US Youth Soccer Official Under 8 Playing Rules

4v4

Small Sided Games 2003

This past August, US Youth Soccer's State Associations approved changes to the Policy on Players and Playing Rules that will affect the game for players under age twelve. Current US Youth Soccer policies require that teams under 10 and younger play games with not more than eight players per side. Effective September 1st, 2003 this rule will detail age group specific playing numbers.

Rule 303. LENGTH OF GAMES, NUMBER OF PLAYERS, OVERTIME PERIODS, AND BALL SPECIFICATIONS

Section 1. (a) Except as provided by USYSA or a State Association, the length of games, overtime periods, ball size, ball circumference, ball weight, and number of players for each age group is as follows:

Age Group	Game Length	Overtime Periods	Size	Circumference	Weight	Number of Players
(Under 13- Under 19 are unaffected by rule change)						
Under 12	Two 30' halves	Two 10' halves golden goal	#4	25–26 in	11–13 ozs	No more than 11, 8 strongly recommended
Under 11	Two 30' halves	Two 10' halves golden goal	#4	25–26 in	11–13 ozs	No more than 11, 8 strongly recommended
Under 10	Two 25' halves	NONE	#4	25–26 in	11–13 ozs	No more than 7, 6 strongly recommended
Under 8	4 12' quarters	NONE	#3	23-24 in	11–12 ozs	No more than 5, 4 strongly recommended
Under 6	4 8' quarters	NONE	#3	23-24 in	11–12 ozs	No more than 4, 3 strongly recommended

US Youth Soccer Recommended modifications to the FIFA Laws of the Game.

FIFA Laws of The Game can be found at www.fifa.com

Law I-The Field: A.Dimensions: The field of play shall be rectangular, its length being not more than 50 yards nor less than 40 yards and its width not more than 30 yards nor less than 20 yards. The length in all cases shall exceed the width.
U S Youth Soccer Recommendation: Length 50 Yards Width: 30 Yards B.Markings: Distinctive lines not more than (5) inches wide.
A halfway line shall be marked out across the field.
A center circle with a five (5) yard radius.
Four corner arcs each with a two (2) foot radius.
Goal area: Three (3) yards from each goal post and three (3) yards into the field of play joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line.
C.Goals: The size of hockey goals up to 6 x 12 feet.

Law II-The Ball: Size three (3)

Law III-Number of Players: A.Maximum number of players on the field at any one time is four (4). B.Maximum number of players on the roster should not exceed seven (7). NOTE: If using Dual Field Method (two adjacent 4v4 fields)up to twelve (12) player roster may be used.
C.There are NO Goalkeepers.
D.Substitutions: Anytime ball is out of play with the permission of the Referee or Game Official.
E.Playing time: Each player SHALL play a minimum of 50% of the total playing time
F.Teams and games may be coed.

Law IV-Players Equipment: Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:
A.Footwear: Tennis shoes or soft-cleated soccer shoes
B. Shinguards are mandatory.

Law V-The Referee: Rather than require a Certified Referee, an OFFICIAL (Game Manager, Coordinator, Observer, Parent/Coach) may be used. Their job is to keep the playing environment FUN, SAFE and focused on the child. Duties are the same as a Referee under the FIFA Laws of The Game: keep time, enforce the rules, stop and restart play. When you stop play for a foul or other reason, take the time to explain to the players WHY! This is their first experience with soccer, too, and the best time to educate all on the Laws of The Game.

Law VI- Assistant Referee: Not used in the small-sided game.

Law VII-Duration of the Game: A.The game shall be divided into four (4) equal, ten (10) minute quarters.
B.There shall be two (2) minute break between quarters one and two and another two (2) minute break between quarters three and four.
C.There shall be a half-time break of five (5) minutes.

Law VIII-The Start of Play: Conform to FIFA, with the following exception: A.Opponent must be five (5) yards from the center mark while kick-off is in progress.

Law IX-Ball In and Out of Play: Conform to FIFA: Ball must completely cross over goal line to be out of play.

Law X-Method of Scoring: Conform to FIFA: Ball must completely cross over goal line and between posts and beneath crossbar to count.

Law XI-Off-Side: There is no offside in small-sided games.

Law XII-Fouls and Misconduct: Conform to FIFA with the following exception:
A.All fouls shall result in an indirect free kick with opponent five (5) yards away.
B.The referee/coach/parent must explain ALL infractions to offending player.

Law XIII-Free Kicks: Conform to FIFA with the following exception:
A.All free kicks will be indirect.
B.Opponents must be five (5) yards away

Law XIV-Penalty Kicks: There are no Penalty Kicks in small-sided games.

Law XV-Throw-In/Kick-In: Replaced by a Kick-in. Awarded when ball completely crosses sideline.
A.Kick-in is considered as an indirect free kick with the opponent five (5) yards away from the ball.

Law XVI-Goal Kick: Conform to FIFA with the following exception:
A.Goal kick may be taken any where within the goal area.
B.Opponents must be five (5) yards away from the ball.

Law XVII-Corner Kick: Conform to FIFA with the following exception:
A.Opponents must be five (5) yards away from the ball.
B.Corner Kicks are Indirect Free Kicks.

US Youth Soccer Recommendations

-Opposing parents/coaches and players should shake hands after each game.

-Participation awards for ALL- No trophies or awards just for best team.

-Parent/coaches, non-playing players and spectators should be there to enjoy and encourage the activity of the youngsters.

-No alcoholic beverages will be consumed or allowed near the playing area.