

Soccer Summary of Rules

Divisions: U10, U12, U14, U15

MISSION

The mission of the league is to promote, develop, supervise and voluntarily assist the interest of youths participating in recreational soccer. The primary goal of the league is to provide a safe and fun outlet for community participation. The attainment of exceptional athletic skill or the winning of games is of secondary importance.

LEAGUE RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

The FIFA published “Laws of the Game”, as amended by the OHSAA shall be the base documents used to govern competitive league play. Specific amendments and clarification applicable to the Middlefield Recreation League are listed in the following document.

These rules are intended as a guide for league administration and uniform play. Recognizing rules cannot be all encompassing, it is expected that good rational judgment and common sense will prevail to resolve disputes not specifically documented in these rules. The overriding factor is resolving undocumented issues shall be the fact that this is a Recreational League. As such, resolution should be in a manner that is fair to both teams and supports the league mission and principles.

Coaches Responsibilities:

- Coaches are responsible for supporting the leagues’ mission
- Coaches must assist the referees in maintaining proper conduct on the field
- Coaches are expected to responsibly manage the conduct of their team’s spectators.
- Coaches are responsible for reporting their game result to the appropriate commissioner.
- Coaches must remain on the sidelines during play.

Uniforms and Equipment:

- The only equipment required is shin guards. Shoes must be tennis shoes or rubber-cleated soccer/baseball shoes.
- All players **MUST** wear shin guards to play or practice.
- Players must wear their team jersey and the goalkeeper must wear color that distinguishes them from the other players and the referee.
- Watches and jewelry are not permitted on the players.

Ball: The appropriate ball size for league play is:

- U10 – U12 Size #4
- U15 Size #5

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Number of Players:

- **U10 & U12:** 8 vs. 8, one of which is designated the goal keeper. Players can play in any position or formation on the field.
- **U14, U15:** Maximum number of players fielded per team, one of which is designated the goal keeper is eleven (11). Minimum number of players per side is eight (8). If a team cannot field the maximum number of players but has at least the minimum number present and able to play, the opposing team will play with a one (1) player advantage. (Less than the minimum present constitutes a forfeit).

Game Information:

- The game will start promptly at the scheduled time.
- A team unable to field the minimum number of players after a ten (10) minute delay shall forfeit the game by a score of two (2) to zero (0).
- The home team is responsible for ensuring the field is in good playing condition. Both coaches and referees are responsible for identifying and correcting any unsafe field conditions at any time, before or during a game. **Safety of the players, coached and referees is the top most priority**
- **U10** games will consist of two (2), twenty four (24) minute halves (The last half may be shortened if the game is running late).
- **U12** games will be divided into two (2), thirty (30) minute halves (The last half may be shortened if the game is running late). If after regulation time the match score is tied, one overtime period of ten (10) minutes will be played in an attempt to break the tie. If the match remains tied after this overtime period, the game ends in a tie. There will be no “sudden death” overtime.
- **U14, U15** games will be divided into two (2), thirty (35) minute halves (The last half may be shortened if the game is running late). If after regulation time the match score is tied, one overtime period of ten (10) minutes will be played in an attempt to break the tie. If the match remains tied after this overtime period, the game ends in a tie. There will be no “sudden death” overtime.
- The clock will run continuously (even for a ball out of play) with no time-out other than those called for injuries.
- Teams alternate goals at half time.
- All of the children should play at least **half** the game and get a chance to play offense and defense.
- There will be a five (5) minute break between the 1st and 2nd half.
- **U10 & U12 Field Size:** 50yds x 80yds
- **U15 Field Size:** High School

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Canceling and Rescheduling Games:

- In general, games will be played during inclement weather. Referees will immediately stop play if lightning occurs or field conditions become dangerous.
- If both opposing coaches agree to reschedule a game for a non-weather related reason, they must notify the commissioner, to arrange field availability and referees.

Substitution:

- A player can be substituted for another player during the half under the following conditions:
 1. Before the half begins.
 2. Before a goal kick.
 3. Before a throw-in and substituting team has possession of the ball.
 4. Before a corner kick and the substituting team has possession of the ball.
 5. When there is an injury and the substitution is for the injured player.
 6. Substitutions for goalies can be made if the goalie is fully dressed and it will not stop play.
- There is no limit to the number of substitutes eligible to participate, as long as the player is a regular continuing member of the team.
- Substitution of non-team members will not be permitted. Violation of this rule will constitute an automatic forfeit.

Ball in play:

- The ball is in play until it completely crosses the boundary line, even if a player is on or outside the line.

Throw in:

- Must be made with two hands and both feet on the ground at the point of release. Last touch determines which team gets the throw in. A second throw in will be allowed if the player fouls on the first attempt. The referee will explain the proper method before the re-throw is attempted.

Goal Kick:

- Taken when the attacking team kicks the ball over the end line. The ball is kicked from the corner nearest where the ball went out.

Corner kick:

- Taken when the defending team kicks the ball over the end line. The ball is kicked from the corner nearest where the ball went out.

