



City of Groveport
Recreation Department
Office (614) 836-1000 / www.groveportrec.com
www.groveportrec.com

Youth Soccer Rules

We will be using FIFA Laws of the Game with US Youth Soccer recommended modifications and league specific modifications as listed below. (*Revised 08/07/2018*)

General Rules (all leagues) (note: rules 1-4, & 22 apply only to GRD teams)

1. **Player Eligibility.** Under no circumstances may an individual practice or compete with a team unless he/she is a registered player with Groveport Recreation Department. Players are allowed to play on one team only.
2. **Waiting Lists.** A waiting list shall be used to secure the names and phone numbers of those individuals who did not register by the registration deadline. Each person on the waiting list will be given fair consideration, on a first come, first serve basis, if a space becomes available in the particular division. Individuals placed on the waiting list are not guaranteed a space in the program.
3. **Formation of Teams.** Groveport Recreation Department will make the final determination on the number of teams and the number of players per team in each division, based on the number of registrants received by the registration deadlines and the number of volunteer coaches.
 - a. 4.5 yrs – Kindergarten & 1st/2nd Grade Teams will be formed in an effort to achieve an equal balance of ages and parent reported playing experience.
 - b. 3rd/4th & 5th/6th Grade Teams will be formed in an effort to achieve an equal balance of talent.
 - c. Siblings in the same division will be placed on the same team.
 - d. *Special requests will not be honored.*
4. **Team Practices.**
 - a. All team practices must be scheduled through The Groveport Recreation Department. Volunteer coaches are responsible for scheduling team practices.
 - b. Groveport Recreation Department shall determine the number of practices permitted per week and the allowable duration of practices.
5. **Team Rosters.** Team rosters will be determined by each individual organization and will have the appropriate number of players for each division. Volunteer coaches are not permitted to add a player to his/her team roster. Teams are not permitted to use a player from another team to make up for a shortage of players in a given game.
6. **Substitute Players.** Teams are not permitted to use substitute players if their team is short for a game. If a team does not have enough players to start, each side may play down one player (i.e. 6v6 can play 5v5). If a team needs to use substitutes in order to field enough players, the game may be played, but the team must report this to the official and opposing coach so the game results will be recorded as a forfeit for the team using substitutes.
7. **Game Cancellations.** When games are cancelled due to inclement weather or other circumstances, attempts will be made to schedule make-ups. Groveport Recreation Department reserves the right to not offer make-up opportunities. Cancellations will be announced, as soon as possible, to the coaches who will contact all of their players. Parents are welcome to call the weather line at 614-836-2989.
8. **Game Changes.** All game changes must be approved and scheduled through the Recreation Coordinator.
9. **Playing Time.** All players are to play comparable time (whenever possible). Exception: players may play less due to injury or disciplinary reasons. When a player is considered seriously injured by either the coach or the officials, the player may not return to the game play that day and must be injury free before returning to practice or play.
10. **Appropriate Attire.** All players are required to wear approved shin guards covered with socks, shoes (soccer shoes or tennis shoes, no baseball or football cleats). Teams will wear matching color jerseys. Goalies are required to wear a contrasting color shirt from both teams on the field.
11. **Slide Tackling.** Slide tackling is illegal except in the U15 league.
12. **Position Specialization.** Coaches are not permitted to require position specialization. Coaches should expose players to as many positions as possible throughout the course of the season to offer the greatest opportunity for player development and enjoyment of the game.
13. **Lightning / Thunder.** In case of lightning or thunder in the area, play will be suspended. Participants will be asked to not leave the park until games are officially postponed or play is resumed. Play will not be resumed until 30 minutes after the last visible lightening or sound of thunder in the area.

