

Introduction

AYSA recognizes FIFA as the ultimate authority on the rules of the game for soccer. As such, the FIFA Rules of the Game as available at www.fifa.com provide the base for the rules that must be followed at all AYSA home soccer games. Any exceptions or alterations to the FIFA rules are noted below, and are done solely to make the game more feasible for youths to play the game. In addition, some *brief* explanation of the FIFA rules are given, but in order to fully understand the rules it is suggested that one read the FIFA Laws of the Game.

Rules of the Game

1 – Field of Play

The basic field markings will be the same as FIFA for all age groups other than overall field dimensions and goals sizes being reduced proportionally as follows:

Number of Players	Field Size		Goal Area	Penalty Area	Goal Size
	Touchline	Goal Line			
5 v 5 (PK/K) Field Map	30 yds.	20 yds.	6 yds radius 3 yd circle radius	none	5 by 9 ft.
7 v 7 (1st / 2nd) Field Map	55 yds.	35 yds.	5 by 8 yds. 5yd circle radius	10 by 15 yds. (6 yd penalty spot, 6 yd arc)	6 by 12 ft.
9 v 9 (3rd - 4th)	70 yds.	45 yds.	5 by 12 yds. 5yd circle radius	12 by 20 yds. (8 yd penalty spot, 8 yd arc)	6 by 18 ft.
9 v 9 (5th - 6th)	70 yds.	45 yds.	5 by 12 yds. 5yd circle radius	12 by 20 yds. (8 yd penalty spot, 8 yd arc)	6 by 18 ft.

2 – The Ball

	Size	Circumference	Weight
Pre-K / K	3	23-24 inches	11-12 ounces
1st / 2nd	4	25-26 inches	11-13 ounces
3rd / 4th	4	25-26 inches	11-13 ounces

5 th / 6 th	5	27-28 inches	14-16 ounces
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3 - The Number of Players

All numbers include one goalie per side.

	# of Players
Pre-K / K	5 v 5
1st / 2nd	7 v 7
3rd / 4th	9 v 9
5th / 6th	9 v 9

Substitutions

Substitutions will follow FIFA rules with the exception that a substituted player may re-enter the game as a substitute player later in the match.

Entry onto the pitch is prohibited without the approval of the head official. Either team may substitute: between periods, on a goal kick, when a goal has been scored or to replace an injured player after an official has stopped play.

The team having gained possession of the ball for a throw-in or corner kick may substitute players, however the team causing the ball to go out of play may not substitute at that time unless the team retaining possession subs or the official deems there has been a sufficient stoppage of play.

4 - The Player's Equipment

- At the beginning of each game, coaches and the referees are responsible for ensuring players are wearing the appropriate equipment.
- Players may not wear anything that is dangerous to themselves or another player. This includes, but is not limited to jewelry, hats and metal spikes.
- Shin guards covered by socks are required by all participants, no exceptions!
- Players should be properly uniformed with each player having a unique number visible on their jersey.

5 - The Referee

Each game will have at minimum one referee. All rule enforcement is to be done by the referee.

6 - The Assistant Referees

Assistant referees will be used at the 3rd through 6th grade level to assist with offside calls.

7- The Duration of the Match

	Duration
Pre-K / K	4 quarters, 8 minutes per

1st / 2nd	4 quarters, 10 minutes per
3rd / 4th	2 halves, 25 minutes per
5th / 6th	2 halves, 30 minutes per

A halftime break of 5 minutes will be available to both teams. For divisions playing quarters this break will be given between the 2nd and 3rd quarter; breaks between other quarters should be minimized.

In the event a game is suspended by decision of the referee due to weather or other reasons, the game will be considered complete if one half of the game has been completed (or two quarters).

8 – The Start and Restart of Play

FIFA rules will be followed for all age groups, with the exception of the build out line rule for Pre-K through 2nd grade.

At the beginning of each game, the team designated as the Home team on the schedule will call the coin toss. The team winning the coin toss can choose either to have the ball first or to choose the side of the field they would like to play on first. The team starting a half or quarter with the ball will alternate through the game.

Build out line

If the goalie gains possession of the ball and pauses or there is a goal kick, the other team must fall back behind the half line. Play will not be stopped. The goalie has the option to put the ball in play at any time, however, after all players from the other team are behind the half line, the goalie will 5 seconds to put the ball in play.

9 – The Ball In and Out of Play

FIFA rules will be followed for all age groups.

