



DEVELOPING CHAMPIONS FOR LIFE!
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Fall 2020 Grades 3-4 Abridged Rules & Key Reminders

All coaches, volunteers, and referees are encouraged to read Loudoun Soccer's full Rules and Policies document, available online on the club's website, which includes FIFA's Laws of the Game and Loudoun Soccer's modifications to those Laws.

Several updates to rules and policies are made each season; the purpose of this document is to highlight changes and reminders that are most significant to you and your role as coach and/or referee.

Key COVID-19 Modifications:

- Pre-Play Questionnaires must be completed by all participants on the day of and prior to the event.
- Coaches and spectators must wear masks or face coverings.
- Players and referees must wear masks/coverings to and from the field but not required to in the game.
- Players when sitting out should remain 10 feet apart, and wear their masks/coverings.
- No pre-game coin toss: "Home" team chooses side to defend, "Away" team kicks off the first half.

Full modified game day protocols are available at www.loudounsoccer.com (under COVID-19).

General Reminders for ALL Teams:

Team Rosters:

Only players appearing on each team's official Loudoun Soccer roster are permitted to play in matches and to participate in practice. The participation of unregistered players may result in disciplinary measures against the coach and/or forfeiture of match results.

Team Officials – Registering, Background Check, SafeSport Training:

All Team Officials (head coach, assistant coach, team manager, etc.) MUST register with Loudoun Soccer, pass a background check, and complete SafeSport (abuse prevention awareness) training. Anyone in a position of trust or authority with the team on or off the field is considered a Team Official.

Practices - Frequency and Space:

Teams may train up to two (2) times per week. Teams are assigned practice field space by the club office. This assignment includes specific days, times, locations, and space. Most if not all teams will share a field with another team, and will receive half of a field within their format (ex: a Grade 1 team will have half of a 4v4 field, while a Grade 6 team will receive half of a 9v9 field).

Playing Time:

Every player who attends at least one (1) scheduled practice each week must play at least one half (1/2) of that week's scheduled game; coaches should exercise common sense when appropriating playing time so that players are not punished with less playing time due to circumstances beyond their control (e.g. practice canceled due to weather).

Player Positions:

Coaches are expected to rotate players into different positions throughout each game and/or the season.

Sideline Behavior and Referee Abuse:

Team Officials are responsible for their personal behavior as well as that of their team (spectators and players). Unacceptable conduct such as inappropriate language, aggressive actions, etc. toward anyone (referees, other Team Officials, players, spectators, etc.) will NOT be tolerated. Disciplinary action – including suspensions – may be issued for conduct that is either alleged or confirmed – serious violations can result in a suspension while facts are verified. **There is ZERO TOLERANCE toward referee abuse.**

Uniform Colors:

The "home" team (the team listed first in the schedule) should wear RED, while the "visiting" team should wear WHITE. Teams are expected to bring both jerseys to manage conflicts.



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Player Equipment:

Shin guards are mandatory at practices and games. Soccer cleats are encouraged but not required; athletic cleats with an extra toe stud (e.g. baseball or football cleats) are strictly prohibited. All jewelry must be removed; **covering earrings with tape is not permitted.** Equipment made of hard plastic or metal should be sufficiently padded and covered; however, participation in games is subject to the discretion of the ref.

Paid Coaches or Trainers:

Loudoun Soccer coaches and/or parents in the Recreation program shall not hire paid coaches or trainers for Recreational players or teams. Those interested in higher-level training are encouraged to contact the Director of Player Development, who will assist in determining the exact needs and will develop a plan to meet those needs.

Inclement Weather:

Absolutely no activities may occur outdoors in the presence of thunder and/or lightning. The field must be vacated and all parties take shelter (in a building or a car); a 30-minute wait period is enforced following each sign of thunder or lightning. The coach is responsible for ensuring that all players are accounted for in these circumstances. The referee determines whether a match is suspended, abandoned, or played; the coach is responsible in the absence of a referee (e.g. at practices).

Concussions:

Any player suspected of suffering a concussion should be removed from play for evaluation and is barred from returning to play that day. The coach should submit the reporting form to the club office. The player may return to athletic activity only when a licensed healthcare provider has provided written clearance to the club.

Grade 3-4 Rec and Challenge: Changes, Clarifications and Emphasis:

- Practice length: each practice may be no longer than 60 minutes.
- Game format: 7v7, four 10-minute quarters.
- Goalkeepers:
 - A player may play no more than one (1) quarter as a goalkeeper per game.
 - Anyone playing goalkeeper one quarter must in addition play at least two quarters in field positions.
- Playing Time: in addition to each eligible player receiving 50 percent of playing time (two quarters on the field), no player may play all four quarters unless all eligible players receive at least three quarters of play (includes one quarter as goalkeeper).
- Substitutions should be made during breaks in between each quarter, excluding Competitive Balance scenarios (see below), and NOT at stoppages or within the flow of the game.
- Minimum distance a player may be from an opposing team's free kick: eight (8) yards.
- Slide tackling is NOT permitted, considered a form of dangerous play and restarted with an indirect kick.
- Heading is prohibited in both practices and games. In games, intentional heading results in an indirect free kick for the opposing team, and unintentional heading results in a drop-ball.
- Throw-ins: players are permitted two (2) chances to perform a correct throw-in restart.
- Build Out Line: a build out line must be identified in each half of the field; a cone on a touchline may be used in lieu of an actual painted line. This line should be equidistant between the top of the penalty area and midfield. On goal kicks and goalkeeper possession with their hands, the defending team must retreat behind the build out line until the ball is released. The goalkeeper may not punt or drop kick the ball from their possession, but may roll, throw or kick.
- Offside: players may only be considered offside from between the goal line and the build out line.
- "Competitive Balance" Rule: a team losing by four goals may add an extra player to the field. If the deficit becomes three goals, the additional player is removed from the field. An extra player may be added anytime the deficit is four goals.
- Play Balance: in the event one or both teams do not have a full complement to field a team (7 players to start the match), the number of players on each team will be equalized for that particular game, by the team with more players either loaning team members, or playing down member so that the same number of players on each team are on the field against each other (e.g. 6v6), as long as minimum playing time per player is still achieved.