

Southeast Michigan Football Club

2023 FALL YOUTH SOCCER RULES

(Travel League Division U12 & U15)

OBJECTIVE

The goal of this soccer program is to provide an instructional league that places emphasis on skill development, sportsmanship, and fun! All players in this league will play at least 50% of every game. Coaches should provide guidance for team play and instruction for all players. Coaches should also approach their recreational experience as a positive and enjoyable one for their players and themselves.

TEAMS / FORFEIT

1. Teams should arrive on time. Game start time may be delayed up to 15 minutes, however, if a team arrives to play later than 15 minutes after the scheduled game time, they forfeit the game (unless prior arrangements have been made and agreed to with the hosting staff and opposing team coach.)
2. Players are permitted to “play up” to an older age group but are not permitted to “play down.” No player under the age of 11 years old will be permitted to play up past U12 due to the Concussion Laws.
3. U12 teams shall play 9 vs 9 including a goalie. To avoid a forfeit, a team must have at least 5 players on the field.
4. U15 teams shall play 11 vs 11 including a goalie. To avoid a forfeit, a team must have at least 7 players on the field.
5. If one team is short players during a game, we encourage the opposing team to match so that the playing field is even. However, this is not a requirement.
6. Both teams’ bench will be on the same side of the field and all spectators will sit on the opposite side.
7. In the case of a forfeit, teams shall be allowed to play a scrimmage or practice on the field. There will however, be no referees.

PLAYER AGE

The league will use the US Youth Soccer Birth Year and Season Matrix found in Appendix A.

GAME CANCELATION / WEATHER

1. If the league coordinator from each city knows 1 hour prior to game time that the weather or field conditions are unplayable, he/she will contact coaches to inform them.
2. Coaches are responsible for informing all players.
3. The league coordinator from each city will also contact their respective referees.
4. If weather is playable 1 hour prior to game time, then teams should still plan to play. If conditions worsen by the time the game is scheduled to start or during the game, it is up to the referee to call the game.
5. If during mid-game the referee stops it due to weather (say thunder or lightning), the referee will be the judge to let teams know whether they can wait it out and continue or end the game. Every time thunder is heard, the game must be delayed 30 minutes.
6. Any game that is ended due to weather after the first half will not be rescheduled. The current score will be final. If a game is ended in the first half and can't be continued due to weather, then the league coordinator will decide later whether it will be rescheduled or not.

COACHES

1. Coaches must realize that they are setting an example for their players, parents and spectators and should act accordingly.
2. When contacting players on the roster, make sure to speak to an adult. Leaving messages with children is not advisable.
3. Coaches must allow all players equal playing time.
4. Coaches shall remain on the team bench side/area of the field and within 10 feet of the touchline. Only referees and players may be on the field.
5. Coaches should instruct players to listen for the whistle during the game.
6. If a coach has a problem with an official, talk *discreetly* with the **site supervisor** about the concerns at an appropriate time. Verbal abuse to an official is NOT a good example for the players and will NOT be tolerated.

7. Any coach who is acting unsportsmanlike (ex. ejected from game/arguing with referee/player/parent) will be subject to dismissal from the league permanently. This is a **RECREATIONAL** league! Players are here to have fun and learn soccer. The game is about the players and no one else.

COACH, PLAYER, & SPECTATOR UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

1. Coaches and players agree to the following terms or face ejection.

I will not, nor will I encourage others to:

- a) Engage in unsportsmanlike conduct with any persons.
 - b) Behave in any manner which would endanger the health, safety or well-being of any person.
 - c) Use drugs, alcohol or tobacco while at any sporting events or practices.
 - d) Engage in the use of profanity.
 - e) Use verbal or physical threats or abuse aimed at any person.
 - f) Initiate a fight, confrontation, or scuffle with any person.
 - g) I will always treat everyone with the respect that they deserve and that I desire for myself.
2. An adult or site supervisor must be present at all games. Site supervisor will be responsible for fielding and handling complaints/concerns from coaches, players, and spectators as well as all ejections from the facilities

EQUIPMENT

1. Shin Guards are **required** for all players. Players not wearing shin guards will not be allowed to play. We encourage players to cover shin guards entirely with a sock when possible.

