

# GENERAL RULES OF PLAY

## ALL LEVELS AND AGES EXCEPTIONS AND ADDITIONS TO FIFA LAWS

Updated 7.12.09 with changes from July 12, 2009 GBM

Except as otherwise noted in these rules, FIFA Laws will govern the play of all games in STYSA Competitions for youth play.

### 6.0. AGE GROUPS

All South Texas Youth Soccer Association play must be between teams of the same age groups. Age groups are determined by the player's age as of midnight, July 31, of the year in which the player could be registered with STYSA for Fall season play.

The age groups are as follows:

- Under 19 years of age
- Under 18 years of age
- Under 17 years of age
- Under 16 years of age
- Under 15 years of age
- Under 14 years of age
- Under 13 years of age
- Under 12 years of age
- Under 11 years of age
- Under 10 years of age
- Under 8 years of age
- Under 6 years of age

Any coach or assistant coach who is responsible for knowingly playing an ineligible player will be subject to suspension from participation in any STYSA sanctioned program.

### 6.1. SPECIAL RULES OF PLAY – Under-13 through Under-19 Age Groups EXCEPTIONS AND ADDITIONS TO FIFA LAWS

#### 6.1.0. Age Group

- a. A player with his / her parent's and coach's permission, and in compliance with the local association playing rules, may play in an older age group; however
- b. Except as provided herein, no player may play in a younger age group than the age group for which he/she is eligible. For Division III players only, if a medical condition exists (substantiated in writing by a licensed physician) that will prohibit or severely hinder a player from playing in his/her own age group, the player may seek special approval from his/her Local Association / Club Board and Member Association to allow the player to play down in a younger age group. All requests must be submitted to and approved by the STYSA Executive Committee prior to the player's first game.

#### 6.1.1. Law 1 - The Field of Play; Technical Areas

- a. The Under-19 through Under-13 age groups shall have a field whose width is between 50 yards and 100 yards and whose length is between 100 yards and 130 yards. The recommended width is 55 yards to 70 yards and the recommended length is 110 yards to 130 yards. The association / club / league which controls the fields shall determine the location of the teams, players, coaches, fans and supporters in relation to the field and each other and of the Technical Area, in compliance with applicable STYSA rules and FIFA Laws, decisions and recommendations.
- b. For Under-13 through Under-19 Only. If there is a Technical Area marked for each team, it will include, but not be limited to, that team's "bench area." Coaches, players, and eligible adults permitted to be present with the team must remain within the markings and within their half, except for substitution and warm-up. If both teams are assigned to one side of the field, only coaches, players, and eligible adults permitted to be present with the team may be within the Technical Area.

### 6.1.2. **Law II - The Ball**

The size of the ball should be as follows:

- Under-19 = Size 5 Ball
- Under-18 = Size 5 Ball
- Under-17 = Size 5 Ball
- Under-16 = Size 5 Ball
- Under-15 = Size 5 Ball
- Under-14 = Size 5 Ball
- Under-13 = Size 5 Ball

### 6.1.3. **Law III - Number of Players**

6.1.3.1. No team, U13 through U15, shall be allowed more than eighteen (18) nor less than seven (7) registered players at any given time. The minimum number of players on the field to start the match shall be seven. **(Changed 7.12.09)**

No team, U16 through U19, shall be allowed more than twenty-two (22) nor less than seven (7) registered players at any given time. The minimum number of players on the field to start the match shall be seven (7). The maximum number of players in uniform and eligible to play at any one game shall be eighteen (18). **(Changed 7.12.09)**

6.1.3.2. Substitutes: In youth play, substitutions shall be unlimited with the following constraints:

- a. For all Super II, Division II and Division III competitions, coaches must make every effort to play each registered player that is present at least one-half of the game unless unable to do so due to player's illness or injury or for disciplinary reasons. In the event that a player is present but will not be playing, the coach must inform the referee and the opposing coach as to the reason that player will not participate.

b. In Division I there is no minimum playing time for each registered player on the team.

6.1.3.3. The prior permission of the referee is required in order to make any substitution at any time, except at the resumption of play after the half time break:

- \*\* On a throw-in (by the team in possession)
- \*\* On a goal kick (by either team)
- \*\* After any goal (by either team)
- \*\* After stoppage of play for an injury (either team)
- \*\* At half time (by either team)
- \*\* After a caution (the player receiving the caution)

### 6.1.4. **Law IV - Equipment**

6.1.4.1. All players will wear shinguards which are commercially produced and specifically designed to provide protection to the shins.

