



THIS IS FOR FUN! ABOVE ALL - KEEP THE KIDS IN MIND

Youth Soccer Rules

(updated 9/14/17)

- When a participant signs up for the Cabot Parks & Rec they expect, and have the right, to play in all matches. All players “dressed out” will participate in the match with exception of injury, illness, and being declared ineligible (a player may be declared ineligible due to unexcused absence of practices and unsportsmanlike conduct in practice or a game during that week). Excused absences are school functions, religious beliefs, illness or injury. Coaches need to respect all the young athletes if they are to have a rewarding experience in sports. Make sure players are respectful at all times during practice and matches to their own coaches, opposing teams (coach, player and parents.)
- Referee(s), Cabot Parks and Recreation Staff, and opposing coach should be notified of an ineligible player.
- All players should be encouraged to attend all practices.
- A game will be considered a non-playable, if one or both teams are not present by 5 minutes after the game is scheduled to start.
- If game time arrives without enough players present but at least the minimum, the game shall start with the minimum. If more players show up, they may enter the game once play is stopped. During the season, you can use a different player from a different team (who you are not playing) to step in and play for your team. This can only happen if you do not have the minimum to start the game.
- All players must wear a Cabot Parks & Recreation uniform and appropriate soccer attire. (cleats (no toe cleat), shin-guards)
- Jewelry such as rings, watches, necklaces are strictly prohibited.
- Opposing coaches and players will shake hands after each game.
- Two coaches per sidelines and one coach permitted on the field (U4-U8) at a time during play.
- Games soccer ball will be size 3 for U4-U8, size 4 for U10-U12, and size 5 for U14 and up. Each team must provide a ball for their scheduled game.
- **Each team that is playing at their scheduled time must provide one assistant referee (PARENT) in the U10 division.**
- Showing **Good Sportsmanship** is a must at all times.

RULES MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE DURING THE SEASON



RULE 1: TEAM COMPOSITION

1. Team composition will be of the following ages:
 - a. U4 Division – 6 players max
 - i. 3 players and NO goalkeeper.
 - b. U5, U6 and U8 Divisions – 8 players max but recommend 6
 - i. 4 players and NO goalkeeper.
 - c. U10 Division – 12 players max
 - i. 6 players and 1 goalkeeper will be on the field at one time.
 - ii. A minimum of 5 players are needed for an official game.
 - d. U12, U14, U16 Divisions – 13 players max
 - i. 8 players and 1 goalkeeper to start a game.
 - ii. A minimum of 6 players are needed for an official game.
 - e. U14, U16 and U18 Divisions (if available) – 15 players max
 - i. 10 players and 1 goalkeeper to start a game.
 - ii. A minimum of 8 players are needed for an official game.

RULE 2: GAME TIME & SUBSTITUTIONS

1. A game will consist of (4) 5-minute quarters with a 5-minute halftime for U4, (4) 6-minute quarters with a 5-minute halftime for U5 and U6, 8-minute quarters for U7 and U8, (2) 25-minute halves with a 7-minute halftime for U10, (2) 30-minute halves with an 8-minute halftime for U12, and (2) 30-minute halves with a 10-minute halftime for U16(U13/U15).
 - a. **SUBSTITUTIONS** (Divisions U4-U8), at the end of the quarter or at half.
 - b. **SUBSTITUTIONS** (Divisions U10), on any dead ball if your team has possession or at half.
 - c. **SUBSTITUTIONS** (Division U12), both teams on your team's throw-in, any goal kicks, or after a goal, or at half.
 - d. **SUBSTITUTIONS** (Division U15 and up), USSF standards
 - i. The clock will not stop during substitutions. Teams should take no longer than 1 minute to substitute players.
 - ii. Substitution of players occurs only during substitutions and in case of a player injury at any time.
 - iii. Or at half
2. All players should play at least half of a game.

RULE 3: SCORING

1. A goal is scored when the whole ball crosses the goal line and is between the goalposts and under the crossbar.
 - a. **U4-U18 Divisions** – Scores or standings will not be recorded during the season. (U4-U8, goals can only be scored when the attacking players are in the offensive half of the field.)

