

Putnam County Youth Soccer Association

Recreational League

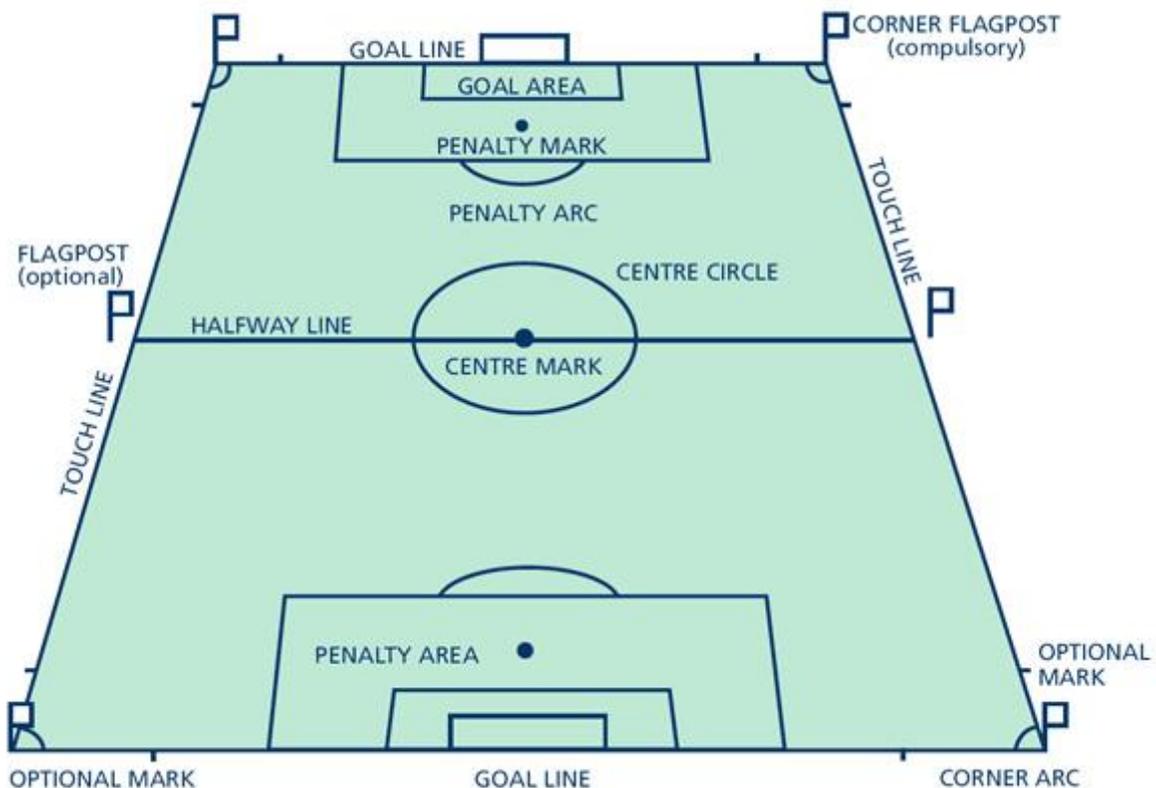
as of Spring 2015

Rules and guidelines for coaches and referees

U-8

(U-8 and U-7)

NOTE: These rules are based on US Youth Soccer Official U-8 Playing Rules for small-sided games, with some local adaptations. They are designed to assist young players in learning the game and its laws, while providing a common framework for the players, coaches and parents to enjoy their recreational soccer experience.



Game conditions and protocols:

- A. All games should be completed within one hour, to ensure games remain on schedule.
- B. Games take place regardless of the weather, *except* when officials sight lightning, severe weather, or as cancelled by PCYSA due to extremely poor playing conditions. Parents should dress children appropriately for the weather: rain, shine, hot, or cold, and provide water for them to drink.
- C. Opposing players and coaches should shake hands after the game, and thank the game official.
- D. Parents and spectators should be there to encourage the youngsters and enjoy the game. Negative comments towards players, coaches, or game official(s) are never appropriate.

FIFA Laws of the Game (as recommended by US Youth Soccer, and modified for PCYSA):**Law I - The Field**

- A. As already determined at Big Walnut Sports Park; U-8 plays on fields 3, 4, and 5. The field is 35 x 25 yds.
- B. The goal is 2 meters high by 3 meters wide (regulation futsal goal).
- C. A penalty area is marked out in front of goal. It should be 15 yards wide, and 8 yards deep.
- D. A penalty mark should be indicated at the midway point of the goal, 6 yards from goal.

Law II - The Ball

Size 3

Law III - Number of Players

- A. The maximum number of players on the field at any one time, per side, is five (5), one of which must be a goalkeeper.
- B. The minimum number of players required on the field for a side is four (4).
- C. Substitutions: Anytime the ball is out of play, with the permission of the Referee or Game Official.
- D. Each player should play about the same amount of time; individual players should not be set in certain 'positions', but should get experience at all positions.
- E. Teams and games may be co-ed.

Law IV - Players Equipment

- A. Footwear: tennis shoes or soft-cleated soccer shoes (NOT baseball cleats with a spike at the toe)..
- B. Shinguards and long socks are mandatory; socks must be pulled OVER the shinguards.
- C. Players should remove necklaces, watches, earrings, bracelets and other jewelry.
- D. Goalkeepers should have gloves, and should wear a colored pinnie to indicate their position.

