

Soccer Rules and Regulations



TABLE OF CONTENTS

MISSION STATEMENT	3
INTRODUCTION	3
TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES.....	3
COACH RESPONSIBILITIES.....	4
COACH ETHICS	6
PARENTS AND SPECTATOR RESPONSIBILITIES.....	6
REFEREE (GAME OFFICIAL) RESPONSIBILITIES	7
PLAYER RESPONSIBILITIES	7
SCOREKEEPING AND STANDINGS	9
RULES OF COMPETITION	9
Law 1 – The Field of Play	9
Rule 2 – The Ball	10
Rule 3 – Number of Players	10
Rule 4 – Player's Equipment	10
Rule 5 – The Referee	10
Rule 6 – The Assistant Referees	11
Rule 7 – Duration of the Match.....	11
Rule 8 – Start of Play and Restart of Play	11
Rule 9 – Ball In and Out Of Play.....	12
Rule 10– Method of Scoring.....	12
Rule 11 – Offside	12
Rule 12 – Fouls and Misconduct.....	12
Rule 14 – Penalty Kick.....	12
Rule 15 – Throw-In	12
Rule 16 – Goal Kick	13
Rule 17 – Corner Kick.....	13

MISSION STATEMENT

Hamilton Youth Athletics is a non-profit organization whose mission is to ensure that all children in and around the Hamilton Township area are provided with the opportunity to participate in organized youth sports at a reasonable cost. We are dedicated to providing children the means in which to enhance their sport and team skills as well as competitiveness. But first and foremost we encourage SPORTSMANSHIP!

Our organization's goal is to inspire our community to come together and make a difference in the lives of our youth by actively participating and volunteering in community sports.

INTRODUCTION

This booklet has been organized to provide a set of regulations and expectations for all participants (e.g., coaches, players and referees). Coaches and referees are expected to familiarize themselves with the entire document so that they understand the expectations and processes used within HYA. Coaches are expected to relay necessary information to their teams.

TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES

1. HYA will provide the Referee a game ball
2. All participants and spectators are required to remain at least two (2) yards off the field of play, and no closer to the goal line than the top of the penalty area.
3. The suitability of the field (i.e. marking, surface condition, weather, etc.) shall be determined solely by the discretion of HYA.
4. Both teams shall be responsible for policing the game field for holes, glass, rocks or foreign objects that might be dangerous to a participant.
5. **Both teams** shall be responsible for cleaning debris from field after every game.

(Coaches are encouraged to bring paper sacks or garbage bags.)

6. Matches that are canceled due to unplayable field conditions may be rescheduled at the discretion of the HYA Board, and must be reported by both coaches within seven (7) days of cancellation.
7. Depending on the age level, a team must field a minimum number of players in order to commence or continue a match. (Also subject to the # of players per team)
 - a. **U6** – 4 players
 - b. **U8** – 5 players
 - c. **U10/13** – 5 players
8. Teams may not use loaned or other non-rostered players to make up a minimum team.
9. Failure of a team to field a minimum number of players within fifteen (15) minutes of the scheduled match time shall result in a 1 - 0 loss for that team. If neither team can field a minimum of players, both teams will have the game result recorded as a forfeit and no points will be awarded in the standings.
10. Failure of a Referee to appear within fifteen (15) minutes of the scheduled match time will not be cause for canceling the game. The coaches must mutually agree to a substitute Referee; or a home team coach shall referee the first half of the game and a visiting coach shall referee the second half. Once the match has commenced under the supervision of a selected alternate Referee(s), the match shall continue as if said alternate(s) was originally

scheduled to referee the match. The alternate(s) may only be replaced by a late arriving scheduled Referee and only upon consent of the alternate(s) who have been selected and commenced the match.

11. Coaches shall report referee no-show to the HYA Board.
12. HYA insurance is not in effect for non-sanctioned events (e.g., indoor competition, practice games with non-affiliated teams, etc.).

