

SYAA Laws of the Game

2020

Introduction

The referee's job is to make the game SAFE, FAIR AND FUN.

Most of the referees in SYAA Youth Soccer are in their 1st or 2nd season as a referee, and, just like the players, are still learning.

Lightning policy

The sighting of a lightning flash or the hearing of the sound of thunder shall be reason enough to immediately stop and suspend a game or a practice session;

- A. Do not wait until it rains.
- B. Do not wait for the end of a period or the end of a game.

Coaches shall take their players to a safe location upon suspension of a game and/or a practice session.

Any restart of play will be the decision of the HEAD referee on duty

Concussion

In order to promote a safer playing environment, all players in the 12-U and younger age divisions are prohibited from deliberately striking a soccer ball with any portion of their head, (a.k.a. heading) in both games and practices. If a player in a 12-U or younger division game deliberately heads the ball, the referee is to stop the game and award an indirect free kick (IFK) to the opposing team.

If the ball hits a players head the play should be stopped so the coach can check the player for concussion.

LAW 1 THE FIELD OF PLAY

U4, U5, U6 fields only mark the center line and the center circle.

U8 add a goal arc. No one is allowed in the goal arc. All shots must be taken outside of the arc. If the ball stops inside the arc area, it results in a goal kick for the defending team. If an attacking player is inside the arc when a goal is scored, there is no goal and results in a goal kick for the defending team. If the defender touches it within the goal area, it results in an indirect free kick 5 yards outside the arc.

LAW 2 THE BALL

U4, U5, U6 and U8 use a size 3 ball

U10 and U12 use a size 4 ball

The referee shall check the air pressure in the match ball prior to the match to make sure it is safe to use. It is the responsibility of the home team to provide the match ball.

LAW 3 PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTES**1. Number of Players**

U4 and U5 usually have 3 players per side;

U6 usually has 3 players per side;

U8 usually has 5 players per side;

U10 and U12 usually have 6 players per side.

2. Goalkeepers

Goalkeepers are only allowed to play a maximum of half of the game, then are replaced with another team member, except during tournaments, where the same goalkeeper may play the entire game.

3. Substitutions

Both teams may substitute any number of players only at the following times:

U4 thru U6 may substitute on the fly at any time.

U8, U10, U12 may substitute at the permission of the referee:

- on a goal kick
- after a goal
- on a throw in
- between periods.

4. Injuries

Bleeding or open wounds – players must leave the game for treatment.

The player may not return until all blood has been cleaned from the player and uniform is completely dry.

5. Coaches

Coaches are not allowed on the field for U8 and above. U6 coaches should only be on the field on rare occasions.

LAW 4 PLAYER'S EQUIPMENT

Prior to a game the Referees shall inspect the players' equipment.

1. Safety

A player shall not wear anything that is dangerous to another player or to oneself. This includes earrings, necklaces, Fitbits etc.,

or anything that the referee deems dangerous. Jewelry of any kind – not permitted

Casts need to be wrapped in a soft wrapping and approved by the senior referee on duty.

2. Uniforms

The basic compulsory equipment of a player shall consist of a shirt, shorts, socks, shin-guards and shoes.

The goalkeeper must wear a color different than that of either team. A pinny worn over the uniform shirt is acceptable.

Shin-guards, which must be covered entirely by socks, shall be made of a suitable material (rubber, plastic, polyurethane etc) and shall afford a reasonable degree of protection.

Cold weather - Players may wear additional clothing to keep them warm and safe. Hoods must be tucked into the jersey top.

3. Footwear

Shoes that meet the following criteria are considered to be legal:

(1) shoes that are made by well-known manufacturers and designated as soccer footwear; (2) gym shoes; (3) any type of shoe having any number of cleats (rubber, plastic or metal) that have no sharp edges. Shoes shall be properly tied (or otherwise appropriately fastened).

No baseball cleats shall be allowed unless the toe cleat has been removed.

LAW 5 REFEREES

A Referee's decision on points of fact shall be final.

The Referee shall perform a pregame checks for safety including inspecting the field and the goals (sandbags in place) and checking for bad weather.

The Referee shall:

- A. Enforce the Laws.
- B. Refrain from penalizing in cases where doing so would be giving an advantage to the offending team.
- C. Act as timekeeper.
- D. Have the authority to stop the game for any reason (injury, weather, safety, etc)
- E. Use appropriate hand signals.
- F. A referee may reverse a decision so long as play has not been restarted.
- G. The referee's decision is final.

Required referee equipment:

- Whistle, Watch, Pen, Scoresheet, Coin.

