

## League Rules

All age groups

- Team “A” parents and coaches on one sideline, and Team “B” parents and coaches on the other.
- When you check the kids in have them tuck their shirts in.
- Any problems with the kids on the field (overly aggressive, cursing, spitting at someone Etc... let the coach know.
- Ensure you have ample room to run along the sidelines. If not ask the parents and coaches to take a few steps back.
- U9 and below should be 8v8 no more. They can play with less players if one team cannot field 8v8.
- U7 and up penalty kicks can be taken in the box. (you will probably have to direct the kids as to where they can stand)

### U6 Boys rules

•Coaches are allowed on the field but should stay in their OWN HALF of the field, please do not impede the play of the match and stay at least 10 yards away from the play as it happens. Coaches stay out of the 18 unless helping your team to set up for Corner/Goal Kicks.

•No Penalty Kicks for Fouls in the box. All restarts for fouls in the box will be moved outside the penalty area.

•Foul Throw-in's should be called. The player should be directed on their mistake and awarded a second opportunity. (Tell the player what they did wrong! Ex remind them to keep their feet on the ground)

•No off sides should be called, however players should not be encouraged not to “cherry pick” / hang out by the opposing team's goal.

(Remind players no pushing at least once or twice before calling a foul, unless it ends up in players falling or getting hurt then call on the first incident.)

## **U 6/7 Girls 7/8 Boys 8/9 Girls Rules:**

- Matches 1&2 of the Fall Season, coaches are allowed on their OWN HALF of the field to help with player positioning (including goal kicks, corner kicks) stay out of the 18. Coaches should not be running around following the play. Ask them to try to stay on their sideline at all times.

(After the second match, if a coach comes on the field please remind them they can only come on the field when you call them for an injury.) They cannot come on the field to setup their players.

- Match 3 of the fall season through the end of the Spring Season NO COACHES ON THE FIELD. NO COACHES OR PARENTS BEHIND THE GOAL.

- All Matches are expected to run according to 8 v 8 aside match rules with the following exceptions:

- Penalty Kicks should only be awarded for obvious hand balls or ones denying goal scoring opportunities. (Handballs that are incidental, not used to play an advantage and/or as a result of the player's hands being in a natural playing position should not be called)

- Offside: Offside shall be called at the referee's discretion. Players gaining any advantage from interfering in a play by being in an off sides position will also be called!(read the offsides information further down on this email)

\*\*\* make sure you call obvious offsides. Slightly offside's is to your discretion.(If you don't call off sides because the player was only slightly off sides you need to at least remind the player to watch his/her offside's) If a player is repeatedly slightly offsides after being reminded you need to call it.

- U 9/10 Boys & Older teams** will adhere to the following guidelines

- All Matches are expected to run according to 8 v 8 aside match rules. No coaches on the field.

## **General Game Rules**

### **Advantage**

Has there been a time when your player has been fouled yet the referee did not make the call? Do you remember if your team kept possession during that time? The referee may have applied the rule of advantage. Let's take a closer look at the advantage rule.

The referee may play advantage whenever an infringement or offence occurs. The referee should consider the following circumstances in deciding whether to [apply](#) the advantage or stop play:

- the severity of the offence: if the infringement warrants an expulsion, the referee must stop [play](#) and send off the player unless there is a subsequent opportunity to score a goal
- the position where the offence was committed: the closer to the opponent's goal, the more effective it can be
- the chances of an immediate, dangerous attack on the opponents' goal
- the atmosphere of the [match](#)

The decision to penalize the original offence must be taken within a few seconds.

If the offence [warrants](#) a caution, it must be issued at the next stoppage. However, unless there is a clear advantage, it is recommended that the referee stops play and cautions the player immediately. If the caution is NOT issued at the next stoppage, it cannot be shown later.

The referee will point both arms forward and say "Advantage" or "Play on" to signify advantage has been given.

### **Throw ins**

Players must keep the following rules in mind when taking a throw-in:

- Face the field of play
- Part of each foot must be either on the touch line or on the ground outside the touch line
- Hold the ball with both hands
- Deliver the ball from behind and over the head
- Deliver the ball from the point where it left the field of play

After throwing the ball, the player cannot play the ball until it has been touched by another player. Basically, you cannot throw the ball to yourself [to begin](#) play. If the player touches the ball before it has been touched by another player, an [indirect kick](#) is awarded to the [opposing team](#) from the spot where the infringement occurred.

All opponents must stand no less than 2 yards away from the player taking the throw-in. If an opponent unfairly distracts or impedes the player taking the throw-in, the opponent will be [cautioned](#) by the referee for unsporting behavior.

Once the ball enters the field, it is considered in play. A goal cannot be scored directly from a throw-in.

### **Drop ball**

If, while the ball is in play, the referee must stop play temporarily, the match is restarted with a dropped ball.

\*\*common use of a dropped ball is when a referee needs to stop play due to a player being injured. Your opponent is in possession of the ball but your teammate is on the ground injured. The referee makes the decision that your teammate needs attention and stops play. Once your teammate has been attended to, the referee resumes play using a dropped ball at the place where it was located when play was stopped.

