

**SYSA Soccer Modified Rules of Competition**  
**Outdoor Recreational Soccer**  
**9 v 9 (U11/U12 and U13/14)**

*SYSA Mission: "To provide sports activities for all youth where everyone plays, develops skills, is taught good sportsmanship, and learns the value of being a team player."*

These rules are modified from the FIFA Laws of the Game. Laws of the Game can be found on the IFAB website. Everyone must respect the decisions of the official and their decisions, remembering and respecting that referees are human and will make mistakes.

All competitions shall be governed by the Rules as stated herein in all cases where they are applicable. All members of SYSA shall be governed by these Rules of Competition. Good judgment, sportsmanship, and fair play should govern the decisions and actions of all the players, coaches, referees, and spectators.

These rules are subject to changes/edits as needed.

**Law 1 Field of Play**

The following specifications are applicable to all **9 v 9** competitions administered by SYSA.

The field of play must be rectangular. The length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line.

Length: minimum length is **70 yards** - maximum length is **80 yards**

Width: minimum width is **45 yards** - maximum width is **55 yards**

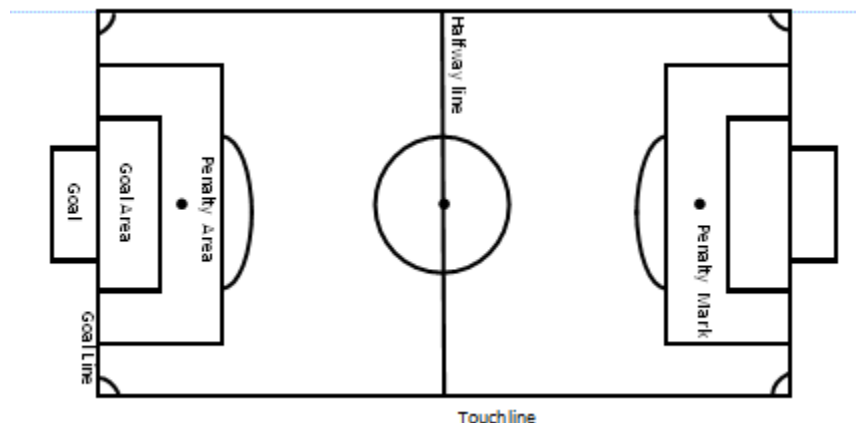
Interior markings include a halfway line, a center circle (**8 yard** radius), a goal area (**5 yards x 16 yards**), a penalty area (**14 yards x 36 yards**), a center circle (8 yard radius), a penalty mark (10 yards), penalty arc (8 yard radius), and corner arcs (1 yard radius).

Goals: **7x21** feet or **8x24** feet goals will be placed on the center of each goal line. In case permanent goals are not available, flags or cones may be used to mark the goals (18, 21 or 24 feet wide). If cones are used for goals, the top of the player's hands will determine the "imaginary" height of the crossbar. For the players' safety, no one should hang from the crossbar of the goal at any time during a game or practice.

Coaches and players will be on one touchline. One team will occupy one half of the touchline and the other team will occupy the other half. Coaches and players should be restricted to their half of the touchline/technical area. Parents and spectators will be on the opposite touchline. Players, coaches and spectators should not be along the goal and penalty area touchlines or behind the goal line.

A game may be postponed at the field site if weather conditions are too hazardous for play. Extreme weather includes lightning, heavy snow or ice on the ground. Rain is not a reason to postpone play.

No dogs or pets allowed near the playing field.



**Law 2 The Ball**

U12: A size **four (4)** ball will be used for all practices and games.

U14: A size **five (5)** ball will be used for all practices and games.

The home team is responsible for providing the game ball.

**Law 3 The Players**

The match is played by two teams, each consisting of not more than **nine (9) players**, one who shall be the goalkeeper. Minimum of six (6) players to start and continue a match.

The official may allow the game to be played 7 v 7 when one team does not have enough players to field a team of 9 on the field. SYSA also supports sharing players when one team does not have enough players. The team sharing players may choose different players for the second half to allow their own players a chance to play with their teammates.

Maximum team roster is **fifteen (15)**. Each player shall receive 50% of the total playing time. The coach is responsible for enforcing this rule.

Substitutions may be made, with the consent of the referee, during any stoppage of play or for an injury.

Substitutions will be allowed in order to give an opportunity for all players to get equal playing time and to balance rather than run up the score.

Players not on the field of play must remain two (2) yards behind the touchline and not along the goal area or behind the goal line.

