

Parents Guide



The Game for All Kids!®

Players Code:

- Play the game for the game's sake.
- Be generous when you win.
- Be graceful when you lose.
- Be fair always, no matter what the cost.
- Obey the laws of the game.
- Work for the good of your team.
- Accept the decisions of the officials with good grace.
- Believe in the honesty of your opponents.
- Conduct yourself with honor and dignity.



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE
DE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

FAIR PLAY
please!

Welcome to the World of Soccer

Soccer is a universal sport. Every country in the world plays it. You and your child are joining over 3 million youth players already participating with United States Youth Soccer. Go anywhere and you will be able to play and become a part of the local action.

Why Belong to a National Association?

As with most parents, your main interest is that your child plays and has a good time. The interest is in belonging to a local group and playing with friends. Perhaps belonging to a larger group will limit my child's opportunities or experiences?

Not so. Belonging to a national association encourages the youth player to explore broader and more fulfilling experiences. As the player's skill and interest expand, the state, region, and national association provide more opportunities to find the levels that interest each child. The national organization is there to help the local club or association create and provide a better experience for each individual.

It takes teamwork to provide a good environment for the player. You are invited to join the team and become a member of your local club, state association and US Youth Soccer.

The Team

US Youth Soccer, Inc. is a member of US Soccer. Us. Soccer is comprised of the Senior Council, Youth Council, and the Professional Council, and as such is the recognized governing body of soccer in the United States and the only one recognized by FIFA.

The Federation Internationale de Football Association with over 197 world-wide members, including the USA, Italy, Bolivia, England Britain, France, etc. writes adopts, and enforces the modern rules of the game and hosts the World Cup, Youth World Cup U-20, Youth

World Cup U-17 and the Women's World Cup, won by the United States Women's Soccer Team in 1991 and 1999.

US Youth Soccer, Inc. is a non-profit youth organization, adopted and accepted into US Soccer in 1974, incorporated in 1983.

Direct Youth Organization Benefits

Organization assistance

- Visual Aids
- Manuals
- Training Programs and Workshops

Training Program for Coaches

- Local coaching clinics for beginning to advanced coaches

Training Program for Referees

- Local clinics by certified referee instructors
- Referee certification test and standards

Medical and liability insurance at low-cost to protect players, coaches, managers, and administrators.

Direct Player Benefits

Player Development Programs

Where emphasis is placed on the development of individual players and NOT on winning at all costs.

- Recreational leagues for all players
- Skills programs for all players
- Competitive leagues for skilled players
- Elite player development program

Special Competitions

- State Tournaments for recreational and competitive teams

- Interstate Regional Cup competitions (U-12 through U-19 Boys and Girls)
- National Cup competitions (U-14, U-15, U-16, U-17, U-19 Boys and Girls)
- Competitions with other FIFA members national youth teams
- International competition through club sponsored international tournaments.

US Youth Soccer, Inc. is divided into four (4) regions: East, West, Midwest, and South and has member state associations, leagues, clubs, and teams in all 50 states. Officially founded in 1974 we have enjoyed a continuing growth pattern and welcome you as part of one of the fastest growing youth organizations in the USA today.

Soccer: The Sport

The purpose is to score goals.

How: Two teams face each other and try to put the ball in the opponent's net.

Where: The game is played on a level field similar to a football field, with goals at each end. The size of the field should be appropriate for the younger player. (Please see modified playing rules)

The team: Only 11 players per team may be on the field at a time. Smaller sized teams are recommended for the younger age groups.

Each Team is Comprised of

goalkeeper defender midfielder and forward

Goalkeeper: is unique in that this player may use his/her hands to defend the goal area and to stop the other team from scoring.

Defenders: their secondary role is to close down the space and the attack of the opposing team. Their primary role is to take the ball away and start the attack in their team's favor.

Midfielders: play the most complete game in that they must be offensive and defensive player at all times. The midfielder (middle ground) is where the attack begins.

Forwards: they finish (score) the attack: They must be willing to come back and aid at midfield to start the attack.

All players must develop offensive and defensive skills and every player has the potential to be a scorer. There is no such thing as a fixed space or position in soccer. Players may interchange positions according to the flow of the game.

Equipment: Soccer is a simple sport. Little special equipment is needed. A ball and open space to play are the only essentials. Each player will want to wear a T-Shirt, shorts, and socks with a good pair of running type shoes. As the child becomes more involved you may wish to purchase soccer shoes.

Shin guards are mandatory and safety glasses (for those who need them) are highly recommended.

Officials: The game has three officials. Their job is to enforce Laws of the Game.

Referee (1)

- Responsible for acting as the timekeeper
- Keeping record of the game
- Enforcing laws
- Stopping, restarting game
- Cautioning or banishing offender
- Ending the game if necessary

Assistant Referee's (2)

- Responsible for indicating when ball is out of play and which team has the right to put the ball into play again.
- Raising their flags to indicate any infringement.

Playing The Game

Two teams face each other on a field of play that is equally divided into two halves. Under the recommended modified laws for the developmental player the game is divided into four (4) equal quarters.

A ball is controlled by a player and a team by using six basic skills:



Method of Scoring: A goal is scored when the WHOLE of the ball goes over the WHOLE of the part of the boundary line defined by the cones or actual goal. Scoring goals is possibly the MOST fun a soccer player has during a game.

