

Tri Cities Soccer Association

Recreational League Rules

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Purpose & Implementation

Purpose & Goal

This document is intended as an introduction to the basic rules of soccer for those at the U14 age level. It also specifically addresses the Tri Cities Soccer Association (TCSA) exceptions, adjustments, or special circumstances. The goal is to promote the game and laws of soccer to the youth of the Tri Cities area. It is TCSA’s intention to follow as closely as practical the consensus opinion of high school, college, and upper level coaches as to how this should be accomplished. To this end, TCSA also introduces the players to the various laws and concepts of the game in stages as they move through the various age groups.

Implementation

It is widely accepted and encouraged in the TCSA recreational soccer program to utilize “teaching moments” to help younger age groups learn the laws of the game. Referees should use discretion in implementing teaching moments.

General Policies

Weather Policy

TCSA will advise if all games are to be cancelled no later than 7:30am on Saturdays. Teams will be notified via PlayMetrics of a cancellation for all games. If the weather turns after Saturday games have begun, a cancellation notice may not be sent out. It is up to the discretion of the referee on the field to determine the safety of the playing conditions.

- I. Any flash of lightning, clap of thunder, or activation of the weather detection system (at fields equipped with it) IMMEDIATELY ends the current games being played with the score reported as it was when the game was terminated.
- II. There are NO delays and restarts of games related to weather conditions.
- III. A period of THIRTY (30) consecutive minutes must go by without a flash of lightning or clap of thunder AND the all clear signal must be given by the weather detection system (at fields equipped with it) before players can be on the fields.
- IV. A game will NOT start later than fifteen (15) minutes after its scheduled start time. If the 30-minute period needed for all clear has not passed by this time, that game will not be played.
- V. There are ABSOLUTELY NO EXCEPTIONS to the weather policy. Referees and coaches should work together to ensure the safety of everyone at the field. DO NOT mess around with the weather.

Goal Safety / Zach's Law

The State of Illinois has a law concerning goal safety - it is commonly referred to as "Zach's Law". IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT GOALS ARE CHECKED PRIOR TO EACH GAME TO MAKE SURE THAT THEY ARE ANCHORED DOWN SECURELY! Goals that are not anchored down can cause serious injuries and even death. If you find a goal that is not anchored down, contact the TCSA Board of Directors (board@tcsa.net) and report it immediately. Do not play the game until the goal is anchored down. If you leave the field prior to the goal being anchored down, advise any other teams or referees planning to use the field of the unsafe condition. Do not let kids hang from the goal crossbar or climb on the netting!

Laws of the Game

I. The Field of Play

- A. All games will be assigned by the league to an appropriately sized field.
- B. If playing conditions are deemed to be unsafe on the assigned field, the game may be moved to a similarly sized field.
- C. Immediately contact the TCSA Board of Directors to report unsafe field conditions (board@tcsa.net).

II. The Ball

- A. Must be spherical.
- B. Must be properly inflated with no jagged edges.
- C. Home team to provide the game ball.

III. Number of Players

- A. See Age Group Specifics for the Number of Players per team.
- B. Each team must designate a goalkeeper by using either a TCSA goalkeeper shirt or a pinnie.
- C. If one team must start below the full number of players on the field due to player attendance, the other team must match the number of players.
- D. Players removed from the field due to injury can be replaced prior to restart.
- E. If a player is attended to on the field for an injury, they **MUST** be removed until the next substitution.
- F. **MERCY RULE:** If either team is leading by four (4) goals, the trailing team adds an additional player. The trailing team continues to add players for each goal over a 4 goal spread and removes a player in the event that they score and for each subsequent goal.

IV. Players Equipment

- A. Full player uniform includes:
 - 1. TCSA jersey
 - 2. Athletic Shorts or Pants
 - 3. Shin Guards (must be worn at all times)
 - 4. Socks (team color and completely covering the shin guards)
 - 5. Proper Footwear (soccer cleats or gym shoes)
 - a) Metal cleats are not permitted
 - b) Baseball or football cleats are not permitted
- B. Absolutely NO CASTS or SPLINTS are allowed, even if they are covered by padding.
- C. No jewelry can be worn, except medically necessary devices or religious relics.
- D. Hoods should be up around the head and tied securely OR tucked into the back of the jersey.
- E. Hard-billed caps are not allowed.
- F. Goalkeepers must wear a color that distinguishes them from both teams and the referee.

