



SIU Recreational Division

Rules of the game for the U7 and U8 Age Groups

Law I- The Field

Size: 40L X 25W yards.

Markings: The field of play is marked with painted lines. These lines belong to the areas of which they are boundaries. The two longer (side) boundary lines are called **touch lines**. The two shorter (end) lines are called **goal lines**. All lines are not more than 5" wide. The field is divided into two halves by a **halfway line**. The center mark is indicated at the midpoint of the halfway line. A **center circle** with a radius of 5 yards is marked around it. A **goal area** measuring 2 yards by 4 yards is 2 yards to either side of the center of the goal line, and 2 yards on to the field. A goal kick may be taken from any place inside the goal area. A **Corner Arc** with a radius of 2 feet from each corner flag is drawn on the field.

Flagposts: (Optional) Shall be 5' tall and placed at each corner and at a point 2 yards from the touchline, at the halfway line on the team's side of the field.

Goals: 4' H x 6' W

Coaching area: Coaches and players must remain 2 yards away from the touch line, between the center circle and the goal box. Only players and coaches are allowed in the coaching area.

Spectator Area: Is restricted to the opposite side of the field from the players, along and a minimum of 2 yards outside the touch lines. No one shall be permitted directly behind the goal, or within 4 yards of the goal line. No dangerous objects (Cars or benches, etc.) shall be permitted within 10 yards of the boundary lines of the field. Play shall not be allowed to begin or continue until this condition is met.

Law II – The Ball

Size 3. Inflated to 6-8 psi. If the ground is hard reduce inflation to 5 psi to reduce bounce.

Law III – Number of Players

The maximum number of players on the field at any one time is 4. The minimum number of players to start play is 3. There is no goal keeper.

The maximum number of players on the roster should not exceed 8. The minimum number of players in the roster should not be less than 6.

Substitutions:

- At any stoppage of play by either team.
- Each player **SHALL** play a minimum of 50% of the total playing time for each game.

Teams are coed.

Law IV – Players Equipment

Safety: A player must not use equipment or wear anything that is dangerous to himself or another player (including any kind of jewelry)

Basic equipment: A team jersey or shirt is worn. The jersey shall be tucked in if possible. The shirt or jersey must be worn on top of any weather-related apparel such as a sweatshirt or windbreaker. Players should dress for the weather. windpants or sweatpants may be worn over the shorts.



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Shinguards are Mandatory and MUST be worn for both practice and games. Socks must cover the shinguards at all time so that there are no exposed edges.

Footwear: Tennis shoes or soft cleated soccer shoes. Shoes with a toe cleat are not allowed.

Sportsmanship:

- After appropriate warning and refusal to comply with this warning, the Referee has the right to direct the coach and/or assistant coach to leave the area of play, should they, in the opinion of the Referee, be affecting the game.
- Unsportsmanlike conduct, harassment, or any other act directed toward the Referee will be considered as affecting the game: If both coach and assistant Coach are asked to leave the field of play after appropriate warning, the Referee shall suspend the game unless a responsible adult can assume coaching responsibilities.
- Should the spectators become unruly, the game will be stopped, opposing coaches and referees will consult and spectators will be asked to maintain order. If, in the opinion of the referee, order is not restored, the game will be terminated.
- A player or coach ejected from a game for any reason shall be suspended for one additional game. The SIU board of directors may take further disciplinary action.

Law V – The Referee

If a certified referee is not available then an OFFICIAL (Club Referee, Game Manager, Coordinator, Parent or Coach) may be used.

- Their job is to keep the playing environment FUN, SAFE and focused on the child. Duties are the same as a Referee: Keep time, enforce the rules, stop and restart play.
- When play is stopped for a foul or other reason, take time to explain to the player WHY. This is their first experience with soccer and the best time to educate all on the Laws of the game.

Law VI – The assistant Referee

Use of an assistant referee is optional.

Law VII – Duration of the Game

The game shall be divided into 4 equal, 10-minute quarters.

There shall be 2-minute breaks between quarters.

There shall be a halftime break of 5 minutes

Law VIII – Start of Play

Preliminaries: A coin is tossed and the team that wins the toss decides which goal it will attack in the first half of the match. The other team takes the kick-off to start the match. The team that wins the toss takes the kick-off to start the second half of the match. The teams change ends at the half.

Kickoff: A kick-off is a way of starting or restarting play:

- At the start of the match
- After a goal has been scored
- At the start of the second half of the match

A goal may NOT be scored directly from the kick-off.



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Procedure:

- All players are in their own half of the field.
 - The opponents of the team taking the kick-off are at least 5 yards from the ball, outside the center circle, until it is in play.
 - The ball is stationary on the center mark.
 - The referee (or game official) gives a signal.
 - The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves forward.
 - The kicker does not touch the ball a second time until it has touched another player.
- After a team scores a goal, the other team takes the kick-off.

Infringements: For any infringement of the procedures, the error is explained and the kick is retaken.

Law IX – The Ball In and Out of Play

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
- The referee has stopped play.

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

- It rebounds from a goalpost, crossbar or corner flag post and remains in the field of play.
- It rebounds from either the referee or an assistant referee when they are on the field of play.

Law X – The method of Scoring

A goal is scored when the whole of the ball passes over the goal line, between the goalposts and under the crossbar, provided that the team scoring the goal has committed no infringement of the Laws of the Game previously.