14. **Inclement Weather.** If a game begins and then is called due to inclement weather: A game that has completed the first half will stand as final. A game that is still in the first half will be rescheduled and resumed from its stopping point.
15. **Concussion Protocol.**
 - a. Coaches, referees, or officials must remove an athlete from play if the athlete is exhibiting the signs and symptoms of a concussion during practice or a game.
 - b. The athlete cannot return to play on the same day that the player is removed, and is not permitted to return to play until they have been assessed and received written clearance by a physician (MD or DO) or by any other licensed health care provider approved by the Groveport Recreation Department.
 - c. Once written clearance has been turned-in to the recreation coordinator, the coordinator will contact the player's parent and coach to notify that they are officially permitted to return to play.
16. **Ties.** Regular season games that end in a tie will be recorded as such. Games during the tournament pool play or round robin that end in a tie will be recorded as such. Breaking the tie for tournament seeding will be as follows: Head to Head (if applicable), if not determined, then goals allowed, if still a tie, then goals scored, if still a tie, a coin toss. During the Championship Game of tournament play games that end in a tie will play a 5-minute overtime period. If the score remains tied after two 5-minute overtime periods, a modified shoot out (3rd/4th grade) or shoot out (5th/6th grade) will occur.
 - a. Modified Shoot Out: Have the player shoot, then play goalie (or play goalie then shoot). The team with the most goals scored after five kicks for each team is the winner.
17. **Mercy Rule.** Applies to teams in the 3rd/4th Grade and older divisions. If a team leads by 4 or more goals, the trailing team may add a player. The extra player may stay on the field until goal differential is below 4.
18. **Sportsmanship.** Good sportsmanship will be demonstrated at all times by players, coaches, and spectators.
 - a. Rules of fair play: Heckling of the other team, "trash-talking," ridiculing others, and throwing equipment will not be tolerated.
 - b. Shaking Hands. Players and Coaches are required to shake hands following every game.
 - c. The use of tobacco, alcohol, other controlled substances of any form by players or adult leaders on the playing field or in the proximity of his/her players are strictly prohibited before, during, or after games and practices.
 - d. Players may be indefinitely suspended from participating in the Groveport Recreation Department's programs for unsportsmanlike conduct.
19. **Protests.** Due to the nature of Youth Sports, protests will not be permitted concerning calls by officials and/or interpretation of league rules. Coaches should address any concerns or questions to Groveport Recreation Department in writing. The Recreation Coordinator will then address appropriate concerns with the entire league if necessary.
20. **Jewelry.** No jewelry is allowed during practice or games; Medical jewelry is permitted, and it must be taped down to the skin for player's safety.
21. **Blood Borne Pathogens.** As soon as the game official has observed blood or bodily fluid on a player (including uniform), he/she must stop the game immediately. The injured player must leave the game immediately and receive first aid attention. The injured player is not permitted to re-enter the game until the injury sufficiently covered (with band-aid, tape, gauze, etc.) or uniform changed. Officials are not permitted to administer first aid to any player.
22. **Transportation of Players.** Coaches are not permitted to transport any children (other than their own) to and/or from any practices and/or games while serving as a coach with Groveport Recreation Department. Coaches, who choose to transport children other than their own, will be held personally liable for any and all circumstances which take place while transporting said children. Coaches may also be relieved from their coaching duties for any violation of this rule.
23. **Criticizing of Officials.** As a general rule, Volunteer coaches are asked to be sympathetic rather than critical when addressing our Soccer Officials. As a Volunteer coach, if you are being critical towards Officials you are modeling behavior that lets the players and their parents know that is acceptable to be disrespectful to others as a part of Groveport Recreation Department Programs. It is important to let all involved know that everyone makes mistakes and they will not be treated poorly because of mistakes they make.
24. **HEADING RULE:** All players are prohibited from deliberately striking a soccer ball with any portion of their head (a.k.a heading), during any game, practice, tryout, or other soccer related activity.
 - a. If a player engages in heading a soccer ball during games, practices, tryouts, or other soccer related activities, contrary to the above listed prohibition, the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the player accept the risk and/or peril of doing so.
 - b. If a player deliberately heads the ball in a game with any portion of their head, an indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the infraction.
 - c. If within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the infraction occurred.
 - d. If the ball makes contact with a player's head and the player has not deliberately played or attempted to play the ball, then play should continue as no infraction has occurred.

