

# ADSL Junior Rules of Competition

Under 7 and Under 8

Based on  
US Youth Soccer Official Under 10 Playing Recommendations and FIFA Official Laws of  
the Game

## Junior Age Group - Under 7 and Under 8

### Rule 1 – The Field of Play:

A. Dimensions: The field of play must be rectangular. The length of the sideline must be greater than the length of the goal line.

B. Length: minimum 40 yards, maximum 50 yards (ASA modification).

C. Width: minimum 35 yards, maximum 45 yards (ASA modification).

D. Field Markings:

Distinctive lines not more than five (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 eight (8) yards is marked around it.

E. The Goal Area: A goal area is defined at each end of the field as follows (see area titled “Goalie box” in picture above). The area bounded by these lines and the goal line is the goal area.

F. The Penalty Area: There is NO penalty area in this age group.

G. Flag posts: A flag post, not less than 1.5 m (5 ft) high, with a non-pointed top and a flag is placed at each corner.

H. The Corner Arc: A quarter circle with a radius of 1 m (1 yd) from each corner flag post is drawn inside the field of play.

I. Goals: Goals must be placed on the center of each goal line. They consist of two upright posts equidistant from the corner flag posts and joined at the top by a horizontal crossbar.

J. Safety: Goals must be anchored securely to the ground or properly weighted (1-2 sandbags). Portable goals may only be used if they satisfy this requirement.

K. Buildout Line: There is NO buildout line for this age group.



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**Rule 2 – The Ball:** Size four (4).

**Rule 3 – The Number of Players:** A match is played by two teams, each consisting of a maximum of 7 players and a minimum of 5 players, one of whom is the goalkeeper. Teams and matches may be coed.

**Rule 4 – Substitutions:** Allowed for either team on any restart (when the ball is out of bounds), no matter who is in possession of the restart. This includes throw-ins, goal kicks, corner kicks, free kicks, or injury checks. Substitutions CANNOT be made while gameplay is live. When ready to make substitutions, coaches must notify the referee in which they will wave the players on the field at the next available opportunity.

**Rule 5 – The Players' Equipment:**

- A. The basic equipment of a player includes a jersey or shirt, shorts, socks, shin guards, and footwear.
- B. Shin guards are covered entirely by the socks; are made of rubber, plastic, or similar substances; and provide a reasonable degree of protection.
- C. Non-uniform clothing is allowed based on weather conditions underneath the game jersey, but uniforms must distinguish teams.
- D. Each goalkeeper wears colors that distinguish him or her from the other players and the referees.
- E. ALL jewelry and ornaments of any sort such as necklaces, earrings, and bracelets are NOT allowed. This rule exists in all outstanding leagues for the players safety.
- F. If both teams are wearing jerseys of a similar color, one team must wear pinnies of a different color to distinguish themselves on the field. Referees should initiate this process before the game starts.

**Rule 7 – Duration of the Match:**

Matches are divided into two (2) equal halves of 22 minutes each, with a five (5) minute halftime.

**Rule 8 – The Referee:**

**A. Each decision of the ADSL referees is final.**

- B. All rule infringements shall be briefly explained to the offending player.
- C. There are no yellow or red cards given for player offenses, however a referee may ask the coach to remove a player for a “timeout” or “break” if there is any excessive, poor behavior that does not align with league rules and/or code of conduct.

**Rule 10 – The Start and Restart of Play:**

A. Preliminaries:

1. The referee decides which team takes the kick-off to start the match. The opposite team will then receive the kickoff for the next half of the game.

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2. Teams must switch sides at halftime. This does not apply to switching benches, it only applies to switching sides on the field of play.

B. Kick-off: A kick-off is a way of starting or restarting play at the start of the match, after a goal has been scored, and at the start of each half. A goal may not be scored directly from the kick-off.

1. Procedure:

- a. All players are in their own half of the field.
- b. The opponents of the team taking the kick-off are at least eight (8) yards from the ball (outside the center circle) until the ball is in play.
- c. The ball is stationary on the centermark.
- d. The referee gives a signal, and the ball is in play when it is kicked and moves.
- e. The kicker does not touch the ball a second time until it has touched another player.
- f. After a team scores a goal, the kick-off is taken by the other team.
- g. For any infringement of the kick-off procedure, the kick-off is retaken or awarded to the other team.

## **Rule 11 – The Ball In and Out of Play:**

The ball is out of play when:

1. The entire ball has crossed the goal line or sideline, whether on the ground or in the air.
2. Play has been stopped by the referee.

## **Rule 12 – The Method of Scoring:**

A goal is scored when the entire ball passes over the goal line, between the goalposts and under the crossbar, provided that no infringement of the Rules of Competition has been committed previously by the team scoring the goal.

## **Rule 13 – Offside:**

- A. It is not a penalty in itself to be in an offside position.
- B. A player **IS** in the offside position if he or she is nearer to the opponents' goal line than both the ball and the second to last opponent.
- C. A player **IS NOT** in an offside position if:
1. He or she is in his or her own half of the playing field.
  2. He or she is even with the second to last opponent.
  3. He or she is even with the last two opponents.
- D. Offside Penalty: An offside player is only penalized if, at the moment the ball is played forward by one of his or her team-mates, in the opinion of the referee he or she is involved in the play by:
1. Interfering with play, or
  2. Interfering with an opponent, or

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3. Gaining advantage by being in that position.

E. No Penalty: There is no offside penalty if a player receives the ball directly from: A goal kick, a throw in, or a corner kick .

F. For any offside penalty, the referee awards an indirect free kick to the opposing team to be taken from the place where the infringement occurred.

### **Rule 14 – Fouls and Misconduct:**

ALL fouls will result in an INDIRECT free kick (ASA modified). The referee will explain all infractions to the offending player.

