

1st Grade Soccer

Gameday Rules and Reminders Updated FALL 2026



Items shown in **maroon** are changes from rules in effect for the previous age band.

- Single field format, **some referee coverage**, if no ref is present, coaches manage games
- **Four 12 minute quarters; 3 minute breaks**; Games must end on time
- 4 v 4 format / Size 3 ball / Pugg goals or Bownets / No goalkeeping
- Substitutions on the fly
- Coaches and “player bench” from both teams should be on one side of the field; spectators on the **opposite** side from the coaches and “player bench” (and not on end lines).
- No adults other than coaches on the designated playing area (“the field”)
- Shin guards are mandatory
- Closed toe footwear mandatory; cleats are optional
- No jewelry, no watches, no earrings (freshly pierced ears must be covered with bandaids)
- Nothing hard in players’ hair
- DCSC Socks, shorts, and club jersey required. On cold days, club jersey should be worn as outer layer.
- Coaches should introduce themselves and shake hands before and after games
- Continuous play model (keep players moving and ball in motion on the field) – [see info](#)
- For the start of the game and restarts after goals: ball is placed at mid-field
- Goal is to keep kids playing; field lines should be monitored for safety rather than strictly enforced
- Coaches supervise games from the sidelines as much as possible
- Follow [lopsided game document](#) for games with 3 plus goal difference
- If a player needs medical attention on the field, they should be substituted out and can return later in the game, and a substitute can immediately enter.
- No whistles or excessive sideline coaching
- No throw-ins; out-of-play balls rolled in or kicked in by adults (no throwing or bouncing)
- No offside rule
- No free kicks, no penalty kicks, no throw-ins, no goal kicks, no corner kicks
- No Yellow or red cards, if there is a persistent issue with a player they may be asked by the referee to sit out for the remainder of the game at the refs discretion
- No dangerous or unsportsmanlike conduct; No excessive celebrating
- No heading, no use of hands
- No slide tackling or tripping
- No dogs allowed at any DC Soccer Club practice or game
- Inclement weather and dangerous field conditions – cancel game, according to club’s safety guidelines. See website.

Note on game play

Everyone is learning - coaches, players, referees, and parents. Coaches must work together to de-escalate games that are too rough or whenever the score differential reaches three. Follow these protocols when there need to be game adjustments:

- Coaches should introduce themselves and shake hands before and after games
- Coaches and “player bench” from both teams should be on one side of the field; spectators on the opposite side from the coaches and “player bench” (and not on end lines).
- If there is a safety problem, a coach should jointly work with the other team's coach and the referee to temporarily stop the game. Be courteous and compassionate.
- When the score differential reaches three (or more), coaches should work together to do something that helps out the losing squad. [lopsided game document](#)
- No adult should ever angrily yell at anyone - a player on the other team, their own player, the other coach, or the referee.
- If the coaches of both squads need to discuss a safety matter with the referee, both sides should do so together.
- If a parent is concerned about the game, they should walk around the field to talk to their own coach, who can then approach the other coach to temporarily stop the game.
- No DCSC staff will be onsite for these games. The Club asks the coaches, the referee, and the parents to work together on behalf of the kids on both squads.