

Recreational Youth Soccer 101

New to the sport, to the league, or both? This is a great place to get acquainted with the game!

The Field of Play

All boundary lines in soccer are “in play.” The ball must cross a line completely to leave the area it was previously in. Players may legally play a ball on the other side of the line without crossing it.

Equipment

Players must wear the following at all games and practices:

- Closed-toe shoes (note: toe cleats and metal cleats are not allowed)
- Shin guards that are appropriate for the player’s age
- Uniform shirt and shorts (at games); athletic shirt and shorts (at practices)
- Uniform socks (at games); soccer socks that cover the shinguards (at practices)

Jewelry is not allowed! This includes all piercings, hard hair fasteners, casts, wristbands, watches, rings, and necklaces. **If your child cannot remove a prohibited item, they will not be permitted to play.**

Scoring

The ball must completely cross the goal line to count as a goal. In U6 & U8 leagues, offensive players may not shoot from on or within the goal arc.

Restarting Play

Here are the most common restarts you’ll see during a game of soccer:

- **Throw In:** Ball crossed the sideline.
- **Corner Kick:** Ball crossed the goal line outside the goal, last touched by defender.
- **Goal Kick:** Ball crossed the goal line outside the goal, last touched by attacker.
- **Kickoff:** Beginning of either half, or after a goal is scored.
- **Drop Ball:** When play must be restarted for any other (non-foul) reason.

Offside (U10 and Older)

A player is in an offside position if they are in their attacking half of the field ahead of both the ball and the second-to-last defender (including the goalkeeper).

Being in an offside position is not a penalty!

Offside is only called when the player in an offside position is involved in play, interferes in play, or causes their team to gain an advantage.

Offside is not penalized on throw-ins, corner kicks, or goal kicks.

Fouls & Misconduct

Fouls include taunting, pushing, striking, kicking, tripping, spitting, holding, or otherwise acting in an unsporting, dangerous, or reckless way while on the field.

The referee may decide not to call a foul if the team that was fouled gained or maintained an advantage afterward. This is entirely at the referee’s discretion.

The way play is restarted after a foul is called depends on the severity and location of the foul:

- **Indirect Free Kick:** Minor offense. The ball must touch another player before it can score.
- **Direct Free Kick:** Major offense. The ball may score directly off the kick.
- **Penalty Kick:** Any direct free kick that occurs within the penalty area in front of the goal.

If a player or coach commits a particularly egregious foul, they may receive a caution (yellow card) or a send off (red card). Players who are cautioned must sit for at least one play before they can be substituted back in. Players or coaches who are sent off must leave the field and return to the parking lot. CSYS tracks all cards received by players and coaches throughout the year. Accumulating many cards during a season may result in a suspension or other corrective action.