

NCYSA Procedures and Rules of Competition for Recreational Play 2007

Under-8 Rules

Game Format Summary Chart

Age Group	Field Players	Roster Size	Game Duration	Ball Size
U-8	4 max. including GK	8 max.	Two - 25 min halves	3

Field Dimension Chart

Age Group	Recommended * Field Size	Recommended Goal Size	Min/Max Goal Size	Center Circle	Goal Area	Penalty Area	Corner Arcs	Penalty Mark
U-8	20x35 yd. to 25x40 yd.	6 ft. x 12 ft.	6 ft. high 6 - 18 ft. long	6 yd.	2 yd. to 4 yd.	6 yd. to 8 yd.	1 yd.	No

* Size given is nominal; at minimum field dimensions, goal and penalty area sizes may need to be reduced to be consistent with overall field size limitations.

Law I-The Field of Play

Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

1. **Dimensions:** The field of play shall be rectangular. Age specific recommendations for field sizes are included in the Field Dimension Chart. The length in all cases shall exceed the width.
2. **Markings:** Distinctive lines not more than five (5) inches wide. A halfway line shall be marked out across the field. The center circle, goal area, penalty area, and corner arcs should be marked using the age-appropriate dimensions from the Field Dimension chart. Field markings may be delineated using disk cones where chalk or paint are or not feasible. (e.g., artificial turf, multi-age group use of the same fields, conflicts with school district or public park field use policies, etc.).
3. **Goals:** Age specific requirements for recommended and maximum goal size are included in the Field Dimension Chart. In case permanent goals are not available, portable goals are acceptable but must be staked down to ensure player safety at all times. For U-8, in the event that there are no permanent or portable goals, traffic cones may be set up or any other safe object may be used to mark the goals. In this case the top of the goalkeeper's hands will determine the "imaginary" height of the crossbar.

Law II-The Ball

Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

A legal ball at the start of the match is defined as spherical, of the following circumference, weight and pressure: Size 3 ball -- 23-24 in., 08-10 oz., 9-10.5 lbs. /sq. inch.

Law III-The Number of Players

Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

1. Age specific requirements for number of players on the field at any one time are included in the Game Format Summary Chart.

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2. Age specific requirements for number of players on the roster are included in the Game Summary Chart.
3. Age specific requirements for use of goalkeepers are included in the Game Format Summary Chart.
4. Substitutions may be made, with the consent of the referee, during any stoppage of play.
5. The number of substitutes shall be unlimited unless a Age specific requirements competition superceding the jurisdiction of the WSYSA determines otherwise.
6. Permission for substitution is not required at quarter break or half time break.

Law IV-The Players Equipment

Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

Refer to Player Responsibilities section for equipment related rules.

Law V-The Referee

Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

Rather than require a Certified Referee, an OFFICIAL (Game Manager, Coordinator, Observer, Parent, or Coach) may be used for U-8. Their job is to keep the playing environment FUN, SAFE and focused on the child. Duties are the same as a Referee under the FIFA Laws of the Game: keep time, enforce the rules, stop and restart play. When you stop play for a foul or other reason, take the time to explain to the players WHY! This is their first experience with soccer, too, and the best time to educate all on the Laws of The Game.

Law VI-The Assistant Referees

Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

Assistant Referees are not required in the small-sided game. Volunteer linesmen may be used at the discretion of the referee for the purpose of calling the ball in or out of play only.

Law VII-The Duration of the Match

Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

1. The game shall be divided into two (2) equal halves of twenty-five (25) minutes each.
2. Half-time break shall be five (5) minutes.

Law VIII-The Start and Restart of Play

Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

1. Preliminaries.
 - a. A coin is tossed and the team winning the toss decides which goal it will attack in the first half of the match.

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- b. The other team takes the kick-off to start the match.
- c. The team winning the toss takes the kick-off to start the second half of the match.
- d. In the second half of the match the teams change ends and attack the opposite goals.

