

**FIFA Laws of the Game**  
As Modified By U.S. Youth Soccer & SYS  
Edited as needed for Recreational Play by DCSA

**Law 1: Field of Play**

Field size for U4-U10 players MAY be reduced for small- sided play.  
U13 –U19 play on regulation size fields.

**Law 2: The Ball**

U4 - U8 play with size 3 soccer balls.  
U12 play with size 4 soccer balls.  
U13-U19 play with size 5 soccer balls.

**Law 3: Number of Players**

U4-U6-4v4/5v5 no goalkeepers, U8 - 5v5+keeper, U10-8v8+keeper, U13 and Up-11v11  
Substitutions for U6 may be made at any time but should be made during a stoppage  
in play.  
U8-U12 are allowed unlimited substitutions by both teams at any stoppage in play.  
U14-U19 are allowed unlimited substitutions but may only sub on kick-offs, goal  
kicks, at the beginning of a half or on own throw-in.  
All players will be given the opportunity to play 50 percent of the game.

**Law 4: Player Equipment**

Shin guards worn under the socks are mandatory.  
Cleats are recommended but not required.  
No baseball cleats with a “toe cleat” or metal spikes are allowed.

**Absolutely no Jewelry is permitted during play.**

**Tape over earrings is not permitted even if the earrings are new and may not be removed. If the jewelry may not be removed the player may not play.**

**Law 5 and Law 6: The Referee and Assistant Referee**

U4 and U6 games are officiated by coaches or parents.\*Referees will be provided as available\*  
U8 are officiated by 1-2 Center Referees  
U10 & U13 are officiated by a Center Referee and two Assistant Referees/Club  
Linesmen or Double Centers \*as available\*

**Law 7: Duration of the Match**

U4 /U6 play four 5 or 8-minute quarters with a 2-minute break between quarters and a 5-min 1/2 time.

U8 play four 12-minute quarters with a 2-minute break between quarters and a 5- min 1/2 time.

U10 play two 25-minute halves with a 5-minute half-time break.

U13 play two 30-minute halves with a 5-minute half-time break.

U18 play two 40-minute halves with a 5-minute half-time break.

**Law 8: Start and Restart of Play**

The team that wins the coin toss chooses which goal to defend.

The other team starts play with a kick from the center mark.

Teams alternate kicks from the center mark to start play at the beginning of each quarter or half.

Players may not touch the ball twice at the start of play.

**Law 9: Ball In and Out of Play**

The ball is in play until it completely crosses over a touchline or goal line.

**Law 10: Method of Scoring**

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

U6 teams are awarded a kick-in after being scored upon.

Game scores are not counted for division standings or playoff seeding.

**Law 11: Offside**

A player is offside when he/she is in the opponents half of the field, nearer the goal than the second to last defender and/or the ball and involved in play.

Offside is not called for U6 thru U10 age groups.

**Law 12: Fouls and Misconduct**

Fouls are classified as either Penal (Contact) or Technical (Non-Contact)

Penal fouls include tripping, pushing, etc. Technical fouls include dangerous play and impeding (obstruction).

Yellow or red cards are administered for fouls committed carelessly or recklessly for U12 and up but are rarely required in SYS. Cards are never shown to U6-U10 players.

Coaches for younger players deal with inappropriate behavior by removing the players from the game for a “cool down” period.

**Law 13: Free Kicks**

Free kicks are either direct or indirect.

A goal can be scored from a direct free kick.

Indirect kicks must be touched by another player before going in the goal for the score to count.

All free kicks for U6 thru U10 are indirect free kicks.

**Law 14: Penalty Kick**

Penalty kicks are awarded when the defense commits a direct free kick foul in the penalty area.

No penalty kicks are awarded for U6-U10 age groups.

**Law 15: Throw-In**

A throw-in is taken when the ball completely crosses the touchlines (sidelines)  
U6 players will use a kick-in when the ball completely crosses either the touchlines or goal lines.

U8 players are allowed a second attempt after an illegal throw. After the second attempt, the opposing team will be awarded a throw-in.

**Law 16: Goal Kick**

A goal kick is awarded when the offense kicks the ball over the opponents' goal line.

The ball must leave the goal area to be in play or the kick is retaken.

U6 use kick-ins instead of goal kicks.

**Law 17: Corner Kick**

A corner kick is awarded when the defense kicks the ball over their goal line.

For more information and detailed explanations of the Laws of the Game, visit any of the following web sites:

United States Soccer Federation:

<http://www.ussoccer.com>

Federation Internationale de Football Association:

<http://www.fifa.com>

United States Youth Soccer Association

<http://www.usyouthsoccer.org>