



Recreational Youth Soccer Development League (RYS DL) League Rules & Procedures

RYS DL RULES OF THE GAME

Game will be played according to [FIFA LAWS OF THE GAME](#) with the following modifications and clarifications:

Law 1: The Field of Play

Dimensions

The length of the field must always exceed the width:

- 1st/2nd Grade:(5v5): Length: 40 yards, Width: 25 yards, (Recommended: 40 x 25 yards)
- 3rd/4th Grade: (7v7): Length: 55-65 yards, Width: 35-45 yards, (Recommended: 65 x 45 yards)
- 5th/6th Grade: (9v9): Length: 70-80 yards, Width: 45-55 yards, (Recommended: 80 x 55 yards)

Goals

Both goals must be identical in size:

- 1st/2nd Grade: 6' x 12' or 6.5' x 12'
- 3rd/4th Grade: 6' x 18' or 6.5' x 18.5'
- 5th/6th Grade: 7' x 21' recommended (6' x 18' or 6.5' x 18.5' allowed with waiver)

Technical Area

Coaches must only coach from their own technical area generally bordered by the touchline, the midline, and the penalty box. Coaches may not:

- cross the midpoint into the opposing team's technical area
 - enter the field of play unless invited by the referee (e.g., injured player)
 - coach alongside the penalty box that surrounds the goal
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Law 2: The Ball

Ball Size

- 1st/2nd Grade: Size 4 ball
 - 3rd/4th Grade: Size 4 ball
 - 5th/6th Grade: Size 4 ball
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Law 3: The Players

Eligible Players

- Players and Club Pass Players must be registered with their club.
- Players and Club Pass Players must be enrolled in the correct grade or younger for their age group
- Age group exemption requests may be submitted to the League Administrator to be reviewed and approved or declined by the League Executive Committee.
- Playing ineligible players may result in sanctions, including:
 - Game forfeiture
 - Coach, Player, Spectator, Club may be suspended from one game or up to end of season
 - Other disciplinary actions deemed by the Rules & Disciplinary Committee

Team Size

- No maximum roster size.
- However, when rostering a team, clubs should take into consideration fairness and playing time.
- It is the aim of the league that all players play at least half the game.

Roster Requirements

- Each team must have a distinct roster. See ***RYSDL Roster Template*** posted on league website.
- Players may only be rostered to one team.
- Teams must have an electronic or printed roster at all games.
- Opponents may request roster verification before or after a match.
- Failure to show a roster is grounds for a forfeit review.

Players on the Field

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|------------------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| • 1st/2nd Grade (5v5): | 4 field players | + 1 goalkeeper | (Minimum to start: 4) |
| • 3rd/4th Grade (7v7): | 6 field players | + 1 goalkeeper | (Minimum to start: 5) |
| • 5th/6th Grade (9v9): | 8 field players | + 1 goalkeeper | (Minimum to start: 6) |

Substitutions

- Unlimited substitutions allowed at stoppages with referee approval, regardless of possession.
- A substitute can only enter the field at the halfway line and after receiving a signal from the referee.
- Players entering at a penalty kick stoppage may not take the penalty kick.

Club Pass Players

- If playing Club Pass Players, teams must adhere to additional eligibility and roster requirements, match limitations, and game day procedures. See ***Procedures: Club Pass Players***.
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Recreational Youth Soccer Development League (RYS DL) League Rules & Procedures

Law 4: The Players' Equipment

Safety

- Players must not wear jewelry, sharp accessories, or unapproved medical devices.
- Casts, braces, or other medical accessories are allowed under the following conditions:
 - Securely attached and adequately padded.
 - Not used to gain an unfair advantage.
- Pre-Game Approval & Adjustments:
 - Team with a player wearing medical accessories must approach the opposing coach and referee during warm-up for approval.
 - Both coaches and referee must approve medical accessories before the match.
 - Players should have extra padding, tape, or securing materials for adjustments.
- In-Game Adjustments:
 - If padding or securing material becomes loose or unsafe during play, the player must leave the field until it is corrected.
- Gaining an Unfair Advantage:
 - If a player misuses a medical device, the referee will issue a warning.
 - Continued misuse may result in removal from the game.

