



LAFC So Cal Rec

West Valley Soccer League (1966 – 2021)

Rules

5/20/2020

**All coaches should have a copy of this document with them at all times. (Games and practice)
Please provide it to LAFC So Cal Rec officials upon request.**

LAFC So Cal Rec (the "League") is a California nonprofit corporation. It requires that all parent, coaches, players, family members and guests (collectively "participants") at any game or practice adhere to the rules of the League, our state association, US Club Soccer and the rules of the game as established by FIFA and adopted by US Club Soccer, a portion of which are included below.

The LAFC So Cal Youth Board of Directors, at its discretion, reserves the right to deny participation of any player, parent, coach, team, or organization if the board of directors deems any actions or activities are not in the best interest of the league.

BY THEIR INVOLVEMENT IN LEAGUE ACTIVITIES, EACH PARTICIPANT AGREES TO ABIDE BY THOSE RULES AND REGULATIONS AND ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEIR FAMILY AND GUESTS.

If you have a problem with the way a team is playing or the way a coach's is coaching or if a team will not concede the field to you at the appropriate time.

Please do not take it in your own hands to confront the coach/parents to solve the problem. You can NOT walk onto the field and try and stop the game yourself.

(Report the issue to LAFC So Cal Rec so we can take care of it)

Adults confronting each other at a youth sporting event is not appropriate under any circumstances!

If you feel yourself losing your temper or you have a parent on your team that is losing it.

Please calm them down. Take the high road and then send your complaints or concerns to LAFC So Cal Rec

LAFC So Cal Rec has a zero tolerance policy for adult confrontation of any kind. Under any circumstance any adult breaking this rule will be immediately removed from the program.

The League Bylaws provide: The mission of LAFC So Cal Rec is to implant firmly in the youth of the community the ideals of good sportsmanship, honesty, loyalty, courage, reverence and respect for authority, so that they may be well adjusted, finer, stronger and happier youths and will grow to be good, clean, healthy and trustworthy adults. The primary goal and emphasis of the League is to provide a positive and fun recreational soccer experience with an emphasis on participation and not on winning.

Recreational soccer: Is that soccer program that is primarily devoted to the enjoyment and development of soccer players without the emphasis on travel or high level competition. The purpose of recreational soccer is to provide an opportunity for the participants to have fun, learn the sport and develop life skills including a lifelong love of the game

Only a team's registered coach(es) may instruct and direct the team, and only from the designated coaching area on the team's side of the field. Participants, except for players in the game, must remain on their designated side throughout the game. Each coach must have at least a Soccer license from LAFC So Cal & US Club Soccer. Complete the Risk Management Programs and Safesport Training.

Parent/Child commitment - It is usually understood that when a parent signs up their child to play in the League that some level of commitment is then made to the team and the league. *three (3) unexcused absences (practice or games) are grounds for dismissal from the team.* With \$0 refund

Non-coaches agree to:

- (A) Allow only the coaches to instruct the team during the game without interference.
- (B) Not instruct or coach the players during the game.
- (C) Remain in the spectator area along the sidelines behind the coach and at least three yards off the sidelines.
- (D) Not stand or loiter along or near the goals at the ends of the field.
- (E) Not criticize or yell at the referees or other participants, or express dissent or displeasure over calls or non-calls in the games.**
- (F) Not use foul or abusive language.
- (G) Offer only positive encouragement to the players or others on the field of play.

"Bad" calls by the referee are a part of youth soccer that usually go both ways and do not detract from the players' experience unless participants set a bad example of voicing dissent to the referee. Continued misconduct in this area may result in the referee either removing the Participant or the coach of the team from the field for the remainder of the game and the entirety of the next game, and subject that person to discipline by the League or US Club Soccer, which have the authority to suspend or remove the offending persons from the League or US Club Soccer sanctioned events.

Coaches may provide direction to their own team on points of strategy and position, provided.

- (A) no mechanical or electrical devices are used.
- (B) the tone of the voice is informative and not derogatory.
- (C) each coach, substitute, or player remains within 15 yards on either side of the midfield line
- (D) no coach, substitute, or player makes derogatory remarks or gestures to the referees, other players, substitutes, or spectators;
- (E) no coach, substitute, or player uses profanity;
- (F) no coach, substitute, or player incites in any manner, disruptive behavior. Coaches are encouraged to emphasize development of soccer skills and self esteem, and to give players an opportunity to play different positions.