Law V - The Referee

There is a Referee or Game Official to supervise the match. Their job is to keep the environment fun, safe, and focused on the children. Their duties are to: (1) Keep time; (2) Enforce the rules; (3) Stop and restart play. When stopping play for a foul or some other reason, the official takes time to explain to the players *why*, so they can learn along with everyone else.

Law VI - The Assistant Referee: Not used in the small-sided game**Law VII - Duration of the game**

- A. Four 10-minute quarters
- B. 3-minute breaks between quarters.

Law VIII - The Start of Play

- A. Teams alternate kicking off from the center circle at the start of each period, and switch ends after half-time.
- B. After a goal, the other side kicks off from the center circle.
- C. All players must be in their own half of the field when the kick-off occurs.
- D. All opponents must be at least 5 yards away from the center mark during kick-off.
- E. The ball is stationary, and at the Referee or Game Official's signal, a player kicks it forward.
- F. The kicker cannot touch the ball a second time until it has touched another player.

Law IX - Ball in and out of Play

- A. The ball must *completely* cross over the goal- (end-) line or side- (touch-) line to be out of play. If the ball is touching any part of the line, it is still *in*.
- B. The opposite side from that which last touched the ball before it went out of play gains possession of the ball.

Law X - Method of Scoring

The ball must *completely* cross over the goal-line, between the posts and beneath the crossbar to count.

Law XI - Off-side

Not used in the small-sided game.

Law XII - Fouls and misconduct

- A. All fouls shall result in an indirect free kick with all opponents at least 5 yards away.
- B. The Referee or Game Official should explain all infractions to the offending player.
- C. A foul should be called when a player unfairly or dangerously impedes another player. Bumping, touching and positioning are fine (no foul); Shoving, grabbing, striking, kicking, charging, jumping at, spitting at, or tripping another player are illegal, as is tackling a player without making contact with the ball first (call a foul and award the other side an indirect free kick at the spot of the infraction). Slide tackles are not allowed for U-8. A deliberate hand-ball is a foul. Coaches should respect the Referee or Game Official's judgment call on these matters.
- D. If a player exhibits repeated aggressive and/or dangerous play, they will be removed from the match for a "cool-down" period; that player's side will then be allowed a substitution, and the decision should be explained in detail to the player.

Law XIII - Free kicks

- A. All free kicks other than penalty kicks are indirect (i.e., the kick cannot score a goal without touching another player).
- B. All opponents must be at least 5 yards away.

Law XIV - Penalty kicks

A penalty kick is awarded when a defensive player denies an obvious goal-scoring opportunity either through a foul or a deliberate handball (other than by the keeper) in the penalty area.

Law XV - Throw-In

- A. Throw-ins are used from the side- (touch-) lines. The player must hold the ball with both hands and throw over their head into the field of play, while both of their feet are on the ground and touching or the side- (touch-) line.
- B. Awarded when the ball completely crosses the side- (touch-) line.

- C. Opponents must be at least 2 yards away.
- D. The thrower cannot touch the ball a second time until it has touched another player.

Law XVI - Goal-kick

- A. Goal kick may be taken anywhere within the penalty area.
- B. Awarded when the ball completely crosses the goal- (end-) line after being last touched by the attacking team.
- C. Opponents must be on their own side of the halfway line until the ball is struck.
- D. The kicker cannot touch the ball a second time until it has touched another player.

Law XVII - Corner kick

- A. Taken from the Corner area nearest to where the ball went out of play.
- B. Awarded when the ball completely crosses the goal- (end-) line after being last touched by the defending team.
- C. Opponents must be at least 5 yards away.
- D. Corner kicks are Indirect Free Kicks.
- E. The kicker cannot touch the ball a second time until it has touched another player.

Notes:

- The goalkeeper can throw, roll, and drop-kick the ball to a teammate, but cannot punt it into the opponent's penalty area in the air. If punted into the opponent's penalty area in the air, the opposing team is awarded indirect free kick at the midfield line.
- A goalkeeper may not score by throwing the ball directly into the opponent's goal.

BASIC THINGS TO KNOW:

- A. No Hands. Players other than the goalkeeper (and even the keeper can handle the ball only within the penalty area) are not allowed to handle the ball with any part of their body from the tips of their fingers to the shoulder, while the ball is in play. If a player deliberately handles the ball, an indirect free kick is awarded at the spot to the other side, unless the infraction occurs within the penalty area (in which case, a penalty kick is awarded). If contact is accidental, play should not be stopped.
- B. Two-touch rule. A player is not allowed to touch the ball again after he/she has performed a kick-in, a corner kick, a goal-kick, an indirect free-kick, or a kick-off, *until* the ball has touched another player.
- C. Headers. Players are not encouraged to learn heading the ball at the U-8 level. If players already are doing it, it should be with their forehead (the hardest part of the head).
- D. Own goals. If the ball hits a defender before it goes into the net, it is a fair goal.
- E. Scoring. Teams do not keep track of goals at the U-8 level.
- F. Kick-off goals. Yes, it is possible to score directly from the kick-off, but coaches should not encourage their players to do so, as it reduces play.

Referees and coaches should download the FIFA laws of the game from US Soccer:

<http://www.ussoccer.com/referees/laws-of-the-game.aspx>

References and Sources:

- http://www.usyouthsoccer.org/parents/Soccer_Pocket_Guide_Intro/
- <http://www.usyouthsoccer.org/CoachResourceCenter/>