One player from each team is needed for the dropped ball. The referee drops the ball, in between the two players, at the place where it was located when play was stopped. As soon as the ball touches the ground, both players may try to gain possession of the ball by passing it to a teammate nearby.

If the ball is touched by a player before it touches the ground, the ball must be dropped again. If the ball leaves the field of play before a player touches the ball, the ball must be dropped again.

### **Penalty kick**

You've broken through the defense and are on your way towards the net all alone. As you enter the penalty area, you've already decided where to place the ball. You're about to take a shot, when all of a sudden, a defender slides in and causes you to fall. Will the referee call a penalty kick?

A penalty kick is awarded if any of the following offences are committed by a player inside his/her own penalty area, regardless of the position of the ball, as long as the ball is in play:

Kicks or attempts to kick an opponent

Trips or attempts to trip an opponent

Jumps at an opponent

Charges an opponent

Strikes or attempts to strike an opponent

Pushes an opponent

Tackles an opponent

Holds an opponent

Spits at an opponent

Handles the ball deliberately (except for the goalkeeper within his/her own penalty area)

The ball must be placed on the penalty mark, which is 12 yards from the goal line. The player taking the penalty kick must be properly identified, but does not have to be the same player that was fouled. All other players must remain outside of the penalty area until the kick is taken.

The goalkeeper must remain on the goal line facing the kicker until the kick is taken. The goalkeeper is allowed to move along the goal line, but cannot move forward until the kick is taken.

The player taking the penalty kick must kick the ball forward. Once the penalty kick is taken, the player who took the kick is not allowed to touch the ball again until it has touched another player. If the player touches the ball before it has touched another player, an indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team.

If the player taking the penalty kick or a teammate of the player does not follow the rules during the kick, the following will apply:

the referee will allow the kick to be taken

if the ball enters the goal, the kick is retaken

if the ball does not enter the goal, an indirect free kick is given to the opposing team from the spot where the infringement occurred

If the goalkeeper or a teammate of the goalkeeper does not follow the rules during the kick, the following will apply:

the referee will allow the kick to be taken

if the ball enters the goal, a goal is awarded

if the ball does not enter the goal, the kick is retaken

## **Direct vs indirect**

During a soccer game, you may have seen the game stopped by the referee and one team is awarded a free kick. The type of free kick awarded is either direct or indirect. So what's the difference? Let's find out!

### **Direct kick**

A direct kick is awarded to the opposing team if a player commits any of

the following seven offences 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

Charges an opponent

Strikes or attempts to strike an opponent

Pushes an opponent

Tackles an opponent

A direct kick is also awarded to the opposing team if a player commits any of the following three offences:

Holds an opponent

Spits at an opponent

Handles the ball deliberately (except for the goalkeeper within his/her own penalty area)

A direct kick is taken from where the offence occurred. The ball must be stationary when the kick is taken and the kicker must not touch the ball again until it has touched another player.

The referee **indicates a direct kick by pointing his/her arm forward**. The referee does not have to keep his/her arm in that position, unlike an indirect kick which will be discussed further down.

If a direct kick is kicked directly into the opponent's goal, a goal is awarded. If, for some weird reason, a direct kick is kicked directly into your team's own goal, a corner kick is awarded to the opposing team.

### **Indirect kick**

An indirect kick is awarded to the opposing team if a goalkeeper, inside his own penalty area, commits any of the following offences:

Touches the ball again with his/her hands after he/she has released it from possession and before it has touched another player

Touches the ball with his/her hands after it has been deliberately kicked to him/her by a teammate

Touches the ball with his/her hands after he/she has received it directly from a throw-in by a teammate.

An indirect kick is also awarded to the opposing team if, in the opinion of the referee, a player:

Plays in a dangerous manner

Impedes the progress of an opponent

Prevents the goalkeeper from releasing the ball from his/her hands

Commits any other offence, not previously mentioned with the direct kick rule, for which play is stopped to caution or send off a player

An indirect kick is taken from the place where the offence occurred. The ball must be stationary when the kick is taken and the kicker must not touch the ball again until it has touched another player.

**The referee indicates an indirect kick by raising his/her arm in the air. He/she maintains his/her arm in that position until the kick has been taken and the ball has touched another player or goes out of play.**

A goal can be scored from an indirect kick only if the ball touches another player before it enters the goal. If an indirect kick is kicked directly into the opponents' goal, a goal kick is awarded. If, for some weird reason, an indirect kick is kicked directly into your team's own goal, a corner kick is awarded to the opposing team.

## **Offsides**

The offside rule is probably one of the most difficult rules in the game of soccer. As a referee, you need to make a split second decision based on what you see. As a coach or player, you either agree or disagree with that decision based on whether you're attacking or defending!

The offside rule really comes down to two things: a player's position and whether that player's position is involved in active play. Let's take a



closer look at these to get a better understanding of the offside rule.