Part of each child's emotional growth involves learning to deal with injuries. Many injuries are more emotional than physical, and can become exaggerated if followed by hysterical behavior, including rushing onto the field. Participants shall not enter the field of play until instructed to do so by the referee. Usually only the coach will be allowed on the field. The League's first concern is the player's safety. However, based on many years of experience the League has learned that an injured player's safety is seldom compromised if play is allowed to continue for several seconds until the next regular stoppage in play.

The League has obtained permission for use of school and park facilities, and each Participant agrees to abide by the rules and conditions imposed by these facilities, including but not limited to prohibitions on smoking, alcohol, littering, pets **NO DOGS!**, cycling, rollerblading, skating and skateboarding, foul and abusive language, and any illegal activity. Participants agree to keep the facilities clean and pick up trash even if deposited by others.

LAFC So Cal Rec Game Cancellation Policy

Every effort is made to play all games during the fall and spring season. The following situations may result in game cancellation.

1. Wet and unsafe field conditions as determined by the league. This does not mean games are canceled simply because it is raining.
2. Determination by an outside party (school district) that the fields are unusable.

3. Extreme heat conditions forecasted to exceed 105 F at the specific field locations. Morning games may be held if the temperature is below that level.

4. Very poor air quality in Woodland Hills area due to fires (AQMD index rating of Unhealthy)

Every season we allocate one make up weekend in case we have cancellations. LAFC So Cal Rec does everything in its power to give teams the appropriate number of weekends. Unfortunately, LAFC So Cal Rec is not responsible for canceled games due to acts of God.

A Code of Conduct for Coaches

As a Soccer Coach, I:

1. agree to abide by the rules/directives of the LAFC So Cal Rec, US Club Soccer, the USYSA, the USSF, and FIFA;

2. agree to dress in a clean and proper manner while coaching, because coaches are an example to their players;

3. agree to hold one team practice each week, to encourage participation in the associations skills development clinic and to be punctual in arriving for practices and games;

4. agree not to leave practices or games until all players have been picked up by a parent, guardian, or other authorized adult;

5. will refrain from teaching unsafe or unsportsmanlike methods to the players;

6. will refrain from teaching demeaning songs, cheers, or chants to the players;

7. will refrain from seeking any advantage beyond that of superior skill, tactics and fitness;

8. understand that official decisions by the referees should be accepted without rancor or anger, no matter how unfair they may seem; **I further understand that the use of behavior, verbal or physical, which is intimidating toward the referee is grounds for immediate dismissal as a Coach;**

9. will teach the players respect for themselves, the opponent, and the referee;

10. will teach the players sportsmanship and proper on-field conduct;

11. will provide a fun learning environment for the players;

12. will teach progressive improvements in technical proficiency and tactical knowledge while promoting self-esteem equally in all players;

13. will instruct parents in proper behavior at games, including respect for the referee, the opposing parents, and both sets of players; I understand that spectator control is my responsibility, and if the referee must take measures to control the game, he/she cannot take them with the parents so he/she will take them with me, as Coach;

14. will encourage safe, competitive, fair play and will reward improvement and effort, regardless of skill, and regardless of the outcome of any game.

15. will ensure that my practice and game fields have been cleared of trash and players belongings before leaving the field.

Winning is desirable, but winning at any cost defeats the purpose of the game. Losing can be a triumph when the team has given its best effort. All our teams should be a positive example for all players and parents. We will show respect to everyone, both on and off the field. It is the duty of the Coaches as leaders of the team, to teach their team these important values.

A Code of Conduct for All Parents

I/We will:

* encourage fair play.

* cheer in a positive manner for all players.

* not criticize the opponents of our team.

