



RECREATIONAL SOCCER REFEREE GUIDE

REMEMBER:

- YOU are in charge!
- Your whistle is your best friend, blow loudly.
- Announce loudly which side (team color) has a throw-in.
- Engage players, many don't know what they need to do explain where possible (do not coach them).
- Always put yourself in the best position to see.
- Everyone makes mistakes! Learn from them but don't be overwhelmed by them.
- Don't let what other people think determine your decision making.
- Be fair and objective.
- If anything happens send a linesperson to get the director/field marshal immediately.

DO NOT:

- Engage with coaches or parents – report abuse immediately.
- Acknowledge, sarcastically, with 'thank you'.
- Extend hand(s) out (palm out) towards parents or players.
- Use cellphone on the field (*except for time keeping*).

REFGING A GAME

Please arrive at the assigned field no later than 5-10 minutes before the start of the game.

Equipment Check:

- At game time, call all players to line-up on the center line for equipment check
- Shin guards are required at all levels (have players tap shins with knuckles)
- No jewelry is allowed, including rings, ear rings, necklaces, bracelets, etc.
- Eyeglasses must be secured by a strap
- Share any violations with coach
- Allow players to return to coach and then proceed to kick-off.

Kick-off for start of game or start of half:

- Confirm that the correct number of players is on the field for each team
- Blow whistle loudly to signal kick-off
- Defending team must be outside the center circle (on their side)
- Kick-off team can kick in any direction
- Player kicking the ball must kick to a team mate – i.e. they can't touch the ball twice.

If ball goes out on the sidelines:

- Blow whistle loudly to stop play, point arm in direction of possession and SHOUT color of team that is being awarded the throw (it goes the opposing team to the one who kicked it out)
- Throw-in must be with two hands overhead—both feet must remain on the ground
- If they get it wrong, explain what is required and then allow a redo
- If they continue to get it wrong, blow the whistle and allow opposing team to take the throw.

When the ball is touched beyond the end line:

- If ball is touched out by defending team a CORNER KICK is awarded to attacking team — ball is kicked in from the corner by attacking team.
- If ball is touched out by offensive team a GOAL KICK is awarded to defensive team — ball is kicked up field from inside the goal box.

If a foul is committed (*see further explanation of 'what is a foul' below*):

- Blow whistle loudly to stop play, point arm in direction of possession – explain if reason is not obvious
- Place ball at the spot of the foul, stand at spot until both teams are ready
- Notify kicker to WAIT for you to say 'go', or blow the whistle, to resume play
- Ensure defending team has allowed 10 yards (5 BIG steps)
- Blow whistle loudly to resume play.

End of half — blow whistle twice and point to the bench.

End of game — whistle loudly in three consecutive blows, raise arm in the air.

WHAT IS A FOUL?

- It is a referee's job is to enforce the rules and keep players safe!
- Please help the players learn the rules by being consistent and concise

Some examples of fouls/infractions

- Pushing – player extends arm outward to push another player anywhere on the field. *This is a tough area with smaller kids as some are just protecting themselves in the chaos, so this has to be the referee's call.*
- Tripping – raising a foot to stop a player getting past them
- Defender is trying to steal ball but misses the ball and makes contact with foot or leg that results in a turnover (loss of ball to other team) – this is a foul, whether intentional or not
- Elbowing – player swings elbow and hits another player, whether intentional or not
- Raising a foot above chest level to contact the ball
- Kicking the ball when a player is on the ground
- Obstruction – using the body to obstruct a player who does not have the ball
- Intentional handball – extending arm or hand away from the body to control ball

You can also give a foul for Unsportsmanlike Conduct – such as yelling at another player, verbal abuse, name calling, **or any form of racism. PLEASE REPORT SERIOUS INCIDENTS TO THE COACH AND/OR SOCCER DIRECTOR.**

NOT a foul/infraction:

- Tackling the ball – defender extends leg and touches ball
- If contact is made to the ball FIRST, it is not a foul – as long the player does intentionally follow through and hit the other player's legs in a dangerous manner
- Shoulder to shoulder contact
- Players may use body to protect the ball, AS LONG AS the arms remain tight to the body
- Player must be using body to position themselves on the ball
- Accidental hand ball (unless arms are carelessly waving around – very possible)
- Player does not have time or space to change hand position and ball hits hand
- Player is using hand or arm to protect themselves.

NOTE: There are NO direct free kicks for 1st – 4th grade – including no penalties. If a player (non-goalkeeper) deliberately touches the ball on the goal line to keep it out of their goal, or prevents an obvious goal with their hands, then an automatic goal is given.

Rules for 1st- 4th Grade:

- NO HEADERS at any level
- NO OFFSIDES
- NO SLIDE TACKLES
- All free kicks INDIRECT – including penalties. See note on deliberate handball on goal line (above).
- SUBSTITUTIONS – anytime (no permission needed) and unlimited (just make sure subs do not come on until the player they are replacing is off the field)

Rules for 5th- 6th Grade:

- NO HEADERS
- NO OFFSIDES – this may change if we have enough ARs.
- NO SLIDE TACKLES
- Direct free kicks and penalties are allowed.
- SUBSTITUTIONS – anytime (no permission needed) and unlimited (just make sure subs do not come on until the player they are replacing is off the field)

AGE	BALL SIZE	HALVES	TEAM SIZE	COACHES
1 st and 2 nd Grade	3	25mins	8 v 8	Occasional on field coaching allowed
3 rd and 4 th Grade	4	25mins	8 v 8	No coaches on the field
5 th and 6 th Grade	4	30mins	7 v 7	No coaches on the field