




2017 NWISL Official Under 12 Rules

The enclosed rules and requirements are based upon modifications to the SAY SOCCER PLAYING LAWS 2015 2nd Edition Revised 1-28-17 and NWISL requirements. These rules are subject to change by NWISL. 

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: 75min. to 80max. yds. Width: 55min. to 60max. yds.

Field Markings: Distinctive lines not more than 4 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. A circle with a radius of eight (8) yards is marked around it. Spectator and Team benches should be on opposite sides of the field.

The Goal Area: The goal area is defined at each end of the field as follows: Two lines are drawn at right angles to the goal line 4 yards from the inside of each goalpost. These lines extend into the field of play for a distance of 4 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: The penalty area is defined at each end of the field as follows: Two lines are drawn at right angles to the goal line 14 yards from the inside of each goalpost. These lines extend into the field of play for a distance of 14 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. Within each penalty area a penalty mark is made 10 yards from the midpoint between the goalposts and equidistant to them. An arc of a circle with a radius of eight (8) yards from each penalty mark is drawn outside the penalty area.

Flag Posts: Conform to SAY with minimum standard being at each corner of the field.

The Corner Arc: Conform to SAY – 3-foot arc on each corner.

Goals: Goals must be placed on the center of each goal line, consisting of two upright posts equidistant from the corner flag posts and joined at the top a horizontal crossbar. The distance between the posts is minimum 18 feet, maximum 21 feet and the distance from the lower edge of the crossbar to the ground is minimum 6 ½ feet, maximum 7 feet.

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

Law 2 – The Ball

The ball used at this age group is size (4) four.

Law 3 – Players

The Number of Players: Two teams play a match, each fielding not more than eight (8) players, one of whom is the goalkeeper. The minimum roster size shall be eight (8) and the maximum roster size shall be fourteen (14). The teams are not required to play even sided. (revised 2-12-15)

Teams and matches may be coed. Any team that roster all girls must be declared a “Girls” team. Any team that roster all boys or coed must be declared as “Boys” team. The minimum number of players per team required to start a match is five (5).

Substitutions: Unlimited with referee permission, at any stoppage of play, except corner kicks and free kicks.

Playing Time: Each player shall play a minimum of fifty percent (50%) of the total playing time.

Law 4 – Players' Equipment: Conform to SAY. Non-uniform clothing is allowed under uniforms based on weather conditions, but uniforms must still distinguish teams. Referees are required to determine the safety of non-uniform clothing and can require removal of such items. Revised 2-02-17

Law 5 Referee: A USSF or SAY Licensed Referee shall be assigned to each game. In the event the assigned Referee does not show, a parent, coach, or assistant may be utilized. Revised 2-02-17

Law 6 Assistant Referees: (2) USSF or SAY Licensed Referee shall be assigned as linesman for each game. In the event (1) or both of the assigned linesmen do not show, the center Referee may use club linesman. Revised 2-2-2017

Law 7 – The Duration of the Match: The match shall be divided into two (2) equal halves of thirty (30) minutes each. There shall be a half time interval of five (5) minutes.

Law 8 – The Start and Restart of Play: Conform to SAY with the exception of the opponents of the team taking the kick shall be at least eight (8) yards from the ball.

Law 9 – The Ball in and out of Play: Conform to SAY

Law 10 - The Method of Scoring: Conform to SAY

Law 11 – Offside: Conform to SAY

Law 12 Fouls and Misconduct: Conform to SAY with youth modifications

A: A deliberate heading of the ball shall not allowed in this age group (penalty for infraction is indirect free kick). Revised 7-09-16

Law 13 Free Kick: Conform to SAY with the exception that all opponents are at least eight (8) yards from the ball.

Law 14 Penalty Kick: Conform to SAY with the exception that all players are at least eight (8) yards from the ball outside the penalty area.

Law 15 Throw-In: Conform to SAY

Law 16 Goal Kick: Conform to SAY

Law 17 Corner Kick: Conform to SAY with the exception that all opponents remain at least eight (8) yards from the ball until it is in play.