6.1.4.2. No player will be allowed to play with a hard cast (padded or otherwise), nor will any player be allowed to play with any brace (knee or otherwise) that contains exposed metal or hard plastics, unless it is wrapped with a minimum of ½ inch high-density foam wrapping or the manufacturer's recommended protective coating.

6.1.4.3. Players may wear sliding, bike, cyclist or tight fitting pants which do not protrude below the top of the knee and are the same color as the shorts. This does not prohibit players from wearing loose fitting, long-legged sweat pants or tights when it is cold or goalkeepers from wearing goalkeeper pants which may be tight and have padding.

6.1.4.4. Bandannas of any style may not be worn during any game. Players may not wear a bandanna either on their heads, legs or arms. Exceptions may be made at the local level for medical reasons.

6.1.4.5. Each member association is responsible for establishing a system of yearly inspection of goals utilized by its member clubs, leagues and associations. A statement shall be provided to STYSA with the submission of Fall registration that the goals have been inspected prior to the beginning of the Fall season and found to be in safe condition. A statement or form and

criteria shall be established by STYSA for a standardized procedure of inspection. The statement shall be signed by an officer of the member association. This requirement must be met or the member association shall not be in good standing.

#### 6.1.5. **Law V - Referees**

The referee's judgment decisions shall be final in all matters concerning the rules governing the playing of the game, the playability of the field and the appropriateness of the uniforms. At the completion of the match, the referee shall have each coach sign the game report and submit the game report to the tournament representative.

It shall be the duty of the referee to declare a forfeit in the event that a team has less than the required minimum number of players on the field ready to play within 15 minutes after the game was scheduled to start. If neither team has the required number, it shall be a double forfeit and shall be scored as a loss for both teams. In the event that the referee rules that the field is not playable, or that the uniforms are inappropriate, then he should note these facts on the game report and have each coach sign it.

A game card will be completed by the referee for all play within STYSA. This card will, at a minimum, contain the following:

- \*\* association, age group, division, game location, date, game time
- \*\* team names and final score
- \*\* cautions (yellow cards) or ejections (red cards) issued, by team with player / name
- \*\* any protest noted and brief basis for those protests
- \*\* Prior to each STYSA sanctioned match, each team shall present to the referee the Adult Participation Pass for each Coach and other Eligible Adult who is present. The referee shall record as part of the game card each Adult Participation Pass that is so presented, by marking on the roster next to the name of each Coach (over age 17) or other Eligible Adult who is listed on the roster and is identified on an Adult Participation Pass and by recording on the game card the name of each Coach (over age 17) or other Eligible Adult for whom an Adult Participation Pass is presented but is not on the roster. **(Changed 7.12.09)**

These game cards are to be retained through the end of the District or STYSA Tournaments.

Disputes must be noted on the referee's game report and a complete description of the incident shall be submitted to the appropriate Disciplinary and Protest Representative.

#### 6.1.6. **Law VII - Duration of the Game**

The duration of the games shall be as follows:

- Under-19 = two 45-minute halves
- Under-18 = two 45-minute halves
- Under-17 = two 45-minute halves
- Under-16 = two 40-minute halves
- Under-15 = two 40-minute halves
- Under-14 = two 35-minute halves
- Under-13 = two 35-minute halves

The half-time interval shall be five (5) minutes.

#### 6.1.7. **Law XII - Fouls and Misconduct**

The FIFA Law with respect to the charging of the goalkeeper shall not apply in youth play. There shall be no charging of the goalkeeper, fairly or unfairly, in STYSA sanctioned competition. Any such act will be considered as "dangerous play" at the least and punished accordingly.

### 6.2. **SPECIAL RULES OF PLAY – Under-11 and Under-12 Age Groups – EXCEPTIONS AND ADDITIONS TO FIFA LAWS (Changed 7.12.09)**

There shall be two age groups in which the number of players on the field may be fewer than that specified in the FIFA Laws of the Game: Under-11 and Under-12. **(Effective 9.1.08)**

6.2.1. **Age Group**

- a. A player with his/her parent's and coach's permission, and in compliance with the local association playing rules, may play in an older age group; however,
- b. Except as provided herein, no player may play in a younger age group than the age group for which he/she is eligible. If a medical condition exists (substantiated in writing by a licensed physician) that will prohibit or severely hinder a player from playing in his/her own age group, the player may seek special approval from his/her Local Association/Club Board and Member Association to allow the player to play down in a younger age group. All requests must be submitted to and approved by the STYSA Executive Committee prior to the player's first game.

6.2.2. **Number of Players**

- a. Each Member Association / Club shall determine whether their Under-11 and Under-12 teams will play with no more than eleven (11) or eight (8) players on the field at a time, including a goalkeeper.

