



## 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade Soccer Rules & Game Format 2025

A coach's job is to provide a safe, fun, confidence-building, positive environment.

### **Therefore, these are your goals:**

- 1) We will not compete at the expense of others.
- 2) We will develop your player's soccer skills by cultivating confidence, striving for a positive attitude and maximum effort whether winning or losing.
- 3) We will leave the season as better players and coaches!

### **Practice Structure**

- **Practice is one hour from 6-7pm.** Have a plan for what you want to accomplish each day in practice. Look over your Take-a-knee!
- **Arrive 10-15 minutes early to get your equipment and to be ready to greet players and families.** Please notify your co-coach if you will be late. If you need to be gone, please find a parent to sub for you. All teams should have 2 adults always present. Parents are encouraged to stay if possible.
- **Equipment will be in a storage unit near the practice fields-** Red bags of size 5 balls, cones, & first aid bag.
- **Greet the children by name, nametags provided for the first 2 practices.** Learning your player's names is a great way to earn their trust and show them that you care about them.
- **Return your equipment to your designated storage unit after practice.** Make sure your bag contains the same number of items when you return the bag as it did at the beginning of practice. Clean up your practice field, please.
- **Players are required to wear shin guards by 2<sup>nd</sup> practice.**
- **Restrooms are available in "The Hub."** This is a bit of a walk from the practice fields. Remind players to go BEFORE practice.
- **One coach needs to stay until all players have been picked up,** parents are encouraged to stay. Players are only released to parent or parent's designee.
- **A typical practice should include:**
  - Stretching (5 minutes) – It is a time to get to know the players while not putting them on the spot. Ask about school that day, how their summer is going, etc. This is about building relationships.
  - Dribbling Activities (10-15 minutes)
  - Passing Activities (10-15 minutes)
  - Take a Knee (10 minutes) character/lesson/distribute sticker
  - Shooting Activities (10-15 minutes)
  - Game Practice (10-15 minutes) – rules, scrimmage, positions
  - Always end with something fun!

### 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade Divisions

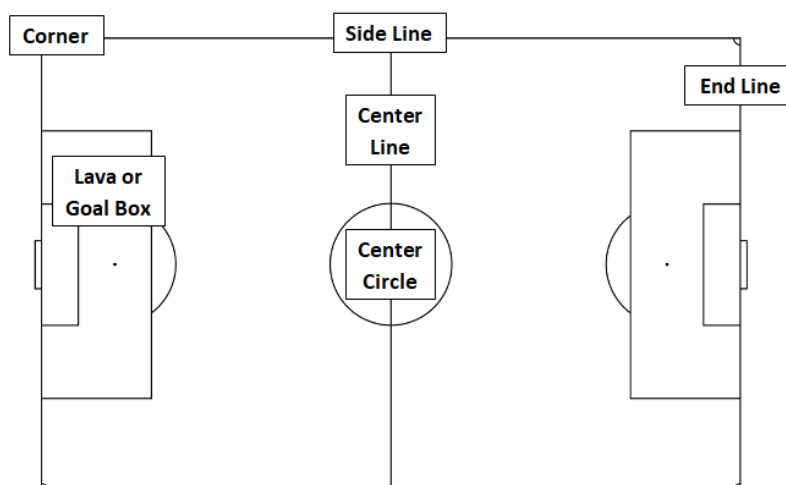
Gender Specific

Field Size 120' x 160'

Goal Size: 6' x 12'

Size 5 Ball

5 v 5 plus goalie



**Field:** Rectangular field with following components:

- Center Circle – where game play starts at the beginning of each period or after a goal
- End Lines – the two lines on the goal side of the field
- Side Lines – the two lines on the non-goal side of the field
- Goal Box – area in front of the goal where the goalie must remain when returning the ball

