

# **Alberta Soccer Association**



## **Laws of the Game** **(Rules for U12 8 a-side Soccer)**



### Acknowledgements

The Technical Committee of the Alberta Soccer Association wishes to thank the following working groups for their assistance with the development of the rules of U12 8-a-side Soccer booklet:

- ✓ The St. Albert Soccer Association
- ✓ Sherwood Park Soccer Association
- ✓ British Columbia Soccer Association
- ✓ Tino Fusco ASA Staff Coach

In addition Alberta Soccer would like to thank our soccer colleagues both domestic and abroad for their assistance and contributions.

### FIFA Modified Laws

#### Introduction

#### **U12 Soccer:**

Player Development within an 8 a-side environment

In keeping with the Long-Term Player Development Model of Canada's Grassroots Soccer, this booklet deals with U12 soccer and should be considered the next step in the development of Soccer's U10 Mini-Soccer program.

#### **Purpose:**

The ASA Board of Directors, ASA Technical Committee and ASA Referee Committee would like to emphasize that the program is designed as a progressive step from the U10 program. We consider it still to be development and learning, therefore requiring some variation from the full FIFA rules.

#### **Player Development:**

This program is designed to assist the development of young players. As such the rules reflect this philosophy.

#### **Referee Development:**

This program provides an opportunity for the development of young referees.

#### **Coach Development:**

This Program provides an opportunity for the development of coaches.

**ASA Soccer Rules of the U12 Game**

<b>Game Format</b>	<b>Team Size</b>	<b>Game Duration</b>	<b>Ball Size</b>	<b>Field Size Min/Max Width</b>	<b>Field Size Min/max Length</b>	<b>Goal Size Min (H) Max (W)</b>
8 vs 8	Max 20	2 X 30 min	4	42 to 55 meters	60 to 75 meters	Height 6ft Width 18ft

\* *The Canadian Soccer Association highly recommends no 11-a-side soccer be played before U13*

\* *Field size permits the utilization and adaptability of workable sizes*

\* *If necessary team size can be district determined*

**Conversion Numbers:**

42 Meters = 45 Yards

55 Meters = 60 Yards

60 Meters = 65 Yards

75 Meters = 82 Yards

**Law 1: Field of Play**

Whenever possible the ideal field size will be 75 meters (82 yds.) length X 55 meters (60 yds) width.

For practical reasons this may not always be possible and games could be played, for example across the width of a regular soccer pitch. However the internal markings should remain the same.

If the existing field is 120yd in length, the width of the 8 a-side field is from the center line of the large field to the edge of the 18 yard box and the length of the field is simply from sideline to sideline.

If the length of the large field is less than 120 yd, then the sideline will need to be extended accordingly beyond the 18 yd box – toward the full field goal.

The ideal goal size is 6ft (H) x 18ft (w), however; the size of goals could be standard portable goals from manufacturers which tend to be approximately 12 ft wide X 6.5 ft high.

Goal nets should be used.

The goal area and penalty area are one and the same. From here on in it shall be referred to as the penalty area.

**Field Markings:**

Fields should be marked by distinctive lines not more than fifteen (15) centimeters wide. The field of play is divided into thirds with a center spot in the middle of the field. A circle with a radius of six (6) yards may be marked around the center spot; however this marking is not mandatory. An offside line parallel to the centre line should be marked from touch line to touch line at the attacking third mark. All field markings may be marked by the means of cones (woz makers).

**The Penalty area is defined at each end of the field as follows:**

Two lines are drawn at right angles to the goal line, eight (8) yards and are joined by a twenty (20) yard line drawn parallel with a goal line.

The area bounded by these lines and the goal line is the penalty area. On the edge of each penalty area a **penalty spot** is made eight (8) yards from the midpoint between the goalposts and equidistant to them.

**Law 2: The Ball**

The ball shall be spherical and constructed of material which is not dangerous to the players.

The ball size shall be 4.

**Law 3: Number of Players**

The game shall be played by two teams, each consisting of 8 players, one of whom shall be a goalkeeper. Teams must dress a minimum of 6 players and a maximum of 20.

Unlimited substitutions shall be allowed at any stoppage in the game. Coaches should have substitutes ready at the centerline of the field before requesting a substitution so that the game is not delayed unnecessarily. Player leaving the field of play should leave at the nearest end or goal line.

To the extent possible, each player must participate in a minimum of 50% of the total playing time in league, playoff and tournament games.

**Law 4: Player's Equipment**

Equipment shall consist of shorts, socks, shin-guards, footwear, and a numbered shirt.

All jerseys must have sleeves. The players may not roll the sleeves up or tie them at the shoulder level. A player who removes his/her jersey to celebrate a goal will receive a caution for unsporting behavior.

