

# Youth Outdoor League Laws

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**LAW 1 – The Field of Play**

- All outdoor games will be played at one or more of the following:
  - Centennial Elementary (4201 25<sup>th</sup> St S, Fargo)
  - Kennedy Elementary (4401 42<sup>nd</sup> St S, Fargo)
  - Moorhead Soccer Complex (3655 23<sup>rd</sup> St. S. Moorhead)
  - Pepsi Soccer Complex (3110 Old Highway 81, Fargo)
  - West Fargo Scheels Soccer Complex (1010 13<sup>th</sup> Ave W, West Fargo)
- Different age groups play on different sized fields to ensure age-appropriate development:

<b>Pre-K – 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fields measure 30 yards x 20 yards.</li> <li>• Goal sizes may vary, but do not exceed 4 feet tall x 6 feet wide</li> </ul>
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fields measure 60 yards x 40 yards.</li> <li>• Goals are 6 feet tall x 6 yards wide.</li> <li>• The build out line shall be placed equidistant from the top of the penalty area and the halfway line.</li> </ul>
<b>5<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fields measure 75 yards x 50 yards.</li> <li>• Goals are 7 feet tall x 7 yards wide.</li> </ul>

**LAW 2 – The Ball**

Different age groups use a different size ball to ensure age-appropriate development. The referee will ensure the game ball is properly inflated.

- Pre-K – 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade: Size 3 ball
- 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> Grade: Size 4 ball

**LAW 3 – The Number of Players**

The maximum number of players allowed on the field of play varies depending on the age group to ensure age-appropriate development:

<b>Pre-K – 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Games are 4v4 format.</li> <li>• No goalkeeper – everyone is encouraged to attack and defend.</li> <li>• Substitutions are unlimited and can be on the fly</li> </ul>
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Games are 7v7 format – 6 field players + goalkeeper.</li> <li>• Teams must have at least 6 players to play (5 field players and a goalkeeper).</li> <li>• Substitutions are unlimited and can be made at any stoppage in play with the referee’s permission.</li> </ul>
<b>5<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Games are 9v9 format – 8 field players + goalkeeper.</li> <li>• Teams must have at least 7 players to play (6 field players and a goalkeeper).</li> <li>• Substitutions are unlimited and can be made at any stoppage in play with the referee’s permission.</li> </ul> <p><b>**Spring/Summer 2026: Only Saturday 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grade girls will play 9v9. Monday 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> boys/girls and Saturday 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> boys will play 7v7 on 7v7 fields. All other rules pertaining to this division are the same.</b></p>

#### LAW 4 – The Player’s Equipment

- Players’ safety is very important and therefore players must meet the following requirements to play:
  - Players are required to wear soccer cleats. Football and baseball cleats are not acceptable footwear due to the addition of a front stud.
  - Players are required to wear age-appropriate shin guards under socks that completely cover them.
  - **Jewelry is prohibited and must be taken off before playing.** Taping is not acceptable, and jewelry must be removed. **Please keep this in mind when you plan to get your child’s ears pierced.**
- Players must wear the official TC United reversible rec jersey to each game. The reversible rec jersey can be used in any of the year-round rec leagues.
  - The home team will wear white, and the away team will wear black.
- The goalkeeper must be clearly identified and can wear a pinnie over their jersey or a different color jersey.

#### LAW 5 – The Referee

Many of the referees in the Rec League are new referees who are learning to referee just like the players are learning to play. Therefore, it is important that coaches and parents keep this in mind and remain patient with our referees as they learn a different aspect of the game. The decisions of the referee are final.

- **Pre-K – 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade:** Volunteer coaches will referee the games. The priority for volunteer coaches is to facilitate the speed of play and to ensure that players remain safe and display positive sportsmanship to their teammates and opponents.
- **3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> Grade:** Whenever possible, a USSF certified referee will be assigned to games to enforce the laws of the games. If a referee is not assigned to your game a member of the TCU staff will act as the referee.

#### LAW 6 – The Assistant Referee

Whenever possible two USSF certified referees will serve as assistant referees for 5<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> grade games (9v9). The assistant referees’ main responsibility is to enforce the offside law. They are also responsible for assisting the center referee with enforcing the laws of the game. A club staff may be used in the event a game does not have one or two assistant referees.