LAW 6 ASSISTANT REFEREES (AR)

The Assistant Referee shall use the correct flag signal:

- A. When the ball is out of play;
- B. Indicate which side is entitled to a corner kick, goal kick or throw-in;
- C. When a substitution is desired;
- D. When a player may be penalized for being in an offside position;
- E. When a foul, misconduct or other incident has occurred out of the vision of the referee.

LAW 7 DURATION OF THE GAME

Age Group	# of Periods	Length of Periods
U4	4	5 mins
U5	4	5 mins
U6	4	7 mins
U8	4	10 mins
U10	2	25 mins
U12	2	30 mins

The timer shall not be stopped for any reason. Time continues for stoppages of play, including injuries.

LAW 8 THE START AND RESTART OF PLAY**1. KICKOFF**

- A. Prior to the game, the choice of ends or kick off shall be decided by the toss of a coin. The team winning the toss will choose to kick off or choose ends. If the coin toss winner chooses to kick off then the other team may select which end to defend.
- B. On a kick-off, the ball is in play when it is kicked in any direction and clearly moves.
- C. The kicker may not play the ball again until it has been touched by another player.
- D. A goal may be scored directly (first touch) against the opponents from a kickoff. This rule does NOT APPLY to U4 thru U8.

2. DROPPED BALL. Used for a stoppage of play when no foul has been committed.

Drop the ball to the team that had possession prior to the stoppage, unless the ball is to be dropped in the penalty area, in which case the ball shall be dropped for the keeper.

3. FREE KICK, GOAL KICK, CORNER KICK, THROW IN – see laws 13 thru 17**LAW 9 BALL IN AND OUT-OF-PLAY**

The ball is out-of-play when:

- A. the whole of the ball completely passes over the entire Goal Line or Touchline, whether on the ground or in the air;
- B. the game has been stopped by the referee, including when the referee accidentally blows the whistle.

The ball is in-play at all other times, including:

- A. If it rebounds onto the field from the goal post, cross bar, or corner flag.
- B. If it strikes the Referee or Assistant Referee without completely leaving the field of play.
- C. If there is an apparent violation, but no signal has been given by the Referee.

LAW 10 METHOD OF SCORING

A goal is scored when the whole of the ball passes completely over the Goal Line, between the goal posts and under the crossbar.

LAW 11 OFFSIDE

The Offside rule shall not apply to any U4 to U8 games.

1. A player is in an offside position at the moment the ball is played or touched by a teammate, if any part of their head, body or feet is:
 - A. nearer the opponent's goal line than the ball, AND
 - B. in the opponent's half of the field (excluding the halfway line) AND
 - C. closer to the opponent's Goal Line than the second-last opponent. (A player who is even with the second-last opponent or with the last two opponents is not in an offside position).

NOTE: The hands and arms of all players are not included when judging offside position.

2. The offside offense may only be called against a player who is in an offside position and subsequently becomes involved in active play by:
 - A. interfering with play, or
 - B. interfering with an opponent, or
 - C. having gained an advantage by being in that position.

A player gains an advantage by playing (touching) the ball or interfering with an opponent when: (1) the ball rebounds or deflects off the goalpost, crossbar, Referee or an opponent; (2) an opponent (goalkeeper or defender) deliberately stops, or attempts to stop, a ball which is going into or very close to their goal .

3. INFRACTION: If a player is declared offside, the referee shall award an indirect free kick (IFK) to the opposing team

The kick shall be taken by an opponent from the place where the offside offense occurred. The offense occurs where the offside player becomes involved in active play, e.g. the player touches the ball or interferes with an opponent. This includes if the offense occurs in the player's own half of the field.

4. A player shall not be declared offside:
- A. merely because of being in an offside position, or
 - B. if the player receives the ball directly from a goal kick, a corner kick, or a throw-in, or
 - C. if the player receives the ball having been last played by an opponent

Five questions for offside call: Was the attacking player:

- 1) In the opponents half of the field **AND**
- 2) Ahead of the ball **AND**
- 3) Past the second last defender **WHEN**
- 4) **The ball was passed by a teammate.**

If so the player is in an offside position and is called OFFSIDE if he/she

- 5) Participates or interferes with play.

Five yesses and flag goes up, and the AR stands still in line with the position of the offense until the ball is placed for the free kick.

LAW 12 FOULS AND MISCONDUCT

Direct and indirect free kicks (Law 13) and penalty kicks (Law 14) can only be awarded for fouls and misconduct offenses committed while the ball is in play.