Compulsory Equipment

- Players must wear a jersey, shorts, socks, shin guards, and appropriate footwear. Metal stud cleats are prohibited. See **Procedures: Uniforms** for clarification of jersey requirements.
- Socks must fully cover shin guards.

Colors

- The Home Team will wear light colors; Away Team will wear dark colors.
 - The Home Team must change jerseys in case of a color conflict.
 - Teams should have an alternate jersey or similar color shirts available.
 - See **Procedures: Uniforms** for clarification of jersey requirements.
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Recreational Youth Soccer Development League (RYS DL) League Rules & Procedures

Law 5: The Referee & Law 6: The Other Match Officials

Number of Assigned Referees

- 1st/2nd Grade (5v5): Center referee only
- 3rd/4th Grade (7v7): Center referee only, club linesmen optional
- 5th/6th Grade (9v9): Center referee only, club linesmen optional

What To Do When There Is No Referee

If a referee is absent, teams are encouraged to find a solution to avoid game cancellations.

- **Alternative officiating options:**
 - A parent or spectator may referee.
 - One or both coaches may referee.
 - Coaches may act as referees from the sideline.
 - A parent, spectator, or coach may act as a linesmen.
- **Club Linesmen Limitations:**
 - Club linesmen may only call the ball in or out of play.
 - Club linesmen may not make other calls, including offsides or fouls.
- **Game Results and Complaints:**
 - Once an agreement is reached, the game result stands and cannot be contested.
 - Calls made during the match cannot be used as grounds for complaints to the league.
- **Respect for Volunteer Referees:**
 - Any individual stepping in as a referee should be treated with respect and appreciation.
 - Referee abuse (verbal or physical) will result in strict sanctions.
 - Volunteer referees should report any abuse to their Club Representative immediately.
- **Reporting of No Referee:**
 - Report on the referee absence via the **Game Report** posted on the League website.

Law 7: Duration of the Match

Periods of Play

- 1st/2nd Grade: 2 x 20 minute halves | 5-minute halftime
 - 3rd/4th Grade: 2 x 25-minute halves | 5-minute halftime
 - 5th/6th Grade: 2 x 30-minute halves | 5-minute halftime
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Recreational Youth Soccer Development League (RYS DL) League Rules & Procedures

Law 8: The Start and Restart of Play

Follow standard FIFA rules.

Law 9: The Ball In and Out of Play

Follow standard FIFA rules.

Law 10: Determining the Outcome of a Match

Unbalanced Score Rule (All Age Levels)

- If a team leads by 5 goals, the opposing team may add one extra player.
 - If lead increases to 6 goals, the opposing team may add another player (total of 2 extra players).
 - If lead reaches 7 goals, the opposing team may add another player (total of 3 extra players).
 - Additional players remain on the field until the goal differential is reduced to 3.
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Law 11: Offsides (& Build-Out Line, Punting)

Offsides

- **1st/2nd Grade:** No offsides, except for blatant offside abuse as deemed by referee
- **3rd/4th Grade:** See Build-Out Line
- **5th/6th Grade:** Follow standard FIFA rules.

Build-Out Line (1st/2nd & 3rd/4th Grades)

- A Build-Out Line will be established midway between the penalty area and the halfway line.
- The Build-Out Line should be painted or marked by cones placed just outside the sideline.
- The Build-Out Line defines where offside will be called (for 3rd/4th Grade)
- Defenders must retreat beyond the Build-Out Line:
 - When the opposing team is awarded a goal kick.
 - When the goalkeeper comes into possession of the ball.
- Defending players may advance once the ball is put back into play.

Punting (1st/2nd & 3rd/4th Grades)

- Goalkeepers may not punt or drop-kick the ball.
 - All other methods of putting the ball into play are permitted.
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Recreational Youth Soccer Development League (RYS DL) League Rules & Procedures

Law 12: Fouls and Misconduct

No Heading Rule (all ages)

- Heading is not allowed to promote player safety and proper skill development.
- If the ball makes contact with a player's head, play is stopped.
 - Deliberate heading: Restart with an Indirect free kick for the opposing team. If the infraction occurs in the penalty area, the free kick is taken from the goal area line nearest to the infraction.
- Inadvertent heading: Restart with a dropped ball.