2. Players are not allowed to wear:

2.1. Cleats with toes spikes

2.2. Metal cleats

2.3. Jewelry (includes new ear piercings)

2.3.1. Taping over any piercing is not permitted. All piercings must be **removed** prior to the start of the game.

2.4. Any hat with a brim

2.5. Hard casts are NOT allowed, even if covered. (soft casts ONLY)

3. Players are not allowed to play with gum or candy in mouths.
4. Players must wear shoes (i.e. no sandals or bare feet)
5. Encourage players to wear athletic-type clothing (i.e. no jeans)

FIELD / SPECTATORS

1. During the game, only players and referees may be on the field.
2. Spectators must remain 5 feet away from touchlines. This gives the referee space to move and players' room to make throw-ins.
3. Spectators will not address the referees or players in any manner.
4. No spectator/coach/player etc. may stand behind the goal/end line to view the game. This is distracting to players and can also be dangerous.
5. *All participants* are expected to assist in keeping the fields clean and worthy of play. Please help the Department by picking up all trash and reporting any concerns with field conditions.

REFEREES

1. The center referee can only be addressed at half time or after the game and only by the head coach in a cordial and respectful manner.
2. Assistant referees should never be addressed directly by any coach, player, or spectator.
3. Players are not to address the referees directly. All concerns must be addressed through the head coach.
4. If there is an issue with a referee, a report should be made to the community's league directors following the contest.
5. At no point should players, coaches, or spectators interact, direct criticism towards, or berate a referee. A referee is a human, and may occasionally make a mistake, however, all referee decisions are final and are not to be questioned.
6. Any player or team violating the above will be issued a warning. After the warning, it will be deemed a red card offense. In the case of a spectator causing an issue, the team will be given a warning, and it is up to the head coach to keep their spectators under control.

SCORING/TIES

1. A goal is scored when the whole of the ball has passed over the goal line, between the posts and under the crossbar.
2. Tie game: Games ending in a tie will be considered tie games and no overtime period will be played.
3. **Mercy Rule:** If either team is ahead by 8 goals at any point in the game, the game is over. The teams, however; MUST play at least one half, even if the goal limit is reached.

SCHEDULED PRACTICES

1. All players should plan to attend practices and let the coach know when you are unable to attend.
2. During practice, you may be sharing field time with other teams so please be respectful.

FIFA Rules are used in this league except where modified.

STARTING THE GAME: AFTER GOAL/AFTER HALF TIME

1. Game lengths are as follows:
 - 1.1. U12 will play two 30-minute halves
 - 1.2. U15 will play two 35-minute halves
 - 1.3. Halves will be separated by a 5-minute break for all games.
2. Coin toss:
 - 2.1. The winner of the toss will get field position choice, while the loser of the toss will get to kick-off.
 1. The game begins with a kick-off, at the center of the field. The opposing team players shall be at least 10 yards (or appropriate distance for field size) from the ball until it is kicked off.
 2. The ball will be deemed in play when it is kicked and clearly moves. The kicker shall not play the ball a second time until another player touches it.
 1. The kickoff does NOT have to move FORWARD. The kickoff can be a backwards pass.
 3. A goal may be scored directly against the opponents from the kick-off
 4. When restarting after half time, ends shall be changed and the team that did not kick off in the first half shall take the kick-off.

5. When any kick is used to begin play (i.e., penalty, kickoff, etc.), opposing players must be at a distance of at least 10 yards from the ball.

BALL IN/OUT OF PLAY

1. The ball is out of play when it has completely crossed the goal line or touchline, whether in the air or on the ground. The touchlines and goal lines belong to the playing field.

2. If the defending team touches the ball last when it crosses the goal line then the attacking team is awarded a corner kick. If the attacking team touched the ball last when it crossed goal line, then the defending team is awarded a goal kick. The ball is placed anywhere in goal area and kicked by *any* defending player. (Encourage other players than the goalie to do this.)

3. When the ball passes over the touchline, the team that didn't touch it last will be awarded a throw-in at the spot the ball went out of bounds.