So what does “nearer to the opponents’ goal line” mean? If any part of your head, body or feet is nearer to the opponents’ goal line than both the ball and the last defender, then you are in an offside position. A player’s arms are not considered.

A player can only be in an offside position in the opponents’ side of the field.

Once it has been established that a player is in an offside position, it is then decided whether the player is involved in active play by interfering with play, interfering with an opponent or gaining an advantage by being in that position.

So what does “interfering with active play” mean? If you play or touch the ball when it has been passed or touched by a teammate then you are interfering with active play.

So what does “interfering with an opponent” mean? If you prevent an opponent from playing or being able to play the ball by obstructing the opponents’ line of vision or movements or by making a gesture or movement which deceives or distracts the opponent, then you are interfering with an opponent.

So what does “gaining an advantage by being in that position” mean? If you play a ball that rebounds off a post or the crossbar after having been in an offside position or play a ball that rebounds off an opponent after having been in an offside position, then you are gaining an advantage by being in that position.

A couple last things to keep in mind about the offside rule. **If an offside call is made, an indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team, which needs to be taken from the place where the offside occurred.** A

player is NOT offside if the ball is received directly from a goal kick, throw in or corner kick.

### **\*\*\* Soccer is a contact sport.**

#### Legal Contact

Legal contact in soccer is nominally described as being “shoulder to shoulder” between two opponents, as one player comes into the other, or “charges,” to challenge for the ball. The most common instance of this is two players running side-by-side, usually as they both pursue a moving ball in front of them. Shoulder-to-shoulder contact may also occur with opponents facing one another, such as in a front block tackle, or from behind, such as when one player screens the ball from the opponent. Each of these examples, when performed properly, represents a “fair charge” in soccer. FIFA’s *Interpretation of the Laws of the Game and Guidelines for Referees* states that, “The act of charging is a challenge for space **using physical contact** (emphasis added) within playing distance of the ball without using arms or elbows.”

The expectation during the performance of a fair charge is that both players will have at least one foot on the ground and that excessive force will not be used. In other words, the player making the challenge cannot just slam into an opponent who is in mid-air or barrel into him at whatever speed, even if the contact is shoulder to shoulder. A fair charge can result in a player being put to the ground, however, if one player loses his balance, timing catches an opponent on the “wrong foot,” or if another player is simply bigger or stronger. The mere fact that contact has occurred and a player winds up on the ground does not make the contact illegal.

#### Illegal Contact

Illegal contact in soccer starts with the fouls identified in Law 12 of the FIFA Laws of the Game, “Fouls and Misconduct,” and escalates from poor challenges during the common run of play to truly inappropriate behavior. The illegal contact in Law 12 includes kicking, tripping, jumping (at, into, or on), (improper) charging, striking, pushing, (improper) tackling, and holding an opponent. The Law states that, “A direct free kick is to be awarded to the opposing team if a player commits... [one of these] offenses in a manner considered by the referee to be careless, reckless or using excessive force.” It is also illegal to charge properly, but with the ball not within playing distance. Referees must use their judgment to determine the severity of the penalty to be applied.

FIFA’s *Interpretation of the Laws of the Game and Guidelines for Referees* states that, “‘Careless’ means that the player has shown a lack of attention or consideration when making a challenge or that he acted without precaution.” (This results in the simple award of the free kick.) Further, it states that, “‘Reckless’ means that the player has acted with complete disregard

to the danger to, or consequences for, his opponent.” (This is supposed to bring a yellow-card caution in addition to the free kick.) Finally, it states that, “‘Using excessive force’ means that the player has far exceeded the necessary use of force and is in danger of injuring his opponent.” (This is supposed to bring a red-card ejection in addition to the free kick.)

Illegal contact can run the gamut from a mistimed slide tackle, one that misses the ball and happens to take down the opponent, all the way to assault. All of this verbiage is well and good unless you are on the receiving end of the illegal contact and run the risk of being severely hurt. As such, coaches need to teach their players three major concepts: 1.) Legal and illegal contact; 2.) Respect for the opponent; and, 3.) How to try to avoid injury at the time of contact.

### Accidental Contact

Sometimes, there is player contact in soccer that does not fall neatly into the categories of being legal or illegal. This type of contact can be characterized as just plain bad luck or misfortune. This can occur in any sport with multiple players, moving at speed in the same space, and it is no different in soccer. Unfortunate collisions can happen: Two players go up together for a head ball and one winds up heading the other player. A player running at full speed is concentrating on the ball and never sees the opponent. Two opponents equidistant from each other, both going for a “50-50 ball,” collide. A player lands awkwardly after legs get entangled. A player jumps over another player on the ground who unexpectedly stands up. Two players on the same team run into each other. There is other accidental contact that does not involve another person: A goalkeeper puts his wrist into the goalpost trying to make a save. A player gets hit with the ball when there is insufficient time to react. A player steps in a hole or trips on a rock. All of these examples are most unfortunate, but they are real instances of another aspect of the game.

All forms of contact in soccer must be recognized, understood, mitigated when possible, and the risks ultimately accepted if one wants to play or coach the sport.