V. Referees

- A. The referee has jurisdiction the moment they step onto the complex.
- B. Referees have three (3) primary responsibilities:
 - 1. Player Safety
 - 2. Ensuring Fairness
 - 3. Promote a Fun Atmosphere
- C. Referee decisions are final regarding fouls, time, and score of game.
- D. Referees may terminate a game whenever they feel that the elements, interference of spectators or coaches, or other causes/situations warrant it.
- E. In the event a scheduled referee does not show up for a game, teams may find a suitable replacement referee. Once that replacement is agreed upon, that person(s) assumes the responsibilities of a league assigned referee.

VI. Assistant Referees

- A. Referees may ask parents of either team to help signal out of bounds on either sideline.
- B. IF referees ask for parents to help signal out of bounds, their sole duty shall be to let the referee know when the ball is out of play by raising their flag. The referee will decide which team earns a throw in, corner kick, goal kick.

VII. Duration of the Game

- A. See Age Group Specifics for the Duration of the Game and periods.
- B. Half time interval is not to exceed 5 minutes.
- C. Allowances should be made for all time lost through substitution, injuries, and time wasting. Any such allowance is at the sole discretion of the referee.

VIII. The Start and Restart of Play

- A. Choice of ends to defend or kick off is determined by a coin toss where the winner may select to kick off or defend a certain goal.
- B. A goal may be scored directly from a kick off (except U8 due to all kicks being indirect).
- C. The ball is determined to be “in play” when it is moved by a kicking motion (forward or backward).
- D. When restarting play after halftime, ends of field are swapped and kick off is taken by the opposite team that took the kick off in the first half.

IX. Ball In and Out of Play

- A. Ball is out of play when:
 - 1. It has completely crossed the sideline or goal line on the ground or in the air - *the entirety of the ball must cross the entirety of the line*
 - 2. The game is stopped by the referee
- B. Ball remains in play until the referee decides to stop play, including when:
 - 1. It rebounds from a goal post, crossbar, or corner flag pole into the field of play.
 - 2. It rebounds off a referee when they are in the field of play (unless the ball hitting the referee results in change of possession or unfair advantage to one team).

X. Method of Scoring

- A. Goal is scored when the whole ball passes over the entire goal line on the ground or in the air between the goal posts and under the crossbar.
- B. A goal can only be applied when no other infringement of the laws of the game has taken place.
- C. Restart after a goal is scored: kick off for the team scored upon

XI. Offside

- A. A player cannot be called offside if they:
 - 1. Are in their own half of the field (U12 and older)
 - 2. Are on their own side of the build out line (U10 and younger)
 - 3. Have the ball
 - 4. Are behind the ball
 - 5. Have two defenders between them and the goal line (typically 1 is the goalkeeper)
 - 6. Never become actively involved in the play
- B. Offside position is determined at the moment the ball is played by a teammate
- C. A player becomes actively involved in the play if they:
 - 1. Play, or attempt to play, the ball
 - 2. Screen the goalkeeper
 - 3. Affect the way an opponent would play by being in that position
 - 4. Gain an advantage by being in that position
- D. There are no offside violations if:
 - 1. The ball is played directly from a corner kick, goal kick, or throw in
 - 2. The ball was last played by an opponent
 - a) Note: Offside may be called on a deflection off an opponent, the referee, crossbar, goal post, or corner flag
- E. The restart for an offside infraction is an indirect free kick for the defending team.


XII. Fouls & Misconduct

A. Direct Free Kick Fouls (does not apply to U8) - Restart at spot of foul unless in penalty area

1. Kick (or attempt to kick) an opponent
2. Trip (or attempt to trip) an opponent
3. Jump at an opponent
4. Charge an opponent (the 'body control foul')
5. Charge an opponent from behind, unless that player is obstructing
6. Strike (or attempt to strike) an opponent
7. Spit at an opponent
8. Hold an opponent
9. Push an opponent
10. Deliberately handle the ball with arm or hand (any area below the shoulder)

B. Indirect Free Kick Fouls - Restart at the spot of the infraction

1. Dangerous play
 - a) High kick
 - b) Playing on the ground
 - c) Kicking a ball in the goalkeeper's hands
 - d) Anything the referee deems to be dangerous
2. Obstructing the goalkeeper while the ball is in their hands
3. Obstruct opponents while not playing the ball
4. Goalkeeper holding the ball for more than eight seconds after they have gained control
5. Goalkeepers dropping the ball and picking it back up
6. Intentional pass-bass violation by the goalkeeper (picking the ball up when deliberately played back by a teammate with the foot or directly from a throw in)
7. Slide Tackling (U10 and younger) where defending player does not make contact with attacking player

