



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

# **SOCCER RULES**

**Youth Sports**



**YMCA OF GREATER SAN ANTONIO**

**YMCA Mission:** To put Judeo-Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

# **YMCA Pledge:**

## **Players Pledge:**

Win or Lose,  
I pledge before God  
To play the game as well as I know how,  
To obey the rules,  
And to be a good sport at all times,  
And to Improve myself,  
In Spirit, mind, and body.

## **Parents Pledge:**

I pledge before God,  
To always support my team,  
With good sportsmanship,  
And sound judgment,  
And to develop my child's self-respect  
And support their participation in the program.  
The Child First, Sport Second

## TEAM DUTIES

1. Both teams are responsible for cleaning up their bench immediately after the game.
2. During the game, there shall be a maximum of two (2) coaches on the sideline.
  - a. In the 3–6–year–old divisions, one (1) coach per team is allowed on the field for instructional purposes. The coach may not interfere with the play and must be along the sides of the field, not in the middle or by the goals.
  - b. 7 years and up – Coaches must be on the sideline only and remain in the “coaching box” if marked on the field. Coaches may only come on the field if beckoned by the referee.
3. 7 years and up – All spectators must be seated on the sideline opposite of their team and cannot stand or sit behind/beside the goal areas. Only cleared coaches and registered participants are allowed on the bench. Spectators and coaches are not allowed on the field, unless requested to attend to an injured player.

## SPORTSMANSHIP

1. The YMCA does not keep official game scores or records. However, the score is documented during the game to promote a learning environment.
2. Unsportsmanlike conduct of the players or coaches is not tolerated. If the behavior persists, the individual will be asked to leave the facility.
3. **Any player, coach or spectator ejected may be suspended for at least (1) game and/or may be placed on season probation. If ejected again during a program, the individual will be subject to permanent removal from the program. The YMCA sports cabinet will meet to review suspensions and removal. Cases will also be reviewed by the sports cabinet for reinstatement.**
4. If the atmosphere of the game feels unsafe or the YMCAs Values are not being adhered to, the referee or YMCA staff member can end the game.
5. If a team has less than the number of required players, the opposing team will be asked to share players in order to provide competition. We make every effort to play each scheduled game.
6. Coaches are expected to adhere to YMCA Values and are responsible for team actions. This includes parents and players.
7. The YMCA Players and Parents Pledge is required prior to the start of each game. A YMCA Staff will lead the pledge, however in the event a staff member is unavailable, the coach, a parent or player can administer the pledge.

## YMCA YOUTH SPORTS KEY PHILOSOPHIES

1. Everyone must play at least half the game.
2. Coaches are volunteers. They are not paid.
3. Our focus is on fun and skill development.
4. Sportsmanship above all.
5. We promote a family atmosphere.

## PLAYER SAFETY

1. To protect the safety of all players in the program, any participant wearing a cast will prohibit them from participating in YMCA games or practices. Exceptions can be made with approval from the Sports Director and documented approval from a physician.
2. Soft casts will be permitted if approved by officials.
3. All types of jewelry (earrings, bracelets, necklaces, etc.) or hats must be removed before the game.
4. Adaptive aids are approved on a case by case basis.

## AGE DIVISIONS

Age Division	# Players on Field** (Includes Goalie, if Goalie allowed)	Goalie	Game Length 3-min halftime	Offsides	Heading	Yellow/Red Cards	Ball Size
3 - 4 yrs	4 v 4	No	4 x 6 min periods	No	No	No	3
5 - 6 yrs	5 v 5	No	4 x 8 min periods	No	No	No	3
7 - 8 yrs	6 v 6	Yes	4 x 10 min periods	No	No	Yes	4
9 - 10 yrs	7 v 7	Yes	2 x 20 min halves	Yes	No	Yes	4
11 - 12 yrs	7 v 7	Yes	2 x 24 min halves	Yes	No	Yes	5
13 - 14 yrs	9 v 9	Yes	2 x 30 min halves	Yes	Yes	Yes	5
15 - 18 yrs	9 v 9	Yes	2 x 30 min halves	Yes	Yes	Yes	5

\*\* # of players on the field can be less (i.e. 3v3, 5v5, 8v8) in order to play the game. Teams can also "loan" players to opposing teams to play the game, if needed.

\*\* If/If league play incorporates an age higher in a certain division, this division will be governed by the lower age division rules (i.e. 13 - 14 age division follows 11 -12 YMCA age division rules). All coaches in the affected age division will be notified prior to the season.

## UNIFORM

- Each player must have on their YMCA issued uniform and shin guards underneath their socks. Cleats are not mandatory to play soccer.

