

US Youth Soccer 7U / 8U Playing Recommendations

US Youth Soccer recommended modifications to the FIFA Laws of the Game including any rules adapted by North Polk United. FIFA Laws of the Game can be found at www.ussoccer.com/referees.

Law 1 – The Field of Play:

Dimensions: The field of play must be rectangular. The length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line. **Length:** minimum 25 yards maximum 35 yards. **Width:** minimum 20 yards maximum 30 yards

Field Markings: Distinctive lines not more than (5) inches wide. The field of play is divided into two halves by a halfway line. The center mark is indicated at the midpoint of the halfway line. A circle with a radius of four (4) yards is marked around it.

The Goal Area: A goal area is defined at each end of the field as follows: Two lines are drawn at right angles to the goal line three (3) yards from the inside each goalpost. These lines extend into the field of play for a distance of three (3) yards and are joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line. The area bounded by these lines and the goal line is the goal area.

The Penalty Area: none.

Corner Flags: none.

The Corner Arc: Conform to FIFA.

Goals: Goals must be placed on the center of each goal line. They consist of two upright posts, equidistant from the corners and joined at the top by a horizontal crossbar. The recommended distance between the posts is eighteen (18) feet and the distance from the lower edge of the crossbar to the ground is six (6) feet. Goals may be smaller in dimension. **Safety:** Goals must be anchored securely to the ground.

Law 2 – The Ball: Size three (3).

Law 3 – The Number of Players: A match is played by two teams, each consisting of not more than four players per team on the field at one time.

There are NO goalkeepers or players allowed to stay in a defensive position.

Substitutions: At any stoppage of play and unlimited.

Playing time: Strive to attain 50% playing time for each player. Teams and matches may be coed.

Law 4 – The Players' Equipment: Conform to FIFA. Non-uniform clothing is allowed based on weather conditions, but uniforms must still distinguish teams. Shin Guards are required, Jewelry is not allowed (this includes taping over any type of piercings)

Law 5 – The Referee: An OFFICIAL (Referee, Game Manager, Team Parent, Coach or Grade 9 referee) may be used. All infringements should be briefly explained to the offending player.

Law 6 – The Assistant Referees: None.

Law 7 – The Duration of the Match: The match shall be divided into four (4) equal, twelve (12) minute quarters. There shall be a two (2) minute break between quarters one and two and another two (2) minute break between quarters three and four. There shall be a half-time interval of five (5) minutes.

Law 8 – The Start and Restart of Play: Conform to FIFA, with the exception of the opponents of the team taking the kick-off are at least four (4) yards from the ball until it is in play.

Law 9 – The Ball In and Out of Play: Conform to FIFA.

Law 10 – The Method of Scoring: Conform to FIFA.

Law 11 – Offside: None.

Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct: no caution or send off shall be issued to players. If a child is being too rambunctious then the game official will ask the coach to make a substitution of that player to give the child a chance to calm down before returning to play.

Law 13 – Free Kicks: Conform to FIFA with the exceptions that all kicks are indirect and all opponents are at least four (4) yards from the ball until it is in play.

Law 14 – The Penalty Kick: None.

Law 15 – The Throw-In: some U8 players do not yet have the eye-hand coordination to execute a throw-in to the letter of the law. However, some U8 players have sufficient eye-hand coordination to attempt the throw-in. One ‘do-over’ per thrower should be the normal response if the throw-in is incorrect. The official of the match should explain to the child how to execute the throw-in correctly and accept anything reasonably close.

Law 16 – The Goal Kick: The goal kick should be taken anywhere within the goal area. Opposing players must be outside the goal area AND at least four (4) yards away from the ball until it is in play. It is suggested that if necessary that opponents are in their own half of the field until the ball is in play.

Law 17 – The Corner Kick: Conform to FIFA with the exception that opponents remain at least four (4) yards from the ball until it is in play.

Additional Recommendations

- Spectator and team benches should be on opposite sides of the field. Spectators and the team benches should be 2 yards from the field
- Parent/coaches, non-participating players and spectators should be there to enjoy and encourage the activity of the youngsters from both teams. Parent/coaches need to refrain from directing play or undermining the authority of the game official. The game official has final decision on any and all situations.
- No slide tackles to be allowed in this age group.
- Scores are not kept in this age group and competition is within the club. Teams are encouraged to loan/share players to keep the games balanced. Adding an extra field player to a struggling team is preferred to make the game fun for everyone involved. Player skills and not high scoring wins are the objective at this age.
- Coaches are allowed to enter the field of play to assist the players in proper throw-ins, restarts and player injuries. If the coach and game official determine the injury requires more assistance than they can provide then a parent can be asked to enter the field also.
- Opposing coaches, players and parents should shake hands after each match.
- No alcoholic beverages or tobacco products will be consumed or allowed near the playing area.
- Your referees are younger and less experienced as a rule in this age group. Asking a question to clarify a rule during player check in with the team is encouraged. Continuously suggesting a call for the referee or discussing/arguing the rules before, during or after the game is not allowed. Any issues or discussion of the rules or game performance may be done away from the players and referee with Jason Chesley, NPU Director of Referees, by any of the follow means.

Email: huskerman@q.com

Phone: Home # 279-0044 or Cell # 943-2949

Personal contact: on the practice field or a place away from the game fields.