



## U8 Rules of the Game

### Ball:

Size 3. Home team provides game balls.

### Number of Players:

There are 4 players from each team on the field.

### Length of Game:

The game shall consist of Four 12-minute quarters. There will be a 5-minute break at half time and a two minute break in between each quarter..

### Equipment:

Shin guards are **MANDATORY**. Socks must be worn completely over the shin guards. Jerseys should be tucked in. Tennis shoes or soccer cleats may be worn. No baseball or football cleats, they have a toe cleat in the front that soccer cleats do not have. No jewelry or metal hair clips are permitted. Except for bracelets that are taped down. (this is allowed due to medical bracelets). If earrings and jewelry are not removed the player may not play.

### Field:

The field size is approximately 35-45 yards x 55-65 yards with small goals. The goals are centered on the goal lines or end lines. The sidelines are often referred to as the touch lines. Goal boxes in front of each goal shall be measured out at 6x12 yards with the goal centered.

### Sidelines:

All players, water bottles, spectators shall remain at least 3 yards from the sidelines at all times during the game. No spectators will be permitted along the goal lines or behind the goal. All players are to sit on one side of the field and monitored by assistant coach when not on the field. All parents/spectators are to sit on the opposite side of the field of the players.

### Coaches:

All coaches must take part in coaching. This includes completing training, and attend one coaches clinic a season. All Coaches will receive a copy of the rules and sign off each season that they agree to follow and enforce and follow all rules and regulations set forth by our league.

### Referees:

At this age group one coach from each team will act as referee during the game.

### Goalies:

No goalies at this age group

### Kick-Off:

Occurs to start off and after half time. Kick is taken from the center of the field and the ball must move forward. The kicker may not kick the ball again until it has touched another player. A goal may be scored on a kick-off. Defenders must remain 5 yards back until the ball is played. Players must be on their own side of the field during kick-offs. Teams can use coin toss to determine first possession. Teams are to alternate kicks from the center mark to start play at the beginning of each quarter or half. If a goal is scored, the team that was scored on takes the kick-off to resume play.

### Throw-ins:

Throw-ins are awarded at the point that the whole ball crosses the sideline. The throw-in motion starts from behind the head and proceeds straight over the top of the head with both hands on the side of the ball. Both feet must be in contact with the ground during this motion. If a throw-in is deemed incorrect, the player gets one additional try before the opposing team gets a throw-in at the same spot. A goal may be scored on a throw-in if any player, same or opposite team touches the ball before it enters the goal.

### Goal Kick:

A goal kick is awarded when the ball crosses the goal line and was touched last by the opposing team. The kick is taken from the edge of the penalty box. The kicker may not play the ball again until it has touched another player first. Defenders must be at midfield or on their side of the field until the ball has been played. A goal may be scored from a goal kick.

### Penalty Kick:

Awarded if a defensive player commits any of the major violations listed under direct free kicks in their own penalty area. All players, except the goalie and player taking the kick must remain outside the penalty area until the ball is played. The penalty kick is taken from 10 yards in front of the goal. The goalie must remain on the goal line until the ball is kicked. The kicker is not permitted to touch the ball a second time until another player has touched the ball.

**Substitution:**

The coach must request permission from the referee prior to making a substitution. A team can substitute at any stoppage of play with acceptance of the referee.

**Out of Bounds:**

The ball is out of play when it completely crosses the goal line or sideline – whether it is on the ground or air. The team gaining possession is responsible for getting the ball.

**Corner Kick:**

A corner kick is awarded when the ball has crossed the goal line and was last touched by a defensive player. A kick is taken from the corner on the side nearest to where the ball went out. The kicker may not touch the ball again unless the ball has touched another player.

**Direct Free Kick:**

All penalties are Indirect free kicks at U8 although these offense could require players to be taken out of the game for a period of time.

1. Tripping.
2. Pushing with hands or holding shirt of the opposite player.
3. Striking another player.
4. Spitting or making contact with an opponent without the ball

The kicker may not touch the ball again until it has touched another player. Defenders must stand 7 yards away. A goal may be scored from a direct free kick without requiring another player to touch the ball first.

**Indirect Free Kick:**

Awarded at the spot of the foul for the following:

1. Passing back to the GK with feet and GK picking up the ball.
2. Dangerous play (high kick).
3. Preventing the GK from releasing the ball
4. Delaying play by kicking the ball after the whistle is blown.
5. Preventing a throw in (standing in front is permitted, but jumping is NOT).
6. Obstruction (blocking access to the ball while not actively playing the ball).
7. Deliberate handball.

The kicker may not touch the ball again until it has touched another player. Defenders must stand 7 yards away. A goal may not be scored from an indirect kick unless the ball has touched another person first.

**Offside:**

No offsides are called at this age.

**The final score is never recorded and no league standings are kept. The emphasis is on learning the game and having FUN, not winning and losing.**

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**Defensive Line:**

Discourage defender withdrawn from the game waiting in the back. Impose that all players must come forward close to midfield when the ball is played on the opposite side of the field.

**Slide Tackling:**

No slide tackling is allowed at this age group. It will result in a indirect free kick for the other team if it is done.

**Playing Time:**

Each player must be allowed play at least 50% of the total playing time.

**Sportsmanship:**

Coaches are responsible for the conduct of their assistant coaches, players and spectators at all times. No coach, player or spectator shall yell at the referee, opposing coach, players or fans. No coaches or fans shall run up and down the sidelines during the game. The coach shall have all players ready to be checked in by the referees before the scheduled game time. After the game is complete, players and coaches will line up and shake hands with the opposing team and referees along the centerline.

**Method of scoring:**

Goals are defined as when the ball completely crossed the goal line, between the goal posts and below the crossbar.  
\*Unless a foul has been committed by either side during the score.

**Heading the Ball:**

-All players 10 years and under shall not head the ball directly from the air in any competition. Nor can they practice heading the ball in any team setting. If a player 10 or under deliberately heads the ball in a match, then an indirect free kick to the opposing team shall be awarded at the spot of infraction.

**Proof of Age**

Proof of age shall be presented to league at sign up and consist of a birth certificate from a state agency or the child will not be permitted to play.

**Practicing during games:**

Absolutely no practices are to be held before a game. Only warmups are permitted, and include dribbling, passing, and stretches.