Law XI – Off-Side

There is no off-sides rule. However, to discourage “camping out” and goalkeeping, no player may play the ball when it is inside the goal area. **(SEE U7/U8 Addendum)**

Law XII – Fouls and Misconduct

A direct free kick is awarded to the opposing team if a player commits any of the following offenses in a manner considered by the referee to be careless, reckless or using excessive force.

- Kicks or attempts to kick an opponent
- Trips or attempts to trip an opponent
- Jumps at an opponent
- Strikes or attempts to strike an opponent
- Pushes an opponent
- Tackles an opponent to gain possession of the ball, making contact with the opponent before touching the ball.
- Slide tackles to gain possession.
- Spits at an opponent
- Handles the ball deliberately.
- Plays in a dangerous manner
- Impedes the progress of an opponent

A player may be removed from the field of play for any of the following offenses:

- Is guilty of violent conduct.
- Uses offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures.



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- Spits at an opponent or any other person.

Law XIII – Free Kicks

All kicks are direct. A goal can be scored directly off the free kick.

The ball enters the goal:

- If a free kick is kicked directly into the opponents' goal, a goal is awarded and play is restarted.
- If a free kick is kicked directly into the team's own goal, a corner kick is awarded to the opposing team.

Procedure:

- All opponents are at least 5 yards from the ball until it is in play.
- The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves.
- The free kick is taken from the place where the infringement occurred. If the ball is inside the goal area it is moved to a distance of 4 yards from the goal line.

Infringements:

- If, when a free kick is taken, an opponent is closer to the ball than the required distance: The kick is retaken.
- If, after the ball is in play, the kick touches the ball a second time before it has touched another player: A free kick is awarded to the opposing team.

Law XIV – The Penalty Kick

There are no penalty kicks.

Law XV – The Throw-in (or Kick-in)

A throw-in is a method of restarting play. A goal cannot be scored directly from a throw-in or kick-in. (At the coach's option, a kick-in may be used instead of a throw in.)

A throw-in is awarded:

- When the whole of the ball passes over the touch line, either on the ground or in the air.
- From the point where it crossed the touch line.
- To the opponents of the player who last touched the ball.

Procedure

At the moment of delivering the ball, the thrower:

- Faces the field of play
- Has part of each foot either on the touch line or on the ground outside the touch line.
- Uses both hands.
- Delivers the ball from behind and over his head. The thrower may not touch the ball again until it has touched another player. The ball is in play immediately it enters the field of play.
- For a kick-in, the ball and player must be outside the touch line and the ball is kicked in.

Infringements / Sanctions

- If the thrower fails to follow the procedure above, the thrower is explained the procedure and given a second chance. Another failure results in a throw in for the opposing team.



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- If after the ball is in play, the thrower touches the ball a second time (except with his hands) before it has touched another player, a direct free kick is awarded to the opposing team. The kick is to be taken from the place where the infringement occurred.
- If, after the ball is in play, the thrower deliberately handles the ball before it has touched another player, a direct free kick is awarded to the opposing team. The kick is to be taken from the place where the infringement occurred.
- If an opponent unfairly distracts or impedes the thrower, he is cautioned for unsporting behavior and shown the yellow card.

For any other infringement of this Law, a player of the opposing team takes the throw-in.

No second chances are awarded for a kick-in.

Law XVI – The Goal Kick

A goal kick is awarded when the whole of the ball, having last touched a player of the attacking team, passes over the goal line, either on the ground or in the air, and a goal is not scored in accordance with Law 10.

Procedure:

- The ball is kicked from either corner of the goal area by the defending team.
- Opponents must be outside the goal area until the ball is in play.
- The kicker may not play the ball a second time until it has touched another player.
- The ball is in play when it is kicked directly beyond the goal area.

Infringements:

- If the ball is not kicked directly into play beyond the goal area, the kick is retaken.
- If the kicker touches the ball a second time before it has touched another player. A free kick is awarded to the other team.

Law XVII – The Corner Kick

A corner kick is awarded when the whole of the ball, having last touched a player of the defending team, passes over the goal line, either on the ground or in the air, and a goal is not scored in accordance with Law 10.

Procedure:

- The ball is placed inside the corner arc at the nearest corner flag post.
- The corner flag post is not moved.
- Opponents remain at least 5 yards from the ball until it is in play.
- A player of the attacking team kicks the ball.
- The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves.
- The kicker does not play the ball a second time until it has touched another player.
- Another player must play the ball before a goal will be scored.

Infringements:

- If the kicker touches the ball a second time after it is in play before another player touches the ball, a free kick is awarded to the opposing team



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U7/U8 Addendum – The Goal Area Violation

The intent of this rule is to keep players from “cherry picking” on offense, and from goal tending on defense. Similarly, coaches should not plant a player in front of the goal area. The 4v4 format is used to encourage all players to be involved in movement and play of the ball over the entire field.

The Rule:

There is no ball contact allowed in the goal area. Players may move through the goal area, but may not touch the ball.

- **Balls Coming to Rest in the Goal Area**

If the ball was last touched by the offensive team and it comes to rest in the goal area, a goal kick is awarded to the defensive team.

If a ball was last touched by the defensive team and it comes to rest in the goal area, a corner kick is awarded to the offensive team.

- **Violations by the Defensive Team**

If, while in the goal area, a defending player stops an offensive shot from entering the goal, a goal is awarded to the offensive team and play is restarted.

If, while in the goal area, a defending player touches the ball, not considered to be shot on goal, a corner kick is awarded to the offensive team.

- **Violations by the Offensive Team**

If, while in the goal area, an offensive player touches the ball, a goal kick is awarded to the defensive team.