer with 1 second resolution and an audible alarm at the end of each half.

Notes:

- . 1) The acting referee may assign somebody else to time the halves if he so desires.
- . 2) It is recommended that each team also keep time in case the referee's timer malfunctions. If a team reasonably believes that play has continued for at least 1 minute past the end of a half, they may yell "time" to the referee, who should check his timer but is under no obligation to stop the game at that point.
- . 3) At the end of each quarter, the acting referee should blow his whistle 2-3 times and point towards the center of the field to indicate that the quarter is over (each referee has his own style).
- . 4) If a goal is scored (ball completely crosses the goal line) before time expires, it counts. If a goal is scored after time expires, even if it was kicked before time expired, it does not count.
- . 5) All coaches should endeavor to start the game on time and keep it moving, so that subsequent games played on the same field will not be delayed. Halves should not be extended to compensate for time lost due to injuries, penalties, substitutions, etc. **Teams must exit the field within 55 minutes after the scheduled start time of their game, whether full 20 minute halves have been played or not.**

Before the Game

Here is a checklist of things **COACHES and ACTING REFEREES** should do before the match starts:

- . 1) Inspect the playing field for rocks, sprinklers, net holes, and other unusual or dangerous conditions. Make improvements as needed.

- . 2) Greet the opposing coaches.
- . 3) If the two teams have very similar uniforms, the “home team” must wear “pinnies” or “training vests” to differentiate the two teams (the field marshal should have a set).
- . 4) Inspect the equipment worn by all members of your own team.
- . 5) Supply the game ball if you are the “home team”.
- . 6) Assign positions to the starting players.
- . 7) Endeavor to get the game started on time, so as not to delay subsequent games played on the same field.

Notes: 1) It is assumed PRE-K matches will **NOT** be assigned referees, so teams must supply their own referee(s) for

these matches.

LAW 8 – THE START AND RESTART OF PLAY

Start of Play (Kick-Offs)

A kick-off is used to start play at the beginning of each half, and to restart play following each goal. In the second half of the game, the teams swap ends of the field, and the duty to kick off the half. Following a goal, the kick-off is taken by the team just scored upon. The referee places the ball in the center of the field. All players must be in their own half of the field, and the team opposing the kicker must remain at least (4) yards away from the ball until it is in play. On the referee’s signal, the ball is kicked into the other team’s half of the field. The **ball is in play as soon as it has been kicked and moves** into the other team’s half of the field. After taking the kick, the kicker may not touch the ball until after another player has touched it. For the 3v3 play format, **a goal may NOT be scored directly from a kick-off.**

Infringements/Sanctions:

- . 1) If the referee or parent-referee believes that the kick-off has been taken unfairly, the kick-off shall be re-taken.
- . 2) After the re-take, if the kicker touches the ball again, before it has been touched by another player, the other team shall be awarded an indirect free kick (LAW 13) from the spot of the foul.

Notes:

- . 1) Prior to each kick-off, the referee should count the number of players on each field half.
- . 2) For simplicity's sake for the Mini Kickers and U5-U6 age groups, the FIFA rule which specifies that the kick-off must be made into the opponent's half of the field **can be ignored** here.

Dropped Ball

If the game is stopped by the referee because of a serious injury, a potential danger, a deflated ball, or some other unusual event (including some penalty situations) for which the method of restarting play is not specified elsewhere in this booklet, the referee shall restart the game by dropping the ball between two players, one from each team, at the point nearest to where the ball was located when play was stopped. However, if the ball was in a goal area when play was stopped, the ball shall instead be dropped on the nearest part of the goal area line that runs parallel to the goal line. The ball shall not be dropped until all other members of both teams are at least (4) yards away from the ball (unless they are standing on their own goal line, between the goal posts). **The ball is in play as soon as it touches the ground.** The ball must be dropped again if a player touches the ball before it reaches the ground.