All players MUST wear shin guards of suitable material. The shin guards should be covered completely by the socks.

Running shoes or multi stud shoes may be worn. 13 stud-molded sole are the most suitable shoes for field conditions in our area.

Goalkeepers must wear colours that are distinguishable from those of other players and those of the referee. Goalkeepers may wear gloves and tracksuit-type pants.

**Law 5: Referees**

As per the FIFA Laws of the Game.

**Law 6: Assistant Referees**

As per the FIFA Laws of the Game.

**Law 7: Duration of the Game**

The game shall be divided into two equal halves. Each half shall be 30 minutes in length. The length of halftime will be a minimum of 5 minutes and for a maximum of 10 minutes. The referee should determine the length of the half time break.

**Law 8: Start of Play**

At the beginning of the game the referee, by toss of a coin, will determine choice of halves and kick off. The winner of the coin toss shall choose which half to defend and the opposing team will get the kick off. The order is reversed for the start of the second half.

At a kick-off, all players shall be in their own half. All players opposing the team taking the kick off shall not be less than 6 yards from the ball until it is kicked. The game shall be started by the referee giving a signal. The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves forward. For any infringement of rule the kick off shall be retaken.

The player taking the kick off must not play or touch the ball a second time before it has been played or touched by another player.

After a goal has been scored, the game shall be restarted by a kick off, to be taken by a player of the team against which the goal was scored.

After the first half of play, the teams shall change halves and the kick-off shall be taken by a player of the team opposing that which started the game.

For any stoppage not mentioned in these rules, the referee shall restart the game by dropping the ball at the place where it was when play stopped, unless play was stopped in the penalty area. In this case, the ball shall be dropped on that part of the penalty area line which runs parallel to the goal line, at the point nearest to where the ball was when play stopped. The ball shall be in play as soon as it touches the ground.

A goal may be scored directly from a kick off.

**Law 9: Ball in and out of Play**

The ball is out of play:

- When the whole of the ball has crossed the goal-line or touch line, whether on the ground or in the air.
- When the game has been stopped by the referee.

The ball is in play at all other times.

**Law 10: Method of Scoring**

A goal is scored when the whole of the ball has crossed the goal line, between the goalposts and under the crossbar, provided it has not been thrown, carried, or intentionally propelled by hand or arm, by a player of the attacking team. The exception is for goalkeepers from within their own penalty area.

**Law 11: Offside**

This rule is intended to HELP player development.

Referees are requested to do the best they can.

ASA would like to emphasize that the program is designed as a progressive step from the U10 program. We consider it still to be development and learning, therefore requiring some variation from the full FIFA rules; i.e the offside line at three quarter field encourages players to spread out.

The offside rule is in effect at the attacking 3rd of the field. This line may be marked as a dotted line, and solid line or single cones or flags on the touch line. Coaches from both teams should bring cones to mark this line in the event that the attacking 3<sup>rd</sup> line is not clearly marked on the field.

This will allow players to develop an understanding of spreading out and creating depth in attack.

**Offside Position:**

It is not an offence in itself to be in an offside position.

A player is in an offside position if:

- He or she is nearer to their opponents' goal line than both the ball and the second-last opponent

A player is not in an offside position if:

- He or she is not in the attacking third of the field of play
- He or she is level with the second-last opponent or
- He or she is level with the last two opponents

**Offence:**

A player in an offside position is only penalized if, at the moment the ball touches or is played by one of his team, he is, in the opinion of the referee, involved in active play by:

- Interfering with play or
- Interfering with an opponent or
- Gaining an advantage by being in that position

**No Offence:**

There is no offside offence if a player receives the ball directly from:

- A goal kick
- A throw-in
- A corner kick

**Infringements and Sanctions:**

In the event of an offside offence, the referee awards an indirect free kick to the opposing team to be taken from the place where the infringement occurred.

**Law 12: Fouls and Misconduct**

Fouls and misconduct are penalized as per the FIFA Laws of the Game:

A direct free kick is awarded to the opposing team if a player commits any of the following seven offences in a manner considered by the referees to be careless, reckless or using excessive force:

1. Kicks or attempts to kick an opponent
2. Trips or attempts to trip an opponent
3. Jumps at an opponent
4. Charges an opponent
5. Strikes or attempts to strike an opponent
6. Pushes an opponent
7. Tackles an opponent

A direct free kick is also awarded to the opposing team if a player commits any of the following three offenses:

1. Holds an opponent
2. Spits at an opponent
3. Handles the ball deliberately (except for the goalkeeper within his own penalty area)

A direct free kick is taken from the place where the offence occurred.