The entire ball must cross the end line or the touch line in order for the ball to be out of play. The position of the ball, not the player is what determines in and out of play.

Two-Touch Rule

A player cannot touch the ball twice in a row when putting the ball in play. The only exception to this rule is on a drop ball restart.

10 – The Method of Scoring

FIFA rules will be followed for all age groups.

The entire ball must cross the plane of the goal line for a goal to be scored.

11 – Offside

Offside will be called for age groups 3rd through 6th only.

A player is in an offside position if he is nearer to his opponents' goal line than both the ball and the second last opponent (the last opponent is the goalie).

However, it is not an offense for a player to just be in an offside position. The player must be in an offside position AND involved in active play as determined by the referee to be called offside.

It is when the offensive player is in an offside position AND is in active play at the time the ball is kicked that this rule is called.

- An offensive or attacking player can't be ahead of the ball and involved in the play unless there is a defender between him and the goalkeeper.
- Or, simply put, you can't hang out at the other team's goal waiting for the ball.
- There must two defenders (one may be the goalie) between the offensive ball receiver and the goal.

A few buts:

- You are not considered offside if you are standing on your defensive half of the field.
- You cannot be considered offside on a corner kick, goal kick or throw in.
- Also, the offside rule applies to the position of a player when the ball is kicked/passed, not when the player receives the ball.

12 – Fouls and Misconduct

FIFA rules will be followed for all age groups with the exception that slide tackling is not allowed at any age level.

The common rule of thumb on fouls is "If it looks like a foul, it probably is." A player cannot kick, trip, jump at, charge, strike, push, hold, or spit at an opponent.

Some soccer rules are actually not black-and-white. Remember though, the referee is ALWAYS right.

The normal consequence of a foul is a direct kick for the opposing team. However, depending on the type of foul and severity, the offending player may be punished. Punishment is given in soccer with yellow and red cards. If a player is given two yellow cards in the same game, that is equal to a red card. A red card can be given at any time without the player first receiving a yellow card.

When a player gets a red card, they must leave the game and their team must play short. An ejected player cannot be replaced (unless they are ejected prior to the start of the game).

13 – Free Kick

FIFA rules will be followed for all age groups.

Direct and indirect kicks are two primary ways that play is restarted after the referee stops play for an infraction. For both of these the ball must be stationary before it is kicked and the opposing players should be a minimum of 10 yards away.

The simple difference between the two types of kicks is this:

- On a direct kick you can score by kicking the ball directly into the goal.
- On an indirect kick you cannot score. An indirect kick must be touched by another player before it can go into the goal. That is the initial kicker and a second person.

As a parent on the sideline, you can tell whether the kick is direct or indirect by looking at the referee. For an indirect kick, the referee will hold one arm straight up in the air until the second person touches the ball. No arm up, it's a direct kick. There are many soccer rules around what causes a direct or indirect kick. In general, a direct kick comes from a contact foul or hand ball. Everything else is indirect.

14 - The Penalty Kick

FIFA rules will be followed for all age groups with the exception of Pre-K/K. No penalty kicks will be awarded at the Pre-K/K division as there is no penalty area on the field of play. Any free kick by the offensive team will be started from outside of the goal area arc.

A penalty kick results from a contact foul or hand ball by the defending team within the penalty area – the large box on either end of the field. So it's a type of direct kick also.

The ball is placed on the penalty spot or mark in front of the center of the goal. All players must remain outside the penalty area and the penalty arc until the ball is kicked. The goalkeeper must have both feet on the goal line until the ball is kicked.

- If after the ball is kicked, it rebounds off of the keeper and stays on the field, the ball is "live" and anyone can play it.
- If after the ball is kicked, it rebounds off of the goal and stays on the field, the ball is "live" and anyone can play it with the exception of the person who just kicked the ball. If the ball rebounds off of the goal and back into play, the person who kicked the ball cannot play it until the ball is touched by another player. Otherwise he/she will be called for two touches

15 - The Throw-in

FIFA rules will be followed for all age groups.

A throw-in is taken when the ball crosses a sideline and leaves the field. The two basic soccer rules for a proper throw-in are to have both feet on the ground and to throw the ball with both hands over the head.

To clarify, both feet must be on the ground when the ball is thrown. The player can hop, run, or do cartwheels up to the point where the ball is released but not when the ball is released. Dragging the toes of one foot is considered legal. The Two-Touch Rule applies to throw-ins.