Infringements/Sanctions:

- . 1) The ball is dropped again if it is touched by a player before it makes contact with the ground, or if it leaves the field of play after it touches the ground without a player touching it.
- . 2) If a dropped ball is kicked directly into the opponent's goal, a goal kick is awarded. If a dropped ball is kicked directly into the team's own goal, a corner kick is awarded to the opposing team.

Notes:

- . 1) It does not matter which team had possession of the ball when play was stopped.

- . 2) Substitutions are not permitted, except in cases of player injury.

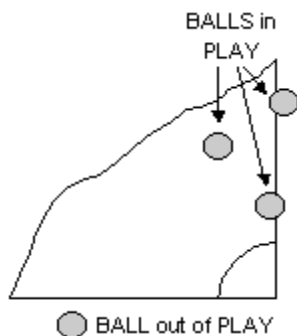
LAW 9 – THE BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY

The ball is **out of play** when:

- . 1) In the referee's judgment the ball has **wholly crossed** a goal line or a touchline, whether on the ground or in the air (see diagram).
- . 2) Play has been stopped by the referee.

The ball is **in play** at all other times, including when:

- . 1) It rebounds from a goal post, crossbar, or corner post and remains in the field of play.
- . 2) It rebounds off either the referee or an assistant referee when they are in the field of play.
- . 3) It appears as though there has been an infringement of the rules of the game, but the referee hasn't blown his whistle.



Notes:

- . 1) Lines on the field are considered to be part of the areas that they outline. For example, the touchlines and the goal lines are considered to be part of the field of play.
- . 2) The referee should give the proper signal as soon as the ball goes out of play, because players are instructed to assume that the ball is in play until the whistle is blown (exception – when it is obvious to all concerned that the ball has gone out of play).

- . 3) From the referee's position on the field, it may appear as though the ball is out of play when in fact up to half of the ball still overlaps the goal line or touchline (try it). Coaches and players must accept the referee's decision on this matter, even when the decision appears to be wrong (players often have the best view).
- . 4) Coaches should teach players to "play to the whistle", and not assume that a ball is out of play until the referee blows the whistle to indicate such.

LAW 10 – THE METHOD OF SCORING

A goal is scored for a team when the **whole of the ball** passes over the other team's goal line (see diagram below), between the goal posts and under the crossbar, provided that the attacking team has not (in the referee's opinion) significantly violated any rules of the game in the process of scoring that goal. **For the 3v3 play format, because there are no goalkeepers, shots on goal may be taken only from within a team's offensive half of the field.**

The team scoring the greater number of goals during a game shall be the winner. If no goals or an equal number of goals are scored, the game shall be termed a "draw". During any stoppage in play, coach of a team that is being defeated by a margin of 10 or more goals may elect to terminate the match at that point, without penalty, by informing the referee, and the referee shall terminate the match ("**mercy rule**").

Infringements/Sanctions:

1) Any "long" ball (whether a pass or a shot on goal) which crosses the halfway line, the goes directly into the opposing team's goal without having been touched by a player from either team, results in a goal kick being awarded to the defensive team.

Notes:

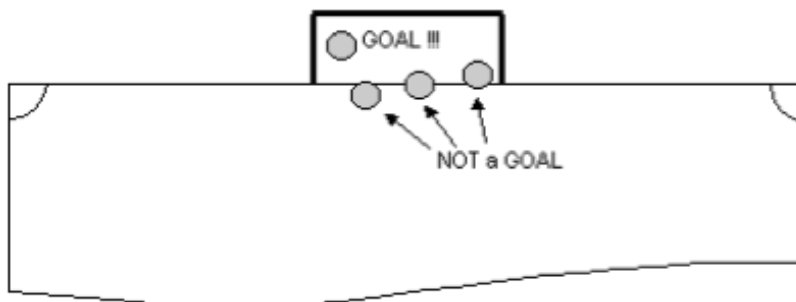
- . 1) It does not matter who touched the ball last before a goal was scored. A defender who accidentally kicks the ball into his own goal has scored a goal for the other team.
- . 2) A goal is not scored if specifically prohibited elsewhere in this booklet. For example, a goal may not be scored directly from a kick-in or indirect free kick.
- . 3) The referee should blow his whistle as soon as the goal is scored, because players are instructed to assume that the ball is in play until the whistle is blown (exception - when it is obvious to all concerned that a goal has been scored).
- . 4) The referee should immediately indicate with his arm that a goal has been scored, by

extending one arm straight out (palm sideways) towards the center of the field.

