



A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE RULES OF THE GAME 2004/2005

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 Level 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 for greatest 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, call 664-0463 and report the incident to RPSL. Dissent with the referee before, during, and after a game is not tolerated by the RPSL.

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.

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.

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.
- Over Under 12: 10 players and a goalie.

Youths shall be played equally and shall play as close to 50% of the game as possible. 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".
- F. When the referee stops play to caution a player (he/she is shown a yellow card), the coach of the cautioned player should consider temporarily substituting the player prior to the restart of play. A player substituted because of being cautioned may be put back in play at the next opportunity for substitution.

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.

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.

Rule 6 Assistant Referees

Assistant Referees assist the referee.



THE RULES OF THE GAME 2004/2005

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 minutes game total.
- 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.
- Over 16: Two 45 minute halves with a 5 minute half-time. 95 minutes game total.

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.

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.

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.

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.



THE RULES OF THE GAME 2004/2005

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.)

A. There are ten serious fouls. For a foul to occur the ball must be in play, it must occur on the field, and it must be against an opponent. It is a serious foul to intentionally:

1. Hold an opponent.
2. Push an opponent.
3. Strike or attempt to strike an opponent.
4. Kick or attempt to kick an opponent.
5. Trip an opponent.
6. Jump at opponent.
7. Charge an opponent in a violent manner.
8. Charge an opponent from behind.
9. Deliberately handle the ball (except for the goal keeper in his penalty area).
10. Spit at an opponent.

B. Punishment for these fouls is a direct free kick from the point where the foul occurred. If a foul is committed in the penalty area by a defender, a penalty kick shall be awarded.

C. There are six minor offenses. It is a minor offense to:

1. Play in a dangerous manner.
2. Charge fairly (shoulder to shoulder) when the ball is not in playing distance.
3. Intentionally obstruct an opponent.
4. Charge the goalkeeper in his goal area.
5. The goalkeeper has 6 seconds to kick or toss the ball back into play after receiving the ball or after the ball has passed over the goal line if last touched by the opposing team.
6. The goalkeeper may not handle the ball from a throw-in or a kick back from his own team.

D. The punishment for these minor offenses is an indirect free kick from the place where the offense occurred.

E. Substitution of the player receiving a yellow card is not required. A player shall be cautioned (shown a yellow card) if:

1. He/she enters or leaves the field of play without the referee's permission after the game has started.
2. He/she persistently infringes on the Rules of the game.
3. He/she dissents by word or action with the referee's decisions.
4. He/she displays unsportsmanlike behavior.

F. A player shall be sent off (shown a red card) if:

1. He/she uses foul or abusive language.
2. He/she is guilty of violent conduct or serious foul play.
3. He/she persists in misconduct after receiving a caution.

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.

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.



A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE RULES OF THE GAME 2004/2005

Rule 15 Throw-In

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

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.

Rule 17 Corner Kick

When the defending team kicks the ball over its own goal line (but not into the goal), the attacking team puts the ball back in play with a kick from any place within the Corner Arc on the side where the ball went out. Defenders must be ten yards away.

The official Rules of the Game can be found at www.fifa.com/index.html