#### LAW 7 – The Duration of the Match

The length of the game depends on the age groups competing (if age groups are combined, the oldest age group rules will apply):

<b>Pre-K/Kindergarten</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Practice will be same day as gameday: 20 minutes</li><li>• 30-minute games with two (2) 15-minute halves.</li><li>• 5-minute halftime.</li></ul>
<b>1st/2<sup>nd</sup> grade</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Practice will be on a different day: 45 minutes</li><li>• 40-minute games with two (2) 20-minute halves.</li><li>• 5-minute halftime.</li></ul>
<b>3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Practice will be on a different day: 60 minutes</li><li>• 50 – minute games with two (2) 25-minute halves.</li><li>• 5 – minute halftime.</li></ul>
<b>5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Practice will be on a different day: 60 minutes</li><li>• 60 – minute games with two (2) 30-minute halves.</li><li>• 5 – minute halftime.</li></ul>

## **LAW 8 – The Start and Restart of Play**

Play is restarted differently depending on the age group playing.

**Pre-K – 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade:** In this age group, getting the ball back into play quickly so players can continue to experiment and have fun is of the utmost importance. Coaches, let the game flow whenever possible! For example, do not stop the play to do a restart if the ball barely goes out of bounds and a player is able to quickly bring the ball back in bounds.

- If the ball goes out of bounds the correct restart is a **pass-in or dribble-in** for the opposing team from the spot on the touchline nearest to where the ball went out of bounds. Players are given control to make their own decisions by being able to **pass or dribble** the ball to restart play. If they have space in front of them, they may choose to dribble. If there is a defender close by then they may look to pass. By **passing or dribbling** to restart play players are encouraged to keep the ball on the ground and to quickly attack their opponent's goal.
- Coaches make sure that all players are given the opportunity to restart play.
- Coaches may also vary the restart by throwing a new ball into play as soon as one goes out to help keep the game flowing.
- Opponents must remain at least 3 yards back from the ball on restarts.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> Grade:**

- **Kickoff:** A kickoff starts the match, starts the second half and restarts play after a goal has been scored. The ball is in play when it moves in any direction.
- **Dropped Ball:** If the referee stops play while the ball is still in play then the correct restart is a drop ball at the spot where the ball was located when play was stopped. The ball is dropped for the defending team goalkeeper in their penalty area if, when play was stopped:
  - The ball was in the penalty area or
  - The last touch of the ball was in the penalty area.In all other cases, the referee drops the ball for one player of the team that last touched the ball at the position where it last touched a player, an outside agent, or a referee. All other players (of both teams) must remain at least 4 m (4.5 yds) from the ball until it is in play. The ball is in play when it touches the ground.
- **Throw-In:** When the ball completely crosses the touchline, play is restarted with a throw-in for the opposing team. A goal may not be scored directly from a throw-in. At the moment of delivering the ball, the thrower must:
  - stand facing the field of play.
  - have part of one foot on the touchline or outside the touchline.
  - throw the ball with both hands from behind and over the head from the point where it left the field of play.
- If the throw-in is not taken correctly, the player will be given one more opportunity to throw it correctly. If the second attempt is not taken correctly, it is retaken by the opposing team.
- **Goal Kick:** When the ball goes out of bounds, over the goal line and is last touched by the attacking team, the defending team is awarded a goal kick. The ball must be placed anywhere within the goal area (6yard box) and the ball is in play as soon as it is kicked and clearly moves. All opponents must be outside of the penalty area until the ball is in play.

- **Corner Kick:** If the ball completely crosses the goal line and is touched last by the defending team, play is restarted with a corner kick. Prior to the corner kick, the ball must be placed inside the corner arc and be stationary. The ball is in play when it is kicked and clearly moves.
- **Build Out Line 3<sup>rd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> Grade:** When the ball goes out of play for a goal kick or when the goalkeeper has possession of the ball in his/her hands, the opposing team must retreat behind the build out line. It is the responsibility of the coach to direct the players behind the buildout line. The opposing team can advance beyond the build out line when the ball is put “in play.” The ball is considered “in play” when the ball is released from the goalkeeper’s possession by a pass or throw. The goalkeeper can put the ball into play sooner, but he or she does so accepting the positioning of the opponents and the consequences of how play resumes.

