

Official Under 8 Playing Guidelines

Black Swamp Soccer League/US Youth Soccer modifications to the FIFA Laws of the Game.

Effective beginning Spring 2011 Season

Roster size: Min 5 – Max 8 players

Law 1 – The Field of Play

Dimensions: The field of play must be rectangular. The length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line.

Length: minimum 25 yards maximum 35 yards

Width: minimum 20 yards maximum 30 yards

Field Markings: Distinctive lines not more than (5) inches wide. The field of play is divided into two halves by a halfway line. The center mark is indicated at the midpoint of the halfway line. The center mark is indicated at the midpoint of the halfway line. A circle with a radius of six (6) yards is marked around it.

The Goal Area: A goal area is defined at each end of the field as follows: Two lines are drawn at right angles to the goal line **three (3) yards** from the inside each goalpost. These lines extend into the field of play for a distance of **three (3) yards** and are joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line. The area bounded by these lines and the goal line is the goal area.

The Penalty Area: A penalty area is defined at each end of the field as follows: Two lines are drawn at right angles to the goal line, **six (6) yards** from the inside of each goalpost. These lines extend into the field of play for a distance of six **(6) yards** and are joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line. The area bounded by these lines and the goal line is the penalty area.

Flagposts: optional

The Corner Arc: Conform to FIFA.

Goals: Goals must be placed on the center of each goal line. They consist of two upright posts equidistant from the corners and joined at the top by a horizontal crossbar. The recommended distance between the posts is twenty-one (21) feet and the distance from the lower edge of the crossbar to the ground is seven (7) feet. Goals may be smaller in dimension.

Safety: Goals must be anchored securely to the ground. Portable goals may only be used if they satisfy this requirement.

Law 2 – The Ball: Size three (3).

Law 3 – The Number of Players: A match is played by two teams, each consisting of not more than five players. One of those players being a goalkeeper.

Substitutions: At any stoppage and unlimited by both teams at the referee's discretion.

Playing time: Each player SHALL play a minimum of 50% of the total playing time.

Law 4 – The Players' Equipment: Conform to FIFA. Non-uniform clothing is allowed based on weather conditions, but uniforms must still distinguish teams.

Law 5 – The Referee: Registered referee, especially Grade 9 or parent/coach or assistant coach. All rule infringements shall be briefly explained to the offending player.

Law 6 – The Assistant Referees: None.

Law 7 – The Duration of the Match: Conform to FIFA with the exception of the match being divided into two (2) equal halves of twenty (20) minutes each. There shall be a half-time interval of five (5) minutes.

Law 8 – The Start and Restart of Play: Conform to FIFA, **with the exception** of the opponents of the team taking the kick-off are at least four (4) yards from the ball until it is in play.

Law 9 – The Ball In and Out of Play: Conform to FIFA.

Law 10 – The Method of Scoring: Conform to FIFA.

Law 11 – Offside: None.

Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct: Conform to FIFA **with the exception that all fouls shall result in a direct free kick.** The referee/coach/parent must explain ALL infringements to the offending player. No cards shown for misconduct. A goalie may not pick up a deliberately kicked or thrown ball to them by a teammate (conform to FIFA)(**This will result in an indirect free kick for the opponent.**).

Law 13 – Free Kicks: Conform to FIFA **with the exceptions that all kicks are direct** and all opponents are at least four (4) yards from the ball until it is in play.

Law 14 – The Penalty Kick: None.

Law 15 – The Throw-In: Conform to FIFA with the exception that an improperly performed throw-in can be retaken once.

Law 16 – The Goal Kick: Conform to FIFA **with the exception that opponents must remain outside the goal area and at least four (4) yards from the ball until it is in play.**

Law 17 – The Corner Kick: Conform to FIFA **with the exception that opponents remain at least four (4) yards from the ball until it is in play.**

BSSL Rule -- Goalie – All goalies when handling the ball **MUST** throw the ball, not kick it. If the ball is kicked, the goalie shall reaccomplish with a throw.

BSSL Rule – When a start or restart occurs at the center mark, the ball must leave the center circle before a shot on goal may be attempted. Restart shall be a goal kick for the opposing team if the ball enters the goal.

Cherry picking in BSSL games is strongly discouraged. Cherry picking is defined as a player hanging out around their opponent's goal area when the ball is being played on the other end of the field, as determined by the referee. If someone is coaching a player to cherry pick they will be warned a max of two times to stop. The third time the coach may be ejected from the match. Offside is not enforced in U8/U10 but it is not in the spirit of the game to cherry pick.