Each team during a league game shall play with no more than eight (8) on the field at a time, including a goalkeeper. **(Changed 2.8.09 – effective 9.1.09)**

- b. Under-11 and Under-12 teams may participate in eleven (11) aside play, where offered in sanctioned invitational tournaments.
- c. Coaches must play each registered player that is present one-half of the game unless unable to do so due to a player's illness or injury or for disciplinary reasons. In the event that a player is present but will not be playing, the coach must inform the referee and the opposing coach as to the reason the player will not participate

6.2.3. **Size of Teams:** The maximum number of players per team shall be eighteen (18) if playing 11 aside or fourteen (14) if playing 8 aside. **(Changed 7.12.09)**

6.2.4. **Forfeits for too few players:** The referee shall declare a forfeit if a team has fewer than the requisite number of players on the field ready to play within a reasonable time after the game was scheduled to start. The requisite number of players shall be seven (7) players if playing 11 aside or six (6) players if playing 8 aside.

The referee shall declare a forfeit if a team has fewer than the requisite number of players on the field ready to play within a reasonable time after the game was scheduled to start. The requisite number of players shall be six (6) players. **(Changed 2.8.09)**

6.2.5. **Goalkeeper:** There shall be no charging or intentional or reckless contact with the goalkeeper in any manner whatsoever. Any such conduct shall be considered at least "dangerous play" and punished accordingly.

6.2.6. **Ball:** #4

6.2.7. **Field of Play:** The association / club / league which controls the fields shall determine the location of the teams, players, coaches, fans and supporters in relation to the field and each other.

6.2.7.1. Games played with 11 players on the field shall use fields that meet the requirements of Rule 6.1.1.

6.2.7.2. Games played with 8 players on the field shall use fields that meet the requirements shown below:

**delete section 6.2.7.1 and 6.2.7.2. (Changed 2.8.09 – effective 9.1.09)**

**Size:** 40 to 70 yards wide by 60 to 90 yards long

**Goals:** 21 feet wide by 7 feet high or 18 feet wide by 6 feet high

**Center Circle:** 8 yards in radius

**Penalty Area:** 14 yards by 35 yards

**Goal Area:** 6 yards by 19 yards

**Penalty Spot:** 9 yards and perpendicular from the midpoint of the goal line

**Penalty Arc:** 8 yard radius from the penalty spot

6.2.8. **Length of Games:** two thirty (30) minute halves

6.2.9. **Offside:** The FIFA Offside Rule shall apply.

6.2.10. 11v11 grandfather for U12 teams (effective until 7/31/2010) Only U11 teams that were formed in an 11v11 format in either the Fall 2008 and/or Spring 2009 season will be permitted to return as a U12 team participating in an 11v11 format through the end of the Spring 2010 season. Returning teams must roster 50% +1 of the previous players from the final roster of the last season that they participated in as a U11 team using the 11v11 format to qualify as a U12 grandfathered team. **(Added 7.12.09)**

### 6.3. **SPECIAL RULES OF PLAY – Under-6 through Under-10 Age Groups Division IV - EXCEPTIONS AND ADDITIONS TO FIFA LAWS**

There shall be three age groups in which the number of players on the field shall be fewer than that specified in the FIFA Laws of the Game: Under-6, Under-8 and Under-10

#### 6.3.1. **Age Group**

6.3.1.1. A player with his / her parent's and coach's permission, and in compliance with the local association playing rules, may play in an older age group; however

6.3.1.2. Except as provided herein, no player may play in a younger age group than the age group for which he/she is eligible. If a medical condition exists (substantiated in writing by a licensed physician) that will prohibit or severely hinder a player from playing in his/her own age group, the player may seek special approval from his/her Local Association / Club Board and Member Association to allow the player to play down in a younger age group. All requests must be submitted to and approved by the STYSA Executive Committee prior to the player's first game.

#### 6.3.2. **Under-10 Players**

##### 6.3.2.1. **Number of Players**

- a. Effective 9/1/2007 – Each Member Association / Club shall determine whether their Under-10 teams will play with no more than eight (8) or six (6) players on the field at a time.
- b. It is the policy of this Association to prohibit eleven (11) aside teams in Under-10 in both league play and invitational tournaments.
- c. Coaches must play each registered player that is present one-half of the game unless unable to do so due to player's illness or injury or for disciplinary reasons. In the event that a player is present but will not be playing, the coach must inform the referee and the opposing coach as to the reason that player will not participate.

6.3.2.2. **Size of Teams:** The maximum number of players per team shall be twelve (12) if playing 8-a-side (effective 9/1/2007) or ten (10) if playing 6-a-side.