### **LAW 9 – The Ball In and Out of Play**

The ball is considered out of play for the following situations:

- Ball completely crosses over the touchline or goal line surrounding the field.
- The referee signals for a foul or misconduct.

### **LAW 10 – The Method of Scoring**

A goal is scored when the ball completely crosses over the goal line, between the two goal posts and under the crossbar.

### **LAW 11 – Offside**

- Offside is not enforced for Pre-K to 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade.
- Offside is enforced for 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> Grade.
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> grade will use the build out line as an offside line. Replacing the use of the midfield line as the indicator of where a player may be in an offside position, the Build Out Line is now used to determine where a player may be called for offside.
  - An offside infraction occurs only if the attacker is clearly closer to the opponent’s end line than the second to last defender or the ball and they are involved in active play.
  - There is no offside offense if a player receives the ball directly from a:
    - Throw-in
    - Goal Kick
    - Corner Kick

### **LAW 12 – Fouls and Misconduct**

- All free kicks awarded in a 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> grade game will be an indirect free kick. Infractions occurred within the penalty area will restart with an indirect free kick from the line nearest where the infraction occurred.
- **Direct Free Kick:** A direct free kick is awarded to the opposing team if a player commits any of the following offenses:
  - (a) Holds an opponent or (b) Handles the ball (except the goalkeeper inside his own penalty area).
- A direct free kick is also awarded to the opposing team if a player commits any of the following offenses in a manner the referee considers careless, reckless or using excessive force:
  - (a) Kicks or attempts to kick an opponent.
  - (b) Trips or attempts to trip an opponent.
  - (c) Jumps at an opponent.
  - (d) Charges an opponent (even with only the shoulder).
  - (e) Strikes or attempts to strike an opponent; or
  - (f) Pushes an opponent.

- A direct free kick is taken from the spot on the field where any of the above referenced fouls occurred. Prior to the direct kick, the ball must be stationary.
- **Indirect Free Kick:** An indirect kick is awarded to the opposing team, to be taken at the spot on the field where the infringement occurred, if in the opinion of the referee, a player:
  - (a) Plays in a dangerous manner.
  - (b) Impedes an opponent.
  - (c) Prevents the goalie from releasing the ball; or
  - (d) Commits any other offense not previously mentioned in the Laws of the Game, for which play is stopped in order to caution or dismiss a player.
- An indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team if the goalkeeper receives the ball from a teammate with his hands.
- An indirect kick is awarded as a result of an infraction taking place within the penalty area is taken from the spot where the infraction was committed. Prior to the indirect kick, the ball must be stationary. The ball must touch another player of either team before a goal can be scored.
- **Required Distance:** Until the ball is in play, all opponents must remain:
  - at least 10 yds from the ball unless they are on their own goal line between the goalposts.
  - outside the penalty area for free kicks inside the opponents' penalty area
- **Heading:** Deliberate heading is not allowed in 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> grade games. If a player deliberately heads the ball in a game, an indirect free kick should be awarded 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 area at the point nearest to where the infringement occurred.
- **Punting:** Punting is not allowed for 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> groups. If a player punts or dropkicks the ball, the opposing team will receive an indirect free kick from the spot of the infraction. If the infraction occurs within the goal area, the ball will move to the top of the goal area closest to where the infraction occurred.

### **LAW 13 – Penalty Kick**

Penalty kicks will only be awarded in 5<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grade games. A penalty kick is awarded against a team for any offense occurring inside the penalty area for which a direct kick is awarded. The ball is placed on the penalty mark, the goalkeeper must have both feet on the goal line until the ball is kicked and the remaining players must be outside the penalty area and behind the penalty mark. The ball is played when it moves forward, and the kicker cannot play the ball a second time until a second player has touched it. If a player on the defending team infringes, the kick is retaken if no goal is scored. If a teammate of the kicker infringes, the kick is retaken if a goal is scored.

### **Weather**

The first time a game is cancelled due to weather it will be rescheduled for a later date. Any other cancellations after the first time will not be rescheduled. League games may continue to be played even during unfavorable weather conditions.

### **Drug Free Environment**

Absolutely no use of alcohol, tobacco, or drugs on the premises.