- . 5) From the referee's position on the field, it may appear as though the ball has completely crossed the goal line when in fact up to half of the ball still overlaps the goal line (try it). Coaches and players must accept the referee's decision on this matter, even when the decision appears to be wrong (players often have the best view).
- . 6) If there is a hole or gap in the goal net which the ball may have passed through, or if the goal net is missing, the referee must decide to the best of his ability whether or not a goal was scored, and that decision is final.
- . 7) **The 10-goal differential "mercy rule" cannot be invoked by the higher scoring team,** nor can the referee terminate a match for this reason alone without the permission of the losing team.

LAW 11 – OFFSIDE

There is **NO** Offside for 4v4 Non-Tournament play.



LAW 12 – FOULS AND MISCONDUCT

This law deals primarily with **how to restart** a game after a foul or misconduct has occurred.. A **foul** is defined as something which one player does to an opposing player **while the ball is in play**. Misconduct is defined as any other disciplinary problem that may occur during a match, including between players on the same team, things that happen while the ball is out of play, and things involving the referee, coaches, and/or spectators.

The referee has considerable discretion as to what will and will not be allowed during the course of a game. Referees walk a fine line between calling too many fouls (the game gets boring) and calling too few fouls (the game gets too rough). In the PRE-K age divisions, the number of fouls called

should be kept to a minimum. What is considered “fair” or “foul” may vary slightly during the game, depending on how the game is going. Following are examples of fouls, which may result in the referee stopping play to award an “Indirect Free Kick” (LAW 13) to the opposing team, from the place where the foul occurred:

- . 1) kicking, tripping, pushing, holding, jumping onto, unfair tackling
- . 2) slide tacking (a player may slide to save a ball or shoot, but not to take the ball away from an opponent)
- . 3) charging unfairly (either too vigorous, or not shoulder to shoulder)
- . 4) deliberately handling the ball
- . 5) impeding the progress of an opponent (except if fairly playing the ball)
- . 6) playing in a dangerous manner (not specified elsewhere)

For the **Pre-K** , **ALL free kicks are INDIRECT** .

Misconduct is usually dealt with after the ball goes out of play, so as not to disrupt the game. The game is restarted as it would have been had the misconduct not occurred. If the referee stops the game specifically to deal with a case of misconduct by a player on the field, the game is restarted with an indirect free kick awarded to the other team, from the spot where the ball was when the referee stopped play. In all other cases of misconduct, the game is restarted with a dropped ball.

Notes:

- . 1) Rules violations detailed elsewhere in this booklet still apply.
- . 2) Significant contact between players is allowed if it is both fair and nonviolent.
- . 3) At the referee’s sole discretion, truly unintentional and trivial rules violations can be ignored, or mentioned verbally to the offending person while the game is in progress, provided that player safety wasn’t significantly threatened, and provided that both teams receive approximately equal treatment. **Repeat** violations by a player must be punished.
- . 4) When a person violates two or more rules at the same time, the more serious disciplinary measures shall be taken.

- . 5) Red and yellow cards are generally reserved for older players along with coaches and parents who become violent and abusive, but may be issued for Mini Kickers and U5-U6 players if the referee deems it necessary.
- . 2) The ball is in play as soon as it is kicked and moves.

Infringements/Sanctions:

- . 1) If any player from the opposing team significantly delays the kick, or moves too close to the ball before the ball is in play, the kick has not been taken properly and **kick must be retaken**. That player shall be warned or yellow carded for delaying the game.
- . 2) If the player taking the kick touches the ball before it has been touched by another player, an **indirect free kick** from that spot shall be taken by the other team.
- . 3) If a free kick (indirect or direct) is kicked directly into a team's own goal, a **corner kick is awarded to the opposing team**.