6.3.2.3. **Forfeits for too few players:** The referee shall declare a forfeit if a team has fewer than the requisite number of players on the field ready to play within a reasonable time after the game was scheduled to start. The requisite number of players shall be six (6) players if playing 8-a-side or (effective 9/1/2007) four (4) if playing 6-a-side.

- 6.3.2.4. **Goalkeeper:** There shall be no charging or intentional or reckless contact with the goalkeeper in any manner whatsoever. Any such conduct shall be considered at least as “dangerous play” and punished accordingly.
- 6.3.2.5. **Ball:** #4
- 6.3.2.6. **Goals:** 21 feet wide by 7 feet high if playing 8-a-side or (effective 9/1/2007) 18 feet wide by 6 feet high if playing 6-a-side.
- 6.3.2.7. **Fields:**  
**Size:** 40 to 60 yards wide by 60 to 80 yards long if playing 8-a-side or 30 to 50 yards wide by 40 to 60 yards long if playing 6-a-side.  
**Center Circle:** 8 yards in radius if playing 8-a-side or (effective 9/1/2007) 7 yards in radius if playing 6 a-side.  
**Penalty Area:** 14 yards by 35 yards if playing 8-a-side or (effective 9/1/2007) 12 yards by 25 yards if playing 6-a-side.  
**Goal Area:** 6 yards by 19 yards if playing 8-a-side or (effective 9/1/2007) 4 yards by 16 yards if playing 6-a-side  
**Penalty Spot:** 9 yards and perpendicular from the midpoint of the goal line if playing 8-a-side or (effective 9/1/2007) 8 yards and perpendicular from the midpoint of the goal line if playing 6-a-side.  
**Penalty Arc:** 8 yard radius from the penalty spot if playing 8-a-side or (effective 9/1/2007) 7 yard radius from the penalty spot if playing 6-a-side.
- 6.3.2.8. **Length of Games:** two twenty-five (25) minute halves.
- 6.3.2.9. **Offside:** The FIFA Offside Rule shall apply.

### 6.3.3. **Under-8 Players**

**GENERAL:** FIFA rules shall apply except where such rules conflict with these rules and, in these instances, these guidelines are recommended. **(Effective 9/1/2005 – The following will no longer be guidelines; they will become rules)**

#### 6.3.3.1. **Number of Players**

- a. Each League / Club shall have the option to organize a U8 program with teams playing either 4v4 or 7v7 depending on their circumstances and needs. Each league / club may run a U8 program with two separate divisions, i.e., one division of 4v4, another division of 7v7. If playing 4v4, there shall be no goalkeeper.
- b. It is the policy of this Association to prohibit eleven (11) aside teams in Under-8 divisions in both league play and invitational tournaments.
- c. Coaches must play each registered player who is present one half of the game unless unable to do so due to player’s illness or injury or for disciplinary reasons. In the event that a player is present but will not be playing, the coach must inform the referee and the opposing coach as to the reason that the player will not participate.

6.3.3.2. **Forfeits for too few players:** If playing 7v7, the referee shall declare a forfeit if a team has fewer than the requisite number of payers on the field ready to play within a reasonable time after the game was scheduled to start. The number is to be specified by the Member Association, but in no event shall the minimum number of players to cause a forfeit exceed five (5).

If playing 4v4, provided that at least two (2) players from each team are present at game time, there shall be no forfeit. Coaches shall accommodate the situation to insure that the game is played by sharing players.

- 6.3.3.3. **Size of Team:** If playing 7v7, the maximum number of players per team shall be twelve (12). If playing 4v4: For teams playing on a single field, the maximum number of players is eight (8) per team; however, seven (7) is recommended.

The Dual Field Method is played on two side-by-side parallel Under-8 fields with a channel area separating the fields. The channel is designated as the bench area. During the course of the matches on the two fields, played simultaneously, players may participate in either match. For teams participating in the Dual Field Method, the maximum number of players is twelve (12) per team.

- 6.3.3.4. **Goalkeeper:** If playing 7v7, there shall be no charging or intentional or reckless contact with the goalkeeper in any manner whatsoever. Any such conduct shall be considered at least dangerous play and punished accordingly. If playing 4v4, there is no goalkeeper

- 6.3.3.5. **Ball:** Size #3

- 6.3.3.6. **Goals:** If playing 7v7, 15 feet wide by 5 feet high or 18 feet wide by 6 feet high are recommended. If playing 4v4, the goals shall be the size of hockey goals up to 6 feet high by 12 feet wide.

- 6.3.3.7. **Fields:**  
**Size:** 40 to 50 yards wide by 60 to 70 yards long if playing 7v7; 25 to 40 yards wide by 35 to 60 yards long, with the length longer than the width, if playing 4v4.