# GENERAL RULES

## 1. SCORING

- A ball that is kicked between, but not over the goalposts at the opponent's goal line, is considered a score equal to one (1) point. The entire ball must be completely over the entire goal line to be considered a goal. **The ball does not have to touch the net to be considered a goal.**

## 2. PLAYER PRIVILEGES

- All players may play the ball with their feet, head, knees, chest, body, or shoulders. Only the goalie may touch the ball with upper arms, forearms, or hands as long as they remain in the penalty area.
- The goalie must put the ball in play and may carry the ball no more than seven (7) seconds in preparation to throw or kick the ball into play.
- If the goalie is going to kick the ball after a goal kick has been determined, only players from the same team as the goalie may be **inside** the penalty box. For the goal kick, players on the same team as the goalie may also kick the ball inside the penalty box.

### **3. HEADING**

- Hitting the ball with the forehead to control it will be allowed in the 13–18–year–old age divisions ONLY. The ball will be an indirect kick for the opposing team at the point on the field where the illegal heading occurred.

### **4. KICK-OFF**

- The kick-off is performed at the mid-field line by one of the offensive players. The ball will be considered in play when it has been kicked and is moving in any direction. The defensive team must line up ten (10) yards away from the ball (outside of the circle) and cannot touch the ball until it is in play. Both teams must be in their respective halves of the field at the kick-off. The player kicking off cannot touch the ball a second time until it has touched another player.

### **5. SLIDE TACKLING IS NOT ALLOWED IN ANY AGE DIVISION.**

## **FOULS AND PENALTIES**

### **1. DIRECT FREE KICK**

- A direct free kick is awarded to the team fouled by a member of the opposing team after the fouls listed below occur outside the penalty area by either team. A direct free kick is awarded to the opponent at the spot of the foul. The ball is placed on the ground and may be kicked in any direction.
  - The defending team may block the ball (i.e. build a “wall”) but must be standing at least ten (10) yards from the ball when it is kicked. (5–yards for 3 – 6 & 7–yards for 7/8 and 9/10 age divisions)
  - The offensive (kicking) team must be four (4) feet away from the “wall.”
  - A direct free kick can score a goal if it passes through the goal. It does not need to touch another player to be a good goal.

Foul(s) which cause Direct Free Kick:

- Careless, reckless, or excessive force/contact that creates an unfair advantage: charges, jumps toward, pushes, kicks/trips opposing player(s). Discretion of the official.
- Handball (except for the goalie). Cannot touch with upper arm, forearm, or hand extended away from the body.

### **2. INDIRECT FREE KICK**

- The indirect free kick cannot score a goal until another player other than the kicker has touched the ball. Regardless if the foul occurred inside or outside the penalty box. The indirect free kick is awarded to the opponent at the point of the foul.
- An indirect free kick is awarded to the team fouled by a member of the opposing team if any of the below occurs

Foul(s) which result in an indirect kick:

- Offside call

- Any contact with the goalie by the attacking team inside the goal kick box (i.e. small box inside penalty box).
- Goalie carrying or handling the ball outside the penalty box (larger box)
- Goalie carries the ball more than seven (7) seconds.
- Charging the goalie or any player when he does not have the ball.
- Playing or attempting to play a ball held by the goalie, or interfering with the goalie as he attempts to clear the ball.
- Kicker or thrower plays the ball before a second player touches it on a throw-in, free kick, corner kick, or penalty kick.
- Ball is not kicked forward on a penalty kick.
- Player stands closer than ten (10) yards at the time of an indirect or direct free kick.
- Any obstruction by a player. (i.e. holding, pulling jersey)
- Intentional pass back to the goalie. The goalie may not use his or her hands if the ball is passed back from his or her own team.
- Illegal Headers.
- The defending team may block the ball (i.e. build a "wall") but must be standing at least ten (10) yards from the ball when it is kicked.
- The offensive (kicking) team must be four (4) feet away from the "wall."
- 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 indirect kick is awarded for the defending team at the previous spot.
- Pass back rule. When a defender (same team) passes the ball back to the goalie; the goalie may not pick up the ball with their hands; can only use feet. Indirect free kick from the point where the goalie picked up the ball.