## Game Day Structure

- **Please arrive 15 minutes early to your game** and head to your field as soon as the previous teams have cleared the benches.
- We will provide a **size 5 game ball**.
- Each team is assigned a country name and will have a flag from that country displayed along the fence.
- **At the beginning of each game, players and coaches will be announced from the bench.** After their name is announced, they should run to the center of the field.
- All players must be wearing shin guards and their jerseys for all games.
- **The National Anthem will be played at all games.** Please line up your team and encourage them to stand respectfully during this time.
- **Player substitution forms are provided to you for games.**
  - The forms are blank for this division, but playing requirements must be met. Players need to play at least 3 periods with one period in each half.
  - If enough players, everyone will sit out at least one period.
  - If player needs to play entire game, one period needs to be in the goalie position.
  - Coaches much have a substitution schedule available to refs at request.
- **If a team does not have enough players to fill a team for their game, they may use a registered player from another team** in the same division or a younger one.
- **We work diligently to provide referees.** Please keep in mind that these referees are volunteers just like you. Coaches will **never** argue the call of a referee and will not allow their players to do so either. You may kindly ask questions after the game if you need clarification.

- Players should be honest when a ball goes out of bounds or a foul is committed, but they should also play until the whistle blows.
- **Music will play over the sound system (30 sec) at the end of each period.** When the music ends, the next period has started.
- **One coach should be paying particular attention to the players on the field and making positive notes as to what they do throughout the game.** This will come in handy for your after-game huddle.
- **Players should exhibit good sportsmanship.** Celebrating a goal or defensive play is encouraged, but not at the expense of an opposing player. No taunting the other team in any situation either from the field or from the bench will be tolerated.
- **There are no time-outs** except for injuries. The game clock runs for all 6 fields.
- After the game, players and coaches will line up and congratulate all opposing players after the game is complete.
- **Huddle time!** Gather your players and your parents and lead them to a side location off the field. Look & speak directly to each child– to tell what they did well. Assign an award to each child. Each child should receive a different game day award each week.

## **Game Play Rules**

### **1. Starting the Game**

- A) 1-2 players from the offensive team will line up on the center line inside the circle. All other players will stand outside of the center circle on their side of the field.
- B) After the whistle, the offensive team will start the game by passing the ball to another player on their team. The player who initiates the pass cannot touch the ball again until another player has touched it.
- C) The defensive team may enter the circle as soon as the ball is touched by the second player.

### **2. Ball Out of Bounds**

The Ball is not out until the entire ball has crossed the entire line. (Not American football's 'Breaking the Plane'). Listen for the whistle to stop play.

- a) A player can be out of bounds and in contact with the ball as long as the ball is in bounds.
- A) When a ball goes out of bounds, it is out on the player who touched it last and is given to the other team to put back into play.
  - a) If the ball goes out over the sideline, it will result in a throw-in.
    - 1. Player must have both feet on or behind the line and throw the ball with two hands over the head keeping both feet on the ground.
      - a. If the player lifts a foot before releasing the ball, the other team will take possession and conduct a throw-in.
  - b) If the ball goes out over the end line:

1. If the offensive team kicks the ball out over the defensive team's end line, it results in a goal kick.
  - a. The ball is placed on the end line inside of the goal box and kicked into play. The rest of the players (offensive and defensive) must be beyond the top line of the goal box. Once the ball has been put into play, they may cross the line.
2. If the defensive team kicks the ball out over their own end line, it results in a corner kick.
  - b. The ball is placed in the quarter circle where the end line and sideline meet.
  - c. The offensive team kicks the ball into play.

### 3. Scoring a Goal

A goal results when the entire ball has crossed the entire goal line between the goal posts.

- A) A goal **cannot** be scored on a throw-in or goal kick. The ball must touch another player from either team before going into the net to be counted as a goal.
- B) A goal **can** be scored directly on a corner kick.
- C) Goals may be scored from anywhere on the field.
- D) Goals scored by the defense will be considered a goal.
- E) Goalies are introduced in these divisions.