Field dimensions:

Div 4, 5 & Div 6 width = 20 yards, length = 30 yards

Div 7 & Div 8 width = 20/25 yards, length = 30/35 yards

Div 9 & Div 10 width = 30 yards, length = 40 yards

Div 11 & Div 12 width = 40 yards, length = 50 yards

Div 13 & Up width = 50 yards, length = 60

- Markings: half line, center spot, 4 corner arcs with 1 yard radius, sidelines and goal lines, goal area. (Div 4, 5 & 6 no goal area)
- Div 9 – Div 10 The build out line is 18 yards from each goal line

Duration of the Game

- Div 4, 5 & 6 the game is to be divided into four 7 minute quarters with a 5-minute half-time break. Games have a 45 min time window
- Div 7 & up the game is to be divided into four 10 minute quarters with a 5-minute half-time break. Games have a 60 min time window
- Quarter breaks approximately 1 to 2 minutes in duration.
The quarter break should be taken at a natural stoppage in play (i.e., throw in)

Games will be scheduled for 1 hour and every effort should be made to keep game time within the scheduled

DO NOT WASTE PLAYING TIME

Warm up the kids before your field time. Then once the field is vacated by the prior games, the new game jumps on and plays the game immediately.

- **The game must end before the next game start time.**

Referees

Refereeing requirement in LAFC So Cal Rec

All teams in division 9 and above will be responsible to provide the name and email address of a volunteer referee. At the time of registration.

This referee will need to referee a minimum of 4 games (Not your team's games)

Only teams that have completed 4 referee time slots will be scheduled to play on the last day of the season.

Any referee that referees 10 games in a season will receive a 100% discount to their child's fees for the following season. Referees can be as young as 12 years old. Referees will need to attend a 2 hour training session. We will have a number of training sessions prior to the season start.

- Protect the players. This is their first duty.
- Parent/Coach referees should be familiar with the modified rules.
- Enforces the rules and briefly explains rule violations to player.
- Report any coach's misbehavior to your assignor/coordinator.
- **Keep game time - ensure that games start and end on time.**
- It is the parent-referee's responsibility to stop the game for fouls, quarter, and half-time breaks.

- If a referee does not show-up for your game, Get a parent or coach to volunteer to referee and go ahead & start the game on time.
- ALL official decisions should be accepted.....

PLEASE understand that **ALL** official decisions by the referees should be **accepted** without rancor or anger, no matter how unfair they may seem; & further understand that the use of behavior, verbal or physical, which is intimidating toward the referee, is grounds for immediate dismissal as a Coach.

If a parent or spectator verbally or physically intimidates the referee. The referee can Stop the game until the parent or spectator in question leaves the field.

All coaches are required to submit the names of any parent / spectator breaking this rule. LAFC So Cal Rec has a zero tolerance to this behavior. Anybody breaking this rule is subject to being banned from the league.

RULE 2 - Equipment

The basic equipment for soccer required by LAFC So Cal Rec & FIFA are:

- Adidas LAFC So Cal Rec Jersey - with LAFC So Cal Rec logo
- Adidas shorts
- Adidas socks
- New uniforms may be purchased through Soccer.com. Details will be sent once teams are formed.
- Prior season and hand-me-down LAFC So Cal Rec uniforms may be worn.
- Uniforms are not included with registration fees.
- Jersey numbers are not required since we don't keep scores or standings
- shin guards
- footwear

Shin guards

According to FIFA, shinguards should be "**covered entirely by the stockings**, *Made of a suitable material (rubber, plastic, or similar substance), and provide a reasonable degree of protection.*

LAFC So Cal Rec will not allow a person to play or practice soccer without shin guards.

Please see – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=meP-gr7xghs>

Coaches, it's a good idea to carry an extra pair of shin guards as part of your regular equipment, so that when the parents are irresponsible, the child is not penalized.

Purchasing good shin guards should be a top priority for every parent.

Footwear

There are no requirements by FIFA that your child have shoes with cleats. Technically, regular tennis shoes are fine - not recommended, but legal. Of course.

There is also this general safety clause in the FIFA rules:

NO Baseball shoes!!! Baseball shoes are not designed for soccer (running & kicking a ball) &

the cleats are dangerous!

A player must not use equipment or wear anything which is dangerous to himself or another player (including any kind of jewelry).

No necklaces, earrings, nose rings, belly rings, bracelets, or tiaras. Soft "scrunchies" in the hair are generally allowed as are soft head stockings. If a child just had their ears pierced, the studs should be covered with tape or removed. *Many leagues will require that the studs be removed.* As one fellow commented, is the hole going to grow back in an hour?

No player will be allowed to play with a **hard cast** (padded or otherwise).

Lastly, the goalkeeper must wear colors which distinguishes him/her from the other players, the referee, and the assistant referees.