1. Direct Free Kick (DFK):

- A. A direct free kick (DFK) is awarded to the opposing team if a player inside the field-of-play commits any of the following seven (7) offenses, while the ball is in play, in a manner considered by the Referee to be careless, reckless, or involving disproportionate force:
- 1) charges an opponent; or
 - 2) jumps at an opponent; or
 - 3) kicks or attempts to kick: (a) an opponent, or (b) the ball while in the possession of the goalkeeper;
 - 4) pushes an opponent; or
 - 5) strikes or attempts to strike an opponent; including a goalkeeper throwing the ball vigorously at an opponent, or pushing an opponent with the ball while still holding it; or
 - 6) slide Tackles
 - 7) trips or attempts to trip an opponent; or

AND the following three offenses:

- 8) holds an opponent; or
- 9) bites or spits at anyone; or
- 10) handles the ball deliberately, i.e. carries, strikes or propels the ball with hand or arm (this does not apply to a goalkeeper within their own penalty area).

2. Indirect Free Kick (IFK):

The commission of any of the following offenses will result in the award of an indirect free kick (IFK), taken by the opposing team at the point of the offense

- A. **DANGEROUS PLAY:** Playing in a manner that could result in injury to any other player or to oneself. “Dangerous Play” is a judgment call. The following are examples only and are not exclusive:
- 1) Raising the foot, in an attempt to play the ball, to the level of another player’s chest or higher when any other player is in normal position.
 - 2) Using a double kick (scissors or bicycle) within playing distance another player (teammate or opponent.)
 - 3) Playing or attempting to play the ball while lying on the ground within playing distance of another player.
- B. **CHARGING FAIRLY:** (i.e. with the shoulder to the shoulder of an opposing player, when each player has at least one foot on the ground) **when** the ball is not within playing distance of the involved players
- C. **OBSTRUCTION:** When not playing the ball, intentionally interposing the body so as to impede an opponent’s movement (without contact).
- D. **FOULS AGAINST GOALKEEPER:** Charging a goalkeeper:
- 1) while the ball is in goalkeeper-possession, or
 - 2) in the Goal Area – whether or not the ball is in goalkeeper possession.
- E. **IMPROPER CLEARING OF THE BALL BY THE GOALKEEPER**

The following rules shall apply to goalkeepers when clearing the ball:

Goalkeepers may run or walk with the ball and take any number of steps while inside the Penalty Area, control of the ball with his hands, may take no more six (6) seconds while holding, bouncing or throwing the ball in the air and catching it again without releasing it into play.

The goalkeeper, having released the ball into play may not touch the ball again with their hand(s) unless it has been touched or played by a player of the opposing team.

On any occasion when a player deliberately kicks the ball, or throws the ball on a throw-in directly to their own goalkeeper:

- A) goalkeeper is not permitted to touch it with their hands.
- B) If, however, the goalkeeper does touch the ball with hands, they shall be penalized by the award of an indirect free kick (IFK) to be taken by the opposing team from the place where the offense occurred.

LAW 13 FREE KICK

Free kicks are awarded to the opposing team of a player who is guilty of committing an offense.

- A. There are two types of free kicks:
 - 1. DIRECT (DFK): from which a goal can be scored without being touched by another player, of either team, against the opposing team only.
 - 2. INDIRECT (IFK): from which a goal cannot be scored unless the ball has been touched by any other player, of either team, before it enters the goal. In U4 to U8 all free kicks will be indirect free kicks (IFK).
- B. All free kicks are taken from the place where the offense occurred, except:
 - 1. Any free kick awarded to a team inside its own Goal Area shall be taken from a point anywhere within the Goal Area in which the offense occurred.

C. On all free kicks the ball must be stationary when the free kick is taken. The ball is in play when it is kicked and clearly moves.

For direct, or indirect free kicks, the opponents must be away from the ball at least 5 yards for U4 through U8 and at least 8yds for U10 through U12. (This replaces for normal 10 yds for older age groups). No indirect free kicks for the attacking team shall be allowed in the goal area; move the ball out to the top edge of the goal box.

LAW 14 PENALTY KICK

There shall be no penalty kicks in the U4 to U8 divisions.

- A. A penalty kick is awarded if a player commits a direct kick offense inside their own penalty area.
- B. A penalty kick shall be taken from the Penalty Mark and the kicker must be clearly identified.
- C. When the penalty kick is taken all players (other than the player taking the penalty kick and the opposing goalkeeper) shall be:
 - 1. within the field of play, and
 - 2. outside the Penalty Area, and
 - 3. outside the Penalty Arc, and
 - 4. farther from the Goal Line than the Penalty Mark, and
 - 5. must remain there until the ball is kicked into play.
- D. The goalkeeper (who may be changed with another player on the field for the taking of the penalty kick):
 - 1. must remain on the Goal Line, between the goalposts, and may move along the Goal Line prior to the kick, but shall not come off the Goal Line until the ball has been kicked, and
 - 2. is permitted to move the body or arms – but not in an unsporting attempt to distract the kicker.