### 4. Free Kicks

The ball is given to the other team to be put in play

- a) Free kicks result from stops in play for fouls, injuries, or other reasons deemed by the referee.
  - b) The opposing team will provide a minimum of 10 feet of space for the kicking team to put the ball in play.
  - c) Free kicks cannot be kicked directly into the goal, it must touch another player from either team first (indirect kicks)
- A) Fouls resulting in free kicks:
- a) **Tripping, slide tackles, pushing, shoving, holding**
    1. Any fighting, hitting, intentional tripping, taunting, or bad language will result in the player being sent to the bench for at least one period at the ref/coach's discretion.
    2. **There are no headers or slide tackles allow at any age.**
  - b) **Hand balls-** any intentional play of the ball with any part of the arm from the shoulder to fingertips
    1. A player who raises their arms to protect themselves and gains no advantage will not be assessed a hand ball foul.
    2. If the defending team handles the ball inside the lava arch, it is a penalty kick.
  - c) **A player on the ground kicking the ball.**
  - d) **In the event of an injury,** the refereeing coaches should stop play and assess the situation and call the coach over to talk to the player.

1. The ball should be given to the team that had possession at the time the referee blew the whistle.

\*A player putting the ball into play (in any instance) cannot touch the ball until another player on the field (either team) has touched the ball\*

## 5. Additional Penalties

- A) Any fouls committed in the goal box by the defense will result in a penalty kick by the offense.
  - a) Occurs at the top of the box and all other players except the goalie must remain outside the goal box.
  - b) Kick taker must wait until the ref blows the whistle to kick the ball. The goalie may move while keeping at least one foot on the line until the ball is kicked.
  - c) After the ball is kicked, players may enter the goal box as the ball is considered a live ball.
- B) "Cherry picking" – having an offensive player lingering beyond the farthest defensive player, not actively in play, **is not allowed**.
  - a) First violation is a warning.
  - b) Subsequent violations result in an indirect free kick for the opposing team at the spot of the kick.

## 6. Positions

Position play will be introduced in this Division. The players on the field will be divided between goalie, defense, mid-field, and forward.

- a) Coaches may distribute the players between positions as they see fit, but every player should have the opportunity to play every position throughout the season.
- A) Goalie
    - b) Keeps the opponent from scoring.
    - c) May play the ball with their hands inside the goal box if the ball was not passed to him/her by a teammate.
      1. Goalie touching the ball with their hands from a pass from a teammate result in a penalty kick.
    - d) After saving the ball, the goalie may either drop kick or throw the ball from anywhere inside the goal box.
    - e) May take goal kicks.
    - f) Offensive players may not initiate contact with the other team's goalie. A foul committed against a goalie will result in a goal kick and may result in removal of the player for the rest of the period, leaving the team playing short-handed.
  - B) Defenders
    - a) Protect the goalie.
    - b) Block shots.
    - c) Prevent opposing attackers from passing or scoring.
    - d) May take goal kicks.

- C) Midfielders
  - a) Link the defense to the offense.
  - b) Bring the ball up to the forwards and keep the ball from reaching the defenders.
  - c) Cover the greatest distance on the field
- D) Forwards
  - a) Attack the opposing goal
  - b) Accurate when shooting on goal

## Tournament Rules for Coaches

Last 2 weeks of the season

If a team does not have enough players from their original/current roster present to play, the team may do one of 2 things:

1. Forfeit game and proceed in loser's bracket.
2. Play one player down against original opponent with full roster. If win occurs, team advances in tournament. The opposing team does not have to play one player down.

**Game:** 2 weeks of full-length games. Open Substitutions on stoppages in play (A player must play  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the game)

### **Overtime:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Tie Breaker – 5 Minute sudden death overtime. 5 v 5 including goalies.
  - Open Substitutions on stoppages in play
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Tie Breaker – Head-to-Head shoot out.
  - Best of 5 shoot out. If no winner is decided **Sudden death** shoot out begins.
  - Use any 5 players as kickers and any goalie (must stay the same once shoot out begins)
  - If still tied, must use remaining players before using any players again.
  - If a player kicks the ball before the referee blows his whistle, the player forfeits their kick. There will be NO re-kicks.