

Game Rules & Division Structures

Fall 2017 – Game Rules & Division Structures						
BOYS Age Group	U4/U5	U6	U7	U8	U9	U10
Match Format	2x4x4	2x4v4	2x4v4	2x4x4	7v7	7v7

GIRLS Age Group	U4/U5	U6/U7	U8	U9/U10	U10	
Match Format	2x4x4	2x4v4	2x4x4	7v7	7v7	

	U4/U5	U6	U6/U7 and U7	U8	U9 and U9/10	U10
Match Duration (mins)	8	8	10	10	12	12
Ball Size	3	3	3	3	4	4
Goal Keepers	N	N	N	N	Y	Y
Substitutions (See below)	OTF	OTF	OTF	OTF	STOP	STOP
Restarts						
Kick-ins	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Throw-ins	N	N	N	N	Y	Y
Corner kicks	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Goal kicks	ARC	ARC	ARC	ARC	Y	Y
Drop balls	N	N	N	N	Y	Y
Indirect kicks	N	N	N	N	Y	Y
Direct kicks	N	N	N	N	Y*	Y*
Penalty kicks	N	N	N	N	N*	N*
Offside	N	N	N	N	BuildOut	BuildOut

OTF – On the Fly, anytime during the match, no need to notify the referee. Previous player to be off before new player goes onto the field.

STOP – At Stoppages – At stoppages in play, ask ref for permission for substitution. Substitute from mid-field.

N* - For a foul within the Penalty area, the ball placed on the penalty area line and then a DFK. Players must be back 10 yards.

Y* - DFKs to proceed as normal when they occur well outside of the Penalty Area but all players must be back 10 yards.

General Rules

Match format may vary at game time due to absences of players, i.e. 7 v 7 change to 6 v 6.

Match format subject to change later due to late adds.

If there is not a referee at the match, have a coach or parent serve as referee. The stand-in referee shall remain neutral and shall not coach the kids from the field.

U6 – U8 will play dual match formats. They will divide their teams into two and play two simultaneous matches. Coaches shall put their less aggressive and less experienced players on one field and the more aggressive players on the other field. Coaches should meet before the game to decide on which field each group will play. Division of teams should be relatively oblivious to the parents and players. Do not use terms such as: good vs. bad players or strong vs. weak players. This format challenges the more experienced players and gives more touches and success to the less experienced players.

U6 – U8 will not have goalkeepers. NEITHER the offense or defense may enter the goal arc – no man’s land. Coaches shall not position a full-time “defender” in the general area in front of the goal as pseudo-goal keeper. Positioning of players is strongly discouraged at these age groups.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR ALL U6-U10 GAMES

SHARING PLAYERS AND PLAYING DOWN: If there are not enough players from one team to play the defined division structure, then we first share players each quarter so that everyone has an opportunity to play. The LAST alternative is to play down and this must be agreed to by both coaches prior to changing the structure for that game and must be communicated to the referee.

LOPSIDED SCORES: The general rule of thumb is for no team to progress beyond a 4-5 goal lead in any match. If that occurs then the coach has the responsibility to change strategy such as moving players in their positions, only allowing a goal scoring attempt after a series of passes, etc.

SUBSTITUTIONS AND EQUAL PLAYING TIME: With the recent changes to the rules for substitutions (including subbing on the “fly” by either team for U6 – U8 games), it is even more critical that coaches keep track of equal playing time. The SYSA policy states that equal playing time for recreational players U6-U10 will be enforced throughout the season. Balancing of player’s time is the responsibility of the coach and should be communicated as such to each team. There may be times where a player has to sit out more in one game than their other teammates; it should be made quite clear that in the next game this will not happen in order to balance out playing time.

MATCH FORMATS: Review the Match Formats in the grids below

ROTATING PLAYERS: Another SYSA policy that needs to be adhered to in the U6-U10 age groups is that of rotating players in positions. This includes the goalkeeper. **NO player should be asked to play in goal for more than one quarter per match.** In all matches players need to be rotated among the positions EACH quarter. This is to give players opportunities to learn all the different positions and to help keep scores from becoming lopsided.

GOALKEEPER PROTECTION: Inexperienced goalkeepers need more time to play the ball safely. To protect the keeper, follow the guidelines in this document for each age group. It is mandatory for Referees to protect the keepers in U9-U10 levels. See Build Out Lines Rules

ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY: SYSA has a ZERO tolerance policy when it comes to inappropriate sideline behavior and conduct. This holds true both before, during and after any match. Coaches are responsible for the behavior of their sides of the field. Parents, players and coaches could sit out future games due to inappropriate sideline behaviors.

“TSL” -- TEAM SPORTSMANSHIP LIASON: All teams U6 through U10 will have a parent designated as the team’s “TSL”, who is responsible for monitoring sideline behavior. The Coaches and TSLs will join the referee at the Center Circle during the coin toss to confirm their commitment to SYSA’s Code of Conduct.

GAME RULES: Specific rules for each age group follows. However, the following general rules apply to all levels: no jewelry can be worn, socks must cover all shin-guards, no slide tackling permitted.

SLIDE TACKLING: Slide tackling is NOT permitted at any time in the U6-U10 age groups. If it is noticed, the referee must blow the whistle, stop the game, and instruct the player that this form of ball tackling is not allowed because of the likelihood of injury at this level of play. Even if executed properly, it is to be called and disallowed. If it continues, the player should be firmly reminded that he/she warned and escorted to the sidelines not to return for this game. A caution is not required at this level of play.

HEADING: There is no heading in practices or games at U4 – U10. If a player deliberately touches the ball with his/her head during a game, and indirect free kick will be awarded from the spot of the infraction. If it occurs in the box, the indirect free kick will be awarded on the goal line.