No Slide Tackles Rule (all ages)

- Slide tackling is not allowed to promote player safety and proper skill development.
 - Players must remain on their feet when challenging for the ball against an opponent.
 - A player who goes to ground in a challenge involving an opponent will be penalized.
 - Restart with a **direct free kick** for the opposing team.
 - Referees may issue warnings or further disciplinary action for repeated or unsafe play.
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Law 13: Free Kicks

- **1st/2nd Grade: All free kicks are indirect.** Opponents must stand 6 yards away.
 - **3rd/4th Grade & 5th/6th Grade:** Follow standard FIFA rules.
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Law 14: Penalty Kicks

- **1st/2nd Grade: No penalty kicks** allowed; take indirect free kick outside of penalty area.
 - **3rd/4th Grade & 5th/6th Grade:** Follow standard FIFA penalty rules.
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Law 15: The Throw-in

Throw-ins

- **1st/2nd Grade:** In the event of a throw-in, a second attempt will be preceded by a referee teaching moment on proper throw-ins. If second attempt is also in error, play will continue without a change in possession.
 - **3rd/4th Grade:** In the event of a foul throw-in, a second attempt shall be given to the same player. If the second attempt is also a foul throw, possession is awarded to the opposing team.
 - **5th/6th Grade:** Follow standard FIFA rules.
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Recreational Youth Soccer Development League (RYSDDL) League Rules & Procedures

RYSDDL PROCEDURES

The League will be managed following these procedures.

League Code of Conduct

- RYSDDL will enforce MSYSA's Behavior Expectation Policy and MSYSA's Code of Conduct.
 - Any action deemed contrary to the League Code of Conduct may result in league sanctions as determined by the Rules & Disciplinary Committee. See ***Procedures: Guidance and Enforcement Committees*** for more information.
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Guidance and Enforcement Committees

The League will form two voluntary committees to guide the direction, conflict resolution, and discipline for the league. Committee membership is open to all Club Representatives.

RYSDDL Executive Committee

- Comprised of one representative from each Club in the League.
- Clubs must be in good standing with the League for inclusion on committee.
- All Club Representatives are invited to participate via the Club Enrollment form.
- Works with the League Administration on any changes to Rules & Procedures, league operations, acceptance of new Clubs, and future direction of league.

RYSDDL Rules & Disciplinary Committee

- In accordance with the League Rules & Procedures, this committee monitors and adjudicates league violations, including Red Cards and Sit-Outs, any action deemed contrary to the League Code of Conduct, and other violations.
 - One Club Representative from each Club is invited to participate via the Club Enrollment form posted on the League website.
 - Representative from the club in violation will be excused from the review of the violation.
 - Clubs must be in good standing with the League for inclusion on committee.
 - The league will give clubs the first opportunity to act when informed of a violation, but it reserves the right to impose additional sanctions if necessary, including:
 - Game forfeiture
 - Coach, Player, Spectator, Club suspension of one game to end of season
 - Other disciplinary actions deemed by the Rules & Disciplinary Committee
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Recreational Youth Soccer Development League (RYS DL) League Rules & Procedures

Uniforms

- A “Jersey” is defined as any shirt or pinnie of similar color (even if colors vary in shade/hue) worn by all team players on the field.
 - Jerseys can have varying designs, pictures, slogans, etc.
 - Jerseys do not require numbers.
 - Teams are encouraged to coordinate an alternate jersey color.
 - In case of jersey color conflict, the Home Team must change jerseys.
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Roster Requirements

- Minimum team roster requirements (electronic and/or printed):
 - Player Last Name
 - Player First Name
 - Player’s Birthdate
 - Current Grade
 - Parent’s Full Name
 - League Verification Statement confirming club verification of roster eligibility: “This roster has been provided by and verified by the club for this team. If challenged, the club must provide further proof of a player(s) being properly rostered. This can include, but is not limited to, any official school document from the current school year indicating the school grade of the player.”
 - Use ***RYS DL Roster Template*** posted on the League website or other format that meets minimum requirements.
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Field Permits