### **3. FOULS THAT MAY WARRANT EJECTION FROM A GAME (Discretion of Official)**

- Any bodily harm or unsportsmanlike conduct towards an opponent.
- Slide tackling.
- Disrespectful words, tone, or language by a coach towards an official during or following the game. (Any discourse between the coach and officials must remain professional and respectful during and after the game.)
- Officials may issue a Red or Yellow card to a player resulting from a flagrant foul, overly aggressive action, unsportsmanlike conduct, disrespect to the official and/or language. The coach may also receive a Red or Yellow card resulting from language, aggressive behavior, unsportsmanlike conduct and/or disrespect to the official or another coach. Red or Yellow cards are at the discretion of the official.
- If a player or coach is issued a Red card they are disqualified and must leave the field (may not remain on the bench).
- Yellow card is a warning; two Yellow cards issued to the same player/coach in one game is equivalent to one Red card.

### **4. OFFSIDES**

- The 3 – 8-year-old division will not have offsides.
- It is not an offense in itself to be in an offside position. A player is in an offside position if he or she is nearer to his/her opponent's goal than both the ball and second last opponent. An offsides call will result in an indirect kick for the defending team.

A player is **NOT** in an offside position if:

- Player is in his or her half of the field of play
- Player is level with the second-last opponent
- During a throw in
- During a goal kick
- During a corner kick
- If the ball touches a defender before it reaches the offensive player regardless of his/her position. (11+ age division only)

## **5. HANDBALL (Discretion of the Official)**

- Movement of the hand/arm in the direction of the ball
- Player touches the ball with hand(s) or picks up the ball (other than the goalie)
- Ball hits any player's arm from the elbow to the hand
- Increasing the body size to touch the ball (i.e. stick arms out to interfere with ball)
- Ball that contacts the shoulder is not a hand ball (judgment of the official - continue play)
- It is not a handball if the hand or arm is close to/touching the body and the player tries to avoid the ball but fails
- If handball is called by the official, the opposing team gets a Direct Free Kick at point of foul

## **6. PENALTY KICK**

- A penalty kick will be placed halfway between the goal line and penalty box (larger box)
- A penalty kick is awarded for any infringement of the rules which ordinarily requires the awarding of a direct free kick if the foul is committed by a defending player within the penalty box (larger box).
- The foul must be deliberate. When awarded, the penalty kick will be made from the penalty spot (halfway between goal line and penalty box).
- All players, except for the players taking the kick and the defending goalkeeper, must be outside of the penalty box. The ball must be kicked forward. If a foul is committed by the attacking team inside the opposing team's penalty box, the defending team will be awarded a direct free-kick from the point of the foul.
- Yellow card and Red card issuing will be in effect for every game for the 7-18-year-old age divisions.
- During the penalty kick, the goalie must have one foot on the goal line.

## **7. DROP KICKS**

Drop kicks are awarded if:

- Inadvertent whistle by the official
- Interruption of the game by something or someone off the field (i.e. child running on field, ball from another field, etc)

## **8. CAUTIONS AND CARDS**

- Not all fouls warrant a card. However, a player or coach may be cautioned first, then given a card, in the judgment of the official.
- Yellow Card: The player or coach acts carelessly, recklessly, interferes with the game (comes on the field), uses excessive force, displays unsportsmanlike conduct or inappropriate language.
- Red Card: A player or coach continues to infringe on the rules of the game, receives a second Yellow Card, acts inappropriately, egregious behavior or is playing/behaving dangerously. Red Card results in player/coach disqualification; they must leave the field, cannot remain on the bench. A Red Card may be given even if this foul by the player is his/her first - discretion of the official. All Red Cards issued are subject to suspension

- Parents and spectators may also be cautioned, and if deemed inappropriate by the official, sent off the field. In this case, the person(s) ejected must leave the premises before the game resumes.

## **9. REFEREES:**

- The official shall be the sole judge of game play on the court. The official's decisions are final.
- The official can ask coaches, parents, players, and spectators to leave the field to maintain a pleasant atmosphere and control of the game.
- If a coach, player, or spectator, is ejected from a game, that person(s)/situation will be subject to review by the Competition Director and/or Sports Director with a potential one (1) game suspension. Should another incident occur within the same season and the same person(s), that coach, spectator, or player may be ejected from the league permanently.
- The official may stop, suspend, or terminate the game because of the elements of interference.
- There will be no disrespectful words or actions toward a referee during the game.

## **10. SUBSTITUTIONS**

- The goal of the YMCA is to provide all children with equal playing time. All players must play a minimum of 50% of the game. If a player is sick or injured, the referee must be notified before the start of the game. If a player ends up becoming ill or injured during a game, he or she can be substituted out.
- 3 – 6 years: Substitutions are by quarter
- 7 years and up – Free Substitutions in these situations: (Goalie's may play the entire game)
  - On a throw in. If your team is subbing, the opposing team may sub as well.
  - On a goal kick
  - After someone scores a goal
  - At halftime