Notes:

- . 1) The kick may be taken as soon as the ball is stationary, at the proper spot, and the other team's players are far enough away.
- . 2) Substitutions are not allowed, except in cases of player injury.

DIRECT Free Kick

Direct free kicks will **not** be used for 4v4 Non-Tournament play.

INDIRECT Free Kick

All of the "general" free kick rules apply. Additionally, **a goal may not be scored directly** from an indirect free kick.

Infringements/Sanctions: 1) If the ball is kicked directly into the opponents' goal, without touching any other person, no goal is scored, and a **goal kick is awarded to the other team**.

Notes:

- . 1) The referee should immediately blow his whistle to stop play, then extend his arm vertically to indicate that an indirect free kick is to be taken. The referee should also indicate to the player taking the kick where the kick is to be taken from. Players are responsible for placing the ball at the proper position. The referee should maintain his arm in the full vertical position until the kick has been taken and the ball has either been

touched by another player or gone out of play.

- . 2) The person taking the indirect free kick may aim the ball directly at the goal, the goalkeeper, or any other person on the field.

LAW 14 – THE PENALTY KICK

Penalty kicks will **NOT** be used during 3v3 Non-Tournament play.

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LAW 15 – THE KICK-IN

In the Pre-k age divisions, the kick-in is recommended instead of the throw-in when the ball crosses the touchline. When the whole of the ball passes over a touchline, either on the ground or in the air, the **ball shall be kicked in from the point where it went out of play**, in any direction, by a player of the team opposite to that of the player who last touched it. All opponents must stand no less than 2 yards from the point at which the throw-in is taken. A kick-in is an indirect free kick from a spot near where the ball last crossed the touchline. The kicker, at the moment of delivering the ball, must:

- . 1) Face some part of the field, and be within 1 yard of the touchline
- . 2) Be very near the point where the ball passed over the touchline

The **ball is in play as soon as it enters the field**. The kicker must not touch the ball until after another player has touched it. **A goal may not be scored directly from a kick-in.**

The “kick-in” option was adopted for Pre-k players to simplify the game, so that the FIFA throw-in rule may be introduced to these young players at a later time. The throw-in is **not** prohibited in the U5-U6 age divisions, but it is discouraged.

Throw-In

Although the kick-in is preferred in the Mini Kickers and U5-U6 age division, players may optionally use a throw-in instead of a kick-in to put the ball back into play. When the whole of the ball passes over a touchline, either on the ground or in the air, the **ball shall be thrown in from the point where it went out of play**, in any direction, by a player of the team opposite to that of the player who last touched it. All opponents must stand no less than 2 yards from the point at which the throw-in is taken. The thrower, at the moment of delivering the ball, must:

- . 1) Face some part of the field, and be within 1 yard of the touchline
- . 2) Be very near the point where the ball passed over the touchline
- . 3) Have a part of each foot on the ground, on or outside the touchline
- . 4) Use both hands
- . 5) Deliver the ball from behind and directly over his head.

The **ball is in play as soon as it enters the field** (in the air). The thrower must not touch the ball until after another

player has touched it. **A goal may not be scored directly from a throw-in.**

Infringements/Sanctions:

- . 1) If the ball is improperly kicked or thrown in, including a kick-in or throw-in taken from the wrong spot, the referee or parent-referee may allow the kick-in or throw-in to be re-taken.
- . 2) On the re-take if the ball is improperly kicked or thrown in, including a kick-in/throw-in taken from the wrong spot, the **kick-in/throw-in shall instead be taken by a player from the opposing team.**
- . 3) If the kicker or thrower touches the ball before it has touched another player, an **indirect free kick** shall be taken by a player of the opposing team from the place where the infringement occurred.
- . 4) If, when a kick-in or throw-in is being taken, any of the opposing players unfairly (in the referee's opinion) distract or impede the kicker or thrower, it shall be deemed unsporting behavior, for which the offender(s) shall be warned or yellow carded.