- All clubs must have a field permit for each age group enrolled in the league.
 - Clubs must submit field permits to League by season deadlines or risk having no home games via the Home Field Permit Link posted on the League website.
 - Clubs must submit reasonable field usage times taking considering sunset, lights, access, etc.
 - Reminder: Games will not be scheduled before noon on Sundays (with Flex Scheduling exemptions)
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Pre-Game Procedures

- The Home Team should contact the Away Team before the game to:
 - Confirm jersey colors to avoid jersey color conflict
 - Provide field-specific details (directions, bathrooms, parking, etc.).
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Recreational Youth Soccer Development League (RYS DL) League Rules & Procedures

Game Day Procedures

- Check **Live Field Closure Listing** posted on the league website for any field closures.
 - Home Team ensures field setup (goals, corner flags, lines).
 - Both teams check in with the referee before kickoff to review League Rules provided on summary **Game Day Clipboards** posted on the League website, including:
 - Length of game
 - Number of field players
 - Unbalanced Score Rule
 - 1st/2nd & 3rd/4th Grade specific rules
 - Coaches must inform referees and opponents of any medical accessories (casts, braces, padding).
 - Coaches must inform opponents of Club Pass Players.
 - Home Teams must resolve any jersey color conflict.
 - Spectators must remain opposite the team benches and at least 3 yards from the sideline.
 - No spectators or team personnel are allowed beyond the penalty box line.
 - Teams must vacate the field promptly after the match.
 - A **Game Report** is submitted. See **Procedures: Game Reporting**.
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Game Reporting

- Both teams submit a **Game Report** no later than Sunday.
 - Additionally, when:
 - **Game halted before halftime**, both coaches submit **Incomplete Game Report** posted on the League website. See **Procedures: Incomplete Game Reporting**.
 - **Red Card is issued**, coach of red carded team submit **Red Card Report & Sit-Out Report** posted on the League website. See **Procedures: Red Card Sit-outs** for next steps.
 - **Red Card Sit-Out is completed**, coach of opposing team of the sit-out player/coach verifies sit-out via the same **Red Card Report & Sit-Out Report**. See **Procedures: Red Card Sit-outs**.
 - All **Game Report** Forms are posted on the League website.
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Incomplete Game Reporting

Games stopped **at or after halftime**:

- Score at stoppage time is recorded as final.
- Any sit-outs served during the game are considered complete.

Games stopped **before halftime**:

- Incomplete games must be reported to the league via the **RYS DL Incomplete Game Report** posted on the League website.
 - Games will be rescheduled and replayed in full.
 - Any sit-out being served during the incomplete game is still owed in the next game, not necessarily in the replay of this game.
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Recreational Youth Soccer Development League (RYS DL) League Rules & Procedures

Red Card Sit-Outs

- A player or coach receiving 1 Red Card or 2 Yellow Cards for the same player/coach in the same game will be required to sit-out the next upcoming game.
 - Coach of team with the Red Card or 2 Yellow Cards for the same player in the same game will report the Card to the league via ***RYS DL Red Card Report & Sit-Out Report*** posted on the League website.
 - That coach will forward the resulting email to the opposing coach of the next upcoming game where the Sit-Out will be served, asking the opposing coach to act as the observer of the Sit-Out being served.
 - Sit-out will occur. Player or coach does not need to be present to serve the sit-out.
 - The observer will report the sit-out verification to the league via the ***RYS DL Red Card Report & Sit-Out Report*** posted on the League website.
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Field Closures

League Notification

- Clubs must notify the league at least 2.5 hours before the first scheduled game or by 10:00 AM, whichever is earlier.
- Field closures are determined at the club level and must be submitted via the ***Club Administration: Field Closure Report*** link on the league website. Link is password protected.
- The league administrator will update the website accordingly.