Kick off: Officially begins the game and/or each half and after a goal is scored. A coin toss decides who starts the game and who defends which goal. The ball must roll forward to start the game.

In Play: The action is continuous until a goal is scored, and infraction (foul) occurs or the ball goes out of bounds.

Offside: Offside is not used in the small-sided games.

Standard Laws

To Restart play: A throw-in is awarded to the team who did not touch the ball last and it goes out of bounds on the touch-lines or long sides of the field.

A Goal Kick is awarded to the defending team if the offensive team last touched the ball when it goes out of bounds over the end line.

A Corner Kick is awarded when the defending team last touches the ball and it goes out of bounds over the end line.

Infractions: the referee watches play and when a foul occurs he stops play and awards the ball to the team that didn't commit the foul. Fouls and misconduct can and will occur even at this level. All fouls shall result in an indirect free kick with opponents at least 3 yards away.

- Kicks or attempts to kick an opponent
- Trips or attempts to trip an opponent
- Jumps at an opponent
- Charges at an opponent
- Strikes or attempts to strike an opponent
- Pushes an opponent
- Tackles an opponent to gain possession of the ball, making contact with the opponent before touching the ball
- Holds an opponent
- Spits at an opponent
- Handles the ball deliberately
- Plays in a dangerous manner
- Impedes the progress of an opponent

Soccer is a contact sport and each action is dealt with at the time it occurs.

Free Kicks: All free kicks will be indirect. That means that a goal may not be scored until the ball has been played or touched by a second player of either team. All opposing players should be 3 yards away.

	U-12	U-14	U-16	U-17	U-19
Field	See Illus.	See Illus.	See Illus.	See Illus.	See Illus.
Goal	8ft 8 yd.	8ft. 8 yd.	8ft. 8 yd.	8ft. 8 yd.	8 ft. 8 yd.
Duration	60 min.	70 min.	80 min.	90 min.	90 min.
Ball Size	#4	#5	#5	#5	#5
Field Players	11	11	11	11	11



Modified Laws

	U-6 (3v3)	U-8 (4v4)	U-10 (8v8)
Field Size			
Length	25 yds.	50 yds.	70 yds.
Width	20 yds.	30 yds.	50 yds.
Goal Size			
Height	4 ft.	6 ft.	7 ft.
Width	6 ft.	12 ft.	21 ft.
Duration	32 min.*	48 min.**	50 min.***
Ball Size	#3	#3	#4
Players	3 (no Goalkeeper)	4 (no Goalkeeper)	(7+ Goalkeeper)

* 4 equal quarters of 8 minutes

** 4 equal quarters of 12 minutes

*** 2 25 minute halves

Parent's Role

1. Provide transportation to and from all practices and games ensuring that the player is prompt not only in arriving but also his departure.
2. Stay and watch practices as well as games and lend the young players your support in a positive manner. Do not point out their mistakes, leave that up to the coach, and be sure to compliment on their accomplishments as well as their effect.
3. If unable to attend the practice or game, encourage your child not to talk with or leave practices or games with strangers.
4. Ensure that your child brings equipment to and from all soccer games and practices when appropriate.

5. Be available to kick the ball around with your child when you are invited to do so.
6. Avoid material awards. Build and attitude of "the rewards lie in the fun of being able to play".
7. Be a good listener. Make them feel important and let them know that they are contributing to a team effort.
8. Be positive. Never criticize. Suggest an alternate way if they are not performing correctly... "Hey, that is pretty good, but shy don't you try it this way."
9. ALLOW YOUR CHILD TO BE A CHILD.

Guidelines to Soccer Parenthood

1. In competition someone always loses. If you win do it gracefully, not boastfully. If you lose, do not allow your child to become negative.
2. Too much competition, too soon, can slow down a child's progress in skill development.
3. Make fun and technique development your first priority.
4. Your child's coach will need all the support and help you can offer. Please make yourself available and volunteer all the time you can spare.
5. Disagreements with the coach or officials do not belong on the public soccer field. Questions, input and positive suggestions should be voiced to the coach and/or club in an adult atmosphere. (The youth player should not be present).
6. The overall purpose is to enjoy the game and the opportunity to be with your child on the field of play.

Player's Rights

1. The right to decide when to participate in soccer.
2. The right to play in every game. At younger ages, every child should have an opportunity to play at least 50% of every game. No child should have to stand and watch at practice.
3. The right to participate at a level that corresponds to each child's maturity and ability.
4. The right to be taught the fundamentals of soccer.
5. The right to participate in a safe and healthy environment.
6. The right to play as a child and enjoy participation in the sport.

US Youth Soccer
1717 Firman Drive, Suite 900
Richardson, Texas 75081

usyouthsoccer.org
e-mail: nationaloffice@usyouthsoccer.org
972/235-4499 972/235-4480 (fax)
1-800-4SOCCER
Or Your State Association

Other materials available From US Youth Soccer...

Welcome to US Youth Soccer
Activity Aids for the Parent/Coach

Youth Soccer Parent/Coach Primer
Aids for the Parent/Coach

Coaching the Under 12 Player
Aids for the Parent/Coach

Official Handbook U6-U8

Guide to Coaching Youth Soccer

Principles of Conduct

Role Models for Life

Assistant Coach Series: U6-U8

Assistant Coach Series: U10 Activity

Assistant Coach Series: U12 Activity

Coaching Youth Soccer 6 to 9 Video

TopSoccer Program Brochure

Soccer Start Program Overview