



2007/2008

## RPSL RULES OF THE GAME

This is a summary of the guidelines and the rules of the game, modified by the Rohnert Park Soccer League (RPSL) for all age groups of Division IV Recreational Play. This summary is simplified and is provided for better enjoyment of the game, by making the Rules more readable at the expense of a reduction of the accuracy, which is especially notable regarding fine points of the Rules. The most accurate listings of the Rules are contained in the FIFA publication Rules of the Game, as modified by the RPSL By Laws and the current California Youth Soccer Association Team Manual, and all of these documents prevail if there is a conflict with these simplified Rules.

Please consider attending a referee training session for a greater understanding and enjoyment of the game. Note that the center referee is the final authority. If you feel that the Rules have been incorrectly applied, speak to your child's coach after the game who will contact the appropriate coaching coordinator and/or referee coordinator. Dissent with the referee before, during, and after a game is not tolerated by the RPSL.

### Rohnert Park Soccer League

PO Box 1656 Rohnert Park, CA 94928 707-664-0463 [www.rpsoccer.org](http://www.rpsoccer.org) The official Rules of the Game can be found at [www.fifa.com/index.html](http://www.fifa.com/index.html)

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#### RULE 1 FIELD OF PLAY

The field must be rectangular and longer than it is wide. The size is adjusted for youth recreational soccer. The RPSL prohibits smoking within 35 yards of the field immediately before, during or immediately after the practice or playing of any youth soccer game on city parks. Smoking is not permitted at all on Cotati-Rohnert Park School District property. The use and/or consumption of any alcoholic beverages or controlled substances, immediately before, during or immediately after the practice or playing of any youth soccer game is prohibited.

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#### RULE 2 THE BALL

- Under 6 and Under 8 play with a #3 ball.
  - Under 10 and Under 12 play with a #4 ball.
  - Under 14 and above play with a #5 ball.
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#### RULE 3 NUMBER OF PLAYERS

- Under 6: 4 players and no goalie.
- Under 8: 6 players and a goalie.
- Under 10: 8 players and a goalie.
- Under 12: 10 players and a goalie (minimum 7).
- Over Under 12: 10 players and a goalie (minimum 7).

Every player must play at least 1/2 of the game, except for injuries, sickness, physically unfit, or for disciplinary reasons. If the player is not going to play at least 1/2 of the game for one of the above reasons, then the coach must inform the player, his/her parents or guardian, and the opposing coach before the start of the game. There is no restriction to the overall number of substitutes or the number of times which a player may be substituted, but substitutions may be made only at specific times, and then only with the permission of the referee.

Players may be substituted at the following times:

- A. Prior to a throw-in, in your favor.
- B. Prior to a goal kick by either team.
- C. After a goal by either team.
- D. After an injury, when the referee stops play, by either team.
- E. At half time or at a "substitution break".

#### RULE 4 PLAYER'S EQUIPMENT

Players cannot wear anything which in the opinion of the referee is dangerous to another player or to himself/herself. Specifically excluded are orthopedic casts, air-splints, or metal splints. Jewelry is not allowed. Shin guards are mandatory for games and for practices.

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**RULE 5 REFEREE'S RESPONSIBILITY**

- A. The referee enforces the Rules.
  - B. The referee keeps a record of the game
  - C. The referee allows no persons other than players and linesmen to enter the field without permission.
  - D. The referee stops the game if a player has been seriously injured.
  - E. The referee signals for all restarts after play has stopped.
  - F. Any player bleeding from a wound must leave the field for treatment
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**RULE 6 ASSISTANT REFEREES**

Assistant Referees assist the referee.

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**RULE 7 DURATION OF THE GAME**

No overtime; ties stand. Games begin as scheduled.

- Under 6: Three 5 minute periods each half. Two halves. 2 minute substitution breaks between periods and 5 minutes between halves. 43 min game
  - Under 8: Two 20 minute halves with a 5 minute half-time. 45 minutes game total.
  - Under 10: Two 25 minute halves with a 5 minute half-time. 55 minutes game total.
  - Under 12: Two 30 minute halves with a 5 minute half-time. 65 minutes game total.
  - Under 14: Two 35 minute halves with a 5 minute half-time. 75 minutes game total.
  - Under 16: Two 40 minute halves with a 5 minute half-time. 85 minutes game total.
  - Under 19: Two 45 minute halves with a 5 minute half-time. 95 minutes game total.
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**RULE 8 START OF PLAY AND RESTART OF PLAY**

A coin is tossed and the team which wins the toss decides which goal it will attack in the first half of the match. The other team takes the kickoff to start the match. The team which wins the toss takes the kickoff to start the second half of the match. In the second half of the match the teams change ends and attack the opposite goals. A kickoff is a way of starting or restarting play at the start of the match, after a goal has been scored, at the start of the second half of the match, or at the start of each period of extra time, where applicable. A goal may be scored directly from the kickoff. The procedure is that all players are in their own half of the field, the opponents of the team taking the kickoff are at least 10 yards from the ball until it is in play, the ball is stationary on the center mark, the referee gives a signal, the ball is in play when it is kicked and moves forward, and the kicker does not touch the ball a second time until it has touched another player. After a team scores a goal, the kickoff is taken by the other team. A Dropped Ball is a way of restarting the match after a temporary stoppage which becomes necessary, while the ball is in play, for any reason not mentioned elsewhere in the Rules of the Game. The referee drops the ball at the place where it was located when play was stopped. Play restarts when the ball touches the ground.

