



U9 & U10 Modified Rules

SnVYSA Official U10 and Under Playing Rules

Last Revision: August 19, 2025

Score Keeping and Mercy Rule

If the score differential reaches 5 goals, then the coach of the team with fewer goals may add one field player. If the goal differential returns to 4 goals, then the coach must remove one player, thus returning to the original number of players.

If the team who is losing does not have a sufficient number of players to be able to add a player, the winning team must remove a player.

If the score differential reaches 10 goals, then the coach of the team with more goals must remove one player from the field. If the goal differential returns to 9 goals, then the removed player may be replaced on the field with any player.

The Ball

Size four (4).

The Number of Players

Each team consists of 7 players on the field at once. 6 field players and 1 goalkeeper. A match may not start or continue if either team consists of fewer than five players.

Substitutions:

At any stoppage of play and unlimited.

If a player who is suspected to have a head injury leaves the field of play for additional evaluation, a substitution can be made in that moment.

Playing time: Each player SHALL play a minimum of 50% of the total playing time. It is the coach's responsibility to enforce this rule.

The Players Equipment

Shin guards and soccer cleats are MANDATORY for both practices and games. Shin guards must be covered entirely by long socks. No baseball cleats allowed.

Non-uniform clothing is allowed to be worn based on weather conditions; however, the uniform must be worn on the outside of raincoats, sweatshirts, or undergarments to distinguish the teams. If needed, teams can also be distinguished by scrimmage vests.

A player must not use equipment or wear anything that is dangerous to himself or another player (including any kind of jewelry; except for a medical alert bracelet).

The Referee

A US Soccer Grass Roots licensed referee may be assigned to your game. If not, then a volunteer referee should be recruited. The age of the volunteer referee should be at least 3 years older than the players.

The Duration of the Match

The match shall be divided into two (2) halves of not more than 25 minutes, based on the energy and motivation of the players. There shall be a maximum of a five (5) minute break between each half. The 2 halves do not have to be of equal duration.

The Start and Restart of Play

Conform to FIFA Laws of the Game, with the exception that the defending team is at least five (5) yards from the ball until it is in play. Remember, let them play and do not interfere for technicalities.

Kick-Offs occur to start each half and after a goal is scored. The kick is taken from the center of the field and the ball can go in any direction. The kicker may not kick the ball again until it has touched another player. A goal may be scored on a kick-off. Defenders must remain 8 yards back until the ball is played. If there is a center circle outlined on the field, defending players must stay outside the circle. Players must be on their own side of the field during kick-offs.

The home team takes the kick-off at the start of the game and the opposing team takes the kick-off at the start of the second half. There is no coin toss. If a goal is scored, the team that was scored on takes the kick-off to resume play.

Fouls and Misconduct

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game with the following exceptions:

- Deliberate heading is not allowed in 7 vs. 7 games.
- Slide tackling is not allowed.
- No cards will be shown in this age group.
- Punting by the goalkeeper is not allowed and will result in an indirect free kick.
- Pass backs to the goalkeeper will result in an indirect free kick if the goalkeeper touches the ball with his hands. The goalkeeper cannot touch the ball with his hands after it has been deliberately kicked to him by a teammate, he must use his feet.

Free Kicks

Free kicks are direct or indirect

Opponents are to be at least eight (8) yards away from the ball until it is kicked.

A goal cannot be scored directly from an indirect free kick. Another player (attacker or defender) must touch the ball before it enters the goal for the score to be valid.

Direct free kick

If an offense involves contact, it is penalized by a direct free kick.

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

- charges
- jumps at
- kicks or attempts to kick
- pushes
- strikes or attempts to strike (including head-butt)
- tackles or challenges
- trips or attempts to trip If an offense involves contact
- a handball offense (except for the goalkeeper within their penalty area)
- holds an opponent
- impedes an opponent with contact
- bites or spits at someone on the team lists or a match official
- throws an object at the ball, an opponent or a match official, or makes contact with the ball with a held object

Indirect free kick

An indirect free kick is awarded if a player:

- plays in a dangerous manner
- impedes the progress of an opponent without any contact being made

- is guilty of dissent, using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or action(s) or other verbal offences
- prevents the goalkeeper from releasing the ball from the hands or kicks or attempts to kick the ball when the goalkeeper is in the process of releasing it
- initiates a deliberate trick for the ball to be passed (including from a free kick or goal kick) to the goalkeeper with the head, chest, knee etc. to circumvent the Law, whether or not the goalkeeper touches the ball with the hands; the goalkeeper is penalized if responsible for initiating the deliberate trick
- intentionally heads the ball
- commits any other offense, not mentioned in the Laws, for which play is stopped to caution or send off a player

An indirect free kick is awarded if a goalkeeper, inside their penalty area, commits any of the following offences:

- controls the ball with the hand/arm for more than six seconds before releasing it
- touches the ball with the hand/arm after releasing it and before it has touched another player
- touches the ball with the hand/arm, unless the goalkeeper has clearly kicked or attempted to kick the ball to release it into play, after:
 - it has been deliberately kicked to the goalkeeper by a team-mate
 - receiving it directly from a throw-in taken by a team-mate
- punts or drop kicks the ball

The Penalty Kick

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game, with the exception that the penalty mark is ten (10) yards from the goal line.

The Throw-In

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game.

For U9 games coaches and the referee are encouraged to allow a retry an illegal throw, especially early in the season. Both coaches and the referee need to agree on this before the game.

Build Out Lines

In the spirit of developing players to the greatest of possible efficiency, SnVYSA has adopted a rule to restrict the marking of the penalty boxes by players on goal kicks. The rule is designed to promote escalated player development via more meaningful player touches in matches. It is also intended to reduce goals from goal kick scenarios.

The Build Out Line will be hash mark midway between the center circle and the top of the penalty arc.

On Goal Kicks and when the goalie has possession opposing players (defenders) must remain behind the Build Out Line until goal kick puts the ball in play. The ball is considered in play when it has been kicked and clearly moved. The attacking [receiving] players may remain anywhere within their half of the field). Should an opposing player enter the build out area early the kick will be retaken.

- If the ball goes out of bounds, the defending (opposing) players will be awarded a throw-in where the ball went out of bounds.
- If the ball goes past the Build Out Line after the goalie passes it, the ball is live and may be played by anyone. The offensive team has lost its privilege to touch the ball first.
- The goalie is not required to wait for the opposing players to retreat behind the build out line. If the goalie chooses to initiate play before the opposing players retreat behind the line the ball is live as soon as the goalie puts the ball in play.

Offsides

The midfield/center line will be used to denote where offside offenses will be called.

The Goal Kick

A goal kick is awarded when the ball crosses the goal line and was touched last by the opposing team.

On Goal Kicks players (defenders) must remain behind the Build Out Line until goal kick is taken and the ball is put in play (attacking [receiving] players may remain anywhere within their half of the field).

- If the ball goes out of bounds, the defending (opposing) players will be awarded a throw-in where the ball went out of bounds.
- The kicking team is not required to wait for the opposing players to retreat behind the build out line. If the player taking the goal kick chooses to initiate play before the opposing players retreat behind the line the ball is live as soon as the player puts the ball in play.
- The ball is considered live and in play as soon as the goal kick is taken.

The Corner Kick

A corner kick is awarded when the ball has crossed the goal line and was last touched by a defensive player. The ball shall be placed in the corner of the field and the opposing players are to be at least eight (8) yards away from the ball until it is kicked.