



# 2026 Spring 3v3 League

## Official Rules

### League Purpose

The Spring 3v3 League is designed to maximize player development, ball touches, decision-making, and enjoyment in a fast-paced, small-sided environment.

#### The emphasis is on:

- Fun
- Creativity
- Confidence on the ball
- Game flow over stoppages

### Format of Play

- All games are played 3 vs 3
- No goalkeepers
- Teams should provide equal playing time
- Unlimited substitutions allowed at any stoppage

### Age Groups & Match Structure

Age Group	Format	Matches per Day	Halves / Halftime
U4	3v3	1	2 x 10 min / 5 min
U6	3v3	1	2 x 12 min / 5 min
U8	3v3	2	2 x 15 min / 5 min
U10	3v3	2	2 x 15 min / 5 min
U12	3v3	2	2 x 20 min / 5 min
U15	3v3	2	2 x 20 min / 5 min

## Field Sizes

---

Age Group	Field Size (yards)
U4	15 × 10
U6	20 × 15
U8 / U10	30 × 20
U12 / U15	35 × 25

- Small-sided fields are used to increase touches and engagement
- Goals are typically 6 ft × 4 ft

## Core Rules (All Ages)

---

### Restarts (General)

- All sideline restarts are kick-ins **or dribble-ins** (no throw-ins)
- All restarts are indirect
- Ball must be stationary before restart
- Opponents must give 5 yards of space

### Kickoffs

- Taken from midfield
- May be played in any direction
- Ball is in play once it is kicked and moves

### Ball Out of Play — Sidelines

- Restart with a kick-in or dribble-in

### Ball Out of Play — End Line

- Last touched by defender    Corner kick
- Last touched by attacker    Goal kick
- Defending team must give 5 yards

### Goal Kick

- Taken from **the goal line**
- Ball must be passed or dribbled out (no punting or drop kicks)
- Opponents should retreat toward midfield (especially U4–U10)

## Scoring Rules

---

### U4 – U6

- No goal box
- Goals may be scored from anywhere on the field
- No half-field restrictions

### U8 – U15

- Ball must **be touched** in the attacking half before a goal can be scored
- No goals may be scored from beyond the halfway line
- Ball must fully cross the goal line to count

## Goal Box Rules (U8 – U15 Only)

---

- A goal box is established in front of each goal
- **Neither Attackers NOR Defenders** may not touch the ball inside the goal box

### Outcomes:

- Defensive touch inside goal box    Automatic goal awarded
- **Offensive touch inside goal box    Goal kick**
- Ball comes to rest in goal box    Goal kick
- Defenders must defend from outside **(may not enter)** the goal box

## Fouls & Misconduct

---

- No slide tackling
- No pushing, tripping, or dangerous play
- All fouls result in an indirect free kick
- **No headers**

### Referees should prioritize:

- Player safety
- Game flow
- Instruction (especially at younger ages)

## Offsides

---

There is no offside rule in this league.

## Substitutions

---

- Unlimited substitutions permitted
- May occur at any stoppage

## Competitive Balance Rule

---

- When a team is ahead by 3 goals, the trailing team may add 1 player
- For every additional 3-goal difference, another player may be added
- Maximum advantage is 5 vs 3
- If the goal difference decreases, added players must be removed
- Players enter only during stoppages with referee approval

## Coaching Guidelines

---

### U4 – U6

- Coaches may be on the field to assist players
- Emphasis on encouragement and guidance

### U8 and Older

- Coaches must remain off the field
- Instruction should occur between plays and when players are not actively on the ball

### Coaching Philosophy:

- Do NOT "joystick coach" — avoid directing every move
- Allow players to make their own decisions
- Encourage creativity and confidence
- **Even out playing time during every match**

## Referee Notes

---

- Use an instructional approach for younger age groups
- Keep games moving quickly with minimal stoppage
- Emphasize safety, fair play, and enjoyment above all
- U12–U15 matches may use more experienced referees

---

**Fun • Development • Respect • Game Flow**

---