COACH RESPONSIBILITIES

1. It is recommended that coaches obtain the official FIFA rulebook and become familiar with the Laws. The ultimate decision of the interpretations lies with the Referee in charge of your game, whether you agree or not. The HYA board will review all controversial calls to ensure proper and universal calls are made going forward.
2. HYA recommends that a goalkeeper be used, that this position not be the responsibility of just one player, but all team members take turns playing this position.
3. Coaching/Sideline Conduct:
 - a. Coaching from the sidelines – giving direction to one’s own team on points of strategy and position – is permitted, provided:
 - a.i. The tone of voice is informative and is not in a scolding manner.
 - a.ii. All comments should be respectful of all other coaches, players, referees, and parents.
 - b. All coaches, substitute players and other bench personnel or spectators are to remain within the “coaching area” (two yards behind the touchline, and not closer to the goal line than the top of the penalty area).
 - b.i. **Exception is U6 where a coach may stand behind the goalie to give direction.**
 - c. No player, coach, substitute player or other bench personnel or spectators are to make derogatory remarks or gestures to the referees, coaches, other players, substitutes, or spectators.
 - d. No player, coach, substitute player or other bench person is to incite, in any manner, or engage in any kind of disruptive behavior.
 - e. If a team is winning the game by 5 or more goals, it is the responsibility of the winning coach to offer to the opposing team coach to place an extra player on the field or for the winning coach to remove a player from the field. Strategies should be used to avoid a blowout. Strategies may include those listed above, i.e. remove player from field, add player to field and/or place stronger players in defensive position or in goal, instruct players to pass the ball three times before shooting on the goal.
 - f. Coaches and parents must stay off the field during the game unless a child is injured, and then the **COACH** may enter the field.
 - g. It shall be the responsibility of each team to maintain proper spectator conduct. Each coach, manager and team, or league official shall be held primarily accountable for the conduct of the spectators for or from

their respective teams. At no time shall foul or abusive language be permitted at any field by coach, player, substitute player or spectator.

- h. If the above rules are violated, the Referee shall ask the responsible coach for compliance with the rules. The Referee may file an incident report to the HYA Board.
 - i. In the event that compliance is not received from the offending party, the Referee shall ask the responsible coach to remove the offending party from the playing area. If this request is made, the Referee must file a written incident report to the HYA Board.
 - j. If the offending party refuses to leave the playing area, or returns after leaving, the Referee shall abandon the match and file a written report of the game abandonment with the HYA Board.
 - k. It is the duty of coaches to report serious infractions within 24 hours to the HYA Board.
 - l. Referee assault results in an automatic suspension from participation in HYA sanctioned activities, and if upheld, can result in suspension for 1 year or more. Referee abuse results in a suspension of a minimum of 3 games. Threats or physical assaults of any individual result in automatic suspension.
 - m. Violation of any automatic suspension results in forfeit of games played.
 - n. Refusal to take the field when directed to by the Referee can result in an abandoned game. Coaches who cause games to be abandoned must appear before the HYA Board, and may be suspended for 1 or more game(s).
4. End of Game Conduct:
- a. Players and coaches should always shake hands at the end of the game.
 - b. Players and coaches should always thank the referee after the game.
 - c. Teams should celebrate wins, but be respectful of the other team.

COACH ETHICS

Coaches, assistant coaches, team manager, trainers, etc, are required to adhere to the HYA Code of Conduct. This code has been developed to clarify and distinguish approved and professional, ethical, and moral behavior from that behavior which is detrimental to the development of soccer within the HYA Youth Soccer. All coaches should familiarize themselves with the Code of Conduct.

1. **Club recreational soccer is intended to focus on development and fun.** The stacking of a team is prohibited. Stacking is defined as any action, whether direct or indirect, overt or covert, by a coach, assistant coach, or parent/guardian to improve the quality of their team by transferring players to their team.
2. Each coach shall be responsible for all information on the roster and that all statements regarding birth date of players on the team are correct. No player shall take the field on or against any association team in league play unless his/her name is on the club generated roster for that team. No player may play on more than one team {except for play on coed}. Playing improperly registered players will result in forfeiture of any games such players participated in and, may result in disciplinary action against the coach.
3. Any coach, manager, or official found guilty by the HYA Board of knowingly using an ineligible player (over-age, improperly registered, or under disciplinary suspension) will be suspended from participation in all HYA activities for a period not to exceed the current and subsequent seasonal years.
4. Teams registered with HYA may not compete with non-affiliated teams without a prior, written exception. (Examples of exceptions considered include a single practice or exhibition games only. No league or tournament play is ever allowed). The coach is responsible for complying, and can be suspended for up to one year for violation of this rule.
5. Coaches shall ensure that their players and player's parents are aware of the Code of Conduct. So that they are aware of:
 - a. The meaning of good sportsmanship and their good behavior demonstrates the aspect of good sportsmanship.
 - b. The negative consequences that will result if the code is breached.

PARENTS AND SPECTATOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents and any other spectator will conform to the HYA Code of Conduct. (A copy will be available for review at the concession stand.