16 - The Goal Kick

FIFA rules will be followed for all age groups.

A goal kick is taken when the ball leaves the field across a goal line (and a goal is not scored) and an offensive player last touched the ball. When a goal kick is taken, the rules of play state that the ball is not back "in play" until it leaves the penalty area, the large box outside of the "goalie box" (see diagram if needed). If either team touches the ball before it leaves the penalty area the kick must be retaken, and if the ball is not kicked well enough to leave the area, the kick must be retaken. The Two-Touch Rule applies to goal kicks. This does not apply to Pre-K/K since there is no defined penalty area.

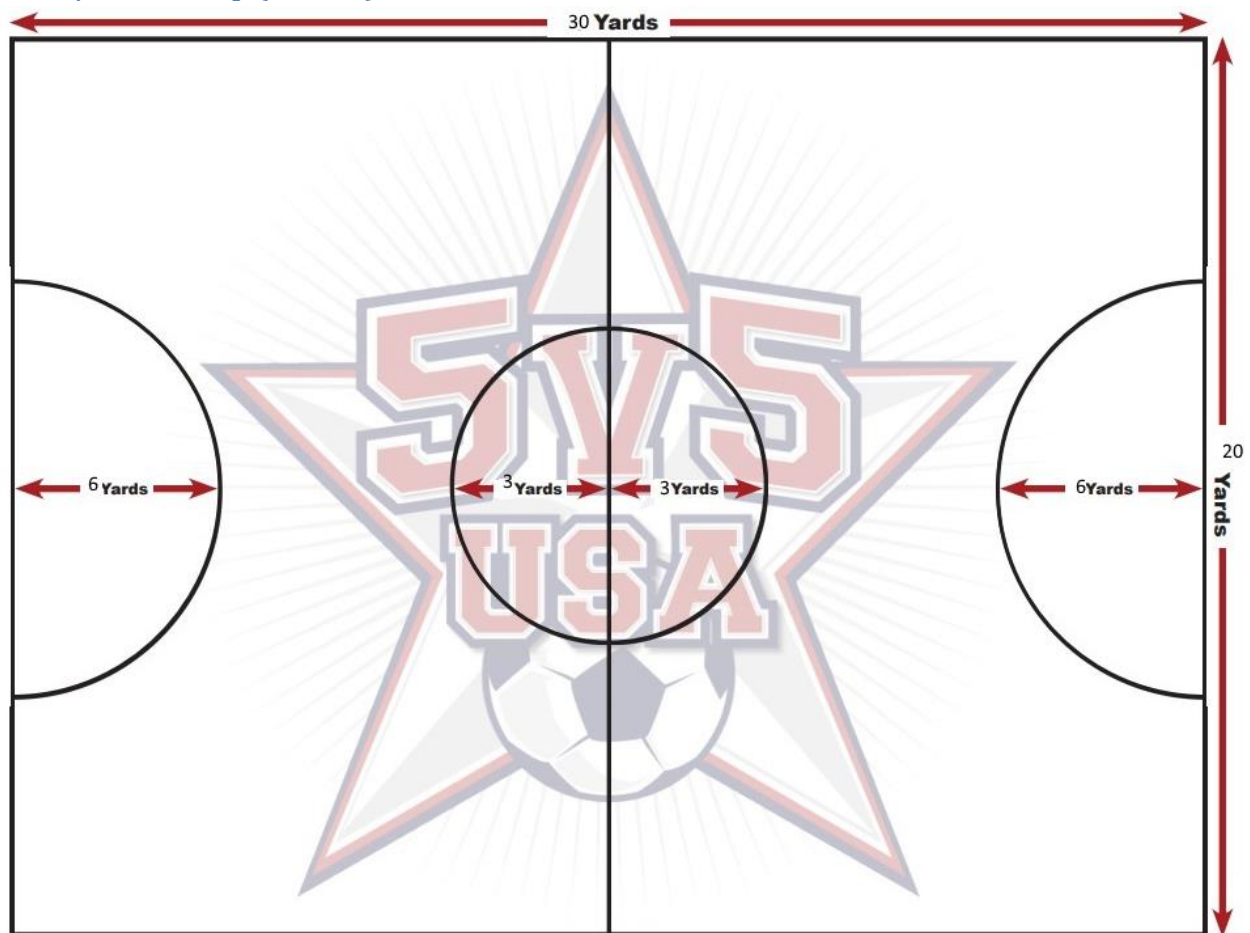
17 - The Corner Kick

FIFA rules will be followed for all age groups

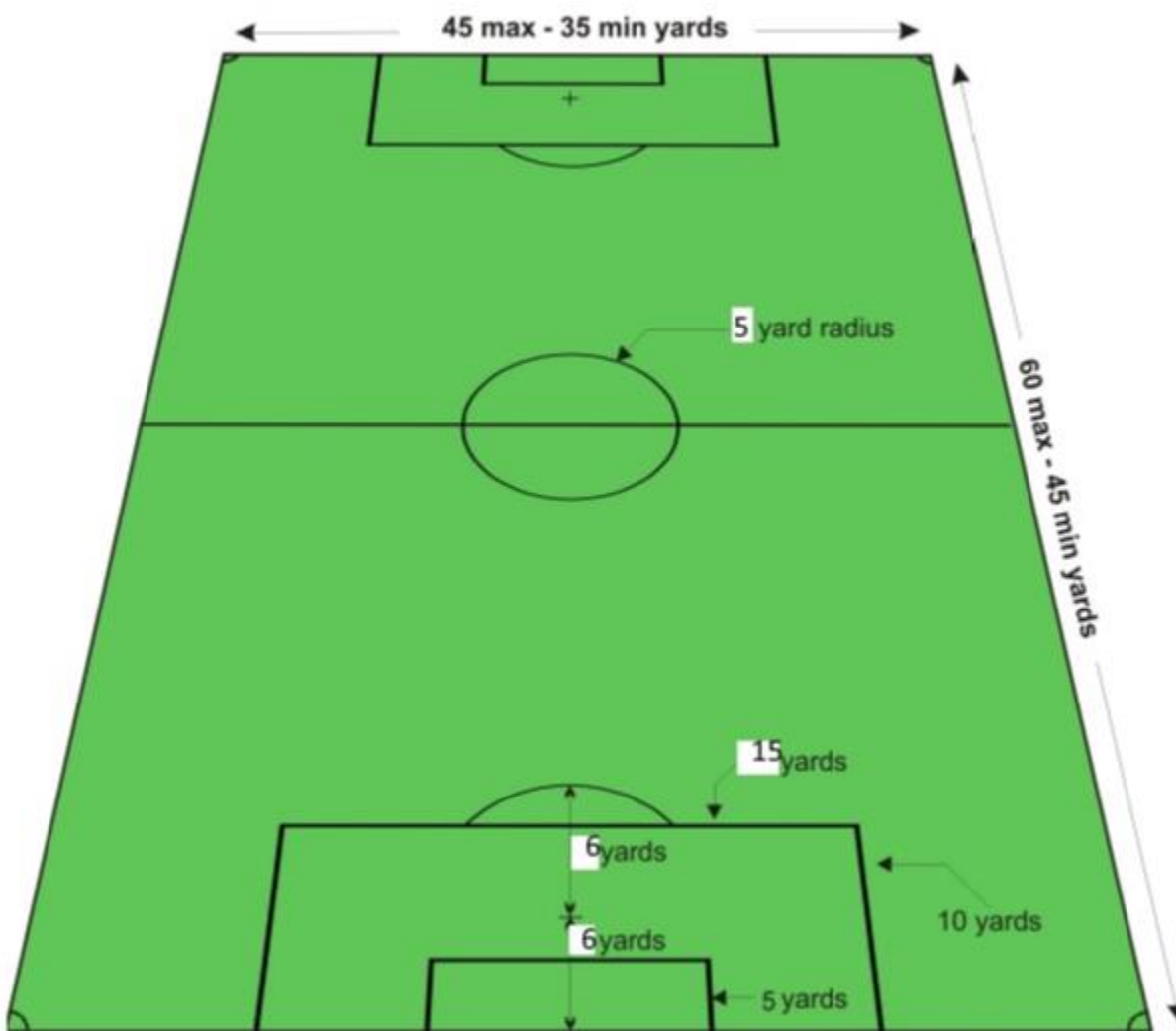
A corner kick is taken when the ball leaves the field across a goal line (and a goal is not scored) and a defensive player last touched the ball. The corner kick is taken from the corner arc nearest to where the ball left the field. The Two-Touch Rule applies to corner kicks.

Appendix

Pre-K/K Field Map (30 x 20)



1st/2nd Field Map (55 x 35)



3rd Through 6th Field Map (70 x 45)