4. *Throw-in*: The ball is put into play by facing the field of play, throwing the ball with two hands simultaneously from behind the head while keeping both feet on the ground. The ball is in play immediately as it enters the field of play. The thrower cannot touch the ball again until another player has touched it.

4.1. Improper throw gives the opposing team possession (throw in).

4.2. Playing the ball, a 2nd time gives indirect kick to opposing team.

5. A *drop ball* occurs when:

5.1. The ball goes out-of-bounds off two players simultaneously and

5.2. When an injury occurs. The drop ball is administered five yards from either the goal line or touchline or wherever the ball is when the whistle is blown for an injury. The official holds the ball at waist level and drops the ball between two opposing players and the ball must touch the ground before being played.

SUBSTITUTIONS

1. May be made by either team between halves, after a goal has been scored, and during an injury break.

2. Teams may substitute during the game also before a goal kick and during a throw-in if they are the team in possession of the ball. If the team in possession chooses to substitute, then the opposing team may sub also.

- a. If the white team has possession of the ball for a goal kick and they choose not to sub, then the blue team may not sub. They must wait for an appropriate time.
3. All players/substitutes must be registered for the program. Players who are not registered for the program with the Department are not eligible to play.
4. **All substitutions are at the discretion of the referee(s)**

SLIDE TACKLING

1. Will not be allowed for U12 or U15.
2. If a player attempts a slide tackle, they will receive a warning not to do so again and if they do, a yellow card will be given and a red card will be given on the next offense. If a player receives a red card, that player will be sent off for the remainder of the game.

HEADING

1. Heading is banned for all division players U-11 (U-12 and below for programs without single age divisions) and below in both practices and games.
2. An indirect free kick will be awarded to the opposing team if a player deliberately touches the ball with his/her head during a game.
 - 2.1. This indirect free kick is to be taken from the place where the player touched the ball with his/her head.
3. Neither cautions nor send offs shall be issued for persistent infringement or denying an obvious goal scoring opportunity related to the heading infraction.

OFFSIDES

1. A player is in offside position if he/she is nearer to an opponents' goal line than the ball, unless:
 - 1.1. The player is in his own half of the field of play or
 - 1.2. The player is not nearer to the opponents' goal line than the second to last defender (goalie is last defender).
2. An offside penalty will only occur if, the ball touches or is played by a teammate, that player is, in

the opinion of the officials, either (1) interfering with play, (2) interfering with an opponent or (3) seeking to gain an advantage by being offside.

3. A player shall not be declared offside by the referee:

3.1. Merely because of being in an offside position or

3.2. If he receives the ball direct from a goal kick, a corner-kick or a throw-in.

GOALKEEPERS

Goalie's will be allowed 6 seconds and then must release the ball. Should a teammate deliberately pass to their own goalie with their feet the goalie may NOT pick up the ball. The goalie must play it with their feet. Goal keepers should wear a pinnie or different colored jersey to stick out from the players in the field. The referee will use their discretion to determine if the goal keeper's outfit is suitable or not.

PENALTIES

A direct free kick (a goal can be scored direct against the offending side) shall be awarded to the offended team from the spot closest to the foul for the following offenses:

1. Intentionally:

1.1. Kicking or attempting to kick

1.2. Tripping with foot or by stooping in front or behind an opponent

1.3. Jumping at an opponent

1.4. Charging an opponent either in front or behind

1.5. Striking or attempting to strike an opponent

1.6. Pushing an opponent

1.7. Holding an opponent

1.8. Deliberately handling the ball by striking, propelling, carrying or the like. Players using their hands/arms to protect themselves will not be penalized.

2. Direct kick penalties called against the defensive team inside their own penalty box will result in a penalty kick.

2.1. A penalty-kick shall be awarded when a player commits any of the above offenses within the penalty area irrespective of the position of the ball.

- 2.2. The goalkeeper must stand without moving his feet on his own goal line until the ball is kicked.
- 2.3. The player taking the kick may not play the ball a second time until it has been touched or played by another player.
- 2.4. All other players must be at least ten yards from the penalty mark and be behind the ball.