1. Spectators should not address the referee at any time!
 - a. Penalties:
 - a.i. 1st Infraction- Referee should stop the game, give a verbal warning to the coach, and ask the coach to warn the spectator that the next infraction will be an ejection or the referee will abandon the game.
 - a.ii. 2nd Infraction- The referee shall instruct the coach to direct the spectator to leave the field. The referee should abandon the game if the spectator does not leave the field.

REFEREE (GAME OFFICIAL) RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The Referee's judgment and discretionary rulings on the field of play in all cases will stand, but will be reviewed by the HYA board at the earliest convenience.

2. No coach, team, club, other individual shall dictate to the Referee or any of the Referee's schedulers a preferred or unacceptable Referee for any match or matches.
3. Understanding the emphasis on professional appearance, the Referee should always have an alternate color jersey or shirt to avoid color conflicts with the team's uniforms. While an alternate referee jersey is preferred, reasonable alternatives may be used.
4. Bleeding shall be considered an injury situation. The Referee shall send to the touchline a player with any bleeding to receive first aid.
5. Substitutions may be made at time of injury with Referee permission. The player may re-enter the game after bleeding has been controlled and covered and after removing bloodstained clothing. Injured player must check in with the Referee prior to re-entering the game.
6. It shall be the responsibility of each team to maintain proper spectator conduct. Each coach, manager and team, club or league official shall be held primarily accountable for the conduct of the spectators for or from his/her respective teams. At no time shall foul or abusive language be permitted at any field by coach, player, substitute player or spectator.
7. Any team that refuses to provide the name of the refuses to provide the name of the responsible person(s) for the verbal or physical abuse will be subject to review by the HYA Board.
8. If the above rules are violated, the Referee shall ask the responsible coach for compliance with the rules. The Referee may file an incident report to the HYA Board.
9. In the event that compliance is not received from the offending party, the Referee shall ask the responsible coach to remove the offending party from the playing area. If this request is made, the Referee must file an incident report to the HYA Board.
10. If the offending party refuses to leave the playing area, or returns after leaving, the Referee shall abandon the match and file a written report of the game abandonment with the HYA Board.
11. Any participant who physically strikes or attempts to strike a referee, shall be barred from all HYA activities until HYA makes a decision regarding this case. All assaults are forwarded to HYA Board for adjudication. If a non-participant (such as a parent or friend or spectator) strikes or attempts to strike a match official, the coach of the coach of the team accountable shall be issued a red card and the Referee may abandon the match.
12. The Referee shall complete a misconduct report for each issuance of yellow (caution) or red cards (ejection) in an association game. Misconduct reports must be submitted within 48 hours of the game to the HYA Board.
13. The misconduct report form may be obtained via the HYA Board

PLAYER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. All players must be attired in matching uniforms of jersey, shorts, socks, and approved shin guards and soccer cleats or gym shoes; to the satisfaction of the Referee.
2. All uniforms shall bear numbers and all players on the same team shall each have different numbers. Goalkeeper jerseys do not require a number.
3. **ALL PLAYERS MUST WEAR SHINGUARDS.** Socks must be worn up and over the shin guards.
4. Goalkeepers must wear colors that distinguish them from other players on both teams.
5. Players may wear prescription glasses, provided they have no sharp edges or points.

6. A player shall not wear anything for personal adornment or that may be dangerous to other players or to themselves (i.e., jewelry, watches, earrings and all body piercing, barrettes, buckles, pins, medals, etc.). Only Medical ID bracelets may be covered with tape; all other jewelry must be removed.
7. For protection, players may wear knee pads or elbow pads, provided they are not being used for unfair advantage, and do not contain any wood, metal or plastic; at the discretion of the Referee.
8. All or any member(s) of a team may wear extra protective clothing against the cold, including gloves, without dangerous, protruding or hard objects, providing that:
 - a. The proper team Jersey is worn outermost; and
 - b. Any hat should be without peak, bill or dangling or protruding object of any kind; however, the goalkeeper may wear a soft-billed hat; and
 - c. Referee discretion may be used to determine if an item of protective clothing is considered to go beyond the purpose of providing a means of retaining body heat.
9. No player wearing a cast or splint of any kind shall be permitted to play in any regularly scheduled game.
- 10.** No player shall be allowed to play in a regularly scheduled game with an injury or a known medical condition which can be aggravated by playing.