A penalty kick is awarded if any of the above ten offences is committed by a player inside his own penalty area, irrespective of the position of the ball, provided it is in play.

An indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team if a goalkeeper commits any of the following four offenses:

1. Controls the ball with his hands for more than six seconds before releasing it from his possession.
2. Touches the ball again with his hands after he has released it from his possession and before it has touched another player.
3. Touches the ball with his hands after it has been deliberately kicked to him by a team-mate.
4. Touches the ball with his hands after he has received it directly from a throw-in by a team-mate.

An indirect free kick is also awarded to the opposing team if, in the opinion of the referees, a player:

- Plays in a dangerous manner
  - Impedes the progress of an opponent
  - Prevents the goalkeeper from releasing the ball from his hands
  - Puts the ball in play through a direct, indirect, goal or corner kick, and kicks the ball again before it has been touched by another player
- Commits any other infringement not previously mentioned in Law 12, for which play is stopped to caution or dismiss a player

An indirect free kick is taken from the place where the offence occurred

**Disciplinary Sanctions:**

The yellow card is used to communicate that a player or substitute has been cautioned. Any player receiving a yellow card may not play for the remainder of the half. The offending player may be substituted for another eligible player; both teams continue to play 8 vs 8.

The red card is used to communicate that a player or substitute has been sent off. Any player receiving a red card may not play for the remainder of the game. The offending player may be substituted for another eligible player; both teams continue to play 8 vs 8.

Only a player or substitute may be shown the red or yellow card.

The referee has the authority to take disciplinary sanctions from the moment he enters the field of play until he leaves the field of play after the final whistle.

A player who commits a cautionable or sending-off offence, either on or off the field of play, whether directed towards an opponent, a team-mate, the referee, an assistant referee or any other person, is disciplined according to the nature of the offence committed.

A player is cautioned if they commit any of the following seven offences:

1. Unsporting behavior
2. Dissent by word or action
3. Persistent infringement on the Laws of the Game
4. Delaying the restart of play
5. Failure to respect the required distance when play is restarted with a corner kick, free kick or throw-in
6. Entering or re-entering the field of play without the referees permission
7. Deliberately leaving the field of play without the referees permission

A substitute or substituted player is cautioned if he commits any of the following three offences:

1. Unsporting behavior
2. Dissent by word or action
3. Delaying the restart of play

A player, substitute or substituted player is sent off if he commits any of the following seven offences:

1. Serious foul play
2. Violent conduct
3. Spitting at an opponent or any other person
4. Denying the opposing team a goal or obvious goal scoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball (this does not apply to a goalkeeper with his own penalty area)
5. Denying an obvious goal scoring opportunity to an opponent moving towards the player's goal by an offence punishable by a free kick or a penalty kick
6. Using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures
7. Receiving a second caution in the same match

A player, substitute or substituted player who has been sent off must leave the vicinity of the field of play and the technical area.



**Law 13: Free Kick**

For any infringement of the Rules of the Game when the ball is in play, the referee may award a free kick to the team opposing that of the offending player. The free kick shall be taken from the place where the infringement occurred, unless the free kick is awarded to the attacking team within the opponent's penalty area. In this case, the kick shall be taken from that part of the penalty area line which runs parallel to the goal line, at the point nearest to where the offence was committed.

At the taking of a free kick the ball shall be stationary and all opponents shall be not less than 6 yards from the ball until it is kicked.

Players taking a free kick within their own penalty area shall kick the ball into play beyond the penalty area. The ball is in play when it is kicked, moves, and has passed outside the penalty area. All opponents shall be outside the penalty area and not less than 6 yards from the ball until it has been kicked. For any infringement of this rule the free kick shall be retaken.

A player taking a free kick shall not play or touch the ball a second time until it has been played or touched by another player.

**Law 14: Penalty Kick**

A penalty kick shall be taken from the **penalty spot**. All players, with the exception of the defending goalkeeper and the player taking the kick, shall be outside the penalty area but within the field of play, and not less than 8 yards from the ball (and behind the ball) until it has been kicked.

The goalkeeper remains on his/her goal line, facing the kicker, between the goalposts until the ball has been kicked.

The player taking the penalty kick must not play or touch the ball a second time until it has been played or touched by another player (one of which may be the goalkeeper).

The time of play shall be extended at half-time, or at full-time to allow a penalty kick to be taken. In the event that time is extended, play shall end when a goal is not scored.

**Law 15: Throw in**

When the whole of the ball has crossed the touch line, either on the ground or in the air, the ball shall be thrown in from the point where it left the field of play, by a member of the team opposing that of the player who last touched it.