2. Start of Play

- a. The ball will be placed at the center of the field by the referee and the game will start with one player taking a kick into the opponent's half of the field, after a given signal by the referee. At the time of the kickoff, every player will be in his/her half of the field. Every player of the opposing team, to that of the kicker, shall be at a distance away from the center mark equal to the diameter of the center circle (i.e., 6 yards for U-8).
- b. The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves forward. The kicker shall not play the ball a second time until it has been touched or played by another player.
- c. For any infraction of the kickoff procedure, the kickoff shall be retaken.
- c. A goal shall not be scored directly from a kickoff without the ball being touched by at least one other player on either team.

3. Restart of Play

- a. After a goal has been scored, the game shall be restarted in like manner by a player of the team that gave up the goal.
- b. Restarting play after temporary delay: In the case of a temporary suspension due to an injury or any unusual situation, if one team is clearly in possession of the ball, the game shall be restarted by an indirect free kick by the team in possession of the ball at the point where the ball was when play was suspended. Should there not be clear possession at the time play is suspended due to an injury or any unusual situation, there will be a drop ball at the spot where the ball was declared dead. The ball shall be deemed "in play" when the ball has touched the ground.

Law IX-The Ball In and Out of Play

Conform to FIFA.

Law X-The Method of Scoring

Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

1. A goal is scored when the whole of the ball has crossed the whole of the goal line on the ground or in the air between the goal posts and under the cross bar.
2. In the event that cones are used for markers, the height of the crossbar will be determined by the height of the goalkeeper's arms.

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3. In the case the goal marker (cone) is knocked over or moved as a result of a direct hit by the ball as it crosses the goal line, the goal will not be allowed. In this case, the ball shall be put into play by either a goal kick or a corner kick, depending on who touched the ball last. As in all judgment calls, the referee's decision will be final.

Law XI-Offside

Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

The offside rule will not apply to any U-8 team; however, the intent of the rule will be followed. Positioning a player in front of the opponent's goal irrespective of the location of the ball on the field is contrary to the aims of the program. The referee shall take appropriate action to prevent this kind of play (an indirect kick to the offended team and instructional statements to the violating players and coach.)

Law XII-Fouls and Misconduct

Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

1. All fouls will result in an **INDIRECT FREE KICK** with the opponents eight (8) yards away.
2. In addition to those offenses defined in the FIFA Laws of the Game, an **INDIRECT KICK** shall be awarded to the opposing team if a player, in the opinion of the referee: Slide tackles (**Slide tackling is not allowed for U-8.**)
3. Consistent with the educational intent of the Small-Sided Program, the referee should inform the offending player of the infraction that was committed.
4. Charging the goalkeeper:
 - a. No player shall make physical contact with the goalkeeper, harass the goalkeeper or attempt to play the ball once the goalkeeper has control of the ball in any manner and to any degree whatsoever.
 - b. Included in "having control of the ball" is, if the goalkeeper holds the ball on the ground with one or both hands.

Law XIII-Free Kicks

Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

1. Shall be classified under one heading – Indirect.
2. The ball must be stationary when the kick is taken and the kicker does not touch the ball a second time until it has touched another player.
3. No kicks shall be taken by the attacking team within the defending team's goal area.

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Law XIV- The Penalty Kick

Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

No Penalty Kicks will be granted at U-8.

Law XV-The Throw-In

Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

1. For U-8, a second throw-in will be allowed if an incorrect throw occurs. Before the "offending" player takes the throw-in, the referee will instruct the thrower on the proper technique and then proceed with the throw-in.
2. The thrower may not play the ball until another player has touched it. If the thrower plays the ball a second time before another player has touched it, the above re-throw rules will apply. The referee will explain the proper procedure and allow a re-throw for U-8. If a U-8 player plays the ball twice again, an indirect free kick shall be awarded to the opposing team from the spot where the infringement occurred.
3. A goal shall not be scored directly from the throw-in.

Law XVI-The Goal Kick

Conform to FIFA.

Law XVII-The Corner Kick

Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

If the player who takes the kick plays the ball a second time before it has been touched by another player, the referee shall explain to the kicker the proper procedure of a corner kick. For any infraction of these laws at U-8, the corner kick shall be retaken.