SCOREKEEPING AND STANDINGS

1. It shall be the responsibility of both teams to report the score to the HYA Board prior to leaving the field on game day. Should both teams fail to report the result of their game, the game will be recorded as a forfeit, and no points will be awarded in the standings.
2. Disputed scores must be reported within (7) days of the game in question to the HYA Board. Disputes will be verified and corrected as appropriate. If disputed scores cannot be verified game will be recorded as "no game played" for both teams.
3. Standings shall be determined by a point system. Three (3) points shall be awarded for a win; one (1) point shall be awarded for a draw and zero (0) points shall be awarded for a loss or forfeiture. No points will be counted for goals.
4. Both coaches shall report lack of assigned Referee to an HYA Board Member.
5. Matches that are canceled due to unplayable field conditions must be reported by one or both coaches within seven (7) days of cancellation, and may be rescheduled at the discretion of the HYA scheduler.

RULES OF COMPETITION

The object of soccer is for a player to get the ball into the other team's goal by using any part of the body except the player's hands and arms. The goalie is the only player allowed to touch the ball with the hands and arms and then only while he is located in his own penalty area.

A referee is in charge of the soccer game. A referee's main objective should be the safety of the players. It is the referee's responsibility to ensure that the game remains fun for everyone. This includes players, spectators and the officials. You will undoubtedly question some of the officiating calls as you watch a soccer game. This is only natural. To be fair to the referee you should read and understand the 17 Laws so that you have a good understanding of the rules of soccer. Try to keep in mind that everyone who is watching a game has a different perspective.

Spectators will be most likely, rooting for one team or the other. This will influence how they view the game. The spectators will more than likely have a family member playing in youth soccer. Also keep in mind that everyone will be viewing the game from a different angle. Try to give the referee the benefit of a doubt. The referees are much closer to the play than spectators. They should be trained in the Laws and impartial to the game's outcome.

The 17 Laws described below are the basic Laws of soccer accepted throughout the world. These Laws are usually altered slightly so the game is more fun and beneficial for young players. Each league should have a specific set of rules it will follow. These rules should be distributed to the coach. Look over the rules of your league to make sure you fully understand them.

Law 1 – The Field of Play

Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

Age Group	Field Size	Goal Area
U6	90 x 60 ft	4 x 6
U8	120 x 90 ft	6 x 12
U10/U11	150 x 90 ft	8x14
U12/U13	225 x 141 ft	10 x 20

Rule 2 – The Ball

Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

1. The ball size for each age group is as follows:
 - a. **U6/U7** – Size 3 ball -- 23-24 in., 08-10 oz., 9-10.5 lbs. /sq. inch
 - b. **U8 & U10** – Size 4 ball -- 25-26 in., 11-13 oz., 9-10.5 lbs. /sq. inch
 - c. **U13**- Size 5 Ball – 27-28 Inches, 14-16 oz, 6-8 lbs of air fully inflated

Rule 3 – Number of Players

Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

1. The number of players on the field at one time are as follows:
 - a. **U6/U8** – 5 players + goalkeeper
 - b. **U10** – 6 players + goalkeeper
 - c. **U13** – 7 players + goalkeeper
2. A team must field a minimum number of players in order to commence or continue a match.
 - a. **U6** – 4 players
 - b. **U8/U10** – 5 players
 - c. **U12** – 5 players
3. All age groups will use a goalkeeper. The goalkeeper must wear a different color shirt (provided by HYA) from his teammates so that everyone can easily distinguish the goalie. The goalie can only use his hands inside the penalty area.
4. Substitutions may be made, with the consent of the referee, during any stoppage of play.
5. The number of substitutes shall be unlimited.
6. Permission for substitution is not required at quarter break or half time break.

Rule 4 – Player's Equipment

Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

1. All players must be attired in matching uniforms of jersey, shorts, socks, and approved shin guards and soccer cleats; to the satisfaction of the Referee.
2. **ALL PLAYERS MUST WEAR SHINGUARDS.** Socks must be worn up and over the shin guards.
3. Goalkeepers must wear colors that distinguish them from other players on both teams. HYA will provide goalie shirts and can be picked up from the concession stand prior to the season's first game.

Rule 5 – The Referee

Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

1. The Referee maybe any of the following
 - a. Registered Referee.
 - b. Parent/Coach or Assistant
 - c. High School Student
2. Prior to the start of the game, the referee shall line up all players to inspect uniform, equipment, and cleats. No player shall take the field to play, prior to the approval of the referee.

3. All rule infractions shall be briefly explained to the offending player.
4. The referee enforces the 17 Rules. There is one difference between soccer and most other sports played in America. In soccer, the referee may let play continue and not call a foul if he or she thinks that stopping play would give an advantage to the team committing the foul. This is called the "advantage clause". The referee should say "play on" when this occurs.
5. Bleeding shall be handled as a normal injury situation. Referee shall send to the touchline a player with any bleeding to receive first aid. Player may re-enter the game after bleeding has been controlled and covered. Substitutions may be made at time of injury with Referee permission. Injured player must check in with Referee prior to re-entering the game.