RULE 4: GOALKEEPER

1. Cabot Parks and Recreation highly encourages coaches to rotate their goalkeeper during each game.



2. Goalkeepers may catch, throw, punt, kick or bounce the ball within the designated goal area.
 - i. **Exception: (U10-U15 Divisions):** The goalkeeper cannot play a ball with their hands if it has passed directly to them by the feet of a teammate. (referee's discretion)
 - ii. U10 goalkeepers must distribute the ball by means of a throw or passing via placing the ball on the ground to have possession. NO PUNTING (Please see Rule 7)
3. Possession by the goalkeeper occurs when their hands make contact with the ball or an effort has been made to pick up the ball and has six seconds to release the ball.

RULE 5: OFFSIDES

1. U4-U8 Divisions
 - a. Traditional soccer offside will not be called in these age divisions.
 - b. All players on a team must attempt to return to their half of the field when defending the opposition's attack. Teams will not be allowed to position attacking players near the opposition's end line (IE: "Cherry Picking").
 - c. The penalty for "cherry picking" will be a free kick positioned at the center mark of the half way line.
2. U10-U18 Divisions
 - a. Traditional soccer offside will be called in this age division.
 - b. There are three distinct aspects of the Offside Rule. All three must be in effect on the same play in order for OFFSIDE to be called against the offense.
 - i. THE OFFSIDE POSITION
 - Being in an offside position means...
 - a. A player that is nearer to the opponent's goal line than the ball AND the last defender (the goalkeeper becomes the last defender once the attacking team gets past the last defensive field player)
 - b. A player that is in the opponent's half of the field.
 - ii. INVOLVED IN ACTIVE PLAY
 - Interfering with Active Play means...
 - a. Playing or touching the ball when it has been passed or touched by a team-mate; while the player is in an offside position.
 - Interfering with an Opponent means...
 - a. Preventing an opponent from playing or being able to play the ball by obstructing the opponent's line of vision or movements.
 - b. Making a gesture or movement by which, in the opinion of the game day official, deceives or distracts an opponent.
 - Gaining an advantage by being in an offside position means...
 - a. Playing a ball that rebounds off a goal post or cross bar after having been in an offside position.
 - b. Playing a ball that rebounds off an opponent after having been in an offside position.
 - iii. THE OFFENSE
 - If conditions i and ii are met, then and only then can a player be called for Offside.



- a. The result of the offside foul will be an indirect free kick at the location where the player was initially ruled to be in an offside position.

RULE 6: HEADING

1. PROHIBITED in U4-U10
2. RESTRICTED in U12 (NO Heading when a goalkeeper distributes the soccer ball via a punt)
3. ALLOWED in U15-U18

RULE 7: BUILD-OUT LINE

1. USSF has implemented a build-outline for the U10 age group. It promotes playing ball out of the back in a less pressured setting.
2. When the goalkeeper has the ball, either during the play (from the opponent) or from a goal kick, the opposing team must move behind the build out line until the ball is put into play.
3. Once the opposing team is behind the build out line, the goalkeeper can pass, throw or roll the ball into the play. (punting is PROHIBITED)
4. After the ball is put into play by the goalkeeper, the opposing team can cross the build out line and play resumes as normal.

ADDITIONAL OFFSIDE RULE CLARIFICATION

Offside can only occur in the opponent's half of the field.

The opposing goalkeeper counts as a defender.

Players are allowed to be in an offside position and not be guilty of offside.

- i. A player can be in an offside position, but if not involved in the active play, then there is no offside.

In order for a player to be guilty of offside, the player must meet both of the following conditions:

- ii. Be in an offside position.
- iii. Be involved in the Active Play.

All offside rule violations are re-started with an Indirect Free Kick

- i. An Indirect Free Kick must be touched by two players (from either team) before the play is considered to have re-started.
- ii. Goals cannot be scored directly from an Indirect Free Kick (only one player touching the ball).
- iii. Two players must touch the ball before the ball crosses the goal line to be considered a goal.
- iv. In the event the ball enters the goal prior to a second touch, the re-start will be a goal kick for the opposing team.