- e. A player shall not be cautioned nor sent-off for persistent infringement, as a result of a heading infraction.
- f. A player shall not be cautioned nor sent-off for denying an obvious goal scoring opportunity (DOGSO), as a result of a heading infraction. It is not a handling offense, and it is not an offense committed against an opponent ... therefore criteria for committing a DOGSO offense does not exist.
- g. Advantage shall not be implemented when a heading infraction occurs which would allow play to continue. Exception: When a ball goes directly into the goal from a header by a defending player into their own goal (e.g. with no subsequent play on the ball) the goal should be awarded. This is the only time an advantage should be applied.

25. **Kick-Off Rule:** The ball may be kicked in any direction, this includes backwards.

4.5 Years - Kindergarten (Size 3 soccer ball, 3 vs. 3, split field model)

1. The game will consist of four 8-minute quarters (visiting team will switch fields at half-time).
2. Games will be played on 20 x 25 yard field using a 4 x 6 foot goal.
3. No Goalkeepers.
4. Coaches will officiate the game and may be on the field during play. All infringements shall be briefly explained to the offending player.
5. Pass-ins (sideline), Goal Kicks (Goal Line) and Corner Kicks will be an Indirect Free Kick (no throw-ins). Opponents must be 4 yards away from the ball until it is in play.
6. Kick-off will be an indirect kick. A goal may not be scored off of a Kick-Off.
7. There are no Penalty Kicks or off-sides.
8. Substitutions are allowed at any stoppage and are unlimited.
9. Focus is on Fun and Ball Skills. Game scores and standings will not be kept.
10. Fouls and Misconduct. No caution or send off shall be issued to players. If a child is being too rambunctious then the official will ask the coach to make a substitution of that player to give the child a chance to calm down before returning to play.

1st/2nd Grade (Size 3 soccer ball, 4 vs. 4, will use split field model if necessary)

1. The game will consist of four 12-minute quarters.
2. Games will be played on 30 x 35 yard field using a 4 x 6 foot goal.
3. No Goalkeepers.
4. One Official will be used and all infringements will be briefly explained to the offending player.
5. Coaches will stay on the sidelines.
6. Substitutions are allowed at any stoppage and are unlimited.
7. Games will begin with a coin Toss. Winner will choose the side of field. Other team begins game with the ball.
8. All Free Kicks will be indirect, including the Kick-off at the beginning of the game and at the half. A goal cannot be scored off of a kick-off.
9. There are no Penalty Kicks or off-sides.
10. Goal Kicks can be taken anywhere in the goal area. Opposing players must be outside the goal area and at least 4 yards away from the ball until it is in play.
11. Corner Kicks will be taken from the corner and opposing players must be at least 4 yards away from the ball until it is in play.
12. Throw-ins will be taken from the sidelines. Violations will be corrected once by the game official. If further violations are made, play will continue with no loss of possession.
13. Defenders may only be in the goalie box when the ball is on their side of the field.
14. Focus is on Fun and Ball Skills. Game scores will be kept by officials for the purpose of tracking league parity. Standings may be used to determine seeding for end of season tournament.
15. Fouls and Misconduct. No caution or send off shall be issued to players. If a child is being too rambunctious then the official will ask the coach to make a substitution of that player to give the child a chance to calm down before returning to play.

3rd/4th Grade (Size 4 soccer ball, 6 vs. 6, including goalie)

1. The game will consist of two 25-minute halves with 5 minute half-time.
2. Games will be played on 40 x 55 yard field with 6 x 18 foot goals
3. Referee will be used and all infringements will be briefly explained to the offending player.
4. Kick-off will be indirect. A goal may not be scored on a Kick-off.
5. Games will begin with a coin Toss. Winner will choose the side of field. Other team begins game with the ball.
6. Free Kicks: all opponents must be at least 8 yards from the ball.
7. Penalty Kick: penalty mark is 8 yards from the midpoint between the goalposts.
8. Corner Kick: opponents must remain 8 yards from the ball until it is in play.
9. Off-sides will be enforced.
10. Throw-in violations will result in loss of possession.

