



## URSL-MD RULES OF THE GAME

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

### Law 1: The Field of Play

#### Dimensions

The length of the field must always exceed the width:

- 3rd/4th Grade (7v7): Width: 30-45 yards, Length: 45-75 yards (Recommended: 40 x 60 yards)
- 5th/6th Grade (9v9): Width: 45-55 yards, Length: 75-85 yards (Recommended: 50 x 80 yards)
- 7th/8th Grade & Older (11v11): Width: 50-80 yards, Length: 100-130 yards (Recommended: 65 x 100 yards)
- 7th/8th Grade & Older (7v7): See 5th/6th Grade dimensions

#### Goals

Both goals must be identical in size:

- 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)
- 7th/8th Grade & High School (11v11): 8' x 24'
- 7th/8th Grade & High School (7v7): 7' x 21' recommended, (8' x 24' allowed)

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### Law 2: The Ball

#### Ball Size

- 3rd/4th & 5th/6th Grades: Size 4
  - 7th/8th Grade & Older: Size 5
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## United Recreational Soccer League of Maryland (URSL-MD)

### Rules & Procedures

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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 for their age group or younger.
- **Playing ineligible players may result in sanctions, including:**
  - **Game forfeiture**
  - **Coach suspension**
  - **Player suspension**
  - **Additional disciplinary actions determined 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 games.

### Roster Requirements

- Each team must have a **distinct roster** (*URSL-MD League Roster Template available online*).
- 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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|--------------------------|------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| • 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) |
| • 7th/8th Grade (7v7):   | 6 field players  | + 1 goalkeeper | (Minimum to start: 5) |
| • 7th/8th Grade (11v11): | 10 field players | + 1 goalkeeper | (Minimum to start: 7) |
| • High School (7v7):     | 6 field players  | + 1 goalkeeper | (Minimum to start: 5) |
| • High School (11v11):   | 10 field players | + 1 goalkeeper | (Minimum to start: 7) |

### Substitutions

- **Unlimited substitutions** allowed at stoppages with **referee approval**, regardless of possession.
- 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, roster, match limitations, game day procedures, (see Procedures: Club Pass Players)**.



## Law 4: The Players' Equipment

### Safety

- Play 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 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.** (See *Procedures: Uniforms* for clarification of jersey requirements)
- **Socks must fully cover shin guards.**

### 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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## Law 5: The Referee

### Number of Assigned Referees

- 3rd/4th Grade (7v7): Center referee only, club linesmen optional
- 5th/6th Grade (9v9): Center referee only, club linesmen optional
- 7th/8th Grade (7v7): Center referee only, club linesmen optional
- 7th/8th Grade (11v11): Center referee & two assistant referees
- High School (7v7): Center referee only, club linesmen optional
- High School (11v11): Center referee & two assistant referees

### 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 absentee referees **via the *URSL-MD Absent Referee Report***.
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## Law 7: Duration of the Match

### Periods of Play

- 3rd/4th Grade: 2 x 25-minute halves | 5-minute halftime
- 5th/6th Grade: 2 x 30-minute halves | 5-minute halftime
- 7th/8th Grade: 2 x 35-minute halves | 5-minute halftime
- High School: 2 x 35-minute halves | 5-minute halftime



## 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 the lead increases to **6 goals**, the opposing team may add **another player (total of 2 extra players)**.
  - If the 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: Offside

### Build-Out Line & Punting (3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Grade)

- 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**.
  - **Defenders must retreat** beyond the build-out line:
    - When 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**.
  - Goalkeepers **may not punt or drop-kick the ball**.
  - All other methods of putting the ball into play are permitted.
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## Law 12: Fouls and Misconduct

### No Heading Rule (3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Grades Only)

- If the ball **strikes 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.
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## Law 15: The Throw-in

### Adapted Throw-ins (3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Grade Only)

- 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.



## URSL-MD Procedures

League will be managed following these 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 ***URSL-MD League Roster Template*** posted on the League website.
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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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## United Recreational Soccer League of Maryland (URSL-MD)

### Rules & Procedures

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#### Game Day Procedures

- **Home Teams ensure field setup** (goals, corner flags, lines).
  - Both teams **check in with the referee** before kickoff to review League Rules provided on summary ***Game Day Clipboard*** found online, including:
    - Length of game
    - Number of field players
    - Unbalanced score rule
    - 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Grade specific rules
  - Coaches must inform referees and opponents of:
    - **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 behind the goal line** unless the space allows them to be **15 yards beyond the goal.**
  - **Teams must vacate the field promptly after the match.**
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#### Game Reporting Procedures

- **Winning team (or Home Team in case of a draw) reports the score.**
  - **Coach of team with Red Carded player or coach will report the card to the league via the *URSL-MD Red Card Report & Sit-Out Report*.**
  - **Coach of opposing team of a sit-out player or coach will verify the sit-out for the league via the same *URSL-MD Red Card Report & Sit-Out Report*.**
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#### Red Card & 2 Yellow Cards 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 the 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 ***URSL-MD Red Card Report & Sit-Out Report*** found online.
- 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 ***URSL-MD Red Card Report & Sit-Out Report*** found online.



## United Recreational Soccer League of Maryland (URSL-MD)

### Rules & Procedures

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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 Rep Field Closure Notice*** link on the league website.
- The league administrator will update the website accordingly.

##### Team Notification:

- Home clubs must inform affected Home Teams and opponents.
  - 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.
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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 game must be reported to the league via the ***URSL-MD Incomplete Game Report*** form found online.
  - Game will be rescheduled and replayed in full.
    - Any sit-outs 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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## United Recreational Soccer League of Maryland (URSL-MD)

### Rules & Procedures

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#### 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, and then schedule 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 10 days before the first day of the next calendar month (April 20 for Spring, September 20 for Fall).
- Flex Scheduling requests following a Field Closure or Weather Cancellation must be emailed to the League Administrator by 5pm on the 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 team is Home Team, work first with your Club Rep
    - If team is Away Team
      - 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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## United Recreational Soccer League of Maryland (URSL-MD)

### 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:
  - **7v7: Maximum 12 players.**
  - **9v9: Maximum 16 players.**
  - **11v11: Maximum 18 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, 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.**



## United Recreational Soccer League of Maryland (URSL-MD)

### Rules & Procedures

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#### Enforcement of the Codes of Conduct

- Any action **deemed contrary to the League Code of Conduct** may result in **league sanctions**.
  - URSL-MD will use the MSYSA
  - Possible sanctions include:
    - **Suspensions for players, coaches, or spectators.**
    - **Game forfeiture.**
    - **Club disciplinary action** as determined by the **Rules & Disciplinary 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.
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