Ball Size-

Size 3 – Div 5, 6, 7, 8.

Size 4 – Div 9, 10, 11, 12.

Size 5 – Div 13, 14, 15.

- Ball in good condition
- Game ball provided by Home team.

RULE 3 – Team

Coaches can assemble their own team.

Coach must submit the appropriate number of applications prior to the official deadline. If you do not have a full team the league will assign pool players to your teams. Applications received after the deadline will be considered waiting list players and will only be assigned to your team if there are no more Pool players that signed up on time.

The only time you would not get pool players if there were not enough pool players to hand out that year.

- **Can I play UP an age group?** Yes (If it's OK with the coach of your team)
- **Can I play Down an age group?** NO Sorry, All players must play age appropriate based on the age groups posted on our website.
- **Can I play on a Club team and Play LAFC So Cal Rec?** No Fall, Yes Spring
- **Can I play on 2 LAFC So Cal Rec teams?** No Sorry
- **Can I play on an AYSO team and Play LAFC So Cal Rec or Club?** Yes (But we do not recommend)

Number of Players

The minimum number of players is (some teams have more)

Div. 5/6 - 6 players for each team.

Div. 7/8 - 7 players for each team.

Div. 9/10 - 9 players for each team.

Div. 11 and up - 12 players for each team.

West Valley Soccer League reserves the right to add additional players to all teams.

No team can refuse a player added to their team by the league.

- Div. 4, 5 & 6 No more than 4 players from each team on the field.
NO GOALKEEPERS!
- Div. 7 & 8 No more than 5 players from each team on the field.
1 Goalkeeper, 4 field players, 2 Subs.
- Div. 9 & 10 No more than 7 players from each team on the field.
1 Goalkeeper, 6 field players, 2 Subs.
- Div. 11 and up. No more than 9 players from each team on the field.
1 Goalkeeper, 8 field players, 3 Subs.
- LAFC So Cal Rec reserves the right to change any of these division numbers depending on the number of players that are registered in any given year
- **Substitutions** may be made during dead-ball situations ONLY regardless of possession. Teams must gain the referees attention. Substitutions should not be made on the fly! And you can not Sub your goalkeeper on a PK (unless the keeper is injured)
- **Playing time:** Each player SHOULD BE GIVEN EQUAL play time. (More than 50%) Unless the player is unable to play due to injury or illness or unwilling to play, there are **NO** acceptable exceptions.

Home team

- Home team picks Sidelines

SIDELINES - Each team and **ALL** their parents **AND** their coaches should be on opposite sideline. Keep yourself, your players and your parents back at least 3 feet from the sidelines so the refs can do their job and players don't run into those on the side lines.

Borrowing players

If you don't have enough players (due to injuries or sickness) you can borrow players from the game prior to yours, or borrow your opponent substitutes to even out the number of players.

Club players cannot play in a LAFC So Cal game. These players could lose their eligibility to play US Club Soccer.

You can only borrow players from LAFC So Cal Rec teams. The player should have already played for their official team that day. (borrowed player should not play for you first and then their official team later that day)

Borrowed players **MUST** be age appropriate or younger. There is no such thing as a forfeit. play the game!

You should only borrow players from other teams if you do not have enough players to field a complete team (7 if playing 7 Vs 7) Borrowed players should not take playing time from players registered to your team.

Under no circumstances are you allowed to play a player not registered to LAFC So Cal Rec. Coaches who knowingly play a player not registered to LAFC So Cal Rec will be subject to immediate removal as coach. Playing a non registered player not only opens the league to litigation. The coach would also open him or herself up to personal liability for knowingly playing a non registered player.

RULE 4 – Start and Restart

A kick-off is the way a soccer game is started or restarted:

- At the start of a game
- After a goal has been scored
- At the start of the second half

The ball is placed in the center of the field. All players must be in their own half of the field and the opponents of the team taking the kick-off must be at least 10 yards from the ball. This distance is indicated by the center circle on the field and will vary some with age.

Normally the referee will blow his/her whistle to indicate they are ready for the kickoff.

The ball is in play when it is kicked.

Note that the two-touch rule applies here ([see Rule 10](#)).

After a team scores a goal, the kick-off is taken by the other team.