E. The ball:

1. must be stationary on the Penalty Mark and kicked in a forward direction,
2. is in play immediately after it has been kicked and clearly moves, and
3. may not be touched a second time by the kicker until touched by another player.

F. A goal may be scored DIRECTLY from a penalty kick.

G. INFRACTIONS

1. For any violation of this Law by the **defending** team:
 - a) If a goal is scored, the goal is allowed;
 - b) If a goal is not scored, the penalty kick MUST BE retaken.
2. For any violation of the Law by the **attacking** team:
 - a) If a goal is scored, the goal is disallowed and the penalty kick MUST BE retaken;
 - b) If a goal is not scored, play is stopped and an indirect free kick (IFK) is taken by the opposing team at the spot of the violation.
3. If **both** teams violate this law, the kick is retaken

H. Extended Time Penalty Kicks

1. When a period is extended to allow a penalty kick to be taken or retaken, the extension shall last until the moment that the penalty kick has been completed, i.e. until the Referee(s) has decided whether or not a goal is scored, and the period shall end immediately after the Referee(s) has made their decision.

After the player taking the penalty kick has put the ball into play, no player other than the defending goalkeeper may play or touch the ball.

When a penalty kick is being taken in extended time, the kicker may not play the ball a second time

LAW 15 THROW-IN

When the whole of the ball has passed over the entire Touch Line, either on the ground or in the air, it shall be put in play by a throw-in. The throw-in is taken in any direction at the point where the ball left the field-of-play, by a player of the opposing team to that of the player who touched it last.

A. The thrower:

1. must face the field-of-play with part of each foot either on the Touch Line or on the ground outside the Touch Line and part of each foot shall remain in contact with the ground at the moment the ball is released, and
2. shall throw the ball with both hands (unless a physical impairment would limit use to one hand), and
3. shall throw the ball from behind and over the head.
4. U4 and U5 use kick ins instead of throw ins.

All opposing players must remain at least two (2) yards from the thrower until the ball is in play.

The ball shall be in play immediately upon any part of the ball breaking the plane of the field-of-play (i.e. the outside edge of the Touch Line) after having been released by the thrower, but the thrower shall not again play the ball until it has been touched by another player.

A goal may not be scored directly from a throw-in.

B. INFRACTIONS

1. For an improper throw-in, the restart shall be a throw-in by the opposing team.
2. For touching the ball a second time, an indirect free kick (IFK) shall be taken by the opposing team. The IFK will be taken from the place where the second touch occurred. throw-in is to be retaken.

3. In the first 4 U6 and U8 division games when an improper throw-in is taken, the Referee should stop play, explain the proper procedure to the player and allow the throw-in to be retaken.

LAW 16 GOAL KICK

When the ball passes completely over the defending team's Goal Line, and was last touched by an attacking player, and a goal was not scored, it shall be put into play by a kick taken:

- A. by a player of the defending team,
- B. from a point anywhere within the Goal Area
- C. The Offside Law (9) does not apply at the taking of a goal kick.
- D. The ball shall be stationary and is in play when it is kicked.
- E. A goal may be scored DIRECT (first touch) from a goal-kick, but only against the opposing team.

F. INFRACTIONS

1. If a player taking a goal kick touches the ball before it is touched by another player, an indirect free kick (IFK) shall be awarded to the opposing team. The IFK will be taken from the place where the second touch occurred.
2. Players of the opposing team shall remain outside the Penalty Area, until the ball has been kicked. Exception: In U4 thru U8 divisions all opposing players must at least 5 yards from the ball. If the opposing players violate this rule the goal kick shall be retaken.

LAW 17 CORNER KICK

When the ball passes completely over the defending team's entire Goal Line, and was last touched by a defending player, and a goal was not scored, it shall be put into play by a kick taken:

- A. by a player of the attacking team,
- B. At the corner nearest to where the ball crossed the goal line.
- C. The ball must be placed in or on the Corner Arc.

- D. A properly positioned corner flag may not be moved by a player for the taking of the corner kick.
- E. The Offside Law XI does not apply at the taking of a corner kick.
- F. The ball must be stationary and is in play when it is kicked and clearly moves.
- G. A goal may be scored DIRECT (first touch) from a corner kick.
- H. Until the ball has been kicked into play, no opposing player may be closer than 8 yards. Exception U4 thru U8 opponents must be at least 5 yards away.
- I. If the player taking the corner kick touches the ball a second time before it has been touched by another player an indirect free kick (IFK) shall be awarded to the opposing team. The IFK will be taken from the place where the second touch occurred.

Referee – Assistant Referee signals