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Indirect Kick:

- A free kick in which the ball must be touched by another player before a goal can be scored. **No direct or penalty kicks are taken in this league.**

Distance from kicks:

- Opponents must be 8 yards from the ball on all kicks.

Offside:

- A player is offside when the ball is played by his/her teammate and following exists: The player is ahead of the ball, and in the opponents half of the field, and there are fewer than two opponents ahead of ahead of him (goalie and fullback).
- There is no offside if a player receives the ball directly from a throw in, corner kick, or goal kick.

Competition Rule:

- If a team is losing by 4 or more points, than the losing team may have an additional player or the winning team may subtract a player (depending on field size) on the field until they are back to within 3 points.

Fouls: Resulting in a free kick.

- **Tripping:** Causing a player to stumble or fall by kicking their legs without having played the ball.
- **Holding/Pushing:** Self explanatory
- **Handball:** A ball played with the arm or hand in order to gain advantage. Reflex actions or the ball kicked against the arm is not a handball.
- **Charging:** Making violent contact with another player to prevent them from reaching the ball when it is not within playing distance.
- **Obstruction:** Moving between the ball and another player to prevent them from reaching the ball when it is not within playing distance.
- **Dangerous Play:** High kicking, playing the ball while on the ground, or dropping your head extremely low to head the ball.
- **Heading and high kicks (added Fall 2016):** U11 players are not allowed to head the ball. If they participate in a U12 game, they are prohibited from heading, however, U12 players (born 2005) are allowed to head. An intentional heading attempt will result in an indirect free kick for the opposing team. Coach is responsible for ensuring their U11 (born 2006) players don't head

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All coaches and referees are to discourage the use of high kicks to try and bring down a head level ball. Size of player defending does not matter, placement of foot near head should result in an indirect free kick for dangerous play. If same player continues the behavior, they will be carded. Coaches should encourage body traps as opposed to high foot traps.

Fouls and Misconduct:

- Any player who intentionally commits one of the following offenses shall be penalized. The penalty will be a direct free kick by the opposing team from the place where the offense occurred. Should a defending player commit one of these offenses within the penalty area, a penalty kick is awarded to the opposing team.
 1. Kicking or attempting to kick an opponent
 2. Tripping an opponent
 3. Jumping at an opponent
 4. Charging an opponent in a violent or dangerous manner
 5. Unsporting behavior
 6. Purposely delaying the restart of play
 7. Holding or pushing an opponent
 8. Carrying, striking or propelling the ball with the hand or arm (except for the goal keeper within his own penalty area)
 9. Foul Language
 10. Slide Tackling (see definition below)

Slide Tackle Definition:

A slide tackle is an attempt by one player (player A) to take the ball away from another player (player B) by sliding on one or both legs and knocking the ball away. Player A attempts to knock the ball away without contacting player B by sliding in such a manner that the ball is the first thing contacted. Tripping of player B can easily result. If executed properly, a slide tackle is a perfectly legal maneuver. However, slide tackling is one of the leading causes of serious leg and knee injuries in the sport of soccer. It is a difficult and advanced skill that most youth players cannot execute properly. In this league slide tackling is prohibited. Coaches should not teach this tactic and are not to allow their players to use this tactic. Referees are instructed to watch for this play and will be penalize players using it.

- A player is cautioned if he persistently infringes upon the rules, shows by word or action, dissent from a decision made by the referee, or is guilty of un-sportsman like conduct.

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- A player will be removed from the field if he is guilty of:
 1. Violent conduct or serious foul play.
 2. Persistent use of offensive, insulting or abusive language.
 3. Is guilty of intentionally spitting at an opponent, coach or referee.
 4. Receiving a second caution in the same match.
- Play is stopped when a player is removed from the field. The game is resumed by an indirect free kick awarded to the opposing team at the spot where the infraction occurred. The player's name will be recorded by the referee and reported to the commission. After two such violations, the player will be suspended for the league for the remainder of the season.
- Any player guilty of intentionally striking or attempting to strike an opponent, coach or official will be suspended from the league.

Referees:

- The referees are older children who have experience playing soccer. They may not have officiated before. Please be understanding if they miss a call. They will be instructed to teach the children when mistakes or infractions occurred during a game.
- The referee is in complete charge of the game. The referee's decisions during the game are final. The referee is the timekeeper and keeps a record of the match. The referee is empowered to stop play for injury or other reasons and to restart the game when ready. The referee may also end the game due to inclement weather, coach or spectator interference, darkness or other reason as they see fit. The referee administers penalties and cautions and expels players for misconduct.
- The home team is responsible for supplying and paying the referees. The board, via mutual consent may amend this provision.
- Each team will provide a linesman to signal throw-ins
- In the event inclement weather or darkness forces a game to be stopped, those games that have completed at least one half of play will be considered final. Incomplete games will be completely replayed.
- Referees will report all yellow or red card infractions (given to a player or coach) to the League Commissioner.

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