Printed rosters are not required to be submitted before the game but may be requested by the Certified Referee.

**Law 4 Player Equipment**

Conform to FIFA Laws of the Game.

A minimum "official" uniform is the standard SYSA-issued jersey with number and socks.

Shin guards are MANDATORY for practices and games. Socks must be worn up and over the shin guards. Safety.

A player must not use equipment or wear anything dangerous to himself or another player. All items of jewelry are prohibited and must be removed. Taping of earrings is prohibited. Players may tape a medical necklace or bracelet. All or any member(s) of a team may wear extra protective clothing against the cold, including gloves without dangerous, protruding or hard objects provided that: (1) The proper team uniform is worn outermost; and (2) Any hat should be without peak, bill or dangling or protruding object of any kind; and (3) Referee discretion may be used to determine if an item of protective clothing is considered to go beyond the purpose of providing a means of retaining body heat.

No player shall be allowed to play in any regularly scheduled practice or game with an injury or a known medical condition, which can be communal or aggravated by playing.

Prosthetic devices require a physician's permission before a player may play and it must state the player needs to wear the device in order to play. Even then, such devices must pose no danger to other players on the field. The referee's judgment shall be the final determining factor.

**Law 5 The Referee**

Brand new officials will be appropriately assigned to SYSA recreational games. Coaches have a clear responsibility to respect the official and their decisions. Referees are not expected to explain their calls, as the coach has access to the law book.

Games will be officiated by a certified official. If a referee is not present, both coaches will mutually agree upon an official. If the coaches cannot agree, a parent/coach from the home team will referee the first half, and a parent/coach from the away team will referee the second half. The parent/coach must refrain from coaching while refereeing. This volunteer official may submit the game data to receive payment for working the match.

Professional, collegiate, adult, high school, and competitive youth matches will be assigned officials before the SYSA recreational matches.

Each official must conduct himself/herself in a manner becoming a member of the league, encourage fair competition and good sportsmanship at all times and enforce the rules of the league. Any official who does not comply with the ideals of SYSA Soccer shall be subject to removal from league participation. Neither the use of foul language nor the drinking of alcoholic beverages by an official during the competition shall be tolerated.

Misconduct reports: If a player or coach is cautioned or ejected, the referee must complete a misconduct report within 48 hours. A player or coach who receives an ejection shall not participate in his/her team's next game.

The referee will have the responsibility of ensuring that any player bleeding from a wound leaves the field of play. The player may only return on receiving a signal from the referee who is satisfied that the bleeding has stopped.

**Law 6 Other Officials**

Certified assistant referees will not be assigned to these games.

It is expected that a parent, one from each team, will assist the Certified Referee by identifying when the ball has crossed the touchline or goal line.

**Law 7 Duration of the Match**

**U12: Two (2) x thirty (30) minute halves and a five (5) minute half-time break.**

**U14: Two (2) x thirty (30) minute halves and a five (5) minute half-time break.**

**Law 8 Start and Restart of Play**

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game, with the exception that the defending team is at least **eight (8)** yards from the ball until it is in play.

Restarting play after a temporary delay, there will be a drop ball for the team that last touched the ball at the spot where the ball was declared dead. The opponents shall be 4.5 yards away. The ball is in play when it touches the ground. The player taking the drop ball cannot score a goal directly from a drop ball.

**Law 9 Ball in and out of play**

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the game.

The ball is out of play when it has wholly crossed the goal line or the whole touchline, whether it is on the ground or in the air. "The whole ball over the whole line."

The ball is out of play, when the referee has stopped the game.

**Law 10 Method of Scoring**

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the game.

A goal is scored when the whole of the ball has crossed the whole of the goal line on the ground or in the air between the goal posts (flags) and under the crossbar (height of the flags).

If cones are used for markers, the height of the crossbar will be determined by the height of the goalkeeper's hands.

There will be no published team standings, and game scores will not be recorded.

**Law 11 Offside**

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the game. An indirect free kick will be awarded to the defending team.

**Law 12 Fouls and Misconduct**

Conforms to the FIFA Laws of the game, with the exception that all opponents shall be at least eight (8) yards from the ball on the restart.

Play should be stopped when a player acts in a careless, reckless, or dangerous manner.

No heading. An indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense. If the offense occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal line.

Legal "safe" slide tackling is allowed.

Not every touch of the ball to a player's hand or arm is an offense.

