

Are You New to AYSO?

INTRODUCTION

This page provides a short introduction to AYSO in Encino, CA. Much more detailed information about our program is contained all over this website, but we thought parents would find it helpful if we summarized, in a few paragraphs, what AYSO is about.

AYSO PRINCIPLES

AYSO was founded on five six principles which affect every aspect our program. They are:

- Everyone Plays!
- Open Registration
- Balanced Teams
- Positive Coaching
- Good Sportsmanship
- Player Development

"Positive coaching" and "good sportsmanship" speak for themselves, but the first three need some explanation:

"Everyone Plays" means that every player on every team must receive a guaranteed amount of playing time. The national minimum is half the game, but in our region we require a minimum of three quarters, with some exceptions.

"Open Registration" means that we accept every player who registers provided we have space in the relevant age group. Although we evaluate players, the only reason we do this is to assure Balanced Teams by assigning players to teams that we strive to make as even as we can.

"Balanced Teams" are not so important when the children are 4, 5, 6 and 7, but once they reach the age of 8 years old, they are playing on larger teams and fields and balance becomes critical. The result is that, at this age, we generally do not grant or even consider requests for players to play together or to be assigned to a particular coach. Teams are put together fresh every year, teams do not continue on from one year to the next.

"Player Development" means that we emphasize development of age-appropriate technical and tactical skills and pure love of the game rather than winning at all costs. We want our players to improve through practice and opportunity to learn from committed coaches whose primary goal is to help players to get better.

TEAM FORMATION

We make up our teams fresh each year and we try our best to balance them, especially once the play moves to larger fields in 10u. Please read our page on this for more detailed information

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

At the regional level, AYSO is an all-volunteer program. All of our coaches, team administrators, program administrators – everyone is a volunteer. Unlike Little League or basketball, we do not pay referees – they too are volunteers.

Participation in AYSO cannot be made conditional on your volunteering but, unless nearly everyone volunteers to do something, we would not be able to function.

We offer extensive training programs for all our volunteers, especially coaches and referees.

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VOLUNTEER PROGRAM (Continues)

Our policy since 2004 will be to require teams to provide at least two volunteers to train and participate as referees. Your child's team may be ineligible for the elimination stage of our playoffs if your team does not provide referees to the program.

TEAMS, GAMES AND PRACTICES

Teams are divided into groupings by age called divisions. The youngest divisions span on year and the other divisions span two years; except the oldest division, 19u which spans three years.

Age is determined on December 31. A player must be at least 4 years old on that date and cannot have reached the age of 19. Only in very rare cases can we register players who are too young and we absolutely cannot register a player who is 19 or older.

A full listing of our divisions and age groups is available. The program for high school age players is slightly different. Teams play two games a weekend but the season ends in mid-November so as not to conflict with high school soccer.

Every team also has one mandatory practice a week (except for the very youngest players, 4 and 5 years old. Practices can take place on a fixed day and time each week. These times are assigned to teams after the teams have been formed, so there is no point asking for assignment to a team that practices on a particular day. We do however permit you to specify one day a week when your child cannot practice.

Team and field sizes are as follows:

Division	Team Size	Format	Field size
6U	5 to 6 players	Teams play 4 v 4	Two games concurrently on adjacent mini-fields
7U and/or 8U	7 to 8 players	Teams play 5 v 5	
10U	9 to 10 players	Teams play 7 v 7	70 x 45 yards
12U	11 to 12 players	Teams play 9 v 9	90-100 yards x 50 yards
14U	14 to 15 players	Teams play 11 v 11	Full size fields
16U and 19U	target 17 - 18; max 22 players	Teams play 11 v 11	Full size fields

For our players 8 to 13 years old, there is also a tournament season which starts with a tournament on Thanksgiving weekend and then continues, in one form or another, through June. Players 14 and up may also play on tournament teams once the high school soccer season ends in late February. These tournaments involve travel to other regions, because we have no access to fields between January and August to run our own local programs.

WHERE DO WE PLAY?

All of our games and practices take place at Balboa Park Sports Complex on Balboa Blvd. Upper division games are played there and various Area 10/V locations.

REGISTRATION AND FEES

Registration is done on-line and can be done at any time. However, after June 1, we start to fill up to the point where there is some chance you won't have room and the later you leave it, the more likely you will be out of luck. We don't give preference to returning players after June 1. Moreover, anyone registering after July 31 will automatically be wait-listed.

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REGISTRATION AND FEES (Continues)

We also hold a short annual early bird special between January 1 and April 30. We are charging \$150 for players who register on or before June 1.

Our fees include a uniform - jersey, shorts and socks - you must buy shin guards and shoes (sneakers OK but everyone wants to play in cleats). The fee also includes team and individual photos, buttons, trophies.

We have a full refund policy for players who withdraw before they play or who are not placed on teams. Partial refunds are available in some other cases. We do not give refunds after July 31 unless additional criteria are met. Note that \$17.50 of our registration fee is paid to the AYSO National Office and is NOT refundable for any reason.

This website is packed with additional information. We've tried to hit the high spots. But please do explore. A good place to start would be the Program page and its links. If you have suggestions on how we can improve the site or the quality of the information you find here, please send us an email message.