Notes:

- . 1) The referee should immediately blow his whistle to stop play, then extend his arm vertically to indicate that an indirect free kick is to be taken. The referee should also indicate to the player taking the kick where the kick is to be taken from. Players are responsible for placing the ball at the proper position. The referee should maintain his arm in the full vertical position until the kick has been taken and the ball has either been touched by another player or gone out of play.
- . 2) From the referee's position near the middle of the field, it may appear as though the ball is out of play when in fact up to half of the ball still overlaps the touchline (try it). Coaches and players must accept the referee's decision on this matter, even when the decision appears to be wrong (coaches and players often have the best view in this case).
- . 3) The only thing that counts is who touched the ball last, whether intentionally or not. If player A kicks the ball into opposing player B, and the ball then goes out of play, player A's team gets the ball, even though player B did not intentionally touch the ball.
- . 4) The kick-in or throw-in may be taken immediately unless the referee has stopped play to allow for one or more substitutions by the team which will be kicking or throwing in the ball, for a player injury, to issue delayed penalties, or for any other reason.
- . 5) Although the touchlines are considered to be part of the playing field, FIFA allows players' feet to be on the touchline during the kick-in or throw-in. This apparent contradiction is allowed to speed up the game, as many players do touch the line during kick-ins.
- . 6) The person taking the indirect free kick may aim the ball directly at the goal, the goalkeeper, or any other person on the field.

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LAW 16 – THE GOAL KICK

When the whole of the ball passes over the goal line, outside the goal posts or over the crossbar, either in the air or on the ground, having last been touched by one of the attacking team, an indirect free kick will be taken **from any point along the goal line**, by any player from the defending team. Players of the team opposing that of the player taking the kick must be at least (4) yards away from the ball. The ball is in play as soon as it is kicked and moves. After taking the kick, the kicker shall not touch the ball until after it is in play and has been touched by another player. **A goal may not be scored directly from a goal kick.**

Infringements/Sanctions:

- . 1) If any player touches the ball before it is in play, the kick has not been taken properly and the **kick is retaken**.
- . 2) If the player taking the goal kick touches the ball after it is in play, but before it has been touched by another player, an **indirect free kick** shall be taken by a player of the opposing team from the place where the infringement occurred.
- . 3) For any other infringement, the **kick is retaken**.

Notes:

- . 1) The referee should blow his whistle as soon as the ball goes completely over the goal line, because players are instructed to assume that the ball is in play until the whistle is blown (exception - when it is obvious to all concerned that the ball has gone out of play).
- . 2) The referee should immediately extend his arm horizontally (palm sideways) toward the goal area to indicate that a goal kick is to be taken.
- . 3) From the referee's position on the field, it may appear as though the ball is out of play when in fact up to half of the ball still overlaps the goal line (try it). Coaches and players must accept the referee's decision on this matter, even when the decision appears to be wrong (players often have the best view in this case).
- . 4) The only thing that counts is who touched the ball last, whether intentionally or not. If player A kicks the ball into opposing player B, and the ball then goes out of play, player A's team gets the ball, even though player B did not intentionally touch the ball.
- . 5) Any member of the team may take the goal kick.

LAW 17 – THE CORNER KICK

When the whole of the ball passes over the goal line, outside the goal posts or over the crossbar, either in the air or on the ground, having last been touched by one of the defending team, a member of the attacking team shall take a corner kick, in which the **ball shall be placed on the nearest corner of the field and kicked into play**. Players of the team opposing that of the player taking the corner kick must remain at least (4) yards away from the ball until the ball is in play. The **ball is in play as soon as it has been kicked and moves**. After taking the kick, the kicker shall not touch the ball until after another player has touched it. **A goal may not be scored directly from a**

corner kick.