Ball In and Out of Play

- The ball is out of play when the whole ball crosses the outside edge of the touch line or the goal line, or the referee stops the game.
- The ball is in play at all other times; even if it bounces off the referee, corner flag, goal posts and crossbar, as long as it does not go out of play first.

RULE 5 - No Hands, please

I bet you knew that one. Most people who know nothing about soccer still know that you aren't supposed to use your hands unless you're the goalie.

A couple of points to clarify.

First, the rule for a hand ball includes using any part of the body from the tips of the fingers to the shoulder.

Second, the proper way to look at this soccer rule is that a player cannot "handle" the ball. A ball that is kicked and hits a player's hand or arm is not a hand ball. This means that the referee must use his or her own judgment to some extent in determining whether or not a hand ball is accidental contact or a purposeful attempt to gain an advantage.

Put another way, the referee must determine if the play was

Ball to Hand (legal)

Or

Hand to Ball (illegal)

Believe it or not, there is also a situation in which the goalie cannot use his/her hands. This is sometimes called the back-pass rule. Goalkeepers cannot pick up a pass that came directly from one of their teammates. In this case, the goalkeeper must use his feet. Infraction of this soccer rule will result in an indirect kick from the point of the infraction. **(The back-pass rule does not apply in LAFC So Cal Rec)**

RULE 6 - Throw-ins

A throw-in is taken when the ball crosses a sideline and leaves the field.

Div 4, 5 & Div 6 There are no throw-ins for this age division. A kick-in is taken to restart play when the ball goes over the touch line. Note that the two-touch rule applies here (see Rule 10).

- The kicker cannot play the ball again until it is touched by another player.
- A goal cannot be scored directly from a kick-in.

The two basic soccer rules for a proper throw-in are to have both feet on the ground and to throw the ball with both hands over the head.

To clarify, both feet must be on the ground **when the ball is thrown**. The player can hop, run, or do cartwheels up to the point where the ball is released but not *when* the ball is released. Dragging the toes of one foot is considered legal.

For teaching purposes WVSL allows players in Div. 7 - 9 to take more than 1 attempt.

SIMPLE THROW-IN (for beginning players)

Stand facing the field with feet apart

Can stand on or behind the side line

Both feet must stay on the ground

Place one hand on each side of the ball

Must use both hands equally (can't use only one hand & if there is a lot of side spin the referee may say one hand was used too much)

Take the ball behind the head and throw forward onto the field

Note that the two-touch rule applies here (see Rule 10). You cannot throw to yourself

RULE 7 - Corner Kicks & Goal Kicks

A corner kick or goal kick is taken when the ball leaves the field across a goal line – you know, either end of the field with a goal.

If the offensive team kicks it out, play is restarted with a goal kick. If the defensive team kicks it out, play is restarted with a corner kick.

The goal kick is taken from anywhere inside the “goalie box” as it is affectionately called. It can be taken by any player, not just the goalkeeper.

Div. 4 – Div. 6 When a team has a goal kick, the opposing team must move behind the ½ way line.

Div. 7 – Div. 8 When the goalkeeper has the ball either during play (From the opponent) or from a goal kick, the opposing team must move behind the ½ way line.

Div. 9 – Div. 10 When the goalkeeper has the ball either during play (From the opponent) or from a goal kick, the opposing team must move behind the build out line.

On a goal kick the team without the ball can only cross the line after the second attacking player has touch the ball. If the ball is kicked down the field the team without the ball can receive the ball as long as it has crossed the build out line.

If the goalkeeper has the ball in their hands from open play. The team without the ball can cross the line as soon as the goalkeeper releases possession. If the goalkeeper puts the ball on the ground the ball is live and the team without the ball can cross the line.

The corner kick is taken from – yes, you guessed it – the corner nearest to where the ball left the field.

Goalkeeper drop kicks

Goalkeeper Release (No Punts): Punts and drop kicks **are not** permitted.

The ball must be distributed by a throw, place kick, or kick from a dribble.

If the goalkeepers are even remotely in control of the ball, any player interfering with the goalkeeper or attempting to kick the ball from the goalkeepers control or semi control must be whistled for a foul. The goalkeepers must be protected.