11. Substitutions allowed during play stoppage when team has possession of the ball and are unlimited. Permission to enter the game is granted by the official.
12. League Standings will only be tracked and used to seed teams in the tournament. Focus is on Fun and Ball skills.
13. Fouls and Misconduct. Conform to FIFA with the following exception: If the goalie punts or drop-kicks the ball **in the air** from his/her own penalty area directly into the opponent's penalty area, the opposing team will receive an Indirect Free Kick on the center spot of the Mid Field line.

5th/6th Grade (Size 4 Soccer ball, 8 vs. 8, including goalie)

1. The game will consist of two 30-minute halves with a 5-minute half-time.
2. Games will be played of 50 x 70 yard field with 7 x 21 foot goals.
3. Referee will be used.
4. Games will begin with a coin Toss. Winner will choose the side of field. Other team begins game with the ball.
5. Free Kicks: all opponents must be at least 8 yards from the ball.
6. Penalty Kick: penalty mark is 10 yards from the midpoint between goalposts.
7. Corner Kick: opponents must remain 8 yards from the ball until it is in play.
8. Substitutions are allowed during play stoppage when team has possession of the ball and are unlimited. Permission to enter the game is granted by the official.
9. League Standings will only be tracked and used to seed teams in the tournament. Focus is on Fun and Ball Skills.
10. Fouls and Misconduct. Conform to FIFA with the following exception: If the goalie punts or drop-kicks the ball **in the air** from his/her own penalty area directly into the opponent's penalty area, the opposing team will receive an Indirect Free Kick on the center spot of the Mid-field line.

U15 (Size 5 Soccer ball, 11 vs. 11, including goalie)

1. The game will consist of two 30-minute halves with a 5-minute half-time.
2. Games will be played of 60 x 100 yard field with 8 x 24 foot goals.
3. Referee will be used.
4. Games will begin with a coin Toss. Winner will choose the side of field. Other team begins game with the ball.
5. Substitutions are allowed during play stoppage when team has possession of the ball and are unlimited. Permission to enter the game is granted by the official.
6. League Standings will only be tracked and used to seed teams in the tournament. Focus is on Fun and Ball Skills.

Disciplinary Sanctions – FIFA regulations. Will only be issued to players in the 3rd/4th and 5th/6th Grade Leagues.

Yellow Card – used to communicate that a player has been cautioned.

Cautionable offences include:

1. unsporting behavior
2. dissent by word or action
3. persistent infringement of the Laws of the Game
4. delaying the restart of play
5. failure to respect the required distance when play is restarted with a corner-kick, free kick, or throw-in.
6. entering or re-entering the field of play without the referee's permission
7. deliberately leaving the field of play without the referee's permission

Red Card – used to communicate that a player has been sent off. A player who has been sent off must leave the vicinity of the field of play and the technical area.

A player receiving a red card may be suspended from participating the team's next scheduled game depending on the severity of the infraction. Additional consequences may also be applied at the depending on the nature and severity of the offense.

A coach or spectator receiving a red card or asked to leave to field of play for improper conduct shall automatically be suspended from participating or attending the team's next scheduled game and may be subject to an indefinite suspension depending on the nature and severity of the offense.

Sending off offences include:

1. serious foul play
2. violent conduct
3. spitting on an opponent or any other person
4. denying the opposing team a goal or an obvious goalscoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball (this does not apply to a goal keeper within his own penalty area)
5. denying an obvious goal scoring opportunity to an opponent moving towards the player's goal by an offense punishable by a free kick or a penalty kick

6. using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures
7. receiving a second caution (yellow card) in the same match

The Referee has the authority to take disciplinary sanctions from the moment he enters the field of play until he/she leaves the field of play after the final whistle.

A player, who commits a cautionable or sending off offense, either on or off the field of play, whether directed toward an opponent, teammate, referee, or any other person, is disciplined according to the nature of the offence committed.

The City of Groveport reserves the right to rule on any matter not specifically covered in the rules and may add or revise rules as needed.