Rule 6 – The Assistant Referees

Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

1. Assistant Referees are not required in the small-sided game. The Referee may referee without assistance or he may request that each coach provide a person to act as linesmen.
2. Volunteer linesmen may assist the referee in controlling the game. The linesmen's duty is to signal to the referee when the ball is out; to indicate a corner kick, a goal kick or to designate which team is entitled to the throw-in. The linesmen may also signal off sides, fouls or misconduct if a goal has been scored or when substitution is desired.
3. The referee on the field makes the official and final decisions. The linesmen are there to assist the referee; the referee may or may not act upon their advice. Coaches should not expect to have linesmen at their youth soccer games.

Rule 7 – Duration of the Match

Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

1. The duration of the game will depend on the age group:
 - a. **U6** – Four – 8 minute quarters with 2 minute breaks between quarters and a 5 minute break at half.
 - b. **U8** – Four – 10 Minute Quarters, 2 minute breaks between quarters, and a 5 minute for the half
 - c. **U10**- Two- 20 Minute halves with a 5 minute halftime
 - d. **U13** – Two – 25 minute halves with a 5 minute halftime
2. Any team leaving the field of play prior to the completion of the match shall result in that team being awarded a 1 - 0 loss.
3. The referee is the only official timekeeper for the game.

Rule 8 – Start of Play and Restart of Play

Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

1. For any infraction of the kickoff procedure, the kickoff shall be retaken.
2. Scoring on Kickoff:
 - a. **U6/U8/U10** - A goal shall NOT be scored directly from a kickoff without the ball being touched by at least one other player on either team.
 - b. **U13** – A goal can be scored directly from a kickoff without the ball being touched by at least one other player on either team Restart of Play

Rule 9 – Ball In and Out Of Play

Conform to FIFA.

Rule 10– Method of Scoring

Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

1. Any player may score goals, including the goalie. Except when taking a free kick, throw in, goal kick, penalty kick or kick off, a ball played by a player directly into his own goal is a score for the opposing team.
2. **At the U6 level, no point will be awarded to if a player kicks a goal into their own goal.**
3. As in all judgment calls, the referee’s decision will be final.

Rule 11 – Offside

Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

1. **U6/U8** – The offside rule will not apply to U6 & U8 teams; however, the intent of the rule will be followed. Positioning a player in front of the opponent’s goal irrespective of the location of the ball on the field is contrary to the aims of the program. The referee shall take appropriate action to prevent this kind of play (an indirect kick to the offended team and instructional statements to the violating players and coach.)
2. **U11 & Up** with conform to FIFA.

Rule 12 – Fouls and Misconduct

Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

1. The Referee must explain ALL infractions to the offending player.
2. Direct Kicks:
 - a. **U6**- There are no direct free kicks including penalty kicks
 - b. **U8/U10**- There are free direct kicks, excluding penalty kicks
 - c. **U13** – There are direct free kicks, including penalty kicks.
3. In addition to those offenses defined in the FIFA Rules of the Game, an indirect kick shall be awarded to the opposing team if a player, in the opinion of the referee: Slide tackles (Slide tackling is not allowed for U6 or U8.)
4. Charging the goalkeeper:
 - a. No player shall make physical contact with the goalkeeper, harass the goalkeeper or attempt to play the ball once the goalkeeper has control of the ball in any manner and to any degree whatsoever.
 - b. Included in “having control of the ball” is, if the goalkeeper holds the ball on the ground with one or both hands.

Rule 14 – Penalty Kick

Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

1. **U6 – U10** – No penalty kick is awarded

Rule 15 – Throw-In

Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

2. **U6**– a second throw-in will be allowed if the player commits a foul on the initial attempt. The referee will instruct the thrower on the proper method before allowing the player to re-throw.
3. **U8 /U10/ U12** – a second throw-in will NOT be allowed if the player commits a foul on the initial attempt. The referee will instruct the thrower on the proper method before allowing the other team player to throw-in.

Rule 16 – Goal Kick

Conform to FIFA.

Rule 17 – Corner Kick

Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

1. **U6 - U8** – if the player who takes the kick plays the ball a second time before it has been touched by another player, the referee shall explain to the kicker the proper procedure of a corner kick and the corner kick shall be retaken.
2. **U10/U12** – if the player who takes the kick plays the ball a second time before it has been touched by another player, the referee shall explain to the kicker the proper procedure of a corner kick and award an indirect free kick.