Team Notification

- Home clubs must inform affected Home Teams and opponents.
 - Teams can also monitor the ***Live Field Closure Listing*** on the league website.
 - Field closures are determined at the club level, not by individual teams.
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Lightning Safety

- If lightning is seen, the field must be cleared immediately.
 - Within 5 minutes of hearing thunder, teams must determine the proximity of lightning.
 - If lightning is within 10 miles, play is suspended for 30 minutes after the last strike.
 - Games will not be restarted in case other games are scheduled on the field later that day.
 - If the game is halted before halftime, both coaches will submit a ***RYS DL Incomplete Game Report***. See ***Procedures: Incomplete Game Reporting***.
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Recreational Youth Soccer Development League (RYS DL) League Rules & Procedures

Auto-Rescheduling

- **Games will be automatically rescheduled for:**
 - Field closures
 - Weather interruptions
 - **Auto-scheduling protocol**
 - The next available date for both teams, typically a Sunday.
 - At the Home Team's field unless unavailable, then scheduled at Away Team's field.
 - **Auto-Communication:**
 - Auto-generated email will be sent with new game information.
 - Do not reply to this one-way communication.
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Flex Rescheduling

Rescheduling games after publication of the league schedule is discouraged due to its impact on multiple teams and referee availability. When requesting a rescheduled game, be mindful of game block coverage by referees to minimize impacts to referee coverage for your game and other games.

- Requests to reschedule games not automatically approved,
- Team is not obligated to agree to change or provide a reason to refuse.
- After review, League may require adjustments to manage referee coverage.
- When registering team for League, list blackout dates to avoid need for flex rescheduling later.

Deadlines

- Rescheduling requests must be submitted by the following deadlines for **Spring 2026**:
 - by **3/25/26** for April games (opening weekend games cannot be rescheduled)
 - by **4/1/26** for May games
- Flex Scheduling requests following a Field Closure or Weather Cancellation must be emailed to the League Administrator by 5pm on Tuesday following the auto-rescheduling of the cancelled game.

Game Change Request Process

- Reschedules start with Home Team Club to ensure home field availability.
 - If Home Team is requesting reschedule, work first work with your Club Rep.
 - If Away Team is requesting reschedule
 - contact Home Team to determine willingness.
 - If willing, Home Team contacts Home Team Club Rep for field availability.
 - Both teams must agree on the date, time, and location by email
 - Home Team Club Rep emails change request to League, including:
 - Copy both Teams on the email
 - Game number
 - Current game date, time, field
 - Requested game date, time, field
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Recreational Youth Soccer Development League (RYS DL) League Rules & Procedures

Club Pass Players

Intent and Fair Play

- The Club Pass rule is designed to support player development and prevent forfeits, not to give teams an unfair advantage.
- Clubs and teams found misusing the rule to stack teams may face sanctions, including restrictions on future Club Pass usage.

Eligibility

- Players may play for another team within their club if they:
 - Are of the appropriate age group or younger.
 - Do not miss their originally rostered team's game to play as a Club Pass player.
 - Participate in no more than two games per day.

Match Limitations

- While league roster sizes are unlimited, teams using Club Pass Players must not exceed United States Youth Soccer (USYS) game-day roster limits:
 - 5v5: Maximum 10 players
 - 7v7: Maximum 12 players
 - 9v9: Maximum 16 players

Verification & Roster

- Club Pass players must be announced at the pre-game meeting between head coaches.
- Coaches must provide a hard copy or electronic copy of the Club Pass player's originating roster upon request.
- Failure to present a roster upon request may result in a forfeit review.
- If a team refuses to show a roster when requested, this should be reported to the league administrator, including game details and teams involved.

Penalties for Violations

- Teams and clubs found misusing Club Pass Players may be sanctioned by the Rules & Disciplinary Committee, including:
 - Limiting the number of Club Pass Players allowed
 - Suspending the use of Club Pass Players
 - Game forfeiture
 - Coach or player suspensions
 - Other more stringent actions as determined by the Rules & Disciplinary Committee. See ***Procedures: Guidance and Enforcement Committees*** for more information.
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