Players taking a throw in shall face the field of play and have part of both feet on the ground, on or behind the touch line. The throwers shall use both hands to deliver the ball from behind and over their head. The ball shall be in play immediately after it enters the field of play.

Players taking a throw in must not touch the ball a second time before it has been played or touched by another player.

The normal throw-in rule will apply. If not properly taken, one re-throw will be given. If still not properly taken, the game will be restarted by a throw in from the opposing team.

**Law 16: Goal Kick**

When the whole of the ball has crossed the goal line, either on the ground or in the air, excluding that portion between the goalposts having last been played or touched by a member of the attacking team, a goal kick shall be awarded to the defending team. The ball shall be kicked into play from a point within that half of the penalty area nearest to where the ball crossed the goal line.

At the taking of a goal kick, all opponents shall be outside the penalty area and not less than 6 yards from the ball until it has been kicked into play. The ball is in play when it has directly left the penalty area.

The player taking the goal kick must not play or touch the ball a second time before it has been played or touched by another player.

A goal may be scored direct from a goal kick, but only against the opposing team.

**Law 17: Corner Kick**

When the whole of the ball has crossed the goal line, either on the ground or in the air, excluding that portion between the goal posts, having last been played or touched by a member of the defending team. A corner kick shall be awarded to the attacking team.

The corner kick shall be taken within the corner arc nearest to where the ball crossed the goal line. All opponents shall be not less than 6 yards from the ball until it has been kicked.

The player taking the corner-kick must not play or touch the ball a second time before it has been played or touched by another player.

A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick.

**Jewelry and Non-Compulsory Equipment**

No item of jewelry of any sort will be allowed on the field of play, even if it is 'taped'. I.E. covered.

Game officials must set an example by removing all personal jewellery before entering the field of play (watches are obviously allowed for game officials).

The rule of thumb should be 'if it can be seen, it's a problem'.

**Earrings:** no earrings of any kind are acceptable. The practice of taping is no longer acceptable.

**Facial Rings:** any kind of jewellery around the eyes, nose or any other part of the face must be removed.

**Bracelets:** all bracelets (including metal, rope, fabric ...) must be removed.

**Medic Alert Bracelets:** may be worn but must be covered or padded in order to be safe for all players.

**Necklaces:** all necklaces must be removed.

**Body Piercing;** any body piercing not visible to the referee is not of concern. Should the piercing become visible the referee will ensure it is removed.

**Watches:** players are not allowed to wear any kind of watches.

**Beaded Hair:** if a player is wearing hair beads the hair must be tied in a bun or covered by a hair net. Loose beaded hair is not to be allowed.

**Rings:** must be removed. The sole exception is a smooth wedding band, which the referee is convinced, cannot be removed, and which poses no danger to any player. It is recommended that teams advise players to have such rings removed before reporting for the match. If it cannot be removed, it must be adequately padded.

**Hats:** no hats are allowed on the field of play, except for goalkeepers using one as an eyeshade.

**Bandanas:** no bandanas are allowed.

**Sweatbands:** no sweatbands are allowed.

**Head Protectors:** only those permitted by FIFA are allowed.

**Spectacles:** are allowed if they are sports spectacles and / or regular glasses and are safe for the players themselves and for other players.

**Pro Wrap:** Single strand of Pro Wrap is permitted with no metal hair clips or bobby pins.

**Orthopedic Supports:** FIFA Circular 863 states that the vast majority of commercially manufactured supports are safe to use. These items pose less of a hazard than players accidentally banging heads, for instance.

The major concern is not the 'hardness' of the equipment alone, rather it should be whether any part of it could cut or wound another player.

Any support must be safe for all players, and adequately padded if necessary.

**Casts:** Players wearing a soft cast will be permitted to play if the cast does not present a danger to him/herself or any other player.

All casts must be adequately padded.

The referee (or a Supervisor of Officials if one has been appointed to the match) will make the final decision as to the acceptability of any cast.

Any player who uses a cast with the intent to intimidate or injure an opponent shall be cautioned or sent off immediately.

### **FAIR PLAY FOR PLAYERS, COACHES & PARENTS**

Coaches, managers, team officials and parents shall not criticize game officials at any time and should encourage the same attitude and good sportsmanship amongst all players and supporters. The game official shall endeavor to conduct the game in a proper manner at all times.

Coaches shall coach from their technical area. If not marked, a technical area is defined as extending one (1) yard on either side of the designated seating area and forward up to one (1) yard from the touch line. Coaches, players, and parents may not position themselves behind the goal.



9023 111 Avenue Edmonton, AB T5B 0C3  
Phone: 780-474-2200  
Fax: 780-474-6300  
[www.albertasoccer.com](http://www.albertasoccer.com)