**Center Circle:** 8 yards in radius if playing 7v7; 5 yards in radius if playing 4v4

**Penalty Area:** 14 yards by 35 yards if playing 7v7; None if playing 4v4

**Goal Area:** 6 yards by 19 yards if playing 7v7; 3 yards from each goal post and 3 yards deep if playing 4v4

- 6.3.3.8. **Length of Games:** *Effective 9/1/2005 – four ten (10) minute quarters*

- 6.3.3.9. **Awards.** Standings will not be maintained, and no trophies or awards will be given except for participation and / or sportsmanship.

- 6.3.3.10. **Penalties for fouls:**
- If playing 7v7, there shall be no penalty shots for fouls within the penalty area. If playing 4v4, there will be no penalty area.
  - All fouls shall be penalized with indirect kicks.
  - From the point of taking an indirect kick or corner kick, opponents shall not be any closer than six (6) yards if playing 7v7; From the point of taking an indirect kick or corner kick, opponents shall not be any closer than five (5) yards if playing 4v4.

- 6.3.3.11. **Offside:** The Offside rule shall be interpreted liberally; however, no player may play in an obvious offside position in front of or near the goal such as a designated scorer if playing 7v7. If playing 4v4, there shall be no offside.

- 6.3.3.12. **Throw-ins:** If there is an infraction of the FIFA throw-in rules, the player throwing the ball in shall receive one additional throw-in after a correcting instruction from the Referee. If the player violates the FIFA throw-in rule on his / her second throw-in, then the opposing team shall be awarded a throw-in.

#### 6.3.4. Under-6 Players

6.3.4.1. **Size of Team:** For teams playing on a single field, the maximum number of players is six (6)

The Dual Field Method is played on two side-by-side parallel Under-6 fields with a channel area separating the fields. The channel is designated the bench area. During the course of the matches on the two fields, played simultaneously, players may participate in either match. For teams participating in the Dual Field Method, the maximum number of players is ten (10) per team.

#### 6.3.4.2. Number of Players

- a. Each Under-6 team during a game shall play no more than three (3) players on the field at a time.
- b. It is the policy of this Association to prohibit eleven (11) aside teams in Under-6 divisions in both league play and invitational tournaments.
- c. Coaches must play each registered player who is present one half of the game unless unable to do so due to player's illness or injury or for disciplinary reasons. In the event that a player is present but will not be playing, the coach must inform the referee and the opposing coach as to the reason that the player will not participate.

6.3.4.3. **Forfeits for too few players:** Provided that at least three (3) players from each team are present at game time, there shall be no forfeit. Coaches shall accommodate the situation to insure that all players get as much playing time as possible. If either team has fewer than three (3) players present, the game shall be abandoned, but no winner shall be declared nor forfeit awarded.

6.3.4.4. **Goalkeeper:** There will be no goalkeeper

6.3.4.5. **Ball:** #3

6.3.4.6. **Goals:** Goals shall be approximately 4 feet tall by 6 feet wide. Hockey goals may be used. Cones spaced 6 feet apart may be used.

6.3.4.7. **Fields:** The field shall be rectangular with the length in all cases exceeding the width.  
**Size:** 15 to 20 yards wide by 20 to 30 yards long

**Center Circle:** 3 yards in radius

**Penalty Area:** none

**Goal Area:** none

6.3.4.8. **Length of Games:** The game shall be divided into four eight-minute quarters. There shall be a two-minute break between quarters one and two and another two-minute break between quarters three and four. There shall be a half-time break of five minutes between quarters two and three.

6.3.4.9. **Awards.** Standings will not be maintained, and no trophies or awards will be given except for participation and / or sportsmanship.

#### 6.3.4.10. Penalties for fouls:

- a. There shall be no penalty shots.
- b. All fouls will be penalized with indirect kicks.
- c. From the point of taking an indirect kick or corner kick, opponents shall not be any closer than three (3) yards.

6.3.4.11. **Offside:** There shall be no off-sides.

- 6.3.4.12. **Coaches on Field:** Coaches may not be on the field of play during conduct of the game.
- 6.3.4.13. **Throw-ins:** If there is an infraction of the FIFA throw-in rule, the player throwing the ball in shall receive one additional throw-in after a correcting instruction from the Referee. If the player violates the FIFA throw-in rule on his / her second throw-in, then the opposing team shall be awarded a throw-in.

Some associations may elect to play without throw-ins. In such cases, the ball will be returned to play by an indirect kick taken from the touchline where the ball exited the field of play. STYSA-sanctioned tournaments will use the throw-in.