No contact will be made with the goalkeeper who has possession of the ball. A goalkeeper with one finger on the ball is considered to have possession. A goalkeeper is considered to be in control of the ball when touching the ball with any part of the hand or arm.

A player or coach who receives an ejection shall not participate in his/her team's next game.

A spectator who has been asked to leave the field of play shall not attend the team's next game.

**Law 13 Free Kicks**

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game, with the exception that all opponents are to be at least **eight (8)** yards away from the ball until it is kicked.

Direct and Indirect kicks will be awarded.

A goal cannot be scored from an INDIRECT free kick unless the ball has been played or touched by a player other than the kicker before passing through the goal.

The kicker shall not play the ball a second time until it has been touched or played by another player.

Until the ball is in play, the opponent must remain eight (8) yards from the ball.

When there are three or more defending players in a "wall," all attacking players must remain at least one (1) yard from the wall until the ball is in play.

**Law 14 Penalty Kicks**

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game, with the exception that the penalty mark will be **ten (10)** yards from the goal line.

**Law 15 Throw In**

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game.

The ball is out of play when it has wholly crossed the whole touchline, whether it is on the ground or in the air.

A goal shall not be scored directly from the throw-in.

If an incorrect throw occurs, a throw-in shall be awarded to the opposing team.

Opponents must stand at least two (2) yards from the point on the touchline where the throw is to be taken.

### **Law 16 Goal Kick**

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game.

When the whole of the ball passes over the whole of the goal line, excluding the portion between the goal posts and under the crossbar (either in the air or on the ground), having last been played by one of the players on the attacking team, a goal kick will be awarded.

A goal kick may be taken from anywhere inside the goal area by any member of the defending team. Opponents must be outside the penalty area until the ball is in play. Teammates of the kicking team may be inside the penalty area when the ball is kicked into play, and the ball does not need to clear the area to be played by the teammate.

The kicker shall not play the ball a second time until it has been touched or played by another player.

The ball is in play when it is kicked.

The team taking the goal kick may choose to restart play before the opponents have retreated outside the penalty area.

### **Law 17 Corner Kick**

Conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game, with the exception that all of the opposing players are to be at least **eight (8)** yards from the ball until it is kicked.

When the whole of the ball passes over the whole of the goal line excluding that portion between the goal posts and under the crossbar, (either in the air or on the ground), having last been played by one of the defending team, a player of the attacking team shall have a corner kick.

A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick.

The kicker shall not play the ball a second time until it has been touched or played by another player.

### **Team Responsibilities**

In the first game of the day, the teams should place corner flags on the field. All teams are responsible for the cleanup of the fields after each game. Please do not leave garbage on the sidelines.

Opposing coaches and players are encouraged to shake hands (fist bump or give high fives) after each match.

Please help put away the field signs and corner flags if you are the last game of the day.

**Parents and Spectators** should enjoy and encourage the activity of the players and refrain from coaching during the match. Please cheer and acknowledge players who exhibit good sportsmanship.

### **Coach Responsibilities**

The assigned coach should attend every practice and every game. All coaches must comply with all Risk Management requirements. There must be an approved adult at all functions.

The coach shall collect a WYS Medical Release form, available on the SYSA website, signed by the parent/guardian for all players and have access to these forms at all practices and games.

Coaches, their assistants, or spectators are not allowed on the field of play during the game unless permission is given by the referee (in case of emergencies or unusual situations).

The coach is responsible for their behavior as well as that of their players, parents, and spectators on his/her side of the field. Remember, this is for fun.

Every player must play in each game at least 50% of the playing time unless they are unable to play due to illness or injury.

Coaching from the sidelines is permitted but not recommended. Coaching must be done in a civil manner, and the tone of voice will be informational and encouraging, not demanding or critical.

Make sure that you have a game ball properly inflated before the game starts. Make sure that your players are properly equipped and ready to play.

In case of injuries during the game, ensure that the player is properly attended to. Check his/her condition after the game and follow up with a call to the home in the evening.

In the event an injured player requires medical attention, he/she must have a written release from the doctor before returning to practice or play with the team.

A coach shall complete an [Incident Report](#), available on the SYSA website, and submit it to the SYSA office within 48 hours of injury/incidence.

Coaches should familiarize themselves with the “[Zero Tolerance for Irresponsible Behavior Policy](#)” written by the Inland Empire Soccer Referee Association.

**Practices**

Only **two (2)** practices per week for **sixty (60)** minutes are allowed at this age level.

*Reviewed and edited July 2025*