A. An indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team if a player commits any of the following offenses in a manner considered by the referee to be careless, reckless, or using excessive force:

1. Kicks or attempts to kick an opponent.
2. Trips or attempts to trip an opponent.
3. Jumps at an opponent.
4. Charges an opponent.
5. Strikes or attempts to strike an opponent.
6. Pushes an opponent.
7. Tackles an opponent to gain possession of the ball, making contact with the opponent before touching the ball.
8. Holds an opponent.
9. Spits at an opponent.
10. Plays in a dangerous manner – this includes slide tackling. NO slide tackling allowed at all.
11. Impedes the progress of an opponent.
12. Prevents the goalkeeper from releasing the ball from his hands.
13. Handles the ball deliberately (except for the goalkeeper within his own penalty area).

B. No ball may be directly punted or drop-kicked in the air by the goalkeeper. This infraction is punished by giving the ball to the opponents for an indirect free kick taken at the center spot on the halfway line.

C. An indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team if a goalkeeper, inside his own penalty area, commits any of the following three offenses: (When any of these fouls occur, the kick is taken at the closest spot outside the penalty area – ASA modification)

1. Takes more than **ten** seconds while controlling the ball with his hands before releasing it from his possession.
2. Touches the ball again with his hands after it has been released from his possession and has not touched any other player.
3. Touches the ball with his hands after it has been intentionally kicked to him by a team-mate or given to him from a throw-in taken by a team-mate.

### **Rule 15 – Indirect Free Kicks:**

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- A. For indirect free kicks, the ball must be stationary when the kick is taken, and the kicker does not touch the ball a second time until it has touched another player.
- B. All opponents are at least eight (8) yards from the ball until after the first touch.
- C. Ball Enters the Goal: A goal can be scored ONLY if the ball subsequently touches another player before it enters the goal.
  - 1. If an indirect free kick is kicked directly into the opponents' goal, a goal kick is awarded.
  - 2. If an indirect free kick is kicked directly into the team's own goal, a corner kick is awarded to the opposing team.

### **Rule 16 – The Penalty Kick:**

There are **NO** penalty kicks (ASA modification). If the attacking team is fouled within the defending team's penalty area, the attacking team shall be awarded an indirect free kick at the edge of the penalty area nearest to where the infringement occurred.

### **Rule 17 – The Throw-In:**

A throw-in is a method of restarting play. A goal cannot be scored directly from a throw-in.

- A. A throw-in is awarded:
  - 1. When the entire ball passes over the sideline, either on the ground or in the air.
  - 2. From the point where it crossed the sideline.
  - 3. To the opponents of the player who last touched the ball.
- B. Throw-in Procedure: At the moment of delivering the ball, the thrower:
  - 1. Faces the field of play.
  - 2. Has part of each foot either on the sideline or on the ground outside the sideline.
  - 3. Uses both hands.
  - 4. Delivers the ball from behind and over his head.
- C. The thrower may not touch the ball again until it has touched another player.
- D. The ball is in play immediately after it enters the field of play.
- E. One (1) re-throw be allowed if the player commits a foul throw on his or her first attempt. The referee will explain what the player did wrong. If the same team commits a false throw-in on the second try then the other team will be awarded a throw-in to restart the game.

### **Rule 18 – The Goal Kick:**

A goal kick is a method of restarting play. A goal may be scored directly from a goal kick, but only against the opposing team.

- A. A goal kick is awarded when the entire ball, having last touched a player of the attacking team, passes over the goal line, either on the ground or in the air, and a goal is not scored.
- B. Goal Kick Procedure:
  - 1. The ball is kicked from any point within the penalty area by a player of the defending team.

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2. Opponents remain behind the buildout line until the ball has been played.
3. The kicker does not play the ball a second time until it has touched another player.
4. The ball is in play when it is kicked directly beyond the penalty area.

### **Rule 19 – The Corner Kick:**

A corner kick is a method of restarting play. A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick, but only against the opposing team.

- A. A corner kick is awarded when the entire ball, having last touched a player of the defending team, passes over the goal line, either on the ground or in the air, and a goal is not scored.
- B. Corner Kick Procedure: The ball is placed inside the corner arc at the nearest corner flag post.
  1. The corner flag post is not moved.
  2. Opponents remain at least eight (8) yards from the ball until it is in play.
  3. The ball is kicked by a player of the attacking team.
  4. The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves.
  5. The kicker does not play the ball a second time until it has touched another player.

### **Rule 20 – Miscellaneous Rules:**

- A. All non-playing players and coaches must remain at least two (2) yards from the sideline. Parents will be on the opposite side of the field than the player sideline.
  1. Referees will not begin the match unless all spectators are on the spectator side of the field. For example, any parents standing or sitting behind the goal line will be instructed to move.
- B. All parents and spectators must remain at least six (6) yards beyond the sideline.
- C. Players and coaches will shake hands after the game's completion.
- D. Coaches are responsible for their actions as well as those of their team parents and spectators (please refer to the ADSL Coaches Code of Conduct).
- E. No players will be placed permanently in front of their goal for defense except for goalies.
- F. NO SLIDE TACKLING or playing on the ground in any situation. The referees are instructed to stop the game for any player that is on the ground for longer than three seconds.
- G. Only three (3) approved coaches are allowed to be on the sideline per team, unless agreed otherwise with the League Commissioner.
- H. Coaches are only allowed on the sidelines with their team if approved by the league/commissioner. Coaches are approved by completing a background check with Anne Arundel County Recreation & Parks Department and submitting forms involving league policy and code of conduct. Once coaches are approved they will receive a Coaches Pass to wear at each game while on the sideline.