3. An *indirect kick* (a goal cannot be scored unless the ball has been played or touched by a player other than the kicker before passing through the goal) shall be awarded from the spot nearest the infraction unless it takes place in the goal area for the following offenses:

- 3.1. Playing in a manner considered dangerous by the referee, i.e. “dangerous play”
- 3.2. When not playing the ball, intentionally obstructing an opponent, i.e. “obstruction”
- 3.3. Charging the goalkeeper.
- 3.4. When playing as a goalkeeper, taking more than 6 seconds while holding, bouncing, or throwing the ball in the air.
- 3.5. As the kicker on a kick-off, direct free kick, corner kick, or goal kick playing the ball again before it has been touched or played by another player.
- 3.6. Intentionally obstructing the opposing goalkeeper to prevent him from putting the ball into play.
- 3.7. If during a throw-in, the thrower plays the ball a second time before it has been touched or played by another player.

RECOMMENDED FIELD, GOAL AND BALL SIZE

Age	Goal Size	Width Min / Max (in yards)	Length Min / Max (in yards)	Ball Size	Match Format	Match Duration (in minutes)
U12	6' x 18'	45 / 55	70 / 80	4	9 vs 9	2 x 30min

U15	8' x 24'	50 / 100	100 / 130	5	11 vs 11	2 x 35min
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NUMBER OF REFEREES PER GAME

1. U12

1.1. Regular season games must have at least 1 referee, certification is preferred, if possible.

2. U15

2.1. Regular season games must have at least 2 referees, certification of 1 referee is preferred, if possible.

***All Locations are smoke-free and pet free (with the exception of service animals).**

LOCATIONS

Ida Fields:

Cornerstone Baptist Church

4000 Lewis Avenue

Ida, MI 48140

Dundee fields:

Reggie's Park dead end of Strawberry Street, west of Outer Drive, Behind Burger King.

Blissfield fields:

Blissfield Middle School

1305 Beamer Road

Blissfield, MI

Clinton

Tate Park

475 W Michigan Ave

Clinton, MI 49236

Tecumseh fields:

U15 - Aden Mead Park

211 S. Occidental Hwy

Tecumseh, MI 49286

U12 - Cal Zorn Park

300 W. Russell Rd

Tecumseh, MI 49286

Adrian fields:

U15 – Michener Elementary
104 Dawes Ave., Adrian, MI 49221

U12 – Heritage Park 3221 N. Adrian Hwy.
Adrian, MI 49221

Onsted

Onsted Community High School

10109 Slee Rd #10

Onsted Mi 49265

APPENDIX A

Birth year and season matrix

When determining the age group for a season, the year the season ends should be used for determining the birth year. Also, note that the format “U followed by age” really means that age and younger. For example, U8 should be read as 8 and younger.

Season	2016 – 2017	2017 – 2018	2018 – 2019	2019 – 2020	2020 – 2021	2021 – 2022	2022 – 2023	2023 – 2024	2024 – 2025
Birth Year									
2020									
2019									U6
2018								U6	U7
2017							U6	U7	U8
2016						U6	U7	U8	U9
2015					U6	U7	U8	U9	U10
2014				U6	U7	U8	U9	U10	U11
2013			U6	U7	U8	U9	U10	U11	U12
2012		U6	U7	U8	U9	U10	U11	U12	U13
2011	U6	U7	U8	U9	U10	U11	U12	U13	U14
2010	U7	U8	U9	U10	U11	U12	U13	U14	U15
2009	U8	U9	U10	U11	U12	U13	U14	U15	U16

2008	U9	U10	U11	U12	U13	U14	U15	U16	U17
2007	U10	U11	U12	U13	U14	U15	U16	U17	U18
2006	U11	U12	U13	U14	U15	U16	U17	U18	U19
2005	U12	U13	U14	U15	U16	U17	U18	U19	
2004	U13	U14	U15	U16	U17	U18	U19		
2003	U14	U15	U16	U17	U18	U19			
2002	U15	U16	U17	U18	U19				
2001	U16	U17	U18	U19					
2000	U17	U18	U19						
1999	U18	U19							