



SYSA/BBSA Recreation Soccer League

Rules and Regulations

Grades 3&4



Welcome to Shaker Youth Soccer Association and Beachwood Bison Soccer Academy Recreation Soccer League! Recreation Soccer is intended for all skill levels to foster a love of soccer, fitness, competition, teamwork, effort, and camaraderie. FUN is the name of the game in Rec Soccer.

With that in mind, below are the official rules of our league. Our game is intended to be real soccer, modeled after the state, national and international rules of the sport. Unless otherwise specified below, refer to the governing bodies for guidance.

1. Format
 - a. 7 players to a side, aka "7v7".
 - i. 6v6 if necessary due to insufficient players.
 - ii. If needed, in-game player loans are encouraged.
 - b. Field should be approximately 55-65 yards long and 35-45 yards wide with a midfield stripe and circle, goal boxes, penalty boxes, and 6x12 (or similar) goals.
2. Ball
 - a. Size 4 is preferred. Size 5 is acceptable.
3. Equipment
 - a. Mandatory
 - i. Appropriate shoes – Soccer cleats are preferred. Turf shoes or sneakers are acceptable. Socks must be worn.
 - ii. Shin Guards – Must be worn under the sock unless integrated into the sock.
 - iii. Team Uniform or similar colored shirt.
 - b. Forbidden
 - i. Cleats from any other sport are forbidden.
 - ii. Jewelry, hair clips, hair pins, and watches. Please use elastic bands for hair. Please contact the league for exceptions.
4. Game Structure
 - a. Two 25-minute halves with up to a 5 minute halftime.
 - i. At the referee's discretion or by mutual agreement between the coaches, four 12 and a half-minute quarters (with 2 minute breaks) may be used to compensate for heat, fatigue, or lack of substitutes.
 - b. **Score will not be kept in any official capacity and coaches and parents are encouraged not to keep score either. No records of wins and losses will be kept.**
5. Rules of Play
 - a. Kickoffs
 - i. Kickoffs will be used to start each period and after each goal.
 - ii. Teams switch sides for the 2nd half and alternate kick-offs each period (halves or quarters).
 - b. Substitutions



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- i. Players may be freely substituted throughout the game at any stoppage of play pending referee acknowledgement.
 - c. Stoppage of play
 - i. Out-of-Bounds
 - 1. Play may be resumed without referee whistle, unless during a substitution or other stoppage.
 - 2. Normal corner kicks and throw-ins.
 - a. Both feet must remain on the ground and both feet must be on or behind the sideline.
 - b. **For a throw-in violation, the referee should not penalize, but allow retries until successful. Gentle instruction is also encouraged.**
 - 3. **On goal kicks, the opposing team must retreat to the midfield stripe until play resumes. Coaches are encouraged to assist the referee with enforcement.**
 - ii. Fouls and Violations
 - 1. For any free kick awarded in a team's own half, the opposing team must retreat to midfield or 10 adult strides, whichever is further.
 - 2. There is NO offside rule.
 - a. Referees are instructed to discourage "cherry-picking" (a player camps out in the opposing team's end, typically near the goal). Coaches are encouraged to assist the referee with enforcement.
 - 3. There is no slide-tackling permitted and a foul will be called.
 - 4. Heading the ball is not permitted and a violation will be called.
 - 5. **Free kicks from fouls and handball are DIRECT, violations (dangerous play, illegal heading) will be INDIRECT. Penalty Kicks can be awarded.**
 - d. Goalkeeper
 - 1. Punting is not permitted. Goalie may throw or roll the ball out or may play the ball out themselves.
 - a. **Violation of the punting rule will result in the ball being returned to the goalie for legal resumption of play.**
 - 2. **When the goalie possesses the ball, the other team must retreat to midfield until the ball is returned to play.**
 - 3. **Back-pass rule WILL be enforced.** If the goalie plays an intentional foot pass back (or throw-in) with their hands, an INDIRECT kick will be awarded where the goalie touched the ball. If inside the goal box, move the ball to the goal kick line.
6. Conduct
- a. Towards the Referee
 - i. **ZERO TOLERANCE for abuse of the referees.**



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1. Coaches, players, parents, and guests should adopt a “no contact” policy with regards to the referees, but negative feedback of any kind is not acceptable and will not be tolerated.
- b. Players
- i. Aggressive play that exceeds normal boundaries will not be tolerated.
 1. Coaches are encouraged to substitute a player that is struggling with fair play until such time they can re-enter the game and play within the rules.
 2. Players that cannot play with the rules may be removed from the game by the referee, their coach, or their parent/guardian.
 - ii. Aggression towards the referee will not be tolerated and may result in removal from the game.
- c. Coaches
- i. Coaches are encouraged to abide by principles outlined in the Positive Coaching Alliance
 1. In short, encouragement, positivity, effort, teamwork, and fun are the names of our game. Negative reinforcement is discouraged.
 - ii. **Coaches are required to give equal playing time to all players. There is no official scorekeeping or recordkeeping.**
 - iii. **Coaches are encouraged to recognize if a game is lopsided, to take corrective actions.**
 1. **Enact a pass-first restriction (e.g. “Make 5 passes before shooting on goal”).**
 2. **Move stronger players to defense, weaker players to offense.**
 3. **Substitute weaker players for stronger players.**
 4. **Remove a player from the field temporarily to try and restore competitive balance (e.g. 6v7).**
 - iv. Coaches are encouraged to remove players from the field if they cannot abide by the rules of fair play until such time they can safely re-enter the game.
 - v. As stated previously, no abuse or negative feedback to the referees will be tolerated.
 - vi. No abuse or negative interactions between opposing coaches will be tolerated.
- d. Parents, Guardians, and Guests
- i. “Cheer, not Jeer”
 1. Please keep the communication with the participants limited to positive encouragement.
 - a. “Good job”, “You got this”, “Go for it”, and similar exhortations.



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- b. The occasional encouragement to engage in a course of action (e.g. shoot, pass, dribble, run, get back on defense, etc) is acceptable.
- c. Coaching from the sidelines is discouraged.
 - i. Playing soccer is difficult enough. Having to decide who to listen to, coach vs parent, makes it worse and can take the fun out of it.
 - ii. Please volunteer to coach in future seasons. We always need coaches!
- ii. Please refrain from communicating with the players from the opposing team.
 - 1. Exceptions would include cheering for exceptional play.
- iii. Negative or abusive behavior towards anyone will NOT be tolerated.
 - 1. Referees have the power to suspend play until the offending behavior is brought under control.
 - 2. Referees are not allowed to eject attendees but are encouraged to seek help from league officials.
- iv. **Parents must sit on the opposite side of the field from the players and coaches. As needed, seating can overflow beyond the corner of the field, but please refrain from sitting near or behind the goals.**