Infringements/Sanctions:

- . 1) If any player from the defending team intentionally positions himself within 4 yards of the ball before it is kicked into play, for the purpose of delaying the game or other defensive reasons, that player shall be warned or yellow carded for wasting time. If the kick has already been taken, it has been taken improperly, and the **kick is retaken**.
- . 2) If the player taking the corner kick touches the ball before it has been touched by another player, an **indirect free kick** shall be taken by a player of the opposing team, from the place where the infringement occurred.
- . 3) For any other infringement, the **kick is retaken**.

Notes:

- . 1) The referee should blow his whistle as soon as the ball goes completely over the goal line, because players are instructed to assume that the ball is in play until the whistle is blown (exception - when it is obvious to all concerned that the ball has gone out of play).
- . 2) The referee should immediately extend his arm (palm sideways) upward and toward the corner of the field nearest where the ball went out of play, to indicate where the corner kick is to be taken.
- . 3) From the referee's position on the field, it may appear as though the ball is out of play when in fact up to half of the ball still overlaps the goal line (try it). Coaches and players must accept the referee's decision on this matter, even when the decision appears to be wrong (players often have the best view in this case).
- . 4) The only thing that counts is who touched the ball last, whether intentionally or not. If player A kicks the ball into opposing player B, and the ball then goes out of play, player A's team gets the ball, even though player B did not intentionally touch the ball.
- . 5) The corner kick may be taken as soon as the other team's players are far enough away from the ball.
- . 6) Substitutions are not allowed, except in cases of player injury.

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After the Game

Here is a checklist of things the **COACH** should do after the game ends:

- . 1) Form their players on the halfway line, near their touchline, for the purpose of shaking hands with players and coaches from the other team. Politeness and graciousness are expected from all concerned as they meet in the center of the field, whether win, lose, or draw.
- . 2) If a coach has a complaint about the officiating or behavior of the opposing coach, send an e-mail to the league to report the problem. Do not escalate the matter on the field with the opposing coach or parents.
- . 3) Pick up equipment and/or trash that may have been left behind. Please leave the field cleaner than when your team arrived!
- . 4) Report any perceived deficiencies in this booklet, using the instructions provided on page ii. We can't cover every combination of situations, but we also cannot improve this booklet unless we hear from you.

Parent's Code of Conduct

Your child is playing soccer for fun. Please realize that everyone wants you to enjoy the game also. This page is being provided as an effort to assist you and your child in gaining the maximum benefit possible from the soccer match. Below are some simple rules you should observe. Please consider them carefully:

- . 1) **Do not shout instructions to your child.** This will cause confusion and may result in erroneous play on your child's part. The coach has instructed your child on how to play. If you shout instructions, your child will probably try to please you and the coach at the same time. In trying to do two things at once, the child may fail at both.
- . 2) **Cheer for him when your child successfully plays the ball.** However, remember your child is a member of a team. Let the other players know you support them. Refrain from disparaging or degrading remarks.
- . 3) **Suffer in silence** whenever something occurs that goes against your child's team. A display of anger may inflame a delicate situation

resulting in embarrassment for you or your child. Some parents embarrass their own children by making a spectacle of themselves.

- . 4) **Remember that the parents from the other team are equally enthusiastic about their team's success.** Be a gracious competitor.
- . 5) **Do not run up and down the sidelines.** Find a comfortable place to sit down or stand and enjoy the match.
- . 6) **Do not shout insults at the referee.** The referee has the power to stop the match if the crowd becomes discourteous. To have been the cause of such drastic action would be a humiliation to you and your child.
- . 7) **If your team loses, adopt a positive attitude.** Compliment the child upon his good plays. Ignore the mistakes. The child will be happy you noticed his good qualities.
- . 8) **Remember -- your child will forget about today's game.** Next week he will probably have forgotten the score. However, both of you will remember that you had a good time playing the most popular sport in the world.
- . 9) **Absolutely no alcoholic beverages** are permitted at any soccer game. **No smoking** is permitted at any soccer game. All non-playing children must be supervised at all times.