TYPES OF FOULS

1. **U4-U8 Division: All Free Kicks are Direct Free Kicks**
2. **U10-U18 Divisions: Free Kicks will be either Direct or Indirect Free Kicks (USFF)**
 - A. **DIRECT FREE KICK FOULS**

A player is penalized and the opposing side awarded a Direct Free Kick when they purposely:



- Kick or try to kick an opponent
 - Deliberately trip an opponent
 - Jump at an opponent
 - Jostle an opponent in a vigorous or dangerous manner
 - Hold onto an opponent
 - Push an opponent
 - Deliberately touch the ball with their hands
 - Strike or try to strike an opponent
 - Push an opponent from behind when the latter is not blocking him/her
- a. If a player commits one of the above infractions intentionally in their own penalty area the opposing team is awarded a Penalty Kick.

B. INDIRECT FREE KICK FOULS

A player is penalized, and the opposing side awarded a Indirect Free Kick when they purposely:

- Play in a dangerous manner (NO SLIDING ALLOWED)
- Obstruct their opponents without trying to go for the ball
- The goalkeeper, in the referee's opinion, intentionally slows down the game

TYPES OF STARTS AND RE-STARTS of PLAY

1. DIRECT FREE KICKS
 - a. A goal can be scored directly without another player having to touch it.
 - b. Kick is taken from the position of the ball at the time of the violation.
 - c. Opponents must be at least 10 yards away from the ball.
2. INDIRECT FREE KICKS
 - a. A goal can only be scored when the ball is touched by another player first.
 - b. Kick is taken from the position of the ball at the time of the violation.
 - c. Opponents must be at least 10 yards away from the ball.
3. PENALTY KICKS
 - a. A defensive player commits a foul within their own penalty area.
 - b. The kick is taken from the penalty spot with only the goalkeeper and the kicker.
4. CORNER KICKS
 - a. Ball goes out-of-bounds over the goal line and has been touched last by a player on the defending team.
 - b. The kick is taken from the inside of the quarter-circle and on the side of the goal where the ball went out.
 - c. A goal can be scored directly from a corner kick.
5. GOAL KICKS
 - a. A ball goes over the goal line and was last touched by the player of the offensive team.
 - b. The kick is taken in the goal area.
 - c. Opposing players must be outside the penalty area until the ball is in play.
 - d. A goal cannot be scored directly from a goal kick.



6. THROW-INS
 - a. Throw ins are given when the ball crosses completely over the touchline.
 - b. Players shall throw the ball in a forward manner holding the ball with 2 hands behind the head.
 - c. The feet must not leave the ground.
 - d. Two retries allowed after an explanation by the referee only in the U8 Division.

CAUTIONS AND SEND-OFFS

1. The following offenses result in a **caution (yellow card)** for the offending player/coach:
 - a. Unsporting behavior
 - b. Showing dissent by word or behavior
 - c. Persistently infringing the Laws of the Game
 - d. Delaying the restart of the game
 - e. Entering, re-entering or leaving the field of play without permission of the referee
 - f. Wearing jewelry

Penalty: The offending player will be substituted out of the game and may not enter until the next legal opportunity. If the game is stopped specifically for one of these offenses, an indirect free kick will be awarded to the offended team.
2. The following offenses result in a **send-off (red card)** for the offending player/coach:
 - a. Serious foul play
 - b. Violent conduct
 - c. Spitting at an opponent or any other person
 - d. Denying the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal scoring opportunity by handling the ball or committing a foul punishable by a free kick or penalty kick
 - e. Receiving a second caution in the same game
 - f. Using severely offensive, insulting or abusive language/gestures

Penalty: The offending player must leave the field. The offending team must play short for each play that receives a send-off for the remainder of the game. If the game is stopped specifically for one of these offenses, an indirect free kick will be awarded to the offended team.
3. Any player or coach that receives a double yellow or a straight red card to be ejected shall be suspended for a minimum of one game. If this occurs a second time in a season, that player or coach will be suspended for the remainder of the season.
 - a. Suspended player may sit on the team bench in street clothes
 - b. Suspended coach may not be in sight or sound of the field area where their team is playing
4. Any spectator ejected must leave the field area IMMEDIATELY. If this occurs a second time for the same offender, this spectator will be suspended for the remainder of the season.
5. The referee has the right to terminate the soccer game, if any player, coach or spectator refuses to leave the field area.