RULE 8 - Direct and Indirect Free Kicks

Direct and indirect kicks are two primary ways that play is restarted after the referee stops play for an infraction. For both of these the ball must be stationary before it is kicked and the opposing players should be a minimum of 10 yards away. The 10 yard allowance is often reduced for the smaller age groups and is left up to the discretion of the referee.

Div. 4 – Div. 10 All free kicks are indirect - a goal may not be scored until the ball has been played or touched by a second player of either team.

The kick is taken from the point of the foul, unless the foul was committed by a defending player when his own goal, in which case the kick is taken from the point on the goal box nearest to where the foul was committed.

The simple difference between the two is this: On a direct kick you can score by kicking the ball *directly* into the goal. On an indirect kick you cannot score. An indirect kick must be touched by another player before it can go into the goal – that is the kicker and a second person.

As a parent on the sideline, you can tell whether the kick is direct or indirect by looking at the referee. For an indirect kick, the referee will hold one arm straight up in the air until the second person touches the ball. No arm up, it's a direct kick.

There are many soccer rules around what causes a direct or indirect kick. In general, a direct kick comes from a contact foul or hand ball. Everything else is indirect.

RULE 9 - Penalty Kick

Div. 11 & up A penalty kick results from a contact foul or hand ball by the defending team within the penalty area – the large box on either end of the field. So it's a type of direct kick also.

The ball is placed on the penalty spot or mark, 12 yards in front of the center of the goal. All players must remain outside the penalty area and the penalty arc until the ball is kicked. The goalkeeper must have both feet on the goal line until the ball is kicked.

If after the ball is kicked, it rebounds off of the keeper and stays on the field, the ball is “live” and anyone can play it.

If after the ball is kicked, it rebounds off of the goal and stays on the field, the ball is “live” and anyone can play it **with the exception of the person who just kicked the ball**. If the ball rebounds off of the goal and back into play, the person who kicked the ball cannot play it until the ball is touched by another player – otherwise he/she will be called for two touches ([the next rule](#)).

RULE 10 - Two-touch Rule

A player cannot touch the ball twice in a row when putting the ball in play. You will see this called many times in youth soccer. It applies everywhere. You will see it frequently on kick-offs, corner kicks, or direct and indirect kicks. If a kid barely hits the ball and decides to take another swipe at it, that is a two-touch violation. This also applies to throw-ins. A kid cannot throw the ball in and then kick it. Nope. No way. No can do.

The only exception to this rule is on a drop ball restart.

Drop Ball: When the referee stops the game for an injury, a non-player on the field, or any other unusual cause, the game is restarted with a drop ball.

- The ball must touch the ground before it can be played. Since the referee put the ball in play, it can be touched more than once by the first player to touch it.

RULE 11 – Heading

1. There is no deliberate heading in Div. 4 – Div. 12 games (and no heading at practice).
2. If a defending player deliberately heads the ball inside the penalty box, an INDIRECT FREE KICK is awarded to the attacking team perpendicular to the spot of the infraction just OUTSIDE THE PENALTY AREA. NOT inside the penalty area. This means no indirect free kicks inside the penalty box due to the defending player deliberately heading the ball.
3. If an attacking player deliberately heads the ball inside the penalty box, an INDIRECT FREE KICK is awarded to the defending team from the spot of the infraction.

RULE 12 – Fouls and Punishment

Div. 4 – Div. 10 All fouls will result in an indirect free kick with opponent 10 yards away. Referee should explain all infractions to the offending player. *NO Direct free kicks, NO penalty kicks.*

Fouls: (The ball must be in play for a foul to be called. The game is restarted with an indirect free kick at the spot of the foul or from the goal arc if the foul was committed by the defending team inside the goal arc):

Div. 11 and up. Direct free kicks, penalty kicks...

- Kicking or trying to kick an opponent
- Tripping or attempting to trip an opponent (opponent does not need to fall down)
- Jumping at an opponent
- Charging (running into) an opponent
- Striking or attempting to strike an opponent
- Pushing an opponent
- Spitting at an opponent
- Holding an opponent
- Deliberately handling the ball with hand or arms (not to be called unless the player is trying to contact the ball)
- Dangerous play (for example: high kicking near another players head; playing the ball while lying on the ground when an opponent is near; trying to head a low ball that someone else is trying to play with their foot_
- Getting between a player and the ball when the ball is not within playing distance (impeding)
- Yelling or screaming to intimidate play
- If the goalkeepers are even remotely in control of the ball, any player interfering with the goalkeeper or attempting to kick the ball from the goalkeepers control or semi control must be whistled for a foul. The goalkeepers must be protected.