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**RULE 9 BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY**

- A. The ball is out of play when it has completely crossed the goal line or touch line (side line) or when the game is stopped by the referee.
  - B. The ball is in play at all other times.
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**RULE 10 METHOD OF SCORING**

A goal is scored when the whole ball completely crosses the goal line into the goal. The team with the most goals wins. If the number of goals is equal, the match is a draw.

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**RULE 11 OFFSIDE**

(Offside is not observed for Under 6 or Under 8 players.)

- A. An attacking player is off side if, in the opinion of the referee, he/she is in the opponent's half of the field and is in front of the ball, and does not have at least two opponents between him/her and the goal line (one opponent may be parallel) at the moment a team mate passes the ball to him/her (the player must be part of the play to be offside) The opposing goalkeeper counts as one player and any other opponent can be the second.
- B. An attacking player cannot be offside if he/she receives the ball directly from a throw-in, a goal-kick, a corner-kick, or when the ball has been dropped by the referee.

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## **RULE 12 FOULS**

(For Under 6 and Under 8 players, all intentional slide tackles will be a foul. For Under 6, Under 8 and Under 10 players, there are only indirect free kicks; all intentional fouls result in an indirect free kick, with opponents 6 yards away.)

The rules are as follows:

It is a serious foul to commit any of the following six offences in a manner considered by the referee to be careless, reckless or using excessive force:

- kicks or attempts to kick an opponent
  - trips or attempts to trip an opponent
  - jumps at an opponent
  - charges an opponent
  - strikes or attempts to strike an opponent
  - pushes an opponent
- or any of the following four offences:
- 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 (except for the goalkeeper within his own penalty area).

A player is cautioned and shown the yellow card if he commits any of the following seven offences:

1. is guilty of unsporting behavior
2. shows dissent by word or action
3. persistently infringes the Laws of the Game
4. delays the restart of play
5. fails to respect the required distance when play is restarted with a corner kick or free kick
6. enters or re-enters the field of play without The Referee's permission
7. deliberately leaves the field of play without The Referee's permission.

A player is sent off and shown the red card if he commits any of the following seven offences:

1. is guilty of serious foul play
  2. is guilty of violent conduct
  3. spits at an opponent or any other person
  4. denies the opposing team a goal or an obvious goalscoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball (this does not apply to a goal keeper within his own penalty area)
  5. denies an obvious goalscoring opportunity to an opponent moving towards the player's goal by an offence punishable by a free kick or a penalty kick
  6. uses offensive or insulting or abusive language and/or gestures
  7. receives a second caution in the same match.
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## **RULE 13 FREE KICKS**

(All free kicks are indirect kicks for Under 6 and Under 8 and U10.)

- A. Direct free kicks are awarded for the ten major fouls.  
A goal may be scored directly from a kick.
  - B. Indirect free kicks are awarded for other misconduct, offenses, and for off side. (Off side is not observed for Under 6 or U8.) The ball must be touched by a second player other than the kicker before a goal may be scored.
  - C. Free kicks are taken from the place where the foul occurred when the ball is stationary with all opponents at least ten yards from the ball.
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## **RULE 14 PENALTY KICKS**

(There are no penalty kicks for Under 6, Under 8, and Under 10; see Rule 13 Free Kicks. There are no penalty kicks to resolve a tie game for recreational soccer; tie games stand.)

- A. A Penalty kick is awarded when one of the ten major fouls is committed by a defender against an opponent in his/her own penalty area while the ball is in play.
  - B. The ball is placed twelve yards from the goal line on the penalty mark. The defending goalkeeper stands with his/her feet on the goal line. All other players except the kicker must stay out of the penalty area until the ball is kicked. A goal may be scored directly.
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## **RULE 15 THROW-IN**

When the whole ball passes completely across either touch line (sideline), it is put back into play with a throw-in by a player of the team opposite to that of the last player who touched it. A legal throw-in starts behind the head and is thrown, not just dropped, equally with both hands. The person taking the throw-in must face the field. Each foot is on or behind the touch line and on the ground.

The penalty for an illegal throw-in is a throw-in for the opposing team.

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## **RULE 16 GOAL KICKS**

When the attacking team kicks the ball over the goal line and not into the goal, the defending team puts the ball back into play with a kick from anywhere within the goal area. Defending players may remain inside their own penalty area while the ball is kicked. The opposing players must remain out of the penalty area until the ball is in play. The ball is in play when it is kicked directly out of the penalty area.

*This league is supported 100% by volunteers - we invite you to become part of this by joining us at a board meeting - please visit [www.rpsoccer.org](http://www.rpsoccer.org) for more information. Thanks!*