

AYSO REGION 678
U5 & U6 Rules Summary
And Referee Duties
(updated 8/6/2007)

PURPOSE OF PROGRAM: To expose 4 & 5 year old children to soccer. This is not a program to develop them. That comes later as the children get older.

SPECTATORS: The home team is listed first in the schedule and sits on the north or west side of the field. The Visiting Team must sit on the opposite side of the field (no exceptions). No one is to be behind the goal lines unless silently taking pictures.

UNIFORMS: Shin guards must be worn by all players. If there is a color conflict with jerseys, the HOME team is responsible for obtaining and wearing pinnies from the equipment shed.

EQUIPMENT: Inspect the field to be sure there are not holes, exposed sprinkler heads, broken glass or anything that might pose a danger. Fix anything you can. Inspect the players to be sure they have no wristwatches or jewelry (specifically no earrings – not even if they are taped). Players may not participate while wearing a hard cast or splint. No baseball type caps with firm brims. Elastic hair ties and ribbons are okay. Barrettes and metal hair pins are not. Shin guards must be worn under the socks.

GAME LENGTH: 30 minutes, divided into four 7.5 minute quarters. Allow 5 minutes for a halftime break and be sure the kids get fluids. A horn will sound at 10 minutes to the hour, and all games should stop at that time. If it is very hot, it is permissible to shorten the games as long as both coaches agree.

BALL: Get a ball from the home team (the first team listed in the schedule). It should say Size 3 on it somewhere. Pick one that is neither too soft nor too hard. Push on it with your thumbs. You should be able to deflect the ball about ¼ inch. Play with the best ball you can find.

PLAYERS: For U5 & U6 there are 3 players on the field. There are no goalkeepers. At U5 & U6 age kids get tired (or bored) easily. Therefore coaches can substitute players at will, ideally at a stoppage in play. Periodically count the players on the field to be sure each team has the correct number and adjust as necessary.

KICK OFF: The game begins with a kick off. The home team will kick off to begin the game. The ball is placed in the middle of the field. The players from each team must be in their own half of the field. In addition, all the visiting players must be at minimum of 5 yards away. and must wait until the ball is kicked before playing. The second half also begins with a kick off taken this time by the visiting team. A kick off is also used to restart the game after a goal is scored. In this instance, the team scored upon kicks off.

THROW IN: When the ball passes all the way across one of the long sidelines (the touchlines) the game must stop. The team that last touched the ball loses possession and the opposing team puts the ball back in play with a throw in. The player taking the throw in must face the field standing outside the line (or with one or both feet in contact with the line). The player must start with the ball behind the head, and then throw it in one motion across the top of the head with both hands. Feet must remain in contact with the ground until the ball is released. Don't be too picky about this. Help them to get it right.

GOAL KICK: When the ball passes all the way across one of the goal lines (but not into the goal), last touched by a player from the attacking team the game must stop. The attacking team loses possession, and the opposing team puts the ball back into play with a goal kick.

For U5 & U6 place the ball on the ground about 5 yards in front of the goal. Instruct all the opposing players that they must move back across the halfway line. Teammates of the kicker can be anywhere, but it is best if at least some of them are across the halfway line as well. Instruct the kicker to kick the ball as hard as they can and restart the match.

CORNER KICK: When the ball passes all the way across one of the goal lines (but not into the goal), last touched by a player from the defending team the game must stop. The attacking team puts the ball back into play with a corner kick. Place the ball on the ground inside or on the lines that mark the corner on the left or right side of the goal depending where the ball went out. Members of the opposing team must stay a minimum of 5 yards away so the attacking team can have a free kick at the ball.

GOALS: When the ball passes all the way across the goal line and into the goal, a goal is scored. Yes, a team may score upon itself. After a goal is scored, bring the ball back up to the center line and restart play with a kick off by the team that was scored upon. Make sure all the players are in the proper places according to the Kick Off description above. We do not keep score in U5 & U6.

FREE KICKS: The only “fouls” players of this age commit are dangerous play and handling the ball. Dangerous play is any kind of play that gives you cause for concern. Some young players are overly aggressive and push, hold or crash into others while trying to play the ball or try to kick at the ball while another child is lying on the ground nearby. This type of play should be stopped. Any child who reaches out to hold, control or deflect the ball with his hands or arms is guilty of handling the ball. If any of these infractions should occur, stop play. Briefly explain to the player what he/she needs to do differently. Then give the opposing team a direct kick at the ball.

For a direct kick the ball shall be placed at the spot of the foul. For U5 & U6 place the ball no closer than 10 yards to the goal of the opposing team, regardless of where the foul occurred. The players on the opposing team must be a minimum of 5 yards away. A goal can be scored from a direct kick without any other player touching the ball.

DROPPED BALL: When a player is injured or when players are all in a bunch flailing away at the ball and kicking each other stop play. In the case of an injury call the coach onto the field to care for the child. In the case of the wildly kicking pack, remind the players to be careful about kicking each other. Then after everything has been sorted out, pick up the ball and drop in to the ground from waist height. In the case of the pack, drop it behind them or behind you to help break it up. As soon as the ball hits the ground it is back in play.

EXPLANATION OF NO-ONE BEHIND THE GOAL RULE: I would like to explain why no one should be standing behind or by the side of the goals. It is a safety issue. In the past years we have seen players get hurt because they were not paying attention to what was happening on the field, but rather to the person talking to them behind them. We do not want parents or other children behind the goal either and so if you see someone from your team there, please ask them to move. Board members of Region 678 will also ask those people to go to the sidelines and cheer for their children or team. Please ask your parents and assistant coaches to follow this guideline.

The coaches will perform the “referee” function for these divisions. The Referee’s primary role in these games is to ensure that the kids have fun and that the game is played safely. To

that end, focus on helping the players when they are confused, teaching the players about the Laws that apply to them and making sure everyone is playing safely. The beauty of the game of soccer is that it avoids a rigid interpretation and application of the rules providing the referee with broad latitude to ensure the game keeps moving. Avoid constant stopping or interfering with their play.

DIVISION U5 & U6 COACHES AS REFEREES: Please have only two people on the field at a time. This should be either the coach or the assistant coach from each team. If the coach does not want to be on the field or cannot be on the field for some reason, than the coach can ask the assistant to step in. Too many adults on the field are unsafe for the kids, and it does not allow for a lot of running space for them. Also, the kids should really only be paying attention to their coaches and what is happening in the game. For some children, too much going on can be overwhelming for them. Use your assistant to help those kids on the teams with throw ins, and/or have them help the kids that need a little extra encouragement or instruction that is by the sideline they are standing on.

When in doubt, apply common sense, do what's most fair and move on.