The common rule of thumb on fouls is “If it looks like a foul, it probably is.”

A player cannot kick, trip, jump at, charge, strike, push, hold, or spit at an opponent.

So what’s the problem?

Soccer can be a physical, contact sport when two opposing players both want the soccer ball and no parent or grandparent likes it when little Susie loses the ball and ends up on the ground!

“Foul!” cries the parent. **“Little Susie was pushed!”**

What you need to know as a parent is that bumping or going shoulder-to-shoulder while competing for a ball is *not a foul* until the hands or elbows come up. This is a bit of a judgment call and not all referees will call it the same way. Some soccer rules are actually not black-and-white.

Remember though, the referee is ALWAYS right.

The normal consequence of a foul is a direct kick for the opposing team. However, depending on the type of foul and severity, the playing “dishing it out” may be punished.

Punishment is given in soccer with yellow and red cards. The FIFA soccer rules

give the guidelines for when to give a yellow card to a player and when to give a red card. I'm not going to get into the specifics here.

If a player is given two yellow cards in the same game, that is equal to a red card. A red card can be given at any time without the player first receiving a yellow card. When a player gets a red card, they must leave the game and their team must play short. An ejected player cannot be replaced (unless they are ejected prior to the start of the game).

L AFC So Cal Rec - Are yellow or red cards handed out?

Not as such. Repeated fouls or inappropriate behavior (e.g., talking back to the ref) should be addressed with a warning to the player and coach. If the warning fails to curb the problem the referee may remove the player from the game for a five-minute "time-out" period during which a teammate may be subbed in.

If the player returns to the game and commits the same offense. The referee will remove the player for the remainder of the game. NO teammate to be subbed in. (the team will play short one player for the remainder of the game)

RULE 13 – Method of Scoring

- A goal is scored when the ball goes completely over the goal line, between the goal posts and under the crossbar.
- Div. 4 – Div. 10 a goal cannot be scored directly from a kickoff, throw in, goal kick, corner kick or free kick.
- Div. 11 Direct free kicks, penalty kicks....
- All L AFC So Cal Rec games. Scores are neither kept nor recorded. There are no standings.

Coaches should exhibit good sportsmanship and back off their goal scoring opportunities to avoid lopsided scores.

Failure to follow this rule (winning by a margin of more than six goals) will result in.

First reported offense - Written warning from the league

Second reported offense – your team will be withdrawn from the schedule for the following week. One game suspension

Once back from your one game suspension if it happens again your team will be disbanded.

It is the losing coaches discretion whether they report the loss to the league or not

if the coach feels the opposing coach did everything they could to help the situation he does not have to report it.

Avoiding Lopsided Scores

While no child probably will suffer any long-term harm from a season with a number of one-sided losses (especially if the coach explains that this is a normal part of sports), we believe a 6-goal

margin is enough. The sportsmanship lesson of not kicking someone when they're down is important both in sports and in life in general.

Though we do not publish scores or keep standings, we will be monitoring scoring differentials and contacting coaches when there are large margins in any age division.

1. Explain during practice why blowouts should be avoided in the interests of good sportsmanship. Teach these steps in practice. Once a game is in progress, it is virtually impossible to introduce these ideas for the first time and expect the players to grasp and remember them.

2. Begin using these steps when you are ahead by a three-goal margin since there still could be additional scoring despite these steps.

3. If you are losing by a four (4) goal margin you should add 1 player. (remove additional player if goal margin is reduced to three).

4. Ball possession may involve a designated maximum number of touches by each player before passing the ball (e.g. 2,3,5), whatever is reasonable for the particular age group.

5. Make 5 consecutive passes before attacking the goal. If possession is lost, the count resets. If you continue to score increase the number of passes needed to go the goal.

6. Play / Shoot only with weaker foot.

7. Allow two-touch passing in defensive end, one-touch in offensive end.

8. Designate one or two shooters. Only those designated can take shots. Advise them that the shots should be taken from outside the 18-yard box and/or only with the other foot, and/or only after receiving a pass back from closer to the goal. All these help your players build their skills.