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8. Offside
 9. Any misconduct while the ball is in play
 10. Double touch on any restart
- C. Cautionable Offenses (Yellow Card) - Restart if play is stopped, IFK from infraction. Restart if ball is out of play when the infraction warranting yellow occurs, play resumes as it normally would have.
1. A player enters or re-enters the field without approval from the referee
 2. A player exchanges positions with the goalkeepers after the game has started without the approval of the referee
 3. A player leaves the field of play without having been given permission by the referee to do so
 4. A player persistently infringes the rules of the game
 5. A player shows dissent in any manner
 6. A player delays a restart
 7. A player fails to respect the required distance on a restart
 8. A player denies an obvious goal scoring opportunity due to a foul while a goal is scored
- D. Send Off Offenses (Red Card) Restart if play is stopped, IFK from infraction. Restart if ball is out of play when the infraction warranting red occurs, play resumes as it normally would have.
1. A player receives a 2nd yellow card
 2. A player exhibits violent conduct or serious foul play
 3. A player exhibits foul or abusive language
 4. A player denies an obvious goal scoring opportunity due to a foul without a goal being scored
 5. A player (other than the goalkeeper) deliberately handles the ball to prevent a goal
 6. A player spits in the direction of another player, the referee, or a team official
 7. If a player is ejected from the game due to a red card, the player is not replaced with another player and his team must play one player down.

XIII. Free Kick

- A. Indirect Free Kick - a goal cannot be scored directly from the kick, the ball must touch any other player prior to crossing the goal line
- B. Direct Free Kick - a goal can be scored directly from the kick (applies to U9 and older)
- C. Ball must be completely stopped and not moving at the time the kick is taken.
- D. Defending players must be 10 yards away from all free kicks.
- E. Free kicks are taken from the place of the infraction except:
 - 1. Within either goal area, the ball is placed on top of the goal area in line with where the infraction occurred (for attacking or defending team based on infraction)
 - 2. A direct free kick foul by the defending team which occurs in the penalty area, the ball is placed on the penalty spot for a penalty kick

XIV. Penalty Kick (does not apply to U8 and younger)

- A. Awarded due to a direct free kick foul by the defending team in their own penalty area
- B. One shooter from the attacking team
- C. One goalkeeper from the defending team
- D. All other players must be outside of penalty area, behind the ball, and outside of penalty arc.
- E. Goalkeeper must keep at least one foot on the line until the ball is kicked.
- F. Shooter may not deceive over the ball, but may delay on the run up to the ball.
- G. The ball is deemed to be in play when it is moved forward with a kicking motion.
- H. If there is a violation by the kicking team (or shooter) and a goal is scored, it is a retake.
- I. If there is a violation by the kicking team (or shooter) without a goal scored, defending team will have an indirect free kick at the spot of the violation.
- J. If there is a violation by the defending team (or keeper) and a goal is scored, the goal stands and the restart will be a kick off.
- K. If there is a violation by the defending team (or keeper) without a goal scored, it is a retake.
- L. If there is a violation by both teams simultaneously, it is a retake.

XV. Throw In

- A. Puts the ball back in play after it has completely crossed the sideline.
- B. Awarded to the team that did not last touch the ball before it left play.
- C. Is taken from the spot where the ball crossed the line by any player on the throwing team
- D. A proper throw in must have:
 - 1. Both feet of the player taking the throw touching the ground in some way
 - 2. Both feet of the player touching or behind the sideline
 - 3. Both hands of the player in contact with the ball and over the top of their head
- E. A violation of a proper throw in results in a throw in for the opposing team (2nd chance throw ins are given for U10 and younger players)
- F. A goal may not be scored directly from a throw in

XVI. Goal Kick

- A. Awarded to the defending team when an attacking player last touches the ball before it crosses the goal line outside of the goal posts.
- B. The ball may be placed anywhere in the goal area or on the line marking the goal area and may be taken by any player on the defending team.
- C. The ball is in play once it has been moved with a kicking motion (it does not need to leave the penalty area to be considered 'in play').
- D. A goal may be scored directly from a goal kick (except for U8 and younger).
- E. All attacking players must retreat out of penalty area and behind build out line (U10 and younger)

XVII. Corner Kick

- A. Awarded to the attacking team when a defending player last touches the ball before it crosses the goal line outside the goal posts.
- B. Ball is placed anywhere in or on the corner arc on the side of field where the ball went out of bounds and the corner flag may not be moved in order to take the kick.
- C. Defenders must be 10 yards away from the ball when it is played, the ball is considered in play when it has been moved with a kicking motion and goal may be directly scored from kick