9. Don't always try to pass the ball to the designated shooter (s). Instead, practice possession and in the process, let defenders get some touches. This doesn't mean we should play keep away for long periods of time, but a couple of minutes at a time is good practice.

10. It is nice to give defenders a chance to play forward or midfield positions. Players should always play more than one position. They usually have more fun, increase their chances of getting more playing time when they reach higher levels and you may discover they are as good or better at the second position. However make the move when the goal margin is four, because defenders are often so anxious to score that moving them when the margin is six often leads to higher differentials.

11. Try to build the attack from the back through the midfield, instead of sending long balls into the offensive third of the field.

12. Bob's favorite - every possession your team has the ball has to go back to your goalie before they can attack every time you lose possession you start again

The goal is to take these steps **quietly**, so they are not obvious to your opponent. Please don't yell out, **"Don't score any more"** or anything similar that could embarrass

The key to success in these situations will always be found by looking at the problem from the perspective of player development. There is no single "right" answer to this problem, but applying guidelines like the ones above can help you turn a disappointing match-up into a valuable learning opportunity for everyone involved.

RULE 14 – Offside

- Div. 5 – Div. 10 the offside rule is not applied in this age division.
- Div. 11 & up The offside rule applies

I decided to leave the best for last.

This is without a doubt the least understood rule by parents and coaches alike.

If you are a Div. 11 or Div. 6 coach you still need to know this rule so you can begin teaching your players not to be offside.

The first thing to know is that you cannot be offside on a corner kick, goal kick, or throw-in. Don't ask me why. Just accept it and go on. The explanation is too long. Also, *it is not an offense for a player to be in an offside position*. The player must be involved in active play as determined by the referee to be called offside.

As quoted from the FIFA soccer rules:

A player is in an offside position if: *he is nearer to his opponents' goal line than both the ball and the second last opponent.*

Clear yet? I didn't think so.

Try this. An offensive or attacking player can't be ahead of the ball and involved in the play unless there is a defender between him and the goalkeeper. Or, you can't hang out at the other team's goal waiting for the ball.

A few other butts.

You can't be offside if you are standing on your half of the field. Also, the offside rule applies *when the ball is kicked*, not when the player receives the ball.

To accurately judge offside, one has to stay even with the second-to-last defender and not watch the ball. Listen for the kick of the ball and judge at the time of the kick whether or not the player was offside.

To be honest with you, this can be a hard rule to understand. Don't get too hung up on it.

Trust the referees.

Offside Rule Made Easy See - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GePlbCsGniA>

FIFA Laws of the Game - <http://www.fifa.com/worldfootball/lawsofthegame.html>

Coaches

Players will have the attitude exhibited by their coach. Although the coach is responsible for teaching skills and strategy, the primary focus on the game should be recreational and for **fun**.

General philosophy is to encourage fair play, fun, and respect for the other team. and coaches are expected to lead by example.

There may only be **two** coaches per team. They must stay on the side that their team is on and may not go to the opposing team's side. Coaches are allowed 15 yards on either side of the midfield line-no further down the touchlines.

- A Coach (1 per team) may remain on the field during play in order to provide encouragement and advice to players, as long as the coach does not interfere with the flow of the game (Div 5/6 & 7 only)

- No coach or parent may stand behind or beside the goal. Spectators should remain on the sidelines.
- It is the responsibility of the coach to ensure that all comments from the sidelines are positive

Field positioning of players Div. 5/6

No player is allowed to play as a goalkeeper on defense, or to "park" or "camp out" in front of the opponent's goal on offense. All players should be involved in active play at all times, meaning each player should be actively following the movement of the ball, even if jockeying for tactical position on offense or defense. If the parent-referee notices a child not involved in active play, he should encourage the player to join play. If the player is unwilling or unable (due to exhaustion, for example), the referee should allow this player to be substituted at the next stoppage or when the ball is in neutral position.

It is a soccer tradition at youth soccer games to -

After the game have your team do a cheer for the opposing team using their team name.

Line up players and coaches for a hand-shake line with opposing team at mid-field. "Good game"
Have parents form a "tunnel" for players to run through (they're never really too old for this are they?).

Common Sense

- Do what is fair and right.
- No league standings are to be kept.
- Team officials and players are encouraged to shake hands with opponent before and after the game.